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Article Summary: The Mormon migration of 1852 is a significant and important event in the history of the American West. It exemplifies how well equipped the Mormon trains were and it demonstrates the effectiveness of group preparation combined with group action and religious purpose in bringing about success. It also centralized and increased the power of the Mormon Church. Also, Mormon converts arriving from Europe began using the town of Wyoming, in Otoe County, Nebraska, as well as Independence and St Joseph as their main outfitting points, no longer relying exclusively on Council Bluffs, Iowa. This article presents a concise, thorough introduction to the Mormon migration of 1852 and then presents Olive Harriet Otto's story, in her own words.

Cataloging Information:

Names: Joseph Smith, Hiram Smith, Orson Pratt, Orson Hyde, Brigham Young, William Woodruff, Ezra T Benson, Jedidiah M Grant, Feramorz Little, George A Smith, John Crook, Thomas Turnbull, Robert Stuart, John Hawkins Clark, William Clayton, Albert Sidney Johnston, Olive Harriet Otto Terry.

Place Names: Salt Lake Valley, Utah; Pottawattamie County, Iowa; Fremont County, Iowa; Kaneshville [formerly Miller's Hollow,] Iowa; Elkhorn River, Nebraska; Loup Fork (of the Platte River), Nebraska; Fort Kearny, Nebraska; Fort Laramie, Wyoming; Fort Bridger, Wyoming; Echo Canyon, Colorado; Nauvoo, Illinois.

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Photographs / Images: Mormon wagon train in camp, a sketch, 1859; Elkhorn River Ferry, about 1853, a sketch; contemporary sketch of Kaneshville, Iowa area (now Council Bluffs);

A MORMON BRIDE IN THE GREAT MIGRATION

By Orval F. Baldwin II

INTRODUCTION

The year 1852 was a momentous one for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and its followers. Several events occurred which were to play an important role in the development of the church and its young settlement in the Great Salt Lake Valley. First, the church, through a sermon of Apostle Orson Pratt openly advocated polygamy as a principle of the Mormon faith.¹ Multiple marriages had been practiced before by prestigious members of the church, beginning with the many marriages of the prophet of the faith Joseph Smith, but the church had never before admitted to the "Gentile" world and to its own followers as a whole, that this well-known practice was a tenet of the faith. This particular happenstance caused lasting repercussions. The controversy over the admission of Utah as a state in the latter part of the 19th century, as well as the trials of the Mormon leaders charged with polygamy in the 1880's, stemmed in large part from the Mormons' refusal to deny the doctrine of polygamy espoused in 1852.

The espousal of this doctrine furthered conflict within the church itself. Since the death of Joseph Smith on June 27, 1844, it had been divided over who should direct its affairs. Smith's family believed that the mantle of responsibility held by their illustrious relative, which had been passed to Brigham Young and the other apostles of the faith, should have been retained within the Smith family. This power struggle remained somewhat of a private quarrel, but with the advocacy of

polygamy by the main branch of the church, the Smith faction confirmed the split by forming the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.² This split has not yet been resolved.

Although these two events were of vital importance, their effect pales somewhat when compared with the great Mormon migration to the Utah territory in 1852. Despite controversy among non-Mormon historians as to the exact number of wagons, trains, and people,³ it is evident that far more settlers traveled to the Great Salt Lake Valley that year than in any other year, preceding or following 1852. Although the romantic allure of the 1847 pioneer band or the bizarre attempts of the handcart brigades appeal to many, it was the "migration of '52" that brought 10,000 people to Utah and thereby provided almost half of the population of the territory at that time.

Preparations had begun, nearly five years before the first wagon train departed, when the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company was set up in Utah by the apostles and elders of the faith. Created during the course of the winter of 1847-1848, the PEF was designed to help church members, especially the poor, gather in the Zion in the desert.⁴ The initial funds, which came from the church treasury, were loaned to impoverished Mormons who were expected to pay back the money after they reached Utah and found employment. In theory, the church was to make the original outlay only, since the PEF was set up to be self-supporting through the repayment of loans granted. Unfortunately, settlers arriving in the "State of Deseret," which was formed in 1849 with Young as governor, could not always find employment and therefore were unable to pay their debts. The theory, then, proved to be less than a complete success in actual practice.

Although the PEF was an economic failure, it does demonstrate the strong desire of the church to gather the Saints, as those of the Mormon faith were called, in Utah. Evidently the church hoped to bring its far flung membership, a minority of the population almost everywhere it existed, together as a socio-political unit controlled by Mormon theocracy, thereby increasing both its spiritual and temporal power. This desire, earlier apparent in the build-up at Nauvoo, Illinois, intensified in the fall of 1851, as is evidenced both by Brigham Young's instructions to the Saints in Pottawatomie County, Iowa, to "Come home! Come home!"⁵ and the church's instructions to

eastern Saints to "Come home to Zion and complete the American gathering."⁶

But the Mormon ideal of creating a "New Jerusalem" in the desert directed by the theocracy of the church was not the only reason for the great migration. Although the wish to "Come home to Zion" was uppermost in the minds of those making the long trek, also apparent as a motivating force was the old spectre of Gentile persecution with its ugly counterpart, Mormon paranoia. Those who had lived through harrowing experiences in Missouri and Illinois, where Joseph Smith and his brother Hiram were murdered, were ready to fly at the first hint of anti-Mormonism. The first signs of disturbance became apparent in western Iowa in the winter of 1851-1852 when much of the non-Mormon population became angered over polygamy practiced in Mormon settlements along the Missouri River.⁷ In addition to this, there had been a mild reaction over the election of a Mormon to a judgeship in the area, and when an anti-Mormon meeting was organized in Fremont County, Iowa, a great deal of name calling and abstract threatening took place.⁸ There was probably little danger of active persecution, but to the faint hearted the threat loomed large, and fear played a motivational role in the migration.

The church's displeasure with the Mormon merchants in Kaneshville, the chief settlement of the Saints in western Iowa, was another factor which influenced migration. Mormons who had remained behind after Winter Quarters was abandoned in 1847 in the face of government and Indian pressure,⁹ were ordered to set up a jumping-off site for the journey to Utah for future immigrants, and they had selected Miller's Hollow, located on the Iowa side of the Missouri River about fifteen miles to the south and east of Winter Quarters. The name of the community was changed at "an adjourned session of a general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints" when "Orson Hyde moved that the place hitherto known as Miller's Hollow be named Kaneshville, in honor of Col. Thomas H. Kanesh," a friend of the Mormons in Washington, D.C.¹⁰ Though the population fluctuated on a seasonal basis, under the supervision of Apostle Hyde, the town grew from a community of two hundred houses in 1850 to a "metropolis" of nearly 3,000 persons in the early part of 1852.¹¹ In addition to being a church leader and city councilman, Hyde founded and edited the first

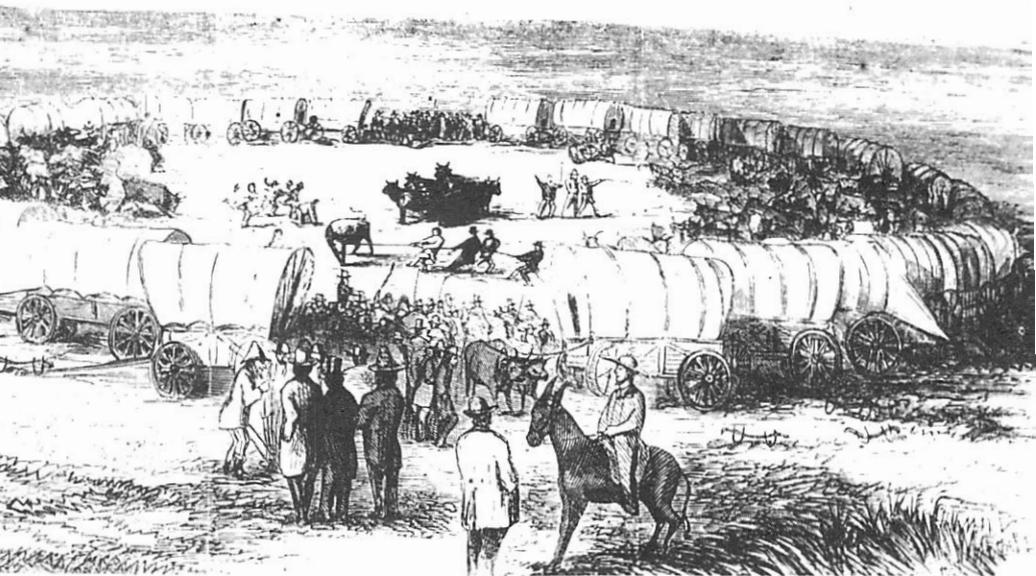
newspaper in western Iowa, *The Frontier Guardian*.

Since 1849 Mormon merchants had been conducting a highly lucrative business with Gentiles who passed through the area needing supplies.¹² Church leaders in Salt Lake City, including Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, and William Woodruff, opposed this, not because their brethren were making large profits, but because they feared the merchants would stay in Kanessville and set up a permanent power base outside of Utah and effective church control. The fears of the hierarchy were justified somewhat since the entrepreneurs, including Orson Hyde, were not adverse to growing rich off their leather and produce businesses and showed little inclination of wanting to leave for Utah.¹³

In the fall of 1851, Young instructed two of the twelve Mormon apostles, Ezra T. Benson and Jedidiah M. Grant, to "evacuate Potawatomie (Iowa) and the states and next fall be with us."¹⁴ They were charged with gathering as many of the poor of the Mormon faith as they could and providing them with funds for emigration.¹⁵ Benson and Grant retired from the church's legislative council, which in effect was the government of the territory, and journeyed east to Kanessville.¹⁶ They were accompanied by a few men experienced in travel along the Mormon trail, some of whom had journeyed between Kanessville and Utah five times. By having these experienced men along to organize and execute the migration, the Mormons hoped to prevent any possible mishaps among the migrating trains.

When the party of church leaders and guides reached Kanessville in December, the entire community girded itself for the upcoming tasks. Under the command of Hyde, Benson, Grant, and other leaders such as Feramorz Little and George A. Smith,¹⁷ the population was transformed from an unorganized mass into a tightly disciplined unit. The people were formed into "companies" of ten, fifty, or one hundred families, each of whom had, or were to have, a wagon.¹⁸ Over each of these companies, and the train as a whole, was a Utah "captain" granted authority by church leaders. John Crook, who participated in the organization but did not make the journey in 1852, reported:

All the talk through Winter and Spring was to fit up and prepare to gather in a body in Utah coming Summer. So everybody that could work turned in and were organized in companies, some working fitting up wagons, chains, yokes, etc., others in timber splitting and preparing the timber.¹⁹



Mormon wagon train in camp. Oxen are being lassoed preparatory to yoking up. Sketch by George Simons from Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, January 8, 1859.

After work parties were organized, the problem of how to provide for nearly 10,000 people during the long journey faced the leaders. Formerly, the PEF and other Mormon charitable organizations had supplied much of the funding necessary for the purchase of foodstuffs, but the problem was greatly magnified by the number of people involved in 1852. The merchants helped solve the problem by selling supplies at a low margin of profit instead of at inflated prices. Thomas Turnbull, a traveler to California, noted that prices for "boots, shoes, and clothing (are) about the same as they are in Chicago." Corn was at twenty-five cents a bushel, oats at thirty cents a bushel, and bacon at twelve cents a pound.²⁰ The need for flour, salt pork or side meat, canned vegetables, and coffee created a thriving business.²¹

The scheduling for departure began the first week in May,²² and following a discourse by Apostle Benson on May 30, the first company crossed the Missouri to begin its long journey westward to the Zion of the Latter Day Saints.²³ The other companies departed on a periodic basis lasting through June and July.

They followed the route on the north side of the Platte River used by the original Mormon pioneer bands of 1847. Mormons had not been the first to use this trail that now bears their name, however, for the trail was "blazed" by Robert Stuart's band of returning Astorians in 1813 and had long been used by fur traders.²⁴ Though the trail was not new, the experiences of the 1852 migration were unique, beginning with the ferrying of the companies across the Missouri. In 1847 there had been but a single ferry in use because most of the Mormon emigrants had crossed the Missouri the previous year and wintered at Winter Quarters. In 1852 there were three separate crossing areas that operated at or near peak capacity in June and July—the old Upper or Mormon Ferry near Winter Quarters; the Lower Ferry at Bellevue, six miles south of Kaneshville; and the Middle Ferry very near Kaneshville.²⁵ These ferries were "large, flat boats" which could hold only two or three wagons at a time.²⁶

The trails, necessarily divided by the use of the three different ferries, converged at a point approximately ten miles north of where the Elkhorn River flows into the Platte. The ferry there²⁷ was a great advantage over the migration of 1847 when none had been there. On the Elkhorn and along the Loup Fork of the Platte, where Orson Hyde had negotiated crossing rights with the half-breeds who operated the ferry, ferries were available at non-restrictive prices.²⁸ Passage over these rivers had been one of the chief worries of earlier Mormon migrations.

The Mormon Trail, also called the Council Bluffs Road, hugged the river itself. In 1847 Young and his band had encountered few others, but with the establishment of Fort Kearny in 1848, with the "discovery" of a ford across the river there, and with most important of all, the rushing to California still taking place, the Mormon exodus in 1852 was anything but solitary. John Hawkins Clark, one of many travelers headed for the California gold fields, in June commented that many wagons were crossing the ford on the Platte, headed both north and south.²⁹ From 1847 to 1851 the Mormon trails had stayed almost exclusively on the north side of the river, but in 1852 at least two and possibly more of the Mormon bands ventured across the river to the Oregon Trail at Fort Kearny.³⁰ In part, this was a reaction to the Gentiles' use of the north side of the Platte that stemmed from the fear of cholera which devastated the prairies that year. But in spite of a myth that "cholera raged

along the south bank, while the north bank was supposedly free of the plague,"³¹ the grim reaper of the Plains cut down Mormon and Gentile alike:

(May 30) . . . an old lady died in cholera, a great many are dying on the St. Joe road. . . .³²
 (June 11) The road has been thickly strewn with graves . . . the sickness seems to be increasing.³³

(June 18) . . . considerable sickness on north and south banks of Platte.³⁴

One place we passed there had been many immigrants die with cholera and had been buried not far from the road, their beds, bedding, and clothing left by the roadside.³⁵

Added to the fear of cholera and the problems of coping with 1,200 miles of unfamiliar terrain was anxiety concerning the Plains Indians. The relatively minor difficulties the wagon trains faced, which ranged from thieving by the Pawnee to outright intimidation by the Sioux,³⁶ had been provoked by the actions of white men. William Clayton's description of herds of buffalo being numerous for two hundred miles on west from Grand Island in 1847³⁷ was no longer true. The buffalo had been slaughtered by hunters in search of fresh meat for the wagon trains, and the Mormons had been no less guilty of this than were the others. In his journal, John Hawkins Clark noted that "during the immigration, buffaloes are scarce on the line of travel; at least we have seen none as yet."³⁸ The restiveness of the Indians obviously troubled the Mormons for the "Rules of the Council of Captains" stated that "penalties for neglect of guard duty" would be strictly applied.³⁹ The "Rules of the Council of Captains" was the law on the trail.

After they had replenished their supplies at Fort Kearny, the trains crept over the Plains toward Fort Laramie. Though they moved at a snail's pace, they found enough variation in the Platte Valley landscape to please their senses. John Hawkins said:

Picture to yourselves a broad river winding through green meadows covered with grass that grows to the water's edge, beautiful little islands setting like gems upon its bosom, on some bright morning when the sun first spreads his golden rays.⁴⁰

On the south side of the Platte were the well-known landmarks of Ash Hollow, Scott's Bluff, and Chimney Rock.

In anticipation of spiritual malaise or uninspired leadership during the long trek, various Mormon apostles who were in charge of the entire migration moved back and forth among the many companies so that they might provide the comforts of the religion, as well as lend the visage of authority. Along with the Utah captains, these leaders also scouted ahead of the trains in

an effort to find water, etc., and with the help of William Clayton's *The Latter Day Saint Emigrant's Guide*, a campsite for the night. Church leaders maintained a strict regimen, and using "The Rules of the Council of Captains" as a guidebook, the Mormons were held to an almost military precision in their daily activities.⁴¹ There was absolutely no travel on the Sabbath, except in case of emergencies;⁴² everyone, except for the very small children and the sick, walked; and the wagons, almost exclusively pulled by oxen, carried provisions and not people. The companies progressed at a travelling pace of ten to fifteen miles a day,⁴³ but the strict discipline enforced during the long, slow journey did not dampen spirits. Inspired by religious zeal and the knowledge that they were going home to Zion, they celebrated their movement westward with singing. In the evenings, after walking all day, they were ready to dance the night away, and the "President of the Trains" (presumably Orson Hyde) came "to open the dances."⁴⁴

From Fort Laramie on, the route of the Mormon migration continued westward over the old Oregon (and Mormon) Trail gateway across the Rockies, the South Pass. Here the main route of the Mormons passed over to Fort Bridger and through Echo Canyon into Salt Lake City. A branch, off the main route, called the Sublette or Greenwood Cutoff was taken by some of the group. Used extensively by the Forty-niners, the cutoff went west to Bear River instead of southwest to the Great Salt Lake Valley. This route was faster, but it was not preferred by the Mormon captains because it involved traveling across a desert.⁴⁵

The last portion of the exhausting journey was the most arduous because of the paucity of good pastures and fresh water in the mountainous terrain. Relief companies were sent out from Salt Lake City with medicine and food for the struggling companies.⁴⁶ Ezra T. Benson had gone ahead of the emigrants and arrived in Salt Lake City on August 20, long before the arrival of the others,⁴⁷ to help direct the relief efforts. But aid did not stop after the trains reached Salt Lake City. After passing through quarantine camps, the new arrivals were given food and put to work in various church-related public works programs, such as the construction of the temple or the building of irrigation channels.

The Mormon migration of 1852 is a significant and important event in the history of the American West: First, it exemplifies

how much better equipped were the Mormon trains to tackle the difficult trail. It demonstrates the effectiveness of group preparation when combined with group action and religious purpose. Between 1847 and 1868 this system successfully brought over 30,000 people to Utah, with the only real exception to success being the ill-fated handcart brigades. The migration of 1852, because it involved more people than any other year of the Mormon migrations, was the apogee of the system's success.

Secondly, the migration of 1852 centralized and increased the power of the Mormon church. Though a few Mormons remained in Kaneshville until 1853, the Mormon settlements in Pottawatomie County were discontinued forever,⁴⁸ and there were no longer any Mormon communities of any stature outside of Utah. (The name of Kaneshville itself was changed to Council Bluffs in 1853.⁴⁹) The great influx of settlers in Utah increased the power of the church by a nearly 100 per cent increase in population, and the Mormons were able to multiply their efforts to establish a Mormon corridor to the Pacific and solidify their hold on northern Utah. Although 1853-1857 saw a slackening of immigration to Utah, the 1852 migration had already given Brigham Young a power base for the Utah War in 1857-1858.

The migration was important in light of a third development. Converts to Mormonism who began arriving from Europe in the late 1850's no longer used Council Bluffs as their main outfitting point. The town of Wyoming in Otoe County, Nebraska, thrived briefly as a Mormon staging area, as well as Independence and St. Joseph.⁵⁰ With the Mormons no longer coming solely to Council Bluffs, immigration through the area declined slowly until at last it ended with the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

Lastly, the "American gathering" of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, for all intents and purposes, was completed in 1852. It was the fulfillment of the vision of Joseph Smith of a Mormon "Zion" away from all enemies. Even though there were later confrontations in Utah between Mormon and Gentile, such as the presence of Albert Sidney Johnston's Army in 1858 and the polygamy-statehood struggle in the 1880's and 1890's, for the most part Mormons were left to their own devices so long as they acknowledged the suzerainty of the federal government. Once away from hostile mobs, the intense zeal of



Elkhorn River Ferry northwest of Omaha about 1853. From a sketch by Frederick Piercy.

the religion subsided over the course of the years. This was a necessary event for both the Mormons and the United States, in order to avoid a confrontation of disastrous proportions.

Among the nearly 10,000 people who came to Utah in 1852, thereby carving for themselves a singular niche in the history of the American West, was my great-great grandmother Olive Harriet Otto Terry. She had come to the Kaneshville area in 1851; she left the area in 1852 as the bride of a Mormon emigrant. Her own story follows, substantially unedited.⁵¹

OLIVE HARRIET OTTO'S STORY

If thar had ben railroads then I wold of went back, but that was no such thing for you know it was the year of 1851.⁵²

Wall, I must not make the rest miserbell because I am, so I dride my tears and picked a few hazel nuts and went back to the waggon where Mother was at work getting our suppers. Bless her sweet life, she always made the best of everything.

We stade in camp that night and the next morning Father started to look for a house to move in to, and he came back in two hours and had bought a house. So we loaded up and went back about two mile on the bank of a littel stream, cold [called] Mesqueter Crick, and thar stud a littel log house, not much bigger than our waggon bed and a grat big old sad chimany.

O, I cold hardley keep from crying agane but I chocked back my tears for Mothers sake and don all I cold to help to make the place (I can't call it a hom), look as well as pasebell.

We onloded our waggon and then Father went back to the littel town and got a cook stove and a set of chairs and two bed stids. There was no room for more. The rest of the beds wold have to be made on the floor. Well in a few days I began to feel a littel better. We had fixed things up as best we cold and all of the rest of the familey was happy and it was not my natur to be dull, so I began to look around, for the place we had moved went by the name of a town. It was cold Carterville.

Sister and I took long walks over the bluffs and we found maney camps of Emegrants camped in the hollows. Tha ware Mormans from Nauvoo [Illinois], tha had come that far to be reddy to get a erley start in the spring for Salt Lake, but I did not like the country. I missed the grate Beach and Hickory trees.

Close to our house thar was a long log house, and one log left out and glass set up one after another the length of the house. Just one long strip of glass and that was the onley window in the house, and that was the Church and in that Church I met my fate.

The Mormans held Church every Sunday and Father and Mother went the first Sunday after we got there, and tha sead thay had a good meetings and sead we ought to go. My Brother had ben several times and had got acquenated with several young men and was not so lonsome as Sister and I.

So I promised that I wold go the next Sunday and I did. When we got thar, tha was singing and it sounded pretty nice coming out of such a place. And we went in and then thar was a old gray haired man prayed. Then thar was a young Ministar got up to speak, and I looked at the Preacher and then I looked away. I had a rite to look at the speaker but I thought I had never seen anyone lok so nice. He talked fast, long and loud and I took it all to myself because he was talking to the Gentiles and was I not a Gentile?

After that it was no trubel to get me to go to Church. I went that night and after Church was out my preacher came around to shake hands with the Brotheran and came and shake to Brother, he had met him before, and Brother gave him a interduction to me and he shook hands as all Minestars do. And after that it seemed to me as I had took a new lease of life for I loved that man from the first time I saw him and it seemed as if he had don the same with my self.

He cold the next day and wanted us all to atend singing school to be held in the same log hut and we all sind our names to atend. Brother, Sister and I, and before that school was out I was his promesed wife. I took the ring of my old lover from my finger and gave it to Sister and told her when he came to give it to him for I cared nothing for him. I cared not for the appel bees, the big trees, nothing, I had left behind, for I had found my Star that I worshaped. And he placed on my finger a lovely ring and I was the happiest girl in the country round. We was to be married in the spring and then start for the grate Salt Lake Valley.

O that was a happy winter. We went to Church to singing School, to dance all the same house. The Mormans beleave in danceing. Old men and women, gray-haired, wold com and jump the craks for the floor was just spolit logs with the flat side up

and hude [hued] of [off]. O it did look to funny to me, but I injoed [enjoyed] it for I was to happy for anything, for my Percy was by my side all the time.⁵³

He seemed to be all devotion. I cold leave Father and Mother, and Sister, and Brothers, all for him. I cold linger on that happy winter always but I must go on with the bitter as well as the sweet.

In the spring of '52 we was married. A small party of us went in a slay to Kanessville [now Council Bluffs] and a quiet wedding at a Ministers house, and I went home with my Husban to begin prepartian for our jurney across the plains of a thousand miles.

O I was all life. Mother often sed I was to happy to last, but I cold not see it that way. In April the Emegrants began to pore in. Train after Train came until the bluffs was covered with covered waggons. Then it was all excitement till in May. Then tha comenced to pull for the Mo River and it soon came our turn for we was all formed in companeys of one hundred waggons and had a Captan for every companey.

Father Terry⁵⁴ was the Captan of our company. We had our waggons fild with every good thing that money cold buy for my husban was well fixed—had plenty of money, and he thought that thar was nothing good enough for me. We had to take Provisian enough to last six months for it wold take that long to cross the plains.

I had never gave a though to how I wold feel when I came to leave my folks behind. The last day had come and I and Percy went to bid Farewell to my Mother and Father, Sisters, Brothers. I took my littel Brother. only four years old, in my arms and he put his littel chuby arms around my neck and sed, "when I get big man, I will come and see you and fetch you back hom so I will."

O Heavens, how often that came back to my mind in after years. Well, the parting was over and we had gone back to our waggon for we had started on our way to the river whar the rest of the companey was camped.

When my dear husban took me in his arms and kissed away my tears and promesed me in three years he wold bring me back to see them all, if my Father did not come. With all this love and comfort I soon was my old self agan for I was to happy to stay sad long.

We got in camp that night a[t] 8 o'clock. The next morning we comenced to cros the Mo River. We had to make the cattel all

swim, and a old flat boat that cold hold but two waggons at a time, so it took to [two] day for one compeny to cross.

Well, at last our company was across and we began our jurney. We onley traveled 8 mile the first day and then we had to stop and wate for Brother Benson,⁵⁵ so Percy told me. And he had to go back and help him with his stock. Brother Benson was one of the big men in the Church, one of the Twelve.

I cold hardley bar to part with him for one day for he sed he wold get back at night. But that day and the next, till nerley fore o'clock, when he came in camp. He was on our littel pony wich he had bought for me. So when I got tired of riding in the waggon, I cold get out and ride my pony.

O how delited I was to see him. He had ben gone two hull days. I cald my pony Brigham and I had meny a jolly ride on him.

We had to stay thar in camp for a week befor we cold start on. I never new why we had to stay thar so long but I did know that ever night thar was strang horses and cattel brought in camp. I spoke of it to my husban and he jus laughed and sed that the Sants was to suck the milk of the Gentiles. I new I had read sumphing like that in the Bibel and I thought no more about it till one night about a week after that, and just the night before we was to start on.

I saw out on the Perier [prairie] old Mike and Polly, my Father's horses. I new my Father never sold his horses. O what was I to do? I cold not let my poor old Father luse his only teem. I soon made up my mind.

I sed nothing to Percy about it. He never new I had seen them. I did not know how (they) had got them but I did know (they) had not brought (bought) them, had stole them.

I wated till dark and when I had my work all dun, I went around the corell. We was camped in a round ring and (a) hundred waggons in a ring makes a big corell. I went to see a Friend of mine. She had ben sick. She wanted me to come and stay with her that night and that just suted me.

I sed I would if Percy wold let me. So I went back to my waggon. He was in bed. We slep in the waggon.

"Whar have you ben, Dear?" he sed.

I told him that Linnie wanted me to come and stay with her that night and I wold go if he didn't care. I crald in the waggon and gave him a good nite kiss and got my shall for the nights was coule, and also my pocket book.

"I guess I will take Brig and let him eat som grass. I can watch him while I stay up."

The pony was tide to the waggon and I was afraid he wold miss him. So I went back to my Friends and stade till ten o'clock till all the camp was asleep. Then I sed, I thought I wold get my pony and go to bed.

O I had told a littel story to Percy but I cold not help it. I went out on the grass and caught my pony and started on my mision of mursey. I road across to the dear old horses and found that tha had thae four feet tide so tha cold hardley walk. I got down and went up to them and tha new me. Mike put his nose up against me and nickered. I untide thar feet and tide them together and started them across the peraria to the mane road.

Then I jumped on Brig and started after. It was a beautiful night. The moon was full but thar was white clouds crossing it. It was a long ride, about six mils, but we soon made the journey. The old horses went on the trot and my pony on the lope. O if the fary boat was on my side of the river I wold be all rite. And so I found it, for the men that run it was up and getting redy to cross back so to be on the other side by daylight.

It was ner two o'clock when I reached the river. I told them my story. Tha was Gentiles and tha did not beleave in the Mormans sucking thar milk that way and tha cold me a brave littel woman and sed tha wold take the horses across the river for nothing, but I wanted more than that.

"I want you to take them over and untye them and start them

*Contemporary sketch of the Kaneshville, Iowa, area (now Council Bluffs).
The artist was Frederick Piercy.*



toward the write way home and say nothing about how tha came her and I will give you five dollars."

I pade them the money and watched till I saw them turned luse and start for home.

Now to get back to camp before any body wold be astar.

I went up the bank whar I had left my pony and jumped on.

"Now, Brigham, old boy, for a race back to camp and Percy."

And I got back before anybody was up. I saw the gard as tha started to drive up the cattle but tha did not see me. I left Brig put on the grass and went to my waggon and crept in bed.

"O, how cold you are," he sed.

"Yes, I went out and got the pony and brought him back so he wold not go of."

"Did you tie him up?"

"No, I left him on the grass. The gard is after the cattel."

O how guilty I felt making so many excuses but Pa had got his horses by that time and that was my comfort.

"Well, dear, you lay still and I will get up and start. I want no breakfast so you wont have to get up."

I was glad fore I was affel tird. I went to sleep and new no more till the waggon comenced to move, and then I woke but went to sleep agan and sleep till nerley noon. I got up and dressed and went to the front and rased the curtin, for he had made it as dark as he cold so I wold sleep.

My Percy was walking by the leders. We had six yoke of cattel. When he saw I was up he came back and got up in the waggon with me. I saw he looked trubled and I asked him if he was hungray and he sad he had eat brekfirst with his Father, so I laft and talked.

He cold not say anything about the horses for he thought I had never saw them, so that saved me a grat imbarsment, but when we was stop for dinner, I hurd a man say to Percy that them horses went back to the river and the fary men set them across.

And that relived my mind. I knew tha thought the horses had got luse and went back them selves. I wondered if Percy knew anything about them, but I dar not say anything about it, and it was not mention in my hearing agan.

Well we had a long pleasent trip, long lines of covered waggons as far as your eye cold reach. You cold see Train after Train moving along and the larg hurds of Buflow along the Platt river for miles. The bottoms wold be black with them. O it wold be such fun to see hunters go out and git after them. Thar was six

hunters in ever train to suply the companey with meet and the buflow meat was ofel nice. And the larg tribe of Indieans that came to our camp, I was so fritened at them.

Larg bands of two or three hundred in a band. Tha was all naked but just a strap of buckskin around the wast and a bow and arow in tha hands. Tha had thar faces panted in all collors. Tha was on the war path but one shot of a revolver wold make a hole tribe run. Tha was afraid of a gun, and the emigrants was well armed, so thar was not much danger.

When we wold overtake another Train thar wold be a big dance. Tha wold form a grate big corell, two hundred waggons wold make plenty room for a big fier and two dancing floors. As soon as tha all drove in camp and got thar cattel on the grass, the young men wold go to work and clean the sod of and wet it and pack the ground hard and role in grat logs to make a fier, and by the time supper was over every thing wold be reddy for the dance, and all [who] wanted to dance wold gather in the center of the corell and the President of the Train wold come and open the dance with prayer, and then every boddy, old and young, wold dance till tha got tierd.

Thar was plenty of music of all kinds that cold be carried in a waggon. And this happened every week, and we had such a good time that I hardley had time to think of home or friends, and Percy was so kind and thoughtful of my comfort. I never danced but he was redy with my shall to rap me in when I was through. His littel wife must not git sick on the plains, so he wold say.

I was not yust (used) to such care and it almost exalted me to the Seventh Heaven, but alas how peple can take a fall. It is a gloryous thing that we can't see in to the future.⁵⁶ If I cold of forsaw my life, I never wold live it to get across the plains, but happy me! I had no care then. My Percy was all to me, and I card for nothin else, when he walked, I walked, when he road, I road. Whar he was, I was, his pepel was my pepel. I was like Routh of old and so the long jurney ended. We was all summer on the plains. We crossed the Mo River on the last day of May and we got to Salt Lake Valley the second of Oct. 1852.

NOTES

1. Benjamin G. Ferris, *Utah and the Mormons* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1856), 363. See also Nels Anderson, *Desert Saints: The Mormon Frontier in Utah* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 130.

2. Joseph Smith and Heman C. Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, 1844-1872* (Lamoni, Iowa: Church Board of Publication, 1911), III, 209.

3. Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter Day Saints, 1830-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 79, lists 21 wagon companies and 8,000 people. Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 209, lists 23 companies and 10,000 people. Andrew Jenson, "Utah Pioneer Companies," *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, 8 (January, 1917), 1-6, lists 22 "well organized" companies. "John Crook's Journal," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 6 (April, 1933), 3, lists 20 companies. Merrill J. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1969), 123, lists 7,500 Saints on the trail in 1852.

4. Ferris, *Utah*, 163-164.

5. *Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1851, 1.

6. Arrington, *Basin Kingdom*, 79.

7. Anderson, *Desert Saints*, 78.

8. *Frontier Guardian and Iowa Sentinel*, 18 Mar. 1852, 2.

9. Donald F. Danker, "Some Social Beginnings in Territorial Nebraska" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1955), 12.

10. Charles H. Babbitt, *Early Days at Council Bluffs* (Washington, DC: Press of Byron S. Adams, 1916), 83. See also Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 123, and Nathan P. Dodge, "Early Immigration Through Council Bluffs," *The Annals of Iowa, A Historical Quarterly*, 18 (January, 1932), 173.

11. Anderson, *Desert Saints*, 79.

12. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 124.

13. Walker D. Wyman, "Council Bluffs and the Westward Movement," *Iowa Journal of History*, 47 (April 1949), 103-108.

14. Arrington, *Basin Kingdom*, 79.

15. *The Frontier Guardian*, November 14, 1851, 2. See also Stegner, *Zion*, 210.

16. Edward W. Tullidge, *The History of Salt Lake City and Its Founders* (Salt Lake City: Tullidge, 1900), 81.

17. "Crook's Journal," 53. See also Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 123.

18. Olive Harriet Terry, 1851-1852 unpublished manuscript of her journey, edited by Irva Baldwin Anderson. Manuscript in possession of Irva Anderson. See also Anderson, *Desert Saints*, 45; Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 32; Kate B. Carter, *The Mormons: Their Westward Trek* (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Co., 1960), 9; and *The Frontier Guardian and Iowa Sentinel*, April 15, 1852, 2.

19. "Crook's Journal," 52-53.

20. "The Diary of Thomas Turnbull," *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society Publications, 1914), 158.

21. Dodge, "Early Immigration," 166-167.

22. "Crook's Journal," 53.

23. *The Frontier Guardian and Iowa Sentinel*, 20 May 1852, 2.

24. Robert W. Richmond, "Developments Along the Overland Trail from the Missouri River to Fort Laramie," *Nebraska History*, 33 (December, 1952), 237. See also Robert S. Ellison, *Fort Bridger, Wyoming, A Brief History* (Casper, Wyoming, Historical Landmark Commission of Wyoming, 1931), 6.

25. Mattes, *River Road*, 124-126. See also Margaret Long, *The Oregon Trail* (Denver: W. H. Kistler Stationery Co., 1954), 75.

26. Terry, MS of Journey.

27. Richmond, "Overland Trail," 241.
28. *The Frontier Guardian and Iowa Sentinel*, May 6, 1852, 2. See also Richmond, "Overland Trail," 241-244.
29. "Overland to the Gold Fields of California in 1852: The Journal of John Hawkins Clark," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, 11 (August, 1942), 242-243.
30. Stegner, *Zion*, 209. See also Babbitt, *Council Bluffs*, 87.
31. "Thomas Turnbull," 166.
32. *Ibid.*
33. "Overland to the Gold Fields," 249-250.
34. *The Frontier Guardian and Iowa Sentinel*, Juen 18, 1852, 2.
35. "Memoirs of Alice Parker Isom," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 10 (October, 1942), 56; *The Frontier Guardian and Iowa Sentinel*, June 11, 1852, 2.
36. William Clayton, *The Latter Day Saint Emigrant's Guide* (St. Louis: Chambers & Knapp, 1848), 22; "Overland to the Gold Fields," 245.
37. Taylor, "Mormon Crossing," 329.
38. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 198.
39. "Overland to the Gold Fields," 242.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Taylor, "Mormon Crossing," 329-331.
42. Howard R. Driggs, *Mormon Trail* (New York: American Pioneer Trails Association, 1947), 35.
43. J. W. Gunnison, *The Mormons* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856), 134.
44. Terry, MS of Journey.
45. Carter, *The Mormons*, 10-11. See also "Overland to the Gold Fields," 265-269.
46. "Overland to the Gold Fields," 272. See also Anderson, *Desert Saints*, 95 and Phillip A. M. Taylor, "The Mormon Crossing of the United States, 1840-1870," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 25 (October, 1957), 333-335.
47. Hosea Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*, ed. by Juanita Brooks (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 445. See also Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, 1892), 478-483.
48. Jenson, "Pioneer Companies," 3-4.
49. Babbitt, *Council Bluffs*, 85-89. See also Long, *Oregon Trail*, 75.
50. Charles Dawson, *Pioneer Tales of the Oregon Trail* (Topeka: Crane & Co., 1912), 64.
51. Terry, MS of Journey.
52. Olive Harriet Otto was born in Pennsylvania in 1833.
53. Parshall (Percy) Adam Terry, IV.
54. Olive Harriet Otto Terry's father-in-law.
55. Ezra T. Benson.
56. Percy married a second time before the wagon train reached Utah and a third time later on. In 1859 Olive left Percy and returned to her parents in Iowa with her three children: Parshall Adam V.; J. O. (a boy); and Olive Eugenia. One child, a boy, had died at birth. Olive Terry died on November 18, 1904, at Wheeler's Grove, Pottawatomie County, Iowa.