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The Box Elder Stake Academy in its Historical Setting

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THE BOX ELDER STAKE ACADEMY IN ITS
HISTORICAL SETTING

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Church History and Doctrine

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

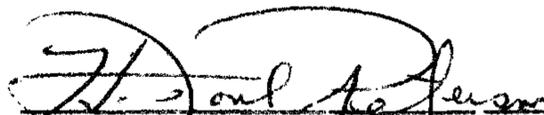
Master of Religious Education

by

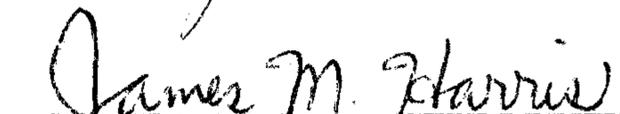
Byron L. Parkinson

April 1973

This thesis, by Byron L. Parkinson, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Church History and Doctrine of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Religious Education.


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Chapter 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A study of the Box Elder Stake Academy gives an excellent opportunity to feel the pulse of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the front lines of the defense against the "crusade to end Mormon rule in Utah." The academy was considered as an inspired, if not a divine, institution created under the inspiration of a prophet of God. Those associated with the academy were deeply involved with the challenges to the educational programs of the Latter-day Saint Church.

Box Elder County has a peculiar historical record. Under the direction of Lorenzo Snow, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, the county overcame great difficulties to flourish and grow. The Brigham City Co-operative was formed in 1865 under Brother Snow's leadership. This form of the "United Order" established a closeness among Church members and a unity of purpose in the community. Buildings belonging to the Brigham City Co-operative were used to house the Box Elder Stake Academy.

Brigham City was on the front line of political and religious confrontation. Box Elder County had a large gentile population.

Corinne, located just seven miles from Brigham City, was referred to as the "gentile" city by the Mormons and as the first "Christian" city in Utah according to the non-Mormons. The Utah Daily, published in Corinne, often gave voice to anti-Mormon feelings. The Liberal Party was formed in 1870 in Corinne. This political party became the rallying point for opposition to the Latter-day Saint Church-sponsored People's Party.

The Edmunds-Tucker Bill of 1887 had annulled and disincorporated the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Church property had been escheated and a test oath was required of all voters. "The crusade to end Mormon rule in Utah" was also applying pressure to limit Latter-day Saint influence in the educational programs of Utah Territory. Mission schools in Utah were being established by "Christian" churches with the express purpose of converting Mormon youth to "Christianity." The Latter-day Saint Church system of academies was part of the answer to the gentile mission schools.

The territorial government of Utah was directed by federal appointees: the governor, five commissioners, and the federal judges were appointed by the President of the United States. The majority of these officers were unpopular with most of the people of the territory. Among the objections to statehood for Utah was the fear that the Latter-day Saint Church would control the elections. The legislature of 1892 outlawed tax support for the Church-sponsored

education programs in an attempt to reassure the national congress that Utahns were politically mature and not dominated by the Church. John D. Peters, secretary of the Box Elder Stake Board of Education, an instructor at the Box Elder Academy, and an elected legislator from Box Elder County, was co-sponsor of this legislation. The Honorable Mr. Peters was the chairman of the powerful legislative committee on education in 1892 and in 1894, and was one of the founding fathers of the Utah Constitution.

Justification of the Problem

The Box Elder Stake Academy in its historical setting is unique. Records kept by the academy, along with stake records and records kept in the community, gave an excellent opportunity to study the activities of those associated with this part of the Church education program as they fought for acceptance, excellence, and then for the survival of the institution. The academy was the first form of higher education in Box Elder County. Experience gained in the academy contributed to the high school system of education in Utah. John D. Peters as a legislator was influenced by his experience in the academy and was influential in educational programs of the State of Utah.

Delimitations

This study focused upon items directly or indirectly related

to the Box Elder Stake Academy. The history of Box Elder County was given to the extent that it sets the stage for the academy. Programs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and political issues were examined as they relate to education.

Sources of Data

Newspaper articles, historical records of the Box Elder Stake Academy, official statements by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on education, private journals, letters, reminiscences, histories, and private interviews have been used. Libraries of Brigham Young University, Utah State Historical Society, LDS Church Historian's Office, and Brigham Carnegie Library were used.

Definition of Terms

The Church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, sometimes referred to as the Latter-day Saint Church, L. D. S. Church, or Mormon Church.

Ward. The basic ecclesiastical unit in and through which the programs of the Church are administered, presided over by a bishop and two counselors.

Stake. An administrative division composed of several wards in a specific geographic area and presided over by a president

and two counselors.

Gentile. A person who was not a baptized member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Academy. A Latter-day Saint Church-sponsored school which provided for the secular and religious training of the youth.

Mission schools. Schools established by non-L. D. S. Christian churches for the purpose of teaching their own children as well as attempting to teach the Mormon children in order to rescue them from Mormon indoctrination.

Saint. A member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Opposition. Those persons who were associated with the Liberal Party of Utah.

Liberal Party. A political party formed in Corinne, Utah on July 16, 1870.

Law of consecration. A program wherein a person consecrated his time, talents, strength and personal possessions to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the establishment of the Lord's work.

United Order. The legal organization such as the Brigham City Co-operative Association through which the Saints attempted to live the law of consecration.

Mormon. A nickname for the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Elder. A title given to holders of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Co-op. Refers to the Brigham City Co-operative Association or as it was later incorporated under the name Brigham City Mercantile and Manufacturing Association.

Polysophical society. An intellectual organization where students developed their skills in many cultural and intellectual areas.

First Presidency. The President of the Church and his counselors who hold supreme directing power and authority over the Church.

Apostle. A member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles chosen to be a special witness for Christ and to administer to the affairs of the Church.

Sketches. A segment or unit of material in an academic setting.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Building of a Mormon Community

Box Elder County was first settled in March of 1851 by William Davis, James Brooks, and Thomas Pierce. Several other families arrived later the same year. The report at the October Conference of 1853 listed 204 members of the Church living on Box Elder Creek.¹

During the October Conference of 1853, Lorenzo Snow was called to settle and preside over the Box Elder area. Elder Snow was to select fifty families to make permanent settlement in this area. Nearly all these families arrived during the spring of 1854.²

Upon his arrival Elder Snow gave the following description of the conditions existing:

When I arrived in Box Elder County, I found the location where Brigham City now flourishes in a very unprosperous condition. Whether its change from a primitive state should be called improvement, e. g. whether it was better or worse for

¹Thelma Kotter, Through the Years in Brigham City, comp. LDS Eighth Ward (Brigham City, Utah: Eighth LDS Ward, 1953), p. 8.

²Thomas C. Romney, The Life of Lorenzo Snow (Salt Lake City: Sugarhouse Press, 1955), p. 151.

what had been done on the premises would puzzle an antiquarian. Even the big meeting house, with its ground floor and earth roof was more extensively patronized as a receptacle for bed bugs than for the assemblage of Saints.³

Because of the scarcity of water and good land in the Box Elder area, the first settlers had claimed these resources as personal property, leaving those who arrived later little chance to own land that would provide a comfortable existence.⁴

The leadership qualities of Lorenzo Snow were displayed when he invited all members of the community to a special meeting at which the law of consecration, as it related to property, was expounded. Upon the conclusion of his sermon, President Snow proposed that land and water should not be sold for its true value but for what the purchaser could afford to pay. Two weeks were given for the Saints to consider the proposal, at the end of which time many responded generously.⁵

This theme of consecration was characteristic of Lorenzo Snow's administration and counsel. It was upon this theme and under his direction that a form of the United Order was established in Brigham City.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., p. 153.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 154-155.

United Order in Brigham City

The Brigham City Co-operative Association, commonly referred to as the Co-op, was established and began to function in the year 1865. It began with four stockholders: Lorenzo Snow, Samuel Smith, Alvin Nichols, and Wm. C. Thomas. These men had a combined capital of about three thousand dollars.⁶ Community members were given the opportunity to take stock in this organization by either cash purchase or by services performed for the Co-op. The number of stockholders had increased to over two hundred the first five years, and the capital had increased to twenty thousand dollars. The operation was limited to the mercantile business in the beginning. Dividends were paid in merchandise at the selling rate; these dividends had averaged about 25 per cent per annum.⁷

Lorenzo Snow, in a letter to Bishop Lunt of Cedar City, explained that this growth was accomplished by "uniting the interests and feelings of the people and securing their patronage."⁸ He went on to explain that it had not been easy for the people to give up their capitalistic feelings.

⁶Ibid., p. 287.

⁷Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, History of Box Elder County 1851-1937 (Salt Lake City: Paragon Printing Co., n.d.), p. 106.

⁸Edward W. Tullidge (ed.), Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine, II (Salt Lake City: Star Printing, 1883), 401.

It required some effort on the part of the stockholders to reconcile their feelings with a knowledge of their duty and obligations as elders of Israel and servants of God. A good spirit, however, prevailed, and a desire to build up the Kingdom of God and work for the interest of the people outweighed all selfish considerations.⁹

The Co-op directors were able to secure enough capital by gaining the support of the people to expand into manufacturing, mining, and other pursuits. By act of the territorial legislature in February of 1870, the Co-op was incorporated under the name of Brigham City Mercantile and Manufacturing Association.¹⁰ Expansion continued with the building of a tannery. The building was described as follows:

. . . two stories, 45 x 80, with modern improvements and conveniences, at a cost of \$10,000. Most of the materials, mason and carpenters work, were furnished as capital stock, by such persons as were able and desired an interest in our institution. . . . we gained by this measure additional capital as well as twenty or thirty new stockholders, without encroaching much on anyone's property or business.¹¹

Additional business and membership in the Co-op provided better use of the products produced, as related: "We soon after connected a butcher shop and a boot and shoe shop with this department, and have kept nearly a dozen shoemakers constantly employed."¹²

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Romney, pp. 287-288.

¹¹Tullidge, p. 401.

¹²Daughters of Utah Pioneers, p. 106.

They next established a woolen factory, the building and machinery costing forty thousand dollars. Here again the people were given the opportunity to work for capital stock.¹³

The Co-op began moving more into agriculture by establishing a dairy at what is now Beaver Dam in Box Elder County, Utah. The milk and cheese as well as the hogs raised on this farm were sold at the Co-op butcher shop. The dairy soon increased until there were five hundred cattle. A horn stock herd of one thousand head was added along with an increase in the sheep herd to include over five thousand head. Other additions included a saw mill; also a cotton farm in the southern part of the state.¹⁴ Lorenzo Snow stated the complexity of the Co-op in 1875:

Our association now comprises between thirty and forty industrial branches--a superintendent over each, who is responsible to the general superintendent for its proper and judicious management.¹⁵

The Co-op expanded to include almost all phases of life, until in 1877

Lorenzo Snow reported to Brigham Young that:

Over one thousand persons, little and big are depending entirely upon the Institution for all their supplies, for food, their clothing, and all their comforts and conveniences. Over one thousand more living in our City are more or less dependent upon this Institution because in its progress it has gradually

¹³Ibid., pp. 106-107.

¹⁴Tullidge, p. 402.

¹⁵Romney, p. 294.

monopolized and gathered to itself all the main arteries and channels of business. . . .¹⁶

The purpose of the Co-op was described by Lorenzo Snow in 1875 when he said: "We aim to furnish every person employment, wishing to work, and pay as high wages as possible--mostly in home products."¹⁷ An example of the Co-op employment is found in an account from Bear River City:

Most of the young people of the community, at some time in their early youth, have been employed at the Co-op farm. Their salaries ranged from fifty cents to one dollar per day, for which they received part scrip and part store pay. Scrip [sic] was an order for merchandise from the storehouse or tithing office, or was used for currency. Store pay was a coupon which might be exchanged for merchandise at any Co-op store at Bear River City, Brigham City, or elsewhere.

The boys and perhaps girls, employed on the Co-op farm were regarded as one large family receiving instructions at various lines most essential to men and women of pioneer life. No recommendations or references were required, no maximum or minimum hours, no wage scale or previous experience was necessary, and if they had not been trained at home, they would be here. The boys in the agriculture, the girls in knitting, weaving, carding and spinning. The girls were taught to cook, bake, preserve, and dry fruits and vegetables. They were also taught to milk cows, churn butter, make cheese, wash and iron, sew, and make soap. They helped with the farmwork, such as binding grain, shearing sheep, hoeing corn, etc.¹⁸

Lorenzo Snow set the example for all the people in the way

¹⁶Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 332.

¹⁷Romney, pp. 294-295.

¹⁸Lucinda P. Jensen, History of Bear River City (Box Elder County Journal Press, 1947), p. 60.

he conducted his responsibilities in the Co-op.

I superintend all the departments and am responsible to the directors and make to them my report from time to time during the year. . . . I receive no pay nor favors in any way or shape, not for conscience sake, but for example in the presence of any grumblers and complainers and grabbers who are independent in their feelings and speech.¹⁹

Brigham Young was very much impressed with the manner in which the Brigham City Co-op was functioning. "Brother Snow," he said, "has led the people along, and got them into the United Order without them knowing it."²⁰

Lorenzo Snow gave credit for the ideas established in the Co-op to the teachings of Brigham Young, as he explained to President Young:

The objective of this co-operation is not so much for the purpose of creating large dividends, as it is that the people may obtain easily what their necessities demand, and in this respect become self-sustaining, and rendered independent of foreign importations, according to your earnest teachings.²¹

The goals and advantages of the Co-op mentioned were accompanied by less tangible results. Those who lived under its influence developed character and a sense of brotherhood by working together for common goals. The Co-op provided religious instruction, vocational training and social recreation for the youth. President

¹⁹Romney, p. 297.

²⁰Arrington, p. 326.

²¹Daughters of Utah Pioneers, p. 108.

Snow stated:

Many of our young men and boys are now learning trades; their parents being highly pleased with their being furnished employment at home rather than going abroad, subject to contracting bad habits and morals.

We have erected a very elegant building, two stories, 32 x 63 feet, the upper part devoted to a seminary and the lower occupied as a dancing hall.

I have considered it of the highest importance to the interest of our community to provide for and encourage suitable diversions and amusements.²²

Lorenzo Snow was successful in developing a great social order, even at a time when the nation was in a depression. "When the panic of 1873 struck Utah, Brigham City was left almost untouched, experiencing in that year its greatest expansion."²³ The Co-op was given much public exposure through the newspapers at this time; social reformers such as Edward Bellamy and Bronterre O'Brien came to visit Brigham City and write about the things they saw. Edward Tullidge, in 1878, wrote the following about the United Order in Brigham City:

The chief historical interest of Box Elder County centers [sic] in Brigham City. Indeed to the mind of the sociologist this communistic city would afford a rare social study worthy of the attention of a Robert Owen, a John Stuart Mill or a Herbert Spencer. Were its record sufficiently presented to this class of minds in Europe, Brigham City would become famous in their writings and sociological examples, and Lorenzo Snow would be ranked by them as one of the world's distinguished social reformers.²⁴

²²Tullidge, p. 402.

²³Arrington, p. 325.

²⁴Tullidge, p. 400.

The success of the Brigham City Cooperative was further expressed:

Generations hence when its illustrious founder shall be sleeping with the fathers, Brigham City will be a unique interesting subject for the study of the sociologist and the review of the historian. It will stand as an example of a city that grew up on a pure co-operative plan; it will prove that socialistic commonwealths are possible and it will historically perpetuate to the Latter-day Saints themselves the social Gospel of the United Order that the Prophet Joseph Smith revealed as the basis of a Millennial society. Truly is Brigham City a great social monument in the age; its apostolic founder is worthy of immortality for the social problems that he has solved for our Latter-day Zion, and the people who have so nobly wrought with him are worthy of remembrance in the pages of history.²⁵

Gentile Influences

Gentile influence was felt in Utah even before the coming of the railroad, as Whitney states in his history:

Keen eyed strangers within our gates were not slow to detect the openings and opportunities for accumulating wealth; . . . it is probable that quite half the merchants of Salt Lake City were non-Mormons.²⁶

The growth of gentile influences in commercial enterprises did not go unnoticed by Brigham Young. The temporal and spiritual welfare were inseparable in the eyes of the Church leaders, and in the October Conference of 1868 a resolution was unanimously adopted,

²⁵Ibid., p. 407.

²⁶Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah, II (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., Publishers, January 1898), 278.

pledging the people to be self-sustaining. The interpretation, according to Brigham Young's discourse at the time, was that "a Latter-day Saint should not trade with an outsider."²⁷

The result of this resolution was of no little consequence and did much to discourage and in many cases cause the failure of business among the gentile merchants. J. H. Beadle wrote:

It was amusing and provoking to take a walk along Main Street that winter, and see the melancholy Jews standing in the doors of their stores looking in vain for customers. For six months the ten Gentile firms did not sell one-twentieth the usual amount of goods; their disgust was beyond expression, and their curses against Brigham not loud but deep.²⁸

Many merchants throughout Utah were forced to leave business and seek opportunity elsewhere. Corinne offered an exciting business prospect, and Utah businessmen were among the founders of this city.

Corinne

The gentile influence was felt in Box Elder County with the coming of the railroad. Corinne townsite, a plot three miles square, was laid out March 25, 1869. An auction was held in the same month and lots were sold, some for as high as one thousand dollars each. Two weeks after the boom struck, the town had three hundred houses and tents, fifteen hundred people had settled, and a city had been born.

²⁷Ibid., p. 279.

²⁸J. H. Beadle, The Undeveloped West or Five Years in the Territories (Philadelphia, Pa.: National Publishing Co., 1873), pp. 116-7.

Corinne claimed the title of the first gentile city in Utah.

The citizens of Corinne, surrounded by Mormons involved in living the United Order, were not always made to feel welcome.

Persecutions in the East had forced the Mormons to the foremost desert reaches where they settled a formidable land, one which many thought unfit for human habitation. Here they worked to establish a social order which would insure peace, prosperity, and equality for all the Church members. The railroad brought an element of wild and woolly camp followers, described by Alex Topance:

On April and May of 1869, Corinne and Blue Creek were pretty lively places. At the latter place was a big construction camp, generally known as "Dead Fall" and spoken of by some as "Hell's Half Acre."

It seemed for a while as if all the toughs in the west had gathered there. Every form of vice was in evidence. Drunkenness and gambling were the mildest things they did. It was not uncommon for two or three men to be shot or knifed in a night.

Back in Corinne, the "Burg on the Bear" it was every bit as bad. I saw there a tent 150 feet long and 50 feet wide, crowded with gambling tables around which hundreds of men swarmed day and night betting their money on every imaginable kind of game, including Mexican Monte and Chinese Fan Tan.

This tent had followed the construction gangs on the Union Pacific nearly all the way from Omaha. I had seen it, or one like it, at Beartown, near Evanston, Wyoming.

When the Golden Spike was driven the construction work stopped and the camp on Blue Creek disappeared and there was no trace of it in a few weeks. But Corinne survived. The boomers picked on it as the coming town and it had a fairly stable population of 1500 to 2000 for a year or two.²⁹

²⁹Alexander Toponce, Reminiscences of Alexander Toponce, Pioneer--1839-1923. Published by Mrs. Katie Toponce, Ogden, Utah, 1923 (Salt Lake City: Century Printing Co.), p. 13.

The Saints felt this gentile element was a threat to the moral fiber of the territory, and some effort was made to keep its influence out.

The Daily Reporter, a weekly publication in Salt Lake City, moved to Corinne and started publication on April 9, 1869. J. H. Beadle, editor, wrote in his first edition:

Our advice to persons who contemplate fleeing from the tyranny of the Mormon leaders is to go to the new town of Corinne, where they will find entire freedom, religious and political. The surest way to break up the despotism prevailing in Utah is to build up such a town as Corinne.³⁰

The role played by this newspaper was not a pleasant one as far as the Mormons were concerned. Many times its pages were used in the expression of editorial warfare against the Saints, as related by W. F. Rae:

. . . in Corinne a most vigorous and unrelenting warfare against the saints is waged by Mr. J. H. Beadle, the editor of the Utah Daily Reporter. . . . In a leading article, the Mormons in authority are likened to "men who would rob their grandmothers of their spectacles and sell their frames for silver." The principal saints whom the mass of the 'ignorant' [quotation added by Author] people almost worship, are represented as "a lot of New England Yankees out on speculation with not the least speck of moral or honest sentiment in their whole compositions. They are out here lording it over a lot of foreign converts who are here made peasants and slaves to these Yankee masters. With such men to obtain absolute sway over an ignorant and bigoted people, can we expect anything else than that these

³⁰J. Cecil Alter, Early Utah Journalism (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, Inc., 1938), pp. 334-335, citing J. H. Beadle, ed., The Daily Reporter [Corinne], April 9, 1869.

leaders should be what they are--crafty swindlers and licentious monsters?"³¹

A spirit of antagonism and misunderstanding developed between the Saints and the gentiles. Conditions made confrontation almost inevitable, as expressed in the following Masonic paper:

Even a slight acquaintance with the local situation as it existed in the '60's and '70's must convince anyone that conditions were such as to preclude any real understanding, or friendly cooperation, between Mormon and Gentile. The differences which raised insuperable barriers between the Latter-day Saints and all others were fundamental, and were rooted in the tenets of the Mormon religion. Various aspects of the things which made for division and strife appeared in the relations of these two groups. On the one hand, for example, were the Saints, stressing, in season and out the distinctive features of their faith and practice: claiming for their institution an immeasurable superiority over all others: refusing to abate, by so much as one iota, demands based upon that assumed superiority; insisting on conformity to one standard, and arrogating to themselves the authority and right, to cast out, into outer darkness, all who deviated therefrom, or questioned their perogatives.³²

The expression of this point of view by the gentiles and the seeming lack of acceptance by the Saints, caused a polarization of opinion, and at times this led to confrontation.

The freighters from Corinne to points north by wagon became a nuisance to the Mormon population in Bear River City. The drivers

³¹Ray M. Reeder, History of the Founding, Rise and Decline of Corinne, Utah (unpublished Thesis, Utah State Agriculture College, 1939), p. 36, citing W. F. Rae, Westward by Rail (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1870), pp. 182-184.

³²S. H. Goodwin & Committee, Freemasonry in Utah, Education Bulletin, No. 6 (Committee on Masonic Education and Instruction, Grand Lodge of Utah, F. & A. M., 1926), pp. 5-6.

called their oxen, horses, or mules such names as Brigham Young or Joseph Smith. They took great pleasure in swearing violently at them as they passed by the Mormon population. The Mormons called a meeting in Bear River City to remedy the situation. A ditch was dug across the road next to the Malad River bridge to cause a detour around Bear River City. The morning after the ditch was dug the first freighter returned to Corinne. When next seen he was accompanied by officers of the law with a warrant for the arrest of anyone who had helped to "obstruct a public highway." Some of the guilty were taken to Corinne and spent considerable time in jail.³³

Political Parties

Prior to the coming of the railroad, political parties had not yet made their influence felt in the territory. The Church population, almost without exception, claimed allegiance to the Church-sponsored People's Party. The building of the railroad brought to Corinne a gentile population concentrated enough in one place to unite in opposition to the Church-sponsored politics.³⁴

Early in the year of 1870 a meeting was held by the opposition in the Masonic Hall in Salt Lake; a slate of candidates were selected to oppose the "People's Ticket," and plans were made to hold a

³³Jensen, pp. 64-65.

³⁴Goodwin & Committee, pp. 14-15.

political convention at Corinne. The leaders of this political movement were aware of the uphill fight they would have but hoped to gain political control of Box Elder County. The convention was scheduled for July 16, 1870. The convention was held in Corinne and at this political rally, the Liberal political party of Utah was formed.

The Liberal Party of Utah became the rallying point for opposition to Church power. One of its forceful members was R. N. Baskin. In his letter of acceptance of nomination as delegate to congress he wrote:

In common with the Liberal Party I desire the establishment of the supremacy of law, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of action in Utah as it exists in other states and territories of the Union; the enactment of an election law which will insure honest elections and enable every man, however poor or dependent he may be, to go to the polls and freely deposit his ballot for whomsoever he may choose, without the fear of infliction of ecclesiastical penalties; to establish a system under which every one may freely and fully exercise his own individuality, choose his own business, political and social relations, without the consent of any bigoted Apostle, Bishop, or Teacher. A system under which every man will have an equal chance by personal worth or merit of honest effort to attain the highest social, political, and business advancement without having to lay his manhood down at the foot of the Priesthood, or kiss the great toe of some pretended Prophet. A system under which the people and not the Church, may freely choose their own rulers, and religious bigotry cease to be an essential requisite to the attainment of office or business monopolies and Church aristocracy, restore the natural law of trade, and social intercourse and allow without question every man to manage his own affairs, hold the title to his own property and run the course of life without weight upon his shoulders.³⁵

³⁵R. N. Baskin, Reminiscences of Early Utah (Salt Lake City: R. N. Baskin, 1914), pp. 25-26.

The opinions expressed by Mr. Baskin may not have been shared by all members of his party but the tone of his campaign did little to bring solutions to the problems that existed. The Liberal Party went about their business of political revolution in Utah with missionary zeal. Part of this zeal was directed at the economic system which held the Saints together and kept the gentiles from being assimilated into the economic society.

Many of the gentiles who came to Box Elder County wanted to stay. They looked around the county for economical opportunities and saw on every hand the influence of the United Order. This to them was a form of servitude, not feeling the spirit of the law as experienced by the enthusiastic members of the Order. They saw the Church leaders not as servants of the Lord, as they were told by dedicated members, but as dictators and land grabbers.

Men from Corinne decided upon an irrigation project for their land and sent a memorial to congress to request water rights on the Bear River. They stated the following about Corinne in this memorial:

It is the only place where a truly American community can be brought into permanent and successful contact with the Mormon population whose feet have trodden, and who hold in their relentless grasp, every other valley in Utah. . . . This supremacy over the soil has been acquired in part by terrorism and force, but mainly by special grants from the Mormon Legislature, in palpable conflict with the organic act,

and all the laws of Congress pertaining to the public domain.³⁶

This memorial and the active opposition in Corinne made Box Elder County a front line in the battle between the Church and the gentiles. This battle raged through the seventies, with bitter polarization taking place. The memorial to congress was not successful in getting water rights, and Corinne declined in population. Her citizens moved to Salt Lake City, Ogden, and other areas usually in the Utah territory where they continued in their opposition to the "theocratic dictatorship" of the Church.

Problems with the Co-op

The peak years for the Brigham City Mercantile Cooperation were experienced at the same time that Corinne was declining and the panic of 1873 had caused the failure of many banks and businesses in the United States. The Deseret News in September of 1876 related the following information about the Co-op:

. . . Brigham City, the capital of Box Elder County, Utah, a Mormon community at that, should be steadily and successfully demonstrating the feasibility of uniting the industries of a whole community, and resolving them into a commonwealth. The problem has been committed into the hands of that prudent and wise gentleman, Elder Lorenzo Snow, who in connection with others, has formed a nucleus of home industries which bids defiance to the fluctuations of trade, or commercial depressions.

A visit to the various departments of this institution will at once convince a person that is not blind to apparent facts, how a

³⁶Goodwin & Committee, pp. 9-10.

community can control their own industries, and live independent of commercial disasters. . . . The capital stock of the institution exceeds one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, subscribed by the citizens of the place.

The product for the last year ending amounted to over one quarter of a million dollars. Thirty thousand dollars of this product was turned into cash, then into merchandise and other materials for the benefit of the business and employees. Liberal wages are allowed the operatives who are engaged by the day or work by the piece, and receive their pay in the products of the institution, including one-sixth store pay, or can have a house built for them, if they require it, and have the cost cancelled by exchange account. If an employee be a stockholder, he or she receives a yearly dividend which has never been less than nine, and as high as fifteen per cent.³⁷

A fire of unknown origin broke out in the Co-op woolen factory during the night of December 21, 1877. The loss from this fire made it necessary to replace both the factory and the equipment. The replacement was completed by July 4, 1878. A contract to pay the expense of replacing the woolen factory was obtained by the Co-op. This contract was to supply ties and other lumber products for the railroad being built into Idaho. A saw mill was purchased in Marsh Valley, Idaho, near the supply of timber. One hundred men from the Co-op moved to Marsh Valley and began the work of supplying the lumber to the Utah and Northern Railroad.³⁸ Everything was going very smoothly for several months when without warning " . . . proceedings were instituted by a grand jury in collusion with an unprincipled judge,

³⁷Daughters of Utah Pioneers, pp. 114-115, citing Editor, Deseret News, Church News [Salt Lake City], November 20, 1876.

³⁸Tullidge, p. 404.

a Methodist minister, against the Brigham City company."³⁹ These charges proved to be unfounded, but caused the arrest of fifty-three men, the loss of the contract, the loss of the saw mill, and the end to the project.

This project expense and frustration, along with the expense to replace the woolen mill, caused great concern. Forces seemed to be at work to destroy the Co-op. The United States Collector of Internal Revenue levied a penalty tax of \$10,200 in July of 1878 on the circulation medium of the Brigham City Co-op.⁴⁰

The entire year of 1878 was a bad one for the crops also. A drought caused an estimated three thousand dollars loss, and a grasshopper attack on the crops caused an estimated damage of four thousand dollars. There was a total loss of \$53,200 in the short space of nine months.⁴¹

The problems facing the Co-op were outlined in a letter to President F. D. Richards, in which the alternatives were expressed and the future plans of the Co-op were discussed:

We were compelled to raise within eighteen months, \$30,000 independent of the \$45,000 required during the same time to carry on our home industries.

There appeared now but one course left for us to pursue, viz: curtail our business, close several of our departments,

³⁹Romney, p. 306.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 307.

⁴¹Tullidge, p. 404.

lessen the business in others, and dispose of such property as will assist in discharging our cash obligations; thus using every exertion to outlive our misfortunes and save ourselves from being totally wrecked.⁴²

When the departments of the Co-op were closed down, in many cases the department managers took over the machinery and operated the business themselves. The good days for the Co-op were gone; the political situation, as well as the economical obstacles and the coming of "civilization" to the territory, caused the downfall of the Brigham City Cooperative. In November of 1895, with liabilities of \$75,000 and assets of \$100,000, the Co-op went into a receivership.⁴³

It is hard to measure the influence exerted by the Brigham City Cooperative on Box Elder County, but with its decline and termination, many were disappointed. The closeness of the community and the brotherhood experienced by those who felt the spirit of the United Order dwindled with the combined forces of "progress" which brought the end to this era.

⁴²Ibid., p. 404.

⁴³Kotter, p. 10.

Chapter 3

EDUCATION PRIOR TO THE ACADEMY

Pioneer Education

The territory of Utah was settled by a people who shared a common belief of religion, thought, and practice. Common ideals existed in the population, as did common goals for education. There were few conflicting ideas or philosophies. Before the pioneers came to Utah they had proven to their own satisfaction that the teachings of the Church were worthy of sacrifice.

Church leaders and political leaders were often the same persons; the governor of the territory and the President of the Church was the same person. Callings were given to certain individuals to establish and preside over certain areas. Responsibility for education was given to the bishops of the wards. "The Mormons had no difficulty in pursuing their educational objectives in all their educational institutions during the early years in Utah."¹ Brigham Young, referring to education, stated:

¹M. Lynn Bennion, Mormonism and Education (Salt Lake City: Department of Education of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1939), p. 126.

I ask all the nations of Christendom, if they can produce a people considering all the circumstance, who are better educated in all the branches of learning than this people, as a people.²

It was not easy in pioneer conditions to build schools and provide teachers for all children, but in Brigham City this was done the same year it was settled.

The first school in Brigham City started the very year it was settled, in 1851. Henry Evans was the teacher. He went from home to home in the old fort and taught the children to read, write, and figure. He was paid in anything usable, food, clothing, etc.

In 1854 a long log school house was erected just outside the fort. If it were standing today it would be about in the middle of the street east of the (LDS) third ward chapel. George Bromwell taught in this building and was followed by Jonathan C. Wright.

William L. Watkins, Brigham City's fourth teacher, was called by President Lorenzo Snow to teach in Brigham City. From 1851 to 1854 anyone who wished to teach school could do so. They were paid in anything they could use at the rate of \$1.00 per pupil for beginners to \$3.00 for fifth grade pupils per term. A term was two or three months. The subjects taught were reading, writing, and arithmetic and for the girls, sewing. Later teachers were secured by invitation. Payments were made in the same manner.

As early as 1864 organized schoolwork was commenced in Box Elder County at Brigham City. Lorenzo Snow, Samuel Smith, and Joseph Grover were elected school trustees by the people and at the same time a one per cent tax was voted for school purposes. The next step in advancement regarding schoolwork came in 1870 with the appointing of Lorenzo Snow as superintendent of public instruction by the court. Funds to erect buildings and maintain schools for a longer period each year were the paramount problems.

On August 19, 1877, Brigham City was divided into four (LDS) wards. At a mass meeting of the people, trustees were

²G. D. Watt and others (reporters), Journal of Discourses, XII (London: Latter-day Saints Book Depot, 1854-1886), 106.

chosen for each ward. Their responsibility was to erect buildings and employ teachers for their own ward or district. The raising of funds was mostly up to the trustees, although as early as 1875 the territorial legislature had voted funds for the support of schools also.³

Gentile Education

Box Elder County was the first area outside of Salt Lake to establish a non-sectarian school, as related by Goodwin: "A day school was established as a branch of the Salt Lake Grammar School--and as the first entirely Gentile School in Utah deserves a place in history."⁴ The gentiles, upon arriving in Utah, did not desire to send their children to Mormon schools; the result of this dilemma was the establishment of the sectarian schools:

The Gentiles who invaded Zion in increased numbers with the coming of the railroad in 1869 were not disposed to send their children to Mormon-dominated schools. To meet this situation they established their own sectarian institutions which were also to serve as mission units to rescue Mormon youth from the error of their fathers. Among the first of these were the Episcopal St. Marks grammar school (1867), the Methodist Salt Lake Seminary (1875), the Presbyterian Salt Lake Collegiate Institute (1875), which became the Westminster College, the Congregational Salt Lake Academy (1879), and the Catholic St. Mary's Academy

³Thelma Kotter, Through the Years in Brigham City, comp. LDS Eighth Ward (Brigham City, Utah: Eighth LDS Ward, 1953), pp. 44-45.

⁴S. H. Goodwin & Committee, Freemasonry in Utah, Education Bulletin, No. 6 (Committee on Masonic Education and Instruction, Grand Lodge of Utah, F. & A. M., 1926), p. 11.

(1875). In addition to these academies and seminaries, Gentile grammar schools appeared in many Mormon communities.⁵

A great deal of missionary zeal was used by these mission schools. A vote of confidence was given to them in the following:

The noble and self-sacrificing men and women of the various denominations, who as ministers and teachers have consecrated themselves to this great work, are deserving the thanks of every Christian and Philanthropist, and it may be that their labors under Divine Providence, may accomplish more than the wisdom of the law givers.⁶

There were in attendance at these schools an average of six thousand pupils. It is not known how many of these were Mormon, but there were enough to disturb the leaders of the Church.

Those who oppose us are well aware of the importance of education in shaping the minds of the rising generation. If they could only take from us the education of our children, they think they would deal us one of the most deadly blows ever aimed at us. . . . It has been hoped by this means and by making the charge for tuition low, to induce the Latter-day Saint children to these institutions to be educated. . . . Whenever they have done so the results have been evil; for what is the value of education if it leads children into infidelity and to reject the gospel?⁷

Brigham City was not beyond the influence of the denominational schools. "There is a Presbyterian Church and also a school

⁵Gustive O. Larsen, Outline History of Utah and the Mormons (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1965), p. 133.

⁶Bennion, pp. 148-149.

⁷William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, Readings in LDS Church History, III (Salt Lake City: Deseret Publishing, 1958), 341, quoting The Juvenile Instructor, XXV, 8 (April 15, 1890), 243.

connected therewith; the Rev. L. S. Gilispie is the pastor and a lady sent by the Presbyterian Association is at the head of the educational department."⁸

The Mormons were making plans to counteract this influence in education by adjusting their role in education. The Governor made reference to this, as related by Whitney:

The Governor pointed to the fact that the Mormon people were "quietly preparing for denominational schools" in which their children might be taught Mormon theology in addition to the ordinary branches of education. This argued, in his opinion, that the Mormon Church was inimical to the public school system. The force of argument was broken by the admission that other churches in Utah--Baptist, Catholic, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Swedish Lutheran--had denominational schools.⁹

Politics in Education in the 1880's

The Edmunds Bill of 1882 was the signal for a takeover of the government by the liberals. The Utah Commission arrived in August of that year bringing with them the test oath to be administered to all citizens of the territory. The Mormons lost control of public schools on December 29, 1884, when Governor Murray issued a proclamation appointing William M. Perry as the Superintendent of Public

⁸Edward W. Tullidge (ed.), Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine, II (Salt Lake City, Utah: Star Printing, 1883), 407.

⁹Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah, II (Salt Lake City, Utah: George Q. Cannon and Sons Company, 1896).

Schools. Mr. Perry was the first non-Mormon to hold this office. Governor Murray appointed Parley L. Williams to succeed Mr. Perry on March 13, 1886.¹⁰ Many changes were made in education as inferred in the following letter from the First Presidency:

Our children should be indoctrinated in the principles of the Gospel from the earliest childhood. They should be made familiar with the contents of the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. These should be their chief text books, and everything should be done to establish and promote in their hearts genuine faith in God, in His Gospel and its ordinances, and in his works. But under our common school system it is not possible.¹¹

The Edmunds-Tucker Law was passed in March of 1887.

Among the features of this law were the disincorporation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the escheatment of Church property. Also included was this statement: "In the public schools no teacher shall be employed or rejected on account of his religious faith or his sympathy with any particular denomination."¹²

Much influence of the Church was taken from the public schools. Since there was no way in which the Church would accomplish its goals of religious education, the Church System of Academies was planned and implemented in 1888.

¹⁰James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, III (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 166.

¹¹Ibid., p. 86.

¹²Wayne Stout, History of Utah (Salt Lake City: Wayne Stout, 1964), p. 299.

Chapter 4

THE CHURCH SYSTEM OF ACADEMIES

Church Schools (1888)

The first academy established by the Church was at Provo, Utah, on October 15, 1875. Brigham Young had endowed this school with two blocks of land in the heart of Provo City. This school became the Brigham Young Academy.

Warner W. Dusenberry was chosen to direct this school as the principal, but on April 15, 1876 he resigned in order to practice law, and Karl G. Maeser was elected to be his successor.¹

The Brigham Young College was established in Logan, Utah, on July 24, 1877, when Brigham Young gave 9,642 acres of land to a board of trustees, the profits of which were to be used to establish and maintain the school. The deed specified that the gospel of Jesus Christ should be the basis of college discipline.²

The Latter-day Saints College was established in Salt Lake

¹M. Lynn Bennion, Mormonism and Education (Salt Lake City: Department of Education of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1939), p. 148.

²Ibid., pp. 156-157.

City under the name of the Salt Lake Stake Academy in 1886, with Willard Done as the principal. In 1889 James E. Talmage became president of this school, and the name was changed to Latter-day Saint College.³

The Brigham Young Academy, the Brigham Young College, and the Salt Lake Stake Academy were the basis of Church education until June, 1888.

Public Schools (1888)

A combination of political, social, and religious opposition to established policies of education by 1888 had removed opportunity for the Church to exert real influence on the politically-controlled public school system. It became necessary under these conditions to surrender to the state the complete educational influence or establish an educational system of its own. To meet the challenge of education for their youth, the First Presidency issued the following instructions to the stake presidents on June 8, 1888:

"June 8, 1888

"Salt Lake City, Utah

"Dear Brethren:

"A meeting of the General Board of Education was held to-day, and the subject of the educational interests of the Latter-day Saints was taken into consideration and discussed at some length. It was decided that a Board of Education, consisting of

³Ibid., pp. 155-158.

not less than five and not to exceed eight in number, should be selected in each Stake to take charge of and promote the interests of education in the Stake. This communication is addressed to you to inform you of this action, and to have you select energetic men who are friends of education, who understand the needs of the people, and who have influence with the Saints, to carry out any suggestions in this direction that may be deemed proper. In the decision which was made by our Board it was made the duty of these Boards to take into consideration the formation of Church schools and the best method of accomplishing this, and after arriving at proper conclusions, to report them to the General Board. Communications of this character may be addressed to Elder George Reynolds, who is the Secretary of the Board. It was felt by the Board that, to begin with, there should be one Stake Academy established in each Stake as soon as practicable.

"We feel that the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people. Religious training is practically excluded from the District Schools. The perusal of books that we value as divine records is forbidden. Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal. The desire is universally expressed by all thinking people in the Church that we should have schools where the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants can be used as text books, and where the principles of our religion may form a part of the teaching of the schools. To effect this it will be necessary that funds be collected. The Church will doubtless do its share; but it cannot carry the entire burden. The Saints must be appealed to. There are hundreds of liberal-minded people among us who will be willing to contribute to this worthy object when they find the subject is receiving proper attention, and that definite and permanent arrangements are being made to establish academies of this character.

"The brethren whom you select to form this Board should be men of character and integrity among the people, who will be able to use an influence in the collection of funds, so that academies may be established, good faculties be employed, and education be made so cheap that it will be within the reach of the humblest in the land. After you have made a proper selection for this Board, the names of the brethren composing it should

be presented regularly at your Stake Conference as other authorities are, so that the people can vote for them."⁴

The main points of this instruction to the stake presidents were:

1. A board of education should be organized in each Stake of Zion.
2. An academy should be established in each Stake as soon as possible.
3. This academy should be a place where religion could be taught as well as academic subjects.
4. It should be a school where the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants could be used as texts.⁵

Dr. Karl G. Maeser was chosen as General Superintendent of these schools to further aid the stakes in their implementation of those instructions.

Karl G. Maeser

It would be hard to find a man who has been more influential in the development of the Church system of education than Karl G. Maeser. Dr. Maeser had functioned as principal of the Brigham Young Academy from April 15, 1876, in which role he and the school received the following vote of confidence from George Q. Cannon:

Professor Maeser, the principal, is a thorough scholar, an instructor of long experience, and a genuine Latter-day Saint. We regard the latter qualifications as being quite as necessary

⁴James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, III (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1966), pp. 167-168.

⁵William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, Readings in L. D. S. Church History, III (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1958), 334.

as the former in a teacher for Latter-day Saint children. If a teacher possesses the influence over his scholars that he should have, their moral and religious sentiments will be shaped somewhat by those which he entertains and by his example, whether he pretends to teach in these branches or not. From our personal acquaintance with Brother Maeser and his able corps of assistants, we feel assured that no pupil is likely to be misled by following either their precepts or example.⁶

As a teacher and scholar, a tribute was given Professor Maeser by George Sutherland, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States and student of the Brigham Young Academy:

Dr. Maeser was not only a scholar of great and varied learning, with an exceptional ability to impart what he knew to others, but he was a man of such transparent and natural goodness that his students gained not only knowledge, but character, which is better than knowledge. I have never known a man whose learning covered so wide a range of subjects, and was at the same time so thorough in all. His ability to teach ran from kindergarten to the highest branches of pedagogy. In all my acquaintance with him I never knew a question to be submitted upon any topic that he did not readily and fully answer. In addition to this he had a wonderful grasp of human nature and seemed to understand almost intuitively, the moral and intellectual qualities of his students. He saw the short-comings as well as excellences of his pupils and while he never hesitated to point them out--sometimes in a genial, humorous way--it was always with such an undercurrent of kindly interest that no criticism ever left a sting. He was, of course, an ardent believer in the doctrines of his Church, but with great tolerance for the views of those who differed with him in religious faith. I came to the old academy with my religious opinions frankly at variance with those he entertained, but I was never made to feel that it made the slightest difference in his regard or attention. The same, I may say in passing, was true of all my relations with all my classmates at the academy.⁷

⁶Ibid., p. 335.

⁷Reinhard Maeser, Karl G. Maeser (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1928), pp. 88-89.

The calling of Karl G. Maeser as General Superintendent of Latter-day Saint Schools on June 8, 1888, did not relieve Brother Maeser of his duties as principal of the Brigham Young Academy; it merely added to his responsibilities.⁸ From instructions of the First Presidency, many academies were established under the direction of Brother Maeser, as shown in Table 1 on page 39.

Wilford Woodruff expressed the importance placed by the brethren on these academies in a letter to Joseph G. Nelson, who had been called to serve as a missionary in the Southern States Mission:

"Presidents Office
 "Salt Lake City, Utah
 "October 2, 1888

"Elder Jos. Nelson,
 "Goshen, Utah

"Dear Brother,

"It has been represented to me that your labors are needed in the Church schools that are now being established throughout the Stakes of Zion, and that your services in that direction will be more valuable to the cause of truth than a mission. I have decided to honorably release you from the call made upon you to go to the Southern States, so that you may place yourself at the disposal of Prof. K. G. Maeser, in some one of the Church Academies.

"Please communicate with him and he will inform you where you are most needed.

"Your Brother,
 "Wilford Woodruff"⁹

⁸Ibid., p. 107.

⁹Clark, p. 169.

Table 1

L. D. S. Academies¹⁰

Academy	Date
Brigham Young Academy	1875
Brigham Young College (Logan)	1877
Alberta Stake Academy	Oct. 19, 1891
Bannock Stake Academy (1898 Freemont, Ricks 1903)	Nov. 22, 1888
Bear Lake Stake Academy	Oct. 16, 1888
Beaver Stake Academy	Oct. 29, 1888
Big Horn Stake Academy, Cowley Wyo.	1909
Box Elder Stake Academy	Dec. 29, 1888
Cassia Stake Academy	Dec. 25, 1888
Davis Stake Academy	June 28, 1890
Emery Stake Academy	Sept. 15, 1890
Juab Stake Academy	July 12, 1890
Juarez L. D. S.	1888
Juarez L. D. S. Academy	1888
Salt Lake Stake Academy (1899 Latter-day Saint College, 1893 L. D. S. University)	1886
Malad Stake Academy	July 3, 1890
Maricopa Academy	Oct. 9, 1895
Millard Stake Academy	Oct. 29, 1888
Oneida Stake Academy	Oct. 29, 1888
Diaz Academy	Sept. 24, 1891
Panguitch Stake Academy	Oct. 30, 1888
Parowan Stake Academy	April 12, 1890
Rich County Academy (Randolph)	Sept. 17, 1891
	Nov. 3, 1890
San Luis Academy, Sanford, Colo.	1907
Sanpete Stake Academy (Apr. 17, 1900 Snow Academy, Apr. 10, 1917 Snow College)	Oct. 18, 1888
Sevier Stake Academy	Dec. 12, 1888
Snowflake Stake Academy	Dec. 25, 1888
St. George Stake Academy	Nov. 1, 1888
St. Johns Stake Academy	Dec. 25, 1888
St. Joseph Stake Academy	Feb. 10, 1891
Summit Stake Academy	Nov. 19, 1888
Uintah Stake Academy	Dec. 18, 1888
Weber Stake Academy	Dec. 18, 1888
Morgan Stake Academy	Nov. 24, 1888
Wasatch Academy	Oct. 25, 1890

¹⁰Berrett and Burton, pp. 337-338.

The academies spread from Alberta, Canada, in the north to Colonia, Juarez, Mexico, in the south. They rendered a valuable service to the youth of the Church.¹¹ Legislation to provide free public schools was passed in the state legislature in 1890 and further improved in 1892. This made a dual system of education. Members of the Church supported public schools with their taxes and Church schools with their contributions. It soon became apparent that the people could not afford to support both.¹²

Religion Classes

The First Presidency advised the establishment of daily classes separate from, but in conjunction with, public school for those who could not attend an academy. They sent a letter on October 25, 1890 to the presidents of the stakes suggesting that in cases where Church schools could not be established there should be a man or woman called to teach a class in religion each afternoon after the close of public school. This class should be held in the school or in a building near the school, but care should be taken for it to be separate from the school to conform to the law. Students attending public schools in this way could be taught the first

¹¹ Leon Roundy Hartshorn, "Mormon Education in the Bold Years" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, 1965), p. 27.

¹² Ibid., p. 31.

principles of the gospel, Church history, and other kindred subjects.¹³

We deem it desirable that every school thus established should be under the guidance and direction of the general board of Education; and those brethren and sisters who accept this call will receive a license from that board to act in this capacity. Suggestions with regard to the studies, etc. will also be issued by the general board, and other means be adopted to place these classes in harmony with the methods of the Church school system, of which, in fact, they will form an important part.¹⁴

Parents soon found it was less expensive to send their children to public school where books were furnished, tuition was free, and in many cases even transportation was provided.¹⁵ The religion class was a part of the training children attending public school received, as expressed by Austin Larsen:

Our memory lane incident tonight is one we all remember and in which we all participated. You recall that as an elementary and grammar grade student that once each week, usually on Wednesday, you were asked to remain for a short period of time, after school, for a "religion class." It was probably held in your school room, with your regular school teacher in the new capacity of a teacher of religion, who with a good deal of pressure and also authority persuaded you to reluctantly remain. This regular teacher was no doubt aided by some good brother or sister from the community. . . . And so for about 40 years these weekly "religion classes," were continued in the elementary and grammar schools. . . . When eventually the success of the new seminary system was assured,

¹³Clark, pp. 196-197.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Hartshorn, p. 30.

the old time "religion classes" became only a memory lane incident in the life of each of us present here tonight. ¹⁶

The leaders of the Church found the academy system expensive to maintain, and the religion classes in comparison inexpensive.

The decisions that the educational leaders of the Church made in these years had a profound effect upon the educational program of the Church as it is today. . . . In 1912 a new kind of educational program was introduced into the Church. A small classroom was built adjacent to Granite High School in Salt Lake City. Students were released an hour a day to receive religious instruction by a religion teacher employed by the Church. ¹⁷

The academy was an effort to provide a complete education program for the student. The cost of such a program was more than the Church could provide. The religion class proved that religion could be provided in conjunction with the public school, and eventually the released-time program in the seminaries proved to be the most economical and practical solution to the problem of providing religious education.

¹⁶Box Elder County, Sons of Utah Pioneers Monthly Meeting Minutes, October 14, 1970.

¹⁷Hartshorn, p. 31.

Chapter 5

THE BOX ELDER STAKE ACADEMY

The Beginning

The people who settled Box Elder County had a strong desire for knowledge. Although schools had been taught since the early arrival of the Saints, there was no chance for the citizens to gain higher education without leaving the community. The Brigham City Co-op tried to fill this need by training young people for vocations on the farms and in the factories. The decline of the Co-op and the growing desire to have more education caused the people of Box Elder County to look for ways of providing higher education. Kotter refers to this feeling:

All along there was a strong feeling among certain people for a school of higher learning, as was evidenced by newspaper reports of mass meetings being held to discuss ways and means of starting and supporting such an institution. In 1888 the Box Elder Stake Academy was established, it being the first and only school of higher education in the county. It was housed in a two story building on the southeast of the block now occupied by the Box Elder High School Gymnasium and Stadium. This rock building had formerly housed a hat factory and a shoe and harness manufacturing business.¹

Instructions to form a stake board of education and a stake

¹Thelma Kotter, Through the Years in Brigham City, comp. LDS Eighth Ward (Brigham City, Utah: Eighth LDS Ward, 1953), p. 45.

academy were sent to each stake on June 8, 1888. Almost immediate action was taken by President Rudger Clawson. The stake board of education was formed and consisted of Rudger Clawson as president, John D. Peters as secretary, and Adolphus Madson, Charles Riley, Samuel Smith, George Facer, and Carl Jensen as members. The executive committee consisted of Rudger Clawson as president, John D. Peters as secretary, and Samuel Smith as a member.²

Plans were made to begin school in the fall of 1888. Arrangements were made to meet that goal, as recorded in the historical record:

The Stake Board of Education having leased of the Brigham City Mercantile and Manufacturing Association, its Boot and Shoe, Hat and Harness Department, fitted up the same for use of the Academy.³

The doors of the Box Elder Stake Academy opened for registration of students on September 3, 1888, less than three months after the request was sent by the First Presidency.

It was understood that any student was permitted to attend this school, the student paying his own tuition and buying his own books. Thus parents bore the burden, making little difference to them whether they attended district school or a church school.⁴

²Box Elder Stake Academy, Historical Record 1888-1893, located in the Church Historian's Office #6591 R, p. 9.

³Ibid.

⁴John D. Peters, Autobiography, comp. George Reynold Watkins, located at 1142 East 27 South, Salt Lake City, Utah, p. 153.

Fifty-nine students enrolled the first day. These students ranged in their abilities from primary to academic, with all ages included. The challenge of organization began.

Joseph J. Anderson, a young graduate of Brigham Young Academy, was employed as principal of the academy; and as the enrollment became larger Miss Sadie Furner was engaged for one year, beginning September 10, 1888. John D. Peters was employed on October 18, and by November 13 Miss Ettie Madsen was added to the staff.⁵

Class Curriculum

The classes taught by each of these teachers is shown on the following tables, taken from the principal's report at the closing of the first term (see Tables 2 through 6).

Table 2

First Term Registration

Department	No. of Students
Primary	30
Preparatory	38
Intermediate	56
Academic	36

⁵Historical Record, pp. 9-10.

Table 3

The Primary Department Curriculum

Classes	Students	Weekly Recitations	Teacher
Primary Theology	24	5	Ettie Madsen
Short Studies B with composition	24	5	Ettie Madsen
Arithmetic E	26	5	Ettie Madsen
III Reader A	15	10	Ettie Madsen
III Reader B	9	10	Ettie Madsen
Primary Geography	24	5	Ettie Madsen
Natural History	24	5	Ettie Madsen
Primary Drawing, Singing and Object Lessons	24	5	Ettie Madsen
Penmanship	24	5	Ettie Madsen

Table 4

The Preparatory Department Curriculum

Classes	Students	Weekly Recitations	Teacher
Preparatory Theology	37	5	Sadie Furner
Short Studies A alt. with Composition	21	5	Sadie Furner
Short Studies B alt. with Composition	44	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Arithmetic C	43	5	Sadie Furner
Elementary Geography	37	5	Sadie Furner
II Reading	38	5	Sadie Furner
Hygiene B alt. with Natural History B	37 18	5 5	Sadie Furner Sadie Furner
Preparatory Orthography	37	5	Sadie Furner
Preparatory Object Lessons alt. with Drawing	8 6	5 5	Sadie Furner Sadie Furner
Preparatory Penmanship	36	4	Sadie Furner

Table 5

The Intermediate Department Curriculum

Classes	Students	Weekly Recitations	Teacher
Intermediate Theology	47	5	John D. Peters
Read & Kellogg with Composition	52	5	John D. Peters
Arithmetic E	47	5	Jos. J. Anderson
V Reader	61	5	John D. Peters
Higher Geography	58	5	John D. Peters
Hygiene A	59	5	John D. Peters
Intermediate Orthography	63	5	John D. Peters
Phonetics alt. with Natural History	46	5	John D. Peters
Intermediate Penmanship	58	4	John D. Peters

Table 6

The Academic Department Curriculum

Classes	Students	Weekly Recitations	Teacher
Academic Theology	44	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Arithmetic A	22	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Elocution	31	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Physical Geography	27	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Academic Orthography	24	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Physiology & Hygiene	33	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Book Keeping B	10	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Book Keeping A	8	5	John D. Peters
Theory & Practice of Teaching	12	5	Jos. J. Anderson
Academic Penmanship	35	4	Jos. J. Anderson

The placement of the students in departments created a problem. It was necessary to work out some method of deciding which students should go to each section. Therefore, a partial examination was given to the students before receiving their admit.⁶ To divide the students into the three or four academic categories would undoubtedly give a broad difference of student abilities in each of these categories. Much time must have been devoted to individualized instruction. Many times the teacher was unable to include the variety of classes needed, as was the case with Ettie Madsen during the first term. The principal related, "The second readers, six in number were discontinued on the second day of the term on account of lack of room and insufficient help."⁷

Each teacher taught twelve classes during the school day. A detailed outline of courses taught in the academy as well as text books used are given in the Plan of Studies of the Box Elder Stake Academy.⁸

Time Schedule

No record is given the first year as to the breakdown in time, but the year 1889-1890 is shown on Table 7, page 51. It will be

⁶Historical Record, p. 37.

⁷Ibid., p. 12.

⁸Box Elder Stake Academy, Plan of Studies, located in the Church Historian's Office #6589.

Table 7
Daily Program, 1889-1890, Second Term

Time	Academic Department	Intermediate Department	Preparatory Department
8:30	First bell	First bell	First bell
8:50	Second bell	Second bell	Second bell
8:50- 9:00	Opening exercises	Opening exercises	Opening exercises
9:00- 9:30	Theology (New Testament)	Theology (Book of Mormon)	Theology (Old Testament)
9:30-10:00	Grammar	Short Studies	Short Studies A
10:00-10:30	Arithmetic A	Grammar	Short Studies B
10:30-11:00	Arithmetic B	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
11:00-11:30	Elocution	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
11:30-12:00	Normal Class alt. with Mental Arithmetic	Reading (1st section)	Reading (1st section)
12:30- 1:15	Penmanship	Penmanship	Penmanship
1:15- 1:45	U. S. History	Reading (2nd section)	Reading (2nd section)
1:45- 2:15	Geography	Geography	Geography
2:15- 2:30	Singing	Singing and Calisthenics	Singing
2:30- 3:00	Physiology	Hygiene and Drawing	Hygiene and Drawing
3:00- 3:20	Orthography	Orthography (English)	Orthography
3:20- 3:30	Closing exercises	Closing exercises	Closing exercises
Teacher	A. Vance	J. D. Peters	Phena Madsen

noted that the primary department was combined with the preparatory department.

Free School System (1890)
and Its Effect

The legislature in 1890 provided for free public schools where tuition and books would be furnished to the students. Tax money would be used to provide facilities and teachers, without cost to the parents or the students. Prior to this time in both public and church schools, the students furnished a good portion of the money needed to support the educational programs.

The Church system of education was not free, nor was the Church in any position to provide free education. The parents of many students saw the free school system as a way to relieve the financial pressures involved in providing education for their children.

The decline in enrollment in the academy was very noticeable at the commencement of the district schools, as shown in Table 8, page 53, taken from the principal's report at the close of the second term.

Of those we have reported discontinued a large number secured their admits for half the term orally awaiting presumably the commencement of district schools, and some procured admits even for less than half the term.⁹

⁹Historical Record, p. 43.

Table 8
Second Term Registration

Department	Males	Females	Total	Discontinued
Academic	11	17	28	3
Intermediate	45	27	72	28
Preparatory	25	14	39	6
Total	81	58	139	37

Principal Vance was concerned about this sudden change in enrollment, and expressed this concern to the stake board of education at the conclusion of his report:

As was anticipated by many the attendance at the Academy has been influenced by the present free school system, but has always been the case with new organizations in the Church that they have striven against obstacles and opposing powers, so may we expect it will be with our Church Schools, and as the Church has thus far been led out of many dark and threatening scenes, so will our Church Schools by the blessings of God surmount all obstacles and breakers that may seem to threaten them. They have received the sanction of the Lord by revelation. We believe the Saints should say today as Israel of old "God hath spoken, let Israel obey, and patronize these schools and fill them to overflowing."¹⁰

The Decline of the Academy

The challenge to the existence of the Box Elder Stake Academy was being felt in 1890. The public schools improved their

¹⁰Ibid., p. 47.

facilities, and more and more students were attracted away from the academy.

The enrollment for the third term is depicted in Table 9.

Table 9
Third Term Registration

Department	Males	Females	Total
Academic	10	13	23
Intermediate	27	10	37
Preparatory	16	5	21
Total	53	28	81

When the enrollment decreased, the number of departments remained the same, but classes were smaller. The academy was supported at least in part by tuition. With fewer students, the board of education could not continue to employ three teachers. The results of this decrease in studentbody meant that two teachers had to do the work of three, as shown in Table 10, page 55. It was necessary to terminate the preparatory teacher, which left two teachers to cover three departments.

The fourth term opened with only eighteen students. The principal attempted to teach all classes, but after five weeks it was decided by the state board of education to discontinue school for the

Table 10
Third Term Registration
1890-1891

Intermediate Department	Students	Academic Department	Students
Theology	44	Theology	23
Grammar A	13	Grammar A	11
Grammar B	29	Rhetoric	2
Arithmetic B	31	Arithmetic A	6
Arithmetic A	12	Arithmetic B	15
Reading A	37	Elocution	23
Reading B	37	Penmanship	23
Penmanship	37	Orthography	23
Orthography	37	U. S. History	17
Geography	43	Civil Government	17
Hygiene	37	Normal Class*	9
		Physical Geography	9
		Physiology	23
Additional classes from Preparatory:		Additional classes from Preparatory:	
Theology	15	Short Studies B	11
Short Studies A	14	Arithmetic B	11
Arithmetic A	4	Penmanship	15
Reading	15	Drawing	15
Orthography	15	Geography	15
Hygiene	15		
Orvis Call, Teacher		Angus Vance, Teacher	
17 classes with 85 weekly recitations		19 classes with 88 weekly recitations	

Historical Record, p. 52.

*Normal Class was a class used to prepare students to become teachers (Historical Record, p. 60).

year, which was done.¹¹ Adjustments were also necessary in the 1891-92 school year. When school opened for the first term only thirty-two students were enrolled, fourteen in the academic department and eighteen in the intermediate department. Fourteen of these students were males and eighteen were females.

The second term enrollment was up to eighty-three students, the academic department enrolling forty-five of these, which was the largest enrollment experienced by that department in the history of the school. The preparatory department was again functioning. Marie Forsgren was teaching nine students in this department, along with the lectures to the lady students.¹²

Concern was expressed with regard to the future of the academy in the principal's report at the end of the second term of its fourth year.

. . . I need not mention the cause of our small attendance this year (83) in comparison with former years (140) only that it may be made a matter of record.

It is surely not because our work is of a poorer quality or that the teachers have not profited at least a little by former experience. Nor is it because there are not as many school children . . . but it is undoubtedly because of better facilities than formerly in the district schools, especially for the smaller children which formed the greater number (proportionate) of the academy.¹³

¹¹Historical Record, p. 52.

¹²Ibid., p. 56.

¹³Ibid., p. 58.

The third term saw another decline in enrollment. Forty-three students enrolled at the commencement of this term. The board did not think it necessary to retain the assistant teacher. The departments were joined together under the principal, and by the end of the term the enrollment had dropped to twenty-five students. School was closed for the year on March 26, 1892.¹⁴

Problems Created by Fluctuation
in Enrollment

Each time a teacher was terminated a serious problem of adjustment occurred. This was felt by the students and teachers, as related in the faculty meeting minutes:

It has been noticeable during the week that some of the students have felt they were approaching the time of discontinuance and wished to be relieved, but that spirit has not been recognized and usual work and diligence has been required.¹⁵

The efforts of the teachers to provide the best possible educational opportunity for the students is illustrated in the adjustment made February 19, 1892, when it was necessary to function without the services of one teacher because of decreased enrollment.

The brethren of the board have thought proper to relieve themselves as far as possible of expenses and so have discontinued the intermediate teacher. (Feb. 19,) When the two dept.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Box Elder Stake Academy, Faculty Meeting Minutes 1888-1903, located in the Church Historian's Office #6591 R, p. 39.

are joined we shall expect to discontinue a few of the classes also reduce them all to a shorter time of recitation. Sis. Forsgren having consented to be present on Tuesday and Friday afternoons. The Ladies working class will be continued the remainder of the term. Class in Book Keeping will also be continued, students who are leaving school will be privileged to continue in these classes. Expressed a desire that the school would prosper under the new circumstances. Extended thanks to the retiring teacher for the untiring energies put forth and the zest with which she had labored for the advancement of the school.¹⁶

The Last Year (1892-1893)

The first term enrollment was thirty-five students. Nine were in the academic and twenty-six in the intermediate department. The principal was the only teacher, and to provide best for the needs of the students and meet the problems involved in teaching, thirteen classes were offered. The lectures to the young ladies were given by Minnie J. Snow and Emma Vance.¹⁷

The second term enrollment had increased to eighty-one students, and George Wilford Watkins was added to the faculty. Mr. Watkins was a former student at the Box Elder Stake Academy and had just finished the Normal Course at the Brigham Young Academy.¹⁸

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Historical Record, p. 60.

¹⁸George Wilford Watkins, Autobiography, located at 1142 East 27 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The enrollment at the academy during the second and third (final) terms is indicated in Table 11.

Table 11
Second and Third Term Registration
1892-1893

Term	Male	Female	Over 18	Under 18	Intermediate Department	Academic Department
Second	52	29	33	48	50	31
Third	47	19	28	38	41	25

The Box Elder Stake Academy performed a great service to the education of the 1888-1893 period of time. Every effort was made for excellence in its role as an educational institution. The devotion of the faculty and their willingness to sacrifice to overcome each obstacle was commendable.

Chapter 6

ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE BOX ELDER STAKE ACADEMY

The Church system of academies was established to provide religious instruction for Latter-day Saint students. The academic subjects taught and the text books used were very comparable to those used in the public schools.¹ The place of theology in the Box Elder Academy was expressed by Principal Joseph J. Anderson:

The cornerstone of Zions schools is Theology, and the growing testimony of our students, their intense interest and growing intellects evidence how well this stone was chosen by our great Latter-day Prophet and how firmly laid.²

Brother Anderson further stated at the end of the third term:

It has been our aim as heretofore not only to teach Theology formally from our text books the Bible, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants but to cause it to permeate all our other work. In a word to make it the foundation of our disciplinary system as well as our classwork to make it the very atmosphere of the students and teachers.³

¹M. Lynn Bennion, Mormonism and Education (Salt Lake City: Department of Education of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1939), pp. 166-169.

²Box Elder Stake Academy, Historical Record 1888-1893, located in the Church Historian Office #6591 R, pp. 14-15.

³Ibid., p. 19.

Principal Angus Vance expressed his philosophy of religion in the academy:

It has been uppermost in our minds to cultivate in the students the spirit of the gospel and a love for the truth that will make them good citizens and faithful workers in the kingdom of God.⁴

The influence of theology in the academy took on many forms. A breakdown in a few of the major areas are discussed.

The Theology Class

An outlined plan for the year in each department is given in the Plan of Studies, as shown on Tables 12 through 14.⁵

Academic Theology was not outlined in the same manner as were the primary, preparatory and intermediate departments. The course consisted of a two year plan with more student involvement. The academic students were expected to deliver one discourse, write one essay, and answer certain questions which were to be handed in to the academic teacher during each term. The course work consisted of Book of Mormon chronology and Church history.⁶

A review was conducted each Monday evening to insure that

⁴Ibid., p. 55.

⁵Box Elder Stake Academy, Plan of Studies, located in the Church Historian's Office #6590, p. 1.

⁶Ibid., p. 2.

Table 12

Primary Theology, 1888-1889

Weeks	Plan of Studies
1-10	18 sketches from beginning of Exodus to Joseph in Egypt
11-20	18 sketches from the birth to the death of Moses
21-30	18 sketches from Joshua, Judges, Ruth and Samuel
31-40	18 sketches from Samuel, David, Solomon and Kings to return from captivity, Ester, Job, Daniel
Bible exercises to alternate with Catechism and testimony meetings	

Table 13

Preparatory Theology, 1888-1889

Weeks	Plan of Studies
1-10	18 sketches from the Life of Christ Book of Mormon from the beginning to the book of Omni 18 sketches from Words of Mormon
11-20	18 sketches from Miracles of Christ 18 sketches from Book of Mormon, Omni to Alma, from Book of Mosiah
21-30	18 sketches from Parables of Christ Book of Mormon from Alma and Helaman, from books of Alma, Nephi and Helaman
31-40	18 sketches from Acts of the Apostles Book of Mormon, III Nephi to the end Sketches from the book of Ether
Bible and Book of Mormon exercises two times per week alternating with separate meetings of the sexes and testimony	

Table 14
Intermediate Theology, 1888-1889

Weeks	Plan of Studies
1-10	18 sketches Bible synopsis of Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, Psalms, Proverbs Doctrine and Covenants, First Lecture on Faith
11-20	18 sketches Bible synopsis of the Prophets Doctrine and Covenants, Third Lecture on Faith
21-30	18 sketches Bible synopsis of Epistles of Paul Doctrine and Covenants, Fourth to Sixth Lectures on Faith
31-40	18 sketches Bible synopsis of other Epistles Doctrine and Covenants, Church organization section

each student had understood and was able to recite the teachings of that week's theology class. Principal Vance reported on this:

A repetition of the weeks work in Theology is held every Monday evening and participated in by all the students. This repetition is heard by selected students from the higher departments. We are assured beyond a doubt of the good results of this exercise and we here express our thanks repeters [sic] for their ready response and valuable labors in this capacity.⁷

General Theology Class⁸

Each teacher was expected to write a report on the progress in theology class and turn it in to the secretary on Wednesday afternoon. This report was used to help make meaningful the general theology class in which all students participated. Vance referred to this class and its function as related:

On Wednesday afternoon a General Theology Class is held, when discourses, lectures, essays, songs and etc. are delightfully rendered. To witness these exercises which reflect the real standing of the students do we cordially invite our patrons and friends.⁹

⁷Historical Record, p. 42.

⁸Minutes were kept in these theology classes and are recorded in the Church Historians Office under Box Elder Stake Theology Class minutes, #6593.

⁹Historical Record, p. 53.

Separate Classes for
Young Ladies

It was felt by the faculty that personalized instruction should be given to male and female members of the academy when subjects of an intimate nature could be covered without embarrassment.

While visiting the Box Elder Stake Academy on November 4, 1889 Karl G. Maeser gave a list of subjects to be covered in separate classes for young ladies. This list was compiled by Superintendent Maeser and a lady assistant.¹⁰

This list was not in the academy records, but results of the classes are given. The closeness created by these meetings was expressed by Phena Madsen:

The young ladies with whom I am so closely connected are kindness itself to me. We have nothing but the best of feelings toward each other. I sense my inability to occupy this position realizing a lack of experience, I feel so perfectly at home with my fellow teachers, for which I cannot feel too thankful.¹¹

These meetings were usually held Tuesday mornings every other week in place of theology. Both young men and young women were instructed by their teachers in the subjects outlined as instructed by Superintendent Maeser. The results of these meetings were reported by Marie Forsgren in January, 1892:

These lectures have done much to awaken a spirit of cautiousness as to the health, etiquette and to diffuse a

¹⁰Box Elder Stake Academy, Faculty Meeting Minutes 1888-1893, located in the Church Historians Office, #6591 R, p. 2.

¹¹Ibid., p. 21.

knowledge of a woman's high and noble mission among the lady student which is being felt for good.¹²

Missionary and Priesthood Meetings

Every effort was made to encourage proficiency in the scriptures. This was shown in the missionary meeting and the priesthood meeting.

For the special benefit of the foreign students and those who do not attend Sunday Schools a Missionary Meeting has been established, the object of which is to prepare the members for the various branches of Missionary labor. Here more than in any other [of] our meetings . . . is the Spirit of God enjoyed.¹³

The priesthood meeting was held by the school every week.

Its expressed function was:

The Priesthood Meetings have formed a prominent part of this [theological] department. They were held every Tuesday evening after the close of the regular exercises. In these meetings scriptural references on a given subject would be explained, a Church history topic treated and several questions answered.¹⁴

The basic goal of these priesthood meetings was the development of the priesthood bearer in various phases of his spiritual life.

The Priesthood meeting is organized for the purpose specially of giving those bearing the Priesthood further opportunities to bear their testimonies, learn public speaking, learn the duties of the Priesthood and acquaint themselves with the scriptures, the history of the Church and etc. These meetings are held weekly after the close of the regular exercises of the day.¹⁵

¹²Historical Record, p. 56.

¹³Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 28.

Polysophical Society

The academy encouraged development of the whole individual, and to aid in the social function of the academy, a polysophical society was organized to afford reception of an intellectual nature. Meetings were held each Friday evening with special programs consisting of lectures, songs, recitations, readings, and answering questions on various subjects.¹⁶

Domestic Organization

The academy was a Church school. The students were to consider each other and their teachers as brothers and sisters, as related by Joseph J. Anderson, principal:

The students should feel that the school is their home, that they are but as members of one large family. In accordance with these principles the teachers have improved every opportunity to cultivate in the students the virtues of kindness, brotherly love and charity--so essential to their well being and progress. A number of regulations have been adopted by the Board and Faculty for their guidance in this family or domestic capacity.¹⁷

The Box Elder Stake Academy was established so religious instruction could be given to the students. It provided this instruction as well as opportunities for development of the complete individual. Programs were provided for social, religious and intellectual development.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 13.

Chapter 7

FROM ACADEMY TO PUBLIC SCHOOL

Social and Political Situation

As early as 1862 the federal government passed legislation which attempted to disincorporate the Church and outlaw polygamy. These laws made it difficult for the leaders of the Church to function in their positions. Much public attention was directed toward the Utah Territory.

The Church's economic institutions and its involvement in education in the territory brought about much religious and political opposition. This opposition was responsible for many changes which otherwise would have been much slower coming. Arrington expressed the result of this opposition:

The crusade which stamped out polygamy also succeeded largely in putting an end to most of the unique and non-capitalistic economic institutions for which the Mormons had been noted.¹

¹Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 356.

The separation of church and state was not easy in the territory of Utah because the Mormon Church reached out into every facet of life. The Church found itself on the defensive in areas in which it felt the federal government had no right to become involved. The federal government felt it necessary to solve the Mormon problem through legislation. This was not easy. Each piece of federal legislation was built upon the previous legislation, until in 1887 the Edmunds-Tucker Act was passed.

The Edmunds-Tucker Act

The historical period of 1888 through 1893 in the Utah territory was probably influenced as much by the Edmunds-Tucker Act as by any other single factor. Arrington states: "The Edmunds-Tucker Act was a direct bid to destroy the temporal power of the Mormon Church."² The sections of this act which relate to this study are those which relate to the economical and educational situation in the territory and the Church. Section 15 states: ". . . the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company are hereby disapproved and annulled; and the said corporation in so far as it now may have, or pretend to have, any legal existence, is hereby dissolved; . . ." ³ This was a way

²Ibid., p. 361.

³U.S., Congressional Record, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1887), CCCXCVII, No. 15, 637.

to confiscate the Church finances and limit the ability of the Church to function.

The federal government was not yet finished tampering with Church organization. In Section 17 of this legislation was found:

. . . the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, so far as the same may now have legal force and validity, are hereby disapproved and annulled, and the said corporation, in so far as it may now have, or pretend to have, any legal existence, is hereby dissolved.⁴

Regardless of this legislation, it was necessary for the Church to continue to function. The influence of the Church in education, however, was limited by this act. In Section 25, the educational programs are established:

That the office of Territorial superintendent of district schools created by the laws of Utah is hereby abolished; and it shall be the duty of the supreme court of said Territory to appoint a commissioner of schools, . . . The said superintendent shall have power to prohibit the use in any district school of any book of a sectarian character or otherwise unsuitable.⁵

Thus the authority of the federal government in the Utah school system was established, and those who could best profit from this situation proceeded to insist upon the separation of sectarian teaching from the schools.

⁴U.S., Congressional Record, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1887), CCCXCVII, No. 17, 638.

⁵U.S., Congressional Record, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1887), CCCXCVII, No. 25, 640.

Free Schools

The Edmunds Tucker Law was passed by the United States Congress in the spring of 1887. Under this law the affairs pertaining to education or schools were taken out of the hands of the territory. The appointment of a territorial superintendent of schools was vested in the territorial court of Utah. Mr. Parley L. Williams, a prominent attorney, was given this appointment.

In January of 1888 Mr. Williams drew up a bill which did not purport to change the existing laws pertaining to education, except that under its provisions schools were made absolutely free.

Mr. C. E. Allen states, in a letter to R. N. Baskin dated December 6, 1911: "This bill was defeated in the house, as I recall the vote, by all the votes of the house except five."⁶ Another bill was drawn up:

. . . This bill was presented to certain members of the council by Heber J. Grant, now and then an apostle in the Mormon church. It was commonly supposed to be the result of the wisdom of that organization, and Heber J. Grant openly fathered it.

This bill proposed not to make the schools of Utah free, but to divert the school moneys to any church organization which was carrying on schools in the State of Utah in proportion to the number of pupils that such organization had in such schools. If this had been done the schools instead of becoming free would all have been under the domination of the various churches of the Territory. This bill was vetoed by Governor West.⁷

⁶R. N. Baskin, Reminiscences of Early Utah (Salt Lake City, Utah: R. N. Baskin, 1914), p. 199.

⁷Ibid.

The free school laws passed by the legislature were largely the work of Mr. Clarence E. Allen, who spent considerable time in composing this legislation. He related in this letter to Mr. Baskin:

Between the time of my re-election and the assembling of the legislature I devoted considerable time to the study of the school laws of this Territory, the States of Kansas and South Dakota and the city of Buffalo. The laws which I found at these various localities seemed to afford me a better groundwork for the proposed laws for Utah than any other that I could find. I drafted two bills; one, if it should become a law, to apply in general to the Territory, the other to apply to cities.⁸

Mr. Allen was determined to pass a free school law in 1890. Prior to the convening of the legislature, Mr. Allen called a meeting with the governor and the superintendent of schools where they devised a plan to assure passage of this legislation. Governor Arthur L. Thomas took these bills to Washington, D. C. and asked Senator Edmunds to present the legislation to the congress of the United States, and if the territorial legislature refused to pass this free school legislation, it would be passed and imposed by the federal government.

These two bills were passed with little opposition by the house, "one unanimously, the other with only one negative vote."⁹ This legislation then went to the council and appeared to have died. The plan of the liberals to present legislation to the federal congress proved effective, for when the Salt Lake City papers ran the story

⁸Ibid., pp. 199-200.

⁹Ibid., p. 201.

of Senator Edmunds presenting this legislation in Washington, changes occurred, as related by Mr. Allen:

All at once the committee on education in the council became very active. My two bills were combined into one, essentially without change, and the name the Collett bill, from Mr. Collett, who was chairman of the committee on education in the council, . . . ¹⁰

The bill was passed and was put into operation and became the first free school law of 1890. This legislation has been very influential in regard to the Church school system.

The free school legislation of 1892, in which John D. Peters played a leading role, is important to this study. Baskin recalls:

In 1892 the committee on education of the upper house of the territorial legislature of which Mr. John D. Peters, a Liberal Mormon was chairman and I was a member, reported a free public school bill and recommended its passage. This bill retained all the vital provisions of the act of 1890, and strengthened it by additional requirements. The bill so reported was enacted and approved by the governor. Other provisions were afterwards added until now Utah's free school system is such as any civilized community might well be proud of, . . . ¹¹

The Commissioner of Schools, Jacob S. Boreman, in his fifth annual report to congress, expressed the effect of this legislation:

The first free-school law was enacted in Utah by the Territorial legislature on 13th of March, 1890, but of course it did not get into full operation until the fall of that year.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 202.

The law was amended on March 10, 1892, and made more effective. The operation of the free school system in this Territory has been very encouraging to the friends of education.¹²

The Economic Situation

The Church went into debt to the amount of about three hundred thousand dollars as a direct result of the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887. With the passing of this legislation, many prominent Church members were sent to prison, because of the section against polygamy. The Church provided legal council for those who were arrested because of the law and financial support for the families of those who were in prison. Concern was experienced at the disincorporation of the Church, and many would-be tithe payers did not desire to pay tithing which would be confiscated by the federal government. Receipts for tithing were more than five hundred thousand dollars per year during the 1880's, but by 1890 they were little more than three hundred thousand dollars.¹³ George Q. Cannon is quoted in the Deseret News on October 20, 1891:

"The seizure of Church property," testified Cannon, "had a very marked effect upon the income [of the Church], very

¹²U. S., Congress, Senate, Letter from Secretary of the Interior Transmitting the Report of the Commissioner of Schools of Utah, January 19, 1893, 52nd Congress, 2nd Sess., Senate Ex. Doc., No. 30, (Washington, C.D.), p. 2.

¹³Arrington, p. 400.

many members of the Church fearing to give what they otherwise would lest further seizures take place."¹⁴

Arrington further states:

Moreover, the idea of tithing as a compulsory payment had been played upon so effectively by hostile writers and speech-makers that the trustee-in-trust was forced, in order to prevent confiscation of current tithing receipts, to substitute the word "voluntary offerings" for "tithing" on certificates issued during the late 1880's and early 1890's.¹⁵

A special meeting of all stake presidents of the Church was called in 1893 to discuss the financial crisis caused by a sharp drop in the payment of tithing by the Church members. This meeting was called to gain help in meeting the financial obligations of the Church. The result was: "A total of \$105,000 was borrowed from these men and their constituents at this time."¹⁶ Later in the same year the Church obtained \$200,000 from J. B. Claflin of Chicago, for a period of three years, at the rate of six per cent interest plus a bonus of \$50,000. This was not finally repaid until March of 1899, however, having been renegotiated. Additional credit from Salt Lake City banks amounted to perhaps as much as \$100,000 before the end of the year.¹⁷

Indeed, the church's financial problem by 1894 had become so acute that the trustee-in-trust found himself borrowing from one bank to pay another. "We are passing through a great

¹⁴Ibid., p. 513.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 400.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 401.

¹⁷Ibid.

financial difficulty," wrote President Woodruff in his journal, "the Lord alone can help us out. . . . Our debts are very heavy money matters are crowding hard upon us."¹⁸

The economic situation in 1893 was one of depression. John D. Peters was involved in banking that year and relates:

This the year 1893, was the panic. Times were extremely stringent. Banks above all were sorely affected. . . . While I did not own one dollar in the concern, I spent many sleepless nights for about 90 days. The affairs of the city were becoming somewhat improved.¹⁹

The depression of 1893, along with the great indebtedness of the Church, combined as contributing factors to the closing of the Box Elder Stake Academy.

Mission Schools

Because of the Mormon influence in the early educational programs in Utah, the mission schools were established not only to teach the students who belonged to the sponsoring church, but to rescue Mormon youth from the indoctrination received from their parents and their church. These schools were very expensive to operate, and with the coming of the free public schools, mission schools began to decline as related by the governor in 1892: "They are drawing the children from private schools and many private (mission) schools have been

¹⁸Ibid., p. 402.

¹⁹John D. Peters, Autobiography, comp. George Reynold Watkins, located at 1142 East 27 South, Salt Lake City, Utah, p. 169.

closed by reason thereof."²⁰ The decline in mission schools removed one of the chief concerns of the Church of having their children indoctrinated and at least some of the urgency in having to have academies was being removed.

John D. Peters

This study would not be complete without mentioning the contributions of John D. Peters. He began his teaching in Three Mile Creek, which is now known as Perry, Box Elder County, Utah. He became superintendent of the Box Elder County Schools in the year 1883. Under his direction the district schools were re-established to allow each district to receive some taxes from the railroad. The first public tax was levied for school purposes, and because of legislature and encouragement from Superintendent Peters, young men and women past school age renewed their school activities. New subjects were taught; recreational activities were encouraged; and school became a meaningful experience to young adults.²¹

The contributions of Superintendent Peters to the education of Box Elder County is related by Lydia Forsgren:

J. D. Peters, who had been a pupil of Frances M. Crawford and L. F. Moench and a student at the Logan High School, began his career as a public school teacher in his home town, Three

²⁰Letter from Secretary of the Interior, p. 2.

²¹Peters, pp. 152-157.

Mile Creek. Here he taught the winter term for a period of seven years.

His congenial disposition and marked originality in his teaching attracted widespread attention, and he was invited to come to Brigham City where for several years he taught the higher grades as an assistant to E. A. Box.²²

Mr. Peters was always looking to the needs of his students. He saw the need of a high school for the young people of Brigham City, and after talking it over with the school trustees along with students and patrons, the old shoe shop was chosen for a suitable place. The building was remodeled, and two of the upstairs rooms were used for school. In these rooms scores of young people in their teens gathered to be instructed in courses such as physiology, technical grammar and economics by Mr. Peters, the principal of this school.²³

In summary of the accomplishments of this great man Mrs. Forsgren said:

He devoted a great portion of his life to the cause of education as teacher, county superintendent, legislator, and later as trustee for the higher institutions of learning in the state of Utah. It is difficult to measure with words the influence he has wielded in building the present educational system of the state.²⁴

When the Stake Board of Education was formed, John D. Peters was chosen to be the secretary to this board, and as the enrollment in the academy increased, he was asked to teach during

²²Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, History of Box Elder County 1851-1937 (Salt Lake City: Paragon Printing Co., n. d.), p. 210.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., p. 211.

the winter term. This he did willingly and well until Principal Vance, feeling the pressure of working with such a talented individual, wrote a letter to Superintendent Maeser about his feelings. Dr. Maeser solved the problem by writing to Brother Peters, who related this in his life history:

Dr. Maeser, the superintendent of all church schools, took a great interest in church school movement. Shortly after I went in to school and commenced my assignment of studies, I received a letter from Dr. Maeser stating that a letter had been written by principal of the school to him. Dr. Maeser asked me to read it and return it without comment. I thought I needed no suggestion of the matter. This letter was well written. The principal had stated that he was very much handicapped in controlling the school. He felt somewhat timid in asserting his position because Brother Peters, who was very considerate in doing everything he could to help school, was also a member of the board of education of this stake, a man of much experience, superintendent of schools, and a teacher in the community, was now a teacher under him. He was also at that time Probate Judge and was acquainted and familiar with all the boys and girls. He thought it would have been easier for him if some young man from the Provo school would be selected as his assistant. I wrote a letter to Brother Maeser, thanked him very much and assured him that whatever he did in the matter would be very acceptable to me, and told him I would double my efforts to help Brother Vance and magnify his position. I had at no time deserted anything that was to be done, or do anything that would not be helpful. I say that all the years following Brother Vance and I were neighbors and friends.²⁵

Transition

The transition from Church academy to free public high school seems to have been quite natural in Brigham City.

²⁵Peters, pp. 160-161.

George Watkins, a young graduate of Brigham Young Academy, taught at the Box Elder Stake Academy during the last year of its existence. In his autobiography he refers to the transition:

The following year [1893-1894] the church closed down a number of their church schools in the then territory of Utah, and high schools were organized to take their place. The Box Elder Stake Academy was one of these schools thus closed. I was employed as one of the instructors in the high school organized to take the place of the academy.²⁶

The transition from Church academy to public high school was influenced by local Church leaders behind the scene. John D. Peters was co-sponsor of the free school education bill passed in 1892. His influence as secretary to the Box Elder Stake Board of Education and influence with the local superintendent of schools no doubt aided the relationship between church and county in working out the local transition. His past interest in higher education in the community makes it seem logical that as an educator, a politician, and a faithful church worker he was in a favorable position to see his school bill implemented in Brigham City where he was serving as mayor.²⁷

The decision, however, did not lie with John D. Peters or completely with the Box Elder Stake Board of Education. The

²⁶George Watkins, Autobiography, located at 1142 East 27 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.

²⁷Peters, p. 170.

final decision to close the academy seems to have come from Karl G. Maeser. He made a visit to the academy during its final term of operation on March 15, 1893. He spoke to the students and also in two public meetings.²⁸ Although a record was not available as to what was said on his visit, he did not announce a decision to close the academy but rather came to observe conditions in the school and community prior to making a final decision.

The conditions in the community were favorable to the transition inasmuch as the prominent educators of the community were active Church members. This transition is referred to in the history of Box Elder High School:

The name "academy building" came into usage in 1888, after the Co-operative Movement became inactive. The Box Elder Stake established an academy there, the first and only institution of higher learning in the county. It was in the upstairs rooms of this building that the first public high school classes were conducted in 1894.²⁹

²⁸Box Elder Stake Academy, Faculty Meeting Minutes 1888-1903, located in the Church Historians Office #6591 R, p. 40.

²⁹Three Score and Ten-Years, Box Elder High School 1897-1967, p. 216.

Chapter 8

SUMMARY

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the dominant influence in the lives of the Box Elder County population. The arrival of Lorenzo Snow gave new impetus to this influence. The challenge issued by Lorenzo Snow for the original settlers to sell their land not for what it was worth but for what the new settlers could afford to pay was the beginning of an interesting and unique chapter in the history of Utah. Here was developed a form of the United Order known as the Brigham City Mercantile and Manufacturing Association. The cooperative movement was responsible for the development of economic conditions which led to the direct participation by the Church in many facets of the lives of its members.

The contributions of the Co-op to the training and education of those who were associated with it as well as the economical contribution of this form of the United Order were of considerable consequence.

With the development of the frontier and the coming of the railroad, gentile influence was felt in Box Elder County. Corinne was established as the stronghold of the non-Mormon element.

A crusade to end Mormon rule was developed here just seven miles from Brigham City. The disappointment of the population of Corinne as they saw their city decline in the shadow of the Brigham City Co-operative, which defied even the depression of 1873, was not only a puzzle to them but a source of irritation.

The problems between the gentiles and Mormons were more economical than they were religious. The frustration of the gentiles as they attempted to compete with the Church-dominated economic and social institutions was the cause for much bitter feeling. The anti-Mormon sentiment which developed led to the establishment of the Liberal Party of Utah. Formed in Corinne in 1870, this political party was largely responsible for the federal legislation to end Mormon rule in the territory of Utah.

The Box Elder Stake Academy existed in a period of transition from open participation by the Church in all facets of life to the time of legal separation of church and state. The Box Elder Stake Academy began just a little over a year after the Edmunds-Tucker Act became law and pressures were being applied to the Mormon Church to limit its influence. The mission schools were in the peak of their existence, and the Church leaders felt the necessity of entering the field of education.

The Box Elder Stake Academy was a part of the Church System of Academies, over which Dr. Karl G. Maeser was superintendent.

The financial support of these schools was gained partly from tuition from the students and the remainder from local and general Church funds. A stake board of education was responsible for directing the local school and securing funds for its operation.

The students in the Box Elder Stake Academy were of all academic levels. The school was divided into four academic departments, primary, preparatory, intermediate, and academic. The school claimed equality with any other as far as the academic subjects were concerned. Great care and concern was given to text books and subject matter. Emphasis was placed on the development of the student to become a contributor to society.

The primary purpose of the academy was the teaching of and application of religion in the lives of the students. Outlines and definite lesson materials were developed for the theology class. Separate classes were held for the sexes where subjects of a more intimate level were discussed. Missionary meetings were held to prepare the students for eventual missionary work. Priesthood meetings were held where the priesthood holders were helped to develop their spiritual lives.

The students were encouraged to consider themselves as a part of a large family and treat each other as brothers and sisters. Provisions were made for the spiritual, educational, social, and emotional development of the student.

The coming of the free school legislation made it possible for the parents to send their children to public schools without having to pay tuition. This was one way to solve some of their financial problems. These schools also brought the end to most of the mission schools established by other churches and the threat to the indoctrination of Mormon youth. John D. Peters, the secretary of the Box Elder Stake Board of Education and teacher in the academy, was one of the sponsors of this free school bill.

The economical situation in the Church, because of the losses suffered by the implementation of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, combined with the panic of 1893, caused the closing of the Box Elder Stake Academy.

The local situation was such that a transition from the academy to the public high school was relatively easy. There was a good relationship between the public schools and the academy, and in the transition, the teachers from the academy were hired into the public school system. The first high school classes were held in the academy building. The climate was such that the religion class proposed by the Church authorities was easily implemented into the public school system.

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THE BOX ELDER STAKE ACADEMY IN ITS
HISTORICAL SETTING

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M. R. E. Degree, April 1973

ABSTRACT

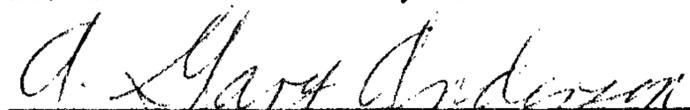
The Box Elder Stake Academy was a part of the Church System of Academies under the direction of Karl G. Maeser. The historical setting of Box Elder County is rather unique. It was here that Lorenzo Snow directed one of the most successful forms of the United Order. The nearby city of Corinne was established as one of the few gentile cities in Utah, and from there a new crusade to end Mormon rule in Utah was begun.

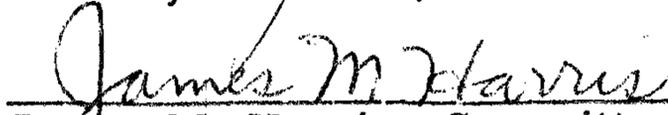
The Box Elder Stake Academy was one of the first academies created under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church. This study includes the purpose for its establishment and methods of accomplishing its goals as viewed within the political, social, religious and economical conditions of this era. The establishment and decline of this academy was closely tied to the historical events of this period.

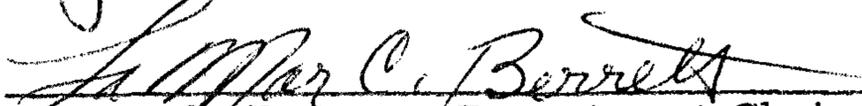
Special attention was paid to the academic function of the academy and the problems involved in its administration. An attempt was made to portray the feeling of dedication and purpose expressed by the faculty as they attempted to achieve excellence in their responsibilities to the students and academy.

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