

**A DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT
TEMPLE, SALT LAKE CITY: AND A
STATEMENT CONCERNING THE
PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT HAS
BEEN BUILT**

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A Description of the Great Temple, Salt Lake City: And a Statement Concerning the Purposes for Which It has been built by D. M. McAllister

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Every Mile a Picture
CANON, GORGE,
PEAK and VALE



THE GREAT TEMPLE, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

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OF THE
GREAT TEMPLE

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AND

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BY

D. M. McALLISTER.

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Holiness to the Lord!

**The House of the Lord, Built by the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Commenced
April 6, 1853; Completed April 6, 1893.**

(Above are the words inscribed on a stone
tablet on the east center tower of the Temple).

No object in Salt Lake City excites greater interest in the minds of strangers than the Temple, which has been erected here by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It elicits expressions of wonderment because of its beautiful yet massive proportions, unique architecture, and evident costliness. Numerous questions are asked concerning the structure, the purposes for which it has been built, and why none but members of the Church are permitted to enter its precincts. This handbook has been compiled, from authentic sources, to satisfy all reasonable inquiries in relation to these matters.

HISTORY OF THE BUILDING.

Four days after the arrival of the Pioneers on the barren site of this now lovely city, July 28th, 1847, President Brigham Young, while walking over the ground

with some of his associates, suddenly stopped and, striking the point of his cane into the parched soil, exclaimed, "Here we will build the Temple of our God." His prophetic words were noted by his companions, and Apostie (afterward President) Wilford Woodruff drove a wooden stake into the small hole made by the point of President Young's cane. On the evening of the same day, the ten acres selected for the Temple Block were marked out, and it was decided that the future city should surround that square.

In April, 1851, the members of the Church—assembled in general conference—voted unanimously to build the Temple. February 14, 1853, after the site for the great structure was surveyed, the block was solemnly dedicated, and ground broken for the foundation of the Temple. On April 6th of the same year, the corner stones of the Temple were laid, with impressive ceremonies, amid great rejoicing of the assembled multitude.

Unknown to those who surveyed the site for the building, the wooden stake driven into the ground by Wilford Woodruff, on the 28th of July, 1847, marked the centre of the plot laid out by them.

It should ever be remembered that this magnificent structure was planned, and its erection begun, by a small number of despoiled and destitute people, at a time when they were struggling for existence in the midst of adverse surroundings. We shall not enumerate the many seemingly insurmountable obstacles, which, from time to time, hindered the progress of the stupendous undertaking; but it may well be said that the completed Temple is a monument of faith and work unparalleled in the world's history.

The Temple is built of gray granite taken from a mountain of that enduring material at the mouth of Little Cottonwood canyon, twenty miles south-east of the city. Many of the blocks of granite in the walls are so large that four yoke of oxen were required to haul each of

them, occupying four days in transit. This process of hauling rock by ox-teams, from the quarry to the Temple site, was so slow and expensive that President Young decided to have a canal constructed to carry the rock by boats. Accordingly, the canal was dug, at great cost, from the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon across the bench land, to an outlet in City Creek, near the Temple block. But in 1873, before the canal was sufficiently completed to be made available for the main purpose in view, a line of railroad was laid which supplanted this contemplated use of the canal. The latter has since been used to great advantage in conveying a large supply of water from Jordan River to the City.

DIMENSIONS.

Some idea of the massiveness of the building, and of the enormous amount of rock used in its construction, may be obtained from the following figures: Foundation, or footing wall, sixteen feet wide and eight feet deep; basement walls, eight feet thick; upper story walls, six feet thick. The extreme length of the building is 186½ feet; extreme width, 118½ feet. Height of side walls on main building 107½ feet; east center tower 210 feet high; west center tower 204 feet. Inverted arches are constructed in the foundation, to distribute evenly the enormous pressure of the massive walls. The entire area is 21,850 feet.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES.

The architecture of the Temple is composite and original. The six towers, three on the east and three on the west, are built entirely of granite. Within each of the four corner towers there is a spiral staircase. There are 172 granite steps, and four landings, in each of these