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Front cover: Advertising mat issued on release of the film
Brigham Young, 23 August 1940.

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Darryl F. Zanuck's *Brigham Young*: A Film in Context

James V. D'Arc

When Darryl F. Zanuck's *Brigham Young* was first released in 1940, President Heber J. Grant of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints praised the motion picture as a "friendmaker."¹ The prestigious Hollywood studio Twentieth Century-Fox had spent more money on it than most motion pictures made up to that time. Its simultaneous premiere in seven theaters in one city (still a world record) was preceded by a grand parade down Salt Lake City's Main Street. Businesses closed for the event, and the mayor proclaimed it "*Brigham Young Day*."²

Not all reactions to the film, however, have been so favorable. A prominent biographer of Brigham Young called the movie merely an "interesting romance" when a more authentic treatment of Brigham Young's life could have made it "one of the greatest epics in the history of the [motion picture] art."³ In the 1970s, President Spencer W. Kimball echoed the criticism of past and present LDS church members. He had little use for the film's portrayal of Brigham Young as a "weak, vacillating prophet."⁴ Many members of the Church today look at the film with amusement; at BYU it has been used to quiz students on historical inaccuracies. Indeed, in order to view *Brigham Young* today, one would either have to tune in to a Utah television station during the July twenty-fourth Pioneer Day commemoration or stay up for a late-night broadcast. The film is rarely shown theatrically even in Utah. To understand the rise and apparent fall in the film's appeal, we must examine it in the context of its time.

MOVIES IN THE THIRTIES

The 1930s were a bifurcated decade. During most of the decade, America was struggling to emerge from the Great Depression under Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs; the last

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three years, impacted by international events, witnessed a gradual preparation for participation in World War II. The American motion picture industry was similarly divided, but for different reasons. Beginning in 1934, the industry finally bowed to public (and especially governmental) pressure, stemming from as far back as the 1920s, and created the Production Code, administered by the Production Code Administration, whose chief leader was Will Hays, former postmaster-general under Calvin Coolidge. Known popularly as the "Hays Office," although actually administered during the decade by Joseph I. Breen, the Production Code Administration, in concert with the major motion picture producers, established an intricate set of requirements. Prior to release, every film was required to obtain the Production Code Seal (or clearance).⁵

With over 61 percent of the nation attending each week, the movies appeared to be virtually Depression-proof. Schlesinger observes that in the thirties, "Hollywood possessed the nation. It formed our images and shaped our dreams. . . . The movies were near the operative center of the nation's consciousness. They played an indispensable role in sustaining and stimulating the national imagination."⁶ The enormous popularity of motion pictures and radio led Warren Susman to his description of the thirties as a developing culture of "sight and sound that was of profound importance; it increased our self-awareness as a culture; it helped create a unity of response and action not previously possible; it made us more susceptible than ever to those who would mold culture and thought."⁷

The all-pervasive influence of movies might have been what concerned President Heber J. Grant when he heard in early 1939 that Twentieth Century-Fox planned a grand scale movie biography of the Church's second and perhaps most colorful leader, Brigham Young.⁸ Up to the late 1930s, Mormons had been the object of often cruel caricature in the nation's theaters. Beginning in 1905, the American Mutoscope-Biograph Company had produced a nickelodeon show entitled *A Trip to Salt Lake City*, depicting a henpecked polygamous husband trying to give his many children a drink of water in a jostling Pullman car. Cecil B. DeMille, later a friend of Heber J. Grant and David O. McKay, was the director-general of Famous Players-Lasky studio, which in 1917 released *A Mormon Maid*, a depiction of Danite bands intent on blood atonement and sneering Brigham-led Mormon Apostles attempting to add to their Utah harems.⁹ *Trapped by the Mormons*, a 1922 British movie prevented from reaching American screens, capitalized on imaginative amorous exploits of

Mormon missionaries in the British Isles, portraying them as mesmeric vampires preying on England's innocent women.¹⁰

Even though in the mid-thirties the Production Code strictly prohibited any ridicule of religious denominations or their clergy and adherents,¹¹ some expressed interest in producing motion pictures based on historical aspects of Mormonism.¹² Such productions were never approved because a depiction of polygamy, an illegal and socially unacceptable practice, would necessarily be involved.¹³ In efforts to stave off further governmental regulation of the industry because of its all too frequent depictions of "loose sexuality," Hollywood studios opted instead for a resurrection of literary classics such as *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935), *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935), and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938).

In the later thirties, despite lingering American isolationism, the threat of war abroad began to have its impact on the types of films produced, especially historical films. "The impact of the war may cause the spate of period works to increase," wrote one feature writer in the *New York Times*. "The past, whether disrupted or serene, is secure."¹⁴ Historical movies seemed to comfort viewers in their feelings of nationalism and patriotism in a world that appeared to be crumbling. There was also a tendency during this period towards expanding beyond the traditional treatment of topics as proscribed by the Production Code. Regarding Hollywood's new approach to potential movie material, *Variety* noted:

No matter how censurable, how depressing, how likely to tread on the toes of political, industrial, or racial groups they are, books and plays are being dug out and gone over with an entirely different eye than in the past. This liberality is not self engendered in these lookers-after the nation's morals, one story editor of a major studio declared this week, but merely the reflection of a greater liberality in the mind of the public itself. It's not, in fact, as has been said, the movies are growing up, but the American public is growing up.¹⁵

Nevertheless, historical movies of this era were generally not innovative. Formula reigned supreme.¹⁶

BRIGHAM YOUNG—IN THE BEGINNING

The idea for *Brigham Young* came to Darryl Zanuck, vice president in charge of production at Twentieth Century-Fox, from junior writer Eleanor Harris. Her twenty-eight page treatment entitled "Prophets of Empire," submitted to Zanuck through executive producer Kenneth Macgowan in May 1938, began with raids on Nauvoo citizens, the assassination of Joseph Smith, and the evacuation of Nauvoo. Her story concluded with the founding of

Salt Lake City and the seagulls saving the Mormons from the total ruin of their first crop. Since the script dealt with Brigham Young's plural wives, Zanuck, knowing the potential difficulties the Production Code would pose, turned down the suggestion. Harris continued to develop the story on her own time and resubmitted it, only to receive the same criticism from Zanuck—the unfeasibility of portraying polygamy:

There is no way that you can conceivably excuse to audiences of the world the idea of one man having eight or nine bed companions. . . . Brigham Young has been used as a standard vaudeville joke for years and it is going to be awfully tough to try to explain to the public that he slept with more than one woman because of religious or economic problems.¹⁷

Sometime in the few months spanning late 1938 and early March of 1939, a theater owner in Kansas with “considerable influence over exhibitors” and claiming to have ties to LDS church leaders sent Zanuck a nine-page treatment of the Mormon story. This treatment apparently convinced Zanuck that such a movie could be done successfully in spite of the fears over polygamy.¹⁸ Immediately, Zanuck's mind focused on his new project. He assigned Eleanor Harris and another writer in Fox's employ, James Woolley, “not now a Mormon,”¹⁹ to work up a treatment, until a “big name” writer could do the final screenplay. Two other studio writers were also temporarily assigned. Zanuck apparently liked the writers' treatment of polygamy, once thought too censurable, and further instructed Macgowan:

The polygamy angle should not be ducked. To do so would rip all semblance of authenticity from the story. It should be hit hard and deliberately. To make the story of Brigham Young and Mormonism and dismiss or timidly handle polygamy would be like making *Alexander Graham Bell* without the telephone, *Jesse James* without guns, or a Columbia picture without [director Frank] Capra. Fifty percent of the young potential audience would go to see the picture hoping to be able to nudge their companions and giggle a bit over their own knowledge of pornographic implications. To deny them this would be to cheat them, defraud them of something savory.²⁰

Zanuck became cautious again about the story's approach to polygamy, particularly after reading a letter sent to Sidney Kent, president of Fox, by President Heber J. Grant, who had read the announcement of the film in the newspapers. President Grant indicated that he was ready and willing to offer assistance to the studio, if only to avoid another slanderous Hollywood fictionalization:

Where an historical character has been so colorful as was Brigham Young, and where so much lurid untruth has been written about such an one, it is not always easy to get at the exact truth which underlies his life—truth which such a Company as your own would wish to have at its disposal before making a film.²¹

The same day he wrote to Kent, President Grant also sent a letter to Will Hays, whom Grant had invited to Salt Lake City in 1918 to sell war bonds when Hays was an official of President Wilson's Liberty Loan drive. Grant confessed that he was "not at all sure as to how you are really connected to the production of pictures," but thought that Hays's

high sense of justice and fair play will see to it that the slanders and vilifications of the past are not dished out again to a public that is sometimes not very discriminating and that is too frequently receptive and even gullible in the matter of unsavory and sensational stories however baseless they may be.²²

In a return letter, Hays assured President Grant that Twentieth Century-Fox had a high reputation and that Kent and Zanuck would receive his suggestions with "sympathy."²³

Meanwhile, it was decided that Louis Bromfield, a novelist of note at that time, would write the original story on which the script would be based. Bromfield, whose Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Rains Came* (1937) became a hit Zanuck film in 1939 starring Tyrone Power, was a logical choice.²⁴

VARDIS FISHER AND *CHILDREN OF GOD*

While Bromfield was on his way by train from Ohio to meet Zanuck in Hollywood, he read a stack of unsigned book manuscripts in connection with his position as one of three judges for the Harper Brothers Prize for 1938–39. One of the manuscripts was a lengthy saga of the Mormons, encompassing somewhat the same period as Zanuck's new film project. The novel, which Bromfield judged the winner and persuaded Zanuck to buy screen rights to, was *Children of God* by Mormon-born Idahoan Vardis Fisher, who was later judged by Alfred Kazin to be America's last authentic novelist of the frontier.²⁵ Acknowledged to be the "most widely read of Fisher's books,"²⁶ *Children of God*, subtitled *An American Epic*, carried the Mormon story from Joseph Smith's boyhood up to Wilford Woodruff's 1890 Manifesto and the official end of plural marriage. The book earned considerable praise on its release; Carl Van Doren wrote that it "neither exalted the Mormons as their own pious tradition did nor abused them in the tradition of their

ignorant enemies.”²⁷ It was also criticized in later years for being historically inaccurate.²⁸ *Children of God* enjoyed prodigious sales upon publication in 1939 and was abridged in two installments in *Reader's Digest* in 1940. The alleged connection between this book and the developing script for *Brigham Young* was of great concern to President Grant and his handpicked liaison with the studio, Elder John A. Widtsoe.

Elder Widtsoe, in a letter critiquing one of the seven major drafts of the screenplay, wrote to executive producer Macgowan that *Children of God* was

well written, entertaining and often brilliant, [but that its] mixture of facts and fancy, of sober knowledge and imagination, of attempts at fairness and acceptance of exploded myth, leaves with the reader a complete misunderstanding of motives, events and accomplishments. Intended to be an historical novel about Mormonism, it has become a biased and incomplete novel about polygamy.

Elder Widtsoe concluded that Fisher's portraits of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were “caricatures” and that the “job [of writing the book] was too big for the author, especially after his series of neurotically-impelled writings.”²⁹

Even though Elder Widtsoe kept him apprised of the script developments, President Grant expressed frequent concern in his journal and in correspondence about the potentially unfavorable influence of Fisher's book on the film's story. In August 1939, he wrote in his journal, “I thought I would buy a copy of it [*Children of God*], but Brother [Alfred E.] Bowen said he didn't think it would be worth my while to even read it, that it is simply rotten.”³⁰ Two months later, President Grant confided in a letter that “I have lived in fear that perhaps there might be something in the picture that would be unfavorable to Brigham Young, because of the man who has been writing the scenario [Louis Bromfield] has endorsed a book that I think is about as mean as the devil.”³¹

In late October 1939, President Grant, J. Reuben Clark, and John A. Widtsoe journeyed to Los Angeles for a reading of the script by Lamar Trotti. President Grant's journal entry for 27 October records in a hopeful vein that “Brother Clark, Brother Widtsoe and I were well pleased with the Script. We think there should be slight changes made, all of which they agreed to make.”³² However, just three months later *Children of God* still haunted him: “I had a miserable night's rest last night. I didn't get to sleep until after twelve o'clock and then slept only a short time. I got up and then went back to bed, but couldn't go to sleep. I felt ashamed of myself that I would allow such a thing as the book *Children of God*

to keep me awake.”³³ John A. Widtsoe, similarly concerned over the effect Fisher’s novel might have on the script, noted to Trotti at the conclusion of a detailed three-page critique of one of the script drafts:

I wonder a little, if Mr. Bromfield who helped adjudge the Harper prize to the indecent book known as *Children of God*, was Fisher’s picture of the Mormons. Literature needs its Will Hays, also. Decent people even in this century cannot be fooled into believing that true literature blossoms from indecency. Man’s many centuries proves the contrary. This, however, is but a passing expression. . . . Should you wish to discuss any of these matters with me, I shall be glad to run down to Los Angeles; unless you come up here and beard the Mormon lions in their own den.³⁴

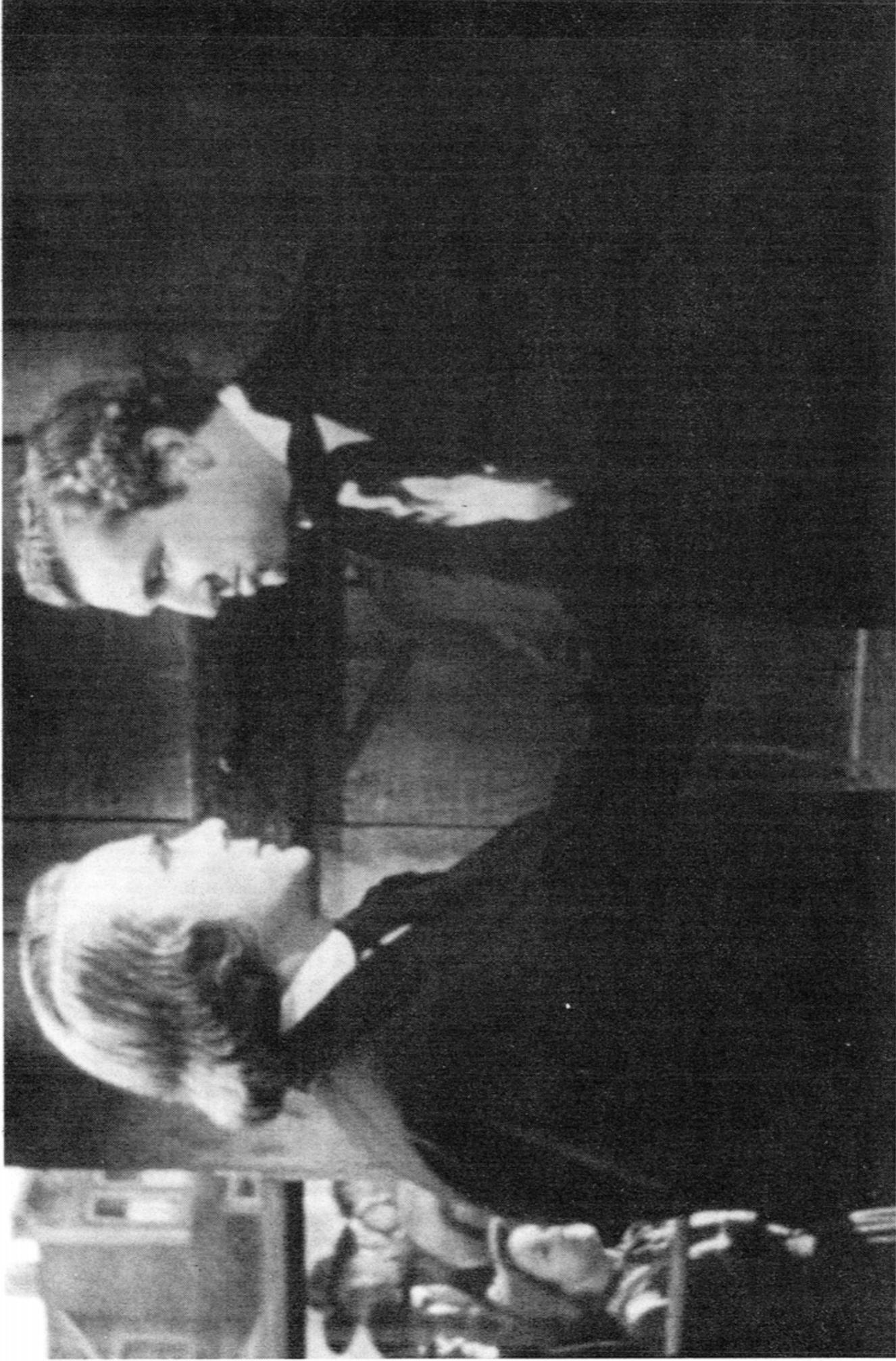
While President Grant and Elder Widtsoe repudiated the book, Weston Nordgren, writing in the Church missionary publication *Liahona: The Elders’ Journal*, suggested that “in spite of its anti-Mormon character, the book has stirred up considerable interest in Mormon doings, which will probably be useful publicity for the present picture.”³⁵ In fact, Fisher’s book had little impact on the final story or characterizations of the film.³⁶

The studio kept in close contact with Church representatives during the production stages. Only a week after arriving in Los Angeles, Louis Bromfield journeyed to St. George, Utah, where he met John A. Widtsoe, who took the novelist on a four-day motor tour through Utah. In Salt Lake City, Bromfield was treated to a lunch with three then-living daughters of Brigham Young and an evening organ recital in the Tabernacle. The pair were joined by President Grant on the last day as they visited Emigration Canyon. Widtsoe’s diary records as the topic of discussion each day: “B. Young all the way.”³⁷

In April 1940, after five full months of work on seven major revisions of the script, *Brigham Young* was before the cameras for more than two months of extensive shooting, mostly on location in California but also in Utah.³⁸ Veteran action director Henry Hathaway directed the film, which included a very expensive cast of Fox’s top stars: Tyrone Power as Jonathan, the young Mormon scout; Linda Darnell, a studio newcomer, as Zina, the non-Mormon “outsider”; Vincent Price, recruited from Broadway, as Joseph Smith; Dean Jagger, also from the stage, as Brigham Young, the title role that launched a successful Hollywood career; Mary Astor as Mary Ann, Brigham’s “main” wife; John Carradine as Porter Rockwell; veteran movie villain Brian Donlevy as Angus Duncan, Brigham’s continual adversary for power; and Jane Darwell, who earlier that year had played Ma Joad



Courtroom scene showing major antagonist character Angus Duncan (Brian Donlevy), Joseph Smith (Vincent Price), and Brigham Young (Dean Jagger) following Young's eloquent appeal for Smith's life.



Courtroom scene, following Smith's conviction, where Smith tells Young, "I want you to take care of my people."



Courtroom scene, close-up favoring Brigham Young as he is commissioned by Joseph Smith to take over the Church.



Flashback during Brigham Young's courtroom defense of Joseph Smith where he recounts meeting Smith for the first time. Note that both are standing eye-to-eye, visually foreshadowing Young's similar role as successor to Joseph Smith.



Brigham Young, in his cabin beneath portrait of Joseph Smith, near the end of the film, prays that he has not misled the pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley. Young equates in this scene the potential failure of Joseph Smith's vision of the Mormon's future and his own hopes for the pioneers.

in Zanuck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, as Eliza Webb, a Mormon killed by a mobber's bullet. Nine-time Academy Award winning musician Alfred Newman wrote an atmospheric score that tastefully used the Mormon hymns "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning" and "Come, Come, Ye Saints" in key scenes. The finished film, nearly two hours long and costing \$1,485,000, was among the most expensive motion picture made by Twentieth Century-Fox up to that time. The subtitle *Frontiersman* was added to attract eastern audiences who might otherwise consider the movie to be entirely religious (see advertising mat illustration).³⁹

REACTIONS

The depictions of polygamy in the movie were brief, limited to the occasional appearance of four wives of Brigham Young and to Zina taunting Jonathan when he proposes marriage: "How could you get to loving one wife more than all of the others?" In another brief scene, while on their way back to Council Bluffs for the remaining settlers, Porter Rockwell and Jonathan compute how large Salt Lake City would be if every man had a certain number of wives. When Jonathan asks, "How will we get that many women?" Porter replies, "Oh, that's no problem. Women convert easy." *Time* magazine's review summed up the film's lack of emphasis on polygamy when it captioned a studio-generated photograph of Dean Jagger surrounded by twelve women in pioneer dress with "Brigham Young: only the publicity department gave him his fair share."⁴⁰

Fox public relations head Jason Joy journeyed to Salt Lake City for a 13 August 1940 private screening for President Grant and his counselors. Following the screening, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that President Grant said, "I thank Darryl F. Zanuck for a sympathetic presentation of an immortal story. I endorse it with all my heart and have no suggestions to make for any changes. This is one of the greatest days of my life. I can't say any more than 'God bless you.'"⁴¹ The star-studded premiere in Salt Lake City on 23 August seemed to ratify that endorsement. Zanuck, Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, Dean Jagger, Louis Bromfield, and other Fox dignitaries hosted the seven-theater premiere.

The national release of *Brigham Young* occurred one month later in New York City's prestigious Roxy Theatre, in Los Angeles at Grauman's Chinese Theatre, and at San Francisco's Paramount Theatre to essentially favorable, if not enthusiastic, reviews. "It is the major picture of the year," wrote the critic for the *Los Angeles Times*.⁴² Popular movie columnist Louella Parsons praised it as

Everyone knows Brigham Young had 27 wives!

But... few people know
 He led 20,000 followers westward ... through torrents, freezing cold, fever... across 1800 miles of trackless wasteland!
 In a blistered basin of salt and sagebrush he made verdant farmland!
 On the shores of Utah's Great Salt Lake he built one of the world's famous cities!
At last the whole dramatic story comes thrillingly to the screen!

"THE COVERED WAGON"
 "THE IRON HORSE"
 "CIMARRON" *Now*

DARRYL F. ZANUCK'S
 Production of

BRIGHAM YOUNG - FRONTIERSMAN

The Great American Motion Picture ...
 written for the screen by LOUIS BROMFIELD

starring **TYRONE POWER** with **LINDA DARNELL**
 BRIAN DONLEVY · JANE DARWELL · JOHN CARRADINE
 MARY ASTOR · VINCENT PRICE · JEAN ROGERS · ANN TODD
 and **DEAN JAGGER** as Brigham Young

Directed by Henry Hathaway Associate Producer Kenneth Macgowan · Screen Play by Lamar Trotti
 A Twentieth Century-Fox Picture

S I G N A T U R E

An example of the studio-generated newspaper advertisements that indicate some of Twentieth Century-Fox's hopes for attracting a wide audience to *Brigham Young*.

“the best picture ever to come out of the 20th Century-Fox Studio and one of the best pictures this reviewer has ever seen.”⁴³ “*Brigham Young*,” wrote a critic in the *Los Angeles Daily News*, “is one of those rare distinguished motion pictures which makes up in two hours for every sin of mediocrity committed in Hollywood. . . . [It] is the best Twentieth Century-Fox production since *Grapes of Wrath* and a credit to the entire industry.”⁴⁴ Of the sixty reviews I have surveyed from daily newspapers, industry trade publications, and national magazines, not more than five could be classified as negative. *New York Times* critic Bosley Crowther was the only dissenter among the highly profiled film critics, declaring, “[The] picture is much more tedious than Brigham’s life must have been.” The lack of screen time on polygamy caused him to conclude that “it’s too bad that *Brigham Young* had to be so monog—we mean monotonous.”⁴⁵

The film industry trade papers were nearly unanimous in praising the film, citing it as “a stirring saga of the Mormon people that has epic sweep and is gripping screen fare”⁴⁶ and “one of the really worthwhile pictures of the year.”⁴⁷ Both *Newsweek* and *Time* carried positive reviews and *Life* chose *Brigham Young* as its “Movie of the Week.”⁴⁸ A half-hour radio adaptation (performed by Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, Mary Astor, and Dean Jagger, all of whom flew to New York for the film’s east coast premiere) was aired nationwide as the season opener for the Kate Smith Show.⁴⁹

The commercial success of the film is not easy to determine because of conflicting box office records and wartime conditions in Europe that restricted film distribution abroad.⁵⁰ Traditionally, the trade paper *Variety* tracks a given film at key theaters for the first few weeks of its initial run. During that time, trends are established and a reasonable estimate can be made of the success of a picture. On the West Coast, *Brigham Young* had an average first week’s gross but fell considerably during the second week. Seattle’s opening was deemed “very disappointing” by *Variety*, but Portland’s reception was “very strong.” San Francisco’s earnings were judged “fair,” and Denver’s receipts were “well above average.”⁵¹ Chicago’s grosses were very low and Omaha’s “average.” The reception in Memphis prompted the paper to say, “Mormon leader has more wives than customers in these parts.”⁵² On the East Coast, opening engagements earned average returns in Boston but were very low in Providence, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia. New York City’s box office grosses were average, but in Baltimore *Brigham Young* received “consistent day and night trade, pointing to a most satisfying figure.”⁵³

Subsequent published references to the box office take for *Brigham Young* have reflected the disappointing trend suggested by the first two weeks of *Variety*'s initial reports.⁵⁴ Yet Maynard Smith, who wrote a 1953 dissertation on the films of Lamar Trotti, claimed to have had access to Twentieth Century-Fox financial records (no longer available at the studio) and reported that the total box office returns from *Brigham Young* exceeded four million dollars.⁵⁵ This figure would indicate that the movie was a better than average success for the studio.

While the national and regional press, including editorials in the Salt Lake City papers, were predominantly enthusiastic about *Brigham Young*, President Grant worried about the reactions of the general Church membership. Truman Young, a San Francisco attorney and a great-grandson of Brigham Young, voiced a general criticism of many in the Church:

It is a sympathetic and entertaining film, if not an epic. [However,] Brigham Young is characterized as altogether too vacillating in the screen portrait. He may have had some doubt of his ability as the perfect leader. But he felt called to aid his people, first in saving their lives and then in finding a peaceful haven for settlement.⁵⁶

In the film, for example, when asked if his decision to leave Nauvoo was a revelation, Brigham's reply in the affirmative contradicts his discussion with Mary Ann minutes earlier when he complained to her that when he asked the Lord if he was to be head of the Church "The Lord didn't say anything."⁵⁷ In another scene when the Mormons are packing up to leave Nauvoo, Mary Ann utters a prayer complaining that "this is an awful thing he's asking us to do. And right now, in his heart he's not half as sure as he makes out to be."⁵⁸ In yet another scene, when Duncan's subversive efforts get the best of him, Brigham confesses to his wife, "Sometimes, I wonder if I'm being punished for saying the Lord told me to take charge."⁵⁹ Despite such scripted dialogue, however, the visual images throughout the film and the favorable linking of Joseph Smith to Brigham Young convey the impression that Brigham is unquestionably Joseph's successor (see frame enlargements).

At the October 1940 general conference of the Church, President Grant responded to what he felt was the prevailing criticism:

I have heard some little criticism of it, but we cannot expect the people who do not know that Brigham Young was in very deed the representative of God upon the earth, who do not know of his wonderful character, to tell the story as we would tell it. There is nothing in the picture that reflects in any way against our people. It is a very marvelous and wonderful thing, considering how people

generally have treated us and what they thought of us. Of course, there are many things that are not strictly correct, and that is announced in the picture itself. It is of course a picture and we could not hope that they would make a picture at their expense, running into a couple of million dollars, to be just as we would like it.⁶⁰

HEBER J. GRANT AND MORMONISM IN THE THIRTIES

President Grant, of course, had agreed to the now criticized Brigham Young vacillations during the various stages of script development. That he did so is revealing about the nature of the man who led the Church for twenty-seven years and who attempted (largely successfully) to build bridges between the broader American and the Mormon cultures. Heber J. Grant succeeded to the presidency of the Church in 1918, upon the death of Joseph F. Smith. At that time, the Church was experiencing the changes that came with the new century, its culture, and more recently the difficulties in obtaining a senatorial seat for Reed Smoot. In the words of Frank W. Fox, President Grant's task was to "transform the Mormon Church from a small sect cloistered away in the Rocky Mountains to a national, and eventually international, religious movement with a universal message." This transformation would be effected by the Church's "coming to terms with the United States politically, socially, culturally (to some degree), and above all spiritually. It had to reconcile its own sense of mission with the existing sense of national purpose, to the end that it might become a working force in American life."⁶¹ By the 1930s this transformation had largely been accomplished, with results that Thomas Alexander characterizes as "nothing less than miraculous. Mormons were now working together in social and community betterment causes such as prohibition, non-partisan government, the development of parks, and a multitude of other social and cultural causes."⁶² The Church Security Plan (or Welfare Plan, as it became more popularly known) provided a great boost to the Mormon image of thrift, industry, and traditional American values. National magazines reflected this changing attitude in the late 1930s, largely to the credit of President Grant, Henry D. Moyle, Reed Smoot, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and others whose business and civic involvements brought the Church closer to the American mainstream.⁶³ By the time *Brigham Young* was released, readers of America's newspapers and magazines were offered pages of information on the Church and its history. In addition to the *Reader's Digest* condensation of Fisher's *Children of God*, the seven million readers of the *American Weekly* were treated to a twelve-part biography of Brigham Young.⁶⁴

President Grant's efforts to accommodate the needs of the filmmakers is evident in the diplomatic tone of a letter he wrote to Kenneth Macgowan in August 1939, before the first draft screenplay was completed:

I hope we shall not appear to you to be overanxious, and we have no disposition to be oversensitive, but we are tremendously concerned that this picture shall be a true picture, and while we are not, any of us, playwrights, or dramatists, or Movie technicians, we can appreciate the war which must constantly go on in one preparing a picture, between the highly dramatic and the sober fact.⁶⁵

On a similar note, John A. Widtsoe wrote to Macgowan: "We [Widtsoe and Lamar Trotti] have worked very carefully on the script, and hope that the suggestions on the copy may be considered favorably by you. However, we shall support you in the final decision, whatever it may be."⁶⁶

Very early in the story-treatment stages, Church officials seemed very flexible in adapting history for the needs of the film, even to the extent of inserting the Hole in the Rock episode into the crossing of the plains.⁶⁷ President Grant also quelled potentially embarrassing moments. When George D. Pyper, the eighty-year-old Sunday School president and historical advisor on the set, intruded once too often with suggestions on historical accuracy, President Grant calmed studio executives saying, "Don't pay too much attention to that brother. We've got to have box office in this picture."⁶⁸

The picture of Brigham Young as a man uncertain about his calling was evidently part of the idea of the film from the beginning. In connection with a suit lodged against Twentieth Century-Fox by Eleanor Harris (a junior writer assigned to work with Bromfield on the story), the credited writer of the film, Lamar Trotti, recounted in his deposition that *Brigham Young* was

a story of a man, an individual, who started out to found a religious community, who sought the help of God to do so, and who didn't find the physical answer to his prayer *but who said that he had done so and on the strength of that led his people in to this valley where they almost starved to death and then he sought forgiveness*, and finally found his people saved by what the Mormon people believed to be a miracle in the form of the sea gulls that came and killed the crickets that were eating their food.⁶⁹

Louis Bromfield, in his deposition, took credit for the "structure and basic ideas" embodied in the final screenplay as filmed, "including the basic dramatic idea on which the whole story is founded, that Brigham Young, without consciousness of revelation or divine assistance assumes control and leadership of his people

and finally appeals to God when he is defeated and his people are in danger of death by starvation.”⁷⁰

Darryl F. Zanuck, in his deposition, confirmed that President Grant, for dramatic reasons, had approved the fictional characterization of Brigham Young that had disturbed so many of his Church members:

So, as a matter of fact, President Grant of the Mormon Church, when he saw the film and as to this particular line in the characterization of Brigham Young, said that while it was not true to the life of Brigham Young, however, it seemed to him it was essential to the situation which Brigham Young knew, and while it was not true he felt that it was a thing that was dramatically essential and so the Mormon Church permitted us to keep it in the picture.

The whole issue of whether the film was true or not in their minds—in the minds of the Mormon Church, was based upon one rather illuminating quality in his character. In other words, Bromfield created the approach and the basic idea of the whole film was built around the character of the man who consciously misleads his people, leading them to believe he is constantly in touch, and he knows, he knows all the time that he is not in touch with God, but at the finish when everything is lost and he faces failure he appeals once more to God and God answers his appeal, and the theme being that all the time he was actually in touch with God although he didn't know it.

That was the big side of the whole film and that made the picture.⁷¹

The question of the film's “truth” and the attitude of Church officials toward historical accuracy help us to understand the forces that finally formed and developed the story as presented to the public. M. R. Werner noted at the film's release that the film either telescoped key events in Mormon history (such as the expulsion from Nauvoo) or clearly fabricated episodes (Brigham Young, at the time of the cricket infestation and arrival of the seagulls, was in Council Bluffs, not in the Salt Lake Valley, as portrayed in the film; gold was not discovered in California in 1846 as the film maintained, but two years later).⁷² Apparently, President Grant and other Church officials working with Twentieth Century-Fox were satisfied as long as a positive image of the Church emerged through the fiction.

BRIGHAM YOUNG AND WORLD AFFAIRS

Seen in the context of the late 1930s, the image of the Mormons as a persecuted people was a timely parallel to the persecution of the Jews in Europe, particularly in Hitler's Germany. The creative artists directly and indirectly responsible

for the storyline of *Brigham Young* were each, in one way or another, not only acutely aware of the persecutions abroad, but vocal if not active in favoring some kind of involvement by the United States in alleviating those conditions. Just prior to Fox's purchase of the screen rights to *Children of God*, Vardis Fisher wrote a lengthy letter to his literary agent encouraging her to approach Zanuck on his behalf for the job as technical advisor on the film:

I don't believe any other person is more familiar with the essential facts of Mormon history and especially with the spirit of it than I am. Above all I should wish to point out to Mr. Zanuck the remarkable opportunity not only to portray one of the most dramatic chapters in American history, but also, and more importantly, to make the portrayal implicitly an antidote to the increasing spread of Fascism and anti-Semitism in this nation. Practically everyone who has written of Mormonism has, in my opinion, missed the spirit of the movement. Above all else, that *movement was an almost century-long struggle to find a refuge for conscience and human liberties*. My novel is the only book that has made that the theme and driving force of the movement. As one actively interested in the Committee for United Action against Fascism and anti-Semitism in this country, I am deeply interested also in the opportunity to make of the Mormon motion picture a powerful, even though implicit, agent in the defense of human liberties in this nation. . . . The theology was only the *raison d'être* of that struggle.

Fisher concluded the letter by offering to be employed in an anonymous capacity, "not because primarily of the money or because I have any ambitions toward Hollywood, but because I am vitally interested in the threat to human liberties in the world today and should like to see the Mormon story produced in a way to make it an implicit voice against persecution and reaction."⁷³

Louis Bromfield, who had a "lifelong interest in the Mormons,"⁷⁴ was similarly concerned with the conditions of fascism in and out of the United States. "Whether or not Bromfield has political aspirations, few Americans have been more active in the anti-Fascist cause," wrote an anonymous author for the 1944 edition of *Current Biography*. Bromfield was on the executive board of the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe and a sponsor of the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born. Speaking of fascism, Bromfield said that "it cuts across all nations. We have plenty of fascist-minded people right here in the United States—the kind who think 'the Fascist-Nazis would put the poor people in their place and protect my property and investments.'" ⁷⁵ Even Eleanor Harris, whose story "Prophets of Empire" had initially set Zanuck's mind in motion on

the eventual *Brigham Young* project, referred to world conditions in an early memo on her story: “With our eyes on today’s headlines, nothing could be more topical than the story of the persecuted people who left their country because they must . . . [w]hose only guide was hope . . . and who, in the midst of desolation, built a triumphant Empire!”⁷⁶ (ellipses in original).

Darryl F. Zanuck was no stranger to topical stories that appealed to the public. In his first story conference for *Brigham Young*, he compared what he had in mind to two earlier films: *The Covered Wagon*, a pioneer epic made in 1923 by Paramount, and *The House of Rothschild*, one of Zanuck’s first productions at Twentieth Century Pictures. Released with great success at the box-office in 1934, *The House of Rothschild* dealt with the persecutions in Europe of the famous Jewish banking family. Veteran actor George Arliss, borrowed from Warner Brothers, played the lead role of Nathan Rothschild. Screenwriter Nunnally Johnson wrote a hateful tirade against Jews for the part of the anti-Semitic rabble-rouser Ledrantz, played by Boris Karloff. Arliss, as Nathan Rothschild, in return, delivered a stinging denunciation as the high point of the film. At the time *The House of Rothschild* was in production, Hitler had come to power in Germany. In his book on Zanuck, Leonard Mosely writes:

From a purely commercial point of view, it was a controversial movie to be making at this time. But if Joe Schenck and the bookers at United Artists were apprehensive about this, Zanuck, on the contrary, was stimulated by the prevailing conditions, and felt that here was a page-one film if there was one, its story brought bang up to date by the happenings in Nazi Germany. . . . Zanuck believed that the controversial aspects of it would attract rather than repel moviegoers.⁷⁷

Zanuck was right. *The House of Rothschild* was the biggest hit of the new company’s brief existence.

In his instructions to executive producer Kenneth Macgowan in the first story conference on *Brigham Young*, Zanuck established the connection between *The House of Rothschild* and his Mormon saga with one eye on history and the other on contemporary events: “Introduce your characters and the cause to which they are pledged. They have just finished the building of their Tabernacle. Then show the start of the persecution and the pogroms, paralleling the situation in *House of Rothschild* and what is happening abroad today.”⁷⁸

Under the skilled pen of Fox’s top scriptwriter, Lamar Trotti,⁷⁹ *Brigham Young* was furnished with a courtroom scene similar to the dramatic scene in *The House of Rothschild*

denouncing intolerance, this time religious rather than purely racial. The courtroom scene is the highlight of the film and is followed by the assassination of Joseph Smith. In the final script, Brigham Young is introduced to the viewer in his stirring ten-minute defense of the Mormons in a scene which includes flashbacks of his first meeting with Joseph Smith. His concluding statement to the jury is a dramatic close-up with Joseph Smith visible over his shoulder:

Now, gentlemen, I'm not asking you to believe a single thing Joseph Smith said. But I do ask you, let him believe it—let me believe it, if we want to. Your forefathers and mine came to this country in the first place for one great reason—to escape persecution for their beliefs, and to build a free country where everybody might worship God as he pleased. That's what brought the Puritans to Massachusetts, the Quakers to Pennsylvania, the Huguenots to South Carolina, the Catholics to Maryland. And when they'd found what they were after, they fought a war to hold onto it, and they drew up one of the noblest documents ever written—the Constitution of the United States—to govern free men. And the very first words they put on that piece of paper guarantees to every man the right to worship God as he pleases—and prohibits Congress, *or anybody else*, from ever doing anything to take away that right. You can't convict Joseph Smith just because he happens to believe something you don't believe. You can't go against everything your fathers fought and died for. And if you do, your names, not Joseph Smith's, will go down in history as traitors. They'll stink in the records and be a shameful thing on the tongues of your children!⁸⁰

The popular press did not miss the implications of Brigham's speech, nor that the message of the film was a very contemporary one. "Religious liberty, with the U.S. Constitution as its backer, is made a serious and coherent theme in the film's motivation," wrote a California reviewer.⁸¹ Philip K. Scheuer, writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, commented that "[a]ll this happened but a century ago. Yet many of us, pausing to take stock at the close of *Brigham Young*, may well find ourselves asking, 'Can such things have been? Did we do this?'"⁸² The *Motion Picture News*, a publication of the Women's University Club of Los Angeles, concluded in their review of *Brigham Young*, "It is difficult for us to believe that they [Mormons] were persecuted in Missouri and Illinois with the savage bigotry of present-day Nazism, but such was the case."⁸³

The widely-received message of tolerance, and the courtroom scene that explicitly made the point, also reflected contemporary social and judicial attitudes. The trial scene, developed and written by Trotti, was wholly fictional and meant to send its message in a minimum of time, which is the essence of any

dramatic presentation. Yet Trotti's (and Zanuck's) Brigham Young argued a defense that would not have been appropriate in the 1840s. The federal constitutional guarantee of free exercise of religion was a legally recognized concept in the late 1930s, but not in the 1840s.

Comparing the fictionalized trial of Joseph Smith as portrayed in the film to the actual trial of Joseph's alleged assassins in 1845 adds insight to the actual legal arguments of the time. According to Dallin H. Oaks and Marvin S. Hill, both Mormons and Gentiles in Hancock County contended in court primarily over "higher law" and "popular sovereignty" and not the First Amendment and its religious guarantees:

The murders and trial at Carthage exposed some basic issues that divided Mormon and non-Mormon in Hancock County. In its own way, each group was committed to the written laws of state and nation, yet each paid allegiance to another law they deemed higher than these. The source of the Mormons' higher law was the revelations of God; its spokesman was their prophet. But with source and spokesman vested in the same individual, the anti-Mormons feared a potential tyranny. The anti-Mormons also appealed to a higher law, but its sources were diffuse and its spokesmen many. Their sources were the Bible, reason, and individual conscience—reliance on God but also "nature." . . . As a minority in the state, the Mormons had to respond to the will of the majority, subject only to the limited and remote guarantees of the written constitution. In their case those guarantees proved insufficient to preserve either their prerogatives as the elected majority or their rights as a participating majority.⁸⁴

Federal Constitutional guarantees were "remote" in states in the 1840s because First Amendment guarantees of religious freedom were not then binding upon the states and were interpreted as a protection from the possibility that the federal government would establish a national religion. The Fourteenth Amendment, originally ratified in 1868, "extended to states the limitations imposed on the federal government by the Bill of Rights," among which were freedom of religion and of assembly.⁸⁵ But it was not until the mid-1930s under the New Deal that the Supreme Court began ruling in favor of protecting minority individuals and organizations (religious or otherwise) against the power of the state.

The timeliness of the message of *Brigham Young*, particularly where contemporary court decisions were concerned, was discussed in a review in the *New York Mirror*:

And, incidentally, to all those officials of various towns who have been chasing out that fantastic sect known as "Jehovah's Witnesses," this department particularly recommends Brigham Young's defense speech at Joseph Smith's trial for treason. It's the kind of Americanism that some of us are sometimes inclined to forget.⁸⁶

Between the time early in 1938 when *Brigham Young* began serious story development and the eve of its premiere in Salt Lake City in late August 1940, war had been declared on Germany by France and Britain, Germany had invaded the Netherlands, and France had fallen. Bombs were falling nightly on London even as audiences in Salt Lake City, New York, and Los Angeles queued up to see Zanuck's saga about Brigham Young.

Would *Brigham Young* have been produced if world conditions had not been what they were in the late 1930s? Perhaps. The story was inherently dramatic and was certainly qualified in terms of sweep and spectacle. Yet the matter of polygamy seemed to be an insuperable obstacle, even to Zanuck, until he was convinced that another element—the theme of religious or racial tolerance—outweighed the liabilities. Zanuck's attraction to the theme of tolerance, in a world where its rarity made headlines, combined with his interventionist posture,⁸⁷ provided fertile social soil from which *Brigham Young* emerged to be favorably received by its viewers.

The modern message of *Brigham Young*, then, addressed current concerns and anxieties about intolerance and persecution. To President Grant and his 700,000 Latter-day Saints, tolerance and acceptance were themes that needed underscoring, particularly in the theaters that had only a few years before projected the unfavorable stereotyped images of nineteenth-century polygamy. By dedicated, continuous involvement in the drafting and production of the film and through wise compromises, President Grant and other Church leaders did much to insure the eventual success of *Brigham Young* in its positive portrayal of the Church's early history. With that objective having been accomplished, it was a relieved Heber J. Grant who declared after the preview showing of *Brigham Young* in Salt Lake City, "This is one of the greatest days of my life."

NOTES

¹“Film Epic Thrills Audiences,” *Deseret News*, 23 August 1940, 6.

²See James V. D’Arc, “When Hollywood & Vine Met at Temple Square,” *Mountainwest* 5 (April 1979): 31–33, 35.

³M. R. Werner, “Brigham Young Seen as Screen Material,” *New York Herald Tribune*, 15 September 1940, sec. 6, p. 10. Werner’s biography *Brigham Young* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1925) was the only significant non-Mormon biography of the Mormon church president and was consulted by Twentieth Century-Fox writers in researching the film.

⁴“The motion picture *Brigham Young* pictured President Young wondering if he was called of God. The picture showed him vacillating, unsure, and questioning his calling. In the climax of the play he is shown wavering, ready to admit he had not been inspired, that he had lied to them and misled them. . . . But there was nothing vacillating or weak about Brigham Young. He knew he was God’s leader” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1975], 29).

⁵See Garth Jowett, *Film: The Democratic Art* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), 109–82, for a lengthy discussion on attempts at motion picture censorship beginning in the early 1900s; pages 233–56 cover the establishment of the Production Code, the Catholic Church’s Legion of Decency, and various state censorship boards. Jack Vizzard, *See No Evil: Life inside A Hollywood Censor* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), is an informative personal account of a member of the Production Code board; see also Murray Schumach, *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor* (New York: William Morrow, 1964).

⁶Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., “When the Movies Really Counted,” *Show* (April 1973): 77.

⁷Warren I. Susman, “The Thirties,” in *The Development of an American Culture*, ed. Stanley Cohen and Lorman Ratner (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970), 192–93. The make-up of the movie audience that supported the Production Code and the institutionalized goals of Roosevelt’s New Deal is described in Ralph A. Brauer, “When the Lights Went Out—Hollywood, the Depression, and the Thirties,” in *Movies as Artifacts: Cultural Criticism of Popular Film*, ed. Michael Marsden, Jack Nachbar, and Sam Grogg (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1982), 25–43.

⁸See Richard Alan Nelson, “A History of Latter-day Saint Screen Portrayals in the Anti-Mormon Film Era, 1905–1936” (Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1975), 221–31, on President Grant’s correspondence to Senator Reed Smoot concerning *Trapped by the Mormons* as an example of his concern over public images of Mormons through motion pictures.

⁹*Ibid.* Many of the findings in Nelson’s thesis were condensed with additional information on sound-era portrayals on film and television into Richard Alan Nelson, “From Antagonism to Acceptance: Mormons and the Silver Screen,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Spring 1977): 58–69.

¹⁰See James V. D’Arc, “The Way We Were,” *This People* 6 (August–September 1985): 44–45; and James V. D’Arc, “The Mormon as Vampire: A Comparative Study of Winifred Graham’s *The Love Story of a Mormon*, the Film *Trapped by the Mormons*, and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*” (Paper delivered at the Mormon History Association meeting, Oxford, England, 9 July 1987).

¹¹“No film or episode may throw ridicule on any religious faith. Ministers of religion in their character as ministers of religion should not be used as comic characters or as villains. Ceremonies of any definite religion should be carefully and respectfully handled” (Production Code, as reprinted in Vizzard, *See No Evil*, 370).

¹²The files of the Production Code Administration reveal that in 1935 Joseph I. Breen, head of the administration, met with representatives of Universal Pictures to discuss their idea for a film about Brigham Young and the Mormon trek to Utah. The studio representative was “particularly insistent that the story he had in mind would have about it no suggestion of loose sex, lovemaking, or marriage-making.” Breen expressed no concern “except the natural difficulty which readily presents itself and which, of course has to do with the question of polygamy.” Also, the “sensitiveness of the Mormon Church communicants” to such a film must be dealt with by a studio making the picture. The studio representatives claimed to have engaged one Harvey Gage “a great-grandson of Brigham Young . . . whose mother is now the official archivist of the Mormon Church” to write the screenplay. Apparently, Universal went no further than preliminary discussions with their plans for a feature film on the Mormons (see Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., Production Code Administration File, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences Library, Beverly Hills, California). Columnist May Mann reported another apparently abandoned film project by Hollywood producer E. B. Derr that was to have begun in 1937. She also reported that Cecil B. DeMille, Paramount, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer had been interested in doing a film on the Mormons but “the present need is for concentrated action” (May Mann, “Events in Mormon Pioneering of Salt Lake Will Be Chronicled in Hollywood Production,” *Deseret News*, 26 December 1936, 3).

¹³“Polygamy is considered as multiple adultery under the Code, and, therefore any story dealing with this theme must have sufficient compensating moral values to permit its dramatization on the screen. It may not be treated in a favorable or glamorous light, and no details of the intimate life of a colony devoted to polygamy may be portrayed on the screen. It must be shown as illegal, wrong, and subversive of the standards of a Christian society” (Olga J. Martin, *Hollywood’s Movie Commandments: A Handbook for Motion Picture Writers and Reviewers* [New York: H. W. Wilson, 1937], 174).

¹⁴Douglas W. Churchill, "Hollywood Goes Historical," *New York Times Magazine*, 4 August 1940, 22. "Hollywood's current preoccupation with American history springs partly from a nationwide resurgence of patriotism (which in turn springs from U.S. revulsion at events in Europe), partly from realization that Americans enjoy pictures based on fact" ("*Dodge City* Has Dodge City Premier That Dazzles Kansas and Half the West," *Life* 6 [17 April 1939]: 68). This article also discusses the success of screen biographies of historical figures and reports that films on the life of Abraham Lincoln and Brigham Young were in production.

¹⁵"Liberalizing the Screen," *Variety*, 13 March 1940, 3. All citations to *Variety* unless otherwise stated are to the New York City edition.

¹⁶Churchill, "Hollywood Goes Historical," 7, 22. In an assessment of historically oriented feature films up to that time (1940), Churchill concluded that "[i]n the main, the films are focused on the great man, the individual who stands at the crux of historical events." Then he listed three traits common to nearly all of these films: "Many of the directors hold that in a biographical film details are inconsequential as long as the spirit and purpose of a man's life are faithfully articulated. Secondly there are numerous external pressures [relatives, special interest groups, descendants of famous figures] who bring the luckless producers into court on the flimsiest provocations. Finally there is the necessity of catering to the popular concept of history. . . . The public wants the objects of its adoration and veneration to be shown as heroic." In the case of *Brigham Young*, all the above factors were strictly met.

¹⁷Darryl F. Zanuck to William Dover, Memorandum, 8 September 1938, Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation Archives, Beverly Hills, California (hereafter cited as Fox Archives).

¹⁸Julian Johnson [head of Fox's story department] to Kenneth Macgowan [associate producer on *Brigham Young*], Memorandum, 8 March 1939, Fox Archives. See also Eleanor Harris v. Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, United States District Court for the Southern District of New York (1942), Civil 10-221, Deposition of Darryl F. Zanuck, 19 August 1941, Beverly Hills, California, 11-12. All documents herein cited in the court case are located in the Federal Archives and Records Center, Building 22-MOT, Bayonne, New Jersey.

¹⁹Kenneth Macgowan to Darryl F. Zanuck, Memorandum, 22 March 1939, Fox Archives. Macgowan also claimed that Woolley had written a six-thousand-word pamphlet for the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce on Mormon history and "knows a lot [about Mormon history] that hasn't made its way into books."

²⁰Darryl F. Zanuck to Kenneth Macgowan, Memorandum, 22 April 1939, Fox Archives. The treatment by writers Eleanor Griffin and William Rankin described by Zanuck in the memo as "amazingly well thought out" was not among the documents in the Fox studio collection. Zanuck in the same memo also indicated that top Fox scriptwriter Lamar Trotti would be assigned to *Brigham Young* after completing work on his current project, *Drums along the Mohawk*, directed by John Ford, which was subsequently released in late 1939. Both *The Story of Alexander Graham Bell* (1939) and *Jesse James* (1939) were produced and released by Twentieth Century-Fox.

²¹Heber J. Grant to Sidney R. Kent, 22 March 1939, typescript, Fox Archives.

²²Heber J. Grant to Will H. Hays, 22 March 1939, typescript, Fox Archives.

²³Will H. Hays to Heber J. Grant, 27 March 1939, typescript, Fox Archives.

²⁴Other films adapted from Bromfield's novels were *One Heavenly Night* (United Artists, 1931), *Night after Night* (Paramount, 1932), *The Life of Virgie Winters* (RKO, 1934), *It All Came True* (Warners, 1940), and *Mrs. Parkington* (MGM, 1944). See David D. Anderson, *Louis Bromfield* (New York: Twayne, 1964); Morris Brown, *Louis Bromfield and His Books* (Fair Lawn, N.J.: Essential Books, 1957); John Bainbridge, "Farmer Bromfield: Famous Novelist Preaches the New Agriculture on His Malabar Farm," *Life* 25 (11 October 1948): 111-22.

²⁵Alfred Kazin, "Our Last Authentic Frontier Novelist," *New York Herald Tribune Book Review*, 27 August 1939, 3.

²⁶Joseph M. Flora, *Vardis Fisher* (New York: Twayne, 1965), 132.

²⁷Carl Van Doren, *The American Novel 1789-1939*, rev. and enl. (New York: Macmillan, 1940), 363.

²⁸David Brion Davis, "Children of God: An Historian's Evaluation," *Western Humanities Review* 8 (Winter 1953-54): 49-56. Robert A. Rees noted the criticism received of many novelists who wrote on Mormon historical themes, including Fisher, but explained through an example from *Children of God* how convincingly a good novelist can dramatize oftentimes plodding history as frequently written by professional historians ("'Truth is the Daughter of Time': Notes toward an Imaginative Mormon History," *Dialogue* 6 [Autumn-Winter 1971]: 19-22).

²⁹John A. Widtsoe to Kenneth Macgowan, 7 September 1939, Kenneth Macgowan Collection, University of California at Los Angeles (hereafter cited as Macgowan Collection).

³⁰Heber J. Grant, Journal, 26 August 1939, typescript, 139, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

³¹Heber J. Grant to Charles Zimmerman, 22 October 1939, typescript, in Heber J. Grant, Journal, 183.

³²Heber J. Grant, Journal, 27 October 1939, 198-99. There is no record of what the "slight changes" were.

³³Heber J. Grant, Journal, 9 January 1940, 6.

³⁴John A. Widtsoe to Lamar Trotti, 13 November 1939, 3–4, Macgowan Collection.

³⁵Weston Nordgren, *Liahona: The Elders' Journal*, 9 July 1940, 55. Nordgren also wrote a favorable article about the upcoming film in the Church's official magazine (Weston Nordgren, "Brigham Young," *Improvement Era* 43 [November 1940]: 532–33, 547).

³⁶While director Henry Hathaway pasted pages from *Children of God* in his shooting script for atmosphere, the only similarities between the finished film and Fisher's novel "were in the way of dialogue" (Kenneth Macgowan to Harry Brand, Memorandum, 30 April 1940, Fox Archives). Also, according to George Wasson, one of the assistant secretaries at Fox, Macgowan's feelings were that "[i]f we were to look at this picture with an unbiased view I am certain that we would find the present story entirely historical in background, which contributes 50% of the story, probably 5% Eleanor Harris, 5% dialogue from Vardis Fisher's *Children of God*, 5% Louis Bromfield, 5% Henry Hathaway's directoral changes, and 30% Lamar Trotti's story development" (George Wasson to Edwin P. Kilroe, Memorandum, 21 August 1940, Fox Archives). See also Henry Hathaway's shooting script for Brigham Young in Henry Hathaway Collection, American Film Institute, Louis B. Mayer Library, Hollywood, California; and Henry Hathaway interview by James V. D'Arc, 9 July 1983, Los Angeles, California, in author's possession.

³⁷As quoted in G. Homer Durham to James D'Arc, 28 September 1979, letter in author's possession. Durham, at the time of writing the letter, was managing director of the Church Historical Department. The Widtsoe Papers remain closed, but Elder Durham quoted the passages dealing with the Bromfield-Widtsoe trip from Widtsoe's diary from April-June 1939.

³⁸See James V. D'Arc, "The Saints on Celluloid: The Making of the Movie *Brigham Young*," *Sunstone* 1 (Fall 1976): 11–28, for a production history of the film.

³⁹See Mary Astor, *A Life on Film* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971), 147. The Twentieth Century-Fox publicity department also chose, in addition to adding "Frontiersman" to the title, to attract Eastern audiences to the film by dealing with their perceived preoccupation with Brigham Young's many wives. It also favorably compared *Brigham Young* with other well-known western epic films *The Covered Wagon* (1923), *The Iron Horse* (1924), and *Cimarron* (1930), the only western film to receive an Academy Award. The advertising mat illustrated here is from a studio-generated "campaign manual" or pressbook sent to newspaper editors and theatre owners. These "camera ready" advertising mats were then used in local newspapers to advertise the film. This advertisement appeared in the *New York Times*.

⁴⁰*Time* 37 (7 October 1940): 63.

⁴¹"High L.D.S. Officials Preview 'Brigham Young'," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 August 1940, 8.

⁴²*Los Angeles Times*, 21 August 1940. In Mary Astor, Scrapbook, Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Mary Astor Scrapbook).

⁴³*Los Angeles Examiner*, 21 August 1940, Mary Astor Scrapbook.

⁴⁴Virginia Wright, *Los Angeles Daily News*, n.d., Mary Astor Scrapbook.

⁴⁵Bosley Crowther, *New York Times*, 21 September 1940, Mary Astor Scrapbook. Crowther expanded on his desire to see more polygamy in *Brigham Young* when he wrote a feature article on historical films. He admitted that there was an almost inherent dilemma in such motion pictures, for "when a picture does strive to make a more adult point [beyond textbook platitudes], the effort is likely to lead to a dissipation of dramatic values. . . . A shade less Brigham and a shade more Brigham would have made for a livelier picture." Crowther admired the efforts made by the producers of *The Howards of Virginia* (Columbia, 1940) and *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* (RKO, 1940), but was disappointed with *Brigham Young* and *Gone with the Wind* (Selznick-MGM, 1939) (see Bosley Crowther, "The American Ideal: How Profound Is the Effect of Filmed History on the Popular Mind?" *New York Times*, 29 September 1940, sec. 10, p. 3).

⁴⁶Review, *New York City Film Daily*, 27 August 1940, Mary Astor Scrapbook.

⁴⁷Review, *Silver Screen*, November 1940, 98, Mary Astor Scrapbook.

⁴⁸*Time* 37 (7 October 1940): 63; *Newsweek* 18 (23 September 1940): 151; *Life* 9 (23 September 1940): 59.

⁴⁹"Kate Smith's Radio Tieups for 'Rockne' and 'Brigham Young,'" *Variety*, 11 September 1940.

⁵⁰A sizable portion of the highly publicized budget of two-and-a-half-million dollars for *Brigham Young* went to advertising to "compensate for the loss of numerous foreign markets by pulling greater attendance in this country," as noted in "Advertising News & Notes," *New York Times*, 20 April 1940, 22. However, in the spring of 1941 the film was released in England. It was initially feared by the British Board of Film Censors that it might be "pro-Mormon propaganda," but it ultimately passed with few cuts and received essentially favorable reviews (James C. Robertson, *The British Board of Film Censors: Film Censorship in Britain, 1896–1950* [London: Croom Helm, 1985]: 76); also "Mormon Trek Impresses British: Screen Story of Brigham Young Is Cause for Commend in English Press," *Deseret News*, 10 May 1941. As of 15 May 1940, the following areas were totally "frozen" out of film distribution: Japan, Korea, France, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Manchukuo. Those "50% frozen" were England, Scotland, and Australia. Partially frozen, interpreted to mean very little, if any, distribution: Germany, Poland, and Rumania. Most of Africa, Saudi Arabia, Iran, India, Afghanistan, and China were unrestricted. The trade paper cautioned exhibitors, however, that where Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg were

concerned "overnight events make the situation doubtful [for continued distribution to those areas]" ("Restricted Film Markets Chart," *Variety*, 15 May 1940, 8). Foreign markets accounted for up to 35 or 40 percent of a given film's total gross income.

⁵¹*Variety*, 11 September 1940, 8; 18 September 1940; 2 October 1940, 11; 25 September 1940, 10, 11.

⁵²*Variety*, 2 October 1940, 9; 25 September 1940, 10.

⁵³*Variety*, 25 September 1940, 9, 10; 2 October 1940, 9; 18 September 1940, 11.

⁵⁴"*Brigham Young—Frontiersman* was one Tyrone Power epic which flopped, much to Zanuck's disappointment" (Aubrey Solomon, "A Corporate and Financial History of the 20th Century-Fox Studio" [Beverly Hills, Calif.: American Film Institute Center for Advanced Film Studies, 1975], 78–79). Tony Thomas and Aubrey Solomon, *The Films of Twentieth Century-Fox: A Pictorial History* (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1979), 18; Dennis Belfonte with Alvin H. Marill, *The Films of Tyrone Power* (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1980), 20.

⁵⁵Maynard Smith, "A Survey of the Screenplays Written by Lamar Trotti with Emphasis on Their Acceptance by Professional and Non-Professional Groups" (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1953), 265. Smith recorded that he had access to the financial statements of Twentieth Century-Fox and the company's treasurer, Fred L. Metzler. Total receipts for *Brigham Young*: \$4,294,500, against a cost of \$1,485,050.17, that more than paid expenses of production and distribution. Smith, in a telephone interview with the author on 10 June 1986, confirmed that he had personally seen the financial records at the behest of Mr. Trotti and with the cooperation of Mr. Metzler. Press claims, and even studio press releases, consistently maintained that the budget was \$2,500,000, but in view of studio budget sheets, such figures were another example of the studio's overworked publicity department.

⁵⁶Fred Johnson, "A Mormon Eyes 'Brigham Young'," *San Francisco Call-Bulletin*, 5 October 1940, Mary Astor Scrapbook.

⁵⁷Lamar Trotti, from the story by Louis Bromfield, "Brigham Young" unpublished screenplay (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, n.d., but probably 13 April 1940 shooting final), 44.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 50.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 88.

⁶⁰Heber J. Grant, "Gratitude for Faith of People," in Conference Report, October 1940, 96. Added emphasis was given to President Grant's concern as this address was reprinted on the "Editor's Page" of the Church's official magazine, the *Improvement Era* 43 (November 1940): 654.

⁶¹Frank W. Fox, *J. Reuben Clark: The Public Years* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press and Deseret Book Co., 1980), 443.

⁶²Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 308.

⁶³Dennis Leo Lythgoe, "The Changing Image of Mormonism in Periodical Literature" (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1969), 177–86, covers the treatment of the Church welfare program in national publications. See also Richard O. Cowan, "Gentile Attitudes towards Mormons, 1890–1947" (Master's thesis, University of Wyoming, 1960). For a Mormon perspective on the Church welfare plan and the Church operations during the 1930s, see James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976), 515–34; and Leonard J. Arrington and Wayne K. Hinton, "Origin of the Mormon Welfare Plan," *Brigham Young University Studies* 5 (Winter 1964): 67–85. For a critical evaluation from a non-Mormon perspective, see Robert Gottlieb and Peter Wiley, *America's Saints: The Rise of Mormon Power* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1984), 70–71, and John Heinerman and Anson Shupe, *The Mormon Corporate Empire* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 180–95.

⁶⁴*American Weekly*, 16 June–1 September 1940.

⁶⁵Heber J. Grant to Kenneth Macgowan, 30 August 1939, Macgowan Collection.

⁶⁶John A. Widtsoe to Kenneth Macgowan, 13 November 1939, Macgowan Collection.

⁶⁷In proposing this treatment, Bromfield admitted that this would be historically inaccurate but declared, "but the Church officials [who would have been President Grant and Elder Widtsoe primarily] are in favor of adapting history and putting it in here" (Louis Bromfield with the collaboration of Eleanor Harris and James Woolley, *Brigham Young*, 26 July 1939, Treatment, 148).

⁶⁸Reported by Thomas Brady, "Profits vs. Prestige," *New York Times*, 28 July 1940, sec. 9, p. 3.

⁶⁹Eleanor Harris v. Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, Deposition of Lamar Trotti, 20 August 1941, Beverly Hills, California, 14 (emphasis added).

⁷⁰Eleanor Harris v. Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, Deposition of Louis Bromfield, 29 August 1940, as quoted in Deposition of Louis Bromfield, 23 October 1941, New York, 2. Harris lost her suit, which sought equal credit with Bromfield for the film's story rather than the "Story Research" credit given her by the studio on the film's release prints (see Eleanor Harris v. Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, Civil 10–221, 2 January 1942, decision rendered by Henry W. Goddard, District Judge, United States District Court Southern District of New York).

⁷¹Eleanor Harris v. Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, Deposition of Darryl F. Zanuck, 19 August 1941, Beverly Hills, California, 23–24.

⁷²M. R. Werner, "Brigham Young Seen as Screen Material," *New York Herald Tribune*, 15 September 1940, sec. 6, p. 10.

⁷³Vardis Fisher to Elizabeth Nowell, 5 June 1939, typescript copy in Fox Archives. Zanuck did not retain Fisher (even in an anonymous capacity) because "Louis Bromfield has been spending a great deal of time with President Grant, the present head of the Mormon Church, and the Mormon Church has already supplied us with several technical advisors that they feel will do a good job for us and I cannot, at this late date, start bringing in another one" (Darryl F. Zanuck to Julian Johnson, Memorandum, 8 June 1939, Fox Archives).

⁷⁴Morrison Brown, *Louis Bromfield and His Books* (Fair Lawn, N.J.: Essential Books, 1957), 90. Prior to the film's release, Bromfield remarked to a reporter, "I just couldn't resist having a chance to say my say about old Brigham Young who, in my mind, was one of the most heroic of American figures" (Grace Wilcox, "Nothing Grew Except Courage," *Detroit Free-Press*, 4 August 1940).

⁷⁵Alma Rothe, ed., *Current Biography 1944* (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1945), 68. The response by other Hollywood studios to the growing awareness of fascism both foreign and domestic is discussed in Peter Roffman and Jim Purdy, *The Hollywood Social Problem Film* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 200–223.

⁷⁶Eleanor Harris to Kenneth Macgowan, Memorandum, 30 March 1938, Fox Archives.

⁷⁷Leonard Mosely, *Zanuck: The Rise and Fall of Hollywood's Last Tycoon* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1948), 140–41. See also Tom Stempel, *Screen Writer: Nunnally Johnson* (San Diego: A. S. Barnes, 1980), 47–50.

⁷⁸*Brigham Young*, "Memorandum of Discussion with Mr. Zanuck," 22 March 1939, 1, Fox Archives.

⁷⁹Lamar Trotti was responsible for many successful films for Twentieth Century-Fox, whether working in collaboration or alone. His impressive credits include *In Old Chicago* (1938), *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939), *The Ox-Bow Incident* (also as coproducer, 1943), and *The Razor's Edge* (1946). Maynard Smith's 1953 master's thesis is the only extensive study of Trotti and his film works; see also Maynard Terebo Smith, "Lamar Trotti," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, ed. Randall Clark, in vol. 44 of *American Screenwriters* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1986), 392–99.

⁸⁰Trotti, "Brigham Young," 26–27.

⁸¹"*Brigham Young* Hit Film of Adventure," *San Francisco Call Bulletin*, 27 September 1940.

⁸²"Mormon Epic Fills Vast Canvas in *Brigham Young*," *Los Angeles Times*, n.d., Mary Astor Scrapbook.

⁸³*Motion Picture Reviews* 15 (September 1940): 3.

⁸⁴Dallin H. Oaks and Marvin S. Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy: The Trial of the Accused Assassins of Joseph Smith* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 210, 214.

⁸⁵William H. Marnell, *The First Amendment: The History of Religious Freedom in America* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964), 149. "The limitation imposed by the First Amendment admits of little debate and has occasioned none. Congress has never shown the slightest inclination to establish a religion. The limitation imposed by the Fourteenth Amendment admits of endless debate and has come close to eliciting such. The question of applicability to specific situations depends on how the Supreme Court justices currently interpret the generalized phrases of an amendment couched in terms to invite dispute" (150).

⁸⁶Kenneth McCaleb, "*Brigham Young*," *New York Mirror*, 15 September 1940, 14. McCaleb is alluding to a series of cases beginning with *Lovell v. Griffin* (1938), in which the courts struck down local laws prohibiting the distribution of Jehovah's Witnesses literature.

⁸⁷Zanuck's production of *A Yank in the R.A.F.*, released in September 1941, portrayed Tyrone Power as an American flyer and also sympathetic participant in Britain's fight against the Germans. The story was also written by Zanuck under his pseudonym Melville Crossman. Significantly, the film's preparation, production, and release occurred well before America's formal entry into the war, and earned from *Newsweek* a slap for prowar propaganda: "From the isolationist point of view, this production that was photographed here and in England with the cooperation and approval of Lord Beaverbrook, British Air Minister, the R.A.F., and the United States and Canadian Governments, is supercharged with propaganda" (*Newsweek* 19 [6 October 1941]: 60). For Zanuck's interventionist sentiments prior to World War II, involving the Spanish Civil War, see Russell Campbell, "The Ideology of the Social Consciousness Movie: Three Films of Darryl F. Zanuck," *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 3 (Winter 1978): 51.

Bread and Water

for Bob Keeler

It sounds like a meal for prisoners,
for the condemned
gathered to share their last supper again.
No one to cater,
served by the youngest and rawest of trusties,
we eat the repast
rehearsing rituals of sweathouse and bath;
facing another six days under sentence of death.

We share the lone swallow and bite
as wards of the Church,
surviving another week's seizure and search,
purging our throats,
scrubbing the skin of the fruit from our teeth
with water in thimbles, and bread
broken like flayed, public flesh
of a prisoner culled by a crowd's holiday breath.

From the refectory, down the barred passage,
we file to our cells
to sleep with the feast, to wake for the walls
of commerce, our crassness.
The water, percolating through earth,
recharges our aquifers;
the bread, still sweet in the fasting mouth,
we hold as our manna until the next sabbath.

—Dennis Clark

Dennis Clark is a poet living in Orem, Utah.

Humanity and Practical Christianity: Implications for a Worldwide Church

James R. Christianson

When I graduated from Brigham Young University in 1957, Mormonism was and had been for many years primarily a religion of the Wasatch Front and surrounding areas. Today Latter-day Saints go into the world, and the Church they represent has expanded well beyond the United States and Europe and is reaching into Asia, Latin America, and Africa for its membership.

During the last twenty years, as this demographic shift from the West to the rest of the globe occurred, Latter-day Saints applauded and took pride in the growth revealed by annual statistical reports. Generally speaking, however, we have not fully comprehended the manifold implications and responsibility that such success brings to the Church and to us as individuals. As we increasingly rub shoulders with people of cultures unlike our own, we have a unique opportunity to become intimately aware not only of obvious differences but of significant similarities as well. Some of us discover with surprise the strength of the bond our common humanity creates between us. We recognize in new acquaintances a brother, a sister, one to whom we belong.

As fellow members of God's family, what should be our relationship with his mortal children with whom we share this planet? I have puzzled over this question repeatedly during the last few years and am embarrassed by my own shortcomings in becoming the quality citizen, brother, and friend I came here to be.

The importance of our successfully confronting this reality was suggested at the time of man's beginnings when Deity proclaimed, "We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell; and we will prove them herewith [that is, with being mortal] to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abr. 3:24). God created our bodies and the earth to test us with everything that being mortal implies, to have us go on from there to do all else that he commands. Whether we do well, whether we are prepared to fulfill every requirement,

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will, in large measure, be determined by our success in coping with our mortality. Are we prepared to come to grips with this, our humanness? For many of us, this merely implies a positive confrontation with such basic opposites as jealousy and understanding, greed and giving, caring and unkindness, hatred and love, temper and patience. It concerns how we handle the way we look, feel, and act; how we develop our physical, mental, social, and spiritual selves.

For some, to be human means being short, medium, or tall; heavy, slight, or of average build. It concerns the straightness of one's teeth, the clarity of one's complexion, and the color of one's eyes, skin, or hair. It also involves how we manage these things in our own lives and how we view them in the lives of others. Yet even as important as these aspects of the mortal experience are, they do not penetrate to the heart of this vital issue. Of much greater significance in grappling with the meaning of our human existence is the need for each individual to understand and define his or her role as a thoughtful and self-conscious member of the family of man. In this sense we are always human beings first and Latter-day Saints second. Simply stated, being a decent human being is a prerequisite to being a decent Latter-day Saint.

OVERCOMING PREJUDICE

It is with these thoughts in mind that I recall the late summer of 1962, when, as a young graduate student with a newly awarded master's diploma buoying up my courage and determination, I left Utah in search of a Ph.D. in history and anthropology at a respected state university. I had served nearly three years as a missionary in Switzerland and Austria, had been a seminary instructor and principal for five years, was married with two children, and yet I was as thoroughly prejudiced as anyone raised in the closed environment of a small western community could be. I had never shaken the hand of nor conversed with a black person. I called the Indian my brother but had made no effort to understand or appreciate him. I viewed non-Mormons with suspicion and regarded all science that conflicted with my views of orthodox religion as mere fiction, its proponents either deluded, dishonest, or both. With all of this armor in place, I entered the world of gentile academia, determined to conquer and convert. Four years later, my head was both bloodied and bowed, and from time to time, as needed, the lessons of those years have been repeated.

In the midst of that painful growing experience, I acquired much needed wisdom that helped place some things in perspective.

I came to understand that there is more to the spectrum of life than an uncompromising black or white; there are indeed shades of gray meriting honest consideration, if not always acceptance. I did not have all the questions, let alone all the answers. This view was brought sharply into focus by a five-year-old Indian boy who lived two houses down the street and was the adopted son of a Baptist minister. He was a regular visitor in our home, and in that totally white environment he would often begin singing, "Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight. . . ." This oft-repeated rendition penetrated my mind and touched my heart. I was impressed not only by the words the boy sang but also by the tone of his voice and the look on his face as he expressed them. What he was really saying was that he hoped they were true.

His anxiety was shared by many of the students we came to know and love at Haskell Indian Institute, where I worked part-time for the next three years. The identity crisis they often faced was explained by one young man who recalled watching a western on television as a little boy. He was totally immersed in the story and was shouting with irrepressible joy as the cavalry charged and successfully destroyed a band of Indians, when his older brother burst into the room, switched off the television, and shouted at him, "Don't you know we are the bad guys?" He realized then, for the first time, that he was not just Tom, but Tom, an Indian. Even though the Indian wars are long ended, there are still many tragic moments in the lives of these earliest of Americans as they search for their place in a country where, as de Tocqueville noted more than a hundred and fifty years ago, their race constitutes "a little colony of troublesome strangers in the midst of a numerous and dominant people."¹

The impressions of those years spent teaching, serving, sharing with, and, above all, learning from these young descendants of Lehi, whose origins were nearly as varied as there are numbers of tribes in North America, are focused in a single image. I can still see the young man who, after years of struggling to comprehend and accept the Anglo culture he was about to enter following college graduation, held his head in his hands and, rocking back and forth, sobbed, "The white man does not understand the Indian; he just does not understand!"

I am not sure that I understand, even yet. But I do know that as the experiences of those years unfolded and I learned to go beyond racial and denominational labels, I discovered that the world is full of thoroughly authentic, dedicated, intelligent people

who are as genuine in their capacity to give and receive as we are in ours.

Between 1962 and 1966 a good deal of racial turmoil erupted in some areas of the country. In the university community of Lawrence, Kansas, the topic provoked heated debate, while throughout the South the issue exploded in force and violence. In Lawrence, a border town in a border state, I often heard the condescending remark, "Our blacks are good; they know their place." In areas where black Americans were unrelentingly insisting on their right to exist as human beings, the militant counter-demand was "put them in their place."

In the midst of this turmoil, one of our fellow students, a bright, attractive young Latter-day Saint from Idaho, became so disgusted with what he saw as the brutalizing of the human spirit in such places as Selma, Jackson, and Tuscaloosa that he left school, a scholarship, and, as we thought, a future of great promise to join with those who were marching, protesting, and sometimes dying. Our reaction in the safe little Mormon community at the university was one of abhorrence and disbelief. In our sorrow for the one "lost," we cast about for an explanation and rationalized that we had not really known him, that the pressures of school had rendered him irresponsible. Whatever his reasons, we agreed that he was wasting his life in a vain effort.

As I think about it today, I wonder, as I have done for years: Where was I? Why did I not join him? Where were we all when humanity demanded that we oppose a thing so wicked that to read about it today or to see it depicted on the screen causes deep anguish and revulsion at the inhumanity of man toward his brother? I would like to think I just lacked courage in not joining Rick on his journey into the South. I could even accept my decision had it been nourished by a commitment to family and education. But it wasn't. What I have to accept and live with is that, at the time, I, like many others, simply did not care.

THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH

During these and subsequent years spent in the southern United States and Europe, I also became increasingly conscious of an additional area of concern posing a critical challenge to Latter-day Saints: our capacity to respect and appreciate the spiritual authenticity of other Christian and non-Christian worship characterized by an earnest search for truth. When we were living in Florida, a Jewish family lived across the road from us, Episcopalians next door, and a nondenominational minister who preached

a saved religion three houses down the street. What great people! Their sheer goodness, their commitment, their love of God and truth in some ways exceeded our own. None of them joined the Church; none was interested. But they came to love us and we to love them, and we grew in our awareness that Christ truly loves us all. When they did not submit to baptism, he did not cease caring for them. Surely the genuineness of their lives pleased him. And if that were so for these three families, then certainly for the thousands and ten times ten thousand like them.

Given the general prejudice many of us have against non-Mormon religions, is it possible we may have misread the intent and content of the Lord's statement to the boy Joseph Smith? Rather than saying or implying that *no* truth could be found among all the churches, was he not declaring that not *all* truth and, perhaps even more importantly, that no priesthood authority was available, hence the abominable nature of their creeds and the human foundation of their dogmas? Believing that all are wrong in a total and irreconcilable sense has led some to a general condemnation of other professors of religion and hindered the development of a genuine Christian brotherhood with them. They claim our attention only if they are willing to listen, and our continued interest in them is often too exclusively conditioned upon their acceptance of our message.

True, ours is a celestial doctrine, and our time, talents, and resources are committed to declaring, living, and defending it. Our goal is to build a kingdom to house those of celestial intent and to see them through mortality back into the presence of God. But what of that vast sea of faces representing the good, the noble, the honorable men and women of the earth whose spiritual interests have been diverted from celestial goals but who have loved and worshipped Christ? What of those who have found not Christ, but truth, and, abbreviated though it may be, have pursued it to the limits of their opportunities and their capacities?

We have our prophets and apostles, our bishops and presidents. But who is tending and teaching that great flock? Are there not those, unknown to us and perhaps even to themselves, who have been called, inspired, or chosen to touch and direct lives and in some cases to influence the courses of nations? Who are they? We don't know. In all likelihood, they themselves are not aware except as they believe they are in the service of truth. Their existence historically is attested to by a First Presidency statement issued in February 1978. Titled "God's Love for All Mankind," it affirms the brotherhood of all men both in the flesh and in the spirit and goes on to declare:

The great religious leaders of the world such as Mohammed, Confucius, and the Reformers, as well as philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and others, received a portion of God's light. Moral truths were given them by God to enlighten whole nations and to bring a higher level of understanding to individuals.

The Hebrew prophets prepared the way for the coming of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, who should provide salvation for all mankind who believed in the gospel. Consistent with these truths, we believe that God has given and will give to all peoples sufficient knowledge to help them on their way to eternal salvation, either in this life or in the life to come.²

Brigham Young also recognized the singular contribution of the reformers, among them Wesley, Whitfield, Luther, Knox, and Zwingli. He noted that though they did not have a fullness of the gospel, "they were not deprived of a portion of the Spirit of the Living God on that account. It is a very great error for us to suppose that men throughout the world have not been under an influence of that kind more or less."³

Whoever they are today, they merit, if not our support, then surely our understanding and tolerance. We struggle at times with the reluctance, even the refusal, of some spiritual leaders to listen to our message. We bristle at their attacks and are angered by their seemingly unjust criticism. We fault their message both as delivered and as received, and decry the absence of priesthood authority, temple ordinances, and an understanding of eternal progression. In our minds, such phrases as "I am saved," "born-again Christian," and "There is no God but Allah" are an affront to God and true religion.

But have we, perhaps, misunderstood their terminology and teachings, as they most certainly have misunderstood ours? Perhaps their language is terrestrial while ours is celestial; hence our inability to communicate. They see no need for baptism by authority, living prophets, continuous revelation, or a plan of salvation. Whereas theirs is a doctrine characteristic of the terrestrial kingdom, not requiring the saving ordinances, ours is of the celestial kingdom, which does. Fortunately, the terrestrial religious experiences of many lead them to a level of thought and desire fostering susceptibility to the higher, more perfect doctrines of the Restoration. Some of our number and the ancestors of all the rest of us made this transition; with the harvest still before us, countless others will yet do the same.

Obviously, today's world is telestial, as it will be for many years in the future. There is, however, considerable good out there that is non-Mormon, and much of it non-Christian. Our willingness to acknowledge and appreciate this good may well determine our

success in influencing others toward a destiny befitting a receptive son or daughter of God.

A PARABLE OF THE POOR

Several months ago I stood in line at the checkout counter of a local grocery store. Ahead of me, a man and his two children were paying for a few basic articles but did not have enough money. What should they return? The items were all essentials. There could hardly be a doubt that every cent the man possessed was laid out on the counter. A final, painful decision was made; an article was handed back to the clerk, and the man pocketed a few pennies of change. Then, in his ill-matched and ill-fitting clothes, with his ragged temple garments showing through the thin fabric of his shirt, he made his way to a battered old car in obvious need of major repair. There he joined the mother and three or four other children. Momentarily stunned and embarrassed by the experience, I did nothing. By the time I had paid for my purchases and hurried out, hoping to see which way they went, the family was gone. I frantically drove around my neighborhood looking for them until it dawned on me that they weren't there. They didn't belong there. They couldn't possibly afford it.

On the way home that afternoon and all the next day—and even today, whenever I think about it—I was and am angry, sad, and ashamed. How could such a situation exist in Provo, Utah? Where were their bishop, their home teachers, their neighbors? But more importantly, where was I? Why had I not stepped forward immediately in the store? Why was I paralyzed at a time when time was of the essence if they were to be helped? Why had I not followed them to find out who they were so I could arrange for their needs?

On another occasion in the same store, I fidgeted impatiently behind some people who had a large cart filled with groceries. When finally tallied, the bill was high and was paid with food stamps. I watched with unconcealed resentment as the heavily-laden cart was pushed to a reasonably nice car and unloaded by a well-dressed lady and her daughter who then drove away.

At about the same time, the media were devoting considerable time and space to the plight of distant peoples ravaged by drought, crop failure, and the loss of their homes. We all witnessed the sickening condition of countless people as they edged toward death by starvation and disease on a planet where farmers are paid to limit productivity by not planting their crops.

I often review these three experiences and the question of our accountability for the poor of the world. Does it really matter whether they pay with food stamps, or with their own scanty funds, or have neither purchasing power nor food? Does it matter whether they are Christian or non-Christian, Mormon or non-Mormon, people we can see and know or people a world away that we will never meet? Does our responsibility end with a fast offering and other institutional giving? Is our caring limited by the ordinance of baptism? Is a person's belly any less empty or his body any less ravaged by disease or afflicted with pain if he is not a member of the Church? Are we guilty of blindly supposing that *our* poor are the unfortunate few who experience reversals creating temporary needs quickly resolved by an efficient Church program, while *their* poor are the masses of hopeless, helpless souls an undefined somebody else will take care of?

Of the three examples I cited, I am sure your heart, like mine, went out to the brother and his children in the grocery store. His poverty was lamentable but reconcilable. He was probably a student, and, though destitute, not without hope. His future is still ahead of him. Perhaps one day he will look back and remember and talk of the old days and the hard times. Fortunately, since we like our needy to be discreet, his clothing and car were befitting one who is appropriately and humbly poor, and he had the good taste not to betray our sympathies by using food stamps to obtain his purchases.

The second instance is more likely to generate hostility toward the undeserving poor as we observe the mythical heavily-laden grocery cart, the clothes and car better than our own, and the dreaded food stamps. How dare people pass themselves off as poor and not wear the rags and pay the price of humility? Yet who would wish to be in their situation? What courage it must take to be unacceptably or inconveniently poor.

Of the final example, those hungry, hopeless faces, those distended stomachs and thin lifeless arms and legs: how easy it is to be both horrified and strangely consoled by their very numbers and their remoteness. Surely, we think, with a tragedy of this magnitude, someone will take care of it—the government, or the U.N., or the Red Cross. If it is vital for us to be involved, the Church will make the necessary arrangements and invite us, perhaps, to make some small sacrifice such as an extra fast day. It is easy to cast all our burden of caring for our neighbor onto the Church, forgetting that it was not the Church but individuals—you and I—who were crowned with mortality in order to prove ourselves. Obviously, the Church cannot do everything, and where it does not act because it should not, you and I, as private individuals, can still

be involved as concerned, compassionate Christians. God help us not to be so concerned with being right that we have no time or inclination for being good. The world is full of sickness that cannot be healed until we begin to care about others, not just “our own” but all people; until we realize that they are all our own.

To the person who wishes to look, the scriptures are replete with clear admonitions defining our responsibilities to the poor. They make plain why some are blessed with abundance and also define the stewardship that is an inherent adjunct to the accumulation of material wealth. In January 1831, the Lord unfolded to Joseph Smith a mystery that was to prevent his destruction and enable his people to “escape the power of the enemy” and “be gathered unto me a righteous people without spot or blemish” (D&C 38:13, 31).

Acknowledging the corruption of all flesh and the prevailing nature of the powers of darkness, a condition “which causeth silence to reign and all eternity is pained,” the Lord revealed to the young prophet, in a most profound statement, the hidden knowledge that, if properly understood and acted upon, would dispell the corruption and dissipate the darkness. He declared, “The rich I have made, and all flesh is mine, and I am no respecter of persons” (D&C 38:11–12, 16). The Lord then elucidates this remarkable declaration in the following parable: “For what man among you having twelve sons, and is no respecter of them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one: Be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other: Be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there—and looketh upon his sons and saith I am just?” (D&C 38:26). This question asked by the parable is rendered even more astounding by the subsequent declaration: “Behold, this I have given unto you as a parable, and it is even as I am” (D&C 38:27). Naturally, a question arises as to how God can be just and no respecter of persons when he allows, even determines, the rags of one and the riches of another. But the admonitions preceding and following the parable dissolve this apparent inconsistency: “Let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me. And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself” (D&C 38:24). “I say unto you, be one; and if you are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27).

The mystery Joseph Smith and his followers were now privy to was the understanding that their own and the Kingdom’s welfare rested in part on the ability of all Latter-day Saints who were granted an abundance to develop a Christlike nature that would lead them to reach out to those of God’s children clothed in rags, not only

blessing the lives of everyone they helped but also being greatly enriched themselves. If divine justice permits economic inequality among men, then it must be that neither rich nor poor can reach their full potential without one another.

An expert on the poor, Mother Teresa, noted: "The poor are hope. By their courage they truly represent the hope of the world. They have taught us a different way of loving God by making us do our utmost to help them."⁴ What she seems to be telling us is that there is a genuine, essential, and perhaps even necessary level on which we can approach and serve God through active concern with the needs of the world's poor.

The need for man to learn both to give and to receive appropriately is highlighted in ancient as well as modern scripture. The prophet Jacob, when told to "get thou up into the temple on the morrow, and declare the word which I shall give thee unto this people" (Jacob 2:11), accused the wealthy of being "lifted up in the pride of your hearts," of wearing "stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel," and of persecuting "your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they" (Jacob 2:13). Such things, he declared, God would not countenance. He pled with them to repent, lest "this pride of your hearts destroy your souls" (Jacob 2:16). In a plea reminiscent of that preceding and following the parable of the man with twelve sons, Jacob admonished his people to "think of your brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all and free with your substance" (Jacob 2:17). He encouraged them to seek first the Kingdom of God, and then, if riches followed, they were to "seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted" (Jacob 2:19).

That such an ideal is achievable is illustrated by an account the Book of Mormon prophet Alma gave of his own people:

And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy and the sick, and the afflicted; and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely.

And thus they did establish the affairs of the church; and thus they began to have continual peace again, notwithstanding all their persecutions.

And now, because of the steadiness of the church they began to be exceedingly rich, having abundance of all things whatsoever they stood in need—an abundance of flocks and herds, and fatlings of every kind, and also abundance of grain, and of gold, and of silver, and of precious things, and abundance of silk and fine-twined linen, and all manner of good homely cloth.

And thus, in their prosperous circumstances, they did not send away any who were naked or that were hungry or that were athirst, or that were sick, or that had not been nourished; and they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need. (Alma 1:27–30)

These and many other references teach us that one of mankind's most serious transgressions is not the coveting of another's possessions, but the coveting of one's own abundance. Such was the plight of the rich young man who came to Jesus for guidance. When the Savior instructed him to "sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me" (Luke 18:22), he was grieved because he loved his many possessions. Those of us who are the object of the Lord's admonition in Doctrine and Covenants 55:16 and of King Benjamin's plea in Mosiah 4:21–23 share the rich young man's plight.

In Mosiah, we read of the serious error so often committed by those whose judgments lash the backs of the poor who petition them in their need. In this they are doubly guilty: first, because they do not quietly seek the needy out instead of forcing them to risk humiliation by public supplication; and second, because they are looking down, passing judgment on a situation for which they possess a poverty of empathy. If they only understood, they would look up and be flooded with compassion in recognizing that, as King Benjamin declared, in our relationship with Christ we are the worst of beggars but are never treated as such.

THE CHALLENGE OF HUMANNESS

As part of the challenge inherent in our humanness, may we see ourselves as numbered with those who are the shepherds of this planet. In directing us to be our brothers' keepers, to do "unto one of the least of these" (Matt. 25:40), to "remember the poor" (D&C 42:30), and to "think of your brethren like unto yourselves" (Jacob 2:17), the Savior assigns us stewardships—as much because we are members of the human family as because of our membership in his Church. As followers of him who loved and loves us all, we must avoid being part of the world's problems. As we strive for this, however, we cannot forget that we alone provide those problems' ultimate solution. For this reason, we should go eagerly and joyously into the world, recognizing that we cannot be the leaven if we are not part of the loaf.

To more fully accomplish this, we must all succumb to the awareness that brotherhood is not defined by color, creed, or secular commitment. Nor is it superficially lyrical or romantic, but is an expression of actual fact. All of mankind, the non-Mormon Christian or non-Christian, the one-billionth Chinese, and the disease-ravaged beggar on a filthy street corner in India are our brothers and sisters, and each has claim on our love, our substance, and the reassuring grasp of our hand. If we fail to recognize and yield to this principle, our approach to true and meaningful worship is diminished, being exclusive rather than inclusive, and we falter in our attempt to do well all else that God commands.

The main gateway to Brigham Young University bears a motto that declares, "The World Is Our Campus." May I add that even more than that, for all of us as Latter-day Saints the world is our home and its people are our people. Their needs are our needs; their pain our pain. May our view of life be as broad and deep as his who wept and suffered and died for all mankind. This is the gospel of Christ: to become as he admonished us to be, even as he is.

NOTES

¹Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Henry Reeves, 2 vols. (New York: Colonial Press, 1900), 1:448.

²"God's Love for All Mankind," Statement of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 15 February 1978.

³Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 25:263.

⁴Georges Gorrée and Jean Barbier, *The Love of Christ: Spiritual Counsels—Mother Teresa of Calcutta* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), 23.

Early British Christianity

C. Wilfred Griggs

Inasmuch as Jesus told his disciples to go into all nations and make disciples through preaching and baptism (Matt. 28:19–20), it is obvious that the limited picture of the growth of the early Church drawn in the book of Acts does not portray the complete fulfillment of that commandment. Even the full title appended to many early manuscripts of that writing—“Acts of the Apostles”—is misleading since the first half of Acts emphasizes the ministry of the Apostles Peter and John, while the last half is devoted entirely to Paul. Geographically, the Church is portrayed in Acts as moving from Jerusalem northward to Antioch and westward through Asia Minor to Greece and Rome, culminating in Paul’s arrival in the capital city to appeal his case in the court of Caesar. Two questions arise both from Luke’s observable selectivity in his account and from the equally observable omission of other presumably available material: what were the other Apostles doing to fulfill Jesus’ commandment to preach in all nations, and in which countries was the Christian faith most successfully established? Of related interest would be information concerning particular obstacles that Christian missionaries faced in different countries, such as the intellectual and moral challenges Paul faced in Athens and Corinth, or the Judaizing problems that occurred especially in Galatia.

Some may be skeptical that reliable information relating to these questions can be found, perhaps even feeling that if there were materials available they would already have been included in the Bible or at least widely known. In point of fact, however, such materials as are available are not widely known outside scholarly circles. In addition to a few lists of apostolic missions, such as the partial one found in Eusebius,¹ the best-known sources are apocryphal texts, such as the *Acts of Thomas*, but neither of these sources enjoys a good reputation for authenticity among scholars. Although I will not treat these legends in detail, the reader is cautioned not to dismiss them too quickly, for there is growing awareness of historical realities underlying some tales previously

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considered mythical (of which the most famous example is the Homeric *Iliad*). Fortunately for Christian materials generally discounted as legendary, there often are other resources available that bear on the subject. Embedded in patristic texts are numerous gems relating to the early spread and history of the church in diverse parts of the Roman Empire. Additionally, archaeological artifacts often provide surprising evidence for a more widespread dispersion of the Christian faith at an earlier time than might be expected. In this essay, I will treat one example of the spread of Christianity in the Roman world, namely, the evidence for early British Christianity.

Before turning to the advent of the Christian church into Britain, however, one should consider briefly the Romanization of Britain in order to establish the conditions of travel and language which early missionaries would face in proselyting there. The first invasion of Britain by Romans was led by Julius Caesar, who made two successive forays across the channel from his headquarters in Gaul in 55 and 54 B.C. While these military exploits did not result immediately in permanent occupation or the establishment of formal relationships between Britain and Rome (Caesar did take hostages and assign taxes, but there is no evidence of follow-through on an official or regular basis), the initial contact had been made that would lead in time to plans for a full-scale invasion and occupation of the island. Before the well-known conquest of Britain by Claudius in A.D. 43, each culture increased in awareness of and contact with the other. Wine jars, high quality pottery, furniture, glass, metal wares, and ivory are among the items that made their way from Roman businessmen into Britain in the century between Caesar and Claudius. In addition to giving a more detailed description of Britain than could have been acquired from Caesar's limited travels there, Strabo lists the following products of the island: grain, cattle, gold, silver, iron, animal hides, slaves, and hunting dogs.² All the preceding are included among the exports to Rome and her subjects. Strabo further notes that in the time of Augustus many British chieftains had succeeded by their friendship and agreements in making Britain virtually Roman property, even without a military invasion.³ Beyond the wares typical of a thriving import-export business, I. A. Richmond mentions two items of notable interest found in the Essex area and dating from the first century A.D.:

Amid the burnt remains of a princely cremation at Lexden, near Colchester, was found a carefully mounted medallion of Augustus, which had been cast on to the pyre with other particularly valued possessions of the dead nobleman. The mounting is Roman, and the

whole object is evidently a special present from the Roman world and of official import, precisely comparable with the portrait of King or Queen treasured by a paramount chief. No less remarkable is the little portrait bust of the Emperor Gaius (Caligula) from Colchester: nobody valued the memory of this mad and capricious ruler after his death, and the bust acquires meaning only as a contemporary token of regard by a philo-Roman notable at a time when Roman intervention was fully expected.⁴

In addition to the exchange of material goods, Juvenal asserted that “eloquent Gaul has trained British advocates (pleaders of causes),”⁵ showing that at least by the end of the first century A.D. Roman culture had penetrated Britain by way of Gaul.

The Roman invasion of A.D. 43 under the direction of the Emperor Claudius thus formalized what had already been occurring for nearly a century: the subjugation of Britain, both materially and culturally, to the status of a province in the Roman Empire. Although pacification of the island (except a portion of Wales) as far north as Chester was accomplished within a quarter of a century, the most imposing monument to the Romanization of Britain was built from c. A.D. 122 to c. A.D. 128 during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, namely the wall built from Newcastle to Wallsend. The wall makes a physical statement that peace and unity south of Scotland were sufficiently well established by the beginning of the second century to necessitate a barrier against the threat of disruption or intervention from the north.

The purpose for tracing here even in this cursory fashion the early Romanization of Britain relates to a possible suggestion that perhaps Christian missionaries (or converts) were confined to the Roman Empire in their proselyting activities during the first century (or centuries?) of Christianity. Even were one to grant such a suggestion—a point not proven in any way—it does not preclude the introduction of Christianity into Britain at a very early date. Clearly, by the early second century if not before, most of Britain belonged to the world protected by Roman law, custom, and other necessary amenities.

Some legends exist relating to visits to Britain by Paul and also by Joseph of Arimathea (whose staff is said to have taken root at Glastonbury in Somerset), but they are considered without foundation by modern scholars. Paul did indicate a desire to visit Spain in his Epistle to the Romans (15:24), and Clement of Rome stated at the end of the first century A.D. that Paul “was a herald both in the East and in the West; . . . he taught righteousness to all the world, and when he had reached the limits of the West he gave his testimony before the rulers.”⁶ There is

nothing in either source to argue for a British visit, but some disagreement has been voiced about what constituted “the limits of the West.” Without further evidence the matter cannot be decided, and the historicity of such early visits cannot be argued beyond personal feelings and beliefs. There is at present no historical evidence to support or refute the legend surrounding Joseph of Arimathea’s visit to Britain.

The British ecclesiastical historian, the Venerable Bede (c. 673–735), records the arrival of Christianity to Britannia through a certain Lucius, king of the Britons, who wrote to Eleutherus, Pope of Rome in c. A.D. 161, requesting baptism into the Christian faith.⁷ There is no account relating how the king heard of Christianity, and most modern commentators dismiss the entire story as fiction. Lack of evidence prevents further consideration here of the matter.

At the opposite end of the temporal spectrum for the arrival of Christianity in Britain is the position taken by many, including J. R. Green in his *Short History of the English People* (only four volumes long), in which the founding of the Christian faith in England occurs in 597 with the arrival of Augustine from Rome to establish monastic Christianity at Canterbury. If the legends of the early visits from the Apostolic era must be dismissed for lack of evidence, the Augustinian founding must be likewise rejected because of considerable evidence that Christianity was well established in Britain before his time.

If the precise date of the arrival of Christianity in Britain cannot be ascertained, some evidences provide a terminus ad quem for its presence there. Tertullian, writing against the Jews from Carthage in the late second century, gives a list of countries in which Christianity is established, and he includes Britannia: “et Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita” (Places of the British not visited by the Romans are subjected to the true Christ).⁸ Charles Thomas argues that such an assertion “cannot possibly be taken at face value,” since no Church Father in sunny Carthage could know or be concerned with such details in distant borderlands of the Roman Empire.⁹ Tertullian is thus refuted, not by substantive evidence or rational discourse, but by the incredulity of a modern author who cannot accept an ancient testimony if it is out of harmony with his own reconstruction of the past.

A near-contemporary of Tertullian, Origen, likewise makes mention in his writings of the advent of Christianity in the land of Britannia, not so much arguing for it as simply accepting it as an accomplished fact.¹⁰ However unsatisfactory to some, therefore, the literary evidence from Carthage and Alexandria-Caesarea

clearly acknowledges a considerable Christian presence in Britain by c. A.D. 200.

The great persecutions of Christianity in the Roman Empire from the reign of Decius to that of Diocletian would most likely have made martyrs of some Christians in Britain, and the most famous of these is Albanus. Bede's account of St. Alban's martyrdom at Verulamium is taken from earlier records, including those of Constantius (*Life of Germanus*) and perhaps others now unknown, and places that martyrdom—with those of Aaron and Lucias at Chester—in the persecution of Diocletian in 303–11.¹¹ But Thomas argues against the Diocletian setting. He reasons that if one places the martyrdoms in the persecution of Decius (250–51) or that of Valerian (257–59) the loss of names and details would have occurred more naturally in a two-century period than in the shorter time of a century and a half.¹² There is also implied in his argument for the earlier date a more visible Christian presence in Britain by at least the early third century.

Archaeological evidence relating to British Christianity in the third century or earlier is not overwhelming or uncontested, but one noteworthy example appears beyond dispute. In 1868 a word-square, or acrostic, was found “scratched in rustic capitals on a fragment of red wall-plaster from a Roman house at Cirencester (Corinium), reading *Rotas/Opera/Tenet/Arepo/Sator*, and generally translated: ‘The sower Arepo holds the wheels carefully.’”¹³ The discovery that the letters of the acrostic could be formed into a cross composed of *Pater Noster* with an alpha and omega (A and O) before and after each Pater Noster was made in 1926 by Felix Grosser,¹⁴ and Toynbee concludes from an analysis of the evidence relating to this famous discovery that “its appearance on our Roman plaster-fragment would seem to attest, although it cannot absolutely prove, the presence of Christians in the Romano-British city of Corinium in the third, or even in the second century.”¹⁵

During the Diocletianic persecution of the Christians that broke out on 23 February 303, Constantius, who was the reigning Augustus over the areas of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, refused to carry out persecutions against Christians living in his domain although he did allow churches to be destroyed.¹⁶ While there is no way of determining how many of the destroyed churches were in Britain rather than Spain or Gaul, some demolition must have occurred on the island, for one of Constantine's first acts after acceding to power at York after the death of his father, Constantius, on 25 July 306, was to end formally the persecution of Christians (including the destruction of their buildings) in his realm and to restore status and privileges to the Church.¹⁷ Endless debates have failed to answer

the question of Constantine's own conversion or that concerning early family contacts with Christianity, but his role as benefactor and protector of the Christians is beyond doubt. The action taken at York on behalf of Christians could not fail to have been politically beneficial in Britain as well as in Gaul and Spain, since the army of his father proclaimed Constantine as emperor in Britain and he ruled for some time from there.¹⁸

The second decade of the fourth century not only brought a cessation of the Great Persecution of Christianity, a peace led by Constantine and begun in Britain, but also introduced the age of the church councils called under the authority of the emperor, among the earliest of which was the Council of Arles held in 314.¹⁹ Among the thirty-three bishops present at the council were three from Britain: Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelphius of either Lincoln or Colchester.²⁰ Athanasius affirms that bishops from Britain also participated in the Council of Serdica held in October 342,²¹ although he does not specify them by name or particular location in his earlier list of names of the participants.²² An unspecified number of British bishops also attended the synod called by the Emperor Constantius to assemble at Ariminum in 359. Sulpicius Severus, in his account of the council, states that provisions and lodging were to be provided for all the bishops but that the bishops from Aquitania, Gaul, and Britain refused to accept public assistance—all except three of the British bishops who, because of personal poverty, took advantage of the emperor's offer.²³

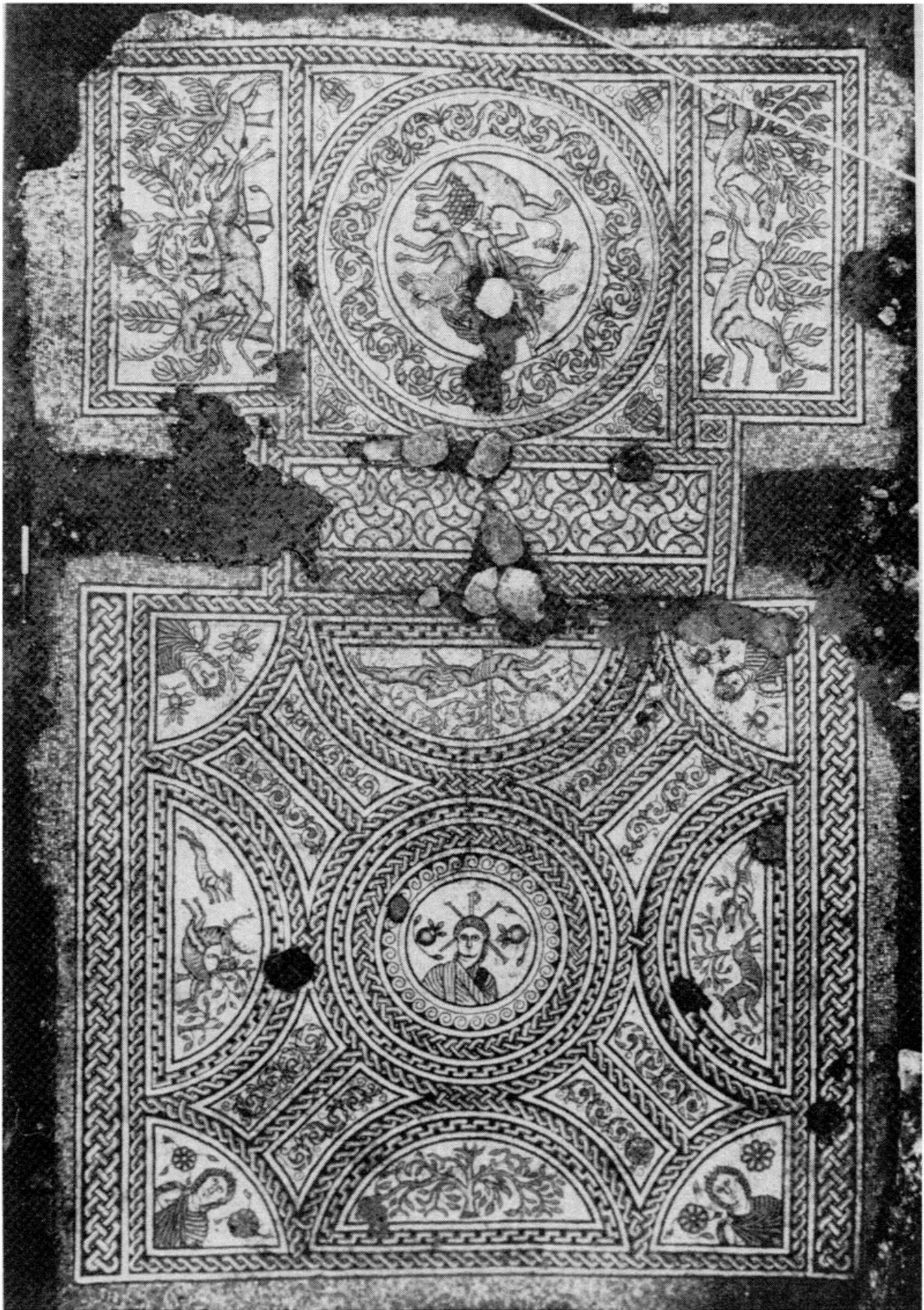
Apart from the multiple references confirming the presence of sufficient numbers of Christians in Britain during the first half of the fourth century to justify organizing them into separate dioceses, each presided over by a bishop, Toynbee writes, "Nothing is known of the cathedrals of the three British bishops who attended the Council of Arles, at York, London, and probably Colchester, or of those of the bishops who went to the Council of Ariminum." Toynbee suggests, however, that such cathedral-churches did exist throughout the province and were either destroyed completely or perhaps still await discovery.²⁴ Athanasius makes reference to the churches in Britain in a letter written to the Emperor Jovian soon after his accession in 363, in which the exiled bishop assures the emperor that nearly all churches in Christendom have assented to the Nicene creed, including those of Britain.²⁵ The claim is clearly exaggerated, at least when he claims that the Eastern churches of Egypt, Syria, Cappadocia, etc., are also overwhelmingly supportive of the Nicene position. One can only wonder if his assertion relating to Britain must be taken at face value, or if it is just a

propaganda claim to strengthen his own position with the new emperor. Nevertheless, the clear indication seems to be that there were churches in Britain at this period.

The archaeology of fourth-century Britain gives additional evidence that Christianity was established in the province. A certain Syagrius, who was a dealer in metal during the fourth century, used the “Chi-Rho” monogram as his trademark.²⁶ In the Thames near Battersea several ingots of pewter have been found (70–80 percent tin, 20–30 percent lead) stamped with his name, followed by the Chi-Rho and either the letters Alpha and Omega or a Christian motto, “[There is] hope in God.”²⁷

A rather unusual occurrence of the Chi-Rho monogram was found in a Roman villa at Frampton, Maiden Newton, some five miles from Dorchester in Dorset. In the dining room of the villa was a tessellated pavement decorated with typical scenes of mythology, including the head of Neptune attended by dolphins. A semicircular extension was later added to the pavement on the side where the Neptune head is, and in the center of the extension is a circle in which was inlaid the Chi-Rho monogram.²⁸ The natural explanation for the unusual pavement is that the owner of the villa was at least nominally converted to Christianity and proceeded to give acknowledgement to the new God alongside the old in the decoration of the dining room.

The most spectacular Christian mosaic from Roman Britain was discovered in 1963 at the village of Hinton St. Mary in northern Dorset.²⁹ The mosaic measures slightly more than 28 by 19 feet, and the design resembles that of the Frampton mosaic mentioned above. In both pavements (and also at Lullingstone), the myth of Bellerophon attacking the Chimaera is depicted, perhaps an allegorical representation of a heavenly warrior warring against evil and also perhaps connected with the popular legend of St. George and the Dragon.³⁰ The Hinton St. Mary mosaic is divided into two portions (see accompanying illustrations), the smaller containing the Bellerophon roundel in a square flanked by rectangles with hounds chasing stags, and the larger containing a roundel in a square. On three sides of the square are hunting scenes with hounds chasing stags and a hind, and the fourth side contains a large spreading tree. In each corner of the square is a male bust, perhaps representing four Gospel authors.³¹ The roundel in the middle of the square contains a bust “facing east, worked with especial care, and very well preserved, of a fair-haired, clean-shaven man with dark, rather penetrating eyes. He is heavily draped in an inner and an outer garment, *tunica*, and *pallium*, and has the Chi-Rho monogram behind his head and a pomegranate in the field on either side



Christian mosaic found at Hinton St. Mary, Dorset, England.
Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

of him.”³² If, as is usually suggested, the bust is that of Christ, the pomegranates would then represent immortality, the tree is the Tree of Life, and the other scenes represent paradise. The major argument against identifying the bust with Christ is the unsuitability of having his picture on the floor where one might step on it. Every other aspect of the mosaic, especially with the Chi-Rho behind the head, argues for the interpretation suggested above. If so, this fourth-century mosaic contains the earliest known depiction of Christ in Britain.³³

Yet another mosaic from Dorset dates from the same period.³⁴ The general scheme of this mosaic is similar to part of that in Hinton St. Mary, and contains two rings decorated with the Chi-Rho monogram. Although the rings are now lost, they are known from drawings made before they disappeared, and Toynbee suggests that the same firm may have made all three of the Dorset mosaics in the fourth century.³⁵

Another Roman villa at Lullingstone, Kent, contained a house-church that was destroyed in the early fifth century. Interestingly, the building containing the rooms that were decorated with date-palms and other symbols and used for Christian worship and ritual practices was earlier devoted to pagan worship. The excavators assert that libations made in votive pots placed before portrait busts in one room continued through the period of Christian activity in the adjoining rooms, making the villa an unusual example of a site where pagan and Christian worship were concurrently practiced.³⁶

Charles Thomas raises the question of how to interpret the mosaics and artwork of these examples, pointing out that “the motifs which they show certainly come within the broad description of being ‘mythological’; but in specific terms they are better described as Dionysiac or Gnostic.”³⁷ After admitting that pre-Constantinian Christian art could have Gnostic elements, he suggests a syncretism of Gnosticism and paganism with Christianity in Britain.³⁸ If that were the case, many more pavements and artifacts could be added to those listed above in considering the nature of the Christian religion in the fourth century.

Numerous hoards of silver and pewter-ware have been discovered from the southern coast of Britain north to Hadrian’s wall.³⁹ A common element of the hoards is the spoon, many of which are decorated with the Chi-Rho and Alpha and Omega in the bowls or handles. One such hoard, the Water Newton collection, found in 1975 near Chesterton, Huntingdonshire (within the Roman town of Durobrivae), contains a wide selection of bowls, dishes, jugs, cups, a strainer, plaques, and related artifacts from the



Detail from Christian mosaic found at Hinton St. Mary, Dorset, England.
Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

early to middle fourth century.⁴⁰ Thomas argues for community ownership and usage, rather than private, for the hoard,⁴¹ but the abundant Chi-Rho and Alpha-Omega decorations prove a wealthy Christian presence, whether public or private. The plaques, however, also have pagan votive inscriptions, raising again the question of syncretism or perhaps of dual usage by pagan and Christian (as suggested in the Lullingstone church-house). Perhaps pagan materials were simply taken over and adapted by Christian converts in their own religious services. John Chandler, in a 1978 lecture at Dorchester, addressed some of the questions raised by this mingling of Christian and pagan symbols:

The very existence of these objects suggests a notion of Christianity current in Britain which would have horrified the Church leaders on the Continent. But would their horror have been greater than that inspired by a picture of Christ's Head on a mosaic floor, in a place where (worshippers apart) house-servants with brooms and mops could hardly avoid the act of sweeping and rinsing Our Lord's image?⁴²

The most impressive hoard yet discovered in Britain is the one found near Mildenhall, Suffolk, in 1942 and presently housed in the British Museum. There are thirty-four pieces in the collection, of which the "most beautiful object to survive from Roman Britain" is a silver dish measuring nearly two feet in diameter and weighing more than eighteen pounds.⁴³ The artwork of the pieces includes a mixture of pagan and Christian motifs, including the Chi-Rho and Alpha-Omega designs found elsewhere, but Painter argues against the treasure's having any specifically religious purpose. The date given to the hoard is the middle of the fourth century, and Painter suggests that it may have belonged to a Roman general named Lupicinus, who had been sent to Britain to quell barbarian revolts. Because many of the pieces were perhaps made in Gaul and Italy, their existence in Britain among a general's personal belongings may not be indicative of British Christianity as such. The hypothesis concerning Lupicinus's ownership of the treasure is unproved, however, and the presence of such wealth in fourth-century Britain is eloquent proof that not all Christians living in the province (whether native or foreign) were impoverished.

In addition to artifacts relating to the life and wealth of Christians living in Roman Britain, there are numerous tombstones that can likely be ascribed to Christians. According to R. G. Collingwood, ordinary Roman tombstones contain the formula "*Dis Manibus*, 'To The Divine Departed,' " which is often (though not always) replaced by the Christian epithet "*Hic Iacet*, 'Here Lies.' " Furthermore, while pagan tombstones usually "reckon the

age of the deceased in years, months, and days, Christian epitaphs take a certain pride in ignoring detail and use the formula *plus minus*, 'more or less,' in giving the age."⁴⁴

Of considerable interest to the present inquiry, and in addition to the tombstones, are observations relating to burial alignments in Roman-British cemeteries. The author has been excavating a large necropolis in Egypt for some years and had observed a shift in burial alignment, which, corresponding with other data, implied that the shift occurred with the arrival of Christianity in that region. Similarly, the excavation of a cemetery at Lankhills, Winchester, revealed some noteworthy characteristics in grave alignments:

First, cemeteries where graves were aligned in an orderly manner, perhaps on a topographical feature, were much more common in the fourth century than before. Thus, none of the sites in table 38 dating from that period was completely unordered, whereas two of the three cemeteries of predominately earlier date, Guilden, Morden, and Trentholme Drive, definitely were. Second, graves with their heads to the west seem to have been comparatively normal in the fourth century and rare if not unknown before. Thus, whereas none of the fourth-century cemeteries in table 38, apart from Cirencester, had a substantial number of graves with heads other than to the west, it is hard to point to any definitely second- or third-century burials that were so aligned. It can be concluded that east-west alignment was prevalent in the fourth century. However, it never became ubiquitous, as the cemeteries at Cirencester, Gloucester, Radles, and Margidunum demonstrate.⁴⁵

And again:

Although pagan cemeteries of an early date seem to have been aligned in any direction, sub-Roman Christian churches and cemeteries in Britain were almost invariably orientated. Fourth-century, and apparently Christian, graves at Poundbury Camp, Dorchester (Dorset), and possibly at Ancaster (Lincs.), also had their heads to the west.⁴⁶

Thomas takes issue with the Macdonald interpretation of the evidence at Lankhills, asserting that since "it is most dubious that at that date (c. 300–320) the Church was necessarily strong enough to influence the layout of a cemetery like Lankhills in which pagans were (and would continue to be) buried, one can look for alternative causes." Following Philip Rahtz, Thomas argues that "it is possible that an imperial sun-cult did" have sufficiently powerful status in Britain after 313 to account for east-west burial orientation with the head to the west.⁴⁷ Syncretism would permit Christian adaptation and continuation of such a custom after its introduction by a sun-cult, but no evidence is given (or available in the sources or the

archaeological evidence) to demonstrate such a fourth-century surge in the imperial sun-cult, especially in the province where Constantine first declared an imperial cessation of the persecution of Christians. Alignment of graves is not conclusive evidence of Christianity by itself, but in the Lankhills study it does provide the most economical interpretation of the excavation data. The same can be said at the author's Egyptian excavation. The popular opinion among scholars is that Christianity did not arrive in strength in Egypt until the end of the second century, but the 180-degree shift in burial alignment (from head-east to head-west) with Christian symbols on burial clothing, etc., occurs in burials dating to no later than the end of the first century. There are no known explanations to account for such a major cultural change at that time, except for the influence of Christianity, and the popular wisdom may have to give way to a new hypothesis. Similarly in Britain, perhaps the strength of Christianity in that province by the early fourth century has been underestimated because of a lack of overwhelming evidence supporting an alternate view. In point of fact, while one can argue that the relative paucity of Christian artifacts dated to the fourth century in Britain argues for limited numbers of Christians living there, A. R. Burn argues against taking such a view:

In short, Christianity was the dominant religion of the Empire during the last hundred years of Roman government in Britain; and yet traces of it among the Roman-British remains are few. This has often caused surprise; but it would cease to do so if it were realized how very few Roman inscriptions of any kind remain from Britain in this period. If fourth-century had been one-quarter as common as second-century or Severan inscriptions, Christianity would have left its mark.⁴⁸

The evidence available through much of the fourth century portrays a widespread but not well-defined Christianity in Britain. The lack of definition is due both to the nonexistence of written records from the province, either biblical or patristic, and to the syncretistic nature of the archaeological evidence. Is the syncretism due to Christian converts who continued to use pagan symbols in a purely decorative sense alongside the now exclusively meaningful symbols of their new faith, or were Gnostic and pagan elements woven into the fabric of newly-acquired religious beliefs? Whatever one's response, it is impossible to substantiate the view of Athanasius in his letter to Jovian that the British churches were all supportive of the Nicene creed, with the additional implication that they were theologically harmonious with the churches of Gaul or Italy.⁴⁹

Theological issues, besides the ones considered at Nicaea, continued to emerge and be defined in terms of orthodoxy and heresy, especially during the fourth and fifth centuries. One such subject was free will and grace, and one of the key figures in the debate was Pelagius, after whom the so-called Pelagian heresy was named. Pelagius was born in Britain in c. 354, and was probably educated in the southeastern portion of the province.⁵⁰ Apparently both wealthy and intelligent, Pelagius went to Rome in the 380s to study law,⁵¹ and a few years later he decided to devote himself to the church rather than continue in legal practice.⁵² During his fifteen or so years of preaching in Rome (to A.D. 410), Pelagius is not known to have encountered any ecclesiastical opposition although he did read Augustine's *Confessions* with repugnance for that author's dismal portrayal of "man's moral helplessness and utter dependence on God's Grace in the struggle against evil." Pelagius taught that "it was inconceivable that God could have placed men in the world without giving them both the capacity to understand his purpose and the power to carry it out."⁵³

The sack of Rome in 410 by Alaric caused Pelagius, among others, to leave Rome, and he journeyed to Africa and then to Palestine. Jerome, who was living at Bethlehem, began to write his commentary on Jeremiah in c. 414, but by then was distracted by the arrival and teachings of Pelagius.⁵⁴ Despite Jerome's discomfiture concerning Pelagius's teachings on man's free will and his charges that Jerome had both depreciated marriage too vehemently and also was not so free from Origenist doctrines as he claimed, two councils of Palestinian bishops in Jerusalem and Diospolis failed to find anything wrong with the doctrines of Pelagius, even after examining the Briton in person.⁵⁵ One of Pelagius's followers, Caelestius, had remained in Africa when the teacher went to Palestine, and while in Africa was condemned by a council of African bishops in 412 for his teachings.⁵⁶ It was soon afterward that Augustine attacked the newly-defined heresy in many tractates. Because Pelagius raised problems relating to Origenism in Jerome's past and Manichaeism in Augustine's past, Evans suggests that he "appears upon the scene of controversy in the second decade of the fifth century as a representative to the two great Catholic doctors of still troublesome issues belonging to their own theological past. To be behind the times was part of Pelagius' lamentable fate."⁵⁷

Pelagius's own theology has been summarized by Evans as an attempt "to be an orthodox theologian of the Catholic Church and to be known as such" and to define man's nature, his relationship to God, and his moral obligation.⁵⁸ With regard to man's nature,

Pelagius denied “any doctrine of original sin understood as the transmission of sin through procreation” and further stated that “no man can be said to be guilty except for a deed which proceeds from his own individual will.”⁵⁹ As to God, Pelagius taught that “the eternal Son, consubstantial with the Father, assumes human nature in both body and soul, and endures the condemnation of death that is due to men because of their sins. The death which he undergoes is not due to him both because as man he is without sin and because he is the Creator of the universe.”⁶⁰ Christ is both revealer and example for man, and “the benefit of the redeeming death of Christ Christians receive as the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of baptism. Grace in this sense justifies the ungodly and makes him to be ‘without sin.’ ”⁶¹ Man’s moral obligation is thus to follow the example of Christ and be fortified through the revelation of Christ so as to become sinless and thus be saved by the proper exercise of his free will.⁶² Pelagius’s emphasis on man’s free will and the potential to become sinless were especially denounced by his detractors.⁶³

Just how or when this heresy reached Britain is not at all certain, but since Pelagius never returned to his homeland it must have been found there before his time or taken to the province by some of his followers. Some slight evidence is thought to exist for the presence of Pelagian thinking in Britain by the beginning of the fifth century, for Victricius wrote in *Liber de Laude Sanctorum I* that his fellow bishops in Gaul had asked him to go to Britain and make peace, although the nature of the dispute was not spelled out.⁶⁴ Pelagius was not attacked for his beliefs until the second decade of the century, and even then two councils in Palestine found him innocent of heresy, so it is unlikely that a visit to Britain by the bishop of Roven in the first decade of the century would have been for the purpose of refuting a heresy which was as yet undefined and not under attack elsewhere.

There is no question that Pelagianism was popular in Britain by the early part of the fifth century, however, and after it was defined as heretical by such leading figures as Jerome and Augustine, one would expect it to be attacked by ecclesiastical leaders in an attempt to exert dominance over churches and thus establish their particular brand of orthodoxy throughout Christendom. The “attack” was launched in 429, led by Germanus, the bishop of Auxerre in Gaul, who went to Britain in response to a request by a legation made up of non-Pelagian British Christians.⁶⁵ The Gallic bishop made four trips to Britain to assist in eradicating the heresy, and in the late fifth-century account of Germanus written by Constantius of Lyon there is no doubt that the mission

was to reclaim heretics rather than convert the heathen.⁶⁶ Prosper of Aquitaine is even more forceful in his description of events, stating that Pope Celestine, on the suggestion of Deacon Palladius, sent Germanus to Britain as his personal representative to confound the heretics and lead the British into the Catholic faith.⁶⁷ Germanus's efforts were not very successful, and in 431 the Pope sent Palladius himself to Britain, after consecrating him as "the first bishop to the Irish Christians."⁶⁸ By implanting Catholic ecclesiastical leaders in an area heavily populated by heretics, much as in the case of Demetrius going to Egypt to establish Catholic Christianity in 193, the Pope attempted to establish a foothold for the Catholic faith and extend its influence in areas where alternate versions of the faith prevailed. Germanus planned to augment the Catholic presence in Britain by sending Patrick as a priest in the care of a senior priest, but when word arrived that Palladius had died, Patrick was consecrated bishop in his place. Patrick himself acknowledged that his appointment was approved over "considerable opposition by a synod of British bishops."⁶⁹

The attempt to establish Catholicism as the faith in Britain was continuing well over a century later, for in 596 Pope Gregory the Great sent Augustine, then prior of St. Andrew's monastery in Rome, to found the Church in England. (Again, one is reminded of Egypt, where a similar attempt by Demetrius was still in process well over a century later when Athanasius made numerous attempts to wear down the overwhelming local opposition to his episcopacy.) Arriving in Kent in 597, Augustine was quite successful, and soon returned to Arles to be consecrated bishop of Canterbury. For many, this "new founding" is considered the real establishment of the Christian faith in Britain, but to make such an assertion is to ignore more than three centuries of well-attested Christianity in that land.

During the latter portion of that period, with the withdrawal of the Roman military and apparent breakdown of Roman governmental apparatus during the Anglo-Saxon invasions, there is little record of association between the Church on the continent of Europe and the Church in the British Isles. When contact was renewed at the beginning of the seventh century, the Irish and the Britons were found to have certain peculiarities of ecclesiastical organization and religious practice that marked them off from their continental brethren and which have led some modern writers to designate them "the Celtic church."⁷⁰

The noted peculiarities were, in all likelihood, the remnants of the Christian faith that had been established long before the coming of the "new" faith. Myres proposes a rather novel theory

that in the deteriorating social world of the Roman Empire, Pelagianism, with its emphasis on free will and moral obligations for man, was at least partially responsible for throwing off the Roman yoke of authority in the fifth century.⁷¹ There is ancient historical support for his position in Zosimus, a fifth-century historian and government administrator who wrote a history of the Roman Empire. This well-regarded writer states that “the people living on the British island and some of the Celtic tribes had revolted from the rule of the Romans and were subsisting on their own” and “after donning armor they were fighting for themselves and had freed their cities from the attacking barbarians.”⁷² The removal of the political yoke, with its accompanying ecclesiastical yokefellow, was not entirely successful, however, for the ecclesiastical harness would again be placed upon Britain within a few centuries, and would remain for nearly a millennium until its removal in the British Reformation.

NOTES

¹Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.1, in vol. 20 of *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca* (Paris: Migne, 1857–87), 214–15.

²Strabo, *Geography* 4.5.2, in *Loeb Classical Library* 243 (1924; reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 253–57.

³*Ibid.* 4.5.3, in *Loeb Classical Library*, 257–59.

⁴I. A. Richmond, *Roman Britain*, vol. 1 of *The Pelican History of Britain* (New York: Penguin, 1963), 13.

⁵Juvenal, *Satires* 15.111, in *Loeb Classical Library* 59 (1924; reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 296–97.

⁶Clement, *Epistola 1 ad Corinthios* (commentary on 1 Cor. 5:6–7), in vol. 1 of *Patrologiae Graeca*, 218–19.

⁷Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 1.4, in vol. 95 of *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (Paris: Migne, 1841–79), 30.

⁸Tertullian, *Adversus Judaeos*, in vol. 2 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 650.

⁹Charles Thomas, *Christianity in Roman Britain to A.D. 500* (London: Batsford, 1981), 43.

¹⁰See, for example, Origen, *In Ezechielem, Homilia 4*, in vol. 13 of *Patrologia Graeca*, 698: “Quando enim terra Britanniae ante adventum Christi in unius Dei consensit religionem? . . . Nunc vero propter Ecclesias, quae mundi limites tenent, universa terra cum laetitia clamat ad Dominum Israel” (When did the land of Britain, before the advent of Christ, agree to the worship of the one god? . . . Now, truly, because of the churches which occupy the boundaries of the world, the entire earth shouts with joy to the Lord of Israel). See also *Commentariorum Series in Matthaeum*, in vol. 13 of *Patrologiae Graeca*, 1655: “de Britannis . . . quorum plurimi nondum audierunt Evangelii verbum” (concerning the people of Britain . . . of whom the majority have not yet heard the word of the Gospel)—implying that many had heard.

¹¹Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 1.7, 32–35.

¹²Thomas, *Christianity in Roman Britain*, 48.

¹³J. M. C. Toynbee, “Christianity in Roman Britain,” *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3d ser., 16 (1953): 2.

¹⁴Felix Grosser, *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 29 (1926): 165–69, cited in Toynbee, “Christianity in Roman Britain,” 2.

¹⁵Toynbee, “Christianity in Roman Britain,” 3.

¹⁶Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, in vol. 7 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 216–17.

¹⁷*Ibid.* 24, pp. 233–34.

¹⁸Ibid. 24–25, pp. 233–35.

¹⁹Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 10.5, 879–93. Constantine called this council, and it was convened on 1 August 314, with some thirty-three bishops present from Gallic Prefecture, comprised of Britain, Gaul, Spain, and portions of Morocco (see Frend, “Religion in Roman Britain in the Fourth Century A.D.,” *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3d ser., 18 [1955]: 1).

²⁰Frend, “Religion in Roman Britain,” 1.

²¹Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum ad Monachos* 28, in vol. 25 of *Patrologiae Graeca*, 725–26.

²²Athanasius, *Apologia Contra Arianos* 50, in *ibid.*, 337–42.

²³Sulpicius Severus, *Historia Sacra* 2:41, in vol. 20 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 152.

²⁴Toynbee, “Christianity in Roman Britain,” 5.

²⁵Athanasius, *Ad Imperatorem Jovianum* 2, in vol. 26 of *Patrologiae Graeca*, 816.

²⁶The Chi-Rho symbol is a combination of the first two letters of the Greek word *Christos*, and is called the *Labarum* in modern literature. From the time of Constantine, who saw this symbol in a vision before the fateful Battle of the Milvian Bridge in A.D. 312, it became identified with Christianity. For a lengthy discussion of the symbol in the Constantinian setting, see N. H. Baynes, *Constantine the Great and the Christian Church*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 60–65.

²⁷J. W. Grover, “Pre-Augustine Christianity in Britain, as Indicated by the Discovery of Christian Symbols,” *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 23 (1867): 225; A. R. Burn, *The Romans in Britain*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), 168.

²⁸Burn, *Romans in Britain*, 169.

²⁹J. M. C. Toynbee, “A New Roman Mosaic Pavement Found in Dorset,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 54 (1964): 7–14.

³⁰Burn, *Romans in Britain*, 168–69.

³¹Toynbee, “New Roman Mosaic,” 14.

³²Ibid., 8.

³³Ibid., 14.

³⁴Thomas, *Christianity*, 104–5; Toynbee, “New Roman Mosaic,” 8.

³⁵Toynbee, “New Roman Mosaic,” 8.

³⁶G. W. Meates, *The Roman Villa at Lullingstone, Kent* (N.p.: Kent Archaeological Society, 1979), 17–23, 63–64.

³⁷Thomas, *Christianity*, 104.

³⁸Ibid., 104–5.

³⁹Ibid., 108ff.

⁴⁰P. C. Kent and K. S. Painter, eds., *Wealth of the Roman World, A.D. 300–700* (London: British Museum, 1977), 29–33.

⁴¹Thomas, *Christianity*, 113–17.

⁴²Quoted in *ibid.*, 121.

⁴³Kent and Painter, *Wealth of the Roman World*, 33; Keith Branigan, *Roman Britain: Life in an Imperial Province* (London: Reader’s Digest Association, 1980), 144–45.

⁴⁴R. G. Collingwood, *Roman Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 140–41.

⁴⁵Giles Clarke, *The Roman Cemetery at Lankhills*, in *Winchester Studies* 3:ii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 352.

⁴⁶Ibid., 424.

⁴⁷Thomas, *Christianity*, 233.

⁴⁸Burn, *Romans in Britain*, 166.

⁴⁹Athanasius lists Britain as supporting the demand of Western bishops at the Council of Serdica, A.D. 342–43, for his acquittal (see *Historia Arianorum* 28, pp. 725–26).

⁵⁰J. N. L. Myres, “Pelagius and the End of Roman Rule in Britain,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 50 (1960): 21.

⁵¹Ibid., 22.

⁵²Jerome, *Epistle*, 50, in vol. 22 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 512–16.

⁵³Myres, “Pelagius,” 22. In his *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul*, Pelagius argues that God has endowed man with the capacity to become sinless and remain sinless through the grace of Christ (see, for example, *Exposition in Epistolam ad Romanos* [commentary on Rom. 6:14; 7:18; 7:21], in vol. 1, pt. 3, of *Patrologiae Latina Supplementum* [Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, 1958], 1140, 1144; *Exposition in Epistolam ad Galatas* [commentary on Gal. 5:17ff.], in vol. 1, pt. 3, of *Patrologiae Latina Supplementum*, 1285ff.; A. Souter, ed., “Pelagi Expositiones XIII Epistolarum Pauli,” *Texts and Studies* 9 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922–1931]).

⁵⁴Robert F. Evans, *Pelagius: Inquiries and Reappraisals* (New York: Seabury Press, 1968), 7–8.

⁵⁵Jerome, *In Hieremiam*, Prologus 3–4; see also 4:41.6 in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, 74 (Turnholti: Typographi Brepols, 1953–), 1–2, 211, for a surprising use of Origen for Jerome, since the presbyter had said Origen was free from heresy. In Prologus 4, 3:60.3, pp. 2, 154, Jerome had gone too far in his depreciation of marriage. Two councils exonerating Pelagius are in Myres, “Pelagius,” 23. For Pelagius on marriage, especially of widows, see *Exposition in Epistolam ad Timotheum* (commentary on 1 Tim. 5:14ff.), in vol. 1, pt. 4, of *Patrologiae Latinae Supplementum*, 1355ff. See also Augustine, *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* 1:2, where a Pelagian charge is made that Catholicism condemned marriage.

⁵⁶Augustine, *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* 2.23, in vol. 44 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 173–74.

⁵⁷Evans, *Pelagius*, 22.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 92. Even Augustine admits that at first he was reluctant to attack Pelagius because his life and conduct were admired by many (see *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* 2.23, 173–74).

⁵⁹Evans, *Pelagius*, 97. See Augustine, *De Natura et Gratia* 8, 10, 13, 34, 54, in vol. 44 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 251–53, 265–66, 277–79.

⁶⁰Evans, *Pelagius*, 106; Pelagius, *Exposition in Epistolam ad Galatas 3:13*, pp. 1277–78; *Exposition in Epistolam ad Romanos 3:24*, pp. 1128–29; *Pelagii ad Demetriadem Epistola 2*, 10, in vol. 30 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 16–17, 25–26.

⁶¹Evans, *Pelagius*, 109. See Augustine, *De Gestis Pelagii* 16, in vol. 30 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 313–14.

⁶²Pelagius, *De Libero Arbitro*, quoted in Augustine, *De Gratia Christi* 8, 11, in vol. 44 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 364–67; Pelagius, *Exposition in Epistolam ad Thessalonicenses I* (commentary on 1 Thess. 1:10), in vol. 1, pt. 3 of *Patrologiae Latina Supplementum*, 1322; *Exposition in Epistolam ad Timotheum 2* (commentary on 2 Tim. 1:10), in vol. 1, pt. 4 of *Patrologiae Latina Supplementum*, 1361; *Pelagii ad Demetriadem Epistola 2*, 10, pp. 16–17, 25–26.

⁶³Augustine, *Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum* 4:27, in vol. 44 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 629; *Epistolam ad Hilario*, letter 157, chap. 2, in vol. 33 of *Patrologiae Latina*, 675–78.

⁶⁴*Patrologiae Latina* 20:443–58.

⁶⁵E. A. Thompson, *St. Germanus of Auxerre and the End of Roman Britain*, in *Studies in Celtic History* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1984), 6:7.

⁶⁶Constantius, *De St. Germano Episcopo*, in *Acta Sanctorum Julii* 7 (1731; reprint, Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1970): 195–98 (“Legatio duplex in Britanniam adversus Pelagianos”).

⁶⁷Prosper of Aquitaine, *Chronicle*, ed. Theodor Mommsen, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, vol. 9 of *Auct. Ant.* (N.p., n.d.), 472.

⁶⁸A. B. E. Hood, ed. and trans., *St. Patrick, His Writings and Muirchu's Life* (London: Phillimore, 1978), 5.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 6.

⁷⁰James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928), 1:171.

⁷¹Myres, “Pelagius,” 21–36, esp. 31ff.

⁷²Zosimus, *Historiae* 6.5, vol. 50 of *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* (Bonnae: Impensis ed. Weberi, 1828–97), 321–22.

Snow

Thinking of Sweden, the sky fluttered
 its dark-browed paleness shut
 just once each winter. And settled
 on us. Mornings wore afternoon.
 We'd ease out on a crust of light
 already bushes had grown through,

floating our footprints, pleased
 with the fat sky sprawled replete.
 What to do with it? Stare?
 Not enough, my daughter thought,
 nudging from sloth a fluffed
 plumpness weather sends

for reawakenings. Spades scraped
 slow arcs green around a tumbled dome.
 For her this was a kneeling someone
 to be coaxed or patted up
 with promises of buttons, a head.
 Pride in our created self

lasted two, at most three days
 then arms slumped in accelerated age.
 Eyes sank. In a drained landscape,
 fading slowest though: the man
 gathered from cold, something newmade
 that was the last to go.

—John Davies

John Davies is a poet living in Prestatyn, Wales. He was a visiting professor of English at Brigham Young University, 1987–88.

Book Reviews

The Hofmann Maze

A Book Review Essay
with a Chronology and Bibliography of the Hofmann Case

David J. Whittaker

The impact of the Mark W. Hofmann murder and forgery cases will be felt in the LDS community for years to come. This is obviously true in the lives of the families he so brutally affected with his pipe bombs; it is not any less true in the lives of his own family whose love and support he betrayed so callously. But it is also true in the larger Mormon community where the shock of murder and the widespread deceit through forgeries seemingly touched the very core of Mormon history and tradition.

While it is early to fully assess the damage to either the public or the scholarly community, what follows is an attempt to provide readers of *BYU Studies* with a reasonably comprehensive guide to the literature and basic facts of the Hofmann case. First, we present a review essay on the three book-length studies of the Hofmann saga; next, a detailed chronology of the Hofmann case as a guide through the complexities of the various episodes and events; finally, a bibliography designed to lead readers to other source materials in addition to providing a guide to the main known Hofmann forgeries. While Hofmann's forgery activities went far beyond Mormon manuscripts, the focus here is almost entirely on the Mormon-related materials.

David J. Whittaker is associate librarian with responsibility for Mormon manuscripts in the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, and an associate editor of *BYU Studies*. He expresses his thanks to the many individuals who reviewed and assisted with the chronology and the bibliography, particularly Ron Barney of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Dean C. Jessee, William G. Hartley, and Ronald K. Esplin of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, BYU; and Paul H. Peterson of the BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine. An abridged version of the review essay appeared as "Special Section" insert in *Newsletter* (Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University) 3 (September 1988).

LINDA SILLITOE and ALLEN D. ROBERTS. *Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders, with a Forensic Analysis by George J. Throckmorton*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988. xiii; 556 pp. \$17.95.

STEVEN NAIFEH and GREGORY WHITE SMITH. *The Mormon Murders: A True Story of Greed, Forgery, Deceit, and Death*. New York: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988. x; 458 pp. \$19.95.

ROBERT LINDSEY. *A Gathering of Saints: A True Story of Murder and Deceit*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988. 397 pp. \$18.95.

For those seeking a guide to the labyrinth that is Mark Hofmann, there are now three volumes that promise a map of his complex life and crimes as well as to the society in which these occurred. Each offers the reader a detailed reconstruction of the stories of forgeries and murders and the subsequent investigation that became such a controversial topic of discussion after the first bombs exploded in Salt Lake City on 15 October 1985. All three volumes offer new and useful bits of information about the Hofmann case, but the discerning reader will sense that some of the maps are less reliable than others, and in some cases the cartography is simply not to be trusted. None of these volumes provides the reader with source citations, and all of them suffer from the problems inherent in writing contemporary history.

The first published study, *Salamander*, appeared in April 1988. Both Sillitoe and Roberts are familiar with the culture out of which Hofmann came, and they use this knowledge to good advantage in their detailed reconstruction of the Hofmann case. Bits and pieces of this work had surfaced before the volume appeared as the authors had given talks and published essays in such places as *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* and *Utah Holiday*. But for those who have followed these presentations, there are still surprises in this volume. The authors have chosen a biographical approach, focusing on key individuals and their families. By using this approach, the authors broaden the context and humanize the impact of Hofmann's activities. The volume itself is divided into three parts with a technical "appendix" on some of the key forgeries by forensic specialist George Throckmorton at the end. The first part, chapters 1 through 6, details the critical events from the initial bombings to the attempts to unravel the crimes by the various individuals and agencies assigned to the

case. The second section, chapters 7 through 14, takes the reader back in time into the lives of the key players as they entered and became part of the life and activities of Mark Hofmann. The third section, chapters 15 through 19, treats the preliminary hearing, the plea bargain, and the interviews with Hofmann after his imprisonment, and concludes with the parole hearing in January 1988.

The authors have structured the story like an historical novel. It generally reads well, flowing somewhat smoothly through a complex series of crimes and their partial solution. The reader is allowed to feel the fears and concerns of the people who were touched either directly or indirectly by the events discussed. One of the strengths of the book is that it never gets bogged down in the technical aspects of these crimes, for throughout the work we see and experience the human drama and pathos that this case created in Mormon country. But a close reading of the volume does reveal that two authors are at work; there are places where the prose is crisp and clear, and others where the details seem to impede the flow of the presentation.

Sillitoe and Roberts provide important information on the early life of Mark Hofmann, detail that is absent from the other two volumes. They tell of the early patterns of dishonesty and possible sociopathology (the authors argue against the report of the state-appointed psychologist on this issue). They probe Hofmann's high school, college, and mission years to provide insight into his later criminal activities. We are introduced to a man who was fascinated with fire and explosives from a very young age; who was cheating and deceiving people during these same years; who had a cruel side to his personality, manifested by his treatment of both animals and people; and who learned very young to live two lives, one respectable and one amoral. The authors suggest at the end of the book that Hofmann was contemplating murder to obtain what he wanted (in this case a coin collection) as early as 1977.

Another strength of the Sillitoe-Roberts study is the human portraits of the two bombing victims, Steven Christensen and Kathleen Sheets. We feel the loss of these people even more because we are made aware of their human connections with families and friends. Their portraits are not cardboard ones, but the reader is invited into each of their lives to see a variety of activities and attitudes, and even their human frailties are discussed with sensitivity and tact.

Particularly valuable are the insights Sillitoe and Roberts give to the teams of investigators assigned to the case. Their professionalism as well as the office politics are discussed along with other aspects of the Hofmann case. Occasionally the reader might rightly

wonder just how the authors learned what the judge who presided over the preliminary hearing was thinking as he heard evidence presented; or further, how they managed to learn just what the conversation was between prosecutor Stott and defense attorney Yengich as they drove around town together on the eve of the plea bargaining. Clearly they gleaned information from the individuals themselves, but we must seriously ask if the various actors are to be trusted fully when, as this volume clearly shows, their public reputations were at stake from the beginning of the case. Indeed we should be especially suspicious, since there has been no end of scapegoating among those who have held the public stage for this matter.

This study also manages to recreate the world of document dealers and the money men behind the big deals, as well as the historical community that was ultimately trying to make sense of the new “finds” and relate them to what was already known about Mormon origins. It was within this matrix that Hofmann managed to play his most dangerous games, and Sillitoe and Roberts have brought to their study a good knowledge of the inner workings of this world.

The critical reader will be disappointed by the lack of source citations. While the authors claim in the Preface that their research was extensive, we are simply asked to trust the accuracy of that research. But with a case this important, centering as it does on an individual who refused to provide his sources, this is asking a good deal. In addition to the lack of documentation, two of the major actors in the story, and hence major sources of information for the authors, are given false identities; one of them is even absent from the index. “Kate Reid,” Hofmann’s first fiancée (see 116, 217–24, 226–28, 231–32, 234, 244–45, 337–39), and “Gene Taylor,” the financier for many of Hofmann’s Americana documents (see 305–11, 336–37, 339–40, 346, 423), are both important sources of information about Hofmann’s character and activities. “Kate,” no doubt still carrying deep scars, is a particularly crucial source for the early Hofmann; and “Gene” (identified by Robert Lindsey as Kenneth Woolley, a cousin of Dori Hofmann) should know something of the whereabouts of some of Hofmann’s documents, most of which are still unidentified and presumably still on the open market. Hofmann admitted in January 1988 that he had forged “hundreds of items with at least 86 different signatures.” Even allowing for the hyperbole of the con artist, it would appear that many items are still not known and presumably are in public and private collections throughout the country. While Sillitoe and Roberts undoubtedly made promises of anonymity and argue that

these individuals' identities are not essential to the story, they are a central part of the still unfolding drama.

There remain unanswered questions, some of which the authors themselves acknowledge. For example, they argue that the public is still not fully informed as to the level of LDS church involvement with Hofmann. They even imply that President Gordon B. Hinckley did not tell the full truth to investigators regarding either the records he allegedly kept detailing his dealings with Hofmann, or his personal relationship with Steven Christensen. They also suggest that it has never been made clear just what promises were made to Steve Christensen by Elder Hugh Pinnock regarding future document acquisitions by the Church. In all of this, Sillitoe and Roberts suggest that the omnipresence of the Church was an important factor in the minds of both the investigators and the prosecutors of the case. But given the demography and history of Utah, it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise.

There are other problems with this study, some of which relate to either unanswered or unasked questions by the authors themselves. For example, by centering their study on the life and motivations of Mark Hofmann, they ignore the actual or potential involvement of others. Hofmann's network of "friends" surely must bear some of the responsibility for his activities. Those who fronted for his document deals, those who fed him his history, and those who helped create the paper trails for his "finds" were accomplices. One wonders why certain individuals are dismissed from this study when they had been critical partners in a number of manuscript and rare book deals. And we must seriously wonder how Hofmann could forge documents of such quality without some help.

Sillitoe and Roberts never really address the public scenario of the Hofmann case. They do not discuss the implications of how the public press used this case to punish the LDS church time and time again. Is it any wonder that some of the Church leaders became reticent after a while when the media seemed to always present the worst interpretation of events to the public? In many respects the authors end up writing more as newspaper reporters than historians. Why, for example, should we trust the letter Hofmann was supposed to have written to his mother (but never sent)? (Lindsey suggests it was not a letter but a student paper.) How do we know for sure when or why it was created? Given Hofmann's apparent inability to tell the truth, how can we trust this item? And since he clearly lied about his access to items in the private vault of the First Presidency and about the existence of an Oliver Cowdery history,

why should we take seriously his claims of intimate association with President Hinckley? We are asked to take a lot of information on the authors' word but are given no way to judge either the accuracy of their work or the thoroughness of their methodology.

The second volume, *The Mormon Murders*, was released in August 1988. Of the three volumes here under consideration, it is clearly the most disappointing. The narrative follows a chronological format, but even a superficial reading reveals it to be more of a novel than a serious work of history. In reading it I was reminded of Peter Bart's *Thy Kingdom Come* (1981), a novel that applied almost all of the anti-Semitic stereotypes to the Mormons. Bart presented a portrait of the Church that transformed a supposed Jewish banking conspiracy as presented in the forged nineteenth-century *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to the operations of the LDS church hierarchy in Salt Lake City. The *Protocols* were used by Hitler and others to rationalize much of the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews. Bart presented a picture of the Mormon church as concerned only with money and power, with nothing else really mattering. In his novel, truth was a convenient commodity treasured more by the publisher of an anti-Mormon newsletter than by the leaders of the Church. Image, power, and money dictated Church policy in Bart's novel, but that was a work of fiction. Naifeh and Smith's book, which assumes the same perspective, claims to be a "true story."

The Mormon Murders is an attack on the Church in the guise of a serious study of the Hofmann case, but its authors are grossly uninformed about the Mormon church and its history. They call the Church "a giant conglomerate" freed by its religious status from reporting and paying taxes. Its great wealth (they are not sure if it is fifteen or fifty billion dollars!) assures members of its truthfulness. Its leaders lie and deceive regularly because lying for the Lord is all right. And since the Church is continuing to grow in wealth (all that really matters), in a few hundred years the "Church wouldn't need to convert the world, it would *own* the world" (22, italics in original). Armed with this perspective, the authors then weave their story of the Hofmann case around it. The money, power, and image of the Mormon church are used to explain just about every angle of the case. And, like the *Protocols*, this volume leaves the reader with a sense that the leviathan of Mormonism is even stronger after the story is told. It is a book that anti-Mormons will like. But if people care about the truth and have a sense of the real meaning of the impact of the Nuremberg trials and their implications for the illegalities of religious persecution, it is not likely *The Mormon Murders* will be necessary reading.

Naifeh and Smith manage to work into their narrative most of the traditional anti-Mormon themes, including the legend of the Danites, the Kirtland Bank problems, polygamy, and, of course, even an account of the LDS temple ceremony. To so insensitively include such a sacred part of Mormon group life, a dimension that has no relationship to the Hofmann murder and forgery cases, can only be understood as further paralleling anti-Semitic literature, which sought to demonstrate the ties Jews supposedly had to the rites of Free Masonry. However, the authors' knowledge of LDS history is so woefully inadequate, and their understanding of even basic Mormon beliefs and practices so absurdly inaccurate, that it is hard to see how anyone could take their work seriously. Their exaggerations are even comic, as when, for example they describe Mormon missionaries as "a pack of young lions tracking a herd" and preying "on the old, the sick, and the lame" (67). Their demeaning descriptions of Church leaders are caricatures rather than true-life portraits. President Hinckley is presented as the quintessential "bureaucrat," who is "notoriously shrewd about people" (113). His office is compared to a funeral parlor (306) and Mormon culture is described as a "vast landscape of mashed potatoes" (109, compare 67). They portray most Church leaders as "businessmen at heart" and suggest that "any talk of religion made them uncomfortable" (118). The absurd comedy grows as they describe a certain leader as "clawing his way up through the dense, sanctimonious jungle of the Church hierarchy" (119), and reaches a peak in their portrayal of a plot by members of the First Quorum of the Seventy to oust President Hinckley! (305–306). It would seem that the authors have spent too much time reading Machiavelli's *The Prince* and apparently none reading the Doctrine and Covenants.

As we would expect, Naifeh and Smith see conspiracies everywhere, and like Peter Bart they are sure the Mormon church is behind all of them. Jerald Tanner (clearly a key source for the authors), like Hiram Cobb of Bart's novel, is the real hero—he seeks and sees the truth, but the Church just wants to suppress it. As we might further expect, Naifeh and Smith fail to see any contradiction in their presenting Hofmann as a thoroughgoing liar *except* when he is telling his tales about his relationship to President Hinckley and the Church.

If *Mormon Murders* has any merit, it is the focus it gives to the case by seeing the whole affair through the eyes of Jim Bell and Ken Farnsworth, the investigators for the Salt Lake police department. Much of the detail regarding the case no doubt came from these two individuals, as well as from Gerry D'Elia, and their

perspective is of value, even if they tend toward cynicism. Thus this volume does provide some insight into the inner workings of the police investigation, including the interdepartmental fighting, the hard work the case required, the strain on the lives of those men assigned to the case, and their perceptions of the society they worked in. Even the theories of the police psychologist would seem to have some merit for understanding Hofmann; where *Salamander* places more emphasis on Mark Hofmann's relationship to his mother, *The Mormon Murders* gives more attention to his father and the possible transference of the problems of this relationship onto the Mormon church as a father-figure. There are insights in this volume, but the overt anti-Mormon bias of the authors, combined with their arrogance and stupidity, not to mention the crudity and coarseness of their language, must be seen as seriously distorting their perspective and judgment. One can't help wondering if the authors cut class at Harvard Law School during the semester when the course on evidence was taught.

The third volume, Robert Lindsey's *A Gathering of Saints*, appeared in September 1988. In many ways it is the best of the three books. As a story, it reads better than the others, and on balance it presents a more complete account of all the aspects of the case. Lacking the vituperative approach of *The Mormon Murders*, it moves deftly through the story with insight and compassion. And it is well organized. By providing several introductory chapters that survey early Mormon history, Lindsey responsibly prepares his readers to better understand the historical import of Hofmann's "discoveries." Thereafter the story proceeds chronologically. In general, this volume is much more evenhanded than the others in dealing with the role of the LDS church in the Hofmann story. Lindsey suggests in one place that the issues of separation of church and state could be one explanation for the hesitancy of Church leaders to readily turn over its files or the manuscripts in its possession to state investigators.

A key source for Lindsey was Michael George (see 283), an investigator for the Salt Lake County Attorney's office. George was clearly the source for the interesting final interview with Hofmann presented at the end of the volume.

Of course there are problems: Lindsey just repeats the old, inaccurate stories of the Danites (see, for example, 204, 249–50), and no serious Mormon historian would agree with his claim that Jerald Tanner (following Fawn Brodie) gave birth to the "new Mormon history" (128). But these flaws can probably be ascribed to his status as an outsider to Mormon country and culture.

Lindsey's volume has more detail on the documents Hofmann "found" and sold than do the other two books. Particularly valuable is his discussion of the "Oath of a Freeman," in which he gives the full story of the one potential sale that might have solved Hofmann's financial problems. Lindsey reprints the letters from the Library of Congress and from the American Antiquarian Society that reveal the behind-the-scenes developments. The other volumes do not present this dimension of the case as fully. Lindsey also peppers his study with ample quotes from the diaries and journals of many of the key participants in these events, material that is either summarized, hinted at, or entirely ignored in the other volumes. By using these primary sources he gives the reader a fuller picture of the thoughts and feelings of the main actors, even though we are never told where *we* can examine these documents.

Lindsey's story is well told and presents realistic portraits of the key participants. Where Robert Stott, the chief prosecutor, is presented in very negative terms by Naifeh and Smith, Lindsey gives a more believable view of a man who tried to be very thorough and very cautious. Stott surely was not the political country bumpkin that comes across in *The Mormon Murders*. The same applies to Naifeh and Smith's caricature of Brent Ward.

One thing that all of these volumes lack is a sense of historical perspective on forgery. Forgery is an ancient business, whether we talk about the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, the Donation of Constantine, the 1929 forgeries of Lincoln letters, the Horn diaries and papers of the 1940s and 1950s, the recent Hitler diary forgeries, or the numerous art forgeries that are periodically brought to our attention by the news media.¹ Even in Mormon history, Hofmann is not the first forger. Consider the clear evidence that the Oliver Cowdery pamphlet *Defense in a Rehearsal of My Grounds for Separating Myself from the Latter Day Saints*, allegedly printed in Ohio in 1839, and even considered authentic by B. H. Roberts, is in fact a forgery.² Then too, some Mormons continue to use the fraudulent Archko Volume in their New Testament studies.³ And recent discoveries in the Texas rare book and manuscript market surely ought to help us place Hofmann's activities in a broader context.⁴

Another problem stems from these volumes' way of treating contemporary history. In telling their stories, these authors would have us believe they were in the Office of the First Presidency when Hofmann met with President Hinckley; or in the back seat of the car when Yengich and Stott drove around Salt Lake City initially discussing a possible plea bargain. Of course we know this was not the case, but by adopting a "you were there" writing style, the

authors betray their work as journalism, not history. Can we really believe that all the players in the Hofmann drama spoke in publishable dialogue, as if every sentence were accompanied by quotation marks?⁵ *Mormon Murders* shows this tendency at its worst. Not only are dialogues invented out of whole cloth, but the authors also manage to climb into the minds of key players so they can tell us what each person was feeling and thinking. This fantasyland approach to reconstructing historical events eliminates all serious methodological roadblocks; the narrative can go wherever the authors wish because truth and evidence are never allowed to get in the way of a good story. And since no source citations are given, the reader has no way to check up on the sources the authors used. One suspects, in fact, at least for the Naifeh and Smith volume, that sources were not identified precisely because their fictions would be found out.

Most people, as these three volumes show, get their history, not from scholarly journals or monographs, but from journalists who control the public media. As Neil Postman has pointed out in his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, the very nature of modern news media has created the idea of context-free information, the idea that the value of information need not be tied to any function it might serve, but merely to its novelty, interest, and curiosity. But more than that, modern journalism is characterized by its capacity to move information, but not to collect it, explain it, or analyze it. "Knowing the facts" in the media has come to mean knowing *of* things, not knowing *about* them. Hence the stress on images, stereotypes, and headlines, on the sensational and on the push for quick answers and conclusions without study or evaluation. The bottom line is entertainment and marketing, not education; what results is triviality, not understanding.⁶ Without a doubt, a show-business atmosphere permeated most of the newspaper and television coverage of the Hofmann case, and this approach has helped to decontextualize and sensationalize the whole case. None of these books escapes this tendency, although *Mormon Murders* is again the most outrageous example.

Like Sampson Avard and John C. Bennett in early Mormon history, the "salamander" and Mark Hofmann are now permanently fixed in the experience and memory of the Latter-day Saints. Like these earlier individuals, Hofmann betrayed the fundamental values of the community he claimed membership in. But unlike the earlier defectors from the Church, who left little record of their lives, with Mark Hofmann we have a better opportunity to understand the whys and hows of his defection. At least these new books

invite us to look deeper into the context of Hofmann's activities, and provide an occasion for self-examination for those of us who hold to the values he rejected so violently.

Several elements of Mormon culture seem to have contributed to the direction Hofmann took. His domestic life was not able to deal fully and openly with its own history, which was, in turn, intermeshed with Mormon institutional history. The polygamous marriage of his maternal grandparents *after* the Manifesto (Mark's mother was born in 1929 of this relationship) was treated as a deep family secret, and Mark's questions about it only pushed the answers further into darkness. Some of his earliest research endeavors into Church history were attempts to find out the truth about his own family. And what Mark saw as institutional disingenuousness—allowing plural marriages but publically denying them—was reinforced at home. In his experience, people just were not able to deal honestly with their past, and they covered this fear with an authoritarian silence. This alone made people and institutions potential victims of his schemes, and his documents could only make their worst nightmares come true.

The Hofmann case also reveals another example of white-collar crime. As the authors of these volumes show, greed was a common denominator of many of the people who got involved with Hofmann: financial greed, political greed, historical greed. "To get gain" was one of the key motives of the actors in this case. Such "getting" has in recent decades created an active "underground" dealing with Mormon documents. One even suspects that this need to know, this lust for knowledge in the Mormon community, was the one card defense attorney Yengich had to play as his client's guilt became more apparent. We must particularly wonder about the greed of collectors, some of whom essentially "ordered" manuscripts from Hofmann in their inordinate desire to possess a specific item. This quest for knowledge that is thought to give a certain power, and the lust for possession of the manuscripts that supposedly convey this knowledge, is another basis for the flim-flam that occasionally surfaces in our culture. We find ourselves "trafficking" in our heritage, reducing everything to a dollar price that invites crime into historical study, and error into our research.

In retrospect it is clear that our tools failed us in this instance. There is no doubt that some of the best minds in America were involved in authenticating the main Hofmann documents; thus historical responsibility was exercised. But what happens when the FBI labs, the experts at the Library of Congress, and some of the best documents people in the country are fooled? It is important to remember that traditional historical education does not include the

kinds of technical training required for detecting forgeries. Yet in this case, with so many people with specialized training and experience involved, it appears that current levels of expertise are inadequate. Then too, the techniques used to detect some of the Hofmann forgeries still have not been tested as to their admissibility into a court of law.

In some ways, our culture's very success helped create Hofmann. Consider our technical knowledge of inks, paper, writing, and printing, which is available in dozens of books and articles, not to mention vast libraries containing histories on all topics. These extensive resources were clearly used by Hofmann. Using equally available information, one could construct a pipe bomb or even (given access to the materials) an atomic bomb. Perhaps this is one price we pay for living in an open society.

The context of Hofmann's activities must be examined more carefully than it is in any of these volumes if we are to fully understand why mistakes were made. Such an examination must take account of the history of Mormon historical scholarship for at least the last thirty years. For example, it is clear that for a number of years there have been tensions within the Mormon community between the two perspectives Owen Chadwick identifies in his perceptive study of the opening of the Vatican Archives:

(1) *The Ecclesiastical Statesman*, who holds, "We have enemies in the world. Bad things happened in the past. If we open our archives, we let in not only neutrals who want to understand, or friends who have that sympathy which enables men to understand better, but antagonists seeking to stir up dirt. Such hostile enquiry, especially if misused, hurts the institution; and in hurting the institution, hurts the world which the institution serves."

(2) *The Scholar/Historian*, who argues, "The Church is committed to truth. The opening of archives is a necessary part of the quest for truth in an age of historical enquiry. Truth is an absolute good. No plea of political welfare can override the commitment. The Church wants to know what really happened. For the sake of that quest it must run the risk that fanatics misuse its documents. Misuse is of the moment, truth becomes a possession."⁷

Both positions have truth and value, and they are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but they do help to clarify real positions. The volumes on Hofmann deal in various ways with the scholar-statesman tensions in Mormon culture. Each book deals with this differently, but it seems clear now that Hofmann got away with some of his activities because he took advantage of the tensions that had developed during the late 1970s and into the 1980s. Hofmann might have appeared in any case, but a more open policy of access to archives would have made his impact less traumatic.

As early as his own LDS mission, Hofmann had concluded, through a study of Fawn Brodie's biography of Joseph Smith, that Joseph was the ultimate con man who forged his revelations and then pretended sincerity. In a perverse way, Hofmann was able in his own mind to twist the life of Joseph Smith into a model for his own activities. For example, after a missionary companion (according to Sillitoe and Roberts) called him to account for his theft of an anti-Mormon work from a library in England, Hofmann justified his actions (paraphrasing Nephi) by saying, "It is better that I steal this work than even one person lose his testimony by reading it." The irony, not to mention the dishonesty, was that Hofmann had already concluded that the Church was not true!

It was Hannah Arendt who said that one of the purposes of the past is to haunt us. Even without Hofmann, we would seem to have enough history lurking in the underbrush to plague us as a people who care so much about truth, but who, at times, care so little about history. Thus it is possible for another Hofmann to appear in our culture, for as long as there are perceived secrets and we tend to distrust each other, someone will emerge to prey upon our worst fears and needs. We care about the work of people like Hofmann because our history matters to us. We anchor our faith in the concrete experiences of times past, both personally and collectively. It is a measure of that faith that we must assess our mistakes while we continue the study of our history even more intensively.

NOTES

¹An introduction to forgeries in history is Robin W. Winks, ed., *The Historian as Detective, Essays on Evidence* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969). See also Charles Hamilton, *Collecting Autographs and Manuscripts* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961); *Scribblers and Scoundrels* (New York: Paul E. Erickson, 1968); *Great Forgers and Famous Fakes* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1980); Gerald Sparrow, *The Great Forgers* (London: J. Long, 1963); Robert Harris, *Selling Hitler* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986); and Denis Dutton, ed., *The Forger's Art: Forgery and the Philosophy of Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983).

²See Richard L. Anderson, "The Second Witness of Priesthood Restoration," *Improvement Era* 71 (September 1968): 20ff.; Richard L. Anderson, response to reader's question in "I Have a Question," *Ensign* 17 (April 1987): 23–25; and Jerald Tanner and Sandra Tanner, *A Critical Look, A Study of the Overstreet "Confession" and the Cowdery "Defense"* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Company, 1967).

³See Richard L. Anderson, "The Fraudulent Archko Volume," *Brigham Young University Studies* 15 (Autumn 1974): 43–64.

⁴See W. Thomas Taylor, "The Texas Forgeries," *Maine Antique Digest* 17 (January 1989): 26–28; and David Hewett, "Forgeries and Fraud in Texas," *ibid.*, 29–30.

⁵Perspectives on these problems are developed by Theodore Draper, "Journalism, History and Journalistic History," *New York Times Book Review*, 9 December 1984, 3ff. See also the discussion by Gordon Wright on the three main challenges to writing contemporary history (inadequate sources, excessive subjectivity, and stunted perspective), "Contemporary History in the Contemporary Age," in Charles F. Delzell, ed., *The Future of History* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1977), 219–30.

⁶Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York: Viking, 1985), especially chaps. 4 and 5. Compare the reflections of Wendell Berry, *A Continuous Harmony: Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), 89–93.

⁷Owen Chadwick, *Catholicism and History: The Opening of the Vatican Archives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 4.

The Mark Hofmann Case: A Basic Chronology

1954

- 9 Jan. Steven Christensen born in Salt Lake City, Utah.
- 7 Dec. Mark William Hofmann born in Salt Lake City, Utah.

1966

At age twelve Hofmann purchases his first Mormon item: a five dollar Kirtland Safety Society Note signed by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon.

1973

- June Mark Hofmann graduates from Olympus High School, Salt Lake City.
- June *Book of Common Prayer* bought by Deseret Book Co.
- 27 Nov. Hofmann called to serve a mission to the England Southwest Mission, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He would served primarily in the areas of Portsmouth, Bristol, and Bath.

1976

- Spring Hofmann enrolls at Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

This chronology has been assembled from a variety of sources. I have benefited from a review by various friends and colleagues. A detailed chronology (1980–87) compiled by Mike Carter appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, 1 August 1987. See also *Deseret News*, 31 July 1987, A6; and [William G. Hartley], "Fraudulent Documents: A Chronology for the BYU Symposium" (distributed on 6 August 1987).

1977

- 15 April Hofmann gets engaged for the first time. He later breaks off the relationship.

1978

- June Hofmann gives a photocopy of an account of a second anointing ceremony in LDS temple (supposedly dated 1920) to Sandra Tanner, a professional anti-Mormon in Salt Lake City.

1979

- 29 April Hofmann writes a college essay in the form of a letter to his mother in which he is very critical of the historical policies of the LDS church.
- Fall Hofmann and Jeff Simmonds discuss the CBS TV miniseries based on Irving Wallace's 1972 novel *The Word* (the lost book of James), a story of ancient manuscripts, forgeries and murder.
- 14 Sept. Hofmann marries Doralee Olds in the Salt Lake Temple.
- October Hofmann sells a Second Anointing blessing to Utah State University archivist Jeff Simmonds for sixty dollars. Hofmann makes Simmonds promise he will not tell anyone where he got it. Hofmann now claims a 1912 date for this item.

1980

- 16 April Hofmann shows his wife a 1688 edition of the Bible and specifically points out that several pages are stuck together. Police later establish that this Bible was purchased by Hofmann in Bristol while on his mission in England.
- 17 April Hofmann shows Jeff Simmonds the 1688 Bible and they separate the stuck pages, discovering the "Anthon Transcript."

- 18 April Danel Bachman and Mark Hofmann visit Dean Jessee at the LDS church historical department in Salt Lake City. Jessee then begins his study of the "Anthon Transcript."
- 22 April The Church accepts "Anthon Transcript."
- 3 May KSL-TV (Salt Lake City) interviews Hofmann in Danel Bachman's office at the Logan, Utah, LDS Institute of Religion. Newspapers carry the story of the "Anthon Transcript" discovery. Hofmann becomes a celebrity.
- 1-4 May Mormon History Association annual meetings held in Canandaigua, New York. One session is devoted to the "Anthon Transcript."
- June The Church attempts to check the provenance of the "Anthon Transcript" in order to authenticate it.
- 27 June Hofmann visits Dorothy Dean in Carthage, Illinois. He tells her he is trying to establish the source of the 1688 Bible.
- July Mark and Doralee Hofmann move to Sandy, Utah.
- 29 July Dorothy Dean signs affidavit, convinced by Hofmann that her mother must have been the source of the 1688 Bible.
- 13 Oct. The "Anthon Transcript" is sold by Hofmann to the LDS church. In exchange the Church gives him a five dollar Mormon gold coin minted in 1850, a first edition of the Book of Mormon, and several examples of pioneer Mormon Currency. Total value: \$20,000.

1981

- 8 Jan. Hofmann is arrested for stealing a bag of sliced almonds from a grocery store in Salt Lake Valley.
- 12 Feb. Hofmann calls Michael Marquardt, asking for information on the 1844 succession. He specifically wants to know what Joseph Smith was doing on 17 January 1844. Two days later Marquardt tells him Joseph Smith spent the day at home.

- 16 Feb. Hofmann shows Church Archivist Donald Schmidt a photocopy of a faded 1844 document that appears to be the text of a blessing Joseph Smith gave to his son Joseph Smith III, 17 January 1844. Schmidt is noncommittal. Hofmann then decides to approach Richard Howard, Church Historian of the RLDS church.
- 24 Feb. Hofmann informs Howard of the Joseph Smith III blessing. Several days later Howard calls Hofmann, at which time Hofmann promises not to sell it before 8 March.
- 27 Feb. Schmidt and associates in the LDS church historical department inform President Hinckley of the Joseph Smith III blessing document. The Church decides to obtain it.
- 2 March The Joseph Smith III blessing is sold to LDS church for about \$20,000 in trade. (The Church trades this document to the RLDS church on 18 March for an 1833 Book of Commandments.) Soon after, Hofmann donates to LDS church a Thomas Bullock letter to Brigham Young, dated 27 January 1865, to add credibility to the blessing. About the same time of the blessing transaction, LDS church purchases some "White Notes" from Hofmann. Hofmann also sells some to Al Rust, a coin dealer in Salt Lake City.
- April At LDS general conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley discusses the Joseph Smith III blessing.
- April-May James Dibowski and Albert Somerford, forensic experts associated with the U.S. Postal Inspector's Crime Lab, authenticate Joseph Smith III blessing. The paper tests would be done by the McCrone Institute of Chicago.
- May Hofmann purchases a large collection of letters from Steve Gardiner in Utah County. On 18 May he pays Gardiner \$20,000; in November he borrows \$25,000 from Al Rust which he pays to Gardiner. This Gardiner purchase constitutes the core of the catalogue list of Mormon manuscripts Hofmann issues about this time.

- 15 May RLDS President Wallace B. Smith announces that a team of experts has tested the Joseph Smith III blessing and established its genuineness. About this time Hofmann meets Lyn Jacobs and Brent Metcalfe.
- 29 May The Joseph Smith to Emma letter (dated 3 March 1833) is sold to Brent Ashworth, a Utah County lawyer-collector, for \$6,000 (\$4,000 in cash, \$2,000 in trade).

1982

- January Hofmann orders rubber stamps from the Salt Lake Stamp Co. which he would use to make various denominations of Spanish Fork notes.
- March Hofmann tells Ashworth of a collection of nineteenth-century letters from the Palmyra area that is coming on the market; he says that a Lucy Mack Smith letter is among them.
- 6 March Hofmann calls Ashworth to tell him about another "find." He drives to Ashworth's home in Payson and shows him a 13 January 1873 letter of Martin Harris to Walter Conrad. Ashworth wants it; the tentative selling price is established at \$27,000. Ashworth offers to trade documents signed by George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Robert E. Lee.
- 29 July Hofmann shows Ashworth the letter of Lucy Mack Smith to Mary Pierce, dated 23 January 1829. They agree to have Dean Jessee check the handwriting of the letter prior to final purchase by Ashworth. Selling price about \$33,000 in trade.
- 23 Aug. News conference held regarding the Lucy Smith letter.
- 17 Sept. Hofmann interviewed by Peggy Fletcher, editor of *Sunstone*. The interview is published in *Sunstone Review* 2 (September 1982): 16–19. Hofmann admits in the interview that with the high prices being paid for Mormon documents "there may be some temptation to forge." Later in the interview he says, "I'm in this for the money."

- Sept. Hofmann interviewed by Jeffrey Keller for the *7th East Press* (an off-campus BYU student newspaper). A summary of the interview appeared in the September 1982 issue, 6–7.
- 20 Oct. David Whitmer to Walter Conrad letter (dated 2 April 1873) sold to LDS church for \$10,000.
- 21 Oct. Hofmann sells Ashworth a half-page fragment from the “Book of Mosiah” for \$5,000. Later Ashworth buys a second fragment, a full page from the “Book of Helaman,” for \$25,000. Both are featured in the *Ensign* 13 (October 1983): 77.
- Nov. to Dec. Spanish Fork Co-Operative notes sold to Alvin Rust. Hofmann had prepared several sets of these undated notes, in denominations of ten cents, twenty-five cents, fifty cents, and one dollar. Hofmann sold sets to various individuals at \$1,500–\$2,000 per set.

1983

- 5 Jan. Hofmann calls G. Homer Durham, managing director of the LDS church historical department, about a letter he says he has just found. In contacting Durham, Hofmann skirts the normal Church channels for acquiring documents. Durham takes Hofmann directly to President Gordon B. Hinckley. The document is the earliest known holograph of Joseph Smith, a letter to Josiah Stowell, dated 18 June 1825. The price agreed upon is \$15,000. The Church insists on establishing its authenticity.
- 10 Jan. Hofmann flies to New York City. He meets there with Charles Hamilton, a well known autograph dealer. Hofmann convinces Hamilton that the 1825 letter is authentic, and he signs a statement to that effect.
- 14 Jan. Elwyn Doubleday sells the Lounsbery Collection of Letters to William Thoman. Hofmann will claim he purchased the Harris 1830 letter from Thoman in March 1982. Police later show that this Doubleday sale to Thoman occurred on 14 January 1983.

- 14 Jan. Letter of Joseph Smith to Josiah Stowell (18 June 1825) sold to LDS church for \$15,000. The letter is then placed in the First Presidency vault.
- 3 March E. B. Grandin printing contract for first printing of Book of Mormon, signed by Joseph Smith and Martin Harris (dated 17 August 1829), sold to LDS church for \$25,000.
- April Hofmann visits the Justin Schiller-Raymond Wapner Galleries in New York City for the first time. He introduces himself as a dealer in rare coins; he also begins to purchase rare children's books from them.
- Nov. Letter of Joseph Smith to General Jonathan Dunham, 27 June 1844, sold to Dr. Richard Marks, of Phoenix, Arizona, by Hofmann, who had earlier promised it to Brent Ashworth. Ashworth would learn of the sale on 27 January 1984.
- 29 Nov. Hofmann calls Michael Marquardt and tells him he has just found a Martin Harris letter. He reads the letter to Marquardt.
- 1 Dec. Hofmann has Michael Marquardt to his home for dinner. He shows him the text of a letter of Martin Harris to William W. Phelps, dated 23 October 1830. Marquardt tells a number of people about it during the next week.
- 16 Dec. Lyn Jacobs, fronting for Hofmann, offers to sell LDS church an 1830 Martin Harris letter to W. W. Phelps (the "white salamander" letter). President Hinckley declines, indicating that the price is too high. Brent Ashworth also rejects the offer. Hofmann, "fronting" for Jacobs, approaches LDS Church Archivist Donald Schmidt, eventually suggesting that perhaps a wealthy Church member could be found to buy it and then donate it to the Church. This middleman idea proves to be attractive. Brent Metcalfe tells Hofmann of Steven Christensen.

1984

- 6 Jan. The Harris letter is sold to Steven Christensen and Gary Sheets. Hofmann had asked \$50,000 for it but had accepted an offer of \$40,000 payable over eighteen months: \$1,000 down, \$9,000 in two weeks, and the balance in increments of \$10,000 at six month intervals.
- January Christensen retains BYU historians Ron Walker and Dean Jessee to study historical context of Harris letter. In a 24 January letter to his research team, he counsels them to seek the truth in their studies.
- Late Jan. Hofmann tells Christensen he has a cash-flow problem; if Christensen can give him the \$9,000 plus \$5,000 now, Hofmann will give him a bonus: the transcript of a 1 November 1825 contract in which Joseph Smith, Sr., Josiah Stowell, and other partners agreed on the division of proceeds from a money-digging enterprise they had organized to find buried treasure. Christensen agrees to advance the money in exchange for a copy of the text and the right to buy the original for \$15,000 if and when Hofmann acquires it.
- February Alvin E. Rust, *Mormon and Utah Coin and Currency* published. It contains several Hofmann forgeries.
- February Dean Jessee's *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* appears. It includes six Hofmann forgeries.
- March Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Utah Lighthouse Ministry, though wanting to believe the Harris letter authentic, admits to "some reservations" because of its similarity to an affidavit of Willard Chase in E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled* [sic] (1834) and to a statement by early LDS convert Joseph Knight. Tanners publish long extracts from Harris letter in the *Salt Lake Messenger*.
- 7 March Steven Christensen issues a press release admitting ownership of the 1830 Harris letter, but he says that he will not release it until further research is done on it. His researchers were then working on (1) *examining the physical text* (they chose Kenneth Rendell of Newton, Mass., to do this); (2) *establishing the provenance of the*

letter (Dean Jessee worked back to Elwyn Doubleday, a dealer in postal memorabilia in Alton Bay, New Hampshire); and (3) *understanding the historical context of the letter* (Ronald Walker, Dean Jessee, and Brent Metcalfe were working on this aspect).

- 18 May “Mike Hansen” [Hofmann alias] orders printing plates from Cocks-Clark Engraving in Denver, Colorado, for Deseret currency.
- June “Mike Hansen” orders twelve zinc etchings from William Clayton’s *Latter Day Saint’s Emigrants Guide* (1848) from Heisler Engraving in Kansas City, Missouri. Part of the \$389.69 order is paid with a check for \$169.69 signed by Mark W. Hofmann.
- August Hofmann sells full set of Deseret currency (dated 1858) to Alvin Rust for \$35,000.
- 21–24 August Sunstone Theological Symposium, Hotel Utah, Salt Lake City. First public discussion of the Harris 1830 letter by Jan Shipps and Richard Bushman.
- 22 Aug. Utah Lighthouse Ministry publishes *The Money-Digging Letter*.
- 25 Aug. *Los Angeles Times* publishes long article on the Harris letter. Other newspapers across the country follow its lead.
- Sept. Utah Lighthouse Ministry publishes copy of a circulating typescript of the 1825 Smith-Stowell letter, and questions why the 1830 Harris letter is devoid of mention of God or angels.
- 26 Sept. Hofmann learns from Kenneth Rendell that forensic examiner of paper, William G. Krueger, has determined there are no indications of forgery in the 1830 Harris letter.
- October In an address at general conference, Elder Bruce R. McConkie warns members who conduct or support historical research threatening to the faith of other members. Three days later Christensen fires Brent

Metcalf from his research team, but gives him severance pay. Metcalfe had filled in for Christensen in giving a talk to the faculty at the LDS Institute of Religion at the University of Utah. The discussion had become very heated over Metcalfe's refusal to bear his testimony to the group after discussing the Harris 1830 letter. Christensen writes a letter to President Hinckley shortly thereafter (16 October) in which he says he has decided to suspend research on the letter and to drop plans to publish a book about it.

30 Oct. Wilford Cardon sends Hofmann a check for \$12,000 for an 1807 Betsy Ross letter.

"Mike Hansen" orders Jim Bridger notes from Utah Engraving Company.

21 Nov. "Mike Hansen" orders printing plate for Emma Smith hymnal back page from Debouzek Engraving, Salt Lake City.

28 Nov. Emma Smith hymnal sold to Brent Ashworth for \$5,000 and a Brigham Young letter.

12 Dec. "Mike Hansen" leaves Mark Hofmann fingerprint, which police later find, on receipt at Salt Lake Stamp Company.

1985

2 Jan. Hofmann sells two Jim Bridger notes to Charles Hamilton for \$10,000.

15 Feb. Steven Christensen receives a report from Albert H. Lyter, III, a forensic chemist in Raleigh, North Carolina. Lyter had examined the ink on the Harris 1830 letter and reported: "There is no evidence that the examined document was prepared at other than during the stated time period."

26 Feb. Christensen again writes to President Hinckley about the Harris letter.

- 29 Feb. President Hinckley calls Christensen and assures him that the Church wants the Harris letter.
- 8 March "Mike Harris" orders plate from DeBouzek Engraving in Salt Lake City for "The Oath of a Freeman."
- 11 March Hofmann flies to New York City.
- 13 March Hofmann purchases five items from Argosy Book Store in New York City for \$51.42. One item he claimed he purchased at this time was the "Oath of a Freeman," the oldest printed item in American history. Hofmann claimed he paid twenty-five dollars for this specific item. Several days later he returns with the "Oath of a Freeman" to Schiller's Gallery in New York City. Various authorities are contacted by Schiller to examine the broadside. William Matheson, chief of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress accepts the item and says a battery of tests will be performed on it to determine its authenticity. In April the Library of Congress tells Schiller and Wapner, Hofmann's agents, that it wants to buy the "Oath of a Freeman."
- 15 March Thomas Wilding and Associate Syd Jensen, at Hofmann's invitation, agree to invest \$22,500 in eighteen rare books.
- 20 March Kenneth Rendell sends his final report to Christensen: "There is no indication that this letter [the Harris 1830 letter] is a forgery."
- 21 March Wilding and Co. investors give Hofmann \$22,500 to purchase rare books.
- 25 March "Mike Hansen" orders a second plate of the "Oath of a Freeman."
- 3 April Christensen tells *Salt Lake Tribune* that tests show Harris letter to be authentic, that researchers are preparing it for publication, and that their findings will be announced at the Mormon History Association annual meeting in May.

- 8 April Schiller sends "Oath of a Freeman" to Library of Congress. Asking price: \$1.5 million.
- 16 April Letter of David and Peter Whitmer to Bethell Todd (dated 12 August 1828) sold to LDS church for \$1,500 by Hofmann.
- 18 April First Presidency accepts Steven Christensen's donation of the Harris 1830 letter to Church.
- 23 April Alvin Rust advances Hofmann \$150,000 to purchase "McLellin Collection" in New York City. Hofmann later tells Rust that he has sold the McLellin Collection to the LDS church for \$300,000.
- 28 April *Church News* announces Church's acquisition of Harris letter from Christensen, and publishes the letter, with a careful statement from First Presidency acknowledging apparent authenticity.
- 29 April Utah Lighthouse Ministry's *Salt Lake Messenger* accuses LDS church of hiding a second letter that deals with early treasure hunting by the Smith family. *Salt Lake Tribune* claims 1825 Smith-Stowell letter exists, but Church spokesman denies that Church possesses it.
- 30 April Rhett James questions authenticity of Harris letter based on study of word patterns of "known" Harris writings.
- 2 May At Mormon History Association annual meetings in Independence, Missouri, Dean Jessee summarizes findings by experts who noted that nothing had been found indicating forgery. As Jessee would reemphasize in the months to follow, one can prove forgery but not authenticity; authenticating is a matter of reducing probability, not of proving. Ronald Walker discusses context of treasure hunting into which the letter apparently fits.
- 5 May Church spokesman retracts his denial of Church having the 1825 letter, saying he was informed by President Hinckley that the letter was in First Presidency vault and perhaps would be subject of critical study as Harris letter had been.

- 9 May First Presidency releases text of 1825 Smith-Stowell letter with statement that Dean Jessee says document “appears definitely to be in hand of Joseph Smith” and is earliest document written by the Prophet. Document expert Charles Hamilton of New York had authenticated the letter earlier.
- 11 May Newspapers nationwide feature headlines claiming that the Smith-Stowell 1825 letter links Mormon church founder to the occult.
- 14 May Spokesman denies Church has hidden Oliver Cowdery history.
- 15 May Walter McCrowe Associates find the Harris letter’s paper “consistent” with period of date.
- 20 May Time magazine publishes “Challenging Mormonism’s Roots” about the documents controversy. Kenneth Rendell verifies, based on his examination and tests, and based on ink and paper tests done by others, “that there is no indication that this [Harris] letter is a forgery.”
- 25 May Ronald Vern Jackson displays forgery of Neeley court docket to support claim that Harris letter is a fake.
- Early June Brent Metcalfe, who earlier had passed to John Dart, a reporter with the *Los Angeles Times*, information from an anonymous source [Hofmann] about the existence of an Oliver Cowdery history hidden by the First Presidency, now meets with Hofmann and Dart in Salt Lake City. Hofmann tells Dart he has seen the Oliver Cowdery history in the vault of the First Presidency, that this history contains a different account of the origins of the Church, and that it credits Alvin Smith with a key role in obtaining the Book of Mormon plates.
- 5 June Wilford Cardon wires \$110,000 to Schiller-Wagner in New York City to invest in a Charles Dickens manuscript “The Haunted Man and the Ghost’s bargain.” Hofmann had told him of the investment opportunity.
- 9 June Hofmann offers the same investment opportunity to Thomas Wilding he had offered to Cardon.

- 13 June *Los Angeles Times* cites “insider” (anonymous interview with Mark Hofmann) that LDS church presidency is hiding a Cowdery history.
- 14 June Library of Congress returns “Oath of a Freeman” to Schiller-Wapner Galleries: price too high at \$1.5 million.
- 28 June Elder Hugh Pinnock helps arrange a loan of \$185,000 from First Interstate Bank for Hofmann to help purchase McLellin papers.
- 6 July *Salt Lake Tribune*, citing Hofmann, says McLellin Collection includes Pearl of Great Price Facsimile 2.
- 29 July Letter of Joseph Smith to General Jonathan Dunham, 27 June 1844, sold to Brent Ashworth, after Hofmann bought it from Deseret Book Co., which had bought it from Dr. Richard Marks, who had bought it from Hofmann. Hofmann loses about \$56,000 on this transaction, but he must keep Ashworth quiet as Ashworth is beginning to tell people how untrustworthy he is.
- August Brigham Young papers “sold” to Wilding group for \$23,600.
- 12 Aug. Hofmann signs contract to buy a home in Cottonwood area of Salt Lake City for \$550,000. Hofmann agrees to pay \$5,000 in earnest money, \$195,000 at closure, and three additional annual installments of \$195,000. The closing is set for 15 October, 1:00 P.M.
- 21–24 August At Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, historians Michael Quinn, Marvin Hill, and Ronald Walker say that Joseph Smith’s involvement with “folk magic” can be sustained without Hofmann documents.
- 3 Sept. Hofmann’s \$185,000 check to First Interstate Bank bounces.
- 10 Sept. Deseret Book sells Hofmann *Book of Common Prayer* for \$50. It contains a signature of “Nathan Harris.” Several days later Hofmann returns to claim that a poem written by Martin Harris was in the back of the volume.

- 13 Sept. Hofmann admits to Wilding and Syd Jensen that their money had not purchased the "Oath of Freeman" or Dickens manuscript, that Brigham Young papers he had offered to sell did not exist, and that he cannot return their money. Hofmann spends the day trying to raise money. One angry investor hits Hofmann in face. Increasing pressure put on Hofmann.
- 16 Sept. Leslie Kress and Kenneth Rendell sell Hofmann two pieces of papyrus on consignment for expected \$10,500 sale. 23 Sept. Hofmann offers to sell papyrus piece to Curt Bench, of Deseret Book Co.
- 25 Sept. Hofmann offers to sell papyrus piece to Ashworth.
- 30 Sept. Hofmann tries to use papyrus as collateral for \$150,000 loan arranged by Wade Lillywhite of Deseret Book.
- 1 Oct. Hofmann sells Deseret currency notes to Deseret Book.
- 2 Oct. Christensen warns Hofmann to tell Elder Pinnock of his problems.
- 3 Oct. Hofmann sells Nathan Harris *Book of Common Prayer* to LDS church for \$700 in trade.
- 4 Oct. Hofmann tells Elder Pinnock he must sell "McLellin Collection" rather than donate it to Church, so Pinnock arranges for it to be purchased for \$185,000 during 13–19 October. Mission President David E. Sorensen, working through his attorney, David West, is to purchase the McLellin Collection, if someone can authenticate it. Steve Christensen is chosen to do this.
- 6 Oct. A one-third interest in a Betsy Ross letter sold to Wilford Cardon.
- 7 Oct. Radio Shack outlet in Cottonwood Mall sells to "M. Hansen" a battery holder and a mercury switch.
- 11 Oct. Hofmann offers to sell President Hinckley a Kinderhook plate and Joseph's translation of it. The offer is declined.

- 13 Oct. Hofmann tries to sell papyrus (supposedly Facsimile 2), for \$100,000. By now Hofmann's debts are at least \$1,300,000.
- 15 Oct. Steven Christensen and Kathleen Sheets killed by bombs. Police warn Ashworth that he may be on the same hit list. As the Ashworths hurriedly go into hiding, their son is involved in a tragic accident that proves fatal.
- 16 Oct. Hofmann injured by bomb in his car. Some speculate that the bomb was intended for Brent Ashworth or Christensen's attorney.
- 16+ Oct. Police identify Hofmann as suspect in Christensen and Sheets murders, motive linked to dealing in fraudulent documents. Police with search warrant go through Hofmann's house, find a green high school letterman's jacket, and, in a locked basement room, books and manuscripts and note cards containing words from the Book of Mormon.
- 19 Oct. Church announces Harris letter was given to FBI to authenticate. The FBI tests did not indicate forgery. Second search of Hofmann home conducted.
- 21 Oct. Elder Hugh Pinnock releases details of his role in obtaining a loan for Hofmann.
- 23 Oct. In a news conference, Elders Hinckley, Oaks, and Pinnock give details about their contacts with Hofmann.
- 25 Oct. Elder Pinnock repays Hofmann's loan to First Interstate Bank.
- 30 Oct. Information from Rendell says papyrus Hofmann tried to peddle was from him, not part of any McLellin collection.
- 31 Oct. Hofmann released from LDS Hospital. Later in the day he is charged with illegal possession of a machine gun. He pleads innocent and posts \$50,000 bail. A Daniel Boone letter (1775) is sold at a Sotheby's auction for \$29,000. The letter was a Hofmann creation. Sotheby's later buys letter back.

- Nov. Grand Jury hears from people who dealt with Hofmann. No charges filed.
- 13 Nov. Hofmann takes a polygraph test.
- 20 Nov. Hofmann's attorney announces that Hofmann passed the polygraph test and thus did not kill Sheets and Christensen.
- 28 Nov. Traugher papers in Texas are found to contain some McLellin papers but are not the expected McLellin Collection.
- Dec. Utah State Supreme Court rejects an appeal that would have forced a nurse to reveal what she overheard Hofmann say in hospital.
- 17–20
Dec. George Throckmorton and William Flynn begin their investigation of historic documents at the LDS church historical department. They discover cracked ink on documents that Hofmann handled, but they are not sure what caused it.

1986

- 7–20 Jan. Second examination in LDS historical department by Throckmorton and Flynn. About this time the FBI lab in Washington, D.C., reports that its tests had determined that the Harris 1830 letter was *not* a forgery. Neither, according to the FBI, was the 1829 printing contract for Book of Mormon.
- 9 Jan. Terri Christensen delivers Steven Fred Christensen, Jr., by cesarean section. It would have been Steve's thirty-second birthday.
- 22 Jan. Third examination by Throckmorton and Flynn, joined by Al Lyter. Exam conducted at Utah State Crime Lab.
- 4 Feb. Prosecutors charge Hofmann with two murder counts, twenty-three counts of theft by deception and communications fraud involving, among others, the "Anthon Transcript," Harris letter, and nonexistent McLellin Collection. Hofmann goes to Salt Lake County Jail.

- 5 Feb. Probable cause statement released, listing Hofmann documents involved in fraud counts. Investigator George Throckmorton says none of documents described are authentic.
- 7 Feb. Rendell says several Hofmann documents are forgeries, but he is not sure about Harris letter. Prominent LDS historians, with only media reports about case for fraud to counter earlier reports showing authenticity, maintain view that some of the documents are authentic.
- 9 Feb. Hofmann released on \$250,000 bail.
- 11 Feb. *Salt Lake Tribune* quotes James R. Dibowski, former director of U.S. Postal Crime Lab in Cincinnati, contending Joseph Smith III blessing document is genuine.
- April Prosecutors examine forty witnesses to collect evidence to build their case against Hofmann.
- 1 April LDS church announces it is returning court documents received from Hofmann to Hancock County, Illinois.
- 4 April Hofmann charged with four additional theft by deception counts.
- 11 April George Throckmorton examines a second copy of "Oath of a Freeman" loaned to police by Wilding. He says it is a fake printed from a negative made in Salt Lake City.
- 14 April Preliminary hearing in the case of *The State of Utah v. Mark W. Hofmann* begins.
- 18 April Investigators show that Hofmann used "Mike Hansen" alias and that Mike Hansen bought bomb ingredients and engraved plates used to print some documents sold by Hofmann.

Former LDS Church Archivist Don Schmidt testifies that Church took few steps to authenticate documents from Hofmann, indicating that most documents were examined solely on basis of their historical contexts.

- 19 April Fourth examination of documents, conducted in a laboratory at Throckmorton's home. At this point 688 documents including 302 Hofmann documents have been examined. Sixty-one of these are believed to have been forged by Hofmann.
- 20 April LDS church announces that forty-eight documents were purchased or otherwise obtained from Hofmann. The Church paid Hofmann \$57,100 for seven items; the other forty-one were acquired by donation or trade.
- 23 April Hofmann reinjures his knee, falling and fracturing the kneecap. Hearing postponed until 5 May.
- May *BYU Studies* special issue focuses on tests the Harris and Smith letters had been subjected to and on issues raised by the letters, including treasure hunting in and before Joseph Smith's time, based on non-Hofmann sources.
- 3 May Mormon History Association annual meeting, Salt Lake City. Special session on early Mormon history. Papers by Ronald Walker and Alan Taylor later published in *Dialogue* 19 (Winter 1986). At the same meetings, Richard Lloyd Anderson makes a slide-lecture presentation on the Joseph Smith to Hyrum Smith Revelation-Letter (May 1838) showing the problems with the postmark.
- 7 May William Flynn, investigator for Arizona State Crime Lab, announces cracked ink proves Harris letter and other Hofmann documents were forged.
- 22 May Hofmann bound over to Utah Third District Court for trial on charges of murder and fraud. On 6 June he pleads not guilty to all charges. Judges rule that Hofmann would face five separate trials; the first, for murder, scheduled for 2 March 1987.
- 24 May Unanswered questions, including how Hofmann passed polygraph test, remain after preliminary hearings end. Based on what public has been told, many people still reluctant to agree with prosecution's case.

- Summer-
Fall Roderick McNeil uses a scanning auger microscope to examine the age of the ink on the documents Hofmann sold to the Church. He concludes that none were written before 1970.
- 16 Oct. Church announces that a search of its archives and First Presidency's vault found no Oliver Cowdery history.
- 28 Oct. Jerald Tanner publishes *Tracking the White Salamander: The Story of Mark Hofmann, Murder and Forged Mormon Documents*.
- 26 Nov. David Yocum, the recently elected Salt Lake County Attorney, removes prosecutor Gary D'Elia from the Hofmann case. Two weeks later D'Elia resigns from the county attorney's office.
- Early
Dec. Defense attorney Yengich and prosecutor Stott begin open discussions about a plea bargain.

1987

- 7 Jan. Plea bargain agreed to.
- 7-8 Jan. Stott and David Biggs drive to Yengich's home in Salt Lake City. Hofmann confesses his crimes to them.
- 22 Jan. Yengich forces Mark Hofmann to confront his family with his guilt.
- 23 Jan. Plea bargain announced. Hofmann pleads guilty to two counts of second-degree murder and two counts of communication fraud involving the Harris letter and McLellin papers. Twenty-six other counts dismissed, and Hofmann agrees to be interviewed about the murders and documents. He goes to the Utah State Prison. Belief continues among some historians that not all Hofmann-related documents are forgeries.
- 11 Feb.-
27 May Interviews conducted with Hofmann in prison.

- 23 April At the invitation of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History and the department of history, BYU, George Throckmorton discusses the Hofmann forgeries with historians and archivists at BYU for two hours.
- 31 July County Attorney's office releases 600-page transcript of interviews its staff conducted with prisoner Hofmann. Hofmann confessed that all the documents listed on statement of probable cause were forged. Some dissatisfaction is expressed in scholarly circles and in the public with the incompleteness of Hofmann's confessions.
- August D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* published.
- 6 Aug. BYU symposium on "Church History and Recent Forgeries." The concluding address by Elder Dallin Oaks published in the *Ensign* 17 (October 1987): 63–69.
- 4 Sept. Deseret Book Company, owned by the LDS church, announces the closing of its fine and rare book department.

1988

- 9 Jan. Hofmann parole hearing. Citing his "callous disregard for human life and that the killings were done to cover other criminal activities," the parole board tells Hofmann that he should spend the rest of his life in prison.
- March Michael George interviews Hofmann for about seven hours. Hofmann claims to have forged documents with at least eighty-three different signatures. When asked how he felt about the people he murdered, Hofmann responds, "I don't feel anything for them. My philosophy is that they're dead. They're not suffering. I think life is basically worthless. They could have died just as easily in a car accident. . . . I don't believe in God. I don't believe in an afterlife. *They don't know they're dead*" (see Robert Lindsey, *A Gathering of Saints: A True Story of Murder and Deceit* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988], 378, italics in original).

- April Sillitoe and Roberts, *Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders, with a Forensic Analysis* by George J. Throckmorton published. In the summary to his forensic analysis, Throckmorton concludes: “During the one-and-one-half-year investigation into the Mark W. Hofmann documents, more than 6,000 documents reportedly dating from between 1792 and 1929 were examined. Of that total, 443 documents came from Hofmann. Of these, 268 (or 60 percent) were found to be authentic—mostly public court records and other historically insignificant items. Another 68 documents (or 15 percent) could not be proven either genuine or forged. However, 107 documents (or 24 percent) were found to be forged” (552).
- 21 April The family of Kathleen Sheets awarded nearly two million dollars in a court judgment against Mark W. Hofmann.
- August Naifeh and Smith, *The Mormon Murders: A True Story of Greed, Forgery, Deceit, and Death* published.
- 6 Aug. *Salt Lake Tribune* reports that Hofmann was plotting to have members of the Utah Board of Pardons killed.
- 10 Aug. Doralee Olds Hofmann files for divorce.
- 19 Aug. LDS church releases official statement condemning *The Mormon Murders* for its “scurrilous descriptions, accusations, and willful misrepresentations of the actions and motives of the leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”
- 15 Sept. Hofmann attempts suicide by way of a drug overdose. He is rushed to the University of Utah Health Sciences Center.
- 27 Sept. Hofmann transferred to hospital at Utah State Prison.
- Sept. Lindsey, *A Gathering of Saints: A True Story of Murder and Deceit* published.
- 1 Oct. *Salt Lake Tribune* announced that Deseret Book Co. had filed a civil law suit in Utah’s Third District Court

against Wade Lillywhite, a key witness in the Hofmann forgery case. Lillywhite, a former employee in Deseret Book Company's Fine and Rare Book Department in Salt Lake City is accused of defrauding the bookstore of \$236,308. On 13 January 1989 Lillywhite pleads guilty to falsifying records and stealing rare books for his own use, and on 17 March 1989 was sentenced to ten years probation and restitution totaling almost \$229,000.

- 16 Oct. Richard P. Lindsay, managing director of public communications for the LDS church, tells *Deseret News* that the Church plans to publish "a complete list of errors, misquotes and exaggerations" in *The Mormon Murders*.

1989

- 16 Feb. *Salt Lake Tribune* announces that the LDS church public relations department is working on a full account of the Hofmann case. Rumors also circulate that a book-length history of the Hofmann case is being researched by members of the LDS church historical department.

The Mark Hofmann Case: A Bibliographical Guide

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12. Emma Smith hymnal (1835) last page—tipped in

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Anderson, Richard Lloyd. *BYU Studies* 24 (Fall 1984 [issued May 1986]): 508-21.

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17. Letter of Joseph Smith to Jonathan Dunham (27 June 1844)
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18. William Clayton. *Latter Day Saint's Emigrants Guide* (1848; pages tipped in)

Hewett, David. "New Evidence of Fake Americana Surfaces in Utah." *Maine Antique Digest* 15 (February 1987): 12A.

19. Handwritten white notes (dated 1849)

Throckmorton. *Salamander*, 540.

20. Spanish Fork notes (n.d.)

Rust, Alvin. *Mormon and Utah Coin and Currency* (Salt Lake City: Rust Rare Coin Co., 1984), 153.

Throckmorton. *Salamander*, 541-42.

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Campbell, Harry Fredrick. *Hofmann Mormon Money Forgeries—Historical Aspects* (Salt Lake City: Privately printed, 1988).

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24. Letter of David Whitmer to Walter Conrad (2 April 1873)

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25. Second Anointing blessing (earliest known forgery)
(c. 1912)

Throckmorton. *Salamander*, 537.

26. Nathan Harris. *Book of Common Prayer* with Martin Harris poem

VIII. The Hofmann Forgeries (non-Mormon)

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Solia-Cohen, Lita, and Samuel Pennington. “Scout or Scoundrel? Has Mark Hofmann Found the Earliest American Printing?” *Maine Antique Digest* 13 (7 December 1985): 26A.

2. The Oath of a Freeman; 2d copy (1638)

Throckmorton. *Salamander*, 549.

3. Daniel Boone letter (1775)

“Boone Letter a Forgery.” *Daily Herald*, 16 August 1987, 2.

Hewett, David. “New Evidence of Fake Americana Surfaces in Utah.” *Maine Antique Digest* 15 (February 1987): 12A (includes a copy of the Boone letter).

New York Times, 14 August 1987 (Sotheby’s auction house buys back Boone letter originally sold to them by Hofmann).

4. Betsy Ross letter (29 November 1807)

Throckmorton. *Salmander*, 545-46.

5. Jim Bridger promissory notes (1852)

Hewett, David. "New Evidence of Fake Americana Surfaces in Utah." *Maine Antique Digest* 15 (February 1987): 12A.

Throckmorton. *Salamander*, 549-50.

6. *Call of the Wild* book plate and Jack London signature (c. 1903)

Hewett, David. "New Evidence of Fake Americana Surfaces in Utah." *Maine Antique Digest* 15 (February 1987): 12A.

Throckmorton. *Salamander*, 550.

IX. The Rumored Documents

A. Oliver Cowdery history

"Unnamed Source Announces Valuable Historical Document." *Sunstone* 10 (July 1985): 37.

Dart, John. "Mormons Deny Papers Exist That Contradict Origins." *Los Angeles Times*, 17 October 1986, sec. 1, p. 32.

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Anderson, Richard Lloyd. "The Alvin Smith Story: Fact and Fiction." *Ensign* 17 (August 1987): 58-72.

B. The William E. McLellin papers

Fielding, Cecilia. "Salt Lake Collector Finds Famous LDS Document." *Daily Herald*, 7 July 1985, 5.

"Collector Says Purchase Is Part of Book of Abraham." *Daily Universe*, 9 July 1985, 2.

Collett, Rod. "Papers Hofmann May Have Were of Early LDS Dissenter." *Daily Herald*, 18 October 1985, 3 (interview with Lyndon Cook).

Carter, Mike. "Expert Claims to Have Sold Hofmann 2 Second-Century Egyptian Papyri." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 October 1985, 2A.

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- . "Missing LDS Documents in Texas." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 November 1985, A1, 2.
- . "'LDS Papers' Found in Houston." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2 December 1985, A1, 3.
- . "Papers Seem Authentic, Expert Says." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 December 1985, A1, 3.
- . "Grand Jury Subpoenas Traughber." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 December 1985, A1, 3.
- . "McLellin a Mormon? News to Us, Descendants Say." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 January 1986, B1.
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- "LDS Statement Addresses McLellin Series." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 December 1985, A1.
- "McLellin Expresses Feelings in Letter" (14 August 1880, MS in New York Public Library), *Deseret News*, Church News Section, 8 December 1985, 6, 10.
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- Ensign* 17 (October 1987): 79.

STANLEY B. KIMBALL, ed. *On the Potter's Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books and Smith Research Associates, 1987. xxvi; 224 pp. \$59.95.

Reviewed by Paul H. Peterson, assistant professor of Church history and doctrine, Brigham Young University.

Editor Stan Kimball, perhaps unwittingly, makes some pretty strong claims about this newest edition of the diaries of Heber C. Kimball. "In some instances," he declares, they "are the best, and occasionally the only, contemporary account of the events they chronicle" (ix). "Without his writings," he adds, "any understanding of early Mormonism would be incomplete" (x).

It may be that such assurances lead the reader to expect more than Heber C. Kimball's diaries can deliver. Most of the diaries have been published previously. More importantly, like many pioneers, Heber noted significant events but seldom analyzed or reflected upon them. In places the sparseness of comment leaves little more than a fast-paced itinerary. The editor notes that Heber did not like to write. I think that it is a fair assessment.

But that is not to say that *On the Potter's Wheel* is not important or illuminating. While it is a kind of hit-and-miss potpourri, it is also vintage Heber C. Kimball, recording events and occurrences of divine import and bearing testimony to the Lord's frequent intervention and watchful care in the dispensation of the fullness of times. And who better to edit and comment on the legendary Heber's writings than scholar-great-great-grandson Stanley B. Kimball, a noted historian and author of an important 1981 biography about his illustrious forebear.

Heber C. Kimball produced four diaries between 1837 and 1847. With the exception of 1846–47 diaries that were written by scribes Peter O. Hansen and William Clayton, they are all reproduced here. In general, they deal with Heber's first and second missions to England, an eastern states mission, a visit to eastern cities, and accounts of life and events in Nauvoo just before and after the Prophet's death. All of the diaries contain helpful insights and occasionally new information. The later ones that describe the concluding labors on the Nauvoo Temple and the transmission of the endowment to the general Church membership are especially noteworthy.

In addition to the diaries, editor Kimball has reproduced what he calls a memorandum book along with two journal extracts from the *Times and Seasons* that detail the Zion's Camp march, Heber's call to the apostleship, and the death of David W. Patten. The

memorandum section consists of fourteen memoranda dealing with personal revelations Heber received between 1852 and 1864. They chronicle his perceived deteriorating relationship with Brigham Young (or at least his growing sense that he had outlived his ecclesiastical usefulness); the Church's tenuous relationships with the federal government; domestic challenges with plural wives; and a bout with sickness. Included among these entries are some predictions or prophecies Heber made. Some of these were fulfilled; others were not realized.

But more than any new information that one might find, it seems to me these diaries are important for two related reasons. They allow us to enter, however briefly, into an era and society that was profoundly different from our own, and they provide a poignant attestation to and appreciation for what can only be described as the incredible faith and devotion that seemed to characterize that first generation of Mormon leaders. Heber lived in an age when things religious both moved and excited the populace. In a day without competitive attractions such as cable television or sporting spectacles, a confrontation between a Mormon missionary and a sectarian minister might attract hundreds. There was more concern with the otherworldly, angels and devils, sin and salvation. It was an age when an Eleazer Miller was so full of the spirit he could burst out "in a voice so loud he could be heard for a mile and a half" (183); a day when the Lord's hand was ubiquitous, and divine implications were often read into seemingly ordinary occurrences. Thus when a large looking glass fell in the room of the First Presidency of the Seventy and shattered, it was thought by some to be symbolic of the seventies being scattered in all the world (159). Seemingly, it was a time when the veil between heaven and earth was generally thin and occasionally transparent. Perhaps the conviction that the Savior would come within one's lifetime made life more simple, answers more obvious, and bred a stronger confidence that one's direction and goals were on target.

Journal entries reveal that Heber, almost on a regular basis, received guidance through dreams (16, 68, 96, 110, 111, 141). The dreams took on myriad forms and images, but in most instances Heber was able to arrive at a meaningful interpretation. On a semiregular basis, he could obtain revelation by consulting with the Lord through a rod (65, 85, 98). From the time of his conversion to Mormonism, the Lord was ever approachable and not too far away.

Perhaps, however, Heber's ability to get divine direction so matter-of-factly was but a natural extension of his faith and absolute trust in the Lord. "I desire to [k]now nothing but Jesus and Him Crusified, for my trust is in The[e] O God" (5), he wrote before he

left for his first British mission. On a later occasion, he pleaded with the Lord to “keep me in thy own care, and leave not, for I am not anny thing of my self” (76). Heber’s loyalty to the Lord also translated into loyalty to Joseph and the Twelve. Two days after learning of Joseph’s death, he asked, “lord how can we part with our dear Br.” and pleaded, “O lord save the Twelve” (74).

Heber’s diaries teem with references indicating his love for first wife Vilate. Interestingly, though plurally married, he almost always was referring to Vilate when he wrote of “my wife.” On one occasion when she was sick, he administered to her and noted soon after that she had recovered. In his mind, her recovery could have but one explanation: “the Lord hurd” (123).

In his earlier biography and again here, Stan Kimball notes that Heber felt a gradual alienation from the Church he had served so faithfully. Especially in the Memorandum section can this disappointment be seen. But I wonder if his disappointments were even more deeply-rooted than his seeming inability to adapt to the more moderate course the Church was taking. Perhaps he was also perplexed by the realization that the oft-cursed enemies of God remained yet to be crushed and that the Saints still did not possess the kind of power that Heber envisioned they would have.

To assist the reader, editor Kimball has provided an introduction, a chronology, three maps, and introductory notes to each of the chapters. I found them all helpful. He provides comparatively little annotation in “deference to the growing tendency to display neither pedantry nor to expend undue time on insignificant events or obscure persons” (xix). For the historically literate, the annotation is sufficient; for others, it is not. The annotation that does appear is sensitive and accurate. This book is another in the Signature Press limited edition series and is attractively bound and printed. In short, this is both a handsome and important volume, and I would hope the \$59.95 cost does not limit its readership.

ROGER D. LAUNIUS. *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988. xii; 394 pp. \$24.95.

Reviewed by William D. Russell, chairperson, division of social science, Graceland College, Lamoni, Iowa.

With this excellent biography Roger Launius, thirty-five years old, has established himself as the foremost historian of the RLDS church. There are other RLDS historians who are better known in the community of Mormon historians (for example, official Church Historian Richard Howard, Temple School President Paul Edwards, and longtime Graceland professor of church history Alma Blair). But Launius, twenty or more years younger than each of these veteran church historians, already has the most impressive array of publications on the history of the Restoration movement of anyone in the RLDS church.

Launius's reputation was tarnished at first by his involvement as coeditor (with F. Mark McKiernan) of a flawed publication of *An Early Latter Day Saint History: The Book of John Whitmer*.¹ But since then he has published four useful books: *Zion's Camp: Expedition to Missouri, 1834*²; *The Kirtland Temple: A Historical Narrative*³; *Invisible Saints: A History of Black Americans in the Reorganized Church*⁴; and the book under review here. With the last two books especially, it is clear that he is currently the premier RLDS historian.

Joseph Smith III is a significant rewriting of Launius's 1982 dissertation (Louisiana State University). He appears to have read all of the available primary sources and the most important secondary sources for understanding the life of Joseph Smith III (1832-1914), the first president of the Reorganized Church. He is also familiar with the secular history of the period and relates it to the story where appropriate. He gives the reader good analyses of both secular and ecclesiastical politics. The endnotes are exhaustive, the work is well organized, and the writing is very readable.

The first five chapters discuss young Joseph's early years in Nauvoo, his rejection of Brigham Young's leadership, and his slow drift toward acceptance of his "call" to lead the Reorganization. The bulk of the book (chapters 6-13) deals with his leadership of the church during his nearly fifty-five years as its prophet and president, from 6 April 1860 until his death on 10 December 1914.

It is a sympathetic biography. While the critical reader might wonder if the prophet always tried to do what was right and just (xi),

Launius nevertheless has written a very professional account of Smith's life. It is clearly not "faithful history." The author does not portray Joseph III as a prophet merely doing what God told him to do. Building on Alma Blair's "Moderate Mormons" essay in *The Restoration Movement*⁵ and on Clare Vlahos, "Moderation as a Theological Principle in the Thought of Joseph Smith III,"⁶ Launius sees Joseph III as a "pragmatic prophet"—a man of action, conditioned by history and responding to events in light of his background and temperament. He tried to be faithful to his father's vision, as he understood it, but he moderated the rough edges of Mormonism, and brought it closer to orthodox Protestantism (5).

Joseph tried to have good relations with the non-Mormon community on the one hand, and vindicate the honor of his father, on the other. That was not an easy task, since his father was not exactly revered in the non-Mormon community. But non-Mormons frequently praised young Joseph's rejection of polygamy and his moderate religious stance. Not a dreamer or visionary like his father, young Joseph was a man who by temperament sought the middle-of-the-road.

His rejection of Utah Mormonism was natural in light of his mother's hostility to Brigham Young and polygamy. He rebuffed the entreaties made by Utahans to join the Brighamites. He also rebuffed the attempts of other factions to enlist him in their cause, including the Reorganization. When they sent a couple of representatives to try to win him over, he reduced one of the elders to tears when he said firmly: "Gentlemen, I will talk with you on politics or on any other subject, but on religion I will not allow one word spoken in my house" (103). Resolving that he would not join any movement unless he felt divine guidance to do so, he gradually became convinced that he should accept the Reorganization's call for him to assume the presidency. When he appeared at the Amboy, Illinois, conference of the church on 6 April 1860 to accept the call, he stated: "I have come in obedience to a power not my own, and I shall be dictated by the power that sent me" (117).

The church that young Joseph assumed leadership over had not developed a clear theological position, beyond its rejections of polygamy and the conviction that the president of the church should be a lineal descendant of Joseph Smith, Jr. The church's position on Mormon doctrines and practices such as the plurality of gods, priesthood eligibility for blacks, baptism for the dead and other temple rituals, was not settled. Gradually a middle-of-the-road position between Utah Mormonism and orthodox Protestantism emerged. The plurality of gods was rejected despite some support

for it by some early Reorganization leaders. Baptism for the dead was left in limbo in the absence of a temple. A revelation produced by Joseph in 1865 called for the ordination of blacks. (Launius points out that Joseph was an antislavery Republican in the 1850s, and remained faithful to that party throughout his life.) The Book of Mormon and later revelations through the Prophet were accepted, but the Book of Abraham did not attain canonical status in the Reorganization.

While Reorganites were united in their opposition to polygamy, they were not of one mind regarding the martyr's involvement in it. Launius notes that high church leaders—the ones most knowledgeable about Nauvoo—knew that young Joseph's father had practiced polygamy. But Joseph believed his father a good man and also that a good man would not practice polygamy. He had to deny it. As the older leaders who knew better died off, young Joseph became more vigorous in his denials of his father's involvement. Gradually the church committed itself to this historical coverup.

Joseph had studied law in two law offices during the mid-1850s. While he returned to farming rather than practice law (the author does not explain why), his legal training appears to have produced in him a legalistic approach to church leadership and doctrine. Correct doctrine was what is contained in the scriptures, which he treated as law books.

Launius notes that the RLDS church was a movement of dissenters (140). Its early members were Mormons who chose not to follow the main body of Saints west. (This reviewer questions the references to the main body who went to Utah as simply one of the "factions" of Mormonism after the martyrdom [77, 101, 191, 364, 368].) As Smith gradually centralized power in the movement (by gaining control of the church press, of the general conferences, and of the appointment of top officers by way of his revelations), it is not surprising that some opposition came from some of the earliest leaders of the Reorganization. The greatest internal crisis came in the late 1870s and 1880s when two apostles—Jason Briggs and Zenos Gurley, Jr.—opposed certain church doctrines as well as the centralization of power in Smith's hands. The latter made it difficult for them to be heard on their doctrinal views. Incidentally, Briggs could be considered the founder of the Reorganization. His claim of a revelatory experience in 1851 brought the "New Organization"—as it was first called—into being. He became the first President of the Quorum of Apostles in 1853 (90), seven years before Smith accepted the office of president. He was, in effect, the founder and first head of the Reorganization even though he was never its president/prophet.

In an excellent chapter on this internal crisis, Launius again builds on earlier work by Alma Blair and Clare Vlahos⁷ and produces an excellent account of the doctrinal and political struggle that culminated in the removal of the two men from the Twelve in 1885 and their withdrawal from the church entirely one year later.

The church grew at a reasonable rate. Membership approximately doubled each decade, up to 23,951 by 1890, the last figure the author gives.

While the book focuses mostly on Joseph's relationship to the church, Launius does not neglect Smith's family. Within a very few years of Joseph's acceptance of the presidency of the church, all of his immediate family had joined the church except stepfather Lewis Bidamon, whose creed was: "I believe in one God who has neither partners nor clerks" (61).

Joseph Smith III had three wives and seventeen children, including three sons who became the next three presidents of the RLDS Church (Frederick, Israel, and William Wallace). Reorganized members hasten to note that Joseph had one wife at a time, and that the first two wives preceded him in death. Scandal was not averted entirely, however. When first wife Emmeline died in 1869, housekeeper Bertha Madison stayed on to help with family chores. Gossip circulated. It only gradually died out when Joseph married Bertha Madison five-and-one-half months after Emmeline's death. Joseph was 62 when Bertha died in 1896. When he met Ada Clark, 29, in Toronto, tongues wagged when they married three months later. Joseph managed to sire three sons by Ada when he was 66, 68, and 75 years old, respectively.

In the final chapter Launius discusses how Joseph addressed the question of who would succeed him. He was high on the flamboyant R. C. Evans of Toronto, whom he called into the First Presidency. But he wanted his eldest son, Frederick, to succeed him. At first Fred M. did not show a lot of interest. Finally Joseph brought his son into the First Presidency, and it was not long before a revelation indicated that Fred M. was to succeed his father. Evans gradually defected from the church and published *Why I Left the Latter Day Saint Church* in 1918.

In the epilogue, Launius relates Joseph III to Max Weber's three types of leadership: the legal, traditional, and the charismatic or prophetic. The charismatic founders of a movement are usually succeeded by noncharismatic leaders who lead more in the legal or traditional mode. This seems to be necessary if the movement is to survive. Joseph Smith III fits this analysis. Launius doesn't discuss Brigham Young, but the same conclusion would likely hold with him as well. The question I have is whether it is then legitimate to

call a noncharismatic leader like Joseph Smith III a prophet. I found little in the life of this moderate pragmatist which suggests that he was a prophet in either the Old Testament sense or in the Weberian theory. Smith was a pragmatic church administrator who happened to be called a prophet by his followers. His administrative position was strengthened by the fact that when he felt strongly enough about an issue he could promulgate his policy preference or his choice of personnel for high callings in the church in the form of a revelation. With such authority he was certain to carry the day.

NOTES

¹Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1980; see Grant McMurray's review in the *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 1 (1981): 60–61.

²Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1984.

³Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1986.

⁴Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1988.

⁵Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1973.

⁶*John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 1 (1981): 3–11.

⁷See Alma Blair, "The Tradition of Dissent—Jason W. Briggs," *Restoration Studies* 1, ed. Maurice L. Draper (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1980), 146–61, and Clare Vlahos, "The Challenge to Centralized Power: Zenos H. Gurley, Jr., and the Prophetic Office," *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought, and Action* 1 (March 1971): 141–58.

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