

By Karen A. Kimball

Based on a true story

“Brigham Young [was] reserved to come forth in the fulness of times to take part in laying the foundations of the great latter-day work” (D&C 138:53).

Kathy listened as Mr. Sodeberg explained how people migrated in the United States. She was excited about her new history class. Flipping through the pages of her new history book, Kathy stopped at a picture of Brigham Young. She had never realized Brigham Young’s significance in United States history before.

Mr. Sodeberg finished his lecture. “There will be homework every day,”

he said. “Your first assignment is due tomorrow.”

At home Kathy sighed as she looked at all the questions Mr. Sodeberg had assigned.

“Tough day at school?” Mom asked.

“Homework every day,” Kathy said. She remem-

bered the picture in her history book. “Mom, Brigham Young is in my textbook. What makes him so important in U.S. history?”

“He directed the migration of thousands of Latter-day Saints to the Salt Lake Valley. Then he organized



The Best Brigham Young

them into settlements,” Mom said. “That took a lot of planning. It was a significant part of the country’s westward migration.”

The next day Mr. Sodeberg announced, “Next week we will perform a readers’ theater. Each of you will dramatize a character of the westward migration. Your parents and other students will be invited to attend the performance.”

Mr. Sodeberg began assigning characters and handing out scripts. When he asked who wanted the part of Brigham Young, Kathy quickly raised her hand.

“Tonight’s homework is to begin memorizing your part,” Mr. Sodeberg said. “You must recite it perfectly. Your grade depends on it.”

Kathy read over her part as she and her friend Laura left class. A terrible feeling came over her. “This is all wrong,” she said to Laura. “It makes Brigham Young sound dishonest.”

“You just see things differently because of your church,” Laura said.

“I can’t say these things,” Kathy said.

“You have to recite them perfectly,” Laura reminded her.

Tears rolled down Kathy’s cheeks as she ran home and burst through the front door.

“More homework?” Mom asked.

“Worse,” Kathy said, handing her the script. “Read this.”

Mom read the script and shook her head. “This writer didn’t know a lot about Brigham Young.”

“What should I do?” Kathy asked.

“First let’s find a Brigham Young costume,” Mom said.

Kathy tried on Grandpa’s long black coat and rolled up the sleeves on her brother’s white shirt. Mr. Grandi next door showed Kathy how to walk with his extra wooden cane.

Mom found a tall black hat in a closet and put it on Kathy’s head. “You’d make Brigham Young proud,” Mom said. “Now you need a new script.”

Kathy looked for information about Brigham Young in Church history books and on the Church Web site. Soon the script was rewritten.

“The true story of Brigham Young,” Kathy said.

On the day of the performance, Kathy’s class gathered in the auditorium. Parents and other students waited in their seats.

Mr. Sodeberg introduced the program; then he stood offstage as the students recited their parts.

Alex recited his script perfectly, but Randall mixed up his words. Mr. Sodeberg made him begin again. Kathy squeezed her cane. When it was her turn, Kathy recited the true story of Brigham Young.

“Did you change your script?” Laura asked after the performance.

“Yes. I told the truth,” Kathy said.

“Here comes Mr. Sodeberg,” Laura said.

“Well done, ladies,” Mr. Sodeberg said. “Kathy,” he continued, “you were the best Brigham Young I have ever seen.” ■



Brigham Young . . . acted in accordance with correct principles, and he became a mighty instrument in the hands of the Lord.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “And Nothing Shall Offend Them,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 90.