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Editor's Column

Edward A. Geary

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Editor's Column

When the Comte de Vergennes announced that Thomas Jefferson had replaced Benjamin Franklin as the U.S. envoy to France, Jefferson is reported to have replied, "I succeed him; no one could replace him." Charles D. Tate, Jr., may not be such an altogether irreplaceable man as Franklin, and I am certainly no such successor as Jefferson; nevertheless, Jefferson's witty and incisive words express what I feel in following Chuck Tate as editor of *BYU Studies*.

After sixteen years as editor, Chuck (to use the name I have called him by since we were office-mates in the attic of the Maeser Building twenty years ago) has accepted a call to preside over the Missouri St. Louis LDS Mission. He has been laboring in this new assignment since July, from all reports with the same dedication, energy, and good spirits that he devoted to *BYU Studies*. At the same time, I have been trying to learn the editorial ropes while stumbling around in some rather big shoes.

Chuck was not the first editor of *BYU Studies*, nor the sole architect of its success; but the journal he inherited in 1967 had a history of low circulation, irregular publication, and uncertain institutional support. Chuck's editorship coincided with an increased commitment by the University administration to support a serious journal for Latter-day Saint scholars. Over the years Chuck built upon that commitment, attracted and developed writers, expanded the readership, improved the design and production quality of the journal, and made *BYU Studies* into a publication of which the University can be proud.

Chuck would be the first to point out that he did not accomplish these things single-handedly. The journal has had the benefit of a distinguished Board of Editors, willing and competent referees for manuscripts, associate editors, book review editors, editorial assistants, and a series of student interns who have done vital work in checking sources, correcting errors, typesetting, proofreading: work which readers are aware of only when it is done badly. During the last few years, Chuck has depended especially heavily on Richard G. Ellsworth, as associate editor, and Linda Hunter Adams, as editorial

assistant. Richard Ellsworth has also moved to a new assignment as chairman of the Department of University Studies. Linda Adams remains with the journal in the new position of managing editor, supervising copy and production and directing the training program which is an important part of *BYU Studies*'s contribution to the University.

I am delighted to be working with Linda and also with David J. Whittaker, our very able book review editor. I am also delighted that Richard L. Anderson and Ronald W. Walker have agreed to serve as associate editors. Richard Anderson, professor of ancient scripture and director of the Bible Section of the Religious Studies Center at BYU, is one of the most respected scholars at the University, with extensive publications in Mormon history as well as in scriptural studies. Ron Walker, senior research historian with the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History and associate professor of history and Church history, is similarly respected for his sound scholarship and fine writing and has won several awards in recent years for the excellence of his work. I have known and admired both men for a long time and feel honored to be working with them.

With the high professionalism of this editorial team, I am much less apprehensive than I would otherwise be about succeeding Chuck Tate as editor. We will be working closely together in formulating editorial policy and direction. *BYU Studies* will change somewhat in the next few years, as it has changed and developed over the years under Chuck. My editorial tenure will be much shorter than his, but I hope that my associates and I can continue to build upon the foundation we have inherited.

Edward A. Geary, Editor