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## Appendix I: Historical Milestones

James B. Allen

Jessie L. Embry

Kahlile B. Mehr

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## Appendix I: Historical Milestones

- 1836 Elijah. This ancient prophet appeared in the Kirtland Temple in fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy that he would come to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Members of the LDS Church believe that since that time the "Spirit of Elijah" has motivated the increased genealogical activity of Latter-day Saints as well as others.
- 1840 Baptism for the dead. The first proxy baptisms for the dead were performed at Nauvoo, Illinois, in the Mississippi River.
- 1842 The endowment. Joseph Smith introduced the endowment ceremony to those who would later introduce it to the general membership of the Church.
- 1845 Nauvoo Temple. In November the first endowments were given in the Nauvoo Temple to the general membership of the Church.
- 1877 St. George Temple. In January the first proxy endowments for the dead were performed in the St. George Temple.
- 1894 Revelation on sealings; organization of the Genealogical Society. President Wilford Woodruff received an important revelation on sealings; this revelation affirmed the importance of eternal family units, the necessity of sealing families under priesthood authority, and the obligation of Church members to trace their lineages for this purpose. The Genealogical Society of Utah was created in November 1894 to coordinate the work of the Church to accomplish this purpose.

- 1910 *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*. The first issue was published in January. The magazine continued as the official voice of the Society for the next thirty years.
- 1918 Vision of the redemption of the dead. President Joseph F. Smith received a vision that showed the Savior's visit to the spirit world and expounded the doctrine of redemption of the dead (D&C 138). In 1976 this revelation was added to the canon of LDS scripture.
- 1927 Temple Records Index Bureau card index. The Society instituted the checking of all name submissions against a card file index of all endowments performed. The index was maintained through 1969, when new endowments began to be recorded in GIANT. It was still used through 1990 to check name submissions for temple work to avoid duplication. Out of every five names submitted, the index identified one as being a person for whom ordinances had been performed.
- 1938 Microfilming Program. The Society's extensive microfilming project permits the gathering of family history sources to the Family History Library and from there to family history centers. The microfilmed records provide the sources for the name extraction program.
- 1961 Records Tabulation. The first name extraction program permitted volunteers to extract names from original records and to send them to the temples for ordinance work. This program was replaced by Stake Record Extraction.
- 1963 Granite Mountain Records Vault. The completion of this facility assured safe, long-term storage of the microfilm camera masters of the genealogical records filmed in all parts of the world.
- 1964 Branch libraries/family history centers. Through these facilities, located in LDS Church buildings throughout the world, researchers can gain access to global records by ordering microfilms of sources from the collection in Utah.

- 1966 Four-Generation Program. Through this program, the Church encouraged all families to compile their own records and ensure that temple work had been performed for ancestors at least four generations back. The program was expanded in 1976, when the Church requested that families consolidate and verify the information on their family group records. These revised records provided the initial data for Ancestral File.
- 1969 World Conference on Records. Hosted by the Society, this conference introduced the genealogical program of the Church to a world audience. The Society found this conference so beneficial they sponsored a second conference in 1980.
- 1969 GIANT. This system automated names processing and initiated the automated storage of massive name files, primarily the International Genealogical Index. GIANT functioned until 1990, when it was replaced by a program called TempleReady.
- 1976 New scripture. President Spencer W. Kimball submitted two revelations to be added to the canon of LDS scripture. These revelations concern work for the dead and are included in the Doctrine and Covenants as Section 137 (given to Joseph Smith Jr. in 1836) and Section 138 (given to Joseph F. Smith in 1918).
- 1978 Stake Record Extraction. This program involved many members in family history work through the decentralized extraction of names. Stake Record Extraction provided a foundation for the expansion of temple work in the 1980s.
- 1981 Temple Recording System. This was the first system to automate the recording of temple work. It was replaced in 1990 by the Ordinance Recording System, which functioned in connection with TempleReady to simplify record-keeping procedures for temple work.
- 1988 Family Record Extraction; Cooperative Indexing. Family Record Extraction first involved Church members in

indexing all pre-1970 temple records and later in indexing major genealogical sources. Family Record Extraction and Stake Record Extraction were combined in 1994. Co-operative Indexing involves the genealogical community outside the Church in indexing sources.

- 1990 FamilySearch. Through compact-disc technology, the FamilySearch system provides researchers access to an ever-increasing storehouse of information through personal computers. It provides automated access to Ancestral File, the International Genealogical Index, the Library Catalog, and several other smaller databases.
- 1993 TempleReady. This system was distributed to all English-speaking stakes, enabling members to clear their own family names for temple work—a function that had been performed by the Society since 1927, when the Temple Index Bureau was created.