conditional, predicated upon obedience to the fulness of gospel law and ordinances (D&C 29:45-44; 130:20-21). It requires voluntary obedience to all of the ordinances and principles of the gospel, beginning with faith in Jesus Christ and continuing through baptism, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the covenants of the endowment and marriage in the temple, and of enduring to the end.

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LEAUN G. OTTEN

**IMPROVEMENT ERA**

One of six publications begun as Church auxiliary magazines between 1866 and 1902, the *Improvement Era* (1897–1970) was the official arm of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association (YMMIA, which became the YOUNG MEN in 1977). It followed the demise of the CONTRIBUTOR MAGAZINE (1879–1896), an independent journal associated with the YMMIA. Joined officially to the YMMIA, the *Era* immediately became the premier adult periodical of the Church through its General Authority sponsorship and its focus on theology, history, contemporary affairs, and life in the Church. Its name reflected its sponsor’s goal to be for the intellectual, moral, and spiritual mutual improvement of its readers in a new Church era just one year after Utah achieved statehood. The *Era*’s preeminence from 1901 onward for more than half a century was in part due to the participation of the President of the Church as its principal editor; thus, its pages were often used to voice concerns important to Church leadership and to respond to queries concerning Church doctrine and LDS LIFESTYLE. Its circulation of 2,000 in 1897 reached 275,000 when it was succeeded by the *Ensign* in January 1971.

The *Era* soon served more than the YMMIA. It was the publication arm of the Seventies in 1908, of other PRIESTHOOD QUORUMS in 1909, and of Church schools in 1913. It merged with YOUNG WOMAN’S JOURNAL, the publication of the Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association (YWMIA, which became YOUNG WOMEN in 1977) in 1929. By 1936 it had become the arm of the music committee, ward teaching, and other agencies of the Church. Beginning in 1942, the *Era* printed all General Conference addresses (it had previously printed selected addresses).

In 1897 the *Era* had a 5 3/4-by-8 5/8-inch format. Thereafter, it usually contained eighty pages, with photographs printed on stitched-in leaves. In 1908 the paper was upgraded, and the number of photographs was increased. At its 1929 merger, the *Era* changed to an 8-by-10 7/8-inch magazine format, printed its covers in color, and began forty-one years of advertisements for its readers. It also added more general-interest articles. In 1957 the *Era* began publishing anniversary issues with four-color sections, but it did not use four-color printing regularly until 1969. In 1960 it began the section "The Era of Youth," a prelude to the New ERA.

The list of editors of the *Era* includes five presidents of the Church: Joseph F. SMITH, Heber J. GRANT, George Albert Smith, David O. MCKAY, and Joseph Fielding SMITH; two members of the QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES: John A. Widtsoe and Richard L. Evans; and two members of the First Council of the SEVENTY: B. H. Roberts and Richard L. Evans. Other editors or managing editors were Edward H. Anderson, Hugh J. Cannon, Harrison R. Merrill, and Doyle L. Green. "The Era of Youth" section was edited by Elder Marion D. Hanks of the Seventy, and Elaine A. Cannon, who later became president of the Young Women (1978–1984).

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**INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI**

The tenth Article of Faith of the Church states, "We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion [the New Jerusalem] will be built upon the American continent." From the Book of Mormon (Ether 13:1–5), early Latter-day Saints realized they had a role in the fulfillment of prophecy and were looking forward to the establishment of the NEW JERUSALEM in America.

Anxious to know exactly where the promised city would be and when it would be built, the