

# **“More Value . . . Than All the Gold and Silver of England”: The Book of Mormon in Britain, 1837–52**

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In 1837 significant problems had arisen in Kirtland, Ohio. Disunity and discontent were rampant among some of the Saints and their leaders. Under these unlikely circumstances the Prophet Joseph Smith declared, “God revealed to me that something new must be done for the salvation of His Church.”<sup>1</sup> On June 1, 1837, responding to the spirit of prophecy and revelation he set apart Heber C. Kimball, one of the Twelve, to preside over a mission in England, the first overseas mission of the Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days. Orson Hyde, Willard Richards, and Joseph Fielding would accompany Elder Kimball from Kirtland. They would later be joined in New York by John Goodson, Isaac Russell, and John Snyder. The missionaries would arrive in England and make their way to Preston on July 22, 1837, to begin planting gospel seeds in Europe.

Substantial research has been done on the spread of the gospel during this early period, including examination of the missions of the Twelve, missionary work in general, the converts’ backgrounds, and other valuable topics.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will examine particularly what impact and what influence the Book of Mormon had in Britain from its introduction in 1837 until 1852. Rather than taking a strictly chronological approach to this subject, I have chosen a topical approach to determine the impact of the book.

Among the questions I will consider are the following: Was the Book of Mormon difficult to access during this time period? What was said by opponents of the book, and what was the missionaries’ response? How did the missionaries use the Book of Mormon? What evidence and explanations were cited to affirm the truthfulness

of the Book of Mormon? Finally, were there significant testimonies and conversion stories from the time period that specifically involved the Book of Mormon?

In discovering answers to the above questions, I have not simply examined the mission of the Twelve Apostles and their efforts to use the Book of Mormon. I have gone further, attempting to show how many common members and converts were affected by the Book of Mormon. While many did not record the specifics of their conversion, a good number did, and it is in their journals, diaries, letters, and reminiscence accounts that many of these significant experiences have been found. This study does not focus on how many people used the Book of Mormon, but rather investigates how important the book was for those who studied and used it, either as a missionary or as a convert.

### **Accessibility of the Book**

One of the major trials the early missionaries faced was the difficulty of providing copies of the Book of Mormon. For the first three and one-half years, the only copies of the Book of Mormon available in England were those the missionaries had brought from the United States. John Goodson apparently brought at least two hundred copies of the book, which he had obtained as payment for his part in the publication of the 1837 Kirtland edition.<sup>3</sup> It is unlikely that the other missionaries brought many books with them because of the prohibitive cost of import duties.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the shortage of copies worsened when Elders Goodson and Snyder became disenchanted with the Church and left for America in early October 1838.<sup>5</sup> They took with them many of the books they had brought. In spite of this shortage, missionaries and antagonists alike turned an impressive amount of attention to the Book of Mormon. As we shall see later, the press and certain ministers of other faiths were not hindered by this shortage in their attacks against the Book of Mormon.

In May 1840, with publication of the *Millennial Star*, excerpts from the Book of Mormon were printed to help acquaint both Saints and strangers with the text. The first lengthy excerpts from

the Book of Mormon published in the *Millennial Star* came from 3 Nephi 11–18. These passages were published in June and July of 1840. Several other excerpts followed in the early years of the *Millennial Star*.

The Book of Mormon had needed to be published for some time in the British Isles. As early as November 1839, Parley P. Pratt had written to Joseph Smith suggesting “that the publication of the Book of Mormon in Europe in English, French, German, and other languages be committed to the Twelve, . . . whose duty it shall be to secure to you the Copy rights in the several governments, and to render strict account from time to time to the first Presidency.”<sup>6</sup> All of the Apostles in England sensed the need for the book to be published. In May 1840, Elder Pratt expressed to Brigham Young that it was “verry much wanted and it is all important to print immediately for why withhold the fulness of the Gospel, in the face of all the prophesies that it Shall go to all nations?”<sup>7</sup> Brigham, in turn, reported to Joseph Smith that “they beg and plead for the Book of Mormon.”<sup>8</sup>

On May 20, 1840, Wilford Woodruff took his colleagues to the top of Herefordshire Beacon for quiet meditation, prayer, and counsel. There they felt inspired that it was God’s will that Brigham Young should leave immediately for Manchester to work on publishing the Book of Mormon and a new hymnbook. They had already collected a substantial amount of money for publication, including 100 pounds from Thomas and Hannah Kington and 250 pounds from John and Jane Benbow. As soon as they hiked down from the hill, Brigham was on his way, carrying the precious funds with him.<sup>9</sup>

Though it took longer than any of the Twelve had anticipated, the first European edition of the Book of Mormon was ready to sell in early February 1841. Beginning in early January 1841, when galley sheets were available, Brigham Young and Willard Richards worked feverishly to prepare the first index, an enlarged table of contents for the book. This was the first step toward helping readers access the content of the Book of Mormon more easily. While the printer in Liverpool had contracted to publish 5,000 copies, only 4,050 were ever delivered.<sup>10</sup>

The Book of Mormon was sold and distributed through announcements in the *Millennial Star* and by missionaries throughout the British Isles. Major announcement of the publication of the Book of Mormon read as follows:

This long looked for work is now out of press. The European edition consists of 5,000 copies, which we humbly trust will so far supply the public that they will now be able to peruse for themselves, a work which has been so grossly misrepresented; and which is in reality of more value to them than all the gold and silver of England. What heart can be so indifferent as not to wish to peruse the record of half a world? Bringing to light Gods dealings with them, together with their history of the past, and their prophesies of the future.—I repeat the declaration, strange as it may seem, that a knowledge of the things contained in this record is of more value to every one of them than the gold and silver of Europe.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, three hundred placards were placed in public places announcing the publication of the book.<sup>12</sup> The books sold for five shillings for the sheepskin cover and six shillings sixpence for the calfskin cover.<sup>13</sup> Sales of the book were likely brisk at first, as pre-publication purchases were filled. However, sales slowed before long. In a letter dated June 25, 1841, Parley Pratt lamented to Levi Richards that “the Books of Mormon sell very slow.”<sup>14</sup>

Three years later, in June 1844, the *Millennial Star* recorded the following:

We also feel to urge upon the Saints the study of the Book of Mormon, through the coming forth of which we have received so much light and intelligence, and have been made the recipients of so many blessings. In our opinion, the importance and value of this record is not by any means appreciated, even by the Saints, generally speaking; and we feel persuaded, that ere long, it will occupy a much more prominent position in the progress of the kingdom of God.<sup>15</sup>

The article further stated that additional reasons for purchasing the book were to help the poor emigrate and to build the temple at Nauvoo.

The enthusiasm the Twelve had anticipated for the Book of Mormon did not materialize. Approximately two months later, an editorial in the *Millennial Star* suggested that Church publications,

including the Book of Mormon, were not selling as well as they should because “fear that the people of the world would not purchase them, has restrained many from making any exertion whatever to dispose of them.”<sup>16</sup> The indication here is that opposition and animosity toward the book was hindering its dissemination. This factor will be discussed in the next section.

On January 20, 1846, Wilford Woodruff wrote to the Saints in Britain indicating that 879 copies of the Book of Mormon were still for sale.<sup>17</sup> A year later, in early 1847, the price had dropped to three shillings.<sup>18</sup> Finally, on January 1, 1848, it was announced that the current edition of the Book of Mormon was sold out and that plans were under way to print another edition.<sup>19</sup> The demand for the Book of Mormon had increased significantly during the years 1848 and 1849, as indicated by this excerpt from a missionary in Glasgow: “There is a spirit of emulation among the Saints, both officers and members, to provide themselves with the books of the law, and all standard works of the kingdom of God. Many, very many are now in possession of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and are giving it a careful perusal who never saw the inside of one before, and would likewise have the Book of Mormon, could they get it.”<sup>20</sup>

He goes on to say that they would need a gross of copies of the Book of Mormon to meet their demand. In May 1849 the second European edition of the Book of Mormon, a run of five thousand copies, came off the press.<sup>21</sup>

Missionary efforts were under way in many other parts of Europe as the Church began to grow during this time. Between 1851 and 1852, the Book of Mormon was published in Danish, French, German, Welsh, and Italian. Many of the translations were done in Great Britain. The Italian edition was published in London, and the Welsh edition in Merthyr Tydfil.<sup>22</sup> In Wales the Book of Mormon was published in sixteen-page signatures; one or two signatures at a time were sent to subscribers from September 20, 1851, to April 6, 1852.<sup>23</sup> The Welsh Book of Mormon had about two thousand subscriptions.

The second European edition sold out much faster than had the previous edition, so a third European edition was prepared under the direction of Franklin D. Richards and published in April 1852.<sup>24</sup>

It appears that Elder Richards originally intended to publish twenty to twenty-five thousand copies. However, he opted to make stereotyped plates so the book could be printed whenever needed with greater speed and at less cost.<sup>25</sup>

### **Negative Reactions to the Book**

When the first missionaries arrived in England in late July 1837, the only prior announcement of their coming came in letters to British relatives. Elder Joseph Fielding had written to two sisters and a brother who were in England.<sup>26</sup> His brother James was a minister in Preston and initially welcomed Joseph and his missionary companions, inviting them to speak in his chapel. However, after a few meetings, seeing the elders' success among his own congregation, James turned against the message and what was happening. The major issue that came between Joseph and James was the Book of Mormon. On August 5, 1837, just two weeks after Joseph came to Preston, he wrote the following in his diary: "I was still at my Brothers. . . . He was very much opposed to us. In the Morning as we were sitting down to Breakfast he began to say very hard things of us and the Book of Mormon. I was much grieved and it appeared that I could not eat. I got up from the Table, took the Book [of Mormon] in my Hand and declared to all, to him in particular, that what we had told them was the Truth, that that Book was of God, and that he would have to repent, and then left the House."<sup>27</sup> James later united with others opposing the spread of Mormonism, much to Joseph's deep disappointment.

In July 1838, one year after the first missionaries' arrival, Richard Livesey came from America and published the first anti-Mormon pamphlet in England, focusing particularly on the Book of Mormon.<sup>28</sup> After reading Livesey's pamphlet, James Fielding wrote to Joseph on August 15, 1838, about the Book of Mormon. He remarked how strange it was that he and Joseph who had been in the "habit of thinking and speaking the same, should differ so widely upon the subject of Mormonism." James declared he had "read the book of Mormon carefully through and parts of it several times over. I have exercised all the understanding God has given me upon

its contents—and the only conclusion I can possibly come to is that the whole system is a cunningly devised fable. . . . How then can I embrace as truth such a mass of incoherency and absurdity as appears almost on every page of the book of Mormon[?] The historical past seems to me a complete zigzag—when I had read two or three hundred pages I got so versed in the up-and-down maze that I could and did actually foretell what was coming next, several times running.”<sup>29</sup>

His brother’s aggressive opposition brought great sorrow to Joseph Fielding. He reported on one occasion that his brother had called the missionaries kidnappers who “had kidnapped a faithful Brother of his.”<sup>30</sup> In spite of this trial and the growing opposition, Joseph wrote, “My faith stands it much better than I could have expected. I intend to stand fast amidst all the Storms that may blow; I have to live by faith and trust in the Lord for my daily bread. . . . My Mind has not been darkened at all, but has been lighted in the Lord, praised be his Name.”<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately, Joseph Fielding’s heartache was not limited to his brother James. His sister Ann and his two other brothers, John and Thomas, were also adamantly opposed to his message. He described the following exchange with his brother Thomas as he left that part of England: “Called on by Bro. Thomas to bid him goodbye. . . . As I left him, he again cautioned me against the Book of Mormon, assuring me it was false. I had shaken Hands and I then turned away and left him, and he continued calling after me to beware of that Book and that Smith, etc. I merely said, ‘I’ll take Care,’ so we parted.”<sup>32</sup>

While the Book of Mormon was not the sole focus of the Church’s opposition in Britain, it was a major target of criticism. In speaking of the attacks upon the Church, one British elder wrote: “They commenced with their own assertions, and continued with newspaper stories, and with letters from the apostates; never mentioning but one passage in the bible; nor did they mention anything of our belief, excepting the ‘Book of Mormon,’ and the book of ‘Doctrine and Covenants.’”<sup>33</sup> The Book of Mormon was being attacked in several ways. Anti-Mormon pamphlets were published from 1838 to 1852. The negative tone of these antagonists is exemplified in

the following excerpt: “I do not mean that the Mormons should be pelted with stones; they should rather be pitied, and prayed for. . . . I do not mean . . . that the Book of Mormon should be committed to the flames, although it richly deserves such a fate; yet I would preserve it as an ill-written novel, and as a monument of human folly.”<sup>34</sup> In addition to the pamphlets that began to circulate throughout the British Isles, many newspaper articles, leaflets, and frequent lectures by ministers and others were specifically focused on stopping the threat of Mormonism.

There are many reasons such opposition was so swift in coming.<sup>35</sup> It is important at this point to briefly examine the arguments and tactics used by opponents of the Book of Mormon. It is clear that some who opposed the book had never read it.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, it is also clear that some had read at least portions of the book because their challenges demonstrated knowledge of the text. Alfred Cordon, an early missionary for the Church, explained how a Mr. John Berry criticized the doctrine in the Book of Mormon. Berry objected to the doctrine in 2 Nephi 2, which teaches that the Fall of Adam was necessary and thus, in Berry’s mind, “charging the Almighty with being guilty of Sin.”<sup>37</sup> The *Edinburgh Intelligencer* printed an article criticizing the Book of Mormon on several accounts, including its mention of a compass several hundred years before polarity was discovered. The article suggested the source of the Book of Mormon was the Solomon Spaulding manuscript and further charged that the book commands Mormons to live in a communal society.<sup>38</sup>

One anti-Mormon writer pointed out that Nephi, in his vision of the Savior’s life, spoke of His baptism in the past tense, while another noted that some of the same expressions found in the early part of the Book of Mormon were found in the New Testament.<sup>39</sup>

Some compared the Book of Mormon prophecy of the establishment of a New Jerusalem and the destruction of the Gentiles, as foretold in 3 Nephi 20–21, to the doctrines of Islam and an “unfuriated fanaticism.”<sup>40</sup>

Another minister took the Book of Mormon to task because in it Nephi was commanded to kill Laban. Moreover, he felt that Christ’s ministry in the New World contradicted the Savior’s state-



ment, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4).<sup>41</sup>

An acquaintance of Joseph Fielding suggested that the story of the brother of Jared's barges was less than inspired. Joseph countered by reading about Hosea taking a wife of whoredoms and asked which account was most like inspiration.<sup>42</sup>

Another critic who was somewhat familiar with the book questioned the means—the Urim and Thummim—by which the record was translated. He also criticized Moroni for admitting weakness in his revelations. (Moroni was actually referring to the weakness in his language and writing, not his revelations; see Mormon 9:31–34.) This same critic misrepresented the Book of Mormon, claiming that in the book the Lord says that the ancient inhabitants of the Americas "are not of the fold of Israel."<sup>43</sup>

One missionary reported that a critic of the Church declared the Book of Mormon a forgery because in it a prophet leads people of God to battle. The contender used the peaceful example of Jesus and His Apostles to suggest that the Book of Mormon was unlike the Bible. The missionary was quick to point out accounts from the Bible that illustrated it was not unlike the Book of Mormon, including Moses's slaying of an Egyptian, and Joshua's, Samuel's, and David's leading Israel to battle.<sup>44</sup>

Mr. J. Curran contended that the Book of Mormon, like the Qur'an, contained "the grandest and most sublime truths respecting God and his attributes . . . which is put forth by the Latter-Day Saints as given by inspiration: it is written apparently in imitation of the Scriptures."<sup>45</sup> Ultimately, this was one of the most common and repeated objections to the Book of Mormon. To most antagonists, the Book of Mormon was another Bible that purported to be new revelation.<sup>46</sup> To many it was a heresy.<sup>47</sup> As one Baptist writer declared, "Not satisfied with the Bible, as a complete revelation from God, the 'Latter-day Saints' have adopted a romance written in America, as a fresh revelation, and have added a trashy volume of 600 pages to that Book, which we are forbidden to add to, or take from, under the most awful penalties!"<sup>48</sup> Later, another critic of the Church referred to the "Apocryphal Book of Mormon" and called the Latter-day Saints "honest and sincere fanatics."<sup>49</sup>

While the above examples represent some of the many approaches taken to undermine the Book of Mormon, they also present a convincing picture that the book was under constant attack from opponents of the Church. There was some special urgency against this book.<sup>50</sup>

## **Reactions and Response**

Clearly from all the accounts studied, much negative thought worked to prejudice the minds of the British people against the Church and the Book of Mormon. Some investigators were deterred, and some recent converts to the Church left because of the opposition. However, the Book of Mormon still led many others to join the Church. An example of conversion despite the opposition comes from Beverly, England. In August of 1849, a lecture was given against the Church. The local paper reported that the speaker showed “the utter falsehood and absurdity of the so-called book of Mormon . . . the total absence of any proof that the book, plates, stone spectacles &c, ever had an existence” and the story of the coming forth of the Church reminded one of “Jack the Giant Killer.” Despite opposition, Robert Clarkson, a native of Beverly, was baptized on February 24, 1850.<sup>51</sup>

One man wrote from Glasgow, Scotland, that he always heard the name of the Mormons “coupled with every species of delusion, fanaticism, and imposture, so that my heart was filled with prejudice against them.” However, when he met a member of the Church whom he found to be “more like other men than I had formerly thought them,” he began to investigate the Church. After reading the Book of Mormon and other Church books he wrote, “I have received more knowledge in religion than ever I expected to receive in my whole life; . . . it must be from Heaven.”<sup>52</sup>

In 1838, Daniel Williams lived with his family in Wales. He had joined the Baptist Church there, but he could not agree with their doctrine. He recorded that he often “prayed God to bring me some intelligence that would set my mind at rest.” About this time, William Davies, who was investigating the Church, gave Daniel the pamphlet *Remarkable Visions*, by Orson Pratt. When Williams read the booklet

about the Restoration, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and its contents, he wrote: "I felt that it was true, and wished if I could find one of those men of God to give me further instructions on the subject. It was just the thing that I wanted, and I hoped that God would send his servants to Wales that I might have the chance of obeying the heavenly message. I continued pray and wait for several months without effect, sometimes being almost ready to start off into England to search for the servants of God, whom not having seen I loved. . . . But I was too poor to bear the expences."<sup>53</sup>

After a year of studying the pamphlet, Daniel met missionaries of the Church in his area. However, such "dreadful tales" were circulating about the missionaries that he could not believe that they were the servants of God he was seeking, so he did not go to hear them. Years passed, and he moved his family to Rhymney, Wales, where his wife died in 1846. By this time the gospel had begun to take hold in Wales. Still, so many awful reports circulated about the Church that he was again deterred from investigating. However, Daniel's brother John listened to the missionaries and was converted. Eventually, John persuaded Daniel to come and listen to the elders. After two attempts Daniel finally heard Elder William Evans preach the gospel. He wrote, "I found that their doctrines were perfectly scriptural and their testimony I could not reject."<sup>54</sup> On March 18, 1847, he was baptized by Elder Williams Davies, the man who had given him the pamphlet nearly nine years before.

While much of the negative press and verbal reports deterred many people from taking the Church and the Book of Mormon seriously, not all ministers and clergymen responded as negatively as those mentioned previously. John Spiers, a Latter-day Saint in England, related an experience he had when traveling on a journey with several passengers, including a Baptist minister:

The talk of the passengers soon turned upon the doctrines of the Latterday Saints, and on hearing them express a wish to know something of the truth of our principles. I told them I was a minister of that order and would be glad to give them any information I could. The Baptist minister and I accordingly commenced to talk and amongst other things he inquired if we believed in the Book of Mormon as an inspired Book. I answered in the affirmative. He then asked if the Bible did not point out in plainness the way of salvation and if it did what was the utility of

the Book of Mormon being revealed. I then asked him if the gospel by St. Matthew did not point out in plainness the doctrines brought by our Lord and if so what was the utility in the writings of the three others. He replied the one substantiates the other so as to convey a greater amount of evidence. I then said the same answer will show the usefulness of the Book of Mormon.<sup>55</sup>

Elder Spiers explained that the Book of Mormon provided an important spiritual history of ancient inhabitants of the Americas, that it made plain many points of doctrine that the world has contended for ages, and that many predictions found in the book would yet be fulfilled. He then indicated that the Book of Mormon is greatly important to humankind. Although the minister did not fully accept Elder Spiers's teachings, he treated Spiers with great respect.

The ever increasing problem of anti-Mormon pamphlets and newspaper articles, and the refusal of most papers to publish rebuttals from the Church, led in part to the establishment of the *Millennial Star*, which began printing in May of 1840. It also led to many published responses from apostles and others such as Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, John Taylor, and Orson Spencer. Before these publications, copies of Parley Pratt's *Voice of Warning* had been brought from New York and were circulating among members and investigators.<sup>56</sup> Chapter 4 of *Voice of Warning* explained that because of all the jarring statements against the book, "it now becomes our duty to show, as far as possible, what the Book of Mormon really is."<sup>57</sup> Orson Pratt's *An Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions*, published in 1840, gave the first printed account of the First Vision, contained the full story of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and described its contents.<sup>58</sup> In 1840, Parley P. Pratt wrote at least three pamphlets responding to specific attacks on the Church and its doctrine. While all three of these contained responses to questions raised about the Book of Mormon, his "Plain Facts, Showing the Falsehood and Folly of The Rev. C. S. Bush" focused on the Book of Mormon.<sup>59</sup> Elder Pratt gave a detailed explanation of why the Bible was not the only word of God. He cited biblical references of missing scripture and biblical passages speaking of the additional revelation to be given to men. Also, he refuted the

Solomon Spaulding theory of the origin of the Book of Mormon and dealt with other issues that had been raised about the book.

Between October 1850 and January 1852, Orson Pratt wrote the most thorough responses to charges against the Book of Mormon that had ever before been written: a series of six sixteen-page pamphlets entitled *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*.<sup>60</sup> Elder Orson Pratt dealt with many of the matters mentioned in attacks on the Book of Mormon. Using the Bible and sound reasoning, he explained that it was neither unscriptural nor unreasonable to expect additional revelation or scripture, and in fact, that it was indispensable if one were to avoid apostasy and corrupted doctrine. Evidence for the authenticity of the Book of Mormon was cited, including the powerful testimonies of the Three Witnesses and Joseph Smith. He confirmed the power of miracles in the lives of those who believe in the book. Finally, Elder Orson Pratt cited numerous Old Testament prophecies which the Book of Mormon fulfilled.

In addition to the many tracts and pamphlets published during this time in England, the *Millennial Star* became a source for much information about the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith's and Oliver Cowdery's accounts of the appearance of the angel Moroni and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon were published in the *Millennial Star*.<sup>61</sup> In addition to these and other historical accounts concerning the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the *Millennial Star* carried articles such as "Interesting Discoveries," "Evidences of the Book of Mormon," and "American Antiquities." These articles related information about recent archaeological discoveries in Central America and suggested historical descriptions of some of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas. The editors of the *Millennial Star* added comments and sometimes passages from the Book of Mormon that related to the finds or the descriptions that had been reported.<sup>62</sup> Other articles printed in the *Millennial Star* emphasized such things as the importance of the testimony of the Three Witnesses, the fulfillment of Isaiah 29:11–12, the Book of Mormon fulfilling Ezekiel's prophecy about the stick of Judah (see Ezekiel 37:16–19), and also the fact that the Bible clearly indicates that there are many missing books of scripture.<sup>63</sup> The impact of the *Millennial Star* grew during these early years. While the newspaper

struggled in the first two years, the circulation grew from 1,600 in early 1843 to about 22,000 in 1852.<sup>64</sup>

In Wales, Dan Jones founded another Latter-day Saint newspaper called the *Prophet of the Jubilee*. Similar to the *Millennial Star*, this paper featured articles defending and explaining the Book of Mormon, especially in its first four issues. The introduction to the first edition of the *Jubilee* stated that one of its purposes was to cite “quotations from the Book of Mormon, and Proofs of its Truthfulness.”<sup>65</sup>

### Missionaries’ Use of the Book of Mormon

What is not well known about early Church history in Britain is how missionaries used the Book of Mormon while proselyting and teaching. A review of scores of journals, diaries, and reminiscent accounts gives us some interesting insights. In the earliest years, because copies of the Book of Mormon were scarce, investigators often read a copy borrowed from a missionary.<sup>66</sup>

Many missionary journals or diaries during this time period do not mention much concerning the Book of Mormon. Many describe only their travels, where they taught, and whom they baptized. However, a number of journals specifically record the subjects the missionaries spoke about and some of the interactions they had with nonmembers or investigators. After speaking to a group of Saints, they would record a comment such as “I preached on the authenticity of the Book of Mormon,” “I preached upon the authenticity of the Book of Mormon being of divine origin,” or “I addressed [the Saints] on the origin and coming forth of the Book of Mormon.”<sup>67</sup> Many of the recorded experiences of the missionaries relating to the Book of Mormon occurred when they had announced a lecture on Mormonism and when they were invited to a discussion or a debate with other ministers.

Wilford Woodruff recorded a typical encounter while preaching in Hanley: “Several priests arrived, armed with i[n]visible weapons to give me dreadful battle upon the Book of Mormon. The Lord showed it to me & I preached to them upon the Book of Mormon & disarmed them of every weapon that they had chosen to fight me with & it flung them into confusion & they did not wish to leave

without doing sumthing & so they jumped upon a Bench & roared & hallowed like mad men untill they were not only checked up but pulled off from the Bench by the people."<sup>68</sup> Elder Woodruff answered questions for a time and then left listeners in the hall "all in an uproar."<sup>69</sup>

John McNeill recorded another example of such encounters. He had been preaching in the streets of Birkhill, when a man spoke up and challenged his message with a pamphlet and other papers against the Church. Elder McNeill reported,

[He] spoke a great deal of evil against Joseph Smith and a few more of the servants of God, and also the book of mormon. When he was [done] with his discourse the people hurrayed and [they] were not for letting me answer him, but there was a man that spoke for me to gett liberty. I then proofed the divine authenticity of the book of mormon from the bible and I also replied to many more of his profound assertions and I also bore testimony of the truth of the gospel and told them that none could be excused, there former righteousness could not save them after hereing the gospel.<sup>70</sup>

While on many occasions missionaries were not allowed to speak or were drowned out by the opposing voices in a crowd, in some cases the opponents were shouted out. Such was the case for Elder James Palmer in January of 1841. He had gone to Monmouth, and a Brother Castrey had been praying for the Lord to send help to preach to a group of interested people. Elder Palmer spoke to a full house on the first principles of the gospel and then taught:

A book should come forth that should bring to pas(s) a marvelous [*sic*] wonderous work and a wonder causing [*sic*] the wisdom of the wise to perish &c. Rvd. Mr. James spoke up and saide do you mean to say that is the book of Mormon. I replied that such a book had been brought forth by the power of God in these last days. At this juncture the congregation put Mr. James down, and would not agree to (h)ear him until I had concluded my discourse. Then he arose again and the people hooted him down. He tried again. They did the same and again, and I discovered they ware determined not to give him audience and to my supprize [*sic*] thay carried him out into the street by force and some of them saide to me not to fear but to set down and feel comfortable which I did do.

Mr. James [the Reverend] must (h)ave been very much discomfited for he saide to me that he would appose [*sic*] me go where I would. I told



him to do so if he wished until he was satisfied. It was then a young man . . . a stranger came to me and took me to the angel inn public house and stayed with me over night and paid my bill next morning. He then disappeared [*sic*] and I never knew who he was but my prayer is that god my heavenly father will reward him for his kindness to me.<sup>71</sup>

The successful manner in which early missionaries defended the restored gospel and the Book of Mormon was often impressive. Several years after Elder Palmer's experience, Elder John Spiers was preaching in the northern English town of Norwich. He spoke particularly of the "coming forth of the Book of Mormon in fulfillment of the predictions of the prophets." A few days later, he recorded "I again preached and as a Mr. Frost of Norfolk had been blowing off his cold congealing breath in the shape of a pamphlet against the Latter-day Saints which had been circulated through the town to quite an extent, I this evening took it up and replied to it. *The effect of the frost soon melted into insignificance before the powerful rays of truth* and the people were soon led to see that his arguments were grounded upon the foundations of uninspired men and not upon principles of truth."<sup>72</sup> Accounts like this one inspire one to wish they could revisit these occasions and see the Spirit rest upon these early servants in their humble yet powerful teaching.

Not all the problems missionaries faced with the Book of Mormon came from antagonists or nonmembers. On one occasion very early in the work in England, Elder Joseph Fielding spoke to a group of people concerning the coming forth of the work and the truth of the Book of Mormon. Following this meeting, he recorded: "It appears that several of the members of the Church were hurt at my setting it [the Book of Mormon] on a Level with the Bible. It grieves me. . . . It is Difficult to bring them to believe in their hearts that God has spoken as in Days of old, and that his Word is as important as it was then. Yet I believe they must receive the whole of this Work before they can be gathered to Zion. The Devil has been trying hard to sow his tares in the Church."<sup>73</sup>

Perhaps the most formal presentation of the Book of Mormon in England during these early years was the presentation of the book to Queen Victoria. Brigham Young assigned Lorenzo Snow to make the presentation, which he did before leaving London in



1842. The presentation was made to Her Majesty Queen Victoria and His Royal Highness Prince Albert, through the arrangement of Sir Henry Wheatley. The young queen, who was in her fifth year on the throne, was only twenty-two. Of this presentation, historian Edward Tullidge records: "It is said that her Majesty condescended to be pleased with the gift. Whether she ever read the Book of Mormon is not known, although if the presentation did not altogether fade from her memory, 'Mormonism' became sensational enough to provoke even a monarch to read the book, if for nothing better than curiosity."<sup>74</sup>

Did these early missionaries ever have feelings about their own neglect of the Book of Mormon? One such expression was recorded in a personal note by Joseph Fielding. He had gone one evening to a mountain near Douglas "with a great desire to have some Blessing from Heaven." He continued:

I have long desired to behold some heavenly Messenger or some Ray of the Glory of God, and have often prayed for it, and often laid and watched for it by night, or stopped on the Road to look for some thing from the Heavenly World. . . . But I feared lest I should ask for things which were not right, and while seated on the Ground, I opened the Book of Doctrine and Covenants and began to read the Instructions there: to be diligent in the Work of God, to teach from the Book of Mormon, etc. I saw that I had not been giving due heed to that Book, and I felt that I was not prepared to hold that Converse with the Angels as I thought. I began to pray for the Church. I felt humbled before the Lord.<sup>75</sup>

The next day He recorded in his diary, "Spoke of the Book of Mormon. Felt well, and the People, too."<sup>76</sup>

Not only were missionaries involved in sharing the Book of Mormon but so were individual members. A particularly impressive account was recorded by young Sarah Layton who was baptized at age fifteen. In 1842, when Sarah was sixteen, she was hired to do needlework for a wealthy lady (Jane Pym) in the town where she lived. This woman learned Sarah had joined the Mormon Church. She was surprised that such a young girl would have joined this religion. Sarah testified of the truthfulness of the Church, its principles, and the Book of Mormon. On a subsequent visit, Mrs. Pym

asked Sarah further about her religion and agreed to read the Book of Mormon. Six weeks later she returned the Book to Sarah indicating that “it was a wonderful book,” and that “her husband, Squire Pym, was greatly interested.”<sup>77</sup>

## **Impact and Conversions**

It appears that most converts were introduced to the Church through the preaching of the doctrines of the Restoration by the elders of the Church. We do not have the detailed accounts of what actually led to the conversions of many individual Saints. Nevertheless, it is clear that many early Saints were being converted and influenced by the Book of Mormon. For example, the deep commitment of the Kingtons and the Benbows in 1840 to expend so much money for the printing of the Book of Mormon offers clear evidence that the power and potential of the Book of Mormon was being felt by converts before the book was published in Britain. The most rewarding part of this study was to find several firsthand accounts of how the Book of Mormon impacted these early Saints as they were in the process of investigating the restored gospel.

George D. Watt, the first convert of the Church to be baptized in England, was within two weeks of his baptism when, as a result of his study of the Book of Mormon, he prophesied, “The land of America is the promised land; it is Zion, and we shall be gathered there.”<sup>78</sup> The missionaries had not yet made any mention of this doctrine to him.

In a straightforward manner, Charles Miller reported in 1837 that “when I heard of the Angel and the book of Mormon, I heard a voice speak to me and say ‘tis true’ several times, it filled me with confidence. . . . I never could rest after I felt it was the truth but through weakness of my nature I kept back from obeying because of opposition till July 31st, 1839 I was baptized by Joseph Fielding.”<sup>79</sup>

John Taylor first arrived in England on January 11, 1840, and within two days he had gone to the home of his wife’s relatives, the Cannons. “He sang for them some of the ‘Songs of Zion,’ testified to the divinity of the message of the latter-day prophet, and affirmed the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, a copy of

which he left.”<sup>80</sup> While Elder Taylor was gone to Preston, the father, George Cannon, determined to make a careful examination of the Book of Mormon.

As he began the perusal, his interest grew with every page, until the spirit of the book has soon taken such complete possession of him that he could scarcely lay it down. He read it far into the night, at meal times, and even had it propped open on his joiner’s bench where he could glimpse a few sentences as he worked, with the result that when Elder Taylor returned within a week, the book’s contents from cover to cover had been absorbed by the assiduous student. His judgement as solemnly announced was that the book was true—that an evil-minded man could not have written it, and a good man would not have tried to write it with intent to deceive. He acknowledged that he had to accept it as of God. It removed his doubts and satisfied his soul.<sup>81</sup>

On February 11, 1840, George Cannon and his wife were baptized into the Church. Later that summer, the three older Cannon children were baptized, including George Q., who later became an Apostle and counselor in the First Presidency.

In Cheshire, England, in 1841, George Morris was a shoemaker. He had recently been widowed when his twenty-year-old bride of just over one year died from complications following the birth of their first child. George overheard children talking about some strange new religion they called “dippers” because they dipped people in the river. Having investigated the various religions in his locale, he decided to attend one of their meetings. He was pleased with what he heard but decided not to be hasty in joining the Church. George recounted that he “borrowed a Book of Mormon from one of the Elders, and commenced reading it very earnestly and prayerfully. I had not read far before the spirit of the Lord bore testimony to me that it was the Truth of Heaven. I continued on reading until I had read it through and got testimony after testimony concerning the truth of the work and divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon and concerning a Prophet, Seer and Revelator having been raised up in these last days with all the power, authority and Priesthood necessary to build up the church of Christ upon the earth.”<sup>82</sup> About a week before his baptism, George reported: “I took a walk one Sunday afternoon up by a beautiful river side into a retired place for the

purpose of meditation and reflecting undisturbed upon the plan of Salvation which had occupied my mind very forceably for a time. I prayed to my Heavenly Father in secret and confessed my sins. I had one of the most refreshing seasons that I ever experienced in my life, for my soul was truly humble before the Lord. . . . I covenanted with the Lord that I would forsake all my sins and begin from that very hour to lead a new life and serve him the remainder of my life to the best of my abilities.”<sup>83</sup>

Adults were not the only ones affected by the Book of Mormon. Young Henry Stokes had a schoolmate whose family had joined the Church, and at the age of twelve he began investigating the Church. For some years his school texts had been the Old and New Testament. Thus, at a young age he was well acquainted with reading scripture. When he heard the elders preach the gospel, he began to see things in a new light: “I read now as if were with new eyes and with a new understanding.” Henry was naturally fond of reading and began to read every Church book he could obtain, including the Book of Mormon. He wrote: “I read and studied them with great pleasure for I was hungry and thirsty for the word of God and it was like honey to my taste. And the more I read and the more I considered what I read the more plain the evidences of the truth appeared unto me. . . . [I] availed myself of every opportunity of learning more fully the glorious truths of the gospel and I became more firmly satisfied with it every day.”<sup>84</sup> Henry was baptized on August 15, 1841, at age twelve.

As an eighteen-year-old, James Bullock left his home to find work. During this time away, his father became associated with the Latter-day Saints. When James returned home, his father encouraged him to investigate the Church. However, James had been somewhat prejudiced because he had heard the Latter-day Saints felt everyone was wrong except them. After further conversation with his father, James made up his mind to prove this matter for himself. He went with his brother to hear the Saints preach but “did not feel much better for hearing them.” Shortly after this, James recorded, “I afterwards began to read the Book of Mormon and while reading it my mind was filled with light, and I was convinced that the book was true, and I said that if ever I joyned any religion I would joine

the Latterday saints.”<sup>85</sup> However, James did not join at that time. He traveled and worked several different jobs over the next year. Still struggling inside, he wrote, “I could not get out of my mind the principles of truth I had heard, and I felt that I ought to be doing better than I was.”<sup>86</sup> When James moved to Hastings, he began trying to look for the Church but was unsuccessful in finding it. He wrote:

After I had done work one evening, I was thinking the matter over in my owne mind, and I thought I would go and pray to the Lord. I therefore retired in to a wood wich was close to where I lived, and there I nelt down and prayed that if the Latterday saints were the true people of God I might not rest till I found them, and if they were not right, that I might not rest untill I found the true religion for I wanted to serve God. After I arose to my feet the same spirit rested upon me again that rested upon me while I was reading the Book of Mormon and I felt satisfied that the saints were the true people of God, and I felt detirmined to find them but where I did not know.<sup>87</sup>

After several failed attempts and misinformed directions, James finally found a branch of the Church in Brighton, England. “I looked up and saw ‘Latterday saints’ in large letters on the wall. The moment I saw that, I felt over come with joy.”<sup>88</sup>

Not all testimonials of the Book of Mormon came from those who joined the Church. Writing to the editors of the *Millennial Star*, one interested party from Bristol calling himself “Decipulus,” wrote the following favorable words:

For some time past I have given my mind to reading and studying the Holy Scriptures. . . . For many years I have been looking for the Lord to raise up a Church—to gather together the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah. When I first heard of your people being in Bristol it struck me forcibly that you must be something different in your principles than the others in this great city, and I thought that probably this might be the true Church that was to come; and in order to prove all things I went to hear for myself. I heard a man by the name of Woodruff, and I was of the same opinion as many more beside myself. . . . I was much taken up with his discourses, for it was the truth. I purchased the Book of Mormon, and have read it over with diligence, and I can find no fault with it. I believe it on the testimony of the witnesses. I have compared it with the Bible, and I find that it perfectly agrees with the Word of God.<sup>89</sup>

Whether “Decipulus” ever joined the Church is not known, but his letter is an important example of how the Book of Mormon affected honest seekers. It illustrates how those who were open-minded could feel and sense the power of the book.

Like precious gems or sparks of light, journals and letters give brief views of what undoubtedly would be wonderful accounts were more details preserved. After hearing a missionary preach the gospel one Sunday evening, future convert James Cantwell, his employer, and their wives stayed up most of the night reading and discussing the Book of Mormon and other Church books.<sup>90</sup>

In 1841, Elder John Needham presented Sarah Griffith with a Book of Mormon, which she promised to read.<sup>91</sup> This resulted in her conversion. A little more than a year after her baptism, she wrote to her future husband, rejoicing “in the abundant light I have received and I find it very delightful to compare the Bible, Book of Mormon and the good news contained in the Millennial Star, and notice how beautifully they accord with each other.”<sup>92</sup>

When John Steele heard of the Church, he was impressed to obtain a Book of Mormon, which he “read carefully through and believed what it contained.”<sup>93</sup> He was so anxious that he was baptized immediately and spent the next month teaching his wife, who was baptized May 3, 1843.

John Powell had been induced by a Church member to read some Church literature, including the Book of Mormon. He read it and prayed to know its truthfulness. However, it was not until he had gone to hear a missionary preach “upon the coming forth of ‘The Book of Mormon’ [that] I was convinced it was true, so I expressed a wish to be baptized.”<sup>94</sup>

In the summer of 1844, Henry Savage and his wife first heard of Mormonism on the outskirts of London. Henry was convinced enough of the truths of the restored gospel that he acquired a copy of the Book of Mormon. “He worked at his loom by day; and a light by his bedside at night, he never slept until he had read the Book of Mormon from the title page to the end. As he was a rapid reader this did not take him long. He was then ready for baptism. His wife rejoiced equally in the plan of salvation. Accordingly they were baptized 2 June 1844.”<sup>95</sup>

One of the most unusual conversion accounts came from Wales in 1848. While no author is listed for this account in the *Prophet of the Jubilee*, it is set off in quotation marks and is given in enough detail to warrant serious consideration. Its author reports having a dream one night in which he found himself in a field with a large crowd listening to a stranger preach about a book he held in his hand. The author was given the book and told to "treasure this book in your memory, and print it in your heart; and while you keep hold of it, all the spirits of the court below cannot harm you." In his dream he encounters various dungeons with beasts and men who speak to him each trying to obtain the book from him. They all seemed to have a strong attraction to destroy the book and its possessor. Through each of the encounters, the author remembered the advice he had been given, which was "that my life depended on keeping hold of the book." After he escaped these threatening circumstances, the dream ended and he awoke. The author wondered and pondered what it all meant, but to no avail. However, he related that a few months later, when in a different part of the country:

I went with my friends on a Sunday afternoon to listen to some stranger who was preaching some new and strange things in a nearby field. As soon as I arrived, I remembered my dream. I recognized the scene at once. After he finished, I asked him to see the book he held in his hand; and after gazing at me with the same eyes as I saw in the dream and in a similar voice, which pierced through the marrow and the bones, he handed the book to me, reciting the above words about it exactly as I had dreamed. This affected me until I almost fainted; despite this I quickly opened the book, and read, for the first time ever, the title "BOOK OF MORMON." As soon as I found it, I believed it, and I obeyed it, and thanks be to its divine author for the enjoyment of its precious promises.<sup>96</sup>

## **Conclusion**

It is difficult from available sources to determine how many early British Saints read the Book of Mormon or what percentage of converts were influenced by the book. However, it can be said that for many of these early Saints, the Book of Mormon became a pearl of great price. It was a critical part of their conversion. The

following poem by one of their numbers from Cambridge in 1851 captures the relationship they came to have with the scriptures.

The Two Books

Hail, Holy Bible! *test of sacred truth!*  
 My much-lov'd study thro' the years of youth;  
 And still I love thy retrospective page,  
 And ever shall do, till my latest age!

The Book of Mormon, *present* light revealed,  
 And shew'd the "other fold," so long conceal'd,  
 An Angel's hand assists the *Seer* to trace  
 The record of the tribe of Joseph's race.

Now side by side those records should recline  
 As *tomes* of Truth that show us light divine;  
 "The stick of Judah" shall my heart enfold,  
 "The stick of Ephraim" shall my right hand hold.

Great God! Great Father! And Eternal King!  
 To thee my soul's best energies I bring;—  
 Unite these staffs as *one* within my hand.  
 And let them guide me to the promised land.<sup>97</sup>

It is clear that faithful missionaries and their converts came to see the Book of Mormon as a vital key in the latter-day work. More precious than "all the Gold and Silver of England," the Book of Mormon continued to forward the work of the Church in Britain. While serving as mission president in the British Isles in 1850, Elder Orson Pratt wrote to the British Saints explaining the unparalleled significance of the Book of Mormon and the role it would yet play in the great latter-day work:

One of the most important revelations that have ever saluted the ears of mortals has been given, namely, the BOOK OF MORMON. It is sent forth as a last message to the nations of the wicked; it is sent to establish a kingdom which shall break in pieces all other kingdoms; it is sent to gather out the righteous from all nations, and establish them in one; it is sent to fulfill the times of the Gentiles, and bind up the law and testimony among them, that if they will not repent, they may be delivered over unto destruction; it is sent to gather Israel from their long dispersion; it is sent to make known the gospel in greater plainness and fulness, that contentions upon doctrine may cease, and the watchman



of Zion see eye to eye; it is sent as the great preparatory work for the second advent of the Son of God; it is sent that the Saints may know the signs of the times, and not be in darkness, and that great day come upon them unawares.<sup>98</sup> The Book of Mormon is the Lord's message of life or of death to every nation under heaven: it is confirmed by the voice of God, by the ministry of holy angels by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and by signs following them that believe: it is to be proclaimed in power unto all the world, and then shall the end come, not the end of the earth, but, as in the days of the flood, the end of the wicked nations.<sup>99</sup>

## Notes

The author would like to express thanks to his research assistants, Nelson James, Mike Johnson, Matt Johnson, and Cory Roberson, who helped significantly in searching and organizing the resources which were used in preparing this chapter.

1. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1948), 2:489.

2. For examples, see James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles, 1837–1841* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992); Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Religious Backgrounds of Mormon Converts in Britain, 1837–52," in *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977):51–65; James B. Allen and Malcolm R. Thorp, "The Mission of the Twelve to England, 1840–41: Mormon Apostles and the Working Classes," in *BYU Studies* 15, no. 4 (Summer 1975):499–526; Richard L. Jensen and Malcolm R. Thorpe, eds., *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989); V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter, eds., *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837–1987* (Solihull, England: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), 71–162.

3. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 249.

4. See Allen and Thorp, "The Mission of the Twelve to England," 520.

5. See Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 155.

6. Parley P. Pratt to Joseph Smith, November 22, 1839, in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 249.

7. Parley P. Pratt to Brigham Young, May 4, 1840, in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 249–50.

8. Brigham Young to Joseph Smith, May 7, 1840, in *History of the Church*, 4:126.

9. See Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898, Typescript*, ed. Scott G. Kenney (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1983), 1:451; see also "History of Brigham Young," *Millennial Star*, November 21, 1863, 743.

10. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 251.
11. "Book of Mormon," *Millennial Star*, February 1841, 263–64.
12. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 251–52.
13. "List of Publications," *Millennial Star*, June 1841, 32. See also "Notices," *Millennial Star*, November 1843, 112.
14. Parley Pratt to Levi Richards, June 25, 1841, Richards family letters, 1801–83, MS 1558, folder 2, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
15. "An Address to Our Patrons," *Millennial Star*, June 1844, 1–2.
16. "Editorial," *Millennial Star*, August 1844, 45.
17. See Wilford Woodruff, "To the Saints in the British Isles, Greeting," *Millennial Star*, February 1, 1846, 43.
18. See Thomas D. Brown, "Notices," *Millennial Star*, January 1, 1847, 16.
19. See "Extracts from Letters," *Millennial Star*, January 1, 1848, 7.
20. Eli B. Kelsey, "Letters to the Editor," *Millennial Star*, March 15, 1849, 92.
21. See *Millennial Star*, May 15, 1849, 160.
22. See Andrew Jensen, *Encyclopedic History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1941), 79.
23. See "D19, Books of the Latter Day Saints, 1851," in *Defending the Faith: Early Welsh Missionary Publications*, trans. and ed. Ronald D. Dennis (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2003), 2.
24. See "Notices," *Millennial Star*, April 15, 1852, 128.
25. See Hugh G. Stocks, "The Book of Mormon, 1830–1879, A Publishing History" (master's thesis, UCLA, 1979), 86.
26. See Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 24.
27. Joseph Fielding Diary, August 5, 1837, 8, typescript, M270.1 F459f, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
28. Fielding Diary, July 24, 1838, 24.
29. James Fielding to Joseph Fielding, August 15, 1838, MSS 670, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.
30. Fielding Diary, January 13, 1838, 16.
31. Fielding Diary, October 2, 8, 1838, 28.
32. Fielding Diary, November 3, 1840, 96.
33. "News from the Elders," *Millennial Star*, December 1840, 212.
34. H. Stevenson, "A Lecture on Mormonism," as quoted in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 341.
35. One writer suggests that a recent notable case of ancient documents finally found to be fraudulent had soured the British literary world, and into this skeptical setting the Book of Mormon entered; see Gordon K. Thomas, "The Book of Mormon in the English Literary Context of 1837" in *BYU Studies* 27, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 37–45.
36. For example, Robert Aitkin attacked the Book of Mormon but had never read it (see Fielding Diary, September 19, 1839, 43). Joseph Fielding told of a

woman who said she did not believe the Book of Mormon but had read only a few pages. Fielding commented, "This is the Way with many; this is their way of proving all things as the Apostle directs" (Fielding Diary, October 1, 1840, 93). James Eckersley spoke of a sect called "Primitive Methodists" one of whom "said that the Book of Mormon was trash without having read it" (Joseph Eckersley Diary, December 27, 1842, 4, MSS 2863, Special Collections, BYU).

37. Journal of Alfred Cordon Oct. 7, 1840, 80–81, MS 1831, Church Archives. See also Journal of Levi Richards, April 8, 1842, 35, MS 1558 folder 5, Church Archives.

38. See "Reply to the Athenaeum," *Millennial Star*, May 1841, 1–3. For more Spaulding Manuscript references, see "Young's Patent Composing Machine and the Family Herald," *Millennial Star*, January 1843, 157; Ronald D. Dennis, trans. and ed., *Prophet of the Jubilee* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, Religious Studies Center, 1997), 100; "A Review of the Last Lecture, 1848," in *Defending the Faith*, 9; "Reply to pamphlet, Printed in Glasgow, Entitled 'Remarks on Mormonism,'" *Millennial Star*, April 15, 1849, 116.

39. See "Reply to Mr. J. B. Rollo's; Mormonism Exposed," *Millennial Star*, July 1841, 47; and Joseph Fielding Diary, November 29, 1838, 29.

40. "Reply to the Preston Chronicle," *Millennial Star*, July 1841, 42.

41. See "Wholesale Conversion of Methodists to Infidelity," *Millennial Star*, December, 1841, 114–15.

42. See Joseph Fielding Diary, February 11, 1840, 55.

43. "Reply to Remarks on Mormonism," *Millennial Star*, March 15, 1849, 86–87.

44. See "Extracts from Letters," *Millennial Star*, January 1, 1848, 9.

45. "Elder John Taylor's Reply to Mr. J. Curran," *Millennial Star*, November 1840, 181.

46. See "The 'London Dispatch' and the Latter-day Saints," *Millennial Star*, November 1840, 188; and "A New Sect," *Millennial Star*, December 1840, 205–6.

47. See "Mormonism, A Heresy," *Millennial Star*, March 1843, 186.

48. "Difference Between the Baptists & Latter-Day Saints," *Millennial Star*, April 1841, 297.

49. "A Mormon Conventicle," *Millennial Star*, October 1, 1848, 303.

50. For more information on anti-Mormon writings in Great Britain, see Craig L. Foster, "Anti-Mormon Pamphleteering in Great Britain, 1837–1860" (masters' thesis, Brigham Young University, 1989).

51. *Hull Advertiser*, September 14, 1849, in Journal of Robert Clarkson, David Crockett, pub., 1996, 3–4, footnote 11 under the date of 1849, MS 14802, Church Archives.

52. "Letters to the Editor," *Millennial Star*, May 1, 1849, 136–37.

53. Journal of Daniel Williams, MSS 667, Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

54. Journal of Daniel Williams, MSS 667, Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

55. John Spiers Journal, April 6, 1849, microfilm, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

56. For example, see John Taylor to Leonora Taylor, January 30, 1840, in Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 363.

57. Parley P. Pratt, *Voice of Warning* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, n.d.), 66.

58. Perhaps the most accessible source of Orson Pratt's "Remarkable Visions" is in the book *Orson Pratt: Writings of an Apostle* (Salt Lake City: Mormon Heritage Publishers, 1976). For detailed overview of "Remarkable Visions," see David J. Whittaker, "Orson Pratt's [An] Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions: A Seminal Scottish Imprint in Early Mormon History," *Mormon Historical Studies*, Fall 2004, 5:79–100.

59. While copies of this pamphlet are in the Church Archives, the pamphlet was also reprinted in a book with an unusual name, *Pre-Assassination Writings of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Mormon Heritage Publishers, 1976).

60. These pamphlets were published as part of the book *Orson Pratt's Works on the Doctrines of the Gospel* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1945).

61. See "History of Joseph Smith," *Millennial Star*, August 1842, 53–54; October 1842, 100–103; November 1842, 116–20; see "A Remarkable Vision," *Millennial Star*, June 1840, 42–44; September 1840, 105–9; October 1840, 150–4; November 1840, 174–78.

62. See "American Antiquities," *Millennial Star*, February 15, 1846, 56–58; March 1, 1846, 67–71; March 15, 1846, 85–87; "Ruins in Central America," *Millennial Star*, March, 1842, 161–65; "Interesting Discoveries," *Millennial Star*, August 1840, 101–3.

63. See "The Book of Mormon," *Millennial Star*, August 1, 1845, 65–70; "Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?" *Millennial Star*, August 1848, 247–51; September 1, 1848, 257–60; September 15, 1848, 273–78; October 1, 1848, 289–93.

64. Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of the Church*, 507.

65. Dennis, *Prophet of the Jubilee*, xxxi.

66. See Autobiography of George Morris, 14, typescript, M270.1 M832, Special Collections, BYU; Diary of Job Smith, Church Archives.

67. See Diary of Appleton Milo Harmon, November 2, 1851, 210, Special Collections, BYU; Journal of John Druce, August 10, 1845, MSS 950, Special Collections, BYU; Journal James Ure, December 24, 1846, 78, MS 1826, Church Archives.

68. Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 119–120.

69. Allen, Esplin, and Whittaker, *Men with a Mission*, 120.

70. Journal of John McNeill, July 24, 1849, MS 13803, Church Archives.

71. Diary of James Palmer, January 25–26, 1841; [www.welshmormonhistory.org/viewresource.php?resourceid=2160&camefrom=](http://www.welshmormonhistory.org/viewresource.php?resourceid=2160&camefrom=) (accessed July 29, 2006).

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73. Joseph Fielding Diary, June 19, 1838, 22.

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