

bers in 1835 but that by 1844, when total Church membership was approximately 15,000, the majority of members (about 8,000) had been converted in Great Britain and therefore probably did not have family ties to religious radicals from colonial New England (7–8).

If the LDS Church's doctrines were still radical during the Nauvoo period, however, Rust's work does not explain why the 8,000 British converts—or the American converts who were not related to seventeenth-century New Englanders, for that matter—had the spiritual disposition to “resonate” with Mormonism. Rust's suggestion that 1830–35 was the early and radical phase of the LDS Church, however, does not ultimately undermine his argument. Instead, it makes his title more apt than it first appears. Perhaps, if a radical spiritual disposition remained necessary for motivating conversion beyond the mid-1830s, there were many radical origins. It would be interesting to see, for example, the source to which the British converts of the 1840s traced their spiritually open disposition. Since the religious movements Rust discusses were transatlantic, similar genealogical research could reveal a similar radical origin.

Perhaps the best way to summarize this book's strengths and weaknesses is to return to the joke that opened this review. If humor really does disguise hostility, then the resentment my distant cousin's quip turns on is the necessary exclusion of other families and other stories that a genealogical narrative creates, even when that genealogical narrative is accurate and historically enlightening. Rust's book should be read by anyone seriously interested in the formative era of the LDS Church, but it should also serve as a call for others to investigate their own radical origins. Maybe then it will be Rust's turn to be bored.

## Seeing Post-Zion Salt Lake City

Alan Barnett, *Seeing Salt Lake City: The Legacy of the Shipler Photographers* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 174 pages, \$49.95.

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Those of us who study material culture frequently use “rootedness,” which is the quality of an object or a structure when it is fixed in association with a geographical place. For example, a group of two-hundred-year-old tombstones with German inscriptions marking graves in the lower Shenandoah Valley of Virginia is valued as evidence by cultural geographers, historians, and material culture scholars alike. The tombstones' connection to a particular time, place, and society is

relatively certain. On the other hand, the provenance of two-hundred-year-old pieces of furniture, silverware, firearms, or other moveable objects is often much more difficult to tie down. Thus, “reading” these “uprooted” objects requires a lot more speculation or educated guesswork—the kind of conjecture that makes many academics very uncomfortable.

Buildings are rooted. Depending on their size and construction, they rarely get moved very far from the places they are originally built. Much like those eighteenth-century German grave markers in the lower Shenandoah Valley, a building’s connection to a particular era, region, and culture is relatively certain. Thus, scholars who study historical architecture as cultural evidence are able to use buildings from a certain time and place to draw inferences about the practical and aesthetic values of the society that created them. Sometimes these scholars compare the structures that have not survived with the ones that have been preserved. This sort of comparison has been made easier since the advent of photography, which makes it possible to capture images of structures as they existed at a specific moment in time and thus preserve facsimiles of these bits of cultural evidence for future generations of scholars. These captured images also show us buildings that have survived into the present with changes made by campaigns of remodeling and repair. With all of this in mind, what might a scholar of Mormon cultural history learn from one-hundred-year-old photographs of buildings rooted in the soil of Salt Lake City?

Those who study Mormon cultural history recognize the importance of Salt Lake City as a center of the Church’s urban identity. Unlike early Mormon capital cities such as Kirtland, Independence, Far West, and Nauvoo, Salt Lake City has served as a seemingly permanent headquarters for the LDS Church as well as the seat of economic and political power for the state of Utah. A religious refuge for Mormons that was soon besieged by federal troops and “Gentiles,” Salt Lake City was far from being the Zion community envisioned by its founders when the railroad came to Utah in 1869. Despite the influx of non-Mormon immigrants and influences brought by the railroads, it was not until after the public end of officially sanctioned new plural marriages in 1890 and the establishment of Utah as a state in 1896 that Salt Lake City became more than an essentially Mormon urban center. It was during this “post-Zion” period that the non-Mormon population of Salt Lake City grew exponentially and a modern state capital was rebuilt on ground where adobe, frame, and brick structures once stood. This post-Zion building boom tradition has defined the cityscape ever since.

In his large format, semi-glossy, “coffee table” book, *Seeing Salt Lake City: The Legacy of the Shipler Photographers*, author Alan Barnett visually addresses this post-Zion building boom tradition. Before selecting the 174 images that appear in his book, Barnett sifted through more than 100,000 images dating from 1903 to 1979 from the Shipler Photograph Collection at the Utah State Historical Soci-

ety. The Shiplers were commercial photographers who worked in Salt Lake City for the better part of the twentieth century and often photographed “business buildings, schools, churches, apartments, and private residences for owners, architects, contractors, real estate investors, and developers” (xii). These previously unpublished black and white photographs run chronologically from 1903 to 1940, with the majority dating to the first two decades of that period. The book also features a foreword by Ted L. Wilson, Salt Lake’s mayor from 1976 to 1985.

Writing for the mass audience of interested laity, neither Barnett nor Wilson attempts to draw any academic conclusions aimed at scholars in Mormon studies. Even so, Barnett clearly understands the value of these images as two-dimensional material evidence for students of Mormon cultural history. The majority of the images are of the secular side of early twentieth-century Salt Lake City. While it might be argued that even these pictures indirectly shed light on Mormon aesthetic taste of the era, they are scenes that might have been photographed in many American cities during that time.

Barnett also includes at least eighteen snapshots of scenes and structures that drew their significance from their association with the Church and its early leaders. Students of Mormon history and culture will find meaning in these particular images. For instance, I found noteworthy the 1907 photograph of the LDS Seventeenth Ward Chapel that once stood on 200 North between West Temple and Second West (21). This gothic revival meetinghouse with its castle-like parapet tower and stained-glass windows was a great example of the kind of architecture that flourished before the ubiquitous LDS corporate cookie-cutter style took over in the mid-twentieth century. Clearly this structure was designed to evoke a stylistic relationship with the Anglo-Protestant ecclesiastical building tradition. This style was almost universally recognized in that day as the fashion for American Christian congregations that traced their doctrinal heritage back to the British Protestant churches. It is hard not to imagine a predominantly British ethnic make-up for the congregation that originally built this chapel. While other LDS meetinghouses used this style, the Seventeenth Ward was distinctive in being one of the few with a stained-glass window featuring Joseph Smith’s First Vision. As Barnett notes, this church was torn down in 1966, but the window is preserved today in a new meetinghouse across the street. Those who see this window today will find that it makes more sense when viewed in conjunction with this photograph.

The book does have its weaknesses. Lacking an index, *Seeing Salt Lake City* requires readers to flip through in search of a remembered image, rereading Barnett’s three- to four-sentence captions in search of dates or other identifiers. Students of Mormon material culture and history may also come away feeling a bit frustrated by the relatively small number of photos that feature Mormon architectural subjects. Nevertheless, Barnett’s effort is a welcome addition to the li-

brary of Mormon material culture studies. Perhaps now others will build on Barnett's work and begin to answer the question, "What might a scholar of Mormon cultural history learn from one-hundred-year-old photographs of buildings rooted in the soil of Salt Lake City?"