APPENDIX B

PEER EXAMINATION

Notes From Meeting Concerning
Chapter Five: The Winter of 1834-35: Adult Education Expands in Kirtland

4 November 2002
Bruce Satterfield
Notes from meeting concerning Chapter 5
4 November 2002

Concerns are bolded. Results of discussion follow.

- **Did Church leaders have an anticipated number who were going to attend the school in 1834?** There are no records giving any indication. There appears to be a building the Church is using for meetings but the leaders never consider that building as an option for the school (see entries for April 30 and May 4, Smith, 1980, Vol. 1, p. 342). Why? The records do not give a reason.

- **Chapter 5 gives two stated reasons why there was no school held during the 1833-34 season. Dr. Thomas questioned how intrusive the Missouri problem was.** I reevaluated the problems and add several additional reasons.

- **What role did Sidney Rigdon’s religious background play in the development of the “Lectures on Faith”? How common was catechistic learning in schools of the period?** The answer is not clear . . . an interesting question that further research may answer. But not necessary to this study.

- **What is the key evidence for differentiating the “Kirtland School” from the “School of the Elders”?** The records at the time, both History of the Church and journals, newspaper articles separate these as two different schools. Looking at all the records, it appears that the Elder’s School was theological and the Kirtland School was secular.

- **How can we be sure of Heber C. Kimball’s reminiscent the December 22 date?** We were not sure. I later went to the Church Archives in Salt Lake and looked at the original accounts but could not make any better determination.
• Is it possible that the quarterly conferences of the Church provided an opportunity or impetus for new sessions of each winter school? Dr. Thomas asked the question but we did not answer it during the meeting. I since have examined the histories of the Church and have not found any indication that a quarterly conference was held in December 1834.

• Have you examined the William E. McLellin diaries? No, I did not know they were available. Dr. Thomas had a copy and let me borrow it. I examined all relevant entries and used them in the study.
Dr. John C. Thomas  
Notes from meeting concerning Chapter 5  
4 November 2002

Questions are bolded. Results of discussion follow.

• **How many participants were anticipated for the school in 1834? How did that affect the kind of facility they needed?** Not sure. No other building appears to have been available in Kirtland at the time.

• **What are the most important factors derailing the school in the winter of 1833-34?** The draft gives the impression that the expulsion of Mormons from their lands in western Missouri is the key factor, but it is unclear why this would disrupt all schooling a thousand miles away in Kirtland? There was ongoing correspondence seeking legal redress in Missouri, but other more local factors likely played a bigger role (see Cook’s discussion): debts, litigation involving a disaffected member, and problems with a physical facility.

• **Did Sidney Rigdon’s religious and education background influence the format of the “Lectures on Faith”? How common was catechistic learning in schools of the period?** The answer is unclear. (It’s worth noting that LDS historians differ about who was the most important author of the Lectures.)

• **What is the key evidence for differentiating the “Kirtland School” from the “School of the Elders”?** The diaries and reminiscences of contemporaries maintain such a distinction. In addition, previous historical treatments have drawn a distinction. A reference in the church newspaper of the time, the Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and
Advocate, indicates a civic role for the “Kirtland School.”

- **Since Heber C. Kimball’s record is a reminiscent account dictated later, what is the basis for a specific date (December 22) given in that account?** Not clear – the date is not recorded in any of Kimball’s extant diaries, which have been published. (On his search at the Historical Department of the Church, Bruce discovered that two different versions of Kimball’s autobiography exist, and it may be that they were made with reference to records available at the time, but the source for that precise date remains a mystery.)

- **Is it possible that the quarterly conferences of the Church provided an opportunity or impetus for new sessions of each winter school?**

- **The William McLellin diaries have been published—they have a few items of import in regard to the Kirtland schools.** (Bruce subsequently reviewed them and incorporated their insights.)