
Creating a Mormon Mecca in England: The Gadfield Elm Chapel

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In his dissertation “Mormon Meccas: The Spiritual Transformation of Mormon Historical Sites from Points of Interest to Sacred Space,” Michael Madsen discusses the creation of “sacred space” by the institutional Church through its restoration of Mormon historical sites. He sees an increasingly top-down effort to anchor and root Mormonism to its history. Ambitious projects in and around Palmyra, Kirtland, and Nauvoo are taken to be evidence for this thesis.¹

Madsen and others have observed that Mormonism’s past is its theology.² By nurturing the Saints’ historical memory and thus Mormonism’s theology and sense of identity, the Church historical sites create a sacred geography that can be shared by all members. Madsen explains: “LDS Church leaders evidently feel that the Church needs more than just theology and history to maintain cohesion and unity, it needs a geography as well; sacred space that all Mormons—whether in Utah or Uganda—can feel a part of, thus rooting the religion in place.”³

For Madsen, the deliberate creation by the Church of Mormon Meccas has had one eye on the international Church, so that Saints in “Uganda” have inculcated within them a greater sense of where the Church came from—where they came from. The fact that such Saints will probably never visit Palmyra or Nauvoo must be held as irrelevant; the creation of a sacred historical

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geography can be a symbol to be revered from afar, the Jerusalems of the diaspora Mormons.

While I believe Madsen to have captured the meaning of recent attempts by the Church to create sacred space through historical shrines in North America, his model of a top-down enterprise need not be taken as the only way Mormons can sacralize their history. Indeed, Madsen himself is aware of this, citing, for example, Nauvoo Restoration, Inc., a private foundation organized in 1962 with the goal to faithfully restore old Nauvoo.⁴ Initially enjoying only partial support from the Church, this private organization was later subsumed into the Church's own efforts at Nauvoo. In a similar vein, another important Mormon historical site—the Gadfield Elm chapel in England—provides another interesting example of a grass roots effort to create a “Mormon Mecca,” one that only later came under the auspices of the institutional Church. Gadfield Elm became a Mormon Mecca not because of an edict from Salt Lake, but through the efforts of local members who yearned for, preserved, and cultivated sacred Mormon space in their own land.

Wilford Woodruff and the United Brethren

The story of the ministry of Wilford Woodruff in the counties of Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, and Herefordshire in central England, the conversion of the United Brethren, and the role of the Gadfield Elm chapel is well known.⁵ Central to the story were the United Brethren, a group of former Primitive Methodists who, in the 1830s, had organized themselves into small congregations surrounding the Malvern Hills. They were led by Thomas Kington, who allowed Wilford Woodruff to share the Mormon gospel with the United Brethren congregations. Woodruff's missionary success was spectacular, and much of it can be attributed to the readiness of this group of English believers to embrace the message shared with them by the American missionaries. Woodruff summarized this amazing effort: “The first thirty days after my arrival in Herefordshire, I had baptized forty-five preachers and one hundred and sixty members of the United Brethren. . . . This opened a wide field for labor, and enabled me to bring into the Church, through the blessings of God, over eighteen hundred souls during eight months, including all of the six hundred United Brethren except one person. In this number there were also some two hundred preachers of various denominations.”⁶ The United Brethren made available to Elder Woodruff “one chapel and forty-five houses, which were licensed according to law to preach in.”⁷ The chapel was at the site of Gadfield Elm in Worcestershire.⁸ When it was donated for use to the Church it was the only LDS-owned chapel anywhere in the world, or

so the story goes locally.⁹ It became a focal point for missionary work in the Malvern Hills area, but was eventually sold to help pay for the local members to gather to Zion.

This is usually held to be the end of the story. The chapel was sold, the Saints emigrated to America, and the tale continues in Zion. But it is the history of Gadfield Elm, not as the vehicle for conversion and emigration, but as a shrine for local Mormons, that will be the subject of this paper.

Restoration

After the end of the apostolic missions and the mass emigration of many Mormon converts, the Gadfield Elm chapel disappears from history, no longer relevant to the westward narrative of Zion.¹⁰ For as long as anyone in England can remember, the chapel had always been in a state of terrible disrepair, little more than a cattle shed. Still, any LDS Church history tour itinerary included the ruins of the chapel. I remember visiting the site with my Primary class, and then later as a seminary student. There was always a sense of the sacredness of the site, and even when I was a young boy, a sense of connection with Mormon history that was otherwise steeped in strange names like Palmyra, Far West, and Sharon. It was also something tangible, a building, not just an



Gadfield Elm chapel before the restoration, 1995. Photograph by Kent P. Jackson.



Gadfield Elm chapel following the restoration, 2001. Photograph by Alexander L. Baugh.

idea on a page. Sourcing this local sense of sacred history somewhat was a feeling of incredulity—we were always told that the Gadfield Elm chapel was the “oldest LDS chapel in the world.” Why then was it a pile of rubble? Why didn’t the Church restore it?

In 1987 the Church celebrated its British Sesquicentennial and set aside some money for site preservation. Elder Neal A. Maxwell traveled to Gadfield Elm to talk to the owners about purchasing the chapel. The price set by the owners was too high, and so Benbow’s Pond (which had been used by Elder Woodruff for baptisms) was the only site purchased.¹¹ A small plaque stands next to the pond, now not much more than a puddle.

The celebrations surrounding the Sesquicentennial, I believe, spurred British Mormons—many of whom were converts and were not steeped in Wilford Woodruffian lore—to become more interested in their own history. A commemorative movie featuring local members, *A Story of Strength*, was filmed during this time in and around the local sites.

About this same time, Americans began to visit the sites in greater numbers. My father, a long-time seminary teacher in the local stake, even began an illustrious career as part of the Mormon tours—dressing up in Victorian finery

he often joined tours at the top of British Camp¹² as the “ghost” of Wilford Woodruff. But still, the Gadfield Elm chapel lay derelict. The program for the May 1987 Cheltenham Stake Conference suggested that “Wilford Woodruff would rejoice especially to see our day and enjoy the worshipful comfort of our chapels.”¹³ Given the state of Gadfield Elm, this statement was more than a little ironic.

In October 1994, the chapel came up for auction. The Church had no plans to bid, so Wayne Gardner, the local LDS bishop, feeling he “just had to do something,” organized a group of Saints in the hope of raising enough money to acquire the dilapidated building. They raised about £7,000 (\$12,000), which was enough to win the bid and pay for urgent repairs to the walls. Over the next six years, the newly organized Gadfield Elm Trust raised a further £65,000 (\$115,000) from members in the UK and the US, including a small donation from the Church.¹⁴

All the efforts to rehabilitate the Gadfield Elm chapel began from the bottom up. A locally organized pageant was held in June 1995 to commemorate “the 155th anniversary of the first conference in the British Mission at the world’s first and oldest LDS chapel.” Local members in period costumes re-



Gadfield Elm chapel from the front side, 2001. Photograph by Alexander L. Baugh.

created the conference, with characters including Thomas Kington, Willard Richards, and Wilford Woodruff. “First and oldest LDS chapel” is a theme that dominates Gadfield Elm’s narrative locally, a real source of pride. I have heard many local members express disbelief when American visitors display their ignorance of this fact; not knowing such a factoid of Mormon history is like not knowing in what year the Church was organized (at least in the eyes of English Mormons).



Gadfield Elm chapel marker, 2001. Photograph by Alexander L. Baugh.

With the restoration under way, and with pageants and tours raising awareness of the chapel, the Gadfield Elm Trust began to produce literature for the benefit of members and for tourists. The Church also began to produce its own historical leaflets, entitled *Exploring Your Heritage*.¹⁵ Some of the more interesting literature was non-Mormon. St. Michael and All Angels Church in Castle Frome published a pamphlet about John Benbow, whose landlord had been the advowson of the church (carrying the right to select the rector of the parish). Even the local historical society got involved, publishing *The Mormons in the Three Counties*, featuring a picture of a statue of William Carter, a local convert, who is credited for being “the first white man to practice irrigation and to grow a crop in Utah.” The purpose of the booklet was to “create interest in what is both a unique chapter of our history and a link between this corner of our island and the pioneering days of the United States of America.” Even the non-Mormons, it seems, were getting excited about local Mormon history. “Do you know where the oldest Mormon chapel in the world is?” asks a BBC website, before explaining the history of Woodruff, the Benbows, and Gadfield Elm.¹⁶

Perhaps in an attempt to gain institutional recognition for their efforts, the Gadfield Elm Trust in 1998 presented President Gordon B. Hinckley (who was in England dedicating the Preston Temple) with an engraved slate from one of the chapel’s original roofing tiles. The inscription reads: “This piece of slate is part of the original tile from the roof of the Gadfield Elm Chapel, built by the United Brethren in 1836, situated near Eldersfield, Worcestershire, England. The chapel was the first to be owned by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, having been deeded to the Church on 14th of June

1840, by the United Brethren, whose leaders were John Benbow and Thomas Kington. Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Willard Richards preached here.”¹⁷

On April 23, 2000, the restored chapel was dedicated by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve.¹⁸ Elder Holland’s great-great-grandparents, Ellen Benbow and William Carter, had themselves worshipped in the chapel. The event even received some local press coverage.¹⁹ History came full circle on May 26, 2004, when the Gadfield Elm Trust handed back the chapel into the ownership of the Church, with a presentation to President Gordon B. Hinckley.²⁰

Center and Periphery

Today, the Gadfield Elm chapel serves as a memorial both to the faith of the United Brethren and to the pioneering efforts of early British Mormons to build the kingdom of God. For the English Saints, such places are as sacred to them as the Hill Cumorah or Temple Square. I fondly remember taking my Young Men’s group to camp at the restored chapel. All of us, men and boys, were deeply touched to stand where Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff stood and to contemplate our compatriots’ sacrifice as they left this place for America. During a devotional meeting we sang England’s national hymn, “Jerusalem,” which extols our “green and pleasant land,” after which we sang “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” remembering those who found Zion, “far away, in the West.” Gadfield Elm as a tangible, bricks-and-mortar monument to sacred history became a contemporary sacred space.

The creation of sacred space is a popular topic among religious geographers. All human spaces can derive cultural meaning, an idea that “has become one of the foundations of contemporary social and cultural geography.”²¹ The creation of sacred spaces such as Gadfield Elm never occurs *ex nihilo*. Gadfield Elm is not just sacred to British Mormons (and thus worthy of conservation) simply because Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff preached there. After all, the 1840-41 mission of the Twelve involved more than just Gadfield Elm, spanning instead the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. Instead, Gadfield Elm has been *made* sacred by a number of factors, including its original history, but also the tangible appeal of a building (even when in ruins), the “British-ness” of the United Brethren, the connection with a central Mormon history, and the fact that worshippers at Gadfield Elm became part of the larger and more famous Mormon story, such as the Oakey family’s suffering as part of the Willie Company, or William Carter being designated as

“the first ploughman in Utah.”²² Thus Gadfield Elm has been a deliberate act by British Mormons of sacred space creation.²³

Local efforts to create sacred space require more than just desire, some “guiding influence” is needed.²⁴ The Gadfield Elm Trust was made up of prominent and trusted local members and had the support of the local LDS stake presidency. “Faithful” academic credibility was lent by BYU professor V. Ben Bloxham who served as Trust historian. And visits to the site by General Authorities, even when it was in ruins, added ecclesiastical legitimacy to the project, something that is vital in highly centralized Mormonism.

Mormons from across the UK and from America regularly visit Gadfield Elm.²⁵ In 2005 an English missionary couple began serving as hosts at the



Interior of the Gadfield Elm chapel, 2001. Photograph by Alexander L. Baugh.

chapel.²⁶ In addition, the Church published additional literature about the area and featured the chapel in a prominent place on the Church’s UK website.²⁷ Literature about the chapel is available at the local tourist office, and official brown and white tourist road signs now guide visitors around the tiny lanes that lead to Gadfield Elm.

Now that the Church owns Gadfield Elm it will be interesting to see

how much it is developed. If Madsen’s model is applicable to such a site, we might expect an intensification of the Church’s promotion of Gadfield Elm as a Mormon Mecca. Currently, this is happening on a moderate scale. The chapel offers a nice picnic and camping field, a restroom, a few ad hoc displays, and devotional space. More professional displays are currently being prepared by the Church Historical Department. There is also a local campaign to highlight Gadfield Elm’s history in the media and among historical societies, and the chapel and grounds are used for Church leadership meetings, firesides, devotionals, service projects, pageants, Christmas services, and special sacrament meetings.²⁸ Responsibility for the chapel is currently a slightly awkward mix between the local stake, the missionaries, the area office in Solihull, and the Church Historical department.

In some ways, because Gadfield Elm has been a Mormon Mecca for quite some time, it requires no further promotion. Warrick Kear, a CES coordinator and former local stake president, told me of the significance of Gadfield Elm and Benbow's Pond to British Mormonism:

When I was called as the new stake president of the new Cheltenham stake, the responsibility for the Church history sites in the stake was the most exciting aspect of my calling. It was a great privilege for me to take Apostles and General Authorities around the sites. They certainly are a spiritual part of LDS membership in [England]. Since the rebuilding and dedication of the Gadfield Elm Chapel, public awareness of the social and religious heritage of LDS people in the area has increased tremendously.²⁹

Local LDS excitement about Gadfield Elm is palpable. One of the local tourist offices is staffed by a member of the Church who is frequently asked by visitors about the history of the area. The history of Malvern dates to William the Conqueror and beyond, but he often highlights Malvern's Mormon heritage instead, leaving some visitors a little puzzled. "Aren't all the Mormons in Utah?" "Ah, no," the member replies. "It all began here." Such is the excitement (and hyperbole) that the restoration of the chapel helped generate. The BBC Hereford and Worcester website mentioned above asks: "What do you know about the Mormons? If your answer's not very much, then here's a fact for you: The church was formed in our two counties."³⁰

Conclusion

Thanks in large part to the efforts of the Gadfield Elm Trust and others, British Mormonism is becoming increasingly aware of its own religious heritage. I have heard some local members express disappointment that the Church never invested much money in the upkeep of these sites until recently. The Gadfield Elm restoration was a private venture, and even though the Church has owned Benbow's Pond since 1987, it is not much more than a strip of grass, a plaque, and a small pond. A consequence of all of this, however, has been that British Saints have taken ownership of their own history—a vital step, perhaps, in the Church's British maturation. And for the Church to fully come of age outside the US, it must be able to develop a sense of local heritage, one not imposed from above. This has been a benefit of the Church's passing on the Gadfield Elm project.³¹

In this way, Gadfield Elm conforms to the Nauvoo model—a Mormon Mecca has been created, not by the institution but by the Saints. The Saints then give it back to the institution. And it is on the historical myths of the insti-

tutional American church that Gadfield Elm is consistently focused. For example, there is in the displays at the chapel no extensive mention of the Church in contemporary Britain, nor of Britain in the mid-nineteenth century. Its narrative is of the American Zion, its heroes are American (Wilford Woodruff), or the English who moved to America (William Carter, John Benbow), and its symbols are American (visitors often dress in pioneer costume).³² Educational activities offered to children revolve around drawing buffaloes and handcars; even sample recipes are for cowboy beans and Johnny cake rather than Herefordshire frazzled beef.



Interior of the Gadfield Elm chapel, 2001. Photograph by Alexander L. Baugh.

Madsen believes that by enshrining Mormon historical geography, the Church has on mind the Latter-day Saint visitor, not the “gentile.”³³ As a focal point of Mormon commemoration, the local Saints who arrive at the Gadfield Elm chapel dressed as pioneers ready to reenact the great trek might lead a non-Mormon visitor to conclude that Mormons were indeed American-minded and semi-Amish—a view probably not conducive to any kind of proselytizing success.³⁴ I do not think this is in the mind of most local Mormons, however. For them, Gadfield Elm ties their Mormon periphery to Mormonism’s historical center, “far away, in the West.” They get to stand where apostles stood and to feel especially connected to people and events that often seem foreign. As Mircea Eliade has explained, sacred space promotes the creation of a “center” which “renders orientation possible.”³⁵ As members of a small minority religion in the UK, one should not underestimate the feeling of orientation towards the American center place that Gadfield Elm’s “peripheral center” provides British Mormons. It is a British site second, a Mormon site first.

Notes

1. Michael Madsen, "Mormon Meccas: The Spiritual Transformation of Mormon Historical Sites from Points of Interest to Sacred Space" (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 2003).

2. Madsen, "Mormon Meccas," 243. Madsen notes Richard and Joan Ostling's observation that, "there is a very real sense in which the church's history is its theology . . . just as creedal churches have official statements of faith, the Mormon church tends to have official versions of sacred history" Richard Ostling and Joan Ostling, *Mormon America: The Power and the Promise* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2000), 245.

3. Madsen, "Mormon Meccas," 251.

4. Madsen, "Mormon Meccas," 96-97. The prime example, perhaps, of private Mormon history building is the Mormon Historical Sites Foundation. See www.mormonhistoricsitesfoundation.org. Another example is the Ship *Brooklyn* Association. See www.shipbrooklyn.org.

5. For more details see James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles, 1837-1841* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 120-30.

6. Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff, Fourth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: History of His Life and Labors as Recorded in His Daily Journals*, Matthias F. Cowley, ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909), 119.

7. Woodruff, Wilford Woodruff, 119. His journal at the time differs slightly, giving forty-two places of worship and one chapel. Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833-1898*, Typescript, Scott G. Kenney, ed., 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983-85), 1:440.

8. V. Ben Bloxham transcribed the Deed of Conveyance between Thomas Shipton (a farmer of Dobs Hill, Eldersfield) and John Benbow and Thomas Kington, dated March 4, 1836, in the Public Record Office, now the National Archives. The land is described as: "at a place called Gatfields Elm in the Parish of Eldersfield . . . and containing by admeasurement Two hundred and thirty five feet in length or therabout and on an average about thirty four feet in width (more or less) and bounded by a common meadow called Gatfields Meadow on the South by land of _____ [blank] Beale Esquire on the West and by a road leading from the Old Stanton Turnpike towards Eldersfield Church on the North and East." Mary Pochin to Ronan James Head, April 29, 2006.

9. When the United Brethren dissolved on June 14, 1840, it became the "Bran Green and Gadfield Elm Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." See Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 1:457-59. Thomas Kington, the former superintendent of the United Brethren, became presiding elder. It was at this time that the Gadfield Elm Chapel was no longer a "United Brethren" building but a "Mormon" chapel. As Thomas Alexander notes, "given the provision for licensing chapels and other preaching places, the Mormons automatically became owners of the licensed Gadfield Elm chapel." Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 93. Still, we have no evidence for any "official" ownership of the chapel by the Church; the deeds are silent on any change of ownership during this period. Wayne Gardner, personal communication with the author. The claim to be the "world's first" LDS chapel also relies on ignoring buildings such as the Kirtland Temple, which functioned in ways more similar to the modern Mormon notion of "chapel."

10. What happened to the chapel when it was sold has not yet been the subject of

research. The deeds are unhelpful, giving only ownership information from the late nineteenth century.

11. Wayne Gardner, personal communication with the author.

12. British Camp is a prominent hill that has been the site of numerous apostolic prayer meetings. The hill is the site of an ancient Roman camp and even earlier fortifications, overlooks the Malvern Hills and was a favorite spot of Elder Woodruff's during his time in Herefordshire. He came here at least four times to meditate, pray, and contemplate his work. On May 20, 1840, Wilford Woodruff, Brigham Young, and Willard Richards climbed the hill and after counseling together made the decision to print the Book of Mormon and a hymn book in Great Britain. John Benbow and Thomas Kington contributed a substantial amount of money which was used to publish these two books. In more recent times, other LDS prophets and apostles have visited the Herefordshire Beacon. Spencer W. Kimball once climbed the hill in company with Elder Derek Cuthbert and prophesied great growth for the Church in the British Isles.

13. Cheltenham Stake Conference program, May 10, 1987, in possession of the author.

14. Wayne Gardner, personal communication with the author. The Gadfield Elm Trust consisted of Wayne Gardner, chairman; Simon Gibson, vice-chairman; Brian Bliss, treasurer; and V. Ben Bloxham, historian.

15. The publication was based on James R. and Lavelle Moss, *Historic Sites of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987).

16. See www.bbc.co.uk/herefordshireandworcester/content/articles/2005/03/30/mormon_chapel_feature.shtml, accessed October 31, 2006.

17. Wayne Gardner, "Presentation to President Gordon B Hinckley," *Ensign* (British Isles Insert) 28, no. 12 (December 1998).

18. The restoration was conducted mostly by local members who did their best to approximate the original building. Most of the walls were in place but were leaning because the mortar had gone soft. The Trust took the walls down stone by stone and rebuilt them. The roof was based on that of a local barn contemporary with the original chapel. The interior incorporates some modern features (for example, a toilet, electricity, and plumbing). The pews were salvaged from an old church.

19. "World's first Mormon chapel reopens," *Hereford Times*, April 28, 2000.

20. See "Little chapel's keys returned to Church," *Church News* 74, no. 23 (June 5, 2004): 3-4; and "Historical chapel given to LDS," *Deseret Morning News*, May 27, 2004.

21. Tim Unwin, "A Waste of Space? Towards a Critique of the Social Production of Space," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 25 (2000): 11.

22. Rowland Sheriff describes the processes that make a space sacred: "The designation of a spot on the landscape or culturescape as 'sacred' results from human decision-making, a result flowing from the perceptions of the special, spiritual meanings associated with the site. If the designation is collectively compelling, it subsequently entails the imaginative operations of coordinating those religious meanings with others in the community of belief and commitment and of interpreting and maintaining the place, role, and significance of the "site" in the continuing traditions of the community. Rowland Sheriff, "American Sacred Space and the Contest of History," in *American Sacred Space*, David Chidester and Edward T. Linenthal, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 313.

23. Hildi Mitchell has noted how British Mormons visit Mormon sites in America as conscious acts of pilgrimage, Gadfield Elm now offers a much more convenient, and patriotic alternative. See Hildi Mitchell, "'Being There': British Mormons and the History Trail," *Anthropology Today* 17, no. 2 (2001): 9-14.

24. See Madsen, "Mormon Meccas," 22.

25. According to Alec and Jeni Mitchell, a missionary couple who served at Gadfield Elm, 2,830 visitors visited the site in 2005, compared with 890 for 2004. More than half of the British visitors came from outside the local stake boundary. Ten percent came from North America. Five percent were non-LDS. Visitor numbers increased in 2006.

26. Alec and Jeni Mitchell continued the old British Mormon tradition of periodical publication by producing the *Gadfield Elm Gazette*.

27. See www.lds.org.uk/content/view/23/47, accessed October 31, 2006.

28. Inspired by Gadfield Elm chapel, the local Cheltenham Stake recently performed a professional-produced musical called "Faith." See www.ldsfaith.co.uk, accessed April 14, 2007.

29. Warrick Kear, personal communication with the author.

30. See www.bbc.co.uk/herefordandworcester/faith/local_mormons/index.shtml, accessed October 31, 2006.

31. According to Wayne Gardner, Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve suggested that projects such as the restoration of the Gadfield Elm chapel be organized locally. Wayne Gardner, personal communication with the author.

32. The dress and costumes worn by Church members during the commemorations are "generic nineteenth century," which costuming is known locally as "pioneer dress."

33. Madsen, "Mormon Meccas," 246.

34. The Mormon-centric nature of Gadfield Elm is underlined by the "secret" code used to allow visitors to enter the chapel after hours. Clues posted on the front door are: "How many chapters in the Book of Enos? The age at which children can be baptised into the church? How many Degrees of Glory? How many books in the Book of Mormon after Moroni?"

35. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, 1957), 64. As Chidester and Linenthal note, "sacred space anchors a worldview in the world." Chidester and Linenthal, *American Sacred Space*, 12. In this case the Mormon worldview is "anchored" in a small corner of England for the benefit of Mormons on the Mormon periphery. One other benefit (not explored in this paper) is the impact Gadfield Elm has on visiting American tourists, whose "testimony" of Mormonism is strengthened by a tangible reminder of their ancestors' lives and sacrifices.

