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**Title** “A Man Raised Up”: The Role of Willard W. Bean in the Acquisition of the Hill Cumorah

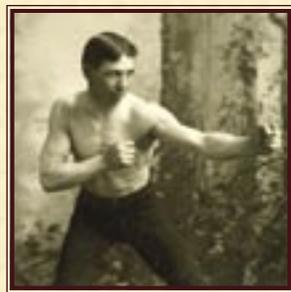
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**Abstract** After nearly three-quarters of a century, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sought to reestablish its presence in the Palmyra area by sending Willard W. Bean and his family to live in the newly acquired Joseph Smith Sr. home in Manchester, New York. Bean soon discovered he had a difficult task set before him because Joseph Smith and Mormonism were held in derision in Palmyra. During the twenty-four years that the Bean family lived in the home, they overcame ostracization through cultivating friendships and preaching the gospel. Willard Bean was instrumental in the acquisition of additional properties of historical significance, including the Hill Cumorah. He restored and improved the Hill Cumorah and nearby acreage. Having completed their assignment to make friends for the church in Palmyra and to build up the church there, the Beans were released from their mission in 1939.





# “A Man Raised Up”

## THE ROLE OF WILLARD W. BEAN IN THE ACQUISITION OF THE HILL CUMORAH

DAVID F. BOONE

**I**N FEBRUARY 1915 Willard Washington Bean<sup>1</sup> entered a chapel in Richfield, Utah, where a stake conference was about to commence. Willard's new bride of just over five months, Rebecca Peterson Bean,<sup>2</sup> was already on the stand because she was in the choir that was to furnish music for the conference. Upon Willard's entry into the chapel shortly before the meeting started, President Joseph F. Smith stood, moved to the podium, and asked, “Will Willard Bean please come to the stand?”<sup>3</sup> Willard complied, and President Smith said to him, “I've got another mission for you. After this service is over, I'll tell you all about it.”<sup>4</sup>

We can only guess at the thoughts that coursed through Willard's mind during the conference session. Perhaps he thought to excuse himself from further service because he had already completed four full-time missions for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And while he had enjoyed and even excelled in each of these opportunities, he could have reasoned he had done his duty

and could therefore be excused from filling another mission and be at liberty to get on with his life, which for him consisted of tending to his family and pursuing education and a professional career. If these were his ambitions, they would have to wait indefinitely because President Smith was about to extend to Willard another opportunity to serve.

Within a few days following the Richfield conference, Willard and Rebecca traveled to Salt Lake City, where President Smith explained to them that the church had acquired the Joseph Smith Sr. farm in Manchester, two miles south of Palmyra, New York, and needed someone to go there, oversee the farm, and represent the church.

In December 1907, a little over a century since Joseph Smith's birth, Latter-day Saint apostle George Albert Smith (a grandnephew of the Prophet and a cousin of church president Joseph F. Smith) purchased the Joseph Smith Sr. farm from William Avery Chapman. Chapman had inherited the farm from his father, Seth, who had purchased it in 1875 from Charles W. and Elvira Bennett.<sup>5</sup>

Within the agreement to sell the farm to President Smith, Chapman secured a promise that he could remain on the property until he could find a suitable place to relocate. After more than seven years, Chapman found another home, and the church began looking for someone to oversee the property. Willard Bean seemed unusually qualified to undertake that assignment. For one thing, as a seasoned missionary, he had an excellent knowledge of the gospel and of church history and doctrine. He was

also known to church leaders for his loyalty and integrity. Further, Willard was tenacious, if not obstinate, and when necessary he was also a fighter, both figuratively and literally.<sup>6</sup>

The Beans were to live in the Smiths' frame home, farm the land, and, if possible, befriend the local inhabitants. Making friends there would not be easy; indeed, while in the office of the First Presidency, Willard was told that "Palmyra was the most prejudiced place on earth" and that the local antagonism was directed against the church and its



The Joseph Smith Sr. home (in Manchester, near Palmyra), where the Beans lived for nearly 25 years.



Willard Bean baptizing his daughter Palmyra on the Smith farm during the September 1923 centennial celebration.

members.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Bean was advised "to be in no hurry to begin missionary work, but to wait until we had made friends and were sure of our ground."<sup>8</sup>

On 24 February 1915, Willard arrived in Palmyra alone and, as future events would manifest, friendless and something of a Mormon pioneer in reverse. His family, consisting of his wife Rebecca and two children by a previous marriage, Paul and Phyllis, joined him within a short time. Together they began life again, but none of them were perhaps prepared for the opposition they were to experience and the antagonism President Smith had warned them of.

Page 24: Willard Bean as he left for the Southern States Mission, 1895.

Page 25, left: Willard Bean, the boxer.

Page 25, middle: Rebecca and Willard around the time of their marriage in 1914.

Page 25, right: The Hill Cumorah as it appeared ca. 1915 when Willard and Rebecca arrived in Palmyra.

All photos in this article are courtesy of Palmyra Bean Packer unless otherwise noted.

## Palmyra

Upstate New York has long held a magnetism for Latter-day Saints worldwide and for other students of Mormon history. The region surrounding Palmyra, Manchester, and Fayette is known as the “Cradle of Mormonism” because of the events that surrounded the restoration of the gospel and combined to bring about the organization of the church in this dispensation. In what would become another memorable chapter in that rich history, the Bean family was called to live in Palmyra to help overcome decades of bitter and hostile feelings so that future Latter-day Saints would have the opportunity to return to the site of their spiritual beginnings.

Joseph Smith Sr. and his family settled in Palmyra in 1816 because he believed that he could make a living and create a new beginning for his family, who had moved 10 times in about a 20-year period<sup>9</sup> because of intemperate climate, crop failure, financial reversals, poverty, and physical misfortune. Many Latter-day Saints believe that the successive moves were part of a divine timetable to ultimately locate the family where Joseph Smith Jr. would be in the right place at the right time to assist in the restoration of the gospel.

Most of the early members of the church had left New York by the close of 1831 to follow their prophet-leader, Joseph Smith, to a new gathering place in northern Ohio. The few Saints who returned to visit Palmyra over the ensuing decades, and the fewer converts who had remained behind were unable to maintain a viable church presence there. With the body of the church gone from the area, bigotry, prejudice, and hatred grew against anything related to Mormonism; and the citizens began to believe ever more fantastic stories against the Smith family, the church, and its members. After nearly three-quarters of a century, the church would attempt to reestablish itself in this inhospitable setting that Latter-day Saints honored for the foundational events that took place there and for the sites that are so much a part of the faith’s colorful past.

### Early Setbacks and Opposition

Arriving in New York ahead of his family, Willard occupied the Smith home and began to purchase supplies, livestock, and equipment to run the

historic Joseph Smith Sr. farm, which was to provide a living for the family. Money for this venture was apparently initially provided by the church, but the Bean family was financially on its own except for projects initiated by the church or undertaken to help establish the church in New York.

Willard soon learned firsthand that “a prophet hath no honor in his own country,” for the Prophet Joseph Smith was still held in derision in Palmyra, where he was the “butt of ridicule and neighborhood jokes.”<sup>10</sup> In this the Beans saw the literal fulfillment of Moroni’s prophecy to Joseph Smith that “God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people” (Joseph Smith—History 1:33). Upon their arrival in Palmyra, Willard’s family were likewise ridiculed for being Mormons and “became [the] objects of curiosity and local gossip, [and were] noticeably shunned.”<sup>11</sup> All family members were affected by this ostracization.

In those days Palmyra’s public library had “one whole shelf [devoted to] anti-Mormon books, some of which were vicious in tone,” Willard noted.<sup>12</sup> Repeated attempts to provide Latter-day Saint literature for a balanced view of Mormonism were quickly and flatly denied. Willard recalled the case he made to the librarian: “I explained that when I wished to know something [about] the Catholic Church I would consult something official gotten out by some reputable Catholic; likewise the Methodist, Presbyterian or any other church.” Willard further noted that “it would be naturally expected that you would have a copy of the Book of Mormon on your shelves, a book published in Palmyra, [which] had wider circulation than any other book, except the Bible.”<sup>13</sup>

After his initial rejection, Willard took his appeal to the council that determined library policy, but his request to place a copy of the Book of Mormon was again turned down because, in the council’s view, “it was . . . a [Mormon] scheme . . . to get that damnable book on our shelves where our young people will have access to it. It will poison their minds against all that is Christian and good.”<sup>14</sup>

Soon thereafter the librarian died, “and without renewing my request,” Willard recalled, “I received a friendly note telling me that the objection to

placing a Book of Mormon in the library had been removed, and [if] I was still desirous of presenting them with a copy, it will be thankfully received.”<sup>15</sup> A special library edition of the Book of Mormon was sent from Salt Lake City, and Willard personally delivered it to the Palmyra village library.

Willard’s fervor to defend the church sometimes took physical form. Rebecca remembered the following incident: “One day my husband was going down main street in Palmyra towards the business district and a man was watering his lawn. . . . He saw my husband coming and said to him, ‘I understand you people [Mormons] believe in baptism by immersion,’ and turned the hose on him.”<sup>16</sup> Willard quickly sized up the situation and responded: “We also believe in the laying on of hands,’ and bounding over the fence he proceeded to do just that, much to the man’s astonishment and chagrin.”<sup>17</sup> Willard never recorded this experience so far as preserved literature reveals, but as time passed, a strong friendship developed between the two men, and the man whom Bean had knocked out later told Rebecca the story himself.

Willard had served a mission in the southern states some 25 years earlier and was somewhat accustomed to such treatment, but Rebecca and the children had to get used to it. As the Bean children became old enough to attend school, they also ran into opposition. The parents of many of the local children initially would not allow their children to interact or play with Mormon children because of Mormonism’s poor reputation in the community. People walking down the street would cross to the other side if they saw the Beans coming toward them. In one extreme instance, as one of the Bean children bent over to pat a dog being walked by a local citizen, the dog’s owner pulled the animal away to avoid any contact with a Mormon.<sup>18</sup> When one of the Bean children reported for school, he was escorted to a desk that had been screwed to the floor in the back corner of the room. Several students had apparently brought notes from their parents stating that they did not want their children sitting by “that Mormon boy.” For several weeks he sat by himself until the situation became more embarrassing for the teacher and the other students than it was for the Mormon boy.<sup>19</sup>

Children are resilient, but Rebecca was not used to, nor was she able to tolerate, such intense antagonism. Consequently, she had a more difficult

time adjusting. Rebecca found it necessary to go to other communities to do her grocery shopping because local storekeepers and clerks refused to assist her. Further, “when Rebecca was expecting her first child, she contacted several nurses in an effort to find one willing to stay in the home and assist [her] when the baby was born.” In every case the person refused to assist her because it meant going into a Mormon home. Ultimately a neighbor woman, Ethel Hackett, who was not a trained nurse or midwife but whose brother had gone to Salt Lake City out of curiosity and decided to stay because he liked what he saw there, came to assist her. Ethel assisted

One day Willard Bean walked by a man who was watering his lawn. The man said, “I understand you people [Mormons] believe in baptism by immersion,” and turned the hose on him. Willard responded: “We also believe in the laying on of hands,” and bounding over the fence he proceeded to do just that.

a Dr. Rodenburger in the delivery of Rebecca’s first child, named Palmyra, and then stayed to assist Rebecca during her time of recuperation.<sup>20</sup> As three additional children were added to the Bean family, Dr. Rodenburger assisted in the delivery of each. All four children were born in the Joseph Smith Sr. home, and in time all were baptized in the little creek near the house, where several new converts were baptized when the Prophet Joseph lived there.

Gradually the tide of opposition began to turn. Palmyra remembered that “when there was a birthday party, everybody was invited but me.” Rebecca tried to comfort her daughter by saying, “Things will get better. Just be friendly.”<sup>21</sup> And things did begin to improve as Willard met the challenge head-on.<sup>22</sup> For over five years, while the family



Willard Bean preached from this bandstand in the park on Main Street in Palmyra.

coped with the community's resentment toward them, Willard not only defended himself, his family, and the church, but he went on the offensive and stepped up the pressure on the local citizenry.

Part of Willard's offensive against anti-Mormon sentiment was to hold street meetings for want of another place to preach the gospel and to defend his family and the church and their right to be there. He chose the main intersection of town as his forum. "Saturday night was alive with farmers migrating to the city to trade their produce for groceries and other goods," Willard wrote. "There wasn't much to do in the small town of Palmyra besides go to the local theater or to the ice cream parlor."<sup>23</sup>

To begin a street meeting, Rebecca, who was a "good soprano,"<sup>24</sup> would begin singing, and Willard, full-time missionaries, fellow church members, and friends would join in. "Willard had the voice of a bull moose and could be heard all over town when he started preaching. Invariably a large crowd gathered."<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, these gatherings also stopped traffic, so another place had to be found. Bean's Quaker friend, Pliny T. Sexton, the local banker, came to his aid by allowing him to use a park, with a bandstand for a pulpit and electric lights. It is estimated that from 200 to 400 people gathered on a given weekend.

"I served notice on the ministers [and others] that we were here to stay . . . [and] that when I am attacked I [reserve] the right to defend my religion," Willard remembered. He further told them: "I did not come here to tear down any man's religion, or abuse those who have no religion; but rather to

fit in with the better element . . . and work for the moral uplift of the community."<sup>26</sup>

Within a short time the Beans saw results. By 1925 a Sunday School had been organized, and a year later a branch was created. Stake organizations followed in 1934, 1985, and 2002.

### Acquiring Properties for the Church

Members of the Bean family were gradually able to make friends in the community and gain added respectability for themselves and the church. These improved relations helped open the way for the church to acquire properties of significant historical interest, and Willard played an important role in this regard. He probably began exploring the possibilities of acquiring land in and around Palmyra shortly after settling there. Obtaining the Hill Cumorah became something of a personal crusade for Willard after he and members of his family attempted to take some guests up on the hill but were rudely driven away by a local farmer with a shotgun. In time Willard succeeded in obtaining for the church not only the Hill Cumorah property but other sites of significance in church history.

### Joseph Smith Sr. Farm and Sacred Grove

When Elder George Albert Smith acquired the Joseph Smith Sr. farm in 1907, he was able to purchase a major portion of the 100-acre plot that was originally owned and farmed by the Smith family. Included in that purchase was a part of the traditional Sacred Grove. It is interesting to note that William Avery Chapman, owner of the farm before the church acquired it, "perpetuated his father's wish that no axe be used in the grove except to remove dead timber."<sup>27</sup> When asked why he protected the area known to Latter-day Saints as the Sacred Grove, Chapman, who was not a member of the church, responded:

Years ago my father sent for me and wished me to come at once. I found father very sick. He said, "I want to speak to you about the farm. I do not think I will live long, and the farm will go to you. I want you to take good care of the grove. I have never used an ax in the grove, except to remove dead timber. I think it should be preserved, for that is where Joseph Smith, the 'Mormon' Prophet, had his first vision." Father died soon after this conversation, and I have done as he wished.<sup>28</sup>

During the time when Chapman was caretaker of the church-owned farm, he was careful to heed Elder Smith's instructions (similar to that of Chapman's father) "to take good care of the grove, to keep it cleared of underbrush, so that it would not be destroyed by fire."<sup>29</sup>

### Hill Cumorah

The irony of the Beans' experience of being driven off Hill Cumorah by a man with a shotgun is that the man did not own the hill and did not work for the party that did. Rather, he was protecting what he understood to be a community effort to keep Latter-day Saints out of the area. Today, visitors to the hill who enjoy the improvements that have been made there over the years may have difficulty imagining the Beans' challenges or visualizing what the area looked like in the early decades of the 20th century or before.



An early view of the Hill Cumorah.

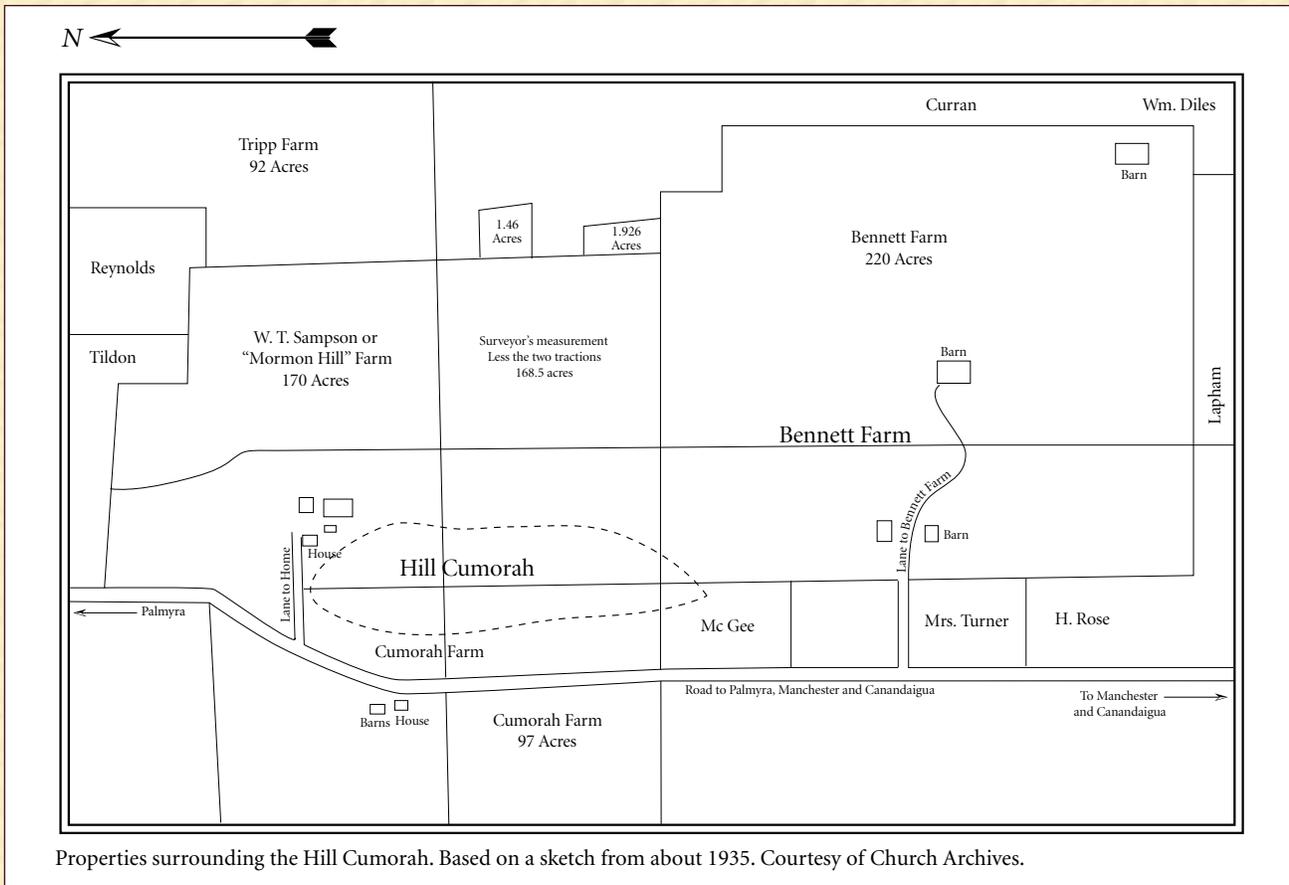
The Hill Cumorah is a prominent hill that has been known through the years by several names, including "Mormon Hill." It was singled out by the angel Moroni from many similar hills in the area when the 17-year-old prophet received a vision about the scripture treasure that was buried there. The next day, after experiencing another rehearsal of Moroni's instructions and hearing his father's encouragement

to follow the angel's counsel, Joseph climbed the hill to obtain his first view of the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon would be translated. Since that early day, the Hill Cumorah was owned by several different people before it was acquired by the church. The west side of the hill was owned and farmed in the early 1900s by James Inglis, and the remainder was owned by Palmyra's banker, Pliny T. Sexton. Willard remembered: "I made a friend of James (Jim) Inglis who owned a farm straddling the highway [New York State Highway 21] the east line extending half way up the hill, taking in 24 acres of land between [the] highway and the hill. He allowed us to park on his land."<sup>30</sup>

As noted previously, Willard was also able to cultivate a friendship with Pliny Sexton. This friendship was initiated by Elder George Albert Smith, who, when he visited Palmyra, would stop to see Sexton. Elder Smith continually encouraged Willard to follow up on his earlier visits to Sexton, writing to Willard, for example, "I hope you will keep in touch with him [Pliny Sexton] and if anything develops that would afford an opportunity for us to get possession of the Hill Cumorah, do not fail to let us know at once."<sup>31</sup>

The Beans, and particularly Willard, became fast friends with Pliny. In fact, Willard and Rebecca named their first son Alvin Pliny after the Prophet's oldest brother and Sexton. Willard and Sexton both had significant interest in the Hill Cumorah—Bean for religious reasons and Sexton for business reasons, seeing the hill largely as investment property. Willard worked closely with Inglis and Sexton over several years to find an opportunity to purchase the hill.

Inglis and Willard visited each other periodically. Without expressing his interest in purchasing the Cumorah property, Willard asked about the value of the Inglis farm. On one of those occasions, Inglis confided that he was considering retiring from farming. "He offered to sell his farm to us," Willard recalled. "I knew we would some time need it for our purposes, yet [I] did not appear over anxious but asked him what he considered the farm of 97 acres was worth."<sup>32</sup> In addition to the 97 acres, the farmland included, "1½ acres of old orchard, five acres of new orchard in full bearing, [one] span of horses, three cows, [and] full farm equipment." Inglis even "knocked a few hundred dollars off for repairs that were needed on the buildings."<sup>33</sup> When



Willard reported his activities to the First Presidency, he was “ordered to buy it.”<sup>34</sup> The deal was closed on 17 September 1923.

The part of the hill that was owned by Sexton took far longer to obtain. Sexton owned, it was estimated, over 100 pieces of property. He knew of the church’s interest in the hill and tried on several occasions to sell the property to Elder George Albert Smith, Willard Bean, and other church representatives. He had, however, apparently also heard some exaggerated stories about the rumored wealth of the church, and the price he wanted for the hill for was far more than the church was willing to pay. When Sexton died on 5 September 1924,<sup>35</sup> “his vast estate went into possession of 105 heirs; a niece was the nearest of kin.”<sup>36</sup> They were all very antagonistic toward the church and made a pact that they would never sell the property to the church at any price.

The estate’s legal counsel, attorney C. C. Congdon, was more friendly toward the church and especially to Willard Bean. Willard had cultivated a friendship with him over several years of personal

association. Willard reported in 1928 that after several years of waiting, and after the most bitter opponents had died, Congdon indicated to him that several of the heirs wanted to get their share of the inheritance settlement from the estate and “that he [Congdon] had talked the matter over with the judge who said that if the deal [to sell Sexton’s previous holdings] could be put over quietly, without publicity, to block [it] before it could be closed, it would be legal. Attorney Congdon knew, and I knew, that the majority of the heirs were anxious to get their bit [part] out of the will and would be glad to [settle for less].”<sup>37</sup>

The deal unfolded in a remarkable manner. After finishing initial negotiations, Bean wrote a letter to the First Presidency detailing the specifics and suggested, “If you think the opportune time has arrived for us to acquire possession of the Cumorah Hill property, consider the enclosed proposition and let me know by telegram.”<sup>38</sup> Two days later he received a telegram from the First Presidency: “Terms satisfactory—close deal!”<sup>39</sup> Three days after that,

Bean received a letter from the First Presidency that had been sent before the telegram was sent. It said in part: “Dear Brother Bean: Please see lawyer of Sexton estate and get definite offer in writing if you can possibly do so, for the hill farm of 170 acres. If they will not sell it alone, get definite offer on the other pieces of property with the Hill.”<sup>40</sup>

A few weeks later, the church purchased Sexton’s 170-acre farm at the Hill Cumorah and also acquired in the deal another farm, one of 220 acres, known as the Bennett farm; a third, smaller farm of lesser value; and a large two-story brick building in Palmyra with a basement, known as the Grange Hall.

Remarkably, both the First Presidency in Salt Lake City and Willard Bean in Palmyra had been thinking the same thing at the same time. Both groups had acted on their feelings, and by the time the instructions from the First Presidency arrived, Willard had already complied with them in every detail. In a later communication, the First Presidency also noted the coincidence: “We have read your letter with a great deal of interest. We were very glad to learn that you secured an option on the Hill Cumorah Farm and other property before receiving word from us to do so. We had already noticed the singular coincidence of your writing to us the very same day and possibly the same hour that we were writing you. . . . Signed First Presidency.”<sup>41</sup>

In the April 1928 general conference of the church, President Heber J. Grant reported that “the

Church has purchased the Hill Cumorah. The purchase embraces the farm where the hill stands, and the adjoining farm, which together with one that we had already purchased, including a part of the hill, gives us now the entire possession of the Hill Cumorah.”<sup>42</sup>

While living at the Joseph Smith Sr. farm, Willard also assisted in the purchase of the Martin Harris farm (north of Palmyra) and the Peter Whitmer farm, where much of the translation of the Book of Mormon was undertaken (about 30 miles southeast of Palmyra, near Fayette, New York).

### Hill Cumorah Beautification and Monument

After the Prophet Joseph retrieved the plates from the Hill Cumorah, neighbors, antagonists, treasure seekers, and others severely scarred the hill by digging holes (presumably looking for treasure),<sup>43</sup> cutting timber, and otherwise changing the complexion of Cumorah. Soon after acquiring the entire Hill Cumorah property, Willard determined, “with the approbation of Church leaders,” to return the hill to as much of its original appearance as possible. The original aspect of his plan included reforesting the hill, providing water for the new plants, illuminating the hill at night, and building a road to the top.

The reforestation project that Willard undertook was immense. “Soon after acquiring the Hill



On Sunday, 23 September 1923, people gathered at the Hill Cumorah to celebrate the centennial of the angel Moroni’s visit to Joseph Smith on the evening of 21 September 1823.

Cumorah [for the church], I began to bring it back to its original self by setting out evergreen and hardwood trees, ten or twelve thousand each year.”<sup>44</sup> Over a period of several years, Willard and his sons, together with his brother Virginius,<sup>45</sup> hired men, missionaries, and volunteers, planted nearly 70,000 trees.

Many of the tree seedlings that these men and other volunteers planted on the hill were donated. Willard recorded: “I contacted the State Conservation Department at Albany, [sent] them a picture of the hill with historical data, and drew their attention to a fine clay model of ‘Mormon Hill’ in the Education Building across from the State Capitol. They sent me an official list of available trees, with instructions on planting, and said they would be pleased to furnish me all the trees I wanted. The only charge would be for transportation.”<sup>46</sup>

Other seedlings, particularly the young hardwood trees that are indigenous to the area, were transplanted from the Smith farm. Willard and his sons, in an effort to keep the Sacred Grove clean, free from fire danger, and aesthetically pleasing, annually thinned out new growth and planted approximately 3,000 hardwood trees on the Hill Cumorah. Willard could think of no better place to plant those trees.

Willard also helped build a road up the hill with a 6 percent grade “so people [could] go up to the top without changing gear. The road comes out on the crest of the hill, well back where there is considerable parking space.”<sup>47</sup> This road later proved important for work crews when a monu-



Top: Hill Cumorah Monument, circa 1935.

Middle: Sculptor Torleif Knaphus (left) and Rebecca and Willard Bean anticipate the monument’s erection. Courtesy Allen P. Gerritsen.

Bottom: President Heber J. Grant conducts the dedicatory service at the foot of Hill Cumorah, 21 July 1935.

ment was erected atop the hill in 1935 to commemorate the visit of the angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1823. Willard recalled that when he first suggested to the general church leaders that a monument be built there, “they hesitated and questioned the [project’s] advisability, fearing that it might be desecrated and marred by souvenir hunters. After convincing them that the [local] people would be proud of it and treat it as their very own,” Willard promised “the complete cooperation of the better element of the community.”<sup>48</sup>

Of his own volition, he laid the groundwork for erecting the monument. Finally, on 21 July 1935 President Heber J. Grant, several members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and other guests, including missionaries and a crowd estimated at over 3,000, witnessed the dedication of the monument. A missionary returning from Great Britain witnessed the event and recorded the following:

On a beautiful summer morning a great crowd gathered at the hill. They had come from [throughout] the nation, and included a number of the General Authorities of the Church. This writer, on his way home from a mission in England, was among that crowd.

On the summit of the hill was a canvas-draped monument. At an appointed signal four trumpeters raised their gleaming instruments. In sharp clear tones, “an angel from on high” echoed across the placid countryside. . . . Then the canvas shroud fell from the monument, and the figure of Moroni looked

out across the quiet fields. . . . To a returning missionary the picture of that summer day is unforgettable.<sup>49</sup>

The returning missionary was Gordon B. Hinckley, who knew Willard Bean personally and wrote of his contributions.<sup>50</sup> Few could have guessed then the impact that Elder Hinckley would later have on this area so significant in the life of the Willard Bean family, nor would many recognize that the monument was the culmination of 20 years of work and a symbol of what Willard had been sent to New York to accomplish.

Later, under Willard's supervision, additional improvements to the Hill Cumorah included a water system, electricity, and a bureau of information. Further, Willard planted "a privet hedge

recorded, "we began to hold picnics and hot dog roasts, followed by programs in front of the Sacred Grove. We then put on small pageants in the field east of the grove, then on Echo Hill east of the Joseph Smith home. The idea grew and after we got possession of the Hill [Cumorah] we held them there."<sup>52</sup>

In 1937 the pageant, now named "America's Witness for Christ," was moved to the Hill Cumorah, where it has remained ever since. Echo Hill later became the site of another significant development. In 1999 President Gordon B. Hinckley announced that a temple would be built in Palmyra, and the site selected was on Echo Hill. The Palmyra Temple is the 100th temple to be announced and the 77th dedicated in this dispensation. It was dedicated by President Hinckley on 6 April 2000.



Left to right: Missionaries gather at the Rochester conference, 24 July 1916; Hill Cumorah Monument with shrubs (planted by Willard Bean) spelling *Cumorah*; View from atop Cumorah.

high along the west side near the top spelling out C U M O R A H with letters 20 x 35 feet."<sup>51</sup> This hedge replaced a sign erected by Willard to draw the attention of motorists to the hill and to assist in his ongoing missionary efforts.

The predecessor of the Hill Cumorah Pageant was a theatrical production written by Norma Fairbanks and initially staged under the direction of Willard Bean in 1926. The site was near the Sacred Grove. Later this pageant was staged on a prominence called Echo Hill, northeast of the Joseph Smith Sr. home but still on the original Smith farm. "After organizing [Latter-day Saint] branches at Palmyra, Rochester, and Canandaigua," Willard

## Continuing Impact

With several important pieces of property now owned by the church and with the historical interest shown by thousands of church members in the area, the First Presidency determined to call other families, like the Beans, to farm the land and to be caretakers of the properties. These families also learned the historical significance of the area and thereafter became caretakers and tour guides to care for the church's interests, answer questions, and teach the gospel to interested visitors.

Two of these early caretakers were Lewis Jackson Stoner and his wife, Elizabeth. They and their

two children enjoyed frequent association with the Bean family. As employees of Willard Bean, they labored with him on the Joseph Smith Sr. farm and proved to be dependable workers. During their stay there, they were taught the restoration of the gospel, at least a working knowledge of church history, and the significance of the Smith farm within that history. When the Stoner family finished their assignment at the Smith farm, it was to accept a new assignment (again as employees of the church) to live at and supervise the Peter Whitmer farm in Fayette, New York.

The Stoners' only son, Harold Jay Stoner, joined the church as a result of the teachings and example of Willard Bean and his family and through the years remained faithful.<sup>53</sup> In March 1970 at age 60, Harold was called to serve as patriarch in the Roch-

refuse the reward offered him. On one occasion, Alvin asked his father's counsel on the matter. His father responded, "Son, you are right to refuse, but don't hold your hand out when you do so!"<sup>54</sup>

### Aftermath

The Beans were released from their assignment in the spring of 1939. It had been 24 years since Willard and Rebecca had departed Richfield, Utah.<sup>55</sup> The older sons had left home to attend Utah State University. The younger children remained at home to continue their schooling.

One day in the early spring of 1939, the Merlin Ellis family arrived in Palmyra and, like so many other visitors, went to the Smith farm and knocked on the door. Unlike other visitors, Merlin and Echo



Left to right: Preparations for the 1935 dedication; Willard Bean instructing missionaries on Hill Cumorah; President Heber J. Grant (left) and Presiding Bishop Charles W. Nibley at Cumorah.

ester New York Stake. He is but one of several people who converted to the church after having first heard the gospel taught by the Willard Bean family.

Through the years, numerous prominent people, church leaders, and other guests visited the area. Willard often left his farm work to tell visitors about the significance of the sites or to take them to other places of historic interest. If he was not available, his wife and children showed them around and rehearsed the story of the restoration.

Alvin, the Beans' son, remembered that occasionally a grateful guest would try to pay him for his time and commentary. Money was scarce, especially to a young boy on the farm, but he would reluctantly

Ellis and their six children were called to replace the Bean family as residents at the Joseph Smith Sr. farm. The Ellises arrived expecting to move their family into the farm home.<sup>56</sup> Inexplicably, the Beans' apparently had no prior notice of their impending release until the Ellis family showed up at their door.<sup>57</sup> One of the Ellises' sons, Glenn, reported of this experience that "the Beans had not been given much notice about the change, but they moved over and took in our large family, as they had accommodated so many people over the last twenty-four years. We lived there for three weeks with the Beans, a priceless opportunity for us to hear all about the historical spots which surrounded us."<sup>58</sup>

As word spread about the Beans' imminent release and departure from Palmyra, many local residents wished to pay tribute to them for their years of service and friendship. During the three weeks that the Bean and Ellis families shared the Joseph Smith home, the Beans, who were busy trying to pack their possessions, were often invited to dinners, receptions, and parties. "We had the satisfaction of seeing the prejudice gradually melt away, and respect for Joseph Smith and the Mormon people thoroughly established in Cumorah Land," Willard wrote. "We had become fixtures. We learned



Top: Elder B. H. Roberts with Willard Bean's son Alvin during a missionary conference at the Joseph Smith farm.

Bottom: President Heber J. Grant with three of the Bean children: Alvin, baby Dawn, and Palmyra (right).

the language and ways of the natives of Palmyra and the surrounding country and they had learned us."<sup>59</sup>

One of Rebecca Bean's vivid recollections shows the contrast in local perceptions of the church between the time of her family's arrival in Palmyra and their departure. One evening three men came to the Bean home and were invited in. The men refused to enter the home, but one of them replied: "We are a committee that has been sent out to tell you people we don't want you here; we don't want any Mormons here; we want you to get out." Brother Bean maintained his composure and said, "Well now we are sorry to hear that; we had hoped to come out here and fit in with you people and be an asset to the community. [But] I am telling you we are here to stay if we have to fight our way. I will take you on one at a time or two at a time; it won't make any difference."<sup>60</sup> One writer de-

scribed the tensions thus: "To say they [the Beans] were unwelcome would be a gross understatement. The venom fairly seeped from their beings [referring to the local citizenry, clergy, and opponents of the Bean family and the church they represented]. Mormons hadn't lived in Palmyra for 84 years."<sup>61</sup> In

**"We had the satisfaction of seeing the prejudice gradually melt away, and respect for Joseph Smith and the Mormon people thoroughly established in Cumorah Land," Willard wrote. "We had become fixtures. We learned the language and ways of the natives of Palmyra and the surrounding country and they had learned us."**

contrast, at the time of the Beans' departure nearly 24 years later, one New York friend said to Willard, "We want you to know that the news that you are soon to leave us came as a shock, and we think the Mormon Church is making a big mistake in taking you away from here."<sup>62</sup> The Beans were feted by the three closest branches of the church, none of which was in existence when they arrived. Willard was honored for his involvement in the Lion's Club, the PTA, and the Businessman's Club, all of Palmyra, as well as for his service in the Rochester Chamber of Commerce and as a councilman for the Boy Scouts of America for all of Wayne County.<sup>63</sup>

Having completed their assignment to make friends for the church in Palmyra and to build up the church there, the Beans moved to Salt Lake City, where they were assigned to continue their missionary duties at Temple Square. Several months later, Willard suffered a debilitating stroke, but he learned to walk again with the aid of a crutch and a cane—and characteristically continued his missionary service at the bureau of information. He passed away on 25 Sep-



Family portrait taken in front of the Joseph Smith home in 1923. From left to right: Paul (son of Willard and Gussie, Willard's first wife), Willard, Palmyra, Alvin Pliny, Rebecca (seated), Dawn, and Phyllis (daughter of Willard and Gussie).

tember 1949 at the age of 81. Rebecca paid the following tribute to her husband: “He was a student of the Gospel all his life and could quote any scripture asked for. He was a missionary all his life whether at home or away, and he had a rich, full life. . . . His work and his life will never die. He was a great man!”<sup>64</sup>

Rebecca had, of course, been active in missionary work with her husband. After his death she continued her labors for a time and returned to Palmyra on at least one occasion. She lived in Salt Lake City and remained alone for nearly 27 years before passing away in Orem, Utah, on 25 June 1976. She noted shortly before her death, “My days and nights in the sunset of my life are sweet and peaceful, and filled with golden memories. I have such love for all the missionaries I have known. I was ‘Mom’ to thousands of missionaries and could never live long enough to thank my Father-in-Heaven for all the blessings that I have had in my life and that are mine today.”<sup>65</sup>

Willard Bean was the first Latter-day Saint known to have returned to live in upstate New York since the departure of church members from there in the early 1830s. He moved into the Smith home, established himself as a farmer, and provided for his family by tilling the same ground in much the same way as the Smiths had done nearly a century before. The Beans’ mission was originally to have lasted “five years or more,”<sup>66</sup> but as it turned out, it stretched into many years. Willard and Rebecca arrived as newlyweds and left a quarter of a century later as grandparents. One purpose of their mission to Palmyra was to lay a foundation of goodwill that would help reverse the prevailing prejudice there against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Evidence of their success continues to the present day as seen by the friendly reception of tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints who annually visit church history sites in the area. ❏

- of Cumorah is an intriguing question requiring further research. See David Dilts to Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, personal communication, 28 July 2004; see also Jane Wolfe to Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, personal communication, 30 July 2004.
35. See Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, *Every Stone a Sermon: The Magnificent Story of the Construction and Dedication of the Salt Lake Temple* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992), 35–36.
  36. Lambourne produced two copies of each painting. They are both “identical except that one is rectangular and the other set is rectangular with an arched top. The sizes are about the same. The perfectly rectangular paintings are on exhibit in the Museum [of Church History and Art]. The arch topped ones are still in the Salt Lake Temple.” Richard G. Oman to Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, 21 July 2004.
  37. “In the Interest of Art,” *Deseret Evening News*, 29 September 1892, 2.
  38. “In the Interest of Art,” 2.
  39. The painting has been dated usually to 1893; see Richard G. Oman and Robert O. Davis, *Images of Faith: Art of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 21. However, primary sources, including Wilford Woodruff’s journal cited below and a “Chronological Listing of Paintings, 1869–1899,” compiled by the family and located in the Church Archives, indicate that the painting was completed by the fall of 1892.
  40. Wilford Woodruff, journal, 16 November 1892, Church Archives; as cited in Scott Kenny, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal Typescript* (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1985), 9:227.
  41. Alfred Lambourne, *Hill Cumorah Painted by Alfred Lambourne, From His Sketches Taken Directly on the Spot* (n.p., n.d.), [p. 2]. A copy of this unpaginated pamphlet is located in the Church Archives.
  42. See Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, “Book of Mormon, opposition to,” in *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, ed. Dennis L. Largey (Salt Lake: Deseret Book, 2003), 129–32.
  43. Lambourne, *Hill Cumorah Painted by Alfred Lambourne*, [pp. 2–3].
  44. Lambourne, *Hill Cumorah Painted by Alfred Lambourne*, [p. 1].
  45. Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Graphic Image, 1834–1914: Cartoons, Caricatures, and Illustrations* (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1983), 65–68, 121–22.
  46. Notice the interesting variant on current Mormon usage, “Cumorah Hill” in the Underwood & Underwood caption; see also “Noted Career Ends in Death of P. T. Sexton,” *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*, 7 September 1924, [p.1], where the term is used again.
  47. See Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, “Stereographs and Stereotypes: A 1904 View of Mormonism,” *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Fall 1992): 155–76.
  48. George Albert Smith, diary, 26 December 1905, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, microfilm copy in Church Archives. We would like to thank Ronald G. Watt, Church Archives, for providing a transcription of this entry for our use.
  49. Edith Smith, diary, 26 December 1905, Church Archives.
  50. Edith Smith, diary, 22 December 1905.
  51. George Eastman demonstrated the gelatin dry plate method (1878); introduced Eastman American Film, which is the first transparent photographic film common today (1885); produced the Kodak camera with the slogan “You press the button, we do the rest,” creating the birth of snapshot photography (1888); introduced the daylight-loading camera, which meant that the photographer could now reload the camera without using a darkroom (1891); changed the company name to Eastman Kodak Company (1892); and produced the “Brownie” camera, selling it for one dollar and the film for it for 15 cents a roll (1900); information taken from the Kodak Web site, www.kodak.com (accessed 11 August 2004).
  52. “Bro Goddard attempted to obtain a picture of the [Kirtland Temple] pulpits but was asked to desist. George A asked for the privilege and was refused. Before Bro B had been discovered the Kodak had already got in its work,” Edith Smith, diary, 27 December 1905.
  53. For an overview of the history of postcards, see Tom Phillips, *The Postcard Century: 2000 Cards and Their Messages* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000).
  54. Frank H. Leib first appears in the Salt Lake City directory in 1901 as residing at 247 South Second West; see R. L. Polk & Co’s *Salt Lake City Directory* (Salt Lake City: R. L. Polk & Co., 1901), 1352. He appears in the business section, “Lieb F. H (post cards), 203 Brooks Arcade” in R. L. Polk & Co’s *Salt Lake City Directory 1908* (Salt Lake City, R. L. Polk & Co., 1908), 1352.
  55. David Dilts, e-mail message to author, 9 August 2004.
  56. George Edward Anderson, journal, 14 August 1907, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City; as cited in Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, T. Jeffery Cottle, and Ted D. Stoddard, *Church History in Black and White: George Edward Anderson’s Photographic Mission to Latter-day Saint Historical Sites, 1907 Diary, 1907–8 Photographs* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1995), 167.
  57. An important early word picture was provided to RLDS readers in 1881 by one of the RLDS twelve apostles; see Wm. H. Kelley, “The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon,” *Saints’ Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 162–68.
  58. Vida E. Smith, *Young People’s History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Lamoni, IA: Herald Publishing House, 1914), 1:10.
  59. For a discussion of Willard and Rebecca Bean’s labors in New York, see David F. Boone, “A Man Raised Up”—The Role of Willard W. Bean in the Acquisition of Church History Sites in Upstate New York,” in this issue of *JBMS*.
  60. Record of Members, Albany Branch, Albany Conference, Eastern States Mission, Church Archives. See Kahlile Mehr to Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, personal communication, 21 July 2004.
  61. In 1927 Smith wrote a pageant entitled “Remember Cumorah,” commemorating the 100th anniversary of Joseph Smith receiving the plates. The *Saints’ Herald* requested that “every branch should make the Sunday following September 22 a day for special service commemorating this event, and where possible the pageant should be presented.” *Saints’ Herald* 74 (27 July 1927): 884.
  62. During nearly 100 years, this medium was one of the ways large groups of people saw images. Only during the second half of the 20th century was it replaced when the Kodachrome three-color process made 35mm slides less expensive to produce. The views that glass slides represent are either drastically changed or no longer exist and therefore capture a moment in time.
  63. Some of the original papers were donated to the Community of Christ Library–Archives, Independence, Missouri (hereafter cited as Community of Christ Library–Archives) in 1988 by Floris M. Hands. After his death in 1996, the remaining slides with relevance to the Community of Christ were donated by Barbara Hands Bernauer, Community of Christ assistant archivist.
  64. Form letter sent to RLDS pastors dated 1 December 1930, W. O. Hands Papers, Community of Christ Library–Archives.
  65. W. O. Hands to Earl Williamson, 1 April 1931, W. O. Hands Papers, Community of Christ Library–Archives.
  66. For a discussion of the 1935 Angel Moroni Monument, see Allen Gerritsen, “The Hill Cumorah Monument: An Inspired Creation of Torleif S. Knaphus (1881–1965),” in this issue of *JBMS*.
  67. *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998), no. 13.
  68. Phelps, “Letter No. 12,” 221.
  69. Roscoe A. Grover, “Moroni Lives Again,” *Improvement Era*, September 1935, 544.
- “A Man Raised Up”: The Role of Willard W. Bean in the Acquisition of the Hill Cumorah**  
David F. Boone
- Portions of this manuscript were originally published in David F. Boone, “Palmyra Revisited: The New York Mission of Willard W. and Rebecca P. Bean, 1915–1939,” in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: New York and Pennsylvania*, ed. Alexander L. Baugh and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Dept. of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 2002), 125–53.
1. Willard was born in Provo, Utah, to George Washington and Elizabeth Baum Bean on 16 May 1868. Willard served four missions before his marriage to Gussie Dee Felts on 3 May 1899 in the Manti Temple. They were the parents of two children, Paul and Phyllis (*Autobiography of Willard Washington Bean: Exploits of the Fighting Parson, 1886–1949*, comp. Vicki Bean Toppliff [Provo, UT: Vicki Bean Toppliff, 2003], 2:159–68). When that marriage ended in divorce, Willard married Rebecca Peterson in 1914. To this union four children were born: Palmyra, Alvin, Dawn, and Kelvin (all born in the Joseph Smith Sr. home). Willard was 46 when called to live in New York and 71 when released.
  2. Rebecca Rosetta Peterson Bean was born on 2 April 1891 to Danish convert parents, Ole Johannes and Julia Maria Hansen Peterson. One of her mother’s fondest memories as a young girl still in Denmark was of entertaining the full-time missionaries in her parents’ home. When the family migrated to Utah, one of Rebecca’s regrets was that she would no longer have the opportunity to host missionaries in her home. Little did Rebecca know that she and her husband, as missionaries in New York for 24 years, would entertain more missionaries, church leaders, and other visitors in their home than would perhaps any other household in the church.

3. Rebecca Bean, fireside address, Salt Lake City, 5 February 1966 (transcript of audiotape in author's possession), 2. There is a lingering question of exactly which General Authority was visiting the stake conference in Richfield. Newspapers, stake records, and other sources name President Joseph F. Smith or apostle George Albert Smith, but a few of those sources identify them both. These men had been instrumental in acquiring Latter-day Saint church history sites, were cousins, and were involved in arranging for Bean to be sent on his special mission to New York, any of which could have caused the confusion.
4. Vicki Bean Toppliff, *Willard Bean, The Fighting Parson: The Rebirth of Mormonism in Palmyra* (Orem, UT: n.p., 1981), 62.
5. Larry C. Porter, "A Study of the Origins of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the States of New York and Pennsylvania, 1816–1831" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, August 1971), 358.
6. Willard W. Bean was the middle-weight boxing champion of the United States. His skills earned him the title "The Fighting Parson," given to him while in New York. In the ring he was called "Kid Bean." Willard's stature as a champion was established before such national boxing honors were bestowed and was assumed by virtue of his beating the former champion in St. Louis, Missouri, soon after the turn of the century. Karen Hoag, "Provo Woman Born and Raised in Joseph Smith's Home," *Daily Herald* (Provo, UT), 10 May 1999, sec. C-1. Information also obtained through a telephone interview with Palmyra Bean Packer, 28 June 1999. See Vicki Bean Zimmerman, "Willard Bean: Palmyra's Fighting Parson," *Ensign*, June 1985, 26–29.
7. Willard W. Bean, "Epitome of Activities in Palmyra, N.Y." (unpublished document in the author's possession). A similar reminiscence by Bean titled "An Epitome of Our Activities in Cumorah Land" reads, "I was told, while in the office of [the] First Presidency, that Palmyra was possibly the most prejudiced spot in the world" (unpublished document in author's possession), 1. Subsequent references will be to the latter document, with its title shortened to "Activities in Cumorah Land" to distinguish it from a third reminiscence of Bean's titled "Cumorah Land."
8. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 1.
9. Milton V. Backman, "Early Moves of the Smith Family, Vermont and New Hampshire" (curriculum packet prepared for a Church History 341 [1805–1844] course at Brigham Young University), 3.
10. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 1. See John 4:44.
11. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 1.
12. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 1.
13. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:47.
14. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:47.
15. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:47.
16. Rebecca Bean fireside, 3.
17. Rebecca Bean, "Brief History of Willard Bean" (unpublished manuscript in author's possession), 3.
18. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 62.
19. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 68–69.
20. Bean, *Autobiography*, 1:336.
21. Palmyra Bean Packer, "Living with History," *Daily Herald* (Provo, UT), 10 May 1999, sec. C-1.
22. Rebecca had numerous experiences that seem to have strengthened her and prepared her for the antagonism that she and her family experienced. Several of these experiences appear in a paper by Boone, "Palmyra Revisited," 125–53.
23. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 73.
24. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 73.
25. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 73.
26. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 7.
27. Rand H. Packer, "History of Four Mormon Landmarks in Western New York: The Joseph Smith Farm, Hill Cumorah, The Martin Harris Farm, and the Peter Whitmer, Sr. Farm" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1975), 56.
28. Packer, "Four Mormon Landmarks," 57.
29. Packer, "Four Mormon Landmarks," 58.
30. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 8.
31. George Albert Smith to Willard Bean, 23 January 1922; quoted in Glen R. Stubbs, "A Biography of George Albert Smith: 1870 to 1951" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 252.
32. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 8.
33. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 8.
34. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 8.
35. Interment record from the Palmyra Cemetery, Village of Palmyra.
36. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 9.
37. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 9.
38. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 10.
39. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 10.
40. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 10.
41. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 10.
42. Heber J. Grant, in Conference Report, 6 April 1928, 8.
43. An interesting perspective provided by Willard's son Alvin was that despite public statements that the Prophet Joseph's claims about treasures, plates, or angels relative to his reception of the gold plates were untrue and made up, on many nights one could see lights on the hill because people were digging there, trying to find a treasure that they were certain, at least publicly, did not exist. Alvin P. Bean, fireside address, Huntington Beach, California, 5 November 1978 (transcript in author's possession), 8–9.
44. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:36.
45. Virginius Bean, known by family members as Virg, moved to upstate New York with his family from Las Vegas and became a major contributor to the beautification process as well as to the growing Latter-day Saint congregation. He remained in the Cumorah area for more than four years.
46. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:36.
47. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:36.
48. Bean, *Autobiography*, 2:37.
49. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Religious Prejudice Allayed by Friendly Utah Mormon," *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City), 5 June 1949, sec. 10-C.
50. Hinckley, "Religious Prejudice Allayed."
51. Willard Bean, untitled manuscript, Family and Church History Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter Church Archives), MS 5617.
52. Bean, "Activities in Cumorah Land," 13.
53. While living in New York, the Bean family was instrumental in helping a number of people join the church. In addition to Harold Jay Stoner (baptized in 1928 at the Joseph Smith Sr. farm), Charles and Maude Collins were converted about 1921. The Collinses were very close to the Bean family and were referred to by the Bean children as Uncle Charles and Aunt Maude. William E. and Sarah Morgan and two of their children were likewise converted about 1923. Their daughter, Genevieve, was scheduled to be baptized at the same time as her family, but she became frightened at the prospect of being immersed in water and ran and hid until the service was over. Two years later she overcame her fear and joined the church through baptism by immersion.
54. Alvin Pliny Bean, "A Modern Mecca," English composition for a class at Utah State University, October 1937 (copy in the author's possession), 2.
55. A biographical file on Willard W. Bean in the Church Archives indicates 1 April 1939 as the release date and further states that the Beans were "Transferred to Temple Square Mission, April 1939." Transcript in the author's possession.
56. Telephone interview with Glenn J. Ellis, 14 June 1999.
57. Willard's granddaughter Vicki Bean Toppliff suggests that Willard and Rebecca knew of their impending release but were trying to keep it a secret. See Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 96.
58. Glenn J. Ellis, "Palmyra Revisited" (unpublished reminiscence in the author's possession), 5.
59. Despite the fact that Willard received only minimal formal education as a child, in later life he was not given to incorrect English usage. In this instance he was merely attempting a cute play on words.
60. Rebecca Bean fireside, 4.
61. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 61–62.
62. Toppliff, *The Fighting Parson*, 96.
63. Bean, "Brief History," 3.
64. Bean, "Brief History," 5.
65. Rebecca Bean, "Fireside Talk Given by Rebecca Rosetta Peterson Bean" (typescript of a fireside address given in Salt Lake City, fall 1964; copy in the author's possession), 12.
66. Bean, "Brief History," 2.

**Encounters with Cumorah: A Selective, Personal Bibliography**  
Martin H. Raish

1. For example, Donna Hill, in *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), provides a careful account of the events but focuses on the plates and says very little about Cumorah; see pp. 58, 69, 70–71. In a different vein, Fawn Brodie, in *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith* (Knopf, 1945; 2nd ed., New York: Vintage, 1995), does not even use the word *Cumorah* when describing the recovery of the Book of Mormon, instead saying only that a rumor was spread through Palmyra that Joseph had "unearthed an extraordinary treasure from the big hill on the turnpike just outside Manchester" (p. 37). She uses *Cumorah* in its modern setting only once (and inside quotation marks) when reporting Heber C. Kimball's description of the cave (p. 41).
2. As the subtitle indicates, this bibliography is both selective and personal. Additional accounts,