C. C. A. Christensen on Art

from the Salt Lake City *Bikuben* February–March 1892

Translated, with an Introduction,
by Richard L. Jensen

The homespun quality of his painting, enhanced by evident ability as a painter, has marked the work of C. C. A. Christensen as representative of Latter-day Saint experience in the nineteenth century.[1] Converted to Mormonism in Denmark in 1850, Christensen immigrated to America in 1857 and pulled a handcart to Utah. In the wake of his conversion, proselytizing and emigration seemed so urgent that he gave up hopes of a career in art, although he had the beginnings of a solid training at the Royal Academy of Fine Art in Copenhagen. But after rigorous pioneering years in Utah, farming and painting homes and theater scenery, he found that through historical and religious painting he could help reinforce the faith of his fellow settlers and at the same time gain a modest income from his art. Thus he became one of the most effective narrative painters of Mormondom. Best known for his epic historical "Mormon Panorama" and paintings of the pioneering experience, he produced numerous other works, many of which are to be featured in a major exhibition in the opening months (April–October) of the Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City, Utah.[2]

Christensen's writing parallels his painting in opening windows on nineteenth-century Mormonism. Though articulate in English, Christensen made his real contributions in Danish, his native language.[3]

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The colored photographs of C. C. A. Christensen's paintings at the end of this article are courtesy of the Museum of Church History and Art, the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Museum, and some private collections. *BYU Studies* appreciates the use of these illustrations.

[1]Jane Dillenberger, "Mormonism and American Religious Art," *Sunstone* 3 (May–June 1978): 13–17. Richard L. Jensen and Richard G. Oman, *C. C. A. Christensen (1831–1912): Mormon Immigrant Artist* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, forthcoming).

[2]The new Museum of Church History and Art is located across the street west of Temple Square, Salt Lake City, Utah.

[3]William Mulder, " 'Man Kalder Mig Digter': C. C. A. Christensen, Poet of the Scandinavian Scene in Early Utah," *Utah Humanities Review* 1 (January 1947): 8–17.

Courtesy of Historical Department
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Photograph of C. C. A. Christensen, ca. 1895, at about the age of sixty-five

The following essay is part of an extensive correspondence published throughout three and a half decades in *Bikuben*, a Latter-day Saint newspaper for Danish and Norwegian immigrants in the Mountain West.

Writing in 1892, at the peak of his artistic career, C. C. A. Christensen sought to promote art appreciation among his fellow immigrants and to encourage art education in the public schools. His essay reflects an approach which has been characteristic of Scandinavia since his time. Christensen identified handicrafts, architecture, and industrial design within the domain of fine art. For him, an attractive homemade quilt deserved the same admiration as a good painting. He saw skill in drawing, the exclusive emphasis of his own early training at the Royal Academy, as the key to artistic achievement.

The Latter-day Saint world view was central to Christensen's thinking on art. His essay demonstrates the inclination of nineteenth-century Mormons to find their temporal endeavors relevant to building the kingdom of God, and thus to preparing for a more glorious society in the hereafter. Expectations of the Millennium, the first feature of Mormonism to arouse Christensen's interest, remained a motivating force throughout his life. This is evident in this 1892 essay, which sees art education for the Latter-day Saints as both an enhancement for sale of their products and a necessary preparation for welcoming the Savior at the Second Coming. Opposed to "spiritualizing" the scriptures, here he focuses literal interpretations of holy writ on tangible expectations.

Christensen was intrigued with pre-earth life and the hereafter, with the human spirit and its capabilities. Aware of progress in British industry and of Horace Mann's educational reforms, this Sanpete County homesteader sought to promote similar advances among his own people. While this essay gives insights into the nineteenth-century world in which C. C. A. Christensen lived, several of his observations on the plight of the Latter-day Saint artist and the condition of art among his people seem uncannily applicable in our time.[4]

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[4]Christensen's article, "De skjønne Kunster," was serialized in *Bikuben* 18 and 25 February, 3 and 31 March 1892. While my translation is reasonably exact, I have deleted a few redundant phrases and divided some of the original paragraphs to improve readability.

The Fine Arts

C. C. A. Christensen

As an attempt to awaken more than the ordinary interest for the fine arts among the Scandinavian populace, and perhaps thereby indirectly also among other nationalities here in our blessed and progressive Utah, let me herewith set forth some of my views on the meaning and importance of the same, particularly for the rising generation. Pictures and decoration have now become such a necessity in our enlightened age that the art of drawing is considered equal to the art of writing and other ordinary school-learning in every up-to-date school system, and therefore it occupies its place as such in instruction. Nevertheless, little is done in that direction in our district schools here in Utah. Our institutions of higher learning, such as the university and the different high schools and seminaries, have, to be sure, done something, but far from enough in that regard, probably for entirely natural reasons, since they generally must struggle for their existence because of a lack of interest in the advantages and necessity of joining in the mighty progress of our age in the area of art and science.

Many still believe that it is a virtue to be thrifty, and they limit themselves to the "bare absolute necessities," meaning thereby food, clothing, housing, and whatever is required for economical home management. Yet hardly a thought is given to the fact that even from such a restricted point of view the products of art will greet the eye in a great many forms. As an example we will imagine a visit to the home of an ordinary Danish farmer in Sanpete, which is perhaps the most conservative part of Utah. Upon entering we find the rug woven of old cloths, but clean and with different colors and patterns according to the taste and ability of the housewife. Next we find pictures, mirrors, flowers in pots and glasses and frames, the latter perhaps partly the work of the daughter. Next the wallpaper attracts our attention with its pretty patterns and tasteful colors. Then there is the furniture, and especially the quilt, which was completed by the sisters during a jolly party a few days ago. If the visitor belongs to this interesting sex which bears the nickname "the fair," it goes without saying that this latter masterpiece will be particularly noticed and admired. That perhaps at times it has served largely for women as a dress or other item of clothing, or served in the army as a piece of an outfit, is irrelevant, for now female ingenuity has actually dedicated

these old remains of the glorious days of the past to a place in the holy of holies, the pride and joy of the housewife: the bedroom.

There is no denying that the useful and the tasteful are brought here into pleasing harmony without having interfered with our general ideas of what is necessary. If we behold the housewife's and the daughter's clothing, we find a multitude of different patterns in the color and other properties of the material, as well as in the style and accessories of the dress, according to the owner's taste and ability to beautify herself and her surroundings in the home. Finally, when the table is set, we find plates and cups decorated with pictures and formed according to the most appealing design to please the eye, as well as to be useful in containing the well-cooked dishes which are served. Usually even these, particularly the cakes, are small works of art, particularly at wedding celebrations and other large gatherings. Even the stove is polished and, black as it is, is still decorated with cast iron flowers on all its doors.

The fundamental basis for all the tasteful objects in an ordinary farm home is the sense of beauty and artistic diligence. When this is brought to the highest level of perfection it is called art, whether he or she who makes use of it is rich or poor, learned or unlearned, understands art or not. He or she who produces these beautiful and useful objects benefits mankind in general and himself/herself as well, and should be considered a benefactor of society. If it were possible to imagine suddenly being placed in a dugout, with a tattered rug for a door, a plank with unplaned legs underneath for chair and sofa, an old chest or empty barrel for a table and flour container, and then having clothing and education of the mind on the same scale, one might perhaps get a partial idea of the changes which have taken place in our earlier notions about what was a necessity. We would miss these ordinary household conveniences, which now make life pleasant and (perhaps imperceptibly) ennoble the minds of both young and old. Necessity and a barbaric taste once made the revolver and the Bowie knife the most sought-after adornments of the young man, and if he could add a wolf tail on his hat and a pair of really jingling spurs he was the lion of the day and thus an object for the admiration of the girls. At social gatherings he sought to imitate the yells and gestures of the wild Indian, and this generally happened even in the ballroom in the good old days. But would we now be satisfied if the conditions of that time were reestablished? That we were contented and happy then is no proof that such conditions would be satisfactory now. Time has changed both us and our notions in many regards, and every step forward in the right direction will

bring us closer to the goal which God has set for mankind to aspire to in this life, with the promised opportunity for further progression in the life to come.

When God created the world in the beginning, he made everything "very good." The surface of the earth constituted the most beautiful panorama, wherever the eye might turn. Mountains, valleys, and plains were decorated with trees, bushes, grass, and flowers. The latter in particular testified to the masterful ability of the great creator to make beautiful shapes and colors to gladden the sight. He also provided each with its own particular smell and taste, as well as the ability to heal, in case men became subject to death through transgression. Thus he was the great master of all gardeners and artists in painting. He was astronomer, geologist, mineralogist, botanist, physiologist, physician, lawgiver, and architect from the beginning and was completely conversant with all the so-called discoveries, sciences, and arts of all time, and consequently he must still possess all these attributes and make use of them in the sphere in which he operates. As a famous scientist declared on his deathbed, he found himself like a child who had gathered together on the edge of the seashore a few pretty rocks from the sand, but who still found that the ocean and the grains of sand were in an inexhaustible supply. What mankind has achieved through the condescending guidance of Providence in six millennia is only a little in comparison with that which has not yet been achieved. But the little which has been won is invaluable as the necessary condition for being able to obtain more.

Our earthly life is intended to be an institution of learning, in which we are educated for the more perfect hereafter. From the cradle to the grave we undergo a series of changes in our notions and ways of thinking, as well as in our physical organization. The child, the man, and the old man are markedly different from each other in intellect and strength, and as a result their enjoyments in life are also different. The child's play is not suited to the man, nor to the grey-haired old man or woman, and yet there was a time when these elderly people enjoyed playing with toys, just as their grandchildren do now. As we approach the threshold to eternity, our notions mature, and we comprehend that childish things are only suitable for children, that we have more important work to perform, that our future reaches out beyond the boundaries of our earthly existence, and that our duty, as well as our welfare, is closely related to the use we have made or make of time. The conveniences which the civilized part of the world now enjoy are a result of a gradual progression through which mankind has passed from the barbarism of ancient

time to the exalted status of present society, and all Christians believe that heaven, which is their hope, is governed in accordance with the most perfect principles, the only principles whereby eternal happiness can be obtained and maintained. That the fine arts occupy their proper place in heaven is perhaps not understood by the sectarian world, which spiritualizes and misinterprets everything the holy prophets and apostles have written about the future joyful place of abode of those who are saved. But all Latter-day Saints should certainly comprehend that the new Jerusalem and other heavenly places, which have been described by holy men who were permitted to behold them in all their glorious reality, were not established or constructed without a plan, by unskilled barbarians.

In reading the Revelation of John, chapter 21, we find that an angel carried him away in the spirit to a large and high mountain and showed him the great city, the holy Jerusalem, which descended out of heaven from God. It had the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of the most precious stone, like crystal-clear jasper. It also had a large, high wall with twelve gates, and over the gates twelve angels and names written upon them, which were the twelve tribes of the children of Israel (v. 10–12). These gates were oriented toward the four cardinal points of the compass. They were each made from a pearl, and one can imagine that in the execution and beauty of the work they were not inferior to the most expensive materials.

To avoid tiring the reader by citing abundant testimonies from the Bible and other holy scriptures, I will simply ask everyone who might want such scriptures to read them himself and consider what he reads. Every city consists necessarily of a collection of buildings, and therefore this glorious city must have buildings, without which there could hardly be a city or streets. Since these are often said to be "paved with pure gold," it is self-evident that this beautiful metal must have been abundantly utilized in the residences of the redeemed and in other buildings. That precious stones were available and constituted building materials for the wall around the city should also be sufficient testimony that houses, temples, and other public buildings were built of such materials, and by skilled craftsmen and artists. The angel "had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof" (v. 15).[5] Here we find the surveyor, and perhaps an architect in the same heavenly personage, condescending to manifest and explain for the astonished ancient apostle his future place of abode when his mission here below had come to an

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[5]Unless otherwise noted, translations of biblical citations have been taken from the King James Version, the Bible most commonly used by Latter-day Saints in the nineteenth century.

end. This glorious city was also shown to Abraham, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

The Latter-day Saints have been taught that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, built a glorious city which he called Zion, and that this city was taken up to heaven a short time before the Flood lifted the ark on its angry waves, while the wicked perished. Every thinker will doubtless perceive that if this is really the case, Enoch must have been very advanced in the art of building and other related arts and sciences, for it would be unreasonable to imagine that a city which only consisted of miserable earthen huts or houses in the ground would be moved and placed beside the holy Jerusalem which was shown to John and which was the tent of God and the home of the redeemed in heaven. Whether it was the same city or another which was shown to John we do not know; but it is clear that there was a city "whose builder and maker is God" in Abraham's day, for without that he could not have hoped to go there. For three hundred years Enoch walked with God and was instructed by him, and it is no wonder that he then could build a city according to the heavenly pattern, according to all the perfect principles of art and science. Therefore it could properly be said that "its builder and maker was God."

Not long afterwards, Noah was commanded to build the ark, using precisely specified dimensions and probably an accompanying drawing, just as Moses several hundred years later was instructed about the Tabernacle with all its vessels and adornments, and was commanded to "look that thou make them [all these things] after their pattern, which was shewed thee [Moses] in the mount" (Exod. 25:40). In reading chapters 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, we find the Lord further instructing Moses about dimensions and materials for every part of the various objects which were to be made by the artists and craftsmen of Israel "after their pattern, which was showed him in the mountain." The thirty-first chapter begins thus:

> And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee. (Exod. 31:1–6)

Thereupon all the various objects are named which these artists should make after being especially endowed with the spirit of God.

Here we see inspired workers or artists in gold and silver and copper, under the guidance of Moses, the prophet, and his fellow helpers, who were "filled with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship to devise cunning works," etc. If therefore the Lord had done likewise with Enoch and his people, and if over a period of several centuries they received practical instruction in art and science under the immediate direction of God, it is no wonder that the city could be found worthy of a place in a higher sphere, particularly when that dreadful event, the Flood, was imminent.

The art of building (architecture), sculpture, painting, and, as a foundation for all these, the art of drawing were thus heavenly sciences, which were, are, and always will be required in order to make the life of mankind pleasant and useful. They are now in practical use both in heaven and on earth among all intelligent beings who have made progress in intellectual regards.

When Solomon was about to build the world-famous temple in Jerusalem, he had a delegation appeal to the king of Tyre to send skilled workers and artists to take over the supervision of this great endeavor. That the Israelites were the Lord's chosen people and that Solomon himself was perhaps the most important monarch of his time did not qualify them for the work of building the temple, with its many precious works of art. The Lord had, to be sure, given Solomon great wisdom in many respects, and much riches in gold, silver, and other costly things besides. But he made use of his wisdom on this occasion by seeking the necessary help among the people of the neighboring king, the Phoenicians, who were at that time more civilized. The Jews were presumably, then as now, a commercial nation, who only cared to learn the quickest way to make money, and therefore did not educate themselves in art or science beyond what was absolutely necessary.

> And Solomon sent to Huram the king of Tyre, saying, As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, even so deal with me. Behold, I build an house to the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God. This is an ordinance forever to Israel. And the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods. . . . Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with

the cunning men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, with whom David my father did provide. . . .

Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because the Lord hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. Huram said moreover, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding, that might build an house for the Lord, and an house for his kingdom. And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Huram my father's, The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skillful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father. (2 Chron. 2:3–14)

Thus we see again that training and suitable skill in art and crafts were required in order to build the Lord a house on earth, in which the ordinances can be performed which are necessary for salvation of mankind both here and hereafter. Piety and pious devotion alone, in the ordinary sense, will not enable one to perform work for which many years' training and practical experience are required, even with the wisdom and wealth of a Solomon besides. What Solomon could not find among his own people he had to compensate for by importing from the neighboring kingdom, which was no doubt very humiliating for both Solomon and his people. That is the way it has also turned out in our times, unfortunately.

From the above it can be seen that the Lord does not consider human skill to be merely a luxury branch of scholarship that might come into play as a pastime; but rather to be both useful and necessary in order to obtain temporal and eternal bliss, in connection with our intellectual development in other areas. We do not mean by this that all people must become trained as artists in order to be saved in the kingdom of God, but that some, who have talents in that regard, should develop these talents, just as all other gifts which God gives to mankind for the benefit of his kingdom or all mankind. Paul's excellent comparison with the various members of the body (1 Cor. 12) can with good effect also be used with regard to the social aspects of the body of the state, and in a slightly modified form:

> But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal . . . God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that those who perform mighty works, then those who have gifts to heal, to govern, to speak in various tongues.[6] Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? etc. (1 Cor. 12:7, 28–29)

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[6]For the remainder of this sentence we have followed the Danish, which varies from the King James Version.

I will continue this comparision as it can be applied to a commonwealth or to the church in connection with the temporal progress of the same. The Spirit of God equips mankind with many different talents or abilities for the benefit and joy of all his children on earth, just as he gave them the gospel with all its spiritual gifts, although not everyone makes use of them to the same degree or at the same time. He (the Spirit of God) equipped some with great wisdom to discover the hidden treasures of nature in the area of science. He endowed others as architects, engineers, speakers, statesmen, poets, and artists. Others he gave abilities as agriculturalists and cattle husbandmen, as well as genius in the various trades, "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he [the Spirit of God] will" (1 Cor. 12:11).

Here I ask with Paul: Are all artists? Are all artisans? Or should all be farmers?

> For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. (1 Cor. 12:14–22)

Thus one class of society cannot say of one or more of the others that because they do not belong to the same one, they are either unnecessary or at any rate less valuable elements of society. Agriculture is no doubt among the most important branches of business in society, and perhaps its most important foundation, like the root, which gives the trunk and branches of the tree nourishment and strength to bear fruit. Yet it cannot be denied that it is for the fruit that the tree was planted, nor that it is in order to enjoy the fruits of the many branches of industry of an advanced civilization that the farmer patiently cultivates the ground and awaits his pay until harvest. If it were not so, he would make do with tools and home implements of stone and wood, as did our fathers in ancient times. Even if he were a sort of artist at thousands of things who could use the ax, the saw, and carpentry tools of modern times, still he would not be able to produce iron or manufacture the tools himself.

Our age has certainly made great progress in art and industry. Through machine-powered factories tens of thousands of useful and attractive objects now found in almost every home are made cheaply and are therefore obtainable for the poorer classes of society. This happy result is the fruit of "the gifts of the spirit" to individual persons who thus have become the benefactors of our generation. Just think of so lowly an object as a match or a pin, which is now sold so cheaply because machines produce these objects in such quantity that, for example, matches are sold at a profit for the price of a cent or less for a boxful, which amounts to about 144 matches. Anyone who has seen the way this is done can partially understand how it is possible, but he must also admire the inventor of the machines. It has probably cost him or those who have constructed these and thousands of other labor-saving machines many sleepless nights, and in many instances it has subjected these benevolent speculators to temporary distress and contempt, sometimes even to violent persecution. But now mankind enjoys the fruits of these martyrs of art and industry, just as we do in religion from those of the churches.

But how few is it who think of the fact that there must necessarily be a foundation, a root, upon which all these products are based? This root is inspiration, or the workings of the Spirit of God upon the spirit of man. A wise man has said, "There is a spirit in man, but the spirit of the Almighty enlightens his understanding." Although mankind calls this inventiveness, all sciences existed with God from the beginning and were put to practical use in the creation of this and other globes. All science and art of the present must exist in perfection in heaven and must be more or less understood by the happy beings who are there in His immediate presence.

Enoch's Zion, "The city, whose builder and architect is God," "the holy Jerusalem," and "the new Jerusalem" were all built according to plans and calculations which made them beautiful and comfortable for their inhabitants. It must not have been a matter of the absolute bare necessities. Fortunately misers (who are idol-worshippers) will not be admitted there; they would hardly approve of the lavish use of gold and precious stones which is found there, but would start by suggesting a substantial reduction in the heavenly budget. If the spirit of God here on earth inspired men to devise works of art for use in religious services in all their imperfection, during the Mosaic dispensation, can we find it reasonable that it should be inactive in the area of art in the place where everything is perfect, and where there is no lack of materials or instruction? Is there not rather a probability bordering on certainty that in our first

spiritual probationary state, perhaps before this world was created, or at least before we received our earthly existence, we were taught in all the sciences and arts which mankind has later made use of here on earth—no doubt to a far lower degree of perfection but yet as a result of the revelations of the spirit, which is given to us for our use and enjoyment? How can the spirit "manifest" that which does not exist? In that case it should rather be called "discovery of the spirit," certainly not manifestation.

If we believe that spirits were sufficiently enlightened to be able to take sides in heaven, which led to rebellion and war, is it not then reasonable also to believe that the same spirits were enlightened and educated in other areas, rather than only having studied politics? Politics in heaven? What an awful thought! And yet one must be content to believe that Lucifer was once there as well as the Son of God, that there was a rebellion, and that a great multitude of spirits were cast out and thereafter had to bear the loathsome name of devils. One logical conclusion draws others along behind it. The abilities which one manifests early in life are weak resoundings of our earlier training in our first spiritual existence. This explains certain phenomena which otherwise would seem unnatural. Children have often shown surprising abilities and proficiency in certain areas, like music, drawing, mathematics and other sciences, at a very young age. Jesus himself was this kind of child wonder, and amazed the scribes with his questions and answers when he was only twelve years old. Many other similar examples have taken place in our own time. Much more could be said on this subject from this point of view, but here we will leave that train of thought and return to earth and our own practical time and see how the fine arts, as they are called, not only are utilized, but also demand recognition as an absolute necessity in almost all branches of business in our enlightened age.

Although it assuredly must have great significance for Latter-day Saints that art finds so much recognition from God and so much use here on earth among mankind in connection with revealed religion, it is of no less interest for some of them to get some idea in a financial way of the effects of art and the taste thereby developed for what is beautiful and appealing to the eye. For the dollar question is, as I said before, of much importance in this world. One finds, as previously mentioned, that everything of beautiful form and color owes to decorative art its advantages over that which is merely usable without regard for appearance.

Decorative art has a bearing upon all branches of business. It is utilized by barbaric savages, who adorn themselves with feathers,

corals, and the teeth of wild animals, or tattoo or paint their faces, as well as by the fashionable ladies of our day, who make their faces up and decorate themselves with the jewelers' prettiest gold jewelry. The propensity to improve or at least change one's appearance, with or without clothing, is found in all peoples, at all places, and at all times, among the old as well as the young, the poor as well as the rich. Their environment is affected by the same sense of beautification, and this has brought about the infinite number of requirements which are made of mankind's means of production, in our time as well as in olden times.

People's tastes and the requirements which result from them are widely varied, and therefore the necessity is greater for the diversity found in the form and color of everything we use. Thus the products of decorative art are multiplied infinitely. Just imagine the patterns of wallpaper and the patterns and colors of clothing, which are all "thought out" by artists before the factories are prepared to produce them. The many millions of people who find an occupation and a means of living in these and many other kinds of factories therefore owe decorative art, and along with it the artist, for their livelihood. The merchant, the shipowner or the railroad company, as well as the state, each in his way, benefits directly from the sale of all these products of industry, which are now considered necessities but generally vary in price because of their appearance. Even the factory owes its existence to the architect, and the same can be said of our ships, railroads, and machines. All is based on the ability of the builder to "think out" and by drawing to elucidate his ideas. That which is most attractive when combined with usefulness, always has the advantage.

Since the art of decorating and drawing is thus brought to bear on almost everything we use daily, it would seem self-evident that at least the beginning fundamentals of drawing and decorative art should be given the attention in our common schools (district schools) which is merited by its great importance. The art of writing is nowadays recognized as an absolutely necessary element in our schools; but it has not always been so, for there are still many thousands who cannot write their own names, much less express their thoughts on paper. The time will also come when we realize the necessity of instruction in drawing in our schools, just as we now realize the necessity of the art of writing.

A little history will perhaps help to confirm my opinion. As everyone knows, England is a country of factories, and consequently decorative art has been utilized for centuries in producing countless

patterns which made their fabrics saleable in other countries. But it was not merely fabrics which engaged the genius of the artist, but a great many other articles which were exported by the English people to other lands and which gave them means to live, almost without producing bread from the earth. It was therefore found necessary not only that the artist and the factory owner should have a knowledge of what was really attractive according to true taste, but that the worker should have some training in that area. Drawing was therefore introduced into most schools, as a result of the unfortunate experience they had had through neglecting it. In his younger years Prince Albert[7] traveled to various countries and thereby came to the conclusion that the English people were far behind the French and certain other nations with regard to the appearance of their products, although these were comparable with regard to quality and price. Thus he made the plans for the first great World's Fair in London (1851), and exhibited to the surprised factory people the clearest proofs of their imperfection, and of the reason—heretofore not understood—that the goods of other countries were beginning to displace the English. Consequently the government, as well as the people, became aware of the situation and hurried to remedy their neglect. Art academies and technical schools were established in all parts of the country, and a couple of decades ago there were already two thousand students studying to become teachers in drawing and decorative art, while more than fifty thousand of the working poor class of the people were receiving instruction in drawing in the common schools. The results were apparent at the next great World's Fair in Paris (1867) in that in only sixteen years England had risen from being one of the lowest-placed nations to the first rank with its articles in art and industry. On this occasion the United States was still in its earlier place—at the bottom.

As a striking demonstration of the financial results this system has had, we will add that English porcelain goods have risen in price and sales to a surprising degree since a certain factory owner (Wedgewood) engaged the sculptor Flaxman to copy his models from antique Greek vases, whereby these goods became world famous and found rapid sales. Thus these clay pits were at once made into lucrative gold mines and gave many thousands of people increased employment and earnings. It is claimed that by founding art collections and art schools England has increased its industry by fifty percent in the past twenty years.

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[7]Consort of Queen Victoria.

When we turn to the continent we find that silk goods from Lyon, as well as woven tapestries (Gobelins) owe their world fame to the refined taste in color which was taught in the many art schools of France. The same can be said about Brussels carpets and tapestries from little Belgium.

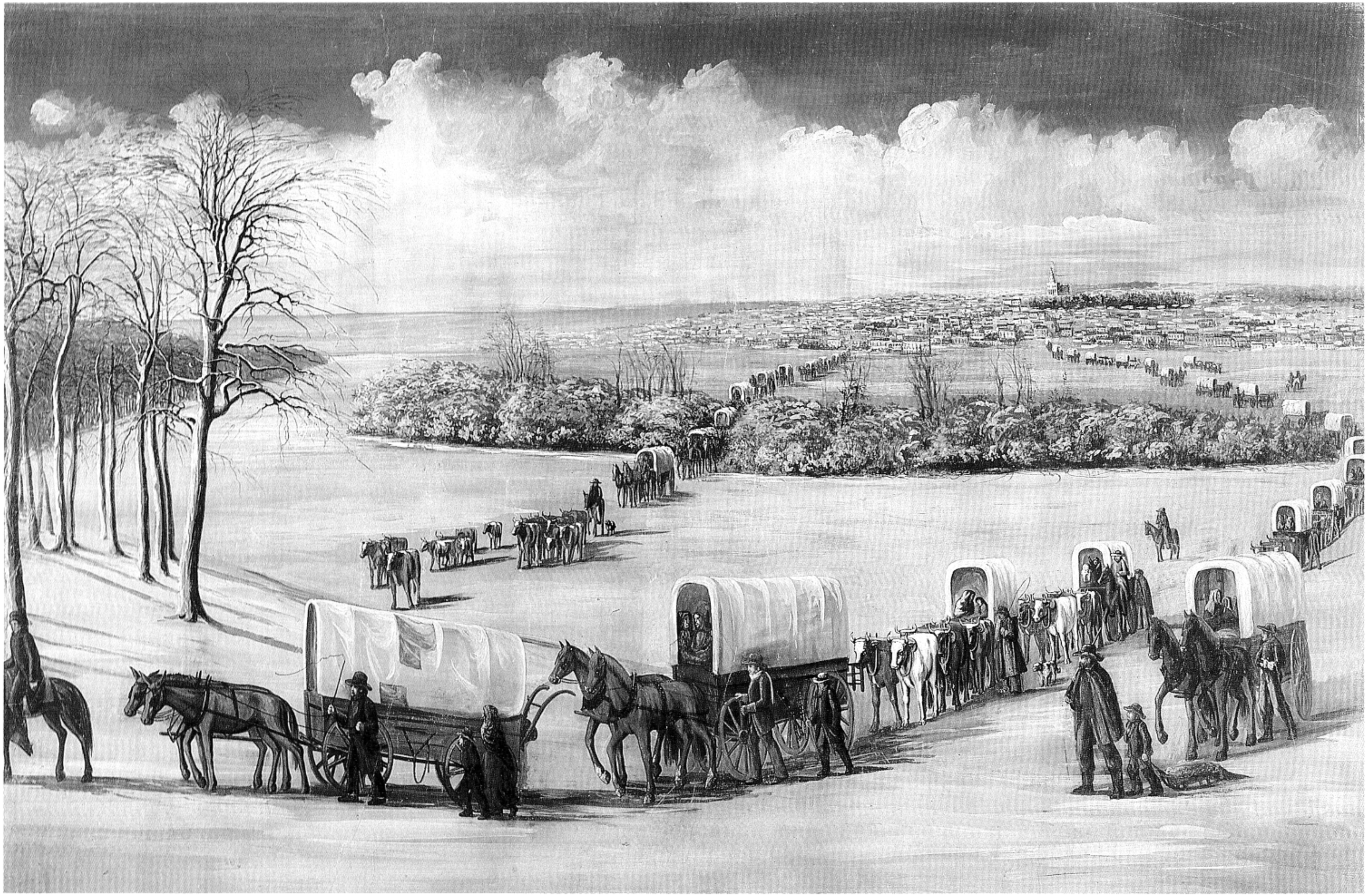
In Massachusetts, in our own country, it has come to the point that drawing is considered a necessity in conjunction with a good general education in the schools, and a law has been passed which directs that all children are to have access to free instruction in drawing in either day schools or night schools when they are over fifteen years old. This, then, is something, but not much for our proud America, which always boasts of its schools. In most cases such instruction in drawing is limited to "copying poor little pictures." Yet this is of little practical use unless it is accompanied by training in the principles upon which decoration and other drawing are based. Seldom is there mention of the rules of tastes, proportion, or color, nor is instruction given in geometrical drawing, which is the basic principle for all decoration. Unfortunately, the result is seen all too clearly in our tasteless buildings, decorated with whatever is at hand in many instances, which regrettably serve only to proclaim our great ignorance and arrogance.

Now and then attempts have been made to excuse our neglect in this area by saying that there is not time to introduce more subjects for instruction in the schools. The children cannot find time to learn more. Let me suggest in reply that instruction be given alternately in writing and in drawing. These subjects are so closely related that instruction in the one subject will help promote the other. Horace Mann, a famous professor, has said: "I believe that a child will learn to draw and write more quickly than he will learn only to write."

In thus concluding this topic, which is of so much interest to me, let me again recommend its great importance for our young, flourishing Utah, with its great future for our children, to our school principals, teachers, and parents, as well as to young students and artisans, for it will be impossible for the coming generations to find ground enough in Utah to till; therefore they should be educated sufficiently early for other occupations.

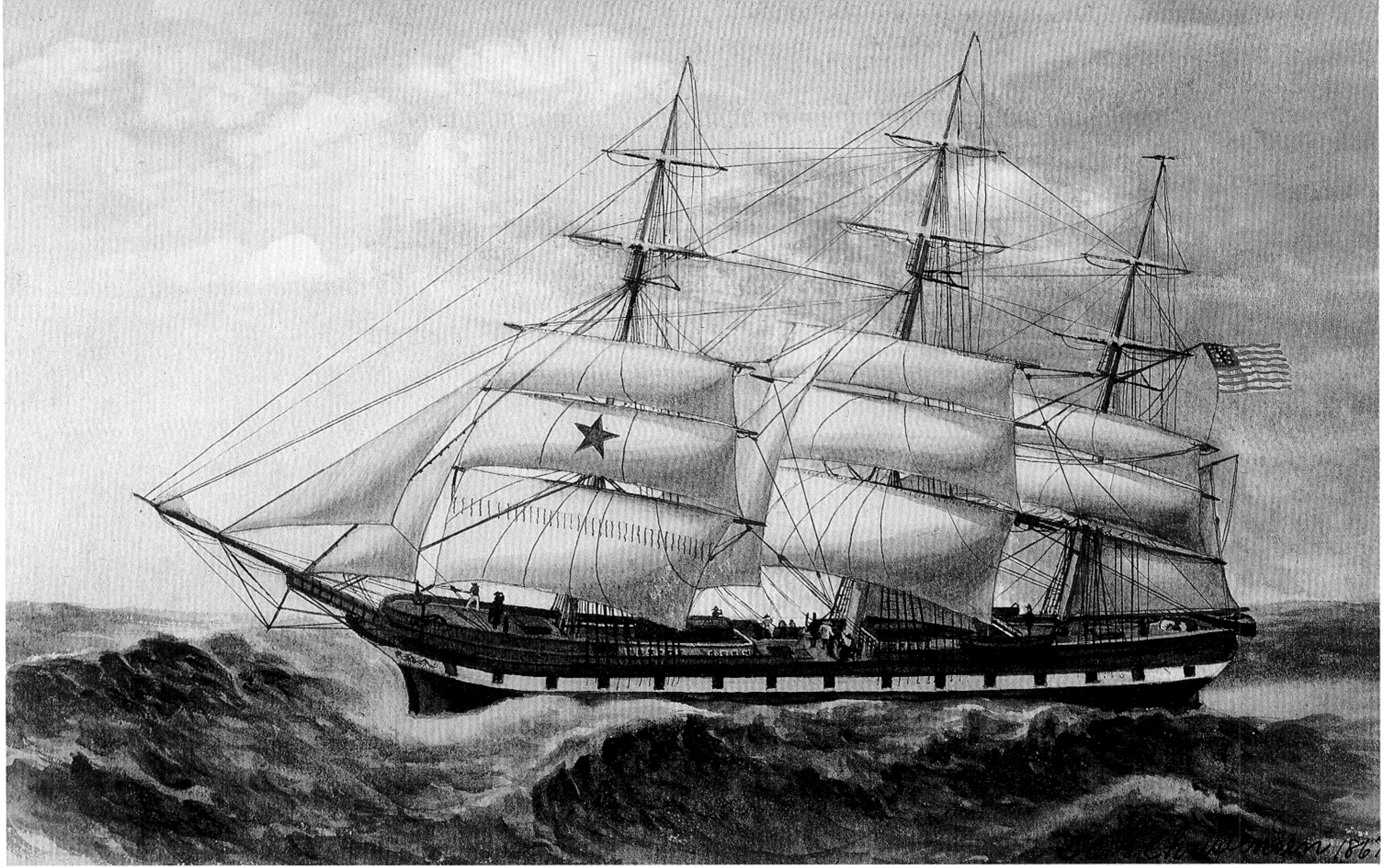
"The First Latter-day Saint Settlement in Missouri" *Courtesy of Brigham Young University*

Scene from C.C.A. Christensen's Mormon Panorama. Here Christensen shows the 1833 expulsion of Mormon settlers from Jackson County, Missouri.



"Crossing the Mississippi on the Ice" *Courtesy of Brigham Young University*

Scene from C.C.A. Christensen's Mormon Panorama. This painting conveys an epic sense of the drama involved in the Latter-day Saint exodus



Emigrant Ship

Courtesy of Erla Coulston

This 1867 watercolor, painted in Norway, possibly depicts the ship in which C.C.A. Christensen sailed as an emigrant from Liverpool to Philadelphia in 1857.

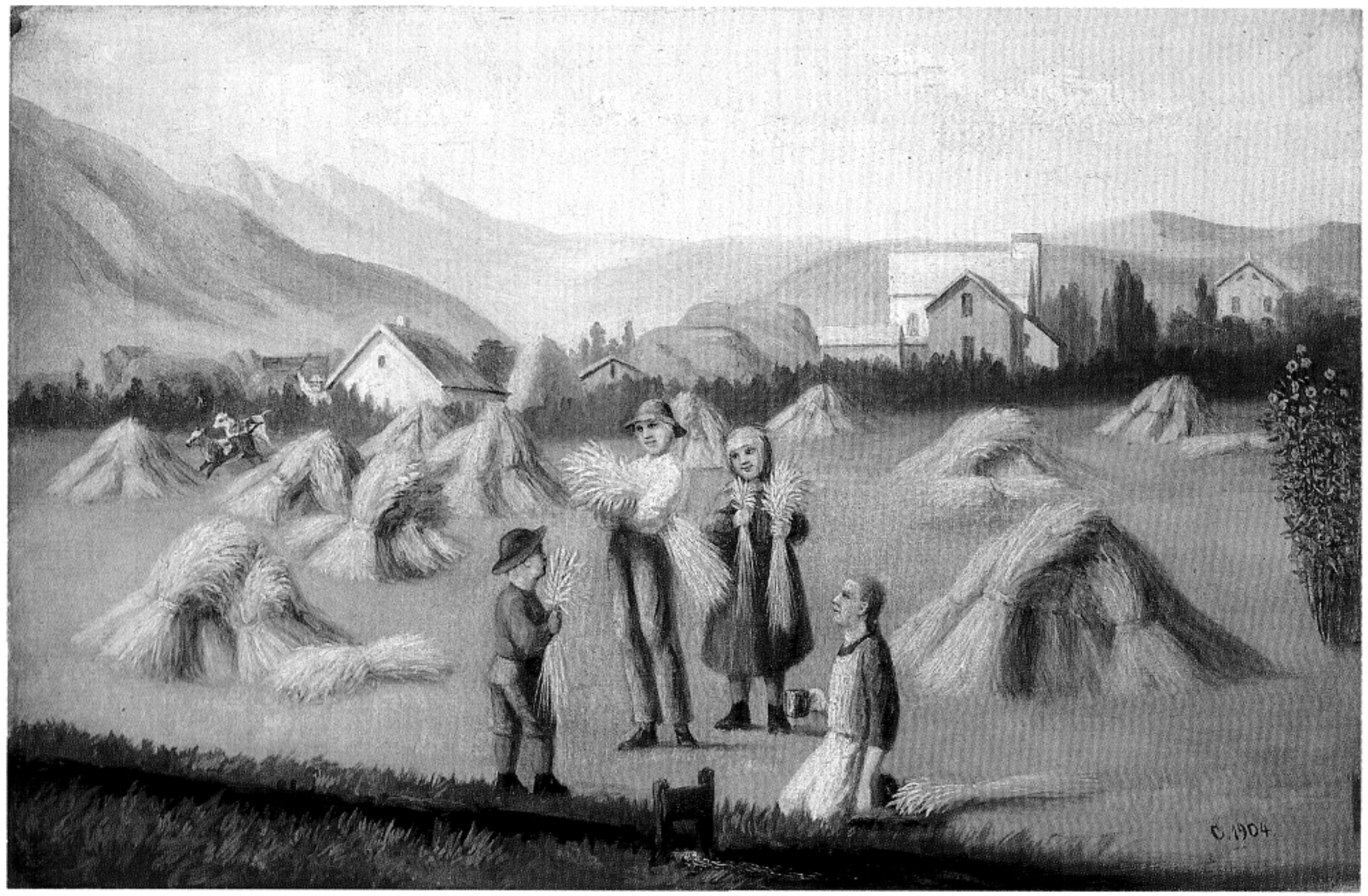
"The Handcart Company" *Courtesy of the Museum of Church History and Art*

C.C.A. Christensen and his Norwegian bride, Elise Scheel, made a handcart trek from Iowa City to Utah their honeymoon in 1857. Christensen painted this largely autobiographical scene in 1900 and exhibited it at the Utah State Fair that year.

Immigration of the Saints

Courtesy of Daughters of the Utah Pioneers

Painted in 1878, this depicts the joyous arrival of immigrants in a Utah community in the 1860s.



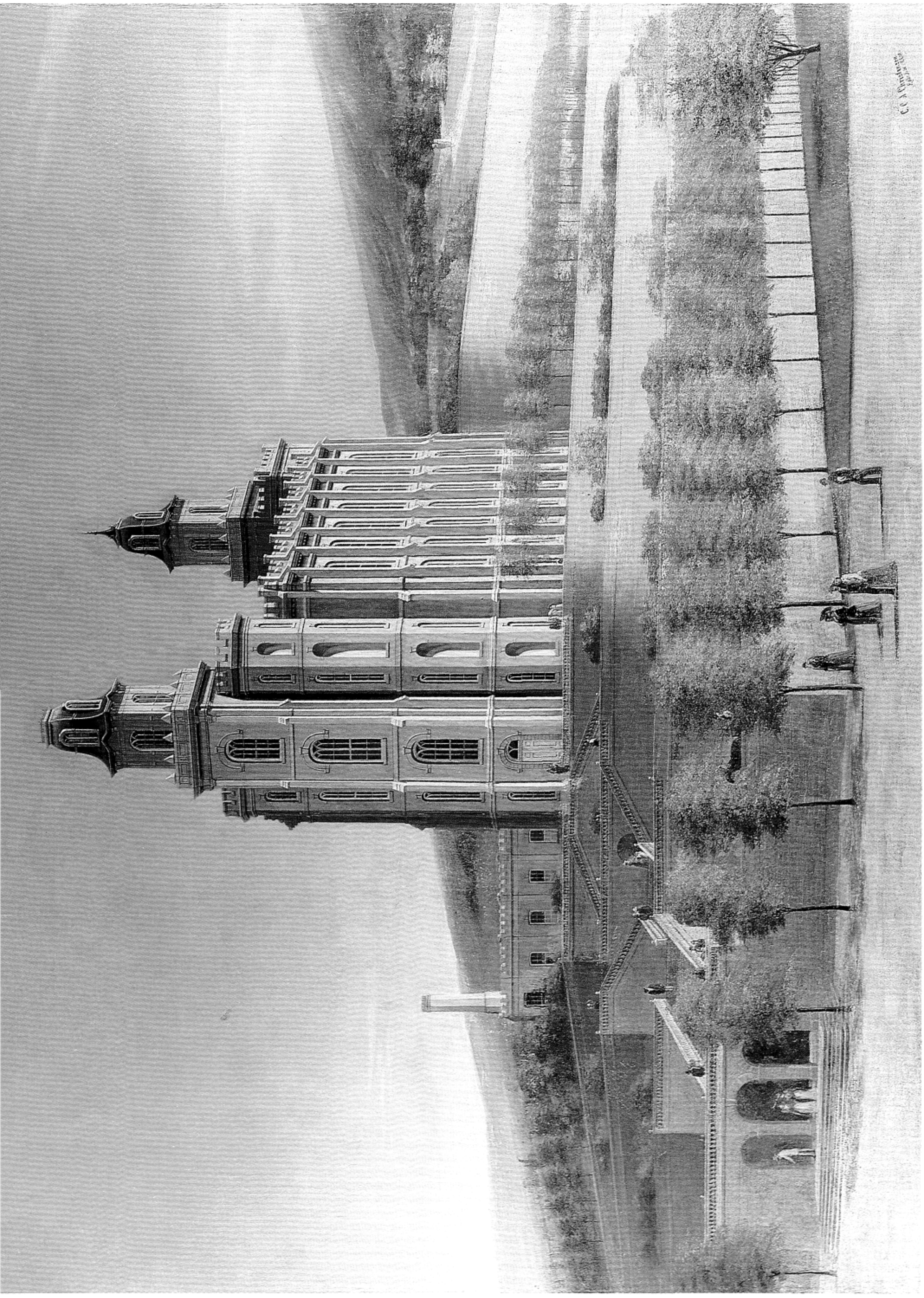
Courtesy of J. William Christensen

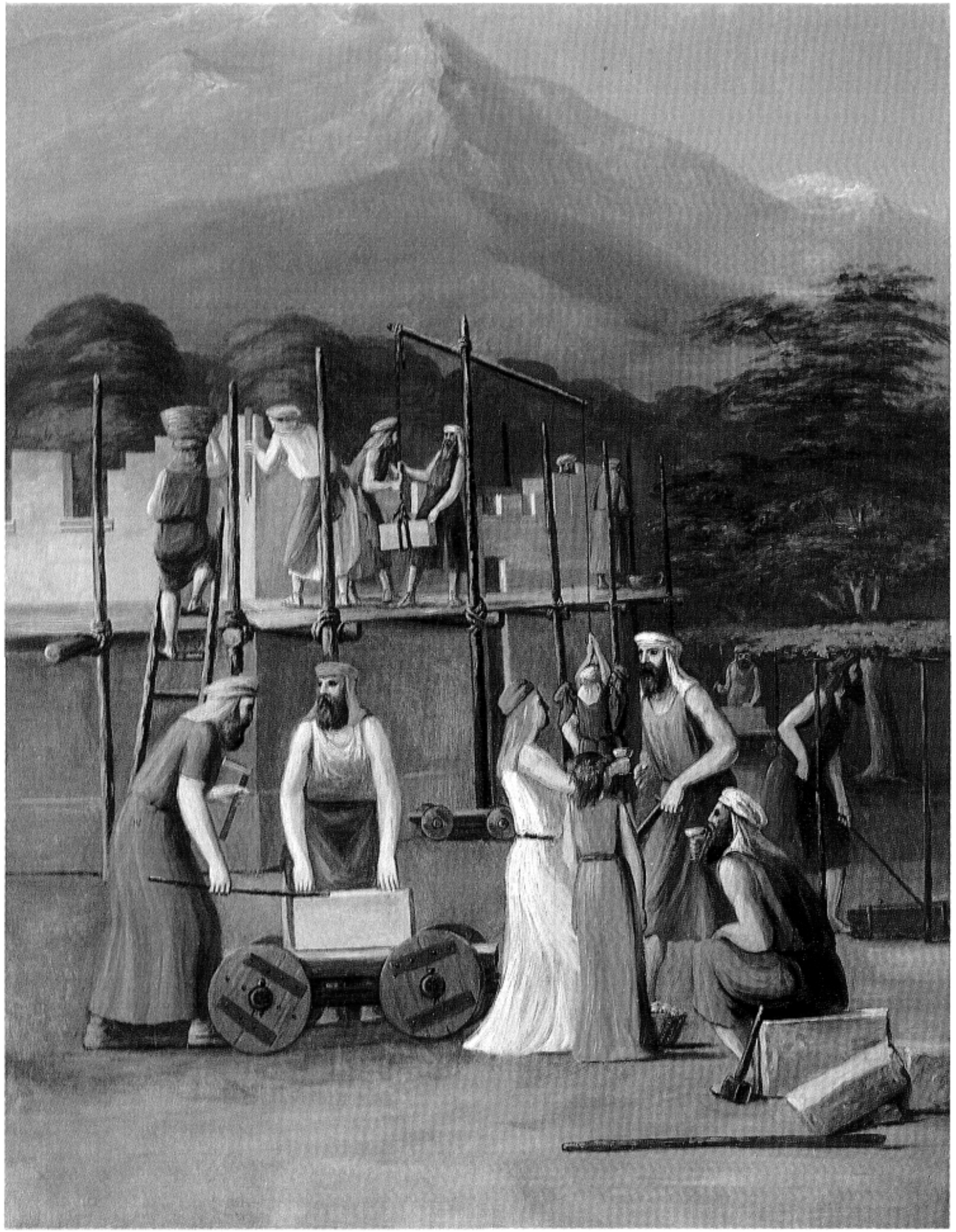
Harvest Time in Ephraim

Here C.C.A. Christensen shows his own children helping harvest grain on the family farm at Ephraim, Utah.

The Manti Temple

This 1889–93 painting by C.C.A. Christensen was commissioned by the women of the Sanpete Stake Relief Societies. The Manti Temple is perhaps the finest example of Mormon pioneer craftsmanship. With his Norwegian friend, Dan Weggeland, C.C.A. Christensen painted murals here. Their creation room mural is the oldest now found in any Latter-day Saint Temple.





Courtesy of the Museum of Church History and Art

"The Building of the Temple"

One of a series of Book of Mormon scenes C.C.A. Christensen painted for the Deseret Sunday School Union in 1890, this work shows the construction