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Prototype for Zion: The Original Provo Tabernacle
and the Construction of Mormon Zion
in the American West

Ryan W. Saltzgeber

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

Prototype for Zion: The Original Provo Tabernacle and the Construction of Mormon Zion in the American West

Ryan W. Saltzgeber
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Master of Arts

During the winter of 2011–2012, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) and Office of Public Archaeology (OPA) at Brigham Young University (BYU) conducted archaeological explorations in urban Provo, Utah. The purpose of the research was to uncover and document the extant remains of the Original or Old Provo Tabernacle (OPT; 42UT1844). The data recovered from that excavation was the impetus for the current study. Through a combination of documentary and archaeological evidence, and using Mormon theology as a lens through which to interpret the actions of nineteenth century Latter-day Saints, this thesis demonstrates the important role played by the OPT in the project of Mormon Zion in the American West. The OPT was the first proposed and eighth completed tabernacle in the LDS Church. In the OPT, Brigham Young initiated a dynamic new building form which was intended to accommodate both the political and economic needs of LDS settlements at a distance from Salt Lake City and the central hierarchy of the Church while simultaneously providing space for Mormon worship and ritual practice. These buildings sought to prepare the Saints of early Utah for the eventual construction of temples throughout the region and, like the Tabernacle of the Congregation anciently, served to build strong communal ties in outlying Mormon settlements.

Keywords: Original Provo Tabernacle, Historical Archaeology, Mormonism, Settlement Studies, Phenomenology of Religion.

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For Kristie,
Always and Forever

PREFACE

Here, at the outset, I feel it only right to disclose several facts about myself to my readers. First, I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I believe that Joseph Smith was visited by living deities and charged with the task of restoring to the earth the church Christ established anciently. I accept Joseph Smith's claim that the Book of Mormon is a historical account of peoples living in the ancient Americas. I do so as a matter of faith and not of empiricism. Second, I myself was raised in Orem, Utah, a comparably sized town abutting Provo to the north; the boundary between the two is indistinguishable to the uninitiated. I attended funerals, graduations, lectures, and musical performances in the second Provo Tabernacle. I felt a kinship to the building. I mourned more profoundly than I would have expected when it burned. This is my home town. These are my people. This is my heritage. These two facts form and inform central aspects of my individual and cultural identity: I am a Mormon boy from Utah's "Happy Valley."

I am also a scientist and a scholar. This is a work of scholarship and not of faith or nostalgia. It represents my attempt to apply rigorous anthropological, historical, and

archaeological method and practice to topics which are near and dear to me. I freely and openly admit that my view here is subjective, one which, from the beginning, is predisposed to accept the word of Joseph Smith, his successors, and his followers as reliable at face value. I identify strongly with the Mormon worldview, and I am particularly drawn, by both faith and heritage, to the devoted Latter-day Saint men and women who founded Provo and built the Original Provo Tabernacle. I am not alone, however, in the belief that accepting as fact the claims of Mormonism is necessary in order to understand both the ramifications and expression of Mormon theology in the lives of historical as well as contemporary Mormon culture (see Shippy 1985). As a believing Latter-day Saint, I bring an inherently emic perspective to bear. I know natively when an explanation, recitation, or interpretation of Mormon theology, practice, and everyday expression is consistent with the conceptual framework of Latter-day Saint culture.

I put these facts on record for two reasons. First, I understand that my belief may create inherent bias in my explanations, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions. Having that potential bias in mind from the outset has forced a more critical appraisal of my assumptions and conclusions and caused me to check and double-check my arguments. Second, I want it to be clear that the statements, pronouncements, interpretations, assumptions, and theories which I present in this thesis represent, to some extent, a “native” or “emic” perspective of the subject. This thesis might be called, to paraphrase Richard L. Bushman (1969:25), “faithful archaeology.” I am not an anthropologist entering this topic as a participant observer having read and interviewed a broad subset of local informants. I am a member of the community. I speak the language. The history, the ideas, the customs, the places are all familiar to me because they are part of my earliest and most lasting cultural identity. These topics *are* extremely important to me. While I bring a bias to the topic, the bias is local. João Biehl and his colleagues (2007:5–6),

in studying subjectivity, admit that while they found “concrete constellations in which people forge and foreclose their lives around what is most at stake,” they argue this is “reflected lived experience” and that the subjective view “does not imply an error but connotes creativity, the possibility of a subject’s adopting a distinctive symbolic relation to the world in order to understand lived experience.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members are referred to by many different names. I have chosen, for the sake of variety, to maintain this convention. The LDS Church, the Mormon Church, or simply the Church will all be used in this thesis as synonyms. Likewise, Mormons, saints, Latter-day Saints, LDS, or simply “members” are terms most commonly used to refer to the people themselves. Where necessary, adjectives have been used to differentiate various groups within the Church (i.e. *modern* Mormons or *early* Latter-day Saints). Likewise, I have chosen to follow LDS conventions for referring to a variety of other people, places, and ideas. This will be especially noticeable in the discussion of Joseph Smith, who in addition to his full name, is frequently called “Joseph,” the “Prophet Joseph (Smith),” or simply “the Prophet.” Rarely, even in scholarly works, is he referred to as simply “Smith,” although I have, at times, adopted this common academic parlance. The restrictive vernacular of Mormonism will be further evident in the names of places and theological concepts. Some phrases which are commonly used amongst Latter-day Saints and which refer to very specific theological ideas have been used. In some cases, this usage is simply unavoidable. The first usage of these phrases are, generally speaking, accompanied with lengthy explanatory treatments which describe their particular usage and their meaning, as well as their historical context, development, and nuances as they pertain to the topic at hand.

In addition, a significant number of scriptural passages have been quoted in this thesis. Latter-day Saints believe the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and two additional volumes—the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price—to be scripture, words dictated by individuals in direct dialogical contact with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Where scriptural quotations are included they are followed by the book, with chapter, and verse (for verbatim quotations) separated by a colon (i.e., John 3:16). All biblical quotations, are taken from the King James Version, the translation most familiar to Latter-day Saints. Passages from the Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price are followed by the abbreviations “BOM” for Book of Mormon and “PGP” for Pearl of Great Price (i.e., 1 Nephi 21:14–16, BOM or Abraham 4:18, PGP). Citation of passages from the Doctrine and Covenants, which is divided into 138 numbered “sections” and two “Official Declarations,” use LDS convention by using the abbreviation “D&C” with the section number and verses separated by a colon (i.e., D&C 76:22). When quotations have been taken from historical documents, I have endeavored to preserve the original spelling. For the sake of clarity, however, I have occasionally made minor spelling corrections by adding missing letters in brackets.

While I was writing my thesis, I was invited by Michael Searcy, editor of the journal *Utah Archaeology*, to contribute an article on the Original Provo Tabernacle to a special issue of the journal. Based on presentations given during a special session of the Utah Professional Archaeology Council Winter Meetings in March 2014, the issue collected articles on significant archaeological projects in the State of Utah over the past several years. My article for this volume was based on and compiled from a text written originally for my thesis and which appears in Chapters 1, 3, and 4. Where the texts are identical they have been used here by permission. Likewise, I was invited by the staff of the Office of Public Archaeology to write

a historical background chapter to be included in the technical report for the site. While that publication is still in press (Harris et al., in press) the chapter for the report and Chapter 3 of this thesis are similar in many respects.

Finally, it is important to note that all statements, conclusions, and explanations as they pertain to LDS doctrine and practice are wholly mine. They represent my measured opinion and I alone am responsible for them. While they are based on statements of leaders of the Church, both living and dead, they should not be seen as representative of official statements of LDS beliefs, policies, practices, doctrines, teachings, or theologies. This is particularly true of Chapter 2, “A Social Theory of Mormon Theology.”

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In the early-morning hours of December 17, 2010, an off-duty police officer in Provo, Utah, reported a fire inside the historic Provo Tabernacle (Figure 1.1). By the time fire crews arrived the building was engulfed in flames. The blaze originated in the attic where a light fixture, displaced to accommodate stage lighting for a performance of the Christmas oratorio *Gloria*, ignited a wooden speaker enclosure (Provo Fire and Rescue [PFR] 2011:ii). By the time the fire was reported, the building's roof structure had already sustained massive damage. Shortly after crews arrived on scene, the roof collapsed. By daybreak the large assembly hall in the building's center was entirely destroyed. As the fire spread throughout the building and crews rushed to extinguish the flames, many Provo residents looked on; snapping pictures, reminiscing, and shedding tears. In the weeks following the fire, heartfelt expressions of grief, loss, and nostalgia flooded social media and news reports as the community mourned the loss of one of the oldest and most meaningful buildings in Utah County. "This is unbelievable, such a tragic experience," Provo resident Carl Bacon was quoted as saying, "So many meetings have been held here. This is a marvelous historic site, a sacred place for us" (Penrod et al. 2010).



Figure 1.1. Fire crews working to put out the fire at the historic Provo Tabernacle, December 17, 2010 (photo courtesy of Provo resident Alison Broadbent).

All told, the fire caused an estimated 15 million dollars in property damage (PFR 2011:vii). The only portions of the historic tabernacle to remain were the brick façade and the towers in each of the four corners. Loss of the Provo Tabernacle was a shock to the residents of Utah County. Originally built to serve as the central meeting place for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), the gothic revival style Tabernacle was a fixture in historic downtown Provo. For generations, this building served as the “cultural and religious center of the Provo community” (Utt 2013:53), even after it lost its primary functionality as the center of the LDS community. The building served as the setting for a

variety of community events including graduations, funerals, public lectures, religious services, political rallies, and musical performances—much like the one planned to occur the night of the fire.

As the community mourned, the LDS Church (the property owner) initiated a research project to assess what, if any, historic resources remained on the property and what the most appropriate course of action might be. While this research project involved LDS Church employees in many departments, the majority of the research occurred within the Historic Sites Division of the Church History department. As crews meticulously dug through the fire-ravaged remnants of the tabernacle, research staff at the Church History Library in Salt Lake City combed through the historical records of early Provo for any relevant information about the settlement and the tabernacle. In the course of research, it became apparent that an earlier “meetinghouse” or “Original Tabernacle” once stood just north of the burnt-out building and it was likely that some of this structure may still remain buried beneath the grassy park.

Original plans for the burnt Provo Tabernacle involved a restoration of the space for continued use as meeting place for the community. However, in the summer of 2011, the Provo Tabernacle restoration project was cancelled by the LDS Church. A new direction for the building had been chosen (Utt 2013:62). On October 1, 2011, in an address delivered during the Church’s Semiannual General Conference, Thomas S. Monson, President of the LDS Church, announced the intention to repurpose the burnt tabernacle as a temple. “After careful study,” Monson (2011:5) said, “we have decided to rebuild [the Provo Tabernacle] with full preservation and restoration of the exterior, to become the second temple of the Church in the city of Provo” (Figure 1.2). Following the announcement, work on the building accelerated with renewed vigor. Emily Utt (2013:63) observed that while “This change in use impacted personal significance



Figure 1.2. Architectural Rendering of the Provo City Center Temple (© 2011, Intellectual Reserve, Inc., used by permission).

of the building for many Provo residents,” it aligned the construction project with the Church’s continued mission to provide greater access to temple ordinances, and in the process “justified the expense in restoring the exterior of the building” (Utt 2013:63).

Repurposing the second tabernacle as a temple preserved and restored the historic character of the building’s exterior, however, the construction project threatened the possible remains of the earlier tabernacle. It was decided that if any remnants of the earlier building did exist, they should be found, excavated, and recorded. Since the foundation of the Original Provo Tabernacle (OPT) was likely to be significantly impacted by the construction project, “it was critical to understand the . . . character of the buried nineteenth-century structures” (McBride et al. 2012a). As a result, the Church History Department of the LDS Church initiated archaeological investigations seeking to recover any extant evidence of the earlier tabernacle.

The resulting data is the subject of this thesis.

At its most general, this thesis is an exploration of Mormon community building in early Utah through an analysis of important themes in LDS culture as they relate to the built environment. Mormonism is a theology with strong ties to physical objects, tangible experience, and carefully designed space (Givens 1997, 2007; Hamilton 1995; Jackson 2003; Leone 1973). Through a thorough presentation of the theological and metaphysical arguments found in the published writings of Joseph Smith, I will show that Mormon theology lends itself in a very literal sense to archaeological inquiry. From the earliest moments of Mormonism, Joseph Smith spoke of physical contact with divine beings, the discovery of ancient artifacts, and the necessity to build Zion; the literal, tangible, and physical Kingdom of God on earth (Joseph Smith–History [JSH] 1, Pearl of Great Price [PGP]; Doctrine and Covenants [D&C] 6:6). Joseph Smith told his followers in 1831 that building Zion was the “most important *temporal* object in view” (*History of the Church* [HC] 1:207, my emphasis). Smith’s vision, first articulated in the Plat of the City of Zion (Williams 1833), entailed the construction of an “urban society . . . worthy to become God’s ‘abode forever’” which replicated “on earth the spatial and social orders of heaven” (Olsen 1993:203; cf. Moses 7:21, PGP). In Joseph Smith’s vision of Zion, no separation existed between the sacred and the secular; rather all aspects of life, from the most routine to the most holy, were crucial to the work of salvation.

Specifically, this thesis explores how Mormon theology was articulated and embodied in the city of Provo through the construction of the OPT. As the center-place of life in Provo during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the prototype for similar structures in other LDS communities, the OPT played a significant role in the establishment of a distinctive pattern of settlement developed by Latter-day Saints in the Intermountain West (cf., Meinig 1965, 1998;

Yorgason 2004; Zelinsky 1961). In Provo, this pattern established a community which remains closely tied to its LDS roots. The excavation of the OPT provides unique insights into the Provo community during the last four decades of the nineteenth century. Through a combination of documentary and archaeological evidence, this thesis presents an analysis of the significance of the OPT to the community it once served as well as the role that the OPT played in establishing the strongly religious, and predominantly LDS community of Provo, Utah. While the remains of the OPT are no longer extant, the legacy of the OPT, as a building which prepared the LDS community for the reception of the highest priesthood ordinances in holy temples, lives on in the construction of the Provo City Center Temple.

Overview

The OPT, or the “Provo Meeting house” as it was frequently called, was proposed by Brigham Young in 1851 (dedicated 1867) as the center place of the Provo (later Utah) Stake—a collection of local LDS congregations or “wards” roughly equivalent to a diocese—the third stake established in the Utah Territory. For just over fifty years (1867–1919) the OPT served as the focus of life in Provo. The building was used for both sacred and secular purposes including regular worship services, business meetings, public lectures, political rallies, and other functions. Prominent leaders of the LDS Church including presidents, apostles, general Relief Society presidents and other officers delivered messages to the Saints assembled in the OPT. The OPT’s time as the primary gathering place of the community, however, was short-lived. By 1885, the OPT had been superseded when the new larger tabernacle was completed. For almost three decades, the OPT stood side-by-side (Figure 1.3) with the second tabernacle and continued to



Figure 1.3. Photograph of Provo's two tabernacles, ca. 1900 (BYU Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Provo, Utah).

be utilized for a wide variety of purposes, including political meetings, artistic performances, lectures, as a community schoolhouse, a gymnasium, as temporary classroom space for the Brigham Young Academy, and—as evidenced in the archaeological evidence—to house livestock, and to store building materials and other items.

As the center-place of both sacred and secular life in mid-nineteenth-century Provo, and the first planned and eighth completed tabernacle built outside of Salt Lake City, the OPT played a major role in the development of the Mormon settlement pattern based on Joseph Smith's Plan for the City of Zion (Williams 1833). In form, the OPT served as the template for several similar structures built in Mormon communities throughout the Intermountain West (Chiat 1997). In function, it was part of the process of continual reimagining and repurposing of space which

developed the unique pattern of Mormon settlement that “helped form the basis for Mormon adaptive success” in the arid Mountain regions of the west (Leone 1978:195).

During the nineteenth-century, tabernacles “were essential buildings in the development of communities and a sense of community throughout the entire region settled by the Saints” (McArthur 2005:3). As the prototype for the building form, the OPT is significant for its role in the beginnings of a widespread settlement project which led to the creation of the vast area known as the “Mormon Culture Region” (or “Mormon Corridor”), one of “only two or possibly three . . . regions whose religious distinctiveness is immediately apparent to the casual observer and is generally apprehended by their inhabitants” (Zelinsky 1961:164–165; see also Meinig 1965; Yorgason 2003; Figure 1.4). In the process, the OPT played a role in the development of the “ethnic-like character” of Mormon religious identity (Campbell et al. 2014:25), an identity which, Thomas F. O’Dea (1966:xiii) described as

an indigenous community, developed under American conditions, with its own experience enshrined in the common memory of its saints and heroes, who were united by common beliefs and values, common and particular institutions, and a common homeland identified with their own sacred history of suffering and achievement.

The settlement project which led to the creation of this strong regional identity was based on the adherence to the revealed principles of Mormon religion. Strict obedience was integral to the building of the kingdom of God on earth. “[W]e are called to build up Zion,” Brigham Young (1870:314) told his followers, “God has spoken from the heavens, and given us revelations, and it is for you and me to obey. The command has been given, it is recorded, and



Figure 1.4. The Mormon Culture Region (adapted from Meinig 1965:214, Figure 7).

Previous Studies of Mormon Settlement

Since its first appearance in the 1820s, Mormonism has spurred extensive study and debate. Intellectuals, theologians, and other able-minded observers—both believing and not—have grappled with its intricacies, its powerful influence on the lives of its adherents, and its profound reimagination of the universe. Studies of Mormon history and culture have utilized a wide variety of social theory for a vast array of purposes. Early literature on Mormonism tended toward treatises—often polemical—on faith designed as either affirmations or denials of the claims of Joseph Smith (Howe 1834; P. Pratt 1837). By the middle of the nineteenth century, attempts to extinguish the new faith, by word or sword, had proven fruitless. In these later years, Mormonism became a topic of curiosity in the popular imagination. Approached with part wonderment and part fear, Mormons were frequently profiled in magazines, published anecdotes, and other literary works (Conan Doyle 1887; *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 1852; Ingersoll 1884; Quincy 1883; Robinson 1883). The world now wanted to know all they could about “that strange and interesting people” (Gunnison 1852:v).

During the latter-half of the nineteenth century, booksellers in New York, Philadelphia, London, and Paris published several first-hand, book-length, accounts of Mormons in Utah written by federal appointees, fellow emigrants, and other individuals (cf. Burton 1857; Carvalho 1857; Chandless 1857; Clayton 1848; Gunnison 1852; Kane 1873; Piercy 1854; Remy and Brenchley 1861; Quincy 1883; Robinson 1883; Stansbury 1852). For many of these early writers, their curiosity was piqued by the wild reports of Mormon atrocities which were so widely circulated. English polymath Richard F. Burton (1857:1) declared his desire “of seeing

Utah as it is, not as it is said to be” as motivation for his own travels to Salt Lake City. It is this objective, empirical attitude toward the observation of the reality of Mormon settlement and institutional structure which led Howard M. Bahr (2014) to conclude that this early travel literature should rightly be considered the earliest ethnographic treatments of Mormonism.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, professional social scientists began detailed and thorough studies of Mormon history and culture. The past century has produced an expansive, dynamic, and ever-growing body of professional and amateur scholarship which seeks to describe, explain, and understand the movement. Studies of Mormonism have been conducted by professional historians, cultural geographers, sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, archaeologists, and many, many others, producing a diverse, comprehensive, thoughtful, and occasionally provocative literature comparable to that of any other world religion. In all this literature, a wide variety of approaches have been used including descriptive (i.e. Arrington and Bitton 1979; Bowman 2012; Shipps 1985), dogmatic (i.e. Arrington 1958; Brodie 1944; Leone 1978), and eclectic (i.e. Alexander 1991; Brooke 1994; Bushman 2004; Davies 2000; Givens 1997; Quinn 1994). Studies of Mormon settlement, beginning with sociologist Lowry Nelson’s (1952) work in rural Utah villages, have focused on the economic arrangements (Arrington 1958, 1979; Arrington et al. 1976), the cultural geography (Jackson 1977, 1978; Jackson and Layton 1976, Meinig 1965, 1998; Reys 1965), or the symbolic implications of the settlements pattern (Olsen 1981, 2002).

Most studies of the planning and execution of Mormon settlements in the American west agree that the pattern was an outgrowth of the Plat of the City of Zion outlined by Joseph Smith in 1833 (Williams 1833). This plan, likely the result of a combination of historical antecedents and peculiar innovations, was promoted by the ideological and theological ideas propounded by

Joseph Smith (Arrington 1958; Arrington et al. 1976; Jackson 1977, 1978; Jackson and Layton 1976; Olsen 1981, 2002; Nelson 1952). Authors often disagree on the particulars of either the level of adherence to the original plan or on the specific motivations for the system. In *The Mormon Village*, Lowry Nelson (1952) drew on his ethnographic surveys of Mormon towns in rural Utah in the 1920s and 1930s to argue that Mormon settlements in the American West, based on the Plat of the City of Zion (Williams 1833; see discussion below), were “a social invention . . . motivated by a sense of urgent need to prepare a dwelling place for the Savior at His Second Coming” (Nelson 1952:28). Nelson provided an early detailed treatment of the ideological sources (particularly the theological components) of Mormonism and their expressions in the built environment. Leonard Arrington (1958; Arrington and Bitton 1979; Arrington et al. 1976) ascribed Mormon motivation to a combination of economic benefit and religious zeal which led to the active and collective embodiment of ideas of economic and political equality in social institutions.

Cultural geographers have found a particular fascination with the Mormon settlements pattern (Bennion 2001; Francivaglia 1978; May 1977; Meinig 1965, 1998; Reps 1965; Zelinsky 1961). In particular, Richard H. Jackson (1977:226) argued that social arrangements outlined by the City of Zion meant that, while the plan was never followed exactly, the morphology of Mormon settlements in the West “grew out of the same theological and philosophical concepts as inspired the City of Zion.” In particular, Jackson (1977:226) highlighted the concept of “nucleated settlements” in Mormon communities which were “unlike the City of Zion in physical detail” but “often grew out of the same theological and philosophical concepts.” Dean L. May (1977) further highlighted the desire of LDS leaders to take the incoming converts from all over the world and turn them from a people of the world into Saints of the Most High God.

“[T]he paramount task they set for themselves in their new environment was a social one,” May (1977:76) argued, “building the heterogeneous harvest of converts . . . into a unified, harmonious, orderly community.” For May (1977), the purpose of the settlement was more important than the morphology of the settlement itself.

Archaeologist Mark P. Leone (1973, 1976, 1978) has done significant work on Mormons. He has variously applied cultural ecology, Marxism, and structural functionalism to the study of Mormon topics. In 1973, Leone wrote specifically about the place of tabernacles in both nineteenth century and contemporary Mormonism (Leone 1973). He argued, after the destruction of the Coalville Tabernacle, that Mormons today were able to destroy historic buildings because Mormon ideology included a “deliberate disposability” of buildings in an attempt to map current ideological trends over the past (Leone 1973:38). Other aspects of his argument, particularly his characterization of tabernacles, are handled in Chapter 5.

Steven L. Olsen (1981, 2002) has offered the most theoretically rigorous contributions to the study of Mormon landscapes. In his dissertation, *The Mormon Ideology of Place*, Olsen (2002) produced the most extensive and philosophically complex study of Mormon settlement. Olsen (2002:22) argues that Zion established a sense of territorial order for Latter-day Saints on the basis of what he calls “cosmic urban symbolism.” Metaphysical ideas were physically embodied through the construction of Mormon settlements which were highly social (urban), centripetally focused, cardinally aligned, and seen as an Earthly imitation of the divine order of society and the cosmos (Olsen 2002:26–31). Settlements, then, “expressed early Mormonism’s highest social ambitions and ultimate existential concerns” (Olsen 2002:25).

Only two previous studies, both master’s theses, have dealt with the topic of nineteenth century Mormon tabernacles. In *The Geographical Landscape of Tabernacles in the Mormon*

Culture Region, cultural geographer Crystal Wride Jenson (1992) used a “reading the landscape” approach to analyze all Mormon tabernacles constructed between 1847 and 1952. Jenson attempted to define tabernacles and to explain their use and significance in settlements throughout the Mormon Culture Region. In *The Buildings at the Center: Latter-day Saint Tabernacles in the Mormon Culture Region*, Aaron J. McArthur (2005:3) gives a thorough analysis of the intellectual place of tabernacles in Mormon settlements, arguing that they were “essential buildings in the development of communities and a sense of community throughout the entire region.” Both of these studies attempt to answer the question of what a tabernacle is and provide some attempts at the meaning of the buildings in the communities in which they were built. Both attempt to cover the entire Mormon Culture Region over an entire century. As a result, each suffers from a lack of depth in the particular analysis which is only compensated for by the breadth of the studies.

Previous scholarship on Mormon settlements has offered considerable insight on the topic, however, rarely have these studies focused on a particular settlement and, more specifically, a particular building within a settlement in their analysis of the ramifications of the Zion-building activities of early Mormonism. This thesis offers the OPT as a case study for testing the veracity of previous claims to the manner, meaning, and significance of Mormon settlement on the basis of the Plat of the City of Zion. As the central structure and the focal point of an early LDS community in the Intermountain West, the OPT is particularly well-suited to this analysis.

Plan of Work

According to a March 2013 Gallup Poll, the Provo-Orem metropolitan statistical area

(an area encompassing most of Utah and Juab counties) is “the most religious” area in the United States with 77 percent of respondents self-identifying as “very religious” (Newport 2013). Likewise, in 2010, Latter-day Saints comprised 88.5 percent of the population of Provo (Association of Religion Data Archives 2010). This level of continued observance of revealed Mormon theology means that Provo today is among the best expressions of the impact of Mormon settlement and community building in the Intermountain West. In the following chapters, I explore how the built environment of Provo articulated the ideological concepts of a Mormon Zion as outlined by Joseph Smith and implemented by his successor Brigham Young.

Chapter 2 begins by outlining the theological and metaphysical arguments of Mormonism which provided the framework for Mormon community building and settlement activities. The chapter presents a phenomenological approach to Mormon theology which provides the theoretical basis for the rest of the thesis. I argue that Mormon theology, as found in the published work of Joseph Smith and expounded by the public statements of first-generation LDS leaders, represents a fully-developed, thorough system of metaphysics with its own ontology, epistemology, and cosmology. Further, I contend that this philosophical understanding of the universe was the guiding principle of all Mormon activities and provided a framework for constructing meaning and understanding among adherents of the infant faith. Key to this system were the cosmological arguments contained in the “Mormon ideology of place,” as expressed through the City of Zion ideal (Olsen 2002).

A historical summary of the founding and building of Provo, Utah, with special attention to the role of the construction of the Original Provo Tabernacle (OPT) in the settlement program, is presented in chapter 3. By tracing the early efforts to establish a Mormon settlement in Utah Valley, this chapter attempts to situate the OPT in the overall settlement project as outlined in

Chapter 4 presents an overview of the archaeological excavations of the OPT, its design, and the methods and procedures—before, during, and after the excavation—which were followed to see it through to completion. This chapter includes the results of the archaeological work, including details about the artifacts and features recovered and recorded. While much of the archaeological evidence recovered in the excavations of the OPT are unable to provide details about the use of the building, Chapter 4 presents a summary of the all archaeological evidence recovered during the excavation in order to provide readers with a full understanding of the association between the artifacts and features of the OPT.

Chapter 5 provides a particular analysis of the artifacts recovered from the floor zone in the basement of the OPT. These artifacts, less than one percent of the total artifacts recovered at the site, are the artifacts most likely related to the use of the building prior to its intentional destruction. By assuming that activities are related to particular artifact categories and artifact categories are related to specific demographic groups, this analysis attempts to identify the activities occurring within the building during its final years of life, the members of the community who most likely participated in the activities, and the areas with the basement where these activities were most likely occurring.

Finally, in chapter 6, I analyze the archaeological and documentary evidence of the OPT in light of the metaphysical system of Mormonism as outlined in Chapter 2. I concluded that the OPT served the community as an *axis mundi* (a point of intersection between the natural and supernatural worlds; Eliade 1963), and much like the tabernacle of the congregation (Exodus 25–27, 33:7–10; Isaiah 54:2), served as “building that prepares people for a temple” (McArthur 2005:14).

Chapter 2

A SOCIAL THEORY OF MORMON THEOLOGY

The Mormon metaphysical system as understood by nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints was the product of gradual development occurring through the continued reception of revelation by Joseph Smith (Figure 2.1) and later Brigham Young (Figure 2.2) (Olsen 2002). In order to understand the Mormon world view which directly led to the construction of the OPT, it is necessary to trace the development of the metaphysical system of Mormonism in its ontological, epistemological, and cosmological dimensions. Likewise, tracing the development of a Mormon ethos is helpful to interpreting the OPT. Through an analysis of the evolution of economic arrangements, worshipful practices, and religious architecture we are able to gain insights into the shifting understanding of the concept of Zion in nineteenth-century Mormon communities and to contextualize the construction and use of the OPT.

Drawing on the work of Clifford Geertz (1973) and the first-generation statements of Latter-day Saints, this chapter presents a brief outline of the key features of the metaphysical and ethical system espoused by Mormon theology. The treatment here is undertaken with the intent of outlining a theoretical model through which to interpret the material remains related to



Figure 2.1. Portrait of Joseph Smith, Jr., ca. 1840s, oil on canvas. Original at Community of Christ Headquarters, Independence, Missouri (image in the public domain).

Mormon practices in early Provo, Utah. While it is systematic in nature, it is not an exhaustive treatment of the topic. While no official statement of Mormon theology exists, more complete and thorough outlines of the system have been attempted on several occasions (cf. McMurrin 1959; O. Pratt 1856, P. Pratt 1837, 1855; Roberts 1893, 1907, 1912; Smith et al. 1835, Talmage 1899; Taylor 1852, Widtsoe 1908, 1937). The primary goals of this chapter are (1) to highlight the key features of Mormon theology as they relate to the construction of the nineteenth-century Mormon world view, (2) to trace the historical development of that worldview and its expressions in the built environment, and (3) to build a theoretical model for understanding the material remains of nineteenth-century Mormon communal structures.

A Paradigm for the Anthropological Study of Religion

Clifford Geertz (1973:87–141) outlines a paradigm for understanding the metaphysical and ethical arguments of religion. Geertz (1973:126–127) best explained the relationship between theology and practice in religious systems when he said, “Religion is never merely metaphysics . . . never merely ethics either.” For Geertz, a mutually-reaffirming discursive relationship exists between metaphysics (world view) and ethics (human action) within a theological system. Religion is metaphysical insofar as it provides adherents with a world view, “their concept of nature, of self, of society . . . their most comprehensive ideas of order” (Geertz 1973:127). Religion is ethical insofar as it calls upon adherents to act in particular ways. The world view is supported when the ethical actions of the adherent confirm the picture of reality drawn by the metaphysical system. The affirmation of the metaphysical system, in turn, leads to continued ethical action, thus, creating a self-perpetuating system. The meaning of both the metaphysics and the ethics of religion are “stored” in sacred symbols which “relate an ontology

and a cosmology to an aesthetics and a morality; their peculiar power comes from their presumed ability to identify fact [i.e., epistemology] with value at the most fundamental level” (Geertz 1973:127). In this way, religion “tunes human actions to an envisaged cosmic order and projects images of cosmic order onto the plane of human experience” (Geertz 1973:90).

Thus, the key features of any metaphysical system of religion are found in its ontology (theory of the nature of the universe), its epistemology (theory of knowledge and method for assessing truth), and its cosmology (the theory of the order and nature of the universe). Sacred symbols exemplify the religious system in the physical world and “formulate a basic congruence between a particular style of life and a specific . . . metaphysic” and are “dramatized in rituals or related in myths” (Geertz 1973:90, 127).

This Geertzian paradigm of religion necessitates the production of a thorough outline of the theology and ideology of a religious system, including the metaphysical and ethical arguments, and the analysis of a physical (symbolic) expression of that ideology. As such, it is particularly well-adapted to the study of any religious site explored archaeologically, and especially to any site where knowledge of the specifics of the theological system are available to the archaeologist. The study of the design, construction, and use of the OPT is case study for this model. As such, the remainder of this chapter presents the general theological arguments of Mormonism and the historical development of the social institutions which provided the physical expression of those ideas. In the next chapter, the story of the founding of Provo and the construction of the OPT with an emphasis on how the local expression of Mormon ideology principally relates to the OPT itself. This process, particularly for an archaeological study, must be undertaken with one caveat in mind. Geertz cautions against the reduction of objects and people to mere symbols. “There is still . . . a difference between building a house and drawing



Figure 2.2. Brigham Young, ca. 1855, photograph by Charles R. Savage (image courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

up a plan for building a house,” says Geertz (1973:91–92). It is important that we distinguish between our “traffic with symbols” and our “traffic with objects or human beings” (Geertz 1973:92). While objects and human beings often function as symbols they are, in actuality, much more. In the case of objects, they are both symbolic of the activities and behaviors in which they are involved and also particularistic manifestations of a technological form (Schiffer 2011). Human beings, on the other hand, are living, breathing, vibrant agents who, while operating within a cultural system, are possessed on intrinsic value and individual action (see below).

An Outline of Mormon Metaphysics

As in all Christian theologies, at the center of Mormon belief Jesus Christ stands supreme. He is the source of power, of sanctification, and of action. Joseph Smith stated emphatically:

The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things pertaining to our religion are only appendages to it. [Smith 1924:121]

Throughout Latter-day Saint Scripture, the Atonement of Christ—the collective act of suffering, death, and resurrection detailed by biblical authors (cf., Matthew 26–28; Mark 14–16; Luke 22–24; John 17–21)—is the pivotal event in human history and the event upon which the entire metaphysical and ethical systems of Mormonism are based. Many of the arguments detailed below rest on the completion of this single crucial act. The central importance of Christ, however, is among one of only a few similarities between Mormonism and other Christ-centered theologies.

Throughout Christian history the production of thorough philosophical statements of belief (often called “creeds” or “confessions”) was foundational to the explication of theology. From Constantine to Aquinas, Luther to Calvin, all debates in Christendom revolved around the production of systematic, exegetical, philosophical statements written, debated, and accepted by authoritarian bodies. Creeds were interpretive, extra-scriptural documents accepted as the official authoritative statements of the proper meaning of scripture. The creeds were viewed as final statements on the principles of Christian belief and metaphysics (Pelikan 2003). Not only does Mormonism reject the Christian creeds, no such formal statement of Mormon theology has ever been produced. In its particular primitivism, the assertion that it is first-century Christianity restored to the earth after the long night of apostasy, Mormonism roundly rejects the whole history of exegetical creeds. “Bluntly put,” says Stephen Webb (2012:244), “Mormons do not play by the rules of the Nicene Creed.” Or, really, any of the Christian creeds. In the process, “nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints . . . embarked on a path that led to developments that now distinguish their tradition from the Christian tradition as surely as early Christianity was distinguished from its Hebraic context” (Shipps 1985:ix–x). Mormon primitivism goes beyond the attempts at reform embodied in the Protestant writings of Martin Luther, John Calvin, or, Smith’s contemporary, Alexander Campbell (Hughes and Allen 1988).

Several scholars have argued that no official “Mormon Creed” exists due to the ardent LDS belief in continuing revelation through modern prophets which precludes the production of any definitive statement of theology (Rasmussen 1992; Talmage 1899; Webb 2012). Early LDS Apostle Parley P. Pratt (1855:33) asserted that the “key to the science of Theology *is the key of divine revelation*” (emphasis added). Likewise, for John Taylor (1852:50), another early Apostle and eventual President of the Church, revelation was one of the governing principles

of the universe. It is more likely that no official extra-scriptural statement of Mormon metaphysics has been produced because it is simply unnecessary to the continued practice of Mormon religion. The published revelations and scriptures of the LDS Church clearly lay out the theological system of the Church and Latter-day Saints are directed to “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37). Revelation, then, does not preclude a system of Mormon metaphysics, rather, it is part and parcel of that system. Indeed, revelation is the basis of Mormon epistemology (see below). Mormons “believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and . . . that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God” (Articles of Faith 1:9, PGP).

The closest that Mormonism has ever come to a formal creed is the Articles of Faith (PGP) (Sondrup 1981). In response to the request from John G. Wentworth, editor of the *Chicago Democrat*, Joseph Smith penned a sketch of the “rise, progress, persecution, and faith of the Latter-day Saints” (*Times and Seasons*, 1 March 1842:706). This response, which purportedly was to be published in a forthcoming history of New Hampshire, is known today as the “Wentworth Letter” (*Times and Seasons*, 1 March 1842:706–710). The Articles of Faith, a series of thirteen succinct statements of Mormon belief, were the concluding section of this letter and were canonized in as part of the Pearl of Great Price in 1880 (Allen and Leonard 1976:170–171). The Articles of Faith are, therefore, considered official doctrine of the Church (Church Education System 2003:256–257). “In terms of brevity and . . . clarity of doctrinal presentation, these thirteen statements are unexcelled” argued Oscar W. McConkie (1989:4–5). While the Articles of Faith provide the framework for a basic theology of Mormonism, they “do

not pretend . . . to summarize all of the basic doctrines of the gospel” (O. McConkie 1989:4–5).

While the Articles of Faith do present the “essential and characteristic features of the gospel” as taught by the Church they do not outline the “prescribed practices” generally contained in the creeds (Talmage 1899:4).

Difficulties in Systematizing Mormon Theology

Several scholars have attempted to construct at least a basic philosophical summary of Mormon theology (Alexander 1980; Bergera (ed.) 1989; McMurrin 1959; Ostler 2007; Underwood 2007). In *Philosophical Foundations of Mormon Theology*, philosopher Stanley M. McMurrin (1959) made the first systematic attempt to apply the lexicon of traditional philosophical inquiry to the description of Mormon doctrine and its metaphysical implications. Focusing largely on questions of Mormon ontology, McMurrin demonstrates the difficulty in labeling Mormon beliefs with the philosopher’s toolkit. McMurrin found, as many others have, that any exercise in devising a philosophical definition of Mormon metaphysics is forced to confront fundamental tenets of the faith which militate against such an exercise. In his review of McMurrin’s work, Truman G. Madsen (1959–1960:101) argued that while studies of this type are “very valuable,” revelation and individual interpretation by believers (byproducts of the lack of a formal theological statement) present ongoing difficulties to any attempt to “pigeon hole” Mormon doctrine.

James Faulconer (2006:22) has argued further that the LDS Church is institutionally atheological, reflecting “the LDS understanding of religion as a set of practices, beliefs, and attitudes . . . fundamental to LDS religion.” Beyond certain foundational beliefs (i.e., those outlined in the Articles of Faith), or where authoritative statements from scripture or modern

prophets can be found, finding consensus amongst Latter-day Saints on belief and practice is often difficult. Even differentiating between “authoritative statements” and opinion can be difficult, particularly when the individual holds a prominent position in the Church (Bergera 1980; Oman 2006a, 2006b; Sherlock 1980).¹ Nathan Oman (2006a:1) has analyzed the “relationship between authority and independent moral judgment, and the way in which Mormons interpret their own past.” Oman (2006a:15–16) argues that members of the LDS Church must be committed to an investigation of the limits of the Church’s doctrinal authority through an appeal to the scriptures and the historical statements of Church leaders. This investigation necessarily employs individual moral judgment to evaluate “truth.” Once the limits are found, moral judgment is simultaneously subordinated to doctrinal authority and employed to further investigate authoritative limits. As a result, Latter-day Saints often invoke “Church Doctrine” as an appeal to their individual knowledge of authoritative statements found in scripture and in the history of the Church. As individual knowledge varies drastically so too do individual interpretations and practices of Mormonism.

This “necessarily interpretive” (Oman 2006b:25) system of personal knowledge and practice within Mormonism makes it difficult, if not impossible, to offer a description of Mormon theology which would satisfy all members of the Church. What follows, therefore, cannot be considered authoritative but rather is the result of a personal project of research and interpretation using authoritative scriptures and historical statements by Church leaders. As such, the following outline of the metaphysics of Mormon theology uses only statements found in Mormon scripture and made by Joseph Smith and other first-generation Church leaders.

Mormon Ontology

The ontology of Mormonism defines two fundamental principles of the universe which have profound and widespread ramifications for the rest of the system of Mormon metaphysics. First, Mormon theology declares that the universe operates on the principles of natural law and in which no being, mortal or immortal, is not subject to these laws. Not only does this posit a causal universe, but it constructs a universe in which agency is eternal, essential, and undeniable. Second, Mormon theology asserts that matter is also eternal, denies *ex nihilo* creation, and places man in a co-eternal relationship with deity, the same species in a nascent state.

A Causal Universe. Mormon theology asserts that the universe is constructed on the basis of a direct causal relationship between the actions of individual agents and the operation of natural law in response. In a revelation received April 2, 1843, the Lord explained to Joseph Smith that “There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:20–21). Here the existence of the law implies the ability for individual agents to make moral choice. The Book of Mormon prophet Lehi explains that “men are free according to the flesh . . . to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death” (2 Nephi 2:27, BOM). The manifestation of the interaction between law and agency, argues Lehi, is evident in mankind’s experiential comprehension of binary opposites (2 Nephi 2:5, 11, BOM). As individuals act in accordance with divine commandments, they receive the promised reward, when they choose to act against the law, they are punished. Lawful actions bring about

goodness, happiness, and pleasure, unlawful actions bring about evil, sadness, and pain.

Alma, another Book of Mormon prophet, further clarifies that no agents, not even God himself, operate outside of these natural laws (Alma 42). In discussing the necessity of Christ's intercession for humanity, an event promised by God in the pre-mortal life (Moses 4:2, PGP), Alma explains that as a prerequisite to God's plan of redemption, He must respect the laws of justice and mercy or "God would cease to be God" (Alma 42:13, 22). The Law of Justice is an eternal law which forces God to intercede on behalf of the woeful sinners to "appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also" (Alma 42:15). The atonement of Christ introduces mercy, overcomes death through the resurrection, and brings us into the presence of God where we are judged according to our obedience to his commandments (Alma 42:23–24).

The interplay between agency—the "free independence of mind which heaven has so graciously bestowed upon the human family as one of its choicest gifts" (Smith 1924:49)—and natural law provides the underlying structure of the universe in which we operate. Actions lead, naturally and automatically, to the reception of the blessings or punishments as outlined by the law.

Eternal Matter. Mormon theology proclaims matter is eternal. In a public sermon delivered in 1841, Joseph Smith explained, "The spirit of man is not a created being; it existed from eternity, and will exist to eternity. Anything created cannot be eternal; and earth, water, etc., had their existence in an elementary state, from eternity" (Joseph Smith, in *HC* 3:387; cf. Abraham 3:18, PGP). This denial of *ex nihilo* creation has certain key ramifications for Mormon theology. First, this assertion means that mankind is coeternal with God, a status which allows

for the absolute freedom to act as independent agents and which means that humans too may progress to be like He is. As Lorenzo Snow's popular couplet says, "As man now is, God once was; as God now is man may be" (Williams 1984:1).

Likewise, Mormon scripture states that "There is no such thing as immaterial matter. . . All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes. We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter" (D&C 131:7–8). This implies that all things in the universe are made of eternal substance which exists in various states along a continuum of purity and refinement. While each state of matter is comprehensible by the physical senses, higher states cannot be discerned by matter in a lower state. Thus, salvation and exaltation of the soul and body can be defined as refinement of matter as it moves from one state of material existence to another.

In addition to individuals, matter is itself also possessed of intelligence and, therefore, agency. This agency of all matter is evident in the account of the organization of the world found in the Book of Abraham. After the "Gods" ordered, commanded, and organized the materials of the earth, they "watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed" (Abraham 4:18, PGP; cf. D&C 93:29, see discussion in Mormon Cosmology below).

Together, these principles construct a universe which is eternal, causal, ordered, and which allows for both the unencumbered freedom of choice for individual agents and the excision of consequences in accordance with natural law. We are "intelligences" (Abraham 3:22, PGP), eternal substances which are neither created nor destroyed by God, but which, through the operation of law and agency, can act and be acted upon (2 Nephi 2:27, BOM). The Mormon concept of deity, therefore, is neither omnipotent nor omnipresent. Rather, God is a being who has achieved a state of knowledge and refinement of matter higher than our own (see Mormon

Epistemology and Mormon Cosmology below). However, faithful Latter-day Saints are assured that through concerted effort, diligence in heeding the commandments of God, and through the pursuit of knowledge that they may obtain not only His presence, but a continued progression alongside Him.

Mormon Epistemology

Knowledge—obtained through study, personal judgment, and revelation—is the key to Mormon individual and collective salvation. Salvation, ontologically defined as the refining of matter, is accomplished through the acquisition of knowledge. Joseph Smith said, “A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power . . . Hence it needs revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God” (*HC* 4:588). “It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance,” a later revelation frankly stated (*D&C* 131:6). Not only is knowledge the *means* to salvation, it *is* salvation; “The glory of God” after all, “is intelligence” (*D&C* 93:36). “He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things” (*D&C* 93:28).

“Saving knowledge” or knowledge necessary to salvation is found in the knowledge that Christ is our Savior. “This is life eternal,” Christ said, “that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast setn” (*John* 17:3). The Book of Mormon further explains that knowing God is to serve God (*Mosiah* 5:13, *BOM*). However, this pursuit is not constrained to simply those things which are contained in scripture or delivered by the voice of the prophets. All truth and knowledge is to be sought. Scripture is filled with calls for individuals to seek learning “out of the best books . . . by study and also by faith” (*D&C* 88:118). “[S]tudy and

learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people,” said another revelation (D&C 90:15). Joseph Smith (in Smith 1924:313) declared, “One of the grand fundamental principles of ‘Mormonism’ is to receive truth let it come from whence it may.” Brigham Young (in Widtsoe 1925:2) said, “‘Mormonism’ embraces all truth that is revealed and that is unrevealed, whether religious political, scientific, or philosophical. It comprehends all true science known by man, angels, and the gods.”

Mormon epistemology might be characterized as “empirical spirituality.” It allows for individuals who lack faith in particular doctrines to experiment, to seek empirical confirmation through experience with the divine. Moroni, the last prophet-author in the Book of Mormon, challenged readers after reading the book to “ask God the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true” promising that if they do so with sincerity and faith in Christ, God “will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 10:4, BOM). Earlier in the Book of Mormon, another author preached “an experiment on my words” promising that by planting the seed of faith in their hearts and not casting it out with unbelief, it will enlarge the soul and enlighten the understanding (Alma 32:27–28, BOM).

Revelation is the key to the assessment of truth. Occasionally, revelation causes the reappraisal of previous beliefs. The removal of *The Lectures on Faith* (Smith et al. 1835) from the canon of Mormon scripture illustrates this point. A series of seven “lectures on theology” (HC 2:176), *The Lectures on Faith* were designed by Joseph Smith, likely with the help of Sidney Rigdon and William W. Phelps (Larsen et al. 1980:249), to be delivered to the School of the Prophets in Kirtland in the winter of 1834–1835. From 1835 to 1921, *The Lectures* were published as part of the Doctrine and Covenants (Van Wagoner et al. 1987:71). In 1921, it was determined that they were intended as theological lessons for use in Kirtland and did not reflect

doctrines revealed after they were written (Alexander 1980:21; Dahl and Tate 1990:16–19).

Most particularly, Lecture Five describes God the Father as a “personage of spirit and power: possessing all perfection and fulness” while Christ is a “personage of tabernacle made, or fashioned like unto a man” (Smith et al. 1835:53). This was deemed inconsistent with the April 2, 1843 revelation that “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also” (D&C 130:22). Since the authorship of the *Lectures* was attributed to men and the later statement was credited to divine revelation, the statements in the *Lectures* were considered part of an earlier, less-enlightened understanding. In Mormon epistemology, man’s understanding of the nature of reality is always subject to revision as God sees fit to reveal new truth.

Mormon epistemology is, thus, a theology in process, one based on an ongoing discourse with the divine mediated through God’s prophets. Individual responsibility to study, interpret, and practice is of paramount importance in Mormon religion and the doctrine of individual salvation. Mormons are called upon to proactively carry out this obligation. For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things,” the Lord told Joseph Smith, “for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant . . . men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will . . . for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves” (D&C 58:26).

Mormon Cosmology

Mormon cosmology expresses a grand vision of the universe based on the principles outlined in the ontological and epistemological arguments above. Since matter is eternal, it logically follows that an existence pre-dated our current mortal life and will be followed

by another state of being. This “pre-existence,” discussed in Moses 4 and Abraham 3 (Pearl of Great Price), reveals a world in which all of mankind lived together as one family with Heavenly parents who taught and cared for their spirit children. At some point, this Father in Heaven outlined a plan which allowed for the continued progression of His children toward His perfection. This plan involved the organization (using the existing matter) of a world for His children to enter a mortal life, obtain mortal bodies, and to test their diligence to His commandments (Abraham 3:24–26, PGP). Knowing that none were capable of perfectly keeping all of His commandments and cognizant of the fact that the Law of Justice would, therefore, require their punishment by banishment and damnation (Romans 3:23, 6:23; Alma 34, BOM), God provided a savior for humankind in the form of His son Jesus Christ (Mosiah 15:5–9, BOM; Alma 34:13–14, BOM).

A revelation received May 6, 1833, and published today as Section 93 of the Doctrine and Covenants, summarizes the metaphysical system of Mormon theology and shows its “integrative tendency” (Olsen 1981:22). “Man was also in the beginning with God,” says the revelation, pointing to the co-eternal nature of our relationship with God. “Intelligence, or light of truth,” it continues, “was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence” (D&C 93:29–30). Knowledge, or truth, here, is also eternal and independent and possessed of agency. The operation of the agency of all matter within the system is interrelated. If the materials of the Earth had not obeyed the commandments of God, no Earth would have existed for man’s trial in mortality. If Christ had not accomplished the atonement, all of creation would have been useless, “it must needs have been created for a thing of naught; wherefore there would have been no purpose in the end of its creation” (2 Nephi 2:12, BOM). Likewise,

individuals are called upon to act in particular ways in order to fulfill their part in the grand vision of eternity.

“Happiness is the object and design of our existence,” Joseph Smith taught, “and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God” (*HC* 5:134–135). This mortal life, according to Mormon cosmology, is a “probationary state” a “time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state which has been spoken of by us” (*Alma* 12:24, BOM; see also *Alma* 34:32–33, BOM). Agency, again, structures the universe and provides the means to salvation if we choose to employ our agency in the pursuit of knowledge. If faithful, we are able to obtain a place at His side, working in concert with Him in the world to come.

Undeniably, Mormon theology and practice is preoccupied with the “world to come.” Much of the teaching and the prophecies in the scriptures speak of the need to prepare the earth for the millennial reign of Christ (*Articles of Faith* 1:10, PGP) by gathering the elect out of the nations of the earth (*Isaiah* 11:11–12) and building His kingdom on earth (*D&C* 65:6). After all of God’s children have had an opportunity to experience mortal life, the “end of time” will occur. Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, all mankind will be resurrected; that is they will literally rise from the dead with glorified (more refined) material bodies (*Alma* 11:45, BOM; cf. *1 Corinthians* 15:21–22). Each individual will then stand before God, provide an accounting of his or her deeds in mortality, and be judged by Him accordingly (*Revelation* 20:12; *D&C* 101:78; *3 Nephi* 26:4, BOM). Each person, according to the obedience they displayed and the knowledge received, will then be placed in one of three “kingdoms of Glory”—the Celestial, Terrestrial, or Telestial—according to his or her light, knowledge, and obedience to the commandments of God (*D&C* 76). After this final judgment, the world will be sanctified and become the Celestial

Kingdom (D&C 130:9).

Toward a Mormon Ethos: The Concept of Zion in Nineteenth Century Mormon Thought

Mormon teachings in the earliest days were basic Christian primitivism. Smith, like many of his contemporaries, felt driven to practice Christianity as they understood it from reading Biblical accounts of the first century Church (Underwood 1993). After the Church was organized in 1830 Mormonism began a radical divergence from mainstream Christian Primitivism. The doctrines contained in revelations received after 1830 were innovative. These ideas, while generally vaguely supported by Biblical passages, were new and innovative. They reflected the revealed order of heaven and separated the movement from others arising out of the Second Great Awakening (Bushman 2005). The most important theological innovation and “the theme Joseph himself emphasized most passionately, was Zion” (Bowman 2012:32). The concept of Zion redefined and refined Mormon theology in key ways which led to “remarkable theological innovations” (Olsen 1981:21). The planning of Zion communities and the construction of temples and other sacred structures at the center of the City of Zion defined the Mormon settlement pattern as “sacred Mormon enterprise, enabled the people to call themselves God’s people, and generated the ‘effective space’ which was to become the Mormon kingdom” (Olsen 2002:29). Mormon architecture and city planning, based on the Plat of the City of Zion, are the integrated expressions of Mormon ontology, epistemology, and cosmology.

The City of Zion: The Mormon Settlement Pattern

Zion was a principal theme of the prophetic ministry of Joseph Smith. Many of the prophet’s revelations echoed the calling by God for Latter-day Saints to build Zion. As early as

April 1829, Joseph is called upon to “seek to bring forth and establish Zion” (D&C 6:6). The call to build Zion was accompanied by promises that Zion would be blessed with the “reward of the good things of the earth” (D&C 59:3) and that it would “flourish” (D&C 35:24; 39:13; 64:41). For Joseph, the call to build Zion was not an esoteric longing for some future state or simply the call to bring new converts to the Church. Rather Zion was “the most important temporal object in view” (HC 1:207). Joseph Smith envisioned the construction of an “urban society . . . worthy to become God’s ‘abode forever’ (Moses 7:21 [, PGP])” which replicated “on earth the spatial and social orders of heaven” (Olsen 1993:203). Zion or the “New Jerusalem,” the Lord promised, was a “land of peace, city of refuge, a place of safety for the Saints of the most high God” (D&C 45:66).

In an 1833 letter to Church leaders in Missouri, Smith revealed his Plat for the City of Zion (Williams 1833; Figure 2.3). This plan, originally intended to be constructed in Jackson County, Missouri (D&C 57:1–3), outlined a settlement pattern which included five components: (1) centralized squares reserved for the construction of community and religious buildings (originally 24 temples); (2) rigid, square gridded city blocks which were generally cardinally aligned; (3) wide streets; (4) prescriptions for the placement of houses within the city blocks; and (5) farm land located outside the settlement (Arrington et al. 1976; Bennion 2001; Jackson 1977; Jackson and Layton 1976; May 1977; Meinig 1965, 1998; Nelson 1952; Reps 1965). In 1838, Sidney Rigdon (1838:53), a member of the First Presidency, urged Church members to “be gathered into the Cities appointed.” “[I]ntelligence is the great object of our holy religion,” Rigdon explained, “intelligence is the result of education, and education can only be obtained by living in compact society.” In a revelation received in April 1843, the importance of building lasting social relationships was reiterated to Joseph Smith. “[T]hat same sociality which exists

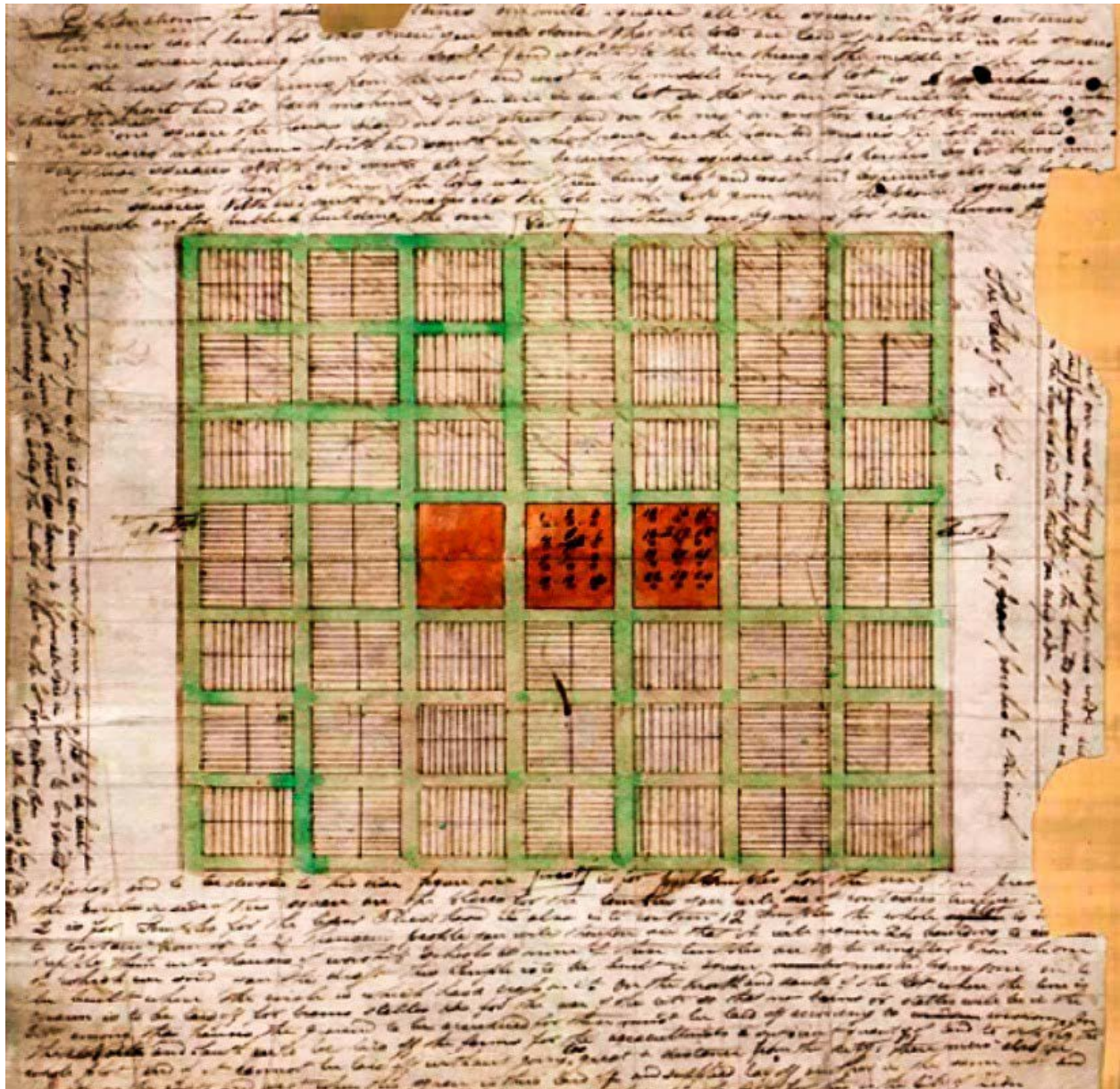


Figure 2.3. Plat of the City of Zion, 1833 (Courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

among us here will exist among us there [in the world after the Second Coming of Christ], only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy” read the revelation (D&C 130:2).

Even after being driven from Jackson County in 1833, the designation of Jackson County as the center place of Zion remained firm. No other Mormon settlement was designated as the center place. Kirtland, Ohio, and Far West, Missouri, were referred to as “stakes of Zion” (D&C

104:48, 115:6) and Nauvoo, Illinois, was called the “corner stone of Zion” (D&C 124:2). Even after a public sermon in 1844 expanded Zion to encompass “all of North and South America” (Smith 1924:362), Jackson County remained the center place. In Salt Lake City, after the place for the temple designated at its center, became the “center stake of Zion” (Young 1863:172).

Smith’s vision of Zion was “centripetally focused” (Olsen 1993:204) and opposed to the isolationism endemic in the traditional American farmstead. Zion required close association among the members of the community, who gathered and built their towns and cities around central structures. The central structure of such a community was thus of particular importance to the overall Plan for the City of Zion and of specific interest to our discussion. The Plan of the City of Zion outlined a complex of 24 temples with mixed religious and secular functions (Williams 1833). Over time, these were eventually consolidated into a single building that “served a variety of purposes” (Bushman 1996:4). The central building was the place where saints went to participate in weekly meetings, to perform rituals and ordinances, and to be taught the doctrines of the gospel.

Zion, the literal kingdom of God on earth, was intended to be a built environment for the flourishing of the sacred society of God. The idea of Zion and the underlying notion of gathering, “mandated a homeland for the restored church” (Nostrand and Estaville 2001:189). Richard L. Bushman (1996:5) has argued that the revealed pattern of Zion “turned space into a funnel that collected people from the widest possible periphery and drew them like gravity into a central point.” The pattern of funneling and gathering was not constrained to a single “City of Zion,” but rather part of a reproducible pattern which created a central city with several outlying, “satellite cities in indefinite numbers, destined to fill up the inland stretches of the North

American continent from the Missouri to the Pacific” (Arrington et al. 1976:5). Eventually, Zion would filled the whole Earth.

Many of the early revelations spoke of the need to “seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (D&C 6:6). The commandment was attached to the promise that if they would “devote all . . . service in Zion” they would “have strength” (D&C 24:7) and “shall prosper, and spread . . . [to] become glorious, very great, and very terrible” (D&C 97:18). Zion was conceived of in two key ways by nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints: (1) as “the city of God” (D&C 97:19), which was “an ensign unto the people” (D&C 64:42), and as (2) “the pure in heart” (D&C 91:21) where there were “no poor among them” (Moses 7:18, PGP). Thus, Zion was simultaneously used to refer to the building of a physical city where faithful converts could gather, and as a people who were purified through the reception of and abiding in the principles of the restored gospel. The gathering and the purification of the people were accomplished in a variety of ways, but the most distinct methods involved the construction of large, central structures for communal purposes and the institution of communitarian economic arrangements. Mormon architecture and economics constituted the symbolic capital of the Mormon ethical system which reinforced Mormon metaphysics.

In principle, Zion was the city-sized conjunction between heaven and earth; an *axis mundi* where all the righteous could come to commune with God. This vision encapsulated a future state of things when, by the toil of the righteous Saints of God, the earth had been renewed to its paradisaical glory as it was prior to the Fall of Adam (Articles of Faith 1:10, PGP; Revelation 4:6; D&C 77:1–2). It was in the sacred architecture of Mormons that this project of building the kingdom of God was to be directed.

Today, when Latter-day Saints refer to “temples” and “meetinghouses” they have a fixed sense of the function and significance of those buildings. This stability of function and reference is the product of a long history of innovations in Mormon worship, practice, and sacred architecture and was not always so certain. The development of sacred architecture in nineteenth century Mormonism was a process which occurred in a series of stages where buildings were built and used in a variety of ways. Nomenclature, likewise, was often fluid. This variability in terminology necessitates the analysis of early Mormon buildings in terms of their use rather than simply by the label they were given.

The organization of space around large, centrally-located structures focused community action and created greater association identity for nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints. Indeed, the core and guiding principle of Mormon Zion is that the center place is the point of focus for the community; the point of gathering where society is fostered. The central structure is of particular importance to the overall Plan for the City of Zion and of specific interest to our discussion. The Plat of the City of Zion, first presented by Joseph in 1833 (Williams 1833), outlined a complex of 24 temples to be used as “house of worship [and] Schools” (Williams 1833:39). Over time, these were eventually consolidated into a single building that “served a variety of purposes” (Bushman 1996:4). The central building was the place where saints went to participate in weekly meetings, to perform rituals and ordinances, and to be taught the doctrines of the gospel.

For much of the early history of the LDS Church, the large central structure was called the “temple.” The Kirtland Temple (Figure 2.4), the first completed temple in the Church, was, in reality, a large meetinghouse where the Saints attended meetings both on Sunday and

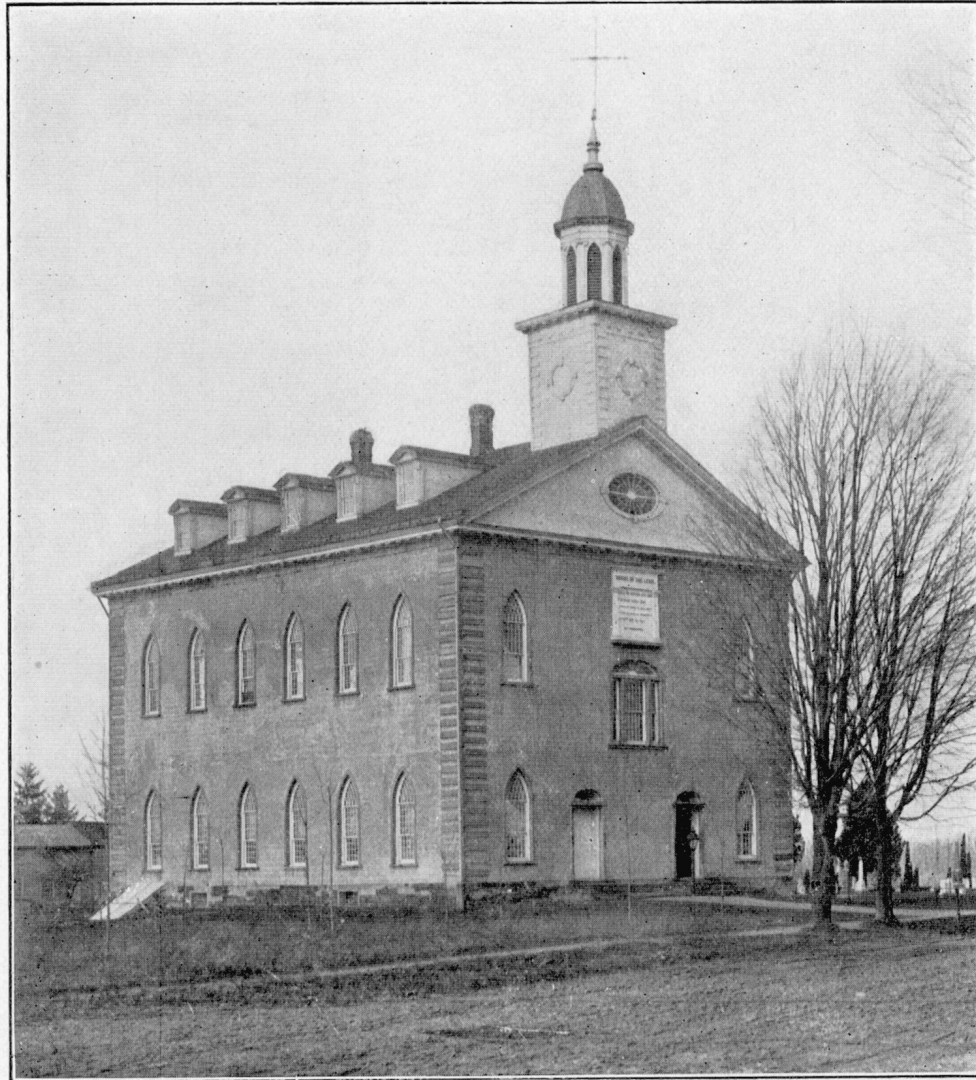


Figure 2.4. Kirtland Temple, Kirtland, Ohio. (Image courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

throughout the week for a variety of purposes. In addition to ecclesiastical functions—including an expansion of ritual practice—the temple housed the office of Joseph Smith and was the site of regular meetings of the business interests of the Church (Anderson 1996).

In Kirtland, we begin to see manifestations of the tensions inherent in Mormon cosmology and epistemology expressed in the Temple. Mormon cosmology and epistemology divide both space and individuals according to their proximity to God. Cosmologically, God is at the center, we reach that center place through the epistemological pursuit of truth. Thus,

Mormon theology both encourages the gathering of all mankind and divides mankind according to the level of knowledge which they have received. The theological system is simultaneous integrating and segregating both space and individuals. This reality is reflected in access to the Temple which was occasionally limited when specific rituals were performed. For example, the Kirtland endowment was given by invitation only (Prince 1995). Because restricted access was selective, the building maintained its overall dynamic functionality, but hints at the necessity of limited accessibility were beginning to appear. This tension and continued paradox of simultaneous integration and segregation would become a key feature of Mormon thought and practice.

For the most part, this practice of selective restriction continued in Nauvoo (Figure 2.5). The expanded temple endowment, first performed on the upper floors of Joseph Smith's Red Brick Store, was only given to a hand-selected group by personal invitation from Joseph (Leonard 2000). A more expansive temple liturgy, including the endowment and sealing ordinances, signaled the beginning of greater restriction on entrance into the temple. In December 1845, Brigham Young listed observance of the commandments, payment of tithes and "seek[ing] after salvation" as the only conditions for admission to the temple (Clayton 1995:201). As a result, the temple lost much of its dynamic functionality. The proposal of a canvas tabernacle, to be attached to the southern wall of the temple, also signaled a move toward separate spaces for higher priesthood ritual and for more mundane worship.

In Salt Lake City, rituals were performed in a variety of locations (including Ensign Peak, the Council House, the Endowment House, and in various locations in the outlying settlements). The Council House (built in 1851) was the first large building built by the Saints and was utilized for a wide variety of purposes, including city government meetings, funerals, weekly

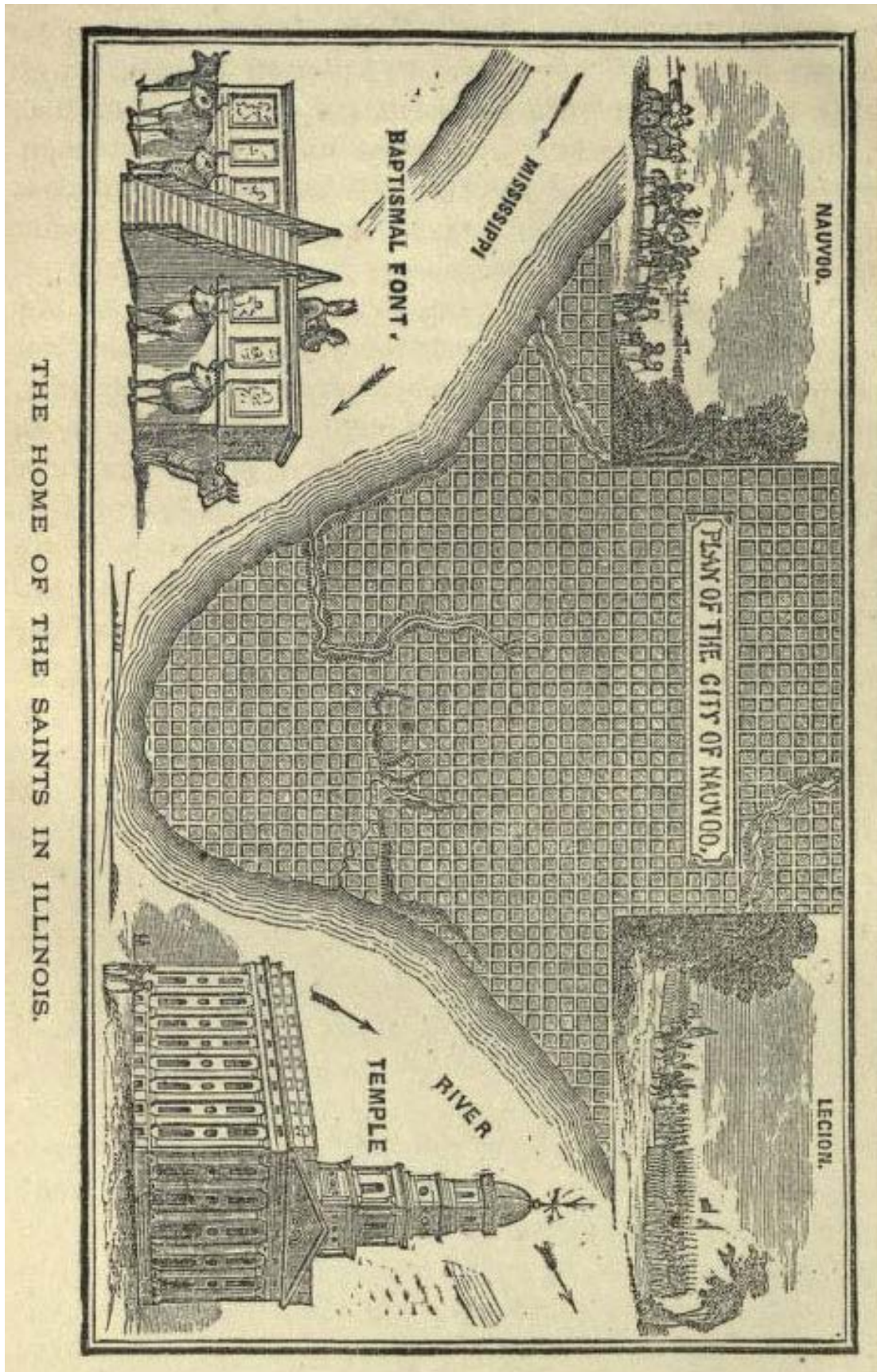


Figure 2.5. "The Home of the Saints in Illinois" from T.B.H. Stenhouse (1873:121) *The Rocky Mountain Saints*. Note the cardinally alligned, grid-iron streets. (image in the public domain).



Figure 2.6. Council House, Salt Lake City, Utah, ca. 1860 (image courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

worship services, as well as washings, anointings, endowments, and sealings (Kimball 1998; Figure 2.6). Some have speculated that as the “gentile” population of the Territory increased, Brigham Young became less comfortable with the performance of these rituals in the Council House (Brown 2008). As a result, rituals were moved to the Endowment House in 1855 (Figure 2.7). Between 1855 and 1877 when the St. George Temple was completed, endowments and sealings were performed either in the Endowment House by invitation from the local bishops or during ad hoc meetings held by members of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve in outlying settlements (cf. Woodruff 1983). Performance of higher ordinances in these temporary temples did have certain restriction. While there is some indication that vicarious endowments



Figure 2.7. Endowment House, Temple Square, Salt Lake City, Utah, ca. 1880, Charles R. Savage (image courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

and sealings were performed occasionally, Brigham Young (1863:254) explained that “There are some sealing ordinances that cannot be administered in the [Endowment] house that we are now using; we can only administer in it some of the first ordinances of the Priesthood pertaining to the endowment.” In a later sermon, Young (1973) clarified this statement by explaining that without a temple the Saints were limited to the performance of baptisms for the dead and living endowments and sealings; all vicarious endowment and sealing could not be performed until the temple was completed.

The evolution of the temple toward increasingly restricted and specialized functions did not remove the need, for a centrally-located, multi-functional structure. In the place of the temple, a new category of Mormon sacred architecture emerged—the tabernacle. The tabernacle

fulfilled the need for a central structure and, in the process, became an “important unifying element in maintaining the Mormon concept of Zion and the Saints’ requirement to bring it about” (Hamilton 1995:53).

In most Mormon settlements developed after Salt Lake City, the tabernacle supplanted the temple in occupying the central location. Generally, the tabernacle, much like the temple in Salt Lake City, was the center place for mapping and ordering space. Tabernacle locations, for example, dictated the numbering of streets for many settlements. Even in settlements where temples were later constructed (i.e., St. George or Logan), the tabernacle remained in the center place while the temple was placed nearby, generally atop hills; literally placed on a higher plane.

The tabernacle became the place where Saints in outlying settlements heard the voices of their leaders, learned the requirements of the kingdom, and sought to fulfill the mandate to build Zion. By replacing the functionally limited temple with the diverse, multi-use tabernacle, Brigham Young simultaneously justified the cost incurred by the massive construction projects while preserving the unifying qualities of the central communal structure. As a result, the tabernacle became part of the overall project of building Zion, which in turn focused community attention, provided central public space, and, in many cases, much like Provo, developed the local area by providing a demand for labor and material and by encouraging the building of local infrastructure. The tabernacle provided the community with a symbol of the collective commitment to live the principles of the restored gospel and gave individuals a strong sense of group identity.

Mormon Economic Systems

In Joseph Smith's vision of Zion, no separation existed between the sacred and the secular. All aspects of life, from the most routine to the most holy, were crucial to the work of salvation. Religion was more than "a matter of sentiment good for Sunday contemplation" but was intimately tied up with the "dollars and cents, with trade and barter, with the body and the daily doings of ordinary life" (Cannon 1877:2). Joseph Smith's revelations are filled with "withering denunciations of social divisions born of rank or wealth and . . . diagnose these failures as collective sin" (Bowman 2012:35). The earliest attempt at an economic system for Mormonism was the Law of Consecration and Stewardship. Revealed in February 1831, this arrangement called on members to donate all of their property to the bishop of the Church. In consultation with the member, bishops then returned to each man "as much as is sufficient for himself and his family" (D&C 42:32). The residue of the property was kept in a storehouse "to administer to the poor and the needy . . . And for the purpose of purchasing lands for the public benefit of the church, and building houses of worship, and building up the New Jerusalem [Zion]" (D&C 42:34–35). The goal of the system was "to advance the cause . . . to the salvation of man, and to the glory of your Father who is in heaven; That you may be equal in the bonds of heavenly things, yea, and earthly things also" (D&C 78:4–5).

This arrangement, which was entered into by covenant, was intended to be the pattern of economics in all of the Zion settlements. "The Law of Consecration and Stewardship was to lay the groundwork for the whole economic and social structure of God's earthly kingdom" (Arrington et al. 1976:361). Matthew Bowman (2012:43) opined "A Zion society required a Zion people, and consecration seemed a way to infuse those values into American capitalists."

Unfortunately, the arrangement did not please everyone. The earliest attempt to install the Law

of Consecration, in May 1831 near Thompson, Ohio, failed when one member withdrew his property and others left to join the effort in Missouri (Hirschi 1992:313). Several attempts were made at implementing consecration in Missouri during the 1830s; however, the frequent attacks by mobs drained the surpluses of the storehouse and made it impossible to continue (Anderson 1992:314).

Over the years, as each attempt at consecration failed, modifications to the plan were revealed. In 1833, the expanded plan included private ownership of stewardships (Anderson 1992:314). After several failed attempts at consecration, a new law, the Law of Tithing was introduced in Far West. While seeming familiar to modern Latter-day Saints, this earliest iteration of tithing was slightly different than what is practiced today. Under this system, rather than consecrating all property to the Church and having a portion returned according to need, Saints were required to consecrate “all their surplus property to be put into the hands of the bishop of my church in Zion,” and then to pay “one-tenth of all their interest annually” (D&C 119:1, 4). The tithing system, which stored mostly in-kind donations, became an incredible engine for economic expansion in Nauvoo and later in Utah (Figure 2.8).

The economies of Nauvoo and Utah, while rich in natural resources and human capital, were cash-poor economies and operated with very little currency. In-kind barter was a common feature of many frontier towns in Jacksonian America. No federal currency existed and the few banks which did exist were legally prohibited from issuing fiat, or unsupported, notes (North 1961). In many towns, this created a difficulty in the storage of value and equity of trade. With no trustworthy intermediary institution to establish value, disagreements about over the monetization of one commodity in comparison to another caused inefficiency in the market and frequent disagreements (Engerman and Gallman 2000). The tithing office resolved this problem

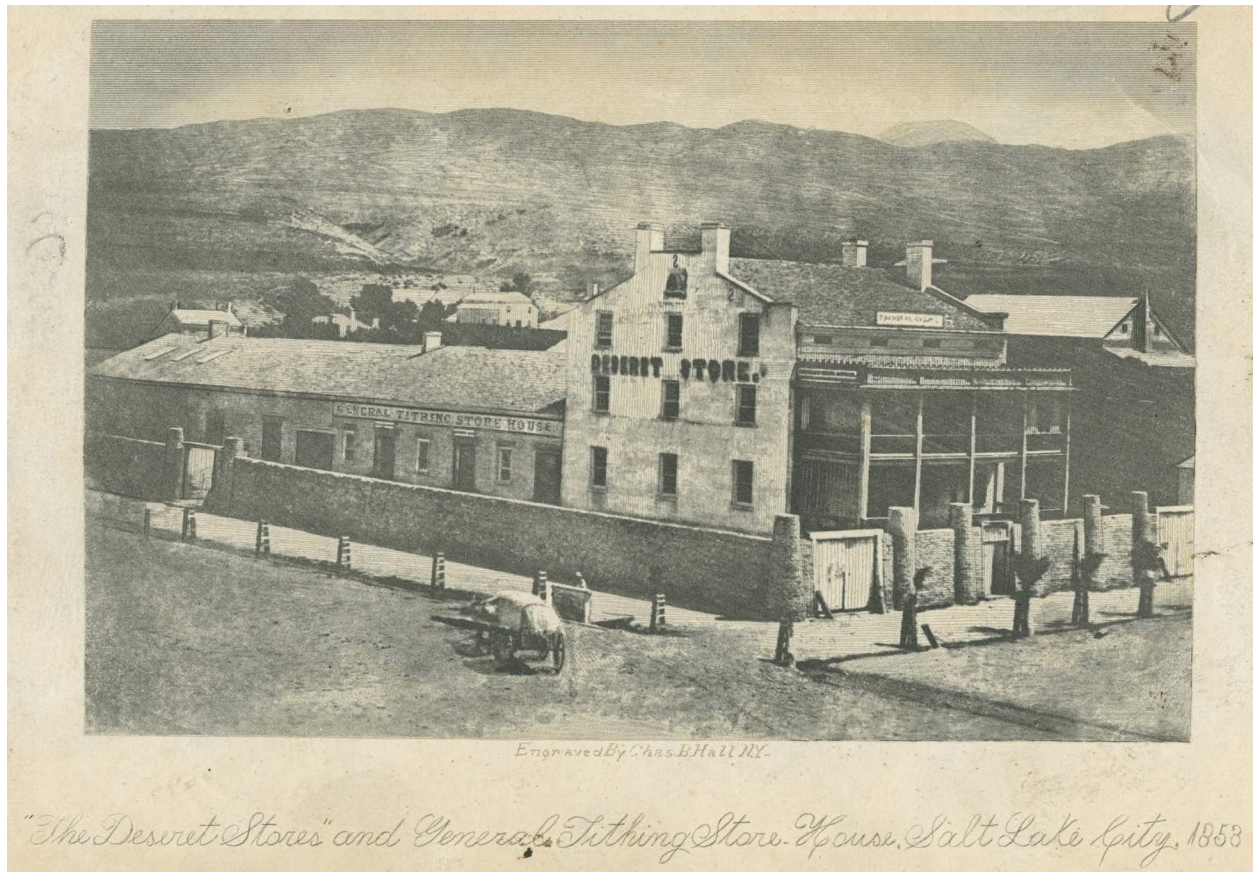


Figure 2.8. Deseret Stores and General Tithing Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1853 (image courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

in many Mormon settlements. Latter-day Saints were able to utilize the tithing office as means of facilitating trade. In-kind donations of food, clothing, tools, raw materials and even labor and services were taken in by the tithing office and used to facilitate the construction of various public works projects. In Nauvoo, this included the construction of both the Nauvoo Temple and the Nauvoo House as directed by revelation (D&C 124). In the process, the tithing office set the prices for various commodities, normalized wages, and facilitated the expansion of capital within the economy by providing tradesmen and laborers with common ground for trade.

Despite the effectiveness of the tithing system, Brigham Young remained determined to install the Law of Consecration. He tried on two separate occasions—first with the cooperative

system in the 1860s and later with the United Order in the 1870s—to encourage the system in Utah (Arrington et al. 1976:7). These attempts were variously successful, but only temporarily.

Conclusion

The metaphysical and ethical arguments of Mormon theology are complex. Understanding, at least to some extent, the breadth and depth of these arguments provides crucial insight into the project of Zion—the symbolic embodiment of Mormon religion. The Original Provo Tabernacle, a building at the center of a Zion community, was key to the project of Zion in Provo and played a critically important role in the development of Mormon sacred architecture in many of the Mormon settlements which followed.

Notes

1. Throughout the history of the Church, several prominent members, even those in the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency, have disagreed about particular aspects of both doctrine and practice within the Church. Famous examples included the disagreement between Brigham Young and Orson Pratt over the “Adam-God” doctrine (Bergera 1980) and the public debate over the Theory of Evolution which found members of the quorum of the twelve and the first presidency on both sides (Sherlock 1980).

Chapter 3

MORMON SETTLEMENT IN UTAH VALLEY

Prologue: Trouble in Nauvoo and the Trek West

The radical ideas promoted by Latter-day Saint theology presented a challenge in their relations with their neighbors. The history of first-generation Mormonism is typified by a cycle of gathering, peace and prosperity, violence, and eventual expulsion. Smith and his followers fled persecution, gathered in large numbers, and built communities in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois where initial serenity devolved into animosity. The conflict would escalate—often to violence—and end with the Latter-day Saints being given an ultimatum: leave or be killed. Often the most ardent opposition came from the dissension of those within Joseph’s inner circle. In Kirtland, disagreements over the management of the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Corporation led to the dissension of some of Joseph’s closest friends including Frederick G. Williams, a counselor in the First Presidency, and Apostle Parley P. Pratt (Hill 1980:288). In Missouri, William W. Phelps, onetime editor of the Church’s official organ the *Evening and Morning Star*, swore affidavits accusing Joseph and other Church leaders of fomenting rebellious attitudes amongst the Saints (Baugh 2000; LeSueur 1987:175–176). In Nauvoo, the editors

of the unflattering newspaper *The Nauvoo Expositor* were all formerly-high-ranking members of Church leadership. The destruction of the *Expositor* press by Mayor Joseph Smith and a predominantly LDS city council set off the chain of events which culminated in Joseph's assassination in the jail at Carthage, Illinois (Flanders 1965:308; Leonard 2002:362–379).

Smith recognized this difficulty in 1839 when, writing from the dank dungeon in Liberty Jail, he called upon the Saints gathering in Illinois to adopt a conciliatory posture. “A fanciful and flowery and heated imagination be aware of,” Smith (Smith et al. 1839:11–12) warned,

because the things of God Are of deep import and time and expeariance and carful and ponderous and solom though[ts] can only find them out. . . . How vane and trifling, have ben our spirits, our Conferences our Coun[c]ils our Meetings our pri[v]ate as well as public Conversations to low to mean to vulgar to condescending, for the dignified Characters of the Cald and Chosen of God.

In the same letter, Smith encouraged his followers to be tolerant of the beliefs and practices of others, a sentiment which he later expressed in a letter to *Chicago Democrat* editor John Wentworth and which is canonized in Mormon scripture today (cf. Articles of Faith 1:11, PGP). Unfortunately, intolerant and inflammatory language proved to be only half the problem. Internal dissensions, as they had previously, led to the repetition of the oft repeated pattern; this time culminating in the assassination of Joseph Smith at Carthage, Illinois.

By 1845, their prophet now dead and their political situation growing worse every day, the Saints under the leadership of Brigham Young and the twelve were faced with the prospects of yet another move. Experience in Ohio, Missouri, and now Illinois had proven that if they were to be successful in their call to build the kingdom of God on earth the pattern could not be repeated. Recognizing that while they could not prevent internal dissent, they could escape external political

forces. On September 24, 1845, in a broadside addressed to the Committee of the Citizens of Quincy, Illinois, Brigham Young declared “we propose to leave this county next spring, for some point so remote, that there will not need to be a difficulty with the people and ourselves” (Young 1845). Church leaders focused their attention on moving west toward the Rocky Mountains and outside the borders of the United States.

While planning the trek west, Latter-day Saint leaders read with great interest the many published reports of the explorations of the Rocky Mountains (Leonard 2000:566–567). The work of John C. Fremont (1845), Lansford Hastings (1845), Charles Wilkes (1845), and Washington Irving’s (1837) “digestions” of the observations of Captain Benjamin L.E. Bonneville were read and played some role in the planning of the exodus to the far west. These detailed travelogues included published maps (Figure 3.1) and detailed descriptions of the west. Time and again, the area around Utah Lake was described as some of the best land in the area. John C. Frémont’s (1845:274) *Report on the Exploring Expeditions to the Rocky Mountains*, for example, reported that the area “would be an excellent locality for stock farms; it is generally covered with good bunch grass, and would abundantly produce the ordinary grains.” Utah Valley also received frequent mention at various times during the journey west. In June 1847, Brigham Young was told by frontiersman Jim Bridger that “the Utah Lake is the best country in the vicinity of the Salt Lake” but the “Utah tribe of Indians inhabit the region around the Utah Lake and are a bad people” (Clayton 1921:275–277).

Exploring Utah Valley

After arriving in the Great Salt Lake Valley, little time was wasted in beginning to explore the region. On July 27, 1847, just three days after arriving, Orson Pratt “led a small party southward,

Figure 3.1. "Map of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842 and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843-44," inset map in Fremont (1845).



climbed the ridge of the Oquirrh Mountains, and obtained a view of Utah Valley” (WPA 1941:217; c.f., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [LDS] 1896–2001: July 28, 1847). Over the next several days Jesse C. Little began a preliminary survey of the area surrounding Utah Lake. Little reported “there was a fine country east of the lake and that the land there was well adapted for cultivation” (LDS 1896–2001: August 2, 1847). In December, Parley P. Pratt led an exploratory party south on the Jordan River to Utah Lake to assess the potential for establishing a fishery in the area (WPA 1942).

Despite these early forays into Utah Valley no effort was made to settle the area until 1849. Establishing a community in the area faced one major challenge: the area was occupied by the *Timpanogot* or Laguna band of the Ute tribe. Due in large part to their control of the natural resources afforded them by the lake and the surrounding mountains, the *Timpanogot* were one of the most powerful Native American groups in the area. They controlled much of the trade between natives and Europeans in the area and were considered “troublesome” by many of the explorers who had interacted with them previously (c.f. Frémont 1845:272). The reticence to settle the area was likely due to ongoing clashes with the *Timpanogots*. Despite this, Brigham Young directed John S. Higbee and thirty families to establish a colony near the Provo River in late March 1849. The first item of business was building a fort for protection from the Ute. In a short time, a fort consisting of 30 picketed cabins, dubbed Fort Utah, was constructed on the Provo River Plain on the eastern shores of Utah Lake (Bean 1849; Figures 3.2 and 3.3).

Frequent, often violent, and usually deadly confrontations punctuated the early experience of Mormons in the area. In 1850 alone, Mormons and Utes fought seven battles in and around Utah Valley. In the years that followed, the Mormon settlers and the Native Americans fought four all-out wars: the Walker (1853–1854), the Tintic (1856), the Goshute (1860–1863), and the

Blackhawk (1865–1867) (Holzapfel 1999:40–41). In response to the unending conflict with the native populations, the settlement of Provo was in an almost constant state of flux. During periods of relative peace, the Saints would spread out; making ever larger land claims. As larger and larger tracts became fenced in and under the tillage of Mormons, the Ute population found it increasingly difficult to subsist. This led to almost inevitable conflict (Carter 2008; Holzapfel 1999).

In addition to the troubles with Native populations, the Latter-day Saints continued an uneasy relationship with their fellow Americans during this period. Occasional hostilities with American immigrants from the East passing through Mormon settlements *en route* to California kept Latter-day Saints in Utah Territory in an almost constant state of agitation (Walker et al. 2008). Reports of clashes between Mormons and other immigrants lead to growing distrust amongst the American people of Mormons in general. Popular, often outlandish reports, of theocratic power and the tyrannical rule of Brigham Young in Utah eventually led, in 1857, to the Utah War, resulting in the replacement of Young as territorial governor and the federal occupation of the territory by nearly one third of the U.S. army (Poll and MacKinnon 1994:17; Walker et al. 2008). The Mountain Meadows Massacre, the tragic ambush and mass-killing of a passing wagon train of emigrants *en route* to California was the climax of the tensions between the Latter-day Saint settlers and their fellow American travelers (Brooks 1950, Walker et al. 2008).

During the Utah War, Saints throughout the Utah Territory were required to abandon construction projects, proselytizing activities, and other pursuits to defend themselves. This defense involved the mustering of a standing army, including a company from Provo. In 1858, fearing Salt Lake City was too vulnerable, Brigham Young decided on a “move south,” abandoning Salt Lake City and making Provo the temporary headquarters of the Church (Tullidge 1884:250; Moffitt 1975:87). Throughout the period of the Utah War (1857–1858) and the subsequent

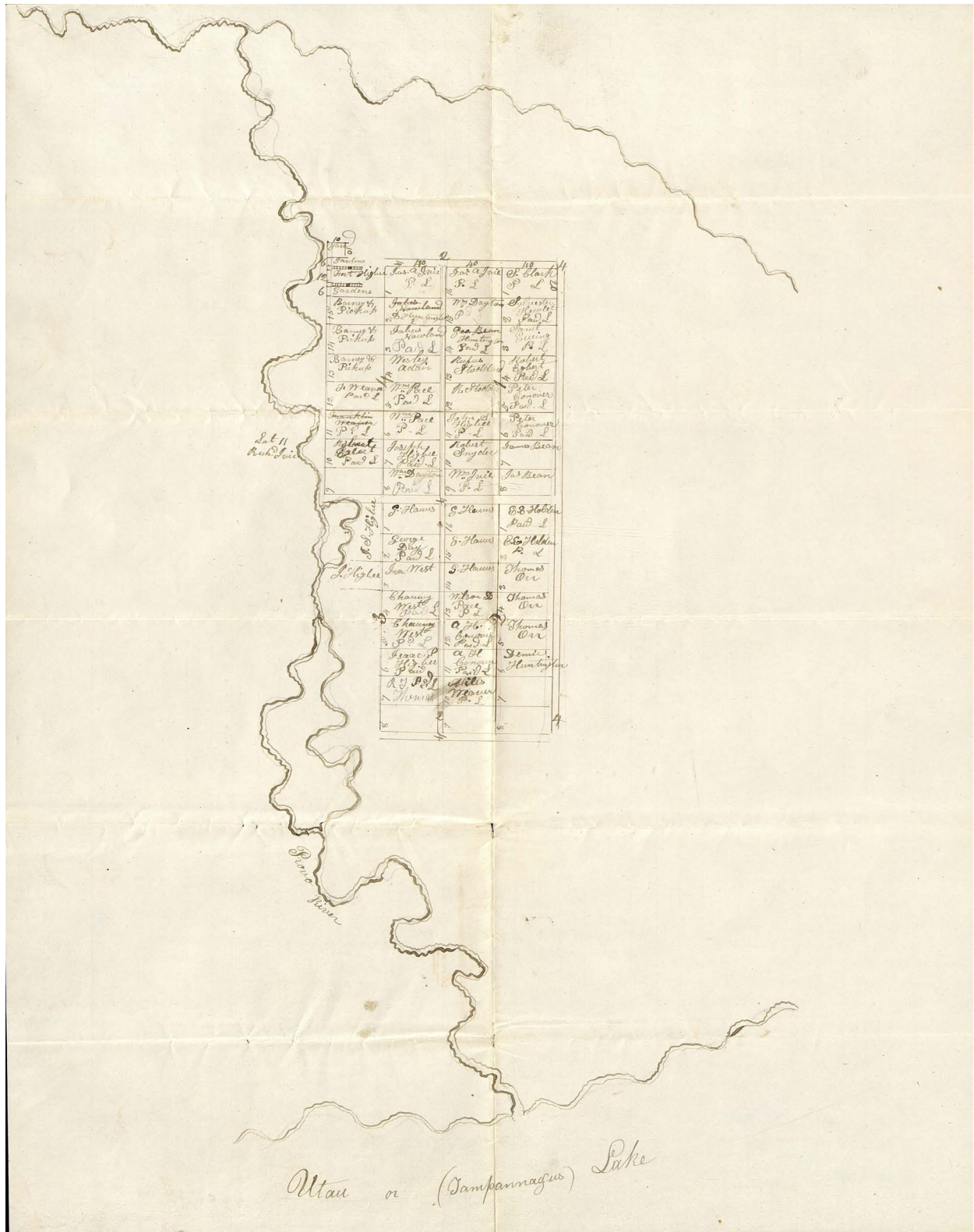


Figure 3.2. Map of "Uttau Settlement," 1849 (image courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

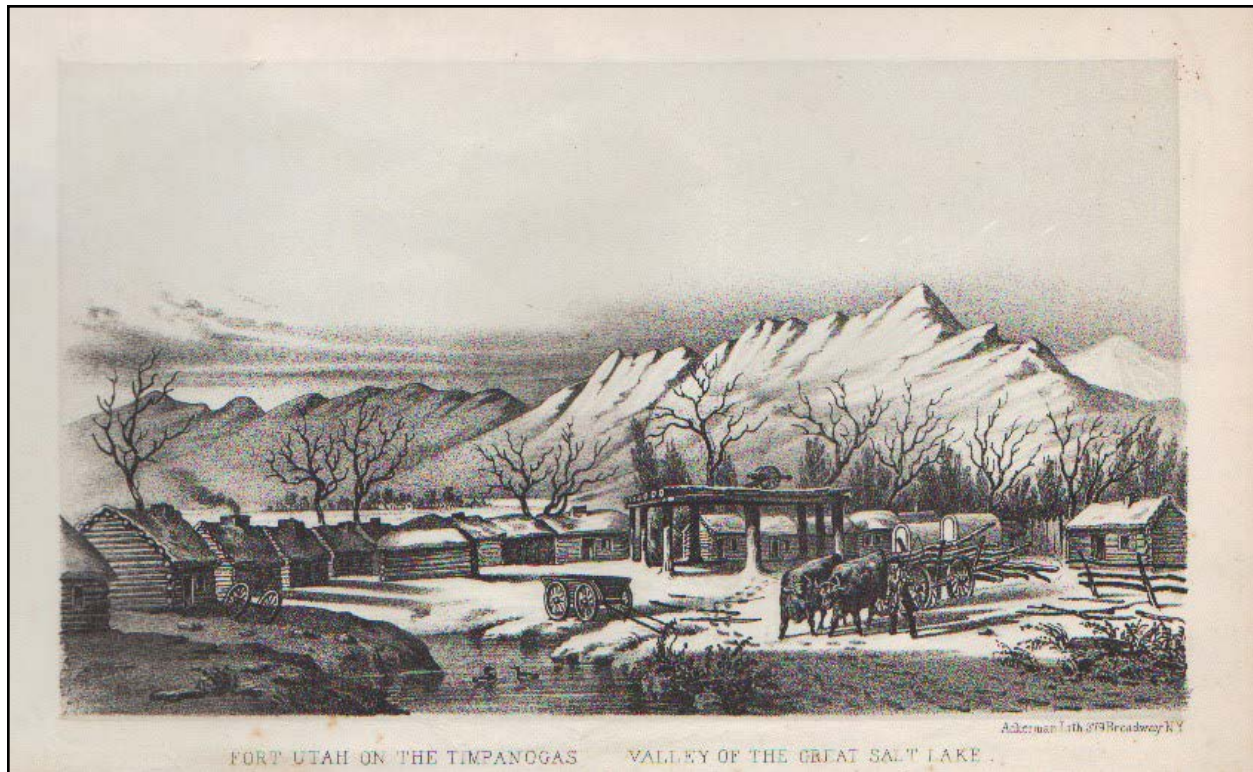


Figure 3.3. “View of Fort Utah, on the Timpanogos, Valley of the Great Salt Lake” (from Howard Stansbury [1855], *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah*, inset between pp. 142–143; image in the public domain).

occupation by federal troops (1858–1861) settlers in Provo and in the surrounding communities were frequently called upon to leave their homes and to “fort up” by gathering inside the protective walls of the nearby forts. The constant threat of attack and potential loss of life and livestock made the development of Utah County slow and difficult.

Despite the tumultuous circumstances throughout this period, Mormon leaders in Provo remained unmoved in their expectations that settlers continue the work of building Zion, the literal, physical kingdom of God on Earth. This included surveying and laying out the town site, constructing communal buildings, rearing homes, improving lots, and subduing—by conversion and conciliation if possible, or by force if necessary—the native peoples in the area (N. Anderson 1966; Arrington 1958; Coates 1978; Chadwick and Garrow 1992; O’Neil and Layton 1978). Of primary importance in the project of building Zion was the construction of a center place where

the community could meet together, participate in events—secular and religious—and build the society of which Joseph Smith spoke.

Constructing a Center Place

On the morning of September 19, 1849, Brigham Young, with his counsellors Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards left Fort Utah with the intention of surveying the area and laying out the settlement (Figure 3.4). Thomas Bullock, who accompanied men and recorded the excursion in his journal, reported that they found a:

very eligible place, about two miles southeast of the Fort where it was decided to build a city a mile square, to be laid off in blocks of four acres each, divided into eight lots of half an acre each, reserving the center block of four acres for a chapel and schoolhouses (LDS 1896–2001: September 19, 1849).

While the settlement had been laid out and construction of individual homes had begun, ongoing conflict prevented any attempts to fulfill plans for public buildings until late 1852. On August 16, 1852, George A. Smith, then serving as leader of the settlement, and other local leaders met at the Public Square (near present-day 500 West and Center Street; Christensen 1983; Figure 3.5). Their intent was to measure “ground for the Provo Meeting House to be 80 feet long by 45 feet 6 inches wide” (Provo Stake Minutes, August 16, 1852). The meeting minutes indicated that the plans for the building were still forthcoming from Salt Lake City and would be the work of church architect Truman O. Angell. A short time later, Brigham Young delivered the plans for the building to Smith, instructing him that the building should be “a substantial house, one that would be a credit



Figure 3.4. The First Presidency, ca. 1852; detail taken from a broadside engraved by Frederick Piercy and printed at Liverpool in 1853 (Courtesy of the Church History Library).

to the place” (Watt 1867:282; Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Andrew Jenson (1941:907) reported later that Young had directed Angell to design a building “with a view of preserving among the youth of Zion a sample of the kind of edifice in which many of their fathers and mothers, as members of the Presbyterian Church, worshipped before they heard the gospel.” By some reports, however, the plans were “not favorably received” by the local members who considered it “so much like a Presbyterian meeting house, and because there was not, as they supposed, material in the country to erect and finish such a house” (Watt 1867:282).

Progress on the construction of the OPT during the next several years was slow while the constant threat of armed conflict hung over the area. The frequent reconfiguration of the town adversely effected construction projects such as the OPT. Attempts to make the town more defensible had altered the design of the settlement several times and made resources difficult to acquire. In the winter of 1853–1854, for example, settlers were told by Brigham Young to abandon

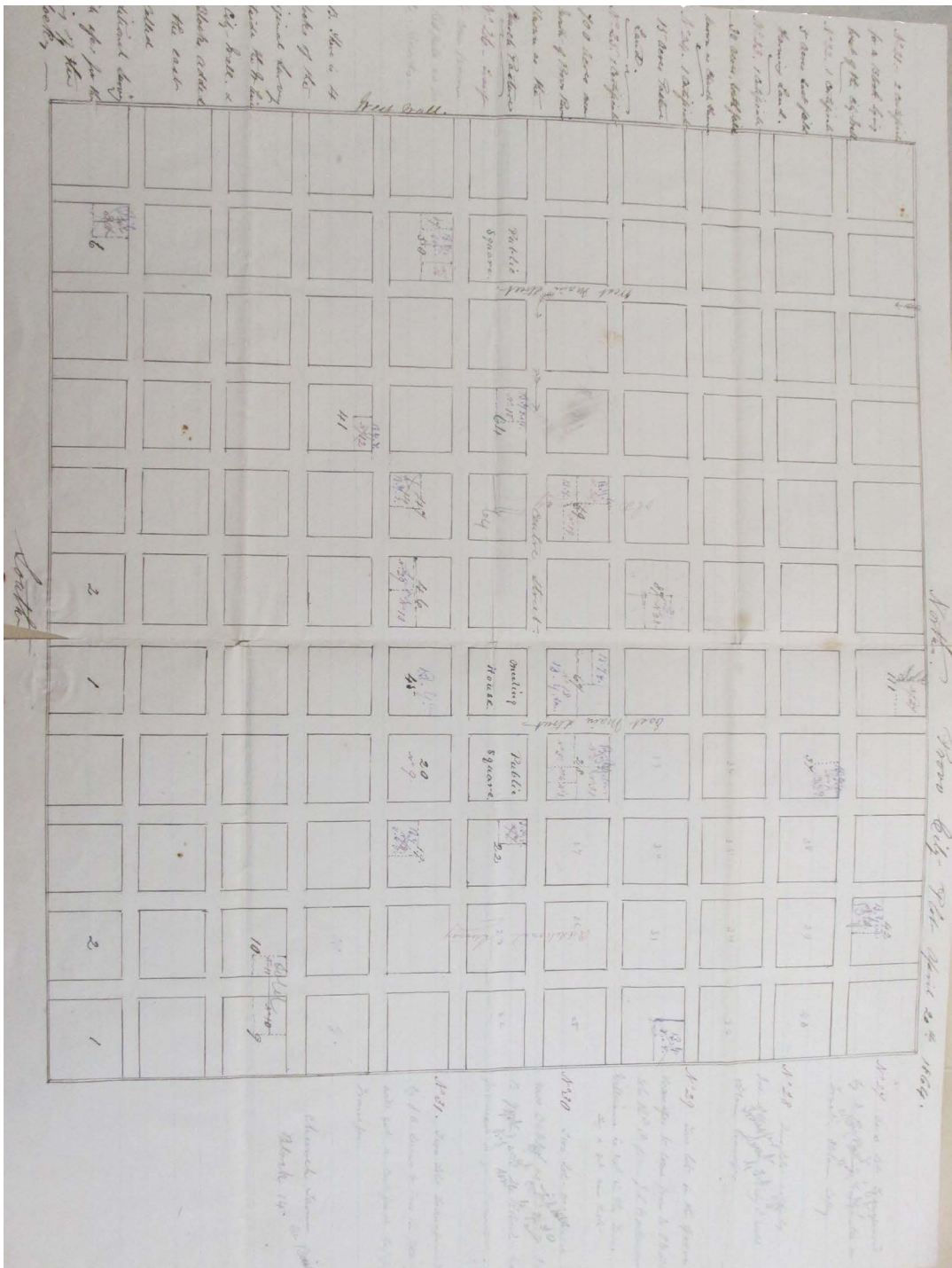


Figure 3.5. Provo City Plat, drawn April 20, 1864, by Alexander F. MacDonald (courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

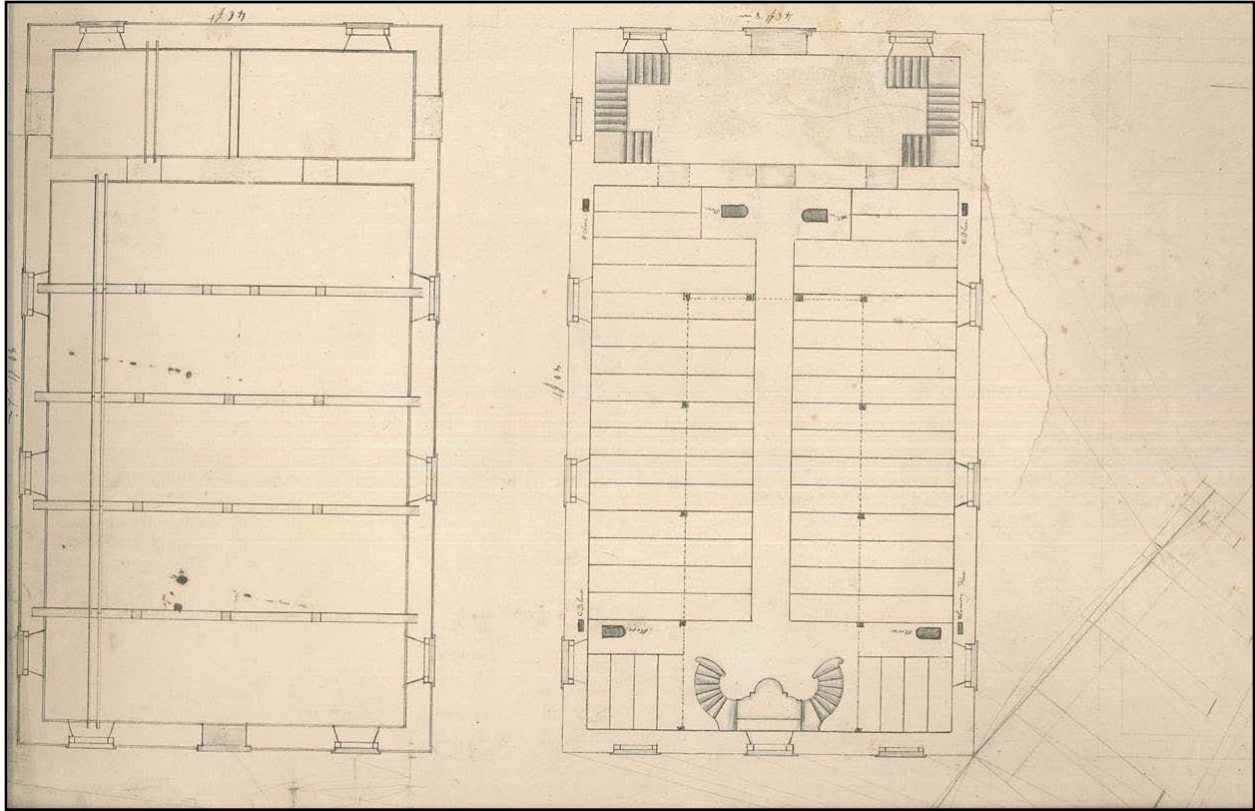


Figure 3.6. Truman O. Angell's original sketch of the basement (left) and the upper chamber (right) of the OPT (image courtesy of the Church History Library).

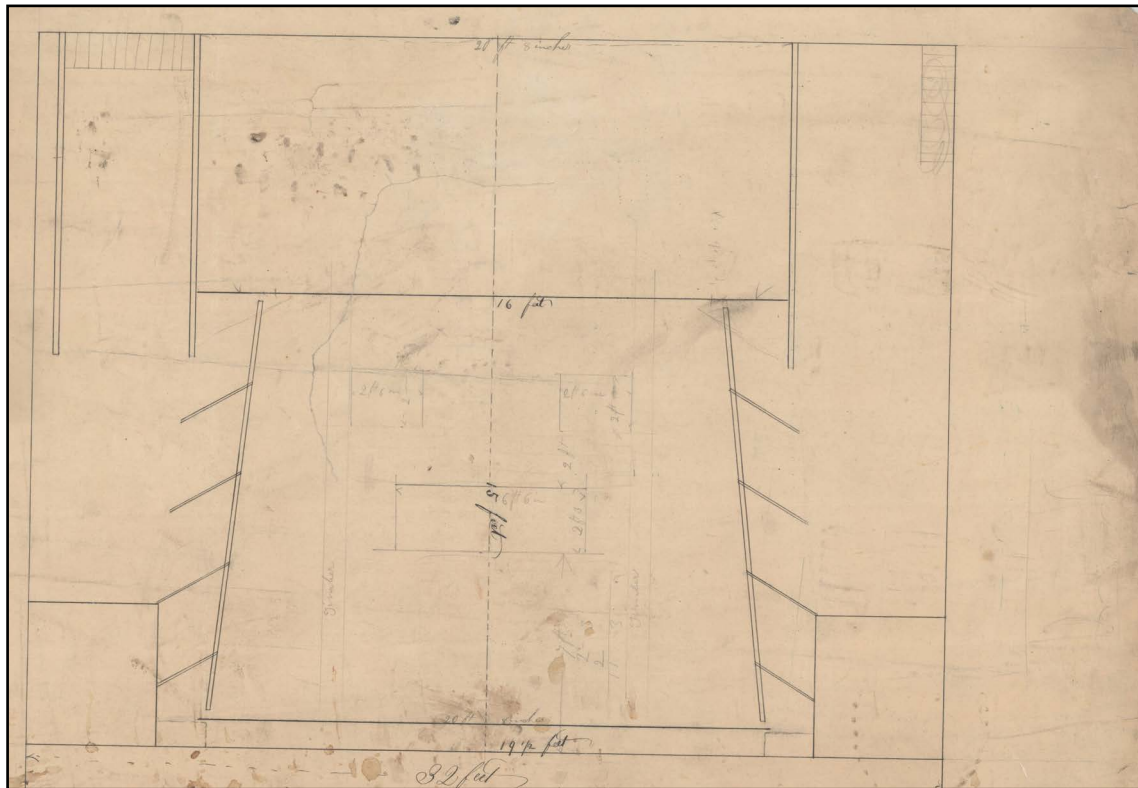


Figure 3.7. Truman O. Angell's original sketch of the balcony (image courtesy of the Church History Library).

certain areas in favor of moving closer together and to build a wall “12 feet high, 6 feet wide at the bottom and inclined to 2 feet at the top” (Tullidge 1884:245; Figure 3.8).

Despite these challenges, new Mormon settlers continued to arrive in Provo and the surrounding area. The construction of homes to meet the demand of the incoming population continued at a steady, nearly uninterrupted pace. The original log school house was moved out of the fort to the public square and two additional wings were added to serve as a temporary meeting house, dance hall, and theatre during the winter months, while a bowery, also constructed on the public square, was built to meet these needs during the summer months (Tullidge 1884:245–247). Meanwhile little progress was made on the construction of the more permanent meetinghouse, the OPT, whose foundation was only “partly laid” (Tullidge 1884:247).

On July 15, 1855, speaking in the Provo bowery, Elder Wilford Woodruff of the quorum of the twelve apostles emphasized the continued importance of building Zion. Woodruff stressed the necessity for the construction of the meetinghouse and attempts to feed and conciliate the natives in this effort. “[R]especting your meetinghouse and farming operations for the natives,” said Woodruff (1855:223), “I hope that [local leaders] will carry out the instructions given them” he said referring to the earlier plans outlined by Brigham Young. Woodruff (1855:223) concluded with a promise of blessings to those who follow the counsel they had been given. “[I]f the brethren will attend to these things and do them in faith and in the name of the Lord . . . the Lord will bless your crops, and your cattle, and all that you possess.” Woodruff’s pronouncement of blessings, fully in-line with the Mormon concept of Zion, would become a common refrain, repeated often by the central leadership of the Church. The message was simple but profound: complete the tabernacle, build Zion, and God will bless you both temporally and spiritually.



Figure 3.8. Protective Wall Built around Provo, 1854 (image courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

There is some indication that the original location selected for the OPT did not meet Brigham Young’s approval. One account reports that upon seeing the original location Young told the leaders in Provo “this is not the place for the meeting house” (*Cluff Family Journal* [CFJ], June 20, 1900:71). According to the same account, it was not until 1856 that leaders in Provo asked Young where they should build the OPT when, due to the continued growth of the town, “the site of the meeting house was moved” (Tullidge 1884:247). With all the dignitaries of Provo in tow, Young drove “east along Center street” approximately half a mile, where he “ascended the gentle rising bench and slope on the block where the meeting house and the Stake tabernacle now stand and said ‘This is the place for the meeting house’” (CFJ, June 20, 1900:71). Accordingly, “the

ground was dedicated and work commenced” at this location, (Tullidge 1884:247; Figures 3.5).

During 1856 and 1857, the stone walls of the basement were completed and plans to produce the adobes necessary for the upper walls were made. In July 1857, Lucius N. Scovil (1857:8), superintendent of the building project, reported to the *Deseret News*, “Workmen are sawing and cutting stone for the water table, caps, sills, etc., for the Provo meeting house.” Scovil noted that William F. Carter was overseeing the cutting of the stone with a water-powered saw and that “The basement is now in readiness for the cut stone.” Unfortunately, events of the Utah War again and the “move south” brought an estimated 30,000 additional people, all seeking temporary shelter in and around Provo, further delaying the meetinghouse construction (Poll and MacKinnon 1994).

When federal occupation of the territory ended in 1861 the Saints in Utah Valley had at last achieved some degree of security. Although the halt in hostile relations with their neighbors would be short-lived, the Saints in Provo took advantage of the respite. Construction on the OPT, as well as the city hall and five ward schools, began in earnest. The people of Provo were optimistic that the meeting house construction could be finished that year. A letter, dated December 1861, from Martin Mills, the operator of the local sawmill, to his father John Mills indicates that the walls of the meeting house “will soon be up to the square” (as quoted in Christensen 1983:60). This optimism is reflected in the lintel stone above the front door of the finished building which read “Errected MDXXXLXI (1861) Praise Ye the Lord” (Figure 3.9). The building, however, would take another six years to complete.

Funding the massive construction of the OPT was an ongoing process which involved all members of the community in Provo. Voluntary tithing collections were called for by the local bishops in 1863 and a reported \$6,221.00 was raised for the project. These funds were used to put a roof on the building and to place the “principle timbers of the tower” (LDSMS, October 19, 1867).



Figure 3.9. Lintel stone from Original Provo Tabernacle (image courtesy of OPA).

All told, collections and voluntary assessments by Provo bishops between 1852 and 1867 garnered a total of \$74,544.00 (LDSMS, October 19, 1867:663; roughly \$1.22 million, when adjusted for inflation [Friedman 2013]). On March 6, 1845, the Meetinghouse Building Committee issued a circular soliciting contracts for the completion of various aspects of the project (Figure 3.10). In April 1865, impatient with the supply of lumber in the Provo area, the Building Committee sent a request to Brigham Young for 3,500 ft. of lumber from a supply they were told Young had near Big Cottonwood Canyon (MacDonald 1865). In addition to official collections, community members attempted other means of raising funds for the building. On Christmas Eve 1860, for example a community ball was held in the second-story social hall above the Cluff Brothers cabinetry factory. The proceeds of the event were donated to the building project “towards the purchase of a bell for the ‘Provo meeting house,’” (CFJ March 20, 1900:56).

NOTICE.

CONTRACTS will be let to the lowest responsible bidders for furnishing material and labor, to complete the Provo meeting House viz.

1st 10,000 feet of lumber red and yellow pine of good quality.

2d 30,000 feet clear white pine, for finishing.

3d for carpenter work, to complete the outside which includes the tower, and cornice.

4th for carpenter work, to complete the inside of the building.

5th for mason work, ~~to complete the inside of the building~~ *including the furnishing of materials*

6th for plastering, including the furnishing of the materials.

7th for outside painting.

8th for inside painting, entire.

Bids for lumber, outside carpenter work, and painting, will be received until April 1st the remainder to continue open until April 15th

For information respecting the style of work, dimensions and quality of materials, apply to Thomas Allman. Provo City.

All communications, address ed to Box No. 4, Provo Post Office.

A.F. Macdonald.
Myron Tanner. } Committe.
Tho's Allman. }

Provo: City. March 6th 1865.

Figure 3.10. Notice of the Provo Meeting House Building Committee (in Allman and Allman 1998:40).

“[A]lthough the figures are large,” reported the *Millennial Star* (October 19, 1867:663), “much of the outlay has occurred to a disadvantage” to the direct construction efforts. The reporter cites the need to build and maintain roads in the local canyons for the “hauling of stone from quite a distance” and the losses caused by the delays in the construction project for consuming the majority of the funds. The road construction projects, while not directly beneficial to the OPT, helped to build up the area by providing increased access to raw materials such as stone, lumber, and sand necessary in the construction of not only the OPT but homes, businesses, and other structures.

As the project continued, sustained diligence was encouraged by frequent calls from the pulpit to complete the tabernacle and to obtain the promised blessings. During the morning session of a conference of the Provo Stake held June 26–27, 1863 in the bowery, Heber C. Kimball and Daniel H. Wells spoke about the importance of building Zion with “Provo as a constituent part of it” (*Deseret News* 1 July 1863:5). The proceedings of this conference show how inseparable religious and secular life was in early Utah. The afternoon session of the conference included an hour-long speech given by Judge John Fitch Kinney, the non-LDS but sympathetic Chief Justice of the Utah Territorial Supreme Court. His topic was the “national Democracy coupled with an intelligent and impartial review of the history of the denizens of Utah” (*Deseret News* 1 July 1863:5). Following the well-received speech, a motion to nominate Kinney as the democratic representative of the Territory to congress was presented and unanimously carried. To conclude the meeting, Brigham Young preached “an instructive discourse” on the “necessity of both public and private improvements, embracing the development of the resources of our mountain home . . . and also enjoining upon the citizens of Provo not to neglect the completion of their meeting house” (*Deseret News* 1 July 1863:5).

The following day, June 27, 1863, during the Sunday morning session of the conference, Heber C. Kimball, first counselor in the First Presidency, reiterated and further elucidated the promised blessings for building the OPT and its importance to the overall project of Zion. “This people will never improve in their minds or advance in spiritual intelligence,” he said “until they improve and advance their temporal interests” (Kimball 1863:234). Kimball tied the work of individual and collective salvation to the construction of a physical place; a Zion, a garden city symbolic of Eden, where God and his angels may come and dwell. “To the people of Provo,” he said, “in the first place . . . complete your meetinghouse, and then go forward with such other public improvements as will rouse your spirits, elevate your minds to action and make you energetic in the Work of God” (Kimball 1863:234). Kimball promised that if the Saints improved their temporal station, first by building the OPT and then improving their own homes and lots by building substantial fences, planting fruit trees, and diligently tending their fields and gardens, “our Father and God can send his angels to visit and to bless you” (Kimball 1863:235–237). The following year, in more simple terms, Brigham Young attempted to compel the Saints in Provo to complete the building project. “I pray ye people of Provo,” he implored, “build that house” (LDSMS, 1867:662).

After fifteen years of planning, modification, and construction, the OPT was finally completed in the summer of 1867. Upon completion, the *Millennial Star* (LDSMS October 19, 1867:663) concluded that the OPT was “without exception the finest place of worship in the Territory, a magnificent building—an edifice that reflects the highest credit upon the people who have reared it.”

The Finished Tabernacle

The finished OPT was a three story structure with a large central tower and belfry on the north end of the building facing Center Street (Figure 3.11; see also Figure 1.3). The adobe walls of the structure—which were six adobes thick—sat on a partially above-ground limestone foundation (Watt 1867). The main entrance to the building was on the north side, where a staircase led from the ground to a pair of recessed doors in the center of the façade with windows on either side. Above the door, the cap stone, a symbol of the difficulty in completing the project, announced a date six years earlier. The tabernacle was described in the *Millennial Star* (1867:663) as being “81 feet long by 47 feet wide, with a tower 80 feet high,” in which was placed the bell and a large Mason & Hamlin clock. The tower was octagonal “crowned with a dome, vane and ball” (Watt 1867:282). A one-and-a-half story vestry, 18 x 18 ft., was at the rear of the building. The exterior above the foundation was covered in a plaster stucco, in which straw was likely used as a binder.

The interior space consisted of a main-floor auditorium with a second floor gallery, the rear vestry, and a substantial basement. To our knowledge, no photographs of the interior of the OPT are now extant. Nonetheless, the descriptions which follow are based on the historical information available from plans, journals, newspaper accounts, and comparisons to similar buildings constructed during the time period. Measurements given here are approximations based on documentary sources and upon the archaeologically-derived measurements of the basement. For more specific information, see chapter 4.

The front entry of the OPT consisted of a single staircase leading to a set of double doors, flanked by windows on either side (Figure 3.11). Upon entering the double-doors on the north side of the building, visitors would have found an entryway, approximately 6 x 40 ft., with stairs on



Figure 3.11. Finished Original Provo Tabernacle, photo taken prior to 1883 (courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society).

the east and the west perimeters leading up to the gallery. The staircases ascended seven stairs to a landing positioned beneath each window. Turning to the south, the staircases ascended seven more stairs to at a second landing, and then turned back toward the building's center for the final four stairs that emptied into the second-floor gallery. Additional windows were located in the structure's east and west walls, above the stairs and between the first and second landings. From Truman Angell's plans (Figure 3.7 and 3.8), it appears that three doorways—right, left, and center—were found in the southern wall of the entryway.

These doorways led into the large auditorium, which was approximately 52 x 40 ft. with 24-foot ceilings (Watt 1867) and occupied the majority of the main floor. Seating in the auditorium was arranged in two sections on either side of a central aisle. Twelve pillars, evenly spaced along

the north, east, and west walls of the auditorium, extended approximately 8 ft. from the floor to support the u-shaped gallery and choir lofts, where additional seating could be found. Each pillar was painted to look like marble by John H. Selk and Henry Maiben (Christensen 1983:66).

Seats were “straight-backed pews with red velvet upholstery, enclosed in booths, entered through a hinged gate on the aisle” (Jackson 2003:75). It is likely that the seats were built of locally-harvested pine and may have been painted, possibly in the popular “faux-oak” style found in other contemporary buildings, most notably the Salt Lake Tabernacle (see Robison and Dixon 2014). Between the main floor, the gallery, and the choir lofts, the auditorium could comfortably accommodate an estimated 1100–1500 people (Watt 1867).

An elevated rostrum, 9 ft. tall and accessed by curving staircases on either side, occupied the southern end of the main auditorium with a central pulpit from which speakers could address the gathered congregation (Figures 3.12 and 3.13). Wilford Woodruff described the pulpit as “very narrow one, that gives but little room to stand in, and there is barely room for three or four on the stand behind it” (Woodruff 1909:478). Behind the rostrum a “high, deep window . . . crowned by a handsome Elizabethan cornice” provided light for speakers (Watt 1867). Additional natural light was provided through six other windows on the east and west walls, three on each side. The organ and choir seats were on the north end of the auditorium opposite the pulpit (Watt 1867). It is likely that an additional entrance to the auditorium was found behind the rostrum and would have led into the vestry on the southern end of the building.

The “vestry,” or office for local clergy, is a term adopted from the building’s Presbyterian inspiration. The vestry of the OPT was a two-storied structure attached to the rear of the building and likely, as the name implied, provided offices for the Stake Presidency and other local leaders.

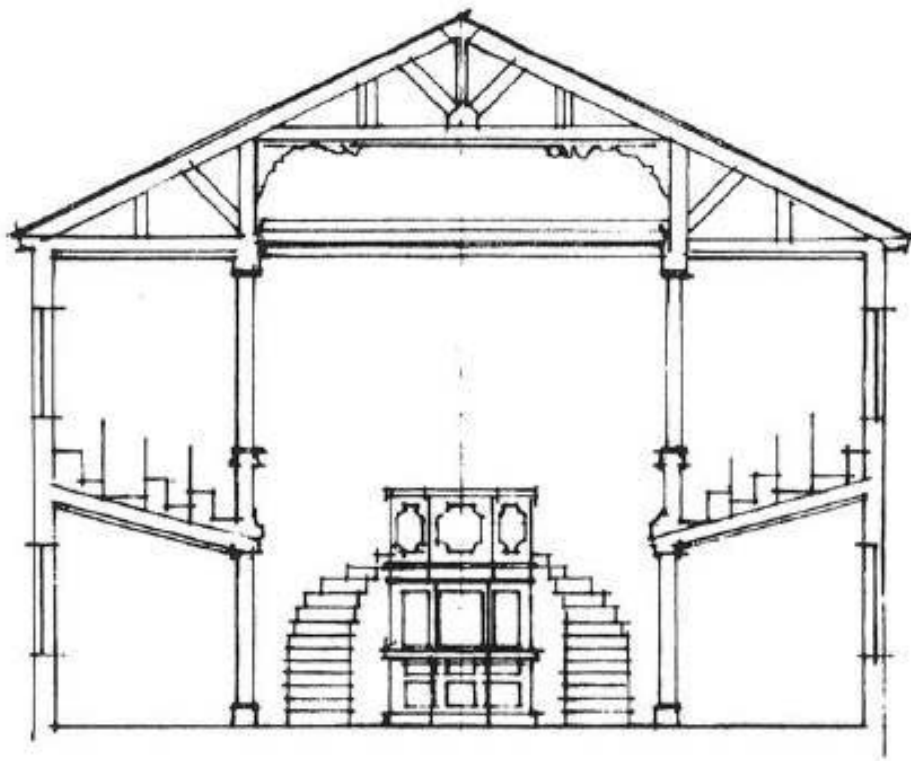


Figure 3.12. Sketch of the likely rostrum arrangement from OPT (Jackson 2003:75). The design for the rostrum was taken from one of Scottish architect Peter Nichol's many design books (original image by Richard W. Jackson, used by permission).

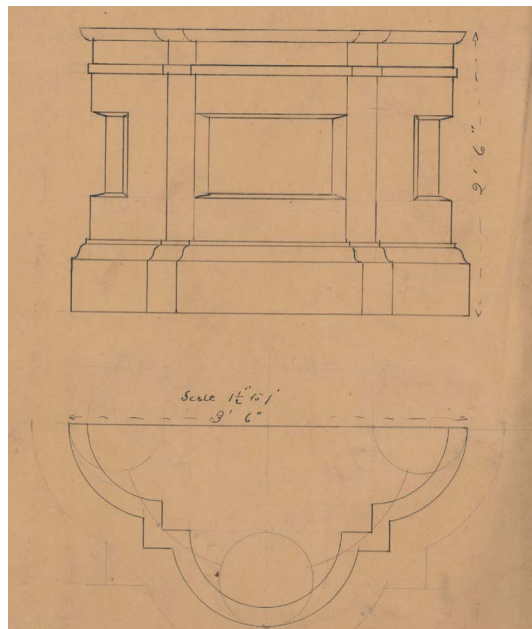


Figure 3.13. Truman O. Angell sketch of a pulpit, n.d. Although this item is unidentified, a comparison of this sketch to the floor plan of the OPT reveals that this is possibly an early rendering of the pulpit (image courtesy of the Church History Library).

It is apparent that there was access to the basement and the main floor auditorium from the vestry.

It is also believed that the vestry provided a rear entrance to the OPT. Given this, it is likely that the ground floor of the vestry was taken up by an entryway, while offices would likely have occupied the second floor. Newspaper accounts indicate that the vestry contained a meeting room large enough to comfortably accommodate small groups. Initially this was probably the meeting place for the Stake High Council, but later groups including the shareholders of the Provo Co-operative Institution used the vestry for regular meetings as well (*Provo Daily Enquirer* [PDE], 30 March 1893:1).

We know most about the basement of the building as this was the area excavated during the archaeological project. For specifics about the measurements of the basement, see chapter 4 where a more detailed and exact account of this part of the building is given. The basement was accessed by stone stairways situated on the north ends of both the east and west walls of the building. The doors at the base of these stairways led into an entryway similar to that found on the main floor. From the entryway, two doorways led to the basement's large meeting room. It is unclear whether the basement meeting room was partitioned in any permanent way when the building was first completed, although there is some indication of remodeling during a later period. Large support pillars for the U-shaped gallery, which extended into the basement from the main auditorium above, interrupted the otherwise open space of the large basement meeting room.

If Angell's plan was followed exactly, the first floor auditorium was heated by four stoves placed near the four corners of the building (see Figure 3.7). Heating the building was an ongoing source of irritation for the local members and meeting minutes often contain references to the building being "too cold." In November 1869, Abraham Smoot (Figure 3.14), the newly-called president of the stake, declared that he would "go to the 'city' and order stoves . . . to warm up

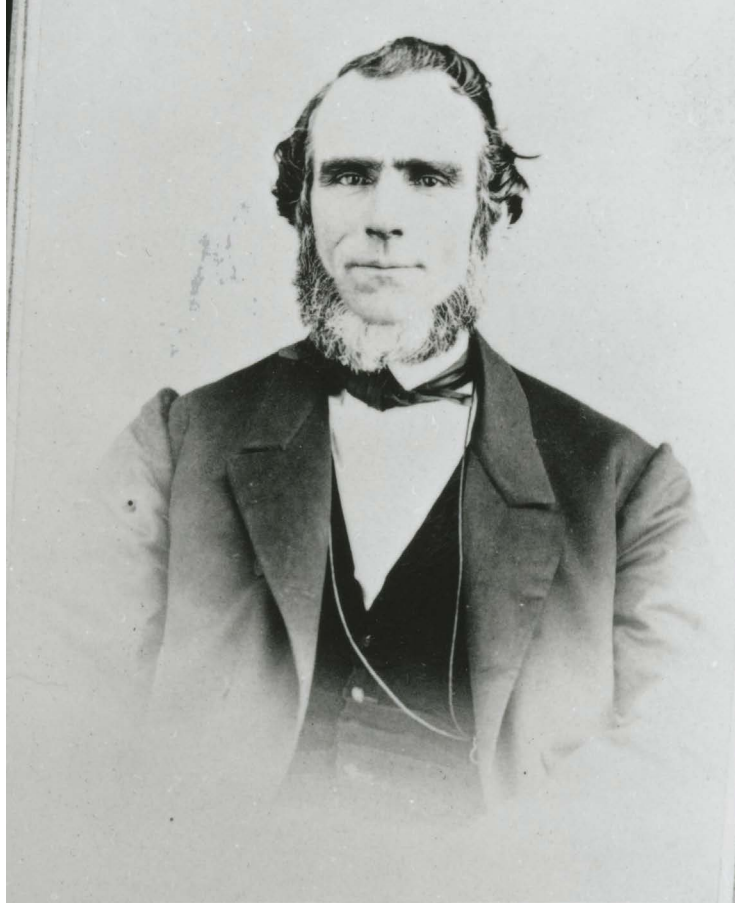


Figure 3.14. Abraham O. Smoot (image courtesy of the Church History Library).

this House” (Christensen 1983:79). Two years later, an exasperated Smoot proposed abandoning the meeting house or holding meetings in the basement until “the people think they can afford to warm it and manifest to the bishops that they are willing to be taxed for that purpose” (Christensen 1983:79–80). Archaeological evidence indicates that the basement was heated at various times by at least four stoves; two in the northern corners of the large meeting room and another two centered on the east and west walls of the room (for additional details and further analysis, see chapters 4 and 5). Coal for the stoves appears to have been stored in the western side of the basement entryway, possibly obstructing the entrance on the west.

The interior of the building was, by all accounts, comfortable and impressive. Every room was carpeted, “the work of our faithful sisters,” which was said to “give an air of taste and

comfort to all.” The rostrum, benches, and rails were finely carved and the seats were upholstered. Archaeological examples of the plaster work indicates skilled craftsman created intricate decorative plaster elements. The interior walls were painted in bright and vibrant reds, yellows, browns, tans, purples, and blues, contrasted with white and gray highlights.

Despite their criticism over the wastefulness and the drawn-out nature of the project, the *Millennial Star* (1867:664) concluded:

This handsome building is . . . a monument of the perserverance and labors of the Saints in Provo . . . we could not but respect the people of Provo. None but a good, liberal hearted people would have kept at that building so many years, and devoted so much of their substance to its erection. . . . The Saints there have now a fine place to worship, and the Priesthood may find now a ready response to their invitation to “come and hear.”

The Dedication of the Provo Meetinghouse

On the morning of August 24, 1867, a cadre of Mormon leaders traveled to Provo to dedicate the completed tabernacle. Included in the group were Brigham Young, and his first counselor Heber C. Kimball, along with Orson Hyde, Orson Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, and George Q. Cannon, all of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Bishop Edward Hunter, Presiding Bishop of the Church, also accompanied the entourage for the planned two days of celebration. Arriving shortly after 8:00 AM, the convoy was greeted by a “cordial reception awarded by the citizens . . . [including] school children, with banners and music, turned out *en masse*, delighted with this opportunity of manifesting their feeling of love and good will to the leaders of Israel” (LDSMS, October 19, 1867). Just prior to the meeting, Brigham Young met with members of the local leadership and the building committee—Thomas Allman, Alexander

MacDonald, and Myron Tanner (Figure 3.15). Young “accepted [the building] with pleasure” from the committee telling the three men “They had done good work.”

President Young called the first dedicatory meeting to order at 10:00 AM. “The eager crowd” occupied “Every seat and corner” of the building. Looking out over the crowded assembly, Young told the assembly that the population of the area had already outgrown the building. “It should have been completed twelve years ago” he told them (*Short History of the Provo Branch* [SHPB], 24 August 1867:33). Following singing by the choir, Young asked the congregation to be “Devotional in their feelings, concentrate their minds and not be gazing around the house during the Dedication Prayer” (SHPB 24 August 1867:34). By invitation, John Taylor, offered the dedicatory prayer.

“Thy servants who reside in this place have after many years, built this house unto thee, as a place of worship—a house of prayer a place for Thy people to assemble in: to speak and to hear thy word, and to worship thee,” Elder Taylor began (SHPB, 24 August 1867:34). The prayer that followed was extremely detailed and specific. Elder Taylor asked the Lord’s blessings for the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the local leadership throughout the Church including the high council, bishops, high priest, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons. He then specifically blessed the leaders in Provo for their efforts in erecting the building. Finally, he dedicated the house “from the foundation to the topstone; that it may be a place in which Thy spirit shall dwell” (Christensen 1983:70). He then proceeded to bless, with extreme specificity, the land, the walls, the fixtures, and everything pertaining to the building. Elder Taylor’s prayer was so specific that it included the adobes, clay, lime, water, joists, columns, flooring, lintels, rafters, shingles, tin, zinc, nails in the floors and in the walls, lath and plaster, and mortar. The tower, vestry, porch, cornices, bell, benches, and doors all received specific mention. Elder Taylor completed the prayer by

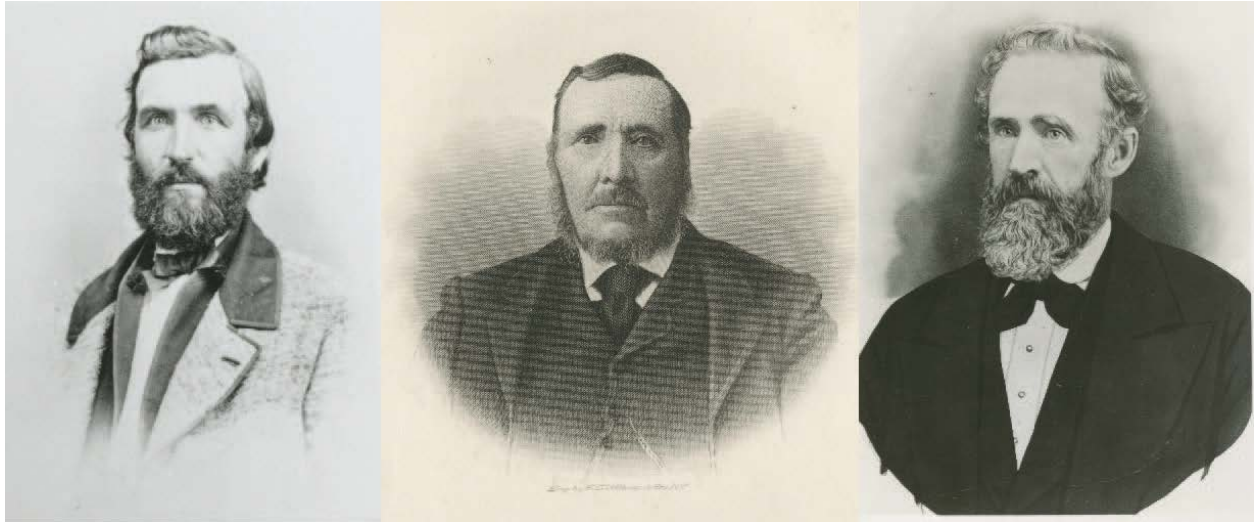


Figure 3.15. The Provo Meetinghouse Building Committee (L–R) Alexander F. MacDonald, Myron Tanner, and Thomas Allman (images courtesy of the Church History Library).

blessing the ‘ball and the vane that rest upon the top of the tower’ (Christensen 1983:70).

Following the dedicatory prayer, Brigham Young, Orson Hyde, Orson Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, and George Q. Cannon all offered remarks on a variety of topics. Brigham Young explained to the congregation that the building was designed to allow the children of Provo to see the “kind of house we went to meeting in down ‘in the other world.’” He reminded the Saints of the need to observe the Word of Wisdom “now and forever” promising that “when we do we will live as people have never lived.” Interestingly, Young also spoke at some length about the temple complex originally designed for Jackson County, Missouri (SHPB, 24 August 1868:39). Orson Pratt, asserting that variety is a law of heaven, commented on the importance of having a “variety of places to worship.” Wilford Woodruff expressed his own delight in seeing “a Presbyterian Meeting House with the Latter-day Saints and the Pulpit occupied with the apostles of the Lamb” (SHPB, 24 August 1867:39–40). At the conclusion of the speeches, Elder George Q. Cannon closed the meeting with prayer.

Due to the size of the crowd, the afternoon meeting and two meetings the following day were held in the bowery adjacent to the OPT. Despite Brigham Young's assertion that the building was already too small, shortly after its dedication the OPT was in full use by the Saints in Provo.

The Use of the Original Provo Tabernacle

During its lifetime, the OPT was used for a wide variety of purposes. The use of the building can be divided into two phases. Phase one (1868–1885) is the period from the completion of the OPT to its supersession by the second tabernacle. During this phase, the OPT was the center place of the community and the backdrop to the most important events in the community and the focus of the efforts to build a Zion community in Provo. Phase two (1885–1919) is the period of the OPT's became the secondary gathering place for the community but still remained in frequent use. Superseded in some respects by the larger second tabernacle, the OPT remained important to the community not as a primary gathering place but as an overflow space, and a temporary home for a variety of groups. This was, however, a period of decline and deterioration which ended in the dismantling of the structure in 1919.

The Original Provo Tabernacle as the Center Place of the Community

Within days of the dedication a variety of meetings were held in both the main auditorium and basement. The building quickly became the backdrop for many community meetings, religious and otherwise. On September 1, 1867, the bell of the Meeting House “called the Saints to eagerly assemble” for the first weekly meeting in the new edifice (SHPB, 1 September 1867:43). During the eighteen years (1867–1885) that the OPT served as the primary meeting place of the Saints in Provo it was the host of a variety of events and the center of community life. Weekly Sunday

worship services, which included the administration of the sacrament ordinance, were held in the main auditorium of the OPT. Quarterly stake conferences, attended as often as possible by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, were also held in the auditorium. Sunday School, Priesthood, and Relief Society meetings were held in the building's basement, as were the ongoing meetings of the School of the Prophets. The occasional lecture, dramatic performance, funeral, and other event was also held in various rooms in the OPT from time to time. During its tenure as the primary central meeting place in Provo, five current or former presidents of the Church, three counselors in the First Presidency, seven Apostles, three general Relief Society presidents, and various other leaders and dignitaries spoke from the rostrum of the OPT (Table 3.1).

Meetings in the OPT fell, generally speaking, into three categories: (1) secular; (2) everyday religious practice; and (3) specialized religious ritual. The boundary between each category was, rightly, blurred since each was considered an important aspect of the overall project of building Zion. As Mark Leone (1973:31–32) explained, “The bond between the people and the building was complete. They worshipped in what they built. The same may be said of their fields, dams, homes; in fact it is quite clear . . . that the whole of redeemed Zion was where one worshipped.” Indeed, the minutes for meetings of various Quorums, presidencies, and other bodies reveal little distinction between religious and secular topics. On several occasions, leaders seamlessly move from testimonies of the restored gospel to in-depth discussion of infrastructural projects. On April 24, 1870, Abraham Smoot told the assembled Saints “One of the first things I heard the Prophet Joseph Smith teach was that the temporal and spiritual are inseparable. Hence, we must speak about the Provo Kanyon Road, factory, etc.” (Christensen 1983:82). Often the religious leadership also served as the political leaders of the community. Stake President Abraham O. Smoot, for example,

Table 3.1 Prominent Persons Known to Have Spoken in the Original Provo Tabernacle.

Church Presidents	
Brigham Young	John Taylor
Wilford Woodruff	Joseph F. Smith
Heber J. Grant	Lorenzo Snow
Counselors in the First Presidency	
Heber C. Kimball	Daniel H. Wells
George Q. Cannon	Brigham Young, Jr.
Apostles	
George A. Smith	Francis M. Lyman
Franklin D. Richards	James E. Talmage
Orson F. Whitney	Erastus Snow
Orson Hyde	Orson Pratt
John Henry Smith	George Teasdale
Other Church Leaders	
Edward Hunter	Eliza R. Snow
Emmeline B. Wells	B.H. Roberts
Zina D.H Young	George Goddard
Joseph Young	Lorenzo Young
Miscellaneous Others	
Abraham O. Smoot	Karl G Maeser
Reed Smoot	John M. Tanner
Isaac Bullock	Electa Wood Bullock
L. John Nuttall	David John
Edward Partridge, Jr.	Marilla Daniels
Susa Young Gates	Elizabeth L. Saxon
T.B.H. Stenhouse	George Watt
Aaron Johnson	A. Milton Musser
John W. Young	Charles M. Savage
	Zebedee Coltrin

* This list represents the individuals whose names were mentioned in newspaper articles, journals, and various histories as noted during research and is in no way exhaustive.

was also the mayor of Provo. His counselors, the local bishops, and many of the counselors in the bishoprics were likewise serving as city councilmen, aldermen, or judges.

The blurred boundary between the sacred and the secular in early Provo is best illustrated by the Provo School of the Prophets and the Provo Mercantile Co-operative. The former, officially organized April 15, 1868, was intended to “lay before [the Saints in Provo] matters pertaining to the building up of the kingdom of God upon the earth” and to give instruction, correction, and explanation “upon all matters which pertain to the temporal and spiritual lives of the saints” (Young 1868:157, 159). The latter, organized February 8, 1869, was the first of many similar organizations across Utah and the first realization of Brigham Young’s renewed attempts at establishing the Law of Consecration amongst the Latter-day Saints. Brigham Young called the Provo Co-operative “one step in the right direction to bring us to our legitimate position before God.” Drawing an implicit parallel to the Law of Consecration, Young said “Joseph [Smith] tried to establish this in his day, but could not accomplish it. . . . We have reason to be proud of Provo” (Tullidge 1884:253; Figure 3.16). In addition to the co-operative, two United Order organizations—the Central Board of the Utah County United Order and the Provo Branch of the United Order—were both organized during meetings in the OPT.

Perhaps the most interesting meetings held in the OPT—and the most surprising for contemporary Latter-day Saints—where those that involved the performance of rituals now reserved exclusively for temples. For example, the building housed a prayer circle room. The prayer circle, a ritual which is now only performed during temple ceremonies, was commonly performed by local leaders authorized to do so in various non-temple structures and places. Although not initially a feature of the building, a space specifically designed to house the Provo Stake president’s prayer circle was a modification to the vestry. The initial one-and-one-half story



Figure 3.16. Provo Mercantile Co-Operative Institution Building, on the northeast corner of Center Street and East Center (University Avenue), Provo, Utah, ca. 1875. The small building with the pitched roof and stone stairs in the background is the Provo Tithing Office (image courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

vestry was expanded to a full two-stories in 1869 to accommodate a “well appointed prayer circle room.” Minutes of these meetings were kept and are now preserved in the Church History Library. Due to the sacred nature of the meetings, these records are not publically available.

In addition to the prayer circle, however, there is some evidence which indicates that the OPT was utilized in the performance of endowments and sealings. On September 26, 1868, while on a circuit tour of the southern settlements, Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith, both members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Daniel H. Wells, a counselor in the First Presidency, held a meeting in the OPT. Woodruff’s (1983:6:431) journal entry for that day reads, “We held a Meeting in Provo Meeting House at 7 oclok. W[ilford] Woodruff Prayed. A[lbert] M Musser spoke

58 minutes Daniel H. Wells 17. /George A. Smith. 55 Endowments & 23 sealings.” Little else is known about this meeting and records of these types of performances, while likely kept, are not publically available. On the basis of similar performances documented in other locales, it is reasonable to assume that the performance of higher priesthood ordinances was reserved for visits from the central leadership of the Church. It is clear that, in the absence of a temple, the performance of these rituals occurred whenever, and often wherever, worthy individuals and members of the centralized leadership of the Church could meet together.

The Original Provo Tabernacle as a Secondary Communal Structure

Even after the construction of the second tabernacle in Provo (built 1883–1898; first meetings were held in 1885), the OPT continued to function as a mixed religious/secular space. For example, a notice in the *Provo Daily Enquirer* on June 1, 1893 announced the “regular monthly meeting of the Priesthood of the Utah Stake” to be held the following Saturday, 3 June, at 10 AM and a meeting of the “Home Missionaries of the Utah Stake,” to follow at 2 PM that same day (PDE, 1 June 1893:1). Periodical announcements in the *Provo Daily Enquirer* indicate that the monthly priesthood meetings, annual gatherings of the seventies quorums, and occasional conferences of the stake or auxiliary organizations—including the Relief Society, the Primary, the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Associations, and the Sunday School—were held in the OPT at this time. From this it seems that the building became an overflow space for religious functions, used primarily when the second, larger tabernacle was unavailable. During this period, at least two congregations—the Provo First and Sixth Wards—used the building as their meetinghouse while other buildings were under construction. In addition to providing overflow space for regular meetings, the OPT became the temporary home for a variety of ongoing meeting

and storage needs for the community. In January 1884, when the Lewis Building, first home of the Brigham Young Academy burned, the OPT briefly served as a temporary locations where classes were held.

Despite the diminished use of the building as the locale for weekly Sunday worship services, there are indications that a “Meeting house choir” and a position for a regular organist were maintained for some time after (PDE, 13 May 1887:3). The building continued to host the funerals of prominent members of the community, including Isaac Bullock, a long-time resident of the city, former mayor, and member of the stake presidency (PDE, 17 March 1891:1). Moreover, the building remained a popular meeting place for the boards of several local businesses, including the Provo Woolen Mills, the Provo Manufacturing Company, the Farmer’s Institute, the State Board of Horticulture, and the Provo Cooperative Institution. The OPT was also utilized for meetings of groups such as the Women’s Hygiene Physiological Reform Classes of Utah Stake of Zion, the Utah County Ladies World Fair Association, and the Utah County Woman’s Suffrage Association. The OPT also continued as the venue for public lectures, including Mutual Improvement Association Lectures delivered by Orson F. Whitney, Karl G. Maeser, and John M. Tanner, and for at least one demonstration of the popular pseudo-science of phrenology by the renowned Prof. Leslie Mutch (PDE, 2 September 1892:1, Figure 3.17)

By 1917, the building had fallen into disrepair. On April 1, 1917, J. William Knight, a member of the stake presidency, proposed that the building be removed from the tabernacle block. The proposal received no opposition. During the following year, the stake presidency advertised contracts to demolish the building. The contract was eventually awarded to George A. Clark of Provo who, with the assistance of his sons dismantled the building, salvaging what they could and pushing the rest of the building in on itself. Pieces of the building made their way into new

Provo Meeting House, Sept. 5, 6, 7, 8, Etc,

Commencing at 8 p. m. Admission Free.



Professor Mutch, Famous Phrenologist UNRIVALED DELINEATOR OF CHARACTER.

Since the death of O. S. Fowler, he has been recognized as without an equal as a Phrenological Examiner.

Subject of First Lecture "Hereditary Education." This invaluable lecture has been given before State and County Teachers' Associations,—receiving unbounded eulogies. Second Lecture "Phrenology Applied," Third, "Quality," etc.

High School, BUTTE, MONTANA,
This is to certify that Prof. Mutch has marked phrenological charts for myself and family, and I believe he thoroughly understands the science:

Respectfully, E. A. STREBS, Prin.

Professor Mutch is by far the best reader of character that has visited the city for some years. Some of our leading men state with emphasis that he surpasses his trainer, the famous O. S. Fowler.—Morning Olympian.

FREE BLINDFOLDED PUBLIC EXAMINATION.

Figure 3.17. Advertisement for Prof. Mutch's public lecture on phrenology held September 5–8 in the Original Provo Tabernacle (meeting house) (PDE 2 September 1892:1; image courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

construction projects throughout the city. Adobes were sold by the Clark family at \$1.50 per one thousand. Stones from the foundation were reused in the walls and foundations of several homes in the area. In 1921, the massive, red pine roof trusses were sold to Arthur N. Taylor and his family. They were used as the spans of a bridge the Taylor family built across the Provo River to provide better access to their Provonna Beach Resort near the present day location of Utah Lake State Park (Taylor 1984:31–36). Shortly after the demolition was completed, the foundation was filled in and a public park was built in its place.

Chapter 4

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS OF THE ORIGINAL PROVO TABERNACLE

The archaeological work conducted at the Original Provo Tabernacle Site (42UT1844) was an example of “rescue” or “salvage” archaeology designed to monitor construction activities for the Provo City Center Temple and to mitigate the adverse effects of those activities on the archaeological remains of the OPT. In addition to the original tabernacle itself, the remains of three additional historic structures—a baptistery dating to the 1870s, the tabernacle caretaker’s cottage, and the Hotel Roberts—and several smaller historic water features were impacted by the construction project (Figure 4.1).¹ All historical and archaeological resources on the property were located, carefully excavated, and thoroughly documented. Artifacts were recovered, cleaned, meticulously documented, analyzed, and are now part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Peoples and Cultures (MPC) at BYU. For the sake of concision and depth, this thesis focuses on the remains of the tabernacle itself. For a thorough presentation of the entire project including the details of the other archaeological features and their associated artifacts, please see OPA’s technical report for the project (Harris et al., in press).

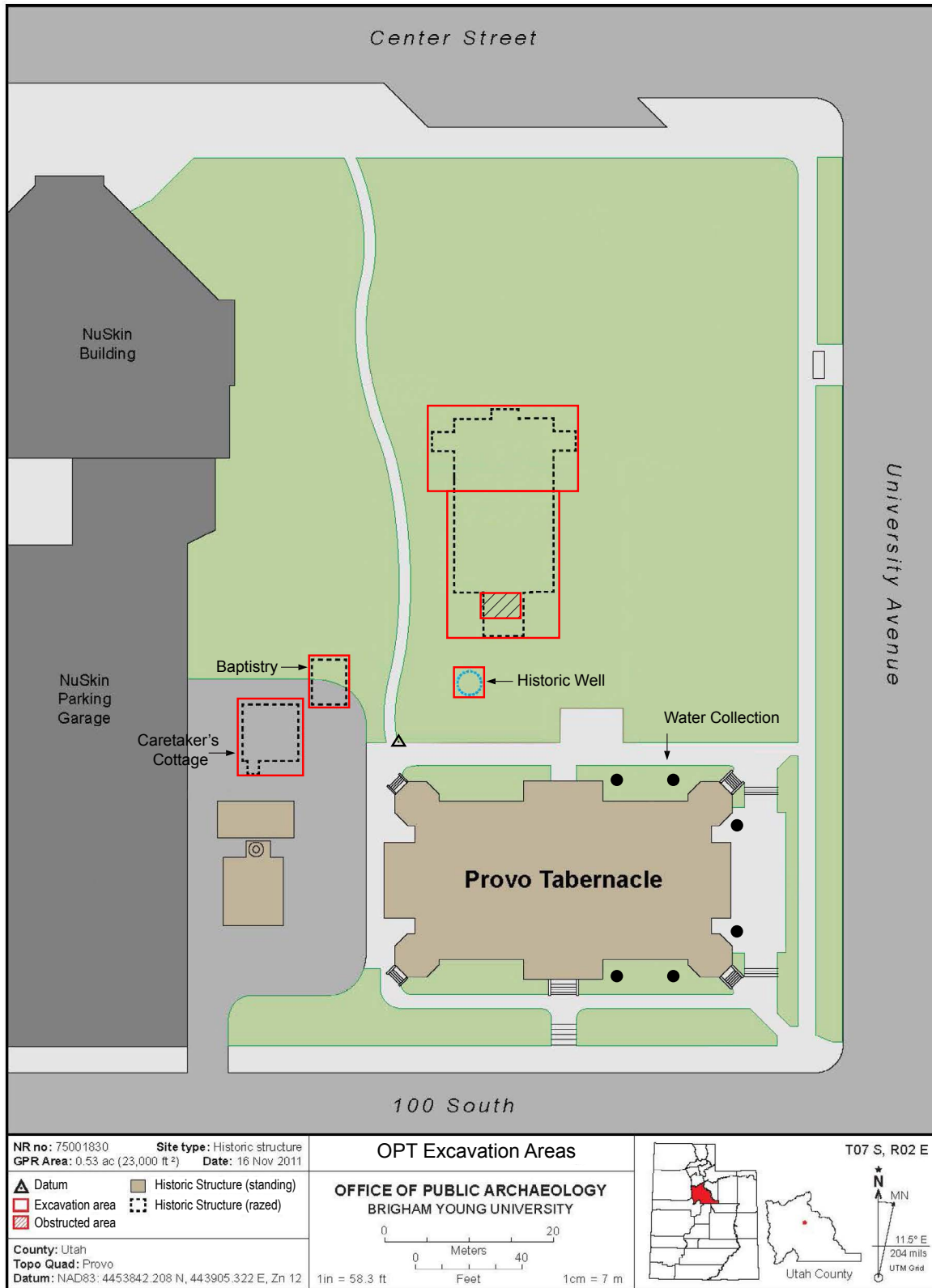


Figure 4.1. Map showing all features excavated by OPA on the Tabernacle Block (courtesy of OPA).

The OPT archaeological project was a massive, multi-disciplinary effort which included documentary research, geophysical survey, excavation, laboratory analysis, and state-of-the-art technological methods for recording and interpreting archaeological evidence. The OPT project represents not only a major archaeological project in the state of Utah, but is perhaps the most significant example of historical archaeology conducted within the state in recent memory. The evidence, both from the ground and the archives, speaks to the important role historical archaeology must play in our understanding of the post-contact history of Utah and the western United States. Likewise, the OPT project was a fine example of the public interest in archaeology and the powerful role the discipline can play through proper engagement with interested communities. This chapter provides an overview and summary of the project, the methods employed, and the types of data which were recovered. This chapter is necessarily a summary of the volume of data compiled in the process of the OPT project.

The feature and artifact descriptions in this chapter are based heavily on the work on Deborah C. Harris, historical archaeologist with OPA, whose painstaking efforts to document and describe the OPT are *the* unparalleled primary source of information on the archaeological excavations of the Tabernacle Block. While I have modified, expanded, and edited the data as needed for my own analysis, as much as possible, I have attempted to stay true to the essence of her meticulously thorough description and analysis of the OPT. For greater and more specific detail see the forthcoming technical report (Harris, et al. in press).

Initial Testing

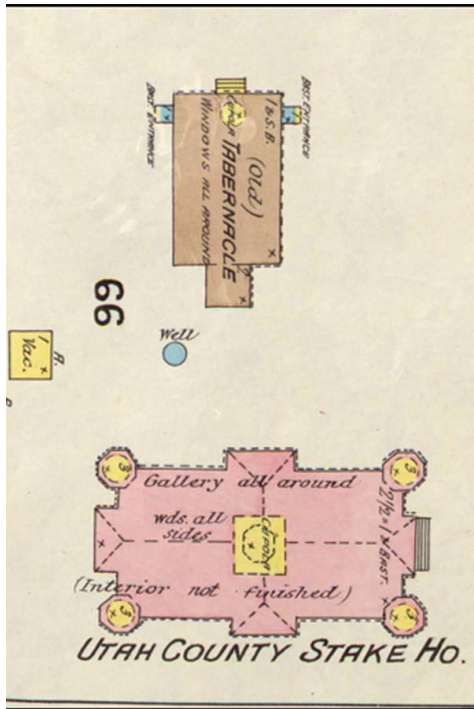
When archaeological investigation of the tabernacle began in November 2011, there were no visible remains present on the ground surface. Before archaeological excavations could be

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authorized at tabernacle site, the site needed to be located and tested to gain some understanding of the layout of the site, the composition of the soil, and the expected nature of the features of the site. A ground-penetrating radar study and traditional archaeological test excavations, summarized below, successfully accomplished both.

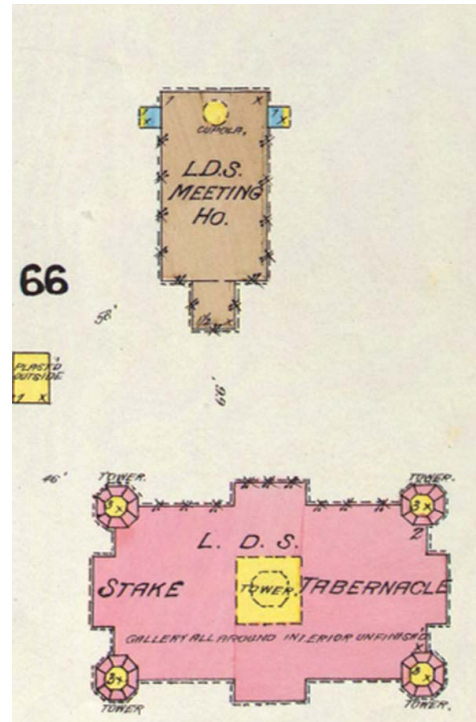
Ground-Penetrating Radar Study

Archival evidence, particularly the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Figure 4.2) and several historic photographs (Figure 4.3; see also Figures 1.3 and 3.10), indicated that the building once stood just to the north of the second tabernacle. However, over the course of time the “building and all associated structure [had] disappeared from the site surface” (McBride et al. 2012a:61). For this reason, Dr. John McBride, Professor of Geophysics in the Department of Geological Sciences at BYU, conducted a three-dimensional ground-penetrating radar (3D GPR) study at the site (McBride et al. 2012a).

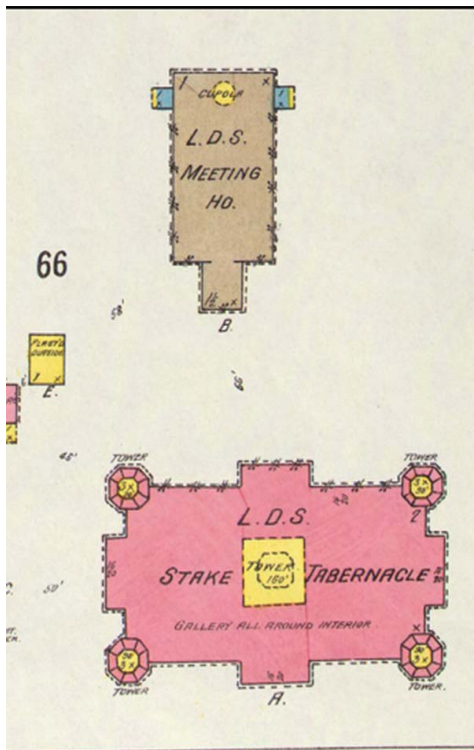
The GPR study at the Provo tabernacle block employed methods which had previously proven effective for imaging buried features at other Mormon historic sites (McBride et al. 2012b) and is comparable to methods employed at other archaeological sites (Conyers 2006, 2011; Conyers et al. 2002; Pomfret 2006). GPR is a geophysical technique commonly employed by archaeologists to image subsurface features (Conyers 2013). GPR is preferred by archaeologists because it is non-destructive, has the ability to provide detailed three-dimensional information about subsurface features, and allows detailed maps of the buried archaeological features in large areas to be produced quickly and effectively (Gater and Gaffney 2003). GPR surveys are conducted by pulling or pushing an antenna over the surface of the ground in a series of parallel and perpendicular transects. The antenna transmits electromagnetic signals or pulses



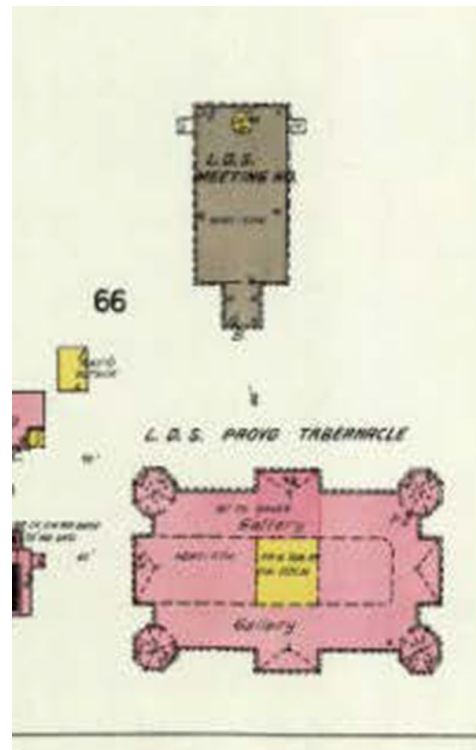
1888



1890



1900



1908

Figure 4.2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Provo, Utah, 1888–1908, showing the proximity of the two Provo Tabernacles (images courtesy of the J. Willard Marriot Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah).



Figure 4.3. Provo Tabernalces, ca. 1885 (Charles R. Savage, image courtesy of the Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

into and the ground and records the travel time of the signals as they are reflected by subsurface objects, features, or soil units back to the surface (Conyers and Goodman 1997). Since the velocity of the radar signal is known, depth in the ground can be calculated. Individual transects, therefore, represent a two dimensional “slice” of the subsurface directly below the antenna. By compiling the transects, a volume representing the subsurface in three-dimensions can be produced. The compiled GPR volume makes it possible to get a sense of the length, width, and height of buried objects as well as their horizontal and vertical location (i.e., depth of burial). From this volume it is possible to produce detailed maps of the subsurface at various depths. The level of detail provided by GPR studies makes it possible to more effectively plan archaeological excavations.

An approximate distance from the northern wall of the second tabernacle to the southern wall of the OPT was taken from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Using this information, survey areas were selected. Initially a single area, 75 x 95 ft. (22.86 x 28.96 m), was planned and surveyed in transects spaced 1 ft. (0.3 m) apart. However, this area contained only the northeast quadrant of the building. Two additional areas (50 x 55 ft. [15.24 x 16.76 m] and 100 x 100 ft. [30.48 x 30.48 m]), were laid and surveyed in the same method. After the surveys were completed, the data was processed and 3D volumes were compiled to allow for interpretation (McBride et al. 2012a).

Analysis of the compiled the GPR data from the OPT revealed the apparent remains of a large, rectangular structure buried at a depth of roughly 2 ft. (0.6 m) below the surface. A comparison of the GPR data with the Sanborn maps indicated that this structure had essentially the same size and dimensions, and was roughly in the same location as the “LDS meetinghouse” from the Sanborn map (McBride et al. 2012a; Figure 4.4). The GPR volume also showed some indication of internal features including walls, doorways, and stairway entrances.

Archaeological Testing

Shortly after the GPR study was completed, test excavations were planned in order to confirm the GPR results. In late November 2011, staff and volunteers from the Office of Public Archaeology (OPA) from BYU excavated a test pit in the southeast corner of the rectilinear structure indicated by the GPR results. Using a combination of backhoe and hand tools, this initial test pit identified intact features including the southern and eastern walls (Figure 4.5). Sediments were screened using ¼ inch mesh in order to assess the general artifact contents of the deposits. Recovered artifacts tended to confirm that the structure dated, at least, to the early

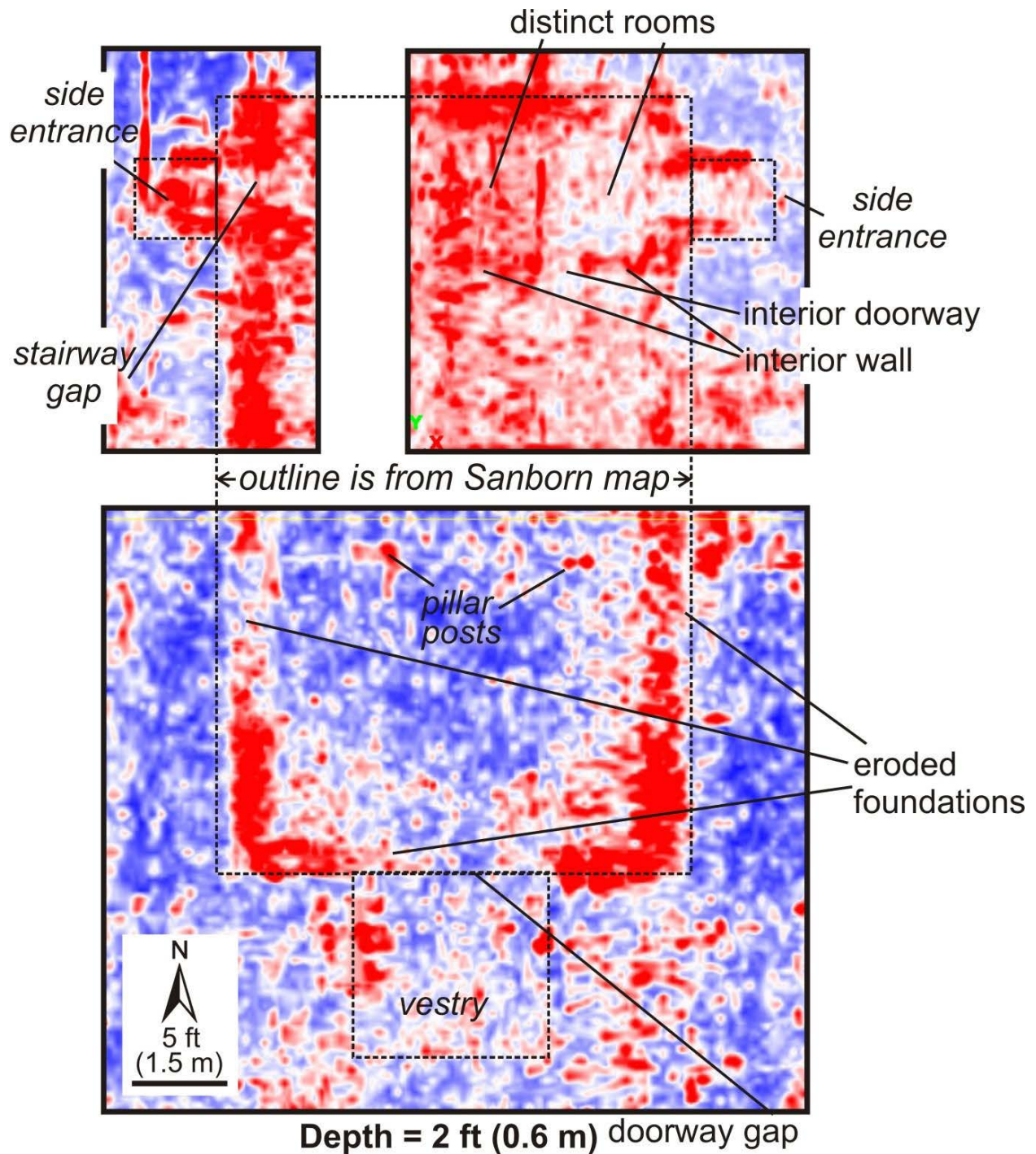


Figure 4.4. Compiled ground-penetrating radar image (plan view) of the subsurface structure at a theoretical depth of 2 ft. (0.6 m) from the GPR study conducted November 2011. Labels indicate initial, pre-excavation, interpretations of the buried features (image courtesy of Dr. John H. McBride).

twentieth century; coinciding with the historically known 1919 demolition (Christensen 1983).

With these promising results, plans progressed for a full-scale archaeological excavation of the site. The LDS Church contracted with OPA in January 2012 to carry out the full excavation.

General Site Stratigraphy

During the initial test excavation a general stratigraphy for the site was created in order to establish reasonable expectations for sediments during a potential full-scale excavation (Figure 4.6). This stratigraphy identified six stratigraphic units within the OPT foundation. These layers are described below.

Stratum I. The OPT was located within the active construction site for the Provo City Center Temple. A layer, 6 in. (15 cm) thick, of dense gravel had laid down to prepared the site for construction related traffic including trucks, cranes, and other heavy machinery by laying.

Stratum II. Below the gravel was a dark, loamy, compact soil 12–16 in. (30–40 cm) thick; round quartzite river cobbles of various sizes were common in this layer. The layer was not screened, however; no artifacts were readily apparent during the excavations (Harris et al., in press).

Stratum III. At approximately 18–22 in. (45–55 cm) below the ground surface archaeologists encountered the structural walls. Fill outside the structural walls was a light brown, heavily compacted silt which appeared imported. These sediments contained no artifacts.

Stratum IV. The interior fill was quite different. Beginning approximately at the top of the walls and extending between 43–47 in. (110–120 cm) deep, a very thick layer composed of a loam similar to the previous layer was found to contain a significant amount of construction debris including cut stone, plaster, mortar, wood, nails, glass, ceramics, and metal fragments.



Figure 4.5. Photograph of initial test pit showing the southeast corner of the OPT foundation (image courtesy of OPA).

ORIGINAL PROVO TABERNACLE 42UT1844

Test Pit Cross-section A-A'

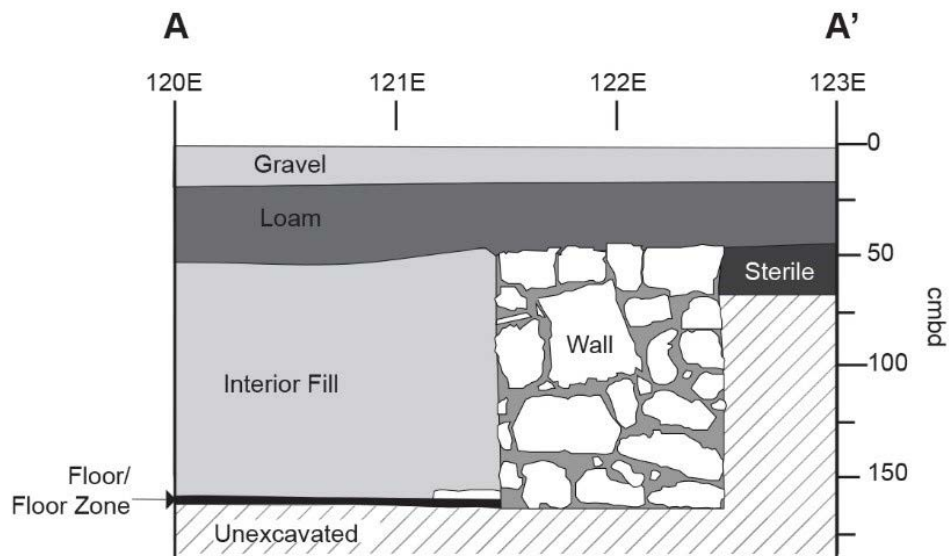


Figure 4.6. Profile of initial test pit indicating the observed stratigraphy (courtesy of OPA).

At the base of this layer, crews encountered a “discontinuous banded layer of plaster fragments, many of which were ‘nicely formed’ examples of decorative or cornice plasterwork.” During the full-scale excavation of the site, this layer was excavated by a combination of monitored heavy machinery and hand excavation across the entire space. In general, approximately the first 3 ft. (90 cm) of fill was removed by backhoe. The “lower fill zone,” ~1 ft. (~30 cm) was then excavated by hand down to the floor zone (Harris et al. in press).

Stratum V. At the base of the cultural fill (~47 in. [120 cm] below the surface), a 0.8–1.6 in. (2–4 cm) thick area was identified as the floor zone. This area was identified by compaction and increased in artifact concentrations.

Stratum VI. Below the floor zone was a culturally sterile, sandy, and heavily compacted loam roughly equivalent to the sediments on the exterior of the wall which lay below.

Excavations at the Original Provo Tabernacle Site

Excavations of the OPT site began January 29, 2012, and ran until April 3, 2012.

The primary goal of the excavations was to thoroughly and accurately document the extant foundations. This included detailed mapping, meticulous notation, photography, artifact recovery and analysis, and three-dimensional scanning. OPA was able to involve more than 50 graduate and undergraduate students, primarily from the Department of Anthropology at BYU, in the excavations. Onsite crews ranged daily from just OPA staff and a few graduate students, to upwards of 20 student volunteers digging, screening, cleaning, bagging and labeling artifacts, and recording notes on the excavation.

The initial project proposed excavations of approximately 50 percent of the OPT

foundation. The amount of volunteer labor available to the project, however, enabled OPA to excavate the entirety of the foundations and the top 1 m (3.28 ft.) of the associated well. The details of the research questions and methods employed to document the OPT foundations is summarized below.

Research Design

The research design for the OPT project focused on answering six questions regarding the building. Those questions, briefly summarized, were: (1) is the architectural style of the OPT similar or distinct from other similar tabernacles built at the time?; (2) where did the raw materials of the OPT originate?; (3) what modifications or remodeling occurred to the original structure during its lifetime?; (4) how was the Tabernacle basement used?; (5) how did the function of the OPT change during the period when the two tabernacles occupied the block?; and (6) were remnants of the associated outbuildings present? (e.g., the caretakers cottage and baptistery) (Harris et al., in press). The plan of the excavation and the methods employed were chosen in the hopes of providing the best possible information to answer these questions.

Excavation Design

Information gleaned from the initial test pit assisted in the planning and execution of the excavations including establishing an expected site-wide soil stratigraphy, the nature of the foundation itself, and some sense of the artifacts that would be recovered. A site datum was established in the southwest corner of the excavation to maintain consistency in horizontal and vertical measurements. Prior to full-scale excavations an orthogonal grid was established which divided the interior of the OPT foundations into 2 m x 2 m grid units (Figure 4.7). Grid units

in the large southern chamber were designated “T” (for tabernacle) and numbered sequentially beginning in the southwest corner and moving east and north. Units in the northern, foyer section, were labeled “N” (for north) and numbered in the same manner. The vestry was excavated in two units. The doorway connecting the vestry to the tabernacle basement was designated “V1” while the rest of the vestry was excavated as a single unit designated “V.” The east and west stairway entrances were, likewise, excavated as individual units. The Jennings Feature System, a standard system for recording archaeological sites in Utah, was employed to document interior features and sediments as the excavations proceeded.

Methods

The interior fill of the OPT foundations were excavated by backhoe to a level approximately 30 cm above the anticipated floor zone. The remaining sediments were removed by hand and screened for artifacts. All screened sediments passed through ¼ inch mesh and artifacts were sorted and bagged by artifact class or type for unique objects. Bags were labeled with the provenience information—including grid unit and level or other associated feature—and any special handling instructions. In order to maintain control of the massive collection of recovered artifacts, artifact bags were assigned field specimen (FS) numbers in the lab.

As with most archaeological projects, hand-drawn maps of the site were produced throughout the project. All major features were mapped and profiles of significant sediments were created in order to aid in the developing understanding of the site. Digital photographs were taken of all features, unique artifacts, and various other aspects of the excavation. In addition to photographs, a three-dimensional rendering of the site was produced using data acquired from a Faro Focus 3D terrestrial LiDAR system at the conclusion of the excavations

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OPT Plan Map with Excavation Unit Grids

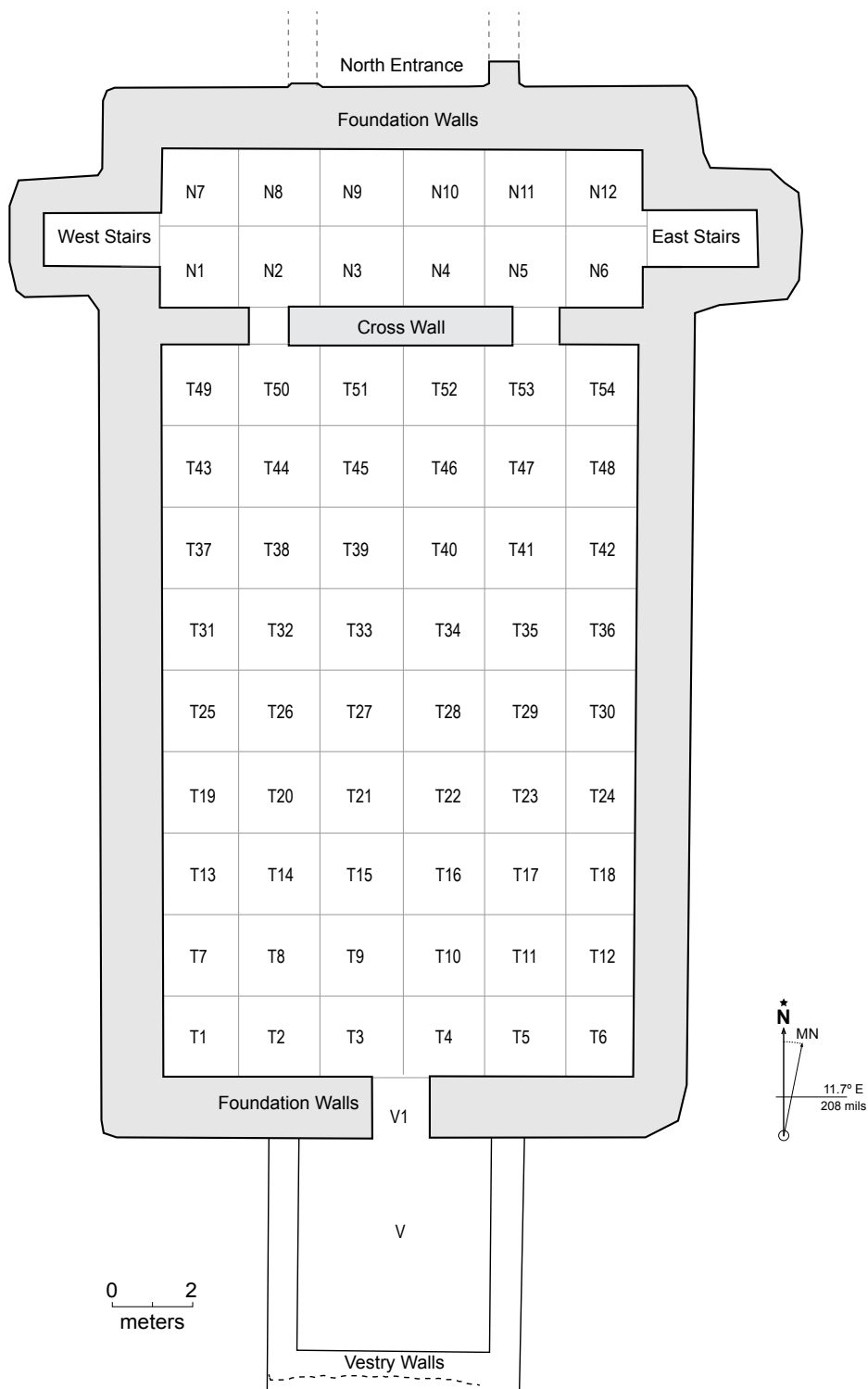


Figure 4.7. Schematic view of the OPT showing the excavaton areas (courtesy of OPA).

(Figure 4.8). This technology provides millimeter-accurate “as built” three-dimensional models which can be measured, sliced, and manipulated in nearly anyway to meet the needs of the project. Using this data, project staff produced highly detailed maps and profiles during the post-excavation process (Figures 4.9 and 4.10).

Public Engagement

Archaeologists have discussed the best approach to stewardship of the past for many years (Bourque et al. 1980; Davis 1977; Egloff 2006; Joyce 2006; King 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980a, 1980b, 1981a, 1981b, 1982; Lipe 1984; McGimsey and Davis 1977; Praetzelis and Praetzelis 2011; Sebastian 2009). Harmonizing conservation of the past with the demands of progress is always challenging. Many members of the interested public would like all archaeological and historical resources to be conserved *in situ* for the enjoyment and education of future generations. This group sees archaeological and historical resources as irreplaceable symbols of our collective heritage. Others, less sentimental, see archaeological and historical resources as relics of a bygone era which, while interesting, are less important than the ongoing project of human cultural and industrial development. This latter group sees no issue with conservation of archaeological resources so long as they do not prevent construction projects which are necessary to the sustained growth of contemporary society. Both sides have equally valid concerns which must be addressed when archaeological and historic preservation projects are undertaken, no matter the setting. In an urban setting where the project is directly related to the dominant ethnic and religious group of the area, this balance is crucial. In general, archaeologists attempt to negotiate a middle-ground solution which satisfies all interested parties. This process involves consultation with interested parties and the negotiation of the most satisfying solution for all

involved.

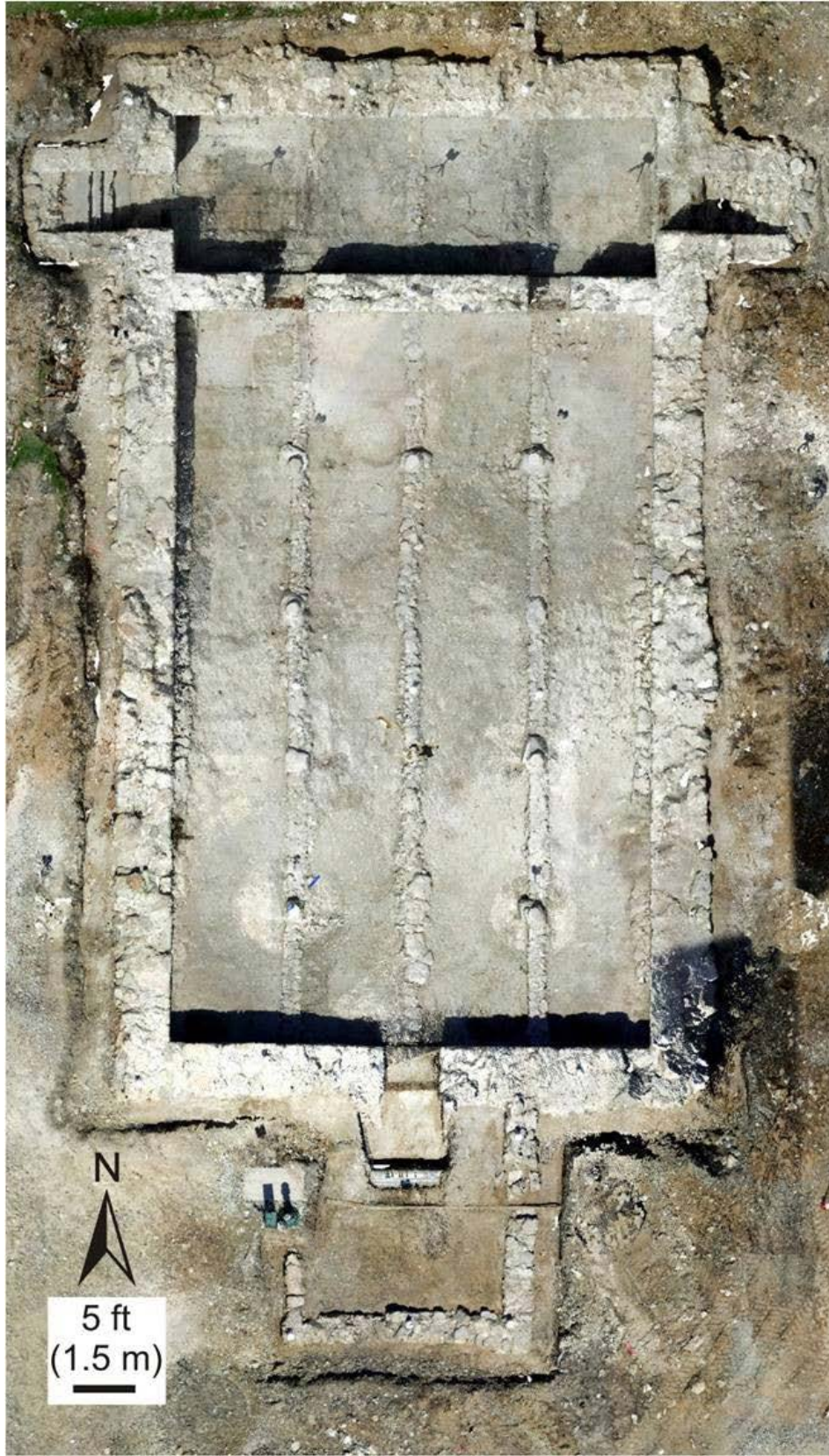


Figure 4.8. Compiled LiDAR image replicating an aerial view of the excavated OPT foundations (scans performed by Skandit; image courtesy of OPA and the LDS Church History Department).

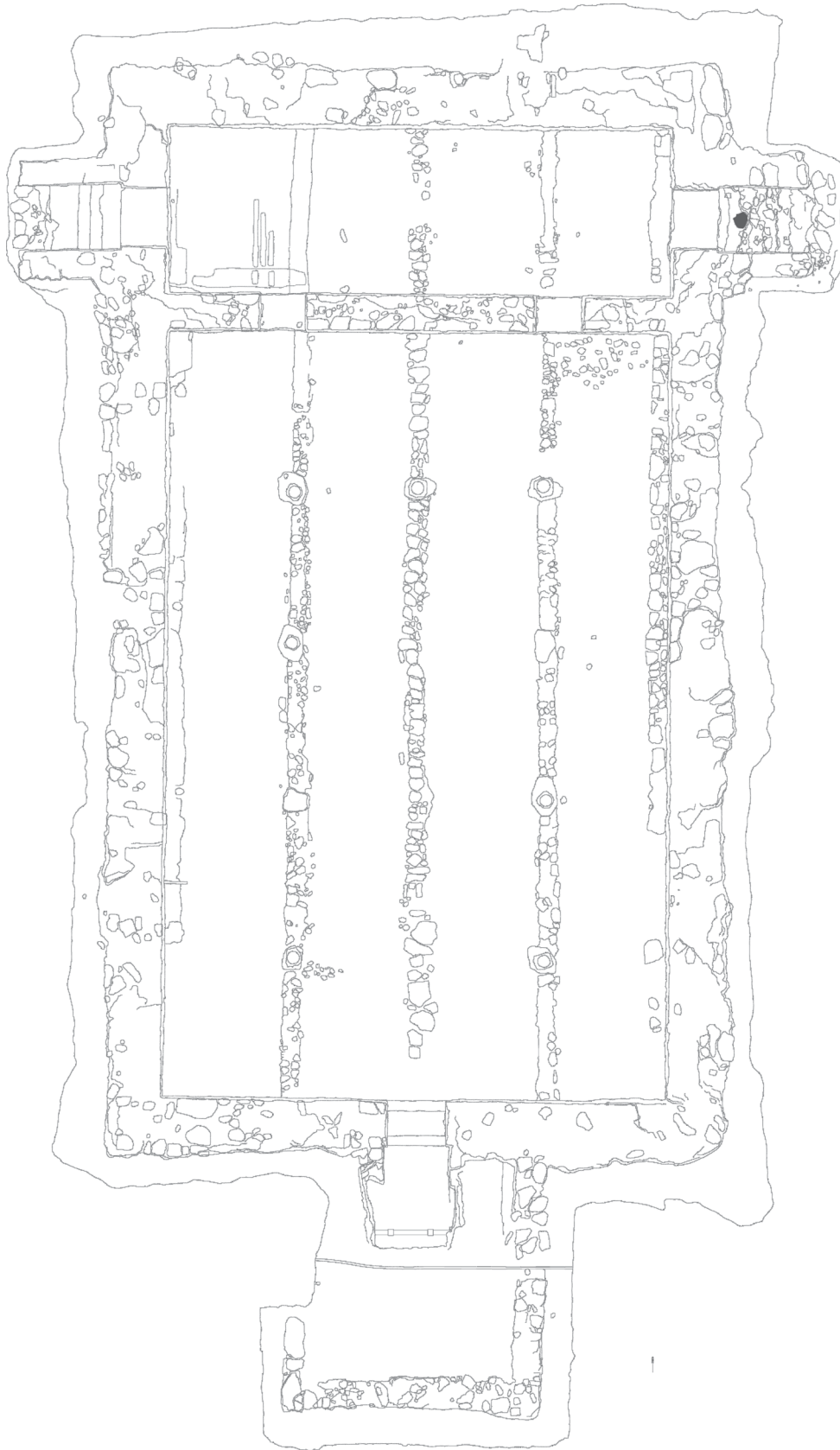


Figure 4.9. Plan map of the fully excavated foundations of the Original Provo Tabernacle drawn from LiDAR data by Scott Ure (image courtesy of OPA).

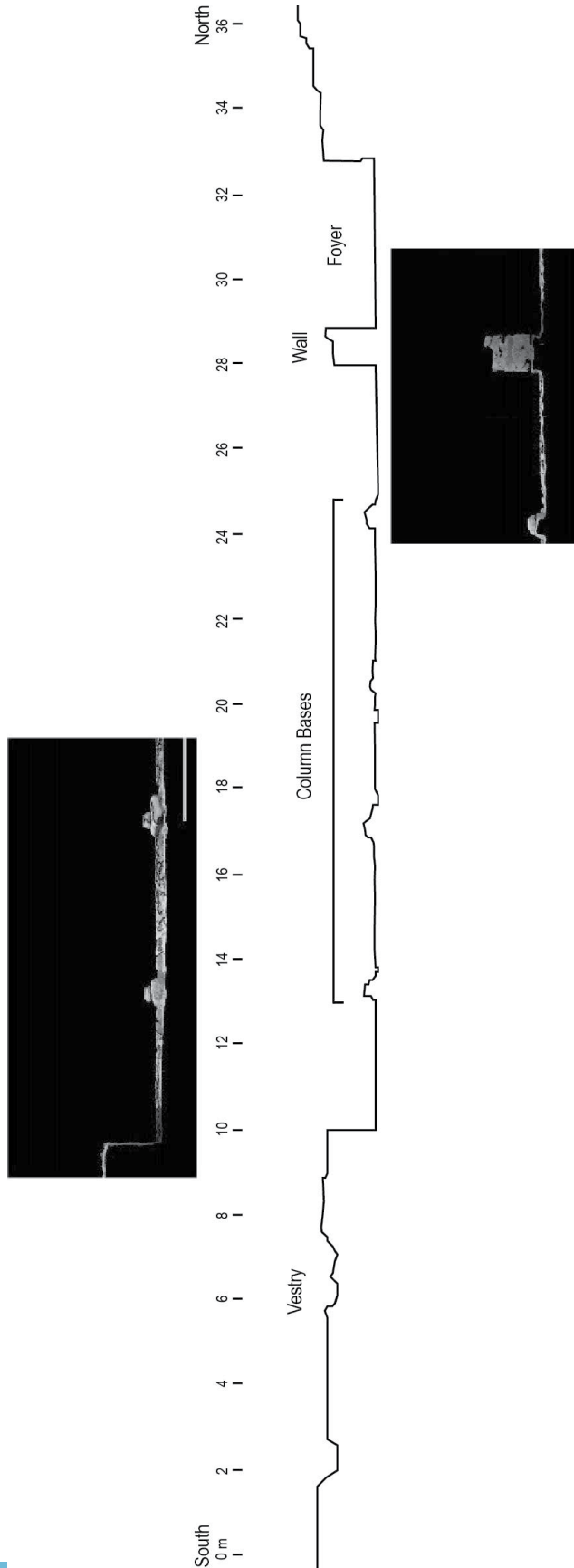


Figure 4.10. Profile running the length of the OPT from south to north drawn from the LIDAR data from the OPT. Inset images are clips of the raw data used to draw the profile. This process was completed long after the excavation was completed (courtesy of OPA).

The OPT archaeological project involved a delicate balance between the conservation of the Mormon heritage of the Utah Valley and necessity to provide for the continually increasing demands of Latter-day Saint worship in the area. During the excavations of the OPT, the conservation debate came to the forefront as a public discussion emerged about the future plans for the archaeological remains of the OPT (Pugmire 2012). Located on University Avenue, between Center Street and First South, the tabernacle site is in the heart of Provo's historic downtown. As a result, the project was bound to receive considerable attention from news media and other interested members of the public (Meyers 2012; Patel 2012; Pugmire 2012; Walker 2012). This interest was anticipated and OPA initially hoped to engage the public in the project by inviting volunteers to donate labor to the project. Unfortunately, as an active construction site, safety and liability concerns limited the volunteer program to matriculated students at BYU who were eighteen or older.

In lieu of a broader public volunteer program, OPA collaborated with the MPC and the Historic Sites Division of the LDS Church to produce explanatory signage displayed on-site which provided visitors with detailed information about the project (Figure 4.11). With the assistance of the MPC, OPA also designed several public programs to allow the community, as much as possible, to be involved in the archaeological work at the site. These on-site programs included demonstrations of archaeological methods, display cases showcasing the most recent and most interesting artifacts recovered, and several scheduled times when OPA staff and BYU graduate students were made available to discuss the project with church groups, professional organizations, and Boy Scout troops from the local area (Figure 4.12). During the excavations, hundreds and possibly thousands of interested members of the public visited the site, watched the excavations, and engaged students and staff in thoughtful and informative discussions.



Figure 4.11. One of the interpretive signs produced by OPA and the MPC to provide visitors to the site with information about the project (Photo courtesy of Charmaine Thompson).

As with many projects of this type, the emotional connection to the site felt by the community was substantial. Near the conclusion of the excavation, several members of the community called for stabilization of the foundation and the incorporation of it in the overall landscape of the temple grounds. A petition effort was organized and public meetings were held to discuss this possibility. “We must somehow preserve a way for our children to connect to their heritage,” said petition supporter and community organizer Raquel Smith Callis, adding “We’re hoping a compromise could be made” (Pugmire 2012). Ultimately, it was determined that, for a variety of reasons, a stabilized ruin was not feasible.



Figure 4.12. Local boy scouts are given a tour of the site. This program was coordinated by Kari Nelson, curator of education at the MPC (photo courtesy of Charmaine Thompson).

While the *in situ* preservation of the OPT foundation was ultimately impossible, the archaeological project was undertaken with the utmost care to ensure that the data collected would document the OPT as comprehensively as possible. A careful research design was chosen which allowed for the thorough and accurate documentation of the archaeological remains. A marker incorporating the original lintel stone will be placed on the temple grounds memorializing the original tabernacle and many of the artifacts have been on public display at the MPC. The record of the archaeological remains will be summarized in a detailed technical report (Harris et al., in press) and plans for the publication of a popular volume have also been discussed. The three-dimensional scanning has also allowed for highly-accurate, virtual

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reconstructions of the foundation (Figure 4.13) and an animation of the foundation of the OPT, together with an animation of the foundation of the Baptistry have been produced and publicly displayed. The stones from the OPT foundation which were removed in during the construction project were donated to the city of Provo for their use in building projects elsewhere.

Although public interest in the project was anticipated and efforts were made to involve the public as much as possible, the emotion associated with objects and sites connected to the community's heritage runs high. A compromise which satisfies everyone completely is difficult if not impossible. The level of interest in the project and, specifically, the call for the preservation of the remains as a way to help our children connect to the past signals the lasting legacy of the OPT. Brigham Young, remember, designed the building in a Presbyterian style to provide the children of the community with a constant reminder of the meetinghouses their parents had worshipped in before joining the Church (SHPB, 24 August 1868:39). The salvage and use of the foundation stones for the completion of construction projects elsewhere in Provo also aligns quite nicely with the manner in which the building's materials were used when it was originally demolished.

Features

The foundation of the OPT was the primary feature excavated in the course of the initial project. Measuring approximately 81 x 47 ft. (16 x 8 m), the foundation closely matched the contemporary accounts of the building (Figure 4.14). Foundation walls of the OPT measured approximately 4 ft. (1.22 m) thick and were constructed primarily of locally quarried limestone, quartzite, and occasionally sandstone. Walls were a mixture of large boulders and smaller filler stones, cemented together with lime mortar.



Figure 4.13. Screen shot taken from an animated fly-through of the fully excavated OPT foundations (created by Skandit; courtesy of the LDS Church and the Office of Public Archaeology).

An interior cross-wall, 2.95 ft. (90 cm) wide, and approximately 15 ft. (4 m) from the interior of the northern wall, divided the front entryway or “foyer area” from the large basement room and provided support for the massive, 80 ft. tower. The front entryway, even in the basement, was likely finished and decorated. Plaster fragments found attached to the stone walls and in the fill during excavation indicate that this area was finished with molded plaster, painted in yellow, tan, and red with highlights in black, white, and gray (Figure 4.15). Two doorways in this interior wall were located approximately 6.9 ft. (2.1 m) from both the east and west walls and allowed passage between the entryway to the large basement room. Stairway entrances on the east and the west of the foyer area extended to the historic ground level (approximately 4 ft. [1.22 m]) above the floor. Each stairway measured 9.8 ft. (3 m) long, and 4.5 ft. (1.37 m) wide, with 1.37 ft. (41.9 cm) wide stairs rising 2 in. (5 cm).

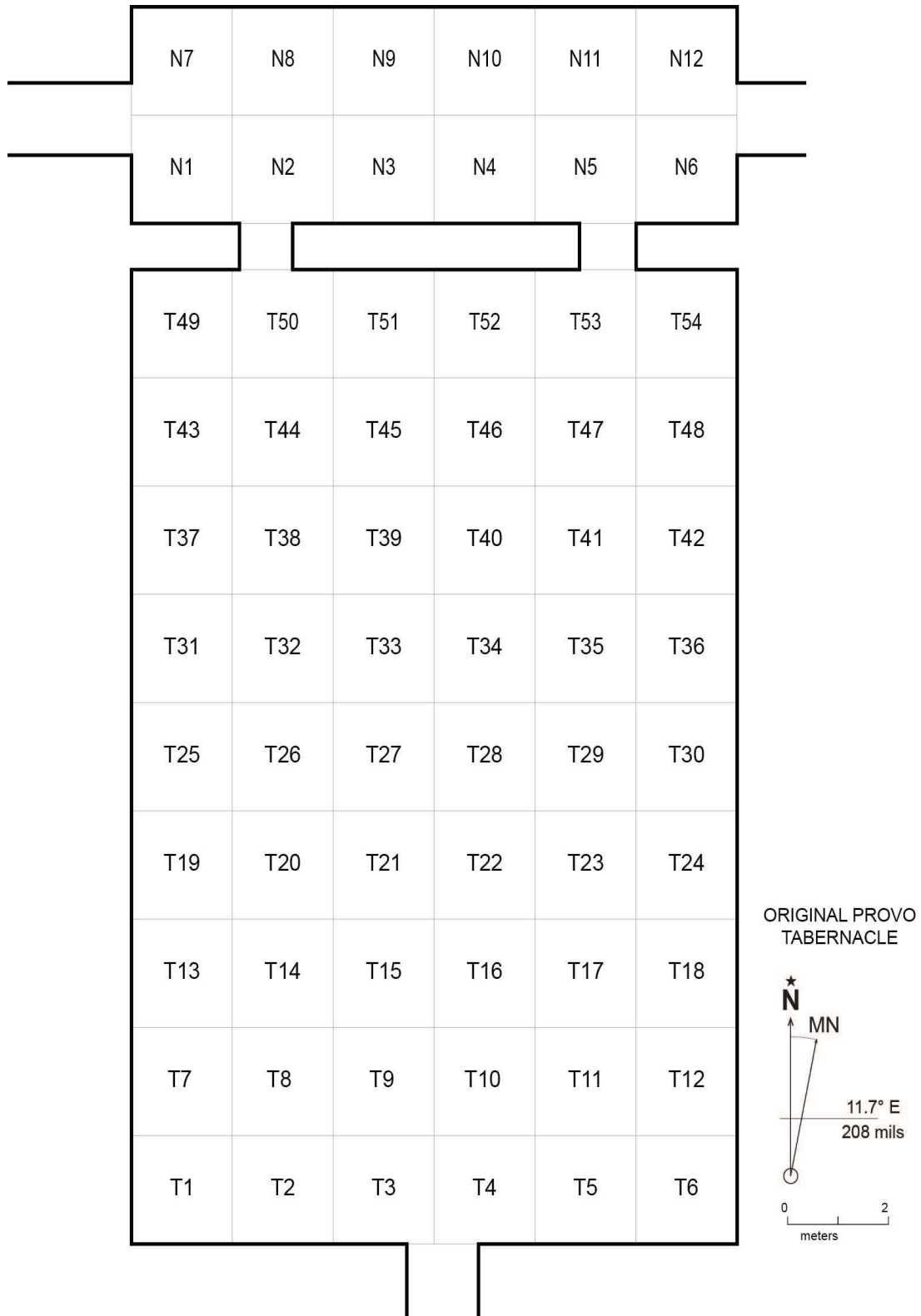


Figure 4.14. Schematic map of interior of the OPT (courtesy of OPA).

The large—approximately 24,440 ft.²—basement room was immediately to the south of the cross wall and occupied the majority of the internal space of the foundation. Various concentrations and features were found inside this space (detailed below). There were no indications during excavation of any permanent division of this space. Although it is possible that temporary dividing walls or curtains may have been used to divide this space for various activities, aside from the nine pillars supporting the balcony, this space would likely have been entirely open. Fragments of lath and painted plaster still affixed to the stone foundations indicate that the walls were finished and finely decorated. Fragments of the plaster work in this area indicated that it was finely molded and painted red, tan, pink, green, blue, and light orange or peach with white and gray highlights.

Five alignments of cobbles ran the length of the building, north to south, bisecting the interior cross wall. Two of these alignments ran immediately at the base of the eastern and western walls. Within the three alignments running through the center of the building were found eight of the nine pillar bases (or “plinths”) that would have served as the foundation for the pillars supporting the balcony in the upper assembly hall (Figure 4.16). It is believed that these rock alignments formed the base upon which the wooden floor of the basement originally sat. Some evidence of the width and distribution of the wooden flooring was discovered in a coal deposit found in the front foyer area (Figure 4.17). In addition, an artifact concentration found in unit T25 contained six pieces of 1x4 inch, milled lumber which were likely fragments of floorboards from the basement.

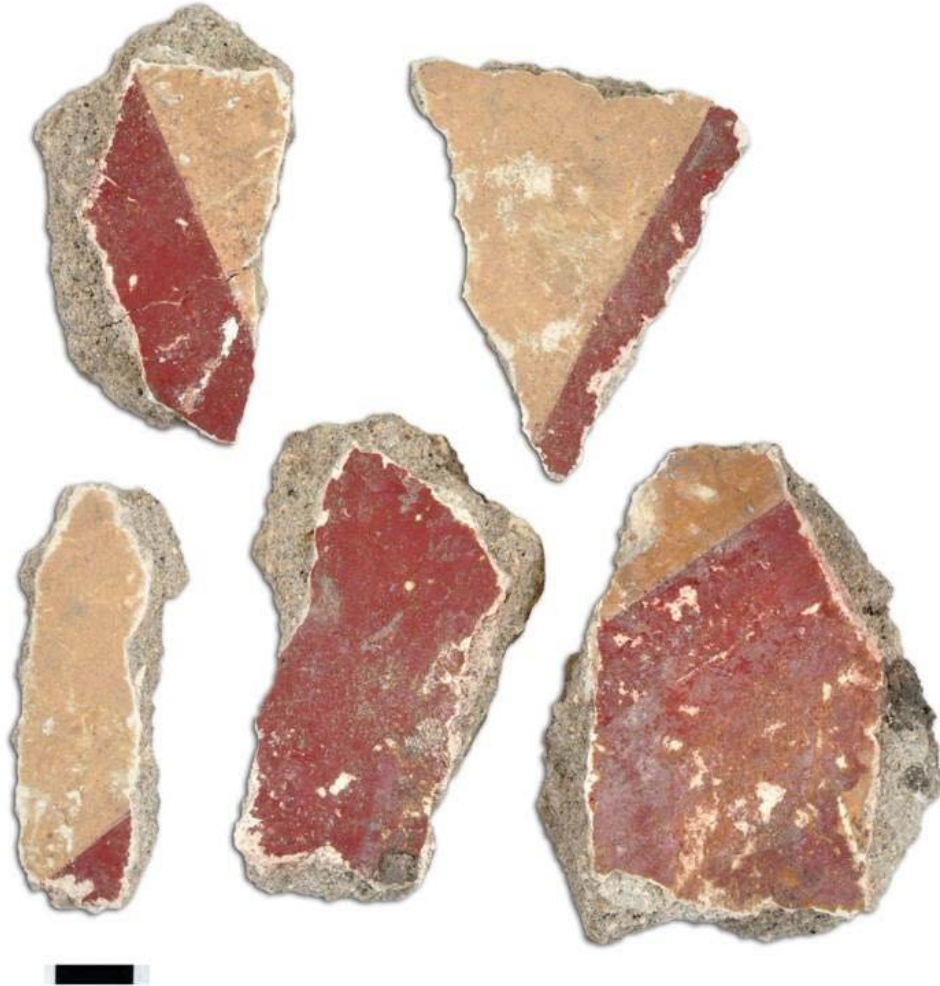


Figure 4.15. Plaster fragments (image courtesy of OPA)

Interior Features

Several interior features, including concentrations of ash, artifacts, rocks, and variations in the sediment, were also recorded during the excavation (Harris et al. in press). These features are illustrated in Figure 4.18 and described below.

Stoves. A close analysis of the available historical photographs reveals that the number of chimneys on the building increased from two to four and eventually included a metal stovepipe. The frequent discussion of the difficulty in heating the OPT is expressed in the archaeological record as well where evidence of several stoves were discovered in various locations. Stoves



Figure 4.16. The plinth stones and the rock alignments within the OPT foundations (images courtesy of OPA).



Figure 4.17. Photographs of the marks in the subsurface layer created by the floorboards which once existed above. This evidence was found within a large ash and coal deposit in the northern foyer area of the OPT foundation (photos courtesy of OPA).

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Plan Map of OPT with Interior Features

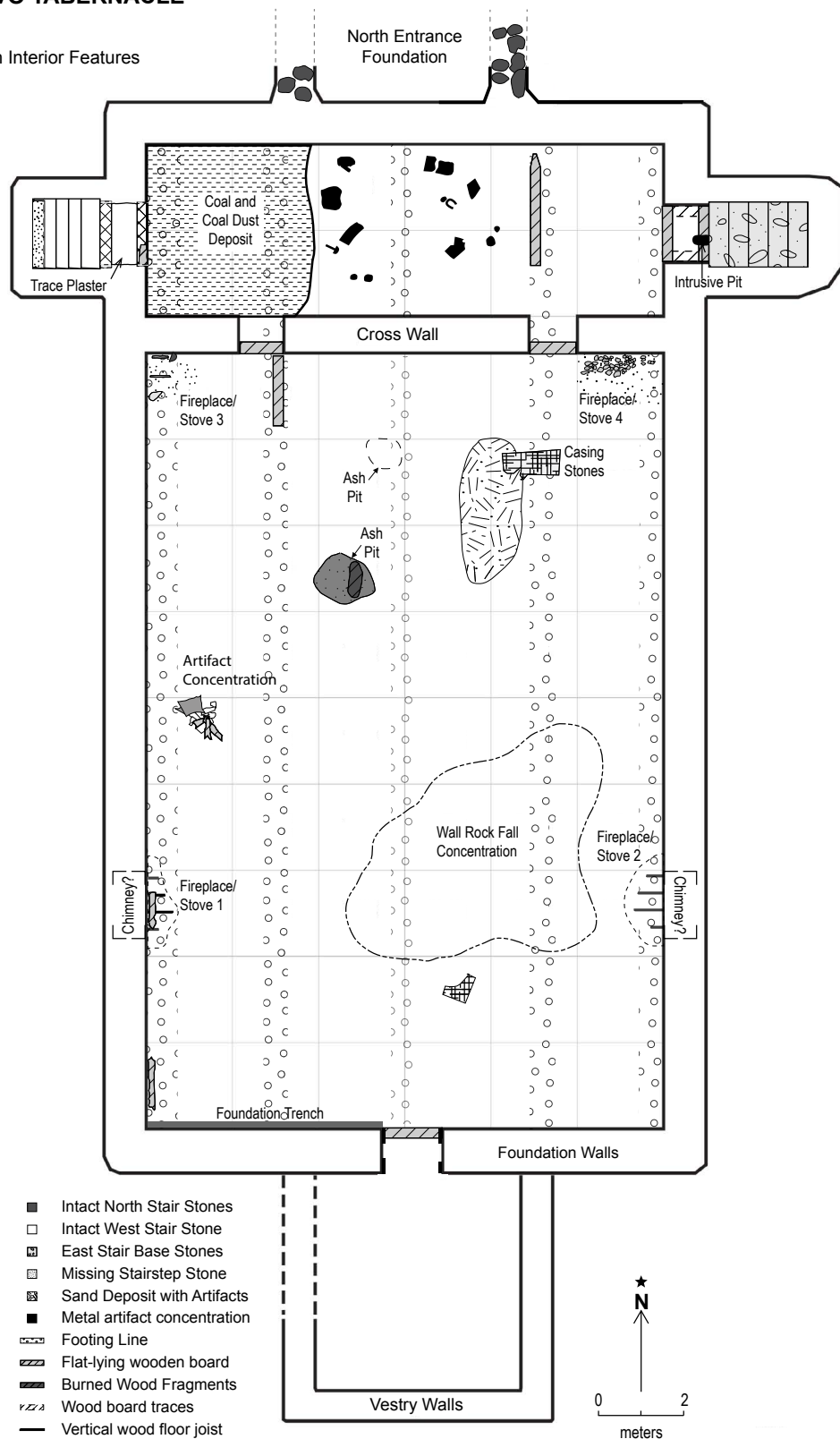


Figure 4.18. Schematic map of interior features excavated in the OPT (courtesy of OPA).

1 and 2 were located in units T13 and T18, against the western and eastern walls respectively, opposite one another approximately 13 ft. (4 m) from the southern wall. Each was indicated by heavy concentrations of ash with burnt artifacts including heavily corroded metal fragments, large diameter ceramic pipe, wall plaster, brick fragments, milk glass, faunal bones, and nails. Beneath the ash concentrations for Stoves 1 and 2 were the indications of 2 x 8-inch milled floor joists, spaced 16 in. apart (Figure 4.19). Each were also accompanied by the indications that flue pipes were incorporated into the foundation and likely extended through the adobe walls to the roofline. Two additional stoves, located in units T49 and T54, were placed in the northwestern and northeastern corners of the large basement room. Stove 3, located in the northwest corner (T49) was surrounded by a 3 ft. 7 in. x 3 ft. 9 in. (1.10 x 1.15 m) semi-circular ash concentration, brown and black in color, with a significant amount of sandy and silt intermixed. Artifacts included plaster, floor joists, metal objects, bottle glass, ceramic pipe, and nails. Stove 4, in the northeast corner (T54), was associated with a more diffuse ash concentration noticeably different from the others. This concentration contained no indication of the floor joists, was thinner, and rested directly on the contact surface and contained on nails. Harris et al. (in press) describes this concentration as “very thin, and . . . almost directly on the floor.” A rock concentration associated with this fourth possible stove, primarily situated at the base of the cross wall, may be either an additional heating stove location or “the remnants of a fireplace or cooking stove location, with the extra stones suggestive of a stone base foundation or framework” (Harris et al. in press).

It is likely that the four stoves located during excavation represent at least two separate configurations installed in the attempt to heat the building. The level of incorporation of stoves 1 and 2 in the foundation indicates that these were likely the original means of providing heat to



Figure 4.19. Photo of floor boards at the base of Stove 2 (courtesy of OPA).

the basement level. The position and retrofit nature of the flue associated with stove 3 and the superficiality of the ash concentration associated with stove 4 may indicate either one additional attempt at heating the building (with stove 3 for heating and stove 4 for cooking) or two separate attempts to improve the building's heating systems. The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, however, indicates that the building was heated by steam for at least the last decade of its existence (cf. Figure 4.2). It is possible that the two refit frames for grate covers (Figure 4.20) were installed when the steam heat was installed in the building.

Wall Rock, Artifact Concentration, and Ash Pit. A massive, amorphous concentration of foundation stones was found deposited in the center of the basement. Measuring 19 ft. 7 in. (6 m) wide and 16 ft. 8 in. (5.1 m) at its longest point, this concentration was likely the result of

intentional piling of the stones as they were removed during demolition (Figure 4.20). A large number of artifacts, from almost every identified class, was recovered from the fill between these stones including building material (plaster, nails, window glass, etc.), personal items (“slate pencils, straight pins, buttons, beads, snaps, rings, comb fragments, and an eyeglass lens” [Harris et al. in press]), ceramics, and glassware. Beneath the rock concentration was a significant ash pit, 7 ft. 2 in. x 2 ft. 7 in. (2.2 x 0.8 m) and nearly 7 in. (18 cm) thick which, based on proximity, may have been associated with stove 2. Artifacts included faunal bone, eggshell, dishware, ceramic insulators, wire, nails, staples, various types of glass (window, bottle, canning), a leather book cover fragment, an eyeglass lens, and stove pieces (firebox handles, burner cover, and flashing).

Coal Deposit in Foyer Area. A significant concentration of coal and coal dust was found in the western area of the north foyer area. Beginning in the northwest corner of the foyer area, the deposit extended 19 ft. 8 in. (6.5 m) east and 13 ft. 1½ in. (4 m) south to the northern edge of the cross wall. An unstained, linear area approximately 6 in. (15 cm) wide ran along the north and south walls of the room and was interpreted as the indication that a coal bin once existed in this area. After this concentration was fully excavated, the coal dust left an impression of the construction method employed in the floor of the basement. Deeply impressed lines, 15 in. (40 cm) apart, indicated the floor joists running east-west. Perpendicular to the floor joist impression, was an undulating, more-superficial set parallel impressions, 4 in. (10 cm) apart indicating the likely use of 1 x 4-inch floorboards (Figure 4.17).

Miscellaneous Interior Features. Other interior features include a single-use fire pit with unburned wood fragments, nails, and unidentified metal likely associated with the dismantling of the building, a possible sump pit for collecting water, and various smaller artifact concentrations

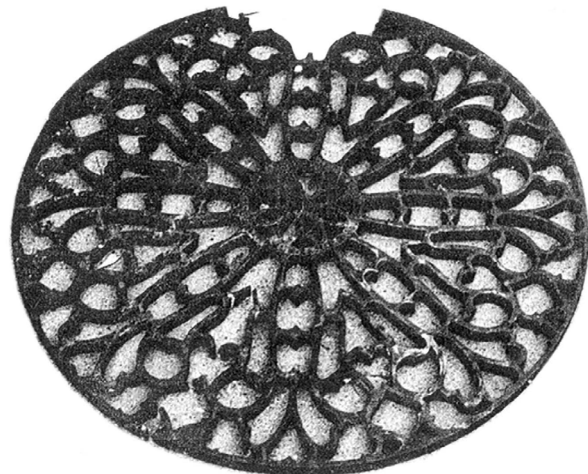


Figure 4.20. Rich Talbot, director of OPA, examines refit stone frame (left); it is likely that these framed the heating grates after steam heating was installed in the building (ca. 1900) (images courtesy of OPA).

and intrusive sediment deposits. Just south of the rock wall concentration was a deposit, 2 in. thick, of plaster pieces which appear to be examples of ceiling plaster.

Artifact Summary

The OPT excavation was a massive effort which ultimately uncovered approximately 32,788 ft.² of floor inside the tabernacle basement. The artifact assemblage at the OPT consisted in whole or part of a calculated minimum of 54,198 individual objects (MNI). Artifacts ranged from very common, such as nails and window glass, to the more exotic, rare, and intriguing. OPA staff, BYU student research assistants, and volunteers completed all artifact analyses. At

the laboratory and analysis rooms located at the MPC each artifact bag received Field Specimen (FS) numbers, were washed, sorted, and analyzed. Recovered artifacts are divided into seven functional categories: (1) building material; (2) ceramics and glassware; (3) domestic items; (4) tools; (5) personal items; (6) faunal remains; and (7) miscellaneous items. Brief descriptions of each of these categories are provided below along with tables of the whole counts, fragmentary counts, and MNI.

Building Materials

Comprising 89.55 percent of the total assemblage, building material dominated the artifact assemblage from the OPT excavations. This category includes fasteners (nails, screws, bolts, and staples), window glass, plaster, adobe, bricks, electrical components, and other types of structural hardware. The most numerous artifacts, both within this class included nails, screws, bolts, and other types of hardware fasteners. Of the 1711 field specimen numbers assigned for the entire project, nails accounted for 746 (43.6 percent) (Figure 4.21). Other building materials included spikes, bolts, screws, washers, plaster fragments, bricks, window glass, and electrical components. Plaster fragments recovered showed evidence of the vibrant decorative paint which once existed in the building's interior (Figure 4.15). In 1891, 64 incandescent light bulbs and the necessary wiring were installed in the second tabernacle at a cost of \$150 (*Daily Enquirer*, May 7, 1891). The OPT assemblage contains a significant amount of early electrical wiring components, contemporary to the early 1890s, making it likely the OPT was fitted with an electrical lighting system during approximately the same period. Remnants of the early wiring include fragments of copper wiring, porcelain insulators, and ceramic fixtures. A preliminary analysis of the nail assemblage revealed a linear concentration of wire nails just



Figure 4.21. Examples of nails recovered from the OPT (image courtesy of OPA).

south of the interior cross wall. Given that the majority of the nails were otherwise cut nails, dating to the period of construction, and these wire nails date to a later, ca. 1890s, period, it is possible that this concentration represents the later addition of a temporary partition.

Ceramic and Glassware

Ceramic analysis, carried out by the staff of OPA, followed procedures outlined in Mark Sutton and Brooke Arkush (2006) with appropriate adaptation according to Dale Berge (1980).

OPA identified five general types of historic ceramics at the OPT: earthenware, whiteware, improved whiteware, stoneware, and porcelain. The majority of ceramics recovered in the OPT foundations were domestic types including improved whiteware, stoneware, and porcelain (Figure 4.22). A total of 397 sherds were recovered from the OPT basement, 79.3 percent (n = 315) of these were identified as improved whiteware including portions of plates, bowls, teacups, saucers, and platters. Additionally, 70 stoneware, seven porcelain, and four redware (earthenware) sherds were identified (Harris et al. in press). Decorative treatments varied within the assemblage, with all the porcelain and 313 of the improved whiteware possessing a clear glaze. From the recovered data, it can be inferred that the majority of the ceramics used in the OPT during its lifetime were utilitarian pieces intended for food consumption.

Domestic Items

Domestic items are generally those related to the home and frequently are associated with activities such as sewing (both production of clothing and maintenance), laundry, and food preparation and storage. Ethnographically these activities are most closely associated with women although not exclusively. Buttons and other clothing fasteners were surprisingly common. In total, archaeologists encountered 148 buttons or snaps in the OPT foundation, 115 from the large basement room and 33 from the northern foyer entrance. Button materials included glass, metal, shell, and vulcanized rubber (Figure 4.23). Additionally, a substantial number of straight pins, needles, safety pins, beads, and the remains of a pair of sewing scissors were recovered in to the OPT. Glass bottles for both medicine and spirits were also recovered.

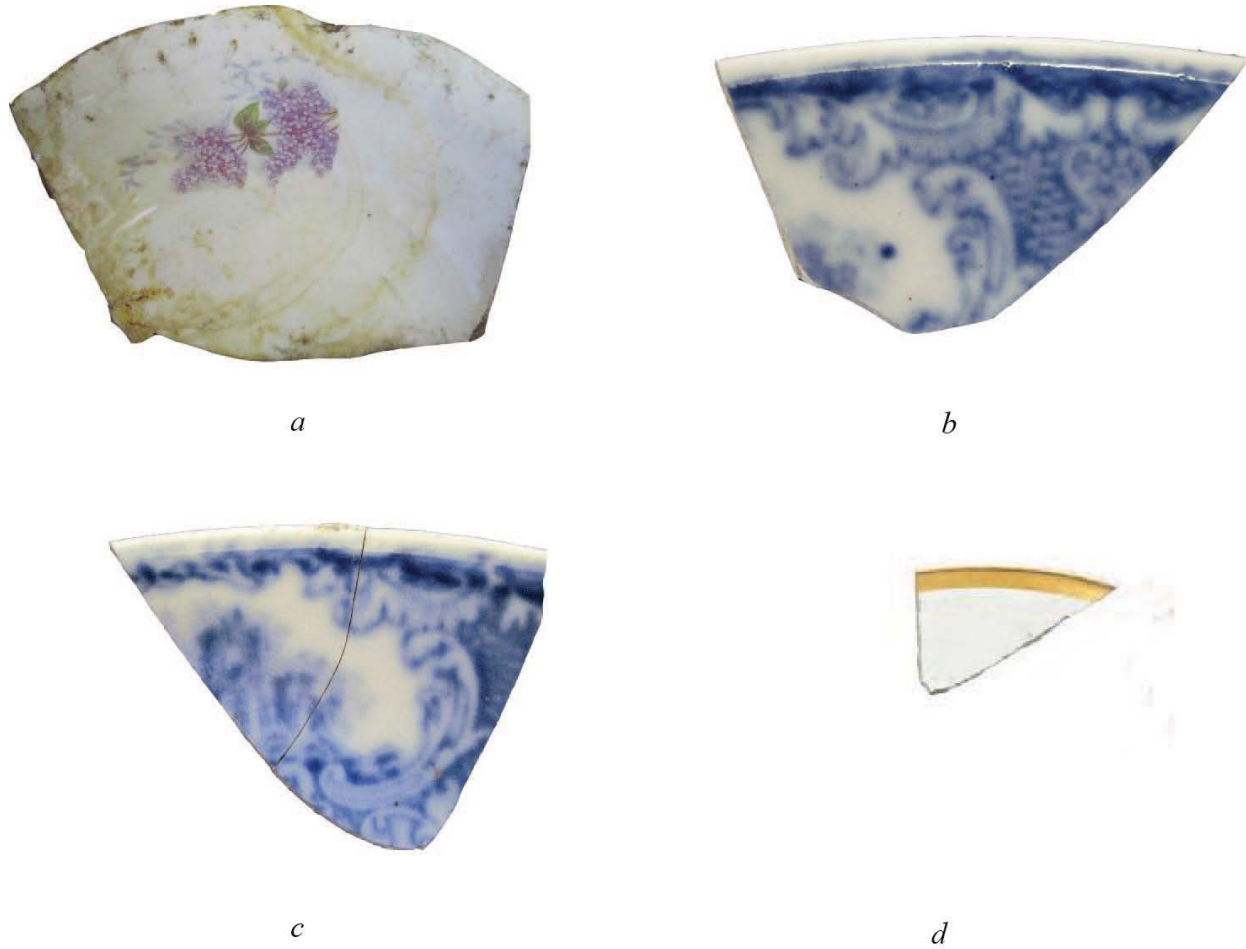


Figure 4.22. Ceramic examples from the OPT, including (a) floral decal, (b and c) flow-blue examples, and (d) hand-painted banding (images courtesy of OPA).

Tools

This category adopts a very broad definition of tools as any object or device which is hand-held and utilized in a particular task. This includes traditional hand tools (hammers, pry bars, screwdrivers, etc.) as well as items used for other tasks such as photography, fishing, hunting, writing, and other tasks. Writing implements were the most common item type in this category. The assemblage contains nearly 60 slate pencils, several writing slate fragments, three wood pencils, a glass inkwell, a fountain pen, and fragments of graphite lead (Figure 4.24).



Figure 4.23. Several buttons recovered in the OPT foundations (images courtesy of OPA).

Personal Items

Personal items recovered from the OPT foundations included clothing items (buttons, snaps, belt buckles, and footwear), coins, toys, tools, various toiletries (combs and hair clips), sewing items, eyeglass lenses, jewelry. Many of these common items were small and likely dropped by children and adults attending meetings in the building. A significant number of toys including small animal figurines, doll pieces, marbles, and a small battle axe were also recovered (Figure 4.25). Hairpins, combs, beads and jewelry pendants—including two nearly identical “D” shaped pendants—were also recovered (Figures 4.26 and 4.27). Finally, various coins of were found including denominations familiar to most and some still in current use (i.e., dimes and



Figure 4.24. Slate pencils, inkwell, and fragments of slate writing boards recovered in the OPT.

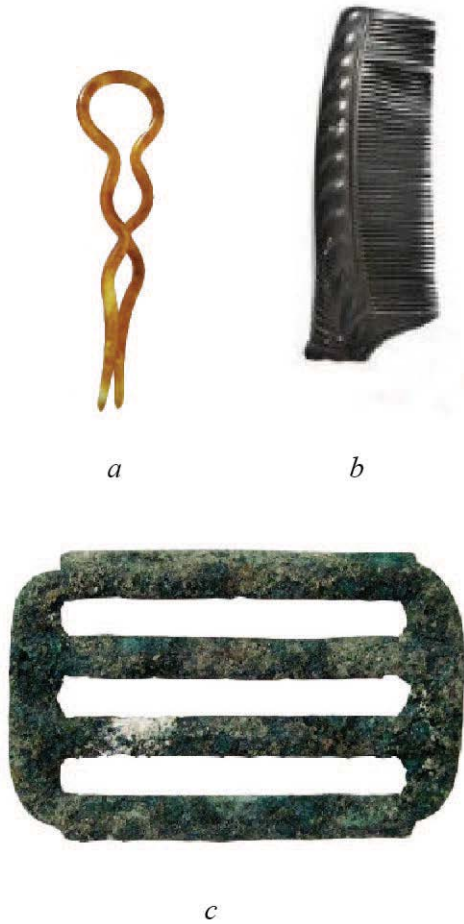


Figure 4.25. Personal items included (a) hairpins, (b) hairpins, and (c) razor blade or belt buckle (images courtesy of OPA).



Figure 4.26. One of two “D” shaped pendants recovered at the OPT (image courtesy of OPA).

nickels), and a two-cent piece. A local trade token from Frumkin’s store, good for one cigar or 12 ½ cents (a “bit”), was also recovered (Figure 4.28).

Faunal Remains

A total of 1282 specimens of animal bone was recovered during the excavations. Taxonomic and taphonomic analyses of the assemblage were conducted by Lindsay D. Johansson (2014) using comparative collections at the MPC and published reference keys



Figure 4.27. Examples of coins from the OPT excavations including an 1854–1873 silver 3 cent piece (bottom left), a 1902 Barber quarter (top right), and the Frumkin's cigar token, (middle left) (images courtesy of OPA).

(Gilbert 1980; Gilbert et al. 1981; Olsen 1964). 817 (63.73 percent) of the specimens recovered were identified to a taxonomic level of order or species. Taphonomic analysis identified the presence of breaking, burning, butchering, gnawing, grinding, and weathering for some of the specimens. The assemblage was quantified using standard methods including Number of Identifiable Specimens (NISP), Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI), and, due to the large number of specimen unidentifiable beyond the level of order, the additional measure of Number of Unidentified Specimens (NUSP) was also calculated.

Mammals (35.13 percent) constituted the largest proportion of the assemblage followed closely by birds (33.67 percent) and amphibians (30.35 percent); fish (0.61 percent) and reptiles (0.24 percent) were also represented. The majority of unidentifiable specimens (81.94 percent) were birds of various sizes, with some mammals (12.26 percent), fish (4.73), and reptiles (0.11 percent) also included. Faunal remains are commonly used by archaeologists to evaluate the diet of persons and groups in the past. In the case of the OPT, not surprisingly, domesticated animals (cows, sheep, and chickens) make up just over half (50.6 percent) of the total faunal specimens recovered. When combined with other non-domesticated “dietary fauna” commonly consumed by European Americans (various species of grouse and wild artiodactyls [deer or elk]), that percentage increases to 84.6 (Johansson 2014).

Miscellaneous Items

This category is a catch-all category reserved for those items which are unidentifiable or which are one-of-a-kind, specialized objects. Items included five shoes for a horse or mule (all found in the northern foyer area), bullets and cartridges,

Research Conclusions

In response to the questions posed in the research design, OPA reached the following conclusions:

- 1) *Is the OPT architecturally unique amongst LDS tabernacles of the period?* The OPT represented a new architectural style without precedent in Utah and served as the prototype for a building type which, both figuratively and literally, stood at the center of the Mormon ideal of city building.

- 2) *Where did the raw materials originate?* It is evident that the stone, lumber, lime, and other materials for the OPT came from local canyons. Roads providing access to these canyons constituted the single largest expenditure during the construction project.
- 3) *What modification or remodeling occurred within the OPT?* There was evidence that modest modification did occur within the OPT sometime near the turn of the twentieth century. This is most evident in the linear concentration of wire nails just south of the interior partition and may represent the addition of a “floating” partition and in the retrofitted electrical components.
- 4) *How was the OPT basement utilized?* The basement of the OPT was used at various times for public and private, religious and secular functions, storage, and generally as a place of meeting for the early Provo community. Archaeologists found evidence of community gathering which likely included food (both ceramic ware and faunal remains). Slate pencils, toys, buttons, brooches, pendants, fountain pens, coins, and the Frumkin’s cigar token indicate that all members of the community of all ages participated in activities in the Tabernacle basement. These may have included educational activities (lectures or school), sewing projects, or other gatherings where food was shared. In addition to the cigar token, glass ware indicates that these gatherings may have included the consumption of tobacco and alcohol.
- 5) *How did the function of the OPT change during the period when the two tabernacles stood side-by-side?* After the construction of the second tabernacle, the function of the OPT slowly transitioned from the center place of the stake where many important meetings were held, to a ward meetinghouse, to a normal school, and eventually to a storage space just prior to its destruction in 1919.

- 6) *Were the remnants of associated outbuilding present?* The remnants of several of the buildings associated with the OPT were also present (Harris et al., in press).

NOTES

1. In addition to the foundations of the OPT, two additional structures—the baptistry and the caretaker's cottage—were identified on the tabernacle block. In addition, a well associated with the OPT and six water collection features or cisterns associated with the second tabernacle were discovered. A third structure, the remains of the Hotel Roberts, was found during work on the block immediately south of the tabernacle block. All of these features were documented using similar methods to the OPT.

Chapter 5

ANALYSIS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES AND ARTIFACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL PROVO TABERNACLE

Historical archaeology involves the integration of documentary research and archaeological methods of inquiry. Chapters 3 and 4 presented, respectively, the documentary and archaeological records of the OPT. The goal of this chapter is to integrate “these independent but complementary lines of evidence to construct meaningful, fuller, understandings of the past” (Wilkie 2006:14). The documentary record is subject to bias caused by intentional deception, misinformation, selective preservation, fraud, and potential manipulation in order to support a dominant worldview (Blouin 1999; Borchardt 2009; Deegan 1982; Duranti 1995; Galloway 2006; Leone 1988; Little 1994). Several authors have argued that one of the most significant contributions of historical archaeology to the study of the past is the ability to supplement the historical record and to reconstruct past lifeways (Deegan 1982:158–162). Barbara Little (1994:8) asserts that the use of archaeological data to supplement the documentary record creates “ways of writing about the past that do not rely on historical documents or documentary historians as final arbiters of meaningful or accurate history.” By confirming,

challenging, or correcting the documentary record, archaeological evidence provides valuable, otherwise unavailable, insights which “contribute to a more accurate history in which biases and the politics of knowledge are acknowledged” (Little 1994:8). By utilizing the analytical toolkit of historical archaeology, this chapter tests the veracity of the documentary record.

Through an analysis of the spatial distribution of artifacts recovered at the OPT, this chapter seeks to test the image of the OPT presented in the documentary record. The documents indicate a dynamically functional building designed and used for all activities related to the project of Latter-day Saint society-building (read “Zion”) in Provo. From the highest forms of worship to the most mundane daily performance, the OPT provided place and space for these practices. With the possible exception of the period immediately preceding its destruction (1917–1919), the documentary record gives little indication of a dramatic shift in the types of activities occurring in the OPT during the latter phase of its existence. For example, worship services, including priesthood quorum meetings, Relief Society meetings, and weekly congregational meetings, continued to be held inside the OPT. Likewise, the space continued to host regular meetings of professional organizations (i.e., the Provo Mercantile Cooperative or the Provo Woolen Mills), school groups, and other community activities, all of which are consistent with its continuing role in the project of Zion. Therefore, at a minimum, it is reasonable to assume that the material record associated with the latter use of the building was at least comparable to the assemblage that would have been created during the building’s time as the primary community gathering place (see Chapter 3).

The artifact assemblage recovered in the excavation of the OPT was rich and diverse, containing a wide variety and large number of items. The very presence of many of these artifacts similarly points to use of the building in myriad ways by members of the community.

Many of these objects (such as the faunal bones, fragments of ceramic vessels, coins, and personal items) are not indicative of a facility which was built simply to provide a place for members of a religious group to listen to sermons, participate in communion (or “the sacrament” as Mormons refer it), or other worship services. Rather there are indications that the OPT was utilized for a wide variety of activities by members of the community. This chapter, however, attempts to present a more complete view of the building’s use by documenting specific activities evident in the archaeological record, where those activities likely occurred, and what members of the community likely participated.

Preliminary Analysis

The selection of the appropriate artifacts for this analysis is critical. The focus of this thesis is on the role of the OPT in the overall project of Mormon Zion. For this reason, only objects which we can reasonably assume were likely to have been related to the primary use of the building should be considered. Three facts, revealed in the documentary record, indicate that there is likely to have been a significant cultural transformation which may show up at the OPT in the archaeological record. We know that (1) the building was intentionally dismantled, (2) significant portions of the building were salvaged and reused elsewhere, and (3) following the building’s dismantling, the open foundation was likely used as a dump site for local trash (Christiansen 1983; Taylor 1984). Behavioral Archaeology, as outlined by Michael B. Schiffer and his colleagues, offers particularly relevant insights in this regard (Reid et al. 1975; Schiffer 1975, 1976, 1999, 2011; Skibo and Schiffer 2008). A careful analysis of the “life history” of the structure, the location and concentration of artifacts, and the internal features will allow us to determine which, if any, of the artifacts are related to the building’s use (Schiffer 1999, 2011;

Skibo and Schiffer 2008).

As outlined in the previous chapter, artifacts were recovered at the OPT in essentially two stratigraphic units: the contact zone above the floor (Stratum IV) and the floor zone (Stratum V). These two layers, as noted earlier, were differentiated on site by a noted increase in soil compaction and a perceived increase in the abundance of artifacts in the floor zone. A previous analysis of the artifact concentrations determined that the “cultural disturbance” caused by the demolition of the building “may have mixed the artifact layers,” and it was therefore unlikely that the artifacts were in locations which were related to their use (Davis 2013:7). This assertion is not demonstrated by any specific analysis of either features or data. If we compare just the total counts of artifacts in the different strata, the two layers appear quite similar (Table 5.1). However, if we calculate the abundance of the artifacts per cubic meter of fill (calculated by dividing the counts by the total volume of material removed in the layer; 58.2 m³ in the contact zone and 7.9 m³ in the floor zone),¹ it is evident that the floor zone (Stratum V) is demonstrably different from the contact zone (Stratum IV) above. The marked difference is further illustrated by the ratio of abundance (Table 5.1). This calculation compares the abundance of an artifact category in each layer by dividing the artifacts per m³ in the contact zone by artifacts of the same category per m³ in the floor zone. With the exception of building materials (a composite of the nails, plaster fragments, and other structural and architectural fragments), these ratios all show that personal items, sewing items, and artifacts related to food consumption are significantly more abundant in the floor zone. The greater abundance of building materials in the contact zone is likely the result of the intentional demolition; however, the fact that it is only slightly higher than the floor zone hints at some level of disturbance to the floor zone caused by the demolition.

This, then, leads to the question, what features or activities occurring within the OPT led to this abundance of artifacts within the floor zone? In this case, the abundance of the artifacts is

Table 5.1. Comparison of the Counts, Abundance, and Ratio of Abundance of Artifacts in the Floor Zone to Abundance of Artifacts in the Contact Zone

	Contact Zone (CZ)	Artifacts/m ³	Floor Zone (FZ)	Artifacts/m ³	Ratio of Abundance (CZ/FZ)
Personal Items					
Toiletry	9	0.17	11	1.39	0.12
Jewelry	11	0.21	9	1.14	0.18
Toys	9	0.17	3	0.38	0.45
Coins	11	0.21	9	1.14	0.18
Writing	30	0.57	29	3.67	0.15
Beads	23	0.44	14	1.77	0.25
Group Total	93	1.76	77	9.75	0.18
Sewing Items					
Buttons	64	1.21	51	6.46	0.19
Sewing Items	22	0.42	34	4.30	0.10
Group Total	86	1.63	85	10.76	0.15
Food Consumption					
Tin Can	189	3.58	116	14.68	0.24
Glassware	114	2.16	125	15.82	0.14
Ceramic	71	1.34	52	6.58	0.20
Faunal	126	2.39	79	10.00	0.24
Group Total	500	9.47	372	47.09	0.20

likely related to the nature of the wooden floor. As evident in the impression of floor found in the coal deposit in the foyer area (Figure 4.17), there appear to have been significant gaps between the floor boards in the basement area. Analysis of the photographs and the site notes indicates that these gaps may have been as wide as ½ inch, sufficiently wide for small items such as coins, ceramic fragments, slate pencils, and other items to fall through. Given both the abundance of the artifacts per m³ and the documented gaps in the flooring, it is reasonable to assume that the artifact concentrations found within the floor zone are likely related to the primary use of the

OPT.

It is also important to note that, while they have been included in the spatial maps, the artifacts in the northern foyer are not part of my analysis here. Based on analysis of the spatial maps, the concentration and distribution of artifacts in this area is more likely related to the discard of trash and not to the primary use of the artifacts.

Summary of Artifacts

In all, 526 artifacts were found in the floor zone of either the large basement room or the front foyer area. These included personal items, pins and needles, ceramic sherds, glassware, and faunal remains (Table 5.2). These represent 0.9 percent of the total assemblage of 54,198 whole artifacts and innumerable fragments currently curated by the MPC as part of the OPT collection. Artifacts included toiletries (n = 11), jewelry (n = 9), toys (n = 3), coins (n = 10), writing instruments (n = 29; mostly slate pencils and writing tablets), beads (n = 14), pins and needles (n = 34), buttons (n = 51), tin cans (n = 116), glassware (n = 125), ceramics (n = 52), and faunal bones (n = 79).

Method of Analysis: Performance-Based Behavioral Archaeology

Schiffer (2011:30) has proposed the “life history construct” as a “highly versatile tool ... which is the entire sequence of activities that took place during the life history of a component, product, or complex technological system.” By outlining all possible natural and cultural impacts on an object or system, including the acquisition, manufacturing, use, discard, and post-depositional processes, this model allows archaeologists to explore the interaction between artifacts, people, and the natural world in both the past and the present (Schiffer 2011:30–40).

Through the comparison of the life history of objects and buildings with the people and groups

Table 5.2. Artifacts by Type and Area from the Floor Zone.

	Area		Total
	Foyer	Basement	
Personal Items			
Toiletry	0	11	11
Jewelry	0	9	9
Toys	0	3	3
Coins	1	9	10
Writing	3	26	29
Beads	0	14	14
Group Total	4	73	77
Sewing Items			
Buttons	1	50	51
Sewing Items	1	33	34
Group Total	2	83	85
Food Consumption			
Tin Can	44	72	116
Glassware	1	124	125
Ceramic	13	39	52
Faunal	10	69	79
Group Total	68	304	372
Total	74	453	526

who interacted with them, we are able to theorize the behaviors and processes which may have led to the observed phenomena.

Skibo and Schiffer (2008:2) outline a system for understanding “the choices people make in inventing, developing, replicating, adopting, and using their technologies.” The proposed method of “behavioral chain analysis” involves two steps (Skibo and Schiffer 2008:10). First, we must identify activities, which are defined as “the specific interactions between people and artifacts, people and people, and . . . between artifacts” (Skibo and Schiffer 2008:10). Then,

by “isolating the components of specific interactions,” including “people participating (social group), the location, frequency of performance and other artifacts,” we are able to determine the “technical choices” (decisions which alter the formal characteristics) and the “performance characteristics” (the “social, symbolic, and utilitarian functions”) of the object (Skibo and Schiffer 2008:11–12).

Following this outline, three questions will guide the analysis of the OPT floor assemblage, these are the following: (1) Based on the artifacts present in the floor zone, what types of activities were likely occurring within the structure? (2) Were these activities specific to any particular demographic groups (i.e., men, women, or children)? (3) Is there any indication that specific demographic groups were utilizing particular areas of the OPT for specific activities?

The answer to Question 1 addresses the activities not specific to worshipful performance (i.e., weekly worship services, meetings of specific Church organizations, and the administration of the sacrament or other ordinances) were occurring within the tabernacle. Since the project of Zion contained no separation between sacred and secular practices, we should expect to see a wide variety of activities occurring in the OPT. Question 2 concerns the interactions of artifacts with particular demographic groups and attempts to evaluate the degree to which the OPT basement was utilized by various groups. Since various quorums and auxiliary organizations in the Church were then, as they are today, defined on the basis of gender and age divisions, this analysis will provide evidence of the degree to which the congregation was dividing into groups of various sizes. Question 3 combines the two previous questions and endeavors to plot the most likely locations where the activities occurred. By answering these three questions, we are able

to consider how the space was divided and utilized by various groups and speak to the technical choices and the possible performance characteristics of the particular activities.

Analysis

Answering the three questions asked above requires three very specific pieces of information. To answer Question 1, the artifacts were analyzed to infer the possible activities with which they were likely associated. For this analysis, the artifacts have been grouped into three categories according to their likely function. These categories are listed in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. The artifacts in the personal items category are related to specific demographic groups (see below). The food consumption category comprises items related to the storage, preparation, and consumption of food. It includes tin cans, glassware, ceramics, and faunal bones. The sewing items category includes items which are potentially related to sewing projects such as pins, needles, and buttons. Finally, writing instruments (slate pencils and slate writing tablets) have been grouped together due to their likely relationship to educational activities such as day school.

Question 2 concerns the demographic groups likely associated with the activities which occurred within the OPT. Attempts to address this question required an analysis with two objectives. First, it seeks to provide a voice to fairly mute members of the community in Provo by, at least in a small way, showing their presence in the use of this importance community gathering place. Second, it attempts to show the OPT as a dynamically functional communal structure which drew the community together and built the “society” Joseph Smith desired in his Plat of the City of Zion. The personal items, which by their nature are most closely associated with various demographic groups, were the key to my analysis. Assumptions for the

demographic association of various artifacts categories are provided below.

Finally, Question 3 is concerned with the specific areas where activities occurred. By plotting the locations of artifacts on a schematic map of the OPT we can attempt to identify where particular activities took place. Artifacts were sorted according to the categories outlined above and plotted on maps of the OPT excavation areas. Artifact counts are indicated on these spatial maps using a grayscale which is progressively darker as the numbers get higher. In all of the artifact categories, many if not the majority of the grid units contained no artifacts of that type. Many contained only one or two artifacts; occasionally the count was slightly higher. Rarely were there more than ten. The gradient levels were chosen to reflect an assemblage of this type. Each of these maps shows the internal features excavated at the OPT to facilitate easier association of the artifacts to the features.

Two caveats must be noted prior to detailing the results of my analysis. First, the large excavation units utilized during the excavation create a resolution issue for spatial analysis. The entire excavation was conducted in 2 x 2 m grid units. During the excavation of each unit, artifacts were collected, sorted, and labeled with the grid unit. While this provides a good general sense of the location where artifacts were found, it does not provide the detail generally desired for spatial analysis. Despite this, however, the clustering of artifacts, even at such low resolution, is still potentially telling. Second, the low artifact counts made it impossible to apply any detailed or rigorous statistical tests to this aspect of the assemblage. Popular spatial methods—including k-means nonhierarchical clustering, Poisson distribution analysis, and simple correspondence analysis—were attempted, but the models were adversely effected by the large number of zeros present in the data tables. As a result, I resorted to a presence/absence

analysis to test for artifact associations. Because of this, the possibility exists that randomness and weak correlations may exist in the distribution of artifacts which remain undetected.

Assumptions

Before proceeding, it is necessary to make clear assumptions I make about the activities related to specific artifact categories and their associations with particular demographic groups. These assumptions are clearly laid out in the analysis below as they pertain to the various artifact categories discussed. None of the artifacts categories can justifiably be assumed to have been exclusively used by men. The historical record of the OPT, however, is dominated by activities undertaken by men and is quite explicit about their presence in these activities in the building. Therefore, my artifact analysis is particularly interested in possible activities undertaken by women and children in the OPT. Clearly, any assumption as to the use of an object by particular demographic groups is subjective and may not be representative of the actual use of the objects; however, the proposed uses of the objects are based on both ethnographic and individual experience with similar objects. Fortunately, the artifacts recovered at archaeological sites in the historical period tend to be quite similar to objects still in use today. Inferring the people who used certain classes of objects, nevertheless, must be done with caution, always checking assumptions against available historical sources for possible changes in use, styles, gender association, or other factors.

Toiletries. The toiletries category of the OPT assemblage was limited primarily to fragments of hard rubber hair combs, hair clips, and other items. The category does not, on its own, allow for the assumption that these artifacts were associated with any particular group.

Analysis of the spatial associations of toiletries with other artifacts categories related to specific demographic groups is likely the only way to assess which group they were associated with.

Jewelry. A small number of jewelry items, including brooch pins, chains, and pendants, were recovered in the floor zone. These items were likely related to the activities of females, both adolescent and adult, and, therefore, may have been associated with the activities of women or children. When analyzed in conjunction with other artifacts of different categories, we may be able to ascribe the appearance of jewelry in particular areas to one or the other demographic group.

Coins. Only a small number of coins was found in the floor zone of the OPT. In addition their use in trade, coins were occasionally modified and used for other purposes. Perforations in coins often indicate their use as jewelry, charms, or religious talisman (Davidson 2004; Leone and Fry 1999; Wilkie 1997). While two perforated coins were found at the OPT (see Figure 4.27), neither was uncovered in the floor zone. There is no reason, therefore, to assume that these were related to one demographic group or another; rather, it is likely that the coins were related to unintentional loss during the exchange of items for cash conducted inside the building (i.e., meals, baked goods, or other sales).

Writing Instruments. The writing instruments recovered in the OPT assemblage consist largely of slate pencils and tablets. These items were common in schoolroom settings in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and were used for repetitive writing tasks such as arithmetic and penmanship exercises. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that these items were most closely related to children attending school in the basement of the OPT.

Beads. A close association of beads with any particular demographic group is difficult. While it is likely that their presence in the assemblage related to activities of women, much like

the jewelry, it is just as likely that they belonged to older female children. None of the beads in the OPT assemblage are like any others, indicating that, rather than being part of a cache of stored beads, they were related to persons actually wearing them as personal adornment. Again, associations with other artifacts will help determine the demographic group they may have been associated with.

Pins and Needles. Given the historical events occurring in Provo around the time of the demolition of the OPT, the pins and needles present a particularly interesting case. On December 28, 1916, a fire in the supply room of the Knight Woolen Mills (the later name of the Provo Woolen Mills) caused \$3,000 in damage (*Deseret News*, 29 December 1916:9). Later, in 1918, a second fire caused nearly \$500,000 in damage to the Woolen Mills (*Deseret News*, 30 July 1918: 9). It has been assumed that the frequent fires created a need for temporary storage and that the OPT would have been a particularly good location for it. Given the possible storage of woolen goods in the OPT, it is difficult to assume that the pins and needles and other sewing related items are associated with women, the demographic group many would assume used these items. An analysis of the co-occurrence of sewing items with other items associated with women, however, can provide some insight into whether or not the building was used for this storage or whether the sewing items were related to projects undertaken by women's groups.

Buttons. While it cannot be said with certainty how a button enters the archaeological record, two scenarios (or variations on them) may explain their presence in the OPT. Individual buttons may have fallen off of the clothing of individuals, fallen below the floor boards and become lost. Or, if buttons were brought in bulk, for either sewing projects or as items being stored temporarily, an occasional button may have dropped unnoticed and eventually gotten below the floor boards. As with the pins and needles, the buttons will be analyzed in association

with other items to assess their demographic associations.

Tin Cans. Tins cans, a common item used to store food, were found in large numbers throughout the OPT and are likely related to food preparation and storage and cannot be ascribed to a particular demographic group. Most tin cans recovered were extremely corroded and fragmentary. The counts in my analysis include all fragments, with the assumption that a larger number of fragments reflects a larger number of individual cans.

Glassware. Fragments of glassware, including of decorative glass vessels and storage bottles, were found in various locations in the OPT floor zone and constitute the largest single category of objects in the current analysis. Much like tin cans and ceramics, the count of glassware includes both fragmentary and whole objects. Glassware also cannot be associated with any one demographic group.

Ceramics. The ceramic assemblage of the OPT is reflective of its time and includes primarily functional wares used in the service and consumption of food. Given the utilitarian nature of these ceramics it is unlikely that ceramic vessels were used exclusively by a single demographic group.

Faunal Bones. Faunal remains for this analysis have been limited to those items which were likely utilized by members of the Provo community inside the OPT. This means that only those animals used as food are included here; rodents, reptiles, and amphibians which likely found their way into the archaeological record on their own have been excluded. In all, this limited assemblages includes only 77 estimated individual specimens (NISP) found in the floor zone of the OPT. This represents less than 0.9 percent of the total assemblage of faunal remains recovered in the excavations of the OPT (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3. Faunal Remains from the Floor Zone Likely Related to Food Preparation and Consumption

Taxon	NISP	MNI	% NISP	%MNI
Mammals				
Small Artiodactyl	8	2	10.40%	10%
Cattle	4	1	5.20%	5%
Sheep	1	1	1.30%	5%
Class Total	13	4	16.90%	20%
Birds				
Large Bird	17	3	22.10%	15%
Medium Bird	14	2	18.20%	10%
Small Bird	4	1	5.20%	5%
Chicken	16	2	20.80%	10%
Game Bird	5	2	6.50%	10%
Unidentified Bird	5	3	3.90%	15%
Class Total	61	13	76.60%	65%
Fish				
Large Fish	2	1	2.60%	5%
Medium Fish	2	1	2.60%	5%
Unidentified Fish	1	1	1.30%	5%
Class Total	5	3	6.50%	15%
Total	79	20		100%

Activities

Three specific activities can be inferred from the artifact assemblage in the floor Zone of the OPT: (1) food preparation and consumption, (2) sewing projects, and (3) school instruction. Each of these activities is represented by an artifact assemblage, but the assemblage may also imply other activities. The discovery location of any object in the archaeological record does not necessarily mean that the item was used in the location found. Instead, it indicates the most

likely location where it last interacted with a human actor; most often an object is found where it was discarded. However, a number of items, in similar locations, related to a particular activity, may imply that the activity occurred there or nearby.

Food Preparation and Consumption

The operating assumption for ceramic and glassware items is that they were associated with the consumption of food. When considered in connection with the analysis of the distribution of tin cans and faunal remains, the spatial distribution of ceramic and glassware items can point to areas where activities related to preparation, consumption, and (particularly) discard of food items occurred. The analysis of these data can indicate likely areas where communal meals occurred; however, it cannot distinguish between demographic groups. A communal meal is just as likely to have been hosted by the Female Relief Society as it was by an all-male Priesthood quorum. It must be assumed, therefore, that all members of the community may have participated in food consumption.

An advertisement in the *Utah County Democrat*, November 14, 1908, announced the Provo Sixth Ward's "famous chicken dinners" being served in the basement of the "old Provo meeting house" for the "each day" during the week of November 16–20, 1908 (Figure 5.1). This small piece of documentary evidence indicates not only the continued use of the building for meals with large groups, but that chicken was the entrée served. Of the faunal remains recovered from the floor zone, domesticated chicken constituted 20.8 percent (NISP = 16) of the total floor assemblage representing at least 2 individuals (MNI) (Table 5.3).

Comparison of the artifact distribution of the faunal remains (Figure 5.2), ceramics (Figure 5.3), glassware (Figure 5.4), and the tin cans (Figure 5.5) allows us to test the hypotheses

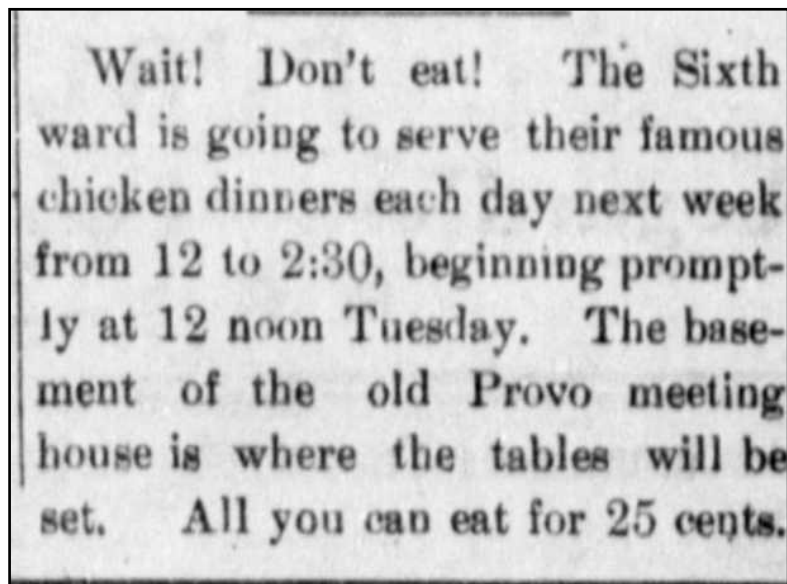


Figure 5.1. Advertisement from the *Utah County Democrat*, November 14, 1908 (image courtesy of J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah).

that these categories are (a) related, and (b) related by way of their inclusion in the activities of food preparation and consumption.

The most obvious initial observation when looking at all four plots is that the faunal remains and the ceramics seem to be related. The distribution of glassware and tin cans indicate a relationship which is less related either to each other or to the ceramics and faunal remains. Faunal remains are diffuse across the entire space, with larger concentrations in the northeast and the southwest corners. The concentration in the northeast corner is likely associated with Stove 4, the stove assumed to most likely be related to food preparation. A high concentration of tin cans exactly over top the stove feature, may also indicate the use of canned goods food preparation. The concentration of faunal remains in the southwest corner of the basement corresponds to a similar concentration in the ceramic assemblage and may indicate an area where

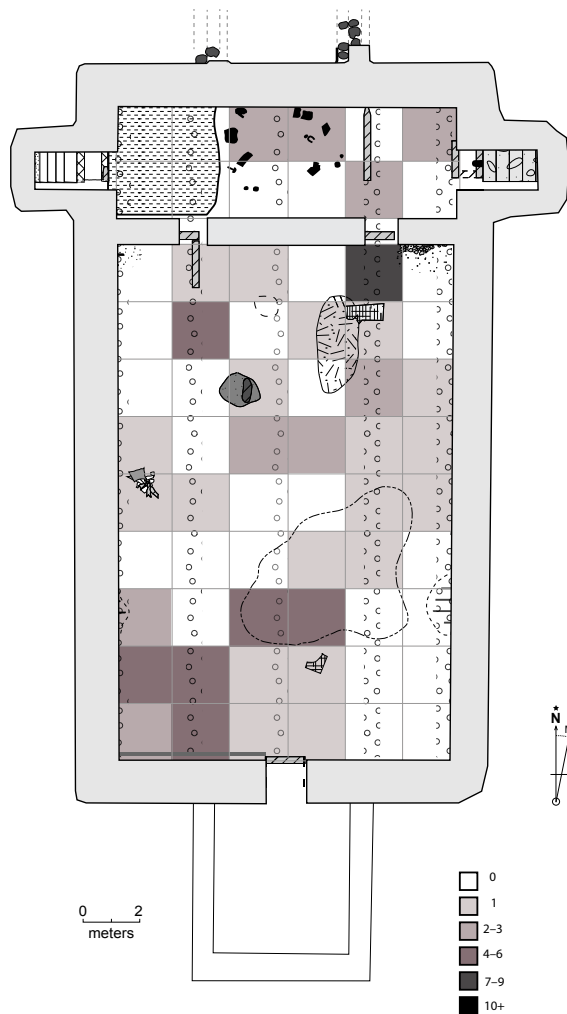
Faunal
n = 79

Figure 5.2. Spatial plot of faunal remains from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

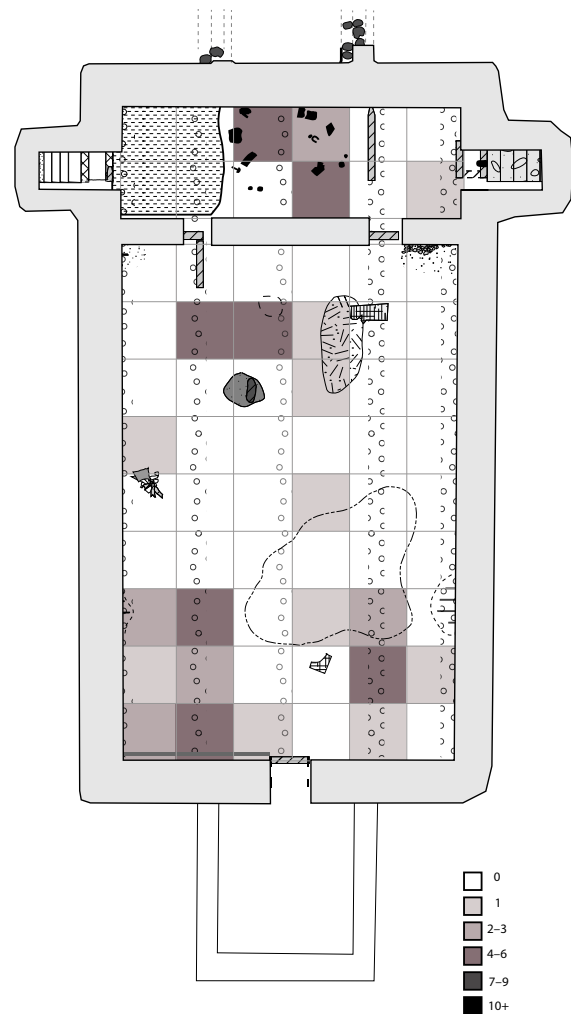
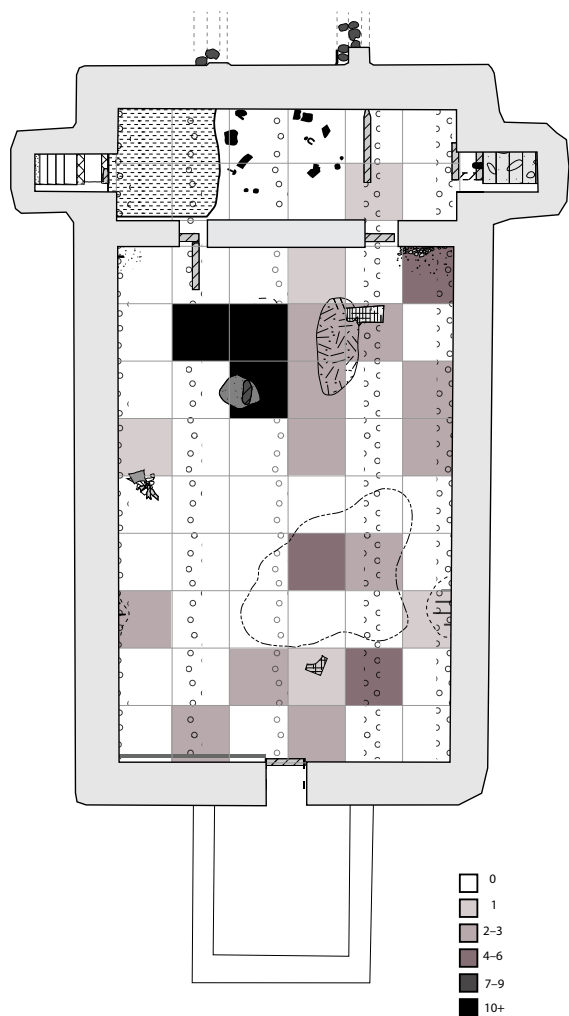
Ceramic
n = 52

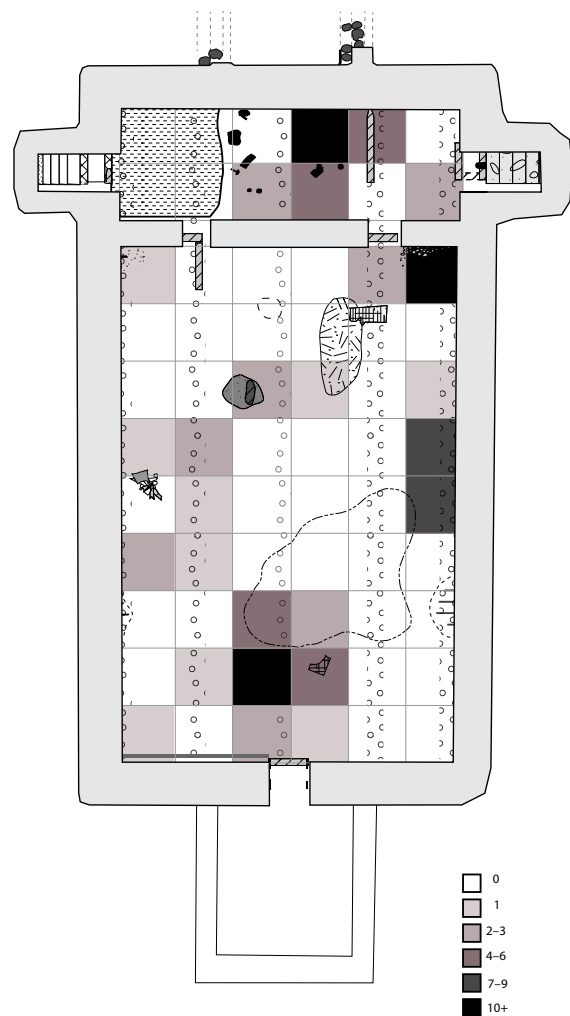
Figure 5.3. Spatial plot of ceramics from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

food was regularly discarded and may be related to consumption. Glassware seems to be the least correlated to the other three categories. The large concentration of glassware fragments, indicated by the three black grid units in the northwest quadrant of the large room, along with the modest concentration of ceramics nearby, is likely related to the intentional burn site and reminds us that sections of the floor zone assemblage may have been disturbed and compromised during the building's demolition.



Glassware
n = 125

Figure 5.4. Spatial plot of glassware from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

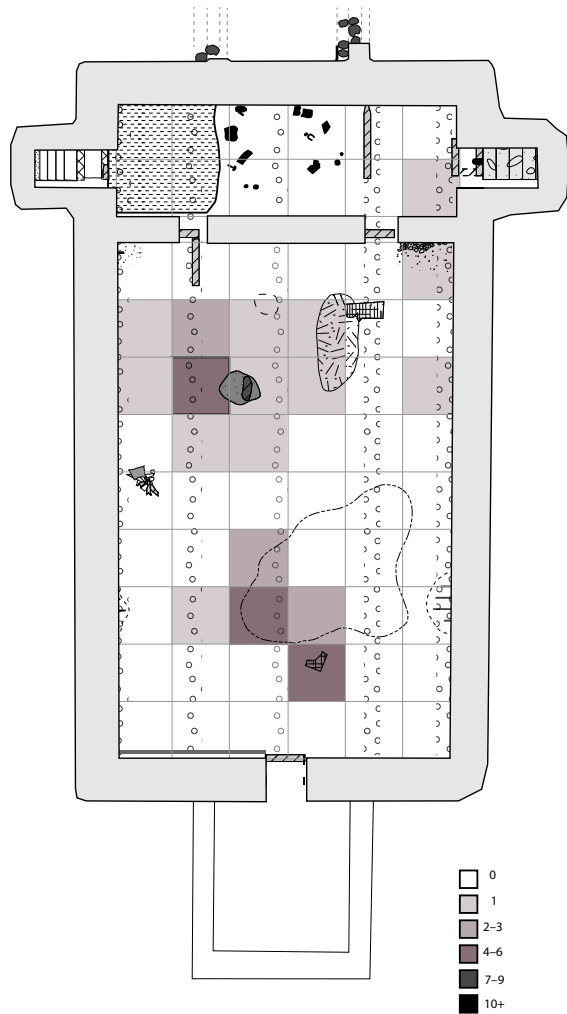


Tin Cans
n = 116

Figure 5.5. Spatial plot of tin cans from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

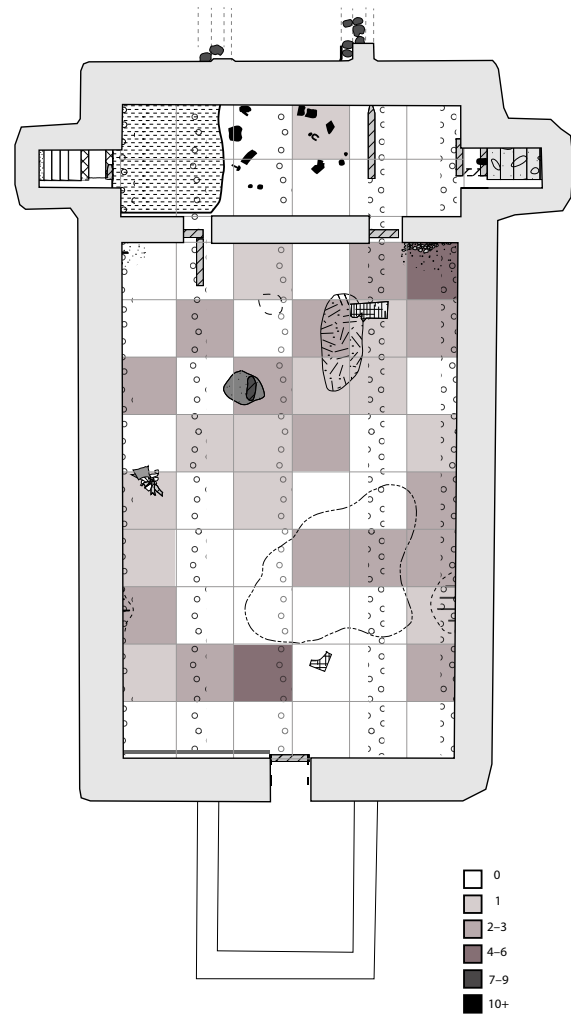
Sewing Items: Project Use or Storage?

One of the working hypotheses for explaining the large number of straight pins, needles, and buttons found in the OPT is that the building was used as temporary storage following each of the fires in the local woolen mills. I have not been able to find any document to support this idea. In order to test this notion, an analysis of the sewing items—pins and needles (Figure 5.6) and buttons (Figure 5.7)—were compared to supposed female items, jewelry (Figure 5.8) and beads (Figure 5.9), to assess possible co-associations. If an association exists between



Pins and Needles
n=34

Figure 5.6. Spatial plot of pins and needles from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.



Buttons
n=51

Figure 5.7. Spatial plot of buttons from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

the sewing items and the assumed female items, it is reasonable to conclude that the sewing items are present due to their use in sewing projects done primarily by women. There are two problems with this argument which must be put on record. First, the number of both jewelry and beads makes it difficult to address the possibility that the distribution of the artifacts is random, and, second, as stated above, the assumed relationship between women and jewelry and beads may be incorrect.

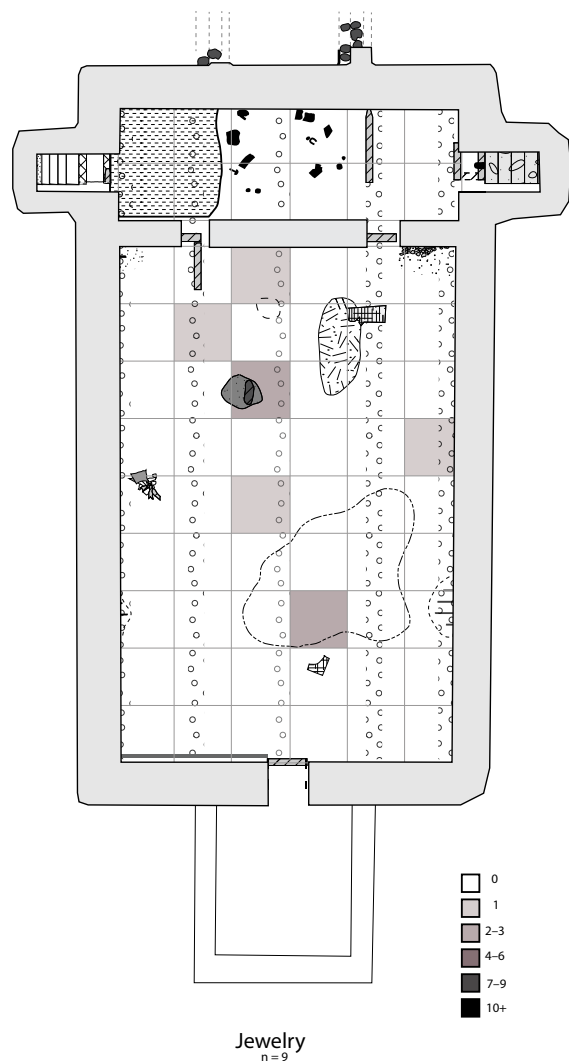


Figure 5.8. Spatial plot of jewelry from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

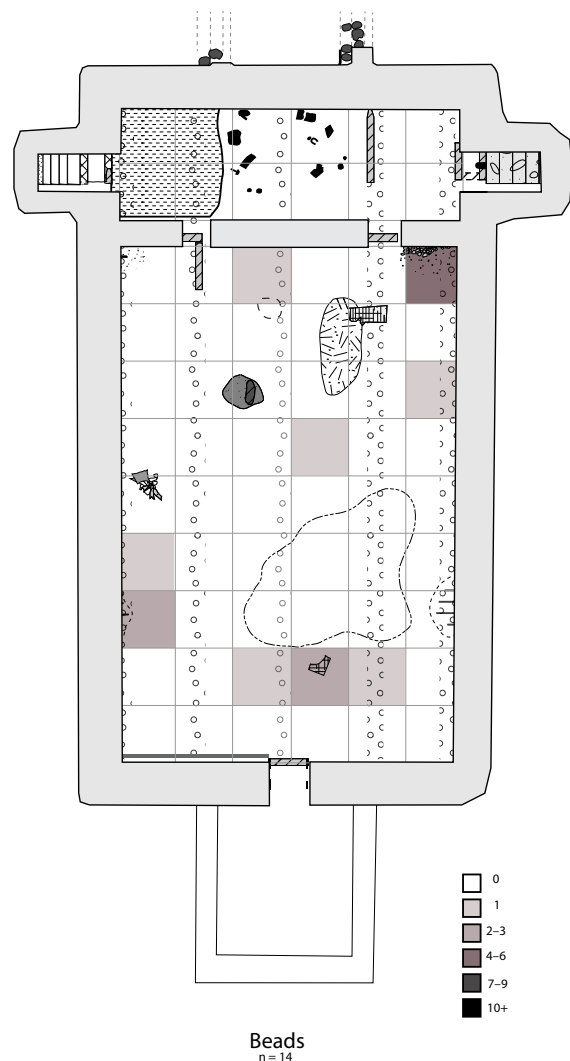


Figure 5.9. Spatial plot of beads from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

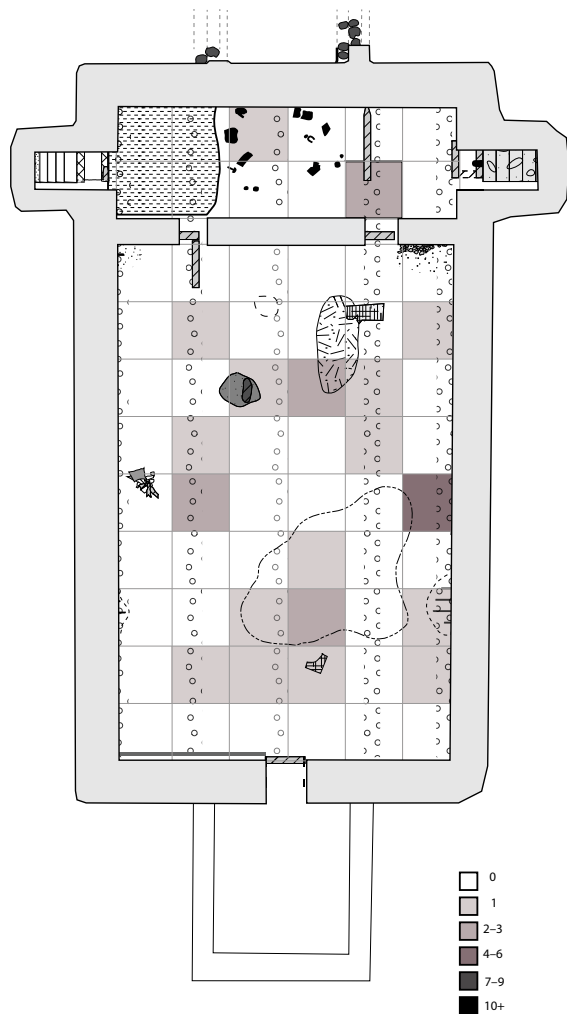
Two concentrations of pins and needles stand out immediately. The first, more northerly concentration may have been affected by the temporary burn area, but its correspondence to several pieces of jewelry may indicate that this concentration of artifacts is related to the use of these items in some project undertaken by women. Likewise, the more southerly concentration of pins and needles corresponds to a linear concentration of beads. As the beads were likely related to personal adornment, as was the jewelry, it is possible that this concentration is also indicative of an area where women undertook sewing projects.

The buttons are distributed fairly evenly across the entire basement. Given both the variability in the types of buttons found and their even distribution across the space, it seems likely that most buttons entered the archaeological record as lost items, broken off of the clothing of people while they participated in activities in the OPT, rather than as the result of either sewing projects or the storage of goods from the Woolen Mills.

School and Writing

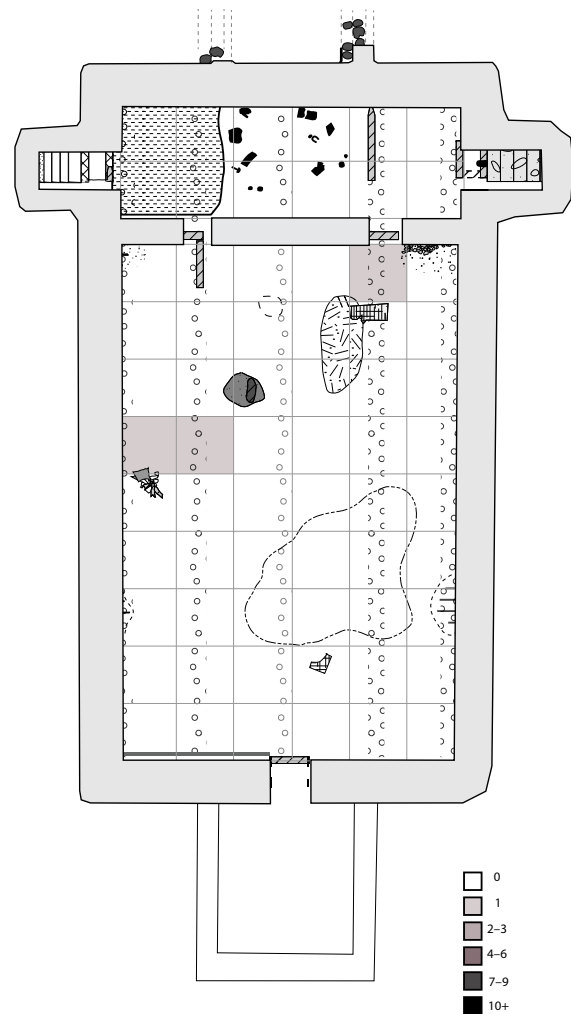
The final activity implied by the artifacts and the documents is the use of the building for school-related activities. Throughout its lifetime, the OPT housed a variety of academic groups, including an early normal school (comparable to modern elementary schools), and it was a temporary location for the Brigham Young Academy after the Lewis Building, the first home of the Academy, burned in 1884. Writing instruments were found throughout the floor zone of the OPT (Figure 5.10).

The writing instruments appear to be clustered in two well-defined areas in the large basement room, with a focal point indicated by the high number in a single grid unit in the center of the east wall. This arrangement may indicate either two separate areas where classes were held for different groups or that classes utilized the entire space, or both. The concentration of writing instruments in the center of the floor near the east wall seems to indicate, at a minimum, a place where writing instruments were stored, and it may also indicate where the instructor's desk was located (as these locations may have been one and the same). It is interesting to note that no writing instruments were found along the northern, western, or southern walls of the large basement room. This absence, in conjunction with the observations already made, seems to



Writing
n = 29

Figure 5.10. Spatial plot of writing instruments from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

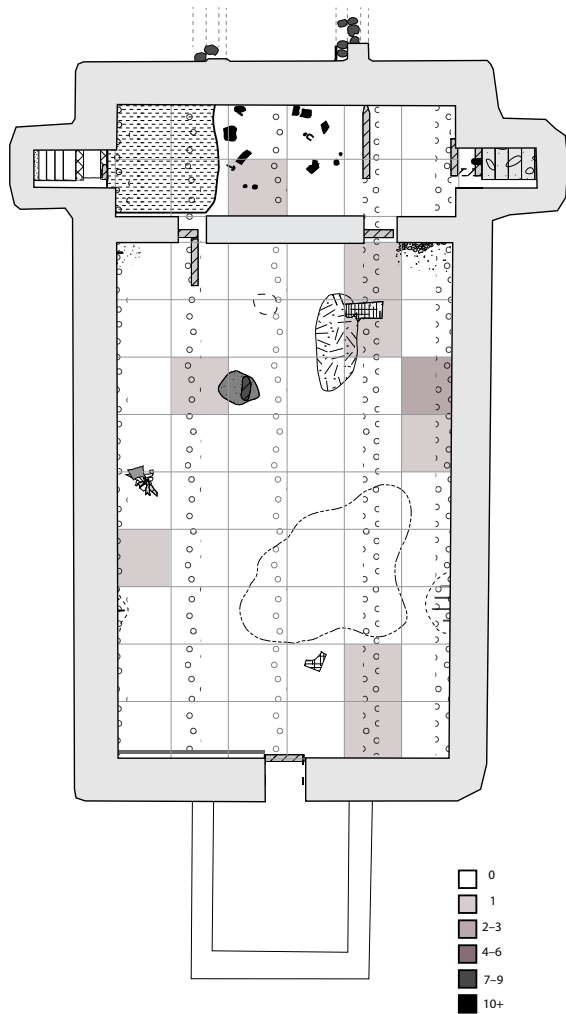


Toys
n = 3

Figure 5.11. Spatial plot of toys from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

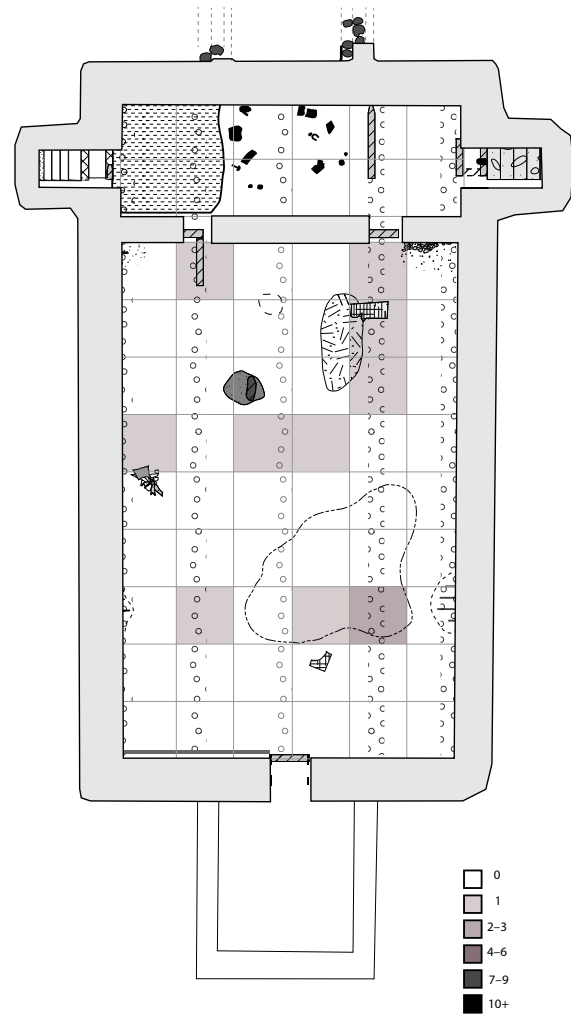
argue for a classroom arrangement which utilized the entire space and where the instructor stood near the east wall to deliver lessons.

If the writing instruments were associated with children, it makes sense to compare their distribution to that of the toys (Figure 5.11), the other category likely associated with children. Although the number of toys found in the floor zone is decidedly small ($n = 3$), it is surprising that there is no correlation between the toys and the writing instruments. Two of the three toys, in fact, were found in the perimeter where no writing instruments were found. If a comparison



Coins
n=10

Figure 5.12. Spatial plot of coins from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.



Toiletries
n=11

Figure 5.13. Spatial plot of toiletries from the floor zone of the Original Provo Tabernacle.

is made between the toys and all other categories, the closest association is found to pins and needles. This may indicate that the women and children were together during sewing projects.

Other Demographic Considerations

Coins (Figure 5.12) and toiletries (Figure 5.13) were the most difficult items to ascribe to a specific demographic group. Therefore, I compared them to all of the other artifacts of various

classes to see whether there were clear associations. This was to determine which demographic groups may have been associated with the loss of these items.

A concentration of coins around the area of Stove 4 is intriguing. Since we have an advertisement indicating a chicken dinner was served in the basement which is “all you can eat for 25 cents” (*Utah County Democrat*, 14 November 1908:3), it is clear that there was some exchange of money related to food consumption in the OPT. This concentration around, but not in, the area where the faunal remains and tin cans were found seems to indicate the preparation of food that food was prepared and sold in the northeast corner of the basement room. It must also be noted, however, that buttons and beads also cluster in this area; a reality which is not explained by this interpretation. Toiletries evince only a modest correlation to other artifacts, most strongly with beads and writing instruments. This may indicate that the comb fragments uncovered were related to women and children, and maybe to young women.

Discussion

The analysis of artifacts undertaken in this chapter seeks to understand the likely activities that occurred in the OPT, who participated, and where the activities occurred. Based on the distribution of artifacts on the floor, it seems clear that the artifacts uncovered in the OPT excavations are not randomly deposited trash. Associations between artifacts likely associated with particular activities and with various demographic groups exhibit a high degree of correlation and show the OPT was utilized for a wide variety of activities. These activities included communal meals, sewing projects, and school classes. Participants in these activities included women and children. Evidence for men, in fact, is not clear in the artifacts from the basement. Activities appear to have occurred in specific locations within the basement.

According to my analysis, meals were prepared on the stove in the northeast corner of the basement, and there is some indication that the exchange of payment for the food also occurred. The remains of meals were then discarded primarily in the southwest corner of the basement and may also indicate the consumption of meals nearby.

The archaeological data, more so than the documentary evidence, indicate clearly that the OPT was used by men and women and young and old for numerous activities. While the historical record, like most documentary sources of the time, is dominated by the activities of the male members of the community, the assemblage of artifacts at the OPT demonstrates the likelihood of the egalitarian use of the space by all categories of persons in the LDS community. In particular, this assemblage illustrates extensive use of the building by women and children in the Provo community.

There is some question as to whether sewing instruments related to projects undertaken by women or to temporary storage of sewing equipment following periodic fires at the local Woolen Mills. My analysis indicates that the artifacts in question likely related to sewing. These artifacts correlate to items likely related to female adornment (jewelry and beads), hence, both kinds of artifacts could have been lost in the same set of activities carried out by women. There is some indication that children were also present during these projects.

When school classes were held in the basement of the OPT, it appears that the classroom was arranged with a focal point on the center of the east wall. It is likely that the instructor's desk was positioned in this location.

Conclusion

While the analysis given here deals only with a small portion of the total artifact assemblage,² it demonstrates that the OPT was indeed a dynamic, multi-use, and even multivocal space where members of the early Provo community came together for various activities. It seems clear that the OPT—where communal meals, social sewing projects, and educational activities are all evident even in its latest years—remained a vital part of the Zion-building ideals of Provo until it was torn down. It was a place where the Saints in Provo, aware of their divine mandate to build the kingdom of God on earth through the pursuit of mutual intelligence and the refining of their social relationships, continued to meet together, to enjoy the blessings of Saintly society, and to strive to build and beautify the place where they hoped one day to commune with God and his Angels.

Notes:

1. This calculation multiplies the average depth of the layer (contact zone = 20 cm; floor zone = 3 cm) by the size of the grid units (200 cm x 200 cm) and the total number of grid units (n = 66). Therefore: contact zone = $20 \times 200 \times 200 \times 66 = 52,800,000$ cm or 52.8 m³ and floor zone = $3 \times 200 \times 200 \times 66 = 7,920,000$ cm or 7.92 m³.
2. I hope, in the years to come, that additional, more robust studies will utilize the data recovered to flesh-out our understanding of early Provo. Future studies will find a vast array of information in further analyses of the OPT data as well as in the artifacts and features recovered and recorded in the baptistry, caretaker's cottage, and the Hotel Roberts.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have examined the role of the Original Provo Tabernacle in the project of Mormon Zion during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Zion was the physical expression of the Mormon metaphysical system and the embodiment of Mormon faith. The concepts of Zion left an unmistakable mark on the landscape. Lowell Bennion (2001:187) stated emphatically that, “nineteenth-century Mormons . . . wherever they settled, no matter what the terrain . . . fashioned similar kinds of cultural landscapes.” The Plat of the City of Zion (Williams 1833) exemplified the ontological, epistemological, and cosmological arguments of Mormon theology and called for the construction of communities where all Saints, from the merchant to the farmer, lived in well-ordered communities and close proximity to each other. In this divine urban landscape, none were “denied the benefits of society . . . and [could] surround their homes with the same intellectual life, the same refinement” (Roberts 1930:312).

For nineteenth century Latter-day Saints, there was no more important undertaking than the building of Zion. The vision of Zion conveyed nineteenth century Latter-day Saint understandings of God’s desires for them and their relationship to him. The goal of Zion was to

create a community of Saints, “the pure in heart” (D&C 97:21), who lived in harmony, equality, and peace in preparation for the return of Christ himself to personally reign in that place (Articles of Faith 1:10, PGP). Through social activities which encouraged the pursuit of knowledge, the means of individual and mutual salvation, and the building of carefully designed settlements, first-generation Latter-day Saints hoped to build an urban environment worthy to be the abode of God (Olsen 2002). Thus, in the project of Zion, there was no division between sacred and secular aspects of life. Business, politics, economics, and community infrastructure were all considered vital aspects of Zion. As it was revealed to Joseph Smith, championed by Brigham Young, and practiced by their followers, the ideal of Zion shaped the community building activities of Mormons in Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, and throughout the Intermountain West.

When, in 1831, Joseph Smith first launched the project of Zion, he did so with the dedication of the temple block in Independence, Missouri (HC 1:196–200). Thereafter, the construction of centralized, mixed-use buildings was a key feature of the Mormon settlement pattern. These dynamically functional buildings articulated Mormon ideas of space and served as focal points for the arrangement of urban landscapes. These central buildings provided the backdrop for many activities related to Zion-building and gave Latter-day Saints a place to gather to hear the words of their leaders, partake in divinely mandated ordinances, and participate in political, social, and economic activities.

Early on, these buildings were called temples. From Kirtland to Nauvoo, the temple—which at first was little more than a meetinghouse—was the place where the Lord revealed new doctrines, expanded ordinances, and revealed the manner by which His Saints were to be perfected. The construction of temples became a key feature of Mormon religion. In the last decade of his life Joseph Smith spent much of his time working to build temples. After Joseph’s

death, the first objective of Brigham Young's leadership was the completion of the temple in Nauvoo. In the valley of the Great Salt Lake, the building of the temple was the first planned structure; its construction would consume the labors of two generations of Latter-day Saints. Prior to its completion, a temporary space was needed, a place where the Saints could receive their higher ordinances of washings, anointings, endowments, and sealings, and enter into the covenants of the Celestial Kingdom. The new ordinances of the temple provided faithful Latter-day Saints with more specialized knowledge; however, access to specific practices and ceremonies was by invitation only. The need to control access to expanded temple liturgy limited the ability of the temple to provide the multi-purpose space necessary for the project of Zion. As Latter-day Saints responded to their mandate to construct Zion in the American West, tabernacles emerged to meet this need.

The Original Provo Tabernacle and the Project of Zion

The Original Provo Tabernacle played a significant role in the establishment of a distinctive pattern of settlement developed around the construction and use of tabernacles. During the lengthy construction project, the OPT provided the community with a common goal that focused their efforts, built local infrastructure, and provided greater access to the plentiful natural resources in the vicinity. After its completion, the OPT was the center place of Mormon life in Provo. In the OPT, the Saints in Provo worshipped their God, planned their city, taught one another, broke bread together, and participated in an assortment of activities with the purpose of building their Zion.

Provo was among the first outlying settlements established in the Utah Territory and soon became a center of religious and social life for Latter-day Saints relocating south of Church

headquarters in Salt Lake City. Provo became one of many iterations of the City of Zion pattern. In the end, Provo witnessed the earliest complete establishment of the pattern outside the direct control of the central Church leadership, including the construction of a tabernacle at the city's center. In the OPT, a pattern of a versatile building emerged. As the first tabernacle planned and the eighth to be completed outside the Salt Lake Valley, the OPT was an integral part of the establishment of the Mormon settlement pattern. Both its location at the city center and its style of construction, as a Presbyterian meetinghouse, were eventually copied in tabernacles built in other settlements throughout the region. The tabernacles in St. George, Utah (completed in 1876; Figures 6.1 and 6.2) and Logan, Utah (completed in 1891; Figure 6.3), bear striking resemblance to the OPT.

Discussion

In the OPT, a new pattern for centralized structures was proposed which could be mimicked in other settlements. While in form and function tabernacles are no longer a vital part of Mormon community life, yet, those that survive remain symbolic of their once prominent role in building the Mormon sense of identity. Some scholars, like Mark Leone (1973), have argued that tabernacles can be demolished at little cost to the collective community or Mormon identity. Writing about the demolition of the Coalville Tabernacle, Leone (1973:34) argued that Mormon architecture was imbued with “deliberate disposability,” thereby allowing the Church to simply destroy these buildings. Citing changes in Mormon worship and practice, Leone (1973:34) contends that tabernacles were “not social centers,” and that the “sea of pews arranged before a raised platform” were designed to “generate attitudes of hierarchy, distance, passivity and separatedness,” ideas Leone found incongruent with contemporary Mormon notions of



Figure 6.1. St. George Tabernacle exterior, photograph by Dean R. Mays (© 2002 Brigham Young University. All Rights Reserved).

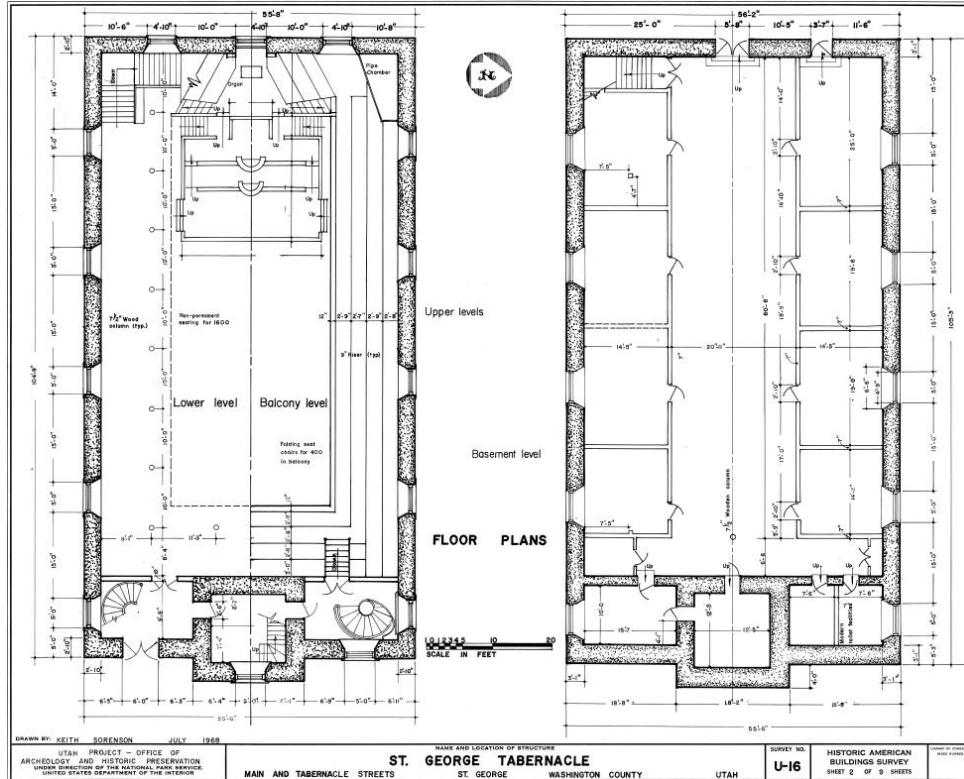


Figure 6.2. St. George Tabernacle floor plans (Historic American Buildings Survey, P. Kent Fairbanks, 1968).



Figure 6.3. Logan Tabernacle, note the similarity in architecture between this building and the Original Provo Tabernacle including a two story attached vestry at the rear of the building.

egalitarianism. He continued in this vein and argued that tabernacles “did not include plans for a congregation that might be mobile during the service, or which might break up into smaller groups of various sizes,” further noting that “Meetings other than worship services were held in other buildings in town” (Leone 1973:34).

Leone’s argument, however, runs counter to the historical evidence presented for the OPT. The documentary record reveals that the OPT, and many other early tabernacles, were part community center and part meetinghouse, and the setting for a variety of other meetings. The OPT was used for regular worship services, including weekly local meetings, regional conferences, and the occasional special conference, as well as for theatrical performances, concerts, public lectures, political meetings, schools, and business meetings, all of which show

the building's shared religious and secular functions. The founding of the Provo School of the Prophets and the Provo Mercantile Co-operative, together with the variety of other religious, economic, and political meetings held in the OPT, argue for a building whose purpose was far less constrained than implied by Leone's characterization. In the OPT we see the organization of space around a central point, the funneling of the community into one purpose through the preaching of the gospel—both publically and in the private meetings of the School of the Prophets—and the organization of a co-operative system which blurred the division between the sacred and the secular and constructed a strong sense of community and group identity for the Saints in that place. Furthermore, the archaeological record of the OPT demonstrates that, not only was the building a dynamically functional building for the male leadership (the few), it was also utilized by women and children (the many) for a variety of purposes.

When the OPT is placed in historical and theological context, it becomes clear that the building played a crucial role in the overall development of religious structures for Latter-day Saints. The OPT was the prototype for a replicable building form, one which could be carried with the Saints and settlers as they entered new areas in their desert landscape. With this, the Latter-day Children of Israel were able to pitch their own Tabernacle of the Congregation, a building which stood in the center of the towns, was the temporary abode of God where men and women could come to commune with deity, directed and focused their efforts, and helped them to work toward building the eventual permanent home for God upon the earth. The tabernacle, the now obsolete building form, was never intended to be a permanent fixture of the Mormon community; rather, much like its ancient namesake, this building was intentionally transient. In this sense, Leone (1973:34) was correct that a certain amount of disposability is inherent in Mormon architecture. Leone's error was in the assertion that the purpose of tabernacles was

somehow different from the purposes of meetinghouses built today. The continued evolution of Mormon architecture, as well as the ability to discontinue and occasionally demolish buildings which are no longer functional, highlights the transmutability of a religion which believes in ongoing revelation.

Conclusion: The Significance of the Original Provo Tabernacle

The OPT was a significant building in the history of Mormon settlement in the west. Its significance is seen in the role it played in the attempt to construct physically a Mormon Zion in Provo, as well as its enduring role in shaping the concept of Zion in the decades that followed. While the form and function of tabernacles no longer remain an aspect of day-to-day life for most Latter-day Saints, the OPT symbolized and helped shape and perpetuate important principles in the project of Zion which remain relevant today. Despite the rescinded call to gather to one location, the concepts of communalism, cooperation, and group identification, all of which are symbolized in the tabernacle as a building type, remain important concepts in Mormon culture. Today, Zion is built in the homes of individual Latter-day Saints and in the communities where they live as they seek to “build Zion where we are” (Holland 2012).

The OPT was the place where early Provo was built. Through its construction, the Saints gained access to the valuable resources of the mountain valleys around them. In the OPT, the people of Provo planned their economic enterprises. It was there that they accomplished the goal of installing, even temporarily the Law of Consecration. The OPT provided them with a place to meet, to hear their leaders speak, to gain knowledge and to grow toward a more perfect knowledge of the universe. For some, it was the place where they came to be endowed. The OPT was part of their preparation, but also a real part of the project of Zion itself. The OPT

served as an *axis mundi* where all aspects of their lives converged, where the sacred and the secular aligned, and where they strove to become the pure in heart.

Taken together, the archaeological data recovered during the excavation of the OPT and the documentary evidence offer a rare glimpse into early Mormon pioneer life in Provo. This combination of documentary and archaeological data allows one to speak to the full life history of the building (Schiffer 1976); such coverage is truly one of the greatest strengths of historical archaeology. Careful and thorough analysis of these data provides a more complete understanding and appreciation the Original Provo Tabernacle and the meaning it held in the lives of the first-generation Utahans who gave their time, energy, and resource for its construction, who worshipped, ate, learned, and socialized within its walls and to understand what motivated them to build this building.

Although the OPT no longer physically remains, its legacy endures. The best expression of this legacy is found in the construction of the Provo City Center Temple. This temple, which repurposes the fire-ravaged remains of the second Provo Tabernacle (the literal successor of the OPT), is a symbol of both the construction of Zion in the past and the expanded vision of Zion-building in Mormonism today. In the sacred ordinances of the temple, family relationships are perpetuated into the next life. If the purpose of the tabernacle is to build society on earth, the purpose of the temple is to build society in the eternal realm. The apotheosis of the second Provo Tabernacle into the Provo City Center Temple is an appropriate extension of the role of the OPT and other tabernacles in building Zion amongst the Saints both here and in the world to come.

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