

Oneida Stake Academy

Preston, Idaho, United States of America

In 1888, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint's General Board of Education was created and stakes throughout the Church were instructed to form academies. The growth of stake schools grew out of the desire church leaders had that the youth be taught the principles of the gospel as a part of their school curriculum, something that would not happen in the public school system. Between 1860-1909 the Church established 35 academies in stakes ranging between Canada and Mexico.¹

Classes for the Academy officially began on October 1, 1888 with 75 students and two teachers, though a building had not yet been constructed.² Construction of a building occurred between 1890 and 1895 and was completed by hand. On July 28, 1895, the Oneida Stake Academy building was dedicated by Elder Moses Thatcher of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Several prominent members of the Church attended the Academy including Harold B. Lee and Ezra Taft Benson, both of whom later became presidents of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In 2003, the Preston School Board decided that it would need the space where the Academy occupied and planned to tear it down. The Mormon Historic Sites Foundation helped raise the \$1.3 million required to move the Academy. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints donated an area at Benson Park in Preston where the Academy currently resides.

The Oneida Stake Academy is currently in the process of being restored.

SOURCES

¹ Fred E. Woods, "The Forgotten Voice of the Onieda Stake Academy," *Mormon Historical Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (Fall 2003), 82.

² Andrew Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1941), 617.



The Oneida Stake Academy
Photo courtesy of Alan Smith

FURTHER READING RESOURCES

- Floyd W. Peterson, "A History of the Oneida Stake Academy," M.A. Thesis, Utah Stake Agricultural College, 1957.
- Fred E. Woods, "The Forgotten Voice of the Oneida Stake Academy," *Mormon Historical Studies*, (Spring 2003), 81.

