tains nearly 141,000 volumes, excluding bound periodicals and government publications.

The college owns a livestock center as part of its agricultural program on 140 acres, including 21 buildings, a few miles west of Rexburg. The college also owns a 160-acre outdoor learning facility on Badger Creek in Teton Valley.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH. The Ricks College Board of Trustees is composed of Church leaders and is chaired by the President of the Church. The Church provides approximately 70 percent of the operating funds for the college. Student tuition and fees, campus auxiliary income, and gifts to the college provide the remainder of operating funds.

Currently (1990) thirty-six student wards in four stakes function at Ricks College. Students are required to take religion courses every semester. Graduates of Ricks consistently remark on the unique spirit of the college, the commitment of faculty to the progress of students, and the overall sense of community and caring they experienced there.

STUDENTS. Ricks College has an open admission policy. Selectivity is used only as it applies to the Code of Honor, which each student must promise, in an ecclesiastical interview, to observe. Since Ricks has academic programs spanning a wide range of ability levels, the goal has been to admit any student who could benefit from the Ricks College experience.

Currently the Admissions Office admits 95 percent of those who apply. Of those admitted, approximately 80 percent actually enroll. Students from all fifty states and thirty foreign countries attend Ricks.

The attrition rate at Ricks is higher than at most two-year colleges because many Latter-day Saint students attend Ricks for one year and then serve a Church mission. Once they complete the mission, many desire to move to a university. In 1989-1990, Ricks College graduated 1,557 students.

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SCOTT SAMUELSON

RIGDON, SIDNEY

Sidney Rigdon (1793–1876) was one of Joseph Smith’s closest friends and advisers. He was also a renowned early convert to the Church, its most persuasive orator in the first decade, and First Counselor in the First Presidency from 1832 to 1844. Following the Prophet Joseph Smith’s martyrdom, Rigdon became one of the Church’s best-known apostates.

Rigdon was born February 19, 1793, on a farm in St. Clair Township, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the fourth child and youngest son of William and Nancy Briant Rigdon. In 1817, while supporting his widowed mother on the family farm, Rigdon experienced Christian conversion and a year later qualified himself to become a licensed preacher with the Regular Baptists. He moved to eastern Ohio to preach under the tutelage of Adamson Bentley, a popular Baptist minister, and in June 1820 he married Phebe Brooks, Bentley’s sister-in-law. After ordination as a Baptist minister, Rigdon became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Pittsburgh in 1821. Famed for his dynamic preaching, Rigdon attracted listeners until his congregation became one of the largest in the city. One of his critics, William Hayden, described him as being of “medium height, rotund in form; of countenance, while speaking, open and winning, with a little cast of melancholy. His action was graceful, his language copious, fluent in utterance, with articulation clear and musical” (quoted in Chase, p. 24).

Throughout his early ministry, Rigdon kept looking for the pure New Testament church that practiced laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost and healing the sick. Drawn to Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott, fellow ministers with similar views, Rigdon associated with leading members of the Mahoning Baptist Association, the forerunner of the restorationist Disciples of Christ movement (see Restorationism, Protestant). In 1826 he became the pastor of a Grand River Association congregation in Mentor, Ohio. In 1830, however, Rigdon broke with Campbell and Scott, who went on to form the Disciples of Christ, while Rigdon established a communal “family” near Kirtland.

In late October 1830 four Mormon missionaries visited Rigdon in Ohio. One was Parley P. Pratt, whom Rigdon had converted to the reformed Baptists a year earlier. Pratt told Rigdon...
Sidney Rigdon (1783–1876), formerly a Baptist-Campbellite minister, was one of the most important early converts to the Church. He served as counselor in the First Presidency, experienced revelations together with Joseph Smith, and was a gifted orator. Courtesy the Utah State Historical Society.

about the Book of Mormon and the RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL through Joseph Smith. After two weeks of earnest investigation, Rigdon announced that he believed the new church to be the true apostolic church restored to the earth. In mid-November 1830 he was baptized and ordained an elder. More than a hundred members of his Kirtland congregation and common stock community followed him into the Church.

Rigdon, along with Edward Partridge, a young hatter who was interested in Mormonism, left almost immediately for Fayette, New York, to meet Joseph Smith. After their arrival, a REVELATION to Joseph commended Rigdon for his previous service, but called him to “a greater work,” including that of scribe to the Prophet on his “new translation” of the Bible then under way (D&C 35; see also JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE [JST]). In December 1830, Smith, with Rigdon’s help, worked on the manuscript that eventually became the seventh and eighth chapters of the BOOK OF MOSES in the Pearl of Great Price.

Rigdon’s report of the harvest of souls in the Mentor-Kirtland area in Ohio may have encouraged Joseph to ask for guidance on moving the headquarters of the Church; in December 1830 a revelation commanded them to leave New York for Ohio (D&C 37; cf. 38). On February 1, 1831, Joseph and Sidney arrived in Kirtland, where they renewed their work on the inspired translation of the Bible.

In the summer of 1831, Joseph, Sidney, and other leaders journeyed to Independence, Missouri, which a revelation identified as the location of the latter-day ZION and the NEW JERUSALEM. Sidney was instructed to dedicate the land of Zion for the gathering of the Saints and to write a description of the country for publication (D&C 58:50). Upon their return to Ohio, Joseph and Sidney resumed the translation of the scriptures, and on February 16, 1832, they jointly received the vision of the degrees of glory that is now Doctrine and Covenants section 76. In March 1832 they were brutally attacked by a mob and tarred and feathered. Sidney received head injuries that occasionally affected his emotional stability for the rest of his life. His friend Newel K. Whitney said that thereafter he was “either in the bottom of the cellar or up in the garret window” (Chase, p. 115).

In March 1833 Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams were formally set apart as counselors to Joseph Smith in the First Presidency. Sidney had already been called as a counselor to Joseph a year earlier, before there was a First Presidency. In 1833 Rigdon was also called to be a “spokesman” for the Church and for Joseph Smith. Rigdon was promised that he would be “mighty in expounding all scriptures” (D&C 100:11). At this same time, Joseph said of him, “Brother Sidney is a man whom I love, but he is not capable of that pure and steadfast love for those who are his benefactors that should characterize a President of the Church of Christ. This, with some other little things, such as selfishness and independence of mind . . . are his faults. But notwithstanding these things, he is a very great and good man; a man of great power of words, and can gain the friendship of his hearers very quickly. He is a man whom God will uphold,
if he will continue faithful to his calling” (HC 1:443).

In 1834 Rigdon assisted in recruiting volunteers for Zion’s Camp and, while Joseph was away on that undertaking, had charge of affairs in Kirtland, including the construction of the temple (see KIRTLAND TEMPLE). He was a leading teacher at the Kirtland school and helped arrange the revelations for publication in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (see SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS). Under the Prophet’s direction, Sidney helped compose and deliver many of the doctrinally rich lectures on faith. He often preached long, extravagant biblically based sermons, notably one at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. In the persecution that followed the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society, Rigdon, along with Joseph Smith and other Saints, fled for their lives to Far West, Missouri, in 1838. There Rigdon delivered two famous volatile speeches, the Salt Sermon and the Independence Day oration, both of which stirred up fears and controversy in Missouri and contributed to the extermination order and the Battle of Far West (see MISSOURI CONFLICT). With Joseph and Hyrum Smith, Rigdon was taken prisoner and locked up in Liberty Jail, but was released early because of severe apoplectic seizures.

Rigdon took an active part in the founding of Nauvoo and in 1839 accompanied Joseph Smith to Washington, D.C., to present the grievances of the Saints to the federal government. He was elected to the Nauvoo City Council and served also as city attorney, postmaster, and professor of Church history in the embryonic university projected for the city. Despite his many appointments, however, he was nearly silent during this time and often sick. He was accused of being associated with John C. Bennett and other enemies of the Church in their seditious plans to displace Joseph Smith, but this he always denied. He did not endorse the principle of plural marriage, although he never came out in open opposition to it. Joseph Smith eventually lost confidence in Rigdon and in 1843 wished to reject him as a counselor, but because of the intercession of Hyrum Smith, retained him in office.

Early in 1844, when Joseph Smith became a candidate for president of the United States, Rigdon was nominated as his running mate and he established residence in Pittsburgh to carry on the campaign. He was there when news arrived of Joseph Smith’s murder. He hastened to Nauvoo to offer himself as a “guardian of the Church,” promising to act as such until Joseph Smith was resurrected from the dead. His claims were duly considered, but at a memorable meeting in Nauvoo on August 8, 1844, Church members rejected him as guardian (see SUCCESSION IN THE PRESIDENCY). The Twelve Apostles (see QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES) were sustained as the head of the Church. When he undertook to establish a rival leadership, Rigdon was excommunicated in September 1844 and left with a few disciples for Pennsylvania, where they organized a Church of Christ. Acting erratically, he lost most of his followers in less than two years. In 1863, he made another effort, founding the Church of Jesus Christ of the Children of Zion, which continued into the 1890s. From 1847 to his death in 1876, Rigdon resided in Friendship, New York, usually in a state of emotional imbalance and unhappiness.

In 1834, in Mormonism Unveiled, Eber D. Howe attacked the authenticity of the Book of Mormon by adopting Philastus Hurlbut’s argument that Sidney Rigdon purloined the “Manuscript Story” of Solomon Spaulding (see SPAULDING MANUSCRIPT), plagiarized it to compose the Book of Mormon, and gave it to Joseph Smith to publish under his name. During his lifetime Rigdon and members of his family consistently denied any connection with Spaulding, and after the discovery in 1885 of one of Spaulding’s manuscripts, the story was discredited.

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BRUCE A. VAN ORDEN

RIGHTeousNESS

Righteousness comprises a broad group of concepts and traits. As with the biblical Hebrew sedek and the Greek dikaiosyne, the English word "righteousness" describes the ideal of religious life, with Godlike behavior as the norm. Righteousness is right conduct before God and among