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The following is an experience I had while teaching at the Brigham Young University Jerusalem Center For Near Eastern Studies.

While visiting with the wife of the Galilee Branch President during the 1988 Winter/Spring Semester in Jerusalem I was given a very interesting insight into early Church history in Palestine and the lives of two young missionaries; Elder Haag and Clark.

The Branch Presidents' wife indicated that the Church was seeking to receive official recognition from the Israeli government in the mid 1960's. One of the governments stipulation for recognition was concrete evidence or proof that the LDS Church had a long term existence in the Holy Land. Organizations such as the Catholics, Greek Orthodox or Armenians would have little trouble proving continuance in Israel.

One of the keys to the Church being able to establish past residence in the Holy Land is a beautiful cemetery in Haifa, Israel. Here lies the graves of two young Mormon missionaries, Elder Haag and Elder Clark. Both died in Haifa near the turn of the century while serving missions for the LDS Church. Both Elders as well as the graves of Georg and Magdalene Grau (also early members of the Church) were used as concrete evidence of the Church's presence in the Holy Land.

While some may wonder why these young men died so far away from home their missions and death were later used by the Lord in establishing His work in the Holy Land.

Ray Huntington

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