

# Temple on a Hill

Manti Temple



By Glen R. Stubbs

**T**he members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are a temple building people. Since the early days of the Church, beginning with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and up to the present time (1976), the Latter-day Saints have erected eighteen of these structures. They have built them in times of poverty and strife and in times of prosperity and peace. These edifices are used for the purpose of performing marriages for eternity, doing vicarious work for the dead, and performing religious ceremonies called the endowment.

**T**he Manti Temple is the fifth temple built by the Latter-day Saints, and the third temple completed in Utah. Situated on an elevated parcel of ground, this temple has become a "beacon on the hill" for area residents as well as for many others who pass that way.

**T**his brief account gives an insight into the struggles encountered by the people of Sanpete County and by the builders in the construction of the Manti Temple. It tells of their faith and devotion and of their willingness to sacrifice for the upbuilding of the kingdom.

**T**he reader will find this short account both interesting and informative. This booklet is not intended to be an exhaustive treatise but is rather a condensation taken from the author's masters thesis, "A History of the Manti Temple."

Cover Photo by Lucien B. Bown

# A Temple On the Hill

*A History of the Manti Temple*

by Glen R. Stubbs

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Ricks College Press  
Rexburg, Idaho  
1976

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **The Settling of Manti**

Situated in the south-central part of the state of Utah, surrounded by the Wasatch Mountains, the Manti Temple has been seen by thousands of tourists who have marveled at its beauty, its architectural design, and the unique history which surrounds it.

The city of Manti is located on the eastern side of the Sanpete Valley, approximately one hundred twenty miles south of Salt Lake City. This valley, once known as "Sanpitch," takes its name from Sanpitch, Chief of the Indians who inhabited the valley.

The history of "Temple Hill" does not start with the construction of the temple in 1877, but dates back to the early pioneer days of Utah. Under the leadership of the great colonizer, Brigham Young, a group of Mormon pioneers (members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) entered Salt Lake Valley on the twenty-fourth of July, 1847. The Mormons had come west because of the persecutions they had suffered in Illinois due to their religious convictions. At this time their destination, the Great Basin, was part of the territory belonging to Mexico, with no one living there except the Indians and a few white trappers.

The settling of Manti in 1849 was due to the encouragement of one of the Indian Chiefs, Walker, who claimed lordship over Sanpitch Valley. It is purported that he had a remarkable dream in about 1840. In it he thought he had died

and his spirit had gone to heaven. He saw the Lord sitting upon a throne dressed in white. He wanted to stay but the Lord told him that he must return to earth, that there would come to him a group of white people who would be his friends and that he must see that his people treat them kindly.

Shortly after the pioneers had established themselves in the Salt Lake Valley, Chief Walker, with twelve of his tribe, met in council with President Brigham Young and other leading men of the Mormon Church. The Indians asked Brigham Young to send colonists into the Sanpitch Valley to teach their people how to build homes and till the soil. An exploration party left in August of 1849, with Walker as a guide. They returned with the recommendation that a colony be located in the valley.

Preparations were made in the fall of 1849 to send a group of pioneers into the Sanpitch Valley to establish the new settlement. Isaac Morley, Charles Shumway, and Seth Taft were placed in charge of a company of fifty families who arrived at the present site of Manti on the nineteenth of November, 1849. Isaac Morley, a veteran of the War of 1812, one of the founders of Far West, Missouri, and later a member of the legislative council of the Territory of Utah, exclaimed as they neared Manti, "There is the termination of our journey; in close proximity to that hill, God willing we will build our city."

Some members of the company desired that they go farther south, possibly where the present city of Gunnison stands. Others doubted the desirability of establishing a settlement near such an unproductive-looking hill, but Isaac Morley, more commonly known as Father Morley, spoke to those in doubt, saying, "This is our God-appointed place, and stay I will, though but ten men remain with me." In spite of all their problems, fears, and doubts, the colonists were willing to accept the site which had been selected for them.

With the near approach of winter, Father Morley advised the settlers to move to the south side of the hill so that they might be protected from inclement weather. The settlement

thus established was in reality a cluster of pioneer wagons grouped together for protection. Each wagon was a home for a family. It was protected from the elements by a sheet of cloth stretched over the bow of the wagonbox. Hardly had the settlement been established and a few trails made through the surrounding underbrush, when the snow began to fall. A long, hard winter was ahead for these settlers, a winter in which most of their cattle were to starve or freeze to death.

Realizing their inadequate protection against the severity of winter storms and freezing temperatures, the settlers turned to the hill for protection. Digging holes in the side of it took several days for it proved to be, for the most part, layers of solid stone. This was, however, a blessing in disguise, as the hill proved to be a valuable stone quarry which was later utilized. These "dug-outs" which they built had smoke vents at the rear and though crude by our standards of today, gave the settlers a comparative degree of comfort and warmth. The pioneers lived under these adverse conditions until the following spring when they were able to start building log cabins and tilling the ground.

Then one warm spring day they heard a hissing sound. It startled them and to their amazement they found that the hill, which had served as their protector during the winter, was now a den of "spotted-backed rattlesnakes." The whole camp was alerted to action as the men fought their deadly foe with the aid of pine torches, clubs, guns, stones, and any other available weapon that would destroy the snakes. This continued for several days before the pioneers were able to get rid of them. The rattlers would go into their holes at dawn and then come out again at dusk. On the south slope of the hill, they could crawl under wagon boxes, the dwarfed underbrush, the woodpiles, and into the dug-outs. The remarkable feature of this experience was that not a single person was bitten by the snakes. The reason for the invasion of the rattlers at this particular time was that this particular species of reptile does most of its traveling in the early evening, and is most dangerous when recovering from the comatose state brought on by the cold of winter.

With grateful hearts for their deliverance from this unexpected menace, the pioneers turned to the immediate task of building a settlement. The experience with the rattlesnakes made the settlers realize that the hill was no longer an alluring refuge. They moved away from their protecting dug-outs.

In the spring of 1850, lands were allotted each family and regulations entered into which would enable the settlers to secure their "squatter's rights." As a dense growth of sagebrush covered the entire valley, the settlers had to remove it before irrigation and cultivation could begin. Because of the severe winter the pioneers had only one team able to draw a plow through the desert ground. This team was used to break small garden patches while the other animals were recovering from the effects of the winter. The colonists had a fair supply of seed and within a short time they had green vegetables for food and the colony was assured of permanence.

Mormon Church Government, under the direction of priesthood leaders, guided the people in religious matters and also in temporal affairs. For many years the bishop was also the mayor of the community. One early bishop said, "The Priesthood has the right to dictate to the people all kinds of duties to perform. The Lord spoke to Brigham, Brigham to the Bishops, and the Bishops to the people." The Mormon pioneers were willing to be obedient to ecclesiastical authority in establishing new settlements, opening general stores, setting up sawmills, or whatever.

That first summer the settlers built a "bowery" near their winter camp where public meetings were held--the most important being the Sabbath Day worship. The first of these meetings recorded was held on July 7, 1850, with Isaac Morley presiding.

The settlers decided that Morley should have the honor of naming the colony. He christened it "Manti," in honor of one of the cities in the Book of Mormon. On June 2, 1851, the settlers began to build a fort in order to protect themselves from any threats or attacks by Indians. The stone from the hill was used to build it.

In the summer of 1854, a larger fort was begun. It was referred to as the "Big Fort," and was built in order to protect the homes of the settlers which were distributed over a large area. This fort was built chiefly of rock from the stone quarry with large adobes and other materials used in the construction. It covered an area of nine square blocks.

"Temple Hill" became a source of good building stone which was used in the building of many private and public structures in Manti as well as in Salt Lake City. William Ward, an architect and sculptor, carved a block of the stone for the Washington Monument in the year 1852. The stone, which was three feet long, six and one-half inches thick, and two feet wide, was to be placed in the monument as a contribution from the Mormon colonists in the State of Deseret. In the center was the emblematic beehive, under it the word, "Deseret," and over it the All-seeing Eye. The stone now occupies a place near the top of the monument. As "Temple Hill" achieved added importance, it became known as the Manti Stone Quarry.

## CHAPTER II

### A Temple Is Planned

The Latter-day Saints are a temple-building people. Since the early days of their church, beginning with the time of President Joseph Smith, and up to the present time (1976), the Latter-day Saints have erected eighteen of these structures and four more are on the drawing tables. They have built them both in times of poverty and strife and in times of prosperity and peace.

Temple building is not an original idea of the Latter-day Saints, for other religions and nationalities have erected temples. The Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, and others have built such buildings. These were all structures of beauty and distinctive design and were outstanding in their architectural and artistic achievements, superior to the best public buildings of their respective eras.

The Latter-day Saint Temples are similar to these other temples in the following ways: (1) the artistic architecture, (2) ritualistic ceremonies conducted by priestly leaders, (3) places of worship and supplication of the Divine or Deity. The distinction between the Latter-day Saint Temples and these other temples is in the significance of the ceremonies performed in them. The Latter-day Saints are unique in their beliefs on marriage and baptism. They believe that baptism, moral and religious covenants, and marriage in the temple are necessary for the salvation of mankind. In order that those who have died without having had the opportunity might gain salvation, these ordinances are performed in the temples in

behalf of the dead, by the living. The living also perform these ordinances for themselves. It is for these purposes that the Latter-day Saints build temples. They are not ordinary places of worship. Their places of worship are called chapels or meeting houses and all are invited to attend; whereas, only those who can be recommended by their bishops and stake presidents may enter the temples.

The first Latter-day Saint temple completed in modern times was built in Kirtland, Ohio. It was dedicated on March 27, 1836 by Joseph Smith, then president of the Church. The next was the Nauvoo Temple. It was dedicated officially on May 1, 1846, by Orson Hyde and Wilford Woodruff. The first two temples completed in Utah were at St. George (1877) and Logan (1884). The Manti Temple was next in 1888. The Salt Lake Temple was started before any of these Utah temples, in 1853, but was not completed until 1893. Other temples built by the Latter-day Saints are the Hawaiian (1919), the Canadian at Cardston, Alberta (1923), the Arizona at Mesa (1927), the Idaho Falls (1945), the Swiss at Berne, Switzerland (1955), the Los Angeles (1956), the New Zealand (1958), the British at London, England (1958), the Oakland (1964), the Ogden, Utah (1972), the Provo, Utah (1972), and the Washington D.C. (1974).

The Latter-day Saints began to plan for the building of temples shortly after their arrival in Utah. When President Brigham Young and party were making the location of a settlement at Manti, President Heber C. Kimball of the First Presidency and grandfather of Spencer W. Kimball (now president of the LDS Church--1976), predicted that the day would come when a temple would be built upon "Manti Hill" on the outskirts of the city. Then he said, "Well, it will be so, and more than that, the rock will be quarried from that hill to build it with.

As early as 1854, the people of Manti were talking about building a temple in their city. This was natural attitude among these people, as the Latter-day Saints felt it important to have a temple in as many localities as possible throughout the Great Basin.



Brigham Young informed the people at a conference held in Ephraim, on December 4, 1873, that a temple would be built in Sanpete County. Naturally, with such an announcement coming from the president of the Church, the people of each town desired to have the temple built in their own community. Leading citizens of Ephraim and Manti were especially suggestive as to where the temple should be built. The citizens of Manti suggested that the tabernacle block was an ideal place for a temple to stand, while those of Ephraim suggested that the block where the Bank of Ephraim now stands would be the choice place for the temple. Ephraim, being the chief town, seemed the logical place for the temple to stand.

At another conference held in Ephraim on the twenty-fifth of June, 1875, the speakers expressed their feelings about the possibility of building a temple in Sanpete County. The differences which had existed as to where the temple should be located seem to have been resolved by this time, as each of those who spoke expressed the desire that the temple should be built on Manti stone quarry. The location was settled finally when President Brigham Young said, "The temple should be built on Manti stone quarry."

The land on which the temple stands was deeded to the Board of Trustees of the Latter-day Saint Church on June 26, 1877 by the Mayor of Manti. There was a spring located just east of where the temple was to stand. It was just enough higher than the temple hill so that the water could easily be piped down for use in the building.

The plans for the temple provided that the building was to be 168 feet long by 95 feet wide. The east tower was to be 179 feet high and the west one 169 feet, giving a height of 243 feet from the lowest terrace wall at the base of the hill to the top of the east tower.

The upper chamber inside the temple was to be 28 feet high in the clear, and 80 feet by 104 feet in the clear between walls, with self-supporting roof, without columns. The main

floor was to be 80 feet by 104 feet in the clear and 20 feet high in the clear. The second floor was to be 20 feet high also.

The Manti Temple District covered the area from Juab County on the north to Washington and Kane on the south. These stakes carried the burden of financing and providing labor and materials for the construction.

The ground for the temple was surveyed and laid out in April, 1877 by Jesse W. Fox, surveyor general of Utah Territory. He was assisted by Truman O. Angel and William H. Folsom, church architects. These men arrived in Manti on April 24 and were under the direction of President Brigham Young.

Early on the morning of April 25, 1877, President Brigham Young asked Warren S. Snow to go with him to the temple hill. Mr. Snow later reported:

We two were alone; President Young took me to the spot where the Temple was to stand; we went to the south-east corner, and President Young said, "Here is the spot where the Prophet Moroni\* stood and dedicated this piece of land for a Temple site, and that is the reason why the location is made here, and we can't move it from this spot; and if you and I are the only persons that come here at high noon today, we will dedicate this ground."<sup>1</sup>

On the twenty-fifth of April, 1877, the site for the Manti Temple was dedicated by Brigham Young. President Young remarked after the dedicatory prayer that the bishops who presided in Manti and the neighboring settlements should have men come with teams and wagons, plows, and scrapers, and picks and shovels, to prepare the ground for the masonwork. He expected from fifty to one-hundred men to come and start work as soon as possible. These men would be changed whenever, and as often as was desirable. They could get credit on labor tithing or on donation account for

\*The Mormons believe Moroni to have been a prophet who lived on the western hemisphere about 400 A.D.

their services, and he expected them to work until the temple was completed.

At this time President Young also exhorted the people that this temple should be built with clean hands and pure hearts. He encouraged the women to render assistance in the project by giving encouragement to their husbands and sons, and also by making clothing of various kinds for them while they were working there. He concluded his remarks with the following words of encouragement and advice:

Now, Bishops, if any person should enquire what wages is [sic.] to be paid for work done on this temple, let the answer be, "not one dime." And when the temple is completed, we will work in God's holy house without inquiring what we are going to get, or who is going to pay us, but we will trust in the Lord for our reward, and he will not forget us. "Behold the fowls of the air," (says the Savior), "for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet our heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"<sup>2</sup>

Following the dedication of the site, a call went out for men to work on the project, and five days later one hundred men knelt in prayer at the quarry to ask for guidance and help in accomplishing this great work. This was the beginning of the work which would take them eleven years to complete.

## CHAPTER III

### The Construction Period 1877-1888

Whenever a call comes from the general authorities of their church to build a temple unto the Lord, the faith of the Mormon people is magnified. They set out to accomplish this work with the zeal that is characteristic of a dedicated people. This was the case in the building of the Manti Temple, as men throughout Sanpete and various other counties responded to the call of their presiding authorities.

Excavation of the site began on April 30, 1877. In October of that same year, William H. Folsom was appointed to act as the architect in the erection of the temple and to take the general superintendency of the business connected with the building of it. His architectural experience had been varied. He had assisted in designing the Salt Lake Tabernacle, the Salt Lake Theatre, the St. George Temple, the Provo Theatre and Tabernacle, and the Moroni Tabernacle.

Joseph A. Young had first been appointed to this position, but owing to his death at Manti on August 5, 1875, he had been able to do no more than make a few preliminary plans.

By the first part of October, 1877, one hundred seven men and seventeen teams were at work on the temple. The men in the temple district had responded cheerfully and spiritedly to the call for men and means to prosecute the work. At the completion of the harvest, other individuals responded to a second call.

The blasting and cutting down of the solid stone required the labor of large groups of men for nearly two years. Eight hundred seventy-five pounds of powder were used to level the ground for the actual site of the temple. The rock loosened by the blasting was used for the terracing of the grounds which was a part of the original plan for landscaping the structure. The whole site, with the terraces and the steps from one to the other, crowned with the temple at the back, was to constitute an outstanding landscape.

By spring of 1879 the preparation of the hill for the temple had been completed and the people were anxiously awaiting the laying of the corner stones. On April 14, 1879, a large number of people assembled near the temple site. After some music by the Nephi brass band, President John Taylor (third President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) and those of the Twelve Apostles present, assisted by the patriarchs, the architect, William H. Folsom, and the master mason, E.D. Parry, proceeded to lay the southeast or principal corner stone. Then President Taylor, standing on the newly-laid stone, said:

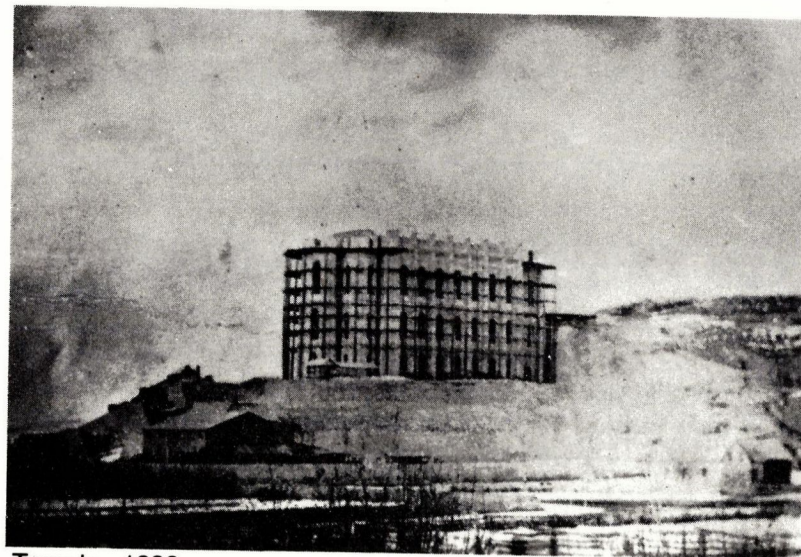
This principal corner stone, the southeast corner stone, under the direction of the Twelve, who are acting in the place and represent the First Presidency, is now laid in honor of the Great God; let it thus remain until this Temple is completed and while the anointed of the Lord may continue to administer therein. May this House be speedily erected that the Saints may have a place in the Stakes of Zion, and in the Stakes of the Temple District and others who may require to administer in the ordinances of the Lord's House and the Son of Man have a place to lay his head.<sup>3</sup>

Records were then deposited in the southeast corner stone in a zinc case; after which Lorenzo Snow, standing on the stone, offered the dedicatory prayer. Proceeding to the southwest corner, the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood, namely, Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter and counselors and several of the local Church authorities attended to the laying of this stone. A dedicatory prayer was offered by Bishop L.W. Hardy.

The procession then passed to the northwest corner. This stone was laid by President Frederick Walter Cox of the High Priest Quorum of the Sanpete Stake and his counselors, and by Sanpete Stake President, Canute Peterson, and his counselors assisted by other stake presidents.

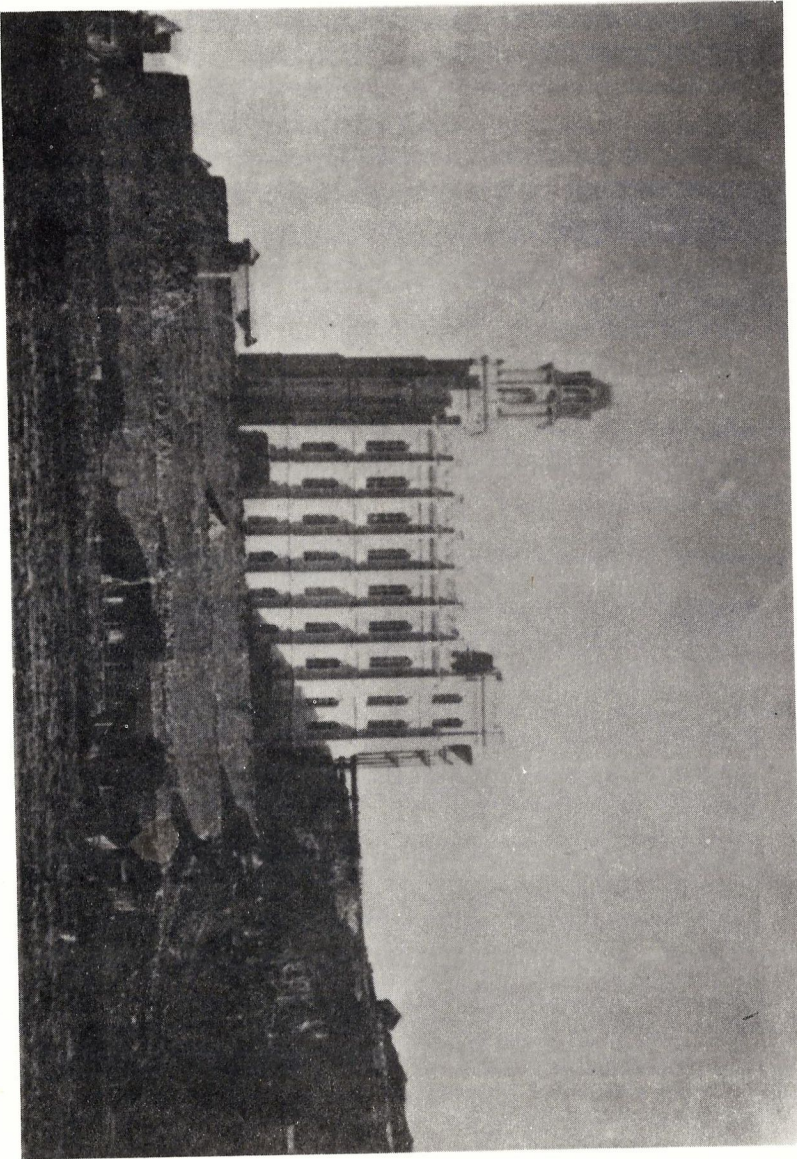
The dedicatory prayer was offered by President Peterson and the procession advanced to the northeast corner, which stone was laid by the presidencies of the Seventies' and Elders' Quorums. The dedicatory prayer was offered by John Vann Cott.

As the work on the temple commenced, it became apparent that the responsibility for such an undertaking was too great for one man. The Quorum of Twelve Apostles decided unanimously to call President Canute Peterson of Ephraim to the aid of Superintendent William H. Folsom. He was named Assistant Superintendent.



Temple - 1883

The work on the temple progressed quite rapidly during the first three years of construction and by April 4, 1882, the walls were up to fifty feet. Another thirty feet added to this wall would carry them to the square. There were times, however,



when the progress was at a low ebb. Though the general authorities of the Church had hoped that the temple would be completed by 1885, there was still a great deal of work to be done at that time. Possibly one reason for the delay in completion was the lack of funds. In 1887 members of the Church outside the temple district were given the opportunity of contributing toward the finishing and furnishing. The temple was ready for dedication by May of 1888, though, the beautification of the grounds had not yet begun.



Temple - 1888

As his part of the work was finished, Superintendent Folsom offered his resignation on August 7, 1888. It was accepted and Daniel H. Wells was appointed as superintendent in his place.

## Financing the temple

The financing of the Manti Temple was a tremendous undertaking in itself, considering the cost of the structure and the economic situation of the people. They were mainly of the agricultural class and relied on their own crops and livestock for a livelihood. Many of them were converts from foreign lands and were of humble circumstances. But they were willing to sacrifice and give of their means and talents in order that the temple might be erected.

In an effort to build a temple, these people sought many ways to raise funds. Contributions came in the form of fifty-cent donations from the wards (small congregational units) of the Latter-day Saint Church. Individuals contributed such things as white-pine lumber, beef, pork, chickens, sheep, eggs, butter, wheat, flour, cloth, quilts, overalls, shoes, sox, steel, iron, tools, and many other items. Eggs laid by the hens on Sunday were designated as "temple eggs" and were turned in to the storehouse. Contributions during the construction period did not always come in small quantities, as entries in the Day Book of the temple include 82 pounds of pork, 424 dozen eggs, 133 pounds butter, 1117 pounds meat, 248 pounds chickens, 62 sheep, and 1006 pounds of flour. The Greenwood United Order donated a wagon load of butter.

A story is told of a Mr. Jones from over the mountain to the east (most likely Emery County) who, in his later years, with tears in his eyes, told how Cyrus Wheelock called on him for a donation to the building fund and how he had been impressed to give his only cow which was needed for his family. It is said that later an angel came in the form of a well-to-do bachelor who asked if they would take his cow and then he would eat with them every once-in-awhile.

As each item was contributed, a receipt was made out to the individual, ward, stake, etc., for the cash value of the contribution. The old book of accounts shows such items as "two steers credited to James Cook for \$38.50, 100 lbs. flour to Samuel Ware for \$2.00, 1 bed cord to John Brier for \$1.00,

Henry Parsons by cash \$4.00." All of these contributions were turned in to the tithing office and then distributed to the workmen. The purpose of this office was "to receive and disburse offerings and Temple donations and keep record of all transactions." Howard Cox of Manti describes the tithing office as being located near the center of the little fort which covered all of the northwest quarter of the block east of Main Street and north of Union Street. It was a two-story rock building and had a full basement with a stone stairway leading down to it on the west side. Several stone steps led up to the main entrance on the south side of the building. The first room inside the entrance was the office of the tithing clerk, next was the office of the ward bishop, next was Superintendent Folsom's office and a drafting room filled with drawing tables and instruments used by their draftsmen.

About one rod south of the office was a wooden granary about seventy-five to one hundred feet long east to west, and divided into bins for different kinds of grain. A platform running along the north side where doors were located served as a receiving dock for sacked grain. On the south side, near the center of the granary, was located a large wagon scale for weighing loads of hay and grain and livestock of various kinds. East of the office building was a large hay barn and south of this were corrals and pens for various kinds of livestock; the open space west and north of the office building was much used by travelers as a free public campground where feed and water for their teams could be had for a nominal fee.

In a concerted effort to raise the necessary funds, the Relief Society (a ladies welfare organization of the Latter-day Saint Church) gathered carpet rags, wove them into rugs and sold them and then gave the money to be used for the temple. Many people would contribute two quarts of milk every week. This was made into cheese and given to the workers. Mrs. Abe Livingston of Manti remembered how the young children would glean wheat from the fields to be used in making bread for the workers.

The people from the district did the majority of the actual building of the temple. Some labor was done through voluntary donation with no pay; however, many workers received tithing scrip in accordance with the amount and type of work performed. This scrip was redeemable at the tithing office for commodities.

The process was described as follows:

United States currency was as scarce as royal luxuries are in the homes of the poor. In place of this, the saints used church money, known as tithing scrip, for which food and clothing could be obtained in the Bishop's Storehouse.<sup>4</sup>

In some cases the donation of labor was in payment for indebtedness to the Perpetual Emigration Fund.\* Receipts were given to all workers for the labor they had performed. Their labor was then placed to the credit of their respective wards and stakes.

In 1887, a circular was sent out by President Wilford Woodruff (4th President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) which announced to the Latter-day Saints that the temple at Manti was nearly completed and gave them the opportunity of contributing toward its finishing and furnishing. It indicated that contributions would be taken from twenty-five cents upward. Cash donations, most of them under five dollars, came from Salt Lake City, West Jordan, Bear River, Provo, Tooele, Morgan, Cedar City; Rigby, Idaho; Rexburg, Idaho; Liverpool, England; the Sandwich Islands; Switzerland; Germany and many other places.

The total cost of the temple, finishing and furnishing included, was \$991,991.81, of which amount the Sanpete Stake contributed \$274,815.05.

\*A fund set up to help emigrants who were coming to Utah; these people would repay the money they borrowed as soon as they could, so that the fund would always be ready to help other emigrants.

## Workers and their skilled crafts

The masonry, woodwork, and architectural design of the temple all indicate that the workmanship was done by skilled workers. Most of these men who responded unselfishly to the call to work on the temple were immigrants who had been converted to Mormonism. Most were greatly skilled in their respective trades which they had learned in Europe. The magnificent temple they built is ample evidence of this. The exactness and perfection with which the mason work and other work were performed are hard to duplicate even today with our professional technology.

A buff colored stone used in the building of the foundation was quarried from the hills south of Manti. Oolite stone obtained from the quarry east of the temple was used in the construction of its walls. The Parry Brothers' Quarry east of Ephraim also contributed some of the stone. After the oolite had been quarried it was broken into moveable pieces and placed on wagons by means of a derrick. The wagons were pulled by teams to the stonecutting shops. A story is told about some of the mules used in this operation--the Parry mules. It is said that one morning the mules could not be found. Finally it was decided to go the hill without them. The mules were found at the temple hill standing ready to be hitched. It seems that they were too serious about the work.

The rock cutting shops were on the northwest side of the hill and had just room enough for two men to work in each. Later some of these shops were built on top of the hill, east of the temple. There the stones were cut to the right size and evened and trimmed with a chisel and mallet. They were then scraped with special tools to make them smooth. During the cutting of the stone, the people for miles around could hear the steady click of the stonecutters. When the stones were ready to be used for building, they were lifted to the top of the temple walls by means of pulleys and teams. The mortar was placed in a wooden box and lifted to the top by the pulleys.

Edward L. Parry, master mason, was appointed to check each stone to see that it was cut to the exact dimensions. On one occasion Mr. Parry noticed that one of the workers was about to place a slightly cracked stone into the wall of the temple. He approached him about it and the worker said it was just a little crack, that it wouldn't make any difference, and anyway the crack would be on the inside, so no one would know about it. Mr. Parry told him that there would be three people who would know it. When the worker asked him who the three were, Mr. Parry said, "You, me, and the Lord."

The stonecutters and masons were of various ancestry, but the majority of them were of Welsh, English and Danish descent. Some of the workers walked from Ephraim to Manti (seven miles) each Monday morning and returned home on Saturday night. One example was J.P.L. Breinholt, a stonemason and stonecutter. While at Manti he would stay at the old Templeton Hotel across from the temple. Another stonecutter, Andrew Christian Neilson, known as "Mormon Preacher," walked five miles each day to the temple to put in his day's work and then return to his home.

Another man who held a responsible position on the building crew was Joseph Taylor, the timekeeper. He became the subject of one of many Mormon "faith promoting" stories. Each day he would go to check on all of the men. Each time he went around the temple the same way. One morning he was impressed to go around the opposite way. He had just gone a little way when he saw a place where the men had quarried under a ledge and felt impressed to tell the men to come out. They had barely emerged when the place they had been digging caved in.

Lumber for the building of the towers came from the mountains east of Spring City, Utah. Some long-leafed pine lumber came from Panguitch, Utah, while the black walnut and bird's eye maple that were used were imported from the eastern part of the United States. However, most of the lumber used was red pine and came from the local mountains.

Sand for cement came from places at the quarries where the stone was so soft and pliant that it could not be used in the temple. This stone formed an admirable cement. It was obtained from east of the temple. At the foot of the hill was a shop for crushing stone into sand.

A temple committee was appointed to fix the rate of wages on the basis of equity for mechanics and laborers and to affix a value to the materials, etc., paid in and used in the erection of the temple. It was decided that the prices to be allowed common laborers should range from \$1.25 to \$2.00 per day; men with teams, \$2.50 to \$3.50 per day; quarrymen, \$2.00 to \$3.00 per day; stonemasons, \$2.50 to \$3.50; carpenters, \$2.50 to \$3.50 per day; master mason, \$5.00 per day. Labor tithing and offerings were deducted from all wages.

Sometimes the stakes were requested to furnish their workers with provisions and supplies--one month's rations at a time. While these men were away, the local people sustained their families. The laborers worked on an average of ten hours a day on the building, six days a week. In contrast to these untiring and faithful workers was the "supposed-to-be-workman" who was always talking and always going for a drink of water. It was said of him, "It takes more water to run that old windmill than any windmill I ever saw."

The city of Manti enjoyed an extensive building program during the construction of the temple. The tabernacle, the South Ward Assembly Hall, the City Hall and the Presbyterian Church were completed during this period. Also many cut-rock homes and various other buildings were built. The tabernacle was completed in 1879.

Never in the history of Manti has there been such a surge in the building program as there was during the period between 1877 and 1888. The reasons for this were two-fold: (1) the county had advanced economically, and (2) there had been an increase in population.

The growth in population during the construction period is worth noting. In 1870 Sanpete County boasted 6,786 residents; in 1880 there were 11,700, and by 1889 there were 16,400 inhabitants in the valley.\*

Notwithstanding the other building needs of the community, the work on the temple went steadily forward. The people believed that God wanted them to build this temple and this was their aim above all else.

\*It is interesting to note that the population today (1976) is considerably lower than it was eighty-seven years ago in 1889.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **The Dedication**

After the eleven years of hard work and sacrifice, the time had finally arrived for the dedication of the Manti Temple.

It is the practice of the church to dedicate to the Lord all temples, meeting houses, schools, welfare buildings and other structures which are prepared for use in carrying out the great programs of the church.

The essential part of any dedicatory service is the formal prayer of dedication. In general the purpose is to hallow and consecrate the building for the particular purpose for which it was constructed.

Temples and meeting houses being houses of worship, are given to the Lord as His houses.

No building is ever dedicated unless it is free from debt.<sup>5</sup>

Before the actual dedication of the Manti Temple took place, a group of church leaders assembled on May 16, 1888, in the celestial room of the temple. Among them were President Wilford Woodruff, some members of the Council of Twelve Apostles, and a few local Church leaders. Daniel H. Wells was unanimously chosen president of the temple with Moses F. Farnsworth as recorder, and Anthon H. Lund as assistant to President Wells.

Private dedicatory services were held at the temple on the seventeenth of May, 1888. President Wilford Woodruff, along with Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, Brigham



Young, Jr., and Heber J. Grant of the Council of Twelve and other selected Church leaders were present at the services. The dedicatory prayer was offered by President Woodruff.

In order that the membership of the Church might witness the dedication of the Manti Temple, public services were held on the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third. About sixty persons, among them some leaders of the Church, left Salt Lake City by train on the morning of May 18, bound for the dedicatory services. They reached the railroad terminal at Chester, where teams waited to take them to Manti.

The streets of Manti presented a lively scene on Saturday evening, the nineteenth of May, 1888. Wagons by the score came rolling in from all directions, after days of travel towards Manti. The road west of the city was lined with wagons as far as the eye could see. The stackyards were full of wagons and many were left standing upon the street in front of the homes, while hundreds of campers whom the people of Manti could not possibly find room for in their homes occupied the meetinghouse square, tithing yard and other such places about the town. A strong feeling of brotherhood was evident among the people.

The dedication of any temple to the Lord has always been a memorable occasion for the Latter-day Saint people. Such was the case with the Manti Temple dedication. Many of these attending the services were able to proceed through the rooms after each day's service. On Monday, the twenty-first of May the public dedicatory services began. No persons were admitted to these services except those who, through a recommend from their bishops, could obtain tickets from their stake presidents.

The services were held in the main assembly room on the upper floor of the temple. This room was filled to capacity, approximately fifteen hundred people, when the meeting

began at eleven o'clock. Lorenzo Snow of the Council of Twelve gave the dedicatory prayer, following which, many addresses were delivered by Church authorities. President Canute Peterson said:

This is one of the happiest days I have ever experienced in my life. . . . I have watched the growth of this house as a mother watches the growth of her children, and I am proud now that it is so far completed as to be dedicated, and I am satisfied the Lord will accept of it.<sup>6</sup>

J.B. Noble said, "I can testify that the Lord has accepted the Temple." Franklin D. Richards remarked that when the pioneers entered the Sanpete Valley the country was barren and desolate, but now (1888) it was called the "granary of Utah."

The dedicatory services were repeated for three days because of the thousands who desired to attend. The residents of Manti and nearby communities had been asked to forego attending the services on the first day so as to give visitors from a distance a chance to attend. It was reported that 2200 persons witnessed the dedicatory proceedings on Wednesday, who, together with the 1700 present Tuesday and the 1500 on Monday, would make the total number who witnessed the ceremonies approximately 5400 people.

During these services many spiritual experiences are purported to have taken place.

On the twenty-first of May, before the opening exercises commenced, Brother A.C. Smythe, the chorister, seated himself at the organ, and rendered a piece of sacred music, a selection from Mendelssohn, at the conclusion of which, persons sitting near the center of the hall, and also on the stand at the west end, heard most heavenly voices and singing--it sounded to them angelic, and appeared to be behind and above them, and they turned their heads in the direction of the sound, wondering if there was another choir in some other part of the Temple. The following persons (and no doubt many more

present) heard the singing and voices: Mary A. Freeze, Salt Lake; Bishop Culbert King; Marion Ward, Garfield County; M.B. Shipp, Salt Lake; Christina Willardson, Ephraim; President John D.T. McAllister, St. George; William H. Folsom, Manti; Amelia F. Young, Salt Lake; Elizabeth Folsom, Salt Lake; Sarah A. Peterson, Ephraim; Henry Beal, Ephraim; Peter F. Madsen, Brigham City; Henry Gardner, Salt Lake; and Edwin Standing, Lehi.<sup>7</sup>

In the course of the services, a bright halo of light was said to have been seen over and around the heads of the following speakers: Lorenzo Snow, Jacob Gates, Robert Campbell, John Henry Smith, Francis Lyman, John W. Taylor, and A.M. Cannon. Canute Peterson observed this halo around the heads of all the speakers, while the dedicatory prayer was being offered by Lorenzo Snow. Near the middle of the prayer, during a pause, the words, "Hallelujah, Hallelujah the Lord be praised," were uttered by a voice in a soft and melodious tone. This voice was heard by Lewis Anderson, one of the assistant temple recorders at that time and later a temple president.

When John W. Taylor was speaking, a brilliant light is said to have surrounded his person. Rhoda W. Smith who attended, wrote that this light surrounded Mr. Taylor from the tips of the fingers on the right hand, up the arm, over the head and shoulders and down the left arm. She described this light as being very bright. It stood out from three to five inches wide, and the rays from the light formed a glorious, soft halo of milky white light all around him. Another person, Walter Cox of Provo, reported that he saw a brilliant circle of light surrounding the head and chest of Mr. Taylor. He said that the light was so dazzling that it surpassed the light of the sun, the light of day being entirely eclipsed.

It was reported that some of the people in attendance at the dedicatory services saw the spirits (spirit bodies) of John Taylor, Brigham Young, Joseph Smith, and Jedediah M. Grant.

These services were a spiritual feast for those who had the privilege of attending. The people of Sanpete County rejoiced in knowing that this temple was now truly a house of the Lord. Their sacrifice and hard work had been worthwhile! Ordinance work began soon after the dedication--on May 28 of that same year.

## CHAPTER V

### Finishing, Landscaping, and Additional Improvements

Against a lofty background formed by the Sanpete mountains to the east, the Manti temple looks out over the Sanpete Valley, and is visible for many miles from north, south, or west. The temple faces east. Without knowing this, many people have the impression that it faces west, as the highway runs along the base of the hill on the west side. P.C. Peterson, a former guide on the temple grounds, once noted that tourists often describe the building as the most beautiful they have ever seen. Many "feel a spirit of sacredness as soon as they get on the hill." Some tourists will ask, "How did they get those walls so beautiful, straight, and nice?" Mr. Peterson would answer, "They used the 'spirit level' with emphasis on the 'spirit'."

The foundation of the building is sixty-three feet above the level of the highway. The temple itself is one hundred seventy-one feet long, ninety-five feet wide and seventy-nine feet to the square. There are two spiral staircases located in the two west corner towers. These staircases extend from the main floor of the building to landings near the top of the towers. These landings lead to a room in the center tower which is not in use. The unique staircases which were designed by William Asper, with the assistance of Joseph Judd, are ninety feet from the main floor to the landings and each has one hundred fifty-one steps, all carpeted. Each step is built to support the next one above it. The staircases are

made of imported black walnut. This is the only Latter-day Saint Temple in which such staircases exist. In both spiral staircases, the center is open, without any supporting column, and the walnut railings and balusters form a symmetrical coil, from top to bottom.

There are three main floors in the temple. The upper floor is a large assembly room which is eighty feet by one hundred four feet and twenty feet high. The ceiling is supported by the walls without the aid of columns.

At the dedicatory services held in 1888, the male members of the Latter-day Saint Church were seated according to the order of their priesthood on stands in the east and west ends of this room. The Aaronic Priesthood occupied the stands in the west while those of the Melchizedek Priesthood were seated on the east. The two other main floors include the instructional rooms and various others, among them a baptismal room. The chief feature of this room is a large font or basin resting on the backs of twelve cast iron, life-size oxen. This font has been provided for vicarious baptism. Each year many Latter-day Saint youth have the opportunity to be proxy for those who were never properly baptized while in mortality.

The workmanship of the Manti Temple has been highly praised by laymen and craftsmen alike. The architecture of the building is a blending of the Gothic Revival, French Renaissance Revival, and French Second Empire. The general plan of the temple--the rectangular body, including the rectangular towers--were influenced by colonial architecture. The buttresses, the two west corner towers, and the exterior moldings are Gothic Revival. The tall, narrow design of the windows is Gothic while their round tops and keystones are French Renaissance in character. The points (ornamental) around the bases of the two main towers are of Second Empire origin. The interior of the temple is a blending of Gothic Revival and Second Empire.

Every piece of lumber used under the floor joists was of the very finest red pine. All the benches, tables, etc. in the

rooms were made of native pine and were made on the temple site. The woodwork turning was supervised by Christian Madsen and Charlie Bird who had charge of the artistic work done in plaster of paris, in the ceilings and walls. Native pine was used for all the finishing work done in the temple.

The murals inside the temple were done by skillful artists and are well executed, yet they are simple enough to be admired by the average person. The artists who did this work were C.C.A. Christensen, John Hafen, John Fairbanks, and Daniel Weggeland.\* These men painted the original murals in the instructional rooms of the temple.

The work performed in the Latter-day Saint Temples is of a sacred nature. Non-members of the Church may see, and many have seen, pictures of the various rooms in the temples. These rooms are for instructional purposes and each of them has mural scenes which are in harmony with the instructions given. These rooms are enhanced by the woodwork, with its graceful arches, heavy doors, and finely cut moldings.

Adjoining and connected with the temple on the north, is the annex, which was one hundred feet long and forty feet wide at the time of its construction. In it the heating system for the whole building was housed; steam heat was used at the time when the temple was completed. This annex was also used and occupied by the janitor and assistants, with culinary and dining apartments connected. The annex is not part of the temple proper. It provides a place for morning worship ser-

\*Mr. Christensen studied in Copenhagen. He came to Utah in 1857. He was interested in Mormon History and his favorite subjects for painting were pioneer life and wheat fields. Some of his paintings hung in the old Salt Lake Theatre. He also painted murals in the Logan and St. George Temples.

Mr. Hafen, more than any other Utah artist, has been his own teacher. He studied some in Paris and also in the United States. He is said by many to be Utah's greatest artist.

Mr. Fairbanks studied in Paris, Central and South America, and in the United States. His favorite subjects were evening effects, sunny harvest scenes or misty water or tree subjects.

\*Mr. Weggeland studied in Copenhagen, England, and Berlin. He painted murals in the Salt Lake Temple also. The Fiords of Norway were his favorite subjects.

vices, space for records, offices, a cafeteria, service rooms, a reception room, etc.

An extensive remodeling of the annex was undertaken between 1935 and 1940. This work included an addition of twenty-two by thirty feet. Partitions were taken out to enlarge the assembly and meeting rooms, and excavation was done to provide additional quarters for the service rooms. The addition also provided more space for records. The heating plant was moved from the basement of the annex to a building immediately east of the temple. Another addition was made during the administration of President Lewis R. Anderson. It provided a reception room. Excavation also provided a new kitchen and dining room, a new vault, etc.

When the completed temple was dedicated the grounds outside were still covered with rocks and sagebrush. Anthon H. Lund, the second president, likened "the Temple with its unfinished setting to a fair maiden of his native land, Denmark, dressed in a beautiful silk gown, but with clumsy wooden shoes on her dainty feet." The grounds remained in a rough condition until April 10, 1907, when the Presidency of the Latter-day Saint Church gave their approval for the landscape improvement work to proceed. The original terrace walls surrounding the grounds were removed, with the exception of the lower one, which was lowered by one-half, and the hill was graded to a cone shape. Thousands of loads of rich soil were hauled upon the hill and scattered over the once solid bed of stone, making it possible to plant lawn and flower beds. This was the beginning of the beautification program.

An elaborate stairway was constructed at that time from the west entrance of the temple down to the street. It was twenty feet wide, with retaining walls on either side, with square pillars at each landing fitted with electric lights. There were one hundred twenty-five steps with nine landings of six feet each with the top one being eighteen feet. The work on the stairway was completed in November. It has since been removed and lawn, shrubbery and trees planted in its place.

Many other improvements to the grounds and the temple itself have been made over the years.

In 1925 a missionary service was started at the Manti Temple. When tourists visit the temple grounds they are met by guides who are willing to assist them by relating the interesting history of the temple and answering any questions concerning it. The guides can be found at the Bureau of Information Building at the foot of the hill. This service is donated freely by members of the Church without any monetary remuneration. Many tourists who pass by the temple go up the hill and visit the grounds. Thousands of tracts explaining the history of the temple and beliefs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been distributed by the guides. Hundreds of copies of the Book of Mormon have also been sold.

The architectural design and beauty of the Manti Temple is a credit to the faith, integrity, and skilled workmanship of the Latter-day Saints. The temple, with its surroundings, has become an important point of interest for many who travel through central Utah.

“This is indeed marvelous,” said an Eastern tourist, as he stood with a group of fellow tourists on Bright Angel Point on the north rim of the Grand Canyon, “but have you seen the white Temple on a hill near a town called Manti?”<sup>8</sup>



Manti Temple

## CHAPTER VI

### Religious Significance

The Manti Temple, from the time of its conception up to the present, has played a significant part in the affairs of the community from a religious, social, and an economic standpoint. To the people there, the temple has always been a source of great pride and a spiritual uplift. They point with pride and satisfaction to "their" temple.

The religious significance is exemplified in the type of ordinances and ceremonies performed inside. First, there is marriage for time and all eternity. The Latter-day Saints believe that family ties will exist in the celestial kingdom\* after the resurrection. This will be so only if the marriage has been solemnized in a temple by the proper authority. It is a well-established fact that there are fewer divorces among those Latter-day Saints who have been married in the temple than among those who have not. This type of marriage gives an added meaning to the marriage covenant.

Second, baptism for the dead is practiced. The significance of this ordinance is in the realization that those acting as proxies are assisting those who never had the opportunity to be baptized by authorized servants while in mortality.

\*The Latter-day Saints believe that there will be three distinct degrees of glory in the hereafter. These being, from the highest to the least, the celestial, terrestrial and the telestial. Within the celestial kingdom there will be three degrees. To obtain the highest a person must be married in the temple and live in righteousness thereafter.

Third, there are religious ceremonies, called the endowment. The endowment is a course of moral and religious covenants. A person entering the temple enjoys not only a religious experience, but an aesthetic one as well. The ceremonies give dramatic emphasis to spiritual matters. The beauty of the religious murals on the walls of the instructional rooms enhances the importance of the ceremony.

A moral and spiritual stimulation comes from regular participation in doing this work. Those who have entered into the covenants made in the temple are generally more devoted and loyal to their church. The desire to be worthy to enter the temple causes the youth of the Latter-day Saint Church, in large measure, to uphold its spiritual and ethical standards.

The Presidency of the temple, during its golden anniversary, (1938) expressed the following sentiment:

We know the Manti Temple intimately and have come to love it well. We are acquainted with its every nook and corner, each growing thing upon its ground, its silence and its strength. We have seen the Temple radiant and alive in the morning sun; we have beheld it quiet and serene in the dusk of evening. We are convinced of the spiritual significance and divine function of the temple.<sup>9</sup>

The significance of the temple in Manti has been manifest throughout the years. One might say that it is a "beacon on a hill" that indirectly guides the lives of the people.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>*Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, L, August 13, 1888.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, XXXIX, June 11, 1877.

<sup>3</sup>*The Deseret Evening News*, April 14, 1879.

<sup>4</sup>William H. Peterson, *The Miracle of the Mountains* (Manti: Published by the author, 1942), p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1958), pp. 174-175.

<sup>6</sup>Manti Temple Historical Record, II (Manti Temple Files, Manti, Utah), p. 21.

<sup>7</sup>*Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, *op. cit.*, pp. 521-522.

<sup>8</sup>Peterson, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>9</sup>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Manti Temple Golden Jubilee* (n.p.: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1938), p. 3.

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