



Hugh J. Cannon (left) and Elder David O. McKay (right) on their world tour, 1920–1921.

Turning the Key that Unlocked the Door: Elder David O. McKay's 1921 Apostolic Dedication of the Chinese Realm

Reid L. Neilson

*The Twelve also are not to serve tables,
but to bear the keys of the Kingdom to all
nations, and unlock the door of the Gospel
to them.*

*Joseph Smith Jr.
March 30, 1836*

“The sky was cloudless. The sun’s bright rays tempered the winter air to pleasantness,” Elder David O. McKay of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles noted in his diary on February 9, 1921, while visiting Peking (Beijing), China. “Every impression following our earnest prayers together and in secret, seemed to confirm our conclusions arrived at last evening; viz., that it seems that the time is near at hand when these teeming millions should at least be given a glimpse of the glorious Light now shining among the children of men in other and more advanced nations.” Months earlier, while Elder McKay was still in Utah, Heber J. Grant, president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, had tentatively directed him to dedicate China for the preaching of the gospel, if he “felt so impressed,” while touring Asia on behalf of the LDS First Presidency. Believing this was the time, Elder McKay and his traveling companion, Hugh J. Cannon, president of the Salt Lake Liberty Stake, walked

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from their hotel towards Peking's Forbidden City in search of a suitable location for the historic occasion. After locating a temporarily secluded grove of cypress trees, the two men knelt, and Elder McKay offered the dedicatory prayer. "Under the century old limbs and green leaves of this, one of God's own temples, with uncovered heads, we supplicated our Father in heaven and by the authority of the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, and in the name of the Only Begotten of the Father, turned the key that unlocked the door for the entrance into this benighted and famine-stricken land of the authorized servants of God to preach the true and restored gospel of Jesus Christ," the young Apostle recorded.¹ Although LDS leaders did not send missionaries to China until after World War II—nearly twenty five years later—it would be Elder McKay, more than any other General Authority, who sought to fulfill the promises of this unique priesthood petition on behalf of the Chinese.

Unlocking the Doors to the Nations

In late February 1835, less than two weeks after the Quorum of the Twelve was constituted, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that global evangelization was the special responsibility of the Apostles. "They are the Twelve Apostles, who are called to the office of the Traveling High Council, who are to preside over the churches of the Saints, among the Gentiles, where there is a presidency established; and they are to travel and preach among the Gentiles." He continued: "*They are to hold the keys of this ministry, to unlock the door of the Kingdom of heaven unto all nations, and to preach the Gospel to every creature.*"² During a dedicatory service of the Kirtland Temple in 1836, he reemphasized this special responsibility: "I then called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the Twelve Apostles, who were present, as Prophets, Seers, Revelators, and *special witnesses to all the nations of the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom, to unlock it, or cause it to be done, among them, and uphold them by their prayers, which they assented to by rising.*"³ Days later, Smith met with about three hundred priesthood holders inside the Kirtland Temple and reemphasized the specific calling of the Apostles. "The Twelve also are not to serve tables, *but to bear the keys of the Kingdom to all nations, and unlock the door of the Gospel to them.*"⁴ The following year, however, the Prophet clarified that although the Twelve had received these keys, they could exercise the associated rights only when acting under the direction of the president of the Church, not the president of their apostolic quorum (D&C 112).⁵ Although no Apostle dedicated a land for the preaching of the gospel during the Prophet's lifetime (1830–1844), his language of "keys" and "unlock" would become part of the priesthood rite. Modern Apostles, as well as other priesthood leaders, have since dedicated

many of the world's lands and countries (some nations multiple times) for missionary work. Elder McKay's 1921 apostolic dedication of China marked the second Asian nation officially "unlocked" for LDS evangelism, the first being Japan in 1901.

Early Attempts to Introduce the Restored Gospel in Asia

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, the Prophet Joseph Smith sent missionaries throughout North America and to Europe to spread Mormonism. However, it was not until after his assassination and the pioneer exodus to the Utah Territory that most Mormons would actually meet any Asians at home or abroad. Not surprisingly, many of the earliest encounters between the two groups were the result of missionary work in the Pacific basin frontier. President Brigham Young and other Church leaders discussed sending missionaries to East Asia soon after gold was discovered in California. In March 1849 the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles sent out a letter to Church members at home in America and abroad in Britain. After sharing living conditions in Great Salt Lake City and discussing the prospects for future settlement, the leaders noted that one elder had returned the previous October from evangelizing in the South Pacific. Moreover, they announced that an Apostle would soon attempt to establish additional Mormon outposts in the Pacific, including one in the Pacific Rim nations. "Parley P. Pratt may accompany them to the Islands or to Chili [*sic*] with a view to establish the Gospel in South America, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, the various groups of the Pacific Islands, or to each or either of these places as the way may open up."⁶ While serving as president of the newly formed Pacific Mission, Elder Pratt did travel to Chile and attempt to start missionary work in South America, but he never made it to China or Japan, as hoped.⁷

During the middle of the nineteenth century, millenarian LDS leaders and members alike kept busy divining the signs of the times, convinced that Christ's Second Coming was at the door. In 1848, months after the first Latter-day Saints entered the Salt Lake Valley, revolutions broke out in Europe, first in Sicily and then in France, Germany, Italy, and the Austrian Empire. Although all of these continental revolutions ended in failure, they intensified the feeling that humankind was living on borrowed time, and alarmed Church leaders debated where to send missionaries to raise the warning voice.⁸ In light of these perceived apocalyptic conditions, they issued a general epistle in September 1851. In the letter, President Young and his counselors made reference to the revolutions seemingly exploding all across the globe, and intimated that they might call missionaries to China and Japan, "which for ages have sat in darkness."⁹ In August 1852, hundreds of Latter-day Saints

gathered in the bowery in downtown Salt Lake City for a missionary-themed general conference.¹⁰ President Young, believing the millennium was impending, called over one hundred missionaries to labor in the European nations of Ireland, Wales, France, Germany, Norway, Denmark, and Gibraltar; in Cape of Good Hope, Africa; in North America, specifically Nova Scotia, West Indies, British Guiana, Texas, New Orleans, St. Louis, Iowa, and Washington DC; and the isles of the Pacific, namely Australia and the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands. President Young also assigned a number of men to commence missionary work in the Asian nations of Hindustan (India), Siam (Thailand), and China.¹¹

That fall, nearly forty missionaries called to the Pacific basin frontier departed from Utah for the California coast, where they started out for Asia, Polynesia, and Australia. President Young did not send missionaries to the Japanese at that time because Japan was closed to the commercial, diplomatic, and religious overtures of the West.¹² The handful of Mormons assigned to South and Southeast Asia struggled in their missionary efforts for several years before abandoning their evangelism posts. A number of factors contributed to their lack of success. Their proselytizing practices were ill-suited for the Indians and other Asians they encountered who hoped to benefit financially from their association with Westerners. The elders also lacked the necessary language skills to work among the non-English speaking masses outside of the British cantonments. Unlike their counterparts in North America and Western Europe who relied on the financial generosity of Church members and strangers in their mission fields, the Mormon elders in India, Siam, and Burma found the Asians too destitute and philosophically unwilling to underwrite their missionary endeavors. The Mormons also suffered from pitiable living conditions, sickness, inadequate medical care, and lack of transportation. They converted only about seventy people, many of them expatriate Europeans, before returning to Utah.¹³

The missionaries assigned to China were even less fortunate. Three of them arrived in Hong Kong but were unable to generate any interest on the part of the native Chinese or the expatriate Europeans. To make matters worse, the Taiping Rebellion, which lasted from 1850 until 1864, was raging on mainland China.¹⁴ In a letter to President Young, one of the missionaries described their precarious situation: “The foreigners in Shanghai have formed themselves into an armed neutrality to be ready for the worst—not knowing what may happen. There is a great deal of excitement in all the trading posts. The troops here are held in readiness to act as occasion requires.” Even though American warships had arrived in the East China Sea, the missionary judged China “in a state of excitement, very unsafe to penetrate to the interior.” The same was true of other foreign settlement ports dotting the East and South

China Sea.¹⁵ Natural conditions such as the heat, humidity, and precipitation of Hong Kong added to the elders' discouragement. Unaccustomed to the sticky humidity, scorching temperatures, and heavy rains, the elders found it difficult to hold outdoor meetings.¹⁶ Soon they determined to temporarily abandon missionary work in China. They returned to America on the *Rose of Sharron* and eventually made their way back to Utah.¹⁷ In 1856, Mormon leaders shuttered missionary work in all other parts of Asia.

Interestingly, the first Chinese Latter-day Saints who converted to Mormonism in 1854 were immigrant laborers living in Hilo.¹⁸ The following year, Church member Alexander Badlam, then living in California, came in contact with a number of Chinese workers. With the encouragement of Church leaders in Utah, Badlam drafted a long letter regarding the prospects for missionary work among the Chinese in California and elsewhere.¹⁹ Encouraged by these reports, in March 1857, President Young wrote to his nephew John R. Young, who was presiding over the mission in Hawaii, expressing hope that the radiance of Mormonism might go forth among all peoples, including the Chinese. "The millions of China's population, that now worship, they know not what, have yet to learn of the living & true God, and tho they have turned a deaf ear to them when we sent unto them, they may yet listen to the truth, when proclaimed to them by some of their own nation. I am glad that you have baptized some of them, and pray that the number, intelligence and faith of all such may be increased."²⁰ But the Utah War of 1857 disrupted LDS evangelism around the world. Young recalled Mormon men of all ages from their missionary responsibilities abroad to help fortify the Utah Territory against federal assault. The missionaries teaching the Chinese in Hawaii and California packed their belongings and returned to Utah. Historian Will Bagley suggests that "this early interest in Asia demonstrated the worldwide vision of the LDS Church, even as it struggled to survive in the Rocky Mountains."²¹ A number of Japanese immigrants in Hawaii also encountered the members and missionaries of the LDS Church during the final decade of the nineteenth century.²² During the first decades of the twentieth century, additional Chinese and Japanese men and women embraced LDS teachings and formed a nucleus of Asian Church members in the mid-Pacific.²³

Asians in Utah

The migration of Chinese and Japanese workers was not just limited to Hawaii and California. By the late nineteenth century, the majority of Latter-day Saints lived in North America, due to the Church's earlier policy of gathering to the "American Zion." Most Church members lived in Utah, the stronghold of Mormon country.²⁴ Settled in 1847 by predominantly Euro-

American Mormons, the state of Utah was and is dominated racially by whites and religiously by Mormons. From 1850 to 1960, at least ninety-eight percent of Utahns were white. By 1990 this figure had dropped to only ninety-four percent. Nevertheless, hundreds of Chinese and Japanese immigrants made Utah their home during the nineteenth century.²⁵ Several Koreans also worked in Utah mines during the 1890s, but nothing is known of their backgrounds. The Korean migration to Utah would not begin in earnest until the first decade of the twentieth century.²⁶ Moreover, the Latter-day Saints would not have meaningful encounters with the Koreans until after World War II.²⁷ These migrations resulted in regular encounters between Asian and white Mormons and other residents of Utah, from which we can learn more about LDS attitudes towards East Asians.

Chinese immigrants first arrived in Utah as laborers helping to build the Central Pacific Railroad, linking Sacramento, California, with Promontory, Utah, in the years following the Civil War. When the transpacific railroad was completed in 1869, former railroad construction workers settled in northern Utah, most in Box Elder County, and continued to work in the railroad industry. In early Utah, most Chinese railroad workers formed their close-knit communities near their places of employment and apart from white residents. At one point in the late nineteenth century, Corinne was home to about three hundred Chinese immigrants. Ogden, Utah's quintessential railroad town as the connection point of several railroad lines, had over a hundred Chinese residents by 1890. Most of these Asian immigrants congregated in a growing Chinatown noted for its unique structures and Chinese businesses. The mining towns of Park City, Pleasant Valley, and Silver Reef benefited from the contributions of hundreds of Chinese workers. By 1890 there was a total of 806 Chinese in Utah. By the turn of the twentieth century, Utah's capital, Salt Lake City, boasted the most Chinese residents, most of who lived in Plum Alley, the state's largest Chinatown.²⁸

The nineteenth-century Euro-American response to the Chinese in Utah was wide-ranging. As in other parts of the West during postbellum America, the Chinese faced increasing hostility in Utah, especially in mining areas where they were seen as a threat to other lower class white workers. Nevertheless, the Utah Chinese did not face the same level of discrimination that they did in other western states. Some Utah newspapers even defended the Chinese immigrants during the period of anti-Asian immigration. Many Utahns viewed the Chinese as benign curiosities to be tolerated and sometimes even celebrated, especially during their holiday festivals. "Most white residents of Utah tended to view the Chinese as a faceless, if not nameless, seemingly indistinguishable group of people who tended to cluster in predominantly white communities," historian Daniel Liestman records.²⁹ As the Chinese

population expanded, however, some Utah residents viewed the mysterious Chinatowns as dens of iniquity where gambling, prostitution, violence, and opium smoking had become, or at least were believed to be, commonplace in these Chinese enclaves. Nativist white labor groups also complained that their members were losing jobs to the Asian immigrants. With mining on the decline, many Chinese switched to service industries, including laundries, restaurants, and grocery stores. Some even worked in the medical field, introducing traditional Chinese healing practices to Utah.³⁰

Although the Chinese and white inhabitants lived in essentially separate spheres in nineteenth-century Utah, members of various Utah Christian denominations attempted to evangelize the Chinese. Several Protestant churches sought to build relationships with their Asian neighbors through English conversation classes in hopes of eventually introducing Christianity to their students. Lena Wakefield, a representative of the American Home Missionary Society in Salt Lake City, began teaching an English class in 1881. By 1895 the Congregational church's education outreach enjoyed the attendance of over a hundred Chinese students. Utah Methodists also targeted the Chinese for conversion, and in time held services specifically for their growing Chinese communicants. Baptists in Ogden also set up a Chinese Sunday School in the 1890s. For some reason, Latter-day Saints were skeptical of the Protestant evangelism of the Chinese immigrants in their midst, unconvinced that Christian educational efforts would result in lasting conversions. Ironically, the normally missionary-minded Mormons did next to nothing to fellowship and evangelize the Chinese in Utah. The Chinese likewise showed little interest in the LDS faith and continued to worship in the handful of "Joss houses" located in northern Utah.³¹ Hundreds of Japanese immigrants also made their way to Utah during the late nineteenth century and were employed by the railroads and agricultural community.³² While Chinese and Japanese migrations to Hawaii and California led to nineteenth-century evangelistic efforts by the Latter-day Saints, it is surprising that the same cannot be said of similar encounters in Utah.

The Twelve's Global Responsibility

Following the death of President Wilford Woodruff in September 1898, Apostle Lorenzo Snow was sustained as Mormonism's fifth prophet-president. His short administration (1898–1901) was marked by the Church's improving financial position and heightened international outreach. Under President Snow's direction, Mormonism entered the twentieth century with 283,765 members, 967 wards and branches, 43 stakes, and 4 temples. In addition, nearly a thousand men and women were evangelizing in over a dozen

mission fields.³³ However, the vast majority of these members, congregations, and edifices were located in North America and did not represent the world's population. Up to this point, LDS missionary work and resources had mainly focused on the nations of North America and Western Europe. Disturbed by this trend, President Snow determined to shift the Church's attention to the nations of East Asia, South America, and Eastern Europe. Believing that Christ's Second Coming was nigh, Church leaders felt that they needed to fulfill the Great Commission in lands heretofore untouched by Mormon evangelists.³⁴ This included Asia, the world's most populous continent, where no Mormon evangelical activity had taken place since the 1850s. Furthermore, in President Snow's mind, the central responsibility of the Twelve was "to warn the nations of the earth and prepare the world for the coming of the Savior," not to overly busy themselves with stake and ward duties, which were the responsibilities of stake presidents and bishops.³⁵ LDS Apostles had been much more involved in foreign missionary work before external and internal stresses forced their retreat to the Great Basin during the 1880s and 1890s.³⁶ But President Snow believed that his lieutenants needed to refocus their energies outward, not inward, to fulfill their errand to the world, just as their apostolic predecessors had done for much of the nineteenth century.

President Snow was not a lone voice in the First Presidency regarding the declining Mormon missionary enterprise at the start of the twentieth century. First Presidency Counselor George Q. Cannon was likewise concerned with the Church's flagging missionary program. He believed the Church was "expending means and time with deficient [conversion] results" as it entered the new century.³⁷ These new missionary realities encouraged President Cannon and others to also advocate the opening of new missionary fields in countries where the "believing blood of Israel" might yet be discovered.³⁸ President Cannon expressed his millenarian vision of twentieth-century evangelism in the October 1900 general conference: "I have had resting upon my mind now for some time a feeling to call upon the Latter-day Saints and tell them that the coming of the Lord is near, even at our doors," he declared. LDS missionaries were no longer enjoying the returns that they once did and time was running out; individual elders were baptizing only about two people a year. "I would not dare to tell you how much money is spent as well as time to do this," President Cannon complained. As the Latter-day Saints were commanded by scripture to warn all of the nations, he too promoted a reallocation of evangelism resources away from underperforming missionary fields. "Hundreds of Elders now in the missionary fields might leave this nation, and go to peoples who have never heard the sound of the Gospel," he suggested. "Oriental lands now untouched by the Elders of the Church have to be penetrated and the honest souls sought out." President Snow's counselor viewed Japan as the toehold

needed for the Mormon expansion into Asia. "If the time has come for Elders to go to Japan, let Japan be penetrated. After a while perhaps an opening may be made in Korea, and in Manchuria, and in China."³⁹

The waning missionary success in North American and Western European mission fields, coupled with a renewed sense of millenarian urgency, persuaded President Snow and his advisors to finally look East instead of West. But rather than orchestrating the evangelism of hundreds of Chinese and Japanese immigrants living within miles of their offices at Church headquarters, they determined to take the gospel directly to East Asia. On February 14, 1901, during a weekly meeting of the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, President Cannon announced the establishment of the Japan Mission and called Apostle Heber J. Grant as its president.⁴⁰ The Mormon errand to the Asian world had recommenced. President Cannon's 1900 conference address and the Church's 1901 establishment of the Japan Mission signaled a shift in LDS Church policy regarding the global deployment of missionaries: Church authorities were taking more notice of the East. It is fitting, therefore, that the first twentieth-century apostolic dedicatory prayer was offered by Elder Grant, while he served as president of the Japan Mission. On Sunday, September 1, 1901, just two weeks after arriving in Japan on the *Empress of India*, the newly minted mission president and his three companions left their Yokohama hotel and walked for a good twenty minutes until they happened upon an isolated grove of trees on a hillside overlooking the Yokohama harbor. After the singing of hymns and the offering of prayers, by virtue of his apostolic keys, Elder Grant dedicated the Japanese nation for the preaching of the gospel. He closed by reading a copy of another dedicatory prayer given sixty years earlier on the other side of the world by fellow Apostle Orson Hyde in October 1841.⁴¹ Although President Snow passed away months before this dedication, his renewed emphasis on the global leadership role of the apostles inspired Elder Grant not only to dedicate Japan, but also to oversee the apostolic dedication of additional lands after he was sustained as Church President in 1918.

In 1920, the First Presidency, now led by President Heber J. Grant, determined to send a General Authority around the world to observe post-World War I Church conditions. They realized that it was critical that Church leaders had a clear understanding of where they should allocate their rebounding evangelistic resources as missionaries were again able to procure foreign visas throughout the world. Moreover, there was historical precedence for such an international fact-finding mission. Twenty-five years earlier, in 1895, the First Presidency indulged Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson's desire to fulfill a special mission to visit all of the Church's non-domestic missions to gather historical materials.⁴² In an 1896 meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve,

Elder Francis M. Lyman proposed that at least one Apostle should annually visit each of the Church's non-North American missions. "He favored a trip around the world at least once a year by one of the Apostles. He felt the Apostles should be in a position from personal knowledge through visiting our missions to be able to report their condition correctly to the Presidency of the Church," one attendee noted.⁴³ Furthermore, Elder Grant contemplated touring the missions of the Pacific on several occasions, including while serving in Japan as mission president between 1901 and 1903.⁴⁴ The First Presidency also encouraged and financed an exploratory tour of China by two enterprising missionaries—Alma O. Taylor and Frederick Caine—on their way home from Japan in 1910 to determine whether or not they should evangelize the Chinese. After weeks in China, they concluded that the time was not yet right for the Church to send missionaries there.⁴⁵

Elder McKay's Journey to China

In October 1920, during a weekly meeting of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, President Heber J. Grant called Elder David O. McKay on a one-year fact-finding mission. He was to tour the Church's evangelical outposts in Japan, Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, and possibly South Africa, the British Isles, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and Germany. The Mormon prophet also directed Elder McKay to dedicate the Chinese realm for future LDS evangelism, if he felt so impressed. The young Apostle was understandably caught by surprise (he was in the process of moving south from Ogden to Salt Lake City), yet Elder McKay agreed to go and spent that evening with William C. Spence, the Church's travel agent, planning his route. The headline "Two Church Workers will Tour Missions of Pacific Islands" ran the following day in the *Deseret News*. In the accompanying article, President Grant announced the forthcoming mission of Elder McKay and Hugh J. Cannon, president of the Liberty Stake: "He will make a general survey of the missions, study conditions there, gather data concerning them, and in short, obtain general information in order that there may be some one [sic] in the deliberations of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve thoroughly familiar with actual conditions."⁴⁶

That December, Elder McKay and Cannon said tender goodbyes to their families, especially to their wives—Emma Ray and Sarah—who were both recovering from recent childbirth. They traveled by train to Vancouver, Canada, then boarded a steamship bound for Asia. After steaming across the Pacific, the two men arrived at Yokohama, Japan, on December 23, 1920, just in time for the holidays. Not surprisingly, they experienced culture shock. By the second decade of the twentieth century, Japan had emerged on the

international stage as a hybrid of traditional Asian and progressive European cultures, through its efforts to adapt to, and take advantage of, the world's best technologies. One of the men described his initial impressions of East Asia:

Here, too, one enters a new world. The people, themselves so different in features and dress from the Europeans, the buildings, temples, pagodas and shrines, rikishas drawn by fleet-footed youths, heavy wagons drawn by men or oxen or small horses or by a combination of all three, all were as unusual as if the stranger were indeed arriving on a heretofore unknown planet.

But no! After running the gauntlet of custom officials he attempts to cross the street and is in grave danger of colliding with an intimate acquaintance—one might say a rattling good friend—a Ford automobile. One feels inclined to pick it up and hug it, such is the delight at seeing something so familiar.⁴⁷

The two Americans continued to be fascinated by Japan's mixture of "Occidental" and "Oriental" cultures, including its transportation system. Both regarded Tokyo's trains, streetcars, automobiles, and watercraft to be excellent by Euro-American standards. They even smiled upon the novelty of antiquated *jinrikishas* that transported them from the docks to the mission home.

But the First Presidency's ecclesiastical observers were less enamored with the status of LDS evangelism among the Japanese. On the first Sunday of 1921, Elder McKay presided over a mission conference and asked the American missionaries for details on the spiritual status of each Japanese convert. He and Cannon were disappointed by the reports. "We discovered thereby that this mission is at the very lowest possible ebb," he lamented in his diary. The next day, Elder McKay offered a number of suggestions to the assembled missionaries, hopeful to help improve the fortune of the mission. He devoted much of his official report for Church leaders in Utah to suggest potential connections between Mormonism and Japanese culture.⁴⁸ After completing their official visit to the mission, Elder McKay and Cannon packed up their bags and headed for China, where they hoped to reach its capital city the following Saturday night so that Elder McKay could potentially offer the apostolic dedicatory prayer for the Chinese realm on the Sabbath. "As Peking [Beijing] is really the heart of China, we had concluded that this would be an appropriate place to perform this sacred and far-reaching duty," Elder McKay explained in his diary.⁴⁹

However, as Elder McKay and Cannon continued their journey east from Tokyo to Peking, via the Korean peninsula, they lamented the more primitive Korean transportation system. "Roads appear to consist mainly of foot paths and the transportation of the country seems to be carried on the backs of cows and oxen," Cannon contrasted with Japan. "Yonder an immense load of straw moved along the path without any visible means of locomotion, but somewhere under the mass was a patient cow. At the same time the driver,

trudging along on foot, had a huge load on his own back.”⁵⁰ China was even a greater disappointment to the First Presidency’s representatives as they rode the rails towards Peking. “When one contemplates what the magnificence of this mighty empire must have been centuries and centuries ago, as evidenced by the mute monuments on every hand, and then sees what it is today, one can only exclaim, ‘How have the mighty fallen,’” Elder McKay mourned. “China is a disintegrating nation. China is a mercenary nation. China is a land of beggars and parasites! China appears to be made up of not a religious but a superstitious people. . . . The Chinese people cannot be successfully Christianized by the usual missionary propaganda.”⁵¹

The duo were nevertheless pleased when their train pulled into the Peking Train Station on Saturday evening, January 8, as planned. Yet their impressions of Peking were hardly positive, in contrast with their earlier opinions of Tokyo. “The horde of ragged and revolting mendicants, grimy porters and insistent jinrikisha men, who fought noisily for possession of us, as we emerged from the station, was not such as to inspire a feeling of affectionate brotherhood,” Cannon bemoaned. “However, we had gone to Peking to do the Lord’s will, as nearly as we could ascertain what it was.”⁵² “Think of a city of a million inhabitants without a street car or omnibus line!” a disappointed Cannon noted of China’s capital city.

The principal means of transportation—indeed the only means except for one’s legs and an occasional auto or a small horse-drawn carriage at the time of this visit were the innumerable rikishas. These flit rapidly and silently through crowded streets, dexterously avoiding collisions which to the traveler appear wholly unavoidable and furnish an excellent opportunity of seeing Chinese life. A facetious American has dubbed these conveyances “pull-man” cars. This was Peking.⁵³

These observations played into the content of Elder McKay’s soon to be offered prayer on behalf of the Chinese.

Elder McKay and Cannon spent that first night at the French-funded Grand Hôtel de Pékin, today known as the Grand Hotel Beijing, located just south of the ancient Forbidden City. Before retiring for bed, Elder McKay and Cannon prayed to know if they should proceed with the dedication the following day. “His inspiration rested upon his servant in charge,” Cannon noted of his apostle-companion, and they tentatively determined to move forward.⁵⁴ Elder McKay was well aware of the historic nature of his first and only dedicatory prayer over a land for the preaching of the gospel, although he had never personally witnessed the offering of such a prayer. “It had been Peter’s duty and privilege to preach the Gospel first to the Gentiles. Please note that when the Lord desired the Gentiles to hear His word, He instructed the Chief

of the Twelve to turn the key that opened the Gospel door to them. This is one of the special duties of the Apostleship," Elder McKay later wrote.⁵⁵

The Dedication

After a sound night's sleep, Elder McKay and Cannon awoke Sunday morning, ready to complete their First Presidency assignment. There was not a cloud on the horizon, and the sun was shining brightly. Yet they again knelt together, and then apart, seeking renewed confirmation of their late night decision. Finally, Elder McKay concluded that the time was "near at hand when these teeming millions should at least be given a glimpse of the glorious Light now shining among the children of men in other and more advanced nations."⁵⁶ After breakfast, the two men left the hotel, bundled in winter coats and hats, in search of a proper dedication site. "But where, in the midst of that clamor and confusion, could a suitable spot be found?" Cannon asked his readers. "The city lies on a level, barren plain. There are no forests, and, as far as we knew, no groves nor even clumps of trees. We were wholly unfamiliar with the city and had met no one who could enlighten us. If we went outside the surrounding walls, there was reason to believe no secluded spot could be found nor the ever-present crowd of supplicants avoided." So they remained for a time within the walled seclusion of the neighboring Legation Quarter before venturing out into the bustling Chinese capital.⁵⁷

Historians are compelled to discern small clues scattered throughout Elder McKay and Cannon's personal writings to excavate what happened next. The duo likely walked south from their landmark hotel on either the British Road or Rue Meu, both of which bifurcated the Legation Quarter, and then turned west when they reached Legation Street or Wall Street, passing by the American legation and its fluttering flag. Leaving the calm of the foreigner enclave, Elder McKay and Cannon again changed direction, strolling north towards the Imperial City, eventually passing through the Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tiananmen), the main southern entrance of the Chinese compound. From here, their wandering options would have been limited in 1921. To their northeast was the sacred Temple of Ancestors, which was then off-limits to foreign tourists and Chinese commoners. To their north was the Meridian Gate (Wumen), which provided only Chinese royalty access to the still aptly named Forbidden City. But to their northwest was the Central Park, a popular public pleasure ground since 1914, which surrounded the ancient Altar of Earth and Grain. According to one contemporary writer, the sixty-acre public garden was "even gayer with its old stone benches under the trees of what used to be Palace gardens, till they were set aside for public recreation, and its flower beds enlivened by booths and restaurants, its artificial hills, its *kangs* filled

with wonderful goldfish. The crowds that patronize all these attractions are extremely well dressed, decorous, intelligent, and are interesting as representatives of the best classes of residents in the capital.”⁵⁸ Today these grounds are known to Beijing residents as Zhongshan Park (*zhongshan gongyuan*), renamed in honor of Chinese revolutionary Sun Yatsen in 1928.

The area, not technically part of the Forbidden City, seemed appropriate as a general setting for the dedicatory prayer. “Directed, as we believe, by a Higher Power, we came to a grove of cypress trees, partially surrounded by a moat [Tongzihe or Tube River], and walked to its extreme northwest corner, then retraced our steps until reaching a tree with divided trunk which had attracted our attention when we first saw it,” Cannon explained. Elder McKay felt impressed that the dedication should occur under its boughs. Two men loitered nearby, but soon departed. “A reposeful peace hovered over the place which seemed already hallowed; one felt that it was almost a profanation to tread thereon with covered head and feet,” Cannon recalled. “There, in the heart of a city with a million inhabitants, we were entirely alone, except for the presence of a divinely sweet and comforting Spirit.”⁵⁹ By now it was around noon on Sunday, January 9, 1921.

Before he offered his own dedicatory prayer, Elder McKay invited Cannon to consecrate the location as a sacred space for “prayer and supplication.” Then the Apostle, under the direction of President Grant and by the authority of his apostolic keys, spontaneously “dedicated and set apart the Chinese realm for the preaching of the glad tidings of great joy.”⁶⁰ Below is the complete extant text of the dedicatory prayer.

Our Heavenly Father: In deep humility and gratitude, we thy servants approach thee in prayer and supplication on this most solemn and momentous occasion. We pray thee to draw near unto us, to grant us the peace asked for in the opening prayer by Brother Cannon; and to let the channel of communication between thee and us be open, that thy word may be spoken, and thy will be done. We pray for forgiveness of any folly, weakness or light mindedness that it may not stand between us and the rich outpouring of thy Holy Spirit. Holy Father, grant us thy peace and thy inspiration, and may we not be disturbed during this solemn service.

For thy kind protection and watchful care over us in our travels by land and by sea, we render our sincere gratitude. We are grateful, too, for the fellowship and brotherly love we have one for the other, that our hearts beat as one, and that we stand before thee this holy Sabbath day with clean hands, pure hearts, and with our minds free from all worldly cares.

Though keenly aware of the great responsibility this special mission entails, yet we are thankful that thou hast called us to perform it. Heavenly Father, make us equal, we beseech thee, to every duty and task. As we visit thy Missions in the various parts of the world, give us keen insight into the conditions and needs of each, and bestow upon us in rich abundance the gift of discernment.

With grateful hearts, we acknowledge thy guiding influence in our travels to this great land of China, and particularly to this quiet, and secluded spot in the heart

of this ancient and crowded city. We pray that the petition setting this spot apart as a place of prayer and dedication may be granted by thee and that it may be held sacred in thy sight.

Holy Father, we rejoice in the knowledge of the Truth, and in the restoration of the Gospel of the Redeemer. We praise thy name for having revealed thyself and thine Only Begotten Son to thy servant, Joseph the Prophet, and that through thy revelations the Church, in its purity and perfection, was established in these last days, for the happiness and eternal salvation of the human family. We thank thee for the Priesthood, which gives men authority to officiate in thy holy name.

In this land there are millions who know not thee nor thy work, who are bound by the fetters of superstition and false doctrine, and who have never been given the opportunity even of hearing the true message of their Redeemer. Countless millions have died in ignorance of thy plan of life and salvation. We feel deeply impressed with the realization that the time has come when the light of the glorious Gospel should begin to shine through the dense darkness that has enshrouded this nation for ages.

To this end, therefore, by the authority of the Holy Apostleship, I dedicate and consecrate and set apart the Chinese Realm for the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as restored in this dispensation through the Prophet Joseph Smith. By this act, shall the key be turned that unlocks the door through which thy chosen servants shall enter with Glad Tidings of Great Joy to this benighted and senile nation. That their message may be given in peace, we beseech thee, O God, to stabilize the Chinese government. Thou knowest how it is torn with dissension at the present time, and how faction contends against faction to the oppression of the people and the strangling of the nation's life. Holy Father, may peace and stability be established throughout this republic, if not by the present government, then through the intervention of the allied powers of the civilized world.

Heavenly Father, manifest thy tender mercy toward thy suffering children throughout this famine stricken realm! Stay the progress of pestilence, and may starvation and untimely death stalk no more through the land. Break the bands of superstition, and may the young men and young women come out of the darkness of the Past into the Glorious Light now shining among the children of men. Grant, our Father, that these young men and women may, through upright, virtuous lives, and prayerful study, be prepared and inclined to declare this message of salvation in their own tongue to their fellowmen. May their hearts, and the hearts of this people, be turned to their fathers that they may accept the opportunity offered them to bring salvation to the millions who have gone before.

May the Elders and Sisters whom thou shalt call to this land as missionaries have keen insight into the mental and spiritual state of the Chinese mind. Give them special power and ability to approach this people in such a manner as will make the proper appeal to them. We beseech thee, O God, to reveal to thy servants the best methods to adopt and the best plans to follow in establishing thy work among this ancient, tradition-steeped people. May the work prove joyous, and a rich harvest of honest souls bring that peace to the workers' hearts which surpasseth all understanding.

Remember thy servants, whom thou hast chosen to preside in thy Church. We uphold and sustain before thee President Heber J. Grant who stands at the head at this time, and his counselors, President Anthon H. Lund and President Charles W. Penrose. Bless them, we pray thee, with every needful blessing, and keep them one in all things pertaining to thy work. Likewise bless the Council of Twelve. May they continue to be one with the First Presidency. Remember the Presiding Patriarch, the First Council of Seventy, the Presiding Bishopric, and all who preside in stakes, wards, quorums,

organizations, temples, Church schools, and missions. May the spirit of purity, peace, and energy characterize all thy organizations.

Heavenly Father, be kind to our Loved Ones from whom we are now separated. Let thy Holy Spirit abide in our homes, that sickness, disease and death may not enter therein.

Hear us, O kind and Heavenly Father, we implore thee, and open the door for the preaching of thy Gospel from one end of this realm to the other, and may thy servants who declare this message be especially blest and directed by thee. May thy kingdom come, and thy will be done speedily here on earth among all peoples, kindreds and tongues preparatory to the winding up scenes of these latter days!

And while we behold thy guiding hand through it all, we shall ascribe unto thee the praise, the glory and the honor, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer, Amen.⁶¹

Cannon described Elder McKay's heavenly appeal as "an act destined to affect the lives of four hundred and fifty millions of people now living, as well as of millions and perhaps billions yet unborn." Yet he rightly acknowledged that "the vast majority of those affected may die in ignorance of the event."⁶² Elder McKay likewise appreciated the magnitude of what they had done in the heart of China. In a letter to Ogden friend John Watson, he described what transpired in Peking's Central Park: "This official act unlocked the door for the entrance of the authorized servants of the Lord into this land at such time in the future as the presiding Authorities feel impressed to call them. It was a most solemn and memorable occasion, one never to be forgotten by the two humble missionaries participating therein."⁶³

Elder McKay and Cannon returned to Japan after less than two weeks in China, where they were again impressed by everything, especially the people. "Certainly it is that thirty days in Japan and China have completely changed my views hitherto entertained of the Orient and Oriental people," Elder McKay penned in his diary.⁶⁴ Over the next eleven months they toured the non-American missions of the Church, returning to Utah in December 1921, after traveling 61,646 miles (23,777 by land and 37,869 by water) around the globe. Back home, the Apostle reflected on his experiences abroad, including his dedication of China, during his first post-fact-finding, mission general conference address. "I want to testify to you that God was with us when we stood beneath that tree in old China and turned the key for the preaching of the gospel in the Chinese realm. My words may not convince you of the fact, but no disputant can convince us that our souls were not filled to overflowing with the Spirit of God on that occasion."⁶⁵

The Church in East Asia, 1921–Present

Elder McKay returned to his apostolic duties and assignments as Church Commissioner of Education, while Cannon resumed his stake presidency re-

sponsibilities. The apostle eventually served as the president and public face of Mormonism for nearly two decades. During his administration, Church membership exploded, the number of missionaries increased six-fold, and note, Elder McKay's 1920–1921 apostolic tour “was a major first step toward comprehending that a worldwide church would consist of more than a series of copies of the Great Basin church.”⁶⁷ While traveling, Elder McKay came to appreciate that if Church members on the periphery were no longer expected to congregate in the Great Basin—where all of the Church's services and programs were offered—then the Church needed to provide these opportunities abroad. While visiting Hawaii on the same trip, Elder McKay was impressed to someday build a Church school where the LDS youth of the Pacific could be spiritually and mentally strengthened, like their counterparts in the Intermountain West. One of his early acts as Church president was to institute the construction of the Church College of Hawaii, known today as Brigham Young University-Hawaii. As Church Commissioner of Education he also returned to Utah with a laundry list of ways the Church could and would improve its educational offerings in the Pacific basin. Not only did the Pacific Islander and Australasian Saints deserve better schools, they also required an increase in the quantity and quality of permanent Church infrastructure. While Church members in North America enjoyed comfortable and substantial meeting-houses, the same could not be said of the international membership. Decades later, President McKay instituted a building program, unparalleled up to that point in Mormon history, to rectify this situation. Even more important, he promised the New Zealander Saints that there would someday be a temple in their midst, a pledge he fulfilled decades later.

Moreover, Elder McKay oversaw the spread of the gospel throughout East Asia, including parts of China, during his presidential years (1951–1970). While serving as a member of the First Presidency he helped organize early missionary work among the Chinese in Hong Kong. On July 14, 1949, Elder Matthew Cowley dedicated Hong Kong for the preaching of the gospel.⁶⁸ In 1955, President McKay sent Joseph Fielding Smith, then president of the Quorum of the Twelve, to East Asia to tour the Church's missions and dedicate new lands for the preaching of the gospel. President Smith first toured the mission and Church sites of Japan, and then continued on to Korea, which he dedicated on August 2. While in Asia, he also divided the sprawling Far East Mission into the Northern Far East Mission, overseeing Japan, Korea, and Okinawa, and the Southern Far East Mission, comprising the nations of Guam, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Taiwan, and lands of South and Southeast Asia, including mainland China, although the latter was not opened to LDS evangelization. On August 21, President Smith dedicated the Philippines, and on August 25, Guam for the preaching of the gospel. But he was unable to

make it to Taiwan that summer.⁶⁹ Four years later, President McKay assigned Elder Mark E. Peterson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to tour Taiwan during the summer of 1959. While in Taipei, Elder Peterson met with mission leaders and Church members on Chung Shan North Road, immediately south of the Grand Hotel, and there specifically dedicated the island of Formosa (Taiwan), on June 1.⁷⁰ “We remember the journeys made by President McKay and President Cannon in those days. We remember their faith and we remember the way in which they reported the wonderful journey they made. We are grateful for them and we are grateful for the general dedication of the Far East for the preaching of the everlasting gospel,” Elder Peterson prayed, making reference to the prophet’s earlier blessing. “As this dedication was made by President McKay, we do thank Thee for all that; and we do thank Thee that as a result since those days the Gospel has been preached here and that many have received it and have received many of the blessings of the Gospel and have given thanks to Thee for the blessings.”⁷¹

During the final years of his life, one of President McKay’s priority projects was the translation of the Book of Mormon into Chinese and other Asian languages. Although the original Japanese translation was published in 1909, he presided over its retranslation and republication in 1957. January 16, 1966, became a red-letter day in President McKay’s life, when Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles presented him with a Chinese translation of the LDS scripture, the language of seven hundred million people at the time. President McKay was delighted to read Elder Hinckley’s inscription, which made reference to his 1921 dedicatory prayer and ended: “The Book of Mormon is now available in the language which is the mother tongue of more people than any other on earth. May it go forth among them as a witness of the Son of God, the Savior of the World.” The Church president later wrote in his diary: “With great emotion I gratefully received this inscribed copy, and commented upon the publication of the Chinese Book of Mormon, saying: ‘This is a great event in the history of the Chinese people. This brings back many fond and delightful memories, and especially of a warm and most delightful day in the early morning 45 years ago when I went with Brother Hugh J. Cannon into the Cyprus Grove. We were all alone as we offered the prayer, dedicating China for the reception of the Gospel.’” President McKay was also pleased to learn from Elder Hinckley that the Korean edition would be published soon, making the Book of Mormon available in the three major East Asian languages.⁷²

President McKay passed away in 1970, but his dream of taking the message of Mormonism to the Chinese did not die with him. Nine years later, diplomatic relations between the United States and China stabilized, prompting officials from Church-directed Brigham Young University to organize a

performance tour through China for the renowned Young Ambassadors. In April 1979, President Spencer W. Kimball suggested to the Church's Regional Representatives that the LDS evangelization of China was "not too distant." That summer Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles accompanied the BYU performing troupe to China where he, under the direction of President Kimball, rededicated mainland China at Beijing's Central Park, nearly sixty years after Elder McKay offered the original apostolic prayer in the same location.⁷³ "His prayer reflected that of Elder McKay's, both in content and in the fact that both prayers were offered in the Forbidden City and expressed the hope 'that thou wilt honor and recognize each of the great promises which [Elder McKay] spoke for the future benefit of this people and this great land,'" his biographer wrote.⁷⁴ And in November of 1984, President Gordon B. Hinckley, by this time a counselor in the First Presidency, offered the dedicatory prayer over the newly constructed Taipei Taiwan Temple, the Chinese Realm's first House of the Lord. "This is a long-awaited day. Our thoughts go back more than sixty years when, as Thou knowest, Thine apostle, David O. McKay, standing on Chinese soil, offered a dedicatory prayer on the great Chinese realm and on Thy work among the generations of the Chinese people," he began. Continuing the prayer he said:

Heavenly Father . . . break the bands of superstition, and may the young men and young women come out of the darkness of the past into the glorious light now shining among the children of men. Grant, our Father, that these young men and women may, through upright, virtuous lives, and prayerful study, be prepared and inclined to declare the message of salvation in their own tongue to their fellowmen. May their hearts and the hearts of this people be turned to their fathers that they may accept the opportunity offered them to bring salvation to the millions who have gone before.

So spoke Thine ordained servant [Elder McKay] long ago, and now we thank Thee, Father, for Thy response to that prophetic prayer. Missionaries have come here from afar to teach the everlasting gospel. Likewise, there have been many Chinese young men and women who have served faithfully and diligently as messengers of Thine eternal truth, speaking to their own people in their own tongue. Thousands have responded to their teachings. We thank Thee for the firm foundation on which Thy Church is now established in this part of the earth. We thank Thee for this day when those who will use this temple may turn their hearts to their fathers, participating in this Thy holy house in those ordinances which will make it possible for their deceased forebears to move forward on the way that leads to eternal life.⁷⁵

Twelve years later, President Hinckley, as Church president, dedicated the Hong Kong China Temple on May 26–27, 1996, which now serves the twenty-first century Latter-day Saints residents of China, Singapore, and Mongolia.⁷⁶

Since President Brigham Young called the first group of Mormon missionaries to China in 1852, many Latter-day Saints have wondered when the LDS

Church will enjoy full evangelization privileges among the mainland Chinese. In March 1991, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles offered a devotional address at Brigham Young University titled “Getting to Know China,” and spoke to this question. “The Chinese who are members of our Church make up such a tiny fraction of the total population of the People’s Republic of China that we could not really say that we have fulfilled our scriptural duty to teach that nation. This is especially clear when we do not have any missionaries in the People’s Republic of China,” the apostle began. “It is currently against the law to send foreign missionaries to China or to proselyte in that country. And because our Church observes the laws of each nation, we have no plans to send missionaries or to engage in proselyting activities in that great land.”⁷⁷ Elder Oaks then shared many of the positive contacts and exchanges the Church, as well as the BYU community, had enjoyed with Chinese officials and citizens over the past several decades. Moreover, he pointed out how the Chinese nation has been temporally blessed since 1921. “In his dedicatory prayer, [Elder McKay] pleaded with our Father in Heaven to bless the land of China and its people. . . . Many of Elder McKay’s petitions have now been answered.”⁷⁸ Elder Oaks concluded with his own thoughts on when mainland China would welcome LDS missionaries. “People sometimes ask me about what can be done to ‘open China,’” he began:

In response, I state my belief that China is already “open”—it is we who are closed. We are closed because we expect the Orient to be the same as the West, China to be the same as Canada or Chile. We must open our minds and our hearts to the people of this ancient realm and this magnificent culture. We must understand their way of thinking, their aspirations, and their impressive accomplishments. We must observe their laws and follow their example of patience. We must deserve to be their friends.

As we become friends of China, and as we learn from them, our Father in Heaven, who has made “all nations of men . . . and [has] determined . . . the bounds of their habitation” (Acts 17:26), will bring his purposes to pass in that great nation “in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will” (D&C 88:68).⁷⁹

Still, ninety years after Elder McKay offered his dedicatory prayer of the Chinese Realm, Mormonism has taken root in the hearts of many Chinese. As noted above, the LDS Church does not currently proselyte in the People’s Republic of China, except where permitted by law. By 2006, the Church in Hong Kong had 22,263 members. There were five stakes—Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong Kowloon West, Hong Kong New Territories, Hong Kong Tolo Harbour, and Hong Kong Kowloon East—in the former British colony; one district, twenty-six wards, and ten branches, in addition to the China Hong Kong Mission and the Hong Kong China Temple. The Church in neighboring Macau, a former Portuguese colony, had 1,125 members and

three branches.⁸⁰ And Taiwan also has a growing LDS presence. The Church there had 42,881 members, in nine stakes—Chung Hsing Taiwan, Hsin Chu Taiwan, Kaohsiung Taiwan, Taichung Taiwan, Tainan Taiwan, Taipei Taiwan Central, Taipei Taiwan East, Taipei Taiwan West, Tao Yuan Taiwan—scattered around the island, two districts, sixty-nine wards, and twenty-three branches. The Taiwanese Saints also support the Taiwan Kaohsiung, Taiwan Taichung, and Taiwan Taipei Missions, and patronize the Taipei Taiwan Temple.⁸¹

Back in 1921, Hugh J. Cannon expressed his hopes, along with those of Elder David O. McKay, “that at no very distant day the light of the Gospel may penetrate the present overwhelming darkness” of China. “Though the abject misery we beheld appealed to our tenderest sympathies, gold and silver we could not give, but the door was unlocked for them through which they may enter into eternal life.”⁸² In the minds of many Latter-day Saints, Cannon’s wishes, and Elder McKay’s apostolic prayer, are slowly but surely being answered.

Notes

1. David O. McKay, Diary, January 9, 1921, holograph, David O. McKay Papers, Manuscripts Division, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City. In addition to McKay’s diary (which Cannon regularly penned on his behalf during their year-long journey), additional primary sources documenting the 1921 dedication of China include: (1) Hugh J. Cannon, Journal, typescript, copy in author’s possession; (2) Hugh J. Cannon, “The Land of China Dedicated,” *Juvenile Instructor* 56, no. 3 (March 1921): 115–17, a short article he wrote en route from Yokohama, Japan, to Honolulu, Hawaii, on February 1, 1921, concurrently published as Hugh J. Cannon, “The Chinese Realm Dedicated for the Preaching of the Gospel,” *Improvement Era* 24, no. 5 (March 1921): 443–46; (3) Hugh J. Cannon, “Around-the-World Travels of David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon,” ca. 1925, typescript, microfilm, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; and (4) Hugh J. Cannon, “Around the World with Elders McKay and Cannon: One of a Series of Letters Recounting the Experiences, Grave and Gay, of Elders David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon, in Their Trip to the Pacific Islands, the Orient and Perhaps Around the Globe,” *Deseret News* (eighty letters published between January 15, 1921 and March 25, 1922). All of the accounts are first-person narratives.

2. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 2:200, emphasis mine (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*).

3. Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:417, emphasis mine.

4. Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:432, emphasis mine.

5. Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:499–501.

6. Parley P. Pratt and Franklin D. Richards, “An Epistle of the Twelve to President Orson Pratt, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles,” *Mil-lennial Star* 11, no. 16 (August 15, 1849): 247; also Journal History of the Church, May 6, 1849, Church History Library.

7. See A. Delbert Palmer and Mark L. Grover, "Hoping to Establish a Presence: Parley P. Pratt's 1851 Mission to Chile," *BYU Studies* 38 no. 4 (1999): 115–38.

8. See Craig Livingston, "Eyes on 'The Whole European World': Mormon Observers of the 1848 Revolutions," *Journal of Mormon History* 32, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 78–112.

9. "Sixth General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Millennial Star* 14, no. 2 (January 15, 1852): 17–18, 25.

10. "Seventh General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Millennial Star* 14, no. 21 (July 17, 1852): 325.

11. Journal History of the Church, August 28, 1852.

12. Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), 257–93.

13. R. Lanier Britsch, *From the East: The History of the Latter-day Saints in Asia, 1851–1996* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998), 8–42.

14. Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), 171–80. See also Thomas H. Reilly, *The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom: Rebellion and the Blasphemy of Empire* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004).

15. Stout to Young, May 16, 1853, as quoted in Hosea Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, Juanita Brooks, ed., 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:172.

16. James Lewis, Deseret News, January 4, 1854; and R. Lanier Britsch, "Church Beginnings in China," *BYU Studies* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1970): 169.

17. "Eleventh General Epistle of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Millennial Star* 16, no. 27 (July 8, 1854): 417.

18. R. Lanier Britsch, *Moramona: The Mormons in Hawaii* (Laie, HI: Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1989), 90.

19. Will Bagley, ed., "*Cities of the Wicked*": *Alexander Badlam Reports on Mormon Prospects in California and China in the 1850s* (Spokane: Arthur H. Clark, 1999), 12–22.

20. Brigham Young to John R. Young, March 1, 1857, Church History Library.

21. Bagley, "Cities of the Wicked", 14.

22. Shinji Takagi, "Tomizo and Tokujiro: The First Japanese Mormons," in *Taking the Gospel to the Japanese, 1901–2001*, Reid L. Neilson and Van C. Gessel, eds. (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2006), 179–220.

23. See Russell T. Clement and Sheng-Luen Tsai, "East Wind to Hawai'i: Contributions and History of Chinese and Japanese Mormons in Hawaii," in Grant Underwood, ed., *Voyages of Faith: Explorations in Mormon Pacific History* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 89–106; and Britsch, *Moramona*, 141–44.

24. Jan Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years Among the Mormons* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 258–60.

25. Pamela S. Perlich, *Utah Minorities: The Story Told by 150 Years of Census Data* (Salt Lake City: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, David S. Eccles School of Business, University of Utah, 2002), 1–19. "Hispanic" was not a separate category until the 1970 census.

26. Chung-Myun Lee, "Korean," in John H. Yang, comp., *Asian Americans in Utah: A Living History* (Salt Lake City: State of Utah Office of Asian Affairs, Asian American Advisory Council, 1999), 145–77.

27. Dong Sull Choi, "A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Korea" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1990), 80–92; and Spencer J. Palmer, *The Korean Saints: Personal Stories of Trial and Triumph, 1950–1980* (Provo: Religious Education, Brigham Young University, 1995).

28. Don C. Conley, "The Chinese in Utah," in Allan Kent Powell, ed., *Utah His-*

tory Encyclopedia (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 85–86; Perlich, *Utah Minorities*, 13; Daniel Liestman, “Utah’s Chinatowns: The Development and Decline of Extinct Ethnic Enclaves,” in Arif Kirlik, ed., *Chinese on the American Frontier* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 269–89; Don C. Conley, “The Pioneer Chinese of Utah,” in Helen Z. Papanikolas, ed., *The Peoples of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1976), 251–77.

29. Liestman, “Utah’s Chinatowns,” 269.

30. Liestman, “Utah’s Chinatowns,” 269–80. See also Michael Lansing, “Race, Space, and Chinese Life in Late-Nineteenth-Century Salt Lake City,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 72, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 219–38.

31. Liestman, “Utah’s Chinatowns,” 281–82; and Lansing, “Race, Space, and Chinese Life,” 236–37.

32. See Wendy Butler, “Strategies, Conditions, and Meaning of Early Japanese Labor in Salt Lake City, Utah, 1890–1920” (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 2002).

33. *Our Heritage: A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1996), 104; Gordon Irving, *Numerical Strength and Geographical Distribution of the LDS Missionary Force, 1830–1974* (Salt Lake City: Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1975), 14–15.

34. Rudger Clawson, Diary, June 26, 1901; “A Farewell Reception,” *Improvement Era* 4, no. 10 (August 1901): 796.

35. Joseph F. Smith, “The Last Days of President Snow,” *Juvenile Instructor* 36, no. 22 (November 15, 1901): 689–90; and B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century One*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: Corporation of the President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1965), 6:375.

36. In 1837, Joseph Smith sent several Apostles to the British Isles, where they labored with great success. Heber C. Kimball was the first mission president in Europe. In 1847, Brigham Young sent a number of Apostles to open new missionary fields in Europe, just three years after the first pioneers reached the Salt Lake Valley. Erastus Snow, for instance, led the first band of LDS missionaries to Scandinavia in 1850. That same year, John Taylor opened the French Mission, and Lorenzo Snow began preaching Mormonism in Italy. Moreover, during ensuing decades, Lorenzo Snow started the East Indian Mission (1851) and the Malta Mission (1852), Taylor reopened the Eastern States Mission (1854), Franklin D. Richards led the European Mission (1854), Joseph F. Smith reopened the Sandwich Islands Mission (1864), and Moses Thatcher organized the Mexican Mission (1879). Other Apostles served as missionaries in these and other mission fields during these same years. *Deseret Morning News 2006 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: *Deseret News*, 2005), 484–87.

37. George Q. Cannon, Journal, July 12, 1900, as quoted in Bitton, *George Q. Cannon*, 436.

38. Mauss, *All Abraham’s Children*, 34. See also “Believing Blood,” in Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 81.

39. George Q. Cannon, in *Seventy-First Semi-Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1900), 63–64, 66–68. See also Cannon, Journal, 6 September 1900, as quoted in Bitton, *George Q. Cannon*, 436–37.

40. Heber J. Grant, Japanese Journal, February 14 and June 26, 1901; Rudger Clawson, Diary, February 14, 1901.

41. Alma O. Taylor, Journal, September 1, 1901, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

42. Andrew Jenson, *Autobiography of Andrew Jenson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), 229.

43. Minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, April 1, 1896, Anthon Lund Collection, typescript, D. Michael Quinn Papers, Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut. I appreciate Jed Woodworth for bringing this source to my attention.

44. Ronald W. Walker, "Strangers in a Strange Land: Heber J. Grant and the Opening of the Japan Mission," in *Taking the Gospel to the Japanese*, 148; and Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), 358.

45. See Reid L. Neilson, "Alma O. Taylor's Fact-Finding Mission to China," *BYU Studies* 40, no. 1 (2001): 177–203.

46. "Two Church Workers will Tour Missions of Pacific Islands," *Deseret News*, October 15, 1920, 5.

47. Cannon, "Around-the-World Travels," 20–21.

48. McKay, Diary, January 2, 3, and 5, 1921.

49. McKay, Diary, January 9, 1921.

50. Cannon, "Around-the-World Travels," 33.

51. McKay, Diary, January 10, 1921.

52. Cannon, "The Land of China Dedicated," 115.

53. Cannon, "Around-the-World Travels," 35.

54. Cannon, "The Land of China Dedicated," 115.

55. David O. McKay, *Ancient Apostles* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1964), 113.

56. McKay, Diary, January 9, 1921.

57. Cannon, "The Land of China Dedicated," 115.

58. Juliet Bredon, *Peking: A Historical and Intimate Description of its Chief Places of Interest* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1922), 123, 456, emphasis in the original.

59. Cannon, "The Land of China Dedicated," 115.

60. McKay, Diary, January 9, 1921.

61. Cannon, "Around-the-World Travels," 37–41. Cannon recorded the prayer text in his memoirs but not in his journal, *Deseret News* correspondence, or the Church periodical account.

62. Cannon, "The Land of China Dedicated," 115–16.

63. David O. McKay to John Watson, January 16, 1921, typescript, David O. McKay Scrapbook #126, Manuscripts Division, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

64. McKay, Diary, 24 January 1921.

65. David O. McKay, "Elder David O. McKay," in *Ninety-Second Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1922), 65.

66. Mary Jane Woodger, "David O. McKay," in Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan, eds., *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 726–27.

67. Prince and Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 358–59.

68. Britsch, *From the East*, 231. See also Matthew Cowley, "Elder Matthew Cowley," in *One Hundred Twentieth Semi-Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1949), 45.

69. Britsch, *From the East*, 98–100, 176–78.

70. Britsch, *From the East*, 255–56. "Taiwan Jubilee: Saints Celebrate 50 Years,"

Ensign 36, no. 7 (July 2006): 77.

71. "Dedicatory Prayer: Taiwan," www.lds.chinese.com/library/dedications/TD.html (accessed September 13, 2007). Elder Peterson continued: "Now, Father, we remember also that Thy great Prophet, President [Joseph Fielding] Smith, was here in the Far East and that he also left his blessing dedicating various parts of these lands again unto Thee. It was not his privilege to dedicate this island or rededicate it so it is for this reason that we have assembled here today and we acknowledge the general dedication of the entire area by President McKay. Therefore we realize that we are offering a prayer of rededication and particularly to dedicate this particular island unto Thee."

72. McKay, Diary, January 19, 1966. See also *Church Almanac*, 638. The Korean translation was published in 1967.

73. Britsch, *From the East*, 301–02. See also Dell Van Orden, "'Door to China may be opening,'" *Church News*, April 7, 1979, 3, 9.

74. James P. Bell, *In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999), 154–55.

75. "'Glorious light now shining,'" *Church News*, November 25, 1984, 4. See also "First Temple in Chinese Realm," *Church News*, November 25, 1984, 3, 14.

76. "Hong Kong Temple: 'May Thy Watch Care Be Over It'" *Church News*, June 1, 1996, 4, *2007 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Morning News, 2006), 518.

77. Dallin H. Oaks, "Getting to Know China" in *Brigham Young University 1990–91 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1991), 93.

78. Oaks, "Getting to Know China," 97.

79. Oaks, "Getting to Know China," 100.

80. *2007 Church Almanac*, 334–37.

81. *2007 Church Almanac*, 463–64.

82. Cannon, "The Land of China Dedicated," 117.