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# Brigham Young University Studies

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# Guest Editor's Prologue

LaMar C. Berrett

The Mormon pioneers abandoned their comfortable homes in Nauvoo in 1846 to face a new life-style that entailed hardships heretofore unexperienced by many of the newly converted Saints. What was their destiny? Where were they going? How would they survive? Answers were not clear to the majority, but their faith in God and his representative, Brigham Young, gave them the strength necessary to meet the hardships with undaunted determination. This strong faith was expressed in Oliver B. Huntington's journal when the Saints were faced with enlistment in the Mormon Battalion: "It might seem strange that they should go and fight for a country that would not protect them; but they got well payed [*sic*] for it and only enlisted for one year, but even without that *it was the council [sic] of the heads, and that would make it right.*"<sup>1</sup>

This issue of *BYU Studies* is concerned with the first part of the Mormon pioneer trek to the Great Basin—the Iowa experience. It deals with the movement of thousands of Saints from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Council Bluffs, Winter Quarters, and other "camping sites" along the Missouri River—the crossing of "one" state in the one year—1846.

Lewis Clark Christian's research on the Mormon foreknowledge of the West helps the reader to understand that the "move West" was a concept taught by Joseph Smith. Carefully prepared maps, interviews, and studies helped the Saints have understanding of "where they were going."

Where they did go as well as what trails they were following is meticulously laid out by "trails-master" Stanley B. Kimball.

An account of "nine babies born on the first night of pioneer travel out of Nauvoo" has caused historians to ask many questions. Which was the first night? Did the Mormons send all the pregnant

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LaMar C. Berrett, professor of religious instruction, is the director of the Church History Area of the Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University.

<sup>1</sup>Oliver B. Huntington Diary 1842-1847, Part 1, typescript, p. 104, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; italics added.

wives across the Mississippi River on the first day? Carol Lynn Pearson has discovered an answer to this question which has long interested historians.

Susan Easton explains the suffering and deaths in Iowa, as does Leland Gentry, who describes the way stations of Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah. Here the Saints showed their great industry and cooperative spirit.

Did the pioneers face danger from the Indian population of Iowa? Lawrence Coates discusses this question, as well as Joseph Smith's interactions earlier with these Indians.

While the Mormons were traveling across Iowa, the United States government recruited Mormon males to go to war against Mexico. What was the reaction by the Saints and their leaders to this "call to war"? John Yurtinus answers these questions.

Church Historian Leonard Arrington provides a clearer insight into the life of the non-Mormon friend of the Church Thomas L. Kane, an insight that helps the reader appreciate not only Kane's role with the Mormon Battalion but with the Saints in general.

Knowing the purpose and reasons for the writing of "Come, Come, Ye Saints," the greatest marching song of the Mormon pioneers, will dispel some of the legends surrounding this favorite hymn. The reasons become clearer thanks to the research efforts of Paul Dahl, who first gathered these facts.

The Iowa experience was a "blessing in disguise" explains historian Reed C. Durham, Jr. Although there were hardships, the communities along the way, the help of good Iowans and Missourians, and the available timber, grass, and animals made the Saints' experience bearable as they completed the first leg of the great Mormon pioneer exodus.

# “In Honorable Remembrance”: Thomas L. Kane’s Services to the Mormons

Leonard J. Arrington

In May 1846 Elder Jesse C. Little was traveling in the Eastern States in behalf of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their founding prophet, Joseph Smith, and his brother Hyrum, having been assassinated in Carthage, Illinois, in June 1844, and there having been determined and repeated attempts on the part of Mormon-hating mobs to drive them from their homes in western Illinois, the body of the Church had finally determined during the winter of 1845–1846 to leave Illinois and migrate to the Far West. Under the leadership of Brigham Young, President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles of the Church, sixteen thousand members of the Church living in the Midwest would travel overland, beginning in the spring of 1846; the several hundred members of the Church living along the Atlantic would travel by sea around Cape Horn and on to Yerba Buena, the contemporary name for San Francisco, under the leadership of Samuel Brannan. Elder Little was appointed to replace Elder Brannan as leader of the Church in the Eastern States and was directed to make contact with government officials in Washington, D.C., to determine whether they would be willing to offer any assistance to those traveling by land or by sea. On 13 May 1846, Elder Little addressed a special conference of the Church in Philadelphia.

In attendance at the Philadelphia conference was a young adult nonmember, Thomas L. Kane. Son of John Kintzing Kane, a prominent federal judge, young Kane had gone to school in Philadelphia, and in his seventeenth year had gone to the British Isles and France to visit relatives and to study. Among those he studied with was Auguste Comte, the founder of modern sociology, who doubtless

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Leonard J. Arrington is director of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History and is the Lemuel H. Redd Professor of Western History at Brigham Young University. A version of this paper was reproduced in 1980 as a Task Paper for the History Division of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

influenced the strong social conscience in the young idealist. Upon his return to Philadelphia, Thomas served as a law clerk to his father and was admitted to the bar. At the same time, he read in eastern papers accounts of the persecution of the Mormons, of their having been driven from their beautiful city of Nauvoo, Illinois, in February 1846, and of their heroic migration across Iowa in the weeks that followed. Kane's curiosity was piqued and his humanitarian impulses stirred. When he read of Elder Little's presence in Philadelphia, and of his plan to address the conference, Thomas decided to attend. He was twenty-four years old at that time.

After the morning session of conference, Thomas Kane introduced himself to Elder Little and invited him home. The conversation there lasted several hours. In response to young Kane's earnest questions, Elder Little told not only of the Mormon religion but also of the exodus from Nauvoo, of the voyage of the ship *Brooklyn* to California, and of his own instructions to enlist the possible assistance of the federal government in the move to the West. Indeed, the conversation continued so long that Elder Little failed to get to that Wednesday evening's session of the conference where he had been scheduled to speak.

Two days later the eager young lawyer appeared at Elder Little's hotel room and asked for a letter of introduction to Brigham Young. He had decided to go to California with the Mormons, and he wished to use his good offices to help out the Saints in their plight. There followed a series of meetings between Kane and Elder Little, who was seven years Kane's senior. Thomas Kane gave Elder Little an introduction to the vice-president of the United States, George M. Dallas.

Elder Little saw the vice-president and other leading federal officials during the days that followed. Early in June he wrote Kane, who had never been robust (he was 5' 6" and weighed a frail 130 pounds), to "get up from his couch, and his pains should leave him." Against the advice of his personal physician and family, Thomas Kane went immediately to Washington, arriving there on 7 June and reporting that he felt better than he had for days. The two men called upon a number of government officials during the next five days and had more than one conference with the president of the United States, James K. Polk. As the result of their negotiations, the government agreed to enlist a battalion of five hundred able-bodied young Mormons to participate in the campaign to wrest the West from Mexico. As a part of the Army of the West, they would travel overland from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to San Diego,

California. This they reasoned would help the Mormons not only by providing government transportation for these men, and a number of Mormon women who were to go along as laundresses and cooks, but also would provide pay in gold which might be used to help purchase provisions and equipment for others who would follow.

The favorable agreement negotiated, Thomas Kane and Elder Little went to St. Louis, and Kane then went on to Leavenworth to deliver secret dispatches from the president and the secretary of war to army officials there. Captain James Allen went immediately to the Mormon camps in Iowa to begin the recruiting, and Thomas Kane joined the Mormons on 11 July at their temporary headquarters on the bluffs on the Iowa side of the Missouri, which, out of respect for Mr. Kane, they later named Kaneshville.

Shortly after his arrival, Kane was taken ill. Although he was in real danger of dying from pulmonary tuberculosis, he was nevertheless aware of all that was going on about him. He was forever grateful for the tender nursing and for the solicitude of those who took care of him. He remembered and later described the farewell ball honoring those who had joined the Battalion, the women with pierced ears who had donated their gold earrings to the common purse, and the men with "useless watch pockets," who had sold their watches to buy wagons and supplies. There were hardship, hunger, and death among the Latter-day Saints, but, to Kane's amazement and pleasure, there was also a spirit of hope and good humor. As an example of the latter, it appears that one of the Saints developed an excruciating toothache, and yet there was no one around who could help him. Finally, as written in his diary, he resorted to desperate measures:

I anointed the tooth, laid hands on myself, and uttered a prayer, but there was no relief. I then recollected that James said that faith without works is dead. So I took out my pliers and with a strong effort managed to pull out the tooth. Sure enough, children, it has never ached since.<sup>1</sup>

During his long convalescence, Thomas Kane often strolled through the woods, conversed with the Mormon people, and observed their preparations for the western trek and their manner of life. He was often accompanied on these rambles by Henry G. Boyle, a member of the Battalion. During one of these rambles, wrote Boyle, he and Kane heard one of the Latter-day Saint men

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<sup>1</sup>From the diary of Charles H. Hart, Library-Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as Church Archives).

praying in secret in the skirt of the woods in the rear of one of our camps. Although we were not near enough to distinguish words or sentences, it seemed to affect [Kane] deeply, and as we walked away he observed that our people were a praying people, and that was evidence enough to him that we were sincere and honest in our faith.

Not long after this, when taking another walk, following a narrow path through a thicket of undergrowth, we came suddenly within a few feet of a man who had just commenced to pray. As we wore on our feet Indian mocassins, we made no perceptible noise, and the man evidently thought himself alone and praying in secret. At the time, I was in the path just in the rear of the Colonel, who, on hearing the beginning of the man's supplication, halted, and, in doing so, turned half around, with his face in the bright light of the full moon, and in such a position that every feature was plain to my view.

I never listened to such a prayer, so contrite, so earnest and fervent, and so full of inspiration. We had involuntarily taken off our hats as though we were in a sacred presence. I never can forget my feelings on that occasion. Neither can I describe them, and yet the Colonel was more deeply affected than I was. As he stood there I could see the tears falling fast from his face, while his bosom swelled with the fullness of his emotions. And for some time after the man had arisen from his knees and walked away towards his encampment, the Colonel sobbed like a child and could not trust himself to utter a word. When, finally, he did get control of his feelings, his first words were, "I am satisfied; your people are solemnly and terribly in earnest."<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Kane's own recollection of these experiences is equally vivid:

I believe there is a crisis in the life of every man, when he is called upon to decide seriously and permanently if he will die unto sin and live unto righteousness. . . . Such an event, I believe . . . , was my visit to [the Mormon camps on the Missouri]. . . . It was the spectacle of your noble self denial and suffering for conscience sake, [that] first made a truly serious and abiding impression upon my mind, commanding me to note that there was something higher and better than the pursuit of the interests of earthly life for the spirit made after the image of Deity. . . .

I had great temptations to a political career. . . . When I left Washington in May 1846 President Polk gave me *carte blanche* as to what I should ask for you on my return. The mixed meanness and malice of others of his adherents caused him to prove faithless to his promises, and, instead of redeeming these, he endeavored to persuade me to go abroad upon other public service. But now, I have lost almost entirely the natural love for intrigue and management that once were a prominent trait of my character.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>H. G. Boyle, "A True Friend," *Juvenile Instructor* 17 (1 March 1882): 74.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas L. Kane to "My dear friends, all of you [Brigham Young and associates]," 11 July 1850, Church Archives.

At the time he wrote the preceding statement, Kane declared he had specified in his will that he wished his heart to be deposited in the great temple in Salt Lake City “that, after death, it may repose, where in metaphor at least it often was when living.” (This extraordinary action was, of course, never taken.)

It was partly as a result of his illness and of his spiritual experiences that, although not a member of the Church, Thomas Kane requested the Church’s patriarch, John Smith, uncle of the slain prophet Joseph Smith, to give him a special blessing. This blessing, given 7 September 1846 at Cutler’s Park, Omaha Nation, is included with others in a sacred book in the Church Archives in Salt Lake City:

Inasmuch as you have had in your heart to promote the interest of the Children of God, the Lord is well pleased with your exertions. He has given His angels charge over you to guard you in times of danger, to help you in time of trouble, and to defend you from your enemies. Not a hair of your head will fall by the hand of an enemy. For you are called to do a great work on the earth and you shall be blessed in all your undertakings. Your name shall be had in honorable remembrance among the Saints to all generations. You shall have a comforter to comfort your heart, and to sustain you in all your trials. You shall raise up sons and daughters that shall be esteemed as the excellent of the earth.<sup>4</sup>

As a result of these experiences and blessings, Thomas Kane later wrote, he committed himself to being a friend of the Latter-day Saints—their “second in an affair of honor,” as he expressed it—identified forever after as one who stood “in the vindication and defense” of the Latter-day Saints. I learned to “feel our brotherhood,” he later wrote. Those experiences “taught me,” he said, “to know from the heart, that I love you, and that you love me in turn.” It fit me, he wrote, “for the inheritance of my higher humanity, to become truly pure and truly strong—to do the work of God persevering unto the end.”<sup>5</sup> That was the experience which leads Latter-day Saints to express love and admiration for General Kane to this day.

A recitation of all of General Kane’s services on behalf of the Latter-day Saints would require a long book to detail. Much of this has already been done by the late Albert L. Zobell in his book, *Sentinel in the East: A Biography of Thomas L. Kane*, published in 1965. Let me select some of those contributions and associations with the Saints which deserve special mention.

While in the Mormon camps during the summer of 1846, Thomas Kane helped to secure consent of the Potawatomi Indians

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<sup>4</sup>John Smith’s Patriarchal Blessings, 1846–1849, p. 211, Church Archives.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas L. Kane to “My dear friends,” 11 July 1850, Church Archives.

for the Mormons to occupy part of their lands. On his return to Philadelphia, he stopped in Nauvoo to witness with his own eyes the sad situation created by the actions of the anti-Mormons of that region. When he reached the East, he went to Washington to inform the president firsthand of what he had seen. He then traveled about the metropolitan areas of the East in an effort to correct the misconceptions that existed about the Mormons and their religion. In the years that followed he often wrote letters to the president of the United States about "the Mormon situation," made personal visits to cabinet members and members of Congress, wrote letters to editors of leading newspapers, and wrote regularly to Mormon leaders in the Great Basin giving them advice and encouragement. It was he who suggested the formation of the State of Deseret and sought congressional approval for its recognition. As part of the campaign to secure the latter, he was granted the opportunity of addressing the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on the Mormons. While preparing this address, he was afflicted with a severe case of gout as well as pulmonary hemorrhages and was in constant and excruciating pain. Only sincere devotion to the people of whom he was to speak drove him to endure the pain so the address might be prepared and given. With his approval and encouragement this lofty address, written and spoken with intense conviction, was published as an eighty-four page pamphlet, which was sent to the chief executive, cabinet members, senators, congressmen, editors, and other prominent men in Washington and other eastern cities.

Even though the State of Deseret for which he lobbied was not approved, and a territorial government instituted instead, the Mormons were immensely grateful to Thomas Kane for his help. They sent him some of the gold which the Mormon Battalion members brought back from California (one of them, with James Marshall, had been involved in the discovery of gold on Sutter's Creek), and they also sent him a specially made wolfskin sleigh robe. Kane had the gold made into seal rings for Horace Greeley and other persons who had assisted in the vindication of the Mormons, and one each for the leaders of Deseret: Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards. The sleigh robe was given to his brother Elisha Kane, who was just leaving for his mission of mercy to search for Sir John Franklin, imprisoned in the Arctic ice. The robe, wrote Kane to Brigham Young, "may be only the more honored by being the first missionary of Mormonism to the North Pole."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Thomas L. Kane to "My friends [Brigham Young and associates]," 24 September 1850, Church Archives.

Later, of course, the Mormons offered to elect Colonel Kane as their delegate to Congress, but he declined, saying he could do more for the people as an independent than as one of their agents.

All this is not to imply that Thomas Kane's interests were restricted only to the Latter-day Saints. For years he also lobbied in the interests of American Indians. Similarly, he embraced the cause of Abolitionism, and he became an active agent in the underground railroad. He managed the Philadelphia House of Refuge, actively sought to improve conditions in the Pennsylvania penitentiary, and established and maintained at his own expense an infant school modeled on the experimental kindergartens of France, Switzerland, and Italy. He traveled on three occasions to the West Indies to study British efforts at slave emancipation. In 1853, he married Elizabeth Dennistoun Wood, his second cousin, who later became a doctor of medicine, graduating from the Woman's Medical College of Philadelphia, of which Kane was one of the founders.<sup>7</sup>

Probably the most monumental and spectacular service of Colonel Kane to the Mormon people occurred during what is usually referred to as the Utah War, or perhaps more accurately as Buchanan's Blunder. President James Buchanan had received reports from three appointed federal officials who had served in Utah that the Mormons were in a state of substantial rebellion, that federal court records had been destroyed, that mail service was openly interfered with, and that government officials were fearful of their lives. Without the consent of Congress, which was not in session, without any investigation, and possibly with the hope of making some political capital out of the situation, President Buchanan ordered the bulk of the United States Army to Utah to install newly appointed territorial officials in Utah, by force if necessary. He did this without conveying any official word to Brigham Young, who was the governor, or to other officials and residents of Utah Territory. The Utah Expedition, consisting of about twenty-five hundred troops and about as many drivers, suppliers, and other hangers-on, got underway from Fort Leavenworth in the summer of 1857. A number of Mormons headed for Salt Lake Valley saw this movement of troops, infiltrated their companies, and learned that they were headed for Utah "to scalp old Brigham," "massacre Mormon leaders," and "drive the hated Mormons from their homes." Four of these Mormon observers drove their horses as

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<sup>7</sup>It was to this college that many Mormon women were sent in the 1870s and 1880s to obtain medical training which they then imparted in Salt Lake City and trained most of the early women doctors in the Great Basin. The current member of the Mormon Church Presidency, N. Eldon Tanner, was delivered by one of these early-trained doctors, Ellis Shipp, and Ellis Shipp trained Anna Maria Swenson, a midwife, who delivered me—Leonard J. Arrington—on an isolated farmstead in southcentral Idaho in 1917.

rapidly as they dared and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley the afternoon of 24 July 1857. The bulk of the settlers, including Brigham Young, were in Big Cottonwood Canyon southeast of Salt Lake City celebrating the tenth anniversary of their entrance into the Salt Lake Valley.

Having no official notice of the advance of the expedition, and listening to the reports of the Mormon infiltrators about the army's intentions, Brigham Young and his associates could only regard the troops as a repetition of Missouri and Illinois—a federal militia on its way to exterminate the Mormons. The Saints hurriedly armed, dispatched an army to eastern Utah to intercept the troops, and prepared for the worst. Mormon raiders slowed the movement of the troops by burning their supplies and capturing their cattle and horses. So effective were these efforts that Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, who commanded the troops, ordered them to “hole up” at Fort Bridger in southwestern Wyoming. There they spent the winter of 1857–1858.

Meanwhile, Colonel Kane, learning of the dispatch of the expedition and realizing the danger to the Saints in this precipitous action of President Buchanan, took immediate steps to intercede on their behalf. He contacted newspaper friends and political acquaintances and delivered to President Buchanan a letter recounting the treatment given the Mormons at the hands of the government from the Missouri period to the calling of the expedition. Finally, he determined he would offer to serve as a mediator. His willingness to do the latter demonstrates his personal courage and also his understanding that only the conciliation of a person respected by both sides could avoid bloodshed. We should not overlook the heroism of this volunteer action. He had married within the past five years, he was rearing a family, he had recently lost his elder brother, Elisha. His father was strongly opposed to any course that would take him to Utah. The father felt the perils were too great: Thomas's health was poor, and it was likely that he would not survive the trip.

At any rate, in December 1857 Thomas Kane expressed to President Buchanan his desire to mediate the dispute, and the president congratulated him on his willingness to abandon the comforts of friends, family, and home, and go to Utah at his own expense without official position during the inclement season of the year. “Your only reward,” wrote the president, “must be a consciousness that you are doing your duty.” In a letter written later in the day, the president added that Colonel Kane had the president's confidence and was “recommended to the favorable regard of all the officers of

the United States whom he would meet as he traveled.”<sup>8</sup> Leaving on a steamer from New York in January, Kane was accompanied by a black servant named Osborne, and he conveniently appropriated that name, traveling as Dr. A. Osborne, a botanist connected with the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. They debarked at Panama, crossed the Isthmus, and sailed up the California coast, from where they hurried on to the Mormon community of San Bernardino. They were assisted there by two Mormon families, who arranged transportation for them to Utah and provided them with provisions and equipment.

Colonel Kane, alias Dr. Osborne, arrived in Salt Lake City on 25 February and immediately held a series of conferences with Mormon leaders. Brigham Young’s journal describes the result as follows:

Colonel Kane . . . tried to point out a policy for me to pursue. But I told him I should not turn to the right or to the left, or pursue any course except as God dictated. . . . When he found that I would be informed only as the Spirit of the Lord led me, he was at first discouraged. Then he said, I could dictate he would execute. I told him that as he had been inspired to come here, he should go to the Army and do as the Spirit of the Lord led him, and all should be right. He did so and all was right.<sup>9</sup>

When talk turned to the Colonel’s health, President Young said:

The Lord has sent you here, friend Thomas, and He will not let you die. No, you cannot die until your work is done. Your name will live with the Saints in all eternity. You have done a great work, and you will do a greater work still.<sup>10</sup>

About ten days after his arrival in Salt Lake City, the Colonel started for the army camps in Wyoming, accompanied by an escort of Mormons. As he neared the camps, he dismissed the escort and rode on alone. He arrived there exhausted, and the soldiers had to take him from his horse. But he insisted on transacting his business with the newly appointed governor, Alfred Cumming. He was able to persuade Governor Cumming that the Mormons would recognize Cumming as governor, that the court records were not burned, that the Mormons were not in a state of rebellion against the government, and that the army should not be allowed to remain in Salt Lake Valley. (Kane had heard enough soldier boasts to know what they

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<sup>8</sup>These letters are published in Albert L. Zobell, Jr., *Sentinel in the East: A Biography of Thomas L. Kane* (Salt Lake City: Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr., 1965), pp. 104–106.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

would do if they were allowed to mingle in Mormon society.) The negotiation with the army leaders was not so pleasant. One of Colonel Johnston's officers shot at Kane, narrowly missing him. Colonel Johnston dispatched an orderly to invite Kane to dinner, but the orderly, perhaps purposely, placed Kane under arrest. With Cumming's approval, Kane then sent a challenge for a duel to Johnston. The affair blew over quickly when Kane was informed that Colonel Johnston had not ordered the arrest.

Thomas Kane and Governor Cumming left Camp Scott, the army camp, for the Salt Lake Valley in April and there met Brigham Young. The new governor verified that President Buchanan's charges were untrue and that he would be acknowledged as governor. When Kane had what he called his "final and decisive" interview with Alfred Cumming, on 24 April, he wrote in his diary: "I am and know myself to be happy."<sup>11</sup> Kane then left the Salt Lake Valley, accompanied Governor Cumming as far as Camp Scott, and then continued east. He reported to President Buchanan, who then arranged to have the Mormons "pardoned" and to have the army located no closer than forty miles from Salt Lake City. Thomas Kane had accomplished his mission and not a person was killed in what is called the Utah War. It was a magnificent triumph; at great personal sacrifice Colonel Kane had accomplished everything he had hoped. In his next annual message to Congress, President Buchanan paid special tribute to Kane:

I cannot refrain from mentioning . . . the valuable services of Colonel Thomas L. Kane, who from motives of pure benevolence, and without any official character or pecuniary compensation, visited Utah during the last inclement winter for the purpose of contributing to the pacification of the territory.<sup>12</sup>

The Mormon tribute written by Wilford Woodruff was even more glowing:

[You were] an instrument in the hands of God, and you were inspired by Him to turn away . . . the edge of the sword, and save the effusion of much blood, and performing what the combined wisdom of the nation could not accomplish, changing the whole face of affairs, the effects of which will remain forever.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Diary of Thomas L. Kane, in possession of E. Kent Kane, near Kane, Pennsylvania. Also Oscar O. Winther, ed., *The Private Papers and Diary of Thomas Leiper Kane: A Friend of the Mormons* (San Francisco: Gelber-Lilienthal, 1937), p. ix.

<sup>12</sup>Zobell, *Sentinel in the East*, p. 172.

<sup>13</sup>Wilford Woodruff to Thomas L. Kane, Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1859, p. 214, Church Archives.

But all the feelings of satisfaction were as nothing. For shortly after this diplomatic triumph, while still in Utah, Kane received the news that his father had died during his absence. The news almost broke his heart.

The years that followed saw Colonel Kane's involvement in the Civil War. It is said, in fact, that Colonel Kane was the first man to offer his services to the governor of Pennsylvania. From the wooded hills of the northcentral part of the state he raised up a regiment of loggers, hunters, raftsmen, and farmers who were known as the "Bucktails," because each wore a bucktail in his hat. This group elected Kane as their colonel and went on to achieve distinction. As the group headed for Richmond, Kane was wounded at Dranesville, captured at Harrisonburg, Virginia, but was freed in a prisoner exchange which made it possible for him to get back into action. He distinguished himself again at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Ill-health forced him to resign from the service in November 1863. For his meritorious service at Gettysburg, he was brevetted major general. He had proved to be a gallant soldier and fearless leader.

The war having depleted his personal fortune, as well as his health, the now General Kane turned to his one remaining opportunity, the undeveloped land owned by his family in McKean County. He took his family there to begin life anew. He built a log cabin, a sawmill, a barn, and a number of cabins for his workmen. He opened roads, built railroads, and in a few years once more became financially independent. He lived like a squire in the midst of his lands and holdings. A succession of Mormon missionaries and envoys visited him with regularity and were regarded as "family." Upon the urging of Brigham Young, he took Elizabeth and his two smallest children, Evan and Thomas L., Jr., and a black cook to Utah to spend the winter of 1872-1873. His wife's father later published Elizabeth's letters in a book, which was recently reprinted, *Twelve Mormon Homes Visited in Succession on a Journey through Utah to Arizona* (1874). It contains fine descriptions of Mormon social customs and gives insights into Mormon-Indian relationships. Elizabeth pictures Brigham Young, whom both she and her husband admired, as a leader who gained his power from a deep interest and concern for the welfare of his people. Both Elizabeth and Thomas received patriarchal blessings in St. George during this trip.

During that trip General Kane intended to keep notes of his conversations with Brigham Young and hoped to do a biography of him, but this was never accomplished. General Kane did prepare a will for President Young, assisted him in separating his own assets from

those of the Church, and prepared documents which helped him in founding the Brigham Young College in Logan, the Brigham Young Academy in Provo, and the Young University in Salt Lake City, which later was absorbed into the University of Utah. When President Young died in 1877, General Kane characteristically dropped everything and hurried from Philadelphia to Salt Lake City to express his sorrow and to assure that the Mormon cause would continue to prosper despite the death of their leader for whom he had so much affection and respect. At that time the General commented to one of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

When the word came to me of President Young's demise, I was somewhat concerned . . . as to the position in which matters [in the Church] would be placed . . . ; but when I met with the brethren, conversed with President John Taylor, looked over the men who stood around him as leaders, I said to myself, the Lord has made ample provision for the preservation of that cause which lies near to my heart.<sup>14</sup>

As his development project in northwestern Pennsylvania progressed, Kane built a chapel, in 1878, on behalf of his aunt, Ann Gray Thomas, of Philadelphia, who wanted the new town of Kane to have a chapel. As all can observe, it was and is a magnificent chapel. General Kane also engaged in other philanthropies. He was the first president of the Pennsylvania Board of State Charities, a member of the American Philosophical Society, and organizer of the New York, Lake Erie, and Western Coal Railroad Company, serving as its president. He also ordered, directed, and financed the building of what was described for many decades as the largest railroad bridge in the world, the 2,053-foot Kinzua viaduct that spans the 301-foot deep Kinzua Creek Valley near Kane. He was the author of two books in addition to his discourse on the Mormons: *Alaska*, published in 1868, and *Coahuila* (a province in Mexico), published in 1877.

On 26 December 1883, General Kane, at sixty-one years of age, died of pneumonia at his home in Philadelphia. Even in his last moments his thoughts were of a people and a faith that he loved and respected. A letter from Elizabeth to George Q. Cannon described his last moments:

Your friend suffered intensely until a few hours of his release, his mind was wandering from the outset of the attack. Yet in the intervals of consciousness he was fully persuaded of the approach of death, and made efforts to give us counsel and bid us farewell. In one of these lucid moments he said: "My mind is too heavy, but do send the

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<sup>14</sup>Statement of John Henry Smith, cited in Zobell, *Sentinel in the East*, p. 219.

sweetest message you can make up to my Mormon friends—to all, my dear Mormon friends.” Nothing I could make up could be sweeter to you than this evidence that you were in his last thoughts.<sup>15</sup>

General Kane often expressed to his family and friends that he wished to be buried between the twin stone entrances of his lovely chapel, and this was done. The chapel was later acquired by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has used it, not only for worship services for members in this region but also as a memorial to its special friend. His Latter-day Saint friends also named a city and county in Utah for Thomas L. Kane and in 1959 erected a heroic statue of him, which is placed in the rotunda of the Utah State Capitol. In this and other ways the Church has perpetuated Brigham Young’s promise and prophecy that Thomas L. Kane would always be held “in honorable remembrance” among the Latter-day Saints.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The principal primary sources of information on Thomas L. Kane are the Thomas L. Kane Papers, Church Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, which include many letters from Thomas L. Kane to Brigham Young and other LDS church officials, as well as copies of letters which they sent to Colonel Kane. All of these were transcribed by Edyth Romney and bound in a volume which is in the Office of the LDS Church Historian. Another primary source is the Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives. A large collection of manuscripts—diaries, letters, and other documents—formerly in the vault of E. Kent Kane, near Kane, Pennsylvania, are now at the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. Photostats of many of the documents were given by Mr. Kane to the Church Archives in 1936 and are available there. Kane’s own book, available in many libraries, is Thomas L. Kane, *The Mormons: An Historical Discourse* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Historical Society, 1850). In using the documents in this paper, prepared for oral delivery, I have taken some liberties with original punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and wording, so as to make the narrative smoother and more meaningful.

The most complete study of Thomas L. Kane is Albert L. Zobell, Jr., *Sentinel in the East: A Biography of Thomas L. Kane* (Salt Lake City: Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr., 1965). A fine summary article by Zobell is “Thomas L. Kane, Ambassador to the Mormons,” *Utah Humanities Review* 1 (October 1947): 320–46. See also John H. Frederick, “Kane, Thomas Leiper,” in *Dictionary of American Biography*, p. 258. A good introduction to Kane is in Elizabeth Wood Kane, *Twelve Mormon Homes Visited in Succession on a Journey through Utah to Arizona*, ed. Everett L. Cooley (Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund of the University of Utah, 1974). Some primary documents related to Kane are published in Oscar O. Winther, ed., *The Private Papers and Diary of Thomas Leiper Kane: A Friend of the Mormons* (San Francisco:

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<sup>15</sup>Elizabeth Wood Kane to George Q. Cannon, 30 December 1883, Church Archives.

Gelber-Lilienthal, 1937); and Donald Q. Cannon, "Thomas L. Kane Meets the Mormons," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Fall 1977): 126-28.

The following reminiscences of Thomas L. Kane have been published: George Q. Cannon, "Editorial Thoughts [on the death of General Kane]," *The Juvenile Instructor* 19 (15 January 1884): 24-25; H. G. Boyle, "A True Friend," *Juvenile Instructor* 17 (1 March 1882): 74-75; Augusta Joyce Crocheron, "Reminiscence of General Kane," *The Contributor* 6 (September 1885): 475-77; Junius F. Wells, ed., "General Thomas L. Kane," *The Contributor* 5 (March 1884): 234-39; and [John Q. Cannon], "The Spouting Well at Kane," *The Contributor* 2 (February 1881): 151-53.

Secondary treatments include Wendell J. Ashton, *Theirs Is the Kingdom* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970), pp. 167-205; Norman R. Bowen and Albert L. Zobell, Jr., "General Thomas L. Kane: The Soldier," *The Ensign* 1 (June 1971): 23-27; Norman R. Bowen and Albert L. Zobell, Jr., "General Thomas L. Kane: The Pioneer," *The Ensign* 1 (October 1971): 2-5; and Charles Peterson, "Kingdom Revisited: Thomas L. Kane and Mormon Plans for a Southern Commonwealth, 1869-1877," paper prepared for delivery to Western History Association, 1976.

# Mormon Foreknowledge of the West

Lewis Clark Christian

Among those seeking a new home beyond the Mississippi in 1846 were the Mormons, whose particular brand of religion was obnoxious to their neighbors in Missouri and Illinois. Even though the Mormon migration to the American West was part of the general overland movement of the mid-nineteenth century, it also differed from the broader western migration in some important ways. First, it was a cooperative mass-movement of a whole people, even a whole culture. The Mormons were not gold seekers or hunters or fur trappers. They were home seekers and home builders. Their main purpose was to find a land so remote they could get beyond the reach of their enemies and worship God according to their own pattern and build his kingdom as they had been commanded. Second, by 1846 the Mormon leaders had as extensive a knowledge of the land beyond the Rocky Mountains as was available in the maps and books of the period. Their trek to that region was neither a mere accident nor a sudden inspiration; rather, they had learned all they could about the West prior to their exodus in February 1846.

The forces behind the Mormon interest in and trek to the Great Basin are found in the beginning of Mormon history. The members had moved from New York, where the Church was founded in 1830, to Ohio and Missouri. The impetus for the general westward movements in Mormon history is embodied in two concepts fundamental to Mormonism: that of the establishment of "Zion," which means, in Mormon theology, the place where the righteous Saints will dwell in peace and harmony in the last days; and that of the "gathering," which denotes a general assemblage of all Mormons to "Zion" once it is established. When the Mormons finally realized in late 1845 that they had to abandon the city of Nauvoo because of the pressure from local and state governments in Illinois, they saw this move as the cause of "Zion." This general feeling is seen in a letter written by an early Church leader, Daniel Jones, to Wilford Woodruff. He wrote

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Lewis Clark Christian is a seminary principal in St. George, Utah.

that the “banishment of the Saints from Nauvoo, was . . . far from being the downfall of Mormonism and the last of Zion, & the gathering”; rather it was “another nail in the coffins of scoffers, and laying another corner stone in Zion.”<sup>1</sup>

The Mormons began to prepare themselves early for the move west, which took place in 1846 and 1847. Many early Mormon journals, newspapers, and letters show that part of that preparation was to learn all they could about the western part of America.

#### REFERENCES TO THE WESTERN MOVEMENT IN MORMON HISTORY PRIOR TO 1842

Throughout the 1830s and early 1840s, the West—and more specifically the Rocky Mountain region—was mentioned as a future home for the Saints. As early as 1832, the *Evening and Morning Star* reviewed books on the West<sup>2</sup> and published articles on various expeditions made to the Rocky Mountains.<sup>3</sup> W. W. Phelps, the paper’s editor, described the West as the land of “Zion.”<sup>4</sup>

A number of early Church members wrote of an interest in the West. Among these was Paulina E. Phelps Lyman, who had traveled with her family to Jackson County, Missouri, in 1832 in the first migration of the Saints to that area. She said it was there, in the house of Lyman Wight, that Joseph Smith told her in a blessing she would live to go to the Rocky Mountains.<sup>5</sup>

According to Wilford Woodruff, Joseph Smith told of the eventual exodus of the Church to the Rocky Mountains in a speech to a group assembled at Kirtland, Ohio, on 26 April 1834. Joseph Smith is reported to have said, “This people will go into the Rocky Mountains; they will there build Temples to the Most High.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Daniel Jones to Wilford Woodruff, 2 January 1846, Daniel Jones Collection, Library–Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter cited as Church Archives.

<sup>2</sup>*Evening and Morning Star* (Independence, Missouri), October 1832, p. 6. Ross Cox’s book, *Adventures on the Columbia River, Including the Narrative of a Residence of Six Years on the Western Side of the Rocky Mountains, among Various Tribes of Indians hitherto Unknown: Together with A Journey across the American Continent* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1832) was reviewed. The book, which described the Oregon territory and Indian cultures, gave the Saints an early exposure to that region to which their attention would be turned in the early 1840s.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, June 1832, p. 6. Special mention was made of Captains Bonneville, Walker, Sublett, Wythe, and Blackwell leading expeditions to the Rocky Mountains.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, October 1832, p. 7. The Far West was described as the “section of country from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains.”

<sup>5</sup>Affidavit sworn before James Jack, Salt Lake City, 31 July 1902, Church Archives. This 1832 blessing is the earliest evidence located of using the term *Rocky Mountains* to refer to an intended home for the Saints.

<sup>6</sup>Wilford Woodruff, in Conference Report, 8 April 1898, p. 57. One of the problems associated with an interpretation of Mormon history is the value of recollections of an event, such as President Woodruff’s speech in 1898, some sixty-four years after the event. The speech is used here since it does support on-the-spot accounts of Erastus Snow, Lorenzo Dow Young, and Sarah Studeviant Leavitt.

In April 1836 Erastus Snow, prior to his leaving for a mission, was given a blessing, which predicted “that he should yet be employed in the ministry west of the Rocky Mountains, and should there perform a good work in teaching and leading the Lamanites west of the Rocky Mountains.”<sup>7</sup> In the same year Hyrum Smith gave a blessing to Lorenzo Dow Young, who lay near death. Lorenzo Young recorded that “the spirit rested mightily upon him [Hyrum] and he was full of blessing and prophecy. He said that I should regain my health, live to go with the Saints into the bosom of the Rocky Mountains to build up a place there.”<sup>8</sup>

Sarah Studeviant Leavitt, who left Nauvoo with the general exodus in the spring of 1846, recorded in her history that “I had known for ten years [since 1836] that we had got to go and I was glad we had got started.”<sup>9</sup>

While Joseph Smith was still in Missouri, Orson Pratt spoke of an intended exodus. Later, in a public meeting held during the exodus, he stated:

It is eight years today [1838–1846] since we all came out of Mo—before that time Jos the Prophet had this move in contemplation & always said that we would send a Co of young men to explore the country & return before the Families can go over the mountain & it is decidedly in my mind to do so.<sup>10</sup>

Lyman Wight in an 1857 letter to Wilford Woodruff substantiated Orson Pratt’s statement, noting that “such a mission was even talked of while in [Liberty] jail.”<sup>11</sup>

Oliver B. Huntington said he was present in his father’s home in Nauvoo when they were visited by Joseph Smith, Sr., in 1840. After stressing it was not to be made public, the father of Joseph Smith told the Huntington family that “the Lord had told Joseph (his son the Prophet) that we would stay there just 7 years and that when we left

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<sup>7</sup>As quoted in Joseph W. Olsen, “Biography of Erastus Snow” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1935), p. 19.

<sup>8</sup>James Amasa Little, “Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young,” *Utah State Historical Quarterly* 14 (1946): 46.

<sup>9</sup>“History of Sarah Studeviant Leavitt,” n.d., p. 28, Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City.

<sup>10</sup>John D. Lee Diary, 26 April 1846, typescript, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; hereafter cited as Special Collections. See also Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 26 April 1846, p. 153, Church Archives.

<sup>11</sup>Lyman Wight to Wilford Woodruff, 24 August 1857, Church Archives. Joseph Smith and several leaders of the Church were confined in Liberty Jail in Missouri during the winter of 1838. Heber C. Kimball expressed to his family in 1839 and 1840 that he felt their stay in Nauvoo would be short (see *Woman’s Exponent* 9 [July 1880]: 18).

there we would go right into the midst of the indians in the Rocky Mountains, as this country, Utah, was then called.”<sup>12</sup>

A number of individuals who knew Joseph Smith recorded that on occasions prior to 1842 he had drawn a route the Saints would follow in making their westward journey to the Rocky Mountains. According to George H. Goddard, Joseph Smith mapped on the floor of the Masonic Lodge in Nauvoo the course they would follow across the continent.<sup>13</sup> Oliver B. Huntington recorded hearing Hopkins C. Pendar, “an old Nauvoo Mormon,” state that “Joseph Smith just before he was killed, made a sketch of the future home of the saints in the Rocky Mountains and their route or road to that country as he had seen in a vision; a map [*sic*] or drawing of it.”<sup>14</sup> Oliver Huntington stated further that Levi Hancock drew a copy of the map, and four other copies were made from it. One was supposedly given to Brigham Young, and “one was carried by the Mormon Battalion by which they knew where to find the church, or, Salt Lake Valley.”<sup>15</sup> Mosiah Hancock, son of Levi, recorded further that Joseph Smith visited his father’s house some time before the Martyrdom, and

stopped in our carpenter shop and stood by the turning lathe. I went and got my map for him. “Now”, he said, “I will show you the travels of this people”. He then showed our travels through Iowa, and said, “Here you will make a place for the winter; and here you will travel west until you come to the valley of the Great Salt Lake! You will build cities to the North and to the South, and to the East and to the West; and you will become a great and wealthy people in that land.”<sup>16</sup>

Another early Church member recorded hearing a Father McBride speak “of Joseph Smith marking out the way the saints would travel to the Rocky Mountains.” Joseph reportedly marked “the Route with his cane in the Sand. [*sic*] they would take.”<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, the West—more specifically the Rocky Mountains—was mentioned as a future home for the Saints as early as 1832; and, although there were some hearsay and remembering after the event, early Church members recorded that Joseph Smith planned and mapped such a movement prior to his death.

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<sup>12</sup>Oliver B. Huntington Journal, 24 February 1883, typescript of journal in Special Collections, Lee Library.

<sup>13</sup>Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 26 July 1897, p. 2, microfilm copy in Special Collections, Lee Library. This is a recollection of George H. Goddard, one of the pioneers of 1847.

<sup>14</sup>Huntington Journal, 27 September 1897. One of the problems with Huntington’s journal is that it was written in the 1880s and 1890s, some forty years after the event. It does, however, appear to support contemporary accounts of Charles L. Walker and Mosiah Hancock.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>“The Life Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock,” typescript, p. 28, Special Collections, Lee Library.

<sup>17</sup>Charles Walker Diary, typescript, 2 vols., 2:41, 42, Special Collections, Lee Library.

MORMON STUDY OF THE WEST—  
1842-1844

From the very beginning of the organization of their church, the Mormons studied and contemplated a westward movement. From 1842 through the death of Joseph Smith in 1844, there were numerous instances when members of the Church recorded that Joseph prophesied a removal to the Rocky Mountains. Research in the writings from this period reveals the year 1842 marked the beginning of an intensified study of the western regions that eventually brought the first pioneers into the Great Basin in 1847.

Joseph Smith's most detailed prophecy on the removal west was given on the occasion of the installation of certain officers of the Rising Sun Lodge of the Masonic Order. The *History of the Church* states that on 6 August 1842 he prophesied "that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains."<sup>18</sup> Other Church members recorded this prophecy in their journals and letters.<sup>19</sup>

Oliver S. Olney's journal entries and letters are significant because they were recorded shortly before and after Joseph Smith made his Rocky Mountain prophecy. He wrote to a friend sometime between July and October 1842 that as early as that summer there was talk in Nauvoo of organizing an expedition for the West as far as the Oregon territory, that the expedition was to leave as soon as possible, that there was to be a lead group of a "few" or "fifty" who would do the initial colonizing, and that it was to be an organized effort.<sup>20</sup>

The talked-of move to the mountains that Oliver Olney recorded did not materialize at that time because of changing conditions in Nauvoo. During 1843, the persecution against the Mormons began to subside somewhat and the need was not so great as Joseph Smith had said "to get up into the mountains, where the devil cannot dig

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<sup>18</sup>Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1932-1951), 5:85. This work will be cited hereafter as *History of the Church*.

<sup>19</sup>For other accounts of this prophecy see Mary Ann Weston Maughn Journal, bk. 1, p. 20, Utah State Historical Society Library; John R. Young, *Memoirs of John R. Young, Utah Pioneer* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1920), p. 53; Kate B. Carter, comp., "The Mormon Battalion," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958-1977), 11:385; Joseph Smith Letter File, Miscellaneous Papers, Utah State Historical Society Library; Anson Call Journal, p. 20, Utah State Historical Society Library. For a detailed discussion of Call's statement on the prophecy and related evidence, see Lewis Clark Christian, "A Study of Mormon Knowledge of the American Far West prior to the Exodus (1830-February, 1846)" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), pp. 72-74.

<sup>20</sup>Oliver H. Olney Notes, 20, 22 July, 6 October 1842, Coe Collection, Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn. For reproductions of the notes, and an explanation of their significance, see Christian, "Mormon Knowledge of the Far West," pp. 75-77, 294-98. See also David E. Miller, "Westward Migration of the Mormons with Special Emphasis on the History of Nauvoo," report submitted to the National Park Service, 1963, p. 235.

us out, and live in a healthful climate, where we can live as old as we have a mind to.’’<sup>21</sup>

The premature death of Joseph Smith on 27 June 1844 prevented his witnessing a fulfillment of his 1842 prophecy. Although, on 23 June 1844, just four days prior to his death, he and some of his closest friends had actually started on horseback for the Great Basin, they had been turned back by the insistence of some of the Saints.<sup>22</sup> He had, however, laid an important foundation for future Church movements. During February 1844 the Prophet had organized an exploring company called the “Oregon and California exploring Expedition,” organized for the express purpose of “‘hunting out a good location where we can remove to after the temple is completed.’”<sup>23</sup> He had also organized in the spring of 1844 a special Council of Fifty, which eventually took a leading role in effecting the exodus in 1846.<sup>24</sup>

Also, during 1843 and 1844, the Saints sought assistance from the nation’s leaders relative to a western removal, but such aid was not then available. Orson Hyde was sent to Washington at that time to solicit aid from Congress. He carried with him a memorial asking Congress to authorize Joseph Smith to raise one hundred thousand armed volunteers to police “‘the intermountain and pacific coast west from Oregon to Texas.’” However, Orson Hyde wrote back that Congress would not authorize such a move since it would be regarded as an infraction of the treaty with England.<sup>25</sup> While in Washington, he forwarded to Church leaders at Nauvoo valuable insights and information about the West, particularly Texas and Oregon, including a John C. Fremont map of his 1842–1843 exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains.<sup>26</sup> When he learned that Congress would not assist

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<sup>21</sup>*History of the Church*, 6:22.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 6:548–50.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 6:222, 224. Beginning on 20 February 1844 and running through 30 March 1844, meetings were held almost every day to discuss the move to the West. Such details as supplies, weapons, and route to be traveled were spelled out for those selected to make the initial trip. For a discussion of this exploring company and results, see Christian, “Mormon Knowledge of the Far West,” pp. 78–81.

<sup>24</sup>Christian, “Mormon Knowledge of the Far West,” pp. 81–87. For a fuller treatment on the role of the Council of Fifty, see D. Michael Quinn, “The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945,” *Brigham Young University Studies* 20 (Winter 1980): 163–97. At this particular time the limits of California and Oregon had not been defined. According to Hubert Howe Bancroft, “It was not uncommon, nor indeed incorrect, to apply that term [California] to territory east of the sierra” (*History of Utah* [San Francisco: History Company Publishers, 1890], p. 238n). B. H. Roberts said also that “the great western Rocky Mountain plateau was for many years and especially in Mormon literature called ‘Upper California’ ” (*A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1930], 3:60–61).

<sup>25</sup>See Orson Hyde to Council at Nauvoo, 25 April 1844; Orson Hyde to Council at Nauvoo, 26 April 1844; Orson Hyde to Council at Nauvoo, 30 April 1844, Orson Hyde Collection, Church Archives.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.* Hyde’s information included a description of the territories and a detailed route to travel. Knowledge of and interest in Texas was an important part of the Mormons’ foreknowledge of the West. For a detailed discussion of this topic, see Christian, “Mormon Knowledge of the Far West,” pp. 160–84.

the Saints in their removal west, Joseph Smith felt it was necessary that he run for the United States presidency.<sup>27</sup> A special group of men called the "lectioneering missionaries" were selected and sent to the various branches of the Church to inform them of the Mormon Prophet's candidacy and to give information to the general Church membership about the Western Mission.<sup>28</sup>

MORMONS STUDY THE WEST—  
1844—SUMMER 1845

With the Church again stabilized under the leadership of Brigham Young after the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the Mormon leaders began an intensified study of the West. From 1844 to the time of their departure in 1846, they studied the available maps and published works to determine the best sites for settlement in the West. Their attention had been focused by Joseph Smith on the Rocky Mountain region and specifically the Great Basin area.

The early Mormon newspapers carried numerous excerpts on western travel to the Rocky Mountain region during this period. In December 1845 the *Times and Seasons* began extolling the advantages of Oregon and California.<sup>29</sup> From the time of its inception in 1843, the *Nauvoo Neighbor* published articles on the West almost every month, giving attention to Texas, California, and Oregon.<sup>30</sup>

The activities of Lansford W. Hastings were reported in the *Neighbor* and excerpts from his *Emigrants Guide to Oregon and California* were reprinted.<sup>31</sup> Hastings went on a lecture tour to New York in late spring 1845, at which time he met Samuel Brannan, editor of a Mormon area newspaper called the *New York Messenger*. Sam Brannan was impressed with Hastings's reports and from 12 July to 6 September 1845, he published extracts from Hastings's *Guide* in his newspaper. It was these extracts which were published in the *Neighbor* during the same period of time.

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<sup>27</sup>For a discussion of the proposal of Joseph Smith for the United States presidency as it related to the westward movement, see Christian, "Mormon Knowledge of the Far West," pp. 87-92.

<sup>28</sup>Two of the missionaries, Heber C. Kimball and Lyman Wight, traveled to Wilmington, Delaware, where they held a conference. While there they took a vote of the members present "to know whether they would go whithersoever the Presidency, Patriarch and Twelve went, should it be to Oregon, Texas, or California." According to Wight, the congregation, numbering one hundred, rose to their feet and consented to go. (See Lyman Wight Letter Collection, Church Archives.)

<sup>29</sup>See *Times and Seasons* 6 (15 December 1845): 1068-1070.

<sup>30</sup>The following issues in the *Nauvoo Neighbor* contained such information: 24 May, 28 June, 19 July, 16 August, 6 and 20 December in 1843; 13, 20, and 27 March, 10 and 17 April, 18 December in 1844; 15 January, 12 February, 30 April in 1845.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 10 April 1844, 13 August 1845; Lansford W. Hastings, *The Emigrants Guide, to Oregon and California* . . . (Cincinnati: George Conclin, 1845). Later, during the winter of 1845, the Mormon leaders studied Hastings's *Guide* rather extensively.

The *Neighbor* followed with interest the summer campaign of Stephen W. Kearny and his regiment of dragoons to the South Pass.<sup>32</sup> Captain Charles Wilkes's expedition along the western sea coast and inland to Oregon and California received extensive coverage.<sup>33</sup>

But it was the expedition of John C. Fremont that received the fullest coverage in the *Neighbor*. Beginning on 25 October 1843, the publication of a "Report of an Expedition to the Country lying between the Missouri and the Rocky Mountains on the line of the Kansas and the great Platte River" was announced, and a brief portion of the report describing in detail Fremont's trip from the North Fork of the Platte to Fort Laramie was included.<sup>34</sup> In 1844 considerable space was given to Fremont's second expedition west. On 29 January 1845 the *Neighbor* extracted portions of that report, with emphasis on the Salt Lake region.<sup>35</sup> On 19 March 1845 it was announced that the report of the second expedition contained a map of the survey of the Great Salt Lake.<sup>36</sup> Again, on 17 September 1845 Salt Lake was singled out by the *Neighbor*. The paper reported that "The Great Salt Lake . . . is for the first time revealed to our view; by one who has surveyed its shores and navigated its waters.—The Bear River Valley . . . is for the first time described."<sup>37</sup> Then Fremont's accounts of these areas followed.

#### AN INTEREST IN THE WEST REVIVED— SUMMER 1845

The Mormon leaders knew by the summer of 1845 that Nauvoo would have to be abandoned. The city's charter had been repealed, and there were increased rumors of mob action. Therefore, during the summer, the Saints directed all their efforts toward the completion of the Nauvoo Temple in anticipation of a removal in the immediate future.<sup>38</sup> As fall approached, they sensed the urgency of beginning to lay definite departure plans and studying and selecting sites of settlement. Oregon, Upper California, Lower California,

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 23 July 1845.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 10 July 1844, 19 February 1845.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 25 October 1843.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 29 January 1845.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 19 March 1845.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 17 September 1845. The *Neighbor* published extracts from the report of Fremont's expedition also on 10 and 24 September 1845. The *LDS Millennial Star*, the Church publication in England, reprinted in 1846 portions of Fremont's 1844 expedition.

<sup>38</sup>For an excellent summary of events during the summer of 1845 and the emphasis that was placed on building the temple as first priority, see Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff, 27 June 1845, Brigham Young Letter Collection, Church Archives. See also *History of the Church*, 7:430–32.

Vancouver Island, Texas, the headwaters of the Colorado, and the Great Basin had all been spoken of in general terms.<sup>39</sup>

A careful study of Mormon writings toward the end of the summer of 1845 reveals that the idea began to unfold that there would be many areas of settlement in the West, with a central "Zion" headquarters located somewhere within the Great Basin of the Rocky Mountains. This plan was suggested by Brigham Young in a letter to Wilford Woodruff, then on a mission in England. Brigham wrote to inform Elder Woodruff that "within one year many of our brethren will be planted on the coast of the Pacific, or near by ready to receive their friends from the islands."<sup>40</sup> On 27 August 1845 the Apostles discussed possible sites in Oregon for those Saints who would colonize that area.<sup>41</sup> Then on 28 August 1845 the leaders decided "that 3,000 able-bodied men should be selected to prepare themselves to start in the spring to Upper California, taking their families with them."<sup>42</sup> On that same date, a significant letter was written to Addison Pratt, then serving a mission in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). This letter is valuable since it brings into focus more clearly the plans of colonization and describes a more specific "Zion" headquarters. After giving Elder Pratt specific instructions concerning the operation of the mission, the letter indicates:

If any of the brethren of the islands wish to emigrate to the continent, have them come to the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon, or the Gulph of Monterey [*sic*] or St. Francisco, as we shall commence forming a settlement in that region during next season and make arrangements with agents in each of those places so emigrants will be enabled to get all necessary directions, and provisions for going to the settlements. The [*main*] settlement will probably be in the neighborhood of Lake Tampanagos [*sic*, Utah Lake] as that is represented as a most delightful district and no settlement near there.<sup>43</sup>

It appears that in August of 1845 the Mormon leaders were formulating plans to colonize the Pacific Coast, Oregon, Vancouver Island, and other proposed sites for "stakes of Zion" but that the center would probably be somewhere near the Great Salt Lake.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>The term *California* referred to the area west of the Rocky Mountains and south of the 42nd parallel. When the Mormons spoke of going to California, they generally meant the western Rocky Mountain plateau. (See Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 3:60-61.)

<sup>40</sup>Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff, 21 August 1845, Brigham Young Letter Collection, Church Archives. See also *LDS Millennium Star* 6 (1 October 1845): 124 for a reproduction of the letter.

<sup>41</sup>Heber C. Kimball Journal, 27 August 1845, Church Archives.

<sup>42</sup>Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 28 August 1845, p. 16, Church Archives. See also Heber C. Kimball and John Taylor journals of same date, Church Archives

<sup>43</sup>Council to Addison Pratt, 28 August 1845, Brigham Young Letter Collection, Church Archives.

<sup>44</sup>The *Nauvoo Neighbor* had in August and September 1845 published new extracts from Fremont's visit to the Great Salt Lake. This probably accounts for part of the sudden interest in this area.

This settlement plan was explained in a letter from Parley P. Pratt to Isaac Rogers, residing in New Jersey. After describing how rapidly things were progressing in Nauvoo, Parley relayed the latest plans of the Church relative to settlement in California. He indicated those plans included the decision (made on 28 August 1845) to send three thousand men to California the next spring with all the provisions necessary to begin settlements. He pointed out specifically that it was the intention of the Church to “maintain and build up Nauvoo, and settle other places too.” Concerning a main settlement site, he wrote further he expected the Church would “stop near the Rocky Mountains about 800 miles nearer than the coast. Say 1500 miles from here and there make a stand until we are able to enlarge and to extend to the coast.”<sup>45</sup>

In light of the foregoing evidence, an isolated reference in the *History of the Church* takes on added meaning. On 9 September 1845 the General Council “Resolved that a company of 1500 men be selected to go to Great Salt Lake valley.”<sup>46</sup> Thus the Salt Lake Valley of the Great Basin had been singled out by this date as being the *probable* site of the initial location west of the Rocky Mountains. However, due to increased mob action in the Nauvoo region, the company of fifteen hundred men never left. Instead a committee of five men was appointed to gather information relative to emigration. On 4 October 1845 the committee made a full and detailed report of all the provisions necessary for outfitting the Saints on their projected journey.<sup>47</sup> This and other reports indicate efforts continued throughout the fall and winter of 1845 for an evacuation of Nauvoo in the spring of 1846.

#### THE CHURCH STUDIES THE WEST— DECEMBER 1845

One of the major activities of the Church after the members knew they would have to leave Nauvoo was completion of the Nauvoo Temple. It was far enough along in construction that in October 1845 they could hold meetings in the lower story. It was their intention to continue working on the temple throughout the winter and spring and to dedicate it to the Lord before they left.<sup>48</sup> The month of

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<sup>45</sup>Parley P. Pratt to Isaac Rogers, 6 September 1845, Parley P. Pratt Letter Collection, Church Archives.

<sup>46</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:439. See also Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 9 September 1845, pp. 19–20.

<sup>47</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:454–55.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 7:456–57. The Heber C. Kimball Journal is extremely important during this period of time for the information it contains concerning the temple work and other activities in the temple. It becomes the often spoken of “Nauvoo Temple Minutes.” See also *LDS Millennial Star* 6 (1 December 1845): 178.

December found all efforts concentrated on completing it sufficiently to begin giving the anticipated “endowments.” On 10 December 1845 the first persons received that temple ordinance.<sup>49</sup> The temple then became an extremely important site to the members. It was a refuge from the outside world and a place where the leaders made an extensive study of the West in the latter part of December 1845.

The Heber C. Kimball journal records on 11 December 1845 that they were busy decorating the various rooms of the Nauvoo Temple. Concerning the items hung on the walls, it states: “There are also a number of maps. A large map of the world hangs on the north side wall, and three maps of the United States . . . hangs [*sic*] on the west partition. On the south wall hangs another large map of the United States.”<sup>50</sup> At least one of the purposes served by the maps is clear. On 31 December 1845 Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball examined “maps with reference to selecting a location for the Saints west of the Rocky Mountains and reading the various works which have been written by travelers.”<sup>51</sup>

On 20 December 1845 Brigham Young and a few of the Council members listened to Franklin D. Richards read in the temple from Fremont’s journal concerning Fremont’s trip to California.<sup>52</sup> The Heber C. Kimball journal reveals additional details concerning the reading of Fremont’s journal.

Pres. Young having slept in the Temple last night was early at his post, and after dictating in relation to the business of the day, and arranging the workmen in order &c. &c. after which he listened to a reading from Capt Fremont’s Journal by Franklin D. Richards in the east room. . . .

Amasa Lyman came in during the reading, also Elder H. C. Kimball, at a quarter to 10. The reading was finished at 10 o’clock.<sup>53</sup>

On 25 December 1845 the Council was again in the temple with Brigham Young holding “considerable conversation about the western country.”<sup>54</sup> On 27 December all the Council took part in a general conversation on California, and Parley P. Pratt read from Lansford W. Hastings’s *Emigrants Guide*.<sup>55</sup> On 29 December extracts of Fremont’s narrative were again read.<sup>56</sup> The Heber C.

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<sup>49</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:542–44. See also Kimball Journal, 10 December 1845.

<sup>50</sup>Kimball Journal, 11 December 1845. On 5 December 1845 the Kimball Journal records that hooks were put up to hang “looking-glasses, portraits and Maps” (see Kimball Journal for that date).

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 31 December 1845.

<sup>52</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:548; Kimball Journal, 20 December 1845. This was the 1844 account of Fremont’s trip to California, first published in March 1845.

<sup>53</sup>Kimball Journal, 20 December 1845.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 25 December 1845. See also *History of the Church*, 7:552.

<sup>55</sup>Kimball Journal, 27 December 1845. See also *History of the Church*, 7:555.

<sup>56</sup>Kimball Journal, 29 December 1845. See also *History of the Church*, 7:556.

Kimball journal records that after the reading on 29 December Brigham Young spent nearly an hour reading Fremont's narrative, after which he retired for the night.<sup>57</sup> On 30 December Parley P. Pratt was working on a "schedule for a Pioneer Company of 1000 men to precede [*sic*] the body of emigrants, find a proper location, & put in seed early in the summer."<sup>58</sup>

There are other indications the Saints were looking to the West. For example, the song "Upper California," composed by John Taylor and approved in Council of Fifty meetings on 11 and 17 April 1845,<sup>59</sup> was sung on numerous occasions by Church leaders in December 1845. Phineas Young sang the song for his brother Brigham and for Heber C. Kimball on 5 December.<sup>60</sup> Erastus Snow sang it in the temple on 30 December.<sup>61</sup> Thomas Atkin later remembered "singing . . . Upper California oh thats the land for me it lies between the mountains and the great pacific sea" while residing in England during this period.<sup>62</sup>

By the end of December 1845 the leaders of the Church had a wealth of information on the American Far West. They had some of the most recent journals, guides, and maps of those who had visited the far west regions, and they were using these materials in selecting locations for settlements. Furthermore, they were psychologically preparing themselves through song for the migration west.

#### PREPARATIONS FOR THE EXODUS CONTINUE— JANUARY–FEBRUARY 1846

As the year 1846 opened, information came to Brigham Young and others that the government of the United States intended to interfere in the exodus of the Mormon church. Consequently, the Saints were forced to cross the Mississippi River earlier than they had expected.<sup>63</sup> Even as the body of the Saints was moving across the river and camping at Sugar Creek, they recorded in their journals and letters how they felt about leaving their homes in Illinois and where they expected to settle in the West. The general Church membership did

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<sup>57</sup>Kimball Journal, 29 December 1845. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball had beds in the temple and often slept there if they completed their work late at night, as was the case on this date.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 30 December 1845. See also *History of the Church*, 7:557. It would appear Parley Pratt used Fremont's narrative and Hastings's *Guide* in preparing his schedule.

<sup>59</sup>Andrew F. Ehat, "'It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth': Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," *Brigham Young University Studies* 20 (Spring 1980): 271. The full text of John Taylor's hymn is published in Ehat's article, p. 280.

<sup>60</sup>Kimball Journal, 5 December 1845.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 30 December 1845. See also *History of the Church*, 7:557.

<sup>62</sup>"Biography of Thomas Atkin," p. 10, Church Archives.

<sup>63</sup>For a discussion of that potential government interference, its possible origin, and its effect on the exodus, see Christian, "Mormon Knowledge of the Far West," pp. 136–40.

not know where they were going, except that it would be beyond the Rocky Mountains.<sup>64</sup> The letters and journals of Church leaders reveal that it was not definitely settled within their minds which sites the Saints would settle in the West. It appears that those in authority had decided Oregon, Vancouver Island, and the California coast would be unfavorable for the main headquarters of the Church. Due to Fremont's report and other information gathered prior to the removal from Nauvoo, the attention of the Church leaders was directed toward a site in the midst of the Rocky Mountains, most probably in the region of the Great Salt Lake.<sup>65</sup>

### CONCLUSION

The Mormons had an extensive knowledge of the West prior to their exodus from Nauvoo, and they relied heavily on that knowledge as they studied possible sites for settlement prior to their departure. They learned all they could about the West. It was continually on the minds of Joseph Smith and other Church members before the expulsion from Nauvoo. Even after the death of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young continued to point "Israel's needle" toward the West. The Mormons firmly believed that God was directing and guiding their plans for the exodus. Yet, in addition to divine direction, they continued to study and gain all the knowledge they could. The Mormons believed that only after they had made a thorough search and study of possible settlement sites would God lend his hand by either confirming or rejecting their decision. Brigham Young followed this principle closely as he prepared the Church to cross the Mississippi in February 1846. Even as the exodus was in progress, Brigham Young continued to study and learn about the West.

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<sup>64</sup>For excerpts from letters and diaries indicating the general unawareness of the Church members as to their final location, see *ibid.*, pp. 144-45.

<sup>65</sup>In December 1845 the Church leaders spent many hours reading the reports of Fremont and Hastings (see *ibid.*, pp. 132-35). It is the feeling of the author that the decision to settle around the Great Salt Lake region made in August and September 1845 was only a *tentative* one. The leaders continued to study the whole region during December 1845. The decision that the Salt Lake Valley would be the *definite* site of the initial settlement would be partially confirmed in the spring of 1846:

Pres. Young said . . . we must divide and arrange the camp [Sugar Creek] so that part might cross the Mountain to the Great Basin soon enough to plant wheat this spring . . . that 300 men were wanted for the expedition.

(Diaries and Records of John D. Lee, 8 March 1846, typescript, Special Collections, Lee Library. As the exodus began, John D. Lee had been selected as a private clerk to Brigham Young.)

# Wisps

Jim Walker

Yellow long before frost,  
The leaves begin their dance  
To the whistle of dry chinook through caraganas.

Thistlespine nestles amid strawberries,  
Hiding beneath the mockery of chilly blooms.

Dust climbs high in the westward sky  
As combines and tractors  
Rut their way through yesterday's promises.

Long evening clouds slide along the horizon  
Shadowing faces grim as gorgons  
For a single sign of rain.

The thwack of beet knives  
Echoes cross a field of doubled backs  
In the blood-red rays of sunset,  
Tolling early harvest.

# The Mormon Trail Network in Iowa 1838–1863: A New Look

Stanley B. Kimball

For twenty-five years during the mid-nineteenth century thousands of Mormons traversed Iowa, developing a network of trails aggregating over 1,100 miles; that is more than their somewhat better-known trails in Nebraska, Wyoming, and Utah combined. Between 1838 and at least 1863, Mormons crisscrossed a four-county-high tier stretching across the southernmost part of the state, the Mormon Mesopotamia between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. (See foldout map of Mormon trails on the preceding page.)

Up to now interest in and knowledge of Iowa trails have focused largely on the Pioneer Route of 1846 and the Handcart Trail of 1856–1857. But there were many other trails and variants, and we are just now beginning to appreciate the dimensions and magnitude of Mormon travel in Iowa. A new picture of Mormon migrations in that state is emerging, showing Iowa to be the most widely and frequently traversed of all the states through which the early Mormons moved.

Although Iowa trails were used by the Mormons into the 1860s, these trails were extensively traveled only through 1853 and, of course, during the handcart era of 1856 through 1857. After 1853, most Mormons took riverboats up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs and Florence. Also, by 1859, it was possible to go by railroad via Quincy, Illinois, across Missouri to St. Joseph and then to take riverboats to the same destination.

Unfortunately, not only have nearly all physical remains of these original roads disappeared but so also has much of the remembrance of their Mormon use. Their role in Mormon history has faded, has

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Stanley B. Kimball, a professor of history at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, is historian of the Mormon Pioneer Trail Foundation.

Diane Clements is the cartographer of the map.

been ignored, and has been almost forgotten. Fortunately, however, there are some road signs and markers along a number of these trails.<sup>1</sup>

The trails may be grouped into five basic categories, time periods, and degrees of importance:<sup>2</sup>

1. *The Southern, Pioneer, or Brigham Young Trail*, from Montrose and Sugar Creek to Council Bluffs, 1846–1853, is as well known as any Mormon trail and is certainly by far the best-known trail in Iowa. This route does, however, have two forgotten variants:

Variant A: Between Drakesville and Garden Grove, 1846–1853.

Variant B: Between Dodge's Point and Mt. Pisgah, 1846–1853.

2. *The Northern or Handcart Trail*, from Iowa City to Lewis, 1856–1863, is the second best-known Mormon trail in Iowa.

3. *The Middle, Dragoon, or Des Moines River Valley Trail*, from Bonaparte to Lewis via Des Moines, 1846–1853, has completely faded from Mormon consciousness.

4. *The Mormon Battalion Trail*, from Council Bluffs to the Missouri line at Hamburg, 1846–1856, has only recently been restored to memory.

5. *The Incidental Trails*, 1846–1858, are almost completely forgotten today.

## THE TRAILS

### *The Brigham Young Trail*

Commencing at Montrose and Sugar Creek, the Brigham Young Trail meandered over three hundred miles to present-day Council

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<sup>1</sup>For the trail markers in Iowa, Mormons owe a debt of gratitude to the Daughters of the American Revolution. Of the thirty-six plaques, markers, monuments, museum exhibits, and informational signs (not counting road signs), fifteen were erected by the DAR; of the twenty-seven of these thirty-six referring specifically to Mormons, ten were placed by the DAR. The Mormons have placed seven, locating them at Coralville, Garden Grove, Corydon, and Mt. Pisgah. Local, county, and state groups are responsible for the rest.

<sup>2</sup>In the account which follows, reference has been made to a few, though by no means all, Mormon pioneer trail accounts. Unless otherwise indicated, the accounts are located in the Library–Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as Church Archives). This article is based on material gathered from reading more than seven hundred Mormon pioneer journals and on travels throughout southern Iowa, personally following the more than 1,100 miles of trails. Post-1863 accounts of crossing Iowa undoubtedly exist; however, I found none. (See also Stanley B. Kimball, "The Iowa Trek of 1846," *Ensign* 2 [June 1972]: 36–45; and Stanley B. Kimball, *Discovering Mormon Trails* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979].)

Bluffs and is so well known it needs little description here. As famous, however, as this trail was and is, recent study has turned up a few surprises. One well-known section of it, for example, appears to have been traveled for perhaps only one month in 1846, and we have recently learned of several variants. To understand this trail and its variants properly, we must divide it into several segments.

The section from Montrose to Drakesville remained constant until 1853, but there were a few small variants. Some Saints, for example, crossed the Des Moines River at Bentonsport and Keosauqua rather than at Bonaparte (where Brigham Young crossed), and some reached the Des Moines via Charleston rather than present-day Argyle.

The segment from Drakesville to Garden Grove via Locust Creek, where the words to "Come, Come Ye Saints" were written,<sup>3</sup> may have been used but once or twice. At Drakesville two important variants originate, one to Garden Grove, the other to Mt. Pisgah. West of Mt. Pisgah the 1846 trail remained constant and became part of the Handcart Trail and the Middle Trail.

These variants west of Drakesville came into use soon after Brigham Young reached Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah. A glance at the original route of 1846 shows it dipping surprisingly far to the south, so far south that in those days when the state line between Missouri and Iowa was ten miles north of where it is today, the pioneers actually entered Putnam County, Missouri. One would expect the Mormons, who had suffered so much in Missouri, would avoid going there. This seemingly strange out-of-the-way route is partly explained by several contemporary journals.

Erastus Snow noted:

Finding it impracticable to haul grain for our teams, in the bad condition of the roads and it being too early to sustain them upon grass we thought it expedient *to deviate from the direct course which we had intended to travel* and bear further south so as to keep near the border settlements where we could obtain feed for our teams. In pursuance of this council [*sic*] we took the old Mormon trace, crossed the Fox River a few miles above Bloomfield [near present-day Drakesville] and followed it to the ford on the Chariton River. We journeyed up Fox river till we struck what is called the old Mormon trace (it being the trail of a party of brethren who made their escape from their enemies in Far West Mo. in November 1838 and traveled through a then trackless & uninhabited country to the Mississippi river).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>See Paul E. Dahl, "'All Is Well . . .': The Story of the Hymn That Went around the World," this issue.

<sup>4</sup>Erastus Snow Sketch Book, no. 3, 16 March 1846, Church Archives; italics added.

Let me explain this reference to the Old Mormon Trace. John Lyman Smith and Hosea Stout also briefly mentioned this road which some Saints used during 1838–1839 en route to Iowa when fleeing Missouri persecutions.<sup>5</sup> Just where these Mormons entered Missouri (John L. Smith indicated it might have been near Locust Creek) and where they went beyond the Fox River is unclear. We know that some, Israel Barlow for example, did go to Montrose;<sup>6</sup> but I have found no reference to any other portion of the Old Mormon Trace. In 1925 Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, wrote that some of these Mormons settled on the Fox River until they became part of the general exodus of 1846. Unfortunately, he gave no particulars.<sup>7</sup> This trace may have been part of the Military Road from northern Missouri to Dubuque via Muscatine.

By the time Brigham Young reached Garden Grove on 24 April and especially Mt. Pisgah on 18 May, he realized that the shorter, more direct route he had originally intended to take was much to be preferred. Since grass was now sufficient to feed the stock, it would not be necessary for later companies to take the Southern Route. Brigham Young “proposed to send men back from Grand River [Garden Grove] to look out a new and better road, so that companies which were coming out of Nauvoo might avoid the bad roads, creeks, and settlements through which the leading company had passed.”<sup>8</sup> Horace K. Whitney noted that as early as 23 April men were sent back to Nauvoo.<sup>9</sup> Erastus Snow recorded that they were to “head the Medicine, Locust, Chariton, and Fox Rivers and thereby open a safer and more practical route for the balance of our emigration from Nauvoo.”<sup>10</sup>

It is not clear how many Saints followed Brigham Young into Missouri; most likely it was only those companies which left Nauvoo before the guides dispatched from Garden Grove returned to Nauvoo to recommend the more direct route.

The Pioneer Route has been well marked. From 1933 to 1940 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the Iowa Conservation Commission placed about a hundred wooden Mormon Trail road markers across the state. All but two of these (at Unionville and Mt. Pisgah)

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<sup>5</sup>John Lyman Smith Journal, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 21 March 1846; and Hosea Stout Diary, 20 March 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>6</sup>Ora H. Barlow, *The Israel Barlow Story* (Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1968), pp. 132–37; see also Joseph Smith, Jun., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1932–1951), 3:265.

<sup>7</sup>Andrew Jenson, Iowa Manuscript History, July 1925, Church Archives.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 27 March 1846.

<sup>9</sup>Horace K. Whitney Diary, cited in Iowa Manuscript History.

<sup>10</sup>Erastus Snow Journal, typescript, p. 70, Church Archives.

seem to have totally disappeared. Then in 1972 the trail was re-marked with about a hundred metal Mormon Pioneer Trail road markers erected by the Iowa Highway Commission and the Mormon Pioneer Trail Foundation.

In addition to these road signs, there are other markers on the grounds of the Wayne County Historical Society Museum in Corydon, in the town park of Garden Grove and also one mile west of Garden Grove at the Trailside Historical Park, at Mt. Pisgah, on the school grounds of Orient, in the Reno Cemetery seven miles southeast of Lyman on County Road G61, in the Cold Springs State Park just south of Lewis, in the town park of Lewis, and on the north side of Baylis Park in Council Bluffs.<sup>11</sup> There are even two markers commemorating the Mormon use of the Keosauqua Ford. On the banks of the Des Moines River in the Lacey-Keosauqua State Park is a wooden post stating "Mormon Trail"; nearby is a bronze marker to "Ely Ford, Mormon Crossing." At one time the Mormon use of the fords at Bonaparte and Bentonsport was marked, but these markers have disappeared.

There is a "Come, Come Ye Saints" exhibit in the Wayne County Historical Society Museum, as well as a Mormon Trail Park near Bridgewater.

*The Brigham Young Trail, Variant A.* This variant did not cross the Fox River near Drakesville but followed a high ridge road between the Fox River and Soap Creek across the top of Appanoose County to the Chariton River, which was forded at a place then called Dodge's Point near Iconium. The trail then proceeded directly west to Garden Grove. The first section of this variant, from Drakesville to Dodge's Point, was used until at least 1853.

There is an Appanoose County tradition that some Mormons remained for a time near present-day Moravia before going farther west. According to this tradition, in 1849 some members of the Moravian Brethren church bought out the Mormons and founded the community of Moravia. If this be true, it is an interesting bit of cooperation between two persecuted peoples; for the Moravians fled religious intolerance in Europe in the eighteenth century, settling originally in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

Also, according to local lore, there is supposed to be a Mormon cemetery "about four miles out in the hills east of town."

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<sup>11</sup>Of interest is the fact that in 1927, before *American Gothic* made him famous, Grant Wood painted three oil-on-wood murals depicting the Mormon settlement of Kaneshville (Council Bluffs) for a conference room in the Hotel Chieftain, which stood across the street from the marker in Baylis Park in Council Bluffs. In 1970 when the hotel was remodeled into a home for the aged, these murals were removed and a collector in Los Angeles purchased them.

Unfortunately, I could find no one in Moravia who could direct me to this cemetery.

There is only one Mormon Trail marker along this variant, and it is one of the Iowa road signs of the 1930s in the little town square of Unionville. The Mormon presence in this part of Wayne County was, however, noted in the 1904 *Atlas of the State of Iowa*, which referred to this road between Confidence and Humeston (County Road J22) as the Mormon Trail, a designation apparently now, unfortunately, forgotten.<sup>12</sup>

The Dodge's Point to Garden Grove segment of this variant, it appears, was little used, perhaps only during 1846, because a still shorter and better road west was promoted and settled upon.

*The Brigham Young Trail, Variant B.* This variant came into use concurrently with Variant A. Instead of crossing the Chariton River at Dodge's Point, the Saints were encouraged to follow high ground along the Chariton as far north as possible, to the Chariton Point, near the present-day community of Chariton. There the river turned west and the Saints followed high ridges between the Chariton River and White Breast Creek through Clarke County, intersecting the Brigham Young Trail south of present-day Osceola about thirty miles southeast of Mt. Pisgah. As early as 15 May 1846 John Lyman Smith noted that one group reached Mt. Pisgah by this route.<sup>13</sup>

The Mormon use of this trail is well commemorated in Lucas County. On the Court House Square at Chariton is a Mormon Trail marker. There is another similar marker at the Chariton Point about one mile south of the Court House on the south side of Blue Grass Road (also marked as County Road B). Furthermore, there are a Mormon Trail School District and a Mormon Trail Basketball Conference in Lucas County. The 1904 *Atlas of Iowa* also refers to a road, marked today as State 34 and County S23 and H50 running north of the Chariton River and west of the city of Chariton, as the Mormon Trace Road, another designation now generally forgotten. (This same road, H50, extending westward into Clarke County, through Smyrna to Highway 69 going south out of Osceola, was also known in 1904 as the Mormon Trail Road.)<sup>14</sup>

Also on this trail, exactly five miles south of Highway 34 at Osceola on Highway 69, was located Lost Camp, about thirty miles east of Mt. Pisgah. Little is known of Lost Camp, but it is mentioned

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<sup>12</sup>M. Huebinger, *Atlas of the State of Iowa* (Davenport, Iowa: Iowa Publishing Co., 1904).

<sup>13</sup>John Lyman Smith Journal, 15 May 1846.

<sup>14</sup>Huebinger, *Atlas of Iowa*.

in the travel accounts of Samuel K. Gifford, Reuben Miller, and Charles R. Dana. It was a branch of the Church during 1846–1847.

### *The Handcart Trail*

The Handcart Trail is also so well known that it will require little comment. Coming by rail from the East Coast via Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, Toledo, and Chicago, the Saints crossed the Mississippi at Rock Island, entering Iowa at Davenport where they picked up the Davenport and Missouri River Railroad for the railhead at Iowa City. Some of the journals which refer to this trip are those of Peter Madsen, Samuel Openshaw, and William Woodward.

The first train crossed the river for Iowa City on 22 April 1856, and almost immediately Mormon immigrant agents began shifting immigrants going to Florence via Westport, Missouri, and Mormon Grove, Kansas, to Iowa City.

Railroad travel, while faster and more convenient than wagon, was far from luxurious. Passengers were packed eighty-six to a car; there was a stove in the middle, a toilet on one end, but no eating or sleeping accommodations. Sometimes the benches had no backs and the cars no springs. At times people tried to sleep in the cars and at times in warehouses along the line. The trains averaged twenty miles an hour, smoke and soot were everywhere, and schedules were wildly erratic. Europeans considered American railroads far inferior to those back home. But still the Saints moved west.

During the Civil War, conditions got much worse. Mormons often rode in cattle cars crawling with lice, experienced long delays, and suffered harassment from soldiers and the “bad spirit” of many of the railroad employees. They also had to contend with detours, with roadblocks, and with shelling when, for example, guerrilla bands, led by the infamous William C. Quantril, blew up the Hannibal, Missouri, trestle in 1861 and tore up a section of track near St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1863. With the destruction of the Hannibal trestle, some Saints, including William Hart Miles, took a riverboat from Quincy, Illinois, to Keokuk and became, perhaps, the first and last Mormons to ride the new Des Moines Valley Railroad from Keokuk to the end of the line at Eddyville and then to proceed by wagon to Council Bluffs.<sup>15</sup>

From the rail depot at Iowa City the handcart immigrants crossed the Iowa River and walked to the staging area on the bank of Clear

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<sup>15</sup>See the diaries of William Henry Freshwater, William Hart Miles, and Elijah Larkin, Church Archives.

Creek three miles west at a small settlement known as Clark's Mills and later as Coralville.

The 275-mile-long Iowa portion of the famous Handcart Trail was used for only two years, 1856 through 1857, but during that time seven of the total nine companies (and eighty percent of the people) who used the Handcart Trail left from Iowa City.<sup>16</sup> There was little immigration in 1858 because of the "Utah War," and by 1859 it was possible to go all the way to the Missouri River by rail.

From Coralville, the Saints followed well-known roads to Adel and Redfield, where they picked up a Dragoon Trail to Lewis via Bear Grove and Grove City, a now defunct community three miles east of Atlantic in Cass County. (Mormon journals occasionally refer to various groves in Iowa, which appear to have served as landmarks.) In Lewis the handcarters picked up the 1846 trail to Council Bluffs. There appears to have been but one variant along this route. Jessie Bigler Martin noted that his 1857 company passed through Dalmanutha, which no longer exists.

It is of interest to note that this Handcart Trail was used by some Mormons after the handcart era. By 1860 the railroad, then known as the Rock Island Line, extended to Marengo. According to the accounts of Lucy M. Canfield and George M. Brown, some Mormon companies went that far by rail in 1862 and 1863.

There are several markers along the Handcart Trail. In Coralville, just west of the intersection of Fifth Street and Tenth Ave., there is a 1936 DAR marker to "The Mormon Handcart Brigade Camp." There is also Mormon Trek Boulevard, connecting Iowa City with Coralville. In 1976 a several-acre Mormon Handcart Historic Site was developed through funds provided by the LDS church for the Bicentennial in Coralville on ground owned by the University of Iowa. It is located along Clear Creek and Highway 6 near the Hawk-eye Court housing complex to the west of Mormon Trek Boulevard. A Historical Marker, a Pioneer Campsite Marker, and a Pioneer Burial Ground Marker are at this site.

In Davenport there is a marker somewhat related to the Handcart Trail. It marks the western end of the no longer existing 1856 railroad trestle connecting Rock Island, Illinois, with Davenport. This marker is located at the junction of Third and Fourth streets (yes, despite Euclid, parallel lines and streets do meet, when the curve of the river, at East River Street, so dictates).

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<sup>16</sup>*Deseret News 1976 Church Almanac*, G 15-17; see also the series of articles by Andrew Jenson, entitled "Church Emigration," which appeared in the *Contributor* from September 1891 and ran throughout 1892.

## *The Des Moines River Valley Trail*

This trail has totally disappeared from Mormon memory, and yet it was trod extensively throughout the main period of Mormon migration in Iowa from 1846 through 1853. This trail did not originate from buffalo tracks, Indian trails, or meandering settlers, as did many of the trails. It was purposely blazed in 1835 by the First U.S. Dragoons under Colonel Stephen W. Kearny. In 1835 several companies of Dragoons were located at Ft. Des Moines (present-day Montrose). These Dragoons were an elite corps of infantry especially created by the War Department to serve on foot or horseback on special assignments. They were usually in the vanguard of civilization, acting as umpires in disputes between white pioneers and native Americans. As such, they blazed many trails in Iowa, some of which were later used by the Mormons. In 1835 Colonel Kearny, later General Kearny who commanded the Mormon Battalion, was ordered on an expedition to locate a site for a new fort near the confluence of the Raccoon River and the Des Moines River (site of present-day Des Moines).<sup>17</sup> By 1846 the colonel's trace had become an important road into the interior of Iowa Territory, a fact not unknown to the Mormons.

Just why certain Mormons, including Richard Steele, went this way is uncertain, but many apparently found it a convenient way to travel. In general the trail followed the highlands of the Des Moines River Valley, via Ottumwa, Oskaloosa, and Pella to Des Moines, a route subsequently followed by major roads and the railroad (as roads and railroads later followed the Mormons along the Platte River Valley west).

Some Mormons, as will be noted, did not follow it very far. A few, for various reasons, left it at Eddyville and Oskaloosa to rejoin the Pioneer Trail of 1846. The earliest journal account I have located noting Mormons beyond Oskaloosa was in 1849. Perhaps the roads beyond Oskaloosa were too rough in 1846. After Oskaloosa, one of the first communities the Mormons would have passed was Pella, or "Dutch Town," as Angelina Farley dubbed it in 1850. Those Mormons who knew its history must have felt some strong kinship with its inhabitants. The community, named after a first-century city of refuge for Christians in Palestine, was founded in the same year the pioneers founded their far western city of refuge—1847. The early settlers were seven hundred Hollanders seeking religious freedom

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<sup>17</sup>"Ft. Des Moines (I) Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* 3 (1897-1899): 355.

in the New World. The Mormons could well have borrowed their motto—*In Deo spes nostra et refugium* (In God is our hope and refuge). There is a tradition in Pella that the Mormons tried to get the Hollanders to buy Nauvoo and settle there.

Between Pella and Prairie City, at least one group of Mormons was aware it was passing through a “paper town” which had been surveyed for the capital of Iowa. Nothing was ever built there, however, and Angelina Farley recorded that her company burned the surveyor’s stakes for camp fires.<sup>18</sup>

Crossing the Des Moines River at present-day Des Moines, the Mormons headed for Lewis via Winterset in Madison County.<sup>19</sup> At Lewis the Mormons followed the 1846 Pioneer Trail to Council Bluffs.

The DAR has marked this Dragoon trail with five markers (only one of which refers to the Mormons). The first can be found on the northwest corner of the main intersection in Montrose. (Incidentally, mayflies are called “Mormon flies” in Montrose.) A second is located at a defunct community, once named Brattain’s Grove and later Utica, at the junction of present-day roads 269 and 16, three miles south of Stockport, Van Buren County. This is the one of the five which refers to the Mormon Trail. At the main intersection in the village of Libertyville is another marker. About four miles north of downtown Ottumwa on Highway 63 at the entrance of the municipal golf course is another marker. All that remains, however, of this is the boulder, which is hidden by trees; the plaque has been removed. The last of the five markers is on the west of Highway 163, five miles northeast of Oskaloosa, across the road from a water tower.

### *The Mormon Battalion Trail*

The last Mormon trail to be considered in this study is the relatively unknown Iowa portion of the Mormon Battalion Trail, which extended from Council Bluffs 1,850 miles to San Diego, California, via Ft. Leavenworth and Santa Fe. The Iowa section of this trail is fifty miles long from Council Bluffs to the Missouri line, and undoubtedly the first Mormons to use this route were the 549 men, 60 women, and some children of the Battalion. Starting out 21 July

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<sup>18</sup>Angelina Farley Diary, 29 May 1850, Church Archives.

<sup>19</sup>It is of interest to note that Winterset is not only the Covered Bridge Capital of Iowa—there are nine such bridges in the county—but also the birthplace of the Delicious Apple and John Wayne.

1846, they followed the bluff line of the Missouri River through Mills and Fremont counties.<sup>20</sup>

Thereafter, occasional groups of Mormons, including Mary Snow, David Bowen, and George H. Harris, followed part of this road between Council Bluffs or Weston and Utah, going to and from the Great Basin until at least 1855. Close to this road was located the Bethlehem Ferry on the Missouri River, below the mouth of the Platte and just west of today's Pacific Junction. For nearly a decade, Mormons used it as an alternative crossing of the Missouri River both going and coming from the Far West. This crossing, frequently called the Lower Ferry, was especially popular with Mormons who chose to go west along the south bank rather than along the north bank of the Platte, the route followed by most of the early pioneers. It was also used when high water on the Elk Horn River (west of Florence) made the route on the north bank of the Platte dangerous.

### *Incidental Mormon Trails*

Between 1847 and at least 1863, nine or more other trails or roads were used by some Mormons crossing Iowa. No one today has any idea how extensively these routes were used, but a study of pioneer journals suggests only incidental use. Perhaps they could be referred to collectively as "pigtailed" to the main Mormon trails in Iowa.

1. Chronologically the first such pigtail to come into use was in 1846 when some Mormons crossed the Mississippi at Ft. Madison, proceeding straight west to the Des Moines at Farmington. Among others, James V. Williams took what we might call the "Ft. Madison Direct Route."

2. Also during 1846 Anson Call, and perhaps others that year and subsequently, utilized the "Albia Cutoff," which ran from Eddyville, an established ford on the Des Moines, via Albia to Chariton Point on the Chariton River.

3. The next incidental trail was the Keokuk Segment from Keokuk to Montrose and Sugar Creek. Although some Mormons, including Charles R. Dana, went this way as early as 1847 (some even picked up this route as early as 1846 from Nashville when Keokuk was the southern terminus of the just then developing Des Moines River route to Des Moines), this route was used mainly during the one year, 1853. During that year it was common for Mormon immigration

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<sup>20</sup>Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 21 July 1846, Church Archives.

agents to send European converts to Keokuk via New Orleans and St. Louis. An outbreak of the dread river scourge—cholera—however, ended the use of Keokuk as a point of departure; and immigrants were urged to sail to New York City and Boston and make use of the nation's developing road and rail systems to the Missouri River.

But during 1853 an official Mormon staging ground was established on the river bluffs one-half mile north of downtown Keokuk. This would place the camp somewhere near today's intersection of Morgan and Second streets, overlooking the river. Stephen Forsdick described the camp as "a long street with wagons on either side of it."<sup>21</sup> Others who stayed at this camp were Christopher J. Arthur<sup>22</sup> and Christian N. Munk. During this period, a branch of the Church was organized in Keokuk.

At times when the river was low, boats could not navigate the Des Moines rapids, and passengers had to disembark at Churchville, Missouri (also known as Alexandria), and go by wagon to Keokuk, crossing the Des Moines River at a place referred to as Dog Town. Among those to do so were Jane Rio Pearce, Richard Rushton, and Robert Bell.

Today all that is left to remind one of this one-time staging ground in Keokuk is a bronze plaque on one side of the DAR statue of the famous Sac and Fox chief, Keokuk,<sup>23</sup> in Rand Park overlooking the Mississippi. It reads, "To the memory of the Pioneers who traveled the Mormon Trail."

4. Also in 1847 there was the "Talley's Ford Cutoff," extending from Oskaloosa to Chariton Point via Talley's Ford, a good, smooth, shallow, and rocky crossing place on the Des Moines. Among others, Richard Steele went this way.

5. The next incidental road was the "Burlington Route" via West Point to Bonaparte. This way was used by Canute Peterson and others during 1848–1849.

6. During the one year of 1849, a rather strange route, the "Washington Way," was used. That year Angelina Calkins Farley and others found themselves in Iowa City long before the railroad reached there. They proceeded to Oskaloosa and points west via Washington County.

7. Several years later, in 1853, and also prior to the railroad, another group of Mormons, including James Armistead, from La

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<sup>21</sup>Stephen Forsdick Autobiography, typescript, p. 15, Church Archives.

<sup>22</sup>The Christopher J. Arthur Journal is located at the Utah State Historical Library, Salt Lake City.

<sup>23</sup>Chief Keokuk had been in Nauvoo during August 1841 and was told of the Book of Mormon by Joseph Smith, himself. For further information, see Lawrence Coates, "Refugees Meet: The Mormons and the Indians in Iowa," this issue.

Salle County, Illinois, likewise found themselves at Iowa City. They headed for Oskaloosa and points west taking the "Sigourney Segment" through Keokuk County.

8. In 1850 one group of Mormons, including Mary Maughan, left Galena, Illinois, crossed into Iowa as far north as Dubuque, traveled through Fairview and Cedar Rapids, intersected the future Handcart Trail at Newton, and picked up the Des Moines River Trail and went to Council Bluffs via Winterset.

9. Perhaps the last of these incidental trails was used in 1858 by John Lyman Smith and others. It was by far the longest of these incidental roads, stretching between Burlington and Oskaloosa. Perhaps it might be termed the "Burlington–New London–Abingdon–Fremont–Oskaloosa Road."

Lastly, a few other places in Iowa connected with the Mormons might be listed. Although Iowaville in Van Buren County no longer exists, some Mormons crossed the Des Moines River there, and Elias Smith lived there for five years before continuing west. There was also a branch of the Church there during 1846–1847.<sup>24</sup>

Trussell Cemetery in Monroe County, about five miles southwest of Blakesburg, along what is sometimes called the Old Southwest Trail, is a small Mormon cemetery with sandstone gravemarkers.

Manti is located near the Fremont and Page county line, three and one-half miles southwest of Shenandoah. This community was founded in 1849 by Alpheus Cutler, who claimed to be the rightful successor to Joseph Smith and who started the Cutlerite church. Although after his death in 1864 most of his followers united with the RLDS, the church continues into the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup> In this nearly deserted community, there is what is often referred to as the "Mormon Cemetery," and Alpheus Cutler (this author's great-great-grandfather) is buried there.

A few Mormon travel accounts, including those of David Moore and Caroline Barnes Crosby, mention passing through Stringtown in Davis County. This was a post office located one mile south of Troy; it also went by the names of Fox and Dover.

Preparation Canyon State Park (not shown on the map) is located five miles southwest of Moorehead, about fifty miles due north of

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<sup>24</sup>In the Iowaville cemetery the Smith family of Layton, Utah, put markers on the graves of some of their relatives buried there. One such marker is to Asahel Smith, uncle to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

<sup>25</sup>Rupert J. and Daisy Whiting Fletcher, *Alpheus Cutler and the Church of Jesus Christ* (Independence, Mo.: Church of Jesus Christ, 1974); see also Dale L. Morgan, "A Bibliography of the Churches of the Dispersion, Part III," *Western Humanities Review* 7 (Summer 1953): 265–66; Steven L. Shields, *Divergent Paths of the Restoration: A History of the Latter Day Saint Movement* (Provo: David C. Martin, 1975), pp. 6–11; Wayne Ham, "Center Place Saints: A Survey of Restoration Fragmentation in Zion," *Restoration* 1 (January 1982): 5, 7.

Council Bluffs. Here Charles B. Thompson, another claimant to the "mantle of Joseph," established the colony of Preparation, originally consisting of about fifty families. The group is sometimes known as the "Baneemytes" or Jehovah's Presbytery of Zion. As was the case with the Cutlerites, after the death of Thompson, most of his followers joined the RLDS.<sup>26</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

As would be expected with Mormons traveling through and living in Iowa for at least twenty-five years, there are many local (and sometimes unconfirmable) traditions regarding them. Since by 1848 there were forty branches of the Church in Pottawattamie County, it is not surprising that that county abounds with Mormon lore and tradition. In the southeast area of Monroe County, probably in Urbana Township, there used to be a neighborhood called the Hairy Nation, from the appearance of the heavily bearded Mormons. There is Mormon Ridge in Marshall County. Van Buren County is especially rich in traditions regarding Mormon cemeteries: one is on Reed's Creek two and one-half miles east of Bonaparte; another is in Vernon; one is two miles southwest of Stockport; one is the Boston Cemetery on the Des Moines River; another is the Oak Lawn Cemetery in Section 32 of Chequest Township; and there is also the Philips Cemetery.

May I conclude this re-evaluation of the importance of Iowa roads and trails in the history of early westerning Mormons with the personal expression that I would like to see these routes restored to memory, better marked, commemorated, and preserved, as well as followed by all those who wish to relive, recapture, and enjoy this important and fascinating part of the Mormon and American past. The Mormon Pioneer Trail Foundation would be happy to cooperate to this end. Invariably during my travels of the more than 1,100 miles of Mormon trails crisscrossing Iowa, I found non-Mormons interested in and proud of the Mormon history of their area and most willing to be of help to me.

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<sup>26</sup>Morgan, "Bibliography of Churches of the Dispersion," pp. 262-63.

# Suffering and Death on the Plains of Iowa

Susan W. Easton

If the suffering the Saints endured on the plains of Iowa is measured strictly in terms of deaths, it would appear the Saints suffered little. While many deaths were recorded at Winter Quarters and beyond, the journals of the first group to cross Iowa list only nine deaths, five of which were children's. Even if some died unrecorded, it is unlikely that many more than nine people died in the first group.

Regardless of the small number of deaths, however, the exiles endured great suffering. They were forced to leave their homes with less than two weeks of provisions and flee into the middle of a winter which froze the mile-wide Mississippi River. Immediately, several accidents occurred because of the poor preparation and the inclement weather. In addition to the accidents, the freezing rain and snow increased the spread of disease while it impeded recovery. Furthermore, the patched tents and wagon covers afforded little comfort to those who were ill. Mothers even gave birth under these adverse conditions. Yet in spite of their tremendous afflictions, the Saints generally remained objective and even retained a cautious optimism. Though they suffered, they lived; hence they had reason to thank their Creator and Sustainer of Life.

This tale of courage amid suffering began on 4 February 1846 when the first wagon, belonging to Charles Shumway, left Nauvoo and thus started the fabled exodus of the Mormon pioneers.<sup>1</sup> Almost immediately misfortune struck. On 9 February 1846, an accident endangered several men as they crossed the river. The *Manuscript History of Brigham Young* chronicles that incident as follows:

At the same time that the Temple was on fire, a number of brethren were crossing the river in a flatboat, when in their rear a man and two boys were in a skiff in a sinking condition, on account of being

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Susan Easton is an associate professor of Church history and doctrine, Religious Instruction, Brigham Young University.

<sup>1</sup>Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 27 March 1846, p. 2, Library--Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City, Utah.

overloaded and the unskillfulness of the helmsman. They hailed to the flatboat, which was soon turned, and rendered them assistance. As soon as they had got the three on board the flatboat, a filthy wicked man squirted some tobacco juice into the eyes of one of the oxen that was attached to Thomas Grover's wagon, which immediately plunged into the river, dragging another with him, and as he was going overboard he tore off one of the sideboards which caused the water to flow into the flatboat, and as they approached the shore the boat sank to the bottom, before all the men could leap off. Several of the brethren were picked up in an exhausted condition. Two oxen were drowned and a few things floated away and were lost. The wagon was drawn out of the river with its contents damaged.<sup>2</sup>

Hosea Stout refers to the same incident as he writes about his own trials in crossing the Mississippi:

We stook [stood] there & contemplated the sad spectacle of our brethren & sisters struggling in death & our own narrow escape from the same fate. Fatigued and worn out with my family sick we proceeded down the shores of the island to the camp which at length we reached in a desolate situation the brethren rendered us all the comfort in their power while those from the sunken boat also landed almost chilled to death excited the liveliest sympathy in every breast.<sup>3</sup>

When considering the melancholy scene that Hosea witnessed, one can understand his remark, "I remembered the revelation which said the Lord had cursed [cursed] the waters in the Last Days and said in my heart it was verily true."<sup>4</sup>

Soon the river froze over, and the travelers could walk across the ice. But with the ice bridge came freezing snowstorms and intense suffering to the camps.

The Saints made their first encampment on the banks of Sugar Creek. However, they had not prepared well to face the fierce winter storms, and soon the Sugar Creek encampment turned into a bitter experience for them. B. H. Roberts records that "eight hundred men reported themselves at the Sugar Creek encampment, during the last two weeks of February, without more than a fortnight's provisions for themselves and teams."<sup>5</sup>

The pioneers lacked adequate shelter. Only a scant supply of tents and wagon covers shielded them from the elements, and most of those coverings leaked during storms. Hosea Stout graphically

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<sup>2</sup>Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-1847* (Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1971), p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>Hosea Stout, "Diary of Hosea Stout," 5 vols., typescript copy in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 2:145.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:41.

illustrates the pathetic state of the exiles in his simple, yet objective, entry concerning his own shelter: "There prepared for the night by erecting a temporary tent out of bed clothes at this time my wife was hardly able to set up and my little son was sick with a very high fever and would not even notice any thin[g] that was going on."<sup>6</sup>

Besides creating great discomfort, the winter storms caused many accidents. In his 16 February entry, Hosea Stout records:

In the night a tree which hung over Capt Luddington's Company commenced giving away and just give them notice to get out of the way with their waggons before it fell. In getting his waggons away Capt Luddington got his hand mashed very badly.<sup>7</sup>

Brigham Young's history records several similar incidents:

It thundered and lightnined at intervals all day, with a strong northwesterly wind which prostrated a tree, twelve inches in diameter, across brother Tanner's wagon, in which were three persons who escaped unhurt. The tents of the second and fourth companies were mostly blown down. . . . conference adjourned until tomorrow because of the severity of the weather.<sup>8</sup>

On another occasion the history notes,

A large tree fell within five inches of Parley P. Pratt's wagon without touching it. Capt. C. C. Rich's family narrowly escaped.<sup>9</sup>

The accidents, though distressing, did not afflict the pioneers nearly as much as the sickness that the bitter winter brought. Brigham Young's history frequently records cases of illness: "Dr. Richards was sick in bed with a severe cough."<sup>10</sup> Another time, the history states, "Four cases of Measles and one of mumps were reported in Camp."<sup>11</sup> Another entry indicates that "Brother Isaac Chase continues sick with the lung fever. . . . several cases of the fever and ague, coughs, etc. are reported."<sup>12</sup> But the history optimistically adds that "in general the Camp is much more healthy than could reasonably be anticipated, after such a severe storm."

Although illness is never pleasant, to be ill under those conditions was particularly distressing. After all, the Saints no longer had a plaster-walled home with a fire burning in the fireplace and a dry bed in the corner in which they could recover. Instead, they slept on the

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<sup>6</sup>Stout, "Diary of Hosea Stout," 2:146.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 2:153.

<sup>8</sup>Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, pp. 125-26.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 81-82.

icy ground under a makeshift covering that scarcely resisted the storm. Hosea Stout's account of his ailing wife tells much about the pitiable state of the sick. He writes that his wife was so afflicted with pain she could not sit up in the wagon. They made a bed for her to lie in as they traveled, but notwithstanding all their care, the traveling injured her very much.<sup>13</sup> Three days later, Hosea records: "It clouded up earley and began to rain and turned out to be a wet rainy day. My tent leaked badly all day & I was troubled to keep our selves and thing[s] dry At night we had trouble by our beds getting wet thus endangering my sick wife. . . . The rain continued and it was Eleven o'clock before we could lay down and then we were rained on all night."<sup>14</sup> Though the conditions were hardly comfortable, the Saints endured their afflictions well, demonstrating devotion to the Lord.

Probably those among the exiles to suffer the most were the women who gave birth amidst those destitute conditions. One such woman was the wife of Rufus Putman Stewart. Sister Stewart walked two miles and crossed a creek after her labor pains had commenced. Finally, she arrived at a vacant house which shielded her from the storm. There she brought forth a son.<sup>15</sup>

Despite deprivations, the Saints enjoyed a generally good attitude. Brigham Young's history notes: "The Saints in Camp were patient, and endured all their privations without murmuring."<sup>16</sup> Another time the history brightly records,

I did not think there had ever been a body of people since the days of Enoch, placed under the same unpleasant circumstances that this people have been, where there was so little grumbling, and I was satisfied that the Lord was pleased with the majority of the Camp of Israel.<sup>17</sup>

On another occasion, Brigham's optimism as well as his gift of prophecy evidenced itself concerning Willard Richards, who was then very ill: "There is Dr. Richards, who has to be poulticed all over to keep life in him, before we get to the pass in the mountains, he will skip and run like a boy, with a gun on his shoulder, after deer, elk, and buffaloes."<sup>18</sup> In fact, in the same entry it is noted that several of the brethren had improved their health and endurance by being exposed to such hardships.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Stout, "Diary of Hosea Stout," 2:175.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 2:177.

<sup>15</sup>Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, pp. 126-27.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

Notwithstanding his optimism, however, Brigham sometimes tired of having to care for an entire church. He claimed that he acted the part of a father to everybody.<sup>20</sup> One entry manifests his discouragement:

Unless this people are more united in spirit and cease to pray against Counsel, It will bring me down to my grave. I am reduced in flesh so that my coat that would scarcely meet around me last Winter now laps over twelve inches. It is with much ado that I can keep from lying down and sleeping to wait the resurrection.<sup>21</sup>

Yet even at this point, when he called for a vote of support, all hands were raised in his favor.

Brigham did not escape the illness that afflicted the Saints, either: "I was so afflicted with the Rheumatism it was with difficulty I could walk."<sup>22</sup>

The Saints seem to have remained optimistic because they trusted in God. Sarah Rich, for example, writes of how her year-old son and her sister contracted measles. In spite of this trial, Sarah felt that the Lord blessed them, because her baby and her sister recovered and no one else seemed to catch the disease. "The Lord is all wise," she writes, "merciful to those who put their trust in Him."<sup>23</sup>

The Saints could also remain optimistic because they suffered few deaths. Even though they underwent great trials, as long as they had life, they had reason to praise God. Nevertheless, the trying conditions proved great enough to take a handful of lives—enough to leave martyrs' prints on the sod of Iowa.

The most touching of those martyrs' tales may be that of Catherine Curtis Spencer. On 12 March 1846, at Indian Creek near Keosauqua, Iowa Territory, Catherine died, just nine days short of her thirty-fifth birthday. She was the youngest daughter of a large and affluent family, and she had become accustomed to her father's fond and tender care. But when she joined the Church, she had to give up the refined life her father had given her and take up the persecuted life her membership offered.

In the trying conditions of the exodus, she often sang to her six children to relieve their hunger and chill. But the changes from a warm, brick home to an icy floor and canvas roof proved too much for her to endure. When her little ones came to the wagon to inquire of

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 150–51.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>23</sup>Sarah D. Pea Rich, *Journal of Sarah DeArmon Pea Rich*, p. 51, typescript copy in Special Collections, Lee Library, BYU.

her condition, she would respond, "Oh you dear little children, how I do hope you may fall into kind hands when I am gone!"<sup>24</sup>

A night or two before she died, she asked her husband, Orson Spencer, to gather her children and friends around her. After she had kissed her loved ones, she said to her husband, "I love you more than ever, but you must let me go. I only want to live for your sake and that of our children."<sup>25</sup> When asked if she had any advice for her father's family, she replied, "Charge them to obey the gospel."<sup>26</sup>

Soon afterwards, she asked to be taken to a house, because the incessant rain had soaked her bedding and had made comfort impossible. Immediately a man named Barnes consented to have her brought to his house, which was not far from the camp. There she "died in peace with a smile upon her countenance, and a cordial pressure of her husband's hand."<sup>27</sup>

After her death, Orson Spencer buried her in Nauvoo next to their youngest child, who had died nearly six months before. Brother Spencer notes in his wife's eulogy "her unceasing and dutiful bearing to her husband, and her matronly diligence in infusing the purest and loftiest virtues into the minds of her children."<sup>28</sup> He explained that he did not write such a tribute in order to mourn for the dead; the dead would be taken from many evils to come. He wanted only to preserve his wife's image in their young children's memories.

John R. Young records a few more details about Orson and Catherine Spencer. Orson had graduated from an eastern college, Brother Young writes, and had become a popular Baptist minister. But when he heard the teachings of Joseph Smith, he and his highly educated wife gave up their home, friends, popularity, and occupation, and followed the Savior. Almost overnight, they had become strangers to their own kindred.

John R. Young's comments add to the pathos of Catherine's death, particularly his account of the exchange between Catherine and her husband after they had received a reply letter from her parents:

The sorrowing husband wrote imploringly to the wife's parents, asking them to receive her into their home until the Saints should find an abiding place. The answer came, "Let her renounce her degrading faith and she can come back, but never until she does."

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<sup>24</sup>Preston Nibley, *Exodus to Greatness* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News Press, 1947), p. 134.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

When the letter was read to her, she asked her husband to get his Bible and to turn to the Book of Ruth and read the first chapter, sixteenth and seventeenth verses: "Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God."<sup>29</sup>

Sarah Rich also praised Sister Spencer in her tribute to the martyr:

She was a noble, faithful, Latter-day-Saint, and was a kind mother to her beautiful children who were left motherless by her death. She was a lady in every respect, and left a beautiful family of children who kept all together and the daughters though then small, managed to do the work and were united together, and became honorable sisters in the Church; and the sons became honorable men, and are all now living to do good.<sup>30</sup>

Her children did indeed become honorable members of the Church. One of them, Aurelia Spencer Rogers, grew up to become the founder of the Primary Association on 25 August 1871 at Farmington, Utah.

Others besides Catherine Spencer died, and they also hallowed the Saints' trek. The accounts of their deaths, however, are not as moving; quite often, the accounts are mere entries of time and cause of death. Brigham Young seems to have shown particular interest, however, in the condition of his nephew, Edwin Little: "At dusk, Dr. Richards and I called on Edwin Little, who was sick in his tent, and counseled him to leave the Camp and stay with some brother in the vicinity, Edwin was taken sick at Sugar Creek encampment, and had suffered from a fever, and severe affection of the lungs ever since."<sup>31</sup> Brigham Young's appraisal of Edwin's condition wavered, however, as Edwin's condition fluctuated. On 9 March, Brigham indicated that Edwin "has been quite sick, but is getting better."<sup>32</sup> Yet in a letter to Joseph Young, written that same evening, Brigham declared, "I should not think it strange if Edwin should not live through his sickness."<sup>33</sup> Still later, Brigham again changed his opinion and wrote that Edwin Little was better.<sup>34</sup> Finally, Brigham's history succinctly records, "At 7:20 A.M., Edwin Little died, and was

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<sup>29</sup>John R. Young, *Memoirs of John R. Young, Utah Pioneer 1847* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1920), pp. 17-18.

<sup>30</sup>Rich, *Journal of Sarah DeArman Pea Rich*, p. 48.

<sup>31</sup>Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 73.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 76.

buried at dusk on the divide between Fox and Chequest rivers.”<sup>35</sup> Doubtless, the death of kindred pained Brigham, but he was not given the luxury of grieving over his nephew. He knew, as others would, that death could not stop the march to the promised land: “I was very busy through the day in preparing for the burial of Brother Little, and rolling out in the morning.”<sup>36</sup>

As an apt eulogy, John R. Young includes Edwin Little as the first name in his glowing tribute of the Saints.

Today, as I recall the scene, and remember the names of some of those heroic exiles: Edwin Little . . . and many others whose lives are interwoven with whatever is great and enduring in our beloved commonwealth, I cannot but liken them to the brave men who faced ice and cold on Christmas night when the invincible Washington led them across the Delaware to do battle with their country’s foes.<sup>37</sup>

A few more deaths were recorded, but they received little attention. Brigham Young’s history records that “James Monroe, son of Sidney Tanner, died at 5 a.m. of inflammation of the brain, aged fifteen months.”<sup>38</sup> Also, “two of bro. Boswick’s children were buried; their death was caused by measles.”<sup>39</sup> Another entry notes that “Samuel Thomas died of consumption.”<sup>40</sup> “Hyrum, son of Hosea and Louisa Stout, died, aged about two years.”<sup>41</sup> Finally, “William Edwards died at three a.m. of billious fever; he had been sick for ten weeks.”<sup>42</sup>

Because of the objective tone of the entries in Brigham Young’s history, one might think of these deaths as mere statistics, as names that cease to represent people who breathed, laughed, sorrowed, and suffered. A list of names can too easily become simple designations of those who died on the Iowa plains, but to their parents and kindred, the name of a loved one who died was more than a name in a catalogue; each name identified a child, a brother, a mother, a father. Doubtless, the kindred faced their beloveds’ deaths both gratefully and sorrowfully. The families must have been grateful that those who died were released from a painful existence. Yet those deaths must have left an emptiness only a hope in God and a miraculous objectivity and optimism could relieve.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>37</sup>John R. Young, *Memoirs of John R. Young*, p. 13.

<sup>38</sup>Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 91.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 159.

Though few died on the plains of Iowa, the small number cannot lessen the degree of their sacrifice. Their deaths prove their devotion as much as do the deaths of the Saints in Missouri, Illinois, or Nebraska. In addition, the Saints who endured the bitter winter storms and accompanying sickness, either to reach the promised land or to die in the journey, equally proved their devotion. Indeed, their hope, faith, and objective, good-natured attitudes during these trials offer to the modern Saints a graphic lesson in true courage.

# Depletion

Edward L. Hart

The city darkens with the natural night  
Like country houses when the twilight ends  
On summer evenings and no form unbends  
From strain of too much day to make more light.

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Edward L. Hart, recipient of the Association for Mormon Letters poetry award in 1979 for *To Utah*, is a professor in the English Department at Brigham Young University.

# “Nine Children Were Born”: A Historical Problem from the Sugar Creek Episode

Carol Lynn Pearson

A most disturbing detail of the exodus from Nauvoo in late winter 1846 is that many pregnant women apparently were among the first Saints to depart. The exodus of the Saints and the drama and difficulty experienced by them at such encampments as Sugar Creek have been painted in our history books with the darkest of tones. “Sugar Creek,” writes Wallace Stegner, “is notorious in the histories as a place of intense hardship, as if it had held a huddle of refugees without rags to cover them or a bone to gnaw.”<sup>1</sup>

And of all the vivid description that has come down to us from the experience at Sugar Creek, none is more vivid than the description of that first night there in which nine babies were born. This piece of information comes to us from no less reliable a source than Eliza R. Snow. She has been quoted in almost all the history books, probably the earliest being Tullidge’s *The Women of Mormondom*, printed in 1877.

Eliza writes of Sugar Creek, “I was informed that on the first night of the encampment nine children were born into the world, and from that time, as we journeyed onward, mothers gave birth to offspring under almost every variety of circumstances imaginable, except those to which they had been accustomed; some in tents, others in wagons—in rain-storms and in snow-storms.”<sup>2</sup>

The image of suffering that the birth of nine babies in winter creates is strong. In our minds we see women large with child, heaving their way across a frozen Mississippi River on foot, already burned out of their homes, traumatized into giving birth by the viciousness of the mobs that stand shrieking on the other side of the river.

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Carol Lynn Pearson is well known to Mormon audiences for her poetry, drama, and essays.

<sup>1</sup>Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion* (New York City: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 50.

<sup>2</sup>Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York City: n.p., 1877), p. 307.

But other evidence seems to paint a different picture. Sugar Creek actually was a well-ordered camp with adequate provisions. The Mormons had been preparing for this move for months. There was no element of surprise or immediate trauma in it. Not everyone had to leave at once; in fact, many remained in Nauvoo for months afterwards.<sup>3</sup> Stegner writes that “most of the women wouldn’t have had to bear their children in the snow if they had not chosen to.”<sup>4</sup>

Thus there is a problem: the pregnant Mormon women seem to have *chosen* to rush out that first night to have their babies in the snow. Yet these women hardly seem the type to have made such a choice. Eliza notes, “Let it be remembered that the mothers of these wilderness-born babes were not savages, accustomed to roam the forest and brave the storm and tempest—those who had never known the comforts and delicacies of civilization and refinement. They were not those who, in the wilds of nature, nursed their offspring amid reeds and rushes, or in the recesses of rocky caverns; most of them were born and educated in the Eastern States . . . had gathered with the Saints . . . had lovely homes, decorated with flowers and enriched with choice fruit trees, just beginning to yield plentifully.”<sup>5</sup>

So they were not the type to purposely choose a hostile environment in which to give birth. The astute reader of Mormon history may at this point wonder if maybe the women got themselves into more suffering than they needed to because they knew suffering was a sign of being God’s chosen people. After all, Orson Pratt wrote in his diary that he felt to “rejoice that we have the privilege of passing through tribulation for the truth’s sake.”<sup>6</sup>

But that theory does not explain why intelligent women would choose to put their lives and their babies’ lives in jeopardy. There is a better answer: they didn’t choose to. It is certain they suffered, and it is equally certain the babies came under the worst of circumstances. Nine babies, in fact, *were* born in one night. But it was not at Sugar Creek.

I stumbled onto the answer to the puzzle quite by accident while researching in diaries in the Special Collections room at the Brigham Young University library. At the beginning of one diary, that of Joseph Smith Black, was a statement by his mother, Jane Johnston,

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<sup>3</sup>B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 3:1–2.

<sup>4</sup>Stegner, *Gathering of Zion*, p. 50.

<sup>5</sup>Tullidge, *Women of Mormondom*, p. 308.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 303.

dictated to Joshua Bennett on 12 May 1883, giving a brief history of her life. Here are the pertinent paragraphs:

I came to Nauvoo under council [*sic*] of the authorities and left my husband on a two year mission. Moved from Nauvoo to Augusta and remained there until my husband came to us in the year 1843. We then moved to Nauvoo again and remained there until the Saints were driven from Nauvoo across the Mississippi River.

My husband being in Canada at the time, we then went to Montrose. Before we crossed the river a party of the mob rode up and surrounded our wagon and made a demand that I should give up what arms we had. I then had a pistol in my bosom, which I drew out and told them it was there, and that I would use it before I gave it up. They did not take it from me, but threatened to throw me in the river that night. We then ferried across the river into Iowa and remained in Montrose a short time.

I then buried what arms I had in a quilt in a hole under the wagon wheel. Had nothing to eat only half a bushel of meal and half a dozen cucumbers that were given to me by Martin Littlewood. There were a great many sick among the Saints and nothing to comfort them, and nourish them, but corn meal, until the Lord sent quails amongst us, which supplied our wants.

I then got a tent from Brother Johnston and had women that were being delivered of child put in it. I was the mid-wife, and delivered nine babies that night. We had nothing to sweeten anything until the Lord sent honey dew, which we gathered from the bushes until we got all the sweets we wanted. I also boiled maple juice and got cakes of maple sugar.<sup>7</sup>

Suddenly new light is thrown on the subject of the nine babies. And the story now makes much better sense. Sister Johnston does not call the group she was with the “Poor Camp of September”; that’s what later historians call it. But that’s clearly what it was. By September only about one thousand of the poorest, sickest, feeblest (and probably the furthest along in pregnancy) of the Mormons remained in Nauvoo, along with a sizable number of gentiles who had bought up the property. Mob violence grew more and more brutal. The weak and ill-equipped Mormons staged a very short-lived and pitiful resistance against up to 2,500 militiamen. After a few days, they surrendered and agreed to leave Nauvoo at once. They quickly tied a few possessions into bundles and crossed the river, the last of them arriving by the evening of 17 September 1846.

The elements of Sister Johnston’s account fit this event—the river crossing to Montrose, the presence of the mobs, the almost total

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<sup>7</sup>Diary of Joseph Smith Black, typescript of manuscript, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, p. 5.

lack of food, the presence of many sick, the availability of cucumbers (September, yes; February, no), and the remarkable appearance of quail.

It certainly seems logical that a woman who had conceived a child in December might hope she could remain in Nauvoo in some measure of comfort until after the birth. And it also seems possible, under the traumatic conditions of the final forced exodus, that nine births might come in one night.

So we will have to revise our picture of the suffering which went on at Sugar Creek, that "huddle of refugees without rags to cover them or a bone to gnaw." Stegner almost puts the puzzle together when he writes, "Some of that over-dramatization stems from the error of confusing Sugar Creek with the Poor Camp of September; some stems from Eliza Snow's report that nine babies were born in the ice-bound tent town the night before she arrived."<sup>8</sup> What Stegner did not seem to know is that Eliza's account *itself* comes from the confusion of the two separate waves of exodus.

Yet one wonders how the confusion began. Perhaps it was like the parlor game we call "gossip," in which a message is whispered around in a circle until it gets back to its original source. In this case the message was, "Nine babies were born—pass it on." After a few tellings, the Poor Camp became the Sugar Creek Camp, and the story has come down to us in that altered form. Furthermore, Eliza begins her account with "I was informed that," while Sister Johnston writes, "I was the midwife"; it is thus clear which account is derivative. In fact, Sister Johnston's statement is even notarized.

Thus, while many incidents serve as tribute to the suffering and the courage of the early Mormon women, it is significant that the mothers of those nine babies did not rush out at the first opportunity to give birth in the wilderness, but actually did so because there was no other choice. The true tale is a tribute to these women's good sense.

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<sup>8</sup>Stegner, *Gathering of Zion*, p. 50.

# The Mormon Way Stations: Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah

Leland H. Gentry

## INTRODUCTION

The enforced exodus of the Latter-day Saints from Illinois in 1846 was made with great sacrifice and suffering. Although many made adequate preparations for a lengthy journey, others were so anxious to leave they did so without sufficient provisions. In addition, the early evacuees included many aged and infirm who required much assistance. These factors tended to slow the movement.

The first encampment was at Sugar Creek, Iowa, about nine miles from Nauvoo. Prior to the general departure further west, a special company was sent ahead to clear roads, build bridges, and select places for temporary encampments. At these latter locations, the sick and impoverished could pause, recuperate, and replenish needed supplies from nearby settlements before moving on.

It soon became apparent, however, that it would be desirable to set up more permanent camps or way stations where migrants could pause for longer periods of time. Here the exiles could winter or spend the growing season putting in and harvesting crops or laboring in nearby settlements to obtain cash for needed purchases. Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah were two such encampments. This article will examine the rationale behind their establishment and describe their growth and development.

## JOURNEY FROM NAUVOO

The Mormon exodus was a move of major proportions. According to John Taylor, it involved moving “(as near as we could estimate) about fifteen thousand Saints, three thousand wagons, and thirty thousand head of cattle . . . a great number of horses and mules . . . [and] an immense number of sheep.”<sup>1</sup> It began on 5 February 1846, and

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Leland H. Gentry is an instructor at the Salt Lake LDS Institute of Religion adjacent to the University of Utah.

<sup>1</sup>John Taylor, “Address to the Saints in Great Britain,” *Millennial Star* 8 (15 November 1846): 114.

by 1 March more than five thousand exiles were encamped at Sugar Creek. Conditions were anything but ideal. As Willard Richards, camp historian, recorded on 19 February 1846:

The wind blew steadily from the northwest accompanied by snow which fell to the depth of seven or eight inches, but much thawed as it fell, the storm was unceasing, and the evening was very cold, which caused much suffering in the camp, for there were many who had no tents or any comfortable place to lodge: many tents were blown down, some of them were unfinished and had no ends.<sup>2</sup>

From this point on, every hardship imaginable, including death, beset the Saints. Day after day, the thermometer registered below zero (Fahrenheit). The Saints, lodged as they were in tents, suffered severely, while the cold weather made an immediate move from Sugar Creek impossible.<sup>3</sup>

On 1 March, however, the camp began its move. "Only too soon did they find every hollow to be a mud hole, in which the wagons would sink to the axle." Incessant rain added to the problems, wetting even the sick and feeble riding in the wagons.<sup>4</sup> Writing in his journal for Thursday, 5 March 1846, Orson Pratt reported:

The roads in many places are almost impassable on account of the mud. Some teams are unable to draw their loads in bad places without assistance. Some wagons were broken. A portion of the camp was forced to stop on account of the roads.<sup>5</sup>

Mud was so bad that the travelers had to double, triple, and quadruple teams in order to get through it. Under such conditions the camp soon became strung out. Those in front consequently had to wait as long as two or three weeks for those behind to catch up.<sup>6</sup> As George A. Smith recorded on 9 April 1846:

About noon it began to rain in torrents and every driver soon got wet to the hide. It seemed as though the bottom of the road had now fallen

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<sup>2</sup>Willard Richards Camp Journal, as cited in B. H. Roberts, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Period II*, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1932–1951), 7:593 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*).

<sup>3</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:598–99.

<sup>4</sup>John R. Young, *Memoirs of John R. Young, Utah Pioneer, 1847* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1920), pp. 16–17.

<sup>5</sup>Elden J. Watson, comp., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Published by Compiler, 1975), p. 323 (hereafter cited as *Orson Pratt Journals*). Some of the men were able to move more quickly than others, thus increasing the tendency for the camp to "string itself out." Several of those who refused to slow down and wait for stragglers were called to account before Church courts to answer charges of disregarding priesthood counsel. (Eliza R. Snow, "Pioneer Diary," *Improvement Era* 46 [March 1943]: 191.)

<sup>6</sup>As quoted in Andrew Jenson, *The Historical Record* (Salt Lake City: Published by Author, 1889), 5:878. Orson Pratt reported "that it was with the greatest difficulty that we could preserve our animals from actual starvation." Men sent to nearby settlements to buy grain and other provisions often returned empty-handed. As a last resort, the animals were turned loose at night and allowed to forage for themselves. Bushes and the bark of trees were often their only form of sustenance. (See *Orson Pratt Journals*, pp. 334–36.)

out, for wagons sunk in the mud up to their beds and the women and the children had to get out in the rain so that their teams might pull the wagons through the mud. Frequently we had to put eight or ten yoke of oxen to a wagon to get the wagons out of the mud-holes. We are now in the middle of a twelve mile prairie. We continued our journey in this way for about two miles; it then began to grow late. We discovered to our right a point of timbers about a mile long. I left my wagon and rode on my horse to find a camping place. I now left two of my wagons on the prairie and put the teams on the other three to draw them through. After I had found a place to camp I drove in and put up for the night. Many of the wagons with families in them stayed on the prairie over night, and wet and cold they were, having no fire or any material with which to build one. Myself and family were wet and cold, having no fire.<sup>7</sup>

### DECISIONS TO ESTABLISH WAY STATIONS

When it was decided that the journey to the Rocky Mountains could not be accomplished in one season, Brigham Young met in council with Elders Orson Pratt, John Taylor, and Willard Richards and decided to write to the governor of Iowa to “ascertain his views about the Saints stopping on the public land in Iowa to raise a crop this season.”<sup>8</sup> That letter was dispatched 28 February. Explaining the plight of their people in being expelled from their homes without sufficient time to dispose of their property, the Mormon leaders wrote:

We, the Presiding Authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as a committee in behalf of several thousand suffering exiles, humbly ask your Excellency to shield and protect us in our constitutional rights, while we are passing through the territory over which you have jurisdiction. And should any of the exiles be under the necessity of stopping in this territory for a time, either in the settled or unsettled parts, for the purpose of raising crops, by renting farms or upon the public lands, or to make the necessary preparations for their exile in any lawful way, we humbly petition your Excellency to use any influence and power in our behalf: and thus preserve thousands of American citizens, together with their wives and children from intense sufferings, starvation and death.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>George A. Smith Journal, as quoted in Preston Nibley, *Exodus to Greatness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1947), pp. 148–49. Orson Pratt reported the ground was so wet from rain that sleeping could only be accommodated by cutting free limbs and strewing them on the ground beneath the sleepers “to keep ourselves from sinking in the mire” (*Orson Pratt Journals*, p. 336).

<sup>8</sup>Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 28 February 1846, Library–Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as Church Archives).

<sup>9</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:600–601.

Pending a positive answer to the petition, they laid plans in early April to implement the idea. On Sunday, 12 April, a meeting was held at Heber C. Kimball's camp to discuss the matter. William Clayton recorded the meeting's outcome:

It was decided to change our route and take a more northern one to avoid the settlements. We will go to Grand River and there enclose a space of land about two miles square and put up some twenty log houses for a resting place for the companies. A company starts out in a day or two to seek out the location amongst whom are the President [i.e., Brigham Young], Heber, and others of the twelve.<sup>10</sup>

This settlement, said Orson Pratt, was to be started "on a tract of land which had been purchased by the general government of the Indians and just vacated by them."<sup>11</sup> In setting forth the rationale behind the establishment of Garden Grove and its sister settlement, Mt. Pisgah, Erastus Snow wrote in later years:

In these places such families were left on for want of sufficient teams and provisions, unable to continue their journey. These settlements were on the tract of country owned by the Potawattamie Indians, and from thirty to fifty miles south there were settlements in Missouri from which they could obtain certain provisions to sustain them until they could raise a crop. Instructions were left in these places for such as were obliged to leave Nauvoo without a sufficient outfit, to locate and sustain themselves in these places until a further door opened unto them, or until a permanent location should be found for the Church and provisions raised to sustain them.<sup>12</sup>

#### SETTLEMENT OF GARDEN GROVE

The Mormon leaders were searching for a location approximately halfway between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Such a location was Garden Grove. Situated 145 miles from Nauvoo on the Mississippi and 157 from Council Bluffs on the Missouri, the settlement was near essential natural resources: virgin soil, timber, and water.<sup>13</sup>

The location was chosen 24 April 1846 by Brigham Young and Henry G. Sherwood. As Orson Pratt reported:

Friday, 24th—Yesterday we traveled about eight miles, to-day, six miles. We came to a place which we named Garden Grove. At this point we determined to form a small settlement and open farms for the

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<sup>10</sup>William Clayton, *William Clayton's Journal* (Salt Lake City: The Clayton Family Association, 1921), p. 17. The scouting party was composed of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, Henry G. Sherwood, William L. Cutler, and Joshua S. Holman (*History of the Church*, 7:609).

<sup>11</sup>*Orson Pratt Journals*, p. 338.

<sup>12</sup>Andrew Karl Larson, *Erastus Snow* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), p. 110.

<sup>13</sup>Journal History, 27 April 1846.

benefit of the poor, and such as were unable at present to pursue their journey further, and also for the benefit of the poor who were yet behind.<sup>14</sup>

Three days later the full selecting committee approved the choice of this elevated piece of ground.

Development of Garden Grove began at once. Shortly after arriving, Brigham Young put 359 able-bodied men to work building the site. Orson Pratt stated that work commenced on 27 April:

This morning the horn sounded for all the men to assemble themselves together to be organized for labour. One hundred men were appointed for cutting trees, splitting rails, and making fence; forty-eight to cutting logs, for the building of log houses; several were appointed to build a bridge, a number more for the digging of wells, some to make the wood for our ploughs; several more to watch our flocks and keep them from straying; while others were sent several days' journey into the Missouri settlements to exchange horses, feather beds, and other property, for cows, provisions, etc., and finally, the whole camp were to be occupied about something. During this council for organization, we were well drenched in rain.<sup>15</sup>

By 1 May Orson Pratt was able to report that "an immense sight of work has been done in the several departments of business" assigned. Nine days later, he recorded:

A large amount of labour has been done since arriving in this grove; indeed the whole camp are very industrious. Many houses have been built, wells dug, extensive farms fenced, and the whole place assumes the appearance of having been occupied for years, and clearly shows what can be accomplished by union, industry, and preserverance [*sic*].<sup>16</sup>

Other writers presented similar accounts. John R. Young recorded that all personnel "were thus employed, and the camp became presently like a hive of bees."<sup>17</sup> Hosea Stout, who arrived a few days after the work began, reported that "the farm" grew so quickly that it appeared to be a "Magic City of the Woods."<sup>18</sup> The location held great promise of yielding bountifully, and much labor was expended

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<sup>14</sup>As quoted in Jenson, *Historical Record*, 5:880. See also Orson Pratt, "Interesting Items Concerning the Journeying of the Latter-Day Saints from the City of Nauvoo, until Their Location in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake," *Millennial Star* 12 (1 January 1850): 2.

<sup>15</sup>Orson Pratt, "Interesting Items," p. 2.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup>John R. Young (*Memoirs*, pp. 18–19) reported that 715 acres were placed under cultivation, while Heman C. Smith ("Early Settlements of Garden Grove," *Journal of History* [Lamoni, Iowa: Board of Publications of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1900], 2:102) claimed that two farms, one of a thousand acres and the other of five hundred, were fenced and placed under cultivation.

<sup>18</sup>Hosea Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861*, ed. Juanita Brooks, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:156–57 (hereafter cited as *Diary of Hosea Stout*).

to make it do so. Evidence shows that the Saints were not disappointed in their expectations. Within a month of its founding, several hundred settlers were encamped at the new location.<sup>19</sup>

On 10 May 1846, Garden Grove was organized into a branch of the Church. Samuel Bent was chosen as president,<sup>20</sup> with David Fullmer and Aaron Johnson as counselors.<sup>21</sup> President Bent's duty, outlined in a 12 May letter, was to preside over both temporal and spiritual matters; he was specifically directed to divide the land according to need, to receive tithes and offerings, and to distribute the same among the poor and needy. He was also to see that none of the community's goods were wasted or lost.<sup>22</sup> The following day Brigham Young left to go farther west.

It was at this time that Brigham Young's land policy, later so famous in the West, first came into play. A man, he taught, might have as much land as he could properly care for, consistent with his family size. Should a landholder prove slack in his care of the land or fail to work it at all, it was to be taken from him and given to another. Every man was to earn his bread with toil, early and late, and only the infirm and incapacitated were excused from manual labor of some sort.<sup>23</sup> The policy appears to have been rigidly enforced in the Iowa settlements of Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah.

#### PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES AT GARDEN GROVE

Conditions at Garden Grove were very fluid, even from the beginning. Few incoming travelers ever stayed very long. Eager to push ahead and journey with the leaders of the Church, many stopped only long enough to replenish supplies, rest, and make needed repairs. This constant flow of traffic served to keep the more permanent part of the encampment lean of goods and short of field hands to do the work. Those who remained did so because they could not do otherwise, but they often found the community unable to supply even their most basic needs.

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<sup>19</sup>James A. Little, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 14 (Winter 1946): 75-76.

<sup>20</sup>Samuel Bent, because of his benevolence, was familiarly known as "Father Bent." He had formerly served as president of the High Council in Nauvoo. During the trek from Nauvoo to Garden Grove, he had served as a captain of a hundred in the Camp of Israel.

<sup>21</sup>*William Clayton's Journal*, pp. 30-31. Originally Ezra Taft Benson was called as a counselor; however, this was rescinded within two days. Two months later Brother Benson was called to be one of the Twelve Apostles.

<sup>22</sup>Edward Stevenson Journal, p. 79, Church Archives. This is an unpublished account of Stevenson's crossing of the plains to Utah and thereafter. Helen Mar Whitney ("Our Travels beyond the Mississippi," *Woman's Exponent* 12 [1 February 1884]: 135) reported that about twelve thousand rails left over from fencing and cabin building were set aside for future use.

<sup>23</sup>Journal History, 10 May 1846, p. 1.

Problems of poverty were compounded by the fact that the poor and destitute from Nauvoo always stopped first at Garden Grove. These exiles often required much care and assistance before they could journey on. The last evacuees from Nauvoo left with little more than the clothes on their backs and were thrust upon the mercy of the local Saints. In speaking of these impoverished migrants, one Iowa writer said: "They comprised a miserable remnant of about seven hundred people, physically unfit and poorly equipped, and they lay huddled at a camp north of Montrose until wagons arrived for them from Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah in October."<sup>24</sup> Since the last Saints vacated Nauvoo by 9 October 1846, their arrival at Garden Grove a month or so later rendered conditions during the winter exceedingly precarious. Those who had, had to share with those who had not, and nothing was in plentiful supply.

Of course, poverty was no new thing to the Saints. Driven from their homes in Ohio, Missouri, and now Illinois, they understood the value of economizing. Shortly after Garden Grove was settled, Brigham Young urged the Saints to sell or exchange anything that they could easily do without: feather beds, silk dresses, earrings, finger rings, chains, brooches, pocket watches, etc. By this means, they could have money to buy flour, oxen, harnesses, saddles, wagons, sheep, and other necessities to sustain them in their daily lives.<sup>25</sup> This counsel proved to be a blessing during the winter of 1846.

Even these supplies, however, could not last forever. The young men and boys of the community had to visit the more established settlements in southern Iowa and northern Missouri to search for work. An example is a letter from Roger Farrer to his son William. Writing from Garden Grove under date of 15 December 1846, he reported that his other sons, from whom he had not heard in some time, were working somewhere in Iowa. Nearly destitute himself, he added, "I have been sick for nearly five months, . . . and we have suffered for want of provisions on account of my not being able to go to work." As were many others, he was still trying to sell his home in Nauvoo.<sup>26</sup>

Matters worsened greatly at Garden Grove during 1847. Destitution drove some to the point of theft, and numerous complaints were lodged with the authorities at Winter Quarters. In a letter from

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Journal History, 2 May 1846. One week earlier the Council of the Twelve had met and discussed the advisability of selling the Nauvoo Temple to raise funds to aid the poor in their removal from Illinois. A vote taken by the Saints in Garden Grove proved unanimous in the affirmative. (*Orson Pratt Journals*, pp. 342-43.)

<sup>26</sup>Roger Farrer to William Farrer, 15 December 1846, Church Archives.

Orson Hyde, dated 19 July 1847, the Saints in Garden Grove were warned that all stealing proved by unimpeachable evidence would result in the guilty parties' being either disfellowshipped or excommunicated. At least some of the accusations were shown to be unfounded when the leaders of the branch visited Winter Quarters and made a full report that cleared the air.<sup>27</sup>

As conditions continued to grow more difficult, however, the Saints were forced to beg. On 8 October 1847, Luman A. Shurtliff and a Brother Hunt were sent throughout the Iowa settlements in behalf of their people to plead for assistance. The philanthropy of the Iowa settlers brought hundreds of dollars' worth of goods and foodstuffs which were distributed among the poor at Garden Grove. There seems little doubt the lives of some were saved through the generosity of the Saints' non-Mormon Iowa neighbors.<sup>28</sup>

At least one problem was never conquered by the Saints in Garden Grove—death. This ever-present spectre struck the camp soon after the settlement was laid and never let up before the town was abandoned in 1852. The Stout family was struck particularly hard, losing three sons while crossing Iowa. In speaking of the loss of his son Hyrum at Garden Grove, Hosea Stout recorded on 8 May 1846:

He died in my arms about four o'clock. This was the second child which I had lost both dying in my arms. He died with the hooping cough & black canker. . . . My wife is yet unable to go about & little Hosea, my only son [left] now is wearing down with the same complaint. . . . We are truly desolate and afflicted and entirely destitute of anything even to eat, much less to nourish the sick & [I am] just able to go about myself. Arrangements were made to bury him this evening.<sup>29</sup>

Death continued to plague the Saints throughout the spring and summer of 1846. Much sadness came with the passing on 16 August 1846 of President Samuel Bent, president of the Garden Grove Branch. He quite literally worked himself into the grave trying to provide for the needs of his people. In the end, insufficient food, lack of proper shelter, and no skilled attention to his own medical needs made President Bent's recovery impossible. In notifying the Twelve Apostles of his death, David Fullmer and Aaron Johnson, his counselors, wrote:

Garden Grove is left without a president, and a large circle of relatives and friends are bereft of an affectionate companion and friend, and the

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<sup>27</sup>Journal History, 7 August 1847, pp. 12–13.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 18 October 1847, pp. 2–3.

<sup>29</sup>Diary of Hosea Stout, 1:160.

Church has sustained the loss of an undeviating friend to truth and righteousness. The glory of his death is that he died in the full triumphs of faith and a knowledge of the truths of our holy religion, exhorting his friends to be faithful, having three days previous [to his death] received intimations of his approaching end by three holy messengers from on high.<sup>30</sup>

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF MT. PISGAH

When Garden Grove was established, it became apparent that it would not be large or productive enough to sustain all the migrating Illinois Saints. Less than a week after Garden Grove was established, Orson Pratt reported:

We are expecting to form another settlement about 35 or 40 miles north of this, and put in some spring crops and also another on the Big Platte river 100 miles or more west of the Missouri. According to the information which we receive several hundred wagons are now on their way from Nauvoo, being strung along the road for more than 100 miles from that city.<sup>31</sup>

Ten days later, Parley P. Pratt was assigned the task of choosing a second location for settlement. It was agreed that he would move north and west of Garden Grove onto a fertile expanse of uninhabited prairie land generally acknowledged as belonging to the Potawatomi Indians. On 16 May, after having crossed numerous streams swollen by recent rains, Parley separated himself from his company and rode ahead in search of the main fork of the Grand River. He recorded:

Riding about three or four miles through beautiful prairies, I came suddenly to some round and sloping hills, grassy and crowned with beautiful groves of timber; while alternate open groves and forests seemed blended in all the beauty and harmony of an English park. While beneath and beyond, on the West, rolled a main branch of Grand River, with its rich bottoms of alternate forest and prairie. As I approached this lovely scenery several deer and wolves, being startled at the sight of me, abandoned the place and bounded away till lost from my sight amid the groves.

Being pleased and excited at the varied beauty before me, I cried out, "this is Mount Pisgah". I returned to my camp, with the report of having found the long sought river, and we soon moved on and encamped under the shade of these beautiful groves.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saints Biographical Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: Published by Author, 1922), 1:367-68.

<sup>31</sup>Orson Pratt *Journals*, p. 344.

<sup>32</sup>Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt*, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938), pp. 342-43.

A few days later, Brigham Young and other members of the Twelve arrived at the location selected by Parley Pratt. Orson Pratt, Parley's brother, described the 19 May firsthand inspection of the proposed settlement:

The twelve, with some others, went out several miles into the regions round about, to view the country. We found the same very broken and hilly, although well adapted to farming. We concluded to form another settlement here, for the benefit of the poor, and such as were unable, for the want of teams, to proceed further. Accordingly, the camp commenced building houses, ploughing, planting, and fencing in farms, and immense quantity of labour was performed in a very few days. And the place in a short time began to assume the appearance of an old settlement. The ground being more hilly and elevated than the prairies over which we had passed, we concluded to call the place Mount Pisgah.<sup>33</sup>

Early residents of Mt. Pisgah were favorably impressed with its picturesque setting. John Taylor, writing from "the Camp of Israel, Mount Pisgah, Middle Fork of the Grand River, May 30, 1846," reported "the place . . . is beautifully situated, [with an] abundance of wood and water being convenient."<sup>34</sup> Hosea Stout saw it similarly. Writing at a later time, he recalled the site as "a beautiful grove of small hickory" and a "delightful place."<sup>35</sup> Wilford Woodruff, arriving about a month after the settlement began, described his initial view of the camp:

I stopped my carriage on the top of a hill in the midst of a rolling prairie where I had an extended view of all about me. I beheld the Saints coming in all directions from hills and dales, groves and prairies, with their wagons, flocks, and herds, by the thousands. It looked like the movement of a nation.<sup>36</sup>

Likewise impressed, Ezra T. Benson spoke of Mt. Pisgah as "the first place that I felt willing in my heart to stay since I left Nauvoo."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Orson Pratt, "Interesting Items," p. 3. Prior to a final decision to settle on Potawatomi lands, the need to secure the Indians' permission was discussed and agreed upon. Henry G. Sherwood "was sent to a portion of the tribe encamped about 50 miles northwest of the site." There he obtained the necessary permission. (See *Orson Pratt Journals*, p. 349.)

<sup>34</sup>John Taylor to "Brother Cain," 30 May 1846, *Millennial Star* 8 (1 August 1846): 31.

<sup>35</sup>*Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:165.

<sup>36</sup>Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff: History of His Life and Labors* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909), p. 250.

<sup>37</sup>As quoted in Lynn Robert Webb, "The Contributions of the Temporary Settlements of Garden Grove, Mount Pisgah, and Kanessville, Iowa, to Mormon Emigration, 1846-1852" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1954), p. 51.

## ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AT MT. PISGAH

It seldom took the Saints long to effect an organizational structure in their western settlements. Recognition of priesthood authority under proper appointment appears to have presented no real problems either. Shortly after a survey of the land had been made, Brigham Young and the other Apostles organized Mt. Pisgah in much the same way they had Garden Grove. William D. Huntington reported:

Thursday, May 21, 1846, the camp was called together and organized. A council of Presidency was appointed over which I was to preside . . . over both spiritual and temporal affairs with Brother Ezra T. Benson and Charles C. Rich to act as presidents with me. Started immediately to organize for the plowing, fencing, and other matters pertaining to their stopping there.<sup>38</sup>

The following day, the newly appointed leaders made the decision to open up a farm similar to that at Garden Grove. Later the same afternoon, Brigham Young called the Saints together and requested all present who were unable to proceed further at that time to separate themselves from the congregation. A majority did so. A motion was then made and passed for those who remained to farm "the field" and share the profits and produce according to need. In the same manner, migrants yet to arrive were to share also, providing they were willing to work. Plowing began the next day.<sup>39</sup> "The scenes of Garden Grove were reenacted" and a "farm of 'several thousand acres,' was enclosed and planted, and the place became a permanent settlement."<sup>40</sup>

The work of overseeing the needs of hundreds of dispossessed persons appears to have been taxing in the extreme. Samuel Bent, as observed, died soon after his appointment as president at Garden Grove. President Huntington died three days later on 19 August 1846.<sup>41</sup> Charles C. Rich was immediately chosen to fill the vacancy. President Rich was replaced a few months later by Lorenzo Snow.

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<sup>38</sup>William D. Huntington Diary, 21 May 1846, Church Archives. President Huntington reported that shortly after he and his counselors had been called, they "pitched a tent" some two or three miles from camp, dressed in their temple clothes, and "held a prayer meeting" at which they sought God's help "for the things the people would need." The journal account reveals a man deeply committed to the task of blessing the lives of those for whom he had responsibility. (See William D. Huntington Diary, 31 May 1846.)

<sup>39</sup>Journal History, 22 May 1846.

<sup>40</sup>B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:55. It is not known how many acres were placed under cultivation at Mount Pisgah.

<sup>41</sup>Charles C. Rich Journal, 2:11, Church Archives.

The year 1847 saw efforts made to perfect Mt. Pisgah along spiritual as well as temporal lines: whiskey drinking and thievery were roundly denounced, while payment of tithes and offerings was firmly advocated.<sup>42</sup> By the time Jonathan Wright arrived in February 1848, he was able to report to Brigham Young: "I found the brethren united and well instructed in the principles of the Gospel by their president, Lorenzo Snow, and seemed as much disposed to abide council [*sic*] as any saints I ever saw, generally speaking."<sup>43</sup>

#### FARMING AND CONSTRUCTION EFFORTS AT MT. PISGAH

The Saints lost no time in making Mt. Pisgah something of a carbon copy of Garden Grove. Charles C. Rich, who arrived at Pisgah on 22 May 1846, only four days after the advance company, found that his predecessors had already "plowed a thousand acres of land, fenced it, and put it to seed."<sup>44</sup> Hosea Stout was likewise lavish in his praise. Arriving a few days after Elder Rich, he described Pisgah as "a delightful place," the main settlement of which "was situated on a long ridge running north and south. To the west was a large, deep valley or bottom land . . . being plowed and planted." Men, he said, were at work everywhere, "improving and planting," while the whole woods and prairies seemed "alive to business."<sup>45</sup>

A little-known settlement, Mt. Moriah, was located on the west side of the Grand River about two and a half miles from Pisgah. Although never rivaling its sister town, this small settlement also went by the name "Big Field." Over one thousand acres of land were broken up and planted next to it. "It was enclosed on the north and east sides with a good fence of rails and poles, while the west and south portions were protected by the Grand River which was its boundary."<sup>46</sup>

As was done at Garden Grove, the land at Pisgah was divided into five-, ten-, and twenty-acre plots. By casting lots, these in turn

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<sup>42</sup>Journal History, 6 January 1848.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 11 February 1848.

<sup>44</sup>John Henry Evans, *Charles Coulson Rich: Pioneer Builder of the West* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1936), p. 121.

<sup>45</sup>*Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:165. If it be wondered why the bottom soil rather than that of the prairie was ploughed, one writer reports that the Saints found the prairie sod too compact to break up with their light teams, "composed mostly of cows." Hence the workers went into the timber on Grand River, girdled the trees and thus deadened hundreds of acres of the best timber to be found there, pulled out the trees, and "ploughed the light bottom soil for their crops." The trees were then used for fencing the land or constructing cabins. (See Alfred Theodore Andreas, *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa* [Chicago: Lakeside Press, 1875].) The reason cows were used as draft animals was that most of the oxen and horses were employed in moving families to Council Bluffs.

<sup>46</sup>*The Biographical and Historical Record of Ringgold and Union Counties, Iowa* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1887), pp. 659-60.

were given to individual families for their personal care.<sup>47</sup> Although the land was privately farmed, the work was regarded as a cooperative enterprise. On 31 May 1846, a few days before his departure for Council Bluffs, Brigham Young called a special meeting and emphasized the spirit of cooperation.<sup>48</sup> The Apostles and other leaders

were busy counseling and directing the labors of the saints in forming a settlement. Councils and meetings were held at which it was decided that the Twelve Apostles, Bishop Whitney, and the records of other church property should journey westward. Those who did not have a sufficient outfit to proceed through were counseled to remain there. . . . Those who were going on shared with those who were remaining. Though selfishness was not entirely overcome yet, there was a general disposition among the faithful to labor for each other's good. It was a day of sacrifice.<sup>49</sup>

Industry became the community's middle name. Pisgah was literally a city on the move. Immigration was so rapid and sustained that "the whole woods and prairies seemed alive to business and a continual stream of emigration [*sic*] pouring in daily . . . looked like the entire country would be inhabited as a city in a short time."<sup>50</sup> Jesse Crosby noted that "here are many people camped in every direction, many are plowing and planting."<sup>51</sup> As a result, 1846 was a bumper year for crops at Pisgah. Peas, cucumbers, and beans produced plentifully, and corn and buckwheat were in abundance, as were pumpkins and squash. Wild turkey from the fields and fish from the nearby river also made their way to pioneer tables.<sup>52</sup>

Construction at Mt. Pisgah was a matter of major interest. Lorenzo Snow recorded his involvement in "chopping and setting up Brother [Parley P.] Pratt's house of logs."<sup>53</sup> A non-Mormon source reported that the Saints

built two log churches [where they] held regular services; there being no mills, they first built small horse mills for cracking, but soon erected a log water-mill on Grand River, the burrs being made from common boulders such as are occasionally found in the country. . . . These stones were rudely dressed but answered a good purpose in preparing food for a number of people; they were about 2½ feet in diameter and 2 feet thick.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Journal History, 31 May 1846.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Jenson, *Historical Record*, 6:887.

<sup>50</sup>*Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:165.

<sup>51</sup>Jesse Wentworth Crosby, "Diary and Reminiscences, 1847 to 1860," p. 31, Church Archives.

<sup>52</sup>Andrew Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1941), p. 546.

<sup>53</sup>Lorenzo Snow, "Diary and Account Book," Bk. 11, Church Archives.

<sup>54</sup>*Biographical and Historical Record of Ringgold and Union Counties, Iowa*, p. 660.

## LIVING CONDITIONS AT MT. PISGAH

The Saints at Mt. Pisgah saw both happy and sad times. Women in particular appear to have suffered. Sarah Pea Rich, wife of Charles, recalled that it was not uncommon while traveling the prairies of Iowa “to find snakes coiled up under our beds when we took them up in our tent in the morning.” The high prairie grass made “perfect hiding places for the timber and prairie rattlers which sometimes made their appearances at very inauspicious times.”<sup>55</sup>

Sickness was another ever-present companion. During the latter part of July and all of August 1846, a general and almost universal scene of illness prevailed in the camp. In numerous instances, so many were ill that no one could be found to take care of the sick and dying. Zina D. Young reported that death was so frequent a visitor “that enough help could not be had to make coffins, and many of the dead were wrapped in their grave clothes and buried with split logs at the bottom of the grave and brush at the sides, that being all that could be done for them by mourning friends.”<sup>56</sup> Charles C. Rich recorded that deaths occurred so frequently that it was often necessary to bury the dead in a common grave.<sup>57</sup>

The number of deaths at Pisgah may never be known. According to Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson, about 150 people died during the first six months, the first being Noah Rogers on 31 May 1846.<sup>58</sup> Later, the settlement was abandoned, and an approximation of deaths was set at somewhere near 300.<sup>59</sup> In 1885, nearly thirty years later, the cemetery was purchased by President John Taylor with funds collected by donation through the efforts of Oliver B. Huntington, son of Mt. Pisgah’s first president. A small monument presently marks the site of these early burial grounds.<sup>60</sup>

But there were some pleasant times as well. Joseph Cluff reported that he lived with his family of fourteen in Pisgah from 1846 to 1849. He built a double cabin near a clear spring and planted seeds brought from Nauvoo in the plot assigned to him. During the growing season, he and his three sons found work as carpenters and blacksmiths in Iowaville, one of the larger Iowa settlements. Prior to leaving, however, they opened up a “beautiful forest” of sugar maples from which they later extracted maple syrup. Joseph

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<sup>55</sup>Charles C. Rich Journal, 2:7.

<sup>56</sup>James A. Little, *From Kirtland to Salt Lake City* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1890), p. 54.

<sup>57</sup>Charles C. Rich Journal, 2:13–15.

<sup>58</sup>Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, pp. 546–47.

<sup>59</sup>*Biographical and Historical Record of Ringgold and Union Counties, Iowa*, p. 660.

<sup>60</sup>Journal History, 1 December 1888. See also *Deseret News Weekly* 36 (26 January 1887): 31.

reminisced happily of harvesting butter, hazel, and hickory nuts, and of sitting at home on long winter evenings enjoying the fruits of their summer labors. He also told of how parents instructed their children in the ABC's and boasted of how he and his sons were "abundantly paid" for their long hours in the sun by excellent crops.<sup>61</sup>

Although food was scarce the first year, conditions improved, Joseph reported:

At first, common table items such as cheese, preserves, and homemade cakes were scarce, and such food as was available was course and somewhat tiring as a steady diet. By harvest time, however, turnips, potatoes, corn, and buckwheat were on the tables of Mt. Pisgah homes. In 1849 travelers on their way to the California goldfields paid top prices to replenish their food supplies. This enabled at least one family to buy a team and wagon and thus pursue their journey to the West.<sup>62</sup>

Socials during those first years, while extremely rare and of meager fare, were held as occasion would permit. Eliza R. Snow tells of a party held at Lorenzo Snow's home in which the dirt floor was strewn with straw while the cabin walls were draped with sheets to give a homier appearance. Quoting from Lorenzo's Journal, Eliza describes the happy occasion as being lighted by large turnips from which the centers were scooped out, and in which lighted candles were placed. These, suspended from the ceilings or appended to the walls, "imparted a very peaceable, quiet, Quakerlike influence, and the light reflected through these turnip rinds imparted a very picturesque appearance." The celebration featured a simple meal of corn and pea kernels served up with "short speeches full of life and sentiment, spiced with enthusiasm, appropriate songs, recitations, toasts, conuncrums, exhortations, etc." The evening appears to have been a profitable and enjoyable one, for "all withdrew, feeling as happy as though they were not homeless."<sup>63</sup>

#### CALL OF THE MORMON BATTALION

The settlement at Mt. Pisgah was slightly more than a month old when Captain James Allen arrived in camp with a military escort to raise a battalion of Mormon men to serve twelve months in the war against Mexico.<sup>64</sup> The battalion, commanded by Colonel Stephen

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<sup>61</sup>Joseph Cluff, *Cluff Family Journal, Reminiscences of Family Members*, vol. 1, no. 8 (n.p.: Cluff Family Organization, n.d.), pp. 122-23.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>63</sup>Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Company, 1884), pp. 91-92.

<sup>64</sup>For a fuller account of the Mormon Battalion, see John Yurtinus, "'Here Is One Man Who Will Not Go, Dam'um': Recruiting the Mormon Battalion in Iowa Territory," this issue.

W. Kearny and known as "the Army of the West," was prepared to reimburse the men for their services.

The call came on 26 June 1846. Those leaders present in Mt. Pisgah, including Wilford Woodruff, a member of the Twelve, immediately went into conference with the people. William D. Huntington reported: "Captain Allen delivered an address to the brethren appropriate to his foolish errand. I followed him with an address by way of commendation or as the old proverb says, answering a fool according to his folly."<sup>65</sup>

Obviously, the initial reaction of the Saints to the government's request was not exactly favorable. Even the captain's appearance among the Saints created "great confusion and excitement." "The report had gone from tent to tent that the United States troops are upon us."<sup>66</sup> This paranoid reaction is quite understandable when one remembers the Saints had been driven from their homes five times prior to this and had been under threat from the military before. Even when the truth was known, the Mormon attitude was one of disfavor toward the request. Sarah Pea Rich said she regarded it as "a cruel demand made upon us" from a government that had rendered the Mormons no aid in their own time of need. Why should the Saints respond any differently?<sup>67</sup>

Wilford Woodruff, however, was more pacific. He agreed to notify Brigham Young at Winter Quarters of the demand and ask for counsel.<sup>68</sup> On 6 July, Brigham returned to Pisgah and in a public meeting the next day recommended support of the request. A letter suggesting a similar response was immediately sent to Garden Grove.<sup>69</sup>

The practical mind of Brigham Young quickly saw advantages to the call. First, he said, it would give the Saints an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States; second, it would transfer five hundred men fifteen hundred miles west at government expense; third, it would furnish money for the Saints to make the trip west since the volunteers could draw some of the money for their clothing allowance in advance.<sup>70</sup>

There were disadvantages, of course. One was that the movement to the West for many families would be delayed at least a year, if not two.

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<sup>65</sup>Jenson, *Historical Record*, 8:10.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Evans, *Charles Coulson Rich*, p. 123.

<sup>68</sup>Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, pp. 546-47.

<sup>69</sup>Journal History, 7 July 1846.

<sup>70</sup>Charles C. Rich Journal, 2:11.

## DISBANDING THE SETTLEMENTS

By the end of 1851, the Iowa way stations had served their purposes. They had provided permanent homes for more than two thousand persons and temporary stopping places for thousands more. Nearly all migrating Saints between 1846 and 1852 passed through Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah.

Earlier in 1851, the Saints began preparations to abandon the settlements and go west. In the spring they planted crops for the last time. As the harvest drew near, a letter dated 21 September 1851 in Great Salt Lake City and signed by Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards, the current First Presidency, urged that the move begin at once. "Come all ye officers in the Church. . . . There is no more time for saints to hesitate."<sup>71</sup>

Acting on these instructions, the Saints began to organize for the move. Following the harvest and winter months, the move began. Only a few families declined to go.<sup>72</sup> Today, Garden Grove continues as a flourishing community, while the cemetery is all that remains of Mt. Pisgah. This cemetery is maintained by the Church as a memorial to the more than three hundred Saints whose bodies lie interred beneath its Iowa sod.

### SUMMARY

There can be no doubt about the valuable service performed by the Iowa way stations for the migrating Mormons. From the time the Saints first crossed the Mississippi and headed west, their journey was fraught with danger and challenges. Failure on the part of some migrants to make proper preparations for the lengthy trip rendered a precarious trip foolhardy indeed. As it was, death dogged their every step, wood was scarce, winds howled, rain drizzled without letup, and snow drifted, leaving roads impassable. Men, women, and children of all ages became victims of the terrible exposure to which they were subjected. The decision to create way stations where these pioneers could camp, recuperate, raise crops, replenish their supplies, and prepare for others yet to come, without doubt saved many lives and greatly facilitated the monumental task of moving west.

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<sup>71</sup>"Epistle to the Saints in Pottawatamic," letter dated 21 September 1851, *Millennial Star* 14 (15 January 1852): 29.

<sup>72</sup>According to Andrew Jenson, only two Latter-day Saint families stayed on at Garden Grove as permanent settlers—Oliver C. Haskins and Jefferson Cleveland ("Iowa Settlements," Church Archives).

# Rue the Scholar

Clinton F. Larson

Essence winnows through his existential bones  
And separates the unknowns from the knowns  
As he reads. It is delicate mind recusing  
That he affects, not holy passion infusing  
Thought, nor even logic not of his choosing.  
For he has it comatose, carefully glossed  
And fixed in abstract history, or embossed  
In his mindlight's regimen and encyclical.  
He iterates from a podium the shadowy call  
Of scholarship, to get it said and written,  
Strenuously falling from fact hard-bitten  
To find its brittle strength. O antiquity,  
If you could have lived as he, in propinquity,  
As he delivers you! Any mastodon writhing  
In a field of ice might envy such striving  
For preeminence! Later, in temperate clime,  
Students also might, writhing as his rime  
Encrusts awareness. How can they attain it  
And, if attained and cozened, maintain it?  
Never will supplicant, knitting with his mind,  
Learn a language quite so facilely or find  
Surcease by working like an abject Turk  
To save his soul. Mohammed himself would shirk  
Such shrift and then, weakly louring, deplore  
Tares browning three feet high at his door  
And languid termites grazing through his wood,  
While he tosses ashes to exacerbate his mood.  
And surely Rue can talk at will, and will,  
To genera of enlightenment. The old mill  
One subtly runs must have its gears, and gears  
Must turn, and grist, at turning, cheers  
The hoi polloi, even grist of rye.

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Clinton F. Larson, a professor in the English Department, is poet in residence at Brigham Young University.

# The Iowa Experience: A Blessing in Disguise

Reed C. Durham, Jr.

February 4, 1846, was a day of Mormon destiny. On that day the exodus began as the first of the Mormon pioneers stepped off a flatboat upon Iowa shores and began to unload his wagon, teams, equipment and goods.<sup>1</sup> After all the planning and work, the time had finally arrived: the move became a reality. It was also a significant historical event, because that first step marked the commencement of the greatest mass movement of people under a single authority in all of United States history.<sup>2</sup> In many respects, such an event was extremely rare, almost unparalleled in the annals of world history;<sup>3</sup> and certainly, the Mormon exodus drastically reshaped the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to this day.

But those first pioneers were not obsessed with making history. They were more concerned about the immediate problem of the frigid cold which was affecting man and beast. Their worries centered on food and forage, wood and fire, sprained wrists and bruised hooves; anxieties were multiplied about tents and wagons, snow and mud, sickness and death. A broken axle or a missing ox became a crisis; a single squirrel shot from the branch of a leafless winter tree to throw into an evening dinner pot was providence. To be sure, when the Mormon pioneers began the exodus, though there was a sense of destiny and idealism about what they were doing, they were compelled to be concerned with daily experiences of sheer survival.

The distance across Iowa Territory from east to west is approximately 310 miles.<sup>4</sup> And yet it took President Young and the main pioneer "camp of Israel" exactly 131 days to complete that trek. This

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Reed C. Durham, Jr., teaches at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion adjacent to the University of Utah.

<sup>1</sup>This was Charles Shumway. See *Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 27 March 1846, p. 2, Library-Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter referred to as Church Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. R. E. Harvey, "The Mormon Trek across Iowa Territory," *Annals of Iowa*, 3d ser., 28 (July 1946): 36; Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4 vols. (New York: Century History Company, 1903), 1:233.

<sup>3</sup>George A. Smith considered this to be the case. See his 10 March 1861 discourse, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886; reprint ed., 1967), 9:66, 73.

<sup>4</sup>*Iowa: A Guide to the Hawkeye State*, Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for the State of Iowa, American Guide Series (New York: The Viking Press, 1938), p. 3.

proved to be horrendously slow by known standards of pioneering speed. By comparison, the second leg of the Mormon journey from the Missouri River to the Salt Lake Valley (a distance of approximately 1050 miles) was completed in exactly 111 days—a feat which was replicated in distance and length of time by the majority of the many subsequent Mormon wagon trains.<sup>5</sup> Why, then, did this first leg of the journey take so long? Even those pioneers who followed after President Young's main group traversed Iowa Territory in a fraction of Brigham's time. Isaac C. Haight, for example, crossed Iowa with a little group of thirteen families in 39 days.<sup>6</sup> Norton Jacob left Nauvoo on 17 June and arrived with his people at Kaneshville, Iowa, on 25 July (38 days).<sup>7</sup> Anson Call, taking a slightly different route, made the trip in 43 days.<sup>8</sup> Why did it take Brigham Young so long—three times longer—to complete the journey?

The answer, simply put, is that this first major Mormon pioneering endeavor in Iowa was the most difficult pioneering experience in Mormon history. History records few tragedies equal in scope or intensity to the hardships, deaths, and delays suffered in Iowa. The Mormon pioneers of 1846 suffered far more difficulties than did those in 1847,<sup>9</sup> and, for that matter, more than any subsequent pioneering venture. In fact, not even the experiences of the Mormon Battalion or the handcart companies compare in "real pioneering" or overall hardships to those first experienced in Iowa in 1846. That year was indeed "the most difficult year in Mormon history,"<sup>10</sup> and yet, all other Mormon pioneering endeavors owe their fame or successes "to the struggles, the price paid in Iowa."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the "Iowa portion of the trek is filled with accounts of hardship and service and devotion to the cause that would exceed any other incident in the whole of

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<sup>5</sup>The time en route from Nauvoo to the Missouri River is calculated from 15 February to 14 June 1846 (see Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-1847* [Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1971], pp. 32, 183-84). The time spent in the second leg of the journey is calculated from the departure from Winter Quarters on 7 April 1847 to the arrival in the Salt Lake Valley on 24 July 1847. The diaries located in Church Archives of Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, Thomas Bullock, Norton Jacob, and others record the departure from Winter Quarters under the date of 7 April 1847. (See also Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, pp. 547, 564.)

<sup>6</sup>Diary of Isaac Chauncey Haight 1813-1862, 3 June 1846-12 July 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>7</sup>Diary of Norton Jacob 1804-1852, 17 June 1846-25 July 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>8</sup>Diary of Anson Call 1839-1872, 2 May 1846-14 June 1846, typescript, p. 35, Merrill Library, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

<sup>9</sup>Andrew Love Neff, "The Mormon Migration to Utah, 1830-1847" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1918), pp. 106-107; David E. and Della S. Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1974), p. 211. Both of these sources express chagrine that the "glamorous" 1847 pioneer trek into the Salt Lake Valley has robbed all the glory rightly belonging to the 1846 Iowa trek. (See also Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979], pp. 97-98.)

<sup>10</sup>Andrew Karl Larson, *Erastus Snow* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), p. 103; Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>11</sup>Eugene England, *Brother Brigham* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), p. 120.

American History.”<sup>12</sup> Another writer described the accounts of hardships as being “the most awful scenes ever enacted on Iowa soil.”<sup>13</sup>

From the numerous extant pioneer journals of the Iowa experience we could easily document the intense and varied sufferings endured by the pioneer Saints; and it is from these journal excerpts that we come to appreciate more fully the true measure of faith, courage, and devotion of these Saints when we reflect upon their overwhelming hardships and adversities. But when the exodus from Nauvoo commenced and the Saints crossed the “great river” and planted themselves in Iowa, their new home for a year or more, it was precisely because of such hardships they failed at first to recognize that Iowa was in reality, and for many valid reasons, a blessing to them—even a blessing in disguise.

Under the circumstances, the Mormon pioneers did not realize that when forced to leave what had been called the “city beautiful” they had crossed the Mississippi into a territory whose name meant “beautiful land.” Early explorers and settlers of Iowa unanimously agreed Iowa was so fertile and beautiful a land that one early writer wrote with enthusiasm that it “surpasses any portion of the United States.”<sup>14</sup> It was also variously described as the “Western Paradise,” the “blooming belle of the American Family,” “the Garden of America,” “gardens of the wilderness,” and the “most magnificent dwelling place prepared by God for the abode of man.”<sup>15</sup> Isaac Galland’s *Iowa Emigrant* (1840) described Iowa as a country of “surpassing fertility and beauty, . . . one of the most sublime, terrestrial objects which the Creator ever presented to the view of man.”<sup>16</sup>

Whether or not the Saints were acquainted with many of these particular publications during their travels in Iowa, the stark reality of the difficult exodus in wintertime would certainly have, at least for the time being, belied all of these glowing descriptions. When first upon Iowa soil, the Saints were freezing, rather disorganized, and hungry. Going on an exodus was no picnic, no vacation. They had no time to enjoy the beauty of this “land between the two rivers.” Yet, it was providential that it was to Iowa the Saints came for refuge.

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<sup>12</sup>Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo*, p. 211.

<sup>13</sup>Edgar Harlan, “The Mormon Trail,” *Washington Journal*, 8 November 1913, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>Lieutenant Albert M. Lea, *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory; Particularly with Reference to the Iowa District, or Black Hawk Purchase* (Philadelphia: H. S. Tanner, 1836), p. 12.

<sup>15</sup>John B. Newhall, *A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846*, 2d ed. (Burlington, Iowa: W. D. Skillman, 1846; reprint ed., Iowa City, Iowa: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1957), p. 9; John Plumbe, Jr., *Sketches of Iowa and Wisconsin* (St. Louis, Mo.: Chambers, Harris & Knapp, 1839), pp. 2, 6; James L. Scott, *A Journal of a Missionary Tour* (Providence, R.I.: Published by author, 1843; reprint ed., Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1966), p. 151.

<sup>16</sup>Isaac Galland, *Galland’s Iowa Emigrant* (Chillicothe, Ohio: Wm. C. Jones, 1840), p. xi.

Iowa in 1846 was already becoming a significant producer of corn. Its precious deep and black prairie soil was rich in minerals and organic matter. Recently turned by the new settlers and squatters, that soil had already produced annually close to eight million bushels of corn, the grain that soon would reign as “king” in Iowa.<sup>17</sup> Whether the large white or the yellow flint corn, more of it was produced in the south and southwest portions of Iowa in 1846–1847—the very area traversed by the Mormons—than anywhere else in the whole state. It was reported that corn was so easy to raise in Iowa soil that it “would astonish a New Englander.”<sup>18</sup> A white corn crop yielded “from fifty to one hundred bushels per acre,” and the yellow flint corn had a yield of from “forty to seventy-five bushels per acre.”<sup>19</sup> In fact, corn, the staple crop of Iowa, was by all measures the single commodity upon which both man and animals could best thrive, and the LDS pioneers had an abundance of both men and animals in need of such sustenance. It was abundantly available in Iowa and in northeast Missouri at the same time because of an exceptionally bounteous harvest in 1845–1846—the year of the greatest need for the Saints.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, there was a surplus of corn—an oversupply—creating a greater eagerness on the part of both Iowan and Missourian settlers for trade and exchange.<sup>21</sup> With supply and demand appropriately matched at the same time, what could have been better?

Furthermore, corn was not the only crop produced in this breadbasket of the nation. Other agricultural products consisted of wheat, rye, oats, buckwheat, potatoes, turnips, beans, melons, squash, and all kinds of other garden vegetables. Clover, timothy, and other grasses grew luxuriantly upon the beautiful prairie lands of Iowa. J. B. Newhall described these prairies as “great natural meadows of exhaustless fertility, affording the richest herbage for cattle, hogs and sheep.”<sup>22</sup> The Reverend James Scott described the prairies with such expressions as “unbounded stretch[es]” of “surpassing beauty.”<sup>23</sup> Lieutenant Albert M. Lea used such descriptive words as “contiguous,” “grand,” and “rolling.”<sup>24</sup> After winter had waned,

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<sup>17</sup>LeRoy R. Hafen, W. Eugene Hollon, and Carl Coke Rister, *Western America: The Exploration, Settlement, and Development of the Region beyond the Mississippi*, 3d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 265.

<sup>18</sup>Newhall, *Glimpse of Iowa*, p. 15.

<sup>19</sup>Lea, *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory*, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup>John R. Young, *Memoirs of John R. Young: Utah Pioneer 1847* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1920), pp. 22–23.

<sup>21</sup>Hafen, Hollon, and Rister, *Western America*, p. 265.

<sup>22</sup>Newhall, *Glimpse of Iowa*, p. 10.

<sup>23</sup>Scott, *Journal of a Missionary Tour*, p. 128.

<sup>24</sup>Lea, *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory*, p. 13.

by April and May, the natural tall grasses of these fertile prairies could have sustained many times the number of stock possessed by the Mormon pioneers. The grasses seemed like an infinite ocean. By the last of May, Mormon livestock had become sleek and fat. Such an amount of forage is easier to imagine when we note that "tall" grasses of the Iowa prairies generally range from five to eight feet in height.<sup>25</sup> Because of these grasses, covered wagons while crossing the prairies often could barely be seen in the distance, and it was easy for children and cattle to get lost. It was also difficult to find game quickly, to spot the Indian prowler, or sometimes even to find the road.

In addition to the production and availability of corn, in 1846 there was another important farm product of both Iowa and northern Missouri which thrived: hogs. Corn and hogs went together: Because hogs were fed corn (including the husks, stocks, and roots), the abundance of corn led to a great increase in hog production. In Iowa alone, the number of hogs produced was approximately 300,000 head.<sup>26</sup> Missouri ranked fourteenth in the nation's production of hogs in 1840, and by 1860, it had moved to fourth place. With good feed, hogs were relatively easy to care for; at that time they were also the most easily marketed product and "the most easily preserved meat."<sup>27</sup> Hog production was such a solid economic endeavor that banks would offer readily available loans to farmers, "at legal interest, for the purchase of barrels, salt, and other needed articles to put pork into a marketable condition."<sup>28</sup> By the time of the Mormon exodus, "packing houses" had been established "in nearly every river town."<sup>29</sup> "Many herds of swine . . . were driven great distances to market, and travelers observed that the Iowa roads were alive with hogs. Each animal represented 'fifteen or twenty bushels of corn on four legs' and contributed to a 'universal squeal heard all along the Mississippi.'" <sup>30</sup>

In addition to the abundance of hogs in Iowa and Missouri, the Missourians had produced a large quantity of livestock. Their interest in this pursuit reflected both a practical economic endeavor and a pride in their fine animals, which were a sign of status.

Most migrations westward somehow touched bases in Missouri before crossing the 36th parallel further west. Missouri quickly

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<sup>25</sup>Leland L. Sage, *A History of Iowa* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1974), p. 10.

<sup>26</sup>Hafen, Hollon, and Rister, *Western America*, p. 265.

<sup>27</sup>Perry McCandless, *A History of Missouri, Volume II: 1820 to 1860*, ed. William E. Parrish, 3 vols. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972), p. 49.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Hafen, Hollon, and Rister, *Western America*, p. 265.

produced a superior stock of quality horses. They improved the Durham or Shorthorn breed of cattle, which were valued for "their size, early maturity, smoothness of flesh, high percentage of choice cuts . . . and their tremendous prepotency."<sup>31</sup> They also produced an improved line of sheep. But of all the stock industry, the famous "Missouri Mule" became the "major state export."<sup>32</sup> It was certainly helpful to the unprepared Mormons who left Nauvoo still to be able to rearrange, modify, trade, add, or deplete their stock and cattle as each pioneer's situation demanded.

Though all of this did not appear suddenly out of the heavens, the ample availability of these commodities was nonetheless a god-send. The cumulated daily recorded amounts of corn, wheat, oats, flour, potatoes, hay and straw, as well as hogs and pork (including a major by-product of lard), cattle, sheep, horses, and mules which the Mormon emigrants were able to purchase with money, exchange, or labor literally totalled into hundreds of tons.<sup>33</sup>

Yet there is more about the lands of Iowa which should be recognized as clearly advantageous to the Mormon hegira. There were no mountains or even high hills to go over, because Iowa is made up only of "green carpeted prairies," sloping and graceful. While the landscape is not especially flat, it resembles nothing more harsh than a waving surface, swelling into gentle ups and downs. Obviously, undulating or rolling lands are far easier to traverse than abrupt or angular elevations. Thus, it was a blessing for the pioneers to be able to start their journey on easy terrain. The elevation of the entire Mormon trek across Iowa from east to west, or from the beginning exodus at the Mississippi River to the Missouri River at Kaneshville, did not at any time vary more than 1000 ft. from start to finish. At the end of the roughly three-hundred-mile journey across the state, the Saints were only a mere 450 ft. higher in elevation above sea level than they were when they started. At no point in Iowa is there an elevation above 2,000 ft. nor below 400 ft., a fact which very clearly emphasizes the relative flatness of the land.<sup>34</sup>

Iowa is a prairie land, with each section of prairie bordered by woods and forests. From the air, Iowa resembles a patchwork quilt which, during all the seasons except winter, is as brightly colored as any that can be purchased:

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<sup>31</sup>McCandless, *A History of Missouri*, p. 49.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>33</sup>This information was obtained from a tally constructed from Mormon pioneer diaries found in Church Archives.

<sup>34</sup>*Iowa: A Guide to the Hawkeye State*, p. 3.

The first coat of grass is mingled with small flowers; the violet, the bloom of the strawberry, and others of the most minute and delicate texture. As the grass increases in size, these disappear, and others, taller and more gaudy, display their brilliant colors upon the green surface, and still later, a larger and coarser succession rises with the rising tide of verdure . . . the whole of the surface of these beautiful plains, is clad throughout the season of verdure, with every imaginable variety of color, "from grave to gay". It is impossible to conceive a more infinite diversity, or a richer profusion to hues, or to detect any predominating tint, except the green, which forms the beautiful ground, and relieves the exquisite brilliancy of all the others. The only changes of color observed at the different seasons, arise from the circumstances, that in the spring the flowers are small, and the colors delicate; as the heat becomes more ardent, a hardier race, appears, the flowers attain a greater size, and the hue deepens; and still later a succession of coarser plants rises above the tall grass, throwing out larger and gaudier flowers. As the season advances from spring to midsummer, the individual flower becomes less beautiful when closely inspected, but the landscape is far more variegated, rich and glowing.<sup>35</sup>

Iowa formed a land-bridge between the thickly forested lands of the eastern states and the nonforested grasslands of the high prairie plains west of the Missouri River. When the Saints entered into smooth rolling Iowa lands, three-fourths of the surface was devoid of forest and trees. Freed from the difficulty of having to clear roads through heavy groves and thickets, the Saints could generally wend their way from one stretch of open prairie to the next. Most of the earlier advocates of Iowa emphasized the fact that the ground was already a kind of highway and that no new ones needed to be made: "The country being so very open and free from mountains, artificial roads are little required. A few trees taken out of the way, where the routes much travelled traverse the narrow woods, and a few bridges thrown over the deeper creeks, is all the work necessary to give good roads in any direction."<sup>36</sup> The statement is somewhat exaggerated, but it still suggests what advantage the terrain was for the Mormons.

Each section of prairie was fringed with the most excellent of wooded groves and forests. The bottomlands produced the ash, sycamore, cottonwood, black walnut, bur oak, and elm trees. These alluvial lowlands were also filled with shrubbery of every kind—the pawpaw, grape, plum, dogwood, spice bush, sumac, etc. The woods of the uplands consisted of every variety of oak, sugar maple, hickory, hazel, cherry, white walnut, mulberry, etc.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Plumbe, *Sketches of Iowa and Wisconsin*, pp. 24–25.

<sup>36</sup>Lea, *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory*, p. 42; see also Plumbe, *Sketches of Iowa and Wisconsin*, p. 6.

<sup>37</sup>Newhall, *Glimpse of Iowa*, p. 15.

In Iowa, the Saints were never out of range of wood, which was so essential to pioneering. In fact, the most heavily forested area in all of Iowa, consisting mainly of oak and hickory, was (and is) located in the southeastern part of the state. These woods extended westward to the Thompson River Divide running through Adair, Union, and Decatur counties.<sup>38</sup> For the rest of the pioneer trek westward across Iowa, the Saints encountered few forests. Was it simply a coincidence the Latter-day Saints traveled during the winter and cold months in the very area of Iowa which contained the most available and accessible wood? Wood was necessary for the fires to heat wagons, tents, people, and animals. Over these same fires women cooked food, and blacksmiths forged iron. Wood was used to repair boxes, wagons, tents, and all manner of tools. It was used in making rafts, boats, and barges with which to cross the large rivers. And it was needed to build the bridges over other bodies of water. When they stopped long enough, the Saints used wood to build huts, cabins, fences, and boweries along the way. And even when the pioneers were not stopping to make a temporary settlement, these groves of trees became welcome shelters from storms, violent cold, or terrible heat.

Another vital commodity for pioneering was water. Once again, Iowa was most admirably equipped to provide the Saints with this necessity on a year-round basis. The Mormon pioneers never once lacked water in Iowa. Invariably, each section of prairie was interspersed with creeks, rivulets, or rivers. None of them were fed by the runoff from high mountains, as in the Mountain West, but by underground springs scattered over the whole state. Such springs flowed all year and supplied many lakes, which in turn fed the numerous rivers. Even though the pioneers' crossings of these many rivers brought hardship, struggle, and occasionally even death, the very rivers they complained about provided the water essential to the life of the camp.<sup>39</sup>

The land of Iowa possessed several additional treasures of nature which were extremely beneficial to the Saints. The abundant wildlife of Iowa provided measurable assistance throughout their trek, but especially after they had departed from most of the inhabited settlements. When the Mormons could no longer rely upon the settlers for resources, they became more reliant on God, on their own provisions, and on their own independent efforts to utilize the natural fish and game resources of Iowa. Miraculously, the fish in Iowa were

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<sup>38</sup>*The National Atlas of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior Geological Survey, 1970), pp. 154-55.

<sup>39</sup>Lea, *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory*, p. 11.

abundant in all the many waters, and many varieties existed. "Every stream is filled with them," reported Lea; there were "immense quantities" of speckled trout, white perch, black and rock bass, pike, pickerel, catfish, shad, red horse sucker, white sucker, sturgeon, and buffalo fish.<sup>40</sup>

The varied wild game and fowl of Iowa were similarly plentiful, except for larger game animals, such as the buffalo, elk, deer, and bear. Earlier, these animals could be found in abundance, but by 1846–1847, the Indian hunters and the westward movement of civilization had diminished the number of such beasts. This is not to say that they were extinct; the Mormons got their share of all four of these game animals, but not as often as they desired or needed. On the other hand, raccoons, "the pork of the Indians," existed in great abundance. Squirrels and rabbits of all kinds also provided many meals along the way. Little use was made of the possums, polecats (skunks), hedgehogs, groundhogs, or porcupines, which were also found along the trail.

Fowl, both land and water types, was very abundant and therefore made a welcome supplement to pioneer eating regimen. Wild turkeys, prairie hens, quails, and pheasants enriched many a pioneer table. Yet, the birds eaten most often by the Saints were the swans, geese, brants, cranes, "and an almost endless variety of ducks" which existed in the "greatest abundance along the rivers, upon the lakes, and not infrequently upon the prairies."<sup>41</sup>

Another treasure of nature which proved to be an additional blessing for the Saints—and again, at a time when it was most beneficial and welcomed—was the munificent array of wild fruits and berries found throughout Iowa. Isaac Galland reported in detail about this matter:

The earliest fruit, which ripens in the last of May or the first of June, is the strawberry. It grows in barren land, or adjoining the timber in prairies, and often on the second bottoms, which are of a sandy soil. This fruit is of an excellent flavor, and in some seasons can be obtained in almost any quantity.

Blackberries grow plentifully, in those places where the timber has been either cut down by the hand of man, or where it has been prostrated by hurricanes; these are also a very pleasant berry, but not so delicious as the strawberry.

Raspberries are not as plentiful as the foregoing, but they are very common in the country.

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 13–14; Scott, *Journal of a Missionary Tour*, p. 154.

<sup>41</sup>Galland, *Iowa Emigrant*, p. 20.

Gooseberries are in many places in the greatest abundance, and of the best quality; they are large and smooth and of an excellent tast [*sic*].

Plums abound in great variety of size, color and flavor, and grow on trees or bushes in a variety of soils, some of them are of an excellent flavor.

Crab apples are found plentifully about the head of the water-courses in the edges of the prairies, they are very large and make excellent preserves, having a fragrant smell and a fine golden color. Several varieties of hickory nuts, the black walnut, the butter nut, the hazel nut and the pecan, are plentiful in many places.

Grapes. Both summer and winter grapes, and of several varieties, both in size and flavor are found in the country. Wild cherries, the black haw, the red haw and the paw-paw, are also found here.

Cranberries grow in the greatest abundance in the northern parts of this Territory, and are obtained from the Indians by the traders in large quantities.<sup>42</sup>

The reception of this blessing of berries, fruits, and nuts “out of the wilderness” no doubt prompted the Saints to recall, and perhaps recite, one of their precious scriptures:

Yea, all things which come of the earth, in the season thereof, are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart; yea for food and for raiment, for taste and for smell, to strengthen the body and to enliven the soul. And it pleaseth God that he hath given all these things unto man.<sup>43</sup>

The agricultural richness of Iowa was due not only to the fertility of its prairie soil but also to the climate. Iowa was called “the best corn climate in all the world.” What made it so were the moist winters, wet springs, hot and humid summers, long growing seasons, and favorable winds.<sup>44</sup> The land thrived not only upon the moisture it absorbed during the winter but also upon the moisture which came during the spring and summer seasons and was always far greater than that received in winter. The precipitation in June was probably four times that of the winter months, with about seventy percent of the total annual precipitation occurring during the months of April through September. Indeed, Iowa received a great amount of moisture during the year. The southeast area, where the Mormons first crossed, probably received a yearly average of 36 inches of rain.<sup>45</sup>

The Iowa climate simply reflected its geographical position deep in the interior of the continent. The winters were very cold, coming from the great Arctic cold masses which regularly swept across the

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>43</sup>Doctrine and Covenants 59:18-20.

<sup>44</sup>Sage, *History of Iowa*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

central prairies states out of the north and northeast. The springs and summers were the other extreme. Maritime tropical warm air masses coming up from the Gulf of Mexico brought frequent thunderstorms and moisture, causing the summer months to be hot and humid.

All of this abundant wet weather in winter, spring, and summer, and the excessive spring warmth and humid summer heat, were admirably suited for the agricultural excellence in Iowa. It did indeed make great corn, but it was not very good for pioneer traveling. Mormon emigrants traveling westward cursed both the wet weather and the accompanying highways of mud which it made, as well as the high humidity. And rightly so, for the hardships endured by the Saints resulted in great measure from these climatic conditions; therefore it was difficult for the Saints to view anything positive in the weather they endured. Few of the Saints recognized that the needed blessing of the abundant supply of food and feed, water and wood, fish and game, and grass and fruits which were bounteously produced in Iowa and available at that time for them and for all of the continuing Mormon migrations could exist only because of the abundance of inclement weather which they were called upon to endure.

There were still several more significant advantages accruing to the Saints by their traveling in Iowa. First of all, when the Saints initially crossed into Iowa country, and for a little more than the first two months thereafter, they were traveling in the area which was inhabited and relatively settled. There were farms, towns and settlements, stores, hotels, schools, churches, courts, and jails. Most importantly, there were nearby, or at least accessible, mills, including the gristmills, which could grind the pioneers' wheat and corn into usable meal and flour. In other words, during the very severest times of their trek—the times of the worst weather conditions, the times of the most serious lack of food and feed, and also during the times of the greatest disorganization among the ranks—there were always some settlers in the prairie neighborhood to whom they might appeal for help, even though the population was relatively sparse.<sup>46</sup> Had it

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<sup>46</sup>The "neighborhood" through which the Saints traveled included parts of eight counties on the Iowa-Missouri border: Appanoose, Davis, Van Buren, and Lee in Iowa; and Putnam, Schuyler, Scotland, and Clark in Missouri. The population of these eight counties in 1846-1847 was approximately forty thousand. (See Walter Williams, ed., *A History of Northeast Missouri*, 3 vols. [Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913], pp. 336-38, 342, 361-64, 378, 523, 606; Elizabeth Prather Ellsberry, *1850 Federal Census for Sullivan County, Missouri* [Chillicothe: n.p., n.d.], pp. 1-32; Gue, *History of Iowa*, pp. 223-24; *History of Adair, Sullivan, Putnam and Schuyler Counties* [Chicago: Goodspeed Co., 1888], pp. 79-80, 423, 448, 513, 615, 642; Plumbe, *Sketches of Iowa and Wisconsin*, p. xv; *The History of Van Buren County, Iowa* [Chicago: Western History Co., 1878], pp. 255-56, 456; *The Story of Lee County, Iowa*, ed. Nelson C. Roberts and S. W. Moorhead [Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1914], 1:365; E. M. Violette, *History of Adair County* [Kirksville, Mo.: Denslow History Co., 1911], pp. 7-19; Charles A. White, *Report on the Geological Survey of the State of Iowa* [Des Moines: Mills and Co., 1870], 1:142-64.)

not been for those settlers and their resources, especially at that time, the Saints would probably not have survived.

In conclusion, it should also be re-emphasized that all this good fortune was available to the Saints at the right time of the year and in the right place in their travels when it would be most beneficial. And with few exceptions everything was free to the Saints just for the taking. Could there have been any place else where the whole Mormon movement could have gone out of Illinois and sustained themselves? Was Iowa tailor-made by divine hands to be so prepared by 1846–1847 in order to take care of this people?

While pointing out the advantages Iowa possessed which favored the Mormon experience, there is no attempt to de-emphasize the overwhelming accomplishment of the pioneers. No tribute should be denied them when discussing this marvel of human effort. It would never do to try to “explain away” the very real saga of intense suffering and agony experienced by these Saints of God. Indeed, that is the very point: they *were* the Saints of God, and he was with them, even in their most terrible hours. He brought them into Iowa, and in the long run it was a great blessing to them—a blessing in disguise.

# “Here Is One Man Who Will Not Go, Dam’um”: Recruiting the Mormon Battalion in Iowa Territory

John F. Yurtinus

Captain James Allen, a personable career officer in the United States Army, rode directly into the Mormon camp at Mt. Pisgah, Iowa Territory. It was 26 June 1846 and the migrating Latter-day Saints were scattered in camps west from Nauvoo to Council Bluffs. William Huntington, who commanded the Mt. Pisgah camp, and Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Apostle who happened to be passing through on his way west, agreed to meet the government representative. Captain Allen explained to the surprised Mormon leaders that President James K. Polk had commissioned Colonel Stephen W. Kearny at Fort Leavenworth to “give the Mormons an invitation to raise five hundred volunteers to assist the U S A in the Mexican War.”<sup>1</sup>

The Mormon leaders, though unreceptive to the invitation, tactfully agreed to permit Captain Allen to address a gathering of brethren and issue a circular explaining his mission.<sup>2</sup> Captain Allen offered to enlist four or five companies of Mormon volunteers to serve twelve months in the War with Mexico. He personally would lead the soldiers from Fort Leavenworth via Santa Fe to California where they would be discharged. He offered the volunteers pay, clothing, rations, and any other allowance granted by the government to recruits. Each company could maintain four women laundresses, and upon discharge the soldiers could retain their arms and accoutrements. The captain offered to enlist any healthy, able-bodied men from eighteen to forty-five years of age. Assuming the Saints intended to settle in

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John F. Yurtinus is a professor of history at Western Nevada Community College.

<sup>1</sup>Wilford Woodruff Journal, 26 June 1846, Library-Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Church Archives).

<sup>2</sup>William Huntington Journal, 26 June 1846, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Lee Library).

California, he explained, this gives “an opportunity of sending a portion of their young and intelligent men to the ultimate destination of their whole people, and entirely at the expense of the United States and this advanced party can thus pave the way, and look out the land for their brethren to come after them.”<sup>3</sup>

The initial Mormon reaction to Captain Allen’s call for volunteers was overwhelmingly negative. Based on previous experiences with the United States government, the rank and file Latter-day Saint tended to be blinded to any positive aspects of enlistment. Ultimately, many Saints feared that Captain Allen was part of a government conspiracy designed to obstruct or prevent their emigration west. They felt Captain Allen apparently was snooping around to investigate their arms, numbers, attitudes, and condition. Five hundred enlistees would remove “the strength of our camp,”<sup>4</sup> men who could very likely be destroyed in battle with the Mexicans. Those Mormons left scattered and helpless across Iowa Territory could perish from inclement weather, Indian raids, or limited food supply. If the Mormons did not “volunteer,” they would be branded as disloyal or treasonous, leaving them susceptible to attacks by Missouri mobs. The United States Army, as a war measure, could even obstruct their exodus. Few people foresaw anything beneficial from Captain Allen’s request.

Hosea Stout reflected the Mormons’ prevailing attitude regarding the Mexican War. On 27 May, when he first learned the war had started, he wrote, “I confess that I was glad to learn of war against the United States and was in hopes that it might never end untill they were entirely destroyed for they had driven us into the wilderness & was now laughing at our calamities.”<sup>5</sup> Later when he learned of Captain Allen’s request, he expressed the commonly held view: “We were all very indignant at this requisition and only looked on it as a plot laid to bring trouble on us as a people. For in the event that we did not comply with the requisition we supposed they would now make a protest to denounce us as enemies to our country and if we did comply that they would then have 500 of our men in their power to be destroyed as they had done our leaders at Carthage.”<sup>6</sup> Although less indignant than Hosea Stout, William Hyde, who eventually joined the Battalion, also expressed a passionate sense of

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<sup>3</sup>“Circular to the Mormons,” cited in *Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 26 June 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>4</sup>William Hyde Journal, 12 July 1846, typescript, p. 18, Lee Library.

<sup>5</sup>Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:163–64.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:172.

disappointment in the United States, saying his “soul revolted” at the treatment the Saints had received:

The Government of the United States were at this time at war with Mexico, and not being satisfied with either having assisted, or by their silence acquiesced in driving and plundering thousands of defenceless men, women and children, and driving them from their pleasant and lawful homes, and of actually murdering, or through suffering causing the death of hundreds, they must now send to our camps, (While we, like Abraham, by the commandment of Heaven were enroute for a home, we knew not where; and after having expelled us from their borders), and call upon us for five hundred young and middle aged men, the strength of our camp, to go and assist them in fighting their battles.<sup>7</sup>

In less poetic but very precise terms, Abraham Day responded: “Here is one man who will not go, dam’um.”<sup>8</sup> However, after Brigham Young’s talk to the brethren the following day, Abraham Day volunteered.

To a degree, the Mormons’ fear appeared justified. The United States government did not know the attitude or strength of the Mormons. Could the Mormons not excite the Indians and threaten the frontier while the United States engaged the Mexican Army? Although the Fort Leavenworth commanders had no intention of interfering with the emigration, they reconnoitered the Latter-day Saint camps.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the Mormons offered little information. Uncertain of Captain Allen’s integrity or intentions, Jesse Martin and Henry Bigler even refused to tell the captain of Brigham Young’s location. They “did not wish him [Brigham] taken by mob authority under the cloak of law.”<sup>10</sup> For want of reasonable information, a general sense of apprehension and mistrust pervaded both sides.

While Captain Allen rode westward from Mt. Pisgah toward Council Bluffs in search of the Mormon leaders, Brigham Young desperately needed to find a location for his followers to spend the coming winter. The struggle through the rain-soaked quagmires of southern Iowa Territory took longer than anticipated, and Brigham Young realized the Saints obviously could not safely reach the Rocky Mountains in 1846. Rather than lead all the Mormons to disaster, he and the other Church leaders already were analyzing final plans to

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<sup>7</sup>William Hyde Journal, 12 July 1846, p. 18.

<sup>8</sup>Abraham Day III Journal, typescript, p. 6, Lee Library. This journal was kept by Abraham’s son, Eli A. Day, and was written in third person.

<sup>9</sup>William E. Prince to R. B. Garnett, Camp Kerney, Missouri, 2 July 1846, Post Letters Sent, Post Leavenworth, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>10</sup>Henry W. Bigler Diary, 30 June 1846, typescript, p. 22, Lee Library.

send a pioneer party of between two hundred and five hundred hardy men to one of three possible locations: the Bear River Valley, Great Basin, or Great Salt Lake. Brigham Young explained the urgency of sending this party: "It is for the salvation of the Church that a Pioneer company start immediately, and we call upon all the Saints at Mt. Pisgah & within call to listen to our delegates—learn the particulars from them & help them without delay, to men, money & means to perfect the company, and come with them to head quarters or follow after immediately."<sup>11</sup> While a pioneer party might search for future homesites in the West, Brigham Young had to find a suitable location where the rest of his followers could spend the 1846–1847 winter. Well before Captain Allen entered the Mormon camps, Brigham Young had decided the Saints could not emigrate to the Rocky Mountains during 1846. However, the Potawatomi Indian agent refused outright to permit the Mormons to spend the winter on the tribal lands east of the Missouri River. Without official permission, Brigham could only pray that the Mormons could spend the winter either at the Grand Island of the Platte River or, perhaps, at Fort Laramie.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, would the Mormon camps strung out along southern Iowa Territory or the Missouri and Platte rivers be safe? On 26 June the Twelve Apostles met in council to discuss a report that the governor of Missouri had been requested to send an armed force to stop the Mormons from crossing the Missouri River. Although they soon learned that the rumor was a hoax,<sup>13</sup> the fact that the leaders considered it worthy of serious consideration meant that the Saints were quite apprehensive of their safety.

Messengers dispatched by Wilford Woodruff warned Brigham Young of Captain Allen's mission two days before the captain entered Council Bluffs on 30 June 1846. Before greeting the captain, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards hurriedly met in Orson Pratt's tent where they decided it "was best to meet Captain Allen in the morning and raise the men wanted."<sup>14</sup> While most Latter-day Saints denounced the government's proposal, the Church leaders quickly recognized it provided an opportunity to earn needed capital for the exodus and a rationale for establishing

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<sup>11</sup>Brigham Young to William Huntington, Camp of Israel, Missouri River, 28 June 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>History of George Albert Smith, 26 June 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>14</sup>Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 30 June 1846, Church Archives.

temporary Mormon settlements on Indian lands.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, the government could at least gain the neutrality of the Saints if not their enthusiastic support during the Mexican War.

When Captain James Allen met with the high council on 1 July 1846, the Mormons' paramount concern was to secure a satisfactory place—presumably along the Missouri or Platte rivers—where they could remain throughout the winter. All of the potentially favorable sites, however, were located within the boundaries of Indian reservations and could only be occupied by whites with special permission from the United States government. Although Captain Allen promised publicly to request that President Polk allow the Mormon families to remain the winter on these Indian lands, the Mormon leaders wanted stronger assurances. At a private meeting in John Taylor's tent, Brigham Young pointedly inquired "if an officer enlisting men on Indian lands had not a right to say to their families: You can stay till your husbands return"? Captain Allen specifically replied "that he was a representative of President Polk and could act till he notified the President, who might ratify his engagements, or indemnify for damages."<sup>16</sup> Although Captain Allen may have gone beyond the powers of a captain in the army, Brigham Young accomplished his primary goal with this agreement. Most of the Latter-day Saints eventually wintered for several years across the Missouri just north of present-day Omaha, Nebraska.<sup>17</sup>

From the bed of an empty wagon Captain Allen addressed the Mormons during the afternoon. He asserted that hundreds of thousands of volunteers were waiting to enlist in the army, but through the special benevolence of President Polk, the army reserved five hundred positions just for the Latter-day Saints. Next, Brigham Young rose "to clear their [the LDS] minds of all prejudice" by exempting the federal government from previous mob violence in Missouri and Illinois:

I wished them to make a distinction between this action by the general government and our former oppressions in Missouri and Illinois. I said, the question might be asked, is it prudent for us to enlist to defend our country? If we answer in the affirmative, all are ready to go.

Suppose we were admitted into the union as a state, and the government did not call on us, we would feel ourselves neglected. Let the Mormons be the first to set their feet on the soil of California. Captain Allen has assumed the responsibility of saying that we may locate

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<sup>15</sup>W. Ray Luce, "The Mormon Battalion: A Historical Accident?" *Utah Historical Quarterly* 42 (Winter 1974): 27-38.

<sup>16</sup>Journal History, 1 July 1846.

<sup>17</sup>Robert A. Trennert, Jr., "The Mormons and the Office of Indian Affairs: The Conflict over Winter Quarters, 1846-1848," *Nebraska History* 53 (Fall 1972): 381-400.

on Grand Island, until we can prosecute our journey. This is the first offer we have ever had from the government to benefit us.

I proposed that the five hundred volunteers be mustered and I would do my best to see all their families brought forward, as far as my influence extended and feed them when I had anything to eat myself.<sup>18</sup>

In light of subsequent events it is critical to cite John Taylor's account of Brigham Young's speech. According to Elder Taylor, Brigham Young said he had been

. . . trying to effect [federal aid] for several years, and this move had been made a little too quick for us. . . . Supposing we were to refuse this offer; we would have to go to California and have to depend upon our own resources to fight, when if we embrace this offer we will have the U S to back us and have an opportunity of showing our loyalty and fight for the country that we expect to have for our homes. If we did not go and help take it, what would be said when we got there and settled down. It would be as it always had been, get out of the way Mormons, get out of the way. Our fathers and us fought for the liberties of this country and we are the only citizens. Whereas if we go and help take the country we will at least have the right, and I do not want any body to be in these wildernesses and undiscovered before we are. I thing [*sic*] the President had done us a great favor by calling upon us. It is the first call that has been made upon us that ever seemed likely to benefit us. Now I want you young men to go and all that can go, young or married, I will see that their families are taken care of; they shall go on as far as mine, and fare the same, and if they wish if [*sic*] they shall go to Grand Island first. Elder Young them [*sic*] got up and called upon those who were willing to volunteer to follow him. A good many followed, but great many held back on account of not knowing that arrangements could be made with their employers.<sup>19</sup>

Although by a year later he was asserting that the Battalion was a plan of the government to destroy the Church, Brigham Young at this time appeared grateful to President Polk for the opportunity to enlist Mormons in the army and sharply distinguished the benevolent federal government from the blatant anti-Mormonism of the nearby states. He admitted seeking federal assistance and argued that enlistment was an opportunity to demonstrate loyalty to the United States. While willing to fight for homes in the West, these Latter-day Saint soldiers would become some of the first United States settlers in California. Finally, Brigham Young promised to personally take special care of the families left behind by the enlistees.

On the following day John Taylor penned a lengthy, but exceedingly valuable, entry in his diary in which he pondered the

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<sup>18</sup>Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1 July 1846.

<sup>19</sup>John Taylor, "Extract from Journal of John Taylor," 1 July 1846, typescript, Lee Library. California at that time referred to the area west of the Rocky Mountains.

circumstances of the Saints and explained why he encouraged the brethren to volunteer. Enlisting Mormons into the United States military would insure the migrating Saints a place to stay on the Indian lands, secure a stock of guns, provide much-needed capital, and give the Saints the opportunity of being pioneer settlers in a new land. At a meeting to encourage enlistment, John Taylor explained:

Many have something like rebellion against the US. I have myself felt swearing mad at the hands of those in authority, although I don't know that I have swore much. We are something like Abraham was, wandering not knowing wither we wander; fleeing from a land of tyranny and oppression we are calculating to settle in some parts of California. If you go to California you must have legal pretense for going there. The US are at war with Mexico and the US have a perfect right to march into California according to the laws of the nations. The US calling upon us to them gives us a perfect right to go there according to the requisition made that we should be disbanded at California. Those that go there will at least supposing there are 500 will have \$6000 and have 500 stand of arms; we have been too weak heretofore and if we have the carry out of the US motto Vox Popula, Vox Dei, . . . we would be old citizens, and . . . we would have a lot of land allotted to us.<sup>20</sup>

On 3 July Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards left Council Bluffs to recruit soldiers along the route to Mt. Pisgah.<sup>21</sup> When they met William Clayton, the Church leaders privately admitted Captain Allen's offer was "a good prospect for our deliverance and if we do not do it we are downed."<sup>22</sup> Near Mt. Pisgah they met Jesse C. Little, the Mormon representative to President Polk, who reported on his labors in Washington to obtain this recruitment invitation and who confirmed the government's offer.<sup>23</sup> Once in Mt. Pisgah, Brigham Young inducted about sixty volunteers. He also took the opportunity to write a letter to Church leaders at Garden Grove, informing them of the government's promises in glowing terms. According to Brigham Young:

They may stay [in California], look out the best locations for themselves and their friends, and defend the country. This is no hoax. . . . The United States want our friendship, the president wants to do us good and secure our confidence. The outfit of these five hundred men costs us nothing, and their pay will be sufficient to take their families over the mountains. There is war between Mexico and the U.S. to whom California must fall a prey, and if we are the first settlers, the old

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 2 July 1846.

<sup>21</sup>Willard Richards Journal, 3 July 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>22</sup>William Clayton, *William Clayton's Journal: A Daily Record of the Journey of the Original Company of "Mormon" Pioneers from Nauvoo, Illinois, to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1921), p. 53.

<sup>23</sup>Journal History, 6 July 1846.

citizens can not have a Hancock or Missouri pretext to mob the Saints. The thing is from above, for our good.<sup>24</sup>

Brother Brigham also wrote to the Church Trustees at Nauvoo and characterized the government's offer as "another leaf of the Gospel."<sup>25</sup>

Back at Council Bluffs other Mormon leaders continued to recruit volunteers. Parley P. Pratt used church service time to admonish the Saints to quit swearing and to join the army.<sup>26</sup> He noted that the Mexican government would tolerate only the Catholic religion and implied that such a law establishing a particular faith would be particularly repugnant to the Mormons.<sup>27</sup> Willard Richards prophesied that if the Saints did their duty and continued faithful "not a man would fall by an enemy. . . . There would not be a[s] much bloodshed as there was at Carthage [*sic*] jail when Joseph and Hyrum fell."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Brigham Young to Samuel Bent, Mt. Pisgah, 7 July 1846, quoted in *Journal History*, 7 July 1846.

<sup>25</sup>Brigham Young to Babbitt, Heywood, and Fulmer, Trustees, Mt. Pisgah, 7 July 1846, in *Journal History*. Brigham Young wrote:

Beloved brethern: We send you another leaf of the Gospel, which you know is glad tidings, or that which bringeth salvation, and we feel assured, that you will consider that salvation, which shall deliver you from the care, trouble and anxiety of raising teams to ship the poor saints over the Mountains, and this is the Gospel we send. . . .

But this time you will probably exclaim: Is this Gospel. We answer yes. . . . And now, brethern, does this look like Gospel to you? You will probably say "no; we cannot do it. Every man is engaged to get means to get away with his family, and it is as much as they can do to take care of themselves. And we need help instead of furnishing it. What can we do!" We will tell you, Call upon all the old men, the young men and boys, big enough to drive cattle, and who want to emigrate west, and put them on the road to Council Bluffs without delay, leaving their women, children and effect[s] behind them. . . . But how is this going to deliver us? say you; not much gospel in this yet; be patient, brethern, the day is dawning, don't stop to ask us any question[s] yet; but send us every man and boy you can without delay. . . . if everyone is diligent, we expect the whole Church will be together, at that point [Grand Island] before winter closes upon us. That is the Gospel. Capt. Allen has pledged himself on the part of the United States that we may stop wherever we choose on Indian lands, in consideration of the five hundred volunteers. . . .

This is the first time the government has stretched forth its arm to our assistance, and we received their p[r]offers with joy and thankfulness. We feel confident the Battalion will have little or no fighting. Their pay will take their families to them. The Mormons will then be the old settlers and have a chance to choose the best location.

See also Parley P. Pratt, "To All the Saints to Whom these presence shall come," 9 July 1846, Pratt Collection, Church Archives. Elder Pratt wrote:

It is the mind and will of God that we should improve the oppertunity [*sic*] which a kind providence has now offered for us to secure a permanent home, in that country, and thus Lay a foundation for a temporal or State Government under the Constitution of the United States, where we shall be the first Settlers and a vast majority of the people and thus be independent of Mobs and be able to maintain our Rights and freedom. . . . should it fail to be Done, we need not think of gathering for we know of no place to gather, with an assurance of peace unless we hearken to Council, and improve the means which our heavenly father has put within Reach.

<sup>26</sup>Brooks, ed., *Stout Diary*, 1:177.

<sup>27</sup>Taylor Journal, 12 July 1846.

<sup>28</sup>Bigler Diary, 12 July 1846, p. 22.

After Brigham Young returned from Mt. Pisgah, the Saints at Council Bluffs held a grand public meeting on 13 July to recruit additional volunteers to fill the five companies. In his address, Brigham asserted, "My experience had taught me that it is best to do the things that are necessary and not keep my mind exercised in relation to the future." He continued:

If we want the privilege of going where we can worship God according to the dictates of our conscience, we must raise the Battalion. . . .

We have lived near so many old settlers, who would always say: Get out! that I am thankful to enjoy the privilege of going to settle a new country. You are going to march to California; suppose the country ultimately comes under the government of the United States which it ought to, we would be the old settlers, and if any man comes and says, 'Get out', we will say 'get out'. Now, suppose we refuse this privilege what will we do? If you won't go, I will go and leave you. We told you sometime ago we would fit you out to go, and now we are ready to fit you out with Captain Allen as the agent of the United States to help us. The president has now stretched out his hand to help us and I thank God and him too.<sup>29</sup>

In conclusion, the Mormon leader vowed, "I will promise this company, if God spares my life, that your families shall be taken care of, and shall fare as ours do."<sup>30</sup> After this speech, the brethren unanimously authorized Brigham to select the Battalion's Latter-day Saint officers.

In another speech, Orson Hyde added his testimony, urging the Saints to enlist:

The work is laid out, and it is for us to perform; we have petitioned government repeatedly to redress our wrongs; hitherto there has been no effort to do it, and our spirits have been discouraged, but recollect large bodies move slowly. When the Savior was crucified, the Apostles said they would go a fishing, but an angel appeared to assuage their grief. Although you may think you are going to be led to a field of battle my opinion is, that it will result in your obtaining peaceable possession of a home, and He who sent quail may send us means of deliverance. Arise, then, the standard is raised, the call is made; shall it be in vain? No, let us rally to the standard and our children will reverence our names; it will inspire in them gratitude which will last for ever and ever.<sup>31</sup>

In response to the united efforts of the Church leaders, over four hundred men enlisted in the Mormon Battalion. Heber C. Kimball appreciatively concluded, "These military Affaires is now found and

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<sup>29</sup>Journal History, 13 July 1846.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

by most all of the people acknowledged to be one of the greatest blessings that the great God of heaven ever did bestow upon this people.’’<sup>32</sup>

The volunteers assembled on 15 July 1846 in Council Bluffs to hear Brigham Young admonish them to be faithful soldiers and to abide by the advice of Church leaders. Once disbanded in California the ex-soldiers could work along the West Coast. The next temple, however, would not be built in California or Vancouver Island but in the Rocky Mountains “where the brethren will have to come to get their endowments.’’<sup>33</sup>

Four and one-half companies of Mormon volunteers gathered around a hollow square at Council Bluffs on 16 July 1846 where Captain James Allen unpretentiously mustered them into the service of the United States Army for one or two years.<sup>34</sup> From Kearny’s original order, it had taken twenty-eight days to enlist the Mormons. Captain Allen had spent twenty-one of those days with the Latter-day Saints. He explained, “The delay in raising this battalion since Colonel Kearny’s order, was caused by the dispersed condition of the Mormon people whom I found moving in detachments, between the Mississippi and Missouri, and many of them more than 200 miles from this post.” After observing the Mormons for nearly three weeks, Captain Allen concluded, “They came into the service very readily and will, I think, make an active and efficient force.’’<sup>35</sup>

Once his command was staffed and organized, Captain Allen marched the Mormon Battalion about eight miles south to Peter A. Sarpy’s trading post on the Missouri River. There he issued the men “blankets, provision, camp kettles, knives, forks, plates, spoons,” and other supplies.<sup>36</sup> While some of the men dawdled around Sarpy’s post, others returned to visit their families.<sup>37</sup> The Church authorities never ceased their effort to “beat-up for volunteers.’’<sup>38</sup> Brigham Young still wanted forty or fifty enlistees to fill the fifth company and exclaimed in a last-ditch effort that “hundreds would eternally regret that they did not go, when they had a chance.’’<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Heber C. Kimball Diary, 14 July 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>33</sup>Richards Journal, 15 July 1846.

<sup>34</sup>Journal History, 16 July 1846.

<sup>35</sup>James Allen to Brig. General Roger Jones, Fort Leavenworth, 2 August 1846, “Mormon Battalion in Mexican War Miscellaneous Papers,” National Archives, Washington, D. C.

<sup>36</sup>Erwin G. Gudde, ed., *Bigler’s Chronicle of the West: The Conquest of California, Discovery of Gold, and Mormon Settlement as Reflected in Henry William Bigler’s Diaries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 19.

<sup>37</sup>Franklin Allen Journal, 1846–1847 Battalion, 17 July 1846, Church Archives.

<sup>38</sup>John Steele Diary, 17 July 1846, typescript, Lee Library.

<sup>39</sup>Journal History, 17 July 1846.

While the privates cleared a square for a military ball on 18 July, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Orson Pratt, and Wilford Woodruff counseled with the commissioned and non-commissioned officers in a poplar grove next to the riverbank. "Take your Bibles, Book of Mormon—burn up cards," exhorted the President of the Twelve Apostles. Since all but three of the officers had previously been to the temple, he admonished them to wear their garments. They were to act as fathers to their companies and to manage their men by the power vested in the priesthood. They were cautioned by the Mormon leader to be gentle and civil, but to prohibit swearing and insults. Desiring no unnecessary confrontations, Brother Young advised the men not to preach or even converse with the Missourians, Mexicans, or any other class of people. If each man used his religious authority and implemented these directives, Brigham prophesied that "every man will return alive if they will go in the name of the Lord & pray every morning & evening in every tent." He concluded by explaining that the Latter-day Saints would go to the Great Basin where they would build temples and strongholds against the mobs. He told the officers, "You will probably be dismissed about 800 miles from us."<sup>40</sup> This was the first time the officers learned, with any degree of certainty, the ultimate destination of the Church.

Heber C. Kimball "exhorted the brethren to humility and prayer, that God might lead them in paths, and before the people in a manner to get as great a name as any people since the days of Moses; advised them to hold their tongues and mind their own business; if they were sick, they had the privilege of calling the Elders, and rebuking all manner of diseases."<sup>41</sup> Even before the soldiers left Iowa Territory the ecclesiastical authorities left the impression the Mormon Battalion would contribute to a Latter-day Saint self-image of hardships and trials similar to the Old Testament Jews.

Along with the moral advice, the authorities also explained their material considerations. The Latter-day Saint leaders expected that the soldiers' pay would help the main body of Saints camped along the Missouri. Brigham Young specifically wanted to know the amount of property and wages the men would acquire at Fort Leavenworth. Even before the soldiers left Council Bluffs, the Church Council selected Newel K. Whitney, Jonathan Hale, and Daniel Spencer to collect the soldiers' wages.<sup>42</sup> At Fort Leavenworth each

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<sup>40</sup>Richards Journal, 18 July 1846.

<sup>41</sup>Journal History, 18 July 1846.

<sup>42</sup>Richards Journal, 18 July 1846.

man would receive a \$42 advance for the year's clothing allowance which would add up to approximately \$21,000. Available records do not indicate whether the money was intended to go directly to the families of the soldiers or to the Church leaders to be distributed for the general welfare of all the Mormons. This issue, which proved quite divisive in the future, probably was not discussed at the time.

Clearly most of the religious and military standard-bearers realized the significance of their assignments and left the meeting in excellent spirits. For example, William Hyde, 2nd orderly sergeant in Company B, records in his journal that he and other Battalion officers began their journey with a "firm promise that on condition of faithfulness on our part, our lives should be spared and our expedition result in great good, and our names be handed down in honorable remembrance [*sic*] to all generations."<sup>43</sup>

After the meeting between the Church authorities and military officers concluded, most of the Latter-day Saints gathered in the cleared square along the Missouri River for the memorable Mormon Battalion Farewell Ball. Captain Allen, who had to write a report to Washington, could not attend; but just about everyone else in camp enjoyed an evening of music, dancing, and friendship.<sup>44</sup> To the music of Captain Pitt's Brass Band the company officers commenced the celebration by dancing a suitable French four. Guy Keysor, one of the participants, noted: "Every one of the assembly was invited to join in the dance: Officers, Soldiers, Citizens & natives— Everything moved in perfect order not an officer, soldier, or Citizen getting out his place; all was still and quiet and nothing was heard but the Musick, except now & then a soft breeze stealing over the tops of the lofty coten woods."<sup>45</sup> One noteworthy guest, Thomas Kane, who previously had arranged a meeting between Jesse Little and President Polk, the meeting which led to the Battalion's call, wrote that "a more merry dancing rout I have never seen, though the company went without refreshments, and their ball-room was of the most primitive."<sup>46</sup> Dancing continued until the sun dipped below the Omaha hills; then, according to Thomas Kane:

Silence was then called, and a well cultivated mezzo-soprano voice, belonging to a young lady with fair face and dark eyes, gave with

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<sup>43</sup>Hyde Journal, 18 July 1846, p. 19.

<sup>44</sup>Steele Diary, 18 July 1846.

<sup>45</sup>Guy M. Keysor Journal, 18 July 1846, Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City.

<sup>46</sup>Thomas L. Kane, "The Mormons, A Discourse Delivered Before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, March 26, 1850," quoted in Sergeant Daniel Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion in the Mexican War, 1846-1847* (Chicago: The Rio Grande Press, Inc., 1964, originally published, 1881), p. 80.

quartette accompaniment a little song, . . . touching to all earthly wanderers:

“By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept.”

“We wept when we remembered Zion.”

There was danger of some expression of feeling when the song was over, for it had begun to draw tears! but breaking the quiet with his hard voice, an Elder asked the blessing of heaven on all who, with purity of heart and brotherhood of spirit had mingled in that society, and then all dispersed, hastening to cover from the falling dews.<sup>47</sup>

After roll was called on the following morning, Sunday 19 July, the men were furloughed for the rest of the day.<sup>48</sup> A few soldiers remained at Sarpy's, but most returned to the Bluffs for family farewells and Sunday service.<sup>49</sup> During the meeting “the brethren began to take courage” when the authorities speaking from the stand explained that the raising of the Mormon Battalion was a “command of the Lord.”<sup>50</sup>

Monday 20 July was the soldiers' last day in camp. Recruitment efforts to fill the fifth company continued through this last day.<sup>51</sup> Wanting to leave as much food as possible with their families and brethren, many of the ill-clad soldiers kept few rations to eat for their journey southward to Fort Leavenworth. A steamboat that had been expected to carry the men never reached Sarpy's post, so Captain Allen decided to proceed overland.<sup>52</sup> After a morning downpour, the soldiers took their wet packs and began on 21 July 1846 their unforgettable western journey.

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., pp. 81–82.

<sup>48</sup>Keysor Journal, 19 July 1846.

<sup>49</sup>Samuel Hollister Rogers Diary, Reminiscences, and Recorded Letters, 7 June 1841–28 February 1886, 2 vols., 19 July 1846, typescript, Lee Library.

<sup>50</sup>Steele Diary, 18 July 1846.

<sup>51</sup>Frank Alfred Golder, Thomas A. Bailey, and J. Lyman Smith, eds., *The March of the Mormon Battalion from Council Bluffs to California Taken from the Journal of Henry Standage* (New York: The Century Co., 1928), p. 139.

<sup>52</sup>Keysor Journal, 19 July 1846.

# Kinsman

Eugene England

If we live in our holy religion and let the spirit reign, it will not become dull and stupid, but as the body approaches dissolution the spirit takes a firmer hold on that enduring substance behind the veil. . . .

Brigham Young

My father's flesh appears the same,  
Brown clay so burned by summers  
In the wheat that still the hat line  
Shows lighter into the failing hair.

But more than half the third finger  
On the left is gone, the fourth clipped  
By the same saw, and crooked just right  
To hook the twine for tying sacks.

And on the right two toes removed  
(Years later) against the constant pain  
From being crushed by the big roan  
As she stepped and turned to leave the stall.

A wedge of bone, ploughed from the skull  
When the derrick fork pinned him to the stack.  
The muscles slack, the teeth reduced—  
The body's edges worn away.

The tabernacle shrinks and sinks  
Toward the earth, and still the face  
Juts toward the east, the hands grasp the wheel  
As they did that morning I was eight:

We drove from town just as the sun  
Squinted down Left Fork into our eyes.  
We stopped the truck and crossed the swale  
To the highest ridge on the lower field—

The stalks still green, the heads just formed,  
Beards now turning silver-tan,  
Still and moist in the windless dawn,  
Closing calmly as we walked the rows.

Plucking random heads, we counted and chewed  
The milky kernels. And then he knelt,  
Still grasping the wheat, in fierce repose.  
I stood and watched his face. He said:

“Thou art the Prince who holds my heart  
And gives my body power to make.  
The fruit is thine: this wheat, this boy;  
Protect the yield that we may live!”

And fear thrilled me on that hushed ground,  
So that I grew beyond the wheat  
And watched my father take his hold  
On what endures behind the veil.

# White Birds

Randall L. Hall

My eyes slowly arc the humps of hills  
Drawing right to left,  
Alighting on a freshly reddened barn,  
Strong-boarded resting place for birds.  
Three white birds then lift themselves  
From the redness deep as that born in the eyes of tears  
Into a sky of three shades blue.  
Three white birds flutter up  
Then glide across the arcs and humps of hills.

My heart flies three white birds inward  
With tokens of regret upon their wings  
More slender and more delicate than doves,  
With thin, sad voices stretching farther  
Than the upward eyes of prophets.  
Their cries are haunting phantoms  
Their cries are pain.

Yet gradually, with weary spans of wings,  
These birds persist past pain,  
Until, scorching suddenly the remnant tokens of regret,  
They move like three white suns that flame out clean!

and glory to the Father,  
reverence to the Son,  
with gratitude unto the Holy Ghost

Who flow eternally in quorum  
Who flow eternally in rounds  
Like three white birds  
Rising.

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Randall L. Hall is a curriculum writer for the LDS Church Education System, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City, Utah. This poem was published in a volume of poems entitled *Mosaic*, for which he was named Poet of the Year for Utah in 1979 by the Utah State Poetry Society.

# Refugees Meet: The Mormons and Indians in Iowa

Lawrence Coates

The story of the Mormons and the Indians in Iowa is an important chapter in the larger narrative of Mormon history during the early nineteenth century. In 1830, a small number of Mormons proclaimed to red men and white men alike that through divine intervention an ancient record had been revealed, telling about the past, present, and future condition of the American Indians. Six months after the birth of Mormonism, Church leaders sent missionaries from New York to the Indians to declare this important message, to urge them to accept the restoration of Christ's ancient gospel, and to find a suitable location for a "New Jerusalem." Although inspired by the dream of taking the restoration to the natives, the Mormons became preoccupied with the task of founding a Zion for the gathering of their converts. Initially, a temporary gathering place was founded with a temple at Kirtland, Ohio, while a permanent location was designated as the center stake of Zion in Jackson County, Missouri. When attempts to establish Zion in Ohio and Missouri failed, the Saints fled to Illinois where they built a kingdom on the Mississippi with shops, farms, fine homes, and several villages. Across the river roamed Indian refugees—the Fox and Sac, and the Potawatomi. The Mormons were unaware when they settled along the banks of the Mississippi how in the near future their story would become interlaced with these native refugees in Iowa.

The Mormons had little contact with the Indians in Iowa during the first few months in Nauvoo. Sometime before August 1841, Mormon missionaries met Chief Keokuk and gave him a copy of the Book of Mormon. Early in August, Keokuk and a large number of Sac and Fox Indians camped along the Mississippi River near Montrose, Iowa, for several days. On 12 August, about one hundred Indians crossed the Mississippi on a ferryboat and two flatboats to the Nauvoo landing where they were met by the Nauvoo Legion Band, who offered to

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Lawrence Coates is a professor of history at Ricks College, Rexburg, Idaho.

escort them "to the Grove"; but Keokuk, Kis-ku-kosh, Appanoose, and the others refused to come ashore until the Prophet Joseph Smith met them. In a short time, the Prophet greeted them, extended a welcome to them, introduced them to his brother Hyrum, and escorted them to a grove of trees overlooking the Mississippi.<sup>1</sup>

Keokuk, although partly French, was born into the Fox clan about 1780. That birth normally would have deprived him of being a leader in the tribal councils of the combined Sac and Fox tribes; but through his forceful personality, oratorical skills, and political maneuvers of pitting one clan against another, Keokuk eventually gained control over many tribal resources. However, this initial influence was nearly eclipsed when he failed to join with a small band of Sac Indians led by Kwaskwamia, who refused in the early 1830s to give up claim to the Rock River country. These Indians had listened to Potawatomi and Winnebago prophets preach that their former hunting grounds would be restored, the game would return, and the whites would be miraculously destroyed. Rejecting Keokuk's leadership, they turned to Makataimeshiakiak, or Black Hawk as the whites called him. Black Hawk was intensely religious and had previously been indoctrinated with the revolutionary ideas of Tecumseh and the Shawnee prophet, Elskawata. Black Hawk, who had bravely fought alongside Tecumseh, had believed the Winnebago, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Foxes were all his allies; but as the Black Hawk War unfolded in 1832, Black Hawk learned he had been deceived by his chiefs and medicine men. Even Keokuk undermined the feeble union between the Sac and Fox tribes by criticizing those who wanted war and by persuading many Sac Indians to ally themselves with those Foxes led by Chief Paweshik, who opposed war. Even after learning of this lack of unity, Black Hawk continued to fight the Illinois militia composed of such notables as Captain Abraham Lincoln, Colonel Zachary Taylor, and Lieutenant Jefferson Davis. Among the troops were other men such as Thomas Ford, John Reynolds, Thomas Carlin, Joseph Duncan, and Orville H. Browning, who not only fought in the Black Hawk War but also subsequently played very influential roles in Mormon history. The overwhelming military strength of the Illinois militia and its Indian allies overpowered Black Hawk and his warriors within only fifteen weeks.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Co., 1932-1951), 4:401-402.

<sup>2</sup>Donald Jackson, ed., *Black Hawk: An Autobiography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964), pp. 1-31. See also Frederick Webb Hodge, ed., *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, 2 vols. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1971), 1:673-74.

During the government's final negotiations settling the war, Keokuk took advantage of this situation and helped in reaching a settlement. Government agents returned the favor by acknowledging Keokuk as the "chief of the Sauk." But some tribal members resented this action since Keokuk had not been loyal during the war and because he was not a member of a ruling clan. Black Hawk expressed his dissatisfaction when he struck Keokuk across the face with his clout during the council meeting that elevated Keokuk to his new "appointment as chief." However, Keokuk later gained status in the eyes of many of his people because he successfully defended their claims to the Iowa territories against the Sioux Indians in Washington, D.C. So when Keokuk met the Mormons in 1841, he had regained much of the influence and power that he had held before 1832.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to remember that the Sac and Fox Indians were not natives of Iowa. They formerly had inhabited the Great Lakes region along with other Algonquian tribes, but conflicts with the Iroquois forced them westward to a region around Green Bay and the Fox River, where French explorers met them in the mid-1660s. The Sac and Fox Indians continued to live in Wisconsin until the 1730s when they came in conflict with the French and their Indian allies. After a series of bloody encounters, the Sac and Fox banded together and evacuated Wisconsin. Some settled west of the Mississippi in Iowa, while others migrated to the Missouri near St. Louis.<sup>4</sup>

Relatively peaceful relations prevailed between the Americans and the Fox and Sac Indians until after William Henry Harrison negotiated the Treaty of 1804 which ceded to the United States all Sac and Fox lands east of the Mississippi and a narrow strip on the west side of the river. This unpopular treaty became the source of many contentions, quarrels with fur traders and Indian agents, pressure from land-hungry pioneers, and agitation from British agents who penetrated the region. All these troubles erupted into the War of 1812, and consequently many bloody battles were fought between the Sac and Fox Indians and the American "long knives." However, the most intense struggle came when the Americans forcefully removed the Sac Indians from a region the Indians called Saukenuk, a strip of land north of the Rock River. Eventually this conflict escalated into the Black Hawk Indian War of 1832.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Hodge, ed., *American Indians*, 1:38-43, 473-75, 673-75, 684-85; 2:471-80.

<sup>5</sup>William T. Hagan, *The Sac and Fox Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), pp. 106-204.

Losing the Black Hawk War forced all Sac and Fox Indians westward. Many came to Iowa. When the Mormons built Nauvoo, these Indians had resided in Iowa only a little more than a century.

The Indians became even more dependent upon white traders for arms, ammunition, cooking utensils, and blankets than before the exodus. Despite this reliance on whites, the Sac and Fox Indians adapted much of their eastern woodland culture to their new homeland. They retained their traditional custom of making birch-bark canoes and dugouts by building bull-boats from willows and buffalo hides. In Iowa, they continued planting maize, squash, beans, and tobacco near their villages while continuing to migrate to their favorite game sites for deer, elk, and other animals and to streams for such fish as native trout, sturgeon, and bass. About 1837, the Sac and Fox Indians adopted the horse from the Plains Indians, so when they met the Saints, they were adapting the horse into their culture.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, with their move to Iowa, these Indians retained their elaborate social organization of some fourteen gentes or family clans which they named after woodland animals, except for the Thunder Clan. These clans provided social order in their personal relationships and established meaning and purpose in life. In addition, there were social groups like the Soldier Society and the Buffalo Society. Politically, the Sac and Fox had chiefs and a council. However, chiefs usually came from the Trout and Sturgeon gentes while the council represented all family clans through their own war chiefs and prominent family members. Usually, chiefs were mere figureheads and socially important persons rather than powerful political figures. But sometimes, powerful leaders emerged and exerted great influence among many of the people. Keokuk is one example of a leader who gained considerable influence with his people by the time the Mormons arrived in Nauvoo.<sup>7</sup>

Sac and Fox Indians were a deeply religious people who believed in many Algonquian deities or spirits called Manitos. These spirit beings, it was believed, permeated all forms of nature: human beings, animals, birds, fishes, reptiles, insects, plants, fire, water, and all elements. These Manitos possessed awesome magical powers. Children were taught to gain a personal relationship with some Manito by fasting, meditation, and prayer. Sac and Fox oral traditions contain many stories about human relationships with anthropomorphic beasts

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<sup>6</sup>Hodge, ed., *American Indians*, pp. 3-15.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

and beings. The most important tale is of Nanabozho, the god of life, the flood, and the restoration of the earth to its pristine condition.<sup>8</sup>

Because a faith in mysteries and supernatural incidents was important to the Sac and Fox heritage, it is likely that when Mormon missionaries told these Indians about Joseph Smith's prophetic powers they indeed believed the Prophet possessed supernatural powers to aid them. In fact, Keokuk not only told Joseph Smith that he prized his copy of the Book of Mormon very highly, but he asked the Prophet for advice in dealing with the white men who were taking their lands, killing their game, and slaughtering their women and children. Joseph Smith sympathized with their troubles and offered advice from his religious perspective. He quoted some passages from the Book of Mormon telling how the Indians had once been a prosperous people with many great towns and cities. But they failed to keep God's commandments, the Prophet said, so they lost their prosperity. However, Joseph Smith promised that Keokuk and his people would not suffer forever, for the time was close at hand when the Sac and Fox Indians, along with others, would once again become a righteous people and help the Saints build a temple in Zion for the Second Coming of Christ. Before this could occur, however, the Prophet declared they "must cease killing each other and warring with other tribes; also to keep the peace with the whites." After this conference, the Mormons shared some food and entertainment with these Indians.<sup>9</sup>

Certainly, Keokuk and his people did not share Joseph Smith's vision of the future, even though Keokuk said he would "follow the good talk." Instead, these Indians were trying to preserve an ancient life cycle of hunting game and growing corn, squash, and beans. In fact, when white men tried to change these patterns of life through education, the Sac and Fox vigorously resisted all efforts to assimilate themselves into the mainstream of white American life.<sup>10</sup>

The visit of these Iowa Indians to Nauvoo drew sarcastic responses from some non-Latter-day Saints. Thomas Sharp, editor of the *Warsaw Signal*, hated the Mormons for their increased political power in Hancock County and poked fun at the Saints for entertaining Keokuk. Sharp published in his newspaper a note that "Indian Chief Keokuk . . . took occasion to pay a special visit to . . . his brother, the Revelator and Prophet, to smoke the pipe of peace with

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>*History of the Church*, 6:401-402.

<sup>10</sup>Hagan, *Sac and Fox Indians*, pp. 205-65.

him in his wik-ki-up to discourse on the wonders of the New Jerusalem.” Linking Keokuk’s visit to Mormon prophecies of building a New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri, Sharp wrote, “The Prophet made a speech . . . depicting in glowing colors . . . the wonders of the Great Temple, the mysteries of the Book of Mormon, and the glorious times that they will all have together . . . in the latter-day city which they are going to inherit.” Characterizing Keokuk as a dumb Indian in a dirty blanket, Sharp said, the chief “looked unutterable things” and replied, “As to the New Jerusalem, to which they were all going to emigrate, so far as he was concerned, it would depend very much on whether there would be any government annuities—and as far as the ‘milk and honey,’ which was to flow over the land, he was not particular—he should prefer whiskey.”<sup>11</sup>

While Sharp’s article was being reprinted elsewhere along the Western frontier, Mormon relations with the Iowa Indians were complicated by rumors that the Mormons were conspiring to overthrow the U.S. government. After being dropped from Church membership in 1842, John C. Bennett traveled throughout Illinois and Missouri charging Church leaders with spreading the sinister doctrine of polygamy and with directing a secret band of Danites who were going to murder their political enemies and overthrow the government. Bennett, claiming to have infiltrated the inner circle of Mormon leaders, declared they

were preparing to execute, a daring and colossal scheme . . . for conquering the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri, and of erecting upon the ruins of their present governments a despotic military and religious empire, the head of which, as emperor and pope, was to be Joseph Smith, the Prophet of the Lord, and his ministers and viceroys, the apostles, high priests, elders, and bishops, of the Mormon Church.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, there was an attempt to assassinate ex-Governor Lilburn W. Boggs, who had issued the order to exterminate the Mormons in Missouri. Legal procedures were initiated to extradite Joseph Smith to Missouri to stand trial for plotting this nefarious deed, and Orrin Porter Rockwell was charged with being the Danite assigned to kill Governor Boggs.

These political troubles had an effect upon Mormon relations with the Indians of Iowa. The Prophet Joseph Smith had begun to think of escaping these political conflicts by moving into the Indian

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<sup>11</sup>*Warsaw Signal*, 25 August 1841.

<sup>12</sup>John C. Bennett, *History of the Saints: or An Expose of Joe Smith and Mormonism* (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842), pp. 5–6.

territories west of Illinois. Any westward movement would bring the Latter-day Saints into contact with the Iowa Indians. On 6 August 1842, Joseph Smith attended the ceremonies that installed the Rising Sun Lodge Ancient York Masons in Montrose, Iowa. While instructions were being given on the ceremony, the Prophet reviewed the political problems and "prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains."<sup>13</sup> This idea would have a marked influence on Mormon relations with the Iowa Indians during the years to come.

Meanwhile in April 1843, two Mormons brought three Potawatomi Indians from Kansas to Montrose, Iowa. The ancestors of these Potawatomi, like the Sac and Fox who visited the Prophet in 1841, had also migrated from the Great Lakes region, particularly the upper reaches of Lake Huron. According to oral tradition, the Potawatomi were at one time intermingled as one people with the Chippewa and Ottawa. Also like the Sac and Fox, the Potawatomi had moved westward to land near Green Bay, Wisconsin. By the close of the seventeenth century, they had migrated south along the Milwaukee River until they took possession of northern Illinois and extended themselves eastward over parts of Michigan and southward to the Wabash in Indiana.<sup>14</sup>

During the French and Indian War, the Potawatomi sided with the French against the British and then joined Pontiac's uprising. During the American Revolution, they sided with the British against the colonists but were defeated. Twenty years after signing the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, the Potawatomi again sided with the British during the War of 1812 to resist the Americans' encroachment on their lands. Shortly after the Treaty of Ghent in 1815, white settlers intensified pressures upon the Potawatomi for the Indians to sell their lands. During the period of forced Indian removal from 1830 to 1841, some Potawatomi escaped to Canada and became known as the Potawatomi of the Woods, while others moved to western Iowa and Kansas and became known as the Prairie Potawatomi.<sup>15</sup> Some of this latter group moved voluntarily while the others resisted moving until military force drove them westward. Those Indians who came to Nauvoo to meet Joseph Smith in 1843 were Prairie Potawatomi and had been in Iowa for a little more than five years.

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<sup>13</sup>*History of the Church*, 5:85.

<sup>14</sup>Hodge, ed., *American Indians*, 2:289-93.

<sup>15</sup>Ruth Landes, *The Prairie Potawatomi: Tradition and Ritual in the Twentieth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), pp. 3-40.

During all of these migrations, the Potawatomi maintained their elaborate social organization of clans or gentes. In 1843 when they met the Mormons, there were about 1800 Potawatomi belonging to about fifteen different clans who lived in the United States. Reportedly, the Potawatomi believed that each clan possessed a totem which in some mysterious way linked their ancestry to such animals as the wolf, bear, beaver, elk, eagle, carp, rabbit, turkey, or black hawk. This elaborate kinship system of social organization was not understood by the Mormons when the Potawatomi visited them in 1843.<sup>16</sup>

Nor did the Mormons understand the ideas of this deeply religious people, who had at one time worshipped the sun as well as offered sacrifices to heal the sick and to succeed in combat and the hunt. Contact with the French Catholics had influenced the Potawatomi to accept the idea the world is governed by two spirits—one evil called Matchemendo, and one good called Kitchemonedo or the Great Spirit. The Potawatomi believed that by using medicine bundles, dreams, visions, the Religious Dance, or Drum Dance they could influence these spirits. They believed that through the appropriate imitative dance movements, along with beating the drum, power was generated to cure the sick, to influence the animal's movements, and to control the rain during floods or droughts.<sup>17</sup> In 1843, these ideas were so firmly engrained in the Potawatomi that it was not difficult for them to believe Joseph Smith could exercise supernatural powers also. Furthermore, they obviously saw the Mormons as possible allies in their struggles with other white men.

Meanwhile, in April 1843, when two Mormons brought three Potawatomi Indians from Kansas to Montrose, they met a Mr. Hitchcock, who possibly had been commissioned to investigate the exploitation of the natives during their removal from their eastern homelands, and asked him to interpret their conversations with the Mormon Prophet. But he declined, saying he could not serve as interpreter because he had long been opposed to Joseph Smith.<sup>18</sup>

Because the Indians were unable to communicate effectively with Joseph Smith, messengers were sent back to Montrose to Mr. Hitchcock, who accepted this second invitation, thinking the Mormons were "plotting some mischief." When he arrived, he asked the Indians "if they had seen the 'great man or British Officer.'" "One of

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<sup>16</sup>Hodge, ed., *American Indians*, 2:289-93.

<sup>17</sup>Landes, *Prairie Potawatomi*, pp. 12-40.

<sup>18</sup>Henry King to John Chambers, 14 July 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs," K1824-81, Iowa Superintendency, 1838-1849, microfilm, 1949, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

the Chiefs inquired which of the two is the man that talks to the Great Spirit," and Mr. Hitchcock pointed to Joseph Smith.<sup>19</sup>

Shaking Joseph's hand, Chief Apaquachawba said he had heard the Prophet "could talk to the Great Spirit and he wanted him to advise them what to do, as the Indians were dissatisfied with the white people bordering on their lands . . . [for] the whites treated them badly." He asked if the Prophet "would give them any assistance in case of an outbreak on the frontier; . . . [since] they had smoked the pipe with ten tribes who had agreed to defend each other to the last extremity." Joseph replied that "he could give them no assistance . . . [for] his hands were tied by the U.S. but . . . he could sympathize [with] them." Mr. Hitchcock, seeking to thwart any cooperation with the Mormons, told the Indians that Joseph Smith "was not the proper person to come to for advice." He added that "they should have consulted [with] their agent on the Mississippi river . . . [for] he would have seen that ample justice was done to them." The natives objected, saying "he was an American Officer." Mr. Hitchcock urged them to present their case to the commanding officer at Fort Leavenworth, but they again refused. Finally, he suggested they see the governor of Iowa, but they "seemed very indignant."<sup>20</sup>

At this point, the Indians gave Joseph Smith a large silver British Medal to put on his Nauvoo Legion uniform. After giving this token, they asked him "to send some of his '*Chiefs*' back with them." But Joseph Smith again declined. Angered by Hitchcock's repeated efforts to influence the negotiations, the Indians dismissed him as their interpreter, and after he left they continued negotiating with Joseph Smith through sign language. Finally, it was agreed that these Potawatomi Indians would return to Nauvoo with some of their chiefs when the corn reached "the top of their leggins."<sup>21</sup>

Early in July, these Indians returned to Nauvoo, but the Prophet was involved in extradition proceedings in Dixon, Illinois, for his alleged role in the attempt to assassinate ex-Governor Boggs. Upon his return, he met with the Indians, who again recounted the loss of their lands, the lives of their men, women, children, and their property. Then they said the Great Spirit had told them "he raised up a great Prophet who would . . . tell us what to do" and indicated that Joseph was that person. Moved to tears by their persecution, Joseph Smith said, "The Great Spirit has told you the truth. I am

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

your friend and brother. . . . Your fathers were once a great people. They worshipped the Great Spirit. . . . But [they] would not hear his words or keep them. The Great Spirit left them and they began to kill one another, and they have been poor and afflicted until now.” Showing the Indians a Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith said, “This is the book which your fathers made. I wrote it . . . this tells you what you will have to do. I want you to begin to pray to the Great spirit.” To solve their current troubles, the Prophet said, “I want you to make peace with one another, and do not kill any more Indians: it is not good. Do not kill white men . . . but ask the Great Spirit for what you want, and it will not be long before the Great Spirit will bless you, and you will cultivate the earth and build good houses like white men.”<sup>22</sup> After his speech, Joseph Smith gave the Indians some oxen and horses and sent Jonathan Dunham to return with them to Kansas. It was probably on this occasion that Joseph Smith gave these Indians two sheets of hieroglyphics copied from the Book of Abraham.

Meanwhile, although Mr. Hitchcock did not serve as an interpreter at this second conference, he gleaned as much information as possible from various sources. Concluding the Mormons and the Indians had concocted a plan to wage war against their enemies, he expressed his fears to Henry King, brigadier general of the Iowa militia, who told the governor of Iowa, John Chambers, that “a grand conspiracy is . . . being entered into between the Mormons and the Indians to destroy all the white settlements on the frontier. The time fixed to carry this nefarious plot into execution is said to be about the ripening of Indian corn.” Believing the situation too serious to “trifle with,” Henry King told Governor Chambers that “in the event of an outbreak we must not be wholly unprepared.”<sup>23</sup>

Governor Chambers forwarded General King’s letter to Thomas Hartley Crawford, who had supported Andrew Jackson’s Indian Removal Bill in 1830 and had subsequently become U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Commissioner Crawford wanted tranquil white-Indian relations in the Trans-Mississippi West, and so he was understandably concerned when Governor Chambers reported this meeting between the Mormons and the Indians. Even though the governor indicated, “Mr. Hitchcock is, I think, rather indicative of the general suspicion and excitement which prevails against the Mormons than of any treasonable design on the part of their [so-called]

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<sup>22</sup>*History of the Church*, 5:480. This account was copied from the Journal of Wilford Woodruff.

<sup>23</sup>King to Chambers, 14 July 1843, “Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs.”

prophet," he warned that Joseph Smith was "an exceedingly vain and vindictive fellow, and would no doubt feel flattered by the appeal made to him by the Indians and if he could bring them into a conflict with the Missouri frontier, might do so, to revenge his old feud with the people of that state." Assessing the loyalty of the Potawatomi, Governor Chambers added that they should be watched closely since they had sided with the British in the War of 1812 and were among the most savage and irreconcilable of any hostile tribe.<sup>24</sup> Certainly, Governor Chambers was not the only one with this view; many Americans had the same idea. William Henry Harrison, who had fought them, labeled the Potawatomi "our most cruel and inveterate enemies."<sup>25</sup> In view of this opinion, the governor requested that an agent visit the Potawatomi villages "to observe any restlessness among them which may indicate a spirit of mischief." Furthermore, he told General King to watch "for any further intercourse between these Indians and the 'prophet' and to keep me informed of any discoveries he may make."<sup>26</sup>

Obviously, there were reasons besides the ferocious battles the Potawatomi had fought during the War of 1812 that Americans distrusted these Indians. Prior to the Black Hawk War in 1832, a portion of the approximately six thousand Potawatomi settled among Black Hawk's people along Rock River to oppose the government's Indian removal policies. But once they realized the British would not give aid to the cause and once they understood they would lose their trading privileges with the government—privileges which were necessary for their survival—they could see they would be the first to feel the brunt of any attack from the whites. The Potawatomi therefore withdrew their support from Black Hawk's cause. Except for one minor incident during the Black Hawk War, the Potawatomi remained loyal to the United States, but many politicians falsely accused the Potawatomi of supporting Black Hawk. By this means, the whites transferred their hatred for the Sac Indians to the Potawatomi and demanded that all Indians be removed beyond the Mississippi.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, during the removal several conflicts occurred between the whites and the Potawatomi. A number of serious problems

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<sup>24</sup>John Chambers to T. Hartley Crawford, commissioner of Indian Affairs, War Department, 7 August 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs."

<sup>25</sup>R. David Edmunds, *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), p. 198.

<sup>26</sup>Chambers to Crawford, 7 August 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs."

<sup>27</sup>Edmunds, *Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire*, pp. 215–39.

developed because the early treaties gave land grants to the Potawatomi near Chicago and in a region known as Platte Country, Missouri. At each location, whites wanted the land that had been reserved for these Indians; so officials continued to negotiate until these Potawatomi lands were exchanged for property in Kansas and Iowa. Many Indians refused to move, and the government responded by cutting off their annuities to force them to evacuate these areas. Also, the War Department prepared to use military force, if necessary. However, General Edmund P. Gaines promised the Indians food and transportation on steamboats to Council Bluffs, Iowa, if they would move. Soon, about 1,450 Potawatomi migrated from Missouri and elsewhere to Iowa. Meanwhile, federal officials discovered that the whites wanted all of Iowa; so they negotiated still another treaty to remove the Indians from Iowa.<sup>28</sup> When the Mormons met the Potawatomi, some were in Iowa and some in Kansas.

Government efforts to move those Indians from the Yellow River not far from Chicago to Kansas were also problem ridden. Catholic Fathers were trying to teach the Potawatomi farming and religion and to integrate them into white society. But officials from Washington undercut the mission by renegotiating a treaty with three Indians, who, along with a fourth one named Menominee who refused to sign, owned twenty-three sections of land. One Indian, named Notawkah (Rattlesnake), signed the treaty; he later became acquainted with the Mormons. Trouble did not end with signing the treaty. Menominee was forced to move at gunpoint, nearly three hundred Indians died from typhoid, and all suffered severe hunger due to the rotten food.<sup>29</sup>

Governor Chambers, Mr. Hitchcock, General King, and Commissioner Crawford were familiar with the resentment that many Indians felt because of these and other problems. To them it was entirely possible that the Mormons and the Indians would form a conspiracy. These men took no chances that a Mormon-Indian uprising would materialize on the frontier. It is easy to understand why these men took the precautions they did, given their perceptions of the Saints and the Indians.

But a look at Mormon associations with these Indians during most of the Nauvoo years clearly shows these government officials misread the Mormons' relationships with the Indians. A careful study of Jonathan Dunham's visit to the Potawatomi reveals that he made no attempt to make any alliances with them, even though they

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 240-72.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

were willing to make a treaty with the Saints similar to the one they had made with the British during the War of 1812. Instead, Brother Dunham studied the Potawatomi villages, economic conditions, religious ideas, and their intertribal feuds and upon his return to Nauvoo brought a letter from a Potawatomi chief, asking the Prophet's advice on selling their lands. Joseph's reply shows his compassion and sympathy for their plight, but he gave no hint that the Mormons would collaborate in any way with the Indians. He advised the Potawatomi chief not to sell the lands but to "keep them to live upon for yourselves and your children." He also said he would assist them in doing their business; if the United States "appoints me as your agent to transact your business I shall cheerfully comply."<sup>30</sup> Finally, a close examination of all other Indian visits to Nauvoo reveals no sign of the Mormons' forming any conspiracy with any Indians.

By the spring of 1844, the anti-Mormon pressures became so intense that during this presidential election year Mormon leaders began seriously to consider alternative locations for settlement. On 20 February, Joseph Smith requested men be sent to investigate California and Oregon as possible locations "where we can remove to after the temple is complete, and where . . . the devil cannot dig us out, and [where we can] live in a healthful climate, [and] where we can live as old as we have a mind to."<sup>31</sup> The next day, Joseph told the Twelve Apostles to send west twenty-five men mounted on horses and mules and armed with double barrel guns, barrel rifles, revolving pistols, bowie knives, and sabers. But if they failed to find twenty-five volunteers, the Prophet told them to "wait till after the election."<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, men who were in Wisconsin cutting timber for the temple proposed an exploration of "the south and western part of North America, together with the Floridas, Texas, West India Islands, and the adjacent islands to the Gulf of Mexico, together with the Lamanites bordering on the United Territories from Green Bay to the Mexican Gulf."<sup>33</sup> Moved by the thought that because of men who had "smuggled themselves into power in the States and Nation" the Saints had lost their liberty guaranteed by the Constitution, early in March Joseph Smith approved a plan for enlisting the

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<sup>30</sup>Joseph Smith to Pottawattomie Indians, 28 August 1843, Library-Archives, The Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter referred to as Church Archives.

<sup>31</sup>*History of the Church*, 6:222.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 6:224.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 6:258.

Indians to help build the Kingdom of God.<sup>34</sup> In this regard, the Cherokee and Choctaw had already requested an interview with the elders of the Church.

Times were turbulent in the City Beautiful. Early in May, several prominent Church leaders who had been excommunicated turned their energies toward undermining the leadership of Joseph Smith by printing a prospectus of the *Nauvoo Expositor*. Meanwhile, Kis-kish-kee, Black Hawk's brother, brought nearly forty Sac and Fox Indians to Nauvoo to see Joseph Smith. The Prophet invited them into the back kitchen of the Mansion House where they complained that the whites had been cruel to them and had robbed them of their lands. Acknowledging their mistreatment, Joseph told them the Saints had not been responsible for these injustices but had bought and paid for the lands they were occupying in Iowa and Illinois.<sup>35</sup>

The Prophet then turned the conversation to those topics of peace, land, and the Book of Mormon which he always mentioned in his conversations with Indians. Trying to impress upon them the importance of the Book of Mormon, he showed them a copy and said, "The Great Spirit has enabled me to find a book . . . which told me about your fathers." Furthermore, Joseph Smith urged them to spread its message. He continued, "[The] Great Spirit told me, 'You must send this book to all the tribes that you can, and tell them to live in peace;' and when any of our people come to see you, I want you to treat them as we treat you." Following the meeting, the Indians walked to Joseph Smith's log house where they performed a war dance for about two hours. Nauvoo residents responded by striking up the Nauvoo Band, firing the cannon, and collecting food for the Indians.<sup>36</sup>

Just one month and four days after his visit with these Sac and Fox Indians, Joseph Smith was assassinated. Soon after this tragic event, James Emmett and Lyman Wight, against the direction of the Twelve, took steps to carry out Joseph Smith's plans to find a resting place among the Lamanites by taking two companies into Indian Territory.<sup>37</sup> In a short time, the Twelve Apostles began finalizing plans to colonize the West. They sent several groups of men to search for suitable locations for settlement and to establish friendly relations

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 6:261.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 6:401-402.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 6:402.

<sup>37</sup>Davis Bitton, "Mormons in Texas: The Ill-Fated Lyman Wight Colony, 1844-1858," *Arizona and the West* 11 (Spring, 1969): 5-26. For an account of the James Emmett Company, see *History of the Church*, 7:377, 383-86, and 495-98.

with the Indians. As these groups crossed Iowa, they had contact with some of the Indians.

On 1 March 1845, the Council of Fifty, a governing body organized by Joseph Smith and now delegated by the Twelve Apostles to direct the move west,<sup>38</sup> met in the Seventies Hall to discuss Joseph Smith's suggestion that the Council "seek out a location and a home where the Saints can dwell in peace and health, and where they can erect the ensign and standard of liberty for the nations, and live by the laws of God without being oppressed and mobbed under tyrannical governments, without protection from the laws."<sup>39</sup> At this important meeting, the Council added several people to "fill up the Quorum," and among the number was Lewis Dana, "a Lamanite of the Oneida nation, and the First Lamanite who has been admitted a member of any Quorum of the Church."<sup>40</sup> Lewis Dana originally came to Nauvoo in May 1840, joined the Church, and was ordained an elder. During this Council of Fifty meeting, eight men were selected to "seek out a location"; and among them were Lewis Dana and Jonathan Dunham, former missionary to the Iowa Indians. Mormon leaders picked Brother Dana partly because of his Indian heritage, but he was ill prepared for this assignment since most Indians living in the region they expected to visit did not speak any dialect of the Iroquoian language. Dana's ancestors had belonged to the Iroquois Confederacy and had once lived south of Oneida Lake in New York. Although they remained neutral during the Revolution, after the war most eventually migrated from New York to Canada or to a region in Wisconsin.<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, on 24 April, Elders Dana and Dunham, as well as three others, began this important mission and after several weeks returned with the report that the Indians were friendly but the Indian agents were hostile. In fact, Agent James I. Rains sent Jonathan Dunham a caustic note which said, "Sir I have been informed that a creature of the above name [Mr. Dunham] in the shape of a human being has been lurking about for some time in the Indian country either entirely without business or under pretense of a missionary. . . . In either case you are violating the intercourse law,"

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<sup>38</sup>For a discussion of the Council of Fifty, see D. Michael Quinn, "The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945," *BYU Studies* 20 (Winter 1980): 163-97; and Andrew F. Ehat, "'It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth': Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," *BYU Studies* 20 (Spring 1980): 253-80.

<sup>39</sup>See 1 March 1845 entry of William Clayton Diary quoted in Ehat, "Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," p. 269; see also *History of the Church*, 7:379.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup>Hodge, ed., *American Indians*, 2:123-26.

Agent Rains declared; "you are hereby warned to leave the Indian country immediately or I will deal with you as the law directs."<sup>42</sup>

Letters and rumors of this nature did not deter the Mormons from contacting the Indians residing west of Nauvoo. From July through November, several men made expeditions into the West to establish friendly relations with the Indians. In July, Lewis Dana contacted some Cherokee near Webber's Falls on the Arkansas River and invited them to join the Mormons in searching for a "suitable [place] for agriculture and . . . [for] Indian life." He further stated, "It is the intention of the Oneida Nation of which I am one to emigrate to it, together with other Northern Nations who are a party to these our intentions, believing it to be a plan that will result in good if entered into and carried out." He concluded by saying, "This invitation is not confined to you alone, but may be extended through you to as many other friendly tribes as you may think worthy of our fellowship."<sup>43</sup> Clearly, Lewis Dana believed he was following Joseph Smith's plans of enlisting the Indians' help in finding a place for a new Zion. In this regard, he was not unlike Lyman Wight, who took a colony to Texas, and James Emmett, who led a company among the Sioux along the Missouri River.

Early in August 1845, Daniel Spencer and Charles Shumway also ignored the Indian agents' objections by spending about a month establishing friendly relations among the Indians in Iowa and the Indian Territory. They carried a certificate from Brigham Young to prove they were "men of honor and reputation" and to declare that the time had come when the Indians "shall receive the true light and realize the power and glory of the Great Spirit." The certificate also urged the Indians to "pray [to] the Great Spirit in the name of his Son Jesus Christ [to] enlighten your minds . . . that he has commenced and will carry forth his work until ancient Israel is gathered and all the blessings promised by the former prophets are poured forth to the joy and rejoicing of your hearts."<sup>44</sup> After promising the Indians the blessings of the temple, the certificate asked the Indians to assist these Mormon missionaries with their assignment. After visiting with several Indian groups, Elders Spencer and Shumway returned with the bad news that Jonathan Dunham, who had given great service toward friendly Indian relations, had died in late July.

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<sup>42</sup>James I. Rains, Indian Agent, to J. Dunham, 22 June 1845, Church Archives.

<sup>43</sup>Lewis Dana to John Brown, Cherokee Nation near Webbers Falls, Arkansas River, 5 July 1845, Church Archives.

<sup>44</sup>This certificate is entitled "This to the chiefs and all the honorable men among the Senecas and all the tribes through which they may pass," c4 August 1845, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives.

Meanwhile, the anti-Mormon pressures mounted. Mormon homes were burned, open conflict occurred between the Saints and their neighbors, and several prominent Nauvoo citizens were charged with "aiding and abetting Joseph Smith in treasonable designs against the state, for being officers in the Nauvoo Legion, for building an arsenal, for keeping cannon in times of peace, . . . and for holding correspondence with the Indians."<sup>45</sup> Amid these troubles, Mormon leaders met with public officials and assured them the Saints would leave Illinois. Meanwhile, the Council of Fifty on 9 September decided that 1500 men should be sent to the Salt Lake Valley while a committee of five gathered information on emigration. Then on 30 September this Council met again, and after hearing Parley P. Pratt's calculation on the costs for taking a family of five to the West, they decided the Saints would all go west in the spring with families, friends, and neighbors. Finally, this decision was ratified early in October by a general conference of the Saints in Nauvoo.<sup>46</sup>

Once the decision was reached, additional men were sent to the Indians late in October to insure a safe trip across Iowa and the Great Plains. Among those sent to reestablish friendly relations with the Indians were Joseph Herring and his brother George. George was reported to be a Mohawk chief who spoke "good English," understood white customs, and conversed "freely on all subjects."<sup>47</sup> Probably the Herring brothers came to Nauvoo from either New York, Canada, or some other place in the northern United States. Being Mohawk, their ancestors had been prominent among the Iroquois Confederation. During colonial times, Mohawk villages were scattered from Schenectady to Utica, north to the St. Lawrence and south to the east branch of the Susquehanna. But during the Revolution, the Mohawk sided with the British, and so following the war most of them fled to Canada. The remainder scattered among different Iroquois tribes in the northern United States.<sup>48</sup> Regardless of their previous residence, the Herring brothers probably were unable to communicate in the native tongue of most Indians living in Iowa. But they were native Americans and consequently could not be charged with being white intruders on Indian land.

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<sup>45</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:444.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 7:439, 447, 453-55, 463-65, 466-67, 478-80.

<sup>47</sup>Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:72. George L. M. Herring, his brother Joseph, Edward Whiteye, Peter Cooper, and Moses Otis were apparently all Mohawk Indians. Hosea Stout mentions them several times in his diary. These Indians were used to promote friendship with the Indians, but these plans never worked very well. During the Mormons' stay in the Indian Territory, they became drunk on several occasions, threatened the Twelve, and eventually left the Mormons at Winter Quarters.

<sup>48</sup>Hodge, ed., *Handbook of American Indians*, 1:920-26.

Early in December, another fear developed; Samuel Brannan reported that President James K. Polk's cabinet "were determined to prevent . . . [the Mormons from] moving West . . . [and furthermore] they must be obliterated from the earth." Again on 20 January, Sam Brannan stunned Mormon leaders with the report the government intended to intercept the Saints on their westward trek and strip them of their weapons so they could not join forces with another country.<sup>49</sup> Concerned by these rumors, the Twelve decided the Saints could not wait for spring to leave Nauvoo; evacuation would have to begin immediately. So on 4 February, the great Mormon exodus began when the Saints crossed the Mississippi into Iowa.

While thousands of Mormon refugees streamed across Iowa, Mormon leaders wrote to the governor of Iowa Territory and asked permission to use the public lands while they evacuated their settlements near the Mississippi and made their way westward, but the governor thought that, due to the intense anti-Mormon feelings, granting this request might jeopardize Iowa's chances for becoming a state. He neither made commitments to the Saints nor attempted to prevent this migration. Meanwhile, late in May, the Mormons entered the land that belonged to the Potawatomi Indians. When they approached a Potawatomi village located along a branch of the Nishnabotna River, the Saints fully expected the Indians would give free use of their land during the exodus. But to the pioneers' surprise, an Indian met them and demanded payment for their crossing the land. The brave reported that the Indians felt that Mormon livestock would eat the grass which the natives used for their stock. Suspecting this request was the result of some conspiracy between the anti-Mormons and the Indians, the Saints held a council with the Indians and tried to convince them the Mormons were their friends. After several hours of talk, the Indians agreed to let the Saints use their land in this region providing once they moved west they granted the Potawatomi possession of the bridges and other improvements they had built.<sup>50</sup>

The Mormons wanted to protect themselves against conflict of any sort. Because they were so painfully aware of conflict with other people, they realized they needed some rules governing their relations with the Indians. So Mormon leaders forbade their members to trade with the Indians because federal laws prohibited unauthorized white people from exchanging goods with the natives. The Mormons

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<sup>49</sup>*History of the Church*, 7:544, 577.

<sup>50</sup>Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 8 June 1846, Church Archives.

voted to disfellowship any person who violated this rule; later certain Mormons were granted a license to trade with the Indians.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, Mormon wagon trains streamed ever westward. On 20 June, they reached the Potawatomi agency at Trading Point. Seeking to prevent any conflicts, the Mormons held a series of talks with the Indians at the agency; with Peter A. Sarpy, a trader; and Major Robert B. Mitchell, the Indian agent. During these conversations, Mormon leaders felt they had established good relations with the Indians, the trader, and the agent. In fact, part of the day was devoted to celebrating the friendly accord that had been reached. Natives, trader, Indian agent, and Mormons all enjoyed dancing, singing, and eating.<sup>52</sup>

But in a few days, the Mormons heard from Peter Sarpy that Agent Robert Mitchell was secretly conspiring with the commander at Leavenworth to prevent the Mormon exodus. Sarpy said Major Mitchell had already "written to the commanders of troops at the Fort [saying] the Mormons were conniving with the Indians and had committed some depredations at Pottawatomie town, and wanted the Dragoons to come up and keep the peace and prevent their uniting with the Indians to fight the United States."<sup>53</sup> Brigham Young met in council the next day and assigned Orson Hyde and Newel K. Whitney to serve as a Mormon delegation to talk to Agent Mitchell about this report. Later that day Elders Hyde and Whitney reported that Mitchell indicated he had written only one letter two months earlier because of his bad impressions of the Emmett Company of Mormons who had spent the winter among the Sioux. He said his recent talks with Mormon leaders convinced him they were good people; so he would do all within his power to assist the Saints' move west, and he felt the officers at Fort Kearny would do likewise.<sup>54</sup>

Accepting Mitchell's explanations, the Mormons proceeded to migrate toward the Great Basin where they hoped to plant a colony before the winter of 1846. On 29 June, they reached the Missouri River near Council Bluffs, not far from Trading Point, and began crossing the river onto Omaha Indian lands. However, Captain James Allen of the United States Army caught the Mormon wagon trains and recruited nearly five hundred men for service in the recently declared Mexican War.<sup>55</sup> After discussing losing the services of these

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 14 June 1846.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 20 June 1846.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 25-26 June 1846.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>See John F. Yurtinus, "'Here Is One Man Who Will Not Go, Dam'Um': Recruiting the Mormon Battalion in Iowa Territory," this issue.

men, Mormon leaders changed their plans and decided to spend the winter on Indian lands on both sides of the Missouri River. But these lands belonged to the Indians; therefore, the Saints needed permission from both the Indians and the federal government to stay in this region. The land in Iowa became government property during the summer of 1846 when the Potawatomi sold it, but the Indians still retained the privilege of using the land for several more years. However, the land west of the Missouri belonged exclusively to the Indians, and the government was legally bound to keep white people from residing on it.<sup>56</sup>

Lacking authorization to remain on these lands, the Mormons asked Captain Allen for permission, and he gave such permission until ratified by President Polk for the Saints not only to pass through these Indian territories but also to make settlements and fortifications while emigrating to their destination. In a short time, the Mormons negotiated a treaty with the Potawatomi Indians near Council Bluffs. The Potawatomi consented to let the Mormons make a settlement and cultivate the soil during the migration to California. Subsequently, President Polk approved of the Mormons' staying on these Potawatomi lands. However, instructions from Secretary of War William L. Marcy warned the Mormons not to make any permanent settlements nor cause any troubles with the Indians that would delay "the survey and sales of lands sufficient to prevent Iowa from becoming a State in the Union." Finally, the Saints must not jeopardize the Indians' interests and rights.<sup>57</sup> But the quest for permission to settle on Omaha lands, across the Missouri, is a different story beyond the scope of this article concerning the Mormons and the Indians of Iowa.

Meanwhile, Brigham Young did more than just gain permission to stay on Potawatomi lands. He sincerely tried to establish cordial relations with the Indians in Iowa. He visited the camps of those Indians who had not been present when the treaty was signed, and he tried to get their consent to this agreement as well. On one occasion, Mormon leaders met with a band of Sac and Fox Indians, gave them a two-year-old heifer, and had a lengthy conversation with them. This experience certainly foreshadowed Brigham Young's policy statement that eventually became a cliché: "It is easier to feed the Indians than fight them." Brigham Young tried to make it clear to the Indians

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<sup>56</sup>Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1846, *Executive Document 1* (Serial 493), p. 217. About six million acres were given up in Iowa and western Missouri with these treaties. The treaties are located in Record Group 75, "Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Ratified Treaties," National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>57</sup>Manuscript History of Brigham Young, from 7 August to 7 September 1846.

that he did not want any troubles with their stealing horses and taking other property. He reminded them about the visit some of them had had with the Prophet Joseph Smith when they came to Nauvoo. Brigham told them about the Mormon exodus to the Rocky Mountains, and he invited Chief Powsheek "to come over the mountains and see the Saints when they got located, and bring his men to hunt for us, and we will make blankets, powder, cloth, etc."<sup>58</sup>

On this same trip, the Mormons renewed their friendship with a band of Potawatomi the Saints had known during the Nauvoo years. These Indians had visited the Prophet Joseph Smith in Nauvoo and had heard him speak in the grove near the Mississippi. Jonathan Dunham had visited their villages. These Indians remembered these experiences for they verified their previous contact by showing a paper that "Father" Joseph Smith had given them in 1843 which counseled them not to sell their lands. They also had a map that had been drawn by William W. Phelps showing the boundaries of their land. Apparently, they had not taken Joseph Smith's advice, but they still cherished these papers. Finally, they produced two sheets of hieroglyphics associated with the Book of Abraham.<sup>59</sup> Certainly, Mormon leaders could see how their friendly treatment of these natives had provided friendly relationships while the Saints remained on these lands during their exodus to the Great Basin.

Brigham Young also invited these Potawatomi Indians to come and live in the Great Basin with the Mormons. These were not idle words. On 6 September 1853, during the trauma of the Walkara Indian War, Brigham Young wrote to these Potawatomi Indians and again invited them to come to Utah. Apparently, a member of this band came to the Great Basin to see the Mormons for President Young announced, "Wa-ab-kee-sick who is now with me says you are desirous to know about this country, its climate, and productions, and I take great pleasure in writing to you that you may know for yourselves." The President told them, "The winters . . . are no colder here than where you are, and there is not so much snow in the lowlands, but much falls in the mountains; the rain falls mostly in the spring and fall." He also told how the Mormons watered their crops and raised "the finest of wheat, corn, potatoes, melons, squashes, peaches, grapes, etc." "Should you or any of your people wish to come and live with us," Brigham Young promised to give "what

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 10-11 July 1846.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

land you may wish to occupy to advantage, the same as we do to our own people.”<sup>60</sup>

These pioneer experiences with the Potawatomi were especially important in fostering a lasting friendship between the Saints and these natives from Iowa. From the beginning of the exodus the Mormons enjoyed friendly relations with the Indians in Iowa. Hosea Stout, the Mormons’ police chief, kept a detailed diary of this period and noted how friendly the Indians were in Iowa. On 25 June, he recorded, “There was quite a number of Indians came to camp to day some we fed They were all friendly.” On the next day, he said, “There was a continual crossing of the Indians all day swimming their horses which seemed to be but little disadvantage to them to come to a stream out of its banks.” On the twenty-eighth, Stout wrote, “In the evening there was large numbers of Indians came into camp all friendly and seemed to understand perfectly well the nature of our move and also our ultimate union with them & our return to the lands of our inheritance &c. &c.” Two days later, these friendly Indians reportedly saved Parley P. Pratt’s life. Parley Pratt and Solomon Hancock tried to ford a stream not far from Council Bluffs while they were on their way to Mt. Pisgah to lead companies westward. Hosea Stout reported, “Br Pratt & the mule came very near being drownd. He floted to shore and was so much exhausted that he could not get out. After resting a while he attempted it again and came near being drowned the second time. . . . He was finally assisted over by some Indian boys, not however until they were satisfied that they were ‘Good Mormonee’ as they call us.”<sup>61</sup>

While crossing Iowa, Hosea Stout continued to report of friendly relations with the Indians in Iowa. He recorded, for example, that while the Saints were nearing Council Bluffs early in July 1846:

There was large companies of Indians followed us today for several miles and in fact they thronged around us all the time we were building the bridge & at times would come in droves to the camp but they were very civil friendly & good natured and done none of us any injury while we were here.

They would amuse themselves sometimes by swimming in the creek in large numbers and sometimes at playing cards at which they seemed to be very dexterous. They appeared to be much interested at our operations while at work which seemed to be a great novelty to them.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Brigham Young to Na-na-no-it, Pottawatomie chief, and Woorish-xuck, Squaw-kee chief, 6 September 1853, Brigham Young Letterbook Number 1, 21 November 1851 to 21 February 1855, pp. 235–36.

<sup>61</sup>Brooks, ed., *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:170–73.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 173.

During the entire period, Hosea Stout reported of no serious conflicts between the Mormons and the Indians in Iowa.

Instead, the Mormons used the exodus as an opportunity to share their knowledge with the Indians. Most often the sharing of information with the Indians was informal. But occasionally, government officials hired Mormon women to teach academic subjects to the Indian children in Iowa. A Mr. Wicks hired some Mormon women while their husbands were making the trek of the Mormon Battalion and asked them to move to Indian Mills to hold school for the Indian children. These women taught sewing, spinning, reading, writing, ciphering, and spelling. But they found it difficult, due to the many cultural differences, to teach the Indian girls even the basic skills of knitting and sewing; and the academic subjects were even more difficult to teach than these domestic skills. Some Mormon children succeeded in teaching a few Indians to read.<sup>63</sup>

Meanwhile, the Mormons were unable to establish the same kind of friendly relationships with the Indians living west of the Missouri River in the Indian Territory. Part of the problem no doubt stemmed from the relative prosperity of the two Indian groups; the Fox, Sac, and Potawatomi enjoyed a more affluent life style than the Omaha and the Otoe, who lived in the Indian Territory. Probably, the relative prosperity of the Potawatomi Indians was partly due to the payments they had recently received from the government for the sale of their lands in Iowa. When Hosea Stout first crossed the Missouri he noticed this difference between the Indians. He observed:

The Otos and Mohas or more properly the Omahas . . . differed widely in appearance from the Pottawattamies on the other side of the river. They were not so well dressed. Instead of good blankets they were at best dressed in old blankets & some entirely in dressed skins in their pure wild native dress but they were uncommonly friendly & would sell green corn for bread & such articles as they wanted to eat.<sup>64</sup>

However, Hosea Stout was mistaken about the "uncommonly friendly" nature of these Indians, for the Saints soon had considerable trouble with the Indians living across the Missouri River in the Indian Territory. The most frequent trouble was the loss of property. The Omaha and Otoe Indians often took vegetables, grain, hogs, chickens, horses, and cattle from the Saints. In fact, these plunderings became so troublesome the Mormons used various means to protect their property. Mormon leaders held a series of council

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<sup>63</sup>Mosiah Hancock Journal and "The Life Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock," Church Archives.

<sup>64</sup>Brooks, ed., *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:183-84.

meetings with Indian chiefs to end these "thefts." Brigham Young gave presents to certain Indian chiefs thinking they would control their people. When these efforts failed, the Saints strengthened their militia and posted guards to watch closely all Indians who came near Mormon property. Even after his departure for the Great Basin, Brigham Young sent a letter in April 1847 to the Saints still at Winter Quarters, saying:

Your crops, and cattle will be exposed to the aggressions of the Omahas, and other Indians, and we say to you, take care of them, learn to watch as well as pray, for the further you go West, the more you will be exposed, and if the Saints cannot watch them safely here, what will they do when they get where civilization or half civilization is unknown.<sup>65</sup>

Troubles continued with the natives near Winter Quarters after Brigham Young made the historic trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Police Chief Stout recorded the loss of several hundred livestock during fifteen separate raids between October 1847 and June 1848. Conflict with the Omahas became so intense that on one occasion the Omahas attacked Francis Weatherbee and some other men who were trying to protect their livestock. Brother Weatherbee was shot through the hip while the others escaped unharmed. Then when Heber C. Kimball's company began making a trek westward in June 1848, several Omaha Indians shot Thomas E. Ricks and Howard Egan while the two men were trying to recover their livestock.<sup>66</sup>

Although the Saints experienced difficulty with the Indians living west of the Missouri River, the pioneers had peaceful relations with the Indians of Iowa while crossing Iowa Territory. Most likely, the peaceful relations between the Mormons and the Indians in Iowa were influenced by the similar heritage of the two different peoples. Both peoples were trying to maintain the integrity of their life-styles, life-styles which differed from that of the general populace of nineteenth-century America. Perhaps their understanding of one another's plight as refugees established a sympathetic relationship. For a brief moment in the span of time, the Mormons and the Indians in Iowa shared a common fate; they were forced to abandon their homes and to found new ones farther west. The red men moved into the Indian Territory while the Saints migrated westward to the tops of the Rocky Mountains.

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid. See Stout's accounts of these incidents from pp. 262 to 315.

# “All Is Well . . . ”: The Story of “the Hymn That Went around the World”

Paul E. Dahl

The hymn “All Is Well,” or “Come, Come, Ye Saints” as it is commonly referred to, composed on Locust Creek in April 1846, has an interesting history. Although the song was popular with the Mormon pioneers, obscurities in its history need clarification. There have been some misconceptions about the motivation for composing the hymn. Also relevant to its composition is the apparent influence of an old English song, “All Is Well.” Finally, the exact location of the Mormon camp on Locust Creek has never been identified, creating a question as to whether the song was composed in Iowa or Missouri. This paper will examine these problems in an effort to increase the reader’s understanding of the history of this great hymn that was a marching song for the Mormon pioneers and is a hymn sung today by Mormons around the world as well as by members of other faiths.

## THE COMPOSER

William Clayton, the composer of “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” was one of thousands of exiles forced from their homes in Nauvoo, Illinois. In early spring of 1846 this group moved westward across Iowa en route to a new, more tolerant home. William, an early convert to Mormonism in Great Britain, was baptized by Heber C. Kimball in the River Ribble on 21 October 1837 and served as a counselor in the British mission presidency. On 8 September 1840 he and his family left their beloved England to make a new home in Nauvoo.<sup>1</sup>

The Nauvoo years were busy ones for William. He served as a clerk for the Church and “was necessarily thrown constantly into the company”<sup>2</sup> of Joseph Smith. Later he was recorder in the Nauvoo Temple.

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Paul E. Dahl is the director of the LDS Institute of Religion in Tucson, Arizona.

<sup>1</sup>James B. Allen, *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton, 1840-1842* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1974), p. 172; Clayton Family Records, LDS Genealogical Library, Salt Lake City.

<sup>2</sup>Andrew Jensen, ed., *The Historical Record* (Salt Lake City: Published by author, 1887), 6:225.

These days were to be short-lived, however, for on 27 February 1846, unfriendly “gentile” neighbors forced him and numerous other Mormons to leave Nauvoo. For the journey west, Brigham Young appointed him clerk for the entire “Camp of Israel,”<sup>3</sup> an appointment that gave William extra assignments in addition to caring for his family. He was also involved in playing concerts with the camp band at the various settlements as the pioneers traveled west.

Because the first day of the journey was extremely cold, they traveled with difficulty only seven and one-half miles into the bleak Iowa prairie.<sup>4</sup> The weather in Iowa that year was miserable for pioneer travel. Of the approximately ninety days spent in transit from the Mississippi to the Missouri, George A. Smith records in his diary that they had “thirty-four days of storm, either snow or rain. This was one of the wettest springs that Iowa had had or was to have for some years to come.”<sup>5</sup> The bad weather affected the health of these pioneers, not only bringing on sickness but also making recovery difficult. The following journal entry by William Clayton is typical of their miseries: “I have been sick again all day especially towards night. I was so distressed with pain it seemed as though I could not live.”<sup>6</sup>

No doubt adding to his distress was the necessity of leaving the youngest of his four wives, Diantha, in Nauvoo. Diantha, the daughter of Winslow Farr, was married to William Clayton on 9 January 1845, in Nauvoo, by Heber C. Kimball. When the remainder of the family left for Iowa, seventeen-year-old Diantha was expecting her first child and was only a month away from delivery. She was therefore in no condition to face the hardships of the journey. It is difficult to perceive the frustration and turmoil that must have faced William during the several months after leaving Nauvoo. The terrible weather and living conditions, plus a large family to care for—including three wives, five children, and his mother—added greatly to these frustrations. He was particularly concerned about Diantha and frequently sent her letters.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 27 March 1846, Library-Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Office Building, Salt Lake City; hereafter cited as Church Archives.

<sup>4</sup>William Clayton, *William Clayton's Journal* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1921), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Lynn Robert Webb, “Contributions of the Temporary Settlements Garden Grove, Mount Pisgah and Kaneshville, Iowa, to Mormon Emigration, 1846–1852” (Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1954), p. 19.

<sup>6</sup>Clayton, *William Clayton's Journal*, pp. 12–13.

<sup>7</sup>Paul E. Dahl, *William Clayton: Missionary, Pioneer, and Public Servant* (Provo, Utah: J. Grant Stevenson, 1964), p. 68. See also James B. Allen, “One Man’s Nauvoo: William Clayton’s Experience in Mormon Illinois,” *Journal of Mormon History* 6 (1979): 54–55.

Diantha, it appears, was also lonely for her husband. In a letter of 16 March she writes:

My Beloved but absent William

It rejoiced my heart to heare a word from you but it would have given me more joy to have had a line from you but I am thankful for a little you know that is the way to get more.

To tell you I want to see you is useless yet true you are constantly in my mind by day and I dream about you almst every night, as to my helth it is about the same as when you left onely a little more so I often wish you had taken your house a long for it looks so lonesome it seems a long time sinse I saw you but how much longer it will be before I can have the priviledge of conversing with you face to face it is yet unknown to me father is doing as fast as he can he wants to get away soon after conference if possible Mother sends her best respects to you, often says how lonesome it seems dont you think Wm will come to night I expect it would cheer her heart as well as mind to hear your voice once more, dear Wm write as often as you can send, for one line from you would do my heart good

I must draw to a close for I am in haste

I will try to compose myself as well as I can. I never shall consent to have you leave again.

Farewell, Farewell<sup>8</sup>

#### A NEW HYMN IS COMPOSED

April 15 found the camp located at Locust Creek, about one-half mile west of the middle fork of Locust Creek. However, the exact location of this camp has not, to date, been positively identified, though it is known to have been near the present-day Iowa–Missouri state line, which has a history of changes and disputes from 1816 to 1895. Some evidence suggests that the camp was located just south of the present-day state line in Putnam County, Missouri.<sup>9</sup> William Clayton records in his journal on 15 April that he spent the previous night on watch and was exceedingly frustrated because the cattle and horses were breaking into the tents. This day, however, brought him good news. The day before, Charles Decker had arrived from Nauvoo with a large packet of letters and messages for the camp. One of the letters, to a Brother Pond, noted that Diantha had delivered a “fine fat boy” on 30 March but “was very sick with ague and mumps.”

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<sup>8</sup>Diantha Clayton to William Clayton, 16 March 1846, Church Archives. The letter is printed in Allen, “One Man’s Nauvoo,” pp. 55–56.

<sup>9</sup>See Stanley B. Kimball, “The Iowa Trek of 1846: The Brigham Young Route from Nauvoo to Winter Quarters,” *The Ensign* 2 (June 1972): 42; Webb, “Contributions of Temporary Settlements,” p. 24; *Unionville (Missouri) Republican*, 23 March 1938 and 17 August 1938; Helen Mar Whitney, “Our Travels beyond the Mississippi,” *Woman’s Exponent* 12 (15 January 1884): 126.

It appears that maybe two women received this information from the Pond letter and then, in turn, passed the news on to William. Helen Mar Whitney, wife of Horace Whitney, records the event:

As I learned, through the mail, that Wm. Clayton was the father of a child by his wife, Diantha Farr, who was left with her parents in Nauvoo. I bore the tidings to Wm., whose delight knew no bounds, and that evening Horace, myself and a number were invited over to their camp, Wm. being one of the band, whose encampment was only a short distance from ours, and which event Horace mentions thus: "In the evening there was a grand christening held at Bro. Clayton's camp, in celebration of the birth of his child in Nauvoo."<sup>10</sup>

William Clayton, in his journal, says he received the "good news" in the morning from Ellen Kimball and went immediately to Pond's camp. Brother Pond then read him the letter telling about William's wife and new son. William also records that after hearing the news he composed a new song, "All is Well." His complete journal entry for this date reads as follows:

Wednesday, 15th. Last night I got up to watch, there being no guard. The cattle and horses breaking into the tents and wagons. I tarried up then called S. Hales and Kimball. This morning Ellen Kimball<sup>11</sup> came to me and wishes me much joy. She said Diantha has a son. I told her I was afraid it was not so, but she said Brother Pond had received a letter. I went over to Pond's and he read that she had a fine fat boy on the 30th ult., but she was very sick with ague and mumps. Truly I feel to rejoice at this intelligence but feel sorry to hear of her sickness. Spent the day chiefly reading. In the afternoon President Young came over and found some fault about our wagons, etc. In the evening the band played and after we dismissed the following persons retired to my tent to have a social christening, viz. William Pitt, Hutchinson, Smithies, Kay, Egan, Duzett, Redding, William Cahoon, James Clayton and Charles A. Terry and myself. We had a very pleasant time playing and singing until about twelve o'clock and drank health to my son. We named him William Adriel Benoni Clayton.<sup>12</sup> The weather has been fine but rains a little tonight. Henry Terry's horses are missing and have been hunted today but not found. *This morning I composed a new song—"All is well."* I feel to thank my heavenly father for my boy and pray that he will spare and preserve his life and that of his mother and so order it so that we may soon meet again. O Lord bless thine handmaid and fill her with thy spirit, make her healthy that her life may be prolonged and that we may live upon the earth and honor the cause of truth. In the

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<sup>10</sup>Whitney, "Our Travels beyond the Mississippi," p. 127.

<sup>11</sup>There appears to be a discrepancy between the Helen Mar Whitney and William Clayton accounts as to who informed William about his wife and new baby. Possible explanations might be that they both reported to him and he recorded only one account in the journal or that "Ellen Kimball" mentioned in his journal entry should have been "Helen Kimball (Whitney)" and William made a mistake when recording it in his journal.

<sup>12</sup>In reality the child's name became simply Moroni Clayton.

evening I asked the President if he would not suffer me to send for Diantha. He consented and said we would send when we got to Grand River.<sup>13</sup>

Thus we have the setting for the composition of the hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints," variously referred to as "the hymn that helped domesticate the American wilderness,"<sup>14</sup> "the hymn that went around the world,"<sup>15</sup> "the Mormon signature hymn,"<sup>16</sup> "the favorite hymn of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Mormons around the world,"<sup>17</sup> and a hymn "worthy to be classed among the great hymns of Christian literature."<sup>18</sup>

#### COMMEMORATING THE BIRTH OF A SON

Clayton's journal entry seems to indicate that the new song was written to commemorate the birth of his new son and the deliverance of his wife through the perils of childbirth.<sup>19</sup> A tradition which is in error, however, has developed within the Church relative to the origin of that hymn. The common misconception claims that Brigham Young came to William Clayton, who was recognized as one of the capable musicians within the Church during his time,<sup>20</sup> and asked him to write a hymn that would strengthen and encourage the members of the camp. A typical example of this account comes from an early lesson manual for the women of the Church:

It was at Locust Creek, Iowa, that President Brigham Young, feeling great anxiety, because there were murmurings in the camp of Israel, called Elder William Clayton aside, and said, "Brother Clayton, I want you to write a hymn that the people can sing at their camp-fires, in the

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<sup>13</sup>Clayton, *William Clayton's Journal*, pp. 19–20; italics added.

<sup>14</sup>Alistair Cooke in the television series "America."

<sup>15</sup>Title of the display in the Wayne County Historical Museum at Corydon, Iowa, commemorating "Come, Come, Ye Saints."

<sup>16</sup>"When the Latter-day Saints Go Marching In," *Sports Illustrated*, 8 December 1980, p. 87.

<sup>17</sup>News release of the Public Communications Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 July 1973.

<sup>18</sup>George D. Pyper, "The Story of Our Hymns," *Improvement Era* 39 (July 1936): 429.

<sup>19</sup>This is the traditional point of view taken by members of the Clayton family, according to Alma Clayton, the last surviving child of William Clayton, as told to the writer in an oral interview prior to Alma Clayton's death.

<sup>20</sup>William Clayton played horn, drum, and violin in the Nauvoo band. Before they left Nauvoo, Brigham Young gave him \$150 to purchase instruments for the brass band to accompany the pioneers on the plains. William Clayton had been called upon regularly with his friends to furnish entertainment at various functions in Nauvoo. In Iowa he made arrangements for concerts for the band in the various settlements through which they passed, he himself playing in the band. (Allen, "One Man's Nauvoo," pp. 49, 55.) After the pioneers arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, he helped reorganize the Nauvoo Legion Band. The Pioneer Day program of 24 July 1853 included one of his compositions, "A Home for the Saints." The present hymnal of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints contains, besides "Come, Come, Ye Saints," another hymn that was sung much in prior years, Hymn No. 198, "When First the Glorious Light of Truth," said to have been Brigham Young's favorite hymn (see Heber J. Grant, "Favorite Hymns," *Improvement Era* 17 [June 1914]: 784).

evening; something that will give them succor and support, and help them to forget the many troubles and trials of the journey.”

Elder Clayton withdrew from the camp, and in two hours returned with the hymn familiarly known as, “Come, come, ye Saints.” His personal testimony is to the effect that the Spirit of the Lord rested upon him during the time of its composition, and that the hymn was written under the power and inspiration of the Lord.<sup>21</sup>

No support has been found for this early tradition. It certainly is not included in Clayton’s own journal; the long-held Clayton family tradition does not support it; and a letter written by Heber J. Grant, while serving as the seventh President of the Church, rejects it. President Grant, in a letter dated 28 March 1923 to Victoria C. McCune, a daughter of William Clayton, makes the following comment:

Elder Frank Penrose brought me a carbon copy of a letter dated July 21, 1920, written by yourself to Lillie T. Freeze, with reference to the hymn, “Come, Come Ye Saints.”

I was very glad to have this information regarding the writing of the poem. I had heard that the poem was written at the special request of President Brigham Young, at Winter Quarters. I do not know where I read or where I heard, at this late date, that President Young requested your father to go and write a hymn that would encourage and bless the Saints on their journey from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake Valley, but I have made this announcement time and time again in public, but of course shall do so no more.<sup>22</sup>

#### AN OLD ENGLISH TUNE

Subsequent research by Church musicians reveals that William Clayton was probably acquainted with a tune of English origin called “All Is Well,” a tune “brought down by oral tradition until its appearance in *Union Harmony* and *Original Sacred Harp*, early Southern publications.”<sup>23</sup> It was derived from the folk song “Good Morning, Gossip Joan,” which in Virginia oral tradition is called “Good Morning, Neighbor Jones.” In 1844, two years before the Clayton composition, J. T. White of Georgia revised the song; it appears in *The Sacred Harp* as “All Is Well. P. M.” In “The Story of Our Hymns,” George D. Pyper says, “No doubt it was from this source that William Clayton got the tune and ‘Mormonized’ it to fit

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<sup>21</sup>“Latter-day Hymns,” *Relief Society Magazine* 8 (January 1921): 58. See also Grant, “Favorite Hymns,” pp. 777–78; George D. Pyper, “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” *Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1939), pp. 21–24.

<sup>22</sup>Heber J. Grant to Victoria C. McCune, 28 March 1923, quoted in Kate B. Carter, ed., *Heart Throbs of the West* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1944), 5:498–99.

<sup>23</sup>Pyper, “Story of Our Hymns,” p. 428; J. Spencer Cornwall, *A Century of Singing* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1958), pp. 301–303.

'Come, Come, Ye Saints.'''<sup>24</sup> The rhythm of the White arrangement also appears to have been revised to fit the lines of Clayton's composition. One stanza of "All Is Well. P. M." is as follows:

What's this that steals, that steals upon my frame?  
Is it death, is it death?  
That soon will quench, will quench this mortal flame,  
Is it death, is it death?  
If this be death, I soon shall be  
From ev'ry pain and sorrow free.  
I shall the King of glory see,  
All is well, all is well!<sup>25</sup>

The only similarity between the lyrics of White's arrangement and Clayton's composition, with the exception of the "All is well!" refrains, is the following two lines. The White hymn reads:

If this be death, I soon shall be  
From ev'ry pain and sorrow free.

In "Come, Come, Ye Saints" two lines of the fourth verse read:

And should we die before our journey's through . . .  
We then are free from toil and sorrow, too.

The four verses of "Come, Come, Ye Saints" epitomize the hardships, courage, and great faith of the Mormon pioneers. A former Church Music Committee member has effectively summarized the meaning of its stanzas:

Stanza I is a challenge to the courage of the Pioneers: though the journey may be hard the grace of God will strengthen them; useless cares will be thrown aside; murmurings will cease. As a recompense, joy! All will be well!

Stanza II spiritualizes the Pioneer endeavor: why mourn? Why expect a reward if they falter? Why shun the fight? "Gird up your loins, fresh courage take, Our God will never us forsake"—another call for fortitude with a glorious promise.

Stanza III gives assurance of temporal joys: that the Saints will find a resting place in the West as foretold by their Prophet. There they will be safe from mobs and violence; there they will swell the air with music and praises to God their King.

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<sup>24</sup>Pyper, "Story of Our Hymns," p. 428.

<sup>25</sup>The White arrangement of the hymn can be found in a hymnal entitled *Original Sacred Harp*, rev. ed., published by the United Sacred Harp Musical Association of Atlanta, Georgia, in 1911. The hymn "All Is Well" appears on page 122 as "re-arranged" by J. T. White, with the following footnote: "The tune has been published before[;] it was printed in the 'Sacred Harp'. It was named by White for the 'Sacred Harp'. The words are also a part of the old melodies." (J. Spencer Cornwall, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," *Instructor* 105 [April 1970]: center spread.) It has also been published in *Twelve Folk Hymns* by J. Fisher and Bro., New York, 1934 ("Come, Come, Ye Saints," *The Pioneer* 20 [January-February 1973]: 16).

*slow*

1 What's this that steals, that steals up-on my frame! Is it death! is it death! } If this be death, I  
That soon will quench, will quench this mor-tal flame. Is it death! is it death! }

2 Weep not, my friends, my friends weep not for me, All is well! All is well! } There's not a cloud that  
My sins for-giv'n, for-giv'n, and I am free. All is well! All is well! }

soon shall be From ev'-ry pain and sor-row free, I shall the King of glo-ry see. All is well! All is well!

doth a-rise, To hide my Je-sus from my eyes, I soon shall mount the up-per skies. All is well! All is well!

3 Tune, tune your harps, your harps ye saints on high.  
All is well, All is well!  
I too will strike my harp with equal joy.  
All is well, All is well!  
Beneath angels are from glory come,  
They're round my bed, they're in my room,  
They wait to wait my spirit home.  
All is well, All is well!

4 Hark! hark! my Lord, my Lord and Master's voice,  
Calls away, Calls away!  
I soon shall see—enjoy my happy choice,  
Why delay, Why delay!  
Farewell, my friends, adieu, adieu,  
I can no longer stay with you,  
My glittering crown appears in view.  
All is well, All is well!

5 Hail! hail! all hail! all hail! ye blood-wash'd throng  
Saved by grace, Saved by grace!  
I come to join, to join your rapturous song,  
Saved by grace, Saved by grace!  
All, all is peace and joy divine,  
And heaven and glory now are mine,  
Loud hallelujahs to the Lamb!  
All is well, All is well!

As it appears in *The Sacred Harp*

## 13

## Come, Come, Ye Saints

William Clayton

Old English Tune

*Resolutely* ♩ = 66

1. Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor la - bor fear; But with joy  
 2. Why should we mourn or think our lot is hard? 'Tis not so;  
 3. We'll find the place which God for us pre - pared, Far a - way  
 4. And should we die be - fore our jour - ney's through, Hap - py day!

wend your way. Though hard to you this jour - ney may ap - pear,  
 all is right. Why should we think to earn a great re - ward,  
 in the West, Where none shall come to hurt or make a - fraid;  
 all is well! We then are free from toil and sor - row, too;

Grace shall be as your day. 'Tis bet - ter far for  
 If we now shun the fight? Gird up your loins; fresh  
 There the Saints will be blessed. We'll make the air with  
 With the just we shall dwell! But if our lives are

us to strive Our use - less cares from us to drive; Do  
 cour - age take; Our God will nev - er us for - sake; And  
 mu - sic ring, Shout prais - es to our God and King; A -  
 spared a - gain To see the Saints their rest ob - tain, O

this, and joy your hearts will swell- All is well! all is well!  
 soon we'll have this tale to tell- All is well! all is well!  
 above the rest these words we'll tell- All is well! all is well!  
 how we'll make this cho - rus swell- All is well! all is well!

As it appears in *Hymns: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

Stanza IV dedicates anew their lives to their task. Living or dying they will be true; if the latter, they will find a celestial home with the just, free from toil and sorrow; if the former, their lives spared, they will shout praises to God, and make the chorus swell with—“*All is well! All is well!*”<sup>26</sup>

#### THE HYMN GROWS IN POPULARITY

William Clayton’s “new song” appears to have gained rapid popularity with the members of the Church, for by 1851 it was included in a hymn book published by the Church.<sup>27</sup> Another tradition referred to by numerous writers is that the song was sung by pioneer groups at their evening camp fires to give them great encouragement in combating the many troubles and trials of the journey. But this writer has not seen any reference to Clayton’s hymn recorded in any original pioneer journals or writings that he has studied.<sup>28</sup>

One of the most authentic accounts we have of the inspiration evoked by this song is from a secondary source. Heber J. Grant shares a testimony given by his father-in-law, Oscar Winters, while Brother Winters was visiting at the Grant home:

Brother Grant, I do not believe that the young people today fully appreciate what a marvelous inspiration it was to the Saints in crossing the plains to sing, almost daily, the hymn, “Come, Come Ye Saints.”

Brother Winters then related the following incident:

One night, as we were making camp, we noticed one of our brethren had not arrived, and a volunteer party was immediately organized to return and see if anything had happened to him. Just as we were about to start, we saw the missing brother coming in the distance. When he arrived, he said he had been quite sick; so some of us unyoked his oxen and attended to his part of the camp duties. After supper, he sat down before the campfire on a large rock, and sang in a very faint but plaintive and sweet voice, the hymn, “Come, Come Ye Saints.” It was a rule of the camp that whenever anybody started this hymn all in the camp should join, but for some reason this evening nobody joined him; he sang the hymn alone. When he had finished, I doubt if there was a single dry eye in the camp. The next morning we noticed that he was not yoking up his cattle. We went to his wagon and found that he had died during the night. We dug a shallow grave, and after we had covered his body with the earth we rolled the large stone to the head of

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<sup>26</sup>Pyper, “Story of Our Hymns,” p. 429.

<sup>27</sup>Franklin D. Richards, *Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 9th ed. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1851; London: William Cook, 1851), p. 58. See also Pyper, *Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns*, p. 24.

<sup>28</sup>If any readers have access to any primary sources of pioneers who made comment about how they were inspired in their trek across the plains by “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” the writer would very much appreciate receiving these accounts.

the grave to mark it, the stone on which he had been sitting the night before when he sang:

“And should we die before our journey’s through  
Happy day! All is well!  
We then are free from toil and sorrow too;  
With the just we shall dwell.  
But if our lives are spared again  
To see the Saints their rest obtain,  
O how we’ll make this chorus swell—  
All is well! All is well!”<sup>29</sup>

President Grant concludes by noting that there were tears in his father-in-law’s eyes when Brother Winters finished relating the incident.

A most unusual account pertaining to this song is reported to have come to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir from an old Indian chief who claimed he heard about the incident from his father:

Many, many moons ago my people were on the warpath. We hated the palefaces. We held council and decided to kill everyone. A band of palefaces were going west. They had almost reached the Rocky Mountains. I was the chief of 1,000 young braves. That night silently we waited on a mountain pass for these people, which were led by Brigham Young. There were braves with bows and arrows behind every rock and tree, waiting to pounce down upon the palefaces. The pioneers camped for the night and prepared dinner. The big bonfire was burning brightly, and the palefaces danced around the fire. Everyone then sat down and began singing, “Come, Come, Ye Saints.” I gave the signal, but our fingers were like stone—not one arrow was shot. We mounted our horses and rode back to camp. We knew the Great Spirit was watching over the palefaces. This is your song; it was your forefathers’ song and is my song every night before I go to bed. It brings the Great Spirit near to me and makes me and my people happy.<sup>30</sup>

A more recent account of the popularity and effect of this song comes from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir’s European tour in 1955. At their first stop in Glasgow, Scotland, the choir sang “Come, Come, Ye Saints.” “Midway in the program, after ‘Come, Come, Ye Saints’ the applause became so tumultuous, even to stamping, that it was necessary to repeat this hymn before proceeding with the concert.”<sup>31</sup>

A current choir member, Dr. Calvin R. Brown, who as a young man went with the choir on that European tour, relates the following:

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<sup>29</sup>Grant, “Favorite Hymns,” pp. 781–83.

<sup>30</sup>J. Spencer Cornwall, *A Century of Singing*, pp. 305–306.

<sup>31</sup>Millicent D. Cornwall, “A History of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, 1847–1957,” MS, in possession of Millicent D. Cornwall, p. 338, as quoted in a letter to the writer from Dr. Jerrold D. Ottley, director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, 31 December 1980.

“I first joined the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in 1944 at age 17. A year later I found myself in Bremen, Germany, a 2nd Lt. in the U.S. infantry. One Sunday morning during Christmas, I was alone by the great Dom in downtown Bremen, viewing with horror the total destruction of that beautiful city. Suddenly I heard the unmistakable strains of ‘Come, Come, Ye Saints’ in German drifting across the bombed out ruins. With great nostalgia and anticipation, I followed the sounds up some creaky stairs to a Sporthalle behind the great cathedral. When I opened the door, the singing stopped as all faces turned to me, noticing my uniform. Having experienced the most severe persecution all through the war, they were obviously frightened by my appearance. I tried to calm them and then began speaking in what they described as ‘German without accent.’ It must have been the gift of tongues. They considered me some kind of messenger delivering them from the extended period of darkness that they had suffered under Hitler. We then sang ‘Come, Come, Ye Saints’ together. I never hear it sung without remembering those tearful faces that day. The song changed my life.”<sup>32</sup>

More than a century and a third has passed since William Clayton identified himself as the composer of this “new song.” However, its popularity has spread far beyond the camp fires of those Mormon pioneers and even beyond the singing by present-day Mormons in their various worship meetings. The Tabernacle Choir is widely recognized for its rendition of the great hymn of the plains, receiving requests that it be included in every broadcast. People of different faiths in many nations now thrill to its sound as do the Mormons.<sup>33</sup> The song has been translated into many languages and is sung by Mormons and non-Mormons around the world. It is published, by permission, in two public school music series as one of the ten best American hymns, comparing favorably with two of the great hymns of the world—France’s “La Marseillaise” and Martin Luther’s “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”<sup>34</sup> It is one of the few hymns to have a special display, in its honor, in a non-Mormon museum at Corydon, Iowa, most likely only a few miles from the spot where the hymn was composed. The hymn has even been publicly recognized by a president of the United States. In a speech given in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on 27 November 1978, President Jimmy Carter said:

I thought about the early Mormons coming across this country, singing a famous hymn . . . “Come, Come Ye Saints.” Only a deep faith could let the words of that song—“All is well”—ring out. In times

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<sup>32</sup>Jerrold D. Ottley to the author, 31 December 1980.

<sup>33</sup>Gerald A. Petersen, *More Than Music* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1979), p. 29.

<sup>34</sup>J. Spencer Cornwall, “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” center spread.

when you and your forefathers were persecuted and driven one from another, [when you] crossed this land looking for freedom and a chance to worship in your own way, when perhaps you knew that you were about to die, when drought and thirst affected you, and still the song rang out, "All is well!"—this is indeed a demonstration of faith and a reaffirmation of hope.<sup>35</sup>

Although William Clayton did not know it at the time, he immortalized his name when he composed the stirring words of his "new song" that spring day on Locust Creek. "Come, Come, Ye Saints" became a song of inspiration for the Mormon pioneers as they journeyed across the plains during the succeeding years; and it still stirs the hearts of Latter-day Saints, as well as those of other faiths, when it is rendered "around the world."

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<sup>35</sup>Petersen, *More Than Music*, p. 30.

# Pioneer Stoicism

Sally T. Taylor

There was not gold within our home for tears.  
The sorrow locked in hidden cache was not  
For foreign eyes. Self-pity could not be bought  
Or bartered from this store. And through the years

This solid coin has rattled in our ears  
Of stoic values. Then, we all were taught  
To hoard our cries. Dear pain and grief were caught  
And placed as treasures in a heart of spears.

But now that currency is old. The rate  
No longer justifies our fiscal clutch.  
That breaking in our eyes is not disgrace!

We'll let our inner treasury abate,  
Dispense our wealth with those we truly touch,  
And let them see the tears upon our face.

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Sally T. Taylor is an assistant professor of English composition at Brigham Young University where she teaches creative writing.

## Book Reviews

EHAT, ANDREW F., and LYNDON W. COOK, eds. *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980. 447 pp. \$10.95.

Reviewed by Dean C. Jessee, senior research historian for the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Some of the difficulty in understanding Joseph Smith lies in the fact that much of the writing attributed to him has been filtered through the minds of other people. For example, those who seek Joseph Smith's thought and personality in the pages of his published discourses confront several limitations: (1) Only about one-fifth of the approximately 250 public addresses he is known to have given during his lifetime were recorded in any substantial detail. (2) Since shorthand skills were not adequately developed in the Mormon community during Joseph Smith's lifetime, extant reports of his addresses contain only a portion of what he said. (3) In preparing the reports of Joseph Smith's discourses for publication in the *History of the Church*, editors found it necessary to provide continuity and substance by adding words and sentences of their own where reporting was hasty. (4) Editorial procedures of the time did not distinguish between material supplied by editors and the wording of original reports. (5) Most additional reports of Joseph Smith's speeches, discovered since the writing of his History, have never been published.

In an effort to correct some of these limitations and shorten the distance between Joseph Smith and the modern reader, Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon Cook have published *The Words of Joseph Smith*, a collection of original reports of the Prophet's discourses. As volume six in BYU's prestigious Religious Studies Monograph Series, the book contains reports or references to 173 addresses given by Joseph Smith during his Nauvoo years as reported by about forty of his contemporaries. The volume is attractively printed and organized in an easy-to-read chronological format. The editors have provided extensive historical notes and a comprehensive index to all scriptural references used in the discourses.

Besides the original reports of speeches published in the *History of the Church*, *The Words of Joseph Smith* contains numerous additional reports heretofore unpublished. Since many reminiscences exist containing statements attributed to Joseph Smith, the editors' intent has been to include only contemporaneous reports of the Prophet's words. Their work provides a useful standard by which the reliability of the reminiscences may be evaluated. Furthermore, since the editorial procedures of the 1850s that governed the first publication of the Joseph Smith discourses consisted of combining multiple reports of a speech into a single account, this volume by identifying individual reports permits a study of nineteenth-century editorial methods. Beyond this, the publication by Ehat and Cook of those multiple reports of a given address allows the reader to evaluate the effectiveness of the reporting process in the absence of verbatim reporting skills. Finally, the reader comes away with a healthy respect for those whose sense of history motivated them to write what they heard in a day when institutional record-keeping procedures were not fully developed. One can only hope that a similar volume covering the pre-Nauvoo period of Joseph Smith's life will be forthcoming.

In their statement of editorial procedure, Ehat and Cook state that "every effort has been made to present a faithful copy of the original reports of Joseph Smith's discourses. By retaining original spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing we hoped to preserve the integrity of the documents" (p. xxiii). A glance at the text indicates that the editors were intent upon preserving all characteristics of the original handwritten reports so far as mechanical type would allow. And indeed, in a work produced to correct outmoded editorial procedures and establish a reliable foundation text, accuracy should be of primary concern. A comparison of the editorial work in *The Words of Joseph* with original reports by Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, William Clayton, and Howard Coray shows that while the editors have produced most of the detail of the original sources they have not fully achieved the high standard of accuracy they set for themselves:

1. To begin with, there is no editorial device to indicate material inserted above the line, which may represent later additions in the text of the original. Invariably, these insertions have been silently incorporated into the edited text. Nor is there a device to designate words written over other words. Where such appear in the original, the editors have either made the alteration silently or crossed out the first word and followed it with the alteration.

2. A major difficulty comes from trying to give exact spelling and punctuation where writing style is not precise. This is especially a

problem with the writing of Willard Richards. For example, in the third paragraph on page 211 the words “sha[l]t,” “investigat,” and “Spi[ri]ts” indicate misspellings in the original; but in the same paragraph parts of other words such as the “ne” in “learned,” the “e” in “preached,” and “r” in “world” are no more plainly evident than those bracketed or left out. It is also often difficult to distinguish commas from periods in the documents. In some instances the editors could have given the writer the benefit of the doubt and used commas instead of periods and vice versa to make the text more readable. But even where the Richards punctuation is clearly legible, the original has not always been accurately followed. For example, in the report of 11 June 1843 a single dash is often used where the original shows a double dash or a period followed by a dash. Frequently, from Richards’s hasty note-taking exact spelling and punctuation are possible only in context.

3. The identification of capital and lower case letters is not always consistent. There are instances where letters written the same way are designated as a capital in one place and lower case in another.

4. Spaces left in original reports, possibly with the intent of later insertions, are not indicated in the edited text.

5. There are a number of errors that more or less affect meaning, errors that reflect lack of familiarity with the original source or inadequate proofreading:

	<i>The Words of Joseph Smith</i>	Original Manuscripts
Page		
185	“ <del>and to the inhabitants that that being</del> ”	“ <del>and to the inhabitants that that being</del> ”
187	“spiritualizing interpretations”	“spiritualized interpretations”
189	“tell them things”	“tell those things”
	“then the little apostates[?]”	“then the little upstarts”
	“crammed down my throat”	“crammed it down my throat”
195	“locked in each others embrace”	“rocked in each others embrace”
	“which they have pursued here”	“where they have possessed here”
196	“what can Earthquakes do”	“what can Earthquakes <del>do</del> ”

198	“sperate” “every”	“encourage”	“seperate” “evry”	“encorage”
	“before they got open while setting up”		“before they got up or while getting up”	
206	“Judas transgression by fell”		“Judas by transgression fell”	
	“hints of those things”		“hints at those things”	
208	“ <u>It is one thing to</u> ”		“ <u>It is one thing to</u> ”	
	“T Take heed both”		“ <del>&amp;</del> Take heed both”	
	“after obtaining this more sure”		“after obtaining the more sure”	
210	“he who will not live it all”		“he who will not have it all”	
211	“should do it by getting together”		“should do it by gathering together”	
	“he began to preach the fulness of the gospel, the [man] was thrust out”		“he began to preach the fulness of the gospel, then was thrust out”	
	“where Peter was [shed] and ano[inte]d”		“where Peter was endowed”	
212	“tithing”		“tything”	

On page 186 “Deacon Homespun” was written by Thomas Bullock in a blank space in the Clayton manuscript, a point not noted by the editors.

Besides the matter of textual accuracy, there are questions involving selection and analysis:

Although the Clayton report of Joseph Smith’s 8 April 1843 speech on pages 182ff. reads more smoothly and was possibly written shortly after the talk was given, it is not the original text. William Clayton left two reports of this discourse. His original is shorter and less coherent than the one published by Ehat and Cook; but the published report, according to the filing notation of the original, was produced by William Clayton by combining his original with Willard Richards’s report of the same talk. In keeping with the objective of presenting unedited original reports, the first Clayton manuscript should appear under 8 April 1843.

The integrity of the 19 July 1840 discourse reported by Martha Jane Coray is questioned and the document placed in an appendix rather than in its chronological setting on the basis that (a) the date “is penned in a darker ink color and may have been an afterthought, not part of the original notes”; and (b) the dating of the discourse is wrong because “reference to government of the United States eventually coming to the ‘verge of crumbling’ and the ‘constitution [approaching] the brink of ruin’ fits more consistently with 1843 than 1840”; and (c) “the idea that the Second Coming would not come for another ‘40 years’ and the notion that Zion comprehends all of North and South America were teachings of the Prophet in 1843 and 1844” (pp. 418–19).

Actually, the ink color of the date is no different than other words that precede and follow it. The characteristics of ink pressure and color are the same throughout the first six and one-half pages of the Coray report at which point an ink change does occur, indicating that the material from that point on was written at a different sitting or with different ink. More puzzling, however, is the suggestion that the concept of the crumbling constitution would fit better into Joseph Smith’s 1843 thinking than that of 1840, considering that the Prophet had just returned from the nation’s capital having failed to obtain redress from the federal government for Missouri grievances. Equally unconvincing is the suggestion that the teaching about Zion comprehending North and South America is an 1843–1844 doctrine rather than an 1840 one. Orson Pratt, writing from Edinburgh, Scotland, to George A. Smith in England in January 1841, referred to information he had received the previous November from his brother Parley in Nauvoo, Illinois, information that appears to have come from Parley’s hearing the same Joseph Smith discourse reported by Mrs. Coray:

“He (J.S.) says Zion is all North & South America!!!!!! The 12 Olive trees are 12 stakes!!!!!! J. Co. Mo. is the centre. The government is fallen & needs redeeming. It is guilty of Blood & cannot stand as it now is but will come so near dessionation [*sic*] as to hang as it were by a single hair!!!!!! – Then the servants goes to the Nations of the earth, & gethers [*sic*] the strength of the Lord’s house! a mighty army!!!!!! – And this is the redemption of Zion – When the saints shall have redeemed that government & reinstated it in all its purity & glory!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! – That America may be an asylum for the remnant of all nations.”

The editorial rules Ehat and Cook set for themselves are very demanding. Since the bulk of textual problems that appear in the book involve accidentals that do not affect meaning, perhaps holding

to such an exacting procedure is not so important when none of the writings being edited are actually Joseph Smith's. An unmodernized text may well be desirable in an edition of an individual's personal writings where the reflection of education and personality are important, but where holograph writings are not involved, it is not as necessary. In either case, the situation requires additional editorial work. However, the conception of publishing the original reports of Joseph Smith's discourses is an excellent one, and Andrew Ehat and Lyndon Cook deserve commendation for their work toward preserving a reliable foundation text of these early sources.

**HARRISON, J. F. C.** *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1979. 277 pp. \$21.00.

Reviewed by Malcolm R. Thorp, associate professor of history, Brigham Young University.

Professor John F. C. Harrison of the University of Sussex (England) is one of the most respected authorities of early nineteenth-century English social history. His most recent book, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850*, providing a detailed and sympathetic account of a rather neglected period of millenarian enthusiasm, is an important contribution to our understanding of England and America during this time. Writing in a narrative rich with human interest, Harrison explores the careers of the various major and minor popular prophets of the period. Mormons will find interest in his attempts to compare the English experience with the American, particularly with Mormonism.

On the surface, the millenarian craze might appear to be nothing more than madness, perhaps the product of the "lunatic fringe" of society. The problem with such simplistic analysis is that everywhere one might turn in the early nineteenth-century sources millenarianism is likely to crop up. It was part of the mental framework of the age, and, as Harrison shows, it was from some solid citizenry that the various prophets gained their following. Not only were working-class disciples a major component of these movements, but the followers also included artisans, lower middle-class shopkeepers, and even a few proper bourgeois people. Harrison attempts to explain why everyday, "ordinary" people came to believe in the revelations of

such diviners as Joanna Southcott, Richard Brothers, John Wroe, and Zion Ward (to name only the more prominent).

Joanna Southcott's career as a prophetess was the most fascinating of all. She was a simple but sincere Devonshire country woman who used her revelatory powers in sealing her devout followers as "Joint-Heirs" with Christ. Presumably, this sealing gave the elect special magical powers against the buffetings of Satan. Then, at the age of sixty-five, this spinster became convinced she was to be the mother of "Shiloh" (see Genesis 49:10), who was to be the promised Saviour who would usher in the Millennium. Even when Joanna's "pregnancy" ended in false labor pains rather than the birth of Shiloh, many of her followers remained optimistic, although Joanna died shortly afterwards, deeply disappointed because of what was not to be.

Less dramatic, but of real significance, was the brief career of Richard Brothers, a former naval officer. In the early 1790s, he reached the low ebb of personal misfortune. Plagued by financial problems, his wife's infidelity, and mental illness, Richard Brothers was on the verge of emigration when he discovered his prophetic mission. He came to believe he was chosen by God to lead the return of the Jews to the Holy Land and undertake the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Although he was committed in 1795 to an asylum as insane, he continued to exercise considerable influence.

One can see a direct connection between Brothers's prophecies and those of John Wroe. A poor Lancashire woolcomber, John Wroe said he had experienced a series of divine communications between 1822 and 1832. He was told it was a calling to lead both the visible and the invisible Hebrews: "That they shall be circumcised both in heart and flesh." Such teachings attracted a following at Ashton-under-Lyne and Bradford, although Wroe's credibility seems to have declined as his passions mounted for seven young virgins.

Perhaps of more significance was the prophet John (Zion) Ward, whose message reminds us of the antinomianism of the seventeenth-century Ranter movement. Like the Ranters, John Ward taught that Christ was essentially within the true believer, although he went beyond Ranterism, claiming to be not only Shiloh, but also God and Christ and Satan!

Harrison explains the popular obsession between 1780 and 1850 with the Second Coming as a response to the crises of profound social and economic change. "Living in such a time of acute social change was for many people uncomfortable, bewildering, traumatic. Familiar social landmarks disappeared, assumptions about stability and

normality were no longer unquestioned, the sources of authority to which men looked for guidance were not convincing as they once had been" (p. 219). In addition to a "general crisis," Harrison argues that there is much evidence for personal anxiety and insecurity related to the stresses and strains of the time. In other words, millenarian imagery was an important ingredient in the heritage of popular culture, and, in time of crisis, the belief helped some people cope with reality. To the millenarian, however, social change was not necessarily an evil, but part of the inevitable process of change that would lead to the creation of a better world. Unfortunately, the millenarian outlook also led to extremism, as in May 1838 when the prophet John Nicholas Tom led his followers against the local Kentish magistrates. The ensuing battle left eleven people killed (including Tom) and seven others wounded—a grim reminder of fanatical excesses that are related historically to the pursuit of the Millennium.

Of special interest to LDS readers is the chapter on "Peculiar Peoples," which discusses American denominations, including the Mormons. While some might be offended by the comparative treatment of Mormonism with the Shakers, Millerites, and other sects, most readers will find the study to be both dispassionate and fair. More problematical, however, is Harrison's assertion that Mormonism does not fit neatly into a premillenarian category, that there were postmillenarian overtones to Mormon thought. Taking the corpus of Joseph Smith's teachings on the Second Coming, it is hard to see how the prophecies can be interpreted as suggesting any sort of moral self-improvement of society. Section 87 of the Doctrine and Covenants sees a premillennial holocaust arising from the sectional strife between the North and South. As wars and rumors of wars filled the face of the earth, it was asserted that only the Saints' political kingdom would survive these calamities. Indeed, there is the stern warning that the kingdom of the devil, which will be built among the children of mankind, will be consumed as stubble. While these prophecies are typical of the premillenarian outlook, the political overtones appear to be distinctly different from the other sectarian ideologies discussed in this insightful book.

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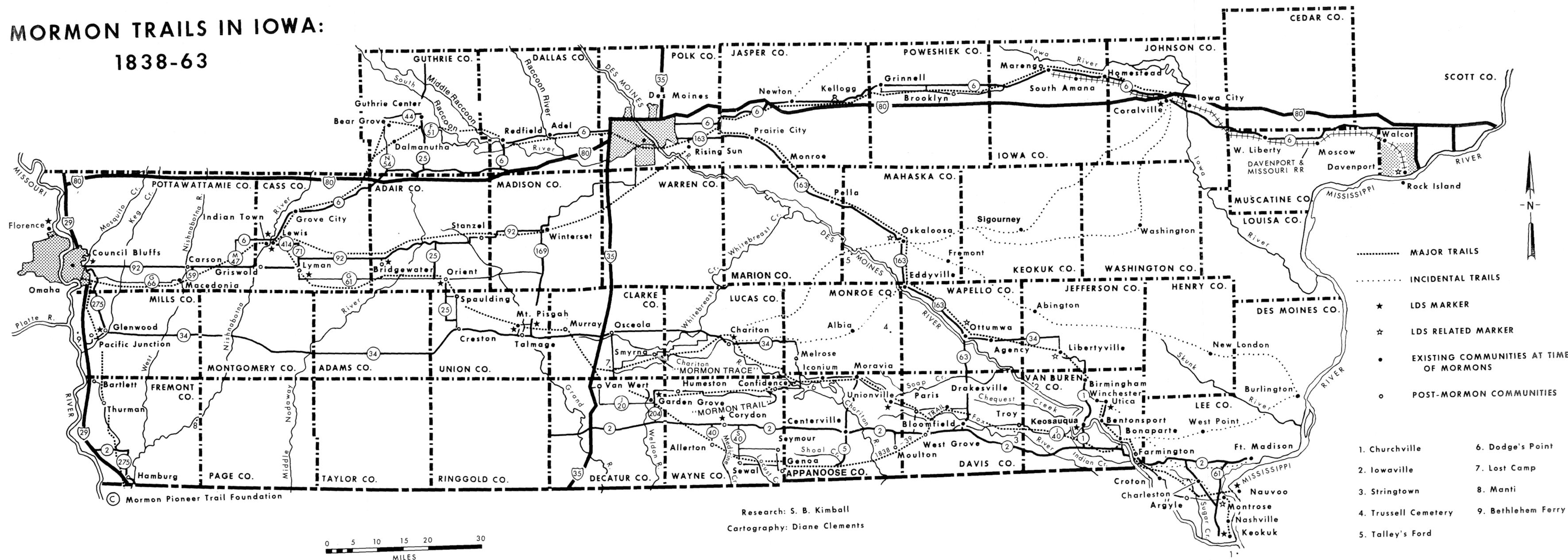
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# MORMON TRAILS IN IOWA: 1838-63



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- ..... INCIDENTAL TRAILS
- ★ LDS MARKER
- ☆ LDS RELATED MARKER
- EXISTING COMMUNITIES AT TIME OF MORMONS
- POST-MORMON COMMUNITIES

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Churchville       | 6. Dodge's Point   |
| 2. Iowaville         | 7. Lost Camp       |
| 3. Stringtown        | 8. Manti           |
| 4. Trussell Cemetery | 9. Bethlehem Ferry |
| 5. Talley's Ford     |                    |

