



1-1-2008

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Recommended Citation

Hicks, Michael (2008) "What Hymns Early Mormons Sang and How They Sang Them," *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 47 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol47/iss1/5>

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What Hymns Early Mormons Sang and How They Sang Them

Michael Hicks

Hymns eloquently portray the faith of those who sing them. In 1827, Alexander Campbell put it well: a hymnbook is “as good an index to the brains and to the hearts of a people as the creed book.”¹ In Campbell’s day and long thereafter, every new church needed a new hymnbook, and every old hymnbook came to need revision. Not only did hymnbooks pervade the early American printing industry, but they also became part of the American sacred canon, as necessary to worship as the Nicene Creed or sectarian articles of faith. They helped worshippers attain their distinctive religious identities in the New World. What Nathan Hatch calls “the democratization of American Christianity” relied as much on gospel song as it did on gospel.²

But while all hymns represent themselves equally in the index of a hymnbook, some hymns are sung far more often than others—and many hymns in a hymnbook are seldom, if ever, sung. A hymnbook actually may be more an index to the brains and hearts of its compilers than of the people who use it. Churchgoers know well that those who choose the hymns to be sung in church meetings redact a hymnbook, emphasizing hymns they prefer, hymns they think congregations want to sing, or hymns that suit particular occasions. It is this everyday reshaping of a hymnbook that more accurately indexes the brains and hearts of religious people than what merely lies between the covers of the book. So, if we want to understand early Mormons, we should want to know not just what hymns they published but what and how they actually sang.

Early Mormon Record Keeping

Although we generally think of the Church in its more concentrated forms in New York, Ohio, and Missouri, we often forget that traveling elders held meetings and established branches in many regions. By the end of 1834, according to Matthew Crawford, the Church had organized 124 branches spreading not only through the three states just mentioned but also in Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, and even Canada.³ In May of that year, W. W. Phelps observed how perplexing the image of Mormondom was becoming: “New churches are continually rising as the light spreads, and it is our peculiar privilege to hear, frequently, from different individuals, calling themselves our brethren, of whose names we have before never heard, and whose faces we have never seen, and learning of saints where we had not heard that the gospel had been preached.”⁴ Consider how quickly the Church spread even in the Deep South: in February 1836, for example, Wilford Woodruff reported having established seven branches of the Church (memberships ranging from eight to thirty-one members apiece) in a single two-hundred-mile circuit in Tennessee.⁵ How these branches held meetings likely differed from worship services in New York and Ohio, especially in hymn singing.

What records do we have of the thousands of meetings held in this far-flung church during the pre-Nauvoo period? Even in the centers of Mormon population, minutes of meetings exist mainly for conferences and priesthood councils, not for less formal meetings and certainly not for the home devotionals that probably took place every day.⁶ Journals and diaries occasionally mention meetings but rarely suggest the meetings’ format and content. Most of the records we have from 1830 to 1838 yield precious little information about meetings: a few lines here and there, incomplete sentences, skimpy reporting, scant details. Surely, more records will resurface as Mormon historiography proceeds, but they will likely follow the bare-bones pattern of the records we know.

Still, when one considers the available minutes and personal records, a few trends emerge. The sources I have studied for the years 1830 to 1838—all the extant minutes as well as journals and autobiographies of nearly two hundred Latter-day Saints—mention on only fifty-eight occasions the names of the hymns sung.⁷ Among those fifty-eight occasions, only twenty-eight different titles appear. And only sixteen of those twenty-eight hymns (57 percent) were published in the first Mormon hymnbook

(1835/1836).⁸ This means that although that first hymnbook contained ninety hymn texts, I can find record (through 1838) of only 18 percent of them being sung. (Table 1 shows the occurrence of all the hymn names mentioned.)⁹

While the sketchy records yield only a small sample for us to consider, one can easily conclude the obvious: some hymns were more popular than others. Of the twenty-eight hymns identified by name, “Adam-ondi-Ahman” is mentioned ten times, “The Spirit of God” is noted seven times, “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken” and “Now Let Us Rejoice” appear five times, “How Firm a Foundation” turns up three times, and five more (“Go On Ye Pilgrims,” “Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters,” “Ere Long the Veil Will Rend in Twain,” “How Precious Is the Name,” and “O Happy Souls Who Pray”) are mentioned twice each. In other words, two-thirds of the fifty-eight occurrences of hymn names from 1830 to 1838 are these ten hymns. More telling, perhaps, is that almost half of the hymns mentioned are the same four hymns (“Adam-ondi-Ahman,” “Spirit of God,” “Glorious Things,” and “Now Let Us Rejoice”).

Why are so few hymns mentioned by name? It is partly a matter of record keeping. Clearly, clerks and scribes differed on whether it was important to record the names of hymns sung. And even those who thought it important may not have known the name of any given hymn, even if they wanted to record it. The seemingly limited repertoire of hymns also results from the choices of the people leading them. Those who chose the songs to sing—and we do not know how many different people that might have been—could choose only songs that they knew and probably chose songs they preferred. Thus, biases in both record keeping and song choosing skew our results.

Consider, for example, that five different hymns on our list of fifty-eight were sung in the same meeting on August 17, 1835. Thankfully, the minutes record the names of all of them (and that one of them was sung twice). So careful an inventory of singing is rare; thus the list may not be representative. The minutes of that meeting say that Levi Hancock was appointed to “lead in singing” (a phrase that may become clearer below).¹⁰ As a leader he could only “lead in” songs that he knew, and he probably chose those he liked or thought suited the meeting’s purposes. As it turned out, four of the five different hymns he led that day did not appear in the soon-to-be-published Mormon hymnbook. But he knew them, and that was enough to have them sung. Would anyone else have chosen any of those five hymns?

Table 1
Hymns Mentioned by Name in LDS Records, 1830–1838

- listed in order of number of mentions (highest to lowest), then chronological
- all mentions are from the Far West Record, except where indicated
- all titles/first lines shown in italics did not appear in the first official LDS hymnal (1835)

Adam-ondi-Ahman	December 16, 1835† January 6, 1836 January 15, 1836** March 27, 1836** late 1836 April 24, 1837 June 11, 1837 March 15, 1838 April 28, 1838 June 28, 1838†
The Spirit of God	March 27, 1836** May 29, 1836*** July 25, 1836 June 28, 1838 July 6, 1838 August 29, 1838† September 16, 1838†
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken	August 4, 1831 August 24, 1831 October 25, 1831 February 14, 1835* August 17, 1835*
Now Let Us Rejoice	March 27, 1836† Winter 1837–1838 June 28, 1838 July 6, 1838 October 5, 1838
How Firm a Foundation	April 21, 1834* March 17, 1838 April 7, 1838
Go On Ye Pilgrims	October 26, 1831 December 7, 1831
Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters	1834§ February 14, 1835*
Ere Long the Vail Will Rend in Twain	September 10, 1834 March 27, 1836**
How Precious Is the Name	August 17, 1835* August 17, 1835* (sung twice that day)
O Happy Souls Who Pray	March 27, 1836** October 5, 1838
My Loving Fellow Travellers	December 7, 1831
He Dies, the Friend of Sinners Dies	April 27, 1832
Age after Age Has Rolled Away	July 7, 1834
Awake My Soul in Joyful Lays	July 14, 1835*
When I Can Read My Title Clear	August 17, 1835*

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Beyond These Earthly Scenes in Sight</i>	August 17, 1835*
<i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	August 17, 1835*
<i>There's a Power in the Sun</i>	December 16, 1835†
<i>There's a Feast of Fat Things</i>	December 16, 1835†
<i>Religion, Which the Soul Must Have</i>	February 9, 1836***
<i>How Pleas'd and Blest Was I</i>	March 27, 1836**
<i>The Towers of Zion Soon Shall Rise</i>	April 7, 1836
<i>Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise</i>	1838‡
<i>O God, Our Help in Ages Past</i>	April 7, 1838
<i>He Died, the Great Redeemer Died</i>	July 6, 1838
<i>Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?</i>	September 16, 1838†
<i>The Gallant Ship Is under Way</i>	September 16, 1838†
<i>To Him That Made the Sun and Moon</i>	October 6, 1838

* Kirtland Council Minute Book, ** Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, *** Wilford Woodruff's Journal,

† Journal History, ‡ Lewis Barney Autobiography, § William Cahoon Autobiography,

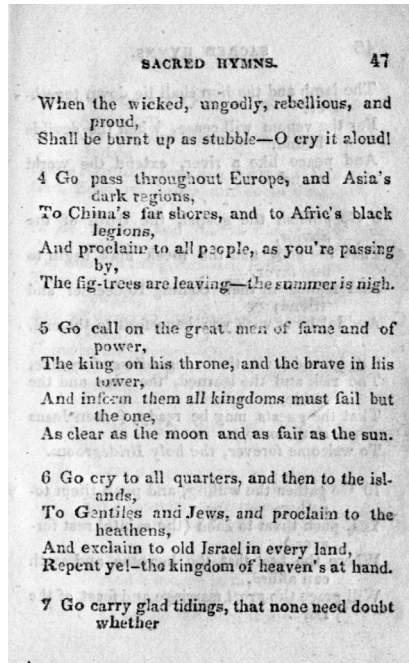
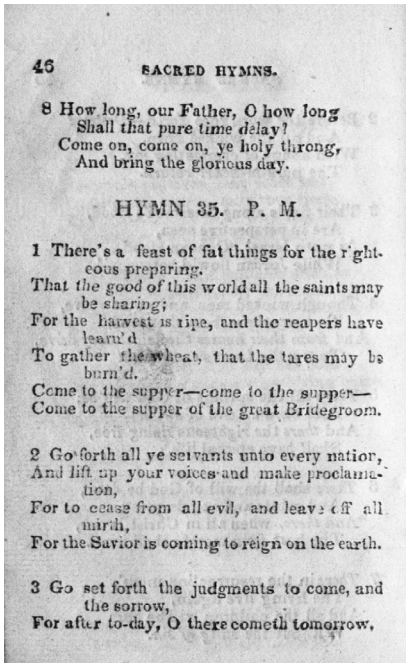
§§ Wandle Mace Autobiography

Farewells, Love-Feasts, and “Adam-ondi-Ahman”

Many hymns Latter-day Saints published and probably sang were for gatherings other than church services, meetings likely without clerks or recorders. For example, the first LDS hymnbook has a section titled “Farewell Hymns.” The well-established Protestant tradition of farewell hymns was that people sang them not so much in regular conference or council meetings but at special meetings held for ministerial departures (that is, “farewells”). That first hymnbook also contained sections labeled “Morning Hymns” and “Evening Hymns,” common designations in Protestant hymnbooks of the day.¹¹ These hymns were for families to sing at home, not at church. Thus, the hymnbook included six of each, probably one for each day of the week except Sunday, when other hymns would be sung at church. Although one of the evening hymns in the 1835/36 hymnbook, “The Day Is Past and Gone,” never appears in the records of meetings through 1838, William Smith, the Prophet’s brother, recalled that it was his father’s favorite evening hymn to sing during family devotionals: “Again and again was this hymn sung while upon the bending knees.”¹² People also sang hymns at work, at home (for example, as lullabies), and certainly at funerals and baptisms. We have few records of such occasions. John Murdock wrote of his own baptism that “the spirit of the Lord sensibly attended the ministration, & I came out of the water rejoicing & singing praises to God, and the Lamb.”¹³ Was he singing hymns? Maybe. But since he used the generic term “singing praises,” we cannot say with certainty.

Some Mormon gatherings, while religious, were not strictly devoted to worship or devotion. One hymn on the list, “There’s a Feast of Fat Things” (also known as “The Proclamation”) was intended primarily for the feasts for the poor in Kirtland. The New Testament mentions “feasts of charity” (Jude 1:12) held by early Christians, who probably based them on Jesus’ story of the rich man who threw a feast and invited—even compelled—the poor and disabled to attend (Luke 14:12–24). Some Protestants revived the tradition. Methodists often held such “love-feasts” in the early nineteenth century—at least once a year among smaller church populations and more frequently among larger ones.¹⁴ In Kirtland the Latter-day Saints held such feasts, for which W. W. Phelps wrote “The Proclamation” in February 1835.¹⁵ The song invited people to the actual feasts in the city and ultimately to the wedding supper of Christ (see Rev. 19:7–9):

There’s a feast of fat things for the righteous preparing,
That the good of this world all the saints may be sharing; . . .
Come to the supper—come to the supper—
Come to the supper of the great Bridegroom.



The first two pages of “The Proclamation,” as it appeared in *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints*, compiled by Emma Smith in 1835. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

In the song's twelve verses, Phelps calls on Latter-day Saints to gather everyone into their millennial community:

Go gather the willing, and push them together,
Yea, push them to Zion (the saints' rest forever),
Where the best that the heavens and earth can afford,
Will grace the great marriage and feast of the Lord.¹⁶

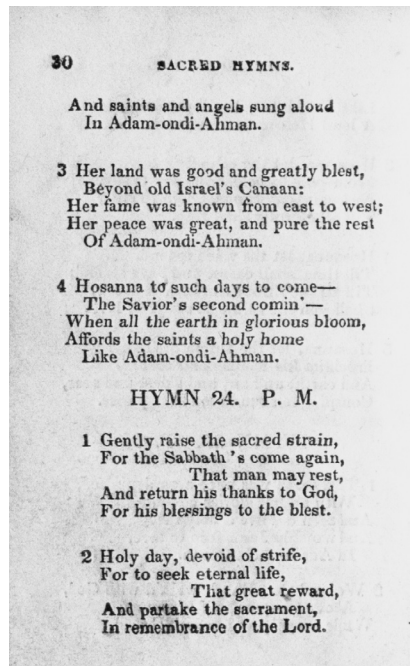
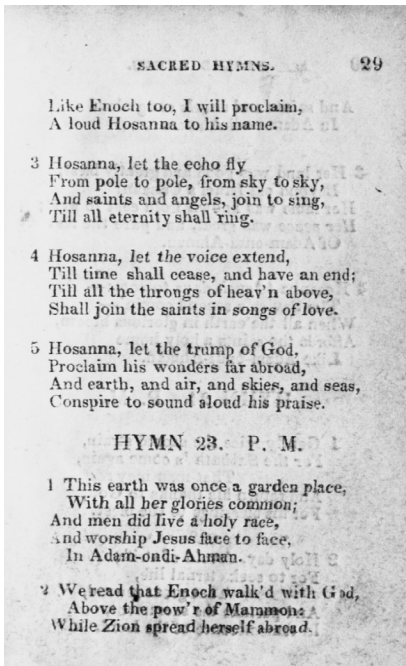
The song was sung at a Kirtland feast in fall 1835, a sixty-guest affair, about which Phelps wrote that it was the "greatest blessing feast I have [ever] attended."¹⁷ Elizabeth Ann Whitney described a later Kirtland feast in words evoking the song: "This feast lasted three days, during which time all in the vicinity of Kirtland who would come were invited. . . . To me it was 'a feast of fat things' indeed; a season of rejoicing never to be forgotten."¹⁸ Although the hymn ended up in the first Mormon hymnbook, it might not have been sung except at such feasts.

Another hymn on the list, "Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters," abounded with military and Old Testament references:

Hark! listen to the trumpeters,
They call for volunteers;
On Zion's bright and flow'ry mount
Behold the officers.
Their horses white, their armours bright,
With courage bold they stand,
Enlisting soldiers for their King,
To march to Zion's land.¹⁹

Such a song appealed to Mormons in the paramilitary march known as Zion's Camp. William F. Cahoon wrote that "Hark, Listen to the Trumpeters" was "our favorite song" when that group marched.²⁰ From Zion's Camp, the song entered a February 14, 1835, worship meeting held in Kirtland where several brethren who had been on the march were blessed and the new Quorum of Twelve Apostles was chosen and ordained.²¹ Although the hymn later became more popular as Mormons developed militias in Nauvoo and Utah, it may well not have been sung in other worship meetings of the pre-Nauvoo period. It did not appear in the first hymnbook.

If some hymns thrived in special circumstances, others had broad appeal. For instance, the hymn most often mentioned in our limited sample from this period is "Adam-ondi-Ahman"—mentioned ten times. This hymn celebrated the place where early Mormons would make a last attempt to gather and build a city in Missouri. Latter-day Saints believed this to be the site where Adam and Eve dwelt after being cast out of the Garden of Eden. It is also believed to be the place to which Jesus will return and where Adam's original language—from which the name "Adam-ondi-Ahman"



“Adam-ondi-Ahman,” by William W. Phelps, as it appeared in Emma Smith’s *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints*. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

derived—will again be spoken by all faithful Church members.²² Although Smith first referred to Adam-ondi-Ahman in 1832, he did not identify its location until 1838 (D&C 78:15; 116:1). But Phelps had already written a hymn about it in 1835.²³ The first verse went:

This world was once a garden place,
With all her glories common;
And men did live a holy race,
And worship Jesus face to face,
In Adam-ondi-Ahman.

Phelps goes on to acclaim “the Savior’s second comin’” when Saints will find a “holy home / like Adam-ondi-Ahman.”²⁴ The hymn was sung at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in March 1836. For the next two years, Church members sang it often, most notably, perhaps, in a meeting held on June 28, 1838, to organize a stake of Zion at Adam-ondi-Ahman.²⁵ After the Saints were driven out of Missouri they surely sang the song less.²⁶ But by then it was indelible. Mormons revised, rewrote, and republished it for decades. It remains in the current hymnbook (1985, no. 49).

On the other hand, “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken,” mentioned five times, occurred three of those times in 1831 and twice in 1835 but not thereafter. We can see why such a venerable Protestant hymn resonated with early Mormons. The words dwelt on Zion, the “city of our God,” which Latter-day Saints interpreted literally. They intended to fulfill the prophecy implicit in the text:

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken,
Chose thee for his own abode.²⁷

After the third recorded instance of singing the song (in a general conference of the Church in Orange, Ohio, on October 25, 1831), Sidney Rigdon arose and noted how God was unifying the hearts of his people: “And in this thing God has taught his children to sing a new song even about Zion which David Spoke of, &c.”²⁸ Despite its relevance to early Mormons, the song could easily get crowded out of their repertoire because it was not really a *new* song. It was perhaps too Protestant, too much a part of the Saints’ past and not their independent future, a future where newly written hymns like “Adam-ondi-Ahman” strove with old ones for a place in the canon.

Like “Adam-ondi-Ahman,” “Glorious Things” also remains in the current hymnbook (no. 46), though both hymns are rarely sung. That is not true of the second-most-oft-mentioned hymn in these early Mormon records, “The Spirit of God.” Phelps wrote the hymn for the Kirtland Temple dedication, at which it had its premiere. That first hearing, in the midst of the ecstatic manifestations of the dedicatory services—angels, visions, speaking in tongues, and so forth—led some to believe that the song had been given by God spontaneously to the temple choir.²⁹ The hymn was printed in the first hymnbook and has likely been sung at all LDS temple dedications since. That was certainly enough to make it a Mormon standard. But most other hymns mentioned by name in early Mormon records fared differently. While all five of the most oft-mentioned hymns appear in the current hymnbook, twenty of the remaining twenty-three titles do not.³⁰ It is fair to say that most hymns early Mormons sang have long since ebbed away.

How and Who

As to how early Latter-day Saints sang hymns, it is important to understand first that hymn names refer only to texts, not tunes. What the Latter-day Saints (like their Protestant peers) called “hymns” were just

words copied by hand into journals or letters and eventually—for some of them—typeset in newspapers, broadsides, and hymnbooks. One could sing any hymn to any existing tune that fit it (or even a tune that did not quite fit).³¹ How can we know what tunes were sung? Sometimes an epigraph on a hymn tells which tune to use. At other times one can deduce a tune because a hymn's words so clearly derive from those of a well-known song (with its own well-established tune). Occasionally, if a text has a peculiar structure (like "Adam-on-di-Ahman"), only one basic tune (and slight variations) will work. But all of these are special cases. Usually we cannot reasonably speculate on what tune was sung with a hymn's text, especially in any given locale. So when we consider early Mormon hymn singing, we can generally be certain about the words but not about the music.³²

Surprisingly, we also know little about who actually sang the hymns in church meetings. We assume early LDS congregations sang each hymn in unison or harmony from start to finish, more or less as we do today. But I have seen no Mormon sources from 1830 to 1838 stating clearly that "the congregation sang" a given hymn. If there are any such statements to be found, they are rare indeed. Most of the minutes, if they mention singing at all, say only that "a hymn was sung" or that a meeting was "opened by singing" or "by singing and prayer." By far the most common wording in *Far West Record* is the statement that a meeting was "opened by singing [a title] and prayer by [a person's name]."³³ From our modern perspective we read this statement as (1) a hymn sung by the congregation and (2) a prayer offered by an individual. But the statement "opened by singing [a title] and prayer by [a person's name]" could mean that before praying, the named individual sang. A few passages in *Far West Record* may connote this interpretation. On November 7, 1837, for example, Thomas B. Marsh was chosen as the "Moderator" of the meeting. The minutes then say that "after singing, the Moderator addressed the Throne of Grace in prayer." A slightly later passage reads simply, "The Council was opened by singing by Prest Marsh" (June 23, 1838).³⁴ In the Kirtland Elders Quorum minutes, we read phrases such as "meeting was opened by [a person's name] by singing and prayer" (March 6 and 12, 1838).³⁵ Joseph Smith records this about an 1835 marriage ceremony: "After opening our interview with singing and prayer, I delivered a lecture."³⁶ Erastus Snow also wrote that he closed a meeting by administering the sacrament, blessing some children "& after singing a hymn I dismissed [the congregation] with the blessing of the Lord."³⁷ William McLellin wrote of a Sabbath service in March 1833, "I opened the meeting by singing and pray and then spoke about half an hour."³⁸ Meanwhile, as singing in tongues began to infuse Mormon meetings, one source notes that "Elder Brigham Young arose and in the Spirit

of God sung a song of Zion in a foreign tongue. After which he delivered a very animated address to his brother ministers.”³⁹

We should understand such passages in the context of their time. Biographies and diaries of Protestant ministers from the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries commonly describe how ministers opened evangelistic meetings. First they would “give out,” “read,” “start up,” or “sing” a hymn.⁴⁰ Next they would pray. Then they would speak (“preach”). Descriptions of this three-part practice abound. One writer describes it nicely: “[a] homely, awkward frontier preacher, clad in ill fitting, homespun preacher garb . . . places his chair before him as his pulpit, and begins to read a hymn, in a soft and charming voice. After the singing of the hymn, comes the prayer, which is uttered with . . . eloquence and pathos. . . . And then follows the sermon on the text.”⁴¹ In an 1802 account of a camp meeting, Jesse Lee noted, “The preachers were singing, praying, or preaching all night.”⁴² Another diary entry by Lee shows that he experienced the three tasks of a preacher—singing, praying, speaking—as an almost mystical self-induction. About the opening of a meeting, he wrote, “As soon as I began to sing, I felt my soul happy in the Lord, and while I was praying, the power of the Lord was sensibly felt in the midst; but while I was speaking from the text, the Lord was more powerfully present.”⁴³ To understand these three aspects of a preacher’s duty, one should think more broadly on what it meant to be a preacher or a missionary: it was not just sermonizing but singing and praying aloud as well.

Descriptions not just of evangelistic meetings but also of public worship meetings from this period show that ministers sang, prayed, and spoke. In his diary for 1825, Free Will Baptist circuit preacher Abel Thornton recorded the standard practice in this way: “After opening the meeting by singing and prayer, Br. Asa Dodge preached to the people.”⁴⁴ A similar formulaic description fills the 1840s minutes of Methodist conferences. Those minutes commonly record that a particular individual opened the conference by “reading a portion of the scripture, singing and prayer” or that the conference was “opened by reading, singing and prayer by” a particular person.⁴⁵ Ministers’ descriptions of how they opened meetings make it clear that they sang in some form—with the “singing” possibly meaning “lining out” (see below)—then prayed.⁴⁶ One Methodist minister recalled of his youth in Missouri in the 1840s, “I would have gone a hundred miles to Conference if for nothing else but to hear the preachers sing.”⁴⁷

Their own accounts show that, in evangelizing at least, Mormon missionaries often followed the pattern of Protestant circuit preachers. In March 1833, William McLellin wrote that, when preaching to potential

converts, “I sung considerable, then opened by prayr and addressed [the congregation].”⁴⁸ George A. Smith wrote descriptively of how he and his companion, Lyman Smith, conducted proselyting meetings in Ohio and Virginia. On June 6, 1835, for example, “As brother Lyman was the oldest, he agreed to preach first. . . . He read the 33rd Chapter of Jeremiah and prayed, gave out a hymn which he sung and then preached five minutes.” Two summers later, after being forbidden to preach in a local meeting-house, Smith stood on a pile of staves, “gave out a hymn and preached.” Later he held a preaching meeting of which he reported, “I read a long chapter, and two long hymns . . . and [preached] two and a half hours.”⁴⁹ Jonathan Crosby wrote that during his 1838 mission to Ohio, he and his companion visited a home where they “preached & sang to them half the night.”⁵⁰ Lewis Barney recalled that in late 1838, two Mormon elders set up a meeting that he attended. “At the opening services they sang the hymn, ‘Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise, Her Light Begins to Shine,’ after which they prayed.”⁵¹ Wandle Mace recorded a similar meeting in the winter of 1837–38 when Parley Pratt and Elijah Fordham had come to the home of a Mrs. Dexter to administer to her daughter. “Together they sang [‘Now Let Us Rejoice’] to soft pleasant music. . . . After singing, Elder Pratt offered a prayer and then explained the principles of the gospel.”⁵² Even when baptizing converts, a Mormon elder might sing. Wilford Woodruff wrote in 1838 that “after Singing a hymn I led a man down into the water and Baptized him.”⁵³

Given these common practices, it seems reasonable that at least some early LDS worship meetings (especially conferences) followed the pattern we see in contemporaneous Protestant meetings. That is, when we read that a Mormon meeting was opened “by singing and prayer by” a particular person, that person might well have done the singing in addition to the praying. It would have seemed only natural for these “brother ministers” to follow a procedure they had practiced in their missionary labors and which was the standard practice in frontier Protestant churches.

Lining Out

What then was the role of congregational singing? We may never fully know. But we have to consider that solo singing by a preacher and group singing by a congregation were often linked by the practice of “lining out” (or simply “lining”) the hymns. Although seldom discussed nowadays, probably the greatest debate in nineteenth-century American church music concerned this way of singing. And since phrases like “giving out”

a hymn or “leading in singing” often pertained to lining out, we should consider it as a possible practice in the early LDS Church.

As commonly done in Protestant churches of the day (and still done in some), lining out the hymns consisted of several steps. First, the hymn leader—usually the minister or someone he appointed—started singing a tune without words. Those who recognized it joined in heartily. Those who did not made a valiant attempt at singing along. The first category of singers sang slowly but emphatically—partly for the benefit of the second category—but they also embellished the tune, decorating it with grace notes and sliding tones to demonstrate their religious fervor. Those who did not know the tune, of course, dragged behind the already slow singing of those who did know it.

After the singing of the tune, the leader hastily chanted or sang one or two lines of the hymn text. The congregation then sang those lines back, setting them to the appropriate part of the tune they had just sung. As they finished, the leader chanted one or two more lines and the congregation sang them back. They continued this call-and-response singing until the hymn was completed (or the leader stopped leading)—always one or two lines at a time. The leader chanted quickly and precisely; the congregation sang slowly and loudly.⁵⁴

Although lining out may strike us as awkward and tedious, it had practical origins. In 1645, Presbyterian reformers explained, “For the present, where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, do read the Psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof.”⁵⁵ By the next century, not being able to read was often less a matter of literacy than of access; many churchgoers did not own hymnbooks (the standard pocket-size variety) and even those who did would seldom have the same collection or edition as their peers. So when a hymn was announced, even a literate congregation might have trouble getting to its words. William Warren Sweet wrote that, even in the early nineteenth century, “frequently no one in the congregation possessed a hymn book except the preacher, who gave out the verses, two lines at a time.” Only as a congregation learned hymns by repeating them often was it “able to sing them without the process of lining out.”⁵⁶

Lining the hymns became known as “old way” or “usual way” singing. These two terms suggest what this style of singing meant to its practitioners. First, it was *old*—that is, traditional or original. Lining was to them the only true form of singing hymns, the way hymns were performed in biblical times (they believed) and again during the Reformation. Second, it was *usual*—the way most American Protestant congregations sang hymns

from colonial days through the mid-nineteenth century, especially if those congregations pursued “authentic” or “pure” Christian worship.

With such virtues to commend the old way of singing, an Ohio conference of Methodists resolved on August 29, 1834, “that all preachers in this conf be instructed to line their Hymns in all our publick congregations.”⁵⁷ On this matter, Methodists wanted to be in step with most reformist Christian groups—Puritans, Baptists, Reformed Presbyterians, Mennonites, Amish, and so forth—who perpetuated the practice in their revivals, camp meetings, and public worship meetings of the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries in America. Even as late as 1846, an American music historian wrote that “to this day, [lining the hymns] prevails over three-fourths of the territory of the United States.”⁵⁸

But from the early 1700s on, many trained musicians objected to lining out and to that “screeching, dragging style that is too common in this country.”⁵⁹ They wanted singing that would not break up the tunes. Some even insisted that hymns never be sung by the untrained voices of a congregation but rather by trained choirs. Their bias was toward what was known as “regular singing,” sometimes called “continuous singing” or “singing by note,” in which singers sang only what was on a printed page of music (thus regulating the singing with written notes). Training singers to do that necessitated singing schools, community classes run by a musically educated teacher who could convey the “rules” of music (basic theory, proper tone production, and so forth).

Choirs and Regular Singing

Most mid-nineteenth-century nonmetropolitan American congregations opposed regular singing, choirs, and musical instruments in church—all state-church practices that were inappropriate in the New World. As late as 1854, the antichoir members of an Ohio Methodist congregation heckled the choir whenever it tried to sing, hoping to “bring discredit on the singers by creating discord.” One heckler defended his tactics by arguing that “there could not be a revival of religion with a Choir tolerated in the Church . . . [because] choir singing originated with the devil.”⁶⁰ In another midwestern Methodist church in about the same year, members of the choir, weary of being condemned by some of their hearers, quit coming to meetings and let the multitude musically fend for itself. Of these schismatic meetings one writer recalled that “sometimes one [choir member] was present, and sometimes all; and sometimes the choir would sing, and sometimes there was no singing by any body in the church.”⁶¹

In 1840, a large group of Ohio Presbyterians publicly defended lining out by tracing it back to the Hebrews, the early Christians, and the Reformers. Their leader went on to explain, "It is often objected that the reading of the line interrupts the singing and 'spoils the music.' Well, the singing is indeed necessarily and temporarily interrupted; but edification is thereby promoted; and suppose the music [is] marred, or even 'spoiled,' what then? Is the chief end now to *worship the music*? This is idolatry, however refined." Regular singing, he said, was "an outrage upon Divine institution, a violation of solemn vows, and a manifest insult to common sense."⁶² As late as 1862, the *Associate Presbyterian* called regular singing a "stupendous Babel" by which "persons may become infatuated by music" until "artistic display takes the place of decent and unified praise to God." Once a church adopts singing by note, "an insuperable barrier is soon presented, and a large number in each congregation, not having suitable qualifications, are deprived of joining in."⁶³

In 1827, Alexander Campbell also taught against regular singing: "Psalm and hymn singing, like every other part of Christian worship, has been corrupted by sectarianism." To learn hymns in a singing school, he wrote, was a "desecration" of the hymns. Although he produced a hymnbook for his followers, he objected to hymnbooks with printed music, arguing that he would "prefer to have an organ, or a fashionable choir as a means of my worship than the words of a hymn set to the notes of a tune on which to fix my eyes while engaged in the worship of God." For Campbell, lining the hymns was the true order. Congregations should learn the hymns' music by ear and therefore by heart.⁶⁴

So the question, of course, is whether early Latter-day Saints lined the hymns. I have found no direct evidence that they did, other than the few suggestive references to "giving out" a hymn (which generally meant some form of reading the text aloud before singing it) or "leading in singing" (which seems to mean something different from beating time). Beyond those statements, there are four good reasons why, if early LDS congregations sang, they may well have wanted to line out their hymns. First, since Mormon converts came out of many other churches (or no church), they shared no common hymnody. If congregations were expected to sing, they expected at least some hymns to be lined out for them. Second, since LDS converts were clearly attracted to the idea of a "restoration" of the primitive Church, at least some of them would expect lining the hymns as a sign of authenticity; widespread and long-held tradition maintained that lining was the biblical standard. Such converts might have resisted anything that smacked of popery or the high Protestant traditions of European state churches. Third, while most LDS converts were probably literate (at least if

the Book of Mormon played a role in their conversion), they had no restoration hymnbook to sing from until the book compiled by Emma Smith. Even after that book appeared in 1836, it would have taken some time for it to proliferate among the communities of the Saints.⁶⁵ Fourth, while new converts kept joining, LDS authors kept writing new hymns. Each new hymn needed to be taught in some way to a congregation. Lining out was the tried and true method.

But regular singing had strong advocates in early Mormondom. Joseph Smith Sr. endorsed it, according to William Smith, who wrote that his father “was a teacher of music <by> note to a concidera[b]l[e] extent.”⁶⁶ That would likely bias Joseph Jr. toward regular singing, though he apparently did frequent camp meetings and Methodist services where the old way of singing prevailed.

Things New and Old

In the end, it was the Lord’s instruction for the Saints to erect a temple that seems to have tilted the scales toward regular singing. A costly building for worship—the kind primitivists such as Alexander Campbell had vigorously opposed—seemed to require high-church traditions of formality, dignity, and aestheticism. Believing that such a temple needed a choir, Joseph Smith recruited a newly baptized singing teacher to organize one. The tension that must have surrounded such a move is suggested in Smith’s journal account of it. He wrote on January 4, 1836, that he met at the chapel “to make arrangements for a Singing School.” There, “after some altercation,” he wrote, “a judicious arrangement was made, a comittee of 6 was chosen, to take charge of the singing department.”⁶⁷

A Mormon singing school bespoke a basic dichotomy in the early Church. The *Millennial Star* put it succinctly: “In this last dispensation God will send forth, by His servants, things *new* as well as *old*, until man is perfected in the truth.”⁶⁸ Those who had converted to Mormonism because of its “restoration” of ancient Christianity were, in principle, pursuing the old. Those same converts then had to accept, often suddenly, the very new—new doctrine, new Church organization, new ordinances, and new social habits. The dilemma became which of the old ways to preserve and cherish as authentic (and not merely habitual) versus which of the new ways to embrace as progress (and not just erosion). For many who had converted from reformist churches such as Campbell’s, from Methodism, or from any of the “seeker” traditions, the old way of singing denoted the genuine church. But the “new way” of singing—with choirs and singing schools—signified to others prophetic advancement, a step in building a

more orderly and beautiful kingdom of God. In singing as in doctrine, old ways suggested security, new ways, growth.

Trained Musicians

In the fall of 1840, after proselyting in England for a few months, Brigham Young wrote to his wife that the missionaries had converted “a grate meny musisions.”⁶⁹ Meanwhile Wilford Woodruff wrote that at Herefordshire “church ministers are alarmed” in part at the “numbers of . . . musicians . . . [being] baptized.”⁷⁰ As they emigrated to Nauvoo, these musicians, trained in then-modern European styles (including regular singing), ensured the demise of any old way singing that might have existed in the Church. It is with that thought one should read the editorial on music published in the January 15, 1842, *Times and Seasons*, which praised “the laudable zeal manifested by some of our *musical* friends, to bring about a uniform and tasteful style of sacred singing.” Noting the “different prejudices and habits” of the Saints, the editorial celebrated “the improvements made, and the judicious order established within a few months past.”⁷¹ As accounts of Nauvoo church meetings increasingly referred to hymns by their *numbers* in the hymnbook—not their names—it became clear that hymn singing now centered on the printed page. And as Mormonism entered its second generation, hymn texts gradually attached to specific tunes. Mormon hymnody was crystallizing, and by 1844 the first Mormon hymnbook with printed musical notation had appeared—not in Nauvoo, though, but in Vermont, the state where the Prophet had been born.⁷²

Mormon hymn singing probably echoed that of many rural American churches that tried to domesticate their revivalist past. But Latter-day Saints may have felt a shift more abruptly since, just two generations after the American Revolution, well-schooled British converts were flooding into their community and taking over the sacred musical life of the Church. Not only did regular singing prevail, but choirs and singing schools also flourished alongside instrumental music; even British-style brass bands played in some worship meetings. One can only wonder how such blandishments might have discouraged American-born Saints who rallied to Mormonism for its restoration of the true Church.

Nevertheless, even in the mid-twentieth century, the Church Music Committee (heir to Joseph Smith’s “singing department”) attempted a rapprochement with the old way. In 1952, the committee recommended to the Presiding Bishopric that the leader of a meeting should *read* “distinctively and effectively” the first verse or at least the first line of each hymn that was

to be sung. The Presiding Bishopric approved the recommendation and on March 25, 1953, sent a letter to all bishoprics telling them to “revive” this practice.⁷³ But by all accounts, the recommendation never caught on.

Conclusion

Now, looking back from the early twenty-first century, what can we confidently say about which hymns early Latter-day Saints sang and how they sang them? We can say what historians must always say about earlier generations: they were like us and not like us. Early Latter-day Saints were like us in that they valued musical worship and seem to have had favorite hymns. But they were not like us in several ways. Their seemingly favorite hymns seldom became ours. They sometimes sang hymns that never appeared in a Mormon hymnbook. In some meetings, the same individual may have sung a hymn, prayed, and spoken. Many Saints—especially those scattered in the branches of the Church—probably thought lining out was the “true” way to sing as a group. And at least some of those Saints probably wondered if choirs or singing schools could be approved by God.

A list of probabilities is as close as we may come to knowing what and how Latter-day Saints in the 1830s sang. But perhaps that is enough to uproot some of our common assumptions about hymn singing in the newly restored Church.

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An earlier version of this paper was read at the annual conference of the Mormon History Association, May 22, 2004, Provo, Utah. My thanks go to Lynn Carson, who long ago shared with me some of the hymn collation on which I have expanded; also to Ron Barney for pointing me to some of the sources I used.

1. From the preface to Campbell’s own hymnbook, first published in *The Christian Baptist* 5 (December 3, 1827): 105.

2. See Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), especially 146–61.

3. See Matthew A. Crawford, “Branches of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: 1830–1834” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 2007), 151–87. An excellent online overview of the establishment of branches may be found on <http://saintswithouthalos.com/n/branches.phtml>. See also Journal History of the Church, December 31, 1833, 6, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, also available on *Selected Collections from the*

Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), vol. 2, DVD 1, microfilm copy in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

4. "Progress of the Church of the Latter Day Saints," *Evening and Morning Star* 20 (May 1834): 318.

5. See *Journal History*, February 1836, 1 (DVD 1).

6. For an account of the hymn singing and devotional that took place among the Smith family on shipboard to Kirtland, Ohio, see Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 533–34.

7. This number, of course, does not include "overlapping" mentions, where more than one source mentions the hymns sung at the same meeting. As to my research process, for twenty years I have steadily researched Mormon musical history, and I have noted each hymn title in every source I could find from this period (1830–38) as well as the Nauvoo period (through 1846). I have gone through carefully, page by page: (1) all of the sources that Milton V. Backman Jr. compiled and Peter Crawley transcribed from this period and put online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints>; (2) every source in the text and CD-ROM that accompanies Mark L. McConkie, *Remembering Joseph: Personal Recollection of Those Who Knew the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003); (3) every time-relevant source in *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*; (4) *History of the Church, Far West Record*, the *Journal History*, and all other extant official minutes, published or unpublished; (5) all LDS newspapers published through the end of the Nauvoo period; (6) many other journals, diaries, and autobiographies, published or unpublished and archived in the historical department of the Church, special collections at BYU, and so forth. (The full citations to these sources appear in notes above and below this one.) Mine should be taken as a thorough but not fully comprehensive count, since minutes or descriptions of meetings will doubtless still emerge.

8. Emma Smith, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835). The hymnbook, while bearing the imprint date of 1835, did not come out until sometime in early 1836. I say this based on the statements of W. W. Phelps in journal entries (typescript in Harold B. Lee Library) for November 28 and December 2, 1835, in which he was still reading and correcting proofs for the hymnbook; also letters of Phelps excerpted in the *Journal History*, in which, as of November 14, he had written to his wife Sally that "the hymn book is not likely to progress as fast as I wish" (p. 1, DVD 1), and on April 2, 1836, Joseph Smith wrote that the *Doctrine and Covenants* (also dated 1835) was not yet bound—the hymnbook, of course, would have come after that book of revelations in priority. See also the brief essay on the hymnbook in Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church: Volume One, 1830–1847* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1997), 57–59.

9. On the list I have had to choose whether to use a title or a first line (when the two differ); some hymns are mentioned both ways. In at least one case, I used the more formal first line ("Religion, Which the Soul Must Have") for a hymn more commonly known by its nickname, "The Sectarian Cudgel."

10. Fred C. Collier and William S. Harwell, *Kirtland Council Minute Book* (Salt Lake City: Collier's Publishing, 1996), 124–29.

11. For an overview of this and other sections and themes in the first LDS hymnbook, see Mary D. Poulter, “Doctrines of Faith and Hope Found in Emma Smith’s 1835 Hymnbook,” *BYU Studies* 37, no. 2 (1997–98): 32–56. For a survey of Mormon hymn historiography before Poulter, see my essay “The Performing Arts and Mormonism: An Introductory Guide,” in David J. Whittaker, ed., *Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1995), 540–41.

12. William Smith, “Notes Written on ‘Chambers’ Life of Joseph Smith” (ca. 1875), in *Early Mormon Documents*, comp. and ed. Dan Vogel, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996), 1:487. This recollection may pertain to a period before the Church was organized.

13. John Murdock, *Journal (1792–1864)*, typescript, 8, in Harold B. Lee Library, also at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/JMurdock.html>.

14. Early Methodist conferences held love-feasts monthly, but this practice seems to have evolved into quarterly or semiannual feasts by the early nineteenth century. By the middle of the century, most Methodist congregations held only an annual feast. See Frank Baker, *Methodism and the Love-Feast* (London: Epworth Press, 1957), 41–42.

15. On the dates of the composition of “The Proclamation,” see William Wines Phelps, *Diary*, February 14 and 21, 1835, LDS Church History Library. The “proclamation” name probably comes from Exodus 32:5, where Aaron makes a proclamation to a feast; the phrase “feast of fat things” comes from Isaiah 25:6.

16. Emma Smith, *Collection of Sacred Hymns*, 46, 48.

17. W. W. Phelps, December 16, 1835, *Journal History*, 1 (DVD 1).

18. For this quotation and more on the feasts in Kirtland, see Mark L. Staker, “‘Thou Art the Man’: Newell K. Whitney in Ohio,” *BYU Studies* 42, no. 1 (2003): 114–15.

19. This song appears in many sources of the period, with slight variations in the text. This version appeared in Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, and John Taylor, comps., *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Latter-day Saints, in Europe* (Manchester: W. R. Thomas, 1840), 283.

20. William F. Cahoon *Autobiography*, in Stella Cahoon Shurtliff and Brent Farrington Cahoon, eds., *Reynolds Cahoon and His Stalwart Sons* (Salt Lake City: Paragon, 1960), 81. See also <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/WFCahoon.html>.

21. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 2:181–89.

22. See the August 2, 1838, entry excerpted from Samuel Tyler’s diary of the Kirtland Camp record reproduced in the *Journal History*, October 4, 1838, 15 (DVD 1).

23. See Phelps, *Diary*, June 3, 1835.

24. This is the text as it appeared in its first publication, *Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*, June 1835, 144. By the time the first hymnbook was published, the opening words had been changed to “this earth.” Emma Smith, *Collection of Sacred Hymns*, 29.

25. *History of the Church*, 3:38–39.
26. The most significant singing of this song after 1838 was probably the following year, at the clandestine cornerstone laying of the Far West Temple. See Elden J. Watson, comp. and ed., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Watson, 1975), 99–100. Revisions of the song would emphasize the future of the place more than its present.
27. Emma Smith, *Collection of Sacred Hymns*, 9.
28. See Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 19–20.
29. Benjamin Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 6.
30. The three others that appear in the current hymnbook are “He Died, the Great Redeemer Died” (no. 192), “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” (no. 31), and “Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise” (no. 41).
31. For an example of this, see the setting of “Now Let Us Rejoice” in J. C. Little and G. B. Gardner, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Use of Latter Day Saints* (Bellows Falls, Vt.: Blake and Bailey, 1844), 12–13.
32. I am more cautious in linking texts to tunes than Kurt Kammeyer in his website <http://www.earlyldshymns.com> and the several books of “original tunes” he markets there. Nevertheless, this site gives some interesting and plausible suggestions of appropriate tunes—although it is all necessarily based on published tunes, not orally transmitted ones. And oral transmission was certainly the norm in this era.
33. See, for instance, Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 151, 153, 159, 163, 191, 193, 198, 208, and 209.
34. Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 121, 189.
35. Lindon W. Cook and Milton V. Backman Jr., eds., *Kirtland Elders’ Quorum Record, 1836–1841* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book Company, 1985), 40–41.
36. In Dean C. Jessee, ed. and comp., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 132. I should note that the record of meetings of the Seventies (in *Journal History*) for this period contains no references to singing but often describes the person who prays then speaking to the group.
37. Erastus Snow, “Sketch Book No. 1” (Journal, 1818–December 1837), image 61, *Selected Collections*, vol. 1, DVD 31.
38. Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies; Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 99.
39. Collier and Harwell, *Kirtland Council Minute Book*, 95.
40. These terms are used so frequently and without explanation that one cannot be sure of their exact meaning or how much nuance might distinguish one’s connotations from another’s. But my reading of many primary and secondary sources leads to my giving the terms an essentially common meaning.
41. William Warren Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days in Indiana* (Indianapolis: W. K. Stewart, 1916), 23. See E. M. Marvin, *The Life of Rev. William Goff Caples, of the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Saint Louis, Mo.: Southwestern Book and Publishing Co., 1870), 178, on this practice in 1864.

See also C. A. Malmsbury, *The Life, Labors and Sermons of Rev. Charles Pitman, D.D., of the New Jersey Conference* (Philadelphia: Methodist Episcopal Book Rooms, 1887), 20, 67, 100–101, 157; these pages discuss both the format and the eloquence of Pitman’s singing of the hymns before he preached.

42. Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America* (Baltimore: Magill and Clime, 1810), 284.

43. Minton Thrift, *Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee with Extracts from His Journals* (New York: N. Bangs and T. Mason, 1823), 86.

44. Abel Thornton, *The Life of Elder Abel Thornton* (Providence: Office of the Investigator, 1828), 83.

45. Such records are found in Sweet, *Circuit-Rider Days*, 225–65.

46. One variant of lining out was simply to begin singing into a large crowd during a camp meeting. Often preachers did this just to calm the confusion when people were overcome by the “jerks” or other strange physical demonstrations, often accompanied by shouting and moaning. This leading out in singing would gradually draw a congregation into its spell. Soon the congregation would begin to sing along, though still in a rowdy, freestyle collage of self-expression. See, for example, Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, ed. Donald Smalley (1832; New York: Vintage, 1949), 171, 174. See also Charles A. Johnson, *The Frontier Camp Meeting: Religion’s Harvest Time* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1955), 141. On some occasions any member of a congregation might start singing a hymn and hope that the rest—or some fraction of them—would take up the song. See the anonymous *Brother Mason the Circuit Rider; or, Ten Years a Methodist Preacher* (Cincinnati: H. M. Rulison, 1856), 18–19, 23–24, 32–33, 135.

47. Marvin, *Life of Rev. William Goff Caples*, 168. Consider also, for example, the many laudatory references to the singing of Rev. Thomas Stewart in W. G. Stewart, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Thomas G. Stewart* (Philadelphia: Collins, 1858), 143–44, 166–67, 173, 198–99.

48. Shippy and Welch, *Journals of William E. McLellin*, 103.

49. These quotations are from George A. Smith, Memoirs (scans of holographs in *Selected Collections*, vol. 1, DVD 32), June 6, 1835, 62, Summer 1836, 93, and [August] 1837, 100, respectively.

50. “Autobiography of Jonathan Crosby,” microfilm of holograph, 18, in Harold B. Lee Library, also online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/JCrosby.html>.

51. Lewis Barney, Autobiography, typescript online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/LBarney.html>; also available in Lee Library. See also *The Life of Lewis Barney as Written by Himself: September 8, 1808–November 5, 1894* (Duncan, Ariz.: Clifford Page Sanders, 1988), 18.

52. Wandle Mace, Journal, typescript, 7, online at <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/WMace.html>; also available in the Lee Library.

53. Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 1833–1898, Typescript*, ed. Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–84), 1:222 (January 16, 1838).

54. Among the many published discussions of the practice’s history, see especially Henry Wilder Foote, *Three Centuries of American Hymnody* (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1961), 373–82; Johnson, *Frontier Camp Meeting*, 123, 195; Alan Lomax, Notes to *The Gospel Ship: Baptist Hymns & White Spirituals from the*

Southern Mountains (New York: New World Records, 1977), 1. The latter recording has some excellent recorded examples of the practice. The most ample technical descriptions of the technique are in Beverly Bush Patterson, *The Sound of the Dove: Singing in Appalachian Primitive Baptist Churches* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 52–53 and 85–167; see also Nicholas Temperley, “The Old Way of Singing: Its Origins and Development,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34, no. 3 (Fall 1981): 511–44.

55. From the Presbyterian “Directory for Worship,” quoted in David Steele, *Continuous Singing in the Ordinary Public Worship of God, Considered in the Light of Scripture and the Subordinate Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; In Answer to Some Letters of Inquiry Addressed to the Writer* (original date unknown, ca. 1870), online at http://www.covenanter.org/Steele/continuous_singing.htm.

56. William Warren Sweet, *Methodism in American History* (New York: Abingdon, 1961), 151. Lining out also deepened the experience of singing a hymn. Few things mattered more to a minister than for a congregation to apprehend a hymn’s meaning, as suggested in the Methodist Discipline’s instruction to preachers: they were to *stop* the singing “often” to ask if the singers had comprehended what they sang, saying: “Now! Do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?” “Of the Spirit and Truth of Singing,” in *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America* (Philadelphia: Henry Tuckniss for John Dickins, 1798), 122. Beyond enhancing the hymns’ meaning, lining out also symbolically bonded the leader with the congregation. Each hymn became a unifying ritual with the rhythm of a slow, meditative dance.

57. From the Journal of James Gilruth for that date, published in William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783–1840: The Methodists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 393.

58. George Hood, *A History of Music in New England with Biographical Sketches of Reformers and Psalmists* (Boston: Wilkins, Carter, and Co., 1846), 200.

59. *Brother Mason the Circuit Rider*, 230.

60. From the autobiography of James Jackson McIllyar (1816–1907), cited in Wallace Guy Smeltzer, *Methodism on the Headwaters of the Ohio: The History of the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Church* (Nashville: Parthenon, 1951), 212.

61. See *Brother Mason the Circuit Rider*, 157–58, 278.

62. From Steele, *Continuous Singing*.

63. The quotations are from the article by “M. R.” entitled “Ancient and Modern Mode of Singing the Psalms,” *Associate Presbyterian* 4 (September 1862): 462–66.

64. The statements by Campbell are quoted in Dale A. Jorgenson, *Theological and Aesthetic Roots in the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Kirksville, Mo.: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1989), 198, 206–7.

65. See Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church: Volume One, 1830–1847*, 59.

66. William Smith, “Notes,” 489.

67. Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 152; italics added. When this passage was prepared for publication in the official Church history, the word was changed from “altercation” to “discussion.” For a larger discussion of the early history of choirs

in the Church, see Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 35–54 and 91–108.

68. “Our Father Adam,” *Millennial Star* 15 (November 26, 1853): 780; italics in original.

69. Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell Young, November 12, 1840, Philip Blair Papers, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

70. Wilford Woodruff to Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith, October 7, 1940, *Times and Seasons* 2 (March 1, 1841): 331.

71. “Music,” *Times and Seasons* 3 (January 15, 1842): 664; italics in original.

72. See the discussion of this work in Hicks, *Mormonism and Music*, 30.

73. See the memo from the Presiding Bishopric to the Church Music Committee, October 31, 1952, and the letter from the Presiding Bishopric to Bishops and Counselors, March 25, 1953, both in the Church Music Department Subject and Correspondence Files, LDS Church History Library.