ceeded Watt as the main reporter to the Journal from 1867 to 1876. Another major reporter was George F. Gibbs, who was born in Wales and was the secretary to the First Presidency of the Church for fifty-six years. In all, twelve people reported sermons for the Journal of Discourses, including one of Brigham Young’s daughters, “Miss Julia Young,” who reported one of his speeches.

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RONALD G. WATT

JOURNALS

Journal writing among the early Latter-day Saints took impetus from a divine charge to the Prophet Joseph Smith on the day the Church was organized: “There shall be a record kept among you” (D&C 21:1). Although that was an official charge to the Church, individual members took it as a personal charge and began keeping journals. Joseph Smith himself worked regularly with scribes until his death, directing the recording of his daily activities. Much of what is known about the early events of the Church comes from the many personal journals kept by leaders and members.

Careful and complete records served as a protection against opponents of the Church. In instructions to the Quorum of the Twelve in 1835, Joseph Smith urged them to note down the procedures of meetings held, for “the time will come, when, if you neglect to do this thing, you will fall by the hands of unrighteous men . . . . If you will be careful to keep minutes of these things . . . . it will be one of the most important records ever seen” (HC 2:198–99). Joseph Smith stated that the Saints had been somewhat delinquent in this charge.

In addition to Joseph Smith’s comprehensive journal, which he kept with the aid of personal scribes, several early converts began to keep personal diaries, most of them sketchy but some very ambitious. It has been a common practice of missionaries to keep journals of their activities, though most of these early journals tended to be factual rather than reflective, and followed a quite standard format: the call, travel particulars, names of companions and Church members, lists of letters from home, sightseeing, release, and the return home. A frequent topic of Latter-day Saint journals is the writer’s conversion to the Church.

Early journals usually are also quite reportorial, matter-of-fact in tone, sparing in detail, and often repetitive; yet they are valuable for historical reference, if not engaging in content or style, though some passages are eloquent in their plainness. Feelings and introspection are more characteristic of twentieth-century journals. Yet all journals are important resources for family history information.

Most Presidents of the Church have kept a journal of some type—either historical or personal, with or without the assistance of a secretary. From the founding of the Church, there was a steady flow of journal writing, the quantity increasing during times of reformation, as in 1856–1857, or when leaders urged the practice of journal keeping. Perhaps best known of the early diarists was Wilford Woodruff, who kept a meticulous personal record (including many drawings)—fifteen volumes covering the years 1833–1898. His record is rich in detail and personal insight on many important events in the early Church.

In 1977, in his Guide to Mormon Diaries & Autobiographies, Davis Bitton identified and cataloged some 3,000 pieces of LDS autobiographical writing, consisting largely of journals, mostly by men, in repositories throughout the United States, though mainly in the state of Utah. Many more uncataloged journals remain in the possession of individuals and families, and Bitton suggested that his bibliography be updated from time to time.

Twentieth-century LDS journals tend to be longer and more numerous, reflecting increased literacy, more time to write, and greater openness. Both Joseph F. Smith and Heber J. Grant, Church presidents from 1901 to 1918 and 1918 to 1945, respectively, left multivolume journal records. LDS journal writing received special stimulus during the presidency of Spencer W. Kimball (1973–1985), who himself kept an extensive journal of about eighty volumes. Typical of his many admonitions to Church members is a short remark in the 1977 October General Conference: “A word about personal journals and records: We urge every person in the Church to keep a diary or a
Journal writing has been encouraged since the earliest days of the Church and has been the source of much of what is known about Church history. Many Latter-day Saints today, including children, youth, and adults, regularly record their experiences in personal journals.

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journal from youth up, all through his life” (“The Foundations of Righteousness.” Ensign 7 [Nov. 1977]:4).

Also in recent years, a new reason for journal writing has been voiced: the value of journals as a gift to descendants—a linking of the generations. President Kimball said: “I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records, they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations. . . . Rich passages . . . will be quoted by your posterity” (p. 61).

Because of the admonitions of scripture and leaders, journal writing, especially in recent decades, has become an integral part of the religious experience of many Latter-day Saints. Parents have been encouraged to write their own personal journals and to help their children begin writing theirs, to make the experience pleasant. President Kimball said in 1980: “Those who keep a personal journal are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives” (p. 61).

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DON E. NORTON
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JOY

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared, “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it” (TPS, p. 255). The concept of true joy to be experienced in this life and in the life to come lies at the core of LDS thought. The Book of Mormon prophet LEHI taught, “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25; cf. Alma 42:8).

Latter-day Saints believe in a PREMORTAL LIFE in which all lived with God, the literal father of the spirits of humankind. Part of God’s plan for the growth and progress of his children—the goal of which is to help everyone become as God himself is and to know the joy that he knows—includes a mortal experience. Therein people obtain a physical body, the power of procreation, and an independence and AGENCY that allow experiences of diverse kinds and thereby enhance the powers of self-determination.

In this light, Latter-day Saints view the physical body, the mortal environment, the procreative power, and the freedom of choice as essential elements of joy. Thus, Heavenly Father created this earth and sent his children to it that they might know joy. In this profound sense, joy and happiness arise from combinations of experience, responsibility and service, and pain and grief, along with pleasure and enjoyment. At the center of God’s plan to make maximum joy accessible to his children is the ATONEMENT of Christ (2 Ne. 2:10–14, 22–27).

One can identify aspects of joy that are available in this life. First are the simple joys of being