You wanted to know what we waited to move for, wrote Sidney Tanner, an early Mormon pioneer, to his family in the East. "It was to go to a land of freedom where we could enjoy the peace of society and our liberty. We did not want to live in a country where there was no peace, no liberty and its citizens [were] not allowed their rights." So much has been written about the Mormon Trail that one wonders if there is anything of consequence to be said. Surely all the prominent details are well known. And were it not for the fact that new sources continue to come to light, one might almost agree to leave the topic alone. However, on closer examination, one soon sees that a host of subjects remains unaddressed and several fascinating themes yet undeveloped. The purpose of this paper is to examine one such theme that played more of a role in the thinking and worshiping of the Latter-day Saint exodus than has yet been acknowledged—namely, their unfolding sense of liberty, a double-sided liberty that included both freedom from persecution and oppression and the freedom to worship as they pleased and where they pleased. It was a dear and cherished liberation bought at the price of sacrificed properties and lost lives that contributed enormously to the success of their enterprise. It also was abundantly attested to in their many writings, songs, symbols, and celebrations.

Abstract

You wanted to know what we waited to move for, wrote Sidney Tanner, an early Mormon pioneer, to his family in the East. "It was to go to a land of freedom where we could enjoy the peace of society and our liberty. We did not want to live in a country where there was no peace, no liberty and its citizens [were] not allowed their rights." So much has been written about the Mormon Trail that one wonders if there is anything of consequence to be said. Surely all the prominent details are well known. And were it not for the fact that new sources continue to come to light, one might almost agree to leave the topic alone. However, on closer examination, one soon sees that a host of subjects remains unaddressed and several fascinating themes yet undeveloped. The purpose of this paper is to examine one such theme that played more of a role in the thinking and worshiping of the Latter-day Saint exodus than has yet been acknowledged—namely, their unfolding sense of liberty, a double-sided liberty that included both freedom from persecution and oppression and the freedom to worship as they pleased and where they pleased. It was a dear and cherished liberation bought at the price of sacrificed properties and lost lives that contributed enormously to the success of their enterprise. It also was abundantly attested to in their many writings, songs, symbols, and celebrations.

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The Star-Spangled Banner was composed by poet Francis Scott Key after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by British ships of the Royal Navy in Baltimore Harbor during the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. The music of the song was adapted from a light opera by John Stafford Smith. The song's melody is associated with the maestoso moderato tempo mark "John Stafford Smith Josef Hofmann GG " as seen in the sheet music. The full sheet music of the song is available online.

The lyrics of "The Star-Spangled Banner" include lines such as "Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light, What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming? The Star-Spangled Banner, Oh, long may it wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

The song has since become the national anthem of the United States. It is often played at official events and sporting events. The lyrics and music of the song are available in various renditions and arrangements, including those by John Stafford Smith and Josef Hofmann.

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