



Another significant furnishing was added in early January 1846. This was the new altar located in Brigham Young's office (Room 1). It was put into use for the first time on 7 January. On this occasion four couples, each in their turn, knelt at this sacred altar. Husbands and wives were sealed to each other for time and for all eternity. "The altar is about two and one-half feet high and two and one-half feet long and about one foot wide, rising from a platform about 8 or 9 inches high and extending out on all sides about a foot, forming a convenient place to kneel upon. The top of the altar and the platform for kneeling upon are covered with cushions of scarlet damask cloth; the sides of the upright part or body of the altar are covered with white linen."¹⁸⁷

Services in the Attic Story

The large central room as divided by canvas partitions was utilized in providing endowment ordinances to thousands of faithful Church members. The altar in Room 1 was used for numerous sealing ordinances and eternal marriages. There is indication that Rooms 2 and 4 were also used for some sealing ordinances.¹⁸⁸ Side Rooms 11 and 12 were used for thousands of washing and anointing ordinances. Rooms 1 and 3 were also extensively used as offices. The remaining side rooms were used for offices, prayer meetings, and leadership meetings. This attic area was also used for recreational purposes and even as a temporary residence for some leaders and patrons, as explained in chapter 4.

Beginning in December 1845, those previously endowed, known as "the quorum," met in

the attic story of the temple. "Elder B. Young Said this quorum should meet heare evry Sabath and take of the Sacrament."¹⁸⁹ This announcement was greeted with feelings of great joy. Those attending noted: "Great solemnity rested upon the brethren and sisters; great union in our meeting."¹⁹⁰ As endowment ordinances were given to others over the next few weeks, this group was greatly enlarged. By 4 January over fourteen hundred individuals had been endowed.¹⁹¹ One such meeting was held on Sunday, 28 December. "About two hundred of the brethren and sisters met at ten-thirty a.m. in the attic story of the Temple, some of the side rooms were filled, and the curtains withdrawn."¹⁹² These curtains were undoubtedly the canvas partitions that had been placed in the central main hall.

Large crowds of people resulted in problems for the structure. John D. Lee reported that "the floor in the attic story or more properly speaking—the trams and joists that support the floor was not sufficiently strong to bear up such an immense weight as would necessarily be upon it—when filled with people. The ceiling has already cracked in many places, the door frames were also cracked by the weight—in so much that it actually became necessary for the preservation of the building to stop holding anymore public meetings."¹⁹³ Heber C. Kimball reported that as Brigham Young addressed those present on Sunday, 28 December, he declared: "Weight on the floor . . . has already caused the walls to crack, prevents the doors from shutting and will injure the roof."¹⁹⁴



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A STORY OF FAITH

DON F. COLVIN