

---

## “Like the Rose in the Wilderness”: The Mormon Mission in the Kingdom of Sardinia

*Michael W. Homer*

In October 1849, Brigham Young instructed three of his Twelve Apostles to travel to continental Europe to organize proselyting missions in Scandinavia, France, and Italy. The Mormon hierarchy had monitored the revolutionary activities that had destabilized the continent for almost two years and was convinced these events presented an opportunity to expand Mormonism to the continent as they had to Great Britain twelve years earlier.<sup>1</sup> The hierarchy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also organized the Perpetual Emigrating Fund to provide assistance to financially challenged converts to immigrate to the United States. Missionaries arrived in Denmark, France, and Italy in June 1850.

### **The Waldensians**

Young selected Lorenzo Snow to open the Italian Mission. In June 1850, Snow and his companions (T. B. H. Stenhouse and Joseph Toronto) arrived in the Kingdom of Sardinia where they began proselyting among the only indigenous Protestants in Italy. The Waldensians lived in narrow valleys west of Turin in Piedmont and were generally poor.<sup>2</sup> Although they were

---

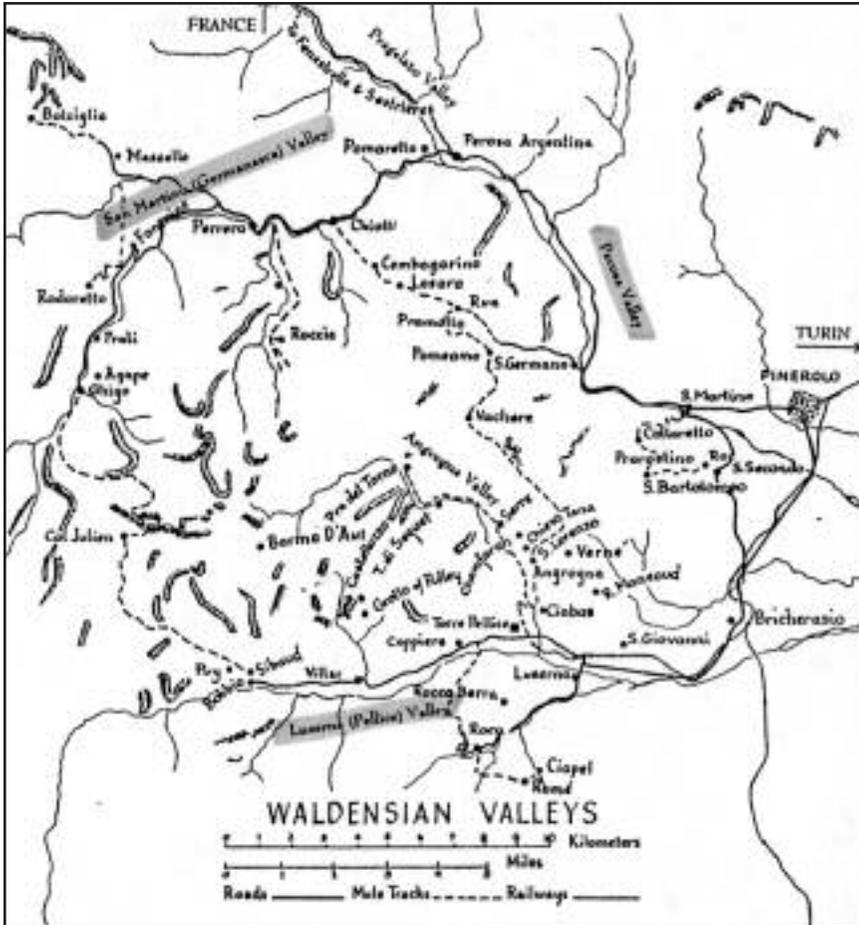
MICHAEL HOMER has been a practicing trial lawyer since 1981. He is currently a shareholder, managing director, and vice president of his law firm. As a member of the Mormon History Association since 1978 and member of the Board of State History appointed by Utah Governor Leavitt in 1997, he has published more than sixty articles on historical and legal subjects. He is the author of one book and coeditor of several others. In 1994, he was the recipient of the T. Edgar Lyon Award of Excellence from the Mormon History Association; the Lowell L. Bennion Editor's Award from *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*; and the John Whitmer Historical Association's Best Article Award. In 1993, he was awarded the David Kirby Best Article Award from the Arthur Conan Doyle Society.

reformed Protestants, their movement began centuries before the Reformation. Between 1170–80, a French merchant named Valdes renounced his wealth and began preaching in the streets of Lyon.<sup>3</sup> Valdes worshiped at St. Nizier in Lyon, a church of the bourgeoisie, where parishioners challenged the political authority of the archbishop. Valdes quickly attracted a community of followers who became known as the Poor Men of Lyons. Even though the Poor Men continued to embrace Catholic doctrines they believed that, even though they were not ordained clergy, their mission was to live lives of poverty and be itinerant preachers. Valdes and his followers confronted other lay preachers who sought to introduce new doctrines, including the Cathari, and challenged doctrinal innovations by quoting from scripture.

Nevertheless Valdes and his followers were very critical of the clergy who they believed had become worldly and sinful. The clergy resented the Poor Men and even though Valdes and his followers were granted verbal permission by the Archbishop of Lyon to preach, they were soon ordered by their local bishop to refrain from preaching because the clergy believed Valdes and his followers were usurping their authority. When Valdes refused to obey, he and his followers were excommunicated.

Following their excommunication, the Poor Men became increasingly radical and soon criticized some church practices, including the veneration of the Saints and the use of relics as well as prayers for the dead. In 1184, the church included them in a list of schismatic movements; and, in 1190, most of them were condemned for heresy. Following their condemnation, the Poor Men experienced internal dissent, and some of Valdes's original followers formed competing splinter groups. After Valdes died, some of the most prominent preachers returned to the Catholic Church.<sup>4</sup>

In 1218, the Poor Men met in Bergamo where they debated the results of the Fourth Lateran Council, including church authority and the sacraments. The Waldensians began to believe that the church had compromised with secular authority, which led the clergy away from an apostolic life. They became increasingly distrustful of the church and for the first time considered themselves bound as a separate religious community. They also began to challenge specific church doctrines and practices, including purgatory, intercession of the Madonna and the Saints, as well as masses for the dead. In 1253, they were accused of starting a fire at the Church of St. Nizier in Lyon where Valdes had been a parishioner. By mid-century, they were driven from their urban venues and experienced a diaspora. They relocated not only in Piedmont but also Provence, Dauphiné, and even in southern Italy (Calabria and Apulia) and Bohemia. In these locations the Waldensians became an isolated and underground culture and developed distinctive doc-



The Waldensian Valleys consist of three main valleys:

*Pellice valley (once known as Luserna valley) which includes the Angrogna valley; Chisone valley (once known as Perosa valley) which includes the Pragelato valley; and the Germanasca valley (once known as San Martino valley) which is the most remote portion of the valleys.*

*From Prescott Stephens, The Waldensian Story (Lewes, Sussex: The Book Guild Ltd, 1998), 160-61*

trines and rituals. Thereafter, followers of Valdes were persecuted, apprehended and even martyred. But, for the most part, such persecution was local and selective.

The Reformation provided the catalyst for bringing the Waldensians in Piedmont out of their isolation, but in some locations, it resulted in their total destruction. In 1526, a synod held in Laux in Piedmont, voted to send two pastors to Switzerland to investigate the Reformation. In Switzerland

they met William Farel, one of the great leaders of the Reformation. In 1528, after Bern adopted the Reformation, Farel went to Geneva where he successfully introduced the Reformation and became a colleague of Calvin. In 1530, a synod held in Mérindol in Provence sent two more pastors to Switzerland. The Swiss were initially concerned because the Waldensians insisted that religious and civil authority be separated—something the Swiss did not believe should occur. After the pastors returned to Mérindol, the Reformation continued to spread—both religiously and politically—in Switzerland. In fact, the Dukes of Savoy, who were Catholic and ruled most of the Waldensian valleys in Piedmont, were in jeopardy of losing their territorial holdings around Lake Geneva. In 1532, Protestant revolts took place in Duke Carlo II's territories in Lausanne and Vaud. That same year, the Holy Shroud was damaged in a fire at the Saint Chapelle in Chambéry—a fire that many Catholics in the capital city of the House of Savoy believed was started by Protestant extremists. In September 1532, the Waldensians held the Synod of Chanforan in Angrogna, which was attended by William Farel and other Swiss reformers, where they voted to join the Reformation. This resulted in the rejection of many of their historical beliefs and practices. In 1536, a French army marched into Savoy and Piedmont and occupied much of the House of Savoy's territory. During the same year, the House of Savoy also lost most of its territory on the northern shore of Lake Geneva when the Protestant-controlled cities of Bern and Geneva, using galley warships, occupied Chillon, Morges, and other cities previously local to the Duke of Savoy.

Following the Waldensian alliance with Reformed Protestants in Switzerland and the threat Protestantism posed to the Catholic rulers in France and Savoy, the Waldensians were no longer a small religious community with no ties to the outside world. They were a part of the Reformed Church in the Calvinist model, and Geneva was the city where Waldensian pastors were educated and trained. Although it took several decades for these changes to become institutionalized the Waldensians constructed temples in 1555 at Ciabas, San Lorenzo, and Coppieri in Luserna valley and soon thereafter completely adopted a new theology and a new ecclesiastical organization. In addition they no longer believed that their primary mission was to embrace poverty and proselyte as itinerant preachers.<sup>5</sup>

After their alignment with Reformers in Switzerland and the commencement of the Counter Reformation the Waldensians also became a larger target for persecution. These persecutions went beyond individual martyrdoms carried out by political and religious zealots. Entire villages were massacred or sent into exile by organized military forces. These wars of religion organized against the Waldensians took place not only in Piedmont but

also in Apulia, Calabria, Provence, Dauphiné and Bohemia. They began in 1561 and continued, with periods of interlude, for more than one hundred years. During this decisive period the Spanish eliminated the Waldensians in Calabria and assimilated them into the Catholic Church in Apulia. In France they were absorbed into the Reformed Church and in Bohemia they were assimilated into the Catholic Church. Only in Piedmont did the Waldensians retain a separate identity. Even as Reformers they developed an ethnic identity and their valleys became a recognizable geographical location. They also developed their own official historiography and became known as the “forerunners of the Reformation.”

In 1561 the House of Savoy’s Duke Emmanuele Filiberto invaded the Waldensian valleys in Piedmont because he was concerned that they had aligned themselves with Reformers who threatened Catholic rule and who had taken possession of his dynasty’s territories in Switzerland. For the first time in their history, the Waldensians raised an army to defend themselves. In February 1561, the Duke’s troops invaded the valleys; but, in June, the Duke agreed in the Treaty of Cavour to grant his Waldensian subjects the right to worship within the limited boundaries of their valleys. He became the first Catholic sovereign to tolerate any form of non Catholic worship.<sup>6</sup> In 1598, the French monarch issued the Edict of Nantes, which also provided that certain Protestant (Huguenot) religious observances would be tolerated in selected villages in rural France.

In 1655, troops loyal to the Duke of Savoy massacred hundreds of Waldensians in their valleys during the Easter season. Protestant Europe vigorously protested this massacre, including the government of Oliver Cromwell in England. John Milton, who visited the imprisoned Galileo in Florence less than two decades earlier and who believed that the Waldensians had existed “pure since the Apostles” and that they “held the same doctrine and government since the time that Constantine with his mischievous donations poisoned . . . the whole church,” was so outraged that he composed a sonnet within weeks of the massacre. The sonnet began, “Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter’d Saints.”<sup>7</sup> These protests persuaded the Duke of Savoy to reaffirm the Treaty of Cavour.

In 1669, a Waldensian pastor, Jean Leger, wrote a history of the Waldensians in which he echoed Milton’s sentiments that they were the true descendants of the Apostles and had preserved the pure doctrine of the primitive church in their mountain valleys. This legend, which would persist well into the nineteenth century, was rejected as forcefully by the Catholic clergy, as it was embraced by some Protestants to demonstrate that a separate path existed back to the primitive church—a path that did not pass through the Catholic Church.

The last phase of the religious wars against the Waldensians began in 1685 when the King of France revoked the Edict of Nantes. France exerted pressure on the Duke of Savoy to eliminate or exile his Protestant subjects. In January 1687 approximately twenty-five hundred Waldensians marched to Geneva in thirteen contingents. The last group arrived in March. More than two hundred persons perished en route. In Switzerland the Waldensians maintained a separate community and, unlike other exiles, they were not assimilated into the larger whole and retained their separate identity. In 1689, when Duke Victor Amadeus II aligned himself with Britain, the Waldensians, made a “glorious return” to their valleys, under the leadership of Pastor Henri Arnaud, and reclaimed most of their confiscated lands. In 1694, the Duke issued a new Edict of Toleration, recognizing the right of the Waldensians to reside in their valleys.

In the eighteenth century, persecution against the Waldensians subsided after King Victor Amadeus II, the first king of the House of Savoy, narrowly escaped being defeated by the French. The Waldensians began to receive aid from Protestants in England, Holland, and Switzerland. Queen Mary granted a royal subsidy to support the pastors in the valleys and subsidize education. During the Napoleonic interlude, the Waldensians were granted religious freedom, but they were also absorbed into the French Reformed Church. During this period, Britain suspended all financial aid to the valleys. The British took new interest in the Waldensians after the European dynasties, including the House of Savoy, were restored to power. William Jones’s *History of the Waldenses*, published in 1812, helped rekindle British interest in the small Protestant sect. Jones’s book encouraged Anglican ministers to visit the valleys. Beginning with Timothy Sims in 1814, these ministers published travel accounts and descriptions of the valleys. Another Anglican minister, William Gilly, who first visited the valleys in 1823, had a dramatic impact on the future of the church. He returned to England and wrote a book that included the romantic history of the Waldensian church, including its claims of apostolic antiquity. More importantly, he convinced the British government to restore the royal grant; and he began raising funds to build a hospital, construct schools, and train ministers. Eventually, a British colonel named Charles Beckwith read Gilly’s account and visited the valleys in 1827. In 1834, he moved there permanently and became the Waldensians’ “great benefactor” for the next twenty-five years.

In 1848, King Carlo Alberto granted separate concessions to the Waldensians, even before he formally “ordained” a new constitution, “the Statuto,” because a number of liberal Italian nobles, including the future prime minister, Count Cavour, petitioned the king to emancipate the Waldensians and Jews. These concessions were particularly significant

because the Waldensians had enjoyed civil and political liberties under Napoleon before being disenfranchised after the restoration of the House of Savoy in 1814. On 17 February 1848, after approving the new constitution but before it was actually published, the king proclaimed in separate “Regie Lettere Patenti,” known as the “Edict of Emancipation,” that the Waldensians were entitled to enjoy all the political and civil rights of others subjects, including the right to attend schools of higher learning, obtain graduate degrees, practice the professions, and hold government offices. Nevertheless, neither the “Regie Lettere Patenti” nor the “Statuto” granted religious liberties to the Waldensians or any other *acattolici* to proselyte or publish religious propaganda. The “Regie Lettere Patenti” provided that “nothing is changed in the exercise of their cult, and in their schools.” The “Statuto” also provided that “The Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion is the only religion of the state.” Nevertheless, it did provide that “other cults now in existence shall be tolerated in conformance with the law.” Similar concessions—but only associated with civil rights—were granted to the Jews in the Kingdom.

Lorenzo Snow’s interest in the Waldensians was reinforced when he read *Sketches of the Waldenses* in a library in Liverpool before leaving for Italy.<sup>8</sup> The tract quoted liberally from Alexis Muston, a Waldensian pastor, who published a book in 1834 in which he reiterated the claim that the Waldensians were a remnant of the primitive church.<sup>9</sup> Muston wrote that the “Waldenses have been the means of preserving the doctrines of the gospel in their primitive simplicity. . . . [T]hey were doubtless designed to preserve the germ of another spring, through the winter of the middle ages; like the leaven hid in three measures of meal, or the precious seed set aside by the husbandman to produce a future harvest.”<sup>10</sup> This tract reflected the belief of many Protestants that the Waldensians provided a “chain by which our Reformed Churches are connected with the first disciples of Christ” and that they were “preserved for a special purpose in the Divine Counsels; destined to fulfill a most important mission in the Evangelization of Italy.”<sup>11</sup> According to this perspective, the Waldensians did not accept the changes instituted by the Catholic Church but had instead “remained on the old ground” and were entitled to “the indisputably valid title of the True Church.”<sup>12</sup> They were “the remnant of the early apostolic Church of Italy,” and “[t]heir traditions invariably point to an unbroken descent from the earliest times, as regards their religious belief.”<sup>13</sup>

The Catholic clergy in Piedmont was very aggressive during the nineteenth century in debunking the claims of Waldensian antiquity. Andrea Charvaz, the Bishop of Pinerolo who had jurisdiction over the Waldensian valleys, wrote a rebuttal to Muston’s book.<sup>14</sup> Giovanni Perrone, a Salesian

priest in Turin, wrote another rebuttal three decades later.<sup>15</sup> These authors argued that Waldensian doctrines and practices had changed dramatically, particularly after the Protestant Reformation, and that *all* non-Catholic organizations lacked authority and apostolic succession. It was not uncommon for Catholics to lump all non-Catholic religions together, even if such religions had little in common.

Despite these Catholic arguments to the contrary, when Lorenzo Snow arrived in Italy, most Protestants continued to believe that the Waldensians originated much earlier than Valdes and his followers.<sup>16</sup> The Mormon hierarchy was familiar with these apostolic claims and also accepted them. In 1834, Sidney Rigdon commented on William Jones's history of the Waldensians and noted that they "were doubtless the remains of the apostolic church." Rigdon also noted the similarity between the "persecutions" and "outlandish falsehoods" that had been perpetrated against the Waldensians and the Mormons.<sup>17</sup> Other Mormon leaders, including Brigham Young and John Taylor, also compared Mormon persecutions with those of the Waldensians.<sup>18</sup> Another prominent Church leader, John C. Bennett, claimed that the persecutions of the Mormons was much worse than those experienced by the Waldensians.<sup>19</sup> Other Mormon leaders compared the teachings of the Waldensian church, particularly those they believed were preserved from the primitive church, with their own LDS Church doctrine.<sup>20</sup>

Snow believed that the Waldensians were better candidates for conversion than the Catholics.<sup>21</sup> He was convinced that they shared many perspectives concerning Church doctrine and practices, including a belief that the Catholic Church had fallen into apostasy and that many characteristics of the "primitive church" had been preserved in their mountain valleys. Some Waldensians also believed in spiritual gifts, including miracles, visions, and gifts of tongues.<sup>22</sup> Snow wrote to Brigham Young that "They appeared to my mind like the rose in the wilderness, or the bow in the cloud."<sup>23</sup>

### **The Mormon Mission**

In July 1850 Snow and his companions arrived in the Waldensian valleys. They rented rooms in the town of Torre Pellice which Edmondo De Amicis referred to as "an Italian Geneva." In September, Snow and Stenhouse, along with a new missionary from England, Jabez Woodard, organized the Italian Mission and dedicated the land to missionary work. From almost any location in Torre Pellice, there is a magnificent view of Monte Casteluzzo, also known as "the rock of Castel Luzzo."<sup>24</sup> Many Waldensian histories asserted that the rock contained a "cavern, which has, at different

times, preserved many hundred persons from the last horrors of cruelty.” The entrance to the cavern was perpendicular. One writer described how the Waldensians “descended [into it] by a projecting angle of the rock, at about the same risk which a man would be exposed to who should try to come down the outside of a chimney, excepting that, instead of a fall of sixty feet, they risked one of 600. Having gained the cavern they received from their comrades, at the top of the rock, ropes and a block, to make a pulley; and by this pulley, in dark nights to avoid detection, the women and infirm were hoisted up, as were also provisions . . . and in this ‘secret place’ as many as 300 persons have been concealed together for weeks.”<sup>25</sup> Snow decided to organize and dedicate their mission at the same location where many believed the Waldensians had sought refuge during their many persecutions.



*Monte Casteluzo, also known as “the rock of Castel Luzzo.”  
This was renamed “Rock of Prophecy” by Lorenzo Snow and his fellow missionaries.  
Photo by Michael W. Homer*

At the time of the dedication, the missionaries had not baptized even one convert. Nevertheless, Snow predicted that nothing could impede the progress of the Church and that it would “increase and multiply and continue its existence in Italy.” The missionaries renamed the Rock of Casteluzo the “Rock of Prophecy” and renamed the adjoining Monte Vandalino, which provided the best vantage point of the Chisone Valley, “Mount Brigham.”<sup>26</sup> The Rock of Prophecy thereafter became a symbol for

the Mormon missionaries, who climbed it when seeking inspiration in difficult times.

During the first six months the missionaries proselyted, they baptized only one person. However, in 1851, following the departure of Lorenzo Snow, twenty persons joined the Church. In 1852, there were sixteen baptisms. In 1853, the most successful year of the Italian Mission, there were fifty-three additional baptisms. In 1854, twenty-seven persons were baptized.<sup>27</sup> In 1855, there were twenty-six converts, and in 1856 there were eight. Although missionaries were also sent to proselyte the Italian-speaking population, they were unsuccessful. After missionaries returned to the valleys following a brief closure of the mission during the Utah War (1857–61), there were only twelve additional baptisms. By 1867, Mormon missionaries found it so difficult to find converts, even among the Waldensians, that the mission was closed.

During its seventeen-year history, the Italian Mission produced 171 converts. Seventy-three of these converts (43 percent) emigrated to Utah in three groups during 1854 and 1855 using essentially the same route through Mount Cenis pass which their ancestors had accessed to leave the valleys in 1686.<sup>28</sup> An equal number of converts were excommunicated.<sup>29</sup> Presumably, some of these returned to the Waldensian church. Although these results seem modest, particularly when compared to the Danish Mission, Mormon missionaries in Italy converted almost 1 percent of the small Protestant group that Snow initially targeted for conversion in the Kingdom of Sardinia. Missionaries who served in Italy recognized and reported that although most converts were attracted by Mormonism's message of restoration, others were attracted by its program of subsidized immigration to the United States.<sup>30</sup>

### **Italy in 1850**

When Lorenzo Snow introduced Mormonism to Italy in 1850, the Italian peninsula was a patchwork of separate kingdoms, duchies, and states. Prince Metternich referred to Italy as "a geographical expression." With the exception of Piedmont and the Papal States, all the regions—including the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the Duchy of Parma, the Duchy of Modena and Duchy of Massa, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the Kingdom of Lombardy-Veneto—were dominated by foreign powers. Unlike Scandinavia and France, where Brigham Young had also dispatched missionaries, Italy was still fragmented, and unification would not be complete for another twenty years.

Like sovereigns in other European countries, the rulers of the Kingdom of Sardinia, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany,

and the Papal States granted constitutions in 1848 that included limited civil and political rights. None of these constitutions changed the relationship between church and state.<sup>31</sup> Only the constitution granted by the King of Sardinia extended civil and political rights to Jews and Protestants. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church remained the official state church in the Kingdom of Sardinia; no other churches were recognized for any purpose, and it was not legal for non-Catholics to proselyte among the Catholics.

After these constitutions were granted, the rulers of the Papal States, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and in the Duchy of Tuscany, were, for a brief time, forced into exile and replaced by radical republicans. Only the King of Sardinia remained on his throne. After the deposed rulers were returned to power, they abrogated their constitutions and were no longer enthusiastic about the prospect of Italian unification. Only the King of Sardinia remained committed to the “Risorgimento”—the resurgence of Italy through its unification. But the king was not acceptable to most radical republicans—such as Giuseppe Mazzini, who had participated in the short-lived republican governments—or even to the restored rulers on the Italian peninsula.

The 1850s decade was a crucial decade in the unification of Italy. The Risorgimento sharpened the conflict between those who had different ideas concerning unification.<sup>32</sup> Those who would be impacted the most were the House of Savoy (the royal dynasty that ruled the Kingdom of Sardinia), the Catholic Church (the only recognized church in Italy and the secular ruler of the Papal States), and the Waldensians (who aligned themselves with other Protestants and Italian liberals who favored the complete separation of church and state in Italy even though many of these same churches did not favor separation in England, Switzerland, Germany and elsewhere in Europe). Although these participants had interacted for centuries, the events of the Risorgimento dramatically reshaped their relationship. Disagreements concerning the prerogatives of the church in civil matters and the separation of church and state were hotly debated throughout the nineteenth century.

The Risorgimento eventually became the project of the Kingdom of Sardinia—the nobility and others who wanted a united Italy to achieve the same glory and dominance as the Roman empire. It was not a popular grassroots movement with broad support from the middle and lower classes. As such, battle lines were drawn between those who would lose power if unification took place (rulers of the regimes that were restored to power in 1815, including the Pope, and their foreign rulers) and those who anticipated greater power upon unification (the Kingdom of Sardinia, the nobility, monarchists, republicans, anarchists, and even Protestants). The



*Pension de L'Ours (also known as Albergo dell' Orso),  
was the oldest and most popular hotel in La Tour (also known as Torre Pellice)  
when Lorenzo Snow resided there in 1850.*

*Photo courtesy of Archivio Fotografico del Centro Culturale Valdese  
(Torre Pellice), Gabriella Ballesio; and Editrice Claudiana*

Risorgimento gained momentum after the events of 1848, known as the “first war of independence.” After the “second war of independence” in 1859, plebiscites were held that confirmed the desire of most of the population to become part of a unified Italy; and, in 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed. This process of unification became known as the “artichoke revolution” because the House of Savoy annexed a region at a time. Following a “third war of independence” in 1866 and the annexation of Rome in 1870, complete unification was achieved under Victor Emmanuel II.<sup>33</sup>

Mormon missionaries misinterpreted the impact of the constitutions granted in 1848, and they did not fully understand the dynamic events that occurred during the seventeen years they proselyted in Italy. This misunderstanding, along with their lack of preparation and limited manpower and financing, contributed toward the limited success of the mission to the Kingdom of Sardinia.

### **The Protestants**

In Torre Pellice, Lorenzo Snow boarded at the Pension de L'Ours (also known in Italian as Albergo dell' Orso), which was located in the town's central piazza known then as Place de laTour and now as Piazza della



*Pension de L'Ours*

9 July 2000

*Photo by Alexander L. Baugh*

Libertá.<sup>34</sup> It was the oldest hotel in Torre Pellice, where most foreign visitors stayed during the nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup> In fact Torre Pellice was growing. Snow's room at the Pension de L'Ours was located within minutes of a new hospital, a college, constructed to prepare men for the ministry so that it would no longer be necessary to send them to Switzerland, and the location of a Temple which would be completed in 1852. These buildings were constructed with the help of British benefactors. Several years earlier, Louisa Costello had marveled that more than half of the books in the college library were in English, even though none of the professors or students "understands a word of English."<sup>36</sup>

Snow's hotel was located directly across the piazza from the residence of the Waldensians' "great benefactor" Charles Beckwith. Beckwith, who lost his leg at Waterloo, oversaw the construction of a school in each village. In 1848 there were 165 schools. He also encouraged the Waldensian's toward renewal or awakening, and believed the church should return to its historical vocation of proselyting outside the valleys as it had done for centuries before the Reformation. Like many English observers Beckwith believed that the Waldensians' orientation toward the Reformed Church in

Switzerland needed to be de-emphasized in favor of a reorientation toward the Church of England which, beginning in the last decade of the eighteenth century, was actively engaged in various missionary and tract societies. Snow reported to Brigham Young that Beckwith's name "has an almost magical effect among the Protestants."<sup>37</sup> Shortly after arriving in Torre Pellice, Snow presented Beckwith with a letter of introduction from Brigham Young, as Governor of Utah Territory, and through this letter he "procured... a ready and cheerful introduction to this gentleman, which resulted in several interesting interviews."<sup>38</sup>

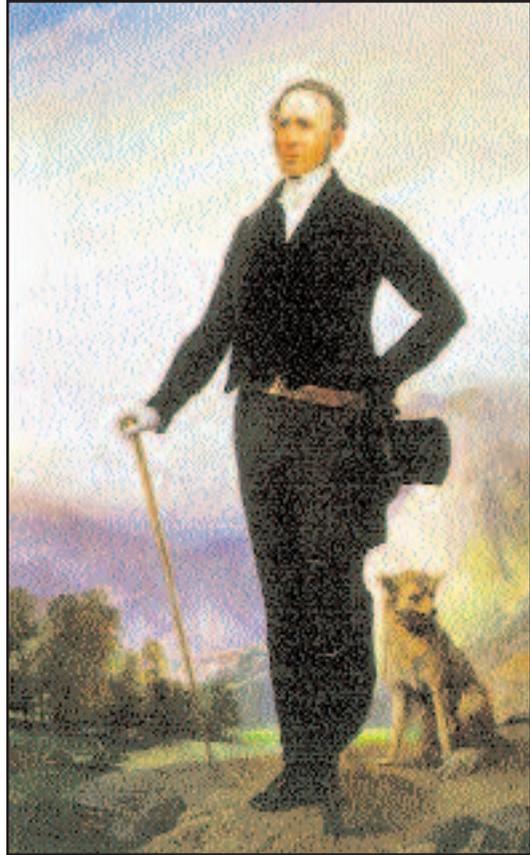
Although it is unlikely that Beckwith was familiar with the beliefs and claims of Mormonism, he would have been interested in Mormon teachings concerning personal religious experience, spiritual renewal, and the church's emphasis on missionary work. Snow and Beckwith probably discussed many of the same topics, which were later summarized in a pamphlet Snow wrote specifically for the Italian Mission. In *La voix de Joseph*, he wrote about the life and mission of Joseph Smith, the testimonies of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, as well as a history of the persecutions of the Church from its expulsion from Missouri to its arrival in the Salt Lake Valley. Beckwith, who attempted to synthesize tradition and renewal among the Waldensians and who later told them "either you will be missionaries, or you will be nothing" and that they needed to "stand up for something, or be nothing,"<sup>39</sup> was apparently not apprehensive about the possibility that Mormon missionaries would knock on the doors of his Waldensian friends. In fact, during one interview Beckwith told the Mormon Apostle: "You shall receive no opposition on my part: and if you preach the Gospel as faithfully to all in these valleys as to me, you need fear no reproach in the 'Day of Judgment.'"<sup>40</sup>

Beckwith's positive response enabled Snow and his companions to mingle freely among the Waldensian community. Snow reported that they were "treated with respect" by the clergy.<sup>41</sup> They attended and were sometimes permitted to speak at meetings held in members' homes.<sup>42</sup> All of these activities occurred before the pastors knew anything about the Church. After a few of these meetings, the Mormon message "produced some little stir among the *officials*." In fact, it created such a stir that in October 1850, the missionaries "received an invitation to attend a public meeting, and answer some questions relative to our mission. We did so, and found some of the most talented ministers present, with an evident desire to crush our efforts."<sup>43</sup> According to Snow, the "ministers looked piteously upon us, and then at the congregation, to whom he said, in tones mournfully low, 'Do not leave that dear church which is consecrated by so many glorious remembrances, and for which your fathers have died.'"<sup>44</sup>

In addition to public preaching, Lorenzo Snow published two pamphlets

in Turin in 1851 (*La Voix de Joseph and Exposition des premiers principes*<sup>45</sup>), which he circulated in Piedmont and in the Swiss Cantons because of the “intimate connection between the Protestants here and in Switzerland.”<sup>46</sup> Following the alignment of the Waldensians with the Reformed churches in Switzerland in 1532, most Waldensian pastors were educated in Geneva or Lausanne. Ebenezer Henderson wrote that Lausanne “has always formed a link of connection between the churches of the valleys, and the Protestant churches of Switzerland and France.”<sup>47</sup> Within six months of arriving in Torre Pellice Snow dispatched T. B. H. Stenhouse to Geneva to organize the Swiss Mission. While there he republished one of Snow’s pamphlets.<sup>48</sup>

Waldensian pastors were eventually briefed about Mormonism by Protestant ministers in Switzerland and England. The Religious Tract Society, which published the book that attracted Snow to the Waldensians, published four tracts against Mormonism shortly after the commencement of the Italian Mission.<sup>49</sup> In addition, two Swiss Protestant clerics wrote responses to Snow’s missionary tracts. In 1851, Louis Favez wrote *Lettre sur les Mormons de la Californie* (*Letters on the Mormons of California*), a forty-six-page tract that championed the Spaulding theory of the origin of the Book



*Charles Beckwith (1789-1862), known by the Waldensians as their “great benefactor” and who resided in Torre Pellice for twenty years beginning in 1834, met with Lorenzo Snow several times in 1850.*

*Photo courtesy of Archivio Fotografico del Centro Culturale Valdese (Torre Pellice), Gabriella Ballesio; and Editrice Claudiana*

of Mormon and criticized selected portions of Snow's pamphlets.<sup>50</sup> In 1853, Emile Guers wrote *L'Irvingisme et le Mormonisme jugés à la lumière de la parole de Dieu* (*Irvingism and Mormonism Tested by the Light of the Word of God*) in which he compared Mormonism and Irvingism and criticized "the corpus vile" of Snow's "paltry pamphlets."<sup>51</sup> Stenhouse replied to Favez and Guers in a pamphlet entitled, *Les Mormons (Saints des Derniers Jours) et leurs ennemis* (*The Mormons [Latter-day Saints] and their enemies*). It was published in Lausanne in 1854 and was distributed in Switzerland and Italy. Both Favez and Guers wrote responses. Favez wrote a two-volume response in 1854 and 1856 entitled *Fragments sur les Mormons* (*Fragments on the Mormons*); and, in 1855, Guers wrote *Le Mormonisme polygame* (*Mormon polygamy*). Both authors also commented on the newly announced doctrine of plural marriage.<sup>52</sup>

Between December 1852 and May 1853, Valerie Boissier, Count Agenor De Gasparin,<sup>53</sup> wrote six articles criticizing the Mormons. The articles were published in *Archives du Christianisme au dix-neuvième siècle*. Robert Baird, who wrote about both the Waldensians and the Mormons,<sup>54</sup> described De Gasparin as "one of the most distinguished French Protestants of our time."<sup>55</sup> Although these articles were not published in English, many of De Gasparin's other works were. De Gasparin, and most other Protestants who taught that Protestantism "is the religion of the Bible," believed that the greatest sin of Mormonism was that it "recommended to the world the new religion contained in the Bible of Joseph Smith" and its attempt to "substitute their personal revelations for the Bible."<sup>56</sup> In 1854, William John Conybeare, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, published an article in the *Edinburgh Review* in which he criticized the teachings and proselyting tactics of Lorenzo Snow.<sup>57</sup> This article was also published in Denmark, France, and India in 1855 and in Italy in 1865.<sup>58</sup> Conybeare criticized the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, polygamy, and doctrinal works by various Mormon writers. He also criticized Lorenzo Snow's Italian mission. Conybeare wrote that Snow's *The Italian Mission* was "grotesque." Conybeare claimed the Mormon Apostle had "contrived to deceive the Roman Catholic authorities, by publishing a tract under the title of 'The Voice of Joseph,' with a woodcut of a nun for a frontispiece and a vignette of a cross upon the title page. Under these false colors, they hope soon to win their way."<sup>59</sup>

There is little doubt that these articles and pamphlets found their way into the hands of Waldensian pastors because of the close contacts between the reformed churches in Switzerland and Piedmont. Although the Waldensians were initially unprepared for the Mormon missionaries in 1850, they were briefed by the middle of the decade after they received these pub-

lications through their network of Protestant ministers. This development created new difficulties for the Mormon missionaries, even among the Waldensians, since their mission was not only opposed by Catholics in the cities but also by Protestants in both the cities and in the Waldensian valleys.

The Waldensian pastors' strong influence was a constant source of frustration to missionaries who, like Snow, complained about the ignorance of the people and who said that the Waldensians were "no longer worthy of their faithful ancestors." In September 1853, Jabez Woodard reported to Samuel W. Richards that after the first branch of members in Angrogna was organized, "enemies in that neighborhood have been numerous and vigilant, embracing all classes, from the magistrate to the match-seller." Woodard wrote that he had been attacked with rocks and that the local population had attempted to disrupt meetings.<sup>60</sup> Five months later, George D. Keaton wrote to Richards that "the clerical profession, also, are quite active in opposing Mormonism." Specifically, he noted that "In one parish, the minister has visited several of the Saints, and reproved them for having received another baptism" and that a pastor in another village "has been lecturing against the Saints, by which means he has stirred up many people to seek after the truth, who have come to us inquiring into our doctrine."<sup>61</sup> In March 1854, Keaton recounted his own experiences with local stone casters and also reported that at the annual celebration to commemorate the "glorious return" of Henri Arnaud, a Waldensian pastor addressed the assembly "knowing that many in their valleys had been baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and fearing that others would do likewise, seized the opportunity to exhort their hearers not to change their religion, but cleave to that faith which their forefathers had sworn to maintain."<sup>62</sup> Despite these warnings, Keaton optimistically reported in June: "The hireling clergy are not backward in opposing us, but they cannot put down 'Mormonism,' neither can they stop its progress."<sup>63</sup> In June 1855, Samuel Francis lent a copy of Stenhouse's pamphlet, *Mormons and Their Enemies*, to a Waldensian pastor in St. Barthelemy. After a heated discussion, the pastor ordered Francis to leave the pastor's home.<sup>64</sup>

The tension described by Mormon missionaries is consistent with contemporary Waldensian sources. The Mormon question reached the very highest levels of the Waldensian leadership, and a deputy in the government was also well acquainted with the problem. Furthermore, in 1855, the Comune of Torre Pellice referred in its annual report to Mormon missionary activity in the valleys and to the Church's program to subsidize emigration. The Mormons became a much greater concern to the Waldensians when family members began preparing to leave the valleys.<sup>65</sup> In 1854 and 1855,



*Joseph Malan (1810-1886), the first Waldensian elected to the Sardinian House of Deputies in 1848, corresponded with the Waldensian leadership concerning Mormon proselyting in the valleys.*

*Photo courtesy of Archivio Fotografico del Centro Culturale Valdese (Torre Pellice), Gabriella Ballesio; and Editrice Claudiana*

three groups of Mormon converts comprising sixty-five emigrants had left the valleys. Emigration was an extremely sensitive subject for the Waldensian clergy. Even though more than 450 persons were abandoning the valleys for France, Switzerland, and the Near East, each year by the middle of the 1850s, the church moderator vehemently opposed church-sponsored emigration because he believed that church members would lose their identity if they left Italy. The issue of church-sponsored emigration was not finally resolved until 1856 when a program was finally organized by the Waldensian Church.<sup>66</sup> The inauguration of this program coincided with a sharp decline in Mormon convert baptisms.

### **The Kingdom of Sardinia**

As previously noted, King Carlo Alberto did not grant his subjects religious freedom in 1848, and his constitution did not contemplate that non-Catholic groups would be permitted to establish missions among his Catholic subjects. Nevertheless, non-Catholics who illegally proselyted in the Kingdom of Sardinia were normally not punished unless they fit within a formula articulated by Prime Minister Camillo Cavour. Cavour stated that “the King’s government cannot tolerate proselytism or public acts in locations where they could produce popular tumult and disorder.”<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, no coercive measures were normally taken against non-Catholic churches unless their activities threatened to create civil strife. In accordance with this policy, Mormon missionaries were occasionally detained and even expelled by government agents. In September 1852, Jabez Woodard was ordered to leave the Sardinian states because he was proselyting in Turin. Two years later, he

wrote that while the Waldensians were “not so closely watched by the Italian police in regard to their religious opinions” beyond their “Waldensian district,” even Mormon missionaries were “surrounded by government spies, and through their influence I was exiled.”<sup>68</sup>

Representatives in the Sardinian government consulted the Waldensian leadership concerning the activities of Mormon missionaries and apparently concerning the government’s decision to exile Jabez Woodard and others. Surviving correspondence demonstrates that Joseph Malan, the only Waldensian member in the Kingdom of Sardinia’s House of Deputies, knew that Mormon missionaries were present in the Waldensian valleys. Malan was elected to the



*Jean Pierre Revel (1810-1871), Moderator of the Waldensian’s governing board from 1848 to 1857 and 1859 to 1860, also President of the Church’s Committee on Evangelization from 1860 to 1871, was concerned about Mormon proselyting and its program of emigration.*

*Photo courtesy of Archivio Fotografico del Centro Culturale Valdese (Torre Pellice), Gabriella Ballesio; and Editrice Claudiana*

House of Deputies in 1848 in the first election after King Carlo Alberto granted his subjects a new constitution. Camillo Cavour, who became prime minister and who was one of the chief architects of the Risorgimento, was elected the same year. Although Malan lived in Turin, where he was a banker, he had many friends and relatives in the valleys. Because of these connections, it is almost certain that Malan was told that Snow and his companions gave a blessing to a dying boy in Torre Pellice in the fall of 1850.

On 6 September 1850, while Snow and his companions were staying at the Pension de L’Ours, they became aware that Joseph Gay, the three-year-old son of the pension’s managers, Jean Pierre Gay and Coucourde

Henriette, was very ill and that his parents believed he would soon die. After visiting the boy and reflecting on the situation, Snow decided to bless him the following day. A few hours after giving their blessing, young Joseph recovered from his illness. His mother expressed “her joy in his restoration,” and Snow assured her that “The God of heaven has done this for you.”<sup>69</sup> Although young Joseph eventually died on 27 February 1854, it is likely that his recovery in 1850 was known to Malan because the pension where Snow and his companions resided was owned by Jean Jacques Peyrot, who was Malan’s father-in-law. In addition, Malan and his wife Caroline were the godparents of the sick boy who was named after Malan.<sup>70</sup>

In May 1853, three years after Mormon missionaries had arrived in the valleys, the Waldensian Church Moderator, Jean Pierre Revel, attended a general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in New York City where he discussed the religious environment in the Kingdom of Sardinia and solicited funds for the Waldensian theological seminary.<sup>71</sup> During his American trip, Revel may have consulted his American friends concerning the Mormons, including their just-announced doctrine of plural marriage and the increasingly large numbers of Danish converts who were immigrating to Salt Lake City.<sup>72</sup> Protestant missionaries in the valleys, who were more likely to be familiar with the success of the Mormons’ emigration program in England, often sought out Revel.<sup>73</sup> The Church Moderator was concerned not only that Mormon missionaries were baptizing members of his flock but perhaps more importantly that some of these converts were planning to emigrate to the United States. It was one thing to convert Waldensians and establish competing churches in Italy. It was quite another to provide members with loans that enabled them to leave their ancestral homes with promises of a better life in the mountains of Utah. New religious movements that appear to encourage family members to disassociate from parents, relatives, and friends are usually perceived as a greater threat to cultural continuity. On 29 August 1854, after the first group of converts had left the valleys, including the family of Jean Daniel Malan, Joseph Malan asked Revel whether Mormons in the valleys were attempting to “seduce the people” and, perhaps recalling Woodard’s expulsion from Turin in 1852, whether “it should not be difficult to repeat the same compliment that was given two years previous, to drive them out immediately.”<sup>74</sup> On 18 September 1854, Malan asked Revel whether he should “apply the principle of freedom of conscience” or take a position that does not “completely approve the decision to expel them [from the valleys], a role that I would personally prefer, rather than follow Cavour’s opinion . . . and adopt coercive measures.”<sup>75</sup>

Although it is unclear whether Malan believed—using Cavour’s formula—that the Mormons were unlikely to incite civil strife since they had

achieved very modest results in their proselyting activities,<sup>76</sup> it is likely that he would have concluded that Revel's desire to expel Mormon missionaries from the valleys was shortsighted. Although the Waldensians were treated differently from all other non Catholic groups in Piedmont, because of their historical relationship with the House of Savoy, if other groups were disqualified from proselyting on the Waldensian's home turf, it would be more difficult to ignore Waldensians who were not only proselyting among the Catholics but were also constructing large and imposing temples in Turin and Genoa.

Protestant proselyting among Catholics was much more dangerous, under Cavour's formula, than Mormon attempts to find converts among the Waldensians. The government did not take "coercive measures" to abort the activities of Protestant missionaries in the cities because they achieved little success.<sup>77</sup> When the missionaries created little tension, they were usually ignored by the government.

### **The Catholic Church**

When Snow arrived in Genoa on his journey to the Waldensian valleys, he wrote to Franklin D. Richards that "I am now in a Roman Catholic country. Its inhabitants are before my eyes continually. My heart is pained to see their follies, their wickedness, gross darkness, and superstition. Oh, I weep that the day of the Son of Man has come upon them unawares: so little are they prepared to receive the voice from on high, 'The Bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him!' They are clothed with darkness as with a garment, and they know not their right hand from their left."<sup>78</sup> Despite Snow's statements, many Mormon missionaries had more respect for Roman Catholic priests than they did for Protestant ministers<sup>79</sup> and were less anti-Catholic than many of their Protestant competitors.<sup>80</sup>

Snow soon learned that even in the Waldensian valleys, there were approximately five thousand Catholics. The medieval town of Luserna was the political and administrative center of the Pellice Valley until 1804 when it was replaced by Torre Pellice after Napoleon annexed Piedmont. The name of the valley was thereafter changed from Luserna to Pellice. This part of the Waldensian valleys was the epicenter of the Catholic Church in the valleys. Ebenezer Henderson, a Protestant who visited Luserna in 1844, observed that "Lucerne is entirely Catholic in its population. There is not a single Vaudois resident in it. It contains a convent and a church; and receiving from government every advantage that can in any way contribute to its prosperity, it is, in influence, the capital of the valleys."<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, even after more than three hundred years of trying different methods, the Catholic Church was unsuccessful in its efforts to convert most of the

Waldensians in the valleys. When Andrea Charvaz—a Catholic priest who had tutored King Carlo Alberto’s children—was appointed Bishop of Pinerolo in 1834, he not only wrote a book challenging the thesis that the Waldensians were an apostolic church but he also oversaw the construction of a priory and church in Torre Pellice. When these buildings were dedicated by the king in 1844 his Waldensian subjects attended the ceremony to honor him. Charvaz expected the priory to be the location where missionary priests could organize their efforts to proselyte among the Waldensians. But the Catholic mission was unsuccessful, and Charvaz resigned as bishop in December 1847 in protest to King Carlo Alberto’s decision to limit his control over material published in his diocese.<sup>82</sup>



*Parrocchia di San Lorenzo, which was built in the seventeenth century, was the parish church located in the Waldensian valleys where Lorenzo Snow had a friendly encounter with a Catholic priest in 1850. Photo courtesy of Archivio Fotografico del Centro Culturale Valdese (Torre Pellice), Gabriella Ballesio; and Editrice Claudiana*

When Mormon missionaries arrived in Torre Pellice, the Catholic Church was still shaken by the Pope’s recent exile, King Carlo Alberto’s emancipation of the Waldensians, and, to a lesser extent, Charvaz’s resignation as Bishop of Pinerolo. While Snow was proselyting in the Angrogna Valley (part of the Pellice Valley), he met Giovanni Battista Costa, a parish

priest in the Parrocchia San Lorenzo. The eighteenth-century Church of San Lorenzo was the earliest, and one of the largest, Catholic churches constructed in the valleys. It was built on a hill overlooking the first Waldensian temple built in the valleys in 1555, which Snow observed had “crumbled into ruins.” Snow was pleased that he and his companions had “received every attention from our host” and that Costa served the missionaries the best meal they had experienced in Italy. When Costa hosted the missionaries in the small chapel of San Lorenzo, Snow “took the opportunity of presenting the Truths of the Gospel.” Costa “listened with great attention, and proposed many interesting questions with regard to modern revelation.” Costa then invited Snow, and presumably either Stenhouse or Toronto, to retire for the evening in the living quarters of the former convent. The next morning Costa presented Snow with an inscribed book of Italian grammar and, after serving the missionaries “an early breakfast, accompanied us some miles on the way” back to Torre Pellice.<sup>83</sup>

Snow’s brief encounter with the Reverend Giovanni Battista Costa demonstrates that despite its own problems in the Kingdom of Italy, the Catholic hierarchy was not overly concerned about the threat of Mormonism in the Waldensian valleys. After all, even the Catholics had achieved virtually no missionary success in the valleys for centuries and Costa, like most Catholic clerics during this period, did not think any distinctions between the various non Catholic groups was particularly important. He would have believed that they were all innovators and that the Catholic Church was the only true church.

Nevertheless, Costa’s gift demonstrates that the Catholic priest recognized that one of the reasons foreign missionaries were stymied in Italy during the nineteenth century was the language barrier. Even the Waldensians, who had lived in Piedmont for centuries, realized that they needed to begin reading, writing, and preaching in Italian to find success outside their valleys. Lorenzo Snow did not anticipate the great difficulty he and his companions would encounter in communicating with investigators. But he eventually discovered that even though French was generally understood in the valleys, “in many parts it is spoken imperfectly, and with an admixture of Italian and provincialism. The latter is understood by a considerable number of persons; but it is not extensively used. In fact, this is a place where there are at least five distinct dialects spoken by different classes.”<sup>84</sup> Neither Snow, T. B. H. Stenhouse, nor Jabez Woodard spoke, read, or wrote Italian. Although Joseph Toronto could speak Italian, he was unable to read or write it.<sup>85</sup> Later missionaries experienced the same difficulties.<sup>86</sup>

Eventually, Mormon missionaries attempted to proselyte Catholics outside the Waldensian valleys. Beginning in 1852, Jabez Woodard sent mis-

sionaries to the largest cities in the Kingdom of Sardinia, including Genoa, Turin, and Nice.<sup>87</sup> On 30 April 1853, the *Millennial Star* reported that Elder Thomas Margetts “had succeeded in baptizing an Italian” in Genoa and that “the doctrines of the Church were creating considerable interest there.”<sup>88</sup> Despite this optimistic prediction, Margetts soon “found it impossible to make converts to our holy religion, in all cases except one.”<sup>89</sup> In July, he remained discouraged and complained that “[t]he persons whom I expected to baptize, also turned, as it were, their backs upon me, and the whole face of affairs became changed.” He discussed the matter with a young man he would eventually baptize who told Margetts that “the annual time of confession had come.” Margetts then discussed the matter with his inn keepers, who also told him that they had discussed the teachings of the Mormon missionaries with their priests and that “the priests have warned us against you, and we now believe you to be an imposter, and from this time you will be closely watched.” Margetts believed that the principal reason Mormon missionaries were able to convert some Waldensians but few Catholics was the “doctrine of confession.” “[T]hey believe it their duty to confess all you say to them, and are so ignorant that they do not know whether you tell them the truth or not.”<sup>90</sup>

When Samuel Francis arrived in Italy in October 1854, he was also apprehensive because “I had heard many times of the inquisition, and secret murders, and other diabolical means the Catholics made use of against those who opposed the Catholic faith.”<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, Mormon missionaries continued to distribute tracts and have conversations with Catholic priests.<sup>92</sup> Ultimately, they were unsuccessful. In November 1854, George Keaton admitted to a Church conference held in Switzerland that “We have been unsuccessful in endeavoring to introduce the Gospel into the towns of the plains.”<sup>93</sup>

Missionary attempts to find converts among the Catholics failed miserably because the Catholic Church opposed the efforts of all non-Catholic missionaries to proselyte in their parishes. In addition, it has been noted previously that there were no constitutionally recognized religious liberties that protected the missionaries’ right to proselyte, and it was much more likely that non-Catholics would be exiled from the large cities of Piedmont than from the Waldensian valleys. Even during his short stay in Italy, Lorenzo Snow eventually recognized that “liberty is only as yet in the bud; and . . . the bud may have a bitter taste” and that his presence even in the Kingdom of Sardinia was “only just tolerated and not recognized as any right, founded upon established laws.”<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, the small number of Mormon missionaries and their lack of success account for the fact that they were per-

mitted to proselyte with few interruptions during their seventeen years in Italy during the nineteenth century.

While the local clergy stymied Mormon missionary success in the cities, the Catholic hierarchy analyzed the Church on a more intellectual level. In 1860, an article appeared in *La Civiltà Cattolica* entitled “Il Mormonismo nelle sue attinenze col moderno Protestantismo” (“Mormonism and Its Relationship with Modern Protestantism”).<sup>95</sup> It was a speech that had been delivered by Cardinal Reisach to the Accademia di Religione Cattolica. The article contained some interesting observations about the nascent Kingdom of Italy’s stated goal to annex the Papal States and the author’s opinions concerning similarities between Mormonism and Catholicism. For example, Cardinal Reisach noted that Mormonism “mixes and unifies the church with the state . . . and [in] this horrifying and iniquitous, religious, social and political system, I ask myself, can one find a confirmation of Catholic truth. Without doubt . . . isn’t it a Catholic principle that the church must not be separated from the state; . . . these principles are recognized in substance by the Mormons.”<sup>96</sup> Similarly, the author wrote that “the Mormons . . . resort to primitive revelation, through their inspired, infallible prophet. . . . [N]o one can deny, that in this . . . there comes a testimony concerning the truth of Catholic principles. . . . Mormonism recognizes . . . it must teach with infallibility.”<sup>97</sup>

Cardinal Reisach’s observations may help explain why Mormon missionaries had such a difficult time making converts among the Catholics in Italy. Despite the Mormons’ fundamental teaching of apostasy, they were perceived as much less anti-Catholic than Protestant missionaries. In addition, they had a very strong sense of hierarchy and of patriarchy that were similar to the structure of the Catholic Church. The Mormon sense that all things are spiritual and therefore subject to the priesthood, including affairs of state, was also a characteristic that the Cardinal believed was Catholic in origin. Even though Mormonism also had tenants similar to Protestants, including regulations concerning drinking and smoking, Sunday observance, and gambling, these elements were not very attractive to Catholic investigators. A decade after Snow opened the Italian Mission, virtually no one—with the exception of Waldensian pastors and Protestant ministers and a handful of people in Turin, including Catholic observers writing for *La Civiltà Cattolica* in Rome—knew that Mormon missionaries were laboring in Italy.

Reisach’s speech is a surprising example of Catholic apologetics during this period. Most Catholic critics would not have compared Mormonism to their church and in addition, most critics did not differentiate the various Protestant sects (which in the Catholic perspective would have included the



*Giovanni Bosco (1815-1888), founder of the Salesians and a loyal disciple of Pope Pius IX, ridiculed Protestant worship in Italy and fought against separation of church and state.*

*Photo courtesy of Archivio Fotografico del Centro Culturale Valdese (Torre Pellice), Gabriella Balesio, and Editrice Claudiana*

LDS Church) from one another. The criticism of Giovanni Bosco is more typical. Bosco was an important personality in the Catholic Church in Piedmont during the nineteenth century, and was one of the Catholic prelates who vehemently opposed the presence of foreign missionaries in Piedmont. Bosco incorporated the Society of Saint Francis of Sales (the Salesians) in 1859, obtained papal approval for them between 1864–1874, and was canonized a Saint in 1930. Despite the Mormons' limited success in Piedmont, Bosco was aware that the American church was proselyting in the Kingdom of Sardinia and for a brief time in the Kingdom of Italy. Like Pope Pius IX, Bosco defended the prerogatives of the Catholic Church, including

its historic role as a secular ruler. He also criticized Protestant proselyting and Waldensian efforts to convert Catholics in the parishes of Turin and other large cities in Piedmont.

In his *Il Cattolico nel secolo*,<sup>98</sup> Bosco ridiculed the claim that Waldensians were a remnant branch of the church organized by Christ's Apostles. Beginning in 1827, the Prussian, English, and Dutch embassies in Turin funded a Waldensian pastor to serve as the chaplain for worship services among foreign Protestants in the capital city.<sup>99</sup> Bosco was very critical of this practice and of the name selected by this group of Protestants: "the foreign legations." Amedeo Bert, who was the pastor of the French-speaking Waldensian congregation in Turin, was appointed chaplain. Bosco ridiculed Bert and the Waldensians and all other groups (he did not recognize them as religions) over which Bert claimed to be chaplain, including Mormons.

Bosco argued that since Bert was the “chaplain of the Protestant legations,” he became an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Quaker, or a Methodist when he worshiped with the English. When he worshiped with the Prussian legation, he became a Lutheran; when he met with the Swedes, he was an Evangelical; if he was with the Danes, he became a follower of Zwingli; when he was with those from Wurtemberg, he became a “Moseimiano”; if he met with the “Badese,” he was an Anabaptist; if he worshiped with the Swiss, a Calvinist or “Sociniano”; and when he was with the legation of the United States, he “had to become a Mormon.”<sup>100</sup> Bosco’s criticism is consistent with most Catholic writings of this period which did not distinguish between Protestant churches, even when there were significant differences between them. In addition he correctly observed that these diverse churches which fought and clashed elsewhere on the continent sought one another out to worship and proselyte as allies in Italy. Nevertheless, Bosco’s observations also demonstrate that neither he nor most Catholic critics in Italy knew very much about the Mormons’ relationship with their Protestant rivals. Even if Mormon missionaries were occasionally invited to debate members of the “Protestant legations,” they were not welcomed to worship in their federated congregations.

### Conclusion

Lorenzo Snow began his mission, like his fellow Apostle Erastus Snow in Denmark, by quietly becoming acquainted with the local people. Although he was initially successful in establishing good relations with Waldensians and Catholics he did not convert thousands as Erastus did in Denmark. This lack of success was, in part, because Snow and other missionaries in Piedmont were confronted by Risorgimento events they did not fully understand. In addition, they lacked manpower, financial resources, the ability to speak the language, and political sponsors to seek converts in the large cities of Italy.

They incorrectly assumed that Carlo Alberto’s Constitution protected religious freedom in the Kingdom of Sardinia. Strict laws against proselyting prevented them from achieving success among the Catholics in the cities.

Mormon missionaries did have considerable success among the Waldensians. Nevertheless, they did not initially recognize that the Waldensians were no longer the Poor Men of Lyons. The descendants of the Poor Men abandoned much of their original doctrines and ecclesiastical organization three hundred years earlier in favor of the Protestant Reformation as preached by Jean Calvin. Since the Waldensians survived as an ethnic group many nineteenth century observers preferred to believe that they were the descendants of the primitive Christians.

Although the Waldensians were initially unprepared for Mormon missionaries in 1850 they were eventually briefed concerning the Mormons “non Protestant” doctrines and practices. In addition they organized their own program of emigration through which the ethnic identity of their members would be preserved in their new communities in America and elsewhere.

The Waldensians were treated differently in the Kingdom of Sardinia than any other non-Catholic group because of their demonstrated loyalty to the King even after being subjected to horrible persecution for centuries and because liberals knew them and trusted them and believed that they could help undermine Catholic influence. Thus, they were allowed to build churches and worship in the cities when other groups were denied the same privileges. This is the reason Protestants banded together under the nominal head of a Waldensian pastor to worship on Sundays.

None of the non-Catholic churches made inroads into Catholic Italy during the Risorgimento. Although the Waldensians successfully organized parishes in Pinerolo, Turin, Genoa, Milan and, following the expanding borders of the Kingdom of Italy, in Florence and Rome, the anti-clericalism associated with the Risorgimento, which alarmed the Catholic hierarchy, failed to produce an attractive Protestant alternative to the overwhelming Catholic majority. The Protestants from abroad were inadequately prepared because they were controlled and financed by persons who had an inadequate understanding of the social, political, and religious conditions of Italy. In addition, the Catholics began to experience their own resurgence under Pope Pius IX, who was recently beatified by Pope John Paul II, which culminated with the Concordat entered into between the Vatican and Mussolini in 1929.

The Italian Constitution did not recognize freedom of religion until the creation of the Republic of Italy after World War II. Since that time successive governments have created one of the most liberal environments for religious minorities in Europe and perhaps in the world. Although some European commissions continue to target new religious movements, Italy has become “like the rose in the wilderness.” Non-Catholic churches, particularly Jehovah’s Witnesses and Pentecostals, have hundreds of thousands of members in Italy. Since 1985, the Catholic Church is no longer the official state church, and non-Catholic churches may obtain official state recognition and even enter into treaties with the government.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints understands these new political realities. One hundred fifty years after Mormonism was among the first religious groups to proselyte in Italy, the Church has finally achieved respect and official state recognition. It is now prepared to join an even more elect group of churches—including the Waldensians and other Protestant

churches that attempted to attract members in the Kingdom of Sardinia during the nineteenth century—that have entered into treaties with the government. These events will enable the Church to enjoy increased public awareness and significant economic rewards that Lorenzo Snow and his companions would not have imagined possible.

## Notes

1. See *Millennial Star* 10 (15 March 1848): 90; (1 April 1848): 103–4; (15 April 1848): 119–20; (1 June 1848): 169; (15 July 1848): 209–11; 11 (1 October 1849): 297–300; 12 (1 February 1850): 37–39. Hereafter cited as MS. In the midst of these events, William Howells was called to open the French Mission on 13 August 1848. See MS 11 (1 September 1849): 263–64; (1 October 1849): 294–97; 12 (1 January 1850): 11–14; (15 March 1850): 91–2; (15 May 1850): 157–59. The first LDS Church branch was organized in Boulogne-sur-Mer on 6 April 1850. John Taylor arrived there on 18 June 1850. See Ronald D. Dennis, “William Howells: First Missionary to France,” in Donald Q. Cannon and David J. Whittaker, eds., *Supporting Saints: Life Stories of Nineteenth Century Mormons* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1985), 43–81. The Swiss Mission was opened by T. B. H. Stenhouse in 1850, and the Prussian Mission was opened in 1851 by Danish missionaries.

2. There are three main valleys that converge toward Pinerolo, which is the administrative capital of the valleys. The valleys are Pellice Valley (formerly known as Luserna) where Torre Pellice is located; Chisone Valley (also known as Perosa), whose population until the eighteenth century consisted entirely of Waldensians; and Germanasca Valley (also known as San Martino), which had a number of Catholic settlements. Snow noted that the Waldensians resided in “[a] few narrow valleys, which are, in some places, only a bowshot in breadth” and that “[t]he inhabitants are far too numerous, according to the nature of the soil.” Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 11, 13. Much of the valleys was not suitable for farming. Snow estimated that “two-thirds, or more, present nothing but precipices, ravines and rocky districts, or such as have a northern aspect.” *Ibid.*, 13. The Waldensians produced grapes, wheat, rye, maize, oats, mulberry barley, potatoes, and common fruit trees. Farmers also raised cows, goats, and sheep. Antoine Monastier, *A History of the Vaudois of Piedmont to the Present Day* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1848), 431–32.

3. Recent historical surveys of the Waldensians include Giorgio Tourn, *You Are My Witnesses: The Waldensians across 800 Years* (Torino: Claudiana, 1989); Valdo Vinay, *Storia dei Valdesi* (Torino: Claudiana, 1990); Prescott Stephens, *The Waldensian Story: A Study in Faith, Intolerance and Survival* (Lewes, Sussex: The Book Guild Ltd., 1998); and Gabriel Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent, Persecution and Survival, c. 1170 - c. 1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

4. Eventually, Pope Innocent III recognized the value of “preachers” to fight against the heresy of groups such as the Cathars and recognized new orders founded by St. Dominic and St. Francis. By this time, some of Valdes’s original followers had returned to the church and founded a religious order known as “Poor Catholics.” Eventually, the Franciscans were successful in preaching against the Waldensians in Lombardy, and they were forced to leave their preferred city life in favor of a rural life. See Tourn, *You Are My Witnesses*, 24–35.

5. Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 161–188.

6. Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent*, 200. Forty years later his son Duke Carlo Emmanuele I attempted to regain territory from Geneva and to return the city to Catholic rule. In 1602 Geneva prevailed over the Duke in a decisive battle still commemorated each December as “The Escalade.”

7. Quoted in Stephens, *The Waldensian Story*, 182.

8. *Sketches of the Waldenses* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1846), quoting Alexis Muston, *Histoire des Vaudois* (Paris: F. G. Levrault, 1834). The Religious Tract Society was organized in 1799 by an Anglican minister to propagate Christian education “against Popish Infidel and Socinian errors . . . [and] . . . to explain and enforce the fundamental truths of the Christian faith.” William James, *The Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society: Containing a Record of Its Origin, Proceedings and Results* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1850), 18. To accomplish this, the society published tracts, books, broadsides, handbills, sermons, periodicals, and even the scriptures. *Sketches* was part of a “monthly volume” series commenced in 1845 to give “at a cheap rate . . . general information with religious sentiments, and adapted it to the new development and growing intelligence of the times.” *Ibid.*, 148. *Sketches* was the eighth book in the series and, like the others, contained 198 pages and sold for six pence in “neat covers” and for ten pence in “cloth boards, gilt edges.” It was one of the most successful installments in the series, with a circulation of over eighteen thousand copies.

9. It is evident that Snow relied on the Religious Tract Society pamphlet and Muston’s thesis concerning the “primitive” history of the Waldensians. He also quoted the poetry of Felicia Hemans and “the Hon. And Rev. Baptist W. Noel,” published in *Sketches*, in his own letters and memoirs of the mission. See Lorenzo Snow, *The Italian Mission* (London: W. Aubrey, 1851), 13, 21–22. In fact, Hemans’ poem, “Hymn of the Vaudois Mountaineers in Times of Persecution,” was later adapted and is still utilized as the Mormon hymn, “For the Strength of the Hills We Bless Thee.”

10. *Sketches of the Waldenses*, 14–15, quoting Alexis Muston’s *Histoire des Vaudois* (Paris: F. G. Levrault, 1834), v.

11. Mrs. William Fison, *The Evangelists of Italy: Or the Mission of the Apostolic Waldensian Church* (London: Werthein & Macintosh, 1855), 5.

12. J. A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, 3 vols. (London: Cassell & Company, Limited), 1:25.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Andrea Charvaz, *Recherches Historiques sur la véritable Origine dei Valdesi* (Torino: G. Bocca, 1838); Andrea Charvaz, *Origine dei Valdesi* (Torino: G. Bocca, 1838). Charvaz eventually became the Archbishop of Genoa and was buried in the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, which Lorenzo Snow visited in 1850 and 1872.

15. Giovanni Perrone, *I Valdesi. Primitivi, mediani e contemporanei* (Torino: Tip. Dell’Oratorio di San Francesco di Sales, 1871).

16. More than twenty accounts written by English travelers to the Waldensian valleys were published between 1815–1830. See Stephens, *The Waldensian Story*, 260–65. Many of these visitors repeated the claim that the Waldensians had apostolic origins. See for example, William Jones, *The History of the Waldenses; Connected with a Sketch of the Christian Church from the Birth of Christ to the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1811).

17. See “Faith of the Church of Christ in These Last Days, No. IV.” *The Evening and the Morning Star* 2 (June 1834): 162, quoting Jones, *The History of the Waldenses*. See also John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86): 24 (9 December 1883): 352 (hereafter cited as JD); and Moses Thatcher, JD, 26 (28 August 1885): 306.

18. JD 5:342; Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City, Utah: G. Q. Cannon & Sons Co., 1892–1904), 3:51.

19. “Correspondence between C. V. Dyer and Gen. J. C. Bennett,” *Times and Seasons* 3 (15 March 1842): 723.

20. See “Faith of the Church in These Last Days,” “Prospectus for a New Paper,” *Messenger and Advocate* 3 (August 1837): 546; Parley P. Pratt, *Mormonism Unveiled* (New York: Printed for the publisher, 1838); Moses Thatcher, JD, 26:312.

21. For Lorenzo Snow’s account of his activities, see Snow, *The Italian Mission*, and Eliza R. Snow Smith, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Co., 1884).

22. Concerning the Italian Mission, see Michael W. Homer, “The Italian Mission, 1850–1867,” *Sunstone* 7 (May–June 1982): 16–21; Diane Stokoe, *The Mormon Waldensians*, M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, December 1985; Michael W. Homer, “The Church’s Image in Italy from the 1840s to 1946: A Bibliographic Essay,” *BYU Studies* 31:2 (Spring 1991): 83–114; Michael W. Homer, “Gli Italiani e i Mormoni,” *Renovatio* 26:1 (Gennaio-Marzo, 1991): 79–106; Michael W. Homer, “LDS Prospects in Italy for the Twenty-first Century,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29:1 (Spring 1996): 139–58; Flora Ferrero, *L’emigrazione valdese nello Utah nella seconda metà dell’800* (Tesa di Laurea: Università di Torino, 1999).

23. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 10. When Snow arrived in the valleys in July 1850, he estimated that there were twenty-one thousand Waldensians and five thousand Catholics. *Ibid.*

24. See Henri Arnaud, *The Glorious Recovery by the Vaudois of Their Valleys* (London: John Murray, 1927). This reference to Monte Casteluzzo was also given by the same publisher in John Murray, *A Handbook for Travelers in Switzerland, Savoy and Piedmont* (London: John Murray, 1843), 371.

25. Edward Finden, *The Illustrations of the Vaudois in a Series of Views* (London: Charles Tilt, 1831), 31–32. Many travelers related this story. See also Henderson, *The Vaudois*, 115–16. Although it is difficult to know whether the precise cavern described by Finden actually existed it is certain that the Waldensians did seek refuge in caverns located in the valleys including the most famous, Gheisa d’la tana, located near Chanforan in the Angrogna valley, and the Bars de la Tagliola, located at the foot of the Rock of Casteluzzo.

26. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 15–17.

27. Keaton reported that a branch was organized in San Germano on 8 May 1854. MS 16 (3 June 1854): 350. In November 1854, he reported to a council of the Swiss and Italian Missions that a total of three branches located in Angrogna, San Germano, and San Bartolomeo had been organized in the Waldensian valleys. MS 16 (11 November 1854), 707.

28. The record of the Italian Mission indicates that between 1850–66, 184 persons were baptized, fifty-eight emigrated, and seventy-three were excommunicated. These emigration figures are inconsistent with the emigrant-ship rosters that contain the names of at least seventy-three Waldensians who emigrated between 1853–66. One possible reason for the discrepancy is that some of the children of the emigrants were not baptized Mormons, either because they were too young or because they chose not to be. See “Emigration Records and Ship Roster” and “Record of Membership of the Italian Mission,” LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

29. Among the stated reasons for these excommunications were negligence, rebellion, infidelity, evil and immorality, apostasy, absurdities, unbelief, criticism, noncha-

lance, cowardice, lying, bad conduct, fear of the world, and deceit. "Record of Membership of the Italian Mission."

30. See Homer, *The Italian Mission*, 19–21. Not all Mormon converts who emigrated to Utah were poor. Surviving records of land sales demonstrate that some of the converts sold their property for significant amounts. In August 1853, Jean Bertoch, a widower with five children, converted to Mormonism. Within a few months, Bertoch took steps to enable him and his family to immigrate to Utah. In October 1853, he paid 200 lire to the Kingdom of Sardinia to secure a military deferment for his eighteen-year-old son, Daniel. Without the deferment, Daniel would have been required to enlist in the army. Archivio di Stato di Torino, Registro delle Insinuazioni di Pinerolo, 1853, vol. 1046, 425–26. In December 1853, Jean sold his home in San Germano Chisone for 2,200 lire. Archivio di Stato di Torino, Registro delle Insinuazioni di Pinerolo, 1854, vol. 1049, 477–78. In January 1854, he also sold a separate field in Pomaretto for 300 lire. Archivio di Stato di Torino, Registro delle Insinuazioni di San Secondo, 1854, vol. 562, 157–59. It is likely that Bertoch donated these sales proceeds to the church, as his five children immigrated to Utah in February 1854, and he remained in Italy until March 1855 to serve as a branch president. His son Jean died near Fort Kearney, Nebraska Territory; his daughter Marguerite died of cholera on an island near New Orleans; and Jean himself died near Fort Atchinson, Kansas, before reaching Utah. I am indebted to Flora Ferrero for this information.

31. Pope Pius IX granted a constitution on 14 March 1848 before he was driven into exile in November. In 1849, Giuseppe Mazzini and other republicans established the Republic of Rome, which adopted a constitution that included a provision that granted civil and political rights regardless of a person's religious belief. When the Pope returned to his throne in April 1850, he abrogated both the Republican and Papal constitutions. See Antonio Patuelli, 1848–49: *Le Costituzioni di Pio IX e di Mazzini* (Firenze: Fondazione Spadolini, Nuova Antologia, Le Monnier, 1998).

32. Denis Mack Smith, *Cavour* (London: Methren & Co. Ltd., 1985), 36–40; Antonio Socci, *Pio IX: Un Papa Scomodo* (Caltanissetta: Edizioni Krinon, 1988), 12; Andrina Stiles, *The Unification of Italy, 1815–1870* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), 22–23.

33. See, Denis Mack Smith, *Modern Italy: A Political History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

34. In 1850, there were two principal inns in Torre Pellice—L'Ours (the Bear) and Lion d'Or (the Golden Lion). Both were recommended by John Murray in the second edition of *A Hand-Book for Travelers in Switzerland, and the Alps of Savoy and Piedmont* (London: John Murray, 1843), 371. Karl Baedeker published his first guide book for northern Italy almost twenty years after Lorenzo Snow's mission. He also mentions these two inns by name. See Karl Baedeker, *Italy. Handbook for Travelers, I. Northern Italy and Corsica* (Coblenz: Karl Baedeker, 1870), 80.

35. Concerning the Pension de L'Ours, see Giorgio Tourn, ed., *Viaggiatori Britannici alle Valli Valdesi (1753–1899)* (Torino: Libreria Claudiana, 1994), 105, n. 9; 225, n. 8. Travelers who stayed at the hotel include William Gilly in 1824 (William Stephen Gilly, *Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piedmont in the Year MDCCCXXIII* [London: Rivington, 1824], 137; James L. Jackson in 1825 (James L. Jackson, *Remarks on the Vaudois of Piedmont, during an excursion in the summer of 1825* [London: T. Cadell, 1826], 98); Ebenezer Henderson in 1844 (Ebenezer Henderson, *The Vaudois; Comprising Observations Made During a Tour to the Valley of Piedmont, in the Summer of 1844* [London: Snow, 1845], 88–90); and Edmondo DeAmicis in 1882 (Edmondo DeAmicis, *Alle Porte d'Italia* [Milano: Fratelli Treves, 1892], 177–9). Ebenezer Henderson, who stayed at

L'Ours during the summer of 1844, noted that it was "a comfortable inn, where the traveler may reckon on excellent fare and good attendance, at a moderate charge." Henderson, *The Vaudois*, 88. He also remembered that his "two small rooms at one end of the balcony . . . were completely overshadowed by the spreading and intertwining tendrils of a luxuriant vine, shooting up from the ground below. The shelter it afforded was the more grateful, as the thermometer stood from 80 to 86 of Fahrenheit all the time I remained in the town." *Ibid.*, 88–89. Even Louisa Costello, who was generally critical of Torre Pellice, admitted that it was "an excellent inn" and that it was "extremely large and commodious, where beds are admirable, the mattresses being filled with the elastic leaves of Indian corn, which rustle most rurally" and that upon waking she "saw the luxuriant vines peeping into my room, from a balcony which extended all around this part of the house." Louisa Stuart Costello, *Venice and the Venetians: With a glance at the Vaudois and the Tyrol* (London: J. & D. A. Darling, 1851), 42.

36. Costello, *Venice and the Venetians*, 55.

37. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 17. Beckwith, was neither a pastor nor even a Waldensian, but was held in the highest esteem by the local population. He was described in *Sketches of the Waldenses*, the Religious Tract Society pamphlet, consulted by Snow before traveling to Italy, as "an English officer, who has, for some years, resided among the Vaudois, whose benevolence is highly appreciated by that grateful people." *Sketches of the Waldenses*, 187–88. Ebenezer Henderson noted, "There is no merely human name more venerated in the valleys of Piedmont than that of Colonel Beckwith. It is in every mouth, while his portrait is exhibited in almost every house." Henderson, *The Vaudois*, 230.

38. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 17.

39. Tourn, *You Are My Witnesses*, 166–67. Beckwith eventually felt the Waldensians had "misconstured" and "repudiated" their origins. Stephens, *The Waldensian Story*, 287–90. In his view they had difficulty converting Catholics because they were too aligned with the Reformed Protestants in Switzerland, they lacked a strong ecclesiastical organization, and they were struggling with the transition from a French-speaking to Italian-speaking church.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*, 19.

42. *Ibid.*, 17.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, 19.

45. Lorenzo Snow, *La voix de Joseph* (Turin: Ferrero et Franco, 1851); Lorenzo Snow, *Exposition des premiers principes de la doctrine de l'Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des Derniers Jours* (Turin: Louis Arnaldi, 1851).

46. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 20.

47. Henderson, *The Vaudois*, 200.

48. Lorenzo Snow, *Exposition des premiers principes de la doctrine de l'Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des Derniers Jours* (Genève, 1852).

49. See, *Mormonism* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1851), Tract No. 598; *The Doctrines of Mormonism* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1853), Tract No. 599; *Is Mormonism True or Not?* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1853), Tract No. 600; *Reasons I Cannot Become a Mormonite* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1851), Tract No. 765. During the same decade, the Religious Tract Society published a book that contained seventeen pages discussing the "Mormonites." See *Remarkable Delusions, or Illustrations of Popular Errors* (London: The Religious Tract Society, n.d.), 171–88.

50. Louis Favez, *Lettre sur les Mormons de la Californie* (Vevey: E. Buvelot, 1851).

51. Emile Guers, *L'Irvingisme et le mormonisme jugés à la lumière de la Parole de Dieu* (Genève, 1853). In 1854, the book by Guers was translated into English and published in London. See Emile Guers, *Irvingism and Mormonism Tested by Scripture* (London: J. Nisbet and Co., 1854).

52. See T. B. H. Stenhouse, *Les Mormons (Saints des Derniers Jours) et leurs ennemis* (Lausanne, 1854). Further responses were published by Louis Favez in *Fragments sur les Mormons*, 2 vols. (Lausanne: n.p., 1854–56). The first volume is entitled *Joseph Smith et les Mormons*. The second volume is entitled *Le mormonisme jugé d'après ses doctrines*. Emil Guers's responses were published in *Le mormonisme polygame* (Genève, n.p., 1855).

53. De Gasparin (1813–1894) was born in Geneva and was a member of the French Chamber of Deputies when Louis Philippe was king of France. When Louis Philippe was deposed, De Gasparin moved to Valleyres, Canton of Vaud, Switzerland, where he began publishing.

54. Robert Baird, *Religion in the United States of America* (Glasgow and Edinburgh: Blackie and Son, 1844); Robert Baird, *State and Prospects of Religion in America; Being a Report Made at the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, in Paris, August 25th, 1855* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1856; Robert Baird, *Sketches of Protestantism in Italy including a notice of the origin, history and present state of the Waldenses* (Boston: Benjamin Perkins, 1847)..

55. Count Agenor De Gasparin, *A Treatise on Turning Tables, the Supernatural in General, and Spirits*, 2 vols. (New York: Kiggins & Kellogg, 1857), 1:v.

56. *Ibid.*, 2:14, 46. For the count's views on the American Civil War, see Count Agenor De Gasparin, *America before Europe: Principles and Interests* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1862).

57. William J. Conybeare, "Mormonism," *Edinburgh Review* (April 1854). This article was reprinted in Conybeare, *Essays Ecclesiastical and Social* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1855), 280–376.

58. William J. Conybeare, "Il Mormonismo dall' Edinburgh Review," in *Origini Europee—religioni—viaggi—studi etnografici*, vol. 5, *Saggi e riviste* (Milano: G. Daelli e C., 1865), 159–239.

59. *Ibid.*, 229–30.

60. Letter from Jabez Woodard, MS 15 (8 October 1853): 670.

61. "The Italian Mission," MS 16 (18 February 1854): 110–11.

62. *Ibid.*, 16 (1 April 1854): 205.

63. "Editorial," *Ibid.*, 16 (22 July 1854): 457.

64. Journal of Samuel Francis (June, July 1855), 79.

65. "Comunicazioni con l'estero, 1836–1899," Faldone 1562, Archivio Storico del Comune, Torre Pellice.

66. Tourn, *Viaggiatori Britannici alle Valli Valdesi*, 235–7.

67. Camillo Cavour, quoted in Valdo Vinay, *Storia dei Valdesi*, 3 vols. (Torino: Editrice Claudiana, 1980), 3:65.

68. "The Italian Mission," MS 16 (24 January 1854): 60–61.

69. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 14.

70. Joseph Gay was born 24 June 1847 and died 27 February 1854. His parents are Jean Pierre Gay and Coucourde Henriette. His godfather and godmother are Joseph Malan and Caroline Peyrot. Archivio Storico del Comune di Torre Pellice, Faldone 1099, Actes de naissance, 1847, and Faldone 1221, Actes de décès, 1854. Joseph had two brothers. At the time of Snow's blessing, François was seven years old, and Matthieu Albert was five. Matthieu Albert Gay died on 24 December 1867 in the home of his father, "Casa Malan," located at the Albergo dell'Orso. The Albergo dell'Orso is vari-

ously referred to as both “Casa Peyrot” and “Casa Malan.” Matthieu Albert’s death is recorded at Archivio storico del Comune di Torre Pellice, Faldone 1345, Atti di morte, 1867, atto n. 110. I am indebted to Flora Ferrero for this inform

71. A. W. Mitchell, *The Waldenses: Sketches of the Evangelical Christians of the Valleys of Piedmont* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1853), 368–69. Revel was encouraged to attend the assembly by Robert Baird, one of the founders of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Unity, William B. Kinney, the United States ambassador to the Kingdom of Sardinia, and, of course, Charles Beckwith. See, Archivio della Tavola Valdese, Categoria IV, Cartella 44, Corrispondenza della Tavola, 1852–53. Ebenezer Henderson, a Presbyterian, wrote that “The constitution of the Vaudois church comes nearer to the Presbyterian than to any other form of ecclesiastical polity now in existence.” Henderson, *The Vaudois*, 212. The Waldensians eventually aligned themselves with the Methodists in Italy and with the Presbyterians in the United States. When the attendees of the 202nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met in Salt Lake City between 29 May–6 June 1990, they prepared an updated response to the claims of Mormonism. See *A Present Day Look at the Latter-day Saints* (Louisville: The Office of the General Assembly Presbyterian Church, 1990).

72. It is likely that Revel knew about the Mormon practice of plural marriage before he arrived in the United States. Stephen Malan, one of the earliest converts to Mormonism in Italy, wrote in his “Autobiography and Family Record” that after the Waldensian pastors became aware that Mormons practiced polygamy, the Waldensian ministers preached that their “young women [would be] taken possession by that infamous polygamist [Brigham Young] and his associates to satiate their lust and debauchery.” Stephen Malan, *Autobiography and Family Record*, 1893, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Such tactics did not always work. Jabez Woodard wrote that when “finding they were trying to excite prejudice in that way . . . [he] went again and preached plurality to the father, and the result was as it will ever be to an honest mind. The house soon became the stopping place for Elders and some of the highest names in the Church have eat[en] and slept beneath that hospitable roof.” Jabez Woodard, *Autobiography and Diary*, 1853–57, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

73. In 1852, the Reverend D. T. K. Drummond, an English Episcopal clergyman from Edinburgh and a friend of William Gilly, spoke with Jean Pierre Revel concerning the Waldensian and Protestant missions to find converts among the Catholics of Italy. Drummond was impressed with Revel and felt after “not very many minutes” that “we had known each other for years.” He “could hardly believe that we were not in some free, Protestant, and happy valley of our own.” He obtained “much important information regarding his Church, with which we were greatly desirous to become acquainted, and which we felt might be at some future time turned to good account, in any endeavor at home to draw the sympathy of British Christians more towards it, and to help its faithful ones forward in the great work of spreading the Gospel to those who are yet in a darkness even worse and more appalling than that of heathenism.” Drummond, *Scenes and Impressions in Switzerland and the North of Italy*, 128–39.

74. Joseph Malan to Jean Pierre Revel, 29 August 1854, *Lettres de M. Joseph Malan*, 1850–59, Archivio della Tavola Valdese, Lettera, n. 67. I am indebted to Flora Ferrero for this information.

75. Joseph Malan to Jean Pierre Revel, 18 September 1854, *Lettres de M. Joseph Malan*, 1850–1859, Archivio della Tavola Valdese, Lettera, n. 69, 134–35. I am indebted to Flora Ferrero for this information. Camillo Cavour was included by Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth Church president in 1889, in a list of “eminent men” of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who were “baptized” through living proxies

in the St. George Temple on 21 August 1877. See Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, typescript, ed. Scott G. Kenney, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah.: Signature Books, 1985), 7:367–8. Lorenzo Snow succeeded Wilford Woodruff as President of the Church in 1898.

76. On 4 December 1855, an official of the Comunità di Torre Pellice noted the activities of Mormon missionaries in the valleys and their program to immigrate converts to the United States but also noted that “until now the missionaries proselyters had not been present in this community.” Archivio Storico del Comune di Torre Pellice, Faldone 1562, 1836–1899, Comunicazioni con l'estero. The note reads: “Non vi esistono in questo comune uffici ed agenzie di società straniere. Trovasi però qui residente a certi intervalli di tempo un certo Francis [sic] Inglese missionario della setta dei Mormoni il quale [annualmente] coordinato da altri suoi colleghi arruolano famiglie ed individui che li conducono [a Malta] nell'Isola di Malta che ivi uniti ad altre reclute stranieri sono per opera della società dei Mormoni trasportati in America. Fin ora non trovarono [questi] detti missionari proseliti in questo comune

77. In 1858, the Reverend S. W. King attended Waldensian church services in Turin. While noting a lack of reverence and attendance during the services, King also observed that although “the Roman Catholic Church in Piedmont may be on the decline, . . . Protestantism has as yet made no corresponding advance.” He also noted that “Efforts have been made, and are making, by the Waldenses and others, to preach the Gospel, and many churches, such as the one at Turin, have been raised in the big towns; but the expected success has not been met with.” Yet the Protestant minister did not blame the government. Instead, he believed that “Proselytism from the State Church is nominally, indeed a legal offense, but there is no disposition on the part of the Government to throw any obstacle in the way of religious liberty.” He also observed that even the Waldenses were allowed “to circulate the Scriptures and religious publications in the native language, provided they confine them to those of their own sect; but this is a merely nominal restriction, of the infraction of which the Government takes no notice; and we were rejoiced to see the Bible—a few years ago a prohibited book, as it is still in the rest of Italy—exposed for sale in every little town.” Rev. S. W. King, *The Italian Valleys of the Pennine Alps* (London: John Murray, 1858), 225–26.

78. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 9.

79. For example, see John Taylor, “Elder John Taylor’s Mission to Europe in 1849–1852,” JD, 1:22. Taylor noted that although “Men have got sick of it [Catholicism], and look upon it as moonshine and folly, . . . [t]he Protestants talk a great deal about Catholic priests, but I believe they are much more honest in the sight of man, and will do more for their pay, than any Protestant minister you can find.” See also MS 16 (1854): 454.

80. During the nineteenth century, Mormonism and Catholicism were compared by some Protestant writers. For example, see J. B. Turner, *Mormonism in All Ages* (New York: Platt & Peters, 1842), 8; Henry Caswall, *The Prophet of the Nineteenth Century* (London: J. G. F. & J. Rivington, 1843), 88–89. Mormon and Catholic writers also noted similarities. In 1857, Brigham Young noted that he had “Power and influence here that no other man on this earth has in the midst of his community, with the exception perhaps of some who we call heathen, and the members of the Church of Rome.” JD, 4: 351. Shortly thereafter, an article appeared in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, a Jesuit journal that many considered the voice of the papacy. The article “recognized” in the Mormon practice of secular control over the affairs of Utah Territory an affirmation of Catholic principles. “Il Mormonismo Nelle Sue Attinenze col Moderno Protestantismo,” *La Civiltà Cattolica* (7 May 1860), 411–12.

81. Henderson, *The Vaudois*, 126.
82. Nicola Rossetto, *Chiesa e istruzione popolare nel Risorgimento* (Pinerolo: Alzani Editore, 2000), 19–32.
83. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 17.
84. *Ibid.*, 13. A contemporary traveler noted that she had difficulty speaking with her female guide because “her patois was almost unintelligible, and her French little less so.” Costello, *Venice and the Venetians*, 48.
85. “Letters to the Editor,” MS 12 (15 July 1850): 218.
86. In April 1856, “Reverend Samuel Francis” turned his attention to Turin. In May, he began studying Italian under the tutelage of Esther Weisbradt in Prarostino to prepare himself for proselyting. Samuel Francis, Journal, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Weisbradt was a school teacher in Turin who was dismissed by the Tavola, the governing body of the Waldensian church. *Corrispondenza della Tavola*, Mazzo 45, anno 1854, Lettera n. 348, pp. 596–7.
87. Attempts were made to proselyte outside the Waldensian valleys in 1852, 1853 (Genoa, Turin), 1854 (Nice and Turin), and 1856 (Turin). See MS 15:186; 14:426; 16:192; 16:707; and 19:218.
88. MS 15 (30 April 1853): 282.
89. “Narrative of Elder Thomas Margetts,” MS 15 (20 August 1853): 555–58.
90. “Narrative of Elder Thomas Margetts,” MS 15 (20 August 1853): 556–57.
91. Samuel Francis, Journal, 69–70.
92. *Ibid.* Francis also noted that two missionaries visited the San Martino Valley (now referred to as Germanasca) where they held “a little conversation with a Catholic priest.”
93. “Council of the Swiss and Italian Missions,” MS 16 (11 November 1854): 707.
94. Snow, *The Italian Mission*, 18.
95. See “Il Mormonismo nelle sue attinenze col moderno Protestantesimo,” *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 4th Series, 6 (3 May 1860): 391–413. *La Civiltà Cattolica* was a periodical with strong Vatican ties that was founded by Jesuits in 1850 to combat the increasingly vocal attacks on the papacy’s temporal authority. When Pope Pius IX returned to the Papal States in 1850 after being driven into exile by radical republicans in 1848, he was vehemently opposed to Italian unification and the separation of church and state. The Pope feared that unification would result in the creation of a liberal state that would encourage religious reform and create an environment conducive to Protestant proselyting. The church knew that most of the leaders of the Risorgimento were lapsed, or at least nominal, Catholics who were not “protectors of the faith” and that many were also Freemasons who were openly hostile to the church. One year earlier, *La Civiltà Cattolica* published an article that criticized the Mormon practice of polygamy. See “La Libertà di fatto nella terra classica,” *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 4th Series, 1 (17 February 1859): 516.
96. *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 6 (3 May 1860): 411–12.
97. *Ibid.*, 404–5. For another article mentioning Mormonism in the context of separation of church and state, see Edoardo Laboulaye, *La Separazione della Chiesa e dello Stato* (Roma: Fratelli Bocca, 1874). Another Catholic cleric who mentioned Mormons during this same period was the Bishop of Annecy. His book (which apparently appeared in French in the mid-1850s) was published in Italian in 1865. Bishop Rendu referred to the founder of Mormonism as “John Schmodt” and noted that converts were being made rapidly in England and Scotland. The Mormon doctrine that apparently interested him the most was the “power by virtue of the work of Saint Paul (I Corinthians 15:29) to save

the dead they wish by receiving baptism for them.” Luigi Rendu, *Il Proselitismo Protestante in Europa* (Firenze, 1865), 43.

98. Giovanni Bosco, *Il Cattolico nel secolo*, 2d ed. (Torino: Tipografia e Libreria Salesiana, 1883).

99. Gian Paolo Romagnani, “Italian Protestants,” in Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wendehorst, *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants, Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 152.

100. Bosco, *Il Cattolico nel secolo*, 409–10. Bosco was not the first writer to mention Mormons in connection with Protestant claims concerning Waldensian antiquity. In 1861, an anonymous writer ridiculed the claims of an Evangelical pastor, G. Robetti, who asserted that *La Nobla Leycon* was in usage by the Waldensians in 1100, or before the birth of Valdes. He wrote not only that it had been used by the Waldensians but also that it was not used by even Lutherans, Mormons, Zwinglians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or Illuminati. Annon., *Popolo All’Erta, Un Valdese, Ti Uccella!* (Livorno: Tipografia Fabbreschi e C., 1861), 21–28.