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History of the LDS Southern States Mission, 1875-1898

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE SOUTHERN STATES MISSION, 1867-1898

Missionary activity has been a staple feature of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) since its organization over 160 years ago.[1] From its inception, Church members have felt themselves obligated and have been exhorted to proclaim the restored gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.[2] As Joseph Smith recorded, "The voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the

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[1]Joseph Smith organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on 6 April 1830. For more information on the origins of the LDS Church and surveys of LDS Church history, see James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992); Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979); Gordon B. Hinckley, *Truth Restored* (n.p.: Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979) 1-38; and Joseph Smith-History, Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981).

[2]For information on early LDS missionary activity see S. George Ellsworth, "A History of Mormon Missions in the United States and Canada, 1830-1860" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1951); William E. Hughes, "A Profile of the Missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1986); Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillian, 1992), s.v. "Missions," by Dean B. Cleverly; S. Kent Brown, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard H. Jackson, eds., *Historical Atlas of Mormonism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), s.v. "Early Missionary Journeys," by Susan Easton Black, s.v. "Early Missionary Journeys in North America," by Arnold K. Garr, and "Missions," by David F. Boone. For a modern overview of current missionary work, see R. Lanier Britsch, "Mormon Missions: An Introduction to the Latter-day Saints Missionary System," *Occasional Bulletin* (January 1979): 22-25.

mouths of my disciples," because "the field is white already to harvest."[3] Between 1830 and 1995, Latter-day Saints have served approximately 668,000 missions,[4] and the Church has invested an enormous amount of resources and energy in the task.

Despite the intensive labor allotted to missionary work and the abundance of surviving records, LDS missiology has been largely neglected. Except for a few random theses and dissertations on specific missions or certain aspects of missionary work, the majority of LDS missionary activity has been ignored by professional historians; only a handful of family historians have dabbled with the topic of missionary work when biographical sketches necessitate such information. Admittedly, writing a mission's history, for however brief a period, is a herculean task. However, the knowledge to be gained--on both an individual and community level--from such an undertaking provides ample compensation. Information on the individual missions, combined with countless missionary diaries and other sources, could produce a plethora of research projects on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century missionary activity.

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[3]Doctrine and Covenants, 1:4, 4:4.

[4]*Deseret News Church Almanac 1993-1994* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1992), 399-400; and LDS Church Missionary Department, phone conversation, 28 March 1996. The statistics published in the *Church Almanac* were complete through 1991. The Missionary Department, knowing the statistics since 1991, gave 668,000 as an estimation for the total number of missionaries set apart through the end of 1995.

LDS Missionary Work in the Nineteenth-Century South

The American South has been a significant region for LDS missionary work. The area has contributed a handful of influential converts who have been disporportionately represented in LDS Church history.[5] The group known as the Mississippi Saints, and men such as Abraham O. Smoot, Henry G. Boyle, and Thomas E. Ricks were among those Southerners whom the elders converted. Furthermore, the South has been an important training ground for future Church leaders.[6] Prominent Church members such as Wilford Woodruff, Jedediah M. Grant, and George Albert Smith, among others, proselyted there. "Of the first twenty-three Mormon apostles, eleven were involved in proselytizing in the South. Three became presidents of the Church. For better or worse, this experience shaped their view of the world."[7]

The encounter between Church members and the inhabitants and culture of the South has varied over time. Between 1830 and 1861, many Mormons traveled to

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[5]Leonard J. Arrington, "Mormon Beginnings in the American South," *Task Papers in LDS History*, No. 9 (Salt Lake City: Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976), 14-17. He noted that Southerners never accounted for more than 2 percent of the total LDS population.

[6]Among those Southern States Mission elders who have risen to high positions of Church and public leadership have been Karl G. Maeser, George Teasdale, Matthias F. Cowley, Rudger Clawson, John Hamilton Morgan, James H. Moyle, J. Golden Kimball, B. H. Roberts, Andrew Jenson, William Spry, Guy C. Wilson, Hosea F. Stout, George Albert Smith, Willard Washington Bean, LeGrand Richards, and Charles A. Callis.

[7]Arrington, "Mormon Beginnings in the American South," 13.

the South to share the gospel with their relatives. Historian LaMar C. Berrett noted that several Saints visited extended relatives in the South.[8] However, Southern missionary activity completely ceased during the Civil War, and only a handful of elders preached in the region between 1865 and 1874.

From the Civil War, to Reconstruction, Southerners had not fully recovered from their social turmoil before the LDS Church formally established its Southern States Mission (SSM) in 1875. During and after this time some southerners acted xenophobically, despising those they considered foreigners and often persecuting them; many more tended to distrust foreigners but still treated them cordially. It is not surprising that they greeted Mormon missionaries, "spiritual carpetbaggers,"[9]--mostly Westerners--with derision and hostility.

Throughout the late nineteenth century, missionaries serving in the South encountered every situation imaginable in their travels. In spite of the abundant hospitality extended to missionaries by the majority of Southerners, a small, unorganized minority disrupted church services and persecuted the elders. This persecution occasionally escalated to whipping, and in a few tragic instances, even included murdering them. As a result, the SSM swiftly acquired a reputation for violence with Church members in the Great Basin--the core of Mormon settlement

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[8]LaMar C. Berrett, "History of the Southern States Mission, 1831-1861" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1960).

[9]David Buice, "'All Alone and None to Cheer Me': The Southern States Mission Diaries of J. Golden Kimball," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 24 (Spring 1991): 38.

in the Rocky Mountains. However, nearly all missionaries who served in the South noted Southerners' polar nature–those who were friendly and would share their last crumb of bread, who would risk their lives defending the elders from their zealous neighbors, and those who were hostile, who acted as predators and actively persecuted them. The elders received extraordinary kindness, apathetic indifference, and reprehensible brutality--each in varying degrees; the American South was both a hospitable and, occasionally, a hostile host to LDS missionaries.

However, the SSM changed over time in regard to the amount of prejudice and persecution, the type of men assigned to labor there, the methods of proselyting, as well as the numbers of elders serving missions. Conversely, other variables remained static over the years: the experiences elders encountered in a new region of the country and their reactions to such situations. This thesis examines the SSM from the missionaries' perspectives. On one level, it could be called a collective biography since it details the elders' characteristics, statistically speaking, and because it describes their mission experiences as well. In the final analysis, missions had both an individual and a collective impact: the individual effect was that elders matured and gained valuable experience, which later allowed them to make greater contributions to their church and communities once they returned; collectively speaking, missions exposed the LDS Church to more people, creating more informed opinions and maybe more sympathy from average citizens, a small percentage of whom ended up being baptized.

Each chapter focuses on a different time or theme. Chapter two relates

important information about the mission when it was reopened after the Civil War. Chapter three examines the statistical profile of those men who served missions to the South from 1867 to 1898. Chapter four details some common experiences missionaries encountered during their Southern sojourn between 1875 and 1898. Chapter five evaluates the persecution directed toward LDS missionaries in the SSM in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The final chapter draws conclusions about the SSM during these years.

Review of Literature

Since no history occurs in a vacuum, the culture these missionaries encountered in the late nineteenth-century South must be explained briefly. A plethora of scholars and writers have attempted to narrate and analyze the region's character since the Civil War.

Religious historian Samuel S. Hill believes the region cannot be fully understood without examining its religious identities and integrating them into studies of the area's culture. He asserts that Southern "religious institutions were threads in the large, intricate bolt which comprised the fabric of Southern society and culture."[10] The South's relative isolation from the waves of immigrants arriving in America in the ante and postbellum eras allowed the area to retain, for

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[10]Samuel S. Hill, *Religion in the Southern States* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1983), 403-413.

the most part, a homogeneous regional religion, unchallenged by non-evangelical denominations. Moreover, Hill theorizes that the South's religious climate was heightened after its defeat in the Civil War. Religion regulated life and acted as an anchor in a turbulent society. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, religion became an even stronger, principal component of southern culture.

Another historian, Charles Reagan Wilson, surveyed the Southern religious climate after the Civil War. He believed Southerners maintained the dream of creating a separate Southern identity, unsullied by military and political defeat, enforced by homogeneous culture, and sustained by religion. Wilson discussed this religion of "the lost cause" and showed how Southern ministers--acting as cultural sentries--disseminated this doctrine to the populace.[11]

Ted Ownby also attempted to explain the polarities of Southern behavior. His chapters on evangelical culture examine the various levels of public religious life. Ownby examined the role of religion in the lives of Southerners and noted how it struggled, and at times competed, with a secular, male-dominated culture. In his research he identified two images of the South: that of the evangelical religious white South and that of the fighter.[12] Ironically, these two images coexisted and became more pronounced during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the end, he concluded that each image had its place among Southerners and was visibly

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[11]Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980).

[12]Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), ix.

expressed and embodied at various times and in various circumstances.

Southern historian C. Vann Woodward acknowledged that religion was a powerful element of Southern culture. Religion exerted a great amount of influence "over the mind and spirit of the South."[13] On the surface of Southern society, conservative religious orthodoxy produced a seemingly homogeneous group of citizens. But underneath the exterior, denominational schisms with their attendant theological and institutional contestations divided many communities and congregations. The only place unity could be found was within traditional theological and devotional orthodoxies. Consequently, new or unorthodox sects--like Mormons--received little support from the mass of church-going evangelicals.

According to Edward Ayers, another prominent historian, religion infiltrated many aspects of Southern society: "Religious faith and language. . . . permeated public speech as well as private emotion."[14] Virtually no part of Southern culture was beyond the realm of religion. Ayers also described the role religion played on both individual and community levels, highlighting the complex impact of churches in community and family life.

Many other sources articulate an a-religious interpretation of the South's

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[13]C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913,* vol 9 of *A History of the South,* ed. Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter, 10 vols. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, for the Littlefield Fund for Southern History of the University of Texas, 1971), 448.

[14]Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford, 1992), 160.

history and of Southern traits.[15] Some writers have identified the peculiar personality traits of hospitality and hostility–stereotypical Southern qualities–as cultural schizophrenia. Other historians have advanced different theories to explain such behavior.

Perhaps historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown put it best when he defined such behavior in terms of *honor*. Honor dictated the Southern temperament and how citizens responded to those they deemed to be malefactors. Southern honor was concerned with reputations, social status, respect, and loyalty. If any of these qualities were questioned, compromised or violated, honor necessitated action, either to right the wrong or to restore the outward appearance of one's honorable place and face. "The ethic of honor was designed to prevent unjustified violence, unpredictability, and anarchy. Occasionally it led to that very nightmare."[16] Apparently it was this sense of honor that led Southerners to harbor as well as harass Mormon missionaries.

As for LDS sources, literature on missionary work is very uneven, and in the

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[15]See Dickson D. Bruce, *Violence and Culture in the Anethellum South* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979); Fitzhugh W. Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984); and Joe Gray Taylor, *Eating, Drinking, and Visiting in the South: An Informal History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982).

[16]Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 39. Although Wyatt-Brown's book deals with antebellum Southern culture, many of these same characteristics are prevalent well into the twentieth century; they did not evaporate during the Civil War.

case of the Southern States Mission it is just as erratic. In addition to LaMar C. Berrett's thesis, there are only two other book-length studies of the topic. First, Ted S. Anderson's thesis explored the administration of President Ben E. Rich (1898-1908), which incidently is the time period when violence declined. Second, is the published thesis by William W. Hatch entitled *There is No Law*. This slim volume recounts the murders of Southern States missionaries from 1879-1900.

Chief among the various papers and articles on the SSM is an unpublished paper written by Mary Stovall Richards.[17] This paper explores public sentiment concerning Latter-day Saints as expressed in Tennessee and Mississippi newspapers between 1875 and 1905. DeVon H. Nish also authored an essay about the mission. Nish briefly narrates 100 years of missionary work in the South, from 1830-1930, in fewer than thirty pages.[18] A third article, by David Buice, examines J. Golden Kimball's Southern States Mission diaries from the early 1880s.[19] Numerous essays exist on the 1879 Joseph Standing murder as well as the 1884 Cane Creek, Tennessee, Massacre.[20] Similarly, many biographies of prominent LDS Church

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[17]Mary Stovall Richards, "Orthodoxy Versus Nonconformity: The Mormon Experience in Tennessee and Mississippi, 1875-1905," copy in possession of author.

[18]Devon H. Nish, "A Brief History of the Southern States Mission for One-Hundred Years, 1830-1930," Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

[19]Buice, 35-54.

[20]Ken Driggs "Murder in Georgia: The Joseph Standing Murder Case" *Mormon Heritage Magazine* 1 (September/October 1994): 28-36; Ken Driggs, "'There is No Law in Georgia for Mormons': The Joseph Standing Murder Case of 1879," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 73 (Winter 1989): 745-772; Gene A. Sessions, "Myth, Mormonism, and Murder in the South," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 75 (Spring 1976): 212-224; Marshall

leaders who served in the South include abbreviated summaries of the men's activities there.[21] However, no single work ties all the information together, and there are many gaps in the mission's history.

Consequently, this thesis attempts to fill some of these voids. Chronologically, it fits between Berrett's and Anderson's theses and coincides with the period of Hatch's, Richards's, and Nish's works.

Conclusion

This in-depth study of missionary work in the Southern States Mission yields significant information. First, the statistical analysis reveals new details about the type of missionaries serving in the late nineteenth-century South. Until this thesis,

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Wingfield, "Tennessee's Mormon Massacre," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 17 (March 1958): 19-36.

[21]See, Arthur M. Richardson and Nicholas G. Morgan, *The Life and Ministry of John Morgan* (n.p.: Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr., 1965), 91-278; Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 135-159; Robert H. Malan, *B. H. Roberts: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1966), 22-32; B. H. Roberts, *A Scrap Book* 2 vols, compiled by Lynn Pulsipher (Provo, Utah: Lynn Pulsipher, 1991), 34-51, 339-342, 358-363, 432-437, 457-479, 495-509; Gordon B. Hinckley, *James Henry Moyle: The Story of a Distinguished American and an Honored Churchman* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1951), 104-122; *Mormon Democrat: The Religious and Political Memoirs of James Henry Moyle* ed. Gene A. Sessions (Salt Lake City: Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1975), 103-128; William L. Roper and Leonard J. Arrington, *William Spry: Man of Firmness, Governor of Utah* (University of Utah Press: Utah State Historical Society, 1971), 23-36; Claude Richards, *J. Golden Kimball: The Story of a Unique Personality* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1934), 40-66; Francis M. Gibbons, *George Albert Smith: Kind and Caring Christian, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 22-31.

no other mission history has attempted to do this type of analysis for a single mission. Second, it recounts the experiences of a number of LDS missionaries in the South. Third, it examines missionary work from the elders' viewpoint to create a better understanding of what they experienced and how they reacted to new situations outside the Mormon "corridor" of settlement in the American West. Finally, a history of the Southern States Mission contributes to the general understanding of nineteenth-century LDS missionary work.

Before launching into a deep discussion of the SSM, we must consider the years immediately following the Civil War when LDS missionaries re-entered the South. The vast majority of Southerners greeted these elders with a warm reception, but their enthusiasm seemed to diminish over time.

CHAPTER 2

PROLOGUE: THE SOUTHERN STATES MISSION, 1867-1874

The following background material sets the stage for a more thorough treatment of LDS missionary work in the South. This chapter introduces the principal parties, Southerners and missionaries, and documents the region's initial postbellum reaction to the LDS religion and its emissaries.

The American South has been a significant region for Latter-day Saint (LDS) missionary work, but the experience of Church members within the South varied over time. Between 1830 and 1861, many members, or Saints, traveled to the South to share the gospel with their relatives. Historian LaMar C. Berrett noted that several Saints visited extended relatives in the region, hoping to convert them. Prominent Church members such as Wilford Woodruff, Hyrum Smith, George A. Smith, Orson Pratt, Warren Parrish, Jedediah M. Grant, and David W. Patten proselyted there. People such as Abraham O. Smoot, Benjamin Clapp, Henry G. Boyle, John Brown, and Bathsheba W. Bigler Smith were among those Southerners whom the missionaries, or elders,[1] converted. However, the strong tide of missionary work in the South begin to subside in 1846, just before the Saints fled

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[1]The word *elder* is a generic title given to male LDS missionaries. In reality, the vast majority of these missionaries held the office of seventy, not elder, in the Melchizedek priesthood.

Nauvoo.[2] It halted briefly–as did all missionary activities--from 1857-58 during the Utah War.[3] The Civil War temporarily closed the region to elders; but missionary work resumed a few years later in 1867.

The Southern Political and Social Climate

The American Civil War stands as an important hallmark in the nation's history. After four grueling years, the union of the states was secured, but at a cost of more than a half million soldiers who were killed and hundreds of thousands who were wounded, maimed, or crippled. The war also had many other repercussions that were not as easily quantified.

Even though Utah was nearly 2000 miles from the battlefields, the state felt the effects of the Civil War. When war began in 1861, Utah Territory's federally appointed governor, Alfred Cumming, returned to his native home in Georgia. Similarly, General Albert Sidney Johnston--who had occupied Utah since 1858--also left the territory, returning to fight for the Confederacy. Despite these two prominent transplanted citizens, Utah officially supported the Union; Brigham Young sent the following telegraph to President Abraham Lincoln: "Utah has not

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[2]See LaMar C. Berrett, "History of the Southern States Mission, 1831-1861" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1960).

[3]Parley P. Pratt was killed while passing through Arkansas on 13 May 1857. If the Utah War had not interrupted, Pratt's death may have caused a temporary suspension of Southern missionary work.

seceded, but is firm for the constitution and laws of our once happy country." The territory even raised a militia that briefly protected mail routes from Indian attacks.[4]

When the Civil War finally ended in 1865, it brought with it Reconstruction (1865-1877), which some believed dealt the region another blow. Even though a small group of politicians questioned its constitutionality, Presidential Reconstruction, among other things, granted amnesty to former Confederates who proceeded to win elections in droves. Radical Reconstruction followed in 1867 when Congress, after several battles with President Andrew Johnson, passed numerous Reconstruction Acts. These laws temporarily placed the Confederate South, except Tennessee, under military occupation; each state was recognized only after it enfranchised blacks and ratified the 14th Amendment.[5]

During Radical Reconstruction, Republicans, northern transplants as well as native Southerners, gained control of Southern state governments and initiated a series of progressive reforms. Unfortunately, several of these republican governments and officials became associated with corruption. Conservative white

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[4]Brigham Young as quoted in James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 318-19.

[5]For views of Reconstruction, see Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Eric McKitrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); and Kenneth M. Stampp, *Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

Southerners christened the northern transplants carpetbaggers[6] and the native white Southern turncoats scalawags.[7] Nevertheless, these politicians maintained solid support from freedmen, a major reason conservative white Southerners disliked the officials. Historian Lewis M. Killian observed:

> The South of Reconstruction times was viewed [by conservative white Southerners] in retrospect as a living hell for decent white southerners, a hell in which illiterate blacks controlled the state governments and the mass of freedmen suffered no constraints until the Klan arose to restore order. . . . The real villains were the Carpetbaggers, the "damn Yankees" again.[8]

The South was in turmoil, politically and socially. For a brief time, conservative white Southern aggression was aimed at blacks and "Damn Yankees."

Contemporary historians have noted that this political and social turmoil temporarily helped Southern minority religious groups; neither Catholics nor Jews endured persecutions during this time because the vast majority of Southerners were

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[6]According to John Hope Franklin, the term *carpetbagger* came into use in the mid-1840s. It originally referred to "suspicious stranger[s]." After the Civil War, all Northerners in the South received the label indiscriminately. "It has generally implied that as a group they had nothing in the way of worldly possessions and were thoroughly unprincipled in their determination to fleece and exploit the South until their carpetbags fairly bulged with the possessions of Southerners." *Reconstruction: After the Civil War*, The Chicago History of American Civilization, ed. Daniel J. Boorstin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 93.

[7]Franklin asserted this name was derived from an area in the Shetland Islands, Scalloway, that bred small cattle. Southerners used the term "to describe those they regarded as the lowest, meanest element in society." Ibid., 98. Most scalawags were associated with the Republican party. Scalawags cooperated with carpetbaggers and freedmen.

[8]Lewis M. Killian, *White Southerners*, revised ed. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985), 23.

preoccupied with freedmen, Yankees, or Reconstruction.[9] In retrospect it is easy to see that Mormon missionaries also benefitted from this inattention.

LDS Missionaries Reenter the South

During the early years, 1867-1875--years that roughly parallel Reconstruction--the Southern States Mission (SSM) functioned very informally, and the Mormon elders who proselyted there had different experiences from those who came later. During this period, generally speaking, LDS missionaries met with phenomenal success, stumbled across isolated Church members, and received relatively little persecution. These missionaries regularly baptized entire families and organized several branches of the Church so local members could hold meetings.

By 1867, LDS Church leaders apparently felt the South had sufficiently recovered from the effects of war because missionary work resumed that year. At the Church's April general conference, several men were called on missions to the Southern states. The following week, Brigham Young and other Church leaders decided they needed someone familiar with the region's culture to oversee the mission. Consequently, Brigham called "Pioneer" John Brown to act as mission president.[10] Later, in January 1868, Brown received notice that his jurisdiction

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[9]Ibid., 75.

[10]John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown* (Salt Lake City: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 252.

extended into all areas "south and west of Philadelphia."[11]

This initial reorganization was only temporary; when Brown returned home two years later, Church leaders did not fill his position. The handful of missionaries who worked in the region for the next six years had no designated leader; the next official president, Henry G. Boyle, was not called until 1875.

At any given time, from 1867-1874, fewer than two dozen proselyting elders canvassed the South, but occasionally only two or four worked in the entire region. Nor was it uncommon for a pair of missionaries to temporarily split up and work alone for a week or even as long as a month. There were no set procedures or specific rules exclusive to the mission at this time. Some elders were called to serve in certain states; others chose their own fields of labor.

Southern States Missionaries

A scrutiny of Southern States missionaries during this era yields an interesting pattern. Of the twenty-one elders under John Brown, thirteen, or 61.9 percent, had been born in the South. Similar patterns exist for SSM missionaries between 1869 and 1874. Thus, the majority of these elders had some connection to the area: many were either native Southerners, had Southern relatives, or had served

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[11]Southern States Mission, "Historical Records and Minutes," 10 January 1868, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereinafter abbreviated as Church Archives. When the mission was again organized in 1875, its boundaries were reduced. See map in Appendix 1.

missions there before. For example, Henry G. Boyle joined the Church in 1842 in Virginia and served at least six missions to the region.[12] "Pioneer" John Brown converted to Mormonism in his native state of Tennessee in 1843; he served three missions to the Southern States.[13] Jesse E. Murphy traveled South and located several relatives, including an uncle and some cousins.[14] Finally, Preston Thomas, although not a native Southerner, served a total of six missions[15] to the South, two of them in Texas.[16]

Although it is only logical to send a missionary to labor among his relatives and neighbors, some Southerners perceived native Southern elders as betraying their own people and defecting to enemies. For example, John Brown recorded that on his first mission, his native Tennesseans "said I was calculated to do more harm in that region than any other Mormon. I had been brought up there and known to be a man of truth and veracity and yet I told the people I knew that Joseph Smith was

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[12]See Henry G. Boyle, Diary, HBLL.

[13]See *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, 1941.

[14]Jesse E. Murphy, Diary, HBLL.

[15]William Hughes discovered the number of men who served multiple missions steadily decreased until 1900. "By the end of the century a very small percentage of men were required to labor a second and third time." "A Profile of the Missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1849-1900" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1986), 172-73. The length of these missions varied; some may have been only a few months, but others may have been much longer.

[16]Daniel Thomas, "Preston Thomas: His Life and Travels," Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, hereinafter abbreviated as HBLL.

a Prophet of God."[17] But that was precisely why Church leaders called him to serve there–he knew people and people knew him; and because he was traveling without purse or scrip,[18] it was assumed he would be able to find lodging and meals more easily.

Convert Baptisms

A distinguishing characteristic of the mission during these early years was the way elders approached baptisms. Missionaries often scheduled meetings in large buildings such as court houses, schools, or chapels, a practice that continued in the mission until the turn of the century. At the conclusion of these meetings, elders would issue an invitation of baptism to the crowd--those who came later did not do this; they seemed to take matters more slowly and more cautiously.[19] Although missionaries did not always have willing audience members, it was not uncommon for them to baptize one or two people after a large meeting. For example, Elder Warren Dusenberry recorded, "Invitation extended and two gave their hands for

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[17]John Brown, Autobiography, Fd 1, HBLL.

[18]Ideally–though not entirely--most nineteenth-century LDS missionaries traveled without money or personal belongings; they were supposed to carry only a small valise and some religious literature. Consequently, they were to rely on the Lord to provide for food and shelter through the people they encountered. For a more detailed discussion of this subject, see Chapter 4.

[19]It is not known whether mission or Church officials instigated this slower, more deliberate method.

baptism."[20] And in Georgia, Elder Jesse E. Murphy baptized six after a similar meeting.[21]

These elders who labored in the South between 1867 and 1875 had relatively large numbers of baptisms, perhaps a direct result of their Southern ties. In a 19 December 1867 letter to the Salt Lake City *Deseret News* editor, President Brown informed readers that the two missionaries in western Virginia had baptized nineteen people since he last heard from them;[22] in the 1880s and 1890s elders rarely baptized this many people throughout the duration of their missions, let alone in a few months.[23]

By September 1868, a year and a half after missionaries began laboring in the South, roughly a dozen elders, according to the official mission history,[24] had baptized 170 people and had encouraged 260 to emigrate west and settle with the

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[20]Warren N. Dusenberry, Mission Diary, 23 February 1868, HBLL.

[21]Murphy, Diary, 31.

[22]Southern States Mission, Manuscript History 18 December 1867, Church Archives. The diaries of President Brown and other missionaries demonstrate that they were in constant communication. They circulated news frequently, writing each other at least every other month and usually more often.

[23]Baptismal records for 1887-1889 and 1891-1896 show that more than 1,760 missionaries converted 3,839 people. For more information on this topic, see Chapter 3. These figures represent the culmination of years of intense labor. What the elders were achieving in the 1860s and early 1870s was phenomenal when compared to these later statistics.

[24]Southern States Mission, Manuscript History, 10 January 1868.

Saints.[25] Elder Henry G. Boyle and his companion, Howard K. Coray, canvassed areas along the Virginia-North Carolina border; their diligent work resulted in nearly 200 baptisms in only twenty-six months. To accommodate these members, the two elders also organized four branches of the Church.[26]

In the many stories of baptisms, one incident, in particular, stands out. In 1868 Elder Boyle baptized three black women, whom he listed simply as Alice, Lucy, and Brenda. He wrote in his diary that "These negroes are the best in this country. They are the most respectable negroes here. We confirmed them at the water's edge."[27] This is the first and only case that has come to light in which African Americans were baptized into the LDS Church in the nineteenth-century South. Boyle also included two other journal entries about his encounters with African Americans. The following year Boyle noted that he and his host, Thomas

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[25]Ibid., 11 September 1868. One explanation for the large figure is that these people had a lot of children; a second explanation could be that the numbers are inaccurate. Moreover, the concept of gathering originated during the New York era of Church history, but was practiced especially in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. An interesting phenomenon occurred in these early eras that did not wholly dissipate until after the turn of the century: when people converted to the Church, they wanted to be near other saints and Church leaders so they often emigrated to areas with large LDS populations. See S. Kent Brown, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard H. Jackson, eds., *Historical Atlas of Mormonism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), s.v. "First Gathering to Zion," by Richard H. Jackson.

[26]Southern States Mission, "Historical Records and Minutes," 3 July 1869, Church Archives; M. Hamlin Cannon,
"Migration of English Mormons to America," *American Historical Review* 52 (April 1947):436-455; and William Mulder, "Mormonism's Gathering: A Doctrine with a Difference," *Church History* 23 (September 1954):248-64.

[27]Henry G. Boyle, *Autobiography and Diary of Henry Green Boyle*, vol. 2, 5 May 1868, HBLL.

Taylor of Flat Shoals, visited "a negro family who are very respectable and neat and clean, and where we have [*sic*] a good dinner. Their name is Cezar."[28] One other entry in Boyle's diary revealed that at a Thursday fast meeting he blessed eight children, two of whom were black.[29]

No other nineteenth-century records from the SSM indicate that African Americans were even preached to, let alone baptized into the LDS Church.[30] Undoubtedly this exclusion partly stemmed from the fact that blacks were denied the priesthood and temple ordinances[31] at this time. Moreover, missionaries most likely worked among those who mirrored their own economic and social class. Finally, it is not inconceivable that some individual missionaries, like many nineteenth-century people, may have been prejudiced against African Americans.

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[28]Ibid., 19 January 1869.

[29]Ibid., 1 April 1869. It is not improbable that these two children were related to the three black women he baptized. But because Boyle most often lists his location by his host families--rather than naming towns or counties--there is no way of knowing the details of this situation.

[30]During the postbellum era, many Protestant missionaries from Northern churches traveled South to preach among freedmen. These Christian envoys met with great success, converting large numbers of African Americans and building up churches. However, many other freedmen protested such authority by leaving traditionally white denominations.

[31]The priesthood is the power that leads the LDS Church. It "is the power and authority by which The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is organized and directed," Richard G. Ellsworth and Melvin J. Luthy, "Priesthood," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillian, 1992), 3:1133-38. Today, all worthy male members over the age of 12 hold an office in either the Aaronic or Melchizedek priesthood. Temple ordinances are now available to all worthy adult church members. Typically, members participate in temple ordinances before leaving on a mission or getting married. See "Temples," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4:1447-65.

Discovering Isolated Church Members

Another distinguishing factor of the mission during these early years was that some elders occasionally found isolated Church members–people who had been baptized ten and twenty years earlier but who had not gathered with the Saints. Interestingly, none had apostatized; all the accounts found thus far note the faithfulness of these people and their eagerness to entertain the missionaries.

President John Brown discovered a couple of isolated church members near Gorden's Ferry on Duck River in Tennessee. They were happy to see the missionary and treated him and his companion well.[32] The following month, he visited an eighty-five-year-old woman, Elizabeth Henderson. According to Brown, Sister Henderson had been baptized twenty years earlier. He must have visited her on one of his other missions since "She remembered well when she saw me eighteen years ago."[33] A few weeks later, a guide took Brown to see Isaac Hamilton, a local Church member. When the missionaries arrived, he immediately wanted them to preach. Hamilton quickly gathered a crowd of twenty-five friends and neighbors, and the elders shared their testimonies of the restored gospel.[34]

While Elder Warren N. Dusenberry was working in Alabama, two local Church members found him. In April 1868, he records that a mother and her son

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[32]*Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, 269.

[33]Ibid., 272.

[34]Ibid.

visited the home where he was staying. The mother had left her husband during the Church's westward migration to the Great Basin, but now wished to rejoin him in Utah.[35]

Mild Persecution

Between 1867 and 1874 Southerners rarely persecuted LDS missionaries, perhaps as a result of the elders' Southern connections and because Southerners were preoccupied with Reconstruction; years later that element of persecution became a distinguishing characteristic of the mission. The South, as a region, is well known for its occasionally violent nature–violent acts were commonplace events in the nineteenth-century South. Commenting on this subject, historian John Hope Franklin wrote, "It might be said that the Southern hand rested nervously on its pistol, knife, or sword; and most visitors eyed this threatening posture with proper respect."[36]

However, Mormon elders in these early years faced very little physical persecution. Most of what they encountered were hearsay reports of violence or false rumors designed to prejudice people's minds against them. Elder Warren

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[35]Dusenberry, 12 April 1868.

[36]John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1956,) 2. Franklin's research analyzes the antebellum period, but many of his conclusions are applicable to the entirety of nineteenth-century Southern culture.

Dusenberry explained that while he was picking up mail, in Aberdeen, Mississippi, a local man informed him that some citizens objected to an upcoming meeting the missionaries planned to hold; people had threatened to take them "to the swamps" if they held the meeting.[37] Two months later, he made a perceptive observation: "Heard of some more slander about Bro. Brown and myself[;] what a great increase there is of bias every year."[38] This was true. For unknown reasons, prejudice seemed to increase proportionately to the amount of time missionaries traveled in the South and to the number of elders who labored there. By 1871, Elder Henry G. Boyle explained that "many lies" had been circulated in parts of Virginia and North Carolina where he had traditionally labored. "These lies have been mostly hatched up by the priests [*sic*] . . . of the Hardshell Baptist Church . . . the Dunkers Church, and . . . the Methodist Church."[39]

With only a few minor exceptions, extant documents of this period show that Christian ministers generally treated missionaries well. In fact, during this era a few ministers even allowed LDS missionaries to preach to their congregations.[40] In later years, Southern Protestant preachers were among the chief instigators and

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[37]Dusenberry, 20 March 1868. Dusenberry did not mention whether they held the meeting. He only wrote "my duty is done[;] they have rejected the truth and must abide the consequences."

[38]Ibid., 26 May 1868.

[39]*Autobiography and Diary of Henry Green Boyle*, vol.2, 6, 11 June 1871.

[40]See *Autobiography and Diary of Henry G. Boyle*, vol. 2, 20 and *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, 272.

leaders of mobs that persecuted and physically abused Mormon elders.[41]

Polygamy[42]

When Elder Boyle wrote that "many lies" had been circulated about him he neglected to mention what the lies were. However, it is not inconceivable that they pertained to polygamy, the Church's most controversial doctrine.

The concept of plural marriage originated with Joseph Smith while he was making his translation of the Bible; Joseph wondered how the great patriarchs of the Old Testament retained God's favor when they had many wives. "He then learned that when the Lord commanded it, as he had with the patriarchs anciently, a man could have more than one living wife at a time and not be condemned for adultery."[43]

Although the Mormon practice of polygamy originated as early as 1831, it was not announced publicly for two decades; on 29 August 1852, Apostle Orson

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[41]See Heather M. Seferovich, "'Save Me From That Horrible Place': The Southern States Mission, 1875-1907," paper given at the May 1994 Mormon Historical Association Annual Meeting, Park City, Utah.

[42]This discussion is only a brief overview of the topic. More research needs to be done on Southern interpretations of polygamy.

[43]Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillian, 1992), s.v. "Plural Marriage," by Daniel Bachman and Ronald K. Esplin. For extended treatments of LDS polygamy, see Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989); B. Carman Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992); and Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987).

Pratt spoke on plural marriage in the Salt Lake City Tabernacle.[44] Rumors of polygamy had dogged the Church since its earliest days. Following Pratt's 1852 announcement, anti-Mormon literature on polygamy quickly flooded the media. By 1856, the Republican Party's platform dubbed Mormon polygamy and Southern slavery the "twin relics of barbarism."[45] The suppression of polygamy continued to be an important issue in late nineteenth-century America.

Many of the elders' surviving records discuss Southerners' perceptions of plural marriage. For example, Warren N. Dusenberry's mission diary contains several references to the subject. Upon his arrival in a particular vicinity,[46] he recorded that a rumor attributed "the separation of man and wife in this neighborhood" to Mormon elders who were accused of stealing women.[47] Two months later he had a conversation with a Judge Terril in Marion County, Alabama; the judge's questions revolved around plural marriage. "About all his inquiry as to our faith was if our people were not fond of women."[48] Dusenberry also remarked that he was asked to speak on Utah and polygamy a few times.[49]

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[44]Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985) 1:53-66.

[45]Allen and Leonard, 299, 305.

[46]Dusenberry, like other missionaries, did not consistently name specific geographic locations. Instead, he notes his area by people's houses. For example, in this particular entry he wrote "i [*sic*] came here to bro. Brenero['s]."

[47]Dusenberry, 7 January 1868.

[48]Ibid., 4 March 1868.

[49]Ibid., 8 April and 20 May 1868.

Similarly, Elder Boyle's autobiography frequently refers to the topic. Boyle once debated polygamy with a minister; but he often voluntarily preached polygamy in his public sermons.[50]

While it was acceptable Church policy for LDS missionaries to explain and preach the doctrine of plural marriage, Church officials did not permit elders to obtain plural wives while fulfilling their missions. In late 1867, President Brown released Elder L. D. Rudd "to go home as soon as he could, he having married a wife here, contrary to the laws of the church."[51] Although rumors about LDS missionaries entering into polygamy with Southern women circulated throughout the South, this is the only documented case of a Mormon elder marrying a plural wife while serving in the SSM. Even though polygamy continued to be an issue for persecution, it caused only minor problems during these early years.

SSM President John Brown

President Brown directed the mission during an important era. While Reconstruction was refashioning Southern society and politics, Brown was responsible for reestablishing the region's mission and for carrying on his own

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[50]*Autobiography and Diary of Henry G. Boyle*, 14 April 1868, 21 June 1868, 20 July 1868, 25 February 1869, 24 April 1871, 17 March 1872.

[51]*Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, 275.

proselyting.[52] Brown had two interesting dreams while he presided over the SSM. The first occurred on 2 April 1869.

> I was in a very large field of watermelons. There were a great many melons and some of the largest I ever saw. They appeared to be three feet long. There had been a heavy frost that killed the vines, and they were effected [*sic*] and beginning to decay. I saw on the side of a large one something protruding. On examination it proved to be a serpent's head in a torpid state. I saw two or three others and told my companion to draw one of them out. . . . It was alive, but stupid. It was said that there were a few small melons in the field that were good if they were hunted up.

Brown then gave the following interpretation to his bizarre dream.

> The field is the United States. The melons are the people. The heavy frost is the late civil war and its consequences. The small melons are the honest in heart. The sleepy serpents are the opposite spirits that reign in the hearts of the people, especially the would-be great ones, which spirits are now held in restraint, hence we have liberty to preach unmolested at present.[53]

Indeed, LDS missionaries went unmolested for another decade, and these early years were an era when baptismal rates were exceedingly high for the small missionary force.[54]

Brown recorded a second important dream in mid-December of the same year. According to his diary, he and others were working in a large wheat field scattered with grass. "In that portion of the field where Brother Boyle was at work, there appeared to be the most wheat. Some spots appeared to be nearly all wheat,

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[52]Brown labored just as hard as his fellow missionaries. Because the mission was so small, SSM presidents, until the late 1870s, wore two hats: one for administration, and one for normal missionary duties.

[53]Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, 284.

[54]Although a few skirmishes occurred between 1868-78, the first major attack occurred when a Georgia mob murdered Elder Joseph Standing in 1879.

tall straw, with heavy heads bent down." But the field suddenly caught fire in the area where Boyle was working, "somewhere in the vicinity of Washington City, and soon all that part of the field was enveloped in a dense cloud of smoke."[55] Boyle's baptismal rates were astonishing and he met with much success in parts of Virginia and North Carolina. During the next few years, the counties where Boyle had worked became very prejudiced against LDS elders; by the end of the 1870s and into the 1880s, hardly any productive Mormon missionary work occurred in those places.[56]

Conclusion

The entire climate of Southern missionary work was relatively open and missionary endeavors were quite successful during these early years when compared to later times. Historians cannot conjecture with any degree of accuracy what precipitated this change in sentiment. Perhaps Southerners' preoccupation with Reconstruction, the small number of missionaries in the South, and their Southern connections deflected attention. Whatever the reasons may have been, the next wave of missionaries, beginning in the late 1870s, received a different reception from the Southern populace.

This research demonstrated that most Southerners responded enthusiastically

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[55]*Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, 307.

[56]See Southern States Mission, "Manuscript History," 1876-1886.

or indifferently to LDS missionaries who re-entered the region between 1867 to 1874. Now that the social and cultural stage has been set, we can introduce the cast of characters who labored there. The next chapter analyzes the elders who served in the SSM during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 3

STATISTICAL PROFILE OF SOUTHERN STATES MISSIONARIES, 1867-1898

To appreciate and to better understand the Southern States Mission (SSM), we must identify the men who served there. Fundamental questions about their birthplaces, ages, and length of service are addressed. The answers to these inquiries also reveal other interesting details, which, combined with the basic questions, present a rich portrait never before discovered.

Volumes of rich data about LDS missions and missionaries are stored in the LDS Church Archives, but historians have shied away from these materials for decades. Gordon Irving's task paper, William Hughes's thesis, and Rex Thomas Price's dissertation were among the first to utilize such sources and continue to be the authoritative references on mission statistics.[1] However, no statistical studies about individual missions in the nineteenth century exist.

The SSM was one of the largest domestic missions. According to Price, 41.8

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[1]Gordon Irving, "Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the Latter-day Saint Missionary Force, 1830-1970," *Task Paper in LDS History* No. 1 (Salt Lake City: Historical Department The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1975); William E. Hughes, "A Profile of the Missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1849-1900" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1986); and Rex Thomas Price, "The Mormon Missionary of the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991).

percent of the missionary force served domestic missions in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; of that group, 40 percent, or 916 of the 2,288, went to the American South.[2] Between 1875 and 1898, the SSM received anywhere from 1.9 to 42.0 percent of the total number of missionaries sent out each year.[3]

A thorough statistical analysis of missionaries in the SSM between 1867 and 1898 unveils a penetrating portrait of the "average" LDS Southern States missionary which can be illustrated by the stories of John W. Saunders and George A. Huntington. Saunders was born 3 January 1863 in Ephraim, Sanpete County, Utah. He was baptized 1 July 1871, at age eight. By the time he was called on a mission he was living in Salt Lake City and a member of the 16th Quorum of the seventies. On 12 October 1885 he was set apart for a mission to west Tennessee by Heber J. Grant. He served there for 25 months until his release on 22 November 1887. Similarly, Huntington was born 1 November 1872 in Salt Lake City. The record simply states that he was baptized at eight years of age. He held the office of seventy in the Melchizedek priesthood when he was ordained for a mission to middle Tennessee on 26 July 1895 by George Reynolds. Twenty-three months later, on 20 June 1897, he was released to return home. Thus, the typical elder was born

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[2]Price, 84-85. His statistics are based on Book B of the Missionary Record, which contains 5,867 missionaries who served in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

[3]The number of missionaries sent to the Southern States Mission for each year between 1875 and 1898 was compared to the total number of missionaries set apart during those years. See "Missionary Statistics," *Deseret News Church Almanac, 1993-1994* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1992), 399-400. Irving's numbers are much lower, perhaps because he only examined the Missionary Record and failed to compare that data with the individual mission histories (12-13).

in Utah, was baptized around age eight, lived in northern Utah at the time he received his mission call, was ordained a missionary in his twenties, held the office of seventy in the Melchizedek priesthood, and labored as a missionary for approximately two years.

Sources

The Southern States Mission Manuscript History, located at LDS Church Archives, contains numerous lists of missionaries who served in the mission. More specifically, the collection includes a book entitled, "Record of Elders in the Southern States Mission, 1877-1898."[4] This source not only provided names of elders chronologically, but also contained a plethora of other data: residency at time of call, assigned conference/district, duration of mission, priesthood office held (i.e., seventy, elder, or high priest), and occasional explanations for early releases.

The information from the "Record of Elders in the Southern States Mission, 1877-1898" was augmented by data from general mission information in the Missionary Record Books B and C, also located at LDS Church Archives. The Missionary Record included missionaries' birthdates, parents' names, mother's

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[4]Information on missionaries who served in the South between 1867 and 1877 was somewhat difficult to obtain. The names were taken from the SSM Manuscript History during those years, and then augmented by information from the Missionary Record. However, the data for these early years are not as complete as that for the period 1877-1898; many dates were incomplete or altogether missing, and the records failed to include the specific areas or states in which the elders served.

maiden names, baptismal dates, names of people who baptized them, ordination and release dates, names of General Authorities who ordained the elders, and, occasionally, brief comments explaining why particular missions were shortened. Like the previous record, all entries were listed chronologically.[5]

Analysis of this data identified and created a profile of those who served in the SSM between 1867 and 1898. Moreover, it gave a detailed picture of missionaries within a specific mission that can now be compared to data about the entire missionary force during the same era or to data about other contemporary missions.

Birthplaces

Because Utah-born elders tended to serve domestic missions,[6] it is not surprising that 1,186, or 71.3 percent of the 1,663 who listed birthplaces, were born in Utah. Idaho accounted for another 3.1 percent of the SSM elders' birthplaces. It should also be noted that 8.6 percent of SSM elders were born outside the United States. The majority of these foreign-born elders, 5.2 of the 8.6 percent, were born

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[5]The results of this study are only as good as the data. For this reason, I checked the entire data set a minimum of three times; any numbers that came up wrong, or too high or too low, were checked a fourth time. Some of the discrepancies are still unresolved, despite the best efforts of this researcher. This author believes the sources, particularly the Missionary Record, contain numerous inaccuracies.

[6]Price, 97.

in England.[7]

Those missionaries born in the South[8] numbered 106 men and made up only 6.4 percent of the total. Of these 106 elders, 21.7 percent were born in Tennessee and 16.0 percent in Virginia. Kentucky, North Carolina, and Alabama rounded out the top five most common Southern birth states.

Birthplaces of missionaries were then examined by mission presidents' tenure. The percentage of Utah-born elders serving under each mission president steadily increased. Presidents J. Golden (1891-94) and Elias S. Kimball (1894-98) hosted the largest number of Utah-born missionaries, 82.9 percent and 80.1 percent, respectively. Southern-born elders were more visible in the early years of the mission; President Henry G. Boyle (1875-78) presided over the highest percentage of Southern-born missionaries, 13.3 percent. His successor, John Henry Morgan (1878-88), had 37 Southern-born elders, but because of the high total number of missionaries, these 37 accounted for only 6.8 percent of all elders. When calculating foreign-born missionaries, this researcher discovered that President Boyle had 3 foreign-born elders, which amounted to 20 percent of his missionary force, but

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[7]Price discovered that of the 5,867 missionaries in his study, 54.4 percent were born in Utah, 1.22 percent in Idaho, 0.41 percent in Nevada, and 0.34 percent in Wyoming, 65. Table 2.4 lists missionaries' birth states, giving both the number of cases and percentages.

[8]Southern birthplaces included Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. No elders were born in Arkansas, Louisiana, or Florida.

President John H. Morgan hosted 95, equalling 17.6 percent of his elders. [see Table 3.1]

Baptism

Baptismal information in the Missionary Record seemed to have been recorded inconsistently. Some entries specified the day, month, and year; others included only the month and year; still others listed only a year or an approximate age at baptism.

The 576 entries, or 34 percent of the 1,689 entries, with complete baptism dates showed that Sundays and Thursdays topped the list as being the most frequent days for baptism: Sundays registered at 29.2 percent and Thursdays at 20.8 percent. [see Table 3.2] Since Sunday School, which in the 1800s was intended only for children, met on Sundays and because of Sabbath observance, it is obvious why nearly 30 percent of these SSM missionaries were baptized on this day. As for the Thursday baptisms, it must be remembered that until 1896[9] the first Thursday of each month was set aside as a day of fasting, and testimony meetings were also held. Thus, Thursdays, especially Fast Thursdays, probably offered an ideal time for baptismal services because church members were already gathered and baptisms

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[9]James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 430. In 1896, Church authorities changed fast day from Thursday to the first Sunday of each month because it was difficult for people to miss work in the middle of the week.

Table 3.1--Birthplaces of Southern States Missionaries by Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President		Utah-born		Foreign-born		Southern-born	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
John Brown	(1867-1869)	0	0	1	9.1	13	61.9
Henry G. Boyle	(1875-1878)	3	20.0	3	20.0	2	13.3
John Morgan	(1878-1888)	303	56.0	95	17.6	37	6.8
William Spry	(1888-1891)	104	74.3	5	3.6	3	2.1
J. Golden Kimball	(1891-1894)	189	80.1	7	3.0	12	5.1
Elias S. Kimball	(1894-1898)	580	82.9	33	4.7	21	3.0
Totals		1,179	70.1	144	8.7	88	5.3

Table 3.2--Frequency of Baptism Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Week	Number	Percent
Sunday	168	29.2
Monday	51	8.9
Tuesday	65	11.3
Wednesday	63	10.9
Thursday	120	20.8
Friday	43	7.5
Saturday	66	11.5
missing	1,113	missing
Total	576	100.1

would augment the day's spiritual ambience. To further substantiate these statistics, 39.9 percent of these 576 SSM elders' baptisms occurred within the first six days of any given month. [see Table 3.3] The first day of a month is highest at 8.2 percent, followed by the fifth day at 7.5 percent.

The majority of missionaries who served Southern missions were baptized in summer months. This trend denoted them as second- and third-generation Saints, for no longer do they choose to be baptized during winter months like their progenitors.[10] [see Table 3.4] Only 43 percent, or 725 of the 1,689 entries, listed baptismal months. From this group, December and January baptisms account for only 6.4 percent of the total. In fact, May through August were the only months with double digits and a full 54 percent of SSM elders were baptized during these four months. The numbers begin to decrease in September, but remain fairly high until November. Thus, 79.1 percent of these 725 missionaries were baptized between the months of May and November, despite the even spacing of births throughout the year.[11]

The data were more complete for baptism years. A full 87 percent, or 1,471 of the 1,689 entries, included baptismal years.[12] The mean age for baptism was

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[10]Conversation with Susan Easton Black, 6 November 1995, Provo, Utah.

[11]Only 24 of the 1,689 men failed to list birthdates. October (9.9 percent), January (9.2 percent), and February (9.2 percent) were the most frequent birth months. Thus, more than a quarter, or 28.5 percent, of SSM elders were born in one of these three months. Days within each month were divided fairly evenly: the first third with 34.1 percent, the second third 33.9 percent, and the last third, 32.0 percent.

[12]If an approximate age was listed instead of a year, I calculated the age from the birth year.

Table 3.3--Frequency of Baptism Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Month	Number	Percent
1	47	8.2
2	35	6.1
3	37	6.4
4	37	6.4
5	43	7.5
6	31	5.4
7	17	3.0
8	12	2.1
9	18	3.1
10	15	2.6
11	9	1.6
12	22	3.8
13	13	2.3
14	11	1.9
15	19	3.3
16	14	2.4
17	12	2.1
18	19	3.3
19	10	1.7
20	23	4.0
21	13	2.3
22	18	3.1
23	14	2.4
24	11	1.9
25	12	2.1
26	9	1.6
27	15	2.6
28	17	3.0
29	6	1.0
30	11	1.9
31	6	1.0
missing	1,113	missing
Total	1,689	100.1

Table 3.4--Frequency of Baptism Months for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Month	Number	Percent
January	18	2.5
February	26	3.6
March	44	6.1
April	33	4.6
May	109	15.0
June	97	13.4
July	102	1401
August	86	11.9
September	71	9.8
October	52	7.2
November	59	8.1
December	28	3.9
missing	964	missing
Total	725	100.2

10.56 years, and the median age 8.48 years.[13] The ages for baptism ranged from 3.0 years to 41.0 years of age.[14] A full 88.3 percent were baptized before their fifteenth birthday, which leads me to conclude that most were probably not converted from another religion--converts tended to be older than fifteen when they joined the Church. These relative young baptismal ages indicate that SSM elders were second- and third-generation Saints, raised primarily in LDS households.

The data set revealed some surprising statistics regarding age at baptism. According to the dates recorded in the Missionary Record, 18.7 percent of the 1,471 elders were baptized before their eighth birthday–the age at which Joseph Smith declared accountability for actions began.[15] Of this 18.7 percent, 0.3 were baptized before the age of six. However, there is a strong possibility that the data set contains errors since the more than 5,000 entries have been completely recopied by hand, at least once, and the original copy no longer exists; in several cases, the simple transposition of numbers (i.e., 1867 instead of 1876) seems to be more plausible. There are some possible explanations for children who were baptized at age seven, but it is hard to believe that children younger than that were baptized. I attribute the twenty cases who were supposedly baptized between the ages of 3.0

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[13]Some listings identified only the year of baptism, or the person's age at baptism. In these cases, I set the day and month at a midpoint, 15 June. Thus, some of the seven-and-a- half year olds could theoretically have been slightly older.

[14]William Henry Petty, from Cache County, Utah, who was born 27 March 1879, was supposedly baptized in 1882 at age 3. However, the inaccuracy of the original record needs to be stressed again. See footnote 5.

[15]See Doctrine and Covenants 68:25, 27.

and 6.9 to inaccuracies in the record itself. Another plausible explanation for the young ages could be explained through faulty memory. For most entries, missionaries listed only a year or an approximate age. Perhaps their math skills were also deficient, and they unknowingly submitted inaccurate information.

Nevertheless, the 17.3 percent of the 1,471 missionaries who were baptized between the ages of seven and eight cannot be entirely dismissed as errors. These occurrences can be understood when placed in their proper historical context. In nineteenth-century LDS communities, bishops retained the responsibility for baptizing children within their congregations. To simplify the process, and probably because of their own busy schedules, most bishops performed baptisms only once a year.[16] This would also explain the monthly "bunching" during the warmer months. Consequently, children who were close to the accepted age of accountability, eight, and who wished to participate in the ordinance, were often allowed to be baptized.[17] The cases of Merlin J. Bartholomew and John P. Pearson illustrate this point. Bartholomew, from Slaterville, Utah, was born 17 January 1858 and was baptized 10 June 1865, seven months before his eighth birthday but during a warm summer month; similarly, Pearson, from Deseret, Utah, was born 16 January 1865, but was baptized 4 June 1872.

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[16]Many ecclesiastical leaders were also polygamists, and during the federal raids it is possible that numerous bishops were forced into hiding or went on missions. In their absence, very few, if any, baptisms would have been performed. This could partially explain the elevated mean age. Conversation with Susan Easton Black, 4 March 1996, Provo, Utah.

[17]Conversation with Susan Easton Black, 6 November 1995, Provo, Utah.

Of the remaining entries, 28.2 percent of the 1,471 cases listing baptismal years were baptized between ages nine and fourteen.

Thus, baptism occurred on both a public and individual level. On the public level, it appears children were herded together at the convenience of their priesthood leaders. But the range of ages at baptism reveals a different story. Baptism was perceived as an individual odyssey because some children waited until they were slightly older than age eight to receive the ordinance. These baptismal patterns demonstrate that nineteenth-century Saints were more concerned with having children receive the ordinance than they were about rigid adherence to age progression.

Southern States missionaries' ages at baptism fluctuated over the years. An interesting trend emerges when elders' baptism age is examined by mission presidents' tenure. As time progressed, the age of missionaries decreased and the number of missionaries in the field increased, the mean age at baptism steadily declined. For example, President John Brown's elders, who served between 1867 and 1869, had the highest mean and median ages for baptism, 24.53 and 22.54 respectively. Conversely, missionaries under President Elias S. Kimball, whose tenure encompassed the years 1894-98, had the lowest mean age, 9.68 years old. [see Table 3.5]

Table 3.5--Baptismal Age of Southern States Missionaries by Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President		Mean Age at Baptism (in years)	Median Age at Baptism (in years)
John Brown	(1867-1869)	24.53	22.54
Henry G. Boyle	(1975-1878)	17.32	15.49
John Morgan	(1878-1888)	13.46	10.39
William Spry	(1888-1891)	10.12	8.49
J. Golden Kimball	(1891-1894)	11.68	8.75
Elias S. Kimball	(1894-1898)	9.68	8.40

Priesthood Office and Quorums

In the nineteenth century, the Melchizedek priesthood was divided into three branches: seventy, elder,[18] and high priest.[19] Each branch had different responsibilities. The seventies received the charge to administer and oversee the Church's missionary work under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "The Seventies are to constitute traveling quorums, to go into all the earth, whithersoever the Twelve Apostles shall call them."[20] President Joseph F. Smith, reflecting upon the role of seventies in the Church, explained they were "to respond to the call of the Apostles to preach the Gospel, without purse or scrip, to all the nations of the earth. They are minute men."[21] James Baumgarten observed that 70 percent of all missionaries between 1860-1875 held the office of seventy. In fact, most missionaries held the office of seventy until after the turn of the

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[18]Specifically, elders are to be "'standing ministers' . . . to watch over the Church, help administer its affairs, teach, and counsel." Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillian, 1992), s.v. "Elder, Melchizedek Priesthood," by R. Richard Vetterli. However, as footnote one in Chapter 2 indicated, the word *elder* is also a generic title given to male LDS missionaries.

[19]The office of High Priest "grows out of and is an appendage to the higher priesthood. . . . These brethren have been called to minister in spiritual things . . . to travel and preach the gospel . . . to perfect the saints and do all the things that a seventy, elder, or holder of the Aaronic Priesthood can do." Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* 2nd ed (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), 356.

[20]B. H. Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7 vols (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980) 1:201-202. See also Doctrine and Covenants 107:25-26, 34.

[21]*Conference Reports*, 6 Oct 1904, 3.

twentieth century.[22] Thus, it is not surprising that 82.4 percent of SSM elders were seventies. Conversely, elders accounted for only 12.0 percent, and high priests for 4.6 percent of the total serving in the SSM.

Missionaries' ages were tabulated according to priesthood offices. Seventies had a mean age of 29.29 years and a median age of 27.44 years. Elders' mean age was 27.56 years and median age equaled 25.83 years. High priests' mean age registered 41.90 years, but their median was 40.39.[23] [see Table 3.6] When the ages of missionaries by priesthood office are examined by mission presidents' tenure, the mean ages within each office steadily decreased. For example, seventies serving under John Brown (1867-69) registered a mean age of 40.39 years, while those under Elias S. Kimball (1894-98) averaged 26.78 years. The same scenario held true for both elders and high priests. [see Table 3.7]

Cross tabulations were used to compute the number of missionaries holding each priesthood office under the various mission presidents. Because President Elias S. Kimball presided over the largest number of missionaries, his tenure (1894-98) necessarily included the highest number of seventies; President John Hamilton

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[22]James N. Baumgarten, "The Role and Function of the Seventy in Church History," (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1960), 48. He discovered seventies constituted the "largest of the three groups in the Melchizedek Priesthood," 108. Even though Joseph Smith intended for seventies to pursue missionary work, Baumgarten identified Brigham Young as the leader who solidified their role.

[23]Priesthood office was not based on age progression in the nineteenth century. For more information on this topic of age progression, see William G. Hartley, "From Men to Boys: LDS Aaronic Priesthood Offices, 1829-1996," *Journal of Mormon History* 22 (Spring 1996): 80-136

Table 3.6--Age of Southern States Missionaries by Priesthood Office, 1867-1898

Priesthood Office	Mean Age (in years)	Median Age (in years)
Seventies	29.29	27.44
Elders	27.56	25.83
High Priests	41.90	40.39

Table 3.7--Age of Priesthood Office by Southern States Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President	Seventy			Elder			High Priest		
	Number	Mean Age	Median Age	Number	Mean Age	Median Age	Number	Mean Age	Median Age
John Brown	15	40.39	43.10	4	33.85	34.49	2	48.18	48.18
Henry G. Boyle	12	38.42	39.96	0	0	0	3	49.21	49.50
John Morgan	330	31.83	29.23	168	27.50	25.72	37	41.31	40.04
William Spry	126	31.45	30.03	6	27.75	26.89	4	38.65	39.00
J. Golden Kimball	210	29.86	28.38	14	27.32	26.58	9	40.95	40.39
Elias S. Kimball	669	26.78	25.19	9	26.39	24.43	18	39.08	38.33
Total	1362	33.12	32.65	201	23.80	23.02	73	43.00	42.57

Table 3.8--Cross tabulations of Priesthood Offices of Southern States Missionaries by Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President		Priesthood Office			Number of Missionaries
		Seventy	Elder	High Priest	
John Brown	(1868-1869)	15	4	2	21
Henry G. Boyle	(1875-1878)	12	0	3	15
John Morgan	(1878-1888)	335	168	38	541
William Spry	(1888-1891)	130	6	4	140
J. Golden Kimball	(1891-1894)	213	14	9	236
Elias S. Kimball	(1894-1898)	673	9	18	700
Total		1,378	201	74	1,653

Morgan's tenure (1878-88) had the largest number of elders and high priests--probably a direct result of the polygamy hunts in Utah. [see Table 3.8] To avoid federal marshalls, many polygamous men either went into hiding in the West, or they left the region and served missions for the Church.[24]

In the nineteenth century, the seventies were organized into groups commonly called quorums. Nearly three decades after the Saints arrived in Utah, Brigham Young reorganized these quorums geographically and identified them with numbers (e.g., the 42nd quorum of seventies). Among Southern states missionaries, the most frequently occurring seventies quorum was the 67th quorum from American Fork, Utah; thirty seventies represented that particular group. With the exception of the 46th (Payson, Utah) and 35th (Morgan, Utah) quorums,[25] all others were represented fairly equally in terms of percentages.

Residence at Time of Call

Not surprisingly, 83.1 percent of all SSM elders resided in Utah when they received their invitations to serve a mission. Another 9.7 percent lived in Idaho. The remaining 7.2 percent came from neighboring Western states such as Nevada,

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[24]See Allen and Leonard, 396, 404-407.

[25]Twenty-six men came from the 46th quorum and 25 from the 35th quorum. All these figures are based on the 792 entries that listed priesthood quorums. A quick perusal of minutes from the 67th quorum revealed no pertinent information for explaining the high number of seventies from this quorum.

Arizona, Wyoming, and Colorado.[26]

As for geographic distribution within Utah, 42.8 percent of the Southern missionary force resided in one of four northern Utah counties: Salt Lake (15.3 percent), Utah (11.9 percent), Cache (9.4 percent), and Weber (6.0 percent). This can partially be explained because of the higher population density in northern Utah. Another factor is that of geographic proximity to Church leaders. It is not unreasonable to assume that ecclesiastical officials called their friends and acquaintances, people they interacted with regularly–based on local leaders' recommendations–on missions. Moreover, many residents in southern Utah were already serving settling missions; consequently, relatively few, until the 1890s when these people's children matured, were imposed upon for further service.[27]

Age of Missionaries

William Hughes discovered the average age of the entire LDS missionary force between 1849 and 1900 to be 22 years old.[28] But missionaries in the Southern States tended to be slightly older. Of the 1,664 SSM elders who listed complete data

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[26]Of the 1,689 elders, only 16 listed no residency at the time of their call.

[27]Price discovered that Salt Lake County failed to send out the largest number of elders in 1871 and between 1882-1884. "The latter anomaly may have reflected the import of the Edmunds bill and the 'raid' on polygamists, as federal marshalls sent many Salt Lake County pluralists into hiding or jail, and the Church sent their Southern [Utah] counterparts into the missions," 74.

[28]Hughes, 133. His statistics also showed a 65-year span in ages.

for birthdates and ordination dates, the mean age at ordination was 29.7 years; however, the median age was 27.5 years.[29] George M. Bartholomew represented the typical age of SSM elders. He was born 5 November 1851 and was set apart 11 October 1880, at age 28.9.

The ages of Southern States missionaries ranged from a low of 13.9 to 67.1, producing a 53-year span in ages.[30] David Miles was the youngest missionary. Miles was born in Mink Creek, Idaho, on 4 June 1878; he was set apart for a mission to South Carolina on 8 April 1892 at age 13. William Kemmington, Elmer Hinckly, and J. D. Kilpack Jr. illustrate missionaries who were also ordained at young ages. They were set apart as missionaries at age 15, 16, and 17, respectively. Conversely, H. B. M. Jolley held the distinction of being the oldest SSM elder. Jolley was born 11 October 1813 in Pitt County, North Carolina, and was set apart for a mission to that state on 25 October 1880 at age 67.[31]

Elders called from different western regions displayed significant differences in ages. The youngest mean age group came from Arizona and registered 22.1 years old; Idaho followed with a mean age of 24.1, while Utah's mean age was 27.2.

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[29]Price determined the mean age of missionaries in 1895 to be roughly 34 years old, (99).

[30]The youngest missionaries were 13.8, 15.2, and 16.4. Although these could be anomalies, the more likely explanation is that the Missionary Record contains incorrect data.

[31]The record contains the following note under Jolley's name: "Filled short mission and visited relatives." Jolley was released 22 February 1881, after serving four months. Other missionaries were close to Jolley's age but served longer missions. Some of these include Edwin W. East, who served at age 61, and John R. Holt and Joseph Argyle, who both served at age 60.

Missionaries who were foreign born[32] had a mean age of 34.9 years compared to those born in western states[33] or territories who had a mean age of 27.2. Southern-born[34] elders serving in the SSM were the oldest of the three groups with a mean age of 39.2. Reasons for the variance in ages are unknown. [see Table 3.9]

Unsurprisingly, the mean age at ordination tended to decline throughout the years. The mean age at ordination for missionaries in the 1860s was 39.87; thirty years later, in the late 1890s, the mean age fell to 27.10. [see Table 3.10]

A correlation between age and residence at time of call was run to further investigate the role of age. However, the computer revealed no significant correlation between the two at the 0.05 level.

Ordination

An analysis revealed a weak to moderate negative correlation between the elder's age when set apart and the length of his service; that is, the younger the elder at the time of ordination, the longer his mission.

As for the frequency of days when Southern States missionaries were

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[32]The foreign countries, listed in order of frequency, included: England, Scotland, Wales, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, New Zealand, Canada, Spain, and Germany.

[33]These Western states include Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming.

[34]These Southern states include: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas.

Table 3.9--Mean Ages of Southern States Missionaries Arranged by Birthplaces, 1867-1898

Birthplace	Mean Age at Ordination
Arizona	22.07
Idaho	24.06
Nevada	26.65
Rhode Island	27.01
Utah	27.16
Sweden	27.59
Switzerland	27.92
Norway	28.05
California	28.49
Denmark	30.44
Delaware	32.17
Wales	32.30
Nebraska	32.53
Germany	32.84
Wyoming	34.25
Alabama	34.27
West Virginia	34.99
Scotland	35.00
North Carolina	35.23
England	35.62
Wisconsin	35.64
Iowa	35.65
Missouri	36.25
Connecticut	36.51
Georgia	36.61
New Jersey	38.01
New Zealand	38.09
Canada	38.77
Texas	39.41
South Carolina	39.46
Pennsylvania	40.22
Illinois	40.66
Kentucky	40.75
Ohio	41.40
Massachusetts	41.83
Virginia	42.20
Indiana	43.27
Mississippi	44.61
Tennessee	44.70
New York	46.12
Vermont	50.76
Spain	57.66

Table 3.10--Age at Ordination to a Southern States Mission by Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President		Mean Age at Ordination (in years)	Median Age at Ordination (in years)
John Brown	(1868-1869)	39.87	41.33
Henry G. Boyle	(1875-1878)	40.57	41.04
John Morgan	(1878-1888)	31.13	28.66
William Spry	(1888-1891)	31.50	30.07
J. Golden Kimball	(1891-1894)	30.14	28.46
Elias S. Kimball	(1894-1898)	27.10	25.31

ordained, the 1,687 entries with complete ordination data showed that Fridays, Mondays, and Wednesdays all registered over 20 percent each. The combined totals for these days equal 78 percent. [see Table 3.11] As for the frequency of days of the month when missionaries were ordained, the 9th and 17th appeared to be abnormally high for unknown reasons. [see Table 3.12] When the days of the month are divided into thirds, the second third of the month seems to have the highest number of ordinations, 42.4 percent. When months are divided into four weeks, the third week registers highest at 46.7 percent, while the second week equals 34.5 percent.

October, April, and November emerged as the most frequent months for ordination to a Southern States mission. These three months register 40.6 percent of total activity for the 1,688 entries listing ordination months. [see Table 3.13] This can be explained partially by the Church's semiannual General Conferences, which were held in April and October. Until the early 1880s, most missionaries were called on missions from the pulpit at General Conferences or set apart at conference time. When President John Taylor slowly discontinued this practice and replaced it with letters from the Church's missionary department,[35] these too must have coincided with such meetings. It appears that even though the method of notifying missionaries changed over the years, October and April remained important months for calling missionaries.

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[35]Hughes, 25-28.

Table 3.11--Frequency of Ordination Day for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Week	Number	Percent
Sunday	33	2.0
Monday	481	28.5
Tuesday	174	10.3
Wednesday	342	20.3
Thursday	85	5.0
Friday	493	29.2
Saturday	79	4.7
missing	2	missing
Total	1,689	100

Table 3.12--Frequency of Ordination Day for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Month	Number	Percent
1	25	1.5
2	35	2.1
3	35	2.1
4	42	2.5
5	35	2.1
6	71	4.2
7	89	5.3
8	89	5.3
9	139	8.2
10	66	3.9
11	97	5.7
12	58	3.4
13	58	3.4
14	76	4.5
15	89	5.3
16	49	2.9
17	112	6.6
18	40	2.4
19	93	5.5
20	44	2.6
21	28	1.7
22	37	2.2
23	38	2.3
24	18	1.1
25	46	2.7
26	49	2.9
27	25	1.5
28	27	1.6
29	28	1.7
30	9	0.5
31	40	2.4
missing	2	missing
Total	1,689	100.1

Table 3.13--Frequency of Ordination Month for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Month	Number	Percent
January	130	7.7
February	141	8.4
March	119	7.0
April	222	13.2
May	152	9.0
June	101	6.0
July	68	4.0
August	58	3.4
September	95	5.6
October	275	16.3
November	187	11.1
December	140	8.3
missing	1	missing
Total	1,689	100.0

Conferences

Between 1867 and 1898, the SSM included fifteen states. However, the mission boundaries constantly changed. Many of the individual states comprised what mission leaders called conferences or districts. States such as Tennessee and Alabama were divided in half early in the mission's history, and then went through subsequent divisions later as the mission continued to grow. For ease and simplicity, and because mission records fail to consistently record the subdivisions of the larger states, the following table shows the distribution of missionaries in each conference by state because of the few years the individual conferences were open. [see Table 3.14] Thus, nearly half of the elders, or 47.5 percent of the 1,627 entries listing conferences, were called to SSM to serve in one of three main states: Tennessee, Alabama, or North Carolina.

As mentioned previously, 106 missionaries were born in Southern states.[36] However, this fact did not necessarily mean they served their missions in those same states. Cross tabulations indicated the only exception seemed to be for Kentucky; of the 15 men who were born in Kentucky, seven were assigned to labor in the state. No other correlations between Southern birth state and assigned mission conference exist.

Cross tabulations revealed differences in lengths of mission within the

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[36]Of the 106 born in Southern states, only 79 of these entries included the conferences in which they served.

Table 3.14--Number of Missionaries Who Served in Each State in the Southern States Mission, 1877-1898

Conferences by State	Number of Missionaries	Percent
Tennessee	322	19.8
Alabama	270	16.6
North Carolina	180	11.1
Virginia	159	9.8
Mississippi	145	8.9
Kentucky	145	8.9
South Carolina	130	8.0
West Virginia	96	5.9
Georgia	57	3.5
Florida	42	2.6
Texas	35	2.2
Louisiana	32	2.0
Maryland	8	0.5
Arkansas	3	0.2
Missouri	3	0.2
missing	62	missing
Total	1,689	100.2

various conferences. Surprisingly, missionaries laboring in South Carolina and Florida served the longest missions, averaging 2.1 years each. Conversely, those elders laboring in Texas and Georgia served the shortest length of time, less than 1.5 years. However, the reasons for this are unclear. [see Table 3.15]

Priesthood offices within each conference appeared to be evenly distributed with the exception of Florida and Louisiana. Neither state had missionaries who held the offices of high priest or elder. However, both states were opened under Elias S. Kimball in the late 1890s, which precluded them from receiving an even distribution of seventies, elders, and high priests. Because high priests and elders accounted for only 3.9 percent of Kimball's missionary force, it is obvious why some states were neglected.

Baptisms within Conferences

The Southern States Mission Manuscript History, located at LDS Church Archives, includes semi-annual statistical reports for the mission. However, statistical records for the entire mission and for each conference are incomplete or altogether absent at times. If these reports were compiled consistently, then several of those before 1887 are missing and may not have survived.[37] Fortunately, reports from 1887 to 1889 are recorded consistently every six months in February and August; no

[37]Primitive reports existed as early as 11 August 1878, but these are not detailed enough to compare with later statistical reports.

Table 3.15--Mean Length of Service in Each State for Southern States Missionaries, 1877-1898

Conference by state	Mean length of service (in years)
Florida	2.1
South Carolina	2.1
Mississippi	2.0
Alabama	1.9
Louisiana	1.9
Virginia	1.9
West Virginia	1.8
North Carolina	1.8
Kentucky	1.8
Tennessee	1.7
Georgia	1.5
Maryland	1.4
Arkansas	1.2
Texas	1.1
Missouri	0.63

statistical reports exist for 1890. And from 1891-1893, reports are again consistent and can be found every six months. From 1894-1896, these semi-annual reports were changed to annual reports. Thus, fairly complete and uniform data are available from 1887-1889 and from 1891-1896.

Statistical reports from the SSM during these years revealed a total of 3,839 baptisms for more than 1,760 missionaries.[38] Thus, individual missionaries averaged almost two baptisms each from 1887-1889 and 1891-1896. Obviously, some missionaries had fewer baptisms, and others had many more. Examining the numbers on a yearly basis revealed 1887 to have the highest average of baptisms per missionary. In 1887, 114 elders baptized 398 people, which averages 3.5 baptisms per missionary. The averages then dip to a low of 2.0 in 1889, but rose to an average of 2.9 baptisms per missionary by 1896. [see Table 3.16]

The top five baptizing conferences in the SSM were South Carolina, Mississippi, West Virginia, South Alabama, and Virginia. If conferences are compressed into states, the top baptizing state was Alabama, with 673 baptisms, followed by Tennessee, with 562 baptisms, and then South Carolina, with 549 baptisms.[39] [see Table 3.17]

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[38]Totals of missionaries are listed on each report except for 1895. In 1895, 228 elders were ordained to Southern States missions. However, only 98 missionaries had been assigned to the mission in 1894. A safe estimate for the number of elders in the South in 1895 would be about 300 elders.

[39]Alabama was split into two conferences, North Alabama and South Alabama, in 1887. Tennessee was divided in two as early as 1883 and then underwent several more divisions before the turn of the twentieth century.

Table 3.16--Baptismal Statistics for Conferences in the Southern States Mission, 1887-1889, 1891-1896

Conference	Number of Baptisms by Year									
	1887	1888	1889	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	Totals by state
South Carolina	64	31	16	20	83	82	59	68	126	549
Mississippi	74	33	20	10	38	95	66	55	66	457
West Virginia	38	53	19	36	25	37	27	46	121	402
South Alabama	14	36	25	3	5	25	41	89	147	385
Virginia	50	20	7	23	31	24	17	45	88	305
Middle Tennessee	-	19	24	1	8	26	55	107	57	297
North Alabama	14	34	13	21	25	18	31	51	81	288
North Carolina	40	14	10	10	5	20	20	27	80	226
East Tennessee	35	22	27	21	16	17	31	22	30	221
Kentucky	-	-	-	4	2	4	36	33	122	201
Florida	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	193	201
Georgia	31	72	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	148
Texas	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	4	59	63
West Tennessee	38	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	47
Maryland	-	-	13	16	-	-	-	-	-	29
Louisiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	20	20
Totals by year	398	342	220	165	238	348	383	555	1,190	3,839

Table 3.17--Frequency of Notations for Early Releases in the Southern States Mission, 1877-1898

Reason for Early Release	Frequency	Percent
Released because of sickness	171	38.3
Sick, requested own release	67	15.0
Transferred	59	13.2
Released, conditions at home	35	7.8
Released at own request	35	7.8
Leaders requested elder's release	28	6.3
Released	20	4.5
Returned without a release	10	2.2
Died	9	2.0
Failed to serve mission	4	0.9
Killed	4	0.9
Dishonorably released	2	0.4
Served a genealogy mission	2	0.4
Released for homesickness	1	0.2
Total	447	99.9

Releases

Early Releases. SSM elders, perhaps more than those in any other mission, suffered from a variety of illnesses. The most common ailments included malaria--also called the chills and fever--yellow fever, and pneumonia. The "Record of Southern States Missionaries, 1875-1898"[40] contains a list of SSM elders as well as abbreviated statements explaining why individuals returned early. Typical notations read: "Hon. rel. on a/c of sickness." Between 1875 and 1898, 237 missionaries returned home early because of sickness; some of these statements reveal that the men themselves requested their own releases; however, the majority of entries simply indicate they left the mission because of illnesses.[41] The mean length of service of elders who returned because of sickness was 0.7 years for the simple notation "Hon. rel. a/c of sickness," and 0.9 years for those who requested their own releases because of illnesses. The range of ages of those missionaries who returned early because of sickness were between 20.2 and 57.8 years old.

Missionaries also obtained early releases for reasons other than sickness. A total of 446 missionaries, or 26.4 percent of the 1,689 entries, returned early. Thirty-five elders requested their own releases. These missionaries had a mean length of

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[40]Southern States Mission Manuscript History, reel 1.

[41]The actual number may be much higher. This figure is derived from those statements that specifically denoted illness as the cause. Other notations could have included sickness--such as those reading "Rel. at own req."--but failed to state specific factors involved.

service of 1.1 years. Another thirty-five elders were released because of "conditions at home," and their mean length of service equaled 1.4 years. The phrase "conditions at home," often indicated financial problems, but in other cases it also entailed extreme sickness or the death of an immediate family member, quite often the missionary's wife.[42] Twenty-eight elders were released at the request of Church leaders, usually General Authorities and members of the First Presidency. The mean length of service for these men was 1.5 years. In some of these cases the men were wanted to fill another position of leadership, and in others, their families had written leaders requesting their releases--usually because of financial difficulties at home. [see Table 3.18]

Cross tabulations of missionaries who returned early by priesthood office and mission presidents' tenure reveal that John Morgan (1878-88) witnessed the highest proportion of elders who returned early.[43] Moreover, 35.1 percent of Morgan's entire missionary force, or 169 of the 482 who served under his direction, returned early. The second highest percentage occurred under President Elias S. Kimball (1894-98) when 25.0 percent of his 704 missionaries obtained early releases. [see Table 3.19]

Only ten missionaries, or 5.3 percent of the 1,689, left the South without

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[42]Numerous diaries and letters discuss the death of children at home. However, the vast majority of missionaries who experienced this situation did not return because of their children's death.

[43]Only seven more missionaries went home early under Elias S. Kimball's tenure, but he had a significantly larger missionary force than Morgan. Thus, when compared proportionately, Morgan's missionaries were the most likely to return home early.

Table 3.18--Frequency of Notations for Early Release from the Southern States Mission According to Priesthood Office, 1877-1898

Reason for Early Return	Priesthood Office		
	Seventy	Elder	High Priest
Released because of sickness	144	19	7
Sick, requested own release	65	1	1
Released because of conditions at home	32	2	1
Released at own request	28	3	4
Leaders requested missionary's release	23	4	1
Returned without a release	4	6	0
Total	296	35	14

Table 3.19--Release Day of Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Week	Number	Percent
Sunday	138	8.5
Monday	204	12.5
Tuesday	367	22.5
Wednesday	229	14.0
Thursday	285	17.5
Friday	235	14.4
Saturday	174	10.7
missing	57	missing
Total	1,689	100.1

obtaining an official release; these men averaged a mean length of service of 0.95 years. That number, 5.3 percent, seems quite low, especially since they filled these missions voluntarily.

Release Dates. The 1,632 entries that listed release dates showed most SSM elders received their releases to return home on Tuesdays, 22.5 percent, or Thursdays, 17.5 percent. [see Table 3.20] Releases usually came during the third (26.4 percent) or fourth weeks (32.2 percent) of each month. However, 9.9 percent of SSM elders were released on the first day of the month. As for frequency of release months, the 1,651 entries listing release dates showed 42.3 percent were released in the months of March (18.6 percent), November (13.4) or June (10.3); January and February were the least likely months to be released, registering only 5.2 and 4.8 percent respectively. The remaining months averaged 6.8 percent. [see Table 3.21]

Age at Release. SSM elders were released at a mean age of 31.19 years and their median age was 29.23 years.[44] Both the mean and median ages at release steadily decreased over the years because it paralleled the decrease in ages when missionaries were set apart. John Brown's elders (1867-69) had a mean release age of 41.69 years; thirty-one years later, missionaries had a mean release age of 29.13 years. [see Table 3.22]

Length of Missions. The mean length of missions, for elders who did not

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[44]These figures are based on the 1,610 entries with complete data for both birthdates and release dates.

Table 3.20--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Month	Frequency	Percent
1	161	9.9
2	46	2.8
3	43	2.6
4	27	1.7
5	42	2.6
6	45	2.8
7	26	1.6
8	31	1.9
9	26	1.6
10	86	5.3
11	36	2.2
12	40	2.5
13	36	2.2
14	30	1.8
15	78	4.8
16	27	1.7
17	36	2.2
18	84	5.1
19	66	4.0
20	101	6.2
21	39	2.4
22	67	4.1
23	98	6.0
24	46	2.8
25	48	2.9
26	35	2.1
27	88	5.4
28	47	2.9
29	33	2.0
30	46	2.7
31	18	1.1
missing	57	missing
Total	1,689	99.9

Table 3.21--Frequency of Release Months for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Month	Number	Percent
January	86	5.2
February	80	4.8
March	307	18.6
April	120	7.3
May	109	6.6
June	170	10.3
July	106	6.4
August	123	7.5
September	116	7.0
October	88	5.3
November	222	13.4
December	124	7.5
missing	38	missing
Total	1,651	99.9

Table 3.22--Age of Southern States Missionaries at Release by Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President		Mean Age at Release (in years)	Median Age at Release (in years)
John Brown	(1867-1869)	41.69	44.08
Henry G. Boyle	(1875-1878)	41.52	41.32
John Morgan	(1878-1888)	32.60	30.20
William Spry	(1888-1891)	33.13	32.01
J. Golden Kimball	(1891-1894)	32.03	30.43
Elias S. Kimball	(1894-1898)	29.13	27.47

accept early releases, between 1867 and 1898 was 1.81 years and the median length 2.03 years. When the data were examined by mission president, it was discovered that the length of missions steadily increased between 1867 and 1898. Missionaries under John Brown (1867-69) served an average of 1.50 years, while those under Elias S. Kimball (1894-98) averaged 2.03 years. Those working under Henry G. Boyle (1875-78) served the shortest missions overall: a mean of 1.05 years and a median of 1.72 years. Thus, as the mission progressed, the length of service increased. [see Table 3.23] Missionaries called to serve in the 1890s tended to be much younger than their predecessors. Perhaps their youth represented freedom from family concerns[45] since they left parents and siblings instead of wives and children, thus giving them less responsibility and enabling them to remain on missions longer. Perhaps they also had stronger constitutions than their older colleagues, which enabled them to serve in the South longer.[46]

An analysis revealed a weak negative correlation between the age at baptism and the length of missions; that is, the younger the elder was baptized, the longer he served.

Priesthood Office and Length of Missions. Upon further examination, it was discovered that priesthood office--seventy, elder, and high priest--tended to

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[45]By the 1890s, only a small percentage of missionaries were married.

[46]Hughes also acknowledged the lowered age of missionaries by 1900. However, he was quick to point out the Church did not have a policy about ages for missionaries in the nineteenth century: "Age was not a prime factor in selecting men to serve missions," 135.

Table 3.23--Length of Southern States Mission by Mission President, 1867-1898

Mission President		Mean Length of Service (in years)	Median Length of Service (in years)
John Brown	(1868-1869)	1.47	1.62
Henry G. Boyle	(1875-1878)	1.05	0.66
John Morgan	(1878-1888)	1.55	1.77
William Spry	(1888-1891)	1.65	1.98
J. Golden Kimball	(1891-1894)	1.87	2.10
Elias S. Kimball	(1894-1898)	2.03	2.22

determine length of mission service.[47] Seventies typically served 1.84 years, elders 1.64 years, and high priests 1.46 years.[48] The major reason for this difference seemed to be connected to the individual's health and to his responsibilities at home, such as financial problems or death. No significant difference between the average length of missions was discovered when those missionaries who returned early for health were deleted. Thus, age, health, and responsibilities at home tended to shorten the length of missions for many high priests and some elders.

By the early 1890s there was a tacit understanding that missions should last two years. An SSM missionary, Elder George Tilton Hyde, recorded that although he was sick and was offered an early release, he refused because "I says [*sic*] 'I'm not going home under two years no matter what happens.!'"[49] Hughes's study echoes Hyde's opinion. Hughes found that the average mission between 1849 and 1900 lasted roughly two years.[50] Conversely, Price discovered the average mission between 1860 and 1894 lasted 21.53 months. However, when Price compared

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[47]Price failed to report any correlations between priesthood office and duration of mission. However, he concluded the average missionary in his study served 21.53 months between 1860-1894. "Duration [of mission] appears to be an almost direct correlate of 'mission age.' It appears to have been almost axiomatic that the older the missionary, the shorter the duration of the mission. The climb back to longer duration times after the death of Brigham Young accompanied the use of younger missionaries." (118).

[48]These figures are based on the 1,631 entries with complete data for ordination and release dates as well as priesthood office. They also include all missionaries who were given early releases.

[49]George Tilton Hyde, Autobiography, typescript, 5, HBLL.

[50]Hughes, 150.

lengths of domestic to foreign missions he found domestic ones averaged 16.3 months and foreign ones 26.9 months.[51] Nevertheless, the statistics of SSM missionaries show that in reality missions to the South were slightly shorter than two years.

Marriage

None of the records I consulted for this study of SSM elders included marital information. However, William Hughes conducted random samples of all missionaries by decade between 1850 and 1890 and concluded that nearly 60 percent of missionaries were married. Of this 60 percent who were married, almost 30 percent were polygamists. Hughes also noted a trend that began in the 1870s and continued till the 1890s: as missionaries' ages decreased, fewer were married.[52] Further research needs to be conducted into this area of nineteenth-century Southern States missionaries' lives.

Summary

This statistical analysis of SSM elders has enhanced existing information about those who served in the South and will be valuable to future researchers of

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[51]Price, 111, 120.

[52]Hughes, 176-181.

specific missions as well as family historians. Because of the statistical results, many areas, including baptismal age, residence at time of call, and analysis of priesthood office have been explored in depth.

To recap the information, the typical SSM elder was born in Utah. He was baptized around the age of eight, held the office of a seventy in the Melchizedek priesthood, and was set apart as a missionary while in his mid- to late twenties. Finally, his Southern sojourn lasted roughly two years. These statistics have helped uncover another dimension of the Mission's history, which ultimately produces a clearer picture of nineteenth-century elders in the South.

Although this statistical analysis contributes original information about who served missions in the South, it reveals only a single dimension of history. The statistical information about missionaries must be augmented and humanized by stories of the elders' experiences to recapture the multiple dimensions of the past.

CHAPTER 4

MISSIONARY LIFE

Nineteenth-century LDS missionary life was not for the fainthearted. The men who composed the statistics in the last chapter suffered long and toiled hard. This chapter attempts to humanize the statistics and to relate some of the elders' experiences during their Southern sojourn.

Missionary service often entailed leaving families[1]--either wives or parents--traveling without purse or scrip,[2] and confronting a new country, language, or culture, all with no formal training. Southern States missionaries, in particular, needed to possess courage, boldness, tenacity, and a strong commitment to their religion. Possession of these qualities enabled elders to enjoy the good times and endure the bad.

Many missionaries recorded the experiences of their Southern sojourn. A significant proportion of Southern States missionaries kept journals, several of which have been preserved in various Utah archives. Although the journal authors served

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[1]Many nineteenth-century missionaries were married to at least one wife. However, there were some younger, single elders as well. The mean age of Southern States elders at ordination was 29.7 years old; the median age was 27.5 years old.

[2]Nearly all nineteenth-century missionaries, and some twentieth-century elders, traveled without purse or scrip, meaning they relied on God's mercy and the generosity of the people they encountered for food and lodging.

in different localities at different times, a surprising uniformity exists among the records.[3] Many elders discuss receiving their mission calls, being set apart by the Church's General Authorities, traveling to their respective destinations, and several describe the new landscapes, culture, and foods; nearly all diaries record similar experiences of sickness, traveling without purse or scrip, allaying prejudice, and encountering persecution.

These journal accounts detail the intricacies of missionaries' lives, revealing the drastic changes in climate and culture between the West and the South. Thus, culture shock, illnesses, happiness, uncertainty, and anxiety punctuated nineteenth-century missionaries' lives in the Southern States.

The Call

Through the end of the 1870s, prospective missionaries' names were announced–without prior notice to those called– during the LDS Church's semiannual General Conferences in April and October. For example, Rudger Clawson remembered the day he was invited to fill a mission, at age 22 in April 1879:

> I was sitting there quietly [in General Conference] when I heard my name called out for a mission to the Southern States. You can very well believe that this was like a bolt from a clear sky. It nearly took me off my feet--it

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[3]This is not to say that one is representative of all, because each possesses its own unique qualities. Rather, most of the missionaries' experiences are quite uniform, and the language used to describe these experiences is somewhat similar.

would have taken me off my feet had I been standing.

But young Clawson, like many others, immediately determined to accept the call because he believed Church leaders spoke on God's behalf. "'Whether I speak by my own voice or the voice of my servants, it is the same.' So I interpreted this call to mean that it was from the Lord and that I was to go upon the Lord's errand."[4]

Similarly, J. Golden Kimball, a veteran of the Southern States Mission (SSM), humorously described circumstances surrounding his call as SSM president. Not only had he been given short notice of his assignment, but leaders had neglected to inquire about his finances, family, health "or whether my teeth were all right, etc.; they just appointed me without asking me any thing [*sic*], and I had faith enough to go."[5] Yet his acceptance was not without reservations. "I felt that it was an honor [to be called] yet it seemed to me that it was not the place for me."[6]

As can be imagined, the reaction to missionary calls varied. Nearly all stated that they were willing to serve when called upon. However, this willingness should not be mistaken for a lack of anxiety–most had preconceived notions about the

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[4]Rudger Clawson, Papers, Bx 1, Fd 1, p 32, Archives, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereinafter abbreviated as ML. He served a shortened mission because his companion, Joseph Standing, was murdered 21 July 1879. Clawson accompanied the body home, but later returned to Georgia to attend the trial. Interestingly, Clawson's patriarchal blessing, reminiscent of those given by the Biblical Jacob to his sons that predicted certain future events, given 22 years earlier, promised that "No enemy shall have power over thee--not even a hair of thy head shall fall by a foe." Bx 19, Fd 1.

[5]J. Golden Kimball, Conference Talk delivered at the One-Hundred and Second Semi-Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [1931] (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1931), 56.

[6]J. Golden Kimball, Diary 6, Bx 1, Fd 21, p 1, 15 April 1891 - 31 July 1892, ML.

various missions gleaned from returned elders, newspaper reports,[7] and the Mormon rumor mill.

To further complicate matters, the SSM had swiftly acquired a reputation for violence and was arguably one of the more difficult missions in which to serve. The general Church populace in Utah knew of the mission's violent reputation. When Charles Flake received his call to the SSM, he observed: "Every one seems to pity me & they all have a prayer in their hearts for my welfare."[8]

Brigham Young's successor as Church President, John Taylor, slowly discontinued the practice of calling out names during General Conference; by the early and mid-1880s he began notifying perspective missionaries, throughout the year, by mail or telegraph.[9] These letters always carried the infamous "Box B" as a return address.

An article in the *Millennial Star*, the Church's European periodical, described the general process of selecting missionaries in the last decade of the nineteenth century: local ecclesiastical leaders submitted names of men whom they deemed to

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[7]Mission leaders and missionaries frequently wrote letters to the editor of the *Deseret News*, and other Utah newspapers, informing friends and Saints of mission conditions or relating various experiences they encountered. The *Journal History* and the Southern States Mission Historical Records and Minutes, both at LDS Church Archives, are scrap books of such articles.

[8]Charles Flake, Diary, 7 April 1883, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, hereinafter abbreviated as HBLL.

[9]See William E. Hughes, "A Profile of the Missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1849-1900," (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1986), 25-29. Hughes theorized that the Church's increased population coupled with the railroad--which allowed missionaries to leave in any season--caused this change in procedure.

be "morally and spiritually qualified to do missionary duty," then General Authorities chose names from those lists. Upon receiving official notice of their missionary call, men were to reply regarding their willingness or ability to serve.[10] Then Church leaders sent an official follow-up letter to the men that included departure dates and other necessary information.[11]

Missionaries typically had less than a month to prepare. For example, Joshua Hawkes had only two weeks' notice before he was requested to begin his journey. "While working . . . a letter from the First Presidency was handed to me giving me notice that I was called on a mission . . . and had but two weeks to prepare for going."[12]

Setting Apart and Ordination

All missionaries from the West were instructed to pass through Salt Lake City to be set apart and ordained by a General Authority and receive some parting advice. Elder B. H. Roberts recalled that he was one of forty-two men, each called

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[10]Thousands of such letters are contained in the "First Presidency Missionary Calls and Recommendations, 1877-1918," Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereinafter abbreviated as Church Archives.

[11]"The Mormon Missionary," *Millennial Star* (31 August 1899):552.

[12]Joshua Hawkes, Autobiography, HBLL, 20.

to various missions, to be set apart.[13] Roberts noted that all but two received promises of a safe return from their mission; he then "wondered if it were significant" that he did not receive such a promise.[14] Another missionary, Elder George H. Carver, noted that in addition to the ordination a "vast amount of fatherly advise [*sic*] . . . was given to us," but he failed to record the particulars.[15] Another missionary, Elder James Hubbard, outlined some of the instruction: he was warned against over confidence; cautioned about deceitful men; counseled to avoid relationships with women; and instructed to seek the Holy Spirit, keep the

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[13]In the LDS Church, men and women are set apart as missionaries and given keys of authority to do missionary work. As part of the activity, they are also "counseled, instructed, and blessed." The term is derived from the symbolical act of being separated from the world (Leviticus 20: 26). In nineteenth-century LDS Church history, the words *ordain* and *set apart* were synonymous. See Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillian, 1992), s.v. "Setting Apart," by Dennis L. Thompson.

[14]It was Roberts's opinion that this promise of safety was a relatively common clause in ordinations. Roberts, "Life Story of Brigham H. Roberts," B.H. Roberts Collection, Bx 1, Bk 1, p 70, ML. A letter from Sterling McMurrin to Everett Cooley in Bx 1, Fd 2 explained that this work was an autobiography typed by Roberts's daughter and secretary, Georgia Roberts Livingston.

[15]George H. Carver, Missionary Journal, June 1879, HBLL. At Church headquarters, elders were also instructed to report to the Church's Historian's Office so they could be listed in the Missionary Record: a ledger of missionaries that included names, parents' names as well as mother's maiden name, birth date, birthplace, baptismal date, baptizer, residence at time of call, priesthood, mission, authority who set them apart, as well as departure and return dates. The Missionary Record, Book B was begun in 1860 and ended in 1894. This collection includes 5,867 names. Incidently, Book A, reconstructed in the early twentieth century, listed missionaries called between 1830 and 1859. Although the exact origin of the Missionary Record is unknown, it was kept at the Church President's office and was begun under the direction of Brigham Young. One of Brigham's counselors or clerks may have even suggested the idea of keeping a record of missionary activity. Telephone conversation with LDS Church Archivist Ron Watt, 19 March 1996, Salt Lake City, Utah.

commandments, and eschew sin.[16]

Traveling to the Mission Field

Once the elders had completed their business in Salt Lake City, they left for their respective missions.[17] Since the transcontinental rail line ran through Ogden, Utah, this city, forty-five miles north of Salt Lake City, became the departure hub. If family or friends lived nearby, they usually accompanied the missionaries to the depot. Elder George H. Carver noted that "a large concourse of brethren and sisters . . . met at the depot to witness our departure."[18]

Missionaries often left in groups, although not all were destined for the same mission. Some headed to Europe. Others traveled to Canada or to domestic missions. The companies eventually separated as each elder took his different route.

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[16]James Hubbard, Diary, 12 April 1895, HBLL.

[17]In the nineteenth century, lacking a pre-Missionary Training Center--a place designed to teach missionaries about cultures, languages, and religion prior to departing for their assigned areas--days, elders received no specialized language or proselyting training. Instead, missionaries were to rely heavily on the Holy Spirit to help them learn languages and to decide which topics they should preach. (The Church did not develop the missionary discussions, formal lessons about the Church and its doctrine given to prospective members, until the 1940s.) Interestingly, few missionaries were required to learn languages in the late nineteenth century; the missionary force was primarily concentrated in the United States and England. The majority of elders who did travel to other countries tended to be natives who had emigrated to Zion or whose heritage stemmed from that country. See Hughes, 177-78, and Rex Thomas Price, "The Mormon Missionary of the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991), 91.

[18]Carver, June 1879.

The long hours on the train often induced reflection and contemplation of future labors. In some cases, the train trek itself presented opportunities for missionary work.[19]

The majority of missionaries bound for the South, and almost all who returned from the region, traveled through Kansas City. Consequently, a few elders took the opportunity to visit nearby Church history sites[20] and meet important people from the era of Mormon settlement in western Missouri.[21] From Kansas City, trains usually passed through St. Louis and then arrived at the missionary's assigned region, or, in later years, at mission headquarters in Chattanooga,

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[19]While Elder B. H. Roberts was traveling, he explained that passengers from another car discovered the missionaries' presence on the train and requested that one come talk to them. Roberts, Bx 1, Bk 1, p. 70.

[20]These Church history sites originated during the 1830s when the early Saints settled in Jackson County, Missouri. Some of the sites included the temple lot in Independence, Missouri, Liberty Jail, and other sites from that era of Church history.

[21]For example, John Morgan, Matthias Cowley, and Nathan Tanner all visited David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. Morgan and Cowley also called on Mormon advocate General Alexander W. Doniphan. John Morgan visited David Whitmer twice, first on 13 April 1882 with Matthias Cowley, as noted in a letter dated 20 April 1882 to John Taylor, and then again on 1 March 1883, Bx 1, vol 2, and Bx 1 fd 4, John Hamilton Morgan, Papers, ML. Nathan Tanner met Whitmer on 11 May 1886. See Tanner, Diaries, Church Archives. John Morgan stated that Doniphan "retains a lively recollection of our people and of the peculiar circumstances surrounding his association with them, and of a visit some few years ago to Salt Lake City[;] all with whom we came in contact treated us very kindly and we felt well repaid for our day's delay." It is significant that they were treated well because the 27 October 1838 Extermination Order, demanding all Mormons evacuate the state, was not formally repealed until 25 June 1976. John Hamilton Morgan, Bx 1, Vol 2, Morgan to John Taylor, 20 April 1882.

Tennessee.[22]

Arrival in Mission

Before the official mission headquarters was established in Chattanooga in 1882, elders traveled directly to their assigned areas. This arrangement occasionally caused problems for new missionaries. Notices of arriving elders did not always travel quickly, and if they did, the problem of logistics had to be addressed; senior companions could not always meet new elders at the depots so these missionaries were often required to travel to a rendezvous point over unfamiliar territory.

Elder Rudger Clawson's experiences are representative of those of others during this era. Upon his arrival at Varnells Station, Georgia, Clawson felt anxious and lonely; he was to meet his companion, Joseph Standing, in a small village seventy miles away. Because no railroad traveled that way, he was obliged to walk over inferior or nonexistent Southern roads[23]--and with new, poor-fitting boots.[24]

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[22]From 1867 to 1875 the mission had no official headquarters; the mission president's field of labor was considered the administrative office. By 1877, however, a small room that doubled as an office was rented in Nashville, Tennessee; mission headquarters remained there until October 1882 when President John Morgan moved to Chattanooga. Although no official reason exists, Morgan's diary intimated that cheaper railroad fares played a role in the decision to move. See John Morgan's diary entries, 4-9 October 1882, Bx 1, Fd 4.

[23]Even Southern cities had few paved streets until the 1890s. See John B. Boles, *The South Through Time: A History of an American Region* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ:Prentice Hall, 1995), 384.

[24]Clawson, Bx 1, Fd 1, p 33. His account during these first few days alone contains many delightful stories and epitomizes a youthful, but zealous, elder.

Later, once the mission headquarters settled in Chattanooga, the mission president or, more commonly because of his absence, the mission secretary greeted elders at the depot. While in Chattanooga, the mission president or secretary often took the new elders sightseeing. The most common attractions were Cameron Hill, which overlooked the city, Lookout Mountain, Chickamauga[25] (the Civil War battlefield and cemetery) and, later, a large iron works plant.[26] After a day or two in Chattanooga, new elders received the names of their senior companions, then traveled to their assigned areas, otherwise known as conferences.

Geography and Climate

Southern topography differs radically from that of the intermountain West. Western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee are the only regions that contain mountains reminiscent of the Rockies. Many who served outside these two areas often wrote about how much they missed the mountains of home; perhaps this explains why Lookout Mountain and Cameron Hill seemed to top the elders'

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[25]The Battle of Chickamauga occurred on 19-20 September 1863. Having just sent some of his troops to Knoxville, the Confederate commander, Braxton Bragg, was shorthanded when U.S. Grant arrived. Consequently, the Union army defeated the Confederates and, as a result, gained control of Tennessee.

[26]Elder Charles Flake's journal entry for 15 April 1883 also details his sightseeing. He "visited the cemetery where 12956 soldiers were laid away to rest. . . . We then visited a colored meeting or place of baptism. There was one that I thought was posesed with evil spirits the way she hollowed and tumbaled around but I found afterwards that she was only posed with the Holy Ghost [original spelling retained]." Diary, HBLL.

tourist list.

Another, more important, contrast between the South and West is annual precipitation. Because 71.3 percent of all SSM elders came from Utah, it is helpful to understand the state's climate. Between 1875 and 1898, northern Utah averaged 16 inches of rainfall a year; only four of those years, 1875, 1876, 1878 and 1885, witnessed above average rainfall, between 20 and 24 inches. Conversely, southern Utah averaged only 6.79 inches a year during this twenty-three year time period.[27] Coming from arid, western deserts that averaged under 16 inches of rainfall, most missionaries experienced difficulty adjusting to a region with nearly three times that amount, 40 to 50 inches of rain per year.

Almost every journal meticulously recorded weather conditions, especially rain.[28] All authors noted the numerous occasions they walked in mud, a miserable experience that made "the roads very disagreeable to travel."[29] One missionary, Elder Henry Eddington, remarked that he walked twenty miles in such conditions.[30] Traveling in rain and mud exacted a high price from the elders, often causing physical exhaustion and, undoubtedly, contributing to a weakening of their

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[27]John A. Widtsoe and William Peterson, *Dodge's Geography of Utah* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Company, 1908), 16.

[28]Recording weather conditions appears to be common among nineteenth-century journal authors. In the case of SSM missionaries, perhaps their farming background influenced the mention of weather, or maybe the fact that few were accustomed to so much rain prompted them to record such information.

[29]Frederick Morgan, Diaries, 13 May 1890, Fd 1, Vol 1, HBLL.

[30]Henry Eddington, Mission Journal, 9 June 1886, HBLL. Eddington often referred to walking as "Mormon conveyance" throughout his diary.

immune systems.

The Southern heat and humidity plagued new elders who were not accustomed to them. Elder John H. Gibbs explained the conditions: "I tell you it is hot hot hot! I take off my shirt at night and when I drop it down it drops like a dish rag and remains wet all night, sweat cant [*sic*] describe it."[31] Traveling in extreme heat and humidity, often on half-empty stomachs, also reduced missionaries' normal vitality and stamina.

The South's sweltering climate fostered large insect and reptile populations, other unhealthful features of the region. Elders from the West often made particular notations of fleas, ticks, and snakes in their journals. For example, Elder Gibbs explained to his wife that Tennessee "is blessed with insects. . . . We can pick them off all most [*sic*] any time in the day. This country is also filled with all kinds of snakes."[32] Elder Moses W. Taylor found fifteen fleas on his body, but his companion fared much worse: "Bro Church looked like he had been covered for his skin was so blotched that you could not find a clear place large enough to put your finger on."[33]

Sometimes missionaries used humor to describe these unpleasantries. Elder John M. Fairbanks playfully described his battle with fleas: "Persecution raged high last night. . . . but I faught [*sic*] manfully and succeeded in killing six of the

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[31]John H. Gibbs to Louisa Gibbs, 12 June 1883, Bx 1, Fd 2, HBLL.

[32]Ibid., 21 April 1883, Bx 2, Fd 1.

[33]Moses W. Taylor, Journal, 4 July 1890, Bx 1 Fd 4, HBLL.

company. . . . [which] was composed entirely of flees, [*sic*]."[34] Fairbanks later summarized his activities: "spent the evening . . . in athletic exercises with the fleas, they would bite and jump and I would kick & scratch."[35] Similarly, Elder Charles Flake devoted an entire journal entry to insects:

> Bro. Morrell reports all well in the lower part of the state [Mississippi]. . . . He also reports that they have some friends that stick close to them, he draws the Photo of some as follows . . . and wants to know if I recognize any of them, and says I can get any size or color I want if I will just send in my order, and they will send me a live sample. How I would like to get rid of what we have here [Paris, MS]. [*sic*] for they are just coming in now in full tilt.[36]

The Southern climate fostered such pests; however, elders probably encountered them even more frequently because they typically found lodging with the poorer social classes[37] and because they often walked through wooded areas.

Even though missionaries joked about fleas, ticks and insects, some of these bugs were actual threats to life. Of the nine elders who died of natural causes in the

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[34]John M. Fairbanks, Mission Diaries, Fd 6, 22 March 1883, HBLL. Fairbanks also served an art mission to France in the 1890s. Elders from other missions, even into the twentieth century, detail struggles with fleas. See Lucile C. Tate, *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982,) 41. This book describes Richards's battles with fleas in the Netherlands Mission.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Flake, 12 April 1884.

[37]Under President J. Golden Kimball in the early 1890s, missionaries were instructed to reach better classes of people. See J. Golden Kimball, Southern States Mission Circular Letter, 20 February 1892, in Henry Foster, Papers 1892-1913, Church Archives; and Heather M. Seferovich, "The Golden Years: The Southern States Mission Administration of J. Golden Kimball," History 690 paper, 1994, 21.

South,[38] three succumbed to malaria or yellow fever, two to typhoid fever,[39] two to pneumonia, and the last two list no cause of death.[40] Numerous other missionaries contracted these diseases, but they eventually recovered or were sent home.

Many elders, particularly those in the swampy areas of South Carolina and Tennessee, became infected with malaria. Some cases were so acute that missionaries either asked or were instructed to return home. Of the 237 elders who left the mission because of sickness between 1877-1898, chills and fever seems to have been the most common culprit.[41]

The Italian word *malaria* translates literally as "bad air." This translation reveals the pre-1880 notions that swamp gases triggered the ailment. In 1880, however, scientists discovered parasites in malaria patients' blood samples; eighteen years later, researchers finally determined that the disease was transmitted through anopheles mosquitoes. Malaria's incubation period ranges from one to three days.

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[38]This number excludes the missionaries who were murdered.

[39]Typhoid fever is not spread by insects, but rather through food and water contaminated with infected human or animal excrements. This is further evidence of the unhealthful circumstances to which the SSM elders were exposed.

[40]Southern States Mission, "Historical Records and Minutes," "Record of Missionaries in the Southern States Mission, 1877-1898" reel 1, Church Archives. No cause of death was listed for the remaining two missionaries.

[41]Missionary Record, Books B & C, Church Archives and Southern States Mission "Historical Records and Minutes," "Record of Missionaries in the Southern States Mission, 1877-1898," reel 1, Church Archives. These two sources indicate when elders returned because of sickness or ill health; however, neither lists specific illnesses. The deduction that malaria caused many elders to return home is based on reading numerous diaries, reminiscences, and family histories.

Victims commonly complain of fever, chills, headaches, and weakness. To alleviate such symptoms, nineteenth-century remedies prescribed quinine and quinidine. Once people become infected with malaria and survived the initial attack, they commonly suffered relapses months or even years later.[42] Further, some strains of the parasites could remain in the affected person's body for up to thirty years, reducing his or her resistance to other diseases. SSM elders typically referred to malaria as the chills and fever. No age group or social class escaped the disease in the South.

Yellow fever also took its toll on several SSM elders. This disease's incubation period is three times longer than that of malaria, ranging from three and six days. Symptoms include a jaundiced coloring, fever, headaches, backaches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes internal bleeding. Moreover, yellow fever can cause degeneration of internal organs. After initial infection, many patients recover and retain a life-long immunity, but an unlucky five to ten percent die within two weeks of contracting the disease.[43] Because the symptoms of yellow fever and

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[42]See *The New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*, 1993, s.v. "Malaria," by Robert Herman; John Duffy, "The Impact of Malaria on the South," in *Disease and Distinctiveness in the American South*, eds. Todd L. Savitt and James Harvey Young (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 29-33; and Mary E. Stovall, "'To Be, To Do, and To Suffer': Responses to Illness and Death in the Nineteenth-Century South," *Journal of Mississippi History* 52 (May 1990): 95-96. Malaria continued to be a problem in the South until the 1940s.

[43]See *The New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*, 1993, s.v. "Yellow Fever," by J. Michael S. Dixon; Jo Ann Carrigan, "Yellow Fever: Scourge of the South," in *Disease and Distinctiveness in the American South*, 55-78, and Mary E. Stovall's article, "'To Be, To Do, and To Suffer': Responses to Illness and Death in the Nineteenth-century Central South." Dr. Stovall identified several yellow fever epidemics, the worst of

malaria are so similar, most missionaries used the names of the two ailments interchangeably. Since victims of yellow fever never have relapses, I am led to believe that more missionaries suffered from malaria since many complained of bouts with chills and fever later in life. A Southern mission was not just immediately hazardous but could affect elders' health for years afterward.[44]

Traveling without Purse or Scrip

From its inception in 1830, Church missionaries generally followed the New Testament's ancient apostles' injunction of traveling without purse or scrip.[45] Thus, nineteenth-century Mormon missionaries believed they were to depend upon God's mercy and the generosity of the people they encountered for food and lodging. The Church's modern revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants endorsed the practice of the ancient apostles and commanded contemporary elders to follow their example.[46] "This mode of operation was a test for both the missionary and the people he contacted. It encouraged faith on the part of the missionary and sacrifice

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which occurred in 1878. The last epidemic struck in 1879. However, the majority of mission diaries deal with the disease in the 1880s and 1890s.

[44]See David Cannon, Autobiography, HBLL. After serving a brief mission to the South, his health was weakened for years and he soon died.

[45]See Doctrine and Covenants 84:62-95;Matthew 10:9-10; and Luke 6:8, 9:3, 10:4, 22:25, 22:35-6.

[46]Doctrine & Covenants 24:18; 84:77-78, 86.

for both."[47] Defending this traveling method, one Church leader remarked, "Our mode of preaching the Gospel came from the Lord, and who dare be so presumptuous as to question His wisdom?"[48]

Richard L. Jensen has commented extensively upon this model of missionary work, calling it "the essence of early Mormonism." He recognized that within the LDS community traveling without purse or scrip represented "Latter-day Saint values and stood for a certain combination of faith, courage, and resourcefulness."[49] Traveling in this mode was as much a rite of passage to the vast numbers of older men who traveled this way in the early days of the Church, as it was an economic necessity.

While having many obvious disadvantages, this method of traveling did possess some benefits. Most elders would not have been financially able to fully support themselves as well as their families at home while serving a full-time mission; even though few elders traveled with absolutely no money, they spent what little they had very frugally--usually only when they had missed several

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[47]Richard L. Jensen, "Without Purse or Scrip?: Financing Latter-day Saint Missionary Work in Europe in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Mormon History* 12(1985):4.

[48]J. Golden Kimball, "Our Missions and Missionary Work," *The Contributor* 15 (July 1894):550. Because of such statements, Jensen remarked that relatively "few who spoke or wrote wished to acknowledge its gradual demise or to speak positively of alternative approaches," 10.

[49]Jensen, 13.

consecutive meal or when hosts demanded payment.[50] Moreover, this type of traveling ended up being an effective missionary tool; it required missionaries to mingle with families, and more baptisms resulted from these intimate associations than from elders' mass meetings.[51] Finally, SSM President J. Golden Kimball believed this method produced powerful faith in the missionaries: "The great majority of men, with few exceptions . . . [cannot] exercise the same faith, when provided with plenty of money, as can the poor, humble, dependent servant of God, who feels that he is no better than his Master."[52]

Because missionaries tended to travel without purse or scrip, they wandered from house to house, rarely spending more than one night in the same place, unless Church members or relatives hosted them. Because elders' regular itineraries necessitated constant travel, missionaries typically walked between one and twenty miles a day, and occasionally more. Elder Oliver Belnap recalled how he and his

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[50]When missionaries bought food, they most often purchased 10 cents worth of soda crackers. Occasionally, they supplemented the crackers with 10 cents worth of cheese or a small can of sardines.

[51]After arriving at these ideas independently, I learned that historian Chad Orton noted similar benefits. In a family history project, Orton listed three advantages: "First, it allowed Church leaders to call on missions men who might not otherwise be able to serve because of financial constraints. Second, in an era of few members and even fewer branches outside Utah, it allowed for greater contact between the local members and the missionaries, often the members' only link to the Church. . . . Third, it allowed missionaries to discuss the gospel with individuals who might not otherwise have taken the opportunity to listen to the elders." "Southern States Missionary," copy in possession of author.

[52]J. Golden Kimball, "Our Missions and Missionary Work." This statement was probably made in an attempt to persuade elders and their families that going without purse or scrip was the best method of travel. In practice, however, few missionaries traveled entirely without financial resources in the 1890s.

companion walked until they "began to get foot sore and some what stiffened in the knee joints." This condition necessitated an "occasional foot bath to keep down inflammation thus making our progress slow."[53]

Traveling such great distances on foot, or as one elder called it "Mormon Conveyance,"[54] was physically taxing. And many missionaries did so on empty or nearly empty stomachs. Elder Henry Eddington casually recorded one day that he had "Traveled 10 miles, had no dinner."[55] Occasionally, some elders were able to snack on fruit or raw vegetables by the roadsides.[56]

Despite such hardships, elders generally managed to receive enough food to sustain their demanding regimen of walking, and they slept indoors more often than outdoors. Southerners, in general, treated the elders well and kept them fed. Elder Briant Copley, clerk of the South Alabama Conference, wrote a letter to the Salt Lake City *Deseret News* extolling Southern hospitality: "It is a well known fact that the people of the South are the most hospitable of any in America, and we Elders . . . are taught a lesson in charity an[d] unselfishness that time can not obliterate."[57]

Even though Southerners were hospitable, missionaries could not idly wait to

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[53]Oliver Belnap, Diaries, 15 October 1889, Church Archives.

[54]Elder Henry Eddington used this term throughout his diary.

[55]Eddington, 12 May 1886.

[56]See Frederick Morgan, Fd 1, Vol 1 31 May 1890, 2 June 1890, 11 June 1890, Fd 2, Vol 2, 8 September 1891, and 14 October 1891; and Willis E. Robison, Papers, 29 June 1883.

[57]Briant Copley, Southern States Mission, Manuscript History, 5 November 1893.

receive their help; they had to request it. However, asking for food and lodging required a lot of nerve, and not a little desperation. Elder Rudger Clawson described the inhibition he felt the first time he asked for a meal. While traveling to meet his new companion, he became very hungry and came upon an "unpretentious home." He concluded to "ask for a meal of victuals, something I had never done in all my previous life. I shrank at the idea. I felt embarrassed, I felt humiliated. It seemed to me I would be acting the role of a beggar." However, hunger pains helped expedite his rationalization and diminish his fears. Clawson remembered a scripture:

> "The laborer is worthy of his hire." [Doctrine & Covenants 84:79] And upon further reflection, I readily perceived that the true gospel of Jesus Christ, involving the principle of salvation, which I was authorized to offer the woman, would more than offset the value of the food given a thousand times. Thus reasoning, I felt perfectly justified in boldly asking for something to eat.

The woman invited him in and fed him. At the end of the meal Clawson thanked his hostess and explained his mission; the woman was not interested, so he continued his journey.[58]

Many missionaries had difficulty adjusting to the Southern diet. The typical bill of fare at this time consisted of corn bread, bacon, and coffee.[59] A close examination of missionaries' diaries and letters reveals that initially these staples often caused severe indigestion and heartburn.[60] One missionary wrote: "It will be

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[58]Clawson, Bx 1 Fd 1, 34.

[59]Eddington, 141.

[60]See Gibbs to Louisa H. Gibbs 16 Mar 1883, Bx 2, Fd 1, and Gibbs to Louisa H. Gibbs n.d. (between 28 April 1883 and 17 May 1883) HBLL. It took Elder Gibbs two months to adjust to this diet.

some time perhaps before we can accustom ourselves to their . . . food. . . . I do not feel as well as I would like to. It is biliousness I think. I expect the pig meat does not agree with me."[61]

Some elders also mentioned their encounters with new and regional or exotic foods. For example, one recorded the first time he ate cornbread,[62] one his first sweet potato,[63] one his first turtle;[64] and another his first opossum.[65]

The South, whose hospitality has occasionally reached folkloric proportions, generally provided for most of the missionaries' needs. Sometimes southerners hosted missionaries with little or no persuasion. Elder Edward Crowther explained that a "Mr. Hol [*sic*]" received him and his companion "very kindly [and] we conversed with them about the Gospel."[66]

All missionaries were not always this fortunate. Sometimes they encountered

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[61]Frederick Morgan, Fd 1, Vol 1, 20 March 1890. As if the food weren't bad enough, the sanitation level varied from house to house. Once, Elder Morgan wrote that he had trouble stomaching his food since the hosts were "very untidy, [and] the house fairly stinks." Fd 1, Vol 1, 25 April 1890. Elder John Henry Gibbs also recorded a similar experience with sanitation and food, see Gibbs, Papers, letter to Louisa Gibbs, 11 January 1884, Bx 2, Fd 4, HBLL.

[62]Eddington, 2 May 1886. Cornbread had been a staple during the Nauvoo period of Church history; but these missionaries were second and third generations, long removed from Nauvoo. Obviously, cornbread did not continue to be a common food for many Utah families.

[63]Joseph E. Johnson, "Personal Journal of the Travels and Experiences of Joseph E. Johnson of Huntington, Utah, to the Southern States," typescript 3, HBLL.

[64]Frederick Morgan, 21 June 1890.

[65]Willis E. Robison, Bx 1, Fd 3, 11 October 1883.

[66]Edward Crowther, Diaries, 26 January 1886, Church Archives.

difficulty when seeking "entertainment," their term for lodging. Elder Oliver Belnap's experience illustrates this point. One night, he and his companion approached a house, "tired and hungry and foot sore." The man, a Mr. Argabite, was "not prepared to keep strangers," but he did not particularly want "to turn any one [*sic*] away at this time of night." Mrs. Argabite explained how she had washed clothes all day, so there would be no bed, and that she was too tired to fix supper. The missionaries quickly assured her their only necessities would be a blanket and a floor.[67] When the Argabites still hesitated, Belnap appealed to their sympathies: "If we cannot get to stay here we will have to lie out before we can get to another house [and] the people will be in bed. . . . Dont [*sic*] go to any bother on our account. We can do without supper." Belnap concluded his journal entry by commenting they had received entertainment "Just by a scratch. . . . [and] we thanked God for [it] and not particularly the man for had not the Lord softened his heart we would have laid out that night."[68]

Missionaries periodically encountered unfriendly people who turned them away at night. For example, Elder Henry Eddington and his companion reported that a Mr. Amos Willey offered lodging. However, when Willey discovered they men to be Mormon elders, he revoked the offer, saying "if we were of any other denomination but Mormons, we could stay but no Mormon could stay with

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[67]This would be much more comfortable than waking up saturated in the South's thick, morning dew.

[68]Belnap, 8 July 1889.

him."[69]

In some cases when missionaries were denied lodging, they tried to find other types of shelter such as unlocked school houses or churches, or abandoned barns and houses.[70] However, some missionaries occasionally endured the unpleasant experience of having to sleep outdoors. Elder Willard Bean and his companion solicited for lodging one evening. "Home after home turned a deaf ear, some saying that they never entertain strangers." Nevertheless, the men retained hope that someone would help them, so they continued "until we could see no more lighted houses, then we headed into the woods, held prayer, then assembled enough oak leaves to made [*sic*] a soft pallet and curled up for the night." This was particularly arduous since it occurred sometime in January or February, extremely unpleasant months to sleep outdoors even in the South.[71]

Missionaries occasionally performed chores for their hosts, obviously as a type of payment and as a goodwill gesture. President William Spry even encouraged elders to labor with the Saints both spiritually and temporally.[72] Such work typically occurred during the planting and harvest seasons and was performed

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[69]Henry C. Eddington, Mission Journal, 6 July 1886.

[70]Because Elder Willis E. Robison and his companion had been refused lodging, they found an unlocked church and slept on the pews. The two men took turns guessing which domination owned the church. Robison's companion thought it belonged to the "Campbellites, on account of it being so neatly finished. But . . . after lying on the benches all night I told him that I thought that it was Hard Sides [Baptist]." Bx 1, Fd 3, 15 June 1884.

[71]Willard Washington Bean, Autobiography, Church Archives, 32.

[72]Belnap, 13 September 1889.

exclusively at members' or serious investigators' houses. While visiting Joseph Hiatt's family, long-time investigators[73] of the Church, Elder Frederick Morgan and his companion helped harvest Hiatt's tobacco crop;[74] Elder Joseph E. Johnson and his companion helped their host, a Brother Spradlin, aged 93, build a new corn crib;[75] and Elder John M. Fairbanks helped a local member plant potatoes.[76]

Occasionally, missionaries encountered people who wished to charge for their hospitality. The prices varied from a nominal ten cent fee to that of one dollar a piece;[77] however, the usual price seemed to run about fifty cents each. Some hosts requested payment, but then invited the missionaries to return. Elder John M. Fairbanks commented that they "payed [*sic*] 50 cts for stoping [*sic*] all night. Mr C [*sic*] invited us to call again."[78]

Charging guests was not an uncommon practice in the nineteenth-century

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[73]The term *investigator* is used to designate people who express interest in the Church and who study the religion's teachings and doctrines.

[74]Frederick Morgan, 16 September 1891, Fd 2 Vol 1. Six days later, he and his companion helped a local member: "Bro P [*sic*] having decided to cut his tobacco crop we all volunteered to assist him." 22 September 1890. The Church's Word of Wisdom was not strictly enforced until the 1930s.

[75]Johnson, 11 November 1886.

[76]Fairbanks, 7 May 1883.

[77]A Mr. Gardener [sic], of Tennessee, charged Elder George H. Carver and his companion one dollar "for staying . . . and causing him so much trouble. We paid it and continued our journey." Missionary Journal, 25 July 1879, HBLL. When Elder Henry Eddington and his companion stopped overnight with a Mr. Brown, of North Carolina, they were charged "ten cents each for our lodgings." Mission Journal, 6 July 1886, HBLL.

[78]Fairbanks, 8 April 1883.

South. Bertram Wyatt-Brown explained that wayfarers who arrived unexpectedly and without letters of introduction or claim of kinship ties rarely received recognition. If Southerners did choose to host strangers, they had the prerogative to exact a fee from their guests "to defray the costs of the host and even to make him a profit." Wyatt-Brown noted that fees had two purposes: (1) to distinguish relative from stranger, and (2) to signify "the [host's] termination of obligation."[79]

Consequently, missionaries could not presume to travel with absolutely no money because they never knew if they would be charged for food or lodging.[80] Most of the money they received came from friends and relatives, usually at the beginning of the mission.[81] Occasionally, home wards (parishes) would pool their funds and send money to needy elders. Elder Willis E. Robison received a letter from his home bishop "containing $25 that had been contributed by members of the Scipio Ward to assist me in my labors in the missionary field."[82] Similarly, Elder Frederick Morgan noted that "the Saints of the 15th Wd [*sic*] had donated one

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[79]Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 334-336.

[80]President Elias S. Kimball attempted to solve this situation. By 1897, all missionaries were to deposit their funds in the office and to keep an account there. If elders carried no money they could truthfully tell people they traveled without purse or scrip. See Elias S. Kimball to John W. Taylor, 4 June 1897, reel 3, Church Archives.

[81]Elder George H. Carver explained: "Many of my friends and relatives assisted very liberally, by presenting me with money and things that would be necessary and beneficial to me while absent from home." Carver, Missionary Journal, June 1879, HBLL.

[82]Robison, 10 July 1883 Bx 1 fd 3.

hundred dollars to be equally divided among Rob, John and I."[83] Missionaries record using this money to purchase clothing and to pay unexpected charges for hospitality.

Having money did not always ensure comfortable lodgings or regular meals, however. For example, Elder Henry G. Boyle and his companion had been denied lodgings "from four o'clock p.m., till so late at night that the people had all gone to bed," even when they informed potential hosts that they could pay nominal fees.[84]

Joe Gray Taylor explained that Southern hospitality was not always unconditional, and that strangers automatically aroused suspicion.[85] Bertram Wyatt-Brown further interpreted the rules governing strangers: Hosts became more discretionary with strangers than with relatives or friends, and only few were stranger than these itinerant Mormon missionaries.

LDS Missionaries: Curiosities and Novelties

During the late nineteenth century, many Southern counties had not been

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[83]Frederick Morgan, 17 September 1890, Fd 1, Vol 1.

[84]Henry G. Boyle, "Trip from Virginia to North Carolina," *Juvenile Instructor* 17(1882):212. In this particular case, Boyle stated that "this failure was not owing to our being 'Mormons'"; other elders occasionally encountered discrimination because of their religious affiliation. In this case, Boyle and his companion fortuitously discovered an unlocked school house in which they were able to spend the night. See also, Willis E. Robison, Bx 1, Fd 3, 30 June 1884, HBLL.

[85]Joe Gray Taylor, *Eating, Drinking, and Visiting in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 132.

canvassed by LDS elders. In any given year between 1875 and 1882, fewer than 100 missionaries were scattered among ten Southern states; thereafter, fewer than 125 elders labored in the South each year until the early 1890s when the entire missionary force swelled.

When missionaries finally arrived in previously uncanvassed regions, they discovered that rumors had preceded them. As a result, they often aroused curiosity and attracted attention, not unlike circus sideshows. Elder Joseph E. Johnson explained his feelings when he arrived in an uncanvassed region: "I feel like I was a long way from home. The people stare at me like I was some kind of a curiosity. . . we being the first Mormons they ever saw. They were awfully afraid of us."[86] A few days later, he and his companion moved on to another town and experienced similar treatment: "December 22 [1886], went to Eaden [*sic*], 10 miles, stayed at the Price hotel. As soon as the word got around that there were Mormons in town they gathered there to see the show and we had a grand set-to with them."[87] Similarly, Elder Willis E. Robison and his companion were the first to visit another county: "Being the first Mormons that had been in that neighborhood, we attracted no little attention, and met with some incidence [*sic*] that were amusing if not ludicrous."[88] Unfortunately, Robison neglected to include the humorous details.

Although this extreme curiosity made missionaries feel uncomfortable, it

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[86]Johnson, 5-7.

[87]Ibid., 7.

[88]Robison, 3 May 1883.

sometimes worked to their advantage. In some cases, townspeople flocked to see the elders; these crowds, however, were often a captive audience. Elder Johnson recorded that at one particular meeting it "was quite a show [for] the people to get to see a Mormon."[89] Elder Robison also had similar experiences. He and his companion held a meeting in an uncanvassed neighborhood: "it being the first time the elders had preached in that locality, the people turned out in masses to hear us."[90] Thus, missionaries seemed to be a novelty in some areas and this, in turn, helped them share their message.

This same Elder Robison also recorded another amusing incident. He and his companion visited Blue Creek, Humphreys County, Tennessee, while a circus was in town. One of the side shows immediately attracted their attention: "there was what was said to be the fat Mormon boy who was not much less. Elder [John Henry] Gibbs asked him a few questions which convinced us that he had never seen Utah."[91] Obviously, this stout sideshow attraction intrigued many visitors.

Prejudice and Persecution[92]

In the nineteenth century, the LDS Church existed outside the realm of

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[89]Johnson, 10. See also pp. 14, 41-43.

[90]Robison, 25 March 1883.

[91]Ibid., 31 October 1883.

[92]This section is intended to give only a brief overview of the topic. The subject is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5.

mainstream Christianity; theologically, it was at odds with orthodox ecumenical needs to which the other churches swore. The LDS Church's doctrine of plural marriage offended most Southerners who held to contemporary Victorian values of monogamous marriage. Moreover, polygamy was often misinterpreted and misunderstood.[93] Although most people considered polygamy repugnant before 1879, once the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against plural marriage in *Reynolds v. the United States* elders constantly came under attack for their belief in the principle.[94] In effect, this case elevated polygamy into a higher profile issue.

Lurid rumors about polygamy and Mormons circulated throughout the nation in the 1880s and 1890s. Concerted "reform" campaigns also capitalized on the rumors and attempted to abolish the practice. Furthermore, most newspaper coverage was far from complimentary.[95] Some Southerners believed LDS missionaries were out to destroy marriages, steal wives, perform nude baptisms, and

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[93]Since slavery and polygamy were dubbed the "twin relics of barbarism," one could assume some Southerners asked why they had to relinquish their slaves while the Mormons retained their wives. However, missionary diaries frequently commented on the region's double standard since many Southern men had black mistresses and illegitimate children but still seemed to be repulsed by plural marriage. For the Southern reaction see David Buice, "A Stench in the Nostrils of Honest Men: Southern Democrats and the Edmunds Act of 1882," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* (Autumn 1988):100-113.

[94]See James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* 2d ed (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 363-65, 399-407, 412-22; and Gustive O. Larson, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1971), chaps. 2-3.

[95]See Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Graphic Image, 1834-1914* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), 33-71.

smuggle women to Utah.[96] John Morgan was probably referring to such tales when he stated that many "strange and peculiar ideas prevail in regard to the objects and intents" of Latter-day Saints.[97] Such rumors, combined with orchestrated negative information coming from the anti-Mormon press and churches, promoted prejudice and encouraged opposition. Consequently, many Southern churches prohibited missionaries from preaching in their buildings,[98] and some ministers persuaded their congregations to simply avoid the elders' meetings.

As for persecution, individuals, or sometimes vigilante groups, threatened the missionaries. In one case, a well-meaning Southerner advised a missionary to omit his testimony of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon from his sermon. "He intimated that I did not know how much danger I was in and said there were men who were willing to 'gore' me through for my testimony." However, Elder Nathan Tanner recorded in his journal that his testimony of these things was the reason he was preaching–otherwise he would go home. He then explained that he feared

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[96]See James Thompson Lisonbee, Correspondence, Fd 1, 21 February 1877, Church Archives; John M. Fairbanks, 23 and 27 May 1883; SSM Historical Records and Minutes, series 11, August 1884, Church Archives; Edward Crowther, 26 January 1886; and Z. S. Taylor, Journal, 21 July 1886, HBLL. See also the previous discussion of polygamy in Chapter 2. Elders were not allowed to take plural wives while serving missions. One missionary married another wife in St. Louis while John Brown was mission president (1867-68). Brown chastised him, then immediately sent him home. Word quickly circulated, through both official and unofficial channels, that such behavior would not be tolerated.

[97]John Morgan, Bx 1, Vol 2, *Deseret News*, 9 September 1893.

[98]See Walter Brown Posey, *Religious Strife on the Southern Frontier* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 69.

God's judgments more than those of a mob.[99]

A Salt Lake City *Deseret News* article, describing the missionaries' unpopularity in the South, advised them to be "as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves."[100] Mission presidents J. Golden Kimball (1891-94) and Elias S. Kimball (1894-98) both instructed missionaries to emphasize positive acts and downplay negative ones, especially to relatives and friends at home. J. Golden Kimball advised his missionaries to remember Southerners' "acts of kindness" toward them, and he pleaded for elders not to speak "of isolated cases of mobbing and whipping."[101] His brother Elias informed the elders: "It is extremely unwise and imprudent and worse than folly, for Elders to write to their families or to newspapers, startling accounts of ill treatment or of mob violence." His rationale was twofold: (1) it inhibited missionary work, and (2) it caused "unhappiness at home."[102]

Applying such instruction was sometimes difficult for missionaries. Elder Robert Urie explained his situation:

> I have been striving for that spirit of love for mankind that so characterized our Lord and Savior, but you know that is so hard to love those that hate and despise you. I did not know we were so much the victims of such feelings untill [*sic*] I came here, but I do not care how much I'm hated for the gospel's sake, that hatred does not condemn me unless it exists in my

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[99]Nathan Tanner, Diaries, 19 August 1884, Church Archives.

[100]"A Voice from the Swamps: 'Mormon' Missionaries Mobbed in Mississippi," *Deseret News*, 19 May 1888.

[101]J. Golden Kimball, Circular Letter, 20 February 1892, in Henry Foster, Papers 1892-1913, fd 2, Church Archives.

[102]Elias S. Kimball, Circular Letter, 25 March 1896, Church Archives.

own heart.[103]

Undoubtedly, Elder Urie was not alone in such feelings. For many missionaries, this was their first experience outside the intermountain west and the Mormon cultural region. To a certain extent, they had been sheltered from having to justify and preach their beliefs to others; thus the individual missionaries had little direct personal experience with prejudice and persecution until they arrived in the South.

In spite of the general bias against Mormons, many Southerners did believe the missionaries' message. From 1887-89 and 1891-96, more than 1,760 elders baptized 3,839 people.[104] However, some postponed baptism because of pressure from family, friends, and neighbors or because of fear of reprisals from the community. For example, Elder William Winn explained how a woman wished to be baptized, but her husband was "very bitterly opposed to it and he told her that when she went out of his door to get baptized she should never enter it again." When her sister and friends "turned against her,"[105] she chose not to be baptized. Because of the frequency of such scenarios, missionaries felt frustrated; sometimes months and even years had to pass before they could see the fruit of their labors.

SSM elders encountered both prejudice and persecution. Prejudice inhibited missionary work and evangelization. Persecution often involved bodily harm; but to

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[103]Robert Urie to parents, 19 December 1897, Church Archives.

[104]See Chapter 3 for more information on these statistics.

[105]William H. Winn, Letters, 23 January 1879, HBLL. Under President John Morgan, missionaries were required to obtain consent from husbands before baptizing their wives. See John Morgan, Bx 1, Fd 7, 7 May 1885.

some missionaries, persecution was an external validation that they were doing God's work.[106] Although prejudice and persecution frustrated many elders, persecution produced stronger reactions among the missionaries. Historically, the American South has been characterized by a predisposition for violence. Intense persecution against LDS missionaries was particularly pronounced in the American South for more than three decades. A hierarchy of persecution existed which escalated from written threats, to verbal harassment, to physical assaults, and, finally, even to attempted murder and murder. Missionaries could never predict which threats would be acted upon; constant uncertainty and anxiety characterized their Southern sojourn.

One missionary quoted a contemporary newspaper article: "there was no more law against killing Mormons than there was rattle snakes [*sic*] and if they come on his place he would take his gun and blow their brains out."[107] Such statements were not always idle talk: between 1879 and 1898 five missionaries were

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[106]Elder Charles Flake illustrated such feelings perfectly in his 7 April 1884 diary entry: "Last night we was talking of how every thing was and I made the remark that there was so little opposition I feared we weren't doing our duty, but my fears were soon dispelled for about 9 oclock [*sic*] some one hollwed [*sic*] 'Hello' Wm. & I walked out. Brother Call had gone to bed, two men stood at the fence and refused to answer when we spoke. As we approached them we could see that they were disguised. . . . On our drawing near we could see that one had a shot gun and they boath [*sic*] had something tied around their heads. However we recognized the speaker as Buck Howell (Mrs. Leggitt's Brother) but could not tell for sure who the other was." HBLL.

[107]Redrick Reddin Allred, Diary, 8 July 1886, Church Archives.

killed in the SSM,[108] and countless others were beaten or physically abused by mobs.[109]

To help stem the tide of persecution, presidents John Morgan (1878-88) and J. Golden Kimball (1891-94) instructed their elders to began working diligently to allay prejudice. By the early 1890s, allaying prejudice was emphasized so much that some elders considered it to be almost as important as converting souls and performing baptisms. Various "Americanization" policies, such as abandoning polygamy and baptizing people from higher social classes, helped allay prejudice.[110]

Conclusion

Nineteenth-century missionary life could be physically, emotionally, and spiritually taxing. Elder Charles Flake explained his situation: "Here I am without friends and with but very little money trying to propigate [*sic*] a doctrine that the very name of which brings reproach to my carictor [*sic*] among the so[-]called

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[108]See William W. Hatch, *"There Is No Law": A History of Mormon Civil Relations in the Southern States* (New York: Vantage Press, 1968). Hatch examines each of the murders in this book.

[109]No statistical information exists on the number of elders who were abused by vigilante groups; and many more incidents occurred than were reported. Moreover, mobs' abuse was not solely confined to the missionaries. Sometimes mobs vented their anger on those who housed and fed elders. Mobs even abused some of the animals the missionaries used. Laura Church, a Saint in Tennessee, occasionally loaned her horse, Traveler, to sick elders or conference presidents. Several missionaries had borrowed him "and he had 'suffered for the gospels [sic] sake'" because a mob had cropped both his ears and his tail. Roberts, 128-129.

[110]See Seferovich, 12, 16, 32.

christian [*sic*] world."[111] To endure such circumstances would require a person to have unyielding belief in his religion, exceptional courage, and a strong sense of commitment and purpose.

In spite of the less than ideal circumstances, many missionaries described their time in the South as being invaluable. Elder James Hubbard explained:

> It [his mission] surely has been a great experience, giving me knowledge and experience which I consider invaluable also [a] testimony of the truth of the work. . . . I have made quite a number of friends and have most always been treated very kindly by the good people of the South[,] Many of whom I greatly love.[112]

This summary of one elder's mission is representative of many others. These men matured--both emotionally and spiritually--through the course of their work; many also developed a deep love and respect for Southerners, as well as stronger faith in their religion. In the same passage, Elder Hubbard further disclosed, "I have experienced some of the most supremely happy moments of my life, while at times I have been greatly tried."[113] Yet he had no regrets.

Missionaries faced constant uncertainty each day. Where would they travel? Where would they find food? shelter? people to teach? places to preach? Would they stay healthy? Would they be ogled and "inspected" by curiosity seekers? Would they encounter prejudice? or be the victims of persecution? These issues and activities, as indicated in their own records, dominated elders' daily schedules. Furthermore, such

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[111]Flake, Diary, 14 May 1884, HBLL.

[112]Hubbard, 23 March 1897.

[113]Ibid.

experiences probably helped these second- and third-generation elders feel a sense of community with first-generation Church missionaries who endured similar circumstances.

An article in *The Contributor* succinctly summarizes SSM life and the missionaries' reactions to it:

> he [the elder] is a wanderer with tired limbs and blistered feet; night overtakes him, but he has no place to lay his head; men refuse him shelter because of his faith; he is hungry, friendless, yet not downcast; for whatever experiences he may be called upon to pass through, the comforting influence of the Holy Ghost cheers his heart, even in the midst of tribulation. To paraphrase the language of Paul, he is troubled on every side, but not distressed; he is perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Being reviled, he blesses; being defamed, he entreats; being persecuted, he suffers it.[114]

Extant diaries, with very few exceptions, retain this sense of optimism amid terrible trials and challenging circumstances. The SSM acted as a training ground for Utah-born Saints: in the South, LDS missionaries were exposed to new people, a different culture, a new climate, and sometimes different world views. The SSM, in one sense, acted as a catalyst, transforming, refining, and maturing the men who labored there. And the persecution LDS missionaries encountered in the SSM was arguably the chief catalyst in their maturation.

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[114]Horatio "A 'Mormon' Elder in the Southern States," *The Contributor* 6(1885):326-27.

CHAPTER 5

PERSECUTION IN THE SOUTHERN STATES MISSION

From pre-Civil War duels to the Ku Klux Klan to fervent family feuds, the American South has long been plagued with a dubious distinction for violence. H. C. Brearley identified the South as "that portion of the United States lying below the Smith and Wesson line."[1]

As of 1886 the Southern States Mission (SSM) had been in operation for only eleven years, yet its infamous reputation for violence and persecution disturbed potential elders. While other Church missions suffered occasional organized persecution, mob influence was particularly pronounced in the American South. In 1886, an unnamed elder from Ogden, Utah, received a call to serve a mission to the Southern States. His reaction: "Save me from that horrible place. Any place on earth but the Southern States."[2] His initial response reveals the hesitancy associated with serving in the South.

The elder's local friends also expressed familiarity with the mission's

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[1]H. C. Brearley, as quoted by Sheldon Hackney, "Southern Violence," *American Historical Review* 29 (February 1969): 906.

[2]W.H., "The Missionary Field: An Advocate of Mobocracy--Experience in the South," 20 January 1887, Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, hereinafter cited as JH and Church Archives, respectively.

conditions. One man remarked that he did not envy the missionary's assignment and was grateful he did not receive the appointment himself. Another man even counseled him: "Prepare your back for the hickory withes."[3]

The South had been the scene of devastating violence of war for years when LDS missionaries finally reentered the region in 1867. Most Southerners' cultural and political loyalties and assumptions were formed through politics, the media, and from the pulpit, which was controlled by a social elite whose status had been tied to slavery, the very object of the conflict. Thus, Radical Reconstruction and Carpetbag governments did not create a favorable image of non-Southerners nor did it endear newly arrived outsiders to native Southerners. As a result, some Southerners despised or distrusted foreigners; and it is not surprising that they greeted LDS missionaries, mostly Westerners,[4] with hostility. One historian, explaining cool receptions given to elders, suggested that Mormon missionaries may have been viewed as "spiritual carpetbaggers."[5] Whatever the reasons, the American South was sometimes a brutal host to LDS elders.[6]

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[3]Ibid.

[4]Of the 1693 elders who served in the South from 1867-1898, 1188 were born in Utah, and 69 in other Western States.

[5]David Buice, "'All Alone and None to Cheer Me': The Southern States Mission Diaries of J. Golden Kimball," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 24 (Spring 1991):38. In the post-Civil War South, Northerners, and to some extent any non-Southerners, were viewed as meddlesome cultural imperialists. Western Mormon missionaries could have also been characterized in similar terms and that is what Buice is alluding to when calling LDS elders "spiritual carpetbaggers."

[6]Of course, violence was not directed solely toward LDS missionaries, as will be explained later in the chapter.

Elders weathered currents of persecution in the SSM for more than three decades. They endured everything from verbal threats to murder. Uncertainty and anxiety characterized their Southern sojourn. The history of persecution in the Southern States Mission between 1875 and 1898 presents a story of persistent harassment, abuse, and violence directed toward LDS missionaries.

Persecution Defined

Persecution is an emotionally charged and sometimes ambiguous word within the LDS culture.[7] Trying to establish a clear definition for this thesis proved to be somewhat tricky. The U.S. legal system does not define terms such as persecution since they can usually be reduced to simpler elements such as libel or assault and battery.[8]

A modern dictionary defines persecution as: "1. To oppress or harass with illtreatment, esp. because of race, religion, or beliefs. 2. To annoy persistently."[9] Because this definition reflects late twentieth-century ideals, a nineteenth-century

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[7]I would like to thank Richard Jensen for calling this problem to my attention in his comments on my paper, "'Save Me from that Horrible Place': The Southern States Mission, 1875-1905," at the 1994 Mormon History Association meeting in Park City, Utah. For general information on persecution see Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, "Early Persecutions," *The Mormon Experience*, 2d ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

[8]Conversation with Dr. Gary Doxey, 14 March 1996, Provo, Utah.

[9]*The American Heritage Dictionary* 3d ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992).

dictionary was consulted. Webster's 1828 dictionary defined persecution as "the infliction of pain, punishment or death upon others unjustly, particularly for adhering to a religious creed or mode of worship, either by way of penalty or for compelling them to renounce their principles."[10] According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word *persecute* is derived from French, which is borrowed from Latin, meaning: "To pursue, chase, hunt, drive (with missiles, or with attempts to catch, kill, or injure)." It then defines persecution as "The action of persecuting or pursuing with enmity and malignity; *esp.* the infliction of death, torture, or penalties for adherence to a religious belief or an opinion as such, with a view to the repression or extirpation of it."[11]

Not all persecution against LDS missionaries in the South contained elements of death or torture, but these components did appear; more often, it entailed written or verbal harassment--with penalties for noncompliance--for religious beliefs and associations. Feelings of enmity and malignity permeate the majority of persecution cases against Mormon elders. To further illustrate what the missionaries encountered, I have developed four categories of persecution and violence.

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[10]Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* 2 vols (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970). This dictionary's definition for persecuting and persecutor is also applicable: "Persecuting, Pursuing with enmity or vengeance, particularly for adhering to a particular religion," and "Persecutor . . . one that pursues another unjustly and vexatiously, particularly on account of religious principles."

[11]*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 591-592.

Hierarchies of Persecution and Violence

Thorough research of extant diaries, letters, and contemporary newspapers and magazines revealed a hierarchy of violence in the SSM. The first, and mildest, form included written notices, by small groups of local citizens, that instructed LDS missionaries to leave the counties; if these demands were not met, the groups often threatened to penalize the elders with whipping or death for failure to comply. The second division involved verbal harassment and threats of physical violence. The third category entailed actual physical assault and beatings. Finally, the fourth classification consisted of attempted murder and murder. The following examples, grouped within this hierarchy, vividly portray persecution in the SSM.

Written Notices. SSM elders periodically received written notices and threats. Occasionally, individuals authored such notes. More often, groups of people met together and drafted the documents. While the majority of notices went unsigned, a small percentage included authors' signatures; in these rare cases, individual's or group's names occasionally graced the end of documents. Only a few groups listed the actual names of those who participated. More often though, notices were signed "Concerned Citizens," "KKK," or with fictitious names such as "Judge Lynch." Some notices were written solely for intimidation purposes, particularly those sent anonymously. Others, however, served as formal notices for the elders to

leave the area.[12]

Although a few notes were hand delivered, quite often written notices were deposited conspicuously along missionaries' paths: some were left on the road; some were nailed to trees; and others were tacked on church doors. From time to time, local newspapers, mostly weeklies, even published some of the written notices. The majority of written notices contained creative spellings, revealing the individuals' literacy or lack thereof.

The case of Elders James T. Lisonbee and John M. Fairbanks illustrates those notes written by groups. Lisonbee received a notice to leave the area while he was serving in Mississippi in 1877. The letter referred to the Mountain Meadows Massacre of 1857,[13] a particularly dark incident in LDS history, and the citizens of Marshall County, Mississippi, wanted their revenge upon the elders:

> . . . The smoldering embers [of] justice that have been sleeping since September 1857 has burst forth in a blaze and nothing will appease its wrath but a Mormon victim to a Mormon God. . . . we have decided to grant you ten days to leave our country and to carry with you as many of your deluded followers as want to go through and those that stay shall be protected in all their liberties that any other citizens enjoyes.
>
> The above has been written after mature deliberation and a failure to comply will be sufficient to lay waste and deluge this country in Blood.

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[12]David Whittaker suggested that some of these misspellings may have been deliberate. Such flagrant misspellings would help hide the people's true identities.

[13]During the 1857 Utah War, a group of people from Arkansas and Missouri, known as the Baker-Fancher party, traveled through southern Utah on their way to California. Tensions, miscommunications, and a pre-millennialist worldview fed the fears and enmity which erupted in September when a small group of men from Cedar City, Utah, joined Indian neighbors, attacked the Baker-Fancher party, and killed all adults--only the young children were spared. See Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* rev. ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

What we have Written we have written
Many Citizens

Lisonbee believed a Mr. "George Wain [*sic*] Wilcose [to be] the supposed writer." Interestingly, he and his companion soon left the county, and traveled south to visit some of his relatives "and to Preach."[14]

Elder Fairbanks received a written notice to leave the country in which he was laboring. The letter asserted that Mormonism was demoralizing and illegal. Then, the note demanded that he and his companion leave "as soon as they can ride walk or crawl away[,] never more to return." The notice was signed: Members of the Pleasant Grove, Alabama, Grange No. 242. Copies of the letter were subsequently sent to two local papers.[15]

Some authors decorated their notices with crude art work, perhaps for emphasis–a picture is worth a thousand words. For example, Elder Z. S. Taylor discovered a written notice on a church door before a scheduled meeting. Upon entering the church house, he found a "rudely drawn gallows on the Blackboard." The following caption also appeared: "You shall hang Between the heavens and the erth till you are ded, ded, ded."[16]

Other authors opted to skip the art work, but still employed visual aids. Elder Frank Stratford and his companion had scheduled a meeting one Sunday, but

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[14]James Thompson Lisonbee, Correspondence, February 1877, Fd 1, Church Archives. Original spelling retained.

[15]John M. Fairbanks, Mission Diaries, 3 February 1883, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, hereinafter cited as HBLL.

[16]Z. S. Taylor, Diary, 23 January 1887, HBLL.

surprisingly it had snowed during the night. While walking to the appointed building, the missionaries noted that the snow was ankle deep and, consequently, they did not expect a large audience. When they arrived, they were greeted by two hickory withes and a note--the sum total of their congregation. The memo read:

> Take warning! We as a band of citizens of this place, having become tired of this business of Mormon preachers trampling through our country, have decided to stop it; therefore Mormon preachers or L.D.S. who want to get back to Utah with their scalps on had better leave in three days. This means business; if these withes are not enough, we can get some more.[17]

Although the note is somewhat humorous, it would have been very unnerving to have received it in the late nineteenth-century South.

Finally, Elder Robert Young found the following letter on a gate: "Notis. Mister mormns if you ant away from hear against next Saturday the 15-teenth day of the month october Bi god you Will git the damest Whipping you efer got Bi god We mean bit [*sic*] Wear no heathens hear We want you to now hit."[18] Elder Young had no way of knowing whether this threat would be out.

Verbal Harassment and Threats. Elders received a steady diet of verbal harassment and threats while serving in the South. Both random individuals and organized groups heckled Mormon missionaries. Some threats were clearly hollow and used solely to intimidate elders; others were given as formal warnings to avoid potential abuse in the future; still others appeared to be promises when third parties-

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[17]Frank Stratford, "The Missionary Field," 13 January 1887, JH.

[18]Robert Cunningham Young, Diaries, 14 October 1892, Church Archives. Original spelling retained.

-local citizens–intervened, frustrating mobs' violent plans by preventing them from harming the missionaries.

Elder W. Scott and his companion were roused from bed at night by a noisy, vicious mob late one Saturday night. The mob included half a dozen men who threw rocks at the house, fired their pistols, and yelled "like demons." After a few minutes the disorderly crowd retreated from the host's property; however, they continued yelling and shooting their guns throughout the night. Elder Scott, explaining the events to fellow missionaries, wrote that he was able to sleep in spite of the perilous situation. Assessing the situation for his audience, he poignantly penned, "Ala. is raging, Hell is boiling. The believers are afraid, saints tremble."[19]

In another instance, rabble descended on the house where an Elder Eldridge was staying. They asked the host, a Brother Simmons, if he were harboring Mormon elders, then summoned them. Elder Eldridge soon appeared at the door and was greeted by five armed, masked men who quickly shoved their pistols in his face. The mob then interrogated Eldridge, asking if he "really believed in the obnoxious principles taught by the the [*sic*] L.D.S. and if so didn't he expect to deny them." Eldridge asserted that he did indeed believe the Church's doctrines and hoped that he would never deny them. The disorderly crowd then demanded that he leave the state in ten days and affixed a death penalty for noncompliance. Before the horde departed, they assured Eldridge "the law would up hold them in what

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[19]W. Scott to Brothers Daniels, Taylor and Packer, 6 September 1881, in John Morgan Papers, Bx 2 Fd 32, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereinafter cited as ML.

they were doing and they were determined that he should leave."[20]

While on his way to preach at a scheduled meeting, Elder Joseph E. Johnson explained that he and his companion passed a minister on the road. When the preacher learned the elders' identity, he "cursed and swore and said he would go with a crowd to kill us any time." Despite this frightening confrontation, the missionaries held their meeting, unmolested.[21] Later that same year, Elder Johnson experienced more threats.[22] He attributed poor attendance at meetings to several threats that had been circulated with the sole purpose of breaking up the meetings. At one particular assembly "our friends said that they expected to hear a pistol fire every minute." Fortunately, the two-hour meeting ended quietly.[23]

Elder Parley P. Bingham and his companion endured a similar experience. One evening, while they were reading quietly in their host's house, a sixty-man mob--a number estimated by Bingham--surrounded the property. The host walked outside and counseled with the disorderly crowd. When they demanded to talk to the missionaries, the host forbade the elders to go out or the mob to enter. This enraged the rabble, who then notified the elders to leave the county by sunrise or

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[20]B. H. Roberts, "Autobiography of Brigham Henry Roberts," Bx 2 Fd 1, 29 October 1884, ML.

[21]Joseph E. Johnson, Journal, 3 April 1887, HBLL.

[22]Johnson may or may not have been in the same locality when both incidents occurred. As mentioned in chapter two, missionaries rarely recorded their exact geographical locations and when they did, too often it was denoted only by host's houses.

[23]Ibid., 14 August 1887.

"they would deal roughly with us. They then left the house, whooping and yelling and discharging their guns." The missionaries temporarily ignored this threat and preached their scheduled meeting the following day. Threats continued to circulate and by the end of the week, both men "deemed it best [to leave the area and] to go back among our friends."[24]

In May 1888, another set of elders was greeted by a mob while strolling down a road. The missionaries suddenly heard the click of guns being cocked: "We halted, but would rather have been excused." The horde quickly surrounded them. One man ran up screaming, "Where are they? I want to see them; I have never seen a Mormon yet." In their account of this incident, the elders joked that all seemed "surprised at not seeing any horns" even though they had been carefully inspected. The rabble then marched the missionaries down the road at gunpoint "amid the jeers and insults of our captors." After several hours of harassment, the elders were finally released, physically unharmed, at 11 o'clock that evening.[25]

Physical Abuse. Many LDS missionaries received rough treatment at the hands of vigilante groups. A small minority of southerners periodically decided to take the law into their own hands, act as judge and jury, and administer punishment to these "spiritual carpetbaggers." Some violence was perpetrated to break up meetings and scare citizens who were sympathetic to the elders. Other episodes

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[24]Parley P. Bingham, "The Missionary Field: Lively Experience in the South--Futile Threats," 10 March 1887, JH.

[25]"A Voice from the Swamps: 'Mormon' Missionaries Mobbed in Mississippi," 19 May 1888, JH.

reveal a deep hatred and intolerance of nontraditional and non-Southern ways.

During a meeting in Georgia, two or three preachers prodded a crowd of drunken men into rushing the pulpit while John Morgan was speaking. Morgan explained that he and his fellow elders "were jirked [*sic*] and thrown about considerable, and knives and pistols were flourished around uncomfortably near." In spite of the rough treatment, Morgan gratefully added, "By the help of the Lord we came out all right, with no bones broken." However, the drunken men succeeded in breaking up the meeting. Local mobs began forming the following week, and temporarily succeeded in expelling the missionaries from the area.[26]

According to an Elder Allred, a fifty-man mob, "armed with guns pistals [*sic*] and ropes," came after him and his companion at a Mr. Harrison's house. Fortunately, Allred and his companion were visiting another family, the Irwins, a few miles away. Concerned friends managed to escape the disorderly crowd's watchful eyes to warn the elders of the imminent danger. When the missionaries could not be found, mob members destroyed Brother Irwin's crops and property, then threatened his life. Elder Allred noted that he believed, "The Lord had his hand over their eyes," because the mob failed to see the missionaries' satchels and umbrellas sitting in plain view on the host's front porch. After the excitement, neighbors and friends were so frightened they begged the missionaries to flee for their safety.[27]

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[26]John Morgan to John Taylor, 11 August 1881, Bx 1 Vol 1.

[27]Redick Reddin Allred, Diary, 27 September 1886, Church Archives.

Similarly, a Kentucky mob descended on a Saint-host's house late one night looking for the elders. Because they were not there, the rabble became outraged and used the host and his son as substitutes: "Bro. Yates and his boy . . . [received] a shameless flogging."[28]

Elder Hyrum Carter and his companion also received violent treatment. One hot summer day he reported that a horde seized the missionaries. They marched "all day through sand ankle deep," traveling fifteen miles. When night came, all slept out in the woods. The following morning they marched ten additional miles. The missionaries failed to record the particulars of the conversation during their forced march; however, it is not unreasonable to speculate that the conversation probably entailed many personal assaults relating to the missionaries' beliefs. When the crowd reached "a very lonely spot," each elder received twenty-two lashes. Mob members then destroyed all their Church literature. After the "ceremony," the rabble escorted them to the depot and deposited them on a train for Utah. Elder Carter and his companion traveled only as far as Columbia, South Carolina, where they disembarked and then walked fifteen miles to a friend's house.[29]

According to one account, an imaginative North Carolina group took it upon themselves to improve the typical whipping scenario. On a wintery December evening in 1882, the riotous throng seized an Elder Belnap and his companion. Intending to scourge the missionaries, they stocked their arsenal not only with

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[28]Moses W. Taylor, Diary, 12 December 1890, HBLL.

[29]Hyrum Carter, Diary, 13-14 July 1893, Church Archives.

withes but also with a container of ashes and cayenne pepper. They had planned to rub this mixture into the elders' bleeding backs to exacerbate their discomfort. But due to the elders' fast negotiating, the mob decided to forego the whipping and instead give them a "'fist and skull' thrashing."[30] Although this case may seem outrageous, the attention to painstaking detail, which would have enhanced the torture, is evident.

When violence erupted at night, the scenario followed a standard pattern. A disorderly, and sometimes drunken, crowd would seize the elders, and sometimes even yanked them from their beds. The rabble, armed with guns, clubs, withes and ropes, would then march to a dark, secluded, wooded area where they abused the missionaries. In the majority of cases, elders reported that the horde initially intended to kill them; but in almost every incident at least one mob member got cold feet, hesitated, and persuaded the group that several lashes[31] would suffice *if* the elders promised to leave the area by a specific time or date--usually the following morning.

The case of Elders John W. Gailey and Joseph Morrell--recorded by B. H. Roberts--illustrates such an incident. One hot summer evening, both elders were dragged from their beds in the middle of the night. Once in the woods, mob members tied ropes around their necks and led them to a secluded area. However,

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[30]"The Spirit of Mobocracy," 18 November 1884, JH.

[31]Because of their ardor, or perhaps their ignorance or inebriation, mobs frequently miscounted the number of lashes administered to missionaries.

individuals in the throng began bickering about whether to hang or whip the missionaries. Finally, the group agreed that a flogging would suffice; they stripped the elders, tied them to trees, and whipped them with doubled "heavy leather halter straps." The account then added that the man executed his job "with all the brute force he could put into his blows." Following the "ceremony," the rabble ordered the elders to leave the county.[32]

Because of the number of violent incidents against elders and because many stories like these circulated so freely, nearly all missionaries in the South expected to receive this abuse. As a result of this victim mindset and perpetual fear, some humorous episodes occurred. Elder Robert Young narrated such an event in his diary. One night he heard voices approaching the house in which he and his companion were staying. One person said, "I am sure they are in there." This particular statement probably sent chills up his spine. Young revealed: "I thought it was a mob come to whip us." But instead of an angry mob, these unexpected visitors were relatives of the host who had just returned from a fox hunt.[33] This story perfectly illustrates the fear, anxiety, and paranoia that characterized elders' Southern sojourn.

Attempted Murder and Murder. After enduring extreme verbal and physical abuse, some missionaries also faced the possibility of being murdered. It appears that

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[32]B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, Century I (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 6:100.

[33]Young, 6 January 1893. Young underlined the entire episode in his diary.

many elders were involved in life and death situations in the SSM. Despite the large number of potentially fatal situations, amazingly only four missionaries,[34] of the 1,689 who were in the South between 1875 and 1898, were murdered.

Even though only four missionaries were killed before 1898, rumors of murdered missionaries frequently circulated throughout the South. Elder J. H. VanNatta wrote about such an incident in 1883. "The news came that I had been shot and riddled with bullets, and the one that brought the news helped to bury me." Although the story is rather humorous, VanNatta wondered if it were a case of mistaken identity--perhaps another missionary or someone else had been killed and the names were incorrect. "Whether or not some one else was murdered and buried instead of me I never learned."[35] Even though no LDS missionary was killed during that year, it is plausible that someone else may have been murdered.

Similarly, Elder Robert Young read about two missionaries being killed in Lewis County, Tennessee, nine years after the Cane Creek Massacre. Although he did not know the truth of the story initially, he evidently went to great pains to find out. He later inserted a note in his journal, in another ink and somewhat different handwriting, that it was false.[36]

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[34]Two other missionaries were killed between 1898 and 1900, under the administration of President Benjamin E. Rich. For more information on the murder of Southern States missionaries, see William W. Hatch, *There is No Law* (New York: Vantage Books, 1968); and Ted S. Anderson, "The Administration of Benjamin E. Rich" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1976).

[35]J. H. VanNatta, "Missionary Incidents," *Juvenile Instructor* 18(1883):365-66.

[36]Young, 22 February 1893.

Other common scenarios involved mobs holding elders at gunpoint. While many missionaries were forced to stare down gun barrels, only a few were shot at, and the majority were never hit.

Elder Henry Eddington explained that his hostess' husband and brother-in-law had returned to the house for the purpose of killing him and his companion. Eddington reported that of them had felt very uneasy that evening and, fortunately, they decided to sleep in the hostess' barn--a place the husband did not think to look. "We heard again that Mr. Shepard and his brother came back to kill us the night we were at his place but thank the Lord we were not there." Later that week Eddington recorded they had heard whisperings of their demise: "we heard that a plan was on foot to kill us, we have some very bitter enimies [*sic*] here, and some still worse on the way." Their friends in the neighborhood advised them to leave the area until emotions cooled considerably.[37]

Unfortunately a few unlucky missionaries did end up catching some of the bullets that came their way. Elder John Alexander was confronted by a mob on a Georgia road and asked if he were a Mormon. When he replied affirmatively, the leader proclaimed, "Well, you're going to die right here . . . ." Alexander, fearing for his life, asked that he be allowed to pray. The chieftain agreed with the stipulation that he "be damn quick about it." Then the mob lowered their pistols and shot. Alexander closed his eyes and fell to the ground; miraculously, none of the three bullets hit his body. Not waiting for their invitation to leave, he darted

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[37]Henry Eddington, Mission Journal, 20, 27 January 1888, HBLL.

away to safety. Minutes later Alexander realized that two of the three balls had come dreadfully close: one ball passed through his hat, and another went through his unbuttoned coat. One editorial later noted this incident "occurred in what is called a Christian land, among a people who call themselves civilized and enlightened, in a country of laws . . . ."[38]

Two other missionaries were not as lucky as Alexander. Elders Milo Hendricks and John Tate sustained wounds in Virginia. A man by the name of Jack Ramsey ambushed the missionaries and shot them both in the legs. Elder Hendricks received "seven rabbit shot in his right leg, several of which remain in the limb." Elder Tate, however, did not sustain such severe wounds and recovered more quickly.[39]

As previously mentioned, only four elders were murdered between 1867 and 1898. Joseph Standing, the first missionary to be murdered in the SSM, labored in Georgia in 1879. He and his fellow emissaries endured many threats and in some cases fled certain areas for their lives. As a result, he had written to the governor, nine days before his death, explaining the injustices heaped upon the missionaries and reporting how local officials had "apparently winked at the condition of affairs. . . ."[40] On Sunday, 21 July 1879, a rowdy twelve-man mob apprehended him and his companion, Rudger Clawson, on a public road. After a few hours of derogatory

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[38]John Alexander, "Our Injured Missionary," *Juvenile Instructor* 18(1883):207, and "Editorial Thoughts," *Juvenile Instructor* 18(1883):200.

[39]"From the South," 16 April 1888, JH.

[40]Hatch, 41-42.

exchanges, violence erupted and Standing received a bullet in the face, leaving him unconscious, but alive. A short time later, Clawson was finally allowed to leave to find help for his wounded companion. In his absence, the disorderly crowd emptied their guns into Standing's body, no doubt attempting to protect the individual murderer by implicating the group. When the case came to trial three months later, the Georgia jury returned a verdict of not guilty.[41]

Five years after the Joseph Standing murder, two more missionaries were killed in Cane Creek, Tennessee, in what became known as the Cane Creek Massacre. The federal government's passage of antipolygamy legislation[42] coupled with increased circulation of anti-Mormon literature amplified Southern hostilities toward LDS Church members generally, and Mormon missionaries specifically. Four months before the shocking event, Elder J. Golden Kimball recorded, "The idea prevalent here [in Tennessee] is, that there is no law for a Mormon and they

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[41]Edward L. Ayers explained jurors often acquitted the accused because they feared being in similar circumstances. "Each juror feels that he might, on leaving the court, find himself in the same position as the accused, and he acquits." *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the Nineteenth-Century American South* (New York: Oxford, 1984), 17. For more information on the Joseph Standing murder, see John Nicholson, *The Martyrdom of Joseph Standing* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1886); Kenneth David Driggs, "'There is No Law in Georgia for Mormons': The Joseph Standing Murder Case of 1879," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 73 (Winter 1989): 745-772; and Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah* vol 3 (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons Co., 1893), 88-95.

[42]The antipolygamy legislation began with the passage of the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act in 1862. Other bills, such as the Wade and Cragin bills were proposed during the 1860s, but failed to pass. The year 1874 witnessed the passing of the Poland Act, and a decade later, in 1882, the Edmunds Act, and, five years later, the Edmunds-Tucker Act also became effective.

can kill us and nothing would be said about it."[43] Violence finally erupted on Sunday, 10 August 1884 in Lewis County, Tennessee, when a masked mob raided a meeting, just as it was to begin. A local Saint and man of the house, James Condor, instructed his sons to retrieve their guns. Within a few brief minutes, two missionaries, John Henry Gibbs and William S. Berry; two local Church members, Martin Condor and James Riley Hudson; and the mob leader, David Hinson, lay dead. By the following day, newspapers across the South were reporting the incident. The acting mission president, B. H. Roberts, instructed elders throughout the South to temporarily stop their work and lie low. The horrific event at Cane Creek, Tennessee, produced similar reactions among SSM elders: trepidation, anguish, and concern for the fate of the mission.[44]

The last of the missionaries to be killed before 1898 was Alma P. Richards. During summer 1888 he labored in Mississippi by himself and was last heard from in August. SSM president William Spry then organized a search for him. Almost a year later, missionaries discovered what they believed to be his bones beside a railroad track. Historians have followed his journey through Jasper and Clark counties, but then can find no trace of his whereabouts until his bones turned up in Meridian, Lauderdale County. The cause of Richards' death has never been firmly

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[43]J. Golden Kimball, Diary #4, 5 April 1884, Bx 1 Fd 9, ML.

[44]See B. H. Roberts, "The Tennessee Massacre," *The Contributor* 6(1885):16-17; Gene A. Sessions, "Myth, Mormonism, and Murder in the South," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 75 (Spring 1976):212-225; and Marshall Wingfield, "Tennessee's Mormon Massacre," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 17 (March 1958):19-36.

established. One story said he was robbed, then beaten, and thrown on the train tracks; another rumor circulated that a gang of blacks murdered him; still others speculate that religious antipathy figured in his death.[45]

Violence between 1875 and 1898

These cases are representative of the recorded incidents that have survived. Many more malicious attacks against elders probably went unrecorded. It is possible that some elders wished to avoid focusing on negative issues while doing missionary work, omitting violent episodes from their diaries, letters, and reminiscences. Southern mission presidents in the 1890s attempted to squelch widespread publicity of stories of violence and persecution. For example, President J. Golden Kimball (1891-94) pleaded with the elders "in their reputations of them [Southerners], to speak of their kind acts, and not of isolated cases of mobbing and whipping."[46] Four years latter, the succeeding mission president, Elias S. Kimball (1894-98), continued his brother's appeal: "It is extremely unwise and imprudent and worse than folly, for Elders to write to their families or to newspapers, startling accounts of ill treatment of mob violence." This statement seemed to condemn missionaries who had spread accounts of mobocracy. Rather than dwell on these issues, President

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[45]See Hatch, 85-90, and "An Elder Murdered," *Deseret News* 15 June 1889.

[46]Southern States Mission Circular Letter from President J. Golden Kimball to elders, 20 February 1892, Henry Foster papers, Church Archives.

Kimball encouraged elders to "Write only upon such subjects as will advance happiness at home; there is enough misery in life without incubating it."[47] These pleas from presiding authorities probably persuaded many missionaries from chronicling their ill treatment. As a result, extant records tend to downplay--if not altogether omit--violent treatment by the 1890s.[48]

Missionaries' Reactions to Violence

Missionaries and their family members and friends were all forced to deal with the potential, and sometimes real, threat of violence on various levels. Elders serving in the South frequently lived in a state of anxiety since potential violence was an immediate threat; family members and friends of Southern missionaries feared for their loved one's safety, and the geographical distance between them and the elders left them feeling powerless.

Families of missionaries naturally expressed concern for their loved one's safety. In a letter to his mother, Elder B.H. Roberts reasoned, "The Lord can care

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[47]Southern States Mission Circular Letter from President Elias S. Kimball to elders, 25 March 1896, Church Archives. In a letter to his brother J. Golden Kimball, Elias explained, "I have about discouraged the Elders from writing to the papers at home." Elias Kimball to J. Golden Kimball, 1 March 1897, "Papers, 1883-1933" reel 3, Church Archives.

[48]Ted S. Anderson theorized violence in the SSM began to decrease with the Reed Smoot hearings between 1904 and 1906. See Anderson, "The Southern States Mission and the Administration of Ben E. Rich, 1898-1908," (M.A. thesis: Brigham Young University, 1976).

for me equally as well in Ga. as He can in Utah." After other comforting remarks, he eloquently penned:

> When ever dark clouds have arisen, and times looked troublous, when men have gathered around us with hatred pictured on their faces and murder in their hearts, I have thought, my mother prayed for me this morning--all is well.[49]

This poetic and reassuring letter closes with a wish that he "shall never live to see the day when my life will be dearer to me than the Kingdom of God. . . ."[50]

When violence culminated in murder, the immediate reaction of most Church members was to discontinue the SSM altogether. After the 1884 Cane Creek Massacre and because of the numerous other acts of violence perpetrated against other missionaries, many elders assumed the mission would be abandoned. Mission Presidents Morgan (1878-88) and Roberts (1883-84) discussed this question extensively with Church President John Taylor, his counselor George Q. Cannon, and other leaders. On more than one occasion, Morgan and Roberts testified about the mission's conditions before LDS Church authorities. When asked specifically about violence, Roberts revealed, "Every elder in the South was exposed to extreme danger and each carried his life in his hands."[51]

The question of whether to close the mission was a difficult one. Roberts privately admitted in his diary that the opinion of Church leaders was divided: some strongly advocated continuing the work; others adamantly disagreed. A few leaders

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[49]Roberts to A. E. Dustin, 25 June 1883, Bx 3 Fd 7.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Roberts, Autobiography, p 147, Bx 1 Bk 1.

initially proposed that Morgan and Roberts assume full responsibility for elders in the South.[52] However, neither man accepted this capricious suggestion.[53]

Roberts then made two counter recommendations. He proposed all newly called elders be informed about the mission's character and the possible dangers. Then "if he [the individual missionary] lacked backbone to come or his friends and relatives did not wish him to come that he be excused [from serving in the SSM]." Roberts also suggested that all elders already serving in the South be given the same opportunity to leave. These measures, in his opinion, "would throw the responsibility where it belonged--upon each elder."[54]

After months of careful consideration, President Taylor and his counselors, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, made the decision for the mission to remain open. However, the elders were instructed to protect themselves against mobs by following Christ's example: "if they persecute you in one city flee unto another."[55] From 1885 on the elders began taking a somewhat more passive role in the South; no longer did they feel obligated to stand their ground in the face of

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[52]The fate of the mission hung in the balance between August 1884 and January 1885. Minutes of First Presidency meetings would be very enlightening; however, access to them is currently restricted. It must be remembered that Church authorities also faced many other problems, particularly those concerning polygamy, during this time. I believe this impulsive proposal was made in an attempt to move on to other, equally pressing, matters.

[53]Roberts, Autobiography, p 147, Bx 1 Bk 1.

[54]Ibid., Diary 6 November 1884, Bx 2 Fd 1. Only three missionaries requested their own release between 1884 and 1886: F. M. Jolley, Alma Angell, and James Harrison. However, it is not known if these men went home because of Roberts' offer.

[55]Ibid., Autobiography, p 147 Bx 1 Bk 1.

mob threats. Moreover, they left old fields of labor--places that were hot beds of violence--and began to enter new areas, many of which had never been visited by Mormon missionaries.

Once these decisions were reached and agreed upon, Morgan and Roberts began disseminating the news to missionaries throughout the South. Summarizing the situation in his diary, Roberts boldly stated, "The work of the Lord cannot be stayed because of the opposition of a mob: the gospel must be taught to the nations."[56] Consequently, he and Morgan encouraged elders to continue their work, but to avoid "localities where violence is threatened and the Gospel rejected."[57] Instead, missionaries were instructed to enter new counties and "hunt for the honest in heart."[58]

Individual missionaries sometimes expressed concern for their own safety, usually in private diaries or journals. For example, Elder Charles Flake received two written notices to leave the country after his companion left to return home. The first stated:

> they is a great nomber of men that is just weighting to see If you will take a hint I tell you they [will] use you rough. ... You had beter be in Utah with your wives [even though he was single] you would be beter of[f]. . . . I worn you again you had beter never be seen in this country any more. this is a plain hint to you.

This note only exacerbated Flake's melancholy attitude and concerns for his safety.

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[56]Ibid., Diary, 28 October 1884, Bx 2 Fd 1.

[57]John Morgan to John Taylor, 14 February 1885, Bx 1 Vol 1.

[58]Ibid.

He assessed his situation as follows:

> I ... remain here alone surrounded by I might say hundreds who would rejoice to hear of my death at any time . . . and many would be willing to resort to any means to get rid of me. . . . It is plain enough for me to understand that my life is in danger, but that is nothing new; for I have known that ever since I left home.

Then he further analyzed his situation, concluding that the only thing he could do was leave his post. But this was not an option for him: "God forbid. I would rather leave my bones to bleach in the Southern Sun then to go home without an honorable release."[59] Thus, he remained in the South, unharmed, until he received an honorable release from mission authorities.

Violent Seasons

Violence as a whole increased during the summer months and particularly during revival season.[60] Anyone who has endured a Southern summer can attest to the sweltering heat and insufferable humidity. When such intolerable weather conditions combined with religious zeal, people often became easily agitated and extremely emotional.

Religious revivals increased participants' preoccupation with religion.

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[59]Charles Flake, Diary, 10 November 1884, HBLL. Original spelling retained.

[60]Religious rural communities typically organized a revival each year. These frequently occurred in August or September, after crops had been laid by. See Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford, 1992), 166-67.

Southerners became more aware of Mormonism, both because of this heightened interest and because so many ministers preached against it. Many mobbings occurred during the revival season when preachers nourished citizens' religious zeal. Some mission presidents accurately appraised the situation and expressed concern for their missionaries during the summer revival months. For example, President John Morgan was the first to note a correlation between the summer religious revivals and an increase in violent persecution.[61] Later, President J. Golden Kimball instructed the missionaries to cease tracting during these potentially perilous months. Instead, they were to visit friends or Church members until the passion and zeal subsided.[62]

Persecutors

Southern mobs were typically commanded by community leaders. Edward L. Ayers recognized that "farmers, merchants, bankers, physicians, lawyers, even ministers of the gospel, often slay their fellowman in private warfare . . . not only with no serious detriment to their reputation, but in many instances with increased popularity."[63] While it is difficult to ascertain the mob chieftain in each incident involving LDS missionaries, three specific groups repeatedly emerge: the Ku Klux

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[61]John Morgan, "Letter to the Editor," 21 September 1881, JH.

[62]Francis M. Gibbons, *George Albert Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 29.

[63]Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice*, 10.

Klan, clergy, and newspaper editors.[64] At first glance these groups appear to be strange bedfellows; a closer examination reveals them to be cultural stewards who exert an enormous influence on their fellow citizens.

Ku Klux Klan. In 1866, before Radical Reconstruction, a group of white Confederate veterans formed the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in Pulaski, Tennessee. Initially, this was a group of young men pulling pranks; however, the fraternity soon evolved into an organized vigilante group to entrench white supremacy and political power by oppressing freedmen and Radical Republicans. Its reputation spread quickly, and similar groups formed throughout the South. Even though the name KKK fell into common use, often becoming "synonymous with all nocturnal regulators," it is important to remember it was a decentralized organization.[65] One historian described the Klan as being "largely autonomous, ad hoc groups that joined together temporarily to 'right' local 'wrongs.'"[66]

The KKK was a treacherous enemy for Southern States missionaries. Although the Klan officially disbanded in 1871, many rural chapters continued to function autonomously for several years. The sovereign Klan organizations often acted as an extra-judicial police force that supposedly executed public will against freedmen and those it labeled "social deviants." The Klan often blended violence

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[64]For more information on this subject, see Seferovich, "'Save Me from that Horrible Place': The Southern States Mission, 1875-1905."

[65]Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1971), xlvi.

[66]Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice*, 164.

with the supernatural and absurd in an attempt to horrify its victims. One common technique to incorporate such characteristics was to introduce themselves as ghosts, dressed in white masks and tall hats, from famous Civil War battlefields.

All surviving evidence of Klan activity against Mormon missionaries is confined to the period from the 1870s to the mid-1880s and occurred in Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina, and Alabama. During this time, John Morgan both served his first mission to the South and was appointed mission president. He personally received the brunt of Klan threats, both written and verbal.[67] Morgan's biography and personal papers contain numerous written warnings signed by the KKK and detail a couple of personal encounters with the group.[68] A handful of other elders also received written notices and personal visits.[69] Incidentally, the Klan sent an unsigned letter to Elder John H. Gibbs in Lewis County, Tennessee, prior to his death.[70]

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[67]Prior to joining the Church in 1868, John Morgan had served as a Union soldier in the Civil War. Whether Southerners were acquainted with this fact and if it had any bearing on his persecution are unknown.

[68]See Arthur M. Richardson and Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr., *The Life and Ministry of John Morgan* (n.p.: By the author, 1965) and the John Hamilton Morgan collection, 7 boxes, ML.

[69]See William L. Roper and Leonard J. Arrington, *William Spry: Man of Firmness, Governor of Utah* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), 26-27; B. H. Roberts, *A Scrap Book*, vol 1, complied by Lynn Pulsipher (Provo, Utah: Pulsipher Publishing, P.O. Box 1607, 1989), 46; and Gordon B. Hinckley, *James Henry Moyle* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1951), 117.

[70]John Henry Gibbs, letter, n.d., Bx 1 Fd 18, HBLL. No one has proven any connection between this warning and the mob that instigated the Cane Creek Massacre, probably because the two are unrelated.

Clergy. Numerous missionaries recorded the presence of Protestant ministers--primarily as mob instigators--in vigilante groups. Elder Samuel Bills served his mission in the Southern states during the mid-1870s. Commenting on his experiences, he noted that "Preachers stir up most of the persecution, Methodists and Hardshell Baptists being the most actively malicious."[71] Three decades later, Mission President Benjamin E. Rich ascribed 90 percent of the mobbings of elders to Christian ministers.[72]

Elder George Teasdale reflected Mormons' own prejudices in asserting that "those who teach for hire and divine for money, who make merchandise of the souls of men, whose craft is in danger, warn their flocks against the so-called 'delusion.'"[73] The Mormon perception was that ministers tended to be possessive of their congregations, and they sometimes reacted violently to anyone who encroached upon their sphere.

Mormon missionaries frequently gained converts from those who were already associated with organized religions. Consequently, some ministers may have feared diminished membership and waged a war for power within their communities. Such ministers saw no contradictions in vehemently denouncing Mormonism and inciting mobs. Religiously affiliated citizens "in rural settings did

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[71]Samuel Bills, "Letter to the Editor," 17 January 1876, Southern States Mission Manuscript History, Church Archives.

[72]Benjamin E. Rich, "Two Letters to a Baptist Minister," *Tracts of the Southern States Mission* (n.p.: n.p., 1899), HBLL.

[73]George Teasdale, "Letter to the Editor," 17 January 1876, JH.

not hesitate to warn malefactors publicly or even to expel them."[74]

Elder Isaac R. Vance recorded that a Methodist minister, named Martins, sent him and his companion away, saying that "he would shoot us like a dog if he had had his gun."[75] Vance also endured much persecution the following month, which he attributed to a Baptist minister named Walker who had spearheaded the trouble.[76]

Similarly, it was reported that Elders John Carter and Joseph B. Keller suffered persecution from ministers. In their field of labor the two missionaries encountered a malevolent mob. Because of the crowd's agitation, some participants shot at them--but missed--and forced them to evacuate the area. Significantly, two of the three leaders possessed the title of reverend, while the third served as a county judge.[77]

Newspaper Editors. Nineteenth-century newspaper articles about the LDS Church were typically unfavorable and frequently antagonistic. Thus, editors of

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[74]Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 447.

[75]Issac Reno Vance, Diary, 53, HBLL.

[76]Ibid., 69.

[77]*The Latter Day Saints Southern Star* (Chattanooga: Benjamin E. Rich, 1899), 1:122. Hereinafter cited as *Southern Star*. This mission periodical, started under Benjamin E. Rich in 1899, contained a weekly series entitled "History of the Southern States Mission." Featured in nearly all 106 issues, this column briefly chronicled mission events from 1875 when the mission was formally created to 1900 when the paper terminated. The usual topics detailed news about baptism, local branches and Sunday schools, emigration to the Colorado colonies, reports of state conferences, and persecution in its various forms. Most reports are sketchy at best and lack complete accounts of the miscellaneous events they mention.

small, backwoods Southern weeklies round out the list of leading persecutors. Many of them either participated in mobs, led mobs, or published hostile articles about missionaries in their columns, which incited mob violence. Sometimes, they even formed alliances with clergy and together slandered Mormon elders through the press and from the pulpit.

Newspaper editors commanded respect, and their title carried a significant amount of prestige. These men typically exerted enormous influence within their communities. "No field of public endeavor in the small town and rural South has been devoid of the country press influence." Because readers often trusted editors' judgment, they tended to accept the stories unconditionally along with the editors' biases. "The basic influences which the country papers have exerted on local opinion have been one part formal editorializing and two parts personal. . . . Bold editors recognized no limitations in expressing strong personal views."[78]

The most lethal event brought on in part by the press finally erupted in the Tennessee Cane Creek Massacre. Spurious, inflammatory press coverage preceded this heinous affair; five months earlier an article christened the "Red Hot Address" had been "scattered promiscuously throughout the land,"[79] and found its way into nearly every major newspaper. An unreliable informant reported this fictitious incident to the Salt Lake *Tribune*, which then printed the original tale and helped to

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[78]Thomas D. Clark, "The Country Newspaper: A Factor in Southern Opinion, 1865-1930," *Journal of Southern History* 14 (February 1948):32, 4, 6.

[79]*Southern Star*, 1:225. For a copy of the "Red Hot Address," see William W. Hatch, *There is No Law*, 97-100.

circulate it throughout the nation along the news wire. The article told of a Bishop West in Juab, Utah, who advocated retaliation and violence against those who persecuted the Saints. Although the supposed LDS bishop did not exist, no journalist or editor verified the affair, which in reality never occurred.[80] Nevertheless, this fabrication incited wide-spread persecution and prejudice. This story, merged with lies about the elders, was disseminated throughout the country.

The *Southern Star* described a Florida newspaper editor who actively participated in a mob. In 1897, this horde supplied a missionary with a train ticket to Chattanooga and forcibly escorted him to the station. However, the missionary disembarked in Georgia, changed trains, and returned to Florida. This action agitated townspeople, who then formed an estimated fifty-man mob. The editor of the local paper, the *Live Oak Banner*, was one of the group's leaders. He subsequently published a statement from fellow mob participants who attempted to justify the incident.[81] Articles such as this continued to flame the persecution fires.

Many missionary letters mentioned opposition from newsmen but related few details. For example, Elder Parley P. Pratt,[82] serving in Tennessee, wrote: "As usual we found priests and editors, with but few exceptions, hostile and bitter in

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[80]Hatch, 97-107.

[81]Ibid., 2:92.

[82]This was the namesake son of the Parley P. Pratt who was killed in Arkansas in 1857.

their denunciations against us."[83]

In this same vein, another missionary identified the press's role in persecution. After describing labors in a successful area, he thoughtfully added:

> All this does not transpire without much opposition, the clergy bring to bear their influence, the local press takes a hand and every effort is made to inflame the minds of the people, sometimes to the extent that threatenings and violence are resorted to by the misled and mistaken believers.[84]

Undoubtedly these instances, and probably many others, inspired President Elias S. Kimball (1894-98) to issue a statement concerning this subject. In a circular letter to all SSM elders, he instructed them to establish a good rapport with local presses; missionaries were to visit newsmen and "cultivate their friendship" when they entered a new county. Kimball suggested they even subscribe to the local paper while laboring in the area. Finally, he acknowledged that editors were "powerful friends, but dangerous enemies."[85]

Persecutors' Motives

It is important to keep in mind that not all Southerners abused Mormon elders; only a small minority of Southerners actively persecuted LDS missionaries. There were probably as many reasons for this as there were persecutors. However,

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[83]Parley P. Pratt, "Letter to the Editor," 7 March 1879, Southern States Mission Manuscript History, Church Archives.

[84]"Letter to the Editor," 21 September 1881, JH.

[85]Elias S. Kimball, Circular Letter, 25 March 1896, Church Archives.

some common and obvious motives for persecution can be enumerated.

Religiously-minded Saints immediately blamed Satan for spurring on persecutors. Others quoted Latter-day Saint scripture "that all these things shall give [them] experience, and shall be for [their] good."[86] But sometimes the Saints themselves unknowingly invited persecution through their self-righteous attitudes and actions.[87] One historian asserted that SSM elders "failed to maintain a low profile . . . and some Southerners ran for their shotguns."[88]

Religious intolerance topped the list of why non-Mormons persecuted Latter-day Saints. "Though complete freedom of religion eventually became part of America's Constitutional system, that development was a long time in coming, with some Americans never fully accepting all its implications." Another reason that would seem to apply to the SSM involved "American nativism." Some U.S. citizens felt threatened by particular groups and feared they could undermine American values and freedoms such as freedom of press, religion, and speech. Although such charges may simply have been untrue, some people believed them, "and this belief was strong enough to compel some of them to violent action."[89]

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[86]Doctrine and Covenants 122:7.

[87]James B. Allen, "Why Did People Act That Way?" *Ensign* (December 1978):21-24.

[88]Leonard J. Arrington, "Mormon Beginnings in the American South," *Task Papers in LDS History*, No. 9 (Salt Lake City: Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976), 8.

[89]Allen, 23.

Southern Violence

To avoid distorting the picture, LDS missionaries' experiences with persecution and violence must be inserted into the broader context of national and regional violence. Acts of violence were not solely directed toward Mormon missionaries. Southern historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown discovered mobs killed 3,337 people in America from 1885 to 1903; three-fourths of these (2,585) occurred within the South's borders.[90] Of this group, blacks comprised the vast majority of victims. The NAACP published similar statistics: between 1889 and 1918 2,834 people, 78.2 percent of whom were black, were victims of Southern lynch mobs.[91] Moreover, five-sixths of all lynchings transpired in southern states.[92] Comparatively speaking, the violence and abuse heaped upon African Americans by Southern whites makes those endured by Mormon missionaries seem meager.[93] Mormon elders simply fit into the larger perspective as one of many groups persecuted by mobs.

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[90]Wyatt-Brown, 188. Such figures are from their nature inexact and most likely greatly underestimate the extent of mob violence.

[91]Lawrence M. Friedman, *Crime and Punishment in American History* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993), 190-91.

[92]C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*, ed. by Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter, 10 vols. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press for the Littlefield Fund for Southern History of the University of Texas, 1971), 351-52.

[93]See Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). This work contains horrific accounts of the torture of lynch victims.

"Violence, it is said, is as American as cherry pie."[94] However, violence has been a key component of Southern distinctiveness for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Folklore has celebrated Southern violence almost as much as it has Southern hospitality. The need to fight appears to have been engraved into the region's character. In short, violence permeated every segment of nineteenth-century Southern society; citizens accepted it as an ordinary element of life.[95]

Southern violence seemed to have flourished for two main reasons: weak or minimal law enforcement and honor. Because Southerners paid little attention to formal laws--or distrusted them altogether--vigilantism thrived, particularly in the last half of the nineteenth century.[96] Notions of honor only compounded the threat of vigilantism. Reputations, social status, respect, and loyalty were inextricably linked to honor. Honor underscored both aggressiveness and competitiveness. Furthermore, the Southern hierarchical culture fueled a society based on honor. Bertram Wyatt-Brown employed literary works as well as ancient history to create a definition of *honor*: a tacit societal understanding, independent of

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[94]Friedman, 173.

[95]For information on the roots and setting of Southern violence, see Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *American Historical Review* 90 (1985):18-43; and John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1956). For general information on violence in the United States see Richard Maxwell Brown, *American Violence* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970); Brown, *No Duty to Retreat: Violence and Values in American History and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr, eds., *The History of Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969).

[96]Friedman, 180.

time and place, that involved notions of self-worth, both publicly and privately. Wyatt-Brown has argued, "The ethic of honor was designed to prevent unjustified violence, unpredictability, and anarchy. Occasionally it led to that very nightmare."[97] Interestingly, this same sense of honor incited many unfortunate incidents, which people participated in to "save face." A perceptive writer once explained, "A [Southern] man's sense of honor appears to have been just as impulsive as his trigger finger."[98]

Another notable historian defined honor as "a system of values within which you have exactly as much worth as others confer upon you."[99] Thus, individuals, usually males, continually jockeyed for position in an attempt to gain, or preserve, honor.

Within such an environment, intangible, ambiguous feelings of fear and prejudice, or perceptions of lost power or honor often ignited individual and group violence. These basic ingredients seemed to have been present in most cases of lynching and other atrocities, as well as those perpetrated against LDS missionaries. Indeed, compared to the atrocities visited upon African Americans by Southern whites those endured by LDS elders appear almost slight.

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[97]Wyatt-Brown, 39. Although Wyatt-Brown's book deals with antebellum Southern culture, many of these same characteristics are prevalent well into the twentieth century.

[98]Clark, 23. Ayers believed "Honor was just another word for lack of self-control." *Vengeance and Justice*, 25.

[99]Edward L. Ayers, as quoted by Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 13.

Some historians have argued for a correlation between an increase in violence and poor economic conditions. Ayers, among others, discussed the economic depressions of the 1880s and 1890s--years that also witnessed dramatic increases in lynchings, property damage, and prison populations.[100] During these decades, "feuding and the vigilante violence called whitecapping terrorized parts of the upcountry."[101] Moreover, the late nineteenth-century South was a society in turmoil. The 1890s, in particular, witnessed the rise of Populism, a severe economic depression--during which thousands of whites lost their land and became tenants or sharecroppers--and an increase in antagonistic race relations. "It would have been difficult to find a climate more hostile to the cultivation of radical movements than the South in the 1890's."[102]

While defending honor underlay responses to perceived threats to self and community, access to weapons assured that the outcome would be violent and often deadly. Southern men, as a rule, carried weapons "at all times, and did not hesitate" to use them.[103] Another writer noted that they "seemed to delight in loading themselves down with pistols and other instruments of destruction."[104] These accessible weapons proved to be quite disturbing. People constantly lived in fear.

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[100]Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice*, 223, 176, 169.

[101]Ibid, 223.

[102]Woodward, 249.

[103]Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice*, 21.

[104]Clark, 23.

Violence always loomed in the background of public gatherings, and men dispensed violence for such trivial things as "the passing of the lie, or because of imagined slights to their womenfolk, dogs, saddle horses, or kinfolks."[105]

Southern Religion

Religion has permeated Southern culture for more than three centuries. Southern religious expert Donald G. Mathews observed "churches provided social bondedness for people otherwise isolated from familial and geographic roots" in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[106] Thus, Southern churches have helped fill many of the citizens' social and spiritual needs for decades. Southerners' commitment to conservative religious values, especially in the nineteenth century, helped contribute to the region's distinctiveness.

Following the Civil War and Reconstruction, Southerners looked to Protestant churches to heal their spiritual and cultural wounds. After these traumatic social and political events, church membership rolls swelled.[107] Religious

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[105]Ibid., 23, 24.

[106]Donald G. Mathews, "Religion," *Encyclopedia of Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 1046.

[107]Charles Reagan Wilson, "The Religion of the Lost Cause," in Patrick Gerster and Nicholas Cords, eds., *Myth and Southern History* vol 1 of *The Old South*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 182.

popularity surged in the 1870s and continued until after the turn of the century.[108] During this time, Protestant congregations and churches provided needed social outlets as well as a sense of community and individual identity. Within close-knit southern communities, people's activities revolved around churches where they gathered and socialized.

Historically, religions in the South tended to insulate its followers from innovative social movements by supporting and esteeming established values. "Tersely stated, religion is dominantly a conservative or reinforcing agent for the traditional values held by white southern society."[109] Historian Charles Reagan Wilson concluded that Southern ministers represented the bastions of Southern culture, perpetuated the idea of the Lost Cause, and sought to preserve the status quo.[110] Not only were ministers community leaders, but they were also cultural sentries. This partially explains why so many ministers were reported as having led mobs against LDS missionaries in the nineteenth century.

To further interpret this bizarre behavior, Ted Ownby identified two images of the South: the image of the religious white South and the image of the fighter.[111] Women represented and tried to preserve the religious camp, while

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[108]Samuel S. Hill, Jr., ed., *Varieties of Southern Religious Experience* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 226.

[109]Samuel S. Hill, Jr., *Religion and the Solid South* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), 36.

[110]See Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: the University of Georgia Press, 1980).

[111]Ownby, ix.

most men embodied the other; but some men occasionally straddled both sides. "It was the tension between the extremes of masculine aggressiveness and home-centered evangelicalism that gave white Southern culture its emotionally charged nature."[112] Ironically, these two images coexisted and were especially pronounced in the latter half of the nineteenth century, particularly with the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and with the dramatic increase of unorganized vigilante groups. Southerners did not take passive roles in religion–either they adhered to religious principles or they blatantly rejected them by violating them, and some did both.

A brief examination of churches on the Southern frontier in the 1810s illustrates the interaction between different dominations. Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches usually populated the region's frontier during this era and competed for members. They often quarrelled among themselves, and even until the end of the nineteenth century "Almost without exception congregations refused to extend the use of their buildings for [other] services."[113] Protocol such as this remained the same till the end of the nineteenth century; numerous LDS elders reported refusals to use or even rent existing church houses for their meetings.

These frontier churches protected their territory and resented intrusions from new dominations. "As if needing elbowroom, the denominations shoved and pushed, attracted and repelled each other like children." However, when religious

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[112]Ibid., 14.

[113]Walter Brownlow Posey, *Religious Strife on the Southern Frontier* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 69.

step-children, such as Catholicism, moved in, Protestant sects temporarily ceased bickering among themselves to form a coalition against them.[114] Similar tactics were carried out against the LDS Church and its missionaries when it reentered the South after the Civil War.

Once rivals disappeared from the scene--or were grudgingly accepted--the situation returned to its former state of anarchy. Churches occasionally had to deal with outside disturbances not led by denominational adversaries; instead, small groups of people, sometimes members of other churches but not always, posed problems. Ruffians occasionally broke up meetings already in progress or attempted to prevent them from even starting; on one occasion, two loads of planks, used as seats for an open-air meeting, were burned by members of other congregations. Other times rogues had ministers arrested for disturbing the peace.[115] Although these particular antics occurred in the early nineteenth century, similar scenarios transpired when LDS elders labored in the region fifty years later. Thus, much of the mistreatment heaped upon missionaries was actually routine protocol in the Southern religious climate and had been going on long before Mormons arrived.

In summary, the nineteenth-century Southern religious climate was as complex as it was competitive. Most Southerners took active roles in religion. Southern churches offered spiritual direction as well as social outlets for their

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[114]Ibid., xiv, xv, 23.

[115]Ibid., 59-60, xvii.

members. However, new sects or churches received cold and sometimes hostile treatment from already entrenched and established denominations.

Conclusion

Although a small percentage of missionaries may have felt obligated to remain in the South because of pressure from relatives and friends at home,[116] the vast majority of the elders could not have endured severe persecution without a deep conviction in their religion and tremendous faith in their God. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley once summarized missionaries' treatment in the South:

> A few [Southerners] accepted their testimony, but many more rose in bitterness against them. These early missionaries endured much persecution. Some were stripped and beaten; some were murdered by hateful enemies. But with faith they persevered. Eventually, thousands upon thousands joined the Church.[117]

This statement reveals one reason so many elders stayed in the South: to convert the "honest in heart" who would accept their message. Theirs was a labor of love and service to perfect strangers. After nearly twenty-five years of intensive missionary work by 1,689 elders, LDS Church membership in the South reached an all time

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[116]This statement stems from B. H. Roberts' comment about giving honorable releases to missionaries who lacked sufficient courage to remain in the South. It is not inconceivable that some elders may have feared a dishonorable release, and its accompanying social embarrassment at home, more than an angry Southern mob.

[117]Gordon B. Hinckley, "God Grant Us Faith," *Ensign* (November 1983):51-52.

high of 10,000 in 1900.[118]

It is also important to note that these missionaries, by and large, were second- and even third-generation Saints. Undoubtedly, they had been raised on stories of the Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois persecutions visited upon the Saints. Consequently, many missionaries probably expected to pass through their own Ohios and Missouris and may have looked upon such treatment as their own rites of passage to becoming true Saints.[119] This could explain why so many elders welcomed and almost seemed to glory in such experiences; perhaps this is why virtually all diaries and letters retain a sense of unyielding optimism, even in the heat of brutal tribulation. Whatever the cause may be, very few evaded such trials of

[118]Leonard J. Arrington, "Mormons," *Encyclopedia of Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 863. This number may have been reached earlier if Southern Church members had not emigrated West and gathered with the main body of Saints. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Church members were discouraged from emigrating West and counseled to build the Church in their areas.

[119]Leonard J. Arrington believed the persecution and violence in the SSM "contributed to the 'siege' mentality of the Mormon community in the last third of the nineteenth century." Arrington, "Mormon Beginnings," 13.

persecution; the majority quietly endured, almost always turning the other cheek to their oppressors.[120]

[120]It is surprising how few missionaries ever fought back or retaliated against their persecutors. "The LDS response to persecution is to temper sorrow and anger in accordance with scriptural counsel. The Savior's admonition to turn the other cheek (Matt. 5:39-42) is expanded in the Doctrine and Covenants: Great rewards are promised to those who do not seek retribution and retaliate." Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillian, 1992), s.v. "Persecution," by Lisa Bolin Hawkins. Only two cases of retaliation against persecutors stand out. Henry G. Boyle, as a recent convert and young elder in 1843, wrestled a local bully and finally knocked him over the head with a frying pan. The only other missionary to grapple with opponents was Willard Washington Bean, who became a boxing champion several years after his mission. Bean sparred with a few men in the East Tennessee Conference and won each time.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Encountering a new subculture, traveling, proselytizing, and enduring persecution were key elements summarizing LDS missionaries' experiences in the Southern States Mission (SSM). These elements have captured the essence of late nineteenth-century missionary work in the American South. Like pictures in a scrapbook, this study highlights some of the region's varying conditions affecting missionary work and reports the elders' responses to new and different situations, peoples, and subcultures. The contribution of this thesis lies in the fact that it documents a time in history and a group of people who have never graced the pages of publication in such detail.

Further, it examines the reaction of a religiously conservative American subculture--the South--to the efforts of a yet smaller subculture--Mormonism--to remake the South in its image. Thus, it is also a history of a clash of two subcultures.

Why did elders serve these missions to the South? Why did they risk their lives when many had wives and families at home? The common denominator among the elders was their possession of strong faith in their religion and their God. They also felt a responsibility, even a sense of duty, to serve others and share

their religion. SSM President William Spry, at the 1889 North Carolina conference of missionaries, believed the elders to be diplomats: "Our position is a sacred one[;] we are doing the work which the Savior should have [us] to perform. We are ambassadors in his stead."[1]

But the actual, individual missions were not quite this glorious; elders frequently experienced anxiety, panic, discouragement, and loneliness. Moreover, it must be remembered that the vast majority of missionaries at this time had never left their Western homes. In spite of these conditions, elders undoubtedly believed the benefits outweighed the costs since they continued to go on missions and remained in the field voluntarily.

This project has uncovered some of the misinformation associated with the SSM. First, modern missionaries in the late twentieth-century often say they wish they had as easy a time as their progenitors. This thesis clearly shows that elders from former days experienced many difficulties modern Saints many not know or comprehend; nineteenth-century missionaries encountered more than their fair share of persecution, emotional distress, and physical deprivation. Second, SSM elders continued working even though they had relatively few baptisms. The fact they continued to serve missions and remained in the field demonstrated that success cannot be measured in numbers, but rather by tenacity. The vast majority of nineteenth-century missionaries were successful simply because they endured and

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[1]William Spry, as quoted by North Carolina Conference secretary Oliver Belnap, Diaries 1887-1889, 13 September 1889, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

continued working--often under less than ideal conditions--until they received honorable releases. And because they remained in the mission field, they found varying degrees of success and left a legacy worthy of documentation. The final myth uncovered in this thesis is that even though the SSM was characterized by violence, it was not the sole defining attribute of the mission. Although this violence existed, it was accompanied with unrivaled hospitality--the lesser-known twin characteristic of the mission.

As discussed briefly in Chapter 1, religion was an important element of Southern culture. The South retained a fairly homogeneous regional religion because it attracted few immigrants. However, underneath this uniform exterior lurked denominational schisms and a-religious tenets. The South occasionally struggled with its religious identity, producing polarities in Southern behavior, often noted as cultural schizophrenia. Moreover, honor--the second most important element of Southern culture--seemed to cast a shadow over the region, sometimes acting as both a blessing and a curse for LDS missionaries.

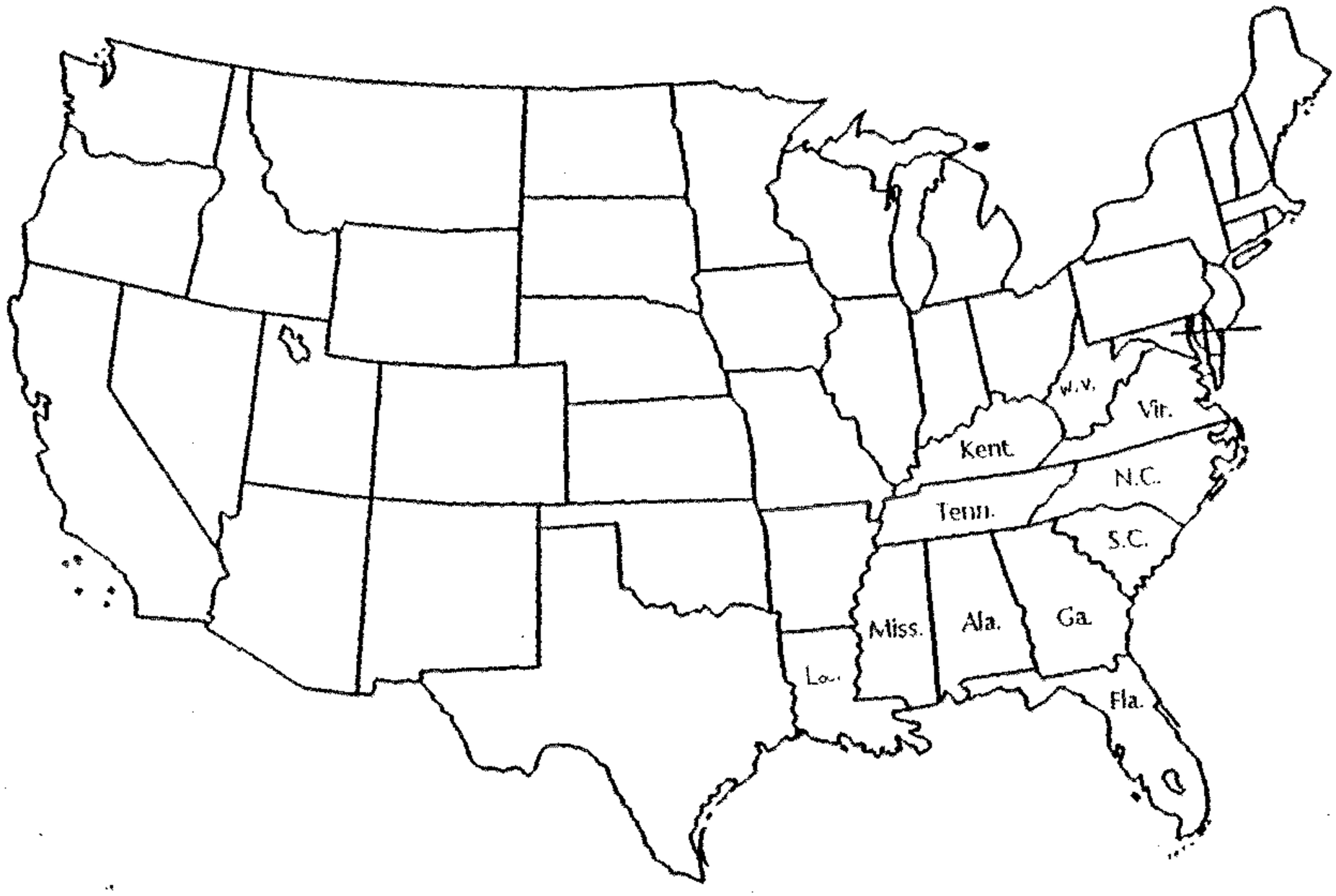
Missions had both an individual and a collective impact: the individual effect was that elders matured and gained experience, which later allowed them to make greater contributions to their church, family, and community once they returned; collectively speaking, missions exposed the LDS Church to more people--for better or worse--creating more informed opinions and maybe more sympathy from average citizens, a small percentage of whom ended up being baptized.

In conclusion, LDS missionaries in the SSM had rich experiences--both

positive and negative–in the American South. From their standpoint, elders performed an act of service to perfect strangers; they voluntarily shared their time and energy to inform and convert a few precious souls to their religion. And, as a result, the individual elders matured, making significant contributions to the mission, their Church, and once they returned home, to their families and communities.

Appendix 1

The Southern States Mission



Appendix 2

Table 3.24--Frequency of Birthdays for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Day of Month	Number	Percent
1	76	4.6
2	43	2.6
3	75	4.5
4	49	2.9
5	57	3.4
6	61	3.7
7	52	3.1
8	48	2.9
9	43	2.6
10	63	3.8
11	61	3.7
12	46	2.8
13	46	2.8
14	63	3.8
15	64	3.8
16	60	3.6
17	55	3.3
18	60	3.6
19	55	3.3
20	55	3.3
21	47	2.8
22	54	3.2
23	48	2.9
24	38	2.3
25	54	3.2
26	63	3.8
27	61	3.7
28	45	2.7
29	50	3.0
30	54	3.2
31	19	1.1
missing	24	missing
Total	1,689	100.0

Table 3.25--Frequency of Birthplaces for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Birthplace	Number	Percent
Arizona	2	0.1
California	4	0.2
Connecticut	2	0.1
Delaware	1	0.1
Idaho	51	3.1
Illinois	38	2.3
Indiana	7	0.4
Iowa	38	2.3
Massachusetts	4	0.2
Missouri	19	1.1
Nebraska	11	0.7
Nevada	7	0.4
New Jersey	2	0.1
New York	9	0.5
Ohio	15	0.9
Pennsylvania	10	0.6
Rhode Island	1	0.1
Utah	1,186	71.3
Vermont	2	0.1
Wisconsin	2	0.1
Wyoming	1	0.1
Canada	4	0.2
Denmark	16	1.0
England	87	5.2
Germany	2	0.1
New Zealand	1	0.1
Norway	3	0.2
Scotland	16	1.0
Spain	1	0.1
Sweden	4	0.2
Switzerland	1	0.1
Wales	10	0.6
missing	132	7.8
Total	1,689	101.4

Table 3.26--Frequency of Birth Months for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1898

Month	Number	Percent
January	155	9.3
February	155	9.3
March	135	8.1
April	149	8.9
May	146	8.8
June	112	6.7
July	96	5.8
August	129	7.7
September	139	8.3
October	165	9.9
November	146	8.8
December	141	8.5
missing	21	missing
Total	1,689	100.1

Table 3.27--Number of LDS Missionaries Set Apart Each Year between 1867-1897

Year	Number Set Apart	Number Sent to SSM	Percentage sent to SSM
1867	133	10	7.5
1868	32	7	21.9
1869	250	8	3.2
1870	96	2	2.1
1871	167	2	1.2
1872	132	0	0
1873	35	0	0
1874	98	3	3.1
1875	197	13	6.6
1876	211	12	5.7
1877	154	3	1.9
1878	152	24	15.8
1879	179	34	19.0
1880	219	49	22.4
1881	199	47	23.6
1882	237	40	16.9
1883	248	83	33.5
1884	205	24	11.7
1885	235	51	21.7
1886	209	54	25.8
1887	282	76	27.0
1888	242	63	26.0
1889	249	40	16.1
1890	283	46	16.3
1891	331	55	16.6
1892	317	75	23.7
1893	162	68	42.0
1894	526	98	18.6
1895	746	228	30.6
1896	922	205	22.2
1897	943	253	26.8

Note: There are 26 missionaries missing from SSM numbers.

Table 3.28--Frequency of Days for Being Set Apart for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1874

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	2	6.3
Monday	6	18.8
Tuesday	3	9.4
Wednesday	1	3.1
Thursday	10	31.3
Friday	8	25.0
Saturday	2	6.3
Total	32	93.9

Table 3.29--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1867-1874

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	0	6.3
Monday	2	18.8
Tuesday	8	9.4
Wednesday	2	3.1
Thursday	1	31.3
Friday	3	25.0
Saturday	0	6.3
missing	16	-
Total	32	100.2

Table 3.30--Frequency of Days for being Set Apart for Southern States Missionaries, 1875-1879

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	5	5.8
Monday	25	29.1
Tuesday	4	4.7
Wednesday	10	11.6
Thursday	118	20.9
Friday	8	9.3
Saturday	16	18.6
Total	186	100.0

Table 3.31--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1875-1879

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	9	13.2
Monday	10	14.7
Tuesday	9	13.2
Wednesday	15	22.1
Thursday	9	13.2
Friday	9	13.2
Saturday	7	10.3
missing	18	-
Total	86	99.9

Table 3.32--Frequency of Days for being Set Apart for Southern States Missionaries, 1880-1884

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	1	0.4
Monday	163	67.4
Tuesday	10	4.1
Wednesday	9	3.7
Thursday	27	11.2
Friday	16	6.6
Saturday	16	6.6
missing	1	-
Total	243	100.0

Table 3.33--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1880-1884

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	23	9.9
Monday	23	9.9
Tuesday	25	10.8
Wednesday	34	14.7
Thursday	74	31.9
Friday	22	9.5
Saturday	31	13.4
missing	11	-
Total	243	100.1

Table 3.34--Frequency of Days for being Set Apart for Southern States Missionaries, 1885-1889

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	11	3.9
Monday	185	65.4
Tuesday	57	20.1
Wednesday	11	3.9
Thursday	3	1.1
Friday	9	3.2
Saturday	7	2.5
missing	0	-
Total	283	100.1

Table 3.35--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1885-1889

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	13	4.6
Monday	16	5.7
Tuesday	176	62.9
Wednesday	20	7.1
Thursday	14	5.0
Friday	24	8.6
Saturday	17	6.1
missing	3	-
Total	283	100.0

Table 3.36--Frequency of Days for being Set Apart for Southern States Missionaries, 1890-1894

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	12	3.5
Monday	64	18.8
Tuesday	67	19.7
Wednesday	11	3.2
Thursday	19	5.6
Friday	148	43.5
Saturday	19	5.6
missing	0	-
Total	340	99.9

Table 3.37--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1890-1894

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	17	5.0
Monday	54	16.0
Tuesday	78	23.1
Wednesday	50	14.8
Thursday	35	10.4
Friday	79	23.4
Saturday	24	7.1
missing	3	-
Total	340	99.8

Table 3.38--Frequency of Days for being Set Apart for Southern States Missionaries, 1895-1898

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	2	0.3
Monday	38	5.4
Tuesday	33	4.7
Wednesday	300	42.6
Thursday	8	1.1
Friday	304	43.2
Saturday	19	2.7
missing	0	-
Total	704	100.0

Table 3.39--Frequency of Release Days for Southern States Missionaries, 1895-1898

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	76	10.9
Monday	99	14.2
Tuesday	71	10.2
Wednesday	108	15.5
Thursday	152	21.7
Friday	98	14.0
Saturday	95	13.6
missing	5	-
Total	704	100.1

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History of the LDS Southern States Mission, 1867-1898

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ABSTRACT

This in-depth study of late nineteenth-century missionary work in the Southern States Mission examines the encounter of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with the American South. It highlights some of the region's varying conditions affecting missionary work and reports the elders' responses to new and different situations, peoples, and subcultures. Examining missionary work from the elders' viewpoint creates a better understanding of what the missionaries experienced and how they reacted to new situations outside the Mormon "corridor" of settlement in the American West. The statistical analysis of the 1,689 elders in the Mission reveals new details about the type of missionaries serving in the late nineteenth-century South. Finally, a history of the Southern States Mission contributes to the general understanding of late nineteenth-century LDS missionary work.

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