

A Firsthand Account of the New Era in Great Britain: 1958-1961

**Establishing the full church program in
Great Britain 121 years after the first LDS
missionaries were sent there in 1837
to “save the church”**

**By
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Foreword

This document presents an account of my experiences while serving as a missionary in Great Britain during the **New Era**, September 8, 1959 to September 5, 1961. The years from 1958 to 1970 in Great Britain are known in the LDS Church as the **New Era**. That period could also be called a “Great Awakening,” the “Second Great Missionary Gathering” or the “Second Great Missionary Harvest.”

The terms “Harvest,” “Gathering,” “Great Awakening,” “Great Missionary Harvest,” have been part of LDS doctrine, lexicon or lore since the time of Joseph Smith and have been used throughout the past 180 years of the Church’s existence. From the time the first LDS missionaries arrived in the British Isles in 1837 until the early 1950s, some missionaries preached and some church members and converts were imbued with a desire to “gather to Zion” --first to Kirtland then to Missouri and Nauvoo and later to Salt Lake City. Both the missionaries and the converts have played a significant role in the growth and development of the Church.

Over the years numerous articles have been written about and church leaders have preached about or have referenced what the terms “Harvest,” “Gathering,” “Great Missionary Gathering” and “Second Harvest” have meant during different periods of time in church history. For example, an article written by Armaund L. Mauss, *Can There Be a “Second Harvest”?: Controlling the Costs of Latter-day Saint Membership in Europe*,” published in both the *International Journal of Mormon Studies* (1:2008, pp. 1-59) and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 1-54, Articles and Essays, provides a good summary of what those terms have meant since the Church was organized in 1830.

Note 1. on page 40 of Mauss’s *Dialogue* article contains the following:

1. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, 1995 seminar for stake and mission presidents in Paris,, quoted in Hoyt W. Brewster Jr., *The Promise: The Prophesied Growth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Netherlands and Belgium and All of Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam Netherlands Mission, 1998). Brewster, then mission president, also quotes a comparably optimistic prediction by Elder Henry B. Eyring made two years later at a similar meeting in Rome and a third by President Gordon B. Hinckley in 2000 about a “second harvest” soon to come in Sweden. (Erik Nilsson, “Göteborg, Sweden: Second Harvest,” *Ensign*, July 2000, 77)

Another article published in the *International Journal of Mormon Studies*, 1:2008, by David M. Morris entitled: “The Rhetoric of the Gathering and Zion: Consistency through Change, 1833-1920,” (IJMS 1:2008, 154-171) further illustrates this concept. On the internet, I found a third article by Nicholas J. Evans entitled: “The Gathering to Zion--Mormon Emigration from Norway.”

It was within the context of the terms “Harvest,” “Gathering, and “Great Missionary Gathering,” that President David O. McKay spoke of “The **New Era**” when he dedicated the London Temple on September 7, 1958. The newly called British Mission President, T. Bowring Woodbury, used the term “New Era” with a picture of President McKay, on the cover of the

Millennial Star, the Church's publication for Great Britain and Europe, to convey the message that the **New Era** also meant that the members were *to stay and build up the church in Great Britain*, and not emigrate.

James R. Moss, the author of Chapter 13, "The Great Awakening" in the sesquicentennial book, *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles 1837-1987*, Cambridge University Press England, 1987, describes what happened during the **New Era** in the British Isles as follows:

In fact, the two decades between 1951 and 1971 saw greater changes for the Church in Britain than in any period since the apostolic missions of the 1830s and 1840s. Following a long night of struggle in its first century, the Church in Britain began to see the light of a new day in the 1950s, building upon the heritage it had forged through years of faithfulness in the face of persecution and sacrifice. By 1971 it had come of age as a fully developed and vital part of the world-wide Church.

During the first seven months of my mission I served in the Leeds District in Yorkshire, under President T. Bowring Woodbury, then President of the British Mission, and Elder Dennis P. Blackhurst, supervising elder of the Leeds District.

March 27-28, 1960 a two-session area conference was held in England. The first session, a priesthood session, was held in Oldham, England, on Saturday evening. The Sunday morning general session was held in the Hippodrome Theater in Manchester. During that session the first stake of the LDS Church in Great Britain and Europe was created by Apostle Harold B. Lee, and it was announced that the British Mission had been divided and a new North British Mission had been created covering the north of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland with headquarters in Hale, Cheshire, a suburb of Manchester. Bernard P. Brockbank was introduced as the president of the new North British Mission.

At the conclusion of the Saturday night priesthood session, President Woodbury called me aside and informed me that I had been called to be the mission secretary in the new North British Mission. He then introduced me to President Brockbank. As mission secretary, I was to help President Brockbank set up and run the North British Mission. Twelve months later, in February 1961, the North British Mission was divided and the Scottish-Irish Mission was created with headquarters in Renfrew, Scotland, a suburb of Glasgow. President Brockbank was called to be the President of the new Scottish-Irish Mission, and he asked me to go with him to Scotland and set up the new mission. I was delighted to do so as I had not spent any time in Scotland, but I was well qualified to set up and help run a new mission.

My two years as a **New Era** missionary (September 1959-September 1961) gave me a first-hand perspective of the great changes and events that unfolded in Great Britain during that time and, subsequently, throughout the Church. It is my hope that my children and grandchildren and other readers of this book will learn what the term **New Era** meant to those of us who served as **New Era** missionaries, and for the church in Great Britain and worldwide.

Preface

The LDS British Mission and Great Britain are very important in LDS Church history. Missionary work began Great Britain in 1837 when President Joseph Smith called seven missionaries to go there to “save the Church in America.” During 1837-1899, they and their successor missionaries converted over 126,000 members in Great Britain. Over fifty thousand of those members emigrated to America and helped save the church both in Nauvoo and Utah. That period became known in Church history as the “Great Missionary Gathering.”

More than 120 years after the first missionaries arrived in Great Britain, on September 7-9, 1958, President David O. McKay formally announced the **New Era** at the dedication of the London Temple. The **New Era** began a second “Great Missionary Harvest” in Great Britain. Under President McKay’s leadership, for the first time in church history the full Church program was implemented, first in Great Britain, then in Europe, and later in the Pacific Islands, Latin America and Asia.

Volume 1 does three things: It briefly summarizes: **(1)** how LDS missionary work in Great Britain from 1837 through 1899 resulted in huge numbers of converts and the first “Great Missionary Harvest and Gathering”; **(2)** how the **New Era** that began in Great Britain in September 1958 launched a second Great Missionary Harvest in Great Britain, and **(3)** how the full Church Program in Great Britain created a template for the internationalization and dramatic growth of the Church worldwide.

Some reading this document may be descendants of LDS converts during the first “Great Missionary Harvest” in Britain and some members may be descendants of LDS converts in Great Britain during the **New Era** and its second Great Missionary Harvest.

Volume II of this document presents my firsthand experiences while serving as a **New Era** missionary in Great Britain from September 8, 1959 to September 5, 1961. On August 31, 1959, I reported to the Missionary Training Center in Salt Lake City to be set apart as a missionary and participated in one week of training before leaving by air with six other missionaries for London, England.

While writing this document, I relied heavily on the following books:

Derek A. Cuthbert, *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Volume 1: 1937 to 1987*, published by Cambridge University Press, 1987;

Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles 1837-1987: editors V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, Larry C. Porter, Cambridge University Press, 1987;

Richard L. Evans, *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain, 1837-1936*;

Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, published in 1985;

Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*, 1979;

Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 2005;

James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 1976;
Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan, *Unto Every Nation: Gospel Light Reaches Every Land*, Deseret Book Company, 2003; and
Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan, *Encyclopedia of Latter-Day-Saint History*, published by the Deseret Book Company, 2000.

I also read and cited a number of articles published in a variety of academic and scholarly journals and newspapers over the past two or three decades, plus missionary materials loaned to me by my brother-in-law, G. Bruce Marchant, who served as a missionary in the Central States Mission from 1955-57 under President Alvin R. Dyer; and missionary materials loaned to me by Gerald E. Jones, including the “Anderson Plan” that he used as a missionary in the North Central States Mission in the early 1950s. O. William Asplund, my good friend and fellow missionary in the British Mission who now serves as a Church Service Missionary at the Church History Library, also provided me valuable material for this project. I also include material obtained from the Internet by my wife, Helen Ure Hansen.

Derek A. Cuthbert’s 1987 book is the sequel to the book published fifty years earlier by Richard L. Evans: *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain, 1837 – 1936*. Derek Cuthbert, a British LDS member, served in several Church leadership positions in Great Britain during the “New Era,” and later became a member of the Church’s First Council of Seventy. His book provides an invaluable perspective of British LDS members during the development and growth of the Church there during the period from 1937 to 1987. He put emphasis on the British members’ part-time missionary efforts, but spends little time on the experiences and activities of the full-time missionaries.

Truth Will Prevail, which was also published in 1987 by the Cambridge University Press, is a complementary publication to the Cuthbert book. It was written by a group of BYU professors and others selected by the editors, V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss and Larry C. Porter. It was commissioned by President (later Apostle) Joseph B. Wirthlin and Elder Russell C. Taylor of the European Area Presidency. Apostle Neal A Maxwell obtained approval from the First Presidency for the project.

I am especially grateful to Gregory Prince for giving me a digital copy of 172 pages of documentary materials he had obtained directly from an interview with Bernard P. Brockbank, and other material he had obtained from the Church History Library while doing research to use when writing Chapter 10 of his and Robert Wright’s 1995 biography of David O. McKay.

My book-length document does not repeat or replace the histories written by Richard L. Evans, Derek A. Cuthbert, and authors of *Truth with Prevail*. It is not a broader history of the LDS Church in Great Britain. Instead, it is my intention and hope that this document supplements the excellent work of Derek Cuthbert, Gregory Prince and Robert Wright, and the BYU professors in their books. I wrote this document primarily for my family and posterity.

I served as a full-time missionary in Great Britain from September 9, 1959 to September 5, 1961, during the early stages of the New Era. As Mission Secretary to President Bernard P. Brockbank, I helped him set up and run both the new North British Mission (March

27, 1960 to February 15, 1961) and the new Scottish-Irish Mission (February 15, 1961 to September 5, 1961). In these positions, I had firsthand knowledge of many events and other activities that took place, both in these two new missions and in the British Mission..

While writing this document I became interested in learning how the Church is faring in Great Britain today---many years after the **New Era** ended---and the Cuthbert book and *Truth Will Prevail* and the David O. McKay biography by Gregory Prince and Wm. Robert Wright were published. So I have included some more recent statistics about the growth of the Church in Great Britain and Europe, and current information about major developments in missionary work in the Church, especially the reduction in age for both young men and young women to serve as full-time missionaries --18 years for males, and 19 years for females. That reduction in age has provided a dramatic increase in the numbers of young men and young women serving missions, the number of new missions created, and the exciting new technology and methods being used to teach and spread the Gospel worldwide.

A lowering of ages for male and female members to serve missions also occurred during the **New Era**. In 1960, the age for male missionaries was lowered from 21 to 19, and the age for female missionaries from 23 to 21. That lowering of missionary ages provided thousands of missionaries to launch the **New Era** and created new missions in Great Britain and Europe in the 1960s.

Because of the influx of applications to serve missions beginning in October 2012, the Church created 58 new missions. These recent changes may portend the beginning of more “Great Missionary Harvests.” It will be interesting to see.

Upon retiring from teaching economics at Utah State University for 31 years, I continued to do international consulting work for six more years. After I retired, I donated more than 150 boxes of materials that I had collected to Utah State University’s Special Collections and Archives. During the next few years I wrote my professional memoir and placed a draft of it on my Internet website, garybhansen.com. My daughter Karen Hansen created that website for me several years ago.

After completing a draft of my professional history, I decided to write my personal history. During the next couple of years, I wrote about my personal life except for my two-year LDS mission to Great Britain in 1959-1961. I was reluctant to write about my mission because I felt I could not summarize all of my mission letters, journal entries and documents in 20 or 30 pages as I had done with the other chapters. However, after reading what Derek Cuthbert wrote about the **New Era** in Great Britain in his 1987 book and how important he thought the **New Era** was to the LDS Church’s history, and reading articles by others who have written about that period, I decided to tackle the job of writing an account of my mission during the **New Era** from my perspective of having served during that important period.

Fortunately, I had digitized files on my computer containing most of my missionary letters, journal entries and other documents. These are now available for me to put in some form for my family, especially my posterity, and others to read -- a printed copy that can be placed in a binder on their shelves to collect dust, or in some other way.

Whether or not I have succeeded in achieving my objectives in writing this document, I hope that my posterity and those who read it will gain a better understanding of what missionary work was like during the **New Era** when I served my mission. Several of my and my wife's ancestors were converted by the LDS missionaries serving in Great Britain during the first "Great Missionary Gathering" that started in 1837.

I am deeply grateful to my wife Helen, without whose continuing assistance and support I could not have completed this project. I am also grateful to O. William Asplund, a good friend and fellow **New Era** missionary who served with us in Great Britain and provided me with valuable information. I also extend my thanks to my daughter Ann-Marie Proctor for her editorial assistance, to my sister, Nancy H. Marchant for carefully reading an earlier draft of this document, and to my brother-in-law G. Bruce Marchant and to my friend Gerald E. Jones who loaned me the teaching materials they used during their LDS missions in the 1950s.

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Introduction

The New Era brought the full-church program and tremendous growth in membership to Great Britain, then to Western Europe and later to the worldwide church

The tremendous growth and strength of the Church began under President David O. McKay after he became President of the Church in April 1951. Following his second worldwide church tour in 1952 (his first worldwide church tour was in 1921), he set in motion the chain of events that lead to the **New Era** in Great Britain with the dedication of the London Temple in September 1958. After which the blessings of the full church program followed.

It had been 121 years since the first LDS missionaries went to Great Britain in 1837 “to save the Church in America” until President David O. McKay ushered in the **New Era** in September 1958. During those 121 years the members of the LDS Church in the United Kingdom and other countries did **not** have the full church program. Only church members living in North America and Hawaii had the full church program--wards, stakes and temples.

Derek A Cuthbert describes the conditions of the British members before the **New Era** in his book, *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Vol. I 1937-1987*, p. 7:

Up to the Second World War most of the members, including the leaders, had emigrated. During the war, all the missionaries have been withdrawn, there was little growth. Thus it was that in a nation of over fifty-five million people, less than seven thousand belonged to the Lord’s Church in 1951. The Saints were scattered over seventy branches, each branch averaging less than a hundred members, and all being organized into fourteen member districts of the British Mission. With no local leadership the branches and districts were presided over by young elders, with a few older couples. ... Members were still emigrating to seek a better life. There were few purpose-built chapels, only old houses and rented premises.

Some great needs had to be fulfilled if the Church was to flourish and become permanent in the British Isles, which had given almost one hundred thousand emigrant converts to build the Church in the land of Zion. These needs were:

1. A harvest of converts who would stay.
2. Better communication, both with church headquarters and the British media.
3. Development of local leadership and financial strength.
4. Provision of adequate physical facilities.
5. A House of the Lord, a Holy Temple.

The **New Era** in Great Britain addressed those five great needs and ushered in an era of permanent Church growth throughout the world. Thereafter members were encouraged to “stay and build.” The dedication of the London Temple and the calling of T. Bowring Woodbury to be the new British Mission President opened the doors to implementing the full church program there.

I believe the Church is as large and strong as it is today as a direct result of the New Era in Great Britain and subsequently in Western Europe.

Prophet of a Worldwide Church

Missionary Work and Church Growth

After having served for 45 years as an Apostle, David O. McKay became the ninth President of the Church on 9 April 1951, with Stephen L Richards and J. Reuben Clark Jr. as counselors. In 1952, the First Presidency introduced the first official proselyting plan for full-time missionaries. The program was designed to increase the effectiveness of full-time missionaries by providing a standard outline of the discussions to be used in teaching investigators. The outline included five discussions entitled “The Book of Mormon,” “Historical Basis for the Restoration,” “Distinctive Doctrines of the Church,” “Responsibilities of Church Membership,” and “Becoming a Member of the Church.”

Nine years later, in 1961, he convened the first seminar for all mission presidents, who were taught to encourage families to fellowship their friends and neighbors and then have these people taught by missionaries in their homes.³⁹ Emphasizing the concept of “every member a missionary,” he urged every member to make a commitment to bring at least one new member into the Church each year. A language training institute for newly called missionaries was also established that year. With these new initiatives, Church membership and the number of full-time missionaries grew rapidly. Under his direction, the number of stakes more than doubled (to approximately 500) as new stakes were formed around the world in such countries as Argentina, Australia, Brazil, England, Germany, Guatemala, Mexico, the Netherlands, Samoa, Scotland, Switzerland, Tonga, and Uruguay. Also in 1961, to accommodate this tremendous growth, members of the First Quorum of the Seventy were made high priests so that they could preside at stake conferences, and the new office of regional representatives of the Twelve was established in 1967. (*Teaching of the Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay, The Life and Ministry of David O. McKay*, 2011, pp. xxiv-xxv.)

President David O McKay and his First Counselor, Henry D. Moyle set in motion the sequence of events that encompassed the **New Era** in Great Britain. It began with the dedication of the London Temple and the appointment of a new British Mission President, T. Bowring Woodbury, who came to the London Temple dedication with President McKay and immediately began addressing President McKay’s tasks and challenges. In addition to a great influx in the numbers of full-time missionaries, a concerted effort was made to energize the members and increase the use of part-time member missionaries as part of Pres. McKay’s “Every Member a Missionary” program. It proved to be very successful.

The flood of full-time missionaries led to huge increases in the number of convert baptisms. On March 27, 1960, the British Mission was split and the North British Mission was

created. Bernard P. Brockbank, a contractor and real estate developer from Salt Lake County, Utah, was called to be its president. On that same day, March 27, 1960, the Manchester England Stake, the first stake of the church in Great Britain and Europe, was organized by Apostle Harold B. Lee. Eleven months later, February 26, 1961, the London Stake was organized and the North British Mission was divided to create the Scottish-Irish Mission. Grant Thorn was called to preside over the North British Mission. A week later, March 6, 1961, the British Mission was divided to create the Central British Mission with James A. Cullimore as its president. On March 5 and 19, 1961, the Leicester and Leeds Stakes were organized. Those four stakes and four British missions greatly increased the number of missionaries and church members, and expedited the implementation of the full church program in Great Britain.

For the first time in 121 years, British members saw new wards created and led by local members, and many new meetinghouses were built to house them. The new stakes and wards were led by British members. A little over a year later, on August 26, 1962, the Glasgow Stake was formed.

By 1983 there were 40 stakes in the British Isles, and by 1987 some 195 chapels and meetinghouses had been newly built or remodeled.

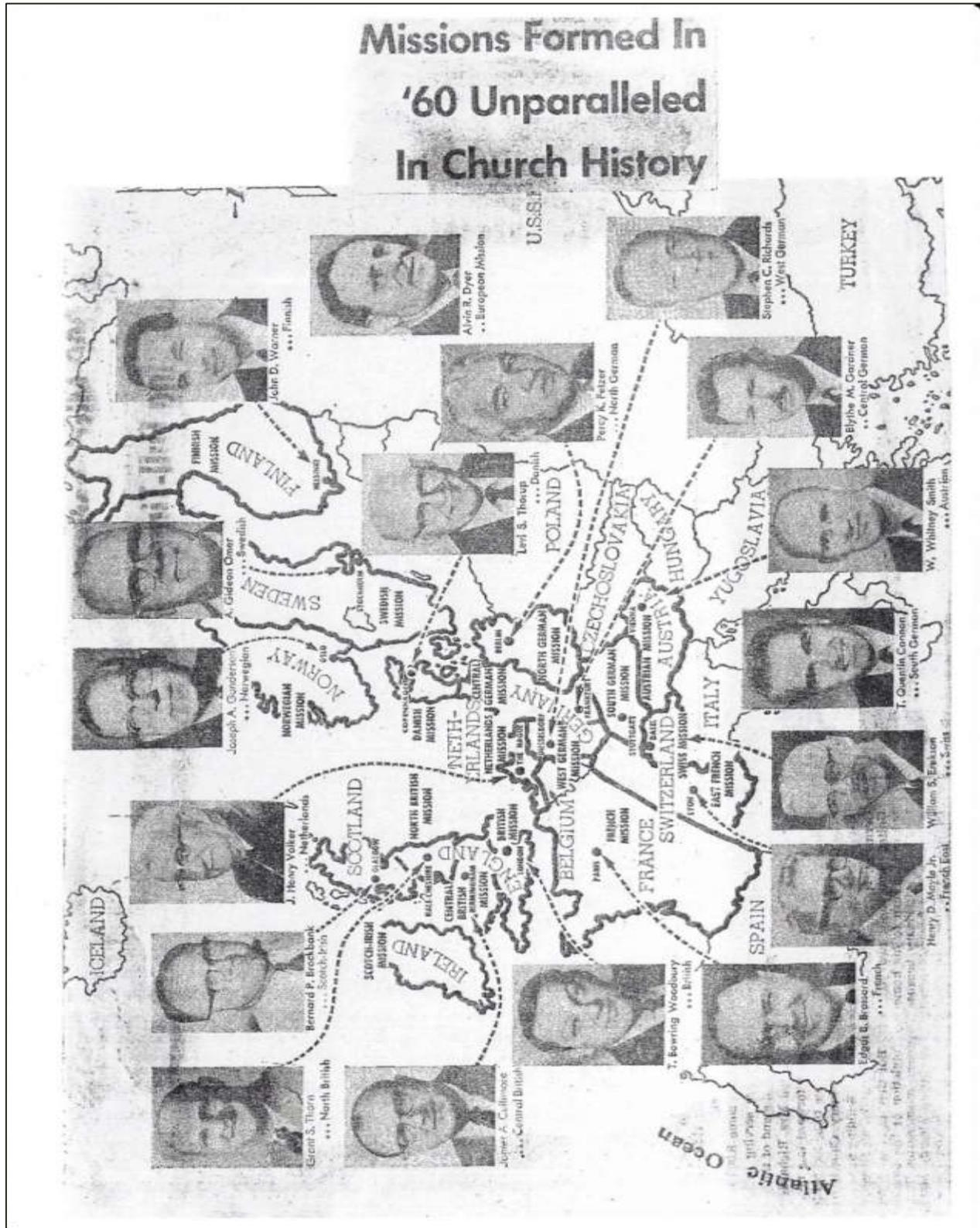
The **New Era** expanded to Western Europe under Alvin R. Dyer, an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve. Dyer was appointed European Mission President in 1960 and headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany. Under President Dyer's leadership and direction, fourteen new missions in Western Europe were created, and the new approaches to missionary work being used in Great Britain were expanded to the countries in Western Europe.

In 1961 the European Mission was divided and N. Eldon Tanner, another Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was appointed president of the West European Mission. His headquarters were established in southern England near the London Temple. From there he supervised all of the missions in the British Isles. During the next twenty years, there were as many as 9 missions in Great Britain.

The creation of the West European Mission and the appointment of Elder Tanner to preside over all the missions in the British Isles led to the establishment of the Deseret Enterprises Ltd. to publish, purchase and distribute all Church manuals and other items needed by the stakes, wards and members throughout Britain and Europe. A building was purchased in Mitcham, Surrey, fifteen miles from the London Temple, and furnished as a warehouse, distribution center and retail store. The distribution center and retail store were located on the ground floor of the building. Several members were hired to run and work in the bookstore.

A meetinghouse building program was soon initiated, and the Hyde Park Chapel was the first one to be completed. It was dedicated by President McKay on February 26, 1961. The first goal was to build 30 chapels in five years; it was soon raised to 50. Several hundred building missionaries were called to assist in the chapel building program. As noted above, some 195 new or remodeled chapels would be constructed by 1985, as stated in Appendix III in the Cuthbert book, p. 199.

The following map published in the *Church News*, circa 1960, highlights the dramatic expansion of missions in Great Britain and Western Europe.



A road map of the chapters in Volume I

Chapter 1 is a brief summary of why the Prophet Joseph Smith sent the first missionaries to Great Britain in July 1837, seven years after the organization of the church, to save the church in America. Converts were encouraged to immigrate to America. The remarkable success of those first missionaries and their successors in preaching and baptizing thousands of people in Great Britain over the next few decades was called “The First Great Missionary Gathering.” They literally “saved” the Church in America and provided the foundation for the continued growth and strength of the church in the next century.

Chapter 2, Part I presents a brief history of the church in Great Britain during the first half of the twentieth century--1900-1950. **Part II** is a prelude to the **New Era** and its great missionary harvest that began after President David O. McKay dedicated the London Temple in September 1958. At the dedication, President McKay announced the beginning of “**A New Era for the Church in Great Britain.**”

Chapter 3, Part I describes the major challenges in implementing the **New Era** in Britain during 1958-1962. **Part II** contains charts and graphs of major events of the **New Era** and its great missionary harvest. **Part III** is my pictorial essay of key events that I and my fellow **New Era** missionaries experienced while serving missions in Britain.

Chapter 4, is a synopsis of the baseball baptism program that was developed and promoted by the first **New Era** mission presidents and missionaries, plus the birthday tributes to church authorities and others were used to motivate the **New Era** missionaries. The baseball baptism program was defended by President Moyle and President McKay, but criticized by some church leaders and historians.

Chapter 5, sets forth some **New Era** statistics in the context of worldwide church growth from 1830 to 2013 and discusses some recent developments and prospects of present and future great missionary harvests.

Contents of Volume II

Volume II is my first-hand account of my missionary experiences from August 31, 1959 to September 5, 1961 during the **New Era** in Great Britain. It includes entries from my journal and pocket diaries, excerpts from my letters to my family, and some pictures taken on my mission.

Chapter 1

The first GREAT MISSIONARY HARVEST AND GATHERING in the British Isles

To help me better understand the history of the British LDS Mission during the 122 years prior to my serving a full-time mission there (September 1959-September 1961), I researched the history of when, why and how LDS missionary work began and was carried out there.

In 1928-1929, Apostle John A. Widtsoe, then president of the British and European Missions headquartered in Liverpool, England, asked full-time missionary Elder Richard L. Evans, then serving as both the associate editor of the *Millennial Star* and secretary of the European Mission, to write a series of articles about “When the gospel came to Britain” for publication in the *Millennial Star*.

In 1937, Richard L. Evans, then managing editor of the *Improvement Era*, was commissioned to write a history of the first hundred years of the Church in Great Britain for the LDS British Centennial. His 1928-1929 articles became the first part of his book titled *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain* that was published by the Deseret News Press in 1937. In October 1953, Elder Richard L. Evans was called to be an Apostle. (I became acquainted with his sons John and Stephen Evans when we served as **New Era** missionaries in the British and North British Missions.)

The Church in America in the early 1830s

Beginning in the mid-1830s, severe economic conditions in America caused the financial panic of 1837 that distressed both America and the seven-year-old LDS Church then headquartered in Kirtland, Ohio. Richard L Evans describes that dire financial situation in his book *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain* as follows:

A financial panic swept over the United States in 1837. Reckless speculation, loose banking and inordinate expansion of paper currency had been in course for two or three years. The crash came soon after Mr. Van Buren became President of the United States in March 1837. Distress was nationwide. A veritable avalanche of petitions for relief swept into the White House. Financial institutions throughout the country were forced to close their doors. Failures in the city of New York alone during the months of March and April amounted to more than one hundred million dollars. The Church and its members, with the whole nation, were unavoidably drawn into this financial catastrophe, and grievous troubles followed. (Evans, p.10)

The LDS Church’s financial problems included the collapse of The Kirtland Safety Society Bank, the misappropriation of \$20,000 by the bank’s cashier, plus the financial obligations incurred for the construction of the Kirtland Temple. Daniel Peterson describes the Church’s internal strife at that time as follows: “Plagued by division, discouragement and

apostasy, 1837 and 1838 have been called the toughest two years of Joseph Smith's life." (Daniel Peterson, "Defending the Faith: "The first missions to England were daring and inspired," *Deseret News*, May 16, 2013.)

1837 the Prophet Joseph Smith sends missionaries to Great Britain

The *History of the Church* records that about June 1, 1837 Joseph Smith called Apostle Heber C. Kimball to preside over a mission to England, the Church's first "foreign" mission beyond Canada to save the Church in America:

In this state of things, God revealed to me that something new must be done for the salvation of His Church. And on about the first of June 1837, Heber C. Kimball, one of the Twelve, was set apart by the spirit of prophecy and revelation, prayer and the laying on of hands, of the First Presidency, to preside over a mission to England, to be the first foreign mission of the Church of Christ in the last days. (*History of the Church*, vol. II, p. 489)

Daniel Peterson describes that event as follows:

During a Sunday meeting on June 4, 1837, in the year-old Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith approached Heber C. Kimball, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve apostles, "Brother Heber," Joseph spoke quietly into his ear, "the Spirit of the Lord has whispered to me: 'let my servant, Heber, go to England and proclaim my Gospel, and open the door of salvation to that nation.'" (Daniel Peterson, "Defending the Faith: "The first missions to England were daring and inspired," *Deseret News*, May 16, 2013)

During the ordination of Apostle Heber C. Kimball, Apostle Orson Hyde offered to accompany him on his mission to England. "His offer was accepted and he was set apart for that purpose." Two more men were also set apart to accompany them in Kirtland--Willard Richards, and Joseph Fielding. Thereafter, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Willard Richards and Joseph Fielding traveled to New York where they were met by three LDS missionaries from Canada--John Goodson, Isaac Russell and John Snyder.

Those seven missionaries, Apostle Heber C. Kimball, Apostle Orson Hyde, Willard Richards, Joseph Fielding, John Goodson, Isaac Russell, and John Snyder, booked passage on the *Garrick*, a nine-hundred-ton ship that sailed to Liverpool, England, on July 1, 1837. Several of the missionaries preached sermons to the passengers on the ship during the voyage. The ship arrived at the dock in Liverpool on July 19, 1837.

The first seven missionaries in Great Britain in 1837 and their successors started the "First Great Missionary Gathering" that played an important role in "saving the church in America."

The first missionaries sent abroad by the Church arrived in Liverpool on 19 July 1837, only seven years after the Church was founded, and 10 years before the

first Mormon pioneers would settle Salt Lake City in 1847. Seven missionaries were sent, including two members of the [Quorum of the Twelve Apostles](#). Hundreds joined the Church after hearing their message, and in 1840, those converts began to depart from this same harbor to join their fellow Church members in America. (Mormonnewsroom.org)

After disembarking, they set about establishing a headquarters for the new mission and began preaching the Gospel in England. Elder Kimball recorded what happened next:

Elders Hyde, Richards, and myself, being without purse or scrip, wandered in the streets of Liverpool, where wealth and luxury abound side by side with penury and want. I there met the rich attired in the most costly dresses, and the next minute was saluted with the cries of the poor, with scarce covering sufficient to screen them from the weather. Such a wide distinction I never saw before. Looking for a place to lodge in, we found a room belonging to a widow in Union Street, which we engaged for a few days. [*Whitney's Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 13]

After considerable discussion and prayer, they were impressed to go to Preston, a manufacturing city located about 30 miles north of Liverpool on the River Ribble, to commence their missionary work. After a stagecoach ride to Preston, six of the seven missionaries found a suitable place to lodge, and Elder Joseph Fielding left to find his brother, the Reverend James Fielding, who lived in Preston. The next Sunday, Rev. Fielding invited them to attend the Vauxhall Chapel where he preached to his flock and announced that his brother or one of the other missionaries who had recently arrived from America would preach a sermon in the Vauxhall Chapel that afternoon at 3 PM.

"I declared that an angel had visited the earth, and committed the everlasting Gospel to man; called their attention to the first principles of the Gospel, and gave them a brief history of the work which the Lord had commissioned on the earth; after which Elder Hyde bore testimony to the same, which was received by many with whom I had conversed; they cried "Glory to God!" and rejoiced that the Lord had sent His servants unto them. "Thus was the key turned and the Gospel dispensation (*Whitney's Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 137)

Elder Kimball wrote the following account about the first sermon given in Britain by one of the missionaries:

We have great works to perform on the earth, and I suppose the whole program of the Church could be put in one of three categories: missionary work, temple work and keeping Church members active and faithful. ...The Prophet Joseph Smith said: "Brethren, shall we not go on in such a great a cause? Go forward and not backward. Courage, brethren and on to the victory! Let your hearts rejoice and be exceedingly glad." ---Spencer W. Kimball, 1977. (As quoted in Leonard J. Arrington & Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*, 1979, p. 284)

Their sermons bore fruit during their first meeting in the Vauxhall Chapel, and the missionaries were invited to speak again at that pulpit that evening and on the following

Wednesday evening. On both occasions, the Vauxhall Chapel was filled to overflowing. Soon some of Rev. Fielding's flock asked to be baptized by the American missionaries.

Rev. Fielding, fearing not only losing some of his flock but also some of his income as a preacher, closed the Vauxhall Chapel to the missionaries and opposed their preaching in Preston. Thereafter, the missionaries preached in private houses, "which were opened in every direction, when numbers came to hear and believed the Gospel." (Whitney, pp. 141-143)

River Ribble



In the River Ribble, near Preston, Lancashire, England, missionary and apostle Heber C. Kimball baptized the first converts in England on 30 July 1837, only 10 days after the missionaries arrived. Several thousand curious spectators watched the baptisms from the park-like banks. It was near here that Church first took root in the British Isles. The Preston Ward, the Church's oldest continuing congregation, was founded in 1837 (mormonnewsroom.org.)

Within the first year of missionary work, the headquarters of the British Mission was moved to Manchester, England. The first seven missionaries were later joined by a second group, including additional members of the Church's Twelve Apostles, following Joseph Smith's July 8, 1838 revelation that they too should serve a mission "over the great waters." They were told to leave for England on April 26, 1839—but "not quite all answered the summons." (Daniel Peterson, "Defending the Faith: The first missions to England were daring and inspired," *Deseret News*, May 16, 2013)

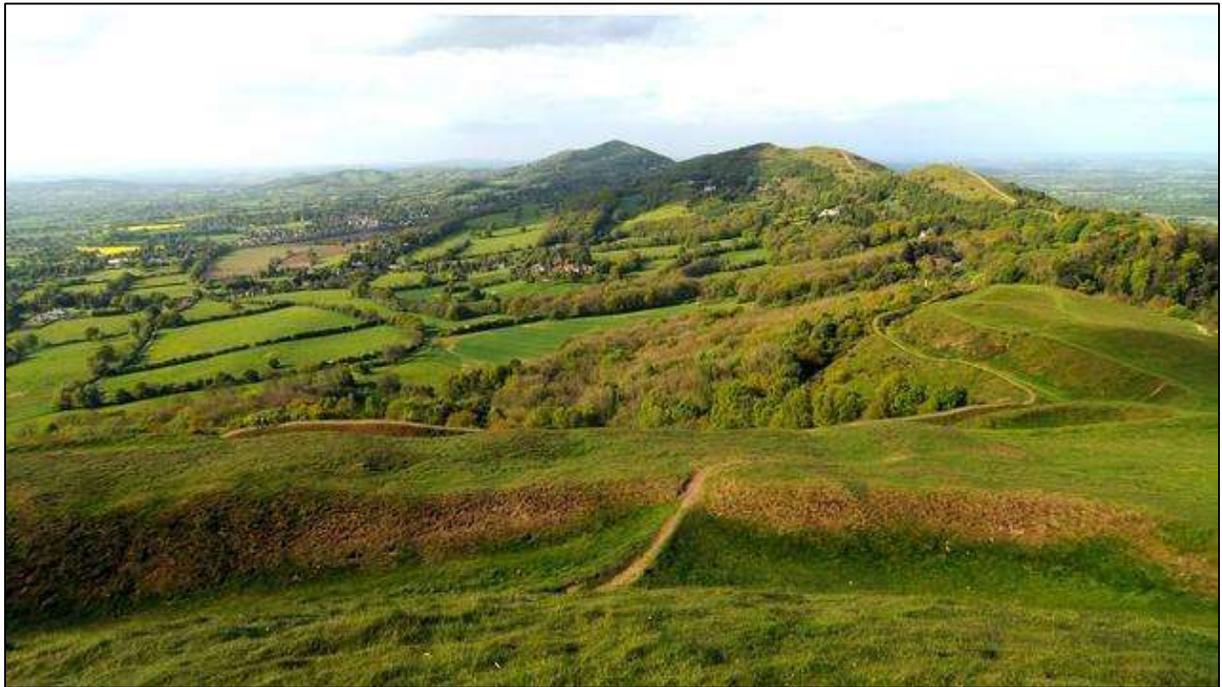
During 1837 and 1838, those first seven missionaries preached in Preston and other parts of England with remarkable success. They baptized 600 people in 1837 and 727 in

1838. During 1837-1839 there were 1,517 baptisms. In 1839, 14 new missionaries, led by Brigham Young and several other apostles, arrived in England to assist the first seven missionaries. Together they baptized 190 individuals in 1839.

In 1840, the British Mission headquarters were moved back to Liverpool so the mission leaders could organize and arrange ship passage for the large numbers of British LDS converts to immigrate to America.

During the summer of 1840, Wilford Woodruff went to Herefordshire and Worcestershire, England.

Below is the view from atop the Herefordshire Beacon (Malvern Hills), the site of both a pre-Roman British fortress and a Roman fort. Wilford Woodruff went there to pray on several occasions. On 20 May 1840, he, Brigham Young and Willard Richards met there and decided to print the Book of Mormon and a hymnal with funds donated by John and Jane Benbow and Thomas Kington. [mormonnewsroom.org]



Below is a view of the pond near the Benbow home where Wilford Woodruff preached to members of the United Brethren and in five days baptized 32 people from the congregation, many in this pond. Eventually, many members of the United Brethren, as well as their neighbors, joined the Church. Combined, there were about 1,500 converts to the Church from the Herefordshire area. [mormonnewsroom.org]

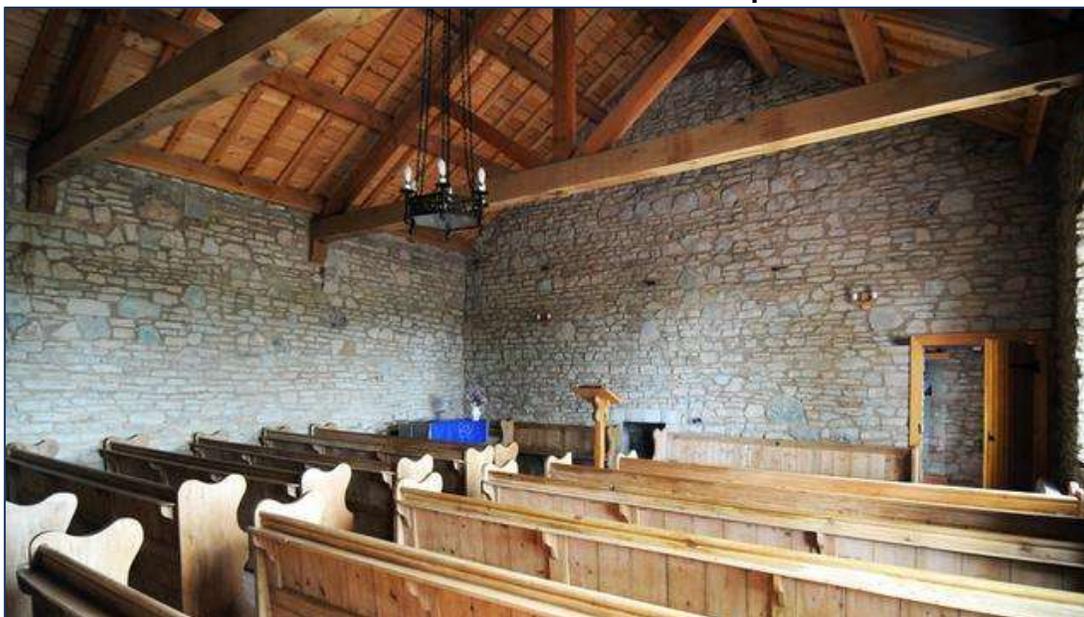
Pond near Benbow home



Restored Gadfield Elm Chapel near Pendock, England



Interior of the Gadfield Elm Chapel



The Gadfield Elm Chapel was built by the United Brethren in 1836 and deeded to the Church in 1840. It was the first building to be owned by the Church in England and one of the first chapels ever owned by the Church. As a missionary to the British Isles, [Brigham Young](#) preached at Gadfield Elm twice, once on 17 May 1840 and once on 14 December 1840. (Mormonnewsroom.org)

The Gadfield Elm Chapel acted as the focal point of Church activity for thousands of Latter-day Saints. Around 1842, as many converts began to immigrate to the United States, the chapel was sold to help fund their journeys. Over the next 150 years, the chapel was used as a toolshed, a garage and a home, eventually falling into disrepair. In 1994, the property came up for auction, and a group of local Latter-day Saints joined together as the Gadfield Elm Trust to raise money to purchase and restore the building. This group then donated the building to the Church in 2004. Then President [Gordon B. Hinckley \(1910-2008\)](#), traveled to England to accept the building as an official Church historic site. (mormonnewsroom.org.)

Converts encouraged to emigrate to America

“Early in the history of the church, missionaries were commanded to assemble ‘the elect’ from throughout the world. ... Converts were to gather physically with other faithful members to assist in building Zion, a covenant community of righteous Saints. ... Immigration to America or to Nauvoo or the Great Basin ... was viewed as a critical part of preparing the earth for the second coming of Jesus Christ.” (online Digital Collections: Mormon Missionary Work: A Brief History and Introduction)

During 1840-1849, 64 additional missionaries arrived, some 34,399 people were baptized and 5,784 members immigrated to America. (Evans, *A History of Mormonism in Great Britain*,

Appendix.) During the following decade, 43,309 people were baptized and 12,355 members immigrated to America. During 1850-1859 there were 43,304 baptisms. Fueled in part by the expanded missionary force, church membership continued to make dramatic and substantial gains.

During the first five decades of missionary work, the missionaries' success in preaching the Gospel and gaining converts resulted in the emigration of thousands of LDS converts from England to gather to Zion in America. Therefore, the active participation and leadership of virtually all of the General Authorities of the Church was required to help organize and direct the missionary work, ecclesiastical matters, and facilitate the process of "gathering to Zion."

Creation of the European Mission and the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company

In September 1849, under the direction of Brigham Young, the Perpetual Emigrating Fund was organized specifically to help newly converted church members obtain the necessary resources and passage on ships bound to America from Liverpool and travel from their ports of debarkation westward to Utah. With the creation of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, they also had to solicit donations "to constitute a fund whereby the poor might be gathered to Zion."

Donations of money, oxen, wagons, foodstuffs and equipment were widely solicited to constitute a fund whereby the poor might be gathered to "Zion." The money advanced to individuals for transportation was considered as a loan to be repaid as soon as possible after the arrival of the immigrants in the "Valley." In the greater number of cases this obligation was honorably discharged. Years later many Utah-born children of those who had been beneficiaries of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund gladly made liberal donations to the fund, in order that their relatives abroad might enjoy the blessings that awaited them in Zion. (Evans, p. 231)

The money advanced to individuals for transportation was considered as a loan to be repaid as soon as possible after the arrival of the immigrants in the [Salt Lake] Valley. (Evans, p. 231)

On February 3, 1852, the first company of Perpetual Emigrating Fund emigrants arrived in Salt Lake City from Europe, with thirty-one wagons; Abraham O. Smoot, captain. It was met by President Brigham Young and his counselors, and a large company of Utah's leading citizens. From this time on, the President of both the British and European Missions, located in Liverpool, provided the leadership, resources and organization to facilitate the flow of emigrants, from Great Britain and Europe through the Port of Liverpool to the United States ports of entry, and on to Utah. (Evans, pp. 234-235)

Alexander L. Baugh wrote:

By the early 1850s, English conversions had actually reached closer to 50,000, because by that time some 170,000 British Latter-day Saints had moved to

America. ... Had nineteenth-century British Latter-day Saint converts remained in their homeland, through continued proselyting efforts and natural increase, membership totals there might have reached the one-million mark. (Alexander L. Baugh, "The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert c. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A Wright (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007, 237-259)

The Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company (PEFC) provided financial and organizational assistance to helped the thousands of converts emigrating from Great Britain and Europe to the United States and onward to Utah in organized wagon and handcart companies and later by rail, until 1887,

when that company was dissolved by passage of the Edmunds-Tucker law, an Act of Congress which, among other things, dissolved the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, the property of which escheated to the government. This act became a law without the signature of the President of the United States." (Evans, p. 232)

In 1856, the Willie and Martin handcart companies started their trek across the Great Plains to Utah late in the season and were ill-equipped to deal with the deep snow that fell on them while traveling to Utah. Brigham Young called for volunteers from throughout the Great Salt Lake valley to take wagon loads of food and supplies to rescue them. Among the volunteers were my great grandfather, James Barker and my wife Helen's Steed ancestor. On October 19, 1856 a blizzard struck the region, halting the two companies and the relief party. With the help and supplies provided by the relief party, the survivors were able to make it to Utah.

The rescue of the Willie and Martin handcart companies from the snows of Wyoming in 1856 has been called "one of the great tales of the West and of America."

This was not the first time President [Brigham] Young had considered using handcarts, but it was the first time he had acted on it. With 20,000 converts in Europe "clamoring" to come to Zion, ² leaders hoped to provide an inexpensive travel option. The Perpetual Emigrating Fund would pay for the travel expenses of the handcart pioneers, and the pioneers would repay the fund once in Utah. President of the European Mission, Elder Franklin D. Richards (1821–99), as well as missionaries and converts, enthusiastically embraced the idea.

A total of ten handcart companies traveled to Salt Lake City between 1856 and 1860. Eight of the ten companies successfully arrived in Salt Lake City. The two largest companies, however, met with tragedy—the fourth handcart company of 500 led by James G. Willie and the fifth company of 665 led by Edward Martin. Also part of this tragedy were two independent wagon companies made up of Saints who had the means to purchase their own wagons—one wagon company of 185 led by William B. Hodgett and the other of 200 led by John A. Hunt. The Hodgett wagon company traveled near or with the Martin handcart company, and the Hunt company traveled about two days behind Martin and Hodgett. ("Go and

Bring Them In," by LaRene Porter Gaunt and Linda Dekker, *Ensign Magazine*, Dec. 2006)

According to Richard L. Evans:

Neither the dissolution of the [PEFC] in 1887, nor any other previous or subsequent difficulty until the United States immigration restrictions of recent times, halted the influx of British Saints to the headquarters of the Church. More than fifty-two thousands of them have come during the years of the near-century since the inception of this unprecedented modern migration. (Evans, pp. 235-236)

1850 the British and European Missions separated

The continued growth of the missionary force and membership of the church in Great Britain and Europe necessitated major organizational changes in the British Mission. Nearly all of the men who served as the presidents of those two missions (British and European) were either apostles or general authorities when they served, or later became general authorities. They were also Americans. In 1850 the European Mission was organized. Previously, the president of the British Mission also served as the president of the European Mission located in the British Mission headquarters.

Richard L. Evans describes those administrative changes and the reasons for them in his book *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*:

Until the expansion of Church activity into continental fields, the responsibility of these men was limited to British Mission activity. With the opening of other European missions, beginning with the Scandinavian Mission in 1850, the responsibility of general supervision over the continental missions and mission presidents devolved upon the president of the British Mission, who then became president of the European Mission, in addition to the detailed responsibility for the progress of the work in the British Isles. Thus the president of the British Mission was also president of the European Mission comprising all ecclesiastical divisions in continental and insular Europe, and subsequently including Asia-Minor and South Africa. (Evans, pp. 220-221)

"The stress on the gathering of new converts to an American headquarters meant sacrificing a stable base in the converts' home country in favor of the colonizing activities in the Great Basin. By 1907 President Joseph F. Smith, the fourth president of the Latter-day saints, following suggestions of George Q. Cannon in 1894, began counseling European members to remain in their own lands. However, despite this counsel, a significant number of converts continued to gather to America." (online Digital Collections. Mormon Missionary Work: A Brief History an Introduction.)"

1837-1859 statistics of LDS missionary work in Great Britain

When I began reviewing the statistics for the first two decades of missionary work in Great Britain, 1837-1859, two things became evident to me:

- First, the number of LDS missionaries serving in the British Isles increased dramatically-- from 21 during 1837-1840, to 64 during 1840-1849, and 191 during 1850-1859. Remarkably, that small number of missionaries helped convert upwards of 80,000 new members. During 1860 to 1899, the number of missionaries increased to 295, 379, 637 and 1,121. During 1900-1909, the number of missionaries increased to 1,376.
- Second, during the later decades of the 19th century when greater numbers of missionaries served in the British Isles, the numbers of baptisms diminished somewhat. It appears that by the end of the 19th century the first “Great Missionary Gathering” in Great Britain had wound down as convert numbers declined to more moderate, but still significant, levels.

From 1860 to 1889, baptisms dropped to 16,112, 6,295, and 6,061, reflecting the depressed economic and social conditions in Britain along with increasing opposition to the missionary work. During the two decades from 1890 to 1909, when the most LDS missionaries were present in the British Isles, there were 3,742 and 7,587 baptisms, respectively. By the end of the 19th Century, the first “Great Missionary Gathering” in Great Britain had wound down.

The grand total of convert baptisms in the British Mission during its first century, 1837-1936, was 126,593 people, suggesting that each of the 5,947 missionaries may have helped convert up to 21.3 new members. But many of these baptisms occurred during the earliest decades, and some of the baptisms may have been the children of members rather than converts. (Statistics from Evans, pp. 243-245)

The remarkable number of convert baptisms by the early missionaries during 1837-1899 became known as the “**Great Missionary Gathering.**”

1837-1937 statistics of the Church’s first century in Great Britain,

Statistics in the Appendix of Evan’s book state that during the first century of the Church’s missionary work in Great Britain, 1837-1936, 52,387 members immigrated to America. However, that number did not include unrecorded and an inestimable number who left Great Britain individually or in small groups without their departure being noted in any of the Church records or publications.

The following three appendices, reprinted from Richard L. Evans book, *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*, pp. 243-246), provide a very informative picture of the Church’s first century and missionary work in Great Britain, 1837 -1936.

NUMBER OF BRITISH MISSIONARIES, BY YEARS*

1837-1839			1870-1879			1905			120
1837	7		1870	21		1906	168		
1838	0		1871	20		1907	151		
1839	14		1872	31		1908	190		
	—		1873	31		1909	184		
Total for three years	21		1874	30			—		
1840-1849			1875			Total for the decade			1376
1840	5		1876	41		1910-1919			
1841	1		1877	58		1910	138		
1842	2		1878	42		1911	146		
1843	2		1879	57		1912	120		
1844	10			—		1913	126		
1845	0		Total for the decade	379		1914	63		
1846	19		1880-1889			1915	42		
1847	0		1880	86		1916	32		
1848	12		1881	52		1917	1		
1849	9		1882	68		1918	0		
	—		1883	60		1919	20		
Total for the decade	64		1884	52			—		
1850-1859			1885			Total for the decade			688
1850	9		1886	65		1920-1929			
1851	8		1887	62		1920	46		
1852	43		1888	64		1921	107		
1853	24		1889	77		1922	68		
1854	25			—		1923	66		
1855	13		Total for the decade	637		1924	82		
1856	42		1890-1899			1925	73		
1857	21		1890	101		1926	80		
1858	0		1891	127		1927	68		
1859	5		1892	67		1928	90		
	—		1893	79		1929	106		
Total for the decade	191		1894	91			—		
1860-1869			1895			Total for the decade			786
1860	48		1896	167		1930-1937			
1861	6		1897	98		1930	78		
1862	19		1898	129		1931	41		
1863	44		1899	191		1932	38		
1864	33			—		1933	43		
1865	30		Total for the decade	1121		1934	57		
1866	30		1900-1909			1935	49		
1867	35		1900	136		1936	54		
1868	15		1901	66		1937	30		
1869	35		1902	136			—		
	—		1903	111		Total for seven years			
Total for the decade	295		1904	114		to April 1937.....			
						390			

Grand Total for one hundred years (to April 15, 1937).....5947

*Note—These figures represent traveling missionaries sent to Great Britain from other countries. They do not include the unnumbered thousands of British-born missionaries who have served while still being citizens and residents of their native land.

BRITISH MISSION BAPTISMS BY YEARS

A record of the number who have been received into membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through the waters of baptism during the past century in Great Britain.

1837-1839		1870-1879		1905	624
1837	600	1870	793	1906	676
1838	727	1871	654	1907	986
1839	190	1872	466	1908	1234
	<u> </u>	1873	461	1909	938
Total for three years	1517	1874	530		<u> </u>
1840-1849		1875	560	Total for the decade	7587
1840	2326	1876	691	1910-1919	
1841	2883	1877	534	1910	963
1842	3216	1878	718	1911	482
1843	1195	1879	888	1912	363
1844	1762		<u> </u>	1913	376
1845	2505	Total for the decade	6295	1914	399
1846	2354	1880-1889		1915	298
1847	2918	1880	843	1916	297
1848	6520	1881	980	1917	319
1849	8620	1882	848	1918	248
	<u> </u>	1883	778	1919	166
Total for the decade	34299	1884	537		<u> </u>
1850-1859		1885	474	Total for the decade	3911
1850	8017	1886	374	1920-1929	
1851	8064	1837	562	1920	204
1852	6665	1888	344	1921	243
1853	4603	1889	321	1922	288
1854	4530		<u> </u>	1923	333
1855	3711	Total for the decade	6061	1924	282
1856	2947	1890-1899		1925	168
1857	2405	1890	239	1926	246
1858	1298	1891	267	1927	171
1859	1064	1892	336	1928	232
	<u> </u>	1893	353	1929	182
Total for the decade	43304	1894	364		<u> </u>
1860-1869		1895	378	Total for the decade	2349
1860	1928	1896	347	1930-1936	
1861	2067	1897	503	1930	246
1862	1517	1898	539	1931	245
1863	2231	1899	416	1932	267
1864	1910		<u> </u>	1933	153
1865	1246	Total for the decade	3742	1934	152
1866	856	1900-1909		1935	147
1867	1096	1900	488	1936	206
1868	2091	1901	986		<u> </u>
1869	1170	1902	581	Total for seven years	
	<u> </u>	1903	472	to 1937	1416
Total for the decade	16112	1904	602		
Grand Total up to 1937		126,593			

BRITISH MISSION EMIGRATION BY YEARS

A partial* record of the British members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who have left the mother country during the past century.

1840-1849		1869 878	1895 153
1840 290		1896 100	
1841 705	Total for the decade 9924	1897 94	
1842 1083		1898 112	
1843 475	1870-1879	1899 106	
1844 431	1870 835		
1845 276	1871 688	Total for the decade 4849	
1846 122	1872 737		
1847 133	1873 881	1900-1909	
1848 369	1874 650	1900 135	
1849 1900	1875 389	1901 445	
Total for the decade 5784	1876 349	1902 253	
	1877 669	1903 255	
1850-1859	1878 903	1904 270	
1850 1048	1879 812	1905 280	
1851 990	Total for the decade 6913	1906 363	
1852 581		1907 447	
1853 1778	1880-1889	1908 324	
1854 2109	1880 808	1909 423	
1855 2686	1881 1150	Total for the decade 3195	
1856 2434	1882 1398		
1857 1208	1883 1457	1910-1919	
1858 122	1884 804	1910 555	
1859 399	1885 697	1911 337	
Total for the decade 12355	1886 644	1912	
	1887 422	1913	
1860-1869	1888 392	1914	
1860 665	1889 447	1915	
1861 807	Total for the decade 8219	1916	
1862 1053		1917	
1863 1599	1890-1899	1918	
1864 1272	1890 347	1919	
1865 515	1891 218	Total for the decade 892	
1866 1132	1892 283		
1867 271	1893 225	1920-1929	
1868 1732	1894 86	1920 256	
Grand total		52,387*	

*Not included in this figure are an unrecorded and inestimable number who have left Great Britain individually or in small groups without their departure having been noted in any of the Church records or publications.

First missionaries to Scotland

While writing this history, I came across an article published in the *Deseret News* that stated that the first LDS missionaries to take the Gospel to Scotland were Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner in 1840, just two and one-half years after the first missionaries arrived in Britain.

According to the newspaper article:

Elder Mulliner was converted to the restored Gospel and joined the Church in Canada. While affiliating with the Church in Springfield, Ill., he was called on a mission to Great Britain. On Dec. 18, 1839, Samuel departed Liverpool on his way to Scotland. In Scotland, Mulliner began his missionary service in the area of Glasgow and continued his labors in neighboring regions, including the town of Paisley.

On March 26, 1840, he performed the first Mormon baptisms in Paisley. It was said that Paisley was more receptive than some other towns or villages. In May 1840, Elder Orson Pratt arrived in Paisley, and on May 8, Elder Pratt, assisted by Mulliner and Wright organized a branch of the church at Paisley. Elder John Taylor also visited the village of Paisley. (“Picturing History: Paisley, Scotland,” by Kenneth Mays, *Deseret News*, Dec. 12, 2012.)

As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 is the fact that when the new Scottish-Irish Mission was created in February 1961, the Mission headquarters was located in Renfrew, Scotland, not far from Glasgow and near Paisley, Scotland, where the first branch of the Church in Scotland was organized. The Scottish-Irish Mission staff attended the Paisley Branch from the time the new mission was organized.

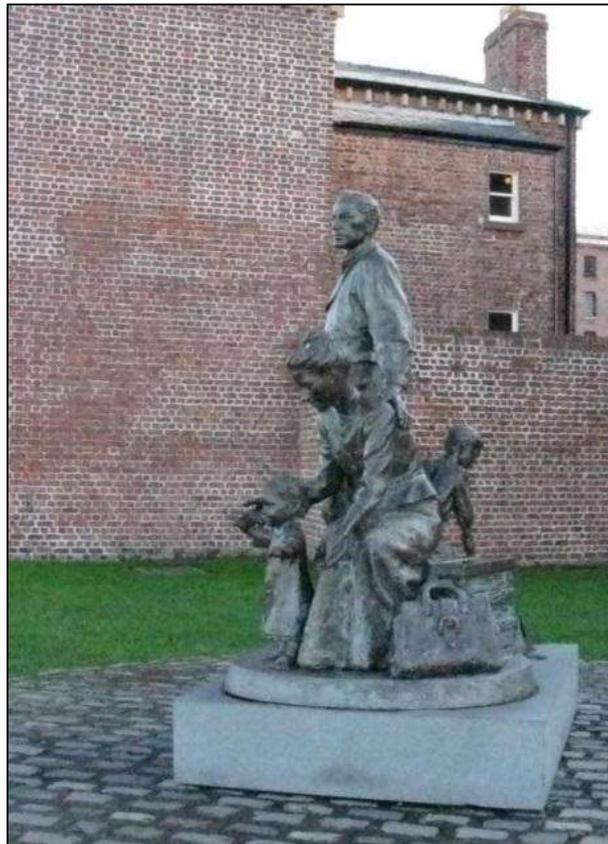
Elder Richard L. Evans describes the importance of the British Isles to the growth and strength of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the second paragraph of Chapter 1 in his book *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*.

From the British Isles has ever come stalwart stock -- defenders of the faith, carriers of the glad message -- men and women who have had the courage of their convictions, and whose convictions have been born of a testimony of truth. They and their children have largely supplied the rank and file of the Church and the majority of its leaders.

However, the emigration of thousands of members of the church from Great Britain and Europe saved, strengthened and expanded the LDS church in America, but weakened the church in Great Britain and Europe for decades—until the New Era began in September 1958.



The Liverpool dock, since restored as a museum



In 2001 the church, in memory of the early Mormon emigration from the port of Liverpool, donated the Emigrants statue at Albert Dock, Liverpool,

Chapter 2

The LDS Church in Twentieth Century Great Britain

Part 1: 1900 to 1950

During the period from 1900 to 1930, LDS missionaries and members in Great Britain and Europe experienced not only religious persecution but severe economic and political problems that led to the outbreak of World War I on August 1, 1914. During the four-plus years of WWI, the British and European people suffered severe scarcities, terrible destruction of buildings and homes and huge losses of lives until the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. But the signing of the Armistice did not end their economic sufferings. Their economic hardships were compounded by the Great Depression of 1929-1939, and by World War II, September 1, 1939-August 11, 1945.

Chapters 11 and 12 of the sesquicentennial book *Truth Will Prevail*, published by the Cambridge University Press in England in 1987, provide valuable information and insights about the conditions of the British Saints during the period from 1914-1945.

From 1900 to 1918, the number of missionaries dropped from 136 to 0, and the number of baptisms declined from 488 to 166. Because church members living in Great Britain lacked the full church program and access to temples, many immigrated to America hoping to enjoy *all* the benefits of church membership and improve their economic conditions. During 1900-1909, 3,195 British members emigrated, and during 1910-1919 another 892 emigrated.

American missionaries evacuated prior to WWI

Germany's declaration of war on Russia on August 1, 1914, prompted Church leaders in Salt Lake City to take steps to evacuate the American emissaries and missionaries from Europe. The majority of the American missionaries were recalled from Great Britain as well. Before the beginning of the war [WWI], Great Britain had 250 proselyting missionaries, more than any other European mission. Church President Joseph F. Smith also encouraged young men in both the United States and Great Britain to support the war effort. Such a situation caused many English branches to be void of any ecclesiastical leadership from the American elders. British young men also could not proselytize because of their induction into military service.

It was during their period the women in the British Mission made a concerted effort to carry the Church forward. Historian Louis B. Cardon wrote, "Besides working in Relief Society, contributing to the national war effort, caring for their own families, and performing individual part-time volunteer work, ...women also assisted in the proselytizing work of the mission." (Alexander L. Baugh, "The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A.

Wright, Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham young University, 2007, 237-259)

Resumption of Missionary work after WWI ends and religious persecution of LDS missionaries and members increases

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, British Saints and their religion came under considerable opposition. It is possible that the Mormon faith was the target of more religious persecution and intolerance than any other denomination in the country during this time. This seems strange when considering that the Church was then a minor religion with membership never exceeding 7,200. British anti-Mormon attacks focused on two major themes: (1) the Church's former practice of plural marriage (polygamy) and (2) the controversy surrounding the 1902 election and subsequent Senate hearings of Reed Smoot, an Apostle who had been elected by the Utah state legislature to the U.S. Senate, but who was charged with practicing polygamy. Opposition came from the press, political circles, the clergy and anti-Mormon rallies and plays. Some later-day saints, especially American missionaries, experienced physical abuse and mob violence. (Alexander L. Baugh, "The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright, Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007, 237-59)

On May 15, 1919, Elder David Ephraim Randall, a brother-in-law of my grandfather Joseph Barker, both of whom had served as missionaries to Great Britain (Joseph Barker from 1894 to 1896 and David E. Randall from 1896 to 1898), departed for his second mission to Great Britain, and was among the first Mormon missionaries to return after the end of WWI. His journal and letters reflect the negative attitude of the British government and people toward Mormons after WWI.

"Other than Junius F. Wells and one or two others who had been called to the Liverpool office and had preceded us a few weeks, we were really the first Mormon missionaries to visit England since the war [WWI]. When we presented our passports to the English Embassy [in New York City] the next day, he refused to sign our passports after the chief officer learned that we were Mormons and could be classed as aliens. He remarked, 'We want missionaries of labor and not of the Gospel.' We had been told in Salt Lake City that we would have no difficulty in getting our passports signed. The matter was taken up with Apostle Reed Smoot, our Senator from Utah in Washington, D.C. and in four days we were able to get the necessary signature. The same night we took a train for Montreal, Canada, and set sail May 27th on board the steamer Minedosa, a new boat which had only been in the water since the signing of the Armistice. ...

"Our presence aboard the Minedosa apparently irked the ship's stewards. Some of them became very angry and declared they would throw the seven G...D... Mormons overboard before they landed. .. On entering the English Channel, we began to see the effects of the war. Many buoys were seen bobbing around,

showing the locations of vessels that had been sunk. We also saw the tops of the masts of the ill-fated Lusitania where so many women and children lost their lives after the liner was torpedoed by a German U-Boat.

“Imagine our joy in having a chance to put our feet on soil again after nine days, but to our surprise when the chief officer arrived on board and examined our passports he informed us that ‘You people cannot land. We are going to send you back, as we were cabled by the English Embassy from New York as soon as you left Montreal not to let you land.’ We were forced to stand by and watch all of the passengers go ashore, leaving the seven despised Mormon Missionaries alone on board. Brother Easton, being a Scotchman by birth, began to protest, but was immediately put under arrest and told that he would be fined \$2,500 and get six months in prison if he persisted. ... Meanwhile, President [George F.] Richards was trying to get aboard the boat to intercede for us, and after a long and anxious wait, he came on deck. We were finally allowed to land after much persuasion, providing we were held as prisoners until such time as the officers could get in touch with the English Embassy at [N]ew York and London. Accordingly, we were held as prisoners for a week, though not confined in jail.

“After a week of anxious waiting, we received notice that we could be permitted to land permanently. Identification books were made out for each of us at the police station. Our pedigrees and pictographs were attached to the booklet and we were charged to report to the chief of police in every town, where we stayed, so they would know just where we were every night, as they might want to call for us at any time.... I left for Sunderland on June 12, 1919. The city was in the Newcastle Conference, situated on the northeast coast of England.

“President Elliott [of the Newcastle Conference] assigned Brother Burrell [an Englishman] and myself a tracting district and we immediately went to work. It was in a lower part of the town. In the afternoon of the third day, I was invited into one house. While there I noticed many people gathering in the street. Some came inside, looked at me, and then went out again. The man of the house tried to send them away, but with no results. More gathered. Finally, one lady looked in at the window, then let out a scream, ‘Mormons, Brigham Young: Here is the Kaiser.’ This so enraged the people that they threatened to tear the house down. Wild-eyed people began swarming inside the building and shouting at the top of their voices. The man of the house said, ‘Aren’t you frightened?’ I answered, ‘No, I am not. But to save your property I will go out into the mob.’

“I stepped into the passage way, was taken completely off my feet and landed in the street by the surging crowd, which beat me with their fists or anything they could lay their hands on, such as sticks and cans. One can made a good sized lump on the side of my head. Brother Burrell had seen the gathering and awaited at the top of the street, where he shared the affair with me. He showed resentment of the treatment, saying, ‘I am an Englishman.’ But that did him no good. On the way, we backed up against a shop window to get protection, when the lady of the shop ran out screaming at us to ‘Get away from here, or I will have my shop window broken. So we proceeded up the street until we came to a better part of the town, where a policeman was [as]signed. We reported to him

and received protection. In return, we gave him some literature. He advised us to report to the chief of police. This we did the next day.

“The chief, Mr. Crawley, seemed to be a very fair-minded man. Yet he wanted to know just what we were doing—about the leaders of the church, Book of Mormon, and what mode of life we could cite as any better than the average man. We cited him the Word of Wisdom and told him of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Gospel, and organization of the church. ‘Let me give you some good advice,’ he said. ‘If you people would change the name of your religion, it would save you much persecution. ‘The Church of Jesus Christ, with Christ as the chief cornerstone, is good enough us,’ I answered. ‘We will take the persecution, but cannot change our name.’

“After an hour’s conversation he said. ”I do not believe in any religion, but will give you protection, and I would like to see some of your literature.’ The literature was gladly furnished. Our trouble was slight compared with the persecution of a few years previous when it took forty police to take the Elders to their meeting and back in Sunderland. Brother Elliott was released August 1, 1919, and I was appointed to take charge of the Newcastle conference as president. ... After three months of laboring alone—missionaries had been barred from coming to England, and none had arrived since our company landed May 1919. On August 31, 1920, we resumed holding street meetings, after three months silence, due to mobbings. Chief or Police Crawley had told us to go ahead. He promised to be with us.

“I was released from my mission to Great Britain on the 10th of March, 1921, and was placed in charge of a group of saints on the return journey to Utah. There were 20 in the company, and we set sail on the ship “Melita” on March 12, 1921. (“A Brief Sketch of the Lives of David Ephraim Randall and Eliza Ann Chadwick Randall,” compiled by Jennie Randall Scott, June 17, 1953)

Shortly after Elder David E. Randall returned from his second mission to Great Britain, Elder Ezra Taft Benson served a mission there as well. He recorded having similar experiences to those of David E. Randall:

”From July 1921 to December 1923, future Church President Ezra Taft Benson served as a missionary in Great Britain. He recorded that the missionaries experienced so much taunting and abuse that at times they turned to the police for protection.” (Alexander L. Baugh, “The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview,” in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzappel, and Dennis A. Wright, Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007, 237-59)

Changing the church position on emigration to America

Just prior to the outbreak of World War I on August 1, 1914, there were 250 proselyting missionaries in Great Britain, more than any other European mission. But with the withdrawal of all American missionaries from Great Britain and Europe, just before the outbreak of World

War I, on August 1, 1914, the number dropped to zero. The first event that signaled the church was moving away from encouraging members in foreign countries to emigrate to Utah came after church president Heber J. Grant assigned Apostle David O. McKay and Elder Hugh J. Cannon, editor of the *Improvement Era*, to make a lengthy thirteen-month 56,000 mile trip around the world in 1920-1921 to gain knowledge and understanding of the conditions church members living abroad were experiencing.

As missionary work began to revive following the close of World War I, the General Authorities felt the need to have at least one of their number become personally acquainted with conditions in all parts of the world. President Grant, therefore, assigned Elder David O. McKay of the Quorum of the Twelve to undertake a personal inspection tour of the Church's far flung missions and schools.

Elders McKay and Cannon were set apart for their tour by President Grant on December 2, 1920, and departed almost immediately....

Their report gave the General Authorities an unprecedented worldwide vision of the Church's challenges and opportunities. More than ever before Church leaders were now in a position to weigh the needs of one area against those of another. (Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, p. 99)

On this tour he [Apostle McKay] dedicated China for the preaching of the gospel. In Hawaii he was so impressed by a group of small children at a flag-raising ceremony at Laie that he was moved to predict that this location would eventually become an important religious and educational center for the Church. He visited many other Areas in the South Seas and Asia, as well as India, Egypt and Palestine, and returned home via Europe. In many places he was the first General Authority the Saints had ever seen. After that, visits of General Authorities to the missions became more frequent. (Allen & Leonard, *The Story of The Latter-day Saints*, p. 508)

Following Apostle David O McKay's 1920-21 tour, church leaders and the missionaries urged church members living abroad to remain in their own countries and no longer immigrate to America.

In a statement issued October 18, 1921, the First Presidency urged the missionaries to stop preaching emigration. The saints, they said, could be more useful to the Church by strengthening the Kingdom in their own lands, rather than sacrificing to emigrate to Zion where 'their hopes will not be realized.' (*The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, by James Allen and Glen Leonard, 1976, p. 497)

Church leaders continued to counsel European Saints to remain in their homelands and build up the Church there. Despite this counsel, however, many remembered the earlier ideal of "gathering to Zion" and believed that they could escape from poverty by emigrating to America. Therefore, the years 1923 to 1930 witnessed the heaviest emigration the German Mission had ever experienced up to that time. Consequently, Church membership in Europe grew

very slowly, increasing from 25,500 in 1920 to only 28,000 a decade later. (Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, pp.101-102)

In 1928 a separate British Mission president was appointed. Previously the same man had served as president of both the British and European Missions, the publisher of the *Millennial Star*, and supervised 10 missions on the European continent.

This practice of dual responsibility continued from 1850 until 1928, when, laboring under the crushing responsibility of directing the affairs of ten missions. Dr. John A. Widtsoe, then President of the British and European Missions, recommended to the First Presidency of the Church the appointment of a separate British Mission president, which recommendation was accepted, thereby giving separate identities to the British and European Mission presidents, which now leaves the presiding European representative of the General Authorities free to travel and confer in all Europe when and where the need is greatest. Thus, on December 11, 1928, Elder A. Wm. Lund arrived in England to become president of the British Mission, leaving Dr. Widtsoe and his successors up to the present time, Dr. Joseph F. Merrill and Dr. Richard R. Lyman, to serve solely as presidents of the European Mission.

Under the direction of these mighty men of God---the century's British and European Mission presidents---have labored the great and ever-changing army of almost six thousand "Mormon missionaries who have gone to Great Britain and the uncounted host of local missionaries who have volunteered their services to their native land. (Evans, *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*, pp. 220-221)

In January 1929, the British Mission was independent of the European Mission and President A. William Lund moved its headquarters to Birmingham, England. In 1932 President James H. Douglas moved the British Mission headquarters from Birmingham to 43 Tavistock Square, London. Shortly before his release in 1933, President John A Widtsoe of the European Mission secured spacious new quarters for the European Mission at 5 Gordon Square, London. A year later, in 1934, President James Douglas moved the British Mission headquarters to the same four-story building as the European Mission. (*Truth Will Prevail*, pp. 350-351)

In 1932, the second British Mission President, James H. Douglas, moved the mission headquarters from Liverpool to London. In 1933, John A. Widtsoe, president of the European Mission chose to relocate the European Mission headquarters to London. The next year, President Douglas moved the *Millennial Star* and the British Mission office to the same London building where the European Mission office operated, 5 Gordon Square, South London, only a half mile from three major railroad stations. (Alexander L. Baugh, "The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007, 237-59)

During the Great Depression of 1929 - 1939, both the British and European people and church members continued to suffer severe economic and political conditions along with the ever

growing threat to their peace and stability by the resurgent and militarizing Germany under the sway of Hitler and the National Socialist (Nazi) Party.

When Adolph Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, many of the British people and their political leaders, with the notable exception of Winston Churchill, were pacifists because of the huge losses of lives and devastation they had suffered during World War I and/or they failed or refused to recognize the growing threat of war with Hitler's Germany.

Continued efforts by Britain's Prime Ministers Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain to appease Hitler and avoid another world war resulted in three critical events that set the stage for World War II. (see William Manchester, *The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill, Alone, 1932-1940*)

Manchester's book documents the British government's responses to three critical events and actions taken by Hitler during the 1930s:

1. the failure of the British and French governments to prevent the German occupation of the Rhineland in March 1936;
2. allowing Hitler to take over Austria (The Anschluss) on March 12, 1938; and
3. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain signing the infamous "Munich Agreement" with Hitler on September 30, 1938, allowing Germany to take over Czechoslovakia. Chamberlain mistakenly thought the Agreement would achieve "peace in our time."

1920-1937 missionary work

From January 1, 1920 to December 31, 1929, 786 missionaries served in Great Britain and there were 2349 baptisms. During January 1, 1930 to August 31st 1937, 390 missionaries served in Britain and baptisms dropped below 200 per year, only 1416 for the entire eight years. The dire effects of the Great Depression and the geopolitical events leading to the outbreak of WWII on September 1, 1939, caused the number of LDS missionaries in Great Britain to drop from 78 in 1930 to 30 in 1937. (Evans, *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*, Appendix, p. 243)

Because of the Great Depression, many LDS families in America were unable to finance missions for their sons, and/or needed their sons at home.

Consequently, the number of missionaries entering the field fell sharply as the effects of the depression spread throughout the country. During the 1920s eight hundred to thirteen hundred were called by the First Presidency as missionaries each year; this represented from 13 percent to 20 percent of the total young men of missionary age. In 1932, on the other hand, only 399 were able to respond, or only 5 percent of the potential. The shortage of missionaries was compounded by the fact that many had to be released early because of economic difficulties at home. (Richard Cowan, *The Church in the twentieth Century*, pp. 162-163)

Using music and sports to find investigators and improve the Church's image

The Church and some mission presidents and missionaries adopted new ideas and methods in the 1920s and 1930s to more effectively use the fewer numbers of missionaries and “maintain productivity” in finding and teaching investigators

“Although Church opposition and agitation continued after World War I, during the 1930s Britons were more tolerant and understanding. ... Participation in athletic competitions in the 1930s helped to foster a more favorable image of the Saints. In 1935 the National Baseball Association was created in Great Britain, the country's first organized baseball league. That year, the London missionary team captured the national championship. ... In the late 1930s, the British Mission sponsored a sixteen-voice missionary singing group, the Millennial Chorus, which sang to the applause of many audiences. The elders chosen to sing in this chorus proselyted during the day and then rehearsed and performed in the evenings. Besides singing in Mormon congregations for several months, the group performed in schools, churches, cinemas, and even on the radio.” (Alexander L. Baugh, “The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview,” by in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007, pp. 237-259)

A missionary chorus attracted favorable note in England and Ireland. Athletics were especially useful; a missionary basketball team made friends in Czechoslovakia, and in Germany four Elders were recruited as basketball judges for the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Lectures featuring colored slides of ancient America were particularly productive in making contacts. The Church Radio, Publicity, and Mission Literature Committee was organized in 1935 to supply materials for these illustrated lectures. With Gordon B. Hinckley (recently returned from a mission to Britain) as executive secretary, the committee directed the preparation of tracts and other mission literature and prepared scripts for special radio programs. (Richard Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, p. 163)

O. William Asplund, a missionary who served in the British Mission with me during the **New Era** and who is now retired, works as a volunteer in the Church History Library. He was going through the missionary journals of missionaries who served under James E Talmage (James E. Talmage was President of the British/European Missions 1924-27), and found that one missionary, Elder Cecil B. Crane, mentioned the use of baseball during his mission to Great Britain in May 1925. (This is the first time I had heard anything about baseball being used in the 1920s as a missionary tool.)

Went to Bolton at one-thirty to play baseball. Played Manchester Conference at Spa? Road recreation Park . Beat them, score twenty-three to eight. First time Liverpool Conference has won in five years time. Had about one thousand out to

see the game. Also had a picture taken by the reporter and a very good write up in the local newspaper.(Journal of missionary Cecil B. Crane, May 16, 1925.)

Louis Cardon, in Chapter 11 of the book *Truth Will Prevail*, describes how missionaries and members used baseball and basketball to improve the image of the Church in Great Britain and find investigators to teach during the 1930s. In the 1937 baseball season, the Catford Saints reached the finals of the National Cup, but were defeated by the White City team. In 1938 the LDS Rochdale Greys won the national championship, and LDS teams from Hull, Rochdale, Bradford and Birmingham, composed of members and missionaries competed successfully in amateur leagues. (*Truth Will Prevail*, pp. 358-360)

Using new missionary lesson plans:

In 1937 the Church published *The Missionary's Handbook*, a lengthy lesson plan to teach investigators gospel principles before inviting or challenging them to be baptized. Also, in 1937 LeGrand Richards, while serving as president of the Southern States Mission, developed "The Message of Mormonism."

When he concluded his service as mission president, Elder Richards: left with each missionary a copy of "The Message of Mormonism." This outline was prepared to assist the missionaries in their study and presentations of the gospel in a systematic and logical manner. In twenty-four weekly topics the missionary could cover the Restoration and basic doctrines of the gospel. Under each topic President Richards outlined key scriptures, listed tracts or other available reading matter, and suggested questions which should be answered in the discussion. (Richard Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, p.279)

Subsequently, in 1950 when Elder Richards was Presiding Bishop, he expanded it into a book and gave it to Thomas S. Monson, then working in the church's Publications Department. Brother Monson organized Elder Richards' material and had it published with the title *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*. It became one of the most popular LDS books in the twentieth century.

1837–1937 LDS British Centennial

In 1937, despite their difficult economic conditions and deteriorating geopolitical climate, a centennial celebration was held in Great Britain.

The year 1937 marked the hundredth year of the Church in Great Britain. The event was commemorated by the visit of President Heber J. Grant. President Grant's visit marked only the second time that a Church President had visited the country, the first being Joseph F. Smith in 1905. President Grant's visit also served as a homecoming for the eighty-year-old prophet-leader who served from 1904 to 1906 as European Mission president. During his eighteen-day stay (July 19 to August 6), President Grant interviewed the missionaries, met personally with the Saints and their leaders, presided at numerous conference, dedicated several chapels build by the Saints,

and “unveiled a beautiful plaque erected on the bank of the River Ribble” near Preston, England, where the first convert baptisms had been performed in 1837.

During the year of the British centennial, 1937, Richard L. Evans—managing editor of the Church’s official press organ, the *Improvement Era*; former secretary of the European Mission; and former associate editor of the *Millennial Star*—was commissioned to write a history of the first hundred years of the Church in Great Britain. His book titled *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain* was the first historical treatise of the events associated with the growth and development of the Church in that country.

Statistics indicate that Church membership in Great Britain in 1937 stood at only 6,364. Thus, the church had found difficulty increasing its membership significantly since the turn of the century. However, a much more impressive statistic is that at the close of the first century of the Church in Great Britain, approximately 126,593 individuals had been baptized, and 5,947 missionaries had labored in that country. (Alexander L. Baugh, “The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview,” in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham young University, 2007, 237-59)

1939 World War II breaks out in Europe

Chapter 12 “War and Recovery, 1939-1950,” written by Louis B. Cardon in *Truth Will Prevail* is one of the best accounts of how World War II impacted the British Saints and the LDS Church. It describes how the local leadership, branches and missionaries kept the Church functioning through the wartime period without any guidance from Church headquarters and under the constant threat of bombing and deprivations.

Initially, the Church purchased large homes and converted them into meetinghouses where missionaries or older couples lived. The larger rooms were utilized for church service and other activities. The following pictures, one taken by Elder O. William Asplund and several from Dereck A. Cuthbert’s 1987 book: *The Second Century: Latter Day Saints Vol. 1: 1937-1987*, pp. 12-15, show the kind of buildings British church members met in until the new church building program began in 1960 under the leadership of President David O. McKay and the Church Building Committee as an important part of the **New Era**.

Two pictures taken of the entrance to the Leeds “chapel” or “meeting house,” or “office” in early 1960, are included in Part One of Chapter 2 of this monograph. They illustrate just how bad some of the meetinghouse and church facilities still were when I was serving in the British Mission. The picture included below, also taken in 1960 or 1961, represents a better kind of meetinghouse in the areas in which I served.



'Trentmor' – Nottingham Branch Chapel 1946–1963

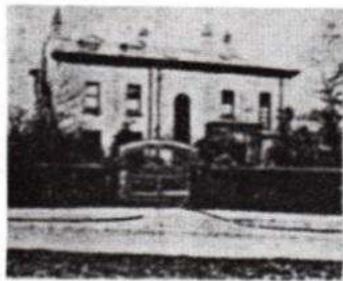


Huddersfield Meetinghouse, 1960, Elders Roger Campbell and Kenneth Borg.
This picture was taken by Elder O. William Asplund

Latter-Day Saint Chapels in the 1950s ranged from purchased chapels to converted houses



Glasgow



Liverpool



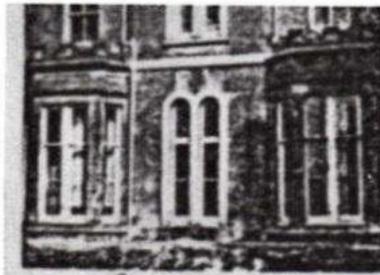
Cardiff



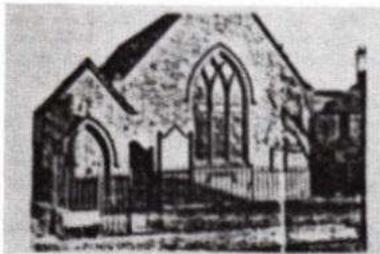
Belfast



Middlesbrough



Plymouth

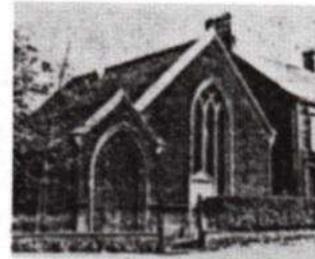


Lowestoft

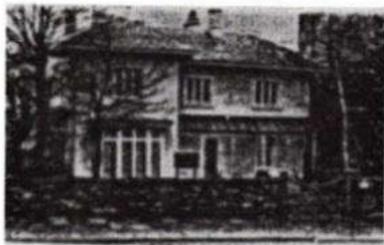
Of these, only the Birmingham Handsworth Chapel was purpose-built, and dedicated in 1912



Birmingham Handsworth



Norwich



Bristol



Loughborough



'Ravenslea' – British Mission Headquarters 1939–1957

Because both the British and European mission headquarters in South London were only a half mile from three major railroad stations, British Mission President Hugh B. Brown moved the headquarters of the British Mission to the “Ravenslea” chapel, and a bomb shelter was constructed in the basement of that building. “Ravenslea” received some bomb damage during WWII.

In the Second World War, when Britain suffered longer and more destructive air raids than in the First, an air-raid shelter was built in the basement of Ravenslea. During intensive raids on London this sometimes served as the common sleeping quarters of the mission presidency's families, the mission office staff, and others. Actually, according to the later recollection of President Cunningham, there was little sleep possible on some of those nights, because of the 'terrible noise of the bombing' but he recalls 'sitting on a blanket on the hard floor, reading aloud the Book of Mormon in turn.'. Although Ravenslea did suffer some damage late in the war, it received no direct hits and there were no injuries among those who used it for refuge. (*MS 106:695-6*; R. West collection: James R. Cunningham address, pp. 372-373)

1939 American missionaries evacuated

Historians James Allen and Glen Leonard describe that tumultuous period leading up to World War II and the Church leaders' response:

In 1938 the threat of war hung over Europe. The expansionism of Germany and Italy under Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini had gone unchecked by the League of Nations and individual governments. After Hitler attacked Poland in September 1939, England and France honored their commitments to defend Polish independence, and war soon engulfed all of Europe.

The Church was paying close attention to world affairs. Like most religious groups, it looked with aversion at the prospect of another world conflagration, and its leaders condemned the use of war for expanding national boundaries...

In 1939, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith of the Council of the Twelve was sent on a tour of the European missions. At the same time President [J. Reuben] Clark, a former undersecretary of state, was in daily contact with the U.S. State Department, and through his efforts Church leaders were kept constantly aware of changing European conditions. Their concern was two-fold: the welfare of the Saints in Europe and the well-being of the American missionaries in the countries threatened by war.

On August 24, 1939, just one week before Hitler invaded Poland, the First Presidency instructed Elder Smith to evacuate the missionaries from Germany, France, and England. At first the intention was to distribute them among the neutral nations of Europe. These nations, however, soon made it clear they would prefer to have all foreigners leave their borders, and as a result all missionaries were returned to the United States...

In closing the missions of the world, the First Presidency charged the mission presidents to keep in touch with local leaders and members as much as possible. For the duration of hostilities, communications between Church leaders and the Saints in most war-affected areas were cut off, and local leaders struggled to hold the members together without direction from any higher authorities. (*The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 1976, pp. 541-551)

Beginning on August 24, 1939, one week prior to the outbreak of World War II in Europe, all American LDS missionaries serving in Britain and Europe were to be evacuated. On September 12, 1939, 107 missionaries returning to America boarded the crowded USS Washington to return by sea to New York. Among the departing passengers on that trip were U.S. Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy's wife and family. (Ambassador Kennedy stayed on through the Battle of Britain and returned to America in October 1940.)

President Hugh B. Brown and a select staff of six experienced missionaries remained a few weeks longer to complete arrangements for the transfer of mission direction to local members. Three of the six missionaries left in October. Before President Brown and the three remaining American missionaries left Great Britain on January 15, 1940, he set apart three British members led by Andre K. Anastasiou, the former President of the London District, to serve as the acting presidency of the British Mission for church members living abroad. For the second time, Great Britain had no American missionaries.

For a period of four years and five months (1940-44), Anastasiou directed the mission. Desirous to keep proselytizing efforts going, he called local members—men with health or disability deferments, women, and some young men who were not old enough for military service—to serve six-month full-time missions. Although the number of missionaries serving under this program peaked at just over forty, 105 local members were engaged in full-time missionary service during the war years. President Anastasiou also initiated a “home missionary” program. Church members who were called to this program agreed to contribute from four to eighteen hours of Church service each week, visiting members, particularly less-active ones, proselytizing door to door, and doing the duties the full-time elders had performed. Over five hundred British saints labored as home missionaries during the war years. (Alexander L. Baugh, “The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview,” by in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright, Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham young University, 2007, 237-59)

Thomas E. McKay, a brother of Apostle David O. McKay, served as the last European Mission President, until that mission was shut down in April 1941, eight months after the outbreak of World War II.

World War II officially ended in Europe on May 8, 1945, and in Japan on August 11, 1945, after America dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But it took over a decade after WWII for the British economy to recover sufficiently to improve the lives and living conditions of its citizens.

Worldwide economic and political turmoil, the Great Depression years, the outbreak of World War II in Europe on September 1, 1939, and the entry of the United States into the war after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, prevented the church from addressing the needs of its international members.

James Allen and Glen Leonard record the following in their book *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*:

After six years of war, conditions in some areas of Europe bordered on destitution. Marauding armies had destroyed or stolen much of worth, and recent crop failures had left thousands hungry and vagrant. Fuel supplies and clothing were meager, and many European Saints found themselves without homes. The period after the war was as much a test of their faith as the war itself had been. (James Allen and Glen Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, p. 550)

In March 1944, Hugh B. Brown had returned to England as the British Mission President.

Although Germany did not surrender to the Allies until May 1945, President Hugh B. Brown was assigned to return to England in March of 1944, where for the next two years he continued in his former position as the British Mission president. During this time he also labored as the Church servicemen’s coordinator in the European Theater. When peace in Europe was once again

established, Church leaders in Salt Lake City were concerned about the spiritual and temporal welfare of the European congregations. (Alexander L. Baugh, "The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview," by in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham young University, 2007, 237-59)

During the entire eight-year period from 1937 to 1945, baptisms in Great Britain declined to 474, and some of those baptisms may have been the children of members rather than converts

1946 American missionaries return to Britain

In January 1946 the Church sent Apostle Ezra Taft Benson to be the president of the European Mission, and go to Great Britain and Europe to survey the post-war conditions of church members, determine what help the church could provide, and how missionary work could be restarted.

In January 1946, only nine months after the war [in Europe] had ended, the newly called Mormon Apostle Ezra Taft Benson was assigned by the Church's First Presidency to serve as president of the European Mission. (In May 1946, Selvoy J. Boyer replaced Hugh B. Brown as the British Mission president.) Benson's assignment was actually twofold: (1) restore contact with European church leaders and members in the branches, and (2) provide welfare shipments and assistance to the saints in war-torn regions. Using the London mission office as his base for ten months. President Benson, in often severe postwar conditions, toured the thirteen European nations where latter-day Saints resided, including Great Britain, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland, Finland and Poland. (Alexander L. Baugh, "The Church in Twentieth-Century Great Britain: A Historical Overview," by in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: The British Isles*, ed. Cynthia Doxey, Robert C. Freeman, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dennis A. Wright (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham young University, 2007), 237-59.)

Elder Benson discovered that during the war some European branches had organized their own local missionary activity; in some cases they seemed more effective at teaching converts than had been the full-time missionaries. Still, it was essential that regular missionary work be reestablished and new mission presidents be appointed. Beginning in 1946 the Church engaged in a concerted effort to send missionaries to all parts of the world from which they had previously been withdrawn. Many of the new missionaries were fresh from military service. By the end of 1946 there were 2,294 in the field, including 311 in Europe. By 1950 the Church counted more than five thousand missionaries, with twelve hundred in Europe. In late 1946 and early 1947 mission presidents began to arrive again from the United States. While local leaders had carried on well during the war, it was important that they now receive direction from men more directly familiar with the general programs of the Church. (James Allen and Glen Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, pp. 549-550)

Sheri L. Dew, biographer of Ezra Taft Benson, devotes a Chapter in her biography of Apostle Benson to his experiences in early 1946, during his return to Britain and his first tour of

the war ravaged European areas. (Chapter 12 “Mission of Mercy,” in *Ezra Taft Benson: Statesman, Patriot, Prophet of God*). It would take years, even decades, to repair the damages of war and return to a period of growth and prosperity—both in Great Britain and Europe.

During the period from 1946-1949, there were 816 baptisms in Great Britain, indicating some success by the returning missionaries in converting new members. In 1950, five years after the war ended, the membership of the church in Great Britain was 6,357. That compares to the 1930 membership of 6,591, and the 1940 membership of 6,481. The church actually lost membership during WWII and the first five postwar years. After missionaries returned during the second five post-WWII years (1950-55), some growth occurred. In 1955, 9,209 church members were listed. However, emigration continued undiminished. (Appendix A, *British LDS Members*, p.442, *Truth Will Prevail*, Cambridge U. Press, 1987)

Evaluating the effectiveness of missionary work

When the American missionaries returned to Great Britain and Europe in 1946, some mission presidents and missionaries began evaluating the effectiveness of the missionary work and developing lesson plans to improve the existing proselyting plans and teaching approaches that took six months to a year before investigators were invited to be baptized.

By the mid-1950s, some mission presidents in North America independently developed less time-consuming systematic lesson plans to help their missionaries teach the gospel to investigators in a shorter period of time. But some mission presidents resisted the use of the *memorized dialogue* in those plans because they felt it hindered the spontaneous promptings of the Spirit and/or felt shorter teaching periods failed to fully prepare investigators for baptism. However, systematic, shorter approaches to teaching the Gospel won over some church leaders and mission presidents, especially when they resulted in more baptisms.

In 1954, Alvin R. Dyer became president of the Central States Mission and selected T. Bowering Woodbury, a successful businessman living with his family in Wichita, Kansas, as his first counselor. As president of the Central State Mission, Dyer had access to both the Anderson Missionary Plan and the Church’s 1952 publication *A Systematic Program for Teaching the Gospel*, but he developed a supplement called “The Message of the Restoration” for his missionaries to use prior to using the church’s *Systematic Program for Teaching the Gospel*. “The Message of the Restoration” had five supplementary components that were sent to the missionaries in weekly newsletters and bulletins.

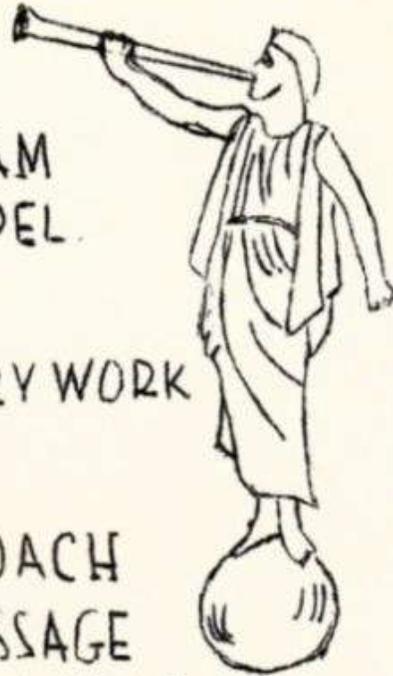
My brother-in-law, G. Bruce Marchant, served in the Central States Mission under President Dyer from August 1955 to August 1957. He served as the Supervising Elder of the Wichita District, for much of the time. He loaned me his large thick binder containing 100-plus weekly newsletters, bulletins and other materials he received from President Dyer. It is useful to see what approaches to missionary work were used by Pres. Dyer, and what his first counselor, T. Bowering Woodbury was exposed to before becoming the British Mission President in September 1958. The following pages provide readers with a glimpse of some of the materials the missionaries received and used in the Central States from 1954-1957.

THE MESSAGE OF THE RESTORATION

A SUPPLEMENT
TO BE USED
PRIOR TO THE

SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM
FOR TEACHING THE GOSPEL.

- RULES OF MISSIONARY WORK
- FIRST CONTACT
- THE DOOR APPROACH
- RESTORATION MESSAGE
- MANNER OF CONVERSION



CENTRAL STATES MISSION
19 55

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SUGGESTIVE CHANGE IN APPROACH

BULLETIN #5

April 15, 1954

A suggested approach on the first tract-
ing visit leading the way to the Teach-
ing of the Gospel upon the invitation to
return.

Elder

"Good Morning we are ministers of the
Gospel tracting in this neighborhood.
May we have a few moments of your time,
to discuss a very important matter with
you."

Lady

"If you are selling something there
isn't anything I need, and I am quite
busy this morning."

Elder

"We realize this for it really is a
busy life we all lead, perhaps too busy
for the important things. Our message is
brief and pertains to your family. It
should be of interest to you."

Lady

"I shouldn't take the time, but if it
won't take long, alright, won't you come
in?"

Note: Enter the house and follow to the
living room or study, walk slowly and not
too close to the lady, be seated together
only upon invitation. (Be courteous and
well mannered.)

Elder

"We surely want you to know how much we
appreciate the opportunity of talking
with you this morning."

Lady

"Well that's alright, but what is this
that concerns my family."

Elder

"As representatives of the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we de-
sire to tell you of the teachings of our
Church concerning the Family Unit. Do
you have any children?"

Lady

"Yes, we have two boys, one 6 and one
10. We also had a little girl but we lost
her about a year ago."

Elder

"We are sorry to learn of your little
girl. This must have been a terrible
blow to you and you husband."

Lady

"We still cannot quite understand why
she was taken away."

Elder

"Death brings sadness to many homes, I
suppose no family really escapes this
sorrow. But tell us in the passing of
your little girl doesn't this cause you
to wonder about the meaning of life?"

Lady

"Yes, we have wondered so much about it
but there just doesn't seem to be any
answer."

Elder

"The answer to these things and the
lessons of life sometime come very hard.
But, we believe that God our Heavenly
Father has made known the truth about
life here upon the earth and the purpose
and meaning of death. Have you ever
thought about it in this way?"

Lady

"No, I cannot say that I have. It has
always been my belief that we were not
supposed to know too much about these
things."

Elder

"That is certainly true to an extent,
but God who loves His children would
truly not leave us alone so far as life
and death are concerned, or as to an un-
derstanding of where we came from when
we were born into this life. Don't you
feel a kind loving Heavenly Father would
tell us about this?"

Lady

"Well, that does seem right, -- what
church did you say you were from?"

Elder

"We are happy that you have asked that
question, for we are proud to belong to
and represent a church that teaches us
the truth about the purpose of life and
of the importance of the family in it.
We are Elders from the Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter-day Saints."

Lady

"I am not sure that I have heard of your
Church before."

Elder

"Our teachings are based upon the Res-
toration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
The answer to many questions that are per-
plexing, particularly to those who have
lost their loved one, concerning life and
death and the preservation of the Family
Unit beyond the grave, have been made
known. I am sure that these truths would
bring a great consolation to you and your
husband?"

STANDARD MISSIONARY PLAN

The standardized Missionary Plan of the Church has well justified itself not only in this Mission but throughout all of the Missions of the Church. It has preserved a degree of order, in teaching, which we could not hope to get without it.

It is expected that each Missionary in the Central States Mission shall use this Teaching Plan exclusively. It is understandable that in some areas some slight deviations from the prescribed Plan will be helpful and progressive. However, in such Districts where these slight deviations are thought necessary, it shall henceforth be the rule of the Mission, that such deviations in any degree must be submitted to the Mission President for his approval before the same are used.

A caution is herewith given to the Supervising Elders of each District, that plans which they feel will be of assistance in furthering the work of the Lord which are not now advocated or set up within the Mission must first, be submitted to the Mission President for approval before such are adopted.

The Church Missionary Committee are constantly seeking ways and means of improving methods for presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to earnest listeners. It is recognized that they have in their hands many modifications to the present plan of teaching the Gospel which they are surveying, to determine new approaches which would improve the effectiveness of our missionary work.

If control and direction were not administered in these affairs it could well be that in a Mission with eighty Missionaries there would be eighty separate Missionary Plans. We shall, therefore, expect that all Missionaries will subscribe precisely to the contents of this Bulletin.

It is to be noted, however, in connection with the Initial Contact Lesson that permission has been granted to use either (a) The Godhead Lesson, (b) The Book of Mormon Lesson, (c) The Plan of Salvation Lesson, as the initial lesson; and thence proceed in proper order with all other lessons of the regular course of teaching the Gospel. This has been permitted, but deviations and modifications of suggested procedures in these three presentations is not to be permitted without express permission from the Mission President.

CENTRAL STATES MISSION PRESIDENCY

The following letters from President Dyer to Elder Bruce Marchant, the supervising elder in Wichita, Kansas, where President Dyer's 1st Counselor T. Bowring Woodbury lived, illustrate how important the numbers of convert baptisms were to President Dyer and his efforts to motivate the missionaries to obtain as many convert baptisms as possible.

When President Dyer attended the May 1957 Mission Presidents Meeting in Salt Lake City, he requested the supervising elders to send him air mail special delivery letters of the numbers of convert baptisms their districts had achieved. He wanted to be in a position to let the other mission presidents attending the Conference to know how well his approach to missionary work was working. (It is easy for me to see similarities in how President Woodbury started using many of the same techniques two years later in Great Britain during the **New Era**. President Dyer introduced them into the European missions when he became European Mission President.) Several letters from President Dyer to the Supervising Elders in the Central States Mission illustrate the point:

May 14, 1957 letter to the Supervising Elders in the Central States Mission:

Already I have received letters from some of the Supervising Elders and indications are given that the month of May will be a record month for Convert Baptisms. In the thought therefore, of stimulating a greater effort in this direction will you forward to me by June 1st, the number of convert baptisms you will undertake to perform in you District for the reporting month of May. Please be advised that this will include all baptisms and confirmations completed by the 10th of June and reported to the Mission Office not later than 12th of June.

I realize that this project, for the month of May, will require the establishment of a goal and objective by all of the Missionaries under your direct charge. A similar letter to this is being sent to all District Mission Presidents and Supervising Elders of the Full Time Missionaries, whereby in a united effort throughout the Mission, with the exercise of great faith, prayer and devotion to duty, we can exceed by far any record ever accomplished in the Central States Mission in the matter of bringing souls unto the Kingdom of our Heavenly Father.

May I commend you and your Missionaries for the fine work you are doing—and encourage you—in this new objective.

Faithfully your brother
/s/ Alvin R. Dyer

When President Dyer returned from the Church Missionary Conference in Salt Lake City he held a similar conference with Central States Mission Supervising Elders.

.Several June 1957 letters from President Alvin R. Dyer to the Supervising Elders serving in the Central States Mission are illustrative:

Dear Elder Marchant:

We are pleased to announce to you an event of great importance.

You are invited to be present at a Special Missionary Conference to be held at Mission Headquarters on Friday and Saturday, July 5th and 6th, 1957. A copy of the Program Agenda is enclosed for your information. Please follow instructions given thereon as to arrival time etc. All missionaries will stay in the Dormitory or Mission Home.

You have no doubt observed, the placing of a Monthly Objective before you with regard to Convert Baptisms. In this connection I desire to commend you and the missionaries serving with you for the high accomplishments of the past five months. We are exceeding to a marked degree, the number of baptisms for last year. Our objective for the reporting month of June, will culminate at the Special Missionary Conference, where each Supervising Elder will be called upon to make a report openly, of the number of converts that will be led into the waters of baptism by July 10th from his district, and will be reported to the Mission Office by not later than the 12th of July.

Survey your situation at once, checking with your missionaries as to their active investigators, determining what the probabilities are for the period herein referred to. Your particular attention is directed to Bulletin No. 93, as to the value of AIM AND OBJECTIVE. This Missionary Conference will be a time of rejoicing to all, but, will be more so, if, in the reports to be heard by the Supervising Elders and District Mission Presidents, it is found that our previous blessings, in the matter of Convert Baptisms, has been exceeded.

Dear Elder Marchant:

The Supervising Elder and District Mission President Conference is over. It was truly a time of inspiration to participate with you in the holding of this conference. I feel confident that all of us have a clearer concept of our responsibilities and what is expected of us as leaders in this important work.

As a matter of review and follow through on the things that were discussed at the conference, I list below herewith some of the highlights of the things that were given.

1. Greater Diligence With Regard To The Following
 - (A) A Greater Number Of Actual Contacts
 - (B) The Issuing Of the Challenge For Baptism To One Family Each Week
 - (C) Pointing Our Program To a Greater Number Of Convert Baptisms
2. Conformity To All Phases Of Our Missionary Program
3. Guarding Against A Summer Let Up
4. THE PROJECTING OF DEFINITE MONTHLY GOALS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT
5. To Be Alert To The Opposition Of Evil, - Laboring To Off Set It By Greater Personal Devotion, And A Closer Concern With Our Investigators
6. A Careful Analysis Of Weekly Reports With The Necessary Follow Through

President Dyer's approach to missionary work in the Central States Mission was considered to be quite "progressive" in the mid-1950s. It represented a positive step in preparing the way for the even more dynamic approaches that would be introduced into Great Britain shortly thereafter by President T. Bowring Woodbury, his first counselor in the Central States Mission presidency..

Most of Dyer's techniques, and some new ones, were introduced in Great Britain in late 1958 and early 1959 by T. Bowring Woodbury when he was called to be the President of the British Mission, starting in early September 1958, and in Europe shortly thereafter by Alvin R. Dyer when he was called to be the European Mission President.

Status of post-WWII missionary work--worldwide

Between 1945 and 1950, the church's **worldwide** missionary force rose from 400 in 1945 to 3,015 in 1950. During the Korean War (1950-53) it dropped to 872 in 1952, but rose to 2,778 in 1958.

Derek Cuthbert's book, *The Second Century: Latter-Day Saints in Great Britain*, includes the number of convert baptisms in Britain. During the years from 1937 to 1944 there were 474 convert baptisms; during the years from 1945-1949, there were 816 convert baptisms, indicating that the return of American missionaries in 1946 had achieved some success. (Cuthbert, p. 198) Unfortunately, his book does not include the number of missionaries who served in Great Britain beginning in 1946 and afterwards.

Part II

1951-1958 - Prelude to the New Era

President David O. McKay begins "internationalizing" the Church

On April 9, 1951, David O. McKay, age 77, was sustained as the ninth President of the Church and served as church president for 19 years. Thirty years earlier, in 1920-21, then church president Heber J. Grant assigned Apostle David O. McKay and Elder Hugh J. Cannon, editor of the *Improvement Era*, to make a lengthy thirteen-month 56,000 mile trip around the world to gain knowledge and understanding of the conditions church members living abroad were experiencing in the aftermath of World War I. Following his 1920-21 world tour, Apostle McKay served as the British and European Mission President during 1922-24. As a young man, David O. McKay had served a mission in Scotland from 1897-99.

Because of world events, such as the Great Depression and World War II, the church was prevented from being able to even begin implementing the full church program abroad---including wards, stakes, and temples. Post World War II reconstruction in Europe was a long slow process, even with financial aid from the United States government taxpayer-funded European Recovery Program ("Marshall Plan") to help rebuild the nations of Europe. In the late 1940s, the "cold war" with the Soviet Union also began. On June 25, 1950, a hot war on the

Korean Peninsula began when North Korea invaded South Korea. It continued until an armistice was signed on July 27, 1953. As a result, missionary service diminished for several years as young men were needed to serve in the military.

In 1952, more than six years after World War II ended and 30 years after his world tour in 1920-21, President McKay made another extensive tour to see how the church was faring in Great Britain, Europe and the Pacific Islands. His 1952 tour must have given him the desire to implement the full church program of wards, stakes, and temples---starting in Great Britain, Western Europe and the Pacific Islands. Until that time the church had functioned as, or was seen as, “an American Church.” Only members living in the continental North America and Hawaii had access to “the full church program.”

On his historic tour of Europe and Great Britain in 1952, President McKay made two separate visits that were pivotal in building the Church in the British Isles, in encouraging the Saints to stay in their own land, and in ushering in a great new period of growth and stability. These visits were the outcome of a First Presidency decision on April 17th, 1952 to select a suitable site upon which to erect the first temple to be built in European lands. President McKay selected a site at Newchapel, Surrey, for a temple in England, and one at Zollikofen, near Berne, Switzerland. The Zollikofen site was announced on President McKay’s return to Salt Lake City. Announcement of the Newchapel site was delayed until the following August, due to protracted negotiations regarding the purchase and use. Then, on August 3rd, 1953, President McKay came to England to visit Newchapel. He went from there to Switzerland to dedicate the Zollikofen site two days later and then returned to dedicate the site for the London Temple on August 10th. The result was a great rejoicing and outpouring of the Lord. At last it was no longer necessary to emigrate; there would be a temple on British soil. (Derek A. Cuthbert, *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Green Britain*, vol. I 1937- 1987, Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp. 9-10)

Church “College” and Temple in New Zealand.

The New Zealand Temple was the first temple the LDS church built in the southern hemisphere, and the second temple built outside of the United States, Canada and Hawaii. The New Zealand temple was completed in April 1958 and dedicated by President McKay on April 26, 1958. Both the temple and church school were built on the same land that became known as Temple View, a suburb of Hamilton. The church had originally purchased the 35-hectare site in 1948 for a secondary school, the “Church College of New Zealand,” for LDS students. It was completed in 1952.

Three years later, February 17, 1955, President McKay went to New Zealand to approve the site that Wendell P. Mendenhall, Chairman of the Church Building Committee, had selected for the construction of the New Zealand temple. While there, President McKay was supposed to decide whether to close the Church College of New Zealand (secondary school) that had been operating for three years. The Church Education Committee had recommended that the school be closed.

However, upon his arrival in Hamilton, President McKay approved the site for the New Zealand Temple and was so impressed by what he saw at the Church College that he decided to add two more buildings to the secondary school in conjunction with the project to construct the new temple. The full story of why and how Church College of New Zealand was built is a fascinating one, especially the addition of two more buildings to it.

Even though enrollment at the Church College of New Zealand increased from 342 in 1958 to 647 in 1970 and 2311 in 2006, the church decided to put greater emphasis on seminaries and institutes adjacent to secular or public schools and colleges. Consequently, on June 29, 2006, the Church announced that the Church College of New Zealand would close at the end of the 2009 school year.

“The church cited a policy of the church to close its private secondary schools when the public school system is able to offer quality education.” (“Closing the Church College of New Zealand: A case Study of International Education Policy,” by Scott C. Esplin. *Regional Studies in LDS Church History: The Pacific Isles*, ed., Reid L. Nielsen, et al, Provo, UT, Religious Studies Center , BYU, 2008, pp. 161-180)

During or after his 1952 world tour, President McKay also announced that a church-owned college would be built in Laie, near the Hawaiian Temple, to provide higher educational opportunities to young church members living in the islands of the Pacific. Subsequently, the church also opened several secondary-level educational facilities in other countries, including one in Mexico City near the first temple built in that nation. (As will be seen in Chapter 4, in 2013 the fate of the Mexico City school would be somewhat different than the one in New Zealand.)

President McKay’s administration caused four well-known LDS historians--Leonard J. Arrington, Church Historian 1972-1982; Davis Bitton, Richard Cowan, and Gregory Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, David O. McKay biographers, to write accounts about the widespread growth of the Church under President McKay’s “forceful” leadership. Two examples are:

The most significant growth in the past generation, perhaps, has been in the number of members of the LDS Church outside the United States. The forceful, internationally oriented leadership of David O. McKay (1951-1970) brought dramatic increases in Mormon proselyting efforts and effectiveness. The 1960s saw the development of missions in Italy, Spain, and South America and another explosive growth in the Polynesian Islands. (Arrington and Bitton, page 286)

President David O. McKay’s administration was a period of unprecedented growth. By 1950, after one hundred and twenty years of the Church’s existence, the number of members reached approximately 1.1 million. During the next two decades, the period of David O. McKay’s Presidency, the number of Latter-day Saints almost tripled, reaching over 2.90 million. Taking into account those who had died during the period, it is probable that as many as two-thirds of all Church members living at the beginning of 1970 had known no other President than David O. McKay. When he had taken office in 1951, there were 184 stakes. The

five hundredth stake was organized on the very day he died in 1970. In 1961[1960?] the Oahu Stake was the only one outside of continental North America. President McKay would direct the formation of the first South Pacific, European, and Latin American stakes. (Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, p. 240)

Under President McKay's administration, temples were built in Switzerland, England, and New Zealand, and stakes were created in Great Britain and Europe before the full Church program followed. The construction of the Swiss temple near Berne started immediately on land already available and zoned for that purpose.

The process of building the temple near London began in 1953 with the dedication of a site purchased near Lingfield, Surrey, a rural area south of London. But it was not until 1955 that President McKay was able to break ground for the London Temple. Afterwards, he travelled to Berne to dedicate the newly completed Swiss Temple, the first temple to be constructed outside of North America and Hawaii.

As Derek Cuthbert notes on page 10 in his book *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain*, the London temple took considerably longer to build because of "protracted negotiations regarding purchase and use" of the site. As a result, the London Temple was not completed and dedicated until three years later, September 7, 1958---some five years after the land was purchased. That delayed the start of the other components of the "New Era" in Great Britain and the launching of its second "Great Missionary Harvest" and "the full church program" in that country.

1955-58 British missionary lesson plan under President Kerr

Below is a brief summary of the missionary plan or lessons that the British missionaries used prior to T. Bowring Woodbury becoming the new British Mission president in September 1958 when the dedication of the London Temple ushered in the **New Era**.

Clifton G.M. Kerr presided over the British Mission from 1955 to 1958. During his presidency, perhaps the missionary teaching plan that was used can be ascertained from the interview with former President Kerr conducted by Gordon Irving on October 23, 1980, for the Church History Program. (LDS Archives, Ms 200 541 Oral History of Clifton George Mercer Kerr Interviewed by Gordon Irving October 23, 1980)

Kerr: You see, the Anderson missionary plan had been in vogue prior to my time, and prior to President [A. Hamer] Reiser's time. And I met so many people who were in the Church for just a few weeks and then dropped out that I was very disturbed by it. For instance, one branch had six percent attendance at Sacrament Meeting. And I talked to a number of people who had let their membership lapse, so to speak. I think one of them sort of summed it up this way: "I was converted here, but not here."

Irving pointed first to his head and then to his heart.

Kerr: Yes. If you are converted in your heart, it may take a long time, but the head will come along if your heart's right.

So that was one concern we had. President Reiser's experimented with some mission programs or plans, including one written by Steve Covey. The Anderson Plan was not in use that much—in fact, very little. So we pretty much followed the plan that President Reiser had, and then we had what we called a "Feed My Sheep Program." The loss after baptism was just not good, so we'd go back with half a dozen lessons on things you wouldn't get in normal proselyting lessons. And Elder Ed Firmage, who's now a professor in the Law School at the University of Utah, wrote a plan, and Covey wrote another plan and sent it over. In fact, Covey left it there when he went home, but we never did put either of them into effect. My recollection is there were about eleven or twelve lessons in the regular plan, and then after baptism you followed up with these others.

So we pursued that, looking for ideas to better keep them in, to do all that could be done. Under the best circumstances you're going to lose some, and of course that thing reached its zenith after my time. Marion D. Hanks told me that he made a survey regarding the period when the mission was pushing what they called baseball baptisms. He said 85% of the adults that came in during that period were not in the church and 95% of the youth. And of course under him the baptisms plummeted. He said, "I can't do it that way."

But Brother Stephen L Richards' letter that I referred to earlier said, "Don't set baptismal goals."

Irving: A letter to you now?

Kerr: No, it was a letter in the file, I think to his brother who was mission president.

Irving: Staynor Richards.

Kerr: "Set work goals and the other objectives will fall into place." So we emphasized work goals and we sent out statistical reports on the number of *Books of Mormon* distributed, and the number of tracts, the number of hours of tracting and so on, and more or less let them compete against themselves.

The prelude to the **New Era** ended on September 7, 1958, when President McKay dedicated the London Temple and announced the beginning of "**A New Era for the Church in Great Britain.**" T. Bowring Woodbury was called to be the new president of the British Mission, headquartered in London, England. He and his family soon moved in to a newly purchased mission home located at 50 Princes Gate, Exhibition Road, an upscale and cultural area in the heart of London. President and Sister Woodbury came to London with President McKay to attend the Temple dedication on September 8, 1958, and immediately thereafter start their tenure as British Mission President and wife.

A New Era for the Church starts in Great Britain

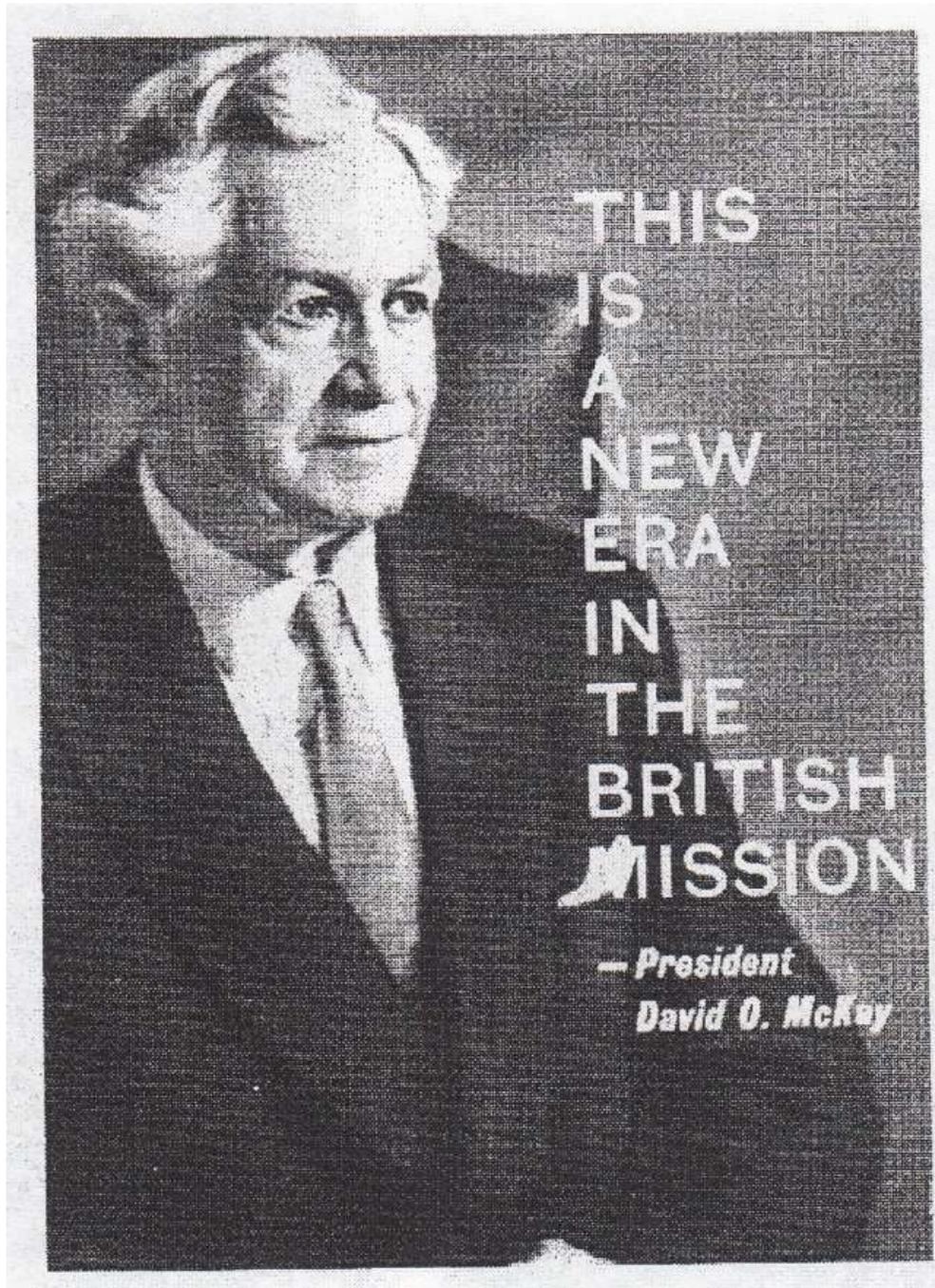
In a June 2006 interview with KUED, Salt Lake City's educational television station, David O. McKay's biographer, Gregory Prince, succinctly summarized just how and why the New Era started when it did:

From its earliest days, there had been an injunction to the church: Proselytize; spread the message. But in the years prior to David O. McKay, we had a succession of events that limited that goal. The Great Depression limited the financial capability of missionaries to go out. World War II had restrictions because everybody was in the draft. Just as it looked [like] we could ramp things up again, the Korean War broke out, and again we had restrictions on the number of missionaries that we could send out. Finally, by the mid-1950s those restrictions were lifted, and now you have David O. McKay saying: "Not only are we going to increase our missionary force in terms of full-time young missionaries; I want every member of the church to become a missionary. Where you are, spread the word." As a result the number of missionaries multiplied several fold. The number of convert baptisms multiplied even more so because he injected that new spirit into what they were doing. He called younger, dynamic, successful businessmen to be mission presidents rather than retired men. ... And in some cases, the results were electrifying. It established the church as a worldwide presence where prior to that it had been a Great Basin institution. ...

**Interview with David O. McKay biographer,
Gregory Prince, by KUED Television June 15
and 26, 2006**

Chapter 3

The New Era and its “Great Missionary Harvest” in Britain



Cover of the *Millennial Star* Magazine after the 1958 dedication of the London Temple

Part I: Expand Missionary Work and Prepare for “Stakehood”

Major New Era developments

The dedication of the London Temple began the **New Era**, the most challenging and exciting time for the British Saints and the British Mission since the arrival of the first LDS missionaries in the British Isles on July 20, 1837 that began the “First Great Missionary Gathering.” I call the period following the dedication of the London Temple the second “Great Missionary Harvest,” to distinguish it from the first “Great Missionary Gathering” in 1837 and thereafter that led to the emigration of thousands of converts to America “to save the Church.” This time they were encouraged to stay and build up the church in Great Britain.

Elder Cuthbert’s book captures how important the changes that took place during the beginning of the **New Era** were to him and the other British LDS Church members, and outlines the challenges that the members and missionaries faced:

In his remarks made when dedicating the Newchapel site for the London Temple on August 10, 1953, President McKay emphasized the importance of missionary work in Great Britain. He said: “We should like every person in Great Britain and the European missions to feel that he or she is a missionary on whom devolves the responsibility of using every influence to bring into the church some person by December 31, 1953. The membership thereby will be doubled. Next year, every year, will be the same and soon we shall have thousands in the Church who will be permitted to enter into the temple of the Most High and perform ordinances for which that house will be erected. This is your duty brothers and sisters.” (Derek A. Cuthbert, *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Volume I 1937—1987*, p. 24)

Expanding the missionary work and preparing the members for stakehood were very difficult and time-consuming tasks as Britain was still suffering the economic aftermath of WWII. Derek Cuthbert wrote: “Money was scarce, most of the brethren had a five-and-a-half day working week; hardly any of the members had cars and there were no motorways.” (Ibid)

T. Bowring Woodbury, the dynamic new British Mission President called to launch and implement the New Era in Great Britain, had previously been the president of The Aircapital Manufacturing Company in Wichita, Kansas, a manufacturer of power lawn mowers, and had served as first counselor to Alvin R. Dyer when he was president of the Central States Mission. Alvin R. Dyer was called to be the European Mission President in early 1960.

After his and Sister Woodbury’s setting apart blessings by President MCKAY, T. BOWRING Woodbury was given the following instructions by President McKay as to what he was expected to do as the new British Mission President:

After President McKay had set me apart and President [J. Reuben] Clark had set apart Sister Woodbury, President McKay took me by the hand and said: “With

the building of the Temple in London, the proposed building of the new Chapel in Exhibition Road and the acquisition of a new Mission Home, this marks the beginning of a NEW ERA in the British Mission, and you, President Woodbury, are the first to preside in this NEW ERA.” We left with the words “NEW ERA” ringing in our ears. The NEW ERA became the watchword, the slogan, yes, the promise of a Prophet to the British Saints. That this was a prophetic utterance is attested to by the fact that out of one mission, the British Mission, came eight missions and the organization of five stakes of Zion. The saints were advised to stay in the land in which they had been placed by the Lord. Now that we had a new Temple, there was no need to come to America, but to build the Kingdom and “lift where they stood.” (Prince & Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, pp.366)

Elder Cuthbert also wrote:

Once President McKay had uttered the words 'This is a New Era in the British Mission', it spread like wildfire among the members. The new mission president, T. Bowring Woodbury, received a flying start however, for President McKay had given him this prophetic message and challenge at the time he was set apart in President McKay's office a few days earlier. Nothing could have captured the imagination of the British Saints more than the vision of a New Era opening up, with the challenge over the previous decade. The leaders knew what had to happen, and some small progress had already been achieved. Now the British Saints were beginning to see the blossoming and the fruition, and it felt good. The prophet's words were a promise but it would require a lot of hard work to gain a fulfillment of that promise. President McKay had given us some mountains to climb, but had provided a mountaineer with experience, enthusiasm and endurance: President T. Bowring Woodbury.

The first time that I met the new mission president was in the Battersea Town Hall, London, at the special district conference in late September 1958. This great conference, with Elder Harold B. Lee present, was indeed a time of transition, with the release of President Clifton G. M. Kerr, who had nurtured the Saints so well for three years, and the handing over to President Woodbury. It was very significant that in President Woodbury's address, he spoke of being able to stand on the shoulders of his predecessor, and so be able to see farther. This he certainly was able to do, and with this great vision, combined with boundless energy and wide experience, he trained and enthused us to bring the vision into reality. I learnt from him my favourite definition of faith: 'Faith is Vision plus Valour.' When I was introduced to him that very first time, I felt of his great spirit, his dynamic personality, and his loving leadership. His experience was just what the Church needed.' He had been counsellor to Elder Alvin R. Dyer, by now an Assistant to the Twelve, when he served as Central States Mission President. He realized that the Church in Britain needed to make a breakthrough. 'We really needed several breakthrough points, in missionary work and public relations, in family togetherness, in training and leadership development, in physical facilities, and in preparation for stakehood generally.

The first three months of President Woodbury's administration was a period of preparation and planning, getting acquainted, interviewing and calling. He called for greater efforts in missionary work, and to capitalize on the improved publicity

the Church was enjoying [as a result of the building and dedication of the London Temple]. (Derek A. Cuthbert, *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Volume I 1937—1987*, p. 35)

Below is a picture of President Woodbury and his family from the Christmas picture sent to the mission and an article in the December 1959, *Millennial Star*, which was the Church Magazine published by the British Mission, when they took up their important assignment in London in early September 1958 to lead the **New Era**.



the Woodbury family

President T. Bowring Woodbury

Sister Beulah Woodbury

Wendy Woodbury

T. Bowring Woodbury II

President Woodbury's First Tour of the British Mission

In the same December 1959 issue of the *Millennial Star*, President Woodbury published a short article entitled "Just a Year Ago" in which he reviewed the previous year and said the following:

“After making our first tour of the British Mission, we felt there should be three points of stress:

1. Elimination of emigration.
2. Local leadership for all the branches and districts.
3. A constructive and definite building programme.

1. Elimination of Emigration

“During the year 114 families emigrated, and 100 members have been lost to the cause of getting stakes of Zion in Great Britain, for this is the number who emigrated from January 1 to October 30. ... About 10 percent, or a tithing of the members seek other climes and countries even though our temple is here and there’s plenty of work in the branches and districts. ...

2. Local leadership

We are grateful to report that every single district is in the hands of British-born brethren. ...

3. A constructive and definite building programme

Shortly, beautiful buildings that look like “Mormon Meeting Houses” will dot this lovely land and put our church in its proper perspective. I wish I could say we had accomplished all of our objectives to the first year. But I am happy to say that we have made great strides forward toward:

1. Eliminating emigration
2. Putting Branches and districts in the hands of local leaders
3. Initiating a building programme of which we can all be proud

Were we to repeat the three main objectives of the British Mission, they would still be the same three points. May we keep our eyes fixed on them and walk in the light of the Gospel toward our goals. (“Just a Year Ago,” President T. Bowring Woodbury, *Millennial Star*, December 1959, pp. 502-504)...

During President Woodbury’s first year of leadership he established a mission board of local members. Leadership meetings were held under the direction of President Frederick W. Oates, the first counselor in the new British Mission Presidency. Brother Oates had been the president of the Sunderland Branch and District for 20 years. The first Mission Board meeting was held in January 1959 at the new British Mission Home, 50 Princes Gate, Exhibition Road, London---a prime London location across the street from the Imperial College and a short distance from the Royal Albert Hall and Hyde Park.

Adopting a New Approach to Teach the Gospel

In addition to the three major events discussed by Derek Cuthbert which were to be undertaken, President Woodbury felt that the teaching approach being used by the missionaries in the British Mission needed to be radically changed and improved. Thus, one of the first things undertaken would be the development of a new approach to teach the Gospel, including a new lesson plan. Drawing on his experience while 1st Counselor under Alvin Dyer in the Central States Mission, and other known teaching materials then in use by other missions elsewhere, he

assigned some missionaries to develop a new teaching plan and methodology for the British Mission. How this was accomplished is described in President Woodbury's Journal:

Friday, January 23, 1959, T. Bowring Woodbury Journal

A Supervising Elders conference was held in the mission home with all districts represented.

A completely new mission teaching plan was presented and the Supervising Elders were given demonstrations by the newly appointed Traveling Elders.

The Traveling Elders called were Wesley Howell, Junior, Craig S. McCune, Frederick P. Neilson, Max G. Kendall and Eldred G. Smith.

The meetings continued January 24 and concluded with a testimony meeting. The Supervising Elders were loud in their acclaim of the new plan. They felt that cutting the number of lessons from seventeen, which they had been using to seven, would increase the tempo and help utilize time more efficiently. Also, the qualification of people after the fourth lesson into active or inactive investigators by asking them a series of questions appealed to them.

The plan is 100 pages with instructions and is most attractively gotten out. We have to thank the Lord for his goodness and Elder Warner for his tenacity and faith. Everyone else in the office thought it was impossible, but Elder Warner gathered his forces which included mostly Elder Oliver and they went to work. They were blessed and helped and able to get the plan out for the meeting.

President Hunsaker worked with the Traveling Elders and they learned the plan and used it before the meetings in order that they could be acquainted with it.

We are grateful for the goodness of our Father in helping us to bring about this wonderful change and to have it done so fast. We praise President Berkley L. Bunker of the Southern States Mission for the development of his plan, much of which we copied. Also, we thank President Alvin R. Dyer, from whom I learned so many things, Richard Stratford, for his help and President Hanks [brother of Marion D. Hanks] of the Gulf States Mission. After meetings in the afternoon and evening, we met again on January 25th.

We attended the most spiritual testimony meeting I have ever been to. These brethren were loud in their praise of the New Era, the mission handbook, our instructions, etc. They made me feel most humble and as always unworthy. (LDS archives, MS8000, Journal of Thomas Bowring Woodbury. Woodbury, President of the British Mission) [The Journal goes from 1959 to 1961]

The New Era 100 page lesson plan that was developed to use in the British Mission by several missionaries serving under President T. Bowring Woodbury, were made available to all of the British missionary force in February 1959, soon after it was completed. It consisted of an "Appointment Discussion," six "Lessons," and the "Call to Repentance." They were:

Appointment Discussion

1. Godhood Lesson
 2. Book of Mormon Lesson
 3. Apostasy Lesson
 4. Restoration Lesson
 5. First Principles Lesson
 6. Plan of Salvation Lesson
- Call to Repentance

After receiving a copy of the new Lesson Plan, all of British missionaries were instructed to memorize and be capable of teaching each of the six lessons, and become fluent in using them. It should be added that the memorization was difficult for some missionaries to accomplish. Also, learning and comfortably using the higher level lessons took longer, especially since we didn't teach the higher level lessons as often as the first two or three.

Someone had also developed, and we could use, several additional lessons to deal with specific issues or problems that might arise during the period of teaching an individual or family the six lessons. We were also given Instruction on how to memorize the Discussions, as well as instructions on how to use a flannel board, which some missionaries used.

How the New Era unfolded for the British church members

Derek Cuthbert's book: *The Second Century: Latter-Day Saints in Great Britain, Volume 1, 1937-1987*, gives a first-hand account of how he, a British church leader, understood and summarized how the **New Era** unfolded after the dedication of the London Temple.

At that first mission board meeting, President Woodbury's 'Prospectus for the New Era' was presented to us. It was then introduced to all members of the Church in the British Isles. Throughout that year it was reiterated, and emphasized with special highlighting in several issues of the *Millennial Star*. It was a three-pronged thrust to reduce and eliminate emigration, to develop local leadership and to launch a concerted construction programme for new meetinghouses. Progress towards these ambitious goals during this historic year laid the foundation for the establishment of, the Church in Great Britain on a firm basis. Despite the very strong counsel of the mission president to the contrary, some emigration continued. In the first year following the Temple dedication it was reduced to less than one percent of the membership. Thereafter it continued to decline, as the members realized there were more blessings to be gained by staying than by leaving. Emigration today [1987?] is negligible. Leadership training and development was so successful that by the close of the year every one of the fifteen districts was under a presidency of local brethren, most of whom had been baptized within the decade. This was real progress since one half of the districts had been relying on missionary elders who were thus diverted from their proselyting labours. At the branch level, in addition to adding fifteen new branches, the one hundredth branch being organised at the turn of the year, almost every unit was in local hands. 'Lift where you stand' was the challenge from our mission president, which stirred us to greater efforts.***

As regards the third aspect, that of meetinghouse construction, President Woodbury was determined that there would be no more old homes purchased for

conversion. The Hyde Park chapel, originally to be called the Central London chapel [and located just down the street from the new British Mission headquarters on Exhibition Road], was the beacon, the portent of things to come, although subsequent chapels would not be on such a grand scale.

Plans became available in the spring, and the members were delighted. When it was announced that Sir Thomas Bennett's firm had been appointed local architect, we knew that it would be equal to the quality of the London Temple. A prime choice site had been obtained, very near to the new mission home, just opposite the Science Museum and round the corner from the Royal Albert Hall.

It was a great occasion when Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve broke ground on August 3rd, 1959. President Woodbury took occasion once again to remind the Saints that this was the 'beginning of a New Era in building in the British Mission'.

Ten months later, on June 14th, I was privileged to conduct the cornerstone services with Alvin R. Dyer, newly appointed European Mission President, presiding. It is interesting to note that on that occasion Sir Thomas Bennett, the architect, told the assembled Latter-day Saints and their friends, 'The design externally and internally will symbolize the great aspirations of the church members and will, we hope, be an imposing landmark in the heart of one of London's most populated and fashionable centres.'

Although this beautiful chapel was the focus of our attention, there were a number of other new buildings in the offing. These were moving forward by the end of 1959 and President Woodbury declared, 'Shortly beautiful buildings will dot this lovely land and put our Church in its proper perspective.'

It was fitting that the first building of the New Era had been the London Temple. It was also appropriate that the first completed meetinghouse was the Hyde Park Chapel, and that President McKay should dedicate it on February 26th, 1961. There were over 1600 members in attendance on that special day, who heard the prophet proclaim, 'In a few years...we shall have chapels throughout Europe, where men and women converted to this Church, will join in stakes.' Four days later, after visits to Scotland and northern England in the interim, President McKay travelled to Wales for the unveiling of a plaque commemorating his mother's birthplace in Merthyr Tydfil. To make that touching day even more special, the Prophet then broke ground for the Merthyr Tydfil chapel, in company with Hugh B. Brown of the Council of the Twelve and Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve."

The following month the building programme was launched in earnest and over the next six months, fourteen meetinghouse projects were commenced, and sixty-three sites purchased to ensure continuity of the programme. This urgency of moving forward with all speed was a reflection of President McKay's pronouncement in March 1960 to Wendell B. Mendenhall, Chairman of the Church Building Committee, 'The time is now' The British Saints were delighted when it was announced that fifty new chapels would be constructed in the next five years.

While this inspired building programme was forging ahead, many other New Era activities were shaping the Church in Britain towards stakehood. (Ibid, pp. 35-43)

Those events set the stage for my arrival in London on September 8, 1959, to serve as a full-time missionary during the early stages of the **New Era**, first as a proselyting missionary for seven months, and then as a mission secretary for the next seventeen months helping President Bernard P. Brockbank establish, organize, and run two newly created missions: (1) the **North British Mission**, created on March 27, 1960, and headquartered in Hale, Cheshire, a suburb of Manchester; and (2) the **Scottish-Irish Mission**, created in early February 1961, and headquartered in Renfrew, Scotland, a suburb of Glasgow.

Major New Era challenges

The challenges in implementing the **New Era** in Great Britain continued throughout the decade of the 1960s. Derek Cuthbert described them as “needed to be met urgently.” During the first four years of the 1960s, the annual convert growth averaged almost forty percent.

Derek Cuthbert wrote in his history of the period that “it was exciting but overwhelming, exhilarating but demanding.” (I could not have said it any better!)

The three main challenges that were thrust upon us [existing church leaders] were **firstly** the need to integrate new members, whose influx became almost a deluge, considering the small base from which the Church was starting. **Secondly**, the need to accommodate these new Saints; our facilities were inadequate and catered for one hundred small congregations in a population of almost sixty mission people. **Thirdly**, there developed a desperate need for supplies and curriculum materials. In the days before the New Era we could ‘get by’ with simple fellowshipping, converted houses, and a few manuals, often recycled year to year. New challenges called for new methods.

One of President Woodbury’s master strokes to give excitement and motivation to missionaries and members alike was to get them reading about the introduction of the gospel to Britain and the miraculous harvesting of souls from 1837 on. In fact, it was said that he bought up the whole stock of that wonderful account by Richard L. Evans, *A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain*. Everyone was encouraged to read it in the hope that the former missionary zeal would be repeated. (Derek A. Cuthbert, *The Second Century: Latter-Day Saints in Great Britain, Volume 1*, p. 51)

It was now a hundred years later. Little did we realize that in the decade of the 1960’s the Church would have a larger harvest than did those early missionaries. In fact, over 57,000 were baptized from 1960 to 1969. Furthermore, converts were positively discouraged from leaving. Emigration was no longer perpetual, the Lord had decreed it through his Prophet.

Solutions to the three challenges needed to be found. Indeed, they were found, and the outcome was even more exciting than the prospect of starting again in a new land. The British Saints were starting again in their own land. (Cuthbert, p. 52)

The influx of youth presented a far greater challenge, for the majority were baptized without their parents. The great numbers of young converts came to be known as 'baseball baptisms'. Down through the years this has become a derogatory term among many people. Among such people 'Osmond baptism' or 'BYU Dance Group baptisms' might have similar connotations. (Cuthbert)

When President Henry D. Moyle was in Manchester in November 1960, he answered these criticisms as follows: "I have noted a little apologetic tone in some of your voices about baptizing too many young people. Well, don't you put on the brakes. President McKay was advised and enlightened and thrilled when the reports began to filter in that you were baptizing some of the youth of Britain, and he did not say to me 'Brother Moyle, you tell them to quit it,' but he said: 'Isn't it wonderful!' How wonderful, it will fit in with our program."

President Moyle then gave us missionaries the following assurance:

You elders [and sisters] need have no concern no matter from what source the criticism comes, as to whether your baptisms are too fast. If you think that President McKay does not know what is going on and that Brother Moyle and Brother Woodbury and Brother Brockbank are 'pulling a fast one' so to speak, why you are mistaken about that...Now I want to say a word about this youth program (Cuthbert, pp. 54-55)

President McKay said:

This growth programme, if you call it a programme, was inspired of the Lord. We need these young men. How are we going to get this missionary building programme carried out without them? The answer is, we could not. (Cuthbert, p. 55)

The Church History program interview of David George Fletcher in 1987, a young man who was baptized as part of the "baseball baptisms" program and then went on to serve for two years as a building missionary, helping build a number of chapels including the remodeling of the North London Chapel and the building of the new South London Chapel that replaced "Ravenslea," demonstrates just what President McKay was quoted as having said.

President McKay addressed the **second need** seriously impeding the growth of the Church in Great Britain—the **need for more and better meetinghouse accommodations**. Derek Cuthbert describes how this was accomplished:

Meanwhile, the Lord was answering the second greatest need, by providing meetinghouse accommodations in a marvelous way. President McKay himself initiated it, when in March 1960 he commissioned Wendell Mendenhall, chairman of the Church Building Committee to visit all the missions in Europe, to determine their building requirements and to develop a programme to help the Saints obtain these needed facilities. Local participation was to be in the form of 'labour missionaries' and volunteer help, supervised by experienced personnel called to direct the various phases of the activity. The British Saints were excited about the programme and were eager to put it into action. It was adopted wholeheartedly in every mission and stake. The need for buildings was great but

even the members were surprised at the scope of the programme. Fifty new buildings were to be constructed over five years. George Biesinger, Stanford Bird, and Hayden Andrews were called on labour missions in Britain to supervise the work. All of these had similar experience in New Zealand and implemented the programme with great vigour. Later, Neil Bradley, Steven Baird and others, were called to assist and the work moved forward strongly.

Some did not think the 'labour missionary' programme would work. How could unskilled teenagers build the beautiful chapels promised by the Brethren? President Henry D. Moyle assured them when he said, 'I would not hesitate to put his (Brother Mendenhall's) knowledge and understanding of conditions in Europe up against any other men in the Church today.' When he reported to the First Presidency that the missionary building programme could be carried out in Europe, President McKay was inspired to say, 'I know it.' (Cuthbert, p. 55).

In October 1959, I took the following "blurred" picture of the front door entrance to the Leeds Branch "meetinghouse" to illustrate the dire need for new facilities when I served as a missionary in the Leeds District. The picture shows some Leeds District missionaries leaving the front door of the Leeds Chapel onto the sidewalk. The second picture, taken by Elder O. William Asplund, also shows the entrance of our "meetinghouse," and just how great our church building needs in the Leeds District really were.

The entrance to the Leeds "Meetinghouse"



North British Mission Secretary Gary B. Hansen and President Bernard P. Brockbank standing on the sidewalk just outside the red door to the Leeds LDS church facility



In early June 1960, I drove Mission President, Bernard P. Brockbank, on a tour of the newly created North British Mission. When we stopped in front of the Leeds Chapel and walked up to the glass front door containing lettering identifying it as the Leeds LDS church, he turned to me and said that he wanted to “kick in” the glass in the door because he did not want the Church to be identified as having such a wretched place in which to meet. After that tour he understood the critical need for the Church to obtain or build new meetinghouse facilities for the members.

During 1959 and early 1960, the Leeds District Supervising Elder Dennis Blackhurst and his companion, lived on the second floor of that building that was scheduled for demolition by the city of Leeds. It had no bathtub nor shower facilities, just a toilet and washbasin, so the supervising elder and his companion, including me when I was his companion for two weeks before the North British Mission was created, had to go to the public baths in Leeds to take a bath.

Sunday School and other church meetings, except for Sacrament Meeting, were held in that condemned building. The Leeds Branch sacrament meetings were held in a rented room in the Leeds City Art Gallery, as I recall.

The huge costs to undertake and complete the meetinghouse building program in the New Era in Britain, and elsewhere, placed a considerable strain on the Church’s finances. Just how serious is shown by the financial figures the church released in several reports during the startup of the meetinghouse building program.

By the end of 1959 the church had spent \$8 million more than its income that year. This resulted in using up the \$7 million surplus funds after the expenditures of 1958.

At the end of 1962 the church was deficit spending \$32 million annually...The new year looked no better. By the end of February there was already a \$4 million shortfall, and 1963 threatened to equal or exceed the spending deficit of 1962.

Then in 1963 N. Eldon Tanner entered the First Presidency as the church was struggling to avoid the worst financial crisis of its history [since 1837?]. By then, his biographer notes, the building program "had so drained Church reserves that at one point financial officers wondered if they would be able to meet the payroll" for church employees.

...In brief, he responded to Mormonism's financial crisis by declaring "a moratorium" on the LDS building program and by halting investments" until a buffer reserve could be built up." ...[U]nder Tanner's careful stewardship "step by step the church was introduced to corporate financing." (D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*, p.219-220.)

By 1966, Church finances were comfortably in the black, and the church building program in Britain and elsewhere could be resumed and completed.

Groundbreaking services for new chapels became a regular feature of Church activity from 1961 on. Church history was made in both Scotland and Ireland that year, as ground was broken in Drumchapel and Belfast for the first LDS chapels in those countries. By the end of 1961 there were twenty-two projects under way, and there was an appeal for more and more 'labour missionaries.' Later they became known as 'building missionaries' or 'church builders'. With sixty new buildings envisaged in this first phase, it was not only several hundred of these fine recently baptized youth who had the opportunity to learn construction skills but also a large number of older members. (Ibid)

According to Cuthbert, as published in his 1987 book, the church built 195 new chapels and meetinghouses in Great Britain in the period from 1960 to 1985. (Appendix III, p.199)

The **third need**--supplying the manuals and the other materials for Church-related courses during the **New Era** in Great Britain resulted in some significant changes. (When I served as a mission secretary, almost all of the publications used by the missionaries and branches of the church in Britain were imported from America. Very few items were printed or produced in Great Britain. I remember President Brockbank writing to his friends in Salt Lake City asking them to purchase and send boxes of the *Book of Mormon* for the missionaries to use in their proselyting.)

Derek Cuthbert describes how supplying the manuals and other Church-related materials was accomplished:

Fulfillment of the third need -- that of providing curriculum materials and other Church supplies -- was also moving forward. In February 1961, the Church in Britain received a significant boost by the setting up in England of the West

European Mission headquarters. This was a division of the Frankfurt-based European Mission, and Elder Nathan Eldon Tanner, a recently-called Assistant to the Twelve, was appointed to preside. In setting up his office and organization, President Tanner quickly found some inconsistencies. The Millennial Star, the Church magazine for the British Saints, was being run by one mission. The same was true for the Mission Bookstore which supplied the whole country. This was discussed with the stakes and mission presidents at a special meeting held in Manchester a month after President Tanner's arrival and it was agreed that both should be brought under the West European Mission.

Action was soon taken and in June 1961 he became the Editor of the Millennial Star with Brother A. Hamer Reiser as business manager... He was given a leave of absence as secretary to the First Presidency to take the assignment. The official announcement stated that he would also serve as 'Manager of the Bookstore, which will handle all church books and temple garments'...The inconsistencies had now been put in order and the foundation prepared for the next phase. (Cuthbert, pp. 59-60)

In October 1961, Derek Cuthbert became the first British business manager of the enterprise. Brother Reiser remained in his position for a short time before returning home on November 13, 1961. Derek Cuthbert was promoted to be Manager of Deseret Enterprises Ltd., that was organized "as a private company to function as the commercial source of supply for books and materials needed by the stakes and missions, wards, branches and members of the church in Great Britain." The enterprise was located in a multi-story building in Mitcham, Surrey, a short distance from the London Temple. President N. Eldon Tanner was Chairman of the Board. Now the framework for the stabilization and further growth of the Church had been established and the New Era was well under way.

Part II: My Missionary Experiences in Great Britain

My involvement in the **New Era**, and many of the events of its Great Missionary Harvest presented above and recorded in Derek Cuthbert's book, began when I arrived in London on September 8, 1959, to serve a two-year mission in the British Mission. It ended when I was released from the Scottish-Irish Mission on September 5, 1961, and returned home.

When people ask me what mission I served in, I answer that I served in three missions--the British Mission from September 1959-March 1960, the North British Mission from March 1960-February 1961, and the Scottish-Irish Mission from February-September 1961. I served as the first mission secretary under President Bernard P. Brockbank to help him organize and operate the newly created North British Mission and then in the newly created Scottish-Irish Mission. We helped bring to pass the prophetic words spoken by President David O. McKay in his dedicatory prayer of the London Temple on September 7, 1958, "This is a **New Era** in Britain" that ushered in its second "Great Missionary Harvest."

The following pictures provide a short introduction to my arrival in Great Britain and serving in three missions.

Our Pan Am plane and Elder John Burnette, one of the seven missionaries in our group assigned to the British Mission, standing on the tarmac during a refueling stopover at Shannon, Ireland, on the morning of Sept. 8, 1959



The mission van and President Woodbury's Jaguar car parked in front of the British Mission Home, 50 Princes Gate, Exhibition road, London, England



Taking our newly arrived group of missionaries to catch our train to Leeds Sept. 9, 1959



I was assigned to labor in the Leeds District. These are the 16 missionaries in our District in December 1959

				RONALD B. WALKER salt lake city, utah MICHAEL H. STEVENS salt lake city, utah KEITH B. SORENSEN salt lake city, utah DENNIS P. BLACKHURST pocatello, idaho supervising elder
				HAROLD D. NEWEY huntsville, utah NEAL R. SWANN preston, idaho SYLVIA ROBINSON wythenshawe, manchester NITA M. SORENSON arimo, idaho
				OLOF W. ASPLUND lethbridge, alberta, canada WENDELL L. OGDEN mooroe, utah GARY B. HANSEN ogden, utah RICHARD E. MARSHALL tooele, utah
				JOHN M. BURNETT salt lake city CONRAD E. MICHAELSON st. charles, idaho ASHBY L. SNOW royal oak, michigan PAUL F. DAY provo, utah

Visiting the London Temple with church members from the Leeds District on January 23, 1960 with my missionary companion, Elder Paul F. Day on the left, and our Supervising Elder Dennis Blackhurst in the middle, and me on the right



A typical rainy day in Huddersfield, Yorkshire, England. February 1960



After serving as a missionary (junior companion) for seven months in the Leeds District (in Halifax, Huddersfield, and Leeds) of the British Mission, where our motto was “Leeds Leads the Mission,” it was announced that a Conference would be held in Manchester, England, on March 27, 1960, at the Hippodrome Theatre where the British Mission would be split into two missions and the Manchester Stake, the first stake in Great Britain and Europe, would be created.

The Manchester Hippodrome where the new Manchester Stake was organized



Elder Hansen at the Hippodrome, knowing I would be the Mission Secretary to President Brockbank, newly appointed President of the North British Mission

When Elder Harold B. Lee organized the Manchester Stake, he also announced dividing the British Mission and creating the new North British Mission that would include all of Northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Bernard P. Brockbank, a successful building contractor and land developer from Salt Lake City, had been called to be the President of the new North British Mission, with headquarters soon to be established in Hale, Cheshire, a suburb of Manchester, England.

President Brockbank was then introduced to the conference attendees. It was of interest to me personally to read President Moyle's account describing who Bernard P. Brockbank was and why he was called to serve as a mission president during the **New Era**. *It also answered for me why I had been inspired to go on a mission at that particular time and served in Great Britain under both Presidents Woodbury and Brockbank:*

It was not difficult to see the hand of the Lord in the appointment of a very experienced priesthood leader to head the new North British mission, who was also a building contractor: Bernard P. Brockbank. President Moyle declared, 'I know the Lord called Brother Brockbank here to stand side by side, shoulder to shoulder with Brother Woodbury and carry out this work just as though there had been no division of the mission.' These two men worked tirelessly to build the Kingdom, and influenced a great many future leaders. With so much high-powered help and direction, their came about a transformation in the image of the Church in Britain. (Cuthbert, p. 56)

At the Priesthood Session of the Manchester Conference held in Oldham, England, the previous evening, British Mission President T. Bowring Woodbury called me aside and informed me that I had been selected to be the mission secretary in the newly created North British Mission. He then introduced me to my new mission president, Bernard P. Brockbank.

The events surrounding the selection of President Brockbank to be the first President of the North British Mission are quite interesting, and worth including. Although he never mentioned it to me at that time, and I did not learn about the specific events surrounding his call to be the first president of the North British Mission until I was writing this document, I think it is well worth including. The following account of his mission call was given to Gregory Prince during his 1996 interview with the President Brockbank:

...I had gone over there [to Great Britain] with part of my family. I shouldn't say this, but I am going to, because it is part of it. I received a call from David O. McKay. I was building Mt. Olympus Hills up here [in Salt Lake County], with hundreds and hundreds of lots. I received a call and he said, "We have decided to open another mission in the British Isles. You have been recommended to be the one to go over there and pioneer the opening of a new mission." Satan jumped on my back and said, "Tell them you need six months." So I did, like a foolish idiot. But he said, "You be there in eleven days." That meant all of my valuable assets up in Mt. Olympus and there that were all pending on immediate action, he just said, "Drop it, the Lord is calling you." I wasn't called to be a General Authority, I was called to open a new mission in the British Isles, in Scotland. (Interview by Gregory Prince with Bernard P. Brockbank, at his home, on May 20, 1996)

In London learning to be a mission secretary

When the conference concluded, President Brockbank informed me that I should travel to London as soon as possible to work with Elder A. Dale Godfrey, mission secretary in the British Mission, for the next four or five weeks to learn my new job and begin making plans for the new mission--open a bank account, get acquainted with the essential suppliers of services, etc., purchase the new equipment and the other items needed to outfit and start up a new mission office.

So I left my companion, Elder Dennis Blackhurst, supervising elder of the Leeds District, and travelled to London to learn the duties of a mission secretary by shadowing and working directly with Elder A. Dale Godfrey, the British mission secretary. My five weeks in London were both a challenging and enjoyable experience. It quickly became clear to me how many duties and responsibilities I was assuming. The full account of what being a mission secretary entailed is presented in **Volume II**.

Elder Godfrey was a good teacher and very competent mission secretary. Furthermore, life in the British Mission Home and observing President Woodbury and his family at close range in London was an interesting experience. Fortunately, it was not all work.



Princess Margaret on her way to her wedding, London, May 6, 1960



Elder Gary B. Hansen, in front of Buckingham Palace
on the day of Princess Margaret's wedding, May 6, 1960

The newly created North British Mission

As noted above, President Bernard P. Brockbank came to Great Britain in late March 1960 to participate in the splitting of the British Mission, the creation of the Manchester stake, and to set up the North British Mission. While I was in London learning to be a mission secretary, President Brockbank traveled around to become acquainted with our new mission area, and to find and purchase a suitable mission home. The one he selected and purchased was located at 118 Park Road, Hale, Cheshire, a suburb of Manchester. The story of how and why this new Mission Home was purchased is quite interesting.

In his May 20, 1996, interview with Gregory Prince, President Brockbank described how he chose where to locate the mission home suitable for the new North British Mission, and how he had found and purchased the building which became our new Mission Home and Office.

When I went in to open the North British Mission, taking half of the British Isles---when we got that one mission, it had been 120 years, approximately, to create a second mission in the British Isles. The headquarters of the Church for all of Europe had been in Liverpool. John A. Widtsoe and many, many other able leaders of the Church had been in Liverpool, so I thought, "Well, the building is still here, we're still using it. I'd better go to Liverpool." I pretty near got blown over twice, the wind was so strong and so severe. I had to hold on to a post to keep from being blown over. I said to myself, "This is a sign, we will not set up

headquarters in Liverpool," even though it had been there. "The Lord doesn't want it in Liverpool, and He just told me so."

Instead, I went over to another place [Hale, Cheshire, a suburb of Manchester], where a man had just committed suicide. I thought his place would be for sale, so I went right over, and his wife was brooding over the death of her husband. I said, "I know you're in mourning. You've had a funeral that you are holding. But the Lord told me to come over and ask you if you wanted to sell your home. I won't do anything more than just get a 'yes' or a 'no,' and then I'll be back after you've had your chance to think it over." She said, "I've got to sell the home." She had her little baby in her arms. She said, "You come back the day after tomorrow." And I went back and bought the home.

We moved our mission staff into it, and we worked from there. I asked President McKay, "Where do you want the mission home (when I turned down Liverpool)?" He said, "I thought I told you the Lord called you to be the mission president over there." I said, "Thank you." I got the message. You can't use any of the old schemes, the old ideas, they are worn out. You can't run it how it was run last year or the year before. You have to get moving into some new things.(May 20, 1996, Interview by Gregory Prince with Bernard P. Brockbank)

When that was done, President Brockbank called me in London and told me to drive to Manchester in one of the new vehicles that I had purchased, and which I had filled with equipment and supplies for the new mission office that we were setting up in Hale, Cheshire. Upon my arrival in Manchester, my first task was to open a bank account and write a 10,000 British pound check to pay for the purchase of the mission home. Furniture had to be purchased for both the mission home and the mission office, and remodeling commenced to house both the mission staff and the Brockbank family. I went to the nearest branch of Barclays Bank in Hale, Cheshire, to open the account. Unfortunately, the banking office in Hale, Cheshire was too small to serve our needs, so I had to go to the Altringham Branch to open an account. The details of how that unfolded in the following weeks and months have been taken from my journal and letters home.

President Bernard P. Brockbank's family

The following picture of the Brockbank family was published in the December 1959 issue of the *Millennial Star* magazine. That same issue of the *Millennial Star* also included photos of the mission staff and all the missionaries then serving in the new mission.

The Brockbank's high school age son, Von, attended The American School, a boarding school in London. Their 18-year old son, Bruce, was called on a full-time mission to serve in Scotland. Their youngest son, Roger, attended the local primary school. Their daughter, Diane, did not come with the family to England,



Front Row: Sister Nada R. Brockbank, President Bernard P. Brockbank. Back row: Von, Roger, Diane, and Bruce Brockbank



L-R: Pres. Brockbank, Pres. Thorne, Elder & Sis. Brown, Elder & Sis. Tanner, & Manchester Stake Pres. member William Bates in backyard of North British Mission



Photos of life in the North British Mission

President Brockbank speaking to a group of new missionaries at a Home Evening in the North British Mission home. Sister Brockbank observes him from behind.



Cramped Quarters in the North British Mission office:

L-R Elder Asplund mission accountant, Sister Cook mission reorder, Elder McKay and Von Brockbank by the window, Sister Ure secretary to Pres. Brockbank, Elder Stout publication, and Elder Dent at the desk



North British Mission office staff: L-R Sister Cook mission recorder; Sister Morrow, missionary and our cook; Elder Asplund, mission accountant; Sister Ure secretary to Pres. Brockbank; and Elder Hansen mission secretary sitting at his desk.



President Brockbank's picture board of missionaries in the North British Mission



The telephone switchboard in the North British Mission Home, May 5, 1960



Elder Asplund's and Elder Hansen's bedroom in the North British Mission Home

June 1960



September 1960, L-R Pres. Brockbank, Sister Brockbank, Sister Morrow, Sister Lisonbee, Sister Ure, the left arm of Elder Asplund and the empty chair of Elder Hansen who took the picture



After working 10 to 14 hours every day getting the North British Mission up and running, President Brockbank rewarded the mission office staff, in September 1960, with a trip to the world famous Military Tattoo held in Edinburgh, Scotland. We drove one of the mission vehicles to Edinburgh where we saw some of the sights and attended the Military Tattoo at Edinburgh Castle before returning to Manchester.

Sister Helen Ure's copy of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo program signed by the North British Mission office staff.



Internet photo of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo,
I had not taken a picture when we attended the event.



North British Mission office staff in Holy Rood Park overlooking Edinburgh, Sept. 7, 1960.
L to R: Elder Asplund, Elder Jensen, Sister Lisonbee, Sister Morrow, and Sister Ure



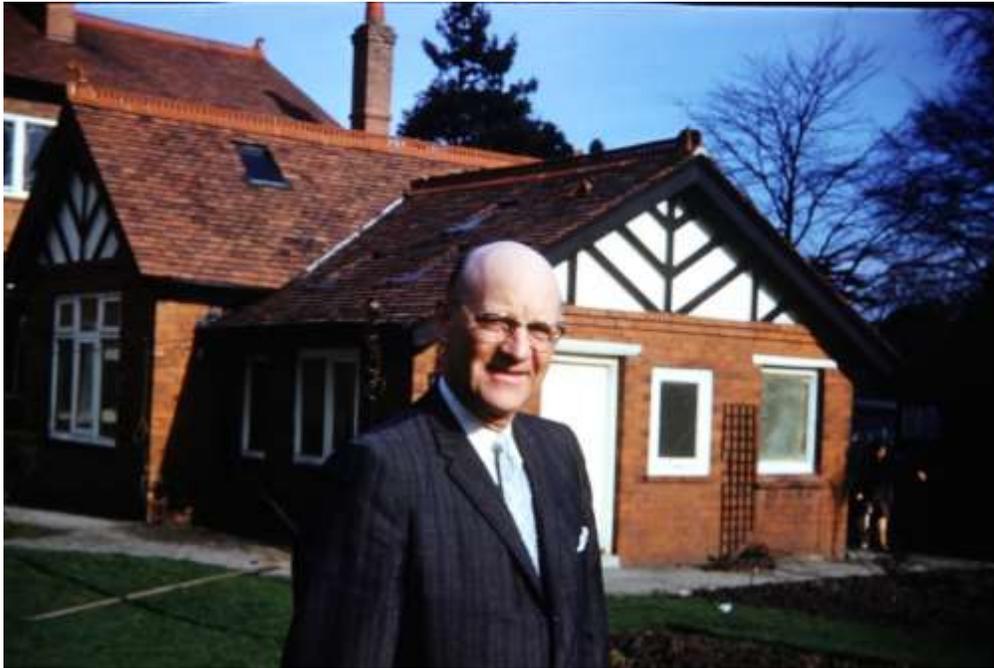
Two "Scottish" Elders, -- Elder Asplund and Elder Hansen --
standing at the base of Arthur's Seat (Pratt's Hill) in Edinburgh



Loading the van for the move to Scotland, Feb. 15, 1961
Sister Ure, Sister Morrow, Elder Hansen, Sister Cook



President Grant Thorn, outside the North British Mission Home



President Grant Thorn took over as President of the North British Mission from President Bernard P. Brockbank in mid-February 1961 after we had departed for the new Scottish-Irish Mission.

President Brockbank gave Elder O. William Asplund, the North British Mission accountant, two choices: He could go to Aberdeen, Scotland, where some of his ancestors had lived, or he could stay in the North British Mission and serve as the mission secretary in the North British Mission helping President Thorn. Elder Asplund opted for the latter and served as Pres. Thorn's mission secretary until he was released to go home in June 1961.

As noted above, President Brockbank asked me to go with him to Scotland, to help organize and run the new Scottish-Irish Mission. I served as mission secretary of the Scottish-Irish Mission from early February 1961 until I was released from my mission in early September 1961. Just how the purchase of a mission home in Scotland actually occurred is very interesting, based on an interview conducted by Gregory Prince with President Bernard Brockbank, which he conducted on May 20, 1996,

Scottish-Irish Mission: purchasing a mission home

The story of how the Scottish-Irish Mission home was purchased is just as interesting and significant as was the purchase of the North British Mission Home. However, it was purchased with divine guidance directly to President David O. McKay, and illustrates just how important this Mission was to him.

Thanks to the May 20, 1996 interview of Gregory Prince with Bernard P. Brockbank, we have an account of how it came about.

Brockbank: ... I saw so many miracles over there. President McKay called me in the middle of the night and said, "I want you to go to Scotland, 'now.'" I said, "President I got out of bed to answer this phone." He said, "You heard me, didn't you?" I said, "Thank you." So, I went to Scotland and found as fine a mission home as we have ever had in this Church. Two acres of landscape. I would have missed it if I had been thirty minutes later.

In my own journal I recorded that I had taken President Brockbank to the Manchester Ringway Airport to catch the 7AM plane to Glasgow. He returned at 9:30 (probably PM). Prince's Interview of Pres. Brockbank continues:

Brockbank: ... I checked into the hotel, but I just sat in the lobby. Finally, I went out into the street, and there was a door open. You see, attorneys over there handle real estate. I went into this office and he asked, "Why are you here?" I said, "I want to ask you a question. I am looking for a place for a home for the mission for the Church." He said, "Well, I don't have anything like that." As I was leaving he said, "Hey, just a minute, I was just called last night to handle a property out here in Paisley." I said, "Can I run out and see it?" He said, "Yes, the people haven't vacated yet, but they are vacating it as fast as they can." I got a taxi and went out to Paisley. There was this mansion. They had moved out just a few hours before. There was a woman sweeping the sidewalk. The rock fence around this place was worth more than we paid for the property. I thought, "There it is, there it is." There was no question about whether I should buy it. I just grabbed it and paid a check.

Scottish-Irish Mission Home, "Glynhill," Renfrew, Scotland

Side garden view of Glynhill in March 1961, before construction of the new wing



As I recall, I went up to Scotland shortly after the deal was closed, and began the process of setting up the new Mission Home and buying the necessary equipment and furnishings to outfit it. We also determined what modifications were necessary for it to serve as both the mission home and mission office. It required considerable remodeling and the building of a new wing on the back of the house. The Church Building Committee sent over someone, Brother Sparks, to provide the skill and direction for the needed remodeling and construction project.

After opening a bank account in a local bank, I spent the next few days visiting all of the furniture and office equipment stores in the Glasgow area, buying needed office equipment and furniture for the new mission home.

When we had “enough” furniture and equipment available to start operations, Sister Ure and Sister Cook came up to Glasgow on the train from Manchester, but had to spend their first night at a hotel. The next day they came out to the Mission Home and helped us set up operations.

A quiet lunch in the kitchen at Glynhill on our second day, Feb. 17, 1961
Pres. Brockbank, Sister Ure, Sister Cook, and my plate at the end of the table





Sister Cook and Sister Ure at work at their new desks

Occupation: Mission Secretary, skill set: "Jack of all trades"



Shortly after we arrived in Glasgow, Sister Ure and a companion were called to be the first "Travelling Sisters" in the Scottish-Irish Mission. They may also have been the first such sisters in the British Isles.

Picture of the Scottish-Irish Mission staff after we were fully in operation.. L-R Ruby Jean Cook, unknown Sister, Jane Morrow, Carma Rollins, unknown Elder, unknown Sister, unknown Sister, Elder Hansen, Elder Kirk, Elder Stout,



President Brockbank carving the turkey at a special dinner with Sister Brockbank and their sons Von and Roger on the right-hand side and the mission office staff in back. I am on the left side



Elder Gary B. Hansen: at my desk in "Glynhill," while serving as mission secretary from mid-February 1961 to September 5, 1961



The board in President Brockbank's office with photos of all of the missionaries in Scotland and Northern Ireland by Districts, March 1961



Elder Hansen, sitting in President Brockbank's chair at his desk, summer 1961, while he is in Utah attending a Mission President's conference

. President Brockbank told the small mission staff that we could travel to London and attend the dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel by President McKay on February 26, 1961, and also attend the creation of the London Stake, the second Stake in Great Britain, that same day.

I also helped to organize and facilitate the "International Singing Mothers' Concert Tour" composed of 50 American and 200 British sisters. They sang at the dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel and the organization of the London Stake, and gave concerts in London, Manchester, Nottingham, Cardiff, Newcastle, Glasgow and Belfast during Feb. 25 – March 7, 1961. I also had the privilege of chauffeuring President McKay on several occasions during his visit to Scotland in late February 1961.

Dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel and the organization of the London Stake

As stated above, shortly after we moved into the new Scottish-Irish Mission home and office, the mission office staff was allowed to travel to London to attend President David O. McKay's dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel in the morning of February 26, 1961, and the organization of the London Stake that afternoon. The following pictures were taken of those events

President McKay dedicating the Hyde Park chapel, February 25, 1961



President David O. McKay organizes the London Stake after dedicating the Hyde Park Chapel

The Hyde Park Chapel, entrance at the left side



President Woodbury speaking at the dedication of Hyde Park Chapel

The Singing Mothers performing at the organization of the London Stake on Feb. 26, 1961, as seen by me from the Crow's Nest



President McKay leaving after the dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel

International Singing Mothers' Concert Tour

INTERNATIONAL
SINGING MOTHERS
PERSONALITIES

DR. FLORENCE JEPPELSON MADSEN, recognised in the United States as a leading professor, conductor, composer and singer, has directed the Mormon mothers since 1941. She holds a Master of Music Education degree from Chicago Musical College and two honorary degrees.

Many of her compositions have been published and performed in America by choral groups and orchestras, including the Boston Symphony.

From a successful career as a soloist, she became a music professor and later headed the music department at Brigham Young University.

★

Though unpaid, these British and American singers boast unusual records of musical experience, Church service, and community activity—all in addition to their primary responsibilities of motherhood.

Most are vocalists, instrumentalists, choristers and teachers, who sing for self-expression, companionship and service.

Months of rehearsal have prepared singers in sectional groups for final combined appearances during concert tours.



DR. FLORENCE JEPPELSON MADSEN
Conductor



**ANNETTE RICHARDSON
DINWOODEY**
Contralto



JEAN TAVERNER
Lyric Soprano



ZESTA T. GEISLER
Pianist



REVA BLAIR
Violinist



Birmingham District



Hull District



Manchester Stake



The International Singing Mothers' Chorus of 50 American sisters and 200 British sisters, led by Dr. Florence Jepperson Madsen and accompanied by Dr. Frank W. Asper, organist, sang at the Hyde Park Chapel dedication, and the London Stake organization.



DR. FRANK W. ASPER. *Organist*

CONCERT TOUR ITINERARY

LONDON	Saturday, February 25	HYDE PARK CHAPEL
LONDON	Sunday, February 26	HYDE PARK CHAPEL
LONDON	Monday, February 27	ROYAL ALBERT HALL
MANCHESTER	Tuesday, February 28	FREE TRADE HALL
NOTTINGHAM	Wednesday, March 1	ALBERT HALL
CARDIFF	Thursday, March 2	SOPHIA GARDENS
NEWCASTLE	Friday, March 3	CITY HALL
GLASGOW	Sunday, March 5	ST. ANDREWS HALL
BELFAST	Tuesday, March 7	ULSTER HALL



Irish District



American Singing Mothers rehearsing in Utah



Bristol District



Preston District



Wales District



Nottingham District



Plymouth District



South District

Afterwards, the Singing Mothers' sang at the Royal Albert Hall in London followed by concerts in Manchester, Nottingham, Cardiff, Newcastle, Glasgow and Belfast during February 25 – March 7, 1961. Elder Maurice Barnes, British mission secretary, and I, Elder Gary B. Hansen, Scottish-Irish mission secretary, served as the tour managers for the Singing Mothers concerts from London, England, to Belfast, Ireland, and arranged all the venues and accommodations for their concert tour. The Singing Mothers travelled on buses throughout their concert tour in the British Isles.

Elder O. William Asplund, now the North British mission secretary, remembers going with me to a hotel in Manchester that said it did not have enough rooms for all of the Singing Mothers. We had a prayer and then I went into the hotel to plead for more rooms while he stayed in the car and continued to pray. Our prayers were answered and we were able to get the needed rooms.



Photo of Elder Barnes taking a picture while I took his picture in Belfast, Ireland, March 7, 1961. Buses for the Singing Mothers

Tour managers Elder Gary Hansen and Elder Maurice Barnes
With the Singing Mother's, in Northern Ireland, March 7, 1961

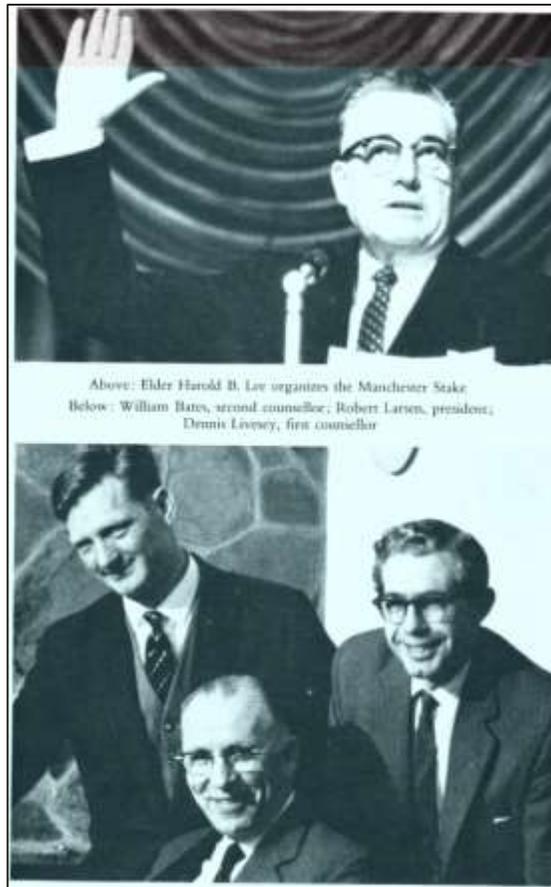


On September 5, 1961, I was released from my two-year mission in Great Britain. Four years later, while attending Cornell University, I received a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the London School of Economics. So, in September 1965, my wife Helen and our little son Mark moved with me to London for a year. On our way to London we stopped in New York City and stayed with President and Sister Brockbank, who were then directing the Mormon Pavilion at the New York World's Fair.

After seeing the Fair we travelled to Southampton on the Queen Elizabeth. When we arrived in London, we lived in a flat above a doctor's surgery in Finchley, North London, and were members of the North London Ward. Our Bishop, Dougald C. McKeown, was the Manager of Deseret Enterprises Ltd. at that time. Church meetings were held in an old former Jewish synagogue that the church had purchased. It was later remodeled under the building missionary program. Two years after we had returned to Ithaca, New York, in September 1966, Bishop McKeown and his lovely wife Grace were called to be the President and Matron of the London Temple. They served in that capacity for five years. We cherished their friendship.

Part III: Statistics of the New Era and its Great Missionary Harvest

On March 26-27, 1960, when Apostle Harold B. Lee came to Manchester, England, and directed the organization of the Manchester Stake, Robert Larsen was called to be the president of the new stake, with Dennis Livesey as first counselor and William Bates as second counselor.



As described by Derek Cuthbert in his history of the first half of the Second Century of the Church in Great Britain, the early days of the New Era in 1959 were very eventful, starting with the creation of a new mission board whose members worked closely with the Mission Presidency.

All of these exciting activities were envisioned in those early days of the planning as the mission board met with the mission presidency in the first year of the New Era, at the mission home in January and at the London Temple in June. It all moved forward in a marvelous way, the most striking aspect being the acceleration in missionary work. . It was gratifying to see the number of proselyting missionaries increase month by month from the one hundred and ninety plateau we had been on for three years. During the next three years, the December totals were two hundred and forty, three hundred and seventy, and eight hundred and eighty due to the organization of additional missions. The first step came in March 1960 with the creation of the North British Mission headquartered near Manchester. The British Mission had remained unchanged since 1837, and this was the first division. It was effected by Elder Harold B. Lee while he was in England for another important event, described below. Then at the close of that year, came the First Presidency announcement of two more missions, namely the Scottish-Irish Mission based in Glasgow and the Central British Mission with headquarters in Sutton Coldfield [a suburb of Birmingham].

The missionaries began working harder than ever before. Their training was also improved by the appointment of five assistants to the mission president, who, together with the mission first counselor, constituted the training team. This proved to be very effective until in the more recent years, zone organization was set up, whereby zone leaders could train even more efficiently within their own zone area. The simpler teaching plan, reduced from eighteen to seven lessons enabled missionaries to teach more by the Spirit, and testify with power.

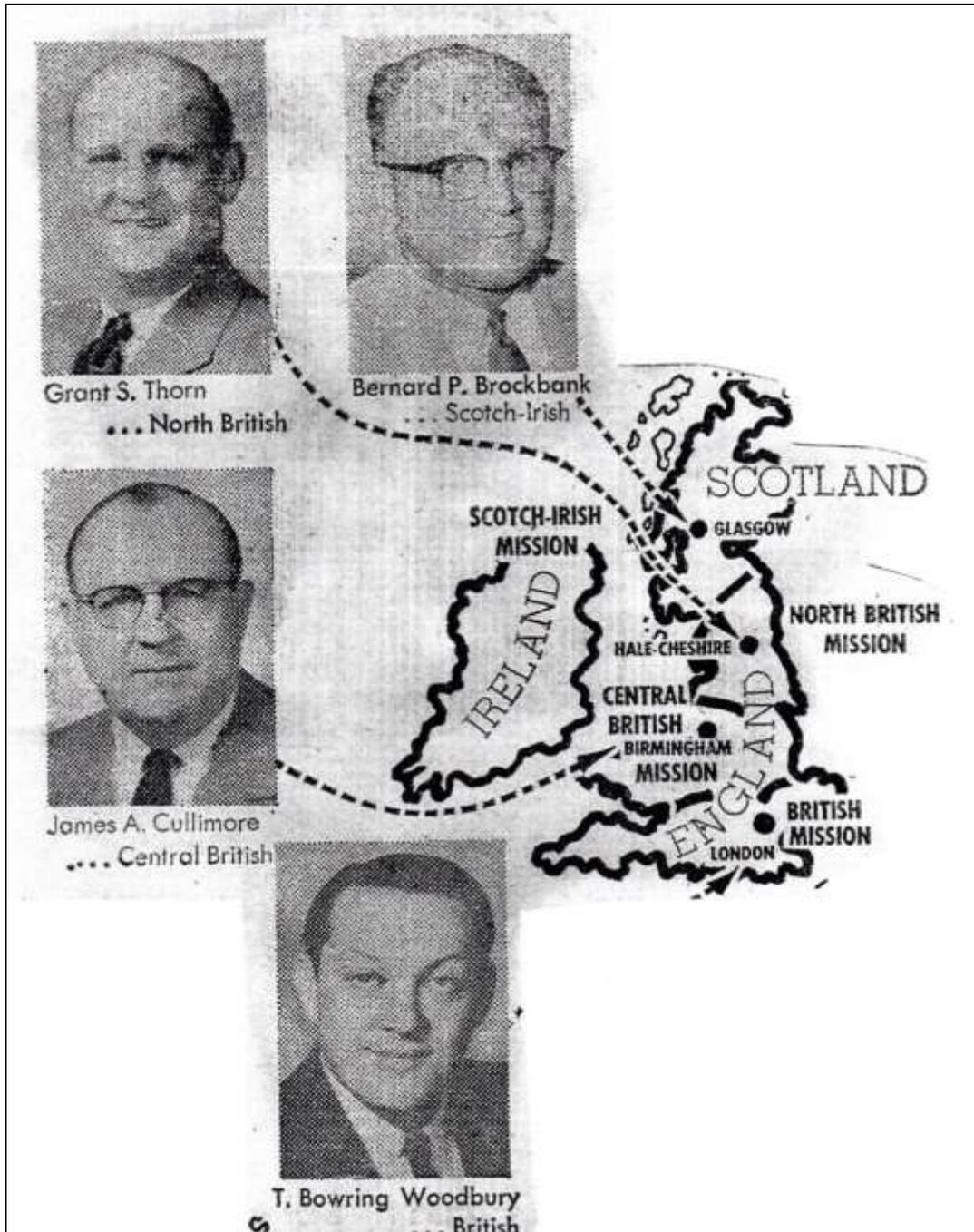
Convert baptisms mounted rapidly and in the first full year (October 1958 to September 1959) exceeded twelve hundred- double the level of the previous few years. This was eclipsed by the events of July/August 1960 when the British and North British Missions combined to give a birthday tribute to President David O. McKay with almost this number in just two months! The text of the Tribute Scroll addressed to President McKay read as follows: (Cuthbert, pp. 45-46)

The missionaries of the British Mission recently wrote that the months of July and August 1960, were to be a Tribute Month to you, in which we jointly pledged to baptize one thousand souls into the Kingdom as a Birthday Tribute to you.

We wish to tell you how, in all humility and gratitude, that the Lord has blessed our efforts. He has heard the prayers of our parents, ward, stake, and quorum members, who joined us in fasting and praying. And that we, at the close of the Missionary Months have baptized one thousand one hundred and eleven souls in that two month period, exceeding our pledge and Birthday Tribute. (Ibid)

By the summer of 1960 the First Presidency lowered the missionary age for young men to 19 years from 20 years and for young women from 23 years to 21 years. Lowering the ages increased the number of LDS young men and young women who served full-time missions.

During my mission in Great Britain (September 8, 1959-September 5, 1961), I witnessed the British Mission divided into four missions. On March 27, 1960, the British Mission was split to create the North British Mission. Eleven months later, in early February 1961, the North British Mission was split to create the Scottish-Irish Mission. On March 6, 1961, the British Mission was split to create the Central British Mission. At that time, the British Mission President was T. Bowring Woodbury, the North British Mission President was Grant S. Thorn, the Scottish-Irish Mission President was Bernard P. Brockbank, and the Central British Mission President was James A. Cullimore.



Source: *Church News* clipping, no date

What these first four Missions and the missionaries serving in them and the additional missions created under the leadership of President Nathan E. Tanner, as the president of the West European Mission, is remarkable. Indeed, the statistics are even more impressive when one looks at the statistics of all the British Missions that are contained in Derek Cuthberts' 1987 book. The statistics of the Church in Great Britain are even more impressive when one looks at the 2013 statistics, as set forth in Chapter Five.



L-R-President Thorn, President Brockbank, President Hugh B. Brown, President N. Eldon Tanner, President Cullimore, President Woodbury

New Era missionary statistics

Unfortunately, Elder Cuthbert's book contains little detailed information about the number of proselyting missionaries who served in Great Britain during the **New Era**:

It was gratifying to see the number of proselyting missionaries increase month by month from the one hundred and ninety plateau we had been on for three years. During the next three years, the December totals were two hundred and forty, three hundred and seventy, and eight hundred and eighty due to the organization of additional missions. (Cuthbert, pp. 45-46)

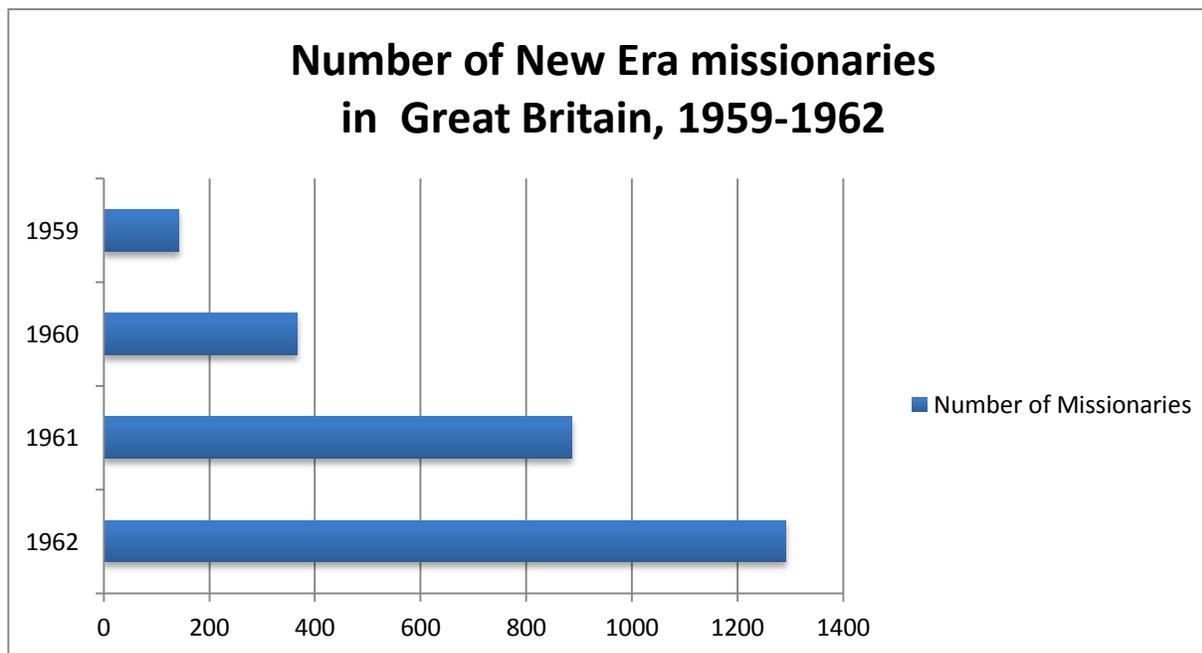
Thanks to the efforts of O. William Asplund, a former **New Era** British missionary (1959-1961), who currently serves as a volunteer in the Church History Library, he obtained and compiled the information on how many new missionaries were added each year during the first three years of the New Era. The addition of these statistics now completes the record of missionaries serving in Great Britain from 1959 to 1962, an increase from 142 to 1,290 in four years.

1959-1962, New Era missionaries in Great Britain

Date	Mission	Number of Missionaries	Total Number for Great Britain	% increase
December 1959	British	142	142	0
December 1960	British North British	205 161	336	258%
December 1961	British Central British North British Scottish-Irish	247 217 186 236	886	247%
December 1962	All British Missions	405 (added in 1962)	1291	909% (A nine-fold increase over 1959)

Email from William Asplund to Gary B. Hansen, January 15, 2014

Yesterday I finally got a chance to sit down with the *Millennial Star* and count missionaries. In 1962, if the numbers in the magazine are correct, 820 new missionaries arrived in the British Isles, not counting Mission Presidents; 415 missionaries finished their missions and went home. So the missionary force grew by 405 during that year. Lots of boundaries changed and new missions were created during that year.



The first Stake in Scotland

Before presenting the Church statistics for Great Britain during the New Era, it is fitting to provide an account of how long it took before the first Stake of the Church was organized in Scotland. It was the 5th Stake created in Great Britain. Although this event occurred some months after I was released from my mission, the Glasgow Stake was created on August 26, 1962.

An account of this event and the response and role played by President David O. McKay in the creation of the Glasgow Stake was provided by Bernard P. Brockbank in his May 1996 interview with Gregory Prince. After discussing how unique and important Scotland was to President McKay, Brother Brockbank related the following story:

Brockbank: ... I called the President of the Church after having only been up there [in Scotland] eleven months and said, "We have a stake ready." He said, "Nobody else is going to create that stake. I am old, but not too old." He was just 90. But he said, "I am coming. I don't know when I am coming, but I am coming to create that stake. So, you just hold it in abeyance."

Finally, he called me on the phone and said, "I will be in the airport at Glasgow at such-and-such a time." So, I was there, and his counselor was there, and Duff Hanks was there. He was a mission president down in London, but he was a General Authority [one of the seven Presidents of the Seventy], and we had several other General Authorities there.

...I had gone over there with part of my family. I shouldn't say this, but I am going to, because it is part of it. I received a call from David O. McKay. I was building Mt. Olympus Hills up here, with hundreds and hundreds of lots. I received a call and he said, "We have decided to open another mission in the British Isles. You have been recommended to be the one to go over there and pioneer the opening of a new mission." Satan jumped on my back and said, "Tell them you need six months." So I did, like a foolish idiot. But he said, "You be there in eleven days." That meant all of my valuable assets up in Mt. Olympus and there that were all pending on immediate action, he just said, "Drop it, the Lord is calling you." I wasn't called to be a General Authority, I was called to open a new mission in the British Isles, in Scotland.

...Now, President McKay created the stake. He did it without flaw in his counsel. He knew it was a part of history that was undreamed of, that Scotland would accept the Church to that degree, that they would let us rent and use the largest building in Glasgow. We filled it to overflowing, plus another 600 seats in an adjoining building. It was an absolute miracle. Scotland couldn't believe it. We had our man from Salt Lake City, who was over there on a music mission, playing the organ. He was way up here. Here we had 200 Scottish mothers in their singing robes.

You couldn't believe it when President McKay came in. He looked around and he said, "I am glad I came, because I can't believe what I am seeing."

...When I picked him up from the airport, he said that he wanted to see the Robert Burns place for one last time. He was a Robert Burns fan. I said, "Well, I'll take you right there, and we'll even let you go in if you can walk there." He said, "No, I'll just remember my visits there before. Just take me to it." So I took him to it on the way back in. He was happy and strong, and he was able to do everything that he wanted to do in good ol' Scotland, his native land.

Then, I took him to the airport, and Sister Hanks had a wheelchair for him. He asked, "Who is that for?" She said, "It is for you." He said, "I don't need it," and he walked to his plane. He flew down to London and held a meeting or two there, and then went home. But when David O. McKay saw those 200 Scottish sisters sitting there in their white robes--no one sings any better than the Scottish, they are just plain musical--he couldn't believe it. Tears came to his eyes as he heard this choir sing. He repeated, "If I hadn't come here in person, I wouldn't believe what I am seeing." That was the Lord's living Prophet. His message was not long, but it was very prevalent [sic] about his mission to Scotland when he was a boy, his going there to serve in many capacities.

The building in which we held our meeting was burned down right after our conference. I think it was arson. They never used it again.

1958-1987, LDS Church statistics for Great Britain,

The following Appendices, I, II, III, IV, and IX, from Derek Cuthbert's 1987 book, *The Second Century: Latter-Day Saints in Great Britain, Vol I, 1937 to 1987*, graphically illustrate what was accomplished during the **New Era** that began in September 1958 at the dedication of the London Temple and continued for more than a decade.

I call that period in Great Britain the New Era's "Second Great Missionary Harvest," to distinguish it from the first one that began in 1837. The remarkable growth was similar to that of the first "Great Missionary Gathering," more than a century earlier in Great Britain. But now the new converts and members were encouraged to remain in Great Britain and build up the Church there. More importantly, the Church was now in a position to provide them with "the full church program."

These statistics show, numerically and graphically, just how dramatic and successful the **New Era** in Great Britain really was and provides persuasive evidence of what was accomplished during that exceptional era. It also shows the reader what it meant to have the full church program---something the British Isles lacked for the first 121 years until the **New Era**.

The **New Era's** "Great Missionary Harvest" helped set the stage for the continuing long-term growth and strength of the church in Great Britain.

APPENDIX I

Membership and Leadership Growth in the British Isles 1937-1985

Year	Total Members	Total Melchizedek Priesthood
1937	6,364	310
1950	6,457	336
1955	9,209	565
1960	19,332	1,073
1965	71,005	2,500
1970	85,217	3,579
1975	99,830	5,160
1980	114,558	7,162
1985	132,810	8,658

Source: Church Membership and Statistical Records

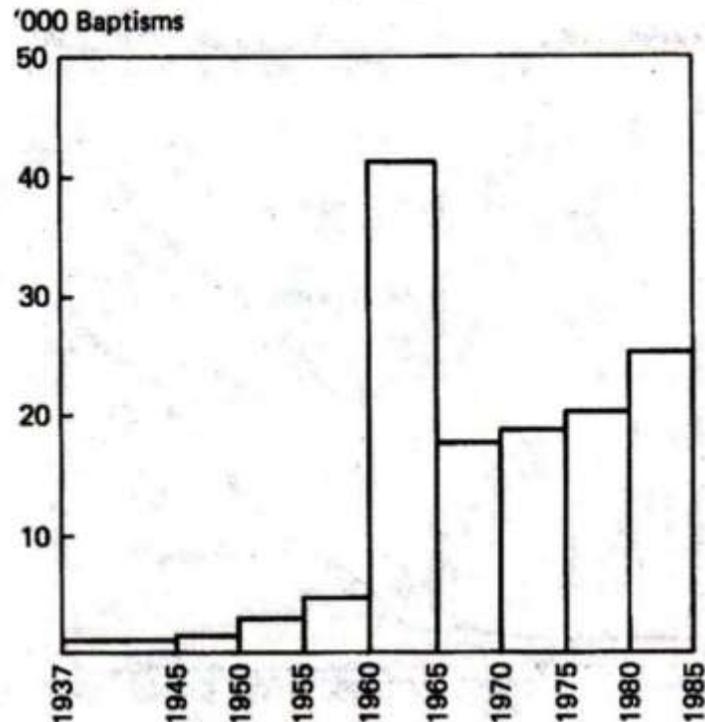


APPENDIX II

Convert Baptisms in the British Isles 1937-1985

Convert Baptisms	
1937-44	474
1945-49	816
1950-54	2,864
1955-59	3,875
1960-64	40,573
1965-69	17,065
1970-74	18,288
1975-79	19,942
1980-84	25,132
1985	3,706
1937-85	132,735

Source: Missionary Department

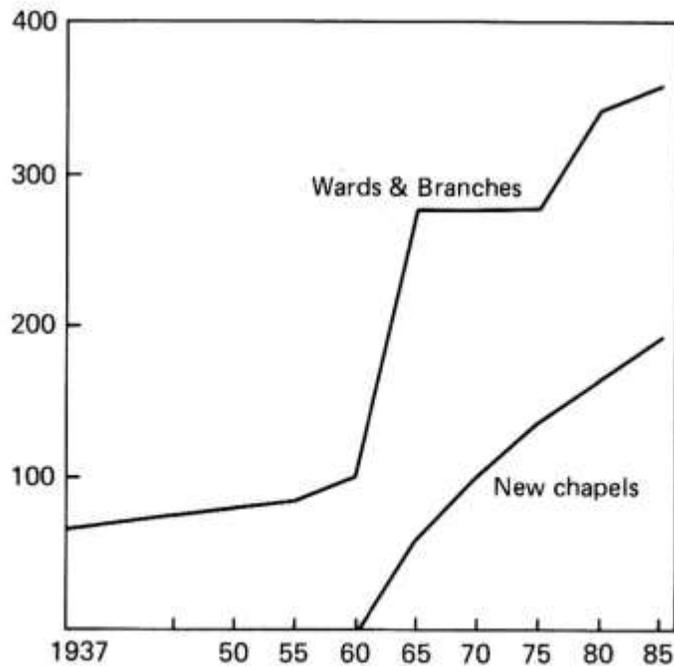


APPENDIX III

Growth in Number of Church Units and New Meetinghouses 1937–1985

Year	Mission Branches	Wards & Branches in Stakes	Total Units	New Chapels
1937	67	—	67	—
1950	77	—	77	—
1955	81	—	81	—
1960	89	11	100	—
1965	217	59	276	54
1970	188	88	276	98
1975	81	197	278	134
1980	20	323	343	162
1985	8	353	361	195

Source: Church Membership and Statistical Records



APPENDIX IV
*Organization of British
Stakes 1960–1986*

	Date		Date
1. Manchester	27 Mar 60	17. Merthyr Tydfil Wales	12 Jan 75
2. London (realigned and renamed London Wandsworth)	26 Feb 61	18. Newcastle-under-Lyme	17 Jan 75
3. Leicester	5 Mar 61	19. Dundee Scotland	23 Nov 75
4. Leeds (renamed Huddersfield)	19 Mar 61	20. Liverpool	14 Mar 76
5. Glasgow Scotland	26 Aug 62	21. Hartlepool*	13 Jun 76
6. Sunderland	17 Mar 63	22. Preston	17 Jun 76
7. Birmingham	14 Sep 69	23. Leeds	12 Nov 76
8. London North (realigned & renamed St. Albans)	20 Sep 70	24. Northampton	13 Feb 77
9. East Anglia (renamed Norwich)	20 Jun 71	25. Lichfield	20 Feb 77
10. Nottingham	4 Feb 73	26. Crawley	14 Aug 77
11. Southampton	11 Feb 73	27. Plymouth	27 Nov 77
12. Hull	26 Apr 73	28. Maidstone	28 May 78
13. Bristol	29 Apr 73	29. Staines	28 May 78
14. Thames Valley (renamed Reading)	24 May 73	30. London Hyde Park	28 May 78
15. Belfast Ireland (renamed Belfast Northern Ireland)	9 Jun 74	31. Aberdeen Scotland	12 Oct 80
16. Romford	24 Nov 74	32. Edinburgh Scotland	12 Oct 80
		33. Paisley Scotland	12 Oct 80
		34. Cheltenham	21 Mar 82
		35. Cardiff Wales	9 May 82
		36. Poole	23 May 82
		37. Chester	6 Jun 82
		38. Ashton	6 Jun 82
		39. Sheffield	14 Nov 82
		40. Ipswich	29 May 83
		(*renamed Billingham)	

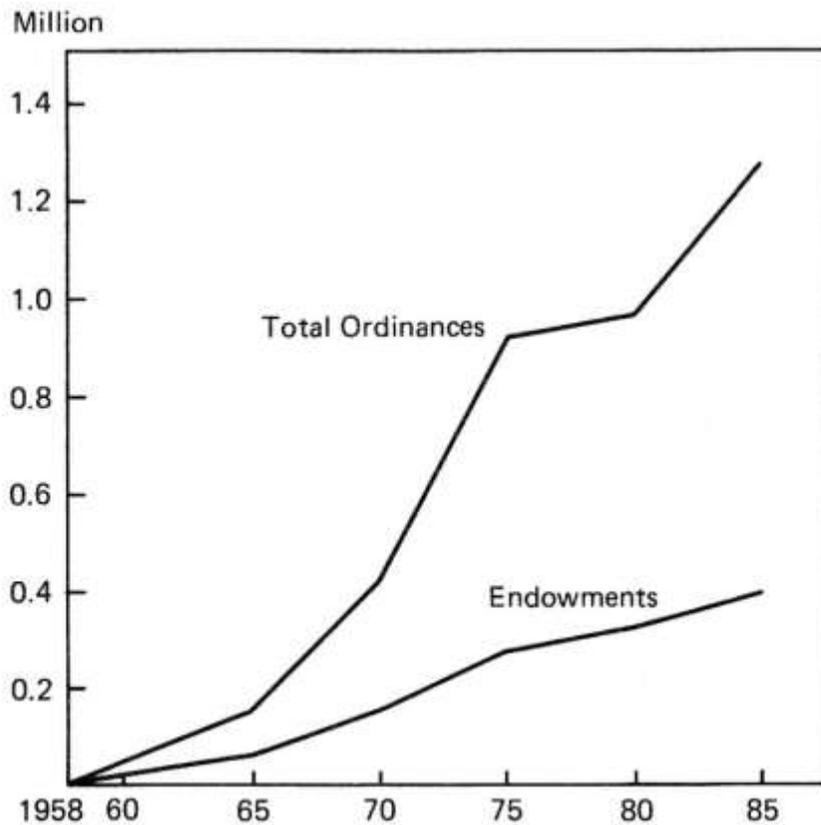
Source: Church Historical Department

Note: The official record states that on 28th May, 1978 the London and London North Stakes were discontinued, and the London England Wandsworth and St. Albans England Stakes were organized.

APPENDIX IX

Temple Ordinances in the London Temple 1958–85

1958–60	10,311	35,650
1961–65	58,869	163,153
1966–70	149,638	403,514
1971–75	266,785	884,660
1976–80	301,207	932,813
1981–85	378,878	1,213,843
Total	1,165,688	3,633,633



The New Era building missionary and church building programs

The LDS chapel at Claremont Terrace in Glasgow, Scotland, is one example of the types of LDS chapels before the start of the chapel building program in 1961.



President Bernard P. Brockbank, Church President David O. McKay, and Dr. Robert McKay? going into the old Glasgow Chapel

As has been noted above in Part I of this chapter by Derek Cuthbert, one of the critical needs that had to be addressed during the **New Era** was replacing of the many inadequate and unsuitable facilities being used as chapels and building new meetinghouses to accommodate the ever growing congregations generated by the dramatic increase in the numbers of new members being converted to the church by the expanding missionary force in Great Britain.

Fortunately, the Church was able to draw on the experience gained earlier in the 1950s in the Pacific region, starting in Tonga and the successful work of building church facilities in New

Zealand by calling local young male church members as church building missionaries. They helped build the needed chapels and schools. The Church provided housing and skilled contractors to teach and manage the young men on a number of projects.

During the **New Era** in Great Britain, the calling of local young male members as building missionaries was adopted to meet the urgent building needs generated. It achieved two objectives: (1) building a large number of new church facilities in a relatively short period of time and at less cost; and (2) provided skill training to many of the young teenage males being converted to the Church as part of the expanded missionary work during the **New Era**, especially the baseball baptism program.

The origin of this innovative approach for building chapels is described by Steven Harper in the *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saints History*, as follows:

In the 1950s the Church's worldwide growth demanded methodological changes to meet building needs. Short of capital and skilled labor, the Tonga Mission president called local young Mormon men to building missions. They consecrated their time and labor and received technical training. The Church provided housing and skilled contractors to teach and manage. By 1952 missionaries finished the Liahona School in Tonga and began work in New Zealand.

In 1955, under the direction of Wendell B. Mendenhall, new chairman of the Church Building Committee, building missionaries were institutionalized. Now skilled supervisors were also called. They left contracting firms to serve; they took their families and received a subsistence stipend. This combination of leaders and laborers constructed the Church College of Hawaii, the New Zealand Temple, and, as the program spread to Europe in 1960 and the Far East, Latin America, and North America in 1962, more than 2,000 buildings throughout the Church, before being phased out by the 1970s. (Steven Harper, "Building Missionaries," in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saints History*, Deseret Book, Co., 1992.

What that meant in Great Britain during the early stages of the New Era was quite dramatic:

President David O. McKay dedicated the London Temple in Lingfield, Surrey on September 7-9, 1958. The first European stake was created March 27, 1960, in Manchester, and others followed in rapid succession. Where only a handful of LDS chapels existed in Britain before 1960, with most congregations worshiping in rented rooms or halls, [by 1965, 54 new chapels had been built, and by 1970 more than 152 new chapels. See: Cuthbert, *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Vol. 1*: Appendix Three] had been completed, and this number rose to around 250 by the end of the 1980s. These manifestations of a permanent presence led to a dramatic reawakening in the British Isles, and an era of increased baptisms and Church growth. (*Ibid.*, *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saints History*, 1992)

The pictures below are reprinted from Cuthbert's book, pp. 58, 76 and 79, about the LDS building missionary program that was used to build chapels and other buildings during the New Era in the early 1960s

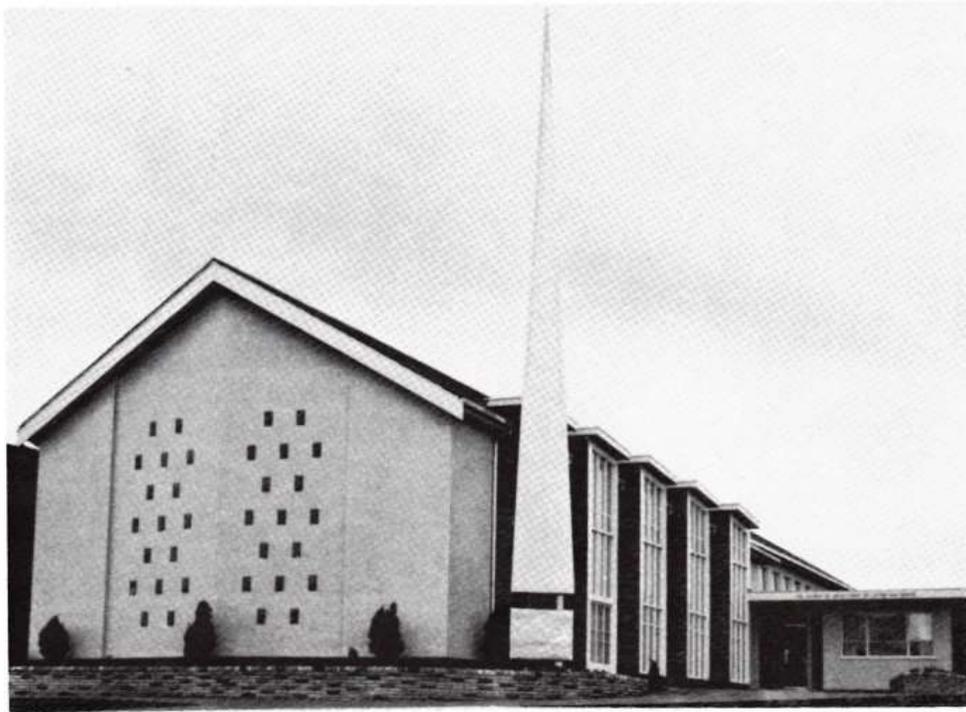
Below: Derby Ward chapel, fifth to be completed, and one of the first to receive the General Conference broadcast





Above: Royce Goodier (foreground), first building missionary in Europe, and Roger Horton, work on the Rochdale chapel.

Below: Building missionaries and members donated 34,000 hours building Merthyr Tydfil chapel



Preston LDS Temple

Perhaps the construction of the Preston Temple, the second LDS temple in England, is the most important example of the growth of the Church in Great Britain after the London Temple ushered in the **New Era** in September 1958. While the Preston Temple is actually located in Chorley, near Preston, it is known as the Preston Temple because Preston, England, is the oldest continually existing Latter-day Saint congregation anywhere in the world after the first LDS missionaries to Great Britain began their missionary work there in 1837. The Preston Temple was constructed in 1998 during the presidency of Gordon B. Hinckley, who served as a missionary there in the 1930s.



Preston, England Temple (1998)

Chapter 4

A Final Look at the New Era and its Great Missionary Harvest

Part I: the New Era baseball baptism controversy

Three separate accounts were written about the **New Era** baseball baptism program and some of the **New Era** leaders and missionaries in Great Britain. D. Michael Quinn and Richard Mavin wrote articles, and Gregory Prince and Wm. Robert Wright wrote an account in their book *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*. The baseball baptism program and related events generated considerable interest, adverse publicity, criticism, and even hostility from some quarters inside and outside the church.

Scholar D. Michael Quinn published a 15-page article entitled “I-Thou vs. I-It Conversions: The Mormon ‘Baseball Baptism’ Era” in *Sunstone Magazine*, December 1993. He first wrote his article in 1973, some twenty years earlier, while working in the Church History Library. Quinn’s article is quite critical of British Mission President T. Bowring Woodbury and other high-level church leaders who were involved in the 1958-1963 **New Era** missionary work. I have included several lengthy quotations from Quinn’s article, to give the reader the substance, flavor, and the rhetoric he used in his arguments.

After reading Quinn’s *Sunstone* article, Richard Mavin, a former British missionary who served under President T. Bowring Woodbury from January 1960 to January 1962, wrote a five-page response entitled, “The Woodbury Years: An Insider’s Look at Baseball Baptisms in Britain,” published in *Sunstone Magazine*, March 1996. Mavin’s article gives a positive perspective on President Woodbury’s leadership and, in my judgment, provides a good account of how the baseball baptism program began and was widely used during the New Era in Great Britain, and perhaps elsewhere.

Gregory Prince, and Wm. Robert Wright wrote a third account of the New Era missionary program in Chapter 10 of their 2005 biography of President McKay, some 12 years after Quinn’s article was published and nine years after Mavin’s article was published. Prince and Wright may have benefitted from reading both Quinn’s and Mavin’s articles and they also had direct access to President McKay’s papers, which were kept and preserved by his long-time secretary, Clare Middlemiss, now housed in Special Collections in the Marriott Library at the University of Utah. Thus, Prince and Wright provide a more complete account of the missionary program during the McKay era and the people who participated in it and the events that transpired during the New Era.

I encourage readers of this chapter to judge for themselves whether the criticisms leveled against President Henry D. Moyle (first counselor to President David O. McKay from June 1959

to September 1963), who spearheaded much of the church's building and missionary programs in the early 1960s, and President T. Bowring Woodbury (British Mission president from September 1958 to January 1962) are justified. Or did President Moyle and President Woodbury ignite the tremendous growth of the church in Great Britain during the New Era and its great missionary harvest, and perhaps on the worldwide church?. As an economist, I find the economic arguments underlying President Moyle's actions are very interesting, given the continual growth of the church in Great Britain more than fifty plus years after the New Era baseball baptisms occurred.

D. Michael Quinn's article about the New Era

Quinn begins his 15-page article with the following paragraphs:

THIS essay tells the story of a specific period in the modern history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It began as a program to encourage I-Thou conversions to Mormonism, but rapidly degenerated into an I-It race for baptism numbers. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, many LDS leaders promoted this as a "New Era" of missionary work and referred to it as the "Youth Baptism Program." In the 1970s, LDS church president Spencer W. Kimball derided it as "the kiddie baptism program."² In 1973 I gave a detailed summary of this history as part of a thirty-five page interview with the historical department of the LDS church. I put it under a twenty-year restriction, which has now passed. (Quinn, p. 31)

President Moyle's financial program for the LDS church was fundamentally linked with his missionary program. First, he expected a major increase of tithing revenues from a significant rise in convert baptisms. Second, he was convinced that massive increases in Church membership meant there soon would be a thousand Mormons in towns and cities where now there were only a few dozen. Therefore, Counselor Moyle ordered the LDS church building program to construct meetinghouses for that projected growth rather than for the current needs of thousands of small branches. (Quinn, p. 32)

This massive building program plunged the LDS church into huge spending deficits. At the time, Apostle Harold B. Lee waged a losing battle in what he called "my stubborn resistance to the principle of 'deficit spending,' supposedly justified in the hope of increasing the tithing of the Church to cover the deficit."⁴ Such an increase in the building program required a virtual explosion in the number of tithe-payers to avoid bankrupting the Church. In effect, this left the Church's financial survival directly in hands of youthful full-time missionaries.

The nickname of "New Era" for this missionary program was linked to Church finances, to David O. McKay, and to Great Britain. The First Presidency's financial secretary had proclaimed in the mid-1950s that projected increases of tithing revenues constituted "a new era in the financial history of the Church."⁵ At the dedication of the London Temple in September 1958, President McKay used the phrase "New Era," and the British Mission president rephrased his words as: "This is a New Era in the British Mission."⁶

Part of that "New Era" was a new approach to teaching prospective converts. Since 1948, many missions had systematic (but unmemorized) presentations that "incorporated well-known salesmanship techniques." Fourteen or fifteen lessons" were required before a prospective convert was allowed to be baptized.⁷ In February-March 1959, the British Mission adopted a six-"discussion" plan which missionaries were required to memorize and repeat verbatim to potential converts. After visiting the British Mission five months later, Apostle Marion G. Romney gave copies of its plan to European mission presidents and instructed them to translate the plan verbatim into their various languages. However, Elder Romney opposed high-pressure proselytizing and warned missionary leaders against being "slave-drivers."⁸

With President Moyle's encouragement, the six memorized proselytizing lessons became the Church-wide program in 1961. This "New Era" plan of memorized dialogue had the following "challenge" midway through the first discussion: "Now, the beautiful thing that we're going to tell you about today is that the Lord has restored His true Church and the priesthood back to the earth again. WHEN YOU COME TO KNOW IN YOUR OWN HEART THAT THIS IS TRUE, WILL YOU BE BAPTIZED BY SOMEONE WHO HAS THE PRIESTHOOD?" No matter what the person's answer, the missionary was to respond: "We hold baptismal services every week in the church. We'll be having a baptism on the (date). We want you to keep that date in mind as you continue to learn about the Church." At the end of this first meeting, the dialogue gave a reminder of the upcoming baptismal service. If the person didn't accept immediate baptism, the lesson plan's third and fourth discussions contained even more emphatic baptismal challenges.⁹

Mormon proselytizing became goal-driven and pressurized upon the Church-wide adoption of this teaching method in 1961. Subtle and not-so-subtle pressures on the "investigators" to accept LDS baptism were in the dialogue's very structure. Missionaries were required to memorize and deliver these six lessons of dialogue word-for-word, and were also instructed how to "coach" the non-Mormon listeners to give the "right" answers. The lesson plan reminded missionaries that "conversion comes only through the Holy Ghost." However, the structure of the "Uniform System" reduced LDS proselytizing to an extended sales pitch and investigators into potential numbers for demonstrating the success of missionaries as gospel salespeople.

Goals, quotas, comparative charts, incentives, material rewards, and deadlines were among the "well-known salesmanship techniques" that Henry D. Moyle made part of the LDS church's world-wide missionary work. Equally important was Moyle's emphasis on baptizing young males whom he expected to become tithe-paying breadwinners and heads of LDS families.

In tandem with the New Era of missionary work, Moyle's protégé Wendell Mendenhall was chair of the LDS Church Building Committee, and Mendenhall accelerated church construction world-wide from 1959 onward. For example, in 1960 the two men addressed a meeting of mission presidents, missionaries, and local leaders in England. They praised the missionaries for using baseball instruction to baptize young boys and for accepting goals to double the current

year's number of baptisms. They also explained that this rate of growth required the LDS church to complete a new meetinghouse every day in Great Britain alone.¹⁰ (Quinn, pp. 32-33)

To assist this accelerated building effort in 1960, the Church began having young men serve two-year building missions in Britain and continental Europe.¹¹ This had double benefits in providing cheap labor for constructing chapels and in keeping the teenage boys active in the Church. Nearly all of them converted without their parents.¹² (Quinn, p. 33)

THE T. BOWRING WOODBURY YEARS

Growth in the British mission

THE principal architect of the Baseball Baptism Program in Britain was Moyle's protégé, T. Bowring ("Beau") Woodbury. President Woodbury led the British Mission from October 1958 to January 1962. Using baseball to recruit British boys was originally a "bottom-up" missionary innovation, which Woodbury quickly adopted and promoted mission-wide. In turn, Moyle encouraged the use of baseball or other sports as a Church-wide missionary tool.³⁶ Other mission presidents who promoted this program to a lesser extent in Britain were Bernard P. Brockbank in the North British Mission and Scottish Mission from 1960 to 1962 and James A. Cullimore in the Central British Mission from 1961 to 1963.³⁷ (Quinn, p. 35)

N. Eldon Tanner, then an Assistant to the Quorum of Twelve, also presided over the French East Mission and all the British missions from his headquarters near the London Temple from 1961 to 1962. The Baseball Baptism Program was at its height when Tanner told supervising elders to follow the instructions of their mission presidents "without question."³⁸ He told the October 1961 general conference that in England, "We are baptizing enough new members every two months to create a stake of more than 2,500 people." The official conference report toned down Tanner's estimate from six new stakes annually to "we are baptizing in the British Isles alone enough people for four or five stakes each year."³⁹

Alvin R. Dyer, also an assistant to the Twelve, vigorously advocated the youth baptism program while he was presiding over missions on the European continent. For example, Dyer told the French missionaries in 1961 that "you can teach or make the statements of everything that a person needs to know to be baptized in this Church in less than three minutes."⁴⁰ Woodbury had served as Dyer's counselor in the Central States Mission before Woodbury's appointment as British Mission president. Cuthbert adds that "President Cullimore [of the Central British Mission] had also been well trained by President Dyer in the Central States Mission."⁴¹

I gained my knowledge of what happened during Britain's Baseball Baptism Program through interviews with some of President Woodbury's

missionaries, with English bishops and branch presidents, and with mission presidents who served in the post-baseball era.⁴²

As a counter-balance to how Woodbury contributed to the excesses of the Baseball Baptism Program, I must emphasize that all local British leaders I met felt near-adoration for him.⁴³ He was devoted to the youth baptism program. During more than three years over the British Mission, Woodbury took personal responsibility for many teenage boys who were baptized in the baseball program. He spent tens of thousands of dollars of his personal wealth to support dozens of these boys as building missionaries in their early teens and as full-time missionaries in their late-teens (Brits could be full-time missionaries at age seventeen). I met one of those young men while he was attending Oxford University. He had been among the "scruffy" Cockney boys that missionaries had recruited as baseball baptisms from the row houses of South London. President Woodbury also used his personal funds to subsidize struggling branches and to implement missionary programs that were beyond the budget of Church funds. Despite such positive contributions, Woodbury also created a world of frenzy and stress for his British missionaries. (Quinn, pp. 35-36)

Behind Moyle's public denial that missionaries were overworked was their crushing schedule in the British Mission. Woodbury told his missionaries that they needed only five hours of sleep a night. At 7 A.M. they were to be out on the streets looking for people to baptize. They were to schedule their last teaching appointment or baptism ceremony at midnight. Moyle reaffirmed that policy in at least one talk he gave to all the British missionaries at the Hyde Park Chapel.

The *New Era*, Woodbury's monthly mission publication, emphasized quotas, baptism statistics, and that it was the Spirit, not the missionary's words, which converted. The implication was that the missionary was only an instrument of baptism, not a teacher of the gospel. Missionaries who reached the mission's baptism goals were honored as a "Golden Missionary of the Month." Achieving increased goals merited membership in the "Convert-a-Month Club," the "Four-or-More Club," the "Extra Mile Club," the "Family-a-Month Club," and the "100 Percenter Club."⁴⁴

In addition, Woodbury took the best baptizers to dinner. For having the highest number of baptisms in a week, he invited two missionaries to have dinner at the mission home where they sat at the head of the table. For consistently exceeding baptism quotas, President Woodbury hosted the top baptizers at the best restaurants in London.

But the baptism quotas kept escalating. In 1958, Woodbury set a goal of 1,250 baptisms in the mission for the next year. In response, his second counselor (a missionary) climbed to the top of a hill in the dead of winter: "He knelt and pleaded with the great God who rules the worlds to bless the British Mission with 1,250 baptisms and more," which the *Millennial Star* noted was fulfilled as "a miraculous answer to prayer."⁴⁵

In 1961, Woodbury's New Era set next year's baptism goal at 14,000. To put that increase in perspective, it's necessary to recognize that three other missions had been created out of the original British Mission by that time. Therefore, Woodbury increased baptism goals more than ten times beyond their 1958 level, even though his mission now had only about a fourth of the territory and population it had in 1958 (and fewer missionaries). Without explaining its full significance, Cuthbert wrote this curious observation twenty-five years later: "There never had been and never would be another year like 1962, when over 12,000 people were baptized in Britain."⁴⁶

In May 1960 the New Era described how all British missionaries received a special badge which they were supposed to wear to weekly missionary meetings, but only if they had baptized one or more persons the previous month. By the personal experience of many of this essay's readers in various parts of the world, that would be a very low goal. Nevertheless, by pre-Woodbury experience in Britain, one baptism per missionary per month was a major achievement.⁴⁷ However, British missionary meetings now resembled pep rallies or a football coach's browbeating at half-time. All the attention was on those missionaries who did not wear the badges.

In July and August 1960, Brockbank's North British Mission combined with Woodbury's British Mission to reach a combined goal of a thousand convert baptisms in honor of David O. McKay's birthday. Their 1,110 baptisms for those two months were almost equal to the previous year's total.⁴⁸

In November 1960, Woodbury announced there would be a mission tour to Mormon historic sites in England and then to the London Temple so that missionaries could re-experience the sacred endowment ceremony. The only missionaries who could go on this grand trip were those who baptized four persons during the next month. The British Mission's New Era used slogans to promote this award: "Find your 4 souls on the double, Then let's see the River Ribble. You'll find your 4 and then you'll hasten to the Temple. Baptize 4 and get some thrills by going to the Malvern Hills. First baptize four (this is the rule) and then let's meet in Liverpool," and finally: "Lean on the Lord's arm to take you to Benbow's Farm." Afterwards, the entire issue of the mission magazine featured photographs of the missionaries who went on this excursion and descriptions of what they did.

Elder Alvin R. Dyer officially encouraged mission presidents in the European Mission to use an invitation to the temple as a way to prod missionaries to achieve baptism quotas. In his 1962 *The Challenge*, published by the Church's Deseret Book Company, Dyer referred to "The mission president [in Frankfurt, Germany, who] had promised that if they got four baptisms in December, they could go to the temple as the guest of the mission president over the Christmas holidays." Dyer then told of two missionaries who had no one to baptize on 22 December, but who "baptized four people in three days and went to the temple with their mission president."⁴⁹ (Quinn, pp. 36-37)

Woodbury launched another contest for the British Missionaries in 1961. It had two planks. First, to honor your mother, baptize four

converts. Second, by so honoring your mother, you will be allowed to attend the dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel in London and be able to see the Church president. (Quinn, p. 37)

Moyle's counsel that missionaries should ignore criticism "no matter from what source" referred to the apostles who were already criticizing the Baseball Baptism Program and its world-wide spin-offs. For example, in March 1960, Apostle Harold B. Lee had warned the missionaries in France that "conversions are not merely the result of a system, not merely the result of a machine operation. . . . We are not concerned primarily with how many baptisms you get."¹⁷ In September, Moyle confided that Apostles Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee were in "real opposition" to his "accelerated missionary program."¹⁸ The European mission president, Alvin R. Dyer, also told the missionaries in France about criticism of the accelerated baptisms he heard when he was at October 1960 general conference.¹⁹ (Quinn, p. 33)

On 15 December 1960, Counselor Moyle formally announced to the apostles that baseball was now a missionary tool to baptize teenage boys. Because the British Mission had traditionally been the most prestigious mission, Moyle emphasized the success of the baseball program there. He reported to the Quorum of Twelve that this was happening "not only in England but all over the Continent."²⁰

Convert numbers soared. General authority Derek A. Cuthbert wrote: "Instead of baptising ones and twos, almost overnight from mid-1960, the missionaries were bringing in tens and hundreds." He became an English general authority who continued to defend the Baseball Baptism Program decades after it was discontinued.²¹ In 1959, Great Britain and continental Europe baptized a total of 9 percent of all baptisms in the LDS church. A year later, Britain and Europe accounted for 36 percent of the entire Church's baptisms.²²

Soon missionaries were competing with each other to achieve baptism "goals," and each mission president throughout the world was competing to have the highest numbers of baptisms. However, many general authorities had misgivings, especially about Britain, where several apostles had served missions. By May 1961, "nearly all" of the apostles were "gravely concerned about the pressures being put on missionaries to baptize to fill a quota of baptisms." BYU president Ernest L. Wilkinson added, "This of course was a criticism of President Moyle and many of the mission presidents working under his direction."²³ (Quinn, pp. 33-34)

Rather than consider the merits of such criticism from the Quorum of Twelve, Moyle publicly counter-attacked. In August 1961, he had the LDS Church News publish the full text of his defense of the "New Era" missionary program. He lashed out against persons who "undertake to sow doubt or uncertainty about any phase of missionary work," which equaled "criticism of our Head, Jesus Christ, the son of God." He denied that missionaries were

overworked. He even instructed parents and Church leaders to ignore letters from youthful missionaries who complained about any aspect of the new proselytizing program.

So that no one would misunderstand, Counselor Moyle referred to "these teen-age baptisms, about which there seems to have been so much talk." He said it was no one's business to complain if a boy chose to be baptized the "first day or the first week or the first month or the first year of contact with him concerning the Church."²⁴ A few months later, his annual report of missionary baptisms had the same tone of defensive defiance: "President Henry D. Moyle of the First Presidency, who, under the assignment of President David O. McKay, directs the great world-wide missionary effort of the Church, feels 1962 will record another 100 percent increase as did 1961."²⁴ (Quinn, p. 34)

Richard Mavin's response to Quinn's Article

After reading D. Michael Quinn's 15-page December 1993 *Sunstone Magazine* article about the "New Era" in Great Britain that criticized the type of missionary work carried out under the leadership of British Mission President T. Bowring Woodbury (after President McKay dedicated the London Temple on September 7, 1958), Richard Mavin, a missionary who served under President Woodbury, felt compelled to "set the record straight" by providing his own five-page account and explanation of what transpired during the "New Era" in Great Britain under President Woodbury. Mavin wrote:

after having such a rich and varied educational experience as I did in those two short years [January 1960-January 1962]. My mission placed me squarely in the middle of one of the most controversial eras in the evolution of Mormon missionary history. [D. Michael] Quinn does an admirable job of reporting the events and machinations of that era; here is my personal look at this "history." "There is more of the story to be told, and several things must be set straight. (Richard Mavin, *The Woodbury Years*.; *Sunstone Magazine*, March 1996, p. 56)

Mavin continued: "Because of the drama and intensity of my experience, I have spent the past thirty-four years discussing, debating, and dissecting what occurred in that short but amazing chapter of my life."

He wrote how his own mission began:

I received a letter from T. Bowring Woodbury, British Mission President, welcoming me to the mission. I arrived in London in January 1960. Woodbury had already been there for a year. I entered a world dominated by one of the most charismatic and powerful personalities I had yet encountered in my life. I would never again be the same. (Mavin., p. 56)

Mavin felt that Quinn's article and the material he used for his references failed to give enough credit:

...to how strongly Woodbury (a man of enormous ego and presence) influenced all the major players around him. Things attributed to Elders Henry D. Moyle, Alvin R. Dyer, N. Eldon Tanner, and others were, in my opinion, at least partially a reflection of Woodbury's strong character and influence. I watched him influence people. Missionaries, especially those who served under him for the first two years, worshipped Woodbury. British Saints were mesmerized by his eloquence and demeanor. There was an air of royalty about the Woodbury family and their lifestyle, mostly engendered by "By," as he was known to family and friends. When Elder Derek A. Cuthbert, in *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, 1937-1987*, refers to the greatness of the Woodbury years, he reflects the kind of impact Woodbury had on the Saints. To the majority of these Saints those were the golden years of the British Mission. Woodbury's powerful influence on people should never be underestimated and can be scarcely understated. (Mavin, pp. 56-57)

I was nearly 24 years old, a college graduate, and had served as an officer in the U.S. Army for two years before serving my mission in Great Britain. Because I served the first seven months of my mission in the Leeds District, some 200 miles north of London, my only contact with Pres. Woodbury was through his regular missives, information from our supervising elder and travelling elders and meeting him upon my arrival, and at the conference called to organize the Manchester Stake. Consequently, I was not enamored with him, but I appreciated his leadership qualities and dynamic personality.

After I was called to be the mission secretary for the newly created North British Mission on March 26, 1960, I lived in the British Mission home in London for five weeks (April-May 1960) learning how to be a mission secretary. While there I saw Pres. Woodbury as a larger-than-life man with a very strong personality who was interesting to see in action at close range. I also saw firsthand how the Woodbury family functioned in the London environment.

From my perspective, after reading Mavin's description of Pres. Woodbury, his second most important contribution is his account of how the baseball baptism program began and his perspective about the New Era in Great Britain and the Church. I quote from Mavin's account at some length so the reader can learn how it unfolded.

How the baseball baptism program began

In the first Summer of my mission, I witnessed the birth of the baseball program. There was no formal unveiling, fanfare, or hype. It was not credited by its creator as having been inspired: neither did it come from the active minds of Woodbury, President Moyle, or any other LDS leader. Its roots were in pragmatism and desperation. (Mavin, p. 57)

Elder Gaylan Grover, [a fulltime missionary], was the branch president in Swansea, Wales. One of his principal responsibilities was creating activities for the half-dozen young people who attended the weekly youth program that Mormons call MIA. It was summer and since the MIA meetings were held in a rented school near a park it seemed natural to take the kids outside into the late afternoon sun for any activity Grover could contrive. By his own admission,

Grover knew nothing about English sports, and so, as he reported to us in our Welsh District supervising elders' meeting he wrote home for a softball and bat.

At the next MIA meeting after the equipment had arrived there was an astounding response. Grover enthusiastically related the phenomenon: "Within ten minutes, we had thirty kids begging to learn the new game. They gathered around us from all over the park, joining in with our kids to play this new American sport." As the evening wore on, it struck the elders that they should get the names and addresses of these non-Mormon kids before they went home.

As Grover and his missionary companion subsequently visited the families, not only were they not rejected, they were welcomed into the homes as "young American friends from the park." Old barriers fell, psychological distance disappeared, and relationships were established. As if by magic, the elders were able to exploit these opportunities to teach. The baseball program had begun.

It became obvious to all of us in the Welch District that Grover had happened onto a marvelous way of proselyting. We tried it and it worked for all of us. Tales of our success soon spread to London, Great Britain, America, and the world. I don't think it ever occurred to any of us in those early days that this was an "easy way" to meet the mission's ambitious new convert baptism goals. After all, we had seen the impressive results of the referral program which had been introduced early in 1960. Compared to the drudgery and rejection of tracting door to door, asking members for lists of their nonmember friends and neighbors to be used as referrals, it was a welcome alternative. The successful results of the referral program set the stage for the new baseball proselyting program. It was simply a "super referral program." Instead of being dependent on members to provide names, missionaries could simply don sweatshirts, take their ball and bat to any park, and within ten minutes, have a crowd of English kids fighting to give their parents' names and addresses for the privilege of receiving a visit from the "young Yanks." (Mavin, p. 57)

How the baseball baptism program went wrong

Richard Mavin explains what caused the baseball baptism program to fall into disrepute and tarnish the experiences and reputations of missionaries and mission leaders. His own words provide a more accurate picture of what happened, and why it happened. I encourage readers to take the time to read Mavin's complete *Sunstone* article.

No one can deny the legitimate value of the program as a proselyting tool. Very few Mormon elders and sisters had difficulty justifying this clever means of finding converts, since when one has "the truth," the end justifies the means. As the baseball program grew it became a source of teaching opportunities, and many parents were taught alongside the children. It was clear, however, that the children were ready to accept baptism much faster than their parents were. The dilemma was, "Do we go ahead with the kids and work with the parents after their children's baptism, or do we wait for the family to enter the waters of baptism together?" The answer was simple for most young missionaries, especially in the highly competitive environment created by a constant barrage of mission incentive programs. (Mavin, pp. 57-58)

Children were easy to convert, adults were not. The temptation was: Why labor with the Jones adults when the Evans kids were also ready for conversion? The elements all came together to create the opportunity for abuse. Based on personal experience, my unequivocal conclusion is that abuse was not overtly planned, encouraged, nor condoned. It just happened. But once it happened, it was conveniently ignored, generally denied, and subsequently apologized for. Without reviewing the whole litany of baseball baptism problems, here are the main areas of concern. (In addition to the fact that most children joined without their parents): Missionaries (a) baptized kids without teaching them properly; (b) misrepresented the organization that the kids were joining, (c) misrepresented or omitted the requirement and expectations for membership in LDS church, (d) failed to get permission from parents for kids to join, and (e) bribed or bet with kids for the purpose of coercing them to join.

The result was a huge number of inactive youth within months of their conversion. Abuses happened for all the reasons that cause people to do the wrong thing for the right reasons. Unfortunately, in the beginning when the abuses started and then increased, Woodbury was insulated from the truth by his missionary leaders. No one dared tell the emperor that his new clothes were an illusion and that he was indeed naked in the streets. The elements that gathered to create the eventual storm can easily be identified. It is a story as old as religion and as predictable as time. Youth and inexperience resulted in missionaries' choosing the line of least resistance, zealotry resulted in the rationalization that the end justified the means; and aspirations affected almost everyone from mission leadership to ordinary missionaries. (Mavin, p. 58)

The "war stories" chronicled by Quinn and others, based on interviews with British missionaries, although sometimes exaggerated, are true in most instances. There is never a lack of controversial experiences in an environment that nurtures controversy. It is obvious that there were damaging things done in the name of Mormonism, but most of the time, to do the right thing. Most children baptized under the baseball program were taught the fundamentals of Mormonism, at least on a rudimentary level, so that most of them knew they were becoming part of a church and not a club. Most parents knew their children were becoming baptized and agreed to it. (Mavin, p, 58)

Mavin discusses the involvement of church leaders who knew about the excesses and those who were called (especially Marion D. Hanks) "to clean up the mess" when Woodbury's term as British Mission president ended. According to Mavin, the missionaries who had served under Woodbury and then Hanks,

could not have had more contrasting responses to the Woodbury dynasty. President Hanks undertook a direction that literally stopped investigator conversion in favor of missionary conversion. The missionaries were instructed to begin a personal retrenchment and rededication program centered on studying the scriptures for days at a time. If what Woodbury had done was "black," then

Hanks had to do it “white.” “There seemed to be no center ground, no search for the possible positive elements in the Woodbury legacy. (Mavin, p. 59)

Mavin defends the Woodbury era and seems to think that the other mission presidents who served in Britain after March 1960 did not have their reputations tarnished like Woodbury did. He felt that Woodbury should have been promoted to a higher church position because of his tireless work in building up the church in Great Britain during the New Era, and that his untimely death, at a “fairly young age was due, in part, to his disappointment associated with the unfulfilled expectations.” (Mavin, p. 59) Bernard P. Brockbank “went on to become an LDS general authority, Woodbury languished in virtual non-recognition.” (Mavin, p. 59)

In the mid-1960’s, I ran into the nicely dressed “By” Woodbury in the Zion’s Bank building (across the street from the Hotel Utah) when he worked there. He was very warm and cordial to me, and we had a good visit. After we parted, I too wondered why he had not received a higher church calling or position after being released from his service as British Mission president. O. William Asplund, a former New Era British missionary who serves as a volunteer at the Church History Library, told me that he had talked with President Woodbury’s daughter, Wendy, several months previously when she came into the Church History Library. She expressed no bad feelings nor recriminations about her father not receiving a higher church calling after he was released as British Mission president, but indicated that her father’s health had deteriorated shortly after he returned from Great Britain, and his health may have prevented further Church service. (Conversation with O. William Asplund on October 6, 2014.)

Richard Mavin closes his article by recounting the following event:

The end of Woodbury’s third year [40 months?] was also the end of my second. The last great mission goal set for the end of 1961 was not met. This was the first numeric baptismal goal Woodbury had not achieved. All the missionaries attended a “celebration dinner” in London in January of 1962. It was a non-event. The gloom and disappointment of missing the all-important goal overshadowed the entire evening. The glory years were over. Woodbury and I both came home on the Queen Mary to begin non-missionary life again. (Mavin, p. 60)

During a missionary meeting with President Henry D. Moyle that was held to celebrate Thanksgiving on November 27, 1959 in Manchester, President Woodbury told the assembled missionaries, of whom I was one, to work 60 hours per week. He said “we must give up ‘Old Era’ missionary ways, and become ‘New Era’ missionaries.” (GBH, November 27, 1959) We were told to work at least 60 hours each week to find, teach and baptize as many people as possible to meet the baptism goals that he had set.

I never personally participated in the baseball baptism program during my two-year mission in Great Britain. From September 8, 1959 to March 27, 1960, I served under British Mission President T. Bowring Woodbury in the Leeds District before the baseball baptism program was used there. During that time, none of us in the Leeds District taught or baptized any children other than those of the parents we were teaching. When the British Mission was divided and the North British Mission was created In March 1960, I was called to be the first

mission secretary in the newly created North British Mission under President Bernard P. Brockbank. When the North British Mission was divided and the new Scottish-Irish Mission was created in February 1961, I was called to serve as the first mission secretary in the newly created Scottish-Irish Mission under President Brockbank. I served in that capacity until I was released from my mission on September 5, 1961.



President Bernard Brockbank at bat

Although President Brockbank supported and used the baseball baptism program, I had no direct personal involvement with it while serving as mission secretary -- unlike the missionaries serving in the field. My journal and letters home seldom mention the baseball baptism program. I have gained what knowledge I have of the New Era baseball baptism program from reading the articles by D. Michael Quinn and Richard Mavin and the biography of Pres. David O. McKay by Gregory Prince & Wm. Robert Wright.

Since then, I have gained additional information about the New Era baseball program by reading the 39-page interview with Kenneth P. Borg who served as baseball baptism program coordinator while serving as mission auxiliary coordinator in 1961 in the Scottish-Irish Mission. My friend, O. William Asplund, a former New Era missionary who serves as a volunteer in the Church History Library, gave me a digital copy of Elder Borg's interview.

Excerpts from the interview with Kenneth P. Borg, Jr, conducted by Christen L. Schmutz, August 22, 1980, under the auspices of The James Moyle Oral History Program, Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-Day Saints Historical Department provide first-hand information about how the baseball baptism program was carried out under Pres. Brockbank in Scotland.

S: Why don't you see if you can describe to me in as good a detail as you can remember exactly how the program worked in its heyday—that is, the baseball program.

B: The idea was to take a baseball and a bat and go out to the park. There are always kids playing in the park. Gee, I haven't thought about this for a long time. You'd go out to the park and start hitting the ball and pretty soon there were two or three kids and pretty soon there were six or eight that wanted to learn how to play American baseball. They were used to soccer and rugby football, but baseball was a strange new thing. So you pretty quickly had a group of kids that you were playing ball with.

We had what we called a youth club. The baseball was just one facet of the youth club. The youth club was the MIA by another name, but for proselyting purposes it was the youth club, the Mutual Improvement Association, and there's nothing wrong with that. So we started with the baseball bats to get the new members coming in, and one night a week we would have our youth club meeting.

The town that I had most familiarity with was Keighley, Yorkshire. This was really when it really started, in the summer or fall of 1960. One night a week we'd have the kids come over to the youth club meeting at the Temperance Hall and we would have games or whatever--I recall we had a Halloween party—but mainly American things, because it created a little interest for the kid s.

We also included lessons about spiritual things, but we really didn't get into the meat and potatoes of the lesson plan.

It seems to me that in order for the children to belong to the club, we had to have them sign cards. I have one of those cards at home and I wish I had brought it. I think we went out to the home of the child and met the parents, explained that this was a youth club and that we had a baseball team, and if they wanted to participate we had to have the signature of the parents. As I remember, that's how it worked.

S: Now did that card also give you permission to baptize the children?

B: It may have. It was just a little 3x5 mimeographed card, and I should have looked through my scrapbook last night, because I have one of those cards.

S: But you didn't emphasize baptism, I take it.

B: It was not emphasized. The children had not been taught, and there was a lot of emphasis from the mission president to teach the family and not the child'. This was the whole point, to get into the home and be able to teach the families. But a lot of these kids were interested in the "youth club" and their parents were not interested in the gospel at all. We would always try to contact the parents and see if there couldn't be some progress made there, and sometimes we could, but most often we couldn't. Yet there was still the interest there on the part of the youngster. They were still interested in belonging to the youth club and coming and hearing the lessons.

As we progressed with a particular group of kids, if we had kind of written off the parents as uninterested, we would proceed in teaching the children until they were to the point where we felt they could be baptized. I know in a lot of respects this was done very hastily, especially in the summer of 1960, very hastily. But we tried not to do that. We really tried to keep them interested for three or four weeks after giving the lessons and exploring the interests of the parents. But I do know cases where it was abused and where kids were brought into the Church just practically overnight.

With the baseball program, and I don't know whether the parents knew about it or not, but they had signed the card. That's right. I think the card included some fine print at the bottom, and the authorization to baptize was just kind of tucked in there someplace.

There were places where this was abused, and that's why I say by the summer of '61 the program had been refined quite a bit and some of these loopholes had been closed and some of the areas where the program had been abused earlier had been shut down.

Now I don't know whether I'm answering your question or if I'm . . .

S: Go ahead. You're doing just fine.

B: I can think of one town in Scotland, Ayr—and this was in '61—where some missionaries were baptizing a lot of children. I think there was only one priesthood holder in the branch, an older fellow that had been in the Church for years and years, and here this branch had gone along for all these years and suddenly there were twenty-five children in the branch and one man. This was just flagrant abuse, and I'm sure that President Brockbank was most concerned about this, most concerned when the program was abused.

There was a lot of feeling about the youth program and the missionaries heard from home that President McKay had said something, that they were concerned about the youth program, and he reassured everyone here that it was okay. This feedback got back to the missionaries, that the people

at home were concerned about the youth program, if it was used under the guidelines that were given. But there was a lot of pressure to get baptisms and to produce, subtle as it was. But it wasn't the obvious pressure that President Woodbury had applied.

S: Telegrams and contests and this kind of thing to keep things moving. I know that some of the missions did not use this.

B: No, none of that. But there was pressure to produce and get program. The North British, I think, discontinued the baseball program. I know they did. I think eventually the British Mission under President Woodbury stopped using the program.

President Brockbank told us once in a meeting that he felt very strongly about the program and he realized that the time would come, ten years down the line, when a lot of these children would be inactive in the Church and they would just be on the rolls, they would just be on record, and they would be inactive. But he felt that this nine-year-old boy that you had just baptized, when he got to be twenty-three and was newly married and had been inactive in the Church since he was fifteen, if someone came to his house with the effort to activate him, he would have a much better chance of responding spiritually to someone coming from a church that he had a recollection of, especially a fond recollection. So if the home teacher were coming to try to activate him, he would have a much better chance of responding to that than if he were just being tracted out cold by the missionaries and the missionaries didn't know his background and he didn't know anything about the Church, and, more importantly, didn't have any personal feelings about the Church.

I know President Brockbank commented to us about that several times. It was like the rats leaving the ship. You heard that this mission had discontinued the program and that mission had discontinued it, but he really held fast to this program. This was the feeling that he gave to us, that these youngsters would really respond better in future years, even if they went through a period of inactivity in the meantime, providing that they had a fond recollection of their experiences, even if it were just with MIA on Wednesday nights.

S: Even if that's all they knew about.

B: That's right. So that was the least we could expect from the program. That was the bottom line.

S: From your experience with it and with the kids, do you agree or disagree with that point of view?

B: I agree. I sure do. I've been back to England a couple of times since then, and I have been very tempted to take my appointment book and try and do some checking and see what's happened to some of the boys that we baptized that were nine and ten, just dirty-faced scruffy kids in knee pants. They'd be married and have a family now, and I just would be interested. I haven't done it, but I would like to do it.

S: It would also be interesting to see if they remembered you . . .

B: Yes .

S: What happened to these youngsters after they were baptized? Did they continue as members of the youth club?

B: Yes, because the youth club was the MIA. There were also members of the Church in the youth club—that is, children of active families in the branch or the ward. They were members of the youth club too. The youth club was just another name for MIA. The baseball only came into it as far as getting their initial interest. At least this was the way it was when they began.

Now in 1961, in the summer, we had a more formally organized baseball program. I was the mission auxiliary coordinator that summer and as such we planned a tournament and it was a super thing. We had an inter-mission tournament held at Wythenshawe Park in Manchester and there were teams there from London, from Ireland, from Scotland. These were all baseball teams. They didn't really have uniforms, but they wore a white shirt or something to identify them. The Irish team had big green shamrocks on their shirts. This was a real exciting thing for these kids, to go on the train all this way. A lot of these kids had never been out of their little town or village. Suddenly the kids were on a baseball team and going from Ireland to Manchester on the boat. Some of their parents had never been that far away from home. So it was a real exciting thing for the kids.

Three missions participated in that--the Scottish-Irish, the Central British, and the British. The North British did not have baseball programs and they did not participate, even though we held our tournament in their mission. It was just kind of a central location.

S: But they didn't send teams.

B: We went down in the spring and talked with Elder Brough, who was the auxiliary coordinator in Manchester, and President Thorn, and they did not want to get involved in the youth program that summer. So they didn't participate in this tournament. We wanted to really have a national tournament, but they held out.

So there were three missions involved, and it was kind of an exciting thing for the kids. I'm sure that that's something those kids will always remember with some fondness, whether they're active in the Church or not. If that memory is there, someday when the missionaries call or the home teachers or the bishop or the ward clerk calls to see whether they need to remove the name from the records, who knows? That just might strike the chord that puts things all together, when more responsibilities are added to that young man who has since grown up and he has a family to be concerned about.

So I feel that the program was a good one, when it was used properly, but admittedly there were cases where it was abused.

S: In the baseball baptism program, as you formed the leagues and everything, how much of your time as missionaries was devoted to it? I guess you weren't a proselyting missionary at the time of this tri-mission tournament, were you?

B: That summer I was not. I was really doing this full time. How much time would the average proselyting missionary spend with his baseball teams? Not a great deal. It seemed to me in the summer of 1960, when this thing was just really starting, that we would only play baseball maybe two afternoons a week for a couple of hours. It wasn't a time-consuming thing. Maybe it was only once a week. Then the youth meeting was one night a week. It was usually a matter of tracting or calling on referrals until two or three o'clock and then going down to the park at four o'clock for an hour or so before dinner and hitting the ball a few times. And the kids just came out of the woodwork. It was just a new thing, and it was amazing

S: Maybe I'll think of some more questions on that later, but for now let's talk about President Brockbank a little bit more. You're the first missionary that I've interviewed that has served under him, so I'd like you to describe him--his physical appearance, what you remember about him, his mannerisms, his character traits, his leadership style, anything you can remember about him.

B: He's a very humble man. He has very searching eyes when you sit and talk with him. He just sees right through you. He knew the plight of the missionaries and yet he was continually trying to boost you up to the next rung on the ladder. I would say that he was a very patient man, but . . .

S: Not a pushover?

B: No. He had very definite opinions about certain things, and yet he could be very relaxed and friendly with a group. He would take the traveling elders down to the gas station and buy

them a coke, and this wasn't President Woodbury's style at all.

Because of his role as Auxiliary Coordinator, I think that Kenneth Borg's interview provides a more complete picture and a better understanding of how President Brockbank viewed and supported the baseball baptism program in the North British and Scottish-Irish Missions when he was the mission president. The interview also indicates that President Grant Thorn, who took over the North British Mission when the Scottish-Irish Mission was created in February 1961, abandoned the baseball baptism program entirely.

Kenneth Borg states that President Woodbury's and President Brockbank's leadership styles were quite different. Because I also served under both Woodbury and Brockbank, I agree with most of Kenneth Borg's assessments about them. I also agree with him that the baseball program was good *if used properly and not abused* — as it was by some overzealous missionaries.

My experience serving under President Brockbank gave me several insights that relate to much of what Quinn and Mavin wrote about in their articles and what Prince and Wright wrote in Chapter 10 of their biography of David O. McKay. Namely:

(1) that the men who served as the mission presidents of the four missions in Great Britain at that time were very able, successful and competitive businessmen who entered into the baptism competition that President Woodbury initiated and promoted;

(2) President Brockbank, a well-known and successful businessman in the Salt Lake area, was approachable and friendly, but also a competitor. But even during baptism competitions with the other mission presidents in Great Britain, I never saw him get angry or upset with anyone, or put undue pressure on our missionaries. In my judgment, his warm personality and approachability may help explain why his reputation was not badly tarnished by the baseball baptisms and birthday tribute programs, and why he was later called to be an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve. Many General Authorities visited our missions while I served as mission secretary, and his interactions with them were always warm and positive. The same was true in his interactions with our missionaries.

Prince and Wright's account of the New Era missionary program

In Chapter 10 of their David O. McKay biography, Gregory Prince and Wm. Robert Wright name three men as being the most important to the New Era in Great Britain and Europe -- Henry D. Moyle, Alvin R. Dyer and T. Bowring Woodbury.

They record that in 1954 President McKay asked Apostle Henry D. Moyle to serve on the Missionary Committee of the Church "and from that point on, the focal point of his life was missionary work." Moyle later stated: "The greatest work I have ever been engaged in, bar none, is missionary work." Upon joining the First Presidency in 1959, he was given charge of the entire missionary program. "Despite a history of heart disease, which claimed his life in 1963, he threw himself at the assignment with apparently boundless energy and enthusiasm, taking the program to previously unimaginable heights." (Prince & Wright, p. 228)

Alvin R. Dyer was the owner of a successful heating and air conditioning business in Salt Lake City when he was called to serve as President of the Central States Mission in 1955.

Taking a radically different approach to the process of conversion, he focused on conviction, not information, or in other words, a "conversion experience," rather than intellectual persuasion achieved by a series of didactic lectures and pamphlets explicating scriptural arguments. He achieved unprecedented success in that mission, and his accomplishments were noted publicly in the April 1957 conference. (Prince & Wright, p. 228)

During a conference talk, Gordon B. Hinckley commended President Dyer for his success in achieving many more converts in the Central States Mission than had been achieved ten years earlier. He then quoted President Dyer as having said, "There is too much hedging in our approach. Drive to the point. Be positive in presentation, but at the same time do the job in a clear and simple way. Let's do it, he said." (Prince & Wright)

In 1958, shortly after Dyer's return to Salt Lake City, after being released as a mission president, President McKay called him as an Assistant to the Twelve, and a year later he was selected as the first president of the newly reconstituted European Mission, with responsibility for all European missions. He took with him the methodology he developed in the Central States Mission and left an indelible though controversial imprint on the church in Europe. (Prince & Wright, p.228)

In the summer of 1958, President McKay telephoned T. Bowring Woodbury and called him to become the President of the British Mission beginning in September 1958. Woodbury "accepted the calling, served for nearly three and one-half years and became the catalyst for a sea change in the missionary program." (Prince & Wright, p. 229). Woodbury had left Salt Lake City during World War II and moved to Wichita, Kansas, where he became president of Culver Aircraft Corporation, a company that made trainer planes for the Navy. After the war ended, Culver lost its military business so Woodbury turned to commercial manufacturing where he became president of a firm that made power lawnmowers. When Alvin R. Dyer became President of the Central States Mission, he chose T. Bowring Woodbury as his First Counselor.

According to Prince and Wright's account, "Woodbury brought to the task not only the skills of a successful businessman but also a unique flair and personality." His son [T. Bowring Woodbury II] described his persona:

My father was a very flamboyant man, in his dress and in the way he handled himself. I know that Elder [Stephen L.] Richards told him that he'd have to be subdued because the British people were very conservative and they were poor at that point—we were only a decade after the war. He indicated that my mother should dress quite conservatively, and so on. My dad just smiled, and told me he totally disregarded that. He was going to do things the way he wanted to do them. And there was that air of independency that I think was enormously important. [Prince & Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, p. 229]

Because Great Britain was financially bankrupt after World War II ended, several church leaders thought the glory days experienced by the missionaries during the “First Great Missionary Gathering” in the 19th century were long gone. According to Pres. Moyle’s son, A. Hamer Reiser, a departing British mission president, remarked to President Moyle that “I don’t think there’s much of the House of Israel left in England. Maybe we should close the mission,” (Prince & Wright, page 220) Richard Mavin, who served under President Woodbury in the New Era suggested that under British Mission President T. Bowring Woodbury that was not the case. Statistics and my own experience strongly support that position.

Restructuring the missionary program

Henry D. Moyle’s entry into the First Presidency in June 1959 provided a green light to significantly change the church’s Missionary Program. Two months later, President McKay appointed President Moyle to be chairman of the Missionary Committee and within weeks President Moyle proposed that the missionary program be restructured and that the General Authorities be directly involved in supervising the missionary work in the nine regions that would be created throughout the world. Five months later, with substantial input from President Moyle, President McKay announced the reopening of the European Mission with Alvin R. Dyer as President. The following year President Moyle’s recommendation was implemented. The regional leadership would be provided by three Apostles, the calling of five new Assistants to the Quorum of the Twelve, and one member of the Seventy. (Prince & Wright, p. 230)

In Chapter 10 of their McKay biography, Prince and Wright set forth the New Era missionary program in Great Britain and include some of President Woodbury’s remarks at the August 3, 1959 groundbreaking for the construction of the Hyde Park Chapel. President Woodbury said there had been a 77.6 percent increase in baptisms during the first six months of 1959, that 10 out of 15 districts of the Church in Great Britain were now in local hands, and that by the end of the year all of the districts could be in local hands. (Prince & Wright, p. 236).

Prince and Wright also state that President Woodbury predicted that 1960 would be a banner year, not only in the British Mission, but throughout the Church. Those remarks presaged the announcement that Apostle Harold B. Lee would be coming to Manchester in March 1960 to organize the first stake in Europe. Prince and Wright record that on March 27, 1960, the day the Manchester stake was organized, Apostle Lee commented to President Woodbury that “This is the greatest event to happen in the history of the British Mission since its organization [in 1837].” (Prince & Wright, p. 237)

Introduction of birthday tributes and other goals

According to Prince and Wright, it was at that time that President Woodbury decided to build on the “conversion successes” of 1960 by giving his missionaries “a new goal.”

It was during these exciting days that President Woodbury announced the first birthday baptism goals for President McKay. He said: “It was decided that the British Mission would achieve five hundred baptisms in the months of July

and August and that the North British Mission would contribute a like number of baptisms and that these thousand baptisms would be a tribute to President David O. McKay and that we would cable him on his birthday, the eighth of September when he will be eighty-seven years old that we had reached our goal of one thousand baptisms as a tribute to him. (p. 237)

According to Cuthbert's book (on page 40) the text of the birthday Tribute Scroll addressed to President McKay did not include the North British Mission, but read as follows:

The missionaries of the British Mission recently wrote that the months of July and August 1960, were to be a Tribute Month to you, in which we jointly pledged to baptize one thousand souls into the Kingdom as a Birthday Tribute to you.

We wish to tell you now, in all humility and gratitude, that the Lord has blessed our efforts, He has heard the prayers of our parents, ward, stake, and quorum members, who joined us in fasting and praying. And that we, at the close of the Missionary Months, have baptized one thousand one hundred and eleven souls in that two month period, exceeding our pledge and Birthday Tribute.

Prince and Wright record how President McKay responded to the inter-mission competition promoted by President Woodbury, demonstrating just how enticing and challenging the competition among those two very capable and competitive mission presidents would become. The cablegram received by the North British Mission from President McKay follows:

Serial Number		WESTERN UNION		Serial Number	
ANGLO-AMERICAN TELEGRAPH CO. LTD.		CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAPHS			
CABLEGRAM					
THIS FORM MAY BE HANDED IN AT ANY POST OFFICE WHICH ACCEPTS TELEGRAMS					
DATE STAMP OF OFFICE OF ORIGIN ROUTE AND SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS		FOR POSTAGE STAMPS OF AND IN PAST COUNTRIES		SENT AT	
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH SEPTEMBER 12, 1960 <i>via Western Union</i>		If the Telegram is not sent at Ordinary rate place the appropriate indicator between the double hyphens below: ↓ LT for Letter Telegram GLT for Commonwealth Social Telegram		TO BY	
WU		ADDRESS (BLOCK Letters)		WORDS CHANGED ACTUAL	
		"QUICKMERE MANCHESTER", ENGLAND			
ALL NORTH BRITISH MISSIONARIES					
MANCHESTER, ENGLAND					
FOR THE MOST UNIQUE AND GLORIOUS BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE EVER GIVEN TO A					
FELLOW LABORER IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, I SEND YOU HEARTY					
CONGRATULATIONS AND DEEP GRATITUDE. OVER 1000 NEW MEMBERS OF					
THE CHURCH IN JULY AND AUGUST IS AN ACHIEVEMENT ACCOMPLISHED ONLY					
BY DIVINE AID, GOD BE PRAISED. MAY EVERY HONEST HEART BE ANCHORED					
FOREVER IN THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRIST.					
GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONALLY,					
DAVID O. MCKAY					
I declare that the text of this Telegram complies with the special language or other regulations applicable to its category or rate of charge. I request that this Telegram may be forwarded VIA WESTERN UNION, subject to the conditions printed on the back hereof, to which I agree.					
NAME AND ADDRESS OF SENDER (not to be returned)					

Within a short time, the other missions in Great Britain followed the British and North British Missions---until Grant Thorn became its President in February 1961---and the race was on. As a result, by the end of 1961 there were even more impressive gains than 1960---a 35 percent increase in full-time missionaries and an 83 percent increase in convert baptisms. Unfortunately, that rate of growth could not continue for long.

As Woodbury had predicted, total baptisms in the British Isles exceeded the record set in 1849---by an astounding 57 percent. Optimism was virtually unbounded, and Moyle predicted that worldwide convert baptisms during the following year, 1962, would double. The results for 1962 were impressive, but the increase over 1961 was 30 percent, far short of Moyle's prediction of 100 percent. The luster of the missionary program was beginning to fade. (Prince & Wright, p. 238)

Prince and Wright document the incentive programs and goals that were used to increase the number of convert baptism in Great Britain.

Other incentive proposals soon followed, yet the terms became less benign. The requirement changed from hours of work, over which the missionaries had reasonable control, to baptisms. The process of religious conversion was thus transformed into a numbers game. Missionaries who met their quotas were rewarded; a trip to the London Temple, a trip to church historic sites, dinner with Henry D. Moyle, or membership in the "Extra Mile Club."

In his diary, Woodbury justified the use of incentives in missionary work:

The use of incentives in every aspect of life has become almost a universal law. We have the incentives of bonus wages for more production in industry; attractive commissions to spur piece salesmen on to greater sales, and the incentive present in every field of greater position for harder work. In the Lord's plan, too, there are great incentives: we are promised a place in the Celestial Kingdom of glory to dwell with our Father in Heaven himself, in return for a life of righteousness, serving him and complying with his commandments and more specifically in the Lord's plan, there are incentives in His missionary program. (Prince & Wright, p. 239)

Prince and Wright concluded that, "what might have been a benign idea at the first had now taken on a "malignant life of its own."

It spun rapidly out of control. Competition within a mission soon became competition between missions. One General Authority later commented: "It doesn't matter how carefully you couch your instruction, there is that inter-mission competition which will exist. They may say "Well, we don't stress baptisms." Nonsense. Every mission president is going to try to look good to his supervisor, who is a General Authority. Well, it's that environment where real trouble began. And then they were using David O. McKay as the motivation, and this was the kicker, I think. That's the last thing David O. McKay would want his image to be used for." (Prince & Wright, p. 241)

Prince and Wright spend several pages documenting and discussing the baseball baptisms program. They note that at one of the June 1961 mission presidents' conference workshops in Salt Lake City was Woodbury's presentation of the baseball baptism program "which he showcased as one of his most effective means of conversion." According to Prince and Wright, most of the other general authorities present were generally silent, except for First Presidency member Hugh B. Brown, "who gave a nuanced warning to the mission presidents." He said that "when great movements get the impetus of a prairie fire there is danger. I hope I have not spoken out of place. I am just sounding a word of warning." Unfortunately, Brown's warning went generally unheeded according to Prince and Wright, "largely because David O. McKay was not yet convinced that there was a problem." (p. 245)

When President McKay toured Scotland in late February 1961, he was accosted by members of the press who asked about the baseball baptism program. President McKay was somewhat concerned about the allegations, but said that "he accepted the findings of Mr. Bernard Brockbank, President of the Scottish-Irish Mission, who had investigated all the cases mentioned at the Presbytery meeting, and had not discovered any foundation or truth in them." President McKay became somewhat combative when the reporters persisted in their questioning. He eventually offered to pay for some representative of the Church of Scotland to come to Salt Lake City "and investigate our faith." He said further, that "no minor can be baptized as a Mormon without the consent of her or his parents. These charges are ridiculous. It is an attempt to get something sensational against our Church." (Prince & Wright, p. 247)

Mormon No 1 speaks

LURING AWAY TEENAGERS? THAT IS NOT OUR FAITH

By THOMAS MULLANE

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY, 87-year-old head of the world-wide Mormon faith, spoke for the first time yesterday about charges that his missionaries are luring Scots teenagers away from their parents' influence.

Over a 4,000 mile trans-Atlantic telephone line from Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A., he said last evening: "The very essence of our faith is parental consent. If any child anywhere has been a teenager, I understand."

THE FAITH'S WORK

It was in this regard that the 87-year-old president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, said: "I am sure that the missionaries are luring away teenagers from their parents' influence."

But President McKay—son of an emigrant from Scotland—had always been an earnest worker. He was in the middle of a restless and strenuous schedule.

Through his interest in Scotland he was able to see that the missionaries were luring away teenagers from their parents' influence. He was sure that the missionaries were luring away teenagers from their parents' influence.

And President McKay said: "I am sure that the missionaries are luring away teenagers from their parents' influence."

Baptised

And President McKay said: "I am sure that the missionaries are luring away teenagers from their parents' influence."

Difficult

And President McKay said: "I am sure that the missionaries are luring away teenagers from their parents' influence."

Scottish Daily Express
Feb. 13, 1961

Before President McKay left Great Britain to return home, he stopped over in London to see President Woodbury. Woodbury recorded in his diary that after discussing the situation, President McKay concluded their meeting by saying: “I want you to know that I am pleased with what I see, what has been done and what is being done and what’s more, President Woodbury, I want you to know the Lord is pleased. Does anything else matter?” (Prince & Wright, p. 248)

President McKay returned to Salt Lake City “seemingly convinced that the whole matter of youth baptisms was overblown.” Yet troubling reports continued to filter in. Later in the year, he summoned Marion D. Hanks, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and asked what he knew of the reports. “Did they do this in my name?” he asked. Hanks answered in the affirmative. McKay then asked Hanks if he could assume the presidency of the British Mission. Hanks said that he would do whatever he was asked but that his recent agreement to serve on President John F. Kennedy’s Council of Physical Fitness had committed him to a heavy traveling and speaking schedule. Upon hearing this, McKay told him to continue doing what he was doing. However, a couple of weeks later McKay again called him to his office and said the situation could no longer wait and that Hanks would have to leave soon, which he did in January 1962. (Prince & Wright, p. 248)

In October 1961, the First Presidency extended to T. Bowring Woodbury, who had already served nearly six months longer than his original calling had specified, an honorable release. [However, President T. Bowring Woodbury was not released as British Mission President until January 1962.] “In extending your release,” they wrote, “it affords us much pleasure indeed to say that you retire from your present position with our utmost confidence, good will and appreciation.” Woodbury and his wife gave an official report of their mission to the First Presidency almost a year later, and McKay’s enthusiastic response suggests that he did not consider him to have been the problem: “Brother Woodbury reported his presidency of the British Mission from **September 1958 to January 1962**. [bolding added] They gave an excellent report.” Nor did McKay know the details of the problem at the time he sent Hanks to England. According to a later memo from Hanks to Clare Middlemiss, “Pres. McKay and I also discussed at some length the condition of the British Missions when I was assigned to Britain. He told me he had not known what was going on and expressed appreciation that I had been able to stop the procedures which, he said, had cast a reflection that would take the Church years to correct.” (Prince & Wright, p. 248)

Early in 1963 McKay made three personnel changes that signaled the end of the “baseball baptism” era. The first was to replace Alvin R. Dyer, president of the European Mission, with Theodore M. Burton. According to Levi Thorup, president of the Danish Mission, Burton immediately changed the atmosphere. “When President Dyer was released and President Burton came over, there had been so much talk about pressure that had been put on, particularly in England and those areas, that they decided nobody was going to have any pressure.” Dyer landed on his feet, eventually becoming an apostle and later, an additional counselor in the First Presidency. Second, Apostle Mark E. Petersen was called to preside over the West European Mission (British Isles), with explicit instructions from McKay to discontinue the youth baptisms.

And finally, on January 31, 1963, McKay replaced Henry D. Moyle as chair of the Missionary Committee with Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the Quorum of the Twelve and a strong opponent of Moyle-style missionary work. Although McKay invited Moyle “to keep his hand on the situation, the message was clear. Moyle never attended another meeting of the committee. (Prince & Wright, p. 249)

Moyle remained first counselor in the First Presidency but without the missionary portfolio which he had called his greatest work, he was an empty man. He confided to Marion D. Hanks, “I have been relieved of every responsibility except my title. On September 18, 1963, Moyle died of a heart attack. (Prince & Wright, p. 250)

Conclusions about the New Era by McKay biographers

Prince and Wright conclude Chapter 10 in their David O. McKay biography with the following observations and comments:

With the benefit of four decades of hindsight, it is nonetheless still difficult to place the missionary program of the McKay years in a coherent context. Even objective data such as baptismal statistics do not tell an objective story. To be sure, there was an astounding increase in baptisms that coincided with the calling of T. Bowring Woodbury to the British Mission presidency, Alvin R. Dyer to the European Mission presidency and Henry D. Moyle to the First Presidency, all of which occurred between the summer of 1958 and the summer of 1959. Whereas in 1959 the total number of convert baptisms church-wide was 33,060, by 1962 it had nearly quadrupled, to 115,834.¹¹⁰ Yet thousands of those baptisms—the total number is not known—turned out to be bogus, causing untold headaches and heartaches for local members, missionaries, and General Authorities alike, while tens of thousands were authentic. (p. 253)

With respect to an allied issue, [of baptizing large numbers of new young members] a spirited debate continues to this day. Is it better to baptize more people and retain a lower percentage, or baptize fewer people and retain a higher percentage? In 1967, Spencer W. Kimball, an apostle and future president, weighed in on the problem at a seminar for newly called Regional Representatives of the Twelve:

Kimball clearly thought that more was better, and during the first eight years of his presidency (1974-81), convert baptisms soared from 69,018 (nearly identical to the number in the final year of McKay’s presidency) to 224,000. And what of the McKay years? At least one insider [J. Alan Blodgett] gave them a thumbs-up: “On balance, it is my assessment that the net results of the Moyle/Woodbury missionary thrust was positive for the church. That was the turning point for the great growth of the church in Britain.” (Prince & Wright, p. 255, J. Alan Blodgett to Prince, November 4, 1999)

My conclusions about the New Era

In this document, I have designated the great growth of the church during the New Era in Britain as the Second “Great Missionary Harvest,” a name that I believe is both appropriate and fully justified by the facts and the results achieved.

Notwithstanding the excesses and mistakes made by some overzealous missionaries and members during the New Era, after (1) reviewing the previous three accounts of the baseball baptisms controversy in the New Era; (2) the membership and other New Era statistics presented in the Appendixes in Chapter 3; (3) the December 31, 2011 membership statistics and other statistics that are now available on the Internet; (4) the accounts that I recorded in my journal and letters home while serving a mission in Great Britain from September 1959 to September 1961 under President T. Bowring Woodbury and President Bernard P. Brockbank (as recorded in Volume II)--I am convinced that the preponderance of evidence shows that the LDS church in Great Britain would not be as large, as strong and firmly rooted in British society as it is today without the events that transpired during the New Era. I am proud to have played a small part in helping to initiate, facilitate and attain that long-term development and progress.

After Bernard P. Brockbank was released as Scottish-Irish Mission President in 1962, he continued the same missionary zeal he had shown as a mission president during the New Era in Great Britain at the Mormon Pavilion at the 1964-65 World Fair held in New York city.

“In 1964, Elder L. Tom Perry, now of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was a 41-year-old high councilor in the New York Stake. ... Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, who held the General Authority position of Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, was assigned to supervise the pavilion Elder Perry remembered. ‘He [Brockbank] moved to New York and had an apartment very near the world’s fair, and I was one of his assistants as the fair developed. I had two nights a week that I was responsible for supervising the pavilion so we were at the fair a great deal.’ (“Elder Perry: Mormon Pavilion at 1964 World’s Fair Had Impact,” *LDS Church News and Events*, Sept. 22, 2014, contributed by R. Scott Lloyd, church News staff writer. On September 24, 2014, the *Deseret News* quoted the above article under the title “Mormon Pavilion at world’s fair 50 years ago set the stage for future outreach to the public.”)

The above article states: “For the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, it represented groundbreaking methods of taking the gospel message to multitudes. The Mormon Pavilion at the fair has left a lingering legacy immediately observable in the art dioramas and multi-media technology of today’s visitors’ centers. ... A Church-commissioned replica [of the “Christus” statue, copied from Bertel Thorvalsen’s sculpture at a Lutheran church in Copenhagen, Denmark] was first displayed in the Mormon Pavilion at the New York World’s Fair. ... The film ‘Man’s Search for Happiness,’ for many years a staple of missionary work, was produced expressly for exhibition at the Mormon Pavilion. ... Full-time missionaries were engaged as tour guides and the Book of Mormon was featured prominently. ... Perhaps the most important legacy of the pavilion is the convert baptisms that came of it.”

Brent L. Top, then an assistant professor of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University, wrote in his article, "Legacy of the Mormon Pavilion," *Ensign*, Oct. 1989, "The impact of that pavilion was felt far beyond the gates of the World's fair. It contributed significantly to the Church's worldwide image and had a profound effect on the Church's missionary efforts. In addition, the Church's use of audiovisual technology in the pavilion pioneered the wide use of such technology by the Church in visitors' centers, fairs, displays and mass media today. ... Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, a new Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, was appointed Managing Director of the pavilion. Elder Brockbank brought to his new assignment not only his expertise in the area of building and construction, but also a missionary zeal that would permeate every aspect of the pavilion. He emphatically insisted that the exhibits proclaim the gospel message, nor merely inform visitors regarding the Church; and it was to be done in a manner tempered and refined by public relations professionalism. ... David Evans [David W. Evans, president of Evans Advertising in Salt Lake City and a member of the Church Information Service organization] reported that during the year previous to the fair, there had been only six convert baptisms in that area [New York, New Jersey and Cumorah stakes], but he estimated that there were a thousand baptisms in each of the two years the fair was open and 'in the succeeding several years, there were six to eight hundred per year.'"

Elder Perry, speaking at the 50th anniversary of the event held recently, said the World's Fair significantly helped the Church's interfaith efforts. He also believes the Church's missionary efforts during the World's Fair influenced the growth of the Church in the area. Elder L. Tom Perry recounts working at the Mormon Pavilion:

"We had good missionary success during that time," related Elder Perry.

Elder Perry credits three Church leaders for the success of the Church's pavilion at the New York World's Fair. He called President Harold B. Lee, then a member of the Council of the Twelve, "the real force behind [the Church's participation]." Other men he included Stanley McAlister, president of the New York Stake, and Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, an assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who moved from Salt Lake City to New York City to direct the pavilion's daily affairs. **(NEWS RELEASE — 15 OCTOBER 2014, Apostle Speaks on 50th Commemoration of 1964 New York World's Fair.)**

Clearly, Bernard P. Brockbank was very important to the successful outcome of the New York World's Fair that he managed from 1964-1965, and the Church's missionary work throughout the world without missions thereafter. Indeed, the New York World's Fair, under President Brockbank's leadership and direction, helped the Church take a significant step forward in its ability to spread the Gospel and use every available means to promote successful missionary work throughout the world, just as he, his fellow mission presidents, and the thousands of missionaries who served during the New Era in Great Britain did.

The following paragraph from Bernard P. Brockbank's obituary, published in the *Deseret News* on October 18, 2000, provides the final word about how important and lengthy his involvement in missionary work was after serving as a mission president during the New Era in Great Britain and its great missionary harvest:

In 1962, while serving as president of the Scottish Mission, President David O. McKay called him to be an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As a General Authority, Elder Brockbank served as Managing Director of the Mormon Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, at the Hemisphere in San Antonio, Texas, at "Man and His World" in Montreal, Canada, and at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan. For seven years Elder Brockbank served as the first president of the newly organized International Mission which included all areas of the world without a full-time mission. Elder Brockbank returned to the British Isles as Area Administrator over Great Britain and South Africa. At the time of his passing, he was an Emeritus member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.



Bernard P. Brockbank speaking at the October 1973 General Conference

Chapter 5

Postscript: Growth of the Church Today

2011 membership statistics for the British Isles

While preparing this document, I found a wealth of recent statistics about LDS church membership worldwide on the Internet that prove that the growth and strength of the Church in Great Britain continues with nearly 190,000 members at the end of 2011, 45 stakes, two temples, 332 congregations and six missions. One can conclude that the LDS Church in Great Britain has been a healthy, dynamic and growing organization since the dedication of the London Temple in September 1958 and the New Era and its great missionary harvest in Britain began.

The chart below lists LDS membership and organizational statistics as of December 31, 2011 for various regions and nations of the United Kingdom, along with British Crown Dependencies. [\[216\]](#) (August 12, 2013, the Facts and Figures section of the **LDS Newsroom website** on the Internet)

The LDS Church in Great Britain as of December 31, 2011

Country/Dependency/ Territory	Membership	Stakes	Wards	Branches	Total Congregations	Missions	Temples
England	146,335	36	230	28	258	5	2
Northern Ireland	5,358	1	8	3	11		
Scotland	26,935	5	26	13	39	1	
Wales	9,401	3	18	6	24		
Bermuda	153			1	1		
British Virgin Islands	144			2	2		
Cayman Islands	198			1	1		
Falkland Islands	10			1	1		
Gibraltar	16			1	1		
Guernsey	47			1	1		
Isle of Man	291		1		1		
Jersey	299		1		1		
Turks and Caicos Islands	82			1	1		

2013 Membership and other statistics for the United Kingdom, Europe, and worldwide

On August 12, 2013, the Facts and Figures section of the **LDS Newsroom website** on the Internet had the following statistics about the Church. They highlight the growth of the Church in Great Britain, Europe and Worldwide during the past five decades since T. Bowring Woodbury, and New Era missionaries arrived in the UK beginning in September 1958. Other New Era mission presidents arrived in Europe in 1960.

Perhaps the best answer to the criticisms leveled at some of the methods used during the New Era in Great Britain is to look at the statistics of how the Church has fared in the decades since the New Era and its great harvest ended in the 1970s. The following statistics recently made available from the LDS.org website, are instructive. They list the following numbers for the Church in the United Kingdom and Europe as follows:

United Kingdom

- Total Church membership: 188,462
- Missions: 6
- Congregations: 333
- Temples: 2
- Family History Centers: 116

Europe

- Total Church Membership: 494,831
- Missions: 42
- Congregations: 1455
- Temples: 11
- Family History Centers: 682

Worldwide

- Total Church Membership: 14,782,473
- Missions: 405
- Missionaries: 74,900
- Missionary Training Centers: 15
- Temples: 141
- Congregations: 20,014
- Universities and Colleges: 4
- Seminary Students Enrollment: 391,680
- Institute Student Enrollment: 352,488
- Family History Centers: 4,689
- Countries with Family History Centers: 128

- Countries Receiving Humanitarian Aid (since 1985): 179
- Welfare Services Missionaries (Including Humanitarian Service): 10,138
- Church Materials Languages: 177

The above news release went on to provide excerpts from remarks made by Apostles Dallin H. Oaks and D. Todd Christofferson at the April 2013 General Conference summarizing the global humanitarian assistance that had been provided by Church members and the Church in 2011-2012.

1961 – 2013, the Hyde Park Chapel



**Hyde Park Chapel in London, England, 2013
after remodeling**

Kenneth Mays wrote and published an article, “Picturing History: Hyde Park Chapel,” accompanied by a picture of the Hyde Park Chapel, in the *Deseret News* on July 31, 2013. It shows how much growth and progress the Church has made in London since the Hyde Park Chapel was dedicated by President McKay on February 26, 1961 during the New Era.

In 1954, Clifton Kerr, president of the British Mission, received directions from President David O. McKay to find property for a chapel in the center of London. The church bought the land for the Hyde Park building when not a single member lived within a seven-mile radius.

The structure was originally dedicated by President McKay in 1961. After being refurbished, it was rededicated by President Gordon B. Hinckley 34 years later.

Because of its location and history, the Hyde Park chapel is regarded as one of the most well-known meetinghouses in the LDS Church. The diversity of its members comes from the many who flock to London from all over the world. The structure is presently a multi-use facility, serving as a chapel, family history center and visitors' center. The building houses two wards and a branch. This complex is also the center for the London England Hyde Park Stake, comprising seven wards and 2,000 members from 115 countries.

Dramatic growth began during the New Era in Great Britain

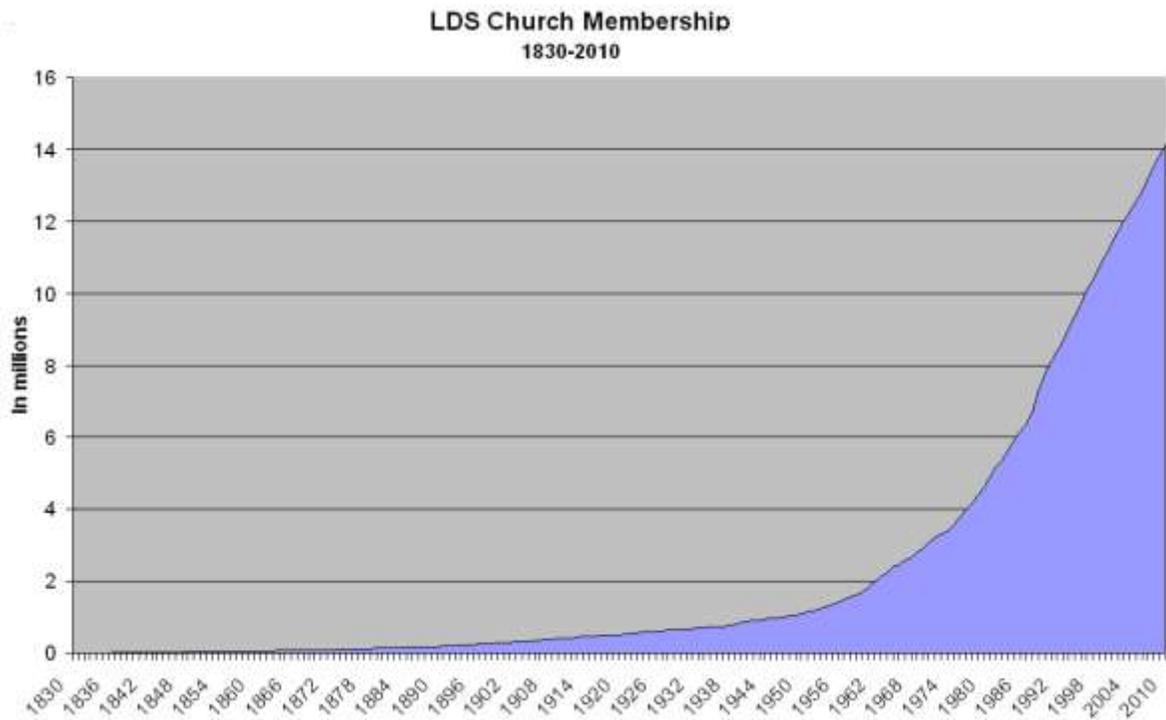
The following table and charts highlight just how dramatic the New Era, 1958 - 1962, really was for the British Isles, Europe, and, ultimately, the worldwide LDS Church during the following decades. Impressive numbers of missionaries were called to serve in Great Britain and Europe and worldwide:

Year	Missionaries
1958	2,778
1959	2,847
1960	4,706
1961	5,793
1962	5,630
1963	5,781
1964	5,886
1965	7,139

Source: www.mormonmissionprep.com/new/

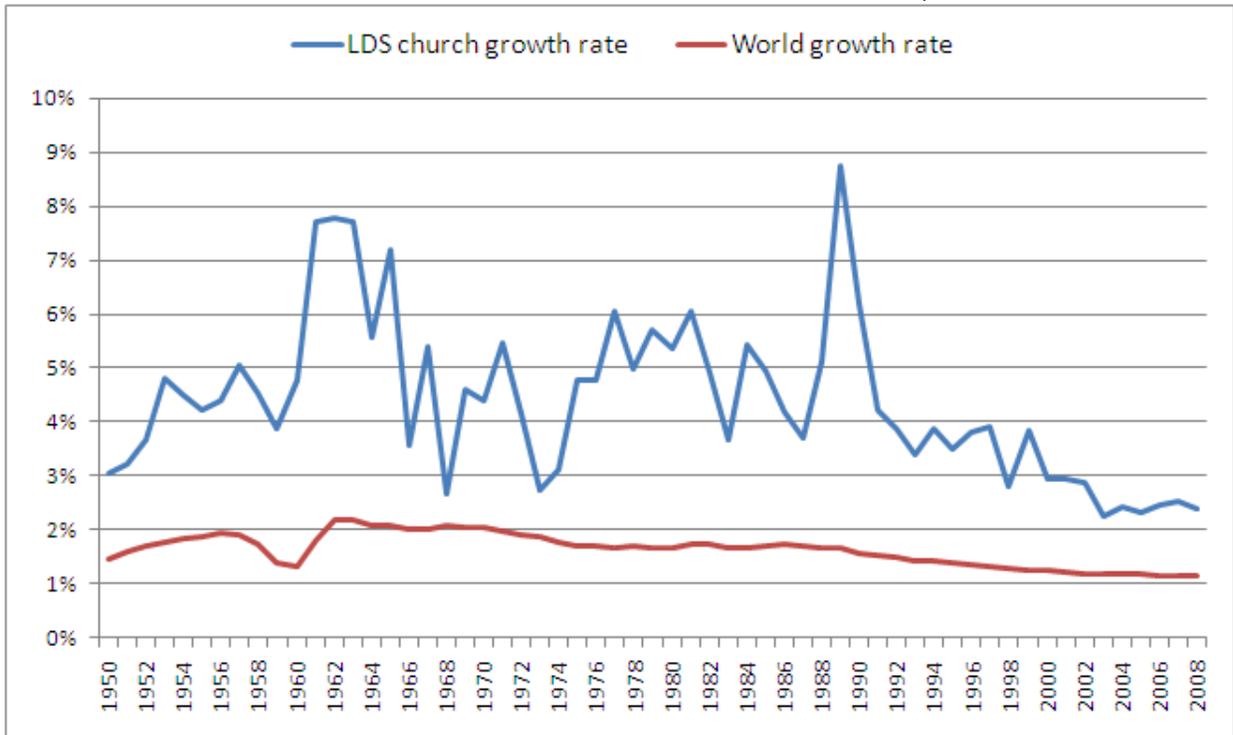


Source: LDS Church Almanac by Deseret News



Source: LDS Church growth by year 1830-2010 by Visorstuff, 2006 (Wikipedia)

LDS Church Growth Rate and World Growth Rate, 1950 to 2008

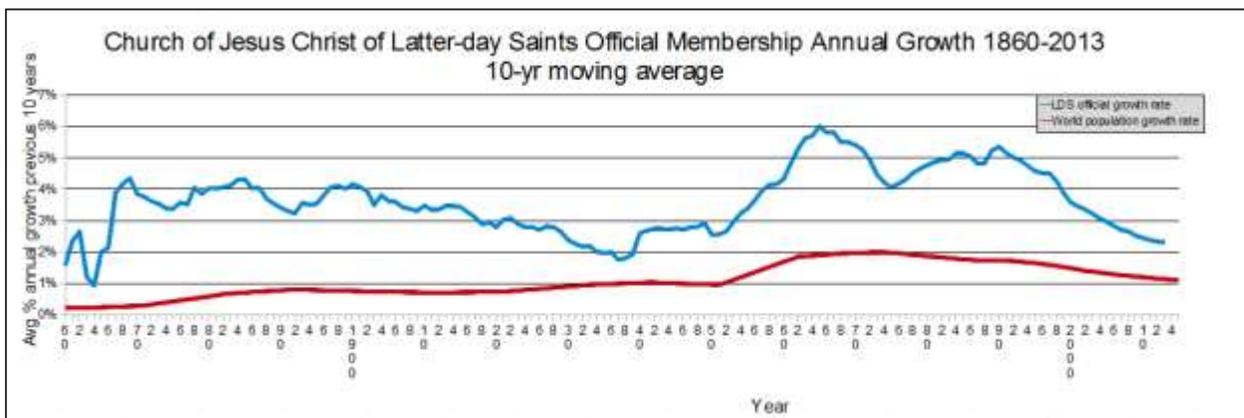


Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints_membership_history

Growth and demographic history

The records of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) show membership growth every decade since [its beginning in the 1830s](#). Following initial growth rates that averaged 10% to 25% per year in the 1830s through 1850s, it grew at about 4% per year through the last four decades of the 19th century (the [Utah polygamy years](#)). After a steady slowing of growth in the first four decades of the 20th century to a rate of about 2% per year in the 1930s (the [Great Depression](#) years), growth [boomed](#) to an average of 6% per year for the decade around 1960, staying around 4% to 5% through 1990. After 1990, average annual growth again slowed steadily to a rate around 2.3% for the ten years ending 2013, still about double the average [world population](#) growth rate of 1.2% for the same period.

Note that the following graph starts in 1860 to optimize its vertical scale: Note that the high point of 6% was reached in the 1960s when the “New Era” was well under way in Great Britain.



On August 29, 2013, the *LDS Newsroom* website contained an article indicating that the Church has been and is now growing at a remarkable rate, and that the National Council of Churches suggests that the LDS Church is “the second-fastest growing church in the United States.” During the October 2014 Semiannual General Conference it was announced that the LDS Church had now exceeded 15 million members.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was formally organized in a small log cabin in upstate New York in 1830.

It took 117 years — until 1947 — for the Church to grow from the initial six members to one million. Missionaries were a feature of the Church from its earliest days, fanning out to Native American lands, to Canada and, in 1837, beyond the North American continent to England. Not long after, missionaries were working on the European continent and as far away as India and the Pacific Islands.

The two-million-member mark was reached just 16 years later, in 1963, and the three-million mark in eight years more. This accelerating growth pattern has continued with about a million new members now being added every three years or less. Growth consists both of convert baptisms and natural growth through the birth of children.

The consequences of this rapid and sustained growth are seen in many places in the world where the Church operates. Congregations that are grouped into geographical areas known as wards are periodically divided as they become too large to administer, or to worship in a chapel or meetinghouse all at once. New buildings are being completed virtually every day of the year in order to house growing membership.

According to the National Council of Churches, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the second-fastest-growing church in the United States. However, despite its increasing numbers, the Church cautions against overemphasis on growth statistics. The Church makes no statistical comparisons with other churches and makes no claim to be the fastest-growing Christian denomination despite frequent news media comments to that effect. Such comparisons rarely take account of a multiplicity of complex factors, including activity rates and death rates, the methodology used in registering or counting members and what factors constitute membership. Growth rates also vary significantly across the world. Additionally, many other factors contribute to the strength of the Church, most especially the devotion and commitment of its members.

Changes in church-media relations

Even the national media in the United States is taking note of the changes that have occurred during the past year. *USA Today* ran an article about how the increase in the numbers of young women “add to Mormon missionary ranks.” The article highlighted three stories and included several pictures: (1) Church lowers minimum age for women to 19. (2) Number of LDS missionaries jumps from 58,513 to 66,731 in six months. (3) More than a third of new

missionaries are women. (Bob Smietana, “Young Women add to Mormon missionary ranks,” *USA TODAY*, May 18, 2013)

The church’s recent launching of the “I am a Mormon” campaign in Great Britain and Ireland is another important development:

According to the press release, 250 double-decker buses feature the advertisements, along with the Charing Cross mainline station and 20 tube stations. The advertisements will be up for the next four weeks, but throughout the rest of the U.K. and Ireland, Internet advertisements will remain through the end of 2013. A specific mormon.org website has also been created for those located in the U.K. (“LDS Church launches “I’m a Mormon” campaign in UK, Ireland. Sarah Petersen, *Deseret News*, April 11, 2013)

The media program in Great Britain has been quite successful:

Two months after the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints launched its “I’m a Mormon” media campaign in Great Britain. LDS officials say they are seeing significant increases in British interest in the church.

The intense media element of the campaign, with ads at tube stations, the Charing Cross mainline station and double-decker busses, ran for four weeks from early April into May. Online advertising will continue in the United Kingdom and Ireland through the end of 2013.

“We are pleased with the response to the U.K. media initiative,” said Greg Droubay, director of media for the LDS Church Missionary Department. “Visitors to the Mormon.org.uk site have increased 250 percent. Similar increases are found in visitors requisition a copy of the Book of Mormon or a missionary visit.”

The church first launched its “I am a Mormon” campaign in New York City’s Times Square in 2011.

On August 29, 2013, the LDS *Newsroom* website announced that in addition to having the Gospel Library (scriptures, manuals, church magazines, songbooks, and an Internet “Mormon Channel,” with radio and TV programs of conference addresses, etc., freely available on the Internet, the Church is also producing and making available for viewing or downloading to computers and portable electronic devices (iPad, Kindles, Smartphones, etc.).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has created a series of videos to provide an introduction to the Church, its members, and its various programs and organizations. This type of introductory information has often been requested by members of the media and public as they have become more familiar with the Church in recent years.

The four- to 10-minute segments feature members of the Church discussing their experiences, beliefs and practices, providing answers to

common questions about the Church. They are a resource for anyone seeking to share or learn more about what Mormons believe.

Significant Changes in Missionary Work

The last few changes described in some of the recent articles cited in this section, such as “sister training leaders,” brings back memories. In October 1961 President Bernard P. Brockbank called a pair of “Traveling Sisters,” two full-time lady missionaries, who worked as trainers with the ever increasing numbers of young lady missionaries in the Scottish-Irish Mission. At that time, the wives of the mission presidents were involved in working with the Relief Society sisters and not with the training and care of sister missionaries.

On June 23, 2013, the Church made an announcement that significantly changes the way missionary work is conducted throughout the world.

The LDS Church is moving further into the digital age, unveiling plans to do less door-to-door missionary “tracting” and do more social media networking to find potential converts.

In what was billed as a “historic” meeting Sunday, June 23, 2013, Mormon apostle L. Tom Perry announced that the Utah-based faith’s largest missionary force ever—more than 70,000 strong—will tap online tools to help them connect with and teach their “investigators.” (Peggy Fletcher Stack, “Mormon missions: Door-to-door approach is out; Internet is in,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 23, 2013)

Such were the headlines in newspapers after the “historic” June 23, 2013 meeting held in the afternoon at the BYU Marriott Center to an audience of missionaries currently attending training courses at the Missionary Training Center where 173 new mission presidents received four days of training along with church leaders. The meeting was transmitted live to Church facilities around the world via the Mormon Channel and also to missionaries, members and leaders around the nation via the Internet. This meeting featured contributions from individuals and groups located in Washington, D.C., Hawaii, and Peru via Skype.

The two-hour meeting featured talks by several Apostles and video-taped messages from Apostle Boyd K. Packer and President Thomas S. Monson.

“The world has changed.” Apostle Perry said. “The nature of missionary work must change if the Lord will accomplish His work.”

A number of new programs and changes in missionary work were announced during that meeting, including:

- Allowing missionaries to use the web during the less-productive times of the day, chiefly in the mornings.
- LDS chapels, which typically have been locked during the week, “will now be open so that missionaries can go there to give tours to interested outsiders and

to use Wi-Fi to receive and contact interested investigators, to confirm appointments, access Mormon.org, Facebook, blogs, emails and text messages.

- Access to the Internet by missionaries will be phased in over several months and into the next years.
- Missionaries' use of the Internet will be closely controlled. Safety is paramount.

According to Elder Perry, God is “calling us as members to serve alongside them and him in this great work.”

Speaking earlier in the day to the 173 new mission presidents who were receiving four days of training, Mormon leaders said that “missionary use of the Internet and digital devices such as iPads will begin in phases and only in designated missions for the rest of this year,” according to an LDS news release. “The Church anticipates these tools will be available to missionaries throughout the world sometime next year.” (Peggy F. Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 23, 2013)

“To the many members of the church gathered in innumerable locations, we affirm that ward and stake councils can no longer say of this great army of missionaries, ‘There they go.’ No, the hour is upon us in which we must now say, ‘Here they come.’ All of us must plan for and use this heaven-sent resource in the most productive way possible.” (Ibid)

Since the October 2012 announcement lowering the age for missionary service from 19 to 18 years for men and from 21 to 19 years for women, the numbers of full-time missionaries worldwide has surged from some 52,000 to an unprecedented 70,274 and is still growing. Fifty-eight new missions have been created, bringing the total number of missions to 405. (R. Scott Lloyd, *Deseret News*, June 23, 2013)

On August 12, 2013, the LDS Newsroom website (www.mormonnewsroom.org) announced that a milestone had been reached: and that there were now 75,000 Mormon missionaries serving full-time missions throughout the world. This number was increased to 82,000 in December 2013, an increase of 7,000 in just 4 months.



An example of what the recent developments announced have had in Great Britain was contained in an article in the special conference edition published in the *Ogden Standard Examiner* newspaper on March 30, 2014. In an article by JaNae Francis, entitled: "Hastening the Work program unfolds in the field," she interviewed Hooper resident Elder Trevor Ward, who returned from the England London Mission, on March 19, 2014.

HOOPER -- Hooper resident Trevor Ward is so new off his mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that he still often refers to himself as Elder Trevor Ward.

The 21-year-old returned March 19 from two years in London.

And in that time, he said, he watched a world of difference made in the success and spirit of missionary work.

The changes were marked first 18 months ago by the lowering of the ages for missionaries being allowed to serve, he said, and second by the release of a new program, Hastening the Work, that was unveiled during a worldwide satellite broadcast last June.

"In a matter of four or five months (last summer), the number of missionaries went from 120 to 220. Instead of one set of missionaries in every ward, we went up to two sets of missionaries in every ward," he said. "We were opening up new missions where no missionaries had ever been before."

And suddenly, there were as many women missionaries as there were men in his mission, Ward said.

"People who had only been out for 12 weeks were training a new missionary," he said. "Some people who were out for six weeks went out with another missionary who had been out for six weeks, so they could follow-up train themselves."

And the difference the new recruits made was amazing, he said.

"You could just feel the spirit of missionary work take off, within wards, within stakes, within the mission," Ward said.

According to the website www.mormonnewsroom.org, the number of missionaries serving worldwide in one year from the time the lowering of the ages was announced in October 2012 to the following October went from 58,700 to 80,300.

The site shows that nearly 10,000 of those additional missionaries were men. Young male missionaries last October numbered 54,600, compared with 44,800 a year before.

But the biggest change in that time was the number of young women missionaries. The site shows the number of female missionaries growing from 8,100 women to 19,500.

The rest of the increase was made up of senior missionaries, which went from 5,800 to 6,200.

In an interview released by the church, David F. Evans, executive director of the church's missionary department, said: "To me, I think the thing that I will always remember has been this response by a group of young people, thousands of them, tens of thousands of them, as they listen to a prophet and then simply said, 'Yes, I'll do it.' And for me I'll never forget that."

As of March 4, there were 84,855 missionaries serving in the church, according to Cody Craynor, a spokesman for the church. That represents another increase of more than 4,000 since last October.

"I feel like there was a good spirit when all the new missionaries came in," Ward said. "When new missionaries come out, they have so much faith."

But Ward said that change was nothing compared with a worldwide satellite broadcast and a new emphasis on a message of "hastening the work of salvation" to members of the church.

At that moment, Ward said, missionary work became more effective and simpler as members began pitching in with the effort like never before.

"When Hastening the Work came out, that is when we started using the members and working with the members," he said.

Latest developments--Missionaries

In an article published in the *Deseret News* on July 3, 2014, Elder David F. Evans, director of the LDS Missionary Department and a member of the First Quorum of Seventy, made the following comments about the current missionary program. His assessment of the current status and developments in the missionary program were reported by Tad Watch in the *Deseret News*. They suggest that the surge in the number of missionaries will peak at about 88,000 before starting to decrease. They also suggest that the number of missionaries will stabilize in the high seventy thousands. Furthermore, Church leaders expect the current pilot developments will portend the full use of new technologies (iPad minis). While Elder Evans did not explicitly say so, I (expect/predict) the new missionary efforts now underway worldwide will lead to another Great Missionary Gathering throughout the world, and not in just Great Britain as was the case with the New Era in Great Britain.

LDS missionary numbers to peak at 88,000; more to use and pay for digital devices

By [Tad Walch](#), *Deseret News* Published: Wednesday, July 2 2014

SALT LAKE CITY — Though the record number of LDS missionaries serving around the world will peak in the fall and then recede somewhat, convert baptisms are increasing and more missionaries soon will be using digital devices to help with their work.

A pilot program has shown that use of iPad Minis by missionaries improved their work and study, and the devices will be used in all missions in North America, Japan and western Europe beginning this fall, the executive director of the LDS Missionary Department said Wednesday in [a wide-ranging, videotaped interview](#) released by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Elder David F. Evans, also a member of the faith's First Quorum of the Seventy, said the devices will be used by about 32,000 Mormon missionaries in 162 of the church's 405 missions.

The church will ask missionaries in those areas to pay for their iPads, which will be their property during and after their missions, at a cost of \$400 apiece.

Evans said the church, as of Wednesday, had 85,593 missionaries serving, up from the [previously publicized record of 85,039](#) in April.

He said the missionary department anticipates the number to rise to 88,000 this fall before starting to decrease.

LDS Church President Thomas S. Monson precipitated the dramatic two-year surge in missionary numbers when in October 2012 he lowered the age requirement from 19 to 18 years old for male missionaries and from 21 to 19 for women.

Elder Evans, who called the surge "one of the greatest faith-inspiring things I've ever seen," said the church expects the number of missionaries will eventually settle somewhere in the high 70,000s, well above the 58,000 serving at the time of President Monson's announcement.

"We don't believe we're ever going back to the 50,000s," Elder Evans said.

About 64 percent of the church's full-time missionaries are young adult men, 28 percent are women and 8 percent are senior missionaries.

"We believe the young people of this church will continue to say yes to missionary service, and they'll continue to choose to become young disciples of Christ," Elder Evans said. "For them it's an absolute free-will offering to the Lord and to their fellow man."

He also spoke about convert baptisms and missionary safety.

"Every month, if you compare month over month, the baptisms are up," Elder Evans said. "Right now for this year, there's about an overall 15 percent increase in the number of convert baptisms this year compared to a comparable period last year."

Elder Evans said missionaries now are being asked to have a "safety moment" at the beginning of each day, an effort to increase their sensitivity to safety issues after several injuries and deaths among missionaries made news, particularly last year.

Those incidents remain few compared to the general U.S. population of 18- to 21-year-olds.

"It is by far the safest place for any young single adult to be that I'm aware of," Elder Evans said. "I've read statistics that suggest being on a mission may be as many as 20 times safer than being generally out in the population."

A pilot program put iPad minis in the hands of about 6,500 missionaries in 30 missions in the United States and Japan, as well as with sister missionaries in most LDS visitors centers. Elder Evans described four lessons learned by church leaders.

First, missionaries were very comfortable and capable using the devices. Second, the devices increased the reading and studying done by the missionaries. Third, they were effective planning tools. Fourth, they helped missionaries communicate better with local church leaders, mission leaders and investigators.

Adding digital devices to more missions will begin in the fall and continue into next year, Elder Evans said.

He also said church leaders hope that digital devices can help missionaries begin their training in new languages, gospel study and other areas even before they reach missionary training centers at the beginning of their service.

The church will ask missionaries from areas Elder Evans said are "self-supporting in terms of missionary service" to pay for their own iPad Minis, similar to the way the church has asked missionaries to pay for bicycles to use in the mission field.

Those from areas that aren't self-supporting will work with their local church leaders and mission presidents on funding.

The video interview is the second video about missionary work released by the church this week. On Monday, a video from church historians told [the story of the faith's first sister missionaries](#).

Both videos can be seen at mormonnewsroom.org.

Email: twalch@deseretnews.com

Mormon Leader foresees expanded role of Lady missionaries

In a recent interview with a newspaper reporter David F. Evans, Executive Director of the LDS Churches Missionary Department, said that with the changed force from being largely dominated by young elders to being a missionary force that is significantly represented by the sisters as well:

When asked about the increasing number of women going on missions he said:

...Right now, it is at about 28 percent [sisters]. We have about 25, 000 sisters; two years ago when [President Thomas S.] Monson announced the age change, there were about 8,000 sister missionaries. We think it will continue to be in the 25 to 30 percent range. It's not just a surge at the time of the announcement but

an ongoing desire in many young women to take advantage of the option President Monson has given them to consider missionary service. There is no pressure on them and no duty to serve, but we see a significant number of young women really want that, and now that they can do it at a little lower age, they are actively choosing missionary service to serve. We see that pattern continue. Likewise, we see more young elders choosing to serve as well. Overall, we don't see the number of missionaries declining very much over time. We think it will be a strong missionary force for years to come. ("Mormon leader foresees 'Strong missionary force years to come.'" Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 2, 2014)

When asked what whether the role of the mission president's wife would change, he said:

We view the role of mission president's wife to be highly involved ...The day is gone when she would accompany her husband without participation. She is an active trainer. We encourage her – as her time and family circumstances permit – to go out with the sisters, help them be better teachers. She's now part of the leadership council instead to just a companion to her husband, who is part of that [leadership] council. ...Of all the things that have changed, the council system may be the best received. ...There is authorization currently where circumstances require to have sisters only districts, and there are places where that is being done. You could see a circumstance where a group of sisters in an outlying area, and it wouldn't be wise to put an elder companionship in that area, a mission president could compose a district just with sisters. That is happening. It's expressly provided for and we are watching it. We've seen a lot of good experiences happening. (Stack.)

Are other Great Missionary Harvests underway?

Is the past a prologue to the future? Will the greatly increased number of missionaries serving in America and church missions worldwide as a result of changes announced since October 2012 result in more Great Missionary Harvests like the New Era that occurred in Great Britain more than a half century ago? Recent events in the LDS Church during the past nine months may reveal they are or will soon be underway.

During the first few months after President Thomas S. Monson made the dramatic announcement at the church's October 2012 General Conference lowering the missionary age from 19 to 18 for young men and from 21 to 19 for young women in the United States, over 6,000 young women and young men submitted applications to serve missions, an increase of 500 percent.

According to Church leaders, the lowering of the ages for young members to serve missions "has pushed the total number of LDS missionaries currently serving around the world to more than 60,000 for the first time in more than a decade." In February 2013, the church called 58 new mission presidents to head the 58 new missions that opened on July 1, 2013 throughout the World. ("LDS Church creates 58 missions in response to surge in missionary applications," Joseph Walker, *Deseret News*, February 22, 2013.)

Presently, the lowering of the age to serve missions has had a dramatic impact on the numbers of LDS students attending colleges and universities in the State of Utah and may be having a significant impact on the number of LDS students attending colleges and universities elsewhere.

The challenge and potential of the current great increase in missionaries hearkens back to September 1958 when President David O. McKay announced the New Era at the dedication of the London Temple that resulted in the New Era's great missionary harvest in Great Britain. Derek A. Cuthbert describes the tremendous growth that occurred in Great Britain in his book *The Second Century: Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, Vol. I*.

In the summer of 1960, the Church lowered the age for missionary service by American young male members from 20 to 19 years and the age for American young female members from 23 to 21 years that greatly increased the numbers of missionaries who served during the New Era in Great Britain and elsewhere. Within a year after March 1960, the number of missions in the British Isles increased from one to four, and the number of missionaries increased from roughly 200 to more than 800. Those dramatic increases made during the New Era in Great Britain achieved the dramatic and impressive results described above and graphically below.

Epilogue: Three views of the New Era

It is fitting that I conclude my firsthand account of serving as a missionary during the first stages of the "New Era" in Great Britain to compare my missionary experience with those of Joseph Fielding Smith, who served in England from 1899 to 1901, shortly after my grandfather Joseph Barker and his two brothers-in-law, David E. Randall and Alma Montgomery, who served missions to Great Britain during the period from 1894-1898.

Joseph Fielding Smith experienced very little success as a missionary in Great Britain at the tail end of The First "Great Missionary Gathering" This is in marked contrast to what he experienced and saw seventy years later when, as President of the Church, he visited Great Britain in 1971 at the tail end of the New Era and its great missionary harvest that I and other New Era missionaries began and actively participated in.

In 1971, President Joseph Fielding Smith presided over the first "Area Conference" conducted appropriately in Great Britain, was held in Manchester, and saw with his own eyes the remarkable results of the New Era led by a small group of outstanding mission presidents (especially T. Bowring Woodbury, Bernard P. Brockbank, James A. Cullimore, and Grant S. Thorn) and their successors, and the thousands of dedicated and motivated New Era missionaries who served in Great Britain during those remarkable years.

It is fortuitous that the following story of President Joseph Fielding Smith happened to be in today's (2014) Priesthood and Relief Society lesson that my wife and I listened to on our iPad this morning (October 19, 2014). The second item comes from one of two books published in Britain on the 150th anniversary of the Church in that country. The third item is the conclusion the Gregory Prinace and Wm. Robert Wright in their 1995 biography of David O. McKay. I

think these three quotations provide a fitting and suitable ending to this document about the importance of the New Era to the growth and strength of the church today..

“From the Life of Joseph Fielding Smith” (Priesthood-Relief Society Manual for 2014)

Joseph Fielding Smith and his wife, Louie, were not surprised when they received a letter, signed by President Lorenzo Snow, calling Joseph to serve a full-time mission. In those early days of the Church, married men often served away from home. So when that letter arrived on March 17, 1899, about a month before their first wedding anniversary, Joseph and Louie accepted the opportunity with faith and courage, mixed with sadness at the thought of being separated for two years.

Elder Smith served in England, about 4,700 miles (about 7,600 kilometers) from home. He and Louie sent letters to each other often—letters filled with expressions of love and testimony. In one of Elder Smith’s first letters to Louie, he wrote: “I know that the work I have been called to do is the work of God or I would not stay here one minute, no, I would not have left home. But I know that our happiness is dependent upon my faithfulness while I am here. I should be willing to do this much for the love of mankind when our Savior could suffer as He did for us. ... I am in the hands of our Heavenly Father and he will watch over me and protect me if I do his will. And he will be with you while I am away and watch over you and protect you in all things.”¹

Elder Smith and his missionary companions were dedicated servants of the Lord. In one letter to Louie, he reported that each month, he and the other missionaries distributed about 10,000 tracts, or pamphlets, and visited about 4,000 homes. However, he followed this report with a sobering observation: “I don’t believe one, or more than one, tract in every hundred is read.”² During the time Elder Smith was in England, very few of the people there accepted the message of the restored gospel. In his two years of service, “he did not make one convert, did not have opportunity to perform one baptism, although he did confirm one convert.”³ Unable to see many results of his labors, he found comfort in knowing that he was doing the Lord’s will and that he was helping prepare people who might receive the gospel later in their lives.

For about two weeks of his mission, Elder Smith was confined in a hospital with four other missionaries. The five elders had been exposed to smallpox, so they were quarantined to prevent the illness from spreading. Although Elder Smith referred to their stay as an “imprisonment,” he and his companions made the best of it. They even shared the gospel with the hospital staff. At the end of the confinement, Elder Smith wrote the following report in his journal: “We have made friends with the nurses and

others who visited us during our imprisonment. Many times we have had talks with them about the gospel; also left with them books to read. When we left the hospital we sang a hymn or two, which among other things impressed those who listened, for we left them with tears in their eyes. I think we have made an impression at the hospital for good, especially with the nurses, who confess that we are not the people they thought we were and [that] they will now defend us at all times.”⁴

Elder Smith concluded his mission in June 1901. Seventy years later, he returned to England as President of the Church to preside over an area conference. By that time, the seeds he and others had planted had sprouted and flourished. He rejoiced to see so many British Saints come to the meetings.⁵ He said, “*Several stakes of Zion, a temple dedicated to the Lord, a considerable number of ward and stake buildings, and some highly successful missionary work—all testify to the fact that the Church is coming of age in Great Britain.*” [italics added] And he said that this progress in Great Britain was representative of what would happen throughout the world. He declared that the gospel is for all people and that “the Church shall be established everywhere, in all nations, even to the ends of the earth, before the second coming of the Son of Man.”⁶

From: Truth will Prevail—What the New Era meant

(James R Moss, a former British missionary wrote Chapter 13, in ***Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints In The British Isles 1837-1987*** pp.394-395)

It was thus no surprise that one who so loved and understood the British people [President David O. McKay] should be the one to help bring about a great awakening for the Church in Britain. In 1951 when David O. McKay became President of the Church, there was only one mission in the British Isles. By 1971 there were seven missions and, for a time, there had been nine. Similarly, in 1951 there were no stakes in Britain, and most of the branches met in rented halls or in converted homes that were ill-suited to church activities. By 1971 there were nine stakes in the British Isles, more than a hundred new chapels, plus the greatest symbol of the spiritual awakening, a temple of the Lord.

In fact, the two decades between 1951 and 1971 saw greater changes for the Church in Britain than in any period since the apostolic missions of the 1830s and 1840s. Following a long night of struggle in its first century, the Church in Britain began to see the light of a new day in the 1950s, building upon the heritage it had forged through years of faithfulness in the face of persecution and sacrifice. By 1971 it had come of age as a fully developed and vital part of the world-wide church.

From: David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism---What the New Era meant to the international church

Thus, a combination of factors --- abandoning the doctrine of gathering, the construction of temples and chapels, reversing the church's negative public image, and training local leaders, [and, I would add, adopting new and more dynamic approaches to missionary work and achieving a substantial increase in the number of missions and missionaries] --- all worked together to effect a maturation of the international church. One hundred twenty-eight years after the founding to the church, the first stake outside North America was formed in New Zealand; a year later, England saw the formation of the first stake in Europe; and in 1966 the first stake was organized in Brazil. Between 1958 and McKay's death in 1970, thirty-four LDS stakes began operations outside North America [with eight of them in Great Britain]. (Prince & Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, p. 372)