"Similarity of Priesthood in Masonry": The Relationship Between Freemasonry and Mormonism

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[p.2] More than twenty years ago Reed C. Durham, Jr., director of the LDS Institute of Religion adjacent to the University of Utah, delivered his presidential address at the Mormon History Association in Nauvoo, Illinois, on the topic of Mormonism and Freemasonry. He concluded his controversial remarks by stating that the Mormon temple endowment "had an immediate inspiration from Masonry," that "the Prophet first embraced Masonry and, then in the process, he modified, expanded, amplified, or glorified it," and that similarities between the two ceremonies of the LDS temple endowment and the Masonic ceremony are "so apparent and overwhelming that some dependent relationship cannot but that exist."

[p.3] He afterwards Durham was censured by Church Education System administrators and issued a public apology. He has not subsequently participated in the Mormon History Association, and his presidential address was never submitted for publication. Although unauthorized versions of his speech have been published, Durham has publicly refused further comment on the subject.

[p.4] Reaction to Durham's speech, and other works on the same topic, demonstrates that discussion of the rituals of Freemasonry and Mormonism is problematic at best. Those who deny any relationship, or argue that similarities between the two are superficial, are concerned that Joseph Smith's use of Masonic rites is inconsistent with his prophetic claims. Others concentrate on similarities to buttress claims that Smith borrowed heavily from Freemasonry without the benefit of inspiration. This "all-or-nothing" approach combines with the secrecy associated with the rituals to create a reluctance to discuss the subject in any meaningful detail.

[p.2-p.3] Even non-Mormons have noted this void in LDS history. Social historian Mark C. Carnes has observed: "The best history of the Mormon church, written by Mormons, skirts the issue. The authors refer to Smith's 'purported use of the Masonic ceremony in Mormon temple ordinances' and note that Mormons recognized that there were 'similarities as well as differences' in the rituals; there is no further elaboration." He also writes: "Whether Smith stole the temple rites from Freemasonry, as the Masons claim, or received them as revelation from God is ultimately a question of faith," but it "cannot be disputed . . . that quasi-Masonic ritual figured prominently in the lives of most Mormon men." Likewise, Paul J. Rich, a British social historian, has commented, "Historians cannot afford to overlook the Masonic ingredient, which manifests itself in surprising ways" including the "pertinent case . . . of the world-wide Mormon movement" which "has an enormous debt to Freemasonry." The failure to address this subject has led prominent British Masonic writers to claim that "Mormonism perpetuates the 'pertinent case . . . of the world-wide Mormon movement' which 'has an enormous debt to Freemasonry.'"

[p.4] The Origins of Freemasonry

Any discussion of the relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism becomes even more complex by inquiry into the origins of Freemasonry. One historian has concluded, "The origin of Freemasonry is one of the most debated, and debatable, subjects in the whole realm of historical inquiry." Another prominent Masonic commentator has concluded that the origin and development of Emblematic Freemasonry is "a great Dramatic Mystery with its origin in the clouds." To understand the origins of the Craft, one must "distinguish between the legendary history of Freemasonry and the problem of when it actually began as an organized institution." Most Freemasons in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Heber C.
Kimball, and other Mormon leaders, believed that "Operative" Masonry, or the craft of building through architecture and geometry, was as old as the world. This myth was institutionalized by James Anderson, a Presbyterian minister, who was authorized by London's Grand Masonic Lodge to write Constitutions of Freemasons in 1723, in which he traced Masonry from Adam to the building of Solomon's temple. Anderson's book gave historical legitimacy and social respectability to the Craft and perpetuated this historical myth for more than 150 years. Anderson's thesis was revalidated by William Preston, arguably "the most important thinker in eighteenth century English Freemasonry," in his Lectures used in giving the degrees of Freemasonry beginning in 1772, and by William Hutchinson in The Spirit of Masonry in 1775 which also received the imprimatur of the Grand Lodge.

Those thus initiated into Freemasonry believed they represented Adam in his "sinister desire to make advances in knowledge and virtue."37

[p.4-p.5] The first Freemasons were eventually organized in which teachings and rituals associated with Solomon's temple were practiced. Preston taught that this new form of "Speculative" Masonry began with Solomon.38 Freemasonry institutionalized this belief by teaching that the ritual, with special tokens, signs, and words identifying Masons from non-Masons, was first used in connection with the building of that structure.39 Brigham Young and other early LDS leaders similarly taught that Solomon's temple was built "for the purpose of giving the temple ritual and was only restored out that the temple rituals that then developed were lineal descendants of the architectural fraternities of antiquity, who were initiates of the old Instituted Mysteries, and that there was hence always a speculative element in Masonry.39--more recent scholarship demonstrates that it is of recent origin. Nevertheless, Masonic scholars continue to debate whether ritual Freemasonry evolved out of the operative guilds or whether the rituals were superimposed on them by outsiders.40 Those who subscribe to the direct link theory hold that "Masonry is the last development and transfiguration of some simple Mystery current among the old Building Guilds."41 Under this theory the Operative lodges--which have been traced to the sixteenth century--began to accept non-stonemasons in the 1600s (hence the term "accepted masons") who eventually "transformed them into speculative lodges."42 Others, who reject the direct link theory, argue that outsiders took control of the lodges, in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, to advance their own esoteric or philosophical system "of building a better man in a better world" by adopting the tools and function of the building trade as symbols and allegory.43 These outsiders have been identified variously as Knights Templar (assuming they still existed in the sixteenth century, which most historians doubt), Rosicrucians, and other esoteric thinkers who had knowledge of the ancients and their rituals. Masonic rituals imitate the rituals of the ancient rituals of the Ancients which were later used in giving the degrees of Freemasonry beginning in 1772, and in 1766; and in the same year an exposé entitled Uses and Abuses of Freemasonry appeared. The three-degree system was then officially recognized in the 1738 edition of Anderson's Constitutions.

[p.7] The first Freemasonry book caused some Masonic lodges to revise their now-public ritual, and in 1751 a rival Grand Lodge of "antients" was organized in London, in part because of changes in the ritual instituted after Prichard's book. Other Masonic authors published books during this period which emphasized the philosophy and practice of Masonry. Some modern scholars, relying in part on such evidences, have concluded that the development of Speculative Freemasonry was influenced more by the esoteric thinking of Hermetism and Rosicrucianism than by Operative Masonry.44 Of course, not all Masonic lodges who reject these specific combinations of intervention also recognize that a combination of evolution and intervention could have taken place.45 The "mythical" system of Speculative Freemasonry was also, in part, a reaction to Protestantism by providing a substitute for banished rituals.46

[p.6-p.7] While the origins of Speculative Freemasonry remain shrouded in mystery it is known that various Masonic lodges (although the name was not officially used until the eighteenth century) were organized before the turn of the eighteenth century, but it was not until 1717 that the Grand Lodge of London was organized (later called the Grand Lodge of England). At least seventeen Masonic documents have been located--seven of which were published "from motives of curiosity, profit, or spouse," and ten of which were prepared by Masons for personal use and to serve as aids-mémoires--which demonstrate that a Speculative Masonic ritual existed as early as the mid-seventeenth century.46 However, this ritual did not include all three degrees of Craft Masonry--Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason--or the Binarian legend until 1723 or 1725, and it was not until 1730 that the first widely-circulated Masonic exposition, which purported to reveal "the full ceremonies and catechisms for the three Craft degrees," was published by Samuel Prichard. Prichard's book, Masonry Dissected, went through numerous printings during its first few years during the late century and thereafter many other editions appeared. The three-degree system was then officially recognized in the 1738 edition of Anderson's Constitutions.

[p.8] During this second wave of Masonic exposé published in England in the 1760s William Preston, a printer, was initiated into the Craft. The next decade he developed a system of lectures to modify and standardize the lectures being given with the widely-divergent rituals being practiced in the various lodges in England.47 His book, Illustrations of Masonry, published in 1772 and in many subsequent editions, was patterned after his oral lectures.48 Other Masonic authors published books during this period which emphasized the philosophy and symbolism of Freemasonry including Calcott's Candal Disquisition in 1769, Hutchinson's Spirit of Masonry in 1775, and Smith's Lexicon and Alphabet of Freemasonry in 1783.

Although Preston was unsuccessful in his efforts to standardize the rituals--one Masonic writer has listed forty-eight separate rites or ceremonies designed to convey "Masonic ideas" developed in England and the continent during the century after the organization of the Grand Lodge, and in 1861 a French Masonic writer identified "seventy-five kinds of 'Masonry', fifty-two Rites, and thirty-four quasi-Masonic Orders"--he was widely read by
both “antients” and “moderns,” and the Grand Masters of both Grand Lodges after years of discussion eventually signed Articles of Union in 1813. These articles included creation of a Lodge of Reconciliation, recommended ceremonies and practices, and creation of the United Grand Lodge of England. Lodges of Instruction, including the Emulation Lodge of Improvement, also began to flourish after a ritual was agreed to by the Union, which attempted to unite the rituals of the various lodges. Even so, Masonic ritual never became completely uniform in either England or the United States.

Freemasonry in America

Shortly after formation of the Grand Lodge of London in 1717 English Freemasonry was introduced to North America. If the British ritual lacked uniformity, “the situation in America was even more chaotic.” In 1730 Daniel Coxe was appointed Provincial Grand Master for New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and three years later Henry Price was appointed Provincial Grand Master for New England. Although there was apparently a lodge in Philadelphia as early as 1731, where Benjamin Franklin joined the Craft and published the first American edition of Anderson’s Constitutions, it was not until 1734 that the first lodge in America was engraven on the list of English lodges (Boston Lodge No. 126) followed by the second in 1736 (Savannah/Province of Georgia Lodge No. 139).

After 1751 the competing Grand Lodge of the Antients warranted Provincial Grand Lodges in the colonies, most of which were not registered with the Grand Lodge of London. By the time the American colonies achieved independence from Great Britain, lodges were spread throughout the eastern seaboard—the Grand Lodge of London had appointed twenty-three Provincial Grand Masters and the Antients Provincial Grand Lodge in Pennsylvania had authorized fifty lodges in North America and the Caribbean. Beginning in the 1780s lodges in the United States were independent of competing Grand Lodges in the United Kingdom. The Grand Lodge of New York was formed in 1781, and by 1800 Freemasonry claimed eleven Grand Lodges, 347 subordinate lodges, and 16,000 members in the United States. By 1826 there were as many as twenty-six Grand Lodges, 3,000 constituent lodges, and between 100,000 to 150,000 members. In New York State alone, which had the largest Masonic membership, there were as many as 500 lodges and 20,000 members.

As the various lodges were organized in the United States, the forms of ritual, which passed informally from mouth to ear, also proliferated. Although William Preston was not completely successful in standardizing British ritual, it is difficult to ascertain how widely his book was read after its publication in the United States in 1804, his system of lectures was adopted and truncated by Thomas Smith Webb, an American Freemason, who published The Freemason’s Monitor in 1797. Like Preston, Webb attempted to standardize the ritual of American lodges and freely acknowledged his debt to Preston in the preface to his book. His Monitor became a “standard textbook” used by lodges in Pennsylvania, thereby spreading Preston’s method, theory, and ritual standards of Freemasonry. In America, Freemasonry’s ceremonial and secret aspects were reorganized, standardized, and systematized in the Ritual of the Royal Arch, which extended beyond the three degrees of Craft Masonry and had previously been performed in a Master Masons Lodge. Webb’s work was published in various editions until it was supplemented by works written by other lecturers and officers associated with Royal Arch Masonry, including Salem Town’s A System of Speculative Masonry in 1817 (with the approval of Dewitt Clinton who was General Grand High Priest of New York); and in 1820 by Jeremy L. Cross, author of The Mystery Monitor (who later became Grand Lecturer of the General Grand Chapter of the Royal Arch). Cross produced for the first time a series of Masonic emblems in pictorial form, several of which accompany this essay (see Illustrations 1, 2, and 6).

Despite the contributions of these books, great disparity continued to exist in the ritual. In 1810 DeWitt Clinton, governor of New York and Grand Master of New York, observed that most lodges worked their own version of the Masonic ritual and he organized a committee to attempt to standardize it. These efforts failed. “If a committee of the most eminent and ancient traditionalists had existed, no one could determine what it was.” As a result, “American ritualists who invented their own Masonic rituals or variants . . . American Freemasonry took many forms, the legitimacy of each determined by the persuasiveness of its innovator.”

Given the success and growth of Freemasonry in the United States and its association with the British Craft, it is not surprising that the American Craft had its detractors and that the first Masonic exposés published in the United States were British translations. Benjamin Franklin (before he became a Mason) reprinted The Mystery of Free-Masonry, which originally appeared in the London Daily Journal (August 15, 1730), in the Pennsylvania Gazette in December 1730. This was followed by American editions of Prichard’s (1749), Hiram’s (1768), and most significantly Jachin and Boaz which was published in twenty editions from 1794 to 1828. The first serious attack on the Craft in America occurred after the French Revolution, when a series of books, originally published in Europe, began to appear charging that a group of Bavarian Freemasons, known as the Illuminati, were prepared to take control of world government and that they had taken their first step by plotting the fall of the French Monarchy. These were soon followed by books by authors claiming the existence of American “secret conspiracies” and attacking the motives of the Craft in America. The next wave of anti-Masonic propaganda in the United States—excluding books, conventions, newspapers, and pamphlets—deprived Masonic rites, and even a political party—occurred during the 1820s. Prior to 1826 Jachin and Boaz was the most frequently consulted exposé in America, but there were others. In 1825 Richard Carlile’s Manual of Freemasonry was first published in weekly issues of The Republican in London; portions were eventually published in book form in 1831, and the full version appeared in 1843. Carlile’s work included the first exposure of some of the higher degrees of Freemasonry, and perhaps for that reason the author claimed that his “exposure of Freemasonry in 1825 led to its exposure in the United States.” In 1826 John G. Stearns published An Inquiry into the Nature and Tenets of Speculative Free-Masonry not as an exposé, but in an attempt to expose the “errors” of the Craft and was used by anti-Masons.

Although it is unclear what impact these books had on William Morgan, they must have been of some interest. Morgan, a disgruntled Mason, may not have been regularly initiated, passed, and raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. Still it seems he had been exalted, perhaps by misrepresenting himself as a Mason, into Royal Arch Masonry (which had four regular degrees and one honorary degree which were normally received after obtaining the first three degrees of “Craft” Masonry) in LeRoy, New York, on May 23, 1825. He became bitter when he was refused membership in a newly-formed Royal Arch chapter in his hometown of Batavia. During the summer of 1825 Morgan (a stone mason by trade) and David Miller, editor of the Batavia Republican
Aduentur prepared an exposé of the first three degrees of the Craft (which some Masons claimed was copied from exposés previously published in England\(^8\)), including its signs, tokens, obligations, and penalties.

\[p.13-p.14\] Incoined by Morgan of his blatant disregard of Masonic oaths never to reveal the rituals of the Craft (which he may not have taken if he had misrepresented himself as a Master Mason to the Royal Arch Chapter), local Masons first attempted to seize the manuscript and may have started a fire in Miller's office, although some Masonic observers have claimed the fire was initiated by Miller himself. When efforts failed to recover the manuscript, some Masons took it upon themselves to abduct Morgan on September 12, 1826, prior to the book's publication. Although Morgan's wife, Lucinda, later attempted to trade Morgan's manuscript for his freedom,\(^9\) Morgan was never heard from again and his book, Illustrations of Masonry,\(^10\) the same title as Preston's pre-Masonic work, was published by Miller in November.\(^11\) Morgan's abduction and the publication of his exposé provided the catalyst for an anti-Masonic fever that swept the nation, including creation of an anti-Masonic party which was a force in national politics. Morgan's Illustrations was the first American-born exposé and appeared in at least twenty editions between 1826 to 1830, the height of anti-Masonic fervor in the United States.

\[p.14\] Since Morgan's exposé was limited to the first three degrees of Freemasonry, a convention of succeeding Masons appointed the Lewiston Committee to write and publish the first exposé of the higher degrees in the United States. The primary purpose of the committee's work claims that the Craft had evolved during the last 250 years, with its rites preserving the secrets of those who preceded them. The Committee's exposition of the higher degrees is essentially a list of the degrees of the Craft, their purposes, and their initiations. The Lewiston Committee's exposition was published in six variant states in 1829. Allyn's book included several important documents of the Freemasons' desire to provide light and knowledge to permit its members to enter a celestial lodge,\(^12\) and attacked Rosicrucian and Kabbalistic elements borrowed by the Craft.\(^13\) Yet it was these very teachings of Freemasonry which attracted some key young men who would later become followers of Joseph Smith, including claims to antiquity, the tradition of a temple, international brotherhood, a lodge to bring like-minded men together, and a ritual to journey from this life to the next.

\[p.15\] Morgan's Illustrations and the Lewiston Committee's Revelation were followed by David Bernard's Light on Masonry\(^14\) in 1829 and Avery Allyn's A Ritual of Freemasonry in 1831.\(^15\) Bernard, like many prominent anti-Masons, was a second Mason and a minister. Many clergy in the first half of the nineteenth century resented the growing influence of Freemasons as their disestablished churches were losing their members. By 1829, hundreds of clergy were beginning to question the legitimacy of Freemasonry's desire to provide light and knowledge. A Ritual of Freemasonry became part of the first seceding Mason organization, the Anti-Masonic Party, founded in 1826 in New York City. Freemasonry was, according to its exponents, the only institution which had "withstood the wreck of time. All world and a spiritual journey into the "Celestial Lodge above through language and symbolism."

Masonic publications, including Masonic newspapers, transplanted English- or American-born commentaries,\(^16\) and exposés by those opposing the Craft, enabled initiates and students of Freemasonry to become familiar with the philosophy of Freemasonry and to discover a number of legends concerning temple building, ancient records, and key words preserved since the time of Adam which were intended to allow initiates access to the true knowledge of God. At least two members of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Heber C. Kimball and Willford Woodruff,\(^17\) had access to Masonic exposés. Although they were probably used in connection with both men's membership in Nauvoo Masonry, either as aides-mémoires or as texts for advanced degrees, they may also have had access prior to their later, much broader, baptism concerning similitudes made by Joseph Smith concerning similar to Mormon temple endowment. Masonic rites have evolved during the last 250 years and quasi-official Masonic publications now republish editions of British and American exposés to enable those interested to study the evolution of Masonic rites.\(^18\)

\[p.16-p.17\] These books discussed in detail the degrees and legends of the Craft, including the Craft's claim that it could trace its origins from Adam, Enoch, Moses, and Solomon, that its organization, teachings, and ritual were preserved through the building of temples, and that it taught a philosophy of life through a presentation of the world and a spiritual journey into the "Celestial Lodge above through language and symbolism." In short, Freemasonry was, according to its exponents, the only institution which had "withstood the wreck of time. All others have sunk into oblivion."\(^19\) It was the "most moral system that ever subsisted,"\(^20\) the one "founded on the Rock of Ages"\(^21\) which provided "eternal and irrevocable principles of natural religion" by which men could pattern their conduct.\(^22\) Several of these legends would have particular significance to Masons who later joined the Mormon church. These include the following:

\[p.17\] The Gold Plate of Enoch. In a portion from the Old Testament prophet Enoch was shown a triangular plate of gold which bore the true name of God.\(^23\) He made a triangular plate of gold similar to the one he had seen in his dream and engraved "indefinable characters," or true name of Deity, on it, placed it on a triangular pedestal, and deposited it in the deepest arch of an underground temple he had built. Only Enoch knew of this treasure. To insinuate that the treasure would not be lost Enoch placed a stone door over the cavern where the gold plate was hidden, built two pillars above the door, one of brass to withstand water and one of marble to withstand fire, and...
placed engravings on the pillars describing the treasure. He also placed a ball containing maps of the world and other secrets of Freemasonry.

The Restoration of the Master’s Word and Gold Plate. During reconstruction of Solomon’s temple by Hiram Abiff, a book open before her symbolizing the “unfinished state of the temple at the time of Hiram Abiff’s murder.” Following Abiff’s death, the “Master’s word” was lost, and it became necessary to use substituted words. After completion of Solomon’s temple, certain signs, tokens, penalties, and emblems were revealed which the ritual teaches are necessary to progress to a fuller knowledge of God. One of the rituals was eventually beheaded, and a pledge was taken to revenge the murderers of Hiram Abiff and those who betrayed the secrets of Freemasonry.

[p.18] The Restoration of the Master’s Word and Gold Plate. During reconstruction of Solomon’s temple by Zerubbabel, approximately 490 years after the original construction, the Master Mason’s word, which was lost when Hiram Abiff was murdered, was rediscovered in the ruins of the temple.

Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon

According to Joseph Smith’s official account, in the spring of 1820 at the age of fourteen in Palmyra, New York, he sought guidance on what church to join and received a vision of God the Father and Jesus Christ. He was told to join no church and to prepare himself to participate in the restoration of Christ’s true church. Three years later, on the evening of September 21, 1823, he received a vision from a celestial messenger named Moroni. Moroni told Joseph that he was a resurrected being who had lived many centuries earlier on the American continent and that there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the sources from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants; also that there were two stones in silver bows and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.

[p.19] Joseph received this vision three times that evening and once the next morning. Although Moroni allowed him to see the plates, sword, breastplate, and Urim and Thummim immediately, he did not allow Joseph to remove them from the hill or to translate them at that time. Instead Joseph was instructed to return to the hill one year later and continue to do so until he was ready to receive the plates. Smith followed these instructions, and Moroni eventually allowed him to take the plates four years later on September 21, 1827. Shortly thereafter, he began to translate them through the Urim and Thummim and other “seer stones.” The translation was finally published by E. B. Grandin in early 1830 under the title of the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon is a history of the inhabitants of the American continent from the time of the Tower of Babel until approximately 400 A.D. It describes the voyages of the ancestors of the native Americans from the Old World to the New; the division which occurred between the sons of Lehi (the Nephites and Lamanites) who became enemies; as well as their wars, ministries, and cultures. During the history chronicled in the Book of Mormon, two civilizations perished in large part because of the growth of “secret societies” which used secret signs and secret words (see, for example, Hel. 2:11; 6:21-24; Ether 10:33; 11:15; 22; 13:18; 14:8; 10). Recalling this history, one of the last prophets in the Book of Mormon warns future generations against “secret combinations” and their deadly consequences (Ether 8:22-26).

The Book of Mormon went on sale in Palmyra on March 26, 1830, and on April 6 Joseph Smith, Jr., and others, organized the Church of Christ. As part of his prophetic calling, Smith received and recorded revelations, which were eventually published in the Doctrine and Covenants, including the restoration of truth, ritual, and scripture which had been lost or defiled since the creation of the world. This restoration eventually included the retranslation of portions of the Bible, new scripture, either through revelation or ancient texts, and the introduction of patriarchal priesthood, plural marriage, the Kingdom of God, and temple rituals.

The William Morgan Episode and the Mormon Connection

Some observers believe that Mormonism was an “Anti-Masonic religion” because of passages in the Book of Mormon which describe secret societies and secret combinations. This claim was first made in the Painesville Telegraph and the Ohio Star in 1831 and later by Ebenezer Robinson—a Mormon convert who was a Mason in Nauvoo before leaving to become a counselor to Sidney Rigdon following Joseph’s death. Robinson wrote in his memoirs that initially Mormons were “strangely opposed secret societies” but that “a great change in sentiment seemed to take place.” One prominent Masonic writer even claims that William Morgan knew Joseph Smith, Jr., and that Morgan was “a halfway convert” to Mormonism (which is impossible since Morgan disappeared in 1826 and the Mormon church was not organized until 1830) and “had learned from him to see visions and dreams.” There is no documentation for this claim and is most likely based on the author’s attempt to further blacken Morgan’s reputation by associating him with the Mormon prophet. More recently, it has been claimed that Joseph Smith, Sr., signed a petition in the “rabidly anti-Masonic newspaper, The Seneca Farmer and Waterloo Advertiser” for the purpose of soliciting “Christian humanitarian concern” and “assistance to Morgan’s unfortunate wife.” Although Joseph Sr. may have signed the petition, it is curious that an anti-Mason would have been welcomed into the jail cell of a prominent Mason, Eli Bruce, particularly for the purpose of converting him to Mormonism.

[p.20-p.22] While it is unknown if Joseph Smith, Jr., knew Morgan, or if Smith’s father was a Mason or anti-Mason, Mormonism did count among its ranks several prominent renouncing Masons and others who were anti-Masons, who may have been attracted in part by the Book of Mormon’s warning against secret societies. These anti-Masons included Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, who participated in an anti-Masonic vigilance committee in Palmyra, New York, in 1827. William Wines Phelps, who edited two...
anti-Masonic newspapers in New York before becoming publisher of the first Mormon newspaper and a member of the Zion Stake presidency,

and George Washington Harris, who was associated with William Morgan in Batavia, New York, and who appeared at an inquest with Lucinda Morgan and identified a body which had been washed up on the shore of Lake Ontario as Morgan’s remains (although it was later determined that he and Lucinda were mistaken) before becoming a member of the Nauvoo High Council. Martin Harris joined the LDS church in 1830, Phelps in 1831, and George W. Harris in 1834. Martin acted as a scribe to Smith when he dictated his translation from the gold plates, helped finance publication of the Book of Mormon, was one of the three witnesses who testified that he saw the gold plates from which the book was translated and the angel who entrusted them to Smith, and stated in 1831 that the Book of Mormon was “the Anti- Masonick [sic] Bible.” Phelps and George Washington Harris attended a convention of seceding Masons held in LeRoy, New York, on February 19–20, 1832, and subsequent conventions in the same village on March 6–7 and July 4–5 of the same year. Among other things, these conventions confirmed that Morgan’s Illustrations of Masonry was accurate and appointed a committee to prepare a new exposé of the higher degrees (published as A Revelation of Freemasonry in 1829) and incorporated into Bernard’s Light on Masonry, appointed another committee to draft a invitation to attend another meeting in LeRoy on July 4, and listened as orators attacked the secrecy of Freemasonry as a “great danger to our republic.” During that meeting, Phelps and Harris joined Hyrum Smith, Heber C. Kimball, Newell K. Whitney and George Miller, but they did not renounce the Craft after the Morgan affair even though some were persecuted for being Masons. Kimball was driven from his home five times by mobs because he was a Mason and was prevented from being exalted into Royal Arch Masonry because the Masonic Hall was burned down by anti-Masons. More significantly, even if passages in the Book of Mormon, Book of Moses, and Doctrine and Covenants, as well as statements by Joseph Smith, occasionally betrayed an element of anti-Masonic rhetoric, there is no evidence that Martin Harris, W. W. Phelps, or George Washington Harris continued their anti-Masonic activities after joining the Mormon church or that Joseph Smith either advocated or adopted anti-masonic tenets or practices. Even Eber D. Howe, who eventually argued that there were anti-Masonic passages in the Book of Mormon, initially contradicted the claim that Mormonism was an anti-Masonic religion by noting that the Book of Mormon was published by a “masonic printing office” and that its tenets were comparable to those of Masonry.

Nevertheless, the Morgan affair, which preceded the most serious anti-Masonic campaign in American history, does have an important connection in Mormon history. In 1830 Morgan’s wife, Lucinda, married George Washington Harris, even though Morgan’s body was never found and he would not have been legally dead (penned over) at the time of his disappearance. The Masonic fraternity was relieved, writing that “anti-Masonry is no more!” and “This celebrated woman who, like Niobe, was all tears and affliction, whose hand was ever held forth to receive contributions from the sympathetic Anti-Masons, who vowed eternal widowhood, pains and penance, is married. Is married, and, tell it not in Gath, is married to a Mason!” But Harris was no longer a Mason, and in 1834 both he and Lucinda converted to Mormonism. In 1836 the couple moved to Far West, Missouri, where they lived with Joseph Smith for at least three months. They eventually followed the Saints to Nauvoo and lived across the street from Joseph and Emma. In the City of Joseph, Harris was called to serve in one Nauvoo High Council (D&C 124:13-32). Sometimes during these years, either in Illinois or Missouri, Lucinda became Joseph’s plural wife while she was still married to Harris. Although one writer has recently speculated that, assuming Morgan was still alive, “Lucinda may have had three living husbands in the early 1840s, something almost unheard of in nineteenth-century America,” Joseph, unlike Morgan and Harris, was never her legal or even acknowledged husband. Following the prophet’s death Lucinda was observed weeping over his body holding an open copy of Stearn’s anti-Masonic treatise, and shortly thereafter she was officially sealed to him as a plural wife, while Harris acted as proxy for the prophet. Within a decade she abandoned Harris, who subsequently divorced in Pottawatomie County, Iowa, in 1856, and eventually joined the Catholic Sisters of Charity rather than marry a fourth husband.

The Mormon Temple Endowment in Kirtland, Ohio

In January 1833 Joseph Smith was commanded in a revelation to build a temple to the Most High in Kirtland, Ohio (D&C 88:11-19). According to Brigham Young this was the next House of the Lord we hear of on the earth, since the days of Solomon’s Temple. Joseph not only received revelation and commandment to build a Temple, but he received a pattern also, as did Moses for the Tabernacle, and Solomon for his Temple. For without a pattern, he could not know what was wanting, having never seen one, and not having experienced its use.

Six months later Smith was rebuked for failing to commence construction of the temple where God would “endow those whom I have chosen with power from on high” (D&C 95:8). According to Heber C. Kimball, Smith met with a council of High Priests on June 23, 1834, to choose those who would be “the first elders to receive their endowment.” On February 15, 1835, Joseph read a revelation to the newly-called Quorum of Twelve Apostles to “[T]arry at Kirtland until you are endowed with power from on high.” The following October Joseph told his apostles of an awaited endowment, the next month informed them that “in order to make the
foundation of this Church complete and permanent" it would be necessary to restore "the ordinance of washing of feet," and on January 21, 1836, he introduced ritual washings and anointings, sealing and washing of the feet.

[p.26] Joseph introduced this endowment to a chosen few--members of the Twelve and others--before the temple was completed (as he would later do in Nauvoo) in the attic of the printing office. Further anointings were performed on January 28 and 30. Those anointed had their blessings sealed on February 6 and at the dedication of the temple on March 27, and in the days that followed the general priesthood and male members also received their ordinations. Following completion of these ceremonies the Mormon prophet announced that he "had now completed the organization of the Church, and we had passed through all the necessary ordinances." After this announcement, Joseph received a new revelation in which Elijah gave him the sealing power of the Melchizedek priesthood (D&C 110), which he did not reveal or use in Kirtland. Brigham Young taught that because of "mobocracy" no one received anything beyond a portion of his first endowments in the Kirtland temple, "or we might say more clearly, some of the first, or introductory, initiatory ordinances, preparatory to an endowment," and that the preparatory ordinances administered in the Kirtland temple "were but a faint similitude of the ordinances of the House of the Lord in their fullness.

Freemasonry in Nauvoo, Illinois

Following the Morgan episode, many Masonic lodges in the United States disbanded--from 1826 to 1828 the number of lodges in New York decreased from 500 to less than 100 and only about 300 active Masons remained in the country--including the Grand Lodge of Illinois, which was organized in 1805. Shortly after the arrival of Joseph Smith and the Mormons in Commerce (later Nauvoo), Hancock County, Illinois, in May 1839, the chartered lodges in the state organized a new Grand Lodge. On April 6, 1840, Abraham Jones was elected Grand Master and James Adams was elected Deputy Grand Master.

[p.27] At the time the Grand Lodge of Illinois was reorganized there were only about 2,000 Freemasons in the United States and little more than 100 in Illinois. Adams was a Mormon who had been baptized on December 4, 1836, and was acquainted with Joseph Smith. Shortly after the organization of the Grand Lodge, John C. Bennett, a former Campbellite minister who had known Sidney Rigdon and other early converts in Ohio, and a Mason who was initiated in Belmont Lodge No. 16, St. Clairsville, Belmont County, Ohio, in 1826, wrote at least three letters to Joseph Smith and Rigdon expressing his interest in joining the Saints and tendering his services to the church. At the time Bennett was Quarter Master General of Illinois and resided in Fairfield. In August 1840 Smith responded to Bennett's first two letters by informing him that he was welcome to relocate in Nauvoo. Within days Bennett wrote that he would soon leave Fairfield for Nauvoo. On September 1, 1840, Bennett arrived in Nauvoo and one month later spoke "at some length" during church general conference.

Bennett soon became a prominent member of Nauvoo society. He was appointed by Smith to help secure a city charter, which he successfully accomplished in December 1840, and in January he was publicly cited as one of the "principal men in Illinois, who have listened to the doctrines that we promulgate, have become obedient to the faith, and are rejoicing in the same." Smith then received a revelation to build a temple and Bennett was specifically enlisted to "help [Smith] in your labor in sending my word to the kings and people of the earth, and stand by ... Joseph Smith, in the hour of affliction, and its reward shall not fail, if he should receive counsel."

[p.27-28] On June 28, 1841, at the height of his influence, and while most of Quorum of Twelve Apostles were in England serving missions, Bennett addressed a communication to Bodley Lodge No. 1, Quincy, Illinois, perhaps at the urging of James Adams, asking that it recommend that a Masonic lodge be established in Nauvoo. His request was denied because Mormons were "unknown to this lodge as Masons." If Joseph Smith, Sr., was alive, his son would have waited until after his death in 1840 to authorize Bennett to seek a charter. W. W. Phelps had been excommunicated in 1838, and although he was reinstated in 1841, his influence on the issue of Freemasonry was apparently negligible. On October 15, 1841, without Quincy Lodge's recommendation, Grand Master Jonas, perhaps to obtain Mormon votes in the next election and further his own political ambitions, issued a dispensation authorizing the organization of a lodge in Nauvoo. When he issued this dispensation, Jonas apparently waved the requirement that an existing lodge make a recommendation and chose instead to do it on his own. When this dispensation was issued there were more than 100 members in the constituent lodges of Illinois. During the next two years, dispensations were authorized for four additional lodges made up almost exclusively of Mormons: Helm and Nye lodges in Nauvoo, Eagle Lodge in Kedoka, Iowa, and Rising Sun Lodge in Montrose, Iowa.

[p.28-29] On December 29, 1841, eighteen Mormon Masons met in the office of Hyrum Smith to organize the Nauvoo Lodge. George D. Miller was elected Grand Master; John D. Parker, Grand Warden; and Lucius Scovill, Junior Warden. The following day Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon petitioned for membership in the Lodge. Their petition was reported favorably by an investigative committee of the Grand Lodge on February 3, 1842. On March 15, 1842, the Nauvoo Lodge was installed by Grand Master Jonas at a grove near the temple grounds and Masons George W. Bennett and Sidney Rigdon were elected as its officers. That evening Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were initiated as Entered Apprentices in Smith's business office in the Red Brick Store. The following day Smith and Rigdon were passed as Fellow Craft and raised as Master Masons. Within five months the Nauvoo Lodge had initiated 256 candidates and raised 243 others, which "was six times as many initiations and elevations as all the other lodges in the state combined." Nether Phelps or George Washington Harris, who both lived in Nauvoo, petitioned for membership.

[p.29] Two days after the installation of Nauvoo Lodge Smith helped to organize the Female Relief Society in the "Lodge Room" at the Red Brick Store. The prophet gave instructions concerning "the Elect Lady"--who is discussed in John 2, was the name of a degree in a French Adoptive Rite which admitted women as early as 1774, and would be used as the name of the fifth degree in the adoptive ritual of Eastern Star in 1868--"and told the women that revelations concerning the title were fulfilled with the appointment of his wife Emma as society president. In subsequent Relief Society meetings additional Masonic terms were used, including references to the society as an "Institution" on March 24, statements by the prophet on March 30 that "the Society go into close examination of every candidate--that they were going too fast--that the Society should grow up by degrees"; that "the Society should move according to the ancient Priesthood ..." said he was going to make this Society a kingdom
of priests as in Enoch’s day—as in Paul’s day”; and his exhortation that the sisters be “sufficiently skill’d in Masonry as to keep a secret” and to be “good Masons.”

[p.30] Shortly after organization of the Nauvoo Lodge and the Female Relief Society, John C. Bennett withdrew from the church and resigned as mayor of Nauvoo. After falling into disfavor, Bennett asked to meet with Hyrum Smith, as representative of the Masonic fraternity, and with Joseph Smith, as church representative, to seek forgiveness. During the meeting Bennett reportedly acknowledged that Joseph had never taught “fornication and adultery—or polygamy.” When Mormons later discovered that Bennett had been discharged from a Masonic lodge in Ohio, he was expelled from Nauvoo Lodge, and because of his ongoing dispute with Joseph and Hyrum he was disfranchised and later excommunicated from the church.

[p.30] Following expulsion from the church, Bennett published a series of articles in the Sangamo Journal (Springfield, Illinois) in which he attacked the church and its doctrines and accused it of creating a ritual similar to the rites of Freemasonry. A book, History of the Saints, which incorporated many of these articles, was published shortly thereafter in Boston. Joseph Smith printed a statement of “Important Facts Relative to the Conduct and Character of John C. Bennett. . . . That the Honorable Part of the Community May be Aware of his Proceedings . . . as an Imposter and Base Adulterer.”

[p.30] The same time Bodley Lodge No. 1, citing alleged irregularities, asked Grand Master Jonas to suspend the dispensation of Nauvoo Lodge until the next annual communication of the Grand Lodge in October. The Lodge also requested that the Grand Lodge investigate the “manner the officers of the Nauvoo Lodge, U.D. were installed” and by what authority the Grand Masters purported to initiate, pass and raise Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon “at one and the same time.” (It is unlikely that there is a connection between Bodley Lodge’s request and Bennett’s allegations concerning a new Mormon ritual.) On August 11, 1842, the Nauvoo Lodge was suspended by the Grand Lodge of Illinois until the annual communication with the Grand Lodge because of alleged irregularities. At the time of its suspension, the Nauvoo Lodge had initiated 286 as Masons, 256 of whom had been raised as Master Masons. The following October the Grand Lodge voted to investigate irregularities by the Nauvoo Lodge and report its findings to the Grand Master. During the same meeting it was reported that there were 480 Masons in twelve lodges in Illinois. Of that number, the Nauvoo Lodge accounted for 253.

[p.30-p.31] Following receipt of this investigation, Grand Master Helm lifted the suspension and allowed the Nauvoo Lodge to resume labor. The committee of investigation found that although irregularities had occurred—“the practice of botilling for more than one applicant at one and the same time” and “an applicant of at least three years standing was admitted on a promise of reformation and restitution”—work should be allowed to commence after the lodge is reminded of these irregularities and admonished not to continue them. No mention was made of Bennett’s allegations of a clandestine ritual.

[p.31] After the renewal of Nauvoo Lodge’s dispensation other dispensations were granted by the Grand Master for Helm Lodge and Nye Lodge (both in Nauvoo) and Eagle Lodge (in Koolau), all of which were made up almost entirely of Mormons. In addition, Worshipful Master Hyrum Smith laid the cornerstone for a Masonic temple in Nauvoo. The Grand Lodge also granted a charter to Rising Sun Lodge in Montrose. The Grand Lodge reported that Rising Sun Lodge had forty-five members, out of a total of 439 among all lodges. Significantly, all of those chartered after Joseph Smith introduced the temple endowment to the “Holy Order.” Regardless of the circumstances, Masons were present in Nauvoo Lodge and report its findings to the Grand Master.

[p.31] Despite suspension of these dispensations, which apparently had nothing to do with Joseph Smith’s introduction of the temple endowment, the lodges in Nauvoo continued to do work, claiming that they had not received proper notice of the withdrawal of their dispensations. In short the Mormon lodges refused to acknowledge the legitimacy, if not the authority, of the Grand Lodge to defrock them. Significantly, it took less than one year to construct the Masonic Hall, which was completed and dedicated on April 5, 1844. Joseph Smith attended and spoke at the dedication, which was presided over by Worshipful Master Hyrum Smith, and the Masonic address was delivered by Erastus Snow. As many as 550 Masons attended the ceremony, and at least one lodge in Illinois investigated members who attended because of their association with “dissolute Masons.” During the ceremony “the subject of the oppression and ill treatment of the Grand Lodge was spoken of.” This referred to the revocation of dispensations and suspension of a charter for the five Mormon lodges and perhaps to the failed efforts of George Watt and Horace Eldredge, who were both in attendance at the dedication, to obtain new dispensations. Thus Mormons were now recognized lodges. Less than three months after dedication of the Masonic Hall, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were assassinated by a mob in Carthage, Illinois, which included a number of Freemasons. Shortly after his death it was reported that Joseph had given the Masonic distress call before falling through the jail window.

[p.32] In October 1844 the Grand Lodge of Illinois severed all relations with Nauvoo, Helm, and Nye lodges because they refused to surrender their dispensations to Grand Lodge representatives. The Grand Lodge also voted to declare the work of these lodges clandestine, suspended their members from the privileges of Masonry, and appointed a committee to determine if the dispensation of Eagle Lodge should be renewed. One year later the Grand Lodge failed to renew the dispensation of Eagle Lodge.

[p.32-p.33] Despite Mormon suspicions that their Masonic brethren had helped plan and participated in the murders, Hyrum and Joseph, and the withdrawal of recognition by the Grand Lodge, Nauvoo Lodge continued to initiate new members. At the time of Joseph’s assassination there were approximately 700 Master Masons listed in the minute book of the lodge. By the end of 1845 there were over 1,000 Master Masons listed by lodge which indicates that lodge work continued at nearly the same pace during the one and one half years after the Smiths’ death as it did during the previous two and one half years. Reed C. Durham counted a total of 3,306 Master Masons in the five Mormon lodges. Not until the Nauvoo temple opened in the midst of the chaos associated with the evacuation of the city did lodge work cease.
The Mormon Temple Endowment in Nauvoo, Illinois

Although Mormon Masons continued to do lodge work after their lodges were disorganized in Nauvoo, their primary goal was to complete the temple they had been commanded to build (D&C 124:37). During the general church conference which began the day after dedication of the Masonic temple, both Hyrum Smith, who had presided over the dedication, and Brigham Young urged church members to “build up the Temple” where they would “get your washings, anointings, and endowments.”

Hyrum even said, “I cannot make a comparison between the House of God and anything now in existence. Great things are to grow out of that house. There is a great and mighty power to grow out of it. There is an endowment. Knowledge is power. We want knowledge.” He also informed the sisters that they “shall have a seat in that house” and that “We are designated by the All-seeing Eye to do good, not to stoop to anything low.”

Within this temple the full endowment—which would be compared to the degrees of Freemasonry and provide Mormonism with a ritual in an otherwise ritual-less church—would be performed. This new ceremony was so important that Joseph Smith revealed it to a select few (just as he had done with the Kirtland endowment) before the temple was completed. On May 3, 1842, Smith asked Lucius Scoville (who also directed construction of the Masonic Hall) and several others “to work and fit up the upper rooms of Smith’s red brick store—which Smith and Rigdon had been initiated, as Entered Apprentices, passed as Fellow Craft, and raised as Master Masons; six weeks earlier—“preparatory to giving endowments to a few Elders.” The next day Smith initiated and “endowed” nine men—Hyrum Smith, church patriarch and first counselor; William Law, second counselor; apostles Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards; as well as Newell K. Whitney (Ward Bishop), George Miller (Master of Nauvoo Lodge), William Marks (Nauvoo Stake President), and James Adams (Deputy Grand Master of Grand Lodge of Illinois), all of whom were Masons—into a “Quorum of the Anointed” or “Holy Order.”

These nine men were anointed as kings and priests and were given keys pertaining to the Aaronic priesthood and the holiest order of the Melchizedek priesthood and the fullness of blessings prepared for the Church of the First Born. On May 5 Joseph received his endowment. The giving of endowments was repeated on May 26 and 28.

It may not be coincidental that the Holy Order consisted of nine men. A Royal Arch Chapter, also known as the Holy Order of the Royal Arch, consists of at least nine Master Masons and was the next logical step in Freemasonry for those who had advanced to the third degree. If a Master Mason wished to progress further, he would petition for membership in a Royal Arch Chapter, which, after the organization of the General Grand Council in January 1798, was independent from a Master Mason’s lodge. Although a comparatively small proportion of Masons in Joseph Smith’s time advanced beyond the third degree, the Royal Arch degree was the logical sequence in the Hiramic legend set forth in the Third or Master Mason degree because it complemented the “loss” theme (loss of the Master Masons or Ineffable Word) and provided a link between construction of the first temple of Solomon and the second (by Zerubbabel).

When the Craft adopted the Hiramic legend (between 1723-25) it sowed the seeds for expanding the ritual to provide for the recovery of the Master’s word, which is accomplished in the Royal Arch Degree. The Master’s word is lost in the third degree after the death of Hiram Abiff, “until time or circumstances shall restore the Master’s word,” and is restored in the Royal Arch Degree. The Master’s word is restored, replacing the substituted words given in the third degree. Because the Royal Arch degree—the seventh degree of Freemasonry and the “principal of the four degrees conferred by a Royal Arch chapter; as the third degree is the chiefest in the lodge of master Masons,” restores lost secrets, it has been described as “indescribably more august, sublime, and important than all other degrees, and is the summit and perfection of ancient Masonry.”

The original Royal Arch degree was developed in the mid-eighteenth century, and its rituals were performed in unrecognized separate chapters until the Antients accepted it as a fourth degree. Although the competing Grand Lodge of the moderns did not initially recognize it, Royal Arch was vindicated in 1813 when the United Grand Lodge—which united the antients and moderns—defined “Pure Antient Masonry” as Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason, including the Order of the Holy Royal Arch. Most Masons during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries believed that “ancient Masonry closes with the degree of royal arch” and that all subsequent degrees were of modern origin “and of little importance.” At the time Joseph Smith was initiated into Freemasonry, the first Royal Arch Chapter in Illinois (Springfield Chapter No. 1) had been granted a dispensation (July 20, 1841) and a charter (September 17, 1841). The degrees of the Holy Royal Arch were generally known to interested Masons through exposés published by the Lewiston Committee and by Bernard; it is also likely that James Adams, a Mormon and a Mason (Past Master of Springfield Lodge No. 4 [1839] and Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois [1840-41]) was familiar with the ritual since he lived in Springfield—which held the only Royal Arch Chapter in Illinois—until his death on August 8, 1843. Members of a Royal Arch Chapter could receive four degrees: Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch Mason. The honorary degree—Anointed Order of High Priesthood—was not conferred on Masons until after the temple was completed. According to William Morgan, who was indisputably a Royal Arch Mason, it was “not an uncommon thing, by any means, for a chapter to confer all four degrees in one night.”

A Royal Arch Chapter has nine officers. The presiding officers, or Grand Council, consist of a High Priest, King, and Scribe (or Prophet) (see Illustration 1). The High Priest is the first officer of a Chapter and wears clothing similar to those of a Hebrew priest, including a miter, upon which is inscribed “HOLINESS TO THE LORD,” the motto of Royal Arch Masons to “be engrafted upon all our thoughts, words, and actions.” He also wears’ the robe of a high priest, the sash, a mace or scepter, and a breastplate. Under Thummim was placed in a High Priest’s breastplate to facilitate the giving of oracular answers. The High Priest, whose honorary title is Most Excellent, officiates in the “Tabernacle” with four veils through which an initiate must pass before being admitted into the Holy of Holies.

The fifth and honorary degree of a Royal Arch Chapter, the Anointed Order of the High Priesthood, is also known as the Holy Order of High Priesthood. It is only conferred upon past High Priests who have ruled over a Royal Arch Chapter. It was created by Thomas Smith Webb in 1798 (who incorporated pre-existing rituals including those of the Knight Templars) and was adopted by the General Grand Chapter on January 10, 1799.
In this degree the jewel of a past High Priest is a plate of gold in a triple triangle. The ritual, when "performed in ample form" requires the "assistance of at least nine High Priests, who have received it" and is dedicated to and includes a history of the Old Testament patriarch Melchizedek. It also includes a consecration and anointing, and candidates are said to be "anointed into the Holy Order of the High Priesthood."

(p.38-p.40) Just as Masonic ritual was undergoing growth, expansion, and revision during the century which preceded the organization of the LDS church, early Mormon leaders taught that Joseph Smith expanded, revised, and restored the rituals of Freemasonry, which most church leaders believed had originated in Solomon's temple but had been corrupted during the Great Apostasy. At the dedication of the St. George temple in 1877 Brigham Young taught that although "Solomon built a Temple for the purpose of giving endowments" few if any were given because "one of the high priests was murdered by wicked and corrupt men... because he would not reveal those things appertaining to the Priesthood that were forbidden him to reveal until he came to the proper place." With the death of this "high priest" an important part of the ritual was lost. Although the Royal Arch degree is similar to the first three degrees—it includes signs, tokens, penalties, and key words—it is also distinct since the Master Mason's word is restored and a candidate passes through four veils to be "admitted within the veil of God's presence, where they will become kings and priests before the throne of his glory for ever and ever." (See Illustration 2.) Furthermore, a Royal Arch Mason is "exalted" and a crown is placed on his head. Those who have been exalted are eligible to be consecrated and anointed in the Holy Order of the High Priesthood. The Mormon endowment, like the Royal Arch, restored the "key word" and temple ritual during construction of the next temple (Nauvoo) and enabled initiates to pass through a veil and become exalted as kings.

(p.40-p.41) But if the rituals of Masonry were the starting point, and the Red Brick Store became the Tabernacle before completion of the Temple, Joseph was also instrumental in effecting important changes. On September 29, 1843, wives of men who had previously been initiated into the Holy Order began to be endowed, anointed, and sealed to their husbands in the "New and Everlasting Covenant" of eternal marriage. This was a startling development since women had not previously participated in the Holy Order (although the Female Relief Society was organized within days of the Nauvoo Lodge) and female participation in the rituals of regular Freemasonry was (and is) prohibited. Nevertheless, some American and British Masons favored female participation and French Masonry officially recognized female Lodges of Adoption in 1774. Like the French Lodges of Adoption—which are called "Institutions"; whose lodge rooms are called "Eden"; and whose "companion" ritual is organized around the "Garden of Eden" legend, including the temptation of Eve with an apple plucked and presented—women were initiated into the Masonic-like ritual of the Holy Order and, like a Royal Arch Chapter—whose members are referred to as "companions" rather than "brother"—Joseph (or his wife Emma) was referred to as "companion." The inclusion of women in these sacred ordinances, previously reserved for men, may have had as much to do with ritually teaching both men and women the virtue of silence regarding the still-secret practice of plural marriage (which was introduced to a small circle of Joseph's most trusted friends as early as 1841) as it did with ritually securing patriarchal authority and obedience over female participants.

(p.41-p.42) In 1843 Joseph also introduced a final ritual, the "highest and holiest order of the priesthood," or "second anointing." Although recipients of the endowment and second anointing were gradually expanded to include about 100 people prior to Joseph's death, it was not until September 10, 1845, after the Nauvoo temple was sufficiently complete to accommodate large audiences, that all worthy Latter-day Saints were invited to participate in the endowment. Temple work was also done vicariously for the dead, including baptisms, washings, anointings, and sealings. The one hundred persons who received their endowments prior to September 1845 increased to more than 1,000 by the end of that year; and by May 1846, when the temple was dedicated and then abandoned, more than 5,634 had received their endowments. Although the term "Holy Order" still occasionally referred to endowments after construction of the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, its status as an "order" or "quorum" declined at the same time as its exclusivity.

Official Descriptions of the Temple Endowment

Since the introduction of the endowment in 1842, no official text of the ceremony has been released by the LDS church. This has given more credibility to unauthorized exposés than would otherwise be the case. The unintiated,
however, have not relied exclusively on exposés by ex-Mormons for information about the endowment. There are contemporary accounts of the ceremony recorded in private journals, and from time to time church leaders have commented on its content and meaning. These statements provide a general outline of the endowment ceremony and some idea of changes which have been introduced from 1842 to the present.

Although church leaders teach that Joseph Smith "himself organized every endowment in our church and revealed the same to the Church," most observers agree that significant changes have been introduced during the past 150 years. Like the rites of Freemasonry, the Mormon temple endowment ceremony has undergone modifications and revisions. Joseph Smith instructed Brigham Young to develop the ceremony after its initial introduction in the Red Brick Store. John Hyde wrote that the ceremony in early territorial Utah was "being constantly amended and corrected," and that Heber C. Kimball would say, "We will get it perfect by and bye." Walford Woodruff recorded in 1877 that Brigham Young asked that he and Brigham Young, Jr., "write out the endowments from Beginning to End, and that at the conclusion of this process "President Young has been laboring all winter to get up a perfect form of endowments as far as possible." Sixteen years later Woodruff met with the Quorum of Twelve and the four temple presidents to "harmonize" the various ceremonies. In the twentieth century other changes have been reported. However, these have not significantly altered the descriptive nucleus of the endowment by church authorities.

Latter-day prophets teach that the endowment provides "knowledge of all that affects our salvation and exaltation in His Kingdom" and consists of a "step-by-step ascent into the eternal Presence" during which "certain special, spiritual blessings are given to worthy and faithful saints" who "are endowed with power from on high and are thereby "enabled to secure the fullness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn" in the celestial kingdom. The structure of the endowment consists of washings and anointings (initiatory or preparatory ordinances first given in the Kirtland Temple), obtaining a garment, receiving a new name or key-word, and a creation drama wherein one receives instruction, signs, tokens, obligations, and (prior to April 1990) penalties.

Washings and Anointings

Joseph Smith told the Quorum of Twelve Apostles of an awaited endowment in October 1835. These initiatory rites—ritual washings and anointings—were introduced in the Kirtland temple on January 21, 1836. One month later, after the introduction of washing the feet, Smith announced that he had now completed the organization of the Church, and we had passed through all the necessary ceremonies. Seventeen years later Brigham Young taught that "Those first elders . . . received a portion of their first endowments, or we might say more clearly, some of the first, or introductory, or initiatory ordinances, preparatory to an endowment." He also stated that many of those who received these initiatory ordinances eventually apostatized because they thought that they had received all necessary ordinances but that more came in Nauvoo.

After being forced to abandon Kirtland and settlements in Missouri, Joseph Smith received a revelation on January 19, 1841, about "the Temple ritual to the world as fully as it has ever been described to the public," in which he states that the washings and anointings (initiatory or preparatory ordinances first given in the Kirtland Temple), obtaining a garment, receiving a new name or key-word, and a creation drama wherein one receives instruction, signs, tokens, obligations, and (prior to April 1990) penalties.

The Garment

According to Elder Boyd K. Packer, of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, "The ordinances of washing and anointing are referred to often in the temple as initiatory ordinances. . . . In connection with these ordinances, in the temple, you will be officially clothed in the garment and promised marvelous blessings in connection with it." The New Name or Key-Word

On April 2, 1843, Joseph Smith gave the following instructions concerning a "white stone" mentioned in Revelation 2:17: "And a white stone is given to each of those who come unto the celestial kingdom, whereon is inscribed the new name written, which no man knoweth save that he that receiveth it. The new name is the key-word" (D&C 130:11). Charles C. Rich, of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, publicly explained in February 1878 that "Joseph tells us that this new name is a key-word, which can only be obtained through the endowments. This is one of the keys and blessings that will be bestowed upon the Saints in these last days, for which we should be very thankful." Creation Drama

Heber C. Kimball, in an address on 27 June 1863, spoke about "Father Adam" and the Garden of Eden: "I might say much more upon this subject, but I will ask, has it not been imitated before you in your holy endowments so that you might understand how things were in the beginning of creation and cultivation of this earth?" This instruction was explained in greater detail by James E. Talmage in a work approved for publication by the church authorities in 1912:

The temple endowment, as administered in modern temples, comprises instruction relating to the significance and sequence of past dispensations, and the importance of the present as the greatest and grandest era in human history. This course of instruction includes a recital of the most prominent events of the creative period, the condition of our appearance in the Garden of Eden, their disobedience and consequent expulsion from that blissful abode, their condition in the lone and dreary world when doomed to live by labor and sweat, the plan of redemption by which the great transgression may be atoned, the period of the great apostasy, the restoration of the Gospel with all its ancient powers and privileges, the absolute and indispensable condition of personal purity and devotion to the right in the present life, and a strict compliance with Gospel requirements. As will be shown, the temples erected by the Latter-day Saints provide for the giving of these instructions in separate rooms, each devoted to a particular part of the course, and by this provision it is possible to have several classes under instruction at one time.
Signs and Tokens

On May 1, 1842, Joseph Smith preached a sermon in which he taught that there are “certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is opened…” The text of this ceremony was published by Elder Orson Pratt, of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, in The Seer in 1853. Pratt was subsequently censured by Brigham Young for doing so.

Exposés of the Temple Endowment

Shortly after the initiation of the “Holy Order” in 1842, John C. Bennett published his History of the Saints in which he claimed to reveal the endowment which he called Order Lodge. Since Bennett was not initiated into the Holy Order—he had previously fallen into disfavor with the Mormon hierarchy—his exposé is not a first-hand account of the ceremony introduced by Joseph Smith on May 4. Bennett’s activities suggest that he was prone to exaggeration and misrepresentation, and there is reason to doubt the accuracy of his account of the endowment ceremonies. His exposé includes a description of the initiatory rites which is not consistent with later accounts written after the endowment was given in the Nauvoo temple beginning in December 1845. Subsequent exposés do not accord with his description of candidates being “blindfolded” and “stripped naked” which is more descriptive of Masonic rituals. His account is, however, consistent with many subsequent references to oaths, covenants, and penalties, including the claim that an oath existed to “overturn the Constitution of the United States.”

Obligations and Penalties

James Talmage also described the portion of the endowment involving obligations:

“The ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part of the individual, such as covenant and promise to observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the race; to maintain devotion to the cause of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the great preparation that the earth may be made ready to receive her King—the Lord Jesus Christ. With the taking of each covenant and the assuming of each obligation, a promised blessing is pronounced, contingent upon the faithful observance of the conditions.”

In 1856 Brigham Young explained the significance of the signs and tokens received in the endowment:

“Let me give you the definition of [the endowment] in brief. Your endowment is to receive all of those ordinances in the House of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to do the very things the angels do. You are enabled to give the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltations in spite of earth and hell.”

Sealing

Elder Packer noted that in addition to the endowment, marriage sealings are performed in the temple which bind together for eternity whole families. The text of this ceremony was published by Elder Orson Pratt, of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, in The Seer in 1853. Pratt was subsequently censured by Brigham Young for doing so.

Bruce R. McConkie added that this “education relative to the Lord’s purposes and plans in the creation and peopling of the earth” relates to “the things that must be done by man in order to gain exaltation in the world to come.”

Signs and Tokens

On May 1, 1842, Joseph Smith preached a sermon in which he taught that there are “certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is opened…” The text of this ceremony was published by Elder Orson Pratt, of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, in The Seer in 1853. Pratt was subsequently censured by Brigham Young for doing so.

Exposés of the Temple Endowment

Shortly after the initiation of the “Holy Order” in 1842, John C. Bennett published his History of the Saints in which he claimed to reveal the endowment which he called Order Lodge. Since Bennett was not initiated into the Holy Order—he had previously fallen into disfavor with the Mormon hierarchy—his exposé is not a first-hand account of the ceremony introduced by Joseph Smith on May 4. Bennett’s activities suggest that he was prone to exaggeration and misrepresentation, and there is reason to doubt the accuracy of his account of the endowment ceremonies. His exposé includes a description of the initiatory rites which is not consistent with later accounts written after the endowment was given in the Nauvoo temple beginning in December 1845. Subsequent exposés do not accord with his description of candidates being “blindfolded” and “stripped naked” which is more descriptive of Masonic rituals. His account is, however, consistent with many subsequent references to oaths, covenants, and penalties, including the claim that an oath existed to “overturn the Constitution of the United States,” and that there were special Priesthood garments. Although he hinted about other portions of the ritual not included in his exposé, he failed to provide details.

Bennett’s exposé also suggests a Masonic connection: he claims that Joseph Smith “pretends that God has revealed to him the real Master’s word which is here given to the candidate,” and that “Order Lodge” was part of Joseph’s “mission for the restoration of the ancient order of things.” A plate in the book (see Illustration 3)—which portrays the presiding officers of the Lodge, Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and George Miller, wearing miter, a Masonic symbol of immortality, hanging on the walls; and lodge furniture located where it would be in a Masonic lodge—more accurately depicts a Master Masons lodge or Royal Arch Chapter and is similar to illustrations published in Masonic exposés portraying candidates (who are blindfolded but only stripped to the waist) taking the oaths of an Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason.

Bennett may have been superficially familiar with aspects of the new ceremony, either because of his membership in Nauvoo Lodge, his relationship with Joseph Smith when the endowment was revealed, or from rumors. After leaving Nauvoo, he claimed that in April 1841 Smith had commissioned him to establish a Masonic-like “Order of the Illuminati” in the event of Smith’s death. Bennett organized the Illuminati in 1846 after joining Mormon dissident James Strang in Voree, Wisconsin. Strang became the Imperial Primate and Bennett the General-in-Chief. Bennett was probably familiar with Robison’s Proofs of a Conspiracy and other anti-Masonic sources which claimed, incorrectly, that the “Illuminati” was a secret circle which controlled Freemasonry and influenced international politics. Although the Illuminati—a group of German Masons—did have some influence in eighteenth-century German politics, they did not exist in England or the United States.
[p.50] Bennett’s exposé of the Female Relief Society, which he called the “Mormon Seraglio,” is even more dubious. Although Joseph Smith may have been flirting with the idea of establishing a “female lodge” when he organized the Relief Society—a claim that Bennett first made in the Louisville Journal in July 1842—it strains credibility to believe that an elaborate ceremony with three degrees (“The Cyprian Saints,” “The Chambered Sisters of Charity,” and “The Consecrators of the Cloister, or Cloistered Saints”) with a marriage ceremony to legitimize “secret, spiritual wives” was conducted by a society ruled by the “Elect Lady.”

Not until December 1845, when knowledge of the endowment expanded beyond a tightly-knit circle of trusted church authorities and their wives to include most worthy members of the general church population, were additional exposés published. Scores of exposés of the “endowment” have since been published. In contrast very little information concerning the second anointing is available since it has never been extended to general church membership.

Because exposés written by endowed men and women were sometimes inconsistent and contradictory, one wonders if the authors purposely distorted them to slander the church, if their memories were bad (they were usually based on a single experience in the temple), or if the ceremonies were still being developed. Regardless of the accuracy of these exposés, the endowment was one of the aspects of Mormonism which troubled those who had withdrawn from the church. Even the publishers of the Nauvoo Expositor, which included William Law, a charter member of the Holy Order, complained in 1844 that they considered “all secret societies, and combinations under penal oaths and obligations, (professing to be organized for religious purposes) to be anti-Christian, hypocritical and corrupt.” Although it is unclear whether this complaint was directed specifically at the endowment, the publishers made no attempt to expose its contents.

The first exposé of the endowment, introduced in the Nauvoo temple on December 10, 1845, appeared four months later in the April 15, 1846, issue of The Warsaw Signal. A woman who signed her name “Emeline” wrote to the newspaper in response to an article which had been published on February 18 which charged that participants in the endowment were “in a state of nudity throughout the ceremony,” a claim which Bennett had made four years earlier. Although Emeline admitted that she was breaking oaths and covenants she had made in the temple by revealing the contents of the ritual, she felt justified because she believed church authorities were “the most debased wretches” and the that endowment was “nothing less than fearful blasphemy.” Nevertheless, she denied that the ceremony took place in a state of nudity, except for an initial robing ceremony during which only women were present and stated that no indecency took place between men and women since they were admitted separately. Although she admitted that she did not remember many of the details of the ceremony, she described the rooms, some of the characters, as well as the fact that there were oaths, obligations, and penalties.

Two additional exposés, more detailed than Emeline’s, were published during the next two years by persons who had already received their endowments in the Nauvoo temple. The first of these was written by Increase McGee Van Dusen in 1847. Van Dusen and his wife Marie were endowed on January 29, 1846, as a reward for working on the Nauvoo temple for several years. By the time their exposé was written, Increase and Marie, who appeared as co-authors in all but the first edition, had left Nauvoo and joined James J. Strang in Voree, Wisconsin. Like other followers of Strang—who, in addition to Bennett, included two original members of the Holy Order, William Marks and George Miller; and two former apostles, William Smith and John Page—the Van Dusens claimed to believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet and included an account of Smith’s first vision in various editions of their exposé, but (not knowing what Marks and Miller knew) they asserted that the endowment had been introduced by the “Imposter B. Young.” Writing in the first person, they described the rooms and substance of the endowment, which they said had seven degrees (the number of degrees in Craft and Royal Arch Masonry were described publicly as the seven degrees of Freemasonry), as well as some of the oaths, tokens, signs, and penalties. Eventually twenty-two editions of their exposé were published from 1847 to 1864, each of which became increasingly detailed and lurid. It was quoted in many subsequent anti-Mormon writings, including an
early tract, published in London in 1849. It was also used as a prototype for fraudulent expositions, including one by Thomas White in 1849 who repudiated the claim that there were seven degrees in the endowment and added that the author witnessed Joseph Smith participating in the endowment performed in the Nauvoo temple. White also included "an account of the frauds practiced by Matthias the Prophet."342

[p.53] One year after the first publication of the Van Dusen exposé, a single woman, Catherine Lewis, wrote a slightly more detailed description of the ceremony,343 but it was published in only two editions and was not as widely distributed as the Van Dusen account. Since Lewis wrote from the perspective of an unmarried woman, her narrative reflects more clearly the link between the practice of "plurality of wives" and the endowment. According to Lewis, she was approached several times before going to the temple by Heber C. Kimball and his wife about being polygamously married to the apostle in the temple. She also noted that men and women went through the ceremony as companions and that one was not considered to have received the "full endowment" unless a woman was sealed to a man as her husband and families were sealed to apostles as children. Ironically, Lewis relied on Bennett, whom she regards as an innocent victim like herself, for the portion of the ceremony she did not complete.

The Bennett, "Emeline," Van Dusen, and Lewis accounts are apparently the only expositions of the Nauvoo temple endowment published by persons who did not emigrate to Utah, even though 5,669 persons were endowed in Nauvoo.344

[p.53-p.54] With one exception, there is no evidence that the endowment ceremony was performed after Mormons left Nauvoo until 1852 when such rites were occasionally given in the old Council House. Three years later the Mormons constructed an Endowment House in Salt Lake City until a new temple could be completed.345 Before this, Brigham Young taught that "many received a small portion of their endowment in Nauvoo . . . we know of no one who received it in its fullness."346 Even after the completion of the Endowment House, certain ceremonies that constituted the endowment work for the dead--could not be performed until the completion of the temple.347 But endowments for the living recommenced; 54,170 persons were endowed between 1852-84.348

[p.54] Prior to completion of the Endowment House, Brigham Young complained that many Mormons asked for their endowment only "To go to California, and reveal everything he can, and stir up wickedness, and prepare himself for hell."349 Only a few of these endowed in Utah did as Brigham had predicted. Some of the most widely published expositions were written by disgruntled Mormons who left the church and published books about their experience away from Utah, including the exposés of the endowment ceremony. Smith's account--authored by Nelson Winch Green, who claimed his wife was "a member of forty, Quorum of Seventies"; Fanny Stenhouse (1874), wife of T. B. H. Stenhouse, a prominent elder and publisher350; and Ann Eliza Young (1875), the estranged wife of Brigham Young.351 Smith's account--authored by Nelson Winch Green (which contained a preface by Harriet Beecher Stowe and an endowment exposé), she also included "an account of the frauds practiced by Matthias the Prophet."342

[p.54-p.55] In both the French and Italian editions of Burton's book the word "endowment" was mistranslated as "admission to the sect" which was confused with a type of baptism or confirmation. This mistranslation may have occurred because Remy originally referred to the endowment as "a species of ordination or initiation for both sexes."352 As a result, the word "endowment" was mistranslated as "admission to the sect," the engraving patterned after Bennett's plate in Bennett's book, including one depicting "Order Lodge." That plate was inspired in part by engravings which had appeared in anti-Masonic almanacs depicting a candidate "receiving his obligation; or the true form of initiatin g a member to the mysteries and secrets of Freemasonry."353 (See Illustration 4.) Because the word "endowment" was mistranslated as "admission to the sect," the engraving patterned after Bennett's plate of "Order Lodge" was captioned "The Baptism of Mormons." The same engraving--but not Hyde's exposé--also appeared in the 1879 Italian translation of Baron von Hubner's travel account with the same misleading caption.

[p.55] One year after the first publication of the Van Dusen exposé, a single woman, Catherine Lewis, wrote a book recounting her visit to Utah in 1857 by a British convert, John Hyde, Jr., who received his endowment in February 1854.345 Although Hyde's exposé contains less detail than either Van Dusen or Lewis, it was only published in two editions, it was read and used by a number of European travelers who visited Utah and published accounts of their observations. Hyde's exposé was translated into French by Jules Remy in his 1860 book recounting his visit to Utah in 1855.346 One year later an English translation of Remy's book, including Hyde's exposé, was published in London.347 Perhaps because of its previous appearance in French, Hyde's exposé was also given wide circulation in the Rie Robert Funk's history of the Saints in 1863348 and in the Italian translation (translated from French) in 1875.349 Ironically, Burton had criticized Hyde's exposé in his book published in London in 1861 (this criticism did not appear in the Italian and French editions) as a "circumstantial description" which could be doubted because of inconsistencies in it and another account written by Mary Ettie V. Smith.350

[p.55-p.56] Beginning in 1858, the year following publication of Hyde's exposé, a number of women whose main complaint about Mormonism was polygamy published books containing a description of the endowment. These authors include Mary Ettie V. Smith (1858),351 who claimed her husband was a "member of forty, Quorum of Seventies"; Fanny Stenhouse (1874), wife of T. B. H. Stenhouse, a prominent elder and publisher352; and Ann Eliza Young (1875), the estranged wife of Brigham Young.353 Smith's account--authored by Nelson Winch Green (which contained a preface by Harriet Beecher Stowe and an endowment exposé), she also included "an account of the frauds practiced by Matthias the Prophet."342

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[p.56] Richard Burton believed that Smith "leans to the erotic," whereas Hyde "dwells upon the treasonous and monstrous tendency of the ceremony."354 Smith's account was printed at least six times under various titles from 1858 to 1876.

[p.58] Fanny Stenhouse's book was one of the most popular accounts by an ex-Mormon published in the nineteenth century. It was published under various titles in at least seventeen printings from 1872 to 1890. In her first book, A Lady's Life Among the Mormons published in 1872, she wrote that "[i]n justice to the Mormons, I feel bound to state that the accounts which I have frequently read, professing to give a correct description of the endowment, given in Salt Lake City, are almost altogether exaggerated. . . . I myself saw nothing indecent though I had been led to believe that improper things did take place there, and I was determined not to submit to anything of the kind."355 Although she repeated this statement in an expanded version of her autobiography, "Tell It All," published in 1874356 (which contained a preface by Harriet Beecher Stowe and an endowment exposé), she also...
suggested that rumors concerning the Endowment House—namely, that those revealing the secrets of the endowment may have been killed—were not entirely groundless, and that she felt “ashamed and disgraced” by the endowment from the day she received it, and that she was justified in revealing it because she did not take the vow of secrecy when called upon to do so in the Endowment House.

[p.58-p.59] Ann Eliza Young's account, Wife No 19, published in 1876, is similar to Stenhouse's experiences that one is tempted to believe that she or her publisher plagiarized a portion of Fanny's exposé. It is a first-person description of the endowment she received as a teenager in which she (like Stenhouse) claims that people may have been killed for revealing portions of the secret ceremony. Nevertheless, she believed that she was justified in revealing it because she did not know what she was agreeing to until after the oath had been given and because justice required removing those bonds. Between 1875 and 1908, Young’s account was published in at least five variant printings, which were preceded by a lecture tour (managed by J. B. Pond, who eventually acted as literary agent for such luminaries as Mark Twain and Arthur Conan Doyle) to Cheyenne, Denver, and Washington, D.C. According to Pond, her lectures were responsible in part for passage of the Poland Bill which enhanced the federal government's ability to enforce the Anti-Bigamy Act of 1862.

[p.60] In 1878 the Salt Lake Tribune began publishing its own versions of the endowment. The Tribune was initially a Godbeite (a Spiritualist schism from Mormonism) organ but was sold to anti-Mormon/Liberal Party interests in 1872, about the same time the Masonic fraternity organized a Grand Lodge in Salt Lake City. Both the Masonic fraternity and the Tribune were actively involved in the anti-polygamy crusades, and there are hints that members of the Craft in Utah may have facilitated, or at least enjoyed, the anti-polygamy campaign. Endowment exposés became an integral part of efforts to encourage the federal government to crack down on the Mormon practice of plural marriage. These accounts purport to be based on eye-witnesses, published and unpublished, and in some cases emphasize the most lurid claims about the endowment. One of the earliest of this type was published by John H. Beadle, editor of the anti-Mormon newspaper, The Salt Lake Reporter, which began publication in 1868 after purchasing the printing press of The Union Vedette (the newspaper of Fort Douglas) which had ceased publication the previous spring and whose main competitor was The Daily Telegraph, edited by T. B. H. Stenhouse. The Beadle exposé is more lurid and less emotional than previous accounts by eye-witnesses. Although it is a synthesis of accounts by Hyde, Smith, Stenhouse, Young, and others, it is not particularly lurid; it does not even allege that candidates were stripped naked during the washing portion of the ceremony. Beadle’s book was published in thirteen separate editions from 1870 to 1904. In 1879, Beadle's account was republished (both in connection with the Oath of Vengeance and the Anti-Masonic Almanac of 1879) and was, like earlier publications such as those of Beadle and Fanny Stenhouse, the product of rather irresponsible journalism.

[p.61] The earliest expose to appear in the Tribune was written by a self-proclaimed “Apostate” in a letter to the editor in 1878. The letter gives a general description of the various stages in the endowment but is not a detailed exposé of the signs, tokens, obligations, and oaths. A more detailed description of the endowment, which became one of the most widely-diffused exposés, was published in the Tribune in 1879. Although the article is signed “G.S.R.,” the author was Caroline Owens Miles, who abandoned Mormonism after being sealed in the Endowment House to a man as his second wife. This account was republished (both in connection with the anti-polygamy crusade and later with efforts to unseat Utah's senator-elect, Reed Smoot) at least seven times during the next thirty years, in three pamphlets distributed by the Ladies Anti-polygamy Society in 1879, in the Handbook on Mormonism in 1882, in the Salt Lake Tribune in 1906, in a pamphlet entitled The Oath of Vengeance issued in the aftermath of the Smoot hearings in 1906, and in a book of short stories about territorial Utah in 1909. Unlike the Beadle account, the Salt Lake Tribune exposé was narrated in first person and, like the exposé published by Hyde, Smith, and Young, it claims that the endowment ceremony is both “disgusting and indecrous.” It is also similar to most exposés published before that time, since it described the endowment rather than repackaging the dialogue, but for the first time also included floor plans of the Endowment House and a sketch of the Devil's apron, which had various Masonic symbols which had not been adopted by Mormonism.

[p.61-p.62] Beginning in the 1870s the Endowment House ceremony and the practice of polygamy were linked in the legal battles to prevent immigrants, who had received their endowments, from becoming naturalized citizens, to disenfranchise Mormon voters, to prevent Utah from becoming a state, and to prevent George Q. Cannon, B. H. Roberts, and Reed Smoot from taking their seats in Congress. The Endowment House was not
only the location where numerous illegal plural marriages had been performed, the endowment ceremony contained, according to some exposés, an oath to avenge the death of Joseph Smith against the U.S. government. During the disenfranchisement cases in 1889 Edward W. Tullidge republished “from the press of the Juvenile Instructor” portions of the Hyde and Stenhouse exposés. Although Tullidge had become disaffected from the LDS church two decades earlier during the Godbeite schism, he did not betray the same animosities of many lapsed Mormons and remained in Salt Lake City where he continued to publish newspapers, magazines, and histories of Utah and the LDS church. He also provided information to the Committee on Territories in Washington, D.C., concerning rumors about conditions in Utah. In republishing these exposés, Tullidge observed that the temple was looked upon as “the Masonic embodiment of that Polygamic Theocracy” which was the prime target of the anti-polygamy campaign, but also criticized the motives and understanding of Hyde and Stenhouse and in particular labelled Hyde’s allegation “that an oath is taken against the United States and its Government” a “direct lie.” He wrote that any oath “to avenge the death of Joseph Smith the Prophet, upon the Gentiles who had caused his murder ... must in its very nature, become obsolete.”

[p.62] Another exposé by Henry G. McMillan, former clerk of the Third Judicial District Court, entitled The Inside of Mormonism written in 1904 to document why Reed Smoot should “be denied a seat in the Senate of the United States” consisted largely of testimony from an 1889 disenfranchisement case in which the district judge denied citizenship to an endowed Mormon. Material from this pamphlet was introduced before the Smoot Senate committee and published in the proceedings. The committee also received affidavits from people who testified that the judge in this disenfranchisement case had later allowed other Mormon immigrants to become citizens, although none stated whether those enfranchised had previously received their endowments.

[p.62-p.63] In February 1906 the Tribune republished the G.S.R. exposé and a description of the endowment attributed to Walter Wolfe during the Smoot Hearings. That same year James H. Walls, Sr. published a pamphlet entitled The Oath of Vengeance which combined portions of Wolfe’s testimony with the G.S.R. exposé to confirm that the ceremony had not changed for almost thirty years. Although those who wished to associate plural marriage with the purported treasonable and lurid character of the endowment ceremony used these exposés to emphasize portions of the endowment which, it was argued, rendered all temple Mormons disloyal to the Constitution and U.S. government, many of the witnesses called to testify at the Smoot hearings denied, as Tullidge had a decade earlier, that the endowment contained any oath or obligation directed against the United States. In 1927, as Tullidge had predicted, the oath of vengeance, which had been the subject of widely differing interpretations, was eliminated from the endowment.

Charges of Plagiarism

The close timing between the establishment of the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge and the introduction of the LDS temple endowment, and similarities between the two rites in published exposés, has led some observers to refer to the endowment as a form of Masonry. Jules Remy noted that “Mormons carry out Freemasonry to a very great extent.” Richard Burton complained that the “Saints were at one time good Mormons; unhappily they wanted to be better” and observed that “the public connects the endowment with a ‘middle ages comedy or mystery—possibly Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained—and connect it with the working of a Mason’s Lodge.” Enrico Besana, an Italian traveler, concluded that the Mormons’ “rites were taken from Masonry.” Phil Robinson, an English traveler who visited the unfinished Logan temple, wrote that the “rites of the endowments ... are generally of the sacred Masonry of Mormonism.”

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Freemasonry. Because Freemasonry was "received from the apostasy," Joseph Fielding, Hyrum Smith's nephew for him to reveal until he came to the proper place."

Because he would not reveal those things appertaining to the priesthood that were forbidden endowments because "the High Priest [Hiram Abiff] was murdered by wicked and corrupt men, who had already a Nauvoo Mason, also quoted Smith teaching that "Freemasonry as at present, was the apostate endowments, as to Heber C. Kimball, Smith believed there was "similarity of preast Hood [sic] in Masonary [sic]" and that remained dedicated Masons throughout Smith's life, and that they continued to do lodge work until they left Nauvoo in 1846. Arguably, it was only after the Saints relocated in the Great Basin that Mormonism and Masonry were completely divorced, and only then did Mormon officials claim that Masonry had outlived its purpose. Since five members of the Holy Order were long-time Masons and the remaining four were fresh recruits, Joseph (Adams) was Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois when Nauvoo Lodge received its dispensation. Without anyone initiating, testing, and ordaining the five members prior to being endowed, and five who were Masons before becoming Mormons (George Miller, Hyrum Smith, Newell K. Whitney, Heber C. Kimball and James Adams)--four of whom were charter members and officers of Nauvoo Lodge (Miller, Master; Smith, Senior Warden; Whitney, Treasurer; and Kimball, Junior Deacon) and one of whom (Adams) was Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois when Nauvoo Lodge received its dispensation. Since five members of the Holy Order were long-time Masons and the remaining four were fresh recruits, Joseph Smith undoubtedly knew that comparisons would be made between Masonry and the endowment. In Nauvoo the relationship between Mormonism and Masonry was readily acknowledged. According to Heber C. Kimball, Smith believed there was "similarity of priest Hood [sic] in Masonary [sic]" and that Freemasonry was "taken from the priesthood [sic] but has been degenerated [sic]." Benjamin F. Johnson, a Nauvoo Mason, also quoted Smith teaching that "Freemasonry as at present, was the apostate endowments, as sectarian religion was the apostate religion." Smith's successor, Brigham Young, taught that King Solomon built his temple to give endowments, that Solomon founded Freemasonry, but that they gave few if any endowments, because "they had no need of such things as are appertaining to the priesthood." Solomon's high priest, Hiram Abiff, was murdered by wicked and corrupt men, who had already begun to apostatize; because he would not reveal those things appertaining to the priesthood that were forbidden for him to reveal until he came to the proper place. Young's first counselor also taught that "Masonry of today is received from the apostasy which took place in the days of Solomon and David."
and a Nauvoo Mason, wrote in December 1843 that “Many have joined the Masonic Institution” as “a Stepping Stone or Preparation for something else, the true Origin of Masonry.”

Oliver Olney wrote in April 1842 that “We have of late had an instruction set up by a man from a distance said to be Masonry in its best state. . . . They say they have lost the fullness of the Priesthood that they say they have lost because of their unlawful works.”

Olney went on to write that the Masonic rite “has much encouraged L.D.S. they think soon to arise to perfection. As some few secrets they have obtained.”

James Cummings, a Nauvoo Mason, recalled that Smith seemed “to understand some of the features of the [Masonic] ceremony better than any Mason and that he made explanations that rendered the rites much more beautiful and full of meaning.”

Finally, Samuel C. Young, while serving an LDS mission in Illinois in 1912, wrote that Charles H. J. Chrystie, who said he knew Joseph Smith personally, told him that “There was some signs and tokens with their meaning and significance which we [the Craft] did not have. Joseph restored them and explained them to us;” and that it was “bigotry, jealousy [sic] and envy which caused Joseph to be taken away from his position in the Masonic order.”

These statements demonstrate that at least three members of the Holy Order were aware of similarities between the Nauvoo Masonic rituals and the Mormon temple endowment. They believed that the Masonic rites were an apostate form of priesthood that survived from Solomon’s temple and that the Mormon temple endowment was a more perfect form of temple work. Many of the Nauvoo Lodge members continued to participate in Masonic rituals after moving to Salt Lake City. Although Lucas Scoville was instructed by Heber C. Kimball on April 10, 1845, to stop initiating Masons, Nauvoo Lodge remained active until the end of 1846. In was not until the Saints arrived in Utah that Brigham Young refused to seek Masonic charters despite opposition from two former Masters of Nauvoo Lodge (George A. Smith and Lucas Scoville) who had expressed an interest in obtaining them; and that Mormon converts such as Louis Bertrand, a French Mason who had never lived in Nauvoo, wrote publicly that Freemasonry had fulfilled its purpose after the endowment was revealed.

While similar statements were made to outsiders who visited the territory, John W. Gunnison, a member of the Slansbury expedition, spent several years in Utah among the Mormons (1849-50). In 1852 he published a book in which he recorded his history and counseled the government to adopt a moderate policy toward them.

Gunnison wrote that the church taught that “Masonry was originally of the church, and one of its favored institutions, to advance them to their spiritual function. It had become perfected from its designs, and was restored to its true work by Joseph, who gave again, by angelic assistance, the key-words of the several degrees that had been lost.”

Richard Burton came to the same understanding when he visited Salt Lake City in 1860, writing that “Joseph Smith has told us that an ‘angel of the Lord brought to Mr. Joseph Smith the lost key-words of several degrees, which caused him, when he appeared amongst the brotherhood of Illinois, to work right a head of the highest, and to show them their ignorance of the greatest truths and benefits of masonry.”

While Gunnison and Burton may have misunderstood the relationship between Mormonism and Masonry and their information may have come from uninformed Mormons who did not represent the hierarchy’s official views on the subject (that the Masonic rite was restored to its original pristine form through divine inspiration, just as the Bible had been restored to its original form in the inspired version), their summary is nonetheless consistent with later statements made in church periodicals or by church authorities. For example, Helen Olney went on to write that “[a]lthough this Masonic institution dates its origins many centuries back, it is only a perverted Priesthood stolen from the Temples of the Most High.”

Perhaps the clearest statement of this understanding was made by Franklin D. Richards, president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, one of the last surviving general authorities who had been a Nauvoo Mason. In 1891 Richards wrote that “Certain mystic rites which were taught by the ancient Nephites have been restored, and that one of Brigham Young’s nephew’s had told him they were truly the lost key-words of several degrees, which caused him, as he appeared amongst the brotherhood of Illinois, to ‘work right a’ head of the highest, and to show them their ignorance of the greatest truths and benefits of masonry.”

Eight years later during a discussion of “secret societies” with his fellow apostles, Richards told his quorum that Joseph, the Prophet, was aware that there were some things about Masonry which had come down from the beginning and he desired to know what they were, hence the lodge. Masonry admitted some keys of knowledge appertaining to Masonry were lost. Joseph enquired of the Lord concerning the matter and He revealed to the Prophet true Masonry, as we have it in our temples. Owing to the superior knowledge Joseph had received, the Masons became jealous and cut off the Mormon Lodge.

Mormons were reluctant to discuss the Mormon Masonic connection after the turn of the century, it was still in harmony with Brigham Young’s teaching that Mormon temple ceremonies were the first temple services since the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. The Mormon Lorenzo Snow, who was a former Nauvoo Lodge member, wrote that Joseph Smith had revealed the temple ceremonies to him in 1843, and that the Joseph Smith foundation brothers had instructed him to extend the temple ceremonies to others.

Finally, Samuel C. Young, while serving an LDS mission in Illinois in 1912, wrote that Charles H. J. Chrystie, who said he knew Joseph Smith personally, told him that “There was some signs and tokens with their meaning and significance which we [the Craft] did not have. Joseph restored them and explained them to us;” and that it was “bigotry, jealousy [sic] and envy which caused Joseph to be taken away from his position in the Masonic order.”

These statements demonstrate that even though the Mormon hierarchy was reluctant to discuss the Mormon Masonic connection after the turn of the century, it was still in harmony with Brigham Young’s teaching that Mormon temple ceremonies were the first temple services since the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. The Mormon Lorenzo Snow, who was a former Nauvoo Lodge member, wrote that Joseph Smith had revealed the temple ceremonies to him in 1843, and that the Joseph Smith foundation brothers had instructed him to extend the temple ceremonies to others.

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In addition to comparing the rituals of Freemasonry to the endowment, Mormon leaders also compared the secrecy and symbols of the two rites. The temple ritual became a hallmark of the secrecy associated with the practice of plural marriage. This was consistent with William Preston’s and William Hutchinson’s lectures which taught that the first lesson of Masonry is the virtue of secrecy. This was also an aspect of Mormonism attacked by the clergy, and which contemporary observers claimed was the target of Book of Mormon references to “secret combinations.”

Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball all taught that the purpose of Freemasonry was to “keep a secret.” During a meeting of the Relief Society on March 30, 1842, Smith warned the sisters about “inauthentic characters” who were “arming after power and authority.” Although he did not mention names because he doubted whether everyone was “sufficiently skill’d in Masonry as to keep a secret,” he said that the matter be left private by reminding the sisters to be “good Masons.” Brigham Young later taught: “I could preach all about the endowment in public and the world know Nothing about it. I could preach all about Masonry & none but a Mason know anything about it. And the mine [sic] part of Masonry is to keep a secret.” Kimball echoed these sentiments when he said: “You have received your endowments. What is it for? To learn you to hold your tongues.”

Even after the turn of the century and the abandonment of polygamy, the same comparison was made. The First Presidency stated in a message on October 13, 1911, that “[b]ecause of their Masonic characteristics, the ceremonies of the temple are sacred and not for the public.”

Mormon use of Masonic symbols has also been publicly acknowledged. Mormons were hardly discreet in their depictions of symbols long associated with Freemasonry (see Illustration 6), including the square, the compass, the sun, moon, and stars, the beehive, the all-seeing eye, ritualistic hand grips, two interlaced triangles forming a six-pointed star (known as the seal of Solomon), and a number of other Masonic symbols on endowment houses, temples, cooperatives, grave markers, tabernacles, church meetinghouses, newspaper mastheads, hotels, residences, money, logos, and seals. This caused a British observer in 1871 to encourage fellow Masons “to keep a secret.”

Some Masonic symbols were retained on the temple, the most common Masonic symbols, the square and compass, which appeared on most endowment houses and were included by Truman Angell in 1894 on the original drawings for the Salt Lake temple, were excised from the completed structure. Although some symbols were returned to the temple, most were discarded after the turn of the century, and by 1906 Joseph E. Morcombe, a Mason and member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, noted that it was inevitable that the church would “borrow from Masonic forms and symbols, perhaps realizing that the Craft itself had borrowed most of the symbols it claimed as its own.”

During most of the twentieth century both Masonry and Mormonism opposed dual membership: Masons in Utah prohibited Mormons from joining or visiting their lodges and Mormons counseled members to avoid joining secret societies. During a discussion of secret societies on April 12, 1900, in a meeting of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency some brethren wondered if “Freemasonry was in some degree excepted [from the practice of plural marriage]. This was consistent with William Preston’s and William Hutchinson’s lectures which taught that the first lesson of Masonry is the virtue of secrecy. This was also an aspect of Mormonism attacked by the clergy, and which contemporary observers claimed was the target of Book of Mormon references to “secret combinations.”

Theodore Schroeder, a former resident of Utah who was ever a resident of Nauvoo,” apparently based on a dinner conversation with Emma Bidamon in 1960. The following year Theodore Schroeder, a former resident of Utah who was...
instrumental in maneuverings to deny B. H. Roberts his seat in congress, a prolific writer of anti-Mormon literature, and a Mason, published an article in The Masonic Standard in which he relied on Burton, Gunnison, Mary Ette V. Smith, and others to support his claim that “Masonry furnished suggestions for the groundwork for the secret endowment ceremony of the Latter-day Saints.”378 Schroeder’s article was republished in the Salt Lake Tribune the following year.379 Five months later Joseph Morcombe responded to Schroeder in the Masonic Standard and challenged Schroeder’s premise that Joseph Smith pilfered the Masonic rite. Morcombe noted that the endowment did not replace Masonry in Nauvoo—both rituals were performed until the Mormons left Nauvoo—even after the Grand Lodge revoked the dispensations and refused to charter the Mormon lodges. He also argued that Mormonism’s adoption of Masonic “forms and symbols” did not prove that Joseph Smith intended the endowment to rival Freemasonry.403

[p.77-p.78] In 1908 another article concerning “Mormonism and Masonry in Illinois” appeared in the Masonic Voice-Review.404 The author reviewed the history of Mormon lodges in Illinois and concluded that after “the church was removed to Salt Lake City its ceremonies were modeled after those of the Masonic fraternity. The church having utilized the Masonic ritual in this manner, the Mormon lodges were no longer necessary and ceased to exist.”405 During the serialization of this article, Joseph Morcombe wrote in a letter to the Review that “later developments of the temple ceremony in the Grand Lodge of Illinois [with Freemasonry], in connection to the same protective ceremonies, aped and corrupted from Masonic precedents.”406 These articles reflect not only the tension between Mormons and Masons but also the on-going debate between Josephites and Brighamites concerning whether Joseph or Brigham had introduced the endowment as practiced in the temples of Utah.

[p.78] Nevertheless important church writers continued to accept the Masonic legend that the Craft descended from Solomon. In 1912, when the church published James Talmage’s The House of the Lord, neither Masonry nor its symbols were mentioned in the discussion of the endowment. Furthermore, in discussing Solomon’s temple, Talmage only referred to the biblical account in the Book of Kings and did not mention that Masonic rite was an adaptation of Solomon’s Temple of ancient days.419 Talmage asserted that “Joseph Smith never knew the first thing of Masonry until years after he received the visit of Elijah, and had delivered to men the keys of holy priesthood and the ceremonies and ordinances of that Temple.”420 Six years later, after being ordained an apostle, he redressed this same subject. In December 1919 he told an audience in the tabernacle that “Modern Masonry is a fragmentary presentation of the ancient order established by King Solomon from whom it is said to be handed down through the centuries”; and that “the temple plan revealed to Joseph Smith . . . was the perfect Solomonic plan, under which no man was permitted to obtain the secrets of Masonry unless he also held the holy priesthood.”421 Ballard also claimed that even though the endowment restored the divine plan inaugurated by Solomon “plans for the ordinances to be observed in the Temple built at Nauvoo . . . were revealed to Joseph Smith . . . more than a year prior to the time the founder of the Mormon Church became a member of the Masonic Order.”422

[p.79] Following Ballard’s denial of Masonic claims that the Mormon temple ceremony was an unauthorized adaptation of Masonic ritual, Sam H. Goodwin, Grand Secretary and Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Utah, responded to the articles by publishing portions of the endowment from three exposés (Van Dusen, G.S., and Walter M. Wolfe).423 Goodwin was an ordained Congregational pastor who had served in various church functions in Utah since 1898 and recognized that the polygamy rationale was no longer valid. In February and March 1921 he wrote a two-part article in The Builder, a Masonic monthly, in which he attempted to explain why “Latter-day Saints are not received into Masonic lodges in Utah, either as visitors or members.”424 The same year he published an expanded version of these articles in a pamphlet entitled Mormonism and Masonry in which he reviewed the formation of Masonic lodges in Nauvoo, the symbols and language of the Mormon temple ceremony, and responded to public statements made by the Mormon leaders that the origins of the Mormon temple ceremony were unknown.425

[p.79-p.80] Writing for a Masonic audience, Goodwin claimed that he would not attempt “to give a categorical answer” to the question “Does the Mormon Church make use of Masonic ceremonies in its Temple ritual?”; that he would not “point out or label any ‘resemblances’ that may be discovered in the course of this study”; but that the “reader must draw his own conclusions.”426 In his discussion Goodwin enumerated various Masonic symbols and emblems which appear on the Salt Lake temple and other LDS structures (square, compass, beehive, all-seeing eye, etc.).427 and published portions of the endowment from these exposés (Van Dusen, G.S., and Walter M. Wolfe).428 Although Goodwin did not answer the question himself, he did attempt to emphasize the Mormon position that Masonic rite dated from Solomon’s temple; that Mormons recognized similarities between Masonry and Mormonism; but that they denied that Joseph Smith obtained the endowment from Masonry or that he was a Mason when the endowment was introduced to him.429 Although Goodwin made no direct comparisons between the temple ceremony and Masonic rites, one of the nine reasons he gave for excluding Mormons from Masonry was: “Clandestinism: Temple ceremonies and the use of language and symbols.”430

[p.80] In 1927 Goodwin published a second pamphlet entitled Additional Studies in Mormonism and Masonry.435 An article in the pamphlet entitled “Why Was Joseph Smith a Mason? Unanswered Questions” included official statements by the LDS church concerning “secret societies”436 and attempted to demonstrate that prior to the turn of the century “Church leaders” taught that Joseph Smith had used portions of Masonic rite in the endowment, in contrast to later teachings that the endowment was revealed to Joseph Smith prior to his membership in Masonry.437 Just as the Masons changed their rationale for keeping Mormons out of their lodges after the abandonment of polygamy, Mormon authorities who outlined the Nauvoo Masons and were unfamiliar with the Craft, had already rethought their response to those who noted similarities between Masonic rite and the temple ceremony. This rethinking, which began with Ballard’s speech in 1913 and 1919, was in part inconsistent with statements by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Franklin D. Richards, and other nineteenth-century Mormon authorities and ironcladly closer in some respects to arguments by anti-Mormons during the same period. It also
demonstrates the Mormon hierarchy’s sensitivity to charges that Smith plagiarized Masonic rites. Surprisingly, with few exceptions apologists of this new Mormon response failed to argue that continuing revelation does not exclude the possibility of adopting and adapting symbols and rites.

[p.80-p.81] After the appearance of Goodwin’s articles, Mormon authorities and other church representatives responded with arguments which followed for the most part the path blazed by Ballard. They argued that Joseph Smith received the endowment before he became a Mason; that the rituals of Freemasonry and the endowment are both descended from Solomon’s temple (Masonic ritual is a corrupted version, while the endowment is a completely restored version); and distinguished between the purposes of the Mormon temple ceremony (serving ordinances for eternal life) and rituals of Masonry (a fraternal organization with a ritual as a metaphor for a spiritual journey). Two months after the publication of Goodwin’s first article, The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine published a lecture delivered by John A. Widtsoe in October 1920 which referred to “apostates [who] have tried to reveal the ordinances of the House of the Lord. Some of their accounts form a fairly complete and correct story of the outward forms of the temple service; but they are pitiful failures in making clear the eternal meaning of temple worship and the exaltation of spirit that is awakened by the understanding of that meaning.”

Widtsoe, who would be called an apostle on March 17, 1921, added that “[s]uch attempted improper revelations of temple worship have been led in all ages and in all parts of the world, and are still repeated in all religious orders and denominations.” He also repeated an argument that “comparisons of ordinances and ceremonies that have always existed is a strong evidence of the continuity of temple worship, under the Priesthood, from the days of Adan.”

[p.81-p.82] A different rationale was published in an August 1921 article by Brigham H. Roberts in the Improvement Era, in which the Mormon general authority responded to questions about “the Prophet’s connection with Masonry and its connection with temple ceremonies, and the endowment rites having been copied from Masonry.” The substance of the article was taken from a March 1921 letter to a member of an Idaho stake presidency who had apparently read Goodwin’s articles. Roberts responded that “the evidence, to my mind, is very strong that Joseph Smith had knowledge of the endowment ceremonies proposed by Joseph Parris and the demonstrations that the revelations concerning the endowment began in 1835 when the prophet obtained possession of the ‘Egyptian papyrus manuscripts,’ and that the temple ceremony ‘resulted from the revelations of God to Joseph Smith, and not from the Prophet’s incidental and brief connection with Masonry.’”

[p.82-p.83] Most subsequent LDS responses followed Ballard and Roberts in maintaining that the endowment was revealed before the organization of the Nauvoo Lodge even if both rituals arose from a common source. James H. Anderson, in an article published in the Improvement Era in 1929, wrote that “the Masonic Order has rites based on ceremonies in Solomon’s Temple; that Masonry is a fraternal organization rather than a religious one, and that Masonic rites descended from Solomon; that Joseph Smith restored the secrets of Solomon’s temple; that the prophet joined Freemasonry to ‘fraternize with the prominent leaders in the political and religious world;’ that Masonic rites are descended from Solomon’s temple (Masonic ritual is a corrupted version, while the endowment is a completely restored version); and distinguished between the purposes of the Mormon temple ceremony (saving and preparing for eternal life) and rituals of Masonry (a fraternal organization with a ritual as a metaphor for a spiritual journey). Five months later Ballard spoke about Masonry again and said that Smith had joined the fraternity in 1842 because “he needed good friends.”

[p.83-p.84] One Mormon writer who did not completely adopt the reasoning of Ballard and Roberts was Anthony W. Ivins, a counselor in the LDS First Presidency. Ivins wrote The Relationship of “Mormonism” and Freemasonry in 1934 which was distributed free to all Mormon stake presidents, ward bishops, mission presidents, and faculty members at LDS Institutes. Ivins, who died before the book was published, admitted in his introduction that it was “perhaps the most valuable book on the subject of Masonic history in existence,” and that it was “one of the best books ever published on the subject of Freemasonry.” He also argued that “the Masonic rite and the endowment resulted from their common genesis at Solomon’s temple and that Joseph Smith had obtained the endowment at least a year before becoming a Freemason.”

[p.84] Regarding Goodwin’s suggestion that the temple ceremony was borrowed from Masonry, Ivins criticized him for quoting from exposes of renouncing Mormons when Goodwin claimed that renouncing Mormons were “the most bitter enemies and opponents of Masonry.” Ivins also admitted that he did not know if there were resemblances between Masonic rite and the Mormon temple ceremony, stated that Joseph Smith became a Mason to “find friendship and protection,” and advocated a more detailed comparison between rituals before he was prepared to admit similarities. He wrote that while Goodwin “pretends to give a truthful and detailed account of the ordinances performed in the temples of the Church, he fails to indicate the resemblance to the rite in Masonry and consequently leaves the reader entirely without proof of the resemblances which he states exist. The writer reaffirms that to judge of the similarity of two things, both must be submitted for inspection.”
Nor did Ivins follow Ballard's and Roberts's lead that the endowment was revealed to Joseph Smith prior to his association in Freemasonry, although his rationale for Joseph's affiliation with the Craft is a strong suggestion that he believed the two were not connected. While he did discuss the various theories concerning the origin of Masonry, including the Masonic dogma that it began with Solomon, Ivins did not suggest that this theory provided a rationale for comparing the two rites. Thus, although Ivins did not argue that the endowment preceded Smith's association with Freemasonry, he failed to explain similarities between the two rites. Instead, he devoted most of his book to explaining Mormon doctrines and teachings.

[p.84-p.85] Ivins recognized that Goodwin's pamphlets would be basic source material for the position that the Mormon temple ceremony plagiarized Masonic rite. Fawn Brodie referred to it in her 1945 biography on Joseph Smith, writing that “[i]t may seem surprising that Joseph Smith should have incorporated so much Masonry into the endowment ceremony in the very weeks when all his leading men were inducted into the Masonic lodge. They would have been blind indeed not to see the parallelism between the costuming, grips, passwords, keys and oaths.”537 Brodie, like Goodwin, presupposed that the Mormon doctrine of continuing revelation was fraudulent and that similarities were evidence of plagiarism, and therefore failed to give any credence to Joseph Smith's explanation to the Holy Order concerning similarities between the endowment and Masonry. Subsequent exposes followed Goodwin's lead in comparing the endowment with Masonic rites and in asserting that similarities prove that Smith borrowed the rites without the benefit of revelation.

[p.85] Following Brodie's entry into the controversy, several Mormon writers addressed the issue of the endowment's origin. They emphasized the superficiality of similarities between the two rituals and differences between the goals and aspirations of Mormonism and Freemasonry. But they failed to evaluate Freemasonry from the perspective of an early nineteenth-century initiate who still believed in the Craft's claim of antiquity and that it preserved "eternal and invariable principles of natural religion." Hugh Nibley, a professor of ancient history at Brigham Young University, who was also known as an informed, objective analyst that the Mormon temple endowment and the rituals of ancient Craft Masonry are "Freemasonry has no incompatibility as to principles or philosophy with Mormonism."538 The endowment "evidently has no relationship whatsoever to the Masonic Ritual context-wise," Hogan criticized the Utah policy which prevented Mormons from joining Masonry, argued that the Mormon temple endowment "was given by revelation" and that it could "best be understood by revelation."539 The Mormon apostle also reasoned that although "it may be true" that similarities exist with other rituals, "similarities . . . do not deal with basic mystical matters but rather with the mechanism of the ritual," that similar features are not "peculiar to any fraternity," and that "Joseph Smith had the right to employ such commonly used methods and symbols without being guilty of plagiarism from any particular group." Again this was consistent with his article, written almost thirty years earlier, that those who "come out of the temple" should see "beyond the symbol, the mighty realities for which the symbols stood."540

[p.86] Significantly, Widtsoe did not mention links between the endowment and Solomon, nor did he claim that the full endowment was revealed to Smith before he joined Freemasonry. He did, however, quote a "former member" of a secret society who said that such societies "have nothing to teach Latter-day Saints," and opined himself that "any thoughtful person" could not accept that "the Mormon endowment was built up secretly, without model." Thus, Widtsoe re-entered the fray in the 1950s when he wrote two articles in the Improvement Era concerning the origin of the endowment and reasons Joseph Smith became a Mason.541 In the first article Widtsoe did not mention the term "secret society" by name (he used the term "secret or independent religious organizations"), but relied on circumstantial evidence (initiatory rites in Kirtland and the revelation on temple work in January 1841) to conclude that the temple ritual was not "merely adapted" from other rituals, he received it "by revelation from God." This rationale was not significantly different from his April 1921 article when he wrote that since the endowment "was given by revelation" it could "best be understood by revelation."542 The Mormon apostle also reasoned that although "it may be true" that similarities exist with other rituals, "similarities . . . do not . . ." What did he dare it? Why didn't he disguise it? The answer is that to those who both, the resemblance is not striking at all . . ."543

[p.86-p.87] Indeed, Elder John Widtsoe re-entered the fray in the 1950s when he wrote two articles in the Improvement Era concerning the origin of the endowment and reasons Joseph Smith became a Mason.541 In the first article Widtsoe did not mention the term "secret society" by name (he used the term "secret or independent religious organizations"), but relied on circumstantial evidence (initiatory rites in Kirtland and the revelation on temple work in January 1841) to conclude that the temple ritual was not "merely adapted" from other rituals, he received it "by revelation from God." This rationale was not significantly different from his April 1921 article when he wrote that since the endowment "was given by revelation" it could "best be understood by revelation."542 The Mormon apostle also reasoned that although "it may be true" that similarities exist with other rituals, "similarities . . . do not deal with basic mystical matters but rather with the mechanism of the ritual," that similar features are not "peculiar to any fraternity," and that "Joseph Smith had the right to employ such commonly used methods and symbols without being guilty of plagiarism from any particular group." Again this was consistent with his article, written almost thirty years earlier, that those who "come out of the temple" should see "beyond the symbol, the mighty realities for which the symbols stood."540

[p.87-p.88] Widtsoe's thesis—that similarities between Mormonism and Freemasonry "do not deal with basic mystical matters but rather with the mechanism of the ritual," that the two organizations have different objectives and practices, and that similarities were evidence of plagiarism, and therefore failed to give any credence to Joseph Smith's explanation to the Holy Order concerning similarities between the endowment and Masonry. Subsequent exposes followed Goodwin's lead in comparing the endowment with Masonic rites and in asserting that similarities prove that Smith borrowed the rites without the benefit of revelation.538

Contemporaries of Hogan, who have also examined the rituals of Masonry and Mormonism, not only agree that there are similarities between the two, but like Franklin D. Richards at the turn of the century, attempt to explain why Joseph Smith's use of Masonry was consistent with his prophetic claims. In 1971 Kenneth W. Godfrey, an LDS seminary and Institute coordinator; wrote an article that recognized similarities between the two rituals, that Joseph Smith believed that "Masonry was merely a corruption of the original endowment," and that similarities were "essential parts of the endowment had been revealed to him by God."543 This theme was amplified by Reed C. Durham in 1974 when he explained that Smith accepted Masonry because he genuinely felt he recognized true Ancient Mysteries contained therein. And, that in light of two fundamental concepts, already established within the theological framework of Mormonism—the Restoration of the Gospel and the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times—Joseph was
under the strong compulsion to embrace Masonry. The Prophet believed that his mission was to restore all truth, and then to unify and weld it all together into one. This truth was referred to as “the Mysteries,” and these Mysteries were inseparably connected with the Priesthood.540

Allen D. Roberts, in a careful analysis of the Mormon use of Masonic symbols, also concluded that “Joseph’s Masonry was not a conventional one. He attempted to restore it in much the same way the gospel was restored. That is, he saw Masonry, like Christendom, as possessing some important truths which could be beneficially extracted from what was otherwise an apostate institution.”541

[pp.88-p.89] Other Mormons doubt that Freemasonry provided the real pattern for the endowment and argue that Mormon rituals, such as the ancient mysteries or Egyptian endowments, provide more meaningful parallels. This perspective has been skillfully developed by professors at Brigham Young University. Hugh Nibley, who criticized Brodie in 1945 for suggesting that there are striking parallels between anti-Masonic rhetoric and Book of Mormon passages, has written about many more meaningful parallels. In 1976 he observed that “temple ordinances are as old as the human race and represent a primordial religion that has passed through alternate phases of apostasy and restoration which have left the world littered with the scattered fragments of the original structure, some more and some less recognizable, but all badly damaged and out of proper context.”542 He commented that the “Mormon endowment, like the Egyptian, is frankly a model, a representation in figurative terms,”543 that “What the Egyptians were looking for was not unlike what the Mormons call an ‘endowment’,”544 but left it up to his readers to decide whether the Egyptian endowment resembles the Mormon endowment.545 More recently D. Michael Quinn, while a professor of history at Brigham Young University, elaborated John Widstoe’s thesis when he wrote that similarities between the Mormon endowment and Masonic rituals are “superficial.”546 He concluded that “the ancient occult mysteries and the Mormon endowment manifest both philosophical and structural kinship.”547 Quinn also compared the purposes of the occult mysteries, the Mormon endowment, and Masonic rite and concluded that the ultimate goal of exaltation is common only to Mormonism and the occult mysteries.

[p.89] In 1967 David John Buerger responded to the notion that the endowment has more meaningful parallels with ancient mystery rites than Freemasonry by noting that Masonic rituals were “a source much closer to Joseph Smith.”548 He explained:

This pattern of resemblances provides strong indications that Joseph Smith drew on the Masonic rites in shaping the temple endowment, and specifically borrowed the tokens, signs and penalties. The creation and fall narrative, the content of the major covenants, and the washing and anointings have no parallel in Masonry. Thus the temple ceremony cannot be explained as wholesale borrowing from Masonry; neither can it be explained as completely unrelated to Freemasonry.549

Buerger did not analyze all Masonic rites and organizations before concluding that parallels were limited to signs, tokens, and penalties. Masonic rituals recognized by regular Freemasonry have undergone substantial change since the eighteenth century, and there are also many versions of irregular Masonic rituals. Among these rituals are Masonic parallels for the Creation and Fall narratives, the covenants, and the washings and anointings.

Parallels between Masonry and Mormonism

The Book of Mormon

The Gold Plates. There are several elements in the legends of Freemasonry and the early history of Mormonism which provide interesting parallels. Joseph Smith was identified with the Old Testament prophet Enoch in various revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants (secs. 78, 92, 96, 104). By Smith’s own account, he was the same age when he organized the Church of Christ in 1830 as Enoch was when he received the Melchizedek priesthood (see D&C 107). Furthermore, Joseph and Enoch had similar experiences: Enoch saw in vision a triangular plate of gold in Mount Moriah and later made and deposited a plate in the same hill for future generations. Joseph was visited by an angel who told him there were gold plates in the Hill Cumorah, he was given the plates which he translated, and he relinquished the plates to the angel. This parallel between the triangular gold plate of Moroni’s gold plates was first noted in 1837 by Jonathan Blanchard, president of Wheaton College and author of an exposé of an irregular ritual (Henry C. Atwood’s Supreme Council of the Sovereign and Independent State of New York) patterned after the Scottish Rite.550 The instruments and plates which Joseph found in the Hill Cumorah and translated into the Book of Mormon were brought to the New World from the same location where Enoch had buried his treasure in the Old World (see Ether 2, 3, 15).

[p.90-p.91] Secret Combinations. Shortly after publication of the Book of Mormon in early 1830 some observers claimed that passages referring to “secret societies” and “secret combinations” were thinly veiled references to nineteenth-century Masonry. Martin Harris, who acted as scribe for Joseph Smith and was one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, observed in 1831 that The Book of Mormon was “the Anti-masonic [sic] Bible.”551 Non-Mormon, and in some cases anti-Mormon, writers made similar observations. In 1831 Alexander Campbell noted that: “He [Joseph Smith] decides all the great controversies . . . and even the question of Freemasonry”552. Jason Whitman observed in 1834 that “finally, it is well known that, in many minds, there is a strong feeling of opposition to the institution of Masonry. All such find something in the Book of Mormon to meet their views . . . thus there are, in the book itself, artful adaptations to the known prejudices of the community.”553 E. D. Howe wrote that same year:

Freemasonry is here introduced and is said to have originated with a band of highwaymen. This institution is spoken of in very reproachful terms, in consequence of the members having bound themselves by secret oaths to protect each other in all things from the justice of the law. The Nephites are represented as being Anti-masons and Christians, which carries with it some evidence that the writer foresaw the politics of New York about 1825-29, or that the work was revised at or about that time.554 Edward Sturtevant Abdy wrote in the famous account of his visit to the United States in 1835, that “one passage in this curious Koran clearly points to the place of its concoction, and the prepossessions of its author” since “[i]t alludes, most unequivocally, to the free-masons.”555 Finally, La Roy Sunderland wrote in 1838 that “the reader will find frequent allusions [sic] in [the Book of Mormon] to Freemasonry . . . under the names of ‘secret societies’, ‘treacherous oaths’ and ‘secret combination’.”556 Modern historians and other writers continue to debate the existence and meaning of these “anti-Masonic” passages.557

[p.91] Additional parallels between Mormonism and Freemasonry have been noted in other Mormon scriptures, including a Book of Moses passage in chapter 5 containing a revelation to Joseph Smith in December
Morgan Harris (not a virgin) held a copy of which went unanswered. Like Hiram Abiff he suffered death at the hands of those he called “brother” and was Freemasons. While attempting to escape from the jail prior to his death, Joseph gave the Masonic distress call, Freemasonry, originally lost when Hiram Abiff was murdered, was restored through the endowment.

Joseph Smith’s death in June 1844 has Masonic parallels. Like Hiram Abiff, Smith was a widow’s son, since his father, Joseph Sr., died shortly after arriving in Nauvoo. Smith taught his followers that the key word of Joseph Smith’s death in the 28th degree of the Scottish Rite becomes the 28th degree of the Scottish Rite.

Masonic representations.

Comparing the endowment ceremony with Masonic ritual, one observes parallels which probably piqued the interest of Mormon Masons. The same no doubt facilitated the conclusions of outside observers who were familiar with the rituals of the Craft and who wrote that the endowment was a form of Masonry. This does not mean that the parallels which are herein elencated are the only similarities which exist between the endowment and Freemasonry or that there are not also significant parallels in the rituals of non-Masonic groups, such as the ancient mysteries, the Egyptians, or even of the Catholic church.

In the nineteenth century most masons claimed that their rituals “derived from the Almighty Creator to Adam, its principles ever since have been and still are most secretly preserved and inviolably concealed”; and “foreseeing the great abuses which their excited mysteries might sustain, if generally made known, determined to confine the knowledge of them only to the elect brethren.” Despite the decay and corruption (read “apostasy”) of the world, the basic truths of Masonry were preserved from generation to generation.

Masonic rites, like the endowment, were dedicated at least in the nineteenth century “to the glory of God and to secure to them [Freemasons] temporal blessings here and eternal life hereafter,” and by advancing in the degrees of the ritual a Freemason “is raised by regular courses to such a degree of perfection, as to be replete with happiness himself, and extensively beneficial to others.”

Beyond these “philosophical” parallels there are also similarities between portions of the rituals that have been referred to as “superficial.” These more obvious parallels include signs, tokens, obligations, penalties, temple robes and aprons, symbols, prayer circle, veil, and other portions of the ritual. In addition, one is struck with similarities in language: the Holy Order of High Priesthood in Royal Arch Masonry is similar to the “Holy Order” endowed by Joseph Smith, and William Hutchinson makes several references to the “endowments” of Masonry in his famous treatise. Other seldom recognized parallels include the following.

Washing and Anointing, Garments, and the New Name.

1. the Order of Anointed High Priest, “Order of High Priests,” or “Holy Order of High Priesthood,” which includes consecration and anointing after the Order of Melchizedek in a chapter of Royal Arch Masons with assistance in “ample form” of not less than nine;

2. the “Knight Priest” degree in the rite of the Fratre Lucius (ca. 1780) which includes anointing a priest after the Order of Melchizedek with Holy Oil; and

3. the ritual of the Knight Templar, as worked in the Baldwin Encampment (ca. 1780), which reportedly includes a ritual anointing of body parts followed by the giving of a new name. The candidate is also presented with a shield “in defense and protection of Virtue and Innocence and in distress, and of the Noble cause” and ceremonial robes which the candidate is instructed “never to be forgotten or laid aside.”

It has been suggested that Thomas Smith Webb used the Templar ritual when he originated the Order of High Priesthood.

Creation Drama. William Preston’s lectures, as set forth in the Syllabus Books, included a description of the “periods of Creation” similar to the Creation drama described by Heber C. Kimball and James E. Talmage. After the organization of the Lodge of Reconciliation in 1813, the United Grand Lodge of England developed a new ritual, adopted in 1816, which perpetuated these lectures and references to the Creation.

Garden of Eden. Initiates into Freemasonry represent Adam “in his sincere desire to make advances in knowledge and virtue,” and his fall “which was the fruit of his disobedience, is affectingly brought to view by the most lively Masonic representations.” In the French system of “Adoptive Masonry” a representation is given of the temptation in the Garden of Eden in its second ritual entitled “Companion,” which is the same name Royal Arch Masons use for their other rather than brother. It has already been mentioned that French Adoptive Rites were recognized as early as 1774. In addition, Father Adam and some angels also participate in the 23rd degree of the Rite of Perfection (Knight of the Sun) which became the 28th degree of the Scottish Rite.

Female Freemasonry. Joseph Smith’s inclusion of women in the endowment ceremony, beginning in September 1843, has some Masonic precedent. Although regular Freemasonry only admits men, arguments were made well before Joseph Smith’s initiation into the Craft, that women should also be admitted. Some irregular Masonic groups (beginning in eighteenth-century France) admit only women (“Female Freemasonry” or “Androgynous Freemasonry”) such as the French Le Droit Humain and its offshoot, Co-Masonry. Masonic groups (beginning in eighteenth-century France) admit only women (“Female Freemasonry”) or both men and women (“Androgynous Freemasonry”). Initiates into Freemasonry represent Adam “in his sincere desire to make advances in knowledge and virtue,” and his fall “which was the fruit of his disobedience, is affectingly brought to view by the most lively Masonic representations.” In the French system of “Adoptive Masonry” a representation is given of the temptation in the Garden of Eden in its second ritual entitled “Companion,” which is the same name Royal Arch Masons use for their other rather than brother.

Joseph Smith.

Joseph Smith’s death in June 1844 has Masonic parallels. Like Hiram Abiff, Smith was a widow’s son, since his father, Joseph Sr., died shortly after arriving in Nauvoo. Smith taught his followers that the key word of Freemasonry, originally lost when Hiram Abiff was murdered, was restored through the endowment. After its restoration, Smith was arrested, incarcerated in Carthage Jail, and murdered by a mob, which included fellow Freemasons. While attempting to escape from the jail prior to his death, Joseph gave the Masonic distress call, which went unanswered. Like Hiram Abiff he suffered death at the hands of those he called “brother” and was mourned by his followers.

The mythology associated with the martyrdom also has Masonic undertones. One of the symbols of Freemasonry, a virgin “weeping over a broken column with a book open before her” denoting the “unfinished state of the Temple,” is similar to a report by Dr. B. W. Richard, a guest in Nauvoo in 1844, who wrote that Lucinda Morgan Harris (not a virgin) held a copy of Stearns on Masonry in her hands while weeping over the prophet’s
body. Just as Solomon's temple remained unfinished at the death of Hiram Abiff, the Nauvoo temple was not
completed at the time of Joseph Smith's death. William Daniels claims that the prophet, after falling from the
second story window of Carthage jail, was dragged against the curb by a member of the militia. When he began to
stir, four members of the militia fired on him and the man who dragged him to the well drew his Bowie knife to
cut off the prophet's head. But before he could complete his downstroke, a pillar of light thrust down from heaven
between Joseph and the militia causing the prophet's assassins to become powerless and flee. More reliable
witnesses observed that Joseph attempted to give the Masonic distress signal and that he was wearing a Jupiter
talisman, which for years was thought to have Masonic significance. These images are similar to portions in the legend of Hiram Abiff, in which his blood was traced to a well
north of Solomon's temple. Those who discovered the blood "concluded that H. A. had been killed there and
perhaps flung in the well," and noted "the appearance of a Luminous light or meteor standing over the well." When the well was dry, Hiram's jewel was discovered, which he cast into the well when attacked by the ruffians (in some rituals the jewel is found on Hiram's body) and, according to some rituals, the jewel was a talisman with the name of God in Hebrew inscribed within two interlaced triangles forming a six-pointed star, which is a Masonic symbol for the perfect Godhead. Joseph Smith's talisman was also inscribed with the name of God.

Analysis
It is ironic, especially given claims by some early observers that Mormonism in the 1830s was anti-Masonic, that
members of the church such as Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were more comfortable
acknowledging the relationship between the two rites than twentieth-century Mormons who were not familiar with
the Craft. Twentieth-century Mormon authors have attempted to distance the endowment from Freemasonry—a
view closer to nineteenth-century anti-Mormons who had no familiarity with the Craft—rather than study the historical
background of the Nauvoo lodge and statements by nineteenth-century church leaders concerning the relationship
between Masonry and Mormonism. There are various possible explanations for this.

The Death of Nauvoo Masons
Most of the Mormon hierarchy were Master Masons when the Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Nevertheless, Brigham Young decided in 1860 not to petition for a Masonic lodge in Utah because he believed Masons were responsible for the death of Joseph Smith and that they continued to work to destroy Mormonism. While he and other church leaders believed that the purposes of Freemasonry had been superseded by Mormon temple ordinances, it also appears that most Mormon Masons, although inactive, remained loyal to the Craft. George A. Smith wanted to establish a lodge in Utah in 1867; a year later Heber C. Kimball told a church congregation that he had "been true to my country, my Masonic brethren and also to my brethren in this Church." John Taylor opined in 1863 that "Freemasonry is one of the strongest binding contracts that exists between man and man." And in 1867 Young himself complained that Freemasons in Utah "have refused our brethren membership in their lodge, because they were polygamists" and then mocked this policy by pointing out that Solomon was the founder of Freemasonry and a polygamous man. Although each of these Nauvoo Masons was prevented from attending lodge meetings in Utah and believed that Mormonism had superseded Freemasonry, they were familiar with both Masonic ritual and the endowment and recognized the similarities. Thus it is not surprising that some ex-Mormons warned readers not to trust Mormon claims that the endowment was similar to Masonic rites, since by that time Masonry had regained stature and acceptance and the most lurid characterizations of the endowment had no apparent Masonic counterpart. After the death of the last of the Nauvoo Masons, a new generation of Mormon writers, who had no personal knowledge of Freemasonry, found it easy to make the same claim as nineteenth-century anti-Mormons who had no knowledge of Freemasonry: that there was no connection between the endowment and Masonic rites. The Nauvoo endowment had been introduced years earlier; had become totally institutionalized; and personal knowledge of Joseph Smith's explanation of the endowment and familiarity with Masonic ceremonies were replaced by reliance on historical accounts of the endowment.

Due to the secret nature of the endowments, much of the knowledge concerning its introduction was recorded in private correspondence or diaries or not recorded at all. Some of these recollections were apparently unknown to Ballard, Roberts, Ivins, McGavin, and Widtsoe. While these, and other writers who responded to Goodwin's articles, admitted they had little or no knowledge of similarities between the two rites, most also argued that any parallels existed only because the rituals share a common ancestor and relied on circumstantial evidence that Joseph Smith received the endowment before his association with Freemasonry.

The Kirtland Endowment
Church writers such as Melvin J. Ballard, B. H. Roberts, and Cecil McGavin believed that there was sufficient
evidence to conclude that Joseph Smith had received the entire endowment ceremony prior to his association with Freemasonry. Roberts believed that the prophet received the endowment when he translated the Egyptian papyri. On July 3, 1835, Michael H. Chandler arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, to display some papyri to the church. Less than three months later, on April 6, 1841, Joseph laid the cornerstone for this new temple. The following year he completed his translation of the Book of Abraham and published it in the Times and Seasons. Ironically, Facsimile Number 2 from the Book of Abraham was published on March 15, 1842, the same day Smith was initiated into Freemasonry. Facsimile No. 2 refers to "the grand Key-words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden as also to Seth, Noah, Moses, Abraham, and all to whom the priesthood was revealed"; "the grand Key, or, in other words, the governing power"; "the grand Key-words of the Priesthood"; and "writings that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God." Ballard, Roberts, and McGavin believed that Smith became aware of the "Key-word" while translating the Book of Abraham prior to his initiation into Freemasonry. Although the complete endowment was not practiced in Kirtland, the "initiatory ordinances" were and Joseph also recorded a revelation regarding the sealing power of the
After the Morgan affair, most Masonic writers refused to discount these claims until "a school of English antiquity. Prior to 1860 most Masonic writers accepted the legends of Freemasonry which claimed that it originated in Authentic School of Masonic History. [p.103]

have been brought on by the "Authentic" school of Masonic history.

that the endowment was revealed to the prophet until after he was initiated into the Craft. This dichotomy may been lost. But while similarities were still explained this way by McGavin, Ballard, and others, none would admit cement, although containing some vestiges of the Masonic rite, contained new elements which had previously Smith's translation of the Book of Abraham contained a full transcript of either endowment.

Mormonism do the same after abandoning the practice of plural marriage and disavowing any relationship with antediluvian polygamy. As long as Masonic rites were recognized as an apostate form of the Melchizedek priesthood.

Mormonism. They also believed that Masonic rites were a degenerated version of the endowment passed down from Solomon and adapted the symbols of Freemasonry and referred to them as such.

Given the secret nature of both rites, it is not surprising that the evidence upon which some Mormon writers have concluded that Smith's knowledge of the endowment preceded his association with Freemasonry is circumstantial and inconclusive. Even if there were evidence that Joseph was prepared to reveal the complete endowment prior to March 15, 1842, he could have become familiar with the rites and degrees of Freemasonry before he was initiated into the Craft either from Morgan's and Bernard's exposés or from discussions with other Masons such as his brother Hyrum or with anti-Masons such as Phelps or Harris. Apparently, such possibilities did not weaken the faith of those who knew both the prophet and the rituals of Freemasonry. They believed that Joseph had received the endowment by revelation but did not deny that Masonic rites were the starting point.

Secret Societies

By 1892 a wide range of lodges and "secret societies" had been established in Salt Lake City. Although church authorities discussed the possibility of excepting Freemasonry from a directive which prohibited church members from joining secret societies, the First Presidency and Quorum of Twelve approved a statement that the church was "opposed to secret societies" with no mention of Freemasonry. In Utah the point was moot since Freemasons would not allow Mormons into their lodges anyway. A flurry of statements, speeches, and articles thereafter appeared advancing this church policy and giving various reasons for it: competing organizations induce members to decrease church activity, forego missions, and cease to pay tithing; "secret societies are institutions of the evil one" and the Book of Mormon condemns such societies. At the same time Mormonism and Masonry continued to be compared by some religious zealots, such as a notorious Leo Taxil, who claimed that both groups were organized and controlled by the Devil (see Illustration 7). Nevertheless, it is not surprising that for most of the twentieth century Masonry and Mormonism were on a collision course and that accusations were made by Mormon writers that anti-Masonic passages could be detected in the Book of Mormon and that the endowment was similar to Masonic rituals. These passages and reported similarities were offered as proof that the Book of Mormon was written in the aftermath of the William Morgan affair and that the endowment had been plagiarized from Freemasonry. It was probably also inevitable that both charges would be met by denials.

[p.101] By the second decade of the twentieth century the LDS hierarchy's position on Freemasonry had evolved from the belief that it was an "apostate" but benign organization which could be joined for fraternal reasons to one that it was an organization that ensured its victims and alienated them from the kingdom of God. By that time Mormonism had embarked on its own course to establish credibility, and relying on comparisons with Freemasonry—which had become a national institution even while no longer claiming that its rituals originated in antiquity—was no longer necessary to legitimize the temple ceremony. If the successors of Solomon could maintain credibility after acknowledging the absence of any direct link with the polygamist patriarch, why couldn't Mormonism do the same after abandoning the practice of plural marriage and disavowing any relationship with Masonry?

[p.101-p.103] This shift was important because Mormon leaders taught that all churches possessed some truth, but that only Mormonism had all the truth. As long as Masonic rites were recognized as an apostate form of the temple ceremonies, it was logical that Joseph Smith had produced an inspired version of it and that the resulting ceremony, although containing some vestiges of the Masonic rites, contained new elements which had previously been lost. But while similarities were still explained this way by McGavin, Ballard, and others, none would admit that the endowment was revealed to the prophet until after he was initiated into the Craft. This dichotomy may have been brought on by the "Authentic" school of Masonic history.

[p.103]

Authentic School of Masonic History

Prior to 1860 most Masonic writers accepted the legends of Freemasonry which claimed that it originated in antiquity. Although these claims were challenged by most anti-Masonic writers in the United States, particularly after the Morgan affair, most Masonic writers refused to discount these claims until "a school of English
investigators" began to evaluate lodge minutes, ancient rituals, and municipal records. Eventually this movement, known as the Authentic School of Masonic History and culminating in the publication of Robert Freke Gould's History of Freemasonry in 1885,610 debunked the notion that the rituals practiced in Speculative Freemasonry originated before the sixteenth century. Gould and others argued that the best evidence indicated that Operative Freemasonry originated with trade guilds in the Middle Ages and that the development of Speculative Freemasonry, with ceremonies and rituals similar to those practiced today, began in the seventeenth century. But even Gould admitted that the symbolism associated with Freemasonry probably had a much earlier genesis.611 Subsequent historians of Freemasonry have written that the ritual of the Blue Lodge—the first three degrees—was probably not developed until 1723 or 1725.612

[p.103-p.104] The Authentic School also recognized that the rituals of Freemasonry have never been static, but have evolved both in time and place. For example, only post-1760 rituals included separate obligations for degrees in conjunction with signs, penalties, tokens, and words, the form found in most subsequent rituals and the same format followed in the Mormon temple endowment.613 The United Grand Lodge of England recently eliminated "all references to physical penalties... from the obligations taken by candidates in the three degrees."614 Ironically, penalties in the Mormon endowment, which have been compared to those in Freemasonry, have also been recently removed.615

[p.104] Although Goodwin was undoubtedly aware of this scholarship, he did not attack the Mormon rationale for similarities between the two rituals—that both were related to the same ancient rituals practiced in Solomon's temple616—since to do so could have upset a portion of his own Masonic readership which still believed in the ancient origins of the Craft.617 In addition, Goodwin's claim that Mormonism had "borrowed" Masonic symbols was less compelling in light of Masonry's own borrowing of symbols from alchemy, the Kabbalah, Egyptian rites, astrology, and the Bible618. John A. Widstoe's retort that Joseph Smith had the right to use similar (read "the same") symbols as Masonry without being charged with plagiarism and that Smith received the endowment by revelation regardless of similarities with Masonic rites is more convincing than the arguments of Roberts and Ballard that denied any relationship with Freemasonry but then also argued that similarities were possible since both traced their origins to Solomon.

The Egyptian Connection

Both Hugh Nibley and Michael Quinn have downplayed similarities between the temple endowment and Freemasonry and instead have emphasized parallels with ancient Egyptian rites and occult mysteries. This perspective is consistent with Roberts's and Ballard's belief that the endowment was revealed to Joseph Smith while he was translating the Book of Abraham. It is also consistent with the nineteenth-century Masonic dogma that Masonry was practiced by ancient Egyptians and other occult traditions.619 and with Nibley's own findings that elements in the Mormon ritual were contained in rituals which predated Freemasonry.620 Still it does not satisfactorily account for the striking similarities between Freemasonry and the endowment.

[p.105] While twentieth-century Masonry continues to be fascinated by ancient Egyptian religion and rites, modern scholarship does not support the legend that Masonic rituals are the direct descendents of Egyptian rites. Masonry's association with Egypt began when Speculative Freemasonry introduced Egyptian elements into the rituals in the wake of enthusiasm for Egypt by eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinkers. Napoleon's Egyptian campaign was a catalyst for modern Egyptian archaeology and helped promote "Egyptian mania" which began several decades earlier in some European lodges. Ironically, the Egyptian mummies which contained the famous papyri translated by Joseph Smith in Kirtland and Nauvoo and published as the Book of Abraham—which Roberts and Ballard believed contained elements of the endowment ritual and provided a catalyst for the revelation of the complete endowment—were discovered in Egypt by an employee621 of Bernardino Drovetti,622 a former French Consul-General under Napoleon and a member of a group of French and Italian Egyptologists who have been associated with members of a secret Masonic "Egyptian" society. Although Egyptian elements were introduced into Masonic rituals before 1800, and some prominent Freemasons secretly converted to what they believed was the genuine Egyptian religion before that time,623 modern scholars have found no evidence of Egyptian elements in Freemasonry prior to the eighteenth century. Even though an Egyptian theme emerged in European esotericism in the sixteenth century, speculative esotericists did not interfere with Masonic rituals before the mid-seventeenth century. When the legends of the craft did emerge, it was of Roman Catholic rather than Egyptian origin.

[p.105-p.106] This Catholic/Egyptian connection is as controversial as the Mormon/Masonic relationship. In 1992 an influential German Roman Catholic priest and theologian, Eugen Drewermann, was suspended from his priestly functions and deprived of his chair at a Roman Catholic institution because he was charged, among other
things, with teaching that Roman Catholic rituals, including the Mass, were borrowed from the Egyptians by early Christians rather than being of divine origin. Although Drewermann is a best-selling author, professional Egyptologists have objected that there is not a single "Egyptian religion" and that not enough is known about Egyptian rituals to make meaningful comparisons. The same objections apply when one tries to find "genuine" Egyptian elements in Mormon or Masonic rituals.

[p.106] Although the Book of Abraham and other revelations of Joseph Smith may provide independent connections between the Mormon endowment and an Egyptian endowment or other ancient occult mysteries, they cannot explain away Masonic parallels. Although Michael Quinn recognizes that "Masonic rites also shared some similarity with the ancient Egyptian mysteries," Masonic commentators who long recognized elements of the Ancient Mysteries were adopted by or grafted onto Freemasonry, particularly the Master Mason's degree, during the eighteenth century. He does not specifically discuss what similarities exist between Freemasonry and Mormonism except to conclude that they must be regarded as superficial. The litmus test Quinn applies to distinguish between "superficial" and "fundamental" similarities is whether such similarities are "structural" or "philosophical." Presumably Quinn would consider similarities in washing and anointing, Creation drama, Garden of Eden, signs, tokens, obligations, penalties, veil, apron, prayer circle, symbols, and secrecy as "structural" similarities. Nineteenth-century Freemasons would not dismiss them. Many of these things were superficial to them as well. But superficial or not they demonstrate that Joseph's starting point was the rituals of Freemasonry and that he adopted and adapted some of its "superficial" elements.

[p.106 p.107] Quinn also argues that there is no philosophical similarity because "no Mason at Joseph Smith's time or thereafter defined the central purpose of Masonic rites to be an ascent into heaven." Although it is true that there are significant differences between the endowment and Masonic ritual--no Mason would claim that Masonic rituals are necessary for exaltation in the hereafter--Quinn's distinction fails to give any credence to the notion that Joseph Smith adapted Masonry. His key holds that the Masonic ritual originated in Solomon's temple, which was built "for the purpose of giving endowments," and that the system of Masonry was "drawn from revelation." and that "ancient Masonry, since the time of Solomon, has been handed down, in all essential points, in perfect conformity to the rights and ceremonies then established." It also fails to account for the early Mormon belief that these rituals provided the catalyst for the restoration of what Franklin D. Richards called "true Masonry, as we have it in our temples." The Craft at the time of Joseph Smith did provide a system to enable members "asent into heaven." Both Masons and anti-Masons of the period wrote about it. Masons believed that the system of the lodges and their rituals were designed for the "celestial lodge," and that when they built their lodges, through the Craft degrees, they were preparing themselves for entry into the celestial lodge. The lodge consisted of "practical allusions to instruct the Craftsmen . . . tending to the glory of God, and to secure them temporal blessings here, and eternal life hereafter." Thus Masonic teaching that by advancing through the Masonic degrees an initiate "discovers his election to, and his glorified station in, the Kingdom of his father" and that he should pray to go "from this earthly tabernacle to the heavenly temple above there, among thy jewels, may we appear in thy glory for ever and ever." Even anti-Masons recognized that "Masonry pretends to save men, to conduct them to heaven, and bestow on them rewards of a blessed immortality." The fact that Freemasonry did not, and does not, teach that its signs and tokens, unlike the signs and tokens of Mormonism, are literally keys which must be given to "angels who stand as sentinels" to "walk back the presence of the Father" does not negate that a central purpose of Freemasonry is to facilitate the ascent of man into heaven. The Mason's degree teaches the immortality of the soul and that after death "the Son of Righteousness shall descend, and send forth his angels to collect our ransomed dust; then if we are found worthy, man into heaven. The Master Mason's degree teaches the immortality of the soul and that after death "the Son of Righteousness shall descend, and send forth his angels to collect our ransomed dust; then if we are found worthy, man into heaven.

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The Kabbalistic Connection

An alternative theory which has not been widely discussed by Mormon scholars is that elements of the temple endowment, can be traced to Jewish mysticism transmitted through the Kabbalah. It has been claimed that the Kabbalah, in an imperfect form, preserved ancient mysteries known to the Israelites. Similarities between the endowment and Masonic rituals could theoretically be explained by the fact that the esoteric wing of eighteenth-century Freemasonry was influenced by and incorporated elements of Jewish mysticism and the Kabbalah into its rituals. Nonetheless, the thesis has also been advanced that information on the Kabbalah and mystic Judaism was available to Joseph Smith independent of his association with Freemasonry.

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Different Perspectives on the Process of Revelation

Those who believe that the revelations of Joseph Smith were received by a mechanical process—word for word from the mouth of God—and that they required no inquiry or thought on his part must address the observations by scholars who note grammatical errors, anachronisms, and familiar phrases, including biblical verses, in the Book of Mormon, as well as evidence that revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants contain responses to contemporary concerns. Although it may be difficult to explain similarities, graphic or superficial, between Masonic rites and the endowment if one believes in the mechanical process of revelation or translation, such similarities are consistent with a process in which a prophet begins with a text and seeks inspiration to restore it to its “original” meaning or to give it new meaning using his own words and the words of the cultural context in which he is situated. Given this perspective, it is not surprising that church officials—not anti-Mormons—who were personally acquainted with Joseph Smith first noted the relationship between Masonry and Mormonism. Anti-Mormons were reluctant to compare a mainstream institution like Masonry with the controversial practices of Mormonism.

[p.110-111] At the turn of the twentieth century, church writers responded to criticisms of the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham, and other revelations of Joseph Smith by advancing the thesis that revelations and translations are not merely the product of a “mechanical process”; that Joseph Smith studied the Egyptian language and translated the language of Abraham; that his translations were entirely based on the Book of Mormon; that at times he adopted language from the Bible in translating the Book of Mormon when “the Nephite record clearly paralleled passages in the Bible”; and that the prophet retranslated and restored lost scripture. More recently, Hugh Nibley has stated that the method employed by Smith to translate or receive revelation, or whether he used the Urim and Thummim, is totally irrelevant to establishing the bona fides of the Prophet. They do not even make sense as expressions of normal human curiosity, since Joseph Smith made it perfectly clear that the vital ingredient in every transmission of ancient or heavenly knowledge is always beyond the comprehension and analysis of ordinary mortals. If it mattereth not by what imponderable method Smith produced his translations, as long as he held up the right answers, it matters even less from what particular edition of what particular text he was translating. It is enough at present to know that the Prophet was translating from real books of Abraham, Moses, Enoch, Mosiah and Zenos, whose teachings now reach us in a huge and growing corpus of newly discovered writings.

Other Mormon authors go further and consider the plates, papyri, and texts as tangible support for spiritual experiences which may have been influenced by but were not dependent upon these material elements.

[p.111-112] Unlike the Book of Mormon, Book of Abraham and other revelations, in which context has been recognized and acknowledged, most church writers in the twentieth century have characterized the process by which the endowment was received as a revelation totally independent of Smith’s association with Freemasonry or his knowledge of Masonic rites. It is ironic that B. H. Roberts was one of the first church authorities to deny any connection between Masonry and Mormonism since Joseph Smith’s use of Masonic rituals, as a source of inspiration for the endowment, is consistent with his thesis of how revelation occurs. Although Anthony W. Ivins’s book, and John A. Widtsoe’s articles departed from the strategy mapped out by Ballard and Roberts—they did not claim that Smith received the endowment before becoming a Mason—they also failed to acknowledge, as earlier church leaders had, that the prophet benefitted from his association with Freemasonry. Although Widtsoe acknowledged similarities between the endowment and other rituals, stated that the prophet had the right to employ similar symbols and methods without being charged with plagiarism, and concluded that Smith received the temple endowment and its ritual “by revelation from God,” he refused to acknowledge what his predecessors knew: the rituals of Freemasonry provided a starting point for the Mormon prophet’s revelation of “true Masonry.” Such an acknowledgment would not only be supported by statements made by early church leaders but also consistent with Roberts’s thesis of how revelation occurs.

[p.112] Dilemmas in church history are more easily understood if one acknowledges that Joseph Smith used his own imperfect thought processes, that the language he used represented the cultural context in which he was situated, and that he adapted recognizable texts and documents through creative inspiration. Whether the rituals of Freemasonry originated in antiquity, as Joseph and Brigham believed, or whether they are of recent origin, as most historians now believe, is “irrelevant” if one believes that recent texts—such as papyri or rituals—can provide a catalyst for a spiritual experience and that the resulting text or ritual constitutes revelation of heavenly images through allegory and symbolism. Smith’s experiences are “taken away” through references to such contemporary contexts. But it does mean that context is relevant in any study of revelation, and that few scholars accept the legitimacy of immediate and non-contextual “dictation” (or “translation”) even for the New Testament.

Conclusion

In 1984 the Grand Lodge of Utah reversed its policy of prohibiting Mormons from joining Masonic lodges. Since then increasing numbers of Mormons have been initiated, despite church discouragement. The strongest church statements were made before World War II, although as recently as 1983 the General Handbook of Instructions, under the heading “Secret Organizations,” warned “members strongly not to join any organization that . . . is secret and oath-bound,” and further advised that “local leaders decide whether Church members who belong to secret oath-bound organizations may be ordained or advanced in the priesthood or may receive a temple recommend.” This policy was removed from the 1989 edition of the Handbook, but subsequent church statements have relied on
the language of the 1983 Handbook. Nevertheless, no church discipline has been taken against members who have joined the Craft since 1984.

Hopefully, these changes will not only improve relations between Masons and Mormons but will also discourage the "all-or-nothing" approach that has characterized the debate over the relationship between their rituals. Ultimately, the efficacy of the Mormon temple ceremony does not depend on whether Joseph Smith adopted or adapted portions of the Masonic ritual when he instituted the endowment or whether the rituals of Freemasonry originated in Solomon's temple. Arthur E. Waite, a prominent Masonic scholar, recognizing the relatively recent origins of Masonic ritual, noted that "antiquity per se is not a test of value. I can imagine a Rite created at this day which would be much greater and more eloquent in symbolism than anything that we work and love under the name of Masonry." Similarly, the legitimacy of the endowment rests on the faith of members who believe that it was heaven sent and find it meaningful and life-giving.
37. See Carr, 43. I am indebted to Kent L. Walgren for sharing a portion of his considerable knowledge of Masonic bibliography.
38. Pick and Knight, 88.
42. Anonymous, Jachin and Boaz (London: n.p., 1762).
44. Anonymous, Shibboleth (London, 1765).
46. J. G. Tupographos, Mahhabone (Liverpool, 1766).
47. Thomas Wilson, Solomon in All his Glory (London, 1766).
50. Coil, 91.
53. Hamill and Gilbert, 58.
54. Pick and Knight, 106.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid., 112.
57. Carnes, 23.
60. Ibid., 19-21.
61. Ibid., 23.
62. Ibid., 30.
63. Hamill, 88.
66. See A Report on the Abduction of William Morgan (New York, 14 Feb. 1829). This number may be inflated since the Freemason’s Library of approximately the same time listed 157 Masonic lodges in New York State. See also Henry Leonard Stillson, ed., History of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, and Concordant Orders (Boston: Fraternity Publishing Co., 1910), 261; James C. Oslone, Opinions on Speculative Masonry (Boston, 1830), 198; and Formisano, 143.
68. Dyer, 125, 128-29.
69. [Thomas Smith Webb], The Freemason’s Monitor; or Illustrations of Masonry (Albany: Spencer and Webb, 1797), A2; Coil, 100; Dyer, 154.
70. Coil, 99; Dyer, 154.
71. Coil, 100.
72. Roberts, 222; Carnes, 48.
73. Carnes, 49.
74. Roberts, 222.
76. Waite, 1:159.
77. Carnes, 23.
78. Ibid., 23-24.
102. See D. Michael Quinn, Early Mormonism and the Magic World View (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 164.
99. Morgan, 69-70; Bernard, 58-9. Morgan admits that Hiram Abiff was an Old Testament figure (2 Chr. 2:13), although the name Abiff is not used.
97. The Lewiston Committee, LeRoy Convention, A Revelation of Freemasonry as published to the World by a knowledgeable student of Masonry and Mormonism.
96. Carnes, 24. See also Stone, 388-97.
95. Avery Allyn, A Ritual of Freemasonry, Illustrated by Numerous Engravings. To Which is Added a Key to the Phi Beta Kappa, the Orange, and Odd Fellows Societies (Philadelphia: John Clarke, 1831). Art deHoyos pointed out to me that Allyn's exposé contains degrees not included in Bernard.
92. The Lewiston Committee, LeRoy Convention, A Revelation of Freemasonry as Published to the World by a number of prominent Freemasons in the group” (see Henry W. Coil, Encyclopedia, 545). Others have reached opposite conclusions. See Christopher McIntosh, The Rose Cross and the Age of Reason (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992); Lawrence O. Lewis, The Morgan Affair (Batavia: D. C. Miller, 1827); and Clarence O. Lewis, The Morgan Affair (Batavia: D. C. Miller, 1827).
90. [William Morgan], Illustrations of Masonry (Batavia, NY: Printed for the Author, 1826).
89. See deposition of Mrs. Lucinda Morgan, in A Narrative of the Facts and Circumstances Relating to the Kidnapping and Murder of William Morgan (Batavia: D. C. Miller, 1827).
88. Mock, 28-29.
87. Many members of the Craft, including Art deHoyos, do not believe that Morgan was a regular Mason. Although no record of his initiation has been located, it is not impossible that such records were destroyed after his disappearance. For a discussion of William Morgan, see Keith Muir, "The Morgan Affair and its Effect on Freemasonry," Ars Quinta Coronatorum 105 (1992): 217-34; Stanley Upton Mock, The Morgan Episode in American Free Masonry (East Aurora, NY: The Roycrofters, 1930); John C. Palmer, The Morgan Affair and Anti-Masonry (Washington, D.C.: The Masonic Service Association of the United States, 1924); Rob Morris, William Morgan: Or Political Anti-Masonry, its Rise, Growth and Decadence (New York: Robert McCoy, 1883); William L. Stone, Letters on Masonry and Anti-Masonry addressed to the Hon. John Quincy Adams (New York: O. Hausted, 1832), 123-297; and Clarence O. Lewis, The Morgan Affair (Batavia: D. C. Miller, 1827).
85. Richard Carlile, Manual of Masonry, with an Introductory Key-stone to the Royal Arch (London, 1843). A later edition of Carlile’s Richard Carlile’s Manual of Freemasonry, in three parts, with an Explanatory Introduction to the Science, and a free translation of some of the Sacred Scripture names (London, 1853). Art deHoyos pointed out to me that Carlile claimed some credit for Morgan’s exposé and that the first exposé of so-called haut grade Masonry in America, by Mary Harlon, Revelations of Masonry, Made by a Late Member of the Craft, in Four Parts (New York: Printed for the Author, 1827), was a plagiarism, at least in part, of Carlile.
84. John Cosens Ogden, A View of the New England Illuminati: who are indefatigably engaged in destroying the religion and government of the United States; under a feigned regard for their safety--and under an impious abuse of true religion (Philadelphia T. Carey, 1790); Seth Peason, Proofs of the real existence, and dangerous tendency of Illuminism, containing an abstract of the most interesting parts of what Dr. Robison and the Abbe Barruel have published on this subject; with a collateral proofs and general observations (Charlestown, MA: Samuel Etheridge, 1822).
83. The Protestant case was made by John Robison, Proofs of a conspiracy against all the religions and governments of Europe carried on in the secret meetings of Freemasons, Illuminati, and reading societies, 4th ed. (New York: G. Forman, 1786); The Catholic case was made by Abbe Augustin Barruel. The Anti-Christian and Anti-Social Conspiracy (Lancaster, PA: Joseph Ehrenfried, 1812). (Barruel’s 1813 Lancaster edition is but a partial translation of a four-volume work published in French in 1797.) Preston responded to these works in the 10th edition of his book published in 1801. Some Masonic writers were “not primarily Masonic, and evidently not founded by Masonic authority, though it pirated or paraphrased Masonic rituals and at one time or another had a number of prominent Freemasons in the group” (see Henry W. Coil, Encyclopedia, 545). Others have reached opposite conclusions. See Christopher McIntosh, The Rose Cross and the Age of Reason (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992); Lawrence O. Lewis, The Morgan Affair (Batavia: D. C. Miller, 1827); and Clarence O. Lewis, The Morgan Affair (Batavia: D. C. Miller, 1827). See also John E. Thompson, The Masons, the Mormons and the Morgan Incident (Ames, IA: Iowa Research Lodge, n.d.).
79. The Pennsylvania Gazette (issued “From Thursday, December 3. To Tuesday December 8. 1730.”) This information was obtained from Allen E. Roberts, Freemasonry in American History (Richmond, VA: Macoy Publishing & Masonic Co., Inc., 1985), 10-11; Pick and Knight, 380-81; and from information kindly supplied by Art deHoyos, a knowledgeable student of Masonry and Mormonism.
76. see, for example, Henry Dana Ward, Free Masonry (New York, 1828), 1-5.
75. Morgan, 69-70; Bernard, 58-9. Morgan admits that Hiram Abiff was an Old Testament figure (2 Chr. 2:13), although the name Abiff is not used.
74. Bernard, 62: “Masonry professes to bring men to heaven, and yet it denies its blessings to a large majority of the human family. All the fair part of creation, together with the old, young and poor, are exempted. How unlike the glorious gospel of the Son of God! In this there is no restriction of persons; the high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, male and female, are all one in Christ Jesus.”
73. See D. Michael Quinn, Early Mormonism and the Magic World View (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 164.

105. Thaddeus Mason Harris, Discourses Delivered on Public Occasions; Illustrating the Principles, Displaying the Tendency and Vindicating the Design of Free-Masonry (Charlestown, 1801); Joshua Bradley, Some of the Beauties of Free-Masonry: Being Extracts from Publications, Which have Received the Approbation of the Wise and Virtuous of the Fraternity; With Introductory Remarks, Designed to Remove the Various Objections Made Against the Order, 2d ed., (Albany: G. J. Loomis & Co., 1821).

106. See Scott G. Kenney, ed., Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 9 vols. (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1983-85), 2:545 (9 May 1843); "I spent the day at Clithorne at Sister Duckworth copying a work from an account of the 5 first degrees upon Masonry"; and Helen Mar Whitney, Women's Exposon 11 (15 July 1829): 26: "I remember once when but a young girl, of getting a glimpse of the outside of the Morgan's book, Exposing Masony, but which my father (Heber C. Kimball) always kept locked up."


108. Morgan, 102; see also Hutchinson, 82; Stearns, 43.

109. Masonic Mirror, Nov. 27, 1824.

110. Webb, 34.

111. Masonic Mirror, 27 Nov. 1824.


113. For an Old Testament parallel to this legend, see Exodus 28:36-38, which reads, in part: "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engraving of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD."

114. Webb, 242-7. Enoch's legend is contained in the Knights of the Ninth Arch Degree.

115. Webb, 249-57. According to some exposés, the signs, tokens, and words were used to distinguish the grades of masons and their wages. See, for example, Carlile, 49-50; Bernard, 94-95. See also Hutchinson, 139; Calcott, 123-24.

116. Morgan, 78-103; Bernard, 61-74. The legend of Hiriam Abiff is contained in the Master Masons degree. For biblical references to Hiriam [Abiff], see 3 Chr. 2:3; 4:16; 1 Kgs. 7:14.

117. The emblems include the Beehive and the All-Seeing Eye. See Morgan, 78-103, and Bernard, 61-74.

118. Bernard, 196-199. The beheading of this ruffian and the pledge to revenge his death is contained in the Elected Knights of Nine Degree. See also 1783 Fracken, Ms., archives of the Supreme Council, 33°, Northern Jurisdiction, Lexington, Massachusetts.

119. Bernard, 124-44. The restoration of the Master's Word is contained in the Royal Arch Degree.


121. Ibid., 9-17.

122. See The Telegraph (Painesville, OH) 2d Series II (22 Mar. 1831): 40; Ohio Star, as quoted in Max H. Parkin, Conflict at Kirtland (Salt Lake City, 1966), 23.


125. Morris, William Morgan, 196.

126. Nervin B. Hogan, "The Two Joseph Smith's Masonic Experiences," 17 Jan. 1987. 13. Hogan assumes that Joseph Smith, Sr., was a Mason and that he became an anti-Mason. Although this may prove true, there is no corroborating evidence that Joseph Smith who joined Ontario Lodge No. 23 and signed a petition published in The Seneca Farmer and Waterloo Advertiser was the prophet's father. The New York 1820 census demonstrates that there were other Joseph Smiths in the vicinity.

127. Harris was quoted in 1831 as stating that The Book of Mormon is "the Anti-Masonic Bible" (Geneva Gazette, 15 Mar. 1831). He also participated in an anti-masonic committee in Palmyra in 1827. See Wayne Sentinel, 6 Oct. 1827, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Martin Harris, the Honorable New York Farmer," Improvement Em 72 (Feb. 1969): 20.

128. See Bernard, 413-17; 452-59; Milton W. Hamilton, Anti- Masonic Newspapers, 1826-1834 (Portland, ME: Southworth-Authoseen Press, 1939), 82. (Phelps and R. M. Blumer established the Ontario Phoenix on April 28, 1829, in Canandaigua, New York). See also Kenneth W. Godfrey, "Joseph Smith and the Masons," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 64 (Spring 1971): 79-90. (W. W. Phelps was the "author of at least two anti-Masonic newspapers, one in Trumansburg, New York, called the Lake Light, and another in Canandaigua, New York, named The Ontario Phoenix . . . "). See also The Wayne Sentinel (Palmy, NY) 5 (7 Mar. 1828). (After renouncing Masony in 1828 Phelps announced his intention of publishing the various Masonic degrees). Phelps received a copy of the Book of Mormon on April 9, 1830, three days after the church was organized, and continued as editor until May 18, 1831, when he traveled to Kirtland, Ohio, and was baptized. See D&C 55. Soon thereafter he arrived in Jackson County where he was called to be a printer for the church. See D&C 57:11. In June 1832 he began publishing The Evening and Morning Star in which extracts from the Book of Mormon appeared which warned against "secret combinations." See The Evening and Morning Star 1 (June 1832): 8; 1 (Jan. 1833): 2. Phelps later became a member of the presidency of the Stake of Zion on July 3, 1834. He also was instrumental in the publication of the Book of Commandments, the Doctrine and Covenants, and A Selection of Hymns. Although he was excommunicated on March 17, 1839, he was reinstated in 1841 and became a member of the Nauvoo City Council. While in Nauvoo, Phelps became a temple ordinance worker where he frequently played the part of the devil who had Masonic symbols on his apron. He continued to play this role in Utah. In Utah he was also a member of the territorial legislature and published the Deseret Almanac from 1851-65. See Andrew Jensen, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jensen Historical Co., 1901-36), 3:602-97.
169. Ibid., 31.
172. Van Wagoner, 27, 39n2.
174. Ibid., 177-79.
175. Ibid., 270.
176. Ibid., 275-76.
177. Ibid., 287, 293, 295-96, 341.
180. History of the Church, 4:164
181. Reynolds, 184.
182. Sam H. Goodwin, Mormonism and Masonry: A Utah Point of View (Salt Lake City: Sugarhouse Press, 1921), 4.
184. History of the Church, 4:550, 566.
185. Godfrey, 79.
188. History of the Church, 4:552-53.
189. Minutes of the Relief Society, 24 Mar. 1842, archives, historical department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS archives).
190. Ibid., 8 Sept. 1842 (recording an epistle read on March 30).
196. Reynolds, 174-75.
197. Ibid., 175.
203. History of the Church, 5:446.
204. Reynolds, 192-93.
207. History of the Church, 6:285.
208. Hogan notes that the “first recorded intimation of possibly building its own Masonic Temple is dated Thursday, February 16, 1843, at the regular meeting of Nauvoo Lodge.” Hyrum Smith laid the cornerstone on June 24, 1843, during a ceremony attended by eight officers and 107 members of Nauvoo Lodge and forty-three visiting Masons. John Taylor delivered an oration. See Hogan, “The Erection and Dedication of the Nauvoo Masonic Temple” (Salt Lake City, 27 Dec. 1976), 3-6. See also History of the Church, 5:446.
209. Reynolds, 244.
210. History of the Church, 6:287. See also Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 2:373. According to Hogan, the lodge minutes indicate that there were ten officers, 318 members of Nauvoo Lodge, and fifty-one masonic visitors in attendance. See Hogan, “Erection and Dedication,” 13.
211. Reynolds, 254-57.
213. Diary of Horace Eldredge, 6 Apr. 1844, LDS archives.
216. Ibid., 228.
217. Ibid., 261.
218. See Nauvoo Masonic Lodge Minute Book. LDS archives. See also Mervin B. Hogan, The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge U.D. (Des Moines, IA, 4 Apr. 1974), 49-81.


220. History of the Church, 6:321-22. For Hyrum Smith’s address, see ibid., 298-301.

221. Ibid., 298-90.

222. Ibid., 299.


224. B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century 1, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1950), 2:135-36 (hereafter Comprehensive History); Complainants Abstract of Pleading in Evidence in the Circuit Court of the United States, Western District of Missouri, Western Division at Kansas City, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, Complainant, vs. The Church of Christ at Independence, Missouri (Lamoni, IA: Herald House, 1893), 299.


227. Ibid., 2-3; “Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” 116, LDS archives.

228. “Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” 129.

229. I realize there were actually ten men present if one counts Joseph Smith, as Heber C. Kimball did when he wrote that he was endowed “in company with nine others” (Kimball Journal, 1845, under “Strange Events,” 114). It is also true, however, that Joseph was not initiated the same day as the rest of the quorum. See “Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” 116; History of the Church, 5:2-3. I am indebted to Richard S. Van Wagoner who first mentioned to me the possibility of a connection between Royal Arch Masonry and the endowment.

230. Waite, 2:375-78.


234. Ibid., 204.


236. Ibid., 11.

237. Stone, 43.

238. Macoy, 332, 502-503; Sheville, 131-32.

239. Christopher Hoffner, Regularity of Origin (Hong Kong: Paul Chater Lodge, 1960), 106.

240. Stone, 54.


242. Unfortunately it is impossible to determine whether Adams was a member of Springfield Chapter No. 1 R.A.M. since chapter records prior to 1850 were destroyed in a fire. See Illinois Masonic Directory (Springfield, 1953), 6.


244. Morgan, 94; Bernard, 85-86.

245. Sheville, 132; Macoy, 458.

246. Macoy, 303; Mackey, 319.

247. Macoy, 250, 303; Mackey, 338.


249. Ibid., 256.

250. Ibid., 300-91; Sheville, 131-208.

251. Sheville, 209; Macoy, 168; Pick and Knight, 282.


253. Mackey, 388.

254. Macoy, 283.

255. Mackey, 338.

256. Ibid., 247; Sheville, 212.


258. Sheville, 212.


260. Town, 76.

261. Ibid.
Some early participants in the endowment believed that the veil was "in imitation of the one in Solomon’s Temple" (see Salt Lake Daily Tribune, 28 Sept. 1879, 4), and that the temple garment represented the "white stone" or new name given to each candidate (see Thomas White, The Mormon Mysteries; Being and Exposition of the Ceremonies of "The Endowment" and of the Seven Degrees of the Temple [New York: Edmund K. Knowlton, 1851], 7).

Quinn, 1978, 86. In Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 2:313 (28 Sept. 1843), Woodruff only recorded that: “President Joseph Smith received his second Anointing this day.” No reference is made to Emma Smith.


Mackay, 27-28.

Ibid., 29, 31.

Ibid., 30-

Scott H. Faulring, An American Prophet’s Record, The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1987), 416: “Beurach Ale [Joseph Smith] was by common consent & unanimous voice chosen President of the quorum & anointed & ord to the highest and holiest order of the priesthood (& companion).” Quinn’s transcription of this entry ends “& companion–dit[t]o.” Faulring intimates and Quinn specifically states that the word “companion” refers Joseph’s companion, Emma, who was ordained as a queen and priestess (Quinn, 65). While Quinn is probably correct, it is interesting that Emma is not named as being in attendance in Faulring’s or Quinn’s transcription or in the account contained in History of the Church, 6:39, or in Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 2:313 (even though later entries do list wives as being present). Nevertheless, it is well established that Emma was a member of the Holy Order, and there is apparently no other reference to her initiation. See "Manuscript History of Brigham Young," 154-59 (22 Oct. 1845-29 Jan. 1844). See also Faulring, 418, 425, 426, 440, 441-42, 444, 445.

Laurin, 123-24.


Quinn, 93.


History of the Church, 7:556.

Buerger, 254n8; John K. Edmonds, Through Temple Doors (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1978), 72.


See, for example, Heber C. Kimball Diary, 15-21 Dec. 1845, LDS archives.


Journal of Discourses 23:131-32; see also 362-63.

While it has occasionally been claimed that the ceremony has remained unchanged (see Joseph Fielding Smith, Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1961], 87), church authorities have revealed that this is not the case (see, e.g., Packer, 191-206).


Hyde, 100.


Ibid., 9:267.

See Salt Lake Tribune, 4 June 1923; Los Angeles Times, 5 May 1990.


David O. McKay, quoted by Truman G. Madsen in a Brigham Young University Ten-State Fireside Address, 5 May 1972.

Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1958), 209.

Joseph Fielding Smith, comp. Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938), 237. See also History of the Church, 4:24.


See History of the Church, 5:2 (I spent the day … instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchisedek Priesthood’); and John A. Widtsoe, “Temple Worship,” The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine 12 (Apr. 1921): 58 (“The endowment and temple work as revealed by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith … fall clearly into four distinct parts: the preparatory ordinances; covenants; and, finally, tests of knowledge”).

History of the Church, 2:287; Jessee, Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 61.


History of the Church, 2:410-28, 429-30; Jessee, Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 183-84.


E. Cecil McGavin, Mormonism and Masonry (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1903), 39.

This “holy anointing” and endowment was bestowed only on a chosen few prior to completion of the temple. See Journal of Discourses 13:49.


334. [Thomas White], Authentic History of Remarkable Persons, who have attracted public attention in various parts of the world: including a full exposure of the iniquities of the pretended prophet Joe Smith, and the seven degrees of the Mormon Temple, and an account of the frauds practiced by Matthias the Prophet, and other religious imposters (New York: Wilson and Company, 1849); Thomas White, The Mormon Mysteries: Being an Exposition of the Ceremonies of “The Endowment” and the Seven Degrees of the Temple (New York: Edmund K. Knowlton, 1851).

335. Catherine Lewis, Narrative of Some of the Proceedings of the Mormons, etc. (Lynn, MA: the Author, 1848).

336. History of the Church, 7:25.

337. An endowment ceremony was apparently performed in 1849 on Ensign Peak. See Comprehensive History, 3:386.


339. Ibid. 2:32.


347. Ibid. 2:65.


351. See Burton, 255-56; Remy and Brenchley, 2:74-5; Beadle, 499-500.


355. Ibid., 42.

356. Ibid., 49.

357. Ibid., 50.

358. Ibid., 51.

359. Ibid., 256.


361. Ibid., 356.

362. Ibid., 357.

363. Ibid., 367-68.

364. Ibid., 368.

365. Ibid., 369.

366. Young, Wife No. 19, 368.

367. Ibid., 371.


370. J. Cecil Alter, Early Utah Journalism (Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society, 1938), 333.


372. The Masonic Hall was made available for meetings of “counter Mormon organizations.” For example, both the Liberal Party and the Godbeites used the hall for organizational meetings during the late 1860s and early 1870s. See Tullidge’s Quarterly Magazine 3 (Oct. 1883): 51. In addition, the Masonic Hall was used in 1870 for discussions concerning the drafting of an anti-polygamy bill. See Tullidge’s Quarterly Magazine 1 (Oct. 1880): 39.


377. The Mormon Endowment House (Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Co., 1872); Mysteries of the Endowment House (Salt Lake City, 1879); Mysteries of the Endowment House (Salt Lake City, 1879) [separate publications].
381. Mysteries of the Endowment House and Oath of Vengeance (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake Tribune, 1906).
386. Edward W. Tullidge, Tullidge's Histories (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1889), 425-65.
387. Ibid., 426, emphasis in original.
388. Ibid., 447.
389. Ibid., 449, emphasis in original. For a discussion of how this issue was used to deny George Q. Cannon his seat in Congress, see ibid., 448.
391. Ibid., 8.
395. James H. Wills, Sr., The Oath of Vengeance (n.p., n.d.).
399. Remy, 2:75.
400. Burton, 426.
401. Ibid., 426. One historian recently quoted from a Masonic text written in Russia concerning "Theological Moral Institution[,] A Discussion Concerning Adam's Fall," which was inspired by Milton's Paradise Lost. Valentin Boss, Milton and the Rise of Russian Satanism (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 48-49.
403. Phil Robinson, Sinners and Saints (London: Sampson, Law, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1883), 139.
404. Wilhelm Wyl, Mormon Portraits (Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Co., 1886), 269.
407. Bennett, 276.
408. Hyde, 100.
409. Salt Lake Tribune, 8 Oct. 1870, 5; reprinted from Salt Lake Tribune, 3 Sept. 1870, 4. Goodwin refers to the author of this passage, Harrison, as a "vigorous church writer," implying that he was a Mormon authority (see, Goodwin, Additional Studies in Mormonism and Masonry, 34-35). This demonstrates that Goodwin may have understood some aspects of Mormon history better than others. Although the reference to Masonry implies a belief that the "signs and tokens" were received from Masonic rites, the whole discussion can only be fully comprehended in the context of Harrison's belief in Spiritualism and that one may speak with discarnate spirits without "signs and tokens" or "tests and key-words."
410. T. B. H. Stenthouse, The Rocky Mountain Saints (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1873), 698. But Stenthouse also noted that "In 'The Mormon's own Book,' by T. W. P. Taylder, 139-147, a singular resemblance is pointed out between the ceremonies in the Eleusinia--a festival among the Cretans--and the mysteries of the Mormon Endowment, as set forth by Van Dusen."
411. Tullidge's Histories, 425.
412. Ibid., 426.
414. Tullidge's Histories, 442.
415. Green, 49-50.
416. Young, Wife No. 19, 357.
417. Ibid., 371.
423. In Van Wagoner, 175.
424. For a summary of this struggle, see Michael W. Homer, "Masonry and Mormonism in Utah, 1847-1984," Journal of Mormon History 18 (Fall 1992).
Although some have claimed that Young was a Freemason before joining the church (see Kenneth W. Godfrey, “Joseph Smith and the Masons,” Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 64 [Spring 1971]: 81-82; Leonard J. Arrington, Brigham Young: American Moses [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985], 89; James J. Tyler, “John Cook Bennett, Colorful Freemason of the Early Nineteenth Century,” reprint from Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ohio [n.p., 1947], 8), Young was not a charter member of Nauvoo Lodge and was initiated, passed, and raised in April 1842. See Hogan, The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge.

Hogan, The Official Minutes of Nauvoo Lodge.

Heber C. Kimball to Parley P. Pratt, 17 June 1842, Parley P. Pratt Papers, LDS archives.


Ibid. 18:303. Although Young was clearly referring to the Masonic tradition of Hiram Abiff, it has been suggested that he may have been referring to Zachariah (Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:31; 2 Chron. 24:20). See John A. Tvedtøes, “The Temple Ceremony in Ancient Rites,” 18, privately circulated.

Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 13 Nov. 1858.

Ehat, 145; see also ibid., 147.

In Oliver Olney Papers, LDS archives.

Ibid.

Horace Cummings, “History of Horace Cummings,” in Kenneth W. Godfrey, “Causes of Mormon Non-Mormon Conflict in Hancock County, Illinois, 1839-1846,” Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1967, 86. A portion of Cummings’s journal was published in the Juvenile Instructor in August 1929. In that version Joseph Smith’s explanation of the Masonic rite is rendered as follows: “One of the first incidents recorded which greatly impressed my mind and which make a useful lesson was related by my father. His parents, who had a large family, lived in Nauvoo, and were quite intimate with the Prophet Joseph. In fact, his father, being a Master Mason, officiated in conducting the Prophet through all the degrees of Masonry. In doing this the Prophet explained many things about the rite that even Masons do not pretend to understand but which he made most clear and beautiful.” Horace H. Cummings, “True Stories from my Journal,” Juvenile Instructor 64 (Aug. 1929), 441. Hogan has criticized Godfrey’s citation of Cummings. See Mervin D. Hogan, Mormonism and Freemasonry: The Illinois Episode (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in association with Smith Research Associates, 1960), 274-78.

Manuscript of Samuel C. Young, LDS archives.


Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 5:482-83.


Burton, The City of the Saints, 426.

Helen Marr Whitney, Why We Practice Plural Marriage (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1884), 63.

Juvenile Instructor 21 (15 Mar. 1886): 91.


Larson, A Ministry of Meetings, 380.


Ibid., 9:293.


The reference given by the editors was “Gems from the History of Joseph Smith,” in Compendium of the Doctrine of the Gospel, 274, which now appears in History of the Church, 4:608.

Heber C. Kimball to Parley P. Pratt, 17 June 1842.

Young, Wife No. 19, 371.


Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 13 Nov. 1858.


See Dyer, 174-75; Hutchinson, xxvi.

Bernard, ix-x.

See, for example, La Roy Sunderland, Mormonism Exposed and Refuted (New York: Piercy & Reed, 1838), 46; and Jason Whitney, Notices of Books, The Book of Mormon, The Unitarian 1 (1 Jan. 1834):47.


Minutes of the Relief Society, 8 Sept. 1842 (recording on Epistle read on 30 Mar. 1842).


468. See Roberts, "Where are the All-Seeing Eyes?", 26-27.
470. See Mackey, 57, 735; Waite, 1:21.
476. See, generally, Homer, "Masonry and Mormonism."
478. Theodore Schroeder, "Mormonism and Masonry," Masonic Standard 11 (7 Apr. 1906): 2, reprinted in Salt Lake Tribune, 24 June 1907, 4. In the Tribune version the quotation is: "Masonry furnished the suggestion or groundwork for the secret endowment ceremony of the Latter-day Saints." In the Masonic Standard, Mary Ettie V. Smith's quotation concerning the Mormon anxiety "to have the Gentiles associate all they know of the beastly 'endowments' with Masonry . . . as a blind to cover the real objects of this 'Institution'" is attributed to "An apostle" which is corrected in the Tribune version to "An apostate."
479. Ironically, Schroeder was initially sympathetic toward the Mormons after arriving in Salt Lake City following graduation from the University of Wisconsin Law School. In one of his earliest articles entitled "Mormon and Mason" written under the pseudonym, A. T. Heist, he referred to the Masonic attitude toward Mormons as "anti-Mormon idiocy," and accused the Craft of relying "almost wholly" on "the evidence of apostates" to "convict the Mormons," a cryptic reference to early claims that Joseph Smith plagiarized the endowment. See A. T. Heist, "Mormon and Mason," Salt Lake Herald, 6 Dec. 1891, 3.
482. Ibid. 11 (May 1909): 144.
486. 1913 Conference Reports, 126.
489. Sam H. Goodwin, Mormonism and Masonry: A Utah Point of View (Salt Lake City: Sugarhouse Press, 1921).
490. Ibid., 20.
491. Ibid., 20-21.
492. Ibid., 22-24.
494. Ibid., 38.
495. S. H. Goodwin, Additional Studies in Mormonism and Masonry (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1927). This pamphlet was primarily a collection of articles previously published in The Builder in November and December 1924 and January 1927.
496. Ibid., 29-32.
497. Ibid., 33-38.
499. Ibid., 62.
500. Ibid., 53-54.
501. Ibid., 63.
502. Ibid., 62.
507. Extracts from address of Elder Melvin J. Ballard, Special Collections, Lee Library, quoted in McGavin, 12. On September 26, 1901, Lorenzo Snow told the Twelve that he allowed his daughter "to act as queen of the Elks Carnival" to enable the church "to get influence with a large organization of influential men in the nation" and compared it to "Joseph the Prophet and others of the brethren joining the Freemasons in order to obtain influence for furtherance of the purposes of the Lord" (see Lieson, A Ministry of Meetings, 316).


510. Ibid., 48-71.

511. Ibid., 70, 85-86.

512. Ibid., 20; see also 12.

513. Ibid., 33.

514. Ibid., 33-36.


516. Ibid., 44.


518. Both Ivins and McGavin mistakenly believed that Goodwin’s pamphlet was first published in 1925. See Ivins, 7, and McGavin, 6.

519. Ivins, 7.

520. Ibid., 10.

521. Ibid., 90-93.

522. Ibid., 88-89.

523. Ibid., 89.

524. Ibid., 179.

525. Ibid., 89.

526. Ibid., 11-20.


529. Hugh Nibley, No, Ma’am, That’s Not History (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1945), 17.


533. Ibid., 62.


536. Hogan, Mormonism and Freemasonry, 318.


538. Hogan, “Freemasonry and Mormon Ritual.”


540. Durham, 10 (Hogan version).

541. Roberts, “Where are the All-Seeing Eyes,” 22-37.


543. Ibid., xiii.

544. Ibid., 14.

545. Ibid.

546. Quinn, Early Mormonism and the Magic World View, 184-90.


549. Ibid., 45.


553. Whitman, 47-48.

554. E. D. Howe, Mormonism Unvailed (Painesville, OH, 1834), 81.


556. Sunderland, 46.

558. In addition to these parallels, other passages in the Book of Mormon have been compared to Freemasonry. These include the "Brother of Jared," a Book of Mormon personage who lived at the time of the Tower of Babel and was led to a place called "Mormoncum." While there he went to a mountain, received a vision of the future, and was commanded to receive the vision, seal up the record to prevent it from being read, and deposit the writing, with "two stones," to facilitate its future translation. Joseph Smith taught that the "Brother of Jared" was given the Urim and Thummim and breastplate on the mountain, that he brought these items with him to America which he buried in the Hill Cumorah, and that they were given to Joseph to translate the gold plates. The Book of Mormon account is similar to an account of ancient records in the Enoch legend of Freemasonry, and may have convinced some early converts to Mormonism, who were familiar with Freemasonry, that the records of Enoch were brought to the United States and translated by Joseph Smith. Other parallels include similarities between the Liahona—a ball used by Levi and his family to guide them to the new world which was also discovered by Joseph Smith in the Hill Cumorah—and the mystical hollow sphere which stood atop Enoch's bras pillar which was carved with maps of the world and universe; and an episode in the Book of Mormon in which Nephi kills Laban with his own sword—because Laban would not release brass plates which contained a history of Nephi's ancestors—and the beheading of one of the ruffians who attempted to obtain the Master's Word from Hiram Abiff. For a discussion of these parallels see Jack Adamson, "The Treasure of the Widow's Son," in Joseph Smith and Masonry (Nauvoo, IL: Martin Publishing Company, 1980).

559. Calcott, 111.

560. Ibid., 111, 116.

561. Ibid., 123.

562. Ibid., 164.

563. For references to signs, tokens, obligations, penalties, prayer circle, veil, and apron see generally Bernard. For specific references to the veil, see Bernard, 124-43; Cross, 30, 35. The reference to an apron as a fig leaf in the Bible has been used as a justification for the Masonic apron. See Colin Dyer, Symbolism in Craft Freemasonry (London: Lewis Masonic, 1983), 47-49; George Oliver, Signs and Symbols Illustrated and Explained, in a course of Twelve Lectures on Freemasonry (London: Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, 1837), 205. The first aprons used in the temple endowment consisted of "sheep skin made to the order and by the direction of Joseph Smith" on which fig leaves were painted. See Oliver B. Huntington Journal, 51, LDS archives. The Marquis de Lafayette, who became involved in American Freemasonry during the Revolutionary War, had an apron with leaves, Hamill and Gilbert, 102, and Stephen A. Douglas is also pictured wearing such an apron in 1846 in a painting which hangs in the Masonic Temple in Springfield, Illinois. See Wayne C. Temple, Stephen A. Douglas, Freemason (Bloomington, IL: Masonic Book Club and Illinois Lodge of Research, 1982). Later aprons used in the Mormon endowment consisted of green silk with nine fig leaves in brown sewing silk. See Salt Lake Tribune, 28 Sept. 1879, 4. For a reference to the prayer circle, see Bernard, 125-26.

564. See Sheville, 209-12.

565. Hutchinson, 6, 177.


568. For parallels between the ritual of the Knight Templar, Baldwyn Encampment, and the temple endowment, I am relying on information set forth in correspondence from Art de Hoyos dated 22 November 1993. For a cryptic reference to this same parallel, see Salem Town, 76.

569. Stillson, (1910), 641; Mackey, 339.


572. See Town, 22-23, 62-63.

573. See Carnes, 49; Town, 22-23, 67, 72-72; Stearns, 168.

574. Town, 67.

575. See Janet Maclay Burke, "Sociability, Friendship and the Enlightenment among Women Freemasons in Eighteenth-Century France," Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 1986, 232-33, 245-47, 272-74. For examples of French and American rites which included references to the Creation, see La Maçonnerie des Femmes London: n.p., 1774; L'adoption ou la Maçonnerie des femmes en trois grades (n.c.: n.p., 1775); [Louis Guillemain de Saint Victor], La vraie Maçonnerie d'Adoption (London: Guillemain de Saint Victor, 1779); and "Rite of Adoption," Collectanea 1 (1937), reprinted (1978), 169-76. See also the discussion regarding Masonic groups which admitted women and took portions of their ritual from Genesis and the Adam and Eve story, in Hamill and Gilbert, 125-24, 189-67.

576. Mackey, 181.

577. See Bernard, 253-72.

578. See, e.g., George Smith, The Use and Abuse of Freemasonry (London, 1783), 361, 365.

579. The key word is rediscovered by the Craft in the Royal Arch Degree. Morgan, 102.

580. Times and Seasons 5 (15 July 1844): 385. See also Women's Exponent 7 (1 Dec. 1878), 98 (press conference of Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs) for evidence that Joseph Smith's family continued to connect him to Freemasonry and repeat that he gave the Masonic sign of distress more than thirty years after his death.

William Daniels, Correct Account of the Murder of Generals Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Carthage on the 27th day of June, 1844 (Nauvoo, Ill.: J. Taylor, 1845). Art deHoyos pointed out these parallels between Hinam Ahiff and Joseph Smith (as described in Nels Lundwall’s Fate of the Persecutors of the Prophet Joseph Smith), including the pillar of light, the well, and the possession of talismans.

Quinn, Early Mormonism and the Magic World View, 64-77. In an affidavit written in 1938 Charles Bidamon, stepson of Emma Smith, testified: “I have many times heard her [Emma Smith] say, when being interviewed, and showing the piece, that it was in the Prophet’s pocket when he was martyred at Carthage, Illinois” (ibid., 69). The statement is hearsay. Even if Emma said it she could have been mistaken or misrepresenting the facts as she did concerning Joseph’s polygamy.

Perfect Master Degree, 1783 Franken Ms.

Art deHoyos first observed this parallel and pointed out the following references. Eugene E. Hinman, Ray V. Denslow, and Charles C. Hunt, A History of the Cryptic Rite, 2 vols. (Cedar Rapids, IA, 1931), 1:177 (the signet referred to in this book is apparently from George Oliver’s Rite de Bouillon which, according to Hamill, is a fraud [see Hamill, 21-22]); and [Albert Pike], The Book of the Lodge (New York, 1872), 313.

Quinn, Early Mormonism and the Magic World View, 66.

Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 5:482.

Ibid.


Ivins, 76n9.

McGavin, 70, 85-96.

History of the Church, 2:235.

Ibid., 238.

Ibid., 4:274.

Ibid., 523, 5:11.


Ibid., 32.

Ibid., 31.

See Godfrey, 76n9.


All of the articles in the Improvement Em appear in the section entitled “Editor’s Table”: Improvement Em 1 (Mar. 1898): 373-76; 4 (Nov. 1900): 59; 6 (Dec. 1902): 149-52; 6 (Feb. 1903): 305, 308; 12 (Feb. 1909): 313. In addition, various speakers at general conference also touched on the subject. See Conference Reports (Apr. 1900), 30-31 (Marriner W. Merrill); (Apr. 1901), 73 (Joseph F. Smith); (Apr. 1903), 20-21 (C. Kelly).

Improvement Em 1 (Mar. 1898): 373-76.

Ibid. 4 (Nov. 1900): 59.


Conference Reports (Apr. 1901).

Coil, 19.


Gould, 1:55.


1. I am indebted to Art deHoyos for this observation.


A summary of his rationale for excluding Mormons from Masonry is set forth in Goodwin, Mormonism and Masonry, 38.
617. When Goodwin wrote Mormonism and Masonry: A Utah Point of View, the “current, approved and popular explanation as to the origin of Masonry” was that “speculative Freemasonry is the last transfiguration of some ancient mystery,” and that “the Mason of the British Isles,” and the “Mason of the[Pg 298] American Colonies,” and the “Mason of the United States,” and the “Mason of the modern day,” were all part of the same Esoteric tradition. AOGM, 3:127-29.


626. Waite, 1:426-27.


628. Quinn, Early Mormonism and the Magic World View, 85.


630. Brady, xii.

631. Town, 165.


633. Calcott, 123.

634. Ibid., 123.

635. Town, 74.

636. Brady, 168.

637. Stearns, 43.


639. Morgan, 93; Bernard, 84. For a Masonic oration making reference to this same imagery, see Thomas Cary, An Oration Pronounced Before the Right Worshipful Master and Brethren of St. Peter’s at the Episcopal Church in Newbargentown, on the Festival of St. John the Baptist, Celebrated June 24th, 5801 (n.p.: From the Press of Brother Angier March, n.d.): “[W]hen this frail fabric shall be dissolved, and the SUPREME ARCHITECT shall summon his laborers to receive their reward, to the condescending Saviour we will listen for the pass word, which shall admit us to his father’s temple, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”


641. Harris, 190.


643. A significant contribution in this area has been made by Lance Owens, “Joseph Smith and Kabbalah: The Occult Connection,” in this issue of Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought.


646. See Claude Guérillot, La Rite de Perfection. Restitution des rituels taduits en anglais et copiés en 1783 par Henry Lewis, 1877, 46-47. These degrees served as the foundation of the Scottish Rite introduced by Mitchell, Dalco, and others. I am indebted to Massimo Introvigne and Art deHoyos for this information.


648. Ibid., 352-53.

649. Ibid., 352-53.

650. See B. H. Roberts, Defense of the Faith and the Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Printing and Publishing Establishment, 1879). The next wave was initiated by F. S. Spalding in Mormonism and Masonry: A Utah Point of View, the “current, approved and popular explanation as to the origin of Masonry” was that “speculative Freemasonry is the last transfiguration of some ancient mystery,” and that “the Mason of the British Isles,” and the “Mason of the American Colonies,” and the “Mason of the United States,” and the “Mason of the modern day,” were all part of the same Esoteric tradition. AOGM, 3:127-29.


654. General Handbook of Instructions (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1983), 77.

656. The 1989 General Handbook of Instructions prohibits only affiliation with “apostate cults,” which it defines as “those that advocate plural marriage.” General Handbook of Instructions (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 10-3.


658. Waite, 1:427.
Freemasonry and Mormonism. By Michael S. Thomas. Introduction. Such a wound as you gave Masonry in Nauvoo is not easily healed, and no Latter-day Saint is, or can become a member in our jurisdiction.”(4). This statement is important and revealing because I think it will give us a basis for understanding the feelings that existed on both sides of the issue. Except for the recent persecutions and a similarity to the public accusations of the time, Masons probably would never have thought that this had been written about them, since anyone even superficially familiar with the Masons, know that the Fraternity would itself condemn any such behavior by its members, and they would immediately be expelled from the Lodge and turned over to Legal.