

Mormon Women in  
Nineteenth-Century  
Britain



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We may begin with a typical story<sup>1</sup>—the story of Esther Ogden, who was born in 1839 in Staley Bridge, Lancashire. Her mother and father were proprietors of the Angel Inn at Mottram, Cheshire. One day, when she was about nine, Mormon missionaries came to the inn for lodging and food. Noting the large reception room, they asked if they might hold a meeting there. The Ogdens told them they might if they were orderly and did nothing disreputable. Esther wrote of the subsequent meeting as follows:

The missionaries held their meeting, and as our family had their quarters at the Inn, we could not help but hear the singing. My mother was so enchanted by the opening song that she crept down the hall where she could hear better. After the singing, one of the missionaries gave the prayer. [Mother] could stand it no longer, and returned to tell father and us children that she had never heard such singing or such a sincere prayer. From then on the missionaries were constant visitors and all of our family were baptized into the Church in 1848.<sup>2</sup>

Five years later, that is, when Esther was fourteen, the Ogdens migrated to America, settled in Kaysville, Utah, north of Salt Lake City, and when she was a little older, Esther married William Bosworth, another English immigrant, and they had twelve children. Esther finally died at age eighty-two after a lifetime of caring for her children, sewing dresses and baby jackets, and managing her husband's farm after his death of sunstroke.

Esther's Englishness came out in many ways. When she was seventy-seven, according to her daughter she suffered from a stroke and never regained the use of her right arm and only partial use of her right leg. She was never able to speak again, her daughter wrote, except when she was very angry. The paralysis made it hard for her to eat solid foods, so she had egg-nogs made with tea three times a day. Her granddaughter describes an incident:

Mother thought tea three times a day was not good for her and was telling me she thought she should flavor the egg-nog tea with vanilla instead of tea. The conversation took place in the pantry and Grandma, who was supposed to be rather hard of hearing, was in the dining room. But she heard this, and if you ever heard an angry lady who couldn't speak trying to protest, that was it. She was very indignant that anyone was plotting to do her out of her tea.<sup>3</sup>

This comes from the personal history of Esther, written for her children shortly before her stroke, and with an appendix written by her daughter and granddaughter afterward. It is one of several hundred personal histories and autobiographies in the Church archives in Salt Lake City.<sup>4</sup>

In the two hundred or more diaries and personal histories of the Latter-day Saint women who lived at least several years in Britain before their migration to the United States or Canada very few said much about their life in Britain. Most of them began their life stories by saying, "I was born at such and such a place; my parents were so and so; we were introduced to Mormonism by the elders in such and such a year, and we decided to gather with the Saints shortly thereafter." At that point they then tell in great detail about the voyage across the ocean, the landing at New Orleans, the trip up the Mississippi by riverboat, and life for a few months in St. Louis or Florence, Nebraska, the frontier outfitting point. The narrative proceeds with comments about the trek across the Great Plains, their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, their early homes, how they made a living in Utah, their activities and experiences in the Church, and so on to the end of their lives.

Clearly, the important thing to all of these people was how they happened to hear the missionaries, how they came to be impressed with the gospel, and their baptism—which often occurred very quickly after first hearing the gospel message—sometimes within a day or week after first hearing the elders. It is almost as if they were already converted to the message the elders brought, and when they heard it preached they quickly recognized it and were ready to make their covenants. Hardly any of the personal histories say very much about their lives as children and young women in Britain.

Nevertheless, what we can learn is important. A substantial proportion of the early Latter-day Saints in the American West were of direct British origin. If we exclude the American Indians, about 70 percent of the adults in Utah in the last half of the nineteenth century were born in Europe. About two-thirds of these were British, and about one-third Scandinavian. So the influence of the British in LDS history in the nineteenth century was clearly very important. The third president of the Church, John Taylor, was born in Westmorland County, England; the sixth president of the Church, Joseph F. Smith, was born of a British mother who came from Bedfordshire; the ninth president, David O. McKay, was born of British parents, his father from Scotland and his mother from Wales. George Q. Cannon, first counselor under four presidents of the Church, was a Liverpudlian; John R. Winder, first counselor under President Joseph F. Smith, was born in Kent; Charles W. Penrose, second counselor to President Smith and first counselor to President Heber J. Grant, was born in London; Charles W. Nibley,

second counselor to President Grant, was born in Midlothian, Scotland; and Britishers who served as Apostles of the Church include: John Taylor, George Q. Cannon, George Teasdale, Charles W. Penrose, James E. Talmage, and Charles A. Callis. Many others had British wives or mothers. And, of course, there were many presidents of the Seventies, stake presidents, bishops, and stake patriarchs that were British.

British women were also prominent in Church leadership. Many British women served in the general presidencies of the Primary, the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, and the Relief Society of the Church. May Anderson, born and baptized in Liverpool, was editor of *The Children's Friend*, the Church's magazine for Primary children, and was secretary of the first general presidency of the Primary. She was later sustained as a counselor to the first president, Louie Felt, and became the general president after Sister Felt's death, serving from 1925 to 1939. Matilda Morehouse Barratt, a native of Cheshire, was also a counselor to the first general president of the Primary, and she was sufficiently respected that one of the original buildings of the LDS University in Salt Lake City was called Barratt Hall. Four other British women were members of the Primary General Board in the nineteenth century: Eliza Bennion, Euphemia Irvine, Alice Taylor Sheets, and Eleanor Thomas Bromley.

In the Young Women's organization, Ruth May Fox, born in Wiltshire, was a counselor to Martha Tingey, second general president of the Young Women, and then became president herself, serving from 1929 to 1937. British women serving on the Young Women's General Board included Emma J. Nield Goddard, born in Lancashire—and she served on the board thirty-seven years; Elizabeth Ann Claridge McCune, born in Bedfordshire; and Nellie Colebrook Taylor, born in Cheltenham.

In the Relief Society, eight British women served on the general board in the nineteenth century: Harriet Bunting, born in Norfolk; Emma Adams Empey, born at Staffordshire; Elizabeth Howard, born in Carlow County, Ireland; Priscilla Paul Jennings, born in Cornwall; Mary Mitchell Pitchforth, born at Hertfordshire; Rebecca Standring, born in Northampton; Elizabeth DuFresne Stevenson, born at St. Helier, Jersey; and Carrie Thomas, born at Plymouth.

And of course there were literally hundreds of British women who were presidents of ward, stake, branch, and mission Relief Societies, Young Women's, and Primary organizations both in Great Britain and elsewhere, and in those days many Sunday School presidents and counselors.

Perhaps the most energetic of the early converts who remained in Britain was Ann Sophia Jones Rosser. She had been born in Raglan, Monmouthshire, in 1834. She was baptized when she was seventeen, married at nineteen, and served for the next sixty years as a kind of permanent

missionary in South Wales and Bristol. Indeed, she was probably the first LDS woman missionary in Great Britain. Over the years she distributed thousands of tracts; sold hundreds of Books of Mormon; distributed meeting notices; sang at open air meetings; is credited with having converted scores of persons; assisted people who needed help to migrate to the Great Basin; nursed many people during epidemics of cholera, influenza, and other diseases; and entertained several hundred elders, including five presidents of the Church: John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith, and Heber J. Grant. As Relief Society president she helped organize women in her conference to relieve distress during World War I, making clothing to send to the front, visiting hospitals, and doing other compassionate and patriotic service.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the impact of the British on LDS culture was profound. Britishers furnished many of our poets, sculptors, painters, musicians, playwrights, and actors. The two hymns most sung by Latter-day Saints were composed by Britons: "Come, Come, Ye Saints," composed by William Clayton, of Lancashire; and "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet" by William Fowler, a resident of Yorkshire. Nearly all the sermons delivered in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City in the 1850s and 1860s were reported by George D. Watt of Manchester, who once lived in the poorhouse and who proved to be the first person baptized in the Church in Britain.

In reading the diaries and life histories one is struck with several important differences between nineteenth-century Britain and life there today.

First, in the nineteenth century the death rate was much higher than in this century. Thus, a large proportion of the girls growing up in Britain suffered because of the early death of one or both parents. For the young women, the death of a parent meant not only loss and grief, but also changes in school, home, work, and friendship. Many of them were brought up by a single parent or by a second father or mother, an uncle or aunt, or by foster parents. Some spent years in the poorhouse.

For a similar reason, many of the girls suffered through the deaths of little brothers or sisters or neighborhood playmates. A heavy proportion of all the babies died before they were one year of age, and of those who survived infancy, about one-fourth died before they reached sixteen. So death was an ever-present reality. The girls and young women, and older women as well, inevitably went through long sieges of illness: smallpox, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, typhus, diphtheria, mumps, whooping cough, and measles.

A second difference is that nineteenth-century girls grew up in larger families than we have today. Many of them grew up in families with ten or eleven or twelve children, and in these diaries there were at least two families with sixteen children. This presented certain problems for the children as well as for the mothers and fathers.

A third difference is that nineteenth-century Britain was marked by greater class distinctions than today, and many, if not most, came from what were called “the lower classes.” Some wrote of their family having a bowl of oatmeal and water as their only sustenance for days on end; of living on a glass of water and two penny loaves per day. Some women reported that they were able to enjoy meat and potato pie only on Sundays. In most families, the father, mother, and children worked fourteen hours a day.

The poverty no doubt increased their eagerness to migrate, and the Church did its best to help them by encouraging them to save a little each week; by organizing emigrating parties, renting ships, and paying their passage with funds donated by members in America; and by encouraging the more well-to-do members in Britain to help others migrate. The few wealthy converts generously shared their means with poorer members and with the Church officials, making possible the publication of the Book of Mormon, the *Millennial Star*, and thousands of tracts and pamphlets.

With respect to education, most of the girls did well to learn to read, write, and do simple arithmetic. Sometimes they learned this in Sunday School, since day school was often an impossibility. Many of them did not read any book but the Bible by the time they were grown. There were some instances in which children were prohibited from going to school because their parents had become Mormons. But we must not emphasize this point too strongly—there were a number of highly educated converts, and their contributions to the Church were noteworthy.

Because of the poverty of their families, if they had one, the girls worked from a very early age—in factories, in mines, or, more commonly, as servants in guest houses, inns, schools, or in the homes of the more well-to-do. They prepared food, engaged in spinning and weaving, did farm labor, and performed other tasks that would furnish them a living and a little spending money. Their work was hard; their hours were long; and their living quarters were usually small and poorly ventilated. In the case of a good many, they, or their fathers or mothers, or all three, were fired when their employer heard they had joined the Church, not so much because the employer objected, but because other employees would not work alongside them. On the other hand, their church affiliation often brought the only respite from a life of misery and toil. The Sunday School, Young Women’s groups, and Relief Societies were often a means of helping them develop themselves so they could move out of their poverty into a condition that made life bearable, even happy.

There were organizations of women Latter-day Saints in Britain, even in the 1840s, shortly after the first Relief Society was organized in Nauvoo in 1842. According to documents in the Church archives there were some female societies in 1843, 1844, 1845, and later years. One of their programs

was to get the women to donate one penny per week to the construction of the Nauvoo Temple. The names of those who contributed were carefully recorded, together with the amount, and placed in the Book of the Law of the Lord, which is today in the First Presidency's vault in Salt Lake City. The first formally organized Relief Society in Britain was the Nottingham Branch in 1873. Others were soon organized in other branches. The Church archives has an 1870s and 1880s minute book for the Glasgow Conference Relief Society.

The leadership which they soon demonstrated, both in England and America, suggests the wonderful potential that existed among these people. Despite their origins in a "class" society, with its traditional and legal obstacles to opportunity and advancement, there was a mushrooming growth of talent and leadership ability after their baptisms. People who, under traditional institutions, would likely have been humble miners, clerks, tenant farmers, and domestics all their lives became, through time, conference presidents, bishops, Relief Society presidents, leading businessmen, mayors of cities, and even members of Parliament and United States Senators. The talent and intelligence was there all the time—it was like the bursting of a seam, the opening of a sealed bottle, the unlocking of a door. That was what Mormonism meant to many of these people. And it was occurring in Britain well before they migrated to America. The gospel suddenly gave people hope and determination, new associations, and standards to live by that affected not only their status in the next life but in this life as well. Abilities which they were not even aware that they possessed suddenly surfaced. In his book, *The Uncommercial Traveller*, Charles Dickens tells of his visits to a group of Latter-day Saints embarking at Liverpool. He was impressed with their industry, cleanliness, and orderliness. He called them the pick and flower of England.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, a comment about the reason for their conversion. It is evident that the religions of the day were not satisfying all of the English people, although most of them were moral, read the Bible, believed devoutly in the teachings of Jesus, and prayed earnestly. Their diaries and personal histories tell of their discontent, and the discontent of their husbands and parents, with existing churches, whether Church of England or Non-Conformist. The pastors, they wrote, were educated in classical literature (Greek and Roman), were sometimes more interested in books than in parishioners, and often felt themselves in a higher class status. Their sermons were reported to be more literary than substantive, often bearing no connection with the personal and family problems of the members. And the doctrines they preached did not always appeal. The God they described was incomprehensible, incorporeal, and inscrutable. Unbaptized infants were condemned to hell. Men and women were creations of God but not children of



God. And the human spirit or soul did not exist prior to conception or birth. The diaries and reminiscences of early LDS women expressed their disappointment, as teenagers, with the predominant religious belief in the natural or innate sinfulness of people because of the sin of Adam and Eve.

Dissatisfied with institutional religion, a few people, especially the men, did not regularly associate with church, and occasionally formed little groups to study the Bible, advocate its precepts, and exercise the gifts of heaven. But even these did not satisfy them.

What was it about the LDS message that appealed to them? First, the man-to-man approach of the lay Mormon missionaries, with their humbly-expressed, sincerely-felt messages. Second, their belief that the Mormons were more biblically oriented and that the prophesies, calls to repentance, and requirements for salvation that they took from the Bible were valid and binding. They were particularly impressed by the LDS view that God is a Person, a Heavenly Father; that men and women have a divine potential. As Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).<sup>7</sup> Moreover, they were persuaded that the new church had all the proofs of apostolic power; it would survive the doom that would soon fall upon the unredeemed world. It would rescue from that destruction all who accepted the true gospel, and this in a quite literal way by organizing their migration to a place of safety, peace, and divine order. As with other pastors and ministers, Mormon elders exhorted their listeners to follow the Christian moral code, to pray, to bring up children in the fear of God, and so on. But the restored Church was unique because it had a special authority and a new conception of the kingdom of God.

There are some final observations about the differences between these convert-immigrants from Britain and women converts from America or from the Continent. By and large, the British women were less submissive, more spunky, more willing to stand up and assert themselves than American women. One Welsh woman, nearly seventy, walked forty-two miles to attend a conference at Merthyr Tydfil in 1845.

They were also surprisingly articulate, even the uneducated ones. They were more expressive than the average American LDS convert, more apt to write letters and diaries. They were also very candid. In their diaries and letters they did not hold back on their complaints and occasional grumbles.

Third, they tended to be politically active. They were insistent on defending their rights, indignant at the slurs of their anti-Mormon enemies, and less passive in overlooking unfair treatment. One gets the impression that the majority of the LDS women working to improve the status of women in the United States were immigrants from Britain. They seemed to recall

their British heritage with pride, especially the protection of civil rights, which many felt was honored more in England than in the United States.

Fourth, and unforgettably, although they migrated willingly, even ardently, they still missed their homeland. Many of them found they could express their feelings of nostalgia and longing only in poetry. In such hand-written poems, some of them really very good, there is frequent mention of the flowers, trees, and birds of the villages where they grew up and lived. Scots, for example, frequently mention how they missed the hawthorn tree, a tree associated with the songs of Robert Burns and having an almost sacred connotation for Scots. Despite their tender feelings toward their homeland, however, none of them expressed regret for joining the Church, for migrating, or for the adjustments they had to make in the new land. As one person wrote: "Could I begin it again with my present light and knowledge and present feeling, and with a noble and beloved being to stand by my head, I would rejoice to go through much for the kingdom of God."<sup>8</sup>

In short, the LDS women in nineteenth-century Britain were highly praiseworthy people. Their British value system, as reinforced by the gospel and their personal righteousness, gave them an aura of blessedness, of working to build the kingdom of God.

Let me conclude the paper with representative biographies of three women whose stories illustrate the strength of the spirit among LDS converts, the hand of the Lord in some of their conversions, and the problems they faced as they sought to live the standards and admonitions of the Gospel.

### **Ruth May (Fox)**

Ruth May was born in 1853 in Westbury, Wiltshire.<sup>9</sup> Her father was a miner and factory worker of very little schooling, but he loved to read the Bible and had a good memory. Her mother, also not well-schooled, was of a religious nature, and there were ministers in her family. When Ruth was just a baby, her parents were baptized members of the Church. Shortly thereafter, when Ruth was only sixteen months old, her mother died of childbirth complications. Her father, who was active in the local branch of the Church and wanted Ruth to grow up as a Latter-day Saint, had difficulty finding someone sympathetic to the Church to take care of her. Sometimes Ruth lived with relatives, sometimes with friends. She lived in seven different homes before she was eight. For one brief period she lived with her grandmother May, who lived in Bradford, on the Avon. Ruth always remembered the lovely swans floating on the river, and the great, broad fields of buttercups, daisies, primroses, and cowslips. Once she was sent upstairs carrying a candle in her hand, and the first thing she knew she was running to the top of the stairs, screaming: "Grandmother, my head is on fire." Grandmother ran quickly upstairs and extinguished Ruth's blazing

hair with her bare hands. From that time on, one side of Ruth's hair was always more difficult to manage than the other.

Of course Ruth was sent to school, where she was apparently a little rambunctious. Nevertheless, the most enduring memory was learning a song about Jesus:

I think when I read that sweet story of old,  
When Jesus was here among men,  
How he called little children like lambs to his fold,  
I should like to have been with him then.

I wish that his hands had been placed on my head,  
That his arms had been thrown around me,  
That I might have seen his kind look when he said,  
“Let the little ones come unto me.”

Yet still to his footstool in prayer I may go,  
And ask for a share in his love;  
And if I thus earnestly seek him below,  
I shall see him and hear him above.<sup>10</sup>

Ruth May wrote of her sense of pride as a child. Her father, she was proud to tell children of the neighborhood, was a gentleman. This was evidenced by the fact that when he came to visit her he was usually dressed in his Sunday best, which meant a silk hat, patent leather shoes, and perhaps a cane. And if he was thus so obviously a gentleman, people should curtsy as they passed him.

When she was eight, her father decided she was old enough for him to become her guardian and teacher of manners. So he took her to Yorkshire, where he worked, which was about two hundred miles from Wiltshire. There they boarded with a Mrs. Saxton, a Latter-day Saint who had a daughter Clara almost the same age as Ruth. Ruth and Clara became fast friends. Lacking a nearby LDS branch, they went together to Church of England Sunday School and each week, with the father's approval, committed to memory pages from an instruction book and used one of their prayer books.

Ruth and Clara had many tasks to perform besides schoolwork—they carried lunch to her father and carried water and groceries to the Saxton home. By the time she was ten Ruth had learned to carry a bucket of water or a stone of flour (fourteen pounds, British) on her head. But she most enjoyed what she called “doing pieces”—reciting poems and stories—in the grocery shop, at socials attended by the minister, and on Sunday School outings. She was now old enough to attend community celebrations, the first of which for her was Guy Fawkes Day. By putting in a half penny, people would gather in groups, build bonfires, and have what she called “jollification.”

All was not play, of course. Ruth was taught to sew, knit, and crochet. Most of her evenings were spent making knots of black thread by the light of a small candle. The laws of England used to permit children to work in the factories when eight years old. But in Ruth's day, children could only work a half-day until they were thirteen. Ruth wanted to do this, but her father, contemplating the trip to America, would not grant his permission. Instead, she washed dishes, scrubbed and scoured the stone floors, and polished the furniture. Sometimes she and Clara went into the broad, green fields to gather blackberries from the hedges bordering the fields. After a rain the mushrooms were thick, and the girls filled their little pails with them. Sometimes they gathered nettles to make beer with and went home with many stings. Thus they had a chance to wander in the green lanes for which England is so famous.

Once Ruth and Clara went with Mrs. Saxton to visit some of the Saxton relatives in Armley, a little city near Leeds. They went to what Ruth called the most wonderful party she had ever attended, where they had great, crystal bowls overflowing with oranges, apples, grapes, and other fruits. As the lady passed the fruit around a second time, Ruth automatically said, "No, thank you," because that was how she had been trained. But when she saw others eating, she went to the bowl and helped herself. This was something that was not done. Ruth reports, "A nice lady came and told me, 'That was naughty. You should never help yourself.'"

On one of these trips she stayed all night and next morning was given two pence half penny for train fare. "But as I wanted to keep my money," wrote Ruth, "I walked home—a distance of seven miles." It was a lovely road, she said, but she hadn't realized how dangerous it might have been.

Finally, in 1865, when she was twelve, her father was ready to go to the promised land. Her father would also emigrate Mrs. Saxton and Clara. He would marry Mrs. Saxton after they reached America, and Clara would now be in actual fact Ruth's sister. After three weeks they landed at Castle Gardens, then went to Philadelphia, where Ruth's father married Clara's mother. The girls worked in a cotton mill for a while and then worked as domestics in nearby homes.

They crossed the Great Plains in 1867 and settled in Parley's Canyon, east of Salt Lake City. Her father worked at Brigham Young's woolen mill, and Ruth in a nearby cotton factory; they later worked in a factory in Ogden. Ruth later married Jesse W. Fox, Jr., and they had a large family, some of whom are still alive.

Ruth began working in the Church's YWMIA office in 1914 and worked there until retiring in 1937. Her husband died in 1928. She was active in politics—one of the organizers of the Republican party in Utah, auditor of the National Council for Women, treasurer of the Utah Woman Suffrage

Association, member of the board of the Deseret Agriculture and Manufacturing Society. Her Church responsibilities included: counselor in ward primary; president of the ward YWMIA; member of the YWMIA General Board; first counselor to general president, YWMIA, 1905–29; and general president of the Young Women, 1929–37. She wrote the poem “Carry On,” which was set to music for the Church centennial in 1930. She visited England for the centennial of the British Mission in 1937, and lived until 1958—almost 105 years. She was a resourceful, witty, and hardworking product of Britain.

### **Patience Loader (Rozsa, Archer)**

Patience Loader was already twenty-eight when she left England, so her personal history has a lot to say about her life there before she left.<sup>11</sup> She was born in 1827 at Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire, the fourth in a family of thirteen, four boys and nine girls. Her parents lived on the estate of Sir Henry Lambert, her father being the head gardener. It was a beautiful place, with flowers, trees, water, and lovely playgrounds. Her father had a home and plot of ground for his own family, and he was able to give each child a spot of ground to plant whatever they wanted. They had everything in the yard for their amusement, so they spent nearly all their time on their own property. On Sunday they attended Sunday School and worship at a Church of England chapel. They were taught to pray. Patience had a happy childhood.

At the age of seventeen, Patience thought she should go out to earn her own support, so she went to a nearby village and worked for one year, receiving a salary of one pound and ten shillings for the entire year. She took time for a brief visit home after the year, and then went to London, where she worked as a housekeeper, seamstress, and later as chambermaid at a hotel.

While in London she heard about the Mormons. Indeed, a friend of hers told Patience that her parents (Patience’s parents) had joined the Church, but Patience could not believe it, so she wrote home, saying, “I suppose they [the Mormons] think they are better than other people, as they call themselves Saints.” She went home for a visit and while there was converted and baptized. When she returned to her work in London, she converted two of her girlfriends, but people jeered at her and she was finally discharged from employment. She finally got work looking after the invalid wife of General William Turner. After Mrs. Turner’s death, Patience stayed at the General’s home to look after him. But when her parents decided to emigrate to America in 1855, the General thought it was proper for her to go with them and so, in December 1855, after eleven years in London, she and her parents, three sisters, and two brothers and their families departed from Liverpool. Two other sisters were to leave the following

summer with their families, and one sister had left a year earlier and now lived in Springville, Utah. Two brothers and two sisters remained in England and did not join the Church.

The Loaders were eleven weeks on board the *John Boyd* and had the usual storms and tossings. On one fearful occasion Patience beheld a vision of the Savior, who spoke to her saying, "Fear not. You shall be taken over safely." After that, although one of her nieces died during the crossing, Patience had no anxiety.

They arrived in New York City in February 1856 and obtained employment. Patience worked in a coat factory. After several weeks the Loaders went on to Nebraska to join a handcart company. Their experience in the handcart crossings was not pleasant because of an early snowfall, but they were the beneficiaries of a massive rescue effort by Saints from Salt Lake City. They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on 30 November 1856, almost a year after leaving Liverpool.

In Utah, Patience married John Rozsa, a United States soldier who had joined the Church. When John was assigned to go to Washington, D.C., on the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, Patience, who by now had a baby girl, went with him. There she cooked for a group of soldiers. At the end of the war, in 1866, her husband, who by now had heart and lung trouble, took his little family and headed west. Unfortunately, he died on the way, at Fort Kearney, Nebraska. As Patience, now a widow, headed on for Utah with her three boys, some Indians came to camp. She was told by the captain not to give them anything, but she had been used to giving them food when she lived in Utah, so she gave them some anyway. The Indians said, "Where's your man?" Patience said, "Gone." The Indian patted her on the shoulder and asked, "Mormon squaw?" She replied, "Yes." He said, "Good squaws, Mormons."

Patience worked in mining camps as a cook and after ten years remarried, this time to John Archer. She enjoyed life with her children; they enjoyed parties and dances, always had refreshments which she furnished—popcorn, molasses candy, doughnuts, and apples. She was active in the local ward as a teacher, Relief Society president, Primary, YMMIA, and Sunday School officer. A woman of strong faith, she had many spiritual experiences. She learned to play the organ after she was eighty. She finally died in Pleasant Grove, Utah, in 1921, at the age of 94. She left a fine posterity, and one of her grandsons was recently president of the Los Angeles Temple.

### **Mary Ann Weston (Maughan)**

Mary Ann Weston was born in the parish of Corse, near Corse Hills, Gloucestershire.<sup>12</sup> Her father, who had been born in Worcestershire, was a watch and clockmaker and also a grower of herbs. Both of Mary Ann's

parents were from substantial, middle-class families, what Mary Ann called “the high gentry.” They were “tall fine looking people,” she wrote, and prominent in their church and in local business circles. Mary Ann grew up knowing and being treated kindly by local tradespeople, the parson, and farmers. Her father was a leading member of the Wesleyan Methodists at Corse Lawn, and led the congregational singing.

Mary Ann attended Wesleyan Sunday School regularly and became a teacher when she was fifteen. They had their own prayer meetings Monday evenings and were sincere in trying to live the religion they professed.

Mary Ann had many memories of her childhood, telling us much about England in 1830. There was the neighborhood friend who came down with typhus and had the quarantine placed on her house. The mother subsequently died, leaving behind eight children. There was the neighboring carpenter who stole the Weston’s gate and was caught carrying it to his home. There was the neighboring farmer who lost a large flock of young geese, and the person taking them left a note tied on the neck of an old gander left behind, thanking the owner for the booty and expressing confidence that he could duplicate the trick the next year. The police thought leaving the note was too impudent, so they investigated and decided that the guilty party was a family normally regarded as “very pious,” living not far away, who held worship services for their faith in their home every Sunday. When the police went one Sunday afternoon with a search warrant, they sat quietly with the congregation until the service was concluded, then arrested the father and son and found in one of the rooms all the missing ducks and chickens dressed for market.

It is clear from her history of living in their country home that their days and evenings were full—driving to the store in Cheltenham (it took two hours by horse and buggy), driving to Leedsbury to buy, and so on. When her mother went to work, Mary Ann stayed home to care for the children, for she would not leave them with the servants. On other days Mary Ann went with her father or with her brothers.

In the year of 1837–38, when she was twenty, Mary Ann went to live with a friend of hers in Leigh in Lancashire to learn dressmaking and millinery. She stayed a year, was treated well, and found the training very helpful to her in the years that followed.

In the spring of 1840, when Mary Ann was twenty-three, William Jenkins, who had married the girl Mary Ann learned dressmaking from, was visiting some friends in Herefordshire and happened to hear Wilford Woodruff preach. He was impressed, heard additional sermons, and was baptized. Upon his return he told his wife and Mary Ann about the new gospel and they soon invited Elder Woodruff to their home. Mary Ann was the only one in the house when he came. Mary Ann wrote:

He sat by the fire and soon commenced singing: "Shall I for fear of feeble man, the Spirit's course in me restrain." Brother Jenkins had told us that he [Mr. Woodruff] had left his home in America, crossed the sea, and came to preach this Gospel to the people of England. While he was singing, I looked at him. He looked so peaceful and happy, I thought he must be a good man, and the Gospel he preached must be true. There was a small society of United Brethren in this place. I think they all joined the Church and emigrated to Nauvoo.

#### Mary Ann goes on:

Soon as the people were baptised, the persecution comenced. One Sunday afternoon while some were being baptised, a man threw a dog in the pond, saying he would baptise the *dog*. There was a man standing near me that had walked 8 or 10 miles that morning to be baptised. He had a bundle of clothes in his hand. I saw a man from the other side of the pool come up to him and asked to borrow the clothes. They were willingly lent. The man went away, put them on, was baptised, and returned them; and Brother Ruck carried them home wet. He afterwards joined the Church and we have laughed about his carrying his clothes so many miles and not using them. Brother Woodruff baptised Mrs. Hill, Hannah Simonds (now M. Phillips of Kaysville), and myself at midnight in the pond in the centre of the Village. We could not be baptised in the daytime on account of persecution.

The next summer and winter, having finished her apprenticeship, Mary Ann went back to her family and, as before she went away, she worked for her father in his traveling and also did some business of her own, sewing for her family and for others. She did much of the housework.

Her family did not obey the gospel, but they did not oppose Mary Ann. She attended all the meetings she could, often walking many miles alone to and from them. One shipload of Saints had gone to Nauvoo from Gloucester, and another was about to leave. She says she attended a tea meeting at Dymock near Leedsbury on 18 May 1840, which was a Monday. There she saw a brother John Davis of Tirely, Gloucestershire (nearby) baptized and then, on the bank of the pond where they were baptizing, ordained a priest. Mary Ann became engaged to him. He was a cooper and carpenter by trade. They were married on Joseph Smith's birthday, 23 December 1840, in Gloucester by a clergyman of the Church of England. They went to Tirely to live and were very happy. They were visited by Elder Woodruff, Willard Richards, and other elders, who held many meetings in their home. They were frequently disturbed by anti-Mormon mobs. On one such occasion the mob attacked Mary Ann's husband, knocked him down, and kicked him; he was bruised internally, and a short time later he died.

Alone, despondent, full of grief and sorrow, Mary Ann decided to gather with the Saints in Nauvoo. She realized enough from the sale of her husband's carpenter's and cooper's tools, and some of her dressers and dinner dishes and other furniture and utensils, to pay her passage and board to



Nauvoo. Her farewell meeting with her family was very difficult. It was a period of anguish and heartache since there was little chance she would ever see any of them again. "I left all that was near and dear to me," she wrote, "to travel some thousands of miles alone and cast my lot with the people of God."

Her diary says much about traveling on the *Harmony*, a sailing vessel with a friendly captain who was going to Quebec for lumber. There were storms and near disasters, but the ship had a friendly crew and passenger group, and the experience was pleasant. After two months at sea they arrived in Quebec, took a steamer to St. John, canal boat to Buffalo, and horse-drawn carriage to Kirtland, Ohio. After seven weeks there Mary Ann joined a group going to Nauvoo. Among those with the group going to Nauvoo was Peter Maughan, a convert from Cumberland, a county in north England, who had been baptized in 1838 and ordained an elder, but whose wife had died in 1841 as he and she were planning to migrate to Nauvoo. Peter was left with five small children ranging in age from two to ten. Peter proposed to Mary Ann, she accepted, and they were married almost immediately and settled in Nauvoo. Mary Ann, of course, raised his children, along with eight she subsequently had by Brother Maughan.

They lived in Nauvoo until the Saints were expelled from there, then worked in coal and lead mines for four years, and finally made the trek west in 1850. They eventually settled in Cache Valley in northern Utah and southern Idaho, where Peter Maughan was presiding bishop and Mary Ann was president of the stake Relief Society. Bishop Maughan even named one of the towns in southern Idaho after her, Weston, which is right next to Whitney, where President Ezra Taft Benson was born and grew up. Shortly after Mary Ann's eighth child was born, Bishop Maughan died, probably of pneumonia. For the next thirty years Mary Ann reared her large family, made countless visits to the sick and the poor, delivered babies, prepared deceased persons for burial, comforted mourners, and gave people medicine. She died in 1901 at the age of eighty-four. She was a wonderfully intelligent and spirited woman and left a marvelous heritage.

There are many other select sisters one could tell about. There was Hannah Tapfield King, who grew up among the classic shades and bowers of Cambridge, a poet, essayist, and philosopher, mother of ten, author of four books and countless poems and articles, who joined the Church at age forty-two after hearing about it from her dressmaker. With her family she migrated to the Salt Lake Valley in 1853, four years after her baptism, and became part of the intellectual community in Utah. "I have lived in two worlds," she wrote near the end of her life, "the actual and the ideal." "The latter," she added, "gave me the poetry I needed to fill my soul."<sup>13</sup>

There was Margaret McNeil, of Scotland, who did not have the opportunity of schooling but nevertheless did a creditable job of teaching herself.

She cared for her little brothers and sisters as they all migrated to the Salt Lake Valley, and then she married Henry Ballard, another British immigrant, and they eventually had eleven children. Her husband was bishop of their ward in Logan for thirty-nine years and she was president of the Relief Society for thirty years. One of her sons was Melvin J. Ballard, an Apostle and one of the great preachers of the restored Church. Apostle Russell Ballard is her great-grandson.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, let me mention Isabella Hales, of Kent, who migrated early enough to the States to have met the Prophet Joseph Smith. "On shaking hands with him," she wrote, "I received the holy spirit in such great abundance that I felt it thrill my whole system, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I thought I had never beheld so lovely a countenance. Nobility and goodness were in every feature," she wrote. Isabella married Joseph Horne, my wife's great-grandfather, and bore fifteen children, including three sets of twins. (And that same tradition continued in my wife's family: Harriet's father and mother also had three sets of twins.) Isabella eventually became general treasurer of the Relief Societies of the Church, helped to found the first LDS hospital in Utah, and was regarded, next to Eliza R. Snow, as the chief organizer among women in the West.<sup>15</sup>

These were all admirable persons, worthy of our remembering them. The gospel is a great school, a testing ground for us all, a means of attaining true happiness in this life and exaltation in the world to come. May we all prove worthy and valiant.

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2. Doritt Harvey Brough, "A Difficult Journey," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, comp. Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1959-77), 20:200.

3. *Ibid.* 20:204.

4. The best introduction is Davis Bitton, *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1977).

5. Elmer Edwards, "A Faithful Sister," *Millennial Star* 78 (4 May 1916): 278.

6. Charles Dickens, *The Uncommercial Traveller* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

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8. Hannah Tapfield King, Diary, concluding note, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

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10. Jemima Luke, "I Think When I Read That Sweet Story," in *Sing with Me: Songs for Children* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970), B-69.

11. Based on Patience Loader (Rozsa, Archer), Diary, LDS Church Archives. See also Leonard J. Arrington and Susan Arrington Madsen, *Sunbonnet Sisters* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1984), 49–60.

12. Based on "Journal of Mary Ann Weston Maughan," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, comp. Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1959–77), 2:345–420. See also my essay in Douglas D. Alder, ed., *Cache Valley: Essays on Her Past and People* (Logan: Utah State University, 1976), 3–5.

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14. Margaret McNeil Ballard, "My Story," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*, comp. Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1959–77), 3:199–206.

15. Mary Isabella Hales Horne, Autobiography, typescript in author's possession. Also Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), 230–36, 332, 492; and Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (1901; reprint, Salt Lake City: Western Epics, 1971), 1:807–8.