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## Book of Mormon Manuscript

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**Abstract:** This article reports that fragments of an original Book of Mormon manuscript were given to the Church by Charles C. Richards.

# The CHURCH MOVES ON



## Book of Mormon Manuscript

MORE fragments of the Book of Mormon manuscript are now in the vaults of the Church Historian. They were given to the Church by Charles C. Richards, who with his father, Franklin D. Richards, one-time President of the Council of the Twelve, received them in May 1885, at Nauvoo, from Major Lewis A. Bidamon, husband of Emma Smith, the Prophet's widow.

On October 2, 1841, the Prophet placed this original manuscript in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House. There it stayed for forty-one years, until 1882, when the old foundation of the building was torn down by Major Bidamon, and the box was discovered. During the time that the box was in the foundation, the elements had seeped through and destroyed much of the valued contents.

A second manuscript copy of the Book of Mormon was made in July 1829, by Oliver Cowdery. This was the copy that was sent to the printer from which was set the type for the Book of Mormon. This manuscript was owned, at times, by Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer. For years it has been the prized possession of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and is kept at their headquarters in Independence, Missouri.

## Elder Benson

ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON of the Council of the Twelve, and former president of the European Mission, returned from his duties in Europe shortly before Christmas and has now resumed his duties at his desk in the Church Administration building. Affairs in Europe are now under the direction of Elder Alma Sonne, assistant to the Council of the Twelve.

## Mesa Stake

MESA STAKE, one hundred sixty-first stake in the Church, was created December 8, from part of the Maricopa Stake.

Included in the Mesa Stake are the Chandler, Gilbert, Mesa Second, Third, Fifth, Seventh, and Alma wards, as well as the Coolidge and Superior branches. The membership totals 3,935.

Lucian M. Mecham, Jr., was sustained as president of the Mesa Stake, with Alma M. Davis and Frihoff P. Nielson as counselors.

Remaining in the Maricopa Stake, with a membership of 3,675, are the Lehi, Mesa First, Fourth, Sixth, Eighth, Papago, Pine, and Tempe wards, and the Spanish-American Branch.

## CORRECTION

THE report of the acquisition, by the Church, of property of historic interest at McKune, Pennsylvania, in the December issue, page 799, reads as if John the Baptist baptized Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery there. Church history records that John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood to these men, instructing them to baptize each other. Joseph Smith first baptized Oliver Cowdery who then baptized the Prophet.

The presidency of the Maricopa Stake remained intact. They are Presidents Lorenzo Wright and his counselors William R. Ellsworth and Marion W. Turley.

The organization was effected by Elders Joseph Fielding Smith and Charles A. Callis of the Council of the Twelve.

## Church and Indians

THE Church has recently established a school for Navajo and Piute Indian children at Blanding, Utah, as part of the missionary activity to these people. Most of the students are under twelve years old. Albert R. Lyman and his wife, Gladys Lyman, are teaching in the two-roomed building. The school has also become a center where the Indian women come to repair their families' clothing.

President George Albert Smith who was unable to see the commissioner of Indian affairs in a recent trip to Washington, D. C., saw the assistant commissioner, and reported as he arrived back in Salt Lake City:

I am satisfied that the commission would fill its obligation to the Indians by providing them with all the schools their treaty calls for, provided Congress would appropriate the money.

We have desired for a long time to do something to help the Navajos and other Indians. If the Navajo tribal council will grant the necessary permission, our Church will establish schools and missions within the Navajo reservation. We want to see to it that they get all the education they want, and with it a desire to take full advantage of all their other opportunities. We appreciate that the Navajos cannot be herded into villages when they prefer to live out in the wide open spaces.

## Sunday School Secretary

RICHARD E. FOLLAND, former president of the South African Mission, has been named executive secretary of the Deseret Sunday School Union

board, by General Superintendent Milton Bennion. This is a new position, but he succeeds Wendell J. Ashton, who has been general secretary. Elder Ashton, who joins the *Deseret News* staff, continues as a member of the general board.

## "The Children's Friend"

APPOINTMENT of Mary R. Jack as associate editor of *The Children's Friend*, the magazine of the Primary Association, has been announced by Mrs. Adele Cannon Howells, president of that organization. Miss Jack is a former general secretary of the Primary Association. She is now secretary of the board of trustees of the Primary Children's Hospital, and secretary of the Salt Lake Tabernacle choir.

## Temple Square Visitors

A RECORD TOTAL of 719,765 visitors came to Salt Lake City's Temple Square during the year 1946. This compares with 377,110 for the year 1945, and 286,809 for 1936. Previous all-time high was 465,432 for the year 1941. It is expected that a million tourists will come to Temple Square during the centennial year.

## New Missionaries

APPROXIMATELY sixty percent of the missionaries now being sent into the field are veterans of World War II, most of whom saved while in uniform for the opportunity of going on a mission. If the sending of full-time missionaries to their fields of labor continues at its present rate, five thousand missionaries will be in the missions sometime during this centennial year of 1947. The prewar all-time high was reached in June 1941 when 2,250 missionaries were functioning. During the war years full-time missionary activity dropped to the low ebb of 350, because there were no replacements as the elders completed their missions and were called into the service.

The year 1947 will stand for some time as a high mark in missionaries in the field for two reasons: missionaries are being called almost as never before; and, there will be few releases during the year because most missionaries, called after having been released from the armed forces, have yet some time to complete their two years or more as missionaries.

As to the over-all picture of mission activity, Elder Franklin J. Murdock, mission secretary has said:

All missions operated before the war again are functioning and, in addition, a flourishing branch of the Swedish Mission has been established in Finland. Numbers