EDUCATION IN ZION

We move forward
faithfully into the future
only by understanding our past.
Our founding stories
reveal to us the higher purposes
for which our forebears strove,
and help us know the path
that we should follow.
Come unto me … and learn of me.
—Matthew 11:28–29

_ I am the light, and the life, _
_and the truth of the world._
—Ether 4:12

_ I am the vine, ye are the branches: _
_He that abideth in me, and I in him, _
_the same bringeth forth much fruit._
—John 15:5

_ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd _
giveth his life for the sheep._
—John 10:11

_Feed my lambs. … Feed my sheep._
—John 21:15–17

As Latter-day Saints, we believe Christ to be the Source of all light and truth, speaking through His prophets and enlightening and inspiring people everywhere. Therefore, we seek truth wherever it might be found and strive to shape our lives by it.

In the Zion tradition, we share the truth freely so that every person might learn and grow and in turn strengthen others.

From our faith in Christ and our love for one another, our commitment to education flows.

**Feed My Lambs, Feed My Sheep,**
by a BYU student, after a sculpture in the Vatican Library

Hand-tufted wool rug,
designed by a BYU student

Circular skylight,
Joseph F. Smith Building gallery

- **“Feed My Lambs … Feed My Sheep,”** by a BYU student, after a sculpture in the Vatican Library
- **Hand-tufted wool rug,** designed by a BYU student
- **Circular skylight,** Joseph F. Smith Building gallery
THE GLORIOUS DREAM OF ZION
A World Made More Heavenly by Educating the Soul

For the early Latter-day Saints, education included the development of all their abilities and talents. They believed it to be one of the primary endeavors of life and eternity.

It was also a key to their becoming a Zion people—a people whose faith in God would inspire them to help each other learn and grow, so that all could progress together.

Though the Saints as a people have often fallen short of the Zion ideal, what stands out historically is the tenacity with which they strove to make their life together a heaven on earth.

To this end, they made education a constant priority. In the early Midwestern years, in spite of poverty, persecutions, and violent dislocations, they founded schools, collected books, and purchased presses.

In the Mountain West, they developed Church organizations to teach the gospel, formulated teacher education programs, and established schools and weekday religion classes to supplement their children’s academic studies.

By their diligence they gradually put in place a system of lifelong education accessible to every person, young or old.

- Nauvoo street scene, reenactment
- Behunin family portrait, Ferron, Utah, circa 1888
- Primary children, Price, Utah, circa 1895
- Schoolhouse, Kirtland, Ohio, reconstructed
Teachers in training for Mutual Improvement Association service, 1892
Students of Brigham Young Academy, circa 1903
Class of 1896, Brigham Young Academy
JOSEPH SMITH, GOD’S STUDENT

Through the Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–1844), God restored His gospel after it had been long absent from the earth. Joseph was prepared for this work by heavenly messengers who taught him and by the Spirit of revelation that attended him as he translated scripture and carried out the work God gave him to do. Literally, he was God’s student.

Joseph’s divinely guided education began when he was fourteen. A farmer’s son in upstate New York, he had been earnestly pondering the darkness and confusion in the world¹ and his own acceptability before God.² After reading in the book of James that wisdom would be provided to those who ask in faith, he went to God in prayer. The Father and Son appeared to him and promised that in time the fullness of the gospel would be made known to him. As Joseph later said, he left that holy scene filled with love and rejoicing, and with direct, personal knowledge of the reality of God, the Eternal Father, and His Son Jesus Christ. Thus began his preparation for the prophetic work that God had appointed him to do.

_He was taught for years by visions and revelations, and by holy angels sent from God out of heaven to teach and instruct him and prepare him to lay the foundation of this Church._³

—Wilford Woodruff, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1873
Angellic Teachers

Joseph had little formal schooling. His foundational education came from his home and from a series of heavenly teachers. The Angel Moroni prepared him to receive and translate the plates containing the Book of Mormon and taught him about his future mission as a prophet. Other angelic visitors tutored him in specific aspects of the gospel and conferred upon him the priesthood authority to administer the ordinances of salvation. These teachers included Moses, Elias, Elijah, John the Baptist, and the Apostles Peter, James, and John.

Joseph’s Education

Besides being tutored by heavenly beings, Joseph learned from his study of the scriptures he translated, from his soul-stretching experiences while carrying out the tasks God gave him, and from the revelations and visions that, he said, “roll like an overflowing surge before my mind.” The education he thus obtained enlarged all of his gifts and talents—including his intellect, faith, character, discernment, wisdom, and compassion—and developed him, by degrees, into the man and the prophet he became. His was an education of the whole soul.

It has often been said that God chose him at a youthful age precisely because he had not already conformed himself to the worldly culture around him. Instead of embracing his society’s confused religious tradition, he examined it, found it wanting, and turned to God for wisdom.

Study

In 1829, by divine command, Joseph translated the Book of Mormon, a volume of ancient scripture, “by the gift and power of God.” From 1830 through 1833, his work included a careful, inspired revision of the King James translation of the Old and New Testaments that clarified and restored doctrines central to the gospel. Later, he produced the text of the Book of Abraham from ancient Egyptian papyrus scrolls. These “translations,” made from languages Joseph did not know, were given him by inspiration; sometimes, as in the Bible revision, they included restorations of long-lost texts.

In part, the Lord assigned Joseph these labors in order to teach him. When commanding him to translate the New Testament, the Lord said, “I give unto you that ye may now translate it, that ye may be prepared for the things to come” (D&C 45:61).

Acquiring Scriptural Fluency

Joseph’s mind and feelings were shaped more by his spiritual experiences than his temporal ones. In the intense study and pondering that the translation work required, he mastered the language and content of the scriptures. The authors of these holy books and the people and situations they portrayed sometimes appeared to him in open vision; they became as real to him as the nineteenth-century surroundings and people he encountered every day.
Moreover, the scriptural language with which he worked became his own. Into sentence after sentence of what he spoke or wrote, he wove scriptural quotations, phrases, idioms, and allusions as spontaneously and comfortably as people speak their native language. He had been educated and socialized by holy beings from a very real spiritual world few others are privileged to see.

It is one evidence that men are unacquainted with the principles of godliness to behold the contraction of affectionate feelings and lack of charity in the world. The power and glory of godliness is spread out on a broad principle to throw out the mantle of charity. God does not look on sin with allowance, but when men have sinned, there must be allowance made for them.

All the religious world is boasting of righteousness: it is the doctrine of the devil to retard the human mind, and hinder our progress, by filling us with self-righteousness. The nearer we get to our heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls; we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs. My talk is intended for all this society: if you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another.

2 Tim. 3:2–4
2 Tim. 3:5
Alma 45:16 D&C 1:31
2 Ne. 9:7–10 Jacob 7:12 Mosiah 28:3 Alma 36:18
Isa. 38:17 Micah 7:19
Matt. 5:7 Rom. 2:1–3 Gal. 6:1–2 Eph. 4:32 Alma 41:14
The influence of scripture on Joseph’s speech is evident in these minutes of the Relief Society’s organizational meeting, held March 17, 1842, in Nauvoo.

Experience

God also taught Joseph through experiences that enlarged his understanding of what he read. These experiences included his vision of the Father and the Son, his interviews with the Angel Moroni, his protection of the gold plates on which the Book of Mormon was originally written, the tests of obedience that God designed for him, and his struggles to live the principles he was learning.

Learning the Doctrine Firsthand

After Joseph had produced 116 manuscript pages of translation from the plates, he pressed the Lord, who had already denied his request twice, to allow Martin Harris, a benefactor and assistant, to show the pages to his wife and several family members. The pages were lost. The realization that he may have forfeited God’s trust caused Joseph almost unbearable grief and impelled him to pray with all the fervor of his soul.

Though Joseph had undoubtedly read about repentance and forgiveness in the Bible and the lost pages he had translated, his own sore repentance following this debacle taught him more deeply and indelibly about these subjects than any amount of instruction and reading.

Revelation

From start to finish, Joseph’s ministry was filled with revelation. Not infrequently, and often in response to prayerful searching, the Spirit of God would impart doctrine or instruction to his mind. He wrote it down or spoke it aloud as the mouthpiece of the Lord. “He had vision after vision,” George Q. Cannon said, “in order that his mind might be fully saturated with a knowledge of the things of God, and that he might comprehend the great and holy calling that God has bestowed upon him.”

Obtaining Knowledge from God

Some of Joseph’s revelations are documented in detail, perhaps none more clearly than one he received while revising the King James translation of the New Testament. When he and his scribe, Sidney Rigdon, came to John 5:29, they received by the Spirit the corrected wording of this verse. Then followed a transcendent vision, given to both men, of life after death. Joseph’s account of this experience, recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 76, became one of the great anchor-points of Latter-day Saint doctrine.

The 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants records the vision Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon had received three years before.

Joseph the Educator

*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*

Joseph Smith’s intense desire to help the Saints become a Zion people sprang from his love for them. According to their own accounts, they learned as much from his acts of kindness and hospitality as from anything he said.

He saw to it that schools were established for people both young and old.

He explained deep truths so simply that everyone could understand, and with a spiritual power that many said was unforgettable.

He regularly gave others abundant leadership and teaching opportunities so that they could learn to govern themselves.

He proclaimed the gospel with testimony, clarity, and boldness, and in an unpretentious manner that quickly became a pattern for the Church.

2. Joseph Smith, History, 1832, Joseph Smith Letterbook 1, box 2, folder 1, pg. 2, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


4. See D&C 110:11–16. [link]

5. See D&C 13 [link].

6. See D&C 27:12. [link]


8. Book of Mormon, title page [link]


10. For examples of Joseph’s frequent personal visitations from heavenly messengers, see D&C 2, 13, 27, 76, 110, and JS–H 1. [link]

11. For examples of inspired utterances received through Joseph, see D&C 29, 87, 88, 89, and 109. [link]

12. Joseph was acutely interested that the Saints likewise learn to live in a continual state of revelation. He taught, “I can taste the principles of eternal life, and so can you. They are given to me by the revelations of Jesus Christ; and I know that when I tell you these words of eternal life as they are given to me, you taste them, and I know that you believe them. You say honey is sweet, and so do I. I can also taste the spirit of eternal life. I know that it is good; and when I tell you of these things which were given me by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, you are bound to receive them as sweet, and rejoice more and more.” Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 6:312.

As they gathered to Kirtland, in northeastern Ohio, and to western Missouri in the early 1830s, the Saints read in the newly published Book of Mormon of a holy people—a people so filled with the love of God and so devoted to each other’s welfare that they eliminated poverty, contention, and class division from their midst and dwelt in safety and peace.

In the inspired revision of the biblical book of Genesis that Joseph had completed not long before, the Saints learned of the city of Enoch, in which an even more ancient people had attained that same kind of peace and prosperity. Because of their purity and their unity of heart and mind, the Lord called these people Zion.

During these years, revelations came through Joseph that guided the Saints in becoming a Zion people themselves. In nothing did they show their enthusiasm for the cause of Zion more than in education, for it was by education—religious, intellectual, cultural, and practical—that they could all come to enjoy an equal privilege and progress together.

Education for the Children

*Bring up your children in light and truth.*

—Doctrine and Covenants 93:40
The Lord repeatedly instructed the Saints to educate their children. Most of the Saints in Kirtland made use of the community-sponsored common schools, like the “little red schoolhouse” attended by Helen Mar Kimball. “For years after we left Kirtland,” she wrote, “I used to look back and pine for the old scenes and school companions; those happy days were lived over again and again in bright dreams.” By contrast, the Saints on the rugged Missouri frontier were frequently subjected to harassment, brutality, and forced relocations which made educating their children very difficult. Nevertheless, they established schools wherever they settled.

Teaching the Younger Saints
In an 1831 revelation, the Lord charged parents in Zion to “teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:28). As children and youth in rural Kirtland worked alongside their parents outside and indoors, they learned the skills, values, and religion of their people.

The adult Saints also taught their children directly. W. W. Phelps, away in Missouri, wrote to his wife, Sally, in Kirtland, of his anxiety to be with his family and to teach their children. Later, in a letter from Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith urged his wife, Emma: “Do teach [the children] all you can ... to form their young and tender minds that they begin in right paths, and not [e]jt contaminated when young, by seeing ungodly examples.”

The Saints were expected to report on the religious instruction of their children to regularly assigned priesthood representatives called teachers. For example, when seventeen-year-old teacher William F. Cahoon visited the Joseph Smith family, he asked, “Do you teach your children to obey their parents? Do you try to teach them to pray?”

Books for the Children
In a revelation to Joseph Smith, received in June of 1831, the Lord instructed W. W. Phelps, a printer, to help Oliver Cowdery, a former schoolteacher, “do the work of printing, and of selecting and writing books for schools in this church, that little children also may receive instruction before me as is pleasing unto me” (D&C 55:4). Phelps was ever after a champion of education for children. He later wrote, “We are preparing to go out from among the people, where we can serve God in righteousness; and the first thing is, to teach our children; for they are as the Israel of old. It is our children who will take the kingdom and bear it off to all the world.”

Books
Oliver Cowdery, circa 1845
William W. Phelps in later years

Schools in Ohio and Missouri
To the Saints settling in Kirtland and Missouri in the 1830s, an early priority was education. For the most part, the Kirtland children attended existing common schools. In frontier Missouri, “about the first thing the Saints did, after providing shelter for their families,” said Emily Partridge, “was to start a school for the children.” The first building constructed by the Saints in Kaw Township in Jackson County was a school.

Kirtland’s young scholars learned from experienced teachers, but in Missouri, the teachers were often children themselves. Mary Elizabeth Rollins, a sixteen-year-old with little formal education, taught in Missouri for two years.
When persecution in Missouri intensified, Saints who had been driven from their Jackson County homes took refuge in nearby Clay County, where some of them taught school.9a The Saints also opened and taught the first schools in Caldwell County, to the north.9b

9a The “little red schoolhouse” in Kirtland was an educational haven for many young Saints. The photograph shows a reconstruction of the original building.

9b This exhortation to establish schools and to teach the children appeared in the first issue of the Church’s newspaper *The Evening and the Morning Star*, published in Missouri in June 1832.

### A Pattern for Church Education

**The School of the Prophets, January–April 1833**

*Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you.*

—Doctrine and Covenants 88:78

In late December 1832, Joseph received a revelation instructing him to establish a school for particularly well-seasoned Church leaders and missionaries.10 Known as the School of the Prophets, its revealed pattern of teaching and learning developed faith and character, as well as knowledge, in every participant. It was organized, the Lord said, “that they may be perfected in their ministry” (D&C 90:8), especially in regard to preaching the gospel to the world.

The subjects of study included doctrine, the affairs of nations, and “all things that are expedient” not only for these leaders, but also “for all the officers of the church, or in other words, those who are called to the ministry in the church, beginning at the high priests, even down to the deacons” (D&C 88:127).

Though it lasted but four months, the School of the Prophets became the model for all later priesthood schools and set an example for classroom teaching that survives in the Church to this day.

*Great joy and satisfaction continually beamed in the countenances of the School of the Prophets, and the Saints, on account of the things revealed, and our progress in the knowledge of God.*11

—Joseph Smith, 1833

### Learning Together in the School of the Prophets
Every time we were called together to attend to any business, we came together in the morning about sunrise, fasting, and partook of the Sacrament each time; and before going to school we washed ourselves and put on clean linen.  

—Zebedee Coltrin, School of the Prophets attendee, 1883

The Lord’s Curriculum

For a people devoted to building Zion, all learning is relevant and all subjects sacred. One of the first topics studied was grammar. The curriculum was to span “the doctrine of the kingdom” and whatever the priesthood leaders needed to learn pertaining to their ministries—“things both in heaven and in the earth . . . ; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms.” As an instructional guideline, the Lord counseled: “As all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:77, 79, 118).

A Sanctified School

“Over the Prophet Joseph’s kitchen,” Brigham Young wrote, “was situated the room in which the Prophet received revelations and in which he instructed his brethren. The brethren came to that place for hundreds of miles to attend school in a little room probably no larger than eleven by fourteen.” The fourteen to twenty-one students, occasionally joined by faithful women, were to come prayerfully and prepared, in the spirit of love, to listen one to another in turn. This they were to do “that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege” (D&C 88:122)—the aim of all learning in Zion. Order and decorum prevailed; when contention arose, the Lord found it “very grievous” (D&C 95:10).

Worthy of Revelation

The Lord provided particular directions for how the school was to be conducted—with reverence, love, and mutual respect. Students were to prepare themselves by repenting of all covetousness, pride, light-mindedness, idleness, oversleeping, lustful desires, fault-finding, contention, and every other sin. They were promised that by teaching one another diligently, they would receive the Lord’s grace and “be instructed more perfectly in . . . all things . . . that are expedient for you to understand” (D&C 88:78).

Meeting room for the School of the Prophets. This photograph shows a reconstruction.

Night stand with items used or worn by School of the Prophets participants, who were to come washed, cleanly clothed, and prayerful. Shown here are a basin and ewer, lye soap, towel, comb, linen shirt, trousers, vest, jacket, and boots.

Schools for Youth and Adults

Ye shall instruct and edify each other.  

—Doctrine and Covenants 43:8
In the summer of 1833, Parley P. Pratt was called to organize a School of the Elders in Jackson County, Missouri. It was based on the pattern of the School of the Prophets in Kirtland. Later, in the winters between 1834 and 1836, the School of the Prophets reassembled in Kirtland under the name of School for the Elders, with an expanded membership. Wrote Heber C. Kimball, “The Elders and Church had been previously commanded to seek learning, study the best books, and get a knowledge of countries, kingdoms, languages, etc., which inspired us with an untiring thirst after knowledge.”

The School of the Elders in Missouri
The class that Parley P. Pratt presided over and taught in Jackson County, Missouri, consisted of about sixty elders. “The place of meeting was in the open air, under some tall trees, in a retired place,” wrote Pratt. “Here great blessings were poured out, and many great and marvelous things were manifested and taught. The Lord gave me great wisdom, and enabled me to teach and edify the Elders, and comfort and encourage them in their preparations for the great work which lay before us.”

To attend this school I had to travel on foot, and sometimes with bare feet at that, about six miles. —Parley P. Pratt, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1857

Priesthood Schools in Kirtland
1834–1836

The School for the Elders in Kirtland
I ... made some remarks upon ... the great necessity of our rightly improving our time and reining up our minds to the sense of the great object that lies before us, viz[.]—the glorious endowment that God has in store for the faithful. —Joseph Smith, 1835

A successor to the School of the Prophets was organized in Kirtland in the winter of 1834. Known as the School for the Elders, it met during the two following winters, first in the printing office and later in the attic rooms of the temple. Preparing brethren for the ministry was a perpetual goal of all the priesthood schools, but the Kirtland School for the Elders also prepared its students to “be endowed with power from on high” in the temple (D&C 38:32). This promised endowment, though not the temple ordinance known today, would strengthen the Saints in their ministries and enable them to endure trials to come.

The Hebrew School
It seems as if the Lord opens our minds in a marvelous manner, to understand His word in the original language; and my prayer is that God will speedily endow us with a knowledge of all languages and tongues, that His servants may go forth for the last time the better prepared to bind up the law, and seal up the testimony. —Joseph Smith, 1836
“My soul delights in reading the word of the Lord in the original,” Joseph Smith noted in his journal, “and I am determined to pursue the study of the languages, until I shall become master of them.”

Like Joseph, many Saints in Kirtland desired to read the Old Testament in Hebrew. In January 1836, the School for the Elders hired a Hebrew instructor, Joshua Seixas, who once remarked that some of the elders “were the most forward of any class he ever instructed for the same length of time.”

The Hebrew grammar text used in Kirtland’s Hebrew School was written by the teacher, Joshua Seixas, in 1833.

Kirtland School
1834–1837

The Kirtland School, which operated in the temple during the same period as the School for the Elders and the Hebrew School, offered an academic curriculum for more than a hundred men, women, and teenagers. Latter-day Saint blacksmiths, artisans, farmers, laborers, and housewives gathered during the winter months to study languages, penmanship, arithmetic, English grammar, and geography. An evening singing school was organized in 1836. The Kirtland School provided an education for those who sought to obey the Lord’s command to “study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues and people” (D&C 90:15).

Wilford Woodruff’s journal, December 1836, includes entries in which he speaks of studying in the Kirtland School.

The blueprint of the Kirtland Temple’s upper story shows that four of the five main rooms were intended as school classrooms. The fifth room was designated for use by the Church leadership.


5. Joseph Smith to Emma Smith, from Liberty Jail, Clay County, Missouri, April 4, 1839, WA MSS 430, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut link. The Beinecke catalog names Lucy Smith as the recipient instead of Emma.

6. William Farrington Cahoon, “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” Juvenile Instructor 28, no. 16 (August 15, 1892): 492–93 link. Although many have assumed that this visit dates from the Nauvoo era, William’s age indicates that it must have occurred while the Prophet and his family were living in Kirtland. Most likely, it took place between October 25, 1831, when William was ordained a priest, and November 7, when he turned eighteen. He would have made such a visit as part of his outlined duties as a priest (see D&C 20:47 link). See William F. Cahoon, Autobiography, 1878, MS 8433, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah link, excerpts quoted in Stella Cahoon Shurtleff and Brent Farrington Cahoon, eds., Reynolds Cahoon and His Stalwart Sons: Utah Pioneers (Salt Lake City: Paragon Press, 1960), 79–80 link.


8. Emily Dow Partridge Young, “Reminiscences of Emily Dow Partridge Young,” typescript, April 7, 1884, 10, BX 8670, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah link.


9. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, “Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner,” typescript, 12, Vault MSS 363, Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah link.


10. The Lord referred to these as the “first laborers” of the Restoration period; see D&C 88:74–80 link.


12. Zebede Coltrin, in Minutes, Salt Lake School of the Prophets, MS, October 3, 1883, 56, [call no?], LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah, [CHD: Please check this reference, as we do not have access to the original document] cited in Merle H. Graffam, ed., Salt Lake School of the Prophets Minute Book, 1883 (Palm Desert, California: ULC Press, 1981), 38 link.


15. For example, Sarah Granger Kimball, in “Fifteenth Ward, Riverside Stake, Relief Society Minutes, 1874–94,” MS, book B, April 11, 1894, LR 2848 14, reel 9, Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah [link](#).

15a. See D&C 88:121–24 [link](#).


17. Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), 100; title on cover reads *Life and Travels of Parley P. Pratt* [link](#).

18. Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), 100; title on cover reads *Life and Travels of Parley P. Pratt* [link](#).


26. Seixas’s first edition of “A Manual Hebrew Grammar for the Use of Beginners” was published in 1833 [link](#). His second edition [link](#) revised and enlarged, was published a year later. Either edition, or both, might have been used in Kirtland’s Hebrew school. (see Goldman, Shalom. Joshua/James seixas (1802-1874): Jewish apostasy and christian hebraism in early nineteenth-century america. *Jewish History* 7, no. 1 (Spring, 1993). : 65-88 [link](#).)


The Temple, a Holy School

_The temple is a great school. It is a house of learning. In the temples the atmosphere is maintained so that it is ideal for instruction on matters that are deeply spiritual._ ..._[The temple] presents the broad, sweeping panorama of God’s purposes relating to this earth._

_Once we have been through the temple (and we can return and refresh our memories) the events of life fit into the scheme of things. We can see in perspective where we are, and we can quickly see when we are off course._

—Boyd K. Packer, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1980

Not two years after settling in Kirtland, the Saints were commanded to build a temple, a “house of God” (D&C 88:119) in which they would “be instructed more perfectly … in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God” (D&C 88:78).

In 1836, after four years of labor and miracles and in spite of extreme poverty and menacing mobs, they completed and dedicated the temple. Within its walls, the Saints received certain saving ordinances, long absent from the earth, and attended worship services, priesthood meetings, and instructional classes.

This was the first of scores of latter-day temples that have been constructed around the world. In them, worthy members receive divinely revealed instruction and ordinances of salvation. From these they can obtain an understanding of God’s plan for His children’s happiness, and strength to live according to that plan.

---

1. Logan Utah Temple, dedicated 1884  
2. Hong Kong China Temple, dedicated 1996  
3. Cardston Alberta Temple, dedicated 1923  
4. Accra Ghana Temple, dedicated 2004  
5. Salt Lake Temple, dedicated 1893  
6. Cochabamba Bolivia Temple, dedicated 2000  
FOOTNOTES

Intelligence is the great object of our holy religion. ... To obtain all the knowledge which the circumstances of man will admit of, is one of the principal objects the Saints have in gathering together.¹
—Sidney Rigdon, First Presidency, 1838

During the first five years of the 1840s, the city of Nauvoo—the new gathering place after Kirtland and Missouri—bustled with educational and cultural opportunities.² In this respect, it resembled other towns in nineteenth-century America, where the quest for self-improvement amounted to a national obsession.²ᵃ As converts flooded in from across the world, priesthood, female, and youth organizations within the Church provided additional support and spiritual training for all. This map, based on that of Gustavus Hills, shows something of the lively Nauvoo palette of activities that the Saints numbered among the riches of Zion.

Buildings on the Map

Common schools, lyceums, lessons, university courses, vocational instruction, Church auxiliary meetings, and cultural and recreational events were held at one time or another in every building and residence represented on this map. Young people learned trades in apprenticeships at various businesses.
University of the City of Nauvoo

The University of the City of Nauvoo administered the city’s entire educational system. Nauvoo was vibrant with enthusiasm for learning. Many adults sought a broad education in subjects such as English literature, languages, mathematics, rhetoric, and music. An 1842 New York Herald article, quoting a United States artillery officer, stated, “Ecclesiastical history presents no parallel to this people, inasmuch as they are establishing their religion on a learned footing. All the sciences are taught, and to be taught[,] in their colleges, with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, Spanish, [et]c., [et]c. The mathematical sciences, pure and mixed, are now in successful operation.” Though the informant may have been exaggerating, his description accurately reflects the aims of the Saints.

The Nauvoo Lyceums

Eliciting truth, acquiring knowledge

—Joseph Smith, 1842

The lyceums organized in Nauvoo were part of a national movement in adult education. Participants, both male and female, paid fees and met in commercial buildings or private homes, wherever there was space. Topics and formats varied from astronomy lectures to debates on capital punishment. To prepare elders for missionary service, lyceums also discussed doctrines of the restored gospel.

It was very curious how the same subject would be handled by different men, each member presenting it in a manner peculiar to himself, all coming to the same conclusion, by the evidence adduced from the scriptures; there was no jarring, no contention nor discord, and all were entertained, instructed, and edified.

—Wandle Mace, recalling a doctrinal lyceum held the winter of 1842–43

The Masonic Hall

The Masonic Hall, an imposing three-story building with a faux marble front, hosted a multitude of Nauvoo’s cultural delights. The first floor held a theater, where Brigham Young first played his famous role of an Incan high priest in the play Pizarro. The Masonic Hall also served as a meeting place for the leadership, clubs, quorums, trade and political associations, and the Nauvoo Militia. Often, dances and art exhibitions were held in the large upper rooms.

The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo

Searching after objects of charity

—Joseph Smith, March 17, 1842

The Female Relief Society, organized under the Prophet Joseph’s direction in Nauvoo in 1842, was to be “a select [society], separate from all the evils of the world—choice, virtuous, and holy,” and an instrument of both instruction and compassionate service. At its formal inauguration, Joseph Smith promised that “this Society shall rejoice, and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time.”

The Relief Society supplied the Saints with moral instruction, contributed to the Nauvoo Temple, and relieved the poor with cash donations, commodities, housing, and service. Some of the first meetings were held in Sarah Granger Kimball’s home. As more women joined, meetings convened in the upper room of the Red Brick Store.
Counselor [Elizabeth Ann] Whitney ... rejoiced that we could enjoy the privilege of associating together to converse on things of the Kingdom to comfort and edify each other.¹¹
—Relief Society minutes, July 15, 1842

The Young Gentlemen’s and Young Ladies’ Relief Society of Nauvoo

Because of concern for Nauvoo’s youth, “the loose style of their morals—the frivolous manner in which they spent their time—and their too frequent attendance at balls, parties, [et]c.,” Church leaders organized the Young Gentlemen’s and Young Ladies’ Relief Society.¹² At these “Young People’s Meetings,”¹³ the largest rooms in Nauvoo, such as the upper floor of the Red Brick Store, filled to overflowing. The young men and “the tender, lovely and beautiful females of our city”¹⁴ met to hear counsel from Church leaders and to pursue Joseph Smith’s charge that they “organize themselves into a society for the relief of the poor.”¹⁵ As its first charitable project, the Society built a home for needy member Sutcliffe Maudsley and his family.¹⁶

Organizing the Priesthood

In Nauvoo, the role of the priesthood quorums was clarified and record keeping became more formalized so that everyone could “render an account of his stewardship” (D&C 72:3).¹⁷ Andrew Moore, president of the Fifth Quorum of the Seventy, noted, “I continued to meet with my [q]uorum once every week to tra[ns]act business and to see that the [q] uorum was in union ... and to give instructions.”¹⁸ Priesthood holders made visits to the members, assuring that each family was spiritually and temporally watched over.¹⁹ The ranks of the Seventies quorums swelled and provided the bulk of the Church’s missionary force.²⁰

You are all apostles to the nations to carry the gospel; and when we send you to build up the kingdom, we will give you the keys, and power and authority.²¹
—Brigham Young, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, instructing Seventies quorums, 1844

Sunday Worship

In Nauvoo, where Church membership grew beyond ten thousand, the Saints often held their Sunday meetings in outdoor groves near the temple site. Sunday meetings usually consisted of talks on theological subjects, testimonies, hymns, and prayers. Church newspaper editor John Taylor lamented seeing “children break the Sabbath by running about and playing on Sunday.”²² Not long before his death, the Prophet Joseph asked children to bring their scriptures and hymnbooks for a children’s Sunday School.²³

This morning I preached at the grove to about 8,000 people.²⁴
—Joseph Smith, July 3, 1842

Abigail Abbott

Left a widow with eight children under the age of sixteen, Abigail Abbott taught school to support her family. She supplemented her meager income with a vegetable garden and a few animals. Because she was busy teaching during the day, she usually did her gardening by moonlight. “I trusted in God,” she said, “and improved every opportunity to help myself.”²⁵
Joseph Lee Robinson

*Through the blessings of God and with my little means and hard labor and management I soon built a good brick house. ... The upper room was ... suitable for a school room. I fitted it up for a school ... with mine own hands and means and I hired a ... teacher, a sister in the church. I agreed to pay her. Then I informed my neighbors that a school would start at my house on Monday morning next. I wanted them to send all their children to school and [I wanted] those that could afford it ... to help me pay the teacher[,] while th[ose] that were not able to pay I wanted ... to feel just as [welcome,] as the school was to be free to their children, every one of them. Monday morning came and the children also. They filled the room.*

—Joseph Lee Robinson, recalling the school he sponsored in Nauvoo in about 1842

Common Schools in Nauvoo

“Notwithstanding the difficulties the Saints had been called to pass through,” said Nauvoo resident Wandle Mace, “the education of their children ... was not forgotten.” At least thirty common schools operated in Nauvoo while the Saints were living there, and over eighty men and women taught in them. Students met in public buildings, some commercial structures, and many private homes ranging from substantial brick houses to log cabins. Under the direction of the regents of the University of the City of Nauvoo, teachers were carefully monitored and certified.

The Music and Concert Hall

The Music Hall was built by the city’s musicians’ organization as a rehearsal and performance venue for the hundred-voice Nauvoo choir and the Nauvoo Brass Band. Financed by concert proceeds, the brick building seated eight hundred but sometimes hosted overflowing audiences of nearly a thousand. Its eleven-foot arched ceilings were designed to enhance the building’s acoustics. During the day, it served as a schoolhouse.

A Nauvoo Museum

As one of the largest cities in frontier Illinois, Nauvoo had no problem attracting traveling exhibits that could increase the inhabitants’ appreciation of the world around them. Their visits inspired plans to found a city museum. Although it never opened, donations were made toward a permanent collection.

_Elder Addison Pratt presented the tooth of a whale, coral, bones of an Albatross’s wing and skin of a foot, jaw-bone of a porpoise, and tooth of a South Sea seal as the beginning for a museum in Nauvoo._

—Joseph Smith, May 24, 1843

The Red Brick Store

The educational, cultural, civic, and spiritual center of Nauvoo was an unpretentious building on its southern edge. Joseph Smith’s Red Brick Store had been constructed to double as Church headquarters, and from it emanated guidance for the Saints’ lives and the course of Zion. In its upper room, Church organizations such as the women’s and young people’s Relief Societies were fostered, civic institutions such as the Nauvoo Library and Literary Society came into being, the University of the City of Nauvoo was established, at least five common schools began, and numerous classes, lyceums, concerts, and other social gatherings convened. Before the completion of the temple, it was the site where the earliest endowments and sealings took place.
Native Americans at the Smith Homestead

At 3 [p.m.], the Indians commenced a war dance in front of my old house. Our people commenced with music and firing cannon. After the dance, which lasted about two hours, the firing of cannon closed the exercise. ... Before they commenced dancing, the Saints took up a collection to get the Indians food.32

—Joseph Smith, May 23, 1844

The Mansion House

At home at nine o’clock [a.m.], reading a magazine to my children.33

—Joseph Smith, December 22, 1843

Besides being Joseph Smith’s home, the Mansion House was a place for visitors and immigrants to dine and lodge. The presence of the Prophet also attracted community members, who came for business and social purposes.

At midnight, about fifty musicians and singers sang Phelps’[s] New Year’s Hymn under my window. ...

[The next day,] a large party took a [N]ew [Y]ear’s supper at my house, and had music and dancing till morning. I was in my private room with my family, Elder John Taylor and other friends.34

—Joseph Smith, December 31, 1843, and January 1, 1844

Dancing in the Temple

The labors of the day having been brought to a close at so early an hour, [viz.:] eight-thirty, it was thought proper to have a little season of recreation[;] accordingly Brother Hanson ... played several lively airs [on his violin,] accompanied by Elisha Averett on his flute. ... This was too much for the gravity of Brother Joseph Young[,] who indulged in dancing a hornpipe, and was soon joined by several others, and before the dance was over[,] several French fours were indulged in. The first was opened by myself with Sister Whitney and Elder Heber C. Kimball and partner. The spirit of dancing increased until the whole floor was covered with dancers, and ... we danced before the Lord.35

—Brigham Young, 1845

A Memorable Party at Sidney Rigdon’s Home

Songs were sung, concluding with the two little girls singing several verses of [“T]he Battle of Michigan,[”] deaconed out to them line by line by their elder sister, Miss Nancy. Then followed an original dance without music. ... Merry games were then introduced, The Miller, Grab, etc. ... At nine o’clock we went out to a second edition of supper, and then the games were renewed with vigor. We left about ten. The Miss Rigdons, who called on us the next day, said the party did not break up till twelve.36

—Charlotte Haven, a Nauvoo resident, 1843
Riverboating on the *Maid of Iowa*

*In company with my wife, mother, and my adult family, also Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and about one hundred gentlemen and ladies, went aboard the *Maid of Iowa*, started at ten minutes before eight a.m., from the Nauvoo dock, under a salute of cannon, having on board a fine band of music.*

*We had an excellent address from our esteemed friend, Parley P. Pratt. The band performed its part well. Much good humor and hilarity prevailed. The captain and officers on board did all they could to make us comfortable, and we had a very agreeable and pleasant trip.*

—Joseph Smith, May 9, 1843

The Seventies Library

*Among the improvements going forward in this city, none merit higher praise, than the Seventies’ Library. The concern has been commenced on a footing an[d] scale, broad enough to embrace the arts and sciences, [everywhere]: so that the Seventies[, ] while trave[ll]ing over the face of the globe, as the Lord’s [“]Regular Soldiers[,] can gather all the curious things, both natural and artificial, with all the knowledge, inventions, and wonderful specimens of genius that have been gracing the world for almost six thousand years. ... It looks like old times, when they had “Kirjath Sapher,” the city of books.*

—*Times and Seasons*, January 1, 1845
Masonic Hall
Printing Office
John Taylor Home
Nauvoo Temple
Sidney Rigdon Home
Music and Concert Hall
*Maid of Iowa*
Lucy Mack Smith Home
Webb Brothers’ Blacksmith and Wagonwright Shop
Sylvester Stoddard Home and Tinsmith Shop
George Riser Boot and Shoe Shop
Jonathan Browning Home and Gunsmith Shop
Mansion House
Sutcliffe Maudsley Home
Windsor P. Lyon Home and Drug Store
Nauvoo House

Orson Pratt, a brilliant self-educated mathematician and astronomer, taught classes in these subjects for the University of the City of Nauvoo—often in his home, since the institution had no campus of its own. Orson Spencer, another faculty member, also taught at home.

The *daybook of William Patterson McIntire*, a tailor in Nauvoo, describes lyceums where the Prophet Joseph and his brother Don Carlos spoke on topics as diverse as truth, vice, biblical history, and public speaking. **39**

The *Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute*, founded in 1844 by Joseph Smith and other brethren, was a subscription library. Interested citizens could “purchase” membership by donating books. Ever an example, Joseph himself donated about fifty volumes, as this ledger indicates. **40**

Standard textbooks and school supplies were readily available in Nauvoo stores. Because paper was relatively expensive, younger students wrote upon slates, which cost only a few cents each. **41**

Chisels, hammers, and other stonemasons' tools were used to quarry stone for the Nauvoo Temple. “Never since the foundation of this Church was laid,” said the Prophet Joseph of the quarry laborers, “have we seen manifested ... a more ardent desire to do the will of God.” **42**

The *Nauvoo printing office* published two newspapers: the official Church periodical *Times and Seasons* and the politically oriented *Wasp*, later renamed *Nauvoo Neighbor*. Setting type for these publications kept several men busy. **43**

Architectural renderings of the Nauvoo Temple by William Weeks were drawn according to descriptions given him by the Prophet Joseph, who had seen the building in vision. **44**

The *Nauvoo Brass Band* performed at Nauvoo Legion drills and parades, dancing parties, concerts, and patriotic celebrations. It was led by William Pitt, an English convert who played several instruments. **45**

Dancing slippers like these may have been worn by young ladies at dances aboard the *Maid of Iowa* on the Mississippi River.

The *Egyptian papyri* from which Joseph Smith had translated the Book of Abraham came to Nauvoo with the Smith family. The widowed Lucy Mack Smith, their custodian, showed them to
interested visitors for a fee of twenty-five cents per person.\textsuperscript{46} These facsimiles are larger than the papyrus fragments they represent.\textsuperscript{46a}

\[\text{Exit Panel}\]

\textit{This is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens; little do they know the trials that await them.}\textsuperscript{47}

—Joseph Smith, June 24, 1844

\textsuperscript{47} Nauvoo street scene, reenactment, circa 1843

2. These included daytime classes, evening lyceums, debates, theatrical and musical performances, and private study facilitated by several libraries. See the numerous items from the *Wasp, Times and Seasons, Nauvoo Neighbor*, and journals and personal histories cited in Glen M. Leonard, *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, A People of Plenty* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press / Deseret Book, 2002), 192–99.


11. Recorded in Minutes of Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, Third Meeting of Nauvoo 2nd Ward, MS, July 15, 1843, 97, MS 3424, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


17. See also John A. Hicks, “To the Elders Scattered Abroad,” *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 9 (March 1, 1841): 340.
18. Andrew Moore, Autobiography, ca. 1845, typescript, 2, MSS 1094, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

19. Teacher’s Quorum Minutes, December 1834–December 1845, MS, February 4, 1844, February 12, 19, 1845, MS 3428, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah


23. Mary Ann Stearns Winters, Reminiscences, undated, 13, MS 119, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


28. Need reference. Not in Leonard, Givens, HC, or sourced essays. [CHD: The researcher who worked on this is long gone, and we don’t know what source s/he used for this fact. If you have any ideas on where this might be found, please feel free to offer them.]


30. “Grand Zoological Exhibition,” Nauvoo Neighbor, July 9, 1845, [467].


34. Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 6:153, 155. See also Joseph Smith, Diary, December 31, 1843, MSS 155, box 1 folder 7, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


39. William Patterson McIntire, Daybook, Nauvoo, 1840, typescript, 104–5, Vault MSS 806, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

40. Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 6:180; Minutes of the Nauvoo Library and Literary Institute, January–June 1844, MS 3431, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. See also George W.


42. “The Temple,” *Times and Seasons*, May 2, 1842, 775–76. The editorial carries no byline, but Joseph Smith was the editor at this time.


46. Josiah Quincy, a prominent nineteenth-century Harvard scholar, recorded that after he and his party had visited the mummies and papyri, the Prophet Joseph told them, “‘Gentlemen, ... those who see these curiosities generally pay my mother a quarter of a dollar.’” Josiah Quincy, *Figures of the Past: From the Leaves of Old Journals* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1883), 387.

46a. They have been enlarged by roughly 50 percent.

EMIGRATING WESTWARD TO BRING FORTH ZION

How great soever be your poverty, however stupendous your difficulties, it matters little. ... Zion must be established, her lands inhabited, her cities built, her temples reared, her sons become mighty and powerful.¹

—Lorenzo Snow, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1851

Nauvoo’s geographical compactness had enabled the Saints to gather often to hear their leaders, join in worship, set up schools and educational societies, and participate in social and cultural events.

But in the Mountain West, Brigham Young dispersed many of them to far-flung, isolated locations stretching from Canada to Mexico. They endured droughts, harsh winters, ravaging insects, and near-starvation. With few printed materials and opportunities to congregate, many regressed religiously, culturally, and morally.

In the long run, regaining the vitality of Nauvoo would require the development of local wards and stakes into centers of gospel learning, service, and social activity. But the immediate need was to rekindle the members’ faith, which the leaders of the Church set about to do with preaching and persuasion.

¹ Sam Gardner farming in Salem, Utah
How Will the Saints Stay Strong in the Faith?

*When the Lord has gathered together a people..., he has always begun to educate them ... in the little things pertaining to life.*

—Brigham Young, President of the Church, 1862

Growing Concerns

Vital to the cause of education in Zion was the Saints’ commitment to improving themselves, their families, and their communities. But during the stressful early years in the American West, Church leaders began to notice negligence, laziness, and moral carelessness among the membership. In their anxiety to establish homes, farms, and communities, some parents neglected their children’s spiritual and temporal education. This left many of the first generation that had been born in the covenant to grow up without appreciation for their parents’ religion and cultural traditions. Before the culture of Zion could be rebuilt, the vision of Zion was in danger of fading away.

Warning Signs

Although outsiders commented on Salt Lake City’s orderliness and industry, Church leaders, looking below the surface, saw youth absorbed with worldliness, quarrels among members, and even lack of physical cleanliness. Most devastating was a widespread spirit of materialism. Preoccupation with gaining wealth consumed many members, both rich and poor. Brigham Young later recalled his grief for the loss of the Zion vision: “I wanted to take up my valise and go throughout the Territory[,] crying, ‘Is there a man in this Territory for God?’” By 1852, he and other Church leaders were preaching repentance in “sermons like peals of thunder.”

President Brigham Young issued a strong call to repentance in the October general conference of 1855.

“Great Reformation”

Disappointed that preaching had failed to bring the Saints to repentance, in 1855 Church leaders called “home missionaries” to recommit priesthood leaders to the gospel and to teach members what was expected of a worthy Saint. The “catechism” they administered, foreshadowing today’s temple recommend interview, helped members assess their worthiness. At a stake conference in Kaysville, Utah, on September 13, 1856, Jedediah M. Grant, counselor to Brigham Young, infused the reformation with a revivalist flavor: he challenged the Saints to manifest their renewed spiritual commitment through rebaptism.
The Measure of a Saint

Not surprisingly, a few of the more zealous missionaries offended some of the people.11 This was one of several reasons that some members left the Church and returned east with lurid tales about the Saints, their leaders, and life in Utah.12 Wilford Woodruff cautioned reformers working with the Saints to use “the [S]pirit of God” and to “get a [f]atherly feeling.”13 By far the majority of the Saints embraced the challenge, accepted rebaptism, shed their material aspirations, and renewed their faith.14 In John Woodbury’s words, many rejoiced in “the hand of mercy ... extended” in this time of “renewal.”15

11 The intent of the “catechism,” said home missionary Richard Ballantyne, “was to save and not to injure the people.”16
12 Jedediah M. Grant, a champion of the Reformation, often spent hours in the water rebaptizing members. The exposure may have led to his premature death on December 1, 1856.17

A Repentant People

In spite of negative responses from Gentiles and dissident Church members, the “Great Reformation” of 1855–56 saved the Church at a critical time. Church attendance rose. Tithing payments increased.18 Members volunteered to aid immigrants stranded by the early snows of 1856.19 They stood together through the Johnston’s army crisis of 1857–58. David Fulmer recounted: “I never saw such a time as the present since I came into the Church. There [are] no lawsuits nor high council [court]s, ... no whiskey drinking, ... no cursing and swearing in the canyons.”20 Once again, the Saints as a people were focused on Zion.

A Step toward Perpetual Improvement

Far from being an isolated incident, the reformation was the first in a series of priesthood-sponsored improvement programs that extended through the next half-century. These programs focused on everything from personal morals and parental responsibility to the reorganization of Church government. As the Saints gradually tamed their mountain wilderness, they learned how to counteract the worldly influences flowing into it.

14 Pages from Esaias Edwards’s journal reveal the humble spirit with which he, like most of the Saints, received the call to reform.

Settlements from Canada to Mexico

We know that the great work of God must all the while be on the increase and grow greater. The people must enlarge in numbers and extend their borders; they cannot always live in one city, nor in one county. ... The Lord designs to lead us to a wider field of action, where there will be more room for the Saints to grow
and increase. ... We want a country where we have room to expand.\textsuperscript{21}

—Parley P. Pratt, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1845

In what seemed to many a risky move, Brigham Young spread members of the fledgling Church over more than a thousand treacherous miles. Between the Saints’ arrival in the West in 1847 and Brigham Young’s death thirty years later, nearly four hundred Latter-day Saint colonies sprang up in the western United States, Canada, and Mexico.\textsuperscript{32} Colonies continued to be established until 1930.
1. Lorenzo Snow, “Address to the Saints in Great Britain,” *Millennial Star* 13, no. 23 (December 1, 1851): 364.[link] See also Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1884), 196: “However great may be your poverty, how stupendous your difficulties, it matters little. … Zion must be established, her lands inhabited, her cities built, her Temples reared, and her sons become mighty.”[link]


3. Levi Jackman, Journal, November 29, 1848, 63–64, Vault MSS 79, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link] This failure in the home became publicly evident as young men got involved with liquor, tobacco, swearing, rowdiness, vandalism, and gang activities, while young women indulged expensive and impractical tastes in fashion, read sensational novels, gossiped, and encouraged Gentile suitors. See the numerous items from bishop’s minutes, deacons’ minutes, Aaronic Priesthood minutes, and Young Ladies’ Retrenchment Society minutes, cited in William G. Hartley, “Common People: Church Activity during the Brigham Young Era,” in *Nearly Everything Imaginable: The Everyday Life of Utah’s Mormon Pioneers*, ed. Ronald W. Walker and Doris R. Dant, Studies in Latter-day Saint History (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), 289–90, nn. 76 and 77.[link]


8. History of Brigham Young, MS, October 15, 1855, 25:94–95, CR 100 102, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

9. Andrew S. Gibbons, scribe, “Questions [sic] to be asked the Latter-day Saints,” holograph, MSS SC 292, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; “Questions to Be Asked the Latter day Saints,” broadside, Americana Quarto 082 .A1 no. 361, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link] See also David Fulmer, in Salt Lake Fifth Ward Fellowship Meeting Minutes, MS, June 28, 1857, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


11. See, for example, Hannah Tapfield King, Journal and Autobiography, typescript, 142–43, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


14. See, for example, John S. Woodbury, Journal, March 26, 1857, 4, MSS 168, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah: “I spoke of the satisfaction I had felt in having the privilege of being at home in this time of reformation”; Esaias Edwards, *Autobiography and Diary*, February 8, 1857, 54, MSS 184, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah: “My prayer to God daily is that I may be enabled to stand in the day of tribulation and adversity for it is my cheifest [sic] desire on this Earth.”[link] See also David Fulmer, in Salt Lake Fifth Ward Fellowship Meeting Minutes, MS, June 28, 1857, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.
Utah. Invoking the law of sacrifice and as a way of expressing their determination to shun the pursuit of wealth, some people consecrated all or part of their property to the Church at this time, although this seems to have been a symbolic gesture more than an attempt to establish united orders. See Feramorz Y. Fox, “The Consecration Movement of the Middle ’Fifties,” *Improvement Era* 47, no. 2 (February 1944): 80–81, 120–21, 124; no. 3 (March 1944): 146–47, 185, 187–88.

15. John S. Woodbury, Journal, March 26, 1857, 3, MSS 168, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah [link]


17. See, for example, William Willes and G. Clements, “Great Reformation,” *Deseret News*, September 24, 1856, 4 [link].

18. Brigham Young to George Q. Cannon, January 30, 1857, Brigham Young Letterbooks, CR 1234 1, box 3, vol. 3, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; Brigham Young to Smith, Richards, and Partridge, January 31, 1857, Brigham Young Letterbooks, CR 1234 1, box 3, vol. 3, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; Journal History of the Church, typescript, February 22, 1857, 43:1, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; Elias Smith, Diary, December 28, 1856, 160–61, MS 1319, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

19. Franklin D. Richards to Orson Pratt, Ezra T. Benson, and James A. Little, November 1, 1856, published in *Millennial Star* 19, no. 7 (February 1857): 108–9 [link].

20. Salt Lake Fifth Ward Fellowship Meeting Minutes, MS, June 28, 1857, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


ORGANIZING TO HELP
EVERY MEMBER LEARN AND GROW

_Enlarge the place of thy tent … : spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes._

—Isaiah 54:2; compare 3 Nephi 22:2

To provide the scattered Saints in the West with the rich opportunities for worship, gospel learning, service, and social activities that they had known in Nauvoo, the Church needed to implement major organizational developments in the stakes and wards. Church government, both general and local, had to be restructured according to the pattern given in the Doctrine and Covenants. Organizations for women, youth, and children—what we now call priesthood auxiliaries—had to be revived or created.

These organizational advances took place during the Church’s first three decades in the West. They made it possible for members of all ages to be taught the gospel in Church classes, to be supported in rearing their children, and to build up Zion in their local stakes and wards.

Where the education of the Saints is concerned, these developments pertaining to the priesthood quorums and auxiliaries must be numbered among the Church’s most far-reaching organizational achievements.
How Will the Saints Educate Their Children?

_This Church is always only one generation away from extinction. ... All we would have to do ... to destroy this work is stop teaching our children for one generation._

—Jeffrey R. Holland, President of Brigham Young University, 1981

Throughout the Great Basin, parents needed their children’s help to clear land, construct shelters, and raise crops. But the wisest of them also perceived the urgency of educating their children. Brigham Young reminded parents, “It is the duty of the Latter-day Saints, according to the revelations, to give their children the best education that can be procured, both from the books of the world and the revelations of the Lord.” Individuals, wards, and communities immediately organized schools in most locations. Though few of the teachers were formally qualified, they were earnest and determined; they were “Latter-day Saints in principle and at heart,” just as President Young counseled.

---

**A Frontier School Education**

Beginning with Mary Jane Dilworth’s tent school in October 1847, the Saints established common schools. Some were administered privately by the teacher and some by the community or ward through a school board. Most were marvels of ingenuity—with no railroad, almost all teaching supplies had to be homemade. Children, youth, and even adults met in enclosures ranging from campfire circles to adobe-walled buildings. They studied whenever and whatever they could. Teachers accepted nearly anything as payment for tuition; some taught for no salary at all. Schedules and subjects varied greatly at first, but gradually a unified school system emerged in the territory.

**Bearberry Ink**

Classrooms throughout the Saints’ settlements lacked supplies. Teachers created their own, literally from anything they could find. Henrietta Wall, a teacher in Sevier County, had one grammar book for her eight students, no blackboard, and very few other supplies. She desperately wanted to teach the children to write using pen and paper, so she taught them to make their own ink, using the bark of the kinnikinnick, or bearberry, plant (___uviursi).
Chicken-Feather Pens and Charcoal Pencils
“The colony wished me to keep school,” wrote Charilla Abbott, Ogden’s first teacher, “which in our meager circumstances I undertook. Finding a chicken feather, I made a pen. ... We had to collect letters from scraps of papers and from old books. These we pasted on paddles.” Because there were no pencils, the class used charcoal from the fireplace; for lack of paper, “we ... made letters on the inside and outside of our hands. In this way the children learned to read and write.”

Horsehair Thread
Ann Jane Wilden, a student in Cedar City, had the opportunity to learn sewing in her class. Lacking any quilting cloth, she gathered a few rags and scraps from friends. Instead of thread, she used horsehair from her family’s animals. Even with such rudimentary resources, she is reputed to have become an expert quilter.

Floor Map
Elsie Booth, a schoolteacher in Alpine, had neither a globe nor maps. “In geography class,” her daughter wrote, “she used an apple to illustrate the shape and rotation of the earth.

“While the children were at recess[,] the older boys would sprinkle and sweep the floor. ... [W]hen the class reconvened, the members ... would be asked to find an island, a river, lake, peninsula, cape, bay, etc[,] using the wet and dry po[r]tions of the floor to represent the land and water of the earth’s surface.”

Payment for Teaching
On the frontier, cash was limited, especially in the outlying communities. Even after the territorial government passed laws permitting the collection of taxes to maintain school buildings, teachers still received their payment “in kind,” in the form of produce, material goods, and even labor. Such was the case with Martha Spence Heywood’s class in St. George. Some of her students transported fertilizer from their home corrals to spread in her garden; others helped out by pulling weeds or hoeing. Tuition expenses for the very poor were sometimes paid from ward or community funds.

Community-Constructed Schools
Just seven years after the Saints’ arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young told the territorial legislature that “in almost all the Wards and Districts, good School Houses have been erected.” In each community, settlers worked together to construct buildings that in many cases also served as churches, social halls, theaters, and meeting places.

Turning a Tannery into a School
Like many communities, Springville numbered a schoolhouse among its earliest buildings. By 1862, it needed a larger one.
The people got together and hired a teacher who would teach in the only vacant building in the town[,] which happened to be the newly constructed tannery. The building was made of adobe, the roof covered with slats, canes and dirt. At the large windows[,] white boards took the place of glass. A big fireplace in the west end was supplied with wood by some of the larger boys in payment of their tuition. The earth floor was covered with red pine bark easily broken into bits and used by the more mischievous boys to flip at the teacher. Pegs were driven into the wall[,] and on these were laid boards to serve as desks. The seats were long benches made from planks with pegs driven in the ends for legs. Inside the door a large canvas was hung from either side of the wall[,] forming a partition and also keeping out cold.11

—Oral tradition from former students, recorded by Mary J. Chase Finley, Springville town historian, 1949

A Hunger for Books

What teachers taught depended on their background and the available textbooks, which were in great demand. In addition to the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and other religious materials, students studied from whatever books could be found. Owners of standard textbooks could easily sell or lease them for extra income. Any scrap of printed paper was precious to a teacher.

Brigham Young was anxious to supply textbooks for schools and all kinds of reading material for the populace. He worked to establish the printing industry and even purchased a paper mill for the Church. In 1869, the completion of the transcontinental railroad finally made the importation of textbooks economical.

11. Eli B. Kelsey advertised his willingness to take payment in kind for his teaching services in the November 27, 1852, issue of the Deseret News.
12. Certain well-known textbooks were in particular demand, as shown by this advertisement placed by Orson Hyde in the Deseret News, December 1, 1858, issue.
13. Miss Armstrong’s school in Ephraim, Utah, circa 1885
14. Schoolchildren in Price, Utah, circa 1895

“The True Foundation”13

Even more vital than schools for the building up of Zion was the gospel-centered home. While many in nineteenth-century America believed that schools should teach moral principles along with intellectual and cultural instruction, educators generally acknowledged that moral instruction was, first and foremost, the responsibility of parents. LDS Church leaders taught parents to assume full responsibility for their children’s moral education and substantial responsibility for intellectual and cultural development as well, with the Church and schools playing secondary and supportive roles.

Beginning at Home

Time and again, Brigham Young taught that parents bear ultimate responsibility for the spiritual and temporal learning of their children. The father was “to bend his will to the will of his God, and then instruct his [family]... by his example as well as by precept.”15a The mother was “to watch over her children, and give them their early education, for impressions received in infancy are lasting.”14 As the front-line teachers “of principle of every description, pertaining to all that can be learned by the human family,”15 mothers must “let [their] minds be sanctified before the Lord, for this is ... the true foundation of a proper education.”16
Primary
To supplement gospel instruction in the home, Aurelia Spencer Rogers proposed establishing a class in her Farmington, Utah, ward where children “could be taught everything good, and how to behave.” She received President John Taylor’s approval and was told, “Joseph F. Smith thinks we might better afford ... the cultivation of the children in Zion, than ... converting people abroad.” Sister Rogers wrote, “I experienced a feeling of untold happiness which lasted three days and nights. During that time nothing could worry or irritate me. ... This was a testimony ... that what was being done was from God.” On August 25, 1878, a large group of children convened for the first Primary meeting.

---

Teachers and Students of the Frontier Schools

[no text]

How Will the Adults Continue to Improve Themselves?

*Remember, too, the great principle of improvement. Learn! learn! learn! continue to learn, to study by observation and from good books! Listen to the instruction ... of your brethren who hold the holy Priesthood, and they will teach you the ways of happiness and of life eternal.*

—Brigham Young, President of the Church, 1877

As part of the movement in nineteenth-century America to democratize education, the ideas of personal and mutual improvement were widely espoused. Through formal education and informal study, individuals and communities sought to advance themselves both culturally and economically.
Brigham Young put even more emphasis on continuous improvement than Americans generally, and his reasons, unlike those of many others, were doctrinal: “The first great principle that ought to occupy the attention of mankind ... is the principle of improvement[, ... of increase, of exaltation.’”

Two clear applications of this principle run through President Young’s administration. One is his constant encouragement of the Saints to engage in improvement of every kind. The other is his careful cultivation of organizations that would, under the priesthood, mobilize the Saints for building Zion.

**Reorganizing the Men and Women under the Priesthood**

To progress toward Zion, the adults needed continuing education, both temporal and spiritual. This required strengthening the Church organization on the local level. The Relief Society had not carried over from Nauvoo, and the priesthood quorums had become disorganized. Local Church units needed curricula for gospel study and positions in which members could serve. During the Saints’ first decades in the West, Brigham Young corrected these deficiencies. He endorsed the formation of ward Relief Society groups and established stake and ward priesthood quorums and schools. These organizations became the Church’s principal means of instructing the adult Saints.

**“A House of Order”**

Utah’s School of the Prophets

In 1867, President Young organized the School of the Prophets, originally as a subsidiary of the University of Deseret, to educate and improve the men. With bishop’s recommends, Zion’s men met to study theology and the sciences. Branches throughout the Mountain West swelled to include virtually every priesthood holder. But the pursuit of academic subjects soon gave way to discussion of practical economic issues, such as business relations with the growing Gentile population. This drift away from the school’s original purpose created problems that led to its dissolution in 1872.

**Priesthood Reorganization**

In the months preceding his death, President Young, his counselors, and the Apostles traveled throughout the Church reorganizing Church government and redefining the duties of priesthood offices. This was done, George Q. Cannon said, “with plainness and distinction and power ... in such unmistakable language that no one need err.” This remarkable achievement created abundant leadership and service opportunities for men and boys. It provided the framework within which the organizations for women, youth, and children could consistently provide enriching educational, social, and service activities. From this point forward, members in every ward and stake could benefit from a full Church experience.

[1]: Presidency and secretary of the Thirtieth Quorum of the Seventy, 1890

**“A Widening Sphere of Action”**
Relief Society Reorganization

Even before the Saints left Nauvoo, the Relief Society ceased to meet. Yet in the dismal conditions of Winter Quarters and pioneer Salt Lake Valley, sisters continued to meet in “prayer meetings” to strengthen each other spiritually. In 1854, when Brigham Young proposed that sisters form ward-level Relief Society service groups to clothe Native Americans in need, some groups of sisters were already doing so. The women later turned their energies to the immigrant poor and refugees displaced by Johnston’s army. In 1866, at President Young’s direction, Relief Society was reestablished in every ward, though not yet on the general Church level.

Retrenchment and Expansion

Lavish feasts prepared for President Young led him to feel that the sisters in Zion were wasting energy better spent in building the kingdom. He therefore asked Isabella Horne “to begin a reform in eating and housekeeping,” encouraging the sisters to live modestly and avoid “making slaves of themselves.” Named the Senior Retrenchment Society, the reform brought to the service-oriented Relief Society increased concern for provident living, personal and mutual improvement, and spiritual growth. “What do I want to retrench from?” asked Eliza R. Snow. “It is my ignorance and everything that is not of God.”

Improvement and Progression of Many Kinds

In Nauvoo, the Saints had attended varied study and discussion groups. Now far from that vibrant setting, individuals organized educational and cultural activities in many of the settlements. Motivating these efforts was Brigham Young’s idea that “‘Mormonism’ embraces all truth[,]... revealed and ... unrevealed, whether religious, political, scientific, or philosophical.” To meet Zion’s needs in areas where skills were lacking, Brigham Young sent individuals east or even abroad for needed education. These endeavors trained future Church leaders, educators, and artisans.

Intellectual Improvement

Lectures, lyceums, classes, and forums flourished abundantly among Saints who craved intellectual improvement. One such organization was Lorenzo Snow’s Polysophical Society, described by his sister Eliza as a “magnificent moral, intellectual, and spiritual picnic.” Another was Wilford Woodruff’s scholarly Universal Scientific Society. In 1855, the Church formally inaugurated a lecture program known as the Deseret Theological Institute. It was dedicated to promoting doctrinal understanding and invited all those “desirous of receiving and imparting ... light, wisdom, and principles” to join.

Formal Educational Opportunities

To certify teachers and establish an orderly educational system, Brigham Young founded the University of Deseret in 1850. It soon languished, partly for lack of funding, but the success of John Morgan’s Commercial and Normal College stimulated its revival in 1867. University of Deseret President John R. Park adopted Morgan’s innovative methods and, at Brigham Young’s suggestion, visited eastern and foreign universities to gather their ideas. In 1892, the University of Deseret became the University of Utah.
Beginning in 1873, a number of women responded to Brigham’s call to study medicine in the eastern states. Upon returning, some of these established small schools to train others, usually as midwives. 

**Vocational Improvement**

Vocational training was one of the Saints’ highest priorities. Apart from formal schooling, they participated in associations for health care, horticulture, typography, beekeeping, and silk manufacture. In 1856, Truman Angell was sent to Europe to study architecture before designing the Salt Lake Temple.” And since, as Brigham Young observed, “it costs no more to raise a good horse, ox, cow, or sheep than it does a poor one,” the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society was created by legislation in 1856 to improve crop and stock production by developing new strains suited to Utah’s environment.

**Cultural Improvement**

Frontier societies rarely have time for artists. But when gifted musicians, actors, artists, and authors converted to the Church and devoted their talents to the kingdom, the cultural life of the community blossomed. The arts the Saints enjoyed were relatively sophisticated. Brigham Young supported all the arts, but especially theater. “The stage,” he said, “can be made to aid the pulpit” if directors “select ... plays that will improve the public mind and exalt the literary taste.” In 1890, to ensure that the Salt Lake Temple murals would be worthy offerings, the Church sent several promising painters to study in Paris.

---

1. Lorenzo Snow, one of the few early Church leaders with a college education
2. Ticket to a lecture of the Deseret Theological Institute
3. Constitution of the Deseret Theological Institute, published in the Millennial Star, August 18, 1855
4. Monaural stethoscope for detecting fetal heartbeat, carved of poplar in 1870s style
5. The University of Deseret Union Building, 1884
6. Members of the Utah Dramatic Society, circa 1895
7. Study by John Hafen for the Garden Room in the Salt Lake Temple, circa 1892

---

**Brigham Young and Improvement**

*I shall not cease learning while I live, nor when I arrive in the spirit-world[,]... and when I again receive my body, I shall ... still continue my researches.*

—Brigham Young, President of the Church, 1860

Brigham Young was born into a poor family. He lost his mother when he was fourteen. Two years later, his father sent him out to make his own way in the world. He had only eleven days of formal education. He became a carpenter, joiner, painter, and glazier, with no apparent prospects for any broader future.

Meeting Joseph Smith changed Brigham’s aspirations. As he learned from Joseph about eternal progression, it quickly became a major theme and aim of his life. For him, the Church, with its emphasis on all kinds of education, was the Father’s means of enabling His children to help one another achieve perfection. The unschooled backwoodsman became a student of theology, literature, architecture, theater, science, business, gymnastics, agriculture, and everything else that could help him elevate himself or anyone around him.
From an address given February 23, 1862, and published in volume 9 of Journal of Discourses

Eliza R. Snow and Improvement

Instead of depending entirely on our husbands for salvation and position, we have to work them out ourselves. The responsibility and labor that devolve upon women are becoming more important. ... God has put the means into your hands to become queens and priestesses in his kingdom, if you will only live for it.\(^{40}\)

—Eliza R. Snow, Relief Society General President, 1880

Eliza Roxey Snow was a well-educated poetess of growing renown when she joined the Church and consecrated her talents to the kingdom of God. As Nauvoo’s Relief Society secretary, Eliza understood well the organizational pattern Joseph Smith had instituted. She preserved its comforting spirit in the “prayer meetings” she led on the plains and in Salt Lake City. The lyrics she wrote for hymns expressed her deep doctrinal understanding and became a source of gospel instruction in the Church.

In 1866, Brigham commissioned Eliza to see that Relief Society was properly organized in every ward, and she traveled throughout Zion to do so. A counselor in the Senior Retrenchment Society and instigator of the Junior Retrenchment Society, she made sure that branches of these auxiliaries were organized properly. Eliza encouraged Junius Wells in his promotion of a similar organization for young men and assisted Aurelia Rogers in establishing the Primary Association throughout the Church.

How Will the Young People Learn Their Parents’ Religion?

Hear it, you Elders of Israel and you fathers and you mothers! ... We want to ... train our children up in the fear of God, to teach them correct principles ourselves, and place them in possession of such things as will lead them in the paths of life.\(^{41}\)

—John Taylor, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1879

Problems among the youth did not completely disappear in the Great Reformation of the 1850s. Here, as elsewhere, Brigham Young saw personal and mutual improvement programs as the solution. “After suitable rest and relaxation,” he exhorted, “there is not a day, hour, or minute that we should spend in idleness, but ... we should strive to improve our minds and to increase in the faith of the holy Gospel.”\(^{42}\) He and other far-seeing parents and leaders set up instructional and service organizations for young people. Some of these, modified and adopted by the Church, are still in use.
Sunday School
In 1849, Scottish convert Richard Ballantyne founded Utah’s first Sunday School to teach children “the true gospel of salvation given by Jesus Christ.” Wards from Farmington to Manti soon established their own Sunday Schools, but the threat of Johnston’s army disrupted the Sunday School movement. In 1864, George Q. Cannon, observing undesirable behavior among Zion’s youth, reinstituted Sunday School in his ward. Other wards followed. Two years later, Cannon began publishing The Juvenile Instructor to help Sunday School teachers. In 1867, Church leaders supported the creation of a union of all ward Sunday Schools, with Cannon as general superintendent.

Organizing the Young Women
In 1869, Brigham Young told his daughters, “All Israel are looking to my family and watching the[ir] example. ... We are about to organize a Retrenchment Association ... to retrench ... in everything that is bad and worthless, and improve in everything that is good and beautiful.” The Junior Retrenchment Society that Brigham’s daughters established became the model for other such societies all over Zion. By 1877, at his request, the name was changed to Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association. As one ward president wrote, “We had accomplished all that there was to do [in retrenching], and were now ready ... to take the lead in higher morals, and to set an example in our communities.”

Organizing the Young Men
When he first heard about the retrenchment movement, missionary Junius Wells, serving in England, wished that “something similar could be done” for young men. In 1875, Brigham Young commissioned Wells to organize a “Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association” within the Church to “establish ... in the youth [an] individual testimony” and facilitate “an application of the eternal principles of the great science of life.” Wells and his colleagues organized the association in every stake in Zion “to aid the holy priesthood in instructing the youth of Israel in all things commendable and worthy.”

The Church Organizes to Educate the Soul
With the encouragement of Church leaders, Saints with shared interests strove to recapture the cultural life they had once enjoyed. Like many others nationally, they...
founded schools, study groups, mutual improvement programs, and social organizations. Building upon these, the Church instituted priesthood auxiliary organizations to provide educational and cultural opportunities that could benefit every member.

**The Temple and the Priesthood**

At about the same time that he was promoting the organization of auxiliaries in every ward, Brigham Young, said George Q. Cannon, “set in order the Priesthood as it ha[d] never been since the first organization of the Church upon the earth.” This President Young did as soon as possible after the St. George Temple was dedicated in April of 1877. He had learned from the Prophet Joseph that “the Church is not fully organized in its proper order, and cannot be, until the temple is completed, where places will be provided for the administration of the ordinances of the priesthood.”

**Relief Society**

Established in Nauvoo, 1842  
Local Relief Society groups formed, 1854–55  
Reestablished Church-wide, 1866–68  
General presidency set apart, 1880

**Sunday School**

First ward Sunday School organized by Richard Ballantyne, 1849  
Ward Sunday Schools revived, starting with George Q. Cannon’s ward, 1864–78  
Union of all ward Sunday Schools organized with Church endorsement, 1867  
Union superintendency becomes Church’s Sunday School general superintendency, 1887

**Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association**

First Junior Retrenchment Society organized, 1869  
Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association adopted Church-wide, 1876–78  
General presidency set apart, 1880

**Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association**

First Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association organized, 1875  
Central committee organized, 1876  
YMMIA adopted Church-wide, 1876–78  
General presidency set apart, 1880

**Primary**

First Primary held, 1878  
Primary adopted Church-wide, 1878  
General presidency set apart, 1880

---

[^4]: **Eliza R. Snow**, first general president of the Relief Society in Utah  
[^4]: **Aurelia Spencer Rogers**, first general president of Primary  
[^4]: **George Q. Cannon**, first general superintendent of the Deseret Sunday School Union
Richard Ballantyne, founder of the first Sunday School in the Salt Lake Valley
Junius F. Wells, first chairman of the central committee for all YMMIAs
Elmina Shepard Taylor, first general president of YLMIA
FOOTNOTES


2. Brigham Young, April 18, 1874, Journal of Discourses (1854–86; lithographic reprint, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 17:45.[link]


7. May Booth Talmage, in Our Pioneer Heritage, ed. Kate B. Carter (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958), 1:35.[link]


9. “Governor’s Message to the Legislative Assembly,” Deseret News, December 14, 1854, 3.[link]


11. From oral accounts of those who attended the school as recorded in Mary J. Chase Finley, A History of Springville (Springville, Utah: Art City Publishing, [1988]), 52.[link]

12. “Grammar School,” Deseret News, January 11, 1855, 2.[link]


17. Aurelia Spencer Rogers, Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others, and History of Primary Work (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1898), 207.[link]

18. Aurelia Spencer Rogers, Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others, and History of Primary Work (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1898), 210.[link]

19. Aurelia Spencer Rogers, Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others, and History of Primary Work (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1898), 212.[link]
20. Brigham Young, July 24, 1877, *Journal of Discourses* (1854–86; lithographic reprint, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 19:64. President Young was addressing a congregation of children when he spoke these words, but he consistently emphasized this topic to Saints of all ages, including adults.


25. George Q. Cannon, Remarks, in “Funeral of President Brigham Young,” Journal History of the Church, typescript, September 2, 1877, 118:6, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


The reorganization included placing all stakes on an equal level within the Church’s structure, relieving leaders serving in dual capacities, ordaining those who had never been properly set apart, calling missing counselors, doing away with authority overlaps or conflicts, regularly ordaining boys to Aaronic priesthood offices, and forming quorums based on geographical proximity rather than prior membership. William G. Hartley, “Brigham Young and Priesthood Work at the General and Local Levels,” in *Lion of the Lord: Essays on the Life and Service of Brigham Young*, ed. Susan Easton Black and Larry C. Porter (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 364–65. For more detail on the reorganization’s course, its historical context, and its impact on the Church, especially following President Young’s death, see William G. Hartley, “The Priesthood Reorganization of 1877: Brigham Young’s Last Achievement,” *BYU Studies* 20, no. 1 (Fall 1979): 3–36.


40. Minutes of Santa Clara Ward Relief Society, St. George Stake, November 27, 1880, LR 8065 14, Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


43. Quoted in Andrew Jenson, ed., *Latter-Day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: Sons of Utah Pioneers Memorial Foundation, 1971), 1:705. [link]


51. Junius F. Wells, quoted in Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from November 1869 to June 1910* (Salt Lake City: General Board of Y.L.M.I.A., 1911), 82. [link] See also Henrietta Lunt Jones, “History of the First Retrenchment Organization in Cedar City, 1869–1885,” typescript, 1940, 2, BX 8670 .M82 vol.6, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. [link]


THE ACADEMIES ERA

President Brigham Young saw the growth of secularism in public education during the 1860s and 1870s as a threat to the youth and therefore to the future of Zion. Early in that period, he began mentoring individuals and setting aside resources that the Church would need, including properties for schools. In the mid-1870s, he endowed Brigham Young Academy in Provo, which became Brigham Young University; Brigham Young College in Logan, which was at first an academy in all but its name and lasted fifty years; and Young Academy in Salt Lake, which did not open as planned, though the property he deeded for it was used for other Church schools. In the decade after President Young’s death, Karl G. Maeser, the founding principal of BYA, helped to found three more academies.

President Young’s preparatory steps proved providential. Even as he was putting his schools in place, state legislatures nationwide were bringing community schools under public control. In order to continue teaching their religion, the LDS Church and other religious groups were forced to consider founding schools of their own. In 1888, Wilford Woodruff, who had begun leading the Church as president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles the year before, launched a system of stake academies patterned after Brigham Young Academy. The educational program required for a Church-wide school system had been developed and tested by the time the Church needed it.
Through Clouds of Trouble, a Loving Light

The Beginnings of Brigham Young Academy

In 1875, Brigham Young founded an academy in Provo that would eventually become Brigham Young University. Those who developed the school were spiritually sustained, sometimes by visions or dreams in which Brigham himself exhorted, encouraged, or instructed them. These experiences belong to a spiritual dimension that is often omitted when the Academy’s founding story is told.

President Young deeded a building and several acres to the new school but also intended to endow it much more liberally. He died before he could do so. Consequently, Principal Karl G. Maeser, board chairman Abraham O. Smoot, and their associates struggled continually against severe economic obstacles to keep the Academy alive. Yet they established a school that became the model for later Church education programs because it educated students spiritually and morally in the very process of educating them intellectually.

Brigham Young’s Foresight

Beginning in 1862, a series of federal legislative acts called for confiscation of properties owned by churches that practiced polygamy. President Young was concerned. In the early 1870s, he quietly began transferring Church properties to private owners—himself, his family members, and trusted Church leaders, apparently including Abraham O. Smoot. This strategy preserved resources that he and they were later able to give for Church purposes, including Brigham Young Academy.

Some seven years later, Maeser’s drawings provided the guiding concepts on which the plans for the new Brigham Young Academy Building were based.

Karl G. Maeser’s Dream

Shortly after President Young’s death in 1877, Brother Maeser had a remarkable experience:

I had a dream, but, in the language of Byron, it was not all a dream. One night, shortly after the death of President Brigham Young, I found myself entering a spacious hallway with open doors leading into many rooms, and saw President Brigham Young and a stranger, while ascending the stairs, beckoning me to follow them. Thus they led me into the upper story containing similar rooms and a large assembly hall. ... Deeply impressed with this dream, I drew up the plan of the localities shown to me and stowed it away without any apparent purpose for its keeping, nor any definite interpretation of its meaning.

Some seven years later, Maeser’s drawings provided the guiding concepts on which the plans for the new Brigham Young Academy Building were based.

Early students of the Academy, 1877
John Taylor’s Vision

Discouraged by BYA’s financial difficulties, Zina Young Williams, a faculty member and daughter of Brigham Young, asked President John Taylor, sometime in the 1880s, if the Church could not do more to support the school. In response, he shared with her a sacred, apparently recent experience. Her father, he said, came to me in the silence of the night clothed in brightness and[,] with a face beaming with love and confidence[,] told me many things of great importance[:]... among others[,] that the school being taught by Brother Maeser was accepted in the heavens and was a part of the great plan of life and salvation ... and that Christ himself was directing, and had a care over this school.4

Abraham O. Smoot’s Mission

Before he died, Brigham Young charged Abraham O. Smoot to watch over the Academy.5 Following President Young’s death, he continued to instruct Smoot. About 1890, Smoot said that President Young took him to a city where the Savior reigned and told him, “You are not to come here until those buildings for the Brigham Young Academy are completed. The growth of the [C]hurch depends upon the growth of the Brigham Young Academy[,] for it is only through knowledge that people will come to understand the Church.”6c

In 1892, Smoot reported that Brigham Young “appeared to me and ... said[,]’[Y]ou need not worry about the Academy or about how means can be obtained to build the structures which have been commenced, for the way will be opened.’”6b

Brigham Young Academy faculty, 1884

Woodworking class under B. T. Higgs, 1900

[Related Stories]

Brigham Young’s School and Warren Dusenberry’s Role

One of Utah County’s community schools in the 1870s met in the Lewis Building, owned by President Young. It was run by brothers Warren and Wilson Dusenberry, educational pioneers in the county. Financial problems closed this school in late 1875. For several years, President Young had been planning an academy for Provo that would “provide a good education unmixed with the pernicious, atheistic influences” of many of the country’s schools.7 In January 1876, he installed his academy in the newly available Lewis Building, and while he was selecting a long-term principal for the school, Utah Stake’s board of education nominated Warren Dusenberry to serve in the interim.7a

The Founding Principal

In February of 1876, President Young called the educated and experienced Karl G. Maeser to serve as the Academy’s principal.11 Maeser came to Provo with high expectations to start an “experimental” term in April. He found the building in disrepair, and on the first day of the new term, only twenty-nine students enrolled.13 Yet he took hold with determination and set about to craft and implement a pedagogical program that incorporated the most advanced educational thinking of his day. This program, which eventually became the template for all Church academies, qualifies him as the founding principal of Brigham Young Academy, if not its first one.10
An Unsigned Legacy
More than a year after Maeser became principal, President Young arranged to have property, said to be worth $40,000, deeded to the school. But on August 29, 1877, three days after the necessary documents were prepared, he passed away, too ill to sign them. The resources lost might have helped the Academy avoid the many years of unrelieved destitution that it subsequently endured.

Constant Financial Adversity
The educational program of the Academy flourished quickly and attracted much admiring attention. Yet for the sixteen years of Maeser’s tenure, the school teetered on the brink of foreclosure. Its operating costs exceeded whatever money it could raise, and it was almost never free of debt. Maeser, his associates, and Church leaders labored to recruit students, thinking that more tuition revenues would help. But given the poverty of the Saints, enlarging the student body often merely increased the Academy’s expenses and its collection of unpaid student promissory notes.

Faculty and Student Sacrifices
The school was Utah Stake’s responsibility, not the Church’s. The stake members could provide little monetary support. Indeed, most of them, because of the Academy’s tuition costs, sent their children to public schools. Stake President Abraham O. Smoot, who also chaired the board of trustees, repeatedly pressed Church leaders and Provo businessmen for contributions. Faculty and students sent out fundraising circulars, turned every possible school event into a fundraiser, and made personal sacrifices to contribute time and labor. Economically, times were very hard.

Fire!
The Lewis Building was soon too small for the growing school. In 1882, President Smoot funded some badly needed renovations and additions. The school enjoyed the benefits of these improvements for only six months. On January 27, 1884, the building burned down.

Many thought calamity had struck. But Maeser and his associates assured the students that only the building and not the Academy had been destroyed. Smoot arranged for his own business property and other buildings to be used as temporary quarters, and the school lost only one day of study.

High Hopes Deferred
Following the fire, the Academy’s board decided to build a permanent new facility. Church President John Taylor came to Provo and selected a site. A public subscription drive and pledges from several Church leaders promised about $40,000, a substantial sum in those days. President Smoot moved the Academy into the Zion’s Cooperative Mercantile Institution warehouse to await completion of the new facility.

But no sooner was the foundation for the new building in place than a nationwide oversupply of grain devastated the economy and made it impossible for the school to collect most of what had been pledged. The foundation sat untouched for the next seven years.
More Financial Perils
Meeting the school’s regular expenses became more difficult than ever. At times, Smoot arranged for payments on the school’s debt. To help pay the rent on the warehouse, a number of teachers went without half their salaries for a year. It soon became apparent, as he wrote to President Taylor, that “without better prospects,... the institution would have to close.”

Then, in 1888, Utah property values spiked sharply upward. A piece of property in downtown Provo, bequeathed to the school by President Young, was appraised at a six-figure price. If the school could sell this property, its problems might be solved at long last.

Finally, a Proper Home
But the property’s deed required approval of all President Young’s heirs to sell it, and three of them refused. When, in 1890, property values began to fall, a group of Provo businessmen pledged to buy the property once the title was cleared. On this basis, the trustees contracted to have the Academy Building completed, “with not yet a dollar in the treasury.”

Six months later, on January 4, 1892, George Q. Cannon, representing President Wilford Woodruff, dedicated the elegant and commodious building in a memorable celebratory event. The new facilities gave the academic program a decided boost. It appeared that the Academy was finally on its way.

Continuing Burdens
The attempt to obtain a clear title to the Young property dragged on. In the meantime, BYA trustees arranged for substantial loans to pay the contractors. The last heir of Brigham Young finally signed an agreement on May 4, 1893—the openingday of the Panic of 1893, the deepest recession the United States economy had yet experienced. Thus the property sale failed, leaving the school with a debt of $81,000 and creditors’ legal actions threatening to close it. Over time, Church leaders worked out ways to pay the debts; but for many years, meeting the Academy’s operating costs continued to be oppressively difficult.

---

1 A deed of trust, signed in 1875, allocated the funds that enabled Brigham Young Academy to open in 1876. This commemorative reproduction was made for the 1975 University centennial celebration.
2 Karl G. Maeser served as principal of Brigham Young Academy from 1876 to 1892. This photograph was taken circa 1876.
3 Brigham Young, 1876
4 Abundant promissory notes testify to the students’ desire for an education.
5 Fundraising efforts for the Academy included both fee-based activities, such as dances, and straightforward appeals for donations.
6 The Academy’s student body poses behind the Lewis Building, circa 1879.
7 Lewis Building, January 28, 1884
8 ZCMI warehouse in Provo, 1884. It housed the Academy for over seven years.
9 Abraham O. Smoot, circa 1880
The Academy Building, 1897. The floor plan Maeser sketched from his 1877 dream resembled those of the most effective school designs of the time, from German-speaking nations. Maeser had left Europe two decades before any of these schools was built.

Wilford Woodruff and Abraham O. Smoot corresponded regularly about the Academy’s indebtedness.

Other Schools Karl G. Maeser Helped to Found

As a teacher in Salt Lake City before his appointment as principal of Brigham Young Academy, Karl G. Maeser had helped to promote a unified system of schools to serve the children and youth of the Church. After his appointment, he began to envision the creation of other academies on the BYA model. In the mid-1880s, he worked with others to found Beaver and Millard Stake Academies and Salt Lake Academy; in fact, he was the first principal of the Salt Lake school. In the normal (teacher training) classes at BYA, he prepared leaders and teachers for all three of these schools and for Brigham Young College in Logan.

In doing all this, Maeser was undoubtedly authorized by Church Presidents Brigham Young and John Taylor, for it was his fixed policy to wait for his leaders’ direction before taking any major steps.

Brigham Young College, Logan, Utah, was founded in 1877. Although Maeser did not establish BYC, he trained leaders and teachers for the school. This photograph of the student body was taken in 1899.

Beaver Stake Academy, Beaver, Utah, originally founded in 1886, lost its campus with the advent of free public schools but reopened in 1898 at a nearby abandoned fort as the Beaver Branch of Brigham Young University. During the year 1908, when this photograph was taken, the school separated from BYU and became known as Murdock Academy.

Salt Lake Academy, founded in 1886, met in the Social Hall for its inaugural session. By 1901, when it moved into its first permanent building, it had held classes in five additional locations and changed its name three times.

Millard Stake Academy, first founded in Fillmore, Utah, in 1885, opened its doors in 1890 but was forced to close in the same decade due to financial difficulties. In 1910, the academy reopened in a newly constructed building in Hinckley, Utah, where this photograph was taken in 1912.
In the mid-1880s, Salt Lake City businessman William B. Dougall found himself increasingly troubled by the aimlessness and frivolity of the city’s youth and longed to provide them with “proper instruction and educational advantages.”

Impressed by the success of Brigham Young Academy, he approached Karl G. Maeser about establishing a similar school in Salt Lake City. The new Salt Lake Academy opened November 15, 1886, “filled with students, every seat being occupied,” and dozens of applicants turned away for lack of space. Two years later, when the Salt Lake Stake organized a board of education, the school’s name was officially changed to Salt Lake Stake Academy.

For decades thereafter, the Academy underwent changes of name, mission, composition, and even sponsorship. At one point, it seemed destined to become a full-fledged university; at others, it seemed doomed to close. In 1931, with the Great Depression depleting the Church’s resources, the school—then known as LDS College—was slated for closure. Nevertheless, two self-sustaining departments survived. These became LDS Business College and the McCune School of Music. In the 1950s, the McCune School closed and the Church once again assumed sponsorship of LDS Business College.

Samuel M. Barratt Hall, one of several buildings on the permanent campus of LDS College, was completed in 1904.

Salt Lake Stake Academy faculty, 1888

Beginnings

In August 1886, William Dougall and several friends met in James Dwyer’s bookstore, damaged by fire only the day before. With “water ... dripping down upon them from the partly destroyed roof,” they made plans for the new academy. Karl G. Maeser promised to become its principal and provide a teacher if funds and a building were secured. President John Taylor authorized the use of the Church’s Social Hall, and Maeser recommended Willard Done of Brigham Young Academy’s faculty as the first teacher and acting principal in Maeser’s absence.

The Charted Course for Salt Lake Academy

At the school’s opening, Maeser told the students that to succeed they would need “two kinds of preparation: ... familiarity with the lessons ...[and] the possession of the Holy Spirit, obtained by prayer.” The second principal, James E. Talmage, also trained by Maeser, added classics and science courses and helped to “give its students a sense for scholarship that finds its roots in religion.” The school assumed the name LDS College in 1890.

Willard Done was the Academy’s first faculty member and third principal.
“Its Future Will Be More Glorious”

Like other academies and the Church itself in the depressed economy of the 1890s, the College struggled financially. Willard Done, its third principal, even resorted to paying faculty salaries from his own savings. By 1899, funding had evaporated; rumors circulated that “the Latter-day Saints’ College is dead!” Commencement exercises began “gloomy as a funeral”—until Church superintendent of schools Karl G. Maeser spoke: “‘The [school] is not dead! ... Nor is it going to die! On the contrary, its future will be more glorious than its past!’”

Renewal

Spurred by Maeser’s prediction, Joseph E. Taylor, a counselor in the stake presidency, began a subscription drive. Response was rapid and generous. To provide a campus and financing for a new building, the Church donated land originally intended for the Young Academy of Salt Lake City. Two years later, in connection with the Church’s donation, the College was renamed LDS University. Although it retained this name until 1927, the school did not offer college courses beyond the sophomore year.

“Rendering a Much Needed Public Service”

—Church General Board of Education, 1932

Shortly after the addition of Joseph Nelson to the faculty in 1887, the Academy began offering courses in shorthand and bookkeeping. Other business courses soon followed. The professional training these classes offered made them particularly popular.

In 1896, the business department became LDS Business College, a separate and semi-independent branch of LDS College, with Nelson at its head. The 1900 course catalog boasted of high-quality business training at “less than one-half the tuition for a similar course in any private business college in this country.”

Finding Its Niche

The business department of LDS College passed through numerous changes of structure, name, and facilities, and it continues to flourish today as LDS Business College. It has fulfilled Karl G. Maeser’s 1886 prediction that the school would ultimately be “patronized by multitudes of students, conducted by faithful teachers, supported by the liberality of the people, approved in its labors by the authorities[,] and above all, sustained by the blessings of Almighty God.”

Once Again, the Urgent Question—How Will the Next Generations Learn Their Parents’ Religion?
In the mid-1800s, starting in New England and spreading south and west, more and more states mandated tax-supported education for all children.\textsuperscript{61} Consequently, community schools that had originally been developed by religious groups were appropriated by state governments and eventually prohibited from teaching religion. Some Protestant churches felt it necessary to establish their own schools in order to indoctrinate their children. Many Catholic dioceses, on the other hand, already had their own private schools in place.

For the Saints in the Mountain West, providing a religiously grounded education for their children was a particularly daunting and complex challenge. Following the antipolygamy Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887, the federal government seized all but $50,000 of the Church’s assets.\textsuperscript{62} This left the members, most of whom were very poor, to bear all the financial responsibility for local Church operations, including education and the construction of the Manti and Salt Lake Temples. With the spread of public education, they also had to pay taxes to support the public schools. They had little left for building their own schools and paying tuition for their children to attend them.\textsuperscript{63}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{61} \textbf{Manti Temple} in construction, 1886
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{62} \textbf{The James Brace family} of Carbon County, Utah, circa 1900. With many fathers and priesthood leaders imprisoned or in hiding, most of the Church’s assets confiscated, and new taxes being levied to support the tuition-free state schools, families typically struggled along with very few resources.
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{63} \textbf{The Edmunds-Tucker Act}, detailed in the January 26, 1887, issue of the \textit{Deseret News}, allowed the state to take over Utah’s district schools and end the religious instruction they had been offering.
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{64} \textbf{The Stake Academies}
\end{flushleft}

Faced with the state’s appropriation of the community schools, the Church in 1888 called on its stakes, in spite of their poverty, to establish their own schools where both academic and religious subjects could be taught.\textsuperscript{64} The response was, on the whole, immediate and generous. Over time, at least thirty-six stakes set up academies for primary and secondary students, constructed buildings, and provided funds for their operations.\textsuperscript{65} This required great sacrifice not only from community members, but also from administrators and teachers, whose earnings were usually in kind and very often not fully paid. Even so, the stake academy system continued for forty years and educated many thousands of young Saints.

\begin{flushleft}
\textbf{Limitations}
\end{flushleft}

The academies could not provide religious education for all of the Saints’ children. An academy education required that families pay tuition in addition to the taxes that supported public schools. Many families were unable and some were unwilling to pay it. Additionally, a growing number of families did not live near enough to an academy for their children to attend.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{64} \textbf{Big Horn Stake Academy}, Cowley, Wyoming, founded 1909
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{65} \textbf{San Luis Stake Academy}, Manassa, Colorado, founded 1907
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{65} \textbf{Weber Stake Academy}, founded 1889, here pictured on a tinted postcard
\end{flushleft}
Sanpete Stake Academy, founded 1888, temporarily housed in the Ephraim co-op store

Alberta Stake Academy, Raymond, Alberta, Canada, founded 1910

Oneida Stake Academy, Preston, Idaho, founded 1888

Student body assembly at San Luis Stake Academy in Manassa, Colorado, 1900

Students of Brigham Young Academy, Provo, Utah, 1891

Field day at Uintah Stake Academy, Vernal, Utah, circa 1900

Religion Classes

In 1890, the same year that the territorial legislature passed the Free Schools Act, Anthon H. Lund, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, proposed a program of weekday afternoon “Religion Classes” for all primary and secondary school students to supplement the public school curriculum.67 The plan, which was adopted during that meeting, added these classes to the Church’s educational program in order to serve students not attending the academies.

A Unique Program

Whereas the Church’s academy program was similar to strategies adopted elsewhere by other denominations, the Church’s Religion Class program was unique; nothing like it had been tried before.68 At minimal cost, it could expand with the growing Church and be adapted to a large variety of situations.

Although the Religion Class program took hold mostly below the high school level, it played an important role as a precursor to the seminaries and institutes that later became the core of weekday religious education for the Church’s youth.69

Like the academies, the Religion Class program lasted for about forty years.

Religion Class participants from Springville Second Ward pose for a group portrait, May 6, 1915.

Anthon H. Lund championed the Religion Class program for many years in General Conference addresses.

The circular inaugurating Religion Classes instructed that teachers “be called, as on a mission, by the Bishop” and receive licenses from the Church Board of Education.

President Woodruff’s and Karl G. Maeser’s Visionary Planning

In spite of the financial challenges they faced, the Latter-day Saints had one advantage over many other religious groups affected by the advent of state-sponsored, secularized education. When the time arrived for the Church to develop its own school system, the model for its schools had already been tried and proven. Many of the administrators and teachers needed to staff them had already been trained. The plans for expansion were already in place. It remained only to implement them.
Careful Preparations
Even before President Wilford Woodruff issued the call for the Church’s stakes to build academies and for the wards to establish Religion Classes—indeed, even before the state’s appropriation of Utah’s community schools—Church leaders were quietly developing a plan for these educational programs. They had been conferring with Karl G. Maeser about the possibility of further academies on the BYA model, and Maeser—undoubtedly with the guidance of Woodruff’s predecessor, John Taylor—had already worked with others to found three of them.

Maeser’s Energetic Obedience
Though best known as Brigham Young Academy’s founding principal, Maeser dreamed of academies throughout Zion, all structured on the BYA model. “The general plan and organization of the [BY] Academy has thus far been taken as the common standard,” he wrote to President Woodruff shortly after becoming Church superintendent of schools in 1888, adding, “The future development of Zion’s educational system will go far beyond what the [BYA] is or ever can be.”

Maeser shared President Woodruff’s vision for the academies but was totally committed to BYA’s success. By contrast, board chairman Abraham O. Smoot was exclusively devoted to BYA, and it troubled him that Maeser, dividing his time between duties as BYA principal and as Church superintendent, spent so much time away from the Academy.

A Generation of Educators
The Church’s stake academies needed trained teachers. These were primarily individuals whom Church superintendent Karl G. Maeser had mentored, in many cases as students in Brigham Young Academy’s normal department. Indeed, he sent so many from BYA that board members complained that their own school was suffering. Among others, Maeser elected to send Willard Done and James E. Talmage to Salt Lake Stake Academy, Reinhard Maeser to Beaver, Guy C. Wilson to Juarez, Joseph G. Nelson to Oneida, and Jacob Spori to Bannock (later named Ricks). Often they were the only faculty at their academies and taught for little or no salary.

Wilford Woodruff
Karl G. Maeser
Reinhard Maeser, founding principal of Beaver Stake Academy. This photograph was taken in 1872, fourteen years before the academy opened.

James E. Talmage, second principal of Salt Lake Stake Academy. This photograph was taken in 1887, the year before Talmage assumed the academy principalship.

Guy C. Wilson, founding principal of Juarez Stake Academy, which opened in 1897. This photograph was taken circa 1920.

Joseph G. Nelson, third principal of Oneida Stake Academy. This photograph was taken in 1890, the year Nelson became the academy’s principal.
Denominational Schools in Mormon Country

An Academic Boon
During the latter half of the nineteenth century, Protestant and Catholic congregations in the eastern United States began opening denominational schools in the South and West. While many of these schools in Utah began as “missions to the Mormons,” they impacted the Church positively. Thousands of Latter-day Saint children benefited from these excellent institutions. So did the Church’s academies, which were challenged to maintain high standards by the good physical facilities, adequate supplies, and well-trained teachers of the denominational schools.

The Strength of the Church’s Youth
Church leaders feared that the denominational schools “would deal us one of the most deadly blows ever aimed at us” by leading away the Church’s future generations. But the youth of Zion, who were eager to learn, proved resilient in their faith. As one Protestant sponsor reported, “They take our proffered education, but not our religion, and use it to strengthen their own institutions.” As state schools improved, many of the denominational schools closed.

Academies and Seminaries
In the half-century or so after 1875, Church schools that offered classes at the primary and secondary levels were called academies. Generally, they were the first founded in a stake.

If the sponsoring stake already contained an academy, succeeding Church schools were usually known as seminaries. Many of them differed from academies in name only.

Alberta Canada Seminary
Cardston, Alberta, Canada, 1892–unknown

Alberta Stake Academy.
See Knight Academy

Bannock Stake Academy
(later Fremont Stake Academy, Smith Academy, Ricks Academy, Ricks College, BYU–Idaho) Rexburg, Idaho, 1888–present
Bear Lake Stake Academy.
*See Fielding Academy*

**Beaver Stake Academy**
(*later Beaver Branch of Brigham Young University, Murdock Academy*)
Beaver, Utah, 1888–1922

**Big Cottonwood Seminary**
Salt Lake City, Utah, 1891–unknown

**Big Horn Stake Academy**
Cowley, Wyoming, 1909–1924

**Box Elder Stake Academy**
Brigham City, Utah, 1888–1893

**Brigham Young Academy**
(*later Brigham Young University*) Provo, Utah, 1875–present

**Brigham Young College**
Logan, Utah, 1877–1926

**Cassia Stake Academy**
Oakley, Idaho, 1888–1921

**Central Seminary**
Mill Creek, Utah, 1889–1892

**Cottonwoods Seminary**
Salt Lake City, Utah, 1890–unknown

**Davis Stake Academy**
Farmington, Utah, 1890–1893

**Díaz Academy**
Colonia Díaz, Mexico, 1890–1912

**Emery Stake Academy**
Castle Dale, Utah, 1890–1922

**Escalante Utah Seminary**
Escalante, Utah, 1892–unknown

**Fielding Academy**
(*earlier Bear Lake Stake Academy*) Paris, Idaho, 1884–1922
Franklin Idaho Seminary
Franklin, Idaho, 1891–unknown

Fremont Seminary
Fremont, Utah, 1890–unknown

Fremont Stake Academy.
See Bannock Stake Academy

Grantsville Academy
(also Tooele Stake Academy) Grantsville, Utah, 1890–1899

Gunnison Seminary
Gunnison, Utah, 1890–unknown

Huntington Seminary
Huntington, Utah, 1890–1904

Juab Stake Academy
Nephi, Utah, 1890–1895

Juárez Stake Academy
Colonia Juárez, Mexico, 1887–present

Knight Academy
(also Alberta Stake Academy, Taylor Academy, Raymond Academy)
Raymond, Alberta, Canada, 1891–1921

LDS Business College, LDS College, LDS University.
See Salt Lake Stake Academy

Malad Stake Academy
Malad, Idaho, 1890–1893

Manassa Colorado Seminary
Manassa, Colorado, 1901–unknown

Manti Seminary
Manti, Utah, 1890–1893

Maricopa Academy
Mesa, Arizona, 1894–1895

Millard Stake Academy
Millard and Hinckley, Utah, 1886–1923
Montpelier Idaho Seminary
Montpelier, Idaho, 1891–unknown

Morgan Stake Academy
Morgan, Utah, 1888–1893

Mt. Pleasant Seminary
Mt. Pleasant, Utah, 1890–unknown

Murdock Academy.
See Beaver Stake Academy

Oneida Stake Academy
Franklin and Preston, Idaho, 1888–1922

Panguitch Stake Academy
Panguitch, Utah, 1888–1892

Parowan Seminary
Parowan, Utah, 1890–1894

Parowan Stake Academy
Cedar City, Utah, 1890–1897

Pima Arizona Seminary
Pima, Arizona, 1891–unknown

Raymond Academy.
See Knight Academy

Rich Stake/County Academy
Randolph, Utah, 1888–1903

Ricks Academy, Ricks College.
See Bannock Stake Academy

Salt Lake 14th Ward Seminary
Salt Lake City, Utah, 1890–unknown

Salt Lake 18th Ward Seminary
Salt Lake City, Utah, 1888–unknown

Salt Lake Stake Academy
(later LDS College, LDS University, LDS Business College)
Salt Lake City, Utah, 1886–present
Samaria Idaho Seminary
Samaria, Idaho, 1891–unknown

San Luis Stake Academy
Sanford and Manassa, Colorado, 1906–1924

Sanford Colorado Seminary
Sanford, Colorado, 1901–unknown

Sanpete Stake Academy
(later Snow College)
Ephraim, Utah, 1888–1932

Sevier Stake Academy
Richfield, Utah, 1888–1913

Smith Academy.
See Bannock Stake Academy

Snowflake Stake Academy
Snowflake, Arizona, 1888–1924

Springville Seminary
Springville, Utah, 1887–1894

St. George Stake Academy
(later Dixie College)
St. George, Utah, 1889–1933

St. Johns Stake Academy
St. Johns, Arizona, 1888–1921

St. Joseph Stake Academy
(later Gila Academy, Gila Junior College, Eastern Arizona College) Central and Thatcher, Arizona, 1888–1933

Summit Stake Academy
Coalville, Utah, 1888–1913

Taylor Academy.
See Knight Academy

Tooele Stake Academy.
See Grantsville Academy
Uintah Stake Academy  
Vernal, Utah, 1888–1923

Wasatch Stake Academy  
Heber, Utah, 1889–1894

Weber Stake Academy  
(later Weber College)  
Ogden, Utah, 1888–1933

---

Saving Zion’s Future  
*The Stake Academies*
[no text; video]

---

**Ricks Academy**

The story of Bannock Stake’s academy begins with its improbable location: a place in eastern Idaho called Mosquito Bend (now Rexburg) that explorers and mountain men said was impossible to cultivate. Though barely able to survive on the land, the stake members, under their formidable president, Thomas E. Ricks, obeyed Wilford Woodruff’s 1888 call for each of the Church’s stakes to establish an academy. At first, the school served the elementary grades and gradually added high school and collegiate classes. In 1918, it became a teaching college, deservedly named for President Ricks. Under the First Presidency’s direction, it was transformed in 2001 into a four-year school, Brigham Young University–Idaho.

---

1. Upper Snake River Valley in Fremont County, Idaho
2. Wilford Woodruff

**Unpromising Beginnings**
Bleak Landscape
The desolate lava-rock plateau where a small company of Mormons settled in 1884 could scarcely have seemed more forbidding. Its only arable portions, on the Snake River, were mosquito-infested, rain-deprived sand banks on which farmers could not grow enough to repay what they had borrowed to plant their crops. A group led by one of Brigham Young’s sons refused to stay in what he called a “godforsaken isolated snow prison.”

Difficult Society
The surrounding populace was as hostile as the land. Latter-day Saints lived in fear of federal marshal Fred T. Dubois, who had persecuted the Church in Illinois and now led raids upon the Saints’ homes in Idaho in search of polygamist fathers. He and other anti-Mormon political partisans stacked juries against the Saints to ensure conviction, maximum fines, and prison terms. Idaho’s Test Oath Law of 1885, signed by the governor at gunpoint, prohibited Mormons from voting or holding public office. This left the Saints with no influence in the district schools, where bigotry was rampant.

Endurance
Despite their challenges and poverty, the Idaho Saints loved their Academy with a possessiveness that enabled it to survive its turbulent early history. Like the settlers’ homesteads, it eventually flourished, thanks to some very specific prophecies of Church leaders and the sacrifices of the Saints.

Thomas E. Ricks, Academy Founder
I ... have expended my means for the benefit of the people, and I am comparatively poor. But my faith has been increased ... and I acknowledge the blessings of the Lord.
—Thomas E. Ricks, Bannock Stake President, 1890

An Extraordinary Leader
Rexburg and Bannock Stake Academy depended heavily upon the leadership of rugged, larger-than-life Stake President Thomas E. Ricks, who sacrificed all he had to fulfill his calling. He encouraged his people to form towns, work together industriously, beautify their properties, serve God, and support the Academy. He rode throughout a stake that sprawled over most of eastern Idaho and into Wyoming and Montana, visiting leaders and families and creating cooperatives in which they could help one another relieve their debts.
First Struggling Steps
For six months after the First Presidency asked each stake to found an academy, President Ricks raised money to build and staff the stake’s new school in Rexburg. Initially, it went only to the fifth grade and had three teachers, including the principal. Church superintendent Karl G. Maeser noted that the fifty-nine students were “very poorly prepared and very unevenly educated, in lessons as well as in discipline.”

Ways without Means
Meeting the school’s expenses depended upon timely tuition payment, regular enrollment, and community support, none of which was reliable in the economically depressed locale. Nevertheless, the school somehow hobbled along. The community often held fundraisers; the Relief Society once pledged four years of Sunday eggs to the Academy. In several cases, mothers of students bought homes in Rexburg to house themselves and their children, taking in other students as boarders to meet expenses.

Early Principals
Jacob Spori
Upon the recommendation of Karl G. Maeser, President Ricks appointed Maeser’s friend Jacob Spori as the Academy’s first principal. An impressively educated and cultivated Swiss convert, Spori was eminently prepared to instruct advanced students. Instead, he found himself teaching twenty-year-olds to read while trying to learn English himself. Even at their best, his students were rough-hewn and uncouth. When they tried his patience, he would clench his fists and say, “Sometimes I feel as though I cannot bear it; but the gospel is worth all.”

Devoted Men
Though Spori’s income could not support his family, he nevertheless used it to keep the Academy going and served as janitor and handyman besides. Yet the school’s debts kept mounting, and in its third year, Spori relinquished his salary so that the two remaining teachers could be paid. His immediate successors, Charles N. Watkins and George Cole, struggled with even greater deficits which threatened to close the school. For generations it took diligent effort to keep the Academy open.

Thomas E. Ricks, Bannock Stake President, circa 1888
The original Bannock Stake Academy building was a ward meetinghouse remodeled in 1888.
The Ricks Academy building, later renamed the Jacob Spori Building, was the first permanent campus structure. It was under construction at the time the Academy’s name was changed in 1902.

Jacob Spori worked for the railroad following his tenure as principal and used most of his earnings to subsidize the Academy.

Charles N. Watkins lost his health due to the stresses of serving as principal. He resigned when he became too ill to continue and died just two years thereafter.

George Cole accepted produce for wages and went without any pay at all for half a year. “It is through the blessing of a beneficent providence,” he maintained, “that this institution still has a being.”
Life and Learning in the Academies

- **Student body**, Emery Stake Academy, Castle Dale, Utah, 1906
- **Art Club**, Brigham Young Academy, 1896
- **Assembly in College Hall**, Brigham Young Academy, 1902
- **Banking and finance class**, Brigham Young Academy, circa 1895
- **Music class**, Beaver Branch of Brigham Young University, circa 1907
- **Marching band**, Beaver Branch of Brigham Young University, 1904
- **Bookkeeping class**, Brigham Young Academy, 1895
- **B. T. Higgs and the Y Bell**, Brigham Young University, circa 1935
- **Men’s basketball team**, Brigham Young Academy, 1902
- **Class of 1890**, Brigham Young Academy
- **Class of 1896**, Brigham Young Academy
- **Young ladies** of Brigham Young Academy, circa 1899
- **Cooking class**, Brigham Young Academy, 1900
- **Football team**, Brigham Young Academy, 1896
- **Gymnasium**, Training School Building, Brigham Young Academy, circa 1902
- **History of pedagogy class**, Brigham Young Academy, 1893
- **Dictation class** using a graphophone machine, LDS University, 1906
- **Field day**, LDS College, 1892
- **Machine sewing class**, LDS University, 1905
- **Master Builders Club** field trip, Brigham Young University, 1906
- **Chemistry lab**, LDS University, 1905
- **Science class using microscopes**, LDS University, 1905
- **Woodshop class**, LDS University, 1905
- **Staff of The BYA Student**, 1891
- **Typewriting class**, Brigham Young Academy, 1901
- **Girls’ physical education class** drilling with clubs, Beaver Branch of Brigham Young University, 1904
- **Students with Principal David O. McKay**, Weber Stake Academy, Ogden, Utah, 1905
- **Hand sewing class**, Brigham Young Academy, circa 1896

---

The Establishment of Home Evening

As the twentieth century began, Church leaders renewed Brigham Young’s stress upon the responsibility of parents to teach their children the gospel. Their review of Church
education identified the home as its most important element. Careful study of this matter led to the Church’s official adoption, in 1915, of a weekly “home evening” for every family.\textsuperscript{102}

**Implementing a Revealed Principle**

Leaders during the early 1900s sought for ways to reduce overlap of the Church’s teaching organizations and ensure that all instructional needs were being met. President Joseph F. Smith charged several high-level committees with streamlining and correlating the Church’s teaching efforts. The 1907 Committee on Adjustments and Correlation recommended that the very similar Primary and Religion Class programs be merged and that the auxiliary organizations of the Church place more emphasis on instruction in the home.\textsuperscript{103}

**A Staunch Advocate**

President Frank Y. Taylor of the Granite Stake set aside Monday evenings for Home Evening in 1909.\textsuperscript{104} A son of John Taylor, third President of the Church, and Margaret Young Taylor, a daughter of Brigham Young, he had learned from his parents the importance of strengthening the family.\textsuperscript{105} “I do not care if you have an invitation to a splendid theatre,” he told the parents in his stake. “Put it aside; hold this night sacred to your own firesides and homes.”\textsuperscript{106} He spent much time earnestly encouraging parents to assume this sacred responsibility and, at President Joseph F. Smith’s invitation, spoke at least four times in general conference on strengthening youth and teaching in the home.\textsuperscript{106}

**A Plan Becomes a Program**

In 1915, the First Presidency of the Church inaugurated the home evening program by a letter. I recall when my own father read that letter to the family at the supper table on the farm. When he concluded the letter, he said, “The Presidency has spoken, and this is the word of the Lord to us!” From that time forward, we diligently held family home evenings in my boyhood home. I testify[,] out of this experience and the experience of family nights in my own home[,] that great spiritual blessings can result.\textsuperscript{107}

—Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Church, 1976

In 1915 President Joseph F. Smith asked ... the Church to have family home evening. My father said we would do so. ...

We were miserable performers as children. ... We would laugh and make cute remarks about one another’s performance. But our parents persisted. We sang together. We prayed together. We listened quietly while Mother read. ...

Out of those simple little meetings, held in the parlor of our old home, came something indescribable and wonderful. Our love for our parents was strengthened. Our love for brothers and sisters was enhanced. Our love for the Lord was increased. An appreciation for simple goodness grew in our hearts. These wonderful things came about because our parents followed the counsel of the President of the Church.\textsuperscript{108}
The First Presidency under Joseph F. Smith announced the official Church-wide adoption of Home Evening in the spring of 1915. The announcement called attention to the Lord’s commandments regarding the teaching of children by their parents and requested that priesthood leaders support the program by setting aside at least one night each month for Home Evening.109

A Program Still in Process

Like some other Church programs, Home Evening was often not consistently implemented where it conflicted with the routines, practices, and habits of the prevailing culture. Many stakes of Zion did put forth great effort, however, in educating the Saints about the duty and blessing of Home Evening. Demonstration of a typical Home Evening program was a common method for encouraging the practice, as were messages from stake presidents and vignettes in local newspapers featuring successful families.

President Joseph F. Smith

The Boyer and Whiting families, left and below, circa 1900. Families developed their own formats for Home Evenings.

John A. Widtsoe and his family engage in scripture study, 1909.

The First Presidency that issued the 1915 announcement instituting the Home Evening program throughout the Church consisted of Joseph F. Smith, standing, and counselors Anthon H. Lund, left, and Charles W. Penrose. This portrait was taken in 1911.

Frank Y. Taylor, circa 1880

George Taft and Sarah Benson family at their farm near Whitney, Idaho, circa 1917

Bryant S. and Ada B. Hinckley, both teachers, were deeply committed to the education of their children. Though far from wealthy, they converted one room of their home into a library and filled it with books by notable authors.111

Granite Stake high council report showing a suggested outline for Home Night, 1924

Booklet produced by the Granite Stake to assist members in conducting Home Night, 1927

Early Granite Stake Home Night suggestions, 1909

Pima Arizona Stake Home Night booklet, 1924

Granite Stake Home Night pamphlet, 1915

The Davis County Clipper advertised the fun of Home Night in its issue of March 10, 1916.


The Vernal Express reported in its February 3, 1922, issue that the local stake would conduct Home Night on Wednesdays.

The Academies’ Legacy

For forty years, the Church academies blessed the youth of Zion with a sound temporal and spiritual education. From these schools came Church and community leaders, scientists, jurists, teachers, and most importantly, faithful parents who used their
education to teach their children well. Many thousands of Church members today can trace their educational genealogy to graduates of the academies.

[1] *Brigham Young Academy Choir, 1902–03*
FOOTNOTES


6c. Sarah Eggertsen Cluff, “A Dream,” Y News [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah] 5, no. 6 (October 16, 1925): 4. A clipping of this article is preserved in UA 704, box 6, folder 17, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

6b. Benajmin Cluff, Journal, January 4, 1892, 2:70, MSS 1667, Cluff Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

7. Brigham Young to Alfales Young, October 20, 1875, CR 1234 1, box 9, 13:930–32, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Typescript and copy of original on file at the Education in Zion exhibit project.

7a. add ref on Martha Coray’s nomination of Dusenberry for principal


9. Brigham Young to Board of Directors of Brigham Young Academy, April 17, 1876, Brigham Young Letterbooks, CR 1234 1, box 10, 14:296, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Copy of original on file at the Education in Zion exhibit project.

13. BYA Board of Trustees Minutes, April 15, 1876, 7, UA 6, box 10, folder 4, Board of Trustees Records, 1875–1985, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Susa Young Gates, “Dr. Karl G. Maeser,” Young Woman’s Journal 3, no. 11 (August 1892): 483; O. H. Riggs, “Correspondence,” Deseret News, April 7, 1875, 2; Reed Smoot, in “Brigham Young Academy,” Deseret News Weekly, January 9, 1892, 84. Because young men and women were needed at home during the spring months, it was unusual to hold a school term at that season. As the term progressed, more students enrolled to bring the total to fifty-nine by the term’s end. See Susa Young Gates, “President A. O. Smoot,” Young Woman’s Journal 3, no. 10 (July 1892): 434; Susa Young Gates, “Dr. Karl G. Maeser,” Young Woman’s Journal 3, no. 11 (August 1892): 482. This increase testifies to the immediate success of Maeser’s innovative methods. Nevertheless, the first twenty-nine students have traditionally been honored as the pioneers in an experiment that some local citizens initially mistrusted.

10. Susa Young Gates to Reed Smoot, November 25, 1911, 1, MSS 1187, box 33, folder 6, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah: “Father wanted it known that Bro. Maeser was the first teacher of that school, and that he organized it from the ground up.”


15. Karl G. Maeser to President John Taylor, October 4, 1878, UA 1094, box 1, folder 2, Karl G.
16. J. Golden Kimball to Joseph Keeler, March 1, 1908, MS 10072, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Typescript in possession of the Education in Zion Exhibit.

17. Karl G. Maeser to L. John Nuttall, November 20, 1886, [1], Vault MSS 790, box 3, folder 18, L. John Nuttall Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Typescript and photocopy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.

18. Abraham O. Smoot to LeGrand Young, January 8, 1891, MS 896, box 1, folder 10, Abraham O. Smoot Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

19. Circular of the BYA, December 21, 1877, UA 1150, box 1, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


21. Board of Trustees Minutes, June 24, 1882, 41, UA 6, box 10, folder 4, Board of Trustees Records, 1875–1985, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


24. Lars Echert Eggertson to Simon P. Eggertson Jr., February 10, 1884, UA 521, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


26. “The Land Secured,” *Territorial Enquirer*, March 25, 1884, page unknown. Copies of this newspaper issue have not survived. A clipping of this article is preserved in Journal History of the Church, March 25, 1884, 176:7, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

27. Untitled, *Territorial Enquirer*, February 1, 1884, page unknown. Copies of this newspaper issue have not survived. A clipping of this article is preserved in Journal History of the Church, February 1, 1884, 175:6, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

28. “The B.Y. Academy,” *Territorial Enquirer*, August 12, 1884, page unknown. Copies of this newspaper issue have not survived. A clipping of this article is preserved in Journal History of the Church, August 12, 1884, 182:9, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

29. In addition to the grain crisis, the construction of the Utah Stake Tabernacle was already underway and required all money that the stake could spare. Also, the winter after the foundation was laid, enforcement of anti-polygamy legislation escalated. Many prominent members went into hiding, were imprisoned, or had to pay substantial fines. Jed L. Woodworth, “Refusing to Die: Financial Crisis at Brigham Young Academy, 1877–1897,” *BYU Studies* 38, no. 1 (1999): 88.

30. See, for example, Abraham O. Smoot, donation slips, MS 896, box 2, folder 1, Abraham O. Smoot Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Reed Smoot, address to BYU assembly, autumn 1930, [4], Reed Smoot Papers, UA 290, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. For more on Smoot’s active involvement in the financial support of the Academy, see Jed L. Woodworth, “Refusing to Die: Financial Crisis at Brigham Young Academy, 1877–1897,” *BYU Studies* 38, no. 1 (1999): 90–93, 96, 103–5.

32. Karl G. Maeser to John Taylor, April 14, 1886, UA 1094, box 1, folder 3, item 22, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

34. Karl G. Maeser to John Taylor, April 14, 1886, UA 1094 Box 1 folder 3 item 22, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


36. “The Brigham Young Academy at Provo Has Been Formally Dedicated,” Ogden Standard, January 5, 1892, 8.


38b. Karl G. Maeser to L. John Nuttall, January 6, 1886, L. John Nuttall Collection, Vault MSS 790, box 3, folder 13, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

39. See, for example, Karl G. Maeser to John Taylor, May 17, 1887, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, UA 1094, box 1, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Karl G. Maeser to Wilford Woodruff, August 17, 1887, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, UA 1094, box 1, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Karl G. Maeser to Wilford Woodruff, November 26, 1887, 2, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, UA 1094, box 1, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Eva Maeser Crandall, quoted in Alma P. Burton, “Karl G. Maeser, Mormon Educator,” master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1950, 106.


41. Andrew Jenson, comp., Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2nd ed. rev. and enl. (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1914), 125, gives the formal opening date for Millard Stake Academy as November 2, 1885; see also “Mother of S. L. Police Head Dies at Family Home,” Salt Lake Tribune, December 6, 1935, 12; Josiah E. Hickman, Journal, December 20, 1890, and January 29, 1893, at http://hickmansfamily.homestead.com/files/jeha.htm (accessed May 16, 2008), original in possession of Hickman family. Andrew Jenson, Encyclopedic History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Corporation of the President, 1941), 504, which gives the year of founding as 1890, appears to be in error.

42. “Salt Lake Stake Academy,” Deseret News, November 24, 1886, 711.


44. “Faculty of the L. D. S. College,” Salt Lake Herald, August 15, 1900, 6.


50. “Latter-day Saints’ College,” Deseret News Weekly, May 24, 1890, 719; “Faculty of the L. D. S. College,” Salt Lake Herald, August 15, 1900, 6. See also Lynn M. Hilton, The History of


54. William E. Felt, “The Inception and Growth of the LDS Business College,” typescript, 1982, 70–71; John Henry Evans, “The History of L. D. S. U.,” in The S Book (n.p., [1919]), [27–28]. See also Lynn M. Hilton, The History of LDS Business College and Its Parent Institutions, 1886–1993 (Salt Lake City: LDS Business College, 1995), 121. The subscription drive may have begun as early as March, weeks before Maeser made his address at the College commencement, but it had apparently not done well up to that point. Maeser’s confidence in the school’s future may have stemmed in part from the Church’s promise to help if the subscription drive failed. It could be that the success of the drive in securing the school’s future was more the popular support it raised among stake members than the amount of financial aid it brought in. See Salt Lake Stake Board of Education Minutes, March 11, 1899, LR 604 46, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


60. Principal’s Report to the General Committee of the Salt Lake Stake Academy, January 28, 1887, in “Salt Lake Stake Academy,” Deseret News, February 2, 1887, 41.

61. Territorial Laws of Utah (1890), art. 13, sec. 88.


63. See, for example, George D. Snell to Wilford Woodruff, January 25, 1893, Centennial History Project Papers,UA 566, box 19, folder 6, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

64. First Presidency to All the Stakes of Zion, June 8, 1888, St. George Stake Board of Education Minutes, LR 7836 39, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.

65. According to William E. Berrett, correspondence or written records have been preserved for thirty-six named academies. See William E. Berrett and Frank W. Hirschi, A Miracle in Weekday Religious Education: A History of the Church Educational System (Salt Lake City: William E. Berrett, 1988), 191–92. Maeser himself has given a count of forty or forty-two that reached the founding stage, probably including “seminaries,” which were branches of a stake academy in outlying areas of the stake. See also Louis J. Clements, Pioneering the Snake River Fork Country (Rexburg: Idaho: Eastern Idaho Publishing, 1972), 82.


67. Anthon H. Lund, Diary, June 2, 1890, in Danish Apostle: The Diaries of Anthon H. Lund, 1890–1921, ed. John P. Hatch (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with the Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2006), 7. A similar idea had been proposed by a Catholic bishop for use in his
own church but was not implemented. See “Church School Convention,”Deseret News Weekly, June 11, 1892, 818. Jewish synagogues were next to try the idea in 1905. See D. Michael Quinn, “Utah’s Educational Innovation: LDS Religion Classes, 1890–1929,”Utah Historical Quarterly 43, no. 4 (Fall 1975): 379–89. See also Brett Dowdle, “Distinctive Assimilation: LDS Religion Classes and Early LDS Efforts at Supplementary Religious Education in the Public Schools, 1886–1929,”9–10, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.

69. See, for example, Stephen A. Smith (Manassa Stake Superintendent of Religion Classes) to Karl G. Maeser, May 22, 1900, UA 1094, box 2, folder 5, item 139, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

69a. Among other things, the Edmunds-Tucker Act had barred members of churches that taught polygamy from holding public office. L. John Nuttall, the elected superintendent of Utah schools and a Latter-day Saint, was thus relieved of his office and replaced by Parley Williams, an excommunicated member who despised the Church, leaving the Saints with no influence in the state school system. See note 39. See also Clarence G. Jensen, “A Biographical Study of Leonard John Nuttall, Private Secretary to Presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff” (MA thesis, Brigham young University, 1962), 94-99.

70. Karl G. Maeser to Wilford Woodruff, September 8, 1888, 2–3, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, UA 1094, box 1, folder 14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

71. Karl G. Maeser to Wilford Woodruff, September 8, 1888, 3, Karl G. Maeser Presidential Papers, UA 1094, box 1, folder 14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

72. See, for example, Wilford Woodruff to Joseph G. Nelson, October 2, 1888, in James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 3:169.

73. See, for example, Daniel S. Tuttle, The Reminiscences of a Missionary Bishop (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1906), 363, 365, 390.


79. Quoted in Dean C. Jessee, ed., Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 128.


83. “Now It Can Be Told: The Most Dramatic Incident in Idaho’s History: Gun Point Forces Bunn to Sign Test Oath Bill,” Idaho Statesman, January 25, 1931, 2. Except for two introductory paragraphs, the article seems to be a narrative composed by S. H. Hays, formerly attorney general of Idaho and son of one of the territory’s early justices.

Autobiography of Sarah Ann Anderson Barnes,” typescript, n.d., [1], copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.

85. The most famous of the prophecies, known as the “wagon box” prophecy, was made by Wilford Woodruff near Iona while touring the settlements in the upper Snake River valley. It was quoted by Ezra Taft Benson at the second dedicatory session of the Idaho Falls Temple in 1945. See “Value of Righteous Living Emphasized,” Deseret News, September 29, 1945, 5, 11. Heber J. Grant, Discourse, April 7, 1899, Conference Report April, 1899: 28.


90. Karl G. Maeser to Axel Nielson, December 11, 1888, Karl G. Maeser Letterbooks, University Archives, UA 1094, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


97. Elizabeth Spori Stowell, “The History of Jacob Spori,” typescript, November 18, 1925, [4], copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.

98. Jerry C. Roundy, Ricks College: A Struggle for Survival (Rexburg, Idaho: Jerry C. Roundy, 1976), 34; Elizabeth Spori Stowell, “The History of Jacob Spori,” typescript, November 18, 1925, [4], copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.


102. The program was originally referred to simply as Home Evening because most households of the time were understood to be family units. When the program was reemphasized in the mid-twentieth century, it was renamed Family Home Evening to underscore its original purpose of gospel instruction within the family to strengthen family members.

103. James E. Talmage and Mae T. Nystrom to the First Presidency, July 29, 1907, Scott G.
104. Frank Y. Taylor, “Remarks” given on October 16, 1909, in *Home Evening, with Suggested Exercises and Explanations: Also a Sermon on Family Government by President Joseph F. Smith and a Special Message from the First Presidency of the Church and the Presidency of Granite Stake* (n.p.: Granite Stake, 1927), 30, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

110. Frank Y. Taylor, Conference Report, April 1913, 48–49.

105. Frank Y. Taylor, “Remarks” given on October 16, 1909, in *Home Evening, with Suggested Exercises and Explanations: Also a Sermon on Family Government by President Joseph F. Smith and a Special Message from the First Presidency of the Church and the Presidency of Granite Stake* (n.p.: Granite Stake, 1927), 32, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

106. See, for example, Frank Y. Taylor, Conference Report, October 1902, 57–59; April 1910, 47–50; April 1913, 48–51; October 1919, 154–58.


109. First Presidency to Presidents of Stakes, Bishops, and Parents in Zion, April 27, 1915, typescript copy in James R. Clark Papers, MSS 2295, box 2 fd 6, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

THE RISE OF SEMINARIES AND INSTITUTES

A Weekday Miracle

Despite the academy system’s successes, expanding it as the Church kept growing was not feasible. It was too costly for the Church to build enough academies to serve all its students, and some families could not afford the tuition. Beginning in 1912, the Church gradually developed two new weekday religious education programs: Seminary for high school students and Institute of Religion for college students. These were designed to supplement the students’ academic schooling.

Between 1920 and 1924, as the Seminary program was thriving and the Institute program was getting underway, the stake academies that did not offer college courses were closed or given to their respective states, except for Juarez Academy in Mexico. The nine that did offer college courses discontinued their primary- and secondary-level courses and became colleges.

[no title]

Not all the Church schools based on the academy model were replaced by seminaries. In areas of inadequate public education, the Church has continued to maintain a limited number of schools that, like the original academies, provide both scholastic and religious instruction for elementary and secondary students. These are located primarily in Mexico and the Pacific islands.

1 Church school students in uniform at Savai‘i, West Samoa. The first missionaries had established Church schools in Samoa by 1892.

2 English class at a Church school in Tonga. In 1892 and again in 1907, LDS missionaries in Tonga opened schools in conjunction with their preaching.
An outdoor classroom for Church school students in Suva, Fiji. The Church’s first Fijian school opened in 1969.¹

Latin American students at Centro Escolar Benemérito de las Américas in the Mexico City area. The Church founded this private secondary school in 1963.²

An Increasingly Pressing Need

When great discoveries are made and when far-reaching movements are launched[,] we usually find many thoughtful men thinking along the same lines. Such was the case when the seminary movement of the Church came into being.³

—Joseph F. Merrill, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1938

Even before the noncollegiate Church academies in the United States were closed, it was clear that many LDS students could never be served by the academies. What could be the alternative for them?

Leaders tried various ways to supplement the students’ regular schooling with some sort of weekday religious instruction. In the early years of the twentieth century, they had some success with elementary school students, but little with students of high school age and older.⁴ Nevertheless, they kept trying, because these students, who were becoming independent of their families and encountering worldly influences, were the ones who needed religious education the most.

Some Seminary Precursors

Promoting Religious Education in Stakes and Wards

After President Wilford Woodruff called upon the wards in 1890 to establish Religion Classes, Church superintendent of schools Karl G. Maeser traveled to many areas conducting demonstration classes to teach stake presidents and bishops how to establish the program. Though somewhat inconsistently implemented, these classes were generally well attended by primary school children. With some exceptions, they proved less popular among older students.⁵
An Early Proposal
In 1899, George M. Cannon, a Utah legislator and concerned Church member, recommended a “theology class” program, with its own buildings, for Salt Lake high school and college students. The proposal was not implemented. It was widely thought that high school and college students would not attend classes that added an hour to their school day and provided no course credit.

Church Leaders’ Intense Concerns
Throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, before the Seminary program began, Church leaders were deeply concerned about losing their young people and were earnestly seeking ways to retain them. They encouraged local leaders to be engaged in the daily lives of the youth and to draw them into fuller participation in priesthood quorum work and Mutual Improvement Association activities. They also stressed gospel instruction in the home.

Attempts to Retain College Students
Also during these years, Elders Anthon H. Lund and David O. McKay, working closely with University of Utah officials, tried repeatedly to develop religion classes for LDS students. They were unsuccessful, mostly because of legal issues concerning Church influence in a state institution.

The Seminaries
Fit for the Moment, and Beyond
In 1912, Joseph F. Merrill, a new member of the presidency of Salt Lake City’s Granite Stake—also a physics professor at the University of Utah and, later in his life, an Apostle—approached the Church board of education on behalf of his stake. He proposed a novel approach to weekday religious education called Seminary. By arrangement with the local school board, classes would be offered for credit during the students’ free periods, provided that they were taught by qualified teachers and did not
include sectarian doctrines.\textsuperscript{12} This meant that while Bible courses could qualify for credit, courses that included LDS doctrine could not.

The Seminary program was well received. Granite’s seminary enrolled about 70 students its first year.\textsuperscript{12a} Even before the Church officially adopted the program in 1919, it had begun to spread to other stakes.\textsuperscript{13} In 1915, for example, half a year before its building was dedicated, Box Elder’s seminary enrolled 150 students.\textsuperscript{12b}

Annie Laura Hyde Merrill
While a student at Salt Lake Stake Academy, Joseph Merrill’s wife, the former Annie Laura Hyde, had attended theology classes taught by James E. Talmage.\textsuperscript{14} Her solidly founded gospel understanding, evident in the Bible lessons she gave to the Merrill children during Home Evening, deeply impressed her husband.\textsuperscript{15} He later told a friend that he had wanted to provide the youth of the Granite Stake with religious instruction of the same quality as Annie had received at the Academy.

Rapid Growth
Church leaders authorized the Granite Stake to pilot the Seminary program for an experimental period. By the eighth year, twenty more seminaries had been established. Thereafter, that pace of expansion continued.\textsuperscript{16}

Over the succeeding sixty years, course credit for seminary classes was gradually discontinued, partly in response to legal objections. The change had no negative impact on enrollment; the students embraced seminary for reasons other than course credit.

Looking back, it may seem that giving up the chance to teach LDS doctrine in credit-bearing courses was too high a price to pay. Yet without this transitional strategy, the program might never have gotten a foothold.\textsuperscript{17}

Criteria of Excellence
In implementing Joseph Merrill’s Seminary proposal, the Granite Stake board of education carefully followed the guidelines given to them by Horace H. Cummings, Church superintendent of education. The teacher, Cummings said, should be a “properly qualified” individual who cared about young people and was respected by and influential with them—a “thorough student” himself with a “strong, winning personality.” He should be “a leader ... who will be universally regarded as the inferior of no teacher in the high school.”\textsuperscript{18}

The First Seminary Teacher
The man selected by the Granite Stake board of education to instruct the first seminary class was Cornell graduate Thomas J. Yates. Although he had already begun a promising career in civil engineering, he accepted this additional assignment and arranged to leave work early each day to fulfill it. Beginning with no examples, no lesson outlines, and no building, he and the Granite Stake leaders worked tirelessly to launch the program successfully.\textsuperscript{19} In the third week of the 1912–13 school year, the first seminary class was held. Yates served for one year.

\textsuperscript{12} Annie Laura Merrill
\textsuperscript{13} Joseph F. Merrill, circa 1915
How the Institute Program Emerged

Alongside their efforts to develop supplemental religious education for high school students, Church leaders had long wanted to provide religious and social support for students attending secular colleges and universities. Often influenced by disbelieving teachers, a disturbing number of these students were abandoning their faith.20 The first efforts to meet the needs of students this age were made in the 1925–26 school year by individual seminary teachers who offered “college seminary” classes where they were serving. Shortly thereafter, the First Presidency formally established a distinct program for these students, which came to be called Institute of Religion.

“College Seminaries”
In response to a widely acknowledged need, seminary teachers Andrew Anderson in 1925 and Gustive O. Larson the following year offered a “college seminary” class in Cedar City, Utah. Sidney B. Sperry did the same in Pocatello, Idaho, two years later.21 During this period, Church superintendent of schools Adam S. Bennion was laying plans for establishing official “college seminaries” near colleges and universities in Idaho, Utah, Arizona, and California.22

Founding the Institute System
In 1926, the First Presidency called J. Wyley Sessions and his family to go to Moscow, Idaho, to launch supplementary religious education classes for students of the state university there.23 President Heber J. Grant authorized $60,000 for the construction of a building—an extraordinary sum, given the economic severity of the times.24 It demonstrated President Grant’s confidence in what this program could achieve.

How Sessions Did It
Initially, Sessions met with resistance in Idaho. He won over his opponents by participating in university and community projects and building relationships with their leaders.25 In two short years, he accomplished two major feats: he persuaded University of Idaho officials to give credit for institute classes, if they were taught by qualified instructors and contained no sectarian doctrine,26 and he directed the construction of an institute building and meetinghouse. To qualify as an institute teacher, Sessions himself earned a master’s degree.

Other Institutes
During the latter part of the 1930s, Institute programs sprang up at colleges and universities all over the western United States. The institute at Moscow, Idaho, was their model.

Like the Seminary program, the Institute program eventually relinquished university credit for its courses in order to include LDS doctrine in the curriculum.
Additional Outreach

At colleges and universities where it was not feasible to establish an official Institute program, faculty-sponsored Deseret Clubs united the LDS student population by means of informal classes, devotions, and social activities. These clubs were especially popular at eastern schools, where LDS students formed a tiny minority.

At institutions where LDS students were more numerous, they also had the option of pledging to Lambda Delta Sigma, a fraternity/sorority-like organization designed to accomplish the same purposes as Deseret Clubs. Glenn L. Pearson, director of the UCLA institute, called Lambda Delta Sigma “the institute director’s best friend” because “it is his medium for creating an LDS college atmosphere.”

---

27 J. Wyley Sessions, circa 1935
27 Gustive O. Larson, circa 1960
27 Adam S. Bennion, circa 1925
27 Sidney B. Sperry, 1934
27 Moscow Institute of Religion at the University of Idaho, circa 1929
27 Members of Lambda Delta Sigma assisting in Red Cross war relief efforts, circa 1943
27 Buildings, students, and faculty of the Pocatello, Logan, and Salt Lake Institutes of Religion, from the September 1959 issue of the Improvement Era

---

An Enduring Solution

As the Church has expanded worldwide, it has opened seminaries, which are often housed in buildings close to high schools with a significant number of LDS students.

Where it has not been possible to hold classes in released time during the students’ free periods, classes are held in the early morning or, in some cases, after school.

Branch seminaries have been established at military installations, on Native American reservations, and in other areas with smaller numbers of students. Homebound students and residents of rehabilitation facilities receive weekly visits from assigned instructors. A home-study program has been developed for geographically isolated students. Other adaptations of the Seminary program are provided for students with special needs.

Wherever LDS students are located, the Seminary program extends to them an opportunity to participate.

Institutes have been established all around the world. Many meet near college campuses, while others benefit college-age youth who want to learn but do not attend or live near an academic institution. Some serve young people assigned to military installations.
In areas where qualified LDS faculty are not available, full-time senior missionaries with professional experience in education are called as administrators and instructors. The institutes are centers of fellowship, learning, and spiritual enrichment. Their social functions and student clubs are indispensable to their mission.

Seminary and Institute programs have expanded wherever the Church is sufficiently established.

---

**Blazing New Trails**

*Teachers in the Early Seminaries and Institutes*

*The most potent influence in training our youth to cherish life, to keep their word of honor, to have increased respect for [humankind] and love of justice, is the life and personality of the teacher.*

—David O. McKay, President of the Church, 1953

The early teachers of seminary and institute traveled into unknown educational territory, equipped with little beyond their own often limited learning experiences and their testimonies, determination, and faith. They faced the daunting task of attracting young people to weekday gospel study and teaching them effectively—without the benefit of an established program, proven methods, or curriculum materials. Not many accounts of their experiences survive; those that did are worth sharing.

*I find more places to apply Theology in one minute than any of my other studies in a whole day. Theology can be applied in [everything] in life[,] I find[,] and one feels so good doing it.*

—Jesse K. Wheeler, seminary student, 1917

*There is a sincerity found among students who ... seek religious education out of regular school hours[—]at a sacrifice of personal leisure or pleasure[—]that thrills the heart.*

—William E. Berrett, seminary teacher, circa 1934
Nurturing

*If you don’t yet have a personal testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel, use mine for a while.*

—Harold B. Lee, later President of the Church, to his seminary students at South High School, Salt Lake City

Much of a seminary or institute teacher’s most important work comes as one-on-one contact with students after class, during activities and service projects, and through letters. For many students, the example, kindness, and counsel of a teacher have provided guidance at difficult moments later in life.

*Lustive Larson,* an institute teacher in Cedar City in 1935, received letters from a former student detailing religious doubts that assailed him. The excerpts above from Larson’s reply show the respect with which he treated these concerns and the watchcare that he continued to show the young man, who replied: “Today I received ... a beautiful philosophy of life in answer to a child’s troubled mind. ... Please accept my thanks for the time and effort you spent writing the letter. But deepest thanks is for the mind and experience necessary [to] preparing such a letter for me.”

*William C. Smith* wrote this letter of congratulation and motivation to his graduating seminary student, Robert J. Smith, in 1936. William was also Robert’s bishop and cousin. Robert went on to serve as a vice president at BYU, a stake president, and a temple president.

*Jimmy Moss,* teacher and principal at East High School seminary during the 1930s, assigned “Gems of Thought” for his students to memorize—he said, “with the purpose of motivating the students, giving them a guide and some inspiration. ... One boy who was in World War II in the Navy wrote me and said, ‘Your gems are going all over the South Pacific.’”

Gratitude

*Many a day I have walked into seminary very downcast, but ... have left ... with high spirits and better prepared for my school day.*

—Edward C. Koelliker, class of 1936, South High School, Salt Lake City

From the inception of Seminary and Institute, enrollments have consistently increased, indicating that students enjoy and benefit from attending. In a representative expression of gratitude, Maurine West Jensen, valedictorian of South High School’s class of 1934, wrote: “Learning of the glory of Christ and of the greatness of other important Bible characters ... has ... raised my behavior to a higher level, inspired my ideals, and given me a pleasant, happy attitude. ... I have learned to give real, lasting service to God and my fellow men. ... I have gained a fuller, richer, more abundant life.”

*S. Dilworth Young,* a 1920s seminary student who later became one of the seven presidents of the Seventy, spoke in the April 1960 general conference of the power of his seminary experiences.

*Grateful students* from Cyprus High School wrote messages such as these in the 1943 yearbook of their seminary teacher, Eugene E. Campbell.

*Thelma Jorgensen* expressed her gratitude to John M. Whitaker for teaching her to see applications of the gospel in her daily life.
Moving Forward

We shall aim to keep alive an interest in spiritual things. ... We shall cultivate the ability to appreciate ultimate values in life.36

—Seminary pledge, “college seminary,” Cedar City, Utah, 1928

Seminary and institute graduates have been honored in ceremonies since at least 1923. When Gustive O. Larson’s “college seminary” class graduated in 1928, CES superintendent Adam S. Bennion offered an address outlining the “Recipe for Life.” In response, Larson’s class pledged to apply in their lives the lessons they had learned in class. Diplomalike certificates emphasized the idea of pairing spiritual growth with academic achievement to provide a firm foundation for future life.

[L] Larson’s 1928 “college seminary” class in Cedar City made the above pledge upon graduation. On his program, right, Larson wrote notes on Adam S. Bennion’s graduation address.

[L] Graduation certificates reminded recipients of their responsibility to live according to what they had been taught. Each certificate was signed by the current Church President, who was also president of the Church board of education.

[L] Seminary graduates from Pleasant Grove, 1927

Memories

[We were] freshies out for a good time. When we went to Seminary, we changed our attitude very much.37

—Roscoe Rogers, seminary student, Snowflake, Arizona, 1936

Seminary and institute students attending classes together tended to develop strong bonds of friendship regardless of differences in age or background. Students in many classes published annuals—inexpensive, self-produced yearbooks—to memorialize their graduation, thank their teacher, assess their growth, and celebrate their experiences together. Class photographs also became popular.

[L] The 1936 Snowflake Beacon was produced by William C. Smith’s class.

[L] South High School seminary classes, Salt Lake City, 1933. In the center stands their teacher, Harold B. Lee.

[L] Boyd K. Packer and his Box Elder seminary class, circa 1952, above. Box Elder, the second seminary established in the Church, was where Elder Packer received religious instruction during his teenage years.

[L] William E. Berrett’s institute classes captured memories of service projects and social activities in the flyer at left.

John M. Whitaker

Seminary Teacher

In April of 1915, fifty-two-year-old stenographer John M. Whitaker was called by Stake President Frank Y. Taylor to take over the Granite Seminary.38 A devoted journal keeper, Whitaker is one of the richest sources of information about the early years of the Seminary program.39 He recorded many occasions when he was able to overcome challenges through faith. One month after starting as a teacher, he wrote, “The name of the Granite
Seminary and its effect upon the young is spreading; and now I have students from many wards outside Granite Stake. He called it a day of “spirit and inspiration” when he wrote, “Seminaries will be established eventually in all the Stakes of the Church, and it will be the salvation of the coming youth.” Whitaker served as chairman of several committees that developed the early seminary curriculum.

Praying for Guidance
I had to start without the least scratch, or outline. ...[It] was a task too great to undertake alone. So I did as I have always done when presented with a task: I went in humility and prayer to my Father and in my simplicity told him my problem, and asked for inspiration, guidance, wisdom, and courage.

—John M. Whitaker, 1915

Teaching and Testifying
Whitaker had a great effect upon the students he taught because they felt that he, as one student wrote, “practiced what he preached.” He was known to end his lessons with his powerful testimony of the Savior, which had a lasting spiritual impact on his students. Alice Mitchell Lillywhite recalled that although Whitaker was always formal in his manner and attire, he remained accessible to his students. “He was kind of fatherly. ... I would go after class and [he] would explain things to me. He’d [jokingly] call me a ‘Doubting Thomas,’ ... but I just wanted to know ... a little more than I had [learned] in class. He was such a good teacher.”

—John M. Whitaker, 1889

Granite High School seminary class, circa 1924
A student expresses gratitude for life lessons, 1917

William E. Berrett
Seminary Teacher and Administrator

In 1925, twenty-three-year-old university graduate William E. Berrett was asked to open a new seminary in Roosevelt, Utah. Following his first year of teaching, he married Eleanor Callister. The difficulty of trying to live on his small salary was compounded by the loss of their first baby due to poor medical conditions in rural Utah. The Berretts made many sacrifices for the Seminary program, including moving all their belongings, without reimbursement, for four consecutive summers in order to attend the seminary teacher summer school at BYU.

Berrett taught seminary throughout Utah and Idaho. His students remember him as faithful, knowledgeable, and friendly. Later, he oversaw the Church-wide Seminary and Institute programs and was instrumental in their worldwide expansion.
Gathering the Flock

Seminary ... had never been held for students attending Roosevelt High School. ... My salary started as of July 1st. ... I began to visit homes, explain the purpose and nature of Seminary instruction and induce young people to enroll. ... Sometimes I could hitch a ride, but mostly I walked, [some days] covering some thirty miles on foot. ... No one ever offered me a meal or a cool drink. Noon lunch usually consisted of a package of crackers purchased at some little country store. ...[One person]... predicted ... that I would fail when he learned I had not served as a [m]issionary.

Nevertheless, when September came around I had nearly one hundred students. A little lumber shack some 18 ... by 20 [feet] had been erected as a Seminary building. It was heated by a pot-bellied stove ... and had no inside plumbing. The floor was uncarpeted and it was without furnishings except for a few chairs and an old desk. There was no piano and all singing had to be [a c]ap[p]ella. I enjoyed the teaching and the students, some of whom were only three or four years younger than I.49

—William E. Berrett, memory of 1925

A Rough Start

I remember taking my wife ... out of Salt Lake City, where she was used to the usual conveniences, out to the Uintah Basin, where we had no inside plumbing and where it was sometimes 20 below [in] the little outhouse. ... She was pregnant; our salary of ... $150 a month ... only went partway. So we had to take in four boarders to ... keep the wolf away from the door. Now, that was a test for a wife.50

—William E. Berrett, memory of 1926

[49] William E. Berrett, graduation portrait, 1925

[50] The newlywed Berretts moved to Roosevelt, Utah, in 1926, about the time these photographs were taken.

[51] Berrett’s book The Restored Church, first published in 1937, served as a seminary text for nearly forty years.

J. Wyley Sessions

Institute Director and Teacher

In 1926, the First Presidency needed a dynamic, diligent, and faithful worker to establish the new Institute of Religion program for college students. They turned to J. Wyley Sessions, home just three weeks following more than seven years’ service as a mission president, to set up LDS theology classes at the University of Idaho in Moscow.51 A farmer by trade, Sessions was understandably concerned about his financial prospects and lack of qualifications. Yet he faithfully fulfilled the challenging assignment to tame anti-Mormon sentiments in northern Idaho and to make a spiritually secure place for LDS college students away from home.
Obedient Labor
Several times Sessions was asked to relocate and begin more institutes. After over a
decade of working for the Church, he was ready to return to financial security in the
private sector when Elder John A. Widtsoe approached him about deferring his plans yet
again in order to start another institute in Laramie, Wyoming. Sessions replied, “Oh, I
wouldn’t like to go, but if you say I should go, I’ll go. You know my ability better than I
do. And if that’s where I can serve best, there’s where I want to go.”

Thomas C. Romney
Institute Director and Teacher
Thomas Romney’s background in Colonia Juarez was filled with poverty, hard work, and turbulence during
and after the 1912 Mexican revolution. Following part-time schooling at Juarez Academy to earn his high
school diploma, he entered BYU as a thirty-five-year-old freshman and earned his bachelor’s degree in two
years. He obtained his two advanced degrees while teaching full-time and supporting a family of eight
children.

Romney’s patriarchal blessing had said that he would be “a mighty influence for good among” the Church’s
youth. From 1929 through 1943, he served as director of the new Logan Institute of Religion, built its
enrollment from 100 to nearly 1,400, and, according to Apostle John A. Widtsoe, made it “the largest and most
effective institute in the Church.”

A Hard-Earned Education
While serving as principal of Knight and Oneida Stake Academies, Romney obtained his
master’s degree from the University of California at Berkeley by attending in the
summers. After five years of teaching at BYU, he moved his family to Berkeley and, at
age fifty-two, earned his doctorate in just one year—a feat that BYU President Franklin S.
Harris said would be “next to impossible.” He claimed that he could not have achieved
any of it without his wife Lydia, whom he had married between his first and second
missions.

Caring for Each One
Romney’s strength was nurturing and mentoring students. In a 1925 letter to George H.
Brinmhall, he explained:

To be of service to my theology students individually ... I have solicited a personal
interview with each ... to ... become personally and intimately acquainted with ... the
moral and religious stature of each student. This can best be accomplished, I find, by
brushing aside all formalities and entering upon a heart-to-heart talk.
His institute students thought of him as a father. One of them, Israel Heaton, remembered that Romney not only taught him the gospel but helped him find work so that he could stay in school. Romney’s ultimate goal for the students included the development of their character. “A teacher who purposely neglects that responsibility,” he said, “should be dismissed from the classroom.”

Thomas C. Romney studying, top; as a missionary in 1896, lower left; and at his graduation from Brigham Young University in 1914

Romney’s wife Lydia encouraged him through seventeen years of collegiate studies culminating in a doctorate from Berkeley in 1929.

The Life of Lorenzo Snow, published in 1955, was one of five books that Thomas wrote.

Thomas Romney at the Logan Institute, circa 1930

Lessons

When seminary began as a pilot program, no central curriculum existed. Using the scriptures as a basis, seminary and institute teachers created their own lesson plans, often basing them on what students most wanted or needed to know. Beginning in 1921, the Church published textbooks to aid teachers, inform students, and standardize the curriculum. In order to justify academic course credit, teachers tested the students on lesson content and issued grades.

A. Theodore Tuttle

A talent for leadership prepared A. Theodore Tuttle for a lifetime of service to his Church and its youth. Ted, as he was called, served as student body president and seminary president at his high school and was named the outstanding religion student at BYU. After service in World War II that included supplying the flag raised at Iwo Jima, he earned a master’s degree from Stanford, taught seminary in Utah and Idaho, and directed the institute at Reno. When called as a General Authority, he was supervisor of all the seminaries and institutes in the western states.

Institute teacher Ted Tuttle asked his class for questions at the end of each session. This student’s queries about affection in courtship guided the lesson plan Tuttle prepared on this topic.

Early textbooks crystallized the messages of seminary and institute lessons. Outlines in Theology, published in 1921, contained suggested lesson plans, scripture readings, passages for memorization, and discussion questions. In addition to these, the 1930 text Land and Leaders of Israel included background material and inspirational poetry.

Examinations emphasized students’ accountability and demonstrated that they had met the standards necessary to receive academic credit. This Old Testament exam key, with answers written in by Ted Tuttle, covers material included in the lecture outline behind it.

Service

Seminaries and institutes offered an ideal opportunity to teach LDS students not merely the doctrine behind their religion, but the practice of it. When, in the 1930s, a Salt Lake Institute student complained to his teacher, Lowell Bennion, that he wanted to “do something worthwhile,” Bennion organized the first of many community service projects that became hallmarks of his institute program. By 1939, service projects were integral in the extracurricular activities of institutes and seminaries throughout the Church.
Lowell L. Bennion and T. Edgar Lyon

For twenty-three years, a remarkable team directed the Salt Lake Institute. Lowell Bennion, its founding director, had learned compassion for the poor and lonely from his parents and on his mission in Depression-era Germany. His assistant director, Ed Lyon, had inherited a strong service ethic from his parents. Both had privately dedicated their lives to serving others. Under their leadership, institute activities regularly included house painting, toy repair, adoption of families for Christmas, and caroling to widows. The students eagerly absorbed this legacy of caring, and graduates shared it worldwide.

Lambda Delta Sigma

In 1936, Bennion helped a group of institute students frame a constitution for Lambda Delta Sigma, a fraternity/sororitylike group for all LDS students willing to promote its values of truth and light, eternal progress, revelation, knowledge, and priesthood. Bennion regarded this co-ed social fraternity as a “laboratory in which youth was trained in leadership and service and where fellows and girls associated in a variety of meaningful ways.”

Sharing Spiritual Strength

LeRoy Whitehead Sr., son of an impoverished young widow, learned to rely on the Lord in his youth. He worked his way through Brigham Young University, graduating in 1926. He had planned a career in the lumber business but responded willingly to an offer to teach seminary for a low salary in Gunnison, Utah. While there, he learned one morning that one of his students had been critically injured in a car accident.

A nurse informed me that it was only a matter of time. ... I was still dazed when the members of the class arrived. ... All of the girls were weeping and the boys ... felt badly. ... One of the girls asked if instead of having a lesson we could pray for her recovery. I was delighted with the suggestion and then asked the students how we should proceed. Another of the students wanted each of the class members to have a chance to pray for her. Another suggested that we kneel by the side of the desks. ... I have never heard more beautiful prayers offered by the youth of our Church. ... I wept the entire hour. ... As the students departed, I all I could say was, “[She] will get well.”

About two hours later, he received news of the girl’s miraculous recovery. Whitehead never entered the lumber business. Instead, he taught for forty-three years at three seminaries, serving as principal for most of that time. He served five full-time missions, three of them with his wife after his retirement, and taught in the Scouting program.

Lowell Bennion believed, in the words of Ed Lyon, “that if you don’t respect the widows and the orphans..., it isn’t real religion.”

Ed Lyon once wrote in his journal, “My ancestors had foresight enough to follow a prophet of God into the valleys of the mountains, and I owe a lifetime of service to others for it.”

Lambda Delta Sigma, like institute, had a strong service orientation. Ed Lyon recalled Lowell Bennion saying that if it ever “degenerated into a punch and cookie fellowship, it ought to be abolished.”

LeRoy Whitehead Sr., circa ????
In the history of the Church there is no better illustration of the prophetic preparation of this people than the beginnings of the seminary and institute programs. These programs were started when they were nice but were not critically needed. They were granted a season to flourish and to grow into a bulwark for the Church. They now become a godsend for the salvation of modern Israel in a most challenging hour.

—Boyd K. Packer, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1982


8. Reference to this letter is made in Willard Done to General Board of Education, March 31, 1899, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 18, folder 11, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

9. Reference to this letter is made in Willard Done to General Board of Education, March 31, 1899, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 18, folder 11, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

10. Minutes of the meeting of the General Board of Education, May 12, 1912, Scott G. Kenney Research Collection, MSS 2022, box 10, folder 4, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


12a. Charles Coleman, et al., “History of Granite Seminary,” MS 2237, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah


15. [A. Theodore Tuttle], interview by Joseph F. Merrill, May 27, 1948, typescript, 1, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project; A. Theodore Tuttle, “Released Time Religious Education Program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” master’s thesis, Stanford University, 1949, 56.


23. J. Wyley Sessions, Oral History, transcript, August 12, 1972, 4, UA OH 65, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


27. Glenn L. Pearson to William E. Berrett, February 1, 1956, [2], MSS 2960, box 3, folder 5; L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


30. William E. Berrett, in “History of South LDS Seminary, 1931–34,” 30, CR 447 2, box 1, folder 1, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.


32. Student to Gusive O. Larson, November 13, 1935, UA 622, box 9, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


36. “Seminary Pledge—1928,” Cedar City, Utah, May 6, 1928, UA 622, box 59, folder 2, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


38. John M. Whitaker, Journal, April 1915, 206, Microfilm 920, no. 21, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Microfilm 920 no. 21.* [B]

39. John M. Whitaker, Journal, September 7, 1927, Microfilm 920, no. 21, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.* [B] Whitaker records, “I … had many private discussions with my friend Dr. John A. Widtsoe, who comes to my home and examines my Journal and Library and often said to me, ‘Brother Whitaker, as you gather and preserve these documents and data of history [they] will be eagerly sought later by professors and students from the East seeking the history of the beginning of the Seminary movement and release time daily religious education. They are very precious and you are the most careful I know of in the church who is preserving such data, I know of no one who has such a vast volume of early church data.’ ”


41. John M. Whitaker, Journal, October 14, 1917, 6, Microfilm 920, no. 21, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

42. See Adam S. Bennion to John M. Whitaker, May 4, 1921, John M. Whitaker Papers, MS 2, box 18, folder 3, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah; Adam S. Bennion to John M. Whitaker, July 28, 1921, John M. Whitaker Papers, MS 2, Box 18, Folder 3, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah; Adam S. Bennion to John M. Whitaker, October 27, 1921, John M. Whitaker Papers, MS 2, Box 18, Folder 4, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.


44. Dean Bringhurst, Granite High School, John M. Whitaker Papers, S 2, box 19, folder 13, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

45. S. Dilworth Young, Conference Report, April 1960, 80–81.

46. Alice Mitchell Lillywhite, interviewed by Laurel A. Burch and Sienna Woolley Webber, Provo, Utah, November 13, 2007, transcript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.

47. William E. Berrett, “As a Seminary Principal,” chapter draft for “My Story,” typescript, 37, MSS 1955, box 1, folder 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


49. William E. Berrett, “As a Seminary Principal,” chapter draft for “My Story,” typescript, 32–33, MSS 1955, box 1, folder 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

51. J. Wyley Sessions, Oral History, transcript, August 12, 1972, 4, UA OH 65, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

52. J. Wyley Sessions, Oral History, transcript, August 12, 1972, 9, UA OH 65, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


59. Thomas Romney to George H. Brimhall, November 1925, Brimhall Presidential Papers, UA 1092, Box 33, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


61. Personal conversation, CTW with Israel Heaton.

62. Thomas C. Romney, “Education in the Great Basin” in Behind the Centennial, no. 6, Address delivered Sunday, April 13, 1947, at 9 p.m. over radio station KSL, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

63. John M. Whittaker Diary, April 1915, Microfilm 920 no. 21, 206-207, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


65. Lowell L. Bennion, Mormonism and Education (Salt Lake City: Department of Education of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1939), 215–17.

66. Lowell L. Bennion, Mormonism and Education (Salt Lake City: Department of Education of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1939), 215–17.


The object ... for the maintenance of Church schools is that true religion ... may be inculcated in the minds and hearts of our children while they are getting an education, to enable the heart, the soul and the spirit of our children to develop with proper teaching.\textsuperscript{1}

—Joseph F. Smith, President of the Church, 1915
The restored Church has always aimed to develop faith, virtue, and knowledge in the Latter-day Saints and encouraged them to seek after every good thing.¹ This is its charted course in education.

Progress along this course has taken generations. As President Ezra Taft Benson has taught, there will be higher educational performance and greater works of art, scholarship, and parenthood only as fast as we become “a better people.”² Church education has so far blessed thousands because of the selflessness, patience, and kindness with which many parents, teachers, and leaders have devoted themselves to the learning of others.

Increasing numbers of Church Education students, young and old, seek to enhance their families, their work, and their service by applying themselves diligently and prayerfully to their studies.

In 1992, President Gordon B. Hinckley said that BYU “is a continuing experiment on a great premise that a large and complex university can be first class academically while nurturing an environment of faith in God and the practice of Christian principles.”³

A decade later, in 2003, President Hinckley stated, “Here we ... are demonstrating that faith in the Almighty can accompany and enrich scholarship in the secular. It is more than an experiment. It is an accomplishment.”⁴
FOOTNOTES

1. See Articles of Faith 1:13.


CHARTING THE CHURCH’S EDUCATIONAL COURSE

In 1875, when Brigham Young first commissioned the academy that became the university bearing his name, he had a clear vision of its mission. The school was to teach the standard academic curriculum and the doctrines of the restored gospel, and to teach them both by the Spirit of God. The Academy’s founding principal, Karl G. Maeser, took these instructions as his guide. He was also determined to emulate the Prophet Joseph Smith, who, he said, “taught his people correct principles and they governed themselves accordingly.”

Since Presidents Smith and Young first stated these precepts, Church leaders have frequently reemphasized them, most famously in a landmark speech given by President J. Reuben Clark in 1938. They are essential elements of what President Clark called “the charted course of the Church in education.”

The Guidance of Heaven

In the late spring of 1876, soon after his arrival in Provo, Maeser received word that in a few days Brigham Young would be visiting him. President Young wanted to learn how Maeser planned to implement the charge he had given him.

Maeser sat at his desk that night to work out his ideas. Nothing came. Through the next day and the day after, he paced his office and scribbled notes. The third day, in the late afternoon, he dropped, exhausted and disheartened, to his knees.

“O Father,” he pleaded. “Show me the way[;] help me to make the plans for this great work. I cannot do it of myself.”

Immediately the confusion of the preceding days was lifted, and within a few hours Maeser had written out the plan for the new school. It had come to him as an answer to prayer.
Maeser’s pedagogical model shaped not merely Brigham Young Academy, but all the Church academies. The leaders and teachers of these schools were largely trained in BYA’s normal department, and Maeser himself, as Church superintendent of schools, supervised their work. Maeser also traveled throughout the West, instructing local Church leaders on how weekday Religion Classes, which were then sponsored by the various wards, should be managed and taught. And in the course of time, the academies and Religion Classes trained the leaders and teachers who eventually created the seminaries and institutes and who built up the Church’s college-level schools.

The inspired plan that Maeser wrote while sitting at his desk on a spring evening in 1876 launched and shaped the now worldwide educational program of the Church.

---

Early Students’ Recollections of Their BYA Experience

[The students] came ... as the result of economy and sacrifice[,]... and ... realized ... the necessity of devoting every energy to study. ... They were earnest, sincere, serious-minded, well-behaved, clean of thought, comradely, and anxious to know and do the right thing. ... They came knowing what they wanted, and determined to obtain it in full measure, however severe the effort. How well they succeeded is disclosed by the history of the Territory, State and Nation, in which the names of so many of them will be found on the roll of honor and high service.

—George Sutherland BYA student, 1879–81 | U.S. Supreme Court justice, 1922–38

[I taught] a class of [grown men], who had never attended school. ...The reason for their attending [BYA] was because they had heard that no ridicule or unkind remarks would ever be passed upon them. Many of them[,]... until they were grown[,] did not realize how handicapped they were without more schooling.
How they would work[!]... They advance[d] rapidly ... in their school life, and ... their own self[-]respect. ... Many of these young men became bishops [or] high coun[cil]men, went upon missions and proved successful ... in the Kingdom of God.

—Zina Young Williams Card BYU graduate, 1881 | BYU faculty, 1877–84 | BYU board of trustees, 1918–30

It did not matter that the building was a ... warehouse, nor that the desks were long, crude, table affairs. ... It was the spirit and atmosphere of the institution which were so fascinating and satisfying. I had heard ... how fine the school was, how the spirit of the gospel permeated every quarter, ... but the reality exceeded my expectations. That year seemed ... the happiest of my life. ... The school was really as remarkable as I then thought it was, for it featured those things which are most important in this life and in the life to come.

—Amy Brown Lyman BYU graduate, 1891 | BYU faculty, 1888–94 | general Relief Society president, 1940–45

One day Dr. ... Maeser ... said: “Not only will you ... be held responsible for the things that you do, but you will be accountable for every thought that you think[. ”]
Being only twelve years of age I did not understand just what he meant, but I couldn’t forget it. ... Within a day or two I ... discovered that[,] after all[,] we are the sum of our thoughts. ... That ... suggestion inspired in me a desire to think only pure thoughts. ... With all my heart I thank the ... Academy and Dr. ... Maeser for what they have done for me.

—George Albert Smith BYU student, 1883–84 | Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1903–45 | President of the Church, 1945–51

You will never put ... on paper and you can never convey an intelligible something that [Karl G. Maeser]
had. He knew how to touch a boy’s heart like no one else that I’ve ever known. He put something in fellows that nobody else ever did. I have seen men come from the farm and ranch and stay there six months and go home with an entirely new light in their eye. He was a character technician.

—Bryant S. Hinckley BYA student, 1883–85, 1887–90 | BYA faculty, 1893–1900 | LDSBC president, 1900–1910 | YMMIA general board, 1900–1925
FOOTNOTES


4. Ida Stewart Peay, “A Story Dr. Maeser Told,” *Improvement Era* 17, no. 3 (January 1914): 194–95. [link]

5. See, for many examples, Karl G. Maeser’s papers and letterbooks, UA 1094, box 3, reels 1–5, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link]


7. George Sutherland, “A Message to the 1941 Graduating Class of Brigham Young University from Mr. Justice George Sutherland” [printed transcript of BYU commencement speech delivered June 4, 1941] (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1941), 14–15, UA 497, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link]

8. Zina Young Williams, “Sketch of School Life in the Brigham Young Academy (1878–1884),” typescript, 8–9, UA 206, item 6, George H. Brimhall Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link]


10. George Albert Smith to George H. Brimhall, March 11, 1925, George H. Brimhall Papers, UA 206, 1925, item 5, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link]

11. Quoted in Beatrice Maeser Mitchell, oral history interview, September 19, 1980, 3, UA OH 38, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.[link]
A Comprehensive Education

Under Karl G. Maeser, the new Academy went to great lengths “to give the pupils a complete education, morally, religiously and intellectually.”

Maeser devoutly believed that nothing short of such an education could prepare men and women to lift the world out of its socially, politically, and religiously degraded condition. “Any deviation from [this course],” he said in 1892, “would have led to disastrous results, and therefore, the Brigham Young Academy has nailed its colors to the mast.”

Difficult Beginnings

In an unusual move for that time of year, Maeser opened the Academy on April 24, 1876, for an “experimental” term. “Financial conditions [were] exceedingly discouraging,” he later recalled, so he served as principal, teacher, chorister, organist, janitor, recruiter, and fundraiser. He instituted daily devotionals, organized the curriculum by grade level, and personally taught grammar, spelling, arithmetic, history, and geography. Because the students were, as he said, “poorly prepared,” the academic work was at first rudimentary. But within two years he had created five academic departments, a choir, and an extracurricular academic forum in which students discussed topics from art and literature to science and government.

Increasing Students

Although only twenty-nine students registered on the first day of the experimental term, their numbers soon increased. In the first academic year, 178 students attended at least part of one term. Five years later, the number grew to 400, although attendance could be irregular due to the financial limitations and labor needs of the students’ families. Most were from Utah Valley, but students from central and southern Utah also came in significant numbers. In all, more than 3,000 attended the Academy during Maeser’s sixteen-year administration.

Class Schedule, Fall 1878

Sixteen-year-old James E. Talmage drew up this class schedule for the fall term of 1878. Talmage was serving as the Academy’s faculty secretary.
Courses are shown for the four departments indicated by their initials under the “Dept.” column: Primary, Intermediate, Grammar, and Academic. Each morning, all students attended the theology class of their respective departments except on Wednesdays, when everyone attended “Extempore,” a small-group gospel discussion session conducted by student assistants called repetitors.

**Strengthening Faith**

On Wednesday evenings, the entire school attended a “General Theological Meeting,” in which assigned students presented talks, musical performances, and original writing with a gospel orientation. Besides this general meeting and the departmental theology classes, all students gathered daily for a brief devotional that included prayer, a hymn, and remarks by the principal or a faculty member. On Sunday mornings, all attended “Missionary Meeting,” where they partook of the sacrament and bore testimony to prepare for missionary service. “All our studies are conducted according to the [S]pirit of the living God,” recorded James E. Talmage. “We [cannot] afford to lose that [S]pirit.”

---

1. **Provo’s Center Street** as seen from 200 West, circa 1870. The Lewis Building stands at far left.

2. **Faculty member Milton H. Hardy** kept a diary, partially in shorthand, recording the recruiting and fundraising tour he and Karl G. Maeser made to Sanpete, Juab, and Millard Counties in July 1887.

3. Minutes of the Academy’s December 5, 1887, General Theological Meeting outline the program for that day and record assignments for the next meeting.

---

**Sayings of Karl G. Maeser**

*Be yourself, but always your better self.*

*Knowledge is not power unless sustained by ... character.*

*No man shall be more exacting of me or my conduct than I am of myself.*

*It is our privilege to become so attached to our duties that temptation shall have no power to lead us astray.*

*The law is made only for slaves[,] a free character ... does right because it is right.*

*Eagerness to earn bread and butter has overshadowed...*
many a golden opportunity.

Precisely as you partake of the Spirit, so will you progress in your studies.\(^{14}\)
—[Karl G. Maeser]

Fostering Self-Governance

To educate the whole soul, Principal Karl G. Maeser devised and perfected what he described as “solid systematic moral and religious training.”\(^{15}\) As “the guiding rule for the teacher,” he believed that “whatever can be done by the pupils, the teacher should never do himself.”\(^{16}\) The system engaged the students in the Academy’s daily operations, including maintaining department or classroom order, recording student performance, and mentoring younger students.\(^{18}\) Maeser instructed faculty to identify students who needed help, so that competent tutors could be assigned to work with them.\(^{19}\) Adopting a name widely employed by educational leaders elsewhere, Maeser called this the “monitorial system.” It helped the students become “responsible for something ... outside of their own individual concerns, but ... essential for the comfort and well-being ... of the little community (the school or class) of which each of them form[s] a part.”\(^{17}\)

Developing Accountability

Not until the senior of the class ... has called the roll, arranged the seats, etc., and announced the day’s lesson, does the teacher resume his duties. He then asks, “Class in order?” to which the senior responds as the case may be. If in the affirmative, the teacher then says, “Report preparation.” All who are prepared then arise. After they resume their seats the questions are put to the class as a body and those who are ready with an answer signify it by the uplifted hand. At the close of the exercise, the roll is again called, when each member of the class answers to his name by a number representing the grade of his merit [...]. It being left to the honor of the pupil to give a correct return of his standing in the class that day.\(^{20}\)

—Deseret Evening News, April 25, 1879
Student-Directed Learning

Once a week, each departmental theology class divided into small groups to discuss what the students had been learning. Each group was led by an older student called a repetitor. One BYA instructor observed the effectiveness of this approach: “A free-for-all discussion now took place which did more to arouse interest and rivet conviction than ten times the amount of passive listening would have done.” The theology discussion repetitors were encouraged to become exemplars of the Academy’s ideals and were asked to identify and meet individual students’ needs.

“The ‘Keystone’ of the Academy”

All priesthood holders at the Academy and those women assigned to serve as repetitors attended a weekly preparation session known as “Priesthood Meeting,” where they studied gospel and Church government principles more deeply than was possible in theology classes. They were exhorted, as discussion leaders, to “teach [class members] the questions in the spirit they were given and cultivate in their minds the love of God and a desire to do right.” Maeser called this meeting “the ‘keystone of the Academy’” and said that without it “there would be no peace, no honor, no mutual confidence.” To this he added, “Those who attend are supposed to have made a covenant with the Almighty to lead a pure life.”

A Home Away from Home

“I have made a public promise to your parents, that I would look after their sons and daughters,” Maeser told his students in 1880, “and having made that promise I am in duty bound to see that it is kept.” Through what Maeser called the “Domestic Organization,” students not living at home received “constant, sympathetic, and wise supervision.” They were assigned to administrative “domestic wards,” each presided over by an elder and two counselors—all students—under the direction of advisory faculty members. Senior students were assigned to visit ward members and report monthly on their welfare. These wards met together each Sunday morning in the Academy’s Missionary Meeting.

Christlike Discipline

When correcting students, Maeser confronted them privately, learned whether they were repentant, and invited them to confess and ask forgiveness publicly.

One student, poor and desperately in need of shoes, stole an unattended purse. Following his apology to the assembled students, Brother Maeser told them: “Now it is up to you. This young man has done everything in his power. ... You who feel that you could sustain this young man, bring him back among you, and forgive and forget, raise your hands.” Most in the room were moved to tears by the principal’s plea. One student remembered, “Oh, how I wanted to do everything that I could for that poor boy.” All voted to forgive the offender.

Then Maeser spoke again. “Now you have forgiven this boy, and remember what forgiveness means: bury it, forget it.”

---

1. Karl G. Maeser's desk, nearly identical to this one on display, was made at the same time and in the same midwestern region. The main portion of Maeser's actual desk has been located, but the bookcase portion no longer exists.

2. The first Brigham Young Academy graduating class, 1877
Nothing can prosper in school or fireside without love. —Karl G. Maeser, Superintendent of Church Schools, 1898

When their father suggested that they attend Brigham Young Academy, Alice Louise and Florence Reynolds balked, because Maeser’s students at the Twentieth Ward School had called him “a harsh teacher.” While attending that school, Reed Smoot, a member of the original BYA class, had experienced Maeser’s severity firsthand—in the form of a box on the ear.

But the Reynolds girls said they “fell in love with [Maeser] the moment we saw him, and still love him as we have seldom loved anyone else.” And Smoot recalled that Maeser’s “whole nature changed” after President Young called him to lead the Academy.

The change in Maeser seems to have come on the day of that calling. Alice Louise’s father, George S. Reynolds, was secretary to the First Presidency and was in the room when these now-famous words were spoken: “You must not attempt to teach even the alphabet or the multiplication table without the Spirit of God. That is all.”

Many years later, Alice Louise said, “One day when I was telling [Father] of the spirit that dominated the institution, he said, ‘You do not need to tell me of the spirit of the Brigham Young University. I was present when it was born. I shall never forget the spirit that filled [that] office when President Young talked to Brother Maeser. It was then that I vowed that, God being my helper, it should be the school where my children should be trained.’ ”
FOOTNOTES

1. Karl G. Maeser, “The Principal of the Brigham Young Academy,” Utah Enquirer, December 23, 1890, 3. [link]


5. “Register of Studies, 1876–1894,” typescript, undated, 6, UA 237, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. [link]

7. “Register of Studies, 1876–1894,” typescript, 1941, 76, UA 229, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. [link]

8. “Register of Studies, 1876–1894,” typescript, 1941, 103, UA 229, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. [link]

9. Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:189, gives a figure of “3,272 different students” but without specifying how that figure was determined. [link]


10. James E. Talmage, in BYA theological meeting minutes, October 13, 1879, 2:9, UA 238, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 1:160. [link]


12. BYA domestic department minutes, February 14, 1889, 74, UA 195, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

13. BYA domestic department records, 1879-1881, 51, UA 239, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

14. Minutes of the Grand Theological Class, August 27, 1879, [2]:[2], Records of Theological Class, 1876–1883, UA 228, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

15. Karl G. Maeser to Benjamin Cluff Jr., April 9, 1894, Brigham Young University President’s Records, 1892–1903, UA 1093, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


19. See, for example, “BYA Faculty Meeting Minutes,” holographic reprint, February 22, 1878, 46, in Meeting Minutes, 1876–1951, UA5, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

17. Karl G. Maeser, “The Monitorial System,” *Juvenile Instructor* 36, no. 5 (March 1, 1901): 153. In this reference, Maeser stated that although he called his system by the name commonly used among educators, he altered his version of the system to discourage student abuses, such as bullying and tattling, and to encourage “cultivation of a public spirit among the pupils.” In James E. Talmage, “The Brigham Young Academy,” *Contributor* 2, no. 9 (June 1881): 272–73, the system is described, though not named. Talmage’s reference to the “Emulatory Method” refers to the system of discipline within Maeser’s version of the monitorial system.


26. See, for example, “Minutes of Priesthood Meetings Held in Brigham Young Academy, 1879–1881,” typescript, September 7 and 14, 1880, 15, and January 11, 1881, 33, in Priesthood Records of Brigham Young Academy, 1879–1881, UA 70, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also James E. Talmage, “The Brigham Young Academy,” *Contributor* 2, no. 9 (June 1881): 272.

21. Karl G. Maeser, quoted in Minutes of the Grand Theological Class, September 24, 1883, 114, Records of Theological Class [and Priesthood Meetings], 1876–1883, UA 228, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


22. “Minutes of Priesthood Meetings Held in Brigham Young Academy, 1879–1881,” typescript, October 19, 1880, 22, in Priesthood Records of Brigham Young Academy, 1879–1881, UA 70, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

23. Karl G. Maeser, quoted in Minutes of the Grand Theological Class, September 24, 1883, 114, Records of Theological Class [and Priesthood Meetings], 1876–1883, UA 228, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

24. Mary John’s record of Maeser’s remarks in “Minutes of Priesthood Meetings Held in Brigham Young Academy, 1879–1881,” typescript, October 19, 1880, 24, in Priesthood Records of Brigham Young Academy, 1879–1881, UA 70, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

27. Karl G. Maeser, quoted in BYA domestic department minutes, January 15, 1880, 100, UA 195, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

28. Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” bound typescript, 1947, 17, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

29. See, for example, BYA domestic department minutes, January 15, 1880, 102, UA 195, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


33. Reed Smoot, address given at BYU Founders’ Day Assembly, typescript, October 17, 1932, 3, UA 290, University Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library,
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Reed Smoot, Conference Report, October 1–3, 1937, 19.


35. Reed Smoot, address given at BYU Founders' Day Assembly, typescript, October 17, 1932, 3, UA 290, University Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Reed Smoot, Conference Report, October 1–3, 1937, 19.

36. Alice Louise Reynolds, “History of the Brigham Young University,” typescript, undated, 2, UA 104, J. Marinus Jensen Collection, University Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah [link].

37. Alice Louise Reynolds, “History of the Brigham Young University,” typescript, undated, 2, UA 104, J. Marinus Jensen Collection, University Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah [link].
The School, a Temple of Learning

This is a world-class university, a great temple of learning where a highly qualified faculty instruct a large and eager body of students. These teachers impart with skill and dedication the accumulated secular knowledge of the centuries while also building faith in the eternal verities that are the foundation of civilization.

—Gordon B. Hinckley, President of the Church, 1992

From the beginning of this dispensation, the Lord has associated the temple, the school, and the ministry, a trio now brought together in this spot. Under the direction of the servants of the Lord, Brigham Young University’s role is to be a “house of faith[,]”... a sanctified and fully effective participant in the revealing and teaching and reforming mission of the kingdom of God.

—Dallin H. Oaks, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1976

For Karl G. Maeser, Brigham Young Academy was a holy enterprise and part of the kingdom of God. It developed students spiritually, morally, and intellectually for prosperity, service, and happiness in both this life and the life hereafter. That is why the Academy and the schools and educational programs to which it gave rise may properly be called temples of learning.

Though their structures, resources, and methods have undergone changes since Maeser’s time, the careful blending of study, testimony building, and opportunities to serve—the education of the whole soul for time and eternity—remains the constant objective.

---

1 Juarez Academy, Mexico
2 Brigham Young University–Idaho, Rexburg
3 LDS Business College, Salt Lake City, Utah
4 Brigham Young University–Hawaii, Laie, Oahu
Jerusalem Center, Israel

BY EXTRAORDINARY DILIGENCE AND SACRIFICE

Building a University

When Karl G. Maeser turned over the Academy’s principalship to Benjamin Cluff in 1892 after sixteen years of all-out effort, he felt that “much yet has to be done.” The Academy was still essentially a grammar school and high school, augmented by teacher training courses. Without marked improvement in areas such as faculty credentials, libraries, laboratories, and curriculum, the school could never be accredited, its students could not compete successfully for employment, and attracting quality faculty and students would become increasingly difficult.

But neither Utah Stake nor the Church had the resources needed for such upgrades. So for many years, even after becoming a university, the school got along on very slim allocations. Yet remarkably, its leaders not only kept it alive but actually built it from a small frontier elementary and secondary school to a fully accredited university.

The First Three Presidents

Cluff the Innovator, 1892–1903

With the encouragement of his leaders, Benjamin Cluff went to the University of Michigan for his college work in mathematics and education. Thereafter, in 1890, he rejoined the Academy faculty with the understanding that he would succeed Maeser as principal. First as assistant principal, while Maeser was traveling as Church superintendent of schools, and then as principal and president, Cluff upgraded the school academically. He carried on Maeser’s emphases on personal honor and watchcare over students. In 1896 he persuaded the Church to adopt the Academy as its own and become fiscally responsible for it, and later to change its name to Brigham Young University. Cluff took the school from stake academy to Church university.
[no title]

Determined to Learn

After hearing about Brigham Young Academy in 1877, nineteen-year-old Benjamin Cluff immediately left Coalville on foot for Provo, sixty-five miles away, to enroll. When summoned home to help on the farm, he promised his father never to ask for financial assistance if he could be allowed to return to school. Following graduation and a mission to Hawaii, Cluff taught at the Academy for three years, then took a leave of absence to study in the East. At the University of Michigan, his defense of the Church in newspapers and public debates won the respect of faculty members and even the university’s president. He earned his bachelor’s degree in three and a half years, working at any job he could find to support his family.

Creative Initiative

Starting when he was assistant principal, Cluff took steps to expand the curriculum, upgrade the faculty, and introduce college degrees. These aggressive steps, taken in spite of the Academy’s heavy indebtedness, proved to be inspired. The announcement of a new Church university in 1892 suggested that BYU would remain a lowly stake academy, just when it had made heavy financial commitments for its new building. But in the nationwide financial crisis of 1893, the Church decided to close its new university. This decision did not completely thwart the Church’s plans, because Cluff’s bold initiatives were preparing the Academy to become the flagship school the Church would need.

Building on Maeser’s Beginnings

Unlike Maeser, Cluff welcomed the influence of eastern educators, yet both of them drew from the progressive educational ideas of the time. Though Cluff employed rules of conduct more than Maeser, especially for those who had misbehaved, his purpose was to advance Maeser’s famous emphasis on personal honor. He utilized Maeser’s “domestic ward” arrangement that fostered the students’ leadership skills, reliability, and spirit of service. He kept the students’ testimonies and moral purity in the forefront of his concern.

A University in Name

The prominent educators that Cluff brought in from prestigious schools to train the Academy’s faculty consistently admired the quality of the school’s personnel and methods. Hence, it may not have been entirely unwarranted for Cluff to propose to the Church board of education in 1903 that the Academy’s name be changed to Brigham Young University. He may have done so to ensure the school’s future direction. The board ultimately approved the change, provided that it entail no funding increases. Board member Anthon H. Lund remarked, “I hope their head will grow big enough for the hat.” Eventually, it did.

1. Invitation to the renaming ceremony, 1903
2. Cluff and BYA faculty, 1892
3. Benjamin Cluff instructs a class of prospective teachers, 1898.
4. Page from the journal of Benjamin Cluff, February 23, 1888
5. Cluff outlined his idea of a good teacher in this article in the March 24, 1891, issue of The B.Y.A. Student.
Brimhall the Builder, 1904–1921

In 1891, following administrative service in the state’s school district, George H. Brimhall came to BYA as head of its normal department. In addition to teaching, he served on President Cluff’s administrative staff and stood as acting president in Cluff’s absence. During his tenure as president of the newly renamed University, Brimhall solidified the school’s importance to the Church’s educational plan, upgraded its faculty, and conducted an ambitious building program that expanded the campus to Temple Hill. He also guided the growing school through some of its most daunting academic and financial crises.

[no title]
The Highest Calling

In 1872, George Brimhall and other young men constructed a timber building in Spanish Fork and established a school for themselves, calling it the Young Men’s Academy. In 1873, Brimhall became its teacher. The territorial superintendent of schools praised these “enterprising young men” and their “teacher of superior ability.” Teaching became Brimhall’s passion; he considered it a “sacred profession” and spoke indignantly of those who considered teaching a mere step on the way to some “higher” occupation. “There may be something with more money ...[or] fame in it,” he said. “But nothing higher.” Franklin S. Harris believed that “George H. Brimhall under a tree would make a university any day, for where he teaches, students will always gather to be taught.”

Retaining Collegiate Status

Early in Brimhall’s administration, some Church board of education members were concerned about finances and wanted to drop all college-level programs. But Brimhall, committed to the collegiate department, quickly saw how to save it. Utah teachers at the high school level were required to have college degrees, which implied a continuing need for a school that could train them. By 1908, Brimhall had persuaded the board to recognize BYU as the Church’s official teachers’ college and to authorize college work for prospective teachers.

Educational Excellence

Brimhall wanted a faculty proficient in both scholarship and religion. In 1907, he began recruiting teachers who had graduate degrees from prestigious eastern universities. New philosophical theology classes addressed the relationship between science and LDS doctrine. Visiting speakers presented modern developments in science and philosophy to both faculty and students. And a “Teacher’s Institute” encouraged faculty to present and discuss papers on current intellectual issues. Yet despite his commitment to teaching, Brimhall drew criticism late in his administration because low salaries led a number of faculty to leave the school.

Saving the Training School

In March 1900, financial pressures led the First Presidency to close the Academy’s training school, a “laboratory” school that gave normal students practical teaching experience. This action, Brimhall argued, made the Academy’s teacher training program “a sneer in the mouths” of rival normal schools and professional organizations. With President Lorenzo Snow’s approval, Brimhall constructed a training school building with funds raised by students, faculty, and community members, particularly local businessman and philanthropist Jesse Knight. In 1902, the structure was dedicated and the teacher training program was reinstated.
Certificates such as this, awarded after 1908, identified BYU as the Church’s official normal college.

Brigham Young Academy’s faculty, 1902

BYA history of pedagogy class, 1893. George Brimhall, head of the normal department, is seated at center.

The training school building, 1902

Harris the Unifier, 1921–1945

Franklin S. Harris grew up in the LDS Mexican colonies and attended Juarez Academy. One of his teachers, Guy C. Wilson, inspired him to become an educator. Harris studied next at BYU, where faculty member John A. Widtsoe encouraged him to pursue agronomy at Cornell. After obtaining his Ph.D., Harris returned to Utah State Agricultural College to serve his own people.

At age thirty-six, Harris became BYU’s third president at a critical time for the school. Faculty and student populations had dwindled due to the Church’s financial struggles, the school’s deemphasis of the arts and sciences in favor of teacher training, and the manpower demands of World War I. Nevertheless, Harris’s quarter-century administration transformed the school into a true university.

Upgrading Faculty and Library

Harris immediately went to work upgrading the faculty by hiring teachers with doctorate degrees and pressing employed teachers to take sabbatical leaves and obtain their doctorates. “You can do it,” he would tell them. “We’ve got to have this increased academic stature and it will be a source of satisfaction to you.” He also multiplied the library eightfold, from 17,030 volumes to some 138,500 volumes. And despite the Church’s serious economic challenges, he was able to obtain funding from the board of education for construction of the Heber J. Grant Building to house the expanded collection.

Land for Growth

Believing that the campus would eventually fill Temple Hill, Harris often took students and alumni there. “Behold,” he would say, “the greatest university campus in all the world—in embryo.” To buy additional land, which he did in hundreds of separate transactions, Harris quietly squirreled away funds, bits at a time, from every imaginable source. When criticized for so doing, Harris replied, “I can never purchase enough land to provide for the future growth and development of this campus.”

Educational Outreach

Harris firmly believed that BYU ought to train leaders, and he geared curriculum development accordingly. To extend education across the Church, particularly in agriculture and Church service, he founded the school’s extension division to serve the nonstudent population. In 1922, he inaugurated Leadership Week, later renamed Education Week, to offer instruction to community members. Both the extension division—now the division of continuing education—and Education Week continue today with an audience that, on other Church campuses and over BYU–TV, reaches many areas of the world.
Legendary Loyalty

The middle to late 1920s were so economically trying that even Harris, a born optimist, wondered if the Church wanted him to starve the school or save it. Unnerved by frequent pay cuts and rumors of the University’s imminent closure, many faculty would have left but for Harris. He consistently dispelled the rumors and won the faculty’s loyalty. When teachers were criticized, even justifiably, he responded, “I know of no better or safer lot of men and women anywhere ... as far as [the students’] spiritual welfare is concerned.” The faculty reciprocated; one, representative of others, wrote to Harris that he remained at BYU because of “my complete confidence in you.” Securing such loyalty may have been Harris’s key to winning accreditation for the school, which might never have occurred had he lost his best-trained faculty.

Dedication of the Heber J. Grant Library, October 16, 1925
BYU’s campus in aerial view, 1929. Harris eventually purchased most of the farmland seen in the background.
Harris and his faculty, 1928
Leadership Week at BYU quickly became very popular. This photograph was taken in 1926, the program’s fifth year.

[Fiscal Challenges]

Rescuing Church and Academy in a Critical Hour

Funding Runs Dry

While Benjamin Cluff was working to upgrade BYA, its fragile sources of support dried up. Still suffering from the federal government’s confiscation of nearly all its assets, the Church could seldom meet its own expenses. Members were asked to make whatever contributions they could afford to the Salt Lake Temple and Provo Tabernacle. And in 1895, Abraham O. Smoot, who had long worked to finance the Academy, died. Economically, the school’s prospects were grim.

On the Verge of Collapse

In 1893, on a day when BYA received some welcome financial assistance from the Church, the stock market collapsed and banks began failing nationwide in the worst depression the country had experienced. Zion’s Bank, the Church’s financial institution, teetered; its failure would have ruined the Church. Creditors called upon the Church to repay loans. As resources dwindled, Church leaders feared that without a substantial loan, the bank would fail on September 2.
An Answer to Prayer

Sent to New York by Wilford Woodruff, Apostle Heber J. Grant did everything he could to obtain a loan on the Church’s behalf, but to no avail. In the early morning hours of September 2, 1893, he prayed “with all the earnestness and power which I possessed” and told the Lord that he would willingly forfeit his life to save the Church. Following this prayer, he was inspired to visit an associate, John Claflin, with whom he had talked earlier. Upon greeting him, Claflin offered the Church a $250,000 loan. Though the terms were steep, Elder Grant accepted. That loan saved the Church—and the Academy.

Exercising Caution

Very gradually, the Church regained its financial equilibrium. Just three years after the Panic of 1893, leaders were able to accept Cluff’s proposal that the Church assume financial responsibility for the Academy. But the economic struggles of the Church, the school, and the nation continued. Elder Grant’s 1893 experience made him exceedingly cautious about Church finances for the next fifty-two years, and especially so after he became Church President in 1918. During Harris’s administration, there were times so economically stringent that President Grant could see no possibility of keeping the school open.

The Salt Lake Temple under construction, 1892

Bishop’s storehouse vouchers such as this one were frequently used to pay BYU employees’ salaries.

Promissory notes illustrate how hard times were for students as well as teachers.

Salt Lake City’s Templeton Building was home to Zion’s Bank during the Panic of 1893.

Heber J. Grant, 1891

New York City, 1892

Benjamin Cluff’s journal summarizes a major event of 1896 that stabilized the Academy financially.

The School’s Sustaining Friends

Improbable Growth

The constant concern of the University presidency in the Brimhall era, often deep into the night, was how to pay salaries and meet operating expenses. Yet, even in stringent circumstances, the school grew physically. During his administration, Brimhall oversaw the construction of five new buildings and many improvements of other campus facilities. The man who made most of this possible was Provo resident and board of trustees member Jesse Knight.

From Want to Wealth

Knight had made a fortune in mining after years of poverty. He once told his son, “We are going to have all the money that we want as soon as we are in a position to handle it properly. We will someday save the credit of the Church.” Although he was deeply in debt at the time—and the Church even more so—he insisted, “I never had anything come to me with greater force than th[is] impression.” Besides assisting the Church, he became a generous financial supporter of BYU.
“Doing Good”

Jesse Knight invested heavily in the University’s future because he believed “that the surest way to express love for God was by doing good to God’s children.”66 Although wealthy enough to fund the entire building program, he contributed in ways that encouraged students, faculty, and community to give whatever they could and share the sense of accomplishment.61 He once reminded students that President Brimhall “gives his all for your sake[,] I have only given you part of what the Lord has given me.”62

The Maeser Memorial Building

In 1908, Brimhall began planning the Karl G. Maeser Memorial Building on Temple Hill, the first of many buildings there.63 The project energized the entire University community. “Some [faculty] have paid ... nearly a half year’s salary,” Brimhall wrote, “and then used ... credit to keep it moving.”64 Students raised $1,049 by contributing their personal entertainment money.65 Twice they collected and donated funds as Christmas gifts to the school.66 Major donations from community members included nearly $50,000 from the Jesse Knight family.67 In all, over fourteen hundred individuals contributed to the $130,000 building.68

George Brimhall, center, and his counselors, Joseph B. Keeler, left, and Edwin S. Hinckley

Jesse Knight, circa 1898

The Knight Endowment Fund that Jesse and his family established for BYU provided significant revenue well into the twentieth century, as this 1945 receipt indicates.

The Maeser Building’s cornerstone was laid on October 16, 1909.

Contributions toward the building came from children, missionaries, and adults from all walks of life.

Saving the University Many Times Over

The Threat of Closure

Trying to cut costs during the 1920s, Adam S. Bennion, Church superintendent of schools, calculated that financing the Church schools cost eight times as much per student as the seminary program.69 He could only conclude that “inevitably we shall withdraw from the academic field and center upon religious education.”70 Though it pained President Grant to lose the Church schools, he agreed that they must be closed or transferred to the states in which they were located.71

Assurance for the Future

Most Church schools were closed outright; the states took over others. Exceptions included Ricks College, which was refused by the state of Idaho, and two schools that were self-sustaining: the LDS Business College and the now-defunct McCune School of Music. Because President Grant thought that “the policy covered all the schools,” word circulated that BYU would close too.72 But Harris did not believe it, and his reassurances calmed his faculty. In fact, Adam S. Bennion’s successor, Joseph F. Merrill, thought the Church needed BYU to train teachers for seminaries and institutes, the very programs competing with it for funds.73 Elder David O. McKay felt as Merrill did. Their intercession kept the school alive.74
The Drive for Accreditation

When Franklin S. Harris took office in 1921, BYU was unaccredited; this meant that other schools and most businesses did not recognize its degrees. Harris immediately undertook the monumental task of preparing the school to qualify for accreditation. Within eighteen months, he began submitting applications to the four major accrediting agencies; three of them stipulated improvements in the curriculum, faculty, and library. Harris found these guidelines “absolutely fair in every respect” and promptly mobilized the school to do what was required.76

“We Have Arrived”

BYU’s first accreditation, granted by the Northwestern Association, came in 1923. Five years later, on November 17, 1928, the Y News announced BYU’s accreditation by the Association of American Universities, the highest accrediting organization in the nation. An editorial in the December 4 issue of the Y News predicted a bright future for the university.77 Without this achievement, the school could not have flourished and probably would not have survived.

---

[no title]

My plea is that ... we look for strength and goodness rather than weakness and foibles in those who did so great a work in their time. We recognize that our forebears were human. They doubtless made mistakes. ... But the mistakes were minor when compared with the marvelous work they accomplished. ... The Lord has used imperfect people in the process of building his perfect society. If some of them have occasionally stumbled, or if their characters may have been slightly flawed in one way or another, the wonder is the greater that they have accomplished so much.78

—Gordon B. Hinckley, First Presidency, 1986
FOOTNOTES

1. Karl G. Maeser to Benjamin Cluff Jr., April 9, 1894, [2], Brigham Young University President’s Records, 1892–1903, UA 1093, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


3. Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 15–16, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

4. Benjamin Cluff, Diary, October 17 and 24, 1886, 259; December 19, 1886, 25, MSS 1667, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 33, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

5. Benjamin Cluff, Diary, March 13, 20, and 27, 1887, 40–41; June 24, 1888, 70; June 9, 1889, 98–99; November 10, 17, and 24, 1889, 105–7; June 8, 1890, 132–33; Christmas, 1894, 138, MSS 1667, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Walter Wolfe, “Benjamin Cluff, B. S., B. M. D.,” Young Woman’s Journal 3, no. 12 (September 1892): 530; “Wicked and Scandalous,” Deseret Weekly, December 14, 1889, 778–79. See also Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 38–42, 46, 50, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:215.

6. See journal excerpts quoted in Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 43–45, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

7. David John to Benjamin Cluff, April 9, 1890, cited in Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 49, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 52, 62, 65–67, 88–89, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The latter source provides details about other innovations of Cluff’s administration on pp. 60–82.


11. Benjamin Cluff, Diary, Christmas, 1894, 134–37, MSS 1667, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 56–58, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.; Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:218–19.

11a. See, for example, the checklists instituted for assessing students’ responsibilities under the domestic system, in “Brigham Young Academy,” Deseret News Weekly, January 23, 1897, 173.

13. See, for example, Faculty Minutes, August 23, 1892, 34; November 2, 9, 1892, 43; April 18, 25, 1894, 90–91, UA 5, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Benjamin Cluff, Diary, November 19, 23, 1899, 180–81, MSS 1667, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


14. His original proposal was to rename the school “Joseph Smith University.” See Benjamin Cluff, Diary, [October] 1903, 204, MSS 1667, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


16. Benjamin Cluff, “Qualifications of a Teacher,” B.Y.A. Student 1, no. 9 (March 24, 1891): [1].


profession of teaching as a so-called stepping-stone to something higher! There is nothing higher. There may be something with more money in it. There may be something with more fame in it. But nothing higher.”


22. Board of Education Minutes, January 26, 1916, UA 566, box 24, folder 10, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:396.

23. BYU Board of Trustees Minutes, November 7, 1908, 141, UA 6, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Faculty Minutes, February 22, 1909, 14, UA 5, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:397–401.


25. See, for example, courses offered by the Department of Theology in the college section of the BYU course catalogs for 1907–11, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:412.

26. See, for example, “Passing Events,” White and Blue [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah] 12, no. 5 (February 16, 1909): 118–19; White and Blue [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah] 14, no. 1 (October 18, 1910): 4–5. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:411–12.


28. “President’s Office,” Journal History of the Church, March 24, 1900, 373:1, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

29. See George H. Brimhall to Benjamin Cluff, January 11, 1901, 2, Cluff Presidential Papers, UA 1093, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Brimhall remarks that the Academy had “already become a sneer in the mouths” of rival normal schools and professional organizations “by our presuming to prepare teachers without a training school.”

30. George H. Brimhall to Benjamin Cluff, June 18, 1900, 2, Cluff Presidential Papers, UA 1093, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 1:350–56.


34. Eugene Middleton, “Personality Portraits of Prominent Utahns: Franklin Stewart Harris,” Deseret News, March 5, 1935, 6; Franklin S. Harris to John A. Widtsoe, April 12, 1911, 2, MSS 340, box 3, folder 12, Franklin S. Harris Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; John A. Widtsoe to Franklin S. Harris, April 20, 1911, 1, 4, 6, MSS 340, box 3, folder 12, Franklin S. Harris Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Janet Jenson, The Many Lives of Franklin S. Harris ([Provo, Utah]: Janet Jenson, 2002), 36.

36. Annie L. Gillespie, Library Report for 1921–22, [May 23, 1922], 1, UA 1089, Box 61, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Brigham Young University, *Annual Catalogue of Courses, 1946–47* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1946), 67. See also Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 2:303. Other estimated figures appearing in Janet Jenson, *The Many Lives of Franklin S. Harris* ([Provo, Utah]: Janet Jenson, 2002), 83, demonstrate that the extent of the library was not well known even among faculty at the university before Harris began his drive to increase the library.

37. Adam S. Bennion to Franklin S. Harris, August 11, 1924, Adam S. Bennion to Thomas N. Taylor, August 12, 1924, both in Harris Presidential Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

38. Amy Brown Lyman to Franklin S. Harris, November 21, 1923, Harris Presidential Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; M. Wilford Poulson to Franklin S. Harris, June 3, 1924, Harris Presidential Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


40. Franklin S. Harris, “Some Activities at Brigham Young University During the Presidency of Franklin S. Harris, 1921–1945,” typescript, 1, enclosure in Franklin S. Harris to LaVieve H. Earl, April 20, 1953, UA 452, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Arlene Harris Grover, interview, September 23, 1986, 4, MSS OH 1927, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

41. Quoted by Dean A. Peterson in Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1975), 4:395n.


43. John A. Widtsoe, during his brief tenure on the BYU faculty, did mobilize his department to answer certain Utah Valley needs in agricultural education, but this program was neither widespread nor permanent and so would not seem to qualify as a formal extension education program. It was certainly not as organized and extensive as the program Harris established, nor even as the program Widtsoe himself had founded at Utah State Agricultural College.

44. For examples of extension curriculum, see courses offered by the Extension Division in the BYU course catalogs for 1922–45, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. For Leadership Week, see “Leadership Week Brings Many Church and School Workers,” *Provo Herald*, January 23, 1922, 1; “Leadership Week Is Attracting Thousands to the University,” *Provo Post*, January 24, 1922, 1; “1700 Are Training for Leadership at the B.Y.U.,” *Y News* [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah], 1, no. 17 (January 25, 1922): 1; Eugene Middleton, “Personality Portraits of Prominent Utahns: Franklin Stewart Harris,” *Deseret News*, March 5, 1935, 6.

45. John D. Wahlquist to Ernest L. Wilkinson, April 6, 1971, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 39, folder 5, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

46. Franklin S. Harris to Susa Young Gates, March 12, 1930, Harris Presidential Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

47. H. Grant Ivins to Franklin S. Harris, November 27, 1944, Harris Family Collection, MSS 340, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


50. See, for example, Utah Stake Historical Record, May 3, 1889, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 18, folder 11, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; George D. Snell to Wilford Woodruff, January 25, 1893, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 19, folder 6, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Loretta D. Nixon and L. Douglas Smoot, Abraham Owen Smoot: A Testament of His Life (Provo, Utah: A. O. Smoot Family Organization, 1994), 245, 250.


54. Benjamin Cluff, Diary, undated [ca. 1898–99], 151, MSS 1667, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, “Benjamin Cluff, Jr.: Scholar, Educational Administrator, and Explorer, Second Principal of Brigham Young Academy, and First President of Brigham Young University: A Study of the Life and Labors of One of Utah’s First School Administrators,” typescript, 1947, 84–85, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

55. See, for example, Minutes of Meeting of General Church Board of Education, March 23, 1926, 159, copy in Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


57. Amos M. Merrill, “In Remembrance of President Joseph B. Keeler,” typescript, undated posthumous, 7, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


59. J. William Knight, The Jesse Knight Family: Jesse Knight, His Forebears and Family (Salt Lake City: J. William Knight, 1940), 39.

60. J. William Knight, The Jesse Knight Family: Jesse Knight, His Forebears and Family (Salt Lake City: J. William Knight, 1940), 91.

61. Alice Louise Reynolds, “School Mourns Loss of Vice-President Knight,” White and Blue [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah], 24, no. 23 (March 16, 1921): 145, quoted in J. William Knight, The Jesse Knight Family: Jesse Knight, His Forebears and Family (Salt Lake City: J. William Knight, 1940), 100.

62. Alice Louise Reynolds, “School Mourns Loss of Vice-President Knight,” White and Blue [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah], 24, no. 23 (March 16, 1921): 145, quoted in J. William Knight, The Jesse Knight Family: Jesse Knight, His Forebears and Family (Salt Lake City: J. William Knight, 1940), 100.


64. George H. Brimhall to Annie Ronnow, January 19, 1911, Brimhall Presidential Papers, UA 1092, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


67. Receipts and Disbursements Ledger, University Archives, UA 355, 47, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Karl A. Miller, *History of Buildings and Grounds Development and Maintenance of Brigham Young University* (n.p., 1989), 140, cites this source but gives a higher figure, perhaps drawing on additional records that he does not reference.

68. Receipts and Disbursements Ledger, University Archives, UA 355, 47, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Karl A. Miller, *History of Buildings and Grounds Development and Maintenance of Brigham Young University* (n.p., 1989), 140, cites this source but gives a higher figure, perhaps drawing on additional records that he does not reference.


70. Minutes of Meeting of General Church Board of Education, March 23, 1926, copy in Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

71. Minutes of Meeting of General Church Board of Education, February 20, 1929, copy in William E. Berrett Church Educational System Research Files, CR 102 174, reel 2, box 2, folder 5, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. The board minutes record: “President Grant expressed the thought that it ‘almost breaks one’s heart’ to think of closing these institutions which have accomplished so much good, but that the funds of the church would not permit of their maintenance in addition to the seminaries which are established and which are becoming more numerous yearly.” See also Minutes of Meeting of General Church Board of Education, March 3, 1926, as cited in Kenneth G. Bell, “Adam Samuel Bennion: Superintendent of L.D.S. Education—1919 to 1928,” master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1969, 88.


74. Minutes of the Meeting of the General Church Board of Education, March 3, 1926, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 27, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Minutes of the Meeting of the General Church Board of Education, March 23, 1926, Centennial History Project Papers, UA 566, box 27, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Minutes of the Meeting of the General Church Board of Education, February 20, 1929, Berrett REsearch Files CR 102 174, LDS church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

75. See, for example, Charles B. Lipman to Franklin S. Harris, September 20, 1923, Franklin S. Harris Presidential Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

76. Franklin S. Harris to David A. Robertson, July 17, 1924, Harris President’s Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

77. “‘Y’ Accepted by Association of American Universities,” *Y News* [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah], 8, no. 22 (November 27, 1928): 1. See also A. R[ex] J[johnson], “We Have Arrived,” *Y News* [BYA student publication, Provo, Utah], 8, no. 22 [sic: 23] (December 4, 1928): 2.

Of the many challenges confronting Presidents Cluff, Brimhall, and Harris, the most overwhelming must have been supplying the growing school with a faculty both professionally qualified and religiously faithful. Other Church Educational System administrators faced the same difficulties, especially as the number of seminaries and institutes grew.

Still, the future looked promising. Fewer of the Church’s bright young people who studied at major universities were leaving the Church. More were returning to BYU or other Church schools and educational programs, fully committed to their religion and ready to strengthen their students in faith and character as well as intellect.

In his or her own way, each of those who worked to build BYU—several of them stood in the front rank of their disciplines nationally—brought their learning into productive harmony with their spiritual and family lives. Their presence on the campus and in the classroom exemplified what the students could become.

Brigham Thomas Higgs

*Be the man you would be proud to have your son become.*

—Brigham T. Higgs
Before sunrise, Brigham T. Higgs would gather his custodial crew and teach them about the value of work and virtuous living. He taught carpentry and woodworking classes at the Academy and, from 1921 to 1939, served as superintendent of buildings and grounds. In each of these assignments, he focused on helping students to develop themselves. One of them said, “Brother Higgs ... has built a name and fame that will endure. ...[H]e was more than a builder of saw mills, and grist mills, and bridges, and houses[;] he was a builder of character, a builder of m[e]n.”

Born in 1858 in Salt Lake City, Brigham moved his family from Castle Valley to Provo in 1895 so that his children could attend Brigham Young Academy. He was hired at thirty dollars a month to manage the Academy’s heating plant. He spent his spare moments doing carpentry work and repair jobs for the school and, in 1897, was asked to teach woodworking and carpentry classes. Over the years, he trained many who became teachers themselves.

Brigham was the first to suggest hiring students as part-time custodians. The experiment was so successful that he was given charge of all campus custodial work. Until his death in 1939, he and a crew of twenty to thirty student employees maintained all the buildings and grounds at BYU. “Hundreds of boys have worked with and for him..., many of [whom] would never have been able to go to school without this work.”

At age fifty-eight, Brigham suffered a serious accident while installing the Maeser Building heating system. For a year and a half he wore a full body cast. “In this torturous [strait] jacket,” wrote his daughter, “he smilingly and courageously carried on supervising his work at school much as usual.” Said a friend, “He has never loafed; he has never leaned; he has always carried more than his share and wanted to.”

Although he was legendary for inspiring his student employees to appreciate hard work, Brigham’s concern for them went beyond the workplace. He would visit their boarding-houses to assess their living conditions and needs. Often he brought extra food for those who were struggling. One wrote, “[T]he man who stands out most as an inspiration to me ... is [y]ou[,] Brother Higgs.”

---

1. BYU’s lower campus, 1902
2. Woodworking tools, including a gouge, a mallet, a drawknife, and a bench plane

Delbert Brigham Brown
The sacrifice some of the students make ... to come to ... [BYU sometimes] makes me wonder if the spirit of those who founded it do[esn’]t still remain with it.12

—Delbert B. Brown

Born in 1896, Delbert Brown grew up in Mexico as a rough-edged rancher and farmer with little use for the Word of Wisdom. But someone helped him along the way, and he changed. At age fifty-two, he and his family moved to Provo, where his children could attend BYU. As the custodian of the Smith Fieldhouse, he became the confidant and counselor of many students. Some of them worked on his crew; most he met in the course of his labors. Delbert’s patriarchal blessing had promised him, “Thou wilt be blessed with wisdom and many will seek thee for counsel.”13 His wife, Irene, said, “Somehow his kind [,] understanding heart and great love of the students drew them to him.”14

The Cigarettes

One day Delbert found a purse containing cigarettes and a gold lighter. The young woman who came to claim it wept when he told her the story of a young man who “took up with some [bad] habits” but with help overcame them; it was, of course, his own story in disguise. Delbert told her that she could have “the cream of the campus” for her friends and future husband, if she would only try. About three years later, following a devotional, a young woman asked him if he remembered the girl with the cigarettes. “I[‘]m that girl,” she said, “and I[‘]m going to be married in the temple next month.”15

The Wallet

A student custodian once brought Delbert a lost billfold that contained a risqué picture torn from a magazine. When the owner, a fifteen-year-old boy, came to the office to claim it, Delbert took out his own wallet and showed him photographs of his own family, saying, “They are pictures any man or boy would be glad to show to [anybody].” Reminding the boy of how it would hurt his mother to learn what he had been carrying, Delbert said, “I want you to do away with those pictures and get your mother[‘]s and sister[‘]s pictures and put them in your [billfold].” The boy promptly tore up the page and said tearfully, “Thanks, Mr. Brown. Nobody has ever talked to me like that before. ... I don[‘]t think I[‘]ll get [into] tr[o]uble now.”16

A Friend with Ten Dollars

Before computers, registration for classes at BYU took place in the Smith Fieldhouse. One day a Middle Eastern student stepped into Delbert’s small office. “ ‘What does one do when ... his money is all gone and he finds out he is short ten doll[ar]s for a class ... that he has to have[?]’ ” Delbert later wrote, “As I looked at that young fellow[,] I thought, [‘H]ow m[a]ny thousand miles away from ... home are you...[?] Just who can you turn to?’” And so I said, ‘Well[,] I gues[s] you will just have to find a friend...’ And he said[,] ‘I have no friend. I know [nobody].’ ‘... I took out ... a ten[-]dollar bill ... (and ... I never carry that kind of money) and handed it to him. He ... said, ‘Why do you do this[? Y]ou don’t even know my name[,]’ And I simply gave him the [only] answer I had: ‘...All students at [BYU] are my friends,'”17

14 Pictures of Delbert’s wife, left, and daughters helped change a boy with a budding pornography habit.
Edwin Smith Hinckley

You have it in your power to set in motion waves of action, love and kindness that will reach the shores of Eternity.\(^\text{18}\)

—Edwin S. Hinckley

Edwin Smith Hinckley, “the Geologist of the University,”\(^\text{19}\) taught and served as an administrator at BYU for twenty-one years while running a family farm to supplement his income. A man of impressive bearing, Ed had the gift of inspiring his students with an understanding of their potential. His student Tommy Martin said, “When E. S. Hinckley’s hand was on your shoulder, you knew you had a friend. That friendliness set students’ hearts on fire. It fired mine and made me want to fly over mountains.”\(^\text{20}\) After retiring from BYU, he presided over a reform school in Ogden, the BYU Alumni Association, and the Provo Chamber of Commerce, building people wherever he went.

In assemblies, students loved to hear Ed’s “gripping” accounts of “poor boys who had climbed the highest rungs.”\(^\text{21}\) One said, “I accept what I heard Hinckley emphasize over fifty years ago, that education constitutes the surest road to the heights.”\(^\text{22}\) He taught life principles as well as geology. Henry Aldous Dixon, later a University of Utah president, said, “He always seemed to know exactly when I was at the crossroads and exactly what to suggest to place me on the highroad.”\(^\text{23}\)

Ed’s optimism and creativity were important in the presidency of the idealistic George H. Brimhall and the practical Joseph B. Keeler. With difficult financial straits to navigate, the three of them spent late nights carefully considering how to meet the many demands of growth, physical maintenance, and curricular improvement, yet still pay faculty salaries.\(^\text{24}\) Colleagues and students alike admired his ability to influence and inspire.\(^\text{25}\) Once, recalled Tommy Martin, he quelled a student brawl with the single word, “Gentlemen …”\(^\text{26}\)

In 1915, when Ed became principal of the Reform School of Utah in Ogden, he changed its name to the State Industrial School and abolished corporal punishment, bread-and-water punishment, and solitary confinement.\(^\text{27}\) His loving concern inspired even hardened boys to improve. Many joined the armed forces and served honorably in World War I.\(^\text{28}\) When the 1918 flu epidemic struck the Industrial School, Ed and his wife worked tirelessly to save these young delinquents’ lives.\(^\text{29}\)
In the early 1900s, when BYU was still housed on its lower campus, Ed had predicted, “Someday, the University will go all the way to Rock Canyon.” When he returned to Provo and joined the Chamber of Commerce, he collaborated with President Franklin S. Harris in purchasing much of the land comprising today’s campus. In 1954, President Ernest L. Wilkinson reported to Ed’s son Robert that BYU’s land holdings extended nearly to the mouth of Rock Canyon.

A jubilant procession up Temple Hill on January 16, 1908, preceded the dedication of land for the new BYU campus Ed envisioned.

Utah State Industrial School, Ogden
BYU campus, 1954
Sunstones, Delta area, Utah
Trilobite, Hinckley area, Utah
Coprolite, San Rafael area, Utah
Septarian nodule, Orderville area, Utah
Picasso marble, Beaver area, Utah
Jasper geode containing chalcedony and celestite, San Rafael area, Utah
A surveying instrument like this one, combining a theodolite with an alidade and a transit, was the state-of-the-art tool for geologists such as Ed in the 1920s. It was used to gather data for topographical maps or replot benchmarks after earthquakes.
Smoky quartz crystal, Beaver area, Utah
Variscite with veins of crandallite, Fairfield area, Utah
Topaz crystals, Delta area, Utah

Florence Jepperson Madsen

Singing is a part of the gospel[. W]e need to sing[. O]ur voice is from God.

—Florence Jepperson Madsen

Florence Jepperson was born in 1886 into a home rich with music. She was called as Sunday School organist when only nine years old. She played organ, piano, and guitar in the family orchestra, and at thirteen she became a contralto soloist for the Provo Tabernacle. By 1906 her love of music had led her east to the professional stage, where audiences and critics acclaimed her “one of the greatest singers in the country.” Though she loved performing, Florence dedicated thirty-seven years of her career to teaching at BYU, where she and her husband, Franklin Madsen, built up the music program.
After graduating from BYU in 1904 and teaching on its faculty for two years, Florence left to study at the New England Conservatory of Music. Its director called her “the finest contralto that ever came to our institution.” Within weeks of arriving, she was performing at the most prestigious musical venues in Boston—“a traditionally difficult place to ‘break in’ for a native,” said Tabernacle organist Frank W. Asper, “and almost an impossibility for an outsider.”

In 1920, after years of acclaim in Boston and New York, Florence left her flourishing concert career for family reasons, returned to Provo, and became chair of the BYU music department. She brought many qualified teachers onto the faculty, including her former student Franklin Madsen, whom she married in 1922. After obtaining master’s degrees from Chicago Musical College, the couple mounted numerous musical performances of high quality at BYU, some of which became established traditions.

Early in 1922, Florence learned that a friend in the East—a widow and fellow Saint—had died, leaving three young daughters whom she wished Florence to adopt. Traveling to Boston once again, Florence braved a three-month storm of anti-Mormon criticism and court hearings to obtain guardianship of the girls. Supportive letters poured in from prominent Utahns and easterners, both in and out of the Church. These, together with her announcement that she intended to marry and raise the girls in a family setting, swayed the court’s opinion in her favor.

As a Relief Society general board member, Florence organized over two thousand choral groups of “Singing Mothers” across the United States and Great Britain. These groups performed in many public venues. Some of them combined to sing in sessions of general conference. In a letter to J. Reuben Clark, Florence wrote, “Much good resulted. ... Husbands, not members of the Church, have been converted; family ties more closely woven; and their testimonies more deeply rooted.”

---

1. Florence with her adoptive daughters, Marion, Ruth, and Georgia Gilchrist
2. Florence the composer published over fifty choral arrangements and original compositions, mostly for women’s voices.
3. A performance dress worn by Florence when? where?

James Edward Talmage

The Sciences have to be redeemed [from] their present position of infidelity and skepticism. ... To lay a single stone in such a work is perhaps my mission in life.

—James E. Talmage
An exceptional student from his childhood, eight-year-old James Talmage entered the Hungerford National School in England in 1870, where he endured “many thrashings” because of his Church membership. Seven years later, when his family immigrated to Provo, Utah, James enrolled at Brigham Young Academy. Before his seventeenth birthday, he graduated and joined the faculty. Following advanced study in the sciences at eastern universities, he presided over two Church schools, the University of Utah, and the European Mission. In 1911, at the age of forty-nine, he was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

In 1882, James wrote of his growing desire “to attend some leading institution for a time to train myself in scientific pursuits.” With the encouragement of Church President John Taylor and Karl G. Maeser, he studied for two years at Lehigh and Johns Hopkins Universities. In that brief period, he completed courses on four class levels in organic and inorganic chemistry, geology, biology, physics, and German while studying medicine and mathematics on his own. He followed his priesthood leaders’ counsel to work not for a degree, but for knowledge that would be useful to Zion.

Upon his return from study in the East, James was appointed principal of Salt Lake Stake Academy, soon renamed LDS College. In 1892, he oversaw the planning of the Church University in Salt Lake City. When the financial crisis of 1893 threatened the University of Utah’s survival, the Church agreed to close its new university and send James to be president of the University of Utah. Though reluctant to leave the Church schools, he accepted. As he had once written in his journal, “I have never yet found it necessary to decline any labor appointed to me by the Holy Priesthood.”

James wrote a great deal for Church members, usually on assignment. His book *The Articles of Faith* grew out of a landmark lecture series at the Church University which drew large audiences. He produced many manuals for Church education courses. As an Apostle, he fulfilled priesthood assignments to write two other exceptionally important books: *Jesus the Christ* and *The House of the Lord*.

As a student, James came to regard Karl G. Maeser as “my second father, firm counselor, and true friend.” In turn, he mentored such men as J. Reuben Clark Jr., who assisted Talmage at three different schools and later became ambassador to Mexico and a counselor in the First Presidency, and Richard L. Evans, a missionary in England who became an Apostle. Clark said that his “association with Doctor Talmage ... brought to me greater intellectual training than any other experience of my life.” Evans, too, was “greatly benefited by ... the man who so painstakingly troubled himself to train me.”

---

[43] *James with Karl G. Maeser*, his mentor
Joseph Brigham Keeler

_Deep down in the heart of this great [s]chool, there are noble deeds untold._

—Joseph B. Keeler

It is doubtful that anyone has done more for Brigham Young University with less acclaim than Joseph B. Keeler. Described by others as a quiet and humble man, he took upon himself whatever needed to be done—from teaching to administration and construction management to fundraising—and did it well. He never spoke of his achievements. Even his children knew little about his accomplishments, although along the way they encountered many who, like George R. Hill, considered him “one of the truly great men of his time.” His determination, recorded in the last entry of his journal, was to live “as long [as] I can be useful.”

Being “[r]oused with the thought that I was sent on this earth to perform a mission,” seventeen-year-old Joseph “began ... to ... read and study good books.” In 1876, he became one of the first twenty-nine students to register at Brigham Young Academy under Karl G. Maeser, who, he said, “enthused me still more to obtain an education.” Following his graduation, Joseph stayed on at the Academy for further studies and served as the first president of the students’ Polysophical Society.

In 1884, within Joseph’s first year of work at BYA—a time when financial matters were “very grave and perplexing”—he was made Academy treasurer. For thirty-seven years, he quietly kept the prosaic matters of accounting, scheduling, and facilities running smoothly while teaching courses and writing several books. He also became acting principal in Maeser’s absence, counselor in three visionary schoolpresidencies, and very nearly president himself. Colleague John C. Swenson recalled Joseph as “a man of exceedingly mature [judgment and] a great factor in the development of the University.”
Joseph possessed an understanding of Church government and a depth of spiritual strength that others relied upon. These attributes led to years of significant Church service within and outside the school. Brimhall wrote of him, “He know[s] the voice of the Good Shepherd[,] and the stranger he will not follow.” Amos Merrill recalled that during periods of spiritual crisis, “young teachers, not a few, and students in great numbers ... came to him for orientation and assurance ... and ... left his presence with their many fears allayed.”

While serving as counselor to George H. Brimhall, Joseph witnessed him in the process of expelling a defiant student from the University. Quietly, Joseph offered to “take care of the details,” led the young man to his office, encouraged him to talk about his dream of a business career, and then offered him work and study space in his office “to finish out the week.” The week became months, and the young man remained in school, eventually graduating with honors. Years later, he attributed “my success in life to that great man.”

1 The presidency of BYU in 1913 included George H. Brimhall, center, Edwin S. Hinckley, left, and Joseph B. Keeler.
2 Joseph and his father, Daniel H. Keeler
3 Pages from Joseph’s textbook The Student’s Guide to Book-keeping, Double and Single Entry, published for Academy business classes in 1892. He wrote it soon after earning his master’s degree from Eastman Business College in New York.
4 An Aaronic priesthood manual written by Joseph for YMMIA and Academy theology classes became the first to be used Church-wide, ushering in the era of unified Church curriculum. Published in 1904, it included his own concordance to the Doctrine and Covenants and remained in use for forty years. Burnt pages in this copy testify to intent study near an unshielded candle. Joseph also encouraged his wife Martha to prepare the first Relief Society manual and paid for its printing from his own pocket. His other publications included First Steps in Church Government (1906), a Keeler genealogy (1924), and several articles and poems in Church magazines.
5 An early calculating machine such as this aided Joseph in his accountancy tasks.

Joseph Kelly Nicholes

A teacher is more than the ordinary laborer or [businessman]. In the life of a student he may be a preacher. 72

—Joseph K. Nicholes
Joseph Nicholes taught at BYU for thirty years and influenced his students to pursue graduate studies at some of the most prestigious universities in the country. Drawing on correspondence with these students, he patterned BYU’s chemistry department after those at leading institutions and developed it into one of the strongest at the University. He championed construction of the Eyring Science Center, started the chemistry Ph.D. program, and inspired faculty and students with his caring and guileless personality. “I didn’t know anybody that didn’t love him,” said H. Smith Broadbent, Joseph’s student and colleague. Said agronomist Nyle Brady, “Without Prof Nicholes, chemistry at BYU would have been nothing; with him[,] it was everything.”

Joseph’s dream was to become “a great authority on chemistry.” He had just begun his Ph.D. program at Stanford when he was called home in 1927 to serve as president of St. George Stake and Dixie College. He never returned to the program. Instead, his dedicated leadership kept Dixie College solvent as it moved from Church to state control. He organized soil productivity studies that rescued the Dixie region’s depressed economy by encouraging sugar beet seed production and increasing alfalfa production. He also helped establish the area’s dairy industry.

In 1933, Joseph joined the BYU faculty. His expectations of excellence made him seem a “stern-father type,” but he had a “special way about him that inspired his students to do their best.” Said one student, “I can [still] recall ... the delightful and inspiring way he presented those first principles of chemistry.” Joseph taught Church history as well as chemistry to packed classrooms. “The rafters in the old education [building]... often vibrated with mirth as Bro. Joseph’s pioneer stories got rolling.”

As department chairman, Joseph hired faculty with doctorates, many of them former students whom he had inspired to go on to graduate school. To establish a doctoral program at BYU, he negotiated its first large grant—$50,000 from Kennecott Copper—that enabled the department to give scholarships and start research programs. Despite equipment scarcity, Joseph pressed toward his goal. In 1961, the chemistry department awarded three of BYU’s first five doctoral degrees.

Joseph’s greatest regret was never having earned his Ph.D. He always corrected students who addressed him as “Dr. Nicholes,” insisting that he did not deserve the title. Yet, even after his retirement due to debility, Dean Armin J. Hill said, “We keep him where he will have maximum opportunity to contact and inspire our new students. No one else on our campus can do this so well.” In 1961, three years before Joseph’s death, the University awarded him an honorary doctor of science degree.

---

1. Dixie Academy became a state junior college under Joseph’s presidency.
2. Chemical equipment and supplies, including a Bunsen burner, a volumetric flask, and chemical bottles
Sidney Branton Sperry

The best proof for the Book of Mormon ... is the book itself.

—Sidney B. Sperry

When Sidney Sperry came to BYU in 1932 with a Ph.D. in biblical studies and languages, he was the first man with traditional academic credentials to be hired full-time as a religion professor. While he brought new standards of scholarship to religious studies at BYU, he devoted his closest attention to his students and the religious education program he loved. Believing that “children are the greatest heritage we have,” he spoke often to his students of the good they would do for the Church. One of them later wrote, “In the halls and classroom he carried the warm spirit of brotherhood, not professional austerity.” Five of the many young men he mentored later became BYU deans.

In addition to earning his master’s and doctoral degrees at the University of Chicago, Sidney completed postdoctoral study in archaeology at Jerusalem’s American School of Oriental Research and was active in the American Society of Bible Literature and Exegesis. His learning strengthened his faith, and he used his scholarship to serve the Church when few had as much training as he. Over the years he published numerous books, articles, and lesson manuals for Latter-day Saints.

Sidney’s impact in Church education was immediate and spectacular. The summer Old Testament course he presented to Church religion teachers in 1929 became, for them, a model of combined scholarship and faith. For two decades he lectured throughout the West on gospel subjects, drawing crowds as large as 1,700 people and reaching radio audiences as far away as Iowa and Saskatchewan. Church members wrote that he had awakened them to the scriptures, and Church authorities thanked him.

In the 1930s, Sidney had a dream that he described thus: “I was up high, looking down on the foothills of Y [M]ountain, but it was a time farther in the future. The campus I saw was ... a great array of many, many buildings ... in the shape of towers. Yes, tall towers! ... [T]he university spread northward, with many more buildings, and ... reached the point where they adjoined a white temple, and I thought, ‘So we will have a temple here as predicted!’”
Though Sidney struggled financially to support his large family on what BYU could pay him, he said, “I would go through all my troubles again in the service of the Lord.” To Elder John A. Widtsoe he wrote, “We will make this University the greatest school in the world for religious instruction.” Sidwyn’s enduring legacy included the qualified, believing scholars that he hired and the emphasis on scriptural study that found its way into the University curriculum.

In Our Book of Mormon, published in 1947, Sidney examined the Nephite scripture using his Old Testament academic background and offered new perspective on it as an authentically ancient document.

Microphones such as these Shure 51 and 55 models helped carry Sidwyn’s radio lectures on scripture to a wide audience.

Ancient Middle Eastern coins, including the “widow’s mite” memorialized in the New Testament

Oil lamp like those used in ancient Israel

Letter to John A. Widtsoe from Sidney, September 2, 1939

Mentoring

The Lifeblood of Our Tradition

From Joseph Smith’s day onward, Church leaders have carefully prepared promising young people for their future contributions to the building up of Zion. Maeser himself mentored prospective teachers for the Church schools, sometimes sending selected individuals away for further training. With time, more and more earned advanced degrees, returned to teach in the Church system, and mentored their own students. Thus the influence of faithful teachers grew from one generation to the next.

Through these relationships of mentors and students, the ideals and the accumulated expertise of Church education have been passed on and have guided the development of Church schools, seminaries, and institutes. By tracing this development through the generations, we can see the charted course on which Church education has always been traveling and thereby know how we should continue the work into the future.
1. R. H. Boyle, address given in honor of B. T. Higgs, Manavu Ward meetinghouse, July 15, 1939, [1], MSS SC 1570, Brigham T. Higgs Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


4. R. H. Boyle, address given in honor of B. T. Higgs, Manavu Ward meetinghouse, July 15, 1939, [2], MSS SC 1570, Brigham T. Higgs Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

5. R. H. Boyle, address given in honor of B. T. Higgs, Manavu Ward meetinghouse, July 15, 1939, [2], MSS SC 1570, Brigham T. Higgs Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


7. R. H. Boyle, address given in honor of B. T. Higgs, Manavu Ward meetinghouse, July 15, 1939, [2], MSS SC 1570, Brigham T. Higgs Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


9. R. H. Boyle, address given in honor of B. T. Higgs, Manavu Ward meetinghouse, July 15, 1939, [4], MSS SC 1570, Brigham T. Higgs Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


13. Delbert Brown, “Campus Experiences,” typescript, 13, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

14. Delbert Brown, “Campus Experiences,” typescript, 13, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


17. Delbert Brown, “The Foreign Boy,” photocopy of MS, 5–6, copy on file at Education in Zion Exhibit Project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


24. See, for example, Edwin S. Hinckley to Robert H. Hinckley, February 13, 1911, and January 1, 1913, quoted in “Edwin Smith Hinckley, 1868–1929,” bound printed compilation, undated, 112–13, UA 484, Edwin S. Hinckley Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Amos M. Merrill, “In Remembrance of President Joseph B. Keele,” typescript, undated posthumous, 7, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


41. Florence Jepperson Madsen to J. Reuben Clark, Jr., August 30, 1961, UA 571, H. Franklin and Florence Jepperson Madsen Collections, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

42a. James E. Talmage, Journal, June 17, 1882, James E. Talmage Collection, MSS 229, box 25, reel 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


45. James E. Talmage, Journal, March 31, 1882, James E. Talmage Collection, MSS 229, box 25, reel 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


47. James E. Talmage, Journal, June 24, 1883, James E. Talmage Collection, MSS 229, box 25, reel 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


51. James E. Talmage, Journal, October 20, 29, 1893, James E. Talmage Collection, MSS 229, box 25, reel 2, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

52. James E. Talmage, Journal, September 21–22, 1911, James E. Talmage Collection, MSS 229, box 29, folder 2b, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His
Mission According to Holy Scriptures Both Ancient and Modern (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1915), iii–iv.

53. James E. Talmage, Journal, January 11, 1892, James E. Talmage Collection, MSS 229, box 25, reel 2, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


56. Joseph B. Keeler, address given in honor of Susa Young Gates, manuscript, undated, [1], MSS 2016, Joseph B. Keeler Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


63. Minutes of Brigham Young Academy Polysophical Society, November 20, 1877, [1], MSS SC 2879, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

64. Joseph B. Keeler, Journal, September 8, 1934, 16, MSS 2016, Joseph B. Keeler Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Amos M. Merrill, “In Remembrance of President Joseph B. Keeler,” typescript, undated posthumous, 7, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also Reinhard Maeser, Karl G. Maeser (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1928), 102.


67. George H. Brimhall to Victor E. Bean, March 27, 1912, 2, UA 1092, George H. Brimhall Presidential Papers, University Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

70. Amos M. Merrill, “In Remembrance of President Joseph B. Keeler,” typescript, undated
posthumous, 8, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


72. Joseph K. Nicholes to H. Smith Broadbent, May 1, 1947, Joseph K. Nicholes Collection, MSS 351, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

73. Earl C. Crockett and George H. Hansen, in “Funeral Services for Professor Joseph Kelly Nicholes,” October 8, 1964, 9, 15, Joseph K. Nicholes Biographical File, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

74. Armin J. Hill to the Manufacturing Chemists Association, January 17, 1959, Joseph K. Nicholes Collection, MSS 351, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

75. H. Smith Broadbent, interview, Provo, Utah, January 9, 2007, [5], transcript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

76. Franklin S. Harris to Joseph K. Nicholes, February 6, 1923, Franklin S. Harris Presidential Papers, UA 1089, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

77. Joseph K. Nicholes to Franklin S. Harris, April 25, 1933, [1], Joseph K. Nicholes Collection, MSS 351, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also H. Smith Broadbent, interview, Provo, Utah, January 9, 2007, [3], transcript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


80. Quoted in “Funeral Services for Professor Joseph Kelly Nicholes,” October 8, 1964, 10, Joseph K. Nicholes Biographical File, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


82. Armin J. Hill to the Manufacturing Chemists Association, January 17, 1959, Joseph K. Nicholes Collection, MSS 351, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

83. J. Bevan Ott, interview, March 24, 2007, [3], transcript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


85. J. Bevan Ott, interview, March 24, 2007, [3], transcript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. BYU awarded two Ph.D. degrees in chemistry in June 1961 and one in August of that year. The other two doctorate-level graduates in 1961 received Ed.D. degrees, one in June and the other in August. Claire DeWitt of Office of Dean of Graduate Studies to Elizabeth W. Watkins, October 10, 2007, on file at EIZ project.

86. H. Smith Broadbent, interview, Provo, Utah, January 9, 2007, [3], transcript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
87. Armin J. Hill to the Manufacturing Chemists Association, January 17, 1959, Joseph K. Nicholes Collection, MSS 351, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

88. Earl C. Crockett, in “Funeral Services for Professor Joseph Kelly Nicholes,” October 8, 1964, 9, Joseph K. Nicholes Biographical File, UA 909, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

90. Sidney B. Sperry to C. L. Bennett, April 7, 1943, Sidney B. Sperry Collection, UA 618, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


92. Sidney B. Sperry to Jessie R. Wadley, April 27, 1939, Sidney B. Sperry Collection, UA 618, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


96. “Sidney B. Sperry: Biographical Sketch,” in They Gladly Taught, ed. Jean Anne Waterstradt (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University and the Emeritus Club, 1986), 1:161; Sidney B. Sperry to Joyce E. Nienstedt, November 28, 1946, Sidney B. Sperry Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; E. L. Bowerman to KSL, December 2, 1946, Sidney B. Sperry Collection, UA 618, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

97. Examples are on file in the Sidney B. Sperry Collection, UA 618, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


99. Sidney B. Sperry to John A. Widtsoe, September 2, 1939, [2–3], in Sidney B. Sperry Collection, UA 618, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

100. Sidney B. Sperry to John A. Widtsoe, September 2, 1939, [3], Sidney B. Sperry Collection, UA 618, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
TO EMBRACE ALL TRUTH

The first and fundamental principle of our holy religion is, that we believe that we have a right to embrace all, and every item of truth, without limitation or without being circumscribed ... by the creeds or superstitious notions of men.¹

—Joseph Smith, 1839

We are here ... that we may put ourselves in possession of every truth, of every virtue, of every principle of intelligence known among men, together with those that God has revealed, ... and thus educate ourselves and our children in [everything] that tends to exalt man.²

—John Taylor, 1883

Many educational leaders in Brigham Young’s time would have scoffed at his plan to have Brigham Young Academy teach revealed doctrine alongside the academic subjects. Even then, it was widely supposed that because religion was founded in faith rather than evidence and human reasoning, it could not be reconciled with secular knowledge.

The Church’s educational pioneers had a different view. They believed in the ultimate harmony of all truth. Like all higher learning, coming to comprehend this harmony is a lifelong task.
requiring continual advancement in both learning and faith. The reward for this effort is the enhancement not solely of the mind, but of every aspect of life—personal and social, practical and aesthetic, now and forever.

Harmonizing Learning and Faith

*The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge.*

—Joseph Smith, President of the Church, 1844

*We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments.*

—Joseph Smith, President of the Church, 1834

*The gift of the Holy Spirit ... quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands and purifies all the natural passions and affections; and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to their lawful use.*

—Parley P. Pratt, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1855

*We are in a great school ... in which we are ... taught to cultivate our minds, to control our thoughts, to thoroughly bring our whole being into subjection to the spirit and law of God, ... that we may carry out the purposes of God upon the earth.*

—Wilford Woodruff, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1857
Remember these three beliefs: First, there is no limit to your potential learning as a child of God. Second, childlike humility is the key to teachableness. And third, living a clean life will allow the Holy Ghost to confirm and expand your learning.²

—Henry B. Eyring, Presiding Bishopric, 1988

True principles are part of one great whole. ... When we encounter apparent conflict in our studies[,]... it is because we see only a part of this great whole. ...[W]e know that this apparent conflict is only a prelude to a new understanding and ... will yield, in God’s own time, to those who seek wisdom by study and by faith.³

—Howard W. Hunter, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1984

If we provide a spiritual foundation for our secular learning, ... we can gain a depth of understanding never before imagined possible. ... We can see the world around us and understand it through God’s eyes. ... We are talking about a widening, not a narrowing, window of opportunity to learn if we attend to first things first.⁴

—L. Tom Perry, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1996

Blending reason and revelation requires that we make our search for learning a part of faithfully living our religion. As we do so, we become more like Christ in our feelings, our character, our perceptions, and our thoughts. We become more purified from the pride, selfishness, and fear that can confound the human mind. This makes us better able to appreciate how all things, both temporal and spiritual, might fit perfectly together.

“It is the light from heaven which will make students better learners,” President Howard W. Hunter said. “It is the light from heaven which will make them better people. ... Students can reach their potential as learners and as human beings only as they learn to let faith in divine truth animate their [entire] lives.”⁵
Staying on the Charted Course

In 1908, President George H. Brimhall, anxious to upgrade BYU academically, hired several very well educated teachers. Faculty and students received them enthusiastically. But reports soon began to circulate that some of the students they taught were losing their faith.  

In late 1910, upon careful investigation, Church superintendent of schools Horace Cummings discovered that, like many intellectuals of the time, the new faculty were teaching that religion is naïve and superstitious. The revelations and miracles of the scriptures, they said, were natural phenomena easily explained by science.

Cummings reported that these teachers were “clean, earnest men, conscientious in what they do and teach,” and Brimhall longed to retain them. But when he tried to persuade them to temper their skeptical treatment of religion, three of them would not agree. Responsive to both the Church leadership and Superintendent Cummings, Brimhall chose to accept their resignations.

Just as he had promoted the most advanced teaching of science on the campus, Brimhall refused to allow religion to be discredited by any of the Academy’s teachers, no matter how qualified they might be in other areas. In order to be in a position to harmonize the two great sources of truth, he said, “we must be in possession of both.”

The stand Brimhall took was exceedingly unpopular on campus. Some said that he had destroyed the school. But his decision turned out to be one of the defining events in BYU’s history.

For the Students’ Sake

George H. Brimhall’s Crossroads Decision
True Freedom of the Mind

As part of our eternal growth and progression, we must each work out the synthesis of faith, virtue, and intellect within our own character. Joseph Smith said, “We are all responsible to God for the manner we improve the light and wisdom given by our Lord to enable us to save ourselves.”

To fulfill this solemn obligation, we must continue throughout our lives to learn truths of every kind—truths grounded in evidence and reason, truths gained from experience, and truths revealed from heaven.

A people that fails to teach its youth to become proficient and independent in all kinds of learning robs them of opportunities to progress.

Without the education of the whole soul, there can be no true freedom of the mind.

_Only an education which educates for eternity has the wholeness which humans need. When we separate learning from divine moral truth it quickly deteriorates into a restless, roving search for meaning and often drifts into sensual selfishness._

—Spencer W. Kimball, President of the Church, 1974
FOOTNOTES


11. Horace H. Cummings to Joseph F. Smith and the General Board of Education, January 21, 1911, 3, Records of Executive Committee and Board of Trustees Business, 1907–22, UA 148, box 1, folder 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

12. Horace H. Cummings to Joseph F. Smith and the General Board of Education, January 21, 1911, 1–2, Records of Executive Committee and Board of Trustees Business, 1907–22, UA 148, box 1, folder 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

13. Horace H. Cummings to Joseph F. Smith and the General Board of Education, January 21, 1911, 4, Records of Executive Committee and Board of Trustees Business, 1907–22, UA 148, box 1, folder 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

14. Ralph V. Chamberlin, *Life and Philosophy of W. H. Chamberlin* (Salt Lake City: Ralph V. Chamberlin, 1925), 159–60. Citing this source, Mary Jane Woodger and Joseph H. Groberg, “George H. Brimhall’s Legacy of Service to Brigham Young University,” *BYU Studies* 43, no. 2 (2004): 28, report that two of the three professors left the university voluntarily. One was formally dismissed. See George H. Brimhall to Henry Peterson, March 16, 1911, George H. Brimhall Presidential Papers, UA 1092, box 17, folder 2, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Brimhall himself reported, “This is the first time during our administration that we have had occasion to handle [i.e., dismiss] a teacher, and the necessity is very, very painful to us”; he further noted that another of the professors had “tendered his resignation some time ago.” George H. Brimhall to Joseph F. Smith, March 17, 1911, George H. Brimhall Presidential Papers, UA 1092, box 17, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


16. George H. Brimhall to Reed Smoot, March 8, 1911, George H. Brimhall Presidential Papers, UA 1092, box 17, folder 3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

LIBERATING GIFTS OF KNOWLEDGE

The Reformation

Tyrants have often maintained their power by keeping their people in ignorance. This they have done by limiting education to a select few and by restricting access to sources of knowledge.

That is why John Wyclif, William Tyndale, and other Reformers were persecuted, imprisoned, and in some cases executed for translating the scriptures into the common tongue, or for printing and distributing those sacred books. Armed with knowledge, even the most socially and economically disadvantaged can think for themselves and resist oppression.

Without raising the sword, the Protestant Reformers liberated their people.

The Restoration

From its beginnings, the restored Church has worked to bring enlightenment to its people. First came the translation, printing, and distribution of the sources of spiritual knowledge—the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets.

Then, to prepare members to use these inspired materials, the Church established schools and religion classes, produced manuals and study helps, and trained thousands of faithful teachers.

Using these resources, all who are willing and diligent—even those without formal education—can free themselves from ignorance and confusion and prepare themselves to become teachers of others.

Printing, a Crucial Instrument of the Restoration
Until the early nineteenth century, printing presses still operated on the same principle as Johannes Gutenberg’s fifteenth-century converted wooden wine press, in which paper was pressed onto inked type by turning a carved screw mechanism. In 1804, Lord Charles Stanhope devised an all-metal press that turned the screw with a lever. Besides requiring less physical strength, this increased printing speed and reduced costs. Further innovations in the northeastern United States rapidly followed. These led to the first presses inexpensive enough for owners of small printing shops to buy.

When the Erie Canal opened in 1825, it became possible to transport such presses economically to rural locations such as Palmyra, New York. By 1829, when the Book of Mormon was ready for publication, it could be printed quickly on a large scale at an affordable cost. So could the other scriptures, pamphlets, and periodicals that were needed to carry the gospel message far and wide.

The Book of Mormon

Upstate New York

Skilled and Available

E. B. Grandin began advertising himself as a book printer in this building in Palmyra, New York, only three months before Joseph contracted with him to publish the Book of Mormon. Like Joseph, he was twenty-three years old. He had just completed his apprenticeship with John Gilbert, an older, experienced printer who had recently sold his shop and press to Grandin but agreed to stay on as chief typesetter. It was Gilbert who set most of the type and created the earliest paragraphing and punctuation for the Book of Mormon.

Quality Paper

Joseph directed that the paper used to print the Book of Mormon be “white and of a smooth texture, of such quality that one could not read through it and see the other side of the printed page.” The first American paper of this quality was produced in Delaware in the early 1800s, and a rapid rise in paper production throughout the northeastern states soon made quality stock more widely available. In 1817, about six miles south of Palmyra, a mill was established that manufactured such paper.

New Type

The first permanent type foundry in the United States was established in 1792 in New York, making metal type affordable for small printing operations. Perhaps because of this, Grandin honored Joseph’s request that the Book of Mormon be set with type that had never been used before. Though he had purchased new type with his press only a few months earlier, Grandin sent for an additional set of unused twelve-point type.

---

1 E. B. Grandin, 1845. Alonzo Parks painted this portrait sixteen years after Grandin printed the Book of Mormon.
2 John H. Gilbert, later in life. He was in his thirties when he typeset the Book of Mormon.
The 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, reproduced here in facsimile. Surviving copies of the first edition are extremely rare.

The printer’s manuscript of the Book of Mormon was punctuated for the most part by John Gilbert, usually in pencil and occasionally in ink, as illustrated here. The letter P indicates a paragraph marking.

An iron composition stick was used to compose and justify a line of type before placing it in the galley tray. The typesetter had to proofread the type backwards.

Galley trays such as these held movable type in place as it was being printed.

An engraving depicts the Peter Smith press on which the Book of Mormon was printed. A replica of it sits in the restored Grandin shop. Grandin’s original press is preserved by the LDS Church Historical Department.

Printing the Revelations

*The American Midwest*

*When God pours out His Spirit, the enemy will rage. ... The lives of those who proclaim the true Gospel will be in danger. ... The same opposition has been manifest whenever man came forward to publish the Gospel.*

—Oliver Cowdery, Assistant President of the Church, 1835

From the first, Joseph realized that printing was vital to the Church’s mission. He learned something of the printer’s craft and encouraged other leaders to do the same. He purchased presses on which the Church printed scriptures, hymnals, newspapers, and tracts. Such publications spread the gospel message and prevented controversy over errors accidentally introduced in handwritten copies.

The Prophet Becomes a Printer

To further the work of proclaiming the gospel, Joseph established a Church-owned printing company in Kirtland, Ohio, called the Literary Firm. He assigned William W. Phelps, a recent convert and newspaper editor, to manage it. From Phelps and from Oliver Cowdery, who had assisted in printing the Book of Mormon’s first edition, Joseph learned the printing craft himself, including typesetting. He had members of the School of the Prophets and others do the same.

In Search of Paper

On April 1, 1832, eight days after being brutally tarred and feathered by a mob in Hiram, Ohio, the Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon made their way to Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), to buy paper for printing the revelations. They accompanied the shipment to Independence, Missouri, arriving on April 24.

The Press in Independence

W. W. Phelps was instructed to purchase a printing press in Cincinnati and take it to Missouri to establish the Church’s printing enterprise there. In June 1832, the first edition of *The Evening and the Morning Star*, the Church’s official newspaper, was published in Independence.
The Book of Commandments

Also in Independence, W. W. Phelps began to publish Joseph’s compiled revelations under the title Book of Commandments. Preparing the manuscript for printing took considerable time, as the proof sheets had to be carried from Independence back to Kirtland, over eight hundred miles away, for Joseph to review.17

Losing the Independence Press, Rescuing the Pages

The Church’s printing shop in Independence was destroyed by a mob on July 20, 1833, before the work of printing the Book of Commandments was completed.18 Several Saints risked their lives to save the scattered pages.19 Printers from Liberty, Missouri, salvaged the damaged press and type for their own use. The court awarded the Church only a small fraction of the monetary loss it sustained.20

The Kirtland Press

Following the destruction of the press in Independence, Church leaders and managers of the Literary Firm decided to establish a printing shop in Kirtland. They borrowed money and, in October 1833, sent Oliver Cowdery to New York to “purchase a press and [type].”21 Joseph and other brethren gathered and formally dedicated the new equipment to the Lord’s service.22 In a journal entry for December 6, 1833, Joseph wrote: “Being prepared to commence our Labours in the printing business[,] I ask God in the name of Jesus to establish it [forever] and cause that his word may speedily go for[th] to the Nations of the earth to the accomplishing of his great work.” 23

The Contribution and Fate of the Kirtland Press

Publication of The Evening and the Morning Star resumed in Kirtland in December 1833. The Latter-day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate, the second edition of the Book of Mormon, the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, and the first LDS hymnal also issued from the Kirtland press.24 In January 1838, the printing office and its press were attached by court injunction for a purported debt and sold at auction to an apostate member of the Church. Within a day, both the office and the press were destroyed by fire.25

Burying the Far West Press to Save It

The Church acquired a third press early in 1838 and resumed publication at the Saints’ settlement of Far West, Missouri.26 When mobs began to threaten the town, Don Carlos Smith, the Prophet’s brother and the Church’s printer, buried his press to keep it safe.27 Months later, several brethren unearthed it and took it by wagon to Nauvoo. Don Carlos printed Church newspapers The Wasp and the Times and Seasons on it until his death less than three years later.

17 Joseph Smith’s journal entries for December 1833 record the beginnings of Church printing in Kirtland.
18 William W. Phelps, circa 1855
19 Joseph Smith himself learned to set type.
20 Steamboat travel helped Joseph and Sidney transport paper from Virginia to Missouri.
21 The Rollins sisters and other members rescued some of the printed revelations from an 1833 mob attack in Independence, Missouri.
Wilford Woodruff’s copy of the *Book of Commandments*, as shown in this photograph, contained handwritten supplements bound together with surviving printed pages.

Oliver Cowdery, circa 1843

The first LDS hymnal was compiled by Emma Smith in obedience to the revelation now known as D&C 25. It issued from the Kirtland press in 1835.

Emma Smith
Palmyra
Kirtland
Wheeling
Nauvoo
Far West
Independence

New Centers of Printing

_The truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished._

—Joseph Smith, March 1, 1842

Following the death of the Prophet Joseph and the Saints’ abandonment of Nauvoo, many enemies of the Church believed that “Mormonism” would die. Instead, it grew stronger. Missionaries in England, aided by Church materials published there, had already baptized thousands by the time the first printing press arrived in Salt Lake City in 1849. And from their stronghold in the Rocky Mountains, the American Saints continued to generate newspapers, pamphlets, and editions of scripture to educate and strengthen Church members and to spread the message of the restored gospel—all this despite the expense of importing paper and the difficulties of producing it themselves.

Text for Great Britain

In the mid-1800s, more Saints lived in the British Isles than anywhere else in the world. Mostly from the working class and desperately poor, they could not afford books but hungered for Church literature. Across England, LDS missionaries contracted with local printers to publish inexpensive periodicals, pamphlets, and tracts containing the gospel message. Their mission, Parley P. Pratt wrote, was to “hurl truth through the land.”
A New Book of Mormon Edition
The first major publication project begun by the Church in England was an edition of the Book of Mormon, published in January 1841. Prepared by Willard Richards and Brigham Young, it incorporated standard British spellings and an "index" that resembled an expanded table of contents. Its print run of 4,050 copies was inadequate for the rapidly increasing membership, which Brigham Young calculated at eight to nine thousand Saints.

The Demand for Church Literature
Missionaries produced pamphlets containing scripture excerpts and gospel doctrine as quickly as they could, but they could not print enough for all the Saints and seekers who wanted them. Publications had to be retrieved from members for proselyting work. Franklin D. Richards, the British mission president in 1850, encouraged the Saints to "lend them to others, so that people might know that Mormonism includes all that is good." By 1860, the Church had purchased a press and set up its own print shop in Liverpool.

The Pearl of Great Price
When Franklin D. Richards compiled the sixty-four-page booklet entitled "The Pearl of Great Price" in 1851, his desire was to fulfill the ever-increasing call for more Church literature. He did not imagine that parts of the collection would ultimately become one of the Church’s standard works. A letter of gratitude written to him by the British Saints was published in the Millennial Star, the Church’s periodical in England.

Paper for Utah Territory
Brigham Young recognized that printing was the most efficient and effective means of communicating with the Saints scattered throughout the West. With Church printing operations secure from mob action, the only remaining obstacle was the cost of paper imported from the East. "Were we making our own paper," declared President Young, "we could then fill the Territory with school-books printed here,[.] print the Church History for ourselves and for the world, and every book we need." After a decade of diligent effort, the Church began producing its own paper at the first paper mill in the western United States.

A Paper Mill from Beet Processors
In 1851, Brigham Young issued a papermaking mission call to newly arrived British convert Thomas Howard, son of a paper mill superintendent. In a wooden shack on Temple Square designated as the Church paper mill, Howard and his associates struggled for years to produce paper.
The first primitive paper, made entirely by hand, resembled cardboard in its color and texture. It worked well to stiffen the brims of women’s bonnets, but publications required paper of higher quality. With makeshift equipment, some parts of it borrowed from sugar-beet processing machines, Howard eventually succeeded in producing Utah’s first domestic writing paper. It went on exhibit at the Juab County Fair in April 1854.  

From Riches to Rags

During the Saints’ early years in the West, paper was still made from rags. Thomas Howard reported that acquiring rags was difficult because “the people at that time had scarcely rags enough to cover their bodies.”  

Brigham Young called successful Salt Lake City businessman George Goddard as a missionary to go from door to door throughout the territory collecting rags for paper. “The humiliating prospect almost stunned me,” Goddard wrote, “but a few moments’ reflection reminded me that I came to these valleys ... for the purpose of doing the will of my Heavenly Father.” His humble service provided over fifty tons of rags for Howard’s mill.  

“Printed on Pancakes”

Though the paper produced with the beet-processing machinery could be used on a printing press, it was still thick, coarse, and dingy in color. One man told Howard that the Deseret News “looked as though it were printed on pancakes.” In 1860, Brigham Young ordered from the East all the equipment needed for a state-of-the-art paper mill. It was hauled across the country by rail and wagon and installed in an abandoned sugar-beet mill. For the next three decades, it produced a finer, more legible paper on which the scriptures, Church circulars, books, the Deseret News, and other materials were printed.  

The first paper mill was located in “the shops on Temple block,” some of which appear in this photograph.  

The first paper produced by Thomas Howard’s mill was thick and irregular, like this handmade facsimile.  

Thomas Howard, circa 1875  

George Goddard, 1873  

Goddard’s diary for January 1862 records his travels to collect rags for paper.  

Newsprint made in 1867 with proper milling equipment made the Deseret News easier to print and read.

Aids to Scripture Study

The Book of Mormon had not been in print a dozen years before Church leaders were seeking ways to make its contents more accessible to readers. The study aids contained in the standard works were painstakingly developed over more than a century, both under official priesthood direction and by members working on their own initiative. The materials thus produced led to the Topical Guide, Bible Dictionary, Index, footnotes, and references found in the LDS scriptures today, which enable all members—even those with little schooling—to become scripture scholars.
Formats and Cross-References

The constant concern of those who have overseen the printing of the Restoration scriptures has been to make them as readable, useful, and affordable as possible. One of the first steps was to number the book’s paragraphs so that they could be referred to easily. Later, the entire text was divided into shorter numbered verses. Although this broke up the flow of the text, it allowed people to cross-reference scriptural passages concisely in printed footnotes and handwritten annotations in the book’s margins. This made personal and collaborative study much easier.

A Valuable Tool

When Elder Franklin D. Richards readied the 1852 British edition of the Book of Mormon for printing in Liverpool, England, he numbered the paragraphs created by John Gilbert for the first edition. In 1879, also in Liverpool, Orson Pratt, while preparing a new British edition, carried this innovation further by dividing the book’s lengthy chapters and verses into the shorter ones used today. Then he did the same with the Doctrine and Covenants. His new versification system allowed him, by using footnotes, to cross-reference scriptural passages in both books. These notes were printed in the 1879 British editions.

1820 Edition Improvements

To facilitate reprintings of the 1879 editions of the scriptures, Orson Pratt commissioned electrotype plates—castings of entire typeset forms on metal sheets. Nearly two decades later, when these plates were worn out and needed replacement, President Heber J. Grant seized the opportunity to add enhanced study helps to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. After careful study, a committee chaired by James E. Talmage recommended columns, chapter headings, new footnotes, indexes, and other improvements. The editions that came from this work looked more like the Bible than their predecessors and were easier to study alongside the Bible.

Indexes and Concordances

An early device for studying the Restoration scriptures was the index, a listing of entries that identified the page or verse numbers where selected events, terms, or topics appeared in the book. Concordances, compiled later by motivated individuals, alphabetically listed and located the actual words that appeared in the book, with each instance displayed in its sentence context. These study tools paved the way for the Topical Guide in the 1979 LDS edition of the Bible, the Index to the 1981 Triple Combination, and the database found on the Internet at lds.org.
Labor of Love

George S. Reynolds, secretary to the First Presidency for forty-four years, was the first Latter-day Saint imprisoned for polygamy. While incarcerated, he received a copy of Orson Pratt’s 1879 edition of the Book of Mormon. The numbered verses enabled him to create a complete concordance of the book—one that listed every instance of every word and of many word compounds. Through eighteen months of summer heat, winter cold, and windborne grit, Reynolds nailed pages of the Book of Mormon to the prison wall, sat on a stool with a board on his lap, and painstakingly catalogued his material. For eighteen and a half years after his release, he continued the work, finishing in 1900. “Had I known the vast amount of labor, patience and care it would take ... I should, undoubtedly[,] have hesitated.... But ... feeling its necessity as a help to the study of the Divine Work whose name it bears, I have ... labored and prayed—until it was prepared for the press.”

To Benefit Many

Recently graduated from Harvard University, John A. Widtsoe studied the gospel with a small group of friends until his stake president told him that he ought to use his education for the benefit of many. Obediently, he brought his study group to the weeknight priesthood meeting, was immediately called as an instructor, and quickly realized that a concordance would enhance the quorum’s study of the Doctrine and Covenants. Compiling his research on note cards, Elder Widtsoe worked on his concordance for the next nine years and presented it to the Church in 1898, hoping that it would “aid in making God’s latter-day word more accessible, better known and more thoroughly appreciated among the members of the Church.” Published in 1906, it became a source for the Index and Concordance included with the 1921 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. In this form it served Church members for another sixty years.

Topical Guide and Footnotes

In 1979, the Church published a Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible and, in 1981, a new edition of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. Their purpose, said President Spencer W. Kimball, was “to assist in improving doctrinal scholarship throughout the Church.” Both volumes feature carefully developed study helps, including a Topical Guide, bound with the Bible, and a very similar Index, bound with the other scriptures. Also included with the Bible are a Bible Dictionary, significant textual changes made in Joseph Smith’s translation, and footnotes clarifying language usage. Both editions include maps, summaries of each chapter, and cross-referencing footnotes. A Guide to the Scriptures, published separately for Saints whose native language is not English, contains many of these Bible study helps.

The Topical Guide combines the best features of an index, a concordance, and cross-referencing footnotes. It brings together significant uses of 750 important gospel words and word compounds and
presents each in sentence context. It also cross-references these to synonymous and related words and concepts.

Some of the footnotes in the Bible offer Hebrew and Greek translation variants and explain archaic English words. All four standard works contain footnotes that cross-reference to the study helps or to other scriptures, including Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible.

Searching the Scriptures Electronically

The scriptural database accessible from the Church’s Internet home page allows an individual to collect all instances of any word or word compound in the scriptures and thereby compile a personal concordance. Like an index and footnotes, the database also offers cross-references to related concepts, such as “Comforter” and “source of testimony” under the topic “Holy Ghost.” The Topical Guide, Guide to the Scriptures, Index, Bible Dictionary, explanatory footnotes, maps, and illustrations are also immediately accessible online.

Scriptural Translations

Every man shall hear the fullness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power.

—Doctrine and Covenants 90:11

Given the importance of translating God’s word correctly, it is not surprising that many translators have felt themselves divinely chosen and prepared for the work. The stories of those who first translated the Book of Mormon into Danish, Japanese, and Hawaiian are representative of scores of others who, collectively, have translated the Restoration scriptures into well over a hundred languages.

Mormons Bog

Danish

[no text]

An Inspired Desire

In 1843, Peter Olsen Hansen of Copenhagen received a letter from his brother, a sailor who had joined the Church. “He told me of God having chosen Joseph Smith, [and] also of the coming forth of the sacred book.” Greatly impressed, Peter told his parents, “I have that book to translate.” He met his brother in Boston, was baptized, arrived in Nauvoo in late 1844, and told Brigham Young of his desire. “The president ... put it upon me as a ... duty.” In 1851 he completed the first translation of the Book of Mormon from the English original.
Royalty Opens a Door

Erastus Snow, called as the first president of the Scandinavian Mission, presented a copy of the newly published Danish Book of Mormon to Denmark’s royal family. “The queen dowager,” he reported, “was so wrought upon by ... the book, that ... she was unable to leave her room for several days.” Soon after this, “a law passed ... sustaining religious freedom” in Denmark, and Church missionaries were informed that no obstacles would be put in their way. President Snow rejoiced that “‘the shell is broken’ in old Scandinavia, and the work of the Lord will advance.”

---

Ka Buke a Moramona

Hawaiian

“I Could Not Do Otherwise”

When George Q. Cannon arrived in the Hawaiian Islands in 1850 to serve a mission, most missionaries were preaching only to English-speaking white inhabitants. In spite of his difficulties with the language, young Elder Cannon wanted to work among the native Hawaiians, “for I felt that I could not do otherwise and be free from condemnation.” Out of his love for these people, Cannon resolved to translate the Book of Mormon into Hawaiian. Assisting him was lawyer Jonathan Napela, one of his earliest converts, founder of the first missionary language training system, and the first native Hawaiian to receive the endowment. “Probably but few in the nation,” Elder Cannon wrote, “were as well qualified as Brother Napela, to help me in this respect.”

Printing for a Polynesian People

After completing his Hawaiian translation of the Book of Mormon, Elder Cannon served another mission in San Francisco to publish it on a press bought with donations from the Hawaiian members. The newly purchased press arrived in disrepair, and the Hawaiian language required so many h’s and k’s that the standard set of type would not suffice. Elder Cannon made the print “large and open[,]... as it is very rare for [Hawaiians] to use spectacles and their amphibious habits ... injure their eyes.” Because the islanders were poor, most of the printed copies were left unbound in order to make them affordable.

---

Morumon Kei

Japanese

[no text]
“I Fear and Tremble”

Nineteen-year-old Alma O. Taylor, one of the first LDS missionaries in Japan, struggled to master the language. Nevertheless, he was told by Elder Heber J. Grant in 1902 that he “would be the main instrument in the hands of the Lord in translating the Book of Mormon into the Japanese language.” The assignment was humbling. “I fear [and] tremble from head to foot and sense a weakness such as I have never before known.” To render the work in an appropriately literary style, he sought the help of a celebrated Japanese novelist, who recommended one of his students to assist Elder Taylor in completing the work.

Tatsui Sato

At the end of World War II, Lieutenant Boyd K. Packer and other LDS servicemen presented a Japanese copy of the Book of Mormon to Tatsui Sato, a translator interested in the gospel. Scanning its pages, he commented, “This is not right … this is wrong.” In the translation, he explained, “the word for God is for a fierce God, a vengeful God. You have taught me of a loving God. Either your book is wrong or you are wrong.” Brother Sato joined the Church and composed a second Japanese translation of the Book of Mormon in the style of the spoken language.

Training Teachers for Zion’s Children

In order to use the scriptures and other religious materials to full advantage, Church members needed qualified instruction—the youth most of all, because of their importance for the future. At first, trained teachers were few, and many who went away for college-level schooling did not return to help.

In the waning years of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, the Church’s long-term efforts in education gradually overcame these problems. With each succeeding decade, its homes, quorums, auxiliaries, seminaries, and schools gave the youth a better grounding in the faith. More students continued through high school and into college studies locally. More who went east for advanced schooling stayed in the Church and came back to build up Zion. As these college-educated young people became parents and teachers, they were able to prepare the next generation of youth better than they themselves had been prepared. In addition, the Church strove to provide its educational personnel with first-rate “in-service” training for the sacred work they were doing.

Over time, this ever-improving preparatory process gradually gained a wonderful, self-sustaining momentum. In the face of opposition, it kept Church education on the divinely charted course the prophets had long envisioned.
Getting on Course Academically

In the 1890s, Brigham Young Academy began offering summer school courses for teachers in Church education, sometimes drawing on General Authorities or distinguished educators from the East as instructors.\(^8\) By the 1920s and 1930s, Church educational administrators Adam S. Bennion and Joseph F. Merrill, both later Apostles, were organizing summer conferences for the “in-service” training of CES teachers. Bennion hoped that such experiences would “broaden the base of all seminary men” and make them “among the most broad and intelligent men in the world.”\(^8\)

Revelation and Reason, 1927

For the 1927 summer conference, Church superintendent Adam S. Bennion and BYU President Franklin S. Harris asked John A. Widtsoe to teach on science and religion.\(^8\) An Apostle and leading soil scientist with a strong theoretical grasp of the issues, Widtsoe’s views epitomized for many the harmony of the revelations of God with the best of humanity’s learning. Widtsoe made a subtle and searching case for the primacy of the first and the necessity of both in lectures he gave at that year’s summer school. They were later published under the title *In Search of Truth.*\(^8\)

Lighting a Fire, 1929

For the 1929 conference, the new Church commissioner, Joseph F. Merrill, invited Sidney B. Sperry, a young seminary teacher pursuing a doctorate at the University of Chicago Divinity School, to teach classes on the Old Testament.\(^8\) Combining his understanding of Hebrew history and culture with his faith, Sperry opened new vistas for teachers in Church education.\(^8\) The so-called higher critics had often used historical and scientific findings to disparage scriptural stories of revelations and miracles; Sperry used these findings to enrich religious understanding of the same stories.\(^8\) The attendees perceived in his lectures a model for bringing religion and scholarship together, and many hungered for the same advanced training.\(^8\)

Distinguished Instruction in the Early 1930s

To make graduate-level schooling available to the Church’s professional teachers, commissioner Joseph F. Merrill invited prominent University of Chicago scholars, including the eminent Dr. Edgar J. Goodspeed, to teach the summer school during the years 1930–33.\(^8\) T. Edgar Lyon, who later taught at the University of Utah institute, said that Goodspeed’s class was “one of the most exciting, thrilling things ... I ever experienced.”\(^9\) For his part, Goodspeed wrote, “I don’t think I ever taught a more significant group in my life.”\(^9\)

With Church encouragement and, in certain cases, Church sponsorship, some seminary and institute teachers earned advanced degrees at the University of Chicago, the University of Southern California, and other schools.\(^9\)

---

\(^8\) The summer school faculty at Aspen Grove, 1927, included John A. Widtsoe, seated left, and Adam S. Bennion, seated third from right.

\(^8\) Joseph F. Merrill, circa 1927

\(^8\) Sidney B. Sperry in later years

\(^8\) Edgar J. Goodspeed of the University of Chicago Divinity School was a New Testament scholar.

\(^9\) T. Edgar Lyon in later years
Course Corrections

Many of the Church’s religion teachers felt strengthened in both knowledge and faith by their graduate studies. Some, however, caught up in the secular spirit of the academic world, became skeptical of the Church’s doctrine and the simple faith of its members. In their lessons, these teachers tended to neglect the faith-building objectives of Church education and to focus instead on principles of ethical living. In order to keep Church education on its charted course, concerned leaders did not hesitate in subsequent summer schools to reemphasize the revealed doctrine and humble faith that are vital to the education of the soul.

School in the Temple, 1934

In 1934, President Heber J. Grant requested that the Church education summer school that year be held in Salt Lake City, where teachers could associate closely with the General Authorities. It lasted for five weeks. Some sessions were held in the temple.

John A. Widtsoe, an Apostle and an exemplary scholar, once again played a key role. Instead of detracting from what the Chicago scholars had taught, he made use of it; his aim was “to apply the Gospel to academic learning.” Scholarship, he taught, did not lessen the need for teachers to be “filled with the spirit of testimony” and to live the truth as well as know it.

The Charted Course of the Church in Education, 1938

For the 1938 summer school, held in Aspen Grove on Utah’s Mount Timpanogos, the First Presidency assigned first counselor J. Reuben Clark to restate with clarity the course that had been charted for Church education from the beginning. Its unalterable components, he taught, are the divine mission of Jesus Christ, with all that it entails, and the prophetic work of Joseph Smith. Instruction in other principles, however worthwhile, must not take the place of these revealed truths. Indeed, said Clark, to teach religion in the Church system, one must have a testimony of these truths and the courage to declare and live by them.

The Aftermath of President Clark’s Address

During World War II and for almost a decade afterward, Clark’s talk seems to have gone unmentioned. But in the 1950s and 1960s, possibly at Elder Harold B. Lee’s suggestion, the Church Educational System began to use it as a training tool for administrators and teachers. In 1980, Elder Marion G. Romney presented large portions of it verbatim in a speech to seminary and institute teachers. Elder Boyd K. Packer, formerly a CES administrator who had been instrumental in reviving Clark’s landmark discourse, told the Church’s religious educators on many occasions what he summed up in these words at BYU’s Annual University Conference in 1995: “That address should be read by every one of you every year. It is insightful; it is profound; it is prophetic; it is scripture.”

1. John A. Widtsoe, circa 1925
2. Heber J. Grant
3. J. Reuben Clark’s speech at the 1938 summer school was the First Presidency’s official word to teachers in the Church Educational System.
4. Marion G. Romney, 1980
5. Boyd K. Packer, circa 1995
Adam S. Bennion, superintendent of Church education, sought to extend the background understanding of Church educators by inviting Apostle and scientist John A. Widtsoe to lecture on the relationship between science and religion at the 1927 summer school.

In Search of Truth, a compilation of the lectures given by John A. Widtsoe in 1927 at the summer school, was published in 1930.

John M. Whitaker’s journal entry for July 12, 1927, told of visits he received from Elder John A. Widtsoe while ill in his tent at the Aspen Grove teachers’ summer school. Elder Widtsoe’s only son had died less than two months before.

A letter from Joseph F. Merrill, dated March 10, 1930, offered Russel B. Swensen a stipend from the Church so that he could attend the University of Chicago Divinity School. Such an expenditure during the Depression was strong evidence of the Church’s commitment to teacher improvement.

Attendees of the 1929 summer school posed for this portrait in front of the Women’s Gymnasium on Brigham Young University’s lower campus.

A letter from Edgar J. Goodspeed to Sidney B. Sperry, dated August 5, 1930, told how much he had enjoyed his teaching experience in Provo.

The daily agenda for the 1934 summer school outlined classes in the mornings and study time in the afternoons. Because the school was held in Salt Lake City, it included field trips to sites of educational interest at Church headquarters. Lectures by General Authorities acted as devotionals.

Wesley P. Lloyd’s diary entry for July 9, 1934, described a meeting of seminary teachers in the Salt Lake Temple with John A. Widtsoe conducting.

Summer school attendees of 1934 and General Authority participants, in the front row, assembled outside the Salt Lake Temple for this group portrait.

Handwritten and typewritten drafts of J. Reuben Clark Jr.’s 1938 speech “The Charted Course of the Church in Education” illustrate how carefully it was composed.

President Clark’s landmark speech characterized LDS youth as “hungry for things of the Spirit” and charged CES instructors to teach them these truths directly, faithfully, and fearlessly.100

Each of Us on the Charted Course

Resolve toward that which is true.101
—Harold B. Lee, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1954

Seek learning, even by study and also by faith.
—Doctrine and Covenants 88:118

Latter-day Saints should have all the genuine excitement others have in the traditional adventure of learning, including learning secular truths.... In fact, when we are so learning and so behaving, we are truly
“about our Father’s business.” This should bring to us a special and genuine zest for learning.102

—Neal A. Maxwell, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1992

Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you.

—Doctrine and Covenants 88:78

If we learn in order to serve, to give to others, and to “feed” others, we will find the acquisition of subject matter much easier. We then are trying not to glorify ourselves, but to teach ... others.... Then there will come to us the full meaning of this scripture: “He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”103

—Boyd K. Packer, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1975
1. For examples of specific sacrifices for intellectual freedom regarding the Bible, see the life stories of John Wyclif and William Tyndale in England, Martin Luther in Germany, Jacques Lefèvre d’Étапles in France, Casiodoro de Reina in Spain, Tamás Pécsi and Balint Újlaki in Hungary, and numerous others.


4. John H. Gilbert, “Memorandum, made by John H. Gilbert Esq.,” typescript, September 8, 1892, 2–3, King’s Daughters Library, Palmyra, New York, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project; Royal Skousen, “John Gilbert’s 1892 Account of the 1830 Printing of the Book of Mormon,” FARMS Occasional Papers (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), 7–8. Several others, including Pomeroy Tucker and Daniel Hendrix, claim to have helped with the proofing and typesetting of the Book of Mormon, but, as Skousen indicates, the punctuation marks on the printer’s manuscript are almost exclusively in Gilbert’s hand, indicating that he took responsibility for most, if not all, of its paragraphing and punctuation. See also Pomeroy Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism: Biography of Its Founders and History of Its Church* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1867), 53, but note that Royal Skousen, “John Gilbert’s 1892 Account of the 1830 Printing of the Book of Mormon,” FARMS Occasional Papers (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), 7–8, refutes Tucker’s claim that Gilbert was allowed any license with orthography or syntax.

5. Gordon L. Weight, *Miracle on Palmyra’s Main Street* (Murray, Utah: n.p., 2003), 27, copy on file at Education in Zion exhibit project.


7. Charles F. Milliken, *A History of Ontario County, New York, and Its People* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1911) 1:415, stated that Grandin obtained paper stock for the Book of Mormon from this mill. Although its specialty was said to be writing paper, surviving first editions of the Book of Mormon attest to the quality of printing paper it produced.

8. J. Leander Bishop, *A History of American Manufactures from 1608 to 1860* (Philadelphia: Edward Young & Co., 1861), 1:213–14. Bishop named John Baine’s Philadelphia type foundry as the first permanent one in the United States, but because it closed at Baine’s death, it is probably best termed the first successful foundry. The one established two years later by Baine’s fellow Scots David and George Bruce in New York City can safely be called the first permanent American type foundry, in part because it was the first to introduce stereotyping (production of a metal cast of an entire page of set type).


13. Joseph Smith, Diary, November 22–December 18, 1833, 28–31, Joseph Smith Papers, MS 155, box 1, folder 1, LDS Church Archives.


53. [Title], *Deseret News*, December 25, 1920, [page]; [Title], *Deseret News*, December 25, 1920, [page].


60. Journal History of the Church, April 11, 1898, 347:2, CR 100 137, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; John A. Widtsoe, *A Concordance to the Book of Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1906), preface [i].


64. Peter Olsen Hansen, “How the Danish Translation of the Book of Mormon Originated,” [1], MS 3522, Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

65. Peter Olsen Hansen, “How the Danish Translation of the Book of Mormon Originated,” [3], MS 3522, Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

66. Erastus Snow, *One Year in Scandinavia* (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1851), 14–15. See also


81. Kenneth G. Bell, “Adam Samuel Bennion: Superintendent of LDS Education—1919 to 1928,” master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1969, 80–81. This quote was taken from Bell’s interview with Obert C. Tanner, February 4, 1969. Tanner had been at the 1927 summer school organized by Bennion.

82. L. John Nuttall to Franklin S. Harris, November 3, 1926, 1, L. John Nuttall Acting


96. J. Reuben Clark Jr. to Joseph Fielding Smith, August 15, 1938, Clarkana Collection, MSS 303, box 215, folder 8, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; J. Reuben Clark Jr. to R. K. Bischoff, September 8, 1938, Clarkana Collection, MSS 303, box 215, folder 8, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


100. J. Reuben Clark Jr., The Charted Course of the Church in Education (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1938).


There has grown out of the history of th[is] institution ...
A CERTAIN FIRE THAT MUST BE KEPT BURNING....
The first task of the future is to preserve ...
this spirit that comes to us from the past—the true spirit of ... Brigham Young University.¹
—Franklin S. Harris, President of Brigham Young University, 1921

Brigham Young Academy wove together the development of faith, character, intellect, and the spirit of service. Students pursued both academic and religious subjects. They helped with school operations and the teaching process. They were expected to maintain the highest standards of deportment and integrity. They participated in wholesome social and cultural experiences. In story after story, we read of faculty nurturing students individually. This was an education not of the mind alone, but of the soul.

Today all these dimensions of personal development—scholastic, spiritual, social, and moral—are available to students attending the Church’s schools and institutes and nearby local wards. This is because the educational and ecclesiastical organizations are, as President Boyd K. Packer has explained, “equally yoked” in their work on behalf of the youth, like a team of fine oxen pulling together for the welfare of Zion.²

The Church’s educational system has stayed true to the course that Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and Karl G. Maeser first charted.
The Founding of the Church College of Hawaii

In 1954, three years after David O. McKay became President of the Church, he announced the Church College of Hawaii, a junior college located in Laie, on the north shore of Oahu. This fulfilled a prophecy that he had made thirty-four years earlier as an Apostle. At the groundbreaking in 1955, President McKay made another prophecy: “From this school ... will go men and women whose influence will be felt for good towards the establishment of peace internationally.” This statement has become a vital part of the school’s mission.

In 1961, the Church College of Hawaii became a four-year school. Thirteen years later, the First Presidency made it a campus of BYU and renamed it Brigham Young University–Hawaii.

Creating a Campus

We dedicate our actions in this service unto Thee and unto Thy glory and to the salvation of the children of men[,] that this college ... may become a missionary factor, influencing not thousands, not tens of thousands, but millions of people.

—David O. McKay, President of the Church, dedicatory prayer at Church College of Hawaii groundbreaking, 1955

Soon after he was called in July 1954, the College's president, Reuben D. Law, recommended that classes start two years later, in 1957. “We’ve waited too long already to establish that college,” President McKay responded. “We must start this fall even if we have to start in temporary quarters.” Board chairman and Oahu Stake President Vaun Clissold made arrangements to secure seven Army surplus buildings for the campus. Once refurbished, these served as the main campus buildings for three years.

A Home Built by Love

The permanent campus was constructed by labor missionaries. Called from Hawaii with supervisors from the mainland, they trained members and students in construction skills. Each morning in prayer meeting, they petitioned for protection against injuries. For the final production push, the whole community joined to scrub, lay tile, and paint. In all, missionaries and volunteers donated nearly 300,000 hours. Their faith, camaraderie, and love set a lasting tone in Laie known as “the aloha spirit.”

Meeting the Need: The Polynesian Cultural Center

This college is a living laboratory in which individuals who share the teachings of the Master Teacher have an opportunity to develop appreciation, tolerance, and esteem for one another. For what can be done here inter-culturally in a small way is what mankind must do on a large scale, if we are to ever have real brotherhood on this earth.
Two challenges faced the young and growing school: jobs for the students were scarce in Laie, and Apostle Matthew Cowley wanted a rich expression of the diverse Polynesian island cultures. The solution was the Polynesian Cultural Center. Constructed in 1963 by labor missionaries, local volunteers, and cultural experts from the islands, it combined traveling programs such as Wylie Swapp’s “Polynesian Panorama” with campus cultural “villages.” It rapidly became Hawai’i’s most popular paid-admission tourist attraction. Besides helping to support the students and college financially, it preserved traditions and served as a powerful missionary tool.

Exporting the Blessings

All programs in learning, relationships and work experiences must be infused with the idea of helping our young people to prepare to return [home].

---

The decision to go home—wherever you come from—is a spiritual decision, not an economic decision. When you do what the Lord wants you to do..., He will pick you out of obscurity and help you.

---

Since its inception, the school has made steady progress toward fulfilling David O. McKay’s 1955 prophecy. It has developed programs to encourage students to return to their native countries, internships to prepare them for careers, and a curriculum that emphasizes intercultural and international understanding. Its alumni are increasingly becoming an influence for good in their homelands.

The real way to help someone is to create jobs for them. I am going to be an entrepreneur and start small businesses in small towns to create more employment.

---

I will build the Church when I get home. If there was a larger percent of the population ... that were members of the Church, there would be less problems in my country.

---

I am going to go back to my home. I know that it is dangerous, but ... I have to help my country. It will be hard. I feel like I am a container of juice being poured into the entire ocean[,...] but I have to try.

---

Tens of thousands in the world who will never set foot on this campus will be blessed and served by the thousands who have been blessed to be here.

---

[1. The McKay Classroom Complex at BYU–H was dedicated in 1958. Its mural depicts the moment in 1921 when Apostle David O. McKay foresaw a Church school of higher learning in Laie.

[2. President McKay at the groundbreaking, 1955

[3. The dedication service, 1958

[4. Campus construction, circa 1957

[5. Tongan labor missionaries inspect a building under construction, circa 1957]
Laie

*I never come to Laie that I don’t have a feeling that this place occupies some peculiar position in the plan of the Lord.*
—Gordon B. Hinckley, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1981

*This triad of learning established by the Church in Laie, namely the BYU–Hawaii campus, the Polynesian Cultural Center, and the Temple, has a significant place in the plan of the Lord to further the work of his kingdom.*
—Howard W. Hunter, President of the Church, 1994

The history of BYU–Hawaii begins with the unofficial dedication of the Laie temple site by Joseph F. Smith in 1915. President Smith deeply loved Hawaii, where he had served his first full-time mission as a fifteen-year-old. He returned many times as an Apostle and as Prophet. Laie, where George Q. Cannon translated the Book of Mormon into Hawaiian and where the first LDS temple outside the continental United States was dedicated on November 27, 1919, became the heart of the Church in the Pacific islands.

---

A Gathering of Strength

*Church Education Faculty and Staff in the Twenty-first Century*

Sustained Momentum

*Education is and must be carried onward fully and abundantly in the Church of [Jesus] Christ.*
—John A. Widtsoe, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, 1937

The founding stories of the Church Educational System’s schools and programs extend over more than a century, from the School of the Prophets in Kirtland through the founding of the Church College of Hawaii in 1955. Since then, that college has become BYU–Hawaii (1984). Ricks College has become BYU–Idaho (2001). BYU’s Provo campus has grown to include study centers in Jerusalem and Salt Lake City and has become one of the world’s largest and most respected private universities. Under Church sponsorship, LDS Business College in Salt Lake City has become a mature two-year vocational school. Through scores of outreach and traveling programs, these schools have spread their influence to almost every country.

The Seminary and Institute programs have expanded with the worldwide growth of the Church and now serve hundreds of thousands of young people. The Church also sponsors other educational programs, such as the Perpetual Education Fund, which enables thousands in developing nations to obtain an education, and the Missionary Training Centers, which provide first-rate language instruction for missionaries.

These educational endeavors are helping to lift people in many nations out of ignorance and poverty and thus enable them, if they are diligent, to know God, to develop their intellect and talents, and to lift others, beginning with their own families.
Through Patience and Faith

*Just as the City of Enoch took decades to reach its pinnacle of performance..., so the quest for excellence at BYU must also occur “in process of time.”*  
—Spencer W. Kimball, President of the Church, 1975

The great ideal of Church education—to prepare souls to embrace knowledge of every kind, with divinely revealed truths as the foundation—has been clear to its prophet-leaders from the beginning. The Church’s fidelity to this ideal, even in adversity, explains its success in education.

President Spencer W. Kimball said that we as a people may often join with other “thoughtful men and women ... who share our concerns” and thereby “multiply our influence.” Yet there are times when we must “break with the educational establishment ... in order to find gospel ways to help mankind ...[and] do what the world cannot do in its own frame of reference.” Were Church education to compromise this commitment to revealed truth, it would lose its distinctive power to elevate the human soul. “This university,” President Kimball warned, “must not be made over in the image of the world.”

Because of their faithfulness to the Church’s educational ideal, the teachers and students in each new generation of the Church Educational System are better prepared. In time, their cumulative efforts will bring to pass President John Taylor’s prophecy: “You will see the day that Zion will be as far ahead of the outside world in everything pertaining to learning of every kind as we are today in regard to religious matters.”

An Education for Eternity

For students attending a Church school or institute, life is not, as it is for many college and university students, an extended holiday from the responsibilities of life. Instead, it is a brief, precious season of being engaged, with focus and concentration, in living the very kind of life that God intends for us beyond our student days. During this season, we have abundant opportunities to develop and blend together our talents, intellect, spirituality, and integrity in doing those things that will serve God and lift others. We learn to do better what we will be doing always. Surely we could not be as well prepared for such a destiny by a strictly secular schooling that did not develop our knowledge of God and the purposes of life, our gratitude for our opportunities to learn, and our desire to lift others as we have been lifted.

[Exhibit of Quotes]

By Study and by Faith
I've always wanted to learn the balance between the spirit and the physical body; ... BYU helps you learn the science, but learning by the Spirit is always included. This [approach]... teaches you how to manage the spirit and the body so that [every part is] healed and healthy. 

—Heidi Broadbent, class of 2011

As a graduate student in family science, ... I was grateful that my professors were willing to share their thoughts and feelings concerning the influence of the gospel in their personal and professional lives.... It wasn’t uncommon for me to study the writings of Freud, Adler, and Skinner one hour and teach the “doctrine of Christ” the next. Only at BYU could I have had this unique privilege of studying, in Elder Neal A. Maxwell’s words, the “link and bridge between revealed truth and the world of scholarship.” 

—Daniel K. Judd, Ph.D., 1987

When I was an undergraduate nursing student, ... I was inspired by an anatomy professor ... who could make a lecture on cellular mitosis feel like a spiritual experience.... Every lecture was like a light descending upon my humble little cranium, expanding its awareness.... [T]he concept that the Spirit would testify of all truth, no matter the source or setting, was amazing. 

—Tracey Bates Long, class of 1986

In a pre-med class the lecturer told us that in med[ ]school we’d be taught to disconnect our emotions from the patients. He bore testimony that this was not the way of the Savior; Christ wants us to care and to feel. He testified of receiving heavenly guidance in his work, sometimes going against what was advised and often saving patients because he followed the [S]pirit. The lecturer was visiting professor Elder Nelson, an apostle of the Lord and retired heart surgeon. 

—David Fisher, class of 2010

BYU has grown ... to a university which can properly boast scholarship, ... a place and environment of beauty, stimulating the development of young minds, and in it all there has been maintained a worship of the infinite, freed from superstition and conducive to the finest kind of spiritual relationship with Deity. 

—Ariel S. Ballif, class of 1925

Faith-guided teachers ... can lead their students to stand in profound awe at God’s infinite creativity.... Students fortunate enough to be educated in such a system will tend to see life as a whole and will recognize the every-day relation of religion to life’s activities. [They] will [understand] that [they] can’t separate [their] religious from [their] social, economic, political, and leisure-time conduct. 

—Eugene L. Roberts, class of 1916

Idealism, Duty, and Honor in Everything
The “Y” has given me something wonderful. It has given me a
circle of splendid friends[,]... a philosophy of life, and a code of
ethics that[,] if followed, makes real men and women. Above all, it
has given to me a vision so beautiful, an ideal so high, that my
work, my faith, my prayers are all that I may be worthy of it and in
some measure live up to it.

—Helen Candland, class of 1924

I cannot think of BYU without associating ... it with ... Brother
Martin. He loved the school, worked for it, had a vision of its future
greatness, [held] an ideal for it, and finally gave his life in service
to it.... When I left, ... the last words he ever said to me were these,

“Remember you are [now] not only you, but BYU.”

—Myrtle E. Henderson, class of 1923

Thanks to some inspiring professors in the Spanish department, I
learned important lessons on the ideals of Zion. Across cultural,
social, and language barriers, we are all children of a loving God
whose greatest joy is in seeing His children prosper and be happy.
As BYU graduates, we have all been instilled with a duty to love
and respect all peoples, languages, cultures, and traditions, and to
honor the promises we have made before God to love one
another.

—David C. Heier, class of 2004

Many classes have closed-book, take-home tests that are on your
honor. I dare say the great majority of students here consider their
honor a duty; they won’t cheat. That says a lot about the integrity
of this institution and the caliber of its people.

—Braton Fredline, class of 2010

All of our children attended ... Brigham Young University because I
knew the influence of our religion [and] the caliber of [the] young
people.... In these times, BYU is an example of goodness that
attracts high-minded students of all denominations.

—Gwendolyn L. Riches, class of 1943

My experience at BYU helped me to decide to go on a mission,
which I wouldn’t trade for anything.... It gave me ... a moral
compass that I think has helped me throughout my whole life.

—Orrin Hatch, class of 1959
Now and Forever, Go Forth to Serve

A young man introduced me to an institute class ...[designed for] middle-aged adults with mental disabilities. This student ... attend [ed] weekly to aid class members who need[ed] assistance—without recognition, fanfare, or [acknowledgment].... What an example I have seen in that student’s ability to look outward while making the most of his BYU experience. sp
—Summer Price, class of 2008

I tell you, my young brothers and sisters, [once] you have been caught up in the spirit of Brigham Young University you will never be the same.... Each of you has a spark inside you which the Lord will someday kindle and make of you an instrument in His hands to bring the world not only sorely needed secular excellence of the University, but the spirit of the Church, the spirit of BYU, and the spirit of the gospel, which I testify to you to be one and the same. as
—Albert Swensen, class of 1938

My roommate last semester was especially considerate. I would often return home late at night to find my bed made and the apartment spotless. His actions demonstrated the love that he naturally possessed for others; it emitted from him and inspired me to be better. ds
—Daniel Snow, class of 2009

It was fulfilling to serve as a Y Group leader for New Student Orientation ... and was a highlight of my BYU experience.... I was inspired by the caliber of the incoming freshm[e]n...—their spiritual strength and intellectual capacity. [Our Y group] grew close in just two days, and one group member called me after his first day of class to talk about it.... His enthusiasm gave me a sense of responsibility to share the things I have learned [at BYU] with others. bm
—Breckann Moncur, class of 2008

I came to [BYU] by myself ... without even a pillow for the night. A stranger from my hall took me to the store ... and helped me buy the things I needed. It was so welcoming to know that someone cared. mm
—Maya Marcelino, class of 2008
The most important thing that I learned here is to serve, with the motto “Learn, Earn, and Return.” In the Marriott School of Management, there are many successful entrepreneurs who come back to instruct us... They are really busy, but they take time to help us... It dawned on me that I’m not here just to learn and earn, but to return as well. I must learn all I can and then return to help those who will be finding their way.

—Thanh Nguyen, 2008

Living Together in Love

[To register for classes, you had to have a down-payment of at least ten dollars]. When I came to the window without any money, I was told, “Go and see President Harris.” He listened briefly, then pulled a ten-dollar bill from his pocket and said, as he shook my hand, “Go register.” I’ll always believe he had his pocket full of ten-dollar bills that day.

—N. LaVerl Christensen, class of 1937

Once in a while President Harris would walk into the soils laboratory and watch what we were doing... He would look at the color in the tubes and say, “Now I bet this has so many parts per million of nitrate on it.” We developed a fine, friendly association with him.

—Rudger H. Walker, class of 1923

Registration for classes took days before we had computers. I would work twenty-four hours a day for a week. One day a young man came to the window and said, “Today’s my birthday!” And I thought, “I am exhausted and you’re telling me about your birthday!”... And he said, “I’ve received enough money to buy a new suit, I’m taking my girlfriend out to dinner, and I have a hundred dollars left over.” I said, “Well, aren’t you fortunate.” Then he said, “I’d like you to find a needy student and give this money to him.”

—Muriel Thole, class of 1958

[The bishop in my first ward at BYU] was great because he tried hard to learn everyone’s name in the first couple of weeks... He told us [that] he had a PowerPoint presentation on his
screensaver ... with our names on it.... I was grateful ... that he wanted to learn about [me].

—Samantha Hunt, 2008

One day I fell asleep in class and would have suffered from the notes I missed while dozing.... As I awoke, a kind hand passed me a piece of paper and [a voice] said, “I saw that you must be really tired. I thought I would take a few notes for you.” What an impact that made on me. I will never forget that girl.... She taught me what [this school is all about].

—Summer Price, class of 2008

As a recovering quadriplegic, I was concerned about how others might see me, but I never felt like anyone looked at me differently or thought any less of me. Students here love and accept you no matter who you are. We are all part of the BYU family.

—Andrew Geddes, class of 2011


3. David O. McKay, address given at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Church College of Hawaii, February 12, 1955, found in Reuben D. Law, The Founding and Early Development of the Church College of Hawaii (St. George, Utah: Dixie College Press, 1972), 60-70. [link]


5. Reuben D. Law, The Founding and Early Development of the Church College of Hawaii (St. George, Utah: Dixie College Press, 1972), 56 [link]

6. Reuben D. Law, The Founding and Early Development of the Church College of Hawaii (St. George, Utah: Dixie College Press, 1972), 75, 92 [link]


10. Tim Critchlow, Biography: Matthew O. Cowley (n.d., n.p.), manuscript on file at Education in Zion exhibit project, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.


13. BYU–H Alumni Newsletter, February 2003 [link]


22. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Second Century of Brigham Young University,” devotional address, October 10, 1975 [link]

23. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Second Century of Brigham Young University,” devotional address, October 10, 1975 [link]


hb. Heidi Broadbent, 2008
tbl. Tracy Bates Long, 1986
asl. Ariel S. Ballif, 1925
clr. Eugene L. Roberts, 1950
hc. Helen Candland, 1925
mh. Myrtle E. Henderson, 1925
dh. David Heier, 2008
bf. Braton Fredline, 2008
glr. Gwendolyn L. Riches, 1990
oh. Orrin Hatch, 1994
sp. Summer Price, 2008
as. Albert Swensen, 1980
ds. Daniel Snow, 2008
bm. Breckann Moncur, 2008
mm. Maya Marcelino, 2008
tn. Thanh Nguyen, 2008
nlc. N. LaVerl Christensen, 1984
rhw. Rudger H. Walker, 1980
mt. Muriel Thole, 2003
sh. Samantha Hunt, 2008
sp. Summer Price, 2008
ag. Andrew Geddes, 2008
The mind must not only possess a knowledge of truth, but the soul must revere it, cherish it, love it as a priceless gem; and this human life must be guided and shaped by it in order to fulfill its destiny.1

—Joseph F. Smith, First Presidency, 1895
1. Joseph F. Smith, commencement address, Latter-day Saints College, Salt Lake City, Utah, June 5, 1895, printed as "Commencement Address," Contributor 16, no. 9 (July 1895): 570. At the time he gave this address, President Smith was a counselor in the First Presidency of Wilford Woodruff. He became president of the Church six years later, following the death of President Lorenzo Snow.