Excavating Nauvoo

Benjamin C. Pykles

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Excavating Nauvoo
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The Mormons and the Rise of Historical Archaeology in America

Benjamin C. Pykles

Foreword by Robert L. Schuyler

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Foreword
ROBERT L. SCHUYLER

Historical archaeology is the archaeology of the modern world, the last five or six centuries of global cultural development. In light of its subject matter, it is not surprising that it emerged as an organized discipline last in the sequence of appearance of the various specialized archaeologies. Classical antiquarianism emerged as early as the Italian Renaissance, prehistoric archaeology with the mid-nineteenth-century geological revolution, and the study of various ancient civilizations in the later nineteenth or early twentieth century. Historical archaeology’s roots in North America go back to the Great Depression. By 1960 it was a fully recognized if small topic of research among fieldworkers in both the United States and Canada. The following decade saw the successful establishment and professionalization of this new field, which today is equal in importance to North American prehistory and, unlike
that older specialization, is rapidly expanding as a discipline around the world.

Historians of science and archaeologists themselves have only recently begun a full investigation of the discipline’s origins and development. The pioneers in the field fortunately preserved at least an outline of their own oral histories, as exemplified by Stanley South’s fine edited collection, Pioneers in Historical Archaeology: Breaking New Ground (Plenum Press, 1994), a collection of oral histories compiled in 1977. A few brief historical syntheses have also appeared. It was not until 2005, however, that the first book-length study of the subject, based on primary sources and using standard historical and contextual analysis, was produced. Donald W. Linebaugh’s The Man Who Found Thoreau: Roland W. Robbins and the Rise of Historical Archaeology in America (New Hampshire, 2004) is an excellent first such study because it outlines in detail the career of a famous avocational fieldworker who helped build the field but who was in turn eventually marginalized by the discipline’s growing professionalism.

Benjamin Pykles’s book, the second serious, extended study, affords a fascinating exploration of a key episode in the development of historical archaeology in America. Excavating Nauvoo: The Mormons and the Rise of Historical Archaeology in America not only convincingly adds a chapter to the discipline’s history, it also has implications for the history of general archaeology and, more broadly, for the history of all the human sciences. Human history, and the histories of individual professions and specializations, follow broad developmental patterns, but the history of any individual society or any discipline is also highly controlled by specific elements in its cultural setting.
As we look at the record of the human past we see both the
determined patterns of cultural evolution and the much more
chaotic and unpredictable factors that are to be found in any
given historical sequence.

Pykles recounts the chance coming together, late in his
career, of the ultimate pioneer in American historical archaeol-
gy, Jean Carl Harrington, and a singular institutional setting
for the growth of the discipline in the 1960s. The normal pat-
tern during the decade of the 1960s, the period during which
the events in this book took place, was characterized by a
series of predictable steps: (1) the recognition of the recent
past as a legitimate subject of archaeological research, (2) a
successful demonstration of the field's contributions, with
case studies, and (3) the acceptance of this new discipline by
various institutions, with expanding support for the future. In
North America the earliest institutions involved with histori-
cal archaeology typically were national governmental agen-
cies, especially the National Park Service (NPS) in the United
States and Parks Canada north of the border, or their state
or provincial equivalents. Slightly later academia (especially
departments of anthropology) provided major support. Finally,
in the 1970s private firms engaged in cultural resource manage-
ment (CRM) emerged as even more powerful and financially
solid allies of the field.

The Nauvoo project (1961–84) stood out from other projects
under way at the time because its support came from an ecclcsiatical institution, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day
Saints (LDS), and its counterpart, the Reorganized Church
of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now called the Community
of Christ). Because of the senior standing of J. C. Harrington
within historical archaeology—with three decades of work in the NPS on some of the most famous historic sites in the United States—and the very strong initial support from the First Presidency of the LDS Church, a normal sequence of steps would have been predicted for this project at its inception. However, the final outcome of the Nauvoo project and the subsequent relationship between the discipline and this institutional setting were both structured and altered by the internal activities of the two Mormon churches, especially the potentially watershed event of succession when a president of the Church dies and is replaced by a new president, prophet, and seer.

Pykles, using primary documentary sources, which he has hunted down in impressive detail, presents the reader with a persuasive study of the interplay of the personalities involved, the growing professionalism of the discipline and its own internal shift from a restoration-preservation purpose to fully anthropological, interpretive goals, and the shifting support of the two separate Mormon churches that own the historical site of Nauvoo. The passing of one president and designation of his predecessor within the Utah LDS Church was a central event, even if one external to the discipline itself, for it had a direct impact on the project and the future relationship between the field and this unusual ecclesiastical sponsorship.

Excavating Nauvoo recounts the story of one of the first nineteenth-century urban settlements to be explored through excavation, a potential “Williamsburg of the West.” Equally important is the book’s demonstration of the specificity of history itself: how events, personalities, and structures unique to the setting at Nauvoo encouraged, significantly supported,
and then truncated the normal growth of historical archaeology as an essential tool for preserving and exploring a major American historic site.

Pykles’s well-grounded book sends a powerful message that reaches well beyond the nineteenth-century Mormon city on the Mississippi to make a statement about the history and future of the entire discipline, even all of archaeology. The institutional settings that have supported the growth of historical archaeology in America have themselves changed over the past quarter century of American history. The transition from governmental agencies to the academy to the business world was successfully navigated, but any drastic alteration in one or more of these three contexts could have greatly affected the history of the discipline, and such alterations may indeed occur in the future. The global triumph of neoliberal capitalism since 1990 has already caused major changes in the academic and professional worlds within which historical archaeologists carry on research. The prediction is for a steady global expansion of the discipline building on all these and additional new supportive settings, but history is messy and unpredictable. What will happen to historical archaeology in the future? The history of the discipline is generally optimistic as we use the discipline’s past to look forward, but the unpredictability of history as seen in this case study is a strong warning for all of us working in the most successful and expansive type of archaeology practiced in North America today.
Acknowledgments

Numerous individuals unquestionably aid a project as long in duration as this has been. First among these is Robert L. Schuyler, who graciously agreed to write the foreword for the book. He has consistently supported and encouraged me in my research on the history of historical archaeology. I am sincerely grateful for the lasting influence he has had on my career.

The library personnel of the University of Pennsylvania largely made it possible for me to write a book on the restoration of Mormon Nauvoo while living on the East Coast of the United States. I owe particular thanks to the staff of the inter-library loan office and to John Weeks and his staff at the University Museum library. Equally influential have been the number of individuals who have assisted me at the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. Randall Dixon, William Slaughter, and Ron Read
have been especially supportive and helpful in my research. Truthfully, the book would not have been possible without their assistance. Ted Hild and his colleagues at the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency graciously entertained my questions and requests for documents, as did Susan Escherich and Patti Henry with the National Historic Landmarks programs in Washington DC. Likewise, Christina McDougal at the Torreyson Library of the University of Central Arkansas and Emily Lovick at Fort Smith National Historic Site were incredibly helpful in locating and forwarding information and images relating to Clyde Dollar. I also owe special thanks to the staff and friends of the Community of Christ Archives in Independence, Missouri, who helped track down images of the RLDS excavations in Nauvoo. Especially helpful in this regard were Ron Romig, Ken Stobaugh, and Marvin Crozier.

I was fortunate to be able to discuss the Nauvoo excavations with both Dale Berge and Paul DeBarthe, two of the principal archaeologists who worked at Nauvoo. I am grateful to both for sharing their insights and memories in person, over the phone, and through e-mail. Don Enders of the Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City likewise made time for an oral history interview, in which he revealed important pieces of information about the LDS archaeological program. Wendy Bacon graciously shared her personal photographs and reminiscences of her experiences excavating for the RLDS in Nauvoo.

Thanks to my good friends Jon and Sarah Moyer, I always had a place to stay and stimulating conversation when visiting Salt Lake City. Scott Thomas, another friend, came through at a critical time and helped locate a key source for the book.
Donna Pykles and Hilda Serr went far beyond normal familial obligations and helped photocopy and take notes on hundreds of pages of periodicals and other sources; their shared enthusiasm for my research made it all that more enjoyable. Richard Veit of Monmouth University and two other anonymous reviewers provided useful feedback on the manuscript, and I believe the book is much better as a result of their insightful comments. Last, Elisabeth Chretien, Joeth Zucco, and Marjorie Pannell have been nothing but superb as editors. They each responded patiently and promptly to a myriad of detailed questions while effectively guiding me through the publication process.

Each of these individuals (and probably many more I have unintentionally left out) has contributed something to this endeavor, resulting in something far greater than what I could have achieved if left to my own. I, of course, accept full responsibility for whatever errors there may be in the final product.

Finally, this project would not have been completed were it not for the enduring love and support of my wife, Chelise, and our four children, Emmalyn, Clayton, Jamison, and Lincoln. In addition to enduring many weeks without a husband and father while I was away on research trips, they have regularly expressed unwavering confidence in me at the times when I needed such encouragement the most. Even in the darkest hour, brought on by a catastrophic failure of my computer’s hard drive, Chelise selflessly devoted countless evenings to help edit the entire manuscript for a second time! She and our children are the source of true joy in my life. This book would mean nothing without them.
Benjamin C. Pykles provides a remarkably even-handed case study of the history of historical archaeology in the context of excavating and restoring Nauvoo, Illinois, a sacred site for both major Mormon denominations, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS).

Before its founder, Joseph Smith (who at the time was mayor of Nauvoo and president of the Church, and was also running for president of the United States), and his brother Hyrum (who was assistant president of the Church) were murdered in the jail in Carthage, Illinois, on June 27, 1844, and the majority of the Latter-day Saints migrated to Utah under the leadership of Brigham Young, the Mormons were gathered at Nauvoo. Pykles effectively makes the case for the importance of the negotiations around the meaning and interpretation of Nauvoo to the practice of historical archaeology in the mutually
antagonistic context of LDS and RLDS interpretations of the Nauvoo site. Within both churches, conflict occurred over the scientific versus religious authenticity of the archaeological work even as historical archaeology was professionalizing, a process that generally includes attempting to ensure that professional decisions are made only by certified professionals. In the case of historical archaeology, professionalization involved moving beyond being an adjunct to historical restorations, such as that of Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia.

A tension between the ideology of professionalism and the ideologies of various stakeholders, notably descendants of those who built whatever is being excavated by archaeologists, often arises, and was certain to arise because of the different sacralized histories propounded by LDS and RLDS Church members eager to undercut each other and to garner historical legitimation among nonbelievers.

As Pykles shows, initial enthusiasm for historical authenticity gradually declined into more rigidly sectarian goals. From an archaeological standpoint, the project remains incomplete. Even among the archaeologists, moreover, there was dissent over pursuing long-term scientific goals or providing immediate aid to reconstruction and restoration endeavors, with the latter almost always prevailing. Pykles not only shows what the archaeologists did, he also explores the cross-pressures of religious politics and jockeying for ownership of historical heritage at one important historical site. Such ownership was not only a concern for disputed sacred histories but a more mundane one of revenues from tourism to the partly restored Nauvoo site.

Alongside the story of professionalizing historical archaeol-
ogy, Pykles tells a story about the Mormons. Heretofore, little
attention has been given to the “archaeology” of the Mormons,
that is, to how Mormons (LDS and RLDS) pursue scientific
goals and why education—as exemplified by Brigham Young
University—was and is so important to them. Archaeological
discoveries have long been called on as a “scientific” way to
buttress sectarian claims to divine destiny. This necessarily
has meant that supporters of archaeological work within the
two denominations vary in their commitment to scientific
methods and in the way they use history for theological and
proselytizing purposes.
Excavating Nauvoo
On the afternoon of January 5, 1967, J. C. Harrington, “the father of historical archaeology,” and twelve other leading scholars in the field gathered in the North Park Inn Motel near the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. The men had come to Dallas to participate in the International Conference on Historic Archaeology being held at SMU that weekend. The purpose of this exclusive meeting of the Special Committee the day before, however, was to discuss the creation of a professional scholarly society devoted to historical archaeology (the archaeology of the modern world, AD 1400 to the present). Among other things, the participants discussed the need for and purpose of such a society and debated what it should be called. Their deliberations extended into the early hours of the following morning. When the proposal to create the society was presented to the more than 100 conference attendees later that day, the measure was unanimously approved.
Subsequently, officers were elected and details concerning the society’s purpose, meetings, publications, and membership were worked out. By the end of the two-day conference the Special Committee had achieved its purpose, and a milestone in the professional development of the field had been reached. The Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) was officially organized.¹

The year before this historic conference at which the SHA was founded, J. C. Harrington had retired from the National Park Service after nearly thirty years of service, during which he pioneered the field of historical archaeology. Indeed, it was precisely because of his experience and status in the field that Harrington was invited to be a member of the Special Committee that organized the SHA, and why he was elected to the society’s original board of directors. Although retired, Harrington was by no means inactive. In fact, at the time the SHA was created, he and his wife, Virginia, were deeply involved in the archaeology program of Nauvoo Restoration, Inc. (NRI), a nonprofit corporation sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to authentically restore the city of Nauvoo, Illinois, as it was during the Mormon period of the 1840s. For four years (1966–69) they spent their summers in Nauvoo, excavating no fewer than five historic sites, including the massive excavation of the Mormon Temple. It was undoubtedly Harrington’s association with the restoration of Nauvoo at this time that resulted in NRI becoming one of the original institutional members of the newly created SHA in 1967.² In fact, upon his return from the conference in Dallas he eagerly wrote to his colleagues in NRI telling them about

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¹ In fact, upon his return from the conference in Dallas he eagerly wrote to his colleagues in NRI telling them about

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² In fact, upon his return from the conference in Dallas he eagerly wrote to his colleagues in NRI telling them about
the society he had helped organize and about his election to its board. At the end of a long career excavating historic sites, Harrington clearly understood the historical significance of the event. “You will be interested in the meeting at Dallas,” he wrote. “Some 120 professional people (mostly archaeologists) gathered there, primarily for the purpose of organizing a new association dealing with historical archaeology. This shows how the interest and active participation in this field has grown, as ten years ago I doubt if we could have garnered a dozen people.”

The connections between the SHA and the restoration of Nauvoo do not stop there. Fifteen years after it was founded, the SHA, boasting a membership of almost 2,000, created a medal to recognize “scholars who have made outstanding contributions to the field.” Not surprisingly, the award was named in honor of Harrington, acknowledging his significant and lasting contributions as the “founding father” of historical archaeology. Appropriately, the first J. C. Harrington Medal was awarded to Harrington himself at the 1982 meetings of the SHA. Medals have been awarded to qualified recipients at the annual meeting of the society ever since. Significantly, those who designed the award incorporated elements of Harrington’s work into the medal itself. In particular, on the back of the medal are stylized depictions of three archaeological sites that represent “both the discipline as a whole and Harrington’s individual career.” The site chosen to represent the nineteenth-century settlement of the Midwest and the subsequent opening of the Far West was that of the Nauvoo Temple. In this way, the medal symbolically represents and permanently
preserves not only the relationship between Harrington and 
NRI but also the association between the field of historical 
archeology and the restoration of Nauvoo (figure 1).

But what exactly does the restoration of Nauvoo have to do 
with the discipline of historical archeology? The archaeological 
excavations carried out by Harrington and others in connec-
tion with the restoration of Nauvoo took place at precisely the 
same time the field of historical archeology was emerging as 
a professional scholarly discipline. Indeed, the formation of 
the SHA was a sign of the discipline’s unfolding profession-
alization at this time. Accordingly, the Nauvoo excavations 
reflect many important aspects of this critical period in the 
development of the field. On a larger scale, because they took 
place during a pivotal and transitional time in the discipline’s 
development, the excavations in Nauvoo serve as an illuminat-
ing case study of the history of historical archeology at large. 
Indeed, although historical archeology was born long before 
the Nauvoo excavations began, and continues to thrive after
they ceased, the historical archaeology of Nauvoo remarkably illustrates the principal contours of the field’s development over time. Thus, even though Nauvoo’s archaeology programs have long since closed down, the story of the excavations at Nauvoo deserves to be remembered for what it reveals about the history of historical archaeology in general.

A Short History of Historical Archaeology
To appreciate why the historical archaeology of Nauvoo is such an excellent case study of the field’s historical development, an understanding of the history of historical archaeology in the United States is required. Although there are numerous isolated examples of excavations at historical sites from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, the proper origins of historical archaeology in the United States are linked to the American historic preservation movement of the late 1800s and early 1900s. A crucial element to both the success of historic preservation and, by extension, historical archaeology was the passage of the 1906 Antiquities Act, which was the first law to establish legal protection and public support for the nation’s archaeological and historic sites. Private efforts were also instrumental in this process. In fact, the Rockefeller-sponsored restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, begun in 1927, was especially influential in drawing attention to and generating interest in historic preservation and the restoration of historic sites.

Although these events were influential in setting the stage, the true formal beginnings of historical archaeology in the United States can be traced to the government’s response to the Great Depression that gripped the country in the 1930s.
Key developments included the creation of relief programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which put a number of archaeologists to work supervising the survey and excavation of hundreds of prehistoric and historical archaeological sites. Equally significant was the passage of the 1935 Historic Sites Act, which made it an official national policy to preserve the country’s historical sites and authorized the NPS (created in 1916) to acquire, preserve, restore, and interpret these sites for public use. It was under these circumstances that historical archaeology had its formal and institutional beginnings, starting with the pioneering work of J. C. Harrington at the site of the first permanent English settlement in America at Jamestown, Virginia.

The NPS offered Harrington a position at Jamestown in 1936 because the archaeology program, begun two years earlier with CCC workers, was faltering. Harrington was at first reluctant to work on a site “only” 300 years old, but the salary was more than he could turn down. Thus, in the fall of 1936, three months after the federal government designated Jamestown and the surrounding area Colonial National Historic Park, Harrington left his graduate studies at the University of Chicago and assumed control of the government-sponsored excavations. Over the course of the next five years, until the breakout of the Second World War, Harrington developed many of the basic field techniques for excavating historical sites, an effort that, in time, earned him the moniker of “father of historical archaeology.”

Harrington’s work at Jamestown and his later excavations at Fort Raleigh, North Carolina, and Fort Necessity, Pennsyl-
vania, among other sites, are characteristic of the way historical archaeology was originally conceived and practiced. Most excavations in these early years were sponsored by government or private institutions and were specifically oriented toward history and the interpretation and restoration of sites famous in American or regional history. As such, the investigation of architectural remains, necessary for accurate restoration, was frequently emphasized over the study of artifacts. In fact, artifacts, if incorporated at all, were primarily used to help date particular features and to illustrate the types of objects uncovered at a site. At the same time, the display and interpretation of excavations to the visiting public was frequently a component of this early work. This emphasis on history and historic site restoration and interpretation dominated the field in its early years. Indeed, up until the 1960s, the majority of archaeologists involved in this kind of work used the term coined by Harrington himself to describe their activities: “historic site archaeology.”

Things changed in the 1960s, however. This was a decade of professionalization for historical archaeology. During this time the young field outgrew its role as an auxiliary to historic preservation and became a professional discipline of its own. A significant factor in this development was the emergence of historical archaeology in the university classroom. What was probably the first course in the United States to carry the title of Historical Archaeology was taught at the University of Pennsylvania by NPS archaeologist John L. Cotter in the 1960–61 academic year. Over the next few years other courses were introduced at universities across the nation, including the University of Arizona, by Arthur Woodward, Harvard Univer-
sity, by Stephen Williams, the University of Florida, by Charles Fairbanks, Illinois State University, by Edward B. Jelks, the University of California–Santa Barbara, by James Deetz, and the University of Idaho, by Roderick Sprague. From these classes and those that followed there emerged the first generation of professionally trained historical archaeologists in North America.

A second key event in the professionalization of the field was the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act. By requiring all federal agencies to be responsible stewards of the historic properties within their jurisdictions, this mandate created new jobs in government agencies outside the NPS, many of which were filled by the growing number of university-trained historical archaeologists. Equally significant, the law also provided federal funding for work on historic properties, including archaeological excavations. In short, the National Historic Preservation Act stimulated the professional growth of the field by creating both employment and funding opportunities for the expanding corps of professionally trained historical archaeologists emerging from the nation’s universities.

The capstone event for this period of professionalization was the organization of the SHA in 1967. Although preceded by the Conference on Historic Site Archaeology (founded in 1960) and the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology (organized in 1966), the SHA was the scholarly association that ultimately gave the discipline an independent, professional, and viable foundation in the United States. Indeed, the SHA afforded the growing community of historical archaeologists a professional and autonomous society that represented their unique interests.
Since its establishment as a legitimate and independent professional discipline, historical archaeology has continued to thrive in the United States and abroad. The SHA currently has more than 2,000 individual members, and historical archaeology is the most commonly practiced type of archaeology in the United States. Federal legislation since the 1960s has stimulated this growth by requiring archaeological investigation prior to all government-sponsored building projects. The resulting explosion of cultural resource management (CRM) archaeology has significantly increased the ranks of practicing historical archaeologists in the nation, but it has also thrust the discipline into the foreign environment of a marketplace economy, where its scholarly goals are often muddled. Academically, at least, historical archaeology is theoretically grounded in anthropology. However, much of the actual on-the-ground historical archaeology continues to be motivated by historicalist research goals and objectives. This partly reflects the predominance of nonacademic sources of funding. Recent decades have also witnessed the discipline’s growth internationally. Especially significant in this regard are the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology in Europe, established in 1967–68, the Australian Society for Historical Archaeology, founded in 1970, and the Historical Archaeology Research Group at the University of Cape Town, begun in 1987. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the discipline continues to grow both nationally and internationally and remains secure in its professional standing.11

It is significant that the two beginnings of historical archaeology—its formal beginnings in the 1930s and its professional beginnings in the 1960s—both coincided with periods
of low national morale among American citizens. Whereas the economic hardships of the Great Depression bred feelings of distrust and resentment toward the federal government in the 1930s, the fearful suspicions of the cold war and the nation’s involvement in the Vietnam War led many in the 1960s to question the government’s authority. Notably, in both cases government officials turned to the nation’s historic sites to help remedy the diminishing sense of national unity. In both instances federal laws relating to historic preservation were passed (the 1935 Historic Sites Act and the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act) as part of efforts to revitalize public faith in the federal government and restore national pride among American citizens. Regardless of whether or not these acts were successful in fostering renewed nationalism, by establishing federal sanction and support for work on historic sites, including archaeological investigations, both pieces of legislation had a significant impact on the development of historical archaeology in the United States.

The restoration of Nauvoo was conceived of and carried out amid these events. As a result, the history of Nauvoo’s restoration in many ways parallels the history of historical archaeology in the United States; conversely, the rise of historical archaeology in America is duly reflected in the history of the restoration of Nauvoo. Indeed, the archaeological excavations undertaken for the restoration of Nauvoo took place at precisely the same time that historical archaeology was emerging from its institutional roots in the American historic preservation movement and transitioning into a professional and autonomous scholarly discipline. Consequently, the historical archaeology
at Nauvoo serves as a window onto important developments in the history of the field.

This book seeks to illustrate the rise of historical archaeology in America by documenting the history of the restoration of Nauvoo. As the primary concern is the history of historical archaeology, particular emphasis is given to the archaeological excavations undertaken in the historic city. The first chapter outlines the historical background for the restoration of Nauvoo, including the early interest of federal, state, and private institutions in restoring the historic city. Chapter two describes the actual restoration of Nauvoo, tracing the efforts of the different parties involved in the restoration projects. Chapter three discusses the decline of the restoration projects in the city and details the conflicts over interpretation that precipitated this decline. Building on the three previous chapters, chapter four tells the story of the Nauvoo excavations, highlighting their origins, rise, and eventual demise within the context of the different restoration projects. Finally, the fifth and concluding chapter discusses the ways in which the Nauvoo excavations characterize the history of historical archaeology as a whole and summarizes their significance in terms of the discipline’s development over time.

Altogether, the history of historical archaeology in Nauvoo is an excellent case study in the history of the discipline at large. Indeed, the rise of historical archaeology in America is plainly illustrated in the Nauvoo excavations. What follows is an account of this history, even, in Michael Coe’s phrase, “the archaeology of the Mormons themselves.”12