AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE MORMON MOVEMENT, 1844-1862

A THESIS

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Sam Houston State Teachers College

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

By

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Huntsville, Texas

August, 1955

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Purpose

In 1847, the Mormon colony at Great Salt Lake was founded. In many respects this was the most unique of the many strange settlements in this country. Although the Mormons had difficulties and met opposition they succeeded in making the area one of the most prosperous in the nation, and, therefore, made a great contribution to the development of the West. There seemed to be a need for a fair and impartial study of their efforts, since according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "no impartial and critical history of the . . .[Mormons] yet exists."[1] The purpose of this study,

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[1] Reed Smoot, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XIII, p. 760 D.

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therefore, is to analyze the growth of the Mormon Church and its movement to the Great Salt Lake region; investigate the economic, social, and political structure established by the Mormon leaders; and to study the efforts of the Mormons to set up a separate state of their own design.

Methods

Material was obtained from both primary and secondary

sources. A study of material relative to the history of the Mormons was made in order to ascertain how the subject had been previously presented. A survey of biographies of leaders of the Church, especially Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and histories of Mormon activities revealed that the subject had not been studied impartially. Material used includes periodicals, books, pamphlets, and material from the Government Printing Office in the Sam Houston State Teachers College library. The most helpful periodicals were Harper's Magazine and Atlantic Monthly. Books found to be most reliable were: J. H. Beadle's, Western Wilds; H. H. Bancroft's, History of Utah; D. G. Morgan's, The Great Salt Lake; George Smith's, The Rise, Progress, and Travels of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; and M. R. Werner's, Brigham Young. Material taken from the publications of the Government Printing Office was largely from the Annual Reports of the American Historical Association, the most helpful of which were the issues for 1916, 1917, 1919, and 1926. Most of the material used is in the Shettles Collection, purchased by the College from Mr. E. L. Shettles. This collection contains much material on the Mormons, and although largely religious in nature, there is much that is of value from the historical point of view.

Findings

Springing from the teachings of Joseph Smith, the

Mormon Church, led by Brigham Young, migrated to the Great Salt Lake region. They felt that in this isolated area they could develop a society in which they were free to practice their religion without fear of molestation. To reach this last place of refuge these people wandered through the Mississippi Valley from Ohio to Missouri, finally settling in Illinois, in an attempt to establish a community among the Gentiles. From Illinois, they migrated to the Great Salt Lake Valley in one of the most successful migrations in American history.

Upon arrival in the Great Salt Lake region the Mormons discouraged profiteering, and each family was alloted a share of land. In spite of the individual allotments, almost a pure state of communism existed for a few years. This ended, however, when certain leaders of the Church began to build up their own personal holdings at the expense of other members. The economic system established by Brigham Young made the Mormon settlement one of the most prosperous in American history. There was little or no poverty, and crime was almost non-existent, as it was not tolerated. The life of the community was directed by the Church leaders to enhance their positions and to increase their strength.

Whether internal development would have upset the system established by the Mormons was never determined, as they were set upon by the Federal government soon after they

established a system of government. They remained in a state of conflict, sometimes violent, until the Civil War began. After the organization of a provisional government for the State of Deseret in 1849, the Mormons appealed for admission to the Union as a state. Congress rejected their appeal and created the Territory of Utah in 1850, instead. This action by Congress brought the Mormons under the supervision of the National government. The appointees of that government were resented by the Mormons, and an effort was made to get rid of them. This lead to open conflict during 1856-1857, which ended after the government sent in armed forces. The Mormons then became obedient to the laws of the United States, and with some few exceptions went about their affairs unmolested.

Although driven from the borders of the United States, and with considerable economic losses, the Mormons were successful in setting up a community on the barren wastes of what became Utah. Through thrift and industry the Mormons not only regained their losses, but developed a vast section of the West into a prosperous area. In time Mormon communities were spread from Iowa to California; the Church grew rich; individuals amassed fortunes; communism vanished; and the Mormons became as worldly minded as the descendants of the Puritans, who had a similar background. Wherever the Mormons settled, they continued to look to Salt Lake City for leadership.

Approved:

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Supervising Professor

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CHAPTER I

EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH AT NAUVOO, ILLINOIS

In 1847, the Mormon colony at Great Salt Lake was founded. In many respects this was the most unique of the many strange settlements founded in this country. Established by a religious sect it was similar, in some respects, to the settlement of the Puritans in Massachusetts, and like that group the Mormons set up a theocracy. An economy was established designed to make the community prosperous, and for a time there was almost pure communism in the Mormon settlement. Certain leaders of the Church, eager for power, began to gather up the greater part of the wealth of the area for themselves, and to establish a way of life that would perpetuate their control over the region. The latter factor led to conflict with the United States government. When the conflict ended the Mormon leaders consented to obey the laws of the nation.

Although the Mormons had difficulties and met opposition, they made a great contribution to the development of the West. There seems to be a need for an objective study of their efforts. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to analyze the growth of the Mormon Church and the movement of its adherents to the Great Salt Lake region; to investigate the economic, social, and political structure

established by the Mormon leaders; and to study the efforts of the Mormons to set up a separate state of their own design.

September 22, 1827, is considered the date of the founding of the Mormon Church. On that day Joseph Smith claimed he found some "golden plates," from which he translated the Book of Mormon, at Cumorah Hill, "located between the towns of Palmyra and Manchester," in New York.[1] In time

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[1] M. R. Werner, Brigham Young, pp. 27-29.

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he gathered a following and established the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. For a time its adherents wandered to and fro in the pursuit of a location for a permanent settlement. Charles Beard, a distinguished historian, said they went about suffering from the "buffets of fate." They stopped for a while at Kirtland, Ohio, and afterwards moved on

> into Missouri where they met a hostility that turned them back for a brief period on their westward march. . . . they were soon charged with outrages and accused of trying to erect a sectarian dominion. . . . They were set upon by their critics and compelled to move across the Mississippi into Illinois.[2]

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[2] Charles A. Beard and Mary Beard, Rise of American Civilization, Vol. I, p. 623.

During this conflict with unfriendly Missourians, supported by the Missouri militia, Joseph Smith and two of his associates, Hyrum Smith, his brother, and Sidney Rigdon, his adviser, were arrested and imprisoned. During the early spring of 1839 other members of the Church, including Brigham Young, fled to Quincy, Illinois.[3] Later, on April 6, 1839,

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[3] Frank J. Cannon and George L. Knapp, Brigham Young and His Mormon Empire, pp. 54-55.

Joseph Smith escaped jail in Missouri, and arrived in Quincy, Illinois, on April 22, where he joined his followers and resumed the leadership of the Church. "Plans for a new Zion were forthcoming without delay. The town of Commerce, Illinois was chosen as a site; its name was changed to Nauvoo."[4]

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[4] Ibid., p. 57.

The town of Nauvoo, in Hancock County, was the last place where the leaders of the Mormons tried to perpetuate a home among the Gentiles of the United States.

Joseph Smith was more prophet than leader, and it remained for the church council or Brigham Young to provide realistic leadership. Brigham, destined to become the leader of Mormon developments, was born in Whitingham, Windham County, Vermont, June 1, 1801.[5] The influence of New England

[5] Ibid., p. 13.

was perhaps responsible for his conservative decisions which were so effective when he became leader of the Church. Smith was able to rule only by prophesying what he deemed necessary. His prophecy was then implemented by his faithful followers. Young, however, ruled by persuasion based on good judgment.

Nauvoo was a breeding place for the malaria-carrying mosquito, and by midsummer, 1839, half the population was stricken with the disease, followed by a high death rate. Smith attempted to relieve the malaria infestation through faith healing. Testimony of several people, including Brigham Young, that they were healed in this manner has been disproved. As Werner observed, "No Prophet but quinine could combat plasmodium Malariae."[6]

[6] Werner, op. cit., p. 58.

In September, 1839, Brigham Young and Herber Kimball went to England to win converts and promote their emigration to America in order to strengthen the Church here. Once a person became a member he was required to work for the Church; however, this practice did not cause hesitation among those who listened to Brigham Young in England, and

his mission proved to be a most successful colonization venture. Under the leadership of Young, these new members established a fund for "assisted emigration."[7] Young, com-

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[7] G. O. Larson, "Perpetual Emigration Fund," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XVIII, September, 1931, p. 185.

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menting upon the results of the trip, said:

> We landed as strangers in a strange land, and were penniless, but . . . we have gained many friends . . ., established churches in almost every noted town of Great Britain . . ., emigrated to Zion [Nauvoo] 1,000 souls establishing a permanent shipping agency . . .[8]

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[8] Cannon and Knapp, op. cit., p. 61.

By 1841, there were 6,614 converts in England, and in ten years the number had reached 32,894. This number was in addition to some 10,319 who had already moved on to America. In February, 1847, the English Mormons petitioned the Queen for assistance in their efforts to reach America.[9] This is

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[9] Larson, op. cit., p. 188.

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significant because it is indicative of the vast resources upon which the Mormons drew.

Brigham Young left England on April 20, 1841, and on

July 1 arrived in Nauvoo with five companions and one hundred and thirty converts. Except for this journey abroad, Brigham Young never left his family. Smith claimed God had revealed that it was Young's duty to remain close at hand and care for his family, and from this revelation Young never transgressed again.[10]

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[10] Cannon and Knapp, op. cit., p. 62.

The controversy that erupted between the Mormons and the non-Mormons in Illinois was in large part the result of the nature of the Nauvoo charter. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon had obtained a charter from the Illinois legislature which legalized the theocratic absolutism of Smith and his associates. According to Werner "the city charter of Nauvoo gave unlimited powers to Smith and his associates."[11] It

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[11] Werner, op. cit., p. 119.

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authorized the mayor and aldermen to enact any laws not conflicting with either the Constitution of the United States or that of the State of Illinois. The charter provided that the mayor and the aldermen might sit together as a municipal court, and conferred upon them the power to issue writs of habeas corpus. Authority was granted for a military organization, the Nauvoo Legion, independent of the State militia.

Except that it retained the authority to repeal the city charter, the State of Illinois had no power which the Mormons did not have in Nauvoo.[12] Just why a charter of this

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[12] Ibid., p. 120. It is of interest that Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas both voted in favor of the charter. See also Cannon and Knapp, Brigham Young, p. 76.

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nature was ever granted is not clear. Although the exact reason has been obscured, Werner claimed it was obtained by scheming politicians. The Illinois legislature at the time was composed of Whigs and Democrats, neither of which could ever maintain more than the barest majority. Both parties felt that by favoring the Mormons they could depend on their support and thereby establish the desired majority in the legislature.[13] Smith's failure to support one party con-

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[13] Ibid., pp. 119-120.

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sistently resulted in political antagonisms adverse to the Mormons.

Control of the Nauvoo militia by the Mormon prophet seemed to the non-Mormons of Nauvoo and Hancock County to justify a fear of religion by force. This may or may not have been the intention of Smith; however, it was one of the factors of antagonism between the people of Illinois and the Mormons. Subsequent events indicated there was

some justification for these fears.[14]

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[14] Ibid., p. 121. Also George Smith, Rise, Progress, and Travels of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, pp. 3-5. Smith assumed command of the forces and made himself Lieutenant General.

In spite of difficulties with their non-Mormon neighbors there was some progress made by the people of Nauvoo. A temple was built by the members of the church, a "hodge-podge" affair, but it did symbolize the strength of the Mormon faith. In addition to the building of the temple, the area was cleared and drained and the cause of malaria was removed. Although predominantly an agricultural community some manufacturing was established.[15] Two brothers,

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[15] Cannon and Knapp, op. cit., p. 78.

Canadians converted to Mormonism, William and Wilson Law, owned and operated a steam-powered sawmill and a flour mill. William Law plays an important part in this story for he was largely responsible for Smith's death, Brigham Young's accession to the leadership of the Church, and the expulsion of the "Saints" from Illinois.

William Law, according to Governor Ford of Illinois, was a "deluded but conscientious and candid man."[16] Trouble

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[16] Quoted by Werner, op. cit., p. 165.

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began for the church and its prophet when Joseph coveted Law's wife. Mrs. Law, a woman of chastity, reported Smith's advances to her husband. Law and some of his friends broke away from the church and established "at Nauvoo a weekly newspaper known as the Nauvoo Expositor,"[17] the purpose of

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[17] Ibid. The press was set up in the store of a man named Higbee.

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which was to expose the Prophet and his practices, including polygamy. The first and only issue of the Expositor, published June 7, 1844, denounced Smith and made an appeal for the virtue of womanhood:

> We are seeking to expose the vicious principles of Joseph Smith . . .
>
> It is a notorious fact, that many females in foreign climes, and in countries to us unknown, even in the most distant regions, . . . have been induced to forsake friends, and to embark upon a journey across the waters that lie stretched over the greater portions of the globe, . . . to glorify God. . . . But what is taught them on their arrival at this place? . . . they are told, after being sworn, in one of the most solemn manners, never to divulge what is revealed, with a penalty of death attached, that God Almighty has revealed, . . . that she should be his Spiritual wife . . . if she refuses the Prophet damns her. She thinks of the sacrifices . . . of thousands of miles traveled over land and sea, and replies God's will be done and not mine. The Prophet and his devotees in this way are gratified.
>
> . . . It is difficult - perhaps impossible - to describe the wretchedness of females in this

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> place, without wounding the feelings of the benevolent, or shocking the delicacy of the refined; but the truth shall come to the world.[18]

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[18] Quoted by Werner, op. cit., pp. 166-169.

Besides having exposed the practice of plural marriage among the Mormons, the Expositor accused Smith of financial crookedness, condemned his political aspirations, and demanded the immediate repeal of the Nauvoo Charter.

Joseph Smith, who had been keeping his revelation on plural marriage secret "until such a time as the law of the land is changed," was infuriated. As mayor of Nauvoo he called a meeting of the municipal council, June 10, 1844, which decided that "the Nauvoo Expositor was libelous and a public nuisance."[19] Subsequently, Thomas Ford wrote in his

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[19] Ibid., p. 170. See also Cannon and Knapp, Brigham Young, p. 90. Both feel, with apparent justification, that combining the church leadership with that of mayor and head of the municipal court was the cause for the injustice that resulted.

History of Illinois that "it was altogether the most curious and irregular trial that was recorded in any civilized country . . ."[20] The council, under Smith's influence, passed

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[20] Ibid.

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the following resolution:

> Resolved by the city council of the city of Nauvoo, that the Printing office from whence issues the "Nauvoo Expositor" [sic] is a public nuisance, and also all of said Nauvoo expositors, which may be, or exist in said establishment, and the Mayor is instructed to cause said printing establishments and papers to be removed without delay, and in such a manner as he shall direct.[21]

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[21] Ibid.

Smith, head of the municipal council and also Mayor with executive powers, issued the following order to the marshal of Nauvoo:

> You are hereby commanded to destroy the printing press from whence issues the "Nauvoo Expositor" [sic] and pi the type . . . burn all the Expositors [sic] and handbills found in said establishment, and if resistance be offered . . . demolish the house, . . . arrest those who threaten you, and fail not to execute this order without delay . . .[22]

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[22] Ibid.

Another office held by the resourceful Joseph Smith was that of Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion. Before he received the report from the marshal that the press was destroyed, he commanded the general to hold the Nauvoo Legion

in readiness to execute the city ordinances, and to remove the printing establishment of the Nauvoo Expositor.[23]

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[23] Ibid.

Obviously he anticipated some threat to his position. The orders of Joseph Smith were carried out, and the Nauvoo Expositor was destroyed. Subsequent events were to prove June 10, 1844, was the most fateful day in the life of Joseph Smith.

On the night of June 10, the Laws and Foster, with whom they had cooperated, fled Nauvoo and went to Carthage, the county seat of Hancock County, where they swore out a complaint charging Smith and others with riot. Smith was arrested June 12. Since the Nauvoo municipal court had the power to issue a writ of habeas corpus, Smith was released immediately.[24] Had Smith, who at the time was a candidate

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[24] Cannon and Knapp, op. cit., p. 92.

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for the presidency of the United States, submitted to trial the only damage might have been to his political aspirations. His effort to avoid the court procedure led to an application of mob rule which cost him his life.

The exercise of arbitrary power, authorized by the city charter, whipped the mob into a wild fury. People

reasoned that if this charter allowed suppression of newspapers and the use of a military organization to carry out Smith's orders, then it became the duty of those who opposed arbitrary rule to resort to any means to subvert the privileges conferred upon the mayor by the charter. Governor Ford, when requested to send out the militia, visited Carthage and found the citizens armed and ready to arrest Smith and the council. Excitement or violence was easy to create, due to a great extent to the nature of the people of Illinois, a frontier state. As Governor Ford said, they "were, with some honorable exceptions, in popular language, hard cases." Ford, although of "considerable intelligence and fair intentions," was not capable of dealing with the crisis, and after hearing both views he called on the Illinois militia to follow his orders; he then notified Smith that if he and his associates would surrender they would be protected, but if they refused he would deal with them with the State militia.[25]

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[25] Ibid.

When Smith learned that the Governor had arrived and had called out the militia he became alarmed and contemplated fleeing Nauvoo, but was persuaded, however, to trust the Governor. Subsequently, on June 24, 1844, he and Hyrum

Smith, his elder brother, and some others surrendered. The next day they were all released on bail, but Joseph and Hyrum were immediately rearrested on the charge of treason "because Smith declared Nauvoo under martial law, which the charge said amounted to a declaration of war against the state of Illinois."[26] Later, in recording some of the

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[26] Werner, op. cit., p. 176.

Church history, a Mormon wrote that when Smith learned that the Governor was sending out the militia

> . . . he was apprehensive that it was their intention to murder instead of try him . . . he hesitated to answer the process of law, until the Governor plighted the faith of the State that he should be protected and have a fair trial . . . Joseph with his brother Hyrum, proceeded to Carthage. . . . they voluntarily entered in recognizances [sic] before the Justice of the Peace for their appearance in court to answer the charge; whereupon a new suit was issued against them . . . charging them with treason.[27]

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[27] Smith, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

Governor Ford had apparently taken all the steps he deemed necessary for the protection of the prisoners; however, he did not reckon with the mind of the mob which did not like him too well, and his action only increased their dislike for him. The militia itself tended to be in sympathy

with the angry citizens and was careless in following the Governor's orders. Ford left Joseph and Hyrum in a "large room of the Carthage jail" while he went to Nauvoo to appeal to the Mormons; he assured them of fair play and asked them to be patient and reasonable. On June 27, John Taylor and Willard Richards spent the day with the prisoners.[28] At

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[28] Werner, op. cit., pp. 177-178. Cannon and Knapp, op. cit., pp. 93-94. Cannon and Knapp said the militia informed the mob that "now is the time to kill Smith and the way will be made easy," p. 94. Smith, op. cit., said that the Governor disbanded the troops and left Joseph and Hyrum "to their fate," p. 6.

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about five o'clock in the evening of June 27, 1844, "there was a noise in the compound outside the jail followed by a few rifle shots." Men rushed up the stairs to the room where the prisoners sat, the door of the room was opened, and the prisoners and visitors were fired upon. Hyrum Smith was killed immediately, but Joseph had a revolver, which had been smuggled in by a friend, with which he succeeded in downing three of the mob. He then turned and rushed for the window to jump out; while doing so he was wounded and fell to the ground. Werner said that he was still alive when he struck the ground and four more shots were fired.[29] George Smith said, "about 150 persons sur-

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[29] Werner, op. cit., p. 178.

rounded the prison and deliberately murdered Joseph and Hyrum . . ."[30]

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[30] Smith, op. cit., p. 6.

This violence, causing Smith's death, was an attempt to destroy the Mormon Church; it failed, however, for in the place of the visionary Smith as head of the Church and the Mormon affairs there was now a very realistic and "grimly practical captain, with a despotic temper and a will of flint" to take over that position. Brigham Young

> succeeded to the leadership of the Mormon church in August, 1844, at a critical time. The murder of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum late in June had shocked and alarmed even its instigators, and the threat of civil war in Illinois between Mormons and non-Mormons had subsided, but the fight for control of the church . . . had threatened to rend the church apart.[31]

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[31] D. G. Morgan, The Great Salt Lake, p. 176.

Sidney Rigdon, the close adviser of Joseph Smith, contested with Young for control of the Church, but the Council of Twelve voted for Young. The members had assumed all along that Young would succeed Smith, and later they voted their approval.[32] Now Young was in control of the church, and the

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[32] Werner, op. cit., pp. 189 ff.

Mormons were destined to find a place where it was possible to build a society of their own. The achievement of this desire could not be realized for some time. It had to wait until they were free of their enemies in Illinois.

CHAPTER II

THE EXODUS FROM NAUVOO

To Brigham Young fell the responsibility of directing one of the greatest mass migrations in the history of the United States. After assuming the leadership of the Mormon Church, Young viewed with alarm the situation as it existed in Illinois. Although the months immediately following the death of Smith passed without incident, there was apparent bitterness between the Mormons and their Protestant neighbors. The charter of Nauvoo was repealed by the Illinois legislature in January, 1845. Finally, in April, 1845, the governor wrote to Young "urging him to take his people to California."[1] Certainly if the Mormons had not made some

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Frank J. Cannon and George Knapp, Brigham Young, p. 101.

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effort to leave they would have been expelled. Passions had been aroused to the same extent as in Missouri in 1838-1839. Joseph Smith was aware of this before his death, but failed to meet the emergency with any realistic plan of action, although he made some effort to locate elsewhere.[2]

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[2] D. G. Morgan, Great Salt Lake, p. 176.

He sought the consent of Congress to raise an army of one

hundred thousand men to occupy Oregon. He also negotiated with the Republic of Texas for land along the Mexican border.[3]

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[3] Ibid.

Texas refused to grant land for the Mormons, but the United States Congress consented to the sending of an army into the West.

With the approval of Congress and with the people of the State of Illinois urging him on, Joseph Smith began his search for a place to move his followers. In early 1844, he selected a company of men to explore the Rocky Mountains, and probably California, in an effort to find a place "where the Saints could locate and enjoy an immunity from that religious persecution which had followed the church."[4] As the

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[4] George Smith, The Rise, Progress, and Travels of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, p. 5.

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company prepared to leave, Joseph Smith was killed, and the expedition was canceled.

Brigham Young began by renewing Joseph Smith's plan to settle in the West. He wrote President Polk as well as the governors of several states asking advice and support. The only reply Young received was from the governor of Arkansas, whose views were the same as those expressed earlier by Governor Ford of Illinois. Ford said that "the Mormons would do well to migrate to some unoccupied country, . . . Oregon

or California."[5] Ford described California as "the pretti-

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[5] Morgan, op. cit., p. 177.

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est enterprise that had been undertaken in modern times," and he suggested that the Mormons "go out there, take possession of and conquer a portion of the vacant country, and establish an independent government of your own."[6]

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[6] Ibid.

At the request of Governor Ford, Senator Semple, of Illinois, called upon President Polk and asked for advice relative to the proposed Mormon migration. Polk's reply to Semple, as he confided to his diary, was that the

> right of migration or expatriation was one which any citizen possessed. I told him that I could not interfere with them on the ground of religious faith, however absurd it might be considered to be; that if I could interfere with the Mormons, I could with the Baptists, or any other religious sect; and that by the Constitution any citizen had a right to adopt his own religious faith.[7]

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[7] Allan Nevins, ed., Polk, the Diary of a President, p. 47.

The Mormons still had not definitely determined to leave Illinois. To indicate that they might possibly remain

in Illinois, Young had them hurriedly complete their temple in Nauvoo. It was to no avail, however, because of the repeal of their charter by the Illinois legislature and the bitterness of non-Mormons. As friction increased the new Mormon leader began a serious search for a place where his people might live undisturbed by non-Mormon neighbors. Although he gave consideration to the western dream of Smith, he preferred, as he told Hosea Stout in March, 1845, "settling the interior of the country between the headwaters of the Arkansas and the headwaters of the Colorado of the West."[8] On August 28, 1845, the Church Council met in Nauvoo

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[8] Morgan, op. cit., p. 177.

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and during the session Young was persuaded to investigate the upper part of California. For this purpose it decided to send three thousand ablebodied men in the spring of 1846. Provisions for an expedition of this size proved to be too great an undertaking and the plan was later modified to "a company of 1,500 men," and the destination was changed to the Great Salt Lake Valley.[9] However, the Mormons were forced

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[9] Ibid., p. 178.

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to flee Illinois before this expedition got underway and it was canceled.

Sixteen days after the Church Council decided to send men to the West, the Protestants of Illinois renewed their attack upon the Mormons. The sheriff of Hancock County, J. B. Bachenstor, felt compelled to call upon the people to help restore law and order. In a proclamation to the citizens of Hancock County, dated September 13, 1845, he stated:

> Whereas, a mob of one to two hundred men, under arms, have gathered themselves together in the South-west part of Hancock county, and are at this time destroying the dwellings and other buildings, stacks of grain and other property, of a portion of our citizens, in the most inhuman manner, compelled defenceless children and women to leave their sick beds, and exposing them to the rays of the parching sun, there to lie and suffer without the aid or assistance of a friendly hand to minister their wants, in their suffering conditions.
>
> The rioters spare not the widows nor orphan, . . . the smoke is rising to the clouds, and the flames are devouring four buildings which have just been set on fire by the rioters . . . the inhabitants, are fired upon, . . . and forced to flee before ravages of the mob.
>
> By the revised law of our state under the criminal code, . . . the crime for arson is as follows: Every person guilty of arson shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one year, nor more than ten years. 'and should the life or lives of any person or persons be lost in consequence of any such offence aforesaid, such offenders shall be guilty of murder, . . .'
>
> And whereas, the laws of the state make it my duty, . . . to suppress all crime,
>
> Therefore I, J. B. Bachenstor, Sheriff . . . in the name of the people . . . and by authority invested in me by virtue of my office,

> hereby solemnly command said rioters and other peace breakers to desist forthwith, disperse, and go to their homes, under penalty of the laws; and I hereby call upon the law-abiding citizens, as a posse comitatus of Hancock county, to give their united aid in suppressing the rioters and maintain the supremacy of the law. J. B. Bachenstor, Sheriff of Hancock county, Illinois.
>
> P.S. - It is a part of my policy, that the citizens of Nauvoo remain quiet and not a man from that city leave as a posse until made manifest that the law and order citizens without the city will not have force sufficient to suppress the rioters of this disgraceful outrage, but that 2,000 effective men hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning to any point in Hancock county.[10]

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[10] Quoted by Smith, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

The Mormons had already planned to leave, but because of this renewed violence decided to move up their date of departure.[11] People were organized into companies, and the

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[11] Ibid., p. 8.

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construction of wagons was begun. During the winter of 1845-1846 and into the spring they built thousands of wagons. The wagons built were made "principally from green timber, which was boiled in brine to facilitate its seasoning . . ." Nearly all the old wagons in the surrounding countryside were bought.[12] All possible haste was made to be ready to leave

[12] Ibid., p. 9.

Nauvoo in the spring of 1846. The Mormons also asked the non-Mormons to help them sell or lease their property. During the winter the Mormons were busy preparing for a great journey west. The women and children worked on tents, clothing, and bedding, while the men did the heavier work.[13]

[13] Nevins, ed., op. cit., p. 47.

Because of the renewed threat of persecution, they decided that the emigration should begin immediately. Consequently, one thousand families began their journey in February, 1846. The first units left, although many were still not ready to leave and had to wait in Nauvoo. The advance units crossed the Mississippi on ice.[14]

[14] Smith, op. cit., p. 9.

Through February and March of 1846 the Mormon followers poured across the Mississippi. Young, able leader that he was, planned well, and by the end of March thousands were on their way into Iowa.[15] During March, Brigham Young

[15] Morgan, op. cit., p. 178.

crossed the Mississippi, landed in Iowa, and took control of

the migration. On March 9, 1846, he wrote one of his brethren:

> Do not think, brother Joseph, I hate to leave my house and home. No, far from that. I am so free from bondage at this time that Nauvoo looks like a prison to me.[16]

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[16] Ibid.

In Nauvoo, meanwhile, there still remained a great deal to be done. Since only the best fitted could leave at the beginning of the exodus, the weaker were left behind. There still remained some property to be disposed of. The non-Mormons probably took advantage of the Mormons. There was no way the Mormons could hope to save their property, since they were compelled to leave Illinois. Therefore, all of them tried to sell their property at the same time, and flooded the market, which prevented sales even at the very lowest prices. When the people of Hancock County realized the weakness of the Mormon community, they decided to force an immediate removal. A mob encamped near Nauvoo in September of 1846. Now the city was almost completely made up of the sick, the infirm, and their attendants. George Smith, in describing the plight of the Mormon community said:

> The mob under the command of Rev. [sic] Thomas S. Brockman, increased their forces

> to about 1,800, made several attacks upon the city . . ., killing three men and wounding a number of others, and battering down many buildings.[17]

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[17] Smith, op. cit., p. 12.

Naturally, the city was defenseless, and there was little that could be done to resist the enemy. Consequently, on September 17, 1846, the last of the Mormons were driven across the Mississippi into Iowa.

Thus the Mormons left Illinois, largely because of the pressure, force, and violence inflicted upon them by the people of that state. Although great injustice had been inflicted upon them by the people of Illinois, it was in some measure inspired by their own acts. However that may have been, Nauvoo was behind them. Immediately ahead lay hundreds of miles of rough, weary travel for thousands of people. Those who led the way took provisions that were the property of all the Mormons, usually leaving those to follow without adequate supplies. The duty of advance units, therefore, was to make provisions for those who followed.[18] They were not striving for economic gain as was

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[18] Morgan, op. cit., p. 178.

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the case of most individuals. Like the Puritans, who in

1620 set sail on the Mayflower, these people began their western journey, motivated by a desire to find a refuge in which they could, without being molested, worship God in accordance with their own peculiar beliefs.

CHAPTER III

OVERLAND TO THE GREAT SALT LAKE

The Mormons, after escaping from Nauvoo, encamped across the Mississippi River. Violence continued to follow them although they were out of the State of Illinois. The last contingent of Mormons driven out of Illinois suffered more at the hands of the Gentiles than others; greatly reduced in numbers, they were exposed to the growing hostility of their oppressors. After they crossed the Mississippi into Iowa they were fired upon by their enemies from the opposite banks of the river, and cannon shot occasionally fell in the area in which they made their camps. To one of the missiles was attached a note on which the writer asserted that it "was sent as a present for the governor of Iowa."[1]

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[1] George Smith, The Rise, Progress, and Travels of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, p. 15.

The Mormons weathered this, however, and shortly the migration was in full swing, with Mormons strung out across the Iowa countryside.

All across Iowa the advance groups were working feverishly to prepare a way for those who followed. Roads and bridges were built, and some companies halted at proper locations to plant crops which would be harvested by those

yet to come. The people worked under adverse conditions, suffering from hunger and cold weather, often poorly clothed, and with practically no shelter.[2] Things gradually reached

[2] D. G. Morgan, Great Salt Lake, pp. 178-179.

a point where the people were afraid of their own helplessness. The uncertain future and the fear that the Missourians would intervene to prevent their migration led to misgivings which, at times, caused the Mormons to distrust their leaders. Some expected to be abandoned along the way; however, they moved on, enduring extreme hardships, and on June 14, 1846, the advanced units reached the banks of the Missouri at a point near Council Bluffs. The wagons were arranged in the form of a hollow square on the eastern side of the river, and at that time Brigham Young considered their plight and reached the conclusion that his followers could never carry on to the Rockies in the same manner as had existed all across Iowa. Young decided to make some changes in their organization, and as a result, orders were given to stop and reorganize completely.[3] The reorganization for

[3] Ibid.

the continued journey was an interesting one. Companies were organized into various sizes of hundreds, fifties, and tens. Each group of fifty was provided with a

> blacksmith and wagon maker . . ., and a good gun, with 100 pounds of ammunition for each ablebodied man. Three hundred pounds of breadstuff were required for each person . . . Many cows were worked in the yoke. Each family was required to take a due proportion of [grain and farm tools]. Every wagon load, and team was inspected by a committee, and none were allowed to start on the plains without the required outfit.[4]

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[4] Smith, op. cit., p. 18.

Rules were also established to regulate the behavior of individuals, especially while in camp at night. No person was allowed to wander about, not even to hunt, unless under special orders from his company's captain. As a result of such precautionary measures none were lost, and few accidents occurred. All camps were strictly guarded, whether it was day or night, and loss of livestock was held to a minimum. George Smith says that losses were small "although we traveled ten hundred and thirty miles, from the Missouri river to Salt Lake Valley, through an uninhabited and desert region."[5] The companies traveled for five days

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[5] Ibid.

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of the week and stopped for a two-day camp on week-ends. Saturday was given to work that would prepare them for the following week of travel. In the afternoon the washing was

done, bread was baked, and the wagons repaired. Also any necessary care for the animals was given. Sunday was set aside as a day for rest and worship. During the week "Morning and evening prayers and songs of praise were never omitted in the camps, and occasionally a dance was enjoyed, the companies usually being favored with musical talent."[6]

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[6] Ibid.

The rules as set up proved beneficial and probably without them the migration would not have been successful. This was especially true because of the magnitude of the movement. Smith made this observation about the vast numbers along the way:

> Companies continued leaving [the Missouri river] till late in the summer [of 1847] making the new route a grand encampment for 300 miles, as wagons were to be seen at every watering place.[7]

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[7] Ibid.

Leaving the Missouri River on the trek to the Rockies, Young and other leaders set out ahead. Going westward with their company they built roads for about three hundred miles through the country, bridging many streams. The weather proved their worst handicap. Cold weather, besides being a

nuisance, did damage to their health, and the rains at times stifled their progress, but they persisted in their efforts to find a new home. While en route they made a settlement, called Garden Grove, on the east fork of the Grand River, in what was to become the State of Iowa. Shortly afterward another settlement was planted on the west fork of the Grand River. While the advanced groups remained at these settlements, the Mormons plowed up and planted a thousand acres of prairie land to provide food for those who came through after they had gone on.[8]

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[8] Ibid.

Following the reorganization of the migration at Council Bluffs, Brigham Young gathered up the companies near there, and they began a temporary settlement at the present site of Florence, Nebraska, which they called Winter Quarters probably because it served that purpose in the winter of 1846-1847. Making provisions for such a large number of people proved to be a difficult task. They erected some

> seven hundred log cabins and 150 dugouts . . . which were built during the Fall and Winter. . . . At this point the Saints suffered extremely from sickness, exposure, and the want of the necessities of life. Several thousand wagons were also encamped in various localities on the east side of the Missouri river, where the Saints began to build up a place,

subsequently named Kanesville in honor of Thomas L. Kane of Philadelphia.[9]

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[9] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

In the spring of 1847, Brigham Young, with 142 persons, started in search of the place where Young claimed it was destined for them to settle. According to Werner, he was led "directly to Great Salt Lake Valley," where he and the company with him arrived July 24, 1847.[10] In their

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[10] Ibid., p. 16.

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efforts to reach the valley they built six hundred and fifty miles of roads, and they covered an additional four hundred miles of older trails left by trappers, thus traveling more than one thousand miles. On July 29, Captain James Brown, with a detachment of soldiers and a company of "Saints" from Mississippi, who had spent the previous winter on the Arkansas River, joined Young and the first units at the Great Salt Lake.

The migration was not complete, only the advanced units had reached their destination, and Mormons continued to arrive in the valley for several years. On August 25, 1847, Brigham Young, after the company with him had settled down, took 107 companions and returned to Winter Quarters.

Young took from August, 1847, until in the fall of 1848, to reach Winter Quarters and return to Salt Lake City. On his return trip he was accompanied by an additional eight hundred wagons.[11]

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[11] Ibid., p. 17.

Before leaving the Salt Lake Valley Young had made plans to keep the Mormons occupied while he was gone. The first thing they did was to plant crops in order to provide seed to be used in the spring. Then they began work on the plans Young had drawn up for Salt Lake City. In the very early days of their colony, therefore, the Mormons began to make use of their labor, a thing that was to prove so profitable for their community in the future.

CHAPTER IV

THE MORMON BATTALION

In 1846 war broke out between the United States and Mexico while the Mormons advanced across Iowa toward the Great Salt Lake Valley. The United States War Department sent Captain James Allen to appeal to the Mormon leaders for men. As the advance companies arrived at Council Bluffs in July, 1846, they were met by Captain Allen, who informed Young that the War Department would like to have five hundred men to assist in the war with Mexico.[1] Brigham Young

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[1] George Smith, Rise, Progress, and Travels of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, p. 9.

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hastened to reply, "You shall have your battalion if it has to be composed of our Elders." Young immediately saw a chance to benefit from the battalion, and he took advantage of it. Since the Mormons were moving west and the battalion would be released in the West, it provided an opportunity to get at least some men there at the expense of the United States government. Young told his followers:

> Suppose we were admitted into the Union as a state and the government did not call upon us, we would feel neglected. Let the Mormons be the first men to set their feet on the soil of California. Capt. Allen has assumed the responsibility of saying that

> we may locate at Grand Island, until we can prosecute our journey. This is the first offer we have ever had from the government to benefit us.[2]

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[2] Quoted by D. G. Morgan, The Great Salt Lake, p. 181.

With the cooperation of Young and the Church Council, five companies of volunteers were "accepted into the army on the 16th of July, 1846." They promptly marched to Fort Leavenworth where they were equipped for infantry service in the United States Army.[3] The group was then dispatched to

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[3] Smith, op. cit., p. 10.

Santa Fe, New Mexico, where it arrived September 12, 1846. In Santa Fe the group was divided. Those physically able to stand the trip were ordered to California, and those who remained were placed under the command of Captain James Brown, who was ordered to build a fort at Pueblo. While Brown's force was in Pueblo a contingent of Mormons from Mississippi arrived and remained there through the winter. In the spring the soldiers, accompanied by the Mormons from Mississippi, went to Salt Lake City where they met Young's group in 1847.

The distance from Council Bluffs, where the battalion was recruited, to Fort Leavenworth is about 180 miles. From Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe they marched seven hundred miles.

The route taken by the group to San Diego, California, was 1,150 miles. The battalion, therefore, marched a total of 2,030 miles to reach California.

Colonel Cooke, the Battalion Commander, paid high tribute to his men when they reached San Diego. From his headquarters, located at the Mission of San Diego, he declared that

> The Lieut. Colonel commanding congratulates the Battalion on its safe arrival on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and the conclusion of its march of over two thousand miles. History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry; nine-tenths of it through a wilderness where nothing but savages and wild beast are found; or deserts where, for want of water, there is no living creature. There, with almost hopeless labor we have dug deep wells, which the future traveller will enjoy. Without a guide who had traversed them, we have ventured into trackless prairies, where water was not found for several marches. With crow-bar and pick-axes in hand, we have worked our way over mountains, which seemed to defy aught save the wild goat, and hewed a passage through a chasm of living rock, more narrow than our wagons. To bring these first wagons to the Pacific, we have preserved the strength of the mules by herding them over large tracts, which you have laboriously guarded without loss.
>
> The garrison of four presidios of Sonora, concentrated within the walls of Tucson, gave us no pause. We drove them out with their artillery; but our intercourse with the citizens was unmarked by a single act of injustice. Thus marching, half naked and half fed, and living upon wild animals, we have discovered and made a road of great value to our country.

> Arrived at the first settlement of California, after a single days rest, you cheerfully turned off from the route to this point of promised repose, to enter upon a campaign, and meet, as we believed, the approach of the enemy; and this, too, without even salt to season your sole subsistence of fresh meat.
>
> Lieutenants A. J. Smith and George Stoneman, of the 1st Dragoons, have shared and given valuable aid in all these labors.
>
> Thus, volunteers, you have exhibited some high and essential qualities of veterans. But much remains undone. Soon you will turn your strict attention to the drill, to system and order, to forms also, which are all necessary to the soldier.[4]

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[4] Ibid., pp. 11 ff.

Upon arrival in San Diego, California, the Mormon Battalion was sent to Los Angeles where the men were discharged, in July, 1847, one year from the date of their enlistment. Fear that the Mexicans, subdued in the Mexican War, might rise again led to the request that they reenlist. One company was persuaded to reenlist for six months. George Smith said they performed their duties "in a highly satisfactory manner." Smith further suggested that the Mormon Battalion arrived in California just as reenforcements were seriously needed, and that their presence probably prevented Great Britain from taking California.[5] This was not true,

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[5] Ibid., p. 11.

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however, as Great Britain never had any intentions of taking California.

On the way to California the Mormon Battalion spent some time near the San Bernardino Valley. While there it helped emigrants, from Europe and the eastern United States who had reached California by boat, establish a settlement. This was probably done with Brigham Young's knowledge, since he felt that the Mormons were destined to control most of the Pacific coast. The settlement combined all the religion and culture of the Mormon Church. Professor Harvey Collins of Redland University said, "In order to realize his [Young's] dreams, colonies were founded here as outposts. The Pacific was the gateway through which foreign converts could be brought."[6]

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[6] Harvey Collins in the Annual Report, American Historical Association, 1919, Vol. I, p. 112.

Captain Jefferson Hunt and his two sons, all from the battalion, seemed to know the San Bernardino Valley. They organized an expedition made up of Mormon emigrants and led it there. The group settled on the "Rancho de San Bernardino." The soil was very rich, and the people put in crops before ownership had been acknowledged. They met many hardships, but by 1856 a prosperous community existed there. In 1857 Young recalled the settlement to Utah because he antici-

pated trouble with the United States government. Some six hundred or seven hundred complied with Young's order and went to Salt Lake City. Some remained at San Bernardino, and a number who went to Salt Lake City later returned.[7]

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[7] Ibid., pp. 112-113.

The Mormon Battalion served two purposes for the Church. It helped secure the blessings of the United States for the Mormon migration, since it served in the Mexican War and helped take California, and it planted a Mormon community in the San Bernardino Valley. When discharged, the members of the battalion joined the Mormon colony at Salt Lake City.

CHAPTER V

FOUNDING AN EMPIRE

The first people in the Great Salt Lake region were the Indians. Many expeditions were made into the area but no permanent settlement was made prior to 1847. Bancroft said that the Spanish probably never reached the region, but that many American explorers did.[1] The first known white

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[1] H. H. Bancroft, History of Utah, p. 18.

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man to explore the region was James Bridger, and to him belongs the honor of discovering the Great Salt Lake.[2] Dur-

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[2] Ibid., p. 19.

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ing the winter of 1824-1825, Bridger, with a party of trappers, entered the valley of the Bear River. Bridger was sent to ascertain its source, and while on this excursion discovered the Lake. The group with him then set out to explore the shores of the Lake and tried to find other streams flowing into it.

After the Bridger discovery others visited the Great Salt Lake. In 1825, James P. Beckworth and William Ashley came to the region on an expedition for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. In 1826, Jeremiah and Thomas Smith visited

there, and in 1830, William Waphill made an expedition. In 1832-1833, B. L. E. Bonneville, who trapped in the area, sent a group of men under Joseph Walker, to trap on a stream flowing into the Lake. Although several people had visited in the Great Salt Lake Valley, none of them settled permanently in the region.

In 1847 a company of Mormons consisting of 147 men with their wives and children reached the Salt Lake Valley.[3]

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[3] L. E. Young, "Colonization of Utah in 1847," Annual Report, American Historical Association, 1922, Vol. I, p. 103.

A short time later they were joined by the remainder of the Mormon Battalion from California. They went to work immediately, especially to planting crops in the hope that some would produce. L. E. Young stated that "during the first month 87 acres of vegetables were planted."[4] Harriet Young,

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[4] Ibid., p. 104.

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wife of Brigham's brother, stated in her journal that her husband planted three acres of wheat on the day he arrived and that it would be necessary to irrigate the land. A system for irrigating was worked out which helped turn the valley into a productive farmland.

Prior to his return to Winter Quarters, Brigham Young ordered some of his followers to explore the region around

Great Salt Lake, and made plans for the building of a city which, August 22, 1847, was named Great Salt Lake City. Subsequently the name was changed to Salt Lake City. The Salt Lake Basin was barren, and the ground was infested with black crickets, which the Indians used for food. Nevertheless, the site for Salt Lake City was surveyed and the precision with which this was done was impressive. The pioneers marched into the basin escorted by Captain Allen, and proceeded to lay out the city under the direction of Young. The first building erected in the city was a fort, which was built on a ten acre tract of land.[5] The fort was built from

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[5] George Smith, The Rise, Progress, and Travel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, p. 16.

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logs and sun-dried bricks. It stood on what was later known as the "old fort" block, in the sixth ward of Salt Lake City. Other buildings were erected, and the city grew. The plan for the city, as laid out by Young, provided for 135 ten-acre blocks, separated by streets 132 feet in width. Once work had begun Brigham Young returned to Winter Quarters, leaving the work to be directed by others until his return. Great progress was made while he was gone, for when he returned in the fall of 1848, he found that 450 houses, three sawmills, and a flour mill had been completed.[6] Attention was then

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[6] M. R. Werner, Brigham Young, p. 236.

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given to the direction of further development.

The city government provided by the Mormon leaders was established when they reached the Salt Lake Valley. The government was tied closely to the Church: the Church Council gave Salt Lake City the political status of statehood, and appointed John Smith, uncle of the late Joseph Smith, its president. Charles C. Rich and John Young were appointed counsellors to the president, and Tarlton Lewis was designated Bishop and High Council.[7] L. E. Young, reporting on

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[7] Smith, op. cit., p. 16.

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the Mormon government, stated that it was not unlike the early town meetings of New England, in that both civil and religious affairs were dealt with at the same meeting.[8] On

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[8] L. E. Young, "Town and Municipal Government in the Early Days of Utah," Annual Report, American Historical Association, 1916, Vol. I, p. 126.

February 14, 1849, Salt Lake City was divided into nineteen wards. Each ward was presided over by a Bishop, whose functions were both religious and civil. As a civil officer his duties were somewhat like those of a mayor; however, in the case of minor offenses he exercised judicial powers. L. E. Young said,

> ward meetings in Salt Lake City in 1852 . . . were called to order by the bishop . . . and considered the setting out of shade trees and

> the supplying of water to irrigate them. The stimuli holding people together were two, religious and economic. These meetings opened with prayer; they were held in meeting houses, but since every town was on a mountain stream, one of the first acts was to measure the water and appoint a water master.[9]

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[9] Ibid.

Another undertaking of the Mormons in the early days of Salt Lake City was to provide for public education. In the fall of 1847, hundreds of people continued to pour into the city. In less than a year the population had increased to about four thousand. Facilities were needed for public education, as the Mormons considered it of utmost importance. According to L. E. Young, on October 19, 1847, a school was opened in an old military tent.[10] Formal schooling thus

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[10] Young, op. cit., p. 104.

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started immediately after Salt Lake City was founded. In 1851, after Utah became a Territory, the first Territorial legislature passed the law providing for public schools. One year earlier, in 1850, the provisional government of the State of Deseret granted a charter for a university.

Generally the Mormon leaders directed the growth of the Mormon state for the benefit of their Church. Nevertheless, the typical American institutions developed, notably

the home, the theater, manufacturing, agriculture, newspapers, and other enterprises. Also there was a strong belief in the principle that a person should be permitted to worship God according to his own conscience.

Another thing the Mormons did upon arrival in the Salt Lake Valley was to parcel out the land. In 1847, the land was almost equally divided among the people, the leaders being as poor as their followers. A. G. Browne, who visited the early Mormon settlements in Utah, compared "their condition with that of the early Christians."[11]

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[11] A. G. Browne, "Utah Expedition," Atlantic, Vol. III, March, 1859, p. 362.

Ten years later their condition was quite different. According to Browne

> the change is extraordinary. . . . Property is distributed unjustly, the bulk of real and personal estate in the Utah Territory being invested in the Church and its directors, between whom and the mass of the population there exists a difference in social welfare as wide as between the Russian nobleman and his serf.[12]

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[12] Ibid.

When the Mormons left Illinois they hoped to be beyond the jurisdiction of the United States when they reached their new home, but on their arrival in the Salt Lake basin they

found, as a result of the Mexican War, that the region they had chosen for their settlement was now United States territory. When they first settled, in what was to become Utah, they attempted to set up a theocratic form of government, but it soon became necessary to establish a government which the United States would recognize. In an effort to achieve their objective they organized the abortive State of Deseret with boundaries extending from the Sierra range to the heights of the Rocky Mountains and from 42 degrees north latitude to the Mojave Desert.[13] All of the area of present

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[13] J. H. Beadle, Western Wilds, p. 492.

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day Utah and Nevada, and a considerable part of Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Arizona was included in the boundaries.

The leaders of the theocracy were also elected leaders in the "State of Deseret." Brigham Young was chosen Governor; Daniel Wells, Chief Justice and Lieutenant-General; the Twelve Apostles divided the Judgeship and State offices. Provision was made for a state legislature consisting of two houses, a senate whose membership was composed of the Presiding Bishops and a lower house whose membership was made up of lower Bishops and Elders. Local officers for counties and municipalities were appointed according to their rank in the Church.[14] This governmental arrangement lasted for about one

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[14] Ibid., p. 492.

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year. The legislature immediately met and provided for a survey to divide the territory outside Salt Lake City into tracts convenient in size for making individual grants. The timber, streams, pasture lands, and valleys were given to the leaders of the Church. The leaders in turn gave them out to members under their jurisdiction. All of the land in Utah was granted to Mormons as a means of excluding Gentiles. Brigham Young said, "If there is nothing for the Gentiles to settle on they can't settle."[15]

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[15] Ibid.

But the Mormons were not to free themselves of the United States, for in 1850 the Congress of the United States passed a law creating the Territory of Utah. The government established for the "State of Deseret" carried on for the Territory. As far as the Organic Act of Utah permitted, all the old officials were chosen for the new system. The legislature assembled again, remained in session for six months, and confirmed most of the legislation of "Deseret."[16] In

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[16] Ibid.

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this manner the Mormons created the most remarkable union of

church and state in American history, a union which lasted for twenty years.

The average citizen finds it difficult to conceive of the empire built by the Mormon theocracy. The government ruled in an absolute manner over all things. Three concurrent governments took charge of every detail of life.[17] The

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[17] Ibid.

Territorial or civil government had jurisdiction over all affairs concerning the Gentiles, and especially in cases between Gentiles and Mormons. The Church government was in charge of all religious questions, and the Church civil system controlled all the industries and commerce. The membership of all three units of control was the same. Brigham Young, for example, was Prophet and Seer, and, therefore, the religious leader. He was The First President over industrial and civil affairs, and he was for seven years the Governor of the Territory, and ran it much longer than that by virtue of his position as Church leader.

CHAPTER VI

THE "STATE OF DESERET" AND TERRITORY OF UTAH

In 1847, Brigham Young explained to his followers that in the past wherever they had gone they had been considered intruders by the settlers who had preceded them. Their presence in the Salt Lake region, however, was different, for they were the first white people to settle there. If it became necessary, he said, they could say to those who might settle later, "We were here first, if you do not like us you have the privilege of leaving."[1] The Mormon settlement was made in the Salt Lake region because the people who adhered to that faith wanted a chance to live unmolested by the society of the Gentiles. Utah was chosen as a place of refuge, in preference to Oregon or California, because the Mormons wanted to be to themselves, and because there was no Gentile population in the region at that time. They believed that if they were unmolested for a time they could grow so strong that they need never fear any intervention. The country in which the settlement was made was so uninviting that few others would desire to interfere with them by settling there. Young said, "If they leave us alone for ten years I

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[1] F. D. Daine, "Separatism in Utah," Annual Report, American Historical Association, 1917, Vol. I, p. 335.

shall ask no odds of them."[2] In this spirit he undertook to

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[2] Quoted in Ibid.

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make the Mormon organization so strong in every respect that physical force could not prevail against them. He stated ten years later that the desired results had been attained, an opinion that subsequent events proved to be wrong.

The Church organization met all the requirements needed to fulfill the desires of the Mormon leader. For lawmaking there was Brigham Young who only had to state what the law was, and the legislature would automatically approve it. The powers of the judiciary were assumed by the Bishops Court, which corresponded roughly to justice courts. There was a High Council whose judicial functions were similar to those of a county court. Finally, there was the First Presidency which was comparable to a Supreme Court. To enforce the law there was "the military organization created at Nauvoo, and still called the Nauvoo Legion."[3] In order to provide the

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[3] Ibid., p. 336.

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necessary revenue, so that this organization could function properly, the tithe and offering of the Church was available.

During the first two years of the Mormon Empire the foundations were laid for the economic prosperity of the Saints, and a policy of territorial expansion, peculiar to

the Mormons, was inaugurated. This included granting all the land to the Mormons, and the maintenance of an emigration organization. The Mormon Empire could have expanded as natural population growth made it necessary, but that would not serve their purpose. What was wanted, and to a great extent attained, was rapid settlement of the Empire as designed by Brigham Young.[4] Daine said this Empire as planned by Young

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[4] Ibid. Emigration and the Perpetual Fund set up for it are discussed in a separate chapter of this study.

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included "Utah, Nevada, most of New Mexico and Arizona, and parts of Wyoming, Colorado, and California; included a seacoast, the harbor of San Diego, and the freedom of the seas for a Mormon Fleet."[5] There was, however, little realiza-

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[5] Ibid.

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tion of Young's dream except in Utah and there actually existed no real need for such a plan in that area for, as already noted, there was little desire on the part of others to settle there. The Mormons were almost completely isolated, except for a few travelers passing through, until the California gold rush of 1849.

Without the approval of the United States Congress the Mormons set up a provisional government for the State of Deseret. Under this government the counties of Salt Lake,

Davis, Weber, Utah, Sanpete, and Iron were organized. The cities of Ogden, Provo, Manti, and Parowon were incorporated. Then provision was made for the construction of roads and bridges to connect the communities they established.[6] In

[6] George Smith, The Rise, Progress, and Travels of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, p. 19.

March of 1849, the provisional government called a convention to write a State constitution for Deseret. The convention met, wrote a constitution and Deseret began to function as a state. Shortly afterward, Almon W. Babbitt was sent to Congress with a petition in which they requested the creation of a Territory. The request for Territorial status was withdrawn upon the advice of Thomas L. Kane, one of their non-Mormon friends, and request was then made for statehood. Kane told the Mormons that as a state they would be more nearly able to establish a government conformable to their best interest. He said it was likely that if a territorial government was established, officers appointed by the Federal government might be from outside the Territory. President Polk, with whom Kane discussed the problem, confirmed the fears of the Mormons. Congress rejected the request for statehood, and created a Territorial government in 1850.[7]

[7] Daine, op. cit., pp. 336-337.

Some time was required to inaugurate the new government, and

meanwhile the illegally established State of Deseret continued to function. The constitution, which provided for the establishment of a government similar to other state governments, was made an instrument by which the Mormons continued the theocracy that had existed the first two years. Brigham Young, who was appointed Territorial governor by President Millard Fillmore, held that office until the arrival of the new appointee, Alfred Cummings, in April, 1858.[8] As Kane

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[8] Smith, op. cit., p. 20.

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had predicted, three of the officials appointed by Fillmore were non-Mormons, none of whom resided in the Territory. For this reason serious trouble arose between the people of Utah and the United States government.

The Mormon distrust of the United States government grew to a bitter hatred, which was encouraged by the Mormon leaders. It was claimed that all Mormons had sworn to avenge the death of Joseph Smith, and considered opposition to the United States as one way of doing it. More reliable historians have not confirmed this charge, yet the Mormons bitterly resented the United States government. Brigham Young helped to intensify the hatred when he said,

> There cannot be a more damnable dastardly order issued than was issued by the Administration [Polk's] to this people while they were in the Indian country in 1846. Before we left Nauvoo, not less than two United States Senators came to receive a pledge from us that we would leave the United States, and then, while

> we were doing our best to leave their borders, the poor, low, degraded cusses sent a requisition for 500 of our men to go and fight their battles. That was President Polk, and he is now weltering in Hell with Zachary Taylor, where the present Administration [Buchanan's] will soon be if they do not repent.[9]

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[9] Quoted by Daine, op. cit., p. 338. The above statement was made on the occasion of Young's being replaced in 1858, and although inconsistent with previous statements, it expressed his feelings from that time.

The Mormons were convinced that there was no justification for sending officials from outside the Territory to run their affairs. To them the right of a people to govern themselves did not cease when they left a State and moved into a Territory.

In the Act creating the Territory of Utah, Congress left the Territorial legislature free to define the jurisdiction of the courts. This gave the legislature, which was Mormon controlled, a great opportunity to place legal power where they wanted it. The probate courts were given, as stated in the Act of 1852, "power to exercise original jurisdiction, both civil and criminal," where not specifically forbidden by legislative enactment.[10] This action was con-

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[10] Ibid., p. 339.

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sidered by the Federal judges as an usurpation of power.

Friction between the Mormons and the government of the United States became more intense. The Territorial legislature also created the offices of Territorial Marshal, Attorney General, and District Attorney, to attend all business that came before the courts. By this maneuver, local self government was assured.[11] These acts of the Territorial legislature

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[11] Ibid.

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were opposed by the officials appointed by the Federal government; as a result the feelings already existing were intensified. Resentment and hard feelings continued until 1857, when the Administration under Buchanan sent the army to compel the Mormons to accept jurisdiction of the United States government.

The Mormon leaders tried repeatedly to obtain admission to the Union as a sovereign state, thinking it would leave all local government in their control and reduce the cause for friction. Therefore, in 1855, the Territorial legislature passed an act providing for holding a convention to form and adopt a constitution for the Territory with the purpose of seeking admission into the Union as a state. The convention met in March, 1856, and adopted a constitution. The convention wrote a constitution, then drafted a memorial to Congress requesting admission. The memorial was submitted to the people and met with unanimous approval.

The memorial, with the constitution, was sent to Washington, where they were presented by the "Delegate, Hon. John M. Bernhesil."[12]

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[12] Smith, op. cit., p. 22.

Congress once more rejected the request for statehood, an act which caused the Mormons to feel that their fears and distrusts were justified. In a sermon in August, 1856, Brigham Young said:

> After 26 years of faithful operation and exertion by our enemies, what have they accomplished? They have succeeded in making us an organized Territory, and they are determined to make us a dependent State or government, . . . I say we are bound to become a sovereign state in the Union, or an independent nation by ourselves.[13]

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[13] Quoted by Daine, op. cit., p. 340.

In 1857, the Utah legislature likewise made treasonable threats. It informed President Buchanan that if he did not improve on his appointments the officers would be returned, and that "we will resist any attempt of governmental officials to set at naught our Territorial law, or to impose upon us those which are inapplicable and of right not in force in our territory."[14] The Mormon threat, although

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[14] Ibid.

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treasonable, was not challenged. Buchanan, who had just become president, allowed it to be pushed into the background in order that the new Administration might deal with the slavery issue.

The Mormons were probably aware of the difficulties with which Buchanan's Administration was confronted, for careful plans were made to make a new appeal for admission to the Union just as the sectional conflict threatened the nation with Civil War. Therefore, as the Southern States were trying to get out of the Union, the nation was confronted with the Mormon request to admit Utah into the Union.[15] In 1862, the people of Utah drafted and adopted a

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[15] Ibid., p. 341.

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new constitution and requested admission to the Union; again Congress refused them admission. Despite the failure of Congress to admit Utah, the Mormons maintained the illegal state government. After the Territorial government enacted laws each year, "Governor" Young of the "State" of Deseret would read his message to the "State" legislature, which would "solemnly re-enact the laws that were passed by the Territorial legislature, and adjourn."[16] There existed,

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[16] Ibid.

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therefore, for a considerable area in the West a dual govern-

ment, the legal Territorial government and the illegal government of the State of Deseret.

Brigham Young maintained control over his people in his bitter opposition to the United States government. The practice of polygamy was the reason for the failure of Congress to admit the Territory as a state. Young never relented on that point; neither did he relinquish control of his followers. According to the Millenial Star:

> The utmost freedom of speech, free from advice, is indulged in; but any measure that can not be unanimously decided on is submitted to the President of the Church, who by the wisdom of God, decides on the matter. . . . [sic] Thus political union is secured, and the shameful display of party spirit, recrimination and pet schemes for individuals or sectional aggrandizement . . . [sic] are, in Utah, things only to be despised.[17]

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[17] Quoted by Daine, op. cit., p. 342.

CHAPTER VII

GROWTH OF THE MORMON EMPIRE AND CONFLICT WITH THE UNITED STATES

While the Mormon Church was located at Nauvoo, Illinois, its membership totaled approximately twenty-five thousand.[1] Although thousands died in the migration, in 1857

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[1] Heber J. Grant, ed., A Short History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, p. 129.

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the Mormon population of Utah was about thirty thousand, including some ten thousand who had emigrated from England, Scotland, and Wales.[2] This growth was the result of a well

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[2] Ibid., p. 133.

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designed emigration organization. The reader may recall that Brigham Young was once sent to England to win adherents to the Church and provide the means by which they might emigrate to the United States. The policy of the Church was to induce as many as possible of its followers to locate in the Salt Lake region.[3] The success that attended the efforts of the Mormon

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[3] Ibid., p. 39.

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missionaries in England resulted in gaining adherents much faster than they could emigrate to America. In 1841, there

were over six thousand converts in England. By 1851, despite the fact that ten thousand had emigrated to America, the Mormons in England numbered about thirty-two thousand. In February, 1847, they petitioned the Queen of England to assist them in emigrating to America. The petition, which they presented to the Queen, was signed by thirteen thousand of the Saints who declared that "we are prepared and shall guarantee to send twenty thousand people of all trades and from all districts in Scotland, England, and Wales at once . . ."[4]

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[4] G. A. Larson, "The Story of the Perpetual Emigration Fund," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. 18, September, 1931, p. 188.

The number of converts desiring to emigrate, but who were unable to do so, had grown to such an extent that the Church decided to create an organization to help transport them to America. Brigham Young stated that the Mormon Church would "never desert the poor and worthy."[5]

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[5] Ibid., p. 185.

In 1849, a special fund was created by the Church to assist in a perpetual emigration. At first five thousand dollars were raised and placed in the care of Bishop Edward Hunter whose responsibility it was to provide ox-teams and food for those people crossing the United States. Although this was a small beginning it could grow to something better,

as was suggested by Brigham Young who, on October 16, 1849, wrote Bishop Hunter,

> The few thousand we send out by our agent at this time is like a grain of mustard seed in the earth. We send it forth into the world, and we expect it will grow and flourish, and spread in a few years to cover England, cast its shadow in Europe and in the process of time compass the whole earth. That is to say, these funds are designed to increase until Israel is gathered from all nations, and the poor can sit under their own vines, and inhabit their own homes and worship God in Zion.[6]

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[6] Ibid., p. 186.

The need for assistance continued to grow, and in September, 1850, the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company was organized. A charter for the company was granted by the provisional government of the State of Deseret. Brigham Young was elected its president and thirteen assistants were appointed to work with him.[7] Funds of the company were used

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[7] Ibid., p. 187.

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to encourage emigration by advertising its services in all countries where missionaries worked. A shipping agency was maintained at Liverpool, England, charged with the responsibility of receiving emigrants, and arranging for their transportation to America. To help defray expenses, emigrants were

asked to pay as much of their transportation cost as was possible.[8]

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[8] Ibid., p. 189.

When a shipload of emigrants reached America they landed either at New York or New Orleans. From these places they followed a route to St. Louis with transportation provided by the company. From St. Louis they followed the route established earlier by the emigrants from Nauvoo. As they crossed the plains to Utah they were compelled to follow strict rules, much like those established by Brigham Young for the first migration. They said prayers in the morning and again at night, and during the week-ends they devoted their time to rest and worship.[9] Some of the emi-

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[9] Ibid., p. 191.

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grants reached Utah by going to the Isthmus of Panama by boat, then crossing the Isthmus, and on to California by boat. From California they proceeded to Salt Lake City. Upon their arrival in Salt Lake City the emigrants were provided for temporarily by the Fund Company. As soon as it was possible, however, they were distributed among friends and relatives, or sent to other communities to settle.[10]

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[10] Ibid.

In spite of hardships incurred by the emigrants, the Fund Company proved very successful in its early years, and became a most successful agency for the promotion of the growth of the population of Utah.[11]

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[11] J. H. Beadle, Western Wilds, p. 495.

Because of a shortage of funds the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company was forced to limit its operation between 1856-1860, by providing only for the transportation of emigrants across the Atlantic. The emigrants traveled on foot from the port of entry to Utah. They must have made a somewhat pathetic scene walking through the Midwest with many of them pushing all of their belongings ahead of them in carts. The Company was revived, however, and the wagons were put back into service. Later the appearance of the railroad made it much easier, although not necessarily cheaper, for the emigrant to reach Utah, but by the time the railroad appeared the emigration was on the decline.[12] Debts had begun

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[12] Larson, op. cit., pp. 190 ff.

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to trouble the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company, and there was a decline in its operation. By the time Cleveland became President it had almost ceased to operate at all, and was dissolved in 1887.[13]

[13] Ibid.

From 1850-1887, the period in which the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company was in operation, it transferred eighty-five thousand people to America from England and Northern Europe.[14] The Mormons appealed to people everywhere

[14] Ibid., p. 185.

to receive their religion and come to Salt Lake City. The motivating factor was, as the reader is aware, to develop the Mormon Empire as rapidly as possible and to provide it with people to defend it against anti-Mormons.

With such a rapid growth in population the Mormons felt secure. They were so sure that they were free to govern themselves according to their own designs, that an effort was made to rid the Territory of all Gentiles, and to forbid all others to enter. Brigham Young asserted that any persons crossing the Territory, other than Mormons, must have written permission from him. This was the occasion for one of the most horrible and dastardly deeds in American history, the Mountain Meadows massacre.[15]

[15] Beadle, op. cit., p. 495.

The incident cited as the cause for the Mountain Mead-

ows massacre took place in Arkansas. There, in 1856, Parley Pratt, one of the Elders of the Church, became involved with the wife of Hector McLean, and induced her to leave her husband. McLean and two of his friends ran Pratt down, and McLean killed Pratt. When news of the killing reached Utah, in the spring of 1857, the entire area became aroused to the point of fury. Brigham Young ordered all Gentiles to leave immediately, and threatened with violence any others who might come into the Territory.[16] During this period of ex-

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[16] Ibid., pp. 495-496.

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citement a wagon train of people from Arkansas, headed for Los Angeles, arrived in Salt Lake City. In the train there were a number of wealthy old men with their sons, sons-in-law and their families, including a number of young ladies and small children. There were forty wagons, several hundred horses and cattle, a piano, some elegant carriages, several riding horses, and an immense amount of jewelry, clothing, and other minor articles. The total value of their belongings was estimated at a sum between one hundred fifty thousand and three hundred thousand dollars, making it one of the richest trains ever to cross the plains.[17]

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[17] Ibid.

When the leader of the train realized that he was in hostile country he hastened on in an effort to get out of it, but as they advanced southward from Salt Lake City they found the people even more hostile. The train, not being permitted to pass through some of the towns, was compelled to detour through the desert. The people in the train were not allowed to purchase provisions; they found themselves frequently charged with violating municipal ordinances, in spite of all efforts to the contrary; and were constantly in danger of arrest. At Beaver they were joined by a Missourian, recently escaped from a jail to which he had been confined by the Mormons, who urged them to hurry if they valued their lives. The people in the train passed through Cedar City, and then increased their efforts to get out of the Utah Territory. They arrived at a place known as Mountain Meadows, where they stopped to rest and make repairs before entering the "Ninety-mile Desert."

There was a rather general feeling later that the Mormon leaders planned the massacre of the members of the wagon train. Beadle said, "some secret work had been going on at Salt Lake City."[18] According to a tentative plan the

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[18] Ibid.

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massacre was to occur at Provo, some forty miles from Salt Lake City, but the desire to find a more advantageous place

caused the change which resulted in the massacre at Mountain Meadows. In an effort to describe this cruel, inhuman act, Beadle wrote:

> The day after the emigrants passed Harmony, John D. Lee, Bishop and President, called a council and stated that he had received command to follow and attack the accursed Gentiles, and let the arrows of the Almighty drink their blood. He stated that they were from Missouri . . ., which had sanctioned the murder of the Apostle; and from Arkansas [where Parley P. Pratt had been killed]. He recited the massacre of Mormons, the murder of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith, and called for an affirmative vote. All hands were held up, and the expedition was at once fitted out. Lee turned out the Indians under his charge, who surrounded the emigrants and prevented their going on, while a regular call was made on the county militia by Col. W. H. Dame, Major John D. Lee, and Captains Haight and Higby. The siege lasted eight days, during which a few emigrants were killed.
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> Some men . . . testified that they were ordered out as militia; others that they went at the command of the Bishop Lee . . . Others that they were asked to go but managed to avoid it. . . . When all were collected at the Meadows, on the eighth day of the siege, Lee and some others bore a flag of truce to the emigrants, and arranged for their surrender. They were to give up everything, including their arms, be taken back to the settlement and taken care of, but held till the war was over. On this agreement they started on their return.
>
> There [remained in the group] sixty fighting men, forty women, and forty-eight children. In front were two wagons, driven by Mormons and containing the men wounded in the siege; behind them were the women and children, and lastly the men. Beside the men marched the Mormon militia in single file. Off on either side were mounted men to intercept any who might break through the lines. A hollow crosses the road there, on each

> side of the way as it enters the hollow are rocks and bushes where the Indians lay in ambush. As testified to by one witness, the women talked joyfully of their rescue from the Indians, and thanked God that they were under the protection of white men.
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> As the wagons passed the gully and the women and children were just entering it, Ike Higby, standing on the bluff above, waved his hand as a signal. Haight gave the command: Halt! Fire! On this instant the Mormon militia turned, and with their guns almost touching their victims, discharged one volley, and almost every man of the emigrants fell dead. . . . The women and children turned and ran back toward the men . . . in twenty minutes six score of Americans lay dead upon the ground. . . .[19]

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[19] Ibid., p. 498-499.

The people in the wagon train were all related, and when killed practically an entire clan was exterminated. Only children, too small to remember the incident were spared, and all identity of the group was lost. Great efforts were made to keep the incident a secret, but so many people with bothered consciences could keep no such secret, and in time John D. Lee was brought to trial and convicted of the murder.[20]

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[20] Ibid., p. 498.

He was not the only guilty party involved, but his conviction served to bring the incident to a close.

Isolated as the Mormon community was, preventing the

leakage of information about a crime like the Mountain Meadows massacre was no serious problem. Political affairs, however, gained attention much quicker, as the Territory was under the direction of the United States government.[21] Trouble began

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[21] A. G. Browne, "Utah Expedition," Atlantic, Vol. III, March, 1859, p. 363.

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for the Mormons almost immediately after the Territory was created. The appointment of Brigham Young as Territorial governor, although it seemed logical to both Fillmore and Young, caused some criticism in Congress and by the Federal appointees to the Territory. After Young was appointed he expelled some of the Federal officers from the Territory. Subsequently threats were made against those allowed to remain. Efforts to replace Young as governor were unsuccessful. One attempt was made by the government to replace him with Lieutenant Colonel Steptoe, of the regular army, but the Colonel declined and recommended that Young be retained. When Young learned that an effort to remove him was under way he informed his followers, "I am and will be governor, and no power can hinder it." United States officials naturally thought that such arrogance had to be suppressed. Young's intentions may have been to demand more than he thought he could get in order to be able to compromise, but he said that if officials persisted in opposing him they

would be slain. In the latter days of Pierce's Administration, the United States officials were run out of Salt Lake City, some fearing for their lives. On at least one occasion a mob broke into the courtroom of the United States District Court in Salt Lake City, and demanded that the court adjourn. By the spring of 1857, an Indian agent named Hunt was the only non-Mormon official in all the Territory.[22]

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[22] Ibid.

Thus Buchanan was faced with what seemed a rebellion when he took office. However, the slavery question was demanding attention, and for some time it forced the Mormon problem into the background.

Republicans, finding in the government conflict with the Mormons an opportunity to embarrass Buchanan and possibly enhance their political position, introduced the Mormon problem in Congress. In Congress the Republicans claimed that polygamy and slavery were one and the same and that both problems should be dealt with as one.[23] It was well known

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[23] Ibid., p. 364.

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that the Mormons refused control by any authority other than their own, and in spite of all inducements to obey the law they remained defiant. With this in mind Buchanan, upon the insistence of Federal officials, expelled by Young, decided

to remove Young from the governorship of Utah. To replace Young he chose Alfred Cummings, Superintendent of Indian Affairs on the Upper Missouri.[24] Mr. Cummings was reputedly

[24] Ibid., p. 367.

a gentleman of education, ambition, and executive ability. Buchanan sent along the army to make sure that Young did not prevent Cummings from exercising his duties as governor. When news of Young's removal reached Utah a yell of rage and defiance sounded from one end of the Territory to the other.[25]

[25] Beadle, op. cit., p. 495.

Young received the news of his removal while he was attending a celebration of the tenth year of the founding of Salt Lake City. As he addressed his followers he reminded them that ten years before he had said that with ten years of peaceful development he would ask no odds of the United States. He also said that now they constituted a free and independent state, and were prepared to face the emergency.[26] After Young

[26] Browne, op. cit., p. 368.

had finished his speech his followers dispersed, went home, and prepared to do whatever he might call upon them to do.

Meanwhile the contingent of the United States Army, numbering two thousand five hundred troops in all, collected

at Fort Leavenworth. There, between July 18 and July 24, it began its march to Utah. The commander of this small force was Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston who later served as a general in the Confederate Army. He boasted that he would restore order if he had to kill all the Mormons in Utah. The troops reached Utah in the fall of 1857, and after some brief encounters with the enemy, mostly making arrests, it settled down for the winter.

The Mormons were in favor of opposing the United States force after they were called upon to do so by their leaders, and after the leaders assured them that they would not submit to the armed forces. Brigham Young issued a proclamation forbidding the troops to remain in the Utah Territory, and announced that arms would be used to resist them. During the latter part of September and the first part of October the Mormons attacked the government troops with cavalry, and succeeded in destroying most of their supply wagons, thus creating a shortage of supplies.[27] Since the troops were unable

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[27] Ibid., pp. 368-371.

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to communicate quickly with the States a company was sent to New Mexico for supplies, and returned with them shortly after Christmas.

President Buchanan in his message to Congress, in 1858, admitted the existence of a rebellion in Utah, and sought

some means of settling it. To bring about a settlement of the war, or near-war, Thomas L. Kane of Pennsylvania, after talking with the President about the matter, was sent as a mediator between the Mormons and the Federal government.[28]

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[28] Ibid., April, 1859, p. 475.

Kane, who had befriended the Mormons on several occasions, was probably the only man who could have served in such a capacity, for he was one of the few Gentiles the Mormons trusted. After corresponding with the Mormons in Salt Lake City, Kane left for California bearing a letter from Buchanan in which the President requested that Federal officials show him every courtesy. He proceeded to San Bernardino under an assumed name, but was detected and carried to Salt Lake City where he was received warmly.

The Mormons, it must be remembered, always felt that the Federal government was wrong, and told Kane and General Johnston (promoted to Brigadier General during the expedition) that all they wanted was to be left alone to choose their own rulers. Kane persuaded them to give in on the matter, however, and order was restored. Brigham Young was required to give up his office and Cummings became Territorial governor in his place.

Although Young remained at the head of the Mormon Church until his death in 1877, and in that capacity often

had some difficulties with the Federal government, the Mormon Empire was broken. The people of Utah remained obedient to the laws of the United States after the restoration of order there, and later, after the question of polygamy was solved, the Territory was admitted to the Union. Therefore, the efforts of the Mormons to set up a separate state in the West were unsuccessful.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Mormons, in 1847, founded at Salt Lake City one of the most unique settlements in American history. Springing from the teachings of a religious sect, founded by Joseph Smith and later led by Brigham Young, this settlement was built by the Mormons in order to develop a society in which they might be free to practice their religion without fear of molestation from non-Mormons. To reach this last place of refuge these people wandered through the Mississippi Valley from Ohio to Missouri, finally settling in Illinois, in an attempt to establish a community among the Gentiles. In Illinois Joseph Smith was killed by a mob, and the Mormons were forced to leave that state by their adversaries. They were led by Brigham Young, who replaced Smith, to a place believed to be beyond the reach of the United States, only to find when they arrived that the United States, as a result of the Mexican War, had moved West more rapidly than they had. The success of this venture was in large measure the result of the leadership of Brigham Young. Charles and Mary Beard claimed that it was "the most successful example of regulated migration in American history."[1]

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[1] Charles A. and Mary Beard, The Rise of American Civilization, p. 624.

Upon arrival in the Great Salt Lake region the Mormons discouraged profiteering, and each family was allotted a share of land to work as it saw fit. In fact, for a few years a state of almost pure communism existed. This ended, however, when certain leaders of the Church began to build up their own personal holdings at the expense of other members. The economic system established by Brigham Young made the Mormon settlement one of the most prosperous in American history. There was little or no poverty, and crime was almost non-existent, as it was not tolerated. The life of the community was directed by the Church leaders to enhance their positions and to increase their strength.

Whether internal development would have upset the system established by the Mormons was never determined, as they were set upon by the Federal government soon after they set up a system of government. They remained in a state of conflict, sometimes violent, until the Civil War began. With the organization of the provisional government of the State of Deseret, the Mormons appealed for admission to the Union as a state. Congress rejected their appeal and created the Territory of Utah instead. This action by Congress brought the Mormons under the supervision of the national government. The appointees of that government were resented by the Mormons, and an effort was made to get rid of them. This led to open conflict which ended after the intervention of Thomas L. Kane.

The Mormons then became law abiding citizens, and with some few exceptions went about their affairs unmolested. The practice of plural marriages caused some disputes to develop between the Mormons and the Federal government, but no serious conflict arose and the Utah Territory remained peaceful until it was admitted to the Union.

Although driven from the borders of the United States, and with great economic losses, the Mormons were successful in setting up a community on the barren wastes of what became Utah. Through thrift and industry the Mormons not only regained their losses, but developed a vast section of the West into a prosperous area. In time Mormon communities were spread from Iowa to California; the Church grew rich; individuals amassed fortunes; communism vanished; and the Mormons became as worldly minded as the descendants of the Puritans, who had a similar background. As the Mormons progressed they built their monuments, in the form of their religious temples. Wherever they settled, the Mormons looked to Salt Lake City for leadership.

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