



EDITORIAL PROCEDURES

THE POETRY SELECTED FOR THIS COLLECTION WAS COMPOSED (WITH A FEW NOTED EXCEPTIONS) BY Latter-day Saints from 1839 to 1846. Preference was given to poetry that focused on the history and citizenry of the city of Nauvoo, especially the events surrounding the life, ministry, and death of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Beginning with poems expressing vehement feelings about the Missouri persecutions of 1838, the collection continues through the Nauvoo era, including the Saints' anticipated trek to the Rocky Mountains. Some poems address specific events or people, and others examine doctrinal teachings or simply offer prayers, lamentations, or even lighthearted humor. The collection presents a diverse group of poets ranging in abilities, yet taken together, they share a surprisingly unified voice.

The collection is primarily meant to make available original poetry from the era; however, we have attempted to provide sufficient context to enhance appreciation and understanding of the verses. Those hoping to grasp the many nuances of Latter-day Saint history would do well to supplement their reading elsewhere. Furthermore, this collection is not exhaustive; many devotional or strictly homiletic verses fell outside the narrative focus of this volume. And, despite our best efforts in searching hundreds of pertinent journals, letters, papers, and periodicals to find historically relevant poems from the era, we likely overlooked or misjudged worthy poems along the way. Due to the amount of poems we encountered, much of the work of this volume involved distinguishing poems of artistic and historical merit.

Although the volume frequently oscillates between serious poetic verses and more lighthearted lyrics, we rarely distinguish the two and frequently refer to both as “poetry” or “poems.” More discerning audiences will recognize important distinctions between poems, hymns, and songs, and must forgive us for conflating the terms. We have tried, however, to provide relevant context in editorial introductions.

When the date of a holographic poem was unknown, the earliest date of publication was used. For undated poems and hymns, we placed the poem within the chronology according to our best guess from the content, context, and, where possible, historical records. Although, as indicated, we include publication dates for most poems, the poetry is not uniformly ordered by date of publication. Since some poems address topics in the recent past or are published well after composition, we use our discretion in ordering the poetry within each chapter. For example, Parley P. Pratt’s poems written while in prison were not published until later. We have chosen to embed them into the narrative closer to when they were probably composed. Also, when nearly duplicate versions of poetry were found,

rather than select the earliest handwritten version, the first printed edition was included in the collection.

When working with unpublished manuscripts, a careful transcription was made of the holographic text to maintain the text as close to the original as possible. To a few of the unpublished and published poems we have made minor spelling and grammatical corrections to enhance readability (for example, replacing the word “tail” when “tale” was intended). Where the meaning and understanding of a poem was not significantly jeopardized by such errors, we maintained the original spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing. As commas and periods are difficult to distinguish in some holographic poetry, where there was a question, periods were placed at the end of a sentence and commas were inserted where the sentence does not end.

For editorial uniformity, capitalization and punctuation are standardized in the titles of each poem. When unpublished poems are not titled, the first line of the poem becomes the title. Where titles include subtitles, the title is printed first and the subtitle printed in a smaller font below the main title. Line endings and words broken at line endings have been standardized. Annotations for antiquated words, references to historical events and figures, and some allusions to scripture and literary works are footnoted. For poems by Eliza R. Snow, scriptural quotations and allusions are included in footnotes and were prepared in consultation with the King James Bible and the other standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but were first discovered and noted by editors Jill Mulvay Derr and Karen Lynn Davidson in their meticulously researched *Eliza R. Snow: The Complete Poetry* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2009). Short epigraphs, quotations, and dedications before poetic verses are included either before the poem or in the editorial note or footnotes. Long prefaces and numbers before stanzas, or numbers

indicating the pagination of longer poems, have largely been removed. While font has been standardized for all verses, the poems' indentation patterns have been modified from the original typeset and printing.

Philosophically, we have tried to maintain historical accuracy without compromising readability, accessibility, or comprehension. Readers looking to find direct transcriptions of published or unpublished works will want to consult the original sources, which are cited after each poem. Above all, as editors, we hope to enhance the readers' appreciation and understanding of these historically rich poems.