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The Resources and Results of the Radio, Publicity,
and Mission Literature Committee:

1935-1942

Matthew Porter Wilcox

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

The Resources and Results of the Radio, Publicity, and
Mission Literature Committee:
1935-1942

Matthew Porter Wilcox
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Master of Arts

The study of media as it relates to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has increased appreciably over the past few years. The Church's first sustained centralized effort began with the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee in 1935. However, little research has been conducted in regards to the creation, products, or impact of the Committee. This thesis examines the circumstances under which the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee was formed in 1935. It further describes the Committee's production of filmstrips, radio programs, and exhibits. The impact of these products in missionary work and public image is also explored.

Keywords: Gordon B. Hinckley, Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, Media, Filmstrips, Exhibitions

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has always used forms of mass media to spread its message and defend its beliefs and practices from attack. For 100 years after it was restored the Church's efforts to use mass media to accomplish its goals took the form of printed material. Books, pamphlets and periodicals could be read and reread, passed to neighbors and go when and where the missionaries couldn't. Since the restoration of the Church in 1830, over one million missionaries, uncounted pamphlets, over 100 different periodicals, and numerous books have been sent out in order to spread and defend the gospel.

While printed publications have, are, and will continue to play an important part in proselytizing and public relations efforts, the Church has integrated newer forms of mass media to spread and defend its beliefs. The Church today is perhaps as well known for its radio, television, film, and internet campaigns as it is for its iconic clean cut missionaries. It has further utilized events, such as pageants and concerts, as well as visitors centers, historical sites, expositions and monuments to further its goals.

Statement of Purpose

This paper will explore the Church's first endeavors to more fully realize the potential of newer forms of mass media in spreading the gospel. In October of 1935, President Heber J. Grant and his counselors in the First Presidency approved the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee. It was the Church's first centralized, systematic, and sustained effort to produce new media for missionary work. Although first charged with producing filmstrips and radio programs for missionary use, the committee was soon engaged in

other endeavors such as the conceptualization and construction of expositions and monuments—all with the aim of improving the Church’s image and spreading the gospel.

The creation of the Committee, as well as the majority of the resources later produced were primarily due to the efforts of the Committee’s Executive Secretary, a then recently returned missionary by the name of Gordon B. Hinckley. Because he played a seminal role in forming the Committee and pioneering media use in the Church, this paper will examine the seven year span from the time he was hired by the Committee in 1935 until he left the employment of the Church in early 1943 due to circumstances surrounding World War II. This paper will explore three questions, as follows:

- 1) What factors lead to the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee?
- 2) What were some of the projects the Committee completed in this time period and how did they go about producing them?
- 3) What was the impact of these projects in terms of the Church’s public image and missionary success?

Rationale

An inquiry into the creation, products, and impact of the Radio, Publicity, Mission Literature Committee is relevant for several reasons. First, there is paucity of information concerning the Committee, as noted by several authors and researchers. Second, a better understanding of what the Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee produced in those formative years is an important link between the Church’s missionary efforts using printed materials and the various ways in which it seeks to spread the Gospel today. The following

paragraphs will seek to address each of these reasons in greater detail in order to show the validity of this topic.

Previous scholarly works. Currently, there is only one publication that deals solely with the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee from 1935-1942: *Go Forward with Faith: the Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* by Sheri Dew. The chapter entitled “Getting Started: The Challenges Begin,” gives a general picture of Hinckley’s challenges and successes in the demanding atmosphere of the Committee, as well as an overview of the filmstrips and radio programs produced during that time period. Dew further gives details concerning the Committee’s exhibition at the 1939 world’s fair.¹ Dew’s work does make a significant contribution in large part because much of her information about the Committee and other aspects of Hinckley’s life are based on interviews with the man himself. The book, however, is about the life of Hinckley; subsequently the chapter is set more in the context of how his experience on the Committee shaped and influenced him. It is less a discussion of the Committee itself—its origins, the production and dissemination of its products, or how influential the Committee was in creating a positive public image of the Church. Thus, in terms of better understanding the contribution to media use by the Church, Dew’s chapter serves more as a snapshot, and lacks the detail that would be possible in a paper specifically focused on the Committee.

There have been other published works that do not deal with the Committee, but contribute to the growing body of research concerning media use by the Church, which also deserve attention. Sherry Baker and Daniel Stout have compiled a robust list consisting of over 300 articles, theses, and dissertations that deal with the Church and the media. Baker and Stout note that research thus far is “heavy on studies of print media, but thin on studies of Mormons

and broadcast media.”² Baker and Stout’s timeline contains over one hundred and thirty publications analyzing print media by or about the Church, just under half of the total number of articles listed in their timeline.

In the case of radio programming, there are only four works cited, even though the Church has utilized radio programs for nearly a century, and has the longest running radio program in the United States.³ Only two of those works deal roughly in the time period of the Committee, and both were written by the same scholar. In his Master’s thesis, and PhD dissertation on the same topic, Heber G. Wolsey examines the history of Church radio broadcasting, and attributes its influence, at least in part, to the growth of the Church.⁴ However, radio programs created by the Committee are only touched upon lightly. While there are several other articles written on broadcasting in general that include some references to radio programming, serious scholarship on radio programming is scarce. Church radio broadcasting is an area that needs more scholarly attention; because the Committee created the first dramatized series of Church radio programming, this work will begin to address the lack of research in this area.

There has been an increase in scholarship concerning the Church’s use film over the past decade. Baker and Stout list about thirty scholarly works centered on film by and about the Church. *BYU Studies* alone has published at minimum twelve articles focused on Mormons and film in the past decade, many of those being found in a special plus-sized edition published in 2007 devoted solely to film.⁵ These articles, however, are focused on film as moving pictures, and not film as filmstrips. Although the use of filmstrips by the Church was pioneered by the Committee, and were used up to and throughout the 1980’s, there are *no* scholarly works that have at their focus the use of filmstrips in the Church’s effort to spread the gospel. This gap has

not gone unnoticed by those interested in Church media usage. Several scholars have suggested further investigation of this “missing link” of Church media history.⁶ For example, Gideon O. Burton states that one possible area for further research is “the use of filmstrips in proselytizing,” which he claims, “beg[s] analysis.”⁷ Baker states that her bibliography has nothing catalogued concerning “audio-visual and media materials that were used by missionaries and by the Church for missionary purposes.”⁸ These calls for further research on filmstrips correlate directly with the Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee because it pioneered the use filmstrips for use by missionaries.

There are a small number of scholarly works dealing with historical sites, monuments, and expositions. Gerald Peterson’s Master’s thesis “History of Mormon Exhibit in World Fairs” deals with Church exhibits from 1851 to 1970, including a brief look at the Committee’s contribution in 1939.⁹ One article that is especially germane to the Committee is entitled “Tabernacle on Treasure Island: The LDS Church’s Involvement in the 1939-40 Golden Gate International Exposition.”¹⁰ Author Brent L. Top gives a brief introduction to the Church’s more “informal” participation in previous exhibits; he further demonstrates how they paved the way for the more official exhibit that was organized by the Church through the use of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee. Top gives due attention to the planning and development, operation of the exhibit, and its possible impact on the Church’s image. Along the way he, like Dew, gives interesting insights into the personality and persistence of Hinckley and his prominent role on the Committee. Top relies on extensive primary source material, which allows him to reveal a greater level of detail than Dew’s treatment of expositions and exhibits. This paper will add to Top’s contribution, as well as place the 1939 exposition in San Francisco in the context of the Committee’s other projects and overall mission.

Understanding the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee's work during this time period is an important link in comprehending the long chain of the Church's continued and increasing use of media to preach the gospel and defend it from attack. Brent Top and Sheri Dew have both made valuable contributions to this area, especially concerning the efforts of Hinckley; however, there is a need for more in-depth research concerning origins of, and resources created by, the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee.

Methodology

Sources. Secondary sources, including the previously mentioned works were found through several searches. The first search was made through the ATLA Religion Database (EBSCO), using the keywords *publicity, media, filmstrips, broadcast, expositions, LDS or Mormon Church, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Further searches explored Brigham Young University's Library catalogue, as well as *BYU Studies* and the *Journal of Mormon History* using the same keywords. This work also relies heavily on primary sources, which are derived from two main collections. The first is the Joseph F. Merrill Collection found in Brigham Young University's Special Collections Library, which contains several correspondences to and from Hinckley, as well as other germane documents. The second collection is actually a set of seven collections from the Church History Library. These collections contain correspondence, Committee notes, scripts, receipts, contracts, and other materials kept by Executive Secretary and Chairman of the Committee itself. Materials from these seven collections are the main source for this work.

Outline of chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction to the topic presents the three main questions this work will explore, and provides a brief literature review of previous scholarship and details the methodology.

Chapter Two provides information in regards to the first research question: What factors lead to the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee? This chapter shows that the Church used print media throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to defend its beliefs and to preach the gospel. However, when anti-Mormon films began to proliferate in the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Church did not use motion picture like it did print media to defend itself. There were individual members and leaders who saw the potential of radio and film to promote a better Church image, and encouraged the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Presiding Bishopric to form a committee to address the problem.

Chapters three through five address the other two research questions: What were some of the projects the Committee completed in this time period and how did they go about producing them? What was the impact of these projects in terms of the Church's public image and missionary success? Each of these three chapters addresses the production of one major project completed by the Committee and its impact.

Chapter Three examines the production of filmstrips. Although originally produced to meet the needs of Missionaries in their work of preaching the gospel, these filmstrips eventually were released to wards, stakes and even Seminaries for instructional purposes. Hinckley had the responsibility of writing and producing the filmstrips under the direction of the Committee members. During his time as Executive Secretary, he worked to increase the quality of the filmstrips by improving the slide coloring process and adding recorded soundtracks.

Radio broadcasts are dealt with in Chapter Four. While the Committee handled multiple radio programs, the *Fullness of Times* series is arguably the most well known and innovative broadcast they produced. Unlike other programs which relied primarily on lecture and LDS gospel music, the *Fullness of Times* was a dramatization of Church history events. This chapter details the many challenges the Committee faced and overcame during four years of production.

Finally, Chapter Five moves away from media to explore the Committee's unique exhibit at the 1939 international exposition near San Francisco. The Committee oversaw the design, construction, and display of a miniature Salt Lake Tabernacle with seating for fifty people. This chapter places the exhibit in the context of previous exhibits and the popularity of the Salt Lake Tabernacle as a tourist attraction.

Chapter Six provides a summary of the findings in each of these chapters in regards to the three research questions presented here, with an added emphasis on the impact of the Committee's work on the Church's effectiveness in spreading its message. It further suggests possible future research, and ends with an explanation of why Hinckley left the employ of the Committee in early 1943.

Conclusion

Sherry Baker has stated that “use of the media has been an important element in the history and experience of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members.”¹¹ The creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, and the resources it produced, are an important part of that history and experience. It is the hope of the author that this work will provide a significant contribution to the collective understanding of the history, role, and impact of media produced by the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee between 1935 and 1942.

¹ Sheri L. Dew, "Getting Started: The Challenges Begin," in *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1996), 86-105.

² Sherry Pack Baker and Daniel Stout, "Mormons and the Media, 1898-2003: A Selected, Annotated, and Indexed Bibliography (With suggestions for future research)," *BYU Studies* 42, no. 3 & 4 (2003), 132.

³ Wendell J. Ashton, *Voice in the West: Biography of a Pioneer Newspaper*, (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1950), 274.

⁴ Heber G. Wolsey, "Religious Broadcasting by the LDS Church" (Master's thesis, Northwestern University, 1949). See also Heber G. Wolsey, "The History of Radio Station KSL from 1922 to Television," (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1967).

⁵ See *BYU Studies* 46, no. 2 (2007).

⁶ Gideon O. Burton, "Establishing Shot: The Scope of Mormon Cinema," *BYU Studies* 46, no.2 (2007), 10.

⁷ Burton, "Mormon Cinema," 10.

⁸ Sherry Baker, "Mormon Media History Timeline: 1827-2007" *BYU Studies* 47, no. 4 (2008), 119.

⁹ Gerald Joseph Peterson, "History of Mormon Exhibits in World Expositions," (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974).

¹⁰ Brent L. Top, "Tabernacle on Treasure Island: The LDS Church's Involvement in the 1939-1940 Golden Gate International Exposition," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History* (Provo: Brigham Young University Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1998), 189-208.

¹¹ Baker, "Timeline," 117.

Chapter 2: Beginnings

This chapter will address the first research question concerning the creation of the Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee by first examining the Church's use of print media. This chapter seeks to show how many of the attacks on the Church using print in the nineteenth century carried over to the emerging media of motion picture in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Because the Church did not respond as effectively with new forms of mass media as they had with print material in the past, the Church's image had deteriorated to a point where the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee was created in order to address the image problem of the Church through new film and radio.

Mass Media in Print

The print culture of America. In order to more fully understand the impact that new types of media had in regards to preaching and defending the Church, it is important to first understand the prior media culture from which film and radio grew. The Church was established in a time when the printed word was both plentiful and powerful. David J. Whittaker states that "Mormonism emerged in a democratic age which defined itself by what it printed."¹

In European countries the press was controlled by the wealthy and powerful and the printing press was linked "with issues of authority and the control of knowledge."² The press in the American colonies, however, became increasingly democratized, which gave more influence to many more people and organizations.³ Philip Davidson and Bernard Bailyn have shown the American Revolution was merely an extension of the ideological battle that took place through

newspapers and pamphlets.⁴ They state that “because of such studies no historian of that period can neglect the roll of the printed word in the movement toward independence.”⁵

The democratization of print continued after the Revolution as well; with freedom of the press came the multiplying of presses and of papers. For example, the number of newspapers published in the United States had grown from about 200 in 1801 to approximately 1200 in 1833; these numbers continued to rise for decades, so that “not one important inland town lacked its own press.”⁶ Print influenced other areas besides politics; religious organizations, such as the American Bible Society, relied heavily on printed materials to spread their message.⁷ While such societies would occasionally print and distribute books, they relied primarily on pamphlets or tracts, to spread the Good News (thus the word *tract* has come to be used as a synonym for missionary work).

It was in the world of type and ink that the Church was restored, and in this world the Church matured, although not without some growing pains. Just as the Revolution was first fought with printed words, the same could be said of the conflict between Church members and their antagonists: long before any shots were fired in Missouri, Illinois, or Utah, the ideological battles were fought first with ink. During the first 140 years of its existence, the Church would use print to defend its ideals and teachings in over one hundred different periodicals, numerous books (including scripture), and *countless* pamphlets and tracts.⁸ The importance of printed materials to the growth of the Church is also evident in the fact that even in times of financial uncertainty “much of its limited capital was devoted to obtaining and operating printing presses, and some of its most talented converts were involved in publishing.”⁹ The following section gives a brief history of the Church’s use of print material during the first one-hundred years of its

existence, and shows that print has been, and indeed continues to be an important aspect in the Church's efforts to spread the gospel and defend its ideals and practices.

The Church's use of books, periodicals, and pamphlets. The ability to print was essential to the restoration of the Church because the first major task given to Joseph Smith in his divine calling was the translation and publication of *The Book of Mormon*. Although the printing of books was important, periodicals and pamphlets served essential roles in spreading the gospel as well. Because they were quicker, easier, and cheaper to print than books, "wherever Mormons established themselves, they left a published record of their presence."¹⁰ The Church's first publication, *The Evening and the Morning Star*, started in Missouri and was later moved to Kirtland. It was followed by other periodicals including the *Elder's Journal*, *Northern Neighbor*, the *Upper Missouri Advertiser* in Missouri, the *Times and Seasons*, the *Wasp* and its successor, the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, in Illinois.¹¹ In all of these places, the saints faced criticism of their lifestyle, beliefs, leadership, etc. While newspapers were not the only means employed by the Church to defend itself, these publications were a principal component in dealing with attacks. They were also instrumental in "reaching out to unify and consolidate. In days when travel was slow and difficult, when missionaries frequently traveled on foot" these periodicals could be passed from house to house.¹²

As the Gospel began to spread overseas, printed material spread as well. Parley P. Pratt, at the beginning of his mission to England in 1839, established the Church's longest running periodical in Church History: *The Millennial Star*. As permanent missions were established in other parts of the world, individual missions usually had their own publication, both to respond to criticisms and to unite the Saints. In the mid to late nineteenth century, the Church published other periodicals in Germany, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland, France, Wales, India, Australia,

New Zealand, and Hawaii.¹³ Pamphlets also became increasingly important starting with the Apostles' mission to England in 1839. Like periodicals, they were cheaper and easier to print than books, but were in many ways superior to periodicals because "there was a greater need for published materials and better information for the prospective convert than the newspapers could provide. Missionaries in their respective areas began to write and have published their own doctrinal pamphlets."¹⁴ The Church continues to rely on pamphlets and periodicals to this day to achieve the aims of spreading the gospel and unifying the saints.

Novels and fiction. There were other types of print media that the Church had to learn to use to defend it. For example, in 1852, the Church announced to the world the doctrine of polygamy, which unleashed a barrage of negative press over the coming decades. The Church used publications to combat negative sentiments. In the mid 1850's, Brigham Young sent four apostles to major cities in the U.S. to set up newspapers that were "established specifically to advocate and defend Mormonism, including the doctrine of plurality in marriage."¹⁵ Orson Pratt set up the *Seer* in Washington in 1853; Erastus Snow established the *St. Louis Luminary* in 1854; John Taylor traveled to New York and in 1855 edited the *Mormon*; and finally George Q. Cannon set up the *Western Standard* in San Francisco in 1856.¹⁶ Other publications already in existence, such as the *Millennial Star* in England contributed significant efforts to the defense of the Church in regards to plural marriage.

Despite efforts to defend the practice of polygamy through periodicals, other kinds of printed material such as novels proved effective tools for turning people against the Church due to the doctrine of polygamy. Some of these novels were written by members of nineteenth century women's organizations. Many of them became involved after the Civil War because when they could "no longer rally around the cause of Abolition, the second of the twin relics of

barbarism became a welcome target for their zeal.”¹⁷ Novels attacking the saints and the doctrine of polygamy were not limited to temperance societies, but became popular among those who just wanted to sell books. Richard H. Cracroft argues that while the practice of polygamy was abhorred by the general public, some authors wrote about the horrors of the practice not out of a moral duty to abolish them, but because they “saw in the myths which grew up around Mormon doctrines and customs...an opportunity for a literary bonanza.”¹⁸ Karen Lynn adds that many novelists “welcomed Mormonism as their own kind of godsend: a combination of mysterious doctrines, incredible iniquities, and pathetic human interest that perfectly answered the tastes of millions of nineteenth-century Americans, mostly female, who loved nothing better than to escape into the romance, adventures, and implausibility’s of popular fiction. Most of these novelists, of course, would have had us believe that it was not popular taste that guided them, but rather their moral and Christian duty.”¹⁹

Over the final half of the nineteenth century and opening decades of the twentieth, “more than two hundred book-length accounts were published detailing travel through Mormon country; more than a hundred novels were printed giving fictional accounts of experiences with Mormons; and perhaps a dozen books of anti-Mormon humor were published. No local group in America had ever been the object of such interest and concern.”²⁰ The result was that Mormons were viewed as the epitome of “criminality, disloyalty, and degradation” and became the foil of what an American, or a religion, should be.²¹ Anti-Mormon propaganda frequently borrowed from fiction; fiction in turn fed on propaganda.²²

Novels played another role in shaping the Church. The end of Utah’s isolation 1869 meant that more people not of the LDS faith were able to associate with members of the Church in Utah, but this doesn’t appear to have caused an appreciable change in sympathy for the

Church or greater understanding of the doctrine of polygamy.²³ The end of isolation did mean more economic opportunity, but it also brought new and challenging ideas in the form of books and newspapers from the secular world. One major concern Church leaders had at the time was works of fiction that were gaining in popularity among many of the saints. What began as a trickle of these novels, brought by soldiers and immigrants in the 1850's and 60's became a continual stream after 1869. The Church had been quick in earlier years to use periodicals to combat false claims in periodicals and to print pamphlets to spread the truths as others tried to spread falsehoods. They were not so quick to use fiction in order to combat fiction. Ross Esplin notes that "the leaders of the Mormon Church were at first actively opposed to fiction in any form, for they regarded it as a worldly, distracting influence and actively expressed the opinion that the Book of Mormon and Bible were the only worthwhile books written."²⁴ Consequently, members were not only discouraged from reading fiction, but producing it as well.

Leonard Arrington argues that "by not producing their own imaginative literature the Latter-day Saints lost the image battle during the period of their western pioneering."²⁵ By 1888, however, leaders of the Church had changed perspectives from almost complete rejection of fictional works to a "qualified acceptance of fiction that taught lessons of moral uprightness and that gave uplift and inspiration to its readers."²⁶ Members were asked to produce virtuous works of fiction, and a monthly magazine, *Parry's Monthly* was established as a venue for authors to publish their short stories.²⁷ Initially, LDS fiction was read almost exclusively by Utah members of the Church, and subsequently it did little to combat the negative image of the Church among those not of the LDS faith. As the quality of the fictional works written by members improved, however, it became more widely read, and had a greater impact on the image of the Church among those not of the LDS faith.²⁸

This brief history of print in regards to the Church provides important contextual clues for understanding the emergence of film and radio and its role in shaping Church image in the minds of the general public. Many of the approaches and tactics used in anti-Mormon literature of the nineteenth century would be reflected in anti-Mormon films produced in the beginning of the twentieth century. Further, just as Church leaders and members had to adapt their understanding and use of some forms of print, like fiction, they would need to adapt their understanding and use of film and radio as well.

The Emergence of Motion Picture

Media theorist and author Neil Postman has stated that “one significant change generates total change . . . A new technology does not add or subtract something. It changes everything . . . In the year 1500, fifty years after the printing press was invented, we did not have old Europe plus printing press. We had a different Europe.”²⁹ Such was the emerging media of motion picture; the development, proliferation, and popularity of movies changed many things in developed countries, including the image of the Church in the first few decades of the twentieth century.

Early films, even those produced for commercial profit, were extremely simple—a film of someone walking, another of carriages passing on the street—they relied on the novelty of motion picture to sell. But even such simple scenes had a palpable influence on audiences. It is reported that in one such film produced by the Lumiere brothers, a locomotive enters a station and several people fled the theater because they believed the train would run them over.³⁰

As motion picture became more and more common at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the novelty of motion picture began to wear off. Simple daily

scenes were not drawing large crowds, and the modern film culture of hired actors, directors, scenes, plot, etc. began to emerge. Perhaps more than anyone else, Thomas Edison shaped the culture of the film industry in the early days. He and his associates “set down the basic precepts upon which commercial Hollywood movie production, distribution, and exhibition are still based: give the audience spectacle, sex, and violence, yet simultaneously pay lip service to the dominant social order.”³¹ His movies were the first to use staged scenes, which presented a “world of idealized romantic couples, racist stereotypes, and relentless exoticism, leavened with a healthy dose of sadism and voyeurism to titillate the public. In short, Edison knew what the public wanted.”³²

The ideals presented to the public by filmmakers like Edison had an increasing impact because it became easier and easier to gain access to them. In the first decades of the twentieth century, nickelodeons sprang up like weeds. In these precursors to movie theaters, “admission was a nickel, and accompaniment was usually from an upright piano at the front of the hall. Early nickelodeons had a generally rough reputation and often a fly by night quality, inasmuch as most were converted storefronts or livery stables and could fold up and move on at a moment’s notice.”³³ Such was the popularity of these venues that by 1908, over two million people attended the Nickelodeons each day, and there were over 8,000 of them in existence.³⁴ The increased popularity and demand for new films meant that there was a lot of money to be made, and filmmakers were continually looking for new stories, heroes, and villains to sate the public’s appetite for more movies.

For filmmakers in search of subjects for comic relief, derring-do, and dastardly villainy, the Mormon myths were fertile ground. The first known film about Mormons, entitled *A Trip to Salt Lake City* (1905), cast Mormonism in a humorous light: following in the footsteps of the

satirists Artemis Ward and Mark Twain, this film (only a few minutes long) pokes fun at the Mormon practice of Polygamy. A polygamist man riding a train with his many children is harried by their simultaneous pleas for a drink of water.³⁵ Within six years, this more comical approach to the Church in film soon gave way to more virulent attacks.

Richard O. Cowan notes that 1911 marked the last year that a nationwide offensive was launched against the Church in newspapers.³⁶ It was also the year that the first strongly anti-Mormon film was released, entitled *A Victim of the Mormons*. This Danish motion picture marked the start of over a decade of attacks made on the Church through film; from this time to 1936, there were at least forty films shot and distributed dealing with Mormons, the majority of which cast the Church and its members as villains.³⁷ The plots from these films drew heavily anti-Mormon literature from the previous century, having a “strong relationship (especially in the pre-1923 anti-LDS films) to the sister arts of literature and the stage.”³⁸ The popular novels written in the nineteenth century depicting either the ruthless, bloodthirsty fighting men called the Danites, or of fair maidens being lured, mesmerized, or kidnapped to become one of many wives to a depraved polygamist man in Utah were present not only in *A Victim of the Mormons*, but numerous films right on its heels. In 1912 alone, films such as *The Flower of the Mormon City*, *A Mormon Episode*, *Mormons and the Mountain Meadows Massacre*, *An Episode of Early Mormon Days*, *Marriage or Death*, and *The Danites* were released to nationwide and even international audiences.³⁹ Thus, the “carry over of traditional Victorian melodrama...found expression in the anti-Mormon screen thriller.”⁴⁰ This shows that the new media culture of film drew heavily on the print culture, at least in terms of attacks on the Church.

These film attacks had the greatest impact on the Church in Europe, and of those countries perhaps Great Britain the most. Such persecution was due in part both to the Church’s

nineteenth century practice of plural marriage, and the ongoing practice of emigration. Beginning in 1840, those converted to the Church were encouraged to emigrate to Utah. The 1840's and 1850's saw England's membership soar to over 30,000, but due to fewer convert baptism and continuing emigration, membership had dropped to 5,423 by 1874.⁴¹ As a result, the majority of the Church in England during the first part of the twentieth century was made up of small, struggling branches, and full-time missionaries, often from the United States, supplemented the leadership of local wards and branches. Similar circumstances could be found in other European Countries where the Church had been established. While Saints who had emigrated from Europe were a great strength to the Utah Church, disaffected family members, and the former clergy of converted Saints who had emmigrated to the United States, and other antagonists of the Church proclaimed that the practice of emigration was the equivalent of abduction.⁴² Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton note that

In the 1910's a wave of anti-Mormon propaganda and occasional violence swept across Great Britain. Based on the charge that polygamy was continuing, the participants in the anti-Mormon crusade were especially concerned about the conversion of English girls. In newspaper articles, in sermons, in rallies, in all kinds of public anti-Mormon meetings the warning sounded. Among the headlines in the London Daily Express was 'The Mormon Trap,' 'The Deadly Menace to English Girls,' and 'Polygamy Still the Real Faith.' If there were not explicit charges of hypnotic powers in many of these warnings, they often implied that the Mormons exerted a mysterious, unholy influence.⁴³

With the introduction of motion picture, those opposed to the Church were able to take the misconceptions, stereotypes, and outright lies that were once the domain of the printed page and resurrect them in more life-like form on the big screen. This new generation of attacks brought with it a terrifying impact. As noted earlier, the first virulent attack against the Church in film was made in Denmark, but the film which arguably had the greatest negative impact was filmed and released in Great Britain. Matilda Graham Cory, alias Winifred Graham, was one of

the most outspoken and well-known critics of the Church. As a novelist, she wrote several fictional books promulgating the ideas of Mormon kidnappings and secret marriages.⁴⁴ In 1922, persecution against the Church reached a crescendo, due in part to a novel turned film written by Graham. *Trapped by the Mormons*, tells how a “Mormon missionary exerts an obvious hypnotic force upon a beautiful, helpless maiden; camera close-ups repeatedly showed the missionary's eyes in a powerful, transfixing stare.”⁴⁵ That same year, *Married to a Mormon*, another film about the slave-like life of a girl forced to marry into a polygamous relationship was also released by the same company.

Despite members’ conclusions that these movies were part of anti-Mormon conspiracy, it is unlikely that all films portraying members of the Church negatively “represented a deep felt conviction on the part of the filmmakers...rather were indicative of [their] attempt to capitalize and exploit topical public issues for commercial advantage.”⁴⁶ This attitude of some filmmakers to release anything to make a profit again mirrors the literary efforts of some authors from the nineteenth century who found polygamy a convenient target. There were certainly films whose creators had an agenda concerning the Church, but regardless of motive, these films had a noticeable, negative impact on the image of the Church, especially the aforementioned *Trapped by the Mormons* in Great Britain.

Missionaries had some success mitigating the effect of the films by distributing pamphlets outside the doors of the theaters where the movies played; however the number of missionaries and pamphlets could not keep up with the widespread distribution of the film.⁴⁷ Richard O. Cowan states that “in a few isolated areas emotions ran so high that anti-Mormon rallies turned to violence. Mud and rocks were hurled at chapels in Birkenhead and Nuneaton, a branch president was tarred and feathered, and missionaries were harassed out of town. In the

face of such agitation, the level of convert baptisms dropped during the second decade of the twentieth century.”⁴⁸ In sum, the former tactics of publishing articles in the paper, holding street meetings, and handing out pamphlets could not keep pace with the emotional intensity of a film, or its ability to reach large numbers of people. The widespread distrust and even hatred for the Church in England has led one Historian to note that “during the first three decades of the twentieth century, British Mormons and their religion came under noticeable opposition... it is a distinct possibility the Mormon faith was the target of more religious persecution and intolerance than any other denomination during this time.”⁴⁹

Initially, the Church did not make any forays into the motion picture production. Many in the Church had a negative view of film in general, due to the perception that Nickelodeons and motion picture theaters had a general reputation for being seedy and raucous. Just as leaders of the Church had been counseled against reading, let alone writing fiction, some members and leaders of the Church were initially reluctant to use the new medium for Church purposes. Others, however, seemed to sense the usefulness of motion pictures in fulfilling the charge to preach to gospel to the whole world.⁵⁰ Levi Edgar Young (grandson of Brigham Young), for example, wrote in 1913:

the Gospel will have to be preached, but as yet the masses are not readers, so they will not be introduced to it through books always, but other means will have to be used in order to excite their interest...so the moving picture is one of the modern means we have of bringing the past down to the very doors of the poorest and most lowly people. It becomes the means of doing a work, wherein books would fail...The moving picture together with all the other modern inventions is to help us carry the Mission of Christ to all the world, and to bring humanity home to the true principles of salvation.⁵¹

The glut of anti-Mormon films in 1912 appear to have been the catalyst for the Church’s entrance into the production of motion picture, but despite its best efforts in motion picture

production and distribution during these two decades, the end result always seemed to be a glancing blow, with little effect in bettering the Church's image. In 1913, for example, the Church released *One hundred Years of Mormonism*, which took its title from the popular Church History Book by the same name.⁵² It literally had a cast of thousands, with large sets of Nauvoo, Independence and other historical sites constructed. The final product was an hour and half long movie, shot from four simultaneously running cameras—it was “a herculean feat for the day.”⁵³ Although it was initially promised world-wide distribution, its release was extremely limited, and thus its impact was negligible.⁵⁴

Similarly, in June of 1923, perhaps in response to the provocative 1922 films in Great Britain such as *Trapped by the Mormons*, and *Riders of the Purple Sage* in the United States, the Church formed a large committee consisting of over 140 people in order to make a motion picture of the arrival of the Saints into the Salt Lake Valley.⁵⁵ However, there is no known record as to the name of the film, or if it was ever completed.⁵⁶ A film released in the late 1920's faced similar disappointments. An independent filmmaker sought to showcase Church members' faith and courage in crossing the plains in *The Exodus*, which was later renamed *All Faces West*.⁵⁷ Again the promise of world-wide distribution went unfulfilled; its release in 1929 was limited, and its success dismal. This was due in part by the stock market crash, but also because “talkies” were the new rage in motion picture. Apparently none of the pictures were shown in Europe, where the Church's image suffered the most.

While the Church's efforts in building a better image through film bore little fruit, there was some success by Church leaders in preventing the distribution of anti-Mormon films in the United States, and especially in Utah. For example, Utah governor George Spry was able to halt showing of *A Victim of the Mormons* in Utah in 1911. Senator Reed Smoot had a larger influence

with his position in the United States Senate. The same year that *Trapped by the Mormons* appeared in theaters in England, a movie entitled *Riders of the Purple Sage* was set for release in the United States. Jacobs notes that the film “was so severe an attack against the Church that Senator Reed Smoot of Utah brought it to the attention of the director, William Fox, and the film was immediately withdrawn from public viewing and all worldwide distribution commitments cancelled.”⁵⁸ In return, Senator Smoot promised to help to kill a proposed thirty percent film industry tax pending in Congress; it was also during this time that Senator Smoot helped the passage of laws to protect the image of the Church in motion picture.⁵⁹

Thus, while the image of the Church in the United States was by no means ideal, the Saints in the United States did not face the same level of persecution in Europe either in print or in film during the 1910’s and 1920’s. After the violent outbreaks in Great Britain following the release of *Trapped by the Mormons* and *Married to a Mormon* in 1922, audiences seemed to have had their fill of the maiden-carried-captive-against-her-will storyline, and the feeling toward the Church cooled somewhat to a general distrust of Mormons, their missionaries, and its practices.⁶⁰ With the prevailing attitudes towards Mormons, and the reduced number of missionaries entering the mission field due to the onset of the Great Depression, missionaries in Europe in the 1930’s could expect rejection, disappointment, and even hostility on a daily, if not hourly basis.

The Missionary Situation in Europe

It was under these unfavorable circumstances Gordon Bitner Hinckley began missionary service in Great Britain in 1933. Events and decisions concerning his upbringing and education in Utah were integral not only to his success during his service in England, but to his success in

creating filmstrips and radio programs in the years after. Both of his parents were educators, and as such, he was exposed to good books and deep thinking from a young age; he recalls: “When I was a boy we lived in a large old house. One room was called the library....There were books of history and literature, books on technical subjects, dictionaries, a set of encyclopedias, and an atlas of the world... I would not have you believe that we were great scholars. But we were exposed to great literature, great ideas from great thinkers, and the language of men and women who thought deeply and wrote beautifully.”⁶¹ His introduction to good literature was furthered as he studied at the University of Utah; working towards a degree in English, he took in-depth courses on the great literary masters of the ages and their works, as well as “every writing course offered at the University, hoping to move in the direction of Journalism.”⁶² He graduated in June of 1932 and hoped to enroll for graduate work the following fall at Columbia University.⁶³ Instead of continuing his education, he accepted a call from his Bishop to serve a mission. He was called to labor in Europe, was eventually assigned to labor in England, and arrived in London in June of 1933.

Although most of Elder Hinckley’s time was spent in tracting and street meetings, he had the opportunity to spread the gospel through published writing. His exposure to great literature throughout his upbringing and subsequent training in journalism had made him a talented writer. For example, before leaving for England, David O. McKay of the First Presidency asked each of the newly called Elders being trained to write a theme on what it meant to them to be a missionary. President Hinckley, years later, recalled that “a day or two later he called me to his office and complimented me, saying that mine was the finest theme he had ever received out of the missionaries in the home.”⁶⁴ He put this talent to use in England, publishing over twenty-five articles in the Church’s long-running periodical *The Millennial Star* during his time there.⁶⁵

Although publishing in the star was commonplace for missionaries, Elder Hinckley's style was not. For example, less than a month after arriving in England he published "A Missionary Holiday." The content of this article is a basic report on the activities of a group of missionaries on the fourth of July. What is remarkable, however, is the quality of his writing—his style portrays a deeper current of thought, and a skill with words unmatched by his companions. The activity that day, for most of the missionaries in attendance, was merely a "recreational experience—a day of baseball—friends—memories and fun."⁶⁶ Another missionary may have reported just that, but Hinckley, looking over the location of the activity on shores of lake Windermere quoted the famous author who stood on those same shores years earlier: "The world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers': Thus mused William Wordsworth as he silently looked across the placid waters of Windermere and Grasmere, a hurrying world rushing by behind his back."⁶⁷ He went on to connect Wordsworth's sentiments to the activities of the day: "Several 'Mormon' missionaries caught that same inspiration on the shores of the Windermere while awaiting the dawn of a glorious Fourth of July."⁶⁸ Elder Hinckley's articles often used quotes from great authors past, are filled with simple activities made sublime. Perhaps because his writing was concise, eloquent, and persuasive, he was soon moved to a new position within the mission.

In February of 1834, just eight months into his Mission, Hinckley was called to serve as the assistant to Elder Joseph F. Merrill of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who was serving as the President of the European Mission. One of Elder Hinckley's official duties in the European Mission office was as Director of Publicity, which suggests that the call came as a result of his education and ability to write. From his correspondences, it is evident that President Merrill was unsatisfied with the progress of missionary work in Europe, and placed much of the

blame on antiquated resources and outdated practices. In March of 1935 he wrote that “our missionary methods are very inefficient. They are largely inherited. Seventy-five years ago they were very fruitful. But conditions have changed and I think we have not changed our methods to keep up with the changing times.”⁶⁹ President Merrill felt the means “for reaching simultaneously practically all the people of every civilized nation is already in existence. The radio and the cinema are the modern popular contact agencies. But for proselyting purposes the most powerful church in the world has found the cinema to be the most effective available agency.”⁷⁰

To clarify, when President Merrill states that *cinema* was the “most effective” tool for contacting people about the gospel, his use of the term *cinema* encompasses filmstrips, also known as slide shows.⁷¹ Cinema filmstrips were in many ways preferable and even superior to motion pictures for missionary work at this time. For example, the projector and film are smaller, lighter, and easier to move and store. Further, nearly everything is cheaper with slide shows in terms of production and equipment. President Merrill also understood the advantage for missionaries to keep “one picture on the screen for a long time while discussing it whereas, with a movie projector, this may result in a burning frame right in the middle of the film sequence or other difficulties.”⁷² This shows that President Merrill had a vision of improved missionary work through newer and better resources like filmstrips; but although he knew what was needed to improve missionary work, obtaining those resources proved to be a huge obstacle.

Church headquarters in Salt Lake had made at least two attempts to produce filmstrips for missionary work in the previous five years with little to no success. Sometime in 1930, a small committee was formed consisting of President David O. McKay, Bishop David A. Smith and Elder Rey L. Pratt.⁷³ Even though the *Deseret News* reported in October of 1930 that “lectures on

film, will be supplied the missionaries of the Church,” there is no evidence that these slide shows were ever completed.⁷⁴ Four years later, another church agency was created to create new missionary materials. The Publicity Bureau, chaired by Elder John A. Widtsoe was formed in 1934, but the group only met once, and “nothing of a concrete nature [was] accomplished.”⁷⁵ These ventures into making filmstrips were not the result of apathy or lack of talent on the part of those responsible. Rather, with so many other pressing things to take care of, the production of filmstrips fell by the way side.⁷⁶

With no materials coming out of Salt Lake, yet still believing that *cinema* was the best means of improving missionary work, President Merrill did two things. First, he had Elder Hinckley start writing scripts and drawing mock-ups of slides for possible filmstrips. This was done not to bypass the proper channels in Salt Lake City, but to help the process. If the general authorities had the script and design in place, perhaps it would take some of the burden off them and expedite the production of the film strips. While in England, Elder Hinckley prepared at least four scripts for consideration: *Down Pioneer Trails*, which tells the story of faithful saints who crossed the American plains, two lectures on the Book of Mormon, and a fourth on Church History.⁷⁷

Elder Merrill also wrote the First Presidency and others such as John A. Widtsoe who were responsible for overseeing the work, to ask for more to be done in terms of providing new missionary resources. The First Presidency commiserated with the plight of missionaries in Europe, stating that “all the modern means that God has placed at the disposal of men should be legitimately used for the proclamation of the Truth.”⁷⁸ Despite their understanding and desire to provide the needed resources, however, filmstrip production remained at a standstill. The scripts and drawings created by Elder Hinckley were sent to Salt Lake, only to be left in at the bottom of

a stack of papers containing other pressing matters.⁷⁹ “Of course we cannot complain,” Elder Merrill laments, “all we can do is to sympathize with the brethren and hope that sometime the work will be organized in a way to give them some relief from the many details that now absorb their attention.”⁸⁰

Elder Hinckley’s mission was coming to an end in the summer of 1935, and having exhausted all other means, President Merrill asked Elder Hinckley to go before the First Presidency in person as his proxy. Elder Hinckley was tasked with persuading them of the need of filmstrips for missionary work, and to do whatever else he could to move the work forward. This final assignment from his mission president not only shaped the course of Elder Hinckley’s future, but the future of missionary work, and the use of media by the Church in spreading the gospel and defending its beliefs.

The Start of a New Committee

There are at least three different written accounts given by Hinckley of his meeting with the First Presidency after his return to Utah. The first account was written in 1935, just after the meeting took place, in the form of letters to President Merrill. The second account is recorded in his life sketch in the Appendix of Bryant S. Hinckley’s autobiography circa 1960. A third account is found in Sheri Dew’s Biography of President Hinckley written in 1996. Although the basic outcome of the story is the same, these accounts offer differing details as to what happened. The main difference is that the 1960 and 1996 accounts give the impression that immediate action was taken after Elder Hinckley’s appearance before the First Presidency, and a committee was formed and functioning just days later. The 1935 account, however, shows that the approval and functioning of the new Committee was much slower and uncertain. These accounts, along

with other letters written between Elder Hinckley and President Merrill at the time, further highlight the tenacity of the young Hinckley, and show his seminal role in the creation of the committee.

Meeting with the First Presidency. All three accounts agree that the meeting between Elder Hinckley and the First Presidency took place on August 21st, 1935. They further agree that he was initially given fifteen minutes, but because of questioning from the members of the First Presidency, the interview lasted over an hour.

Elder Hinckley's letter to President Merrill on August 23, 1935, however, provides a greater amount of detail than his later accounts: "At last," he exclaims, "I have seen the First Presidency. After trying for more than two weeks, I was given an appointment."⁸¹ He specifically mentions the presence of President Grant and David O. McKay, with Joseph Anderson taking down shorthand of the report; no mention of Rueben J. Clark is made. Further, he notes that "before I had finished the Presiding Bishopric came in and heard of our troubles."⁸² He also spells out in greater detail his push for action on publicity materials such as slide-show lectures: "I told them plainly of what was being done, and of the difficulty we had in securing the things we desired. I warmed up on the illustrated lectures. Brother McKay expressed himself as being heartily in favor of the thing. The President was noncommittal. They have been terribly busy since they returned from the East; my time was up at 10 o'clock and I was obliged to leave at five minutes past ten."⁸³ The 1960 account states that a visit with President McKay the next day led to a request that Hinckley be hired by the Church.⁸⁴ The 1996 account, on the other hand is much more specific; it states that *two days* after the meeting, President McKay informed Elder Hinckley that a committee consisting of six members of the twelve had been formed, and that he was hired that same day.⁸⁵ Elder Hinckley's letters at the time, however, make no mention of

any such meeting or job offer. While the reasons for such a discrepancy are unknown, it may be that time had worn away Gordon B. Hinckley's memory. It may also be that the First Presidency had indeed decided a day or two later to form a committee and hire Hinckley, but it took another month to set everything in motion. Whatever the reason, the letters written at the time by Elder Hinckley offer a window into his thoughts as he attempted to fulfill his assignment. The remainder of this section will draw upon Elder Hinckley's letters written in 1935 to detail the origins of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee.

Elder Hinckley's other efforts. Technically, Elder Hinckley had completed the assignment given to him by his Mission President by representing the situation of the European Elders to the First Presidency. But having completed his assignment of meeting with the First Presidency, it appeared to Elder Hinckley that he was no closer to obtaining filmstrips to send to President Merrill. Even before he saw the First Presidency, Elder Hinckley tried to move the work forward by getting in to see *anyone* who was involved in the Publicity Bureau chaired by John A. Widtsoe.

He knew from President Merrill that Elder Widtsoe was the chair, and Bishop David A. Smith was a member of the Publicity Bureau that had been created in 1934, but he had "never been able to find out who the other members are, but of course Bishop Smith was one of the moving powers and worked with energy to keep things going."⁸⁶ Elder Hinckley gained firsthand knowledge of how busy these men really were; he met with constant frustration in trying to meet with them, both leading up to and after his visit with the First Presidency. In his first report back to president Merrill, Hinckley stated: "Bishop Smith asked me to call in at this office at 3 in the afternoon. But when I went over to the Presiding Bishop's office at 3, I was told that Bishop Smith had just left for San Diego. I smiled as a trained missionary should, and said, "Cheerio,

and all the best!”⁸⁷ Hinckley reports that Elder Widtsoe received him kindly, but was leaving for California “where he goes to deliver a series of lectures destined to hold his attention for at least six months, possibly longer. That means just one thing; —as far as President Widtsoe is concerned the matter of publicity lectures is dead for a long period.”⁸⁸ When contacting members of the Publicity Bureau failed, he talked

with any number of people—Mark Peterson and Henry Smith at the News, Stringham Stevens, Harrison R. Merrill, Bishop Smith, and others who all say that we are passing up untold opportunities for lack of some central bureau here for publicity and such work as these lectures. Everyone here seems to appreciate the need, but no one seems to have sufficient time to effect any kind of an organization. My suggestion is that you keep drumming them from over there and then before long something will be done. ...I have told my story wherever it would count for good and done what I have been allowed to do to assist in the execution of the job.⁸⁹

Despite constant roadblocks, he continued his efforts. Although his original plans were to enroll in graduate school and find a job upon his return, all his spare time was soon taken up in his efforts to move forward Church publicity. As August turned to September, all of Elder Hinckley’s efforts seemed to yield nothing, and his letters to President Merrill became more and more despondent. After a month and a half of trying to gain support, he lamented that “I have but one recourse left, and that is to again appeal to the First Presidency. It’s just about taken the heart out of me to have to go pounding on the doors of busy men, one day after another, with no obvious success. But I shall screw myself together for another try, and attempt to see President McKay again tomorrow or the next day.”⁹⁰ While he does not mention the outcome of his attempt to visit the First Presidency again, the tone in his letter two days later suggests it did not have the desired effects. In his report to Elder Merrill, he seems almost apologetic: “Please understand, President Merrill, that I have not tried to evade this lecture problem. After I had done all I could, and six weeks passed with nothing but discouragement—kind words from all but no

concrete results—I began to feel that I would have to get busy at something with which to patch my missionary rags.”⁹¹

Merrill, for his part, was writing letter after letter to the First Presidency and other general authorities, hoping that Elder Hinckley would be hired as an assistant to Bishop Smith in order to push forward the project of creating filmstrips for missionary work.⁹² His responses to Hinckley are laced with encouragement that some form of action would be taken, and even hints that there would be gainful employment for Elder Hinckley. Finally, after nearly two months of dogged persistence, Elder Hinckley was given news that all of his efforts were not in vain. In a quickly scrawled letter dated September 30th, Hinckley reported that President McKay “has now approved of our project, and that I should have been notified more than a week ago. He [explained] that the reason for the delay lay in the fact that the committee chairman, Bro. Widtsoe, had left. And now Bro. McKay says he will recommend the immediate appointment of a new committee.”⁹³ Instead of reorganizing the Publicity Bureau with Elder Widtsoe as the chair, Steven L. Richards' committee on missionary publications was expanded to become the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee consisting of six members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, with Gordon B. Hinckley as the Executive Secretary.⁹⁴ The change was made official just after General Conference in October of 1935.⁹⁵

While the new Committee was responsible for other projects such as radio scripts and missionary literature, in his first meeting with Elder Richards, Elder Hinckley “emphasized the necessity for getting this lecture work done first, and he agreed that that should be the first thing tackled.”⁹⁶ In reviewing the time commitment, setbacks, and frustrations of fulfilling his former Mission President’s final assignment, he commented: “In spite of the fact that it has taken me nearly three months to get this going, I feel very happy. This is an entirely new thing.”⁹⁷

Conclusion

The creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee was a result of many different factors. The rise and popularity of new forms of mass media such as motion picture, and especially films which portrayed the Church in a negative light influenced the general public to have a more negative view of the Church, especially in Europe. This negative image continued through the great depression, during which time there were fewer missionaries to combat it. In order to give the European missionaries more resources that could reach a greater number of people, and potentially have a greater impact, President Merrill had Elder Hinckley were instrumental in the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, which was officially formed in October of 1935.

¹ David J. Whittaker, "Web of Print: Toward a History of the Book in Early Mormon Culture," *Journal of Mormon History* 23, no.1 (1997), 9.

² Robert Gross, "Printing, Politics, and the People," in *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (1990), 377.

³ Whittaker, "Web of Print," 16.

⁴ David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977), 35.

⁵ Whittaker, "Pamphleteering," 36.

⁶ Ben James Loewenberg, *American History in American Thought*, (New York: Simon Schuster/Touchstone Book, 1972), 153.

⁷ Whittaker, "Pamphleteering," 36-37.

⁸ Richard G. Moore, "A History of Periodicals from 1830 to 1838," (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1983), 95. The time span of one-hundred and forty years is significant because in 1870, 140 years from the organization of the Church, other periodicals that had been published in different part of the world under the name of the Church were discontinued, and three periodicals *The Ensign*, *New Era*, and *Friend*, would take their place. *The Millennial Star*, for example, which had begun publication in 1840 when the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles began their mission there was, at the time, the longest running Church organ. However, all periodicals, including the *Star* were replaced by the new standard, *The Ensign*.

⁹ Peter Crawley, "Bibliography of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York, Ohio, and Missouri," *BYU Studies* 12, no.4 (1972), 465-537.

¹⁰ Whittaker, "Web of Print," 11.

¹¹ Virgil V. Peterson, "Early Mormon Journalism," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 35, no. 4 (1949), 630.

¹² Loy Otis Banks, "The Evening and the Morning Star," *Missouri Historical Review* XLIII, no. 4 (1949), 333.

¹³ Peterson, "Early Mormon Journalism," 632.

¹⁴ Moore, "History of Periodicals," 95.

¹⁵ Peterson, "Early Mormon Journalism," 632-33.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Karen Lynn, "Sensational Virtue: Nineteenth-Century Mormon Fiction and American Popular Taste," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14, no. 3 (1981), 102.

¹⁸ Richard H. Cracroft, "Distorting Polygamy for Fun and Profit: Artemis Ward and Mark Twain Among the Mormons," *BYU Studies* 14, no. 2 (1974), 273. Cracroft highlights how the two leading humorists of their decades, Artemus Ward and Mark Twain, respectfully, had visited Salt Lake City and had seen "Plurality at its best." Ward, for example, had fallen sick during his stay and was nursed back to health by a group of charitable sisters. "Ward would write to Twain on 21 January 1864 that "the saints have been wonderfully kind to me. I could not have been better or more tenderly nursed at home. God bless them all" (280-81).

¹⁹ Lynn, "Sensational Virtue," 102.

²⁰ Leonard J. Arrington, "Mormonism: Views from Without and Within," *BYU Studies* 14, no. 2 (1974), 144. See also Lynn, "Sensational Virtue," 141.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 143.

²³ Whittaker, "Web of Print," 18.

²⁴ Ross Esplin, "A Survey of Fiction Written by Mormon Authors and Appearing in Mormon Periodicals Between 1900 and 1945," (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1949), 1.

²⁵ Arrington, "Mormonism," 150.

²⁶ Esplin. "A Survey of Fiction," 3.

²⁷ Ibid, 6. Just two years later, nearly all Mormon periodicals began to include works of fiction in their pages.

²⁸ See Arrington, "Mormonism." Arrington argues that a major reason the image of the Church improved after 1930 was due to well-written pieces of fictional literature by Latter-day Saints.

²⁹ Neil Postman, *Technology: the Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 18. In Baker, "Timeline," 120-121.

³⁰ Jack C. Ellis and Virginia Wright Wexman, *History of Film* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), 7.

³¹ Dixon and Foster, *History of Film*, 10.

³² Ibid, 10-11.

³³ Ibid, 10.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Richard Alan Nelson, "From Antagonism to Acceptance: Mormons and the Silver Screen," *Dialogue* 10, no 3 (1977), 60.

³⁶ Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985), 40.

³⁷ 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), 207.

³⁸ Ibid. 207.

³⁹ Nelson, "Antagonism to Acceptance," 61.

⁴⁰ Nelson, "Screen Portrayals," 207.

⁴¹ Bruce Van Orden, "The Decline in Convert Baptisms and Member Emigration from the British Mission after 1870," *BYU Studies* 27, no. 1(1987), 97-98.

⁴² Richard L. Jensen, "The British Gathering to Zion," in *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837-1987* (Solihul, England: Deseret Book Co., 1987), 189. Speaking of the first decade of the twentieth century, Jensen states that "anti-Mormon agitation in Britain focused particularly on emigration."

⁴³ Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, "Mormonism and Mesmerism," *BYU Studies* 15, no. 2 (1975), 153.

⁴⁴ See Malcolm Thorp, "Winifred Graham and the Mormon Image in England," *Journal of Mormon History* 6 (1979), 107-121.

⁴⁵ Bunker and Bitton, "Mesmerism," 207. See also Nelson, "Screen Portrayals." Nelson argues that though the LDS community has categorized *Trapped by the Mormons* as purely anti-Mormon, the film makers themselves were more likely capitalizing on a topic that was widely discussed more for making money than any hatred of the Mormons. Joseph F. Merrill, in a letter addressed to Charles W. Irvings dated April 18, 1935 concerning Kauffman's History of the Church states that "This book was obviously written from an insufficient knowledge of the facts that it attempts to present. It is too bad. We think it likely that the writers wanted to be as fair as they could. But they certainly wanted to write a book that would sell. And Therefore as Mr. C Harecourt Robertson, a London writer, found out a year ago, in order to sell it was necessary to paint a picture that satisfied more or less the popular conception of the wickedness of the

Mormons...,” correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁴⁶ Nelson, “Screen Portrayals,” 157.

⁴⁷ G. Osmond Hyde, “Movie Campaign Against ‘Mormons’ Leads Many to Investigate Message,” *The Deseret News*, June 3, 1922. In Nelson, “Screen Portrayals,” 157.

⁴⁸ Cowan, *Twentieth Century*, 37.

⁴⁹ Alexander Baugh, “The Mormons in Twentieth Century Great Britain: A Secondary Source Essay,” Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, 3.

⁵⁰ David Kent Jacobs, “The History of Motion Pictures Produced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1967), 4.

⁵¹ Levi Edgar Young, “‘Mormonism’ in Picture,” *Young Women’s Journal*, February 1913.

⁵² Nelson, “Antagonism to Acceptance,” 61.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 63.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵ *Deseret News*, June 30, 1923.

⁵⁶ Jacobs, “History of Motion Pictures,” 29.

⁵⁷ *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 24, 1928. Cited in Jacobs, “History of Motion Pictures,” 29.

⁵⁸ *Journal History*, July 13, 1922. Cited in Jacobs, “History of Motion Pictures,” 28.

⁵⁹ Nelson, “Antagonism to Acceptance,” 61-62.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 61.

⁶¹ Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Environment of Our Homes,” *Ensign*, June, 1985, 1.

⁶² Bryant S. Hinckley, “Life Sketch of Gordon B. Hinckley,” Appendix 1, in *Autobiography*, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁶³ Dew, *Go Forward*, 55 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

⁶⁴ B. Hinckley, *Autobiography*.

⁶⁵ Matthew Porter Wilcox, “The Published Writings of Young Gordon B. Hinckley,” in *BYU Religious Education 2010 Student Symposium* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2010), 35–48.

⁶⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Missionary Holiday,” *Millennial Star* 95, no 29 (1933), 494.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 494-5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 494-5.

⁶⁹ Joseph F. Merrill to C.W. Irving, March 12, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

⁷⁰ Joseph F. Merrill, October 1935, article draft, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁷¹ James M. Sanders, “Sources of Strip Films and Color Slides,” *The American Biology Teacher*, 15, no. 7 (1953), 184.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, September, 19, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁷⁴ *Deseret News*, October 18, 1930.

⁷⁵ Hinckley to Merrill, September 19, 1935.

⁷⁶ Joseph F. Merrill to O.H. Budge, December 7th, 1934, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁷⁷ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, August 21, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁷⁸ Merrill to Irving, March 12, 1935.

⁷⁹ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, September 25, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁸⁰ Merrill to Budge, December 7th, 1934.

⁸¹ Hinckley to Merrill, Aug 21, 1935.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ B. Hinckley, *Autobiography*.

⁸⁵ Dew, *Go Forward*, 85.

⁸⁶ Hinckley to Merrill, Sept 19, 1935.

⁸⁷ Hinckley to Merrill, Aug 21, 1935.

⁸⁸ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, Sept. 17, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁸⁹ Hinckley to Merrill, August 21 1935.

⁹⁰ Hinckley to Merrill, Sept 17, 1935.

⁹¹ Hinckley to Merrill, Sept 19, 1935.

⁹² Joseph F. Merrill to Gordon B. Hinckley, August 23rd, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁹³ Hinckley to Merrill, September 30, 1935.

⁹⁴ Hinckley to Merrill, October 3, 1935.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, October 16, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Chapter 3: Filmstrips

The creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee in October 1935, led to the Church producing the first filmstrips for use by missionaries along with other more traditional resources such as pamphlets, booklets, lessons, and visual aids. The following three chapters seek to describe some of the media produced by the Committee and their impact on missionary work at the time. This chapter focuses on filmstrips, the problems encountered during production, descriptions of those completed and distributed, and changes and improvements made from 1935 to 1942. Further, this chapter provides evidence to support the claim that the filmstrips were one of, if not *the* best, means of contacting and teaching investigators about the Church during this time period.

Overview of filmstrips

Description. According to records kept by the Committee, there were seventeen different filmstrips completed between 1935 and 1942.¹ The following list is chiefly comprised of those filmstrips found in a set of scripts kept by Gordon B. Hinckley with the exception of *Down Pioneer Trails* and *Before Columbus*. These two filmstrips are referred to frequently in correspondences and requests for materials between missions and the Committee.²

1. *Down Pioneer Trails*—A story of the hardships faced by Mormon pioneers crossing the plains by handcart.
2. *Landmarks of Church History (1941)*—Takes the viewer on a Journey from the birthplace of Joseph Smith to the “spires of the Salt Lake temple.”

3. *In the tops of the Mountains (1941)*—Introduction to the State of Utah. Unlike *Accomplishments of the Mormon People*, this deals less with the economy of Utah, and more with tourist attractions.
4. *Fascinating Salt Lake City*—A guided tour of Temple Square and the surrounding area.
5. *Brighton your Vacation (1937,1942)*—Details the benefits of vacationing in Brighton, Utah.
6. *Historic Highlights of Mormonism (c.a. 1941)*—An overview of important historical events in the Church.
7. *Church Welfare (c.a. 1940)*—description of the history, purposes, and organization of Church Welfare.
8. *With Power to Act*—A story of Mormon Priesthood.
9. *Accomplishments of the Mormon People*—created by a professor at BYU, but produced and distributed by the Committee. It gives some history of Utah including Brigham Young Academy. Major cities are reported, and statistics concerning Utah’s economy.
10. *The Abundant Life*—Details the organization and programs of the Primary and Youth in the Church.
11. *Latter-day Saint Leadership (1936)*—Biographical information for each of the prophets from Joseph Smith to Heber J. Grant.
12. *The Apostasy*—explains how the Church of Christ changes from the first to ninth centuries; further looks at reformers such as Martin Luther, John Huss, and others. Does not give information on the restoration.
13. *Forgotten Empires*—an introduction to the Book of Mormon.
14. *Before Columbus*—a follow-up lecture on the Book of Mormon

15. *King of Kings*—a slideshow adaptation from Cecile B. DeMille’s 1927 motion picture by the same title. This filmstrip was produced and marketed by National Studios Inc., and purchased by the Church.
16. *The House of the Lord*—Gives a brief history of temples from the ancient times; includes pictures of the interior of the Salt Lake Temple, and describes work for the dead.
17. *How to Keep Well*—information prepared by L. Weston Oak, a physician from Provo, on the health benefits of keeping the Word of Wisdom.³

The Committee records also contain materials from two other filmstrips: one concerning the life and martyrdom of Joseph Smith, and the other entitled the Plan of Salvation. It is unclear, however, whether or not these two filmstrips reached the final stage of production. The material in the Committee’s record is not as complete for these two filmstrips, and correspondence mentioning these two filmstrips is nonexistent. All other filmstrip lectures are found in the Committee’s records and are referred to in other materials such as request forms, and correspondences. Although a more thorough examination of the materials for each of these filmstrips could be performed, the present work will seek to highlight some of the reasons that these topics were chosen as subjects for missionary lectures. Explanations and examples, some of the advances that were made during this period to enhance the effect for audiences will be included.

Purpose. One of the most noticeable aspects of these filmstrips is that, for the most part, they are a far cry from the doctrinally rich lessons that are taught today by missionaries. This is especially true of the first twelve, which deal mostly with important LDS history events, people, programs and organization. It seems strange that missionaries would show what amounts to a tourist slideshow on vacationing in Brighton, Utah (*Brighton your Vacation*), or that anyone

would have an interest in how much of Utah’s land is used to growing corn (*Accomplishments of the Mormon People*). Even those whose titles or content appear to deal with LDS doctrines and beliefs are actually quite light on doctrine. For example, the filmstrip about the Word of Wisdom entitled *How to Live Well* is more about what science had to say about eating right and maintaining a healthy lifestyle than about the Lord’s counsel in Section 89. It was filled with charts on vitamins, recommended amounts of protein, fats, and carbohydrates, drawings of cells, explanations of correct posture, and warnings about the dangers of alcohol and tobacco.⁴

Similarly, the filmstrips *Forgotten Empires* and *Before Columbus*, which deal with the Book of Mormon, were “not designed as dogmatic proof of the authenticity of the book of Mormon. With one minor exception and the material found in the “conclusion,” no mention is made of the Book of Mormon, leaving the lecturer to draw obvious parallels or leave them out as befits the occasion. It has been written with the object of exciting the curiosity of listeners to the point that they will want to know more about early American civilization. If it succeeds in doing this, it will provide a valuable approach to a discussion of the Book.”⁵ Even the filmstrip, *King of Kings*, about the life, ministry and death of the Savior, was not produced by the Church, and didn’t teach unique LDS doctrine of the Savior and Atonement— it was a more general Christian view of the Savior adapted from a motion picture. By today’s missionary standards, the filmstrips’ focus on the seemingly less weighty matters of the gospel seems to miss the mark. However, the purpose of these filmstrips was not so much to preach the gospel, but to create interest so that the gospel could be preached.⁶

In writing to the newly formed committee in November 1935, Elder Joseph F. Merrill, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, then serving as the president of the European Mission, made his vision known as to what he wanted from a filmstrip. Speaking in behalf of the

presidents of the various European missions he stated that “we are anxious first of all to get ‘contact’ lectures. These may possibly be followed later with doctrinal lectures as a further aid of your committee to missionary work . . . certainly the lectures should aim to create and hold interest—good lectures always do that. A little humor is a wonderfully effective help.”⁷ Perhaps in defense of this statement, or for clarification, he wrote Elder Richards a month later, stating that “the lectures we are seeking are not sermons. We would not think of preparing sermons for the elders . . . [the filmstrips should] break down prejudice and to arouse an interest that will lead the auditors to our meetings, to reading our tracts and pamphlets and to conversations with the elders; in other words, to a desire to know something of Mormonism.”⁸ This speaks to the dual purposes of these filmstrips as both missionary and publicity tools. On the one hand they were to generate interest so that missionaries could then teach the saving doctrines of the Church. They should also break down prejudice, so that even those not interested in investigating the Church might at least gain a clearer understanding of its doctrines and practices.

President Merrill knew that the persistent persecution described in the previous chapter had left significant widespread misunderstandings concerning the Church, its members, and missionaries in Europe. The difficulties faced in Europe were not always fully understood by leaders living in the United States. He explained to the Committee that “we do not care to recommend lectures or anything else for the American missions. Those concerned are amply competent to do that themselves, but we do believe that we have some idea of what our needs in Europe are, and certainly some of the pictures and stories that would serve us best would be unsuited to America.”⁹ Thus, what was really needed, in Europe at least, was not a sermon on the divine calling of Joseph Smith, but a way to merely get a foot in the door— some basic information that would help to begin to dispel long held falsehoods by presenting the truth about

the LDS people— where they live, their history, and the organization and purpose of the Church. Once barriers were overcome, then the divine calling of Joseph Smith and other fundamental doctrines could be taught.

The way in which the missionaries used these filmstrips supports the notion that they were used both to find new investigators and for publicity reasons. Even though the Church had a mostly negative image, “people are attracted by the idea of pictures for their entertainment and information. This opens the way for us to meet with them during an evening.”¹⁰ Elders would generally schedule a time in the evening at a local hall, library, or other location.¹¹ Halls and libraries often had a set schedule for lectures and presentations at a set time each week for which patrons regularly attend. For example, President Joseph F. Merrill’s journal indicates that he regularly attended slideshow lectures at Kingsbury hall.¹² Depending on the venue, the missionaries might present to a group of twenty or two hundred.¹³ At the end of the presentation, the missionaries would invite the attendees to learn more about the Church. Sometimes, they would be invited by members of the audience to present in other locations, which could include home visits with a small group of friends and family (sometimes referred to as “cottage meetings”).¹⁴ Even if no one was interested in any further teachings of the Church, the presentation of the lecture allowed the Church to tell its own story.

Because many of the people in Europe had been fed a steady diet of stories of helpless maidens carried away to become unwilling and unhappy wives of a depraved Mormon, the filmstrips like *The Abundant Life* would paint a more accurate picture of Mormon family life, where a happy family would be shown “grouped [together] to indicate affectionate understanding between all.”¹⁵ While popular movies had shown degenerate elders hypnotizing people for their own benefit, filmstrips like *Latter-day Saint Leadership* showed kind, caring, Christ-like men

leading the Church. These were the driving principles for filmstrip creation, and the more effectively they created interest, the better the chance missionaries would have in preaching the gospel. Thus, throughout Hinckley's tenure on the Committee, the filmstrips were produced to be "contact lectures" used to create interest in the Church.

The Process and the Product

While it appears that the purpose of these filmstrips as contact lectures was clear from the beginning, the process, and the final product were in almost constant flux. The previous chapter highlighted some of the difficulties in forming the Committee, but perhaps just as many challenges and obstacles presented themselves after the Committee was formed. Refining both the process and the product took several months, and when new innovations in coloring or sound were introduced, new processes and products needed to be refined again and again. Hinckley's correspondence indicates that he had a sense of purpose, even urgency to produce the filmstrips and distribute them as quickly as possible, but challenges and obstacles constantly prevented him from accomplishing this task. The difficulties began from day one, with the simple task of finding a place to work.

Initial problems. After being hired as the executive secretary, Hinckley hoped "to be given a desk in some corner with a typewriter, and get to work."¹⁶ After a month, Hinckley was still without a place to work, or even a typewriter. When he finally was given a work space, he was compelled to stop waiting, and found a desk and typewriter on his own.¹⁷ This small example is indicative of how Hinckley would have to deal with many of the challenges in his new role: he would be given something to work with, but most of what was to be accomplished would come through his own efforts.

Another challenge came in the form of working with six members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As discussed in the previous chapter, one point of Hinckley's frustration in trying to get filmstrips produced, when he arrived from England, was merely getting an appointment with those in charge of the Publicity Bureau to discuss the project. While the new Committee did meet regularly, the problem was compounded in that he now had to coordinate with even more busy men. At times, these time constraints wore on him; in his first month of work on the newly formed Committee, he had hoped to move forward at a much more rapid pace than had been the standard with the previous Publicity Bureau. "Next thing I heard," Hinckley wrote in a letter to President Merrill, "was that [Elder Richards] was in California... I am tired of waiting for this thing to get going, and have decided to plug in, come what may."¹⁸ As time passed, his comments in his correspondence concerning the frustrations of working with people with tight schedules and time constraints diminished appreciably. This is most likely not due to the members of the Committee devoting more time to the projects at hand, but to Hinckley learning to adapt his schedule and expectations of time to completion.

He also learned to change his tendency to jump in and get a project done as quickly as possible to get in step with the more measured, controlled approach of the Committee's Chair, Elder Richards. Before he had been hired by the Committee, Hinckley had pitched in and pushed the *Down Pioneer Trails* filmstrip through production in two weeks, but with Elder Richards at the helm of the new Committee, the process of conceptualizing, producing, and distributing filmstrips was slowed to a calculated, deliberate pace. To President Merrill, Richards communicated the need for a more methodical approach. While we do not have Richards' letters, President Merrill responded in December of 1935 that "of course we are anxious to get illustrated lectures as soon as possible, we do not care to have the work rushed to secure speed at the

expense of quality. Your committee is at work. This is extremely good news and we are perfectly willing to wait for results.”¹⁹ While few official minutes exist from the actual Committee meetings, several examples show the more deliberate, measured approach under the leadership of Elder Richards. Take for example the description of two slides the Committee felt should accompany one of the filmstrips: “Typical Mormon family consisting of a Mother and Father and three girls and two sons. Suggested ages. Girl 21 years, boy 19 years, girl 16 years, boy 12 years and girl 8 years. Grouped to indicate affectionate understanding between all. Two kiddies, around the ages of three or four years arriving at Sunday School hand in hand. Suggest that shot be taken through doorway looking out upon a sunlight scene in which the two figures are the main centre of interest.”²⁰ In a draft with hundreds of potential pictures, this example illustrates how detailed preparations were previous to the actual shooting of the pictures. The written draft descriptions, or manuscripts, of these filmstrips provide many other aspects which testify that the process of filmstrip production moved forward carefully. For example there are multiple drafts for each lecture, copious marginal notes, descriptions of music, instructions for the missionary, and other detailed visual aids.

At times, the slower pace frustrated Hinckley: “the wheels grind slowly,” he lamented in a letter to Merrill.²¹ But through some painful experiences, Hinckley learned the value of Elder Richards’ more measured approach. For example, while Hinckley felt a great sense of accomplishment in completing and shipping the *Down Pioneer Trails* filmstrip, the excitement was short lived. The completed filmstrips arrived with no script. A somewhat irate President Merrill complained “the strips are no good without the manuscript and the manuscript is no good without the pictures. It takes two to make a whole. And why the pictures were sent without the manuscript I do not know.”²² Hinckley explained that the “script was completed weeks and

weeks ago, but has never been read by those who must pass on such things. It's lost somewhere in some committeeman's papers," and promised to get it to Merrill as soon as possible.²³ When Hinckley did send the script along, the missionaries who first had the opportunity to use the filmstrip were unpleasantly surprised to find that the lecture "skips all over and does not hold to the pictures, so that the last part of the lecture needs to be completely reorganized."²⁴ Hinckley responded that

your sentiments concerning the Church history manuscript in no way surprises me. I received my surprise on that some time ago. I found that in making up the strip, whoever had done it found that he had some good pictures which I had not included in my sequence, put them in, and thus destroyed the continuity of the sequence as I had arranged it. (I found that something had been done on the "Down Pioneer Trails" lecture also, but got there in time to correct most of those things...) The only thing we can do with the History lecture is to write some new material to fit the old strip.²⁵

Although frustrated sometimes with the slow pace of production, Hinckley was learning that rushing the process generally resulted in more mistakes which required more effort at a later time to rectify.

As Hinckley got into the slower, more deliberate pace set by Elder Richards, the mistakes were somewhat less problematic, and had to do more with logistics than with egregious oversights concerning the filmstrips themselves. Letters between Hinckley and President Merrill dropped off sharply in November of 1935, and correspondence between President Merrill and Elder Stephen L. Richards increased. However, President Merrill continued to direct some correspondence to Hinckley (he being the workhorse for the Committee) in order to streamline the production and release of filmstrips.

As other filmstrips began to be distributed by the end of 1935 and the beginning of 1936, there began to be a flow of constructive criticisms from the mission field in regards to making

the filmstrips better fit the needs of the missionaries. Hinckley accepted, and even invited such feedback. After *Down Pioneer Trails* was finally finished (correct images, with a lecture that matched), he asked the mission presidents to “please be generous with your criticism. I have tried hard to put over the idea of which we talked. Did I succeed?”²⁶ While responses were generally favorable, there were occasional suggestions for improvement. For example, President Auther Gaethe, serving in Prague, Czechoslovakia, commented that the filmstrip on Church History “would be difficult to use in a contact lecture. I used it the first evening in Prague and our elders themselves remarked that it is too strong...for people who come out for the first time.”²⁷ Subsequently, the Church History lecture was rewritten and released in accordance with the desires of the Mission President.²⁸

Although plagued with problems in the first months on the job there came a time when the production of filmstrips became somewhat routine. In May of 1836, it had been approximately ten months since Hinckley had returned from England and started producing filmstrips, during which time he had overcome many of the earlier problems that plagued their production and timely release. Nearly a year after having been given the assignment to help move along filmstrip production, Hinckley was finally able to report to his former mission president that “I think we are at final length getting this film business going on a satisfactory basis...I am still going around with my fingers crossed, but things look better than ever before.”²⁹ As he would come to find out, the work was just beginning.

As all the minutia was worked out, a new challenge confronted the Committee, meeting the demand for more and new materials. Even before Hinckley had met with the First Presidency in August of 1835, President Merrill held a conference with all the European Mission Presidents, at which time they discussed the eventuality of receiving the filmstrip lectures for use by the

missionaries: “The feeling was unanimous at the Liege conference that this illustrated lecture project would be one of the best contact means now available.”³⁰ Several Mission Presidents, and even Elders, were so anxious to employ the new medium that “they are all trying to become equipped with one or more suitable projectors. President Walker bought six, getting them at the price of about \$20.00 each. Brother Hardy of the British [sic] Mission succeeded the other day in picking up a small film projector for 15 [pounds], . . . President Lyon found a very fine one in Germany that he got for \$28.00.”³¹ This all happened before Hinckley had even met with the First Presidency, and long before a single filmstrip was released. It was not only the European Mission Presidents who were eager for better resources. Shortly after the October General Conference of 1935, Mission Presidents from North America convened in order to “stir up some action on publicity.”³² When Hinckley was finally officially on the job, it was less than two weeks until President Merrill was requesting several new film strips including one on the Word of Wisdom, as well as two Book of Mormon lectures.³³ Elder Merrill later wrote: “So popular are film lectures with our mission here that unless the brethren at home put a break on us you have just begun on a developing industry that will provide us with one of the most successful tools in our proselyting work.”³⁴

Changes and improvements made to the filmstrips

Even though Hinckley stated that the Committee had “this film business going on a satisfactory basis” by mid 1936, major changes in the way they were produced were soon to come. Thus, during the years that Hinckley served on the Committee, the process seemed to be in a near constant state of flux. *Down Pioneer Trails*, the filmstrip that took Hinckley two weeks to finish after returning home from his mission was extremely simple: a dozen copies of photographs or hand drawn figures colored by hand accompanied with a typed lecture to be read

by the missionary. In 1935, nearly all the work was done by Hinckley himself. By the time Hinckley left the Committee in 1942, advances in coloring, and other picture quality, as well as in sound recording, and projectors, combined with an ever increasing demand made the production of one filmstrip a monumental task. The following pages detail some of these advances and improvements in the filmstrip production.

The beginning of sound slides. The first major change to take place was the introduction of sound to the previously missionary-narrated filmstrips. It appears that the gains made with filmstrips in contacting people to teach could be quickly lost by a poor reading of the lecture material by the presenting missionary. Far too many missionaries who were perfectly energetic and engaging in conversation, when asked to read a script, would revert to a near monotone voice that would render the most carefully prepared lecture useless. The European Mission noticed this and attempted to train the missionaries how to present the “illustrated lectures with more faith and enthusiasm.”³⁵ In fact, the instructions to several of the lectures prior to the introduction of sound stated that “the manuscript is so written that it might be read. However, much better results will be obtained when the speaker gives the talk with the force and color of her own personality, and in her own manner of expression.”³⁶ The introduction of filmstrip with an accompanying soundtrack (known as a sound slide lecture) went a long way to improving this aspect of the contact lectures.

Ten years prior, portable machines capable of sound were not to be had; “lantern” style projectors weighed upwards of forty pounds. Newer projectors, however “included a turntable, and speakers integrated into the projector, all which folded up into a small suitcase sized case with a handle” and weighed between six and ten pounds.³⁷ Such enthusiasm for new equipment and filmstrips was due, at least in part to increased use of the technology in the world in general,

coupled with various companies' attempts to sell their wares directly to Mission Presidents and elders. A representative of Vocafilm Corp., for example, previewed the film slide adaptation of *King of Kings* on the sound-slide projectors to President Roscoe A. Grover and others of his "workers" (which are assumed to be missionaries) presumably as a means of a sales pitch.³⁸ The salesman was referred to the Committee, who, like always, moved at a deliberate pace. In response to Mr. Earle's letters, Elder Richards flatly stated that the Committee would "keep your letter on file pending a consideration of the whole subject of training and publicity work in our missionary system."³⁹

Although it is unclear how long the Committee discussed the possibility of producing filmstrips with musical accompaniment and narration, correspondences indicate that the Committee began to gather information concerning the cost of new projectors capable of playing records during the summer of 1937. Several different models were tested, such as the Illustrovox, Projectosell, Halloway, and RCA. They further asked for recommendations from those who had used them. This extra step paid off. For example, President Grover (who was apparently anxious to employ the use of sound slides) noticed that with the Halloway model, the record was situated right above the light source, which leads to overheating and even warping of the record. He suggested that the Committee choose a model where the record did not sit directly over the light.⁴⁰

The final decision concerning which sound slide projector for mass purchase by the Committee was not one that the members took lightly—this was a major investment—with each projector costing from "45 to 55 dollars. Discounted for 20,000 [dollars] for the lot."⁴¹ In May of 1938, the Committee announced to the mission presidents that the new RCA projectors would soon be available and that they hoped "in the near future to have new films with the talking and

musical effects transcribed.”⁴² The projectors were ready for use in June; nearly a year after the Committee had begun to seriously look into it.

Creation of new filmstrips with narration and music, however, were not so easily obtained; the actual sound slides were *not* released at the same time the new projectors were made available.⁴³ The selection and purchase of the projectors was really only one small aspect of the transition to sound slides. In order to produce filmstrips with sound, recording of music and narration had to be arranged, actors had to be hired and directed. Recordings needed to be made or acquired of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir (the default choice of music for the sound recordings). Music and narration had to be edited. Once the audio was recorded, the actual production of records happened out of state. One example of the extra work needed in order to complete a sound slide lecture can be inferred from the script of *Fascinating Salt Lake City*, which features a missionary explaining to a non-member couple the various attractions, in, on, and around Temple Square. The script contains detailed descriptions of what the slides should show as in previous scripts, but also contained notes as to what music should play, where it should start, stop, swell, etc. It includes chimes to signal the changing of pictures, along with memos to the actors voicing the various parts, and a note inserting the voice of Heber J. Grant at one point.⁴⁴ With the addition of sound, there were a thousand new details that needed attention. Thus, the announcement of new projectors was tempered with the statement that “as yet we have very little material to use on these machines.”⁴⁵ Although these extra details put the sound slide lecture production behind, new sound slide lectures began to trickle out into the missionary field by the end of 1938.

Creating a new coloring process. While the introduction of sound in the filmstrips did not come about until 1938, color had been a part of the filmstrips from the beginning, but the

process and quality of coloring changed dramatically in the intervening years. Initially, every picture was shot and exposed on black and white film because it “was not feasible at that time to make prints in color.”⁴⁶ Instead, each picture on each frame was tinted by hand. Initially, this work was contracted out to the *Deseret News* under the direction of Mark E. Peterson, as they had the knowledge and equipment for such an undertaking.⁴⁷

Although the method of hand tinting each frame was tedious, the result was generally high-quality, and filmstrips were thought to be better received by the public because of the added time in coloring them.⁴⁸ The Committee took pains to make the coloring as real to life as possible. For example, special care was taken when preparing and tinting the slides for the filmstrip entitled the *House of the Lord* so that the interior of the Salt Lake Temple was “tinted to represent actual colors of furniture, carpets and murals.”⁴⁹ Without a better alternative, the process of hand tinting each picture on each filmstrip continued for several years after the creation of the Committee.

From the outset of filmstrip production, however, Hinckley realized that “If we are going to have more than a dozen copies of each lecture done in colors we shall have to find a faster method of coloring them.”⁵⁰ As production increased, the *Deseret News* facilities were no longer capable of handling the demand. Hinckley recalls that “we had at one time, as I remember, six or eight women working doing this hand tinting; and literally tinted tens of thousands of frames.”⁵¹ Many alternatives were explored; for example, in 1935, Hinckley put forth the “possibility of painting the pictures first, then taking them in colors, and printing them in colors,” but that idea, along with several subsequent tries, was not feasible.⁵²

After having exhausted ideas from within the Committee, Hinckley began to contact various companies in the film industry about the prospects of finding a different means for coloring the filmstrips starting in 1938. Requests were sent to Consolidated Film Industries, Technicolor, Sillfilm, and Cinecolor, to name a few, with the same basic request: “We have become convinced of the value of natural color work, and are anxious to secure some method by which we can produce or have produced film strips...in natural color.”⁵³ Whether it was the cost, the time, the quality, or a mixture of them all that finally “convinced” the Committee at that time to pursue more earnestly a different method of coloring is unclear. What is clear is that the move away from hand-tinting was a long, well-researched and well-thought-out process. Finally, the Committee decided to work with Technicolor. Hinckley recalls that “we worked very closely with Mr. George Cave...and did a lot of pioneering work in this field. Mr. Cave was very helpful and we worked out a program under which, I think for the first time, 35 mm Kodachrome originals were used to make 35 mm film strips in quantity, which was a very significant thing.”⁵⁴ This new process required an extra step and cost of sending the negatives to California for printing. Further, besides the salary paid to Hinckley, the process of coloring in this fashion was the most expensive piece of the process; however, it appears that the return on this investment in quality was worth it.⁵⁵ For example, one Mission President wrote that “the enthusiasm that these color slides arouse is really remarkable.”⁵⁶ Beginning in late 1939, several new filmstrips including *Landmarks of Church History*, *In the tops of the Mountains*, *Historic Highlights of Mormonism*, and *Church Welfare* were produced in color and with sound. In a few short years, the Committee (in large part due to Hinckley’s efforts) had not only introduced a new form of media with which to garner interest in the gospel, but had greatly improved its quality. As will

be seen in the final section, the extra time and expense in adding sound and natural color was well received, and resulted in a better means of capturing the interest of potential investigators.

Impact

The preceding pages have outlined the process of filmstrip production and the improvement affected by the Committee between 1935 and 1942. But what were the benefits to the church missionary program due to these filmstrips? What impact did they have? There are very few, if any, quantitative means of showing that the contact lectures produced by the Committee had a causal effect on aspects of missionary work like the number of baptisms. However, there are several indicators that at the very least, Church leaders in Salt Lake City, Mission Presidents, and missionaries perceived that the filmstrips were impacting missionary work for good. This paper will focus more on the qualitative indicators that the filmstrips had a positive impact on the missionary work of the Church.

The first and most apparent indicator that the filmstrips were having an effect in garnering interest in the Church comes from letters written by those serving as missionaries at the time. Committee records contain scores of letters from missionaries who extol the results from the filmstrips. A letter written to the Committee in 1939 from Elder Milton J. Rassmussen is representative of the sentiments of many concerning the efficacy of the filmstrips:

As a missionary, I have had a great amount of success using our film slide pictures and the accompanying lectures. People are attracted by the idea of pictures for their entertainment and information. This opens the way for us to meet with them during an evening and hold a little cottage meeting. With the pictures and lectures, we give explanations, comments, and little talks on the truths we really want to put over to them. Later, we can, of course, hold cottage meetings where-in we spent the evening explaining the gospel. If at first we

suggested the latter type of meeting, many of them would refuse having a natural distaste for preaching. So we find the film slide lectures very helpful.⁵⁷

Mission Presidents also reported overall favorable impressions and better results due to the filmstrips as contact lectures. In June of 1936, Elder Merrill held a conference with all of the mission presidents of Europe. Of that meeting, he reported to the Committee that “every president attending said that these lectures are at present the best means of contact operating in his mission.”⁵⁸ Elder Richards reported at the end of 1936 that “the California mission has found them of such value that during the past few months they have purchased 20 machines, the southern states now have 20, the east central 15, the northern 13, and the central 14. And are generous in their praise concerning them . . . In several cases Elders have purchased their own machines.”⁵⁹

The scores of letters generally contain plaudits, but they also hold requests for more materials of the same kind. “You may feel that our wants are excessive,” explained President LeGrand Richards to his father Stephen L. Richards concerning his hefty order of filmstrips, “but our missionaries are having so much success with the machines in getting into homes and opening doors for preaching the gospel, that it seems a shame not to be able to supply their needs.”⁶⁰ The constant flow of requests like this one is a further indication that the missionaries felt that the filmstrips were of great value. Many requests made were similar to that of Elder Roger Hodson, who wrote to the Committee in June 1939, stating that his mission was “very desirous to keep up to date with all the new material available for aiding us missionaries to publicize the Gospel to people, so if you have any new material, equipment, etc., we would much appreciate having it if possible.”⁶¹ The delivery of filmstrips was often not received as quickly, perhaps, as the missions would have liked. Due to their high demand, the filmstrips were often out of stock.

Another indication that the leadership of the Church felt that the filmstrips were having a positive impact can be found in their willingness to devote an increasing amount of resources to the project during the Great Depression. Hinckley estimates that there were a total of 471 copies of filmstrips produced by the end of 1936, which cost a total of \$2352.00, or \$4.99 per filmstrip.⁶² This cost estimate is similar to what Vocafilm charged the Church for each copy of the filmstrip *King of Kings*. The base price for each copy of the filmstrip in Technicolor was \$4.03.⁶³ These estimates did not include costs that would come later regarding advances in sound and color, which would add appreciably to the overall cost. Projectors were, of course, an even greater investment. The initial estimated cost of getting 500 projectors that could play a record was 20,000 dollars.⁶⁴ Further, this initial purchase would really be only the beginning—there would also be further costs to the missions for repairing and replacing parts, as well as the purchase of new projectors as the old ones became obsolete or irreparable. Thus, the continued creation of filmstrips and their effectiveness in proselytizing can be validated through the willingness of the Church to continue spending large amounts of money on the resources themselves even in the midst of the Great Depression.

Yet another indicator that the Church was willing to spend more resources on the filmstrips was the hiring of translators. Initially, all of the lectures were written in English and sent to the missions. Missions which did not speak English were required to translate the lectures on their own.⁶⁵ In October of 1938, however, the Committee made a request that a “Spanish language translator to be hired. All the lesson material which was now translated in the missions should be translated by the translator.”⁶⁶ It was not until 1939 that Eduardo Balderas became the first full-time translator assigned to work at Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. Just after World War II he was joined by a few others who were brought to Salt Lake City from several of

the Missions of Europe.⁶⁷ While their work was not exclusive to translating the filmstrips, the filmstrips certainly contributed to the growing amount of missionary material that necessitated translating.

Finally, the impact of the filmstrips can be seen in that their use quickly spread to the other auxiliaries. Along with the hundreds of requests from missions for new and replacement filmstrips, an increasing amount of requests began to pour in from stake missions, wards, and seminaries, for use in new member discussions, classrooms, and even Sacrament meetings.⁶⁸ Initially, the First Presidency had decided to limit the use of the filmstrips to missionary work only.⁶⁹ But as requests, and the supposed benefits of using filmstrips in other venues proliferated, the restrictions were relaxed. By 1939 the Committee was authorized “by the First Presidency to furnish one set of films of the type you mention to each stake mission and inasmuch as our work is entirely concerned with missions, this is the only authorization we have of the distribution of films.”⁷⁰ While at that time, the distribution of films was only made to stake missions, the Committee occasionally loaned filmstrips to Seminaries and Sunday Schools “for a matter of a week or so.”⁷¹ The filmstrip project started by the Committee is arguably the starting point for the popularization and production of filmstrips for other areas of the Church as well. Although it is nigh impossible to attribute success in the mission field to one specific cause, the preceding evidence supports the claim that missionaries, mission presidents, and the Committee had the perception that these filmstrips were of great value generating interests.

Conclusion

The preceding pages have provided a brief description of the filmstrips produced during Hinckley’s tenure as executive secretary for the Committee, and has further described some of

the challenges and changes in filmstrip production. While even the basic earlier versions of the filmstrips were popular with missionaries as contact material, the addition of sound and more realistic coloring made the slideshows even more effective in generating interest in the Church. Further, various pieces of evidence support the claim that these new filmstrips were the most effective means for gaining entrance into the homes of investigators and generating interest in the Church. The young Elder Gordon B. Hinckley had been sent home from his mission with an assignment to push the work of producing quality filmstrips forward; due in large part to his efforts, and the visionary leadership of Elders Joseph F. Merrill and Stephen L. Richards, these filmstrips were a powerful tool in the missionary's charge to preach the gospel unto the entire world.

¹ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, Film Strip scripts [c.a. 1936-1942], Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

² In another example, the 1935 letters between Joseph F. Merrill and Gordon B. Hinckley, it is clear that Hinckley had prepared two different lectures concerning the Book of Mormon, but the committee's record show only *Forgotten Empires*. The other, entitled *Before Columbus*, which appears often in the requests from the missionary field, seems to fit the description.

³ Committee, Film Strip scripts.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Joseph F. Merrill to Steven L. Richards, December 10, 1935, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷ Joseph F. Merrill to Gordon B. Hinckley, November 12, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

⁸ Merrill to Richards, December 10, 1935.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Elder Milton J. Rasmussen to Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, (n.d.), correspondence, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City .

¹¹ Joseph F. Merrill to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 16, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. President Merrill wrote the Committee stating that "We would appreciate a reply on the possibility of obtaining this lecture as soon as possible, as most of the libraries and similar groups even now are making their winter schedules, and we should like to get as many opportunities as possible of this type."

¹² Joseph F. Merrill, 1834, Journal, Joseph F. Merrill Collection Brigham Young University, Special Collections, Provo.

¹³ Merrill to Richards, December 10, 1935. President Merrill writes that in one extreme example, the manager of the Theater Royal filled the house to capacity (1000 People) and had to turn away another 1000.

¹⁴ Rasmussen to Committee, (n.d.).

¹⁵ Committee, Film Strip scripts.

¹⁶ Dew, *Go Forward*, 87 (see chap. 1, n. 1). This is another place where President Hinckley's memory as recorded in Dew's Biography deviates from his letters written at the time.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, October 29, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

¹⁹ Joseph F. Merrill to Steven L. Richards, December 27, 1935, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²⁰ Committee, *Filmstrip Lectures*, Church History Library.

²¹ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, October 29, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

²² Joseph F. Merrill to Gordon B. Hinckley, October 3, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

²³ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, September 25, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

²⁴ Merrill to Hinckley, November, 12, 1935.

²⁵ Hinckley to Merrill, September 25, 1935.

²⁶ Hinckley to Merrill, October 3, 1935.

²⁷ Merrill to Hinckley, November 12, 1935.

²⁸ Gordon B. Hinckley to Joseph F. Merrill, May 20, 1936, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo. It took some six months, however, for the new edition of the Church History lecture to be revised and sent out. The Wheels grind slowly, indeed.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Joseph F. Merrill to Gordon B. Hinckley, August 23 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Hinckley to Merrill, October 3, 1935.

³³ Joseph F. Merrill to Gordon B. Hinckley, October 17, 1935, correspondence, Joseph F. Merrill Collection, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo.

³⁴ Hinckley to Merrill, October 3, 1935.

³⁵ Mission President's conference, August 1936, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁶ Committee, Film Strip Scripts.

³⁷ Vocafilm to Stephen L. Richards, August 17, 1937, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁸ Mr. Earle to Stephen L. Richards, August 25, 1937, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁹ Stephen L. Richards to Mr. Earle, August 20, 1937, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁰ R.A. Grover to Stephen L. Richards, (n.d.), correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴¹ Ellsworth C. Dent to Stephen L. Richards, (n.d.), correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴² Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Mission Presidents, May 1938, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴³ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Marion G. Romney, June 17, 1938, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁴ Committee, Film Strip scripts.

⁴⁵ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to John B. Reed, July 9, 1938, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁶ Jacobs, "The History of Motion Pictures," 64 (see chap. 2, no. 50).

⁴⁷ Hinckley to Merrill, August 21, 1935 (see chap 2, no. 77).

⁴⁸ Gordon B. Hinckley, Untitled Document, (n.d.), Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁹ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, Salt Lake Temple interior photographs, January 16, 1937, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁰ Hinckley to Merrill, October 29, 1935.

⁵¹ Jacobs, 64

⁵² Hinckley to Merrill, October 29, 1935.

⁵³ Radio, Publicity, Mission Literature Committee to Cinecolor Inc, June 16, 1939, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁴ Jacobs, 64.

⁵⁵ Hinckley, (n.d.), Untitled Document. Hinckley writes that the total cost for producing a set of strips was 1902.57, with over 1300 dollars being devoted to coloring.

⁵⁶ Merrill to Hinckley, June 16th, 1939.

⁵⁷ Rasmussen to Committee, (n.d.).

⁵⁸ Joseph F. Merrill to Steven L. Richards, June 23, 1936, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁹ Stephen L. Richards, (n.d.), untitled document, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁰ LeGrand Richards to Stephen L. Richards, August 5, 1936, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶¹ Rodger Hodson to Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, June 16, 1939, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶² Gordon B. Hinckley, (n.d.), untitled document, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶³ Committee, Filmstrip Scripts.

⁶⁴ Dent to Committee, (n.d.).

⁶⁵ Merrill to Hinckley, August 23 1935.

⁶⁶ Radio, Publicity, Mission Literature Committee to the First Presidency, October 12, 1938, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁷ Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, (Bookcraft: Salt Lake City, 1985), 270.

⁶⁸ Henry Dastrup to Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, October 16, 1936, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁹ Dastrup to Committee, October 16, 1936.

⁷⁰ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, February 7, 1939, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷¹ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to B.H. Ririe, February 7, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

Chapter 4: Radio Broadcasts

As shown in the previous chapters, the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee's priority in first months after it was created in 1935 was the production of filmstrips. However, as filmstrip production and distribution became routine, the Committee turned its attention to other means of missionary work and publicity. The following two chapters will examine the Committee's use of radio programs and exhibits, respectively. Each chapter will give a brief overview, and highlight a specific, innovative project undertaken by the Committee. This chapter will deal with the Committee's use of radio programming in spreading the Gospel, and will deal specifically with the conceptualization and creation of thirty-nine radio dramatizations of Church history entitled the *Fullness of Times*. As with the production of the film strips, these dramatizations were an innovative way to soften long-held prejudices among non-members, and generate greater interest in the gospel.

In 1967, Heber G. Wolsey noted that “during its approximately half-century of existence, [LDS radio programming] has been so busy making broadcasting history that it has taken little time to record that history.”¹ Indeed, there is a general paucity of research concerning the history of LDS radio broadcasting as compared to research concerning print or film.² This work will hopefully not only add to the collective knowledge of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, but also provide a meaningful contribution to the literature concerning LDS radio broadcasting and its impact.

A Brief History of Radio Broadcasting in the Church

The creation of radio technology was somewhat parallel to that of film, with technology for both emerging in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Other similarities exist between the two media; for example, radio went through its novelty stages, as did film. Just as simple moving pictures captivated audiences in the early days of motion picture, anything played over the radio in its first years fascinated listeners.³ But while commercial films began to appear just before the turn of the century, “experimental” radio stations didn’t start showing up until the 1910’s, with the first commercial radio stations popping up in Detroit and Pittsburg in the summer of 1920.⁴ Although its start was somewhat slower than that of film, radio programming exploded in the 1920’s and 30’s. In January of 1922 there were thirty licensed radio stations; by the end of the year, there were over 500.⁵ One such station was KZN in Salt Lake City, which aired its first broadcast on May 6th, 1922, with President Heber J. Grant reading a quotation from section 76: “and this is the gospel, the glad tidings which the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father.”⁶ Although President Grant was the first to be heard over radio in Utah, the new station’s primary goal was not necessarily LDS-centric. It promised to air “the best the country has to offer in lectures, concerts and other entertainments.”⁷ It was also host to at least 21 other denominations’ religious broadcasting in the twenties, thirties, and forties.⁸

While not exclusively LDS, KZN was the vehicle by which many important radio broadcasting milestones for the Church were reached. For example, General Conference was first broadcast in 1924.⁹ In November of that same year, the first broadcast of the nation’s longest running program to date aired, *Music and the Spoken Word*.¹⁰ In March of 1929, the Church started broadcasting Sunday evening programs developed by the Mutual Improvement Association.¹¹ As leaders and members began to see the potential for spreading the gospel, there

were countless other smaller programs aired throughout the United States and the world by individual members, wards, stakes, and missions on their respective local stations. The Church further extended its reach via radio when Colombia Broadcasting invited the Church to participate in their series *The Church of the Air*, a non-denominational program that invited certain religious groups to create 4 programs per year. Various churches were asked to provide music and sermons “with the stipulation that the material presented be non-controversial.”¹² The Church’s programs generally coincided with General Conference, with the other two airing at Christmastime and the summer months.¹³ The response to these programs was exceptional, with up to 7500 requests for reprints of a single program.¹⁴ Most of the requests for these reprints came from nonmembers.¹⁵

The Committee and Radio

During the 1920’s and 30’s when these Church programs began to air, different persons or groups were assigned to oversee their production. Initially the presiding Bishop, then later a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was given responsibility for Church radio work. Eventually, in order “to meet the ever increasing demands and opportunities, “stewardship for Church radio production was given over to the Committee in 1935 for the “preparation and supervision of materials use in proselyting activities.”¹⁶ Thus the Committee was responsible for organizing and producing all official Church radio programming. Consequently, Committee notes show an almost never-ending paper trail of requests for certain things to be broadcast or rebroadcast. Stakes and missions which had found some level of success with a locally produced program were most frequent in their requests to have their program released as an official Church broadcast. For example, the Committee received a request for a group called the Singing Mothers to be allowed to perform on the Church’s Sunday evening radio program twice a year.¹⁷

Yet another set of transcripts were sent in of some radio programs used in Boise, “presented to the committee that they might be of some further use”.¹⁸ Other decisions dealt with how long to allow a musical group or program to continue on the air, who should be called on to speak for the quarterly *Church of the Air* broadcast, and where to find new musical talent to keep the programming fresh.¹⁹ The Committee also came up with and produced new material for use in the missions, such as a compartmentalized set of lectures and music from which “the missionaries ... build their programs utilizing the transcribed music and the mimeographed talks.”²⁰ The common theme among the various programs was the format; nearly all relied on the old standard of lecture and music. However, by 1937, the Committee was considering a different type of program. Instead of lectures and music, dramatizations of the scriptures and Church history would be created and entitled the *Fullness of Times*.

The *Fullness of Times* series

By 1937, the Committee was searching for a company with experience in producing radio drama to take responsibility for the programming.²¹ The Committee’s records are unclear as to when the decision was made to produce these dramatizations, or what influenced them to produce something beyond the basic radio programs consisting of sermons and musical numbers. It is possible that James Moyle, President of the Eastern States Mission was influential in at least putting the idea on the table. In 1932, he had written to Salt Lake Church Headquarters requesting a central publicity committee, with a further request for publicity representatives in each ward and stake.²² Moyle believed that radio programming could be put to use in removing “the feeling of horror and piety which arises in most people at the mention of ‘Mormon’ or ‘Latter-day Saints.’ The psychological effect of constantly reading something unobjectionable about a people reduces, with surprising rapidity prejudice which may exist against them.”²³

Gospel radio programs could further “arouse interest in Mormonism by the disclosure of its practical value.”²⁴

After the formation of the Committee in 1935, Moyle submitted several scripts of gospel dramatizations for the Committee’s consideration, “with the hope that the missionary cause of the Church may be aided, and the Gospel brought to more listeners in their homes throughout the world.”²⁵ One such script is a gospel discussion between two missionaries and an investigator, yet another presents a gospel conversation between two hosts and their guest, and a third was entitled “The Convert.”²⁶ The fourth was based directly from a scriptural passage, and was entitled “Nephi Obtains the Plates: an episode from the Book of Mormon’ adapted for radio, based on 1 Nephi 3 & 4.”²⁷ There were also thirteen dramas discussing the articles of faith.²⁸ Moyle was so anxious to have such a resource that he offered to “record them here in New York, during the coming season if [the Committee] approves.”²⁹ Dramatizations were nothing new during the golden age of radio; however, what Moyle was proposing in terms of gospel dramatizations was quite different than the traditional music and sermons that the Church had been broadcasting for over a decade. He insisted that dramatizations would “hold the interest of many listeners who do not care to hear a sermon, and that thus many thousands may be reached who are not now being contacted on the air.”³⁰ Ultimately, Committee notes give no definite answer as to where the idea for gospel dramas originated, but the scripts and letters from James Moyle hint at the possibility that he was a major force in initiating the *Fullness of Times* series, just as Joseph F. Merrill was instrumental in moving forward the work of filmstrips.

Wherever the idea started, the Committee records indicate that requests to multiple professional radio production companies had been sent out in the beginning of 1937. One company in particular seemed to catch the Committee’s attention: Price and Mertens, Inc. of Los

Angeles California (shortly after this, Mertens left the partnership, leaving only Price). This particular company had produced twenty-six half-hour Bible dramatizations, called the Sunday Players, which had aired for several years in the Los Angeles area.³¹ George Logan Price, the founder and owner, did his best to woo the Committee into doing business with his firm: “the true story of what the world calls Mormonism is a closed book to millions. Many have formed prejudicial opinions based on antagonistic and dishonest propaganda.”³² In order to tell the story of Mormonism, Price originally proposed creating 52 half-hour dramas where “everything would be authentic and true to life, and you would have a series of striking dramas, permanently recorded, which could be used in a thousand ways for 100 years to come.”³³ Throughout his letters to the Committee, Price exudes enthusiasm for the possibilities of sharing the story of Mormonism through Radio. But the Committee was cautious:

We have had so many propositions made to us, however, and some experiences which prompt us to ask of you the following questions:

1. If you were to make for us two transcriptions as per your proposal, would we have the understood right of rejection or acceptance?
2. Would you give to us the right to purchase the two transcriptions, when completed, outright, and if so, at what price?
3. Would it be agreeable to you to leave all financial arrangements for additional transcriptions until after you had made the two initial records and they had been submitted to us for audition?
4. Could you forward to us at this time the probable cost of transcriptions in the event a substantial series were to be agreed upon?³⁴

Price answered in the affirmative to all questions, and gave corresponding prices.³⁵ He further sent a demo, and after the Committee and the First Presidency had listened to it, they decided to grant Mr. Price an interview.³⁶ By mid-year, 1937, the Committee decided to hire Price on a provisional basis, allowing his firm to produce the first thirteen half-hour episodes. If the Committee approved of the work, the firm would be given the opportunity to renew the contract and produce another twenty-six episodes.³⁷

As part of the agreement, Chase Varney, Price's contracted writer, opted to remain at his home in Colorado Springs and work long distance, submitting scripts by mail for the Committee's approval. From there the scripts would be sent onto Los Angeles for production.³⁸ As neither Varney or Price were members of the Church, and thus not well versed in Church history or LDS doctrine, the Committee sent over 20 books for them to use in their research for the project, including the *Doctrine and Covenants*, *Pearl of Great Price*, *The Comprehensive History of the Church*, *The Articles of Faith*, *Gospel Doctrines*, *The Great Apostasy*, *The Vitality of Mormonism*, and others. After receiving the literature, Price commented in a letter that "it is, as you say, a big summer reading program, but a most fascinating one."³⁹ From this time in mid July of 1937 to the end of the August, Price, Varney, and others spent hundreds of hours poring over the literature. By October they had submitted their overall plan for which episodes would be produced, along with some minor details about each episode. Their outline showed that these first thirteen episodes would start with an introduction of the Book of Mormon and the United States as the Promised Land and end with Joseph Smith's martyrdom.⁴⁰

As the *Fullness of Times* project got under way, the Committee had a goal of finishing the project before the winter of 1938, due to the fact that the "radio reception is better, and there are more listeners."⁴¹ Although the project was off to a good start, neither George Price, Gordon B. Hinckley, or any member of the Committee understood the difficulties that would arise, the time and money it would take, or the quality and impact of the final product.

The measured pace mentioned earlier, set by Elder Richards, was as evident in the production of the *Fullness of Times* as it was in the making of the filmstrips, if not more so. The Committee was extremely cautious in all aspects of the production of the first thirteen episodes. For example, even though Varney had written and sent off scripts for the first four episodes by

mid November, the approval of these episodes was not completed until the end of the year, due to suggestions and revisions made by the Committee and sent back to Varney in Colorado. After a script was approved, Price handled all the details in terms of hiring the actors and director, finding music, and making the recording. However, as per their agreement, the Committee retained the right to reject an episode and have it remade. As it would turn out, there were very few episodes that were not remade, edited, or modified in some significant way after the initial recording.

Due to the slow production pace, Hinckley penned a somewhat apologetic letter to Mr. Price confessing that “matters have moved very slowly, largely occasioned by our own delay.”⁴² In reality, it was not completely the Committee’s fault. With Chase Varney, the writer, living and working in Colorado Springs, the production company located in Los Angeles, and the Committee in Salt Lake, the sending of scripts, rewrites, and revisions caused constant delays and even gross miscommunications. In an effort to speed things along, Price urged Varney to relocate to Salt Lake City in order to streamline the writing and approval process, which he eventually did in the fall of 1938.⁴³ Price also tried to speed up the process by taking liberties with the scripts during production of the individual episodes; often, an extra minute of material was needed to fill the requisite time, or the actors or director would suggest a change in or addition to a speaking part to make it flow better. After one such change in an episode, Hinckley wrote to Price that they could not accept the episode because “unfortunately, the two major changes which you made in the script when you found yourself short of material are the things which they questioned.”⁴⁴ Such actions, meant originally to expedite the process, backfired for Price, resulting in the Committee asking that the episode be recorded again according to their desires.

In what must have been a frustrating exercise for the production company, the Committee requested that all of the first four episodes be remade. This seems to have prompted a meeting from both Mr. Price and Varney with the entire Committee in Salt Lake City at the end of February, 1938.⁴⁵ While no records exist as to exactly what was discussed or agreed upon, the outcome seems to have been positive. A week after, Price wrote to Richards, stating that “I cannot believe that any script which will pass these five astute minds, each with its definitely different viewpoint, can fail to arouse enthusiasm in the heart of every member of your church, and, quite as much, in the minds of the Gentiles to whom the story will come as something new and novel.”⁴⁶

Despite Price’s enthusiasm for the prospects of the project, it appears that not everyone was as optimistic or hopeful that these dramatizations were worth the resources being devoted to them. Just as leaders of the Church needed a great deal of persuasion to create and fund the Committee in 1935 and the project of missionary filmstrips, it appears that similar reservations were held by leaders concerning the *Fullness of Times* series. Richards related to Price that he was particularly impressed with one episode. “I have another audition with some more of our associates arranged for this coming Thursday. I am expecting and hoping that President Grant will be with us and I am relying upon ‘The Visions’ to effectuate a complete conversion to our project. If and when this comes about, I am sure that we can then arrange call details to our mutual satisfaction.”⁴⁷

By the end of October 1938, first thirteen episodes had been written, revised, approved, recorded, rejected, recorded again and accepted, and were set to begin airing mid November. Although the original plan was to produce another twenty-six episodes, all parties involved were

seriously reconsidering such a move. Price, in two letters in November expressed his concerns surrounding what had been the process of revision:

As to who is responsible for the necessity for so much revision, I shall not undertake to say. Mr. Varney, whose original understanding squared with ours, to the effect that this would be more or less another Sunday Players' assignment, with the writer free within certain acceptable material, hold us morally responsible for all of his additional work, and I am afraid that our inability to satisfy Mr. Varney's claim up to this time has resulted in rather strained relations, on his part, Mr. Varney has had to return to Colorado Springs, has no job to go back to, and, in these unsettled times, we cannot but sympathize with his situation and feel obligated to remit to him such funds as we can spare.⁴⁸

Varney was not the only one hurting financially. Several days after the above letter, Price sent another letter explaining their financial plight, though instead of the sharp edge of the previous communication, it was tempered with a bit of humor: "It is true that we lost almost everything but our woolie undies (bought especially for my Salt Lake City trip last winter) on the job just now we're broke."⁴⁹ But even though he was licking his financial wounds, Price left the door open for involvement in future productions. If the Committee decided to continue, he stated that "we shall be glad to have the outline [of future episodes], and will then indicate to what extent we feel we may be able to contribute. We had, of course looked forward with great hopes to doing the Brigham Young series."⁵⁰ The Committee was also reassessing the potential future of the radio series, especially in regards to hiring the firm of George Price again. From November of 1938 through most of 1939, correspondence between Price and the Committee essentially stopped, along with all work on the *Fullness of Times* radio series. This is partially due to the Committee's involvement in the 1939 World's Fair, but it is also due to the fact that the Committee was scouting other means by which other episodes could be produced locally. Despite the inconvenience of working long distance with them, Price and his associates had met all their obligations and created a quality product. While the Committee would prefer to work

locally, they would prefer quality over the convenience of working with local production companies.⁵¹ Therein lay the difficulty in deciding who would produce the remaining episodes—local talent, which would be less expensive and easier to work with, or professionals like Price and Varney, who were more expensive, but guaranteed quality. During the months of September and October of 1939, negotiations were ongoing between the Committee and Price.

One of the major sticking points between the Committee and Price was who should write the scripts and how much should they be paid. They offered to re-hire Chase Varney at a rate of 50 dollars per script; Price responded that an offer so low amounted to an insult: “of one thing you may be sure, Chase can’t do cheap work; no truly creative genius can. You’ll get just as much for \$50 or \$100 as you would get for \$150.” Price insisted that “Varney is the one man who can write what the Church requires ... [you] will appreciate that he had to re-write practically everyone of his first scripts, and do some them over two, three, or even four times... and that if there is any ‘gravy’ now, Chase is entitled to it.”⁵² Thus, for some time, Price and the Committee were at a stalemate, with the Church offering 50 dollars per script, and Price insisting that with all the research needed, as well as multiple rewrites, 150 dollars per episode was more appropriate. The Committee and Price continued to haggle back and forth until the end of October, 1939.

Hinckley did his best to grease the wheels. In a conciliatory tone he expressed his feelings that he preferred the artistry of Varney and the production value of Price, pleading with Price that “might I suggest, personally, that in view of all of these considerations which might not have received due attention before, you see if you could not give a figure upon which the Committee could look with favor.”⁵³ Eventually, an agreement was reached. By October 26, 1939, Price Inc. was rehired to write the scripts of twenty-six additional episodes, with Varney

being paid seventy-five dollars per script. Price, who usually would take a cut of this payment, agreed to waive his percentage of the seventy-five dollars and remit the full amount to Varney. Varney agreed to the lower amount due to the formation of a script committee, made up of Hinckley, and Jason Cannon (local writer paid on a per script basis). This script committee would mediate between Varney and the Committee by reviewing and revising the scripts before sending them to the Committee for final approval. Any further suggestions for revisions by the Committee would be sent back to these script committee editors rather than Varney.⁵⁴ All twenty-six scripts would be written and approved by the Committee before production in order to avoid the unfortunate delays which accompanied the first thirteen episodes.⁵⁵ Although the Committee hired the firm of Price to write the scripts, they did not initially hire him to produce the episodes; the Committee would make that decision after the scripts were written. Price was neither guaranteed nor excluded from consideration.

Price seemed pleased that a deal could be arranged, even if it only included writing the scripts—he appeared even more delighted that Hinckley would be heading up the new script committee. From their correspondence, Hinckley was highly esteemed by Price and Varney. Price explained that both he and Chase Varney “feel that while you have all the spiritual qualifications for an Elder, and your absolute loyalty to the Church cannot be questioned, you have also a breadth of vision, and a tolerance for the Gentile point of view which will make you a particularly valuable co-worker for Chase and me.”⁵⁶ In a statement that would prove prophetic, Price added that the Church “has some truly great leaders now, and in the new crop which is coming along, it has full assurance of greater leadership for the future. I’ll wind up by being a Saint in name if not in fact, if I don’t watch my step.”⁵⁷ The agreements were finalized on the sixth of the November, 1939; Price and Varney got to work on the overall outline for the

remaining episodes, submitting it for approval by the end of the year. After a year on the shelf, the *Fullness of Times* project was moving forward again.

The Final Twenty-six Episodes

Both the Committee and the production company had learned some things when producing the first thirteen episodes about how to work with one another. Despite their previous experience, however, producing these programs was a complex process, and there were persistent issues to be ironed out. It would take another two and half years before the series would be completely finished, and it would be the most costly and lengthy single project in the Committee's history to that point.⁵⁸

Hinckley was in a difficult position sitting as the mediator between the Price, Varney, and the Committee. For example, an accurate depiction of Church history would include all the principal people and events; in a radio drama, smaller speaking parts had to be combined and the story streamlined. When Varney and Hinckley produced an episode with 14 characters, Price counseled Hinckley that "one thing you should avoid ... is a too long list of characters ... The American Federation of Radio Artists (AFRA) with which we have a contract, is upping the talent rates 50 % or more, and 14 characters at the new rate would mean a talent cost alone of \$600."⁵⁹ Reducing the number of characters had other benefits as well: "my own opinion is that more than seven characters rarely are essential to any radio drama. When there are so many characters the listener finds it difficult to keep them shuffled; it is hard to differentiate between voices. Nor is doubling the answer; first of all, AFRA talent must be paid for doubling; second, the radio audience is becoming too wise for us to get by with many doubles."⁶⁰ Price indicated that Varney had a tendency to put too many characters into an episode, and in a winking fashion

writes to Hinckley that “even if Chase is unable to hold down the number of his characters, you can eliminate several by giving their lines to major characters. It is far better radio to do this than confuse listeners with so many different characters that their attention cannot fasten on any.”⁶¹ Hinckley took Price’s counsel seriously in his revisions by reducing the characters, stating that “the drama has not suffered and the purse has gained.”⁶² Although staying true to the history of the Church, and simultaneously making a dramatic production meant to captivate audiences while dealing with the practical issues of radio production was a constant concern, the combined efforts of Hinckley, Price, and Varney made it possible.

Another concern in the drafting the scripts had to do with the amount of narration in the new episodes. In justifying the large amount of narration in one episode, Varney relates that

where there are to be a limited number of plays covering a broad field of history, I considered it advisable to return to the narrative form employed in the first thirteen, rather than the close knit uninterrupted form which I would like to have maintained. But where so much important historical information and events is to be included, it is impossible to make skillful transitions with the use of a narrator. From carefully listening to, and analyzing[sic], current radio productions of historical material, I notice there is a decided tendency toward “dramatized narration” for such subjects where an eventful and lengthy period is covered....the writing of these plays has been hardly a part-time job, for I have worked early and late, and put in more hours than at any other work; which of course the job warrants, and which I hope the result justifies.⁶³

Varney later notes that usually he would use less narration and more dialogue and action, but contends that “dramatic narration, well delivered, with some imagination and fervor, is as acceptable as most dialogue.”⁶⁴ Hinckley, however, responded with disappointment to the episodes submitted which were narration heavy; he worried that if the perfect narrator is not found, “it will either click, or it will be very, very blah.”⁶⁵ Over the course of several letters between Hinckley and Varney, Hinckley defined what he, and by extension the Committee, felt take precedence in the struggle to find balance between history and drama. “While I feel that

good narration can be made effective if well handled, I incline to the thought that the action, drama, and dialogue could be increased and handled with better effect with increased listener interest resulting.”⁶⁶ He later clarified to Varney even further that “we want history, but our first concern is drama.”⁶⁷

Another concern in writing the scripts was their treatment of doctrine. While the Committee favored drama over a strict history, they were not so inclined to place drama above pure doctrine in importance. In the case of an episode highlighting the Church’s welfare efforts throughout its history, the Committee felt that this particular episode was presented in a way to make the Church look too much like communism. Hinckley felt that this particular episode “does not advance the interests of the church... Why do it?”⁶⁸ But Price often pushed back; in response to another incident where the Committee felt that a particular segment should be heavily revised on doctrinal grounds—he quipped that “I am at variance with the Committee in its insistence on so much that is more or less doctrinal and which has not great amount of selling value. I still see this as a job to sell Gentiles and not one to please those already thoroughly grounded in your Gospel... I still think, however, that our market consists of human beings, and that we must get human appeal into our stories, if we expect them to be listened to, or hope for a favorable reaction from those who do listen.”⁶⁹

After nearly six months of trying to help Varney and Price understand what the Committee wanted in terms of drama, narration, history, and doctrine, a somewhat irate Hinckley responded to Price’s letter mentioned above:

Certainly these dramas are not to be preachments...rather we want good drama, with living characters expressing indirectly through their actions those virtues for which Mormonism has always stood. In other words we want people doing things,

with the reasons for their doing them so uncomplainingly, subtly tucked in behind so to speak.

After all, this whole thing is a matter of good art or poor art, and I think you'll find we won't complain at anything that is good art. As I said once before, either through fear of putting in too many characters or of not putting in enough doctrine to please us ... Mr. Varney to me seems to have lost much of his "touch."⁷⁰

Price subsequently copied Hinckley's statement into a letter to Varney, but omitted the phrase about Varney losing his touch. Price explained that "a lot depends on knowing how to handle temperamental chaps who have a creative, imaginative, artistic slant"⁷¹ For his part, Varney complained that he was "finding it increasingly hard to make good drama from the incidents he has to cover."⁷² This back and forth between Hinckley and Price was constant during the writing of the scripts in 1940, and serves to highlight several important aspects of the whole process.

First, the Committee had a clear view of what they wanted, and held to that standard throughout the process, no matter how many times it had to be rewritten, or how long it took. Secondly, these programs were being produced for the purpose of capturing the attention of the listeners and generating interest in the Church. Had they been interested in a strict telling of the history of the Church, anyone of the many sermons already being delivered by the Church or its members on various radio programs could have sufficed. Hinckley, as the head of the script committee that stood between the main writer and the RPML Committee, took upon himself to revise and improve many of the scripts from Varney that he felt were found wanting. Even though Varney moved temporarily to Salt Lake City in September of 1940 to expedite the completion of the last few episodes, by the time the scripts were finished and ready for production, only about 25% of Varney's original material remained. In reflecting on all the effort it took to polish the episodes, Hinckley mused "I believe that we will never regret the time nor the efforts when the records get out in circulation."⁷³

Production begins

As script writing was wrapping up in the fall of 1940, the Committee began to grow closer to making a decision as to who should produce the series. All throughout the process of writing the scripts Price had self-promoted himself as the best candidate for the job of producing the episodes. At first his plugs were more suggestive. For example, Hinckley's earlier concern that having too much narration could be "very, very blah," Price noted that "All will depend, of course, upon proper direction, skilled production, and an intelligent reading of the lines by competent actors."⁷⁴ This is presumably a hint from Price that he was the one with skills and connections to make it happen. Other prompts were not so subtle. After failing to receive any kind of indication whether or not he would be hired to produce the series, he quipped: "frankly, your people are pretty good poker players, and they play them close to their vest. I don't know whether I am going to have a hand in the production or the shows or not, and I'm not going to ask or ever bring the subject up again. When your Committee gets ready to break the news, if ever, I suppose I'll be in on the secret. Until then—Selah—whatever that means."⁷⁵

In October the Committee reached its decision. Hinckley relayed the bad news to Price that the opportunity would be given to a local company; however, the news came with a sliver of hope for Price. Just as Price was given an "audition" for the first thirteen episodes, local companies would have the opportunity to show that they could produce a quality program. Hinckley explained "the problems are all theirs. We have given them no advice of any kind—have simply turned over the scripts to them and told them to produce the shows for an audition, and that the future depends entirely on quality. All here feel, naturally, a certain desire to use local talent and facilities, but they also feel very definitely that in a situation of this kind with as much involved as there is in this case, nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of

quality.”⁷⁶ If the local company failed to measure up to the Committee’s standard of quality, Price would be offered the contract. While there is no specific mention in the Committee records as to the quality of the local production company’s audition, it is apparent from the correspondence between Hinckley and Price beginning in 1941 that the contract was eventually awarded to Price.⁷⁷

By the end of March, 1941, Price had nearly everything lined up in order to start production on the contracted twenty-six episodes, stating that “the job will not be easy, but it will be one of those things that people of our type take special joy in doing.”⁷⁸ Over the next seven months, he would come to understand just how difficult the production of these twenty-six episodes would be. Despite their previous experience working on the first thirteen episodes, and the advance work they had done in preparing and approving all the scripts beforehand, Hinckley commented during the seven months of production that “there is always some stumbling block rising in front of us.”⁷⁹ This was due at least in part by the Committee, who, as always, proceeded at a cautious pace. Because of the Committee’s careful oversight, production did not happen as quickly as Price would have liked. But outside of the Committee’s influence in slowing production, records and correspondences between Hinckley and Price indicate that three major external problem areas also contributed significantly to delayed production: Music; Actors and Directors, and script revisions.

Copyrights and Music

Recording and using quality music for the series proved a significant problem, especially concerning legal issues such as rights and releases. Initially, the Committee had wanted to use recordings of the Tabernacle Choir for the soundtrack, but this idea was found to be untenable

due to scheduling problems.⁸⁰ As an alternative, it was decided that a smaller number of singers who had already formed should be invited to record the music, but this option failed also because the chosen choir had disbanded for the summer of 1941, and it was proving difficult to get them together again.⁸¹ Even if the scheduling issues with either group had been worked out, the quality of the recordings they had done initially was suspect. Price had heard demos, and commented that there was a “wow” sound. Hinckley explained that it had taken ten years to get the desired quality with the choir and their microphones. Some of the choir members had to hold their heads a certain way to get the sound they wanted, and even the slightest deviation could cause a major drop in quality.⁸² While some choir recordings and organ music were usable for some of the episodes, it fell to Price to arrange for much of the musical arrangements, adding to the cost, time, and stress of production.⁸³

Perhaps of even greater concern than finding musicians and recording quality music was the licensing and release of rights for the music. This aspect was a continual headache as Price had to deal with the American Society of Composers, Authors, Publishers (ASCAP) and the American Federation of Musicians (AFM). Multiple letters deal with the many intricacies of legally using music recorded for a radio broadcast.⁸⁴ Price had to keep detailed records of all music used in each episode, including date of recording license issued to Price by the AFM, the local number of the union, and the name of the official signing license.⁸⁵ Even with a substantial paper trail, some radio stations were hesitant to broadcast the show. While KSL was satisfied with the releases, some of the subsidiary stations were not: “all of these stations insist on an agreement whereby the Church assumes full liability for anything that might arise. We want therefore to run them on KSL as sort of a proving ground before exploring them extensively elsewhere.”⁸⁶ In another instance, Price had to provide evidence that the series would be

produced for Church missionary activities and not for commercial interests including any “money-raising scheme”, and that the Church would retain full control.⁸⁷

Rising Costs

Just as Price had to go through the American Federation of Musicians union to contract for music recordings, he also had to work with the American Federation of Radio Artists (AFRA) to hire voice talents. Working with AFRA was part of the business, but Price caught a whiff that prices would be raised from fifteen dollars per actor per half hour, to twenty-one dollars per half hour.⁸⁸ As Price had contracted with Committee to produce each episode for a certain amount, raised rates meant smaller profit margins for him, and his pleas for the Committee to finish things on their end in a timely manner became almost frantic: “This letter is an SOS, prompted by the fact that actors, technicians, and almost everybody in Hollywood are planning to take advantage of the war situation to up prices on us very substantially in the near future.”⁸⁹

This threat of a rate increase was complicated by the fact that Elder Steven L. Richards, the Chairman of the Committee, wanted Moroni Olsen, a well-known LDS actor of the day, to play Brigham Young. Because Olsen was engaged in another project, the production was set around his schedule, which was paced slower than Price would have liked, and again increased the likelihood that rates would go up during production.⁹⁰ There was further delay when Olsen’s busy schedule made it impossible to continue with the *Fullness of Times* series, and the Committee requested recordings of four different actors in consideration of who the “new” Brigham Young should be.⁹¹ Luckily, the Committee’s decision was quick, unanimously choosing Gayle Gordon to be Brigham.⁹² During all of these small delays, however, the rate

increase took effect, but using his business acumen, Price was, for a short time more, able to get “a new release under the old prices.”⁹³ This new contract would only be binding until the end of November, at which time the rates would jump to 38 dollars per half hour; Price once again urged the Committee to urgency.⁹⁴ Hinckley promised to speed things up as much as he could, and stated that “the Committee wants to see the job completed. You will find no inclination on their part to let you get stuck with higher union rates.”⁹⁵

Finding a director who fit well with what the Committee wanted, and on Price’s schedule also proved a challenge. Hinckley felt that the original director chosen by Price was not giving enough “careful attention” to the series.⁹⁶ “I cannot understand the nature of a man who would not be willing to take 30 minutes to time the script in advance rather than waiting until he had a cast of 10 or 12 and keep them standing around while cuts were made—cuts which must be made under pressure and are likely to bear the earmarks of hurried work.”⁹⁷ The director was subsequently replaced. Trying to throw a little humor into the mix of bad news and delays, Price joked: “ain’t radio production fun . . . especially when you have to work with a group of singers and actors?”⁹⁸

More Script Revisions

While the scripts were written and approved by Varney and the script committee in 1940, records indicate that the scripts were constantly being revised during the seven months of production. Each time a script was revised, it had to pass Committee approval again. While many of the revisions were completed by Hinckley and Jason Cannon who served on the script committee, some were made by Price, the director, or the actors while practicing or recording the series. Even after Hinckley and Cannon had revised, polished, and received approval for a script,

the director or actors felt that a different word or phrase would come off better and would suggest changes. By the terms of the contract, all changes had to be approved through the Committee, and the script would need to be sent back to Salt Lake for consideration. While Price had dealt with the Committee's mode of approving scripts during the first thirteen episodes, it wasn't any easier the second time around. Both Price and the actors were usually given some flexibility for artistic license, and the process of continually going to the Committee for approvals was inconvenient. In several instances, Price tried to find a way around sending each minute change back to the Committee. He initially asked if it would "not be possible for the Committee to delegate to you [Hinckley] or Mr. Cannon or both the passing upon purely dramatic or editorial or 'artistic' changes which we may suggest in the wording, but not in the format?"⁹⁹ When that failed, he asked if artistic license could be approved through Moroni Olsen, who was at that time working on the series.¹⁰⁰ The sending of revised scripts back and forth between Salt Lake and Los Angeles caused other delays due to uncertainty as to which drafts were the most recent.¹⁰¹ Finally, Hinckley was given permission to make quick decisions on small changes without full Committee approval, and he would periodically travel to Los Angeles to go over the scripts with Price prior to production. It was a responsibility he did not take lightly, and some early experiences taught him to be careful in what he wrote and approved. For example, in one episode Parley P. Pratt was traveling with a group during winter, and calls to some of the company who were completely covered by the snow during the night to "Awake and Arise." Hinckley related that

Told one way, it added a little touch of humor that would be unoffending. Told another, it might be taken as sacrilege. As it turned out, when it played today, two of the members of the Committee remarked that as it was characterized it sounded sacrilegious. And of course when that comment was made I felt like thumping my head for not deleting it from the script. The Committee has made me largely

responsible for everything that goes on these records, and you can see why I've become so conservative about things.¹⁰²

The experience of having been given even more responsibility had an impact on Hinckley: "I believe that I am slowly beginning to catch on with regard to what makes good drama for our type of show and what does not. I have listened to some of these episodes as many as four times in a row—both the good ones and the bad ones. I am receiving an education in radio drama—and receiving it the hard and costly way."¹⁰³

All the delays and obstacles, however, took their toll on both sides with relations becoming increasingly strained. At one of their meetings in Los Angeles, Hinckley mentioned to Price that he had seen "a few grey streaks in your hair when I was there. If things keep going as they have been, you'll soon be white. This job has been filled with more trouble than one would expect on ten ordinarily."¹⁰⁴ Price continually pressured Hinckley and the Committee to speed efforts on their end, calling for more artistic freedom. At one point Price threatened that if he could not produce "something more acceptable and more credible [he] would drop the job and ask that the contract be dissolved rather than turn out poor, unacceptable work."¹⁰⁵ For its part, the Committee was often underwhelmed by the product they were receiving, and continued to demand the strictest adherence to the approved scripts and the highest production. They rejected many of the episodes, and were liberal with their criticisms. Things came to head in mid-July; Price traveled to Salt Lake for a meeting with Elder Richards and other members of the Committee. No notes exist concerning what was discussed in the meeting, but some reconciliation seems to have taken place. Price wrote to Hinckley that "It's tough when nice people have to be tough, and I know that's the way you all felt."¹⁰⁶ Although there were still some problems for the remainder of the production, the tensions evident in earlier letters were much less pronounced.

While the Committee planned on having a few of the episodes redone or modified in some small way later under a new contract with Price, the series was scheduled to start airing all 39 episodes from the beginning starting on October 3, 1941—one each week.¹⁰⁷ All business, including remakes, between the Committee and Price would be wrapped up by the end of June, 1942. It had been a trying time for both sides. During the time of production, Hinckley wrote that “I don’t know of a time in my life when I have had more pressing and important work than I have on my hands . . . I work here all day long and go home and pound a typewriter far into the night.”¹⁰⁸ Price, perhaps, had a more difficult time, and had lost a great deal of money on the venture.¹⁰⁹ By the time he had finished his work with the Committee in 1942, he was forced out of business, lamenting that at 57, he was “not very marketable.”¹¹⁰ But out of the trial, what started as a professional relationship with Hinckley grew into friendship, to the point where Price felt “so much that you are one of the family (you must consider that complimentary, but I AM proud of my Gordo-Pordo).”¹¹¹ Despite his bad fortune, Price had gained a friend, and deep satisfaction for having produced such a quality program: “there was a lot of hard work, many disappointments, plenty of grief, and yet is a job that I shall always be proud to have done.”¹¹²

Price’s satisfaction with the series seems to have stemmed at least in part from experiences he had while producing the series. Despite all the headaches and difficulties, Price seems to have been genuinely moved by much of the material: “any feeling of strangeness [we] have had for the story in the beginning has worn off. In fact, Gayle [who was voice for Brigham Young] and several of the other boys are reading all the Mormon literature they can get their hands on; they are sincerely interested, and anxious to do a good job.”¹¹³ His letters to Hinckley indicate that individual episodes affected him deeply; he wrote that episode twenty made him cry, “and when a show can do that to me, it must be good. I couldn’t walk out before the cast and

congratulate them as I wished to because I couldn't control my features. Driving back to the office I had that sensation of which comes only a few times in a lifetime of spiritual cleansing. I don't know why; maybe you will."¹¹⁴ In a personal letter to Hinckley penned on the last day of 1941, Price wished Hinckley many happy returns for the New Year: "I hope 1942 may bring you many, many more opportunities to make the lives of others more bearable. Our cast feels much about our work with you as I do. Pat McGeehan, a staunch Roman Catholic, said yesterday: 'we're all better Christians because of the job we've done on this series', and I think he spoke for all the boys and girls."¹¹⁵

Impact

It is possible that Price was so pleased to have been involved in the *Fullness of Times* series not only because he was so affected by it, but because it affected so many others as well. As the series aired at the end of 1941 and throughout 1942, Hinckley kept Price apprised of its reception. After only two weeks on the air, Hinckley reported to Price that the "response has been remarkable ... letters poured in from all over the west"; the second episode entitled "The Visions" was especially well received.¹¹⁶ Other events further highlight the success of the series. For example, "at the conclusion of the series when it was presented on KSL, a booklet which contained information concerning the programs was offered to interested listeners. An immediate response was received which took all of an edition of three thousand copies."¹¹⁷

While it is difficult to estimate the exact impact the series had in improving the image Church, or opening doors for missionaries to teach, there are some indicators, such as those mentioned above which show that many felt that these radio programs were highly influential in furthering the cause of the Church. Most notable were the requests sent in from missions and

stakes for copies of the series. Church leaders across the United States reported the *Fullness of Times* “has proved to be very helpful, particularly in stake missionary work.”¹¹⁸ More specifically, the dramatizations of the scriptures and Church History did a “great deal of good accomplished especially among inactive members and split families.”¹¹⁹ Others reported that the series was “most valuable to missionaries.”¹²⁰ Multiple wards and stakes reported using records of the programs in Sunday school, Seminaries, and even in Sacrament meetings: “they help to build more reality and a better understanding into the history of the Church and its vital characters.”¹²¹ One Stake leader wrote to the Committee that “undoubtedly this material has rendered exceptional aid in furthering the understanding of the Gospel and stimulating people to increased enthusiasm and testimony.”¹²²

As was the case with the filmstrips, another indicator that the Committee felt the project would have an impact can be found in their willingness to devote so much time and expense to it. The Committee decided to continue production after the first thirteen episodes, despite all the difficulties associated with radio drama production. It is unclear how much the series cost in total to the Committee, but records indicate that for the last twenty-six episodes, they paid 405 dollars to Price for each episode, totaling 10,530 dollars. This did not include the seventy-five dollars per episode paid to Chase Varney for his work writing scripts (an additional 1,950 dollars), or any extra expenditures such as recording music by the Tabernacle Choir, Hinckley and Cannon’s salary, money for travel to and from Los Angeles, postage and phone calls between Los Angeles, the 2500 dollars they spent on buying their own record press, or anyone of the other myriad costs such as “stenographic and other office help” involved with the production of this series.¹²³ The actual cost of each episode was most likely much, much higher than the checks paid to Price, and most likely amounted to a total of tens of thousands of dollars. That the Committee was willing

to spend so much money is an indication that they felt the program would be beneficial to furthering the work of the Church.

Conclusion

Although the Committee began by focusing on the production of filmstrips, it had responsibilities for various kinds of media including radio programming. The realization of the *Fullness of Times* series, which utilized dramatizations, was a break from the Church's previous use of lectures and music in radio broadcasting. While such dramatizations required a greater level of planning, detail, and problem solving than the more conventional methods, evidence indicates that these programs may have had a wider and deeper impact on audiences, both members of the Church and those not of the faith, than the more traditional methods.

¹ Wolsey, “History of KSL,” 2 (see chap. 1, n. 4).

² Ibid, 2. Wolsey states that “The *Journal of Broadcasting* lists only a handful of historical studies of radio stations”. This is confirmed in more recent publications such as Sherry Bakers’ Mormon Media Timeline, as mentioned in the first Chapter.

³ Gleason L. Archer, *History of Radio to 1926* (New York: American Historical Society, 1938), 208.

⁴ *ibid*, 207.

⁵ Wolsey, “History of KSL,” 46.

⁶ *Ibid*, 9-10.

⁷ *Deseret News*, May 12, 1922.

⁸ Wolsey, “History of KSL,” 171-173.

⁹ *Ibid*, 174.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 175.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 175-176.

¹² *Ibid*, 178.

¹³ *Ibid*.

¹⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁵ Gordon B. Hinckley, “Twenty Five Years of Radio Ministry,” *Deseret News*, April 26, 1947, 4-5.

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷ Louise Y. Robinson, Kate M. Barker, and Julie A.F. Lund to Stephen L. Richards, March 2 1937, correspondence, Chairman files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁸ Richard L. Evans to Stephen L. Richards, June 21, 1939, Radio Scripts, 1936-1960, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁹ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, Notes, Committee Meeting Notes, 1936-1937, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²⁰ Hinckley, "Twenty Five Years," 4-5.

²¹ George Logan Price to Stephen L. Richards, April 14, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²² James H. Moyle, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²³ James H. Moyle to District Publicity Directors, November 30, 1932, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²⁴ Moyle to Publicity Directors, November 30, 1932.

²⁵ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, Radio Scripts, 1936-1960, untitled documents, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ James H. Moyle to Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee, 1936, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Price to Richards, April 14, 1937.

³² Ibid.

³³ George Logan Price to Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee," April 5, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁴ Stephen L. Richards, "Letter to George Logan Price," May 6, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁵ George Logan Price, "Letter to Stephen L. Richards," May 8, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁶ Committee, "Letter to George Logan Price," July 1, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁷ George Logan Price, "Letter to Stephen L. Richards," June 21, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ George Logan Price, "Letter to Gordon B. Hinckley," July 20, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁰ George Logan Price to Stephen L. Richards, August 28, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴¹ George Logan Price to Stephen L. Richards, December 27, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴² Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to George Logan Price, October 21, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴³ Price to Richards, December 27, 1937.

⁴⁴ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Price, September 18, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁵ Stephen L. Richards to George Logan Price, February 11, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁶ George Logan Price to Stephen L. Richards, February 24, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁷ Stephen L. Richards to George Logan Price, February 7, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁸ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, November 15, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, November 20, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁰ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, November 15, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵¹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, October 8, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵² George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, September 25, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵³ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, October 9th, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ George Logan Price to Chase Varney, October 26th, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, June 25, 1942, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, February 28, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, March 27, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶² Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Prince, March 30, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶³ Chase Varney to Gordon B. Hinckley, February 24, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁴ Chase Varney to Gordon B. Hinckley, April 16, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁵ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, April 22, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, May 2, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁷ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, July 11, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁸ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, August 27, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁹ Price to Hinckley May 2, 1940.

⁷⁰ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, May 15, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷¹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, February 21, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷² Price to Hinckley, August 27, 1940.

⁷³ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, March 10, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁴ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, March 6, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁵ Price to Hinckley, July 11, 1940.

⁷⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, October 2, 1940, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, March 22, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁹ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, May 22, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁰ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, June 5, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸¹ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, June 6, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸² Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, May 16, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸³ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, February 15, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, April 8, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁴ See Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁵ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, June 12, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, October 4, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁶ Hinckley to Price, October 4, 1941.

⁸⁷ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 10, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁸ Price to Hinckley, March 6, 1941.

⁸⁹ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, September 20, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁰ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, March 26, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹¹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 25, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹² George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, July 2, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹³ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 5, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁴ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, October 27, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁵ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, October 28, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, July 22, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 7, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁹ Price to Hinckley, March 26, 1941.

¹⁰⁰ Price to Hinckley, April 8, 1941.

¹⁰¹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, March 26-27, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰² Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, August 29, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰³ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, August 20, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁴ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, July 16, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁵ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, May 5, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁶ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 20, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁷ Hinckley to Price, September 20, 1941. See also Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, October 15, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁸ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, September 22, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, May 24, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹⁰ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 29, 1942, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹¹ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, September 3, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹² Price to Hinckley, June 29, 1942.

¹¹³ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, July 19, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹⁴ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, July 11, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹⁵ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, December 31, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹⁶ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, October 23, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹⁷ Wolsey. "History of KSL," 181

¹¹⁸ Stake Requests for *Fullness of Times* radio series, Executive Secretary Files, 1940-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ George Logan Price to Gordon B. Hinckley, October 31, 1941, correspondence, Executive Secretary Files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, see also Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature to Earl P. Carter, July 23, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

Chapter 5: Exhibits

On February 18th, 1939, the Golden Gate International Fair opened its doors to the public. Located on Treasure Island, a 400 plus acre man-made island in the San Francisco Bay, the fair was a celebration of the completion of the San Francisco-Oakland Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge. The displays reflected the theme of unity, peace, and innovation, with testaments to mans' accomplishments included. There was an eighty foot statue symbolizing Pacific unity, multiple gardens and fountains, a huge edifice called the Temple of Religion, an amusement park, and an exhibit created by the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which paid tribute to one of the Church's own engineering marvels. The exhibit featured a miniature Mormon Tabernacle, complete with a working pipe organ and seating for fifty, where visitors were treated to a short slide show program accompanied by organ music. This miniature tabernacle was a huge undertaking, and represented a great deal of effort and resources on the part of the Committee, as well as the Church.

Although expositions are not technically a form of mass media, they did fit into the Committee's responsibility of improving the Church's image through publicity, and relatively little research has been done concerning this aspect of Church publicity. Gerald J. Peterson has noted that "little has been written, outside of news and periodical articles, concerning Church Exposition activities."¹ While there have been a handful of scholarly works dedicated solely or in part to the miniature Tabernacle, this chapter will add to extant works by showing that the exhibit at the 1939 exposition was the next step in a progression of Church exhibits over the

years. It will further reveal details concerning the conceptualization and functioning of the exhibit, and discuss the exhibit's impact on the Church's image.

Genesis

The miniature Tabernacle at the 1939 International fair was not purely the creation of the Committee members at that time. Although there were multiple factors influencing the design of the display, their decision to build such an ambitious exhibit is primarily the result of two main factors: the increased popularity of the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, as well as the Church's continued participation in world's fairs in the years leading up to the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition.

Tabernacle as Tourist Attraction. Although the Tabernacle in Salt Lake has been a favorite tourist attraction for over a century, it was initially off limits to most visitors. Utah's period of isolation ended in 1869 when the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroad lines were connected at Promontory Summit, bringing business, goods, and news. It also brought a fair share of travelers who came to see the curious ways of the polygamist Mormons they had heard so much about in the eastern states. Local cabbies and merchants not of the LDS faith routinely capitalized on travelers' fascination with LDS depravity, giving unofficial tours of prominent homes and LDS structures in downtown Salt Lake. They were "full of gossip" and perpetuated the stereotypical image of the licentious Mormons by pointing out "houses ostensibly built for two, three, or more wives and commented on peculiar living arrangements" and speculated concerning Mormons secret practices in the endowment house and Tabernacle.² Mormon leaders and members were initially unsure how to deal with all the gawkers. Many in the Church felt that the tourists came only to denigrate Mormon beliefs, practices, doctrines, and holy places. While

they could not keep them from coming to Salt Lake, they felt that Temple Square should have been sealed off to outside visitors. The general feeling amongst members of the Church was that the Tabernacle was sacred, second only to the Temple and the Endowment House, and that gentiles should not be allowed to enter. Two leaders in particular, Brigham Young Jr. and Francis Lyman, felt that anyone permitting visitors not of our faith into the Tabernacle should be brought before councils of the Church for disciplinary action.³

Over time, however, most leaders came to understand that “tourism offered Mormons the chance to reshape their image before a wide audience without relying on the unfamiliar devices of a conventional mass-marketing campaign. After some initial reluctance, Mormon leaders came to believe that they could convince tourists coming to Salt Lake of Mormon virtue even if the tourists had come to see Mormon vice.”⁴ To this end, the Church began to implement measures to promote the virtues of LDS society in Utah to the end that mainstream America, and even the world, would come to tolerate Mormonism, even if they did not convert to it. While most visitors were impressed by the “ordered space” of Salt Lake—its carefully laid out plat, wide streets, and beautiful trees—Temple Square was the main attraction, and the Church used that space to show the world Mormon refinement.⁵

The Church began to open the doors of Temple Square at the turn of the century. By 1902, the Church had established an information bureau consisting of a two dozen volunteers tasked with answering questions, handing out pamphlets, and guiding tourists during their visit to Temple Square.⁶ In 1904, new buildings began to be added specifically to address the needs of growing numbers of tourists. Of all the buildings on Temple Square, the Tabernacle became the most popular site. Church sanctioned, guided tours of the Tabernacle had started around the turn of the century, and the additional free organ recitals beginning in 1906 quickly became the most

popular part of the program.⁷ Thomas K. Hafen estimates that during this time 150,000 to 200,000 tourists visited Temple Square per year.⁸ As the Tabernacle increased in popularity, the Church was better able to tell its own story not only by sending missionaries out to the world, but by drawing people *in* to Salt Lake through tourism. Thus, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the Tabernacle had become much more than a meeting place for the Saints, but a tool to engender a better Church image.

World's Fair and Expositions. The rise of the Tabernacle as a tourist attraction in the first decade of the twentieth century was also an important factor in the shaping of Church exhibits in fairs as expositions. The Church first used fairs to promote the restored gospel at London's Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in May of 1851.⁹ Over the next fifty years, the Church would also participate in a handful of other expositions as time, resources, and inclination would allow, including the Vienna International Expositions in 1873, the World's Colombian Exhibit in 1893 in Chicago, the World's Fairs at St. Louis and Portland in 1904 and 1905, respectively.¹⁰ The Church's participation between 1851 and 1908 in exhibitions, however, "had only been indirect and usually as it related to exhibits sponsored by the Territory or State."¹¹ Most of the expositions in the United States sponsored booths and exhibits from the territories and States, highlighting their geographical area, resources, people, industry, etc. As the dominant culture in Utah, Mormonism played a key part in the Utah exhibits, and would occasionally provide materials and personnel. As the Church continued to participate in exhibitions, leaders increasingly saw the potential benefits of more direct involvement.

It was not until the World's Fair in Seattle in 1909 that the Church planned an exhibit independent from the Utah exhibit. The Church's exhibit featured paintings, maps, and other artifacts from Church history, but its main attractions were two replicas of buildings found on

Temple Square: a seven foot plaster model of the Salt Lake Temple and an exact replica of the Tabernacle borrowed from the Smithsonian.¹² The model of the Tabernacle was especially well received due to its detail; it was cutaway so that observers could see the organ, seating, and the structure of the trusses.¹³ The use of the Tabernacle and Temple as pieces to generate interest in the restored gospel at the Seattle fair in 1909 coincides with the Church's promotion of the Tabernacle and other buildings on Temple Square as tourist attractions in Salt Lake.

For various reasons, the Church did not present an exhibit at a world's fair again until the Century of Progress Exposition from 1933-1934 in Chicago.¹⁴ Its largest exhibit thus far, the Church sponsored a 16 by 32 foot booth, containing many works of art, artifacts, and other objects to draw observers' attention. One such piece was an eighteen-foot bas-relief sculpture entitled *Eternal Progress*, which "was sculpted to depict ... the Church's belief regarding man's beginning, the purpose of mortality, and his future in the eternities."¹⁵ The centerpiece, however, was the cutaway model of the Tabernacle on Temple Square. David O. McKay, reporting on the exhibit, stated that "the miniature replica of the Salt Lake Tabernacle and organ seem to be the magnet that first attracted the crowds. It was an excellent example of the effectiveness of visual education. As heads peered around heads and over shoulders to look at the model, almost invariably someone in the group would begin to tell of his visit to the renowned edifice. With the attention of the observer thus centered the missionaries found willing listeners"¹⁶ This exhibit was also important because it marked a significant increase in time and resources, not only in the preparation and presentation of the displays, but in other activities put on by the organizers of the exposition.

Just a year later, the Church participated in the California Pacific International Exposition in San Diego. While the actual exhibit was identical to Chicago's, instead of occupying a booth

in a building provided by the exposition, the Church actually built its own edifice to house the display.¹⁷ The replica of the Tabernacle once again played a prominent role; it was strategically placed at the entrance of the display to draw the attention of passers-by and was the most popular display item of the exhibit.¹⁸ Further, just as the Church participated in the Chicago Fair of 1933 in more ways than it did in the Seattle Fair of 1909, the Church continued to increase its visibility through various means during the San Diego Fair. For example, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir performed, slide show lectures were given concerning the Book of Mormon and archeology finds, Elder John A. Widtsoe gave several lectures, and the exposition organizers sponsored an official Latter-day Saint Day. Thus, during the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Church continually used the Tabernacle in its exhibit while increasing its participation in the various aspects of the expositions. Understood in this context, the Committee's exhibit at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition followed the path and trajectory of previous exhibits.¹⁹

Preparations

It was halfway through the San Diego Fair that the Radio, Publicity and Mission Literature Committee was created and took responsibility for fairs and expositions. Previously, fairs were overseen by a general authority—such as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles or the Presiding Bishopric—or by local leaders. Discussions about and preparations for the Church's exhibit began approximately two years prior to the opening of the fair. Stephen L. Richards had been in frequent contact with members of the Exposition's committee during much of 1937, but was still undecided as to whether the cost of erecting such an exhibit of such a magnitude was worth the cost.²⁰ By the end of the year, however, the Committee decided to move ahead, and the Exposition's administrators confirmed receipt and acceptance of the Church

application on December 31st, 1937. The Committee's attention now turned to the considerable work that lay ahead.

Although Stephen L. Richards would later write that Gordon B. Hinckley was in charge of "all the details about the exhibit," Richards was very involved throughout the planning stages and initial months after the Exposition opened.²¹ An advisory committee was also formed in the San Francisco Bay area of local priesthood leaders. Committee members included Stephen H. Winter and Eugene Hilton, Presidents of the San Francisco and Oakland Stakes, respectively, and W. Aird MacDonald, Mission President. President Winter would chair the advisory committee, and would later work in a paid position as the full-time director of operations for the exhibit during 1939.²² While the Committee could accomplish a great deal in Salt Lake, the advisory committee were their eyes, ears, and boots on the ground. Both the advisory committee and the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee had their hands full in organizing, finalizing, and refining all of the many details during 1938 and 1939.

Design and construction. The most pressing aspect concerned the practical issues of taking the concept of a miniature Tabernacle and turning it into a reality. The Committee had been working from an idea and a few sketches, and it took time to formalize design details.²³ For example, while some kind of Tabernacle exhibit was going to be the focal point, not everyone was convinced that a miniature version of the Tabernacle was the best approach; Frederick Black, an Exposition administrator who worked closely with the Committee throughout the planning phase, stated that "if a complete tabernacle were built, the scale would be so small that people sitting inside would get a false impression. I'm wondering if your designers won't probably consider building a section, so that it could be built on a larger scale."²⁴ Other ideas and variations were batted about through the first part of 1938, with the design ironed out through the

work of Fetzer and Fetzer, an architectural firm hired by the Committee. Eventually the original concept of a miniature Tabernacle with seating for fifty was settled on and the plans completed in the fall of 1938.²⁵

With the main design issues resolved, the Committee turned their attention to finding a contractor to build the structure. The main problem they faced in this instance was narrowing the pool of prospective contractors and subcontractors. After the Committee's application for admittance was accepted to the expo, scores of letters and pamphlets from companies such as Wagner and Burnett Associates, Ferdinand Terheyden & Bros., and Quandt and Sons Design inundated the offices of Stephen L. Richards and Gordon B. Hinckley. These letters solicited the Church's business to design, build, paint, wire, carpet, or furnish the structure.²⁶ Others specialized in metal work, light fixtures, movie projectors; or exhibit transportation to and assembly on site. The Committee entertained several offers for construction, with the contract being awarded to H.J. McKean for the price of \$5,250.²⁷ Hired in mid to late November, construction moved quickly, and by the end of 1938 more than two-thirds of the structure had been finished.²⁸

During 1938, while the Committee worked through the design and construction of the building, other myriad details needed their attention. The Committee, the designer, and the contractor had to meet not only the building codes for the state of California, but also regulations and restrictions for exhibits set by the organizers of the Exposition. For example, after the construction of the tabernacle was mostly complete, the Committee wanted to put up neon signs with the words "MORMON TABERNACLE" on the cornice of each side, which would be "neat letters, not to [sic] large, and in a color which will harmonize with the finish of our building."²⁹ While such a request would almost certainly be allowed under standard building codes, the

Committee was not sure if they fit the regulations of the Exposition. In response, a representative of the Exposition clarified that “you may use neon or any other lighting unit, provided it is behind obscure glass or other translucent material, in such a manner that the source of the light is not directly visible to the eye.”³⁰ Such is just one example of the many details that had to be worked out, not only with the contractor or subcontractors, but with the organizers of the Exposition as well. Other examples include submitting for approval building permits, estimated power loads, and landscaping and other displays on the outside of the tabernacle, to name a few.³¹

There was also the matter of how to categorize the miniature Tabernacle. The Exposition was divided into twenty-six different sections, each housing a different category or type of display, and the Committee in Salt Lake and the Fair’s administrators in San Francisco went back and forth as to where the exhibit would best fit. The administrators pushed for the Tabernacle to be in the Temple of Religion, an edifice conceived by an ecumenical council consisting of six members from the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant traditions who felt that with “buildings devoted to arts, to science, to education and to amusement . . . a spiritual note, too, should be heard on the spot.”³² Their goal was to erect a building that would “be a symbol of religious freedom in these United States.”³³ While he admired the ideals of the Temple of Religion, Stephen L. Richards had several reservations about committing to the placement of the Tabernacle there: “we are not, of course, in any sense of inimical to the project for the erection of a hall of religion but there seems to be so much of indefiniteness connected with it and its consummation is predicated on so many contingencies that we feel it would be better to formulate our plans for an exhibit within our own control.”³⁴ Indeed, Richards was correct; the ecumenical council pushing for the Temple of Religions got a late start, and while it was

eventually built, for much of 1938 it was dubious whether or not they would raise the needed funds.³⁵ By the time the Church's contractor was ready to begin construction, the Committee had secured a spot in the Homes and Gardens section. Perhaps it was placed there because "the space surrounding the unique little dome-shaped [sic] building is landscaped with carpet, artificial grass and potted evergreens to represent the walks and beautiful gardens of Temple Square."³⁶

Pamphlets and presentations. Another issue that cropped up concerned the Committee's plan to distribute pamphlets. Exposition administrators had instituted a policy that would not allow for the distribution of "denominational propaganda of any kind."³⁷ F.M. Sandusky, the clerk who reviewed applications for proposed exhibits, approved the Committee's application conditionally—he was concerned about the provision concerning the distribution of religious material. The Committee would need to clarify the purpose of passing out pamphlets, and perhaps withdraw their request if he found their reasons lacking.³⁸ Because the distribution of pamphlets had been an increasingly important aspect of the Church's exhibits in Chicago and San Diego, Richards appealed to the Exposition's committee for an allowance. After having sent in several documents and multiple letters concerning the content of pamphlets and the means of distribution, Richards persuaded the organizers of the Exposition to allow missionaries to do so.

Most important, perhaps only second to the miniature Tabernacle itself, was the presentation that would be given there. Although President Stephen H. Winter had assumed his role as the director of operations and was organizing the last minute details, there was still one major aspect of the presentation which had not been addressed. President MacDonald had assigned several Elders to take responsibility of presenting the slideshow and handing out pamphlets, but there were no organists in the ranks of his missionaries. As always, the

Committee desired first and foremost a quality program, but the cost of a professional organist was an issue. Hiring professional organists to perform every half hour for 12 to 14 hours a day would be cost prohibitive. On the other hand, volunteer organists from local wards and stakes could be used, but Winter was worried about consistency in the program, the logistics of coordinating enough volunteers to fill all the program times, as well as the cost and time of travel.³⁹ The Committee began a broader search among full-time missionaries to find qualified organists. Letters were sent to all missions in the United States, Canada, and to Mexico requesting information on any Elders or Sisters who were proficient in playing the organ.⁴⁰ There were only two elders found who fit the Committee's requirements. One was a missionary named Elder Hansen from the Northern States Mission.⁴¹ The other was Elder G. William Richards, a professionally trained organist and a member of the American Guild of Organists.⁴² He also happened to be the nephew of Elder Stephen L. Richards. Both Elders Hansen and Richards were transferred to California in February, and would spend the next nine months performing organ music for the presentation every half hour.

Opening day. The Golden Gate International Exposition opened on February 18th, 1939. All the plans and preparations would now come to fruition. All three members of the advisory committee were there opening day along with several missionaries in order to ensure smooth operation. Gordon B. Hinckley also traveled to the exhibit in order to observe and to make sure that everything was in order with the different aspects of the presentation.⁴³ Of that day, President Winter stated "We all feel sure we have everything in order for a most successful exhibit."⁴⁴ While pleased with the exhibit and program, the Committee felt that it would be "very necessary that our operations there be closely observed for a period in order that we may be sure that we are pursuing the most effective course."⁴⁵

1939 Season

Improvements to the exhibit and the presentation. In order to provide the very best image to the public, the exhibit itself was almost constantly being updated and improved. One major issue initially was that several items needed to round off the interior and exterior had not yet arrived, such as the cut-away model of the Tabernacle that was meant to sit just outside of the miniature Tabernacle, and several other display materials.⁴⁶ Most noticeably absent of the interior were the chairs, which did not arrive until March.⁴⁷ There were also issues with the presentation that needed to be worked out. For example, initially, the missionaries giving the presentation felt that the pictures in the slide show needed to be brighter in order to get the full effect.⁴⁸ When a higher watt bulb was installed, however, the projector overheated, especially on days when there was a high volume of visitors with little to no time between programs for it to cool down. President Winter arranged for holes to be cut out in the box holding the projector with a blower put in to keep the temperature down. While this solved the issue of overheating, the noise from the blower became distracting.⁴⁹ They also found that the organ music was not as effective because the pipes sat directly behind the screen, so President Winter petitioned for a perforated screen.⁵⁰ The missionaries giving the presentation also found that making a few small changes in the prescribed outline seemed to improve the flow. By omitting the final organ piece, and merely ending on the phrase “founded and guided by revelation, it is the Church of Jesus Christ, and so it is named,” the presentation seemed to leave a greater impression, it also allowed them to do an extra 5 or 6 shows a day.⁵¹

Struggles with consistent presentation quality. The most important aspect of the presentation quality, however, was not the equipment, but the performance of the missionaries presenting the material. In a letter to President Winter, the Committee stated that “we have received comments from a number of others to the effect that the missionaries participating in the exhibit are making their presentation appear more habitual than sincere,” and that each and every presentation should be “a thoughtful, inspirational and instructional program, given with real conviction as well as skill.”⁵² One visitor’s criticisms in particular were vitriolic. She came to the “exhibit and listened to our program for a time or two then started to tell the Elders what a terrible job they were doing and how they were all wrong and that they had an awful script and that the Committee in Salt Lake had done a terrible job and that the whole thing should be changed.”⁵³ She even went so far as to write a letter of complaint to President Grant himself. President Winter responded that he was not surprised at most of the criticisms, admitting that there were “three who haven’t done so well and about who complaints have been made.”⁵⁴

The Committee understood that it was “difficult for them to put feeling into this presentation when they are giving it over and over and over again, but it is worth all the effort they can make.”⁵⁵ In response, they made some suggestions as to how to keep the presenters fresh. For example, they felt “it would be better to have these missionaries work for three or four days in a stretch, full time, and then be free to stay entirely away from the fair and rest and perhaps engage in other missionary work, than to take a half a shift every day. It is our feeling that they will not be as likely to become stale on the job if it can be conveniently arranged for them to stay entirely away from the fair part of the week.”⁵⁶ With the exception of the Elders Hansen and Richards (the organists), President Winter and President MacDonald also made it a habit of transferring missionaries in and out of the assignment regularly. Over the course of the

1939 season, approximately forty missionaries served at the exhibit. Even the organists were given some reprieve through the use of local church members who played the organ. While different measures such as regular transfers helped avoid mediocre performance, continual oversight and training was required to help the [missionaries] “correct any errors they may have developed and help them improve.”⁵⁷ President Winter assured the Committee that “we are doing everything possible to keep the program up to the highest standard possible.”⁵⁸

Although as shown above, the missionaries in general needed continual supervision and training, one specific individual caused repeated problems. This Elder had been chosen by President MacDonald precisely because of his talents in speaking and singing, and even made him District President over the six or seven other missionaries serving there at any one time. However, due to some character flaws, both President Winter and President MacDonald felt it best to transfer him. In June of 1939, after the exhibit had been running for about four months, Stephen L. Richards stopped in to watch the presentation. While he admits that “no complaints were made as to the quality of the service rendered by those serving at the Fair...I felt that there had been a considerable falling-off in the excellence of the lecture, since the time I visited before....we all know that some are gifted in this line of work more than others. Why shouldn't we have those who are most gifted to do it for us?”⁵⁹ In consequence, Elder Richards asked President MacDonald to transfer this particular elder back to the exhibit.

President MacDonald complied with Stephen L. Richards' request, but not before sitting down with this elder and having a “long talk with him and ... [feeling] sure he would mend his ways.”⁶⁰ For a time, this particular elder improved his behavior and meaningfully contributed his talents to the program, but eventually fell back into old habits. Once again, President MacDonald felt it imperative that this missionary be transferred. Knowing that Stephen L. Richards would

question this move, he sent a letter explaining the situation, quoting the experience of Richards's nephew and organist G. William Richards, who had taken this elder's place as District President: "We have been paying too high a price...it is deplorable that such a gifted person should be so lacking in the traits of character which the rest of us consider indispensable. The constant undermining influence of anyone so contemptibly dishonorable is certainly not conducive to this work. We are seriously handicapped until he is replaced by a more trustworthy and genuine missionary."⁶¹

Other missionaries complained that this elder "feels he should be the leader everywhere and tries to dominate every situation. Under the above circumstances and in the interest of harmony, I feel that he should be moved from the Fair but feel that you should be advised of the reason for his transfer. I am bringing him to the Mission Office where I feel I can have him under my own care."⁶² Despite this elder's flaws, letters regarding him are the only correspondence which link poor behavior to a single individual. Most other problems, as noted in an earlier section, deal with general performance issues rather than undesirable behaviors of a single missionary. This suggests that most missionaries fulfilled their duties admirably. By the middle of the summer, most issues regarding both technical and personnel problems had been worked out, and the program ran like clockwork for the remainder of the season.

Other Church events during the fair. While the exhibit and program in the Homes and Garden section was the Church's central attraction, the advisory committee headed by President Winter increased the Church's visibility in multiple ways throughout their time at the fair. While the Church had declined the invitation to build their exhibit in the Temple of Religion, they did set up a display there including the *Eternal Progress* statue and some other materials.⁶³ On several occasions, Elders Hansen and Richards gave hour-long organ recitals, and President

Winter and other Church leaders were invited to speak there on occasion.⁶⁴ The Church was also invited to provide one of its sound slide productions to run in a loop in an adjacent hall, but “Hinckley persuaded himself that our transcriptions are not suitable . . . they are likely too long, people being unwilling to sit for half an hour or more in their tour of the Fair.”⁶⁵ Instead, he arranged with Metro-Goldwyn Mayer to use a short eleven minute film they had made entitled “The Miracle of Salt-Lake City.”⁶⁶ For his part, President Winter had arranged for several radio interviews, as well as for a local station to broadcast the thirteen completed *Fullness of Times* episodes.⁶⁷ One of the biggest and most visible events for the Church was June 14, 1939.⁶⁸ The organizers of the Exposition had named that date Utah day, where multiple activities were planned, many of which were Church-centered. For Example, President Grant traveled to the Fair and gave an address, and the Tabernacle Choir was invited to sing.⁶⁹ Many of these extra publicity events allowed President Winter and the missionaries to invite crowds to attend the program at the miniature Tabernacle or to introduce people to the Church by some means or another.

Wrapping up. The long days of giving the same presentation again and again, the pushing for the highest quality and the extra publicity through other means seems to have paid off. By mid-July, President Winter reported to the Committee that “at about noon today we will score the 100,000 person to come into the Tabernacle and sit down and listen to our program. This maintains our 2% of the attendance at the Fair.”⁷⁰ On the several days when larger crowds visited the Exposition grounds the small Tabernacle was filled to capacity with many standing and on the outside, waiting for their turn to step inside and witness the program.⁷¹ While there were many visitors who visited the display without attending the program, the missionaries lost no opportunities in handing out literature. Boxes containing 25,000 pamphlets would arrive one

week and would be gone the next.⁷² If they had counted those who only stayed for part of the program, or to whom they spoke outside of the exhibit, it would “easily add another 250 to 300,000 more making about 400,000 we have reached in some small way.”⁷³

As fall came, and the fair was beginning to wind down, President Winter again tallied the number of people who he estimated to have come through. By the end of the season in October, he estimated that approximately 1.25 million people had either sat through all or part of a program, visited the exterior of the exhibit, or received a pamphlet with an accompanying explanation by the missionaries.⁷⁴ At the closing of the fair on October 29, 1939, the missionaries returned to their respective duties. Only Elders Hansen and Richards, as organists, had served for the entire duration.⁷⁵ President Winter continued his work for a short a time to wrap up the loose ends before securing full-time employment as the general manager of a local company.⁷⁶ Originally, the organizers of the Exposition had planned for only one year of operations, but due to the large numbers of attendees and other indicators of its success, there was talk of the Fair reopening for another year. The Committee delayed removing its exhibit and other display materials through the last months of 1939 until a final decision was made.

Exposition extends for a Second Season

A few days after Christmas, 1939 the Committee received word that “it has been definitely decided to reopen the Golden Gate International Exposition from May 25, 1940 to September 29, 1940.”⁷⁷ While the Committee was interested in participating for another year, they did not decide for certain to continue their involvement for some time.⁷⁸ Although over a million people had been exposed to the Church by means of the exhibit, it was an extremely expensive venture, and at least part of the Committee’s delay in deciding to go forward for

another year was due to their consideration of the worth of the exhibit as compared to its actual cost. Their decision was also delayed because of the lack or scarcity of information they initially received concerning operation of the Fair during the second season.⁷⁹

One factor that may have influenced them to renew their contract was cost; the Committee learned that the rental price for their lot would drop from \$11,985.37 to \$3788.80 due to “a substantial reduction in the utility rates and other services.”⁸⁰ Thinking that President Winter was employed full-time the Committee explored the idea of not having a paid manager, as “there is not a great deal of business to be done but some matters to have to be looked after.”⁸¹ They wrote to the three members of the advisory committee in California, explaining that “we are naturally anxious to cut down expenses as much as possible and if we could we would like to avoid the payment of a manager’s salary...What do you think? Could you appoint a supervising Elder who could do the work with such direction as [you all] could give?”⁸² President Hilton was “a little dubious about the wisdom of putting the exhibit entirely in the hands of the missionaries... The young men are wonderful but like young colts they need the support and guidance of a good wheel horse.”⁸³ President MacDonald felt that under the direction of the right elder, his missionaries could satisfactorily care for the entire exhibit.⁸⁴ As it turned out, President Winter’s job as a general manager ended, but he was hired to manage the Temple of Religion at the expo. This put in him in close proximity to the Church’s exhibit if need arose, and he was asked to continue serving on the advisory committee. Elder G. William Richards was again transferred to California, not only to play organ but as the supervising elder and manager. The Committee felt that his “experience of last year would give a proper background and enable him to do the job well.”⁸⁵

The Committee was also encouraged to renew its contract by the change in neighboring displays and an increased effort on the part of the organizers to publicize the Church's exhibit. For example, Winter reported that "the robot display which gave us trouble last year will not be there. They promise to have something agreeable in its place."⁸⁶ An Exposition administrator also assured the Committee that they had placed more attractions near the Tabernacle, and that there would be more advertising to draw people there. Winter agreed that "our exhibit will be much more in evidence this year than last year. They are making every effort to get people to our end of the Island, which should make our exhibit more effective than last year."⁸⁷ Finally, on April 12th, 1940, the Committee decided to renew its contract for the second and final season.⁸⁸

With only a month and a half from the time the Committee committed itself to another year until the Fair reopened, there was much to do in the little time left to prepare the exhibit. Gordon B. Hinckley kept busy revising and updating the slide show; he and a colleague by the name of Frank Wise worked together to design a new projector that would achieve the picture quality desired without the hassle of overheating and needing a fan as in the previous year.⁸⁹ Utilizing a unique setup integrating glass plates and a high watt bulb, the visuals were brighter and more vibrant than previously seen.⁹⁰ The Committee also dealt with the numerous applications, licenses, and payments that needed to be taken care of. Aided by the advisory committee, Elder G. William Richards had the responsibility of overseeing onsite preparations, including repairs. The structure needed to be repainted inside and out, the well-worn carpet, felt, and the faux grass needed to be replaced, and a myriad of other small fixes needed to be done.⁹¹ He was also responsible for training and supervising the missionaries—among them was the one talented missionary who had so many problems the year earlier. Although requested by both President Winter and Elder G. William Richards, Elder Hansen was not able to return for the

1940 season as an organist; instead, the Committee sent a talented singer and organist named sister Cardon from Logan.⁹²

Fortunately, the exhibit and presentation were essentially the same as the year before, and most of the bugs in the program had already been worked out. Stephen L. Richards commented that “Personally, we think we can’t make much improvement over last year.”⁹³ As the 1940 season opened and progressed, Elder Richards reported to the Committee that “the Fair is going along beautifully.”⁹⁴ Indeed, the small amount of correspondence for the 1940 season, as well as the lack of anything remarkable mentioned therein as compared to that of the previous season were testaments to the smooth operation of the exhibit in its second season. Even the elder who struggled the year before seems to have matured, and fulfilled his duties well. Besides the occasional repair to be made, there seems to have been only one major issue. Elder G. William Richards reported to his uncle in a more personal letter that

We have a fine group of elders this year and we look forward to a happy association and many rich experiences. [A certain talented elder], with his fine voice and superb delivery, is coaching the others in the lecture. Last year I vowed time and time again that I would never attempt this work with only two organists, and now as indigestion returns due to hasty eating, etc., I murmur my resolution with a vengeance and wish that elder Hansen were here. The part time organists we used last year were never very satisfactory; their infrequent help meant a lack of familiarity with our procedures which prevented them from lending artistry to our presentation.⁹⁵

Besides the lack of one additional organist, there were no major problems reported by Elder William G. Richards, Elder Stephen L. Richards, or any of the members of the advisory committee or the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee.

The Fair closes. After the Fair ended on Sept 29th, 1940, the missionaries were transferred to back to their respective responsibilities. While all 15 missionaries who served at

the Fair during the 1940 season received a letter of thanks from the Committee, Elder Richards received a special commendation: “we recognize that you have made a real sacrifice in the interruption of your work as a missionary in the Eastern States Mission to serve in the work you have done at the San Francisco Fair, particularly when your last call came which entailed your forsaking the completion of your mission in the Eastern States. We feel, however, that the results which will follow your mission at the Fair will more than compensate you for the change in your plans.”⁹⁶ President MacDonald stated that Elder G. William Richard’s effort “needs no commentary. He has been an excellent missionary and District President, and I have greatly appreciated his fine work.”⁹⁷ As for the exhibit itself, decisions needed to be made as to what to do with some of the exhibit pieces. The sculpture entitled *Eternal Progress*, and several other pieces of display material were returned to storage in Salt Lake. The chairs were sold to the Fresno branch for 1.50 each, and the organ was sold to the Bakersfield Saints for \$1,000.⁹⁸ Once the miniature Tabernacle had been stripped of these and any other reusable items, it was razed in mid-October.⁹⁹ Thus ended yet another major project by the Radio Publicity and Mission Literature Committee in an effort to generate a more favorable feeling towards the Church.

Impact

Such an expensive and complicated project begs the question as to whether or not it did actually result in better feelings towards the Church by those who came in contact with it. Brent L. Top in his article on the exhibit at Treasure Island states that “it is difficult to evaluate the missionary success of this exhibit.”¹⁰⁰ If missionary work is more broadly interpreted to mean opening a dialogue with those not of our faith, or making friends and fostering understanding, there are several indicators which show that the exhibit was successful.

First, the Committee was convinced that it had a positive impact. In letters sent out to the missionaries who served there, they stated that “we feel that the missionary work which was done at the Exposition will bear fruit for years to come.”¹⁰¹ For this reason, they were willing to devote considerable resources to this project, not only for one, but two years. Success could also be judged by numbers of people who visited. As listed earlier, over one million people visited the exhibit in the first year alone. While no numbers for the 1940 season could be found in the Committee’s records, it is not unreasonable to think that similar numbers visited the exhibit proportional to the shorted schedule. This means that potentially two million people participated in the exhibit in some fashion. The sheer number of visitors suggests that even if there was not a well-prepared exhibit and presentation, by chance alone a number of people, albeit small, would be affected by the Church’s presence there.

Second, the quality of the presentation and qualitative data from those who attended also give an indication that the exhibit influenced those who attended. For example, after the exhibit, “several church groups and civic organizations in the bay area, including the Trinity Episcopalian Church of San Francisco, invited missionaries who had participated in the Church’s exhibit to come to their group and deliver the presentation about the Church.”¹⁰² At the end of the 1939 season, President Winter also described his perception of the impact the exhibit and presentation had on individuals who attended:

Everyone took a pride in our fine exhibit in keeping it up to a high standard at all times worthy of the great message we had to give. There were so many fine expressions given by people who came in to listen. Often we would hear the expression it is the most dignified and lovely program on the Fairgrounds. It’s an oasis of peace in all the commercialism. We are so happy you invited us to come in and we will come again and many did come back many times and would bring others. In coming many would say to their friends we were told to be sure and not miss this. Many times they applauded and people would come out drying their eyes they were so moved by the program. We really believe we accomplished the

purpose of the exhibit in making friends for the Truth and will make a ready welcome to some missionary who will find these people in their homes...Innumerable times we have given addresses to people who ask for them as to where they could learn more about the Church.¹⁰³

While quantitative evidence does not exist as to the exhibit's impact in terms of missionary work as conversion, accounts given by those who witnessed the event provide evidence that the exhibit did have an effect in terms of opening dialogue with those of other faiths, and promoting a better feeling towards the Church.

Conclusion

Whatever the venue, and whomever was in charge, Church exhibits have been an important means of creating a better feeling towards the Church. The miniature Tabernacle at the 1939 Golden Gate Exposition was born out of the Tabernacle's popularity as a tourist attraction and its use in previous world's fairs and expositions. Further, the Committee's project at the 1939 Exposition was the Church's most intricate, complex, and expensive exhibit created up until that time. Like the actual building it was meant to represent, the miniature Tabernacle was an effective tool in gaining visitors attention so that the missionaries might have an opportunity to explain the Church's beliefs and practices, if not convert them to it.

¹ Peterson, "Mormon Exhibits," 4 (see chap. 1, n. 9).

² Thomas K. Hafen, "City of Saints, City of Sinners: The Developments of Salt Lake City as a Tourist Attraction, 1869-1900," *Western Historical Quarterly* 28, no. 3, (1997), 358.

³ Thomas G. Alexander, "Reshaping the Latter-day Saint Image," in *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 240.

⁴ Hafen, "Tourist Attraction," 346.

⁵ Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America* (New York: Knopf, Inc., 1993), 140-160.

⁶ Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985), 38.

⁷ Cowan, *Twentieth Century*, 39.

⁸ Hafen, "Tourist Attraction," 355.

⁹ Peterson, "Mormon Exhibits," 5. It is not known exactly how the Church participated in this fair.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 12-25. There were several Fairs in which the Church, the State of Utah or both, were absent due to various reasons.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 30.

¹² Stephen L. Richards to Charles G. Abbott, February 7th, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. Richards indicates that the model had been borrowed on several previous occasions for exhibits. From this it is inferred that that the same model was used at this particular exhibit.

¹³ Peterson, "Mormon Exhibits," 31-32.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 38-39.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 44.

¹⁶ David O. McKay, "The Church of Progress Display," *The Improvement Era*, December 1933, 864-865. As found in Peterson, "Mormon Exhibits," 41.

¹⁷ Peterson, "Mormon Exhibits," 52.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 49-52.

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- ¹⁹ Richard O. Cowan and William E. Homer, *California Saints: A 150 Year Legacy in The Golden State* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 294.
- ²⁰ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Stephen H. Winter, September 7, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1932-1939, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²¹ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, April 28, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. I was not allowed access to the Executive secretary files for Gordon B. Hinckley's correspondences concerning the exhibit; the majority of the information for this chapter is drawn from the correspondences of Stephen L. Richards.
- ²² Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, April 28, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²³ Stephen L. Richards to Avard Fairbanks, February 19, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²⁴ Frederick Black to Stephen L. Richards February 1, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²⁵ Untitled document, 1938, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²⁶ Miscellaneous documents, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²⁷ H.J. McKean, contract, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²⁸ H.J. McKean to Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, December 31, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ²⁹ Stephen L. Richards to F.M. Sandusky, February 1, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ³⁰ J.H. Lefeavre to Stephen L. Richards, February 4, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ³¹ R.M. Sandusky to Stephen L. Richards, March 31, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
- ³² Stanley Armstrong Hunter, *Temple of Religion and Tower of Peace at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition* (San Francisco: University of California Press, 1940), xxiii.
- ³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Stephen L. Richards to Frederick Black, December 23, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁵ See Hunter, *Temple of Religion*. The book deals almost entirely with the story of how the Temple of Religion was funded.

³⁶ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Tom J. Ayers, May 6, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁷ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, November 26, 1938, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁸ Stephen L. Richards to F.M. Sandusky, December 31, 1937, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

³⁹ Top, "Tabernacle," 198 (see chap. 1, n. 10).

⁴⁰ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature to Missions of Canada, United States, Mexico, , correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴¹ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature committee to Stephen H. Winter, March 20, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴² Top, "Tabernacle," 199.

⁴³ Ibid, 200.

⁴⁴ Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, February 19, 1939, correspondence, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁵ Stephen L. Richards to W. Aird MacDonald, February 2, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁶ Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, February 23, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁷ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, March 2, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁸ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, April 5, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁴⁹ Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, May 24, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁰ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, April 5, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵¹ Stephen H. Winter to Gordon B. Hinckley, July 24, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. When Stephen L. Richards discovered the change, he asked president Winter to follow the program as had been written and approved by the committee.

⁵² Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Stephen H. Winter, July 20, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵³ Winter to Hinckley, July 24, 1939.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Stephen H. Winter to Gordon B. Hinckley, Aug 4, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁶ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Stephen H. Winter, March 20, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵⁷ Winter to Hinckley, Aug 4, 1939.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Stephen L. Richard to W. Aird McDonald, June 20, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁰ W. Aird MacDonald to Stephen L. Richards, September 20, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Untitled document, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁴ Stephen H. Winter to Gordon B. Hinckley, November 2, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁵ Stephen L. Richards to W. Aird McDonald, March 5, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁶ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to Preston Richards, March 8, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁷ Stephen H. Winter to Gordon B. Hinckley, Aug 29, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁶⁸ Winter to Richards, May 24, 1939.

⁶⁹ Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, June 11, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁰ Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, July 13, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷¹ "Church has Popular Exhibit at Exposition," *Deseret News*, March 11, 1939, p. 7 as found in Peterson, "History of Exhibits," 58.

⁷² Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, to Zion's Printing & Publishing Co., August 11, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷³ Winter to Richards, July 13, 1939.

⁷⁴ Winter to Hinckley, November 2, 1939.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, March 12, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁷ Leland W. Cutlor to Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, December 28, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Stephen H. Winter to Gordon B. Hinckley, December 27, 1939, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁸ Stephen L. Richards to Eugene Hilton, April 12, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Stephen H. Winter to Stephen L. Richards, April 23, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁷⁹ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, January 30, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁰ G.L. Bowe to Stephen L. Richards, January 18, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸¹ Richards to Hilton, April 12, 1940. See also Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Eugene Hilton to Stephen L. Richards (n.d.), correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁴ W. Aird MacDonald to Richards, April 20, 1940, telegram, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940.

⁸⁵ Stephen L. Richards to Stephen H. Winter, April 24, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁸⁶ Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Richards to Hilton, April 12, 1940.

⁸⁹ Richards to Winter, April 24th, 1940.

⁹⁰ Top, "Tabernacle," 190.

⁹¹ Stephen H. Winter to Gordon B. Hinckley, May 7, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹² G. William Richards, Letter to Gordon B. Hinckley, June 27, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹³ Richards to Hilton, April 12, 1940. See also Winter to Richards, April 23, 1940.

⁹⁴ Stephen L. Richards to G. William Richards, June 6, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁵ G. William Richards to Gordon B. Hinckley, May 28th, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁶ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to G. William Richards, October 7, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁷ W. Aird MacDonald to Stephen L. Richards, September 25th, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁸ Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee to W. Aird MacDonald, November 13, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁹⁹ F.M. Sandusky to Stephen L. Richards, October 17, 1940, correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰⁰Top, "Tabernacle," 191.

¹⁰¹ Stephen L. Richards to Elder G. William Richards November 8, 1939, , correspondence, Chairman Files, 1935-1943, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰²Top, "Tabernacle," 205.

¹⁰³ Winter to Hinckley, November 2, 1939.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The previous chapters have addressed three primary questions concerning the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee's work between 1935 and 1942. First, what factors lead to the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee? Second, what were some of the projects the Committee completed and how did they go about producing them? Finally, what was the impact of these projects in terms of the Church's public image and missionary success? The following pages will summarize chapters 1 through 5 and describe the extent to which these questions have been answered. Further areas of research will be offered. Finally, because Gordon B. Hinckley was such an influential figure not only in the creation, but also the day to day functioning of the Committee, this chapter will end with a brief description of the circumstances under which he left the Committee in late 1942.

Summary of Findings

Question 1: what factors lead to the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee? The first chapter addressed this question by providing justification for research about the Committee. Chapter One argued that while there are a few articles or book chapters on the topic, there is generally a paucity of information regarding the Committee, its origins, and the various materials it produced. Understanding the creation and work of the Committee is important because the Church has increasingly used mass media in the form of television, film, radio, websites, and internet applications to spread its message throughout the world. The Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee holds an important place in the history of the Church's use of mass media because it was the first systematic, consistent approach to the production and dissemination of modern mass media.

Having provided a rationale for research concerning the Committee, Chapter Two addressed the first research question. The second chapter first argues that the Committee's responsibility for producing more modern forms of mass media has its roots in the Church's practice of using print media to spread the gospel and defend its doctrines. Since its restoration, the Church has been continually attacked for its beliefs and practices. Arguably the most contentious issue during the latter part of the nineteenth century was the practice of polygamy. During that time period numerous books, newspapers, and pamphlets were produced and distributed in an effort to discredit the Church, its leaders, or its doctrines. The Church in turn put the printed word to work for its own purposes of defending its beliefs, spreading the gospel, and unifying the saints.

The persecution the Church faced for its practice of polygamy began to abate in the United States after 1890. However, there were approximately forty films made about Mormons in the first three decades of the twentieth century, the majority of which portrayed Mormons in a negative light. Many missionaries working in areas where these films were shown found it extremely difficult to tell the story of the Church during this time period, in large part because of the role of anti-Mormon film in reinforcing negative perceptions of members and missionaries. The worst was felt in Europe—and especially in England—where dislike for the Church reached its climax in 1922 with the release of *Trapped by the Mormons*. New forms of mass media, such as film, had a profound negative impact on many people's opinion about the gospel. Unlike its use of print media in years past, the Church was slow to put film to use in its own behalf, and the standard means of preaching and handing out pamphlets was not enough to stem the tide of negativity.

Elder Joseph F. Merrill and Elder Gordon B. Hinckley did more at that time, perhaps, than anyone else to move the Church towards spreading the gospel message through modern mass media. Elder Joseph Merrill, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and President of the European Mission pushed the leaders of the Church in Salt Lake to produce slide shows for missionary work. He believed that such a resource could have a major positive impact on missionary work in Europe. He relied on the talents of a young Elder Hinckley to get his message across. At the end of his mission in 1935, Elder Hinckley was sent back to Utah with the assignment of speaking to the First Presidency about the needs of the Elders in Europe. The second chapter further refutes the notion that the First Presidency formed the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee just a day or two after Gordon B. Hinckley's visit to them in October of 1935. Rather, he spent two months trying to encourage the leaders of the Church to take action on the matter of Church publicity. Letters between Gordon B. Hinckley and Joseph F. Merrill show that his tenacity in continually speaking to various leaders in Salt Lake over the course of two months was a major factor in the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee.

In summary, the immediate context of the creation of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee had to do with the adverse missionary climate in Europe which had been inflamed due to anti Mormon film. However, these initial chapters further show that the creation of the Committee is an important link between the Church's use of mass media in the form of print, and the Church's more current use of modern forms of mass media such as television, film, radio, and the internet.

Question 2: what were some of the projects the Committee completed between 1935 and 1942 and how did they go about producing them? Chapters Three, Four and Five each detail an

innovative project carried out by the Committee having to do with the production of a form of mass media or a publicity event.

Chapter Three outlined the creation of filmstrips as contact lectures for missionaries. Initially, the individual slides were black and white photographs later colored by hand. The presentation of these filmstrips required the missionary to read a prepared script. Over time, however, a method was developed which allowed the pictures to be produced in color, and audio recordings using records replaced the need for missionaries to read the script. The filmstrips themselves dealt less with core doctrinal issues, and focused instead on interesting aspects of the gospel or LDS culture in order to catch the interest of potential investigators.

Radio programming was the focus of Chapter Four, specifically the production of the *Fullness of Times* radio drama series. These dramatizations broke from the norms of music and lecture generally associated with Church sponsored radio programming. This series was also different because a professional production agency from outside of the Church was hired to produce the program. Despite its high cost and almost continual production delays, 39 episodes were completed over the span of about four years. Like the filmstrips, the *Fullness of Times* series was made with non-members as the audience, and even though the content covered important events in Church history, the series was not strictly historical. Instead, the Committee wanted episodes that had drama and would draw the attention of those not of our faith.

Finally, Chapter Five dealt with a project that was more of a publicity event which used mass media—the miniature Tabernacle display at the 1939 International Exposition in San Francisco. This display drew upon the popularity of the Salt Lake Tabernacle as a tourist attraction as well as lessons learned in effective exhibits from previous expositions. Visitors who

came mainly out of interest for this unique structure gave the missionaries who staffed the display the opportunity to share something of the restored gospel.

By examining Chapters Three, Four, and Five, which describe the film, broadcasts, and exhibits produced by the Committee together, two significant themes common to all the projects stand out. First, the Committee desired the highest quality product, demonstrated in several ways. For example, the Committee consistently followed a slow, measured pace in conceptualizing and producing all resources, oftentimes to the consternation of those with whom they worked. Second, if certain aspect of a project could be done appreciably better, the Committee was generally willing to expend more money, effort, and other resources. In the production of the filmstrips, for example, continual improvements were made in terms of the coloring process, the addition of audio tracks, types of slides used, and projector brand. Third, the Committee was also willing to stop production or redo products if it did not meet their high standards of quality. The production of the *Fullness of Times* series is a perfect example of how an episode that was found wanting was redone until it met the Committee's approval.

The second theme is that many of the products did not focus on the core or saving doctrines of the Church. Instead, material was chosen that would improve public relations by appealing to wider audience. Of the seventeen filmstrips created during this period, only a handful dealt with doctrinal issues; the majority of them dealt with interesting facts about Utah or the lifestyle of the Mormon people and leaders. As shown in Chapter Four, the Committee was primarily concerned about drama, or the mechanisms used to hold and keep the listener's interest, and were even open to take liberties with some aspects of Church history in order to keep the interest of listeners. Similarly, Chapter Five has shown that even though the Tabernacle

does not hold an essential role in salvation as the Temple does, it was used as a popular tourist site and later as the central exhibit in the 1939 World's Fair because of the interest it generated.

Therefore, one of the main arguments woven throughout Chapters Three, Four, and Five is that one of the Committee's goals in creating materials was to improve public relations by creating something interesting enough to get a foot in the door. Knowing that they were trying to combat years and even decades of half-truths, myths, and flat out lies about the Church, the Committee had to produce something interesting enough to influence people to want to listen, and high-quality enough that they would continue to learn more about the real substance of the Church.

Question 3: what impact did these projects have in terms of the Church's public image and missionary success? Multiple scholars have noted that the public image of the Church did improve appreciably during the 1930's. Thomas G. Alexander, for example, states that by 1930 "a clear trend was evident" in regards to the improving image of the Church.¹ James Allen and Richard Cowan assert that "although the long-range trend had been toward a more favorable image, it was not until these years [speaking of the 1930's] that it crossed the line from a predominantly negative to a more positive character."² Leonard Arrington also believes that it was during the decade of the 1930's that the image of the Church became generally more positive.³ However, it is difficult to prove that the products and events of the Committee were the primary cause for a better Church image throughout the world. Even scholars, like those mentioned above, have diverse opinions as to what were the main causes of the shift in opinion about the Church.

The disagreement between scholars emphasizes the point that attributing causation to any one primary factor is extremely difficult in any situation, much less events that happened decades ago. The shift in public opinion about the Church was most likely due to multiple causes. It is the argument of this study, based on the evidence provided in chapters three, four, and five, that the work done by the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee was one of the primary contributing factors to the Church's improved image in the 1930's and beyond.

This study further argues that whatever the *actual* impact of the Committee on the Church's image, it is evident that the members of the Committee, numerous missionaries and members of the Church, and ecclesiastical leaders *perceived* there was a large positive effect in terms of good publicity and missionary work. Chapter Three, for example, shows that there is a common theme in letters from missionaries and mission presidents to the Committee that the filmstrips were the most effective tool they had in making contacts. Similarly, Chapter Four demonstrates that multiple stake and ward leaders in the western United States extolled the value of the *Fullness of Times* series in approaching less active families, engaging youth and young adults in Church history, and doing missionary work. Chapter Five indicates that the numbers of programs completed, counts of people who attended, and pamphlets distributed, were quantitative indicators of the impact of the miniature Tabernacle display. A final indication that Committee members and Church leaders felt that the filmstrips, broadcasts, and exhibits were having a positive effect is manifest in their willingness to expend considerable money during the Great Depression for the creation and production of these resources.

Suggestions for Future Research

Although this work contributes to general knowledge in regards to the creation, projects, and impact of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee, there are some issues to consider in regards to areas of future research. First, the issue of the impact of the Committee's projects on the image of the Church, while touched on, was not the main focus of this study. The primary sources used to answer the question of impact are derived directly from records kept by the Committee. As such, much more could be done to further understand both the Committee's immediate impact on the image of the Church by searching more broadly for other accounts such as diaries and letters from missionaries who served in the miniature Tabernacle, investigators who viewed the slide-shows, heard the radio programs, or attended Church exhibits. A broader search may also allow for a negative case analysis where individuals may have thought something else was a better missionary tool, or even those who did not care for the resources provided by the Committee.

Second, one argument of this study is that the work of the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee is an important link between the publicity efforts of the newly restored Church and the publicity efforts of today's world-wide Church. The impact of the Committee could also be explored by examining the effect of the trends in mass media started by the Committee in the 1930's to the Church's publicity efforts in the decades to follow. To what extent do the Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee's efforts, philosophies, and approaches to publicity carry over to the publicity efforts today in television, radio, film, and the internet?

Finally, of all of the publicity efforts started by or improved by the Committee, film strips as a form of spreading the gospel continues to be the least researched, despite being one of the most effective methods of opening doors in missionary work at that time. Much more work needs to be done concerning how they were used, how often, and how the filmstrips themselves, or their use changed over the course of the decades of the 50's 60's and 70's.

Gordon B. Hinckley Leaves the Committee

Because Hinckley was such a seminal figure in both the creation and functioning of the Committee, this work focuses on the seven years in which he was employed there. This seemed to be the most sensible place to delimit the years for analysis due to the fact that he was a seminal figure in the creation and functioning of the Committee. It is fitting that a brief description of the circumstances under which he left serve as a bookend to this study.

Working as the Executive Secretary of a committee alongside six of the twelve apostles was a demanding job. At times, the strain wore at Hinckley, and he lamented that “One day I am working on a radio program, another on a film script, the next on photographic details, the next on record pressings and trying to find out why the copper on the stampers is brittle or low pressure shows up in the records, and on another day it’s a book manuscript I have been assigned to read or a pamphlet to prepare. In between is the business—correspondences, accounts, our budget and scores of other things. It’s all very interesting, but at times discouraging and full of the sort of worry that keeps me down to less than 140 pounds.”⁴ But it was not the high demands of the job that took him away from the Committee; despite the load, it was precisely the challenge of getting it all done that not only worried, but fueled him. He stated that if nothing else, “there is one thing this job has, and that is variety.”⁵

He also had doubts about his abilities in performing the job in a satisfactory manner, wondering if “I’m doing the wrong kind of work, that I’m not doing justice to the job or the cause because of lack of ability and inclination.”⁶ He complained that despite the variety of the job, he would “sometimes get awfully weary of swivel chair and desk work, and long for a siege of overalls and tools.”⁷ While he had his doubts about his desire or capacity to do the work the Committee required of him during those seven years, it was the United States involvement in World War II beginning in 1941 which prompted him to seriously search for other employment.

As the war continued on into 1942, he began to wonder if working for the Committee was the best contribution he could be making to his country in a time when others were sacrificing so much. Subsequently, he searched for ways in which he could contribute to the war effort. At the time he was 33 years old, still “young enough to be inducted.”⁸ The life of a soldier or sailor was not in the cards for him, however. Rejected by the armed services for active duty due to his allergies, he began looking for jobs that would benefit the nation in its time of need.

The opportunity to serve his country presented itself in the form of moving supplies by rail. Early in 1943, he was hired by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Company as an assistant station master.⁹ Leaving Church employment was bitter sweet for Hinckley. Although the Committee continued on under the leadership of Elder Stephen L. Richards and five other apostles, it was Hinckley who had for seven years carried on the lion’s share of the day to day work; there can be little doubt that his contributions to the work of the Committee would be sorely missed.¹⁰ Despite his desire to have a more physically active job, his feelings of inadequacy in performing his responsibilities for the Committee, or the pull to contribute to the war effort, he understood the preeminence of the Gospel message. In this concluding passage,

written as he contemplated leaving the Committee, Hinckley shares his insights into the solution for the ills of a world in turmoil, and the part he had to play in providing that solution:

...in spite of all these daydreamings I come back to the reality that what the world needs more today than anything else is spiritual stabilizations; and the eternal truth that I have tried to put into some of these scripts that men and nations can find peace only in the gospel of Christ. To win the war we need math and chemistry, bones and sinew, but to win the peace we need “a broken heart and a contrite spirit.” We need the equality of the Atlantic Charter, but we need more urgently the equality that comes from a knowledge that we are all sons and daughters of God in a very literal sense and are therefore brothers and sisters. There is no gainsaying we need the bravery of Bataan, but we need the also the courage of righteous conviction. Perhaps if I can use what strength and ability I have to promote these things I shall have made some small contribution to the world’s good.¹¹

¹ Thomas G. Alexander. *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints 1890-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 256.

² James B. Allen, Richard O. Cowan, *Mormonism in the Twentieth Century* (Brigham Young University Press, Provo, 1964), 66.

³ Arrington, "Mormonism," 150 (see chap. 2, n. 20).

⁴ Gordon B. Hinckley to George Logan Price, June 25, 1942, correspondence, Executive Secretary files, 1935-1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Dew, *Go Forward*, 125 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

¹⁰ Dew, *Go Forward*, 134-135. Gordon B. Hinckley was given multiple offers to return to work at the Church before accepting his position as Executive secretary of the Committee after the end of the war.

¹¹ Hinckley to Price, June 25, 1942.

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