

*Salt Lake Herald* [LCCN: sn85058130]

On Sunday, June 5, 1870, publishers William C. Dunbar and Edward L. Sloan, elders in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), released the first issue of the *Salt Lake Herald*. The men promoted their newspaper as independent and neutral. The newspaper was sympathetic to but separate from the Mormon Church, while providing advertising opportunities for the growing numbers of non-Mormon merchants in the city. Their new paper, however, consistently reflected the views of the *Deseret News*, the official organ of the Church. Dunbar and Sloan were veteran newspapermen, having edited and managed the short-lived *Salt Lake City Daily Telegraph* [LCCN: sn84024750]. On September 1, 1870, John T. Caine bought an interest in the *Herald*. Caine, who later was a six-term delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, became the paper's managing editor. Dunbar assumed the role as business manager, while Sloan served as general editor.

Sloan's editorials reflected the Mormon values of the day, for he thought it important to explain his faith's beliefs to the reading public. "When the people of Utah, their faith and institutions are aspersed, maligned and unjustly attacked," he wrote, "we shall esteem it our solemn duty to present the truth in reply, when the source is worthy a rejoinder." Sloan had personal reasons for providing such rejoinders, for he was a devout convert to Mormonism and, with three wives of his own, a confirmed polygamist.

The four-page morning daily was in many respects typical of western newspapers of the day. There were articles on agriculture, mining, religious and domestic interests as well as entertainment news. Articles on crime, vice, and natural disasters also appeared. Politically, the *Salt Lake Herald* was Democratic. Because it gave considerable space to controversial religious topics, however, editors of secular papers sometimes mocked the *Herald* as a mere proponent of the LDS Church. The *Salt Lake Tribune's* [LCCN: sn83021452] pet name for the *Herald*, for example, was the "Mormon Herald," while the daily *Salt Lake Democrat* [LCCN: sn85058117] called it the "Church Echo." Sloan aggressively responded to such slurs with strong counter editorials, a strategy not available to the publishers of the *Deseret News* [LCCN: sn85058149], which endeavored to avoid any controversy that could harm the Church.

When forty-four-year-old Sloan died in August 1874, a succession of editors followed. Charles W. Penrose, who spent most of his journalistic life with the *Deseret News*, was *Herald* editor from 1892 to 1899. Horace G. Whitney got his start with the *Herald* as city editor and manager, and it was the only time the newspaper made a profit according to Heber J. Grant, former *Herald* president. Whitney became music and drama critic, then business manager, for the *Deseret News*, where he won wide acclaim.

Senator William A. Clark, a Democrat from Montana, bought the paper in 1898, tripling revenues over the next 11 years. In 1909, however, prominent Utah Republicans assumed control, dramatically changing the paper's political focus. The *Salt Lake Herald-Republican* [LCCN: sn85058140] suspended publication in July 1920, unable to compete with other papers for scarce advertising revenues.