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About the Author

RONALD W. WALKER is a professor of history at Brigham Young University, where he also serves as a senior research associate in the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History. He earned a Ph.D. in American history from the University of Utah.

Professor Walker has published more than six dozen historical articles. He has also authored or co-authored four books, including the prize-winning *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998). With Doris R. Dant, he co-edited *Nearly Everything Imaginable: The Everyday Life of Utah's Mormon Pioneers* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1999). His other two books, written with James B. Allen and David J. Whittaker, have dealt with Mormon bibliography and historiography: *Studies in Mormon History, 1830–1997*, received a special award for distinction from the Mormon History Association, and *Mormon History*, which surveyed the writing of Mormon history and biography.

Professor Walker has been active in the Mormon History Association and has served as the organization's president.

He and his wife, Nelani Midgley Walker, live in Salt Lake City and are the parents of seven children.

Called as an Apostle at age 25, Heber J. Grant was acutely aware of his inadequacies. Feeling unseasoned and unsure, he questioned whether he had “the qualities that count” for such a position. Yet he took solace in his faith: “There is one thing that sustains me & that is the fact that all powers, of mind or body, come from God and that He is perfectly able & willing to qualify me for His work provided I am faithful in doing my part.”

Despite insecurities, Grant always excelled. His single mother, Rachel Ivins Grant, gently fostered the tenacity, industry, and faith that permeated his life. This is the little-known story of Heber J. Grant and his values before he became Church President.

“When a leader reaches distinction, we often wonder about his background, the experiences that influenced and molded his aspirations and character. Here, Ronald W. Walker has painstakingly accessed the most reliable sources, mined intimate details, and penetrated to the story behind the story. This is the finest work yet on the formative years of the Church’s seventh president.”

—Truman Grant Madsen

Front Cover

Heber J. Grant at different ages, courtesy Church Archives,
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints