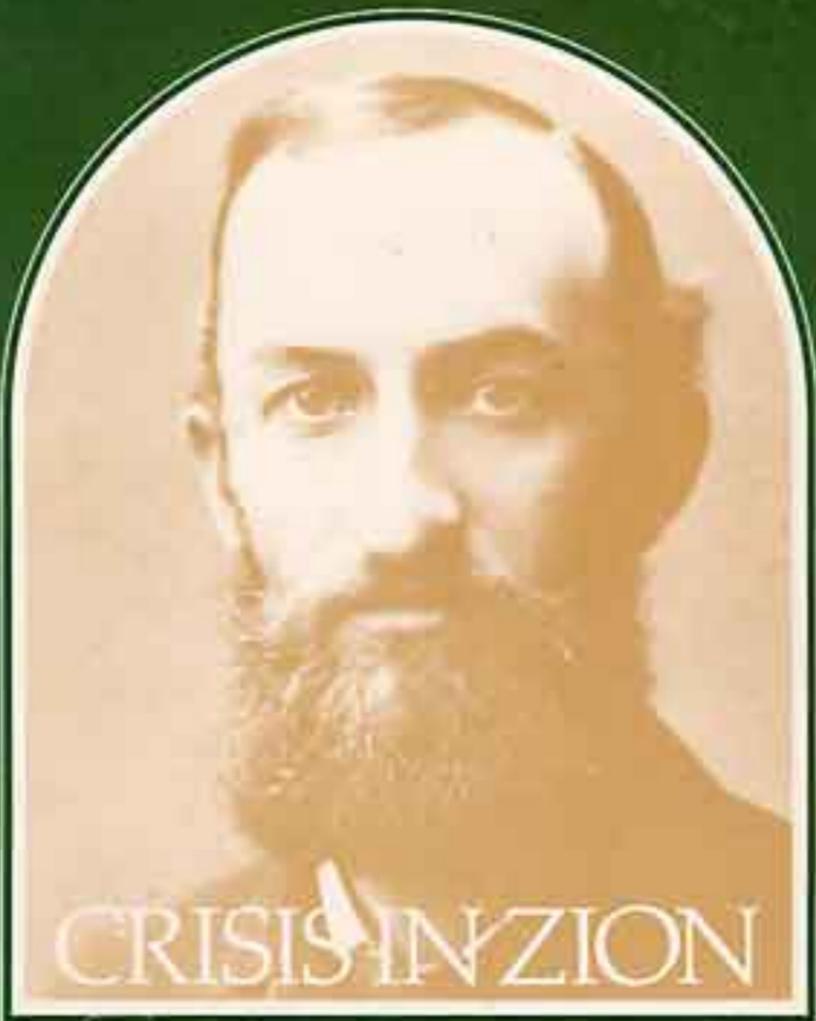


# SUNSTONE

A UNIQUELY MORMON MAGAZINE

Volume Five  
Number One  
\$2.50



## CRISIS IN ZION

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Wallace Stegner

Church Politics and  
Sonia Johnson

1st Place Fiction  
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# SUNSTONE

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# Readers' Forum

## Unholy Triad

Though *Dialogue* enjoys the company of *Sunstone* and *Exponent II*, we do resent the "unholy triad" reference put forth by David J. Cannon (Readers Forum, Vol. 4, No. 4). Though we have never laid any claims to holiness, we are not unholy either. We are dedicated to free inquiry within the bounds of decency and documentation. In fact, we believe so profoundly in the gospel of Jesus Christ that we trust it to withstand inquiry from such as we.

Mary L. Bradford  
*Dialogue* Editor

## Mormon Symbols

I just wanted to drop you a note to tell you how fine an article your piece on symbolism is and how important I think it is. Your analysis is penetrating and it raises some fundamental issues about the role of symbolism in Mormonism and the significance of the decline of symbolism in the Church. I believe that your article presents concrete and visual images of what is perceivable as a 150 year process of self-definition within Mormonism in which the definition has often been blurred by the eclectic nature of Mormonism as well as by the uncomfortable fusion of the isolation of the saints and the appeal for external approval. In your direct and implied comparisons of Mormon symbolism with the symbolism of the Egyptians, Judaism, Christianity, and Masonry, Mormonism usually comes off as an awfully weak sister. Perhaps the problem lies not only in the process of

Mormonism's self-definition, but also in the fact that the symbolism we have from the other groups represents them in their maturity of self-definition, whereas Mormonism is still relatively young. In other words, the symbols you chose on the one side of the comparison represented symbolism in stasis, whereas the Mormon side of the comparison was symbolism in flux.

D. Michael Quinn  
Provo, Utah

## Sunday School Supplement

As a professional librarian and bibliognostic I enjoy your Sunday School Supplement. However, I believe that it would be much more helpful if you'd tell your readers just how they may gain access to the many difficult-to-obtain dissertations and theses you cite.

Your staff and some of your readers may have access to the fine Mormonism collections at the Church's Historical Department, the University of Utah, or the Brigham Young University, but the majority of your public would be hard pressed to find a copy of, for example, Robert Kent Fielding's *Indiana University, 1957 dissertation* (May-June, 1979, p. 52). I'd suggest that you add a note to such entries that a xerox copy of it may be purchased for \$22.00 from University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 or by calling 800-521-3042. Anyone that has access to a microfilm or microfiche reader at a meetinghouse library, branch genealogical library, or public library, may purchase a microfilm or microfiche

copy of it for \$11.00 from the same firm. It would also be helpful to add its order number (Fielding's is 00-22685).

J. Carlyle Parker  
Turlock, California

## Corporate Decision

I just received my July-August (1979) issue of *SUNSTONE* (Dec. 14, 1979) and wish to reply to the letter by Scott S. Smith about the "Supernatural Revelation."

He reports that there was something supernatural about the "black revelation" now scheduled to be placed in the back of the *DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS*, along with the Manifesto not as a "Revelation" but a "declaration."

However, the interview by Wesley Walters with LeGrand Richards rules out any possibility of a "supernatural" occurrence. It was simply a corporate decision. Religious leaders, too, should be careful with the truth.

John L. Smith  
Marlow, Oklahoma

## Medium is Part of Message

I have just returned from my long stay in the U.K. and was delighted to find *Sunstone* in my pile of mail. Thanks for publishing my piece on Eskdale in such an attractive way. All of the articles were good, but there is a certain aesthetic quality about the magazine that goes quite beyond the content. Perhaps in this case the medium of *Sunstone* is a good part of its message. It's satisfying to know that beauty of presentation can be combined so well with excellence in scholarship. The Fisher piece, the one by Alder and the comparison of Mormons and Monnies (M & M's??) make for excellent reading and stimulating conversation. Thanks for caring about excellence and broadening the common Mormon definition of spirituality.

Fred S. Buchanan

## Corrections for Double Issue (Vol. 4, Nos. 5-6)

"Problems in Universalizing Mormonism" by Sterling M. McMurrin (pp. 9-20) was originally read 10 October 1979 at the Salt Lake City Public Library in a lectures series under the auspices of the Utah Division of State History. The response by Truman G. Madsen was also given that night. Photos on pages 9 and 10 were used with permission of the Church Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Photos on pages 11-15 were used with permission of the Graphics Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



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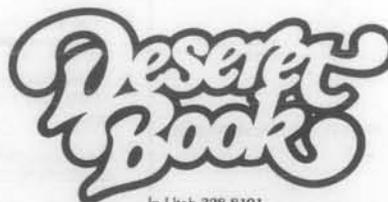
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Hello! Mormon Sport would like to introduce you to a magazine that we feel is long overdue; one that deals with only our L.D.S. athletes, coaches, fitness experts and nutritionalists worldwide who believe in excellence in both physical and spiritual matters, and are strong church members as well.

Some of our Mormon Athletes are well known, but the majority go unnoticed, and many of their stories can be of benefit to you. Things like parental support of endeavors, hard work, the benefits of the Word of Wisdom, setting and achieving goals, endurance and much more.

Below is just a sample of the articles to appear in the January 1980 issue. We invite you to travel with us as we follow our athletes worldwide. Of course, your travels won't be by plane or even car, but through the pages of Mormon Sport Magazine. We hope you'll come along!!! We promise to make this an exciting year!!

- "Spencer W. Kimball, The Athlete," by Andrew and Edward Kimball. A delightful article about our beloved Prophet and leader and his love for sports, by his son and grandson.
- "From Grandpa's Pond to Moscow," by Henry Marsh. Read how Henry's life was saved because his grandfather (Henry D. Moyle) lived a righteous life. Learn of Henry's rise to world class athlete and Pan Am Gold medal winner.
- "When You're Down, Get Up and Try Again," by Curt Brinkman. This is an inspiring story of courage and faith by one of the world's great wheelchair athletes.
- "Decision Confirmed in Red China," by Devin Durrant. BYU's basketball player makes an all-important decision and tells how it was confirmed while touring Red China.
- "Cindee Secrist, M.V.P.," by Hugh Hilton. Read of Cindee's honors as M.V.P. in softball in Southern California.
- "Training," by Paul Cummings. How to begin a serious training program by America's 1500 meter record holder and Olympic hopeful.
- "Fitness for Life," by Dr. Phil Allsen. Why we should stay fit by a nationally known fitness expert.
- "The Pride of Utah Valley," (Orem's Track Team) by Rollie Bestor (BYU Assist. Swim coach). Orem High dominated the Utah track scene last year, and most are back again.
- "The Best Event of My Life," by Bruno Gerzeli. Read how this world famous soccer player found something more important than just playing soccer.
- "Dad Sold His Business," by Mark McGregor (BYU swimmer and Returned Missionary.) Mark tells of his father's total support of his children's endeavors and their resulting success.
- **PLUS Sports Quiz, Statements on health by our leaders, New Releases on L.D.S. Athletes in all sports worldwide, advertisements from L.D.S. businesses and much more!!!**

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The author of the short story "Yellow Dust" (pp. 59-63) is Joseph Peterson, a student at BYU.

The photos illustrating Levi Peterson's "A Mormon and Wilderness: The Saga of the Savages" (p. 69) were provided by the author. Top to bottom: Levi Mathers Savage and daughter Ruth; Levi Mathers Savage and Lydia Lenora Hatch Savage; Woodruff, Arizona, where Levi Mathers

Savage was bishop.

"The Book of Abraham Facsimiles: A Reappraisal" by Edward H. Ashment, "A Response" by Hugh Nibley (pp. 33-51), "Knowing Doing, and Being: Vital Dimensions of the Mormon Experience" by Arthur R. Bassett, and "A Response" by Lowell Bennion (pp. 64-68) were all papers delivered at the Sunstone Theological Symposium in August 1979.

"The Upstream Swimmers: Female Protagonists in Mormon Novels" by Linda Sillitoe (pp. 52-58) was delivered at the Fourth Annual Symposium for the Association of Mormon Letters held 13 October 1979 at BYU.

historical and scriptural grounds did little to endear him to the curia. When his 700-page *On Being A Christian* became a best-seller in Germany in 1974, concern about Kung's influence rose. The English translation appeared in 1976 and from then to the present has appeared monthly in the Book of the Month Club selections. (See *Sunstone's* review in Vol. 2 No. 2.)

Kung was stripped of teaching authority for denying infallibility and for "contempt for the magisterium [teaching authority] of the church." Since Tubigen is a state university, it remains to be seen if Kung will be fired from his post. He will still be able to function as a priest.

The heresy trial of Dutch theologian Edward Schillebeeckx (pronounced *Skhill-uh-bakes*) has aroused interest because he too was a leading theological advisor during the Second Vatican Council, and his 767-page *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* has been widely acclaimed. Vatican Radio has accused Schillebeeckx of Arianism, the doctrine that Jesus is inferior to God because he did not exist eternally with the Father in the Godhead. Like Kung, Schillebeeckx manifests an influence of modern biblical scholarship which treats the Bible as an historical, as well as inspired, document which underwent several layers of textual revision and modification during its formation. The results of his examination will be sent to the Cardinals in charge of the doctrinal congregation, then to Pope John Paul, who could bar him from teaching in a Catholic

# One Fold

## Vatican Cracks Down on Liberal Theologians

In December the Roman Catholic Church stripped Hans Kung, one of its most well-known theologians, of authority to teach Catholic doctrine. And for the first time since its overhaul in 1965, the "Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith" was convened to investigate another prominent theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx.

Kung, a professor of Catholic theology at the University of Tubigen, has a long list of credentials. In 1962 John XXIII named him official counselor on theology at the Second Vatican Council. But in 1970, feeling that the Council's liberalizing mandate had been slighted in pronouncements of Paul VI, Kung published his most controversial work, *Infallible? An Inquiry*. "Without any bitterness or resentment, but also unimpressed by any sanctimonious exhortation to keep quiet and to practice obedient 'humility' and 'love' for the Church . . . in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, we stand up in word and deed for the reform and renewal of our Church," he wrote. "God alone is infallible," Kung concluded. "He alone is free from error . . . To err is human. To err is also ecclesiastical, to err—as we have recently added—is papal: simply because church and pope are also human and remain human."

Kung interpreted Matthew 16:17-19 as an assurance that the church as a whole, rather than its leaders, would not go

astray: "The church is distinguished from other human organizations—and this distinction is certainly decisive—in that the promise is given to her as to the community of those who believe in Christ: that she will survive all wrong conclusions and mis-hits and also all sins and vices; that in all upheavals her truth is never simply shattered and destroyed; that in her the message of Jesus Christ will endure . . ."

Kung's denial of papal infallibility on



university or suspend him from the priesthood.

Schillebeeckx also has a large popular following. Dutch theological students gathered over 60,000 signatures on a petition supporting Schillebeeckx to send to the Vatican.

The crack-down on these two theologians, as well as liberation theologians, (see *Sunstone* Vol. 3 No. 5), appears to be part of a general conservative shift in the Vatican. Traditional Catholics are concerned about recent doctrinal developments. In Holland, for instance, a poll of Roman Catholics revealed that only 47% believe Christ is the Son of God, compared to 70% in 1966.

### Teens Approve Pre-Marital Sex

A Gallup poll published in December indicates that only 30% of American teenagers believe pre-marital sex is wrong, compared to 59% who feel it is not wrong. Nearly three-fourths of the boys 16-18 years old felt pre-marital sex is not wrong. Family stability seems to play an important role in attitude formation, for while 73% of all teens whose parents were divorced approved of pre-marital sex, the figure was reduced to 56% in homes still intact.

### Religious Beliefs in America and England

Another Gallup poll indicates that many more Americans (94%) than Britons (75%) believe in God, the divinity of Jesus Christ (75% to 55%), and attend church (more than three to one).

### Support for Women Priests

The Jesuit weekly *America* reports support for ordination of women priests has increased from 29% in 1974 to 40% in 1979. "Within five years," the magazine predicts, "support for women priests will be not only a majority but a consensus position of the American Catholic community." The poll found that opposition comes primarily from the poor, less educated, and unemployed, while greatest support came from college educated males under thirty years of age in upper-income brackets, living in the west, the nonwhites and less active in church.

### Reorganized LDS on Equality

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has issued a statement reasserting the equality of women under its religious doctrines.

The statement, issued by church president Wallace B. Smith, was an apparent attempt to demonstrate that the church did not agree with the

excommunication of Sonia Johnson from the LDS Church.

The Independence, Missouri-based church, which split with the Mormons in the 1850's, quoted from a resolution passed by its world conference in 1972:

"The present age is witnessing a worldwide struggle in which women are seeking the same equality that the church cherishes in scriptures and resolutions. Therefore, be it resolved that the church reconfirm its belief in the

principle of equality as applying also to women."

Spokeswomen Renee Murray said the church had received numerous calls about its policy toward women and the ERA since the Mormons excommunicated Sonia Johnson. "The church wanted to dispel any idea that it has the same policy," she said. "They want to make clear the differences between the two groups." (AP article, *Ogden Standard-Examiner* December 7, 1979.)

# DIALOGUE

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Wallace Stegner, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and former director of the Stanford University writing program, spent his high school and early college years in Utah. Many of his books, which include *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, *Mormon Country*, *The Gathering of Zion*, *Angle of Repose*, and *Recapitulation*, deal with the West and particularly the Mormon West. "I didn't choose a literary career and dedicate myself to it. I didn't choose the West as the place I would write about and from . . ." he once observed. "It turned out that I had to chew, because I had those teeth, and it turned out that I had to chew cottonwoods because those were the trees I grew up among, the ones that I found handy for my chewing."<sup>1</sup>

For Mormons this was a fortunate discovery. Stegner has been a sympathetic and perceptive outside observer, teaching us much about ourselves because of his dedication to what he has described as his "obligations" as a writer: "not to flatter, not to praise, certainly not to over-praise" and "to try to be honest, to try to be impartial, to try to be serious."<sup>2</sup>

This interview was conducted at his home in California during March 1979 by Peggy Fletcher and L. John Lewis.

SUNSTONE: Your most recent novel, *Recapitulation*, was set in Salt Lake.

STEGNER: Yes. Several of my books have been set in Salt Lake. Parts of *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, of which *Recapitulation* is a sort of continuation. Parts of the Joe Hill story. At least two of the essays in *The Sound of Mountain Water*.

SUNSTONE: Are your perceptions of Salt Lake different in this new book? There is a constant reference to the changes brought by time.

STEGNER: Yes, my perceptions are very different in this one. They were bound to be. I had got myself into the position of following a man who returned to his home town after half a century. My sense of how different it could be derived from the experience of a friend who graduated from the University of Utah in 1929 and went

down to Aruba to work for an oil company. In 1932 he came back through Salt Lake and joined some others of us to go to the Olympics in Los Angeles. He had been on a desert island for three years, and he was overwhelmed by change. Primarily the change had been wrought by neon, which the rest of us had barely noticed because it came a little at a time. For him, the whole town had changed. In *Recapitulation* I was projecting things like that across forty-five years, a time span in which many changes will take place even in a traditional town. Also, I was playing with themes of remembering and forgetting, the indelibility and capriciousness of memory. When you return to a place that you haven't seen in a long time, there is often a disturbing strangeness. Memory is attached to places, and when the places change, memory is disrupted. In *Recapitulation* I was not reporting my own experience, because I have been back to Salt Lake often since I left off living there. But things do change. That's partly what the book's about.

SUNSTONE: Is it your feeling that the people have changed? That they have become less conservative—more cosmopolitan?

STEGNER: Oh, sure. Radio and television have helped rub away provinciality in Salt Lake as elsewhere. That's not all good—in a sense they have homogenized the country. You have no idea how far off, behind the mountains, Salt Lake seemed before television, air travel, and more than the beginnings of radio. In the Twenties, we were still playing with crystal sets, scratching on a piece of rock with a wire and cheering when we got a sound in the headphones. It was only at the end of the Twenties that we began to get radio as a systematic invasion of our geographical isolation. It happened to every corner of the United States. Benny DeVoto went through the Middle West about 1940 and was amazed to find that, through radio, the Middle West had discovered the salad. Similar changes happened in clothes, speech, many other things. In my novel I was jumping back from the full present into a time when radio was very young and television unheard of. Those days, you didn't get up in the morning and listen to Begin or Sadat while you brushed

your teeth. I don't look upon mass communications as a savior, exactly. Much of the time they're cheap, sleazy, and dim-witted. But they do mean that nobody, in even the remotest parts of the country, need any longer feel cut off from the rest of the world.

SUNSTONE: So in your own personal experience, do you see Salt Lake as really changed—in terms of the people, the culture, Mormon doctrine?

---

## Memory is attached to places, and when the places change, memory is disrupted.

---

STEGNER: I haven't been in Salt Lake enough to be a competent judge, but my impression is that Salt Lake is much like other regional capitals. It has the same contacts with the outside, though its Mormon focus tends to make its responses somewhat different. But by and large, it is like Boise or Portland or Denver or other cities with which it might be compared. It is the center of a big area, the economic and cultural capital of a region. What happens to the others happens to it—the same growth into the suburbs, the same problems of growth, pollution, strain on institutions. One thing that does make it different is the enormous financial power of the Church. A lot of the development in Salt Lake is Church financed and directed. Trolley Square may be a local variant of San Francisco's Ghirardelli Square, but the ZCMI complex is different from business complexes elsewhere.

Another thing that in the old days made Salt Lake unique was its instant access to the desert and mountains. I have the impression that that contact with the earth has diminished as the population has increased and the suburbs spread. When I was a boy we could take a streetcar to 21st South and 13th East (which is where the State Penitentiary then was), and from the Prison Farm's fence could hook onto a D&RG freight going up Parley's Canyon, and be up in the mountains in half an hour. By contrast, the last time I tried driving up into one of the canyons it was a hassle.

I get the impression that Salt Lake is very big on development and that there are many wheeler-dealers among those who run the town. It could be that the Church is a brake on the worst aspects of this; it could be that the Church abets it. I don't know. I rather suspect the latter.

SUNSTONE: Do you think that reflects a materialist strain that always has been a part of Mormon culture?

STEGNER: If so, it's something that Mormonism shares with the United States at large. Despite common criticism, Mormon industry and business may actually be more responsible than industry and business elsewhere. But it is not likely to ignore the main chance. What I see in Salt Lake may be based on hit-and-run observation, so don't quote me as doing anything but guessing. But it is clear that Salt Lake is one of the leaders in the boom that affects the entire Rocky Mountain area. Salt Lake isn't booming in isolation, and it isn't lagging behind. Uranium, coal, oil and real estate development have all offered big opportunities to entrepreneurs, among whom we have to include the Church.

SUNSTONE: What about the Mormon sense of history? Do you see that as having made a difference in Salt Lake as against some place like Denver or the other capitals you mentioned?

STEGNER: Perhaps some. Not enough to make it really different. Because there is civic pride in other places, there is a sense of history, there are cultural aspirations as well as go-getterism. Denver's Public Library, for example, is a great historical repository, and Denver has better museums than Salt Lake, and more, though not necessarily better, music. It is not a monumental city in the way Salt Lake is. Salt Lake has monuments, and statues, and treasured buildings, and Church shrines that are unusual in a town so young. Salt Lake set out to create early what might have taken half a millennium, because it does have the impulse, stimulated by both piety and a sense of social difference, to preserve the symbolic records of its history. I don't know whether it is still there or not, but there used to be—on Sixth East, I think—the stump of a little old cedar tree that was supposed to have been the only tree in the Valley when the pioneers arrived. Is that still there?

SUNSTONE: Yes.

STEGNER: Good. I approve of that impulse to preserve what has been historically important. It's more characteristic of Utah than of other western states. It was almost compulsory for Mormon emigrants to keep diaries during the trek across. Well, if you were fleeing Pharaoh across the Red Sea, and knew it and knew the significance of what you were doing, wouldn't *you* have kept a diary? No other wagon parties are that well recorded. A lot of people in the Gold Rush had a sense of history, too, but they were looking for a gold mine, not heaven on earth. They were more interested in getting news of new diggings, and buying shovels, than in taking notes or recording Providences. That historical piety is one of the things that has most interested me in Mormon culture. It has kept track of itself, it has valued its own saga. Ironic, too: the Mormons came into the West to build the future, and even as Clayton's odometer clicked off the miles, they had already begun to build a past.

SUNSTONE: What other things do you see as characteristic of Mormon culture?

STEGNER: To a modern swinger, it would look very straight, perhaps goody-goody, probably anachronistic. I am not a modern swinger, and I have no antipathy to straight arrows. But they do look very middle class to voguish people. Their virtues are family virtues, there is a strong and cohesive sense of community—exactly what the sociologists lament the passing of in our society. The virtues that the Mormons have chosen, or inherited, are old-fashioned American virtues, many of them stemming from rural New England and upstate New York. It remains to be seen how well they hold up in the face of Utah's—and the Church's—growing involvement in the technological society. They haven't held up very well in the rest of the United States, or in any place highly industrialized. But when you ask me what qualities I see in Mormons, I hardly know where to begin. That's a book—my third Mormon book. And I'll have to hold the book until I see how the Church handles its dilemma.

SUNSTONE: We, in fact, have noticed in a number of your books emphasis or interest in the family relationship: how did the children interact with the parents, and the marriage relationship. Did any of that come out of your time in Salt Lake?

STEGNER: I suppose it must have. Also, I grew up all over the West. If you read western history, you can't get around the fact that if people coming west didn't come, like the Mormons, as communities, they generally came as families. Very often, because it took time on the frontier to consolidate communities, the only cohesive element in their society was the family. I have noticed in several parts of the world that where there is virtually no community, because of war or other disruption, there is still a strong sense of family. The West was a social disruption for most Americans and most immigrants. Families did hold together because the family was the last line of defense against anarchy, the only social unit there was. Because it was part of my subject matter and also part of my life, I have probably put some of that last-ditch family solidarity in my books.

SUNSTONE: You have also said that all writers reveal something of their personal philosophy—personal value system—in what they write, which gives some consistency to their works.

STEGNER: I think they do. You can't write a book without revealing some of yourself, and what you reveal of yourself may be, for some readers, the most intimate and valuable thing in the book. I've said somewhere else that fiction is dramatized belief. You inevitably reveal yourself in what you elect to put your characters through and how you make them respond to their experience, and also in how you (I hope subtly!) nudge a reader into responding to what he reads.

SUNSTONE: Tell us about your book *Angle of Repose*—what you were saying about the grandmother especially, and the marriage relationship.

STEGNER: I was probably, in an ever-so-delicate way, calling my western egalitarian grandmother a snob. Her snobbery was almost like a tragic flaw, and it was actually the only thing about her that I myself didn't like. She couldn't ever see anything in her own life quite straight because she kept seeing it all through the eyes of her tony



eastern friends. But notice: I didn't write the book to prove that Grandmother was a snob, or that snobbery is an unpleasant weakness. I wasn't writing a morality play. I was writing a novel about a woman who had many fine qualities and great talents, and who led a most interesting life in interesting places. But if, as you seem to be, you are asking why I became Grandmother's judge, I have to say that I didn't like her snobbery, thought it a weakness, and used it to bring her to disaster. She didn't respect her husband as much as she should have. She thought of him as a boy in man's clothing, always on

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### Fiction is dramatized belief.

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another man's errand and never quite up to the Clarence Kings and the articulate easterners. Whereas, as I pursued that family through the novel, I came to think of him as a sort of hero. He was at least as competent, though never so visibly, as she, and he had dreams that were quite as big and less selfish. Several people have told me that they were amazed, on reading the book for the second time, to find that Oliver, not Susan, is the hero. I suppose I bent their arms, in a way. I wanted him to come off as better than she thought him, and her to come off as a little less admirable than she thought herself. And then, of course, just because I don't believe there is any hero without a flaw, I gave him that hard, ugly streak of unforgiveness that perpetuated the anguish she had brought into their lives.

I should point out, too, that I had a sort of historical and sociological motive in that novel. Both Oliver and Susan were of a class that we have tended to overlook in our view of western history. We think of the western pioneer as a simple man with a handcart or covered wagon, a tall shanghai rooster, one spotted hog, and a grade-school education. But not all pioneers were farmers, and not all were poorly educated. I wanted to show, in Oliver and Susan Ward, some pioneers who were educated, gifted, well-born and well-connected, but were still authentic pioneers. The West was not entirely a deculturated desert. Not everybody lost his shirt, or came west without one.

SUNSTONE: In *Gathering of Zion* you treat the Mormon immigrants to the West—in this book as impartially as possible.

STEGNER: I was deliberately letting the emigrants speak for themselves, so that there was literally no attitude I could take, pro or con. I was simply trying to recreate the experience as the people who had it had lived it. That seemed to me the only fair way. And I've never had anything but pleasant comments from Mormons about that too. In *Mormon Country* I had inadvertently made a few comments that some people thought condescending. I didn't want that to happen again.

SUNSTONE: It has been said that *Mormon Country* was by and large much more positive and favorable, and not as objective as *The Gathering of Zion*.

STEGNER: It isn't as objective; it's more personal. I was neither pro-nor anti-Mormon when I wrote it. I was living in Cambridge, Massachusetts and very homesick for Utah and people I knew. I probably was more enthusias-

tic in that book, but now and then I was moved to say something about doctrine. Those were the spots that some people objected to.

SUNSTONE: We in the Mormon Church who are in the arts have been somewhat dismayed by the lack of literature that has been produced by the culture. There are plenty of other religious cultures that have produced fine literature: case in point, Jewish culture. What do you think the chances are that the Mormon culture could produce good literature? Is there such a thing as Mormon literature? Or ought there to be?

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## The chorus of every play ought to be in the hearts of the audience.

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STEGNER: That's a complicated and difficult question. I will have to answer it piecemeal. First, Mormon culture hasn't had quite the time that Jewish culture has had. Give it another three or four thousand years and then ask your question. Second, Mormonism has until recently been preoccupied with its differences, its conflicts with the surrounding American culture, its martyrdoms. The dramas of the Mormon experience that have caught writers' imaginations have been the mobbings and burnings, Haun's Mill, Nauvoo, and the hardships of the migration west to a desert frontier. The literature that has resulted has almost always had a self-righteous tone, and sometimes it has been outright faith-promoting. That has meant that it can be read with conviction only by Mormons. And how many Mormon readers are there—readers of fiction especially? And if a condition of being able to read Mormon stories is unshakable faith, then what happens to literary excellence? To any of those cosmopolitan swingers out there who *do* read, Mormon literature is likely to seem at best parochial, at worst incredible. Mormons themselves think of themselves as a peculiar people. In some ways they are so peculiar, both in their history and in the dense web of their practical life and their faith, that outside readers just won't believe them when they see them in print.

Writers, Malcolm Cowley says, are people with readers. Unless Mormon writers can stir up enough readers within the four million or so who know about and believe in Mormon history and Mormon life, then they are going to have to find readers outside, as in fact all significant literatures have done. The only way they can do that, I think, is to write about people, and let the faith take care of itself. I will envelop the people, it will be part of the dramatic propriety of the context, but can't look like an attempt to justify or proselytize, and it may well leave entirely behind the old wrongs. Though Jewish tradition contains plenty of stories out of the pogroms, and now is all but dominated by the horrors of the Holocaust, look where its ancient strength lies: creation myths, stories like those of Job, Judith, David and his rebellious doomed son Absalom, the Prodigal Son, the poetry of the Psalms with their celebration of carnal and celestial love, *People*, who happen to have been Jews, and reported without a trace of whitewash, with all their humanity about them. King David was a great hero of the Jews, but Jewish writing shows him proud, stubborn, and inclined to

crawl into wrong beds. Have Mormon writers achieved that degree of objectivity and honesty about Joseph Smith and Brigham Young? Could a Mormon writer write the story of Parley Pratt without making it an exemplum of Gentile ferocity and persecution? Could he tell the story of an apostate as a human story, and not an instance of weak faith? The trouble with a lot of Mormon literature is that it has had a compulsion to moralize. I suspect that when the Mormon experience is made into real literature, its writers will have to have achieved a sympathy for more points of view than one, and will have to deal with some pretty harsh challenges to the traditional Mormon beliefs. You can't make a statement about faith without dealing in some fashion with doubt, giving doubt its due.

This is to say that Mormon literature is going to have to be open-minded, both about dogma and about history. I am sure that in the past some Mormon historians have been embarrassed by the tendency of the Church to whitewash or conceal some incidents in its history. I remember a public seminar in which several of us—Juanita Brooks, Sam Taylor, and I, among others—urged the then Church Historian to open up the archives to scholars. He admitted that he couldn't, completely. Now Leonard Arrington seems to have done so. That is an indispensable first step.

The Catholic Church has known for a long time that doubt and questioning are ultimately more faith-promoting than dutiful piety. If you don't leave room for doubt, you're probably not going to convince those outside readers that what is being reported is valid human experience.

There is one further problem: that Mormon society is so well organized, and operates on principles so different from those of other societies, that the novelist who tries to deal with it finds himself constantly tempted to stop his story and explain celestial marriage, or the Word of Wisdom, or the Temple sacraments. The only way is to be bold—take all that for granted, let it be found out by readers. *Never* explain. The best reader is one who is eager to find out what's going on, and why. Let him guess and make inferences. As Benny DeVoto once said, if a reader is with you at all he's probably a mile ahead of you. You don't have to *teach* him Mormon history and doctrine and sociology; he can learn it.

You ask if there is a Mormon literature. Not much of one, yet. Some beginnings. Ought there to be a Mormon literature? Of course. There ought to be a literature for every society on earth, it's as natural as birds singing. But it takes a while. It takes some big imagination that can see around the Mormon world, see its relations to the rest of the world. And unquestioning piety would be as out of place in such a writer as extreme modesty in a gynecologist.

SUNSTONE: Does it have to be a Mormon?

STEGNER: Not necessarily. It might well be an ex-Mormon or someone who has lived much among Mormons without being one. One of the Mormon novels that people take seriously is Vardis Fisher's *Children of God*. Fisher was brought up as a Mormon, but lapsed. A year or so ago Leonard Arrington and someone else tried to make a case for the notion that Fisher was actually more Mormon than he pretended, was still a member of the

faith when he wrote his book. Fisher's wife was somewhat indignant, half afraid that Vardis would rise from the grave in a rage. According to her, he had repudiated the faith entirely, and I think he had. But he *knew* it, that's the point, and knew many things about it that he had to respect and wouldn't misrepresent. Half the trouble with Mormon literature of the past is that it was written largely either by sensationalizers or by defenders of the faith.

It would be one thing if Mormonism could depend on breeding up its own full complement of readers. In a way, the Deseret Bookstore serves the clientele, and I gather you don't think what it dispenses is quite literature. Literature has to have validity for a world audience. A writer writing in English has to offer something to New York and London, and perhaps to English-speaking Chinese in Singapore, and to everyone else able to inspect the human condition through the medium of language. When a culture is large enough to contain its own large intellectual class and its own large reading public, then a lot of literature can come out of even the most repressive and thought-controlled society. Every Russian writer from Pushkin to Solzhenitsyn has had trouble with the censors, but Russian literature is one of the greatest in the world. It didn't become so by whitewashing the Czars or the Commissars. It became so by looking at them honestly, sometimes with open anger, sometimes speaking in riddles to avoid persecution, and probing deep into what makes people people.

Mormon society was never that repressive, but in its history it certainly has tried to control thought. The way to write a significant body of literature is to keep your mind utterly free and absolutely open, and to write for the world. That means opening things up, as Leonard Arrington has done, apparently with the full approval of the First Presidency. Now all you need to do is work and wait.

SUNSTONE: Do you think that anyone outside the Mormon culture cares about a crisis of faith?

STEGNER: Of course. But it must be expressed in other than doctrinal terms. Let's face it, a crisis in a Catholic over the doctrine of transubstantiation isn't likely to be very interesting to non-Catholics. But if you can make him so human that we can take his faith and his doctrines as emblematic of our own, then the crisis will interest anyone who has *any* faith, of any kind. Then it's a human crisis involving faith, not a theological argument. I have known Mormon missionaries who went out into another world and had their faith shaken. Some of them never recovered. Could their mental struggles and anguish be made into fiction? I think so, if what we are given is less the abstract arguments pro and con, and more the consequences of doubt or apostasy on the personal relationships of that young person—effects on his family, friends, community, effects that put him crosswise in the society that used to be his shelter and reassurance. Fiction is made of human relationships and human qualities, not of theological arguments.

SUNSTONE: What about Dostoevsky?

STEGNER: Does he argue theology?

SUNSTONE: The Grand Inquisitor is as Theological as one can get.

STEGNER: All right, you win. As long as you've got Dostoevsky to do it. But it's not the most natural fiction. Dostoevsky felt intensely, he was convulsed with those themes of crime and retribution and resurrection, and he coughed them up burning hot. The passion makes them live. Whoever said that a novel is what happens in this room today wasn't talking poppycock. One of the good definitions of a novel is Willa Cather's: "A passion and four walls."

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It takes some big imagination that can see around the Mormon world, see its relations to the rest of the world.

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SUNSTONE: Could you write a novel about Mormons without their theology?

STEGNER: Yes. Concentrate on the family, which in a way is theological in Mormondom, but is more. What's more important than the articles of faith is the relationships between daughters and mothers, sons and fathers, in a big Mormon family. That's closer to us as readers than any other human experience. We're all sisters, brothers, children, parents. I think that the strains of family life are the most natural subject matter for a Mormon novel. You can take the religious side of it almost for granted, or let it leak out. Let me repeat DeVoto's rule: If a reader is with you at all he's probably a mile ahead of you.

SUNSTONE: So if you're a good writer, you don't have to explain why your characters are doing some seemingly bizarre things?

STEGNER: I think that's right. But some situations do have disadvantages, and this is one. The chorus of every play ought to be in the hearts of the audience. We write within large sets of assumptions that we share or largely share with our readers. If our readers don't share our assumptions, we have lost them. When we are dealing with peculiar societies the only chance we have is to make our characters interesting enough as people so that the readers will leap on every clue, and fill in for themselves what is not at first understandable. That is how Faulkner leads us to understand his world, the blacks and whites, the shadow of slavery, the antebellum and post-bellum pride, the upward mobility of the Snopeses. They take themselves absolutely for granted. You never find Faulkner standing around in his story explaining things. If he is talking at all, he is talking through other mouths than his own, limiting himself to what his spokesman-characters would see or know or understand.

Novels, that is, are as if overheard. The characters give themselves away, the author should be present only as a faint vibration, something that is never overt but that like a current carries the novel's people and events in a certain direction. He cannot preach or apologize. Once that lesson has been learned and put into practice, Mormon fiction will be as valid and interesting as any other fiction. It might even gain a certain piquancy from being about people and a society different from the usual run.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Wallace Stegner, "Literary by Accident," *Utah Libraries* (Fall 1975):14

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

# SOME CONCEPTS OF

by Lorin K. Hansen

Since the beginning of the Restoration many Mormons have been led to believe that their position on the principle of modern divine revelation was nearly unique in the Christian world. Reactions from other Christians have been sufficient to leave that impression. Very early, for example, Joseph Smith related his First Vision to a Christian minister and received this first taste of prevailing opinion:

...He treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the devil, that there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days, that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there would never be any more of them. (JS 2:24)

Such reactions have been common in Mormon experience. This is not surprising since the belief in the cessation of modern revelation has been a dominant view throughout most of Christian history, the origin of the doctrine dating back to the second century. At that time the early church struggled desperately to protect the faith from the divisive influence of professed gnostic revelations. In self defense, in the face of waning authoritative guidance, the church of that day enunciated the principle of "...revelation given once for all in days long gone and never to be added to or altered."<sup>1</sup>

But much has happened in Christian thought since Joseph Smith's day. There has been the rise of Protestant liberalism, the brief flourishing of the Catholic modernist movement, the reaction of Protestant fundamentalism, the influence in this century of neo-orthodox (crisis) theology, and a host of other theological expressions. As part of these theological movements there have been major changes in the general Christian view of divine revelation.

The awakening concern with revelation began first within Protestantism. In retrospect Carl Braaten observes:

Every modern Protestant theology, regardless of which category shapes its thinking, has felt obliged to establish itself as a theology of revelation, as if thereby it has achieved all that matters or what matters most.<sup>2</sup>

James Barr speaks of the uniqueness of the present situation:

... it is equally clear that the dominance of the concept of revelation is modern, and has caused this term to acquire a function which it never had in the whole previous history of the church.<sup>3</sup>

A veritable flood of literature has appeared on the subject. The doctrine of revelation has been called "...the most frequented hunting ground of theologians."<sup>4</sup> In-

tense interest has been felt by Catholics as well as Protestants. One of the two most important documents to come out of the latest Vatican Council was the document on divine revelation. Karl Rahner explains the present situation in the Roman Catholic Church:

Quietly and almost unnoticed, an answer is being given at the present time to the question of a correct and full understanding of the concept of revelation, the question to which the Church at that time (during the Modernist Movement) had no clean answer...<sup>5</sup>

What are these new concepts of divine revelation? And why have they taken on such importance in our day? A concise statement on such a flurry of new thought is difficult. It is helpful, however, to realize that there are only a few basic recurring themes which dominate this new revelation-literature. In the following discussion four basic categories will be described briefly, put in historical perspective, and related to the Mormon experience.

## Revelation as Communication

The most common concept of revelation through the Christian centuries has been revelation as communication. Revelation, in this view, is the divine process of unveiling, making known objective truths that before were hidden. By the incarnation, by vision, by voice, or by the inner promptings of the Spirit, God conveys to man objective truths important to his salvation.

It is this concept of revelation that has so long been coupled with the idea that revelation was complete and closed. The incarnation was God's complete self-revelation to man. The Bible, as a depository of propositional revelation, was complete with Christ and the apostles. The immediate source of man's knowledge from God was no longer the present prophetic gift but rather the inspired, inscriptured truths of a closed canon. The scriptures themselves became God's revelation.

Again, this view of revelation-complete and a canon-closed dates back to the struggles of early Christians. In fact, this concept has been at the center of Christian controversy ever since. It was a central issue in the Reformation when Protestants claimed not only the completeness of scriptures but also the sufficiency of scripture. It was hotly debated during the Enlightenment when Deists claimed that there had been no special communication from God. Belief in the closure of revelation has also been challenged. Scattered Spiritualists or "enthusiastic" sects such as the Montanists, the Quakers, the Quietists, and the Moravians have claimed the immediacy of the Spirit, the indwelling light, the openness of revelation.

The greatest challenge to this conservative, narrow

# DIVINE REVELATION

view of revelation, however, came in the nineteenth century when many Christians became deeply influenced by the new historical and scientific criticism of the scriptures. In spite of an onslaught of skepticism the conservative view survived. A stream of orthodoxy, weakened but determined, continued down even to the present. In fact, orthodox views of revelation are now being reasserted with new force by a rising group of modern evangelicals. Carl F. H. Henry, a strong advocate in this movement, expresses this view concisely:

The Bible is no mere record of revelation, but is itself revelation. Revelation is inscriptured. Scripture is a mode of divine disclosure, a special written form of revelation . . .

God speaks to us today by the scriptures; they are the trustworthy and adequate bearer of His revelation . . .<sup>6</sup>

When the scriptures thus become objectified, propositional revelation, the next step is to regard God as the literal author. "Biblical inspiration," in the view of strict orthodoxy both Catholic and Protestant, is said to be "verbal" (extending to the very choice of words) and "plenary" (extending to all parts equally).

The overriding concept of revelation in Mormon thought is also that of divine communication. The communication may come through vision or through voice. Sometimes the communication comes by the direct influence of the Spirit on the consciousness of man (D & C 8:2-3). Whatever the means, the revelation can be verbalized and recorded and added to the canon of scripture.

The Mormon concept of revelation, therefore, is similar to the orthodox view in that revelation, at least in part, is communicated proposition. But even in this respect there are obvious differences. The most obvious is that, in the Mormon view, revelation is continuous, the canon of the scripture is never closed. An article of Mormon faith is that God "... does now reveal, and . . . will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (9th Article of Faith).

Revelation can become scripture, and here also there are parallels and contrasts in the Mormon and orthodox views. In orthodox verbal inspiration of the Bible is not considered to be equivalent to a mechanical dictation but in some way there is a confluence of the wills of God and man. The words of scripture reflect the styles and cultures of the writers yet are authoritatively the *very word of God*. The inspiration is plenary; one cannot call some parts of the scriptures inferior or allow for errors in so-called unessential matters.

In addition to the Bible there are modern accounts and testimonies that contribute to the Mormon concepts of

revelation and of the interplay of the divine and the human in revelation. An attempt should not be made to reduce these accounts to some universal formula, but to the extent that these testimonies are representative, revelation that is the basis of scripture is a cooperative experience between man and God. Joseph Smith once stated:

All things whatsoever God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit and proper to reveal to us, . . . are revealed to us in the abstract . . . revealed to our spirits as though we had no bodies at all.<sup>7</sup>

The prophet apparently gave expression to these abstractions in his own language and received confirmation concerning these expressions (D & C 9:7-9). Whatever the precise nature of this process, it was God's way for giving authoritative revelation to man "... after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding" (D & C 1:24).

This confluence of God and man produces a correct message; in this respect the Mormon position is also one of scriptural inerrancy. In the words of Joseph Smith, "... there is no error in the revelations which I have taught."<sup>8</sup> In contrast to Christian orthodoxy, however, a clear distinction has to be made between a correct teaching and a perfect and full expression of that teaching. The process of revelation is not mechanical, involving the very choice of words. The human element is there too. For this reason Joseph Smith and the Church after him have felt justified in editing and improving the wording of modern scripture, that it might better convey the intended message. The message is divine, the words are of man, and the text is sufficient for the purposes of God.

In orthodoxy, the human element in the scriptures must be circumscribed with great care. Verbal, plenary inspiration is the critical link to communication from God. In Mormonism the human element in scripture is also a sensitive issue, but there is not the urgency found in Christian orthodoxy. There is more allowance for the human element within the bounds of scriptural inspiration. As vital and cherished as the scriptures are in Mormonism, it is the personal witness and the present prophetic guidance which are deemed most vital as a foundation for the faith.

## History as Revelation

In the mid-nineteenth century, about the time of Joseph Smith, intellectual forces were surfacing in western thought which were to bring sweeping changes in Christian theology and a major reaction against the rationalistic, proposition-centered religion of orthodoxy.

The doctrine of revelation has been called the most frequented hunting ground of theologians.

A revolution was occurring in men's view of history. Historians were attempting a strict scientific approach to their work. Men were deeply influenced by such men as Hegel and Darwin. Ideas of progress, development, and evolution were coming into vogue. History was now being viewed not merely as a sequence of events but as an organic development.

These changes had far-reaching effects on Christian theology and particularly on the concept of divine revelation. The critical, skeptical eye of the historian now shifted to the Bible. Eventually, little of the Bible was not called into question. As a result Christians began to lose faith in the inerrancy of the scriptures and began to see the Bible as a very fallible, human book. This struck at the very heart of orthodox religion, leaving many, especially Protestants, to wonder where they were to turn for the foundation of their faith, where they were to find the locus of divine revelation.

Men of that day were very much in the spell of historical and evolutionary thought, and many came to regard history instead of scripture as the locus of divine revelation. The scriptures were no longer the inspired recordings of once delivered propositions but a human record of man's upward, spiritual evolution. The revelation was not in the words of the book but in the divine process of historical, progressive redemption that the book described. Thus it could be said that the Bible itself was not revelation but that it "contained" revelation in the sense that it described or represented the historical revelation.

The relating of history to revelation has been touched on in various ways down through the centuries. But it was in the nineteenth century that the categories of history, evolution, and progressive redemption had their full impact on the Christian theology of revelation. At that time the view of revelation-in-history came to be associated with liberal theology, but even then uses made of the idea were quite varied. The naturalistic thinker, the liberal, and the conservative all used the category of history to convey views of divine revelation, each in contrast to the view of traditional orthodoxy. The debate among these various views has continued to our own day.

The enthusiasm with which this concept of revelation-in-history has been embraced, in whatever form, was noted by James Barr:

...No single principle is more powerful in the handling of the Bible today than the belief that history is the channel of divine revelation. Thus the formula 'revelation through history' is taken to represent the center of biblical thinking, and the interpretation of any biblical passage must be related to this historical revelation... These ideas today are not only common, but they

enjoy almost unqualified acceptance...

Historians of theology in a future age will look back on the mid-twentieth century and call it the revelation-in-history period.<sup>9</sup>

It should be noted that the theme of history-as-revelation has been used explicitly by one Mormon author, Heber C. Snell, to relate the story of ancient Israel. To quote Snell:

God was making a special revelation of himself and his will through ancient Israel. It was not a revelation embodied in words but in life. What happened to individuals, to communities, and to Israel as a whole, which led in the direction of the highest values we know, is the proof of the revelation. In this sense the greatest persons and events were the revelation. That is what is meant by the revelation of God in History.<sup>10</sup>

Snell's work was received with mixed feelings by his Mormon audience. Some saw his book essentially as a document of Protestant liberalism. Others thought it addressed a definite heritage in the Mormon concept of history. Perhaps it was some of both.

In any case, the concept of revelation-in-history has made its contributions. It was a challenge to an abuse that treated the Bible merely as a textbook of doctrinal propositions. It brought into relief the key biblical theme of what God was accomplishing in history. The historical context in scripture gained new importance. But the revelation-in-history concept has also had its difficulties. It too has been involved in distortions of the scriptures. Preconceived notions of evolutionary history have been used to reconstruct and reorder biblical events. The revelation-in-history concept has also been used to displace or downplay the concept of direct, divine revelation. When God recedes behind the scenes of history, in the writings of many, he recedes too far. God no longer speaks. Prophets become mere gifted philosophers giving expression to the religious consciousness of the age rather than chosen emissaries announcing, "Thus saith the Lord!"

The revelation-in-history concept, in many of its expressions, is foreign to Mormon thought. It is a Mormon belief, however, that history does have meaning and direction. God, according to Milton R. Hunter, has been "...the center, the principle, motive force of human history."<sup>11</sup> Salvation is not just a matter of lifting men out of a meaningless sea of events. There is also a divine "plan of salvation" for the human family as a whole.

This view of God working through history is often found in Mormon literature which deals with the principles of revelation-accommodation and progressive preparation. A prophet or a Savior can be sent to men, but

The message is divine, the words are of man, and the text is sufficient for the purposes of God.

unless men are sufficiently prepared in their cultural and spiritual situation, little is accomplished. Christ came in the meridian of time, but for centuries there had been a schoolmaster. As man progresses he receives divine revelation conditioned to his present situation. In the words of Brigham Young:

I do not believe that there is a single revelation, among the many God has given to the Church, that is perfect in its fullness. The revelations of God contain correct doctrine and principle, so far as they go. . . . He (God) has to speak to us in a manner to meet the extent of our capacities . . ." (JD, 2:314).

Thus, the Lord tells the Church today, ". . . ye are little children . . . ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. . ." (D & C 78:17-18). Here a little, there a little, hopefully man progresses in spiritual vision.

While Mormons generally believe in a divine influence and some sort of progression in history, they do not ordinarily use the term revelation in reference to it, particularly since this seems to raise the specter of the nineteenth century Protestant liberalism. Nevertheless, at least one Mormon author has so named it by using a convenient metaphor.<sup>12</sup> The usual sense of revelation as direct communication from God has been called "vertical revelation." The disclosure of God's purposes through development in history has been called "horizontal revelation."

#### Revelation as Personal Encounter

Protestant liberalism has had a major impact on Christianity. Early in the twentieth century, however, it began to slip from its central position on the theological stage. One reason for this was the position of liberalism on the nature of man. After a world war and a depression it no longer seemed so evident that progress was inevitable or that man's unfolding nature was altogether good. The mood was changing from one of optimism and hope to one of crisis and despair.

In this new context, after the First World War, neo-orthodoxy or crisis theology developed. The movement began in Europe under the leadership of the Swiss theologians Karl Barth and Emil Brunner but quickly gained an extensive following, influencing even British and American theologians. This movement has been most influential in bringing into relief within Protestantism still another view of divine revelation.

Instead of a theology of the immanence of God, as found in nineteenth century liberalism, in neo-orthodoxy emphasis shifted to a theology of the complete transcendence of God. Instead of man being able to

gradually create a kingdom of God on earth, man was held to be sinful, depraved, and hopelessly lost. Salvation was not in history but by a timeless eternal God breaking into history and lifting men out of it. Within liberalism there had been a shift to the message of the social gospel; within neo-orthodoxy there was a return to an emphasis of personal-redemption. Man's predicament was not to be solved by evolution through time or even by striving for adherence to presumably divinely disclosed propositional truths. Not rational knowledge and progress but faith and the grace of reconciliation were man's dire needs. And this came through personal encounter between man and God. In the words of Karl Barth:

. . . revelation—that which came to apostles and prophets as revelation—is nothing less than God himself . . .<sup>13</sup>

In other words, God himself in personal encounter. The supreme revelation occurred when God was incarnate in the Christ. But this revelation is not complete for an individual until he too encounters the very presence of God within his own soul. This occurs as one recognizes the Christ in the man Jesus.

The divine-human encounter, the unveiling and the response, involves also the awakening of man to the reality of his justification and election with God. Quoting Barth:

This is what revelation means, this is its content and dynamic: reconciliation has been made and accomplished. Reconciliation is not a truth which revelation makes known to us; reconciliation is the truth of God Himself who grants himself freely to us in his revelation.<sup>14</sup>

For Barth, revelation is a matter of redemption and exclusively a matter of redemption. The encounter, the faith and the reconciliation are all one revelation event. Finally, it is important to note that the testimony, the justification, and the reconciliation are *not* communicated propositions. Rather, through this encounter with God and the outpouring of the Spirit, man is changed, finds himself in a new position.

Neo-orthodoxy, in a sense, is a return to reformation themes. But (on the question of the historical and scientific criticism of the scriptures) it is not entirely in the tradition of the reformers. It accepts with liberalism the critical approach to the Bible. In Protestant liberalism this led to the shift of the locus of revelation from scripture to history. The key to the neo-orthodox accommodation, however, is a shift of the revelation concept from objective, communicated propositional truth to personal encounter. Revelation, it is claimed, is completely devoid of

Man, in despair, uncertainty,  
estrangement, guilt, or dread, is grasped  
by the mystery of revelation.

propositional truth. There can be truths about revelation, man's response in retrospect, but the revelation itself is pure encounter. For orthodoxy the Bible was revelation; for neo-orthodoxy revelation was the encounter that came while man was reading the Bible. The Bible was merely the stepping stone to revelation. Thus, in neo-orthodoxy, criticism of the Bible can be accepted and yet divine revelation itself remains beyond the reach of destructive criticism.

This accommodation to scriptural criticism is shown in the interpretation given to many biblical accounts. Reference is often made by Barth and Brunner, for example, to the Fall of Man. But for them there is not actually a man named Adam. Brunner considers the theophanies of the Old Testament to be a "relic of popular mythology." Such "naive and childlike stories" indicate not the physical presence of God as a person but only the "personal" presence of God through the "Spirit."

In comparison, revelation in Mormon literature is often defined as divine communication, and emphasis is placed on the "knowledge" that comes from revelation. ". . . By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things" (Moroni 10:4-5). But there is another dimension to the Mormon concept of revelation. The Holy Ghost is also the Comforter. Revelation is also communion. It involves not only proposition but also a deep feeling of the nearness of God. In the words of David O. McKay:

Never forget that great events have happened in this Church because of such communion, and because of the responsiveness of the soul to the inspiration of the Almighty. I know it is real! . . . the greatest comfort that can come to us in this life is to sense the realization of communion with God.<sup>15</sup>

This aspect of revelation is important in the Church today, evident not so much in theological descriptions and definitions or even in the recorded propositions of the Restoration. It is to be experienced oneself or sensed in the personal testimonies of the members.

While there are some similarities between neo-orthodox and Mormon concepts of revelation in that revelation is thought of as personal communion and a present reality, there are also fundamental differences. In neo-orthodoxy, for example, the encounter is one of reconciliation between the wholly transcendent, absolute God and depraved man. The encounter is a moment in which man becomes aware of his election and justification to which he contributes nothing. In Mormon thought God is not so distant nor man so depraved; neither is revelation subsumed in the concept of redemption. After receiving the testimony of Jesus, the witness

of the Spirit, one's ultimate salvation most likely is still in the balance. There is the Holy Spirit of Promise, but this is God's affirmation to those who receive the testimony of Jesus, who are baptized in his name, and who at long last overcome by faith (D & C 76:50-53).

Mormonism, of course, differs as well in its estimate of the Bible and to an extent stands in a position between orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy. Mormons do not accept the concept of strict verbal, plenary inspiration (as in orthodoxy) nor do they accept at the other extreme that God speaks only in subjective truths, never in objective, propositional truths (as in neo-orthodoxy). From this middle ground it would seem that orthodox theologians are trying to preserve their faith and protect the scriptures from the critics by exaggerating them and that the encounter theologians have unnecessarily conceded the scriptures to the critics and have sought haven in an un-touchable world of subjectivity.

#### Existential Experience as Revelation

We have seen in neo-orthodoxy how modern theologians have turned away from the nineteenth-century concepts of salvation and revelation-in-history and turned instead to a subjective interpretation of revelation along the lines of reformation themes. In this century we also find another closely related development, another thread in this fabric of subjective interpretation. Many modern theologians have adopted the approaches of existentialism in their statements of faith, rejecting not so much nineteenth-century liberalism as the positivistic approach to knowledge that lies at the basis of it. Passionate involvement rather than dispassionate observation, reflection, and speculation is claimed as the key to insight. From a world of "things" interest has shifted to man's personal "existence." This existential approach has had its effect on recent views of divine revelation, expressed in the writings of such theologians as Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich, and H. Richard Niebuhr.

In the existentialist view, as in neo-orthodoxy, revelation could be described as encounter. But now the encounter is not with a divine, transcendent being. Revelation is rather, as Tillich would say, an encounter with "Being Itself." The revelation is the manifestation of God only in the sense that "God" is another name for the "ultimate ground of being," and the encounter is with the personal only in the sense that God, though not a person in any sense, is the "ground of all that is personal." According to Tillich:

A revelation is a special and extraordinary manifestation which removes the veil from something which is hidden in a special and extraordinary way. This hid-

The encounter is one of reconciliation  
between the wholly transcendent,  
absolute God and depraved man.

denness is often called "mystery" . . .

Here (in revelation) the mystery appears as the power of being, conquering nonbeing. It appears as ultimate concern . . .<sup>16</sup>

Man, in despair, uncertainty, estrangement, guilt, or dread of nonbeing, is grasped by the "mystery" of revelation. His mind transcends to a state of ecstasy and illumination. There is a disclosure of what ultimately concerns him, the Ultimate Ground of his Being. In the miracle of this mystery-ecstasy encounter he achieves his inner integrity, his meaning and authenticity.

Like Barth, these theologians give no place to objective knowledge or doctrine in what they mean by revelation. There can be statements made about revelation, but the "true" knowledge of revelation is subjective and cannot be verbalized and separated from the revelation event itself. Truth is found only in the depth of inward experience. To quote Bultmann:

What, then, has been revealed? Nothing at all, so far as the question concerning revelation asks for doctrines—doctrines, say, that no man could have discovered for himself—or for mysteries that no man could have known once and for all as soon as they are communicated. On the other hand, however, everything has been revealed, insofar as man's eyes are opened concerning his own existence and he is once again able to understand himself.<sup>17</sup>

What is received is existential knowledge or what Bultmann calls "not-knowing knowledge."

Again, it follows that the objective statements of the scriptures have no divine sanction. They represent merely the crude attempts by the ancients to express themselves. The extraordinary events of the scriptures (the fall, the resurrection, etc.) become the myths (Bultmann) or symbols (Tillich) employed to allude to the truths of revelation, that is, the existential truths behind the myths.

Let it be said in passing that the God in this existential concept of revelation is in great contrast to the God of Mormon testimony. Revelation for Tillich and Bultmann is said to be an encounter with the Divine, but still the focus is on man. In their writings the personal God who is a loving Father seems to fade away into esoteric abstractions.

These theologians also speak of the dread and uncertainty of life. Yet they give no place to the possibility of objective, revealed truths which could relate to these feelings. According to Mormon scripture there are truths which cannot be known except by the Spirit. There are also truths that defy verbalization " . . . neither is man capable of making them known . . ." (D & C 76:114-118).

But still there are simple, vital, objective truths which can be known, can be expressed, and have been revealed by God. It is these truths of the Gospel, the Good News, the "peaceable things" (D & C 39:6; 42:61) of joy and eternal life that are so addressed to man's situation.

The importance of the inner man was not an original discovery of modern existentialism. This has been God's message throughout the centuries. Superficial assent and outward show are not sufficient. " . . . Saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Jeremiah 31:33). Man must be deeply affected by the gospel message; he must be born of the Spirit into a newness of life.

The testimony of a life touched by the Spirit of God has been told so often. That touch is often a delicate touch, but at times it has been very dramatic. The classic example from Mormon scripture, of course, is the experience of Alma the younger. Alma made a transition from a soul racked with torment to one filled with marvelous light, exceeding joy, and consuming purpose. Without retelling that story, it can be said that whatever modern theologians could mean by such words as "encounter," "reconciliation," or "authenticity," the meanings could hardly indicate more than the overwhelming reality of the transformation in the life of Alma.

Another dramatic example, more modern, illustrates another important point. Lorenzo Snow tells that he had expected some manifestation at his conversion and baptism into the Restored Church—as a confirmation of the truth of his actions. None came. His feelings became gloomy and depressed, and he decided to pray about it. As he began to pray he immediately became enveloped and filled with the Spirit of the Lord:

. . . O the joy and happiness I felt! No language can describe the almost instantaneous transition from a dense cloud of mental and spiritual darkness into a resplendent of light and knowledge, that God lives, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and of the restoration of the Holy Priesthood, and the fulness of the gospel . . .<sup>18</sup>

Lorenzo Snow describes several aspects of this experience: despair, encounter with the Spirit, and ecstasy. Finally, in contrast to the "not-knowing knowledge" of Bultmann, he speaks of propositional testimony. Thus, it would be the Mormon view that when we speak of revelation, we are speaking of the ways of God and, therefore, that we should approach the subject with humility and openness. We should take care not to think that the ways of divine revelation can be reduced to overly simple formulas. In particular, we should not imagine that the

There are simple, vital, objective truths  
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importance of existential knowledge in revelation precludes the concurrent reality of objective knowledge in revelation.

### Conclusion

In summary, looking at ourselves in comparison with others, we could say that the Mormon concept of revelation is that of communication, without revelation being completed or without the heavens being closed. God's subtle influence is in history, but revelation also comes to man at a point of history and in a manner accommodated to his conditions. Revelation is existential or subjective without thereby being devoid of propositional content. And it is encounter without the person of God being lost in superlatives and vague philosophical abstractions.

From the Mormon viewpoint, however, the most striking of the concepts used to describe divine revelation in modern theology is the new emphasis among Christians of revelation as a modern, personal experience. It seems the logic of the position has become most compelling. The Swedish theologian, Nathan Soderblom, echoes the feelings of many others when he concludes "how impossible it is to maintain that there is a true revelation unless we assume it continues in the present time."<sup>19</sup>

It is also interesting that for all the modern emphasis on revelation as a present, personal experience, there seems to be little discussion on the role of the prophet for modern times. Revelation is often said to be subjective only; there is no objective, prophetic message. But even on this point, there are signs of change.<sup>20</sup>

In Mormonism, by way of contrast, the president of the Church, as prophet, and other spiritual leaders provide everpresent guidance from God. The importance of the role of the prophet, however, in no way diminishes the importance in Mormon thought of each person receiving revelation. Mormons feel that to each person is given the opportunity for inspiration within the sphere of his own affairs and responsibilities. And to each is promised the confirming witness that the guidance from spiritual leaders is inspired.

Thus, even with the emphasis in Mormonism on prophetic revelation, there is a shift of responsibility to the individual.<sup>21</sup> In a sense, all must be prophets of God,<sup>22</sup> each must seek his own communion. The promise of Brigham Young is typical:

When you have labored faithfully for years, you will learn this simple fact—that if your hearts are right and you still continue to be obedient, continue to serve God, continue to pray, the Spirit of revelation will be in you like a well of water springing up to everlasting life. (JD 12:103)

Whoever the person and whatever the faith, there is the personal promise and the personal challenge of divine revelation. Revelation is now. So we must ask: Can we live the precepts of God? Can we draw near to him? Can we serve him in righteousness? Can we be sensitive to the Spirit and responsive to the Spirit?

### Notes

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- <sup>2</sup>Carl E. Braatan, *New Directions in Theology Today, vol. II: History and Hermeneutics*, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), p. 12.
- <sup>3</sup>James Barr, *Old and New in Interpretation*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 83-84.
- <sup>4</sup>John Baille, *Revelation*, (New York: Macmillan, 1937), p. x.
- <sup>5</sup>Karl Rahner and Joseph Ratzinger, *Revelation and Tradition*, (New York: Herder, 1966), pp. 10-11.
- <sup>6</sup>Carl F. H. Henry, "Divine Revelation and the Bible," in *Inspiration and Interpretation*, ed. J. F. Walvoord, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 256-257.
- <sup>7</sup>DHC, vol. VI, p. 312.
- <sup>8</sup>DHC, vol. VI, p. 366; also vol. I, pp. 104-105.
- <sup>9</sup>James Barr, "Revelation Through History in Old Testament and in Modern Theology," in *New Theology*, no. 1 ed. by Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman, (New York: Macmillan, 1964), p. 61.
- <sup>10</sup>Heber C. Snell, *Ancient Israel—Its Story and Meaning*, (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 3rd ed. 1963), p. 280.
- <sup>11</sup>Milton R. Hunter, *Gospel Through the Ages*, (Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, 1945), p. 52.
- <sup>12</sup>George T. Boyd, *Dialogue*, vol. III (Spring 1968), p. 56.
- <sup>13</sup>Karl Barth, *God in Action*, (Manhasset: Roundtable Press, 1963), p. 56.
- <sup>14</sup>Karl Barth, *ibid.*, p. 17.
- <sup>15</sup>David O. McKay, "Consciousness of God: Supreme Goal of Life," *Improvement Era*, (June 1967), p. 80.
- <sup>16</sup>Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. I, (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 108-110.
- <sup>17</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, "The Concept of Revelation in the New Testament," in *Existence and Faith*, (New York: Living Age Books, 1960), p. 85.
- <sup>18</sup>Eliza R. Snow Smith, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow*, p. 5, quoted in Preston Nibley, *The Presidents of the Church*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), p. 140.
- <sup>19</sup>Nathan Soderblom, *The Nature of Revelation*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 121.
- <sup>20</sup>Gabriel Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), note especially chapter 6; see also Louis C. Midgley, *Improvement Era*, vol. 73, (August 1970), p. 68.
- <sup>21</sup>See J. Reuben Clark, *Speeches of the Year*, July 7, 1954, Brigham Young University.
- <sup>22</sup>See Brigham Young, JD 3:192; Heber C. Kimball, JD 5:88.

LORIN K. HANSEN received his Ph.D. in physics from UCLA. He is a research physicist in Sunnyvale, California.

# Are You Running With Me Jesus?

"people are running . . ." *Parade Magazine*

Billy Graham wherever he is,  
George Romney every day  
Senator Proxmire to the Capitol and home again.

Are you running with me Jesus,  
Asks the Reverend Malcom Boyd?

May I ask the same?

I'm not watching my stride  
With Billy Grahams by the Clyde.

I'm not going for distance  
with the Senator's persistence.

I'm not trying to win a race  
Even at George Romney's pace.

I'm an existential runner,  
Indifferent to space.

I'm running here in place.

Wall to wall unending,  
The treadmill carpet flows.

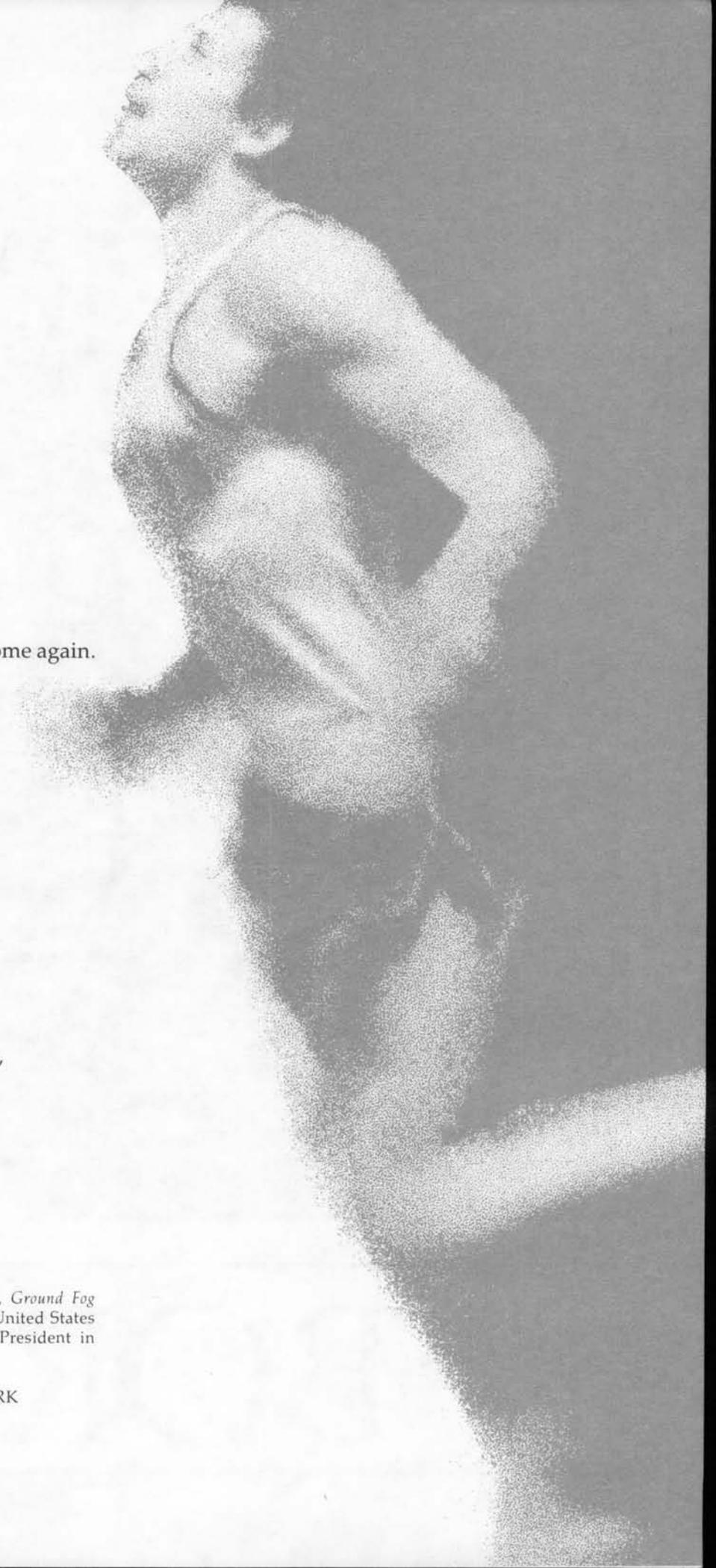
Baseboard to baseboard unchanging,  
From the looms of Mohawk.

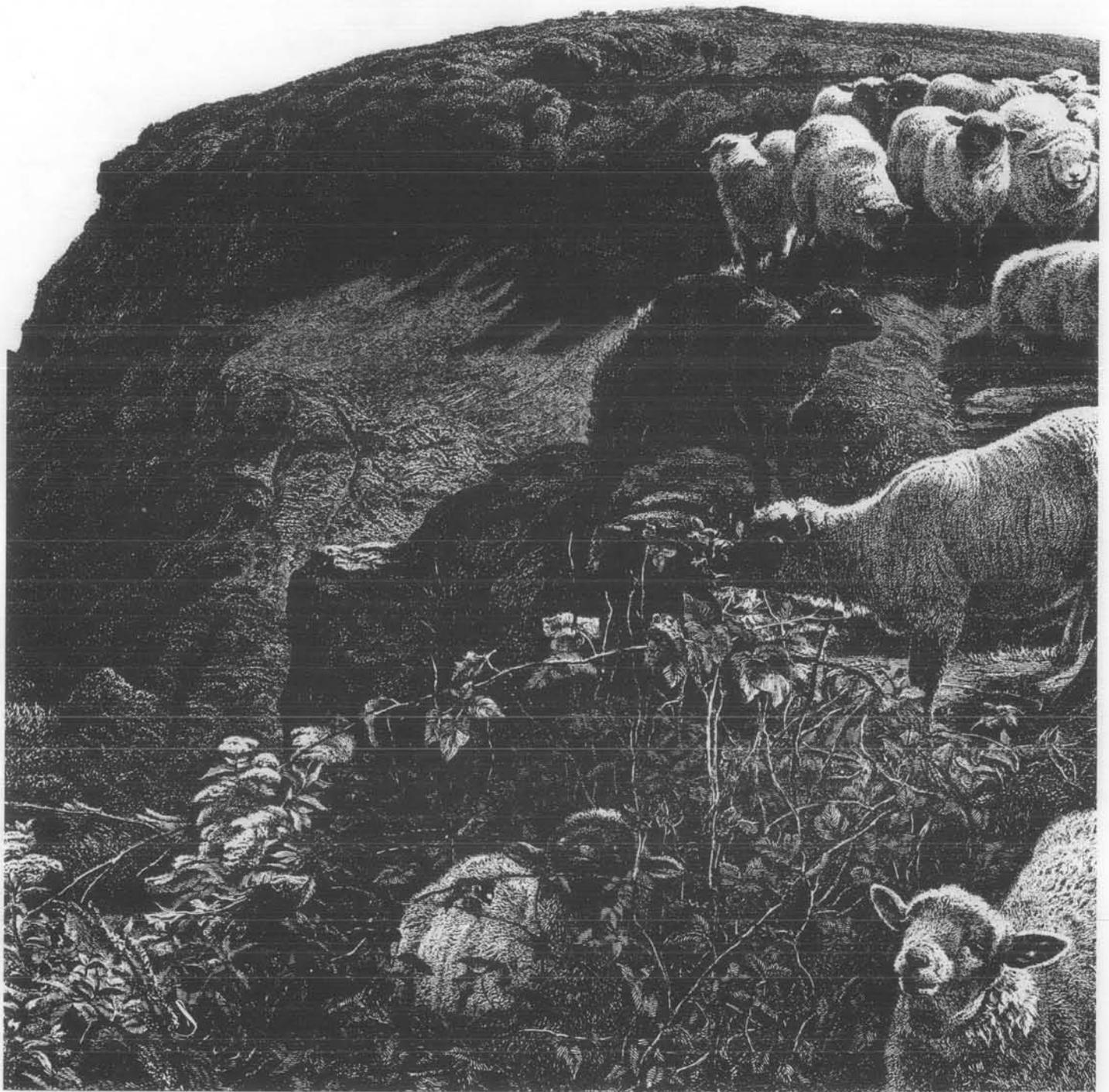
As I run against the clock,  
Are you running with me Jesus,  
Or not?

Eugene McCarthy

EUGENE McCARTHY's second volume of poetry, *Ground Fog and Night*, was published in May. He served in the United States Senate for twelve years and was a candidate for President in 1968 and 1976.

From the book OTHER THINGS AND AARDVARK  
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Bruce W. Jorgensen

# BORN OF

His mother may have been right, a long time afterward, that he had not been baptized until he was ten because he was afraid of the water. He had been afraid. He must have been four or five, wading in the shallow end of the pool or standing tentative on the steps. Someone—he could never recall even a face—grabbed him, yanked him into deeper water. A bony arm clamped around his ribs that he twisted against, a hard chin bored into his head, then the sun and the bright noises were gone, and water stung his eyes and roared into his ears, his mouth and throat, warm and heavy and oddly solid, a lump of clay too big to swallow.

The bigger body bore him down, then a hand between his shoulders shoved him deeper till he was loose in the water, floating unsure of bottom or surface, twisting to find a way out. Then he saw the changing sky of light before his eyes torn by a hand that gripped his right arm high near the shoulder and drew him out. His father. He clung with arms and legs to his father's thick body, coughing and crying, and his father loosened him, turned him down across one arm and whacked him between the shoulders so he coughed more water out, then clasped him again against his body. "It's all right, Carlie, I'm here. He's gone. It's all right."

He had been afraid, but there was his father too, not a member because of Grandma Wendell, whose father had been so fanatic, even his mother said, that his children went without shoes and decent clothes so he could give to the Church. Grandma had nothing good to say about Mormons, and his father hardly talked about religion at all, unless his mother might say, "Gray, don't you believe in the hereafter, don't you want to be together, in heaven?" and he'd answer, "When you're dead you're dead. I've seen a lot of things die and go back to the dirt. They can just put me in a pine box or tie me in a gunny sack and it'll be fine."

The summer he turned eight, the Bishop came with his father's friend J.B. to see about him being baptized. He said he didn't want to, not knowing why he said it but sure he didn't, and his mother made one serious nod toward the Bishop. Then J.B. said, "Gray, we could take care of you at the same time. You'd make a better Mormon than half the people in the ward. What do you say?" His father just grinned and said, "No thanks, J.B., not this time." And J.B. said "We'll get you under yet."

He got over being afraid of the water. Bathing, he would sink in the full tub until warm water covered him, every part except his nose, and his skin, the boundaries of his body, seemed to blur so he

wasn't sure where he ended and water began, and his own blood surging in his ears sounded almost like noises of the house, creaking or popping of beams his father had cut from timber and sawn himself, water running in the pipes his father had installed.

And his father and mother had gone on taking him swimming, along with his big brother Jared, who was in high school, and his baby brother Joel. He would watch his father swim, turning into something like a seal or a big fish as if water were another home.

Maybe it was that same summer he was eight, when his father took him into the deep. His father liked to dive, thundering cannonballs or sharp jack-knives slicing into the water straight for the bottom. He'd stand on the springboard, turn to them and say to watch him swim like a rock, then he'd dive, both feet coming down arched on the end of the board, the board bending, straightening, lifting his body into the air to turn in a clean arc, shining, then to fall straight on into the water solid as a brick but cutting so cleanly that when his feet disappeared there was only a little splash like a white wing waving or the quick fin of a fish. He'd watch for his father under water and sometimes lose him, he stayed so deep so long, as if he had turned, hide, hair, meat and bone, to the water's own bluish lucence, invisible as an angel in air. Other times he followed a pale blur streaming snakelike as if without effort along the bottom. Then his father would surface, blowing a spume like a walrus, snorting or barking, black hair streaming with water down his forehead and nape.

"Let me give you a ride, Carlie. Come on. On my shoulders." So he rode his father's wide bristling shoulders while he waded in water up to his chin, sometimes over his head, so Carl felt scared again of going under, down the steep slope into the eight-foot. But his father would turn back up to shallow. "That was o.k., wasn't it. Now sit on my back, wrap your legs around me, just like around a horse, and hold your hands right here on the sides of my neck, and ride while I swim." So he did that, too, the water streaming around his elbows and waist as he straddled his father's back, watching his arms in long sweeping strokes, the water sleeking his black hair, feeling his father's back pumping when his legs frogkicked.

Another time, his father had him hook the fingers of one hand into the waist string at the back of his swimming trunks while he surface-dived, and scared, Carl let go and thrashed in the water till his father turned and caught him under the chest. "You didn't go down. You were swimming but you didn't know it. Now hang on again and this time go down with me." So Carl did, eyes clamped, nose pinched, lips bitten shut, feeling the water lift him and stream his hair back, finally opening his eyes

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# THE WATER

to the blur of his father's body gliding, a thread of bubbles twinkling up behind his head. After that, he started to go on his own, started under water with his breath burning behind his breastbone, and finally learned to hold his head out or turn it sideways for air. "Good, Carlie," his father said. "You'll be all right." So the fear was gone without his thinking about it, and the summer he was ten he told his mother he wanted to be baptized, this too without thinking about it, only knowing.

**I**t was Saturday morning. His mother had him combed and dressed in white shirt and borrowed white pants, and again asked his father if he'd go down with them to watch. "No, I've got to get those supplies together for the sheep camp. Too many hypocrites anyway." And his father went out and drove the truck down the street ahead of them, turning toward town while they kept on to the Ward. "Hypocrites," his mother said. "Sometimes I think he's as scared of being baptized as you were of swimming." But Carl doubted his father was scared of anything.

In the basement hall of the chapel, dark double doors had been opened on a little room with a little pool in it, tile steps going down into the water. It must go deeper into the ground, he thought, than the furnace room. A lanky blond man in a white coverall was standing waist-deep in the water. Carl was first, and nudged by Brother Sharp he walked down into the font, the unexpectedly warm water soaking his white clothes to his chest, and stood by the man, who took his left hand and closed it around his right wrist and whispered, "Hold tight there, grab your nose when I say Amen, and sit." Then he held Carl's hand and wrist with his own left hand, clapped him once on the back of the neck with his right, and spoke: "Carl David Wendell, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Carl was pinching his nose when the big hand tightened on his hand and wrist, and he felt an instant's wild panic as the other hand came down heavy on his neck, caving his knees under him and thrusting him down. Then the water folded over his head, he floated free of the tile bottom, light and lost, for a second not feeling the hands that held him, and then he was raised up streaming and guided to the steps, blinking to clear his sight. Brother Sharp helped him out, shaking his hand, and his mother led him to the restroom door and handed him his dry clothes and shoes and a towel. His wet white clothes clung to him, a heavy, slow new skin.

When he came out, his mother hugged him and straightened his hair and told him how glad she was that he belonged to Heavenly Father's Kingdom now. "I just

wish your Dad could have been, too, or done it himself. At least Jared will be down tomorrow to lay hands on you and confirm you." Then they drove home. She offered him lunch, but he said he didn't want any right then, and he walked around the house and yard, wondering if he would feel new, believing and doubting the cool lightness that had still not left his skin entirely. He looked at the green ash tree, leaves on a few branches turning their paler undersides in a shift of noonward air. He walked back of the house and lay down in the shaded arch of the lilac bushes where the grass was sparse. The lavender and white cones of bloom were gone, with their scent that drowned the air in April, but the light under the bushes felt moist, almost tasted of the heartshaped green leaves that he had still not learned to make bleat with the shrill buzzing his father could blow through them. Lying on his back he lifted his arm to look at his birthday watch. The second hand swung in its jerky circle and close to his ear it made a small steady clanging. But deep as he looked, the sky seemed unturning, the light and shade of earth standing in utter arrest. He said the one word Kingdom to himself, then the one word Lord. A brown sparrow darted from behind his head, low across his sight with one beat of wings in the bright air, past the bushes and into shade behind the house. He felt then the solid world turn under him, wheeling on its axis like a giant millstone, himself turning evenly with it, and his hands gripped into the thin-bladed grass.

Then he heard his father coming back, tires grinding into the gravel, the whine of downshifting, and turning his head to the side he saw the light green pickup nose into the garage and then his father walk toward the side door of the house. He got up and went in, past the drying sheets his mother had hung near daylight.

"...hasn't had lunch yet," his mother was saying. And his father: "We can eat at the camp. If Knute's there he'll fry us some mutton." She shrugged and put the loaf back in the bread box. "If you both want to, all right. Do you want to ride up to the sheep camp with Daddy, Carl?"

"Yes," he said, the weight of solemnity on him lightening but still muffling the excitement. His mother knew how much his father liked driving on the twisting roads, eating fresh mutton and potatoes cooked in grease in black iron pans on rusty campstoves, squatting on his heels and talking with herders, and how he, Carl, liked going with and watching all this, his father's pleasure. "Then change your clothes," she said, "and take your hat and jacket. It'll still be cool up there."

"You come too, Leah," his father said.

"Not this time. I've got to get Joel from Maureen's and make his lunch, and there's the wash to finish. You two have a good ride."

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His wet white clothes clung to him, a  
heavy slow new skin.

The pickup climbed between pale cliffs, the road winding even more than the stretch called Rattlesnake in the main canyon where Grampa Swensen's Model A got coasting too fast and Gramma got ready to throw out the baby Jed but then Grampa rolled the car up the sidehill and got it stopped. Coming down a south branch of the canyon was a deep dry gully where Great Grampa Swensen's wagon rolled over and killed him and one of his sons and they weren't found for two days. Carl tried to imagine that but couldn't.

Often he dreamed of roads almost like these, only through red ferric clay, and more twisting, more roller-coastering and dizzy: he'd be riding with his father, and sometimes his mother and little brother, not too fast but at a speed that would have made his mother put her hands on the dashboard, up over abrupt hills, around sharp curves with steep slopes above and sheer cliffs below, billowing a caterpillar cloud of pink dust behind them, climbing higher and higher and seeming to go ever slightly faster. Sometimes the dream would just fade midway in the journey, in a queer suspense of peril and safety. Other times it would end with the truck's front wheels over the edge of a deep washout, lurching him awake like being thrown forward in a sudden stop. And sometimes, the worst, it would speed to the top of an impossible hill, go over, and float on nothing, shimmer into nothing itself, and he'd be falling, crying out for his father or mother, the dream spinning him awake, dizzy, gripping the edge of the mattress that was still turning over under him to spill him on the floor, panting, his chest tight, heaving and pounding hard.

Even the first times, when he cried aloud before he could stop himself and his mother came, he could not tell the dream, and he'd never told anyone since. Even the shrillest terror carried its strange comfort that he kept to himself.

Out of the canyon and going up the ranch dugway, he could remember riding in the open back of the GMC with its sides that would let down for benches, and how he'd cling to the uphill side, as far from the drop as he could get but not able to stop looking over and down at how the world fell away, huge, bowl-like, widening and deepening and drawing him into its center as if its enlargement made a vacuum that would fill itself with him. He was over that now, could take pleasure like his father's in that opening space, though he still felt the pull of the widening.

When they reached the camp, a canvas-covered wagon that always made Carl think of pioneers, except that it had rubber tires and a tin chimney and was like a little cabin inside, Knute was not there, nor were the usual scruffy dogs, yipping and then cowering back under the camp, wagging tucked-down hindquarters to

beg and avoid being petted. "Probably chasing strays," his father said. "Let's get this stuff unloaded and fire up the stove for lunch."

Carl helped his father pull out the four bales of hay and stack them behind the wagon. The ten-gallon milk cans of water were too heavy for him, but he carried in a box of groceries and set it on the high lumpy bed built across the back of the wagon. His father stepped up the wagon tongue and into the doorway, tilting his hat back off his forehead to wipe the sweat with his cuff. "He's almost out of mutton, and I see he's got a yearling tied up out here he likely means to slaughter. Let's you and me take care of that."

His father killed a sheep about once every summer out behind the garage and cut and wrapped the meat for their freezer, but Carl mostly stayed away, inside the house, until the carcass was ready to hang, blunt-necked, oddly skinny in its braided lean and fat, the legs chopped short at the hocks, ribs whitely arching inside the body cavity. His arms went watery and his chest hollow, but he said "OK, Dad," and got up and walked out and down the iron tongue, a little surprised his knees carried him.

His father reached through the cab window into the glove compartment, got out his knife and stone, and whetted the blade for a few seconds. The steel rasped against the soft chitter of aspen. Then the man pulled a coil of rope and a short piece of shovel handle from the truck and walked toward the sheep tethered at the edge of the trees, looking indifferently at them with its milky blue eyes, its lower jaw jerkily chewing. "What do you want me to do?" Carl asked.

"Just wait. You help after this first part." His father straddled the sheep, gripped it behind the withers with knees and calves, and untied the length of braided baler twine from its neck. The sheep bucked forward once, couldn't get free, and stood still. The man crooked his left forearm under the sheep's jaw, drew it back sharply so the muzzle strained skyward, the throat taut, then he pulled the knife across once, hard and quick, opening the throat clear to the neckbone. For an instant Carl wondered when the blood would start. Then it came pulsing rich and dark, foaming into the grass and the black soil. The sheep stamped and bucked, hooves springing and skittering crazily, then its legs buckled under the man's body bearing it to the ground where he held it, now kneeling astride the fat flank and holding the head still farther back while the blood ran in weaker surges and the breath rasped from the severed windpipe. When the kicking stopped, he stood, wiped his knife on the wool, and tilted his hat back to wipe his forehead, breathing audibly through his teeth.

"Well." He looked at Carl. "That's done. Get me a clean pan out of the drawer."

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Even the shrillest terror carried its  
strange comfort that he kept to himself.

"Yes sir," Carl said and ran to the wagon. What surprised him was his father's face, that it was without revulsion yet without pleasure too, except the satisfaction of having done the thing neatly, the same as when he oiled some kid's squeaky tricycle or got the water regulated in all the furrows of the garden. What surprised him more was himself, that he too felt this a matter of fact, a kind of work, new, but after the first startling slash of the knife just something to see and do. But it was death and it would feed them.

When he came back with the pan, his father had already slit the hide from neck to vent, spilled out the entrails into a coiled, steaming pile already drawing a few lumbering flies, and had the dark-red, fatty knot of heart and the darker, almost purple flared lobes of liver ready to lay in the pan. "If Knute don't want those, we'll take em home. Set the pan by the stove and see if you can find a clean cloth to lay over it."

When Carl came back from doing that, his father was sliding the chunk of shovel-handle through slits in the sheep's peeled legs just above the chopped-off joints and knotting the rope at its center. He stood, tossed the end of the rope over an aspen branch as high as he could reach, pulled the end down, and handed it to Carl. "Let's hoist im. Easier with a block, but we'll manage." They pulled together, hands alternating on the taut rope as if in a game, and the carcass swung free of the ground and swayed in front of the tree. The leaves on the bobbing branch winked like flung coins.

"Now help me peel the hide," the man said, "like this," and gripping with his left he drew the edge of his right hand like a blade between hide and muscle, stripping the skin back an inch or so. Carl stepped beside him and tried the same on the other side, surprised at the heat of the flesh, at how hard he had to grip and pull with his right hand and cut with the bones of his left. He found himself breathing steady and heavy and falling into his father's rhythm, forgetting to try to keep his shoes from under the slow drip of the neck.

Their hands met at the backbone just as the dogs came up yipping and sniffing at the entrails and the blood-soaked earth, with Knute behind them walking his little roan. The mare spooked when she caught the scent, and the herder dismounted and tethered her to the far side of the camp wagon. "How's Gray?" he hollered coming toward them still a bit stiff-legged.

"Just dandy," his father answered. "Got you some groceries."

"And done my chore too," The herder cracked a snaggly grin across his lean, seamed face. "Who's your help?"

"Ah, you remember Carl."

"Sure. Named for your Dad. But don't see him up

here too much."

"Sometimes he's his mother's. But he's with me today. Just got baptized."

Struck, Carl couldn't look at either of them for a second. He'd forgotten the morning, his lightness, the expectation of his brother's hands on his head tomorrow. He felt now as solid, weighted, as the bone and sinew of the hung lamb, unable to locate within himself that earlier feeling, but sensing no absence either.

"Now that's all right," the herder was saying. "He's a good boy." And Carl grinned up at him, almost extended his stained hand for a shake, then felt the formality unfit.

"He is," his father said, then, "How about cooking us some lunch?"

The herder coughed and said sure, his sourdough was ready and he had taters and onions and some chops if this boy would light the stove. So Carl did that while the herder helped his father finish skinning the sheep and chopping through the neckbone.

When they'd finished eating and put the dishes into the big pan to soak in soapy water, the herder pulled from his pocket by its blue tag dangling on yellow string his Bull Durham pouch. "Roll you a smoke, Gray?"

"No thanks. You know I quit. But you go ahead."

"At's all right." The man grinned again his gapped yellowed teeth.

Carl remembered his father coming home from the doctor's and saying he was quitting, and how the last unopened pack of Luckies still lay at the back of the hall shelves, "probably all wormy by now," his mother said. "Might as well have been smoking horse manure from the corral." His father had kept pipes around the house for a while, but couldn't get to like them. All that was part of why he might as well be baptized, but he wouldn't.

The herder rolled a lumpy cigaret which he lighted by opening the firebox of the stove and holding it to a coal. He puffed blue rings that wavered to the arched canvas roof and broke. Carl could remember his father doing that, once in a while getting one ring to go right through another.

After a while his father stood and said, "Well, thanks, Knute. Think we'll drive on up over Seven-Mile and back down Lions Trail."

"Sure enough, Gray. At's all right." The herder stood and stepped to the door of the camp as they walked out to the truck. "Now you watch that boy," he grinned, and coughed and spat onto the ground.

He knew where his father meant to go: the weathered tent-frame set on the foundation of big logs they called the half-house, Grandpa Wendell's summer camp that for years now they had used mostly for picnics on the Twenty-fourth of July. He had never seen it with the canvas stretched and battened on it, though he wished every

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All that was part of why he might as well  
be baptized, but he wouldn't.

time they came that they could set it up and stay.

"Let's get a drink," his father said when they'd parked near the frame. He doubted his father was thirsty, but none of them would pass here without stopping for a drink, the water was that good, icy cold out of the bones of the mountain and clear as air. His father had told him how he and an old herder had found the spring high under the summit, and how Grandpa Wendell had bargained with the town of Cumorah for some wooden pipe discarded from the town's old supply line and had laid the pipe with his sons' help a quarter-mile down from the spring to the site for the half-house, then cut the big pine trunks to lay the plank floor on and set up the frame.

Back of the frame on the uphill slope, shaded by two big pines, was the end of the pipe, the water spilling into a shallow gravelled basin, then overflowing to become one head of a creek that ran all the way to the valley and watered farms before it emptied into the river. His father knelt and put his mouth to the bright arc of water and so did he. It froze the lips, bit into the teeth like chomping on an iron railing in winter, and went down like cold molten metal. When they had drunk, his father held under the spill from the pipe a gallon jug sewed with twine into a salt sack, and when it was full, let it stand in the basin so the burlap would soak and keep the water cold. Even so, Carl knew, when you drank it back in town it would be already warm as tapwater, its sweetness flattening.

"I remember Dad, your Grandpa Wendell, taking his shower here when we camped," his father said. "He'd rigged a piece of one-inch pipe to run up over here, with a shower head on the end of it. He'd run out here first thing, bare-naked, while Grandma was starting the bacon, stand under the damn thing and yank on the chain and then stamp and dance around, hootin and hollerin till he couldn't stand it, and then run back in for breakfast. By God. Said it'd help him live to ninety if it didn't give him his death. Never could get me to try it. He didn't last that long."

The sack was well-soaked now, and his father lifted it out, dripping. "We'd better go. Get another sip if you want it." Carl knelt to drink again. He remembered one thing of Grandpa Wendell's funeral: Brother Petersen telling a story about himself, how he'd given a talk in Sacramento Meeting one time all about brotherly love and later in the week had been out riding and been stopped by a big man on a horse. "That was Carl Wendell. He said to me, 'Son, that was a fine talk you gave last Sunday. Now what are you going to do about it.' And the two of us got down off our horses and set and talked an hour or more, and I got to know Carl Wendell." The boy couldn't remember what Brother Petersen got to know, but strangely that was his clearest image of his grandfather, lost and now called up again, the big man on the horse

and then sitting in the dirt talking. (He must have gone to church some, been baptized when a boy, so why not his own father?) And now this new clear sight: the man dancing naked in the water cold as stone.

They drove north over the divide to head down the switchbacks. Near the steep brow of the mountain, his father stopped again. "Let's take a look off here," he said, and they got out and walked to the ledge. He'd been here often before, after every Twenty-fourth picnic and almost every drive; he'd always asked to see the lookout, then hung back from the very edge when they got out to it. He went closer today.

From the lookout the world scooped away east and north and northwest in the widest, deepest bowl, its edge maybe in Colorado. His father liked to get to the very edge, stand and just look, and he too liked the wide domain of colors and ridges behind and behind one another, bluegreens and blues that lightened in the farthest distance: it went almost forever, blueing into sky.

He didn't know he would ask it until he did. It was like his first dive off the board when he knew his fear was gone but hadn't tried this, doing the thing before he knew he'd decided.

"Dad, do you think you go nowhere when you die?" The surprise almost cost him his balance on the edge, and he felt his father's hand jump to his shoulder to steady him, then let go before speaking.

"Don't know." He looked up, but his father still looked out on the spread ranges. "I've dug my living out of the dirt and out of the hides of sheep and don't want you boys to have to do that, but I don't mind going back to the dirt. It's good country. If there's a God he made it the way he liked it."

His father still did not look at him or touch him again and Carl did not need to say or ask anything more. Then his father pointed in front of them, to a small island of pine in a meadow below a curve of the road. "If I had money and the BLM was selling, I'd buy an acre there and build me a cabin. Or I'd level off a place to park a house trailer. There's a good spring there—see where the willows are?"

He saw, and felt again the slow, centered pull of the widening bowl, like what you feel when ready to dive. The world in its lines and colors sloped out and away like a wave gathering to crest, all one: God's Kingdom and his father's good country, and he knew himself in both for life.

BRUCE JORGENSEN earned his Ph.D. from Cornell and is now an assistant professor of English at Brigham Young University. He has published fiction, poetry, and essays.

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If there's a God he made it the way he  
liked it.

# CRISIS IN ZION:



## Heber J. Grant and the Panic of 1893



Ronald W. Walker

In late June 1893 a man pale with anxiety sat in the personal office of New York businessman, John Claflin. From his vest pocket he pulled his gold watch. It was 2:46 p.m. For three hours now he had waited for Claflin, and each minute increased his tension. His nervous energy demanded that he do something. He picked up some paper and began a letter. "I can prevent myself from thinking so hard by writing to you," he wrote his correspondent. "We are living years in a few months."<sup>1</sup>

The writer was a pencil-thin and bewhiskered Heber J. Grant. Dressed conservatively, he looked like either a clergyman or a businessman. In fact he was both, a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and also a president or director of at least a dozen major Salt Lake City-based business enterprises. As a self-made man of thirty-six, who had read and come to personify Samuel Smiles' popular Victorian books on *Self-Help*, *Thrift*, *Duty*, and *Life and Labour*, he was terrified to think he might soon lose his financial honor. But even more troubling to the apostle was the fear for the fate of his beloved Mormonism, then listing dangerously in heavy financial seas.

His frantic day had started before 5:00 a.m. after just a few hours of fitful sleep. He had been in Hartford where he had tried to wring one last loan from his insurance friends. Without success and with only days and perhaps hours left to secure relief, he had boarded a New York train to appeal to Claflin.

John Claflin seemed an ideal candidate. By extending credits daringly to his customers, he had expanded his family's wholesale concern, H.B. Claflin Company, until it became the largest mercantile institution in the world. While others at the close of the nineteenth century thought the Mormons in far-off Utah were slightly bizarre if not disreputable, the New York merchant, interested in both the exotic and the profitable, invested in them. In 1889 he loaned the Saints \$40,000, and two years later another \$100,000. In 1892 he offered them a \$200,000 standing or perpetual credit but was declined.

Grant had previously dealt with Claflin, who knew and trusted him. In normal or even slightly difficult times, the Mormon might have expected the merchant's aid. But this summer was hardly normal. On May 4th the National Cordage Company, one of Wall Street's high

flying favorites, suddenly went into receivership. The following day the New York Stock Exchange broke. Cordage plummeted twenty points—one-third its value. Three brokerage houses in New York and another in Boston closed their doors. The Panic of 1893 had begun.

Wall Street was less a cause of the maelstrom than a barometer. The wisdom of the time blamed the 1890 Silver Act for the Panic. This act required the Treasury Department to purchase 4,500,000 ounces of "white metal" monthly and to use silver as well as gold to back the American currency. The result, according to Eastern financiers, was monetary instability, a dangerously depleted U.S. Gold Reserve—and panic. But even before the monetary panic struck, American foreign trade had declined, falling wheat and iron prices had hinted of general contraction, and business activity itself had turned downward. The stock market only ignited a smouldering flame.

The Panic of 1893 was among the most disastrous in American history. Stocks tumbled throughout the summer, and an unprecedented 15,252 businesses went into receivership. By the winter of 1893 about 18 percent of the national work force was without jobs. Those who remained employed found their wages slashed by almost 10 percent. The financial storm struck the West with particular fury. As Eastern money contracted, the normally cash-starved banks of the debtor West collapsed. Of the national bank failures in 1893, only three institutions in the Northeast suspended operations, while thirty-eight closed their doors in the South. In the West, however, 115 banks went into receivership—sixty-six in the Pacific states and Western territories alone.

Even before the panic, Utah had experienced hard times. During the territorial boom of 1889-1890, the value of land and of business and residential property had skyrocketed to as much as ten times pre-1889 prices. Speculators reaped enormous paper profits, and real estate transactions in Salt Lake City alone reached an unprecedented \$100,000 daily. To meet voracious demands for credit, nine new banks opened in the city. Then, in December of 1890, shockwaves from the collapse of London's Baring Brothers burst Utah's speculative bubble, and Utahns numbly reaped the harvest from their craze: depressed prices, lowered profits, over-extended credit,

The New York merchant, interested in both the exotic and the profitable, invested in the Mormons.

and tight money. "The neighborhood seems to be infested with thieves," one diarist wrote in 1891 of the prevailing want, "as coal, wheat, lumber and many other things have disappeared."

Mormondom's economic fortunes smiled no brighter. A drop in Church tithing revenue, from \$878,394 in 1890 to \$576,584 in 1893, charted the general economic decline. But churchmen had to cope with more than diminishing revenue. The Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 had financially crippled the Church. The law stripped Mormonism of its legal standing and hindered Church management, especially the ability to secure loans. By disenfranchising many Saints and placing election machinery in the hands of their opponents, the act enabled non-Mormons to gain political control to transfer city, county, and territorial funds from Mormon to Gentile banks, further undermining the Church's ability to obtain local loans. Moreover, by demanding the surrender of all Church assets in excess of \$50,000, the law deprived the Mormon community of property worth over \$1,000,000, as well as revenue and possible loans derived from Church property.

Initially, LDS officials attempted to defuse the Edmunds-Tucker Act by selling or giving in trust Church property to faithful members who would act as stewards for the religious community. The combination of government officers, the courts, and court-appointed receivers, however, proved too powerful for the Mormon leadership. By the early 1890s, receivers controlled most of the Church's marketable property, including some \$500,000 deposited largely in Salt Lake's non-Mormon banks. Meanwhile, lawyers' fees, lost revenues, and property manipulation due to the Edmunds-Tucker Act plunged Zion \$300,000 in debt. Denied legal standing and the use of its own resources, Mormondom stood virtually defenseless before the coming panic.

Obviously the early 1890s demanded retrenchment. However, the venerable and other-worldly Wilford Woodruff, who from boyhood had avoided debt as "the rule of my life," pursued a different course as Church president. For thirty-five years he had quietly cherished the knowledge, given in visions of the night, that he would dedicate the monumental Salt Lake Temple. To that end the octogenarian proceeded vigorously. When President Woodruff dedicated the temple in April 1893, his administration alone had spent over \$1,000,000 on the \$4,000,000 project. Woodruff's social conscience, moreover, led to other ambitious enterprises financed largely by borrowed capital. As his second counselor Joseph F. Smith explained: "We began to feel that there was a responsibility resting upon us which required something to be done, in a small way at least, in the direction of giving employment to our people." As a result, \$1,000,000 was invested in public works projects such as the Saltair Pavilion on the Great Salt Lake shoreline, the Saltair Railway Company (later known as the Salt Lake and Los Angeles Railway), and the Utah Sugar Company.

The Church's growing debts demanded a loan broker, and leaders increasingly turned to Heber Grant. During his short business career, he and his companies had promoted vinegar, insurance, machines and imple-

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ESTABLISHED 1873.

INCORPORATED 1888.

Capital, \$200,000. Surplus, \$200,000.

Zion's Savings Bank and Trust Company,

Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Main Street, Salt Lake City, Utah.

ments, newspapers, soap, and even horses and carriages; now he found that he could also promote loans. During the autumn of 1890, almost three years before the panic hit, the dangerously overextended Salt Lake banks demanded payment on outstanding loans, and Grant scrambled not only to meet his own heavy obligations but also to rescue the two banks which discharged the Church's interests—Zion's Savings Bank and Trust and the State Bank of Utah. Grant had founded the latter and was now its president.

Desperately needing \$100,000, Grant grasped "at a straw" and traveled east in the late fall of 1890. Omaha and Chicago bankers smiled at his audacious request for a low-interest loan, pointing out that short-term interest rates on the New York Stock Exchange had risen to one-half of one percent a day—or 182 percent per year. In New York, however, Grant played several trump cards. He not only insisted that bankers consider the Utah State Bank's past and future business, but offered as security the highly regarded notes of the Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution (Z.C.M.I.), Utah's multi-branched department store.

In the end, Grant's grit and aplomb won over the New York bankers. When J.H. Parker, vice-president of the National Park Bank, received him coolly, Grant addressed a personal message to the bank's directors:

I am offering you four notes of \$12,000 each of Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution. These notes are guaranteed by thirteen Directors and also by the State Bank of Utah, which has a capital of half a million dollars. . . . These endorsers are worth at least a couple of million dollars. If two million dollars of personal endorsement, together with the endorsement of a half a

But the new and ever larger loans were robbing Peter, as Grant phrased it, to save Paul.



Courtesy Utah State Historical Society

George Q. Cannon, counselor in First Presidency.

million dollar bank, with the note of an institution that has never failed to meet its obligations, is not considered good I will telegraph and secure you some additional endorsement. If you do not care to cash these notes take my advice and stop doing business with people so far away from home as Utah.

The National Park Bank extended the loan and became one of Grant's warmest New York contacts. Within two weeks after his arrival in the East, the Mormon businessman turned the key to a total of eight New York and Hartford banks, wired \$240,000 to Salt Lake City, assisted in another \$60,000 loan, and secured the promise of yet another \$36,000. "I think I can say," he wrote one of his daughters in early January of 1891, "that the past seven days have been as successful as any in my life."

Grant's spectacular success catapulted him into the center of LDS finance. When he returned to Salt Lake City in January 1891, President Woodruff asked him to raise money for the floundering Sugar Company. Sugar financing in turn led to his appointment as the Church's chief loan agent. By January 1892 his San Francisco loans netted \$232,000. Four months later he was back in New York for \$260,000. But the new and ever larger loans were robbing Peter, as Grant phrased it, to save Paul. A Mormon Cassandra was not required to foresee the possible results. The Church's short-term and constantly maturing debts were a precarious foundation which the slightest financial tremor could reduce to rubble.

Church authorities considered several solutions. Grant himself hoped to attract eastern or British capital to Utah by greatly increasing Z.C.M.I.'s capitalization. The money from new investors would eventually flow into Mormon banks, which could then lend to the Church. When Z.C.M.I.'s directors, fearful of losing control to new stockholders, refused to cooperate, Church leaders in July of 1891 suggested an alternative plan: they asked Grant to proceed to London or Paris and secure a \$500,000 long-term, low interest loan. Due to the serious illness of his wife Lucy, however, Grant repeatedly postponed the long trip.

Formation of the investment firm of Cannon, Grant & Company (CG&Co.) provided a stopgap remedy for Mormon financial problems. Leading Church businessmen had for some time discussed such an enterprise; but to get them to agree, Grant complained, was like "the pulling of a cat by the tail over a carpet." Finally, in December of 1891—only hours before he was to leave Salt Lake City on one of his money-raising missions—Grant organized the firm. He and George Q. Cannon, first counselor in the Mormon presidency, became senior partners, with thirteen prominent Mormon financiers serving as associates in the venture.<sup>2</sup>

CG&Co. sought to strengthen the credit of the Church-related businesses by endorsing their financial paper. With the partners' pooled stock as collateral, the signature of CG&Co. could place a gilt edge on even an unattractive Utah Sugar Company note. The partners, however, pledged more than a few securities from their portfolios. In order to secure maximum leverage, each agreed to assume if necessary the entire surety of the firm. Consequently, both R.G. Dun and John Bradstreet believed CG&Co. worthy of a \$1,000,000 Double-A rating.

Like the legendary Hudsons' Bay or East Indian Companies, CG&Co. mixed private and public affairs. The partners did not blush at the prospect of personal profit, and much of their business fit harmoniously into the Age of Enterprise. However, as the Edmunds-Tucker Act forced the Church to conduct its business informally through intermediaries, the investment firm also became a semi-official agency. During its brief prosperity in the early nineties, the company often held its meetings in President Woodruff's office and under his supervision. It signed Church-related loans, which Eastern financiers considered morally binding the Mormon community. Its directorship interlocked with most other Mormon businesses. Indeed, had its directors voted in concert, they might have controlled the Sugar Company, the State Bank, and probably Z.C.M.I. The firm's relationship with the two Mormon banks was especially close. CG&Co. advertised itself as "Financial Agents, with State Bank of Utah" and, using money borrowed from Zion's Savings, bought over half of that bank's stock and heavily invested in the State Bank and Z.C.M.I. as well.

But as events during the 1893 Panic would prove, the investment firm's power was illusory. Instead of a bulwark, it became a breach in the wall. As CG&Co. foundered during the summer of 1893, it threatened in turn to bankrupt much of the LDS financial community.

## II

Late in December 1893, the signs were already ominous. Heber M. Wells, cashier of the State Bank, Grant's brother-in-law and soon to be the state of Utah's first governor, confessed "trepidation." A stringency seemed to be approaching, and the bank carried a large and troubling amount of past due paper. Besides the bank itself had borrowed large sums payable "on demand." In a word, its cash reserves were precarious. Two months later Grant found an unsettling pall hanging over the New York money center. Even small loans were difficult

## You cannot realize what a plight we are in—it is simply terrible.

to obtain. "I am good and nervous over the present," he acknowledged.

There were reasons for jitters and fright. The Church owed at least \$500,000 in short-term, rapidly maturing notes and hadn't the slightest prospect of paying. Moreover, the insatiable Sugar Company, on which the Church had staked its reputation, continued to devour cash. The only available relief was to dip the bucket once again into the financial well. On April 25, 1893, Church leaders authorized the First Presidency and Heber J. Grant to "raise means & handle stock of the Sugar Co. . . whether in the States or in Europe." A week later, only two days before the New York Stock collapse, the Cannon, Grant and Company partners found it was "imperatively necessary to look hurriedly to our business lest we be submitted to disgrace and serious loss." Again the only answer seemed Heber J. Grant and more loans.

By the middle of May, Grant was aboard a Denver and Rio Grande train bound for New York. He carried \$300,000 in notes to be renewed, \$200,000 bearing the CG&Co signature. A single defaulted note could destroy the Mormon credit rating and make impossible further renewals and loans. Neither he nor his associates were optimistic. "This is the most difficult mission bro. Heber has ever undertaken," Francis Lyman wrote on May 10, "now that financial affairs are tumbling in all directions."

Two weeks later Grant was exultant. Although finding the loan market much worse than during the previous crisis and moneymen "frightened half to death," he nevertheless had renewed almost \$150,000 of the most pressing loans and had secured an additional \$25,000. The devout Grant saw in this the divine hand. Before leaving Salt Lake City, President Cannon had pronounced upon him an electrifying blessing which promised success. "I hope and pray that I may never forget . . . the blessing promised me before I came away from home," Grant wrote in his journal. "Without the blessings of the Lord . . . I could not have succeeded with the market in the condition that it is in."

Outwardly, events in Salt Lake Valley were also encouraging. Bank clearances in May slightly increased over the previous year, business failures were relatively low, and newspapers guardedly hoped that the Panic's destroying angel might pass Utah by. Church leaders, meanwhile, continued their policy of enterprise to aid the region's economy. On June 1 they decided to sponsor—but not underwrite—a \$75,000,000 railroad from Salt Lake to Los Angeles. To finance the project and secure long-term loans for the Church itself, Mormon officials revived their plan to obtain British capital. To this end, George Q. Cannon was given a power of attorney over all remaining Church assets and was instructed to join Grant in New York. From there, the two churchmen hoped to proceed to London.

Obviously neither the elated Grant nor the business-as-usual Utahns understood that the 1893 crisis was only building steam. But by the first week of June local bankers—and especially Mormon bankers—were beginning to understand. Depositors were making a run on the banks! "Never while reason lasts or immortality endures do I wish to have repeated the experiences I have undergone the last two days," a thoroughly agitated Heber M.



Heber J. Grant and others in front of the Utah building at the Chicago World's Fair.

Courtesy LDS Church Archives

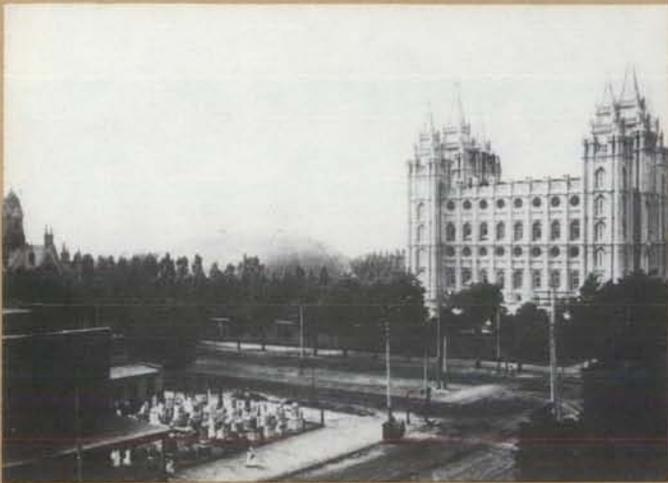
Wells informed Grant. "Our deposits melted down over \$25,000 and our available resources tonight have reached the minimum of 22%. All day long I have sat and smiled and acted (thanks to my stage experience) as if nothing unusual was happening. . . . You cannot realize what a plight we are in—it is simply terrible."

Grant immediately understood. Wells's graphic prose hardly overstated things. Within a year, the bank's ratio of cash reserves to deposits had dropped from 65 percent to 22 percent and the 22 percent was artificially high. Several years earlier the State Bank and Zion's Savings had agreed to share the same quarters and customers. The State Bank had surrendered its savings accounts and the Zion's Savings had given up its commercial business. Also as part of the agreement, Zion's Savings had deposited its cash reserves—almost \$125,000—with the State Bank. Now, with a run on both banks, the State's melting reserves had to supply each. Conceivably, several large withdrawals from either bank could sink both. "Such a condition," Grant confessed, "is enough to make a man wild with the blues."

Grant had long understood that the Church finances were jerry-built, but perhaps only at this time did he fully realize how wobbly the structure actually was. Everyone intimate with Mormon finances understood that a single defaulted note endorsed by CG&Co. could spell the end of Church credit. Now it was suddenly apparent that CG&Co.'s shadow fell ominously over the two Mormon banks as well. Because of the interlocking directorates, the collapse of CG&Co. would ruin the reputation of the leading men connected with the banks—especially since the CG&Co.'s partners were individually responsible for the firm's debts. Predictably the current run would become a panic. Moreover, the Mormon banks had loaned CG&Co. at least \$350,000. If the company went to the wall, the banks' uncollectable loans would surely force them to follow.

The dominoes could also fall in the opposite direction. Bank failures would probably destroy CG&Co., which had heavily invested in the State Bank and Zion's Savings and had used securities from these institutions as collateral in securing loans. Although the Mormon banks' assets outweighed their liabilities, even a temporary suspension due to the lack of liquidity would send

The season demanded that ice flow in the veins of even the most favorably disposed merchant.



Courtesy Utah State Historical Society

Salt Lake Temple shortly before its dedication in 1893.

shivers up the spines of the Wall Street capitalists, causing them to demand additional security for their past and future loans—security that the stretched-to-the-limit CG&Co. could not provide. In short, LDS finances seemed assaulted from both directions, and vulnerable at each point.

The only recourse was another loan, and on June 7, 1893, Grant reappeared at the National Park Bank of New York. In just ten days the hard-pressed New York bankers would begin issuing clearinghouse loan certificates, rather than money, to their depositors. Not surprisingly E. K. Wright, the bank's president and chief stockholder, flatly refused a loan. Undaunted, Grant expressed regret that the State Bank's business would have to go elsewhere and asked Wright permission to appeal to the bank's vice-president and cashier. "I feel to thank the Lord that I captured them completely," Grant wrote in his journal. "They put their heads together as to how to capture Mr. Wright and while they were chatting together Mr. Wright stepped up and said, 'Mr. Grant if those men are favorable I shall say yes.'" Grant got \$50,000.

For a moment Grant enjoyed his triumph. The National Park money seemed an ample transfusion for the hemorrhaging Mormon banks, and on June 8 Grant wired his plural wife Augusta to join President Cannon's London-bound entourage. Relaxation might now be mixed with business. But even before the Cannon party arrived at New York, Grant had concluded that he could not desert his post. The Church notes in Hartford were soon maturing and the Panic was now raging in full force. On June 17 Cannon's party sailed without him.

Grant's decision to remain in New York was providential. Four days after Cannon departed for England, the Damoclean sword poised over Mormon finance fell. For months Church leaders had feared that W.S. "Mack" McCornick, the friendly non-Mormon banker, would request payment on his "demand" loans. On June 22 he demanded CG&Co. pay \$20,000 and two days later, in another transaction, required and received \$37,500 from the State Bank. "Shakespeare says 'Macbeth doth murder sleep,'" Wells mordantly wrote Grant. "If he had lived till this day he would have made it a different scotchman. . . 'McCornick doth murder sleep.'"

The situation was critical. Even before McCornick's payment demands, the run on Salt Lake City's banks had accelerated. The banks in turn had slammed down the windows of their loan cages and tightened credit. When Apostle Abraham H. Cannon, a director of both the State Bank and CG&Co., sought a loan, he found cashier Wells flint-eyed and without mercy. Stringent banking, however, proved counter-productive. By forcing business to a standstill, it caused deposits to decline even faster. By the end of June, the State Bank had lost \$125,000. "To those who knew the facts," Wells wrote, "apprehension and dread of direful consequences have been plainly discernible in every feature and every look, like the faces of attendants in a sick room in the presence of death, but as stated our outward demeanor has been full of buoyancy and cold bluff."

The crisis was two-fold: the Mormon banks' waning reserves and CG&Co.'s past-due \$20,000 debt to McCornick. The Church provided brief, thumb-in-the-dike relief for the former by borrowing \$25,000 from the Brigham Young Trust Company and lending the sum to the State Bank. Wells in turn delayed McCornick with subterfuge. He coolly informed the banker that the \$20,000 was deposited in New York but that Grant was using the money as leverage to renew the firm's notes. The tactic won a few days' postponement.

The Salt Lake news almost overwhelmed Grant. His nerves had already pushed him to his physical limits. Expecting to be absent three weeks from Utah, he had now spent six weeks in the East, and he wondered whether his strength would allow him to continue his efforts. Each Salt Lake letter and telegram had a bluer cast. The Mormon bank vaults were emptying. Grant Brothers' Livery Company, unable to meet its notes, was threatened with bankruptcy. McCornick had stayed CG&Co.'s execution four times but was growing ever more impatient. Gladly, Grant thought, he would trade high finance for a bookkeeper's ledger—anything would be better than having once again "to get down on one's knees" before the bankers. Besides, he had no idea where to kneel. The State Bank's New York correspondent had already refused his demand for special consideration. "I think that I would almost be wild tonight," Grant wrote George Q. Cannon in England, "did I not know that the Lord has helped me in the past and I have faith that He will do so in the future."

As a last resort, Grant now turned to John Claflin, but he did not come empty-handed. He held as possible collateral \$100,000 in Z.C.M.I. notes—the best security Utah could offer. These had come from Thomas Webber, Z.C.M.I.'s manager and an unpublicized CG&CO. director. Believing the times required that "we must help one another," Webber, without consulting his directors, had made the loan to the Church. Grant hoped these securities would fortify his main argument: that the State Bank-CG&Co. directors were also the leading men in Z.C.M.I., the company which bought Claflin's goods. Their ruin—or even disfavor—might destroy H. B. Claflin Company's Mormon business.

While Grant waited in Claflin's office through the long afternoon of June 27, the fate of both the Church and his businesses weighed on his shoulders. Finally, after 4:00

p.m., the merchant listened to Grant's impassioned appeal. In response, Claflin informed the Mormon that a loan was "utterly impossible." The season demanded that ice flow in the veins of even the most favorably disposed merchant. Claflin softened the blow by promising his good offices. The next morning he personally escorted Grant to several banking firms, including the high-risk and high-profit Blake Brothers. When they offered to purchase a single \$5,000 Z.C.M.I. note at an exorbitant 18 percent, Grant grabbed the chance. But the two men raised only an additional \$5,000. After visiting the banks Claflin penned a strong letter in behalf of Z.C.M.I.'s notes ("If the Z.C.M.I. is not good the merchants of the United States generally might as well go out of business"), whereupon Grant pointedly asked his friend to express his ringing verbal faith more tangibly. Claflin himself reluctantly purchased the other \$5,000 note.

Events in Salt Lake City, meanwhile, seemed to climax. Grant's efforts in New York left McCornick only half mollified—he still demanded the \$10,000 outstanding on his \$20,000 loan to CG&Co. On June 28, Zion's Savings cashier, George M. Cannon, privately feared catastrophe "to many of our institutions." When Heber Wells closed shop on Saturday, June 1, he gloomily surveyed the debris. The Mormon banks had begun the day with \$40,000 and ended with \$10,000. That same day two Provo banks collapsed and Salt Lake's Bank of Commerce escaped failure only by securing aid from the bankers' clearing house. "Before you receive this," Wells wrote Grant, "it is possible—nay probable you will hear of our suspension."

Despite Wells's dire prediction, the Mormon banks weathered this wave of the storm. Beginning on Monday, July 3, Zion's Savings Banks, along with Salt Lake City's other savings institutions, required a thirty-day notice of withdrawal for deposits of less than \$100 and a sixty-day notice for larger sums. Although extraordinary, the action was legal. "At first there was a lull," Wells remembered, "then the storm broke in all its fury. Depositors swarmed around Zion's side [of the bank]. . . . Some went out sullenly muttering that something was wrong, some said they expected it, some stormed, demanded their money and said the bank must [be] shaky; but the medicine worked." No one suspected that the problems of the city's savings banks touched the State Bank, which was actually able to increase slightly its reserves.

Wells enjoyed his success only for a moment. Then the terror of McCornick's unpaid \$10,000 struck him. He remembered dolefully twirling his moustache—"the only remnant of hair I have left"—when he opened Grant's latest telegram and saw the words "GLORY HALLELUJAH." Grant had raised \$20,000!

On Monday morning the apostle resolved to secure money at whatever the cost. First he appealed to his insurance friends. He then called at two banks. Next came W.H. Coler, who for several days had considered making a \$100,000 loan. No one was in the New York Life's offices because of the approaching July 4 holiday. Finally Grant tried Blake Brothers again. "I begged of them to find one of their customers who would purchase the



Heber M. Wells, Cashier of the State Bank of Utah.

notes I had to offer at some price." A few moments later he secured \$20,000 at a whopping 24 percent discount. After writing Salt Lake City, Grant related his success to the National Park's E. K. Wright who heartily commended him his pluck. Two days later Grant and some friends were still celebrating—with the popular nineteenth century dessert, water ice, at Delmonico's.

### III

Grant's personality was forthright and his mind not given to irony and subtlety. Otherwise he might have sensed the personal contradiction of his New York mission. His business career had been a footnote to Brigham Young's preaching on Zion's self-sufficiency and independence. Each of the young apostle's schemes and projects had sought to build God's kingdom—a unique religious commonwealth apart from mainstream America. Yet his New York loans wrapped the cords of American finance around the Utah Zion as surely as a Lilliputian net fastening Gulliver. Hereafter Church leaders would not only feel increasingly at ease with the ways of American capitalists, but they would be beholden, at least for the short run, for their services. Within another decade these influences would go so far that muckraking journalists would begin to cast the Mormon Church in the role of a Wall Street plutocrat. Along with other economic forces working to nationalize America, the Panic of 1893 changed not only the economics of Mormonism but also indirectly its public image.

During the summer of 1893 the needs of the moment, still not solved, concealed this long-range vision. The crisis of July 3 had passed, but LDS finances continued to sink. True, from May through July Grant renewed all of the Church's pressing obligations and secured an additional \$150,000. However his *tour de force* only postponed Armageddon. The new loans were of the shortest duration—two, three, at best four months. Grant knew that additional renewals were probably impossible. Like Zion's Savings' delayed deposit payments, the New York loans were a short-fused time bomb set to explode at the end of August.

There seemed to be no solution, only a gaping crevasse.



Courtesy of Utah State Historical Society

William S. McCornick, non-Mormon banker.

For a while, Mormon fortunes seemed to rest with George Q. Cannon's English mission. On July 3, the day on which Mormon finances were barely salvaged, Cannon had talked at Whitehall with the Earl of Roseberry, the British foreign secretary. Although twenty years had passed since their last meeting—apparently while Cannon was serving as Utah's territorial delegate in Washington—the foreign secretary, soon to be prime minister, cordially received the Mormon emissary and wrote a letter of introduction to Baron Rothschild. On July 7 a tersely worded cablegram—"UNSUCCESSFUL"—dashed Mormon hopes for a long-term loan. Cannon had met with Rothschild, his brothers, and other leading financiers, but the prevailing American panic and the European ignorance of Utah affairs made a loan impossible.

Utah, meanwhile, was slipping into a severe depression. Banking contraction was only partly to blame. A late winter had heavily damaged local agriculture, particularly the important cash-producing wool clip, making 1893 Utah's worst sheep year to date. Even more disastrous for the local money supply, the plummeting price of silver forced the closing of many mines. By the end of June, Utah businessmen began to lay off workers and reduce wages. Such prominent citizens as John Morgan, Abraham Smoot, and Ben Rich were bankrupt. Real estate speculator George A. Mearns committed suicide for the lack of \$1,000. "From every side arises the cry of hard times," wrote one diarist. "I have never witnessed a greater stagnation in business enterprises than has manifested itself during the last month. Money is not to be had, confidence seems to have disappeared, and credit is denied by nearly all tradesmen. Public works are stopped, and . . . thousands of men are out of employment."

A kaleidoscope of personal, human acts reflected the hard times. A needy seamstress, fearing starvation for her children, appealed to the patriarchal Franklin Richards. "I encouraged her the best I could," the elderly apostle remembered, "& she wiped away her tears & went with apparently increased bravery." The Salt Lake County's tax collector—also an LDS bishop and a

CG&Co. director—mismanaged \$32,000 in public funds and then asked protection from the General Authorities to avoid embarrassing the Church. Discovery of his theft would have weakened both the credit rating of the CG&Co. and Church attempts to recover their confiscated property. Apostle Francis M. Lyman spent one August morning in his bed, immobilized by the awful prospect of bankruptcy and regretting his debts to family and friends. George Q. Cannon, back from England, abandoned his multi-family communal kitchen, kept his boys from school to do the work of released hired hands, and transferred his few unencumbered assets to his wives. By contrast, during the State Bank's desperate days in July, young George F. Richards bolstered its reserves with \$1,500—the bulk of his savings.

The depression paralyzed the Church. By late June cash donations had almost ceased. On July 1 the Church failed to meet its payroll, forcing General Authorities to draw their living allowances in tithing commodities. In Salt Lake City, mission president J. Golden Kimball described himself at the "the end of the rope" and pled for "anything" to aid him in returning to his Church assignment in the southern states. Appropriations for Church education were halted, twenty schools were closed, and the opening of the new Church university in Salt Lake City postponed indefinitely. Clerks struggled to pay the low-priced fares of returning missionaries, and sometimes failed. "Every day urgent demands for cash are made of us, which we cannot meet," wrote the First Presidency, "for the simple reason that we have no money . . . We never saw such a time of financial stringency as there is now."

Endeavoring to maintain the Church's balance, Mormon leaders sent letters to local congregations directing that tithing commodities or other property be cheaply sold and the cash hastily sent to Church headquarters. Buyers were few, however, and local charity consumed most of the money raised. During a prosperous year, over 50 percent of all tithing flowed from local congregations to the general Church offices; in 1893, headquarters received only 19 percent. For several weeks the General Authorities considered borrowing over \$100,000 from 126 wealthy Saints, but they evidently realized that the plan would cripple the Mormon banks. There seemed to be no solution, only a gaping crevasse.

On August 2 the leading LDS money men met to take "stock." The weary Grant had returned the previous day from New York, and at an 8:00 a.m. CG&Co. meeting he reported on his New York labors. "We only live now on sufferance of those we owe such large sums to," Francis Lyman summarized after Grant's narration. But the investment firm had larger problems than note renewals in the Eastern market. It had endorsed the paper of Burton-Gardner Company, and the latter's recent bankruptcy seemed a mortal blow. The directors decided to transfer the Sugar Company heavy indebtedness elsewhere—perhaps, somehow to the Church itself. A joint meeting of the directors of the two Mormon banks that afternoon was equally grim. Cashier Wells revealed that without new deposits the banks would close within several weeks. He dispiritedly wondered whether an earlier closing might be the wisest course.

This time a pound of flesh would be necessary to save Mormon finances.

The Lord giveth and now He seemed ready to take. The Mormon leaders solemnly entered their new temple and prayed for relief. "All the Lord requires of us," President Woodruff exhorted, "is to do the very best we can, and he will then take care of the remainder." On August 12 the Mormon president took his last public action to resolve the crisis. At a meeting attended by the First Presidency, seven apostles, the Presiding Bishopric, and nineteen stake leaders, Woodruff reviewed the emergency and urged an increase in donations. When possible, the Church would also borrow from the Saints at 10 percent. Participants remembered little talk and no comprehensive plan of action. Two weeks later, sublimely unmoved by Mormondom's crumbling finances, Woodruff appropriated \$15,000 recently found in the Church's accounts in England and Hawaii and led the rest of the First Presidency and the Tabernacle Choir on a long-planned public relations tour of the World's Fair in Chicago. Before leaving Utah, President Woodruff nominated Grant and George Q. Cannon somehow to resolve the crisis. Since Cannon was part of Woodruff's party, the responsibility fell to Grant.

Again, Grant's mission was critical. Within two weeks, Zion's Savings must begin paying the large withdrawals requested sixty days earlier. And at about the same time, the Church's many loans would start to mature. Meanwhile, Wells Fargo had unexpectedly demanded that the Church reduce its \$25,000 overdraft privilege at the bank by \$10,000. When, on August 24, the Brigham Young Trust Company failed to pay \$50,000 owed Wells Fargo, Heber Wells tried to resolve the problem with a new loan from Mack McCornick. "Yesterday we bearded the former lion in his den," Wells related. "We told him everything; pleaded, entreated, cajoled, warned, threatened, and afterwards damned him. He was callous, obdurate, unyielding." Finally, with an eye on future Mormon business, McCornick yielded \$10,000 as a temporary sop. Toward the end of August, the Church notified Wells Fargo in San Francisco that it would probably default on its September 2 loan payment.

By August 24, Grant was back pounding the streets of New York in search of a large, long-term loan. This time, he realized, a pound of flesh would be necessary to save Mormon finances. With margins of reserves to assets in New York banks at 20.5 percent in mid-August—their lowest point of the crisis and well below the 24 percent legal limit for national banks—nothing less than a huge bonus would entice bankers into risking a long-term loan. But even when he promised a 20 or 25 percent commission, Grant found no takers. "I am getting blue by the hour," he informed Wells. "I wish that there was something bright in the distance that I could look forward to."

In Utah the final crisis was at hand. On Friday, September 1, the Mormon banks held only \$20,000, a scant 3 percent of deposits. By closing time \$5,000 had been drained from the vaults, and Wells frantically wired Grant that the State Bank could not survive another two days. Earlier that same day the Mormon apostle had finally wrangled a promise for a \$100,000 loan. But he had pressed too hard, and the frightened banker had delayed



Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir performing in Festival Hall at the Chicago World's Fair. James H. Crockwell, photographer.

payment until Wednesday, September 6. Now Grant learned that the Mormon banks could not last that long. He had come so close!

Since arriving in New York, Grant had tried to follow President Woodruff's counsel to neither worry nor complain about the financial crisis. But as events pounded down upon him, he again wondered whether he might break under the strain. He had exhausted all possibilities for a loan; there seemed to be no stone left to turn. Before him loomed the "perfect horror" of another Kirtland Bank failure, which had rent Church finances and caused widespread apostasy fifty-six years earlier. Several times during the early morning of September 2, he shed bitter tears as he "supplanted the Lord with all the earnestness and power which I possessed." After 3:00 a.m. he lapsed into several hours of fitful sleep.

Events of the next day seemed drawn from a surrealist drama. Grant appeared to move in slow motion, almost in defiance of the prevailing high stakes and emotions. Arising after 8:00 a.m., an unusually late hour for the vigorous Grant, he knelt at morning prayers and offered to forfeit his life in exchange for the preservation of the banks. Experiencing a calming assurance, he bathed and breakfasted deliberately and then, without a destination in mind, boarded an elevated railway train. At the station nearest H.B. Claflin Company, he decided to stop and shake John Claflin's hand. The merchant was not in his office but had left word that he wished to see Grant. Grant proceeded on to the National Park Bank but missed the right station. Backtracking, he entered Blake Brothers and there found John Claflin with a proposition.

Claflin had watched closely over the past several weeks as New York bank reserves finally stabilized and edged above the 24 percent legal minimum. Recognizing that the worst of the national money crisis was over and aware of Grant's willingness to pay an extravagant bonus, the New York businessman sensed the time was ripe to save the finances of his Mormon friends, secure for himself a handsome commission, and ensure for his company Z.C.M.I.'s lucrative trade. His terms were terrifying: \$500,000 for two years at 6 percent with a \$100,000 bonus going to Claflin—almost 33 percent of the loan would be lost to interest or commission. A desperate Heber Grant refused to "split straws." He asked only

that the deal be halved: \$250,000 for two years, same interest, with \$50,000 given to Claflin. Within hours the State Bank learned that it could draw upon its New York correspondent for an initial installment of \$50,000. The Mormon banks were saved.

The attractiveness of Claflin's loan varied with the beholder. On the grounds of the Chicago World's Fair, Grant explained his actions to the First Presidency. "Prest. Woodruff did not appreciate . . . getting only \$200,000 and yet paying interest on \$250,000," the apostle remembered. In fact, the Church president found the loan's terms "fearful." Although Church leaders formally approved the note, and many personally signed it, the more cautious believed that Grant had gone too far. In their eyes the loan had ruined the young apostle's financial reputation. "They did not comprehend the exigencies of the case," Grant later argued, "but I would gladly have given twice as much had it been necessary in order to save our banks."

Grant scarcely overstated matters. Although the Church would require loan after loan during the troubled 1890's, the Claflin money had allowed the banks to navigate their most dangerous passage. The safety of the banks in turn had prevented the bankruptcy of CG&Co., its individual partners, and—morally at least—the Church itself. Such failures would have had far-reaching consequences of their own. There is no possible way of estimating the eventual catastrophe had the floodgates not held.

The trauma of 1893—with its struggling banks, pinched finances, and heroic loans—was never related publicly. As each new wave of the crisis threatened, the Salt Lake newspapers had reassuredly pronounced the financial foundations of Zion as unshakable as the granite walls of the Wasatch Range. Officially the Saints were never told otherwise. When President Cannon addressed their October Conference, he stated only the obvious. "We have had, since we last met," he reported, "considerable trouble in financial matters . . . You have no doubt felt it individually, as we have felt it as a Church. Probably at no time in our previous experience have we had to contend with pecuniary embarrassments as we have had of late." Only a few in the audience understood that Cannon spoke of more than the Church's unpaid bills. Nor did the Mormon public learn of the Claflin loan. Fearing a reputation as a Shylock, John Claflin had demanded secrecy.

The story had a sequel. Although Grant's loans may have saved Zion and its money men from bankruptcy, the panic was ruinous. "A few years ago," Grant admitted in 1898, "we thought less of spending \$100 than we do now of a \$5 bill." Although the pacified national government returned what was left from the Edmunds-Tucker confiscations, Utahns and the Mormon Church staggered through the misnamed "Gay Nineties." When the entire Claflin note fell due in 1895, the Church was able only to make the first payment on the loan's principal. It eventually cancelled its debt largely by transferring to H.B. Claflin Company some of the Church's shares in the Saltair Beach and the Salt Lake and Los Angeles Railway companies. Final payment on the Claflin note was not made until 1899.



Salt Lake City's Main Street during the 1890's.

There was a final, personal irony to the episode. The mighty H.B. Claflin interests became overextended and in 1914 fell into receivership. John Claflin spent his last twenty years in retirement—prosperous enough to winter on the palmy Jekyll Island resort in Georgia, but stripped of personal or financial influence. Heber Grant, in contrast, became Mormonism's president. One of the hallmarks of his administration, even during the Great Depression of the 1930s, was fiscal stability. The harrowing summer of 1893, with its lessons for careful finance, clearly had left its mark. Indeed, for its participants, like old comrades-in-arms, the Panic of 1893 became a topic to cherish and celebrate. Those were the days, Heber Wells mused to Grant almost thirty years after the event, "when we fought and bled and nearly died together."

#### NOTES

1. A fuller and completely documented version of this article was published in *Arizona and the West* (Autumn 1979) 21:257-78. Because of its interest to wider, Mormon audience, we have chosen to reissue it in the following form. The article draws its documentation primarily from the journals and correspondence of Heber J. Grant, held by the LDS Library-Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. In addition, Mr. Walker has used local newspapers; the papers of the LDS Financial Department, the Presiding Bishopric's Office, and the First Presidency Office; as well as the diaries and reminiscences of Abraham H. Cannon, Hezekiah E. Hatch, Francis M. Lyman, Merriner W. Merrill, George F. Richards, Franklin D. Richards, John Henry Smith, James E. Talmage, and Wilford Woodruff. For specific citations the reader is referred to the earlier article.

2. In addition to Cannon and Grant, the partners were: Joseph F. Smith, second counselor to President Woodruff and director of Z.C.M.I., Zion's Savings Bank, and the State Bank of Utah; Abraham H. Cannon, apostle, manager of the printing firm of George Q. Cannon & Sons; John H. Smith, apostle and businessman; Francis M. Lyman, apostle and businessman; George M. Cannon, cashier of Zion's Savings and principal shareholder of the State Bank; Leonard G. Hardy, bishop and county collector; Thomas R. Cutler, manager and director of the Utah Sugar Company; Thomas S. Webber, superintendent of Z.C.M.I., president of Zion's Benefit Building Society, and director of Zion's Savings, Utah Sugar Company, and Home Fire Insurance; Philo T. Farnsworth, mining speculator; William H. Rowe, assistant superintendent of Z.C.M.I. and director of Z.C.M.I. and the State Bank; and Henry A. Woolley, Nephi W. Clayton, and Jesse W. Fox, Utah businessmen. Webber and Farnsworth kept their participation from public view and did not allow their names on CG&C stationery.

RONALD W. WALKER is a research historian living in Salt Lake City.

# Church Politics and Sonia Johnson:



## THE CENTRAL CONUNDRUM

by Linda Sillitoe

It has been a year since Paul Swenson, editor of *Utah Holiday* magazine, called to tell me he was receiving press clippings from the East which indicated that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was running an anti-ERA lobby in Virginia's General Assembly. The word was that it was being directed from Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. Because I had done an investigative article on Utah's tumultuous IWY convention in 1977 (from which article I had since recovered), he thought I might like to sort out Church and politics once again and would find my earlier experience useful.

On the basis of the IWY experience, I asserted that the anti-ERA lobby in Virginia was, no doubt, local, originating with a few politically active Church leaders who were simply using the Church's official policy opposing the ERA to gain support. But I had friends in Virginia; I wasn't in school that quarter, and I'd missed doing a story on a controversial court case (both because I'd been advised by my husband, doctor, and mother to take life easier). It seemed an interesting, brief diversion. I agreed to look into it.

Thus began a year of long hours on the telephone, a file now burgeoning with information and clippings (which will soon find a home in the special collections archives at the University of Utah), four articles for *Utah Holiday*, constant "interpreting" between women in Utah

and in Virginia as many of us took part in painful growth in less-conditional sisterhood—in sum a vastly educational and harrowing year. At the end of that year, December 1, Sonia Johnson was tried for her membership in a bishop's court in Virginia. When donations to a support fund for Sonia from Mormons and non-Mormons in Utah, Washington, and elsewhere proved to be more than adequate to send witnesses to the trial, it was proposed that I go to Virginia "to get it on paper." Where or how that story would be distributed, I wasn't sure, for at that time I was committed to *Utah Holiday* only for a "face in the crowd" story on Sonia Johnson. *Sunstone* also expressed an interest in talking with me on my return. As it turned out, *Utah Holiday* made room for a cover story with Paul Swenson sharing the byline.

Since the *Utah Holiday* story went to press (well after deadline), I have talked with many individuals and various groups, usually in company with Kathryn Mackay, a Salt Lake City historian who testified at the trial. I have learned which questions repeatedly arise, which points need to be stressed even for *Utah Holiday* readers, and—always important for Mormons—how to come up with something coherent in answer to "What does this mean for you?"

Because the donors who paid my way to Virginia are unknown to me, my sense of constituency is urgent but

broad. I was the only journalist to attend the trial from Utah (although two television stations sent cameras and reporters) and, as far as I know, the only Mormon journalist. And so at *Sunstone's* invitation, I will try to respond to that second constituency, a study group in print, as a Mormon, within a Mormon context. I won't doff my reporter's hat since this will not be a personal essay (though it may sound like one to this point); but I will push that reporter's hat to the back of my head and leave the complexity of detail—crucial though it is—of the politics, charges, trials, and personal dynamics to those interested in reading further and deal with the context of Sonia Johnson's trial—ERA and anti-ERA politics—the statements of the excommunication letter, and the issues relevant to each of us as Church members and/or citizens of the United States.

## II.

The first two people I talked with in Virginia last year were friends and very active Mormons. Both were in some way connected with the LDS Virginia Citizens Coalition (which they said had begun as the Virginia Citizens Coalition). They confirmed that the group was indeed directed by the general authorities in Salt Lake City. Not until I spoke with Regional Representative Julian Lowe, who said he had organized the Coalition with the help of Apostle Gordon B. Hinckley, was I convinced. Elder Hinckley is a member of the Church's Special Affairs Committee which looks after political interests.

Beverly Campbell has just been appointed spokesperson for the First Presidency. A year ago she owned a public relations firm and was called by Elder Lowe to be chair of the Virginia Citizens Coalition. She takes credit for the organizational structure which is now used in other states such as Missouri. Stake Relief Society presidents are included on the executive board. The pyramid structure moves down through stakes and ward utilizing Relief Society presidents as stake and ward "key coordinators" and is further staffed by ten couples per ward.

As the Coalition went into action, funds were solicited by ward bishops from individual ward members, anti-ERA petitions were signed in ward lobbies, women were instructed in lobbying techniques by the founder of Virginia Stop ERA, who is also a Mormon. The Coalition and Stop ERA co-published 50,000 pamphlets called "Equality Yes, ERA No". Thus was Virginia's General Assembly enthusiastically lobbied by the Virginia Citizens Coalition whose members had been given "priesthood callings" to work as "private citizens."

In Salt Lake City, press secretary for the Church, Jerry Cahill, confirmed that Regional Representatives Lowe and Don Ladd were authorized to organize in their area "with the knowledge of the leadership of the Church and its full blessings." A few minutes later Cahill called back with the information that the petitions in the ward lobbies had been inappropriate.

By winter of 1979-1980, however, that qualm had been surmounted, at least for the Missouri Citizens Council. The Special Affairs Committee now says that the Council has permission to use all Church buildings and Church meetings in the anti-ERA effort, although firesides,

priesthood meetings, and Relief Society are deemed the most likely and appropriate for anti-ERA instruction. Citizen groups are warned not to endorse candidates or use central Church funds, which could endanger the Church's tax exempt status. They have also been told to discontinue "setting apart" members called to the Missouri Citizens Council. (But a Missouri priesthood holder explains that they now "invite" and give priesthood blessings.)

Educational speakers are encouraged, such as General Relief Society President Barbara Smith, who recently toured Missouri speaking in Church meetings on "How the Equal Rights Amendment Will Affect the Family." She similarly toured North Carolina earlier in the year, Bill Evans, secretary to the Special Affairs Committee states. Anti-ERA organizations are not to use "LDS" or "Mormon" in their titles; thus the Missouri LDS Citizens Council has become the Missouri Citizens Council. Explains Jerry Cahill, "This is so as not to discourage non-Mormons from working with us and to avoid putting the focus on the Church rather than on the ERA."

Some anti-ERA literature is provided by the Church—a pamphlet prepared by the Relief Society, "Why Mormon Women Oppose the ERA," for instance, and "The Equal Rights Dilemma" prepared without identification by Church public communications and reissued in Missouri with the Citizens Council logo. Eagle Forum and Stop ERA literature is also distributed in ward lobbies and at meetings, say informed sources. When asked if he was aware that anti-ERA materials were being sold in Church lobbies, Bill Evans replied, "I was not aware of that, but such activities are left to the discretion of the area leaders."

Over the pulpit and in ward and stake newsletters, members are urged to support and "follow the Prophet" by working against the Equal Rights Amendment. They are instructed who and how to lobby at workshops and in meetings and advised, insist members from Virginia to Missouri to Arizona, to deny being organized at all—particularly by men—but to lobby as private citizens. (Salt Lake City elders asked by their quorums to picket pornographic movies as private citizens can recognize that dual motivation.)

While Church leaders at the local level and spokespersons at Church headquarters prefer to view the Mormon lobbies as voluntary groups ("good folks in a good cause," enthuses Don Ladd, Virginia regional representative) they agree when pressed that the groups are organized in and by the Church; but because of the strong stand on the ERA, Ladd explains, it doesn't matter how finely the line is drawn.

In Virginia the eastern press shone a sudden spotlight on the hundreds or thousands (Virginia press carried VCC estimates of membership from 2,500 to 16,000—I think the first number is generous) of private citizens who wrote about the ERA's danger to the family on attention-getting colored paper and lobbied as an unregistered group of unrelated individuals.

Perhaps because of the curiosity evidenced in the press, headlines flared in Virginia and Washington newspapers when it was discovered that the Coalition had not registered as a lobbyist group (required of all groups who spend more than \$100). That mistake seems

natural enough for a novice group—and a pro-ERA Lutheran group made the same error—but the press was particularly intrigued by the Mormons. When it was discovered that their obviously well-organized interest group was supported by something called FACT (Families Are Concerned Today), defined by Coalition officers as “an organization that raises funds,” interest piqued again.

Ron Thomas, the CPA who managed the FACT account, stated that FACT officers were Julian Lowe and Beverly Campbell; they authorized payment for anti-ERA printing. But Thomas said he knew nothing about the Citizens Coalition. He could not identify any fundraising activities held by FACT; meetings had not been held nor was there a membership list. It was, all told, a bank account. Virginia ward members reported that the checks requested by bishops to support the Coalition were made out to FACT.

In Missouri the financing has been more direct. One stake leader was told that the stake had been assessed \$2,000 to support the Missouri Citizens Council. Donations were accepted from individuals in the stake president's office, says one who was invited to contribute, but the pledges and donations were made out to the MCC.

As this article goes to print, the Equal Rights Amendment is being hotly debated in the Missouri legislature. The Missouri Citizens Council is vigorously lobbying against its ratification. An active Mormon who was recruited by the Council told me: “Beverly Campbell appeared on a television station in St. Louis and said that the Church is not involved in opposing the ERA. She said, ‘The Mormon Church, as a church, does not bus people to legislatures.’ Well, this morning Relief Society was cancelled in many wards in Missouri, and everyone got on the buses in front of our meeting houses and went to Jefferson City to lobby.”

It is important to stress that it is legal for churches to lobby on any issue (although they may endanger their tax exempt status by endorsing or supporting candidates or by using central church funds). The Special Affairs Committee has confirmed the activities and guidelines of state anti-ERA groups, which are filled with dedicated, believing people working for a cause they believe has moral and religious implications. One such lobbyist claims they are meeting others who are surprised and happy to discover “how nice Mormons are.” The lack of “Mormon” or “LDS” in the recent lobbyist logos, funds such as FACT which serve no obvious purpose except to disguise the source of revenue, and the insistence of Church members that they have been instructed to lobby as the general public rather than a homogeneous interest group (a tactic which significantly inflates the apparent anti-ERA sentiment in the state) give the lobbies a furtive aura.

More important to Mormons, however, seems to be the fact that most of *them* (like myself until recently) are not aware that such lobbies exist in the Church. Having accustomed my mind to that knowledge, it seems to me unnecessary that members in Utah should be shocked and disillusioned by the activities of their sisters and brothers in Arizona, Illinois, or Missouri or wonder what in the world Sonia Johnson is doing in Virginia. When a native Missourian visited her home state and told mem-

bers there of her Salt Lake friends' reactions to the Missouri Citizens Council, it was the Missouri members' turn to be shocked and disillusioned. They had believed, quite naturally, that the entire Church was aware of their efforts on the front lines of the political battlefield, approved, and were similarly engaged.

Common knowledge, however, does not insure unanimous comfort within that religious-political arena. Many, involved or not, approve, of course, and find that their political and religious feelings coincide very nicely on the issue of the Equal Rights Amendment—and some groups oppose other issues as well, such as abortion. Other members are not as eager but feel compelled to support the anti-ERA groups as a program of the Church. Still others in the spectrum privately agonize over problems they see in terms of practical politics and Constitutional overtones; still others have expressed concern about being “called” to what they consider a political crusade. Those members who are pro-ERA, quiet or vocal, find themselves religious members of the political enemy camp, particularly in states where ratification of the ERA is critical and the Church is organized to oppose it. One priesthood holder in Missouri inquired to what extent a member could be pro-ERA without coming into conflict with the Church. The answer received, he says, from his stake president through his bishop was, “A member may be pro-ERA, but may not oppose any program of the Church, including the Missouri Citizens Council.” Across that spectrum, then, there will be divisions of opinion on this issue, but that is preferable to total or partial ignorance.

Since the Church has confirmed that some members are actively lobbying against the Equal Rights Amendment with the blessing and direction of Church leaders (Special Affairs Committee consists of Elders Gordon Hinckley, David Haight, and James Faust of the Council of Twelve, and Elder Neal Maxwell of the Presidency of the Council of Seventy), it seems to me that it is time for the rest of the membership to inform ourselves about what we, as a Church, are doing.

As I have worked on these articles many of the weeks of 1979 and then taught Church history to a gospel doctrine class on Sundays, I have repeatedly been impressed by the similarity between the Church's current political activities and the early political history of the Church. As I have been driven with the saints from Ohio to Missouri to Illinois, and now west to what will become Utah, the same *attitudes* are revealed, though issues and circumstances differ.

There is still the attempt to converge the spiritual and temporal worlds through political methods. And still the response to our fellow citizens' uneasiness and eventual outrage is that we are persecuted because of the stirrings of Satan. “But the Church *never* involves itself in politics . . .” I have heard many say in response to the anti-ERA lobbies. These current activities are precedent-breaking only in terms of the last several decades. We are true to our beginnings.

I have a personal interest, of course, in a more informed membership concerning the Church's anti-ERA efforts. I have been accused of “washing the Church's dirty linen in public” or “pulling skeletons out of the closet.” The Church recognizes that laundry (and I see no

## It causes a more noticeable discrepancy between her words in print and her words as heard.

reason why *my* Church should own dirty laundry) and says it's been drying in the breeze all the time. Perhaps if those "skeletons" will don some of the "laundry" and stay out in the sunlight for a while, they will flesh out a bit and look healthier to everyone.

### III.

I called Sonia Johnson for an update before speaking at a recent study group. "What is the status of your appeal?"

"Well," she answered, "it was hand-delivered to the stake president more than two weeks ago. Day before yesterday I received a letter from him saying that he has received it. I suppose you could say that my appeal is moving with all the speed of a wounded tortoise!"

That remark, in addition to being informative, reinforced something I have learned about Sonia Johnson: she favors a vivid word over a bland word every time. Not only does this consistent characteristic of her speech make her eminently quotable (a reporter's dream), but it causes a more noticeable discrepancy between her words in print and her words as heard than is usually noticeable.

My first conversation with Sonia about a year ago surprised me: her voice was thoughtful rather than strident, unusually expressive instead of harsh; and her anger about the "men organizing my sisters behind the scenes to work against their own equal rights" seemed balanced by pain. I can only assume my expectations of her were formed by reading her words as quoted by the press—and that is true for most people who feel they know Sonia Johnson.

Since then I have discovered that her use of hyperbole and sometimes startlingly vivid language is usually humorous or ironic; but when she speaks from pain or anger, as in her speech given in September to the American Psychological Association meetings in New York City, her rhetoric strikes many Mormons as polemic and harsh. (Associated Students at BYU, in fact, distributed that speech to the BYU studentbody after her excommunication, an apparent disregard of copyright law.)

The APA speech describes the Mormon anti-ERA lobby in Virginia and the Church's opposition to the Amendment, then broadens to the discussion of problems among Mormon women. Citing Utah's alarming statistics on depression, "premaritally pregnant" teenage brides, teenage suicide, and rape, Sonia Johnson insists that "our sisters are silently screaming for help." The next paragraph continues:

Because Mormon women are trained to desire above all else to please men (and I include in this category God, whom all too many of us view as an extension of our chauvinist leaders), we spend enormous amounts of energy trying to make the very real, but—for most of us—limited satisfactions of mother-and-wife-hood substitute satisfactorily for all other life experiences. What spills over into those vacant lots of our hearts where our intellectual and talented selves

should be vigorously alive and thriving are, instead, frustration, anger, and the despair which comes from suppressing anger and feeling guilty for having felt it in the first place.

Returning to politics, the key paragraph of the speech centers on her cause:

But women are not fools. The very violence with which the brethren attacked an amendment which would give women human status in the Constitution abruptly opened the eyes of thousands of us to the true source of our danger and our anger. This open patriarchal panic against our human rights raised consciousness miraculously all over the church as nothing else could have done. And revealing their raw panic at the idea that women might step forward as goddesses-in-the-making with power in a real—not a "sub" or "through men"—sense, was the leaders' critical and mortal error, producing as it did a deafening dissonance between their rhetoric of love and their oppressive, unloving, destructive behavior.

Copies of the "Patriarchal Panic" speech abound throughout Mormondom. It is the extreme, not the norm, of Sonia Johnson's utterances and yet it identifies clearly the heart of what has become her dilemma. It is in this speech that she crosses the line between equal civil rights and the patriarchal system of the Mormon Church, a border also blurred by the Church by identifying the ERA as a *moral* issue upon which the Church is taking *political* action (in harmony with the July 4, 1979 statement of the First Presidency which explains that moral issues, so identified by the First Presidency and Council of Twelve, may be "worthy of full institutional involvement"). Thus it is no more possible to remove Sonia Johnson's promotion of the Equal Rights Amendment from a Church context than it was possible for her to remove the anti-ERA petition from her ward lobby.

Shortly before her excommunication, Sonia Johnson told an interviewer she was "Mormon right down to my toenails." The mother of four children ages five to sixteen, a university instructor in Africa and the United States, she still attends her Virginia ward regularly. As late as last summer she held down three Church positions: ward organist, gospel doctrine instructor, and cultural refinement teacher in Relief Society. She continued the latter until the end of November, the week before the second trial, and played the organ at fast meeting after the December 1 trial (when no decision had been announced.) She claims to have once been "on a pedestal," determined to be "the perfect Mormon wife and mother."

It was, ironically, in a Church meeting that Sonia Johnson says she became a feminist. She had been overseas and only vaguely aware of the women's movement in the United States, she explains. At this meeting priesthood leaders explained the opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment expected of ward members in harmony with official Church policy. When she went to the meeting she says, she expected to agree with what was said, but somehow as she listened she saw "the implications," and, she concludes, "I walked out of that meeting a feminist."

While testifying before a Senate subcommittee on the Extension of the ERA, Sonia Johnson learned from the interaction between herself and Mormon Senator Orrin

Hatch of Utah that Mormons for ERA were attractive to the press. And it was when Virginia wards, homes, and stakes filled up with anti-ERA literature, petitions, Coalition assignments, and strategy that she decided she must separate in her own mind the political and spiritual realms of the Church.

Reporter Marjorie Hyer wrote in *The Washington Post* late in 1979 about Mormons for ERA:

Earlier this year while they themselves were lobbying for the passage of the amendment in the Virginia legislature, Johnson's group forced the church to register as a lobbyist on the other side. . . . In recent months, Johnson's group has become a sort of self-styled "truth squad" attacking the church's opposition in states where ratification is an issue.

Once Mormons for ERA divided the political anti-ERA aspect of the Church from what they saw as their spiritual and cultural center in Mormonism, they opposed the Church vigorously—and to their minds, politically. Banner tows carried signs such as "Mormons for ERA Are Everywhere" in Virginia and Utah (but never on Sunday), and pickets appeared at conferences. But the Mormons for ERA's main tactic was to expose and publicize the Church's anti-ERA lobbies. It soon became apparent, however, that the press was more interested in the personal angle of a toeing-all-lines-but-one Mormon woman battling her (male) church leaders on an issue of women's rights. That angle made good copy and the story of the Church's politics was mainly ignored, except as it was embodied in one quotable personality—Sonia Johnson.

In mid-November, Sonia Johnson was summoned to a bishop's court. Her bishop, Jeffrey Willis, agreed to postpone the trial to give her more time than the proffered two days to prepare a defense and invite witnesses—and establish the charges against her. Another bishop counseled her to request a stake court, which she did on November 16th, the evening before the original trial date. That morning a story had appeared on the front page of the "Metro" section of *The Washington Post* concerning the trial; that evening her request was not only angrily denied, but she was told to appear in court the following morning.

The variety of charges, trial times and settings, the witnesses heard and not heard, the extraordinary procedures within the court, and the unusual support and press coverage outside the court are important and interesting, but complex. There is not space to discuss those things here, except in the most cursory way.

The witnesses who testified at the December 1 trial before Jeffrey Willis were all members in good standing (the Sterling Park ward bishopric checked before the trial): Dr. Ralph Payne from Pennsylvania who heard the APA speech in New York and volunteered his testimony; Kathryn Mackay from Salt Lake City who met Sonia Johnson in October and heard her speak at the women's conference at the University of Utah; Maida Withers, a fellow Mormon for ERA in Virginia; and a Church employee who heard her speak at the women's conference in Provo in October and who has asked to remain anonymous. Because the bishop seemed primarily concerned with the effect of Sonia Johnson's statements on others (undermining Church leaders, leading people

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away from the prophet, teaching false doctrine, etc.) thirty statements were also submitted to him at the trial testifying to the reactions of various individuals in the audiences. Ida Harris of Logan, Utah (Sonia's mother); Esther Peterson, former Utahn and Special Advisor to the President; and John Bailey, Teddie Wood, and Hazel Rigby of Mormons for ERA in Virginia were also there to testify but were never called. The trial was limited to an hour and thirty minutes, although it ran about an hour longer.

The witnesses report that Sonia Johnson was not only charged with hindering the worldwide missionary program, but also with damaging the genealogy, welfare, family home evening, and family preparedness (food storage) programs; that she was charged with teaching false doctrine, though no examples were given even when requested by the witnesses; and that she was charged with undermining the confidence of members and non-members in the leaders of the Church. Not until the excommunication letter arrived December 5 did the charges become available in writing:

1. Have your actions influenced members and non-members to oppose Church programs; i.e., the missionary program?
2. Have your actions and statements advocated diminished support of Church leaders?
3. Have you presented false doctrine which would damage others spiritually?

The findings of the Church court deal first with the "missionary charge," a widely-carried misquote which read variously, "If the missionaries come to your door, don't let them in."

That statement appeared first in a Montana news story after Sonia Johnson talked politics with a group of non-Mormon ERA supporters in Kalispell. She told them, according to the transcript of her talk, that the Church was involved in anti-ERA efforts and that they should lobby the Church as if it were a political body. A film clip of her remarks in Kalispell was flown into Virginia for the trial (and a few seconds were shown on NBC news), but due to the elapsed trial time, the film was not shown, and Sonia Johnson tried to explain the context and her intentions.

In an editorial in *The Washington Post*, Sonia Johnson explained her "missionary statement" this way:

Contrary to the statement in the church's press release, I did *not* testify that "(Mormon) missionaries should not be invited into people's homes." What I did do was tell ERA proponents in Montana that they should not hesitate to lobby the church since it has itself chosen to be a political body and as such must expect to be lobbied. I told them that perhaps the only lever they had for deal-making (which is what lobbying is) is the church's earnest desire to have all non-members listen to its missionary message. "Therefore," I told them in effect, "write and tell church leaders that you do not like what they are doing in ERA politics, and that if their missionaries come to your door you will say that you are not interested in a

## In the Sonia Johnson story, oversimplification is the lie.

church that is fighting your civil rights. In other words, tell church leaders if they will listen to you, you will listen to them." This, to my mind, is political lobbying, pure and simple.

That context was not understood or not acceptable to Bishop Willis, evidently. The excommunication letter reads, "You testified that you believe and have taught that missionaries should not be invited into people's homes."

The second finding has an even more complex history. Sonia Johnson participated on a panel of Mormon women at the University of Utah's women's conference in October. In that speech, "Off Our Pedestals: The Chronicles of the Uppity Sisters," comprised of letters from Mormon women throughout the United States, Sonia Johnson said the words "savage misogyny" which followed her like a pair of open fangs. They appeared in the second paragraph of her speech, which she read verbatim:

Not long ago, my Bishop told me meaningfully, "I keep MY wife on a pedestal!" "Oh," I thought, "so you've got her safely immobilized." (I'm sure he wishes my husband would get me back on MINE!) And though pedestals really aren't funny, I had to smile a little because I was reminded of a banner I saw in the 1978 Extension March in Washington. It showed two women sitting on pedestals at the bottom of a big deep hole. You could see ground level 'way above them and the heavy boots of men walking around up there. And one woman was saying to the other, "I'm getting tired of this elevated position!" This made me think of one of my favorite rejected slogans for our airplane banner tow: PEDESTALS ARE THE PITS. It's true, of course, pedestals are the pits.

I wish there were time to talk at length about why the pedestal, as a symbol of women's immobilization and isolation in our male centered society, more than any other symbol—the gilded cage, the doll's house—reveals our savage misogyny. Briefly it is physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually cramped. It is precarious and a fall is dangerous if not fatal. It maroons women and keeps us emotionally stranded from one another. And by placing us in the position customarily occupied by statues, reveals society's attempt to render us as conveniently non-human, mindless, and will-less as they (statues).

The *Deseret News* that night ran a UPI article in which the nature of "savage misogyny" changed significantly:

Sonia Johnson of Arlington, Va., told University of Utah students Friday that the male leaders of the church were demonstrating a hatred of women by claiming to hold them in high regard while denying them equal powers with men.

"Pedestals are the pits," said Ms. Johnson. "It shows most vividly the savage misogeyny (sic) in the Mormon church."

Sonia Johnson says she spent "more than two hours at both trials explaining "savage misogyny." Here is her recollection of the December 1 trial:

I said, "I gave you that speech so you could read it and not misquote me. I read it just as you have it, and I

said 'society'—the world! Western civilization! Everyone, including women. All of us."

And one of the counselors said, "All of us . . . even the church leaders?"

And I thought, why fight it? "Yes," I said, "everyone."

Jeffrey Willis states in the excommunication letter:

You testified that you believe and have publicly stated that our society, specifically including church leaders, has a savage misogyny; when, in fact, it is church doctrine that exaltation can be gained only through the love that results in the eternal bonding of man and woman.

The press release from the Church was made even more specific by Steve Coltrin who consulted first with Bishop Willis, then amended: "You testified that you believe and have publicly stated that our (Mormon) society, specifically including Church leaders, has (in Mrs. Johnson's words) 'a savage misogyny . . .'"

The *Deseret News* came full circle the night of December 5 when, while quoting the Church press release directly, it added its own, original spelling, "misogeny."

The *Washington Post* editorial (not carried in Utah) contains Sonia Johnson's explanation of these two court findings:

The unfortunate distortions came about largely, I believe, because of Bishop Willis' insistence upon wrenching all statements and actions in question out of the political context in which they occurred, and forcing them into a religious context for which they were never intended and in which they cease entirely to reflect my opinions.

The third finding of the court, however, is a statement Sonia Johnson does not dispute:

You have publicly taught that the church is dedicated to imposing the prophet's moral directives upon all Americans; when it is the doctrine of the church that all people are free to choose for themselves those moral directives dictated by their own consciences.

Taken in context, I believe that statement from the "Patriarchal Panic" speech does indeed reveal the true and major reason for Sonia Johnson's excommunication:

The political implications of this mass renunciation of individual conscience under direction from "God" are not clearly enough understood in this country. The Mormons, a tiny minority, are dedicated to imposing the Prophet's moral directives upon all Americans, and they may succeed if Americans do not become aware of their methods and goals. Because the organization of the church is marvelously tight, and the obedience of the members marvelously thoroughgoing, potentially thousands of people can be mobilized in a very short time to do—conscientiously—whatever they are told, without more explanation than "the Prophet has spoken."

But Mormon anti-ERA activity, though organized and directed through the hierarchy of the church from Salt Lake down through regional and local male leaders, is covert activity not openly done in the name of the church. Members are cautioned not to reveal that they are Mormons or organized by the church when they lobby, write letters, donate money, and pass out anti-ERA brochures door to door through whole states. Instead, they are directed to say they are concerned citizens following the dictates of their indi-

vidual consciences. Since they are, in fact, following the very dictates of the Prophet's conscience and would revise their own overnight if he were to revise his, nothing could be further from the truth.

In those paragraphs Sonia Johnson is doing what she did in virtually every public statement and interview: breaking the story that Mormons for ERA were determined to make public, that the Mormon Church is opposing the Equal Rights Amendment through organized lobbies in various states. By quoting that statement which contains the central purpose and tactic of Mormons for ERA, I believe that the excommunication letter rebuts the "news" and implicitly denies the validity of the contention. Thus the central pivot between embracing the Church as a whole, politics included, and the division of the spiritual and political Church, justifying allegiance to one aspect and opposition to the other aspect is, after all, encapsulated in the findings of the court.

"It's all right to be pro-ERA," confirmed Church spokesperson Don LeFevre after the excommunication, "it's just not all right to be anti-Church."

Throughout the last few months, Sonia Johnson has stated virtually the same distinction: it is not her pro-ERA beliefs that have caused her conflict but her opposition to the Church's political activities in relation to the ERA.

By the time she received word of her excommunication, Sonia Johnson had received five thousand letters from all parts of the country, almost all supportive. The list of Mormons for ERA spiraled, the telephone rang incessantly, and the press coverage was heavy, particularly in the East. Beginning at a luncheon at which Presidential candidate Edward Kennedy spoke, and continuing as she campaigned for the ERA in various states, Sonia Johnson's introduction was met time after time with prolonged standing ovations. But in Utah the population quickly polarized, a polarization reflected in wards and stakes throughout the country.

Sonia had never watched the "Donahue" television show when she received an invitation to appear on the program. Friends enthusiastically encouraged her to accept, and the producer said they would request the Church to send a spokesperson to appear with her. Sonia Johnson explained that she would be happy to appear with any member of the Special Affairs Committee or with Barbara Smith. But when the Church provided the name of Beverly Campbell, chair of the Virginia Citizens Coalition, Sonia Johnson refused to appear with her. "She has no authority. It looks as if this is just local Virginia politics. Someone should appear who knows about the campaigns in other states—Missouri and Illinois, for instance—and can speak for the Church."

By the time Sonia Johnson arrived in Chicago, Beverly Campbell had authority—she had been appointed official spokesperson on the ERA for the First Presidency. But, knowing Beverly Campbell from the ERA politics in Virginia, Sonia Johnson still refused to appear and offered to return to Virginia without being on the program herself. Instead, the producer chose to give her the entire hour with the terse (and inaccurate) explanation that the Church had chosen not to send a representative.

Sonia Johnson reports that she enjoyed doing the program, but that her "Mormon hate mail" increases as the film travels from one area to another. Despite the fact

## Portraying Sonia Johnson as either a martyred saint or a wicked sinner accomplishes nothing.

that many Mormons do not respond favorably to the program, the Church has still expended considerable effort to gain "equal time." In Salt Lake City, the Church flew Beverly Campbell out to appear on a local television program where she indicated that Sonia Johnson had insisted on appearing on the "Donahue" program alone. After KTVX in Salt Lake City gave the Church thirty minutes following "Donahue" for Beverly Campbell to respond, the *Deseret News* ran a lengthy article on Beverly Campbell and mentioned that Barbara Smith had declined the "Donahue" invitation—members of the Special Affairs Committee were not mentioned. During the thirty minute response, Beverly Campbell read the court findings from the excommunication letter, commented, then spent the balance of her time discussing her opposition to the ERA. Questioned by news journalist Roy Gibson, she confirmed that she was called to the Virginia Citizens Coalition by a regional representative, and that anti-ERA literature was appropriately found in Mormon Church lobbies.

In mid-January it became known that the Johnson marriage had not survived the stress of the year. Attributing the break in the marriage to too many crises at the same time, Sonia Johnson said, "I don't want to blame the excommunication, but it didn't help."

Richard Johnson, a statistics professor, ERA supporter, and Mormon convert told the press he thought the break-up would be final. Frequently photographed at his wife's side during the two trials, he stayed with their children while she campaigned for the ERA early in 1980. A UPI story of January quotes him as saying, "Things got exacerbated, with the trial and the grief."

What few knew as the trial and excommunication were carried to the country via a surprisingly devoted media and press was that the pain and grief visible in Sonia Johnson concerning her rejection by the Church did not reveal the extent and seriousness of the private disaster.

At the beginning of 1979, Sonia Johnson believed that her Church very well might, allied with other organizations such as Stop ERA and Eagle Forum, defeat the Equal Rights Amendment. Efforts of Mormons in Nevada, Florida, Arizona, Virginia, and North Carolina were deemed significant, and Regional Representative Marion Callister was scheduled to rule on rescission for Arizona and Idaho. "Missouri and Illinois are organized to the hilt to fight the ERA," she said in the early fall. But by early 1980, many feminists in the country believed that the Equal Rights Amendment had breathed new life. They attribute that rejuvenation to the focus of the nation's attention on a woman who is rapidly becoming a folk-heroine—except among her own people—who was cut off from her church for doing battle in a public arena that is, at once, religious and political.

### IV

"But what does all this mean to you?" fellow members always ask over lunch, after study groups, over the tele-

Many members, still active and caring, find themselves feeling disenfranchised within their own spiritual nest.

phone. (I like the refinement over the old Utah IWY question, "Which side are you on?") I said at the beginning of this article that this has been an educational and harrowing year. Some things I have learned have not been pleasant, but I'm sure some have been invaluable, the two qualities not being mutually exclusive.

I have learned, for instance, that the Church court system, unlike the civil court system, does not protect the individual. Since the bishop is presumed to be acting with the guidance of the Lord, the protection of the accused person's rights and feelings is left to the brethren in charge of the trial. Since those protections are not inherent in the system, a Church court can be used as a weapon.

I have learned that women are at a true disadvantage in Church courts. Many Mormon men have served in ward or stake trials and/or have access to the General Handbook and its supplements. A woman has neither of those advantages. Unlike a man, she has limited knowledge of court procedure, no understanding of her rights and her responsibilities; she has no awareness of usual procedure, no knowledge of *what to expect*. That ignorance and the inaccessibility of the information is a handicap. There is also the inherent inequity of being tried by fellow saints who are not, and cannot be, totally aware of her point of view. While a man is judged by other men who share a common experience of temptations, challenges, and systems simply by virtue of being men, a woman is also judged by men who, despite their sympathies, have never for a minute of their lives seen the world from a woman's eyes.

I have come again, as I did when investigating the IWY article, to view oversimplification as the true enemy. In the Sonia Johnson story, oversimplification is the lie. I have not yet used all the information or resources in my file, nor do I have all points of view relevant to the case (Jeffrey Willis, for example, has refused to be interviewed not only concerning the court itself, but also about the situation in general), but I have tried to exhibit as much as space permits the information central to the story. Portraying Sonia Johnson as either a martyred saint or a wicked sinner accomplishes nothing, since she is a woman, articulate, determined, pained, devout, and audacious. She attributes her strength to the Lord, because of the fasting and prayer of many in her behalf; meanwhile, Jeffrey Willis and his wife have also given thanks for the moral and material support from their ward, considering the trial a time of spiritual growth.

There is nothing simple about the story of Church ERA politics in terms of organization, motive, event, or people involved. Members on both sides of the issue are believing, practicing Mormons who care intensely about the future of the Church and of the country. The current polarization among Church members is understandable in terms of the central conflict. There are many who view the one line Sonia Johnson did not toe as an essential one—not ERA politics, but obedience and loyalty to the Church. Thus her severance reinforces their own obedi-

ence and loyalty, and in some cases, but not all, their own political-moral beliefs on the Equal Rights Amendment. Others are in crisis because they view the situation in terms of the Church's position in national politics; not all pro-ERA, nor all vocal, they view Sonia Johnson's separation of the political and spiritual aspects of the Church as valid and for her—and possibly for themselves—necessary. Thus many members, still active and caring, find themselves feeling disenfranchised within their own spiritual nest. Though this may seem a morality play in Puritan costumes of black and white, it is instead a very human drama with all the peacock array of colors on our human earth, a vivid chapter in the evolution of humankind.

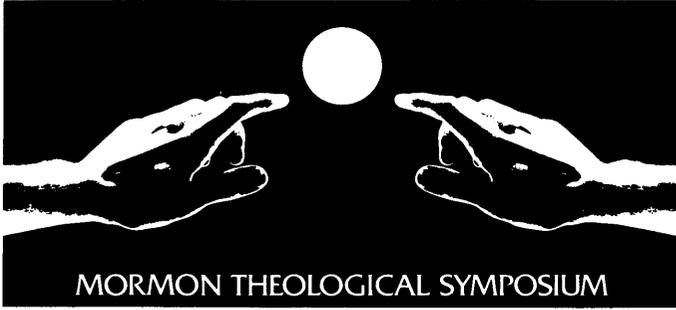
It has been a year of confrontation for me, of asking hard questions and flinching at the answers, then inflicting pain on those who question me. Yet for everything that has struck me as difficult, harrasing, or even bitter, there have been other incidents and moments of true generosity and courage freely given, sometimes at considerable risk.

And so I pass that question, "What does this all mean for you?" back to you, the reader, with what seems to me the central conundrum. What is the Church's appropriate role in current politics? Is there a difference between official statement and institutional involvement? How many issues involving political action will be deemed moral issues? What should be the profile of the member who does not agree with the Church's position on such an issue? Can such a policy be considered revelation when Church members are not required to accept that position? Has the time come for Church members to align their political beliefs with their religious beliefs? Can members do otherwise without becoming goats in a fold of sheep? How do we heal the splits in families and ward families? How do we still the anguished questions, "Do I belong?" and conversely, "Do you belong?"

To return to the specific from the general: if a pro-ERA member, knowing it is her (or his) right to *be* pro-ERA, finds herself called to a citizens' group which will lobby against the amendment, discovers anti-ERA literature in the ward lobby, lobbying instructions in sacrament meeting, and buses waiting outside the the stake center on Relief Society morning, how should she respond? Should she become a member of the Missouri Citizens Council (or Quest for Quality Government in Nevada, or Friends of the Family in North Carolina) to support her leaders? Should she join a pro-ERA group but keep quiet about the Church's plans and involvement? Should she use her individual voice (or join with a few friends) in loudly combatting a large and effective opposition lobby, thus choosing the most effective and dangerous route toward finding herself deemed anti-Church . . . as did Sonia Johnson.

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## 1980 Call for Papers

Because of the success of our first *Sunstone* Theological Symposium (26 papers of good to excellent quality; 500 in attendance; comments generally very favorable), we have felt encouraged to proceed immediately with plans for a second symposium next August.

To give the greatest opportunity for careful thinking and writing (as well as careful review and selection) we are announcing that the 1980 *Sunstone* Theological Symposium will be held August 22-23. We are now making a call for *Titles and Abstracts* of prospective papers. These must be received by us no later than *1 April 1980*. Papers should be about 10-12 typewritten pages or about 3000 words. They should be capable of being comfortably read in about 20 minutes. Invitations to submit papers will be based on the attractiveness and relevance of the proposals, but final selection will depend on the quality of re-

search, thought, and expression in the finished paper.

We will consider papers on any subject related to Mormon theology. However, as we approach the 150th anniversary of the founding of the LDS Church, we especially encourage papers closely relating Mormon history and theology. Some suggested topics might be: the influence of Mormon theology on the writing of its history; evaluating the "new Mormon history"; analyzing the works of prominent Mormon thinkers such as Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, the Pratts, Orson Spencer, Eliza R. Snow, B. H. Roberts, John A. Widstoe, James E. Talmage, Joseph Fielding Smith, and others; and the development of Mormon beliefs, doctrines, and practices.

Other themes which might be considered include: problems and opportunities of international Mormonism in worship, thought, and spiritual development; Mormon epistemology; implications of the unique Mormon concept of God for worship and morality; is there a Mormon theology?; and analysis of contemporary issues from a Mormon theological perspective.

The success of the 1979 *Sunstone* Theological Symposium was largely due to the quality of the presentations and the enthusiastic response of those attending. With experience and additional preparation time, we of *Sunstone* fully anticipate that the 1980 *Sunstone* Theological Symposium will be even more significant and beneficial.

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# 1980 Sunstone Fiction Contest

## FIRST PLACE

Bruce Jorgensen

Linda Sillitoe

*Born of the Water*

*The Long Walk*

## SECOND PLACE

Patricia Hart Molen

*Miracle Pageant*

## HONORABLE MENTION

Rebecca Cornwall

Dean Hughes

Bela Petsco

*Drowning*

*Eulogy*

*Blackness of the Darkness*

SUNSTONE was gratified by the number of excellent entries submitted to our first fiction contest and looks forward to next year's contest. In behalf of D. K. Brown, each first place winner will receive \$375 and the second place winner will receive \$100. "Born of the Water" by Bruce Jorgensen is included in this issue but because of space limitations Linda Sillitoe's story will be included in Vol. 5, No. 2. Other fiction entries will be published in future issues. Deadline for the 1981 *Sunstone* Fiction Contest will again be October 1. Complete contest rules will be included in a subsequent issue.

# A Mormon Associations

## A Mosaic of Mormon Culture

The Departments of Anthropology and Archaeology, Art History, English, Geography, and History, and the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University will sponsor a Symposium, "A Mosaic of Mormon Culture" to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Symposium is to be held October 2 and 3, 1980, on Brigham Young University Campus under the auspices of Special Courses and Conferences.

Interested persons are invited to propose papers, presentations, or complete sessions. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel, and should be received by March 15, 1980. They may be sent to any of the members of the steering committee, who are: Thomas G. Alexander, Charles Redd Center; James B. Allen, History; C. Mark Hamilton, Art and Architectural History; Richard H. Jackson, Geography; Neal E. Lambert, English; and John L. Sorenson, Anthropology and Archaeology. All are at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602. The symposium will deal with Mormon

culture in its broadest aspects—the beliefs, social forms, and material traits of life and thought. Mormon culture thus defined includes the material objects, intellectual symbols, language, and related manifestations, characteristic of life among members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in any nation, which distinguish them from those who are not LDS. The evidence of this Mormon culture may be exhibited through the landscape, artifacts, literature, behavior, visual arts, performances, folklore, humor, music, internal tradition, graffiti, or other manifestations.

In general, the symposium committee will consider only proposals which aim at interpreting the culture rather than only describing it. Papers and presentations may include but are not limited to: 1. Scholarly analyses, discussions or comparisons; 2. Exhibits or visual presentations; 3. Performances or demonstrations; or 4. Combinations of these. In other words, virtually any manifestation of Mormon culture is within the domain of this symposium. The major constraint is that the proposed contribution be interpretive in nature.

# Reviews

## Hunters in the Snow

David Kranes  
University of Utah Press, 1979  
123 pages, \$12.00



the village is at lower left and straggles back, almost as sparse as its trees, through middle distance to blurring mountain slopes farther away. One row of houses, in dimmed clayey or vegetal tones (say of squash, carrot, yam), trudges uphill in the left midground; in front of the last, an inn with its sign askew on

one hook, some peasants have lit a fire and feed it with what looks like straw. Passing in front of them—no greetings either way—three hunters with about a dozen dogs, counting pups, trudge downhill, home. Tired, buttocks dragging a bit, they look empty-handed, empty-bagged, but for a skinny red fox slung on a lance. The dogs too are lean, low-hung, though one fat pup still frisks. The villagers below, tiny blots of stopped action, fish through the ice of ponds or skate on it. Gray ice, the same gray as the sky: the blank nullity back of everything.

The elder Pieter Brueghel's "Hunters

in the Snow," reproduced as the cover of David Kranes' collection of short stories by the same splendid title. It's a richly pleasing, quietly disturbing painting. The stories, at their best, please and disturb too—with their hunters "in the late blizzard of time" that blurs tracks, blurs home, blurs selves.

I like some less than others. "The Wishbone" (the sort of well-made story that gets an A in a writing workshop), about two sixteen-year-old lovers who decide to be "older," moves me less than "Diving Lesson," which gropes (sometimes awkwardly) after the enigma of father and son. Surprisingly (since I'm not a fantasy fan), I liked some of the non-realistic stories best. Maybe "Peterson's Stones" gets *too* wild with its old Indian whose granddaughter's skin bears the stigmata of industrial America—a cufflink, an amphetamine capsule, teeth of a zipper, a small cathode tube—just as the sedimentary stones bear fossil imprints of subway tokens, Shell credit cards, watchband ribbing; maybe the whole thing's too neatly allegorical, as fantasies sometimes are. So try "The Frame Lover," or try the last one, my own favorite, "The Phantom Mercury of Nevada": "This is not science fiction. This is real! I swear . . . *Real*—and such a mystery!" "Why do people disappear?" No answer to that: but *how* in this story, how Ross and LaVelle vanish from the narrator, is fantastically on target.

In the other mode, I'm left rather flat by what seems mere topicality (the feminine generation gap) in "Marianna" and turned off by the sexual and moral violence (not porn, though) of "Cordials." But then there's "Hunt" with its shrewd recording of an artist's marriage cracking up in a New England winter: "And Hunt wept. *Goddamn Brueghel*, he thought: *goddamn his truth.*"

Kranes does what good storytellers have always done: brings news. How it's going out there. In "Little Sister" he can tell you how it goes for a runaway girl losing herself in New York City—high, hungry, and wan. Or in "Dealer" he can tell you how it goes for a drifter who senses his life "soon would be different" as a casino dealer in Jackpot, Nevada.

Maybe you'd just as soon not know, and maybe just as soon not be teased about what's real and what's fantasy, though lots of storytellers since Cervantes have teased just so. One nice thing about short stories—they require less investment of time than an episode of "Mork and Mindy." And are lots more likely to pay off better. Even the paperback price, though, may look

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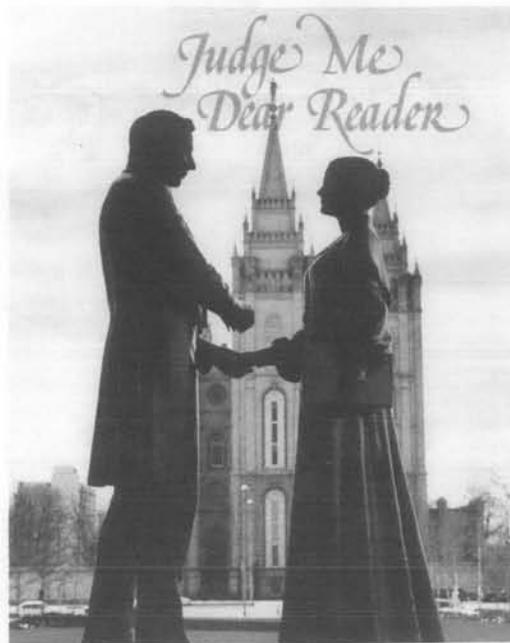
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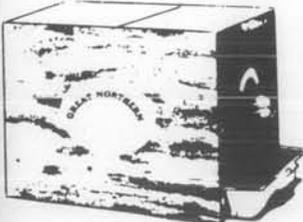
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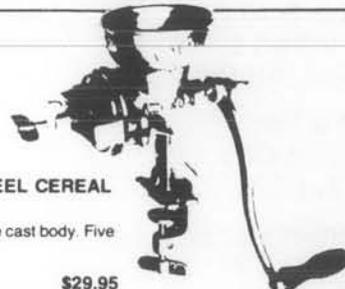
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Short stories may be fairly obsolete as a popular and commercial genre: fewer paying magazines print them (except maybe pop sentimentality, true confessions, science fiction, porn of varying hardness), the hacks have gone to TV, and Brooks and Warren long ago captured the artists for academic examination—a mixed blessing. But small quarterlies, university presses (like the U. of Utah issuing this book),

shoestring presses, and even an occasional commercial house still support the habit of serious writers and of common readers, those alert, choosy, literate but not always "literary" folk with whom Dr. Johnson and Virginia Woolf delighted to concur. A small bunch, but we like an occasional good story, and we're willing to hunt.

*Bruce W. Jorgensen*

BRUCE W. JORGENSEN earned his Ph.D. from Cornell and is now an assistant professor of English at Brigham Young University. He has published fiction, poetry, and essays.

# Update

## Church and State

Several Utah state legislative leaders admitted recently that they participated in using the state's legislative press to print newsletters and other materials for the LDS Church.

House Speaker James V. Hansen, R-Farmington, who is also President of the Farmington Stake, admitted he signed a check to the printing office for \$132 worth of printing for the stake Primary Association. "I guess I'm just going to have to face it," said the Speaker when asked about the transaction. One of the bishops in Speaker Hansen's stake, J. Leon Sorenson, Farmington 2nd Ward, also admitted church printing projects were run off on the state press.

Rep. Hansen said the printing office had been told to take care of legislative printing first, then other state agency printing, then "to keep them busy," private printing. "But I realize now it is wrong to compete with private printers so an order has gone out banning any kind of private printing," the Republican leader said. All but one of the private printing jobs was for Mormon activities. (*S.L. Tribune*, 13 January 1980)

## Church-College Ties

Utah colleges and universities are too closely tied to the Mormon Church, says a Utah State University forestry professor. Dr. Ronald Lanner told the USU Institutional Council the ties are a violation of the Constitution which guarantees separation of church and state.

Lanner claims the USU bookstore has

allocated over 100 feet to religious materials and only 46 feet to reference materials, 15 to psychology, and five to philosophy.

In addition, he alleged that high-level school administrative decisions are made by Mormon officials. In the past 12 years, three USU presidents and nine vice-presidents have been Mormon.

He asserted that rules were broken to accommodate members of the LDS Church. Leaves are supposedly granted to faculty for the betterment of USU and the advancement of the faculty member. But leaves of three years duration are granted for LDS missions. (*AP article, Deseret News*, 11 November 1979.)

## George Romney

Thirty-two Michigan state lawmakers have demanded the resignation of former Governor George Romney from the Wayne State University Board of Governors for his claim that many Equal Rights Amendment backers are "moral perverts."

Rep. Mary Brown, D-Kalamazoo, told a news conference Romney's statements are an insult to the legislature, Governor William G. Milliken, and to the women of Michigan. The legislature several years ago voted in favor of the ERA. Milliken has been a strong backer of the amendment.

Romney, now a regional representative of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, in an interview in the *Detroit News* said the amendment is "basically the product of

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many individuals who had been making a concerted attack on the family and on morality as taught by the prophets through the ages."

In Utah, Governor Scott M. Matheson characterized Romney's comments as inept and inaccurate. The governor, a long-time supporter of the ERA, referred to the 1896 Utah Constitution which, although worded differently, contains the same "essence and commitment" as today's ERA.

In a January 14, 1980, letter to the *Deseret News* T. Helen Backe recalled attending a banquet several years ago in Salt Lake City where Romney's wife Lenore spoke in support of the ERA before a large congregation of mainly Mormon businesswomen. "Is she a pervert?" asked Ms. Backe.

### Truth Telling

In a lecture at the Salt Lake Public Library on 30 October 1979, David Briscoe, an award-winning news editor for the Associated Press, addressed the topic, "Can the True Church Afford to Tell the Truth?"

Asked Briscoe, a life-long member of the Church, "Can the Mormon Church, which claims to be the only church of God, maintain a climate in which its members continue to learn new truths,

in which reporters and even critics openly deal with questions about the Church and in which the Church itself responds truthfully, honestly, and openly to each new issue?"

"I firmly believe," said Briscoe, "that every action of the Church or its leaders is subject to scrutiny. In fact, as a Mormon and a journalist, I believe it essential that every important act or pronouncement be examined objectively, that no churchly declaration escape either the conscience of the individual challenged to accept it nor the legitimate questions of the journalist obligated to report it. . . . As a journalist, I must approach the Church in the same way I would any other large institution—private or government—that affects the lives of hundreds of thousands, even millions of people."

Briscoe suggested a maxim which he hoped Latter-day Saints might accept: "Questions cannot destroy truth. Questions build truth, whether that truth is revealed or experienced. It was, after all, questions in the mind of Joseph Smith that led to the restoration of the gospel. And, it is questions in the minds of non-Mormon contacts that lead them to conversion. . . . Too many Church leaders feel that questions—whether from

concerned members, apostates or probing newsmen—are threats."

"For whatever reason, the Church is not always open, honest, or truthful. Whether we are talking about the prophet, . . . other General Authorities, the Church public relations arm or the Mormon missionaries who knock at your door, we find all too often a lack of candor which ought not to characterize such a lofty institution."

Briscoe identified several areas in which he felt the Church had been "less than open and even deceptive to a degree": image building through public relations, use of the Church by various political groups, behind-the-scenes manipulation in the anti-pornography and liquor-by-the-drink issues, unwillingness to discuss Black priesthood policy and Church finances, the existence and extent of psychological, social, and moral problems of its members, appearance of unanimity among the General Authorities, purposive distortion of other groups, disclosure of projected changes and their reasons, and Church history.

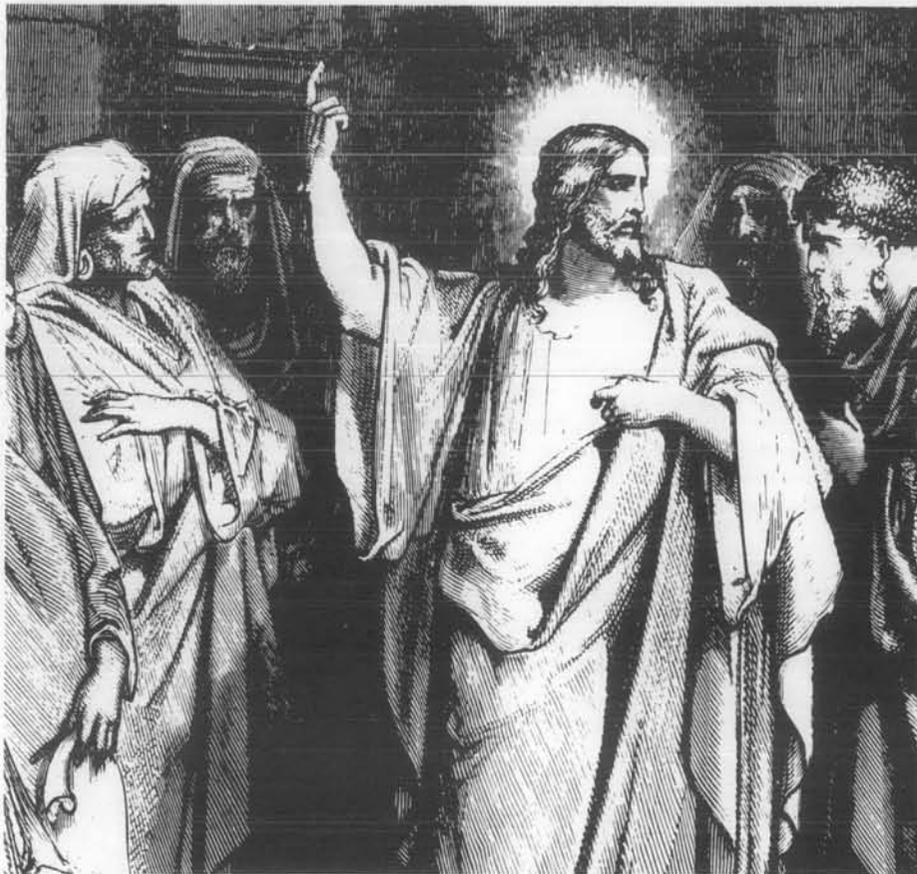
Briscoe commented that there are some good signs indicating frankness on the part of General Authorities. For example, in a speech which received almost no publicity, Bruce R. McConkie told a BYU audience, speaking on the black revelation: "Forget everything that I have said, or what President Brigham Young or George Q. Cannon or whomever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that has now come into the world."

Said Briscoe, "When a General Authority admits error, that is a major step forward in the quest for honesty and openness in the Church. Now, if only Elder McConkie had made that speech in General Conference."

He concluded with the observation, "The word of God, whether it comes from scripture or the mouth of the Mormon prophet, or any other Church source, cannot thrive amid deletion, distortion, or deception. As the Church grows, the role of the objective journalist becomes ever more important, the need for honesty and openness ever more critical."

### Two Missionaries Murdered

A 24-year-old unemployed laborer has been arrested and charged with the murders of two elderly female Mormon missionaries whose bodies were found in a shopping center parking lot in North



Charleston, South Carolina, on December 15, 1979. The victims were Elizabeth W. King, 66, of Kaysville, Utah, and Jane Ruth Cannell Teuscher, 65, of Fish Haven, Idaho.

James Arthur Brown, who was free on a \$5,000 bond in connection with an attack on a Berkeley County woman in October, was arrested at his parents' home. The arrest occurred after police pursued several leads, including entries in a diary kept by the missionaries.

#### IRS and BYU

Brigham Young University has been ordered to show cause why it should not obey an Internal Revenue Service summons requiring names of donors of certain gifts received in 1976, 1977, and 1978. Chief Judge Aldon J. Anderson, U.S. District Court for Utah, issued the order requiring the school to show cause before U.S. Magistrate Daniel Alsup. The action follows a summons BYU spurned as illegal.

Request for the summons was based on more than 150 IRS audits showing a value claimed for the gifts at over \$18 million. The IRS contends the correct value to be \$2 million.

BYU President Dallin Oaks has called untrue implications by the IRS that donors took exaggerated deductions and has resisted IRS orders to turn over the names of the donors.

#### Temple Garments

In a letter to Church leaders dated December 15, 1979, the First Presidency has announced the introduction in February of two-piece temple garments. The new style garments will be offered in addition to and will be priced about the same as the regular one-piece variety. No explanation for or description of the new garments was given. Interestingly, the garments worn by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo were two-piece, equivalent to a shirt and pants.

#### Church and State

A Church welfare farm in Bonneville County, Idaho, has lost its property tax exemption. County commissioners concurred unanimously with an earlier ruling by assessor John Wasden and revoked the exempt status of the 480-acre farm near Osgood, northwest of Idaho Falls. The farm will pay and estimated tax of \$2300.

County attorney Robert Fanning said that under Idaho law, church property is taxable when leased. A 1974 lease agreement between the farm's owners, Idaho Falls West and North Stakes, and the farm's operator, North Stake President Lynn Mickelsen, gives

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two-thirds of the farm's crops to Mickelsen.

David M. McConkie, a church attorney, said the Church was aware of the state lease prohibitions but considered Mickelsen to be an employee of the stakes. McConkie argued the county should not render a strict interpretation of the agreement because proceeds from the farm help support the Church's welfare system which benefits the state.

#### **Judge Callister**

Federal District Judge Marion J. Callister, who is hearing a major challenge to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, has been released from his position as regional representative to the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The action taken on October 31, 1979, was not made known to the judge until late November and was not announced publically until the end of December. Judge Callister was not informed of why he had been released but felt it was because of his heavy judicial work load and the need to spend more time with his family.

Since the excommunication of Sonia Johnson there has been renewed pressure for his removal from the case due to the Church's official opposition to the ERA. Judge Callister, however, has

stated that he has no obligation to the Church to interpret the law in any manner other than that required under the Constitution.

#### **Freeman Institute**

Mark A. Benson, a regional representative of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has been appointed Vice-president and Director of Development for the Freeman Institute. The appointment was announced by Cleon W. Skousen, founder and president of the Institute and professor of religion at Brigham Young University. The Institute sponsors seminars teaching a conservative interpretation of constitutional principles.

The new vice-president is the son of Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of Twelve Apostles.

#### **Wellsville Tabernacle**

Priesthood members of the Wellsville Stake have voted to recommend building a new stake center behind the historic tabernacle which dominates this northern Utah community. A decision on the fate of the 76-year-old meetinghouse has been postponed according to Stake President Donald J. Jeppesen.

The agenda of the priesthood meeting

included review of a report received from the Church physical facilities department. The alternatives were to demolish the tabernacle, construct an addition and remodel the old building, or construct a new facility. The recommendation will be sent to the Church building department in Salt Lake City for approval before a final decision is made.

Debby Goates, chairman of the Concerned Citizens for the Preservation of the Wellsville Tabernacle, said she dislikes the prospect of two churches on the town square. Mrs. Goates, who has presented the tabernacle for nomination to the National Historic Register, is hoping to create a Wellsville National Historic District in which the gothic style tabernacle would be the focal point.

The monumental tabernacle was built in 1902-08 and was dedicated June 28, 1908 by President Joseph F. Smith. Made entirely of native materials, the edifice was designed by architect C. T. Barrett. Major modifications of the tabernacle have included lowering the original 135 foot tall tower, replacing the ornamental tracery in the gothic windows, and painting the brick and stone building white. The imposing scale of the tabernacle remains as does the unusual two-level, central-plan chapel.

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting  
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- SUNDAY MORNING MEETING IN THE SACRED GROVE. A Crawford Gates choral work (to be performed by Baritone Roy Samuelson, chorus, brass quintet, and percussion) has been specially commissioned for this inter- and intra-faith worship time.

Canandaigua has plenty of motel accommodations. The Sheraton Inn and lodgings nearby, however, **are filling up fast.** For more information and reservations, write to Larry Porter, MHA Secretary-Treasurer, P.O. Box 7010, University Station, Provo, Utah 84602, or telephone (801) 374-3691.

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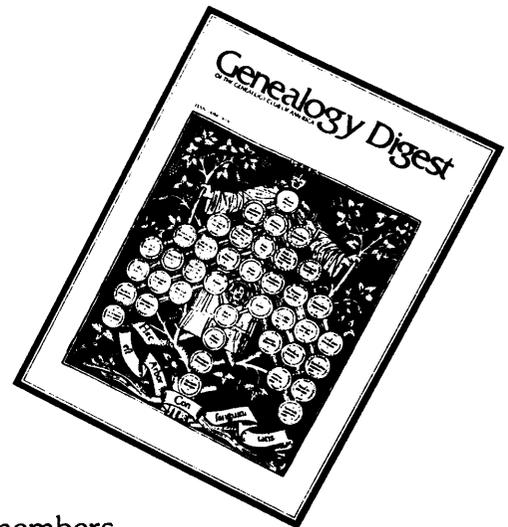
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