Religion and Memory in American Public Culture, 1890-1920

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RELIGION AND MEMORY IN AMERICAN PUBLIC CULTURE, 1890-1920

a dissertation

by

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Abstract

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by

Sarah K. Nytroe

Dissertation Advisor: Professor James M. O’Toole

This dissertation examines the ways in which Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists repositioned themselves in American life and culture during the Progressive Era. Between 1890 and 1920, the place of these religious communities in American society became less secure as faith and religious practice became increasingly individualized. In response, churches reasserted their place in American society through deliberate reconstructions of the past to recreate their religious and historical identity. Through pageants, parades, poetry, and orations, they publicly displayed and celebrated their place in America and their contributions to the making of the nation. Specifically, they argued that religion and national progress went hand in hand. Progress needed religion. As such, the clerical and lay members of these communities constructed collective religious memories that strayed from historical reality in order to reinforce present needs and concerns. Perpetuating these often times misleading memories helped them to navigate the murky waters of modernity including theological change, societal prejudice, industrialization, and war by supplying them with the space to sustain the cultural legitimacy of their community. By examining religious experience via the lens of memory this dissertation illustrates how religious communities pursued an active role in America at a time when society increasingly disregarded the relevance of religion.
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Introduction

“Religion is the greatest fact of History.”
John Henry Barrows (1893)

“Memory is what we now have in place of religion.”
Court of Memory, James McConkey (1983)

In the preface to his two-volume collection containing the history and major papers delivered at the World’s Parliament of Religions, John Henry Barrows, minister of Chicago’s First Presbyterian Church and Chairman of the Parliament’s General Committee, confidently declared “Religion is the greatest fact of History.” Over the course of seventeen days, delegates of the American Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and the relatively small Buddhist and Hindu traditions attended sessions in which speakers vividly illustrated that religion advanced both religious and civic progress in the world. Edward Everett Hale, himself a prominent orator from Boston, echoed Barrows’ sentiment in his address entitled “Spiritual Forces in Human Progress.” Like Barrows and the other delegates in attendance, Hale argued that religion was the handmaiden of progress. They walked hand in hand throughout the course of world and particularly national history. Surveying the previous century Hale vigorously proclaimed that, “All that the world owes to America it owes to the spiritual forces which have been at work in the United States.” Next, Hale turned towards the coming century and the continued role that religion and “spiritual forces” would play in the realms of international relations,

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education, healthcare, and “social rights.” The progress in these areas of society would
not merely be the result of “physical” but rather of “spiritual… discovery and material
progress.”

Although brief, Hale’s address spoke not only to the major impulse behind
the Columbian Exposition and the World’s Parliament of Religions but also to the mood
of many American religious communities between 1890 and 1920. As the religious
communities at the center of this study asserted, religion – particularly their brand of
religion – imparted cultural and civic blessings that had served as a solid foundation for
social and political progress in the past and could remain so in the future.

While Barrows and his religious counterparts lauded the prominent role of
religion, the last decades of the nineteenth century also brought a challenge to the
authority of religion as faith became increasingly privatized. Unlike the American
religious representatives at the Parliament, who made their opinions regarding the
relation between religion and progress quite clear, American cultural historian Michael
Kammen points to a contrasting trend at the turn of the twentieth century. Ample
evidence exists in the enshrinement, critical evaluation, and opposition to the past to
suggest that Americans were engaged with history more than ever. The same could not
be said for religion. As the cultural and moral cachet of religion waned, Kammen argues,
a “spiritual crisis occurred.”

This turn to the past, via a critical or nostalgic eye, was

crucial to the construction and transformation of American national identity based upon
conscious efforts of remembering and forgetting. Amid an intellectual atmosphere of
growing uncertainty about the relevance of faith, national tradition served as a

3 Edward Everett Hale, “Spiritual Force in Human Progress,” in The World’s Parliament of
Religions, 523-526.
4 Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American
Culture (New York: Knopf, 1991), 194
“surrogate” for revealed religion. Numerous individuals who turned towards history and an engagement with the past had either once been ministers, students of theology, or came from families of evangelical piety. Moreover, religious institutions and clergy attempted to link religion with a national tradition. Clergy utilized the influence of their pulpits to aid the creation of national “shrines” and churches commemorated institutional anniversaries. The pageants and secular anniversary celebrations taking place before 1910 contained religious overtones as well.

Developments within the discipline of history, moreover, also contributed to a shift in historical consciousness in the late nineteenth century. Preeminent American religious historian Martin E. Marty also spoke to how the past became an appealing and luring alternative to religion, although not in a fashion that engaged the construction of a national tradition or collective memory. Historians began to critically evaluate the past with the emergence of the historical profession; philosophers, like William James, in examining their past experience in the institution of the church, increasingly rejected it; and progressive social thinkers, like John Dewey and Jane Addams, sought the recovery of labor experiences grounded in the past. The new historians, influenced largely by trends in Europe, saw history more and more as “a process of continuous, qualitative change” rather than one of providence.

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5 Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory, 194.
6 Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory, 197-199. Kammen briefly highlights several of these individuals including Tomas Dixon author of The Clansman, which served as the literary basis for the film “Birth of a Nation” (1915).
7 Perhaps this can be seen, in part, as a starting point for the creation of what sociologist Robert Bellah termed “civil religion.” See his article “Civil Religion in America,” Daedalus: Journal of the Academy of Arts and Sciences 96, no. 1 (Winter 1967): 1-21.
8 Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory, 199, 201, 206.
9 Dorothy Ross, “Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America,” The American Historical Review 89, no. 4 (October 1984): 924. For an additional study on the emergence of the historical
institutionalized religion as it had been known throughout much of the nineteenth century became less culturally, socially, and personally relevant. In the first of three volumes on modern American religion, Marty observes that, “in order to look forward on the modern scene in which they were figurative immigrants, they naturally did and must also look backward.”

Standing on the verge of the new experience of a modern industrialized American society, memory had seemingly replaced religion.

The altered attitude towards the authority and place of religion in American society and the new view of historical development occurred against a backdrop of rapid social and economic change. First, the United States expanded significantly geographically. Twelve new states were added to the Union between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I, bringing the total to 48 by 1912. The United States census of 1890, moreover, officially declared the closing of the frontier.

Following in the footsteps of its European counterparts, the United States acted on its own imperial ambitions in the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico in the late 1890s.

Second, just as the nation’s geographic horizons increased, it seemed that the daily experiences of Americans shrank. The confined urban environment replaced the expansiveness of rural living. Historian Arthur M. Schlesinger imagined this change of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as inaugurating a “clash” between a “static, individualistic, agricultural” culture and a “dynamic, collectivistic, urban”

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The majority of America’s population increasingly lived in urban areas thus providing the necessary workforce for industries in cities like New York in the Northeast and Chicago in the Midwest. In turn the economy of the United States quintupled in size between 1865 and 1914, contributing to abundant wealth – the number of millionaires grew from a handful to 4,000 in the 1890s – but also extreme poverty. The immigrants from western and southeastern Europe that comprised the bulk of America’s industrial labor force – nearly one third of the population by 1900 – also experienced the negative consequences of this economic change. Crowded into tenement housing, paying high rents, and living with inadequate sanitation and water services, the immigrant populations, Schlesinger suggests, were left “groping in the dark.”

By the early twentieth century, progressive reformers emerged to rectify the social consequences of urbanization and industrialization.

Amid the simultaneous expansion and constriction of life in the United States due to geographic, economic, and social changes, American religious communities engaged in a turn to the past to more emphatically assert the relevance of revealed religion both spiritually and historically. From the last decade of the nineteenth century to the end of World War I, these communities shined the light of the past on present and future conditions through an active recollection of the past. This allowed them to navigate an

14 Schlesinger, The Rise of the City, 120.
emerging modern American society that placed less stock in the religion of their parents and more faith in history. American religious communities, like the historians, philosophers, and social thinkers that Kammen and Marty studied, turned to the past – their religious, national, historical past – in order to look towards the future of the modern. In the process of looking backwards, they affirmed the association between religion and progress made by American delegates at the World’s Parliament of Religions. What follows in this dissertation is an examination of how religious communities reconstructed and recreated their religious and historical identities within the context of modernization and the emerging “modern scene.”

At the center of this process identity formation was an active recollection of the past and subsequent creation of a dominant narrative that provided a foundation for the religious community’s collective memory. Religious peoples, both clerical and lay, used a variety of commemorative practices and public practices to perpetuate a collective memory, a memory that would connect the meaning of past events with those of the present and future.

America’s religious communities, at both an institutional and personal level, experienced the transformations, changes, and tensions wrought by the shift from an “old

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16 The process of modernization, as understood within this study, includes rapid industrialization and urbanization through accelerated productive means that placed significant emphasis on rationality, specialization, efficiency, and progress; secularization, particularly with an emphasis on the decline of religious authority; intellectual developments within science and history, and their subsequent influence upon thoughts about the structure of society; and the spread of communication capabilities through multiple media outlets like newspapers, journals, pamphlets, and later radio and television. This understanding of the process of modernization draws from Richard D. Brown, “Modernization: A Victorian Climax,” American Quarterly 27, no. 5 (December 1975): 533-34; Daniel Joseph Singal, “Towards a Definition of American Modernism,” American Quarterly 39, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 2; Marshall Berman, All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity (New York: Simon & Schuster 1982); and Mark Chaves, “Secularization as Declining Religious Authority” Social Forces 72, no. 3 (March 1994): 756.
This dissertation uses the lens of memory studies to demonstrate how various religious communities steered a course from an “old” to “new” America by creating particular memories of the past. As such, narratives of past events and figures relevant to their respective communal identities supplied them with spiritual and historical legitimacy through public productions of history. They could strengthen the historicity of their religious faith, sustain religious belief in a context that appeared to challenge traditional religion, and reevaluate and reaffirm the relationship between religion and American society. In short, through an appropriation of a memory of the past, they could present a case for the continued relevance and importance of religion. At the center of this study are five religious communities that embarked upon ambitious commemorative projects that aimed to not only present an image of the community to itself, but also an image of itself to an American society not always willing to accept or acknowledge its contributive role.

Whether specific to the specific experience of each religious community or to a larger national or international context, the subjects of this study worked deliberately to demonstrate that, at moments of triumph or decay, religion was the fundamental source of progress and restoration. Proceeding chronologically over the course of the thirty-year period between 1890 and 1920, this dissertation begins with American Catholics and the occasion of the Columbus Quadricentennial. Held over the course of 1892-1893, and concurrent with the more public and secular Columbian Exposition, the Quadricentennial helped American Catholics to exhibit the compatibility of being both American and Catholic, a goal they continually struggled to attain throughout the nineteenth century,

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and for that matter well into the twentieth century. Following closely on the heels of the Quadricentennial was the Utah Semi-Centennial of 1897. To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the migration of Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Salt Lake Valley in Utah, in what popularly became known as the “Pioneer Jubilee,” organizers and participants perpetuated a narrative of the overland trek that could rid Utah and Mormonism of negative or opposing public sentiment. The middle chapter of this study takes as its subject a religious community that turned to the biblical past to validate the emergence of their tradition in the early twentieth century. Between 1906 and 1909, early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission – located in an industrial and working-class area of Los Angeles, California – helped to establish the Pentecostal tradition via an engagement with the New Testament and a rejection of contemporary society. The religious communities at the center of the final two chapters commemorated events and figures from their past while the United States stepped onto the international stage during World War I. Starting in 1917 and extending into 1918, General Synod and General Council Lutherans observed the Reformation Quadricentennial. Maintaining the insistent tone established by Pentecostals that pointed to the major limitations of American society, Lutherans utilized the anniversary year to not merely celebrate the Reformation and the religious liberty it bestowed, but to also point out that the religion of the Reformation was the only true cure for spiritual backsliding and international conflict. In a similar vein, Congregationalists proclaimed the relevance of the principles and character of the Pilgrims in modern society during the Pilgrim Tercentenary held in 1920-1921. In a world beginning to remake itself anew in the wake of a four-year war,
Congregationalists sought to show how the Pilgrim ideals could still provide the foundation for a free church and free state in the twentieth century.

Looking at the experience of religious communities through memory illustrates the connections among the recollection of the past, the creation of historical and religious identity, and the consistent engagement by American religious communities with public culture. Within the past thirty years, memory studies has become firmly established among scholars in the field of history.\(^\text{18}\) Scholars have examined the contested process of remembering and forgetting and the ways in which present concerns dominate constructed versions of the past to draw larger conclusions about the social, political, and cultural forces at work in society. Most of the scholarship that draws from memory studies focuses on the development of tradition (particularly in relation to the nation-state), the memory of war, and the importance of maintaining spaces and objects like monuments to perpetuate memory.\(^\text{19}\)


American religious history, have yet to fully draw from the concepts within this field to explore the American religious experience.\(^\text{20}\)

By looking at the experience of American religious communities through the lens of memory, this study underscores both the unique experiences of each group and the key factors characterizing the landscape of American religion between 1890 and 1920. In particular, this study is informed by the memory work of sociologist Maurice Halbwachs and anthropologist Paul Connerton. Although he was not the first to reflect upon the construction of memory, Halbwachs examined the creation of collective memory and its links to social power. In the 1930s, long before historians began to engage historical memory, Halbwachs laid the groundwork for thinking about the implications of remembering and forgetting. This work included his assessment of “Religious Collective Memory” in which he argued that religions, like societies in general, return to the past and frame “the new elements that it pushes to the forefront in a totality of remembrances, traditions, and familiar ideas” at their foundation or at moments of transition and transformation.\(^\text{21}\)
For the religious communities at the heart of my dissertation, the turn of the twentieth century was one of those moments of transition. Due to the institutional stress from immigration, the theological flux from Darwinism and evolution, the challenges of an emerging modern society, and eventually the global conflict of World War I, American Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists all turned to the past to retrieve familiar, almost nostalgic ideas, that could help orient their religious community to contemporary society. Moreover, Halbwachs established two more points about the function of memory relevant to this study. First, he argued that in the process of returning to the past, societies and religion were not interested in historical fact, but rather in arranging “the facts of the past in a manner conducive to inspiring believers and unbelievers alike with feelings of religious wonder, of edification and admiration.”

Similarly, the clergy and laity of each religious community deliberately ignored aspects of historical reality in order to encourage increased faithfulness among believers and to nurture a nostalgic longing for the religious, civic, and social ideals of the past within the present and future. Second, Halbwachs indicated that the recollection of the past is not a neutral project. A memory is not an exact remembrance of the past as it occurred but a reconstructed “with the aid of the material traces, rites, texts, and tradition left behind by that past, and with the aid moreover of recent psychological and social data, that is to say, with the present.” The religious communities at the center of this study intentionally recollected and created a memory of the past by looking through the lens of their contemporary religious and social concerns and future goals. Their present concerns served as a filter through which they produced a usable past.

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22 Halbwachs, “Religious Collective Memory,” in On Collective Memory, 111.
Connerton’s work also aids this dissertation at the conceptual level. While Halbwachs focused on how societies and religions created a collective memory of the past, Connerton seeks to take his ideas further by examining how a community maintains a particular memory. Connerton argues that collective memory is maintained and sustained through “commemorative ceremonies.”

To be considered a ceremony that can support and perpetuate a communal memory, Connerton suggests, it needs to be a habitual performance or ritual. In the process, these performances or rituals produce “meaningful narrative sequences” that become the foundation of a memory. In this study, American Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists created similar “meaningful” narratives of the past via the repetitive public presentation of songs, orations, pageants, publicity, and parades. Strictly speaking these methods may not be considered rites or performances. In enacting and communicating a dominant narrative of the past that was seen and heard, however, these religious communities formalized, habitualized, and ultimately preserved a particular version of the past.

Using the lens of memory as an analytical tool also allows this dissertation to strike a balance between the large-scale surveys of the American religious experience and denominationally specific studies by drawing from the critical components of both methods. In short, there is an implicit comparative component to this study. On the one hand, surveys of American religion, such as those of Sydney Ahlstrom, Martin E. Marty, and Mark Noll, lend themselves to providing the necessary narrative arc for the

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25 Connerton, _How Societies Remember_, 3-5.

26 Connerton, _How Societies Remember_, 26.
institutional and individual experience of religion. These historians have established the dominant narrative for the period studied in this dissertation, one of a battle between revealed religion (primarily mainline Protestantism) and modernization. This narrative highlights the decline of the cultural influence of Protestantism and the emergence of unbelief as a valid alternative to revealed religion. In the process, however, denominational particularities and idiosyncrasies can get lost in an attempt to present readers with a coherent argument about religion in America. Like a survey or synthesis, this dissertation highlights numerous themes of continuity that emerge unifying the specific circumstances of each religious group under the umbrella of a single American religious experience. Moreover, unlike the dominant historical narrative of the period, this dissertation will demonstrate that none of the religious communities believed in the decline of religion. As their recollection and positioning of the past in relation to the present and future demonstrates, they believed religion was on the ascendant.

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Denominational studies, on the other hand, afford more nuanced considerations of any given religion. Major concerns of denominational narratives at the turn of the twentieth century include the internal dynamics of institutional growth, theological debates, the relationship between church and state, and lived religion. At the same time they can often fall short of connecting those nuances back into a larger narrative of American religion, or for that matter, American political, social, and cultural history. Like denominational histories, this study examines the specifics of how each religious community recollected the past and created a particular memory that was unique to their own ecclesiastical context.

Either in part or as a whole several themes about the experience of American religious communities at the turn of the twentieth century emerge throughout the course of this study. First, as noted, one of the primary concerns that American Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists had during their respective commemorations was that of reestablishing, reaffirming, and or resolidfying the relationship between religion and American society. While they may have recognized a threat to religion and to their denomination specifically, recalling the past served as a defensive strategy against any real or perceived decline. Religion, these communities argued, was fundamental to the very creation of American society and to any present and

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future social and civic progress. At the same time, these religious communities rejected certain aspects of modern American life, particularly what Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists saw as excessive materialism and the lack of devout faith. The critique of the negative components of society served as a springboard for the second major theme running throughout this study. Having fully embraced the progressive outlook of American society prior to World War I, yet issuing cautions as well, these religious communities infused their respective commemorative occasions with prescriptions either to ensure continued progress or to alleviate social ills. Each community believed that its particular brand of religion possessed the means to keep America on the path of progress or to right that path. It is here that these communities could connect their respective narratives of their religious and historical past with the course of the nation’s present and eventual future. Finally, several of the religious groups in this study – the Mormons, Lutherans, and Congregationalists specifically – appropriated modern entertainment methods, advertising techniques, and bureaucratic measures to perpetuate their narratives of the past. All of these communities used various commemorative practices and public ceremonies at their disposal to create and sustain their collective memory, including literature, orations, poems, songs, art and monuments. It was the production and consumption of pageants, parades, souvenirs and publicity measures, however, that made these commemorations more than celebrations for the religious family. Not only did religious communities take a cue from trends in American culture, but also by appropriating these methods for their own purposes, they could dramatically and publicly display their narrative of the past and an image of their religious community to American society.
As representatives of America’s major denominations gathered to participate in the World’s Parliament of Religions in September 1893, with their intentions of promoting the global value of religion – and, in their minds of Christianity in particular – little did they know that the external pressures of modernization and theological change and the internal stress of immigration and church growth would prompt them to endorse not only Christianity, but their specific brand. Over the next thirty years, each of the American religious communities examined in this dissertation re-imagined its place in American society. Through their respective commemorative practices and public ceremonies they proceeded to publicly present that image to American society.

Chapter one examines the commemorative practices and public ceremonies enacted by American Catholics. After the representatives of mainline Protestantism, Roman Catholics were the largest contingent at the World’s Parliament of Religions, with eighteen delegates in attendance.\(^\text{30}\) For the Protestant organizers having delegates from the Catholic Church present in Chicago provided a boon to their event.\(^\text{31}\) Participation on the part of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the U.S. was not a foregone conclusion, however. On the one hand, as many of the Catholic delegates at the Parliament believed, their presence and ability to speak about Catholicism could help publicly define and defend the church’s relationship to American society. On the other hand, more conservative elements within Catholicism, on both sides of the Atlantic questioned the

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value of engaging with other Christian denominations let alone non-Christian religions. What would become known as the Americanist controversy within the Catholic Church by the end of the 1890s and lasting into the first decade of the twentieth century was only beginning to take shape during the World’s Parliament of Religion. During the American Catholic community’s celebration and commemoration of Christopher Columbus in 1892-1893, the underlying issues that came to define the Americanist controversy were largely absent. Rather than be embroiled in the struggles and strains of a growing church, the hierarchy and the laity recognized the Columbus Quadricentennial as a chance to define themselves once again to an American society that remained suspicious of American Catholics. Their argument, one with which many of their Protestant counterparts would have vehemently disagreed, posited that Catholicism was the source of America’s religious and civic progress including its democratic form of government. Moreover, Columbus became a model Catholic to be emulated by an immigrant population struggling against the forces of industry and modernization.

For Mormons, who are examined in chapter two, the 1890s offered an opportunity to reach out to American society and public opinion. American society, unfortunately, was not necessarily ready to allow them into the mainstream. While the state of Utah had its own building at the Columbian Exposition, which included a statue of Brigham


Young, the organizers of the Parliament did not invite any Mormon delegates. At a moment when the country was celebrating its discovery by Columbus, Utah and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were taking steps to improve their image. Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church and successor to Brigham Young, officially banned the practice of polygamy in 1890. Long a point of contention between Mormons and Americans at both a popular and political level, Woodruff’s Manifesto smoothed the path for the territory of Utah to become a state in 1896. Within the span of a few years, Utah entered the political mainstream and Mormons continually tried to penetrate the religious mainstream. The occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the Mormon pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley presented both Mormon and non-Mormon Utahans with one more opportunity to publicly define their relationship with the country. In the perpetuation of a narrative that linked the development and progress of Utah with that of the nation and the West, Utahans presented an image of themselves stripped of any significant references to Mormonism. The organizers of the Pioneer Jubilee clearly recognized that Utah’s future economic and political success in the Union required a sanitized and more universal narrative of the Mormon pioneers. Just as Mormons were ignored at the World’s Parliament of Religions, organizers and average Utahans stripped

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the historical record of its Mormon character in order to achieve specific goals in the present and future.

At the time of the World’s Parliament of Religions, Pentecostalism had yet to emerge onto the American religious scene. Most Protestant delegates at the Parliament represented the emerging liberal and conservative interests that would come to characterize Protestantism in the first decades of the twentieth century. The voices of liberals like Washington Gladden, father of the Social Gospel, and Lyman Abbot, pastor of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, dominated. At the same time, however, the language of Pentecost was present at the Parliament, but in a manner distinct from that expressed by Pentecostals a decade later. Several Protestant speakers drew a parallel between the occasion of the Parliament and Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Participants used this appeal to sacred history to advance a view of the Parliament as a moment for potential religious unity and harmony and to elevate “American idealism.”

Unlike the other religious communities in this dissertation, early Pentecostals participating in the revivals at the Azusa Street Mission between 1906 and 1909 did not remember their past to address their needs in the present, but rather created a past that gave their budding tradition religious and historical legitimacy in the present. Chapter three examines how they turned to the biblical past to construct an origins narrative. In the process they remembered the first Pentecost, not to promote a triumphant view of American society and the Christian religion, but rather to chastise contemporary Christianity and point out its failures. Moreover, in their attempt to replicate the Pentecostal narrative in the twentieth century, the participants at the Azusa Street Mission

also sought to restore a “purer” Christianity that could help redeem society from its materialism and usher in the return of Jesus to earth.

By all accounts, there were no representatives of any synod of the Lutheran Church at the World’s Parliament of Religions. As with other Protestant groups, however, Lutherans did hold separate denominational congresses in conjunction with the Parliament. The limited public presence of Lutheran leaders reflects a larger pattern of the ability of the denomination to fly under the radar of both American religious history and American history. There is a limited amount of scholarship on Lutheranism published outside the confines of denominational presses while large surveys of American religious history often gloss over Lutheranism. On the one hand, as Martin E. Marty himself suggests, Lutherans appear to be a “historyless” people. Mark Noll, on the other hand, suggests that American society’s understanding of Lutheranism – think guilt, Jell-O molds, and lutefisk – comes largely from the fictional town of Lake

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37 Brief reports on the Lutheran Congress held by the General Synod, the General Council, and the Missouri Synod can be found in Barrows, *The World’s Parliament of Religions: An Illustrated and Popular Story*, 1468-1478.


Wobegan, Minnesota, as presented in Garrison Keillor’s “A Prairie Home Companion.”

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Lutheranism faced internal struggles including the persistence of synodical division and a growing religious body due to immigration. Moreover, church leaders became increasingly concerned about the perceived threats of the New Theology and World War I. Most Lutherans, no matter their ethnic background, faced anti-German sentiment. Chapter four looks at the Reformation Quadricentennial of 1917-1918, when clerical and lay Lutherans actively worked to impart a sense of historical Lutheranism to themselves and American society. Lutherans undertook the commemoration with the intention of demonstrating the value of Lutheran history in shaping modern American society; they did not want to be a historyless people in their own eyes or those of non-Lutherans. In addition, they sought to highlight the contemporary applicability of the Reformation tradition, particularly in the areas of religious and civic liberty.

Congregationalists and their religious interests, a major force in mainstream Protestantism at the beginning of the twentieth century, were well represented at the World’s Parliament of Religions. In the final moment of “triumphant Protestantism,” according to Richard Hughes Seager, the organizers of the Parliament – those from the Protestant mainstream – also attempted to “overcome the provincialism that they thought afflicted religion.” The Congregationalist Church, more than any other Protestant denomination, embraced the workings of the New Theology as inspired by evolutionary theory and biblical criticism in order to shed the supposed constrictions of religious

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sectarianism. It is largely in the context of emerging theological contentions between modernists and fundamentalists that the history of Congregationalism is addressed during this period; there is little scholarship specifically on the experience of Congregationalists themselves and the institutional work of the church during this period. As they celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims in Massachusetts in 1920-1921, which is examined in chapter five, Congregationalists sought to re-imagine their religious ancestors’ place in the analogs of history; religious intolerance was forgotten while the principles and character of the Pilgrims were highlighted. The Pilgrims became models of religious devotion and democratic government for an institution struggling to remain relevant to its congregants and for a denomination trying to retain cultural influence. Like the Pentecostals and Lutherans before them, the Congregationalists exploited the commemorative event to both right the ills of society, particularly in the wake of the World War I, and to express a confident hope in the future.

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Past. Present. Future. The American religious communities comprising this study remembered a specific, and often idealized, version of the past in order to reorient themselves to the present and future. To construct a religious and historical identity for themselves in a way that closely identified the progress of American society with their religious community, they culled from past figures and events to create a dominant narrative that articulated the foundation for this relationship. They aspired to make their

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history familiar to an American public that rejected, ignored, or increasingly disregarded the dynamic ways in which religion shaped society. Religion, they concluded in short, paved the way for progress in the past and could continue to do so in the present and future. For American Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists, navigating the often treacherous waters of the present and living on the cusp of the modern required a return to the past.
Chapter One

Making America Catholic: American Catholics and the Columbus Quadricentenary, 1892-1893

*Satan in Arms against Columbus*, an epic poem by the dramatist Theodore Sydney Vaughn, was one of numerous pieces of commemorative literature to be produced during the Columbus Quadricentenary in 1892-1893. On the one hand this poem, like many biographies and histories of Columbus written up to and during the nineteenth century, addressed both the personality and the famous voyage of Columbus in 1492. On the other hand, unlike the standard biographies of the day, Vaughn explicitly identified Columbus’s Catholicism as a central driving factor in the discovery of America and the spread of Christianity from the old to the new world. Vaughn forfeited historical accuracy to convey certain spiritual lessons. From the opening scene in the “Court of Hell” to the dramatic conclusion in which Mary, the “Star of the Sea” rescues Columbus and his crew from a storm brewed by the demons of Hell, Vaughn created a religiously driven narrative about Columbus, his voyage, and the origins of America. The discoverer and his discovery were not merely about new lands and new people, but about a battle between Heaven and Hell, the forces of good and evil.

In the “Court of Hell,” Lucifer’s followers – the demons, fallen angels, and principalities – gather together to debate man’s fate (i.e. eternal salvation) after the death of “Divinity Incarnate on the cross” (i.e. Jesus). Their last stronghold – lands untouched by Europeans where “savage Indians” worshipped them – Lucifer explains, was threatened by the “Church of Peter” and a man named Colon being sent by God across the ocean. The allegiance of the Indians must be maintained at all costs, Lucifer
demands, and Colon must be stopped.\(^1\) What follows in the drama is a contest of spiritual might between the powers of hell and the powers of heaven over the ability of Colon to bring the news of the gospel to the Indians. At each step Colon is “opposed by some preternatural agent” but he is also “sustained by some supernatural power.”\(^2\) Three times Lucifer and his followers try to undermine Colon’s religious mission to reach the Indians and three times God and his angels come to his aid.

At first, Lucifer and his loyal followers scheme to ruin Colon’s public reputation, to prevent him from receiving financial support for his voyage, and to warn him in his dreams that attempting to cross the sea would only bring him pain and anguish. Even in his frustration at being undermined at every corner, Colon continues to find inner strength through prayer, frequent attendance at Mass, and reception of communion. Moreover, an Angel from heaven urges Colon to push forward in his pursuit of unknown lands across the ocean.\(^3\) Despondent one moment and uplifted the next, Colon remains confident that “High Heaven makes of me a favored child,/And I,-and none but I,-shall lead the way/To speak God’s name where name of God is not.”\(^4\) Colon embraces the favor that heaven bestows on him knowing that finding unknown lands is about continuing the good work that began with the Incarnation.

Unsuccessful in both ruining Colon’s reputation and preventing him from receiving financial support from Spain, Lucifer labors to thwart God’s plans by placing another obstacle in front of Colon. A two-pronged plan unfolds. First, Lucifer sends demons to the Port of Palos to instill fear into the hearts and minds of the sailors and

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\(^2\) Vaughn, “Introduction” in *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, [np].
\(^3\) Vaughn, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, 22-54.
\(^4\) Vaughn, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, 29.
prevent them from joining Colon. Second, he dispatches a ship carrying the damned of Hell disguised as a much-needed and willing crew for Colon. Just as before when Colon was opposed by evil powers, he once again benefits from heavenly protection. Before employing this overzealous crew, Colon insists that they swear upon his sword, a sword that happens to have been forged in Heaven and gifted to him by one of God’s Angels. Three times he demands they swear an oath. Three times they refuse. In an instant the heavens burst open and an Angel “pitched an angered bolt” down upon the demon-ship shattering it to bits and sending the crew back to Hell.

Lucifer makes a third and final attempt to spoil the venture of the heaven-blessed and protected Colon during the voyage west across the unknown waters. While the demonstration of God’s power and might on the behalf of Colon eventually convinces the sailors of Palos to join his crew, at sea the demons of hell continued to foment fear and mutiny in their hearts and minds. In contrast to the fickleness of his crew, however, Colon remains steadfast in his faith and his mission as he prayed daily. Colon calls upon the direct intervention of heaven even as hell commands the weather to work against him – first in holding back the wind and then in brewing up a terrible storm. In the final act of the spiritual battle for the souls of the Indians in unknown lands, the mere sight of Mary, the “Star of the Sea,” standing between Colon’s ships and the storm sends Lucifer and his demons back to Hell. Colon proceeds on his voyage and safely arrives in the Americas.

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5 Vaughn, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, 78-112. Certain numbers in Old and New Testament books of the Bible have been interpreted to hold significance; in this case, three often signifies completeness.
6 Vaughn, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, 112.
7 Vaughn, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, 131-175.
Like much of the outpouring of commemorative literature during the four-hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus’s voyage from Spain across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas, Vaughn’s poem sacrificed historical accuracy for compelling drama and rich moral and religious lessons. This poem stands out from other commemorative literature during the Quadricentenary because Vaughn situated Columbus within a religious – and more specifically a Catholic – narrative framework. The Catholicity of the narrative and the figure of Columbus himself are apparent throughout the piece from the title of the poem, to its content, to the preface penned by John Lancaster Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, Illinois. Even with the vivid title, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, Vaughn immediately established the thematic focus of his poem as one grounded in a spiritual battle between Heaven and Hell for the souls of Indians via the voyages of Columbus. Moreover, in the face of numerous obstacles that threatened the wellbeing of his family and his public reputation, Columbus remained unwavering in the pursuit of his divine mission, encouraged through the practice of his faith, and confident with heaven’s direct intervention in his life.

The Catholic character of this commemorative poem is evident in the preface by Spalding. Appointed bishop of Peoria in 1877, Spalding was the primary mover and shaker behind the establishment of the Catholic University of America in 1889.\(^8\) Moreover, Spalding leaned more towards the liberal spectrum in the divergence within

the hierarchy over the proper relationship between the Church (and its inhabitants) and American culture; liberals, or Americanists, came to desire a fuller engagement between the Church and American society, while conservatives, or ultramontanes, advocated a greater degree of separation. In his preface, Spalding articulated a view of Columbus’s achievement that reflected his Americanist inclinations. Columbus, Spalding wrote, “is the inaugurator of the modern age, in which the principles of Christianity find larger application, in which enlightenment spreads, good will prevails, and the people rule.”

According to Spalding, Columbus not only served as the starting point for the spread of Christianity, specifically Catholicism, but Christianity had allowed for the development of enlightened thought and democratic government.

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For American Catholics in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Columbus Quadricentenary offered the occasion to create a particular memory of Columbus. Church leaders and laity employed this memory to bolster the public image of the Church in the face of anti-Catholicism, strengthen the devotion of the faithful that was increasingly comprised of immigrants, and proclaim their belief in the foundational role Catholicism played in America’s founding and future progress. According to Jay P. Dolan, the period between 1880 and 1920 marked a “cultural awakening” of sorts for American Catholics and by the 1890s, the Catholic Church in America had “come of age.”

The numbers of the faithful had increased exponentially from 1850 to 1900, jumping from 1.5 million to twelve million. This increase, which was due primarily to

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10 John Lancaster Spalding, preface to Vaughn, *Satan in Arms against Columbus*, [np].

11 Dolan, *In Search of American Catholicism*, 72, 125.
immigration, placed strenuous demands on the institution and the hierarchy to address the needs of an ethnically diverse and urban faithful. At the same time, the late 1880s and the 1890s also marked the intensification of the ecclesiastical debate between Americanists and ultramontanes, as briefly mentioned, over the nature of the Catholic Church in America. Heated debates between Americanists and ultramontanes over issues like education and immigration came to a climax in 1899 when Pope Leo XIII condemned Americanism in the encyclical Testem Benevolentiae. During the Quadricentenary, Catholics reconstructed the memory of Columbus and his voyages to navigate the murky waters of achieving greater public confidence, strengthening a large immigrant church, and defining the proper relationship between the church and American culture.

One of the chief factors shaping the Catholic memory of Columbus during the Quadricentenary was the collective memory of anti-Catholicism. Anti-Catholic prejudice was predicated on a dichotomy between Catholic and Protestant piety and theology, but also between the church as an institution and American government. While America was democratic, free, and progressive, opponents perceived Catholicism to be authoritarian, monarchical, and superstitious. The communal memory of this supposed division was shaped by what Dolan refers to as five “waves” of anti-Catholicism; the ebb and flow of anti-Catholicism.

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anti-Catholicism served as the primary backdrop shaping the content and overall themes of the Columbian Catholic narrative.\footnote{Jay P. Dolan, foreword to Hennesey, American Catholics, ix. For more detailed examinations of anti-Catholicism from the colonial period through the late nineteenth century see John McGreevy, Catholicism and American Freedom: A History (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003); Justin Nordstrom, Danger on the Doorstep: Anti-Catholicism and American Print Culture in the Progressive Era (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); Mark Massa, Anti-Catholicism in America: The Last Acceptable Prejudice (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 2003), 2-37; and Jody M. Roy, Rhetorical Campaigns of the 19th Century Anti-Catholics and Catholics in America, Studies in American Religion (Lewistown, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000).} During the colonial period Catholics experienced political and social constraints while during the 1820s and 1830s anti-Catholicism became more widespread with the publication of popular exposés on the secret lives of priests and nuns behind closed doors. By the 1850s, anti-Catholicism became political again with the organization of the Nativist Party and charges of “popish” conspiracy. While anti-Catholicism seemed to diminish during the Civil War, by the 1870s fears of a church making political headway with the Democratic Party, pushing parochial education, and opposing liberalism, national unity, and intellectual progress emerged. Moreover, during the Quadricentenary, anti-Catholicism experienced a resurgence under the auspices of the American Protective Association [APA]. Founded in Clinton, Iowa, in 1887 by Henry F. Bowers and thriving primarily in the upper Midwest, APA membership jumped from 70,000 in 1893 to nearly 500,000 in 1894. Although it largely dissipated by 1900, the APA demonstrated the staying power of sordid tales of Catholic conspiracy and the desire to keep Catholics from holding public positions.\footnote{McGreevy, Catholicism and American Freedom, 124-125; Nordstrom, Danger on the Doorstep, 37-38; Massa, Anti-Catholicism in America, 30-32. For a fuller account of the APA see Les Wallace, The Rhetoric of Anti-Catholicism: The American Protective Association, 1887-1911, European Immigrants and American Society (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1990).} The distinctively Catholic memory of Columbus and its perpetuation in public parades, orations, dramas, exhibits, and commemorative literature sought to fully put to rest any doubts about the ability of Catholics to be loyal to both church and country.
A second, and related factor, shaping the Catholic memory of Columbus was the desire on the part of Catholics to achieve respectability by addressing the devotional life of its immigrant membership. For the newly emerged Catholic middle class and ecclesiastical leadership, the Quadricentenary presented an opportunity to shore up the religious fervor and strengthen the cohesion of its growing urban and immigrant base. The Catholic middle class and hierarchy transformed Columbus into a figure that could unite all Catholics beyond their particular ethnic backgrounds and loyalties. Comprised primarily of second generation Irish and Germans who worked as educators, editors and writers, their positions allowed them to function as a “bridge” between the church’s immigrant population and the larger Protestant culture. Not only could middle-class Catholics moderate between the immigrant population and non-Catholics but they could also ease the tensions between Catholicism and American society by cultivating an “understanding of Catholicism that minimized conflict with national values.”

The church hierarchy and the middle class shared a concern about the devotion and loyalties of the immigrant population. Bishops meeting at the Third Plenary Baltimore Council in 1884 specifically took steps to build up the institutional supports of the church as it related to its growing immigrant character. Americanists were

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15 Paul Gerard Robichaud, “The Resident Church: Middle Class Catholics and the Shaping of American Catholic Identity, 1889-1899” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1989), 4-5. Because historians of American Catholicism tend to focus on the dynamics of the immigrant church, Robichaud’s study is one of only a handful that gives a detailed examination of the Catholic middle class. Other works that touch upon bridging groups include Thomas J. Jonas’s The Divided Mind: American Catholic Evangelists in the 1890s, The Heritage of American Catholicism (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1988); and Deirdre M. Moloney’s American Catholic Lay Groups and Transatlantic Social Reform in the Progressive Era (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

16 O’Brien, Public Catholicism, 99.

17 Ellis, American Catholicism, 104-105; Hennesey, American Catholics, 181-182. For scholarship that examines the development of the church’s supporting institutions see Dorothy M. Brown and Elizabeth McKeown, The Poor Belong to Us: Catholic Charities and American Welfare (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); and Carol K. Coburn and Martha Smith, Spirited Lives: How Nuns...
particularly riled by what they perceived to be the divided loyalties of the church’s immigrant population. John Ireland, bishop of St. Paul and the most vocal and zealous advocate of Americanism, argued that the lack of harmony within the church as a result of immigration translated into the church’s inability to completely shed the labels that Catholics were foreign and unfit for citizenship.\(^\text{18}\) Specifically, the immigrants arriving from areas of southeastern Europe in the 1880s and 1890s who remained loyal to their homeland hindered the church from completely integrating into American society.\(^\text{19}\) As such, the Catholic hierarchy and middle class made Columbus the first American Catholic. Columbus’s ability to transcend ethnic loyalties and remain devoted to the church made him a valuable tool to assimilate immigrants into the folds of the church and erase divisions between the church and American culture.

The final issue shaping the construction of the memory of a Catholic Columbus was the desire on the part of church hierarchy to solidify the association between the Catholic Church and the religious and political progress of the United States. As mentioned, anti-Catholic rhetoric chastised the church for not only being behind the times, but actually hindering religious and civil progress. During the Quadricentenary, however, church hierarchy and Catholic authors argued that Columbus served not only as the religious link between the old and the new world but also opened the way for the development of democratic forms of government and the future advancement of the country. Through missionaries and average lay Catholics, furthermore, the church had made her mark on the development of the nation. After inundating American society


\(^\text{19}\) Cross, *The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America*, 89.
with orations, parades, and stories advocating the Catholic memory of Columbus no one, the hierarchy and Catholic authors declared, could deny the past, present, and future relevance of the Catholic Church.

Columbus in History and in Memory

By the Quadricentenary in 1892-1893, multiple biographies and histories from both sides of the Atlantic had firmly established Columbus’s reputation, heroism, and centrality to the development of America. English-language biographies of Columbus and histories of the discovery up until the American Revolution were predominately written and published in Europe. The American Revolution, however, heightened the importance for the colonists to appropriate Columbus and his legacy for political purposes. In the process of seeking political legitimacy and separation from England, Columbus came to represent “the soul and spirit of the nation and embodies… its sense of courage and adventure, of perseverance and triumph, of brash indomitability.” From that tie forward through the Quadricentenary, Columbus was intimately linked to the identity of the nation and possessed the character Americans should emulate.

A long tradition of Columbus biographies and the transformation of his legacy – almost immediately from the time of his voyages in 1492 – enabled American Catholics to remake Columbus in their own image because. In part, the malleability of the memory and legacy of Columbus stemmed from his own self-promotion, contemporary histories written by admirers, including his son Ferdinand and reformed conquistador Bartolomé

20 Claudia L. Bushman, America Discovers Columbus: How an Italian Explorer became an American Hero (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992), xii.
de Las Casas, and gaps in the historical record. Rather than being presented with one Columbus, “history has given us many Colombuses and left us an incomplete record from which to reconstruct the Columbus who really was.” In his study of the evolution of Columbus Day and Columbian centenary celebrations, historian Matthew Davis points out that Columbus is “the emptiest – if among the most priceless – of American historical vessels.” Puritans during the colonial period to Native Americans during the Quincentenary in 1992 have been equally fervent in their praise and vilification of Columbus’s status as national hero and symbol. Similarly, during the Quadricentenary, American Catholics filled the empty vessel of Columbus with their own interpretation of the discoverer and his legacy. American Catholics created a memory of Columbus that converted him from merely an American hero to an American Catholic hero, an image that suited their present needs in the early 1890s. He became the Catholic discoverer – a

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23 Wilford, The Mysterious History of Columbus, x.


His Catholicism became the center of the narrative. In the process of constructing a narrative that intimately linked Catholicism with the course of American history and democratic ideals, Catholics not only provided the long sought-after proof of the compatibility between being Catholic and being American, but they suggested that Catholicism served as the foundation for American society and democracy.

American Catholics turned to publishing their own interpretations of Columbus and his legacy knowing that biographies and histories of Columbus and his voyages had affirmed his heroism and pervasive presence in the collective consciousness of nineteenth-century Americans. In particular, American Catholic writers took aim at two of the most widely-received Columbus biographies published in the nineteenth century: Washington Irving’s *A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (1828) and Justin Winsor’s *Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery* (1892). Irving’s mammoth biography became an instant success and the most popular biography of Columbus throughout the remainder of the century; reprints in nearly forty editions in the United States and Great Britain and over fifty editions in Latin America and Europe came out during his lifetime alone.\(^{27}\) Although he utilized the then newly available compilation of manuscripts and documents organized by Martin Fernández de Navarre about Columbus and the voyages, Irving filled up the Columbus vessel with large doses of imagination and drama and limited amounts of


\(^{27}\) Wilford, *The Mysterious History of Columbus*, 47; and Schlereth, “Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism,” 943.
Winsor’s account of Columbus provided a more critical assessment of both Columbus and Irving. Published in 1891 to supplement the upcoming Columbian exposition, Winsor raised numerous questions about Columbus’s goals, motivations, actions, and ultimate meaning for American history. In the process, he critiqued Irving and Irving-inspired depictions of Columbus by other historians who, in Winsor’s eyes, failed to assess Columbus critically. Analyzing the inability of historians to probe Columbus’s character, he targeted them for masking the truth, which was “nowhere more patent than in the palliating hero-worship of Irving, with his constant effort to save a world’s exemplar for the world’s admiration, and more for the world’s sake than for Columbus’s.” The publication of Winsor’s more critical history, however, was poorly timed; it was published on the eve of celebrations and commemorations during the Quadricentenary.

The creators of American Catholic commemorative literature on Columbus faulted authors like Irving and Winsor for what they saw as a deplorable inattention to his Catholicity. The absence of Columbus’s Catholicism, they believed, was due to the desire to perpetuate anti-Catholic prejudice. American Catholic writers argued that Winsor, Irving, and other Columbus biographers and historians like the American William H. Prescott, the German Wilhelm von Humboldt, and the Spaniard Emilio Castelar, failed to pen suitable and acceptable interpretations of Columbus and his

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28 For more detailed accounts of Irving’s biography of Columbus and the subsequent Columbus mania see Bushman, America Discovers Columbus, 106-154; Sale, The Conquest of Paradise, 341-350; and Schlereth, “Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism,” 943-945.
29 Justin Winsor, Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), 501.
30 Bushman, America Discovers Columbus, 155-157; Schlereth, “Columbia, Columbus, and Columbianism,” 964.
Only a few historians, like the Frenchman Roselly de Lorgues, the Italian Francesco Tarducci, and the American John Gilmary Shea, and all Catholics for that matter, could competently interpret Columbus and assess his legacy. Proponents, primarily Catholic writers, created a memory in which Columbus was “saint as well as hero.” Opponents of Columbus, the “malevolent detractors and revilers” as Catholics saw them, did not allow for “high spiritual motive nor even natural courage nor magnanimity.” Catholic writers and orators during the Quadricentenary would right this wrong. Blinded by the experiences, needs, and prejudices of the present moment in which they lived, the two sides – the Catholic and the non-Catholic writers – struggled to create and control the dominant memory of Columbus.

Catholic writers argued that those non-Catholic writers who ignored or slandered Columbus perpetuated anti-Catholic prejudice. The Catholic interpretation of the Columbian literature by Reuben Parsons, chaplain of St. Joseph’s Hospital in Yonkers, New York, demonstrates this point of view. To address Columbus’s “alleged crimes,” Parsons relied heavily upon what he considered to be satisfactory narratives of Columbus, narratives written by de Lorgues and Tarducci. Other histories, like those penned by Irving and Humboldt, Parsons found problematic because the “religious aspect of the life of the hero was presented in a distorted fashion, or, at best, in a very inadequate manner.” Moreover, Humboldt’s indictment of Columbus’s character as overly stern and cruel, Parsons argued, was nothing new. The charge was continually brought against Columbus by “the entire Protestant school.” While one “school” suggested that Columbus mistreated Indians, failed in his administrative capacities, and

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acted with extreme severity towards others, Parsons stated that these accusations were entirely false. Parsons quickly turned his attention towards what he believed to be the real issue – not the scorn of Columbus but of American Catholics in the late nineteenth century. In putting forth these allegations, historians of the “Protestant school,” like Irving, Humboldt, and Winsor, sought “to illustrate its theory that true greatness and Catholicity were incompatible.” As suggested by Parsons, the non- (and anti-) Catholic Columbian literature was not about the legacy of Columbus, but rather about using the memory of Columbus to perpetuate prejudice against the Catholic Church.\(^\text{33}\)

Winsor’s critical assessment of the discoverer and the Columbian literature caused the greatest amount consternation for American Catholic writers and orators during the Quadricentenary. In the final chapter of his five-hundred-page biography of Columbus, Winsor devoted considerable attention to discrediting the Catholic and non-Catholic interpretive schools of Columbus. Few escaped his anger over the failure to critically examine Columbus and his character; religious affiliation did not matter. In Winsor’s estimation, “There is no more conspicuous example in history of a man showing the path and losing it.”\(^\text{34}\) The non-Catholic historians like Irving, Prescott, and Humboldt, and the Catholic scholars, like de Lorgues and Shea, all failed to recognize the problem of Columbus’s character. They disguised the truth by assigning to Columbus the virtues of a saint and possessing no “‘worldly quality.’”\(^\text{35}\) Having adequately chastised his contemporaries, Winsor proceeded to examine the mistakes in action that stemmed


\(^{34}\) Winsor, *Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery*, 499.

\(^{35}\) Winsor, *Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery*, 501.
from Columbus’s defective character, including the enslavement of Indians, the policy of *repartimientos*, and his insistence upon maintaining territorial power.\(^{36}\) But in Winsor’s mind, the “most sorrowful of all the phases of Columbus’s character is that hapless collapse, when he abandoned all faith in the natural world, and his premonitions of it, and threw himself headlong into the vortex of what he called inspiration.”\(^{37}\) The “inspiration” Winsor referred to was the same “inspiration” that American Catholics writers like Vaughn sought to commemorate, the inspiration Columbus derived from his faith and that motivated him to spread the Gospel. He abandoned the guidance of science, wisdom, and reason, Winsor argued, and hopelessly began to accredit to Divinity the measure of his own infallibility. ‘God made me,’ he says, ‘the messenger of the new heaven and the new earth, of which He spoke in the Apocalypse by St. John, after having spoken of it by the mouth of Isaiah, and He showed me the spot where to find it.’ He no longer thought it the views of Aristotle which guided him. The Greek might be pardoned for his ignorance of the intervening America. It was mere sacrilege to impute such ignorance to Divine wisdom.\(^{38}\)

Winsor lambasted assessments of Columbus that focused on his religious motivations. Unlike Vaughn, who explicitly pointed to the importance of divine guidance and intervention in Columbus’s voyage, Winsor saw this as mere “ignorance.” For American Catholics, Winsor’s memory of Columbus was clearly a thorn in their side and one that demanded an aggressive response.

The response to alleged insults against Columbus by Winsor came not only from writers like Parsons, but also from American Catholic orators who believed it necessary

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\(^{36}\) Winsor, *Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery*, 505-509.

\(^{37}\) Winsor, *Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery*, 510-511.

\(^{38}\) Winsor, *Christopher Columbus and How He Received and Imparted the Spirit of Discovery*, 511.
to expose what they saw as veiled anti-Catholic prejudice. James Louis O’Neill, pastor of St. Louis Bertrand Parish in Louisville, Kentucky, proclaimed to his congregation that Irving, Humboldt, Castelar, and the primary slanderer Winsor, “in blind, malicious bigotry, have joined hands with the cowardly defamers of his [Columbus] own day in a dastardly attempt to besmirch his name. It is against the Catholic claim, personified in Columbus, that the bigots are now raging. They would revile the Discoverer, simply because he was a Catholic.” Moreover, O’Neill considered the writers for magazines like Harper’s and the Century a “viper-brood spitting out their venom against the man who represents to them Catholicity.”\(^{39}\) Those historians and publishers who criticized Columbus, according to O’Neill, did not have a problem with the discoverer’s actions but with the religious affiliation and motivation behind those actions. Similarly, in his “comprehensive” story of “Columbus the Catholic,” George Barton found his patience wearing thin with “literary Pharisees,” who saw only evil in their examination of Columbus and could not open their eyes to any of the good he had done.\(^{40}\) His account, unlike those of the “Pharisees,” aimed to reveal the “pious zeal and religious fervor that characterized the life of the illustrious Columbus, and which finally led to the discovery of the New World.”\(^{41}\) In an address before the New York Independent Symposium, Maurice F. Egan, University of Notre Dame professor and later U.S. Minister to Denmark, argued that Columbus needed to be treated just as fairly as George Washington. The source of this unfair dealing by English historians, Egan reasoned,


\(^{41}\) George Barton, *Columbus The Catholic – A Comprehensive Story of Discovery* (Baltimore, MD: John Murphy and Company, 1893), vii, 3.
stemmed from their inability to project “their minds beyond the gulf made by the
Reformation, and this has biased them fatally.” The attacks on Columbus were in
actuality attacks on “the power that inspired and encouraged Columbus.”

As articulated by O’Neill, Barton, and Egan, the real issue at stake when non-Catholic
historians condemned Columbus was not his character or his actions, but the religious
inspiration for those actions, his Catholicism.

Many Catholic writers and orators outright dismissed non-Catholic accusations of
Columbus’s failure and lack of character as the work of anti-Catholic prejudice. Others, however, strove to evaluate both extremes while still affirming his importance to history.

After examining over twenty biographies of Columbus, A.A. Spofford synthesized the
divergent impressions of Columbus. Some biographers exalted his religious zeal, while
others labeled that same fervor as superstition. Biographers who dismissed the
importance of the discovery largely concluded that Columbus was ambitious, arrogant,
proud, cruel, greedy, tyrannical, and fanatical. Rather than rejecting these assessments as
the work of anti-Catholic prejudice, however, Spofford challenged these biographers to
“show us the man invested with absolute power, in that or in any former age, who abused
it less.”

Columbus made mistakes, Spofford conceded, but not nearly as many as his
contemporaries. Like Winsor, Spofford tried to critically analyze Columbus and his
legacy by the standards of Columbus’s day rather than those of the present. Scholars and
writers in the late nineteenth century, “sitting in luxurious easy-chairs in great libraries,

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42 “Christopher Columbus. Maurice F. Egan in New York Independent Symposium,” Boston Pilot
(June 11, 1892), 3.
43 A.A. Spofford, “Christopher Columbus,” Great Men and Famous Women. A Series of Pen and
Pencil Sketches of the lives of more than 200 of the most personages in history vol. 3, ed. Charles F. Horne
(New York: Selmar Hess Publishers, 1894), 138 from Articles, C. Columbus, KC-1-3-9-01, Box 733,
Knights of Columbus Archives, New Haven, CT.
can pass swift and severe judgment upon the acts and motives of Columbus.” Spofford asked them to “take the place of Columbus – if they are gifted enough among their manifold endowments to do it” before passing judgment on Columbus.  

Walk a mile in Columbus’s shoes, Spofford implored biographers and historians, and reflect upon whether or not they would have acted and thought differently. Spofford concluded that Columbus’s “successful discovery atones for his many failings.”

Richard H. Clarke, a lawyer and founder of the United States Catholic Historical Society, offered another more balanced assessment of Columbus. In his attempt to illuminate certain controversies about Columbus, Clarke pointed out that while the public impeached Columbus, “excessive eulogy and blind advocacy” by more parochial interests (i.e. Catholics) only seemed to prompt more opposition. Columbus’s discovery resulted in numerous benefits, which necessitated fair treatment but not excessive and uncritical praise. As the writings by Spofford and Clarke illustrate, some American Catholics attempted to step back from both extremes of the Columbian legacy to simultaneously acknowledge his failures and reaffirm his importance as the Catholic discoverer.

“Columbus is Ours”

Within days of one another, President Benjamin Harrison and Pope Leo XIII issued statements to the population of the United States and to the faithful of the Catholic Church respectively, articulating their desires for recognition and celebration of the Columbus Quadricentenary. In a brief proclamation published in both secular and Catholic newspapers, Harrison called for public demonstrations, particularly by

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44 Spofford, “Christopher Columbus,” *Great Men and Famous Women*, 137.
45 Spofford, “Christopher Columbus,” *Great Men and Famous Women*, 132.
46 Richard H. Clarke, *Old and new lights on Columbus: with observations on controverted points and criticisms* (New York: R.H. Clarke, 1893), v-vi, Knights of Columbus Archives, New Haven, CT.
47 Pope Leo XIII as quoted in Barton and Loughlin, *Columbus The Catholic*, xii.
America’s school-aged children, on October 12, the day designated to celebrate the Quadricentenary. This day, Harrison believed, should be set aside to honor Columbus and the country’s achievements since its discovery. Edward Bellamy, a social gospel advocate and author of *Looking Backward*, organized the Columbian Public School Celebration to be instituted throughout the country. As Cecilia Elizabeth O’Leary points out in her study of American patriotism, America’s youth would continue to spread the redemption of civilization begun by Columbus. Late nineteenth-century students were seen as representatives of the best of the enlightenment and progressive spirit that Columbus pioneered in the late fifteenth century. In addition, Harrison implored churches and their congregants to give thanks to “Divine Providence for the devout faith of the discoverer, and for the Divine care and guidance which has directed our history and so abundantly blessed our people.”

The Columbus Quadricentenary offered many celebratory opportunities for non-Catholics Americans to honor Columbus and, in turn, recognize their own accomplishments and progress in the intervening centuries. Nothing embodied this sense of achievement, progress, and nationalism more than the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago. Open for just over a year from the dedication ceremonies on October 21, 1893 through the following October, the Exposition attracted 27 million visitors to a display of

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50 J.M. Dickey, *Christopher Columbus and His Monument Columbia being a Concordance of Choice Tributes to the Great Genoese, His Grand Discovery, and His Greatness of Mind and Purpose* (Chicago and New York: Rand, McNally & Company, Publishers, 1892), 159-160.
the “highest degree of industrial civilization.” The Columbian Exposition marked the beginning point of other yearlong public celebrations in cities nation-wide. One of the most extravagant and boisterous festivities took place in New York City. Not wanting to be outdone by the city that outbid it to host the exposition, New York City responded with its own commemoration in October 1892. Nearly one million people attended the final day of a five-day gala that included parades along the streets of Manhattan and the presence of naval ships in the harbor. Although not on the scale of either Chicago or New York, cities and towns across the country took part in their own local patriotic displays of honor and praise to Columbus through parades, musical programs, plays, and orations. For a country that was celebrating its own “coming of age” and its seemingly unstoppable advancement at the turn of the twentieth century, the memory of Columbus embodied America’s sense of triumph.

American Catholics also used the Quadricentenary to claim Columbus as their own and demonstrate the church’s sense of triumph and “coming of age.” Pope Leo’s statement on Columbus addressed similar themes as those stated by Harrison; he made devout faith the centerpiece of his proclamation to Catholics. The American Catholic middle class and hierarchy organizing the Church’s commemoration and creating the Catholic Columbian narrative took Leo’s message to heart. In an address delivered at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, Leo claimed that Columbus’s accomplishment compared with

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52 O’Leary, To Die For, 165-168.
53 Burg, Chicago’s White City of 1893, xiii.
few others in the “history of humanity.”\footnote{Pope Leo XIII, “Quarto Abeunte Saeculo: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on the Columbus Quadricentennial, July 16, 1892,” in \textit{The Papal Encyclicals, 1878-1903}, vol. 2, ed. Claudia Carlen Ihm (Raleigh, NC: The Pierian Press, 1981), 285.} Unlike the Columbian Exposition, Leo linked Columbus’s achievements not to industrial, but rather to spiritual progress. Columbus’s voyages resulted in the salvation of souls. It was “indubitable that the Catholic faith was the strongest motive for the inception and prosecution of the design; so that for this reason also the whole human race owes not a little to the Church.”\footnote{Pope Leo XIII, “Quarto Abeunte Saeculo” in \textit{The Papal Encyclicals}, 286.}

Leo continued on to consider the memorable merits of the discoverer, including his human ambitions and more importantly the faith that sustained his mind, body, and will. His faith prompted him “to extend the Christian name and the benefits of Christian charity to the West.”\footnote{Pope Leo XIII, “Quarto Abeunte Saeculo” in \textit{The Papal Encyclicals}, 287.} The timing of the voyages, moreover, appeared providential for the Catholic Church, for “Columbus threw open America at the time when a great storm was about to break over the Church [i.e. the Reformation]. …he seemed to have truly been born, by a singular vision of God, to remedy those losses which were awaiting the Catholic Church on the side of Europe.”\footnote{Leo is clearly referring to the Protestant Reformation, which began in 1517 about 25 years after Columbus’s first voyage.} Because of the great good that emerged out of Columbus’s voyages, Leo proposed that it was only fitting to commemorate Columbus, but also “that we should confess and celebrate in an especial manner the will and designs of the Eternal Wisdom.”\footnote{Pope Leo XIII, “Quarto Abeunte Saeculo” in \textit{The Papal Encyclicals}, 287.} He concluded by stating that churches in Spain, Italy, and the Americas should celebrate a High Solemn Mass on October 12, or the following Sunday, and implored Catholic churches in other nations to do the same. Secular celebrations needed the assistance of religion, in Leo’s estimation, because of the centrality of Catholicism and the divine in directing Columbus on his voyages.
American Catholics claimed ownership of the memory of Columbus to combat persistent anti-Catholicism. While non-Catholics and Catholics alike could agree that Columbus represented heroism and goodness, Catholics believed that his religious faith was a central feature of his symbolic usefulness. They were more than willing to emphasize the Catholic character of the discoverer and his voyages. Barton proclaimed in his biography of “Columbus the Catholic,” that the “discovery and exploration of America were Catholic enterprises, undertaken by Catholics with Catholic motives, and carried out entirely by Catholic cooperation.” The Catholic overtones of the entire venture made “the man and the event… ours.”  

William Gross, Archbishop of Portland, Oregon, expressed a similar sentiment. “Catholics especially,” Gross proposed, “should pride themselves in celebrating the discovery of America, since this magnificent event was brought about by devoted children of the Holy Church.” Because the discoverer was Catholic, was inspired by the Catholic faith, and was assisted by Catholics, it was only proper that Catholics take the lead in commemorating the Catholic discoverer. Barton and Gross’s rhetoric suggested that only Catholics could appropriately commemorate Columbus. Moreover, by emphasizing the Catholicity of Columbus’s memory, Catholic clergy, writers, and orators implicitly argued for a direct connection between religion and the origins of the United States.

Prominent laity also affirmed Catholic ownership of Columbus’s memory and the link between religion and the progress of the country. Daniel Dougherty, a layman from New York, penned a letter to Mark F. Vallete, the corresponding secretary of the United States Catholic Historical Society, conveying the urgency of the Quadricentenary

59 Barton, *Columbus the Catholic*, xii, 90.
60 William Gross quoted in Barton, *Columbus the Catholic*, 89.
moment. Printed on the front page of *The Pilot*, Boston’s Catholic newspaper,

Dougherty’s letter indicated his concern about the indifference exhibited by his fellow
American Catholics towards “the sublime event in which they of all their countrymen
have the deepest interests and most reason to be proud.” Even descendants of the
Pilgrims annually celebrated the arrival of their ancestors. Cannot, therefore, Dougherty
queried, “Roman Catholics once in a century celebrate the landing of Columbus? This
anniversary belongs as much to Catholics as Plymouth Rock to the Puritans.” Dougherty
dramatically pointed to the impending negative and detrimental consequences for
American Catholics if they did not step up and commemorate Columbus appropriately.

He stated

I prophesy that unless Catholics, if need be, aggressively, display their historic
right to celebrate this anniversary our sectarian fellow-countrymen will in all their
approaching demonstrations alight the peerless Queen of Castille; if not disparage
Columbus, will surely ignore his identification with the Catholic Church and
assert that the discovery of America was the heaven-directed forerunner of the
Reformation and Protestantism!  

In many ways, and although not explicitly stated, Dougherty saw the occasion of the
Quadricentenary as an opportunity to “aggressively” counter anti-Catholicism. Without
action on the part of American Catholics, the narrative of Columbus and his voyages
would be shorn of their Catholic origins and become part of the harbinger of the
Protestant triumph on the eve of the Reformation. This would lead, Dougherty feared, to
further marginalization of Catholics and potential elimination from the narrative of
American history at the hands of anti-Catholics.

After indicating the reasons why Catholics should take the lead in

commemorating Columbus and his discoveries, Dougherty recommended “opportune and

61 Daniel Dougherty, “Daniel Dougherty on the Columbus Centenary. Opportune and Practical
Suggestions,” *Boston Pilot* (January 30, 1892), 1.
practical suggestions” to the Catholic laity, clergy, and intellectuals for celebrating the Quadricentenary. Believing that the celebrations in 1892 should be “distinctively Catholic,” Dougherty advocated that his co-religionists gather to celebrate the Mass. Catholic intellectuals also had an important role to play. To these writers belonged the task of managing and controlling the historical record. Catholic writers needed to focus upon “the vindication of the truth of history that to glorify the discovery of America is to sound the praises of the Catholic Church.” Seeking the truth about the discovery of America went hand in hand with the great work of the Catholic Church; they could not and should not be separated from one another. Just as the commemorative activities should not be left to Protestants, writing the history of Columbus and his voyages could not be left to Protestants. Although Protestant writers, like Irving and Prescott, introduced Columbus to American readers, “it is simply impossible for the most liberal Protestant writer to treat with entire firmness any Catholic subject.”

It remains unclear how Dougherty’s fellow Catholics received his warning and suggestions, but it is clear that his was not the only voice in the crowd.

Other Catholic writers and clergy stressed the need for the laity to own the memory of Columbus and to take pride in his discovery and subsequent work of the Church during the Quadricentenary. In an edition of biographies of Catholic heroes and heroines published in the wake of the World’s Columbian Exposition, James G. Gahan, editor of the Catholic Herald, stated that “the citizens of the United States who belong to the Catholic Church have greater and graver reasons to rejoice and be glad because of that success which in common with patriotic citizens of all denominations they had so

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earnestly desired.” Moreover, Parsons took French Catholic writer de Lorgues to task for suggesting that the work of commemorating Columbus religiously belonged to France and Rome alone. More than either the Catholics of France or Rome

no people have a better right to be in the van than the Catholics of the United States. It needs not that we join in that absurd spread-eaglism which would insinuate that the Church never found a proper field for her labors until this Republic came into existence; there is sufficient reason for congratulation in the past of the American Church, sufficient grounds for hope as to its future, to induce the American Catholic to enter, with more heart and soul than any other, into the joys of the coming celebration.64

Catholics possessed the right to honor Columbus not merely as a patriotic gesture in the present, but as an affirmation of the Church’s work in the past and in the future. In a homily given during the opening Mass for the World’s Columbian Catholic Congress, Father P.J. Muldoon, the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Chicago, asked “but to whom more appropriately than to Catholics could the word of good cheer… be extended, for Catholics and Catholics alone, are the only representative of that Church which had being, when he [who] to-day is revered with unheard of praise set forth to discover the Western world.”65 Because it was Catholicism that supported Columbus in his voyages in the fifteenth century, in Muldoon’s assessment only Catholics could fittingly honor him in the nineteenth century. A general consensus emerged among the American Catholic laity and clergy during the Quadricentenary; Catholics alone could properly celebrate and give full meaning to Columbus’s legacy.

As leading American Catholic laymen and clergy asserted the need for Catholics to take responsibility for the Quadricentenary, their thoughts and words turned not only to

the glories of the past but also to the opportunities that the future held, particularly a future that appeared uncertain for religion. From the mid to late nineteenth century, belief and unbelief in God existed as viable options for personal conviction. Darwinism and new scientific methods influenced unbelief, but it was religion in its attempt to adapt to these intellectual shifts that “slowly strangled Him.” Even though the American Catholic Church did not fully feel the impact of Darwinism and his scientific thought until the late 1890s, clergy clearly recognized the pressure religion faced. The Boston Pilot was aware that “the forces of unbelief were never, perhaps, stronger, and certainly they never garrisoned so much territory, as in this year of the Columbian quadricentenary,” and that the commemoration of Columbus and his ardent and unwavering faith demonstrated civilization’s need for religion. In a pastoral letter to parish priests, Archbishop Patrick John Ryan of Philadelphia informed them of the imperative to communicate to their congregants that the same Christianity that inspired Columbus was the only “power to perpetuate that civilization.” Ryan asked his priests to show parishioners “that the great questions which agitate and divide the world today find their best solutions in Christian teachings.” American society needed religion. Ryan specifically pointed to the problems confronting labor and capital – problems many working-class Catholics in Philadelphia had first hand knowledge of. Strikes rocked the country from the late 1870s through the early 1890s; the Pullman Strike took place in

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66 Turner, Without God, Without Creed, xiii.
67 The most contentious moment for the American Catholic Church and Darwinism came with the publication of University of Notre Dame professor John Zahm’s book entitled Evolution and Dogma (1896); it was officially condemned by the papacy two years later. Disagreements over Darwinism remained largely confined to the realm of Catholic intellectuals. See Dolan, In Search of American Catholicism, 112-115; and Appleby, “Church and Age Unite!”, 13-52.
68 “The Lessons of the Columbus Festival,” Boston Pilot (October 22, 1892), 4.
69 “American Bishops on Columbus Day. Pastorals Relating to the Celebration of the Quadricentenary,” Boston Pilot (September 17, 1892), 5.
1894, just months after the Quadricentenary. Periods of economic depression contributed to uncertainty, and questions about “fairness and economic justice” plagued laborers. Ryan concluded that labor and capital could “only be united by the Gospel and harmonized in the Founder of Christian civilization.” As suggested by Ryan, the social problems of the day could only be resolved via religion. Cementing the link between Columbus and the progress of civilization opened the door for American Catholic clergy like Ryan to make further claims about religion’s essential role in the development of society. In looking at the present through the memory of the past, Ryan could see answers and solutions for contemporary and future problems.

In addition to serving as a resource to straighten out the country’s social ills, Catholicism could also fortify the religious foundation of the country, as Protestantism seemed to be crumbling. Paulist priest Walter Elliott, in an address entitled “Missionary Work of the Church in the United States” that he delivered at the Catholic Congress, suggested that the Quadricentenary and “the collapse of dogmatic Protestantism is our opportunity” to convert non-Catholics. Elliott, very aware of the growing split among mainline Protestant denominations over the emergence of the New Theology that emphasized practical spirituality and the social application of Christianity rather than creedal adherence, believed now was the moment for Catholicism to assert itself. The corresponding secretary for the Catholic Truth Society, William F. Markoe, also realized this was a great opportunity for the conversion of non-Catholics. “Amid the universal

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70 For a discussion of the troubles faced by laborers and capital see Trachtenberg, The Incorporation of America, 70-100.
71 “American Bishops on Columbus Day, 5.
72 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 56.
73 For an examination of the sources of the theological struggles facing Protestantism see Szasz, The Divided Mind of Protestant America, 1880-1930; and Henry F. May, Protestant Churches and Industrial America (New York: Harper, 1949).
crumbling of creeds and wreck of religions,” Markoe suggested, “the ship of Peter alone sails majestically onward and upward, and it is for us who are on board of her to cast the nets in which the souls of men must be saved from religious shipwreck.” Commenting upon the social and moral life of America, Muldoon, again in his sermon at the opening Mass for the Catholic Congress stated, “materialism and humanitarianism have impregnated the spiritual.” He posed a series of questions to those in attendance

Who shall pour oil upon these troubled waters?... Who except the sons of that Church founded by Christ to heal the wandering, wounded nations until the consummation of the ages?... When souls are to be saved and when generous, honest souls are hurrying hither and thither in the shadow of death, following foolishly phantom light, who will rest, who will spare the sacrifice and sit with hands piously folded pronouncing the idle word, ‘enough?’

The Catholic Church was the one church, Muldoon and his co-religionists suggested, that could achieve salvation for individuals and could right the wrongs of a society plagued by materialism and labor disputes. The Quadricentenary only served to demonstrate the solid foundation of the Catholic Church in the past and present.

Even as the entire country embarked on an elaborate celebration of the Columbus Quadricentenary, particularly through the World’s Exposition in Chicago, American Catholic clergy and laity insistently declared the right of their church and faithful should not only lead but were also the only ones able to fittingly commemorate the memory of the discoverer and his voyages. At the heart of this memory of Columbus was his Catholicism. Columbus’s zealous faith motivated the discoverer and propelled the progress of civilization, the origins of the United States, and the spread of Christianity. Just as in the past, American Catholics argued that Catholicism once again was at the vanguard of civilization, leading American society through the trials of social problems

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74 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 127.
75 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 12.
and the decline of Protestantism. The future course of civilization depended upon the Catholic Church and her faithful.

**Controlling the Historical Record: The Catholic Columbus Narrative**

The American Catholic clergy and middle class created a Columbus narrative that underlined the Catholic qualities of the discoverer and his voyages to correct erroneous images of themselves and to compel the laity’s religious devotion and loyalty. In his study of Catholic fictional literature, Paul R. Messbarger argues that Catholic authors functioned as “quasi-official spokesman” as they wrote stories to “catechize and discipline the faithful.”

Catholic Columbian non-fiction narratives functioned in a similar fashion. Columbian narratives by Catholic and non-Catholic writers did share similar features. In both, Columbus was a hero. Biographers, with Winsor being the exception, pointed to Columbus’s strength, fortitude, and resilience in the face of overwhelming obstacles. His immediate accomplishments and the long-term doors opened for the yet-to-be-republic varied little from biography to biography. American Catholic authors, clergy, and laity also emulated the standard narrative established by Irving for subsequent biographers. The account of Columbus and his voyages, however, demanded something more if Catholic authors and orators were going to make him a distinctively Catholic hero. Through an infusion of all things Catholic, including discussions of Columbus’s missionary zeal, devout faith, and chosen-ness, the American hero became the American Catholic hero. By remembering Columbus in a manner that highlighted his devotion to the Roman Catholic Church, American Catholics themselves could emulate his saint-like qualities.

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First, American Catholic writers and orators drew attention to the source of Columbus’s motivation: a missionary passion inspired by a lifelong devout faith. The constancy of his missionary impulse and unwavering faith sustained Columbus through both success and trials. In the preface to his biography of Columbus, Barton aimed to “conspicuously set forth the pious zeal and religious fervor that characterized the life of the illustrious, and which finally led to the discovery of the New World.”

James F. Loughlin, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and author of an introduction to Barton’s book, offered similar remarks. Catholicism provided the “sacred fire” that pushed Columbus to the new world, and therefore, Loughlin suggested, “this Continent belongs to the Church of Christ.”

O’Neill told his St. Louis Bertrand parishioners that just as Columbus possessed the true faith and believed in the true God, “we can partake of the enthusiasm of Columbus, as Christian zeal spurred him on, and as the Christian ideal excited him to hope for the day when the light of Christ would shine over this new land.”

In *Columbus, The ‘Christ-Bearer,’* John A. Mooney compared Columbus with his patron saint Christopher. Like Christopher, who bore the Christ child on his shoulders while walking across a stream, Columbus bore Christ “across the dark waters of the perilous sea.” He brought “tidings of great joy to the forgotten parts of that round world he had conceived.”

While Columbus did not literally carry Christ on his shoulders, his Catholic biographers pointed out that he willingly assumed the burden of

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77 Barton, *Columbus the Catholic,* vii.
78 Barton, *Columbus the Catholic,* xi.
bringing the Gospel to unknown lands and that as Catholics in the nineteenth century they should too.

Similarly, Archbishop Michael Corrigan, of New York City, asked the clergy and laity sitting before him on the third day of the Catholic Congress to reflect upon the motives that persuaded Columbus to undertake his voyage. The value and the fate of the “human soul,” Corrigan argued, “more than anything else, impelled Columbus to tempt unknown seas in order to spread the Gospel of Christ.” Although Columbus was in part motivated by love of science and his “adopted country” it was primarily the principle of the Catholic faith – a “sacred fire” – that he took with him on his voyages. Neither personal glory nor financial gain drove Columbus across uncharted waters, but solely his spiritual and religious sentiments grounded in the Catholic Church.

American Catholic authors and writers pointed out to the laity that the so-called “sacred fire” of Catholicism that drove Columbus should also drive them. Columbus became an exemplary Catholic and a model of the faith for laity in the late nineteenth century. He strictly observed Church fasts and ceremonies, and attended Mass on a daily basis. Barton even suggested that Columbus’s consistent observance of church rituals were “more regular than a professed religious.”

Throughout his professional life and during the voyages, Columbus deliberately associated his enterprise with the Catholic Church. While waiting for a response from the Spanish court about whether the king and queen would financially support his voyages, Columbus resided at the Convent of La Rabida and wore the habit of a friar. Columbus and his crew received Communion prior to the departure from the port of Palos in Spain. On the voyage across the Atlantic

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81 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congress, 66, 68.
82 Barton, Columbus the Catholic, 8.
Ocean, Columbus recited the Hours daily.\textsuperscript{83} In addition to highlighting his personal devotional activities, Catholic authors also pointed to Columbus’s desire to publicly demonstrate the Catholic nature of the voyages. Columbus urged his crew to improve their devotional lives by praying daily and singings songs of thanksgiving and praise. In addition, Columbus was sure to bring the mark of Catholicism to bear in the act of naming the lands he came upon. He named the ship, the \textit{Santa Maria}, in honor of “Holy Mary.” When he and his band of “Christian knights” reached the Caribbean, he named the first place San Salvador, or “Holy Savior.”\textsuperscript{84} Moreover, Columbus’s first thoughts turned to constructing a cross as a means to claim the land for Christ.\textsuperscript{85} Through this “sign of Redemption,” many places came “under the domination of the Catholic religion.” And “unable to contain his gratitude he prostrated himself in adoration before the Supreme Author of the discovery.”\textsuperscript{86} Columbus incorporated his Catholic faith into his voyages in the fifteenth century. As such, he served as an example to Catholics in the late nineteenth century of how to make the Catholic faith real in their daily lives.

The second way that American Catholic authors and orators made Columbus a model Catholic figure to be emulated by was by stressing how his personal trials tested his faith. Columbus exhibited grace under pressure at all points of his rise to prominence, during subsequent voyages, and in the final years of his life when his reputation declined. While anyone might be able to remain religiously devout in success, it was amid continual hardships that Columbus’s faith was strengthened and reaffirmed. Moments of

\textsuperscript{83} Barton, \textit{Columbus the Catholic}, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{84} Dickey, \textit{Christopher Columbus and His Monument}, 108. It was James David Coleman, Supreme President of the Catholic Knights of America, who referred to Columbus and his crew as Catholic knights in an address to members.
\textsuperscript{86} Barton, \textit{Columbus the Catholic}, 46, 48.
suffering, in particular, marked the apex of Columbus’s faith. Catholic writers and orators made Columbus’s physical, emotional, and mental agony a central component of their plot line. Even from the beginning of his life, Columbus faced an uphill battle. He came from a poor family and possessed little formal education. He endured the hardest trials, however, when he pursued support from various European monarchs, when his crew threatened revolt during the first voyage, when he faced accusations of abuse and failed administration in New Spain, and when he spent his final years in destitution. Catholic authors consistently appropriated key moments like these to perpetuate the memory of the suffering Catholic Columbus.

Catholic bishops requested that their priests bring to bear the value of the suffering Columbus in their sermons and addresses during the Quadricentenary. Archbishop Ryan recommended several possible sermon topics including the usefulness of exploring Columbus as a model of suffering. Like Columbus, the Catholic laity needed to maintain their faith in both good and bad times. Columbus’s career, Ryan explained, “shows how religion sustained him in all the vicissitudes of his life.” When he succeeded, Columbus’s faith served to moderate excessive pride. When he experienced “chains, humiliations, and poverty,” his Catholicism provided him with consolation and support. This lesson, Ryan believed “will suggest themselves as useful in your flock.”

With each testing of his faith, Columbus emerged as a stronger and more devout Catholic. An article in the New Orleans Morning Star and Catholic Messenger affirmed that “years of disappointment and humiliation, of poverty and contempt, of failure and

88 “American Bishops on Columbus Day. Pastors Relating to the Celebration of the Quadricentenary,” Boston Pilot (September 17, 1892), 5.
hopelessness, were the best school in which to learn patience and sweetness under the guiding hand of such teachers as faith and piety.”89 Father Nugent, a priest at a parish in Iowa focused on one such instance of contempt – the inquisition Columbus faced at the University of Salamanca. As an avid student of cosmography, history, philosophy, and theology, Columbus held his ground against the ignorance of the supposedly learned and religious hierarchy of the day who doubted the feasibility of the voyages and the roundness of the earth. Nugent proclaimed that Columbus proved the theologians and scholars “scientifically wrong” while Columbus was “unscientifically correct.”90 Mooney pointed out that numerous forces beyond Columbus’s control – envy, jealousy, greed, taunting, mutiny, and insults – assaulted him from all directions. Yet Columbus countered these “wicked men and tempests with prayer, with lighted candle and the word of God.” Through it all he remained “from first to last a man of strong Catholic faith.” Whether awake or sleeping, God spoke to Columbus comforting him “in all his tribulations.”91 Both Nugent and Mooney illustrated that Columbus served as an exemplar of how Catholics should respond at times of their own personal duress.

Catholics should not only emulate Columbus’s faith during times of success, failure, and suffering but also in dying. The same sustenance Columbus received from his faith in life allowed him to die in a suitably Catholic way. In his narrative of Columbus’s life, John O’Kane Murray, a physician and Irish immigrant, told his readers that his last hours “may teach us how to die.” During the closing hours of his life Columbus fulfilled his earthly obligations and then turned his attention toward his next

89 Columbia Christum-Ferens – What’s in a Name?,” Morning Star and Catholic Messenger (August 13, 1892) in Dickey, Christopher Columbus and His Monument Columbia, 240.
90 Nugent, “The Earth’s Rotundity,” Denver Republican (1892) in Dickey, Christopher Columbus and His Monument Columbia, 255.
91 Mooney, Columbus ’The Christ-Bearer,’ 14.
life by making a final confession and receiving the Holy Viaticum. Mooney similarly pointed out how even in death Columbus’s life was intimately connected to Catholicism. First, Mooney suggested that Columbus’s last breath happened on a holy day, the Feast of the Ascension. On this day, Columbus received “the last sacraments, humbly, contritely.” After taking the necessary steps for a proper death, Columbus repeated the words Jesus spoke at his death: “‘Into thy hands, O Lord! I commend my spirit.’”

Mooney then offered up the final lesson that any reader should garner from Columbus’s death: “A devout Catholic during his whole life, he found in the bosom of the Church, in death as in life, the only certain help, comfort and happiness.” Catholic writers plainly used their biographies of Columbus to impart religious lessons, in this case about death, to strengthen the laity’s Catholic faith.

A final means by which Catholic writers and orators created a distinctively American Catholic Columbus was to associate the discoverer with the biblical figure of Moses and the venerated first president George Washington. Moses delivered the chosen people of God from slavery in Egypt, and Washington delivered the colonies from the tyranny of the British Empire. They supplied two historical personages that could validate both Columbus’s Americanism and role as religious guide via Catholicism. Columbus resembled Moses both in the immensity of his task and that it led to loneliness. Like Moses, Columbus’s “pensive gravity impressed his companions with a mingled respect, distrust and fear, which held them aloof from him.” In his address at the Catholic Congress, Richard Clarke pointed to the uncanny physical likeness and the experiential parallels between the two men. At the time of their religious undertakings,

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both men were forty years of age, left family behind, experienced safe passage through water, and were subjected to violence and mockery. They “were living patriarchs of living races of men believing in the one true God,” and they died impoverished outcasts who finally “reached the promised land.” Clarke effectively elevated Columbus and his voyage to the same religious significance – and even biblical import – as Moses.

Catholic writers and orators also pointed to similarities between Columbus and George Washington to link the memory of the discoverer’s life with that of America’s first president. While speaking at the Columbian celebrations in Portland, Maine, Bishop James Healy stood before an audience gathered at the city hall and measured the qualities exhibited by both Columbus and Washington as they reached the lowest points in their lives. During his darkest hours, Washington’s “greatness was more evidence in his constancy of purpose, his unfailing courage in distress and defeat, and his victory over adverse fortune.” Healy proceeded to attest that Columbus demonstrated the same steadiness, bravery, and strength as Washington during times of difficulty. With both Catholics and non-Catholics in attendance on the speaker’s platform and in the audience, Healey carefully used the public setting to link the American and the Catholic through his observations of Columbus and Washington.

In the process of illustrating Columbus’s devotion to the Catholic faith, American Catholic writers and orators elevated his saint-like qualities at the cost of downplaying his human-like qualities. They reconstructed the memory of Columbus to assert that God especially chose Columbus to spread Catholicism and that Columbus acknowledged his chosen-ness. O’Neill told his parishioners that Columbus was the “divine instrument” for

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95 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 25.
96 “Columbus Day Celebrations. Bishop Healy’s Address at Portland, ME,” Boston Pilot (November 5, 1892), 2.
the permanent establishment of Catholicism in the west.\textsuperscript{97} Like the Israelites and the patriarchs of the Old Testament, God chose Columbus for the task of bringing Christ to unknown lands. The solitary focus that took possession of Columbus revealed “qualities that remind us of the early Christians.” He was “chosen by God… to reveal to humanity the sum total of the terrestrial creation.”\textsuperscript{98} The course of his life, both the highs and lows, clearly indicated that Columbus was chosen for great religious purposes

That a man should have thus preserved his purity of sentiment and so pious and religious character through twenty years of seafaring life, amid scenes of adventure, turbulence and danger, is the strongest proof that Columbus was a representative of the Most High and a chosen missionary and ambassador [sic] of the faith.\textsuperscript{99}

The very fact that Columbus experienced personal suffering and public struggles, Catholic writers and orators suggested, provided sufficient evidence that he had been chosen for a special task. Columbus, moreover, was intuitive enough to recognize his special calling. In his biographical sketch of Columbus, Murray opined that, “He looked upon himself as standing in the hand of Heaven, chosen from among men for the accomplishment of a high purpose.”\textsuperscript{100} Delivering a paper entitled, “Columbus: His Mission and Character” at the Catholic Congress, Richard A. Clarke likened Columbus to a mystic. In all occurrences, he perceived the “ever-provident hand of God, and in every turn in his own eventful and dramatic career he recognized his own immediate touch with the ever-present Diety.”\textsuperscript{101} Columbus’s saintly nature made him worthy of being emulated by American Catholics.

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\textsuperscript{97} O’Neill, \textit{The Columbian Celebration}, 45.
\textsuperscript{98} P.L. Connellan, “In the Land of Columbus,” \textit{Boston Pilot} (August 27, 1892), 1.
\textsuperscript{100} Murray, \textit{Lives of the Catholic Heroes and Heroines of America}, 30.
\textsuperscript{101} \textit{The Columbian Catholic Congress}, 26.
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The considerable weight Catholics placed on Columbus’s faith and his aspiration to spread the gospel functioned also to discredit those writers and orators, like Winsor, who argued that Columbus was motivated by more material and earthly desires. Non-Catholic writers depicted Columbus’s financial demands from Isabella and Ferdinand as the pursuit of material gain and profit. It was quite the contrary according to American Catholic writers and orators who argued that spiritual not material motivations directed Columbus. Looking at this aspect of Columbus’s life solely through the lens of his religion, Catholics said that Columbus was not seeking personal wealth. Rather his requests for monetary assistance were made only in the service of spiritual and religious progress. This progress included bringing the light of Christianity to the dark lands of the west and regaining the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, what was believed to be the site of the crucifixion.

In the attempt to counter what they saw to be the outlandish charges of personal ambition and selfishness, Catholic writers and orators paid particular attention to Columbus’s vision of retaking the Holy Sepulcher. In his continued assessment of Winsor, O’Neill explained to his parishioners that, “a world-embracing ambition was sanctified by zeal for souls.” For O’Neill, the ends justified the means. Similarly, as Mooney contemplated the dilemma of reconciling Columbus’s demands for titles and share of material treasures, he asked, “Ambition and greed?” He quickly replied no. Nothing of adventure, greed, fame, or power motivated “the tender soul of Columbus.” Rather, for Columbus “the idea of the delivery of Jerusalem and of the Holy Sepulcher, was not more fanciful than the idea of bearing Christ to a new world.”

O’Gorman, of the Catholic University of America and later the first bishop of the diocese of South Dakota, also addressed the issue of personal versus spiritual motivations. In an address delivered at the Cathedral in Baltimore on Columbus Day, O’Gorman likened Columbus to an apostle bringing Christ to unknown lands, but also a crusader in his desire to re-take the Holy Sepulcher. In explaining Columbus’s pursuit of wealth, O’Gorman suggested:

> It was because Columbus had the noble ambition to effect what the Crusades had failed to do, and to found a house that should be a prop to the Holy See in its losses and dangers, that he insisted so sternly with Portugal and Spain on dignity and wealth, both of which he fondly hoped would come to him from his enterprise.¹⁰⁴

Catholic writers and orators argued that what appeared to be worldly ambition and greed, was in reality a much more important and higher aim. Columbus solely wanted to use the riches and wealth from the voyages in the service of the Church to recover the Holy Sepulcher, not to support his own personal gain.

Controlling, and in many ways manipulating, the historical record about Columbus and his voyages emerged as a particular concern of the American Catholic religious community during the Quadricentenary. Unlike what they perceived to be the biased and irreverent biographies of Columbus, from the likes of historians like Winsor, American Catholics created a memory of Columbus that underscored the Catholic character of the man and his mission. Columbus became a devout Catholic who, writers and orators suggested, could be emulated by the burgeoning immigrant membership of the church. The narrative of the Catholic Columbus provided a model for lay Catholics in the late nineteenth century.

Performing the Catholic Columbian Narrative: Pageants and Parades

American Catholic writers, orators, and clergy were not solely responsible for perpetuating the narrative of Columbus as an American Catholic hero. While the Catholic laity became the target of an ambitious project by church leaders to increase the religious devotion of the church’s membership, they did not passively receive the Catholic Columbian narrative. They actively validated this narrative by participating in its public presentation through pageants and parades. Pageants and parades presented the laity with the opportunity to not only receive the religious message created by writers, orators, and clergy, but to enact and embody the Columbian narrative. Like the orations and literature, pageants and parades possessed a distinctively Catholic tone that stressed and promoted Columbus’s Catholicity. The authors of these plays – M.M.A. Hartnedy, a priest; an anonymous Ursuline sister; and another anonymous dramatist – adhered to the same formulaic Catholic biography of Columbus. Each drama highlighted Columbus’s Catholic faith, illustrated the climatic moment of discovery, and concluded with a tableau recounting Columbus’s death. In light of the increasing immigrant nature of the church and the persistence of anti-Catholic prejudice, these pageants and parades provided “images of [a] ‘common’ history,” a “focus for group loyalties” and “plots to structure our individual memories.”

These pageants and parades centered around a particularly Catholic memory of Columbus and his voyages in order to impart – or attempt to – a collective identity for American Catholics in the early 1890s.

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As Catholic penned-dramas, each pageant aspired to make Columbus’s Catholicism the guiding force in his life and the voyages; religion infused everything. The unnamed Ursuline included a preface to her pageant “Columbus, the Great Discoverer of America,” that she intended to be read by the men and women staging the production but also to audiences before staging the pageant. From the beginning the Catholic participants and audience knew, the Ursuline explained, that Columbus believed strongly that he was God’s chosen instrument. In turn, Columbus’ ups and downs in life only served to further divine objectives. “The many trials, struggles, disappointments, vexatious delays, which would have broken any spirit less magnanimous,” the Ursuline asserted, “served only to make him a fitter instrument to carry out the designs of Divine Providence.”

The actions taken by either Columbus or those who sought to thwart his efforts, according to the Ursuline, worked to achieve ends intended by God. It is apparent from the outset of the Ursuline’s production that the Catholic laity were not merely performing a pageant of the discovery, but staging a dramatic narrative of spiritual testing and growth.

As with Catholic biographies and orations of Columbus, his chosen-ness emerges in numerous scenes throughout all three pageants. Like Vaughn’s Satan in Arms against Columbus, the visitation of angels confirmed Columbus’s divine blessing and the religious objective of his voyages. The opening scene of the Ursuline’s pageant depicts an angel coming to Columbus while he sleeps in a chair, his navigational tools and terrestrial globe strewn about him. As he sleeps the angel speaks encouragingly to him: “Open thou the gates of the ocean. Fear not, but sail to the westward. Great will be thy

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107 An Ursuline, “Columbus, the Great Discoverer of America,” v. It was a common practice among Catholic religious women at the time to deliberately author publications anonymously, thus the simple “an Ursuline” as the author of this pageant.
tribulation, but He whom thou adorest and in whom thou trustest will steer thy bark aright.”

The angel’s visit and words to Columbus reminded the Catholic participants and audience to remain steadfast in faith and trust even amid their struggles. Hartnedy’s pageant, “The World’s Fair Drama. Christopher Columbus,” also included an almost identical scene. While Columbus sleeps, an angel comes in answer to his prayer and to encourage the “man of destiny” to sail westward. “Know then thy vow [to recover the Holy Sepulcher] is most acceptable to Heaven,” the angel affirms, “The might of God’s arm that in times of old cleft the waters of the Red Sea to make way for God’s people, will open a way for thee through the western waters!”

These visits from God’s heavenly messengers provided Columbus, the pageant authors suggested, with the necessary divine affirmation of his actions. Hartnedy and the Ursuline used the same scene to mold a distinctively Catholic memory of Columbus, one in which religion strengthened and drove the discoverer. Moreover, Catholic participants and audiences would not only be informed about the role of the faith in the past but also hopefully come to a fuller recognition of how the Catholic faith could inform their present lives. Just as Columbus received heaven’s blessing and protection in 1492 so too could Catholics in 1892.

The Catholic dramatists used the heavenly visitations to make even more direct connections between the religious past and the future. In both pageants, a visiting angel told Columbus that millions would follow in his footsteps and honor his work. An angel came to Columbus at a trying moment to affirm his religious mission. He could be satisfied in the present, the angel informed him, that he “found the hidden land beyond

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108 An Ursuline, “Columbus, the Great Discoverer of America,” 5.
the western wave” and “given to thy fellow-men a garden of delights.” Moreover, the angel explained, he could find joy in what the future would hold: “Thither for centuries to come will the tide of immigration drift, and grateful millions yet unborn will praise thy deed, will bless thy name.”

Once again, Hartnedy’s pageant struck a similar tone. The prophetic voice of an angel told Columbus that many men and women would come out of the darkness and into the light because of him. He would be remembered in the history books and be celebrated in the future because he brought the light of Catholicism to untold millions. “The great Christian nations of the future that will arise in thy domain beyond the waters,” the angel proclaimed, “will honor thee in public celebrations in a thousand cities centuries after thy work is o’er!”

By linking Columbus’s missionary objective in 1492 to subsequent religious development and success, both dramatists outlined direct connections between the participants and the audience in the present and the Catholic memory of Columbus.

Like any good story, the Catholic Columbian narrative included its antagonists. Creators of the Catholic Columbian narrative, particularly the Catholic dramatists, used the antagonists, those men and clergy who sought to undermine the discoverer, to underscore the Catholic character of the protagonist, Columbus. Two characters, in particular, illustrate the stark contrast between the humility, resolve, and faith of Columbus and the supposed ignorance and grandstanding of his enemies. The anonymous Catholic dramatist introduced the primary antagonist, Talavera, an astronomer and counselor to the king and queen, as he mused aloud regarding the state’s war with the Moors.

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110 An Ursuline, “Columbus, the Great Discoverer of America,” 50.
Ferdinand and Isabella esteem me for my knowledge of astronomy, but I will keep it to myself that I know very little about it. What matters it to be learned? It is enough to appear so. This is the best way to become a great man. We have so many asses that are looked upon as wise; I will make one more.  

Clearly, Talavera’s character was looking to get ahead, but rather than presenting his true self he masked it through deception and pretending. Moreover, he wanted to expend as little energy as possible in his position as counselor; he did not want to work for his success. Speaking with Count Pedro Quintanilla, the royal treasurer, Talavera said, “I am not selfish… and when I can do a charitable action without disturbing myself, I do it with my whole heart. …We must admit it is very fatiguing to occupy such a position. I am already in a perspiration.” Talavera’s self-serving actions and ambitions only served to highlight Columbus’s unselfish desires to aid the spread of his Catholic faith. Unlike Columbus, who underwent numerous trials to achieve his success, Talavera hoped to remain “unmolested in my blissful idleness.” Catholic participants and audience members should have seen that Talavera was lazy and deceptive while Columbus was hardworking and truthful.

Another character in the Columbian narrative, Dr. Toto, allowed the Catholic dramatists to explore the historical disagreement over Columbus’s motives. The Catholic dramatists argued, through the contrast between Columbus and his antagonists, that his voyages were based upon reason and scripture rather than emotion and myth. At a meeting with Isabella and Ferdinand, Dr. Toto entreated the monarchs to compartmentalize scriptural questions and leave them in the hands of monks. He

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114 Anonymous, “Christopher Columbus,” 18.
continued by exploring a hypothetical situation of discovering other peoples, an expository that played upon the emotions and fervor of the crowd gathered at the court if we discover them won’t they discover us! [Aye, Aye] and swarm over the Ocean of Darkness to invade our kingdom – a curse which we would bring on ourselves worse than the plagues of Egypt of old. [Cheers – Go on. Go on.] …their adventure here would seem as if hell itself had vomited up all its furies on our shore! [Cries of Bravo, Bravo]. …Remember the destruction of the Roman Empire by the barbarians of the North who were as angels of light compared with these horrid monsters, that mariners of good repute have often seen lurking in the dark clouds that bound the ocean on the west! [Cheers]

A thundering applause broke out at the conclusion of Toto’s feverish diatribe. While his title indicated Toto’s learnedness, he reverted to attacking Columbus’s proposal with myths of sea creatures, fear, and emotion. Columbus, on the other hand, attempted to persuade the king and queen of the wisdom of his proposed venture based upon scripture, theology, and reason.

Columbian pageants – as written and performed by Catholics during the Quadricentenary – supplied the substance for a religiously driven plot from which the American Catholic community could find guidance for living in the present by turning to the past. It mattered little that no late nineteenth-century Catholic ever lived during the period of Columbus’s voyages. By virtue of a shared historical religion across time, lay American Catholics could consult a collective memory of Columbus as a figure demonstrating a full and real faith.

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Parades also provided the Catholic laity with another opportunity to create and publicly perpetuate the memory of the American Catholic Columbus. Organizing and participating in a parade provided American Catholics with the public space necessary to

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more forcefully demonstrate the compatibility between America and Catholicism. As Mary P. Ryan writes in her study of civic engagement in nineteenth-century New York City, New Orleans, and San Francisco, residents of cities occupied and used public spaces, including the streets, to demonstrate their citizenship through ceremonies and enter “public time and space to represent themselves in a profusion of custom-made identities.”\textsuperscript{116} For American Catholics, the “custom-made” identity revolved around an appropriation of Columbus and subsequent Catholic missionaries to underscore the religious foundations of the country. The very public nature of the parades allowed the clergy and laity to take their distinctively Catholic memory of Columbus outside of the confines of the church and into society at large.

The Columbian Parade held in Louisville, Kentucky, on October 21, 1892 and organized by the Catholics of the city, and more specifically the parishioners of St. Louis Bertrand’s Parish, illustrates how American Catholics sought to publicly harmonize devotion to their country and devotion to their faith. O’Neill reported in his history of the parish’s commemorative parade that almost immediately after hearing Pope Leo’s declaration, his parishioners began planning a celebration that combined “patriotism with faith.”\textsuperscript{117} In the end, the memorial in honor of Columbus combined explicitly religious dimensions, like the Solemn High Mass that inaugurated the celebration, singing of the Te Deum, praying of the rosary, and sermons, with more civic celebrations, in this case the Columbian parade. The blurring of the lines between Catholicism and America was further complicated during the High Solemn Mass when the U.S. flag and abundant red,

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\item Mary P. Ryan, \textit{Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 59-60.
\item O’Neill, \textit{The Columbian Celebration}, 9.
\end{enumerate}
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white, and blue bunting surrounded the flag of the papacy and Columbus. Nearly 15,000 men and women participated in the parade while nearly 100,000 people became witnesses of the unfolding of the Catholic Columbian commemoration and demonstration of American Catholic citizenship.

While Louisville’s Catholics devoted the day to memorializing Columbus through religious activities, during the night they turned their attention to exhibiting the compatibility of their patriotism and faith. Consisting of a mix of marching columns, “living historical panorama,” and “moving tableaux,” the civic event was infused with Catholicism – from the subject matter to the participants themselves. With a blast from a bugle, the parade left its departure point – St. Louis Bertrand’s Parish – led by the Grand Marshall C.A. Curtin and a twenty-piece German Liederkranz band. “Moving tableaux” followed, each proceeded by a parishioner carrying a banner naming the content of the scene, leaving no doubt as to the importance and Catholic character of the subject in the minds of viewers.

The parade first highlighted the historical figures of the discovery itself. The first five tableaux revolved around the return of Columbus to Spain and the procession, along with his sailors and guards, from the port of Palos to Barcelona to meet with his benefactors, Isabella and Ferdinand. In each case, from the royal standard bearer riding a horse to the ten sailors, carrying the “specimen products of the new world,” including birds, corn, tobacco and maize, the Catholic men portraying these historical figures were dressed in richly-decorated, yet “historically accurate” Spanish costume. Walking in

single file, a group of seven Indians followed, again portrayed by men of Louisville’s parishes, carrying spears, bows, and arrows. Louisville Catholics held nothing back in organizing the parade, as the adornment of all participants illustrates. Not only were they appropriately dressed in the clothing of the period, but they also carried the necessary props providing a complete visual representation of the Columbian narrative.

The historical and religious lessons Louisville Catholics hoped to impart through the parade to the community’s Catholics and non-Catholics alike came with the arrival of Columbus. Escorted by forty cavaliers, Columbus, who was depicted by T.J. Batman, followed his sailors and the Indians. The arrival of Columbus and those historical figures that followed him marked the procession’s culmination. This is what viewers had been waiting for. They were about to witness not only the climax of the Columbian narrative, but also see before them the connection between Columbus and the nation in the form of the allegorical representation of America, Columbia. Columbus’s benefactors, Ferdinand and Isabella, marched in the parade accompanied by Columbia, the feminine allegorical representation of America. Using Columbia as a name for America came into popular use just prior to the American Revolution as a means by which the colonists could distance themselves historically from Great Britain. By having Columbus’s benefactors walk hand in hand with Columbia, Louisville Catholics created a visual association between the discoverer and the nation itself. Three additional girls, Blanche Gordon, Eliza Hannan, and Mary Walsh, marched with the historical and allegorical figures. Gordon, Hannan, and Walsh carried the gifts of faith, hope and charity, which they later presented to Columbia. In this final illustration, these three Louisville Catholic

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121 For a discussion of the origins of the name Columbia for the United States see Bushman, America Discovers Columbus, 41-59.  
122 Bushman, America Discovers Columbus, 41.
girls presented Columbia with Columbus’s religious contributions to the welfare of the nation.\textsuperscript{123}

The parade’s remaining tableaux carried the historical narrative beyond 1492 through subsequent centuries to draw attention to Catholics who succeeded in standing by their faith and bringing that faith to others in the Americas. Riding in a chariot accompanied by two pages was Bishop Diego Deza, portrayed by Father J.C. O’Mahony. Deza was not only a theologian and inquisitor but also supported Columbus. Three additional boys, dressed in red, white, and blue, rode on the back of the chariot.\textsuperscript{124} As with the decorations inside St. Louis Bertrand’s Church, the affiliation between Catholicism (i.e. the bishop) and the United States (i.e. the boys dressed in the national colors) was reinforced visually. The next Louisville Catholic marching in the parade was Father M.A. Horrigan, portraying Bartolome de Las Casas, who was praised as “Protector of the Indians and the First Abolitionist in America.”\textsuperscript{125} The final two Catholics of the sixteenth century receiving prominent attention in the parade were Louis Cancer, “the first to shed his blood in territory now belonging to the United States, June 20, 1549,” and St. Louis Bertrand, “Apostle of New Granada, and Wonder-worker of the New World – 1562-1569.” Father J.R. Higgins and O’Neill himself portrayed these last two missionaries respectively. Along with Columbus, Deza, Las Casas, Cancer, and Bertrand served as centerpieces of the Catholic Columbian parade because they demonstrated the missionary ideals of the Church. Like Columbus, these were men of devout faith who contributed to religious advancement in the new world.

\textsuperscript{124} O’Neill, \textit{The Columbian Celebration}, 16.
\textsuperscript{125} O’Neill, \textit{The Columbian Celebration}, 16.
Moreover, Louisville Catholics made one final connection between Catholicism and America. The final component of the parade consisted of a procession of Catholic girls representing the states and territories. Transported in vehicles decked out in red, white, and blue bunting and Columbus flags, each girl represented either a state (dressed in white) or a territory (dressed in black), and were adorned with crowns and sashes of red, white, and blue. As they proceeded along the parade route, they also sang an ode honoring Columbus to the tune of “America.” Once again what both Catholics and non-Catholics saw and heard reinforced the connection between Catholicism and the United States. A mixture of Catholic-specific and American-specific tableaux and decorations coupled with the ultimate meshing of Catholic and American in a song about Columbus to a tune about America, the Louisville Columbian Parade offered the ultimate display of “patriotism and faith.”

Using the Columbian Memory: Loyal Catholics and American Citizenship

As American Catholics commemorated the American Catholic hero with parades, plays, histories, and orations during the Quadricentenary, they revealed more about the concerns of the institutional church at the end of the nineteenth century than about the discoverer of the late fifteenth century. Their memory of Columbus became a tool to advance their parochial interests. Through the memory of a Catholic Columbus, clergy and middle-class laity addressed the charges of incompatibility between being Catholic and being American. Nativists looked upon the institutional church and its hierarchical leadership with disdain; far from being democratic, the Catholic Church was

authoritarian.\textsuperscript{127} Moreover, Nativists believed that the loyalties of the Catholic laity were split between the church and the nation. Rather than thinking independently, the Catholic laity was overly influenced and controlled by the hierarchy and the Vatican. With the entire country involved with the Quadricentenary, American Catholics emphasized the central role Columbus and subsequent Catholic missionaries played in establishing the United States. They used the memory of a Catholic Columbus, moreover, to argue that there was no tension between being Catholic and being American. The nation’s future needed the church and her faithful. In doing so, they countered long-standing accusations that the Church was the enemy of freedom and democracy and that Catholics could not be loyal citizens.

American Catholic writers and orators, the creators and guardians of the Catholic Columbus memory, used the discoverer to emphasize the ability of Catholics to be loyal citizens. They argued that rather than Catholicism being an obstacle, it enabled the laity to be better citizens. Speakers at the Columbian Catholic Congress predominantly discussed the issue of Catholic loyalty. More than likely the middle-class laity and the hierarchy attending and speaking at the Congress would have been well aware of the resurgence of anti-Catholic prejudice as it manifested itself in the American Protective Association. As he spoke about the relationship between the Catholic Church and the political life of the country, E.H. Gans, a lawyer from Baltimore, pointed out that Catholics remained loyal to the government because it was their “conscientious duty.” “We claim that a man may not only be a Catholic and a true American citizen,” Gans

\textsuperscript{127} McGreevy, \textit{American Catholicism}, 93.
argued, “but that if he is a good Catholic he is the best and most loyal of citizens.”\textsuperscript{128} The very same issue that Nativists claimed prevented Catholics from being loyal citizens, Gans and other Catholics contended allowed Catholics to be the best citizens. To further illustrate that the church did not inhibit loyalty but rather cultivated it, speakers at the Catholic Congress pointed to American Catholic education. Archbishop Corrigan asserted that in Catholic schools, “you will find no anarchists or socialists, but thousands and thousands of brave men and true, who love their country, not only for its own sake but for conscience sake; who willingly obey its laws and who would shed their blood in its defense.”\textsuperscript{129} Within this brief statement, Corrigan made two important points. First, by suggesting that Catholic schools harbored neither socialists nor anarchists, Corrigan implied that the real enemies of democracy could be found elsewhere, like public schools. Second, Catholic schools were the home of patriotic men who followed the laws and would willingly die for her defense.

The lay and clerical delegates attending the Columbian Catholic Congress also addressed the issue of Catholic loyalty and citizenship in their closing resolutions. They ranked the issue of Catholic loyalty to the country with major social and labor questions of the day. The last resolution spoke to the theme of loyalty to the state. Catholics, the motion stated, were “true and loyal citizens” who “declare our love and veneration” for the “glorious Republic.”\textsuperscript{130} They went one step further and “emphatically” denied that any Catholic faced a predicament when confronted with his duties to the Church and the state. The issue of dual loyalties had not been a problem in the past and it would not be

\textsuperscript{129} \textit{The World's Columbian Catholic Congresses}, 69.
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{The World's Columbian Catholic Congresses}, 200.
one in the future. With a declarative affirmation of the importance of being guided by both religion and the state, the resolution concluded

In the language of the Apostolic Delegation, let our watchword be, ‘Forward! In one hand the Gospel of Christ and in the other the Constitution of the United States.’ Let us keep on in the path of virtue and religions, that the blessings of national liberties, born of the stern energy and morality of our forefathers, may be preserved for all time as sacred heritage.131

In this closing statement, the Catholic clergy and lay delegates suggested that not only were the charges of conflicting loyalties unfounded but that one’s loyalty to the state could be strengthened and enhanced by religious faith. Only by embracing both religion and democratic political principles could the “blessings” of the past be protected in the future.

Even as the clergy and the middle class affirmed the compatibility of being Catholic and American, they used the occasion to remind the laity of their civil obligations. Having once again forcefully refuted charges from Nativists and non-Catholics, clergy and church leaders urged the laity to remember the blessings of U.S. citizenship and to cultivate their loyalty to the state. University of Notre Dame Professor Maurice Francis Egan emphasized that his history of Catholicism in the United States could be invaluable for Catholic children. Certain individuals continued to harbor the belief that Catholics were strangers in the country. As such, Egan hoped Catholic children would acquire useful knowledge about their religious heritage from his book. The book would help them “defend their rights to enjoy all the blessings of a land which their ancestors in faith of the Catholic Church discovered, and in which other ancestors of

131 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 200.
theirs in the Catholic faith proclaimed freedom of conscience for the first time.”

A proper historical education could dispel any ignorance among Catholics and give them the necessary ammunition to defend themselves in public. Similarly, in the pastoral letter to his priests, Archbishop Ryan suggested that they should use commemorative sermons “to intensify the loyalty of your flock to their country and its institutions.” Moreover, Ryan linked loyalty and patriotism to right moral conduct: “remind them that the true patriot should be a just man, for ‘justice exalteth a nation, but sin maketh nations miserable.’”

Once again, devotion to the Catholic Church did not prevent loyalty to the nation. As suggested by Ryan, the church helped Catholics avoid the kind of corrupt actions that could harm the nation and encouraged the kind of action that could bring greatness to the country.

In their speeches and sermons during the Quadricentenary several Catholic clergy also engaged with the issue of Catholic loyalty to the United States. G. Steigerwald, a deacon from Columbus, Indiana, took advantage of a very public forum to assert and further encourage Catholic devotion to America. Speaking at the conclusion of a city-wide parade and civic exercises in front of the court house, Stiegerwald urged Catholics to practice virtue and to “instill into the minds of their children lessons of patriotism and love for the country discovered for the people by a Catholic.”

Catholic parents needed to teach their children the lessons of patriotism that were gifted to them by Columbus. Father Thomas J. Conaty proclaimed to his congregation at the Church of the Sacred

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132 The Columbian Jubilee, or Four Centuries of Catholicity in America, being a historical and biographical retrospect from the landing of Christopher Columbus to the Chicago Catholic Congress of 1893 (Chicago, IL: J.S. Hyland & Co., 1893), ii-iii.
133 “American Bishops on Columbus Day. Pastorals Relating to the Celebration of the Quadricentenary” Boston Pilot (September 17, 1892), 5.
134 “Columbus Celebrations. Columbus, IN,” Boston Pilot (November 5, 1892), 2.
Heart in Worcester, Massachusetts that they gathered not as Catholics or Americans but as “Catholic Americans.” They blended both religious and civic celebrations in honor of Columbus. Celebrating Mass within the church provided a setting to give thanks for the blessings bestowed upon the country. They placed “the flag of our country in our church and on our alters, that in our thanks giving we may unite flag and creed, and pledge our loyalty to both.”\textsuperscript{135} The action of Columbus in discovering the Americas and the actions of American Catholics in the late nineteenth century demonstrated that the church and state did not exist in opposition to one another but rather in harmony. The freedoms perpetuated in the United States allowed Catholics to unite “flag and creed” without contradiction. Catholics could be citizens of the state and members of the church without the demands and loyalty of one coming into conflict with the other.

The Catholic clergy, middle-class laity, and writers could insist upon the compatibility of being both Catholic and American as much as they wanted, but authenticating that union required an appeal to history. They pointed out that compatibility was founded upon the prominent role played by Catholics in the settlement of the Americas from Columbus down through subsequent centuries. In the preface to his comprehensive \textit{Four Centuries of Catholicity in America}, Egan stated that readers would find that “the red of Columbia’s flag is the red of Catholic blood, the white the purity of Catholic zeal, and the blue the color of the Immaculate Patronness whom Columbus and Balboa, De Smet and Charles Carroll and Cardinal Cheverus and Roger Taney and Orestes Brownson loved and trusted as we do.”\textsuperscript{136} The history of the country was wrapped up with and sometimes dependent on the history of Catholicism. At the

\textsuperscript{135} “Columbus Celebrations,” \textit{The Boston Pilot} (October 29, 1892), 2.
\textsuperscript{136} Egan in \textit{The Columbian Jubilee}, iv.
conclusion of his five hundred-page-history, Egan asked, “who shall dare in our presence to call America a Protestant country?”137 While Egan did not go so far as to say that America was a Catholic country, even though Protestants had no problem claiming it as Protestant, he employed imagery that implied that America was Catholic. Morgan J. O’Brien, a judge from New York and organizing member of the Columbian Catholic Congress, painted an picture of a nation touched in all places by Catholicism, “for not a land was found, not a mountain crossed not a valley entered, or a stream forded, but Catholic missionaries led the way.”138 Catholic missionaries physically brought Catholicism to all parts of the country, but they also left Catholicism’s spiritual imprint. George Parsons Lathrop, a convert to Catholicism, stated that Catholic missionaries brought with them the “delicate yet pervasive aroma of beautiful religious names and associations” that “diffused… like perfume of incense, which lingers in the air and memory.”139 The United States was stamped with the “aroma” of Catholicism in her names and traditions.

Other Catholic clergy and laity reiterated the same point. Delivering a sermon at a Military High Mass at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Providence, Rhode Island, Father James Coyle expressed his astonishment at the suggestion put forth by non-Catholics that Catholics did not have the right to make claims to the country. “Unworthy!” Coyle exuberantly proclaimed. That claim crumbled, “When the land from sea to sea, from mountain top to mountain top, affords the unquestioned proofs of our

137 Egan in The Columbian Jubilee, iv.
138 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 18.
139 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 64.
fidelity, our unwearied fidelity.”

Proof of Catholic fidelity was evident in their vigorous defense of the constitution and flag. Catholics were always there, O’Brien asserted whether groaning under the iron heel of despotic rulers, whether amidst the trials of our revolutionary struggle, whether amidst the wars that succeeded wherein the autonomy of our nation was threatened, there, sharing with their fellow-countrymen in the trials and tribulations and in the subsequent triumphs, were to be found the Catholics.

Just as Catholics shared in carrying the burden of fighting for the sovereignty of the nation, so should they be able to rightly share in her victories. Father Patrick Cronin from Buffalo, New York echoed O’Brien’s sentiments. In his address entitled “The Church and the Republic,” Cronin argued that there could be little wonder that the church flourished in the United States. This was a land “baptized in the blood of the Catholic revolutionary heroes, and preserved in unified glory by the prowess of Catholic arms on many a gory field.”

Not only was the land imprinted with names associated with the Catholic tradition, it bore the blood of the church’s members.

American Catholics also defended and treasured the constitution that separated church and state and affirmed liberty, individual rights, and religious freedom.

Archbishop of Baltimore, James Cardinal Gibbons, pointed out that “as patriotic citizens” Catholics appreciated the benefits of liberty in allowing the church to grow “untrammeled, under the benign influence of our republican institutions.” The particular political conditions (i.e. separation of church and state) fostered in the United States provided a stable foundation for the Catholic Church to grow institutionally. On the issue of whether or not Catholics upheld the precepts of the constitution, O’Neill

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140 “Cathedrals of SS. Peter and Paul, Providence, RI,” Boston Pilot (October 29, 1892), 8.
141 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 18.
142 The World’s Columbian Catholic Congresses, 75.
143 Barton, Columbus the Catholic, 96-98.
proposed the following question to his congregants: “Do we keep in faithful memory the story of Catholic Maryland, with [sic] religious freedom first proclaimed?” He then proceeded to answer his own question. “Not the narrow, bitter Puritans, nor even kindly Roger Williams,” O’Neill asserted, “but the followers of Lord Baltimore, were the pioneers of liberty of conscience in our land!”  

No one could doubt the devotion of Catholics to the constitution when in Maryland they were the first to promote religious freedom. Baltimore lawyer E.H. Gans articulated a similar argument in his address “The Relations of the Catholic Church to the Social, Civil, and Political Life of the United States” delivered at the Columbian Catholic Congress. “The Catholic Church has been the only consistent teacher and supporter of true liberty,” stressed Gans. Even more, “no such real democracy can be found outside the Catholic Church.”

With non-Catholics having long targeted the Catholic Church as the enemy of liberty and democracy, Catholics were now arguing that it was their church, and their church alone, that served as the source of liberty and democracy. O’Brien also attested to the link between Catholicism, religious freedom, and democracy. The logical result of Columbus’s discovery of Americas was “the establishment of an independent Government upon a foundation which guarantees the fullest and greatest freedom to the individual.” Of course, these statements linking the Catholic Church with the establishment of religious freedom and political democracy would have come as a surprise to many Protestants and Nativists who disparaged Catholics. For American Catholics, however, it mattered little whether or not the historical reality surrounding the emergence of religious and political

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freedom emanated from the Catholic Church, but their memory of Columbus created such an association.

Having firmly established the compatibility of being both Catholic and American in the present through an appeal to the past, Catholic writers and orators turned towards affirming the important role that Catholics and the church could and should play in the future. By disassociating the current growth and strength of the institutional church from what Protestants and other non-Catholics perceived to be an authoritarian regime based at the Vatican, Catholic writers and orators confidently moved away from the past to visions of the future. Thomas Beaven, Bishop of Springfield, Massachusetts, proclaimed

The prosperity of the Church, which is certainly abreast of the best advances of our country in the pathway of a truly Christian civilization, has assumed, during the last fifty years, proportions of strength, and grandeur before which every unbiased intelligence must stand in silence, if not demonstrative admiration. It is impossible for such an organization to come into touch with our national institutions without becoming a forceful element in the make-up of American life.\(^{147}\)

According to Beaven, the Church was not merely a great institution in its own right, but its greatness in part derived from its influence on other non-religious “national institutions.” In his reflection on democracy’s evolution in the United States, O’Gorman postulated that “here Church and State move on parallel lines, not clashing, but peacefully, in mutual respect and forebearance.”\(^{148}\) The tolerance and respect that the church and state afforded one another, O’Gorman believed, allowed them to pursue similar rather than opposing interests. In the final paragraphs of The Columbian Jubilee, or Four Centuries of Catholicty in America, the authors pointed to the Catholic Church as the source of sacred authority necessary to temper the excesses of individual liberty

\(^{147}\) Barton and Loughlin, *Columbus, the Catholic*, 91-92.

\(^{148}\) “Columbus Day Celebrations. The Rev. Dr. O’Gorman in Cathedral, Baltimore,” 3.
and to prevent the emergence of anarchy. Through the “power to inspire faith, reverence, and obedience,” the Catholic Church “will introduce into our national life and character elements of refinement and culture which will temper the harshness and recklessness of our republican manners.”

Having been one of only a few religious group to not formally split due to tensions caused by slavery and the Civil War, the Catholic Church could make the country stronger by uniting “the heterogeneous populations and widely separated parts of our vast country” and was “destined to become more and more the strong bond to hold in indissoluble union the great American family of states.”

The United States needed the Catholic Church to be the religious conscience of the state.

Conclusion

The celebrations honoring Christopher Columbus and his voyages during the Quadricentenary in 1892-1893 were certainly numerous and pervasive throughout the country. This was particularly true in Chicago, the city hosting the World’s Columbian Exposition. Just as the Exposition allowed the United States to proudly declare and visually demonstrate how technologically advanced the country was in its industry and manufacturing, the Catholic Church – the hierarchy and priests, the middle-class laity, writers and orators, and working-class immigrants – claimed Columbus as the American Catholic hero. They could and did appropriate his memory to create and perpetuate a narrative that highlighted Columbus’s Catholicism as the motivating factor in his voyages and the discovery of America. The American Catholic memory of Columbus was not focused on a historically accurate portrayal of the explorer but rather upon manipulating the past to suit the contemporary internal and external pressures facing the church in the

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149 The Columbian Jubilee, 511.
150 The Columbian Jubilee, 511.
late nineteenth century. Contemporary concerns drove the reinvention of an already heralded American hero into a distinctively American Catholic hero. On the one hand, Columbus’s memory assisted American Catholics, once again, to temper and potentially dispel anti-Catholic prejudice, especially concerns about dual loyalties to church and state. On the other hand, Columbus’s memory aided the church hierarchy to encourage newly arriving immigrants to exhibit proper devotion to both the church and the state. In the process of commemorating Columbus and re-remembering him in the context of the late nineteenth century, the American Catholic Church came out of the Quadricentenary year with increased confidence about their institution and the part it could play in the nation’s future.¹⁵¹

Chapter Two

Taming the Past for Utah’s Future: Mormons and the Pioneer Jubilee, 1897

In 1893, the Saltair Pavilion (owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [LDS]), located on the southern edges of the Great Salt Lake, opened a bathing resort with amusements for Utahans looking for leisure and recreation.¹ Four years later, nearly five thousand people made the fifteen-mile trek from Salt Lake City to Saltair to witness one of the many commemorative and entertaining productions taking place during the 1897 celebration honoring the fiftieth anniversary of the pioneers’ arrival in the Salt Lake Valley. While many in this large crowd may have frolicked in the lake’s saltiness on earlier occasions, they now sat on the water’s edges to witness an allegorical presentation testifying to the lake’s historical importance. After the presentation the evening’s festivities were capped with a ball at the Pavilion. In the “Wedding of the Waters,” the Great Salt Lake was baptized with the River Jordan and the Dead Sea; Utah resident A. Milton Musser had brought the water back from Palestine. The allegorical figures of “Utah” and her attending maidens along with the mythological figures Neptune, Poseidon, and Ceres officiated at the physical mingling – the wedding – of these three bodies of water. As “Utah” and her maidens stood waiting on the dock for the arrival of Neptune and Poseidon from across the Lake, Ceres proclaimed

Behold! ‘Tis the Baptismal day!
From the Holy Land bearing water
From the great Dead Sea and the historic Jordan.
Neptune and Poseidon cometh
‘Tis the hour when this,
America’s counterpart of the Holy Land,

The rippling waters of our Salt Lake
Shall kiss the crystal drops brought from
a Land
Pressed by the feet of him of Galilee.
The land of Pharoah sends here its water,
Where the weary, wandering pioneers one
full half-century ago
Found peace and sweet contentment.  

As Ceres proclaimed to the crowd, this baptism was not solely about the physical joining of seemingly different bodies of water from two continents. The symbolic connection established between the United States through Utah and the Holy Land was much more important than the physical act of fusing the Great Salt Lake, the Dead Sea, and the River Jordan. The waters from Palestine, the land “pressed by the feet of him of Galilee,” had finally come to the counterpart of the Holy Land – America – and more specifically Utah.

After Ceres’s opening discourse, the audience shifted their attention to the scene materializing before them. Amid trumpet blasts and an instrumental rendition of “America,” “Utah” summoned the four winds that preceded the arrival of Neptune and Poseidon across the lake. Crossing the lake on colorfully decorated barges, Neptune and Poseidon delivered the vials of water from the Dead Sea and the River Jordan. “Utah” graciously received the waters and proceeded to sing the praises of the Salt Lake – “the Dead Sea of America” – and declared the physical and sacred resemblance between Palestine and nineteenth-century Utah. The geography of Utah’s valleys, mountains, and lakes along with the growth of her cities configured “the outlines of Holy Palestine.” As “Utah” united the waters, she recalled the pioneers of fifty years earlier who had “in their journey hither kissed the death/ mask from the desert./And brought forth fruit and flowers./And grassy meadows to give life to man.” This baptism of the Salt Lake

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2 “For Utah,” Salt Lake Tribune [SLT] (July 22, 1897), 1.
wedded the old and new worlds. It mixed “memories of the sacred land” with the history of the lake.\(^3\) The ceremony of the “Wedding of the Waters,” one that combined the fanciful, mythological, sacred, and dramatic into a single memorial, marked one of several ways in which Utah citizens and visitors from other western states and the east participated in the Pioneer Jubilee, or Utah Semi-Centennial.

Over the course of one week in late July 1897, Utahans remembered and commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the migration of Mormon pioneers out of Nauvoo, Illinois and settlement in the Salt Lake Valley. After months of work and publicity inside and outside of Utah, thousands gathered in Salt Lake City for either one day or the entire week to witness and participate in the numerous activities planned by the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission, the official body charged by the state government with carrying out the anniversary. The Pioneer Jubilee, as it came to be called, contained an incredible combination of historical and moral lessons, entertainment, and consumption. A different parade or procession served as the main attraction of each day’s events, while additional activities – baseball and football games, bicycle races, field sports, a “Wild East Show,” concerts, plays, and fireworks – provided numerous ways for visitors and celebrants to experience the Jubilee.\(^4\) More importantly, Utahans used the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary to reassess their relationship to American society and culture and to reinvent themselves in a manner more suitable to American values and institutions. As the Jubilee week unfolded, the Semi-Centennial

\(^{3}\) “For Utah,” 1.

Commission and average Utahans detached the memory of the migration from any explicit traces of Mormonism. Rather, they created a memory that linked the migration and settlement of Utah with the progress of civilization. To maintain economic and political success in the present and future, the Semi-Centennial Commission and Utahans stripped Mormon associations from their memory of the migration.

The 1897 celebration took place during a decade of profound change for Utah, and specifically for Mormons. A half-century’s worth of attempts to move from the status of a territory to that of a state finally bore fruit in 1896. Only after the LDS Church made political and religious concessions in the early 1890s did Utah achieve statehood. Historians of Mormonism and other scholars point out that the period beginning in 1890 through World War I marks a significant turning point or transition for the LDS Church from existing outside to residing inside the confines of American culture. Prior to this period, and to a limited degree afterwards, non-Mormons saw Mormonism as a threat to orthodoxy at all levels – religiously, socially, and culturally. Thomas G. Alexander explains that in the 1890s the church leadership had to reevaluate the “paradigm” that governed the “essential characteristics of their religious tradition.” Mormons needed “sufficient political stability to preserve the interests of the church” that would allow

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“them to live in peace with other Americans.” In doing so, Mormons and the LDS Church would experience a shift in their relationship with American society and culture. They would no longer be “alien” but through a process of political and economic “Americanization” they would achieve respectability. With statehood in hand the Utah Semi-Centennial celebration honoring the Mormon pioneers presented the exact kind of occasion that Mormon and non-Mormon Utahans needed to achieve political, social, and cultural respectability.

What to Do with the Mormons?

The Utah Semi-Centennial Commission possessed on the one hand a rich story of migration and settlement and on the other the need to deal with the weight of Utah’s problematic history of tensions between Mormons and non-Mormons over the nature of the Kingdom of God and polygamy. Mormons and Gentiles in Utah needed a triumphant and sanitized narrative of the migration and settlement to recreate the image of the state in the eyes of the nation. Like American Catholics during the Columbus Quadricentennial in 1892-1893, the occasion of the Pioneer Jubilee provided Utahans with an opportunity to promote a more positive picture of their state and its residents.

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For a nation that had often looked upon Utah during the previous fifty years with a critical and weary eye, this was a moment when her politicians, businessmen, and average citizens, no matter their religious affiliation, could put the state’s best face forward. The Utah Semi-Centennial Commission also served as the primary force behind modeling a revitalized public image of the state and her residents with support from average Utahans. The narrative of the migration and subsequent settlement of Utah highlighted the link between the past, present, and future. Utahans recalled the past by commemorating the pioneers of 1847, focused on the present by celebrating the growth and development of Utah since 1847, and looked toward the future by envisioning economic prosperity for the state. The Pioneer Jubilee narrative began to suggest that Utah’s past was one of pride, not shame, while her present and future was full of promise and hope.

If Utah was to experience a revitalized place in American society, the story of her past demanded refashioning. The narrative created by the Semi-Centennial Commission underscored the triumph and progress of Utahans. There was no room in this narrative for the tensions and controversies that had plagued Utah’s past. To accentuate the positives and downplay the negatives, the Semi-Centennial Commission took liberties with the historical truth. Specifically, this meant minimizing the numerous moments of tension between Mormons and the American public and federal government over the nature of the Mormon Kingdom of God and polygamy. Utahans believed that their one-time territory and now state had been and would be at the fore of spreading civilization and American institutions in the budding West. In the past, they argued, Utah and her predominantly Mormon population did not challenge American ideals and institutions.
Rather, they not only accepted but also developed and disseminated those ideals and institutions in the untamed wilderness. With this overall theme, the Semi-Centennial Commission needed a sanitized account. By its very nature the 1897 Jubilee celebrated an event in which Mormons played the leading and supporting roles, but any explicit identification of the migration and settlement of Utah with the Mormons and the LDS Church needed to be struck from their collective memory. The Semi-Centennial Commission remembered Utah’s past in a manner suitable to advance the prospects of her future during the preparatory work and the Jubilee week itself. The publicity campaigns inside and outside of Utah, extensive planning and organization, and the daily parades of the celebration itself provided the Commission with the necessary apparatus to advance a particular memory of the migration. As a result, there was little to no room for anything that publicly associated the state’s success with Mormonism. As with their American Catholic counterparts, the tension between the historical reality of the past and present and Utahan’s desire to present an affirmative public image of themselves and their state presented no real dilemma for the Semi-Centennial Commission.

For Utah’s residents, dealing with Mormonism’s controversial place in the American religious and cultural landscape was an important component of the 1897 Pioneer Jubilee. Wherever the LDS Church and Mormons found themselves during the course of the nineteenth century – from upstate New York, to Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and eventually Utah – opposition and questions from non-Mormons quickly emerged. As one historian suggested, the problem of Mormonism “loomed large in the nation’s consciousness.” ¹⁰ Shortly after LDS Church founder Joseph Smith experienced a

visitation from the Angel Moroni near his family’s farm in upstate New York in 1823, Mormonism attracted negative attention. Because the church had not yet been formally organized, which did not occur until 1830, early criticism was directed at Smith. Non-Mormons perceived his visions to be the product of a “diseased imagination.” In the wake of formal organization of the church and the implementation of a doctrinal and theological structure, criticism shifted to the institution. The sources of anti-Mormonism were many, but at the top of the list were the nature of the Mormon Kingdom of God and the practice of polygamy. Americans also found other aspects of the LDS Church problematic including the Mormon belief in continued revelation, exclusive claims to the path of salvation, and reliance upon the Book of Mormon as a supplement to the Bible.

First, the issue of the nature of the Mormon Kingdom of God not only caused the greatest amount of strain between Mormons and non-Mormons inside and outside of Utah but also served as the foundation of the negative images of the state and its residents prior to the anniversary. Smith’s church seemed to offer one of many choices for religious seekers during the Second Great Awakening. The millennial expectations of the Mormons – the belief that Christ would return to earth and inaugurate a thousand-year


reign – required preparation. All Mormons would gather together “out of the world” and be “insulated from divisive outside influences” in the latter-day Zion – prophesied by Smith to be located in Western Missouri, but subsequently relocated to Utah – where they would build up the kingdom prior to Christ’s return. In this manner, the Mormon theological understanding of the Kingdom of God presented an “alternative to the Protestant evangelical kingdom.” Mormonism did not simply offer a religious alternative to early nineteenth-century Christian denominations but also a different social and political perspective of the world.

The Mormon theological understanding of the Kingdom of God was not merely a spiritual matter but also a temporal one that encompassed both the political and economic realms. This understanding formed the basis of conflict between Mormons and non-Mormons inside and outside of Utah. Preeminent Mormon historians Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington argue that the main issue defining the relationship between Mormons and the nation “lay in the Mormon concept of a divinely authorized earthly religious kingdom, in which secular and religious concerns were fused under the central authority of the priesthood, as represented by the prophet-president of the church.” Politically, the Kingdom of God, would function as a theocracy with leaders of the church also steering the governance and legal functions of the kingdom. At the economic level, the kingdom would emphasize cooperation and communitarian values to ensure the

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14 Arrington and Bitton, The Mormon Experience, 66.
15 Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience, 52.
16 Arrington and Bitton, The Mormon Experience, 161.
well being of all church members. Mormons rejected “a diverse, competitive, secular society, where no religious group had priority” for an “all-inclusive community with social, economic, religious, and political aspects.” Many Americans saw the Mormon attempt to build an economic and political Kingdom of God as a threat to the “egalitarian, individualistic, laissez-faire Jacksonian creed.”

The second issue that strained the relationship between Mormons and non-Mormons was the practice of polygamy. Polygamy, also known as “Patriarchal Marriage” or “the Principle,” was a social practice embedded in the Mormon theological understanding of salvation. According to Mormon theology, salvation was made available through the grace of God. While God’s grace was necessary for salvation, the individual Mormon’s ability to live a righteous life in accordance with the gospel affected the “degree of glory” that could be achieved after one’s resurrection. The highest degree

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17 Leonard J. Arrington points to seven principles that guided the economic ambitions of Mormonism’s Kingdom of God including the emphasis on the gathering, the construction of large self-sustaining Mormon villages, the stewardship of property, the development of natural resources as an act of worship, the pursuit of economic independence from the outside world and economic unity and cooperation within, and economic equality. See Leonard J. Arrington’s Great Basin Kingdom; An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900, Studies in Economic History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 22-28. For detailed examinations of the Mormon economic and political kingdom especially see Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May’s Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation among the Mormons, 2nd ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992); and David L. Bigler’s Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847-1896, Kingdom in the West (Spokane, WA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1998); and chapt. 4 in Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience, 113-146.


19 Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience, 63. In his discussion of the Mormon conception of sacred space, Steven L. Olsen lays out several dichotomous relationships between Mormon and American communities. Differences that contributed to the tensions and supposed incompatibility between these two groups included communitarian vs. capitalism, stewardship vs. ownership, theocracy vs. democracy, discrete vs. organic settlement, mechanical vs. organic solidarity, communal vs. individual, and sacred vs. secular social order. See Steven L. Olsen, “The Mormon Ideology of Place: Cosmic Symbolism of the City of Zion, 1830-1846” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1985), 305.

that a Mormon could reach was exaltation. Exaltation provided for the “continuation of the family unit throughout eternity” and therefore required marriage with a member of the opposite sex.\textsuperscript{21} The first plural marriage took place during the church’s residence in Nauvoo, Illinois, when Joseph Smith and Louisa Beeman were married in 1841.\textsuperscript{22} Prior to a public announcement made by then LDS president Brigham Young in 1852, the practice of plural marriage was largely limited to members of the church leadership.\textsuperscript{23} Over the course of its existence as an officially sanctioned church practice, approximately 10\% of Mormon families were polygamous.\textsuperscript{24} As with the Mormon conception of the Kingdom of God, what they saw as a legitimate component of their religion quickly became wrapped up in larger conflicts over proper American social values.

The conflict over polygamy grew in intensity during the second half of the nineteenth century and culminated in a significant adjustment on the part of the LDS Church in order to achieve statehood. In the wake of Young’s public announcement, criticism of polygamy first emerged at the popular level. Numerous fictional exposes about polygamous marriages were published in the years following his announcement.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{24} Larson, \textit{The “Americanization” of Utah for Statehood}, 37; Ivins, “Notes on Mormon Polygamy,” 102. In his quantitative analysis, Ivins points out that any attempt to determine the number of polygamous marriages can only be estimates because they were not a matter of public record. In \textit{Utah: The Right Place The Official Centennial History} (Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs Smith Publisher, 1995), Thomas G. Alexander suggests an even higher percentage of Mormons were polygamists; nearly 20-30\%, were practicing polygamists in the late nineteenth century (187).
\textsuperscript{25} Arrington, “Intolerable Zion,” 244, 249-254. Arrington examines four novels, all of which contained strong-willed female protagonists and deluded and depraved male antagonists. At the center of these novels were women who refused to become Mormons and enter into plural marriages. As mentioned
Moreover, the increased number of Protestant missionaries in Utah in the late 1860s and early 1870s, particularly Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists, sermonized on polygamy. They pointed out, while in Utah but also when they returned East, that polygamy threatened “American morality… and missionary zeal.” In addition, a group of non-Mormon women based in Salt Lake City founded an Anti-Polygamy Society and began publishing the *Anti-Polygamy Standard* in 1880. While Mormons saw polygamy as a matter of “holiness and goodness,” their non-Mormon counterparts increasingly saw it as a “symbol of deviance and debauchery.” Through these popular manifestations of anti-Mormon sentiment via the popular press and Protestants, the problem of polygamy increasingly came to the attention of the federal government.

While the LDS Church had prior clashes with the federal government, it was the issue of polygamy that prompted Congress to pass a series of legislation throughout the 1860s and into the 1880s targeting the legality of the practice and compelling the church to eventually officially condemn it. This period from 1862 to 1890 marked a final tug-of-war between the church and federal government over the boundaries of religious versus temporal authority. For Mormons who supported polygamy the issue was about the freedom to practice their religion as they saw fit. After all, the Constitution enshrined religious liberty. At the popular and legislative levels, opponents of polygamy linked

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*29* Early instances of conflict between the LDS Church and the federal government included the “Utah War” in 1857-1858, when President Buchanan sent three thousand U.S. troops to Utah, and the continued disagreement over the appointment of territorial officials. For examinations of these two examples see chapt. 15 in Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 250-271; and Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 164-170.
Christian morality with the Constitution. As Sarah Barringer Gordon suggests, opponents argued that the Constitution could not “shield such immorality… or liberty would be fatally compromised.”

Non-Mormons believed polygamy stood in stark contrast to the kind of American moral values that were grounded in Protestant evangelical Christianity and the Constitution.

With pressure from Utah’s non-Mormon population, Congress passed three major pieces of legislation – the Morrill Bigamy Act in 1862, the Edmunds Act in 1882, and the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887 – that outlawed polygamy and successively increased the penalties for polygamists and the LDS Church. Although the Morrill Bigamy Act outlawed polygamy, it was only with the Edmunds and the amended version, the Edmunds-Tucker Act, that the federal government more strictly enforced the penalties through territorial officials in Utah.

Collectively these acts eventually forced the LDS leadership to reevaluate its position on polygamy. In addition, the acts increasingly limited the church’s ability to practically implement the Kingdom of God and restricted the political and economic participation of polygamists. The Edmunds Act defined polygamy as a felony, disenfranchised polygamists, and prohibited their ability to sit on juries and hold political office. Conviction carried with it either a hefty fine or a prison term. Five years later, the Edmunds-Tucker Act granted more powers of oversight to federal officials including the implementation of an anti-polygamy oath for potential

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31 The Edmunds Act broadly defined polygamy as “unlawful cohabitation” making it easier for officials to bring charges against and prosecute polygamists.
voters, office holders, and voters; and the confiscation of church property valued over $50,000. 32

Over the course of ten years, from 1882 when Congress passed the Edmunds Act until 1893 when President Harrison issued the last pardons for unlawful cohabitation, Utah was in a state of turmoil. While implementing Congress’s legislation on the ground, non-Mormons attempted to gain an upper hand by making inroads into the one-time Mormon monopoly in local (particularly Salt Lake City) and territorial politics. Meanwhile, the LDS Church struggled to carry out its vision of the Kingdom of God. Numerous church leaders and other polygamists evaded the law by going “underground” or served prison terms. 33 The friction and ill feeling between Mormons and non-Mormons inside and outside of Utah that had characterized this period overall, however, began to wane significantly in 1890 when LDS Church president Wilford Woodruff issued the “Manifesto.” As one of Mormonism’s most elderly leaders (he was ninety-three during the Jubilee and died one year later), Woodruff participated in and witnessed many of the events that transformed the LDS Church during the nineteenth century. As a pioneer, he migrated from Nauvoo, Illinois and resettled in the Great Basin in 1847. During the prosecution of federal anti-polygamy laws in the 1880s he avoided arrest by going “underground” in St. George, Utah. After the death of President John Taylor, 32 Numerous studies, in brief or in extended detail, address the passage of federal legislation and its impact on the LDS Church and Utah politics including chaps. 2 through 10 in Larson, The "Americanization" of Utah; Kenneth David Riggs, “The Mormon Church-State Confrontation in Nineteenth-Century America,” The Journal of Church and State 30 (1988): 276-289; Larson, “Government, Politics, and Conflict” and “The Crusade and the Manifesto,” Utah’s History, 243-256, 257-276; Bigler, Forgotten Kingdom, 348-360; chapt. 12 in Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, 353-379; Jean Bickmore White, “Prelude to Statehood: Coming Together in the 1890s,” Utah Historical Quarterly 62, no. 4 (1994): 300-315; chapt. 8 in Dwyer, “The Gentile Comes to Utah,” 215-249; and Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 191-200.

33 By 1889 there were 589 convictions under the Edmunds Tucker Act (Riggs, “The Mormon Church-State Confrontation,” 283).
Woodruff became only the fourth person to hold the highest office in the LDS Church. After personal reflection and consultation with church counselors George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, Woodruff issued a public statement in September indicating that the LDS Church would no longer sanction plural marriages. At the theological level, Woodruff’s statement ended the practice of polygamous marriage. At the practical level it took much longer for the practice to dissolve. While historians do not always agree on whether or not Church leaders intended for the Manifesto to function merely as a temporary or permanent measure, they do agree that it “ripped down and buried the banner of polygamy” as a stumbling block to statehood.

Even after the LDS Church officially ended the practice of plural marriage in 1890, disbanded the Church’s political party (the People’s Party) in 1891, reduced investments of church money in economic ventures and emphasis on a cooperative economy, polygamy was and continued to be a contentious issue, particularly for non-Mormons outside the state. All obstacles to full acceptance in American society and

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34 Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 192. Also see Alexander’s biography of Woodruff, Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991).


36 Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 201. Polygamous marriages did not end overnight. Mormons who entered into plural marriage prior to the Manifesto continued to fulfill their familial obligations within those marriages. While the number of Mormons in plural marriages declined after the Manifesto, Larson points out that there were over 1,500 Mormons engaged in polygamous marriages in 1899 and just below 900 in 1903 (The “Americanization” of Utah, 275). The LDS Church leadership, moreover, issued another “Manifesto” in 1904 and formed a committee in 1909 to investigate those Mormons who continued to engage in plural marriage. For another indication of the difficulty of the LDS Church to practically end polygamous marriages see Kenneth L. Cannon II’s article on the public versus private statement of three Church Presidents during the late nineteenth: “After the Manifesto: Mormon Polygamy, 1890-1896,” Sunstone 8 (1983): 27-35.

37 Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 200. For assessments of the Manifesto and questions of its permanency see Lyman, Political Deliverance, 4; and chapt. 13 in Larson, The “Americanization” of Utah, 265-281.

38 In 1903, the Utah State Legislature nominated Republican and non-polygamist Reed Smoot to take a seat in Congress. Under the suspicion that the LDS Church secretly approved of polygamy, Congress’s Committee on Privileges and Elections embarked upon a three-year investigation. He was
culture had seemingly been eliminated. Utah and her residents, particularly Mormons, had taken the necessary steps to gain respectability. As one Mormon historian suggests, however, “Utah has been Mormon country. Not only have most of its inhabitants been members of the ‘Church,’ but this is the single fact most likely to be known by non-Mormons.”

To build on the advances made during the first half of the 1890s and to address the image of Utah as “Mormon country,” the Semi-Centennial Commission planned a spectacular and secular Jubilee celebration. At the center of this commemorative occasion was the creation of a triumphant Pioneer narrative that largely stripped Utah’s past of any signs of controversy and any explicit recognition of Mormonism.

The absence of any large LDS Church-orchestrated celebration for the Jubilee coincidentally aided the Semi-Centennial’s goal of refashioning the national perception of Utah and to strip the memory of the 1847 migration of any explicit identification with

allowed to assume his seat at the conclusion of the investigation. It was the midst of this investigation that President Joseph F. Smith issued a second “Manifesto.”

Richard D. Poll, “Utah and the Mormons: A Symbiotic Relationship,” in New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington, ed. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1987), 323. Contemporary examples seem to suggest that the image of Utah as “Mormon country” continues to persist even today. Although involving fundamentalist sects that broke away from the LDS Church, the national press coverage of the arrest, trial, and conviction of Warren Jeffs in 2006 on charges of accessory to rape; the raid in early 2008 by the state of Texas on a polygamist compound; and the HBO series “Big Love,” which tells the story of the everyday familial and social challenges of a polygamous family in Utah, provides evidence to support this notion. At the same time, there are examples of Mormons attempting to alter their image via popular culture. In this day and age of reality television increasing numbers of young adult Mormons have shown American society a new face of Mormonism. Young adult Mormons have appeared on MTV’s “The Real World,” Fox’s popular “American Idol,” and CBS’s “Survivor.” See “Mormons Have a Place on Reality TV -- Gays Too!,” Newsweek (May 19, 2008), http://glaadorg.nexcess.net/cinequeer/2008/05/newsweek-mormons-have-a-place.html (accessed August 2008). In addition, Chad Harding recently created “Mormons Exposed: Men on a Mission,” a calendar featuring recently-returned male Mormon missionaries in less than fully clothed photo spreads (i.e. bare chests). Each month features one missionary along with his personal background and information on his mission work. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of each calendar goes to specially chosen charities. As Hardy explains on his website, he hopes that the calendar will clear up “some common misconceptions of Mormons by celebrating the beautiful bodies, great looks and amazing stories of service of these deeply spiritual men.” Harding says that the LDS Church leadership has asked him to stop his work on the calendar but he is already planning another calendar for 2009 and a Mormon moms calendar for 2010. See Mormons Exposed, http://mormonsexposed.com/ (accessed August 2008).
the LDS Church and Mormons. In the wake of the federal prosecution of church leaders
who practiced polygamy in the late 1880s, the LDS Church struggled to recuperate in the
arena of finances and morale. During the legal prosecutions of polygamists, the LDS
Church accrued a debt of $300,000.\footnote{Ronald W. Walker, “Crisis in Zion: Heber J. Grant and the Panic of 1893,” \textit{Sunstone} 5, no. 1 (1980): 27. For an expanded version of this article see \textit{Arizona and the West} 21 (Autumn 1979): 257-278.} Church debt increased further during the 1890s
with investment poured into church welfare and education projects, sugar production and
hydroelectric power, and completion of the Temple in 1893.\footnote{Arrington, \textit{Great Basin Kingdom}, 391-403.} Average Mormons also
struggled during the economic downturn of the early 1890s; tithing – a major source of
revenue for the church – decreased significantly.\footnote{Walker, “Crisis in Zion,” 27.} Finally, the church’s financial
troubles were only exacerbated by the nation-wide Panic of 1893 and subsequent
economic depression that lasted into 1897, the year of the Jubilee celebration.\footnote{For a quantitative analysis of the Panic of 1893 and the nation-wide depression see Douglas Steeples and David O. Whitten, \textit{Democracy in Desperation: The Depression of 1893}, Contributions in Economics and Economic History (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998).} As
Ronald J. Walker suggests, the church was “paralyzed” by the depression.\footnote{Walker, “Crisis in Zion,” 32.} As an
institution, the LDS Church was financially unable to orchestrate a grand celebration,
particularly not on the scale initiated by the Semi-Centennial Commission.

In addition to the problem of finances, the LDS Church also took a major hit to its
morale during the 1880s. For a religious community to whom Pioneer Day was, as one
sociologist suggested, “one of the most important public expression[s] of Mormon

Significant events had indeed taken place. Politicians and average Americans were
keeping their eyes on what Mormons were doing in Utah, as the coverage in the nation’s major newspapers, like *The New York Times*, demonstrates.\footnote{David A. Copland, “The ‘Mormon Problem’ and the Press,” in *Outsiders in 19th-Century Press History: Multicultural Perspectives*, ed. Frankie Hutton and Barbara Straus Reed (Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1995), 187-208.} As legalized anti-Mormon sentiment climaxed with the prosecution of polygamists, the removal of the church’s status as a corporation, and the restrictions on political freedoms with the implementation of the Edmunds and Edmunds-Tucker Acts church leadership and lay Mormons probably found the odds stacked against them. After four decades of negative attention in the popular press and from the federal government, Woodruff and other leaders of the LDS Church may have thought it wise to lay low during the Jubilee rather than rouse further national attention.

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In addition, Mormons and non-Mormons inside Utah attempted to improve their relations during the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the migration as they focused on enhancing the present and future economic and political prospects of the state. While the Jubilee memorial narrative maintained a distant and primarily ambiguous relationship with Mormons and the LDS Church, the state’s Mormon and non-Mormon residents displayed a united front in creating and perpetuating that narrative. Non-Mormons could help ensure their continued economic and political vitality in the newly constituted state by cooperating with their one-time opponents. In short, cultural cooperation during the 1897 Jubilee could help erase the decades of physical, economic, political, and social turmoil between Mormons and Gentiles.

From the moment of settlement to that of statehood, Mormons comprised the overwhelming majority of Utah’s population. As Salt Lake City grew and as Mormons
settled in areas of the Great Basin further north and south along the Wasatch Range of the Rocky Mountains, the non-Mormon population slowly increased. Non-Mormons had been present in Utah shortly after the beginning of settlement in 1847, particularly merchants and eventually land speculators. By the 1860s, they numbered in the hundreds, consisting mostly of officials of the territorial government, soldiers, merchants and financiers. It was only after the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 and the establishment of mining enterprises that the growth of the non-Mormon population took off. Although the LDS Church provided financial support, materials, and workers for the completion of the railroad and Mormons comprised nearly 40% of the mining labor, these industries remained primarily the purview of non-Mormons.47 The year the railroad brought Utah and the nation closer together physically, approximately 80,000 people lived in two hundred towns. At the turn of the twentieth century, three years after the Pioneer Jubilee, Utah’s population had grown to nearly 270,000.48

Nowhere were these tensions more apparent than in Salt Lake City, Utah’s capital and home of the Pioneer Jubilee. As the largest city and the political, economic, and religious center of the territory, Mormons and Gentiles came to heads over the church’s economic practices and political dominance from the mid-1860s until the mid-1890s. The religious diversity of the state increased to the point that by 1890 members of other religious affiliations, including Lutherans, Catholics, and Jews also called Salt Lake City home.49 Non-Mormons and Godbeites, Mormons who disagreed with the Church’s view

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49 For an examination of the increased religious diversity of Salt Lake City, see chapt. 4 in Alexander and Allen’s *Mormons & Gentiles*; and chapt. 7 in Ferenc Morton Szasz, *The Protestant Clergy*
of free-market capitalism, moreover, disliked the church’s economic practice of cooperation. They grew frustrated with the establishment in 1868 of the Zion Cooperative Mercantile Institute [ZCMI], a church-run cooperative economic enterprise based in Salt Lake City with affiliated mercantile cooperatives through the territory. The Godbeites also disliked the church-implemented boycott of Gentile merchants. Gentiles were also aggravated by their inability to undercut the Mormon control of city politics. By the late 1870s, they owned valuable property and paid high taxes but “felt discriminated against since they had little or no voice in city politics.” Mormons and Gentiles, moreover, were divided along party lines, with the LDS’s People’s Party on one side and the non-Mormon Liberal Party on the other.

Mormons and Gentiles were even segregated when it came to cultural activities and the spatial use of the city, further reflecting the strained economic and political relationship of the two groups. They existed separately both physically and, as suggested by Mormon historian Jan Shipps, psychologically. They lived and worked in separate areas of the city. Gentiles largely resided in the southern and western portions of Salt


50 Alexander and Allen, Mormons & Gentiles, 92.
52 Part of the ambiguity of the relationship between the Jubilee and Mormonism revolves around the urban environment and the use of public space. Salt Lake City was founded as the religious and social center of the LDS Church; the fact that Temple Square, where the Mormon Tabernacle and Temple are located, served as the point of origin for the planning and settlement of the remainder of the city reinforces the connection between religion and the urban environment. Moreover, the daily parades passed by Temple Square and the Tabernacle provided social space for certain commemorative activities and concerts during the Jubilee. The spatial limitations of this project prevent an extended examination of the use of space for religious ends and the manner in which the use of urban space helps to create a religious identity. For additional studies of the geography of Salt Lake City and the religious and secular use of its space see Olsen, “The Mormon Ideology of Place”; C. Mark Hamilton, Nineteenth-Century Mormon Architecture and City Planning (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Richard V. Francaviglia, The Mormon Landscape: Existence, Creation and Perception of a Unique Image in the American West (New York: AMS Press, 1978); John W. Reps, Cities of the American West: A History of the Frontier Urban Planning (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979); Lester D. Campbell, “Perception and Land Use: The Case of the Mormon Culture Region” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974); Richard H. Jackson,
Lake City while Mormons tended to live in the northern and eastern sections of town.\textsuperscript{53} The businesses located along Main Street also reflected these divisions. Mormon businesses were largely located just south of Temple Square, while non-Mormon businesses were located even further south.\textsuperscript{54} In addition, non-Mormons and Godbeites founded the *Salt Lake Tribune* in 1871 to give voice to their interests, while the *Deseret News*, founded in 1850, became the official organ of the LDS Church. They not only avoided living or working near one another, they also avoided celebrating the nation’s birthday together; the Mormon and non-Mormon residents did not observe a joint July 4\textsuperscript{th} celebration until 1888.\textsuperscript{55}

While the iciness of Mormon and Gentile economic, political, and cultural relations began thawing as early as the late 1880s, the Pioneer Jubilee marked one of the first real opportunities that they could cooperate for the future development of their city and state. Even though leadership in the city gradually shifted away from the church hierarchy to lapsed Mormons and non-Mormon businessmen born outside of Utah in the late 1870s, Salt Lake City did not have a non-Mormon mayor and city-councilman until

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\textsuperscript{54} Richard H. Jackson and Jeremy G. Bryson, “Salt Lake City’s Main Street Plaza: Sacred or Secular Space?” in *Geography, Culture and Change in the Mormon West: 1847-2003*, ed. Richard H. Jackson and Mark W. Jackson, Pathways in Geography Series (Jacksonville, AL: National Council for Geographic Education, 2003), 82. Jackson and Bryson point out that this economic division of space along Main Street continued into the early twentieth century. A building boom, which included the Newhouse Hotel, took place in the non-Mormon section of the business district. The LDS Church responded with the construction of the Hotel Utah on the southern edge of Temple Square near Main Street (the building is now the Joseph Smith Memorial Building).
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Meanwhile, the first economic cooperation between Mormons and non-Mormons occurred with the organization of the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade in 1887. After Woodruff issued the Manifesto in 1890 and disbanded the People’s Party in 1891, the conflict between Mormons and non-Mormons inside Utah and Salt Lake City subsided considerably.

The composition of the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission reflected the more amicable and accommodating association between Mormons and non-Mormons. The Commission’s Chairman, Spencer Clawson, migrated to Utah in 1852 and was the son of a bishop of the LDS Church. While he worked as a young man at the ZCMI, he later owned and operated his own dry goods company. Non-Mormon E.G. Rognon filled the position of the Commission’s secretary. Born in Indiana and educated in the law and the classics at DePauw University, Rognon settled in Salt Lake City around 1890. He dabbled in mining ventures, was secretary of the Mt. Nebo Land and Irrigation Company, and served as a member of the city’s Chamber of Commerce. For over a year, Clawson and Rognon worked with one another without letting four decades worth of political and economic animosity get in between their overall objectives for the Pioneer Jubilee.

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58 For non-Mormons residing in Utah, Dwyer and Anderson suggest, moral qualms about the Mormon practice of polygamy were secondary to Mormon control of city and territorial politics and church economic policies that limited a free-market economy. Dwyer, “The Gentile Comes to Utah,” 65; and Anderson, *Desert Saints*, 325.

59 “Chairman Clawson,” *The Pony Express* 1, No. 2 (May 12, 1897), 11, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church History Library and Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah, (Access #391999), hereafter cited Church History Library; “Utah Semi-Centennial Commission – From the Press Bureau of the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission,” Microfiche M284.5 U89f, Church History Library.

60 “Secretary Rognon,” *The Pony Express* 1, no. 3 (May 19, 1897), 18, Church History Library.
While the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission faced its share of difficulties, including raising money to finance their ambitious project and countering charges that the commemoration was purely a “Mormon show,” Clawson, Rognon, the Commission’s acting committees, and average Utahans gathered together to honor the pioneers while planning for Utah’s economic and political future.\(^6\)

As the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission and average Utahans planned and carried out the Pioneer Jubilee they fashioned a memory of the migration and settlement in Utah through the filter of the LDS Church’s past relationship with American society and earlier Mormon and non-Mormon interaction. To temper lingering anti-Mormon sentiment in the present, they consciously avoided direct reference to the Mormon character of the migration itself. They sanitized the narrative of the Mormon pioneers and in turn made their memory appealing to not only Mormons but also non-Mormons inside and outside of Utah. Moreover, in creating a non-sectarian memory of the

\(^{61}\) “Jubilee Funds Wanted,” \textit{SLT} (June 2, 1897), 8. The Utah Semi-Centennial Commission estimated the total costs of the Jubilee to be $50,000; this amount was necessary to ensure that the Jubilee did not “disgrace and humiliate the people of Utah” (\textit{Official Report and Financial Statement of the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission}, 11). They first approached the state legislature to procure funds; after much bickering, the legislature appropriated $20,000 – $15,000 to be used by the Commission and $5,000 to be distributed among the counties. Commission members also made an appeal to President Woodruff for $10,000 from the LDS Church. Initially Woodruff remained non-committal. Due to the financial state of the church at the time, he only provided only $2,000. Finally, the Commission turned to businesses and individual Utahans to contribute money. As indicated by coverage of the preparations in the \textit{Salt Lake Tribune} and the Semi-Centennial Commission’s Official Report this proved to be a very tough process. Subscriptions trickled in during the first part of 1897. After an early-June rally at the Salt Lake Theatre, during which Commission members urged residents to contribute financially, and with the appointment of a committee to canvass Salt Lake City and solicit funds, the number of subscriptions increased. Even after the Pioneer Jubilee came and went, however, the Commission was still trying to collect on subscriptions. They went as far as threatening to sue those who failed to fulfill their obligations. For coverage of appropriations in the state legislature see “Pioneer Jubilee Affairs,” \textit{SLT} (February 11, 1897), 5; “Jubilee Appropriation,” \textit{SLT} (February 16, 1897); “House Gulps the Code,” \textit{SLT} (March 6, 1897), 5; “Cowboy Tournament,” \textit{SLT} (March 11, 1897), 8; “Cut the Sum in Two,” \textit{SLT} (March 13, 1897); “Rather Breezy Meeting,” \textit{SLT} (March 14, 1897), 1; “Not a Day of Rest,” \textit{SLT} (March 15, 1897), 5; and “Sloan Quits the House,” \textit{SLT} (March 15, 1897), 5. For appeals made to the LDS Church see “Church and the Jubilee,” \textit{SLT} (January 23, 1897), 8; “Jubilee Fund Growing,” \textit{SLT} (March 2, 1897), 8; and “Z.C.M.I. Gives $1,000,” \textit{SLT} (March 26, 1897), 8. The individual and business subscriptions can be found in the Semi-Centennial’s \textit{Official Report and Financial Statement of the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission}, 57-99.
pioneers, the Mormons and non-Mormons in Utah could establish and advance a cooperative agenda that advanced the present and future economic interests of the state.

**Mormon Pioneers in History and in Memory**

Similar to the biographies and histories of Christopher Columbus and his voyages, the story of the Mormon pioneers underwent significant alterations prior to the Jubilee celebration in 1897. Because the LDS Church understood itself to be a latter-day Israel, as reflected in the official name of the church, shortly after their arrival in the Great Basin they interpreted their experience in the light of their biblical predecessors. While many of the facts remained the same the interpretation of those facts were modified to reflect a memory of the pioneers that reinforced a particular religious and historical identity. The malleability of the memory of the pioneers and their migration made it easier for the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission to retain certain aspects of the narrative and discard others that made it easier to improve the nation’s image of the state. While the Pioneer Jubilee narrative more closely resembles the Mormon memory of the pioneers than it does the actual historical record, the Semi-Centennial Commission altered that narrative even further to meet the economic and political needs of Utah in the late nineteenth century. The “Wedding of the Waters” presentation demonstrates that even though they wanted to distance Utah’s image from Mormonism, the Semi-Centennial Commission co-opted those elements of the Mormon memory of the migration to suit their Jubilee goals.

The historical record of the Mormon pioneers pieced together by twentieth-century historians is untouched by either the Mormon self-conception as the latter-day Israel or the Semi-Centennial vision of a new Utah. Even before the overland trek,
Mormons had become acclimated to the migration experience; shortly after the organization of the LDS Church, it moved from upstate New York to Kirtland, Ohio in 1831, and attempted to relocate to Far West, Missouri in the late 1830s. After establishing a thriving community in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1839, Mormons once again moved, this time to Utah, in 1847. Although the LDS Church had been granted a charter to found Nauvoo on the eastern banks of the Mississippi Rivers, just across from Iowa, relations with non-Mormons deteriorated over time. It became increasingly clear to church leadership that living in such close proximity to non-Mormons hampered their ability to live peacefully while building God’s kingdom on earth. After Smith was killed while being held at a jail in Carthage in 1844 and the revocation of the charter by the Illinois governor the following year, Brigham Young and other church leaders started making preparations to migrate during the winter of 1845-46. The lead company of Mormon migrants crossed the Mississippi River in early February 1846 starting a sixteen-month migration that ended in the new Zion – the Salt Lake Valley.

The pioneers primarily followed trails already established by previous travelers relocating to California and Oregon, but the trek across the present-day states of Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Utah still contained its fair share of difficulties. The first portion of the migration took the longest; it took a month for the initial contingent of 5,000 Mormons to travel 100 miles. They did not cross the Missouri River and establish Winter Quarters until late in August, nearly six months after leaving Nauvoo. The slowness of this stretch of the migration was complicated by bad weather, illness, numerous bodies of water to cross, the construction of way-stations for the Mormons soon to follow, and deplorable morale. The Winter Quarters, settled on the western
banks of the Missouri River near present-day Omaha, provided a home for the lead company until April of 1847. An “advance company” consisting of 147 men, women, and children (including Young and other church leaders) left Winter Quarters in early April. Within the span of three months, this company completed the final thousand miles of the migration. Although a small party first entered the Salt Lake Valley on July 22, Young – who had been afflicted with tick fever – and the rest of the advance company, entered the Valley on July 24. By October, nearly 1,600 Mormons had relocated to Utah and between 1849 and 1852, approximately three to four thousand Mormons resettled in Utah each year.

The Mormon memory of the migration largely reflected their self-conception as a latter-day Israel to legitimize their belief in the LDS Church as the restored and true church; they interpreted the experience through a religious rather than a political lens. Mormons consciously imitated the Israelites. Jan Shipps suggests that Mormons did

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62 Arrington and Bitton, The Mormon Experience, 98.


64 Arrington, Brigham Young: American Moses, 172. A decade after the first migration 35,000 Mormons resided in the area of the Great Basin. That number jumped to 75,000 by 1869 and 125,000 by 1877. Overseas missionary work, particularly in Great Britain, contributed to the great number of Mormon migrants.

not merely imitate the Israelites but “lived through” sacred history in their own age.\textsuperscript{66} As an act of living through, of replicating past events in the present, Mormons gave legitimacy to the restoration of pure Christianity and to their place in sacred history.\textsuperscript{67} After the migration, Mormons continually interpreted the experience through the lens of a sacred past in the attempt to create a sacred present and future.\textsuperscript{68} Mormons helped solidify this memory of the migration – the “pioneer myth” – as a nineteenth-century Exodus through subsequent annual Pioneer Day celebrations, sermons, museums, books, and dramatic productions.\textsuperscript{69}

Mormons identified the organization, experience, and geography of the migration as a nineteenth-century Exodus. Brigham Young consciously sorted the migrants into companies of ten, fifty, and one hundred, which was a direct copy of the organization used by Moses during the exodus from Egypt. Just as the Israelites faced natural obstacles and hunger so too did the Mormons. When faced with the difficult crossing of the Mississippi in February of 1846, the Mormons equated the freezing of the river with the parting of the Red Sea. When suffering from hunger and unable to find food, the Mormons believed that God sent quail to nourish them just as God sent manna from heaven for the Israelites.\textsuperscript{70} If Mormons constituted the latter-day Israel, they saw

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\textsuperscript{66} Shipps, \textit{Mormonism}, 52.
\textsuperscript{67} Shipps, \textit{Mormonism}, 38.
\textsuperscript{69} For specific examples of these manifestations see Eliason, “Celebrating Zion.”
\textsuperscript{70} Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, \textit{The Exodus Story: Ancient and Modern Parallels} (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1997), 67.
Brigham Young as their latter-day Moses, as demonstrated through his leadership and prophetic authority.\footnote{Leonard Arrington’s biography of Young even includes the subtitle American Moses.}

Mormons not only transformed the meaning of the migration experience but also modified their memory of the geography to suit their religious self-conception. As the Mormons passed through the plains of Nebraska and portions of Wyoming they undoubtedly saw a landscape that differed greatly from western Illinois. In many diaries, Mormons commented upon the geography of the plains. Based upon visual observations sometimes they saw the land as barren, but they also recognized that some land might prove viable for agricultural production.\footnote{Jackson, “The Overland Journey to Zion,” 9-13.} Only in the years following the migration did church leaders increasingly re-interpret the plains as a “desert.”\footnote{Richard H. Jackson, “The Mormon Experience: The Plains as Sinai, the Great Salt Lake as the Dead Sea, and the Great Basin as desert-cum-promised Land,” Journal of Historical Geography 18, no. 1 (1992): 41, 48.} In addition, the Great Basin became a “desert” in the Mormon memory of the settlement; a “desertification” of the land supported their belief that God would transform the land and act in history.\footnote{Richard H. Jackson, “The Mormon Experience,” 52. This tradition served to glorify Mormon accomplishments, emphasize the belief in divine intervention, and illustrate that Young had been divinely inspired.} The American “desert” now more appropriately reflected the desert crossed by the Israelites. At the same time, Mormons also saw the Salt Lake Valley as their “promised land.”\footnote{Holzapfel, The Exodus Story, 63.} Finally, Mormons drew parallels between specific geographical features of the Salt Lake Valley and the Holy Land of Palestine. Mormons named a river in Utah after the Jordan River in Palestine. They saw the Great Salt Lake as similar to the Dead Sea while Utah Lake, because of its importance for fishing, was compared to the Sea of

\footnote{\textsuperscript{71} Leonard Arrington's biography of Young even includes the subtitle American Moses.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{72} Jackson, “The Overland Journey to Zion,” 9-13.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{73} Richard H. Jackson, “The Mormon Experience: The Plains as Sinai, the Great Salt Lake as the Dead Sea, and the Great Basin as desert-cum-promised Land,” Journal of Historical Geography 18, no. 1 (1992): 41, 48.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{74} Richard H. Jackson, “The Mormon Experience,” 52. This tradition served to glorify Mormon accomplishments, emphasize the belief in divine intervention, and illustrate that Young had been divinely inspired.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{75} Holzapfel, The Exodus Story, 63.}
Galilee. As evident in the naming of geographical features in the Salt Lake Valley, the act of replicating the Israelites moved beyond experience to include inhabited space.

The Semi-Centennial Commission co-opted symbolic aspects of the Mormon memory to create a pioneer narrative that emphasized the economic development of the region and the arrival of civilization to a barren wasteland. Similar to the Mormon memory of the migration and settlement, the Salt Lake Valley and Utah in general functioned both as a “desert” and a “promised land” in the collective memory created by the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission. At the same time, however, the Commission’s narrative suggested that the “desert” would be transformed not through the intervention of God but through the hard work of pioneers and the “promised land” would not be a new Zion but a land of economic prosperity and progress. The Semi-Centennial Commission did not, however, strip the Jubilee narrative of all religious influence and meaning. Like their American Catholic counterparts, the Commission’s narrative still recognized the importance of providence and faith, but, unlike the American Catholics, this was of a more general Protestant Christianity rather than a denominationally specific Mormon Christianity. A divine being guided the pioneers but this was a non-sectarian, rather than a Mormon God, that could appeal to a wider audience. This appropriation and ensuing alteration of the Mormon memory of the migration and settlement is particularly evident in the numerous public statements, poems, and songs approved by the Commission for the Jubilee and produced outside the confines of the Commission. In the process, the Semi-Centennial Commission created and disseminated its own “pioneer myth” stripped of any specific Mormon character. As the Semi-Centennial Commission narrated the story of the migration, the experiences and hardships of the past played a
civilizing role in preparing Utah for a politically and economically prosperous present and future.

The first part of the Jubilee narrative and the week’s celebratory activities revolved around the past. As the Semi-Centennial Commission told it, the Mormon pioneers, who crossed the plains from Nauvoo, Illinois to the uninhabited Great Basin, overcame the hostility of both non-Mormons and the “Great American Desert.” In doing so they tamed the virgin land to reap great rewards agriculturally and economically, producing wealth not only for Utah but also increasingly for the nation. Over the course of fifty years, the pioneers carved out a special place for Utah in the settlement and development of the West through their hard work, perseverance, fortitude, and faith. They faced many obstacles and overcame them. In the narrative and the Jubilee activities like daily parades, the surviving pioneers were lauded and honored for undertaking such an arduous migration and for improving the region economically, socially, and politically.

The second part of the Jubilee narrative and public celebrations focused on the future. In particular, Utah’s future benefited from an event that marked the turning point of the narrative – the achievement of statehood. As early as 1849, Utahans submitted a constitution and appeal for statehood to the federal government. Faced with numerous obstacles and opposition from inside and outside the territory, Utah did not become a state until 1896.\footnote{While the territories surrounding Utah – Nevada, Colorado, Arizona and Idaho – became states before Utah, territorial officials went through the process of appealing for statehood five previous times (1849, 1856, 1872, 1882, and 1887) before success in 1896. For an examination of the multiple attempts to become a state and the success of 1896 see Lyman, \textit{Political Deliverance}; chapt. 14 in Larson, \textit{The "Americanization" of Utah}, 283-304; and Larson and Poll, “The Forty-fifth State,” in \textit{Utah’s History}, 387-404.} Once again, Utahans had overcome adversity. They were no longer
second-class power players in the nation’s political system. Now they were on equal footing with the rest of the nation. As such, the Jubilee narrative shifted to the future while still connecting to the past. For the state and her citizens, the past was both a foundation and a mere threshold. The Jubilee narrative provided an image of the future that was just as promising and successful as the past. Individually and collectively Utahans would continue to experience economic greatness. Moreover, they would continue to lead the West towards progress and civilization that could match, and potentially surpass, that of the East. Utah’s citizens could only achieve endless prosperity and progress, however, if they retained the same perseverance, fortitude, and strength that the quickly passing pioneer generation had possessed.

While the themes of providence, struggle and hardship, and progress and civilization were enshrined in the poems, songs, statements, and publicity intended for Utahans and particularly for the nation it was the official invitation that set the tone of the Jubilee narrative. Civic and fraternal societies and state representatives and governors across Utah and surrounding states received the elaborately decorated invitation that requested their presence during the week’s commemorative events and activities. Out of the reportedly two thousand invitations sent out by the Commission, the most important one was personally delivered to President William McKinley. Selected by Governor Heber J. Wells and the Commission, a delegation of important political, social, and religious leaders from the state traveled to Washington, D.C., to personally present

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77 “Jubilee Visitors,” Eastern Utah Advocate [EUA] (May 13, 1897), 1.
78 “Jubilee Notes,” SLT (June 27, 1897), 4.
the invitation and ask for McKinley’s presence in Utah. The delegation included George Q. Cannon, a LDS Church official, and his son Frank J. Cannon, who was elected senator the previous year. Additional delegates included George W. Bartch, an associate justice of the state’s Supreme Court, P.H. Lannan, editor of *The Salt Lake Tribune*, Senator Joseph L. Rawlins, and Representative William H. King.

The very composition of the delegation and their cooperation in delivering the invitation to McKinley reflects the desire on the part of Mormons and non-Mormons in Utah to use the Semi-Centennial to nourish and present an image of more cordial relations. For example, the elder Cannon not only participated in the migration from Nauvoo in 1847, but his leadership role in the LDS Church placed him at the front of the numerous controversies that plagued Mormons for nearly four decades. He became involved in several Mormon publications including the *Deseret News*, served as Brigham Young’s personal secretary, and was a polygamist with five wives and thirty-two children. For a decade he served as Utah’s delegate to Congress. In the wake of the Edmunds and Edmunds-Tucker Acts, Cannon lost this position and lived underground for a period of time before surrendering and was imprisoned for six months for cohabitation. The delegation also included George W. Bratch. Unlike Cannon, Bratch was neither a Mormon nor had experienced the migration. Originally from Pennsylvania,
Bratch had only arrived in Salt Lake City with his law partner in 1888. A year later, President Benjamin Harrison appointed him a probate judge, a position that very well may have placed him in the thick of the federal government’s attempts to legally prosecute polygamy. Cannon and Bratch, men who at one time stood on opposite sides of the law, now stood together before the president in mutual collaboration. Rather than opposing one another, the Mormon and non-Mormon delegates presented a united front when they traveled to Washington.

On May 10, President McKinley welcomed the delegation to the White House where they spent the morning telling him the narrative of the pioneers that came to dominate the commemoration. As the delegation spoke with McKinley, they wove a story of weary yet hearty pioneers who trudged across the plains to transform the wilderness of America’s desert and to plant and cultivate the seeds of political, economic, and cultural civilization in the West. In the absence of any explicit mention of Mormons or Mormonism in their rhetoric, the delegates suggested that the goal of the Jubilee was not to shed light on the reasons for the migration (i.e. anti-Mormonism) but rather the manner in which the pioneers handled the migration and its eventual civilizing influence.

As framed by the delegates, the migration and settlement was a political rather than a religious action. In a letter penned by Governor Wells and read to McKinley by the delegates, the pioneers, after “having fought their way through the wilderness,” first planted on a nearby mountain “the ensign of liberty, the glorious Stars and Stripes.” This made them “more than the founders of Utah – they were the conquerors of arid America,

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the forerunners of Western civilization, the envoys of the United States in the acquisition of a new and mighty empire.” After fifty years, Utah was the home to “thrifty, happy, patriotic citizens.”

When Utah finally achieved statehood, Lannan affirmed, “it was greeted by a people as loving, as loyal, as true and as devoted to our free institutions as ever lived.”

The Book of Pioneers, a two-volume publication commemorating the pioneers and the Jubilee, echoed Wells and Lannan. Yes the pioneers were “religionists fleeing from the tyranny of persecution,” but more than that they were Americans to whom “civil government was as much of a desideratum with them as was the right and liberty of religion and its outgrowth – worship.” As they made their appeal to President McKinley, the Mormon and non-Mormon delegates appealed to his patriotism. This was not an historical event relevant only to Mormons but to all Americans. This was not about a band of Mormon pioneers attempting to build God’s kingdom here on earth, but about a group of American pioneers demonstrating their patriotism by aiding the western expansion of the United States.

The delegates also pointed out that the pioneers stood at the vanguard of economic development in Utah and the greater mountain West. In his address to the president, Cannon proclaimed that through their irrigation systems the pioneers laid the foundations for the settlement of the entire “arid region of the West.”

Lannan also spoke about economic progress instituted by the pioneers. Lannan pointed out in his speech that the pioneers who made such success possible bore “poverty and hardship… unceasing and poorly requited toil.” Putting aside personal desires and youthful dreams,

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83 “Accepts on Condition,” SLT (May 11, 1897), 1.
84 “Accepts on Condition,” SLT (May 11, 1897), 1. For additional accounts of the delegation’s trip to Washington D.C., see “The President and Utah,” Deseret News [DN] (May 15, 1897), 9.
85 Utah Semi-Centennial Commission, The Book of the Pioneers, 12.
86 “Accepts on Condition,” 1.
they “reclaimed” the land “from the waste.” In the end, the deserts, mountains, and waters yielded to the pioneers

the waters of the streams turned aside from their natural channels, gave life to the soil… the desert relented at last and smiles grew on its savage face through flowers and golden harvests… at the miners’ summons, the sterile mountains open[sic] their adamantine doors and brought forth their jewels.87

As nature bent down before the unrelenting work of the pioneers “the smiles of civilization were warmed into life in Utah.” The state’s economic wellbeing was founded “upon the sacred graves of those pioneers” and “on land enriched by their tears.88 The printed invitation echoed Lannan’s words. In solitude and “undeterred by destitution and hardship they uncomplainingly toiled” and redeemed the wilderness.89 As indicated by the delegates the economic progress and civilization present in Utah was due not to divine intervention but to the hard work of the pioneers. The attitude and the ethic of the pioneers upon settling in Utah was not only worthy of heroic praises but also of emulation in the present.

The thematic arc of the Semi-Centennial Commission’s Jubilee narrative conveyed a series of ups and downs that was aimed at compelling the most suspect non-Mormon of the validity of this commemorative occasion. The pioneers faced adversity, the Commission argued, but they triumphed politically (i.e. statehood) and economically (i.e. agriculturally, mining, railroads) bringing progress and civilization to a once barren and primitive land in the process. If McKinley had attended the Pioneer Jubilee, it would have served as a significant step toward altering the country’s popular understanding of

87 “Accepts on Condition,” 1.
88 “Accepts on Condition,” 1. The account of the Utah delegation’s trip to Washington DC was reprinted as “Will Probably Come” in the Manti Messenger [MM] (May 15, 1897), 1.
89 “Utah Pioneer Jubilee, 1847-1897,” Microfiche M284.5 U89ut 1897, Church History Library. The text of the invitation was also printed in various newspapers including “An Invitation,” Ogden Standard Examin[er] [OSE] (July 9, 1897), 2.
Utah as “Mormon country.” The delegation left Washington, D.C., with no official acceptance of the invitation but hopeful that they would see McKinley in Utah in July. McKinley told them his attendance depended upon whether or not Congress was still in session. McKinley did not send his official regrets about the impossibility of his attending until mid-July. In his letter to Governor Wells, however, he diplomatically recognized and praised the pioneers in a fashion that fit with the Semi-Centennial’s image of the past. Because of their “wisdom and foresight,” McKinley wrote, the country owes “much of its present greatness and prosperity.” He congratulated the Utahans for building a “mighty Western Empire.” In his concluding remarks, McKinley expressed his hopes that the Jubilee celebration would be a demonstration of “the qualities which the Nation looks for in its best representatives and that this event may exalt patriotism and tend to promote National unity.” Even in the absence of his physical presence, his words testified to the kind of public image of Utah the Semi-Centennial Commission wanted to convey – a narrative stripped of Mormon overtones and infused with triumph and success.

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90 “M’Kinley is All Right,” SLT (May 13, 1897), 2; “Depends on Congress,” SLT (June 11, 1897), 1; and “President McKinley and the Jubilee,” DN (June 26, 1897), 38.
91 “First Day,” SLT (July 21, 1897), 1; “President Can’t Come,” SLT (July 15, 1897), 1. Based on discussions in Utah newspapers, most Utahans were looking forward to McKinley’s visit to their state and were planning accordingly. As indicated in “To Welcome M’Kinley,” SLT (June 10, 1897) a reception committee was established to plan for McKinley’s arrival since there was little evidence to suggest he would not be attending (8). Moreover, conflicting reports about McKinley’s attendance also contributed to the anxiosness surrounding the late date of his decline. For discussions of McKinley’s anticipated arrival and the disappointment after his decline see “President McKinley Wanted,” DN (May 22, 1897), 13-14; “General Items,” DN (June 26, 1897), 43; “A Coloradaan’s View,” DN (July 10, 1897), 106; “Local News,” OSE (May 14, 1897), 2; “Local News,” OSE (June 10, 1897), 2; “M’Kinley Will Not Be Present,” OSE (June 23, 1897), 1; “M’Kinley Will Stay at Home,” OSE (June 23, 1897), 2; “Jubilee Notes,” OSE (July 15, 1897), 2; “Over Advertised,” OSE (July 25, 1897), 4; “Let Old Glory Wave,” MM (May 29, 1897), 1; “General Items,” SLT (June 16, 1897), 4; and “M’Kinley’s Utah Trip,” SLT (June 23, 1897), 1.
The Parades of the Pioneer Jubilee Week

The commemorative ceremonies and public activities of the Jubilee week visually supported the pioneer narrative created by the Semi-Centennial Commission. As with the use of parades by American Catholics during the Columbus Quadricentennial, the parades held during the Pioneer Jubilee week reinforced and perpetuated the memory of the pioneers that the Semi-Centennial Commission wanted to publicize inside and outside of Utah. The thematic progression of the parades during the week reflected the links between the past, present, and future in the Jubilee narrative. The opening on Tuesday, July 20, consisted of a procession of the surviving pioneers, the unveiling of the Brigham Young monument, and a ceremony in the LDS Tabernacle honoring the pioneers. By the next day, however, the focus of the day’s parade shifted from the past to the present with “The Pageant of Progress,” which illustrated fifty years of Utah’s economic and cultural growth and development. The two parades held on July 22 – the Children’s Parade and the “Great Salt Lake: Real and Fanciful” – kept the Semi-Centennial Commission’s version of the “pioneer myth” alive but cloaked in a mantle of entertainment. Friday’s parade more so than any of the others tried to make links between Utah’s present and future through a display of floats from Utah’s counties. Everything came to a climactic conclusion on Saturday with one final procession of each day’s floats and no-expenses spared fireworks display on Capitol Hill overlooking downtown Salt Lake City. For the thousands of men, women, and children who gathered along the downtown streets of Salt Lake City or purchased seats for prime views of the daily festivities, these parades offered entertainment, historical lessons about Utah’s past, and prophecies of the state’s future.
As the Jubilee week approached, Salt Lake City was busy with a flurry of activity and excitement, and increasingly packed with people. With approximately 100,000 visitors expected to stay in the city, the Semi-Centennial Commission established a Bureau of Information for visitors seeking accommodations and a Medical Corps outfitted with a Red Cross ambulance and surgeons to tackle any injuries and illnesses during the celebration. Utahans residing in Salt Lake City and elsewhere also demonstrated their enthusiasm and willingness to make the Jubilee a success. Merchants and homeowners in Salt Lake City outfitted their businesses, including ZCMI, and houses with both the colors of red, white, and blue and the official colors of the Jubilee, yellow, green and red. Members of the Provo Boys Jubilee Orchestra, out of their sense of “Being ‘Patriotic,’” offered their services to the Semi-Centennial Commission. This musical group, comprised of boys ranging in age from fifteen to eighteen, wanted “to do our share to make the Pioneer Jubilee a success.” Even before the official start of the Jubilee, visitors began pouring into Salt Lake City. With travel specials being offered by nearly every railroad company, visitors came from all points in Utah but also as far away

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92 For details about the Bureau of Information see “Jubilee Accommodations,” SLT (May 29, 1897), 7; “Great Crowds Coming,” SLT (July 19, 1897), 5; “The Opening Day of the Jubilee,” SLT (July 20, 1897), 1; and “Auditing Jubilee Bills,” SLT (July 27, 1897), 8. For details on the establishment and work of the Medical Corps see “Jubilee Accommodations,” SLT (May 29, 1897), 7; and “News of the Guard,” SLT (July 18, 1897), 5. Over the course of the week, the Medical Corps attended to a relatively small number of accidents (40) compared to the overall number of people in the city for the Jubilee. For accounts of these accidents see Reports; Adjutant General Reports (July 9 to August 7, 1897), Box 1, Folder 14, Semi-Centennial Commission Administrative Records, 1896-1898, Utah State Archives and Records Service (hereafter Utah State Archives), Series 1195.

93 “General Items,” SLT (July 17, 1897), 4; “Jubilee Colors Chosen,” SLT (April 11, 1897), 5; “The Opening Day of the Jubilee,” SLT (July 20, 1897), 1. The Jubilee colors symbolized important vegetation in the state – the sunflower, sagebrush, and foothill blossom.

94 Correspondence from The Provo Boys Jubilee Orchestra per H.E. Giles (June 14, 1897), Box 1, Folder 2, Semi-Centennial Commission Administrative Records, 1896-1898, Utah State Archives, Series 1195.

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as Montana, Idaho, Arizona and Colorado. The Salt Lake Tribune reported that nearly 5,000 people arrived from Butte and Anaconda in Montana by way of the Oregon Short Line two days early. Moreover, nearly twenty wagons left Milford, Utah, several days early carrying them to the state’s capital for the weeklong festivities. With months of preparation and planning behind them, the Semi-Centennial Commission and Salt Lake City used the Jubilee week to shape the memory of the 1847 migration in the minds of the thousands of visitors who came to celebrate.

The first day of the Jubilee focused on the past, particularly by honoring the pioneers, both those still living and those who died. Even though it was almost August, when the heat of summer can become unbearable, the Jubilee week opened with a pleasant and cloudless day. By nine in the morning the surviving pioneers had assembled at Old Fort Square (now Pioneer Park), where they, along with the Grand Marshal Brigham Young, Jr., and the Nauvoo Brass Band, marched to Temple Square – the religious center of the LDS Church, home to the imposing gothic Temple completed only four years earlier, and starting point for surveying the city. The presence of these pioneers, the Salt Lake Tribune opined, inspired a somber silence from the gathering crowds. Old pioneers walked slowly and painfully to “the rhythm of drums that beat too fast for their tired feet” before an anxious crowd of 20,000. There at the southern edge of Temple Square overlooking Main Street was the partially completed Brigham Young Monument; while the figure of Young stood on the pedestal the two additional figures

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95 The various railroad lines offering special fares included Oregon Short Line, Sanpete Valley Line, Colorado Line, and Utah Line. Several rail line companies also subscribed money to help fund the Semi-Centennial.

96 “Great Crowds Coming,” SLT (July 19, 1897), 5.

97 “Hot at St. George,” SLT (July 17, 1897), 7.

98 “First Day,” 1.

99 “First Day,” 1; “Pioneer Jubilee Grand Pageants in Honor of the Pionffirs [sic], Western Recorder (July 11, 1897 [improper date]), MS284.5 P662j 1897, Church History Library.
that were to sit at the base were not yet finished. The unveiling of the monument was the first of two ceremonies paying tribute to the memory of the migration and to those who were still living.

The unveiling ceremony in the morning and the public reception at the Mormon Tabernacle in the afternoon commemorating the pioneers reinforced the Semi-Centennial Commission’s pioneer myth. For Mormons, Brigham Young was the “American Moses” who guided his Mormon flock to their Zion to build God’s kingdom on earth. For the Semi-Centennial Commission, Young was “Utah’s great Pioneer and Statesman” who brought “civilization to the Western Empire.” In their addresses during the ceremony, James H. Moyle, a Mormon and later Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Wilson administration, and C.C. Goodwin, a non-Mormon and editor of the Salt Lake Tribune, revealed the many ways in which Young and his band of pioneers brought civilization to the West. With faith, Moyle stated, the pioneers filled the “unknown

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100 The Brigham Young Statue still stands at the intersection of South Temple and Main Street, but was moved out of the middle of the road and relocated to the edge of Temple Square. The uncompleted figures included an Indian and a fur trapper.

101 While the surviving pioneers did walk from Pioneer Square to Temple Square, it is not entirely clear how much additional marching they did along the parade route. According to the SLT the parade route for the second day started at the Brigham Young Monument proceeded down Main Street to Fifth Street (now 500 South). From there, they marched east one block to State Street where they turned north one block to Fourth Street (now 400 South) and then turned west and marched one block back to Main Street. Here they countermarched through the tribunes – paid seating – and then continued east to State Street. They turned north on State Street and continued marching until they reached First South (now 100 South) where they turned west back towards Main Street. They then continued north on Main Street one block until they reached Temple Square. Although the SLT reported the parade route for the second day of the Jubilee only, photographs of subsequent parades reveal that this was the only route used. See “Joy Reigns,” SLT (July 22, 1897), 1.

102 The main part of the monument – the statue of Young – was originally on display at the World Columbian Exposition in 1893, with C.E. Dallin having designed the original monument. Construction was completed by the Brigham Young Monument Association. For additional coverage of the unveiling see and “Jubilee Committees Busy,” SLT (April 10, 1897), 8; “Monument Site Given,” SLT (June 6, 1897), 8; “Prize Won by Stephens,” SLT (June 9, 1897), 5; “Untitled,” SLT (July 15, 1897), 6; “Miss Lunt,” SLT (July 21, 1897), 1; “Personal Mention,” SLT (July 29, 1897), 4.


104 For additional information on Moyle see Gene A. Sessions, ed., Mormon Democrat: The
regions… with Christianity, with fields and with gardens, with the flowers of summer, with the golden harvest of autumn, making the desert to bloom as the rose and the barren waste to bring forth in rich abundance.”

In his address, Goodwin pointed out that although they were greeted by a desert that “stretched out mockingly before them” nobody could have known that the pioneers would transform the landscape in such a drastic fashion.

Brigham H. Roberts expressed a similar sense of astonishment at the pioneers’ undertaking when he spoke before them and a crowd of nearly 12,000 at the Tabernacle. Roberts, an LDS Church leader and historian, decided not to address the reasons for their “expatriation from the Union.” This moment, rather, was about honoring their continued patriotism in the face of adversity and their ability to achieve success through suffering and hardship. In the end, Roberts suggested, the Young Monument illustrates the “eloquent simplicity of man’s highest conquest under the blessing of Almighty God, one of triumph over the wilderness.”

For the Mormon and non-Morman orators alike the memory of the pioneers was not about the overtly Mormon related reasons for migrating and settling in Utah, but rather about the fact that these pioneers brought civilization to the West.

The morning and afternoon observances paying tribute to the surviving pioneers also reflected the Semi-Centennial Commission’s desire to demonstrate the now-existing cooperation between Mormons and non-Mormons. As evidenced by the speeches given

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“Pioneer Jubilee Festivities,” DN (July 24, 1897), 177.

“Pioneer Jubilee Festivities,” 179.

by Moyle, Roberts, and Goodwin, both Mormon and non-Mormons gave vocal tribute to
the pioneers and credence to the de-Mormonized pioneer myth being circulated by the
Commission. In addition, Orson F. Whitney, an elder in the LDS Church and author of
the Commission’s prize-winning chorus “Ode to the Pioneers,” read the opening
prayer. Wilford Woodruff, the “oldest survivor of the first company of pioneers,” was
supposed to provide the opening prayer, but was unable to attend that morning due to
poor health. Meanwhile, the closing benediction was given by Father Lawrence Scanlan,
Catholic priest of St. Mary Magdalene’s Cathedral in Salt Lake City. The composition
of the morning’s dignitaries clearly reflected an attempt to bridge the political, economic,
and religious gap that had long divided Utah’s Mormon and non-Mormon population.

On the second day of the week (July 21) the focus of the Jubilee narrative and
activities gradually shifted away from the pioneers themselves to the fifty years of
development and progress that made Utah a “gem in Old Glory.” The “Pageant of
Progress,” the title of the day’s parade, established a tone of confidence in the successes
of the past and those to come in the future. The “masses of humanity” that had been in
Salt Lake City for the previous day’s activities was growing. According to accounts from
the railroads, nearly 15,000 people had already arrived in the city for the Jubilee. Moreover, the Salt Lake Tribune reported that mines had suspended activity for three
days to allow laborers to make the trip to Salt Lake City. George Kofoed Reese, a
thirty-nine year-old devout Mormon who worked in finances at a factory in Salt Lake

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109 For information on the Scanlan see William Richard Harris and Lawrence Scanlan, The Catholic church in Utah, including an exposition of Catholic faith by Bishop Scanlan (Salt Lake City, UT: Intermountain Catholic Press, 1909).
110 “Fifty Years Old and a Star on the Flag,” DN (May 1, 1897), 14.
111 “Joy Reigns,” SLT (July 22, 1897), 1.
City, was one of the masses. After completing his chores in the morning, Reese and his family made their way into town. They planted themselves on the west side of Main Street at the corner of 4th Street where they had a good view of the parade. They, along with others, witnessed a visual panorama of the Semi-Centennial’s narrative of Utah’s history through elaborately constructed floats that highlighted the state’s transformation from a primitive wilderness to a flourishing center of agricultural development, manufacturing, and mining.

Over the course of a few hours, the Reese family and the masses of people from inside and outside of Salt Lake City watched Utah’s past unfold before their eyes along Main Street. The first floats recognized the earliest inhabitants in the Valley. “Indians Moving Camp,” perhaps in anticipation of those settlers soon to come, followed Grand Marshal Brigham Young. The parade then included a float of the cabin of Jim Bridger, who conveyed to “civilization the earliest reliable news of the Great Salt Lake.” The last float illustrating Utah’s history prior to settlement by the pioneers was “Utah in 1847,” which depicted the primitive state of the territory. Consisting of a wilderness of barren land and brush, the float visually paralleled the rhetoric espoused by the numerous orators and the Semi-Centennial Commission. The “unbroken wilderness” was ready for human action, not God, to redeem and transform the land. The parade established a

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113 George Kofoed Reese Diary, 1897 Jan-Sept., Microfilm: MS6810 1, George Kofoed Reese Papers, Church History Library. Based upon the diary entries during the first half of 1897, Reese and his family took their religious obligations seriously. Besides his accounts of work, chores at home, and activities with friends, he often wrote about his religious practices. Sundays were devoted to religious devotion including Sunday school and Prayer Circles. When he spoke of his employment, Reese often talked about town making “solicitations” along Main Street and “posting books and transferring accts to new ledgers.”


115 The Pony Express, 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 7, Access #39199, Church History Library.
linear narrative of progress that contrasted the past with the peaceful and civilized character of 1897 by presenting the uncivilized wilds of Utah first.

The floats illustrating the period of early settlement in Utah conveyed a sense of linear progress and the presence of divine guidance. Three floats – the “First Saw Pit,” “First House in Utah,” and “Slow Transportation” – pointed to the initial steps taken by the pioneers to plant permanent settlements. The pit was the method used for sawing wood that provided the materials for the first house in Utah. Moreover, “Slow Transportation” included oxen, which the pioneers employed as “the first motive power.” One of the first events to test the fortitude of the pioneers was depicted in the float entitled “The Gulls and Crickets.” This float recounted the near destruction of the 1848 harvest by a swarm of crickets. The crickets “scorched” the land and the pioneers “toiled in vain to rid the land of the pests.” What happened next became enshrined early on in the popular Mormon imagination and became a matter of the importance of faith in the Semi-Centennial Commission’s Jubilee narrative. With few options left and their food storage depleted, the pioneers prayed. From near the lake flew a “flock of snow-white seagulls” that “pounced upon the crickets and gorged themselves. …they disgorged and fed again – and thus were the crops saved.”¹¹⁶ The story of the gulls and crickets possessed symbolic value for Mormons but the LDS Church did not have a monopoly on its usefulness. Within the Jubilee narrative created by the Semi-Centennial Commission the gulls and crickets story also took on sacred significance demonstrating the importance

of faith for all Utahans. God, through the gulls, had defended the first pioneers and in turn the bird was “protected by law, and every man is its defender.”\footnote{Utah Semi-Centennial Commission, \textit{Official Report and Financial Statement of the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission}, 36. For more details on the story of the gulls and crickets see William G. Hartley, “Mormons, Crickets, and Gulls: A New Look at an Old Story,” in \textit{The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past}, ed. by D. Michael Quinn (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 137-152.}

The remainder of the “Pageant of Progress” highlighted how Utah became economically, politically, and technologically civilized through the hard work and faith of the pioneers. A cornucopia of “firsts” in the realm of Utah’s politics and the economy followed including the first city council, legislative hall, territorial legislature, sugar mill, and smelter for mining. In part these floats demonstrated the ways in which Utahans had administered the state by emulating cities and states in the East; there was no mention of the Mormon theocracy. Meanwhile the sugar mill and smelter pointed to attempts by Utahans to develop a capitalist economy rather than in reality develop a cooperative economy. Finally, civilization in Utah was enhanced by the development of communication with the “First Fast Mail” via the Pony Express and later the telegraph and telephone. These forms of communication ultimately joined the established civilization of the East with the civilization budding in the West.

The Pony Express served as a prominent feature of the Jubilee narrative because it was one of the first means of bridging the geographical gap between the East and the West. While it took 124 hours for riders to traverse the distance between St. Joseph, Missouri, and Salt Lake City, the Pony Express helped “to annihilate the distance between civilization and the border.”\footnote{\textit{The Pony Express}, 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 4, Access #39199, Church History Library.} As such the Pony Express provided the working foundations for other developments that furthered this annihilation including the coach, railroad, telegraph, and telephone. The Semi-Centennial Commission appropriated this
meaning of the Pony Express for promotional purposes in 1897. Just as the work of the pioneers had been transmitted back East via the Pony Express, the Semi-Centennial’s official publicity organ, entitled The Pony Express, would illustrate the different stage [sic] in the development of Utah’s mining and agricultural resources. It will tell of her progress in governmental and business affairs, her advancement in manufacturing and in the arts, of the perfection of her present civilization, of the prevalence of peace and good will among all her people and of her splendid future possibilities.119

Similarly, the Salt Lake Tribune suggested that the Pony Express was “the first swift voice that was heard between the men of the extreme East and the extreme West.”120 In the past and now in the present, The Pony Express would sing the praises of Utah’s development and progress and unite the country. Besides the visual depiction of the Pony Express in the float, the Semi-Centennial Commission also incorporated it in the Utah Pioneer Jubilee Cup, an official souvenir created for the occasion. Like the parades, the cup encapsulated in material form the Jubilee narrative, with images of “home and peace seeking” pioneers migrating with mountains in the background; the state seal; a buffalo, flintlock rifle, arrows, a beehive and the sego lily; and a Pony Express rider trying to keep the lines of communication open between the East and the West while being chased by “relentless and vengeful” Indians.121 Like the toiling pioneers, the Pony Express riders, the Jubilee narrative suggested, worked equally hard to keep the path of progress clear of any obstacles.

119 The Pony Express. 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 4, Access #39199, Church History Library.
120 “The Pony Express,” SLT (July 24, 1897), 4.
121 “Flattened Surface of Pioneer Commemoration Cup,” DN (July 3, 1897), 93. The Semi-Centennial commissioned a firm in Vienna, Austria, to produce the 5,000 cups. The cup was made from rolled steel and painted with enamel. The jewelry store Joslin & Park in Salt Lake City possessed exclusive rights to sell the cup. It could be purchased for one dollar. See “Pioneer Jubilee Affairs,” SLT (February 11, 1897), 5; “First Jubilee Cup Made,” SLT (March 20, 1897), 5; “Jubilee Prizes Offered,” SLT (March 21 1897), 7; “Contests for Poets,” SLT (June 8, 1897), 8; “Untitled,” SLT (July 7, 1897), 3; and “Untitled” [Advertisement], SLT (July 28, 1897), 4.
The railroads and the mining industry played an important role in the memory of Utah’s past as depicted in the Jubilee parade and in the historical record. Railroads and mining opened the territory not only to increased investment and wealth but also a growing non-Mormon population. As Nels Anderson suggests the expansion of the railroads and mining in the late 1860s and throughout the remainder of the century served as forces of “cosmopolitanism.” They effectively drew Utah into the national economy and made communication and travel between the East and the West more efficient. The story of Utah’s relationship to the rails was embodied in an exact duplicate of Engine No. 1, which first traveled the Union Pacific Railway. The LDS Church, however, had an ambiguous relationship with the railroads during their construction and expansion. Brigham Young worried about the potential corrupting influence of outside forces that accompanied the railroad but he eventually embraced the railroads as a means to connect Mormons within Utah. He lobbied to have Salt Lake City serve as the transfer point between the East and West rather than Ogden, which was located further north.\textsuperscript{122}

Between 1869 and 1874, moreover, LDS-owned companies constructed 250 miles of rail line to connect communities.\textsuperscript{123} Because railroads transported goods and people in and out of Utah in the past it became an important symbol of the state’s progress in the Jubilee narrative. In \textit{The Pony Express}, the Semi-Centennial Commission pointed out that more miles of rail had been built in Utah in 1896 than any place west of the Mississippi. The badge created by Tiffany’s and gifted to the surviving pioneers by the


\textsuperscript{123} Eugene P. Moehring, \textit{Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1890}, The Urban West (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 2004), 91.
Semi-Centennial Commission included an image of a locomotive as one indication of the state’s progress.\textsuperscript{124}

In the wake of the completion of the transcontinental railroad and short lines, mining expanded quickly in Utah. After the development of the railroads, mining in Utah was “unleashed” as capital investment poured in from Great Britain, the eastern United States, and within Utah itself to harvest metals like lead, copper, gold, and silver.\textsuperscript{125} The railroads enabled the expansion of mining enterprises, particularly in the Wasatch and Oquirrh Mountains, while the construction of smelters in Utah starting in the early 1870s made mining a more profitable endeavor. Companies no longer had to ship unprocessed ore to Baltimore or San Francisco but could smelt the ore in Utah. Technological developments – like the power drill and safety cage – also contributed to an increase in the financial benefits to be gained from mining. The Jubilee narrative appropriated from the historical record the benefits of mining rather than the negative consequences like poor working conditions. In the “Pageant of Progress,” two floats – one entitled the “Establishment of Mining in Utah” and the “First Smelter in Utah” – visually highlighted the centrality of mining to the state’s economic prosperity.\textsuperscript{126} As one part of taming the wilderness, people had broken “the solitudes of the mighty mountains with the sounds of the hammer and the blast.”\textsuperscript{127} Through mining “the mountains have been made to yield

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{124} For a full description of the badge see Utah Semi-Centennial Commission, \textit{The Book of the Pioneers}, vol. 2, 51.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Alexander, \textit{Utah, The Right Place}, 159. For a map of the location of minerals and smelters in Utah see Alexander, \textit{Utah, The Right Place}, 160.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
millions of precious metals from ground that was then a wilderness.\textsuperscript{128} The Semi-
Centennial Commission took thirty-five years of mining as a point of pride as indicated
by the amount and profit from silver and gold production in 1896 reported in \textit{The Pony
Express}.\textsuperscript{129} Moreover, a later edition of \textit{The Pony Express} revealed that Utahans had
“unlocked the treasure vaults of mountains and turned a stream of metals valued beyond
two hundred millions into the mills and mints of the Nation.”\textsuperscript{130} In the Jubilee narrative
the development of the mining industry proved to be a crucial way station along the path
towards economic success.

Another major feature of the Jubilee narrative, one that enabled the week’s
festivities to extend into the evening, was the ability of Utahans to harness the
hydroelectric power of her lakes and rivers to light the businesses, homes, and streets in
Salt Lake City. Although the first electric company and lines did not get a float in the
“Pageant of Progress,” the modern implements of electricity – poles and lines – filled Salt
Lake City’s main street and allowed for evening activities and parades during the Jubilee.
Starting in 1881 the Salt Lake Power, Light, and Heating Company electrified businesses
and streets in the city. By 1889, the streetcar system that had been established in 1872
made the shift from horse-power to electricity.\textsuperscript{131} During the 1890s and the Jubilee in
1897, a tangle of electrical poles and lines ran north and south and crisscrossed east and

\textsuperscript{128} “Half Century of Growth: Marvelous Changes Wrought Since the Arrival of the Pioneers,” \textit{SLT}
(July 24, 1897), 1. For additional discussion of the development of mining in Utah and the West see Mark
W. Jackson, Richard Jackson, and Brandon Plewe, “Environment, Culture and Choices: Contrast in
Development in the Utah Territory,” in \textit{Geography, Culture and Change in the Mormon West}, 10-14;
McCormick, \textit{The Gathering Place}, 69-73; and Malcolm J. Rohrbough, “Mining and the Nineteenth-
Century American West,” in \textit{A Companion to the American West}, ed. William Deverell, Blackwell
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{The Pony Express}, 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 4, Access #39199, Church History Library.
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{The Pony Express}, 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 7, Access #39199, Church History Library.
\textsuperscript{131} McCormick, \textit{The Gathering Place}, 88. Like many other urban centers in the country,
electricity was a matter of private investment rather than municipal responsibility.

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west along Main Street. During the week’s celebration the Salt Lake and Ogden Gas and Electric Light Company outfitted the parade route with over 6,000 lamps to make the night seem like day during the Jubilee. The use of electrical lighting during the celebration became a demonstration of Utah’s progress as it opened “up some of the mysteries of science.” Like cities in the East, Salt Lake City could point to electricity as a demonstration of her refinement.

Even though the use of electrical lighting demonstrated Utah’s civilized and modern state, equipping Main Street was no small task and for many Utahans seeing the light at night proved to be a new and potentially harmful experience. The Salt Lake and Ogden Gas and Electric Light Company only had eleven days to string the lamps that operated on three separate circuits. To prevent any problems, the company tested the lights twice daily, maintained a day and evening patrol of the lines, placed a “trouble-shooter” at a local drug store, and established a code of whistle signals to report any troubles with the system. Then nightly from eight to two in the morning, Main Street was illuminated for the visitors enjoying the evening’s festivities, becoming an “electrical carnival.” After having visited Main Street during one evening of the week, George Reese commented upon the plethora of lights strung across the street, which to him revealed “a grand sight.” Not all experiences of the evening illumination, however, were positive. The Salt Lake Tribune assumed the responsibility of warning visitors to refrain from climbing the electrical poles. Moreover, in their official report on accidents and injuries during the week the Medical Corps attended to one individual.

132 “How the Lighting was Done,” SLT (July 28, 1897), 5.
133 “How the Lighting was Done,” SLT (July 28, 1897), 5.
134 “Great Crowds Coming,” SLT (July 19, 1897), 5.
135 Reese Papers, Church History Library.
136 “General Items,” SLT (July 24, 1897), 4.
whose hand had been “burned badly by electric wire.” Electrical lighting offered one more indication of the state’s civilized and modern development to visitors from inside and outside of Utah, albeit a potentially dangerous one.

By the second to last day of the Jubilee week – July 23 – the focus of the parades had shifted from the present to the future in the form of the “Parade of the Counties.” This procession of floats from the state’s counties simultaneously illustrated the agricultural, mining, and manufacturing wealth of Utah in the present and publicized the desire for further investment and settlement to continue its progress in the future. In giving each county the opportunity to display its resources and economic and social value to the state, the entirety of the parade functioned as an elaborate act of boosterism for the state and Salt Lake City. The Pony Express applauded the growing city for its “unrivaled and limitless resources, matchless attractions and rare advantages” and its ability to provide a “central place for safe, active and profitable investments.” The Semi-Centennial Commission also showered accolades on the state as a whole. Utah was fast becoming “the storehouse of the nation. Every day it is demonstrated that the possibilities of production from the new State’s treasure-vaulted hills and fertile valleys are great – beyond comparison.” In addition, the success of this parade depended upon the willingness of average Utahans to participate in financing, developing, and constructing the floats. Although the Semi-Centennial Commission appointed a local commissioner for each county and while the state appropriated $5,000 to be distributed among the counties, the design and construction of these moving advertisements demanded more

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137 Reports; Adjutant General Reports (July 9 to August 7, 1897), Box 1, Folder 14, Semi-Centennial Commission Administrative Records, 1896-1898, Utah State Archives, Series 1195.
138 The Pony Express. 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 2, Access #39199, Church History Library.
139 The Pony Express. 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 5, Access #39199, Church History Library.
than the work of a single commissioner and often more capital than that provided by Utah’s legislature.\footnote{140} If Grand County residents wanted investment to pour in to develop her natural resources, the \textit{Grand Valley Times} pointed out that, “all should keep in mind that something is expected from them to aid the success of the display of Grand County at the Pioneer Jubilee.”\footnote{141} The \textit{Grand Valley Times} also pointed out that Utah had plenty of “room for multitude of people to establish comfortable homes.”\footnote{142} Here was the chance for average Utahans to contribute to the success of the Jubilee in practical ways, for edification in the present, and for success in the future.

The economic success of Utah’s future was an especially acute issue since both the state and the country was still trying to pick up the pieces from the Panic of 1893 and the ensuing four-year depression. In an article for \textit{The Pony Express} entitled “Utah the Forty-Fifth,” C.E. Wantland, a land agent with the Utah Pacific Railway, applauded Utah’s ability to weather the storm of economic depression. Wantland pointed out that “depression and uncertainty rule in the business affairs of other States… calamities grow common and awful fears strike deep into the hearts of men,” but Utah “held her own and prospered better than the older States during the six dark years since 1890… she yet forged well ahead during the years of the dark and dreary past.”\footnote{143} This glowing review of Utah’s economic fortunes in the early 1890s, however, was not an accurate assessment. Even before the panic of 1893, Utah had experienced a boom and bust cycle in property sales in 1889-1890. When the economic depression did settle in it was

\footnote{140} The county commissioners were appointed in April of 1897. A complete list of the commissioners can be found in Utah Semi-Centennial Commission, \textit{Book of Pioneers}, vol. 1, 6-7. For a list of the amount of money appropriated to each county see “Jubilee Commissioners,” \textit{SLT} (April 23, 1897), 5.

\footnote{141} “Jubilee Entertainment,” \textit{SLT} (May 31, 1897), 5.

\footnote{142} “Untitled,” \textit{Grand Valley Times [GVT]} (June 18, 1897), 8.

\footnote{143} C.E. Wantland, “Utah the Forty-Fifth,” \textit{The Pony Express}, 1, no. 3 (May 19, 1897), 19, Access #39199, Church History Library.
complicated by crop damage from a late winter and falling silver prices.\textsuperscript{144}

Unemployment rates were high. In 1894, nearly half of Salt Lake City’s laboring population, or about 4,000 people, could not find work. Violence and acts of protest demonstrate the frustration caused by the depression. Unknown parties set a series of fires in the city of Ogden and American Railway Union workers went on strike preventing trains from coming into Salt Lake City.\textsuperscript{145}

With these economic struggles largely behind them, many Utahans saw the Pioneer Jubilee and the county parade in particular as a crucial component of the state’s recovery. Salt Lake City Councilman Buckle suggested that the city was in a perilous situation. “It’s a case of advertise or bust with this town,” he asserted, “If we bring Salt Lake to the notice of Eastern people we shall be able to realize on lots of property which now lies idle, simply because people here are too poor to buy it. We need outside blood, and we’ll have to advertise to get it.”\textsuperscript{146} A few months later, the author of an untitled editorial echoed Buckle’s assessment for the need of outside investment

Do you know what the Jubilee will do? …it will open the columns of every newspaper in the United States to discussion of Utah – her resources and attractions. …It will not only put thousands of dollars of outside money into local circulation but its effect upon the growth and development of the state will not cease to be felt for a quarter of a century. …Everything then will be more stable… and real estate will sell.\textsuperscript{147}

As indicated by Buckle’s advertise-or-bust position and by the commentary in the \textit{Salt Lake Tribune}, Utahans pinned their hopes for economic improvement and prosperity on the national attention the state would receive during the Jubilee and public events like the county parade.

\textsuperscript{144} Walker, “Crisis in Zion,” 32.
\textsuperscript{145} Alexander, \textit{Utah, The Right Place}, 211.
\textsuperscript{146} “Jubilee Appropriation,” \textit{SLT} (April 16, 1897), 8.
\textsuperscript{147} “Untitled,” \textit{SLT} (June 13, 1897), 8.
Utah counties used their floats to depict the valuable natural resources available and ready to be excavated in the future. Carbon County, located southeast of Salt Lake City and situated along the Books Cliffs and Wasatch Plateau, chose to highlight its coal mining. The float included a miner standing next to a cart loaded with coal at the opening of a “black and sinister and yawning” mine shaft. Emery County also displayed its coal mining, but rather than creating a miniature mine like its counterparts in Carbon County, Emery merely piled a stack of coal on top of the float. Residents of Tooele and Summit counties created elaborate floats to illustrate their natural resources. Located west of Salt Lake City and bordering the eastern edge of Nevada, Tooele County’s topography includes the Great Salt Lake Desert and borders the eastern edge of the Wasatch Mountains. At the rear of Tooele County’s float stood a mountain out of which ran a tramway carrying cars loaded with ore. The tramway moved towards the front of the float where a cyanide mill, small tanks and other machinery were ready to process the raw ore. Summit County, located east of Salt Lake City and bordering Wyoming, chose to highlight the silver mining in the Uinta Mountains, particularly around Park City. The county’s float included a model of a stamp mill at the rear and several miners standing near an opening to a mine near the front of the float. With pride the miners looked at a pile of silver bars stacked in the center of the float.  

While these county floats illustrated that vast amounts of wealth had already been obtained through the exploitation of Utah’s natural resources, they also suggested that greater wealth was still available. The Semi-Centennial Commission’s *The Pony Express* provided the necessary publicity to accompany the visual advertisements of the floats. At

148 “Parade of the Counties,” *SLT* (July 24, 1897), 1. Other counties that chose to depict the importance of natural resources on their floats included Iron (iron), Juan (gypsum and salt), Beaver (sulphur), Salt Lake (smelter), Wasatch (sandstone and marble), and Weber.
the request of a “gentleman in the East,” who was gathering capital to invest in the state, W.E. Nelden penned an article praising Utah’s abundant resources. As president of the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce, Nelden was in a position that allowed him to speak knowledgably about “Utah the Blessed.” He bragged that Utah was the country’s second most productive mining state and that its “mineral area has just been scratched.” The advent of new technology to excavate resources from the land, Nelden suggested, “will more than double in the near future our present annual output.”  

The “unrivaled and limitless resources” made Utah the “gem State of the great intermountain region.” The Pony Express also publicized Utah’s mining success. Although the publicity organ exaggerated the claim that Utah could produce metal to supply the “world for ages,” the story of the state’s mining industry was indeed one of success and growth before and after the Pioneer Jubilee. In 1860, when the mining industry had yet to experience a boost from the completion of the railroad, only 500 miners resided in Utah. By the beginning of World War I, however, nearly 10,000 miners lived in the state. The value of production also reflected a growth trend. In 1869, mining production was valued at a mere $169,000. Nearly thirty years later that value jumped to $10 million and by 1917 it had increased another tenfold to $100 million. For the Semi-Centennial Commission and Utahans participating in the county parade, their labors to construct floats that publicized the natural resources certainly seemed to bear fruit in subsequent decades.  

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149 “Utah the Blessed,” The Pony Express, 1, no. 1 (May 5, 1897), 6, Access #39199, Church History Library.
150 Untitled New Items, The Pony Express, 1, no. 2 (May 12, 1897), 17, Access #39199, Church History Library.
151 Untitled New Items, The Pony Express, 1, no. 2 (May 12, 1897), 11, Access #39199, Church History Library.
152 McCormick, The Gathering Place, 70.
153 McCormick, The Gathering Place, 70; and Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 227. For a discussion of Utah’s mining industry between 1896 and 1917 see Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 225-234.
The other major industry advertised in the county parade and *The Pony Express* was agriculture, including farming and ranching. Displays of agricultural production, however, were much less creative than the mining floats. Washington, Plute, Emery, Grand, and Davis Counties exhibited their agricultural wares of fruits, vegetables, grains, and roots in large piles on the floats. Davis County, which actually constructed six floats for the parade, also created a small-scale pen for sheep along with the ever-present guard dog. Some counties did try to make their floats more visually attractive. Box Elder County displayed its farming prowess with fruits gushing out of a cornucopia. The mere use of a cornucopia suggested that farmers in Box Elder produced an abundance of fruit for local – and potentially national – consumption. Cache and Rich County not only highlighted their agricultural produce but also the modern implements needed for farming. Alongside one another on the Rich County float was an “aboriginal wickiup” and a “modern farm.” Rich County chose to highlight the contrast between Utah’s once primitive state (i.e. the wickiup) and its civilized approach to agriculture (i.e. the modern farm). On the Cache County float, two farmers and their machinery stood next to an abundant amount of wheat and fruits. Visually, the numerous county floats testified to Utah’s agricultural surplus that fed the state’s population and brought her wealth. Civilized and modern methods, moreover, served as the keys to that success and wealth.

As with the floats, the publicity used to support the county parade chose to dwell on the agricultural abundance that Utah possessed in the present but that would only increase in the future with continued investment and settlement. The “excellence of quality and flavor” of Utah’s agricultural production, *The Pony Express* lauded, “challenge the world’s best.” In addition, the quantity of the produce almost always

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154 “Parade of Counties,” *SLT* (July 24, 1897), 1, 5.
equals “the demand for local and export purposes.” The Pony Express also bragged that Utah’s expansive “agricultural area, developed and undeveloped is capable of sustaining millions of people who will yet inhabit its valleys.” Those people who did live in Utah, The Pony Express claimed, were relatively happier than their counterparts in the rest of the country. During his visit to Salt Lake City and Ogden during the Jubilee, W.H. Warren wrote to his friends George and Gertrude Humphrey about the wondrous sights he saw. He visited a reservoir of water that fed “thousands of acres of farming land.” In an unidentified valley he saw the “finest sistern [sic] of eragation [sic] of any country in the world and this is a fine country.” Moreover, he acknowledged that “I never had mutch [sic] of an opinion of it before” but after seeing abundant crops, water, and pleasant meadows “the more I see of it the better I like it.” Warren’s testimony to his friends was exactly the kind of impression the Semi-Centennial Commission wanted the Jubilee to make.

Specific cities and counties also received positive publicity during the Jubilee. According to The Pony Express, Provo, located south of Salt Lake City, was situated in one of the “most fertile and best watered valleys.” With ample water and fertile soil along with a new beet factory, Provo “has a future filled with the brightest promise.” Sanpete County also received good publicity via the Deseret News. Although Sanpete

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155 Untitled New Items, The Pony Express, 1, no. 2 (May 12, 1897), 13, Access #39199, Church History Library.
156 Untitled New Items, The Pony Express, 1, no. 2 (May 12, 1897), 17, Access #39199, Church History Library.
157 Untitled New Items, The Pony Express, 1, no. 2 (May 12, 1897), 17, Access #39199, Church History Library.
158 W.H. Warren, Letter to George Gertrude Humphrey, (July 24, 1897), Church History Library.
159 Untitled New Items, The Pony Express, 1, no. 2 (May 12, 1897), 12, Access #39199, Church History Library.
Valley was not as beautiful as the more northerly-situated Utah Valley it still possessed charming attributes. Sanpete’s prospects “are most flattering” for

All the towns are thoroughly wide awake to modern civilization. In material improvements, they rank abreast of the same size in the north; in educational matters they are behind no community in the State. The people are noted for their industry and thrift, and as to public indebtedness, the county would make a flattering comparison with any other.¹⁶⁰

Residents of Sanpete could take pride in having participated in the civilizing process. At the same time, this process had laid the foundation for even further settlement and investment. As the county parade and accompanying publicity illustrates, the deliberate attempts at boosterism by the Semi-Centennial Commission and average Utahans were not merely centered on increasing agricultural production but also increasing settlement.

Utah did experience an agricultural transformation in the following two decades that brought the sought-after wealth pursued by the Semi-Centennial Commission. Developments in irrigation techniques and dry farming and the diversification of crops allowed families to farm larger areas of land. While most families continued to cultivate small plots of land of five to ten acres, the average farm size actually increased from 30 acres in 1870 to 212 acres in 1900. The percentage of Utah laborers working in agriculture was higher than the national average by 1929 at nearly 29%.¹⁶¹ Ranching also expanded significantly during this period, particularly with more sheep and cattle feeding off of the land.¹⁶² Located primarily along the foothills of the plateaus, the grazing of sheep and cattle increased by 6,300%.¹⁶³ From the hindsight of two decades,

¹⁶⁰ “Towns of Sanpete County,” DN (August 14, 1897), 259.
¹⁶¹ Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 221-224.
¹⁶² Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 225-226.
¹⁶³ Alexander, Utah, The Right Place, 206.
Utah’s mining and agricultural developments definitely yielded the kind of results that the Mormon and non-Mormon organizers of the Jubilee pushed for.

Large crowds lined up along the parade route in downtown Salt Lake City on July 24, the official anniversary marking Young’s arrival in Salt Lake Valley, to watch the crowning achievement of the past week’s celebration and commemoration of the pioneers. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that people began to gather before the sun came up over the Wasatch Mountains, while George Reese commented that wherever one went on the last day of the Jubilee there were large crowds. At eleven in the morning the “Pioneer Parade” was launched achieving “a fitting culmination of five days’ jovial celebration.” The procession eclipsed “in length, beauty and diversity of features any other parade ever given in the United States west of the Mississippi.” A majority of the parade duplicated the “Pageant of Progress” and the “County Parade,” serving as one final visual and public affirmation of Utah’s past, present and potentially future progress. What made this parade stand apart, however, was the reproduction of the pioneer train that entered the valley fifty years earlier. The surviving pioneers, nearly six hundred strong as reported by the *Salt Lake Tribune*, marched along the parade route with President Wilford Woodruff leading the way. As the surviving pioneers passed before the crowds so too did “the tale of civilization.” Although some suffered the stifling heat of the day, they received the “homage of thousands.” The pioneer train reproduction “renewed the past,” a past of hardship and pain but also of “brave hearts and… marvelous

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164 “The Final Great Parade,” *SLT* (July 25, 1897), 4; and Reese Papers, Church History Library.  
patience that win wildernesses.”

When the former pioneers passed by, Brother Fox, a friend of George Reese from Sanpete, “could not help but shed tears.”

The “Pioneer Parade” and the arrival of the train provided the crowds – both young and old – with an opportunity to honor the pioneers and witness fifty years of Utah’s hard yet triumphant history unfold before their eyes.

Preserving the Memory of the Pioneers: The Hall of Relics

The Utah Semi-Centennial Commission preserved and perpetuated the memory of the pioneer past with the Hall of Relics. Most of the activities and ceremonies planned by the Semi-Centennial Commission for the Pioneer Jubilee, while serving to perpetuate their version of the “pioneer myth,” only did so in a temporary fashion. The waters of the Great Salt Lake could not be differentiated from those of the Dead Sea and the River Jordan. The surviving pioneers would return home and slowly pass away. Visitors would grab their respective train or wagon-ride home and return to the daily activities of their lives. The fruits, vegetables, and grains of the county floats would spoil and be tossed away. There were very few tangibles that would last beyond the Pioneer Jubilee to “warm and strengthen and cheer our people long after the pageant has faded out of

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167 “The Final Great Parade,” 4. The final event of the Jubilee week was a massive fireworks display located where Main Street meets Capitol Hill. The Semi-Centennial Commission suggested that this pyrotechnic display was one of the largest ever to take place in the United States. Starting at 8:30 in the evening, the display included several illuminated set pieces including those that reinforced the pioneer narrative – a life-size portrait of Young and Governor Wells, a miner with a pick ax and other tools, a kicking donkey (probably representing the Democratic Party), a large silver dollar, and a cluster of diamonds – along with the fanciful and somewhat strange – a “Niagara of fire” and Joko the monkey performing on a horizontal bar. In the end, the Commission spent nearly $2,000 on fireworks. See Utah Semi-Centennial Commission, Official Report and Financial Statement of the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission and Financial Statement, 55; and “Miss Walsh Annoyed,” SLT (July 28, 1897), 5.

168 Reese Papers, Church History Library.
The preservation and display of the physical and concrete objects used by the pioneers during the migration and settlement of Utah would memorialize the pioneers, instill the migration with a sacred quality, and connect present and future generations with their pioneering forbearers.

To house and display the objects, the Semi-Centennial Commission constructed the Hall of Relics. Prominently located along the parade route on the southwest corner of South Temple and Main Streets, the Hall of Relics was modeled after the Parthenon, the ancient Greek temple constructed for the goddess Athena, protector of Athens. In less than thirty days, the building was constructed and outfitted with electricity free of charge by Salt Lake Electrical Supply. Because the Commission intended it to be a temporary structure, builders used staff and lumber, following the precedent established at the Chicago’s Columbian Exposition in 1893. Not all agreed with the Commission’s ambitious project however. During the construction in late June, George Reese commented on what he saw as the exorbitant price tag – $4,000 – for a temporary building. To Reese the expense was taken “all out of good judgment and reason for there are many buildings that could have been rented for a very small sum of money.” The exterior of the Parthenon replica was left undecorated except for a statue, “The Signal of Peace” by Utah sculptor Cyrus E. Dallin, while the interior was decorated with the

169 “After the Carnival,” DN (July 31, 1897), 223.
171 “Soliciting to be Pushed,” SLT (May 11, 1897), 5.
172 “Jubilee Features,” DN (May 22, 1897), 25.
173 Reese Papers, Church History Library.
While the Semi-Centennial Commission acknowledged that the architectural housing for the relics may have seemed out of place, they believed that the building and the contents within it joined together “the Ancient and the New Civilization.” For the Commission, this “temple” was only appropriate since no housing can equal to the owners or to coming history, the value of the ‘fragments,’ whose every particle tells its own immortal story, the story of a journey where all superfluous things were denied transit, for teams were precious, the journey an enigma, and life itself at stake.

The structure housing the relics reinforced their sacred value; only a house of worship, albeit a pagan structure, fit within the overall objectives of the Commission.

The detailed attention and care these owners and the Semi-Centennial Commission bestowed on these objects indicated that they were not just any rifles, clocks, kettles, bedspreads, and ploughs. As defined by the Semi-Centennial Commission the objects used by the pioneers to carry out the migration and settlement of Utah were relics, objects endowed with sacred significance. Within the medieval Catholic tradition, relics – particularly the bones and clothing of saints – were prominently featured as objects of veneration. The relics of Utah’s pioneers came to function in a similar manner. They provided “evidences of an unselfish life” and told stories of “days gone by, of privation and want, of primitive comfort or defense, of the tragedies, the incidents, the loves and joys and sorrow.” These were not merely

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174 “Jubilee Features,” DN (May 22, 1897), 25; Catalogue of Relics, M284.5 U89c, 6, Church History Library. Dallin’s statue is more prominently known as “Appeal to the Great Spirit.”
175 Catalogue of the Relics, 4, Church History Library.
176 Catalogue of the Relics, 4, Church History Library.
177 For studies of the tradition, or cult, of relics see chapter three in Joe Nickell, Looking for a Miracle: Weeping Icons, Relics, Stigmata, Visions & Healing Cures (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1993), 73-100.
178 Catalogue of the Relics, 7, Church History Library; and “Zion, City of Saints,” DN (August 7, 1897), 251-52.

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material things, but objects that told stories about men and women whose character
should be emulated. As such, the desire to gather them together

is imbedded in human nature and is the outflow of sentiment; the mother
cherishes the tiny shoe of her babe which sleeps in death, the religionist devout in
faith, thinks a small remnant of ‘the cross’ a treasure beyond the reach of gold,
and all memories of affection, reverence and honor cling to the silent reminders of
things which perish in the using, and like their owners finally return to original
dust. ¹⁷⁹

These relics connected Utahans of 1897 to the pioneers of 1847, not only as the
benefactors of the pioneers’ hard work but also as inheritors of a demanding legacy.

“The mess chest, the candlesticks and tools,” the Semi-Centennial Commission
suggested, “told of states and old conditions with eloquence so mute, yet forceful, that all
could understand.” ¹⁸⁰ Seeing, potentially touching, and knowing the stories of the
objects reminded Utahans that the economic and political future of the state demanded a
similar kind of unselfishness.

From the beginning, the Semi-Centennial Commission intended the Hall of Relics
to have both a practical and financial purpose. First, in order to help subsidize the
financing of the Jubilee, visitors would be charged an entrance fee to see the implements
used by pioneers to traverse America’s desert and tame the wilderness. Second, and most
importantly, the contents of the hall – the relics – provided “precious reminders of that
memorable experience” and “the nucleus of an exhibit for a future State Historical
Society.” ¹⁸¹ Because the Semi-Centennial Commission wanted to display the objects

¹⁷⁹ Catalogue of the Relics, 7, Church History Library.
¹⁸¹ Catalogue of the Relics, 3, Church History Library; and Utah Semi-Centennial Commission,
Statement, 14. Those “relics” left unclaimed were turned over to the recently formed Utah State Historical
Society for museum display. The society received little financial assistance for the upkeep of these objects,
which were eventually turned over to the Daughters of Utah Pioneers in 1926. For an examination of the
formation of the Utah State Historical Society see Glen M. Leonard, “The Utah State Historical Society,
used by pioneers, the project of physically preserving the memory of the “pioneer myth” necessitated the participation of the pioneers and their relatives. After making the decision to establish a Hall of Relics in April, Utahans started to contribute relics to the Commission. INFORMATION ABOUT THESE RELICS AND WHO DONATED THEM WAS WIDELY PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPERS OF SALT LAKE CITY AND OTHERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE. NOT ONLY DID THESE REPORTS OF DONATED ITEMS PROVIDE THE NAME OF THE DONOR, THEIR PLACE OF RESIDENCE, A DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT, AND HOW IT WAS USED, THE DATA WAS OFTEN ACCOMPANIED BY A DETAILED GENEALOGY OR HISTORY OF THAT RELIC.

The Hall of Relics reflected the Pioneer Jubilee narrative by offering a three-dimensional history lesson that emphasized sacrifice, deprivation, tragedy, faith, and in the end triumph. Smaller items were arranged in enclosed cases along the walls while larger items were displayed out in the open. The plethora of items on display ranged from the practical, like rifles, spectacles, skillets, stirrups, teapots, wagons, a printing press, musical instruments, and a map of the migration route to the unique, like two bullets removed from the body of John Taylor after he was shot at the Carthage jail. Three cases, moreover, were devoted to “primitive” and “prehistoric” Utah along with “Modern Indians.” Items depicting “primitive” Utah were primarily minerals like sulphur and slat, but also included the impression of a fossilized fish. “Prehistoric” relics included baskets, sandals, and the “implements of war.” Finally, the relics illustrating the “Modern Indian” included leggings, a head-dress, a peace pipe and a scalp.

The objects displayed in the Hall of Relics gave material form to the Commission’s narrative.

182 “Hall of Relics Assured,” SLT (April 18, 1897), 5.
183 Catalogue of the Relics, 10, 12-14, Church History Library.
of progress and civilization; these were the very tools used to redeem the wilderness and make it bear fruit. As one observer noted, the Hall of Relics was “an epitome of civilization, a demonstration that the Anglo-Saxon race when directed aright, moves toward the redemption of ‘the waste place of the earth,’ colonizing the desert, building roads, towns, cities, trade, overcoming barbarism and subjecting rude and crude humanity, not by the sword and the bayonet, by blood and annihilation, but by potent examples of industry, of kindness and consideration.” In the embodiment of the Hall of Relics the past was preserved and served to articulate valuable lessons to the next generation of “pioneers.”

The Semi-Centennial Commission gave special attention to items once belonging to Brigham Young. A “special cabinet” containing Young’s “personal effects” was placed near the entrance of the hall. This case included Young’s clothing and handkerchief, his spectacles and a ring, his highly marked up books, and a mess box used during the migration. Perhaps one of the most venerated objects displayed in the Hall of Relics was the wagon Young used during the migration. According to the Semi-Centennial Commission, “every Pioneer will look with reverence on both [referring to the “sister wagon”], for the memory of their illustrious owners.” In transporting Young from Nauvoo to Utah the wagon possessed a story of “vicissitudes and travel, of anxiety and hope, of weary days and broken sleep.” Like the pioneers themselves, the wagon told a tale of hardship and anticipation for what was to come. Prior to the display of the wagon, the Salt Lake Tribune and The Pony Express circulated reports about the construction, use, and ultimate fate of the vehicle. Originally built in Nauvoo, Illinois, by

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184 “Utah as Real Phenomenon,” DN (August 7, 1897), 253.
185 Catalogue of Relics, 8, Church History Library.
186 Catalogue of Relics, 20-21, Church History Library.
a Mr. Eldredge, Young purchased the wagon before the westward migration. During the overland trek, Young and church leadership used the wagon as a headquarters and meetinghouse. After being used in Salt Lake City for nearly thirty years, Arizonian John W. Young remolded the wagon to serve as a kitchen during the construction of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad. A.M. Tenney then acquired the wagon and took it to his ranch where it was abandoned to the forces of nature. Supposedly Indians took away the cover and bolts, while the wagon tongue had been used for fire fuel. Almost lost, Brigham Young Jr. arranged for the remainder of the wagon to be shipped to Salt Lake City and preserved for use in the Jubilee week.\(^{187}\) Granted not all relics were given as much detailed attention as that of Young’s wagon, but the literal and historical deconstruction of this pioneer relic indicates a strong desire on the part of the Commission and Utahans to maintain links between the struggles of the past and the triumphs of the present.

The Semi-Centennial Commission and average Utahans created and used the Hall of Relics as one final way in which they could fashion and perpetuate a particular memory of the migration during the 1897 Pioneer Jubilee. Just as the parades and presence of the pioneers reinforced the narrative of progress and triumph created by the Commission, the objects housed in the Hall of Relics solidified an image of hard-working and civilized migrants and settlers. In addition, the objects assumed a sacred significance in calling them relics. The material goods used by the pioneers to tame the wilderness and bring economic and political success to Utah in the past were worthy of respect and reverence in the present and future.

\(^{187}\) “A Famous Vehicle,” *The Pony Express* (May 12, 1897), 11.
Conclusion

During a decade of political, economic, and social transformation and transition for the state of Utah and the LDS Church, the Pioneer Jubilee week of July 20-24, 1897, presented Mormon and non-Mormons alike with a rare opportunity. After forty years of popular and legal anti-Mormon sentiment, Utah embarked upon the ambitious project of redefining its public image during the last decade of the nineteenth century. The LDS Church’s rejection of polygamy and the disbanding of the People’s Party along with the achievement of statehood all worked towards altering a once negative image. The occasion of the Pioneer Jubilee functioned in a similar fashion. The Utah Semi-Centennial Commission and the financial and creative efforts of Utahans worked to construct a more positive image of Utah by altering the memory of the pioneers and their migration. The Jubilee demonstrated that Utah was at the forefront of political and economic progress and civilization in the West. In the past, present, and potentially the future, the hard work and toil of Utahans made and could make a once barren land bear agricultural and mining fruit. To do so, however, the Semi-Centennial Commission needed to cleanse the memory of the migration and settlement in the Salt Lake Valley of any explicit connections to the LDS Church or of Mormon overtones. While Utah’s past and present success had largely relied upon the work and labor of Mormons themselves, Utah’s future success and integration into the American mainstream demanded that they be purged from the memory of the migration and settlement.
Chapter Three

Coming Full Circle: Early Pentecostals and the Azusa Street Revivals, 1906-1909

Over the course of seven months in 1907, Eula Wilson, a fifteen-year-old girl from Wichita, suffered through a life-threatening illness. The medical doctors who monitored Eula’s health were unable to provide a diagnosis or prescribe a medicinal cure. Modern medicine could not provide an adequate answer to Eula’s mysterious malady. Eventually, the ailment that produced blindness in one eye and caused it to sink back into the socket also took Eula’s life. Observers reported that the miraculous soon took place as Eula was laid out for burial. As a grief-stricken mother sat next to her dead child, Eula sat up and immediately began to tell her mother of her after-life experiences. She had journeyed to heaven, seen Jesus, been healed, and, most importantly, was now called upon to “warn the people of their sins, and tell them of this beautiful place [heaven], and that He was coming soon, for them to be ready.” Not surprisingly, the medical doctors, who had concluded that Eula’s condition was incurable, were unable to account for her complete recovery.1 It was clear to her mother and the many others who would eventually hear of Eula’s story that the teenager had seemingly risen from the dead. The answers that modern medicine could not provide were found in the emerging religious tradition of Pentecostalism. In the first decades of the twentieth century, particularly as it manifested itself at the revivals at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles between 1906 and 1909, Pentecostalism offered a religious experience grounded in the biblical past.

For the early Pentecostal movement the account of Eula’s illness, rising from the dead, and new task of witnessing to the second coming of Jesus served as one of many

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testimonies that continually affirmed their burgeoning apostolic and apocalyptic beliefs.

As stated in *The Apostolic Faith*, a prominent organ of the Pentecostal movement published by the Azusa Street Mission, Eula’s story was “simply another witness to us that the Lord is showing signs and wonders in these last days, as a loud call to His people to prepare for His coming.”¹ Early Pentecostalism centered on the belief in the imminent return of Jesus and the coming end times. Jesus’ return and the end of the world, they believed, would be coupled with a revitalized and purer Christian church – a “renewed experience of apostolic Christianity” – than what existed in the early twentieth century.² Grounded theologically in experience over tradition, Pentecostalism came to be defined by a premillennial belief in the second coming of Jesus, salvation through faith, divine healing, and baptism in the Holy Spirit with the accompanying evidence of speaking in tongues.³ During the opening decades of the twentieth century, and specifically the peak

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³ Edith L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 11. The largest Pentecostal denomination to emerge out of this period was the Assemblies of God Church, which formally organized in 1914.

years of religious revival at the Azusa Street Mission, a recollection and recapitulation of the biblical past was essential to the formation of a religious and historical identity for the emerging Pentecostal religious tradition. Just as Eula came full circle through her death and resurrection, the collective religious memory of the early Pentecostals brought the first-century experience of Pentecost full circle in the early twentieth century. Specifically, the early Pentecostals believed that unlike the first century, the fullness of Pentecost – the second coming of Jesus – would be accomplished in their own time.

Located in downtown Los Angeles, the Azusa Street Mission, a one-time African Methodist Episcopal Church, became home to a series of religious revivals. Starting in April of 1906 and lasting until 1909, Azusa Street leaders and participants sought to usher in a purer and more apostolic Christianity prior to the second coming of Jesus. While religious revivals occurred after this period and the Mission continued to function as a congregation until 1931, it never achieved the kind of success nor gained the same public recognition and attention as it did in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Leaders and participants argued that the Holy Spirit led the revivals, but William J. Seymour served as the pastor of Azusa Street. Born in 1871 to former slaves in Centerville, Louisiana, Seymour’s life quickly became characterized by displacement. For over ten years Seymour moved from city to city, including Indianapolis, Cincinnati, the “Miracle of Memphis” (Youngstown, NY: Cambria Press, 2007), 35-45; and Grant McClung, “Try to Get People Saved: Azusa ‘Street Missiology,’” in Azusa Street & Beyond, ed. Grant McClung (Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006), 1-21. Scholars agree that the four main theological tenets mentioned above comprise the “foursquare” gospel of Pentecostal belief, but they do not necessarily agree about what makes Pentecostalism distinct. This disagreement revolves around the issue of speaking in tongues, or glossolalia. Vinson Synan and Robert Maples Anderson suggest that speaking in tongues distinguishes Pentecostals, while Donald W. Dayton suggests that defining Pentecostalism solely along these terms immediately constricts and simplifies the understanding of Pentecostalism.

I will be borrowing the concept of recapitulation from Jan Shipps and her discussion of Mormons. Shipps suggests that Mormons did not ritually recreate events but enacted an “experiential ‘living through’ of sacred events in a new age.” Shipps, Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition, 52.

Goff, Jr. and Wacker, Portraits of a Generation, xvi-xviii.
back to the South and eventually to Houston, where he worked and became exposed to holiness and budding pentecostal teaching. It was while living and working in Houston that Seymour began attending a bible school run by Charles Fox Parham. Parham articulated an early theological connection between baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. After roughly five weeks of training, Seymour was invited to Los Angeles to pastor a holiness church – a “classic store-front mission” – headed by Julia Hutchinson, who was then making plans for a mission trip to Africa. Hutchinson’s church did not warmly receive Seymour after he preached the pentecostal message of baptism in the Holy Spirit as a third work of grace and with tongues as evidence.

Rejected by Hutchinson and her church, Seymour stayed for a time at the homes of Edward and Mattie Lee and then Richard and Ruth Asberry, where he continued to hold prayer meetings and preach. It was in the Lee and Asberry homes where the religious revivals began attracting an audience, particularly after Edward Lee received his baptism in the Holy Spirit. News of the revivals spread, drawing larger crowds to the Asberry home that eventually strained the confines of the residence. Needing a more suitable

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location to hold the genuinely interested and the curious, Seymour rented a building on a dead-end road just off of San Pedro Street.\textsuperscript{10}

From the beginning, the Azusa Street Mission stood on the outside of acceptable race relations and worship practices. During the three-year revival, but particularly in its first months, the Mission attracted a crowd that reflected the multiracial makeup of turn-of-the-century downtown Los Angeles including African-Americans, Latinos, Japanese, Chinese, and whites. Based upon his own background as an African-American living during the Jim Crow era, Seymour sought to “lead the church toward a radical transformation of individuals and society” and provide a theology and religious experience that would appeal to the socially, racially, and economically dispossessed who struggled “to identify with the optimism held by religious progressives.”\textsuperscript{11} Just as the early racial integration and unity of the Azusa Street Mission defied the social norms of the period, so did the Mission’s worship practices. As Cecil M. Robeck, a professor of Church History and Ecumenics, suggests, the city’s traditional Christian churches were “ill prepared to embrace” the minimally structured religious services at the Mission.\textsuperscript{12} The leaders and participants at Azusa Street, moreover, had a much different perspective

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\textsuperscript{10} There is a plethora of books about the Azusa Street Revival, particularly in the wake of the Centennial Anniversary of the revivals in 2006; Cecil M. Robeck’s recent publication \textit{The Azusa Street Mission & Revival} is the most thorough and well-researched book on the Mission. It is largely intended for a general rather than an academic audience and therefore contains minimal notes.


\textsuperscript{12} Robeck, \textit{The Azusa Street Revival & Mission}, 137.
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on what was “consistent with good church ‘order.’” Services, although scheduled at three different times during the day, could often blend into one another. In addition, these services were held every day of the week, rather than just once a week. The religious life of the Mission focused on prayer, but additional activities included singing, preaching, and men and women giving testimonies. Early Pentecostals valued spontaneity and the power inspiration that came from the Holy Spirit, and their services could be loud and boisterous.

Differences and similarities emerge when examining the experience of the early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission alongside those of the other religious groups in this study. First, early Pentecostals recollected the past in order to create an origins narrative that could legitimize the development of a new religious tradition in American society. American Catholics, Mormons, Lutherans and Congregationalists, all exploited a long history of religious and historical development to create identities and define their relationship to American society via commemorations of the past. Pentecostalism was grounded in several nineteenth-century religious movements in the United States and Great Britain. While implicitly drawing from Wesleyanism’s distinction between justification and salvation, the holiness movement’s teaching on perfection, and the Keswick Movement’s stress on a higher life via the Holy Spirit, the leaders and participants at the Azusa Street Mission did not have the luxury of relying upon the same kind of long-established religious tradition and theology to provide the foundation for

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their existence. In his study of collective religious memory, sociologist Maurice Halbwachs examined the identity formation of early Christianity in relationship to Judaism. With no memories and traditions of their own, early Christians relied upon Jewish memories and traditions. In the conclusion to *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte: Etude de mémoire collective*, Halbwachs points out that these became “the natural supports of a new community’s memories, which affirm and sustain such traditions as if they were its guardians. These memories slowly gain authority.”

Much like early Christianity and its reliance upon Jewish tradition to establish its legitimacy and authority, early Pentecostals depended upon the tradition of Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles to provide the “natural supports” for their emerging tradition. The past was essential to constructing a religious tradition that would be acceptable not only in the eyes of Pentecostals but also to American society as a whole.

Like their religious counterparts the leaders and participants at the Azusa Street Mission took the biblical narrative of the first-century Pentecost and refashioned it to suit their twentieth-century religious and historical needs. Moreover, like the others, they

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16 Maurice Halbwachs, conclusion to *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte: Etude de mémoire collective*, in *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 219. The conclusion to *La topographie* is the only portion of this piece of scholarship translated into English; Coser point out, however, that the conclusion contains the entire thesis, while earlier chapters do not contribute any new ideas to his argument and primarily focuses on a discussion of sources and documentation.
appropriated a past of which they had no direct or lived experience – the first-century Pentecost and subsequent call to evangelize. With no lived experienced of the past, refashioning the biblical narrative of the first Pentecost became a much easier task. The dual belief in the second coming of Jesus and the accompanying renewal of the Christian church led early Pentecostals to seek more than a mere replication of the first Pentecost. Rather, the leaders and participants at the Mission sought a more complete Pentecost, one that would bring to full fruition the pentecostal experience and commission of the first century – preparation for the second coming of Jesus. Through their actions in worship and the use of space and their words, they attempted to create a historical and theological narrative linking the first and the twentieth century. In the process, early Pentecostals argued that society needed a second Pentecost that surpassed the first in promised power and abundance. Christian history and the church, they believed, would come full circle.

Finally, like the other religious communities in this study, early Pentecostals created an origins narrative to define their relationship to American society and other religious traditions. Unlike American Catholics, Mormons, Lutherans, and Congregationalists who sought to engage and bring the influence of religion to bear more fully on American society, early Pentecostals had a more ambivalent relationship with American society. They interpreted natural disasters and modern developments, particularly technologically, through the lens of the second coming. Even more important in their pursuit of a renewed Christianity, early Pentecostals distanced themselves from contemporary Christian churches. The days leading to the second coming of Jesus demanded a purer church that reflected the characteristics of apostolic Christianity in the first century. In the process of restoring the apostolic church, early
Pentecostals looked to recover that which had been “lost, defiled, or corrupted.” For the leaders and participants at the Azusa Street Mission, the mainstream churches in Los Angeles provided ample evidence of that which was wrong and corrupt with Christianity and that which they hoped to rectify.

Halbwachs’s examination of the dispute between dogmatics and mystics over the direction of the ancient Christian church helps to clarify the early Pentecostals’ relationship with other religious traditions. The dogmatics – the church fathers, popes, and councils – produced a working body of tradition and theology that came to function as the collective religious memory of the church. Mystics, however, sought to access an understanding and meaning of Christianity beyond that predicated by the institutional church. Rather than limiting the meaning of early Christianity to that which was contained within official doctrine, mystics looked outside the confines of tradition and recovered those facts, persons, and experiences that had long been neglected. They wanted to “return religion to its sources and its origins, either through trying to reproduce the life of the early Christian community, or through claiming to abolish the passage of time and to enter directly into contact with Christ as the apostles who had seen and touched him and to whom he appeared after his death.” The mystics offered an alternative, or a counter-memory, to that of the dominant collective memory of the church. Early Pentecostals resembled the mystics in their attempt to establish a Christianity that more fully resembled that of the first-century apostles. They saw the doctrines, institutions, and traditions that came to dominate in contemporary Christian churches as uncharacteristic of the true apostolic heritage.

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Pentecost in History and in Memory

The meaning and relevance of the first-century Pentecost underwent a significant transformation during the years of revival at the Azusa Street Mission. The narrative of Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles provided the content for early Pentecostals to understand and interpret their religious experiences in the early twentieth century and to create their own collective religious memory. As they sought to understand the present in light of the past Azusa Street leaders and participants altered the memory of the first Pentecost to suit the events unfolding at the Mission and the changing social, economic, and religious circumstances happening around them. This led them to view the second Pentecost as surpassing the first Pentecost in power and significance. In turn, Jesus’ return to earth would be ushered in more quickly. The central component of their religious and historical identity was the link between the experience of the first Pentecost and the second in the twentieth century. Their understanding of history as sacred and their conviction that the second coming of Jesus was imminent, led early Pentecostals to interpret their experiences inside and outside of the Mission through this sacred lens. They constructed a collective religious memory through words and actions that established legitimacy via this sacred connection. As such the first Pentecost became both a basis and an affirmation of an emerging religious tradition.

Azusa Street Pentecostals turned to a so-called primitive past when Christianity was the purest and most strongly connected to the apostolic church as a means to develop their collective religious memory. Restorationist or primitivist movements, scholars suggest, “enshrine the first age as a transcendent norm and, on that basis, stand in
judgment on the contents of modern culture.” 19 Moreover, as these movements become
enmeshed in an ideal past, they are unable to distinguish between their own time and that
of an earlier period. They believe themselves to be “actually living through or reenacting
the strong events of the first times with which they now fully identify.”20 Those involved
in primitivist/restorationist movements try “to make sense of the reality around them so
that they can live their lives as they will and must. They must reach somewhere beyond
themselves for reference points, models, and patterns.”21 By engaging, elevating, and
seeking to recapitulate the first century pentecostal experience of the apostles, Azusa
Street leaders and participants did exhibit the characteristics of a restorationist movement.
The biblical narrative of Pentecost provided the experiential standard for early
Pentecostals, so much so that they came to see what transpired through the revivals as a
“repristinated apostolic Christianity” in which the errors and corruptions of the history of
the church and contemporary Christian churches could be righted.22 Finding and
adhering to patterns of Christian living and religious practice grounded in biblical
narratives opened a space for Pentecostals to point out the faults of contemporary
Christianity. They sought, as Grant Wacker suggests, to literally reenter a world and time
that no longer existed “by breathing its holy air, smelling its sacred fragrances, and
luxuriating in its spiritual delights.”23 Through their actions of giving testimonies,

World, xiv.
20 Hughes, “Introduction: On Recovering the Theme of Recovery,” in The American Quest for the
Primitive Church (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 6. Scholars often use the terms
restorationism and primitivism interchangeably.
21 Martin Marty, “Primitivism and Modernization: Assessing the Relationship,” in The Primitive
Church in the Modern World, 4.
22 Grant Wacker, “Playing for Keeps: The Primitivist Impulse in Early Pentecostalism,” in The
American Quest for the Primitive Church, 199.
23 Grant Wacker, “Searching for Eden with a Satellite Dish: Primitivism, Pragmatism, and the
Pentecostal Character,” in The Primitive Church in the Modern World, 144.
worship, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and use of space, early Pentecostals reentered a purer and more sacred time and place than that of early twentieth-century America.

In the process of trying to recover a bygone era and experience, scholars point out that restorationist/primitivist movements are ahistorical or characterized by “historylessness.” These movements, some scholars suggest, reject history. Primarily because of an adherence to premillennialism, scholars generally argue that Pentecostalism lacked an historical consciousness or a concern for the larger trajectory of church history because believers saw it only as one of decline and error. As Edith Blomhofer bluntly states, “history… was irrelevant” and “historylessness was a badge of honor” for early Pentecostals. For the early Pentecostals of this study, keeping records of any historical import appeared to be a mute point in relation to what the immediate future held. In addition, the independent nature of Pentecostalism in the early years and the negative attitude towards institutional religion prevented the systematic record keeping that often accompanied more organized churches.

Although early Pentecostals did not have the same awareness of history that came to characterize the modern period – one grounded in observation, record-keeping, and material explanations – that does not automatically preclude them from possessing their own distinct understanding of history. While the early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission did not maintain a modern historical consciousness, they did cultivate one

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26 Blumhofer, Restoring the Faith, 13.

grounded in a sacred conception of history. The Bible’s narrative of Pentecost supplied a sacred lens through which they could interpret 2000 years of church history in a manner that offered a religious and historical bulwark for the emergence of their religious tradition. With the beginning and end of their historical understanding already established – the first Pentecost and the second Pentecost – it was left up to early Pentecostals to fill in the blanks of the intervening period. As such, leaders and participants at Azusa Street “selectively” remembered from the annals of church history to meet their present needs. All history became sacred in its relationship to the first and second Pentecost. Some evidence indicates that early Pentecostals acknowledged the historical relevance of the moment in which they lived and the events in which they participated, albeit through a predetermined sacred lens.

The reflections of Frank Bartleman, a “pioneer Pentecostal evangelist, journalist, and social critic” and zealous advocate for the renewal of Christianity before the Azusa Street revivals began, illustrates the presence of an historical consciousness among early Pentecostals. Born in Carversville, Pennsylvania, to a German father and an American mother in 1871, Bartleman’s life prior to his settlement in Los Angeles paralleled that of Seymour. Often impoverished and struggling to financially maintain himself and his growing family, Bartleman dedicated himself to the ministry even though he had little formal training. Bartleman preached in Philadelphia, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Youngstown, and Denver before settling in Los Angeles in 1904. Before the revivals began at Azusa Street, Bartleman published *The Last Call*, in which he predicted a worldwide revival that would lead up to the end times. In March of 1906, he witnessed the makings of the Azusa Street revivals when he attended two cottage prayer meetings at the Asberry

residence. Although he relished the revivalist atmosphere consuming the city in the wake of the events at Azusa Street, Bartleman quickly became disheartened with the direction of the Mission. While he himself received his baptism in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues in August 1906, he increasingly questioned the over-emphasis placed on the experience as well as the excessive dogmatism that he saw emerging at the Mission. Bartleman continued to travel locally and eventually nationally and internationally preaching the pentecostal message. His international evangelization tour was cut short when World War I broke out in Europe.  

The Pentecostal historical consciousness can be seen in Bartleman’s account of the revivals that consumed Los Angeles starting at the Azusa Street Mission. What emerges in *How Pentecost came to Los Angeles; What really happened at Azusa Street* is first, Bartleman’s general understanding of history and second, his specific concern for the historical legacy of the early years of the Pentecostal movement and the revivals in the larger context of church history. Even though Bartleman came to criticize Azusa Street for falling into the trap of institutionalization, his views on history can be taken as representative of the Azusa Street Mission as a whole.

Bartleman recognized the historical importance of Azusa Street in his account of the revivals. At the time of the revivals Bartleman yearned to submit himself completely to God. He saw the hundreds of letters of inquiry sent to him as inhibiting that process. In order to remove this hindrance, Bartleman “burned no less than five hundred personal letters [he] had received in the early Azusa days from leading preachers and teachers all

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over the world inquiring anxiously about the revival that was then in our midst.”

Whether at the time of the revivals or only in retrospect, Bartleman struggled with the dual desire to give himself up entirely to God leaving nothing of his own selfish desires, and to maintain some kind of historical documentation that could shape how the revivals would be received in future histories. After confessing to burning the letters in his account, Bartleman also indicated his regret in having done so: “I almost wish at times that I had kept these letters, as they would be of much interest now as historical evidence to the widespread influence of the revival.”

While early Pentecostals may have been prompted by a primitivist impulse to look to the past and by premillennialist fervor to look to the future, in so doing a sense of history emerged but in a manner that fit the needs of the immediate present. The concrete historical evidence does not necessarily exist to testify to the presence of an historical consciousness, but Bartleman’s deliberation over the fate of correspondence indicates the making of one.

Bartleman also assessed the relationship between the revivals and church history. He suggested the pentecostal experience “has proven an epoch in the history of the church just as distinct and definite as the Spirit’s action in the time of Luther and Wesley, and with far greater portend.”

These recollections of church history demonstrate the Pentecostals’ appreciation of history and a desire to provide legitimacy to the young movement by connecting it to respected religious figures and events of the past.

Bartleman saw himself and the revivals as part of a larger course of history, but one that was not yet completed. Just like the Spirit-filled times of the church’s existence during

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31 Bartleman, Another Wave Rolls In!, 108.
32 Bartleman, Another Wave Rolls In!, 76.
the lives of Martin Luther and John Wesley, the Pentecostal revivals marked another turning point in the history of the church, but with more importance. Although Bartleman viewed history as moving forward, he viewed the future of the church in relation to the past. The Christian church could only move forward into the future, Bartleman stated, by returning to the past, by returning to the church of the Pentecost. Sacred history was still in the making: “And it is not yet all history. We are too close to it yet to understand or appreciate it fully. But we have made another step back on the way to the restoration of the church as in the beginning. We are completing the circle. Jesus will return for a perfect church, ‘without spot or wrinkle.’”  

While Bartleman’s understanding of history was linear in the sense that the future pointed to a revived and more pure apostolic church and the second coming of Jesus, that future could only be achieved through a circular understanding of history – by a return to the conditions and experiences of the first-century Christian church as manifested at Pentecost.

Early Pentecostals understood and relied on church history in a cursory and selective manner in the attempt to look to the future by returning to the past. History needed to conform to the collective religious memory that they cultivated to suit the needs of the second Pentecost and hoped-for second coming of Jesus. The New Testament was the main source of history that Pentecostals used to construct the narrative of their collective religious memory. The narrative was supplemented by the history of the church, albeit in a fashion that highlighted glimmers of renewal and targeted moments of error. To situate the second Pentecost as the completion of the first and to maintain a connection to the belief in the second coming of Jesus, nothing in church history could surpass the purity of the Pentecostal movement and everything needed to underline how

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33 Bartleman, *Another Wave Rolls In!*, 76.
far Christianity had gone astray. Early Pentecostals made limited reference to their indebtedness to the history of the church. These carefully chosen references, however, supported a collective religious memory that established the first Pentecost as a standard and the second as bringing that standard to fruition.

Even though Pentecostals did not evaluate the course of nearly 2000 years of church history in an analytical or critical way, the negative interpretation of the entire body of church history supplied the basis for claiming that the perfection of the apostolic church was the standard to which Christianity needed to return. Early Pentecostals viewed the whole of church history as a period of darkness and apostasy interrupted only by a few flickers of light. Bartleman pointed out that “we are to drop out of the centuries of the church’s failure, the long, dismal ‘dark ages,’ and telescoping time, be now fully restored to pristine power, victory, and glory.”

Less than a page later, Bartleman once again pointed out that “we are coming back from the ‘dark ages’ of the church’s backsliding and downfall,” and that “we are living in the most momentous moments of the history of time.”

Two important points emerge from Bartleman’s analysis of church history. First, he interpreted church history solely as one of darkness and failure. Second, and more importantly, he saw the present age as one of historical and vital importance in that it marked a backing away from the “dark ages.” Bartleman believed religious revivals would pull the church out of darkness and show it the light that had once radiated in the first century. In his examination of the theology of the Azusa Street Mission, historian Douglas Jacobsen suggests that most people held similar convictions about the revival. The revivals “marked a critical turning point in the history of the

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34 Bartleman, Another Wave Rolls In!, 89.
35 Bartleman, Another Wave Rolls In!, 90.
Christian church.” The Church fell into disrepute after the first Pentecost, and the experience and fulfillment of the second Pentecost promised to bring about full circle the experiences and promises of apostolic Christianity.

William Seymour also directed attention towards the glimmers of light in the long span of darkness of church history. In the first issue of *The Apostolic Faith*, Seymour drew from *History of the Christian Church* by John Fletcher Hurst, a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, to illustrate the manifestations of the Holy Spirit throughout history. The Quakers spoke in tongues and the Swedes experienced revivals in the 1840s, as did the Irish in the late 1850s. Seymour returned to the theme of the light shining amid the darkness in the second issue of *The Apostolic Faith*. Again, he called out certain individuals who tried to draw the church back to the truth. Seymour asserted that since the conclusion of the apostolic age “men have been preaching a partial Gospel.” God, however, “from time to time raised up men to bring back the truth to the church.” Like Bartleman, Seymour included Martin Luther and John Wesley as individuals who directed the church back to the truth. Seymour also mentioned Dr. Charles Cullis, a homeopathic physician and Episcopalian, for his work in healing. By naming important figures and movements, early Pentecostals, like Seymour, could further the historical legitimacy of the revivals taking place in their own time, and demonstrate the links of spiritual activity between the first and second Pentecost. They could assert

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36 Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 64.
that the activity of the Holy Spirit had not come out of nowhere. They could argue, rather, that the Holy Spirit had not stopped acting within history after the institutional church’s departure from the apostolic faith of the first century. The Holy Spirit acted in history at necessary moments, with the early twentieth century marking the culmination of that activity.

As Bartleman and Seymour’s observations of church history demonstrate, early Pentecostals were not averse or ignorant of a sense of history. Their notions of history – as having a definite beginning and end point – predisposed them to narrate the history of Christianity linearly from the first Pentecost to an expected and anticipated second Pentecost. Interpreting church history in a negative light provided the necessary historical link between the first-century Pentecost and the recapitulated version occurring in the early twentieth century. It was unnecessary for early Pentecostals to dwell upon the sordid details of the darkness, downfall, and overall apostasy of church history. All that was necessary in order to foreshadow a return to the apostolic faith and to construct a collective religious memory of Pentecost was to highlight the figures and events of darkness and light within church history.

Early pentecosal emphasis on speaking in tongues, divine healing, and the imminent return of Jesus – all beliefs that ran counter to most of mainstream Protestantism of the early twentieth century – demanded an active engagement with the past in order to establish religious authority. The narrative of the first Pentecost contained in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, as well as other selected passages from the Old and New Testaments, laid out the spiritual, physical, and spatial activities and components required of a personal and communal Pentecost. The desires of the Azusa
Street leaders and participants to restore apostolic Christianity through an exact duplication of the first Pentecost, however, proved to be impossible. As much as they tried to equate first-century Jerusalem and early twentieth-century Los Angeles through their rhetoric and actions, the circumstances and conditions of the two cities would never be the same. The moment early Pentecostals attempted to return to the past they began to reconstruct the memory of Pentecost. Halbwachs suggested that just such a transformation would occur: “although religious memory attempts to isolate itself from temporal society, it obeys the same laws as every collective memory: it does not preserve the past but reconstructs it with the aid of material traces, rites, texts, and tradition left behind by the past, and with the aid moreover of recent psychological and social data, that is to say, the present.”

The narrative of Pentecost provided the rough outline, but it was the reality of the socio-economic changes of the early twentieth century that provided the grist for a reconstructed religious memory.

The Old and New Testament passages appropriated by the early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission highlighted what they believed to the markings of a true and pure apostolic church. Most importantly these passages pointed to the activity of the Holy Spirit, which over the course of two thousand years had been relegated to obscurity by the church. Although the church continued to experience manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit prior to the “triumph of Christianity in the West under Constantine,” Augustine’s “cessation theory” eventually came to dominate within Christian theological tradition. In the late fourth and early fifth century, Augustine argued that speaking in tongues fit the needs of the early church, but it was no longer an essential component of the Christian life. By 1000 AD, speaking in tongues stood outside the boundary of

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acceptable Christian theology and life. Speaking in tongues was increasingly seen as
evidence of the work of the devil or evil spirits, rather than that of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{42} Not
only had speaking in tongues been marginalized within the collective memory of
Christianity, it had also been deemed outside Christian experience in its associations with
the devil rather than of God. Like the construction of a counter-memory by the mystics
examined by Halbwachs, early Pentecostals presented an alternative memory of Christian
living that differed from that of contemporary Christianity in their return to the fullness of
the narrative and experience of Pentecost.

While the New Testament provided the bulk of the narrative from which early
Pentecostals fashioned a collective religious memory, they also made use of the Old
Testament. In particular, the leaders and participants at the Azusa Street Mission drew
from the prophecy in the book of Joel. As one of the prophetic books, Joel includes
foretelling of calamity and destruction, which is then followed by the prophet’s call for
repentance.\textsuperscript{43} The passage that is interpreted in the Christian tradition and appropriated
by the early Pentecostals contains a prophecy of the coming Messiah. While Azusa
Street leaders and participants would have affirmed the entirety of the prophecy they
chose to highlight the verse that linked most directly to the narrative of Pentecost in the
New Testament: “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all
flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.”\textsuperscript{44} The passage from Joel demonstrated the link

\textsuperscript{43} All quotations from the Bible are taken from the Revised Standard Version. The prophecy of
destruction via water and the plague of locusts is recorded in 1:1-2:11; the call for repentance comes from
2:12-17.
\textsuperscript{44} Joel 2:28. The remainder of the prophecy foretells of the end of the world: “Even on the male
and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. I will show portents in the heavens and on the
earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood,
between the Old and the New Testament, and indirectly linked the would-be second Pentecost to the Old Testament. When the apostles became astounded by what was transpiring at Pentecost – some wondered if drunkenness had overtaken them – Peter turned to Joel to reassure them that it was the Holy Spirit that overwhelmed them and not alcohol. Peter stated that, “No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.'” By culling from the Old Testament prophecy of Joel, the early Pentecostals grounded the authority of their budding tradition within the entirety of the Bible.

After the Old Testament prophecy from Joel, the narrative created by early Pentecostals shifted to the story of the first Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles and other supporting passages from the Gospels of Luke and Mark. It was in this biblical account that Azusa Street leaders and participants gleaned the experiential standard and gathered the components for the reworking of their collective religious memory. The narrative of Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles reveals a plot of anticipation and fulfillment. Prior to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Jesus told the apostles

not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”


Acts of the Apostles 1:4-8. Immediately following this statement from Jesus he ascended into heaven and the apostles returned to their “upper room” in Jerusalem. Luke 24:49 also indicates that the
Two major features of the second Pentecost of the early twentieth century can be gathered from the Acts passage prior to the Pentecost. First, there is the promise of baptism in the Holy Spirit and second, the promise that those who have been baptized will be endowed with a power to evangelize to the rest of the world.

Following a period of waiting – fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus – the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. More than likely Pentecost took place on the Jewish Festival of Weeks, which celebrated the first reaping of the wheat harvest. While Jews would have gathered at the Temple to witness the sacrifice made by the chief priests, the small group of Christians, numbering approximately 120, would have been gathered in the upper room in the southwest part of Jerusalem. As they sat in the upper room, “suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.” Whether or not tongues of fire actually physically appeared above their heads, it “signified the purifying presence of Diety.” Filled with the Holy Spirit they “began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.”

The occasion of the Festival of Weeks could account in part for the apostles’ initial confusion over speaking in tongues; normally the city’s population numbered around 50,000 but increased to several hundred thousand during festival times. The author of Acts wrote

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49 Maier, In the Fullness of Time, 215.
now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs--in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.” All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

It was at this point that Peter reassured the apostles that they had indeed been baptized in the Holy Spirit and were not drunk.

In the wake of receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit the apostles, the apostles took it upon themselves to fulfill the Great Commission given to them by Jesus on Mount Olivet just before his ascension. This Commission called on the apostles to preach Jesus’ name to all parts of the world, which they quickly undertook beginning in the city of Jerusalem where nearly 3,000 people were baptized on the day of Pentecost. From Jerusalem the apostles traveled along the Mediterranean Coast and to Asia Minor. Not only did they baptize but they also drove out demons, healed the sick, and raised the dead. Most of these signs, particularly the gift of healing, were “necessary to authenticate the message of Jesus and the disciples and to assist the spread of Christianity. But when, after the apostolic age, the faith was broadly established in the Mediterranean world, the great wonders seem to have ceased on any regular basis.”

For the early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission, both the Great Commission and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, particularly divine healing, became an important means by

52 Maier, In the Fullness of Time, 218, 228-232; and Acts of the Apostles 2:31-47.
54 Maier, In the Fullness of Time, 297.
which to authenticate the collective religious memory in which the twentieth-century Pentecost linked directly back to the first-century Pentecost.

Numerous testimonies and reports by Azusa Street leaders and participants referencing the first Pentecost validated their collective religious memory. As they recapitulated the pentecostal experience – baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, evangelization, and divine healing – early Pentecostals attempted to lay the foundation for the renewal of the apostolic church. In doing so, they believed themselves to be enacting a sacred history that was rooted in the first century. As with the early pentecostal use of history, the active recollection of the first Pentecost needed no specific details. Pervasive references to the biblical narrative, as if a stamp of approval, were often used. When early Pentecostal leaders and participants pointed to the activity of the Holy Spirit in worldwide revivals and personal baptisms, they were often book-ended by references to the first Pentecost. The Mission, the *Apostolic Faith* stated, stood for “the faith once delivered to the saints.”

Events taking place at the Mission were in the “old Pentecostal fashion.” The experience of the present could be easily validated by a reference to the past, albeit a past that no Pentecostal had any personal memory of. The Azusa Street Mission framed their aims in relation to the past.

The most ubiquitous recollection of the first Pentecost, often without detail, accompanied an individual’s testimony of his or her baptism, healing, and/or repentance.

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55 “Apostolic Faith Movement,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 2. In the same article, the faith of the saints was also compared to the “old time religion, camp meetings, revivals, missions, street and prison work and Christian Unity everywhere.” Within the Azusa Street Mission conception of the right kind of faith and Christian living there was an easy mingling of time both ancient, in the reference to Christian unity, and eighteenth and nineteenth revivalism, in the reference to camp meetings.

A.W. Orwig recalled that he felt compelled to repent “as on the day of Pentecost.” He also acknowledged the promotion of the speaking in tongues “as on the day of Pentecost.” Some attendees, Orwig mentioned, even “mocked and caviled, also as on the day of Pentecost, and are doing so at the present.”\(^{57}\) Details of one’s pentecostal experience were unnecessary, as indicated by the evidence in *The Apostolic Faith* and other pentecostal papers. Rather, a reference to the similarity between, and even exact duplication of, the first and second Pentecost, served as a means to endorse the Pentecostal movement. Pastor Ansel Howard Post told a story of three people who sought and received their personal Pentecost. “Their day had fully come,” Post recalled, “and as suddenly as on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit fell upon them and filled them.” Post’s reference to Pentecost was not only the exact phrasing employed by Orwig, but he also borrowed from the language of the Acts of the Apostles. In the Pentecost experienced by these three seekers, “all the characteristics of the first Pentecost were manifest.” Post, however, did not proceed to specify those characteristics, but assumed his audience would be very aware of what comprised the traits of Pentecost. After delivering a sermon he also received his baptism in the Holy Spirit. Once again, he described the event as taking place “as suddenly as on the day of Pentecost.”\(^{58}\)

\(^{58}\) Ansel Howard Post, “Testimony of a Minister,” in *The Way of Faith and The Apostolic Faith* (January 1907) in *Holy Ghost Revival on Azusa Street: The True Believer Part I*, 70-71. Early Pentecostals also linked the first and second Pentecost via references to the specific passages that contained the biblical and historical record. Remembering his participation at the Azusa Street Mission as a teenager, S. Henry McGonvan told of one evening when “the fire of God fell and a few people were filled with the Holy Ghost according to Acts 2:4.” As with the testimonies of Orwig and Post, McGonvan did not embellish on the content of Acts 2:4; his audience would have had first-hand knowledge of the passage. Just as an individual experience of Pentecost could be affirmed as true and valid through reference to the first Pentecost, experiences of Pentecost could also be verified as false and void. In a gospel tract, Mrs. W.H. McGowan wrote about her visit to Azusa Street and subsequent realization that she did not possess the power of the Holy Spirit “as on the Day of Pentecost.” In continuous references to the first Pentecost, rarely did the eyewitness or reporter of an experience or healing delve into the particulars of that Pentecost.
The persecution of the apostles in the biblical narrative also furnished Azusa Street leaders with a lens through which they could interpret their movement as authentic and in line with the true apostolic heritage. As with individual testimonies, the early Pentecostals could return to the experiential standard provided in the Acts of the Apostles to assess and interpret their place in sacred history and construct their collective religious memory. The history of the early Christian church in the immediate aftermath of Pentecost was not a “prolonged glory story” but one of “persecution, and repression.”

The apostles’ preaching on the Temple steps in Jerusalem angered the Sadducees, prompting their arrest. After some apostles healed a cripple, they too were arrested. The unwillingness of the apostles to refrain from preaching and the increased incense of the authorities culminated in the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Like the biblical narrative of Pentecost, the narrative of the challenges and persecutions faced by the early Christian church offered up a living example for leaders and participants at Azusa Street to follow.

Similarly, the Azusa Street leaders also used criticism from the secular press, particularly the Los Angeles Times, to provide legitimacy for the second Pentecost. Orwig reported that the Los Angeles city papers characterized the services at the Mission “as scenes of wild fanaticism, enacted by ignorant and crazy people,” and they


59 Maier, In the Fullness of Time, 227, 263.
60 Maier, In the Fullness of Time, 221-226.
denounced tongues as “a fraud… sacrilegiously caricatured.” The April 18, 1906, edition of the *Los Angeles Times* contained the following front-page headline, which clearly demonstrates the ambiguity observers felt toward the emerging revival: “Weird Babel of Tongues. New Sect of Fanatics is Breaking Loose. Wild Scene Last Night on Azusa Street. Gargle of Wordless Talk by a Sister.” Eventually the Los Angeles Church Federation, which represented the interests of mainstream Protestantism in the city, grew concerned about what they perceived to be the “out-of-control fanaticism” of the Azusa Street Mission. Rather than jump to defend their theological positions and religious experience, however, early Pentecostals viewed these comments through their understanding of the first Pentecost and the apostles’ persecution. A brief news item in *The Apostolic Faith* pointed out that while Azusa Street leaders and participants had “been persecuted and maligned by the secular papers… God has only used it as a free advertisement to draw honest souls.” Bartleman also believed that ridicule and abuse from the secular press only aided in spreading the revival rather than hindering its progress. The free advertisement could draw both the merely curious and the genuine seekers.

As much as the early Pentecostals valued the free advertisement provided by the critical coverage of the secular press and the Los Angeles Protestant churches, the consistency and harshness of this criticism demanded another means of responding. Once again Pentecostals turned to the past to make sense of the present.

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64 Untitled Article, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 10 (September 1907) in *Like as of Fire*, 41.
item published in *The Apostolic Faith* provided a note of stern encouragement:

“Apostolic power will mean apostolic persecution. Hell with all its power will be turned loose. It behooves us to get a spiritual backbone, spiritual stamina, and stick-to-it-iveness that will enable us to stand these last days against all the forces of the enemy.”  

The Mission suggested that “apostolic persecution” was par for the course. If the apostles of the first century suffered persecution neither could the early Pentecostals expect to possess the power of the Holy Spirit without experiencing some hardship along the way. The fullness of Pentecost included the good and the bad.

For the early Pentecostals, apostolic persecution included conflict with the law. In particular, they were targeted for engaging in religious activities seen as upsetting public decorum. One man, having already been baptized in the Holy Spirit, was arrested “on account of the disturbances which the preaching of the Gospel created among the people who crowded about.” Accused of disturbing the peace, the other man and the woman who accompanied him “sang all the way to the jail and shouted and prayed while they were there.” Their refusal to remain quiet even after their arrest made the police anxious to be rid of them. Authorities frequently turned to these charges to account for the detainment of Pentecostals. May Mayo, Miss Jacobsen, and Mr. and Miss McLain, although praying inside a cottage, were arrested and charged with “using boisterous language, unusual noise.” “In other words,” *The Apostolic Faith* reported, they were arrested for “praising God and speaking in tongues.” A judge informed the four defendants that they needed to leave town or face the legal consequences and go to jail.

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66 Untitled Article, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 2 (October 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 7.
67 “Arrested for Jesus’ Sake,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 4.
What the surrounding neighborhood, police department, and courts saw as a public
nuisance, the early Pentecostals saw as persecution for their religious practice.

Early Pentecostals who were arrested took the opportunity to further interest in
the pentecostal message. Henry McLain asserted that God used him the most during his
brief stint in the local jail. Meanwhile, the arrest of a group of Pentecostals in Whittier,
located southeast of Los Angeles, “only increased the interest and deepened the work.”

During a revival in Portland, Oregon, “the devil raged, shots were fired, some were
arrested and brought up before the judges.” In Minneapolis, Pentecostals were threatened
with arrest at a revival and were ordered “to have the meetings stopped on the charge of
disturbing the peace.” As much as legal authorities tried to silence the religious
movement by bringing charges of breaking the law and arresting Pentecostals, these
actions by public authorities only increased public knowledge of the movement and
exposed Pentecostals to audiences they may never have had access to otherwise.

One of the most compelling and dramatic accounts of the continuation of the
pentecostal work even in the face of persecution was reported in *The Apostolic Faith* by
an individual who identified himself only as “a worker.” The worker, although at first
critical of the revivals, eventually experienced a religious conversion. Shortly thereafter
the worker encountered two police officers, to whom he felt bound to relate the work of
God in his life. Convinced that there was something wrong with the worker, the police
officers thought he “was crazy and carried [him] to the station.” As with those
Pentecostals arrested before him, jail presented an unwilling audience to whom he could
preach the pentecostal message. Due to the agitation that the worker caused at the jail,

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69 “In Jail for Jesus’ Sake,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 3 (November 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 12;
and Untitled Article, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 4 (December 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 13.
70 “In the Last Days,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 9 (September 1907) in *Like as of Fire*, 37.
the police transported him to the local emergency room where he stayed until the morning. Once again, however, the worker was enabled to preach, and “before morning they were all my friends.” That same day, the police officers accused the worker of being insane and he appeared before a superior court judge to determine whether or not he should be committed. The worker reported that “the Lord permitted me to speak in the Italian language and one of the judges understood.” For the third time, the worker was able to communicate the pentecostal message and in doing so secure his release. Early Pentecostals interpreted incidents like those experienced by the “worker” in the light of apostolic persecution and in a manner that confirmed the legitimacy of the second Pentecost.

When early Pentecostals differentiated the first from the second Pentecost they often spoke in terms of the power received by the participants at each event. If the age of the second Pentecost were to bring forth the fulfillment of the first-century promises – particularly the power granted to those receiving their baptism in the Holy Spirit – then they saw the first Pentecost as going unfulfilled. In their fashioning of a collective religious memory of Pentecost, the reception of power once received by the apostles was now more plentifully bestowed on the men and women at the second Pentecost. As he traced the course of pentecostal experiences throughout history, Seymour pointed out that “the Apostolic church had a wonderful power” only to further contend that “we have the promise of the same power to-day.” In a news item from The Apostolic Faith, the author clearly illustrated the relationship between the first and the second Pentecost: “He gave the former rain moderately at Pentecost, and He is going to send upon us in these

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71 “Arrested for Jesus’ Sake,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in Like as of Fire, 4.
72 “The Promise Still Good,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in Like as of Fire, 3.
last days the former and latter rain. There are great things to be done in these last days of the Holy Ghost.”

The author took care to draw attention to the fact that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the first Pentecost was only a modest one. The fullness of the Holy Spirit would only be experienced in the last days. Bartleman also proposed that with the latter rain came “a restoration of the power, in greater glory – to finish up the work begun.”

Endowed with the power to carry out the Great Commission, that same power would aid early Pentecostals to “tread on serpents and scorpions, …drink any deadly thing and it shall not hurt you, …cast out demons and lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” In short, with the baptism in the Holy Spirit, came the “authority to do the same work that Jesus did.”

For the leaders and participants at the Azusa Street Mission, who came largely from working class and impoverished backgrounds, the possibility of possessing the same spiritual abilities bestowed on the apostles may have assumed added significance. In one of his sermons, Seymour reassured his congregants that no matter how lowly the circumstances they came from, in having received baptism in the Holy Spirit they would be used by God. The baptized have “the power of God on his soul and has power with God and men, power over all the kingdoms of Satan and over all his emissaries. God can take a worm and thresh a mountain.” In addition, with the Holy Ghost, “you have an

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73 Untitled Article, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 4.
74 Bartleman, *Another Wave Rolls in!*, 89.
75 Untitled Article, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 10 (September 1907) in *Like as of Fire*, 44. Early Pentecostals also compared the first and second Pentecost by referring to the former as occurring in the morning and the latter in the evening. They even compared the two based upon the number of people baptized. At Azusa Street nearly 150 people received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, “more than on the day of the Pentecost.” See News Item, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 1.
76 “The Baptism with the Holy Ghost,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 11 (October-January 1907-1908) in *Like as of Fire*, 48.
77 The backgrounds of Seymour and Bartleman have already been explored briefly in this chapter. For an additional examination of the socio-economic backgrounds of the men and women participating in the early Pentecostal movement see chapts. 6 and 7 in Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 98-113, 114-136.
empire, a power within yourself. Elijah was a power in himself through the Holy
Ghost.\textsuperscript{78} Echoing the emotion and intensity of Seymour, an unidentified man revealed
his overwhelming desire to possess the power of the Holy Spirit within himself. “Eight
years ago,” he proclaimed, “I was shown that there was more than justification and
sanctification for us; there was a power the disciples had that I must have.”\textsuperscript{79} The
possibility of possessing this religious might spoke to early Pentecostals at the spiritual
and material level. If they held the power once given over to the apostles, they too could
minister to the world of the impending return of Jesus. The prospect that they could own
this spiritual command also spoke to the downtrodden and harsh conditions that most of
Azusa Street participants experienced; they could exercise power even as they existed in
a material world that refused to grant it to them.

Early Pentecostals looked to legitimize the genuineness of their Christian
experience and to assert their role as the true inheritors of the apostolic church by framing
their work in the early twentieth century in light of the first-century Pentecost and the
subsequent apostolic persecutions. The spiritual experience and challenges faced by the
apostles in spreading Christianity was the standard by which early twentieth-century
Pentecostals measured the authenticity of their experiences and created a collective
religious memory suitable for their situation. Moreover, the affirmation provided by
recapitulating the first Pentecost in the early twentieth century reassured early
Pentecostals that they stood at the edge of a future that included the return of Jesus to
earth.

\textsuperscript{78} Seymour, “The Baptism of the Holy Ghost,” \textit{The Apostolic Faith} 2, no. 13 (May 1908) in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 55.
\textsuperscript{79} “What the Pentecost did For One Family,” \textit{The Apostolic Faith} 1, no. 6 (February-March 1907) in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 27.
Sacred Space and the Creation of the Second Pentecost

Leaders and participants at the Azusa Street Mission also relied on biblical narratives to reconstruct the sacred space of the first Pentecost. To further the religious objectives of the second Pentecost, they carved out sacred space in the changing urban landscape of early-twentieth century Los Angeles based on the multiple transformations and uses of the Azusa Street Mission building. The recent scholarship of Lindsay Jones and others on the creation of sacred space elucidates the processes by which early Pentecostals fashioned the physical space of the Mission and assigned it a wide range of meanings. In his two-volume study, Jones argues that the architect or original creator of a particular space does not determine its ultimate meaning. Rather, the value of a space changes over time based on how it is used by various parties. Between 1906 and 1909 Azusa Street leaders and participants endowed the two-story building with meaning not only for themselves, but everyone who came to know of the revivals. Through a careful reading of the Pentecost narrative, Seymour and others physically ritualized and reenacted the narrative of Pentecost.

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81 Jones labels these time and user specific spatial meanings “ritual-architectural events” and points to three categories for determining the sacred meaning of a specific space: orientation, commemoration, and ritual context (*The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture, 315*). For a valuable summary of Jones’s argument in *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture* see Williams’s article “Sacred Space in North America.”
Los Angeles Pentecostals reconstructed and presented the external and internal space of the mission according to their reading of scripture. The process of sacralizing the Mission’s seemingly ordinary environment involved three different, yet interrelated, levels: (1) the broader urban character of Los Angeles, (2) the distinct space of the downtown neighborhood in which the Mission stood, and (3) the Mission building itself. Seymour and revival participants believed that the Mission’s space became sacred because of the divine intervention of the Holy Spirit in healings and baptisms; they were sure that it was the action of the Holy Spirit that infused the space with its sacred qualities. At the same time, however, by looking at eyewitness accounts and testimonies of the events at Azusa Street, individuals also created the sacred quality of the Mission. By replicating the biblical narrative and interacting with the surrounding urban environment, Seymour and revival participants once again attempted to return to the past in the present. As with the rhetorical references to the experience and power of Pentecost, these actions enabled them to establish what they believed to be the true apostolic faith in the days leading to the second coming of Jesus.

The variety of meanings and mythic quality of the city of Los Angeles made it easier for early Pentecostals to create a sacred spatial connection between first-century Jerusalem and the upper room and early twentieth-century Los Angeles and the Azusa Street Mission. The early Pentecostals at Azusa Street and the city’s boosters both sought to assign an idealized image of the physical space they inhabited, albeit in ways that contrasted sharply with the material and historical reality. Within the American

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82 Mircea Eliade, historian and philosopher, worked from the understanding that a distinct separation existed between sacred and profane, or secular, space; this analytical approach has been criticized by subsequent scholars who see this position as static and undermining the potential for human action. See *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987).
imagination California, as a whole, was a “symbol of renewal... of expectation,” and Los Angeles specifically, “was imagined long before it was built.”

This myth-making process only began in earnest in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Railroad developers, land speculators, and other capitalists like Harrison Gray Otis, Civil War veteran and owner of *The Los Angeles Times*, wanted to attract a Midwestern “solid industrial class” that would provide the necessary investment and labor to further the city’s development. These boosters advertised Los Angeles as “the new Jerusalem... at the semi-arid, most westerly – and newly civilized – corner of the great frontier.” The city, they argued, had a climate that benefited individual health and agricultural development, possessed an abundant amount of fertile land awaiting development, and served as a western counterpart to the East’s “City on the Hill” in which one could experience all the fruits of economic and industrial life without the negative consequences like overcrowding and urban blight. Possessing a “collective genius for productive promotion,” L.A.’s boosters inundated the Midwest with literature in newspapers and

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magazines, while novels like Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* (1884) enhanced the idealistic image the city’s boosters wanted to perpetuate.\textsuperscript{86} Over the course of thirty years from the late nineteenth century into the early twentieth century, railroad interests, the citrus industry, and Hollywood lent their hand to promoting Los Angeles.

For all the potential that the geography of the urban landscape exhibited, and which boosters aggressively promoted, the reality posed serious challenges to the myth. Although touted as an Arcadia, “a found natural paradise,” and a Utopia, “an empty space inviting development,” the geographic region that became home to the city of Los Angeles contained none of the components that would naturally recommend it for settlement.\textsuperscript{87} The area had no natural port that could provide for easy transportation of goods and people.\textsuperscript{88} With an arid climate in what constituted a desert, only a limited amount of rainfall could provide for agricultural development. If it did not rain enough in Los Angles, it could also rain too much. Torrential downpours caused the Los Angeles River, located just east of downtown, to flood the surrounding lowlands.\textsuperscript{89} Yet, no matter the reality of Los Angeles’s climate, geography, and overall physical characteristics, boosters imagined the city the way they wanted it to exist in reality.

The transformation of Los Angles from a “Mexican village” to an “American town” in the nineteenth century and eventually to a “fragmented metropolis” in the twentieth century offered a complicated story of multi-racial interaction and an often-

\textsuperscript{87} McClung, *Landscapes of Desire*, xv.
\textsuperscript{89} Klein, *The History of Forgetting*, 33.
struggling economy. Historical reality was neither as simple nor idealistic as the boosters suggested. The Spanish founded Los Angeles – then known as El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles (The Village of Our Lady, the Queen of the Angels) – in 1781 as part of an attempt to tighten administrative control of their vast land empire in South and North America. They also wanted to stem the imperial ambitions of their European rivals. Eighteenth-century and much of early nineteenth-century Los Angeles had been Catholic and multi-racial; the imprint of this religious and ethnic heterogeneity was socially, culturally, and politically visible. Having existed as an agricultural village for nearly seventy years, residents of Los Angeles struggled with California’s transition from a colonial possession to independence from Mexico and then statehood in the United States. Residents, who had operated ranches on a self-sufficient basis, now faced a rocky transition to a market economy. The influx of miners during the Gold Rush temporarily smoothed the conversion, but by the late 1860s rancheros increasingly sold off large plots of land to American creditors. The completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Santa Fe Railroad in 1883 and 1886, respectively, furthered L.A.’s integration into the national economic network. The introduction of the railroads and a subsequent rate war spurred extensive land development; nearly 2,000 real-estate agents dealt in nearly $100 million worth of property sales in 1887 alone. The citrus industry expanded with Sunkist and the discovery of oil in the late 1880s and 1890s provided Los Angeles and the surrounding region with another avenue of

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93 Davis, *City of Quartz*, 111.
economic development. Industrial manufacturing, like that proliferating in the northeast and Midwest cities like Chicago, came relatively late to Los Angeles. By the 1930s, manufacturing supplied 50,000 jobs. With the production demands of World War II, manufacturing increased exponentially.

While influenced by the larger trajectory of L.A.’s development, Seymour and his congregation also drew upon the history of the neighborhood in which the Mission stood. When the first Pentecostals came to Azusa Street, the area supplied the means by which the city could continue to grow. The Azusa Street of the late nineteenth century—actually named Old Second Street—dead-ended at a company specializing in street paving. A marble works business sat on the southeast corner where the block met the north-south running San Pedro Street. The area where First, San Pedro, and Los Angeles Streets intersected became known as “Five Points.” By the mid-1890s, the orchards surrounding the building had been uprooted and within the next ten years a lumberyard emerged on the property to the south and east. A section of the Southern Pacific Railroad ran nearby to service the lumberyard. A livery and feed supply store opened across from

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the marble works and boarding houses and other small businesses appeared in the surrounding area.\textsuperscript{97}

In many ways, the Azusa Street Mission existed on the edge of two different downtowns, with the north being occupied by developing industry and a multiethnic population while the south housed banking and finance districts and the Anglo-Protestant population of Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{98} Just north of Azusa Street was the historic heart of Los Angeles, El Pueblo, or the Plaza. Sonoratown lay to the northwest of the Plaza and Chinatown emerged on the east side of the Plaza. Little Tokyo, which came to encompass the area of Azusa Street, was located just east of the Mission.\textsuperscript{99} These areas of downtown Los Angeles were home to the city’s mushrooming multiracial population of Mexicans, Japanese, Chinese, Italians, and African-Americans. Over twenty different


Downtown remained central to L.A.’s commercial, financial, industrial, and transportation life well into the mid-twentieth century. With the development of suburban neighborhoods and the construction of freeways, the city grew increasingly decentralized and downtown went into decline, like many others across the United States in the 1960s. Starting in the late 1980s and early 1990s, attempts were made to revitalize the downtown area to attract tourists, financial interests, and residents to trendy loft living. In the process of this revitalization, however, there has been a concerted effort, Mike Davis suggests, “to prevent any articulation with the non-Anglo urbanity of its future.” Moreover, Davis argues that the “Downtown hyperstructure… is programmed to ensure a seamless continuum of middle-class work, consumption, and recreation, without unwanted exposure to Downtown’s working-class street environments” (\textit{City of Quartz}, 229, 231).

ethnic groups called the Plaza home by the early twentieth century. The Anglo-Protestant majority, the very same men and women creating the myth of Los Angeles, increasingly looked at these neighborhoods with disdain because they exhibited the very effects of “industrial and racial ‘pollution’ of modern industrializing urban America” they argued did not exist in their city. The sanitation services were poor and crowded conditions led to little open space and inadequate ventilation. The air became polluted and the odors of raw sewage were evident. Moreover, the city’s vice district was located in and around Chinatown.

In response to the unseemly sights and sounds of the industrial and multiracial areas of downtown Los Angeles, the Anglo-Protestant majority “chose to reside away from the center and created a new civic center southwest of the Plaza.” Major thoroughfares south of Sonoratown, the Plaza, Chinatown, Little Tokyo, and the Azusa Street Mission included Main Street, Broadway, Hill Street, and Pershing Square. The Santa Fe and the Southern Pacific depots and the Red and Yellow streetcar stations, which began operating in 1886 and serviced downtown and connected it to other urban areas, were located on and just east of Main Street. A banking district, or what became known as the “Wall Street of the West,” developed south of Third Street on Spring. Shopping and entertainment venues developed on Broadway, particularly movie

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100 Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza*, 11.
101 Wild, *Street Meeting*, 13, 41.
105 Rolle, *Los Angeles: From Pueblo to City of the Future*, 30-34; and Curtis C. Roseman, *Images of America: The Historic Core of Los Angeles* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2004), 8, 11. The Red cars operated by Pacific Electric Railway Company provided transportation service to San Fernando Valley, Long Beach, and San Bernardino and covered 60 miles of territory by the turn of the century. *Images of America* includes valuable images for assessing the physical transformation of downtown Los Angeles from the mid-nineteenth century through the twentieth century. Most of these images are available through the TICOR Photograph Collection housed at the California Historical Society.
theatres. Hill Street, referred to as the Calle de Toros (Street of the Bulls) in the Mexican era, was used for residential and commercial purposes, primarily south of Fifth Street. Pershing Square was the city’s largest downtown park and offered a space for public gatherings that contrasted with the open space of the Plaza. It was within this physically segregated space of downtown Los Angeles that the Azusa Street leaders and participants interpreted the Mission and its relationship to the city.

As the religious revivals grew, Seymour needed to find more suitable accommodations for his congregants. Once the Asberry home became too small for the growing interest in the revivals, Seymour leased the building at 312 Azusa Street for eight dollars a month beginning in April 1906. The Apostolic Faith Mission, as it was formally incorporated in March 1907, eventually purchased the building and the lot for the sum of $15,000; they made an initial $4,000 payment and paid off the remainder of the mortgage in 1908. Within the four walls of this unseemly building, Seymour, his congregants and other seekers and visitors to the Mission created a kind of sacred space that could meet the demands for the kind of revivals that would proceed the return of Jesus to earth.

The location of the Mission in the commercial and industrial heart of Los Angeles suited the worship style of the first Pentecostals. *The Apostolic Faith* pointed out the desirability of the building’s location and space

The situation is favorable, being centrally located and its surroundings where no one will be disturbed by prayers and shouts going up sometimes all night. Praise

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109 Roseman, *Images of America*.
God! The Mission building was formerly a place of worship where souls have been saved years ago; and during the past year, hundreds have been saved, sanctified, healed, and baptized with the Holy Ghost.\textsuperscript{112}

The commercial and industrial quality of the surrounding neighborhood was perfect for the daylong, and sometimes all-night, services. Unlike the Bonnie Brae Street home, the Mission building was situated in a “transitional neighborhood” that was neither entirely comprised of businesses and industries nor residences.\textsuperscript{113} On Azusa Street, Seymour and the revival participants need not worry that their extended and often times noisy prayer and worship services would bother the neighbors, particularly at night when businesses were closed. For many contemporary Christian churches this area would not have been suitable, but for the early Pentecostals it was ideal.

The past history of the building helped Mission leaders and participants endow the Mission with sacredness and create parallels between the first and second Pentecost. Prior to the building’s use by the Apostolic Faith Mission, the two-story structure had been put to a variety of purposes, some sacred and some profane, including commercial and residential uses. Biddy Mason, a former slave from Georgia who had won freedom for herself and her daughters, purchased the property for the construction of an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in 1888.\textsuperscript{114} From the beginning, the AME congregation intended for the space to connect the human and divine through worship.

\textsuperscript{113} Robeck, \textit{The Azusa Street Mission & Revival}, 129; “Bible Pentecost: Gracious Pentecostal Showers Continue to Fall,” \textit{The Apostolic Faith} 1, no. 3 (November 1906) in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 9. Services at the Mission could number from three to nine in the course of a single day, while some services ran into the early morning hours.
\textsuperscript{114} Robeck, \textit{The Azusa Street Mission & Revival}, 5; and Michael E. Engh, S.J., \textit{Frontier Faiths: Church, Temple, Synagogue in Los Angeles, 1846-1888} (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico, 1992), 43-45. For further information on Biddy Mason see chapt. 6 in Dolores Hayden, \textit{The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History} (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995), 138-167. The First African Methodist Episcopal Church first organized in Mason’s home in 1872 and it, along with the Second Baptist Church, were the most prominent Africa-American churches in Los Angeles at the turn of the century.
The physical components of the building, including the gothic windows, pitched roof, and second-floor sanctuary, easily lent themselves to this end. In February 1904, with a new brick structure ready south of Azusa Street at the corner of Eighth and Towne Streets, the AME congregation abandoned the building as a place of worship. They converted the second floor sanctuary into boarding rooms, while the ground floor, which had served as a stable for the congregation’s horses, remained unfinished with a dirt floor, low ceiling, and exposed studs. Less than one month later, the work of an arsonist removed additional physical attributes that had once identified the building as a church. Extensive fire and water damage prompted the AME congregation to replace the pitched roof with a flat one, demolish the exterior staircase leading into the sanctuary, and remove all but one gothic window. Thereafter a carpenter used the ground floor for tool and supply storage between remodeling and repair jobs. By 1906, the building had been transformed from a house of worship to a house of business. When Seymour and his congregants relocated to 312 Azusa Street, they incorporated the physical alterations made to the building into their interpretation of the Mission’s space.

The unassuming interior space of the Mission matched the unassuming exterior of the surrounding neighborhood. Seymour and the Mission’s congregants designed the worship space simply and humbly to facilitate the connection between revival participants and the Holy Spirit. After Seymour began renting the building, he and his congregants furthered the transformation of the main space of 1600 square feet on the

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115 Robeck, The Azusa Street Mission & Revival, 70.
117 Robeck, The Azusa Street Mission & Revival, 71-72
118 Robeck, The Azusa Street Mission & Revival, 72; and E. Myron Noble, preface and Introduction to Like as of Fire, n.p.
first two floors. The first floor, still showing the signs of stable use, was thoroughly
cleaned and could hold around forty people. Straw and sawdust were strewn on the floor,
wooden planks were arranged in a “U” shape for seating, and a pulpit was constructed
from a packing crate and covered with a white cloth. The walls remained bare except
for a simple white washing. The only icons adorning the ground floor sanctuary were the
crutches, braces and the like, the signs of healing experienced at the Mission. Rooms on
the second floor were put to both practical and religious uses. On one side of the long
hallway was lodging space and offices for Seymour. On the other side was a long narrow
room – a “tarrying” room – stocked only with wooden planks for seating. By
reserving this second-floor room for the exclusive purpose of waiting for the baptism in
the Holy Spirit, the leaders explicitly likened the physical orientation of the room to the
“upper-room” used by the apostles during their own Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of
the Apostles. While the Mission’s exterior was stripped of any physical signs that could
identity 312 Azusa Street as a house of worship, Seymour, other leaders, and revival
participants purposefully maintained the profoundly ordinary character of the interior.
The religious revivals that would lead to the restoration of the true apostolic church
needed to replicate the first Pentecost, including the kind of space in which a Pentecost
would occur.

Azusa Street leaders organized the exterior and interior in a plain, modest, and
uncluttered manner, while revival participants seeking baptism in the Holy Spirit, divine

120 Robeck, The Azusa Street Mission & Revival, 74; Bartleman, Another Wave Rolls In!, 56.
Bartleman said that the upstairs room was established solely for the purpose of “tarrying.”
121 For additional contemporary descriptions of the interior of the Azusa Street Mission see “The
Same Old Way,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in Like as of Fire, 3; “Bible Pentecost:
Gracious Pentecost Showers Continue to Fall,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 3 (November 1906) in Like as of
Fire, 9; and “From Azusa Mission,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 12 (January 1908) in Like as of Fire, 49.
healing, and worship reinforced this character through their interpretation of the space.  

As with their attempts to establish legitimacy and authority through rhetorical reference to the story of Pentecost, the Azusa Street leaders and participants also turned to these accounts, in addition to the nativity narratives, to assert the importance of humble space in the encounter between the human and divine. These narratives provided the standard for the proper arrangement and use of sacred space. The distance in time -- from the beginning of the first century to the beginning of the twentieth -- and the difference in space -- from Jerusalem to Los Angeles -- was not a dilemma for the early Pentecostals. Rather than acting as a hindrance to reestablishing the apostolic church, first generation Pentecostals tried to preserve a historical and spiritual link between 33 AD and 1906 by creating and maintaining the spatial similarity and continuity between the first and second Pentecost.

Mission leaders and participants incorporated the population and religious changes taking place in Los Angeles in their interpretation of their second Pentecost. Los Angeles witnessed a substantial population increase during the first three decades of the twentieth century. In 1900 the city was home to 102,000 people, and by 1930, a year before the Mission was demolished, the population boomed to over 1.2 million. While the original settlers in the area were of Spanish and African descent, an increasing number of white migrants from the Midwest arrived in the late nineteenth century. The

122 Grant Wacker acknowledges in his study of early Pentecostals and their relationship to American culture that outsiders visiting the Mission may have seen the use of worship space as disorganized. He points out, however, that Pentecostals chose and used space intentionally; early Pentecostals often used once profane space, like the “devil’s warehouses,” to bring order to what was once disorder (Heaven Below, 112).

123 Robeck, Azusa Street Mission & Revival, 53; Lynn Bowman, Los Angeles: Epic of a City (Berkeley, CA: Howell-North Books, 1974), 181-195, 227; Kevin Starr, Material Dreams, 390; and Singleton, Religion in the City of Angels, xvi. In his study of the development of the Pentecostal religious tradition, Robert Maples Anderson sites the statistic that 5.6% of the city’s 1910 population was non-white; when taking into account immigration to the city, that number rose to 22% (Vision of the Disinherited, 63).
early twentieth century also saw the city’s population grow due to fairly substantial 
emigrant populations from Scandinavia, Germany, Russia, Italy, Spain, Japan, China, and 
Mexico. By the turn of the century, Irish, Germans, Chinese, and Jews populated the area 
known as “Five Points.” After 1900, the Japanese increasingly took over the area. By 
1910, Little Tokyo became home to the majority of the 6,000 Japanese living in Los 
Angeles, many of whom had migrated south from San Francisco after the earthquake.\textsuperscript{124} 
Jews migrating from Russia in the wake of the 1917 Revolution increased from 2,500 in 
1900 to 20,000 in 1920. In response to the revolution south of the border, Mexicans also 
migrated to Los Angeles; between 1910 and 1920, the Mexican population skyrocketed 
from 5,000 to 90,000.\textsuperscript{125}

In its earliest days the Azusa Street Mission attracted men and women from this 
multifaceted ethnic and racial population, but African-Americans dominated the 
congregation during and after its experiment in multiracial worship services. A small 
African-American population resided in Los Angeles from the colonial period to the early 
to mid-nineteenth century. Starting in the 1880s, more African Americans came to Los 
Angeles, primarily migrating from the south. Over the course of thirty years, the

\textsuperscript{124} Wild, Street Meeting, 24-30. Donald Teruo Hata Jr. and Nadine Ishitani Hata point out in 
“Asian-Pacific Angelinos: Model Minorities and Indispensable Scapegoats,” in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century Los Angeles: 
Power, Promotion, and Social Conflict, that Little Tokyo’s population ten years earlier was only 152, 
although another study suggests that the 1900 population was 1,000 while the 1910 population was 9,000 
(71). During World War II and the internment of Japanese and Japanese-Americans, Africa-Americans 
moved into Little Tokyo earning it the name of Bronzeville. For further information on the development of 
Little Tokyo and Bronzeville see Kariann Akemi Yokota, “From Little Tokyo to Bronzeville and Back: 
Ethnic Communities in Transition,” (M.A. thesis, University of California Los Angeles, 1996); Ichiro Mike 
Murase, Little Tokyo: One Hundred Years in Pictures (Los Angeles: Visual Communications/Asian 
American Studies Central, 1983); Brian Masaru Hayashi, ‘For the Sake of Our Japanese Brethren’: 
Assimilation, Nationalism, and Protestantism Among the Japanese of Los Angeles, 1895-1942, Asian 
America (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995); William M. Mason and John A. McKinstry, The 
Japanese of Los Angeles, 1880-1920 (Los Angeles: County of Los Angeles and Museum of Natural 
History, 1969); chapt. 9 in Hayden, The Power of Place, 210-221.

\textsuperscript{125} Wild, Street Meeting, 24-30. For an additional examination of the Mexican immigrant 
population in Los Angeles see Gloria E. Miranda, “The Mexican Immigrant Family: Economic and 
Cultural Survival in Los Angeles, 1900-1945,” in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century Los Angeles, 39-60.
African-American population increased from just over 100 to nearly 7,600; by 1920, ten years later, the population doubled to over 15,000. For many, Los Angeles offered an alternative to the strict segregation of the Jim Crow era. Some historians label the early twentieth-century period of the “relative freedom and opportunity” experienced by African-Americans as “Paradise Lost.” According to these historians, the socio-economic opportunities, particularly in housing and municipal employment, quickly declined in the 1920s with housing restrictions.

While some African-Americans had middle-class aspirations, many still struggled to sustain themselves economically. Before 1900, most African Americans lived on the east side of Main Street. With the area’s decline, however, more middle-class oriented blacks moved further south along the more respectable San Pedro Street and Central Avenue, which became known as the “Black belt of the city” by 1915. Although a portion of L.A.’s African-American population desired and achieved middle-class goals of home and business ownership, there was a large contingency of lower-class African Americans.

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127 Scott Kurashige, The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 2; and Douglas Flamming, Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 2. In his study Flamming wants to challenge the narrative of decline that has come to characterize studies of the racial experience of African-Americans over the course of the twentieth century. He argues that no period of “Paradise Lost” existed, but rather that African-Americans have been both “half-free and locked in struggle” (3).


129 Flamming, Bound for Freedom, 25, 92. Flamming devotes an entire chapter to the relationship between Central Avenue and African Americans; see chapt. 3.
Americans who ran up against the accepted racial discrimination of the time. More than likely, this included the congregants of the Azusa Street Mission. Between 1900 and 1920, black women overwhelmingly worked as domestics, with a smaller percentage taking on other duties as laundresses and seamstresses. Black men competed for work against the Asian and Mexican populations. During the same period of time, a fifth of the black males worked as general laborers while smaller percentages found employment as porters, janitors, and servants.\textsuperscript{130} Just as the first Pentecost bore a multiethnic character, so too would the second Pentecost as it occurred at Azusa Street.

Early Pentecostals also interpreted their role as the true apostolic church through the growth of the city’s religious life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In 1869, before the mainstream Protestant denominations had gained a solid foothold in the city, there were only four religious structures; an additional seven buildings were constructed in the 1870s.\textsuperscript{131} With the arrival of more and more Protestants from the east and the Midwest, church construction and congregation membership increased. By 1900 nearly 40\% of the city’s population attended church.\textsuperscript{132} In the two years between 1905 and 1907, the period during which the Azusa Street Mission began, the number of churches grew from 180 to 254.\textsuperscript{133} This growth of mainstream churches but also of “exotic cults” and other “freak religions” continued unabated during the 1920s.\textsuperscript{134} An

\textsuperscript{130} Flamming, \textit{Bound for Freedom}, 70-76.
\textsuperscript{131} Engh, \textit{Frontier Faiths}, 57.
\textsuperscript{132} Singleton, \textit{Religion in the City of Angels}, 54.
\textsuperscript{133} Robeck, \textit{Azusa Street Mission & Revival}, 55.
employee of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce reported that the city was home to 350 churches in 1921.\textsuperscript{135}

From this vibrant, yet often struggling multiracial environment, early Pentecostals drew parallels between the physically distinctive urban environments of Los Angeles and Jerusalem to collapse the distance of time and space. With a firm knowledge of the narrative of Pentecost, Bartleman quickly linked Jerusalem and Los Angeles within sacred history. In his account of the religious revivals, Bartleman suggested that Los Angeles was a “veritable Jerusalem.”\textsuperscript{136} Bartleman, however, did not stop at merely asserting that Los Angeles was a true Jerusalem. He proceeded to explain in greater detail how the city functioned as the “American Jerusalem,” where there existed a diversity of religious beliefs and nationalities. Echoing Acts 2:5-12, Bartleman affirmed that in Los Angeles

\begin{quote}
Every sect, creed and doctrine under Heaven is found… as well as every nation represented.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Every false religion under Heaven is found represented here. Next to old Jerusalem there is nothing like it in the world. It is on the opposite side, near halfway around the world, with natural conditions very similar so. All nations are represented here, as at Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{137}
\end{quote}

In order for the early Pentecostals to reestablish the true apostolic church it was important to demonstrate that ancient Jerusalem resembled modern Los Angeles in as many ways as possible. Both cities, one in the first century and the other in the early twentieth century,

\textsuperscript{135} Engh, “Practically Every Religion Being Represented,” 201. For denominational histories of Congregationalism and Episcopalians see Royal G. Davis, \textit{Light on a Gothic Tower: First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, 1867-1967} (Los Angeles: First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, 1967); and Ruth Nicastro, ed., \textit{As We Remember: Some Moments Recalled from the First Hundred Years of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles} (Los Angeles: Communications Office of the Diocese, 1995).

\textsuperscript{136} Bartleman, \textit{Another Wave Rolls In!}, 29.

\textsuperscript{137} Bartleman, \textit{Another Wave Rolls In!}, 64.
were budding cosmopolitan cities, and home to diverse ethnic, socio-economic populations, and false religions.

Jerusalem was not the only city of the Holy Land that early Pentecostals referenced in the process of restoring the true apostolic church. Seymour and revival participants located parallels between Los Angeles and other inconspicuous cities and towns in scripture. What mattered more than the physical marks of the urban and architectural space was the kind of spiritual atmosphere nurtured by using the physical components of that space. In the spring of 1907, Seymour spoke to a gathering of people in Metropolitan Hall located at 327½ South Spring Street. As he preached, Seymour, like Bartleman, made spatial comparisons between Los Angeles and cities in scripture. After reading passages from Isaiah, Seymour proclaimed, “I am so glad the Lord God has raised up a people right in Los Angeles and [San] Francisco, they seem like Sodom and Gomorrah, but out of these cities the Lord God has raised up a people for His holy name.”

Seymour’s audience more than likely would not have missed the link he made between Los Angeles and her sister city further north and the sinful and wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their minds probably turned to the wickedness taking place not very far from Spring Street in the vice district around Chinatown. Making negative associations between cities of scripture and those of twentieth-century California functioned in a similar manner as the early Pentecostals’ negative interpretation of history. They served to bolster their position as the true apostolic church and reinforced their belief in the imminent return of Jesus.

138 “The Pentecostal Assembly,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 7 (April 1907) in *Like as of Fire*, 30. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah and Abraham’s plea for god to save the few righteous in the city is recorded in Genesis 18: 16-19; 29.
Seymour and the Mission also made positive associations between Los Angeles and cities in scripture to claim that God used the unlikeliest of circumstances and unexceptional locations to intervene in human affairs. Although not directly related to the story of Pentecost, early Pentecostals also called attention to the sacred historical links between Los Angeles, Bethlehem, and Nazareth. The Azusa Street Mission building was like Nazareth, the town of Jesus’ childhood, not in its physical attributes but in its quality. An article from *The Apostolic Faith* drew from the Gospel of John to illustrate the work of the Holy Spirit taking place at Azusa Street: “Those who know God feel His presence as soon as they cross the threshold. ‘Can there [sic] any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ ‘Come and see.’ This is the Nazareth of Los Angeles. Some have come from long distances to this spot, directed of the Lord.”

Just as the city of Los Angeles was an unlikely location for God to do great things, the neighborhood and the building itself were similarly improbable sites into which God would send the Holy Spirit. To maintain continuity with scriptural tradition – especially the narrative of Jesus’ birth – the second Pentecost and Jesus’ pending return would necessarily take place amid similar circumstances. Believers spoke about the space of the surrounding neighborhood and particularly the building as having the essential spatial qualities. Editors of *The Apostolic Faith* pointed out that “in the vicinity of the tombstone shop, stables and lumberyard… you find a two-story, white-washed old

139 “The Same Old Way,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 3. The article drew from John 1: 46. The verse was contextualized amid Jesus’ calling of Nathanael and Philip to be his disciples.
stable at Bethlehem." As this observer noted, Los Angeles was not merely like Bethlehem in its physical environment, but Los Angeles literally was Bethlehem. Using similar phrasing, A.C. Valdez, a young boy during the revivals and later a missionary to Australia, recognized the parallels between the downtown neighborhood where Pentecostalism emerged and the ancient Palestinian town where Jesus was born. The commercial and industrial area was an “unlikely place for what occurred,” Valdez recalled, “Yet many people had made the same comment about a stable in Bethlehem nineteen centuries earlier.” The historic Bethlehem of scripture provided a spatial precedent where the human and divine could interact: “When Christ was born, it was in a barn in Bethlehem; and when He began sending the ‘latter rain’ about two years ago, the outpouring of the Spirit, it was in a barn in Los Angeles; for the Old Mission is like a barn in its humility and plainness.” Because God entered the world physically with the birth of His son through a simple barn in a small town, early Pentecostals took this as the benchmark for how God would intervene in the world in the twentieth century. To them, Los Angeles became a Bethlehem and the Azusa Street Mission became a barn.

Both the barn of the nativity narrative and the former stable of the second Pentecost became important sacred spaces in the early development of the Pentecostal tradition. The former served as the location of Jesus’ first coming, while the latter would serve as a sign of his second coming. Visitors and revival participants often referred to the Mission – specifically the ground floor with its whitewashed walls and sawdust floors – as a barn or manger. Calling to mind her stay at the Azusa Street Mission some thirty

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140 “Bible Pentecost: Gracious Pentecostal Showers Continue to Fall,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 2 (November 1906) in Like as of Fire, 9.
142 “From Azusa Mission,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 12 (January 1908) in Like as of Fire, 49.
years later, Rachel A. Sizelove explained that when she entered the building and looked around she “thought of Jesus when He came to earth and was born in a manger. …I thought of the fine church houses in Los Angeles, but the Lord had chosen this humble spot to gather all nationalities.” Thomas R. Nickel echoed Sizelove’s sentiments

God was using a stable in Los Angeles to open the flood-gates of salvation and deliverance as he had used a stable on the opposite side of the world, in Bethlehem, nineteen hundred years before, as the birthplace of Jesus Christ, who made possible this salvation and deliverance. Man would have chosen a great place and a great cathedral for these might [sic?] event: God preferred to choose stables.

Sizelove and Nickel’s appraisal of the modest quality of the Mission’s interior drew upon an important aspect of sacred space that early Pentecostals believed was outlined in scripture. By remembering the nativity narrative, Sizelove and Nickel were cognizant of the modesty of space. Just as with the stable where Jesus was born the Mission where the revivals occurred did not portend greatness.

By claiming a spatial resemblance, even creating a replication, between the humble and simple spaces of Jerusalem and Los Angeles, early Pentecostals created an environment that welcomed all peoples, no matter their ethnic or racial background. Whether the early Pentecostals made direct parallels between Los Angeles and Jerusalem, Sodom, Gomorrah, Nazareth, or Bethlehem the end goal was the same. Through observation and direct interaction with the multi-ethnic character of the urban environment in which they lived and through careful reading of the sacred narrative of the Pentecost and other passages of scriptures, early Pentecostals looked to construct the humble spatial conditions necessary for a second Pentecost.

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143 Rachel A. Sizelove, “Pentecost has Come!,” in Holy Ghost Revival on Azusa Street: The True Believer I, 76.
Rejection of Contemporary Christianity

In constructing and defining the proper space for the descent of the Holy Spirit early Pentecostals simultaneously identified the improper use of space for the interaction of the human and divine. If the Mission’s neighborhood and interior space harbored the necessary qualities of a worship space, the church buildings of contemporary Protestants and Catholics did not. The “fine” churches described by Sizelove and Nickel, lacked the necessary simplicity and humility that should characterize sacred space. Historian Grant Wacker points out that Pentecostals “disregarded society’s notions of aesthetic attractiveness.” Moreover, to demonstrate that the second Pentecost could inaugurate the pure apostolic faith, they continually pointed to the institutional and theological components of contemporary Christianity that departed from the criterion set out in scripture. Seymour and revival participants not only disregarded and shunned the elaborate accoutrements of contemporary Christian churches, but they regularly pointed out the problems with such denominations, an action that often earned the Azusa Street Mission the ire of the mainstream Los Angeles Christian community.

The historical trajectory of L.A.’s religious life did not follow that of cities and rural areas in the East. From the beginning of Spanish settlement in the late eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century, Catholicism was the primary religion in Los Angeles and California as a whole. When California entered the Union in 1850, there were only twelve Protestant ministers in the entire state and as late as the early 1880s, two-fifths of the city’s population was Roman Catholic. As more and more migrants from the Midwest moved to Los Angeles, however, the Protestantization of the city began

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146 Singleton, *Religion in the City of Angels*, 15, 49.
in earnest soon eclipsing and overwhelming the Catholic character of the area.

Mainstream Protestant denominations like Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, were able to establish a solid foundation through their national voluntary associations more so than through the activities of individual missionaries. These associations allowed Protestant churches to establish congregations and wider influence in the cultural, social, and economic life of the city. Protestant Anglo-Americans developed an infrastructure of religious and social institutions that permeated the city and controlled its political apparatus. By the turn of the century, this power of influence and control aided Protestants to exercise the same progressive spirit of their counterparts in the East while also marginalizing those religious and ethnic groups that did not fit with their vision of Los Angeles as a “new” Jerusalem. Through the processes of Americanization and Protestantization, Anglo-Americans believed Protestant values would guarantee that the city remained aesthetically pleasing and morally pure amid the commercial and industrial changes taking place downtown.

As the guardians of the city’s myth and Christian values, mainstream Protestants would have seen the Azusa Street Mission and the numerous pentecostal missions established in its wake as a challenge to their vision of the city. The early days of the

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147 Early evangelization by Protestant ministers faltered in the third quarter of the nineteenth century in part due to limited numbers of ministers, the kind of migrant to Los Angeles (young men vs. family units), limited funds, and a scattered population. For the fitful stops and starts of Protestant denominations in Southern California see chapters one and two in Engh, *Frontier Faiths*, 1-29, 32-54; and chapt. 1 in Singleton, *Religion in the City of Angels*, 1-28.


150 Several different store-front missions emerged following the lead of the Azusa Street Mission including Bartleman’s mission at 8th and Maple Street, the Charles Kent mission on 51st Street, Arthur Osterberg’s Full Gospel Mission, Joshua Skyes’s Apostolic Church in East Los Angeles, and a Swedish mission on Wall Street near east 8th Street. Moreover, Abundio and Rosa de Lopez held open air meetings in the Plaza. Missions also emerged in areas surrounding Los Angeles within a year of the opening of the
Azusa Street Mission actively cultivated an environment that welcomed men and women of all races and ethnicities. The interracial makeup and interaction at the Mission clearly tarnished the Protestant Anglo-American desire to create an “aesthetic, political, and moral… white spot of America.” Moreover, the religious goals and socio-economic background of Azusa Street Mission congregants were looked down upon by middle-class African Americans who belonged to mainstream churches like the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Second Baptist Church, both located on Central Avenue. The AME and Second Baptist Church “were models of voluntary racial separation and exclusion and were proof positive to some white people that African American people did not really want any involvement in the white world” whereas early Pentecostalism like that at Azusa Street was “often dismissed as a fraudulent, low-class cult regardless of racial considerations.” Azusa Street leaders and participants articulated their critique of contemporary Christian institutions, theology, and space within this racially stratified environment.

The first criticism that early Pentecostals leveled at contemporary Christianity was the extreme degree to which it had become institutionalized. There was little room within the folds of early Pentecostalism for the professionally trained and educated minister that dominated American Protestantism. When these ministers came to “investigate” the Azusa Street Mission they stood apart in their manners and dress. They entered “proud” and “well-dressed,” but the “high looks” of ministers were quickly

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151 Wild, *Street Meeting*, 38.

replaced by awe, conviction, and “wallowing on the dirty floor.” An article in the *Apostolic Faith* appropriated the parable of the prodigal son to expose the problems with professional ministers. The trained minister became analogous to the “elder brother.” The account began with a retelling of Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son, but it quickly became conflated with contemporary events. Azusa Street opened for the return of “prodigals” but

There was one discordant voice in the parable, as told by Jesus. It was the elder brother’s. He is here also. …He may have worn a long-tailed coat and white necktie and walked around and gave orders. …Yes, the elder brother is angry and will not come in to the feast. He sits on the fence and finds fault saying that the “new tongues” and other gifts that [sic] Father is handing out to His children are of the devil.

The professionally trained ministers from L.A.’s mainstream Protestant churches may have perceived Pentecostalism as a threat, particularly because the pentecostal religious experience eclipsed the need for their specific role as religious guides. Early Pentecostals, however, suggested that their purer Christianity would bring ministers back to their apostolic foundations.

Pentecostals saw the professionally trained and educated Protestant minister as a small part of the bigger problem of the Christianity’s departure from the ways of God to the ways of man, particularly in the solidification of theology. Azusa Street Mission leaders opposed creeds and doctrines created by man and not God. Creeds, doctrines, and the traditions created by men, they argued, kept truth hidden. They were “dead

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forms” that prevented people from living “practical Christianity.” These manmade doctrines did not meet the standard of true apostolic faith as established by the first-century apostles. Bartleman made clear that the pentecostal revivals were part of a long process for the church to struggle out “up through ‘its’ and ‘isms,’ theories, creeds and doctrines (and schisms), issues and movements, blessings, and experiences and professions… We need no more theology or theory. Let the devil have them. Let us get to God.” Because of these lifeless statements of belief and Christian living, early Pentecostals argued, contemporary Christian churches and their congregants had departed from true Christian life as dictated by the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostals also criticized the Roman Catholic Church, which became an easy target for concerns about the dangers of strict institutionalism. Although Pentecostals were neither the first nor the last to criticize Catholicism, nor the only group to do so in the early twentieth century, the Pentecostal critique saw in Roman Catholicism just as much, if not more, evidence of the detrimental effect of introducing man-made doctrines to Christian life. In a compilation of beliefs adhered to by the Azusa Street Mission penned by William J. Seymour, Roman Catholicism was criticized although never mentioned directly. Purgatory was characterized as “a fond thing, vainly invented, and

155 “Fire Falling at Hermon,” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in Like as of Fire, 3; “Pentecost in Danville, VA” The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 2 (October 1906) in Like as of Fire, 6; Untitled Article, The Apostolic Faith 1, no. 2 (October 1906) in Like as of Fire, 8.
156 Frank Bartleman, Another Wave Rolls in!, 92.
157 This volume of the doctrines and discipline of the Azusa Street Mission was compiled in 1915, several years after the peak of the revivals and during theological schisms among Pentecostals when the denominational structure of the tradition began to solidify. In its rhetorical and practical attempt to be a pure apostolic faith and not fall into the trap that the Christian had, Pentecostalism did achieve a degree of institutionalization.
grounded upon no warrant of scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.”\textsuperscript{158}

Condemnation of the use of Latin, rather than the vernacular, in the Roman Catholic Mass, was much less direct. Seymour pointed out that, “it is a thing plainely repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive church, to have public prayer in the church, or to administer the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.”\textsuperscript{159}

Yet, as with the early Pentecostal denigration of professional Protestant ministers, there was hope for those who lacked the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the purity of the apostolic faith, even Roman Catholics. While \textit{The Apostolic Faith} contained multiple reports in any single issue of those men and women who received their baptism in the Holy Spirit, the stories of former Catholics were given special attention. After a member of a chain gang received his baptism, “God took all the Romanism out of him.” Another unidentified man who had entered seminary to become a priest was “converted from the power of Romanism and captivity” after receiving his baptism in the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{160} All that was perceived as false about institutional religion, particularly Catholicism, early Pentecostals suggested, was stripped from someone once they received their baptism.

Early Pentecostals also believed that contemporary religious structures and use of space hindered a Christian’s ability to achieve communion with God. By using flashy and elaborate decorations and accoutrements, these churches had become too worldly in their attempt to attract people to Christianity. Seymour and the members of the Azusa Street Mission could point to numerous examples of these worldly Christian structures in


\textsuperscript{159} Seymour, \textit{The Doctrine and Discipline of Azusa Street Apostolic Faith Mission}, 53.

\textsuperscript{160} Untitled Article, \textit{The Apostolic Faith} 1, no. 1 (September 1906) in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 2; and “A Portuguese Minister Receives His Pentecost,” \textit{The Apostolic Faith} 1, no. 2 (October 1906) in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 5.
their daily activities downtown. Just blocks away from the Mission stood St. Vibiana, a Roman Catholic cathedral with baroque architectural style modeled after the Puerto de San Miguel in Barcelona, Spain. Completed in 1876, St. Vibiana’s ornate statuary, murals, and 3,000-seat capacity likely served as a prime example of all that was wrong with modern-day Christian space.\(^\text{161}\) The First Congregational Church of Los Angeles provided another visual illustration of the kind and use of sacred space rejected by early Pentecostals. After its founding in 1867, the First Congregational Church built a structure at New High Street but it quickly became too small and they relocated to another structure on the corner of Third and Hill Streets. By the late nineteenth century, this structure housed an expensive organ and the church organized an orchestra for church services.\(^\text{162}\) Early Pentecostals could easily contrast their vision of sacred space—humble and simple like a barn—with the large, overbearing, and elaborately decorated spaces like those of St. Vibiana’s and the First Congregational Church.

From the two-story Mission, Azusa Street leaders and participants looked upon L.A.’s churches with alarm. In a sermon published in *The Apostolic Faith*, Seymour declared that, “so many people today are worshipping the big mountains, big churches, stone and frame buildings.” One’s connection to the divine, Seymour pleaded, could not be attained in these human constructions, for “Jesus teaches that salvation is not in these stone structures – not in the mountains – not in the hills, but in God.”\(^\text{163}\) Seymour’s

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\(^\text{161}\) Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 42. St. Vibiana’s suffered severe damage from the Northbridge earthquake of 1994. The Los Angeles diocese began demolition of the cathedral, but this action was stopped. The former Cathedral was remolded and now serves as a venue for the performing arts and private and public events.

\(^\text{162}\) Davis, *Light on a Gothic Tower*, 51. The First Congregational Church moved out of downtown Los Angeles to the Wilshire District in the early twentieth century. Its present structure was completed in 1932 and architecturally reflects the cathedrals of Europe.

\(^\text{163}\) Seymour, “River of Living Water,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 3 (November 1906) in *Like as of Fire*, 10.
sentiment was echoed in an *Apostolic Faith* article entitled “The Holy Spirit Bishop of the Church.” The new churches of stone and brick dotting the urban landscape of Los Angeles looked to “new choirs [and] trained singers right from the conservatories… fine pews [and] fine chandeliers” to “attract the human heart to win souls.” Once drawn in by these modern religious amenities, the people in the pews “heard a nice, fine, eloquent oration” and they saw “great wealth [and] people in the very latest styles, in different costumes, and loaded down with jewelry, decorated from head to foot with diamonds, gold and silver.” Early Pentecostals condemned what they saw as a central failing of contemporary Christianity, mainly the lavish amounts of money wasted on modern church structures. The contention over the appearance, presentation, and use of religious space ultimately revolved around how humans could best obtain salvation and live a Christian life. These stone structures with their fancy choirs and rich congregants “failed to bring divine power and salvation to precious souls.” The interior spaces of these buildings, in the opinion of the first Pentecostals, inhibited rather than aided one’s salvation.

If contemporary churches deceived people into believing that salvation could be achieved in an opulent space surrounded by wealth and refined music, Seymour and the first Pentecostals pointed out that these spaces only gave one false hope. An article in *The Apostolic Faith* pointed out the distinction between a true and false church, between the church as a building and as a body of believers: “if these meeting houses and such buildings were really churches of Christ, the storms, cyclones and fires could not harm

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164 “The Holy Spirit Bishop of the Church,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 9 (June-September 1907) in *Like as of Fire*, 39.
them; but we see them blown down… and burned down.”\textsuperscript{166} Bartleman also lamented the deplorable conditions of modern churches. Contemporary worship spaces, Bartleman explained, “are but a shadow of the former ones, too often a place to blow off steam in human enthusiasm, or become mentally intoxicated supposedly by the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{167} Bartleman took his critique beyond the church structure to include the snappy and peppy worship services within them. They were a “bastard product,” Bartleman railed, “as far as ‘Pentecost’ was concerned.”\textsuperscript{168} By their very nature, modern church structures and worship services were illegitimate. These churches and the use of them by their congregations would never be right for manifestations of divine power. The grand architecture of the stone churches and the numerous distracting displays during worship services thwarted the ultimate connection between the divine and the human – salvation.

As early Pentecostals rejected what they saw as the wrongful interpretation of the church, they increasingly emphasized the sacredness of the individual’s body. Ultimately, a building was not the true church according to early Pentecostals. Rather, as one observer put it, “the church is planted in our hearts through the Blood of Jesus Christ… this church that He plants in our souls will stand throughout eternity.”\textsuperscript{169} This church could not be destroyed by fire or wind. If the church was planted in the heart of each person and not confined to stone or wood structures, a person did not need to be at a specific place to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. A.C. Valdez reaffirmed the Mission’s assertion that the church was composed of believers. He learned from the New

\textsuperscript{166} “The Holy Spirit Bishop of the Church,” in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 39.
\textsuperscript{167} Bartleman, \textit{Another Wave Rolls In!}, 83.
\textsuperscript{168} Bartleman, \textit{Another Wave Rolls In!}, 82.
Testament that “we are temples of the living God.” In addition, in a series of questions and answers printed in *The Apostolic Faith*, one of the first inquiries asked, “Is it necessary for a person to leave their home duties in order to wait at some place for the Holy Ghost?” The editors emphatically answered no. Clarifying their forthright answer, the editors proposed those kinds of spaces where an individual could receive salvation and their baptism in the Holy Spirit. They wrote that, “you can wait right in the kitchen or in the parlor or in the barn. Some have received the baptism of the Spirit in their barns, some in their kitchen, some at family worship, some on their porch, some about their business.” Like the manger where Jesus was born and the “manger home” at Azusa Street, the kitchen, parlor, and porch were seemingly unlikely places for the interaction of the human and divine. The Mission emphasized that salvation and one’s baptism in the Holy Spirit would be more likely to occur at home or work than in modern churches lacking the presence of the divine power.

Many men and women testified to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit at home and work. Brother G. Zigler reported that he received his baptism in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues while driving his fruit wagon into the city at three in the morning. An unidentified “sister” from Whittier experienced her baptism in the Holy Spirit while baking a cake at home. Kneeling down in her yard as her house was engulfed in flames, another unidentified “sister” who had been “hungry” to receive her

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170 Valdez, *Fire on Azusa Street*, 37. Valdez’s reference to the body as temple comes from I Corinthians 6:19.
171 “Questions Answered,” *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 11 (October-January 1907-1908) in *Like as of Fire*, 46.
173 Untitled Article, *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 6 (February-March 1907) in *Like as of Fire*, 21.
Pentecost was baptized in the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{174} After recounting his conversion in an orange grove, Valdez explained that “many people don’t find God in an orange grove, although they could, because He is there, and everywhere.”\textsuperscript{175} Brother Zigler, the two unidentified sisters, Valdez, and numerous other men and women encountered the divine as they moved about their daily activities or in desperate situations, as in the case of the woman whose house was on fire. Many early Pentecostals did not receive their personal Pentecost at the Azusa Street Mission, but rather in those places and spaces they frequented on a daily basis. By implication such ordinary daily places also became sacred. Zigler, these two sisters, and Valdez found and experienced the divine in the everyday rather than the kind of space designated as sacred by contemporary Christianity.

Just as the early Pentecostals interpreted the second Pentecost of the twentieth century according to the biblical standard laid out in the Old and New Testament, they also appraised contemporary Christian space according to the same principles. In the process, they found the institutions, theology, and sacred space of L.A.’s many Protestant and Catholic churches to be woefully inadequate to receive the Holy Spirit. The doctrines and space these churches provided for worship failed to meet the spatial criterion necessary for the interaction of the human and divine. The seeming worldliness of their Christian counterparts in Los Angeles only furthered the early Pentecostal belief that theirs was the true apostolic faith ready to usher in Jesus’ return to earth.

\textsuperscript{174} Untitled Article, \textit{The Apostolic Faith} 1, no. 3 (November 1906) in \textit{Like as of Fire}, 9.
\textsuperscript{175} Valdez, \textit{Fire on Azusa Street}, 31-32.
Conclusion

The high expectation that early Pentecostals had that Jesus would return to earth never materialized. The failure of their second Pentecost to achieve its ultimate and final goal, however, does not lessen the dynamism of the religious experience that emerged at Azusa Street in the first decade of the twentieth century. Nor does it undermine their belief that they had indeed been party to God’s direct intervention via the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Over the course of these revivals, William J. Seymour, Frank Bartleman, other leaders of the Mission, and revival participants and congregants wholly immersed themselves in the narrative of the first-century Pentecost and other biblical narratives. From these narratives they created a collective religious memory that provided them with the foundation to assert their religious and historical legitimacy as a budding religious tradition and to declare their role as the true apostolic church.

Wanting to restore the apostolic Christianity that would allow for Jesus’ return to earth, the early Pentecostals embarked on constructing a collective religious memory in the present that relied upon an interpretation of the past that would suit their visions of the future. Like their Anglo-Protestant counterparts who created a mythic Los Angeles to attract investment and settlers to the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Azusa Street leaders and participants molded another Jerusalem – and Bethlehem and Nazareth – out of the Los Angeles that they inhabited on a daily basis. In reading the biblical narratives of the first Pentecost through the lens of their sacred view of history, they increasingly saw around them the makings of a second Pentecost. They interpreted L.A.’s multi-ethnic and racial population, the barn-like and humble qualities of the Azusa Street Mission building, the elaborate and worldly contemporary church
structures, and the opposition from secular and religious authorities as proof that their movement possessed the true inheritance of the first-century apostolic church. Through rhetorical references to the first Pentecost and purposeful fashioning and use of the Mission’s space based upon active recollections of the biblical past, early Pentecostals sought to collapse the geographic and time differential between first-century Jerusalem and twentieth-century Los Angeles. In so doing they hoped to bring to completion, and surpass, the promises left unfulfilled in the first century Christian church.

As the early Pentecostals co-opted the past to create a religious experience relevant in the present and a vision of the future, they introduced a sense of urgency and anxiousness to their relationship with American society. In the previous two chapters, the collective religious memories shaped by American Catholics and Mormons in the last decade of the nineteenth century were primarily triumphant in nature. These self-fashioned narratives very much corresponded with America’s view of itself as the most progressive and successful in western civilization. In their dependence on biblical narratives to tout the second Pentecost and the return of Jesus, early Pentecostals introduced a degree of apprehension about the direction of American society that tempered the strictly triumphant tone of previous commemorations. By the turn of the twentieth century and particularly through World War I, America’s social and political progressives increasingly acknowledged the negative effects of urbanization, industrialization, and immigration. At the same time, as the Lutherans and Congregationalists undertook their commemorations of the Reformation Quadricentennial and the Pilgrim Tercentenary, respectively, they also acknowledged these changes and how they affected society. While still constructing triumphant
collective religious memories, the Lutherans and Congregationalists drew on the imperative established by the Pentecostals. They coupled a narrative of success with an urgent need to reform society through the recollection of the past and the application of religious principles in the future.
Chapter Four

Celebrate the Sixteenth Century to Transform the Twentieth Century: Lutherans and the Reformation Quadricentennial, 1917

The yearlong celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Reformation commenced in New York City churches on October 29, 1916, with “Go-to-Church Sunday.” Dr. S. Edward Young, chairman of the committee spearheading this concerted effort, reported that church attendance jumped by twenty-five percent. Of all of Manhattan’s Protestants who owed their religious inheritance to the Reformation, Lutherans in particular paid special attention to this anniversary. It was not only a religious movement that brought an end to unified Christendom but it was also linked to their denomination’s namesake, Martin Luther. At St. James’s Lutheran Church, located on the Upper East Side near Central Park on the corner of Madison Avenue and 73rd Street, Reverend Junius B. Remensnyder, author of *What the World Owes Luther*, drew from a passage in one of Paul’s epistles at his morning service.\(^1\) Rather than taking a strictly celebratory and positive tone in his sermon, Remensnyder used the occasion to rail against the dangers threatening contemporary Protestantism. He was especially worried about what he saw as the increasing secularization of Protestantism. The ministers preaching from Protestant pulpits, he explained, no longer focused on spiritual matters but rather the social, ethical, and philanthropic issues of the day. In the afternoon, the Lutheran churches of Manhattan and the Bronx held joint services, a Lutheran hospital was dedicated, and over four thousand people attended a musical program at the Academy of

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Music in Brooklyn. The crowd quickly surpassed the Academy’s capacity so an overflow crowd of one thousand people was sent to the Central YMCA.²

Across the country in Los Angeles, the Lutheran churches of southern California also organized services and programs for the anniversary of the Reformation in 1916. Twelve congregations participated in the joint celebration that unfolded at Angelica Swedish Lutheran Church in Los Angeles. After an afternoon full of readings from scripture, prayer, a musical solo, and three addresses by pastors from the participating congregations, the women of Angelica prepared a supper. The meal was promptly followed by religious services; the evening’s activities replicated those of the afternoon service. Like their Lutheran counterparts on the East Coast, Lutheran pastors on the west coast also addressed the need to reform society, religion, and even the state.³

Across the United States, wherever a Lutheran congregation existed and no matter their synodical affiliation, the last days of October 1916 marked the beginning of an extended season of celebration. Lutherans – and other Protestant denominations owing their religious inheritance to the Reformation – focused on the memory of Martin Luther and more generally on the religious and political legacy of the Reformation. Protestant denominational organizations, including the Federal Council of Churches [FCC] and the American Unitarian Association, planned celebrations. The FCC, a representative body of Protestant churches organized to make the Christian message relevant to changing social and industrial conditions, created a joint committee to plan a celebration for its

member churches. The American Unitarian Association, a body representing the Unitarian churches since 1825, held a program in October 1917. Reformation celebrations, however, were not all strictly religious in nature. Prominent and wealthy individuals, like banker J.P. Morgan, and cities, like Boston, also organized their own individual means of commemorating the Reformation. J.P. Morgan, well known for his mergers of major electric and steel industries and his philanthropic activities, outfitted the materials for a traveling exhibit on the history of the Reformation. The city of Boston established the Greater Boston Quadricentenary Committee to arrange commemorative exercises including an organ recital at Park Street Church and an address entitled “Four Centuries of Protestantism” by Dr. Charles R. Brown, dean of Yale’s School of Religion. In his address, Brown connected the past and the present in his speech. He pointed out to the three thousand persons gathered in Tremont Temple in downtown Boston that Luther’s Germany was under the threat of autocracy. Moreover, he urged unity among Protestants against the “forces of evil” and warned that the Catholic Church was trying to control education.


5 “Reformation Day to be Celebrated,” Christian Science Monitor (October 17, 1917), 1, 3. The American Unitarian Association and the American Universalist Church of America merged in 1961 to form the Unitarian Universalist Association.

6 “Protestantism 400 Years Old,” Boston Globe (November 19, 1916), 43.

7 “Anniversary of the Reformation,” Boston Globe (October 14, 1917), 40; “Reformation Day to be Celebrated,” Christian Science Monitor (October 17, 1917), 1, 3.

The synods of the Lutheran Church, however, undertook the most comprehensive and aggressive organizational campaigns to celebrate the anniversary of the Reformation and Martin Luther. By the turn of the century there were over 1.6 million Lutheran communicants and over 6,700 pastors and 11,000 congregations throughout the United States. At the time of the Quadricentennial, these communicants and congregations were members of sixty-two Lutheran synods, or administrative bodies carrying out functions similar to a diocese in the Catholic Church. Some of these synods, particularly the ethnically organized Norwegian synods, were independent while others were affiliated with the General Synod [GS] (1820), the General Council [GC] (1867), the United Southern Synod [USS] (1863), or the Synodical Conference [SC] (1872); the GS, GC, and USS were largely represented in the Northeast, Upper Midwest, and the South, while the SC was primarily represented in the Midwest. Disagreements over the authority of and adherence to the Lutheran Confessions and how that degree of confessionalism translated into church practice shaped much of the history of Lutheranism in the United States and the nature of synodical relations. Because of the variety of synodical affiliations and therefore confessionalisms characterizing Lutheranism during this period, this chapter will focus on the commemorative efforts of the GS, GC, and USS through the New York Quadricentennial Committee and the Joint Committee. The commemorative activities and program of the committee of the Missouri Synod, originally organized in 1847 as The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri,

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11 The Lutheran Confessions consist of the Book of Concord and the Augsburg Confession. A good deal of American Lutheran scholarship focuses on the debates among synods and church leaders over confessionalism. This may be in part because the sources are more easily accessible and available to researchers.
Ohio and Other States and the main body of the Synodical Conference will not be a major focus of this chapter. 12

For Lutherans the Reformation anniversary was not merely a moment to celebrate and honor the religious legacy of Luther and the reform movement, but an opportunity to enact transformation and solidify Lutheran religious and historical identity. The New York Committee, a creation of the Lutheran Society – a laymen’s society promoting fellowship – expressed the slogan that came to define the work of both lay and clerical Lutherans during the Quadricentennial. “Education, Inspiration, and Transformation” became the main goals of the celebration. Education was needed not only for Lutherans who lacked adequate historical understanding of their faith but also for non-Lutherans who knew little about the impact of Lutheranism on history, especially the course of American history. Inspiration was needed for Lutherans to undertake religious work in the twentieth century. Transformation of the individual, church, and society was the

hoped-for end result of education and inspiration. Both the New York Committee and the Joint Committee created clearinghouse-like organizations to nationalize and regularize the Quadricentennial festivities and focus the efforts of the Lutheran laity on consuming commemorative literature, producing pageants, and supporting financial campaigns. These determined actions lent themselves to the creation of more solid Lutheran identity in the face of theological and social changes.

Jacob A. Clutz, pastor, president of Midland College from 1889 to 1904, and professor at the General Synod’s Gettysburg Seminary from 1909 to 1925, gave voice to the ambitious objectives of the Lutheran churches during the Reformation Quadricentennial. Most Lutheran pastors and theologians, no matter their confessional stance, could agree on the three-fold objectives articulated by the national committees and expanded upon by Clutz. In Clutz’s viewpoint Lutheran churches in the United States needed to focus on education, conservation, inspiration, and unification during the anniversary year.

Clutz’s first concern revolved around the lack of knowledge about the faith among Lutherans. In both knowledge of the historical facts of the Reformation and the theological principles of the faith, Clutz argued, Lutherans were “woefully ignorant.” Although an historical understanding of the Reformation and the faith were not necessary for salvation, they were “essential to efficiency in church work.” Clutz pointed to evidence from a self-conducted survey to illustrate the poor shape Lutherans found themselves in when it came to the basics of the Reformation. After asking thirty-two

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Lutherans a series of twenty-five questions, only twelve respondents correctly answered the date of Luther’s birth, two named his parents, seven identified the name of the religious order Luther joined, and only six could indicate the year Luther died. Clutz also posed more confessional questions to his subjects. When asked if they had read the entire Augsburg Confession, only ten responded in the affirmative and only fourteen could explain why the Confession was titled as such. If the data Clutz presented was not enough to convince his readers that Lutherans stood in dire need of education in the faith, he challenged them to conduct the same survey in their Bible classes, prayer services, and Young People’s Societies. He even supplied them with a list of questions. The conclusion to be drawn from the survey data was clear to Clutz. Education in the faith was indispensable if Lutherans were going to conserve the faith in the face of present challenges “undiminished and uncorrupted for ourselves and future generations.” If Lutherans did not understand their own faith, both historically and confessionally, how could they take up the necessary work of the church?

With an education in the faith grounded in an imagined past and a conservation of the faith rooted in the present, Clutz turned his attention to inspiring his readers for the future. Chastising his fellow Lutherans for being selfish, complacent, and “too modest and deferential,” he used the occasion of the Quadricentenary to rally his co-religionists to act. Education in the history of the Reformation was useless, Clutz argued, unless it was put to a practical use, like the conservation of the faith. Armed with a pride in and loyalty to Lutheranism, Lutherans needed to preserve the identity of the faith. While

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Lutherans might quarrel among themselves, Clutz avowed that, “in all essential characteristics, in all those things which really differentiate it from the other Protestant Churches and give to it an individuality of its own, it must be true to its historic origin and development, or lose its identity and forfeit its right to exist as a separate organization.” As Clutz deduced, what would be the point of being Lutheran if Lutheranism capitulated to the Protestant majority; in the end, Lutheranism would be like any other Protestant denomination and no longer distinctive.

In a tone slightly less confident than that which characterized his discussion of education, conservation, and inspiration, Clutz suggested that the final objective of the Reformation Quadricentennial was unification. Church growth during the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century led to a multiplication of synods and a denomination characterized by confessional divergence and institutional splintering with the GS, the GC, the USS, and the Missouri Synod. Clutz wondered if it was better to not speak of unification at all. He questioned whether the “linguistic, and national, and traditional differences may be too many and too pronounced ever to be entirely overcome.” All indications, however, pointed to greater unity. In the post-bellum period down to the Quadricentenary, the GS, GC, and USS moved slowly toward greater cooperation, particularly in the development of a Common Service Book with Hymnal and in finding confessional uniformity. By the early decades of the twentieth century, merger and unity were the watchwords of the day. As one Lutheran historian suggests, “the times

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were of bigness, big business, big government… The obvious question was: Why not big churches?”

In Lutheran historiography, scholars frame the narrative of the Reformation Quadricentennial as a significant catalyst towards merger and union. The occasion of the anniversary, one scholar suggests, “powerfully stimulated the trend toward Lutheran unity.”

On September 1, 1914, the Joint Committee, comprised of members of the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South met for the first time in Atlantic City to begin planning for the Quadricentennial celebrations. At this meeting, the committee passed a motion recommending a merger of the three bodies, but it was tabled quickly when members, much like Clutz, believed it was too early to push for union. Meeting in April 1917, only a few months after Clutz articulated his doubts about unification, the Joint Committee passed a resolution for union. Through the summer and early fall, all three bodies approved the union and the Constitution of the new body. By November 15, 1917, the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South merged to form the United Lutheran Church of America, which had a membership numbered at 800,000, the largest in the Lutheran church at the time.

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Undoubtedly, the Reformation Quadricentennial served as an important moment in the history of cooperative efforts among Lutherans, excluding the Missouri Synod and other smaller independent synods of the period. To only see the significance of the Quadricentennial in its relationship to intra-Lutheran union and cooperation, however, automatically limits the historical narrative to issues Lutheranism confronted internally. This is evident in the coverage that historians of Lutheranism in the United States have devoted to the Quadricentennial. By stepping outside the confines of the Lutheran churches, important external factors emerge to help situate the Lutheran experience of the Reformation anniversary within the context of the modern American experience and American religious history. In particular, Lutheran church leaders and theologians saw the Quadricentennial as a chance to reinforce Lutheran identity in the face of the challenges of the New Theology and anti-German sentiment during World War I. As such, the move towards union between the GS, GC, and USS can be viewed not merely as a sign of the times, but a defensive maneuver on the part of the Lutheran church to safeguard its faith and theology.

The Lutheran church returned to the past to explore the nagging questions of Lutheran identity and assert its religious values in the present. The issue of Lutheran

identity and the church’s relationship to the nation has emerged as a valuable analytical framework for historians. In the early republic Lutherans faced the challenge of shaping a distinct identity while living amid a “culturally Protestant majority.”  

Like their American Catholic counterparts, Lutherans needed to maintain a balance between accommodation and preservation in the process of Americanization. This balancing act, David Gustafson asserts, often led to tensions and anxiety for Lutherans as they tried to adopt the social and cultural practices of the Protestant majority while still preserving their unique doctrine and liturgy.  

In her synthesis of Lutheranism in the United States, L. DeAne Lagerquist also points out that the course of constructing a Lutheran identity straddled the line between being both American and Lutheran. Creating a Lutheran identity manifested itself over theological, financial, and leadership controversies. The seemingly never-ending process of creating an identity continued for Lutherans during the Reformation Quadricentenary. Once again, they sought a middle road that allowed them to position themselves as both American and distinctively Lutheran. Moreover, in a manner similar to the early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission between 1906 and 1909 and the Congregationalists in 1920-1921, Lutherans approached the commemorative occasion with both a sense of urgency and anxiety. This dual sense of urgency and anxiety stemmed from two major religious and social developments that eventually shaped how Lutherans recollected and used the Reformation to assert their legitimacy and value in the present and future.

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27 Gustafson, Lutherans in Crisis, 1.
29 Lagerquist, The Lutherans, 4.
Lutherans constructed a collective memory of the Reformation and Luther based upon their evaluation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century religious changes that came to be known as the New Theology. From 1880 through 1930, mainstream Protestant denominations, particularly Congregationalists, were at the fore in developing a new liberal theology that incorporated modern intellectual ideas from evolutionary theory and Darwinism into interpretations of the Bible and Christian living through the Social Gospel. Starting first among ministers and then spreading to seminaries, colleges, and universities and eventually to the people in the pews, by the mid-1920s the New Theology caused major divisions within mainstream Protestant denominations. This division culminated with the split between modernists and fundamentalists. Knowing God primarily through experience rather than abstract creeds and doctrines became a hallmark of liberal theology. Furthermore, theologians began to use developments within science and historical criticism to study the Bible. As such, the Bible was no longer merely a sacred text inspired by God, but rather an historical document written by men of a particular time and place. Those intellectuals and ministers at the forefront of the New Theology also provided leadership for the Social Gospel movement. With the theological emphasis on experiential religion, the movement addressed the needs of a society plagued by the ills of industrialization and urbanization by tackling the practical needs of the impoverished rather than the conversion of individual souls.

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30 Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America*, xi.
31 Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America*, xi. One of the most well publicized events of the mid-1920s that revealed the tension within the new liberal theology was *Scopes vs. the State of Tennessee,* or more popularly known as the “Monkey Trial.” See Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America,* 117-126; and George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture,* 184-188.
32 For further studies of the New Theology and the Social Gospel see Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism;* Hutchison, *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant*
A significant number of Lutheran church leaders and theologians looked upon the New Theology and Social Gospel movement as a dilution of the Christianity embodied by the Reformation. General surveys of Lutheranism in the United States only briefly discuss the impact of the theological and accompanying social changes on the church. It is suggested that American Lutherans did not “seriously confront” the issues that emerged with evolution and higher criticism and that they focused on “personal rather than social ethics.”\(^{33}\) Although the same divisiveness that emerged within mainstream Protestantism did not split Lutherans, some church leaders did critically evaluate the relevance of evolutionary theory and higher criticism.\(^{34}\) Overall, however, leading Lutherans argued that prioritizing the experiential over the creedal and doctrinal and the ethical and philanthropic aid over spiritual conversion had undermined and threatened the true nature of Christianity. Prominent church leaders warned that it was only a matter of

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\(^{33}\) Eugene L. Fevold, “The Theological Scene” and “Merger Developments,” in The Lutherans in North America, 305, 356. While there is a limited amount of scholarship beyond general surveys of Lutheranism and the confessional disagreements among Lutheran synods, there is even less scholarship on Lutheranism’s relationship to New Theology and the Social Gospel movement. See Fevold, “The Theological Scene” and “Merger Developments,” 305-307, 354-356, and Fred W. Meuser, “Business as Usual,” in The Lutherans in North America, 381-385, 385-387. Fevold suggests that there was no engagement with the New Theology and the Social Gospel movement at the lay level. Any kind of involvement with the Social Gospel movement was largely confined to church leadership in the East, particularly the General Synod. Moreover, in providing a general Lutheran position on the New Theology and the Social Gospel, Fevold and Meuser acknowledge that by the first decade of the twentieth century there were attempts at minimal accommodation.

time before Lutheranism would significantly feel the effects of the budding liberal theology.

With theological threats coming at them from the Protestant majority and with general fears of the declining importance of religion, leaders in the Lutheran church used the Reformation Quadricentennial to reeducate congregants in the historical faith. By mobilizing a variety of publicity and educational tools, church leaders hoped lay Lutherans would emerge from the anniversary year renewed in their faith and more knowledgeable in the history of the Reformation past. To counter the central components of the New Theology, the Quadricentennial education program focused on the distinctiveness of the Confessions, the sacramental nature of the church, and the importance of bringing the Lutheran faith to others via both domestic and foreign missions. In addition to educating their own congregants in the values of historical Lutheranism, Lutheran church leaders and laity-based celebration committees sought to instruct non-Lutherans in the history of the Reformation. Even though Lutherans worried about the New Theology and the Social Gospel, one Lutheran historian points out that “in only one area did Lutherans think of themselves as superior: the area of doctrine.” Lutherans “felt that other Christians, to the degree that they differed in belief from themselves, were wrong.” With both Lutherans and non-Lutherans grounded in the confessional and spiritual basis of religion, specifically Lutheranism, a solid bulwark would be in place to neutralize, if not undermine, the advancements of the New Theology and Social Gospel movement and ensure the continued value of religion in American society.

The second factor affecting how Lutherans remembered the Reformation, and of more immediate concern to their everyday lives, was the outbreak of World War I in 1914 and the subsequent emergence of anti-German hysteria. As of the summer of 1914, most of Europe was embroiled in military conflict; by April of 1917 – the mid-point of the Reformation anniversary – the United States was fighting on the side of the Allied powers. The war posed a two-fold problem for American Lutherans and their Quadricentennial ambitions. First, the war threatened to put a stop to their commemorative plans. After the United States entered the war, the celebration planned by the National Lutheran Woman’s Quadricentennial celebration was cancelled.\(^{36}\) Even more problematic for Lutherans was the anti-German, and more broadly anti-immigrant, sentiment present in the country at the time. Although the anti-German sentiment began before the United States entered the war it began to “mushroom” by early summer of 1917. A general hatred of all things German, from the language to the music, had taken hold of American society, by the fall of 1917. By the winter of 1918, the intensity of the hysteria reached a feverish pitch when mobs directed violence toward German-Americans and their property.\(^{37}\)

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\(^{37}\) Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I*, Minorities in American History (De Kalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 234, 244, 279. During the course of the war there was significant pressure placed on German-American publications to halt the use of the German language and a general move to end instruction in the German language in schools. In *The Eradication of German Culture in the United States: 1917-1918*, American-German Studies, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1986), Erik Kirschbaum points out that over the course of twenty years from 1910 to 1930 the number of German-language newspapers dropped from 488 to 100 (71). Other examples of attempts to eradicate any German-ness from American society included bans on the use of the German language by various state legislatures; for example, the South Dakota legislature banned the use of German over the telephone or in public spaces (Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 252). For additional examinations of the anti-German hysteria see David W. Detjen’s study of the National German-American Alliance in *The Germans in Missouri, 1900-1918: Prohibition, Neutrality, and Assimilation* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1985); Phyllis Keller, *States of Belonging: German-American Intellectuals and the First World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); and chaps. 26 and 27 in Meirion Harries...
Although a significant portion of the American Lutheran population had emigrated from Germany or had German ancestry, not all were Germans. In the mind of American society, however, “individual differences were obscured” while “personal idiosyncrasies or behavior patterns were not taken at face value but were interpreted within a network of preconceived notions.” In essence, all Lutherans were German. Lutherans belonging to the Missouri Synod bore the heaviest burden during this period, primarily because they continued to use the German language in church services and in their parochial schools. While Lutherans in the East did not experience anti-German sentiment to the same degree as their counterparts in the Midwest, it did not mean that they were impervious to the physical or psychological effects of this pervasive phenomenon. With the perception of the Lutheran Church as “foreign” coupled with the heavily German make-up of the church, all Lutherans faced “guilt-by-association.”

Lutherans fashioned their Reformation narrative for the Quadricentennial in a more neutral manner in order to counter the anti-German hysteria present in American society. As such they deemphasized the geographic location of the Reformation – Germany – and heightened their emphasis on the major figures and their widespread influence on subsequent religious and political developments. Lutherans simultaneously detached the Reformation from its historical location and linked the message of the

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38 Luebke, Bonds of Loyalty, 77.
religious movement to the modern development of democracy. More specifically, leading Lutherans argued, the changes wrought by the Reformation – namely the individual access to scripture and religious liberty – provided the necessary foundations for the kind of civil liberties and freedoms embodied in the Constitution and history of the United States. In essence, they argued for a direct historical link between Luther’s 95 Theses and Wilson’s Fourteen Points; in the context of World War I, Lutherans aligned the Reformation with the course of U.S. rather than German history. In the process Lutherans sought to aggressively demonstrate their loyalty to the United States since many faced the danger of being tainted by association with Germany. Confirming one’s allegiance to the “war for democracy” took on added significance during the Quadricentennial. In turn, Lutherans appropriated the Reformation narrative to assert that those very democratic principles for which the United States now fought were grounded in historical Lutheranism.

Luther and the Reformation in History and Memory

In the historical record and collective memory Luther’s reputation and the relevance of the Reformation fluctuated according to the dictates of religious and social needs. In the process the details of the historical reality of Luther’s objection to the “unholy trinity” of “divine kingship, papal theocracy, and scholastic synthesis” became muddled in the attempt to create a narrative of the Reformation that culled from the past

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41 Meuser also points out that the various synods of the Lutheran Church sought to deemphasize the location of the Reformation while emphasizing the religious movement’s message (“Celebration, War and the Great Change,” in The Lutheran Church in North America, 394-395).
only those elements that could advance a particular interest in the present. During the Reformation Quadricentennial of 1917, Lutherans selectively remembered from the past to create a narrative of the Reformation that highlighted the religious and political links between the sixteenth century and the twentieth century. The religious liberty achieved through Luther’s advocacy of the lay reading of the Bible, they argued, opened the door to political liberty as it manifested itself in the democratic government of the United States. By making this historical jump from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, American Lutherans also sought to reinforce their patriotic allegiance at a time when American society looked on them with general suspicion. Finally, no matter their past positions on the confessional nature of Lutheranism, Lutheran leaders were inclined to underline the confessional and sacramental nature of the Reformation as a means to respond to what they perceived to be theological developments that threatened the life of religion. The Reformation’s religious and political usefulness to Lutherans depended upon intellectual and religious developments taking place in Europe and the United States that evolved over the course of four centuries.

Several religious developments and theological ideas shaped how Christians received Luther and the Reformation. Luther’s place in the “American imagination” dates back to the Elizabethan period and the Puritans, but within the United States in particular it was the work of Jonathan Edwards and revival preachers of the early eighteenth century who saved Luther and the Reformation from the dustbin of history. During the early decades of the nineteenth century the Unitarians drew from

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Enlightenment thought and expanded upon Luther’s memory by pointing out his “contribution to the rise of religious liberty.” Moreover, other nineteenth-century observers increasingly saw the Reformation as an ongoing rather than a static event. Evangelical Protestants of the Second Great Awakening “mined” the sixteenth century and gathered from it a “pious” and “courageous” Luther that “they tried to identify themselves with.”

In addition to these religious developments, various intellectual developments also contributed to the rise of Luther’s popularity. Along with the influence of the Enlightenment, New England adherents of Romanticism paid attention to Luther’s mind and “make up” more than his actions, which helped to spread his reputation beyond the confines of Unitarianism and Evangelical Protestantism. From the early to late nineteenth century, references to Luther “became even more favorable than they had been.” In addition, Luther became a hero to some politicians; in his speech dedicating the Bunker Hill Monument in 1843, Daniel Webster pointed to the Reformation, along with commerce and adventure, as one of the pillars of the American republic.

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44 Lehmann, *Martin Luther in the American Imagination*, 34, 38. Lehmann quotes Charles Francis Adams from 1832 in which he suggested, “The struggle of Luther was the struggle of the human mind, for liberty, moral, religious, political, and ecclesiastical. Its consequences are not yet fully developed, both in good and in evil” (41).


46 Lehmann, *Luther in the American Imagination*, 66, 74. French and English Romantics Jules Michelet and Thomas Carlyle were particularly influential.


48 Lehmann, *Luther in the American Imagination*, 135. Lehmann examines several other works of nineteenth-century historians to see if they created a link between the Reformation and American history including George Bancroft, John Lothrop Motley, and John William Draper. While some national figures made a historical link between the Reformation and American history, Lehmann indicates that no clear consensus existed. He states that “in evaluating the contribution made by nineteenth century American historians to an assessment of Luther’s importance for the modern world, we must see that in the decades before and after the Civil War not one leading American historian did significant research on Luther, that not one wrote at length about Luther, and that not one discussed in a thorough, extensive way the meaning of Luther’s heritage for the New World.” At the same time however, the historians of the early to mid-nineteenth century did hold fast to the Unitarian view of “Luther as the champion of religious as well as civil liberty” (144-145).
Meanwhile, the nineteenth-century German view of Luther as an “undisputed hero” also
influenced the favorable views of American church historians.\footnote{Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 122.} By the 300\textsuperscript{th}
anniversary of Luther’s birth in 1883, his memory in the United States stood on a solid
foundation, as evident in popular magazines and history textbooks.\footnote{Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 157-159. For examinations of the celebrations of the 300\textsuperscript{th} anniversary see chapt. 14 in Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 176-193.}

The anniversary of Luther’s birth marked the peak of the reformer’s widespread
popularity in the United States. The development of more critical and secular historical
methods in the last decades of the nineteenth century, however, offered less laudatory
assessments of Luther and the religious dynamics of the Reformation and more critical
evaluations of the political and economic components of the movement.\footnote{See chapt. 16, Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 211-227. Lehmann points to James Harvey Robinson, an authority in Reformation history and professor at Columbia University between 1895 and 1919, as one of the most significant voices in calling for historians to pay more attention to religious movements not merely in their theological impact but also in their relationship to secular developments; see chapt. 17, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 227-241.} For early
twentieth-century progressives and advocates of the Social Gospel “nothing Luther had
done or said was of compelling value in their own struggle, [and] their own attempt to
shape the modern world.”\footnote{Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 253.} The final blow to Luther and the Reformation’s widespread
religious and political appeal came with the beginning of World War I and the entrance
of the United States into the conflict in 1917. Even though his status as an American
hero had been “dismantled stone by stone, argument by argument, in the decade before
1914,” the war served as the final catalyst that relegated his relevance solely to religious
circles, specifically Lutherans.\footnote{Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 269. Lehmann examines the scholarship of several historians of the Reformation leading up to World War I including Albert Henry Newman, Henry Clay Vedder, William Walker Rockwell, Williston Walker, Arthur Cushman McGiffert, John Alfred Faulkner, Preserved Smith, and Emphraim Emerton, all of whom took a much more critical approach in their analysis of Luther (253-267).}
Over time clerical and lay Lutherans in the United States became less dependent upon the assessment of other religious and secular groups and more creative in their hero-worship of Luther. On the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Reformation in 1817, Lutherans struggled over the very meaning of Lutheranism and lacked a common organizational structure. As such they did not impress “their particular opinion of Luther on a wider audience” but rather “participated in movements started and controlled by others.”

Like American Catholic and Mormon knowledge of Columbus and the overland trek, respectively, the average Lutheran’s historical knowledge of the man and the movement that defined their religious tradition was a “simplified version” of the past. Any scholarship produced by American Lutherans, much of which were translations from German language publications rather than original works, tended “to edify and inspire the readers with the values of which Lutherans saw in the father of their church: strict adherence to true Christian beliefs as exemplified in the Bible, humility and courage, good-naturedness and piety.” By 1883, Lutherans could engage in an unadulterated celebration of Luther’s birth, but by the Reformation Quadricentennial when the United States was engaged in World War I and anti-German sentiment was on

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56 Lehmann, *Luther in the American Imagination*, 156. The life of John Gottlieb Morris, pastor at First Church in Massachusetts for 33 years, active member of the General Synod, and member of the Massachusetts Historical Society demonstrates the emergence of attempts to cultivate a Lutheran historical consciousness. His strident confessionalism was accompanied by an increased interest in the history of the Reformation, Martin Luther, and the Lutheran Church in the United States. In the 1850s he began collecting material that documented American Lutheran history, wrote numerous books and articles on Luther and the Reformation, was a founding member of the Lutheran Historical Society (1843), served as president of the society from 1875 until his death in 1895, and was a primary mover behind the Lutheran celebration of the 300th anniversary of Luther’s birth in 1883. See Michael J. Kurtz, “John Gottlieb Morris and Nineteenth Century Lutheran Historical Consciousness,” in *American Lutheranism: Crisis in Historical Consciousness? Essay and Reports 1988*, ed. August R. Suelflow (St. Louis, MO: Lutheran Historical Conference, 1990), 14-28.
the rise, Lutherans approached the anniversary with an anxiety and urgency not present in earlier periods.\textsuperscript{57}

The U.S. entrance into the military conflict of World War I allowed Lutheran leaders and committee organizers to contend that the war necessitated the renewal of the modern political principles born out of the Reformation. In light of German belligerence and the supposed threat to democracy, Lutherans and the American public in general needed to be reminded that the institutional and material foundations of twentieth-century society lay in the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{58} Even before the U.S. entrance into the war, Otto H. Pannkoke, a Missouri-Synod pastor and General Secretary of the New York Committee, expressed his anxiety about the effect of the war on the celebration to the Executive Committee. On the one extreme, Pannkoke feared that “rabid anti-Germans will suspect that the Reformation is a Pro-German propaganda.” On the other extreme he worried that “the war situation will occupy men’s minds in the exclusion of everything else.”\textsuperscript{59} Either way, Pannkoke believed, the war could only have a detrimental effect on the Lutheran

\textsuperscript{57} For a discussion of the Quadricentennial see chapt. 20 in Lehmann, \textit{Luther in the American Imagination}, 270-287. I agree with Lehmann to the extent that Lutherans saw the occasion of the Reformation anniversary as an opportunity to counter accusations that they were not loyal Americans in the midst of World War I and to “remind the Lutheran communities of their confessional basis and national origin” (270, 280-281). At the same time, however, in this section as well as throughout his study, Lehmann largely confines his assessment of the changing role of Luther in the American imagination to the realm of intellectuals, theologians, ministers, and historians who left published material, leaving no opening to access the lay Lutheran’s view of Luther. Granted, the scope of Lehmann’s study over a broad period of time, the nature of the primary sources available, and his own confession that he looked to explore the “public” view of Luther rather than the “popular” view automatically limits the historian (12). Lehmann though did not delve as much into an analysis of the \textit{actions} of Americans and Lutherans to memorialize Luther as much as what American and Lutherans \textit{said} and/or \textit{published} about Luther. It is the arena of action, I believe, that I can start to explore the role of the laity in celebrating and honoring Luther and the Reformation.

\textsuperscript{58} In his “War Message” delivered before a Special Session of Congress on April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson sought a declaration of war against Germany. During this speech he uttered his famous statement: “The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty.” See Ronald J. Pestritto, ed., \textit{Woodrow Wilson: The Essential Political Writings} (Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2005), 251-258.

\textsuperscript{59} Correspondence from Otto H. Pannkoke to Members of the Executive Committee (February 8, 1917), Box 4, Folder 2, Correspondence 1916-1918 of the Lutheran Society of New York, Accession No. 87-1256, Archives of the Evangelical Lutheran of America (hereafter ELCA Archives), Chicago, IL.
church’s ability to celebrate the Reformation. Days after the United States joined the allied powers against Germany, Pannkoke used the *New York Reformation Anniversary Bulletin*, the publicity arm of the New York Reformation Quadricentennial Committee, to articulate a connection between the celebration and the war. The April 15 edition of the *Bulletin* contained the front-page headline “THE GRIM SPECTRE OF WAR!” The altered position of the United States to the war, Pannkoke suggested, also necessitated a changed mood for the Quadricentennial. The anniversary could no longer be a “festival of light rejoicing” but

> an act of reconsecration to all those principles of liberty, truth and humanity that made the Reformation the birth hour of [the] [sic] modern day. It has become the fount of inspiration to engender the spirit of sacrifice, courage, fearless loyalty to truth and humanity so fundamental to this land in its hours of trial. 

Pannkoke turned his worry and anxiety from February to his advantage in April. The very social and political principles that emerged out of the Reformation and had become stable in the United States for nearly two centuries were now threatened by war and needed reaffirmation. The leaders and laity of the Lutheran church took the lead in establishing such connections.

Other members of the New York Committee also made the link between the Reformation and the political principles that the United States fought to preserve in war. In a form letter appealing for financial support, W.H. Rose, Chairman of the New York Committee’s Finance Committee, argued that “this event brought about a separation of Church and State, and established that civil and religious liberty which made possible our American independence, the foundation of our great nation.” In a few short words, Rose made a direct link of casualty between the Reformation and the American Revolution.

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Moreover, he stated, that as Americans, Lutherans needed to “celebrate with patriotic fervor and display the establishment of our freedom… the birth of those ideals which were the inspiring factors in its inception.” The Chairman of the New York Committee, Theodore E. Schmauk, pastor of Salem Lutheran Church in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and president of the GS from 1903 to 1918, made a similar historical link between the Reformation and American society in another form letter appealing for funds. “In its present crisis,” Schmauk suggested, the country needed to celebrate the Reformation as a reminder that Martin Luther, “aside from his purely religious beliefs and labor… stood for human freedom, for the right and duty of each man to do his own thinking in politics as in religion.” Luther’s “fearless ‘God helping, I can do no other’ has rung through every crisis,” Schmauk proclaimed, from the Pilgrims’ journey to the New World, to the America Revolution, and to the Civil War. Rose and Schmauk clearly interpreted the Reformation in light of World War I. As such, celebrating the past became an opportunity to remind Lutherans and all Americans that the very democracy they fought for in the twentieth century had its firm foundations in the sixteenth century in the person of Martin Luther and the spirit of the Reformation.

In their addresses and sermons to congregants during the Quadricentennial year, Lutheran pastors also made the historical link between the work of Luther in the Reformation and the civil and political liberties nourished in the twentieth century. Dr.

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61 Correspondence from W.H. Rose to “My dear Friend” (June 5, 1917), Box No. 3, Folder No. 8, Annual Meetings Programs 1917-1919, The Lutheran Society of New York Papers, Accession No. 87-1256, ELCA Archives.
63 Correspondence from Chairman of the Committee T.E. Schmauk to “Dear Sir” (May 11, 1917), Box No. 4, Folder No. 8, 400th Anniversary of the Reformation Correspondence, 1915-1917, The Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives.
Lawrence A. Johnston, president of the Augustana Lutheran Evangelical Church from 1911 to 1918, chose the “love of personal liberty” as the major theme of his address on the Reformation. After a brief history of where the church faltered and how circumstances began to change with Martin Luther, Johnston concluded by arguing that all free governments are “indebted to Luther for their spirit of government.” While these liberties were important in the past, Johnston reminded his audience in an indirect reference to World War I that, “they are worth just as much in the present, and if all signs fail not, the future is going to put these principles to the test as never before.”

After exploring the nature of the Lutheran church theologically, an anonymous speaker in a lengthy speech on the “glories” of Lutheranism concluded with a discussion of the relationship between the church and state. Once again, it was a short leap from the establishment of religious to civil and political liberty. The speaker pointed out that in having restored the “Liberty of Christ” to the church, Luther made it a democracy in which no man would be dominated but by God and the Word. As such Luther was “also the great Liberator of the State and the father of these principles, on which all genuine civic liberties and all genuine civic and social democracy are based.” This author went further than some Lutheran speakers in declaring that the Reformation was “the fountainhead of all our modern law, modern liberties and democracy” for “what else is political democracy but an application with in [sic] the civic sphere of the principles of the universal priesthood of all believers?” It mattered little to Lutheran pastors and speakers during the Quadricentennial that Luther continued to believe that the state was

sanctioned by the divine. In the context of World War I, it was necessary for Lutherans to alter the memory of the Reformation to fit their contemporary needs. In turn they aggressively made the case that all modern law and civic and political liberties could be traced back to the Reformation and Martin Luther.

The construction of a Lutheran collective religious memory and narrative of the Reformation also infused the periodicals of the Lutheran church. In an article published in the GC’s Lutheran Quarterly, Conrad B. Gohdes expressed his concern for the transmission of the truth of Lutheranism to future generations. Gohdes pointed out that Luther was “the author of liberty that made our American home country a possibility by its conquest of the Papacy.”

John C. Mattes, a professor at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Iowa, suggested moreover that Luther’s writings, Liberty of the Christian Man in particular, were the sixteenth century’s declaration of independence. The Reformation did not have an impact on religious and civil liberty through direct force or modification, as suggested by Gohdes. Rather, Mattes argued that the Reformation affected liberty “by the infusion of a new spirit that was bound to bring liberty with it as it worked itself out in the social and religious organism.”

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66 C.B. Gohdes, “How Can We Transmit Lutheran Truth to the Coming Generation?,” Lutheran Quarterly 47 (July 1917): 375. The Lutheran Quarterly began publication as the Evangelical Review in 1849 and changed titles in 1872 (Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, 113). Like most Lutheran publications of the period, the Lutheran Quarterly was largely intended for Lutheran theologians and pastors, but “thoughtful” laity were invited to subscribe. The Lutheran Quarterly discussed theological, religious, and historical questions pertinent to the Lutheran church and specifically of the GS. Confessionally, the editors stood “firmly and uncompromisingly for the orthodox faith as confessed by the Lutheran Church, and never knowingly publish any article which attacks or discredits the fundamental doctrines or principles of the Christian faith” (April 1918, 305). The editors at the time of the Quadricentennial were Frederick G. Gotwald, Jacob A. Clutz, and John Alden Singmaster.

67 For further biographical information on Mattes see Merritt L. Bomhoff, “In memoriam, John C. Mattes: The influence of John C. Mattes on the Life of Wartburg Seminary” (S.I.: s.n., 1974).

68 John C. Mattes, “True Liberty and How the Reformation Gave It,” Lutheran Church Review 46 (October 1917): 527-530. The Lutheran Church Review was the official publication for the GC and at the time was edited by T.E. Schmauk and other faculty of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Mount Airy, Pennsylvania.
century Reformation as the birthplace of modern political democracy and civil liberty, Lutherans could contrast it to the twentieth-century ascendancy of an autocratic and imperial Germany.  

Not all Lutheran church leaders, however, agreed with using the Reformation Quadricentennial as a defensive measure. Theodore Graebner, a Missouri Synod Lutheran pastor and professor of theology and the New Testament at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, railed against any attempts to make the Quadricentennial anything more than a celebration that gave glory to God. In an article for the Missouri Synod’s English-language periodical, The Lutheran Witness, Graebner maintained that shifting the “emphasis from the religious meaning of the Reformation to the social and civic, is to raise a false ideal and must destroy the spiritual effect which our celebration might otherwise have upon the American churches and the public at large.” Graebner, and much of the leadership in the Missouri Synod, wanted the Quadricentennial to focus on the religious blessings of the Reformation. The New York Committee earned some of Graebner’s most vehement attacks. He called them “infidels” and an “insult to Lutheran intelligence” in their attempt to create a celebration that elevated the civil and political aspects of the Reformation over the religious. Citing Schmauk’s letter that was later published in The Lutheran Herald, Graebner warned his readers about making the “Reformation a movement which occurred in the natural

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69 Commentary by both Lutherans and non-Lutherans on the link between the Reformation and civil and political liberties can be found in the New York Reformation Committee and Lutheran Society’s New York Reformation Quadricentenary Committee: personal appreciations by leading Americans s (New York, NY: The Committee, 1917). An anonymous author in the October 3, 1917 edition of Outlook also stated that Luther and the Reformation established the precedent if not the opening for democracy through the “fundamental contention for the rights of every Christian laymen to appeal to the law of God in Holy Scripture from Popes and councils who contradict it” (“Luther’s Quadricentennial,” 162).

70 For additional biographical information on Graebner see Jerrald Kort Pfabe, “Theodore Graebner: Apologist for Missouri Synod Lutheranism,” (Ph.D. diss., St. Louis University, 1972).
 evolution of society! And let us not make Americanism stand as a natural complement of the Reformation.”

No matter the personal viewpoint of Graebner, many Lutheran leaders and laity saw a need to re-imagine the Reformation as an ideological bulwark for U.S. involvement in World War I and to curtail the anti-German hysteria that many Lutherans experienced first hand during the war. In late 1917, *Life* magazine published a running list of marks that identified traitors, including he who “celebrates with zest the quadricentennial of Luther, but forgets the anniversary of Lusitania.” The underlying assumption of *Life* magazine’s attack on supposed traitors, it seems, was that only Germans would celebrate Luther and forget the Lusitania. While most Protestant denominations celebrated the Reformation anniversary and although Lutherans were not mentioned directly, the educated reader would more than likely have thought of Lutherans because they more publicly and fervently commemorated the Reformation. Shortly after Wilson called for a declaration of war against Germany, moreover, members of the Lutheran Society issued a declaration verifying their allegiance to and support of the government. The Lutheran Society publicly stated that the “nation arose out of the spirit of the Reformation.” During the troubling time of war the Reformation’s “message will hallow the people to do their duty by their country and its sacred ideals.”

Even after the official anniversary year ended, the memory of the Reformation continued to serve Lutherans in combating anti-German sentiment. Delegates gathered at

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71 “Notes on Theodore Graebner,” Box 12, Folder 252, LCMS Clergy Pannkoke Files, Accession 88-5, ELCA Archives. The original article is “False Ideals of the Jubilee,” *Lutheran Witness* (May 15, 1917): 142-144. The Missouri Synod also had a German-language publication at the time entitled *Der Lutheraner*.


the annual meeting of the Atlantic District of the Missouri Synod adopted a resolution reiterating the loyalty of Lutherans to the United States. In contrast to Graebner’s diatribe, the delegates specified that the fullest potential of the “democratic principles” of the Reformation were found in “this land of the free,” not in Germany. Lutheranism manifested itself visibly with the enlistment of nearly 165,000 Lutheran men in the armed services. Finally, the delegates pointed out to their detractors that Lutherans migrated to the United States to experience the freedom of conscience and worship and that a close examination of the history of the country revealed Lutheran loyalty. Still, synodical body resolutions and the enlistment of Lutherans in the armed services did not entirely halt American society’s questioning of Lutheran loyalty. Speaking at a commemoration of the 401st Reformation anniversary in Carnegie Hall in 1918, Reverend William Schoenfeld, pastor of Immanuel Church in Manhattan and member of the previous year’s New York Committee, once again declared Lutheran loyalty to the country. As much as Lutherans sought the public spotlight during the Reformation Quadricentennial, the central role of Germany in World War I, the United States’ eventual participation in the conflict, and the anti-German mood forced them to rethink and re-envision their memory of the Reformation. The Reformation of the sixteenth century, as it was remembered and celebrated by Lutherans during the Quadricentenary, furnished the democratic principles and civil and religious liberty for the twentieth century.

If the war threatened to undermine democracy, developments closer to home endangered Christianity. Just as the Reformation supplied the twentieth century with

74 “165,000 Lutherans in War,” New York Times (May 1, 1918), 13.
75 “165,000 Lutherans in War,” 13.
essential political and democratic principles, it also furnished necessary religious principles. J.E. Whitteker, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and President of the Board of Home Missions for ULCA, found disturbing parallels between Christianity just prior to the Reformation and in his own day. Before Luther and the Reformation, the church drifted along and lacked any concrete course. Today, Whitteker believed, the church “bobs up like a whale in mid-ocean, spirits and spouts, and then sinks out of sight.” Many Lutheran church leaders, like Whitteker, were angered and deeply concerned by what they saw as similar troubles afflicting Christianity from the sixteenth century down to the twentieth century. The consequences of sixteenth-century Roman Catholicism and the twentieth-century Social Gospel and New Theology to usurp divine with human authority, according to Lutheran leaders, would be the same. Christianity would possess no anchor. Elevating the human over the divine inhibited the growth and development of “true evangelical Christendom” as it existed during the age of the Apostles and as it was restored with the Reformation. For that reason, during the Reformation Quadricentennial, the Lutheran Church assumed the burden of not merely challenging these social and theological developments but serving as a

witness of that better way which distinguishes between the false and true in deed and doctrine… between the reverent study of divine Word and irreverent attitude of the destructive critic toward it.; between the social programme which is imbued with the altruistic spirit that knows not Christ and the Christian spirit that starts our from the Gospel of grace and leads back to it.

79 Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 10.
In order to return the present to the Christianity that characterized the apostolic period, in
a similar manner to the early Pentecostals at Azusa Street, Lutheran leaders called for a
return to the past by “moving along the old time-tire lines, with a sensible regard for the
conditions of modern life. The old-Gospel in principles, the new Gospel in practice.”

While Lutherans did not reject the practical application of the gospel to daily
living, they did resist the attempt to diminish its spiritual importance. Reducing
Christianity to a set of moral and ethical principles, Lutherans believed, was a repudiation
of religion’s true purpose – personal salvation. By the 1890s some individual Lutheran
clerics expressed their concern about the growing disconnect between the church and the
laboring classes in an age of expanding industry and manufacturing and the growing gap
between the rich and the poor. No “Lutheran spokesman,” however, “was ever tempted
to substitute humanitarianism for religious commitment or secular goals for the will of
God.”

The Lutheran resistance to the Social Gospel stemmed from their “conservative”
thetical interpretation of the social responsibility of the church. Man sinned and the
church’s responsibility lay in preaching the gospel to redeem the individual sinner;
problems that plagued social as a whole needed to be addressed via individuals. The
gospel was “not a code by which to rule the world,” but rather a means to individual
salvation.

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80 Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 10.
81 Deitz, “Eastern Lutheranism in American Society and American Christianity,” 237, 251. For
some of the more sympathetic individual views of the Social Gospel movement, see Deitz, 201-208.
Another study of Lutheranism’s relationship to the Social Gospel is Harold H. Lentz, “History of the Social
Gospel in the General Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, 1867-1918” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University,
1943).
82 Deitz, “Eastern Lutheranism in American Society and American Christianity,” 242-244, 248-
253. Deitz points out that the “conservative” theology of the Lutheran Church during this period was
reinforced by the immigrant nature of Lutheranism; these immigrants were “products of highly self-
conscious orthodoxy.” Just ten years before the Quadricentennial, nearly 80% of Lutherans spoke a
language other than English (Deitz, 260, 270).
The occasion of the Quadricentennial allowed Lutheran leaders to more clearly communicate their anxiety about the seemingly destructive course of contemporary Christianity. Whitteker devoted consideration to the relationship between Lutheranism and the Social Gospel. He suggested that ever since it set foot on the shores of North America, the Lutheran church possessed a “social programme,” but those currently existing in the city offered nothing for Lutheranism. The church needed to prioritize the soul, Whitteker argued, and any system that disregards the soul is “foreign” to the spirit of Christ and the church. He concluded by asserting that a social program that “does not line up squarely with the commission of Christ and the distinctive purpose of the Gospel of Christ, finds no sympathy with the Lutheran Church in the aggregate.”

In a similar manner, W. Roy Hashinger counseled that America needed “faith righteousness” not “benevolent good works.” Regeneration of the individual rather than the Christianization of the social order was the need of the day. Lutheran historian and professor at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, A.R. Wentz, suggested Americans are “cutting off their religious supply.” Moreover, “extending both hands in love to fellow men… simply resolves religion into ethics and morality and thus makes religion irreligious.” In the process, Wentz vigorously warned that

> the religious life of our country is in danger of being dissolved into social and moral uplift, into recreation halls, reading-rooms, free lunches, gymnasiums, swimming-pools, sewing circles, suppers, and banquets, and feeds and open forums, and a hundred and one other things that are good enough all right in

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83 Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 8-9.
themselves, but that are positively wrong and damnable when allowed to take the place of religion.\footnote{Wentz, “The Message of the Lutheran Church to America,” 548-549.}

Recreation halls, swimming pools, sewing circles and other social activities were not the means by which men’s souls would be saved, Wentz argued. Just as Luther protested against “ceremonial good works” in the sixteenth century, Lutherans needed to protest against “benevolent good works” and “to tear off the materialistic clothing of our twentieth-century American civilization and to clothe it with vital religion.”\footnote{Wentz, “The Message of the Lutheran Church to America,” 549-550.} For Whitteker, Hashinger, and Wentz, Christianity, and Lutheranism in particular, could not be about social rejuvenation but rather about individual salvation and the re-application of the principles of Lutheranism.

The impact of higher criticism on the authority of the Bible was of even greater concern for Lutheran leaders. Generally speaking, Lutheran leaders saw Darwinian evolutionary theory as “simply new forms of old idolatries” and “rejected the extreme conclusions to which critical scholarship was led by the application of the evolutionary to the Bible.”\footnote{McDaniel, “Evolution in American Lutheran Thought,” 86; and Deitz, “Eastern Lutheranism in American Society and American Christianity,” 108.} Of course, there were Lutherans who critically engaged the new intellectual developments more willingly than others, but in an American society where Lutherans often resided on the cultural and religious margins of the Protestant majority, defensive measures took priority.\footnote{McDaniel argues that the defensive approach to higher criticism may have been based upon more pragmatic decisions rather than theological ones. As they went on the defensive, Lutheran leaders shored up a more “clearcut confessionalism” that distinguished Lutheranism from other Protestant denominations and preserved their church (11-27).} The New Theology, as seen by Lutherans, challenged the authority and infallibility of the Bible and therefore the very divine authority upon which
their church was founded.\textsuperscript{90} As seen by Lutheran leaders, like Theodore E. Schmauk, higher criticism was “destructive, negative, and naturalistic.”\textsuperscript{91} Schmauk wrote prolifically on the dangers of the more critical approach to the Bible and became a “vigorous champion” for the opposition.\textsuperscript{92} For him and other Lutheran leaders, these new intellectual developments posed a threat to the development and maintenance of a true Lutheran faith.

Church leaders used the Quadricentennial to denounce higher criticism and call for a return to the firm faith of the Reformation as grounded in the Bible. In an address delivered before students and faculty at the Hamma Divinity School in Springfield, Ohio, Gohdes tackled the thorny issue of educating younger generations of Lutherans in the faith. The faith of the young Lutherans was lost because of circumstances specific to denominational life like “prayerless Lutheran homes, worldly Lutheran pastors, [and] homes divided in the faith through mixed marriage.”\textsuperscript{93} More trouble emerged with intellectual developments (i.e. Darwinism) that denied Scripture, the deity of Christ, and made man the “offspring of the beast through evolution.”\textsuperscript{94} Evolution was a “destructive pestilence” that would contaminate the hearts and minds of Lutherans.\textsuperscript{95} Gohdes alerted his readers to the urgency of the moment: “Woe to the age of Darwin! A civilization that forsakes the sign of the cross to march beneath that of the beast, must face either a reformation or a revolution. And how sadly and strangely silent is much of Protestantism

\textsuperscript{90} For Luther’s relationship to the Bible see chapt. 2 in Ernst, “The Place of the Scripture in the Lutheran Churches in America,” 47-97.
\textsuperscript{91} Deitz, “Eastern Lutheranism in American Society and American Christianity,” 137.
\textsuperscript{92} Deitz, “Eastern Lutheranism in American Society and American Christianity,” 146. In his role as editor, Schmauk used the Lutheran Church Review to espouse his views of higher criticism. He also wrote The Negative Criticism and the Old Testament (1894).
\textsuperscript{93} C.B. Gohdes, “How Can We Transmit Lutheran Truth to the Coming Generation?,” Lutheran Quarterly 47 (July 1917): 376.
\textsuperscript{94} Gohdes, “How Can We Transmit Lutheran Truth to the Coming Generation?,” 377.
\textsuperscript{95} Gohdes, “How Can We Transmit Lutheran Truth to the Coming Generation?,” 378.
over against this science of and from the slime!"96 Whitteker also attacked evolution and higher criticism for endeavoring to discredit the Bible. Teachers of “material science” filled Protestant colleges and theological seminaries and they enlisted their “laboratory outfit” to undermine the divinely inspired scriptures.97 Students of the Bible, moreover, “addle their brains over the vain effort to discredit the historicity of Scripture.”98 Whitteker echoed Gohdes when he argued that these educational institutions reeked “with this learned slime.”99 For Gohdes, Whitteker, and many other Lutheran clergy and theologians, the fact that other Protestant denominations, themselves heirs of the religious teachings of the Reformation, became enamored with these new theological methods clearly indicated the need for Lutherans to step forward and purify the Christian church and restore the Bible to its proper role.

As they verbally attacked the ills of modern Protestant theology, Lutheran clergy and theologians argued that the future survival of Christianity hinged upon an amplification of the religious teachings of historic Lutheranism as based in the Reformation past. Lutherans possessed the true heritage of the Reformation and therefore needed to use the Quadricentennial to institute the right preaching of the “restored Gospel” and the proper administration of the Sacraments. These would contribute to a personally vigorous religious life.100 From the Lutheran pulpits, schools,

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96 Gohdes, “How Can We Transmit Lutheran Truth to the Coming Generation?,” 380.
98 Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 7.
99 Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 8.

Although strictly speaking the Lutheranism of the twentieth century was not a restorationist movement like that of the early Pentecostals, Lutherans did call for a return to what they say as a purer form of Christianity as nourished in the immediate years of the sixteenth-century Reformation.
and press would echo not the voice of man, but rather “without faltering, without a
dissenting gesture… the old standard… [and] the old truth… [and] the old ways.”\textsuperscript{101} The
“old standard” included a rejection of the man-made Bible at the heart of the New
Theology and a turn toward the “open Bible, the unadulterated Bible, the whole Bible” as
it was made available to Christians during the Reformation and as it was embraced by
Lutherans.\textsuperscript{102} Renewal of the belief in the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible,
Lutheran leaders believed, would contribute to knowledge of the truths of salvation and
the recognition that “Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life.”\textsuperscript{103} The Joint Lutheran
Committee took practical steps to ensure that Lutheran pastors “restored” the Gospel by
issuing a pamphlet containing preaching material for the Quadricentennial year.
Lutheran pastors could turn to the reference guide for access to particular subjects for
each Sunday’s sermons along with accompanying passages from the Lutheran
Confessions and from Scripture. This guide, the Joint Committee suggested, could help
cultivate “a better understanding of the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church and a
deeper consciousness of what she stands for.”\textsuperscript{104} The divinely inspired and authoritative
Scriptures, not man, provided the standard by which Christians should live.

Lutheran leaders also turned to the Reformation past to preach the right
administration of the Sacraments. Some Lutheran leaders saw the sacraments, like the
preaching of the gospel, as a distinctive mark of the Lutheran Church. After

\textsuperscript{101} Gohdes, “How Can We Transmit Lutheran Truth to the Coming Generation?,” 380.
\textsuperscript{102} Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 6.
\textsuperscript{103} McDaneil, “Points to be Emphasized in the Quadri-Centennial,” 512.
\textsuperscript{104} Correspondence from the Joint Lutheran Committee to L.A. Johnston containing “A Series of
Texts and Subjects for the Reformation Year based on Augustana and in Harmon with the Pericopes, as
nearly as possible,” Box 2, Folder 8, L.A. Johnston Correspondence, 1916 May-August, Personal Papers of
Dr. L.A. Johnston Collection, ELCA Archives. Suggested sermon subjects for the anniversary year
addressed both theological and historical questions including free will, the ministry, justification, original
sin, good works, the papacy, and the life of Martin Luther.
differentiating the administration of the sacraments among the Lutheran, Roman Catholic and various Protestant churches, Clutz suggested that they become a means of identifying Lutherans to one another “whenever and wherever they meet.” Altering either the preaching of the gospel or the sacraments would threaten the “essential nature” of Lutheranism. Maintaining the Lutheran understanding of the sacraments, like the Lord’s Supper, would distinguish them from other Protestant denominations, enable them to easily identify their Lutheran brothers and sisters, and ensure their close identification with the Reformation heritage. As one anonymous Lutheran pastor expressed, baptism and the Lord’s Supper were not merely symbolic but real gifts instituted by Jesus. For Lutherans the dismal condition of Protestant Christianity required an infusion of spiritual rejuvenation. The Reformation Quadricentennial provided Lutherans with the opportunity to resist the intrusion of the New Theology by recalling the Reformation heritage as they saw it in the proper preaching of the Bible and the administration of the sacraments. Lutheran pastors and theologians believed that if they and the laity used the Quadricentennial to preach this message, both the future of Lutheranism and Christianity would be better off.

As the changing collective religious memory of the Reformation and Luther suggests, Lutherans did not have a monopoly on the dominant narrative of the religious

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106 Anonymous, “The Glories of the Lutheran Church – 1917,” ELCA Archives. Whitteker and McDaniel also pointed to the administration of the sacraments as a primary purpose of the Lutheran church; see Whitteker, “What Lutheran Christianity Has Given and Has to Give to America,” 4; and McDaniel, “Points to be Emphasized in the Quadri-Centennial,” 512. In the April-May 1917 edition of the *Lutheran Church Review*, Lutheran historian J.L. Neve also raised the question about the uniqueness of Lutheranism, its future, and the sacraments by raising a series of questions. In one question he asked, “Can we maintain our conception of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which is characteristic of Lutheranism and in which we so fundamentally differ from the teachings of other Protestant churches?” (‘The Future of Lutheranism,” 165).
movement and its leader. During the Reformation Quadricentennial, however, Lutheran clergy and laity attempted to assert their distinctive claim to the historical and religious legacies of the sixteenth century. In the face of anti-German sentiment during World War I and the encroaching threat of the New Theology, Lutherans turned to the past to make sense of their present relationship to American society and changing Protestant theology. In turn, the past in the form of the Reformation became a fortification against charges of anti-Americanism and liberal tendencies in theology.

The Quadricentennial Committees and Nationalization

The task of carrying out the Lutheran church’s objectives of education, inspiration, and transformation fell primarily to the New York Reformation Quadricentenary Committee and the Joint Lutheran Committee of the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South. Both committees were comprised of lay and clerical members from the major synods, although Otto H. Pannkoke and H.R. Gold in their roles as Director and Executive Secretary for the New York Committee and the Joint Committee, respectively, were the primary movers and shakers. While the New York Committee was the brainchild of the Lutheran Society,

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107 The Missouri Synod also organized its own committee to celebrate the Reformation Anniversary. Because of the Synod’s position on union between bodies of the Lutheran Church, they were adamantly opposed to cooperative efforts between congregations of differing synodical affiliation.

108 Lay and clerical members of the New York Committee came from the General Synod, General Council, and the Missouri Synod. Members included Charles Smith and William Horn from the General Council; G.U. Wenner, Fred Oberlander, and William Snyder from the General Synod; and William S. Schoenfeld and William Koeppchen from the Missouri Synod. In addition, the committee included laymen who came from middle to middle-upper class backgrounds. Theodore Hetzler and Charles Dahmer were president and vice-president of Fifth Avenue Bank respectively; Theodore Lamprecht owned a wholesale business; George D. Boschen was a printer; and Fred Gravenhorst owned a business that imported coffee (Pannkoke, A Great Church Finds Itself, 50). Members of the Joint Lutheran Committee included Dr. Theodore Schmauk, President of the General Council who served as chairman; John L. Zimmerman, a General Synod lay congregant from Springfield, Ohio who served as treasurer; and Reverend Howard R. Gold who was the Executive Secretary. Like Pannkoke, Gold was the chief force behind the Joint
a layman’s fraternity based in Manhattan, the Joint Committee was created primarily by leaders of the three major synods. In addition, both committees based their operations in the East – the latter in New York City and the former in Philadelphia. As a result, their efforts at meeting the objectives of the Quadricentenary were largely geared towards Lutherans who adhered to the confessional standards of the GS, GC, and the USS. The laymen and clergy who worked for these Quadricentennial Committees wanted to increase the general public’s knowledge of Lutherans and their religious tradition. They did this by producing and efficiently distributing publicity materials and programs. As Pannkoke expressed his aspirations for the Quadricentennial, the anniversary “was to become the Mount of Transfiguration for the Lutherans of America.” In the process of preparing for a successful commemoration of the past that indicated to both Lutherans and non-Lutherans alike the continued value of the Reformation in the twentieth century, the committees emulated larger trends taking place in American society, particularly trends like nationalization and propaganda.

From the beginning both the New York Committee and the Joint Committee envisioned their organizations serving as clearinghouses of information and ideas about Lutherans and their religious heritage. They would “map out and supervise” the

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Committee’s work as a clearinghouse (Pannkoke, *A Great Church Finds Itself*, 44). After graduating from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Pannkoke pursued his graduate studies at Columbia University and Union Seminary where he cultivated his interest in cultural history, particularly that of the Reformation. He also served as the pastor at a Brooklyn mission (Pannkoke, *A Great Church Finds Itself*, 20, 46-47).

The Lutheran Society proposed the formation of “the Committee on Lutheran Civic Celebration in 1917” as early as 1915 in a statement from the Executive Committee. The work of what came to be known as the New York Reformation Quadricentenary Committee did not begin in earnest until the middle of 1916 when Otto Pannkoke became Director. See Statement from the Executive Committee on Establishing a Lutheran Lyceum Submitted by Chairman C.C. Springhorn and Secretary C.H. Dahmer (May 22, 1915), Box 3, Folder 7: Annual Meeting Programs, 1914-1916, RG 22, Lutheran Society of New York (Accession No. 87-1256), ELCA Archives. Leaders of the GS, GC, and the USS suggested the formation of a committee to celebrate the Quadricentennial as early as 1909, but an official Joint Committee was not created until 1914.

Pannkoke, *A Great Church Finds Itself*, 44.
commemorative programs and educational aspects of the Quadricentennial; serve as a “national medium for information and service to Lutheran church organizations”; and fill advisory roles to “stimulate, encourage and assist in the direction of local celebrations.”

Both committees wanted to make it clear to the various synods and local Lutheran churches that they were not dictating how they should celebrate the Reformation, but were merely providing suggestions. When necessary, the committees would assist individual congregations in organizing and arranging their own programs and events, but they would “not wish to supersede denominational committees.”

Publicizing and promoting the Quadricentennial and the Lutheran church would “put the Lutheran Church conspicuously on the map for recognition by non-Lutherans in this country and make it a force to be considered seriously by all” and “keep alive the understanding among all people that Lutheranism stands for the best kind of citizenship in our country.” Pannkoke reiterated this point when he suggested that past struggles could help “solve the tasks of today and tomorrow.”

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111 Statement from the Executive Committee on Establishing a Lutheran Lyceum Submitted by Chairman C.C. Springhorn and Secretary C.H. Dahmer (May 22, 1915), Box 3, Folder 7m Annual Meeting Programs, 1914-1916, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives; Correspondence from George D. Boschen, President, Theo. H. Lamprecht, Treasurer, and O.H. Pannkoke, Executive Secretary to Mr. Intemann (nd), Box 3, Folder 7, Annual Meetings Programs, 1914-1916, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives; Pamphlet on the Joint Committee (nd), Box 3, Folder 3, L.A. Johnston Correspondence, July-September 1917, Personal Papers of Dr. L.A. Johnston, ELCA Archives; and The New York Quadricentenary Committee, Untitled Article, The New York Reformation Anniversary Bulletin (hereafter Anniversary Bulletin) 1, no. 1 (December 1, 1916), 1.

112 Untitled Article, Anniversary Bulletin 1, no. 1 (December 1, 1916), 1.

113 Correspondence from Theodore H. Lamprecht to J. Louis Schaefer (Chairman of the Quadricentenary Committee) (November 27, 1917), Box 4, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1916-1918, RG22, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives. Gold reinforced this viewpoint in a letter to J. Louis Schaefer; see Correspondence from H.R. Gold to J. Louis Schaefer (January 18, 1916), Box 4, Folder 8, 400th Anniversary of the Reformation Correspondence, 1915-1917, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives.

114 Correspondence from O.H. Pannkoke to J. Louis Schaefer (March 11, 1917), Box 4, Folder 8, 400th Anniversary of the Reformation Correspondence, 1915-1917, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives; Correspondence from H.R. Gold to J. Louis Schaefer (January 18, 1916), Box 4, Folder 8, 400th Anniversary of the Reformation Correspondence, 1915-1917, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives.
the best chance for the Lutheran church to make known its history and contributions to the country. They mobilized all the resources and people available to improve their standing in American society and further the relevance of Lutheran theology.

The committees maintained an ambiguous relationship with the issue of merger, however. The New York Committee stated firmly that it did not want “to repress and minimize differences of viewpoint and interpretation that may exist today” and as such would not function as “a propaganda, but a Celebration committee.” Identifying what the committee would not do was just as important, if not more, than what the committee intended to do during the year. While the merger of the GS, GC, and the USS was eventually a consequence of the Quadricentennial, it was not a foregone conclusion, as indicated by the cautionary tone of the New York Committee. They did not want to promote merger or union, even though the cooperation among lay and clerical members of the synods pointed to a willingness to collaborate across synodical lines. At the same time, however, the Joint Committee wanted to use the Quadricentennial to “magnify the unity and the national character of the American Lutheran Church.”

Gold suggested

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116 Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (December 1, 1916), 1. Apparently this initial statement of purpose was not enough to allay doubts among Lutherans themselves that the committees, especially the New York Committee, would not overstep its boundaries. Six months later, in May 1917, an anonymous inquirer asked if the committee was specifically denominational or religious. The committee responded no; the Reformation was not the “peculiar property of any denomination.” Moreover, committee work would complement, not interfere with, the work of individual committees. One month later in June 1917, the committee reaffirmed that it would “not interfere with the religious celebrations planned by the various church bodies.” Because it was catering to the various Lutheran churches in the vicinity of New York City and New Jersey for the anniversary of an historical movement that was not the singular purview of Lutheranism, the New York Committee was continually made aware of the need to carefully and clearly articulate its responsibilities for the Reformation Quadricentennial. See “An Anniversary Celebration Catechism,” *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 11 (May 15, 1917), 1; and “The Plans of the Committee,” *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 13 (June 15, 1917), 2.
that, “in large sections of our Church there is unity in belief and nearly uniformity in practice. Here the need is merely one of social and practical intercourse.”

The work of the New York Committee and the Joint Committee mirrored the federal government’s ambitious efforts to mobilize the American public during World War I. The government needed to recruit able-bodied men for a combat-ready army, manufacture the weaponry and ammunition for the Allied forces, ration foodstuffs, and finance the war through Liberty Loan drives. To prod American involvement on the homefront, the government “relied on a combination of voluntarism and coercion” and created intergovernmental agencies that “intruded into virtually every area of private life.”

It became clear to American civilians that a victory overseas required their active participation. The Committee on Public Information [CPI], created days after Wilson sought a declaration of war against Germany, conducted the battle for the minds of the American public. George Creel, editor of the Rocky Mountain News, led the committee. He quickly made his mark; the CPI became known as the “Creel Committee.”

It was the job of Creel and his Committee to “fuse the American people into ‘one white-hot mass’ ablaze with ‘fraternity, devotion, courage, and deathless determination,’ ready to enlist, to give money, to make any sacrifice that was required of them.”

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121 Creel as quoted in Harries, The Last Days of Innocence, 164.
campaign that included the release of 75 million bulletins, the use of street car advertising and cartoon images, propaganda in newspapers, and the Four-Minute Men who “delivered a rapid fire of pithy phrases and elevated sentiment” in the time it took a movie theatre to change film reels.\(^\text{122}\) Through the creation of the CPI and Creel’s mobilization of the numerous propaganda methods at his disposal, the federal government quickly reached the American public efficiently and effectively. No matter where their daily activities took them, average Americans would have been exposed to the publicity and propaganda calling for active and aggressive support of the U.S. war effort.

The work of the New York Committee and Joint Committee functioned in a similar manner to that of the CPI as the Lutheran church attempted to quickly and efficiently preach their collective religious memory of the Reformation and enlist the active participation of the Lutheran laity. Both committees created various subcommittees to individually and more ably handle specific tasks, like publicity, education, literature and finances. In addition, the New York Committee also established the Speaker’s Bureau so that “the men of to-day know the great achievements of four centuries ago.”\(^\text{123}\) The New York Committee needed a body comparable to that of the

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\(^{123}\) Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (December 15, 1916), 1. From the sources available the New York Committee had four subcommittees on publicity, literature, education, and finances, while the Joint Committee had subcommittees for literature and publicity, public meetings, medals, motion picture film, and finances. The Joint Committee eventually abandoned the idea of making a film about Martin Luther and the Reformation. See Correspondence from O.H. Pannkoke to J. Louis Schaefer (May 27, 1916), Box 4, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1916-1918, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives; Untitled Pamphlet on the Joint Committee (nd), Box 3, Folder 4, L.A. Johnston Correspondence, October-December 1917, Personal Papers of Dr. L.A. Johnston, ELCA Archives; Correspondence from Unidentified Individual to “The Editors” [form letter] (October 19, 1916), Box 2, Folder 9, L.A. Johnston Correspondence, September-November 1916, Personal Papers of Dr. L.A. Johnston, ELCA Archives.
Four-Minute Men in order to deliver the hoped-for goal of 10,000 lectures in the vicinity of Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, and New Jersey.\footnote{124} The Bureau provided lecture outlines and sometimes visual aids “to enable men quickly to get to the heart of the discussion,” speakers that were primarily Lutheran pastors but also included “public men” and scholars and who could be requested to speak on a certain topic of the Reformation, and a bibliography of relevant historical material.\footnote{125} By the middle of December 1916, the New York Committee had enlisted thirty men and by June 1917, the Bureau had 150 speakers at its disposal to meet the Quadricentennial needs of local congregations.\footnote{126} Having assembled a large body of capable Lutherans and non-Lutherans to give speeches, the Bureau held true to its claim that it could assist even the smallest organizations and churches in learning the facts of the Reformation.\footnote{127}

\footnote{124} Untitled Article, \textit{Anniversary Bulletin} 1, no. 2 (15 December 1916), 1.
\footnote{125} Untitled Article, \textit{Anniversary Bulletin} 1, no. 1 (December 1, 1916), 1. Reverend William Koepchen, pastor of St. Luke’s Church in Manhattan, made his private collection of over 1,200 slides on the Reformation available to the Speaker’s Bureau for presentations. Both committees placed less emphasis on publishing scholarly literature during the anniversary. Rather, they compiled lengthy bibliographies and reprinted important literature for those scholars, pastors, and laity seeking more comprehensive histories of Luther and the Reformation. The bibliography created by Union Seminary Professor W.W. Rockwell and Pannkoke for the New York Committee contained over 600 titles; see “Reformation Literature Recommended by the Quadri-Centennial Office,” \textit{The Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 327-328. The New York Committee also promoted a popular edition of Heinrich Boehmer’s \textit{Luther in Light of Recent Research} (New York: The Christian Herald, 1916) for general public use at the cost of $.25. The edition sold well in its release and requests for the publication came into the NY Committee from as far away as South Dakota, where Dr. Z.J. Ordal, the President of the Normal School, requested 70 copies. See Untitled Article, \textit{Anniversary Bulletin} 1, no. 5 (February 1, 1917), 2; and Untitled Article, \textit{Anniversary Bulletin} 1, no. 6 (March 1, 1917), 3. The major Lutheran periodicals also published their own reference lists of valuable literature on Luther and the Reformation. See Theodore Schmauk, “The Luther and Reformation Literature of the Last Fifty Years,” \textit{Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 287-294; Theodore Schmauk, “Discussion of the Reformation Literature for the Quadri-Centennial,” \textit{Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 295-307; “Luther Articles in the Lutheran Church Review (1882-1916),” \textit{Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 319-320; Reformation Articles in the Lutheran Church Review (1882-1916),” \textit{Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 321-323; “Luther and Reformation Articles in the Evangelical Review (1849-1870),” \textit{Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 324; and “Reformation Articles in the Lutheran Cyclopedia,” \textit{Lutheran Church Review} 35 (July 1916): 325-326.

\footnote{126} Untitled Article, \textit{Anniversary Bulletin} (December 15, 1916), 1; and “The Plans of the Committee,” \textit{Anniversary Bulletin} 1, no. 13 (June 15, 1917), 2.
\footnote{127} Throughout the course of early 1917 through October of that year, there were ample opportunities for Lutherans and non-Lutherans to attend a lecture or address on the Reformation. See Mary Kupiec Cayton, “The Making of an American Prophet: Emerson, His Audiences, and the Rise of the
The lecture topics and outlines made available through the Speaker’s Bureau
reflected the Quadricentennial-goals. The New York Committee wanted lecturers,
whether or not they used the suggested aids and themes, to impart a general knowledge of
the Reformation or a specific aspect of the movement. In turn, the Committee wanted
audiences to acknowledge the religious and social blessings to come out of the sixteenth
century and that continued to flow in the twentieth century. Whether or not the Lutheran
laity received the message as the Committee hoped they would, they made it very
difficult for Lutherans to avoid the link between the sixteenth-century Reformation and
democracy and the continued theological relevance of Lutheranism in the present age.
After having surveyed the “Life of Martin Luther,” Rev. V.A.M. Mortensen of the
Church of the Redeemer in Jersey City, New Jersey, could for example point out that the
Reformation provided for a purer spirituality based upon the “open” Bible, salvation
through justification rather than works, and religious liberty. 128 Besides the religious
benefits of the Reformation, lecturers could focus on the movement’s contemporary
social and political influence. George A. Romoser, professor and then president of
Concordia Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn, delivered an outlined lecture at the English
Lutheran Church on Long Island entitled “The Reformation and Modern Liberty, Man,

Culture Industry in Nineteenth-Century America,” The American Historical Review 92, no. 3 (June 1987):
597-620.
128
Untitled Article, Anniversary Bulletin 1, no. 6 (March 1, 1917), 4. Other lectures that more
than likely dealt with the religious and spiritual importance of the Reformation included “The Opened
Word” given by Rev. J. Howard Worth at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in the Bronx, “How the Reformation
Freed the Bible” delivered by O.H. Pannkoke at the YMCA Central Branch in Brooklyn, and “Lutheran
Congregational Life” given by May Woebler at Brooklyn’s Church of the Incarnation. See Anniversary
Bulletin 1, no. 6 (March 1, 1917), 3; Anniversary Bulletin 1, no. 6 (March 1, 1917), 3; Anniversary Bulletin
1, no. 6 (March 1, 1917), 4. The Anniversary Bulletin unfortunately did not publish the content of these
historical and religious lectures; I have yet to come across any the text of these lectures in the course of my
research.

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State, Public School and Church.” R.W. Sockman, pastor of a Methodist Episcopal Church, delivered the same address on the relationship between Luther and political liberty at the Church of the Holy Comforter in April and twice within the span of a single week in May. It became clear through the development of lecture outlines and topics that the Committees and church leaders were interested in more than merely extolling the religious consequences of the Reformation. With the backdrop of World War I, it became increasingly clear that “America is the only land where the principles of Luther have penetrated the social order” and that “America owes its free institutions and progress primarily to the Reformation.”

In addition to the Speakers Bureau, the New York Committee and Joint Committee harnessed both textual and visual materials to articulate their collective memory of the Reformation and rally Lutherans to participate in the Quadricentennial. William T. Ellis, Secretary of the Men and Religion Commission, encouraged Lutherans to use publicity to its fullest because “it was an act of publicity – the nailing of the ninety-five Theses to the church door – that precipitated the Reformation.” Moreover, Ellis suggested that if Luther himself had been alive in the twentieth century he would have

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130 Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (March 15, 1917), 4; Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 11 (May 1, 1917), 4; and Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 12 (June 1, 1917), 4. Other lectures that focused on the political and economic consequences of the Reformation included “Luther and Democracy” given by Reverend William Schoenfeld at the 23rd Street YMCA in Manhattan, the “Reformation and America” delivered by Reverend G.J. Muller at Brooklyn’s Church of the Incarnation, and “How the Reformation Helped Humanity: Brought Wealth and Prosperity” given by O.H. Pannkoke at the English Lutheran Chapel on Long Island. See *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 9 (April 15, 1917), 2; *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 8 (April 1, 1917), 3; and *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 10 (May 1, 1917), 3.

131 As quoted by W.H.P. Faunce, President of Brown University in “American and the Anniversary Celebration,” *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 5 (February 1, 1917), 1; and Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (December 15, 1916), 1.
used the power of the press and published his Theses in the newspaper. As such Lutherans needed to insert visual and textual reminders of the Reformation anniversary in secular newspapers in order to make “a reformation groove, as it were, upon the mind of the nation.”¹³² The Committees and smaller church bodies saw themselves as living up to Lutheran history when they took advantage of the religious and secular press, itself a major factor in success of the Reformation.

*The New York Reformation Anniversary Bulletin*, published on a semi-monthly basis from late 1916 through October 1917, served as the New York Committee’s organ for providing information and pithy propaganda to persuade and coerce Lutherans to participate in the Quadricentennial.¹³³ Pannkoke ambitiously sought to distribute the *Anniversary Bulletin* – a “magazine that will be chuck full of enthusiasm and suggestions to arrouse [sic] public interest” – in mass quantities. He hoped to issue 100,000 copies of the bulletin to churches in the New York and New Jersey area.¹³⁴ Based upon the communications sent to the Committee, the *Anniversary Bulletin* was dispensed widely and did serve as an effective publicity tool. One “friend” donated $100 to “Help Spread the Bulletin.”¹³⁵ And spread it did. While sitting in the waiting room of the local YMCA, Mr. G.B. Heyen of Brooklyn picked up an issue of the *Bulletin*. Intrigued by what he read, Heyen wrote to the Committee requesting all previous back copies. And Rev. J. Kavasch of Hartford, Connecticut, made an appeal to the Committee for 25 copies

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¹³³ Based on my research I have come across 15 issues of the *Anniversary Bulletin*; there is a break in the publication dates from July to October. There is little reason to doubt that the New York Committee stopped publication during this period, but I have not come across these issues. Each issue was four pages in length.

¹³⁴ Correspondence from O.H. Pannkoke to J. Louis Schaefer (May 27, 1916), Box 4, Folder 2, Correspondence 1916-1918, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives.

of the *Bulletin* that he could pass around to the young people in his church.\textsuperscript{136} In addition, the Committee’s publicity committee issued regular updates of its work to nearly 200 news outlets, including the *Lutheran Standard*, the newspaper of the Joint Synod of Ohio.\textsuperscript{137} Efficient use of the press and news services allowed Lutherans across the country to feel a sense of commonality and solidarity as they celebrated and remembered the Reformation during the Quadricentenary.\textsuperscript{138}

When it came to persuading Lutherans to participate in the Quadricentennial, the New York Committee employed rhetoric that aimed to prompt action out of gratefulness for the blessings of the Reformation. At the same time, the committee had no problem shaming lay Lutherans if they had not acted enough to celebrate the Reformation anniversary. Lay Lutherans, the committees believed, needed to do the legwork to make the Quadricentennial successful. Because the occasion of the anniversary, “finds the world in turmoil as great as when the Reformation struggle was on,” the New York Committee suggested, “there is a call for loyalty, courage, self sacrifice, devotion to duty as it is demanded only in the hour of the supreme crisis.”\textsuperscript{139} The urgency of the need to act only increased once the United States entered World War I. In early May the New York Committee called for “more man power, more will power, more heart power” to

\textsuperscript{136} Untitled Article, *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 4 (January 15, 1917), 1.
\textsuperscript{137} “Church News: Jubilee Notes,” *Lutheran Standard* (3 March 1917), 135. In a similar manner, the Joint Committee released weekly information about the progress of the Quadricentenary entitled “Protestant Jubilee News.” Moreover, the Missouri Synod established the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau (ALPB) in 1914, which served as its publicity organ during the Quadricentennial. The ALPB published a series of tracts by Missouri Synod pastors, and sold thousands of stickers and postcards (Pannkoke, *A Great Church Finds Itself*, 49; and Meyer, “Some Aspects of the Observance of the Reformation Quadricentennial,” 26).
\textsuperscript{138} The publicity arm of the New York Committee was retained as the National Lutheran Council’s publicity bureau when it was established in 1918; Pannkoke served as its first Director. See Osborne, *Lutherans Working Together*, 23-24; Frederick Wentz, *Lutherans in Concert*, 9-10; Meuser, “Celebration, War, and the Great Change,” in *The Lutheran in North America*, 403-414; and chapt. 32 in A.R. Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America*, 302-319.
\textsuperscript{139} “Even as They Did so Ought We!,” *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (March 1, 1917), 2.
“rouse to all the message of the Reformation Anniversary.”

By the beginning of October 1917 Lutherans needed to act with increased speed: “the present time is a time for deeds. Let words be saved for the time when men discuss the accomplished event.” Lutherans could “feature the Reformation in the routine activities of life about us” with children canvassing their neighborhoods to hand out attractive cards, posters, and signs; adults posting Quadricentennial advertisements in offices, hotels, and store windows; Lutherans sending letters and packages to family and friends with stamps and stickers bearing the image of Luther’s coat of arms; and members of Lutheran families wearing Reformation buttons.

Lutherans who worked and lived alongside other Lutherans as well as non-Lutherans held the greatest potential to bring the Reformation to bear upon the twentieth century.

Taking a cue from the federal government’s physical and psychological mobilization of American society, the New York Committee and the Joint Committee attempted to rally Lutherans of all stripes to support their Quadricentennial goals and exposed Lutherans and non-Lutherans alike to the continued political and religious

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140 “More Man Power,” *Anniversary Bulletin* 1, no. 10 (May 1, 1917), 1.
143 Annual meetings of associations and organizations connected with the Lutheran Church afforded an opening to further persuade Lutherans of their responsibility to the church during the Quadricentenary, particularly domestic and international missionary work. Reverend R.E. Golladay and Reverend G. Troutman both marshaled the nearly 200 delegates that attended the Eighth Annual Men’s Missionary Conference in Youngstown, Ohio, in February to use the occasion of the Reformation celebration as an incentive to increase missionary activity. In his address to the Lutheran men gathered before him, Troutman beseeched them: “As we get better acquainted with our church, it should arouse our missionary zeal and give us new impetus for mission work. Our forefathers were willing to bleed and die for the doctrines that the Bible teaches. A review of the past should bring us to appreciate our heritage and strengthen the weak-kneed.” Moreover, Lutherans needed to take up the responsibility of preserving “the faith once delivered to the saints.” Troutman pointed to the model of the men of the Reformation who not only stood by their faith but died for that faith, to persuade the delegates that they too should be compelled to act for the betterment of the church. They needed to first appreciate the historical faith that many had died for, and to second act upon that appreciation by spreading the doctrines of the Bible through missionary work. See Leonard O. Burry, “Eighth Annual Men’s Missionary Conference,” *Lutheran Standard* (March 3, 1917), 129-130.
relevance of the Reformation in the twentieth century. The New York Committee reported over 200 lectures delivered in the New York City and New Jersey areas over the course of the anniversary year and 1,000 events in October alone. Both the New York Committee and Joint Committee published pamphlets and issued news releases to local newspapers. Throughout the Quadricentenary year, the Lutheran Church mobilized an overabundance of textual and visual promotional materials and activated Lutherans to penetrate all aspects of their local communities with the news and message of the Reformation.

Lutheran Laity: Reformation Lessons and the Future of the Church

The success of the Reformation Quadricentennial, as with the Utah Semi-Centennial and the Pilgrim Tercentenary, depended on the active participation of the Lutheran laity. In addition to aiding the publicity activities of the New York Committee and the Joint Committee, the Lutheran laity was exposed to the Lutheran church’s memory of the Reformation through popular and educational literature and the production and staging of pageants. The literature and pageants rendered the Quadricentennial memory of the Reformation in an entertaining manner that still imparted religious and political lessons. As they consumed these Reformation lessons that were intended to reinforce their faith, Lutherans of all ages were also called on to donate financially to ensure the future institutional stability and strength of the church.

144 Correspondence from Thomas H. Lamprecht to J. Louis Schaefer (November 27, 1917), Box 4, Folder 2, Correspondence, 1916-1918, Lutheran Society of New York Papers, ELCA Archives.
Young Lutherans, because they constituted the future foundation of the church, were of particular concern to clergy, theologians, and Quadricentennial leaders.\textsuperscript{145} The *Singing Weaver and Other Stories: Hero Tales of the Reformation* contained embellished stories of Reformation figures that could simultaneously educate and entertain.\textsuperscript{146} Julius and Margaret Seebach, both graduates of Gettysburg College, he a Lutheran pastor, she editor of the Women’s Missionary Society *Lutheran Women’s Work*, penned this collection of ten tales about “helpers of the Reformation, mostly feeble and obscure, but good and valiant heroes nevertheless.”\textsuperscript{147} These Reformation “helpers,” like the Lutherans reading the accounts of their heroism, were children, women, and the elderly who, although they were not Martin Luther, could take the Reformation into their everyday lives. For some Lutherans the Reformation may have seemed a part of the distant past with little relevance to their daily existence. A collection of tales like *The Singing Weaver* could help rank-and-file Lutherans see the relevance of the lessons and principles of the Reformation in the past and actively maintain those principles in their daily lives.

Little Lutheran girls, for example, could find inspiration from the life of Argula von Stauff. Her story began in 1502 when she sat under a pear tree reading from the Bible. Argula was so deeply engaged in the text that she barely noticed two monks approach her and immediately start talking about her book. One of the main blessings of

\textsuperscript{145} For an examination of the concern for young Lutherans in the Missouri Synod in the 1920s see John Pahl, “Lutheranism in the Twenties: Youthful Perspectives,” in *Interpreting Lutheran History: Essays and Reports from the Lutheran Historical Conference, 1996*, ed. James W. Albers and David J. Wartluft (St. Louis, MO: Lutheran Historical Conference, 1999), 185-205.


the Reformation – the access of the laity to the Bible – came to the fore when he snatched the Bible from her hands and told her in a grave tone, “My child... it is well I passed and saw you here! This is a dangerous book which you, in your innocence, have been reading.” Frightened for herself after hearing the monks speak of the dangers of heresy, Argula stored the Bible away. As an adult, however, Argula devotedly followed news of Luther and his writings and annoying her husband, a town official, in the process. In light of the ridicule faced by those who promoted Luther, Argula wrote a letter to the learned at the University of Ingolstadt challenging them to demonstrate the heresy contained in Luther’s teachings. University and town officials made Argula and her family suffer for breaching religious and social propriety; her husband lost his position of authority, her family refused to speak with her, and she and her children were left to seek refuge elsewhere. In the face of this loss however, Argula stood firm. Speaking to her son Bernard, she articulated the moral of the story

When men have not courage to stand up for what is right, women must do it! The time is not yet, but it will come when the gospel is free to all, that women shall know as much of God’s word and tell it as freely to others as a man may do – yes, as the most learned doctors! Nor women of rank only, but the poorest peasant maid whose heart is clean in God’s sight, and whose mind is full of His truth!¹⁴⁸

Argula’s final exhortation, given to the reader just as much as to the character of Bernard, accentuated the way in which the Reformation and Luther loosened the grip of the Roman Catholic Church on the Bible and gave it freely to all.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, Argula’s

¹⁴⁸ Seebach, The Singing Weaver, 83-84.
¹⁴⁹ As mentioned earlier, the authority and divine inspiration of the Bible as well as free access to the Bible were key aspects of the Lutheran church’s collective religious memory of the Reformation. Julius Seebach also wrote The Book of Free Men: The Origin and History of the Scriptures and Their Relation to Modern Liberty (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917). Lutherans and non-Lutherans alike argued that path of modern liberty led from access to the Bible and religious liberty to political and civil liberty in government. Seebach, moreover, argued that the content of the Bible itself promoted freedom and “fashioned the thought and directed the conscience of the people, so that they became fitted for the truest liberty in self-government” (227).
example and words of encouragement about the role of women of any socio-economic station could motivate Lutheran women. Whether they were mothers or little girls, Lutheran women could ensure the prevalence of the Bible within the Lutheran tradition.

Literature for adults was geared towards stimulating study and discussion of the Reformation. With criticism and assistance from members of the Joint Committee, Carolus P. Harry wrote *Protest and Progress In the Sixteenth Century*. Harry addressed the political, social, and religious state of affairs prior to the Reformation, described Martin Luther’s life and theological thought, and pointed to other Reformation movements. Appendices on the chronology of the Reformation and the Ninety-Five Theses were also included. While Lutherans could read *Protest and Progress* at home, this text was intended to bring Lutherans together to talk about the Reformation. Modeled after the Missionary Education Movement’s study books, *Protest and Progress*’s eight chapters ended with a series of questions to prompt discussion. Harry wanted to promote general historical knowledge of Luther and the Reformation but also lessons from the sixteenth century that would be personally relevant to Lutherans in the twentieth century.

In an introduction to “Leaders of Study Classes,” Harry pointed out that classes should be fairly small (only 10 to 12 participants) and should meet over the course of 8 to

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150 Other literature intended for adult education included J.A. Darmstaetter, *A History of the Reformation for Young and Old*, trans. Rev. Joseph Stumpt, D.D. (Reading, PA: Pilger Publishing House, 1916); and Harriet Earhart Monroe, *Historical Lutheranism in One Hundred Questions and Answers*, 10th ed. (Philadelphia, PA: The Lutheran Publication Society, 1916 [1895]). Monroe’s pamphlet of twenty-seven pages was in its tenth edition by the time of the Reformation Quadricentennial. Much like the Baltimore Catechism of the Catholic Church, brief questions about the Reformation and the primary teachings about the Bible and salvation were answered succinctly. Monroe’s book contained basic factual questions like “Who was God’s instrument in bringing about the Reformation?” (4), but also questions that aimed to distinguish Lutheranism from other churches like “Aside from the doctrines of Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and Election, what radical difference existed originally between Lutherans and others” (17)? Monroe also presented questions specifically about the Lutheran Church in the United States.
10 weeks to ensure a thorough examination of the historical matter at hand. In particular, Harry explained, “It is hoped that the somewhat personal questions will enable the students to personally apply the principles they have been studying, so that the book may be cultural and not merely informing.”¹⁵¹ The set of questions at the conclusion of each chapter began with factual inquiries geared towards reinforcing the historical and/or religious information just conveyed and ended with more spiritually relevant questions. For example, Harry asked, “Would this be a favorable time for another Reformation? Give the answers for your answer.”¹⁵² In another example, Harry pushed his readers to think more deeply about their faith. He asked, “Do you know that you are saved?” and in one instance, “For what in your religion would you risk your life?”¹⁵³ Clearly, Harry’s concluding questions were meant to prompt Lutherans to confront the reality of faith in their daily lives. In the end, the Committee hoped that by historically studying the Reformation and Martin Luther, Lutherans could continually bring its blessings and principles to fruition in their own daily activities. After quoting from Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians on diversity and cooperation, Harry relayed one final clarion call to his readers: “If each of the various denominations will truly and sincerely teach that for which it stands… Protestantism will undoubtedly advance and the souls of men be reached and saved.”¹⁵⁴ Like Lutheran children reading and hearing the stories of The Singing Weaver, Lutheran men and women too could participate in the spiritual revitalization of a society.

¹⁵² Harry, Protest and Progress in the Sixteenth Century, 32.
¹⁵³ Harry, Protest and Progress in the Sixteenth Century, 68, 93.
¹⁵⁴ Harry, Protest and Progress in the Sixteenth Century, xiii.
Lutherans could also help promote the fundamental religious and political principles of the Reformation and educate themselves through the production and performance of pageants and dramatic programs. Liturgical dramas and pageants afforded rank-and-file Lutherans, including adults and young people, the chance to propagate the Reformation narrative and memory by participating in the production or by viewing the staging of dramas about a past central to their historical faith. According to historian David Glassberg, Americans became infatuated with historical pageants in the early twentieth century, which largely overtook historically oriented orations and addresses as the primary means of commemorating the past. The progressives who created and sought to control the pageants that Glassberg examines believed that “history could be made into a dramatic public ritual through which the residents of a town, by acting out the right version of their past, could bring about some kind of future social and political transformation.” The production and staging of these local pageants reinforced loyalty to the community, promoted progress, and aided the formation of historical and civic identity. Although Glassberg does not examine pageants of a specifically religious character, his emphasis on the educational quality and transformational potential of the pageants can be seen in the religious pageants produced and staged by Lutherans during the Quadricentenary. Through their Reformation pageants and dramas, Lutherans wanted to strengthen their allegiance to the religious community of the church, to present the Reformation’s contribution to the American religious and social scene, and to shape their denomination’s religious and historical identity for the future.

155 Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry, 1, 9.
156 Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry, 92-93.
The pageants first highlighted the religious blessings that came out of the Reformation. In the preface to *The Pageant of Protestantism: Celebrating the Quadricentennial of the Reformation*, Harriet Earhart Monroe, daughter of a Lutheran pastor, suggested that one of the defining characteristics of the Reformation was the gift of the “open Bible.” As such, “each person taking part should carry a Bible, and at certain signals each person could hold aloft the open Bible.” The content of Monroe’s pageant reflected this emphasis on the “open Bible.” While her pageant’s procession of floats began with the history of the Reformation and climaxed with Luther’s defense of his position at the Diet of Worms in 1521 – including Luther holding a Bible – much of her pageant traced the spread of Lutheranism through missionary work. One float depicted the arrival of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg to the United States; several Lutheran pastors stood around the character of Muhlenberg, each of them holding an “open Bible.” Additional floats depicted imagery from the Women’s Missionary Movement and Lutheran mission work around the world in areas like Liberia, Japan, Mexico, and South America. The final float fittingly served as a call for the audience to continue to spread the blessings of the “open Bible.” Entitled “World Conditions,” the float contained a large globe and illustrations of “all forms of destitution and suffering… taxing the ingenuity of the designers and showing the need of the gospel of Christ.” Seeing poverty of a “groping blind man” and the idolatry of a “witch doctor” with their own eyes through the float’s characters, audience members would also read banners.

proclaiming “Go ye into all the world” and “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”162 More than entertainment, pageants like Monroe’s called Lutherans to answer this question with a resounding “I will go.” For Monroe it was important for Lutherans to continue to spread the “open Bible” – a primary gift of the Reformation – through mission work.163

Pageant creators also looked to highlight the connections between the Reformation and modern political and civic liberty. Like Monroe, C.F. Malmberg, a professor at Thiel College in Greenville, Pennsylvania, presented this central theme of the Reformation in *The Professor of Wittenberg*. According to the introduction to Malmberg’s script by H.W. Elson, the Reformation “freed men’s consciences and thus made modern progress possible by establishing the right of private judgment and laying the foundation of universal education. It also made possible the political revolution of a later time and also the industrial emancipation of our own day.”164 In essence, all the religious, social, economic, and political progress of the four centuries after Luther’s work could be attributed to the Reformation. Rather than merely alluding to the connection between the sixteenth and twentieth century, Lloyd Eastwood-Seibold’s pageant carried the political implications of the Reformation into the present. The fifth episode of Eastwood-Seibold’s pageant, entitled, “America, the Land of Liberty, The Protestants in the New Land,” included the arrival of the Pilgrims through which came

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163 Another pageant that emphasized the religious aspects of the Reformation was Sanford N. Carpenter’s *Luther’s Coat of Arms, An Interpretation* (Philadelphia: The Lutheran Publication Society, 1918). Carpenter suggested that through his pageant Lutherans would “learn to love [their] own church and the whole church and work of the Lord Jesus Christ much the more” and would find “great help in that great battle with the forces of ignorance and of darkness” (7, 9).
164 C.F. Malmberg, *The Professor of Wittenberg: A Drama of the Reformation* (Burlington, IA: The German Literary Board, 1917), 1-2. Malmberg based his pageant on the “chief authorities” of the Reformation and the content of his pageant was confined to the period of the Reformation itself, climaxing with Luther’s defense of his position at the Diet of Worms (1).
the “Protestant spirit into New England,” the start of religious liberty, and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.¹⁶⁵ The final scene – “Unto the Ends of the Earth” – linked together the past and present as it looked to the future. Standing before the audience were the “Spirit of the Church, lifting high the cross with one hand and in the other holding to her breast the Holy Bible” along with Luther and reformers of the past four hundred years. Ribbons extended from the hands of Luther and the reformers to children of all nations, with the United States at the center, as the “air is filled with the music of angelic voices as there bursts upon the ear the triumphant message of the Church.”¹⁶⁶ The religious liberty that came to fruition in the sixteenth century would continue to spread throughout the world in the future. While serving as educational tools to enlighten lay Lutherans about the basics of the Reformation, the pageants also visually linked the past with the present and future.

Largely intended for Lutheran audiences, the very fact that these pageants, liturgical dramas, and tableaux were, nonetheless, performed in public forums like theatres, churches, and streets played a role in not only shaping Lutheran historical and religious consciousness but also in exposing non-Lutherans to the importance of the Reformation. E. Theodore Bachmann, an historian and member of the United Lutheran Church in America, recollected his own experience watching a Reformation pageant at the Metropolitan Opera House, located on North Broad Street, in Philadelphia. The Reformation of the sixteenth century unfolded before his twentieth-century eyes. As a child, reading about the Reformation could not accomplish what seeing could. As he sat in the darkened opera house, Bachmann witnessed Luther dramatically nailing the

¹⁶⁶ Eastwood-Seibold, An Historical Pageant, 44.
Ninety-Five Theses to the Castle Church door. He watched, breathlessly perhaps, as
Luther stood before Charles V and refused to repudiate his theological belief that faith,
 grace, and Scripture alone were necessary for salvation. Bachmann revealed that, “For
the mass of church members… and for the young who were being introduced to their
confessional tradition at one of its high moments, there was the Reformation drama.
Probably none was more telling on the impressionable.” Glassberg suggests that the
“making of history into ritual depended… on the audience’s complete identification with
the special world created on the pageant field.” Bachmann found himself identifying
with the world of the Reformation. In turn for him and many other Lutheran children and
adults, the dramatic retelling of the Reformation did educate and inspire.

Finally, lay Lutherans were called on to raise money for education, missionary
work, and ministry pension funds. The General Synod, General Council, and Missouri
Synod all established campaign goals of one million dollars and the United Synod of the
South wanted to raise $750,000. The Iowa Synod, the Norwegian Synod, and the United
Norwegian Lutheran Church set up campaigns to raise $250,000, $4000,000 and
$800,000 respectively. Gifting money to the religious education of Lutherans and the
missionary efforts to spread the gospel both domestically and internationally, church
leaders argued, demonstrated one’s fidelity to the church and thanksgiving for the
blessings received by the church through the Reformation. In addition, being strong
financially would help strengthen the Lutheran church in the face of theological

changes. At the Women’s Missionary Conference, Mrs. C.N. Herrnstein contended

167 Bachmann, The United Lutheran Church in America, 76.
168 Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry, 149.
169 “Reformation Anniversary,” The Los Angeles Times (September 12, 1915), 15; Meuser,
“Celebration, War, and the Great Change,” in The Lutherans in North America, 393 (3ff.); “Quadri-
centennial Notes,” The Lutheran Standard (October 21, 1916), 679.
that raising money was “only an expression of our faith and of our gratitude to our Lord and Savior for His manifold kindness and blessings in the past four centuries.” To counter criticism that the Jubilee Fund drives were purely set up to accumulate wealth for the church, H.J. Schuh of the Joint Synod of Ohio clarified that “faith, thankfulness, appreciation are the motives... The wealth in itself will not find the Lord, but faith and devotion will consecrate wealth to the Lord.” As with the creative and financial demands placed on Utahans during the Pioneer Jubilee, the Reformation Quadricentennial did not serve merely as another opportunity to extract money from lay Lutherans. Rather, lay Lutherans could express their gratitude and indebtedness to the Reformation by giving money to the church to ensure that future generations also received the blessings of the Reformation.

The financial campaign of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States (Joint Synod) shows the determination and resolution of the Lutheran church as a whole towards enhancing its religious and spiritual foundation across the world and increasing the knowledge about Lutheranism. In honor and thanksgiving for the blessings of the Reformation, the Joint Synod inaugurated the “Jubilee Offering for the Church Building Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States.” Over the course of several years, lay Lutherans were asked to subscribe and eventually make their

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172 Lutherans were not alone in raising money during the year; other Protestant denominations and church associations also established fund raising campaigns during the Quadricentenary to improve religious education in their colleges.
payment towards the financial goal of $300,000. Originally stocked by migrants from the Lutheran stronghold of Pennsylvania in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, by the mid to late nineteenth century, the Joint Synod maintained a stronger confessional identification with the Missouri Synod after withdrawing from the General Council in 1867. Theological controversy over the doctrine of election, however, prompted the Joint Synod to end their “‘on again, off again’” relationship with the Missouri-Synod dominated Synodical Conference in the early 1880s. Although the Joint Synod made concerted efforts to re-establish good relations with the Missouri Synod it remained independent. Theological controversy over the doctrine of election, however, prompted the Joint Synod to withdraw from the Conference in the early 1880s. The mood of union that pervaded the General Council, the General Synod, and the United Synod of the South was also present in the Joint Synod; in 1930, the Joint Synod merged with the Iowa Synod and Buffalo Synod to from the American Lutheran Church.

Like the CPI and the New York Committee and Joint Committee, the Joint Synod relied upon coercive rhetoric to compel Lutherans to contribute to the financial wellbeing and long-term religious and spiritual goals of the church. *The Lutheran Standard*, the Synod’s weekly newspaper, provided a forum for a Quadricentennial series entitled “Jubilee Bells.” Authored by Lutheran pastors Fred O. Schuh and H.J. Schuh, “Jubilee

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Bells” urged Lutherans to contributed by appealing to their emotions, including shame, and their level of devotion to the Lutheran Church. As early as November 1916, H.J. Schuh asked his readers if they fully appreciated the fact that the Reformation “dispelled the gloom of ignorance and superstition” of death. In thanksgiving for the freedom from the fear of death, Lutherans needed to provide “for the preaching of this truth to coming generations.” As such, the Jubilee offering towards church building “will help to perpetuate the pure Gospel and make dying easy for thousands yet unborn.” Besides ensuring that future generations of Lutherans would know the true teaching about death, the money that Lutherans gave towards building churches would also secure the proper administration of the Lord’s Supper rather than a “commodity to be bought and sold.” As it was framed in the “Jubilee Bells” series, the Jubilee offering was not a matter of material but rather one of spiritual wealth and growth.

The Schuhs’s rhetorical tactics shifted from instructing lay Lutherans to donate money for education, mission work, and church construction, to chiding them for not having yet donated. In particular, they used church competition and guilt to prompt hesitant readers to step up to the plate. The Schuhs turned to the historical foil of the Reformation – Roman Catholicism – to urge Lutherans to participate in commemorations and celebrations, including making financial contributions. Even though the Roman Catholic Church was just as “antiscryptural” in the twentieth century as it was in the sixteenth century, the Schuhs argued that Roman Catholics could impart several important lessons to Lutherans. Catholics, they suggested, attended worship services faithfully; entered church space reverentially; respected their priests; and sacrificed

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financially to build up the denomination institutionally with churches, convents, hospitals, and schools. Even though they maintained a similar standard of living, Schuh believed, Roman Catholics put Lutherans to shame in the arena of building up the institutional apparatus of the church. Schuh explained that “many of them give until they actually feel it, but how seldom is this the case with our Lutheran people?”

For many lay Lutherans of the Joint Synod and other church bodies, giving financially to Jubilee funds would have been a real sacrifice. Often they were already making contributions to “home-needs” like the construction of churches and paying off debt. Moreover, with the entry of the United States into World War I, Lutherans were asked to give monetarily to secure the spiritual care of Lutheran servicemen through the National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Welfare and to assist Lutherans in war-torn Europe. Lutherans, like other Americans, also felt pressured to purchase Liberty Loans to finance the war. Along with the demands from their government and their church, Lutherans faced a stark increase in the cost of living, which jumped by 20% between 1914 and 1916. Like Utahans who were called upon by the Semi-Centennial Commission to ensure the future growth of Utah even amid the economic depression of the 1890s, church leaders pressured lay Lutherans to secure the future stability of the faith amid an uncertain economy during a war.

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180 Two appeals for wartime aid were made in 1919 and 1920, and the National Lutheran Council expended a total of eight million dollars to assist European Lutherans during the post-war period (Kent, *Commitment to Unity*, 71).

181 Harries, *The Loss of Innocence*, 285. The cost of living increased by nearly an additional 75% in the next four years, while food, fuel, and clothing prices increased by more than half of their peace-time prices (285).

182 To supplement their utilization of the power of the press, the Joint Synod also sent out representatives to canvass Lutheran congregations, which was not an all-together simple task to complete in a year’s time. The Synod was split into eleven districts that covered a large geographical swath of the
The reality of the national economy did not stop the Schuhs from employing seemingly shameless rhetoric to coerce lay Lutherans to meet the idealistic financial goals of the Quadricentennial. At the halfway point of the Quadricentenary year, Lutherans were solicited to give more, not less: “our regular expenses are growing rapidly from year to year and instead of reducing our offerings we must add to them.”

Fred Schuh and H.J. Schuh were more than willing to identify those men and women, and even children, who willingly made the kind of sacrifices demanded for the future survival of the Lutheran church. Sunday-school children who excitedly offered what little they had “became examples to those of maturer years” who, although possessed more financially, were slower and more hesitant to contribute. Boys, unsatisfied with the subscriptions made by their fathers, put their own names on a separate subscription form passing “the real test” of love for the church. Everyone made sacrifices, including a “young crippled working girl” who subscribed fifteen dollars to the Jubilee Fund.

United States and Canada. As of June 1917, the Joint Synod had a total of seven representatives traveling in the various districts visiting individual congregations to persuade Lutherans to contribute money. Reverend George F. Pauschert of Spokane, Washington, and Professor Gohdes worked in the Texas District; Reverend Fred O. Schuh, author of several “Jubilee Bells” articles, worked in the Eastern District; Reverend W. Beiswenger, Reverend J.J. Vollmar, and Reverend E.C. Hess worked in areas of Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota; and Reverend M.L. Friedrich worked in Wisconsin. These seven men, however, could only cover a limited amount of church territory during the year. The East District of the Joint Synod contained a total of 350 congregations alone and as of February Rev. Schuh reported that barely half of those congregations had been visited. With only a few months before the end of the Reformation anniversary, the Joint Synod sought the employment of additional men to make sure that all congregations would be solicited at least once. Moreover, all pastors received letters on September 1, to be read to congregations “suggesting that the matter of the Jubilee Fund be taken up once more to ascertain what progress has been made, how near the work is finished, and to push the completion of the work in good time.” See “Church News: Jubilee Notes,” The Lutheran Standard (June 2, 1917), 342; Fred O. Schuh, “The Jubilee Fund – What the Outlook?,” The Lutheran Standard (February 10, 1917), 82; and “The Jubilee Fund. A Loyal Friend – A Table of Figures,” The Lutheran Standard (August 18, 1917), 521.


Younger congregations and mission churches were also used as models of sacrificial giving to shame older and more established congregations. The twenty-five-member Baltimore-Washington D.C., Redeemer mission subscribed $300 even though it had only been organized in the summer of 1916 and carried the burden of a monthly parsonage payment.\textsuperscript{186} St. Luke’s Mission in Zanesville, Ohio, barely managed to pay a quarter of its pastor’s salary and possessed a debt of $3,000 on the church property. The nearly sixty lay members of the mission, however, still subscribed $429 to the Jubilee Fund. Redeemer and St. Luke’s Mission, Schuh explained, put “many an older congregation to shame.”\textsuperscript{187} No matter their economic situation, every Lutheran man, woman, and child was expected to secure the spiritual and religious growth of Lutheranism by giving to the Quadricentennial financial campaigns.\textsuperscript{188} The Lutheran


\textsuperscript{188} Further use of guilt to induce Lutherans to contribute financially came from the published reports of donations. Every week over the course of three years from late 1916 through late 1919, \textit{The Lutheran Standard} gave an account of the amount of money subscribed and eventually paid. Subscriptions and payments to the Jubilee Fund were listed in a section of the paper entitled “Announcements and Credits,” which also recorded the monetary contributions made to several other church education and missionary programs and organizations. Posting the subscriptions and payments, however, was not just a matter of indicating a dollar amount. Each dollar amount was accompanied by the name and location of the congregation where the subscription originated, the name of the pastor, and sometimes how many people subscribed. While individual contributors were often not named, the identification of a particular congregation could also function as a source of pride for the amount of money contributed or a source of shame for the limited or lack of contribution. Based upon the periodic calculations by Fred O. Schuh, the average subscription of any given communicant was not large. From two anonymous congregations from his travels in the East District during the spring, Schuh indicated that “Congregation 1” and “Congregation 2” subscribed $3,854 and $773.54 respectively. He further estimated that the average communicant from the first congregation gave $9.40, while the average communicant from the second congregation gave $7. Of course, beyond estimations and averages, some Lutherans contributed much more. An unidentified male parishioner from Pastor G.M. Schmucker’s congregation in Canton, Ohio, subscribed $300, and an unidentified widow who initially subscribed $50 returned later with $500 for the Jubilee Fund. In the end, lay Lutherans demonstrated their thanks for the blessings of the Reformation and confirmed and legitimized the spiritual education and missionary work of the Joint Synod by making their payments, no matter how big or small long after the excitement and fervor of the official Reformation anniversary had passed. See Fred O. Schuh, “The Jubilee Fund. Some Classification - $60,000 Paid,” \textit{The Lutheran Standard} (April 7, 1917), 216; and Fred O. Schuh, “The Jubilee Fund. Two Interesting Letters. – Time for Vigorous Work Now,” \textit{The Lutheran Standard} (April 21, 1917), 248.
church’s role as the successor and guardian of the historic faith of the Reformation in the face of the New Theology and anti-German sentiment during World War I depended on the active participation and sacrifice of lay Lutherans.

As indicated by the aggressive, and sometimes brazen, publicity techniques of the New York Committee, the Joint Committee, and the Joint Synod of Ohio, clerical and lay Lutheran leaders believed that for the religious and political lessons of the Reformation to retain relevance in the twentieth century they needed to enlist the participation of rank-and-file Lutherans. Lutherans needed to be educated in the basic historical facts and principles of the Reformation in order to pass that knowledge on to non-Lutherans and to spread the historical faith of Lutheranism through mission work. They could obtain this education by reading popular literature and taking study classes, but also through the staging and viewing of pageants. Finally, church leaders appealed to lay Lutherans to give monetarily to the education, mission, and church building goals of the various synods. At a time when their financial circumstances were already taxed by wartime demands and inflation, Lutherans gave, if not begrudgingly, to the Quadricentennial fundraising campaigns. Taking the Reformation anniversary into their everyday activities, according to church leaders, would secure the constancy of the Reformation past in a future of religious and political uncertainty.

**Conclusion**

Over the course of the Reformation Quaricentennial in 1916-1917, America’s Lutherans refashioned the memory of the religious and political movement to make it applicable to the changing circumstances of the early twentieth century. By recollecting
and commemorating the Reformation, Lutherans also took full advantage of the opportunity to reflect upon their own religious and historical identity by clarifying their relationship with the country and other Protestant Christians. Amid the flourishing of the New Theology, which many Lutheran pastors and theologians largely saw as a threat to the religious inheritance of the Reformation, and the challenges of a war, in which Lutherans of all ethnic backgrounds became subjects of anti-German sentiment, remembering and celebrating the Reformation became an offensive measure. Like their American Catholic and Mormon counterparts, they could co-opt the past to present a more positive image of Lutheranism in the present. For Lutherans during the Quadricentennial, the Reformation became the source of true religion. Lutheranism was grounded in the “open Bible,” the right administration of the sacraments, and confessional standards. Moreover, the Reformation served as the source of modern political liberty as it stemmed from religious liberty.

Regional and national committees, individual synods, and lay Lutherans contributed their time, ideas, and money to create and perpetuate the Lutheran collective religious memory of the Reformation to an American society they believed was in dire need of spiritual and political rejuvenation. Emulating the government’s Committee of Public Information, the New York Committee and Joint Committee publicized the Reformation anniversary by promoting lectures and addresses, publishing pamphlets, and persuading Lutherans to fully participate in the occasion. To strengthen and expand its churches, the Joint Synod of Ohio called on its Lutheran congregants to give financially, not only as a means of giving thanks for past blessings but to secure those same gifts in the future. Lastly, popular literature, study texts, and dramatic productions were tools
used to educate lay Lutherans in the basic facts and principles of the Reformation. This education served to fortify not only their faith but also to arm them with the tools necessary to spread the Reformation message in the future.
Chapter Five

Pilgrim Principles and Character for the Twentieth Century: Congregationalists and the Pilgrim Tercentenary, 1920-1921

At the beginning of the Pilgrim Tercentenary celebration of 1920-1921, Reverend Frank Dyer, pastor of the First Congregational Church in Tacoma, Washington, stood at the pulpit in front of his congregants and passionately proclaimed the virtues and principles, he claimed, that guided the Pilgrims three hundred years earlier. Dyer informed his congregation that the anniversary of the Pilgrims’ sailing from England to what would become Plymouth colony in present-day Massachusetts was not merely the celebration of the “priceless treasures” the Pilgrims brought with them, but also the symbolic return of the *Mayflower* to a war-ravaged Europe, Africa, and Asia. The Pilgrims brought a “Civil Compact” – as exemplified in the *Mayflower Compact* – and a “Church Covenant,” which served as the foundation for a free state and free church. Dyer was one of many Congregationalist orators during the Tercentenary who declared that these two agreements provided the foundation for the modern separation of church and state, democratic government, and freedom of worship. To whom, Dyer asked, did the United States, and the world for that matter, owe thanks for the “great American idea” of democratic government and freedom of worship? Dyer told the men and women

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1 The First Congregationalist Church was founded in 1874; Dyer left the parish in 1921 and moved to Los Angeles. For a history of this church see Paul B. Raymond, *The Church that Lumber Built: The Story of Tacoma’s Oldest Living Institution, the First Congregational Church* (Tacoma, WA: First Congregationalist Church, 1989).

2 Frank Dyer, D.D., “What the Mayflower Brought to America”: Sermon Commemorating the Beginning of the 300th Year of Pilgrim History in America – 1620-1920” (1920), 1-2, Congregational Library, Boston, Massachusetts.

sitting in the pews of his church that the world owed a debt to the “church of the Pilgrims,” the Congregationalists, who “cradled” an “infant republic” in the *Mayflower.*

Having sufficiently praised the Pilgrim past, Dyer shifted the focus of his sermon to the good that Congregationalists had accomplished in the intervening centuries. He outlined several hallmarks of Congregationalism including the promotion of an open mind towards new learning, a fearless attitude towards seeking the truth, an unequalled contribution in the realm of education, and a “missionary spirit and zeal” at home and abroad. Theological change, education, and missionary work were not limited to the past, Dyer suggested, but would serve as the foundation for America’s future “re-baptism of the Pilgrim spirit.” Amid the “throes of a great disorder and a deep unrest,” Dyer lamented, the fortuitous occasion of the Pilgrim anniversary presented Congregationalists with the opportunity to “re-launch” the *Mayflower* and “to recur to those religious and political foundations which were well and truly laid by the Fathers.” Dyer’s lively recollection of the past and rallying cry for the future resembled the arguments of many Congregationalist ministers who preached on the Pilgrims’ contributions to the religious and political foundation of America. Moreover, Dyer’s call to action did not go unheeded throughout the Tercentenary year. The First Congregational Church instituted religious, social, and financial goals. These goals included striving for “regular and habitual attendance” at church services, Sunday school, and mid-week services; increasing church membership with “spiritually alive and practically useful” congregants; constructing a “Memorial Community House” for the purposes of education, religious

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5 Dyer, “What the Mayflower Brought to America,” 4-12.
training and social service; and contributing financially to the stability of the church. Like Dyer, moreover, ministers and their congregations throughout the country instituted similar goals for the anniversary year. Like Lutherans during the Reformation Quadricentennial, the memory of the Pilgrims prompted Congregationalists to bring the relevance of the past to bear upon the present. Congregationalists believed that the principles, character, and actions of the Pilgrims provided models for strengthening religious devotion and practice within their own denomination in the face of their fear that religion was on the decline. Moreover, the Pilgrims’ example could be used in the post-war society to increase the brotherhood of the United States and the rest of the world.

The legacy of the Pilgrims, and their Massachusetts Bay neighbors the Puritans, however, had become nearly one and the same and the subject of disparaging commentary by the time of the Tercentenary. In numerous attempts, particularly by

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8 Dyer, “What the Mayflower Brought to America,” 16.
9 The Pilgrims were separatists who migrated to New England and founded Plymouth Colony in 1620 while the Puritans were non-separatists, and often suspicious of their Pilgrim separatist counterparts, who settled in New England and founded Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. From the beginning, the Puritans outnumbered the Pilgrims and eventually Plymouth Colony was integrated into Massachusetts Bay Colony. In her valuable appendix on the distinction between the terms Pilgrim and Puritan, Susan Hardman Moore points out that the term Pilgrim was first used by William Bradford, governor of Plymouth Colony, in the biblical tradition of Hebrews 11:13. The Pilgrims were “exiled citizens in heaven, not migrant saints who founded a new nation.” The label Pilgrim only became popularized in the early nineteenth century. The term Puritan was first used as a term of derision and abuse. See Appendix I in Moore, Pilgrims: New World Settlers & The Call of Home (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 148. In some ways, however, the Plymouth Pilgrims were also puritans in that they sought to reform the governance and liturgy of the Church of England and the Puritans were pilgrims in that they made a religious journey. Ann Uhry Abrams points out in The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999) that although they were historically distinct from one another early on, in effect and in the popular imagination, the Pilgrims and Puritans overlap, “partly because many of the early writers and orators – either intentionally or inadvertently – conflated the two societies and partly because in certain contexts the two groups hardly seemed to differ” (xvii-xviii). For discussions of the historical distinction between Pilgrims and Puritans see Richard Howland Maxwell, “Pilgrim and Puritan: A Delicate Distinction,” Pilgrim Society Notes, Series 2 (March 2003), www.pilgrimhall.org/PSNoteNewPilgrimPuritan.htm (accessed August 2008); Peter Lake, “Defining Puritanism – again,” in Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith, ed. Francis J. Bremer, Massachusetts Historical Society Studies in American History and Culture
New Englanders, to redefine the Pilgrims they had lost their usefulness as an “ideological icon.”

The declining ideological relevance of the Pilgrims was aided by the commentary of men like H.L. Mencken. Having worked his way up through the journalism ranks with the Baltimore Herald and Baltimore Sun, Mencken reached the peak of his public popularity and hatred in the 1920s. Particularly influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche’s views of religion and democracy, the overly cynical newspaperman wrote prolifically and contemptuously of America’s faults. According to Mencken, “Puritans have nearly all the cards.” Puritanism, in short, Mencken believed and forcefully argued was the problem with America. Mencken’s hostility towards the Puritans, and religion in general, found no equal in the opening decades of the twentieth century.

Rather than seeing the Puritans as the foundation of all that was good about America in terms of religion, politics, and culture, Mencken pointed to them as the source of all that was wrong and uncivilized about society. In an article written for the New York-based Smart Set in 1914, Mencken railed about the pervasiveness of Puritanism. “You must be surely impressed by the persistence of the Puritan outlook upon the world,” Mencken suggested, and “the Puritan conviction of the pervasiveness of sin, the Puritan lust to make a sinner sweat and yell.” Puritans brought the hammer of morality to bear

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12 Teachout, The Skeptic, 129.
upon everything and everyone. They assumed “that every human act must be either right or wrong and that ninety-nine percent of them are wrong.”\textsuperscript{13} Writing under the pseudonym Owen Hatteras in 1916, Mencken referred to the Puritan as a “poor stick of a man” and similarly argued that he was obsessed with legality.\textsuperscript{14} He was morally voluptuous and his hideousness spreads like a “foul pestilence” wherever he goes.\textsuperscript{15} Democracy and Puritanism were also linked in a negative way in Mencken’s mind. “Democracy,” Mencken declared, “always resolves itself, in the end, into a scheme for enabling the weak and inferior men to force their notions and desires, by mass action, upon strong and superior men.”\textsuperscript{16} As such, the Puritan “drew up the laws now on the statue books and they cunningly contrived to serve their own purposes.”\textsuperscript{17} The Pilgrims and democracy lived and thrived together in Mencken’s mind, proceeding from “excess to excess”; they were mere “delusions” that would eventually expire.\textsuperscript{18} As evident in his diatribes Mencken was unwilling to credit the Puritans with any positive qualities. Rather he was more than eager to malign anything or anyone in American society that reeked of Puritanism.

The religious and secular celebrations that laid laurels at the Pilgrims’ feet during the Tercentenary of 1920-1921, however, overwhelmed Mencken’s disparaging opinions. Not only were the Pilgrims honored as brave and strong individuals of the past, but as

\textsuperscript{16} H.L. Mencken, “What Ails the Republic,” in \textit{Mencken’s America}, 117. This article was originally published in the \textit{Baltimore Evening Sun} in April 1922.
\textsuperscript{17} Teachout, \textit{The Skeptic}, 129. Teachout points out that Mencken’s view of the U.S. government “forever changed” after learning that the Justice Department had him under surveillance and the War Department censored his mail (132-133).
with the commemorations of Columbus, the Mormon pioneers, and Martin Luther, they were lifted up as men and women to be emulated at a particularly volatile moment in American history when materialism and the lack of religion seemed to reign. Of all the commemorative occasions examined in this study, no other event or figure was as widely celebrated as the Pilgrims; the Columbus Quadricentenary places a close second. As with the Lutheran church’s celebration of the Reformation, World War I contributed to a sense of urgency during the Tercentenary. An armistice had been reached by the belligerent nations in November 1918 and the Versailles Peace Treaty was signed in June 1919, but the consequences of the war still lingered. The perceived religious and political instability of the postwar period made the Pilgrims, their history, and their symbolic meaning easily malleable by numerous secular and religious interests.

During the Tercentenary year, Americans were more likely to experience and participate in celebrations of the Pilgrims through various non-religious programs at the local and state level. It was in the context of these secular commemorations that all could share in the heritage of the Pilgrims and the responsibility associated with that legacy; the descendants of the Pilgrims were not merely those men and women related by blood. The country was “inundated” with numerous novels, histories, paintings, and illustrations providing textual and visual evidence of the Pilgrim legacy. Private associations, towns, and states took it upon themselves to commemorate the Pilgrims from mid-December 1920 through much of the following year. The American Mayflower Council

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19 The ratification of the Versailles Peace Treaty was a contentious process that involved nations seeking sincere peace but also revenge for the brutal destruction of four years of modern warfare.
20 Charles A. Merrill, “Our First Immigrants: What is Our Legacy from the Pilgrims?,” *Boston Globe* (December 23, 1920), 10. Merrill pointed out that the continued presence of the Pilgrim tradition would assure that the country would not be tempted to “sacrifice other things to the pursuit of wealth” nor “align itself with the powerful of the earth” as its own political influence increased.
arranged for preachers, professors, and journalists to speak in over sixty cities. In late November 1920, from Dallas to Milwaukee and New Orleans to Albany, orators spoke about the legacy of the Pilgrims, often to thousands.\(^{22}\) Numerous towns, particularly in Massachusetts, put on pageants that told the narrative of the Pilgrim past while also incorporating the history of their community.\(^{23}\) The residents of Worcester, Massachusetts performed “The People’s Pilgrim Pageant” for the dedication of the city’s open-air theatre, while 200 of the yearlong and summer residents of the Cape Cod town of Truro performed a pageant for an audience of 2,000.\(^{24}\) The community of Plymouth, however, outdid all of her competitors with the performance of “The Pilgrim Spirit,” a pageant written by Harvard professor George P. Baker. The spectacular production which included a cast of 1,300 filled by residents not only from Plymouth and the surrounding communities of Kingston, Duxbury, and Marshfield; a chorus of 300; and seating for 10,000; offered a fitting culmination for the Tercentenary. With three weekends of performances scheduled for late July and early August 1921, the pageant attracted huge crowds to Plymouth. Each performance nearly sold out, traffic jams clogged the streets, and no hotel bed was left empty.\(^{25}\)


\(^{23}\) As Glassberg points out in his examination of pageants, the community was central to the production of pageants. Particularly in the arc of plots, there was a great deal of emphasis placed on continuity over disagreement; a focus on social, economic, and political development; and in essence a narrative of progress (122, 140).


In addition, politicians and the federal government took steps to commemorate the Pilgrims. Numerous conservative politicians of the postwar period lent their oratorical skills to the celebrations. Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot Lodge provided the primary address at Plymouth’s celebration on December 20, 1920, while President Warren G. Harding, newly elected the previous November, and his Vice-President and former Governor of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge both spoke at the celebration in Plymouth in July of 1921.\(^{26}\) In addition, the Federal Treasury issued 300,000 half dollar coins with images of a Pilgrim and the Mayflower, while the Postal Service issued three stamps, depicting the Mayflower, the landing, and the signing of the Mayflower Compact.\(^{27}\) The Massachusetts Pilgrim Tercentenary Commission, ambitiously seeking to revamp the Plymouth waterfront and harbor, received an appropriation of funds from Congress.\(^{28}\) To say the least, at the local, state and federal level, the Pilgrim Tercentenary could hardly go by unnoticed.

Besides the non-religious commemorative programs, other Protestant denominations also made use of the Tercentenary to articulate a particular vision of society, including the Federal Council of Churches [FCC] and the International Congress of Free Christians and Other Religious Liberals [ICFC]. The Federal Council of Churches held a meeting in Boston that simultaneously observed the spirit of the Pilgrims and examined the status of Christianity in American society. Organized in 1908 with thirty-three participating Protestant denominations, the FCC provided a means for these

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\(^{26}\) For further examination of the speeches given by Lodge, Harding, and Coolidge and numerous programs held in Plymouth during the Tercentenary see Bittinger, *The Story of the Pilgrim Tercentenary Celebration*; and Seeyle, *Memory’s Nation*, 510-533, 571-578.


Protestants to express their unity in addressing the changing needs of society. The Pilgrim Tercentenary served as the occasion for the FCC to gather and take stock of the state of Protestantism. Earlier in the year, the Council issued a report documenting the numerical strength of religion in America including data on churches, ministers, members, and Sunday schools. In light of the Tercentenary, the Council issued a statement conveying their confidence that “religion has… held its own” even amid the trends of migration, materialism, and the spread of scientific knowledge. The meeting in Boston allowed prominent members of the FCC to more explicitly tie the memory of the Pilgrims to the state of religion in American society. W.H.P. Faunce, President of Brown University, used his address at an evening session held at the Episcopal Cathedral Church of St. Paul on Tremont Street to underscore the contributions of the Pilgrims and bypass their purported narrowness. Freedom served as the foundation of the Pilgrim understanding of democracy, Faunce proclaimed, and while they may have been narrow in outlook “they had to be of stern fiber to do the great work before them.” He also encouraged the men and women actively reforming society to cultivate a spirit that developed “all the fairest in the heritage from the fathers.” The Pilgrims had contributed to the strength of religion and democratic government in American society and their ancestors needed to do the same.

In a similar manner to the FCC, the meeting of the ICFC honored the Pilgrims in a fashion that harmonized with their understanding of religion. Organized in Boston in 1900, the ICFC aimed to “open communication” between those who strove to “unite pure

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30 “Sums Up Progress During 300 Years,” Boston Globe (December 19, 1920), 20.
religion and perfect liberty” and to increase their fellowship and cooperation. The ICFC’s invitation supported the Pilgrim beliefs in liberty, religious toleration, popular government, and cooperation in industry. The ICFC did so only, however, “in terms that befit the twentieth century” and in ways that would make the Pilgrim principles “vital in the life of the modern commonwealth.” Held during the first week of October 1920, the meeting marked the seventh such gathering of Christians and religious liberals. Over the course of five days, the delegates participated in religious services, took a “pilgrimage” to Plymouth, and listened to several addresses on the Pilgrims and their relevance to present-day religion. At the opening session of the meeting held at Arlington Street Church, the minister of Upper Chapel in Sheffield, England, Christopher J. Street, sermonized on the liberality of the Pilgrims. Notwithstanding doctrines that “now seem to be delusions,” particularly the Calvinist teaching of redemption and the strict interpretation of scripture, the Pilgrims understood that in relationship to religious truth “room must be left for growth, both in themselves and in those who should follow them.” From the Pilgrim belief that the state should not oppress the individual’s religious association came the “conception of a Free Church in a Free State.” From the Pilgrim’s partial grasp of religious truth and their openness to growth came “a Free and

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34 Nearly 800 Congress participants took advantage of the “pilgrimage” to Plymouth on October 5; they visited First Church, Plymouth Rock, and the former homes of Pilgrim leadership.

Progressive Faith receptive of Divine Truth in modern manifestations. In addition, Street called attention to the social and political implications of the Pilgrim legacy. The Pilgrims’ fellowship encouraged cooperation, advanced “amity and peace” in their relationship with the Indians, and promoted unity, all of which provided an example of international brotherhood for the League of Nations. Although Street and Faunce both acknowledged the real or Mencken-like fabricated narrowness of the Pilgrims, they downplayed the Pilgrims’ faults and appropriated their memory to champion not only religion, but a specific kind of religion.

Although there were numerous non-religious memorials throughout the tercentenary year, Congregationalists, the direct spiritual descendants of the Pilgrims, created a distinctively religious commemoration that was aimed at reviving the religious spirit of their denomination, American society, and a post-war world. The Pilgrims, as the Congregationalists remembered them, were ready-made models for civil and religious liberty and a devout faith. Congregationalists, like their non-Congregationalist counterparts, more than likely participated in the non-religious programs held at the local and state level. At the same time, however, Congregationalists – both the lay and clerical leadership and the church members themselves – embarked upon a denominationally distinctive commemoration of the Pilgrims. Similar to the Lutherans during the

38 There were several other addresses at the International Congress that spoke directly or indirectly to the legacy of the Pilgrims. Other examples included “The Pilgrim Character” by Francis G. Peabody, a Unitarian minister and professor at the Harvard Divinity School; “The Message of the Pilgrims to the New Age” by Reverend Samuel M. Crothers, pastor of First Parish in Cambridge, MA; “The Pilgrim Spirit” by William Laurence Sullivan, a Unitarian minister; and “The Free Churches and the Tasks of a Prophetic Era” by Arthur C. McGiffert, a professor at Union Theological Seminary.
Reformation Quadricentennial, Congregationalists wanted to “congregationalize” individuals and society in a manner reminiscent of the Pilgrims.

With a rich history behind them and waning cultural influence, the Congregational church used the Tercentenary to reclaim some of its authority. Turning inward during the Tercentenary was particularly important as the prominence of Congregationalism as an institution declined over the course of the nineteenth century, although many of the church’s ministers remained major figures in the American religious scene. Historically, Congregationalism was largely concentrated in New England. From the early to mid-nineteenth century when religious experience and affiliation became increasingly democratized in the wake of the American Revolution, the Congregational churches struggled to stay apace with other emerging Protestant denominations. While the Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians experienced exponential growth due to the religious revivals of the Second Great Awakening and national expansion to the west, the denomination remained largely confined to New England. Moreover, after the Civil War, Congregationalism along with Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism were no longer the largest churches in the county having been eclipsed by religious communities like Roman Catholicism that were supported by immigration populations.

As they struggled to establish a denominational foundation, however, Congregationalist ministers provided religious and cultural leadership. Congregational ministers, like Henry Ward Beecher, and other mainstream Protestant clergy were celebrities who were “widely quoted as authorities and chosen as custodians of the

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Congregationalists founded many of the nation’s most prestigious universities, including Harvard and Yale. Originally founded upon the belief of the compatibility between religion and knowledge, these universities adopted scientific methods for the acquisition of knowledge that increasingly pushed religion to the periphery in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.\(^4\) The same influences within the discipline of science that relegated religion to the margins in institutions of higher education were the same that the church embraced. Several Congregational ministers, like Horace Bushnell, Beecher, and George A. Gordon, either served on the front or helped navigate through the development of the New Theology. Unlike other Protestant denominations, particularly the Baptists and Presbyterians, who struggled through the treacherous waters of theological change, the Congregational church adapted to and incorporated the influences of evolution and higher criticism into their theology with relative ease.\(^4\) In addition to these theological transformations, Congregationalists responded in due course to the intense poverty, abuse of labor, and corporate monopolies produced by modern industry. Washington Gladden, a Congregationalist minister, was one of the primary architects of the Social Gospel movement over the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In writings like *Applied Christianity* (1886) and *Social Salvation*


(1902), Gladden argued for the practical and ethical application of Christian theology and religious belief.

Congregationalism’s clerical and lay leaders approached the Pilgrim Tercentenary with a sense of urgency, as did Lutherans during the Reformation Quadricentennial, but also with a sense of progressive optimism. The sense of urgency stemmed from external and internal changes. First, mainstream Protestantism faced the challenge of meeting the spiritual needs of an increasingly urban and immigrant population. Second, starting in the late nineteenth century a split began to emerge between, what Martin Marty labels, “private” and “public” Protestantism. The former focused on individual salvation and a personally moral life while the latter focused on the social aspects of Christianity. Congregational leaders, who largely fell under “public” Protestantism, saw the theological changes accompanying the New Theology as a valuable resource in addressing domestic and international problems; these theological developments served as the basis of their progressive optimism. The New Theology, one historian suggests, constituted a “conceptual revolution,” in which the historical tenants of Calvinism underwent a process of liberalization. Congregational statements of faith deemphasized – or outright rejected – classical Calvinist emphasis on human depravity, predestination, and the transcendence of God. Many Congregationalists believed that Calvinism was

\[43\] See chapt. 15 in Marty, Righteous Empire, 155-165.

\[44\] Marty, Righteous Empire, 179. Marty suggests that this schism was formalized by 1908.

\[45\] Szasz, The Divided Mind of Protestant America, 70.

\[46\] The history of creedal adherence in the Congregational church was characterized by a reluctance to affirm an authoritative statement. Moreover, the creation of creeds reflected the increased liberalization of Calvinism in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Unlike Lutherans, maintaining an historically authoritative creed was not an essential component of Congregationalist religious and historical identity. No “declaration of faith” had been declared by Congregational churches between the 1648 statement and the Burial Hill Declaration in 1865. Subsequent landmark declarations included the Commission Creed of 1883 and particularly the Kansas City Statement of 1913. The Kansas City Statement, Congregational historian Williston Walker pointed out, “represented a decisive move away from anything like explicitly
no longer an effective theology in American society. Central to Congregationalism’s progressive optimism was God’s immanence, or active presence in the world. Progressive optimism in the ability to affect change, through human cooperation with God’s presence in the world, combined with a sense of urgency. As William R. Hutchinson suggests, “liberals… seemed genuinely apprehensive that if Christians did not act, if churches failed to act, frightful things could happen to this civilization.” The Pilgrim Tercentenary, in the wake of something as “frightful” as World War I, marked a culmination of the Congregational duality of urgency and progressive optimism.

The process of revitalizing Christianity through the “congregationalization” of America began by ensuring the vitality of the Congregational church itself. In order to look outward to American society and the world, Congregationalists first needed to look inward. Increasing membership numbers, instituting better religious education to retain members, recruiting young people for missionary work, and improving the financial stability of the church would, church leaders hoped, establish a firm basis for engaging the world via missionary work and social responsibility. For several years leading up to the Tercentenary and during the anniversary year itself, individual congregations, the National Council of Congregational Churches [NCCC], and the International Council of Congregationalists [ICC] actively commemorated the Pilgrims and appropriated these celebrations to pursue the practical advancement of their religious and social agenda. Established in 1871 to allow for “more coordinated effort among the churches” and to

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47 Hutchinson, *The Modernist Impulse in America*, 147. Hutchinson points out that a great deal of the literature produced by religious liberals articulated a sense of crisis after 1900.
advocate “openness to advanced intellectual life,” the NCCC took the lead in organizing a national commemorative program of education, financial development, and missionary recruitment. Like the Lutherans, a national plan for the commemoration allowed Congregational leaders to reach out to historically independent congregations. Moreover, the ICC used the Tercentenary occasion to address the larger social and religious goals of the church. Cooperatively founded by the Congregational Union of England and Wales and the NCCC and intended to foster fellowship between the Congregational churches worldwide, the ICC first gathered in London in 1891. The gathering of Congregationalists in Boston to commemorate the Pilgrims marked the fourth meeting of the ICC.

After taking full stock of the state of the Congregational church, its leaders and laity could turn outward and “congregationalize” society both domestically and internationally. Influenced by the emphasis on social responsibility in the New Theology, their contribution to the Social Gospel movement, and the rebuilding of the world in the wake of World War I, Congregationalists took it upon themselves to reinvigorate and renew the spirit of Christianity within the lives of men and women around the country and the world. The sense of progressive optimism infused their commemorations and Tercentenary goals in 1920-1921. Congregationalists leading and participating in the Tercentenary embodied the “inner landscape” of the progressive clergy studied by Richard M. Gamble. Gamble suggests that many progressive clergymen looked at World War I through the lens of the Social Gospel and in turn hoped

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to bring about a “material, political, and spiritual” transformation of the old world.49 Although Gamble argues that they transformed the Puritan “errand” from a spiritual into a secular task, the Congregationalists in this study still believed that progress was not solely material but religious as well.50 Congregationalists, like their Lutheran and Pentecostal counterparts, expressed outright disillusionment with the direction of American society, particularly its materialism. At the same time, they also conveyed their faith in progress and confidence in a future specifically guided by the principles and character of the Pilgrims.

The Pilgrims in History and in Memory

During the Tercentenary the Congregationalists drew from a long tradition of myth making surrounding the Pilgrims. Their exaltation of the Pilgrims as the bearers of modern religious freedom and founders of democratic government emerged from more than a century’s worth of re-imaginings of the Pilgrims. Part of the Pilgrim myth “sprang from an amalgam of the Plymouth story with the more extensive history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.”51 In the popular imagination, the Pilgrims and Puritans became one and the same; although historians of the mid-twentieth century forward, like Perry Miller, have made attempts to differentiate the two from one another, they often remain a singular entity even today.52 Nineteenth-century historians also aided the creation of the Pilgrim myth by arguing that, “the puritans and their Pilgrim religious

cousins were the true architects of what made America what it was.” They – the Puritans and the Pilgrims – became “apostles of liberty rather than godliness” and the New England town became “the seedbed of American democracy.” Numerous articles, sermons, poems, and artwork reinforced this memory of the Pilgrims/Puritans. By the early twentieth century, however, a generation of commentators like Mencken pointed to the Puritans as the source of “all that was bad, making it responsible for prudery, bigotry, and opposition to fun and drink.” Facing increased hostility toward the memory of their religious ancestors, the Congregationalists tried to reclaim them as the founders of religious liberty and democratic government at a time when religion and democracy seemed to be threatened.

Over time the historical reality of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony and the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay Colony gave way to usable and malleable memories fitted to suit political, social, and religious interests. They became “synonymous with patriotism, simplicity of life, sterling worth, democracy, and all other desires of the young Republic.” Ann Uhry Abrams points out in her study of the Pilgrims and Pocahontas that during the nineteenth century the memory of the Pilgrims was employed to support the belief that “God willed the transportation of Protestantism to America.” In addition, the Pilgrim memory was used to argue for the transference of Western civilization from Europe to the Americas, and to combat Catholicism and slavery.

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57 Abrams, *The Pilgrims and Pocahontas*, 75, 143.
Moreover, during the late nineteenth century those purporting a social Christianity turned to the Puritans to advocate moral education in schools and to act against materialism. In the process, by associating the Puritans with “abstract truths, the Puritan tradition lost much of its concrete historical identity.”

The historical record differs from the collective memory of the Pilgrims and Puritans. The roots of Puritanism can be traced back to the English Reformation of the sixteenth century, which first attempted further reforms of certain worship practices and ceremonies in the Church of England after Henry VIII separated from the Roman Catholic Church. By the early seventeenth century, the Puritans had largely constructed their own theology different from that of the Church of England. Separatists, those who became frustrated by attempts to reform the church from within, established their own congregations. Facing the possibility of persecution, some separatists resettled on the European continent including the small Scrooby congregation that migrated to Holland and later constituted the majority of the Pilgrims sailing to Plymouth. Of the 120 Pilgrims that departed from England in 1620, there was no pastor and only 35 had been

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members of the Leyden congregation in Holland. The Plymouth Colony remained relatively small and insulated until Puritans in England gained increased interest in North America. The Great Migration of 1630 brought 1,000 people in seventeen ships to Massachusetts Bay Colony, which was three times the size of Plymouth in the first ten years of its existence. Massachusetts Bay, moreover, founded nearly 20 churches in the 1630s and by the 1640s 20,000 people had migrated from England. By the end of the seventeenth century, Massachusetts Bay annexed Plymouth, which brought an official end to the distinction between the two colonies.

According to the historical record, moreover, neither the Pilgrims nor the Puritans settled in New England to establish religious liberty or democratic forms of government. Both the Pilgrims and Puritans believed in a certain kind of church and a certain kind of community and government to support the dictates of religion. The Pilgrims/Puritans did not bring religious freedom but rather “were only seeking freedom for themselves that they might worship according to the dictates of their own conscience.” Those who posed a threat to their ideal of a pure church in the fragile conditions of New England were largely unwelcome. In turn, the Puritans created what has become known as the New England Way as a means to maintain the purity of the church, to retain the protection of Providence, and to ensure “peaceful orderly settlement.”

60 Bremer, *The Puritan Experience*, 32, 35.
64 Rodger Williams and Anne Hutchinson serve as examples of those who posed a challenge to the religious, social, and political unity created in Puritan New England.
stability of religious and civic life could be maintained by covenants that served as “solemn agreements which bound settlers together with common rights and responsibilities.” Moreover, those seeking membership in a church were only admitted after giving a testimony of faith approved by the church. Like their religious covenants, the Puritans established a form of civil government that “had a responsibility to uphold the true religion lest the public heretic prove to be a threat to the stability and purity of the commonwealth.” In practice, an aristocracy served as the form of government rather than a democracy. Although the Puritans did not establish democratic forms of government, historians do recognize that they did foster – intentionally or unintentionally – theories of limited authority, popular participation, and the consent of the governed all components conducive to a democracy. In short, the Pilgrims/Puritans

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68 Bremer, The Puritan Experiment, 92.
69 Bremer acknowledges that in some ways Puritan governments were democratic, but he also points out that a practice like the institution of a broad franchise was put in place “for the purpose of binding the people to their government than to encourage the expression of popular views” (The Puritan Experiment, 90). They still sought consensus, order, and stability over pluralism. Von Rohr also explores the early Massachusetts Bay Colony government charter, John Winthrop’s views of moral versus natural liberty, and the relationship between the church and state. While the church governed the realm of the spiritual and the state, this relationship was complicated by the “principal of uniformity” that argued for only one religion in the state and the conviction that the church should assist the church (64-68). Finally, James F. Cooper seeks to reexamine the contribution of early Congregationalists to democracy. He points out that while at one time “quaint ‘filipietists’” pointed to the early Congregationalists as the fathers of democracy and while scholars since the late 1960s and early 1970s have reacted against this interpretation, that still leaves the question of the origins of New England democratic government unanswered. Cooper revisits the Congregationalists and argues that both in theory and in practice they fostered “concepts that would flourish during the Revolutionary generation, including the notions that government derives its legitimacy from the voluntary consent of the governed, governors should be chosen by the governed, rulers should be accountable to the rule, and constitutional checks should limit both the governors and the people.” See Cooper, Tenacious of Their Liberties: The Congregationalists in Colonial Massachusetts, Religion in America Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4-5. Also see chapt. 6 in Barlett, The Faith of the Pilgrims, 103-123.
in past histories and particularly in memory have been attributed with more than is generally due to their credit in relationship to religious freedom and democratic government.

Tercentenary pageants – those written by and for Congregationalists and non-Congregationalists – helped to construct a memory of the Pilgrims that reflected contemporary needs and desires rather than the historical reality. Although pageants incorporated elements of the history of the migration and early settlement, the narrative of these events supported contemporary concerns regarding the status of religion, the fate of democratic governments, and social responsibility. In short, the historical reality of the Pilgrims was obscured to heighten the contemporary relevance and usefulness of the Pilgrim experience. No matter who authored the Pilgrim Tercentenary pageant, each included basic plot points including the departure from England, exile in Holland, eventual migration to North America, and the residence at Plymouth. Amid all of these narrative pieces, the Pilgrims persevered through hardship and various obstacles. From this basic narrative emerged the major memorial themes of the Tercentenary year: keeping the Pilgrim spirit alive in the realms of freedom and liberty, the role of America as a religious and political guide, and the application of the Pilgrim principles – including

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70 This theme of perseverance and struggle through hardship and numerous obstacles not only emerged in the memory of the Pilgrims but was also a prominent feature of the Utah Semi-Centennial and the Columbus Quadricentennial. The character of Edward Winslow, before departing Leyden for the Americas, proclaimed in “The Pilgrim Spirit,” the pageant by George P. Baker, that “Yes, we are well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother country, and enured to difficulties of a strange and hard land which yet in a great part we have by patience overcome.” See George P. Baker, “The Pilgrim Spirit”: A Pageant in Celebration of the Tercentenary of the Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, Massachusetts December 21, 1620 (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1921), 69. Similarly, the prologue between the scenes of the Pilgrims’ departure from England and arrival in Holland suggested they “welcomed trial toil severe, and change,/For by them were they harder made, to serve/The purpose of the God who guided them.” See Anne Marjorie Day, The Guiding Light: Pilgrim Tercentenary Pageant Play in Four Episodes, American Dramatist Series (Boston: Gorham Press, 1921), 8.
“the presence and guidance of God and the supremacy of conscience over against all human authority” – in the Pilgrim past but also in the present and future.  

Pageant authors explicitly identified their religious and/or political concerns in writing a drama about the Pilgrim past. Congregationalists created pageants that simultaneously addressed their co-religionists and articulated a broad and inclusive message for society at large. A Connecticut-based Congregational church aimed to produce “a pageant showing the duty of the Church to the Pilgrim Fathers, to the present-day immigrants, and to their children’s children.” This church wanted a pageant that did not stop at celebrating the Pilgrims but connected the responsibilities of the church to America’s immigrants and future.  

Similarly, Anne Marjorie Day believed that her pageant championed Americanism, which contained “those principles which should be the guiding light of the world.” The students at the Classical High School in Providence, Rhode Island, moreover, seemed inspired, swept on by the amazingly tolerant Pilgrim spirit and almost mystic faith in divine guidance.” The inspiration of Pilgrim tolerance and faith would stir young people in the present and future to stem “the engulfing flood of materialism” that Day saw emerging after the war.  

Henry E. Oxnard, member of a Congregational church in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, certified that his pageant possessed an overtly “missionary character.” The presentation of the pageant was a success in his church, Oxnard boasted, making it a valuable tool for other congregations. Like Day,

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72 Mary Alice Emerson, “Loyalty to our Heritage,” The Congregationalist and Advance (April 15, 1920), 505.
75 Henry E. Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant; or the Atonement of Anawan a Tercentenary Pageant Drama from the Indian Point of View (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1921), 5.
Oxnard believed the pageant offered an alternative form of entertainment for youth who
were often corrupted and softened by the ““Movie” that “mingles evil and good, and
often ridicules religion and religious offices.”76 Esther Willard Bates, the author of
several collections of pageants, including productions on Christopher Columbus,
presented her pageant as means to communicate “the vital significance of their [the
Pilgrims] ideals and actions to all mankind.”77 Although her pageant was published by a
Congregational press and performed by the youth of the Union Congregational Church of
Boston at the meeting of the ICC, Bates deemed it worthy of a wider audience.78 While
grounded in the seventeenth-century experience of the Congregationalists’ religious
ancestors, the lessons and principles of the Pilgrim past were applicable to all people in
the twentieth century.

Some pageants highlighted how the Pilgrims fostered religious freedom through
personal hardship. For Marietta Conway Kennard, whose pageant was approved by the
Congregational Conference Committee of the state of Washington and northern Idaho,
the story of the Pilgrims, who “followed the gleam/Through the stormy sea,” began in the
garden of the Fairweather family. In the garden, Francis the servant and Richard
Merriweather the orphan sat comparing the ability of flowers and humans to thrive in
conditions of hardship, which immediately established a major theme of the Pilgrim
experience.79 Several Fairweather family members entered the garden including the
patriarch John and his wife Eleanor, their eldest son James and his wife Dorothy and their

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76 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 6.
78 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church held in Boston,
Massachusetts, June 29-July 6, 1920, comp. and arr. Truman J. Spencer (New York: The National Council
of the Congregational Churches of the United States, 1921), 39.
79 Marietta Conway Kennard, The Pilgrim Gleam: A Pilgrim Tercentenary Pageant Play [Tacoma,
WA: 1920], 4.
daughter Margaret. Detecting that something was bothering his son, John inquired into his sadness. James told his father that Parliament passed an act prohibiting the Pilgrims from worshipping according to their conscience and that the Scrooby Pilgrims were preparing to leave England for Holland. “We love England,” James exclaimed, “but we hate tyranny!” Unsympathetic to his son’s struggle over devotion to country or religion and possessing little respect for the “ale-bloated, wooden-shoed” Dutch, John told James that if he chose religion over country that his brother Andrew would become his heir. Moreover, James’ mother proclaimed: “Conscience! Who would give up a rich inheritance and go penniless to foreign parts for conscience sake?” Faced with the hardship of exile in Holland without country, family, or financial stability, James, his wife and daughter followed the dictates of their conscience and left England.

Other pageants also pointed to the willingness of the Pilgrims to adhere to the dictates of conscience even amid hardship. In the first episode of Day’s *The Guiding Light*, William Brewster was arrested for violating the king’s laws against non-conformity. As the episode came to a conclusion, Brewster spoke intently of the “divine law” that dwelled inside a person that was “greater than the law of any land.” A “Questioner” and “Interpreter” guided the narrative of Bates’ pageant. At one point, the Questioner asked what the Pilgrims sought. In response, the Interpreter proclaimed that they wanted “A commonwealth of God,/A haven of their own across the sea,/Where midst of perils, midst of savage foes,/Midst hunger, cold, and stalking pestilence,/They

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fix their eyes upon the stars and find/Freedom to worship God.”

Kennard’s pageant also continued this major theme. After a twelve-year sojourn in Holland, James spoke to his now grown daughter about the decision to leave their home once again for the shores of America. He told her that she could return to England where she would be “rich, admired, and loved” and her life would be one of ease and rest. Demonstrating her willingness to follow the “gleam” and endure any hardship that could come her way, Margaret chose to sail with her family. The following scene depicted the band of pilgrims, including the Merriweather family, crossing “the sea on wings of storm to find/Our promised land.” Here in their new homeland – “like a page not yet written on” – James and the remainder of the Pilgrims could worship according to their conscience and “build laws modeled on the laws of our great home land.”

As these pageants suggested, the Pilgrims pursued religious freedom to the ends of the earth even amid continued challenges that could bring about their personal or financial ruin.

Pageants also explored, or exploited, the Pilgrims’ connection to the political principles of democratic forms of government. Victor E. Williams, a teacher at Emery County High School in Huntington, Utah, used the allegorical “Spirit of History” to escort a little boy and girl through manifestations of fair play in history. According to Williams, the Pilgrims encapsulated the “ideal of fair play” that came from Anglo-Norman sources and “has become a leading ideal of the great American nation.”

The “Spirit of History,” a female dressed in classical Greek costume, subsequently

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84 Bates, A Pageant of Pilgrims, 9.  
85 Kennard, The Pilgrim Gleam, 9-11.  
86 Kennard, The Pilgrim Gleam, 12.  
87 Kennard, The Pilgrim Gleam, 14.  
transported the children to an early demonstration of a trial by jury among the Anglo-
Saxons. As the children watched intently, Gurth, “a greybeard of evil aspect,” minded a
pot of boiling water intended to test the testimony of Cedric of Malmsby; Malmsby had
been accused of setting fire to the haystacks of John of Leith.  

When Malmsby was offered the option of testifying to his innocence rather than placing his arm in the
scalding water, Gurth interjected angrily: “Testimony! Such crazy new-fangled notions! I
say put him to the fire.” The Hundred-Elder conducting the trial chastised Gurth, saying
that, “thy ancient cruelties will not forever be tolerated.”  

The accused subsequently called forth a witness who testified that he was nowhere near the area where the arson
took place. As such, the Hundred-Elder found Malmsby innocent and set him free.  

The Pilgrims, as Williams’ pageant demonstrated, inherited the heritage of a fair judicial
system from their Anglo-Saxon ancestors and brought it with them to North America.  

Finally, the pageants used the Pilgrims’ relationship with New England Native Americans to make a contemporary appeal for the pursuit of religious and social justice.

As a Congregationalist minister himself, Oxnard placed a priority on imparting a lesson
about the religious legacy of the Pilgrims in relationship to missionary work and seeking
peace over war. Oxnard told the Pilgrim story through the eyes of Anawan, an aid to

King Philip who was chief of the Wampanoag tribe during King Philip’s War in the mid
1670s. Historians point out that early relations between the Pilgrims and the native tribes

90 Williams, “A Pilgrim Pageant,” in Bulletin of the University of Utah, 28-29.
91 Williams, “A Pilgrim Pageant,” in Bulletin of the University of Utah, 30.
93 Pageants also enshrined the signing of the Mayflower Compact as the moment when self-
government became a reality in North America. The signing of the Mayflower Compact in Day’s Pilgrim
narrative marked the “Beginning of a Free Republic first/In all the world – its charter, Liberty” (The
Guiding Light, 27). Historians, like Abrams, argue however that the Mayflower Compact was not a
“republican constitution” but a “covenant to guarantee congregational autonomy, provide a secure system
for governing the new colony, and certify the Separatists’ hegemony over the diverse population of
‘strangers’” (The Pilgrims and Pocahontas, 26).

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of Massachusetts were relatively peaceful and calm. Oxnard, however, may have deliberately chosen King Philip’s War to highlight the difference between the power of Christianity and “heathenness” to bring an end to war. Through the conflict between the Pilgrims and Indians, Oxnard communicated a contemporary relevant message to audiences that had just lived through the conflict and unstable peace following World War I.

The pageant opens on a seemingly idyllic scene with birds singing and little children running around playing, eventually settling down to watch their mother, Teweelema, work. Teweelema, however, burdened by a heavy and sorrowful heart lamented the cruelty of war; she not only pled with the Christian God for an end to the war but also with her husband, Naugaught, a hunter and warrior, whose belligerence would not be held back. Teweelema begged him to be a “Christian man!” Although he loved her deeply, Naugaught forcefully declared that the “Taunt of Redskin, Redskin, Redskin,/Red-hot heathen” implored him to fight the “great Devourer” of their land and happiness. Throughout the first scene Naugaught is torn between warring against the prejudice and colonialism of the “great Devourer” and his wife’s desire that he be a “Christian man” and seek peace.

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94 Francis Bremer points out that while Puritans saw the Indian population of Massachusetts as “courteous and hospitable,” they also saw them as “lazy and prone to drunkenness” and generally uncivilized. And while they did not begin to think of the native populations as racially distinct from themselves until around the turn of the eighteenth century, in part due to King Philip’s War (1675-1676), “they certainly judged him culturally inferior and gradually mounted an effort to ‘raise’ him to the level of Englishmen by bringing him the blessings of civilization and Christianity” (The Puritan Experiment, 200, 202). Also see chapt. 16 in Bremer, John Winthrop, 323-347; and Philbrick, Mayflower.

95 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 17-21.

96 Other pageants contain episodes demonstrating the Pilgrims’ perspective and relations with the native tribes of Massachusetts. Like Oxnard’s pageant, the Indians were largely depicted as uncivilized and in need of Christianity’s saving grace and the accompanying blessings of English civilization. Bates’s pageant included an episode depicting the first, and very unnerving, encounter between the Pilgrims and the Indians, and the first thanksgiving. As the Pilgrims arrived, the Indians were “howling, painted, bloodthirsty savages.” In the Thanksgiving episode, the Indians tempted young Pilgrim girls with dancing.
The theme of ending war and achieving peace became intertwined with another major theme in Oxnard’s pageant – the role of missionary work. As Anawan first envisioned the Pilgrims landing on the shores of North America, the lights dimmed around him and the scene shifted to Elder Brewster who declared, “Within thy hand this age-long Rock/Extends a welcome to our knock… Free to worship as we please,/To serve thee and the aborigines.” According to Oxnard’s narrative, depicting the relationship between the Pilgrims and the Massachusetts natives was two-fold. First, in coming to the Americas the Pilgrims could worship freely and second, they could also undertake mission work among the native populations. Several instances of interaction between the native populations and Pilgrim missionaries take place in the course of the pageant, including the activities of Samuel Fuller, a doctor and deacon of the church, and John Eliot, who translated the Bible into Algonquian. John Eliot preached to the native population about the fall of Adam and Eve, the redeeming power of the “Cross of Jesus,” and the need to “trust his Gospel.” The gospel that “flows just like a brook,” Eliot

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These actions of revelry prompted Miles Standish to chastise the young girls: “Dancing! Shouting! Fiddling! Are ye all possessed of the devil?” (Bates, A Pageant of Pilgrims, 14, 30). These instances illustrate that the Indians were both lacking in Christian salvation and English civilization. Day’s pageant includes an episode portraying the Pilgrims’ treaty with Massasoit in 1621. Before Massasoit arrived, leading members of the community called the Indians “savages.” Once the treaty had been agreed to by all parties, Elder William Brewster stated that, “We daily pray for their conversion, but now that we have confirmed a peace with them there cometh to our assistance God’s extraordinary work from Heaven” (Day, The Guiding Light, 38). As with Oxnard and Bates, it was important to highlight the savagery and uncivilized nature of the Indians to contrast with their need for Christianity and its subsequent blessings.

Oxnard requested that a portion of any monetary proceeds be directed towards the Home Missionary Society. Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 24.

99 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 33. John Eliot came to America in 1631, eleven years after the first Pilgrim migration. Beginning in the 1640s he began learning the Algonquian language and cultivating relations with the Wapanoag tribe through a man named Waban, who had sent his son to a grammar school in Dedham. He established “Europeanized villages” for converts to resettle in and learn English ways, and translated the New Testament into Algonquian in 1661 and a catechism in 1654 (Bremer, The Puritan Experiment, 202-204). For varied interpretations of John Eliot’s work among the native Massachusetts tribes see George E. Tinker, Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993) and Richard W. Cogley, John Eliot's Mission to the Indians.
asserts, not only brings individual salvation from sinfulness but also “makes the World’s heart quiver/With the pulse of Brotherhood.” Yes, the gospel had the power to redeem individuals but it could also redeem society. King Philip, chief of the Wampanoag tribe, however, was not persuaded by Eliot’s sermonizing. Rejecting Eliot’s missionary plea, Philip angrily rejected the gospel and “dust-balanced laws” and wanted the Pilgrims to “die or depart our beautiful shores.” Philip’s response reveals an ambiguous component of Oxnard’s pageant. On the one hand, Oxnard placed the missionary dynamic of the Pilgrims at the center of his pageant while revealing the supposed imperial ambitions of the Pilgrims as well. On the other hand, many audience members may have recognized a parallel between the Wampanoag tribe led by Philip and the belligerent nations of World War I. They both seemed to reject the power of religion to achieve peace and implement just laws.

Rather than using Philip’s refusal of the missionary advances of the Pilgrims as a tool to cast them in a negative light, Oxnard used the hostile relationship to emphasize the “heathen-ness” of the Indians and their need for Christianity. After his capture by Captain Benjamin Church and transfer to Plymouth for trial, Anawan sacrificed his life to help save the individual souls of other Native Americans and to bring peace to the land. Although several pleas were made on Anawan’s behalf, Increase Mather unflinchingly argued that the “heathens” needed the salvation that Christianity could give. Mather believed that the “heathen too shall have a chance,” but “those who spurn the gospel plea/And scoff at Christian liberty,/Shall never members of Zion’s branch.”

The issue before King Philip’s War (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

101 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 35.
102 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 36.
103 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 44-45.
for Mather, and it seems for Oxnard as well, was black and white. Anawan was called upon to answer to the charges of murder and conspiracy, but he did not speak and was condemned to death by the court. Within Oxnard’s narrative, Anawan’s death was not without meaning; his death represented the means by which the colonists and natives could achieve peaceful relations with one another. His death – “the supreme sacrifice” – led “in a yet swifter pace/The favored, nobler, whiter race.”

According to Oxnard, the individual life of Anawan provided the obligatory sacrifice, the “atonement,” so that all of the native population could benefit from the “white race.” For the sins of his tribe, Anawan, the child of nature, died so that “his friends and foes might be reconciled.”

The strange, often times convoluted, and chronologically inaccurate narrative of Anawan’s vision of the Pilgrims’ arrival, the interaction between the Pilgrims and the natives in war and in missions, and the dramatic climax of Anawan’s sacrificial execution seems problematic from a strictly historical perspective. Oxnard clearly forfeited historical accuracy for a larger purpose. For the sake of supporting his major themes of freedom to worship and the missionary component of the Pilgrim venture, Oxnard re-imagined the significance of Anawan’s death to emphasize the contemporary relevance of the Congregationalist church.

Finally, as with the pageants written and performed during the Reformation Quadricentennial, several Pilgrim pageants made direct links between the past, present, and future in the collective religious memory. Ending the Pilgrim narrative in the present with overt implications for the future helped to reinforce the major religious and political lessons to be gleaned from the pageants. Kennard, in her most straightforward narrative,

104 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 49.
105 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 46-49.
did not bring her pageant completely into the present but merely foreshadowed it via the Pilgrim actors. At the conclusion of the pageant James Fairweather and Richard Merrithew discussed the meaning of the new land on which they would make their new homes. For the young and idealistic Merrithew, the land meant “the place where a mighty nation will some day be!” For him “No dream is too great, no hope too high, to measure it.” Although many “dark days” will come, “the harvest will be blessed.”

Merrithew’s prediction of a strong nation emerging even amid “dark days” probably struck a chord with the audience members who had just lived through World War I. Similarly, Oxnard’s pageant concluded with a future-oriented episode: “The Ideal Future.” As several people held aloft flags of various nations, one person took the lead in carrying a flag of an unspecified nation as the narrator proclaimed: “Bring from the Holy City’s street/The living faith, the royal way,/And lead a people’s patient feet/In paths of perfect day.”

Both pageants concluded with a sense of optimism and hope for the future. By implication in this future the United States would retain greatness and religion would guide nations.

Several pageants carried the religious and political legacy of the Pilgrims through the succeeding centuries. Pageant writers interpreted the past in light of the present. In the only episode of Williams’ pageant dealing with the Pilgrims, he depicts them establishing a treaty with the native population. In this scene they brought “an end to ceaseless quarrels and savage battles that settle nothing. With fairness and open dealing, even the Indians can be conciliated.”

Recognizing the modern relevance of the Pilgrims’ action, the little boy excitedly exclaimed “Why, that was like a little League of

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Pageant writers, like Williams and Oxnard, also interpreted the present in light of the past. The same spirit of justice, fair play, and the role of religion that guided the Pilgrims in the past manifested themselves in successive historical episodes including the Revolutionary War, the Emancipation Proclamation, and World War I. In Williams’ pageant each episode built upon the previous with all leading inexorably to the conclusion of World War I. In this climatic scene President Wilson’s war declaration was recited and a procession of “men in khaki,” Red Cross nurses, and representatives of the service branches followed with the entire audience singing “Over There.”

Williams not only infused a major dose of patriotic fervor at the end of his pageant but also clearly demonstrated that the recent Allied victory and peace were connected to the Pilgrim heritage.

Oxnard also addressed the conclusion of World War I in an episode entitled interestingly, “Renaissance and World War.” Actors dressed as soldiers and members of the Red Cross stood on stage as “Keep the Home Fires Burning,” an upbeat popular song at the time, played in the background. The sacred and profane were interchanged in the poetic recitation accompanying the tableau

On to the world-wide evolution,
Keep in step, keep in step!
Heaven’s way is the great solution,
Act with prep, act with prep!
Tis’ war ‘gainst war with all thy might
To crown the Lord of Peace,
Lift up the banner of Right,
Effect the world’s release.

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109 Williams, “A Pilgrim Pageant,” in The Bulletin of the University Utah, 34.
111 Oxnard, Anawan Rock Pageant, 52-53.
As with the arrival of the Pilgrims and the birth of the nation through the American Revolution, the war that audience members just lived through was part of “Heaven’s” plan. This plan focused not only on instituting peace over might but crowning “the Lord of Peace” as a means of making the world a better place. Oxnard wanted his audience to leave the production with an unbounded faith in man and his ability to progress forward with one hand holding the cross and one hand holding onto the world.

The myth of the Pilgrims/Puritans that took shape over the course of two and half centuries provided Congregationalists with plenty of malleable historical material from which to create a collective memory of their religious ancestors. By paying limited attention to the historical facts of the migration and subsequent settlement in Massachusetts, the Congregationalists fashioned a memory of the Pilgrims that suited their contemporary needs during the Tercentenary of 1920-1921. As war-torn Europe attempted to pick up the pieces of society from four years of brutal fighting and a long and bitter peace settlement and as the United States began to rethink its role in the world, Congregationalists elevated the Pilgrims as examples of tolerant, hardworking, persevering, and religiously devout men and women. The concluding episodes depicting the relationship between the Pilgrims of the past and the present of World War I fit within the viewpoint of some progressive Christians. They interpreted the war as “the alignment of the world into the ultimate imperial revival, the one between paganism and Christianity, between the empire of Satan and the empire of God” in which the United States was a “modern messiah” that would affect “humanity’s final, collective redemption.”112 American society and the world needed the principles of the Pilgrim

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past, particularly the role of religion to guide nations in brotherly and peaceful coexistence in the present and future.

The National Council of Congregational Churches’ Tercentenary Program

In addition to the numerous pageants available for production and consumption during the Tercentenary year, clerical and lay church leaders also exposed congregants to numerous opportunities within the religious community to remember the Pilgrims and apply their principles and character throughout their daily lives. The National Council of the Congregational Churches, like their Lutheran counterparts three years earlier, established a threefold Tercentenary program to fortify the institutional strength of the church and the religious convictions of individual congregants. Through an educational, financial, and missionary program, Congregationalist church leaders looked to remind the laity of their Pilgrim heritage and responsibility to uphold it.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, clerical and lay Congregational church leaders created a national structure to provide direction on controversial issues and promote common interests. As a denomination, Congregationalism retained a congregational church polity in which individual churches remained independent from one another. No overarching institutional body was established for the denomination until the founding of the NCCC at a national meeting in Oberlin, Ohio in 1871. To promote effective interaction between Congregationalism and American society and among Congregationalists, the NCCC was viewed as a means to “discuss the needs of the denomination and voice the sentiment of the people” amid expanding missions and a
The NCCC consisted of both lay and clerical members who could vote and while they could not vote, benevolent societies and seminaries could voice their concerns. Individual congregational churches maintained their autonomy; the NCCC did not function like an ultimate power passing on authoritative statements on creeds, worship practice, and church policy. Rather, the NCCC initially provided consultation on issues concerning the church and nourished unity between individual churches. Over time, particularly in the early twentieth century, the NCCC assumed responsibility for the denomination’s missionary and benevolent work. It also increasingly spoke for the church at the national, international, and interdenominational level. In short, the NCCC helped a fiercely driven independent denomination find a single voice.

During the Tercentenary year, the NCCC established a major educational, financial, and missionary program for Congregational churches, a program that was followed to varying degrees because of the independent nature of the denomination. As with Lutheran synods preparing and planning commemorative events for the Reformation

113 Edmund Lyman Hood, *The National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States* (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1901), 4, 63-64. The denomination’s move towards centralization and nationalization was similar to that being instituted within other religious communities, like the Lutheran churches, and American society as a whole within the business world.

114 Hood’s account of the NCCC contains the organization’s constitution and by-laws, which explicitly recognized the “common interests” and unity of Congregational churches but also their independence at the level of church governance. The issue of balancing the pursuit of the “common interests” and doctrinal and practical unity of Congregationalism and the autonomy of individual churches, however, proved to be a troubling matter for the NCCC during the first twenty years of its existence. For fear of individual churches losing their autonomy, some, like the General Association of New Jersey, wanted to limit the authority and power of the NCCC by having the body called together only during emergencies (Von Rohr, *The Shaping of American Congregationalism*, 319). During the national meeting held in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1913, the structure of the NCCC was reorganized to include an executive committee, regular meetings every two years, and a committee on missions, which effectively gave it a “larger role in the denomination’s life” (Von Rohr, *The Shaping of American Congregationalism*, 320-321). Elizabeth C. Nordbeck, professor of church history, moreover, suggests that the debate over “true” or “pure” Congregationalism focused on the dichotomy between the principles of autonomy and fellowship (introduction to *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism*, by Walker, xvi). For discussion of the successive meetings of the NCCC after its 1871 founding see Hood, *The National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States*.

Quadricentennial, Congregationalists, whether stimulated by the events of World War I or conditions within their denomination, recognized the importance of celebrating the memory of the Pilgrims several years prior to the anniversary. The earliest call for some kind of commemorative action by the NCCC came at the sixteenth biennial meeting of Congregational churches in New Haven, Connecticut in 1915. The Congregational Board of Ministerial Relief and Annuity Fund suggested that the “supreme duty” of the years leading up to the Tercentenary should be aimed towards raising no less than three million dollars for the ministry relief and annuity fund.\textsuperscript{116} Throughout the course of the week’s meetings and reports, several other boards echoed the sentiments of the Board of Ministerial Relief. The Executive Committee asked that the anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims be celebrated in conjunction with the International Congregational Council meeting scheduled for the summer of 1920, while the Commission on Missions suggested that the celebration promote the missionary undertakings of the denomination. The missionary work of the church promoted “the cause which the Pilgrims counted dear and attest [sic] our devotion to the faith by which they lived and died.” By directing the celebratory energies towards missions, the church could consecrate lives, particularly the young, “to the service of Christ” at home and abroad.\textsuperscript{117} This perspective articulated by the NCCC reflected the opinion of Tercentenary pageant authors like Oxnard. At this early stage in the game, however, the numerous ideas of the various commissions and boards of the NCCC were largely declarative in scope; they supported remembering the


\textsuperscript{117} The National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States ... Sixteenth Regular Meeting, 28-30, 47, 239-240, 263-264. The Commission on Missions also recommended that the NCCC work towards recruiting one thousand young people for missionary work and raising five million dollars for such purposes.
landing of the Pilgrims and instituting some kind of commemorative goal that could advance the religious and social objectives of church, but they had little in the way of concrete plans in place. By the following regular meeting of the NCCC held in Columbus, Ohio in 1917, a Tercentenary Commission was in place and tangible ideas were being put into action.

**Education and Spiritual Development**

First among the NCCC’s major goals during the Tercentenary year was improving the historical education and spiritual development of the men and women of the Congregational churches. In a pamphlet, published shortly after the 1915 meeting, outlining the NCCC’s suggested plans and activities for local churches the first three of five goals revolved around cultivating a better understanding of the Pilgrims and spiritual growth. The Tercentenary Commission affirmed that the individual Congregational church needed “fresh study, proclamation and application of the religious and political convictions which brought the Pilgrims to America.”

The study of the Pilgrims’ religious and political beliefs revolved around not only understanding the past but also applying the “Pilgrim Principles” in the present. From the mid-nineteenth century forward, “denominational leaders waged a kind of holy war of words to counter what they believed was massive public ignorance about the true faith of the founders and its formative role in public life.”

The educational plans of the NCCC can be viewed as

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118 “Pushing the Program: An Outline of plans, methods, and activities in the local church as related to the Tercentenary Program of the Congregational Churches” (Boston, MA: Tercentenary Commission, 19??), 2.

119 In the program, the Tercentenary Commission does not actually explicitly identify the “Pilgrim Principles.”

120 Nordbeck, introduction to *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism*, by Walker, xiii.
part of this agenda that, like during the Reformation Quadricentennial, was primarily
directed at Congregationalists and then to the American public. Recommendations to
individual churches were geared towards pastors and leaders in the church. Pastors, the
NCCC suggested, should give sermons on the origins of Congregationalism and
Puritanism as well as the contemporary achievements and future goals of the church.
Besides using Sundays and evening sermons, the Tercentenary Commission proposed
that each church establish a “comprehensive system” of religious education, particularly
the adoption of the text Pilgrim Deeds and Duties: A Handbook of Congregational
History and Outlook for “constructive study, and exposition.” Finally, the Commission
encouraged individual churches to observe Forefather’s Day (December 21) in
appropriate ways, whether that consisted of a social gathering or a pageant.¹²¹

Although individual churches could carry out the historical study of the Pilgrims
according to their needs, the primary method pushed by the Tercentenary Commission
was the Tercentenary Correspondence Course.¹²² As with many of the activities and
plans implemented by the Tercentenary Commission and the NCCC, the Correspondence
Course was not solely about remembering and understanding the Pilgrims but rather
about applying the principles of the Pilgrims in the present and future. The NCCC
explicitly framed the course as assisting in the “‘after-the-war’ work” of the
Congregational churches. The past could provide the necessary inspiration and light to
approach the unknown future: “Whether the swing of the future be toward federation or
unity, or the creation of a new social form or forces, or in directions not now apparent, we

¹²¹ “Pushing the Program,” 5-7.
¹²² The Tercentenary Commission or the NCCC consistently offered numerous suggested
publications for use within the individual churches geared towards either the Tercentenary anniversary or
other spiritual aspects of denominational development. See “List of Publications,” 4th ed. (Boston, MA:
National Council of Congregational Churches, nd).
can respond better if we move in the light of experiences and according to the nature and
spirit within us.” If the incentive of obtaining the guiding light of the past to provide
direction in “the new world the war is making for us” were not enough, the NCCC
rewarded participants throughout each step of the course. After completion the study and
exam for each section (of three), participants could earn first the Pilgrim Certificate, then
the Colonial and Congregational Certificate respectively, all culminating in receiving the
Tercentenary Diploma in 1920. Furthermore, the Tercentenary Commission
encouraged competition between churches; based upon a particular percentage of the
participating church members, individual churches were placed either on the Honor Roll
– cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa laude.

Much like the study and discussion of the Reformation Quadricentennial, the
methodology of the correspondence course did not prompt a critical analysis and
engagement with the Pilgrim past but rather the memorization and regurgitation of brief
answers to questions. Young Congregational men and women needed to quickly apply
the lessons of the past to their experience in the present, not think analytically about the
past in a manner that might upset the memory of the Pilgrims. Each section of the

123 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 1. In my research at the Congregational Library I was
only able to locate one of the four bulletins for the correspondence course. It is more than likely, however,
that the questions and topics covered in each bulletin were drawn from the text Pilgrim Deeds and Duties,
which is published and available. Although not explicitly stated in the course bulletins issued by the
NCCC, more than likely the Correspondence Course was geared towards young people and adults.
124 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 1.
125 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 2.
126 Like Carolus P. Harry’s Protest and Progress and Harriet Earhart Monroe’s Historical
Lutheranism in One Hundred Questions and Answers, the study and examination components of the
“Tercentenary Correspondence Course” contained questions and answers in the style of the Baltimore
Catechism.
127 In an article entitled “Crazy for History,” professor of education Sam Wineburg opens with an
anecdote about the observations of “The Historic Sense” among young Americans by J. Carleton Bell,
managing editor of the Journal of Educational Psychology, in 1917. While the study of history provided a
means by which young people in the classroom could think and reflect, what actually took place in the
classroom was the accumulation of factual knowledge, what Bell considered the “narrowest” of the
course included a series of one hundred questions, most of which addressed basic factual components of the Pilgrim experience and Congregational history. In the fourth bulletin covering Congregationalism’s second century of history in America, factual questions included:

1. What territory had been occupied by the Pilgrims, the Puritans and their descendants during the first century, 1620-1720?
16. Who was Jonathan Edwards?
74. What missionary society was formed soon after the American Board?
91. What were the ‘Noon Houses’?  

Taken individually these questions and their accompanying answers appear to offer no underlying theme or objective, yet taking each section of the course as a whole, it is clear that the Tercentenary Commission wanted to convey a distinct memory of the Pilgrim past to the young Congregationalists of the present and future.

Collectively, the correspondence course questions were supposed to stimulate students to think about the religious and political connections between the past and the present. With a century of history concluded, question number three for the colonial period asked, “Had they [the Congregationalists] lost the spirit of their forefathers?”

While the Congregationalists of 1720 did not maintain all the same standards as their Pilgrim counterparts a century earlier, they remained hostile to tyranny, a “spirit that still survives and is becoming more apparent as their descendants smite twentieth century tyranny.”  

Participants were encouraged to recognize the connection between their forbearers’ fight against the tyranny of Great Britain and their own fight against the tyranny of Germany during World War I. Certain questions also openly linked the

“historic sense.” Interestingly, the first aspect of the “historic sense” was the application of the lessons of the past to present circumstances. See Sam Wineburg, “Crazy for History,” The Journal of American History 90, no. 4 (March 2004): 1401.

128 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 3-4, 9, 11.
129 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 3.
religious and political development of the country. Question number twenty-four, presupposing a relation, inquired: “How was the Great Awakening a preparation for the American Revolution?” The answer bluntly provided by the Tercentenary Commission stated that the religious movement of the Great Awakening increased the “moral tone” of New England and brought to the fore “the ideals and principles of the Pilgrims and Puritans: the presence and guidance of God and the supremacy of conscience over against all human authority.” In this atmosphere, the answer continued, the New England leaders of the Revolution found their training. As the correspondence course allied religious development with the political progress of the nation, participants should have clearly recognized that the country needed not only the principles of the Pilgrims but also the guidance of God.

The final two questions addressing the history of the colonial period dealt with the Pilgrim past in a way that affirmed the twentieth-century direction of Congregationalism. Question number ninety-nine asked if the “swing” of the eighteenth century moved away from the Pilgrims. The stipulated answer suggested that Congregationalism moved back to the principles of the Pilgrims, to the ideas of the separation of church and state, to their focus on education, to the “recognition of the hand of God in human affairs,” and away from “the austere, aristocratic and intolerant spirit of some of their Puritan leaders.”

The creators of the Tercentenary Correspondence Course wanted participants to acknowledge that an independent church, tolerance, and God’s action in human history were components of their denomination not limited to the eighteenth century but also applicable to the twentieth century. Similar to the progressive vision of history evident in

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130 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 4.
131 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 12.
the previous question, the final question for the colonial period asked about the advances of the church during the eighteenth century. The century marked the development of a “new consciousness of its spiritual mission,” which “inaugurated the great missionary, educational and social movements” that “constitute the glory of its third century.”

Overall, the Tercentenary Correspondence Course reflected a progressive view of history, one in which the religious and political achievements of the Pilgrims during the seventeenth century produced fruitful work in intervening centuries, and the Congregational Church hoped, in the future.

In addition to the NCCC’s history-based educational program, the Tercentenary Commission wanted to enhance the quantity and quality of individual congregations. Starting in January 1916 and continuing over the course of five years, the Commission wanted to increase church membership by 500,000 by “confession and by letter.” In addition, the Commission wanted to boost the number of “young” men and women “devoting themselves to life service in Christian leadership in the ministry and missionary work.”

Taken together, the NCCC saw the Tercentenary as an opportunity to draw more people into the folds of the Congregational church and demonstrate the continued relevance of religion. Following the assemblage of Congregational churches in 1915, the NCCC’s Commission on Missions began meeting with the Commission on Evangelism, the NCCC’s Executive Committee, and executives of the Mission Board to promote these particular aspects of the Tercentenary program. As with the educational component of the Tercentenary program, the Tercentenary Commission suggested several

132 “Tercentenary Correspondence Course,” 12.
133 Tercentenary Commission, “Pushing the Program,” 2.
134 The National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States Addresses, Reports, Statements of Benevolent Societies, Constitution, Minutes, Roll of Delegates, Etc., Seventeenth Regular Meeting, Columbus, Ohio, October 10-17, 1917 (Boston, MA: Office of the National Council, 1917), 146.
courses of action that individual congregations could take to increase their membership numbers and recruit ministers and missionaries.

Functioning similarly to the Reformation Quadricentennial committees, the NCCC formulated a plan of action for individual congregations to follow. First, individual churches were encouraged to establish a Committee on Evangelism that would function as the central organizing body for the task. Under the auspices of this Committee congregations were pushed to compose a working list of all potential new converts and strays, after which pastors could conduct personal interviews with each person. While pastors would be assuming a considerable responsibility in the evangelizing mission, the process of compiling lists of potential converts would have required the cooperation and input of the laity. The remaining recommendations focused on creating a welcoming and evangelistic atmosphere; Sunday school teachers were asked to urge students to follow Christ, pastors were asked to infuse the “spirit of evangelism” in their sermons, and congregations were asked to focus the life of the church on the personal relationship with Jesus.\textsuperscript{135} The effectiveness of the Congregational church worldwide, however, depended upon more than just increasing church membership; new ministers and missionaries were also needed. The key to promoting this component of the Tercentenary program became the responsibility of the pastor. He needed to continually raise the issue in Sunday services by proclaiming the work of ministers and missionaries to one of the “highest spiritual” callings and a decision that was both “sacrificial and heroic.”\textsuperscript{136} Moreover, pastors could recruit ministers and missionaries in the context of prayer meetings, in working with the men

\textsuperscript{135} Tercentenary Commission, “Pushing the Program,” 7-8.
\textsuperscript{136} Tercentenary Commission, “Pushing the Program,” 8.
and women’s organizations, and speaking one-on-one with parents and their children.\footnote{137} If necessary, the Tercentenary Commission suggested, pastors could turn to blunt statistics to complement the more subtle means of sermons and prayers to enlist young men and women in the service of the church. The Tercentenary Commission painted a somewhat dismal picture of the ministerial status of the church. Although the Congregational church had 3,800 ordained ministers in active service along with 180 missionaries stationed abroad, it was also losing over 200 men and women each year to old age, death, and other denominations or callings. Moreover, while theological seminaries graduated from 85 to 110 ministers each year, to keep pace with the annual decrease that number need to improve to nearly 125 graduates per year.\footnote{138} Next to educating Congregationalists in the historical lessons of the Pilgrims, the future life and vitality of the church depended upon fortifying it with the necessary leadership and pastoral guidance.

The NCCC’s success in completing these objectives of the Tercentenary Program was ambiguous at best. After a single year of promoting the five-point program for the Tercentenary, the Commission on Missions pointed out in their 1917 report before the NCCC that “a decided majority of the churches have in one measure or another put themselves in line with this plan for a concerted emphasis upon certain great duties.”\footnote{139} At the next meeting in 1919, held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the Commission on Evangelism reported that initial efforts, however, were less than enthusiastic. As of the beginning of 1918, the Tercentenary Commission had undertaken a heavy burden of work and achieved a significant degree of success over the course of two years in the

\footnote{137}{Tercentenary Commission, “Pushing the Program,” 8-9.}
\footnote{138}{Tercentenary Commission, “Pushing the Program,” 9.}
\footnote{139}{The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 146.}
areas of education and raising money, but as far as improving the ranks of church membership and the ministerial infrastructure of the church, the program had fallen flat. In turn, a small committee comprised solely of ministers reorganized these objectives and attempted to tackle them more systematically. The Commission on Evangelism would focus on increasing church membership in 1919 and save the task of recruitment for the ministry for 1920.\textsuperscript{140}

In the conclusion of their 1919 report, the Commission on Evangelism stated that concentrated work in the field of evangelism resulted in concrete successes. The Commission created an Easter Ingathering plan that occurred during the six weeks of Lent leading up to the installation of new members at Easter. Congregational pastors were bombarded with pamphlets on instituting a program of evangelization in their churches, including the “Win One More Fellowship.” Moreover, pastors could utilize prayer, preaching, Bible schools, interviews, and the Pastors’ Training Classes for religious instruction in preparing to make the Ingathering a success.\textsuperscript{141} Based upon the information from individual congregations throughout the country, the Ingathering worked well. While only one-eighth of the total number of Congregational churches gave an account of their Ingathering results, the 656 churches that did revealed a total increase of over 11,000 new church members over the course of the Easter season. Based upon the reporting churches, the 1919 Easter additions marked a 17% improvement from new church membership in 1918.\textsuperscript{142} Reeling from their achievement, the Commission on

\textsuperscript{140} The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 167-168.
\textsuperscript{141} The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 168-171.
\textsuperscript{142} The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 172. See pages 172-173 for a full statistical breakdown of the number of reporting churches from each state, the number of Easter 1919 additions, and the 1918 additions.
Evangelism implemented a similar campaign in 1920, even having solicited suggestions from pastors as to what methods did and did not work.  

By 1921, the Commission on Evangelism had even more good news to report at the biennial meeting held in Los Angeles, California. This time, however, their statement also revealed a concern for “membership waste.” Improved membership numbers meant little if congregants were unwilling to maintain their faith through an active prayer life and social responsibility. It was one thing to label oneself as a member of a Congregational church, but it was another matter entirely to act and live as a Congregationalist. The Commission on Evangelism reported that the devotional life of the average Congregationalist was negligent; the occurrence of prayer meetings, family worship, and grace at meals had dropped off while attendance at worship services averaged, at best, a quarter of a church’s membership rolls. Centuries of Christian history illustrated perfectly that “when Christians neglect social worship, habits of secret prayer decay, and the knowledge of God as a vital personal experience which is the only adequate dynamic for noble living is weakened.” In spite of the largest increase in church membership over the course of three centuries, according to the Commission, millions of Americans remained un-churched and “untouched.” Within the Congregationalist church itself, the numerical upsurge was not “efficient enough to keep us from losing ground.” Besides the continued anxiety about the potential stagnation of

143 The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 173. The church’s publication, then entitled The Congregationalist and Advance, also published new membership stats for individual congregations.
145 The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 77-82.
146 The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 82.
147 The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 74.
church membership, the Commission also revealed concern about the negative attitude and a general distrust of the evangelist profession and membership “waste.” As viewed by Commission on Evangelism at the 1921 meeting, religion struggled to maintain its hold and influence on individuals and society. Without active members, the principles of the Pilgrim past, and the guiding hand of religion, in general, could not be taken into the world in the present and future.

The anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims in 1920-1921 offered Congregationalism’s national organization, the NCCC, a prime opportunity to advance its religious and institutional interests. The NCCC wanted to increase the ranks of lay membership and in turn the domestic and international missionary apparatus of the Congregational church. Over the course of five years, from the initial aspiration to improve church membership to the final assessment that mere numbers did not equate with a devout believer, the Tercentenary program to develop the religious and spiritual foundation of the denomination proved to be dubiously successful. The noteworthy membership campaigns that filled the ranks of the Congregational church suggest that religion, in this case specifically Congregationalism, still appealed – at some level – to men and women of the post-war era. At the same time, however, Congregationalism competed for the attention of their congregants in an increasingly materialistic society and struggled to retain practicing church members in the life of the church and society.

148 *The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting*, 74-75, 77.
Pilgrim Memorial Fund Drive

Similar to the work of various Lutheran synods during the Reformation Quadricentennial, Tercentenary financial campaigns became a way for lay Congregationalists to commemorate the Pilgrims while simultaneously ensuring the sustainability of their legacy through the church’s work in the future. The last component of the Tercentenary Commission’s five-point program for the celebration of the Pilgrims consisted of a campaign to raise five million dollars for the relief and retirement of Congregational pastors, which was officially entitled the Pilgrim Memorial Fund [PMF]. The Congregational Board of Ministerial Relief and Annuity Fund first recommended a fundraising campaign, with an initial goal of three million dollars, as a fitting way to commemorate the Pilgrim anniversary.149 As with the other components of the Tercentenary Commission’s five-point anniversary program, plans were not solidified until 1917. The Commission on Missions informed the NCCC that many concerned individuals proposed different amounts for the PMF, but the sum of five million dollars was decided upon as a “practically minimum figure” that “represents in a dignified and worthy way the significance of the anniversary.”150

Leaders of the NCCC believed that strengthening the ministerial leadership of the church could produce a positive domino effect by improving the overall religious life of the church. Initially, disagreement emerged regarding the most suitable application of the

149 The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Sixteenth Regular Meeting, 51-52. The NCCC also published a pamphlet urging Congregationalists to raise two million dollars for missionary purposes by 1920; the pamphlet argued that this amount was a “trifling sum” for the 800,000 church members, particularly if every member set aside five cents per week for the fund. This is the only evidence I have come across regarding a Tercentenary fund distinct from the Pilgrim Memorial Fund. See National Council of Congregational Churches, “Two Millions by 1920: Tercentenary Missionary Goals of the Congregational Churches,” 1, National Council of Congregational Churches, 9.3.121, Congregational Library.

150 The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 147.
funds; rather than dispersing the funds arbitrarily, the Commission on Missions concluded that the money could give “dignity to the ministry of the Gospel of Christ” in two ways. First, the money could promote “the effectiveness of the men constituting the ministry.” Second, the money could enhance the “self-respect of the denomination and its consciousness of the high and sacred mission of the church and living God.”¹⁵¹ In light of the religious heritage of the Pilgrims, the Commission on Missions believed that in ensuring the financial stability of ministers the return on the investment would be immeasurable. Retired ministers would be financially secure, current ministers could serve longer and gain financial and moral encouragement from the support of their congregations, and more young men would enter the seminary. In sum, the PMF would lead to a “new impulse of hope and power” in the religious life of the Congregational Church.¹⁵²

After the Commission on Missions worked out the logistical matters of the PMF, a Pilgrim Memorial Fund Commission comprised of one hundred members and a nine-person executive committee assumed the responsibility of implementing the fundraising campaign through 1921.¹⁵³ The PMF Commission spent much of 1917 and 1918 organizing. They recruited a “field force,” under the direction of seven leaders, to assess the “piety and the purses” of individual congregations and to canvass for subscriptions throughout the country from both the pulpit and in personal conversation; published a booklet about the fund to assure congregants of the validity of the campaign; and

¹⁵² The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 148-149.
¹⁵³ The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 55, 60-61. For a list of the one hundred members and the Executive Committee see The National Council of the Congregational Churches… Seventeenth Regular Meeting, 7-9.
established quotas for individual churches in each state.\textsuperscript{154} By the fall of 1919, the field workers had completed their canvassing work in eight states, nearly finished canvassing work in six additional states and had just started in nine other states. Solicitation work along the Pacific Coast started in the early months of 1920.\textsuperscript{155} Clearly, this fundraising campaign was not going to be haphazard and unorganized, but implemented in a way that efficiently maximized the institutional machinery and personnel of the church.

The reality of the campaign, however, did not completely meet the expectations of the PMF Commission. Solicitations for money were underway in full force but, according to the Commission, the returns were less than stellar. By late September 1919, more than one million dollars had been pledged to the fund (over 23,000 subscriptions). At this point, the New England region, home of the majority of the country’s Congregationalists, had yet to be canvassed.\textsuperscript{156} The PMF Commission, though, was disappointed that the appeal for large contributions, the biggest up to that point being fifty thousand dollars, had not panned out. There seemed to be a glaring discrepancy, particularly in light of similar financial appeals made in other Protestant denominations. They attributed the lackluster generosity of rank and file Congregationalists, however, to competing outlets for their congregation’s philanthropy. It seemed unwise to actively solicit funds when the churches were vigorously absorbed in “the prosecution of the war” including Liberty Loan drives and charity work. The pockets of Congregationalists, like their Lutheran counterparts a few years earlier, had been strained during the five Liberty

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\textsuperscript{155} The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Eighteenth Regular Meeting, 277.
\textsuperscript{156} The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Eighteenth Regular Meeting, 280.
Loan campaigns that raised $20 million. Almost 30% of that money came from Americans who earned less than $2,000 a year.\textsuperscript{157} To compete with the financial needs of a country prosecuting a war to “save democracy” would have only aroused suspicion, the PMF Commission concluded, and in the end cause more harm than good.\textsuperscript{158}

Congregationalists already felt pressure from the CPI to financially support their government and Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo, even suggested that the person who could not afford to contribute $1.25 was not worthy of being an American.\textsuperscript{159}

As such, the Commission decided to intensify the fund drive in the final months of 1919 and into 1920. The Commission remained certain of the campaign’s outcome and believed that the fund would temper the mere “conventions and popular acclaim” sure to dominate during the Tercentenary year. As a “memorial to his labor [i.e. Pilgrims’],” the fund would brace “the churches for their work at their weakest point” and help them face “the future with the faith of those who, three hundred years ago, sought freedom here and by their faith and fortitude laid the foundation of ‘the church without a bishop and the state without a king.’”\textsuperscript{160} The PMF Commission remained confident that Congregationalists, even with strained purses, would be liberal with their benevolence. The future of the church, one dependent upon the faith of the Pilgrim past in the pursuit of freedom, rested on the financial stability of the institutional church.

Like the New York Committee and the Joint Committee during the Reformation Quadricentennial, the PMF Commission adopted the propaganda and information sharing techniques of the federal government’s CPI Committee. Rank-and-file

\textsuperscript{157} Zieger, America’s Great War, 76.  
\textsuperscript{158} The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Eighteenth Regular Meeting, 280.  
\textsuperscript{159} Zieger, America’s Great War, 76.  
\textsuperscript{160} The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Eighteenth Regular Meeting, 282.
Congregationalists would have found it difficult to steer clear of the demands placed upon their pocketbooks during the Tercentenary year. Field workers, consisting primarily of ministers, visited individual churches speaking from the pulpits at Sunday services about the importance of the fund. They also visited with congregants one-on-one. The PMF Commission gained the support of the church’s publication, *The Congregationalist and Advance*, to advertise the fund but also to push readers towards further subscriptions. Each week’s edition of the paper included a two-page spread promoting the PMF. The first page of the spread always included a diagram charting the advance towards each state’s subscription quota and in some cases their oversubscription, while the second page included an appeal based on an image of the Congregationalist past or future. As reflected in the church’s paper, the Commission wanted Congregationalists to be emotionally, and not merely financially, invested. Editors of the paper could strike at the emotions of their audience by using advertising techniques rooted in the contemporary experiences of its readers in the wake of World War I and appealing to the potential fragility of the church’s future.

By the time the PMF drive got underway, Congregationalists were more than used to requests for their money, whether for the church’s benevolent organizations or for the war. In particular, they would have been acclimated to the militaristic rhetoric and imagery employed to enlist their financial support in the Liberty Loan drives. Each PMF subscription update was accompanied by the image of an army bugler heralding the monetary increase from the previous week. In addition to the military imagery, the

advertisements often referred to ministers as the “veterans of the church.” By labeling Congregationalist ministers religious “veterans,” the editors of *The Congregationalist and Advance* more than likely knew that its readers would think of the military veterans of the recently concluded war. They also connected America’s religious and military leaders in the “conservation of America’s life.” When enlisting the services of Congregationalists, the editors also referred to subscribers as an “army.” With the original five million dollars nearly fully subscribed by late January 1920, the editors urged a final push to surpass that amount: “Now is the time for the reserve forces of large wealth to rush up their heavy artillery in vigorous support of this heroic front line. Don’t delay your attack! Bring your Big Guns into the fight! Make the Victory Complete!” Raising a sustaining fund for the minister-“veterans” was like fighting a battle, albeit a religious one, that could help ensure victory for the future of the church. The editors may have appropriated this rhetorical technique from the creators of war bond posters who often employed the idea of a “shared duty” between soldiers on the battlefield and civilians on the home front. The civilians and veterans of Congregationalism, editors of *The Congregationalist and Advance* implied, shared the duty of supporting and sustaining the church.

In addition to the weekly two-page spread, the paper included fictionalized accounts conveying the necessity of subscribing to the Pilgrim Memorial Fund. At the beginning of January 1920, Reverend W.A. Bartlett, pastor of First Congregational

163 “To Provide for the Veterans of the Church,” *The Congregationalist and Advance* (March 4, 1920), 305.
Church in Chicago, penned “When the Angel Came: A Pilgrim Memorial Fund Story.”

The anecdotal story focused on emphasizing the long and worthy service of ministers in the church, in this case the service of the main character Reverend Sylvanus Pickering, and supporting them financially through thick and thin. From the opening, readers were greeted with a bleak, and seemingly hopeless, scene. Pickering’s church is shabby looking, in disrepair and without a good paint job in nearly fourteen years; the minister’s clothes were just as ragged as the exterior of his church. When his wife, Josephine, visits the grocery store, she overhears locals conversing about discouraging their sons from entering the ministry. Even Mrs. Darius Martin, the wife of the parish committee’s chairman, tells Josephine that while they want to raise money for elderly ministers, their current financial situation prevents them from taking the lead. Bartlett makes the point, however, that Mrs. Martin and her husband were once again remodeling their home, having been dissatisfied with the previous year’s work. The physical deterioration of Pickering’s church and the spiritual half-heartedness of his congregants painted a religious life void of vitality and a highly discouraged pastor.¹⁶⁶

Just as soon as the despondent and hopeless Pickering began to question the worth of his so-called “higher-calling” as a minister for forty-five years, a stranger entered his home. Neither the pastor nor his wife seemed to be struck by the appearance of the stranger out of nowhere. Before they could inquire into his identity, he tells them he is glad to sit with them as an approaching parade passes by their front picture window. “The Pageant of Years” included the hundreds if not thousands of men, women, and children that Pickering and his wife influenced over the course of his ministry. Three to

four hundred children march by waving flags, singing and cheering; one of the tallest boys carries a banner that reads “Sylvanus, you consecrated us in baptism.” One group of adults carries a banner reading “You received us into the Church of Christ,” while another group’s banner reads: “We are the strangers Josephine greeted after service.” Pickering and his wife looked down the line of the parade and could not see its end as people continue to march by providing evidence that his “higher-calling” had indeed bore fruit. Over the course of forty-five years, Sylvanus had smiled at some, helped others resist temptation, and comforted some after a family member’s death. During the parade Pickering’s hopelessness was transformed into joy and gratitude and renewed vigor for the work of his ministry. Pickering turns to thank the stranger, but he had disappeared just as quickly as he had appeared.

In the end Bartlett’s fictional account of the Pickerings and their visit from a heavenly visitor served two purposes. First, the transformation of Pickering’s attitude about his life’s work from one of fruitless toil to one of a spiritually triumphant ministry would have served to encourage the Congregational ministers reading the story. More than likely the average Congregationalist minister experienced his own struggles in physically and spiritually maintaining his church. They very well could have identified with the fictional experiences of Sylvanus Pickering. The second lesson of Bartlett’s tale was directed at lay Congregationalists. The story functioned as an impetus for congregants to subscribe to the Pilgrim Memorial Fund not only out of thanksgiving but also out of shame. As congregants read the story, they may have thought of the minister who helped them avoid temptation or welcomed them into the church through baptism. For the mere spiritual development ministers provided, congregants needed to contribute

167 Bartlett, “When the Angel Came,” 46.
to the PMF. Moreover, if pushing men and women to subscribe out of gratitude alone did not work, Bartlett turned to shaming his readers. When the church called upon them to assist financially in the past, many congregants may have come up with similar excuses as that of Mrs. Darius Martin. It is impossible to document the effectiveness of Bartlett’s story. At the same time, however, it can be concluded that a positive or negative appeal to a person’s emotions can pull powerfully on an individual’s conscience.

Whether or not stories like Bartlett’s and military imagery and language had a significant impact on Congregationalists’ decisions to contribute financially, subscriptions poured into the PMF Commission’s New York office. By January of 1920, the total amount subscribed to the PMF exceeded the initial goal of five million dollars. With over six million dollars subscribed, the NCCC decided to extend the financial goal to eight million dollars, particularly in light of the increase in the cost of living since the campaign began. Even though the money subscribed exceeded the original goal, those subscriptions originated from just 100,000 people, just over an eighth of the total membership of the Congregationalist church. The minimal number of people subscribing to the fund, however, was less discouraging to the Commission. They were most pleased with the monetary outcome and the fact that the campaign to raise the money created a “fine denominational consciousness with a resulting spirit of hope and courage for meeting problems of the future.”

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169 The largest contributions came from the Congregationalist churches located in the areas of New England, New York, and New Jersey; See The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 147.
170 The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 143.
brotherhood, among individual churches in a way that would secure the religious future of Congregationalism. By subscribing to the PMF, rank-and-file Congregationalists demonstrated their loyalty to the denomination and produced moral and spiritual advance by uplifting the “standards of the ministry and in recruiting its ranks.”

A campaign that started as a mere idea in 1915 concluded with fairly reasonable financial success in 1923, the year the NCCC officially disbanded the Pilgrim Memorial Fund Commission. For Congregationalists part of the Tercentenary consisted of honoring the Pilgrims by providing for the financial foundation of the very ministers, who like their Pilgrim fathers, sustained the church spiritually. Not only did the PMF serve as an appropriate means by which Congregationalists could honor both those from the past and those living in the present, the fund, the Commission concluded, ultimately assured that the church could meet the institutional challenges of the future. The concerted and united effort among individual churches in raising money for the PMF

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171 The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 147, 150. Subscriptions, however, were mere promises of payment and not actual money in the bank for the church’s future. The Commission’s elated reaction to the amount of money subscribed to the Pilgrim Memorial Fund became, over time, frustration at the inability to collect on those subscriptions. It was one thing to subscribe a certain amount of money and another matter entirely to write a check for that amount. As of May 1, 1920, the total amount paid into the fund amounted to just under half that subscribed, a mere three million dollars and some change. From mid 1920 through 1923, the Commission focused on the collection of payments that totaled millions of dollars. Congregationalists chipped away at fulfilling their financial obligations by paying off nearly four and half million dollars, but there were still over 64,000 outstanding subscriptions. In their report at the NCCC meeting in Springfield, Massachusetts, the Commission had set a more realistic goal; rather than expecting 100% of subscriptions to be paid, they aimed for 70%. In their tallying of payments, as of June 1923, only Congregationalists in one state – Hawaii – paid off their entire subscriptions. Only Congregationalists in an additional ten states met the 70% of payments or more. The states that met the 70% of their pledged amount, which was often more than the quota set by the NCCC, included Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Vermont. While Congregationalists in New England and surrounding states were more likely to subscribe significant sums of money, they were not necessarily as willing to pay off those subscriptions. Because many people failed to respond to their statements, the Commission turned to the individual church, due to its “intimate personal relation,” to put pressure on people to fulfill their financial obligations to obtain the remainder of the payments. See The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting, 145; The National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States Minutes, Roll of Delegates, Moderator’s Address, Council Sermon, Reports, Statements of Mission Boards, Constitution and By-Laws, Etc. Twentieth Regular Meeting, Springfield, Massachusetts, October 16-23, 1923 (New York: Office of the National Council, 1923), 56-57, 59-60.
aided them to “meet every challenge of our time with high courage and unfailing faith” as they continued to promote religion and God’s kingdom on earth.  

**The International Congregational Council and the Pilgrim Heritage**

The final component of the Congregationalist church’s commemorative practices during the Tercentenary was the International Congregational Council. Held over the course of the July 4th holiday for eight days, the ICC brought together Congregationalists from major English speaking countries (the United States, England, and Australia) as well as South Africa and “other parts of the world.” Cooperatively founded by the Congregational Union of England and Wales and the NCCC, the ICC first gathered in London in 1891 to foster fellowship among Congregational churches worldwide. The gathering of Congregationalists in Boston marked the fourth such meeting of the ICC. According to the ICC’s constitution, participating members ascribed not only to the religious “body of truth which our own churches and the Church Universal have received from the beginning,” but also politically “to that form of government which recognized the headship of Jesus Christ and the spirit of Christian brotherhood as the basis of true democracy.” Finally, the ICC promoted unity in faith among Congregational churches. In the wake of World War I and the work to establish the League of Nations, American and English delegates culled the Pilgrim past for principles to guide the religious and political future of the world.

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172 *The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Nineteenth Regular Meeting*, 58.

173 The NCCC took the initial steps to get the fourth ICC meeting off the ground. At the 1915 NCCC meeting, the Committee on the International Council recommended that they plan for the next ICC, if and only if, the war ended before 1920 (*The National Council of Congregational Churches... Sixteenth Regular Meeting*, 38).

The memory of the Pilgrims as religious and political guides permeated the rhetoric and actions of the ICC. The ICC program included a commemorative portion, which in turn served as a springboard for examining the contemporary ills of society.\textsuperscript{175} The organizing committee made an explicit link between the past and present in 1919 as they pursued preparation work with full force after the war ended. Celebrating the Pilgrims was good, but they were “overshadowed by the oppressive issues of the hour.”

As the organizing committee envisioned the purpose of the ICC, and as the delegates themselves affirmed when they came together in Boston, the Pilgrims had “practical significance” in the present. Congregationalists, not only in America but also internationally, needed to arrive at a “fresh consideration of the bearing of the Pilgrim message upon the life of the world of our time.”\textsuperscript{176} Much like the Pilgrim Memorial Fund, the assemblage of Congregationalists from around the world in Boston served as an

\textsuperscript{175} The commemorative program provided several ways for delegates to reflect upon the historical legacy of the Pilgrims and three centuries of Congregationalism. At any time during the week, delegates – and the Boston public for that matter – could visit the Congregational World Exhibit set up in Boston’s Mechanics’ Building Hall, the home base for the ICC gathering. Having seen many exhibits that “played down” to visitors, Reverend Frederick Brooks Noyes was thoroughly impressed by the Congregationalist exhibit. Not only did the exhibit refrain from appealing to the pocketbooks, but the “strong spirit of the Pilgrims seemed upon it.” Moreover, delegates were invited to a performance of Bates’ “A Pageant of Pilgrims.” Finally, delegates had the opportunity to enjoy a pilgrimage to Plymouth on Thursday afternoon, the third day of the meeting. The Committee on the International Council had hoped to conduct the meeting in Plymouth but the lack of adequate space for several thousand people shifted the meeting to Boston. With box lunches in tow, nearly 900 delegates traveled to Plymouth by car and train. Upon their arrival, the delegates were free to roam around town and explore the sacred sites of their religious heritage. Some drank water from Brewster’s Spring, some climbed Burial Hill that overlooked the harbor, while others “plunged into the ripples that substituted for the ‘breaking waves’ of 1620.” Late in the afternoon, the delegates reconvened at Cole’s Hill – where it is believed that the Pilgrims buried those who died during the first winter – and found a place to sit as they listened to a series of addresses before splitting up for dinner at the various churches in town. The afternoon in Plymouth allowed Congregationalists from around the world to see and to touch the very sites – the Plymouth Rock, Burial Hill, and Coles’ Hill among others – of their religious and civic heritage began. The activities and the addresses of the various delegates reinforced not only the importance of remembering the Pilgrims but also of continually applying the very principles that made the Pilgrims worth remembering in the first place to the modern religious and political world. See Frederick Brooks Noyes, “The Congregationalist World Exhibit: An Illuminating Feature of the International Council,” \textit{The Congregationalist and Advance} (July 15, 1920), 86; \textit{The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Eighteenth Regular Meeting}, 283; “Sectional Meetings: Vital Subjects Under Discussion,” \textit{The Congregationalist Advance} (July 15, 1920), 85.

\textsuperscript{176} \textit{The National Council of the Congregational Churches... Eighteenth Regular Meeting}, 286.
appropriate means to remember the religious ancestors. The historical importance of the Pilgrims lay not merely in maintaining records of the past but in applying their principles to the current world situation.

American and British delegates at the ICC meeting interpreted present religious, political, and social conditions through the lens of the Pilgrim past and fashioned a memory of their religious ancestors that supported the continued relevance of Congregationalism in the future. Addresses given before the nearly 4,000 delegates at sectional meetings focused on three main themes – the religious life of the church and world, the civic life of the world, and the state of the social order. American and British delegates, moreover, reported on ten pertinent issues facing the church including spiritual ideals, church polity, theology, education, international obligations, and the state of the youth. Speakers and delegates repeatedly looked to the Pilgrims and their religious

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177 Each day’s meeting opened at a central location – Boston’s Mechanics’ Building on Huntington Avenue in the Back Bay – and with a prayer, a morning address, a devotional service that consisted primarily of singing hymns, and followed by another series of addresses. The afternoons were devoted to three sectional meetings, which were held at Central Congregational Church on the corner of Newbury and Berkeley Streets; Mt. Vernon Church at Beacon Street and Massachusetts Avenue; and Old South Church at Copley Square. For the complete program of devotional services, addresses, and reports see *Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church*, 37-44. The third major theme tackled by the ICC was the state of the social order. From the emergence of the Social Gospel movement, both clerical and lay Congregationalists were at the front of a movement within American society to tackle the social problems like the abuse of alcohol, crime, and the racial tensions accompanying industrial development, particularly in urban areas. Even as the progressive movement began to wane in the third decade of the twentieth century, Congregationalists at the ICC continued to push for the spirit of Christianity to produce a just society. The “Address to World-Wide Congregationalism” praised the efforts taken by industries to provide better wages and working conditions towards the end of creating a more “Christian industrial order” (54). Jane Addams, best known for founding Hull House in Chicago, spoke to the Congregationalists about their moral obligation to feed the starving in the world. Several other addresses and reports from both an American and British Commission on a “Christian Social Order” were also delivered during the ICC meeting. Some of these addresses included “The Christian Outlook upon Production and Distribution” on July 2, 1920; “Congregationalism and the Social Order” by Rev. W. Blackshaw on July 5, 1920; “The Contribution of the Church to Social Uplifting” by Rev. John A. Patten; the American Commission’s Report on “Congregationalism and the Social Order” and the British Commission’s Report, “To Recount the Service Rendered in Creating a Christian Social Order and to Suggest a Program of Action.” Clearly for the Congregationalists attending the ICC, the country and the world still needed the influence of Christian principles in the social order. See *Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church*, 53-54, 188-193, 146-154, 176-180, 321-341, and 462-477.
and civic principles as the necessary foundation for the future. In his speech during the delegate’s pilgrimage to Plymouth, Dr. C.H. Beale, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, spoke to the need for the Pilgrims’ ancestors to continually strive to fulfill the two basic principles of religious and civic life – the freedom to worship God and the establishment of a state without a king.\textsuperscript{178} Religion and democracy, Beale suggested, “undergird [sic] our social structure.”\textsuperscript{179} At the same time that these principles manifested themselves in the United States, Beale suggested that the religious and civic sentiments of the Pilgrims continued to spread out to the world like the water that “gushed forth from the rock smitten by the rod of Moses.”\textsuperscript{180} As illustrated by Beale’s rhetoric, no matter the topic of discussion before the delegates, they should consistently turn to the past for guidance and strength in the future.

At the sectional meetings, the delegates focused primarily on the influence of the Pilgrims in the religious life of the church and world. Just as the Pilgrims recognized and lived according to the “reality of God,” Congregationalists should also aim to make this their “first object of allegiance… not merely of our salvation, but of all right living, right relationship, and all true interpretation of the universe and its meaning.”\textsuperscript{181} This statement adopted by the American delegates at the ICC, communicated the delegates’ desire that their fellow Congregationalists recognize that the Pilgrim faith was not only important for individual salvation, but could provide direction for personal and national relationships. The “controlling conviction” of God’s reality, the statement suggested, is needed even more in light of a world of “revived paganism, its lessened sense of personal

\textsuperscript{178} Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 216.
\textsuperscript{179} Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 215.
\textsuperscript{180} Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 215.
\textsuperscript{181} Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 52, 53.
obligation, its eagerness for the pleasures and satisfactions of the present.” The Pilgrims, like the Mormon pioneers, provided an example for living in a world that emphasized materialism at the cost of religion. The Pilgrims taught men and women how to acknowledge the reality of God and therefore live in good relations with one another rather than submitting to modern temptations. In adapting the Pilgrim model, Congregationalists could advocate legislation that met the “needs of the age” and contributed to justice, and evangelize to a world in desperate need “of the light of the glory of God.” Reverend W.L. Walker similarly reaffirmed the notion of living according to God’s reality in his address on the “Spiritual Import of Congregationalism.” While he believed in the moral implications of the spiritual life, Walker asserted that Congregationalists needed to “not only to seek to make right the outward conditions of life but the inner spirit of men.” The spiritual life of the world also needed transformation. “To the spiritual ear, the sad, struggling, weary, sinful and suffering world is crying aloud for salvation,” Walker proclaimed, “It is salvation from its own unspiritual self it needs.” By making humans “co-workers with Himself,” God would transform the individual and the world, Walker argued, by “seeking to possess” their hearts.

The call made by the delegates to grasp and live in relation to the reality of God, however, did not necessitate conversion to Congregationalism. While Walker advocated the “spiritualization” of the world, he did not suggest that Congregationalism possessed a monopoly on spirituality. Congregationalism, Walker asserted, was a “spiritual

\[182\] Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 53.
\[183\] Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 55.
\[184\] Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 104.
\[185\] Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 108.
In their report on Congregationalism and Spiritual Ideals, the American Commission, comprised of fourteen ministers and one woman, pointed out that Congregationalism produced five “spiritual results” – freedom from both “sacerdotalism” and “sacramentarianism;” intellectual development through education and reason; and freedom and worth of the individual as the foundation of democracy. Echoing Walker, the American Commission argued that one did not need to become a Congregationalist in order to enjoy these “spiritual results” but rather “become Congregationalized in all the relationships of their lives.” The world would be a better place if people were “Congregationalized.” Anybody, whether they were a member of a Congregationalist church or not, could receive the benefits of the Pilgrim legacy through the denomination.

If the religious principles of Congregationalism served as the starting point for creating a better world, the civic principles of freedom, democracy, and unity were the logical concluding point. As the American Commission on Congregationalism and Liberty suggested, “the cause of human freedom waited for the inspirations and sanction of an emancipated Christian faith.” The Pilgrims migrated with a “spirit of liberty” and advanced towards freedom “by their conspicuous heroism, and the success of their enterprise.” According to the American Commission, the cause of freedom and democracy stemmed directly from religious freedom. As the American Commission on Congregationalism and Spiritual Ideals succinctly and confidently stated, “religious freedom makes political freedom inevitable.” The American Commission on

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186 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 103.
187 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 218-222.
188 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 224.
189 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 238.
190 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 239.
191 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 221.
Congregationalism and Unity, chaired by Boston-based minister Willard R. Sperry, repeated the sentiments of other commissions. Based on their study of Congregational history, they triumphantly concluded that it

cannot be dissociated from the whole democratic movement of the modern world. We hold our polity… to be one of the earliest expressions of the nascent democracy of the Reformation. Our past history, our present problems, and our future fortunes are bound up in the bundle of life with the whole democratic idea. Radical modifications of democratic theory and practice in modern states will be reflected in the life of our own communion.  

As expressed by numerous American delegates at the ICC – and by other religious communities in this study – the religious and political advancement of the modern world were inextricably bound together.

In their discussions of the contemporary political implications of the collective religious memory of the Pilgrims, the American ICC delegates related the past to the present post-war situation, particularly the League of Nations. Although Republicans in the United States Congress advanced a vote against the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles therefore nullifying the country’s participation in the League of Nations, delegates at the ICC discussed the organization as an essential component of international unity. The American delegates resolved to lobby the Republican and Democratic nominees for the 1920 presidential election to pledge their support for U.S. entrance into the League of Nations. Several ministers linked the League of Nations to larger social and international harmony. The main theme that emerged in the discussion of the war and the League of Nations was an ideal of what the organization could provide for a post-war society – unity and brotherhood among nations. For Congregationalists this specifically meant Christian unity and brotherhood. The ICC sought “the realization of

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192 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 341.
193 Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 56.
human brotherhood,” while the organization’s constitution pointed to “Christian brotherhood as the basis of a true democracy.”\footnote{Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 50.} The war shook the foundations of society, but from it also emerged “the conception of certain great fundamental possibilities of a better and more Christian world.”\footnote{Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 53.} In particular, the League of Nations could help ensure “a more Christian relation of nation with nation.”\footnote{Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 54.} Reverend K.L. Perry suggested that the major lesson born from the recent war was that of the importance of unity. Not only were Christians promoting unity, but it could also be seen in the League of Nations.\footnote{Volume of Proceedings of the Fourth International Congregational Church, 123.} Even in the wake of Congress’s refusal to accept the Treaty of Versailles, the country’s participation in an international peace keeping organization, and a return to isolationism, the delegates at the ICC continued to believe that the ideals of the League of Nations were worth pursuing. Even if the country would not engage the world politically and diplomatically, the Congregational church could engage the world through the religious legacy of the Pilgrim fathers.

**Conclusion**

The Pilgrim Tercentenary provided a culmination to the commemorative actions and public ceremonies undertaken by various religious communities between 1890 and 1920. While local and federal officials planned various programs and methods to celebrate the Tercentenary, the Congregationalists – the religious heirs of the Pilgrims – claimed the past for themselves. In light of external factors like a recently concluded and bitterly fought war and social problems, and internal factors, like a church struggling to
retain cultural and religious influence amid denominational competition and nationalization trends, the Congregationalist church co-opted the memory of the sixteenth-century Pilgrims to promote their twentieth-century religious and political agenda. Rather than relying on a strict adherence to the historical record of the Pilgrims, their migration, and subsequent settlement in Massachusetts, Congregationalists remembered the Pilgrims as tolerant men and women who established the religious freedom and the foundations of political democracy in the United States.

The Congregationalist collective religious memory of the Pilgrims contained two main components. First, the memory of the Pilgrims created an essential link between religion and civil society. Second, the memory equipped them with a relevant example for individual and international relations in a postwar world. Like their Pentecostal and Lutheran counterparts early in the century, Congregationalists approached the Tercentenary with a sense of urgency. Burgeoning materialism in American society and the potential threat posed by authoritarian governments to democracy prompted Congregationalists to appropriate the memory to assert the need for Christian teaching and God’s guiding hand in the world. As evidenced in their education, missionary, and civic objectives during the Pilgrim Tercentenary, the Congregationalist church sought to build up the institutional strength of the church and religious devotion of its members. In turn, they believed, renewed spiritual vigor coupled with organizational might would supply missionaries, pastors, and individual lay members with the resources needed to “congregationalize” and spiritualize their daily lives and pursue the ideals of brotherhood and unity in domestic and international relations. As they remembered the Pilgrims to interpret the changing church and world emerging around them, Congregationalists
culled religious and political lessons from the past to outline the spiritually based future of the church and world.
Conclusion

Religion and American Society: Then and Now

Over the course of the thirty years between 1890 and 1920, America’s Roman Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists turned to the past in order to make sense of their present and future relationship to American society. Amid multiple struggles that were internally specific to each denomination yet externally similar, they turned a nostalgic, rather than a critical, eye to the past as the means by which to re-identify their respective religious community with America’s changing economic, political, and social structure. During this time, revealed religion itself seemed to be under assault. The New Theology of the late nineteenth century offered a perspective on the religious experience that downplayed the importance of individual salvation and adherence to creeds. The intellectual frameworks of Darwinism and evolution, moreover, provided a more analytical means for evaluating the Bible. Mainstream Protestant leaders increasingly lost cultural influence, particularly in the area of higher education. Institutionally, churches struggled to meet the spiritual and material needs of a membership comprised more and more of immigrants. These immigrants from eastern and southern Europe migrated to a United States undergoing its own growing pains due to a shift from an agricultural and rural to an industrial and urban-based economy. The values of the workplace and society, placed more and more weight on efficient productivity, rationality, and material wealth. Within this context, religion was seemingly squeezed out of the public areas of American society and culture.

As the experience of the religious communities at the center of this study demonstrates, however, America’s Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and
Congregationalists undertook their own methods to adjust to these internal and external changes. Church leaders and prominent laity exerted great effort to make revealed religion relevant to their congregations by creating memories of past events and persons who contributed to the historical legacy of their religious tradition. Like the many historians, philosophers, and progressives of the day who turned to the past to reevaluate the present and future, religious communities exploited a long tradition of religious and historical development to rethink and resituate their relationship to American society. By recollecting the past, they strengthened the historicity of their faith and constructed the foundation of a communal religious identity that bound together an ever more disparate membership. In addition, during this period, these communities believed that religion still had a prominent and influential role to play in guiding American society along the right path towards religious and civil progress. Through commemorative projects and public celebrations that were directed towards the faithful and American society as a whole, these communities presented a case for the necessary place of religion in America’s past, present, and future successes and triumphs.

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During the Columbus Quadricentennial of 1892-1893, American Roman Catholics co-opted Columbus and his voyages and transformed him from being merely an American hero into an American Catholic hero. For a community that had long battled popular and political anti-Catholic prejudice, Columbus – a figure who garnered much admiration from Americans in general – served as the ideal vehicle to once more assert American Catholicism’s legitimacy as a religious and cultural force in society. As argued by orators, writers, and clergy, the Catholic Columbus opened the doors for the religious and political
development of the United States. His Catholicism, they argued, did not impede him from pursuing progress and advancement, but rather facilitated it. In addition, Columbus provided a model Catholic for the large immigrant membership in the church. Throughout his numerous hardships and successes, Columbus relied on his faith to motivate his work and guide him in all things. As they fashioned a passionately devout Columbus from the historical record, American Catholics strove to create a figure worthy of spiritual emulation by immigrants.

Since the Quadricentennial, however, Columbus’s reputation has experienced a significant alteration. By the time of the Quincentennial in 1992, Columbus was no longer the revered and respected discoverer of the Americas, but a man chided for inaugurating the genocide of the indigenous peoples of Latin America and opening the door for the introduction of slavery. As Colin G. Colloway notes in his review of James Axtell’s Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial North America, “If 1992 was not for most people an occasion for mourning and national flagellation, neither was it a time of unrestrained jubilation.”

While there is little to suggest that the American Catholic community engages in the same kind of euphoric recollection of Columbus and his voyages as they once did in the late-nineteenth century, there were indications of continued attempts to praise the Catholic Columbus during the Quincentennial. Pope John Paul II visited the Dominican Republic on the occasion of the 500th Anniversary of Columbus’ voyages. At an outdoor mass he proclaimed that “To say America, is to say Maria,” suggesting that Columbus’s voyages were about a “liberating faith rather than a harbinger of brutal conquest.”

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Father John A. Hardon, S.J., of the Real Presence Eucharistic Education and Adoration Association based in Chicago, Illinois, echoed the sentiments of the church’s institutional leader and his religious counterparts in the nineteenth century. Hardon critically examined the historical sources to assess Columbus, but he continued to uphold the discoverer as a figure deserving of Catholic reverence. The “discovery” of America, Hardon suggests, would not have been possible without the Catholic Church.\(^3\) In his estimation, moreover, Hardon proposed that the fifteenth-century discoverer was the “destined herald of the true faith to half of the human race” and helped initiate “the most fruitful conversion to Catholic Christianity since apostolic times.”\(^4\) Finally, like American Catholics during the Quadricentenary, Hardon believed that Columbus’s legacy contained valuable religious lessons for the future. Columbus and those missionaries who followed him, Hardon pleaded, should “inspire us to preserve, to purify and to promote the faith.”\(^5\)

Clearly, the memory of the Catholic Columbus and his continued appropriation as a model for Catholics continues to have staying power among the institutional leadership.

A few short years after the Columbus Quadricentennial, Utah and her predominantly Mormon population planned and staged an elaborate weeklong celebration to honor the pioneers who migrated from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Like the Roman Catholic Church, the LDS Church faced considerable popular and


\(^5\) Hardon, S.J., “Transcript of Talk on Christopher Columbus,” www.therealpresence.org/archives/Christopher_Columbus/Christopher_Columbus_001.htm (accessed August 2008). Hardon wrote/gave a total of six talks on Columbus the Catholic.
legal anti-Mormon sentiment, particularly as it climaxed in the prosecution of polygamists in the 1880s. By the mid-1890s, the LDS Church had made several concessions demonstrating its desire to enter more fully into the American social and cultural mainstream. The church disbanded its political party, decreased its involvement in financial investments, and most importantly, officially condemned the practice of polygamy in 1890. In 1897, the Pioneer Jubilee afforded Utahans one more occasion to combat criticism of their state and its overwhelmingly Mormon population. To secure a more positive image of Utah and her Mormon inhabitants in the minds of America’s non-Mormons, the Utah Semi-Centennial Commission and average Utahans created a memory of the migration stripped of any overt references to Mormonism and the LDS Church. The Semi-Centennial Commission refashioned the memory of the migrants in a manner that raised them up as carriers of western civilization and progress to a once barren wasteland. In addition, they wanted to enhance the economic growth of the state by advertising its abundant agricultural and mining resources awaiting development.

One hundred years later, Utahans continue to celebrate Pioneer Day. The day celebrating the arrival of the pioneers is an official state holiday and LDS Church offices are closed. As with the Semi-Centennial of 1897, contemporary Pioneer Day celebrations reflect a combination of entertainment, nostalgic remembrance, and calls for the application of the pioneer qualities in the present. The 2008 Pioneer Day celebration in Salt Lake City included the Days of ’47 Rodeo at the Energy Solutions Arena and a Days of ’47 parade on July 24. Although the parade did not start until nine in the evening, Utahans – like George Reese and his family over a century ago – began

gathering early to get good seats. Scott Johnson and about twenty friends camped out nearly twenty-fours early with mattresses for sleeping and tarps to protect them from the elements. As another parade watcher, Chris Ripplinger, observed, “It’s just a novelty.”

For Johnson and Ripplinger, the pioneer parade functioned primarily as a form of entertainment as they watched marching bands, floats, and beauty queens pass by in procession. Rather than riding in a wagon, like Woodruff, LDS Church president Thomas S. Monson and his wife rode comfortably in a stylish convertible. At the same time, however, Pioneer Day retains a sacred quality for the LDS Church. The church held a sunrise service at the Tabernacle. During the service, Earl C. Tingey, an elder and member of the Presidency of the Seventy, spoke about the continued relevance of the 1847 pioneers in the early twenty-first century. The pioneers, Tingey suggested, sacrificed themselves in hardship for their beliefs and in turn achieved great things. Similar to their pioneering forbearers, Tingey called upon his audience to understand that they too needed to overcome their own challenges to help the church “move forward… to the truths we should be pursuing.”

As during the Semi-Centennial, the pioneers served as a convenient and malleable component of the past to address present and future circumstances within the LDS Church.

Within ten years after the Semi-Centennial, the tone of the commemorative occasions shifted. No longer did religious communities focus solely on the triumphs of the past; they also reflected on the uncertain and anxious future of Christianity and society. For early Pentecostals at the Azusa Street Mission and increasingly around the

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country and world, American society and contemporary Christianity appeared to be on the downturn. Between 1906 and 1909, William J. Seymour and the participants at the Azusa Street revivals turned to the biblical past of the first Pentecost to retrieve what they believed was true apostolic Christianity. By recreating the first Pentecost in twentieth-century Los Angeles, the early Pentecostals believed that they could combat the materialism that plagued society and redeem contemporary Christianity from the unnecessary institutional structures and accoutrements that kept individuals from achieving real salvation. Through their words, actions, and use of physical space they appropriated the biblical past to construct a legitimate historical foundation for their budding religious tradition. Moreover, by remembering and recreating the past in the present, the early Pentecostals believed that their revivals would usher in the much anticipated and hoped for second return of Jesus. No Azusa Street participant experienced Jesus’ return in his or her lifetime, but they contributed to the emergence of a religious tradition that spread to every part of the globe.

Over the course of one hundred years, the Azusa Street Mission has eclipsed the first Pentecost in the collective religious memory of Pentecostalism. Azusa Street is popularly viewed as the beginning point of the tradition, but historians point to more nuanced and multifaceted origins. Joe Creech suggests that two major historiographical interpretations have emerged in explaining the emergence of Pentecostalism: the “Azusa stream,” which suggests that all roads lead back to the Mission, and the “many fires” interpretation, which suggests that Pentecostalism is much more multidimensional in its genesis. Within the academy, the story of the Azusa Street Mission is often seen as one of many parts in the emergence and solidification of Pentecostalism as a viable Christian
tradition. The “Azusa stream” interpretation, however, has gained a much larger following outside of academic circles contributing to what Creech suggests constitutes the “myth of origins” surrounding Pentecostalism. In his attempt to clarify the role that the Azusa Street Mission played, Creech suggests that Azusa became a “symbolic point of origin” within the Pentecostal tradition. Rather than functioning primarily as the end point in the continuity established between the first and second Pentecost, the Azusa Street Mission itself became a beginning point, a standard by which other spaces where the human and divine encountered one another would be measured. The Pentecostal religious tradition began at Azusa Street and the religious revivals that took place there, not at the first Pentecost in an upper-room in the city of Jerusalem.

Nothing solidified this interpretation more than the Azusa Street Mission Centennial in 2006. Over the course of five days in April 2006, Los Angeles hosted a pentecostal celebration of the Azusa Street Mission. During the festivities, nearly 45,000 people from over 100 countries participated in Bible studies, training sessions, and revivals; listened to numerous addresses and sermons; and even watched “The Fire Still Falls,” a pageant that reenacted the narrative of Azusa Street. Other events allowed participants to more fully engage the history of the Azusa Street Mission and to reinstitute sacred spaces for the encounter between the human and the divine. Organizers established an “upper-room” where prayer took place throughout the celebration and

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“Holy Spirit ministry rooms” where participants could await their baptism. Tours of important historical markers of the Pentecostal movement, including the former site of the Azusa Street Mission, took place daily. The pilgrimage of thousands to Los Angeles and more specifically the former location of the Mission where Pentecostalism was born (the building was torn down in 1931 and the site is currently occupied by the Japanese American Community and Cultural Center) functioned as an attempt by Pentecostals to reclaim the memory of the Azusa Street Mission and reassert spiritual ownership over part of the modern-day urban landscape.

The dual emphasis on uncertainty and progress continued during the Reformation Quadricentennial in 1917-1918. America’s Lutherans, a denomination that had generally not experienced the same degree of opposition as Catholics and Mormons, now faced two major challenges during the anniversary year. On the one hand, Lutherans – no matter their ethnic background – faced significant anti-German sentiment during World War I and especially after the United States joined the allied powers. On the other hand, Lutheran church leaders were particularly concerned about the potential threat that the New Theology posed to the theological strength of their institution and members. In turn, they used the occasion of the Quadricentennial marking the birth of the Reformation in the sixteenth century to combat charges of anti-Americanism and to strengthen the faith of rank-and-file Lutherans. Organizations representing the interests of the General Synod and the General Council, like the New York Quadricentennial Committee and the Joint Committee, borrowed publicity methods employed by the federal government’s Committee on Public Information to promote this dual agenda. In the process, these committees created and perpetuated a memory of Martin Luther and the Reformation that
made a direct causal link between the religious developments of the early sixteenth-century and the political developments of later centuries. The emergence of Lutheranism, they argued, provided for the establishment of a democratic government in the United States and could help ensure the survival of democracy in the present and future. Moreover, Lutheran clergy and lay leaders used the occasion to educate and encourage rank-and-file Lutherans to invest themselves in the work of the church, first through education and second, through mission work.

As Lutherans in the United States look towards celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, their objectives primarily reflect the larger trends that transpired on the American religious scene in the twentieth century. While the General Synod and the General Council pushed for union during the Quadricentennial, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (formed from a merger of the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in 1988) is pursuing a more ecumenical celebration for the Quincentennial. The Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, meeting since 1965, will more than likely address the anniversary of the Reformation at an upcoming round of dialogue. Moreover, General Secretary of the Lutheran Federation, Ishmael Noko, suggests that, “we are not commemorating that we became Lutherans, but we are commemorating that through the reformers the Church was constantly renewed.” Moreover, Noko points out that, “Lutherans look at Catholics from the point of view of the 16th century, and we define ourselves vis-à-vis the Catholic of the 16th century, which is not correct.”

As suggested by Noko, the upcoming Quincentennial will demand that

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Lutherans no longer become burdened by the collective religious memories of the past, but rather move toward greater religious cooperation.

As America’s Lutherans celebrated the Reformation Quadricentennial in 1917, Congregationalists busily prepared to commemorate the landing of the Pilgrims during the Tercentenary in 1920-1921. Similar to the Lutherans and Pentecostals, Congregational church leaders and laity conveyed their alarm about the direction of American society and the world, particularly in the wake of the end of World War I. They also created their memory of the Pilgrim past and its relevance for the present and future with an emphasis on the important role religion could play in furthering religious and civic progress. As they fashioned the collective religious memory of the Pilgrims, Congregationalists lauded them for their perseverance through difficult struggles. More importantly they conveniently downplayed the undemocratic tendencies and religious intolerance of the Pilgrims and their relations, the Puritans, in order to create models of religious and civic progress for the twentieth century. Congregational church leaders believed, like Lutheran leaders, that the laity needed to be educated in the historical faith in order to “congregationalize” society domestically and internationally through mission work and the application of the Pilgrim principles.

With the Quadricentennial of the landing of the Pilgrims still twelve years out steps are already being taken to once again commemorate the occasion. The community of Plymouth has already established a committee with Peter J. Gomes, Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister at Harvard's Memorial Church, serving the summer of 2007, Pope Benedict XVI issued a statement that suggested that the Christian denominations to emerge out of the sixteenth-century Reformation, including Lutheran churches, were not true churches or defective. He also affirmed the primacy of the Roman Catholic Church as the true inheritor of apostolic Christianity.
as chair. In 2007, Gomes informed the community that the occasion of the upcoming
anniversary could help Plymouth to “seize the opportunity to re-brand itself and live up to
the myths and symbols of being the oldest community in the Commonwealth and
perhaps—if only sentimental—in the nation.” Gomes also suggested that while speeches
and parades had their value, the real lasting significance of the anniversary could be
found in achieving a tangible result, in this case perhaps the realization of the
Downtown/Waterfront Public Space Action Plan.\textsuperscript{13} It is unclear at this point if
Congregationalists as a whole or individually will choose to commemorate in any
religious or secular way the arrival of the Pilgrims. Since the Tercentenary,
Congregationalism underwent even further reduction of its denominational
distinctiveness and distancing from its theological roots with the merger of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church and Congregational Christian Church to form the
United Church of Christ in 1957. Like Congregationalists nearly a century ago, the UCC
retains a congregational polity and views creeds more as declarations of faith rather than
tests of one’s faith. As the anniversary draws nearer, it will remain to be seen if the UCC
sees the Pilgrims as relevant to their collective religious memory either in the present or
future.

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Individual and collective memories can be fickle, malleable, and inaccurate
reflections of historical reality. Between 1890 and 1920, the religious communities
comprising the focus of this study took liberties with historical reality in order to create
usable memories that could sustain them in the present and future and situate themselves

\textsuperscript{13} For all information on the upcoming Pilgrim Quadricentennial see
in relationship to American society. Rarely did they critically examine the events and
ing figures at the center of their collective religious memories. To have done so would have
undermined the ultimate objective of claiming that religion, and often their own
particular brand of religion, was the cure for what ailed America. American Roman
Catholics, Mormons, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Congregationalists all argued that
religion played a transformative role in the spiritual and civic triumphs of the past. In
order for the country to continue on that path in the modern era, progress and religion
could only walk hand in hand.
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