Samuel Whitney Richards had been a Mormon for almost one third of his life when, in January 1846 at the age of 21, he was called by Nauvoo Temple President Joseph Young to receive his “endowments,” the most sacred rites of the Latter-day Saints. A few weeks later, on January 29, he and his “sweetheart,” Mary Haskin Parker, were married in the temple. For a number of weeks thereafter they assisted in the administration of endowments as temple workers. Working in the temple was not new to Samuel -- he had been doing so as a “joiner” since April 1845. This intricate and demanding carpentry work reflected the patience and deliberateness which he had cultivated from an early age and which came to characterize his life as a second echelon Mormon leader. He committed himself to his assigned tasks with typical Yankee energy and drive, whether in decorating the House of the Lord, saving souls, or thinning rutabagas.  

Another of Samuel’s character traits was his liking for social activity, in spite of the seriousness with which he took his religious calling. Although Nauvoo at that time was being threatened by hostile mobs, there always seemed to be time for socializing among the Saints. For example, on May 9th Samuel and Mary attended a party of the Quorum of the Twelve and their wives in the Temple where they learned “the rudiments of dancing” from instructor J. H. Nichols. On one occasion a party of fifty attended the dancing school at the temple until 3 am and were refreshed with “cakes, wine [and] Coffee.” Apparently the Nauvoo Temple was used as an assembly hall for public events, not just for formal religious rites. It should be noted that given the Mormon emphasis on wholesome recreation as an essential part of community life, using a part of the temple in this way was probably not considered inconsistent with its religious purposes.  

In addition, Samuel’s frequent mention of the use of coffee and wine is indicative of the fact that the “Word of Wisdom” prohibition against these beverages was at this time interpreted as more of a divine suggestion than a divine mandate.6

At the beginning of May 1846, Samuel learned from Wilford Woodruff and Orson Hyde that he and his brother Franklin has been called on a mission to England, the common, if mistaken, generic term for Great Britain. Before leaving for his mission Samuel escorted Mary to the other side of the Missouri River on May 19th and thence toward the Camp of Israel. On the 23rd he parted with his wife of just under four months to return to Nauvoo where he looked for work while waiting to leave for the United Kingdom.

On June 18 he had a daguerreotype photograph made for Mary “to have while I was from her.” On Independence Day he and Franklin received their parting blessings in the Temple and left Nauvoo.

Samuel’s feelings were, he said, better imagined than described: so much of his young life had been committed to the building up of Zion in Nauvoo -- he had worked on sixteen buildings, besides three public halls and the Temple -- indeed, it was a community “in which he had not been idle.”6 His life and labors in Nauvoo in a way foreshadowed the kind of unquestioning commitment which he would make the remainder of his days: he was blessed with faith to accept the inevitable as part of God’s will for him, even if the outcome was not clearly desirable -- at least from a human perspective. Nauvoo must be left behind along with Mary. A new mission beckoned and Samuel seemed energized by that prospect, even though it pained him to leave.

FREDERICK S. BUCHANAN in a professor of educational studies at the University of Utah where he teaches History of Education. He is also published in History of Scottish Emigration to Utah. He was born in Scotland and has done considerable research on the Mormon Church there. Recently, with his son Alan and his wife Rama, who is a great grand-daughter of Samuel Richards, he visited many of the areas which Samuel visited during his Scottish mission.
In the next two months he passed through St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia on his way to New York. The trip was almost a forward-looking time machine as he traveled from the agrarian West towards the more congested and smoke filled, fast industrializing East -- a foretaste of his entire mission residence in one of the centers of the emerging industrial era, 19th century Scotland, whose industrial workers have been described as the "shock troops of modernization." During August and September he and Franklin raised funds for their mission among the local Saints, and on September 22 they took passage on the "Queen of the West" for Liverpool.

In a lonesome mood Samuel wrote that he hoped Mary would not forget him as "days, weeks, months and years roll o'er your absent Samuel." Lonely for "my Mary" he no doubt was, but this twenty-two-year-old also gave every indication that he thoroughly enjoyed the high adventure of crossing the Atlantic on a sailing ship. Although thirty-foot waves threatened to engulf him, Samuel kept to the deck. He clearly relished every plunge to the depth, the bite of the wind on his face, and the tang of the salt on his lips. This Massachusetts Yankee was no land lubber: familiar with nautical terms and at home on the ocean, he rolled up his sleeves and pitched in to assist the crew. In the midst of a violent October storm on the North Atlantic, he noted that "the scene was too grand to be fearful," much to the discomfiture of sea-sick Franklin who was confined most of the time to his cabin. So successfully did Samuel quit himself as a seaman that Captain Wheelock offered him a position as a mate on his next voyage -- Franklin could come too, as a clerk!

His ability to quickly get his sea legs on this voyage was a portent of Samuel's approach to his life as a missionary, mission president, emigration agent, farmer, legislator, judge, husband, and father. Ever able to accommodate himself to the ups and downs of life, he charted and steered his way through calms, squalls and outright storms without compromising his principles or allowing the rough seas, in and out of Mormonism, to inundate his ship.

After some three weeks on the ocean Samuel began the first of his three missions to the British Isles. At a meeting in Manchester, he was assigned to labor in Scotland under Franklin's leadership. Mary, on hearing...
this news, expressed some surprise that he had been assigned to Scotland and wondered if the assignment were “agreeable to your feelings.” Perhaps they had counted on his being sent to labor among her own kith and kin in Lancashire. If Scotland were not agreeable to him, in the Richards’ tradition of selfless service, he gave no hint of dissatisfaction. On October 24th, after a few days visiting Mary’s kin, Samuel left Liverpool on the “Princess Royal” and on Sunday October 25 he arrived at the estuary of the River Clyde and then proceed to the center of industrial Scotland: Glasgow.9

Immediately on his arrival, Samuel joined the Glasgow Saints in worship at the Odd Fellows Hall at the Trongate. At the close of the meeting, he wrote, “the Saints flocked around me to grasp my hand and bid me welcome...so warm a reception I never before met.” Some even pressed gifts of money on him. Later on that first Sabbath in Scotland he preached to a “large congregation of Saints and Sinners.” Members followed Franklin and him to their lodgings just to hear what they had to say.10 News of affairs in Zion deeply interested the Saints: their caring for an ailing Orson Spencer (July 1847) and a few word about a future gathering place.

With the exception of a month spent in England caring for an ailing Orson Spencer (July 1847) and a few days in Ireland helping to organize branches there (6-14 October 1847), Scotland would be Elder Richards’ home for the next fifteen months. This outgoing, charismatic, sociable young Yankee felt completely at home among these strangers and knew how to make even taciturn Scots feel at ease. Throughout his mission the Saints sought Samuel out as a friend and advisor. They had great need of as much personal assurance as the Richards’ brothers could give; their faith and trust in church leadership of as much personal assurance as the Richards’ brothers had given; their faith and trust in church leadership of their request and the issue was resolved amicably.14 As the Saints flocked around me to grasp my hand and bid me welcome...so warm a reception I never before met.” Some even pressed gifts of money on him. Later on that first Sabbath in Scotland he preached to a “large congregation of Saints and Sinners.” Members followed Franklin and him to their lodgings just to hear what they had to say. News of affairs in Zion deeply interested the Saints: their caring for an ailing Orson Spencer (July 1847) and a few word about a future gathering place.

But before the mists were dispelled the Richards had to meet with numerous individuals and branches and convince them that the financial burdens that “Joint stockism” had imposed on them would be removed. While some members gladly cooperated-operated with them and surrendered money and records belonging to the defunct venture, others were not as trustful. A Brother McAllister had refused previous requests to give up the materials he held saying that he would not give the Joint Stock Company books to anyone -- not to President Hyde nor even to the Prophet himself. However, after meeting with the diplomatic entreaties of Samuel and Franklin, he agreed to their request and the issue was resolved amicably.14 As in so many instances, Samuel’s skills of persuasion turned a potentially combative situation into one in which “a good feeling was manifest throughout.”15

When Franklin was called to be President pro tem of the British Mission at the beginning of 1847, Samuel was left “in charge of all the Saints in Scotland” consisting of the Glasgow and Edinburgh Conferences.16 During the next year he had to call on all his natural skills as a diplomat in dealing with the often fractious and clannish Scots. He wore two hats as a missionary -- as the President of the Glasgow Conference and also as presiding officer of the church in all of Scotland. Franklin Richards later claimed that his greatest achievement as President of the British Mission in the 1850s was his initiation of the system of “pastors” -- as sort of intermediary between the mission president and the conference presidents with responsibility for a number of conferences. It may be that Samuel’s dual role in Scotland in 1847 was one prototype for this “pastoral” calling.”17

Samuel may not have been formally called “Pastor,” but he acted in a very real sense as a shepherd of his
Scottish flock. His persuasive, gentle, peace-loving disposition, combined with a marked sense for exactness in detail when needed, endeared him to veteran members who had been in the church in Scotland since its beginning in 1840. No incident illustrates his pastoral care and his attention to the physical, financial and spiritual needs of his flock as much as his relationship with "Mother and Father Kerr" with whom he boarded in Glasgow. When John Kerr became seriously ill, Samuel anointed him that his suffering would soon be relieved. Samuel returned later and found Brother Kerr "wearying for me to come and be with him." He then stayed with the old man "until he breathed his last at 8:10 p.m." Described by one of the admiring Saints as a typical Yankee, "a real Go Ahead Fellow," Samuel Richards never hesitated to lead out when action was needed. In this instance he helped prepare the body for burial, wrote obituary letters to friends who had been in the church in Scotland since its beginning.18

As he breathed his last, Samuel wrote:

"all for Two Pounds and Ninepence! He conducted a funeral service, served traditional "cake and wine," conducted the internment and then preached a "funeral discourse" at church the following Sunday. With typical thoroughness he also procured the necessary Sexton's Certificate so that Sister Kerr could claim her husband's military pension and insurance.

He acted as an intermediary in resolving disputes between branch presidents and members -- in one meeting he accepted a 2/3 no-confidence vote of congregation as an indication that the branch president should be released.19 At other times he chided the leadership of the capital city's Edinburgh Branch for exercising "unrighteous dominion" over the smaller branches of the Conference. There was a strong streak of Yankee democracy running through his administration of church affairs and there is little indication of him asserting authority in an arbitrary or capricious manner, a disposition which accommodated him to the democratic tendency among the Scots. Branch leaders were referred to as "delegates" to conference meetings and he used the term "elected" rather than "chosen," to describe how one branch president was called.20 One gets a distinct impression that his leadership style included a considerable amount of "bottom up" involvement or "grass roots revelation" as he administered Church affairs in Scotland. His experience in holding together over 2,000 members of the Church scattered throughout Central Scotland in some 40 branches no doubt shaped the organizational skills which were recognized by the House of Commons Select Committee on Emigration which interviewed him in 1854. Indeed, the conclusion of the committee that "the Mormon ship is a Family under strong and accepted discipline, with every provision for comfort, decorum and internal peace" is an apt reflection of Samuel Richards' approach to church administration. He was firm in his convictions, but caring in his actions.21

Caring for and helping the Saints in these practical ways took up a major portion of Samuel's energies during his fifteen months in Scotland. He was continually traversing the city of Glasgow and central Scotland on errands of mercy: to bless a sick child, comfort grieving parents and widows, and bless newborns (two were given his name: Samuel Richards Gibson and Samuel Richards Watson). The lack of eligible male members of the Church led him to counsel single sisters about marrying within the faith. Then as now, young women growing up in "Babylon" had a difficult time meeting men who shared their convictions. He often gave this advice in the form of acrostic poems and to Sister Helen McAuley, Samuel wrote:

Unbiased by the wiles of sinners vilest breath,
Live in thy Youth, for Life beyond the gates of death;
Adore the holy priesthood's power to seal thee there,
Your soul to life, with Endless bliss & crown to wear.22

To Catherine Kennedy, who nursed him through the small pox, he gave a warning about maintaining her personal virtue:

No treasure more Eternal can you on "Man" bestow.
Even him who is the head of all thy sex below.
Despair not of thy hope, A Saviour shall you see,
Yet with love's compassion, deliverance brings to thee.

In spite of his confidential friendship with numerous Scottish sisters none ever became his plural wives on his return to Utah. He counseled them as their spiritual leader and the theme of many of the poems is that if the female single members remained faithful, they would not be forgotten in the eternal scheme of things. However, one "Sister Craig" was also evidently very much attracted to the young Yankee and so strong was her desire to marry in the Church that she wanted to go to America with him. She asked Samuel to meet her at Edinburgh Railway Station so that she could converse with him about her circumstances as a single unmarried member of the Church. Samuel reported that she told him that her heart "inclined
after Me so much that she would be willing to leave all her father’s house could she but go with me to the Camp [of Israel].” He responded by saying he hoped she would gather “with me or soon after.”

In Glasgow he lived in the same house as the widowed Sister Mary Kerr and a number of young women, and in one instance he sounded very patriarchal as he chastised them for quarrelling. In no uncertain terms he reminded them that “I [am] the head of the house and intended to rule it and their way had got to be as I said...” A far cry from his more democratic administration of church affairs, but perhaps the problem gave young Samuel an opportunity to practice governing a plural household.

Concern with pastoral issues did not mean that Elder Richards ignored the theological aspects of Mormonism. He preached sermons on the resurrection, the second coming, the fall of Babylon, priesthood authority, the “true and false” church and of course, Mormonism’s most distinctive 19th century doctrine, the gathering. He could also call saints and sinners to repentance. Frequently he records that after he had preached, individuals asked for baptism. The evening after Franklin had delivered a sermon on the “Administration of Angels and Spirits”, the ordinance of re-baptism, he and his brother baptized fifty in the chilly January waters of the River Clyde -- forty six of whom were re-baptisms of people who were already members of the Church.

On one occasion a woman on first meeting him told him that she had seen him in a dream six years before and that he “took her from a pond of water, while in the act of Drowning.” She claimed that angels were in attendance upon him at this time and that she believed “the principles that I taught, they were as she had seen them” in her dream. At Lanark he preached on the “Priesthood” while many in the congregation wept openly for joy and “even Apostates did not refrain from shedding tears.” During the afternoon meeting there was a manifestation of “the gift of Tongues and interpretation” among the Saints both old and young. Nine year old Margaret Thom sang “some beautiful verses in Tongues and was interpreted by another young sister.” Lanark was one of the poorest of the branches in terms of material possessions, but according to Samuel Richards it was rich in “humility and simplicity.”

His ability to touch and convince people with his preaching was perhaps one of the reasons why, when it was known that he would preach in Paisley, large “bills had been printed and posted” warning the town that a Mormon missionary from America would be preaching. However, a large crowd still assembled to hear him, including “some of the bitterest enemies of the Church.” On that particular day he “enjoyed much Liberty of Spirit and Speech.” He also might have thought himself on the American frontier because seated in the congregation was the visiting Chief of the Chippewa Indians and three of his family. Samuel talked with the touring Chief and presented him with A Voice of Warning for which the Chief “expressed a warm feeling of thankfulness.”

Samuel’s sermons were always well organized around a limited theme and conveyed to the listener his sense of order, his “excellent logic and clear thinking,” and his deep spirituality. He could also poke fun at those with whom he disagreed, as when he commented on the bigotry he met among many of the professional clergy:

The minds of men have got so small
One hardly dares to think at all.
And if you question priests with reason,
A crime it is of highest treason.

Of course, “reason” as Samuel used it here was not what the well-schooled clergy might call reason, but for devout believers, Mormonism was a “reasonable” religion and if one used common sense along with divine inspiration, its “truth” would be perfectly clear to an open mind.

Some have suggested that Orson Pratt was influenced in his “reasonable” philosophical speculations about Mormonism by his experience among the Edinburgh intelligentsia during his mission to Scotland in 1840. Not Samuel Richards. Familiarity with the safe, romanticized Scottish historical tradition was one thing; familiarity with its secular philosophy was quite another and although he had a good mind and sharp insights, he never seemed to concern himself with the formal learning of the world, at least as it was exhibited in 19th century Edinburgh.

Near the beginning of his mission, Samuel climbed Arthur’s Seat (known among local Saints as Pratt’s Hill) with John Taylor and drank in the view of the city of Edinburgh, the Firth of Forth and the “German Ocean”, “Fair and pleasing” though the scene was to him, true to his religious convictions he could not survey “Modern Athens,” the 18th century’s “hot bed of genius,” without contrasting its “Doctors, Lawyers and Divines” with those, such as John Taylor, who were genuine apostles. These Modern Athenians, he asserted, had no real substance in their learning:

They boast of learning, wit and wine
And of their great ability.
They dupe the ignorant of his soul
And Truth there meets scurrility
They had, in Samuel’s view, substituted the truths of the
Gospel with their “Modern rules”:
They’re far too wise to e’er become
What scriptures say we must, “as fools”
But could the Lord spend time awhile
They’d teach him gratis better rules.31

The extent to which the “intelligentsia” regarded
Mormon reasonableness as simple gullibility and incredu-
licity is illustrated by the comments of one of Scotland’s
leading churchmen, the Rev. Dr. Robert Lee. He claimed
at a meeting of the Edinburgh Presbytery that the conver-
sion of so many Scots to Mormonism in the west of
Scotland was evidence enough that Scotland needed to
upgrade and improve its schools. To Lee, the Mormon
claims were so incredulous and based in folly that not
even a Hottentot would accept them.32 The Edinburgh
Branch publicly challenged Lee to debate the proposition
whether the Latter-day Saints Church or the Church of
Scotland was more consistent with “Reason and the Word
of God.” Nothing came of the challenge and Samuel
Richards does not even mention it in his journal although
the handbill listed him as the main speaker in Edinburgh
the following week.33 His natural disposition to favor
concrete reality over philosophical speculation combined
with his fervent and deeply rooted testimony of Mormon
claims precluded him from ever considering opposing
claims seriously. He was indeed a “true believer.”

He also communicated to the Scottish Saints the
trials which his wife and parents were experiencing in the
Camp of Israel, and he records the tears which flowed
among the members when he relayed the news of his
brother Joseph’s death as a drummer boy in the Mormon
Battalion and those of Franklin’s wife, infant son, and
daughter. His father Phineas and his wife Mary wrote him
letters giving him rich details of life in the Camp which
Samuel shared with the Saints. On 27 June 1847 he
commemorated the third anniversary of the Martyrdom
by retelling the events of 1844 to the Glasgow branch and
moved the congregation to tears with his first-hand ac-
count of that historic Mormon turning point.34 His per-
sonal experiences and the written accounts of the suffer-
ings of the refugees from Nauvoo bonded those on the
bonny banks of the Clyde with their brothers and sisters
on the banks of the Missouri and created a transatlantic
community of Latter-day Saints, tied together by common
historical memories of suffering and sacrifice. It was the
stuff of which communities of believers are made.

His use of Mormon history in this way reflected
his deep historical sense that what he was doing was not a
temporary thing, but had historical, even eternal, con-
sequences. After one sermon in Glasgow based on Amos
3:7, “Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth
his will unto his servants the prophets,” “he enjoyed much
liberty in the ministration of the word.” He added that
what he had said “no doubt by many will be remembered
while time shall last.”35 It must have been a superb
sermon, although his claim was perhaps a wee bit over-
done. However, his evaluation is certainly indicative of
his sense of the long term importance of what he did. It
was no doubt his keen sense of the importance of docu-
menting events which stimulated him to collect together
early copies of the Millennial Star from the Scottish Saints.
In this way a complete historical record was made avail-
able for future historians. That itself certainly earns him a
respected place in Mormon historiography.36

He also took advantage of every opportunity to
familiarize himself with events in Scotland’s turbulent past: he made a number of visits to Edinburgh Castle and
was entranced with the ancient Scottish coronation rega-
lia on display in the Castle and with the details of the life
of Mary Queen of Scots at Hollyrood Palace.37 He stood
in reverent awe at the tombs of the sainted Queen Marg-
aret and of Scotland’s paramount hero, Robert the Bruce.
There in Dunfermline Abbey as his mission came to a
close, he laid a flower and a leaf of ivy on their tombs. As
he contemplated the struggle that Bruce and others had
waged so many years ago he wished they could be en-
gaged with him in his present work. Standing near the
tombs of these great ones, he felt a powerful “love and
attachment” for the Scottish Saints and “a strong desire
now burned in my bosom that I might be as true to the
King of Kings as they had been to their Country’s cause...

The Noblest sons of Scotia’s Land
Did fight for Crowns in days of yore.
But now a chosen, nobler land
Do fight for Crowns once more.38

He seemed to be drawing a parallel between the
14th century struggle of the Kingdom of Scotland to be
recognized as a legitimate entity under Robert Bruce’s
leadership with that of the Mormon efforts in the 19th
century to establish the Kingdom of God. His under-
standing of Scottish history certainly must have warmed
the cockles of many a Scot’s heart. They found him well
informed and sensitive to their culture. Never does Samuel
Richards confuse a part of the United Kingdom with the
entire entity. He never assumes that Scotland is a subset
of England.
On another occasion he dressed in an Odd Fellows uniform and participated in some Scottish history in the making. In August of 1847 he formed part of an honor guard for Queen Victoria on her visit to Dumbarton Castle. Dressed as a Scottish Oddfellow, Elder Samuel W. Richards, late of Nauvoo, stood just six feet from the Royal party. He had a “fine view of her Majesty, Prince Albert...the Prince of Wales and the Princess ‘Royal’.” Ever sensitive to incongruities in what he saw or experienced, the shouting of the crowds and the booming of cannons which welcomed Victoria’s retinue prompted him to note that “one would think all Scotland was in an uproar and [I] could only regret that they were not as well prepared to show the same degree of loyalty to the “King of Kings” as they had manifested to an Earthly Sovereign.”

As far as Scotland’s contemporary social scene was concerned his “soul feels the distress which pervades this land.” But, although he notes that there were protest riots in Greenock on the Queen’s Birthday and he comments to Mary on the poverty and lack of employment that were widespread among the Saints, Samuel does not reflect any direct sense of viewing Mormonism as a solution to economic and social dislocation in Scotland. However, he recognized the baneful effects of poverty on the gathering and he did encourage the members to assist each other temporally -- “those who have, [should] bestow on those who have not.” Just as he was getting ready to leave for America (February of 1848) European revolutionary fever reached Glasgow and on 6 March 1848 armed mobs surged through Buchanan Street, the Trongate and Queen Street, destroying property and shouting “Vive La Republic! We’ll hae Vive la Republic, an naething but Vive la Republic.” Several demonstrators were wounded and at least one was killed when troops fired into the mob. If there were any Saints who wondered whether they should gather, no doubt such revolutionary sentiment and the conditions which produced it -- poverty, lack of work and lack of bread -- probably served as a motivation to gather as much as Samuel’s preaching. For many Mormons such upheavals were regarded as “Signs of the Times” and a certain precursor to the Second Coming.

Although there were some expectation that the Second Coming was imminent, as noted earlier, the idea of recreation as a component of the good religious life seemed to permeate Mormon practice. Accordingly, on more homey occasions Samuel joined in celebrating traditional Scottish festivals: he spent “Halloween” of 1846 refreshing himself with “Pudings, apples etc” and on December 31 he noted the Scottish celebration of Hogmonay (New Year’s Eve) which he creatively translated as meaning “hug-me-now.” (Perhaps he was thinking of Mary!) One can certainly imagine him having fun trying to speak like a Scot -- he uses words such as “lassies” for girls, “flittin day” for moving day, and “crack” for conversations. He bought a copy of Burns poems “neatly bound for 2/6d’” in Glasgow and with John Lyons, the Mormon poet from Kilmarnock, he visited the Burns monument and the statues of Tam o’Shanter and Soutar Johnnie at Alloway, “drinking together...natural as life.” They also visited the cottage where Burns was born, after which they “took a glass of Mountain Dew [Scotch Whisky] then returned to Ayr.” There, after overcoming a bout of sickness which he blamed on “the devil,” Richards and Lyon reorganized the Ayr branch. As a respite from the heavy preaching and administrative duties he had, he relished both the large scale “soirees” which the branches frequently sponsored as well as the more informal small scale “sing-songs” in the homes of individual members. At a Kilbimie soiree, three hours were spent in speaking, singing, and eating cakes, wine, pies, candy and oranges. Samuel notes that “in all of which, as would be expected, I acted a prominent part, and much enjoyed the rich repast.” At the home of a Brother Paul in Glasgow he joined John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt, George Watt and Sister Kennedy for a dinner consisting of “Scotch Kale and Haggish...Poetry was very abundant,” as was singing. The evening concluded with a visit to the Theatre Royal -- at 1/6d each. Next evening at the branch soiree, John Taylor sang, to the tune of Auld Lang Syne, a song he had composed on the train between Edinburgh and Glasgow. It was designed to stir the spirit of gathering among the British Saints, a theme never far from Samuel Richards’ thoughts during all of his missions to Britain:

The shamrock, thistle, leek and rose,
That bloom so fresh and fair,
Shall planted be around the tree
And of its fragrance share.

Chorus:
Then since our God has made us one,
And planted freedom’s tree,
We’ll taste its bud, but eat the fruit,
In California.

Samuel also had a good singing voice and, never reticent to demonstrate his talent, he was called on frequently to entertain the Saints and sometimes
unappreciative sinners! After Orson Hyde had spoken in Glasgow, he and Samuel repaired to a public house for a hot “whisky toddy” for President Hyde’s cold. Hyde asked Samuel to sing a hymn, but he had no sooner begun singing:

Wake, o wake the world from sleeping;
Watchman, watchman stand in power
Hark and hear the saviour crying,
'Tis the last, the eleventh hour
“when he was immediately silenced by the entrance of the landlady.” Hyde apologized for disturbing her, even as he regretted that she would not allow a sacred song to be sung in her public house.47

At other times the socializing took on the nature of simple slapstick and fooling around. No doubt letting off some steam now and again was necessary for their own mental health; pursuing the things of the kingdom without a break could, become oppressive at times. After a number of meetings in Edinburgh a group of mission and conference leaders met at David Calder’s home in Falkirk where:

the evening was spent in quite a rude [clownish] manner, throwing water, playing tricks, etc, etc, until quite late. Was well refreshed with wine and other varieties [of drink]. This rude but noble party consisted of Bros. [David] Calder, [Orson] Spencer, [Andrew] Cahoon & myself with Sister Mary [Calder] to take care of us.”48 From the description, it is evident that the brethren needed someone to take care of them. It is evident too that the Word of Wisdom, as it is known today, was not yet operational.49

From the number of accounts which he records in his journal one gets the distinct impression that Samuel Whitney Richards thoroughly enjoyed socializing, frequently into the “wee hoors” of the morning. He and his peers, Scots and Americans, were no “sour faced Saints” but seemed able to integrate the serious work of preaching, baptizing and building the Kingdom with a considerable amount of light hearted recreational activity. His journal is replete with accounts of singing, dancing, reciting, eating and tramping around the hills of Scotland. And whenever mission leaders visited, they took them to see places of historic interest or to the new painting of “Adam and Eve” being displayed at Glasgow’s classic Argyle Arcade (one of the earliest indoor malls).

He was also a frequent visitor to the Arcade to purchase tartan plaids, Glengarry bonnets and thistle badges for presentation to Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Spencer et. al. The “tartanolatory” of Walter Scott’s induced Celtic Revival was at full flood. With Victoria and Albert’s ersatz Scottish castle just built at Balmoral and the so-called “Royal Stewart” tartan the favorite color, it was the common practice to give visitors something “authentically” Scottish as a memento of their visit -- even if “clan tartans” had just recently been invented as a Scottish tradition.50 Such Mormon “clan chieftains” as Brigham Young and Heber Kimball were also the recipients of tartan plaids from the Glasgow Conference.51 Indeed, if every missionary who visited Scotland came away with souvenir plaids, the Mormon trail must have been awash with red Royal Stewart tartan in the late 1840s! It should be noted though, that Brigham Young’s plaid was of the Shepherd tartan -- plain black and white, more fitting to his austere tastes.

Lest one think that Samuel was on a “grand tour” while Mary suffered hardships in the far-off Camp of Israel, it must be noted that Samuel was not always in the best of health while in Scotland. Shortly after his arrival he notes that public speaking was hard on his lungs -- the damp climate of the Glasgow area (the winter temperature was usually 35 degrees and always very wet) was causing him serious bronchial problems. Frequently he “coughed almost incessantly from the time [he] lay down.”52 In a letter to his mother, Wealthy Richards (and probably in response to motherly questions about his health), he told her that he was working very hard, but was suffering from colds and coughs which have affected his lungs. His comment that the “air is very impure in this country hence disagreeable to me”53 may reflect not only the damp climate, but also the fact there were some 500 industrial establishments emitting smoke and fumes into the Glasgow air. Of course, industrialists claimed that the smoke from all these furnaces -- dye works, foundries, steam engine manufactures and distilleries -- was not in any way harmful to public health.54

From personal experience the writer knows that Glasgow’s polluted air quickly blackened white shirts in the mid-twentieth century. There is no doubt that it had similar affect on Samuel Richards’ lungs in the nineteenth century. Part of Samuel’s reason for frequent excursions into the hills of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire may have been the opportunity it gave him to breathe unpolluted country air and a “fresh breeze from the sea.”55 As his mission came to a close he looked forward to the benefits of living in a drier climate. The Romans left Scotland almost 2,000 years before with the same hope.
These colds and coughs, however, did not stop Samuel in the prosecution of his mission. He recorded them as part of the struggle to establish the Kingdom -- sickness was Satan's means of stopping the work. There is no evidence of him calling in a physician to deal with his illnesses, but he frequently donned his temple robes and sought divine help for the Saints who were sick and no doubt for himself. Even when he suspected he might have the dreaded Cholera Morbis, which reached plague proportions in Glasgow in the 1848, he did not flag in the prosecution of his pastoral tasks. As it happened, this illness apparently was not cholera, but one affliction did stop him in his tracks: on Valentine's Day 1847 he noticed a rash on his face. Samuel called in a barber to give him a shave, but the barber gave him much more -- he told him he had "Small-Pox." Before inoculations were accepted and not viewed as a sign of distrust in Divine Providence, 20% of all deaths in Glasgow earlier in the century were due to this scourge. Even when it was not of epidemic proportions it was always present in the densely populated industrial centers.

This "loathsome disease" struck him just as he was getting into the swing of presiding over the Church in Scotland. For weeks he must have suffered from headache, fever, vomiting and pain in his back and limbs. It also left him completely depleted of bodily strength and with an overall feeling of malaise, not at all a desirable state for a member of the active Richards clan. On top of all this were eruptions on the skin which followed the fall and rise of Samuel's temperature.

Samuel described this affliction as his "greatest trial of sickness," "very tedious" and "scarcely endurable." He no doubt agreed with Lord Macaulay's characterization of smallpox as "the most terrible of all the ministers of death." For a month, from Valentine's Day to St. Patrick's Day, he was unable to sleep through the night without someone having to tend to him. But, on March 19 he had his first shave in a month and the next day he seems to have been fully recovered: he had a "jovial visit at Bro. Campbells." Samuel came through his confrontation with death, not only with thanksgiving to the Lord for preserving him, but also with great appreciation for the Scottish Saints who attended him and brought him a "constant supply of "Port Wine, Cake, Figs, Oranges, Raisens, Lemons & (a traditional part of the Scottish diet, then as now) most all kinds of candy." The fasting and praying and the "tender watch-care" he received from the Saints cause him in later life to claim that he was of Scotch nationality "for I owe my life to the Scotch Saints." Shortly after his recovery he "preached a powerful sermon on the resurrection to the Glasgow Saints: an appropriate theme given his return from death's door. His recovery was, he said, "almost a miracle." Handsome of face as he was, as much of a miracle for him was the fact that the pox marks left little evidence of their presence on his face! His skin, he recorded, was "perfectly smooth." At the conclusion of the Glasgow Conference on 28 March 1847 he eloquently expressed his gratitude for surviving the illness:

O God, I pray thee accept the thanks of thy servant for that degree of thy Spirit and the strength of body that he has enjoyed and the union of thy people so abundantly manifested this day. The Glory of which shall be to thy Holy Name through Jesus thy Son, Amen.

In common with most full-time mission leaders, Samuel was in large measure dependent on the local Saints for financial and material support and not until near the end of his mission did he have to draw on Glasgow Conference funds (Thirteen Shilling and Five Pence) for his personal use. For instance, in June of 1847 he recorded the receipt of "Five Pounds One Shilling and Tuppence" from the Saints, while in August he received "Three Pounds One Shilling and Seven Pence ha'penny." If during his mission he received an average of Four Pounds, One Shilling and Six Pence each month, his yearly income would have amounted to Forty Eight Pounds & Eighteen Shillings, which according to Smout, was about what skilled workers could hope to earn in Scotland. Unskilled workers, which probably included most of the Saints, earned less than Thirty Pounds per year. While Samuel was certainly not able to live in an affluent manner, he was living at a level similar to the "better off" among skilled workers. The area of Glasgow where he lived (Cowcaddens) was at this time a "flourishing industrial area with foundaries, cotton and flour mills, engineer's shops, saw mills and timber yards." It was populated by "rather industrious, hardworking folk" with no "rich folk among them..."

He keenly recognized how much of a sacrifice every "baw-bee" (half penny) was to many of the less affluent Saints who shared their mite with him. On his first visit to the Lanark Branch, the members gave him "of their poverty 4 handkerchiefs, one dress for my wife and about 6 shillings in money." During a visit to Paisley, the Saints presented him with cloth for a suit, vest and shirt with a total value of Six Pounds -- one fifth of a worker's annual wages! In Kilmarnock, branch presi-
dent John Lyon, seeing Samuel’s need of adequate foot wear, called on a shoemaker member to repair his well-worn shoes, and it was done immediately. In addition to cash to help him live and travel, the Saints gave him a total of some fifty gifts, all of which he duly recorded, sometimes listing their value: clothing, gold rings, a watch, slippers, an overcoat. Other gifts included David Hume’s History of England and items designated for Mary or his mother (usually tartan dress material). Especially touching was the gift of a suit of boy’s clothing which had been made for his namesake, wee Samuel Richards Gibson. The laddie had died, but his parents sent his unused suit to Mary for her yet unborn first son.

That he and his family were the recipients of so many gifts is some measure of the closeness which the members felt to Elder Richards and his loved ones. He spoke to the members about his family frequently. Certainly he shared some of his worries about the fate of his parents in the Camp of Israel and especially his concerns for Mary. Given that he received his first letter from Mary seven months into his mission, it’s no wonder there are frequent references to Mary and prayers for her salvation. Even while surveying the noble grandeur of Edinburgh from the eminence of Arthur’s Seat he found himself thinking about and longing for his sweetheart at the Camp and wishing she were by his side at that moment. He sent her a Valentine from Glasgow in which he imagined what she might be saying about his absence. Perhaps he may have felt a tinge of guilt that she should be facing the rigours of life in the American “wilderness” while he was relatively comfortable in urban, if damp and smoky, Glasgow. Of course, she gave a resolute “No” to his inquiry about whether his absence was a burden to her, though it surely was! Even though she felt (in his thoughts) that many joys had fled and many pleasures lost their charm, because he was absent, he has her look to the future where she will reign in “Glory Celestial with him who is my head.” Even if she died, her reward would be great. Given the high mortality among the refugees from Nauvoo, the latter was an ever present possibility and even a Mormon Valentine which pledged “Eternal Fidelity” had to face it. This too was the cost of pursuing the work of the kingdom. Compensating for that reality, he ended on a more optimistic note saying:

Yet soon I hope to meet thee
With a fond embrace, and prove my Faithfulness to her that’s Sealed as Mine.
Almost a year later, the last words recorded in his journal at Liverpool on Hogmonay (New Year's Eve) 1847 were that he had just written to many of the Scottish Saints and also to his “dear though absent Mary for whose happiness and good I ever pray even as for my own. May Angels guard her.”

Ever the intrepid record keeper, Samuel summarized his whole mission in a table entitled “Distance & Expense of Travel.” From leaving Nauvoo on 4 July 1846 until New Year’s Day in Glasgow in 1847 he had traveled a total of 6,900 miles at a cost of Eleven Pounds Three and Tuppence. In his work as “Pastor” of Scotland (from 1 January 1847 until 12 February 1848, he traveled 5,999 miles at a cost of Nineteen Pounds Nineteen and a Penny. From Glasgow he traveled 5,730 miles to New Orleans at a cost of Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings. Total mileage: 18,629; total cost of his mission travels: Thuty Four Pounds Seventeen Shillings—an amount equivalent to around $3,200 in 1994 dollars. If, as noted above, he received Forty Eight Pounds ($4,300 in 1994 dollars) in support from the Scottish Saints, it is clear that the cost of his entire mission was covered in large measure by the local members.

If we allow around 2,000 miles for trips to England and Ireland from Glasgow, it appears that in 1847 he traveled some 4,000 miles within Scotland. Given that Central Scotland only measures approximately fifty miles wide by eighty miles long, this 4,000 miles represents a great deal of time and energy spent in crisscrossing the country in the interests of the Mormon Church. No wonder at times he admits to being exhausted, he was perpetually on the go by coach, train, canal boat, steamers and “Shank’s mare” (foot). But his mission was more than frenetic activity, these miles traveled and pounds spent were concrete manifestations of the whole-hearted commitment to the cause he had espoused. The loving, enthusiastic and loyal response he received from the Scottish Saints, it is clear that the cost of his entire mission was covered in large measure by the local members.

By the end of December 1847 Samuel was ready to turn his face toward Zion. The concluding capstone on his pastoral labors in Scotland was a grand soirée held in his and Franklin’s honor. Franklin had come north for the occasion and on 27 December 1847 three hundred and fifty Saints gathered in Glasgow for an evening of songs, original recitations, cordials, sweetmeats and oranges—it was, Samuel noted, “the best Soiree the Saints ever held in Scotland.” The group expressed how very deeply they felt at Samuel’s departure and frequently manifested their “Ecstasy” by an “an almost deafening roar” of approval. If his family could only have been there to see how loved and respected he was, it would have added to his happiness and would surely have mollified their own privations and sufferings in the Camp of Israel. They would, he reflected, have “blessed the day that we visited so noble and lovely a people.”

The climax of the farewell came when the local brethren placed Royal Stewart plaids on the two brothers, along with glengarry bonnets and thistle pins. The Scottish Saints, they were told, wished them to wear “the emblems of their Pride” in remembrance of their work among the Scots. When Samuel and Franklin were so endowed, the 350 Saints let out a “roar of applause...expressed...with hands and feet” as only a Glasgow gathering can do. Both brothers were overwhelmed by the honors heaped on them. Samuel summed his feelings thus:

Twas not the Value of the Gift
It was a Nation’s Pride Bestowed
On us from whom they succour sought
For whom the purest feelingsflowed.75

He then read his own “Epistle to the Scottish Saints” in which he urged them to follow him to Zion:

Dearest Saints would you come
Where Ephraim doth roam,
‘Mong mountains and wiles in the West;
Where Israel doth camp,
And truth as a lamp,
Bright burning, doth lead them to rest?
Methinks you exclain, We are longing to go,
And learn of them there what Saints only know.76

The following day the Richards brothers called together six of the local leaders (William Gibson, Graham Dou-
glas, John Lyon, Robert Menzies, William Dunbar and John Carmichael) to their apartment. There Franklin and Samuel anointed and conferred on them a parting blessing. The eight men sang “A Spirit of God like a Fire is Burning” and tarried so long in saying farewell that Samuel and Franklin almost missed the boat to Liverpool.  

They expected to leave for New Orleans soon after their arrival in Liverpool, but as it happened, a letter arrived from the Twelve authorizing the re-commencement of church sponsored emigration. A home for the Saints had finally been established in the West. Samuel headed north again and for the next six weeks he was busily engaged in organizing some seventy Scottish Saints into an emigrant party. On 20 February 1848 this group, and a similar one from England, sailed on the “Carnatic” bound for New Orleans — the first Church sponsored group to gather to Zion since the death of Joseph. Among them were the names of many of the stalwarts in Samuel’s United Kingdom journal: the Youngs, the Carruths, the Calders, the Bullocks. Fulfilling a promise to the dying John Kerr that he would make sure that his wife would be gathered to Zion, Samuel included “Mother” Mary Kerr in this group. She had had some very difficult times with a drinking problem and Samuel, uncharacteristically, severely chastised her for shaming the other members of the Church in Glasgow by her drinking. He hoped that once in America among the Saints, drink would become less of a problem. However, she disappeared during the voyage up the Missouri, either by leaving the party at St. Louis or by falling overboard, probably the latter he concluded. Samuel was profoundly saddened that a person he cared for so much should be “wrested” from them just at the point of arriving in Zion. It was almost as if the rhythm of life were reminding him that in spite of all the planning and praying some things have a tendency to “gang aft agley,” and lea’s us nought but grief an pad For promis’d joy!”

On 20 May 1848 Samuel, with his “heart beating high” in the anticipation of “clasping the hand of a Dear Wife, a Father and Mother” again, came within sight of Winter Quarters. Next day was Sunday and without missing a beat he records: “Went to meeting with my wife.” It was almost two years to the day that he had said good-bye to Mary. Brigham Young visited him that evening, approved of Samuel’s “Credentials,” told him to keep them “and prepar for the Mountains, etc.”

For two years his “Lancashire lass,” Mary, had supported him in his missionary calling with prayers, letters and with her own sacrifice, deprivation and hardship. Any success he met in Scotland was just as surely hers. With keen insight she recognized the value that the Church’s leaders attached to Samuel and in her last letter to him in Scotland she told him that “it will be many years err you will be permitted to settle down with the Saints and if you are permitted to remain one year with them now, twill be more than I expect.” She was very close in her prediction because in 1852 Samuel returned to Britain as President of the British Mission — and once again Mary was left on the American frontier to long for the day when she would be re-united with her Samuel. But for the present he and Mary were together again. After nearly a year’s stay near “the border of Missouri,” in 1849 they began their trek to the mountains on the third anniversary of his departure for his mission to Scotland: 4 July. Going to “the Mountains” was the beginning of yet another of Samuel Whitney and Mary Haskin Parker Richards’ loyal responses to the call of duty. It would not be their last.

NOTES

1. Samuel Whitney Richards was born August 9, 1824 at Richmond, Massachusetts, the son of Phinehas Richards and Wealthy Dewey Richards. He died at Salt Lake City, Utah on November 26, 1909. The principal source used in this research was a microfilm copy of the holograph original of diaries which he kept between 1846 and 1848. This microfilm is in the archives of the History Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter cited as LDS Historical Department. I also used typescripts of other diaries or notebooks prepared from the originals by Brigham Young University, c. 1951. These will be referred to as SWR Typescript. I am indebted to my father-in-law, the late Alton F. Richards (Samuel’s grandson) of Ogden, Utah for his foresight in making sure that the bulk of Samuel W. Richards’ diaries and letters were preserved from the ravages of time.

2. Diary May 9, 18, 27, 1846.


4. Word of Wisdom observance in Nauvoo see Robert Bruce Flanders, Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 244-247. Not until the early 20th century would it become a standard for measuring worthiness. In the late 1860s attempts were made to enforce the prohibitions for economic reasons. See Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints
5. Diary, May 23, 27; June 8, 18; July 4, 1846.

6. Diary, July 4, 1846.


8. Diary, October 2-4, 1846; see also Samuel W. Richards to Mary Haskin Parker Richards, Winter Quarters, January 1, 1847. Samuel W. Richards Papers, LDS Historical Department.


10. Diary, October 25, 1846.


13. “Memorial of the Glasgow Conference,” January 3, 1847, cited in Millennial Star 9 (February 1, 1847): 35-36. See also comments about members in Paisley who were “wronged” by Hedlock in Andrew Sprowl, Diary, January 3, 1847, ms. in Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

14. Diary, December 4, 1846.


17. William G. Hartley, “LDS Pastors and Pastorates, 1852-55” in Mormons in Early Victorian Britain, 194-215. The use of “pastors” was limited to the British Isles (and Denmark) and was an effort to de-centralize church administration. As membership declined the need for the “pastorate” diminished and was not used after 1869.

18. Diary, May 15, 1847; Robert and Elizabeth Watson to Samuel Richards, Salt Lake City, January 15, 1849 in Samuel W. Richards’ Papers, LDS Historical Department.

19. Diary, November 14, 1847.

20. Diary, January 9; May 22, 1847.


22. See poems in SWR Typescript, 54-55, 263.

23. Diary, December 13, 1847. Emphasis as in original diary entry.

24. Diary, December 13, 1847. Emphasis as in original.

25. Diary, January 3-4, 1847.

26. Diary, November 29, 1846.

27. Diary, May 29-30, 1847.


30. Diary, December 14, 1846.

31. These poems on Edinburgh as a seat of learning are entitled: “Reflections Written after descending from Arthur’s seat the highest eminence near Edinburgh Dec. 14th 1846” and “Written upon my arrival in Glasgow from Edinburgh Dec. 17, 1846.” They can be found in SWR Typescript, 258-259.

32. The Scotsman, 1 May 1847.
33. A copy of this handbill can be found in my “Scots Among the Mormons.” Utah Historical Quarterly 36 (Fall 1968): 333.

34. Diary, June 27, 1847.

35. Diary, December 12, 1847.

36. Diary, June 11, 1847; Cannon, Biographical Sketch... 11.

37. Diary, December 14, 1846; December 19-21, 1847.

38. Diary, December 22, 1847.

39. Diary, August 17, 1847. Apparently one of the local Mormons, a “Bro. Meiklejohn” was a member of the Odd Fellows (a fraternal order) and loaned Richards his garb for the occasion.

40. Samuel W. Richards to Mary Haskin Parker Richards, Winter Quarters, January 26, 1848; Millennial Star 9 (February 1, 1847): 35-36.


42. Diary, May 25; December 3,31, 1847.

43. Diary, November 30, 1847.

44. Diary, May 26, 1847. Emphasis added.

45. Diary, December 17, 1847.


47. Diary, January 31, 1847; See A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the use of the Latter Day Saints (Bells Falls [Vermont]: J.C.Little & G.B. Gardner, 1844), 75-76; a slightly different version was probably used in this incident. See SWR Typescript, 244. The hymn was written by W. W. Phelps.

48. Diary, September 22, 1847.

49. In a list of items which Samuel purchased in Britain he included a “a coffee boiler” which he noted “will be good to make herb tea in when we keep the Word of Wisdom.” SWR Typescript, 72 (emphasis added).


51. Diary, January 13; February 10, 1847.

52. Diary, November 1-5, 1846.


54. G.W. Muir, Report on the State of Engine and other Furnaces, in Glasgow; and on the means to Prevent Nuisance Arising from Smoke (1851), cited in Glasgow Observed, 92-93.

55. Diary, May 27, 1847.

56. Diary, April 27, 1847.

57. Diary, 2 November, 1847.


59. The description of smallpox symptoms is from A.M. Behbehani, The Smallpox Story: in Words and Pictures (Kansas City: University of Kansas Medical Center, 1988), 83.

60. Behbehani, The Smallpox Story, 8.

61. Diary, February 14-March 19, 1847; Cannon, Autobiographical Sketch... 10.

62. Diary, March 28, 1847.

63. Smout, A Century of the Scottish People, 110.

64. Information on Cowcaddens was derived from a letter to the author from D.L. McCallum, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, 22 May 1995.

65. Diary, December 1, 1846.
66. Diary, May 31, 1847.
67. Diary, November 1, 1847.
68. A list of the variety of gifts he received is in SWR Typescript, 74-76.
69. Diary, January 20, 1847.
70. Diary, December 14, 1846.
71. Samuel W. Richards, to Mary Haskin Parker Richards, Winter Quarters, February 1847. Original holograph in possession of Rarna Richards Buchanan, Salt Lake City. This letter accompanied a colored Valentine greeting.
72. Diary, January 31, 1847.
75. Diary, December 27, 1847.
76. Diary, 236.
77. Diary, December 28, 1847.
78. Samuel W. Richards, to Mary Haskin Parker Richards, Council Bluffs, Nebraska, January 26, 1848. Samuel Richards Papers, LDS Historical Department.
79. SWR, Typescript, March 1848.
80. SWR Typescript, May 20, 1848.