

MINNESOTA MORMONS

A History of the
Minneapolis Minnesota Stake

Fayone B. Willes

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Cover photo: *Members from all over Minnesota and Wisconsin gathered 26 October 1924 for the dedication of the Fourteenth Avenue Chapel in Minneapolis. Heber J. Grant, president of the Church, is at center left wearing shaded glasses with George Albert Smith on his left.*

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Foreword

MY ASSOCIATION WITH MINNESOTA began twenty-five years ago when my profession required that I travel to the state regularly. For a five-year period, while living in Albuquerque, then Denver, and later in southern California, I came to Minneapolis as often as twice a month. During these frequent visits, I became well acquainted with the Twin Cities, the people, and the natural beauty of one of the best-kept secrets in the United States—the state of Minnesota.

Since moving to Minnesota in 1984, our family has been discovering just how much there is to be proud of in the “land of ten thousand lakes.” We have been thrilled as we have explored beautiful Lake Superior, many miles of the mighty Mississippi River, the primitive north woods, the vast Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and dozens of the beautiful lakes in the Twin Cities area.

Minnesota is a wonderful place to live and consistently rates near the top of “quality of life” lists among American states. But nothing is more impressive than the people themselves, especially those native Minnesota Mormons who helped establish the Church in this area.

Minnesotans have a reputation for being hard-working and clean-living citizens, known for their thrift, honesty, and friendliness. It was this quality of people who helped lay the foundation for the Church in the Upper Midwest. They were committed to the gospel, and their leaders were strong and courageous despite much persecution.

I didn't realize until I became involved in this project that the Upper Midwest had played a prominent role in early Church history. I had no idea that some of the earliest Saints in the area were sent by the Prophet Joseph Smith from Nauvoo. They traveled up the Mississippi River by boat to bring back a supply of lumber for use in building the Nauvoo Temple.

Many LDS newcomers to Minnesota are probably unaware, as I was, of the many outstanding Church leaders who are a part of our stake's history. While serving as stake president in Colorado, I became good friends with George Damstedt, who was president of a neighboring stake. Brother Damstedt, who is a native Minnesotan, is currently serving as president of the Swedish Temple.

I was also unaware that Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, and his family resided in Minneapolis from 1947 to 1954 while he was completing his medical training at the University of Minnesota.

Elder Adney Y. Komatsu, a General Authority of the Church since 1975, was one of a group of Japanese-American servicemen stationed at Fort Snelling during World War II.

Elder Monte J. Brough of the First Quorum of the Seventy, sustained in 1988, resided in the Twin Cities area while serving as president of the Minnesota Minneapolis Mission.

The most prominent member of our Minneapolis Minnesota Stake is Mark H. Willes, who served as the stake president for nine years while concurrently serving first as the president of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank and later as the president of General Mills, Inc. President Willes is a wonderful man who truly loved the people of his stake. His frequent, humble, and sincere expression of this love lifted the members to new performance heights in personal achievement as he urged them to pursue the "power principles" of reading the scriptures (especially the Book of Mormon), fasting and prayer, and frequent attendance at the temple. It was my privilege to serve as his counselor for

nearly two years before his release, and he was an inspired and inspiring leader in every way.

I am grateful to the early members of the Church whose faith and sacrifice helped to establish the Church in Minnesota. I am grateful for our current Latter-day Saints who are building upon this heritage and who are dedicated to accomplishing the mission of the Church. It is our hope and prayer that some day soon we will have our own temple in the Twin Cities area. This is a dream that the members are already working toward through their willingness to attend the temple frequently, even at great personal sacrifice, and their understanding of temple principles.

I have great admiration and appreciation for Fayone Willes, who has generously contributed hundreds of hours and her remarkable literary gifts to produce this thoroughly researched and comprehensive history of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake. She has spent countless hours interviewing, researching, and organizing information. With great sensitivity and skill, she has candidly described the growth of the Church in Minnesota in the context of relevant national and worldwide events.

I am grateful to the early Minnesota Saints who realized the future value of important events and who took the time to record their experiences in personal journals and in mission and stake historical files. This book compiles many of their exciting, touching, and humorous stories, memories, and personal experiences. All of these wonderful Latter-day Saints, who had a real appreciation for history, are responsible for this excellent publication.

*David M. Brown, President
Minneapolis Minnesota Stake*

Preface

FROM THE WINTER OF 1976-77

when I first gave any thought to Minnesota as a place where our family might make a home, I wanted to know about its history—both the history of the state and the history of the Church there. After our move to Minneapolis, I found abundant literature about the state, but I only heard wonderful stories about the stake. My aim as a self-appointed agitator to have such a history written was never to have a go at it myself, although in retrospect I should have known from a lifetime of Church membership and service that this is most often how things work.

This book is an attempt, then, not only to satisfy my own curiosity about the history of the stake, but to make it available to others. From the earliest days when lumber missionaries labored to supply boards and shingles to the Nauvoo Temple, through the tentative, early organization of congregations who shivered through winters in rented buildings, and rejoiced over each step forward (even if only buying silverware for the meetinghouse kitchen), to the organization of a fully functioning stake, I have found the story to be poignant and inspirational. It is the story of a wonderful stake, now brimming with talent, leadership ability, and love. Working on this project has reaffirmed a great truth: a great stake does not exist because of a great leader or even a group of great leaders. It takes hundreds of individual members—men, women, and children—living through their own personal challenges and crises and still giving of their time and

means. It takes the love and vision of many who, because they believe, work together to build a tomorrow that they might never enjoy. The stories of these Minnesota Mormons have touched my heart as I have tried to reach out with understanding across the years.

Doing this work has been its own reward. The labor—and there was a great deal of it—came with a special spirit. On many occasions, I experienced the clear sensation of being led virtually by the hand—of knowing whom I should talk to next or whom I should ask for advice. I acknowledge this assistance gratefully. I believe that it was the faith of the founding parents of the stake reaching down through the decades to bless this modern work, and I wonder if that influence lingers oftener and appears in more guises that we recognize in our numerous congregations and activities.

I owe other debts as well. Without the cheerful and willing help of many, many people, this volume could never have been completed. All the librarians and archivists at the LDS Historical Department were hospitable while I did research there and unfailingly patient with my long-distance phone calls. I particularly thank Chad Orton who read some of the early chapters and gave valuable suggestions. Dr. Wes Johnson was responsible for a family and community history conference at BYU which helped me hone skills and direct my efforts profitably. Mary Hawes introduced me to her Wisconsin friends, Toddy Porath, Jean Anderson, and Betty Erickson, and they in turn generously shared their own research and writing. Robert Johnson, Oakland California Stake historian, responded immediately to my request for information on Delbert Wright.

Wiley Pope, whose recent untimely death was a loss to St. Paul and the Minnesota Historical Society, made his “Minnesota LDS Journal History” files available and helped work out a few puzzles in the early years. Galen Erickson enthusiastically made his equipment, as well as his own photographs, available and spent time insuring that the final selections were of high quality. Not one of the present or past mem-

bers of the stake refused a request to be interviewed; to a person, they were open and candid with their responses. Many contributed photographs and other memorabilia and materials to the stake collection.

Particularly I must also thank the past stake presidents and their wives—Sherman and June Russell, Paul and June Wilson, Tom and Bonnie Holt, and Mark Willes—who cheerfully endured many questions, made valuable suggestions, and never failed in their encouragement. David Brown, the present stake president, continued support without skipping a beat.

Lavina Fielding Anderson, my editor, greatly strengthened the manuscript with her insistence on detail and accuracy, and did it in such a gracious way that it almost didn't seem like work. My children—Wendy, Sue, Keith, Steve, and Matt—did not once complain and were always enthusiastic.

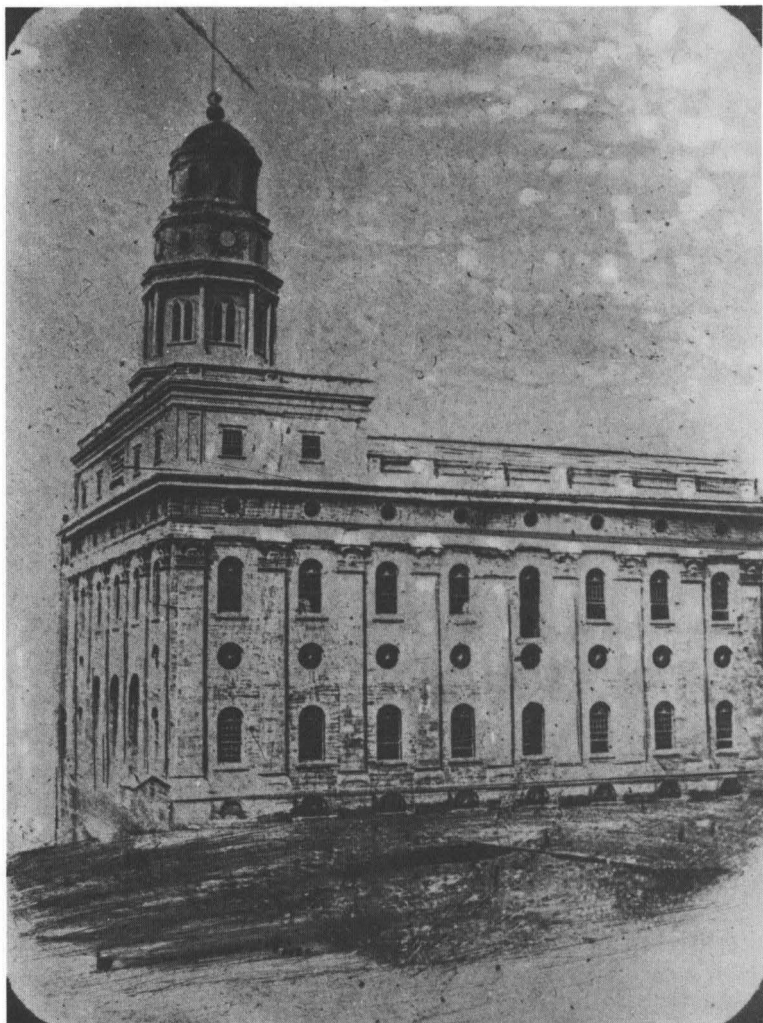
Finally, I owe my greatest debt, dearest love, and deepest gratitude to my husband, Mark, who supported and believed in this project—and in me—from the beginning.

*Natural and
Human Resources,*

1841-57

IT WAS NOT THE PROMISE OF A harvest of converts that first drew Latter-day Saints to the Upper Midwest in the early 1840s but the thick forests of white pine that stood in Wisconsin Territory's Big Woods along the Black River. Since colonial days, when these trees were felled for ships' masts for His Majesty's navy and for merchant vessels, the white pine seemed faultless. The large trees towered between 120 and 160 feet—sometimes 200 feet—tall with a base of four or five feet. Its wood was strong, odorless, soft, and so straight-grained that a man could split off usable boards with only a broad axe. Comparatively long-lasting, it was more buoyant than hardwoods and floated easily down river highways.

To the beleaguered Saints gathering on the shores of the Mississippi River four hundred miles downstream in their new city of Nauvoo (formerly Commerce), Illinois, the Black River's white pine was a godsend. Having been exiled for their faith from New York, Ohio, and Missouri successively, they were determined to make a permanent home in Illinois. The most important symbol of both their faith and their determination was the temple, an ambitious three-story structure high on the river bluff. It had priority over every other physical project. Excavation for its deep foundations had begun in 1840, within months of the first settlers' arrival.



The Nauvoo Temple about 1845. Courtesy LDS Historical Department Archives.

The cornerstone was laid in April 1841. By then, it needed long, sturdy timbers that the local prairie woods could not supply. Mormon prophet and president Joseph Smith and

other Mormon leaders naturally looked upstream toward Wisconsin's majestic pines.

Pineries Mission

On 2 September 1841, just two years after the first Mormon refugees arrived in Illinois, a small company of about twenty men left Nauvoo, some accompanied by their families, traveled upriver by boat to Prairie du Chien, continued ninety miles to the mouth of the Black River, and then followed the Black over a hundred miles to the falls. (See Map 1: The Upper Midwest.) Their appointed leaders were Alpheus Cutler, master mason for the Nauvoo Temple and

Map 1. The Upper Midwest and the Pineries Mission, 1841-44, showing modern state boundaries.



member of the temple committee, and Peter Haws of the Nauvoo House Association. (See Appendix A.) Their mission was to take possession of a sawmill which Joseph and Hyrum Smith had recently purchased in Nauvoo from the firm of Crane and Kirtz for \$1,500 and to begin logging operations (Miller 1916, 9). They had provisions for nine months, limited funds from the Nauvoo House Association, scanty knowledge of lumbering, but a commitment to bring white pine down to Nauvoo (Flanders 1965, 183). If they were successful, they could not only supply lumber for the temple but also for the Nauvoo House, a large hotel combined with Joseph Smith's private residence, also under construction. Any surplus lumber could be easily marketed in booming Nauvoo, raising badly needed cash to finance both buildings. This "Pineries Mission" was thus critical to the success of Nauvoo's most important building projects.

Such group pioneering by Latter-day Saints was not new. In the eleven years since Joseph Smith had organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York, its members had experimented with various forms of communal enterprises, including community building on the Missouri frontier. Their experiences—and their faith—taught them the value of firm commitment to a shared ideal, internal compromise, organizational skills, and a willingness to sacrifice individual desires to achieve group goals. The experience at the pineries, though not divisive like the disputes that racked the Church internally in Kirtland and not violent like the mobbings and forced expulsions in Missouri, would test every ounce of their strength and commitment.

Wisconsin Territory, created in 1836, stretched westward to the banks of the Mississippi, well into what is now Minnesota. The virgin forests were the domain of Indians, fur trappers, and a few ambitious New England lumbermen. Lyman Wight, a later leader of the pineries mission, described the country as a "dreary, cold region" covered with "cranberry marshes, pine barrens and swamps with a small amount of good land, scarce of game, and only valuable [for] mill priv-

ileges and facilities for lumbering purposes” (in Draper 1943, 127). George Miller, another leader of the pineries, would remember that “nothing but toil and hardships awaited us at every stage of our undertaking” (1916, 12).

As the pioneers were traveling north to establish their camp in 1841, they met lumberman William Douglas and his wife traveling down river, hoping to get back to civilization before the imminent birth of Mrs. Douglas’s baby. Nathaniel Child’s wife in the Mormon party immediately came to Mrs. Douglas’s assistance as midwife, and the Douglas daughter became the first recorded white birth in Clark County, Wisconsin (Polleys 1948, 24).

Near the falls of the Black River, the group settled in and commenced operations, even though the mill was not fully functional. But by that time, winter was upon them. It was a winter few of them had experienced. Wisconsin Territory was a land of extreme temperatures. Summer heat could soar as high as 114 degrees; but the winter cold was even more devastating, with the mercury falling as low as -50 degrees. The missionaries struggled through these icy months trying to improve the mill and ending up “almost [making it] anew” (Miller 1916, 9).

Assessment of the first season’s success was not bright. One raft of “hewed timber” which could be used for the temple had been brought to Nauvoo by the end of the summer, but no milled lumber was produced. By October 1842, the mission was in debt \$3,000 and “the amount of lumber so little that our work was almost brought to a stand[still]” (Miller 1916, 10).

Besides the challenge of bringing the mill to full operation, other obstacles stood in their way. Chief among them was lumberman Jacob Spaulding, a millwright who had made the first permanent settlement at Black River Falls in 1838 and who now claimed squatters’ rights to the land and lumber the missionaries were cutting.irate, he accused them of poaching his timber, recruited an armed band among the other lumbermen to enforce his claim, and attempted to

drive the missionaries off during the winter of 1841-42. Since the land had not been surveyed—and would not be until 1846—no one could secure a legal land title. The missionaries recognized Indian ownership of the land and felt they had as much right to the timber as anyone, after securing permission from the Indians to log. The other lumbermen, however, obviously felt that the Mormons had violated the unwritten code of ethics which existed among them. In this threatening atmosphere, it was weeks before the missionaries dared return to their work (Polleys 1948, 46).

There was a steady flow of people to and from the pineries. In the fall of 1842, George Miller, forty-eight-year-old president of the Nauvoo House Association, second bishop of the Church, and a close counselor to Joseph Smith, was sent to the pineries in the fall of 1842 to take charge and, with Peter Haws, to “keep the work progressing” (Miller 1916, 10). Miller was instructed to take his ailing wife in hopes that a change of climate would help her recover. His daughters and a hired girl to help with the cooking accompanied them as they left Nauvoo in late fall.

This small group formed an advance party that traveled quickly up to Prairie du Chien. There Miller met with Jacob Spaulding in an attempt to settle the differences of the previous winter. Miller contracted with Spaulding to buy several mills further up the Black and to purchase Spaulding’s logging claims in return for the present mill and \$12,000 (Miller 1916, 10). With this business settled, Miller then looked hopefully for the arrival of the main party, bringing a boat load of flour, pork, and other staples to see the mission through the imminent winter. The plan was to load these supplies on a keel boat (a flat-bottomed raft) at Prairie du Chien and then tow the keel boat by steamer to the mouth of the Black River. From there, men would “pole” the raft by hand up the Black to the falls. This arduous process meant, according to a later historian, that several “full-grown and well-developed men” would stand at the front of the “walking boards,” which ran the length of the keel boat on either

side, jab long poles into the stream bed, and then walk backwards along the board, exerting pressure against the solidly placed pole and thus propelling the boat forward against the current. When the "poler" came to the end of the walking board, he raised his pole, walked to the front of the boat, and began the process all over again—hour after hour, day after day. This activity required "the most tremendous exertions that men could possibly make" and caused "the shoulder against which the end of the pole was placed, and the back of the uninitiated [to] suffer horribly" (Polleys 1948, 21).

Theoretically, it was possible to break a channel through thin ice on the river in the fall and spring, but obviously the best time for poling was during the late summer and early fall when ice was not a problem and when the current was at its weakest. The logistics of supply for the faraway mission were obviously taxing, and the 1842 season proved unforgiving. Miller and his party of women waited with increasing anxiety at Prairie du Chien for the arrival of the main party. Henry W. Miller, who had been left in charge of the supplies and the main group of men had, George Miller irritably claimed, "loitered away his time in Nauvoo swelling over his big authority" and was three weeks late getting to Prairie du Chien (Miller 1916, 10). The delay was almost disastrous.

By the time the main party arrived at Prairie du Chien, the steamboats had stopped running, "leaving ninety miles to tow or pole [their] boat [up the Mississippi] to the mouth of the Black River, in addition to getting it another 100 miles up the Black to the logging camp," as Miller summarized the problem. The party of men, women, and children had no choice but to come doggedly on. They succeeded in getting the supply boat about eighty miles up the slush ice of the Mississippi before the river froze solid, forcing them to cache the supplies at a trading post about seven miles south of the Black's mouth until spring.

The only shelter for them was still over a hundred miles away at the pineries. So the missionaries slogged upriver on foot, with a few ox teams pulling what supplies they could

draw by wagon and improvised sleds, to get established for the winter and begin the new season of logging operations. By the time they reached the settlement at the falls, it was December and they were “almost worn out with the incredible toil that [they] had just passed through,” recorded Miller. “I will not attempt to give in detail . . . the toil, cold, breasting snow banks, (it was two and a half feet deep on a level), treading a road for oxen and sleds to travel on, and the labor . . . in getting the families moved up; suffice it to say that Bonaparte’s retreat from Moscow was a mere nothing in comparison save there were no deaths or freezing amongst us” (1916, 11).

Now the group of Saints faced the herculean task of keeping the mission supplied through the long and difficult winter from the cache over one hundred miles away. The snow was deep all winter, and they could bring only sleds and “back loads” of food at a time. Miller, writing a decade later to *The Northern Islander*, a newspaper published by the splinter Strangites on Beaver Island, Michigan, recalled that bitter year: “Too much cannot be said in praise of these faithful brethren. They really performed wonders. We were in the midst of a howling wilderness, and the aspect of our affairs to some might seem forbidding; but we were all buoyant with hope of better days and resolved on accomplishing the work we had undertaken.” He further praised these hardy pioneers: “They performed labors that are incredible to relate” (1916, 11).

When the ice broke up in early April 1843, Miller and four other men made a perilous trip downstream through “gorges of ice” and struggled back up for nine days of “violent exertions” to deliver what remained of the cached supplies and the keel boat to the pineries (Miller 1916, 12).

In addition to the lack of supplies, the missionaries had another hurdle to overcome that winter. The Winnebago, who were numerous in this part of Wisconsin, were, according to Miller, persuaded by local traders dealing in whiskey to make trouble for the Mormons. The Indians came to the

mill, demanding food and the pine trees the missionaries were cutting. They threatened to burn the mill if their demands were not met. Miller, unable to understand their language, succeeded in persuading the Winnebago to accompany him to a trading post where an interpreter explained that the Indians were perishing from hunger because the deep winter snows had hindered their annual hunt. Miller affirmed friendship with the Indians, saying he had never tried to cheat them of their furs or lands nor supplied them with liquor, but had instead given them food on previous occasions. As a further pledge of his friendship, he bought flour and pork from the traders and gave it to the Indians, instructing them to take it home to their children. His candor and generosity neutralized the immediate conflict with the Winnebago.

During that long, poorly supplied winter, the missionaries continued to cut logs and drag them to the river bank, a task facilitated by the frozen ground. Then after the spring ice was gone, they floated the logs to the mill, and sawed them into rough lumber. (Only once, in 1842, did the pineries float unmilled logs to Nauvoo, presumably to provide extraordinarily long timbers for the temple which the mill could not supply.)

The milled lumber, marked for identification, was then tied into small rafts and floated to the mouth of the Black River. The river was not particularly well suited for this operation, according to a later historian, for the logs "got hung up on the rocks in the granite gorges above the falls and on the many sand bars and sloughs of the lower river" ("Historic Jackson" 1976). After wrestling the small rafts down to the Mississippi, the men assembled them into larger rafts and then pushed them out into the larger river for the final leg of the journey to Nauvoo.

By 1843, persistence at the pineries began to yield increasingly better results. During the summer, Bishop Miller accompanied rafts totaling 200,000 feet of "good pine lumber" and 70,000 shingles. These, he noted, were sawed

in two weeks and brought downriver in two more. This lumber provided the immediate needs of the temple and Nauvoo House, with enough left over to sell, thus helping to liquidate some of the Nauvoo House Association's debts. By mid-1843 the pineries mills were putting out over twelve thousand feet of lumber per day, and Miller reported that he had paid in lumber a third of the \$12,000 owed to Spaulding. In an optimistic letter dated 18 July 1843, Willard Richards reported from Nauvoo to Brigham Young, then on a mission in the eastern United States, that the Saints could expect to build more mills at the pineries and process an unlimited supply of lumber. "All that is wanting is hands," said Richards (HC 5:512).

The population at the pineries ebbed and flowed. In August 1843, George Miller, then back in Nauvoo, persuaded Lyman Wight to "gather up a company of young men and families" and return to the pineries with him. Wight had recently returned from an unsuccessful mission to bolster the



A run of logs on the Black River c. 1870.

finances of the Nauvoo House Association. He immediately raised a large company, which consisted of many widows and children, reasoning that it was Bishop Miller's responsibility to clothe and feed them anyway and that this task could be accomplished just as well at the pineries where they might, in turn, cook and wash for the men. Miller procured the Church-owned steamer, *The Maid of Iowa*, for the trip; and the party arrived at the mills in August. The mission had to build additional homes for these new arrivals, but the burden of supporting them was lightened that fall when the missionaries harvested 500 bushels of wheat from fifty acres that they had cleared and planted the previous spring.

According to Miller, Joseph Smith hoped to make the pineries a permanent settlement. The settlement's increasing population and stabilizing organization both indicated that his hopes might be realized. As the winter of 1843-44 deepened, about 150 people were working at the pineries living in "permanent, good houses" (Miller 1916, 15). Miller had also brought up a "drove of Cattle," consisting of "oxen, milch cows and young cattle" to help feed the settlement (Miller 1916, 14). On 30 January 1844, a communication from the pineries reached Nauvoo that several members had been excommunicated for "lying, back-biting, and tattling from house to house, . . . speaking evil of the heads of the Church and taking a false oath . . . and cursing the bishop" (JH 30 Jan. 1844, 1). This official action indicates that a branch of the Church was organized and functioning at the pineries.

The chastened members enjoyed increasing professional success. That winter, "a very great amount of lumber was made" (Miller 1916, 18). A serious problem arose, however, when the Indian agent forbade cutting timber above the falls on the Black River. Since the good timber was above the falls, all of the lumbermen—including the Mormons—raised a great clamor. About the same time, in January 1844, Chief Oshkosh of the Winnebago and his interpreter visited the Mormon camps where a feast was prepared for them. According to Miller, Chief Oshkosh listened with rapt atten-

tion as the Mormons explained their religion, recounted their persecutions in Ohio and Missouri, and reaffirmed their friendship with the Indians. Chief Oshkosh remembered that the Mormons had previously given them food and was favorably impressed; in return, he now pledged that the Mormons "should have the exclusive privilege of cutting timber above the falls in exchange for feeding his people when they should pass by." He advised Bishop Miller to accompany him to the Indian agency to obtain a written permit from the agent confirming this permission "in order to silence the [non-Mormon] lumbermen" (Miller 1916, 19).

Miller and Cyrus Daniels, one of the missionaries, returned to the agency with Chief Oshkosh to see if they could negotiate this arrangement. They traveled forty miles cross-country on snowshoes through snow eighteen inches deep and received a chilly welcome from the agent. Because Chief Oshkosh insisted on his continuing friendship with the Mormons, the agent reluctantly agreed to confirm any agreement the Indians made concerning already harvested logs but refused to permit any additional cutting above the falls on the Black until he had consulted the authorities in Washington (Miller 1916, 19). Chief Oshkosh now pressed Miller and Daniels to come to the Indian lodges and relate the story of the Mormons to the rest of his people. As Miller reports, "Upon hearing [this story] . . . the Indians shed tears (not common for an Indian) saying we had been treated almost as badly as the Indians."

During the spring of 1844, the missionaries milled the already felled logs and sent this lumber to Nauvoo in two rafts, one containing 87,000 feet of lumber and the other 68,000 feet (Draper 1943, 77). The last raft left for Nauvoo in early July. It would be the last lumber the Black River pineries produced for Nauvoo.

There is no record of Washington's answer to the agent's inquiry or his response to the missionaries; but presumably the missionaries were not optimistic that the permission they sought would be forthcoming. In the spring of 1844, George

Miller and Lyman Wight “proposed to abandon the pineries and use their company in a grand colonizing and missionary scheme in the Southwest,” namely Texas (in Flanders 1965, 185). While the merits of this plan were being weighed, Joseph Smith was assassinated on 27 June in Carthage Jail. When the news reached the pineries several days later, the missionaries reacted with “utter disbelief” (Polleys 1948, 22). George Miller was in Kentucky “electioneering” for Joseph Smith’s candidacy for the presidency of the United States, and Lyman Wight was in Maryland on the same mission. Those left in charge at the pineries rafted up the loose lumber, tore down their houses, sold the mill “worth at least \$20,000” back to Jacob Spaulding for “a few hundred thousand feet of pine lumber,” and bade farewell to the pineries mission as an organized community (Miller 1915, 23). A few Saints chose not to return to Nauvoo and made lives for themselves in western Wisconsin, but the majority of the missionaries headed downriver for Nauvoo. What for almost three years had been a Mormon outpost on the Black River became a ghost town overnight.

Mormon Coulee

Back in Nauvoo, Lyman Wight “placed himself at the head of [the pineries] company” (Miller 1916, 23). Convinced that Joseph Smith had approved his Texas colonization plan, Wight tried to convince Brigham Young (then President of the Quorum of the Twelve and acting head of the Church), to move the Saints west and south. Instead, Young counseled them to return to Black River Falls (JH 18 Aug. 1844). Wight accepted Young’s counsel in part and began preparations to return to Wisconsin but did not go as far north as the abandoned pineries. In a letter written 29 November 1844, Wight explained that many pineries missionaries were afflicted with chills and fever (malaria), making it necessary to find “a more healthy part of the country than Nauvoo” to winter in before making preparations for an early start to Texas in the

spring of 1845 (in Sanford 1940, 136). Although George Miller had permission to go to Wisconsin with Wight, he apparently stayed in Nauvoo.

In September 1844, about 130 people, including “forty able bodied men” (HC 7:401) under Wight’s leadership went north from Nauvoo to a site about five miles southeast of present-day La Crosse and eight miles from the Mississippi, on a broad ravine surrounded by gently sloping hills covered with hardwoods. “Mormon Coulee” (or valley), as the place is still known, was an ideal site—about ten miles long and a half mile wide, with rich soil. The stream running through the coulee, which drained into the Mississippi, ran fifty feet below the soil bench, ensuring safety from spring flooding. The surrounding hills sheltered the area from freakish weather, insuring a dependable growing season. The settlers named the valley “Lamoni” and the stream “the Waters of Helaman,” both names from the Book of Mormon (in Sanford 1940, 135).

That fall, several men went up the Black River to secure shingles and other building materials from the old pineries site and also cut “60 tons of hay” to sustain their animals (in Sanford 1940, 135). At Mormon Coulee, they quickly put up cabins to see them through the winter, but their provisions were inadequate. Nathan Myrick, the earliest permanent settler of La Crosse, hired “quite a number” of the men to cut cordwood, construct a boat, and “get out rails” on the island opposite La Crosse where he operated an Indian trading post. The men drew their pay from Myrick in provisions to support the coulee settlement (in Sanford 1940, 130). Dr. Lafayette Bunnell, who owned land in the La Crosse area, also hired some of the Mormons to break and fence ten acres of his land (in Sanford 1940, 131). By working at whatever jobs were available and trading oxen, cows, and hay for other provisions, the settlers survived the winter—but barely.

In the spring of 1845, Wight determined to carry out his plan for establishing a colony in Texas. Nathan Myrick reports that, when he and other creditors learned the Mor-

mons were leaving, they went to the coulee on 27 March and settled their debts by taking oxen and horses. The Mormons then set fire to most of their homes, loaded their goods on flat boats, and left Mormon Coulee by the light of their burning houses (in Sanford 1940, 130).

Three weeks later, presumably as the party was enroute south, Wight received a letter from Brigham Young asking him to give up his Texas scheme, return to the main body of the Saints, and help complete the Nauvoo Temple (HC 7:400). Wight refused and continued on to Texas with his group. There they founded Zodiac on the Pedernales River near Fredricksburg, Texas, in 1847. Wight was excommunicated from the LDS Church in December 1848 and died suddenly in Texas ten years later. His followers afterward aligned themselves with the RLDS Church (Shields 1975, 47).

George Miller began the trek west with the Mormon pioneers but became disillusioned at Winter Quarters in 1847 and led a small group of followers to join the Wight colony in Texas. An important motive seems to be that his son, John Miller, had married one of Wight's daughters and was living in Zodiac. In Texas, however, Miller found Wight "so addicted to drinking that he would, if persisted in, destroy himself, and bring ruin upon his community" (Miller 1916, 42). Doubting Wight's claim to be Joseph Smith's divinely appointed successor, Miller eventually joined another group of LDS dissidents, the Strangites of Beaver Island, Michigan.

One Mormon named Loomis chose not to leave Mormon Coulee and stayed behind to help raise the first crop of wheat grown in the area. Another member of the group, William Post, moved with his two wives and children to Sand Prairie, Vernon County, Wisconsin, "built a log cabin on an Indian mound and lived with his neighbors in peace for many years." Later when anti-polygamy sentiment intensified, he reportedly moved to Utah (*Milwaukee Sentinel*, 12 Nov. 1981, 1).

These events ended nineteenth-century Mormon excursions into western Wisconsin Territory. Today visitors to the old pineries site in Jackson County, Wisconsin, will still find

“Mormon Riffles,” a two-mile stretch of white water running swiftly between granite walls just below the present town of Hatfield, now the site of a power plant. Its name has long outlasted the temple that the logs were sent to build. But it remains a fitting tribute to the dedication and perseverance of the pineries mission.

By late 1846, persecutions in Illinois forced the Saints out of Nauvoo. In the spring of 1847, the Mormon vanguard left Winter Quarters on the banks of the Missouri River and headed westward to the Salt Lake Valley. The great trek across the plains had begun. Every year saw wagons crossing the rivers, plains, and mountains to the new Zion until 1869 when the transcontinental railroad was completed. It eventually involved almost 60,000 immigrants (Stegner 1964, 9).

Groups Who Stayed Behind

Not all of those who were converted to Mormonism, believed in the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith, and accepted the Book of Mormon as true made that long journey west, however. While the main body followed the leadership of Brigham Young, the lack of unanimous agreement on Joseph’s successor and different levels of understanding about some of his theological and social innovations during the Nauvoo period led to clusterings of those with similar beliefs around leaders who claimed to be the Prophet’s legal successors. All of the leaders of the pineries mission—Alpheus Cutler, George Miller, and Lyman Wight—led or associated themselves with these groups. As noted, many of the families who had served in the pineries remained loyal to Lyman Wight and sundered their ties with the Mormon Church. Others also left the main body of the Saints, pursuing different paths. To some of them, Minnesota became an attractive location to rebuild their lives.

On 29 May 1848, Wisconsin entered the Union. Its western border was the St. Croix River. The land west across the river, stretching into what is today North and South Dakota,

became known as Minnesota Territory, despite its lack of the requisite 5,000 inhabitants. But it didn't take long for settlers to discover the rich farm lands being ceded by the Indians. The Sioux had signed the first land treaty in 1805, yielding among other territories, the Falls of St. Anthony. In 1837 Chippewa and Sioux chiefs gave up title to the large triangle between the Mississippi and the St. Croix rivers. Ten years later, in 1847, the Chippewa nation ceded another triangle extending west of the Mississippi. The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, signed in 1851, transferred 24 million acres of Sioux lands—most of southern Minnesota—into white hands. By 1889, which marked the last Indian cession, all Minnesota was open to white settlement. In 1855 the population of Minnesota Territory was estimated at 4,000; the following year, it skyrocketed to 100,000. At an official census taken in 1857 in preparation for statehood, Minnesota numbered 150,037 inhabitants (Lass 1977, 97).

Two groups of disaffected Mormons made Minnesota their home, played their part in the area's history, are referred to as "Mormons" in Minnesota history books, and are often erroneously linked with the LDS Church. Although they severed theological and geographical connections with the Utah Church, their roots are the same and their diverse branchings have some interest. Two became the first white settlers in two Minnesota counties—the Cutlerites in Otter Tail County and Henry Way's followers in Becker County. A third group—the Strangites—settled on Beaver Island in Michigan but eventually splintered into several small groups that resettled all over Wisconsin.

The Cutlerites

The Cutlerites took their name from Alpheus Cutler, original leader of the pineries mission and master stone mason on the Nauvoo Temple. Cutler refused to recognize the authority of Brigham Young and stayed in Iowa, where he and his followers established the small settlement of Manti in Fremont County, Iowa, in 1852. In 1853 he "reorganized"

his "Church of Jesus Christ" and had everyone rebaptized except himself. (He felt that rebaptism might disassociate him from Joseph Smith.) In 1859, his followers numbered 183; but when the RLDS Church was organized in 1860, many Cutlerites gave their allegiance to Joseph Smith III (Jenson 1941, 61).

Plans to move the group, then numbering about a hundred, to Minnesota were interrupted on 10 August 1864 by the death of the eighty-year-old Cutler. However, in the spring of 1865, "Mother Cutler" and Chauncey Whiting, Cutler's counselor, led half of the group into Otter Tail County in west central Minnesota after a sixty-one-day trip. They filed claims on four homesteads on a narrow stretch between Battle Lake and Clitherall Lake. They believed revelation had designated the spot, but one of their descendants remarked ruefully, "They walked over the most fertile land in Minnesota to settle on a sandbank" (Young 1980, 112).

Enthusiastically, they plowed and sowed sixty acres of prairie with grain and vegetables, founded the town of Clitherall, built cabins, and faced the perils of Indians, grasshopper plagues, and isolation. The remaining members of their sect arrived in 1866. That year, they also built a church and a school, the first in Otter Tail County, which opened with thirty pupils.

Their nearest trading post was Sauk Center, sixty-five miles away; the nearest post office was St. Cloud, 100 miles to the southeast. For a time, the mail arrived from Alexandria by dog-sled. For the first years, they had to haul wheat to St. Cloud to be milled, and wool from their flocks went to Minneapolis to be carded into rolls.

They unsuccessfully tried to implement the United Order, holding all things in common with everyone working for the good of all. They opened stores, mills, a smithy, and eventually a post office (Tiller 6 Feb. 1930, 4).

These people had firm testimonies of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. Although they differed primarily with Brigham Young and the "Salt Lake Church" over the issue

of authority and the practice of polygamy, LDS missionaries calling on them in the early 1880s found well-used copies of the Book of Mormon and other church literature. Because of their lack of conspicuous public practices, they became a “less peculiar” people than their Salt Lake cousins. After visiting Clitherall in 1882, Elder Christian Wallantine reported that their numbers had dwindled to about one hundred and their experiment with the United Order had failed (JH 18 July 1883). “Their religious belief is not so very different from the average Protestant church,” another writer noted, “except that they believe that the Book of Mormon is the word of God as well as the Bible” (Tiller 14 Jan. 1930, 4).

In 1883, Charles M. Nielsen of Springville, Utah,¹ and his companion, H. W. Buchanan, visited Clitherall while on a mission in Minnesota. Nielsen reported that the Cutlerites treated them kindly and allowed them to preach twice in their hall. But, he assessed, they had ceased to function as a religious body and had stopped holding meetings. They “still retain faith in ‘Mormonism’ to an extent, and revere Joseph Smith as a Prophet,” commented Nielsen, “but they think they are all right as they are, without further change of location or opinion. When asked why they had ceased to hold meetings they replied that they had determined to ‘stand still and see the salvation of God.’” He concluded that they were generally “withering as [a] religious society” (JH 9 Oct. 1884, 2). LDS missionaries continued to visit Clitherall occasionally and were always greeted kindly but made no known converts.

¹Charles M. Nielsen is probably Carl Iver (or Ivor) Magnus Nielsen, who always went by Carl M. Nielsen. There are several reasons for believing that the Charles M. Nielsen identified in the *Scandinavian Jubilee History*, p. 33 and quoted in the *Journal History*, 9 October 1882, p. 2, is actually Carl M. Nielsen, since the dates of birth, baptism, immigration to Utah, and Minnesota mission years are identical and since Carl/Charles are linguistic variants. I have no information to explain, however, why he would have used two different forms of his name.

In 1881 when the railroad was built at some distance from Clitherall, a "New Clitherall" was established with easier access and the "Old Town" began to disappear. By the turn of the century, pioneer Clitherall had largely disappeared. In 1975, only two members of the Church of Jesus Christ still lived in the area and they were "not actively conducting church services" (Shields 1975, 62).

Henry Way's Followers

The second group of Mormons, about thirty families, followed Brigham Young out of Nauvoo but then became troubled not only by "spiritual and theoretical questions" about Brigham Young's authority but by the "practical certainty that they were leaving behind them a smiling land to endure no one knew what hardships to reach a haven the aspect of which they knew not." This group, under the leadership of Henry Way, returned to the vicinity of Lamoni, Iowa, for several years, and then faced the practical problem that available land in Iowa was dwindling. California forty-niners brought back glowing reports of Mormon colonization in Utah, and "a few suggested attempting migration to Utah." Instead, the majority favored establishing a new colony in Minnesota on lands newly opened for settlement. They made their way north by covered wagon, driving herds of sheep. After a few years in Clitherall with the Cutlerites, they felt the need for more room and moved further north. They settled near Floyd Lake in June 1868, the first white settlement in Becker County. (Reportedly the only other white man in the county was a trapper with an Indian wife.) Some later joined the RLDS Church, but most were not religiously active. Today little suggests any separate religious identity from their neighbors (*Fergus Falls Tribune* 25 Nov. 1926, 1).

Strangites

The third splinter group was initially the most successful. Its leader was James Jesse Strang, a Wisconsin resident

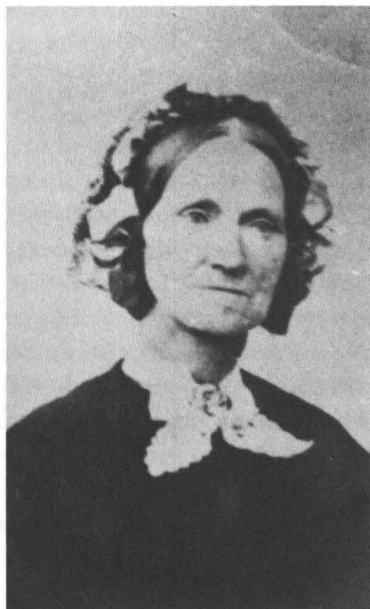
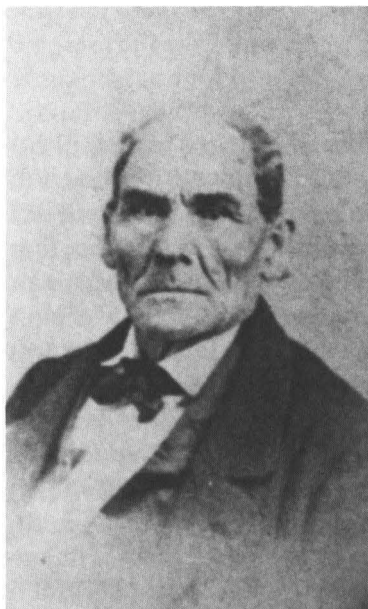
before he joined the Church early in 1844. Strang challenged Brigham Young's leadership after Joseph Smith's death, claiming that a letter from Smith written 18 June 1844, only five days before Smith's assassination, authorized him to assume the Prophet's place. He eventually established a colony at Beaver Island at the north end of Lake Michigan and attracted several prominent Church leaders to follow him, including John E. Page, William Smith, William Marks (former Nauvoo Stake president), and George Miller (Shields 1975, 41). Strang's following for several years rivaled that of Brigham Young. At Beaver Island, he experimented with several innovations, including the reestablishment of plural marriage, and had himself crowned "king" in an elaborately staged ceremony in 1850. Two of his own men assassinated him on 16 June 1856, and lawmen and mobs forcibly evicted most of his followers from Beaver Island. They scattered throughout Wisconsin and Michigan.

Early Mormons in Minnesota

A fourth category of Minnesota Mormons were faithful members who had no differences of theology with the Utah Church but who, for various reasons (usually economic), did not accompany the pioneers west. One of these families, that of Eli Houghton and his second wife, Margaret McMean Houghton, has aided the growth of the Minnesota Mormon community to the present. Baptized in 1836, Eli and Margaret were living in Nauvoo when the Saints were expelled in 1846. They came to Minnesota to visit their sons, James, Newl, and George, before making the trek west but were persuaded by the boys to stay in Monticello. Eli died in December 1865; but in the summer of 1877, Margaret, still staunch in the faith, welcomed Elder Bengt Wulffenstein and subsequent missionaries, supported them, and became the nucleus of a branch in Monticello that included her daughter Deborah, Deborah's nonmember husband, Ashley C. Riggs, and

Ashley's older brother, George Riggs, and his wife, who is not named. Margaret and her younger daughter, Laura, immigrated to Utah in 1878 where Margaret married Josiah Fleming Martin and raised a second family. But Deborah and her family stayed in Minnesota; and today their descendants, surnamed Ostvig and Holker, continue to help build local congregations.

Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner and her husband, Adam Lightner, did not stay in Nauvoo after the Mormon exodus, but alternately farmed and operated hotels for river travelers in St. Croix Falls, Stillwater, and Marine until they were financially able to join a company of English immigrants in Omaha, Nebraska, and make the journey west with their ten children (Lightner 1863).



Eli Houghton and Margaret McMean Houghton, the first known Mormons in Minnesota. They arrived after 1847 from Nauvoo. Courtesy of Martin C. Ostvig.

First Missionary Efforts

And of course there were missionaries. In the 1830s, all worthy male members of the Church who were ordained also held the authority for missionary work. When one was converted, writes historian George Ellsworth in his study of missionary work between 1830 and 1860, he “almost spontaneously” considered himself “following the example of the ancient apostles in traveling without purse or scrip” to spread the good news of the restoration. In fact, it was not uncommon “for a man to hear Mormonism preached one day, be baptized the next, be ordained an elder on the following day and the day after that to be out preaching Mormonism” (Ellsworth 1951, 30). In addition to formal mission assignments, many men also spontaneously “took missions” to various locales as moved by the Spirit. To check “influences at variance with the original spirit and intent of Joseph Smith’s teaching,” Church leaders maintained close contact with male members through conferences and such courses as the School of the Prophets in Kirtland and Nauvoo (Ellsworth 1951, 39).

The Mormon missionary message was simple: they preached a universal apostasy from the original church established by Jesus Christ and its restoration—not reformation—through the agency of Joseph Smith. He became God’s prophet when, as a young teenager, he prayed to know which church he should join. In a direct vision of the Father and the Son, he learned that he should join none of them but was called to reestablish the original church, which had become corrupt and polluted. Part of Joseph’s prophetic mission was to translate the Book of Mormon, the record of America’s ancient inhabitants who had received a visit from the risen Christ. Prophets were not unknown in Smith’s region of New York, which also produced the Shakers and the Seventh-day Adventists; but a new book of ancient scripture was a distinctive element.

By the early 1840s in Illinois, a new system of proselyt-

ing was instigated, so that “a missionary served only when appointed.” Later this “appointment” would not only include a period of service, but a geographical location as well. During Brigham Young’s tenure as president of the Church (1847-77), this practice of appointment would receive greater and greater emphasis until it became the established procedure for the Church. During the 1840s, printed handbills (single sheet announcements) aided the missionaries. These handbills could be passed out on street corners or door to door to announce meetings, subjects to be discussed, and specific doctrines taught by the Church. In addition, other missionaries and Church leaders wrote, published, and distributed pamphlets or tracts at their own expense. Parley P. Pratt’s *A Voice of Warning* and Orson Hyde’s *A Prophetic Warning* are two examples.

By 1841, as the Saints were building Nauvoo and the pineries mission was being established in Wisconsin, missionaries were active in all the settled areas of the United States, including southeast Wisconsin. The first known record of missionary activity in Minnesota, however, occurred seven years after the Mormon pioneers reached Utah, when in 1854, according to the terse report in a county history, “a Mormon elder, Ralph Joung, preached at Spring Grove” (Roppe and Onsgard 1952, n.p.)

In 1857, LDS missionaries baptized Robert Pope and his wife, Sarah Leduc Pope, Edwin Theodore Pope (Robert’s unmarried brother), and Joseph Laduc (Sarah’s brother), and his wife, whose name was not recorded, in Morristown, Rice County, southern Minnesota. These baptisms may have been performed in “Mormon Lake,” a small body of water nearby which has since gone dry.

Robert Pope was an Englishman who had lived in eastern Canada, New York, and Wisconsin before filing on land in Morristown in about 1855. In 1858, soon after his baptism, the family sold its holdings in Minnesota and moved to Utah. They lived first in Farmington, later helped colonize the Bear Lake area, where Robert served as bishop of the Fish Haven

Ward from 1877 to 1882, and finally settled in Vernal, Utah, where many of his descendants still live.² He helped bring the first threshing machine to Utah from California (Daughters 1947, 31). Joseph Laduc died in Minnesota shortly after his baptism; but his wife and children also emigrated to Utah.

This pattern of conversion and “gathering to Zion” would be repeated for the next half-century, so urgent were the admonitions from Church leaders to join with the body of the Saints in the West and so difficult was the task of being a member of a distrusted minority.

But in another sense, those converts made in Morristown over 130 years ago proved that Minnesota had resources even more important than its tall white pines. These human resources would help build Zion in Utah and, when Zion was strong, would spill out of the west with missionaries and transplants to build the stakes of Zion in far-away places. It was necessary for Minnesota to first lose its Saints to Utah so that later the Church could prosper and grow on home territory.

²Robert and Sarah Pope's great-great grandson, Wiley Pope, returned to Minnesota in 1970 to attend graduate school at the University of Minnesota, worked for the Minnesota Historical Society, and lived in the St. Paul Stake. He died 23 January 1990.

Harvesting in “American Scandinavia,”

1868-89

THE LATE 1850s AND EARLY 1860s found the Church, the state of Minnesota, and the nation struggling with challenges which postponed further missionary work in Minnesota until the late 1860s.

First, Utah's people faced the monumental challenge of establishing an agricultural base, homes, and businesses in a harsh desert environment that no one had any previous experience with; at the same time, it needed to integrate thousands of new immigrants each year. Then, increasing friction with the federal government, largely over issues of authority, culminated with the invasion of Johnston's Army in the so-called "Utah War" in 1857. With this threat, all missionaries were recalled. It is not known whether any were laboring in Minnesota and Wisconsin, but they would have left immediately for the West. After a year of tension and adjustments, the conflict subsided and the more urgent national crisis over slavery turned the government's attention to the coming Civil War (1861-65). It is interesting that Church leaders voiced the belief on at least two occasions that Johnston's Army was made up largely of Minnesota troops.¹ I have been

¹The *Deseret Evening News* published Levi Stewart's remarks at the Bowery, 30 August 1857: "The feelings of certain portions of the United States, at least I will say of the leading men, the rulers, must be very

unable to determine whether this belief is factual or, if it is true, what effect, if any, the returning soldiers' Utah experience might have had on the reputation of Mormons in Minnesota.

Utah, though loyal to the Union, participated marginally in the Civil War; Brigham Young responded to Abraham Lincoln's request in April 1862 to "raise, arm, and equip a company of cavalry for ninety days service, to protect the property of the telegraph and overland mail companies" (in Arrington and Bitton 1979, 171).

Developments in Minnesota

Minnesota was simultaneously dealing with its own problems. By the time it was admitted to the Union in 1858, Minnesotans had seen their pioneer optimism shattered by the financial Panic of 1857, followed by a depression which devastated the frontier economy.

Then tensions which had smoldered for years between the Sioux Indians and white settlers in Minnesota erupted into the Sioux War of 1862, "one of the bloodiest Indian wars in United States history" (Lass 1977, 104). During a surprise week-long offensive, the Sioux swept through the Minnesota

strenuous in regard to movements against us. When I reflect upon the fact of their calling troops from Minnesota and sending them to Utah to operate against the Latter Day Saints, I am convinced that their feelings are wrought up to make some general and united move against this people" (JH 30 Aug. 1857). A long newspaper article, "Expedition Against Utah," summarizes the details of the Church's dealings with the federal government before the crisis and includes the Church's "Memorial and Resolutions to the President of the United States." In it, this paragraph appears: "And if the people would not hold still under such fiendish despotism . . . then indeed would arise the preconcerted hue and cry of treason and the call upon troops who have been ordered from the Swamps of Florida, the threatened frontiers of Minnesota and from the length and breadth of the land to attempt an utter extermination of the known most peaceful and really praiseworthy citizens in the Union" (JH 7 Oct. 1857).

River valley, devastating farms, killing settlers, and seizing control of the Lower Sioux Agency. It took soldiers from Fort Snelling a month to subdue the Sioux who retreated north and west out of Minnesota. Casualties included 413 white civilians, 77 soldiers, and 71 Indians, including 38 who were later executed. Many of the white settlers fled to Minneapolis or St. Paul and never returned. Others returned but lived with the fear that the Indians would rise again. It was not an atmosphere conducive to missionary work.

During these times of unrest, technological advances were creating a revolution in transportation that would impact greatly on LDS missionary work. On 10 May 1869, four years after the Civil War, the Union Pacific Railroad coming from the west coast and the Central Pacific coming from the east coast were joined with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Summit, Utah. The event marked the transcontinental connection of the country and symbolized Utah's "entry into the mainstream of American economic life" (Arrington and Bitton 1979, 175). No longer were immigrants required to cross the plains in covered wagons or on foot to reach Zion, and no longer could Zion isolate them from outside influences. But it also meant that Utah's missionaries could go more easily into fields that were suddenly much more accessible.

Before the Civil War, Minnesota's small population did not attract much attention from Church leaders; but after the war, with fears about Indians allayed by the passage of time, the area hummed with settlers breaking the prairie sod. The state's population which had grown to 439,000 in 1870, tripled during the next two decades. Cheap, fertile land—the richest portion of Minnesota—became part of the federal government's public domain. In 1862, the same year that the Sioux War had pushed settlers back from the frontier, the federal Homestead Act allowed American citizens or immigrants who had begun the naturalization process to claim 160 acres of land simply by building a suitable dwelling, living on the claim for five years, and paying nominal

closing costs. By 1880 over sixty-two thousand claims had been filed and nearly one-seventh of the state homesteaded (Lass 1977, 112). These settlers increasingly were of foreign birth. Between 1820 and 1900, at least five million Germans immigrated to America. Many settled in Wisconsin and Minnesota, accounting for the distinctly German atmosphere of such cities as Milwaukee and St. Paul (Holmquist 1981, 248, 220, 277). The Germans were well known for their religious diversity and included large groups of Catholics, Protestants, dissenters, and free-thinkers.

The Scandinavian boom began later and lasted longer, the peak coming in the 1880s. Between 1845 and 1930, about 1,250,000 Swedes, 850,000 Norwegians, and 309,000 Danes set sail for America; more made their homes in Minnesota than in any other state. It became the center of Scandinavian America and even today "is perceived as the most Scandinavian . . . state in the union" (Holmquist 1981, 153).

Utah also received a large share of Scandinavian immigrants. Mormon missionaries reached Copenhagen in 1852 and opened the Scandinavian Mission. By 1880, more than thirty thousand Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish immigrants had reached Zion, mainly settling in Cache and Sanpete valleys (Arrington and Bitton 1979, 142). Danish-language newspapers estimated that 40 percent of Utah's population was Scandinavian (Bjork 1959, 286). Missionary efforts in Germany likewise increased German migration to Utah. These new Saints were logical missionaries to reach compatriot groups in other locations. One target group was "Scandinavian America" in Minnesota.

Before the completion of the railroad, missionary calls had usually been issued during the Church's annual April conference, so that the missionaries could leave in May when travel was easier. The railroad made it convenient to leave at other seasons, including after harvest, when winter could make ox-team or horseback travel hazardous. Soon the trains were bringing these missionaries to Minnesota.

First Missionaries in Minnesota

In September 1868, the *Deseret Evening News* reported that Elder Silas Hoyt was laboring in Minnesota (JH 11 Sept. 1868). In 1870 Ariah C. Brower of Richmond, Utah, and Eli Whipple were proselyting in Minnesota and several neighboring states (JH 26 May and 14 Sept. 1870).

These missionaries seem to have been first accepted with interest and even enthusiasm. Elder Brower reported that he gave a series of lectures at Lake City, Minnesota, on the "Rise and Progress of the Latter-day Saints" and "Polygamy." When he arrived to deliver the last lecture, he "was greeted with a hearty cheer, and was interrupted several times during its delivery with demonstrations of the same kind." Upon returning to Utah, he described his mission as an "excellent time" during which he "baptized several, left others believing and has been well treated everywhere" (JH 19 Feb. 1870, 5).

The next known missionary to labor in the area was forty-three-year-old Bengt P. Wulffenstein of St. George, Utah, who was called on a mission to "Scandinavia" by telegram in the fall of 1875. He immediately set his affairs in order, made his farewells, and, two weeks later, was set apart in Salt Lake City by Apostle Orson Pratt. He traveled east by rail with five other elders, although he alone was headed for Minnesota. Wulffenstein, born and baptized in Sweden, spoke English, Swedish, German, and, by his own account "some Danish"—linguistic prowess that proved to be a great asset in Minnesota. This was probably the first systematic attempt to target American Scandinavians as prospective converts (Jenson 1941, 514).

At that time, there was no formally organized mission. Thus, missionaries sent to the area were outside any support network that a mission president, traveling elders, regularly scheduled conferences, or mission publications would have supplied. Elder Wulffenstein reported his labors in periodic letters to Orson Pratt and the *Deseret News*.

Northwestern States Mission

The first step toward organization came in 1877 when Cyrus H. Wheelock, an experienced missionary then laboring in Fon du Lac, Wisconsin, was instructed to “organize” the missionaries working in the area. Thus, the Northwestern States Mission was born. (See Appendix B.) The mission covered a vast area—Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois—and was headquartered in Council Bluffs, Iowa (Jenson 1941, 38). Shortly before the new mission was organized, nine missionaries were active in Minnesota (NSM 6 Feb. 1877). On Sunday, 12 May 1878, President Wheelock held a conference with other missionaries in Council Bluffs. Elders Christian Heiselt and Mads Jorgenson were called to travel through “north-eastern Nebraska, south-eastern Dakota and south-western Minnesota as a pioneer party to discover regions inhabited by Scandinavians, where fields might be opened up” (NSM 12 May 1878).

Mormon missionaries during this period were typically mature and experienced men rather than unmarried youths. The *Scandinavian Jubilee Album*, published in Salt Lake City in 1900, chronicles some of these Minnesota missionaries, and two profiles might serve as illustrations. Mads Anderson, a native of Denmark, served two local missions in Denmark before immigrating to Utah in 1862. He was called to the Minnesota mission field at age fifty and again at fifty-four, presiding over the Minnesota Conference on both missions. (A “conference” is the equivalent of today’s mission “district.”) (*Scandinavian* 1900, 54) At age thirty-three, Christian N. Lund of Sanpete County had already performed three years of missionary service in his native Denmark before he served for a year (1879-80) in Minnesota. Nine years later, he served in the Territorial Legislature of Utah. Like the others they served with, these men were often fluent in several languages, seasoned in the gospel, and ready to harvest the prairie fields of the Midwest.

Their president for almost the entire decade of the

1880s was a man whose greatest traits were his humility and his unwavering commitment to the gospel. When President Wheelock was released in 1880, very ill from sunstroke, William M. Palmer of Aurora, Utah, a veteran of missionary work in Michigan, was called to succeed him. President Palmer's family had joined the Church in Iowa and had immigrated to Utah in 1852 when he was a boy of six. In a letter to Wilford Woodruff at the close of his mission, reporting on his service, he says that when he received his first mission appointment from Brigham Young in February 1876, he "could not read without spelling every word" and could "barely write my own name." Since childhood, he had been blind and "could not distinguish one letter from another until I was twenty-two years of age." He considered himself "a very weak instrument in the hands of God," except for his burning testimony and willingness to exercise his faith. "My prayer," he said, "was that the Lord would make me an instrument in his hands of doing good and to bring souls to him and also that he would help me to obtain education and to understand scripture and . . . retain what I read and be able to explain it to others, and I covenanted I would preach his gospel all my life if he wishes me to." Palmer's faith was rewarded for "later in life he obtained a good practical education." And he kept this covenant, devoting "the greater part of his time to preaching the gospel both at home and abroad." He was said to be a "great scriptionist" and an "ardent missionary" (NSM 20 July 1889).

He left his wife and children in Utah for the nine years of his presidency. As president, his life was much like that of the missionaries. He traveled thousands of miles by rail, team, and stage to hold scheduled conferences and seized every opportunity to preach the gospel. He gave Minnesota much attention, preaching on one two-week trip in 1881 at Pelican Lake, St. Francis, Spencerbrook, Cambridge, Isanti, Crawford, Monticello, and Elk River.

His service was not without personal sacrifice. He was pelted with rotten eggs, rocks, sand, and dirt, heckled, almost

roped, and threatened with personal harm. In the fall of 1881, he received notification of the deaths of a twelve-year-old son and ten-year-old daughter. "Oh the sorrow it brought to my heart!" he wrote. "I shall never forget this day." The day after the sad message arrived, the grief-stricken father preached at Spencerbrook while a mob of over twenty men "sneered and hooted" outside. On 2 November 1881, he received written instructions from President John Taylor to return home for the winter. Perhaps because of all the stress, his health began to fail and he underwent surgery in Minneapolis that same year (NSM 15 Oct. 1881).

During his first year, President Palmer announced a decision reached in conference with the other elders to print three thousand copies of Elder John Morgan's popular tract, *The Plan of Salvation*, in Swedish; the actual print order was five thousand, and it was probably printed in Chicago (NSM 14 Oct. 1881).

President Palmer also helped codify a list of missionary rules which included: "Do not run around too much; Bear your testimony of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration . . . and leave the Holy Spirit to seal it upon the hearts of the people; Don't tear down other's religion or churches; Don't urge people to go into the water, urge them to repent, and when they have done that, they will gladly be baptized; Tell the people they are to come to Zion because God has commanded them; Hold all the meetings you can;" and, of course, "No Elder is permitted to keep company with a girl or spark in the least way while on a mission" (in Berry 1888-90, 187).

Once a missionary was assigned to the Minnesota Conference by his mission president and usually (though not always) assigned a companion, he would travel slowly through an area, stopping in each town to find out if any Mormons lived there. "Inquiring after the Latter-day Saints," Elder Wulffenstein called it. Occasionally, they were rewarded. At Elder Wulffenstein's first stop in Minnesota (he did not record the town's name), he found seven Mormons who were

"very glad" to see him. After a meeting with them that same night, he tried to "get the school" for a "public" meeting to preach to nonmembers in the area (Wulffenstein 13 Nov. 1875). As in rural Utah, rural Minnesota's schoolhouses often doubled as church, recreation hall, town meeting hall, and multi-purpose room, theoretically available to anyone with a legitimate request. Wulffenstein continued this pattern for most of his mission, searching for Saints and anyone willing to listen to his message in each town and holding meetings in schoolhouses all over the state. Occasionally he attended services of other denominations already underway in the schoolhouse and was sometimes given time to speak briefly. These meetings were conducted in English, German or "Swede."

The country was still sparsely populated, however, and the missionaries had long distances to cover. "Even the topographical arrangements of the country add to the arduousness of [our] labors," wrote Elder Gilbert R. Belnap from Hooperville, Utah, to the *Ogden Daily Herald* in a letter published 26 February 1883. "The state is laid off in townships six miles square, only from one to three schoolhouses in the township, and it is often the case that the elder has to pass by three or four before he gets permission to hold a meeting in one. Thus it takes all day to travel and a good deal of the night to talk to the people."

The missionaries would stay in one location long enough to follow up any contacts, preach, hold as many meetings as possible, and then move on. Traveling as they did with only a small "grip" (bag) containing a few necessary items and little or no money, they relied on the charity of the people for food, lodging, and transportation. Usually they walked. Many nights they went to bed hungry and slept in a haystack or under the stars.

In 1876 Niels Hendriksen, then proselyting in Minnesota, wrote to *Bikuben* (*The Beehive*, the Danish newspaper published in Salt Lake): "It is now seven and a half months since I left Salt Lake City. For five and a half months I wandered

about in Minnesota in the company of A. Svendsen of Spanish Fork, Utah. Together we covered eighteen hundred miles on foot, held thirty-eight gatherings, and baptized a few persons. . . . Since Brother Svendsen returned home, two months ago, I have traveled around alone, have conducted some meetings, and baptized five persons.” He ended his report optimistically: “Prospects for future work in Minnesota are now better” (in Bjork 1959, 288). That same year Elder Wulffenstein wrote to Orson Pratt: “I have traveled on foot about 800 or 900 miles, held 54 meetings and done the talking and singing mostly alone. . . . My labor has been mostly among the Scandinavians, occasionally a German” (JH 8 Feb. 1876).

Their physical hardships were intensified by general distrust and often downright hostility. Hendriksen reported to *Bikuben* in 1877: “We also discovered that the so-called Christians who live there are not very liberal. We had to suffer many insults and persecutions” (in Bjork 1959, 288).

As early as the 1850s, many pastors, especially Lutherans, had accompanied the waves of migrants and worked hard organizing local congregations on the prairie frontier. After three decades of pioneer work, they understandably saw Mormon proselyting as competition and resented it. Furthermore, ethnic societies and institutions had accompanied the Scandinavian immigrants, usually creating a wary attitude toward strangers. In a letter to the *Deseret Evening News*, Elder Wulffenstein reported on a second visit to Isanti County:

Last fall when I came here [the people] seemed to me like they were nearly all asleep. They came to my meetings and rejoiced in my humble testimony, and there was hardly any opposition in some places. I generally drew full houses and the people said they felt well &c. But after that the orthodox ministers . . . seemed to fear for their bread and dinner. . . . They at once commenced their revivals . . . and warned and scared the people and told them the danger of going to our meetings. (JH 16 Apr. 1876).

Bikuben discouragingly characterized Minnesota in 1877: “There people know little about Mormonism except many

preacher and newspaper lies; it is a hard and barren field" (in Bjork 1959, 286). Christian N. Lund corroborated in an 1879-80 article: "The pastors zealously watch over the people and spare no pains in stirring them up against us" (in Bjork 1959, 288).

These religious and ethnic suspicions were fueled by the nation-wide bad press Mormons received for their practice of plural marriage. Minnesota newspapers, like others throughout the country, were rarely neutral, seldom accurate, and often inflammatory in their reports on the Mormons. The *St. Croix Union* (23 Oct. 1855) slurred Brigham Young: "His manhood obliges him to have forty or fifty wives." In 1857 the *Faribault Herald* (19 Mar. 1857, 1) quoted a "correspondent for the New York *Tribune*" as averring that "human sacrifices are to be offered in the Mormon temple at Salt Lake City." Joseph Smith was contemptuously called "Joe Smith," Mormons were "Utah wolves," and Mormonism was characterized as "gangrene" in a typical "news" story in the *Morristown Rustler* (5 Nov. 1889, 2). Mormon beliefs and institutions were routinely called "repugnant . . . to civilization and Christianity," that "strange and formidable delusion," and a "putrid sore" (*St. Croix Union* 23 Oct. 1854). The Mormons were viewed as immoral because of their practice of polygamy, anti-Christian because of their belief in the Book of Mormon (which seemed to supplant the Bible), unpatriotic because of the "theocracy" they had established in Utah where they were quickly making themselves "impregnable from future assault" (*St. Croix Union*, 23 Oct. 1854), and generally dirty, lascivious, and evil, anxious to steal women away into harems, drag souls to the devil, and create anarchy in the country.

These charges from the press combined with anti-Mormon sentiment from the pulpit to prey on people's imaginations, kindling fears that sometimes prompted persecution. Missionaries record being beaten, pelted with rocks and rotten eggs, and threatened with tar and feathers. They were denied meeting places; and sometimes opponents dis-

rupted meetings by yelling, screaming, and threatening physical harm. These periodic incidents continued throughout the 1880s. In Cambridge in 1881, William Palmer reported that while he was holding meeting in the schoolhouse, a “number of disturbers brought a large dog to the door, which they kept open. They held the brute and abused it, to keep up a constant howling in order to disturb the proceedings. After the meeting dismissed they pelted [me] with dirt and sand” (NSM Nov. 1881).

On at least one occasion in 1886, two elders were jailed overnight for vagrancy when they could not post \$50 bail. They were tried and discharged. (NSM 15 Apr. 1886). “Opposition here is very hard,” wrote Elder Wulffenstein to the *Deseret News* in 1877. “Some intend to go to Utah this fall and be baptized there because people in the neighborhood will not allow an elder to come there” (NSM 26 Sept. 1877).

In perhaps the most dramatic recorded incident during this period, a mob surrounded President Palmer and four other elders who were preaching in a Monticello house. As the elders left, townsmen caught Elder James Godfrey by the leg with a new strong rope and began dragging him along the ground toward a large woodpile. According to the mission history, “After going a few feet the rope broke, leaving four or five feet of it with the elder.” This “miraculous” interruption gave time for “some of the citizens” to intervene, and they “kept off the mob until the elders got away” (NSM 11 Sept. 1881).

Dramatic though these moments of danger were, more nights than not, the elders had beds and food. They found true Christian charity and encountered many who, although they didn’t believe their message, defended them “as free men,” who were guaranteed the right to worship and assemble as they chose (NSM 31 Dec. 1881). The elders praised these “good people” of Minnesota: “I never travelled from house to house a whole day without getting at least one meal a day,” reported Carl M. Nielsen, a missionary from Springville, Utah, in 1883. “Oh, it is a glorious thing to be a messenger of

the Gospel of Christ." In the end, their testimonies gave them strength to go on despite hardship and opposition. As one writer in *Bikuben* in 1883 summed it up, "People say that we are false prophets, but what greater proof of the contrary is there than this—that we are willing to give up everything in Zion in order to go out on [a] mission" (in Bjork 1959, 293).

A less personal but even more threatening obstacle to missionary work in Minnesota was the long and frigid winters. To missionaries afoot between small towns, storms and low temperatures represented real dangers. Carl M. Nielsen recorded in his autobiography that he "sold all I owned in this world" to prepare for his mission but had not been able to afford an overcoat. As he was leaving Springville for Salt Lake City, he met his former bishop, Nephi Packard, who "pulled off his new overcoat and gave it to me, as he thought I was not well enough fixed for the cold winters. . . . I certainly thanked God to bless him for it, as I found out when I came down in those awful cold winters in Minnesota, I needed the coat" (1911, 33).

The elders traveled, preached, and even baptized during winter months, although they stayed put if they could find a place to do so—usually with a member family—and did not travel in sparsely populated areas or where there were poor roads. Nevertheless, they were always willing to capitalize on missionary opportunities. Elder Nielsen tells of walking out on the ice of the Mississippi River near La Crosse to locate a place for baptisms in -40 degree weather. Before he knew it, the ice had cracked and he was in water up to his shoulders. Unable to lift himself up and weakening quickly, he uttered a despairing prayer, "If there is a God in Israel, help me now." Before he knew it he "stood on the top of the ice and was all right." Soon the prospective converts arrived. Another place was found "only nearer the land" and Elder Nielsen baptized six persons. After kneeling in grateful prayer he says, "Although I had been freezing while I stood in the ice, it was after all a glorious day for all of us, for me a day never to be forgotten" (1911, 47).

From time to time, the elders reported other miracles. Mads Anderson and his companion, Jacob Jacobson, baptized a couple in Minnesota with a twelve-year-old son who was blind. Soon after the parents were baptized, the boy dreamed that

... Elders Anderson and Jacobson preached the only true gospel, and if he would be baptized by them he should receive his sight. He told his parents and they consented for him to be baptized. Next day Anderson and Jacobson, who had not been in that area for six months, called that way and baptized the boy. He began to receive his sight from that hour and preached to a number of young men and women with such peculiar power and spirit that they were not only astonished, but convinced of the truth of his testimony. As a result of this, when Anderson and Jacobson called at that locality last month seven of the young people who had heard the boy preach were baptized. (NSM Nov. 1881)

F. F. Hintze of Big Cottonwood, Utah, wrote to his parents in February 1880 of a particular blessing. He had recently baptized four people, one of them a man bedfast with rheumatism "and barely able to get on his feet." According to Minnesota historian Kenneth Bjork,

Hintze had taken this man to the river . . . cut a hole in the foot-thick ice, and then immersed him in the frigid water. The sick man improved immediately; next day he walked without a cane, and soon appeared to be in excellent health. Shortly thereafter the man's wife and another woman were baptized. The wife, whose health also had been poor, appeared strong after emerging from the water, and that night she slept soundly. Commenting on the miracles, Hintze said, "No one can say that there was any recovery to be had from being baptized under such conditions, unless it was to result from God's command." (in Bjork 1959, 293)

Once when Elder Carl M. Nielsen was hurrying through a city, he heard a voice telling him to go across the street and speak to a man about to get into a surrey. Elder Nielsen did, identifying himself as "a Mormon Elder from Utah."

Upon hearing this the man "dropped the lines he held in his hands, just before going into the surrey, and he was about to embrace me, and said, 'You are the very man I have been looking for for the last forty years. Just get into my surrey and when we get home I will tell you all about it.'" Upon arriving home the man amiably introduced Elder Nielsen to his wife as a "live Mormon Elder" whom he had "captured." He said that while living in Michigan he had heard Oliver Cowdery testify in a courtroom to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and the witness he had received. The listener's heart had been touched although he had been unable to talk to Cowdery. Now, forty years later, he finally heard more about the restored gospel. Shortly afterward Elder Nielsen baptized the whole family (1911, 39).

A notable success came during the late 1880s when missionaries preached to a small group of receptive Strangites who had settled at Warren's Mill, Wisconsin (now Warrens), northeast of La Crosse. One newspaper article, excerpted in the mission history in 1 October 1887, reported "that almost all of the Strangites are now 'reclaimed', and that a branch of the church was functioning there with twenty-six members."

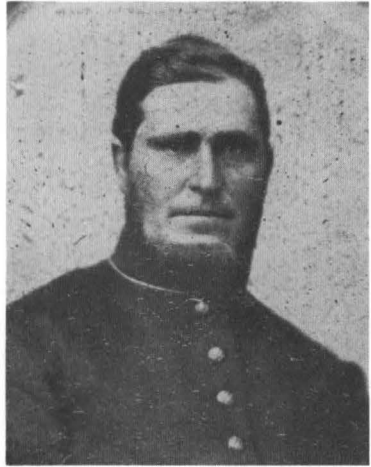
Early Branches

What happened to these early members? In 1875, Elder Wulffenstein organized what was probably Minnesota's first branch. It was a handful of new Saints in Freeborn County; but before long, the members immigrated to Utah (JH 15 Nov. 1875, 2). The next year, sixteen members in Mille Lac County became Princeton's first branch (NSM 22 Aug. 1876). In 1877 four branches were organized: Monticello in Wright County (nineteen members), Farmersville in Winona County (twelve adults and fifteen children), Burns in Anoka County (thirteen members), and Isanti (twelve members) (NSM 26 Sept. 1877). In February 1882, the mission history reports that Minnesota had seventy-four members. The Monticello and

Princeton branches were still functioning; the Farmersville, Burns, and Isanti branches were not; and new branches had been formed in Linden (Brown County), St. Francis (Anoka County), and King Lake (Meeker County). Most of them had local leaders, with the elders visiting them frequently to hold conferences and add strength. There were six missionaries “from Utah” laboring in the mission with five local elders and two priests. Eight months later on 20 September 1882, the history records twenty-six more baptisms, putting Church membership at ninety-six. Presumably many of the baptisms were among Scandinavian immigrants. A request in 1881 for more “efficient Swedish and Norwegian elders” was typical of a repeated plea during the 1870s and 1880s (NSM Nov. 1881). Writing from Rockford in 1884 to the *Deseret Evening News*, Mads Anderson suggested that it would be wise if sons of Scandinavian Mormons would “learn their mother tongue” to aid missionary work (JH 4 Aug. 1884, 5).

Through numerical strength and the support of members and nonmembers in the area, Monticello became a kind of unofficial hub for the missionaries during the 1880s. As already noted, Elder Wulffenstein there found Margaret Houghton and her married daughter Deborah H. Riggs. Wulffenstein baptized Deborah and two of her sons and blessed her other children. Deborah’s husband, Ashley C. Riggs, had laid out the town; and the Riggs and Houghtons were considered prominent citizens. The Riggs home was always open to the missionaries, and winter often found four or five elders “boarding” there. It was also a frequent meeting place, thanks to Deborah’s active support and her nonmember husband’s hospitality.

Although Ashley never joined the Church, Wulffenstein baptized his older brother, George W. Riggs, his wife (not named), and a servant (NSM 12 June 1877). George Riggs’s home was also used for branch meetings. On more than one occasion, Ashley and George deflected anti-Mormon persecution. In September 1877, George Riggs was called to preside over the Monticello Branch, assisted by Eli H. Riggs,



Deborah Houghton Riggs, daughter of Eli and Margaret Houghton. Five or six elders would frequently be guests for the winter in her Monticello home. Courtesy of Martin C. Ostvig.

Ashley C. Riggs, founder of Monticello, used his influence to aid the missionaries. Courtesy of Martin C. Ostvig.

Ashley and Deborah's son. In April 1879, George wrote to the *Deseret Evening News* reporting "about fifty" Saints in the Monticello area who were "desirous of emigrating to Utah" (JH 24 Apr. 1879, 3).

Elder Mads Anderson included a tribute to George Riggs in an 1880 letter to the *Deseret Evening News* which was equally true of all the Riggs and Houghtons: "[He] is a good man, and I pray the Lord to bless him and family for all the good they do to the elders that are sent here on missions" (JH 1 June 1880, 3). Eventually, George Riggs and his family immigrated to Utah and settled in Farmington.

The high point of nineteenth-century membership in Minnesota came in 1886. The mission history reports 218 "total souls" on 15 April 1886 and 227 by October with twenty-six elders. The Minnesota Conference then included Wisconsin, "Dakota," and Iowa as well. Just a year later, the figure

had dropped to 183 members. Membership would not surpass 227 until after World War I.

Gathering to Zion

Although it is impossible to determine the rate of inactivity or “backsliding” among members who were not fully converted, migration to Utah certainly accounted for much of the fluctuation. Some packed up within days of their baptisms. For instance, on 19 August 1876, W. H. Cowles and his wife were baptized and he was ordained an elder. The next day, he was called to preside over the Farmersville Branch, which Elder Wulffenstein organized that same day. One month later, on 21 September, Cowles was “released to immigrate” and left for Utah with Elder Wulffenstein (NSM 1876). Economic hardship hindered others, however, from taking the road west so quickly. In the spring of 1886, Elder



Home of Ashley C. Riggs and Deborah Houghton Riggs where the Monticello Branch was organized in 1877. This home is still standing. Courtesy of Martin C. Ostvig.



George W. Riggs, set apart as presiding elder of Monticello Branch 15 October 1877 by Elder Bengt P. Wulffenstein. Courtesy of Martin C. Ostvig.

Wulffenstein reported that ten families had "a strong desire to come out of wicked Babylon" but had "great difficulty in disposing of their property" (NSM 15 Apr. 1886).

Departures were frequently timed to coincide with that of a returning missionary who would take charge of the immigrants. These groups could be as large as fifty; and once a group of seventy left from Monticello. Because the immigrants frequently settled in the home areas of the missionaries, many Minnesotans found new homes in Sanpete and Cache counties and the Bear Lake area.

Thus, until the policy of the "gathering" changed during the first decade of the twentieth century, local branches saw a continual pattern of seasonal blooming and fading. Constant immigration, persecution, small numbers of elders, and difficulties in transportation and communication created a problem of continuity for the Church in Minnesota. Starting over was a constant task. When a new elder came to the field, he usually had no one to orient him and little idea where to find members or sympathetic friends. He began all over again to establish his own network of contacts that might lead to baptisms. For this purpose, the *Deseret News*, published over twelve hundred miles away in Salt Lake City, served as an unofficial clearing house for missionary contacts. For ex-



Street scene of Monticello in 1865. Photography by E. F. Boyd, courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.

ample, in 1876, Elder Wulffenstein wrote to the newspaper reporting that, in several localities he had recently visited, people asked for news of Silas Hoyt who had labored in the state seven years previously, but Wulffenstein had to "fall back in the negative" in response to their requests (JH 19 July 1876). Since the newspaper was read faithfully by Mormons all over the West, as well as by missionaries all over the world, Elder Wulffenstein obviously hoped that someone could provide him with information about the former missionary. On another occasion in July 1877, which he also reported to the *Deseret News*, Elder Wulffenstein went to Albert Lea looking for Elders Peterson and Graff, then "read my News and saw that they were returned home. I do not know of any they have baptized. I would be glad to be informed by them" (NSM 23 July 1877).

Lacking access to historical records, an elder could easily assume that he was the first to work in an area. In 1877 Elder Anton E. Anderson claimed to have preached the "first discourse on Mormonism in Minnesota" (JH 23 July 1877). He simply was not aware of the work that had been done in the previous two decades.

Minneapolis and St. Paul

Interestingly enough, the Church had no branches organized in the state's two largest population centers—St. Paul and Minneapolis—until Sunday Schools were formed around the turn of the century. The reasons seem to be both economic and social. Without money, missionaries could not rent sleeping rooms or buy food, and it was easier to find a charitable person in the country. Being without a place to sleep in the city could—and did—result in arrest for vagrancy. The mission history on 12 September 1888 tells of a missionary preaching in Minneapolis during the day but hurrying toward the country as evening drew near. Several times, elders were arrested in large cities and spent the night in jail during the 1880s. Also, as the population in the cities

grew during the last decades of the nineteenth century, specific ordinances were passed and invoked against Mormon missionaries, as Elder D. Jensen explained in a letter to the *Ogden Daily Herald*, to “root [them] out of the state” and “incite the people against [them]” (JH 15 Mar. 1882, 6). Lack of money also exacerbated the urban problem of finding a place to preach. City schoolhouses were not available, nor were churches. Lecture halls had to be rented. Ordinances sometimes prevented missionaries from preaching on street corners, the only alternative if a member’s house was not available.

Still, LDS missionaries during the 1870s and early 1880s did not neglect the cities. They advertised preaching services and meetings frequently in the newspapers and by handbills and made a few converts. It was not until the late 1880s, however, that missionaries began to actively develop strategies to cope with the cities. In 1888, mission president William M. Palmer advised:

If any Elders feel themselves able, three or four of them can join together and rent a furnished room in the suburbs of some of the great cities and board themselves, which will cost but little, this during the coldest of the winter. They can then distribute tracts, political or congressional matter, loan books, and visit from house to house; and ask families to allow you to come in and pray with them. Then again, elders laboring thus in a city may obtain a hall, some old store building, or private house to hold a meeting. . . . Thus we may get at some of those in the cities. (NSM 12 Sept. 1888)

Northern States Mission

President Palmer returned to Utah for the winter of 1887-88—“lungs not well.” John E. Booth and Dennis E. Harris both served terms as presidents pro tem. of the mission, reporting to President Palmer by letter. When Palmer was released at the end of 1889, Charles W. Stayner of East Bountiful was called in his place. Stayner had previously

filled two missions to his native England before coming to the Midwest. At that time, the name of the mission was changed to the Northern States Mission, headquartered in Chicago, and its area was expanded to cover twenty-two states and parts of Canada. Contained within its boundaries was much of the territory formerly belonging to the Eastern States Mission, which had ceased to function temporarily because of the political turmoil surrounding the issue of polygamy.

After President Stayner was released in 1893, mission headquarters were moved to the East Coast. Three men—David F. Stout, Joshua Reuben Clark, Sr., and Samuel G. Spencer—served as mission presidents during that time, trying to direct a handful of missionaries spread so thin that they were nonexistent in Minnesota and Wisconsin. In his dismal statistical report for 1895, President Clark records only 356 LDS members in the whole mission (fewer than in Minnesota alone in 1891) and that his fifty-six missionaries had walked 37,699 miles in an almost futile attempt to spread the gospel. He did not report convert baptisms; perhaps there were none (NSM 31 Dec. 1895).

The Church was facing dire legal political threats in the form of the Edmunds Act (1882), which had reinforced existing legislation against polygamy, and the Edmunds-Tucker Act (1887), which was an effort to destroy the temporal power of the Church by confiscating most of its property. Anti-Mormon sentiment and persecution were at an all-time high. Powerful pressures were brought to bear, forcing the Church toward conformity with the larger American society.

In this atmosphere, missionary efforts in Minnesota essentially ceased. As early as 1887, President Palmer reported to Salt Lake that "the Minnesota Conference . . . is a worn out field, as we have done more missionary work there and emigrated more saints from those parts than all the rest of the mission in the last 12 years" (NSM 15 June 1887). In October 1888, John Helquist labored in Minnesota, finding "no resident LDS" but rather "much indifference to religion of

any kind and much prejudice against the Mormons” (NSM Oct. 1888). Between 1891 and 1897, the mission history reports no missionaries in Minnesota, Wisconsin, or the Dakotas. In fact, there were only 396 “officers and members” throughout the entire mission (NSM Feb. 1891). In 1893, although the mission survived in name, its headquarters moved from Chicago to Washington, D.C.

How, then, should we evaluate missionary work in Minnesota during the 1870s and 1880s? It is true missionary efforts produced no Mormon institutional presence in the state, but that was never its purpose. The purpose—to convert new Saints and encourage them to gather to Zion—succeeded with at least four hundred Scandinavians, Germans, and other Minnesotans. “Hundreds [more] believe our testimony,” lamented President Palmer in 1885, “but have not the moral courage to obey and face the terrible pressure brought to bear against the kingdom of God” (NSM 7 June 1885). Despite hardship and opposition, missionaries preached the gospel, gleaned in the semi-fertile fields of Minnesota, helped to foster new understanding and sympathy for the Church, and then returned to Zion to prepare for the next stage.

*Establishing an
Institutional Presence,*

1896-1925

AS THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

neared, the intolerable tensions between the Church and the federal government in Utah were largely resolved, helping to create an atmosphere in faraway Minnesota that encouraged permanent LDS growth. The most important of these changes was Church President Wilford Woodruff's announcement in September 1890:

Inasmuch as laws have been enacted by Congress forbidding plural marriages, which laws have been pronounced constitutional by the court of last resort, I hereby declare my intention to submit to those laws, and to use my influence with the members of the Church over which I preside to have them do likewise. (D&C—Official Declaration 1)

This decision came after years of steadily increasing prosecution and legal harassment, and Wilford Woodruff felt driven to it by, as he recorded in his journal on 25 September, “the necessity of acting for the temporal salvation of the church” (in Arrington and Bitton 1979, 183). Within the week, the statement was submitted to members of the Church at the October general conference, and an era came to an end.

Another cause for national concern that had prompted some of the legislative action against the Mormons was the Church's extensive role in Utah politics and economics. Some

claimed this influence was so great as to result in total control. Critics viewed this meddling as un-American and set out to crush the real and perceived control through congressional legislation. The Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 essentially stripped the Church of nearly all its property and provided for the “legal dismemberment of the church itself” (Arrington and Bitton 1979, 183). Even though President Woodruff’s Manifesto did not specifically address the political problem, it relieved some of those pressures. In 1891, the Mormon People’s Party was dissolved, and Mormons joined the two national parties as they saw fit. “Most Americans,” comment historians Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, “were glad to accept Woodruff’s official declaration as adequate evidence of Mormon accommodation” to national norms. Congress passed an enabling act in 1894 that led to Utah statehood in 1896, returning the Church’s property during those same two years. In return, Mormon leaders never again “attempted to reassert pervasive control over the territorial economy” (1979, 184).

Three broad social factors greatly reduced, though they did not entirely end, consistent attacks on the Church from press and pulpit: the Church’s accommodation to American norms as evidenced by the Manifesto, increased exposure of Mormon life to outsiders, and increasing secularization that made religion more personal and less of a public issue to Americans at large.

Travelers in Utah

As travel to Utah increased during the first two decades of the twentieth century, favorable reports of the Mormon people trickled back, not only in the press but by word of mouth. The elders working in Minnesota heard such reports with real thankfulness as some travelers went out of their way to say a kind word about the Mormons.

For example, on 3 October 1907, Elder Alvin J. Welchman wrote to the *Liahona*¹ from Faribault about a man he had met while tracting. This Minnesotan, who professed to have no religion, said he had visited Utah some years before. As he was about to board a train in Salt Lake City, a little girl asked him to buy her oranges, seven for ten cents. As he reached into his pocket for money, another girl stepped in front of her saying "Buy of me, she is a Mormon." He continued:

I did so to save time, but she gave me only four oranges for my dime. But on coming back to Salt Lake a few days later I spied the little Mormon girl and motioned for her and said now I will take 10 cents worth of oranges of you and she gave me seven of the nicest oranges in the basket and thanked me. Now it wasn't the number of oranges, but the honesty of the little girl, which goes to show me that they are taught to do right. She stepped back and went on to some one else when cheated by her opponent, without trying to get revenge.

Another pair of elders tracting out businessmen in Muscoda met a banker who gave them each a half dollar saying, "Here boys take this, . . . for the sacrifice you are making and the courtesy shown me by the 'Mormon' people." He had recently been to Utah and received "royal treatment" (NSM 14 June 1908).

Elder Charles N. Broadbent, a missionary from Provo, Utah, talked in 1908 with another visitor to Utah who said, "I never met nicer people in my life than those I met during my four or five month stay in Utah." Elder T. T. Rasmussen reported the next year that people were "much more friendly, due to the fact that many have recently visited Utah and find that they have been misled by false stories told by those who know better. The result," he said, "is [that] we re-

¹*The Liahona: The Elder's Journal* was an LDS periodical devoted to missionary work, published from 1907 to 1945 in Independence, Missouri. Articles from *The Liahona* often appeared verbatim in the mission history.

ceive better treatment and greater consideration” (NSM 27 June 1908, 4 Dec. 1909). The mission history proudly reported the statement of a nonmember lecturer: “The purity and happiness of the people in Utah are due to their observance of correct principles” (NSM 14 May 1910).

In 1911 Elder Charles W. Stoddard met the governor of Minnesota, Adolph O. Eberhart, in one of the St. Paul hotels. The governor genially told him he could testify from a recent trip to Utah “that Mormon home life is uplifting.” Further, “he did not believe that a people who had the opposition to meet that the Mormons had met and who had performed such a wonderful work in the west could do so without the help of the Almighty” (NSM 26 Sept. 1911).

Almost invariably, people who had positive experiences in Utah were willing to take literature from the missionaries and sometimes listen to their message. Occasionally these contacts resulted in baptisms. One couple who had been converted but not baptized during a prior visit to Utah were tracked out in 1909 by the missionaries. The wife requested baptism, and the elders complied. “After we returned to their home for lunch the husband remarked that he was sorry he had not been baptized. On being told it was not yet too late, he said, ‘Then brethren, I want you to go back and baptize me,’ which we did” (NSM 18 Sept. 1909).

These individuals who changed their minds did more than respond favorably when they met Mormons. They began to feel that Mormons had been slandered as a people and actively corrected what they perceived as unfair treatment when they had a chance. A remarkable endorsement by a nonmember was Francis W. Drake’s eleven-page letter published in 1915 in the *Blue Earth Post*. Determined to increase circulation of the letter, Drake reprinted it in pamphlet form and distributed it to friends and acquaintances. Drake had spent the previous winter in Salt Lake City, which he glowingly called “the center of western civilization,” and reported favorably on every aspect of life there. “In the city,” he said, “I found them very much the same as everybody else,

only perhaps a little more kind than the common run of Gentiles, very polite, accommodating, ever ready to give out information and glad to meet strangers. In their homes they are moral and religious. They believe most sincerely in their church and are prayerful and exemplary before the world.” He concluded his letter: “I am glad to have been able to commend the lives and works of a people against whom I think a false prejudice exists throughout the world.”

In the early summer of 1907, two elders, baptizing ten new converts in a small lake near Aitkin, were surprised when the whole town turned out. They later learned that the townspeople were checking out a rumor that water was being brought all the way from Salt Lake for the baptism; but they soon learned that even for the Mormons, “the water of Minnesota is just as good as any other” (NSM 30 June 1907).

Increasing Secularization

Not everyone, however, was interested in debating the merits of Mormonism. The increasing urbanization and secularization of the United States saw a parallel decrease in religious fervor, leading some observers to comment on an attitude of indifference toward religion. Elder Joshua Rueben Clark, Sr., of Grantsville, whose namesake son and future counselor in the First Presidency was supporting him on his mission, wrote to the *Deseret News* in 1895, concerned about conditions he observed in a brief stopover in Minnesota on his way east: “As to religion, a little of that goes a long way here, I find. The people as a rule in the Northern States, do not want much to do with religion. They seem perfectly willing to let their ministers interpret the scriptures for them. Whatever construction the ministers put upon them is satisfactory. They pay their preachers to study the divine record for them.” He summed up his evaluation with the comment: “In mingling with the people of the north I find many very intelligent men on all subjects but the gospel. When one talks or attempts to talk on the great plan of salvation, they man-

ifest a great amount of ignorance and with that ignorance they also manifest a spirit of indifference that is truly lamentable” (in NSM 17 July 1895).

As persecution lessened, the door was opened for permanent LDS congregations, which had to be built from a harvest of Minnesota converts who would stay in the state or from faithful “Utah Mormons” moving into Minnesota. These conditions began to materialize slowly at the turn of the century.

Missionary Work Resumes

In 1896 the headquarters of the Northern States Mission returned from its three-year exile in Washington, D.C., and Louis A. Kelsch was named mission president on 21 December 1896. He brought his wife and children with him to Chicago from their home in Murray, Utah, apparently the first time a president was accompanied by his family in this mission. On 10 July 1896, he reopened the Wisconsin Conference with headquarters in Tomah, and the first missionaries began proselyting in rural Minnesota in June 1896 after a five-year hiatus. A year later, two elders laboring in Winona and four others working in Brown and Nicollet counties accepted President Kelsch’s challenge to reopen Minneapolis. They arrived 6 September 1897 and found “the city very lively, being the week of the state fair” (NSM 14 Sept. 1897). They immediately began holding street meetings and tracting. Counting two additional elders in Meeker County, the newly reorganized Minnesota Conference had a total of eight. In December the force in neighboring Wisconsin had grown to twelve elders and fifty-one members (NSM 31 Dec. 1897).

President Kelsch scheduled semi-annual conferences; Minnesota’s first was in August 1898 in Faribault where he, the missionary force of twenty-two, possibly some members, and interested investigators met in Armory Hall. Seven months later in March 1899, Apostle Heber J. Grant was the

main speaker at quarterly conference in the Minneapolis Conference, the first time an apostle had visited or preached in Minnesota. Five months later, Apostle Matthias F. Cowley became the second, attending the Minneapolis conference. After that, General Authorities regularly visited Minnesota conferences.

By 1900 a small Minnesota Conference office was established at 113 East 15th Street in Minneapolis but was moved in December 1901 to 312 South 8th Street because “the old place was too cold” (NSM 31 Dec. 1901). Five months later, the office shifted to 57 Tilton Street, where it stayed until February 1903, then moved to 68 East Eleventh Street. These rooms would typically serve as combination offices and residences for the full-time missionaries.

Changes in mission boundaries, announced at October conference in 1900, streamlined missionary work in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Nebraska and the Dakotas were transferred to the Colorado Mission, and Missouri was attached to the Southwestern States Mission. President Kelsch was released to return home where, seven months later, he left to open Japan for missionary work.

Slowly but steadily, the missionaries made new converts, and this time, some stayed. As early as 1890, George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency told the *New York Times* that “we really urge our missionaries to dissuade” immigration; but the policy was not formalized until 1907 when the Church “began buying or building permanent mission headquarters and chapels in countries with stable local congregations” (Arrington and Bitton 1979, 140). In Minneapolis in 1902, for example, meetings were temporarily abandoned because “so many of the saints left for Zion” (NSM 11 May 1902).

Minnesota Pioneers

Those who stayed in Minnesota and western Wisconsin were the real pioneers of what later would become the Minneapolis Stake. They helped lay the foundations for Church

units all over the area. As they lived and defended their beliefs, worked with and learned from the missionaries, and met together and implemented the programs of the Church, they became living translations of the Mormon concept of community and Church organization for the larger and sometimes indifferent or even hostile population, where they were a very small minority. Their experiences were similar to those of numerous Mormon communities forming away from the Mormon core all over the United States. Held together by the bond of common testimonies, they were united despite backgrounds which crossed economic, social, and national lines. As brothers and sisters, they built the Mormon presence in Minnesota, linked by shared sympathies and belief in the gospel.

Some, but surely not all, of those who initially stayed were elderly; they may have felt it was too late for them to reestablish themselves in a new location. But confirmed by instructions from Salt Lake City, the idea that one didn't have to live in Utah to be a Mormon began to grow. Esther Flynn and her daughters, Henrietta, Alva, and Kathryn, joined the Church in Hudson, Wisconsin; they freely opened their home to the elders for many years, hosting some of the earliest MIA socials (NSM Nov. 1902).

Thomas Dean of Rodgers, Minnesota, who was baptized in 1900 and died in Rodgers in 1908 at eighty-eight, was instrumental in converting many members who helped build the Church in the southern part of the state (NSM 1 Aug. 1908).

During the summer of 1915, hecklers harassed missionaries conducting a street meeting in St. Paul, but twenty-four-year-old Louis Lee, an onlooker, defended them spiritedly. After the meeting, the missionaries thanked him. This contact led to his baptism a few weeks later in August 1915. Two years later he married Nora Prellwitz, also a convert, in the St. Paul chapel. The next morning they left by train for the Salt Lake Temple, one of the earliest temple marriages of Twin Cities residents on record. Nora's mother and sister,

Mary and Elsie Prellwitz, were also active in the St. Paul branch (Lee 1989). Louis Lee died in 1989 at the age of ninety-eight, the oldest surviving Minnesota convert at the time.

In 1917 at the young age of thirteen, Elaine M. Schaefer joined the Church in St. Paul through the influence of her new stepmother, Molly Simons Schaefer, and her step-grandparents, E. Rudolph Simons and Sophia Elizabeth Cramm Simons, themselves converts of several years. Elaine married another branch member, Stewart W. Peterson, in 1932. Stewart's mother, Alma Louise Paulson Peterson, and her sister, Pauline Paulson Harrington, had joined the Church in 1921. Stewart served as president of the St. Paul Branch from 1937 until 1949 and then was called as president of the North Minnesota District until 1953. He died in 1955. Both he and Elaine served in numerous callings, and their efforts were invaluable in fostering local Church growth. Elaine witnessed and participated in the growth of the Church from two very small branches in the Twin Cities in 1917 to three stakes in Minnesota in 1984, the year of her death (S. E. Peterson 1989).

Elders William W. Horsley and S. LeRoy Salverson baptized John T. Higgins, a hospital cook, in 1917 in Rochester, Minnesota. For more than a decade, he made the hundred-mile train trip several times a year to the Twin Cities to attend conferences until a Sunday School was organized in Rochester in 1930. He was probably Minnesota's first full-time native missionary, serving in California from 1928 to 1931. In 1937 he became the first branch president of the Rochester Branch and was given the honor of turning the first shovel of earth at its chapel groundbreaking ceremonies in 1953 (Souvenir 1954). In later years he served as an enthusiastic one-man sunshine committee visiting LDS patients at the Mayo Clinic.

In 1921, Stillman Ordway Nichols and Mabel Eunice Murphy Nichols were baptized in Virginia, Minnesota. Their seven-year-old son, Arden, and their younger daughter, Delores Ida (later DeSouza) were baptized when they reached



Stillman Ordway Nichols, Mabel Enuice Murphy Nichols, and their two children, Arden Nichols and Delores Ida Nichols (later DeSouza). The parents were baptized in Virginia, Minnesota, in 1921 with the children following when they turned eight. Courtesy of Arden C. Nichols.

age eight. Arden, who served later as branch president in St. Paul and as a beloved patriarch of the Minneapolis and St. Paul stakes for almost eighteen years now, remembers the missionaries calling in swallowtail Prince Albert coats, striped pants, and derby hats—a conspicuous uniform which prompted the neighbors to gather their children in the house “because they were afraid they’d take them to Utah.” Arden and his sister, who were sent to bed while his parents discussed Joseph Smith with the missionaries, listened through a slightly open door, hoping their parents would believe, “because we did. We knew it was true” (Nichols 1988, 1). As a result of his conversion, Stillman lost his job and couldn’t find another until he moved the family to St. Paul and began work with the railroad.

Arden married Ruth Finck, whose parents, Joseph Finck and Rosina Beuller Finck, were running a thriving barber shop in Basel, Switzerland, when the missionaries found them in 1905. Joseph was baptized and Rosina followed him a year later. When news of their baptisms spread, business fell off dramatically, and they were forced to find other ways to support the family. Soon Joseph was called to serve a mission himself. In 1920 the parents and Ruth moved to St. Paul to join an older son. Another son was on a mission, and a third remained in Germany. Shortly after their marriage, Ruth and Arden served a mission in Hawaii (1947-49) from the St. Paul Branch and, like their parents, have nurtured the growing Minnesota Church units.

Mary Anna Moe’s conversion was a remarkable story of generational links. Her maternal great-grandfather, Ole Hanson Tiller, had been baptized in Norway in 1856 in an icy river near Trondheim where he served as branch president and local missionary. Persecution eventually became so threatening that a friend helped smuggle him out of Norway in a box. He reached Logan, Utah, and sent for his wife, Malena Halvorsen Tiller, who was baptized in Logan. They left grown children in Norway, including a daughter, Marith, who married Peter D. Moe, and they eventually immigrated

and settled in Minneapolis. Although neither Marith nor Peter joined the Church, seven of their ten children did, and many of them were stalwarts of the early Minneapolis branch.

Mary Anna Moe, the oldest, was baptized in Lake Calhoun in June 1900 at age twenty-five. The only other Minneapolis members at the time were Ernest Banks and his wife, whose name has not survived. Apparently a black couple, their home served as the meeting house. In 1911, Mary married Marcus M. Swenson, who had been baptized in Aurora, Minnesota, five years earlier. Missionaries boarded and held meetings at their Minneapolis home off and on for many years. Mary served in the presidency of Minneapolis's first Relief Society and was the branch organist until her son Russell succeeded her (NSM 25 Oct. 1908).

Hannah Moe Langseth and her brother William Moe, other children of Marith Tiller Moe and Peter Moe, were baptized in Lake Calhoun, while their younger siblings, Martha Moe (later Johnson) and John Moe, were baptized the day after Pioneer Day in 1913; the baptismal party hiked down a steep ravine at the end of Lake Street to the Mississippi where, despite the danger from many large logs floating in the water, the baptism proceeded. Hannah and Martha mothered the missionaries—frequently inviting them to dinner, letting them use their telephones, and giving them quilts for bedding.

In 1926, John Malcolm Paulson, Elsie Mary Treichel Paulson, and their three children were baptized in Maple Ridge, a small town about seventy miles north of the Twin Cities. He had been looking in vain for a religion that more closely resembled that taught by the Savior; and when his sister, Louise Paulson Peterson, the mother of Stewart W. Peterson, sent the missionaries, he immediately accepted Mormonism. Eventually all sixteen of John's and Elsie's children joined the Church. Ostracism forced the family into several moves; and they eventually settled south of Cambridge where they became stalwarts of the Springvale Branch. John, his

son Albert, and a Brother Jacobsen, a nearby member of the Church, built a one-room chapel to house the branch. John's and Elsie's younger son, Bob, eventually moved to Minneapolis and served for six years (1952-58) as president of the Minneapolis Second Branch, while the Golden Valley chapel was being erected. Some of John's and Elsie's children and grandchildren still live and serve in Minnesota (Paulson 1989, 7).

Even before 1920, several Utah Mormons came to Minnesota for personal and economic reasons and played key roles in the growth of the Church here. In 1914 twenty-seven-year-old Clarence Bigelow arrived in Minneapolis. His pioneer family had moved to Wyoming and then Alberta, Canada. Active in the small Minneapolis branch, Clarence converted Frances Caroline Johnson, a native of Red Wing. They married and raised six children. He became an early local (nonmissionary) president of the Minneapolis Branch, and his last tithing envelope before his death in 1963 was addressed to his son, Richard C. Bigelow, newly ordained bishop of the Minneapolis Third Ward. Clarence's and Frances's children and grandchildren carry on the Bigelow tradition of service in Minnesota today (Bigelow n.d., 1).

Emma Blank, a Minnesota native, was converted in St. Paul by full-time missionaries who were also her Utah cousins. She served as first president of the St. Paul Branch Relief Society. Her daughter Louise married Everett F. Petersen from Wanship, Utah. After trying life in Utah, Louise and Everett eventually settled in St. Paul to raise their family. Everett was the second president of the St. Paul Branch (1926-37); their daughter Luella served as a missionary from St. Paul (M. Peterson 1989, 2).

George Damstedt grew up in St. Paul and Fairmont, Minnesota, where his then-nonmember father taught the LDS Sunday School held in their home. His mother had joined the Church as a girl in her native Sweden, immigrated to Minnesota, and attended a local Lutheran church because she knew of no LDS congregation. One day when the minister spoke out against the Mormons, she rose, bore her testi-

mony of the truthfulness of the Church, and was "immediately and forthwith hustled out and asked not to return." Later she learned of the branch meeting on North Grotto, and the family began attending there. George was one of the early missionaries from the St. Paul Branch (1948-50). After college he left the area, served as president of the Lakewood Colorado Stake for ten years, was a counselor in the first presidency of the Denver Temple, and is currently serving as president of the temple in Sweden (Damstedt 1989).

Astrid Stefania Johansson was born in Sweden in 1898, left at age seventeen to join her mother and stepfather in St. Paul, and there met and married Jorgen Jensen. One day, two Mormon missionaries knocked on her door in Minneapolis, and that led to Astrid's investigating the Church. Her husband had heard negative reports about Mormons from co-workers; but despite his objections, Astrid persisted and was soon ready for baptism. "I knew that this Church was teaching the truth and it made me feel bad that Jorgen was against me being baptized," Astrid wrote in her autobiography. One day "I felt the tears coming, so I went into the bedroom and cried. Jorgen had a soft heart and he did not like to see me cry, so he told me if I felt that way about joining to go ahead. I was baptized January 25, 1925." Although Jorgen never joined her in her newfound religion, Astrid raised her children in the Church and has served for sixty-five years in practically every Church calling, including Relief Society president. She has been particularly active in genealogy work and, at the age of ninety-one, still works one day a week in the Family History Center. A birthday tribute characterizes this beloved oldest member of the Minneapolis Stake:

She's the girl who came from Sweden,
Astrid Jensen is her name.
Her industry and spirit
Bring her everlasting fame.

Elizabeth March, John G. and Anna Carlson, E. A. and Adelle Christensen, Adell Winklers Cain, Jennie Wray and

her daughter Isabell, Julius Hoerlyck, an immigrant from Germany, and his wife Catherina, Emily Titze, William Kirkham, Mary Jane Heidenreich, Albin R. and Nellie Bentson, Charles and Lillie May Rose, Ross and Julia M. Freel, Alfred W. Christensen and his wife, Renford Patch and his wife, Irma McKeever Patch, Gunda Larsen, who worked in the mission home for many years, and many, many more—these are all names on the honor roll of Minnesota LDS pioneers, not because they went anywhere, but because they stayed. They helped lay the foundation of the Church here that we continue to enjoy and build on today.

Northern States Mission

These converts were made by a growing force of missionaries who were becoming better organized and more sophisticated in their proselyting methods. In 1902 Asahel H. Woodruff, a son of Wilford Woodruff, was made president of the Northern States Mission, replacing Walter C. Lyman who had kept things together for seven months after President Kelsch's departure. Born in 1863, Woodruff filled a mission to Great Britain (1884-86) and was an active businessman in Salt Lake at the time of his call. President Woodruff immediately brought in all of the conference presidents for consultation in Chicago. On 31 January 1903, the mission history records, they systematically discussed plans "for the betterment of the work" throughout the mission and held a "spirited" testimony meeting. Among other things, Woodruff reemphasized the need to proselyte without purse or scrip when possible as the most effective way of reaching prospective converts because "it appealed to the honest in heart and made them realize the great importance of the work."

A few months later in the spring of 1903, President Woodruff toured part of the mission, typical of a mission president's life during this time. He walked from Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Kalamazoo, held thirteen meetings, was "refused entertainment" thirty times, and had to sleep in a

barn one night (NSM 24 May 1903). In November of that year he purchased Carthage Jail, scene of the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, for the Church for \$4,000. Shortly afterwards, he suffered a detached retina in the right eye, a condition then not treatable. "The best specialists assured him they could do nothing, and he would lose his sight" (NSM 11 Jan. 1904). In June 1904, he was released and returned home with his family.

German E. Ellsworth, an elder from Lehi, Utah, who had been in the mission for a year and was then serving as mission secretary, replaced President Woodruff. President Ellsworth, although still a young man, was already an experienced missionary, but his future experiences would become a record of incredible service. Several years earlier, he had filled a mission to California, financing himself with the \$1,000 he had saved to go to medical school. After his return, he married Mary Rachael Smith, and they had two children. At stake conference in Lehi, Utah, he caught the attention of Apostle Matthias F. Cowley, who called him to serve in the Northern States Mission after the session. The people of Lehi "were up in arms about it," according to President Ellsworth, because it seemed to be such an interruption to his life. His bishop confided that there were "at least twenty young men in the town in a better position to go on a mission" and that "one word from him" to his close acquaintance, President Joseph F. Smith, "would cancel the call." Brother Ellsworth responded, "Don't say the word" ("Missionary Service" 1953).


He arranged for his family to join him, and the Ellsworths began seventeen years of service to the Northern States Mission. President Ellsworth's dedication and innovations accelerated missionary work. He was a fluent speaker with unusual earnestness and impressiveness. He could—and did—keep the attention of audiences for as long as three hours (NSM 11 Jan. 1904). Twenty-three years after his release, he was called to preside over the Northern California Mission (1942-51), making a total of twenty-seven years of mission-

ary service for the Church. All but one of those years was served with his wife, Mary. This missionary career has been likened to some of the great men in the Book of Mormon like Alma and Alma the younger, who “were so thoroughly converted themselves, that they desired to spend their entire lives spreading the glorious gospel message” (“Missionary Service” 1953).

As mission secretary, Elder Ellsworth had arranged for a 10,000-copy edition of the Book of Mormon to be printed in Chicago at great savings for the Church, enlisting the help of missionaries to read proof (NSM 1903 report). Eventually copies of the Book of Mormon for all the missions in the United States were printed in Chicago. His testimony of the value of the Book of Mormon echoes the testimony of President Ezra Taft Benson today: “As a child under the influence of a Sunday School teacher I was deeply impressed with the value of the Book of Mormon as a converting power and made wide use of it on my first mission in California.” While visiting the Hill Cumorah, he was struck by the thought to “push the distribution of the record taken from this hill—it will help bring the world to Christ” (NSM 1903 report).

Motivated by this testimony, he bought two ads “at considerable expense” in the *Minneapolis Journal* and the *Minneapolis Tribune* in 1908 and also placed ads in street cars in the major cities. In April 1908, the St. Paul elders reported plans to get advertisements in three hundred street cars on three separate lines which ran through the business center (NSM 4 Apr. 1908). They also successfully placed copies of the Book of Mormon in local book stores for sale. President Ellsworth proposed unsuccessfully that the Council of the Twelve buy advertising for the Book of Mormon in leading magazines and would have heartily approved the “Homefront” spots on television and radio and the multi-page advertising inserts during the 1970s in the *Reader’s Digest*.

In 1908 President Ellsworth selected seventeen LDS hymns and had them printed in a pamphlet entitled *Songs of Zion*. It included “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet,”



**Jesus came to America
centuries ago.**

He found a civilized nation here. He taught
them and ministered to them.

The impressive testimony is now published
in *(from buried plates)*

The Book of Mormon
ALL DEALERS
50c Cloth \$1.25 Limp Morocco \$1.75 Gilt Morocco

This advertisement for the Book of Mormon appeared in the 25 March 1908 Minneapolis Tribune when the paper sold for a penny. It competed for the reader's eye with ads for "women's waists" at Dayton's Department Store and advertisements to "summer" on Lake Minnetonka.

and "O My Father," and the back cover advertised the Book of Mormon. Eventually 200,000 copies were published. Missionaries used its two versions (35 cents for words and music, 10 cents for words alone) as a tract. Family singing around the piano was a popular pastime then, and the elders often reported that they had hardly left the door when they could hear the residents playing the "choice songs." Eventually 200,000 were published and distributed (NSM 11 Nov. 1917). In 1917, President Ellsworth transferred the copyright of *Songs of Zion* to the First Presidency. It is still being published today and is distributed Church wide.

Another innovation German Ellsworth introduced was the practice of always having the elders ask for permission to pray when visiting in a home. The elders reported that this practice "turned prejudice to friendship and indifference to interest, and elicited an invitation to call again." They concluded that this was because "the prayers of a humble elder are as glad tidings to an honest heart, and the people are left to meditate on the blessings asked upon their home" (NSM 4 Feb. 1904). This practice is now universal in modern missionary work.

Another program tried for a short time was "early morning drop tracting," where the missionaries left tracts at homes "early enough to be read at the breakfast table and on the way to work" (NSM 11 Nov. 1917).

Permanent Congregations Established

With the new century, the formal church organization made steady progress. On 8 January 1899 a Sunday School was organized in Minneapolis with ten members but closed on 12 March after only two months when its rented hall became unavailable. A year later, it reopened on 20 May with five officers and teachers: Elder George Redden, superintendent (a full-time missionary), a secretary, a pianist, a teacher for the theological (adult) class and another for the primary (children's) class (*Juvenile Instructor* 1903, 78). By November



*The St. Paul-Minneapolis combined Sunday School in 1903. The earliest black members of the Church in Minnesota may be in this photograph: Ernest Banks, third row back, fourth from right, and his wife, whose name has not survived, in the stylish hat, behind him a little to the right. This photograph appeared in the *Juvenile Instructor* 38 (1903): 79. Courtesy of LDS Historical Department Archives.*

attendance had reached twenty-one, and they were singing "Zion Is Growing" as a closing hymn (Minneapolis Branch, Sunday School, 16 Nov. 1902).

St. Paul's Sunday School was organized on 5 August 1900, also headed by a missionary, John A. Kofoed. The other four officers were a secretary, an organist, and two teachers. There were thirteen members enrolled (*Juvenile Instructor* 1903, 78).

Both these Sunday Schools functioned separately until they were combined in May 1902 with an average attendance of fifty. With spring weather and easier traveling, the leaders felt that "the two schools being so close together it was thought well to have [them] unite for a time" (*Juvenile Instructor* 1903, 79). When winter returned, the two again separated with near equal numbers; St. Paul reported thirty as its average attendance. Also, significantly, the St. Paul Sunday School was now under the leadership of a local brother, George M. Cafferty (*Juvenile Instructor* 1903, 79).

With only a handful of Saints, missionaries organized Sunday Schools in a new area so the elders, members, and investigators could meet together weekly for instruction and worship. There would be hymn singing, prayer, oral roll call, minutes read and approved, and a lesson. If possible the group was divided for lessons according to age—children and adults. By 1908, singing practice had been added to the meetings in Minneapolis. Records show that the sacrament was also passed at these Sunday School meetings. When numerical and priesthood strength in the Sunday Schools warranted, a branch was organized with other auxiliaries being added as appropriate.

The Sunday Schools in the Twin Cities were very active. One missionary in 1908 called Minneapolis's Sunday School a "thriving branch" composed of "a body of real live Mormons who believe in teaching the gospel by example as well as by precept" (NSM 19 Sept. 1908).

By 1912 Sunday Schools were functioning in Duluth, Brainerd, and Aitkin, while a second Minneapolis Sunday

School had been organized on the city's north side. (This second unit did not survive at this period.) In 1913 a Sunday School was organized in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

The Mutual Improvement Association was functioning by March 1904, with men and women meeting together in homes. In Minneapolis "Bee Hive" work began in 1915 "to teach [the young girls] that domestic life is not the drudge that many of the young women of today think it to be" (NSM 24 Aug. 1915). On 27 January 1914, according to the mission history, Minneapolis's MIA had twenty people in attendance.

Branches Organized

On 2 July 1912, the St. Paul and Minneapolis branches were consolidated into the Twin Cities branch, with full-time missionary Edwin W. Bonneru as president, local members Marcus M. Swenson (his name is misspelled as Severson on the record) as Sunday School superintendent, and Esther Flynn and Emily Titze as assistants. This combined branch functioned for a little more than two years. Then on 8 November 1914 at a conference held in St. Paul, the congregation was again divided. "From now on," the mission history states, "Sunday School and [sacrament] meeting will be held in Minneapolis" as well. The division was permanent with both apparently becoming branches at that time. Although the record is not complete, it appears that William Kirkham was called to preside over the St. Paul Branch at this time, and Marcus M. Swenson was probably branch president in Minneapolis.² Both were local members. In April 1918, Clar-

²The ward history does not list a presiding officer between 1914 and 1918; but a short biography of Mary Moe Swenson mentions that her husband, Marcus, served "as the first president of the Minneapolis Branch." Marcus had previously been Sunday School superintendent and, as Marty Ostvig recalls, continued as a leader for a number of years. Furthermore, Marcus was lame, which would have made him ineligible for military duty. It seems highly probable that he served as branch president during part or all of this four-year period.

ence Bigelow was ordained an elder and called to preside over the Minneapolis Branch. Both congregations continued to grow and have been divided again and again during the last seventy-five years.

Meeting Places

Predictably, housing these fluid and fluctuating units was a problem. Until 1914 both the Minneapolis and St. Paul Sunday Schools met in a series of rented halls, initially clubs or dance halls that were “unfit places for saints of the Most High.” Meetings were “dampened” because of the unacceptable halls, and “the saints felt a reluctance to invite their friends to such places of questionable reputation” (NSM 2 Nov. 1907). One notable exception had been the Minneapolis Sunday School in 1907, then numbering about a dozen members, who had taken a year’s lease on “a little store building in one of the most desirable parts of the city” for \$18 a month. They raised the \$200 needed for furnishing “LDS Hall,” as they called it, at 111 East 26th Street. According to the mission history, it was “cozy, clean and handsomely furnished, with two home-like living rooms for the missionaries in the rear” (2 Nov. 1907). LDS Hall served the needs of the Sunday School for about eighteen months. Then membership dwindled, probably as a result of emigration; and they could no longer afford the lease. After that, halls, including rooms at the court house and members’ homes, were used.

Finally, unable to locate a suitable building, the branch determined to construct its own. In December 1916, the First Presidency sent a \$500 check for a site at 3101 Fourteenth Avenue South. Branch members matched the check with \$500 they had raised. Unfortunately, however, World War I and the subsequent depression halted their plans.

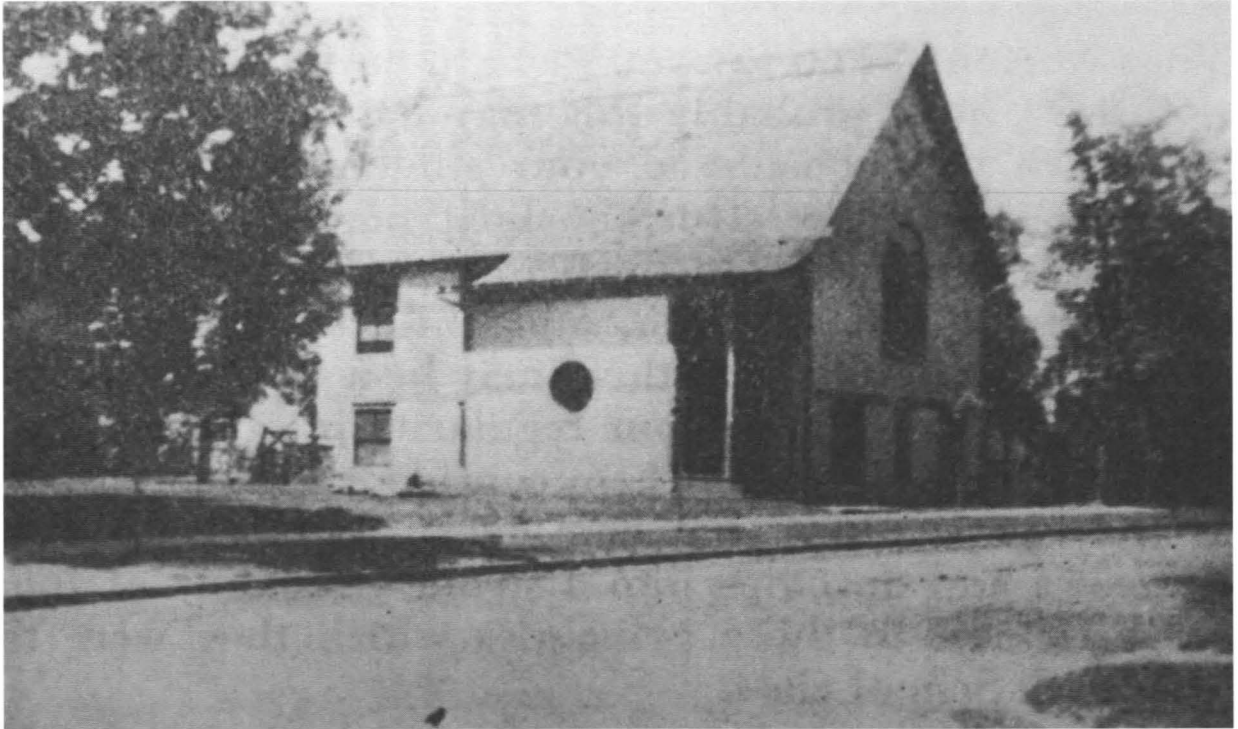
First Church-Owned Building

The St. Paul Branch acquired the first Church-owned building in Minnesota. On 9 May 1914, it purchased a permanent meeting hall from another denomination at 247 North Grotto for \$3,000. The members spent an additional \$500 for remodeling, including repainting it and removing its cross from the steeple. The building was dedicated, with great rejoicing, by Apostle Orson F. Whitney on 28 August 1914 and served the branch for almost thirty years. Because many members of the St. Paul Branch lived near the North Grotto building, it worked well as the center of the small Mormon community.

The building's most impressive feature was the baptismal font in the basement, built by cabinetmaker Rudolph Simons and other members. For ten years, it was the only font in the state; and converts came from all over, even as far north as Duluth, to be baptized in the font. The hot water heater was inadequate to fill the font, so all the members cheerfully took turns spending four or five hours heating large kettles of water in the kitchen.

Elaine S. Peterson described the early interior of the chapel as "rather primitive, with wide board floors and a furnace [in the basement] with one huge opening right in the center of the chapel. The chairs in the chapel—not pews—looked like kitchen chairs. They were fastened together on a long board so that they could not move and make a lot of noise on the rough wooden floor. We had small square tables such as people use in the living room for the secretary and for the sacrament" (n.d., 2).

Bit by bit the building was improved, with the Saints rejoicing over each addition. First came a library table for the sacrament, then a pump organ. The missionaries moved into two rooms created at one end of the basement where the huge furnace occupied the center. Years later, the heating system was replaced and moved to a corner and the Saints built a recreation room in the larger basement area. When a



The St. Paul Branch chapel at 247 North Grotto, the first Church-owned chapel in Minnesota, dedicated in 1914.

modest kitchen was installed in the basement, dinners and more ambitious socials became possible. "Oh, I shall never forget how happy we were when we were able to buy dishes and silverware so [the kitchen] could be used," said Sister Peterson. Later carpet runners were added in the chapel and the pump organ was replaced with another excellent instrument.

The Organization of Relief Societies

Sister Mary Ellsworth worked diligently alongside her husband, traveling extensively through the mission to strengthen women's work. Perhaps her most important contribution was the organization of twenty-three Relief Societies in the mission, including one in Minneapolis and another in St. Paul in 1914. The first meeting of the St. Paul Relief Society was held 8 November 1914 with Sister Ellsworth in attendance. Both these organizations were presided over by local sisters—Julia Coburn in Minneapolis and Emma Blank in St. Paul, according to a later *Liahona* report (in NSM 9 Feb. 1915).

Organized in Nauvoo on 17 March 1842 by the Prophet Joseph Smith at the sisters' request, the Relief Society organization is today the oldest existing women's organization in the world. Though briefly disbanded during the trek west, it was again active by 1851 in Salt Lake City and has continued world-wide growth, today numbering almost 2.5 million sisters. Its aims, as articulated by Joseph Smith, are to "provoke the brethren to good works in looking to the wants of the poor, searching after objects of charity and administering to their wants, and assist by correcting the morals and strengthening the virtues of the community" and are best summed up by the motto "Charity Never Faileth" (General Board 1966, 18).

Sister Ellsworth not only directed the sisters' efforts to relieve the needy but began a vigorous program to promote genealogy through the Relief Society. Two years later, the



The women and girls of the St. Paul Branch Relief Society about 1918. Seated on the floor, left: Elsie Prellwitz (Williams), Louise Blank (Petersen), Molly Simons (Schaefer), and Henrietta Flynn (Hook). Second row and three women in the center, left: [given name not known] Hurl, Paulene Blank Peterson in black leaning back against Jennie Wray in a white blouse, President Emma Blank (center with a white collar), her hand on the arm of Isabel Wray, Mary Prellwitz in black, and Kathryn Flynn. Third row, standing, left: Two Hurl sisters, given names not known, Alva Flynn Rice (white blouse), unidentified woman, Emma Peterson, Esther Flynn, Henrietta Simons Paulson, Nora Prellwitz Lee, and Viola Flynn Cragh. Courtesy of Melvin E. Petersen.

sisters had submitted almost two hundred names to the temple (NSM 31 Oct. 1916, 2 Jan. 1917). By spring of 1915, the sisters were organizing sewing clubs in Minneapolis and St. Paul where the young girls as well as the sisters "meet together and exchange ideas on fancy work and sewing." The sewing club in St. Paul expanded its interests to include literature and music and worked enthusiastically "in all lines of Relief Society work" (NSM 23 March 1915).

The Relief Societies first met twice a month, then increased the schedule to weekly meetings. The general board issued lesson outlines, which the sisters studied, augmented by a lesson one week each month on the Book of Mormon which Sister Ellsworth outlined for the teachers. She also instructed the Relief Societies to hold a second work meeting each month "where the sisters sew for the worthy poor and make articles for bazaars and socials, by which means their organizations are largely financed" (NSM 3 April 1917). In 1917, apparently the first year they held bazaars, the Minneapolis sisters netted \$48 and the St. Paul sisters \$52 (15 May 1917).

The sisters went visiting teaching on the streetcars, because few had automobiles. Ruth Nichols recalls, "It would take the sisters all day to go by streetcar." She does not mention the average number of sisters assigned to each visiting teaching team, but they did much more than leave a gospel message. "If there was sickness in the family they'd stop and wash dishes and clean the house, then they'd catch another street car and go on to the next visit" (1988, 5).

When the United States joined the three-year-old World War I in 1917, Relief Societies throughout the Church essentially became Red Cross units and worked at tasks assigned by the local Red Cross chapters. Minneapolis and St. Paul Relief Societies were affiliated with the Red Cross from December 1917 until June 1919, seven months after the war ended. The sisters met weekly from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. with a short lunch break, either at Red Cross headquarters or in each other's homes. They turned out large numbers of hos-



The Minneapolis Branch Relief Society in 1918. Alice Bell, the new president, is in the front row, fifth from the left, with Julia Coburn, outgoing president, sixth from the left. Courtesy of Bambi Patrick.

pital pajamas, underwear, children's clothing, surgical dressings, knitted articles, and refugee garments.

For a few months, the mission had actually benefited from World War I as it received reassigned European missionaries. But by 1917 when America entered the war, many young men who would otherwise have served missions were in the armed services, and some missionaries felt compelled to resign their missions to join the fighting forces, until "only a handful" of elders and sisters carried on the work (NSM 29 Oct. 1918). Local priesthood leaders also joined the armed forces, contributing to the severe shortage of leadership. Into this void stepped full-time sister missionaries and local sisters in the branches, "men not being available" (NSM 29 Oct. 1918).

Sister Missionaries

According to the mission history, the first lady missionaries sent to the Northern States came in 1904 when Lydia A. Soeffner of Payson, Utah, and Hedwig E. Stauffer from Nounan, Idaho, were assigned to labor in Wisconsin. From then on, the sisters became an increasingly important asset to the mission, especially during wars when their efforts, along with those of local sisters, kept the congregations and the mission functioning. Elder Franklin S. Davis praised them in a 29 October 1918 report to the *Liahona*: "Too much credit cannot be given our lady missionaries. They are bearing nobly the great burden which is devolving upon them through the shortage of elders" (in NSM 29 Oct. 1918).

In 1918, during the war-caused shortage of men, the Minneapolis Sunday School was reorganized with Alice Bell as superintendent, Adell Cain, assistant, and Elnora Johnson, secretary (NSM 29 Oct. 1918). Alice Bell, an early Minneapolis convert, was a capable leader—"a grand woman who could do anything," as Martin Ostvig described her. Married to a nonmember and childless, she threw all her energies into Church service until her death in 1953.

Flu Epidemic

The Saints also suffered from the 1918 “Spanish influenza,” which spread worldwide and killed twenty-two million people, including half a million Americans—twice as many victims as those killed in the war. Robust adults in their twenties and thirties were particularly susceptible, and the flu afflicted more and killed a higher percentage of the population than any epidemic since the Black Death of the fourteenth century. Two elders died, one in Wisconsin and the other, Taylor Giles of Heber City, in St. Paul. In October 1918, missionary work was temporarily suspended for several weeks because so many elders were ill. Some of them were hospitalized, and one sister missionary was sent home in a “weakened condition” because of the flu (NSM 31 Dec. 1918).

By mid-1919, the war was over, the flu epidemic was ebbing, and the mission history recorded a sign of the new normalcy in June: the men in St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Duluth branches were making home teaching visits. By 1921 both Twin Cities branches had choirs.

Post-War Missionary Efforts

In May 1919, German and Mary Ellsworth and their children were released. The Ellsworth presidency had been a period of significant development. From 985 members at the beginning of his mission, there were now 4,000—and many others, possibly hundreds, had migrated west. Thirty branches held regular Sunday morning and evening services, with auxiliaries and other programs functioning. Elder J. Frank Pickering paid a fervent tribute to President Ellsworth on behalf of the mission, saying that “kings and emperors could never point to such a work” (NSM 29 Nov. 1919).

Winslow Farr Smith, called as the new mission president on 13 May 1919, was the son of Apostle John Henry Smith and a grandson of George A. Smith, Joseph Smith’s first cousin. The Utah-born President Smith had been a manu-

facturer and had a no-nonsense approach to missionary work. One of his first sermons, delivered in Duluth on 29 November 1919, began, "I am a Mormon with only one wife." An energetic and powerful preacher, he immediately began training the swelling ranks of new missionaries and helping local units toward post-war growth.

One of the Church's greatest problems in Minnesota during this time was financing. During the last year of his mission, President Ellsworth had organized cottage meetings in the homes of the Saints, asking them to recommit themselves to tithing, fasting, and prayer (NSM 31 Jan. 1919). As yet, no satisfactory system had been developed for handling incoming fast offerings. The post-war depression meant an unusually large number of calls for aid from needy members. Missionaries also felt the financial constraints, and some had to be released because their families could no longer afford the monthly \$50 to keep them in the field.

Undoubtedly, some of the unsung heroes, who kept missionary efforts going and, hence, congregations growing, were the parents, wives, and children of the elders at home trying to keep families fed and clothed, in addition to sending whatever excess money they could squeeze out of the family budget to their missionary. One incident recorded in the mission history illustrates their never-failing support. "President G. E. Ellsworth," began the letter from Charles Cook of Grouse Creek, Utah, on behalf of his missionary father, "please find enclosed \$5.00 for my papa. Brother Ellsworth I worked and earned this money and I want papa to have it for it is the first money I have earned as I am only eight years old" (NSM 2 Nov. 1907).

First Church-built Chapel

A second and related priority set by President Smith was finding adequate physical facilities. When President Smith arrived, only the St. Paul Branch had its own chapel. Two years later, in 1921, the Minneapolis Branch renewed its

efforts to build its own chapel. "The initiative was taken by the Relief Society with the priesthood a close second," recorded the mission history on 24 May 1921. Branch stalwart Julius Hoerlyck was named chairman of the building committee, and in one month the branch raised \$800.

President Smith reluctantly dampened their enthusiasm in a priesthood meeting on 26 February 1922—by then they had \$1,000 in the fund—by explaining the financial crisis the Church was currently undergoing and suggesting that the branch might build a basement and use it until they could afford the upper structure. They persisted, however; and seventeen months later, Branch President Clarence Bigelow received a letter from the First Presidency giving permission to get bids on a building providing they did not exceed \$12,500. In February 1924, President Bigelow signed an agreement with a contractor and construction began a few weeks later at 3101 Fourteenth Avenue South. By September 1924, Minneapolis Branch members held their first meeting—a testimony meeting—in the new chapel followed by MIA in the chapel that week, and an MIA social in the middle of October.

By then, the chapel was paid for and ready to dedicate. The Relief Society sent invitations to members of the Church throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin to attend dedication services during the district conference on 25-26 October. Twenty-five years earlier, Heber J. Grant had been the first apostle to visit Minnesota. Now he came as president of the Church, accompanied by George Albert Smith, himself a future president of the Church.

After the Saturday sessions at North Grotto in St. Paul, the Sunday morning session moved to Minneapolis, jamming the new building to capacity. The congregation sustained the General Authorities, partook of the sacrament, listened attentively to President Grant's address, then fervently sang, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," as the closing hymn. After the session, the sisters of the Minneapolis Branch Re-



Members of the Minneapolis Branch in front of the Fourteenth Avenue chapel, under construction in 1924.



The Minneapolis Branch chapel at 3101 Fourteenth Avenue South, dedicated 1924. It was the first LDS Church-built chapel in Minnesota. Photograph taken about 1980, courtesy Don Jardine.

lief Society served a “very delightful lunch,” and everyone gathered outside the chapel for photographs.

The dedication service began at 2:00 p.m. with songs from the branch choir and addresses from Apostle George Albert Smith and President Grant, who also offered the dedicatory prayer. At an evening session, President Grant treated the congregation to a vocal solo, “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee.” Local newspapers favorably reported the dedication, including pictures of President Grant and the new chapel (NSM 26 Oct. 1924).

North Central States Mission

The mission slogan for 1925 had been “The greatest gift to man is the power to make his Best—Better” (NSM 2 June 1925). Nine months after the dedication of the Fourteenth Avenue chapel, the mission took another giant step forward, the reward for the efforts of many. On a steaming hot day, 12 July 1925, Apostle Rudger Clawson, presiding over a district conference in Minneapolis, organized the North Central States Mission, headquartered at 2725 3rd Avenue South and presided over by John G. Allred of Salt Lake City, who accompanied Elder Clawson. The new mission drew on portions of four other missions—the Northern States, Western States, Northwestern States, and the Canadian missions, and some missionaries from all four—a total of thirty-five—were transferred to the new North Central States Mission. Mission boundaries included North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana east of Great Falls, and parts of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. In that vast area resided 1,900 members of the Church organized into six conferences: Port Arthur Conference (all of the mission’s Canadian areas), Minnesota Conference (all of Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin), North Dakota Conference, South Dakota Conference, and the Montana Conference (eastern Montana). Within a month, the Minnesota Conference was divided into two conferences, one in the north and one in the south (NCM 12 July 1925). (In 1927, the First Presidency recommended that mission divisions be called “districts,” rather than “conferences” [NCM 27 Jan. 1927].)

The creation of this new mission fulfilled a quarter century’s hard work and vision. The requirements for institutional growth had been met. From almost nothing, congregations had grown slowly, if not in a nurturing atmosphere, at least in a more tolerant one. Local leaders directed the activities of fully functioning branches, giving members opportunities for greater development. And finally, two LDS chapels housed a great variety of Church activities, made a clear

statement of Church presence in Minnesota, and pledged future permanence. Both had baptismal fonts in anticipation of more converts. The Church was in Minnesota to stay and facing an optimistic future.

*Centennial Rejoicings:
The Message of the Jubilee Box,
1930–80*

RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR OF 1930 was a decidedly gloomy activity for many Americans. Eight weeks earlier, the financial uncertainties, prevalent for months and growing strong on rumor, turned into panic on Black Thursday, 24 October 1929, when the New York stock market crashed. The ensuing depression closed the extravagant flapper era of the 1920s and plunged the country into hardships heretofore unknown, chilling America's optimism and confidence in the government's ability to provide economic prosperity. Daily the number of closed businesses increased, banks failed, and people lost their jobs. A majority of Americans struggled to house and even feed themselves—not for days or weeks, but years. Sixteen months into the depression, an estimated 4.8 million people were unemployed with 360,000 added to the ranks monthly (Daniel 1987, 382). Despite President Herbert Hoover's claim that "prosperity is just around the corner," it would be almost a decade before the economy stabilized again. In the meantime, for many it was a dogged quest for survival.

However, despite the country's economic woes, one group eagerly anticipated the arrival of 1930, temporarily forgetting the distress of the depression. They were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, anticipating with growing excitement the approaching centen-

nial anniversary of the organization of the Church on 6 April 1830. On that date Joseph Smith with a small group of believers, had gathered at the Peter Whitmer home in Fayette, New York, and legally organized the Church with six members. Despite persecution and ostracism both social and physical, Mormonism had flourished. Now, one hundred years later, over 700,000 members, still largely clustered in the Intermountain West but also spreading to urban areas in the United States, Europe, and the Pacific islands, prepared for a grand celebration.

Centennial Celebration in Utah

In Utah, with its majority Mormon population, the centennial celebration was ambitious. A "sacred pageant-drama" entitled "The Message of the Ages," depicting the "outstanding religious events of the world in chronological order from the Council in Heaven to the present day," played for thirty performances to approximately 200,000 people and still could not satisfy the demand, according to the Church's souvenir brochure. The pageant was performed in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on a stage built of four platforms filling the "entire space from the lower pulpits to the front pipes of the great organ . . . extending from gallery to gallery" and using "enough lumber to build three commodious homes." Approximately five thousand yards of fabric went into curtains and drapes which were hung on an improvised gridiron constructed of gas pipes screwed together. The "great organ" in the Tabernacle had to be moved about thirty-five feet necessitating "the welding of hundreds of connections" to keep the keys and action of the organ working. The three-hundred-member Tabernacle Choir, accompanied by the organ and a forty-piece orchestra, sang music "of the great masters" and also hymns and anthems written for the occasion by LDS composers. On stage, fifteen hundred participants created a "veritable sensation" among the



*Arthur Welling and Phoebe
McLaughlin Welling. Courtesy
of Estelle Welling Smith.*

audience, many of whom had traveled long distances to attend (*One Hundred* 1930, 45).

Salt Lake was crowded as never before. Special trains from the west coast, the Pacific Northwest, and Canada brought people to the celebration. “Motor car caravans” rolled in from surrounding states. Among the many visitors were Arthur Welling and Phoebe McLaughlin Welling, called in May 1929 to preside over the North Central States Mission. Welling, a resident of Farmington, Utah, had been a faculty member at the LDS College for eight years, enjoyed a long career in education, and had served in the Utah legislature.

Their children, Estelle and Richard, stayed in Minneapolis for the celebration.

Besides the stupendous stage production, the Church also published a centennial edition of the Book of Mormon and B. H. Roberts's six-volume *Comprehensive History of the Church*. Floodlights were installed for the first time at all seven existing temples (including Hawaii and Canada) to light them at night for the duration of the celebration. The April edition of *Time* magazine featured an article on the Church with a drawing of President Heber J. Grant on the cover.

The celebration centered around April conference and began, appropriately, in the morning session, Sunday, 6 April. Notably, and unusually, the weather was ideal during the entire conference. Radio receiving sets were installed in nearly every LDS chapel in the west, and the *Deseret News* estimated (perhaps optimistically), that one million people heard the broadcast of the first session. Desiring to include everyone "in all the world, where wards and branches are organized," the First Presidency instructed Church units too distant to receive the broadcast to carry out a uniform program, which had been sent out well in advance.

Centennial Celebration in Minneapolis

Among these loyal units were Minnesota's. President Welling in his 1929 annual report, submitted four months earlier in January, had judged the two branches in Minneapolis and St. Paul as being in "excellent" spiritual condition, "though numerically small and geographically scattered" (NCM, January 1930). In St. Paul, the missionaries and members had recently redecorated and cleaned the chapel on North Grotto, and installed a new oil heating system (NCM 21 Jan. 1930). The branch in Duluth was housed in a small rented building. Missionaries, inspired by the motto, "Make 1930 the best of a hundred years," were active in many areas of the state. President Welling's 1930 year-end report to Salt

Lake details the extent of missionary work that year: eight mission districts (Yellowstone, Northern Minnesota, Southern Minnesota, Saskatchewan, Lake [Lake Superior around the Duluth area], Manitoba, North Dakota, and South Dakota), with twenty-six hundred members, fifteen sister missionaries, and forty-five elders.

On 6 April, two hundred Saints from all over Minnesota gathered at the Fourteenth Avenue chapel to begin the centennial celebration. After an early-morning sacrament service, they reconvened at exactly 10:00 A.M. to sing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet” and read a telegram from President Welling. Then a full-time missionary read the centennial message to “people throughout the world” from the First Presidency—Heber J. Grant, Anthony W. Ivins, and Charles W. Nibley. The program continued almost exactly as President Grant had instructed: the choir and congregation sang “The Spirit of God like a Fire Is Burning” and sustained the General Authorities. In Salt Lake City, where every seat in the Tabernacle was taken and “the aisles and doorways filled to their capacity,” seating was limited to officers of the various priesthood quorums; quorum by quorum the men rose and manifested their support. In Minneapolis, the congregation voted together, men, women, and children.

Immediately after the sustainings, the entire congregation, both in the Tabernacle, in the chapel in Minneapolis, and in dozens of other locations around the world, rose to their feet, each man, woman, and child holding a clean white handkerchief. Next came what was perhaps “the most thrilling and impressive religious solemnity that those present had ever witnessed,” the Hosanna Shout, and a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most of the Minneapolis Saints. Led by E. A. Christensen, president of the Minneapolis Branch, the congregation waved the white handkerchiefs “in almost perfect unison,” lifting their praises in one voice to God and his Son:

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!
To God and the Lamb
Amen, amen, and amen.



Minnesota members celebrate the Church's centennial, 6 April 1930, at the Fourteenth Avenue Chapel.

The Hosanna Shout, President Lorenzo Snow had said in 1899, had its origins in the heavens, "When all the sons of God shouted for joy" (in Woodbury 1975, 18). Its history can be traced through ancient Hebrew celebrations of thanksgiving and rejoicing and appears in the New Testament on the occasion of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In the modern Church, it punctuates special occasions and "marks singular points in time," including many of the groundbreaking and all of the dedications of temples since the Nauvoo Temple (Woodbury 1975, 21). It also signalled such spiritually powerful moments as the departure of the Quorum of the Twelve for the first mission in England in 1837 and the reorganization of the First Presidency in 1847 three years after the martyrdom of Joseph Smith. It is a sacred and joyous expression, stated Lael J. Woodbury, dean of BYU's College of Fine Arts and Humanities, "used when spiritual feelings cannot otherwise be conveyed, when the love of God is so rich that mere language is inadequate to express it" (1975, 21). The centennial celebration was such an event. As the congregation in Minneapolis uttered their Hosanna Shout in reverent awe that April morning, surely they felt one with hundreds of thousands of other members of the Church and with God.

The missionaries and Saints in Minnesota would commemorate the centennial throughout the rest of 1930 by efforts to increase and extend the work. In July, four hundred people attended conference sessions in St. Paul and Minneapolis despite almost unbearable heat. On 31 August, a fourth branch was organized near Princeton, the Springvale-Dalbo Branch, presided over by local member Valentine Mott. The elders in Rochester had been administering often to the sick at the Mayo Clinic and having "good Gospel conversations" (NCM 29 Oct. 1929). The missionaries were also exploring the proselyting possibilities on the Iron Range, partly because the Duluth, Missabe & Northern Railway serving that district allowed missionaries free clergy passes (NCM 14 Nov. 1931). President Welling, writing his annual report for the mis-



Nicknamed the "Gospel Chariot," this vintage Model-T provided transportation in the North Central States Mission during the depression. Courtesy Estelle Welling Smith.



North Central States Mission home, 3055 Elliott Avenue, at the time of the centennial celebration. Courtesy Estelle Welling Smith.

sion history and Church headquarters in December 1930, reported that he had traveled forty thousand miles by train and car during 1930, "considerably more than once around the world." Tithes showed "a gratifying increase" over 1929, despite "drought, unemployment and low price of wheat," and the mission's Saints were twenty-six hundred strong, with over one-third of them, or just under one thousand residing in Minnesota's three districts.

The Jubilee Box

But the year closed with a centennial project that cast a bright shadow into the future. The sisters of the Minneapolis Branch Relief Society solicited letters from local Church leaders and members to seal in a time capsule for fifty years,



The Minneapolis Branch Relief Society presidency, who conceived and carried out the Jubilee Box project in 1930. Left: Phoebe McLaughlin Welling, Helen Christensen, President Alice Bell, and Mary Swenson.

thus extending their celebration two more generations to their grandchildren. The indomitable Alice Bell, who by then had been branch Relief Society president for eleven years (she served twenty-five in all), spearheaded the Jubilee Box project. Twenty-nine letters were written and sealed in the gold-painted metal box, ten from such leaders as the mission president, branch president, and Relief Society president, to be opened by their counterparts, and nineteen written by individual members addressed to their descendants who might be alive in 1980.

In addition to the letters, some carefully chosen artifacts also went into the box:

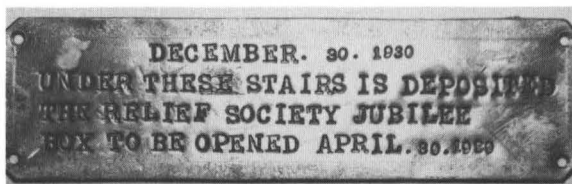
- A well-worn \$1.00 United States silver certificate, series 1923
- Two photographs of the Relief Society sisters who organized the project and sealed the box, including Phoebe Welling, wife of the mission president



*Members of the Minneapolis Branch Relief Society and some brethren in 1930.
This photograph was placed in the Jubilee Box when it was sealed.*

- A 7, x 27, photograph of the congregation present for the 1924 dedication of the Fourteenth Avenue chapel including President Heber J. Grant and Apostle George Albert Smith. Unfortunately, individuals are not identified.
- A 7, x 27, photograph taken the day of the 1930 centennial service at the same chapel
- A pamphlet of the First Presidency's centennial message to the world with photographs of President Grant and his counselors on the cover
- The centennial issue of the *Liahona: The Elder's Journal*, 1830-1930
- A stencilled copy of the ten-page *Beacon*, Minneapolis Branch's newsletter, volume 1, number 13, dated 7 January 1931
- Two *Deseret News* articles from 1877, the year missionary work in Minnesota came under direction of an organized mission

The hand-written note on top of these articles read: "This box sealed this 30th day of December 1930; Dedicated to the President of the Minneapolis Branch Relief Society, to be opened April 6, 1980." The cover was soldered shut, and the box was placed behind the stairs in the Fourteenth Avenue chapel with a metal plaque attached to the riser reading:



Keeping track of the Jubilee Box for fifty years was not an easy task. Over a decade later when the Fourteenth Avenue building was sold, the box went to the newer chapel on Park Avenue, an office building purchased and refurbished to house the Minneapolis Branch. Not infrequently, it stayed in private homes. When the Bryant Avenue building was completed as the new home of the Minneapolis Branch in 1950, the box was again deposited there for safe-keeping for a little over twenty years. After 1975, it came to the bishop's office of the Minneapolis First Ward in the Bloomington chapel.

Its opening culminated the 1980 sesquicentennial celebrations on the evening of 30 April. A crowd of over two hundred came to take part, including reporters from the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. Thirteen of those attending had been members of either the St. Paul Branch or the Minneapolis Branch in 1930. Several speakers honored the early Church members in Minnesota, retold incidents in Church history in the state, and detailed the difficulties of keeping track of the Jubilee Box for fifty years. Then, with everyone's full attention, Everett Manwaring, former counselor in the stake presidency, opened the box. Six descendants received letters that night, including two former stake members, Oral Larson Haglund and her daughter, Phyllis Haglund Grangroth, who had traveled from Salt Lake City to be present for the occasion. The daughter and granddaughter of Olive Smith Larson, they had heard frequent tales of the Jubilee Box. For Phyllis, the memories dated from the time she was a small child told to "always remember the box." She had. Nels Larsen, another recipient, read the Norwegian text of the letter his mother, Gunda Larsen, had written.

Minneapolis Ward leaders did their best to see that the remaining letters from the Jubilee box reached those for whom they were intended. The ten letters to Church leaders were immediately deliverable. Some of the others took longer—even years. To date, nine—almost half—of the letters have been given to the families of the writers.



Sealed for fifty years, the Jubilee Box awaits its opening on 30 April 1980 in the Bloomington chapel. Courtesy Don Jardine.



Everett Manwaring opens the Jubilee Box.



Oral Larson Haglund, left, and her daughter, Phyllis Haglund Grangroth, both former members of the stake who had returned from Utah for the occasion, examine the photos from Jubilee Box. A letter from Olive Smith Larson, Oral's mother and Phyllis's grandmother, was one of the treasures the box held. Courtesy Minneapolis Star Tribune.



Twin brothers Rodger Rose, left, and Rolland Rose find themselves in photographs of early congregations sealed in the Jubilee Box. Courtesy Minneapolis Star Tribune.

The messages of the Jubilee Box letters usually expressed several themes. First, almost all the writers wondered, with little success, what the Church in Minnesota might be like in 1980. "It is impossible to realize what may be fifty years hence," Alice Bell had written. "We rejoice in the great things the Lord has accomplished since the organization of His church and with such a foundation we and those following us should have a structure strong and beautiful for you to continue. Our advantages are so much greater than those who started the work and yours will be even greater than ours, provided we have the faith of the leaders and are as humble and sincere, that we should be able to go forward without fear, strong of heart and with 'an eye single to the Glory of God.'"

Margaret Maslin, editor of the branch newsletter, mused, "How queer the fashions and modes of today will seem to that younger generation who will rise to take our place. All the wonders and marvels of this age of ours, so called 'the machine age,' whose speed strikes terror to the soul of sedate maids like me, will seem as nothing, so eclipsed will they be by the greater miracles that will have happened and become as commonplace fifty years hence."

"One would hesitate to think," wrote Elder Arthur D. Smith of Holbrook, Arizona, and president of the South Minnesota District, "of what might be when this is read. One thing is certain and that is the world that you know will not be the one that I see now. Perhaps in that day our ways and methods will seem as primitive as our grandfather's now seem to us." His letter was given to Mark H. Willes, then president of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake.

Phoebe Welling, wife of the mission president, hopefully speculated that "perhaps [there will be] a stake of Zion fifty years from now." (When the box was opened, there were three stakes in Minnesota.) Her husband, Arthur Welling began his letter confidently saying, "Ours is the best day the world has ever seen, and yours will be better than today." As a mission president concerned with the process of spread-

ing the gospel, he continued, "By that time radio will have made preaching the gospel a comparatively simple matter. As yet, we have to depend on tracting, cottage meetings, hall meetings, street meetings and personal testimony, a relatively slow process." Perhaps President Welling wouldn't have been so surprised at the 1980s after all! His letter went to Monte J. Brough, then president of the Minnesota Minneapolis Mission and now a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy.

"Many changes will have taken place before that time," wrote Ingeborg S. Malmgren to her son Arthur, summing up another theme of the Jubilee letters, "but one thing will remain the same, namely the gospel of Jesus Christ." This belief in the enduring, eternal nature of the gospel was overwhelming in the letters. For many, the most important thing they could record was their own belief in the reality of the Savior and his gospel. Their testimonies ring fervent and true across the years.

Sister Malmgren continued, "[The gospel of Jesus Christ] is the same today and forever, and to serve him with all our might mind and strength will bring peace and blessings into our lives here on earth and hereafter life everlasting." "I rejoice in the service of the Lord. . . . I do know that He lives and the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ, is true," stated William Moe, then first counselor in the Minneapolis Branch presidency. Mary Moe Swenson, branch organist and stalwart, admonished her posterity, "Be true to yourself and to your religion and to your God. For there is no exaltation outside of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

"There is no greater joy in the world," wrote Nellie Bentson, "than the joy which comes to one in trying to live the gospel. . . . It may be necessary for you to go through many trials," she further admonished her children, "but even though your trials are great, always try to remember that this life is very short. . . . Satan will try you, but be firm, and you will never need to be ashamed." Hilma N. Goude, born in Watertown, Minnesota in 1877 and baptized in 1921, wrote,

"[The Lord] has been with me and his spirit has guided and protected me and the gospel holds out to me the hope of progression and eternal life." "My testimony of the truth of the gospel . . . is my life," wrote Margaret Maslin. "It has given me the desire to live. It is my joy, the dearest, richest possession this world can offer. . . ."

President Welling left his testimony in detail: "Mormonism is true, Joseph Smith was and is a prophet, the Church presents the same organization as characterized in the primitive Church, it is God's house, he is building it. It will stand forever." Then he summed it all up in one sentence, "For these and other reasons, I am proud to be a Mormon missionary."

Olive Orpha Nichols Larson left a moving account of her conversion to Mormonism. She was washing dishes in her kitchen, she said, very much troubled about what the truth of God was. She had left the church of her birth saying she would "never again" belong to any denomination whose creeds she could not accept; paid ministers and infant baptism seemed particularly abhorrent to her. As she stood wondering, the thought came that if she went into a dark closet and asked God in all earnestness and humbleness for knowledge, wouldn't he tell her? She did just that. After her prayer, feelings of great happiness came over her. She resolved to follow any way God showed her, even if it meant going back to her former church. That very night she was invited to an LDS cottage meeting by friends she had not seen in years. She hesitated, having heard unsettling rumors about the Mormons, but decided that "God was not going to ask me to become a Mormon." Besides, she had prayed for guidance and knowledge. She and her husband went to the cottage meeting. Soon after the missionaries began talking she found herself saying, "That's what I am seeking! That's what I believe! That's what the Bible teaches!" They attended several other meetings and were baptized in 1926 in the Fourteenth Avenue font.

Several of the letters highlighted current conditions in

the mission and congregations in Minnesota. E. A. Christensen, branch president of the Minneapolis Branch wrote, "We had a very successful year just passed. This is a thriving branch of the Church with about 250 members. Many very faithful and devoted to the gospel. Tithing paid in this year amounted to about \$3,500 and fast offerings nearly \$115. There are not many poor and only a few widows. We feel that the Lord has been good to us all and blessed us exceedingly."

Alice Bell described the Relief Society as "a small band of active workers, but united in love and harmony." Her letter is read each year at the Minneapolis Ward Relief Society Christmas party—now a tradition.

Two sister missionaries, Emma Lawrence from Woods Cross, Utah, and Ashlong Jacobsen of Logan, wrote to the "youngest lady missionary," describing their labors and living conditions: "We tract in the morning from door to door," they wrote, "and hold Primary meetings in the afternoons. We use our evenings for visiting investigators, friends and Saints. We are living on the third floor of Brother and Sister Charles Rose's home. We have two rooms and a bath at our disposal and are very comfortable. We prepare our own meals on a fine gas range, but are often invited out to eat at different homes. We drink purified water from the Mississippi River. Our average expenses for a month are about \$35.00." They continued, "Tracting is very difficult in some cases, and even though we aren't often kicked off porches as the Elders sometimes have been, people often tell us in no uncertain tones that they aren't interested, and sometimes they even slam doors in our faces. But this is no discouragement to a young missionary."

Writing to her infant daughter, Adell Winklers Cain, who was a visiting teacher in the Minneapolis Branch for forty years before moving to California, praised the sisters: "The missionary girls that have come out from the west have something about them that I find in no other class of girls."

They inspire me to live a better life in every way. How much I want you to have that shining light about you.”

Other members described close ties to early Church history. Clarence Bigelow wrote, “My grandmother [Sarah Elizabeth Henderson] crossed the plains in the early days of the Church when she was 12 years old . . . [walking] the entire distance. . . . As a little girl she knew the Prophet Joseph Smith.” “My mother [Harriet Louise Chase],” wrote Phoebe Welling, “remembered the Prophet [Joseph] very well. She was baptized by the Prophet in the Mississippi River [at Nauvoo] at perhaps the last public baptismal service he ever performed when she was eight years old.” Arthur Welling recorded, “My father, Job Welling, was a handcart pioneer of 1856. A venerable patriarch of the Alpine Stake, hearing my father’s name, once said to me, ‘I helped your father bury one of your brothers on the plains of Iowa’ adding ‘be as good a man as your father.’” He said he wished to pass on that challenge to other young men of the Church, “Be as good a man as your father.”

Lastly the letters reach out with love, excitement, and great optimism across the years to members of the Church in Minnesota. Few expected to live to see the Jubilee Box opened, yet all left words of counsel, comfort, and love. Phoebe Welling perhaps expressed it best: “It gives me a feeling of joyous pleasure akin to excitement [to greet you]. It is my nature to seek and give happiness. Always I feel that just around the corner something very worthwhile and satisfying is lurking. . . . So now as I greet you, I greet you wholeheartedly.”

“My greetings and prayers are extended to you,” wrote Margaret Maslin. “The road of life is hard to traverse, the way is weary to all especially when we gape upon life thru eyes bedimmed by materialistic desires. But when we clear our sight and walk in humility and faith, gazing thru the brighter eyes of the spirit, how unbelievably noble, filled with grandeur, the rarest of opportunities and joys life appears.”

Thirty-year-old Pearl Chaney counseled, “Be of good

cheer always no matter what you are called to go through. Go on with [a] song in your heart.”

“May you be given strength in the discharge of your duty,” wrote Elder Arthur Smith to the missionary who would be president of the South Minnesota District in 1980, “that your works may be the works of righteousness making of that unborn day the best day that the world has ever known.” Ingeborg Malmgren prayed, “May we meet in that great beyond where no tears or sorrows enter in,” and bade all a “most loving farewell.” Olive Larson’s hope for her grandchildren was “to meet you, every one, and know you in the great beyond. I will be looking for you all, and I will be so disappointed if I don’t see you all there.” Alice Bell counseled the sisters, “May the Lord bless you with a faith that shall make you do your share to bring this wonderful work to its culmination.”

Fifteen-year-old Darrel Brady, the youngest contributor to the Jubilee Box, told of his activity in the branch’s Boy Scout Troop 118 and his desire to serve a mission in due time. He closed his letter, written to his future children and grandchildren, by saying, “I must go back now to my youth and wait for you and the things that shall follow.”

The letters of the Jubilee Box seem to have it all—curiosity and excitement about the future, reflections on 1930 conditions in the Church in Minnesota, and faith that things would only get better and better if members remained diligent. Ties to early Church history provided continuity over 150 years of growth, and the fervent testimonies would strike harmonious notes in modern testimony meetings. The writers speak to us of our common past and future, reaffirming that through dedication and perseverance the Saints can overcome the world and achieve peace.

Perhaps Julius Hoerlyck summed it all up best in the poem composed specially for the Jubilee Box in his distinctive homemade style. He is fondly remembered for always closing his remarks or testimony by telling the members in his heavy German accent, “I luf you all!” His poem, convey-

ing a heartfelt message of counsel, testimony, and vision, is, in its own way, truly inspired.

GREETINGS 1930-1980

Tick-tock-tick-tock goes our clock
Our clock repeats tick-tock-tick-tock
Relentless does the time go on
For us that left our work undone.
But sweet and peaceful do we rest
If we have done our honest best.
We cannot bid the time to stay,
But work and progress while we may.
While we are still on mother earth
We have to show what we are worth.

It's not so much success or failure
That counts and measures up our labor;
But our earnest true intent
By which we strive to gain the end.
Although the end lies still concealed,
We had enough to us revealed
That we may progress, live and learn;
And finally full salvation earn.
God gives us vision, strength and love,
He grants His spirit from above.
We feel His hand, its guiding power
Is always with us every hour.
For all these blessings does He give
That we may learn His way to live.

This testimony do we bear
To you and people everywhere:
God lives and in these latter days
Has shown and opened up the ways
To joyful life and exaltation,
And through the Gospel—life, salvation.

Great is the work we have to do
For us and for our dear ones too.
May our souls with love abound
To do this work on Zion's mound.
In faith we look forward to you

To finish what we could not do,
The work we had to leave undone,
We leave for you to carry on.
In temples that will be erected
Within our midst, as we expected.
We pray God's blessings on your head
To lead you on, as He has led
Your sisters, fifty years ago
So will he bless you even so.
With courage, faith, with love and cheer
And keep His holy spirit ever near.
He'll hear your prayer every day
And answer them his own best way.

We offer you the season's greeting,
We wish we could attend your meeting.
We hope you may appreciate
That which we write this far off date.
When you have read all we have said,
Please sing the song, "True to the Faith."

Julius Hoerlyck
Minneapolis, Minnesota
U.S.A.

The jubilee box was truly a buried treasure for all members of the Minneapolis stake, reaching across the years to share its richness and show that, even during dark times, there is reason to rejoice.

*A Generation of
Community Building,*

1918-45

BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD wars—1918 to 1945—the congregations in Minneapolis and St. Paul grew slowly, at least numerically. Baptisms for the whole North Central States Mission remained low: only 1,955 for the twenty-three years between 1925 and 1948—an average of 81 per year. In only six years did baptisms top 100. The lowest baptizing year was 1946, at the end of World War II, when the mission recorded only 28 baptisms, reflecting an almost total absence of full-time male missionaries (NCM, annual reports). And this in a mission covering three and a half states and parts of Canada!

At the end of 1930, Minnesota's 789 Church members were scattered all over its three mission districts. Arden Nichols, who left the St. Paul Branch in 1924 to work in Utah, returned twenty-one years later in 1945. "The branch was pretty much the same as when I left," he recalls. "Some of the older folks had died and their children grown up, but I pretty much knew everybody in the branch in 1945" (1988, 7).

Numbers on paper, however, cannot convey what was happening in the lives of the members and in the branches where there was a great ongoing process of internal maturation. This is best seen in evidences of institutional maturity and independence, as well as in the intangible sense of com-

munity which served as a source of cohesion, bonding the members to each other and uniting them firmly.

Local Leadership

The first sign of institutional maturity was the growing ability of local priesthood holders to assume positions of leadership heretofore held by full-time missionaries. After 1922, training local leaders to assume even more administrative duties in the branches had received great emphasis. By 1928, mission president John G. Allred reported that “in most cases the entire responsibility [of the branches] is being assumed by the branch presidencies,” freeing full-time elders for more missionary work and promoting “faith and good fellowship among the members” (NCM 31 Dec. 1928). The elders continued to serve as district presidents, liaisons in priesthood authority between the branch presidencies and the mission president; but that, too, began to change and local members assumed district-wide responsibilities. For example, in 1930 Julius Hoerlyck was given responsibility for supervising genealogy work in the mission (NCM 8 June 1930). Martin C. Ostvig, great-grandson of Eli and Margaret Houghton, served as president of the South Minnesota District for several years, the first local leader called in that capacity. Likewise, in 1949, Stewart W. Peterson, recently released as president of the St. Paul Branch, was called to preside over the North Minnesota District (1949-53).

Visits by General Authorities

Local members enthusiastically supported Church programs and institutions. Annually a General Authority toured the mission, usually an apostle. The Saints looked forward to these “up close and personal” visits. In 1928 when Apostle David O. McKay attended the mission conference in Minneapolis, the crowd overflowed the hall and anxious listeners stood clustered at the open doors—the largest of any

meetings held in the Minneapolis chapel (NCM 17 June 1928). In September 1935 when George Albert Smith came, three hundred people jammed the Fourteenth Avenue chapel in Minneapolis; some had driven sixty miles to be there (NCM 1 Sept. 1935).

These mission tours were not weekend affairs but instead lasted sometimes two or three weeks. In company with the mission president, the General Authority would visit Church units and missionaries in each area, preaching wherever possible and meeting the Saints. The small numbers of Church members enabled the visitors to meet and shake hands with everybody, a priceless memory to be cherished by the local Saints. Even more important, a General Authority would return to an area every four or five years. Over the years, members and leaders developed close, personal ties. Local members felt personal loyalties to leaders, as well as institutional loyalty. The leaders, in turn, developed a sensitivity to and history of developments on the local level, noting and appreciating the members' efforts. The sense of unity was deep and rich, reinforced by many meetings and events. Those who enjoyed this intimacy view the growth of the Church since the late 1960s, despite its excitement and inspiration, with a deep sense of loss. Despite the many gains, exploding Church population curtailed the in-depth visiting by General Authorities that made them personal friends, as well as revered leaders, on the local level and undoubtedly deprived them of the sustained relationships over time that meant they had their fingers on the pulse of the Church in a way that is now impossible.

Institutional Growth

The year 1939 saw an attempt to divide the St. Paul and Minneapolis branches into four units, "two strong branches and two new units in distant parts of the cities" (NCM 26 Sept. 1939). Although the division did not last, it definitely pointed the way toward future growth.

The Primary had been the last auxiliary to receive emphasis, but it flourished during the 1930s through the special nurturing provided by sister missionaries who actively organized primaries all over the state. The first had been organized in St. Paul in the summer of 1925 by Sisters Matilda Tueller and Iva Mortensen (NCM 9 Aug. 1925). The sisters saw particular advantages in teaching in home settings because there they could reach parents as well as children. President Welling's 1930 annual report claimed twenty primaries functioning in the mission with an enrollment of over four hundred children, mostly nonmembers. During that year, several mission-wide Primary conferences had been held, including one in St. Paul in November (NCM 23 Nov. 1930) and Sarah Orem, a sister missionary from Tooele, Utah, had been assigned to live at the mission home and lead both the mission's primaries and its Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Associations (NCM 31 Dec. 1930).

Tithing and fast offering receipts increased each year as members became more committed to their financial obligations. In 1930 and 1931 Arthur Welling sent letters to members throughout the mission, encouraging them to participate in tithing settlement by mail if they could not meet with their branch president in person. One hundred of the self-addressed envelopes he enclosed with the tithing letter were returned (NCM 31 March 1931). In 1942, the St. Paul Branch experimented with a plan for more financial stability: members paid budgets in a brown envelope and were issued a card admitting them to monthly "budget" events. The program was so successful that it was adopted mission-wide.

Gradually local members, always supportive of missionary work, became increasingly important in local and church-wide missionary efforts. Through the 1910s and 1920s, street meetings were a usual means of preaching the gospel. In a typical street meeting, missionaries would gather on a city corner, sing a hymn to attract attention, and then preach to those who stopped to listen. "We loved to go with the missionaries to street meetings," recalls Ruth Nichols. "There

might be fifteen or twenty of us, and we'd gather on the sidewalk. . . . We used to try to sing loud so that we would attract the pedestrians walking around. The street meetings were often on Saturdays, and the next morning at church you could tell who had been to the street meeting because they were so hoarse" (1988, 4).

Soon, however, local members got involved in additional missionary work themselves. In 1928, the North Central States mission sent out its first missionary, Bert L. Murphy of the Harlem Branch (Montana). John Higgins seems to have been the first full-time missionary sent out from Minnesota. He served in California (1928-31) before there was even a branch in Rochester. By the late 1930s, the Twin Cities branches began sending the children of their early members on full-time missions. Nels Larsen, the son of Gunda Larsen, served in Norway from 1935 to 1937. (In 1980-81, Nels again filled a full-time mission to Norway from the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, this time with his wife, Virginia.) Other missionaries sent out during the late 1930s were Darrel Brady (Germany), Raymond Moe (Norway), Adell W. Cain's sons, Robert Cain (California), and William Cain (Southern States), and the twin sons of Charles and Lillie May Rose, Rodger Rose (Brazil 1935-39), and Rolland Rose (Germany 1936-39). After World War II, Edward Markgraf left for northern California from Minneapolis Branch (NCM 13 Oct. 1944). The St. Paul Branch also began sending out missionaries, including its first full-time lady missionary, Luella Louise Petersen (later Bergstrom) (Texas, 1941-43), the daughter of Everett F. and Louise Petersen, and the first missionary couple from the branch, Ruth and Arden Nichols (Hawaii 1947-49).

In January 1931, President Heber J. Grant instructed all the mission presidents by letter to "enlist the services of worthy local brethren and sisters" to supplement the efforts of the full-time missionaries wherever possible. Thus, the local missionary program (known today as the stake missionary program) was born. In 1932 in St. Paul, eight local missionar-

ies were set apart to “do missionary work as their time allows,” a trend that quickly mushroomed (NCM 24 Apr. 1932). A year later, the local missionaries in the Twin Cities greatly outnumbered the full-time missionaries—sixty-seven to forty (NCM 31 Mar. 1933).

A Maturing Sense of Community

Besides these institutional indicators of maturity, however, perhaps the most important achievement during this time was intangible: these Minnesota Mormons established a genuine community which met many of its members’ social and cultural needs as well as their religious hungers. They developed a strong sense of group identity and loyalty. Their testimonies had separated them from the world, and they came together like a family for nurture and support. As early as 6 October 1900, the *Deseret Evening News* reported that eighty members had enjoyed a picnic at White Bear Lake. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Saints in Minneapolis and St. Paul regularly celebrated birthdays, the Fourth of July, Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year’s Eve, Halloween, and July 24th (Utah Pioneer Day). Eagerly anticipated and long cherished, these socials rapidly became a tradition, reinforced by spontaneous or ad hoc gatherings.

They went on picnics, sang together, had hayrides, played games, cheered for each other at softball games, held street dances (which quickly wore out shoe leather, but no one cared), whirled through Gold and Green Balls, and celebrated summer with watermelon busts. They went to parks, homes, sometimes hotels and restaurants, and later, when they had them, chapels. Sometimes these events were combined with baptismal or other services. In 1916, for example, a hundred members attended the Memorial Day picnic in Como Park at which a priesthood meeting was later held (NCM 30 May 1916). It was easy matter to turn a picnic at one of Minnesota’s beautiful lakes into a baptismal service.

For years, Charles and Lillie May Rose, who lived on



The Minneapolis Branch Primary's Valentine's Day party, 14 February 1948.



The Minneapolis-St. Paul members enjoy a hayride during the late 1940s.

Lake Minnetonka, opened their home for a Fourth of July celebration. It provided a perfect vantage point for the late evening fireworks over the water. Elaine Peterson remembered an early Halloween party in the North Grotto chapel where the young people rigged up a spook alley in the basement with its entrance down the coal chute (n.d., 4). Increasingly they used these socials, even Christmas parties, to raise needed money for building funds, missionary support, and other worthy projects.

But the most important thing about the socials was that everyone was included, young and old and in-between. "We played together and we stayed together," was the motto. Even after the Twin Cities branch was permanently divided in 1914, the members frequently got together for socials, supported each other's building funds, and anticipated conferences where friendships could be renewed. And nothing could be done without the missionaries. The community functioned like one big family, and the missionaries were an especially



The North Central States Mission home, 1949-70, at 2219 Pillsbury Avenue, Minneapolis. Photograph taken about 1960, courtesy of Jim Ogilvie.



Elders Morris Rowley, left, and Calvin J. Nelson hard at work in Little Falls, Minnesota, 1939. Courtesy Donna R. Nelson Maughn, Calvin Nelson's daughter and currently the stake Primary president.

During the 1940s and 1950s, missionary attire included a hat. The elders didn't care much for them and often threatened to "throw it in the Mississippi" when they boarded the train for home at the old Burlington Northern station in Minneapolis. Here, Elder Glen James Wiese poses proudly as his headgear flies off to the left. Courtesy of Betty Erickson.



important part of it. They often spent their whole missions in one area, sometimes serving in leadership positions in the district and branches. Their lives and activities were an integral part of the fabric of this growing Mormon community. "When they went home," says Ruth Nichols, "we gave them bigger farewells than they got when they left for the mission field. We'd go down to the train, and, figuring they were released, the girls all kissed the missionaries goodbye" (1988, 5). The girls also looked forward to the occasional MIA meetings when the elders came "by assignment" to teach dancing. The girls "would be lined up for a block waiting to get a dance with the missionaries" (Nichols 1988, 6). It was a common practice for missionaries to have their photographs printed on the front of post cards and pass them out to friends and members along with Articles of Faith cards. Many families—particularly boys for whom the missionaries were special role models—collected and saved these cards much as boys today collect baseball cards.

The sense of family extended across the state. Stewart W. Peterson, who served for twelve years as president of the St. Paul Branch and then as North Minnesota District president (1949-53), was a one-man host committee. He vigorously encouraged members from outlying areas to come to district conferences (usually held in the Twin Cities) and to participate in the meetings and the socials that were often held as part of conference. Branch leaders and members from the Twin Cities traveled monthly to the outlying districts, participating in picnics and outings. If a Twin Cities branch produced a play or entertainment, it wasn't over until they'd taken it "on the road" to the outlying members. "It was the aim of the [mission district]" explained Elaine Peterson, "to make everyone that was on the records of the Church feel as if they were part of a family" (n.d., 6).

Leaders put untold miles on their cars as they visited and drew people in. Often they felt confirmation of the Spirit as they did this. Once Stewart and Elaine Peterson were returning from Brainerd when they felt a prompting to stop

and visit an elderly sister ill in a nursing home. Despite the late hour, they turned the car around and found the sister. "Oh, I have been praying that you would come," she told them. She then gave them some special instructions about her genealogy. It was the last time they saw her alive (E. Peterson n.d., 7).

World War II

This deepening sense of community and commitment to each other and to the Church helped the members weather the depression and yet another world war. At the beginning of hostilities in 1939, the North Central States Mission actually benefited, as it had at the beginning of World War I, as missionaries evacuated from Europe were reassigned to state-side missions to complete their terms. The North Central States Mission got over thirty and continued to receive new elders in dwindling numbers until July 1942. But for the rest of that year, no new missionaries arrived in the field. In all of 1943, only six new missionaries were assigned to the North Central States. One was a local brother and another a "short-term" elder (NCM 29 Oct. 1943). Many mission districts lost all missionaries for the duration: Thunder Bay Branch, East and West North Dakota, Bismarck, Yellowstone, Manitoba, Winnipeg, and Duluth. Increasingly, missionary work was carried on by sister missionaries, both full-time and local. Sometimes couples served. And sometimes it was not done at all. By the end of the war, there were only twenty full-time missionaries in the whole mission (Nichols 1988, 8).

The members, responsible now for their own spiritual needs, gallantly rose to the challenge. Newly appointed mission president William L. Killpack praised the members on 21 May 1944 in the mission history: "Everywhere we went, we found the Saints with their lamps trimmed manifesting the same faith as that which made the Church strong in the early days."

The isolation allowed local Saints to improvise and in-

novate their own ways of doing things. One of these innovations was the St. Paul Branch's annual Christmas candlelight services. The services were "just like regular sacrament meetings," except that at the beginning all the young people filed in, dressed in choir robes, carrying lighted candles, and singing "Adeste Fideles," according to Arden Nichols (1988, 9). Local members appreciated the pageantry which continued for four or five years, but the mission president stopped it as being a "little too Protestant." Many members of the Minneapolis Branch lobbied for similar candlelight services, but without success.

The congregations felt direct impact from the war as they sent off their young men to the armed forces. Over twenty served from the Twin Cities branches. Kenneth Miller (St. Paul Branch) and Robert A. Swanson (Minneapolis Branch) were killed in action.

Despite the anti-Japanese sentiment prevalent in the country, the St. Paul Branch also welcomed LDS Japanese-American servicemen who were with a larger group at Fort Snelling in a Japanese language training school there. The army wanted soldiers fluent in Japanese to help with counter-



LDS Japanese-American servicemen attending the St. Paul Branch on North Grotto in the early 1940s while they were stationed at Fort Snelling. Courtesy of Arden and Ruth Nichols.

intelligence and, anticipating victory, the post-war occupation of Japan. One of these Nisei men was Adney Y. Komatsu of Honolulu; he was sustained to the First Quorum of the Seventy—the first General Authority of Oriental ancestry—in 1975.

Local members and congregations planted victory gardens and threw their energies to the war effort in every way possible. On 8 May 1945, members of the Minneapolis Branch celebrated VE Day with “prayers of thanksgiving and songs of rejoicing” (NCM). Along with all Americans, they were ready to put the long years of war and depression behind them.

Post-war Growth

By early 1946 the barometer measuring Church growth in Minnesota was rapidly rising. After the years of famine, the mission president was struggling to train the avalanche of new missionaries. The mission history records almost-weekly arrivals—sometimes only two or three at a time, but often in groups of ten or twelve, and once seventeen. On 5 October 1946 President Killpack reported that the missionary force had doubled since April, with sixty-eight full-time and forty local missionaries serving. Five months later, eighty-five missionaries attended a conference of just the two Minnesota districts (NCM 29 March 1947). Six months after that, 110 missionaries gave reports in missionary meetings in St. Paul (NCM 20 Sept. 1947). All of the cities that had formerly had missionaries were reopened.

President Heber J. Grant, who had died in 1945 at the war's end, had devoted much effort to improving the Church's image, thereby enabling it to communicate its message without the distortions of prejudice and helping it take its rightful place in the larger society. His successor, President George Albert Smith, continued this effort, and Minnesotans began to capitalize on a more accepting American society and assume a more visible and respectable role as

contributors to the larger culture. In 1947, Minneapolis Branch's thirty-three-member choir gave an hour and a half program at the Congregational Church in Faribault which was "well received." In the summer of 1947 (the centennial year of the pioneers' entry into the Salt Lake Valley), missionaries and members staged a commemorative pageant in four local parks, Como, Phalan, Lake Harriet, and Minnehaha (NCM 24-28 July 1947). In 1952 when the BYU basketball team came to Minneapolis to play Hamline, Colleen Kay Hutchins, the first LDS Miss America, accompanied them. Missionaries and members vigorously promoted the game and, at a personal invitation from the missionaries, Governor E. Elmer Anderson attended (NCM 29 Oct. and 21 Nov. 1951).

Perhaps the Church's best public relations effort during this time was the nine-member "LDS Mission Orchestra" and the "Mormonaire," a "music district" of full-time missionaries organized in November 1949 under the direction of newly appointed mission president John B. Hawkes. They traveled throughout the mission, playing for dances and performing before a wide variety of audiences. By January 1950, the two-month-old group had toured 7,000 miles, "made contact" with 24,000 people, performed on 55 school programs, played for 27 public dances, made 23 radio broadcasts, and played for Gold and Green Balls in all parts of the mission. All the dances opened and closed with prayer and were "conducted on LDS standards to show the young people of the world that they have a right to expect fine cultural entertainment" (NCM 11 Jan. 1950). The musical district continued to function for several years, supplemented in 1952 by a chorus of sister missionaries (NCM 24 Feb. 1950).

President Hawkes also organized a mission basketball team as a way of making contacts with nonmembers. The elders practiced basketball in the mornings and did their regular missionary work in the afternoon. They were defeated at the University of North Dakota by the freshman team, but the Mormonaire entertained during half time, and the pos-



"The Mormonaires," the popular North Central States missionary orchestra about 1950. Left: Burthel B. Mayhew, William R. Siddoway, Stanton E. Schmidt, Kenneth R. Sloods [?], Lee W. Robins, Robert K. Passey, LeVin Duwall, DeMar Duwall, David J. Carruth, and E. Armand Ashby.

itive publicity meant more to them than a winning score (NCM 20 Feb. 1950). In the Minneapolis Armory, they played the Northwestern Bible College team and won 48 to 36, raising \$2,000 for the Minneapolis Branch building fund. Half-time entertainment included a film on Temple Square (NCM 11 March 1950). In Austin they played a preliminary game on the same program with the Harlem Globetrotters (NCM 11 Jan. 1950). Perhaps their most unusual game was against the Rolling Gophers, a team of World War II veterans who had lost one or both legs and were confined to wheelchairs. They accepted the Gophers' challenge to play in wheel chairs, and the much-publicized game was broadcast over Minneapolis's local station WDGY. Although the missionaries lost 34-36, they "won the respect and admiration of the crowd for their good sportsmanship and talent" (NCM 11 Jan. 1950) and filled the half time with short talks, a performance by the Mormonaires, and an Indian dance by an elder from Arizona.

In short, the decades between the wars and World War II itself were times of social abrasion, when money was tight and physical resources were scarce. By repeated decisions to put each other and the gospel first, Minnesota's Saints proved their faith in the gospel, building slowly but very surely and very solidly on the foundation of a previous generation. Like a strong family, they had weathered the storm. When post-war expansion came, characterized by more missionaries, rapid growth, and more money for facilities, the Mormon community was ready to capitalize on new opportunities.

6

The Impact of Utah Mormons,

1945-60

AFTER 1945, ANOTHER POST-war phenomenon—the in-migration of members of the Church who had been nurtured in the Mormon core areas of the Rocky Mountains—began to heavily influence Mormon congregations in Minnesota. Their growing presence in Minneapolis and St. Paul changed the makeup of the Mormon community drastically, brought the Church here great blessings, and also posed some challenges to local congregations.

In the 1800s, Mormons usually left Utah with clear intentions of returning after they had gleaned specific knowledge with which to benefit their community. They were like “a bee which visits gay flowers in its quest for honey,” wrote James E. Talmage in his journal when he left Utah in 1883 in search of better education, but whose “end is to return to the hive with its treasure” (in Talmage 1972, 48).

For example, Utah’s shortage of medical doctors caused acute problems in many of the western settlements, especially for expectant mothers and children. Encouraged by Brigham Young during the 1870s, more than ten Mormon women studied medicine in the East, most often at the Women’s Medical College in Philadelphia, which was one of the few institutions that admitted women. They then returned to Utah to set up medical practices, establish hospitals, and teach other women midwifery. In 1890, the Church modestly financed five “art missionaries” to study in Paris in return for artistic services they would render on their return home, specifically,

creating the murals in the Salt Lake Temple, completed in 1894.

By the end of the century, it was more common for young people “with a streak of the adventuresome” to leave for personal reasons, rather than on assignment. Thus, they acquired training and took advantage of economic opportunities unavailable to them in Utah. Out-migration, as historians and sociologists term this process, can best be understood in terms of “push” factors, which provided an impetus to leave, and “pull” factors, which drew Mormons away from Utah.

The first push factor, as has been seen, was Utah’s inability to supply first-class advanced education. The University of Utah in Salt Lake City (originally founded in 1850 as the University of Deseret), Brigham Young University in Provo (originally founded in 1876 as Brigham Young Academy), and the Utah State University in Logan (originally founded as Brigham Young College in 1888) were still primarily high schools, just beginning to offer collegiate-level classes in the early 1900s (Allen 1978, 593). Utah had no professional schools to train doctors or lawyers.

Promising students at these schools were frequently encouraged by enthusiastic professors to go on to graduate schools; and despite the enormous financial difficulties involved, a significant number did so. Each institution seemed to have a handful of professors who, by their encouragement, helped “push” students out of Utah. One was the University of Utah’s Maud May Babcock, a New York native educated in the East and in Europe and a convert to the Church, who knew firsthand the advantages to be gained in “the world.” She taught oratory, speech, drama, and physical education, and not only encouraged, but even accompanied summer students, to study at other institutions (Price 1970, 2). Dr. Thomas L. Martin, a professor of agriculture at BYU, “made a kind of career” of sending hundreds of students on to graduate schools—reportedly more than any other professor. Others, like Joseph Marion Tanner at Utah State, did the same

(Blake 1989, 2). The desire for advanced education, coupled with such encouragement from mentors, prompted many to leave the mountain valleys to see what the larger world could offer.

Corresponding “pull” factors to these “pushes” were the lure of great schools in the East and the widely diversified economy and social life which offered employment opportunities not available in Utah. Growing numbers of these students developed a desire to optimize their situations by using their training in wider fields. This often meant living away from Utah. This new generation was increasingly hospitable to the idea of making homes in California, New York, or even Minnesota, putting down roots, and building a permanent life outside Utah.

Students came first to eastern schools, but those in the Upper Midwest did not long go unnoticed. By 1901 forty LDS students from Utah were attending the University of Chicago. “A faithful lot,” according to the mission history, they were such a help to the missionaries in Chicago that German Ellsworth reassigned his full-time missionaries for a time and “left the preaching to be done by our students” (NSM 24 July 1901, 7 Apr. 1906). By 1919 a “large number of western people” were also attending the chiropractic school in Davenport, Iowa, while Maud May Babcock arrived at the University of Wisconsin in Madison the next summer with a group of students (NSM 26 Oct. 1919, 20 June 1920).

The mission history’s first mention of Utah students at the University of Minnesota came at the close of World War I when Brother E. B. Brassard brought his unnamed wife and her sister “to study and [also] teach at the University of Minnesota” (NSM 10 June 1919). For the next twenty years, a few Utah students found their way to the northland. After World War II, the trickle became a flood. Over the past four decades, hundreds of Mormon students have been trained at the university in such diverse fields as educational psychology, sociology, theater, music, agriculture, and medicine. In 1956, Clyde Parker, whose reputation for excellence in edu-

cational psychology drew students to Minnesota for over fifteen years in the 1950s and 1960s, counted twenty-two Ph.D.'s or Ph.D. candidates in one "rather small" St. Paul Branch sacrament meeting (Parker 1986, 8).

The University of Minnesota's strong pull was reinforced by its excellent LDS faculty members who were prominent in their fields. Andrew T. Rasmussen, a native of Spring City, Utah, earned his Ph.D. at Cornell University in 1916, began teaching neuro-anatomy at the University of Minnesota in 1921, and was the first recorded LDS professor there. He sometimes lectured on "The Word of Wisdom Corroborated by Medical Research" and other related topics to appreciative Twin Cities members (NSM 13 Sept. 1921).

Other professors followed. Metallurgist Thomas Joseph from Beaver City, Utah, was a specialist in smelting iron ore and helped develop the taconite process which enabled Minnesota to exploit its Iron Range. He was named assistant dean of the Institute of Technology in 1950 and retired from the university in 1963 after twenty-eight years (Blake 1989, 7).

Frank "Doc" Whiting came to Minnesota from Utah in 1937 to get his Ph.D. in theater, then stayed to teach and head the department for over thirty-six years. In 1970 he conceived and set up the popular Show Boat, an old river steamboat converted to a theater which is permanently moored on the Mississippi near the Minneapolis campus. It continues to run a full summer production season each year. He was also instrumental in convincing Sir Tyrone Guthrie to establish the now famous regional Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis (Hoffman 1988, 1).

Reuben Hill, an internationally influential sociologist from the 1960s until his death in 1985, was affiliated with the university and was named Regents' Professor of Family Sociology in 1976.

O. Meredith Wilson, a former studentbody president and teacher at BYU, earned a Ph.D. in history (1943) from the University of California at Berkeley, was a professor at the University of Utah and the University of Chicago, then

became president of the University of Oregon in 1954. In 1960, he was named president of the University of Minnesota, serving seven years. Wilson Library on the west bank of the Minneapolis campus is named in his honor. His prominence helped correct criticisms levelled at the Church that Mormons were all uneducated country bumpkins.

Lowry Nelson retired from the University of Minnesota in 1958 after a twenty-one-year teaching career in rural sociology. A native of Ferron, Utah, he graduated from Brigham Young Academy and earned an undergraduate degree at Utah State University before completing a Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in 1929. His book, *The Mormon Village: A Pattern and Technique of Land Settlement* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1952), is a classic still used by geographers and sociologists today (Lowry n.d.). Many other names could be added to this distinguished list.

By the late 1970s, thirty-one LDS professors were affiliated with the university including Roy D. Wilcoxson (plant pathology), George Blake (soils), Gordon B. Davis (management information), Wayne J. Anderson (general education), Lavell Henderson (biochemistry), Edmund F. Graham (animal science), Clifford Wilcox (agriculture), Donald C. Rasmusson (agronomy and plant genetics), and Howard Morris (food science and nutrition), Alan R. Anderson (educational psychology), and Douglas Dearden (anatomy), to name a few. These fine professors were a strong pull factor to hundreds of LDS students deciding where to get the best education. Many of these students in turn went on to achieve high recognition themselves and are scattered all over the country.

The University of Minnesota School of Medicine, which pioneered heart surgery after World War II, trained many of the prominent Mormon surgeons and doctors now practicing in Utah and other areas. The surgery department was chaired by Dr. Owen H. Wangensteen, internationally renowned and considered by many as the outstanding surgical teacher of the age (Nelson 1990, 1). Over the years, a “kind of pipeline” had been established between the Uni-



A dinner party of the Minneapolis Branch MIA held in a local hotel about 1949. Standing left: Art Patch (cropped off), Dorothy Anderson, Joyce Hawkes, Laura McIntire Hawkes, Mission President John B. Hawkes, Harold B. Hulme, Joyce Thorson, Phyllis Riggs, Jack Prellwitz, Marv Anderson, Joy Jensen, Russell M. Nelson, Dantzel Nelson, Harold Anderson, Ed Parry, Margaret Walker, Rodger Rose, Edythe Rose, Darlene Lenzen, (unidentified), Ruth Anderson, Mary Eleanor Swenson, Marion Groesbeck, Mary Ostvig, and Martin C. Ostvig (cropped off). Seated at the left table, back: Dorothy Patch, Corinne Ottley, Don Swenson, Winona Swenson, Russell Swenson, Sister Larson, Freeman Larson, Ed Markgraf, Jack Ostvig, and Bill Groesbeck. Seated at the right table, back: Joe Leach, Jr., Sister Joe Leach, Sr., Joe Leach, Sr., Sister Franke, Brother Franke, Gary Munson, Eldon Anderson, George Tischer, Joan Ellingwood, and two full-time missionaries (not identified). Photograph belonging to Dr. Harold B. Hulme, supplied by Elder Russell M. Nelson.

versity of Utah and the University of Minnesota medical schools. Of the fifty-five students who graduated from the University of Utah medical school in 1955, eight came to Minnesota to further their training (Jenkins 1989, 9).

But the “pipeline” had started earlier than that. Russell M. Nelson and his wife, Dantzel, had arrived in Minneapolis in September 1947 with “little more than hope, faith, and willingness to work” to begin post-medical school training (Nelson 1990, 6). At the university, Russell’s interests in research were enhanced when he was selected to participate in the laboratory work of Dr. Clarence Dennis, which developed the artificial heart-lung machine. This experience proved pivotal to Russell’s ultimate career in cardiovascular surgery. Their team reported a monumental milestone at the American College of Surgeons 16-23 October 1949 in Chicago—successfully sustaining an experimental animal for thirty minutes on an artificial heart-lung machine, then having the animal survive (Nelson 1990, 3). At the university, Russell met another University of Utah graduate, Conrad B. Jenson. They were professional colleagues in thoracic and cardiovascular surgery in Salt Lake City until Russell’s call to serve on the Council of the Twelve in 1984 (Nelson 1990, 4).

Among other prominent LDS physicians trained in Minnesota are Homer Warner, L. Stephen Richards, Jr. (who served as a counselor in the stake presidency during his Minnesota years), and Wallace V. Jenkins.

The idea that Minnesota enjoyed a climate conducive to physical health originated with its first territorial promoters. (Extremes of hot and cold climates were considered beneficial in the nineteenth century.) Probably the early entreaties of George Miller and Alpheus Cutler that Joseph Smith consider western Wisconsin as the Saints’ ultimate home were at least partially influenced by this idea; and Cutler was certainly acting on it when he took his followers to Wisconsin temporarily to escape Nauvoo’s fevers and ague. Although the Mormons went west instead, many non-Mormons came

to Minnesota for health considerations. Among them was Dr. William Warrell Mayo, father of William James and Charles Horace Mayo. In 1889, he chose Rochester as the site of the now world-famous Mayo Clinic. This prestigious clinic also became a pull factor for young LDS physicians completing their training. Reed Clegg, the first full-time orthopedic surgeon in Utah, completed his training in surgery there during World War II, served until war's end in the European theatre, and then returned to Salt Lake City to found his practice (Clegg 1986). J. D. Mortensen from Thatcher, Arizona, was a fellow at the clinic from 1951 to 1956. During his training as a thoracic cardiovascular surgeon, he also served as president of the Rochester Branch. In 1954, two missionaries knocked on the door of Dr. Markham J. Anderson and his wife Missy in Rochester. They sold Missy a Book of Mormon for fifty cents and made an appointment to return. The Andersons were baptized the next year. Dr. Anderson was a third-generation surgeon at the Mayo Clinic; Will and Charles Mayo had persuaded his grandfather to move to Rochester from Maine in 1892 at the age of fifty to become their first partner in the fledgling clinic. Mark Anderson's subsequent contributions to the Church included serving as bishop of the Rochester Ward (1965-70). These doctors were only three of many LDS physicians and surgeons connected with the clinic over the years.

In a similar way, Mormons began coming to Minnesota seeking jobs after the turn of the century. Clarence Bigelow, early president of the Minneapolis Branch, and Everett F. Petersen, the second president of the St. Paul Branch, were among the earliest. Some also came as employees of large national companies. E. A. Christensen, who was branch president in Minneapolis (1928-31), was a regional sales director for Hills Brothers Coffee. His motto was "*I don't drink coffee; but if you must, then drink Hills Brothers.*"

Particularly after World War II, the Twin Cities' energetic business climate began to attract LDS employees. Large

numbers were hired to work for such Fortune 500 companies headquartered here as 3M, Honeywell, Control Data, General Mills, Pillsbury, Northwest Airlines, Dayton Hudson, and a host of smaller ones. Many families who came put down deep roots and considered Minnesota their home. Some are still here. Others stayed long enough to make great contributions to the Church in Minnesota before moving on.

Another very important pull factor for these Mormons moving to Minnesota was a sense of mission to relocate; for some of them, it was almost a calling. They recognized that the Church could not grow if all Mormons stayed in Utah or moved there after conversion; perhaps living away from the mountains would benefit both the Church and their families. "We felt we were pioneers. We were moving out into the world," said George Blake, a professor of soils from Utah County who moved to St. Paul in 1955. "There was an attitude of meeting the world on its own terms, particularly in education" (1988, 2).

Most of those who stayed considered it to be an important decision, one on which they sought spiritual guidance. Many of them reported feelings of reassurance and confirmation—that Minnesota would not only be a good place for them but the "right" place, the place the Lord wanted them to be. They felt that somehow there was religious purpose in their move. For example, Thomas A. Holt, his wife Bonnie, and their family moved to St. Paul to take a job with the North Central Companies soon after completing graduate school at BYU in 1965. They enjoyed Minnesota but sometimes wondered if raising their children away from their extended families was worth it, especially when they made the long emotionally exhausting annual trips to Salt Lake. They were "coming home [to Minnesota] from one of these trips and it had been especially hard to leave our families," they relate. "It was late in the evening and the children were all asleep in the back seat as we drove up Highway 35 from Des Moines. When we crossed the Minnesota border and saw the sign 'Welcome to Minnesota' we both had a very strong

spiritual confirmation that this was where the Lord wanted us. That was a great comfort to us, and we've never doubted since" (1989, 10). Tom Holt became the first president of the St. Paul Stake when it was organized in 1976 and currently serves as Regional Representative in the Minnesota Region.

My own family experience is another example. In 1977, when Mark was chosen to be president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, relocating from Philadelphia seemed like an excellent career move. We had both grown up, met, and married in Salt Lake City, then left to complete both undergraduate and graduate school at Columbia in New York City sixteen years earlier where two of our five children had been born. "But I always felt," Mark said, "that there was something more to this move than professional considerations, that there was something the Lord wanted me to do here, some mission to perform." While we were attending our first stake conference in the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, he had the disturbing but powerful feeling during the meetings "that I would be stake president here some day" (1989, 1). I had had the same surprising feelings during those same meetings. Neither one of us said anything to the other because we each felt it would not be appropriate to discuss them. Two years later, when Mark was called to be the fourth president of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, he and I shared, for the first time, those 1977 promptings and went into that calling with a good deal more peace of mind than we might otherwise have had.

Whatever the combination of push or pull that got the westerners here, the effects of their in-migration on the Church in Minnesota were varied, important, and lasting. The first impact, particularly in the 1950s, was a steady increase in the size of the local units. Russell Nelson recalls the "marvelous" branch choir in the small Minneapolis Second Branch, then meeting in the Spiritualists' church. "After the choir performed," he said, "we moved from the seats in the choir loft and returned to become the major part of

the congregation” (1990, 5).¹ The Nelsons, like other Utah move-ins, were dependable members of both the choir and the congregation; but the congregation didn’t stay small long. By the end of the decade, Minneapolis had four branches and St. Paul two. This growth, coupled with convert baptisms, would soon result in the organization of a stake in Minnesota.

Since many of these move-ins were prominent in their fields, they helped focus positive community attention on the Church. For example, in 1952, G. Albin Matson, who was serving as a counselor in the mission presidency, was honored in the *Minneapolis Star* for his research and work in establishing the Minneapolis Memorial Blood Bank. His distinguished career in immunology and serology included a term as the first president of the American Association of Blood Banks. Brother Matson later served on the first high council and as the first patriarch of the Minnesota Stake (1960-64) until he moved from the area (NCM 6 Dec. 1952). He was only one of many who helped bolster the reputation of Mormons in the Twin Cities.

Beginning in 1966, Alfred E. Hall, a Montana native, practicing attorney, and convert to the Church, was elected five times mayor of Burnsville and took a popular and successful stance against the spread of obscenity. He also served two years as a counselor in the stake presidency and as bishop of the Minneapolis Third Ward. In 1972, Robert E. Riggs, professor of political science at the University of Minnesota and a member of the Minneapolis Fourth Ward, was elected mayor of Golden Valley, serving until 1975 when he returned to academic life at Brigham Young University. Riggs’s and

¹Wally Jenkins, who sang in the same choir, remembers with a chuckle that, during the Christmas performance of the *Messiah*, Russell would boom out from the back row of the choir, “For unto *Russ* a son is given.” “We’d say, ‘No, Russ, those aren’t the words to the *Messiah*.’ And he would say, ‘You sing your words and I’ll sing mine!’ ” (Jenkins 1989, 3) (The Nelsons had nine daughters before their only son was born.)

Hall's terms overlapped briefly, so there were two LDS non-native mayors at the same time in the Minneapolis suburban area. Both men were highly respected in their communities.

Another result of the influx of Utah Mormons was to provide leadership to local congregations. This trend began early and has gained strength over the years. As noted earlier, Clarence Bigelow, Everett F. Petersen, and E. A. Christensen, early branch presidents in the Twin Cities, were all westerners. All five presidents of the Minneapolis Stake and eighteen of the twenty counselors who have served with them have been nonnatives with Utah roots. Many local bishops and other priesthood and auxiliary leaders have also been from the West.

The depth in leadership resources had a down side—the third impact. In-migration inevitably challenged the strong sense of local community Minnesota Mormons had developed over the years. At first, some of the students and professors arriving for educational reasons were only semi-active. Upwardly mobile, their educational and professional interests separated them from the largely working-class interests and occupations of the local members. Their strong ties with the university, seeing themselves as “temporary,” and their family bonds in the West also drew them emotionally away from the local units. At the least, it attracted them primarily to other Mormons also connected to the university.

Even for the majority who remained active in the Church, several factors worked against their full integration. The elements of upward mobility, temporariness, and common interests naturally drew the westerners into a tighter orbit with the other university students. Also, perceiving that local members already had the support of family and friend networks, they naturally turned to each others—students and professors like themselves—to create similar networks of emotional and social support, to celebrate holidays together, and to play “family” roles for each other and their children.

This internal arrangement gradually expressed itself structurally. In the fall of 1950, LDS students and faculty under the direction of Professor Wayne J. Anderson organized a Mormon Fellowship on the University of Minnesota campus with fifty students (NCM 21 Oct. 1950). Its goals, as set forth in its constitution, were to “promote good fellowship, . . . make LDS ideals more practical [in the students’] lives; provide intellectual stimulation; furnish cultural adaptations for talents; and foster the religious life at the University of Minnesota” (NCM 21 Oct. 1950). To become a member, a student had to submit an application, be accepted by the Executive Council, and go through a formal pledging procedure, which included paying a one dollar fee. Many, if not most, of the activities, however, were open to anyone who wanted to come. The fellowship planned to meet twice a month and have an additional monthly social. Its first large activity, two months after its organization, was a Christmas Ball at Coffman Union. Five hundred people attended and danced to the music of the Mormonaires (NCM 22 Dec. 1950). The fellowship continued to sponsor popular socials, dinners, roller skating parties, and dances.

The social needs of the LDS students and faculty, as well as those moving from the West to Minnesota for other reasons, were met through another social group that was loosely organized in the early 1950s called the Westerner’s Club. It had little formal structure or functions except for frequent socials, but its name effectively spelled out conditions for membership.² The Westerner’s Club members appreciated it and strongly supported it. For them, it provided a sense of extended family unity which they felt had been keenly missing.

For the “old time” Minnesota members of the Church,

²Similar organizations sprang up at other universities where there was a group of LDS faculty and students. The University of Wisconsin in Madison had its Utah Club, and there was a large and active Utah Club in New York City functioning before World War II.

however, the Westerner's Club was threatening. The local congregations had been built largely from convert baptisms. Some worried that local members' opportunities for Church leadership might be reduced if the already strong Utah people were favored. They also felt left out of club activities and came to resent its implied exclusivity. A significant number of native members were geographically isolated from their extended families or estranged from them because of their membership in the Church. They relied on Church-sponsored events to fill many of their social and cultural needs and sensed that the strong sense of "family" developed over the years was threatened by a competing organization. Although the youth and adults had been welcomed at Mormon Fellowship activities, they quickly noticed that the Westerner's Club excluded them; and since many of the westerners were also leaders in the local branches and mission district, they felt doubly threatened.

The Westerners, for their part, apparently did not see their socials as an extension of their Church activities. That they never intended to form a clique is clear from the resolution of these tensions. As the club became more active and popular, its calendar began to interfere with the scheduling of regular Church events. When the stake was organized in 1960, this problem continued, reinforced by the expressed feelings of exclusion the native members of the Church were suffering. Some of the new stake's leaders stopped supporting the Westerner's socials and let it be known that perhaps the Westerner's Club had taken on a life bigger than ever intended. The club was willingly disbanded within a couple of years, although several small spin-off study groups continued to meet. For all the members, westerners and Minnesotans alike, their testimonies of the gospel and dedication to the Church were stronger and more deeply rooted than their need for social support. Many have successfully worked, following this time, to ease and erase what negative impact the Westerner's Club might have had.

By the mid-1970s, the nature of in-migration had begun

to change. Fewer LDS students were coming to the University of Minnesota, but more Twin Cities businesses were recruiting employees who happened to be LDS. Many of them continued to be Utah natives, but increasingly they also came from California, Washington, New York, or other places. Often, even if they had grown up in Mormon core areas, they had spent their adult working lives away from the Intermountain West.

Typical of this new generation of “indigenous” leaders are Michael D. Fairbourne, the current stake clerk, and his wife, Peggy Goldsmith Fairbourne, who moved to Minneapolis in 1977. Mike was born in Utah but spent most of his childhood in Tennessee where his father worked on the Manhattan Project. When he was a teenager, the family moved to Idaho Falls. After he married Peggy and graduated from the University of Utah, they lived briefly in Idaho Falls where Mike launched his career in broadcasting, spent six years in Portland, Oregon, and then moved to Minneapolis where he is chief meteorologist at WCCO-TV. Stephen W. Hansen was born in Logan and raised in the Washington, D.C.-Baltimore area where he met his wife, Carol Curran, a convert. Instead of returning to Utah for college, he graduated from Wabash College in Indiana and earned a master’s degree from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Steve’s career in retailing took Carol and their eight children to seven different states (Utah was not one), until they moved to Minneapolis in 1981. Several years later, he took an executive position with Norwest Bank and has served as a counselor in the stake presidency since 1984.

David K. Fossum had no Utah roots but was a second-generation Mormon, born in Baker, Oregon. He moved many times while growing up and also during his Air Force career. His wife, Marietta Woodward Fossum, a native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, had joined the Church in her late teens. In 1981, the Fossoms moved their five children to Minneapolis. David served three times as a bishop before coming to the Twin Cities and was called as first president of the stake’s Laotian-

speaking branch, organized in August 1989. This broader base of leadership, typified by these three families, helped to blur the lines between Minnesota natives and Utah Mormons, as Minnesota membership increasingly reflected worldwide growth and population migration patterns.

Despite the tension caused by the immigration of western Mormons, it has been overwhelmingly positive for the Church in Minnesota. Convert baptisms, though rising, could not have produced the strength in numbers and depth of leadership as rapidly as in-migration. As one Minnesotan succinctly put it, "Some people complained, but we loved 'em. We needed 'em." And one visible result was the creation of Minnesota's first stake.

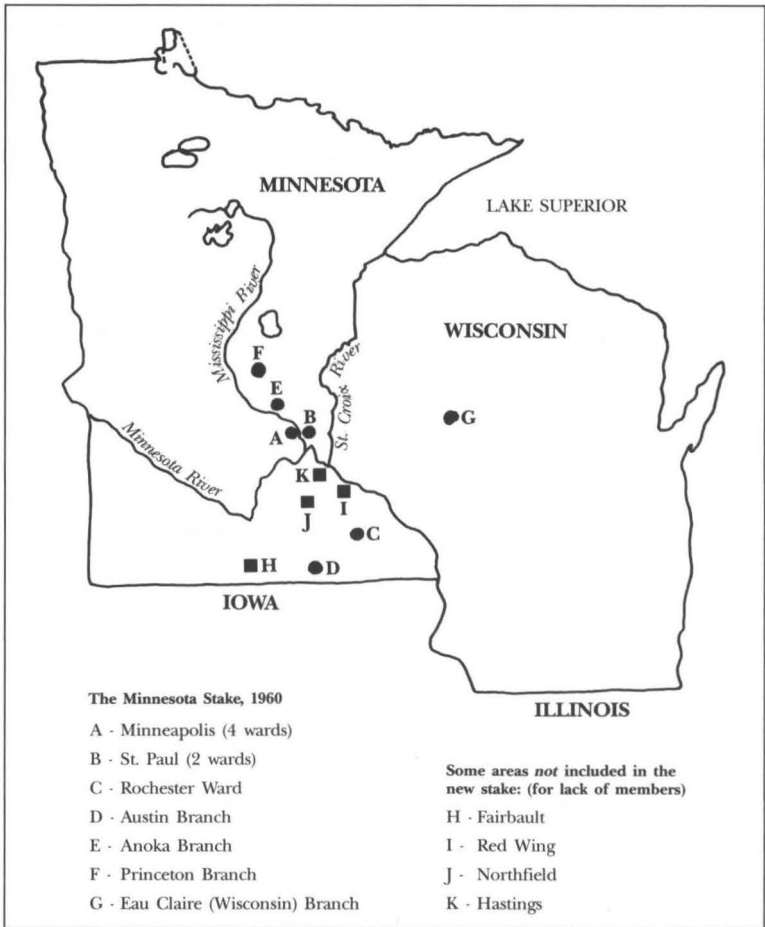
Stakehood,

1960

ON 12 JULY 1953, THE THREE mission districts in Minnesota held a conference in the Twin Cities. The districts were dissolved, and the members were redistributed into two districts, north and south. This was not the first division of the districts into this form, but it was the first permanent one. The new South Minnesota District had about thirteen hundred members in nine existing branches—Anoka, Springvale (later Princeton), St. Paul, Minneapolis (at this time it was not called Minneapolis First), Minneapolis Second, Rochester, Austin, Fairmont, and Mankato. It was the bud which seven years later would blossom into the Minnesota Stake.

James W. McConkie, assistant professor of music at the University of Minnesota, was called as the south district's first president with Stewart W. Peterson and Rodger M. Rose as counselors. Within six weeks, President McConkie contracted polio and died at age thirty-two (NCM 21 Aug. 1953). Arnold R. Knapp, an executive with American Linen, was called to replace him and served until 1957.

Growing institutional strength brought full Church programs to more and more members in the district. On 13 December 1953, a branch was organized in Winona, making ten in the mission district. By 1954, an elders' quorum was organized in Minneapolis. On 17 April 1955, 510 people attended conference sessions in St. Paul and Minneapolis, the largest attendance of any conference ever held in the mission. The



Map 2. The Minnesota Stake, 1960. Areas not included in the new stake for lack of members include Fairbault, Red Wing, Northfield, and Hastings. Minneapolis had four wards and St. Paul two at the time of the stake formation. Except for Rochester Ward, the other cities had branches.

district-level boards of Relief Society, Sunday School, MIA, and the Primary were filled by local members, who began holding regular mission conventions and leadership meetings for the branch officers and teachers. A nine-man district council, forerunner of a stake high council, was functioning by 1957 (NCM 2 Jan. 1957).

District leaders poured special efforts into high-quality youth programs. Most young people were either the only Mormon or one of very few in their schools. They saw other LDS youth only on Sundays and at branch and district socials. Church contacts were important to help them maintain the values of the Church and marry within the faith. On 24-26 May 1957, the first mission youth conference was held at the Bryant Avenue chapel. Themed "The Greatest Show on Earth," it drew youth from every unit in the district into activities keynoted by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Quorum of Seventy. From this point, these conferences have been held annually.

Growing strength allowed the district to sponsor many additional programs which reinforced a sense of community—frequent mission dances; track meets; dance, speech, and music festivals; and road shows that traveled between St. Paul and Minneapolis. On 5 April 1957, the first edition of the *Minnesotan*,¹ the district monthly newsletter, appeared. "We operated as a stake for years under the name of a district," said R. Sherman Russell, who served first as a counselor in the district presidency and for an additional thirteen years in the stake presidency (Russell 1988, 11).

Wider use of radio broadcasts lessened the perceived distance between the Twin Cities and Salt Lake. In 1930, most of the chapels in the West had been wired to receive centennial radio transmissions from Salt Lake City. It took eighteen years—but finally on 5 April 1958, the South Minnesota

¹*The Minnesotan* newsletter was published for five years (1957-61), then was replaced by *The Minnesota Stake News* (1964-70). Since then, the stake has had no newsletter.

District priesthood leaders gathered to hear a direct wire broadcast of the priesthood session of general conference at the Bryant Avenue chapel. Five years later, members began receiving a single session of general conference (usually Sunday morning's) broadcast one week later over WCCO-TV.

The congregations continued to grow through move-ins and efforts of the North Central States Mission, headquartered then in the graceful red brick home at 2219 Pillsbury Avenue in Minneapolis. The elders bolstered each other by singing "good and loud, but mostly loud" the North Central States Mission Song:

We come from town and village,
An army called of God,
To preach the living gospel,
Which is the iron rod.
Although we come as strangers,
We leave as brothers true,
United in a friendship
To last our whole life through.

Chorus:

What joys we share in missionary days
Serving in North Central States.
Where the air is clean and the grass is green,
And the wind blows sharp and clean.
What joys we share in missionary ways.
And when we get back home,
We will vow with a will,
'Twas the best two years still,
In the North Central States.

On 6 December 1958, thirty-one converts were baptized in Minneapolis, the largest number ever baptized at one service in the North Central States Mission. Mission President Paul C. Child had called a special missionary-member fast to pray that God would guide the missionaries to people who were seeking the truth; and they felt that their prayers were literally answered. In a larger sense, however, this increase

in baptisms was part of a period of unprecedented growth and expansion experienced by the Church world-wide following World War II. Church membership increased more than 50 percent each decade during the period from 1950 to 1980, far exceeding growth rates during the 1800s (Cowan 1985, 263-64). This growth would change the Church into a world-wide institution.

In the 1959 April general conference, President David O. McKay reemphasized a missionary program that had been used in the British Isles in 1923 while he was serving as a missionary there. Because of the bitter feelings that existed against the Church, the British missionaries were unable to advertise publicly. Instead, each member became responsible for helping the missionaries find prospects to teach and for becoming worthy emissaries of the gospel themselves, so that whoever they came in contact with might hear the "good message of truth." "That is the message today," said President McKay in 1959 to the Church as a whole: "Every member—a million and a half—a missionary" (Conference Report April 1959, 122).

Many members caught the vision of President McKay's words with inspiring results. One was Marilyn Findell, the newly appointed head of the Youth Mission Committee for Minneapolis Second Ward. She decided to give her nonmember boyfriend, Donald Gordhamer, a chance to meet the elders. Her efforts resulted in three baptisms during the 1961 Christmas holidays. Elder James Ogilvie, a missionary from Glendora, California, baptized Don. Twenty years later, James returned to Minneapolis as an assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine and, in 1983, was called as bishop of the Bloomington Ward. Three years later, Don Gordhamer, now married to Marilyn Findell, was called as bishop of the Burnsville Second Ward. Both bishops—missionary and convert—served together on the bishops' council of the Minneapolis Stake for two years.

In 1957 there were three LDS congregations in the Twin

Cities; but move-ins from the West and fresh convert baptisms, quickly changed that. In 1958 the St. Paul Branch was divided into the St. Paul Branch and the St. Paul Second Branch. In February 1959, the Minneapolis Branch was split, creating the Minneapolis Third Branch; four months later, the Minneapolis Second Branch was divided, forming the Minneapolis Fourth Branch. When the dust settled, the number of branches had doubled.

Stake Organization

On Monday afternoon, 28 November 1960, Apostle LeGrand Richards and Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve, arrived in Minneapolis. They had just finished a weekend of conference assignments but still had important business in Minneapolis. Earlier that year Delbert F. Wright, who had replaced Arnold Knapp as district president in 1957, had proposed to the First Presidency that the district was ready for stakehood, and the First Presidency had agreed.

The organization of a stake is a benchmark in the progress of a Mormon community, signifying not only a critical mass of numerical membership but also a pool of trained and seasoned priesthood leaders, able to implement the full Church program. More than raw membership statistics, the number of stakes is the barometer measuring Church maturity, activity, and spirituality. Historian Richard O. Cowan has pointed out that “in contrast to a mission district, which generally must *receive* strength and leadership *from* the Church, a stake is able to *give* strength and stability *to* the Church, just as stakes support a tent” (1985, 263-64). Clearly the Minnesota Mormon community had reached this level of development. Even though it was autumn by the calendar, it was springtime for the Church in Minnesota.

Working from the mission home on Pillsbury Avenue, Elders Richards and Sill spent late into Monday night and all Tuesday morning interviewing individual members of the district presidency and council, branch presidents, and other

priesthood leaders. On Tuesday afternoon, they called Delbert F. Wright to preside over the new stake. He selected his two district presidency counselors as stake presidency counselors: R. Sherman Russell and Eugene R. Talbot, a research chemist at Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company in St. Paul. The three of them sat down at the mission home to put together a high council, branch presidents, bishops, and stake auxiliary heads. Stake leadership included a clerk, ten high councilors and Patriarch G. Albin Matson, who also served on the high council. (See Appendices E, F, and G.)

Apostle Richards asked for suggestions about what to name the new stake. The brethren present, well aware of the civic rivalry between Minneapolis and St. Paul, did not suggest that it be called after either of the two cities. Instead, they proposed "the Minnesota Stake," even though it was technically a misnomer. The stake boundaries included the metropolitan areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul, but only parts of southern Minnesota and western Wisconsin, and did not come close to covering the state. For example, a twenty-five-mile radius around Rochester, Austin, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, lay within the stake, but the neighboring towns of Faribault, Red Wing, Northfield, and Hastings did not. Because these areas lacked substantial numbers of Church members, they remained under the jurisdiction of the North Central States Mission, then presided over by Clement P. Hilton. The northern boundaries included a similar area around Anoka, but nothing north of Princeton. The title was, however, correct in one sense. The Minnesota Stake was the first to be organized in the state and would remain the only stake for sixteen years. On 1 February 1974 the name was officially changed to the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, because of a directive from Salt Lake to name stakes after the city in which the stake center was located.

At a special meeting of the district membership Tuesday evening, 29 November, at the Bryant Avenue chapel, the members unanimously voted to form the stake and to accept

the proposed leaders. With this sustaining vote, the Minnesota Stake officially came into being. It was one of twenty-nine stakes organized in the Church that year and the 317th stake organized since 1830. The new unit included 2,643 LDS members in 966 families organized into eleven branches. Six of these branches became wards during that meeting: Minneapolis [First], Second, Third, and Fourth; and St. Paul [First] and Second. Five other units continued as independent branches: Anoka, Princeton, Rochester, Austin, and Eau Claire (Wisconsin).

Delbert Wright, considered “a real dynamo,” was the final element in the necessary formula to make a stake in Minnesota. Certainly he was well qualified and experienced. He had just been released as president of the Oakland California Stake after seventeen years’ service when he moved to Minnesota in 1956. He had also served as a counselor in a stake presidency, high councilor, and in many other Church assignments before that. But perhaps the most important thing he brought to Minnesota was his close personal relationship with many General Authorities including all four



*Delbert F. Wright, Minnesota Stake president, 1960-63.
Courtesy of LDS Historical Department Archives.*

members of the First Presidency—David O. McKay, First Counselor J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Second Counselor Henry D. Moyle, and Hugh B. Brown, then serving as a third counselor. They knew him, trusted him, and had complete confidence in his leadership abilities.

Born on 29 December 1901, Delbert Wright grew up in Ogden, and attended Weber Academy, receiving a high school diploma and a year of college level credits. The same year that he left the academy he married Gertrude Lyon Patten in the Salt Lake Temple. Over the years he received a good business education “on the run, so to speak” and put it to use in his thirty-nine-year career at General Mills, Inc. In 1960, the same year he became stake president, he was named to the Board of Directors of General Mills. He was nearing the end of his professional career when he assumed responsibility for the stake; and his personal motto, “Do things Wright the first time,” had become a credo tested many times (Johnson 1989).

He turned sixty-one in December 1962 and returned to California for retirement,² but his two years as stake president were enriched by years of experience, careful training, and wisdom. Stake members generally agreed that he launched the stake “Wright.” Although local priesthood leaders could have effectively served as stake president, Delbert Wright’s service as district president for almost three years acquainted him with local members and priesthood leaders, and his depth of experience and closeness to the General Authorities were invaluable in getting the stake off the ground smoothly.

During the several months that the Wrights traveled between California and Minnesota preparing for retirement,

²In 1964 he became the first president of the newly constructed Oakland Temple, serving four years. Later, he enrolled in a liberal arts program at Brigham Young University and received a degree from that institution when he was seventy-five years old. He died 14 June 1988 at age eighty-seven (Johnson 1989, 3).

Sherman Russell, as first counselor, led the stake. Then, on 17 February 1963, Apostle LeGrand Richards called him to be the stake's second president; he chose L. Stephen Richards, Jr., and Paul W. Wilson as counselors.

R. Sherman Russell was born in Provo, Utah, a descendant of early Danish and Scottish pioneers, and grew up in Denver and St. Louis, where his father's business took the family; thus, he was only technically a Utahn. He left St. Louis to labor in the Spanish-American Mission for two and a half years (1941-43), then was immediately drafted into the U.S. Air Force and became a radio operator-gunner. In 1946 he married Melba June Kanipe of Belleville and East St. Louis, Illinois, in the Salt Lake Temple and graduated from BYU in 1951. As his career as an FBI Special Agent thrived, four children were born to them. In 1952 the FBI transferred him to Minneapolis. In 1955 he was called as president of the Minneapolis Branch, then as a counselor to Delbert Wright in the district presidency, and then as first counselor in the first stake presidency where he served for two and a half years.



*R. Sherman Russell,
Minnesota Stake president,
1963-73.*

Many stake members rejoiced in Sherman Russell's call as stake president. He was known for his command of the scriptures, and they appreciated his well-documented and powerful sermons on gospel doctrines. Even more important, the Russells showed every sign of sinking permanent roots in Minnesota—a course of action applauded by other LDS Minnesotans. The family had already lived in the state eight years, almost three times as long as most mission presidents served, and Church leadership service had acquainted President Russell with members throughout the district and the new stake. Finally, people felt, there would be more continuity and greater stability with a stake president who was here to stay.

L. Stephen Richards, Jr., born in San Francisco where his father was in school, had recently completed his residency in general surgery at the University of Minnesota and was teaching surgery at the Veteran's Hospital. Paul W. Wilson, born in Utah, had recently been transferred from Salt Lake to Minnesota by his employer, the national accounting firm of Ernst and Ernst. He had served as counselor to President Russell during his whole tenure and would succeed him as stake president, providing unbroken continuity for sixteen years. In 1964 when Brother Richards returned to Salt Lake City to join the Salt Lake Clinic as a cardiovascular-thoracic surgeon, Roy D. Wilcoxson, a professor of plant pathology at the University of Minnesota, replaced him. Four years later in 1968, Roy was released to spend a year abroad on a work-related assignment; and Richard E. Frary, an executive with Univac, became a counselor. In 1971, when President Frary's business-related move took him to Philadelphia, Alfred E. Hall, a Montana native, replaced him. Al Hall practiced law in Minnesota and served several terms as the highly popular mayor of Burnsville.

All of these stake presidencies moved to solidify the accomplishments of the past. From the time the stake was organized, President Wright made a point of drawing leadership from all units, not only with an eye toward future growth,

but also to reinforce the stake's sense of community. President Russell continued this practice, especially trying to keep a balance between Minneapolis and St. Paul. He could see already that a logical future stake division would be between the Twin Cities. When that happened, both areas would need well-trained people.

A brief look at the original stake high council bears this out. The ten members represented five of the six wards, including three from St. Paul. The rest were drawn from among three of the Minneapolis wards. Three of the ten new high councilors were Minnesota natives and converts to the Church; the rest had western roots. By the time the stake was divided in 1976, half of the high council, the stake Relief Society president, and many other stake officers lived in St. Paul. Sixteen years of planning and training ensured a strong St. Paul Stake from the start.

In one aspect, the Minnesota Stake reached beyond its boundaries to serve all the people of Minnesota, plus those of North and South Dakota, parts of Canada, western Wisconsin, Nebraska, upper Michigan, and neighboring areas. Because only a patriarch can give patriarchal blessings and only a stake can have a patriarch, the Minnesota Stake patriarch became the source of those blessings for members in a huge region who would otherwise have had to travel to Salt Lake City or go without. Minneapolis became a kind of "patriarchal service hub" for much of the Upper Midwest until other stakes were organized.

When the stake was organized, G. Albin Matson was called as patriarch. In 1964 when he moved from the area, Arling A. Gardner, a regional supervisor of the USDA thirteen-state central region, was called to replace him. When Arling died in Minneapolis in 1967, Freeman R. Williams became stake patriarch. By this time, the load was becoming so heavy that, in the early 1970s, President Russell requested permission to call another patriarch. Arden Nichols became the second patriarch in 1971, sharing Freeman's burden. In 1972, Freeman moved to Arizona, and Arden carried on alone

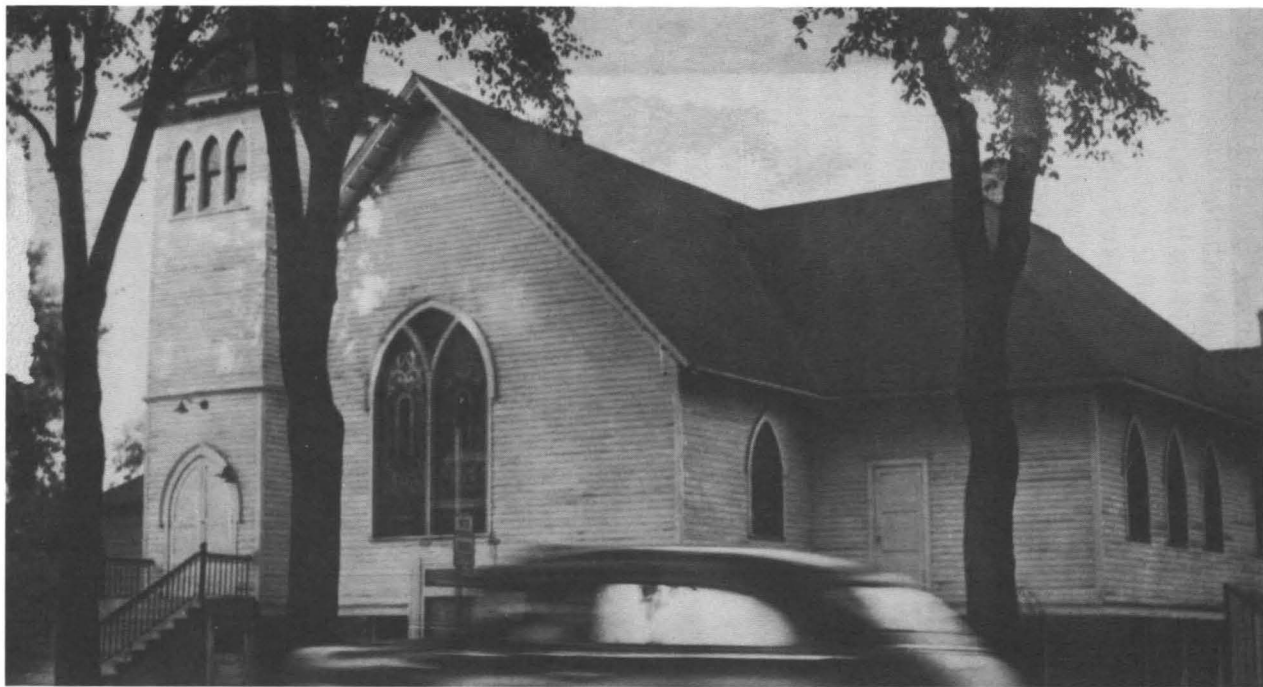
until 1973 when Sherman Russell, just released as stake president, was called as the second patriarch. During this time, the work load was so great that they each gave about eight blessings per week. (Russell 1988, 22).

They served together until 1976 when the St. Paul Stake was formed; then Arden became patriarch of the new stake, Edmund F. Graham, a professor of animal science at the University of Minnesota, became St. Paul Stake's second patriarch, and Sherman Russell served alone in Minneapolis for a few months. In 1977, a second patriarch, Laurence C. Monson, was called in Minneapolis. Since then, both Minneapolis and St. Paul have had two patriarchs, except for a hiatus of several years after Larry Monson moved to Utah and before Alan R. Anderson was called. (See Appendix F.) The work load has become relatively lighter for the patriarchs; they now report each giving about six blessings a month. Since the organization of the Anoka Stake, Minnesota has six patriarchs; but members in the northern half of Minnesota, still under mission jurisdiction, continue to come "south" for their patriarchal blessings.

The Building Program, 1947-70

Probably the greatest challenge that both Delbert Wright and Sherman Russell inherited was the shortage of LDS Church buildings and the inadequacy of existing buildings. (See Appendix D.) When the stake was organized, not one building could accommodate offices for the stake presidency or high council. This situation continued into President Russell's tenure. Although some early stake conferences were held at the chapel of Minneapolis Ward at Bryant Avenue, it was impossibly crowded and the stake began renting Central High School in Minneapolis and Morningside High in Edina.

During the 1950s, three new chapels had been constructed: the Summit Avenue chapel for St. Paul members to replace the North Grotto building in 1950, the Minneapolis



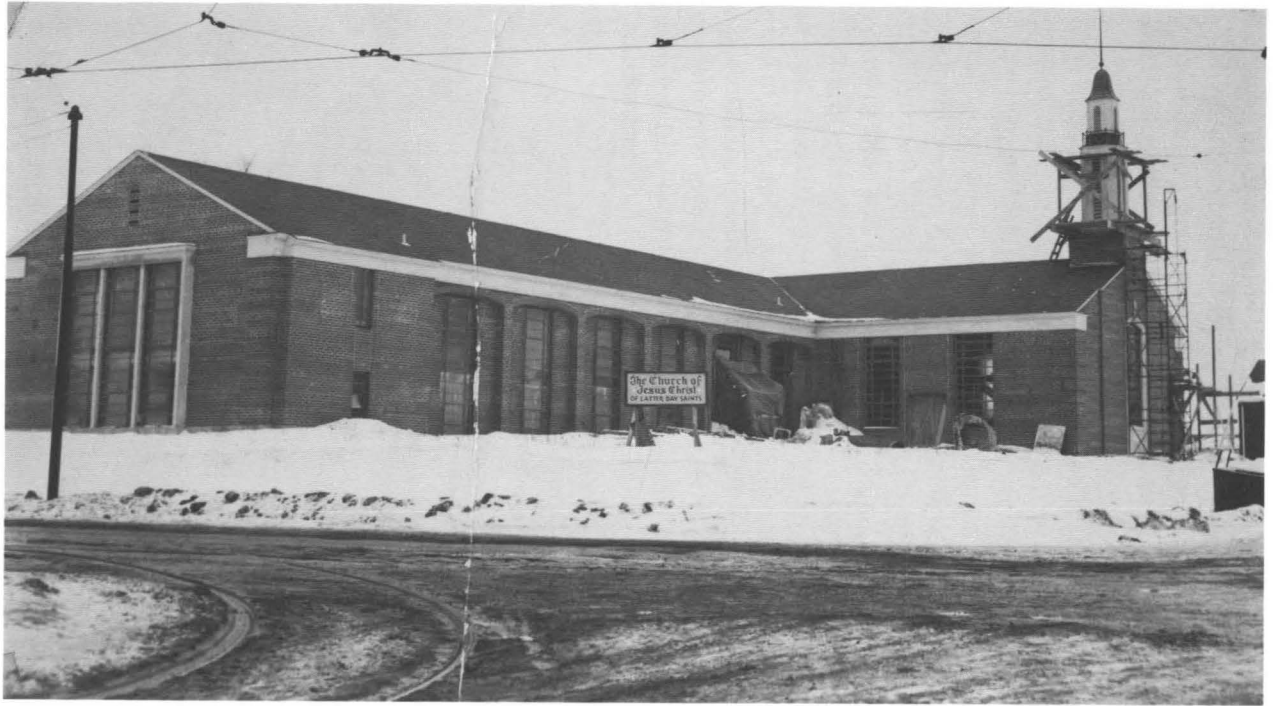
The Spiritualist Church on Lyndale Avenue, rented as the first home of the Minneapolis Second Branch, about 1953.

Branch's chapel at 5601 Bryant Avenue South in 1951, and Minneapolis Second's chapel at 4000 Golden Valley Road in 1956. But because of the rapidly growing population, all three were inadequate almost before they were completed.

The history of these three buildings is worth reviewing, for the shared goal of building a chapel and the mutual struggle to achieve it distinguished the LDS community from the end of World War II through the decade of the 1950s. In 1947, when another attempt had been made to start a Sunday School in north Minneapolis, the Church rented the Spiritualist Church at Second and Lyndale to house the small congregation. Inadequately insulated, it was too cold in winter and too warm in summer. One branch member recalled winters: "I can remember sitting in meetings with our coats on and being able to see our breath when we spoke" (Minneapolis Second 1951-57). They had to leave classroom doors ajar for warmth, which meant that the noise level was distracting. These less than ideal conditions, however, did not deter the growing Second Branch. "The spirit of God was with us," wrote the anonymous author of a brief historical essay included in the branch records, "and made our hearts warm." (Minneapolis Second 1951-57).

Another problem was more decisive in triggering a move. The Spiritualists claimed that the LDS congregation prevented them from contacting their spirits, thus hindering their own worship. They were particularly concerned because the Primary children, working on a special program, were learning how to tap dance during the week, creating some additional "strange" noises. In 1957 when the Golden Valley Road chapel was completed, the Minneapolis Second Branch finally had a home of its own, and they left rented facilities behind—for a while.

Shortly after World War II when the Fourteenth Avenue building was sold, the Minneapolis Branch also began meeting in rented facilities, most often the downtown YWCA. Finally in 1946, it purchased an office building at 2222 Park Avenue and renovated it to serve as a chapel while fund-raising

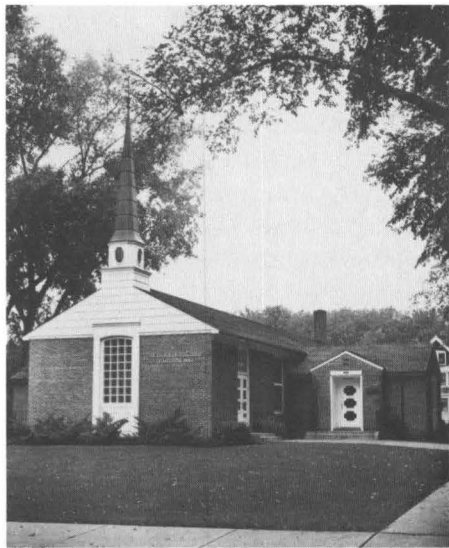


Minneapolis Branch chapel at 5601 Bryant Avenue under construction. It was dedicated in 1951. Note trolley tracks in the foreground. Courtesy of John M. Rodgers.

continued. The Church sold this building to help pay for the newly purchased Bryant Avenue site in early 1950, and the Minneapolis Branch rented halls for another year until Bryant Avenue was completed in 1951. During that time, there was not one Church-owned facility in Minneapolis or St. Paul which could accommodate services.

The stake's buildings were raised not only with money but also with faith. Sister Adeline Swanson, an eighty-two-year-old convert of only two years, owned two homes in Minneapolis, one her residence and the second rental property which provided a large part of her income. Although her branch president demurred, she sold the second home and gave the proceeds to the Minneapolis Branch building fund. She lived to enjoy Church services in the Bryant Avenue chapel which her sacrifice had helped to build, stretched her small income to attend the temple in Utah, and worked on her family genealogy.

When construction was nearing completion on Bryant Avenue, the branch found itself \$5,000 short of its required



The St. Paul Branch chapel, 1671 Summit Avenue, dedicated in 1953.

30 percent share. Since no LDS chapel is ever dedicated until it is completely paid for, this was a major problem. Coincidentally, Arnold Knapp was given a \$5,000 bonus from his employer, American Linen, at this time. Arnold instructed that his bonus check be made out directly to the Church and earmarked for the building fund, sending the fund-raising into the black for the first time. The dedication could now be scheduled.

The revolving-rental-door situation was repeated a third time in St. Paul when the North Grotto building was sold in March 1951. It took a year to break ground for the replacement building on Summit Avenue and almost another year before the new chapel was finished. In the meantime, the branch met in the Summit Lodge at 1512 Laurel Street. The Summit Avenue building was something of a novelty among LDS chapels when it was completed, because it had a basement which served as a recreation area. It hadn't been planned that way, though. When the footings were being dug, the workers ran into a peat bog, necessitating excavation of the basement.

During the time these buildings were constructed, congregations were small, with few, if any, wealthy members. Saints throughout the district nevertheless felt a responsibility to share the financial burden of building buildings and did all they could to support each other's fund-raising efforts. It was common practice for one branch to sponsor a fund-raising dinner or activity to benefit another branch's building fund. For example, the Anoka Branch raised and contributed \$60 to the Golden Valley building in 1955 (NCM 16 Oct. 1955). The next year, the St. Paul Branch sponsored a dinner and carnival with proceeds going to the Minneapolis Second Branch building fund (NCM 7 June 1956). This tradition of mutual support had carried over since the early days when North Grotto was purchased and the Fourteenth Avenue chapel built, with the members in each city rallying around each other. Clearly their objective was to see the Church grow all over Minnesota.

STAKEHOOD

They succeeded almost too well. The chapels constructed were almost too small for the congregations that were ready to move into them. In addition, design and construction deficiencies proved insoluble. The Summit Avenue building was situated on a small city lot with no parking facilities except on the surrounding streets and no room to expand. Bryant Avenue had an adequate parking lot in the beginning, but it soon became too small, as did the building. Even more important, however, was that building officials in Salt Lake City and Utah mission presidents who supervised the projects did not understand Minnesota's climate; and the result was buildings ill-suited to northern winters. Bryant Avenue was built as "California construction," meaning there was no insulation in the walls or ceiling. Even in the days when oil was cheap, it cost \$700 a



The Minneapolis Second Branch chapel at 4000 Golden Valley Road, dedicated in 1957.

month to heat the building and the floor was never warm. In the winter, members always kept their boots on during Church or coats wrapped around their legs. In 1964, a classroom wing helped solve the space problem, but not even a new heating system could heat the cold floor. The parking situation worsened. By early 1969, stake leaders initiated a building fund drive to replace the Bryant Avenue chapel.

The Golden Valley Road chapel, situated on a beautiful lot overlooking Sweeney Lake, was an ideal setting. Too late—when water was gushing through the Relief Society room—they discovered that the chapel sat atop a spring. There was no room to expand, to accommodate the explosive growth the congregations experienced during the late 1950s and 1960s. After it was organized in 1959, the Fourth Branch began sharing the Golden Valley chapel with Second Branch. By then it was dubbed “the doll’s house,” because it was so small. There was a small cultural hall—too small for such sports as basketball. Just seven years after it was completed, the building was sold. Its last sacrament meetings were held there in August 1964.

In 1969 President Russell arranged for an in-depth site study of Church buildings, projected areas of growth, characteristics of LDS membership, and plans for future buildings. In the Twin Cities, the LDS congregations had an appreciably higher education level than the general populace. The same percentage had a high school education, but only 20 percent of the LDS population had less than a high school education, compared to 35 percent in the metropolitan area. More strikingly, 30 percent of the LDS population had college degrees, compared to 14 percent of the general population. A similar difference occurred in income levels. Twenty-three percent of the LDS population had incomes over \$15,000 per year, while only 12 percent of the general population enjoyed that affluence. The LDS occupational breakdown showed 11 percent blue collar and 29 percent professional, while in the general area these figures were reversed—29 percent blue collar and 14 percent professional



The St. Paul chapel at Edgerton and Highway 36, dedicated in 1969 as a replacement for the Summit Avenue chapel. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

(Minnesota 1969, 5-6). The site plan noted that the newer existing buildings—the Minneapolis stake center (completed in 1966) and the Edgerton and Anoka chapels—were well-located, which meant close to the freeways and in the suburbs, mirroring population growth. The study suggested that future locations should continue this plan and proposed new construction to meet future needs: a new building in Bloomington to replace the Bryant Avenue chapel, another in Hopkins to accommodate growth in the western suburbs of Minneapolis, and a third in the Burnsville/Lakeville area to house projected growth south of the Minnesota River.

President Russell's tenure as stake president (1963-73) saw tremendous efforts to remedy the inadequate building situation. He constantly urged the Saints to meet their financial obligations; and members responded, sometimes slowly, but faithfully assembling the necessary contributions. In all, seven buildings were built, improved, or bought and paid



Members of the Lamanite Branch in June 1966.

for during that decade: the Bryant Avenue classroom wing (1964), the Minneapolis stake center (1966), funds partially raised for Bloomington, Edgerton built (1967), Princeton completed (1965), the old institute building at 1205 University Avenue purchased (1969), and the Anoka chapel finished (1962). This was a huge investment for a stake with only 1,300 families.

Indian Proselyting

Although the fund-raising and construction efforts absorbed tremendous amounts of energy in the stake, the mid-1960s were also distinguished by an effort to reach out to the increasing numbers of native Americans in Minneapolis. On 8 April 1964, the Church established the Northern Indian Mission,³ with responsibility to proselyte these people in the northern tier of states. The largest urban Indian population in the United States, then about eight thousand, lives in the Twin Cities. Beginning in 1966, the missionaries labored among these people, primarily Sioux and Chippewa who had migrated from the reservations, with marked success. One year later in 1965, twelve full-time missionaries were working in Minneapolis among the Indians. Almost from the beginning, there were enough members that they could be organized.

Under the direction of President Russell, a Lamanite Sunday School began in Minneapolis on 19 June 1966 in the American Legion Hall on Chicago Avenue. Initial attendance was only fifteen, but that increased until fall saw well over one hundred. In November the Lamanite Branch was established as part of the Minnesota Stake with Roy B. Lorentzen, whose wife was a Lamanite, as president. The branch helped activate Lamanite members who otherwise “felt out of place

³In 1973, the name was changed to the Dakota-Manitoba Mission and, in 1975, to the South Dakota Rapid City Mission.

when asked to fellowship with a majority of white members.” The Lamanite leaders saw their efforts as “keeping the door open for Lamanite growth of the future,” reported the *Minnesota Stake News*.

The elders began a Primary Seminary (so called because it was administered under the Indian Seminary Program of the Church rather than the Primary auxiliary), picking up children in three Church-owned Dodge vans and another purchased by the branch president. As many as seventy children participated at a time, many of them nonmembers. Two months later, in November 1966, the branch was fully organized with Relief Society, a genealogy class, Sunday School, weekly seminary and Primary, a young marrieds’ group, MIA, and even a men’s basketball team and a woman’s softball team.

This branch shared the Bryant Avenue chapel with Minneapolis and Minneapolis Third wards but, almost immediately, launched its own building fund campaign. The first fund-raising event, a basket social held in 1967, earned \$45.10. The members were excited about their future in the Church. “It is not the Church of today which keeps us so enthused as it is the Church of tomorrow,” wrote one in the stake newsletter.

The Church Indian Placement Program was implemented in 1954 as the outgrowth of requests by American Indians in the Southwest who were seeking placement for their teenage children in LDS homes so they could attend high school. This program was implemented in the Twin Cities in the mid-1960s (Giles 1989, 60). In addition to formal schooling, the children learned home discipline, attended Church meetings with their foster families, and were introduced generally to Anglo culture. In 1967, twenty local children were in the program; the next year, it jumped to thirty.

Lack of a meeting place and the concentration of members in neighborhoods far from the chapel were big stumbling blocks for the branch; but a new Church policy forbidding the use of mission automobiles to transport members

was a hurdle too big to overcome and the reason for the branch's being discontinued in early 1968 (Minneapolis Third 30 June 1968). Church leaders interviewed even twenty years later speak with regret of this promising branch's demise. The Lamanite members were encouraged to attend the wards in which they resided; but lacking transportation and reluctant to fit in with Anglo culture, most of them fell into inactivity.

Ties with Utah

During the 1960s, the stake made a concerted and successful effort to span the 1,400 miles between Minnesota and Utah and become a full participant and contributor in the opportunities provided by the larger Church organization. The Minnesota Stake, in its first decade, became a "stake" supporting the "tent" and enjoying the benefits of that relationship.

Traveling to Utah usually meant a twenty-four-hour-drive one-way, either in car or bus. For April general conference in 1960, the Minneapolis Third Ward chartered a bus so members could attend general conference in Salt Lake together (Minneapolis Third 12 Mar. 1960). In 1967 a "large group" of youth went to Salt Lake by bus to participate in the annual Church dance festival (Minneapolis Fourth 24 June 1967). The stake's sports program shone the next year when the Minneapolis Fourth Ward men's basketball team took eighth place in the all-Church tournament in Salt Lake City in which 4,400 teams participated. (Minneapolis Fourth 10 March 1968). The stake also modestly underwrote part of the transportation costs so that stake auxiliary board members could attend the general auxiliary conference held annually in Salt Lake City. This program greatly aided in leadership development in the stake.



MIA dance in the mid-1950s at the Golden Valley chapel. Courtesy of Betty Erickson.



The Minneapolis Fourth Ward men's basketball team, Lou ("The Fox") Oelkers coach, took eighth place in the All-Church tournament in 1968.

Regional Meetings

In January 1964, the First Presidency announced the creation of sixty Priesthood Regions to better administer and train members and relieve some of the burdens on the General Authorities. A stake president in each region was named chairman. Three years later at the 1967 October general conference, Regional Representatives were called to administer these regions.

Minnesota initially belonged to the Upper Midwest Region, centered in Des Moines, Iowa, a five-hour drive away. The stake leadership traveled to Des Moines twice a year for a day of instruction in various aspects of Church administration and programs. First, the Minnesotans drove in convoy, leaving at 3 A.M. and returning about midnight. Next they tried a chartered bus so the members could sleep.



Minneapolis Stake leaders prepare to travel to regional meetings in Des Moines, Iowa, during the mid-1960s.

A five-hour trip both before and after a full day of meetings was still grueling, so the next solution was to charter a four-engine Northwest airplane. The leaders would board the plane early in the morning and have breakfast on the flight to Des Moines. Church members in Des Moines would pick them up at the airport in a convoy of cars and take them to the regional meeting site. The “taxi” money the Des Moines members thus earned went into their own building funds. After the regional meetings ended, the stake leaders boarded the plane and enjoyed a steak dinner on the flight home. After about two years, however, the cost became prohibitive.

President Russell conferred with Apostle Delbert L. Stapley about the problem and the result was that Minnesota was made a region. It was probably the smallest region in the Church, however, consisting of a single stake and the districts in the North Central States Mission.

Building Stake Identity

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the stake presidency during the 1960s was the need to establish a strong sense of identity for the new stake. Up to this point, the local units had functioned under mission presidents who stayed a brief three years and whose main efforts were directed toward supervising the full-time elders and missionary work. It took a year or eighteen months to get acquainted with the local members; most of the time, if branches were running smoothly, the mission presidents were relieved to be able to devote more attention to missionary work. This arrangement fostered a sense of autonomy and resourcefulness on the part of local units organized under the mission that testified to the members’ strength but meant learning new skills of cooperation, collaboration, and connecting when they were integrated into the stake.

President Russell identified as his greatest challenge the task of unifying the twelve units in the stake “into a group that looked to their own leadership rather than beyond that

leadership to a mission president who came from the headquarters of the Church.” He gave the reorientation full priority and asked a visiting General Authority how long it took to get people thinking “like a stake.” “About eight years,” was the answer (Russell 1988, 12, 14).

President Russell tried to shorten that process with a vigorous four-pronged effort. First, building programs provided a tangible confirmation of the growing stake. Raising money was not always easy, especially when the members had just finished a building project and were asked to start another. Branch members had always willingly supported other branches in their building efforts, but that help was always voluntary. Now, besides building funds, there were budget assessments, a more formal and demanding financial commitment. “We had to go beyond simple motivation and inspiration sometimes,” said President Russell. “There was this struggle of allegiance to this [stake] entity, as opposed to the local group” (Russell 1988, 15). For example, members and some leaders for a time, exhausted from two decades of unremitting financial sacrifice and concerned about moving away from public transportation, resisted the plan to sell Bryant Avenue and replace it with the Bloomington building. Eventually the resistance was overcome, but not without struggle.

Second, President Russell fostered a strong stake identity by building vigorous priesthood quorums and training programs. He continually emphasized that the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums were the backbone of the Church and that these quorums were organized under the stake presidency, not the bishoprics. This point had been taught since district days and was repeatedly emphasized during the early years of stakehood. The stake presidency saw themselves as the presidency of the Church for the stake and the high council as acting for the stake in the way the Quorum of the Twelve acted for the Church as a whole. Training sessions with the priesthood leaders taught these concepts specifi-

cally and prepared the brethren to administer the Church through the priesthood quorums.

The third method of increasing unity was a concerted effort to keep a high profile. Stake leaders maintained an intensive travel schedule, providing hands-on administration, easy accessibility, and high visibility. Having been called from all units of the stake, these men were a constant reminder of membership in and support of a larger entity. Their efforts improved not only the quality of stake functions but also the support for them: youth conferences, road shows, dances, and all stake activities blossomed. Unity and the sense of stake identity increasingly coalesced. "It did take about eight years," confessed President Russell, "but we finally thought in terms of a stake. We still had our loyalties to the wards, but we thought in terms of a stake, and a united stake" (1988, 15).

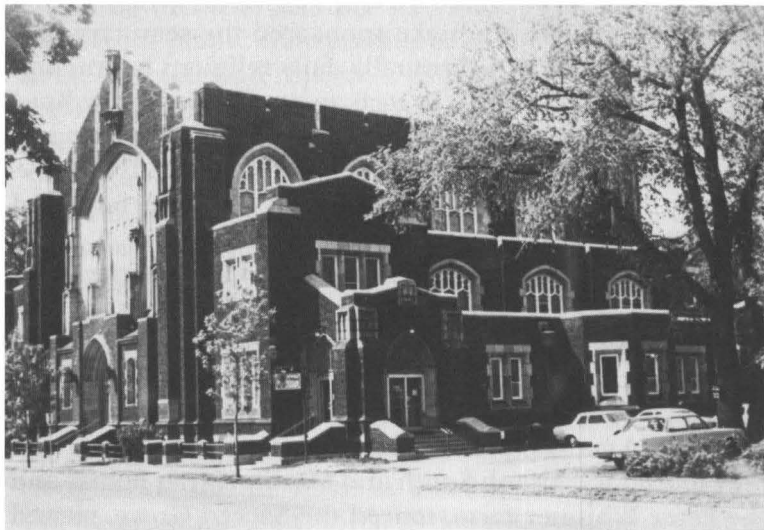
Seminary and Institute Programs

The stake continued strong efforts in behalf of the youth. In May 1963, the stake sponsored the seminary program with weekly and eventually daily religious instruction for high school students. In 1976 an annual Seminary Bowl competition began, with seminary students competing in ward teams at the end of the seminary year with their new-found knowledge of the scriptures. The seminary bowl and scripture chase is still an annual event in the stake.

In 1966, the stake held its annual youth conference in Palmyra, New York, with 176 young people making the two-thousand-mile trip east in five chartered buses to see the annual Hill Cumorah Pageant, "America's Witness for Christ." Dorothy P. Holt, second counselor to Florence Jacobsen in the YWMIA general presidency, accompanied them. En route they toured the Joseph Smith and Martin Harris homes and the Peter Whitmer farm, toured the Sacred Grove, viewed Niagara Falls, and marveled at the Kirtland Temple. The six-day trip also featured a dance, dinners, swimming, and pic-

tics; it proved to be an “exceptional opportunity” for the young people to get acquainted (*Church News* 10 Sept. 1966, 12).

Since the University of Minnesota was attracting many LDS students from the West and some local young people were electing to stay in the Twin Cities for at least part of their college careers, the need for an Institute of Religion at the University of Minnesota grew. By fall quarter of 1962, a part-time institute class was being held on Fridays at the university, an outgrowth of the Mormon Fellowship organized twelve years earlier. The program grew into a formal institute; and by 1970 Ray Jordan, the institute director, reported that it was offering six weekday courses to 251 students “mostly in the college age bracket.” The classes included missionary preparation, Old Testament, Church history and doctrine, “Religious Problems in a Modern World,” and a graduate seminar on the teachings of Joseph Smith. These classes were offered for audit, institute credit, or BYU-transfer credit.



The Old Institute Building, purchased by the Church in 1969, demolished and replaced in 1984. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

At first the institute classes were taught in rooms on campus, but scheduling was always a problem; as the institute grew, so did its need for a building of its own. In 1969, in order to provide a new home for the institute, the Church bought a fifty-five-year-old structure conveniently located at 1205 University Avenue from the Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist, who had used the building since 1914. Stake leaders anticipated the organization of a student ward which would, in turn, attract more students and use the building as its chapel. Initially they planned to use the old red brick building with its antiquated heating system and marvelous pipe organ for two years, then raze it and replace it with a modern structure.

The University of Minnesota Ward was organized 3 January 1971 with John C. Schreiner as bishop. In 1972, in accordance with a First Presidency directive, the ward was changed to branch status and the name was changed to University Branch. The old institute building served both the University Branch and the institute for twenty-three years and was a beloved landmark around campus before being replaced in 1984 with a smaller single-story building.

The 1970s saw the full flowering of the Institute of Religion. It sponsored a free noon organ recital series on Wednesdays for several years, and an active institute choir performed frequently at church meetings and concerts in the area. During the 1970s, enrollment at the institute hovered around a hundred, down substantially from the peak enrollment of 251 in 1969. These numbers reflect dwindling enrollment of LDS students at the university. The institute program has continued to offer a full program of classes for institute credit only, leading to a certificate of graduation from the Institute of Religion of the Church. Adapting to new needs, the institute has increasingly served the continuing education needs of adults members throughout the metropolitan area by offering weekday institute classes taught at several Church buildings. These classes provide a popular opportunity, particularly for women not in the work force, to study the

scriptures and Church doctrine intensively in a formal setting. With this change in emphasis, the institute enrollment has increased dramatically during the 1980s to nearly three hundred. The institute classes have also given several women the confidence and impetus to return to school and complete college degrees.

During the 1989 spring quarter, the institute enrolled a total of 140 Twin Cities students, 50 of them college students attending classes at the institute building, and the rest continuing education students meeting in classes held at the stake centers in Anoka, St. Paul, and Minneapolis, and the Burnsville Ward. In addition, the institute teaches classes via satellite in Rochester, La Crosse, Mankato, and Northfield, reaching LDS students at Mankato State, Carleton College, Saint Olaf, and the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse.

Genealogical Activities

Minneapolis's stake center, constructed in the suburb of Crystal, was completed in 1966 (see Chapter 8). President Russell promptly released Tom Gwynn as bishop of the Minneapolis Second Ward and agent bishop while the stake center was under construction. His new assignment was to set up a functioning genealogy library in its basement. (It was renamed a Family History Center in 1988 in accordance with a Church-wide directive.) Tom Gwynn finished the job in record time; his company had already informed him that he would be transferred to Bismarck, North Dakota, in a year. The excellent carpentry skills of August Kiessling, a retired German member, Gordon Tennyson, a professional cabinet-maker, Charles Mathias, and others were enlisted to finish off basement walls and build cabinets in the room.

Then Bishop Gwynn began scrounging equipment for the library. On his numerous business trips, he checked out microfilm companies in every city he visited and "ran into one deal after another." The library opened in 1967 with twelve microfilm readers. Bishop Gwynn's mother, who lived

in Utah, donated the basic set of books required to begin the library. It was the fifty-first branch library, and one of the first east of Utah.

Because it provided access to the vast holdings of the Church Genealogy Library in Salt Lake City, the library was immediately successful. It has grown in size and service, is well-known in Minneapolis to non-Mormons who are serious genealogists or hobbyists, and has been featured several times over the years in local newspaper articles. In fact, in 1988, 92 percent of the patrons using the library were nonmembers who keep the library functioning at capacity (Wilson 1989, 16). Others who served as directors of the library and helped make it what it is today were John Matsen, Eleanor Patch, Larry Ingalls, and Wayne Smith.

During the 1970s the library held annual public seminars on various aspects of genealogical research and often had 400 people attending. Today the Family History Center is open twenty-seven hours a week. Patrons find 2,643 rolls of basic-information microfilms like censuses and vital records on permanent loan from Salt Lake, many more on temporary order, and a helpful staff of almost fifty volunteers under the direction of June Wilson, the library's director since 1984.

Although it is not the Church's largest branch Family History Center, it is among the centers with the highest volume of microfilm loans from Salt Lake. During 1988, it received and used 3,766 rolls of microfilm. In the first six months of June 1989, it received over three thousand rolls, an increase of more than 60 percent. Its users consider it an incomparable community resource.

At least one nonmember library patron joined the Church. Cay Merriman, who had recently moved to Minneapolis from Chicago and was interested in researching her family tree, worried that the move would inhibit her progress. She had trouble locating the stake center with its genealogy library. When she succeeded in locating the library at the stake center, she was astonished to discover that it was within

walking distance and grew so knowledgeable about the library from the hours she spent there doing her own research that she became a faithful staff member for a while. In time, she, her husband Jack, and a daughter joined the Church. When they were transferred to Fargo, North Dakota, she was instrumental in starting another branch genealogy library there. Now retired, the Merrimans live in St. George and are active temple-goers. Their daughter is a returned missionary and BYU graduate (J. Wilson 1989, 19).

Counseling Services

In the late 1960s, the stake presidency became concerned about the growing need of troubled members for counseling services. President Russell, always open to innovation, asked high councilor Clyde Parker, an LDS professor of educational psychology at the University of Minnesota, to set up a clinic for these members. It would be staffed by LDS students in his department whose counseling he would supervise. The students, in turn, would receive university credit.

Since before World War II, the University of Minnesota has been a leader in the counseling and guidance movement which grew to national prominence during the 1950s. Among its graduate students were many Latter-day Saints. The clinic was an attempt to match these academic resources with a real need in the LDS community.

As his high council assignment, Brother Parker set up a program where individuals, couples, and families could be referred to the clinic by their bishops and then counseled by students under his close supervision. Thus, the LDS Counseling Clinic was born. Counseling sessions were held at the old institute building just off campus. Clients were expected to pay if they could; but those in need were counseled regardless of their financial ability. The graduate students felt that such service constituted a highly desirable internship to com-

plement and complete their academic work. Some also considered their time as Church service.

When Clyde Parker was released from the high council in 1970, Alan R. Anderson, also a professor in the educational psychology department and already a high councilor, was asked to continue supervising the clinic as his high council assignment. The somewhat informal clinic procedures were tightened to conform with state laws regulating counseling, and the clinic was set up as a business, bringing about some changes. After a while, supervision of the clinic was no longer regarded as a Church calling but was still a voluntary assignment. Financial arrangements were formalized, and clients paid for the services they received. Because the number of LDS students in the department was dwindling, non-LDS students were recruited as counselors, and all considered their service a formal internship for which they received university credit.

When Alan Anderson was called into the stake presidency in 1979, there was no other licensed LDS consulting psychologist in Minnesota to take his place, and the clinic was in danger of being closed. Instead, at the request of President Willes and President Holt, Alan worked out a legal arrangement with the university to incorporate the clinic into his private practice, and the fees were increased to cover the costs of supervision. The student counselors are salaried because state law prohibits them from collecting fees directly when they are not yet licensed. The name was changed to the Church Counseling Clinic to differentiate it from the LDS Social Services which, as part of its program in the United States, sends a caseworker from Chicago once a month to deal with cases involving unwed mothers, foster placement, and so forth.

The Church Counseling Clinic is now a licensed private clinic with seven part-time graduate student counselors who see an average of fifty clients per month. It serves only LDS members who are referred by their bishops—a unique,

one-of-a-kind resource to the Mormon community in Minnesota.

The decade of Sherman Russell's leadership of the Minnesota Stake was a time of progress. He met head-on the challenges to adequately house the stake and forge a sense of unity. Building on the "Wright" momentum, he and his counselors skillfully led the stake to a full institutional program, firmly built on a sound doctrinal base. The solid foundation laid during those years anchored the LDS community as a permanent institution in Minnesota. The stake had indeed become a place of refuge where members could meet their religious needs and a wide variety of their social needs. The stake's success in meeting these challenges assured future growth and refinement.

Building a Stake Center,

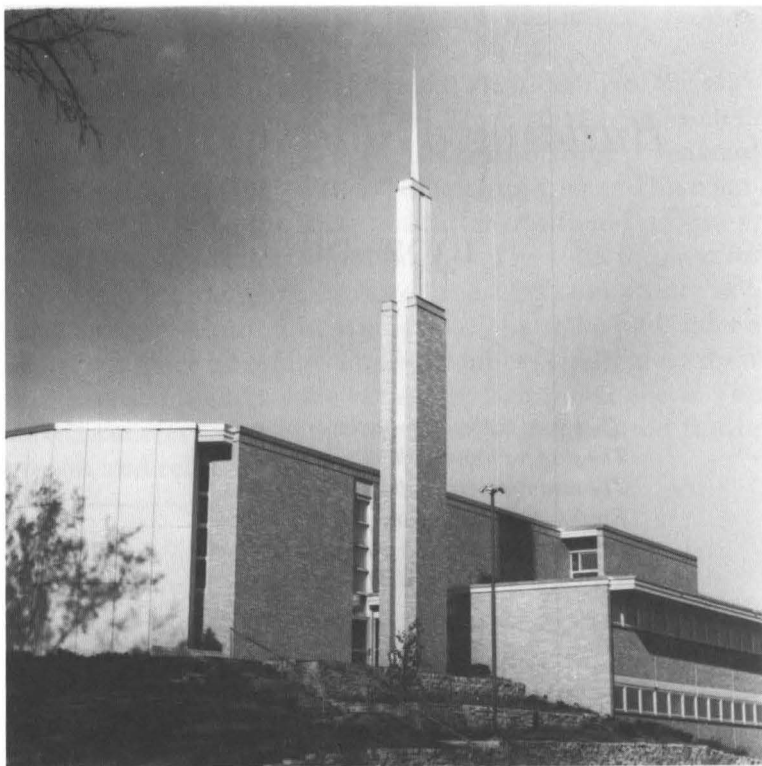
1962–66

*They go to the forest for palm or pine
The stuff for humbler homes,
The mountain gives up its valued gifts
For the stately spires and domes.
But whether they work with marble or sod,
The builder is hand in hand with God.*

William Dunbar

The infant stake's most challenging housing need in 1960 was for a "first class" stake center to house stake offices and activities, provide a suitable home for one or more of the wards, and make a visible statement about the growth of the Church in Minnesota. With fewer than three thousand members scattered over the southern half of Minnesota and western Wisconsin and the already pressing needs for all ward housing, it was a formidable task.

The Minneapolis Fourth Branch, organized in June 1959 with Paul W. Wilson as president, had been meeting in the Golden Valley Road chapel with the Minneapolis Second Branch. The building did not lie within Fourth Branch's boundaries, and its physical deficiencies have already been mentioned. In September 1959, Paul Wilson, with the enthusiastic support of Delbert Wright, then district president, had begun fund raising for a new building with an evening of entertainment at the Golden Valley Road chapel. A branch committee began to identify possible building sites.



The Minneapolis Stake Center at 2801 N. Douglas Drive, Crystal, dedicated in 1967. Photo taken in October 1966.

Within a year, in 1960, the district was organized into a stake, and the Fourth and Second branches became wards. Now the need for a stake center became acute. At that time, the Church owned three buildings in the Twin Cities, Bryant Avenue and Golden Valley Road in Minneapolis and Summit Avenue in St. Paul; but all were inadequate for ward use, could not easily accommodate stake conferences, and had no space for stake offices. Stake officers' meetings and interviewing occurred in homes, quiet corners of hallways, and literally in closets. Clearly, the existing plans for replacing one of these three buildings needed to be upgraded to a full stake center.

Selecting a Site

Selecting the site for the building was a lesson for local Church leadership in human nature and how to deal with the bureaucracy of the Church Building Department, headquartered over fourteen hundred miles away, lacking a real understanding of the Minnesota climate, and juggling hundreds of simultaneous projects. By the early 1960s, many possible sites had been identified, inspected, and rejected by the Building Department as “too something”—too wet, too close to traffic, too low, etc. The site on Douglas Drive and 28th Avenue North in Crystal, previously identified and favored by the Fourth Ward committee to replace the Golden Valley Road chapel, had been rejected as “too hilly,” even though the asking price of \$36,000 seemed reasonable.

Late in 1962, President Wright insisted that the Building Department send out a representative to try again. By this time, exhaustive searching had convinced the local committee that the site on Douglas Drive was still the best to accommodate a full stake center, but they tried a different strategy. As the car, filled with stake leaders escorting the Building Department representative, drove slowly down Douglas Drive, the local leaders said nothing but looked admiringly at the six-acre wooded lot. Following their gaze, the representative suddenly sat up, pointed, and said, “Now there’s the place that you need to build—right up there.” By the spring of 1963 the purchase was finalized; but during the delay, the price had unfortunately risen \$6,000. Still, it was a wonderful location, easily accessible by highway and in a desirable residential neighborhood.

The two bishops of the Minneapolis Second and Fourth wards, Thomas A. Gwynn and A. Everett Manwaring (who had replaced Paul Wilson as bishop of the Fourth Ward in 1963), were closely involved through the planning and building processes. Bishop Gwynn, agent bishop during the construction, was a short man whom several dubbed “the biggest little man” around (Russell 1988, 17). Everett Manwaring

was famous for his annual sermon to the youth on the three S's: sex, sin, and self-control. Both men were energetic, aggressive, seasoned Church leaders who kept up a friendly rivalry to see which of their wards could outdo the other. They also had the Church experience to know what would be needed in a stake center and especially a stake center in Minnesota.

An opportunity to sell the chapel on Golden Valley Road developed about the same time that the stake received approval to purchase the site on Douglas Drive. Taking advantage of both opportunities meant long-term benefits but left the Second and Fourth wards without facilities. Until the stake center was occupied two years later in 1966, these wards rented Neill and Sunny Hollow elementary schools nearby for Sunday services and weekly activities. Officers and teachers worked "out of closets and car trunks like nomads" for two years, recalled Brent Adair, later bishop of the Fourth Ward (1977-82) and counselor in the stake presidency. "Every meeting had to be set up and taken down like a circus tent." But, he added, "the adversity and difficulty increased our ability to do and our commitment to do it well" (1980, 24).

Fund-Raising

The Church underwrote 70 percent of new buildings, but the stake's 30 percent of the estimated total, \$650,000, came to a whopping \$195,000. Minnesota Mormons were used to miracles, though; and even with just over a thousand families in the stake, no one questioned "if" it could be done. They knew it would take dedication and sacrifice, and they weren't afraid of either.

They buckled down to a concerted effort in the fall of 1962 when President Russell, who had been leading the stake in Delbert Wright's absence for several months, clearly saw the need for the stake center. Unwilling to wait, he began urging the bishops and branch presidents to begin vigorous

fund-raising efforts. Bishop Paul Wilson started the action by bringing a check (the result of Fourth Ward's fund-raising projects), to the next meeting with the stake presidency; he passed it over commenting, "Well, I think it's time we put our money where our mouth is. Here's our ward's check for \$1,000 to get things rolling" (Manwaring 1989, 1). Even before he was called as stake president, Sherman Russell officially started the 1963 drive by setting a goal of \$30,000 for the year. The members responded, and building fund-raisers sprouted everywhere.

There were dinners where members cooked food, brought it to the Church, and immediately bought it back. Annual carnivals on the stake center lot for five years resembled "a mini state fair midway," attracted many neighbors, and cleared several thousand dollars each year. There were bazaars, inventories, paper drives, and dances. Lillie May Rose, by then a spry octogenarian in the Minneapolis Ward, attended the dances and gave \$100 to the building fund for every man who danced with her (J. Wilson 1989, 17). At "slave auctions," members offered services they did well for a price paid to the building fund. During one of these auctions, Jean Nelson of Fourth Ward kept jacking up the bidding on four hours of her husband Bill's services, proclaiming, "I want him to work for *me*." Bill jokingly implored, "Come on! Somebody else bid! I can't work for that woman" (Manwaring 1989, 3).

For many months, the stake parked a small trailer with high sides on the building site where members could deposit their newspapers for recycling. The newspapers brought "a pretty good price" at the time. One day as Warren O. Biorn, a counselor in the Fourth Ward bishopric, was pulling the trailer to the recycling station, the tailgate flipped opened on Highway 55, spilling the papers for blocks. Everett Manwaring recalled, "We were down there picking up papers for a *long* time" (1989, 6).

In the Minneapolis Fourth Ward, the bishopric assigned quotas to the auxiliaries. The Relief Society, for example, was

assessed \$5,000, to be made “outside of Church.” Under the leadership of President Barbara C. Curtis, the sisters began organizing grocery inventories at Shopper’s City (“doctors, lawyers, managers, and vice presidents counting pantyhose and bobby pins”) and having bake sales in shopping malls.

After learning to decorate cakes at Relief Society, the sisters then began marketing these skills for the building fund. Their first order was Kay Peterson’s and Bob Holker’s wedding cake. They were so successful that, even after the building drive, Barbara Curtis continued it as a home business. When the time came to turn in the money, the sisters were delighted to learn that they had exceeded the assessment by \$300 (Curtis 1988, 5). All of Fourth Ward’s auxiliaries were likewise successful in meeting their assessments.

Interesting, time-consuming, spirit-building, and even enjoyable as all these activities were, however, they could not yield the major amounts needed to finance such an ambitious project. For this, outright donation was the only way—plain old “digging into the pockets,” as Paul Wilson put it. During his tenure as Fourth Ward bishop, he asked every family in the ward to donate the equivalent of one month’s salary during the coming eighteen months (Manwaring 1989, 1). Other wards adopted similar programs. Members tightened belts, put off family vacations, postponed home repairs, and dug deep.

For example, Fern Griffin and her then nonmember husband, Howard, in Minneapolis Second Ward celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary during this time. They had been given a “whole box full of silver dollars” by family members, some of which had been saved for years and probably were (or would have become) worth much more than face value because of their silver content and collector interest. They donated them all to the building fund (Griffin 1987, 7).

Newly called Bishop Richard C. Bigelow of the Minneapolis Third Ward faced the dual challenge of meeting the assessment for the stake center and raising money for a proposed classroom addition to the Bryant Avenue building at

the same time. He personally visited every member of the ward to solicit support. "I remember going to one elderly widow's home," he recorded. "The assessment we had made her was \$50. I, somewhat timidly, presented this assessment to her, asking if she could accept it, and she said to me, 'Bishop, I have \$900 in a little jar up in my cabinet, and I've just been waiting for some special project that I could give it to. I want you to have it.' It wasn't too many months before we had the money that we needed." He added, "This was a very spiritual experience to me, to see these people respond in the way they did, that the work of the Lord might progress" (Bigelow n.d., 15).

Bishop Tom Gwynn of Minneapolis Second Ward asked each member of his congregation to make a personal assessment. "In many cases," he said, "they voluntarily came up with a much higher assessment than we would have put on them." He did not expect much of the students, many of them in straitened circumstances, attending the University of Minnesota who resided in his ward. The students gave freely, however. "One student sold his motorcycle, his only mode of transportation, in order to donate the entire amount to the building fund," recalls Bishop Gwynn (1987, 8).

Construction, 1964-66

The groundbreaking ceremony was held at the site on 20 June 1964, under the direction of President Russell, attended by officials from the city of Crystal. The ideal weather seemed like a benediction on the success of the fledgling project. That afternoon a carnival sponsored by the stake MIA roared into action on the site, netting the building fund an additional \$2,300.

Shortly after the groundbreaking, a Church-salaried building superintendent, Don Cockrum from Beaumont, Texas, moved his wife, Alma, and two daughters into the old frame house that stood on the property. Church members were then encouraged to donate much of the actual labor;

and Minnesota's Saints responded heroically. They contracted to hang all the sheetrock; put up all the acoustical ceiling tile; haul all the bricks, cement blocks, sand, and water for the masons; pour granular insulation in all the hollow cement blocks of the walls; install the sprinkler system and do all the painting and landscaping; lay the floors; construct the roof; do all the cabinet and woodwork finishing; and finally, do all the clean-up. Crews of sisters primed and painted all the windows before they were put into place. An estimated 90 percent of the labor on the building was member donated—the highest amount of member-donated labor of any building built by the Church to that time, according to a Church Building Department official (Gwynn 1989, 8).

Generous help also came from professionals in the stake. Plumber Joseph Ikhaml, bishop of the St. Paul Second Ward, contracted to do all the plumbing in the building. Using member-donated labor, which he carefully supervised, he was able to save the Church “thousands of dollars” (Manwaring 1989, 5). Warren Biorn and his crews did the insulation, roofing, and sheet-metal work. Harry Johnson's surveying firm surveyed the site. Leonard Thayer, a heavy equipment expert from the Princeton Branch, and his son Lynn contoured the ground. Gordon Tennyson, a master cabinet-maker, did all of the fine woodwork on the pulpit in the chapel. Fay Dearden helped decorate the stake president's office and other areas in the building. John Curtis's truck was always available for errands or hauling.

All-round efficiency expert Steven G. Erickson of Minneapolis Second Ward was called to be project clerk. He spent over a thousand hours paying bills, processing the paperwork, and taking care of the bank account. Because of his promptness in paying bills and the excellent relationship he and Brother Cockrum developed with contractors “literally thousands of dollars were personally contributed to [the] building by non-member sub-contractors and suppliers in the Twin Cities,” recalled Bishop Gwynn, speaking at the building's dedication (1967, 3). This aid came in the

form of free use of equipment and supplies which would otherwise have had to be paid for.

Initially much of the timber on the lot had to be removed. By July the site looked as if it had been hit by a tornado. "We had trees and stumps laying all over the landscape," said Tom Gwynn (1967, 3). Brother Cockrum concisely reported to Salt Lake, "We have a stump and log problem" (in Gwynn 1967, 3). The members worked unceasingly to haul the wood off and prepare the site for construction. The Hennepin County Work House (jail) provided backup help by sending some of its "temporary guests" to cut logs (Gwynn 1967, 3). Many logs were buried in a long, fifteen-foot-deep trench near the northern edge of the parking lot.

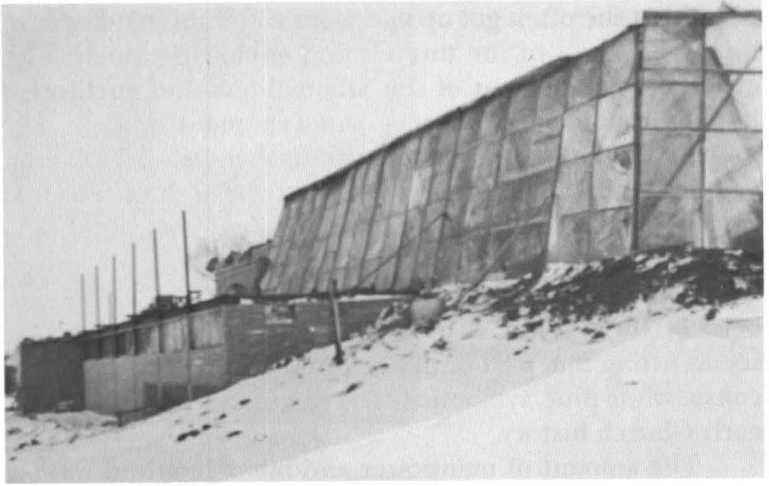
As quickly as the site was cleared and contoured, stakes were driven to mark where the footings would be dug. As Bishop Gwynn and Bishop Manwaring walked around the site and compared the distances with the blueprints, it was obvious to them that the Relief Society room was much too small. Somehow they had failed to notice the dimensions on the standard plan and now realized that the room—not much bigger than a regular classroom—was already completely inadequate. Their hearts sank. Turnaround time through the Building Department would run two or three weeks, and work on the footings was scheduled to begin immediately. Bishop Manwaring, a gifted raconteur, recounts with relish how one of these men did what any faithful, creative bishop would do. Remembering the injunction that Zion's stakes should be enlarged, by the light of the full moon, he went to the building site, tape measure in hand, pulled up the stakes for the side walls of the Relief Society room, extended each out from the side of the building about an additional ten feet or so and replaced them (Manwaring 1989, 2). Thus, with two decisive strokes, this deliberately anonymous bishop produced a room which now comfortably seats about sixty-four and created a legend that instantly became part of the stake's folklore.

The fall of 1964 was particularly rainy, complicating the trenching for footings and the furnace room. The holes were continually filling up with water and had to be emptied out by hand. The work of clearing the lot was nothing compared to this back-breaking labor. Typical is this August 1964 report: "Bad luck, rained all night, mud to our knees, 10 volunteers here" (in Gwynn 1967, 4). Many young men spent hours ladling mud into buckets at the bottom of the trenches while others hauled the buckets up on ropes and dumped them (Manwaring 1989, 2). The furnace room, which had to be partially dug by hand because of how it was situated on the hill, also had to be repeatedly "mucked out."

By the time the ground started freezing that fall, the footings were in place in the trenches with the soil compacted back around them. They barely beat the winter freeze, however. In the last few areas, the soil had to be broken up with hand picks to fill the trenches because it had already begun to freeze.

Nobody in Minnesota lets winter stop anything. Though temperatures fell as low as -35 below, the members put up temporary enclosures with 2x4's and plastic sheeting around the twenty-foot-high area where a wall would be built. Then they hauled bricks, blocks, sand, mortar, and water into the enclosures and prepared them for the professional masons. When that section of wall was completed, they took down the enclosures, moved them to the next location, and began the process all over again.

The enclosures were heated around the clock with small kerosene space heaters called "salamanders." Since the salamanders held enough fuel for only seven or eight hours, they had to be refilled and relighted between midnight and 2:00 A.M. Fourth Ward brethren Warren Biorn, Bill Thomas, and Stan Hackett were three of the men who consistently performed this duty. Warren's wife, Florence, a nonmember, was concerned because he sometimes would come home with his hair and eyebrows singed from trying to relight the temperamental sputtering salamanders. This worried her to the



Heated enclosures during the construction of the stake center walls, 1965-66.



Kerosene-burning "salamanders" kept the drying concrete in the plastic enclosures from freezing during the construction of the stake center, winter of 1965-66.

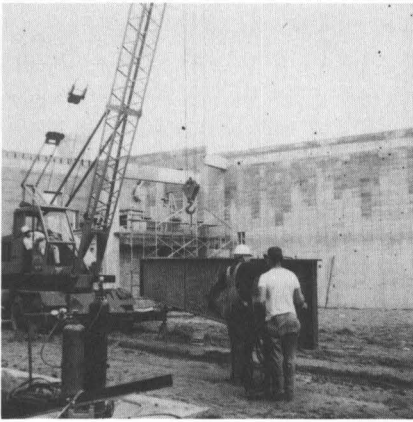
point that she often got up and went with him to make sure he got back out of the tunnels and enclosures safely. The grueling management of the salamanders and enclosures lasted throughout the winter—about six months.

As the walls were being built, Isabel Ostvig Holker, a great-granddaughter of Eli and Margaret Houghton who had come to Minnesota from Nauvoo, donated part of a badly damaged moon stone from the Nauvoo Temple to the building project (Holker 1989). It was incorporated in the outside brick on the east face of the building about four feet high. It seems fitting that part of that temple, built with stately Wisconsin white pine, symbolically continues this area's ties with early Church history.

The amount of manpower and labor required was relentless and unending. Yet the Saints never failed. Even during the coldest weather, the turnout of men, women, and children was always excellent. A telephone call or an announcement could get almost anything. Work "parties" were scheduled every Saturday, most evenings, and many weekdays. The motto for the Saturday parties was: "From ten to two, and then you're through. If you stay 'til four, you'll love it more" (Manwaring 1989, 4).

They got no breaks on weather. Brother Cockrum's construction reports contained entries like this one, dated 16 January 1965: "-15 degrees today. Good turnout of volunteer labor working on roof joists. We are moving on in spite of cold. Mormons are tough." Another in March 1965: "-5 degrees today. We have twenty-three men out." "Had ten men out today," Brother Cockrum noted later that month. "Had to plow out four to six feet of snow. Men had to park two blocks away and walk in. We have snow piled everywhere." In April, when the weather should have improved, came this entry: "Snowed all day, 5 degrees, forty-four men out today donating one hundred sixty-six hours" (in Gwynn 1967, 4).

Crews battled the brisk cold winds of April and May 1965 to put up the rafters over the classroom sections. A crane placed the heavy I-beams over the chapel area to carry the

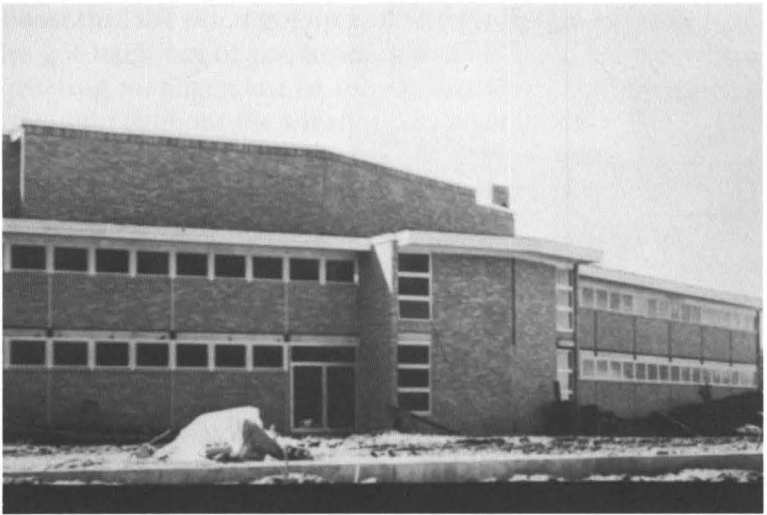


Raising an I-beam during the construction of the stake center.

weight of the roof, but heavy rains and thick mud brought work to a standstill because the crane would bog down if they brought it back to the site. And they couldn't keep working until the huge I-beam was in place over the Junior Sunday School room. Brother Cockrum asked Bishop Gwynn to round up "thirty or forty physically strong men who could lift the beam into place by hand." One Saturday they assembled at the building site. They built scaffolding out of wood and concrete blocks so the beam could be raised a little at a time. Then they literally picked up the steel beam, worked it up to the proper height bit by bit, and put it in place atop the brick walls. It was done with "coolie labor," quipped Bishop Gwynn, "Mormon coolie labor" (1989, 12).

The second hitch was the main floor over the basement area. It was made of pre-poured sections of concrete, put into place with a crane. Through some error, the sections were poured about three inches too short to rest on an I-beam to support the brick walls above. The solution was to weld a three-inch piece of steel onto the support beam, extending it under the concrete sections.

Fourth Ward convert Maynard Erickson and Tom Gwynn worked all one day in temperatures of twenty-below zero to weld the three-hundred-foot "stringer" to the beam.



Basement entrance of the completed Minneapolis Minnesota Stake Center, 1965-66.

“I’m not that good a welder,” confessed Bishop Gwynn, “but Maynard is a master welder. He worked with me until he was satisfied with what I was doing. We didn’t meet half way, though.” They each started at one end, but “I went about one-third of the way and Maynard came the remaining two-thirds” (1989, 13).

That summer two teenagers, Brian Anderson and Chuck Johnson, worked as “masons’ assistants” to help put up the tower. They built the scaffolding, mixed mortar, hauled bricks, and handed them up to the mason; but Brian didn’t miss the opportunity to embed a lucky penny in the mortar on the bottom level of brick (Anderson 1989). Late that summer, a hovering helicopter gently lowered the top of the spire into position.

By fall of 1965, everything was enclosed and the furnaces were providing heat. “The building is shaping up nicely,” read the construction report, “and will be a shining light for our Heavenly Father. So many are watching the progress on the hill” (in Gwynn 1967, 13).

Finishing work on the interior began in earnest. Lou Oelkers, a professional painter who would be called into the stake presidency in 1973, Sid Anderson, Fourth Ward stalwart and father of the indefatigable Brian Anderson, and Owen Ash, a Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine, were called to be in charge of staining and finishing the wooden doors. Working hard to attain the smoothest surface possible, they first pressed dyed “mud” into the pores of the oak, then sanded, varnished, and finished the surfaces. The result was “like satin.” Custodians in the building have constantly tried to keep people from taping anything to the doors. When the tape is removed, it pulls the fine filling from the grain of the wood and leaves an irreparable spot.

Other member crews hammered sheetrock into place, sprayed plaster finish, put up ceiling tiles, or laid floor tiles. Once a crew applying ceiling tiles high on the scaffolding in the cultural hall found Astrid Jensen of Second Ward, then in her mid-sixties, beside them, deftly putting adhesive on the tiles and passing them on for application.

Because of Bishop Manwaring’s and Bishop Gwynn’s careful attention to details and insistence on high standards, the results of the members’ efforts were of high quality, despite their lack of experience. If the quality slipped, they were instructed to rip things out and do it over—right. Once or twice things really went awry. Part of the plaster finish in the chapel had to be redone because it “rippled and looked like waves of water” (Manwaring 1989, 4). On another occasion, an earnest but inexperienced group worked all evening in three of the classrooms smoothing and cleaning the cement floors, spreading black tar adhesive, and laying the floor tiles. The next morning, a more experienced eye noticed that all of the perfectly placed tiles were wrong side up. They were scraped up and replaced—not once, but twice, before the floor finally passed inspection. One day a crew spent hours putting up ceiling tiles in the stake president’s office, then realized that the tiles were not properly aligned. So they took down most of them and redid the tiling, but

purposely left a little patch of slightly mismatched ones in the center just to “remind the stake president of human frailties” (Manwaring 1989, 9).

But the basement was a problem of its own, part of a story which has only recently ended. It was apparent during the planning stages that the natural slope of the site could be turned into an asset by excavating a walk-out basement underneath the row of classrooms on the north side. The building could thus include an additional six thousand square feet of usable, relatively inexpensive space, providing for a large Scout room, insulated space for pipes and heating ducts, and future expansion. The local leaders enthusiastically agreed upon this plan, asked the local architect to add it to the standard floor plan provided by the Building Department, and sent it in to Salt Lake. The Building Department approved it.

As construction progressed, the basement area became a source of friction. Salt Lake had approved the plans but apparently had overlooked the basement addition. Now they were determined to enforce the rule, “no basements in Church buildings.” By the time the first building inspector arrived from Salt Lake during the winter and realized the discrepancy, however, it was too late to do much about it as the building was in place and the area underneath the north side could not be ignored. This resulted in some interesting exchanges with Church headquarters.

Desiring to be strictly obedient and dismayed at the problem they had inadvertently created, local leaders agreed that no basements were allowed; therefore, they did not have a basement. They began referring instead to “the space.” But semantics could not make the problem disappear. In a spirit of cautious confidence that their course was in the best interest of the local Saints and that it was the only viable one, they went ahead with plans to finish “the space,” if not within the letter then within the spirit of the law.

The pipes and heating ducts that ran through the space had to be walled in to protect them. After the walls were built

and the doors installed, Bishop Gwynn obtained a bid to pour the cement floor. The Building Department quickly objected to the bid for cement in a “nonexistent” basement. Local leaders, left to grapple with the physical reality of the problem, responded that they might not have a basement but they did have a “space” which had been approved in the early plans and which had to be brought to some degree of completion. Still, the Building Department not only objected but instructed them to back-fill “the space” with sand.

At this point, the Crystal building inspector stepped in. Because there were electrical conduits in the floor of the space, he required that they be covered with low cement “tunnels” to protect the wiring before the back-filling. The bid for creating the “tunnels” was \$700 more than a bid for pouring the whole floor. At this opportune moment, a new inspector from the Church Building Department visited the site. As Bishop Gwynn reviewed the different options with him, the inspector concluded that it made sense to accept the cheaper bid and gave permission to pour the cement floor. The inspector was on his way to Duluth in connection with another building, so Bishop Gwynn knew he had two or three days before the inspector returned to Salt Lake City where someone more familiar with the project might give different instructions. Wasting no time, Don Cockrum telephoned John Curtis and asked if he could pour the basement floor by the next night. John did (Gwynn 1989, 10).

Scout meetings in the new Scout room started the week after the building was completed. By the next year, 1967, a very active genealogy library was functioning in the rest of “the space.” The basement area “has paid for itself a thousand times over,” said Bishop Gwynn (1989, 10).

However, that wasn’t the end of it. For years, stake presidents requesting permission from the Building Department for work or renovation in the basement, were met over and over again with the response, “But there is no basement in your stake center.” In late 1989 as remodeling was completed in the basement’s Family History Center, the Building De-

partment acknowledged that a set of blueprints of the stake center basement had been added to their records. Finally, the basement is official.

Another pitfall in the well-meaning long-distance administration of the Building Department showed up after the building was occupied. Because Church employees perceived Minnesota's location to be, as Everett Manwaring put it, "on the barren tundra," they decided that air conditioning would not be required in the building. This decision was reached because of a formula used in Salt Lake which specified that if the mean temperature in an area was below a certain degree then air conditioning was not justified. Local leaders pointed out that Minnesota summers are very hot and humid, reaching temperatures as extreme on the high end as those of winter are on the low end—but to no avail.

In August 1966 two months after the building was occupied, stake conference convened to hear the assigned General Authority, Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy. Temperatures were hovering in the high nineties when the Saints gathered for the Saturday night session, and the humidity was nearly as high. All the opened windows and doors couldn't catch even a hint of breeze. Since no screens had been provided for the windows, Minnesota's "state birds" (mosquitoes) flew freely through the meeting. Despite their pride in the newly completed structure, the Saints had to agree with Elder Young who stood at the pulpit, mopped perspiration from his brow, and called the stake center a "hot and steamy mausoleum" of a building.

Afterward President Russell explained to him that although the duct work for air conditioning was already installed and the local share of the cost was in the bank, the stake had been denied permission to install it. Elder Young instructed him to have Bishop Gwynn, still the agent bishop, resubmit the request for air conditioning immediately. Two weeks after Elder Young returned to Salt Lake, a Building Department official gave the go-ahead for air conditioning (P. Wilson 1989, 9). President Russell later had occasion to

thank Elder Young for his assistance and asked him what happened. "Oh," said Elder Young, "I just called up Brother So-and-so of the Building Department and told him he was a d--- fool."

Dedication, 1967

As the stake center's dedication neared in July 1967, the full magnitude of the project could be assessed. Cost of the building and land: \$643,500, 30 percent of which, or almost \$200,000, had been borne by the local members. They had donated a staggering 24,000 hours of labor. Significant donations of time came from members in every unit in the stake, including units like Austin, Eau Claire (Wisconsin), Princeton, and Rochester that were several hours away. As Bishop Manwaring put it in a final report, "Many unsung heroes have lifted and driven, pushed and pulled, carried and dragged, dug and filled, nailed and smoothed, sanded and painted, stained and varnished and glued and cleaned!" (1967, 6) John Manwaring, Bishop Manwaring's sixteen-year-old son, had the largest number of individual hours—over 613. Several had given over five hundred hours, many over two hundred hours, and more than fifty exceeded one hundred.

Paid labor expended on construction totaled twenty-six thousand hours. Other statistics were equally impressive. The building had used 685 cubic yards of concrete, approximately 8,000 masonry concrete blocks, and 120,000 bricks—and "every one of them were handled by the Saints" (Cockrum 1967, 7). The building took twenty-six months to build and stands twenty-three feet eight inches at its highest point; the tower rises to seventy-one feet ten inches.

The following spring, for two Sundays in a row, April 23 and 30, the stake proudly held open house in the new building. Over seventeen hundred people attended, 70 percent of them nonmembers. Tour guides led groups through the building where displays and full-time missionaries told

about the Church programs that would be carried out in the building. Then the visitors watched *Man's Search for Happiness*, a movie produced two years earlier for the LDS Pavilion at the New York World's Fair.

On 9 July 1967, eighty-three-year-old Hugh B. Brown, counselor to President David O. McKay, traveled to Minnesota to dedicate the building. He had not been well and had declined a first request. But President Russell wrote a second time, explaining that two hours' flying directly to Minneapolis, being met at the airport, dedicating the stake center, and then flying back to Salt Lake would actually take less time than attending all his Sunday meetings in his home ward, then not on the consolidated schedule. President Brown telephoned President Russell and queried humorously, "Have you ever heard the statement, 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again'? Well, it's true" (Russell 1988, 25). Delbert and Gertrude Wright came back from their home in California where they were presiding over the Oakland Temple. Don and Alma Cockrum came from Texas.

President Brown expressed appreciation to the congregation for their sacrifices of time and money but warned that it would not be the last time they would be asked to give. Then he told this little story. After living in the Lethbridge (Canada) Stake for over thirty years and helping to build chapels, a tabernacle, and a temple, he and his wife moved to Utah where he hoped to "practice law and make a little money for a change." Soon they were visited by the bishop who invited them to a banquet at the chapel. Upon arriving at the banquet, President Brown found a note by his plate saying "your contribution to the chapel, which has just been finished and not paid for, is \$1,500." Then he was called on to speak, but couldn't think of an appropriate text, until he remembered, "I came to my friends and they took me in." Soon after that he was made president of the Granite Stake; and within days, the head of the finance committee asked for a donation of \$3,000, because "the rest of the people will be guided by what you do, so your donation must be large

enough so that others will be reaching toward it. But,” President Brown added as the sympathetic laughter died down, “I’ve never missed one dollar I’ve given in helping to build [Church buildings],” implying that no one else would either (Brown 1967, 13). Stake members already held this same conviction firmly and appreciated his confirmation.

President Brown also noted, “Unless people can find a cause which in their estimation is greater than they are individually, they’ll never amount to much” (1967, 18). Members of the Minneapolis Stake had found such a cause in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They poured everything they had in means and labor to further the Savior’s work, prove their devotion, and build a beautiful structure. With their united effort, they erected a graceful and stately building which today, twenty-four years later, continues to meet the needs of the members adequately. Surely the hopes President Russell expressed at the dedication that the stake could “turn with the same zeal” exhibited during construction “to satisfy the purposes for which it was built, to breathe into it the spirit of life through unselfish and devoted service to our brothers and sisters,” continue to be realized (1967, 9).

Institutional Maturity,

1973-79

AFTER THE UNEXPECTED DEATH of President Harold B. Lee on 26 December 1973, Spencer W. Kimball became the twelfth president of the Church. For twelve years until his death in November 1985 at the age of ninety, President Kimball's tenure was marked with important innovations and many changes. Spurred by President Kimball's admonition to "lengthen your stride," the number of missionaries doubled and convert baptisms shot up. With his inspired vision that the gospel must be preached world-wide, he called upon Church members to pray that the doors of all the nations would be opened to missionary work. When the Minnesota stake was organized in 1960, it was the 317th. Nineteen years later in 1979, the thousandth stake of the Church was organized at Nauvoo, an average growth of almost forty stakes per year.

Perhaps nothing had a greater impact on public opinion and the Church's power to spread the gospel world-wide than the 1978 revelation received through President Kimball which gave every worthy male the right to hold the priesthood. This revelation came at a time when the nation had been struggling with civil rights, integration, and equality for fifteen years. The Church had been severely criticized for withholding the priesthood from blacks, although the strongest and most militant criticisms had come during the 1960s. Under President Kimball's guidance, the General Authorities made the issue a matter of intense discussion and

prayer. Despite the advantages to be gained by changing the policy, President Kimball was determined to follow the promptings of the Spirit whichever way it led. If that meant maintaining the status quo, he would, he wrote, “be true to it all the rest of [my] life” and would “fight the world” if need be (1979, 4). After much fasting and prayer, the revelation to change the policy came to the General Authorities amid a great spiritual outpouring.

At the time of the revelation there were few, if any, black LDS members in Minnesota, though apparently there had been at least two black members at the turn of the century. Mary Moe Swenson, a Minneapolis stalwart, reported that when she joined the Church in 1900 the only other Mormons in the city were a black couple. This may have been Ernest Banks and his wife, who are identified as among the earliest members. Their race is not specified; but a 1903 photograph of the Twin Cities Sunday School shows what appears to be a black couple on the upper rows.

In 1978, the local Saints received news of the revelation with excitement and great rejoicing as it was picked up on wire services, television broadcasts, and in newspapers. Since that time some converts from Minneapolis’s small black community have joined the Church. One of the first families was Joseph D. and Shirley Purvis and their three children. Although they remembered reading with interest about the change in Church policy regarding priesthood for worthy black men, it didn’t mean much to them at the time. Their kindergarten-age daughter attended Primary with the children of their neighbors, Dick and Pauline Edgley. Over time, the Purvis family learned more about the Church and gained testimonies. They were baptized in 1981. Joseph, who holds an Ed.D. from Harvard and is principal of the Holland Continuous Progress School in Minneapolis, was ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood shortly after baptism, the first black member in the stake to hold the priesthood. Shirley is currently serving as choir director in Crystal Second Ward.

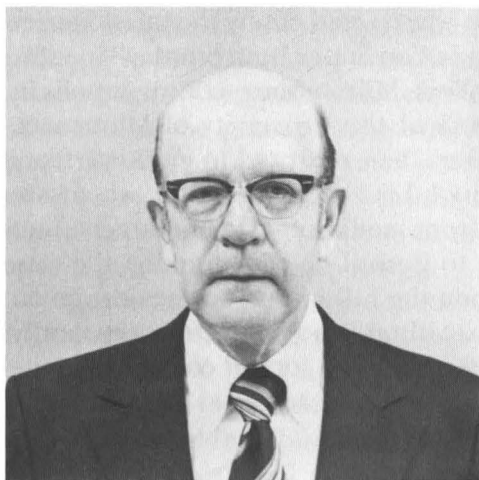
Milton G. Dunham was tracted out by the missionaries and baptized, as he puts it, “on Super Bowl Sunday” in 1986. A native of Ithaca, New York, Milton came to Minneapolis in 1948 to do graduate work at the University of Minnesota, served in the Korean War, then returned to graduate from the university’s law school. Like the Purvises, he was aware of the 1978 revelation from media reports but attached no particular significance to it until he began taking the missionary discussions. Then the full import of the change on his own life sunk deep. Milton, who is a referee in family court for the state of Minnesota, is a former counselor in the stake mission presidency and now serves as the ward mission leader in Crystal Second Ward.

Stake Reorganization, 1973

In May 1973, just seven months before Spencer W. Kimball became president of the Church and because of President Russell’s health problems, Apostle Marvin J. Ashton and Regional Representative Robert D. Hales came by assignment to reorganize the Minnesota Stake during its regular quarterly stake conference. Paul W. Wilson, who had served as a counselor to President Russell for his whole tenure (1963-73), was called as the new stake president. President Russell was made a patriarch of the Minnesota stake.

Counselors were John M. Matsen, a pediatrician at the University of Minnesota from the West, and Bennett H. (Lou) Oelkers, the first native Minnesotan to serve in a local stake presidency. In 1974 when Brother Matsen moved from the area, A. Everett Manwaring, former bishop of the Fourth Ward, was called to replace him. Three years later, the St. Paul Stake was organized. Because Lou Oelkers lived within its boundaries, Richard G. Edgley, an executive at General Mills, was called to replace him in the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake presidency.

Paul Wilson was born in Salt Lake City, a descendant of early pioneers. He graduated from the University of Utah in



Paul W. Wilson, Minneapolis Minnesota Stake president, 1973-79.

accounting and served in the army during World War II. After the war, he married June Jackson in the Salt Lake Temple and worked in Salt Lake for five years. Then he was transferred to the Minneapolis office of the international accounting firm of Ernst and Ernst as a CPA in 1953. He became a partner in 1961. In Minneapolis he served as a counselor in the branch presidency and as financial clerk. When the Minneapolis Fourth Branch was organized in 1959, he became its first president. When the branch was made a ward with the stake organization in 1960, he became its first bishop and served until his call as counselor to Sherman Russell in 1963. After his tenure as stake president, he was called as the Welfare Services Regional Agent in 1979 and as a Regional Representative in October 1982. He held both callings simultaneously for six months, then was released as a regional agent. He completed his term of service as a Regional Representative in 1987. During his later years as Regional Representative, he had responsibility for the Minnesota Region.

President Wilson and his counselors continued to build upon the policies and goals of previous leadership—maximizing stake unity and strength, emphasizing Church gov-

ernment, stressing personal welfare, and encouraging strong homes. He inherited a good stake—but a large one with almost five thousand members. Despite the growth in membership, the stake covered less territory than it had possessed at the time of its original formation. Rochester, which had become a ward in 1962, and Austin Branch had been reassigned to the mission district in October 1970 as the nucleus of a future stake in southern Minnesota. (Rochester resumed branch status at this time.)

During the decade between 1965 to 1975, stake membership had increased over 50 percent. By the end of that year, there were 5,269 members in 1,989 families, organized in twelve units.

Preparing for a Stake Division

It was apparent that the stake would soon be ready to be divided, a change long anticipated. Before his release in the early 1970s, President Russell had taken steps to more equitably apportion membership among the wards, particularly in St. Paul.

This was a more difficult process than it appeared. Because LDS wards are completely staffed by lay members of the congregations, it has always been necessary for people to attend those congregations in whose boundaries they live, thus providing a pool of manpower to carry on the programs of the Church. Members moving to a new area generally “checked out” the strength and membership of a ward to see if it would meet their needs. Over the years, this resulted in some polarization between the “natives” and the Utah Mormons that became particularly evident in the St. Paul First and Second wards. The professors and graduate students at the University of Minnesota attended the St. Paul Second Ward. The St. Paul First Ward consisted mostly of “old time” native Minnesota converts. There was no ill will between the two wards who shared the Summit Avenue (and later Edgerton) buildings and often held priesthood meetings to-

gether; but the trend intensified, partially a result of the Westerner's Club and the divisions it had fostered. In the early 1970s, seven families were called from the St. Paul Second Ward to begin attending the St. Paul First Ward, with the hope that this integration would erase the remaining distance between the Minnesotans and the westerners and even out ward populations until official changes could be approved (Holt 1989, 7). The families agreed. Most of the adults had stake callings so their departure did not heavily impact ward structure, and the Second Ward was large and brimming with talent anyway.

A few months after his calling, President Wilson organized a task force of members of the Stake Priesthood Executive Committee to make recommendations for major boundary changes. Their assignment was to create a new ward in St. Paul and one in Minneapolis, to realign boundaries to even out total numbers in all the units, and to give each ward a minimum number of Melchizedek Priesthood holders. In addition, the new boundaries would eliminate the central city wards and instead divide those areas up among several wards. When the task force had completed its work and Salt Lake had approved the plan, there were two new wards—Minneapolis Fifth and St. Paul Third. The city of Minneapolis had been carved up into pie-shaped wedges and members and leadership more evenly divided. This restructuring provided for future growth and the imminent organization of a St. Paul Stake.

President Wilson, looking into the future, emphasized training the additional priesthood holders to provide leadership for both the present and future stakes. Once a year during his tenure (twice during the first two years), the stake ran a six-week leadership training course for new bishops, counselors, and elders' quorum presidencies. The stake presidency reviewed essentials of priesthood leadership and Church programs from the bishop's handbook and conducted workshops on interviewing techniques and listening

skills. These efforts greatly increased the pool of trained personnel for new assignments.

President Wilson also continued the policy which had existed from the beginning of stakehood of calling people to serve in stake positions from every unit. He also stressed the importance of holding personal priesthood interviews, which increased the stake's esprit de corps. President Wilson was solicitous and supportive of the bishops and other priesthood leaders who served under him. His hands-on style of leadership, accessibility, and encouragement gave them the training and motivation they needed to carry on.

Another event which prepared the stake for division was changing its name from the Minnesota Stake, with connotations of providing leadership to the whole state, to the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake on 1 February 1974 (Minneapolis Minnesota, report ending 31 Dec. 1972).

St. Paul and Rochester Stakes

On 14 February 1976 in the Minneapolis stake center, Apostle Mark E. Petersen, with the assistance of Russell C. Taylor, Regional Representative, came to divide the Minneapolis Stake. A capacity crowd of over two thousand filled the stake center that Sunday morning. People knew the long-anticipated change was about to become a reality. Additional seating was arranged in the Relief Society and Aaronic Priesthood rooms, and people were asked to keep their coats on their laps.

It was with great satisfaction that the members raised their hands to sustain a series of proposals: that the St. Paul Stake be organized, that Thomas A. Holt be the first stake president, with counselors Gordon B. Davis and Paul M. Roundy, and that it would include twenty-eight hundred members in seven congregations—the three St. Paul wards, Anoka, Princeton, and Eau Claire (Wisconsin) wards, and the University of Minnesota Branch. Roughly the dividing line

was the Mississippi River, with most of the area to the east in the St. Paul Stake and to the west in the Minneapolis Stake.

The new president, Thomas A. Holt, an executive at the North Central Companies, had lived in the stake for eleven years, served as stake YMMIA superintendent, and was completing his sixth year as bishop of the St. Paul First Ward when called. His first counselor, Gordon B. Davis, was born in Idaho Falls, Idaho, was a professor of management information at the University of Minnesota, and held its Honeywell Chair of Management Information Systems. He was serving as St. Paul Second Ward's bishop when called into the stake presidency. Paul M. Roundy, second counselor, was part owner of People's Plumbing, which had supervised much of the plumbing work on the Minneapolis stake center. Paul was enjoying a miraculous remission from a life-threatening blood disease. He served faithfully for five years, was released in early 1981, and died the following August.

The University Branch which met at the old institute building was actually in Minneapolis, though on the east bank of the Mississippi. However, it was placed in the St. Paul Stake for a good reason. At the time of division, the St. Paul congregations were underhoused and the Church Building Department minimum for building a stake center was three thousand people. Including the University Ward in the St. Paul Stake gave the new stake a numerical advantage so that it could move forward with plans for a stake center. The new stake raised over \$200,000 and, with the generous portion of the Minneapolis stake funds it had received at the time of the stake's division, held ground-breaking services for its stake center in Oakdale September 1977 under the direction of Elder Richard G. Scott of the First Council of the Seventy. The first meetings were held in the completed building in November 1978.

The St. Paul Stake was the 744th stake organized in the Church and the second in Minnesota. It had taken sixty-one years from the first Sunday School in Minneapolis until the

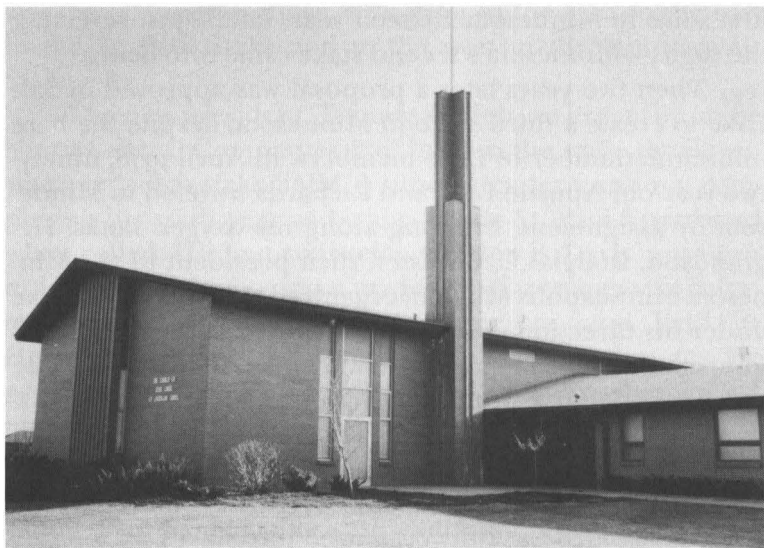
first stake in Minnesota. Sixteen years later—just reversing the digits—Minnesota's second stake came into being.

Then two years later a proposal was approved in Salt Lake to create a third stake in Minnesota, despite the bare minimum number of 1,650 members. In April 1978, ninety-two-year-old Apostle LeGrand Richards traveled to Minnesota by assignment, bringing along his oxygen tanks. His grandson, Douglas L. Callister, then president of the Minnesota Minneapolis Mission, organized the Rochester Stake under his direction on 30 April (Callister 1989, 10). Lee M. Johnson was called to be the first president of the stake. The stake included five Minnesota wards and one branch: Austin, Mankato, Red Wing, Rochester, Winona, and Faribault, and a Wisconsin ward and a branch: La Crosse and Sparta. Now all the territory—and more—originally covered by the Minnesota Stake was fully organized into stakes.

The Minneapolis Stake continued under the leadership of Paul Wilson. The stake had five wards, all in Minneapolis, and twenty-five hundred members. As a result of the 1969 site study, the stake purchased five acres of land in Bloomington under a plan then in operation in the Church to buy and reserve land for future use. It was intended for a new mission home and possibly a chapel or stake center at the southern end of the stake. At that time, the view from Normandale Road showed a big expanse of rolling hills, with no construction anywhere. Today the area is heavily developed.

The site plan and its recommendations proved prophetic. A new mission home and office building on the Bloomington property was completed in 1971, and the home on Pillsbury Avenue which had housed the mission for twenty-two years was sold. Mission boundaries were realigned and the mission was renamed the Minneapolis Minnesota Mission in 1974, in response to a standardized Church-wide system of nomenclature.

Construction on the adjacent Bloomington chapel had been resisted by the members, who had needed some time



*Chapel at 9700 Nesbitt Avenue South, Bloomington, dedicated in 1975.
Courtesy of Galen Erickson.*

to recuperate from the demands of fund raising and who were concerned about leaving the city. However, this building was completed in the spring of 1975 to house the Minneapolis First and Third wards. With this event, the Church effectively moved to the suburbs. There were no longer any LDS chapels in the downtown Minneapolis or St. Paul areas.

To accommodate growth in the western suburbs, the Minneapolis Fifth Ward chapel was built in Plymouth, several miles west of the Hopkins area proposed by the site survey. By this time, the stake was providing a larger share of the local construction monies and gave 40 percent of the local share—which still stood at 30 percent of the total. Ward members provided 60 percent. Ground-breaking services were held 23 October 1976, and the building was completed in August 1977 at a cost of \$850,000. The chapel sits on three acres of land across the street from Wayzata High School, convenient for seminary students.



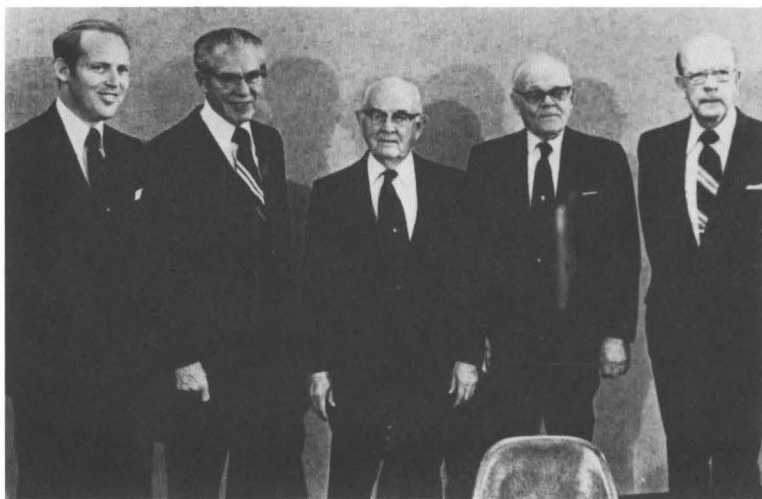
Minneapolis Fifth Ward chapel, 3300 Vicksburg Lane, in Plymouth, dedicated 1978. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

For several months after the building was completed, the chapel was filled with folding chairs rather than benches. Bishop Gordon C. Olsen purposely delayed ordering pews to take advantage of a recent policy he had just learned about permitting padded seats in all new buildings. The Plymouth building thus became one of the first in the Church to have cushioned pews, now common in LDS chapels.

The completion of the Plymouth building was like reaching the top of a high, rocky hill. For the first time in forty years, the stake's units were adequately housed. A final project was remodeling the basement in the Minneapolis stake center to provide additional space for the Family History Center (then the Genealogy Library) in 1967.

Solemn Assembly, 1976

During his tenure as president, Spencer W. Kimball initiated many efforts to more effectively administer the grow-



The only time the entire First Presidency has been in Minnesota. Left: Thomas A. Holt, president of the St. Paul Minnesota Stake; N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency; Spencer W. Kimball, President of the Church; Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; and Paul W. Wilson, president of Minneapolis Minnesota Stake. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

ing world-wide Church. In 1974 President Wilson received a letter from the First Presidency announcing a series of solemn assemblies over a period of several years for priesthood leadership living away from the Intermountain West. These assemblies, under the personal direction of the First Presidency, were a time for teaching, training, and spiritual uplift for priesthood leaders (P. Wilson, Sr., 1989, 11).

Minneapolis was chosen as the site of one of the assemblies. Only selected Melchizedek priesthood leaders were invited: stake presidencies, bishoprics, mission presidencies, district presidencies, high priest quorum presidencies, and seventies quorum presidencies. With written invitations, they assembled from Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Minnesota at the Minneapolis stake center on the afternoon of 18 September 1976. Since a solemn assembly is a most sacred meeting,

usually held only in a temple, the stake center was prepared for the occasion as if it were a temple. The building was cleared and those who entered had to present a current temple recommend as well as a written invitation to the assembly. The entire First Presidency was in attendance that day—Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner, and Marion G. Romney—also Apostle Boyd K. Packer and Elder Rex Pinegar of the First Quorum of the Seventy. Stake presidents blessed the sacrament for the congregation, and bishops passed it. All five General Authorities instructed and inspired the gathering during the four-hour meeting. It was the first time the First Presidency had been in Minnesota together, an unprecedented opportunity for local leaders. President Kimball's failing health soon made it necessary to curtail such assemblies.

Presidents Wilson and Holt had an interesting experience at the conclusion of the solemn assembly which gave each of them an insight into the great leadership and vision of President Kimball about the potential for Church growth in Minnesota. President Kimball asked the two men how many stakes there were in Minnesota. When they responded, "Three," he smiled and gently said, "Three? Why, you should have *thirty* stakes here." The two stake presidents began thinking of how there could be thirty stakes in Minnesota and western Wisconsin by the year 2000. Tom Holt went home and calculated that, assuming move-ins and move-outs remained equal, it would take one new convert a year for every nine current members to yield 75,000 Saints. Somehow, it did not seem impossible (Holt 1989, 16).

Area Conference, 1979

By the early 1970s, the world-wide growth of the Church began to necessitate other changes. In 1971, President Kimball inaugurated area conferences, sending a group of General Authorities to hold meetings in various places around the world. At first, only one conference was held each year, the

first in Manchester, England, in 1971. Four area conferences were held in 1975. These conferences became an increasingly important link between the General Authorities and the growing, far-flung Church membership (Cowan 1985, 421).

In 1979, the Upper Midwest had its turn with a two-day area conference held in Madison, Wisconsin, for members from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois. Many members of the stake drove four hours, camped overnight, or stayed in motels to attend the conference conducted by N. Eldon Tanner. President Kimball, ill and under a doctor's care, was unable to come. Paul Wilson represented the stake as a speaker at the conference.

Strengthening Families and Youth

As greater sexual freedom, legalized abortion, and the weakening of traditional moral values became more pervasive in the country during the 1970s, the Church increasingly sought to counter these trends. It had adopted the family home evening program Church-wide in 1965 and continued to emphasize teaching and training children in the home during the 1970s. Church auxiliaries also moved to help strengthen families.

The response in Minneapolis, as in other areas, was to hold a hard line against these "deteriorations." Stake conferences always included counsel on building and maintaining strong families, teaching moral values to children, giving women positive feedback in their roles as wives and mothers, and keeping lines of communication open between generations.

The stake continued to hold a wide variety of programs to give youth opportunities for social interaction where high moral standards could be maintained. During this time the stake tightened standards for youth activities and spelled out dress codes for dances and socials. Ties were required for the young men and dresses of appropriate length and modesty for the young women. By the early 1970s, dance cards

were issued for admittance to stake dances. Signed by the participants and their bishops, these cards affirmed a participant's willingness to abide by the standards. By the 1980s, dance cards were no longer used, even though the stake still maintained dress codes and high standards of conduct. Only one problem seems to have proved insoluble. The selection and particularly the volume of the music at stake dances is a continuing source of debate.

Recognizing that moral responsibility is instilled in children at a young age, the stake Primary, under the direction of Susan M. Smith, focused on developing a greater sense of accountability among leaders and teachers for getting each child to the weekday Primary meetings and improving the quality of teaching they received there.

During Paul Wilson's tenure as stake president, an all-out effort was made to improve home teaching and visiting teaching, which the stake saw as the first line of defense for the home. Statistics rose in the stake to impressive levels as members responded. Frequently wards reported monthly home teaching in the high 80 and 90 percentages. Months when wards achieved 100 percent were not uncommon. During the early 1970s, home teaching hovered at around 50 percent but jumped sharply in 1973 to 80 percent and continued to climb. By 1978, the stake proudly reported an average of 92 percent home teaching for the year. Visiting teaching was equally strong and sometimes exceeded home teaching. The stake Relief Society presidency under the leadership of Carol Jardine presented a special valentine to President Wilson in February 1978, confirming that the Relief Society had achieved 100 percent visiting teaching that month—a total effort.

Cultural Activities in the 1970s

The 1970s saw a full flowering of stake-sponsored cultural events with high levels of participation. Even in the early days of the Minneapolis and St. Paul branches, the members

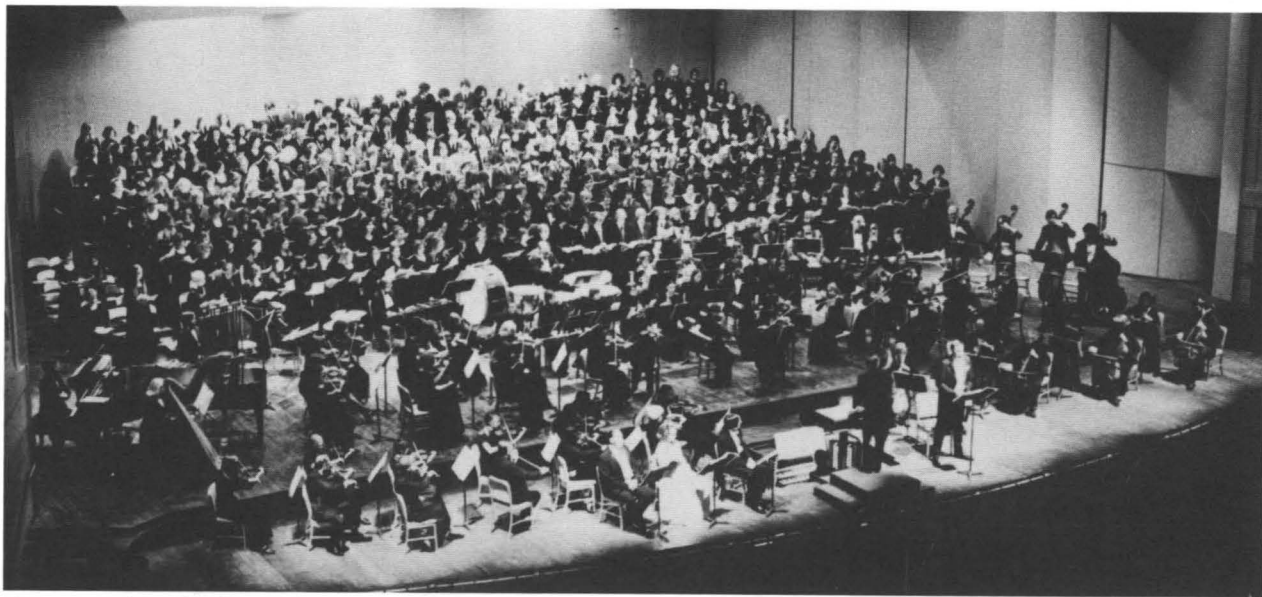


The Minneapolis Second Branch production of A Comedy of Errors in 1958, in the basement of the Golden Valley Road chapel. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

had produced annual plays, usually as building fund-raisers. In 1958, the Minneapolis Second Branch staged Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* in Minneapolis, an uproarious success; and in 1963, Frank Whiting, head of the Theater Department at the University of Minnesota, directed *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde, which raised \$1,500 for the stake building fund. Traditionally, during the 1970s, the stake sponsored a Christmas concert to add to the joy of the season; and after the St. Paul Stake was organized, both stakes co-sponsored the event for several years. Usually this was a production of Handel's *Messiah*, performed in one of the stake centers.

In early 1975 Clyn D. Barrus, then conductor of the Civic Orchestra of Minneapolis and a member of St. Paul First Ward, approached Dr. Dwayne Jorgenson, conductor of the University of Minnesota Symphonic Chorus, and proposed a joint performance of the *Book of Mormon Oratorio* by Mormon composer Dr. LeRoy Robertson to ring in the nation's bicentennial in 1976. Barrus had already received an enthusiastic go-ahead from the Minneapolis Stake, which agreed to sponsor the event. He pointed out to Dr. Jorgenson that the oratorio was a great piece of American music and that the performance would be an unusual concert of religious music to present for the bicentennial celebration.

Dr. Jorgenson was skeptical; but after studying the score, he accepted the proposal. He conducted rehearsals for six hours a week from September until the concert in December 1975. In mid-October, Dr. Jorgenson complained to Clyn, "We like the music, but someone has to tell us what is going on. How did Jesus get on the American continent?" That question led to a presentation on the Book of Mormon. Thomas Plummer, a member from St. Paul on the university faculty, addressed the chorus and answered questions. The carton of forty copies of the Book of Mormon brought for interested singers disappeared quickly. One young woman wandering around afterwards commented disconsolately, "I couldn't get a book. On the way to the carton, I dropped my



A presentation of LeRoy Robertson's Book of Mormon Oratorio, December 1975. Photograph by Galen Erickson, appeared in the Church News, 10 January 1976, p. 10; courtesy of LDS Historical Department Archives.

music and it was trampled.” Eventually 150 chorus members requested and received copies of the Book of Mormon (“Book” 1976).

A near-capacity audience of four thousand attended the first performance held in the University of Minnesota’s Northrup Auditorium. Then the musicians traveled by buses to Chicago for a performance in the Schurtz High School auditorium, paying their own way. Members of the Wilmette Stake, co-sponsors of the road concert, treated the musicians to dinner at the stake center and took them to their homes for the night. These two performances of the oratorio are believed to have been the first outside the Intermountain West. Only four of the 450 performers were LDS: Dr. Barrus, Curt Anderson, pianist, and two members of the chorus.

Naomi Robertson, widow of the composer, attended the performance in Minneapolis. She said her husband had predicted performance of the oratorio someday outside of Utah—“but not in our lifetime.”

In the summer of 1977, the Minneapolis and St. Paul stakes co-sponsored a production of *Saturday’s Warrior*, an LDS musical by Doug Stewart and Lex de Azevedo. It was directed by Hyrum Conrad who was completing a Ph.D. in theater arts at the University of Minnesota. The play ran for six performances at Jefferson High School to capacity audiences. The nominal admission fee netted \$4,333, which was divided between Minneapolis and St. Paul and earmarked for similar events in the future.

In December 1978, the Minneapolis and St. Paul stakes teamed up again for a special Christmas production of the opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by Gian-Carlo Menotti in the newly completed St. Paul stake center. This ambitious production was professionally done with creative staging and wonderful costuming despite the limitations of stage area and equipment. All performers, including the leads, were LDS. The opera captivated capacity crowds for two performances.



A 1977 production of Saturday's Warrior, co-sponsored by the Minneapolis and St. Paul stakes. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

The stake Relief Society contributed to the cultural opportunities by sponsoring an ambitious yearly social, often a dinner dance. This event usually coincided with the anniversary of the Relief Society's founding on 17 March 1842. One particularly memorable program was in 1978 when the "Monument to Women" sculpture garden by Dennis Smith and Florence Hansen was being completed in Nauvoo. The evening at the stake center featured a program depicting these monuments and the history of women. After the program came dancing in the cultural hall to a live orchestra for the five hundred guests. It was a prelude to the dedication of those monuments the following June, when twenty sisters from the Minneapolis Stake drove to Nauvoo to be on hand for the festivities.

In March 1969, "Springtime Internationale" was the theme of the Relief Society's fashion show and social. The reigning Mrs. America of 1969, a Latter-day Saint from Orem, Utah, was the guest commentator. Fifty women and twenty-

two children modeled hand-sewn items in the fashion show. Classrooms in the stake center were decorated to represent spring festivals throughout the world, offering the thousand guests demonstrations of home skills, displays, and food samples ("Mrs. America" 1969; additional details from undated paste-up of a page from the stake newsletter, probably April or May 1969, Minneapolis Minnesota Stake Collection).

Community Involvement

President Wilson, echoing President Kimball's encouragement to be responsibly involved in community welfare, reinforced the theme by urging members to be a stronger force for good in their communities. In the spring of 1978, the stake sponsored a political action seminar at the stake center. Several local political leaders attended, including Bill Frenzel, state representative from Minnesota. They expected to see a handful of people and were astounded when over four hundred filled the chapel. Talks and seminars that night focused on the need to become involved politically and how to do so by attending precinct caucuses and influencing the platforms of the party of one's choice. Separate seminar sessions were held on pornography, abortion, and ways to work through the system to make one's opinion known. That spring many members attended party caucuses for the first time.

As society changed outside the Church during the 1970s, members of the Minneapolis Stake drew closer together. Under the strong watchful care of President Wilson, Church programs, particularly priesthood programs, grew stronger and moved toward new levels of excellence. Leaders and teachers bolstered traditional roles of family members, and stake members received opportunities to participate in some truly excellent cultural events. As stake division decreased the number of members to be served and the area to be covered, the stake became more manageable to administer. It

was a time to take position firmly against an increasingly discordant world.

Perfecting the Saints,

1979–89

DURING A SPECIALLY CALLED stake conference on 21 October 1979 at the Minneapolis stake center, Apostle David B. Haight presented Mark H. Willes for the congregation's sustaining vote as fourth president of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, with Richard G. Edgley, a controller at General Mills, and Alan R. Anderson, professor of educational psychology at the University of Minnesota and former bishop of the Minneapolis Fourth Ward, as counselors.

Mark's calling was both a great challenge and a great blessing to our family. We had always accepted callings in every ward we had lived in through our whole married lives, and I had seen Mark develop a combination of true love for people and effective administrative skills that had genuinely prepared him for this calling. We had both grown up in Utah and married in the Salt Lake Temple when Mark was a sophomore at Columbia College in New York. He earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University in economics, taught at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, worked as a research economist and director of research at the Federal Reserve bank in Philadelphia, and then became chief operating officer at the bank. We had moved from Philadelphia into the stake only two years earlier when Mark had accepted the presidency of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Within his first year of being stake president,



Mark H. Willes, president of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, 1979-88.

he became chief financial officer at General Mills, Inc. Several years later he was named president of the company.

When Dick Edgley moved to Salt Lake City in 1981 to work for the Church as managing director of finance and records, Kent Van Kampen, a veterinary pathologist who was supervising the research lab for Medtronic, was called to replace him. With Kent's call into the stake presidency, all three men had Ph.D.'s. Noted one high council member, "The stake presidency all have doctorates—in *patience, humility, and diligence*" (D. R. Brough 1983, 9). In 1984 Alan Anderson was called to be a stake patriarch; and J. Brent Adair, former bishop of the Minneapolis Fourth Ward and an employee at General Mills, became a member of the stake presidency. At the same time, Kent Van Kampen moved to Florida with a job change; and Stephen W. Hansen, an executive at B. Dalton bookstores took his place. Brent's job change and move to California in 1987 brought David M. Brown, an ex-



A regional conference being held in the Minneapolis Auditorium 9 September 1984, since demolished.

ecutive with Network Systems and a fairly new member of the stake, into the presidency.

The new stake presidency in 1979 assumed leadership of the stake at a time when the Church was undergoing accelerated changes in response to continued world-wide growth and changing social and economic conditions. A major external challenge was the energy crisis during the late 1970s, when the United States faced oil shortages and skyrocketing gasoline prices. U.S. President Jimmy Carter, concerned with American habits of waste, called for stringent fuel conservation, higher energy prices, and penalties for waste (Daniel 1987, 1124). On top of that, double-digit inflation was squeezing everyone's pocketbooks.

Self-Reliance for Members

Church leaders took the energy crisis seriously but were equally concerned about an internal "crisis." In April 1978

general conference, Apostle Boyd K. Packer had spoken on an undesirable dependence that had grown up within the Church—emotional dependence. He stressed the principles of emotional self-reliance and individual spiritual independence, reaffirming that “the aim of the Church is to help people help themselves” (1978, 91). Just as members could not expect the Church to supply all their material needs, so they could not expect the Church to supply all their emotional, social, and spiritual needs. Over-demanding members and over-responsive leaders had created a dangerous dependence; many leaders were overburdened, and many members were not learning essential skills of maturity.

Four years later in 1982 October general conference, President Marion G. Romney approached the same topic from a different direction with his fable about “the gullible gulls.” Large flocks of sea gulls along the gulf coast were starving despite an abundance of fish in the ocean. They had depended on scraps from the shrimp fleet for so many years that they no longer knew how to fish. Some Church members, said President Romney, have become like these “gullible gulls,” financially or emotionally dependent on their bishops and the Church (1983, 91). Financial, emotional, and spiritual self-reliance became an important priority in the Church. Trimming nonessential Church activities and reducing time demands were the answer, even though it was a risky action. Some families, that were perhaps less committed and functioned less efficiently, might fail to fully fill the gap. Nevertheless, Church leaders accepted that risk, proceeding on the philosophy that families had to be challenged to live correct principles.

The Consolidated Meeting Schedule

Between these two conference addresses came a policy change in the Sunday meeting schedule, designed to help resolve both problems. On 1 February 1980 instructions came from the First Presidency to consolidate meetings, with sac-

rament meetings, Sunday School, Primary, Aaronic Priesthood, Young Women, Melchizedek Priesthood, and Relief Society meetings all being held during a three-hour block on Sunday (First Presidency 1980). The letter explained five purposes for the new program: (1) to support the home, (2) to facilitate “home-centered Sabbath activities,” (3) to provide for a “more flexible weekday activity program,” (4) to reduce the amount of travel by Church members and conserve energy resources, and (5) to “reduce the non-essential costs required for members to participate in Church activities.”

Minneapolis Minnesota Stake moved immediately to implement the consolidated meeting schedule, and the first consolidated meetings were held in March 1980. Already, however, it had already taken some important steps in that direction. Recognizing the same pressures that had led to the consolidated schedule, the new stake presidency had established, as one of its first items of business in 1979, a monthly “family Saturday.” On that day, no Church meetings, activities, or events were held; and chapels remained locked even for informal sports activities. This measure freed stake members, especially leaders, for additional time at home with spouses and children.

In theory everyone was enthusiastic about “family Saturday”; but in practice, holding the line proved extremely difficult. Requests bombarded the stake presidency to allow early morning basketball practice “before families woke up” or to schedule baptisms, but the presidency held firm. “Family Saturday” is still observed on the stake calendar.

Concern about the energy shortage, as is obvious from the First Presidency’s letter, was not the only or even the main reason for the consolidated meeting schedule. As social problems increasingly impacted American families, Church members were not immune. The previous decade had seen a strengthening of Church programs to support the home and tighter standards for youth activities. But as social problems became even more pervasive, a new response was needed.

In a major way, then, the Church attempted to limit its financial and time demands on members, freeing them to refocus their attention on family and home responsibilities. This move also had the advantage of reminding couples and parents that they needed to take the initiative in their own behalf, rather than relying on Church programs.

Implementing Self-Reliance

With an eye on this new focus, President Willes further encouraged self-reliance among members in two ways. During his nine-year tenure as stake president, he continually urged members to work toward greater personal spirituality and, hence, greater spiritual independence. He referred to the skills of individual spirituality as “power principles” and repeatedly promised stake members in conference talks that if they would implement the “power principle” basics—praying, fasting, reading the scriptures, seeking the Spirit, attending the temple, and going to Church meetings prepared to be spiritually fed—they would experience increased ability to meet the demands of life, even to the point that miracles would happen.

Secondly, he tried to exemplify the love of our Father in Heaven for each of His children, by expressing and extending his love to the members of the stake, thus making the gospel a more personal power in people’s lives. President Willes sought to demonstrate visibly to stake members that they had access to a higher power they could tap to meet life’s challenges, that Church programs provided support in this effort, but that they were empowered to act for themselves. In every interview, personal conversation, and public address, he always verbally expressed love for the members, individually and collectively. They felt it and responded to it. He thus reaffirmed to stake members that, as his counselor Kent Van Kampen (n.d.) stated, “people are more important than form and format, and that is as it should be in Christ’s Church.”

Screening Stake Activities

Beyond the consolidated meeting schedule and “family Saturday,” the stake presidency and high council supported family self-reliance by rigorously screening stake activities. In planning meetings, they made a real effort to articulate the purpose for each activity on the stake calendar, evaluate that purpose in terms of members’ time and impact on their lives, and then take action that would best support those goals. In some instances, programs were added to the stake calendar or greatly enhanced. Other programs were deemphasized or eliminated altogether.

Welfare Activities

One program that underwent great change as a result of this evaluation process was the stake welfare program. During President Russell’s tenure, funds had been set aside for a stake welfare project and had accumulated to thousands of dollars by the early 1970s. There had been no movement toward a specific project, however, although many options were reviewed. Although farms were one of the more popular welfare projects in the West, stake leaders expressed concern about making such a project viable, given Minnesota’s climate.

In 1975, the Minneapolis Fourth and Second wards located and purchased a forty-acre farm in Corcoran, north of Minneapolis, divided it equally, and ran it with all-volunteer labor from the wards. During peak summer months, ward members were asked to work two to three hours per week on the farm. They grew cucumbers under contract for Gedney Pickles, a local bottler. The Second Ward went into tomatoes and raspberries. Other crops raised were squash, strawberries and corn. Some years the farm showed a profit; in others, it did not. Usually the two wards harvested enough produce to help them meet welfare assessments of around \$2,000 each year. In 1976 the Fourth Ward under the direc-



Max H. Garrett, then bishop of Second Ward, is picking raspberries on the ward's welfare farm in July 1979. Courtesy of Sylvia Abrahamson.

tion of Paul Wilson, Jr., had a banner year and netted over \$6,000 with its corn and cucumbers. Certainly, working together for a common goal strengthened ward unity and commitment. Creative announcements to encourage volunteers also provided some comic relief in sacrament meetings, where members were admonished to sign up for work parties and instructed in “the value of a cucumber the size of one’s little finger compared to the value of a cucumber the size of one’s thumb” (P. Wilson, Jr., 1990).

However, the weather was often capricious, the farm had no irrigation facilities, and a profitable harvest seemed tied to the presence of a specific leader who had previous farm experience or enough know-how to nurse the project along.

In the late 1970s, the First Presidency became concerned about the welfare program’s ability to meet member needs during natural disasters and economic downturns. They asked stakes to establish substantial and successful welfare projects. Early in the 1980s, the Second and Fourth wards

gave the Corcoran farm to the stake to be run as a stake welfare project. The stake increased the raspberry acreage, perhaps its best cash crop, and drew volunteer labor from all over the stake. One person was called to direct the farm activities. Labor assignments were made through ward priesthood quorums and Relief Societies. Usually the farm director was a man; but Rindy Wilson, “a real firecracker,” according to President Willes, and a young mother in Plymouth First Ward, had grown up on a farm in Utah. She organized maintenance, planting and harvesting schedules, and marketing for the 1984 and 1985 growing seasons.

Despite the stake’s best efforts, the farm was not consistently successful. Some years, drought resulted in meager harvests. In July 1982, it was reported in high council that the farm committee was “very discouraged” because the berry crop had been lost that year. The cost to members in time and effort was much greater than it would have been to simply buy produce in grocery stores. With the new family-focused emphasis of the 1980s, the stake presidency reevaluated all the factors involved in the welfare farm. Would it help the members meet their goals of personal spirituality and self-reliance? It certainly taught hard work and perhaps some economic skills; but the Chicago Temple was nearing completion, and stake leaders were anxious for members to support it in every way possible. For this and other reasons, the stake presidency, high council, and bishops agreed to raise welfare funds through cash donations. In 1987, the farm was deeded to the Church for sale.

On 8 May 1961, representatives from four stakes—Kansas City, St. Louis, Winter Quarters, and Minnesota—met in Des Moines with Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, to organize the 36th Welfare Region of the Church—the first region organized east of the Rocky Mountains. As a result, the full welfare facilities of the Church became available to worthy members within the region.

To further complement the local welfare system, a regional bishops’ storehouse/cannery had been built in Apple



Running the cannery operation at the Apple Valley Bishops' Storehouse, 1986.

Valley in 1982. Possible locations for the cannery were discussed as early as 1976 and the land in Apple Valley was approved for purchase in April 1979. At that time, President Wilson recommended that the stake quickly finish raising its share, amounting to about \$30,000, so that construction could proceed as soon as possible. President Willes continued support of the storehouse/cannery. Operations there began in 1983, and Paul Wilson, then serving as Regional Representative, dedicated the building on 28 October 1984.

The cannery functioned for only a few years before it became apparent that, like the welfare farm, it was costing more in money for ingredients and member time than could be justified in light of stake goals. The stake presidents in the region recommended closing the cannery in the fall of 1986. The bishops' storehouse continues to serve the Minnesota Region, including the Duluth and St. Cloud districts.

Scouting

If the welfare program was curtailed during this period of reassessment, many other Church programs received renewed emphasis and strength. One of these was Scouting.

In the mid-twenties, the Minneapolis Branch had sponsored a vigorously successful Scout troop under the leadership of Scoutmaster “Uncle” John Moe. Nels Larsen, Russell Swenson, and others remember an active troop which swelled in membership to twenty-eight boys. The troop boasted a troop bugler, song, and cheer. It camped during summers at Camp Robinson Crusoe on Bird Island, won many awards at Scout jamborees, and was named “Headquarters Troop” in the Minneapolis area.

In 1953, Clifford C. Mathias was called as Scoutmaster for the enthusiastic Scout troop in Minneapolis Second Branch. In the early 1960s, he was asked to serve with the North Central States Mission MIA program and traveled all over the mission, promoting Scouting programs. Called into the bishopric of the Second Ward in 1966, Cliff continued to have responsibility for a strong Scouting program. Since the beginning of his involvement in 1953 and primarily through his efforts, Troop 2 of Second Branch/Ward has been the leading LDS troop and one of the Viking Council’s leading Scout troops. It was the first to provide opportunities for significant numbers of boys to advance to Eagle rank. In 1960, Cliff received the Viking Council’s most prestigious award—the Silver Beaver. Since then, four other stake members have been so honored: T. Gary Morris (1982), Joseph W. Toone (1984), Theodore (Ted) Newcomb (1981), and Paul W. Wilson, Jr. (1987). Barbara Curtis also made significant contributions to both the Church and community Cub Scout program.

During this time, Gary Morris, working with the Viking Council, brought all the Scout troops in the stake into the Pathfinder District (one of thirteen in the council). Because the troops were geographically scattered through many districts, LDS Scouts were a small minority whose special needs

were easily overlooked. With consolidation into one district, however, the LDS troops became an important asset to the district because of their united ability to lend support in programs and funding. Also, because LDS troops numerically represented a large proportion of the Pathfinder District, Scouting leaders were more responsive to their special Aaronic Priesthood needs, such as scheduling and standards.

This influence was also apparent financially. In 1981, the Pathfinder District was raising about \$15,000 a year in the sustaining membership enrollment drive. That year, the district turned the annual fund-raising drive over to Robert Wakefield, who was also serving on the stake high council. A year later, the district's sustaining membership drive topped \$20,000. During the next three years, when Paul W. Wilson, Jr., served as chair, the total reached about \$50,000; and in succeeding years, Karl Hawes and Joseph Toone directed the drives, bringing contributions beyond \$60,000.

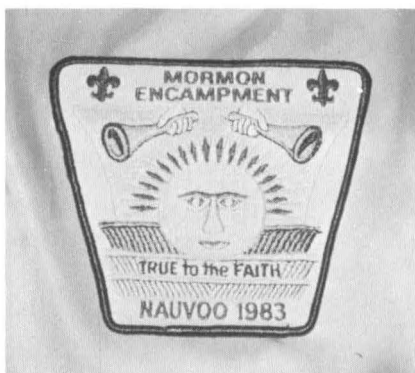
The Pathfinder District has honored many stake members for their service with the Award of Merit, its highest recognition, only five of which are given each year. Among the recipients have been Cliff Mathias and Barbara Curtis (the first Mormons so honored), Norman Janzen, Ted Newcomb, Stephen Hansen, Brian Anderson, Joseph Toone, Robert Gerlach, Bruce Ehlert, Richard Lewis, Jim Pendergast, and Paul Wilson, Jr.

LDS Scout leaders continue to be involved at the district and council levels. All areas of the Pathfinder District are dependent on the many LDS volunteers serving in a variety of roles. Paul Wilson, Jr., currently serves as the Council Commissioner and on the executive board of the Viking Council. As commissioner, Paul is responsible for all the programming within the council.

The strength of the Scout troops sponsored by the stake and their participation in larger events continues, too. On 4-10 August 1983, ninety-eight Scouts (five of them nonmembers) and eighteen adult leaders from the stake participated in the largest LDS Scout encampment ever organized in the



Scouts from the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake attending the 1983 Nauvoo encampment.



Patch from the 1983 Nauvoo encampment.

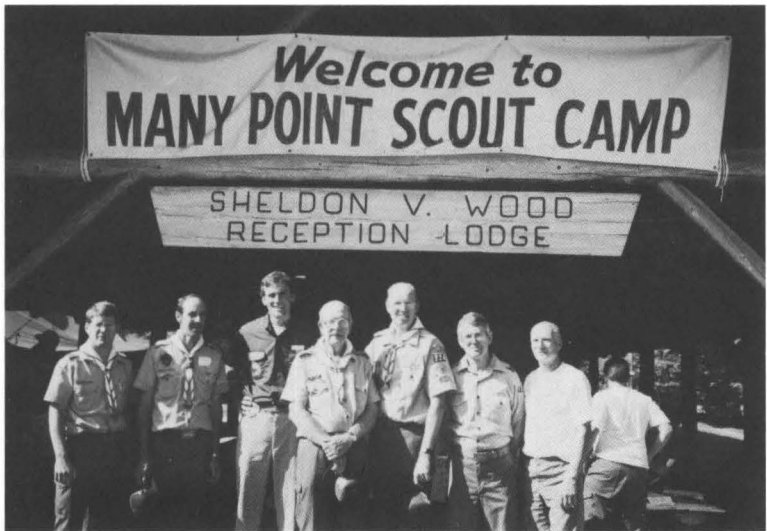
Upper Midwest. Minneapolis's contingent was 87 percent of the active boys in the stake. The tent-city encampment set up at Camp Eastman Boy Scout Reservation seven miles south of Nauvoo drew more than twenty-two hundred youthful Church members from eight Midwestern states.

The encampment was organized with the theme "True to the Faith" to help LDS young men appreciate the faith and perseverance of the early Saints who lived in Nauvoo from 1838 to 1846. In keeping with this theme, each troop camp was named after a Church leader from the Nauvoo period. Bruce Ehlert from the Minneapolis stake served on the planning committee.

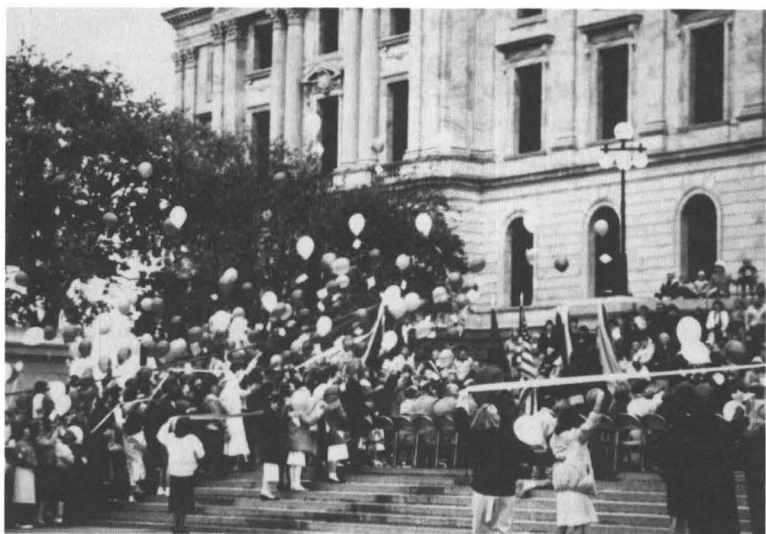
Despite torrid weather and problems with the water supply, the boys toured restored Nauvoo, swam, canoed, fished, practiced archery, and enjoyed getting acquainted with Scouts from other areas. Thirty-four merit badge offerings allowed the boys to make progress on their awards. They also attended a performance of *The City of Joseph* pageant and heard talks by several General Authorities, including Elder Robert L. Backman, general president of the Young Men, and his counselors, Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone and Elder Rex D. Pinegar, all of the First Quorum of the Seventy. Patriarch Emeritus Eldred G. Smith also attended, visiting the camps

to show clothing worn by Hyrum Smith when he was slain at Carthage.

During the summer of 1987, another large LDS international encampment was held at Many Point Scout Reservation in central Minnesota, bringing together nearly six hundred boys and leaders from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Ontario. Elders Rex D. Pinegar and Hartman Rector of the First Quorum of the Seventy attended this encampment, themed “Valiant Men of Truth.” The encampment took place under the direction of Paul Wilson, Regional Representative for the regions involved, and was chaired by Stephen Hansen, counselor in the stake presidency, and Bruce Ehlert. Scouts and their leaders donated over two thousand service hours to improve the Many Point Scout Camp. Among other things, they built a second Challenging Outdoor Physical Encounters course (COPE), a conditioning and obstacle course which teaches teamwork and management skills by having Scouts tackle its strenuous de-



Scouting leaders from the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake at Many Point Scout Camp, 5 August 1987.



Young Women in the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake release helium balloons on the steps of the capitol in St. Paul as part of the world-wide Young Women's activity on 11 October 1986. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.



Stake youth helping out at the Minnesota Special Olympics in their "helping hand" T-shirts, summer 1989. Courtesy of Galen Erickson.

mands in teams. They also built a climbing tower, put up new signs throughout the camp, and constructed bulletin boards for all camp sites.

Other youth programs besides Scouting continued to receive strong emphasis. Community service increasingly became an important part of annual youth conferences. The 1988 conference was planned to coincide with the Minnesota Special Olympics, a summer event for handicapped people of all ages. Over two hundred Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women were escorts and cheering sections for participants. Identified by T-shirts sporting a helping hand logo, the young people impressed many at the Olympics. Their leaders reported not one discipline problem during the conference, a fact they attributed to the service-centered focus.

Women's Days

Another program begun during the early years of President Willes's tenure was the annual stake women's days. As the controversial Equal Rights Amendment was debated throughout the country, priesthood and Relief Society leaders encouraged and supported LDS women in their traditional roles as mothers and homemakers. In the late 1970s when satellite broadcasts became possible, the Church sponsored an annual women's fireside, broadcast from Temple Square. The presidents of the three women's auxiliaries and selected General Authorities addressed current topics of concern to women.

In 1979 the Minneapolis Stake Relief Society under the direction of Carol Jardine held its first annual women's day, a Saturday of educational and inspirational addresses and workshops open to all women in the stake. Themed "All Things Are Possible," its highlight was the keynote speaker, Lucile Johnson, a well-known counselor from Orem, Utah.

Barbara Naatjes, the new stake Relief Society president and board continued the tradition the next year, and the second conference attracted over six hundred women, includ-

ing nonmember friends and family. The conference continues to be held with slight alterations in the format each year but with consistently high attendance.

Temple and Genealogy Activity

The stake presidency placed new emphasis on supporting temple programs. Until the mid-1980s, the closest temple was in Utah; but LDS Minnesotans have had a strong desire to participate fully and regularly in temple ordinances and have willingly invested large amounts of time, money, and energy to do so. Deborah Houghton Riggs, an early member of the Monticello Branch, traveled twice to Utah by train to do temple work for herself and family members in the St. George Temple before the Salt Lake Temple was completed in 1894.

On 30 October 1917, Louis G. Lee, member of the St. Paul Branch and a local convert, married Nora Prellwitz in the chapel on North Grotto. His grandmother came a hundred miles to witness this “unusual” Mormon marriage (NSM 30 Oct. 1917). The next morning they took the train for Salt Lake City to be sealed in the temple, the first recorded temple marriage of members from the Twin Cities area. It would be almost seventy years, however, before Minnesotans had a temple closer than a thousand miles.

In 1930, mission president Arthur Welling proposed to the General Authorities, perhaps jokingly, that the Cardston Temple, which had been completed in 1923, should be placed within the boundaries of the North Central States Mission. Since President Welling had to travel as far as Great Falls, Montana, anyway to visit his farflung branches, “with little if any additional expense . . . the [mission] borders might be extended westward” to include the “temple city” (NCM 31 Dec. 1930). This proposal was never acted upon, but groups from the Twin Cities occasionally attended the Cardston Temple.

During the early twentieth century, Minnesota members

participated in fund-raising for at least one temple. In September 1920, the Northern States Mission observed a day of fasting for the Arizona Temple. Although notification from the General Authorities about the fast “was so late in arriving there was not ample time to organize the work properly,” the members of the mission still contributed \$711.95 (NSM Nov. 1920).

For about four years in the early 1970s, the stake sponsored a midsummer temple day at the Salt Lake Temple. Members were urged to plan their vacations around the temple day and travel to Utah as families. Former members of the stake residing in Utah were invited to attend the temple sessions as well as the banquet that was usually held in the evening with a General Authority as guest speaker. In 1976, two hundred current and former members attended this stake temple day (*Communicator*, Aug. 1976, 11).

When construction of the Jordan River Temple at the south end of Salt Lake Valley was announced in 1978, Minnesota was assigned to the new temple district. President Wilson announced to the high council in May that the stake’s assessment was \$42,000, due a year later in June 1979. A month later, the assessment was reduced to \$34,000 when the estimated cost of the building dropped (Minutes 23 May 1978; 27 June 1978). The stake successfully met its assessment, and President Willes and other stake representatives attended the dedication in the fall of 1981.

Elation greeted President Spencer W. Kimball’s announcement at April 1981 general conference that a temple would be built in Chicago, Illinois—the Church’s thirty-fifth operating temple. Relatively speaking, the 400-mile drive from the Twin Cities to Chicago brought the temple right into Minnesota’s back yard. The stake’s strong commitment to temple attendance is illustrated by the immediate response to a letter received in May 1981 from John Sonnenberg, chairman of the Chicago Temple Committee, to President Willes, suggesting that the Minneapolis Stake contribute \$87,000 toward the temple. The stake already had a

temple fund, and additional contributions came in quickly. By October 1982, seventeen months later, the stake had sent in \$91,000, exceeding the original assessment by \$4,000. But it didn't stop there. By the end of September 1983, the stake's contribution was \$108,643.20, more than \$21,000 beyond the expected participation.

Many stake members who frequently visited Chicago on business and for other reasons stopped by the construction site and brought back reports on progress. During the open house held 13 July to 3 August 1985, hundreds of stake members got their first glimpse of the interior of the temple.

The eighth dedicatory session on Saturday, 10 August 1985 at 5:30 P.M., was reserved for members from the Twin Cities area. Hundreds traveled by car or bus to attend the impressive services. A stake choir under the direction of Curt Anderson provided music and President Willes offered the opening prayer. The temple was dedicated by President Gordon B. Hinckley, second counselor in the First Presidency. After the dedication, stake members walked reverently around the grounds, greeting each other and basking in the spirit of the temple before reluctantly heading west toward home.

Stake members began regularly patronizing the temple after it was opened for ordinance work in the fall of 1985. In 1988 the stake set a specific goal of accelerating temple work. In January a special stake leadership temple day at the Chicago Temple took the place of the more usual leadership meeting. All stake officers, bishopricks, Melchizedek Priesthood and auxiliary leaders, and their spouses were invited to participate in a two-day temple trip. Approximately 140 members taxed the capacity of the Chicago Temple that busy weekend. A special meeting was held twice in the temple chapel (numbers were too large to allow one seating), highlighted by messages from Lysle R. Cahoon, temple president, and President Willes. This trip inspired greatly increased levels of temple attendance and genealogy activity for the

year. In nine months, between January to September 1988, when the Chicago temple closed for renovations, stake members did 2,136 endowments, 29 percent more than the previous *twelve* months' work.

Members of the stake have also served as temple workers, making the eight-hour drive down to spend two weeks of every month doing temple work and living in Church-owned apartments across the street from the temple. Some couples work a two-week-on, two-week-off schedule; others alternate one-week-on, one-week-off. Stake temple workers have included Edythe and Rodger Rose, Barbara and John Curtis, Yvonne and Melvin Pearson, Ruth and Henry Stevens, Barbara and Everett Manwaring, and Leonard and Mary Hawes (whose service was cut short by Leonard's death in 1988). All were released in 1988 when the temple closed for renovations.

In 1988 the Crystal First Ward, which had been organized in 1982 with Joseph W. Toone as bishop, conducted a highly creative and productive genealogy/temple project which came to involve the entire ward membership. Prompted by the Church-wide emphasis on the blessings of temple attendance and the stake's encouragement of temple activity, the ward adopted the goal of doing temple work for deceased relatives of ward members in numbers that would equal the then current membership of the ward—529 individuals. The project was dubbed "Heaven Ward." The eight-month effort, conceived and led by high priests' group leader Mark Paynter, involved intensive training in genealogical research, help with name submission, motivation and publicity, and preparations to attend the Chicago Temple as a ward on a three-day trip in late August.

Members went to Chicago as families, cooked meals in the Wilmette Stake Center, and performed over sixteen hundred ordinances for deceased relatives in almost twelve hundred hours of temple service. Two ward families were sealed and five ward members took out their own endowments. Because of these efforts, Crystal First Ward members, through

proxy ordinances, exceeded its ward membership almost three times and came closer to making a "heaven stake."

In 1978 President Kimball proposed a Church-wide program of extracting names from genealogical records for temple submission. The Minneapolis Stake was anxious to be part of the program and volunteered to participate. In 1981, the Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City assigned it a large set of Scandinavian parish records on microfilm from which to extract names, and part of the branch genealogical library in the basement of the stake center was turned over to extraction readers. Three women read, checked, and rechecked the work: Astrid Jensen, Barbara Anderson, and Jean Nelson. Barbara and Jean both took tests in Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish to qualify for the extraction program; Swedish was Astrid's native tongue. Several years later, Marie N. Schreiner was called to be the trainer, and other "extraction missionaries" were added to the program. The stake considered these workers a special category of stake missionary because they were identifying names for proxy baptisms.

The extraction workers, usually between ten and fifteen, are asked to spend eight hours a week at microfilm machines in the extraction library next door to the Family History Center or in their homes. The names they produce go through an extremely careful check before being submitted to Salt Lake, where they undergo another rigorous test for accuracy and completeness. Eventually they are sent to the Chicago Temple. There have been years when the extraction program produced fifty thousand names, and one year when eighty thousand names were submitted. This huge volume has not always been possible, for lack of trained extraction workers has been a constant problem. Currently the program is rebuilding, with Everett Manwaring serving as director.

Financial Self-Reliance

Financial self-reliance was also stressed. President Willes noted that members had long been counseled to have

a year's supply of food, clothing, fuel, and, if possible, funds on hand to meet emergencies. He reasoned that if this was good for individuals and families, then it would be good for wards and the stake as well, especially at that time of economic stress.

With the support of the bishops, two things were done to make the stake financially stronger. First, the stake budget was completely reassessed and cut where possible; the wards were encouraged to follow suit. During President Willes's tenure, the stake budget was flat, declined, or rose by only small amounts. In part this approach was possible because the stake no longer needed to raise huge sums for buildings, but it also represented strict scrutiny and control of budget requests. In consequence, it significantly reduced the financial burden on stake members.

Second, at President Willes's suggestion, the bishops agreed to keep budget assessments above yearly needs for a time, thus accumulating a year's supply of operating funds to be held in reserve. These funds were held in savings accounts and the annual interest returned to the wards for budget use. By the mid-1980s, the stake and most of the local congregations had a year's cushion of operating funds. They continued to enjoy this almost unheard-of luxury until December 1989 when the Church announced sweeping changes in financing local units. These surplus funds were then turned over to the general fund of the Church.

Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Quorum of the Seventy noted another mark of the stake's financial independence when he spoke at stake conference 6 November 1989. The Minneapolis Minnesota Stake is one of the few stakes in the Upper Midwest which produces an excess of fast offering funds beyond its needs; these funds are sent to Salt Lake for use in needier areas.

Organizational Changes

As growth in the Minneapolis suburbs continued and

the member population ebbed and flowed, ward boundaries changed to keep pace. In 1978 a small branch had been started in Hutchinson, fifty miles west of Minneapolis, as a dependent of Minneapolis Fifth Ward. In 1980, Minneapolis Sixth and Seventh wards were created by realigning the boundaries of the Minneapolis Ward and Minneapolis Third Ward. Then fifteen months later on 26 September 1982, the stake completely reorganized boundaries and congregations to produce Crystal First and Second, Plymouth First and Second, Burnsville First and Second, and Bloomington wards. Minneapolis Ward, with differently drawn boundaries, rounded out the slate of eight wards. Hutchinson Branch was discontinued in 1985 when a series of move-outs made it too small.

In 1981, the mission created the St. Cloud District with an eye toward eventually organizing a fourth Minnesota stake. The Buffalo Branch, then in the Minneapolis stake, was given to the St. Cloud District. The St. Paul stake contributed Princeton, St. Cloud, North Branch, and additional members for the Buffalo Branch to the new district. The Buffalo Branch was in the process of buying land to build a chapel, and Minneapolis stake leaders authorized funds for the purchase of the lot in 1982.

Four years later, the Anoka Stake was organized on 20 October 1985 from the St. Cloud District including the two Anoka wards from the St. Paul stake and the Hutchinson area. Lyle T. Cottle was called as stake president, with first counselor Thomas Ramsey and second counselor Jay Eckersley. Today the Buffalo Ward and the reorganized Hutchinson Branch continue as part of the Anoka Stake.

Buildings in the 1980s

The growing congregations began to exert pressure for new buildings. Hutchinson Branch purchased a large residence in early 1980 and remodelled it for a meetinghouse.

To accommodate the Burnsville membership, who



Burnsville chapel at 651 E. Southcross Drive, dedicated in 1983.

mostly lived south of the Minnesota River, a 3.87-acre lot had been purchased in 1981, anticipating that it might be a future stake center for the southern suburbs. Current Church policy did not allow building with so much room “to grow,” so instead a smaller chapel was completed in 1983 at a cost of almost \$1.3 million.

The Bloomington meetinghouse got extensive and expensive remodeling in 1983. The original “California construction” had placed plumbing in the uninsulated ceiling. The pipes froze and burst with monotonous regularity in the winter, causing extensive water damage. The Bloomington and Minneapolis wards met in the Plymouth building and the stake center for six months until the pipes could be put in the ground “where they belonged in the first place,” as an observer succinctly summarized, and the water damage was repaired at the cost of almost \$300,000.

Missionary Work

Within a few weeks after the reorganization of the stake presidency in 1979 President Willes suggested a test plan to mission president Monte J. Brough, hoping to provide vigorous support to the full-time missionary program. Forty members of the Minneapolis First Ward were called to serve as “ninety-day missionaries” to intensively fellowship investigators and inactive members throughout the stake. Many were given temporary “furloughs” from their ward jobs—including leadership positions—to be missionaries. It was hoped that other stake members would get the message that missionary work was *everyone’s* responsibility. President Brough agreed, and the plan was implemented. Although the results of the program did not produce a spectacular number of reactivations and convert baptisms, a new spirit of vitality infused missionary work throughout the stake.

Although this improvement was encouraging, stake and mission leaders had hoped for greater gains. Minnesota continues to be a challenging place to do missionary work, and its winters are still very difficult for the missionaries. Now the full-time elders and sisters work through the winters, heavily bundled up and carrying golf balls so they can knock on doors without taking off their gloves and risking frostbite. They report that the coldest days are sometimes actually best for tracting because sympathetic Minnesotans, concerned about people out in severe weather, invite them more readily into their homes. Recently, the stake has begun to fulfill hopes for increased convert baptism. In 1988, there were 109 new converts; and in 1989, 202 people joined the Church, over a 100 percent increase.

And no one has ever complained about the quality of people who are brought into the Church in Minnesota. They are truly remarkable. For example, in a 1988 sacrament meeting in the Plymouth First Ward, stake mission president Karl Hawes told this story of two referrals.

In the spring of 1959, a recently baptized couple, Steve

and Betty Erickson, gave the missionaries one referral—Betty's brother, his wife, and their three children. At first they weren't interested, but as time—and the missionaries—worked on them, they came to know the truth of the restored gospel. In 1961 the referral couple, Sid and Dorothy Anderson, and their three children were baptized.

The second referral in this story was in 1967 when Sue Hogan, daughter of Frank and Alice Hogan who were Wisconsin converts themselves, started her senior year at Robbinsdale High School and began dating the fullback on the football team, Tom Hawes, a nonmember. To pacify her parents, she asked him to listen to the missionaries. He did, was baptized the next summer, and began preparing to go on a mission. Two months after leaving for the field, his parents, Art and Mary Hawes, and brother Karl, who was telling the story, were also baptized. Later two other brothers joined.

From these two referrals have come an incredible harvest: two bishops, three ward Relief Society presidents, one stake Relief Society president, three ward mission leaders, two stake mission presidents, four full-time missionaries, six stake missionaries, over 250 converts, and eight temple marriages. Coincidentally, both families were members of a small Methodist congregation in Crystal whose pastor wondered how the Mormon Church could grow so fast.

Satellite Facilities

In 1981 private donations of almost \$12,000 by a small group of stake members financed installation of a twelve-foot satellite dish at the stake center. For the first time that year, stake members could view all sessions of the April general conference broadcast via satellite from Salt Lake City.

Not long afterwards, the General Authorities authorized the expenditure of Church funds for one satellite dish per stake. Using this program, the Minneapolis stake purchased a second dish which was installed in the Bloomington build-

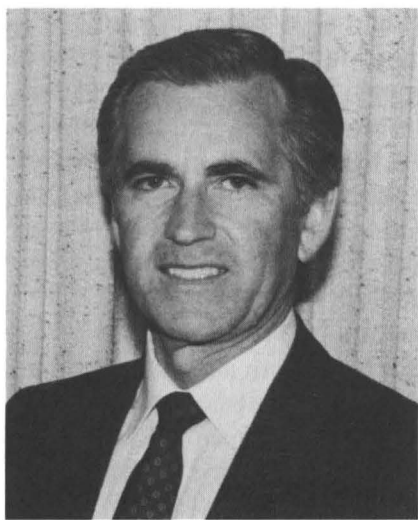
ing. Then, in 1988, private donations from the two Plymouth wards funded a third dish installed in the Plymouth building, giving three buildings in the stake great communication capabilities.

The Fifth Stake President

In early fall 1988, a letter from the First Presidency notified President Willes that he would be released as stake president at the regular November stake conference. President Willes's coming release was announced to the members of the stake in September, and members were counseled to avoid speculation on the coming changes and instead to prepare themselves spiritually to fully participate in the process of revelation by which a new stake president would be called.

The Saturday evening session of conference was held in the stake center with Elder Loren C. Dunn presiding, assisted by Tom Holt, Regional Representative. The building was unable to accommodate the entire stake membership. Since 1980, stake conferences had been split, with one session in the northern part of the stake, the other in the south. Instead, the Sunday sessions were held at Orchestra Hall, the plush home of the Minnesota Orchestra in downtown Minneapolis. Members of the stake choir were particularly pleased to perform in an acoustically superior hall and could now record in their journals, "I sang in Orchestra Hall today."

During the conference sessions that day, David M. Brown was called as the fifth president of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake. President Brown was born in Utah to nonmember parents and joined the Church as a young man. He married MelRae Bateman in the Salt Lake Temple and they have four children. They had moved to Minnesota four years earlier when he had accepted a position as a vice-president for Network Systems, a computer networking company. Previously he had served as president of the Col-



David M. Brown, president of the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, 1988-present.



Stake officers, 6 November 1988. Back left: Henry Stevens, assistant stake clerk; Mike Fairbourne, stake clerk, Kayland Call, executive secretary, and Dan Brian, assistant executive secretary. Front left: Stephen W. Hansen, first counselor, David M. Brown, stake president; and Lester W. B. Moore, second counselor. Photograph by Galen Erickson, courtesy of LDS Historical Department Archives.

umbine Colorado Stake and had been second counselor to President Willes for two years. Called to serve with President Brown was Stephen W. Hansen, first counselor, who had been serving as a counselor to President Willes, and Lester W. B. Moore, second counselor. Les, his wife Margene S., and their six living children had moved to Minneapolis from Salt Lake in 1983 when he became president of Deli Express Fast Foods. He was serving as a counselor in the Minnesota Minneapolis Mission at the time of his call into the stake presidency.

As he addressed the members, President Brown told them of being released after a brief term as stake president in Colorado. Elder Bruce R. McConkie had assured him, "You will have a chance to finish your term." President Brown had jokingly responded, "Once a bishop, always a bishop, but once a stake president is enough." Still, he said, "just in case Elder McConkie was indeed speaking for the Lord and it wasn't just an idle comment, just in case the Lord really did want me to be stake president again, I [felt that I] should begin preparing myself." He immediately began taking steps to put his life and more particularly his work schedule in order so that he would be prepared for any eventuality.

It is perhaps not difficult to envision what the future holds for the Minneapolis stake. One exciting new direction the stake is taking as it moves into the 1990s is toward more cultural diversity. On 27 August 1989, the Minneapolis Second Branch (Laotian-speaking) was created from a small group of converts who had heard the missionary discussions just weeks before and who said they had been "seeking a church home" since coming to the United States. David Fossum was called to be branch president and his wife, Marietta, Relief Society president. At this writing, two Laotians are serving as counselors in the branch presidency. After the Laotians were tracted out, teaching them was difficult because many lacked English language skills. Mission president Gerald R. Thompson assigned two elders to learn Laotian "on the job," and a Laotian-speaking member of the Anoka stake was temporarily loaned to the branch until additional

Laotian-speaking missionaries could arrive. After the first sacrament meeting of the branch, a baptismal service was held and ten more Laotians were baptized. In the four months since then, branch membership has risen to over one hundred.

Spanish-speaking missionaries are also active in Minneapolis, and the mission is expecting its first Hmong-speaking missionaries to begin proselyting among the Twin Cities sizeable Hmong population. That the stake will come to reflect the greater microcosm of the world has already begun.

Dreams of being surrounded by thirty more stakes, as President Kimball suggested, with a temple crowning one of Minnesota's beautiful wooded hills, will surely come to pass as Minnesota Mormons continue to build upon the solid accomplishments, the testimonies, and the dedication of the past and reach out in love to all.

Perhaps Paul Wilson summed it up best. Writing in the *Fourth Ward Communicator* in May 1980, he said:

The lessons of those [past] years seem to be that [we] really can be what [we] want to be—great, good, useful, productive, spiritual, Christian. [We] can do all that and more and enjoy life. We can be a beacon light for future growth—for a new Stake, a new Mission, a new Temple. We can have anything we desire in the Lord's program, *IF* we are willing. The bed rock of our testimonies and the bed rock of our future is found essentially in three great principles: obedience, sacrifice, and consecration.

Appendices

APPENDIX A*

Partial List of Pineries Missionaries,
1841-44

Henry Adams	Mrs. Gaylord
John Adams	Grover Hawley
Blakely B. Anderson	Pierce Hawley
Mr. Avery	Peter Haws
Baby Amos	William Head
Phineas R. Bird	Andrew Hoffman
James M. Black	Thomas Jenkins
James Brown	Moses Jones
Natilda Carter	John Kite
Ezra Chase	Tarleton Lewis
George W. Chase	[name unknown] Menelds
Nathaniel Child	Hiram Mikesel
Mrs. Child	Mrs. Mikesel
Miss Child	John Miller
David Clayton	Mrs. Elmira Miller
Peter W. Conover	Rosina Minerva Miller
George Coray	George Miller
Sylvester Culett	Henry Miller
Elizah H. Cummingham	Mrs. Mary Catherine Miller
Meacharn [?] Curtis	Ira L. Miller
Mitchell Curtis	David Monroe
Stephen Curtis	Abraham Monseer
William Curtis	John Names
Alphous [sic] Cutler	Jacob Morris
William L. Cutler	Reuben Oaks
Cyrus Daniels	Horace B. Owens
Jabez Durfee	Octavius Pauket
Robert Egbert	Albert Pern
Milo Everett	Aaron Plumb
B. Flemm	Horace Rockwell
James Flock	Anna Christinia Smith
Mr. Gaylord	Moses Smith

*David A. Blencoe, *comp.* Typescript, n.d. Photocopy in the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake collection.

Spencer Smith
Noah Southwick
David Spauldin
Harry Sprague
A. F. Steward
Franklin Stewart
John Taylor
Joseph A. Teasdale
Henry Thompson
Richard Thorn
Hugh Walker
Anna Christina Wight
Mrs. Harriet Wight

Laromi [sic] Lemhi Wight
Levi Lomoni Wight
Lyman Wight
Lyman Lehi Wight
Matilda Dorter Wight
Orange Sysander [Lysander]
Wight
S. A. Wilcox
Hardin Wilson
John Young

APPENDIX B

Mission Presidents

Northwestern States Mission

The Northwestern States Mission was formally created 6 May 1878. It had existed *de facto* since the previous year when Wisconsin missionary Cyrus W. Wheelock, acting on instructions, “organized” the missionaries in the area. Its first borders included Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois with headquarters in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Minnesota was included in its boundaries from 1877 until 1889. The mission name was changed to the Northern States Mission 20 July 1889.

Cyrus H. Wheelock	1878–79
William M. Palmer	1880–89
John E. Booth	1884–84
Dennis E. Harris	1888–89

Northern States Mission

Minnesota was placed in the Northern States Mission from 1890 until the North Central States Mission was formed in 1925. During the first half of the twentieth century, the wives of mission presidents usually played at least some leadership role in the women’s auxiliaries in the mission. After 1914 when Relief Societies were first organized in Minnesota until 1960 when the stake was formed, the mission president’s wife also served as the mission Relief Society president.

John E. Booth	1889–90
Charles W. Stayner	1890–93
David F. Stout	1893–94
Joshua Reuben Clark, Sr.	1895–96
Samuel G. Spencer	1896–96
Louis A. Kelsch	1896–1901
Walter C. Lyman	1901–02
Asahel H. Woodruff	1902–04
German E. Ellsworth	1904–19
and Mary Rachel Smith Ellsworth	
Winslow Farr Smith	1919–23
and Emily Whitney Smith	

John H. Taylor and Rachel Grant Taylor	1923-29
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North Central States Mission

On 12 July 1925, Minneapolis was named headquarters of this new mission which included Minnesota, North and South Dakota, southern Saskatchewan, and southern Manitoba.

John G. Allred and Harriet A. Hartley Allred	1925-29
Arthur Welling and Phoebe McLaughlin Welling	1929-34
Wilford Woodruff Richards and Elfie Stucki Richards	1934-37
David A. Broadbent and Mima Murdock Broadbent	1937-40
George F. Richards, Jr. and Edith May Dunn Richards	1940-44
William L. Killpack and Ann Jane Latimer Killpack	1944-49
John B. Hawkes and Laura McIntire Hawkes	1949-54
George Eugene England and Dora Rose Hartvigsen England	1954-57
Paul C. Child and Diana Hyda Fallentine Child	1957-60
Clement P. Hilton	1960-63
McKay A. Allphin	1963-66
Homer S. Satterfield	1966-69
Carl Marcus King	1969-72

Manitoba-Minnesota Mission

Minnesota-Wisconsin Mission

Established in 1970, the Manitoba-Minnesota Mission functioned for almost three years. Then in 1973, for a matter of months only, the name was changed to the Minnesota-Wisconsin Mission. Headquarters for both missions remained in Minneapolis. The mission boundaries were initially those of the North Central States Mission but changed very frequently.

Vern R. Peel	1972-75
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Minnesota Minneapolis Mission

Established in 1974 with boundaries which include most of the state of Minnesota except the extreme northwest and southwest, and western Wisconsin.

Douglas L. Callister	1975-78
Monte J. Brough	1978-81
Milton C. Mecham	1981-84
Edward F. Bennett	1984-87
Gerald R. Thompson	1987-present

APPENDIX C

Wards and Branches in the Minnesota Stake/ Minneapolis Minnesota Stake 1960-90

1. Anoka Branch

Organized as a branch: 8 March 1953

Branch presidents: Elton V. Denny 1953-56

Harris L. T. Torbenson 1956-63

Organized as a ward: 5 May 1963

Bishops: Harris L. T. Torbenson 1963-67

Richard C. Bigelow 1967-68

Bennett H. (Lou) Oelkers 1972-73

Marvin O. Evans 1973-75

M. Ray Pope 1975-

Transferred to St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

2. Austin Branch

Organized: 5 August 1951 with 35 members

Branch presidents: Edwin B. Petersen 1951-57

Claude I. Sumner 1957-62

J. Logan Hanson 1962-63

Edwin B. Petersen 1963-

Returned to Manitoba-Minnesota Mission: 4 October 1970

3. Bloomington Ward

Created: 7 April 1981 from the Minneapolis Sixth Ward

Bishops: Garth Lindsey 1981-83

James W. Ogilvie 1983-88

Matthew A. Smith 1988-present

4. Buffalo Branch

Created as a branch: 8 October 1980 from the Minneapolis Fifth Ward; 115 members in 40 families

Branch presidents: Jeff Reneau 1980-

Transferred to Minnesota Minneapolis Mission 1981 as part of the newly organized St. Cloud District; became part of Anoka Minnesota Stake 20 October 1985

5. Burnsville First Ward

Organized as a ward: fall 1982 from Minneapolis Third and Fifth wards

Bishops: Richard C. Bradford 1982–85
Donald Ritchie 1985–87
James E. Lindsay 1987–present

6. Burnsville Second Ward

Organized as a ward: fall 1982 from the Minneapolis Third and Fifth wards

Bishops: Kayland E. Call 1982–86
Donald J. Gordhamer 1986–present

7. Crystal First Ward

Organized: 26 September 1982 from parts of Minneapolis Second and Minneapolis Fourth Wards, 445 members in 162 families

Joseph W. Toone 1982–88
Steven H. Thomas 1988–present

8. Crystal Second Ward

Organized: 26 September 1982 from parts of Minneapolis Second and Minneapolis Fourth Wards; 436 members in 172 families

Bishops: Douglas M. Dearden 1982–87
Thomas E. Hawes 1987–present

9. Eau Claire Ward

Organized as a branch: in October 1937

Branch presidents: Roy W. Davis 1937–57

Elgart Schroeder 1957–60

Karl Maas 1960–61

LeRoy O. Anderson 1961–[unknown]

Elgart Schroeder [dates of second term not known]

Organized as a ward: 17 September 1967, 250 people in 89 families

Bishops: Calvin K. Quayle 1967–75
Thomas F. Miller 1975–

Transferred to St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

10. Hutchinson Branch

Organized as a branch: 4 April 1978 from western parts of Minneapolis 5th Ward

Branch presidents: Jeffrey Bell 1978–80

Charles H. Gersdorf 1980–83

Ralph Picka 1983–

Disbanded and members attended neighboring units. Area transferred to Anoka Stake 20 October 1985

11. Lamanite Branch

Organized: November 1966

Branch presidents: Roy B. Lorentzen 1966–68

Disbanded: in 1968; members absorbed by other wards

12. Maple Grove Ward

Organized: 30 November 1988 from parts of Plymouth First Ward and Crystal First Ward

Bishops: David D. Smith 1988–present

13. Minneapolis Ward

Organized: 8 November 1914

Branch Presidents: Marcus M. Swenson 1914–18

Clarence Bigelow 1918–26

John G. Carlson 1926–28

Emelius A. Christensen 1928–31

Alfred W. Christensen 1931–[unknown]

Walter F. Whitehead [unknown]–1945

Martin C. Ostvig 1945–[unknown]

Carl A. Danielson [unknown]–1951

Arnold R. Knapp 1951–52

Wayne J. Anderson 1952–55

Samuel E. Jorgenson 11 September–13 November 1955

R. Sherman Russell 1955–58

Melvon C. Jensen 1958–60

Wilford W. Hardy 1960–continued as bishop

Divided: in 1951 to create Minneapolis Second Branch

Made a ward: 29 November 1960 when Minnesota Stake was created

Bishops: Wilford W. Hardy 1960–61

Robert R. Barrus 1961–65

Freeman R. Williams 1965–67

Donald N. Nish 1967-70
Ray D. Bingham 1970-73
Dennis W. Byers 1973-76
William B. Sonne 1976-77
Glen B. Smith 1977-80
W. James Winspear 1980-80
Michael D. Day, Sr. 1980-83
Thomas Mosher 1983-88
W. James Winspear 1988-present

14. Minneapolis Second Branch (Laotian-speaking)

Organized: 27 August 1989
Branch president: David K. Fossum 1989-present

15. Minneapolis Second Ward

Organized as branch: 16 September 1951
Branch presidents: John M. Rodgers 16-30 September 1951
Martin C. Ostvig 1951-52
Robert C. Paulson 1952-58
Wallace V. Jenkins 1958-59
Thomas A. Gwynn 1959-continued as bishop
Divided: 7 June 1959 to form Second and Fourth branches
Made a ward: 29 November 1960 when Minnesota Stake was created
Bishops: Thomas A. Gwynn 1960-66
Jay Smith 1966-71
Max H. Garrett 1971-77
G. Richard Lewis 1977-82
Douglas M. Dearden 1982-continued as bishop of Crystal Second Ward

Absorbed in 1982 by realignment of boundaries creating Crystal First and Second wards.

16. Minneapolis Third Ward

Organized as a branch: 1 February 1959 with division of First Branch
Branch presidents: Eugene M. Patch 1959-60
Made a ward: 29 November 1960 when Minnesota Stake was created
Bishops: Eugene M. Patch 1960-60
Harold S. Barnes 1960-63

Richard C. Bigelow 1963-65
Dwaine K. Solie 1965-67
Raymond L. Russell 1967-70
Lloyd W. Ogden 1970-71
Eldon Humphreys 1971-73
Alfred E. Hall 1973-76
Charles E. White 1976-78
Cornell L. Ullman 1978-82
Kayland E. Call 1982-continued as bishop of Burnsville Second Ward

Divided in 1982 forming Burnsville First and Second Wards.

17. Minneapolis Fourth Ward

Organized: 7 June 1959 as Minneapolis Fourth Branch by division of Second Branch

Branch presidents: Paul W. Wilson 1959-continued as bishop

Made a ward: 29 November 1960 when Minnesota Stake was created

Bishops: Paul W. Wilson 1960-63

A. Everett Manwaring 1963-71

Alan R. Anderson 1971-77

J. Brent Adair 1977-82

Absorbed in 1982 by realignment of boundaries forming Crystal First and Second wards and Plymouth First Ward.

18. Minneapolis Fifth Ward

Organized: 3 March 1974 by the division of Minneapolis Fourth Ward

Bishops: Gordon C. Olsen 1974-78

D. Robert Brough 1978-(continued as bishop of Plymouth First Ward)

Divided: 19 September 1982 into the Plymouth First and Second Wards

19. Minneapolis Sixth Ward

Organized: 17 January 1980 with boundary changes of the existing five wards

Bishop: Glen B. Smith 1980-81

Absorbed 7 April 1981 by boundary realignments which created Bloomington, Burnsville First, and Burnsville Second wards

20. Minneapolis Seventh Ward

Organized: 17 January 1980

Bishops: John W. Bennion 1980–80

Garth Lindsey 1980–81

Discontinued: 15 April 1981

21. Plymouth First Ward

Organized: 19 September 1982 with the division of Minneapolis Fifth Ward; 389 members in 102 families

Bishops: D. Robert Brough 1982–83

Brian L. Anderson 1983–88

E. Bradley Wilson 1988–present

22. Plymouth Second Ward

Organized: 19 September 1982 with division of Minneapolis Fifth Ward; 366 members in 126 families

Bishops: Robert L. Gerlach 1982–85

Donald R. Nielsen 1985–present

23. Princeton Ward

Organized as Springvale–Dalbo Branch: 31 August 1930

Branch president: Valentine Mott 1930–[unknown]

Disbanded about 1939

Sunday School reorganized 11 November 1945

Organized as Springvale Branch: 1 March 1953

Branch presidents: Kermit R. Lemke 1953–62

John E. Curtis 1962–[unknown]

Henry Adams [unknown]

William D. Kukuk [unknown]

Barry A. Baker [unknown]

Abel K. Lood [unknown]

Name changed to Princeton Branch in January 1958 because a new building had been approved in Princeton. Transferred to St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

24. Rochester Ward

Organized as a branch: 5 September 1937

Branch presidents: John T. Higgins 1937–50

Lowell D. Pincock 1950–51

J. D. Mortensen 1951–55

Max C. Pettey 1955–62

Became a ward: 2 December 1962

Bishops: Fred N. Spackman 1962–65
Markham J. Anderson 1965–70
Karl R. K. Nicholes 1970–

Transferred back to mission in November 1970, resumed branch status. Became a ward in Rochester Stake 30 April 1978

25. St. Paul Ward

Organized as a branch: 8 November 1914

Branch presidents: William Kirkham 1914–26

Everett F. Petersen 1926–37

Stewart W. Peterson 1937–49

Gordon Bergstrom 3 March–7 August 1949

Arden C. Nichols 1949–53

Lee B. Neilsen 7 June–6 July 1953

B. Austin Haws 1953–[unknown]

Marsden B. Stokes [unknown]–1958

J. LaMar Zollinger 1958–60

Made St. Paul Ward 29 November 1960 when Minnesota Stake was created

Bishops: Clifford L. Wilcox 1960–64

Donald A. Miller 1964–71

Thomas A. Holt 1971–76

Became part of the newly created St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

26. St. Paul Second Ward

Organized as a branch: 26 September 1958 by division of St. Paul Branch

Branch president: George R. Blake 1958–60

Became a ward 29 November 1960 when Minnesota Stake was created

Bishops: Joseph M. Ikhaml 1960–70

Roy D. Wilcoxson 1970–73

Gordon B. Davis 1973–76

Arthur R. Schmidt 1976–

Transferred to St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

27. St. Paul Third Ward

Organized: 3 February 1974

Bishops: David Martindale 1974–[unknown]

G. Bruce Rogers [unknown]

Transferred to St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

28. University Ward

Organized as the University of Minnesota Ward: 3 January 1971

Bishop: John C. Schreiner 1971-72

Reorganized as University Branch by First Presidency directive regulating Church units at universities June 1972

Branch presidents: John C. Schreiner 1972-74

Lewis Church 1974-75

LaVell Henderson 1975-

Became part of the newly created St. Paul Stake 15 February 1976

APPENDIX D

LDS Buildings in the Minnesota Stake/ Minneapolis Minnesota Stake

1914-90

- 1. Chapel** (first one owned by the Church in Minnesota)
247 North Grotto
St. Paul, Minnesota
Purchased: 9 May 1914 for \$3,000 with \$500 for remodeling
Dedicated: 28 August 1914 by Orson F. Whitney
Renovated: 1935 and a recreation hall was added
Features: the baptismal font in the basement was the only one in the area for many years and served all members of Minnesota and western Wisconsin
Sold: 22 March 1951
Status in 1990: Still standing; owned by St. Paul Council of Churches
- 2. Chapel** (first one built by the Church in Minnesota)
3101 Fourteenth Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Dedicated: 26 October 1924 by Heber J. Grant, President of the Church, assisted by George Albert Smith of the Quorum of the Twelve
Designed: by Joseph Don Carlos Young, son of Brigham Young and newly appointed Church Architect; his design No. 35
Sold: early 1940s
Status in 1990: Still standing
- 3. Chapel** (Springvale-Dalbo Branch)
Springvale, Minnesota
Dedicated: by Apostle David O. McKay in 1930
- 4. Office building** (renovated for a chapel)
2222 Park Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Purchased: in October 1946
Occupied: 15 August 1948
Sold: 15 December 1949

5. Chapel

5601 Bryant Avenue South

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Built to house Minneapolis First Branch

Lot purchased: 14 December 1949 for \$10,000 (general Church funds: \$7,000; local contribution: \$3,000)

Groundbreaking: 30 July 1950

Completed: in 1951

Cost: \$185,000

Dedicated: 12 September 1951 by Apostle Ezra Taft Benson

Classroom wing added: begun 1964, dedicated 12 November 1967 by Stake President R. Sherman Russell

Sold: by early 1970s

Status in 1990: Still standing

6. Chapel (first chapel built by the Church in St. Paul)

1671 Summit Avenue

St. Paul, Minnesota

Lot purchased: 1951

Groundbreaking: 27 April 1952

Constructed for St. Paul First and Second Branches

Dedicated: 7 June 1953 by ElRay L. Christiansen of the First Council of Seventy

Sold: in 1966 (replaced by Edgerton)

Status in 1990: Still standing

7. Chapel/Bureau of Information

Rochester, Minnesota

Groundbreaking: 1953

Dedicated: 16 May 1954 by Oscar A. Kirkham of the First Council of Seventy to house the Rochester Branch and introduce the Church to the many people who came to the Mayo Clinic

Cost: \$150,000

8. Chapel (Austin Branch)

Austin, Minnesota

Built: 1954–55

Dedicated: 5 June 1955 by Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy

9. Chapel

4000 Golden Valley Road

Golden Valley, Minnesota

Built: 1955–57 by members of the Minneapolis Second Branch

Groundbreaking: 23 October 1955

Dedicated: 26 May 1957 by Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy

Designed: by Salt Lake architect Theodore R. Pope; site plan and local architectural work by Norman R. Johnson of St. Paul

Features: Colonial style chapel built in the shape of a “T”; two-level cement block, brick-faced; 8,000 square feet of floor space: chapel, class rooms, recreation hall, Relief Society room, kitchen, and Scout room.

Sold: August 1964 (replaced by Minnesota Stake Center)

Status in 1990: Still standing

10. Chapel

Anoka, Minnesota

Groundbreaking: 15 June 1959

Dedicated: 2 September 1962 by Apostle Spencer W. Kimball,

Renovated: addition in 1965

11. Chapel (Princeton Branch)

Princeton, Minnesota

Built: 1965

Dedicated: 27 October 1968 by R. Sherman Russell, Minnesota Stake president

12. Stake Center

2801 N. Douglas Drive

Crystal, Minnesota

Groundbreaking: 20 June 1964

Constructed for Minnesota Stake organized 29 November 1960; Minneapolis Second and Fourth Wards

Cost: \$643,500

Labor: 26,000 hours paid; 24,000 donated

Dedicated: 9 July 1967 by Hugh B. Brown, First Counselor in the First Presidency

Renovated: basement area genealogy library, 1967

Status in 1990: Presently in use as stake center and home of Crys-

tal First, Crystal Second, Maple Grove wards and the Minneapolis Second Branch (Laotian)

13. Chapel

Edgerton and Highway 36

Little Canada, Minnesota (St. Paul)

Built for the St. Paul First and Second Wards to replace the Summit Avenue building

Groundbreaking: 5 March 1966 (charcoal heaters had to be used to thaw the ground)

Construction time: 9 months

Lot: 8.2 acres

Cost: \$485,000

Use: began in 29 January 1967

Renovations: addition in 1977

Dedicated: 16 February 1969 by Loren C. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy

Features: chapel seats 364, cultural hall expands seating in the chapel to 1,100; kitchen and baptismal font

14. "Old" LDS Institute (University of Minnesota)

1205 University Avenue S. E.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Built: in 1914 by the Fifth Church of Christ Scientist, purchased by LDS Church in 1969

Cost: \$172,000

Features: large chapel, excellent organ, antiquated heating system

Not used from 1982 until 1984, demolished in February 1984, and replaced by modern facility on the same site

15. Chapel

9700 Nesbitt Avenue South

Bloomington, Minnesota

Constructed for Minneapolis First and Third Wards, replacing the Bryant Avenue chapel which had been sold. Land purchased in 1970, five acres for \$35,000

Groundbreaking: c1974

Completed: 1975

Dedicated: 5 September 1976 by L. Harold Wright, Regional Representative

Renovated: begun in October 1983; cost approximately \$259,500
Features: chapel, cultural hall, baptismal font, kitchen, offices
for two wards, library. Satellite dish added in about 1982
Status in 1990: Houses the Bloomington and Minneapolis Wards

16. Chapel

3300 Vicksburg Lane
Plymouth, Minnesota

Constructed for Minneapolis Fifth Ward

Lot size: 3 acres

Groundbreaking: 23 October 1976

Construction: begun in October 1976; completed in August 1977

Cost: \$850,000

Dedicated: 19 February 1978 by Walter Kindt, Regional Representative

Features: 17,714 square feet: chapel, cultural hall, baptismal font,
kitchen, offices for two ward bishopricks, library, padded pews.
Satellite dish added in 1988.

Status in 1990: Houses the Plymouth First and Second wards

17. Chapel (Hutchinson Branch)

126 Adams Street
Hutchinson, Minnesota

Home purchased by Hutchinson Branch in 1980, renovated

Meetings began 7 December 1980

Dedicated: 1 April 1984 by Mark H. Willes, Minneapolis Minnesota Stake president

18. Chapel

851 E. Southcross Drive
Burnsville, Minnesota

Built for the Burnsville First and Second Wards

Lot: 3.87 acres, purchased in 1981

Groundbreaking: 1983

Cost: \$1,297,167, including site.

Dedicated: in October 1983 by Mark H. Willes, Minneapolis Minnesota Stake president

Features: 13,523 square feet; chapel seats 205, 31 teaching areas

Status in 1990: Houses the Burnsville First and Second wards

19. Bishop's Storehouse

6890–145th St. W.

Apple Valley, Minnesota

Dedication: 28 October 1984 by Paul W. Wilson, Regional Representative

20. "New" LDS Institute Building (University of Minnesota)

1205 University Avenue S. E.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Built to house University of Minnesota LDS Institute and University Ward, St. Paul Stake

Cost: \$483,760 (100% Church)

Dedicated: 6 May 1989 by Loren C. Dunn, First Quorum of the Seventy. First used in September 1985

Features: 5,672 square feet

Status in 1990: Used by St. Paul Stake and Institute of Religion at University of Minnesota

Homes of the Minnesota Minneapolis Mission

1. Office: Opened 1 August 1925

2725 3rd Ave. South

Minneapolis

2. Home: [unknown]–1934

3055 Elliot Avenue

Minneapolis

3. Home: 30 July 1934–6 September 1949

3240 Park Avenue

Minneapolis

4. Home: 26 August 1949–71

2219 Pillsbury

Minneapolis

5. Home and office: 1971–present; built by the Church

5931 W. 96th Street

Bloomington, Minnesota

APPENDIX E

Presidencies of Minnesota Stake/ Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, 1960-90

Delbert F. Wright 1960-63

Counselors:	R. Sherman Russell	1960-63
	Eugene R. Talbot	1960-63

R. Sherman Russell 1963-73

Counselors:	L. Stephen Richards, Jr.	1963-64
	Paul W. Wilson	1963-73
	Roy D. Wilcoxson	1964-68
	Richard E. Frary	1968-71
	Alfred E. Hall	1971-73

Paul W. Wilson 1973-79

Counselors:	John M. Matsen	1973-74
	Bennett H. (Lou) Oelkers	1973-76
	A. Everett Manwaring	1974-79
	Richard G. Edgley	1976-79

Mark H. Willes 1979-88

Counselors:	Richard G. Edgley	1979-81
	Alan R. Anderson	1979-84
	Kent Van Kampen	1981-84
	J. Brent Adair	1984-87
	Stephen W. Hansen	1984-88
	David M. Brown	1987-88

David M. Brown 1988-present

Counselors:	Stephen W. Hansen	1988-present
	Lester W. B. Moore	1988-present

APPENDIX F

Patriarchs of Minnesota Stake/
Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, 1960–90

G. Albin Matson	1960–64
Arling A. Gardner	1964–67
Freeman R. Williams	1967–72
Arden C. Nichols	1971–76
(continued serving as St. Paul Stake patriarch, 1976–present)	
R. Sherman Russell	1973–present
Laurence C. Monson	1977–82
Alan R. Anderson	1984–present

APPENDIX G

Auxiliary Presidencies of Minnesota Stake/Minneapolis Minnesota Stake, 1960-90

Relief Society Presidencies

Harriet Martin 1960-63

Counselors: Elise Anderson
June Jackson Wilson

Violet Larson 1963-64

Counselors: Vonda L. Olsen Williams
LaNay M. Flint Davis

Vonda L. Olsen Williams 1964-66

Counselors: Bethine Bernhisel
LaNay M. Flint Davis
Carol W. Jardine
Beverly Tennyson

Arthella M. Basinger 1966-74

Counselors: Fay Dearden
Irene Semadeni Larson
Joan A. Garbett
Jeanne M. Monson

Carol W. Jardine 1974-80

Counselors: Barbara Skie Naatjes
Elizabeth Tobler
Julienne Thomson

Barbara Skie Naatjes 1980-83

Counselors: L. Fayone Bingham Willes
Jean Jones
Kay Peterson Holker
Kathryn L. Patch Bigelow

Sarah Marie Orme Carson 1983-86

Counselors: Kathryn L. Patch Bigelow
Marlene Russell Lindsay

Marlene Russell Lindsay 1986–87

Counselors: Kathryn L. Patch Bigelow
MelRae Bateman Brown

Kathryn L. Patch Bigelow 1987–90

Counselors: MelRae Bateman Brown
Leslie J. Eddington Bautista
Sharon Ann Keig Price

Leslie J. Eddington Bautista 1990–present

Counselors: Sharon Ann Keig Price
Dana Curtis Nelson

Primary Presidencies

Rose Hardy 1960–61

Counselors: Dorothy Oliver
Barbara Gellert

Jo Ellen Nelson 1961–62

Counselors: Dorothy Oliver
Dorothy C. Patch

Betty M. Erickson 1962–65

Counselors: Dorothy Mathias
Dorothy C. Patch
Laurel Larson

Maurine C. Henderson 1965–69

Counselors: Colleen Larsen
Laurel Larson

Thelma Patton 1969–75

Counselors: Kathryn Moss
Gladys Schulze
Barbara Tindall
Edith P. Brown
Carol Y. Rasmussen
Sharen T. Chappell
Dorothy C. Patch
Sylvia E. Purdy

Sylvia E. Purdy 1975–76

Counselors: Elizabeth A. White
Dorothy C. Patch

Susan M. Smith 1976–79

Counselors: Virjean Call
Louise Plummer
Carolyn H. Manwaring
Joyce Bartelmy
Gaynelle Erickson

Carolyn H. Manwaring 1979–80

Counselors: Judy Bandelin Chambers
[other counselors unknown]

Jolene Pearson 1980–83

Counselors: Shelli Nye
Pamela Kline
Jackie Kellington
Patricia Natrass

Jessica McGovern 1983–86

Counselors: Shelli Nye
Sharon Ann Keig Price
Wendy Ingels
Denise Call

Jane Annette Bigelow Palmer 1986–88

Counselors: Susan Nuckols
Debbie Hatch
Gloria LeSueur
Donna R. Nelson Maughan

Donna R. Nelson Maughan 1988–present

Counselors: Susan Nuckols
Ann Curtis Youngquist
Shauna Payne

Young Women's Presidencies

Grace Smith 1960–63

Counselors: Margaret Talbot

APPENDICES

Kathryn Blake
Kathleen Cardon

Kay Packard 1963-63

Counselors: Diana Cranney
Kathleen Cardon

Kathryn Blake 1963-67

Counselors: Diana Cranney
Marie Markuson
Violet Larson

Shirley Sederberg 1967-68

Counselors: Violet Larson
[other counselors unknown]

Nettie Taylor Bagley 1968-70

Counselors: Violet Larson
Elizabeth W. Ritchie
Darlene E. Bennett

Darlene E. Bennett 1970-73

Counselors: Maxine Garrett
Phyllis Ann Rogers
Jean M. Schmidt
Judy K. Soelberg

Dola Hoefling 1973-75

Counselors: Dorothy Anderson
Linda J. Meyer
Marie N. Schreiner
Barbara Bradford
Joan Holker Flygare

Louise Chambers Winspear 1975-80

Counselors: Nadine Buxton
Betty Matthews
Jean Keck
Patricia Halverson
Gail John
Cindy Wakefield
Marlene Russell Lindsay

MINNESOTA MORMONS

Rosey Byers
Nancy Schindler

Carol McKee Gerlach 1980–82

Counselors: Patricia Natrass
Cindy Wakefield
Lurene Bagley Toone
Elaine Savich Lowrance

Elizabeth W. Ritchie 1982–84

Counselors: Alta Adair
Barbara Bradford
Elaine Savich Lowrance
Elvie Border
Pamela R. Wagner Brian
Sarah Muir

Marietta Woodward Fossum 1984–88

Counselors: Mary Robertson
Pamela R. Wagner Brian
Jacqueline Zeyer Winspear
Jane Wiebers Seaman
Barbara Curtis Hawes
Virginia Tollefson Slipka

Susan L. Miller Ogilvie 1988–present

Counselors: Myra Welling
Colleen Beardall Kunz

Young Men's Presidencies

Robert R. Barrus 1960–61

Counselors: Richard Johnson
Ronald Rigby

Joseph Bently 1961–63

Counselors: Scott Parker
Neal Knutson
Robert Weir

Ralph E. (Ted) Packard 1963–64

Counselors: Scott Parker

APPENDICES

Robert Weir
M. Spencer Hamilton

Scott Parker 1964–66

Counselors: M. Spencer Hamilton
Robert Weir
C. Therald Larson

Thomas A. Holt 1966–69

Counselors: C. Therald Larson
Henry R. Patton
Albert G. Call
B. Gary Smith

Mervin G. Housley 1969–70

Counselors: C. Therald Larson
Gerald M. Hansen

William C. Romney 1970–71

Counselors: Gerald M. Hansen
Robert W. Warnick

Robert L. Sandberg 1971–72

Counselors: Robert W. Warnick
G. Robert Tait

D. Robert Brough 1972–73

Counselors: William B. Sonne
G. Robert Tait
James D. Condie
Robert Ogden

Cornell Ullman 1978–78

Counselors: T. Gary Morris
[other counselors unknown]

Gordon C. Olson 1978–78

Counselors: Garth Lindsey
T. Gary Morris
Brian Anderson

Mark H. Willes 1978–79

Counselors: T. Gary Morris
Max H. Garrett

MINNESOTA MORMONS

Dean Croft [was serving in 1980; dates of calling and release unknown]

Counselors: [unknown]

T. Gary Morris (was serving in February 1980)

Counselors: Daniel C. Lowrance
[additional counselors unknown]

Joseph W. Toone 1981–82

Counselors: T. Gary Morris
Robert McGovern
Robert Naatjes

Michael Hannan 1980–81

Counselors: T. Gary Morris
Robert McGovern

David K. Fossum 1982–83

Counselors: T. Gary Morris
Robert McGovern
Robert Naatjes
Bruce Ehlert
Richard Anderson
Richard Morris

Bruce Ehlert 1983–86

Counselors: Richard Anderson
Stephen Bagley
Joseph Price
Calvin T. Candland
E. Bradley Wilson

David M. Brown 1986–87

Counselors: E. Bradley Wilson
Calvin T. Candland

E. Bradley Wilson 1987–88

Counselors: Calvin T. Candland
Matthew A. Smith

Brian L. Anderson 1988–present

Counselors: George D. Nelson
Mark Hartman

Sunday School Presidencies

L. Stephen Richards, Jr. 1960-63

Counselors: Joseph C. Bently
Wilford O. Nelson
Earl Stark

Harold R. Wallace 1963-65

Counselors: Harold R. Oaks
Robert L. Sundberg
Bartell W. Cardon
A. Garr Cranney

Clyde Parker 1965-68

Counselors: George R. Blake
A. Garr Cranney
Arthur R. Patch

Richard S. Frary 1968-69

Counselors: George R. Blake
Alan R. Anderson

Alan R. Anderson 1969-71

Counselors: Chester Harris
James E. Heule
Robert E. Riggs
Franklin Mann

Darwin A. John 1971-73

Counselors: James E. Heule
Robert E. Riggs
Franklin Mann
Roger Stroud
Duane Skie

Charles White 1973-76

Counselors: Robert E. Riggs
Duane Skie
Douglas Deardon
Donald Appleby

Harmon J. Tobler 1976-78

Counselors: Sidney H. Anderson
Dale W. Larsen

James E. Heule
Ralph Houston
Keith A. Youngquist

Richard A. Seay 1978–79

Counselors: Dale W. Larsen
Keith A. Youngquist
Robert L. Holker

Henry H. Stevens 1980–81

[no counselors]

Ralph Thomson 1981–83

Counselors: Norris Niccum
[additional counselors unknown]

Joseph Price 1983–86

[no counselors]

Thomas Anderson 1986–87

[no counselors]

Robert Rich 1987–88

[no counselors]

Larry D. Kacher 1988–present

[no counselors]

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NOTE: HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT Archives refers to those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. I consulted Minnesota newspapers (*Morristown Rustler*, *St. Croix Union*, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, *St. Paul Dispatch*, and *Faribault Herald*) in the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, and Wilson Library, the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. The Minneapolis Minnesota Stake Collection is housed in the Minneapolis Minnesota Stake Center, Crystal, Minnesota.

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