

University of North Carolina at Asheville

Zion's Tributaries: Mormon Immigration and the Erosion of Communal Singularity

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By

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The Mormon overland trail spanned from Council Bluffs, Iowa to the Great Salt Lake Valley, and the final stretch was the most difficult. One pioneer succinctly described the situation, “of all the splendid scenery and awful roads that have ever been since creation, I think this days journey has beaten them all.”¹ There were only a few steep canyons in the Wasatch mountain range to travel through, and the Mormon pioneers aptly named the most frequently used pass, “Emigration Canyon.”² In addition to being steep and rocky, there were a number of large streams that had to be crossed again and again as they made their descent. Frederick Piercy noted the promises that lay ahead and the troubles that lay in their path, “there were warm friends ahead, and a hearty welcome for the travelworn, so we scrambled up the mountains, and thumped and bumped over the rocks, and splashed through the streams, till we surmounted all difficulties...[and] signs of civilization met the eye.”³ Five miles from the city they stopped at the last creek crossing and took a break, bathed, and changed clothes before meeting their relatives and friends.⁴ This steep and rocky path culminated the arduous journey that brought approximately 80,000 Mormon converts from Europe across the Atlantic, 700 miles up the Mississippi, 500 miles west on the Missouri, and then 1,300 miles overland across much of the American continent.⁵

¹ Jean Rio Pearce diary, Manuscript 66, Special Collections, University of Utah Marriott Library, September 28.

² Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 174.

³ Frederick Hawkins Piercy, *Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley*, ed. Fawn M. Brodie (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 125.

⁴ Piercy, 125.

⁵ Gustive Larson, “Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,” *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters* Vol. 31 (1954): 145.

The first Mormon pioneers were Americans driven from their homes in Nauvoo, Illinois amidst a flurry of threats, violence, and the assassination of Joseph Smith, the Mormon church's founder and leader.⁶ Their community, beliefs, and political activities antagonized Americans whose beliefs and sentiments concerning religious pluralism and the diffusion of political power were still in the formative stage. Smith's revelations were a direct response to this uncertainty borne out of the Second Great Awakening. Unfortunately for the Mormon followers, their condemned beliefs resulted in ostracism and occasionally violence, as "the heretic has always been a much graver threat to spiritual solidarity than the infidel."⁷ Not more than a few years ever passed in any of the early Mormon towns before they were expelled by hostile neighbors driven by Mormon truths and rumors, political power or weakness, and, at times, simply the failures of business ventures gone horribly awry.⁸ Early in the development of Mormon identity, they struggled as disaffected outcasts who had failed to change American society's acceptance of diverse opinions and beliefs. This struggle reached its apex at Nauvoo, and from there they simply abandoned their hopes of operating within the United States.

Although their exodus into the remote Great Basin was intended for self-preservation and the freedom to put their communitarian and political principles in practice alongside their religious beliefs, their success was short-lived.⁹ Admittedly, their communitarian spirit "helped them accommodate a steady stream of immigrants, create scores of settlements and colonies in the area,

⁶ Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 35-43.

⁷ Eric A. Eliason, ed., *Mormons and Mormonism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 135.

⁸ Marvin S. Hill, *Quest For Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), xvi, 35, and 41.

⁹ Ethan R. Yorgason, *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 78.

and construct an unusually varied economy,” eventually it brought about the end of the Mormon kingdom.¹⁰ Unable to keep the great pluralistic tendencies of the United States and much of the Western World from affecting their church and people, the Mormon church succumbed, but not to any external pressure from non-Mormons. The church’s ideals were victim to circumstance and its own success. There were, however, benefits to this reconstruction, “in saving their community from the drastic restrictionism essential to the [communitarian] success, church leaders removed the conditions without which nation-wide and world-wide proselyting would have been unsuccessful.”¹¹ To be sure, this was never an explicitly made decision. Their very survival necessitated abandoning early societal structures focused on unity and communitarianism that had been established through persecution and forged during the eventual exodus out of the United States to the Great Basin.

The first Mormon pioneers, though understandably disgusted with the United States government’s failures to protect their property and lives, nevertheless maintained a cautious devotion to their former country (the territory they claimed was at the time under the control, albeit in name only, of Mexico).¹² Their devotion was to America’s founders and the principles on which the Constitution was written, not to its current politicians. Rather ironically, this bond to their former country was further strengthened in Mormon culture as emigrants from Europe poured into the Salt Lake Valley over the course of more than thirty years. The emigrants saw little, if any, distinction between relocating to Utah versus America, and they shared many of the same aspirations and ideals of those non-Mormon emigrants who settled on the eastern seaboard.

¹⁰ Yorgason, 80.

¹¹ Leonard J. Arrington, “Early Mormon Communitarianism: The Law of Consecration and Stewardship,” *The Western Humanities Review* 7, no. 4 (Autumn 1953), 367.

¹² Thomas O’Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 116-117.

This shift made the transition easier when Mormon leadership eventually relinquished political autonomy. Among the conditions attached to statehood, Congress required, in general, allegiance to the United States and its institutions, and, in particular, the “abandonment of certain political, economic, and social peculiarities.”¹³ Emigration eased the bonds linking Mormon-to-Mormon and gradually softened anti-American sentiments that made Mormon inclusion possible in the states.

What resulted was a group that, according to Thomas O’Dea, “came close[r] to evolving an ethnic identity on this continent than did any other comparable group. Moreover, it was a genuine, locally and independently conceived, ethnicity, born and nurtured on this side of the water and *not* imported from abroad” [emphasis added].¹⁴ While O’Dea’s assertion that they were the closest that a separatist group came to evolving their own ethnic identity is correct, the idea that it developed indigenously is exceedingly peculiar. In 1850, three years after their arrival in the valley, the percentage of households headed by foreign-born men or women was 27 percent, and by 1870 it had increased to 65 percent.¹⁵ In a community with fertility rates exceeding the national average by a considerable amount, the Mormon community substantially increased their percentage of foreign-born citizenry for over thirty years. Mormon identity was especially impacted from abroad.

These emigrants brought with them their own culture that was absorbed and accommodated into the Mormon identity. They harbored less hostility towards the United States,

¹³ Gustive O. Larson, *The “Americanization” of Utah for Statehood*, (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1971), ix.

¹⁴ O’Dea, 117.

¹⁵ Clayne L. Pope, “Households on the American Frontier: the Distribution of Income and Wealth in Utah, 1850-1900” in *Markets in History: Economic Studies of the Past*, ed. David W. Galen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 158.

which helped the region “Americanize” for statehood.¹⁶ Mormon leaders, though wanting to maintain a particular type of community, “were soon to find...that a ‘newness of life’ is more readily imagined than effected and that the past clings tenaciously to men, even in a new land.”¹⁷

A unique identity was indeed created on the Great Plains and afterwards, in the settlements. Borne of common suffering and hope, what resulted was uniquely American. Life was difficult, food scarce, and opportunity elusive but possible. Many were optimistic and found contentment in the American desert while others were overcome by poverty and continued west, feeling disaffected and that they had been misled, but most suffered through the setbacks and were able to eventually acquire land and fulfill the call of their elders to “make the desert blossom as the rose.”¹⁸ The self-reliance of small communities and individuals neutralized much of the centralized power structure in Salt Lake City. This occurred to such a degree that by “the turn of the century, [the] welfare emphasis began eroding in favor of concern for individual and corporate freedom to accumulate as much wealth as possible.”¹⁹

The Mormon church’s preoccupation with family history and recordkeeping provided ample material for research. Early writing about the church usually came in one of two forms. It was either the affirmation of its prophecies and tenets by the faithful, or the denigration of its beliefs and leaders by critics with their own religious motivations.²⁰ Although works in a similar

¹⁶ For more information on how this transformation took place, from a top-down approach, see Gustive Larson’s *The “Americanization” of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1971).

¹⁷ Arrington and Bitton, 110.

¹⁸ Arrington and Bitton, 109.

¹⁹ Yorg, 91.

²⁰ Unfortunately Mormonism continues to inspire this type of treatment from authors primarily of competing faiths. For an older example see Orson F. Whitney’s, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1892). For those written in the second half of the twentieth century see Stanley P. Hirshson’s *The Lion of the Lord: A Biography of Brigham Young*, Richard Abanes’ *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church*, Ernest

vein are still written, erudite history on the church began during the latter half of the twentieth century due to the efforts of both Mormon and non-Mormon scholars.

Leonard Arrington was the unofficial leader of the so-called, new Mormon historians. This new professionalism in Mormon scholarship represented a real “shift from parochialism and polemics to a more human and universal history rooted in such ‘humanistic and scientific disciplines’ as ‘philosophy, social psychology, economics, and religious studies.’”²¹ His groundbreaking work on the Mormons, *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900*, offered a thorough treatment of how the church crafted and carried out economic policy. Haven written a number of works on the curiosities of early Mormon economic policies and communitarianism, Arrington found the divergences from mainstream American culture especially intriguing. *Great Basin Kingdom* became the foundation for further Mormon studies, and was particularly important because Salt Lake City and its satellites represented “one of the few regional economies in modern history founded for a religious purpose, dominated by religious sentiments, and managed by religious leaders.”²² Their communal development was an extension of early American ideals, though unique in the West, and sharply contrasting with the individualistic tendencies growing in the eastern United States at the time.²³ Arrington argued that this difference between the two groups accounted for most of the subsequent conflicts between their theocracy and the United States government. Mormon leadership eschewed the growing

H. Taves’ *This is the Place: Brigham Young and the New Zion*, Jon Krakauer’s *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith*, among many others.

²¹ Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, *Mormon History*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 60.

²² Leonard J Arrington *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830, 1900*. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), vii.

²³ Arrington, *GBK*, 63.

ethos of capitalism in the East because their communities were driven by group welfare instead of individual profit.²⁴ Conflict came not so much from polygamy, as from the anti-capitalistic principles guiding church policy.²⁵

Circumstances surrounding the Second Great Awakening provided key context for understanding the rise of the Mormon sect and the eventual conflict with non-Mormons and the United States government according to Klaus J. Hansen.²⁶ In *Mormonism and the American Experience* he used an anthropological approach to explain the fundamental role that society played in shaping the social, political, and moral aspects of an individual's life.²⁷ Hansen believed the origins of the Mormon faith were a combination of these factors and a reaction to inadequacies in American culture.

Hansen wrote another monograph, *Quest for Empire*, that challenged the mainstream assumptions concerning polygamy and conflict with the U.S. government. One of his major claims is that the church leadership, in effect, sacrificed polygamy to preserve the political kingdom. Doctrinal anachronisms, like polygamy, were of much less importance, and were therefore sacrificed to save the existing hierarchy. Many of Hansen's conclusions, however, have

²⁴ Arrington, *GBK*, 293.

²⁵ Arrington, *GBK*, 356.

²⁶ At its founding, it is more accurate to designate Mormonism as a "sect," rather than a separate "religion." While most now accept its designation as its own religion, I used the definition of sect given by Sydney Ahlstrom in *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), as it most accurately reflected the circumstances at the time, "the term 'sect' refers to a movement, almost necessarily small at the outset, which secedes from or forms the periphery of a more stable, socially adjusted, and often culturally dominant religious group. Sect formation is thus usually an expression of alienation; it is a movement of people who are spiritually, socially, economically, educationally, or in other ways 'disinherited.'" Nothing could describe the Mormon people better through most of the nineteenth century than that definition. Note, Ahlstrom struggled to assign a designation to the church as they grew in the twentieth century, "one cannot even be sure if the object of our consideration is a sect, a mystery cult, a new religion, a church, a people, a nation, or an American subculture; indeed, at different times and places it is all of these."

²⁷ Klaus J. Hansen, *Mormonism and the American Experience* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 47.

been criticized by others who believe the Council of Fifty's importance was overplayed by Hansen.²⁸

These ideas of struggle between different factions of society are further echoed in Marvin S. Hill's, *Quest for Refuge: The American Flight from American Pluralism*. Hill offered a meticulous account of early tension and violence with non-Mormons prior to the Mormons' exodus west. The first half of the book was remarkable in its theories and evidence, but the latter half suffered as Hill lost his thesis in a dense history collected over twenty years of research. His position that conflict resulted from the Mormons struggling against structural changes in society is inadequately backed up by evidence which rather seems to suggest that it was the non-Mormons pushing back against the unity of the Saints. Many disaffected groups struggled to find and define their place in the new American order attempting to merge capitalism and evangelism. For an interesting look into how the Mormons eventually accommodated capitalism, see Ethan R. Yorgason's *The Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region*.

Thomas O'Dea stressed in his sociological study, *The Mormons*, that their peculiar beliefs, societal rites, and institutional strength worked to unify its members while simultaneously fomenting resentment against them from outsiders. Their communal structure, hostility to outsiders, and resiliency in the face of overwhelming antagonism unwittingly created "a situation that, of necessity, was bound to be characterized by intense rivalry, suspicion, and even animosity."²⁹ Their eventual self-exile further galvanized their feelings of unity, devotion, and commitment to their faith.

²⁸ The Council of Fifty was a secretive church organization that met sporadically and made some decisions for the church.

²⁹ O'Dea, 49.

Emigration from a number of European countries to Utah was organized almost entirely by the church. Robert Mullen discusses three different plans for emigrants in *The Latter-Day Saints: The Mormons Yesterday and Today*. A strictly empirical study done on the main plan, the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, is Gustive O. Larson's *Prelude to the Kingdom*. Larson focuses almost exclusively on migration and the fund, ignoring church history and twentieth-century developments. Though it is a relatively modest work, in that it proposes to do little more than offer the story of Mormon emigration, it is still useful. The documentation is unimpressive, but he makes up for it by including whole sections of primary sources within the text. In an effort to increase the accessibility of these documents, Larson has provided an important source.

After establishing their capital city deep in the heart of the Great Basin, protected to the east by the Rocky Mountains from America's corrupt politicians and bigoted citizens, Mormon elders, led by Brigham Young, organized the settlement and contemplated how to populate their remote kingdom. The area they claimed was larger than the Great Basin.³⁰ The doctrine of "the gathering" became the central tenet by which to accomplish this great undertaking.³¹ It was the spiritual impetus that drove every Saint, in America and abroad, to leave their homes and join their unknown brothers and sisters in Zion. The idea of gathering in Zion reached back to the days of the Old Testament Israelites:

It was said, when the righteous gathered together, in the days of Enoch, that the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them: and such must be the case in these last days, when the Lord is pruning his vineyard for the last time, and gathering his elect from the four quarters of the earth.³²

³⁰ See accompanying image on page 31. Reprinted from Arrington and Bitton.

³¹ Jan Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years Among the Mormons* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 293.

³² *The Evening and Morning Star*, vol. 14, no. 21, July 17, 1852.

The gathering served a number of practical purposes. Clearly, the fledgling church needed settlers to establish communities, work the land, and build the temple. To bring the masses, they began missionary efforts throughout the United States and eventually into England, Scotland, and onto the continent. They found a ready audience for their message as economic conditions had been hitting the middle-classes and poor especially hard in the industrial regions of Europe. Many people directly appealed to their respective governments for help. The first chartist petition to Parliament in 1838 sought assistance to escape from the depressed conditions, “We find ourselves overwhelmed with public and private suffering. We are bowed down under a load of taxes...our trades are trembling on the verge of bankruptcy, our workmen are starving. Capital brings no profit and labor no remuneration.”³³ In response to the wail of the poor the *Millennial Star* announced several years later in 1842 that America was “reserved by the Almighty as a sure asylum for the poor and the oppressed.”³⁴ The Saints proposed to deliver the poor from bondage and provide them with land and opportunity.³⁵

This would not, however, be an easy task. The cost of moving an entire family proved beyond the means of most of the early converts in poverty stricken England. The church therefore established a fund which was to last forever and would gather the Saints year after year until the end times.³⁶

The Book of Mormon circulated widely in England and captivated many with its tales of a pre-Columbian American history. Peter McIntyre, a poor but educated Scotsman, was shown the book by “a wealthy but...eccentric gentleman” who was intrigued, but doubtful of its claims.

³³ Gustive O. Larson, “Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,” *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Proceedings* 31 (1954), 140.

³⁴ Larson, 140.

³⁵ Larson, 140.

³⁶ Arrington, *GBK*, 77.

McIntyre, however, was immediately convinced of its divine authenticity and sought out the missionaries to learn all he could of this new religion. Shortly after his conversion, he and three other Saints healed a crippled man by the laying on of hands and having the invalid refuse medical treatment for three weeks. They later cured a young woman's breast cancer after having "consecrated a piece of fresh butter and [anointing the girl]."³⁷ His experience was not uncommon and after spending time with the Mormons and witnessing these miracles he wanted to join all the other Saints in Zion.

Many converts were understandably devoted to the country of their birth and hesitant to leave, but they also bemoaned the inequities and difficulty of life. The Mormons appealed to the downtrodden on a level that transcended wealth and comfort.³⁸ The Saints abroad were instilled with the principle of the gathering and stood to benefit from the promises of the gathering, "to deliver the honest poor, the pauper...from the thralldom of ages, from localities where poverty is a crime and beggary an offence against the law...and place them in a land where honest labour and industry meet a suitable reward."³⁹

The tenor with which church leadership spoke concerning the gathering varied and was largely dictated by circumstance. In July of 1832, while still in Missouri, the official church newspaper at the time, *The Evening and Morning Star*, proclaimed that the gathering had begun one year earlier and that it "will be accomplished...yet the Lord has commanded that it shall not be done in haste, not by flight, but that all things shall be prepared before you."⁴⁰ The fact that the gathering began in 1831 is remarkable and speaks to the fundamental importance that this idea had

³⁷ Peter McIntyre, 1790-1872 autobiography, Special Collections, University of Utah Marriott Library, 15.

³⁸ McIntyre, 38.

³⁹ *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 18, no. 4, January 26, 1856.

⁴⁰ *The Evening and Morning Star*, volume 1, no. 2, Independence, Missouri. July 1832.

for the followers of the Mormon sect. Only a scant eight years after Smith received his first revelation, and more than fifteen years before the rapidly growing church was led west by Brigham Young, church leaders unknowingly laid the foundations for the great relocation of Saints that was to come.⁴¹

Smith and his followers believed they were God's chosen people, and Christ would return to reign over their city during the end times because of their devotion.⁴² They drew haphazardly from the Bible for both inspiration and instruction. Believing themselves modern day correlates to the Israelites of the Old Testament, they searched the text for parallels, and found many for a persecuted and banished people. They had followed the same instructions as Abram who was supposedly told by God to, "get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred...unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee."⁴³ Taking these instructions literally, church leaders prepared themselves and their followers for Christ's return and went about building a nation worthy of it.

Many scholars have made convincing arguments that the early actions and principles of the church were established as a reaction against the great pluralistic inclinations arising out of the Second Great Awakening.⁴⁴ More than anything, early Mormonism was "anti-pluralistic, for dissent and diversity were always atheistic and destructive."⁴⁵ They sought unity in both the temporal and spiritual realms of their existence. This dovetailed perfectly with the idea of

⁴¹ Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 154.

⁴² *The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 18, no. 2, January 12, 1856.

⁴³ Genesis 12.1-3, King James Version.

⁴⁴ See Marvin S. Hill's, *Quest for Refuge: The American Flight from American Pluralism* and Kenneth H. Winn's, *Exiles in a Land of Liberty: Mormons in America, 1830-1844*.

⁴⁵ Hill, xii.

gathering in general, because if privilege is granted to “gathering and not to dissociating, [there] is no room for the other.”⁴⁶ A homogenized society disencumbered from the difficulties of difference is exactly what early leaders of the church sought.

Though the Saints believed that they followed God’s instructions, they knew that their own path, beset with trials, would test their vigor and faith. This idea was forged in their collective identity during the attacks on their communities and took on even greater importance on the overland trail. The Mormon people too, their leaders told them, were “ordered...into an unpromising wilderness, to be subject to hunger, and thirst, and many hardships.”⁴⁷ Gathering in a single location secured them those inheritances that would result from their faith.⁴⁸ They also believed that God was separating out his chosen before an earthly judgment. Their concentration was as much of a means of protection against the “chastening hand” of the Lord as it was from earlier persecution.⁴⁹

Thus the gathering became one of the fundamental tenets of the Mormon faith. Church leaders explained their beliefs and special relationship with God on a number of occasions, “we believe in the literal gathering of Isreal [*sic*] and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion will be built upon this [American] continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that

⁴⁶ John D. Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation With Jacques Derrida*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 14.

⁴⁷ Orson Spencer, “Letters exhibiting the Most Prominent Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” (Liverpool: Brigham Young, 1866), 123.

⁴⁸ Spencer, 126.

⁴⁹ Spencer, 131.

the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.”⁵⁰ The gathering was the clarion call to which all the faithful were compelled to respond.

Once settled in the valley, the church began calls for others to join them almost immediately.⁵¹ Though the community lacked the means to assist the emigrants and were often themselves on the brink of collapse, they had faith that their efforts were not in vain.⁵² After less than a year, the Council of the Twelve Apostles, the leading council for the church, put out their yearly General Epistle calling on all who had not yet made the trip across the Great Plains to “gather yourselves together speedily...let all the Saints who have been driven and scattered from Nauvoo...gather immediately...let all the Saints in the United States and Canada gather to the same place.”⁵³ Even though circumstances were precarious, Lorenzo Snow, an early follower who later became President of the church, exclaimed to the people of Europe that “the command is now for [them] to be delivered from bondage, poverty, and distress, and come to the valleys of the mountains, where they can sustain themselves.”⁵⁴ Even though the means for sustaining such an influx was questionable at best, a mass call was soon extended for all Saints wherever they might reside to gather:

To the Saints in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and adjacent islands and countries, we say, emigrate as speedily as possible to this vicinity...come immediately and prepare to go West—bringing with you all kinds of choice seeds, of grain, vegetables, fruits, shrubbery, trees, and vines—every thing that will please the eye, gladden the heart, or cheer the soul

⁵⁰ P.G. Mode, “The Articles of Faith,” *Sourcebook and Bibliographical Guide for American Church History*. (Boston: J.S. Canner & Company Inc., 1964), 102-103.

⁵¹ *The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 58, no. 50, December 13, 1856.

⁵² For an excellent treatment of the early financial difficulties and the eventual means which enabled the church to begin offering direct assistance to the emigrants, see Arrington’s chapter “Harvest of ‘49” in *Great Basin Kingdom* which covers the diggers who passed through Salt Lake on their way to California and, in many respects, saved the community from ruin.

⁵³ *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*, no. 6, March 15, 1848.

⁵⁴ Sheryl Richard Benson, “The Emigration of Swedish Mormons to Utah, 1905-1955” (Masters thesis, University of Utah, 1965), 5.

of man, that grows upon the face of the whole earth; also, the best stock of beast, bird, and fowl of every kind; also the best tools...machinery for spinning, or weaving, and dressing...[and] all kinds of farming utensils and husbandry...that shall tend to promote the comfort, health, happiness, or prosperity of any people.⁵⁵

The question often arose among the recently converted why they had to emigrate. Never before had a religious movement relied so heavily on relocation, but, through their failed communities, the Mormons in America learned that living alongside non-Mormons was exceedingly difficult and dangerous. An ideology therefore developed based on the isolation of the Saints, “that to escape the debilitating secularizing tendencies of sectarian pluralism, they must live apart from the Gentiles.”⁵⁶ Simply put, living with non-Mormons negatively impacted their spiritual lives.⁵⁷ The community served as a means toward self-improvement and righteousness.⁵⁸ An individual’s perfectibility was limited amongst non-Mormons, thus the necessity of the gathering.⁵⁹ Alcohol, tobacco, and even caffeine were corrupting influences to be avoided, and it proved much easier to abstain in a community where some degree of purity prevailed.

The church had a long history of assisting less fortunate Saints. In 1839, after being forced out of Missouri and into Illinois, the leaders of the Church, under Young, passed a motion entering them “into a covenant to stand by and assist each other to the utmost of our abilities in removing from this state, and that we will never desert the poor and worthy.”⁶⁰ The Council of the Twelve

⁵⁵ *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*, no. 6, March 15, 1848.

⁵⁶ Hill, 35.

⁵⁷ *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 18, no. 2, January 12, 1856.

⁵⁸ Mulder, 19. And Dean L. May, *Three Frontiers: Family Land, and Society in the American West, 1850-1900*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 61.

⁵⁹ Susan Curtis, “Palmyra Revisited: A Look at Early 19th Century American Thought and the *Book of Mormon*,” Lecture in Scott Kenney Papers, Manuscript 587, Box 9, Folder 13, University of Utah Marriott Library.

⁶⁰ Gustive O. Larson, “The Story of the Perpetual Emigration Fund,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (1931): 185.

Apostles entered into a similar covenant in the Nebraska territory on October 6, 1845. Making it official policy with the Nauvoo Covenant, they asserted that they would do everything in their power to assist less fortunate Saints.⁶¹ Once they were established in the Great Salt Lake City, they reaffirmed their earlier verbal commitments with monetary aid and other forms of direct assistance, and “pledged themselves to cooperate for removal of ‘all the Saints’ to the west.”⁶²

Thus in October of 1849, they collected \$5,000 in donations and thirteen yoke of oxen to bring those Saints still stuck in Pottawattamie County, Iowa to Utah.⁶³ They empowered Bishop Edward Hunter to take the cash and ox-teams back to the States and bring back the stranded Saints.⁶⁴ He set out across the Plains with \$5,000 and the oxen. After arriving in Kanesville, Iowa he used the money to secure provisions and purchase more livestock and then led the first group of pioneers back to the valley. In his first trip Hunter brought back around 2,500 people. Upon his arrival, he sold the additional livestock back to the Saints and set out again for the United States. Everything went to plan. One year after the fund’s initiation he was back in Kanesville with \$20,000.⁶⁵ The following year another 2,500 made the journey, and in 1852, those remaining in Iowa and Missouri were finally organized and brought west. They numbered about 10,000 and were the last of the stranded Saints to make it to Utah.⁶⁶ With the success of this program the church instituted a remarkable scheme of voluntary migration, the likes of which America had

⁶¹ Arrington, 19.

⁶² Gustive O. Larson, “Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,” *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Proceedings* 31 (1954): 139.

⁶³ Aird, 303 and Larson, “Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,” *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Proceedings* 31 (1954): 139.

⁶⁴ Gustive O. Larson, “The Story of the Perpetual Emigration Fund,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (1931): 186.

⁶⁵ William G. Hartley, “How Shall I Gather?” *Ensign* 27, no. 10 (October 1997): 9.

⁶⁶ Arrington, 77 and 79.

never seen, and would never see again. The Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, or PEF, was incorporated in September of 1850 under the direction of President Young. The articles of incorporation were concise, yet supplied all the necessities required of such a company in a small community. Its structure outlined, positions enumerated, accounting practices stated, and purposes espoused. The PEF had but a simple purpose, “to promote, facilitate, and accomplish the Emigration of the Poor.”⁶⁷ It clearly stated that these funds were not charity, but a loan, and that individuals and families receiving said funds were to pay the funds back with labor, in kind, or with specie.⁶⁸ And with its incorporation the Mormon church instituted,

The most systematic, organized, disciplined, and successful pioneers in our history; and their advantage over the random individualists who preceded them and paralleled them and followed them up the valley of the Platte came directly from their ‘un-American’ social and religious organization. Where Oregon emigrants and Argonauts bound for the gold fields lost practically all their social cohesion en route, the Mormons moved like the host of Israel they thought themselves. Far from loosening their social organization, the trail perfected it.⁶⁹

By 1852, everyone who desired relocation and were still stranded between Missouri and Salt Lake City were on the move. The effort had proven so successful that it seemed only natural to extend this assistance to the Saints in England, “to close the Nauvoo door, however, was to open the European one.”⁷⁰ Proselyting began in the United Kingdom in 1837 and their success in converting the English and Scots was remarkable. By 1851 the Saints numbered 32,894 with an additional 10,319 already having made the trip to America.⁷¹

⁶⁷ W. Richards, “Articles of Incorporation, Perpetual Emigrating Fund,” *Deseret News*, Vol. 1, no. 15, September 21, 1850.

⁶⁸ W. Richards. Payments in specie, though preferable, were exceedingly rare.

⁶⁹ Stegner, 6.

⁷⁰ Hartley, 10.

⁷¹ Gustive O. Larson, “The Story of the Perpetual Emigration Fund,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (1931): 188.

On August 3, 1852, Bishop Abraham Smoot brought the first company of Saints by means of the PEF from England into the Valley. Following him out of Emigration Canyon were some 250 men, women, and children walking beside and behind 31 ox-drawn wagons. Though they had assets in excess cattle, wagons, and provisions, the earlier fund-raising efforts soaked up most of what cash and specie circulated through the town as a result of the gold miners who passed through Salt Lake City on their way to California. It quickly became clear with that first expedition that the company's revenues would commonly fall short of expenditures.⁷²

For the first decade of emigration, the agency shipped all the emigrants to New Orleans where they then took a steamship up the Mississippi. They continued up to St. Louis where they either stayed to earn some extra money or proceeded on to Nauvoo, Illinois. In Nauvoo they were outfitted for most of the journey with their "wagon, two yoke of oxen, two cows, and a tent," in addition to the luggage they brought with them.⁷³ After learning to control the oxen, they organized themselves into teams and headed out onto what could only euphemistically be referred to as a "road." The families struck out into the great expanse of the western United States having only faint ideas of the hardships that would come with "the tedium of creeping along sixteen to twenty miles a day in mud and sand."⁷⁴ Jean Rio Pearce, a young widow with several children, described the daily toil of the trail, silently berating those who called the ground they traveled over a road, "it is a perfect succession of hills, valley, bogs, mudholes, low bridges, and

⁷² James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1833-1964, Volume 2*, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1965), 167-168.

⁷³ Aird, 313.

⁷⁴ Mulder, 163.

quagmires... Oh, for the Taun Roads of England... Each day I hope that we shall have better travelling [*sic*] on the next, but as yet our changes have only been from bad to worse.”⁷⁵

The outfitting post remained in Nauvoo even after they began shipping emigrants through the northeastern ports one year to avoid the Cholera epidemic in New Orleans. After arriving in New York or Philadelphia they traveled by steamship through the northeastern canals and onto the Great Lakes. They disembarked at ??? and then traveled by rail to the jumping off point at Nauvoo. From there they made their way to Kanessville (Council Bluffs), Iowa where the route “was well established” all the way to the Salt Lake Valley.⁷⁶ Once en route and until reaching the valley, “the emigrants’ life was dominated by the daily need for grass and water.”⁷⁷ They therefore traveled alongside the great rivers of the west. They followed the Platte River across Nebraska and into the central part of Wyoming where they then followed the Sweetwater River southwest the rest of the way through Wyoming and into Utah.⁷⁸

The journey across the Great Plains and through the Rocky Mountains took its toll on the pioneers and tried their patience as nothing before ever had. Although impossible to present a monolithic depiction of their trials, certain elements were common to all. They confronted their own emotions and the forces of nature. Choking dust, stubborn draft animals, rattlesnakes, biting winds, incessant rain, heat, cold, pain, death, and unbridled liberty were all encountered or felt at one time or another.⁷⁹ The most trying experience was death. Most who passed on the overland

⁷⁵ Pearce, June 2, 1851.

⁷⁶ Arrington and Bitton, 133.

⁷⁷ Arrington, *GBK*, 186.

⁷⁸ See accompanying image on page 32. Reprinted from Piercy.

⁷⁹ For a detailed description of the hardships faced by the first group of pioneers, see Stegner’s *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail*.

trail left no record of the hardships they endured, and were remembered, if at all, only by a crude marker that signified their final resting place and the occasional note found in a diary which usually listed little more than their name, day, where, and how they died. The young and healthy who got ill often passed with little more difficulty than the infant who, bore into the freezing rain, lasted not an hour.⁸⁰ Hundreds never completed the journey, succumbing to exposure, accidents, disease, and other maladies that indiscriminately struck at the pioneers.

Murder, too, happened on the trail. Occasionally dotting the countryside, though rather infrequently, were grave-markers similar to one seen by William Ajax which had the following inscription, "Charles R. Young, aged 43 years, was tried by jury on the 7th of July 1862, for murdering George Scott on the 6th of July, and was found guilty and executed on the 8th, by being shot."⁸¹ The difficulty of the journey pushed many beyond their breaking point and inevitably led to conflict, which, as seen from the above example, was swiftly dealt with. Justice, retribution, and forgiveness all took many forms amongst the pioneers on the western trail, but were never delayed.

Amongst all the pain, death, and "sudden storms that broke over Iowa and Nebraska frightening beyond anything known in the Old Country," the pioneers also felt a sense of freedom greater than anything they had ever experienced before.⁸² Contrary to popular conceptions of the pioneering family riding in the wagon as the father and mother took turns driving the team, only the driver and the sickest among them were forced to endure the jolting ride of the covered wagon. The endless stream of oxen kicked up so much dust that anywhere near the wagon-train was

⁸⁰ Stegner, 87.

⁸¹ William Ajax, February 1, 1862-December 31, 1863, diary, Special Collections, University of Utah Marriott Library.

⁸² Mulder, 163

unbearable. The wagons also lacked shocks to absorb the rough road over which they clumsily rolled, so most walked the entire way.⁸³ This also lightened the load for the oxen straining under the weight of wagons exceeding their recommended carrying capacity. The oxen traveled at a pace from one and a half to two miles per hour, while the average person strolled along at a leisurely pace of three miles per hour.⁸⁴ The women, children, and any others not forced to help with the teams were therefore free to roam the countryside away from the insufferable dust.

During the day they were constantly in awe of the “grand and terrible” scenery and explored their new country which was “beyond description for wilderness and beauty,” while at night they slept in tents “like [their] fathers in ancient times.”⁸⁵ Thoughts drifted occasionally to those family and friends back in the Old Country and what they might be thinking of them. Though some regretted their departure, most relished the experience and wondered if not it was their family and friends who bore the greater misfortune, wishing they could picture them “in the open air with nothing to tell...of a [civilized] world, but the creaking of the frogs in the springtime near us; the stars glittering in the heavens, and the moon shining brightly, enabling us to see for miles...I felt at the moment a sense of freedom and security I cannot describe.”⁸⁶

After arriving in the valley, those Saints who were assisted by the PEF were to repay their debts as soon as they were settled and able to acquire a little surplus.⁸⁷ The company was initially designed so the funds would increase “until Israel [was] gathered from all nations, and the poor

⁸³ Lucy Hannah White Flake, *To the Last Frontier*, Special Collections, University of Utah Marriott Library.

⁸⁴ P.A.M. Taylor, *Expectations Westward: The Mormons and the Emigration of their British Converts in the Nineteenth Century*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 223.

⁸⁵ Autobiography of Peter McIntyre, 1790-1872. Ms 29. Western Americana, Utah Library. And Diary of Jean Rio Pearce.

⁸⁶ Pearce, June 4.

⁸⁷ Larson, 186.

[could] sit under their own vines, and inhabit their own homes, and worship God in Zion.”⁸⁸ With deep roots in the Mormon experience it was “as an expression of the Mormon cooperative spirit which had held them together in rough going through New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois.”⁸⁹

By securing passage through the church, each family entrusted themselves to the Company for the duration of the trip. They were told “that they will continue under the care of the agent...until they arrive in the Valley...and that on their arrival...their time and labour shall be subject to the appropriation of the Perpetual Emigrating Company, until they have paid [back] the Company.”⁹⁰ While many contemporary observers believed that the church held these emigrants in some form of bondage, such was not the case at all. Many decided, of their own accord, to disembark at one port or another, and a small number were encouraged to do so after being excommunicated for immoral behavior.⁹¹

Most remuneration was in kind, labor, or other forms of payment. Inability to convert repayments into cash or other goods useful for emigration resulted in numerous funding difficulties. Collection was even more difficult since the Mormons had claimed not just the Salt Lake Valley, but an area encompassing modern-day Utah, Nevada, most of Southern California, and parts of New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon.⁹²

⁸⁸ Larson, 186.

⁸⁹ Gustive O. Larson, “Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,” *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Proceedings* 31 (1954): 139.

⁹⁰ “Sixth General Epistle,” *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*. Vol. 14, No. 2, January 15, 1852.

⁹¹ Many diaries and journals that cover the voyage across the Atlantic mention young women falling for, and in some cases, even marrying sailors, women leaving their husbands, and several staying for extended periods at New Orleans, St. Louis, and/or the outfitting posts. Many even moved on to California after trying to make it in one of the closer satellite towns. The church was more or less successful in identifying most individuals whose devotion wavered before they had lent them money and disembarked, but for those who apostatized on the journey, the PEF simply absorbed the costs.

⁹² See image on page 31. Reprinted from Arrington and Bitton.

Before two years passed in their new town the population grew beyond what the surrounding valley could comfortably absorb at the time. Rather than “adding suburb to suburb,” Young and his counselors decided to send out recent arrivals, after rest and consultation, to settle towns throughout their illegitimate empire. Most new settlements were devised in advance and in a similar fashion. Small teams were sent out to locate habitable regions and then notices were placed in the *Deseret News* for volunteers to settle the areas. Desiring each settlement to be self-sustaining, in each group went five carpenters, two blacksmiths, a millwright, a surveyor, shoemakers, and masons.⁹³ Once the families were organized and positions were filled, they headed out with horses, cows, seed, ploughs, guns, and various tools needed for settlement, irrigation, and agriculture.⁹⁴

By 1856 about 100 settlements were established and another 400 were founded before the turn of the century. Church leadership in Salt Lake City directed the establishment of these outcropping settlements. This occurred in a number of stages. First, the church sent out companies to explore for hospitable areas. After a suitable location was discovered, the church called for and organized families and individuals to relocate to the settlement. And finally, as the city was laid out, developed, and required skilled workers of various sorts, requests were made from the bishops in the settlements back to Salt Lake City for more emigrants. New arrivals in the city were then instructed to push on to their assigned settlement.⁹⁵

⁹³ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah, 1540-1886*, “The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Volume XXVI,” (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), 318.

⁹⁴ Bancroft, 318-320.

⁹⁵ Arrington, *GBK*, 88.

These colonizing efforts were seen “as religious duties and called ‘missions.’”⁹⁶ The growth of many missions led to “noticeable clustering of the foreign-born into ethnic neighborhoods.”⁹⁷ They tended to remain where they first settle even if increased opportunity was present elsewhere since they “retain[ed] the benefits of living near individuals with a similar culture.”⁹⁸ This put them at an economic disadvantage, as they were less likely to take advantage of opportunities, but what wealth gap existed as a result of one’s origins was quickly replaced by a different inequality resulting from inheritance and individual abilities and ambition.⁹⁹

Those sent out to build up the outlying settlements tended to congregate more with their fellow countrymen and assimilated less than those who remained in Salt Lake City. These outlying settlements tended to promote clustering of peoples together according to their country of birth, “the country was wild and broken, the settlers were mostly from the old Country, their language and customs were so different from ours, we could not get used to them, it seemed.”¹⁰⁰ These outlying posts clearly made assimilation more difficult and emphasized differences as the “old Country” Lucy Flake referred to, was England.

The church was slowly building a theocratic empire, “but one in which the individual found considerable room for expression as well as satisfying participation in the great struggle to build God’s kingdom in the unfriendly desert.”¹⁰¹ Such a governmental structure was not a foregone conclusion, but fit nicely with Mormon principles, their history, and the physical

⁹⁶ O’Dea, 86.

⁹⁷ Clayne, 184.

⁹⁸ Clayne, 173.

⁹⁹ Clayne, 180 and 188.

¹⁰⁰ Flake, 7.

¹⁰¹ O’Dea, 86.

environment of the desert. Theocracy resulted primarily from their “passion for unity and solidarity” in religious beliefs and order.¹⁰² They were also the first Anglo-American community to base large settlements around irrigation farming, a technique necessitating strict water control and long accompanied in the past by “authoritarian leadership and co-ordination in a tightly knit social organization.”¹⁰³ This unity, however, was undermined by the continual increase of emigrants from abroad.

They brought with them the hopes and ideals they had learned of America while still in Europe. A group of Scottish musicians, upon arrival in the city, organized the first pipeband, but they made sure it was clear “that the purpose was not to create a Scottish national spirit ‘because first, last, and all the time we are AMERICANS’” [emphasis in original].¹⁰⁴ Rather than centralizing authority in a single location, its dispersal across the kingdom weakened the united front of the church against outside forces, thereby encouraging accommodation and compromise. Contrary to popular misconceptions, “what happened at church headquarters was not always an accurate indication of what was going on in the local congregations...it [was] in the activity of their local ward or congregation that Mormons...found their greatest sense of group identity.”¹⁰⁵ These settlements preceded the infrastructure necessary for strictly controlling them, and therefore precipitated a diffusion of authority out of Salt Lake and away from empire.

Early Mormon ideals preferring only nominal differences in wealth between families were quickly supplanted due to the different opportunities afforded by varying regions and circumstances. The vast sprawl of Mormon communities had destroyed these ideals, as

¹⁰² Arrington, *GBK*, 27.

¹⁰³ O’Dea, 88.

¹⁰⁴ Frederick Stewart Buchanan, “The Emigration of Scottish Mormons to Utah, 1849-1900,” (Masters thesis. University of Utah, 1961), 133.

¹⁰⁵ Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 206.

“communitarian societies were seldom successful except in small, homogenous, well-contained groups.”¹⁰⁶ Whatever hopes of equality existed “proved ephemeral,” but this does not mean that substantial opportunity and improvement did not exist in the western United States.¹⁰⁷ Most converts’ economic situation notably improved after emigration, and, perhaps more important, there was reason for hope when compared to what they had faced in Europe.¹⁰⁸

Wealthier Saints and single men who could survive working oddjobs remained in the city while others headed out to assigned destinations or went to live near relatives or friends who were already established.¹⁰⁹ Finding work in the city was difficult, but what privation resulted was usually more than made up for by the kindness of neighbors. Single men like William Ajax found work digging gardens, constructing dams, planting corn, sugarcane and potatoes, building the temple square, boiling salt, chopping wood and doing anything else that helped him to get by. For his services he was occasionally paid in specie, but more often with flour, molasses, apples, wheat, hens, or soap. When it was too cold to work, or there was no work to be had, many relied on the kindness of earlier settlers who had acquired some constancy. Ajax’s journal is replete with examples of families providing him with food and the occasional place to stay.¹¹⁰

Many of the emigrants were satisfied while others remained impoverished and disaffected. One European convert recognized the opportunity afforded him and wrote, “we are here in a free country, and every man who will work can provide himself...with a house, a cow, a wagon, and

¹⁰⁶ Arrington, “Early Mormon Communitarianism...” 367.

¹⁰⁷ Clayne, 188.

¹⁰⁸ Clayne, 189.

¹⁰⁹ Gustive O. Larson, *Prelude to the Kingdom: Mormon Desert Conquest, A Chapter in American Cooperative Experience*, (Francetown, New Hampshire: Marshall Jones Company, 1947), 244.

¹¹⁰ Ajax, 1863.

horses, as well as with land enough to raise his bread; no poor man can do this in [Europe].”¹¹¹ Others who lived in poverty for years were disenchanted and less optimistic, “trusting in the assurance of the missionaries, whom I believed to have the spirits of truth. I left my home, sacrificed my property, broke up every dear association, and what was sad is yet, dearer than all, left my beloved native land, and for what? A bubble that has burst in my grasp.”¹¹² Though all struggled, many were content. They had been freed from capitalism’s early development that turned much of Europe into a place that they were glad to leave, and they enthusiastically adopted their new nationality. They were reborn, literally as well as figuratively, into the clean, crisp air of the west. Gone were the smoke stacks, diminutive titles delineating narrow abilities, and limited prospects. In the desert kingdom there was opportunity for a fresh start and social fluidity.

It should be noted, however, that the poignant quote written above was by a single woman while a man wrote the other. The possibility, ambition, and purpose with which many of the new transplants poured their energies were almost exclusively reserved for men. In the land of liberty, oppressive forces still lingered and took on familiar forms. Women, though cherished as wives and bearers of children, could hope for little opportunity outside of these traditional roles. Unmarried women could occasionally find work housekeeping, nursing, or midwifery, but these were primarily to help them get by until marriage.¹¹³

Even the fledgling communities had organized programs of assistance and temporary job placement services. These were conducted by the bishops and financed by the church.¹¹⁴ The

¹¹¹ Helge Seljaas, “The Mormon Migration from Norway,” (Masters thesis. University of Utah, 1965), 177.

¹¹² Pierce, September 29, 1862.

¹¹³ Seljaas, 182.

¹¹⁴ Gustive O. Larson, “Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company,” *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters* 31 (1954), 145.

labor was primarily menial, but “in Zion they at least had hope of seeing some lasting, tangible rewards for their work.”¹¹⁵ A visiting non-Mormon witnessed first-hand the crude functioning of the system, an emigrant train would arrive with some 600 people and many of those needing work. The bishops gathered everyone together, and then “one bishop said he could take five brick layers, another two carpenters, a third a tinman, a fourth seven or eight farm servants and so on...In a few minutes...two hundred of these poor emigrants had been placed in a way of earning their daily bread.”¹¹⁶ Though these jobs offered little security with regard to permanent employment, they helped many to survive and contribute to building Zion.

The end of the decade brought the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 that, surprisingly, all but ended the planned migrations organized by the church. While everyone thought the railroad would boost emigration, it was instead the death knell for the church’s emigration program that lasted for over two decades and brought some 80,000 emigrants from Europe into the Great Basin. Why this dropoff occurred is not entirely understood. Though travel by rail raised the total cost of the trip, it made the journey infinitely easier. With the more comfortable option of riding to the city, it suddenly seemed ludicrous to have people walk across the Plains, and indeed, many probably felt that the new means of travel simply priced them out of the journey. Though the life of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company was not officially ended until 1887 with the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker bill, the gathering had unofficially expired long before. Church leadership focused instead on securing statehood and expanding their missionary efforts to reach people in all countries. In a little more than twenty years the church had brought thousands from Europe, conquered the harsh desert environment, and completed the most organized and successful religious migration in American history.

¹¹⁵ Seljaas, 180.

¹¹⁶ Larson, 145.

The hopes of establishing a purified community to rule after Christ's return diminished as the faith matured and they scaled back on their expectations concerning the end of the nineteenth century. In the years preceding statehood, the Mormon community was increasingly under attack from the United States. Having just fought the Civil War over sectional differences, Congress made sure to nip any Mormon peculiarities in the bud. On the judicial side, they threatened, jailed, or forced polygamists underground which disrupted the church hierarchy as it was mainly the wealthy and influential who practiced plural marriage. Congress also passed legislation which stripped the church of much of their property.¹¹⁷ The church foresaw most of these actions and made due adjustments.

Although these actions by the United States government damaged the church structure, no governmental interference matched the disruptive nature of the Mormons' shifting ideology. The ideals that inspired the gathering slowly dissipated alongside their devotion to others' welfare. Whereas missionary zeal had long made conversion near synonymous with emigration, the focus shifted exclusively to the former. And in the desert kingdom, "Mormon pleas to be self-sufficient lost most of their regional and communitarian implications...self-sufficiency started to mean private economic independence instead of implying community well-being."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Yorgason, 82.

¹¹⁸ Yorgason, 100.

Annotated bibliography of secondary sources

Monographs

Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

Ahlstrom's offers an in-depth look at the history of religion in America. Though Ahlstrom admits Mormonism often receives an inadequate amount of focus, he too does the same. He states that understanding the conflict between Mormonism and the US is fundamental to understanding the structural changes that the country had gone through. Nevertheless, it is useful for understanding the background out of which Mormonism grew.

Arrington, Leonard J. *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1958.

An older monograph but is a classic in Mormon history. Exceptionally detailed, cited, and contains a rich description of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. One of Arrington's more interesting claims is that it was not the peculiar practices, most notably Polygamy, of Mormons which led to conflicts with the federal government, but rather their economic divergence away from the new economy of laissez-faire capitalism. Arrington states that the Mormons were insulated from the rise of corporate power, rugged individualism, and Social Darwinism that was sweeping the nation in the late 19th century. While this book certainly does not propose to be a Marxist interpretation of the church's rise, he does attribute the divergence to the communitarian principles which the Mormons adopted, and were popular at the time, prior to their exodus.

Arrington, Leonard J., and Davis Bitton. *The Mormon Experience*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

This monograph contains a good description of emigrant travels from Europe and general statistics concerning immigration. It also mentions that the idea of a corporation was floated while they remained in Illinois, but it was quickly shot down by the European missionaries who saw only the desire for speculators to profit and the potential for abuse. As it was overwhelmingly supported once in Utah this fact might illuminate the dire need of the church for assistance and funds.

Caputo, John D. *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1997.

Just used for one quote relevant to the gathering, and the idea of movements based on similarities.

Eliason, Eric A., ed. *Mormons and Mormonism*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

This is a collection of articles with a couple of particular interest for my paper. The first is by Eliason and discusses the historiography of Mormon studies to the present. The most important development for Mormon history was the rise of the “New Mormon Historians” who were led by Arrington. Another article by Rodney Stark discusses the “sociological model for the growth of new religious movements.” Stark analyzes the success of proselytizing efforts in Britain to try and account for the fact that by 1840 half of all the Mormons lived in Britain. He posits the theory of conservation of cultural capital to understand this phenomenon. That is, people are more likely to change their beliefs only if in doing so they are forced to only abandon a minimum amount of “cultural capital.”

Hansen, Klaus J. *Mormonism and the American Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Interested in stressing the anthropological aspect to understanding society. Believes that as no outsider can understand another culture without understanding their ritualistic ceremonies and rites of passage, its religious foundations, so too can no one understand American culture without understanding its religion and the role revivalism has played. Also discusses how conflict with Mormonism was inevitable due to the political, economic, and social values of the country at that time.

Hansen, Klaus J. *Quest For Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.

Focuses on the drawdown of the kingdom which the Mormon leaders had tried to build in the 19th century. This is very interesting because he stresses that polygamy was only the focal point of a much larger foundation that stirred anti-Mormon passions. That is, when polygamy was finally ended it was meant to save the kingdom, but it actually brought about the gradual drawdown of the church as a separate kingdom.

Hill, Marvin S. *Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989.

An excellent book that covers the early tension between Mormons and their neighbors. Hill suggests that the cause behind Mormon problems was pluralism, especially religious. He argues that Smith’s religion was a reaction to this pluralism and the backlash against the Mormons can be traced to the skepticism many had of their aims in consolidating power in such an un-American way.

Larson, Gustive O. *Prelude to the Kingdom: Mormon Desert Conquest, A Chapter in American Cooperative Experience*. Frankestown, New Hampshire: Marshall Jones Company, 1947.

One of the definitive treatments of the establishment and life of the PEF. The main purpose of this book is the focus on just one of the many social experiments that occurred in the 19th century, the Mormons, and their efforts to fulfill the “gathering,” instituted by Joseph Smith.

Larson, Gustive O. *The Americanization of Utah for Statehood*. San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1971.

Though this will primarily be useful if I decide to cover the conflict between the Church and the U.S. it will also be important for understanding the changes taking place throughout the valley in the latter part of the 19th century. Larson claims that it was through this *Americanization* that Utah achieved statehood.

Dean L. May, *Three Frontiers: Family Land, and Society in the American West, 1850-1900*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Thoroughly researched account of Mormon settlement.

Mulder, William. *Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957.

A phenomenal account of the missionary expansion into Europe, emigration to Zion, and the PEF. Offers an interesting idea to explain the large number of Mormon emigrants; that “in Mormon thinking emigration was practically synonymous with conversion.”

Mullen, Robert. *The Latter-Day Saints: The Mormons Yesterday and Today*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966.

Gives an adequate account of the PEF, but where this book is really good is on the buildup to confrontations with Washington. Talks about how the renewal of tensions started over a contract to deliver mail. This is all the more interesting as it was a few years before the outbreak of the Civil War and many, at least in Utah, believed this troop deployment was encouraged by the southern delegates as a distraction from the country's biggest problem, slavery.

O'Dea, Thomas F. *The Mormons*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Provides really good background into why conflict was inevitable, and why they were forced to seek refuge in the West. Very interesting in positing the idea that Mormons actually achieved their independence before arriving in Utah and this is why they had so many problems in Missouri and Illinois. They became almost like a separate city-state and their neighbors were understandably apprehensive about their presence. Also, as a non-Mormon, he ventures into some topics that many of the other writers have only reticently mentioned.

Jan Shipps. *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

Primarily a chronological account of Mormon history beginning with its founding and going through the restructuring after the turn of the twentieth century.

Shipps, Jan. *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years Among the Mormons*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Covers a number of interesting developments in the nineteenth century.

Stegner, Wallace. *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1964.

A great book on the emigration that gives the perspective of the people and the hardships they endured. Goes into depth on the day-to-day activities as the Mormons crossed the plains and the disaster that was the initial exodus.

Taylor, P.A.M. *Expectations Westward: The Mormons and the Emigration of their British Converts in the Nineteenth Century*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966.

Taylor's work is concerned with the technical questions of organization. Focuses on the fact that the PEF could not be properly centralized as the distances between Liverpool and the Salt Lake valley were so great and communication took months to get from one place to the other. An interesting look into what actually took place, the rates passengers paid, dates of departures and arrivals, funding considerations, etc. Will also provide evidence rebutting some of the claims made by Carson.

Walker, Ronald W. David J. Whittaker, James B. Allen. *Mormon History*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

A great work on the development of Mormon historiography. Discusses comparative analysis, sociology, demography, folklore, geography, cultural, and women's history. A good place for secondary sources and understanding the transitions and what the various authors were building on.

Yorgason, Ethan R. *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

Journal Articles

Aird, Polly. "Bound for Zion: The Ten—and Thirteen-Pound Emigrating Companies, 1853-54." *Utah Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2002): 300-324.

A prize-winning essay on one specific aspect of emigration, and many of the failures and hardships which accompanied it. In the effort to gather as many Saints from Europe as they could the Church leadership was continually searching for ways to reduce the costs to the emigrants. They eventually decide to ration them less food and put more persons to each wagon, needless to say this did not turn out very good.

Arrington, Leonard J. "Early Mormon Communitarianism: The Law of Consecration and

Stewardship," *The Western Humanities Review* 7, no. 4 (Autumn 1953): 341-380.

An article focusing on economic development early in the church's history.

Hartley, William G. "How Shall I Gather?" *Ensign* 27, no. 10 (October 1997): 6-24.

An article written specifically for the Church but still provides some good information of the PEF and trials of the emigrants.

Gustive O. Larson, "The Story of the Perpetual Emigration Fund," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (1931).

A great article that chronicles the entire history of the fund. Will undoubtedly be one of the main articles I will use.

Larson, Gustive O. "The Story of the Perpetual Emigration Fund." *The Pacific Historical Review* 13, No. 2 (Jun., 1944): 136-150.

Similar to above.

Larson, Gustive O. "The Story of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company." *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Proceedings* 31 (1954): 139-146.

Similar to the article above but with minor, yet important, differences.

Pope, Clayne L. "Households on the American Frontier: the Distribution of Income and Wealth in Utah, 1850-1900." In *Markets in History: Economic Studies of the Past*, ed. David W. Galen New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Good article with statistics on development of Utah's economy.

Unpublished Dissertations and Thesis

Benson, Sheryl Richard. "The Emigration of Swedish Mormons to Utah, 1905-1955." Masters thesis, University of Utah, 1965.

A great source for the history of emigration.

Buchanan, Frederick Stewart. "The Emigration of Scottish Mormons to Utah, 1849-1900," Masters thesis. University of Utah, 1961.

Much like above thesis.

Seljaas, Helge. "The Mormon Migration from Norway." Masters thesis. University of Utah, 1965.

Similar to the other two, and excellent source as well.

Lectures

Susan Curtis, "Palmyra Revisited: A Look at Early 19th Century American Thought and the *Book of Mormon*," Lecture in Scott Kenney Papers, Manuscript 587, Box 9, Folder 13, University of Utah Marriot Library.

A look into circumstances surrounding Smith's early life and examinations into the formation of the Mormon text.

Primary Sources

Published Sources and Compiled Collections

Bancroft, Hubert Howe. *History of Utah: 1540-1886*. San Francisco: The History Company, 1889.

Gives not only a history of the Indians and Mexicans who preceded the Mormons, but the entire history of Mormonism's development as well. It is also meticulously documented and is an astonishing work given that it was written in 1889. Offers all kinds of useful and interesting information from the price of flour in 1850 to the temperature of the hot-springs outside of Salt Lake City.

Mode, Peter G. *Source Book and Bibliographical Guide for American Church History*. Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1921.

Contains both of copy of the Edmunds-Tucker Act which dissolved the PEF and Wilford Woodruff's manifesto proclaiming that the church would heretofore abstain from polygamy.

Piercy, Frederick Hawkins. *Route From Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley*. Edited by Fawn M. Brodie. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.

An account by a young painter who, although never having converted, traveled with the Mormon emigrants from Liverpool, England to Utah all the while recording in his journal and making sketches. Piercy's embarked on the journey as a young man of twenty-three in 1853 having been more or less recruited by the Mormon missionaries to offer a fair and benign portrayal of the passage and, more importantly, polygamy.

Diaries and Letters

Ajax, William. Diary, February 1, 1862-December 31, 1863. University of Utah Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

An excellent source for information on the assimilation section of my paper. He talks at length on what opportunities existed for work, the wages he received, and the prices which things cost.

Pearce, Jean Rio. Diary. University of Utah Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

Pearce was a widow who moved her children from England to the Great Basin in 1851. She kept a thorough journal throughout her trip even after losing one of her sons at sea. She gives an excellent description of New Orleans, her trip up the Mississippi, and the difficult journey across the plains.

Spencer, Orson. "Letters Exhibiting the Most Prominent Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Liverpool: Brigham Young, 1866.

A crucial source that discusses the movement, procedure, and purposes of the gathering. A fundamental source that draws the link between the Mormons and the Hebrews, and specifically details the need for the concentration of the Saints.

Young, Brigham. *Correspondence*. In Blair Family collection, University of Utah Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

Offers a different perspective on Young from the one often portrayed. These are early letters which show a faithful young servant who no one could have predicted to led the church to its great growth.

Newspaper articles

The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star, January 1852-November 1890.

Will serve as the basis for much of my paper. Touches on a number of different topics relating to the gathering, the PEF, and conflict in America and abroad. Offers instructions to those wishing to emigrate, articles about why they should emigrate, and procedures on how their emigration will be financed among a number of other things.

The Evening and Morning Star, July, 1832.

Mainly serves to illustrate how early the idea of the gathering appeared in Church rhetoric. States that the work of the gathering began in 1831 and that it should be done responsibly. There are a number of transitions on how urgently the gathering should be undertaken which mirrors the conditions of the Church at the time. When things were poor, it was discouraged, and when day to day conditions improved they encouraged emigration with greater force.

Record Books

Liverpool Emigration Records. European Mission. "Emigration Records, 1849-1925."

I will use this document for a number of purposes. It shows the numbers, careers, and debts owed by those who emigrated.

"Receipts and Orders for Perpetual Emigrating Fund, 1862-1863." University of Utah Marriot Library, Tom L. Perry Special Collections.

An interesting collection that provides insight into the difficulty of raising money for the emigrants and collecting once they had made the trek.

Autobiographies

Flake, Lucy Hannah White. *To the Last Frontier*. University of Utah Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

Less interesting than I originally had hoped, but still useful for understanding that for many of these pioneers Salt Lake City was only a stopping point to a further destination.

McIntyre, Peter. *1790-1872*. University of Utah Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

A really interesting look into the conversion and travels of an intelligent Scotsman who wrote quite a lot until his wife abandoned him shortly after they arrived in St. Louis. He draws on notes he kept in his diary for the early periods and is the only part of the autobiography that I will use.