



MY BEST FOR THE KINGDOM

History
and
Autobiography
of

John Lowe Butler

a
**Mormon
Frontiersman**

WILLIAM G. HARTLEY

In the face of persecution and ridicule, John Lowe Butler and wife Caroline Skeen converted to Mormonism in 1835. The next year, they moved from Kentucky to join the Saints in Missouri, where John became one of a handful of loyal, rough-and-ready men trusted by Church leaders with difficult frontier assignments. As a militia officer and a Danite captain, he came to the defense of the Saints against a Missouri mob at Gallatin and witnessed the fall of Far West. As an ordained bodyguard of Joseph Smith, he rode with a posse from Nauvoo on the trail of the Prophet's kidnappers. In the final days of Nauvoo, he rejoiced with his brethren in the temple where he served as an ordinance worker and guard. He filled four missions to the plains Indians and wintered in vanguard camps of the Mormon exodus. He married eight women and fathered fifteen children by three of them. He died while serving as a pioneer bishop in Spanish Fork, after having "done my best to help roll forth the Kingdom of God."

Facing death, John Lowe Butler penned his autobiography, now preserved in the LDS historical archives. Scholars have used it sparingly, but it is a rich source for numerous events in Mormon history which have not been well understood or researched. *My Best for the Kingdom* is a meticulously researched history based on and including a careful, new transcription of Butler's autobiography. The author, William G. Hartley, draws from contemporary sources as well as published histories to put John's autobiography into the context of the major events in LDS history of which he was a part. The result is new understanding of LDS missionary work in revival-scorched Kentucky in the 1820s and '30s, Church-sanctioned Danite raids in Missouri, Indian missions undertaken from Nauvoo, the early pioneering expeditions led by James Emmett, and George Miller's Ponca

encampment. In Utah, John Lowe Butler's history sheds valuable light on early Spanish Fork history, federal Indian agent Garland Hurt's Utah War activities, and family life amongst nineteenth-century Mormons.

My Best for the Kingdom is an epic story that will add depth and perspective to any previous study of Church history by offering a detailed and satisfying look at the life of a man and family who lived it.

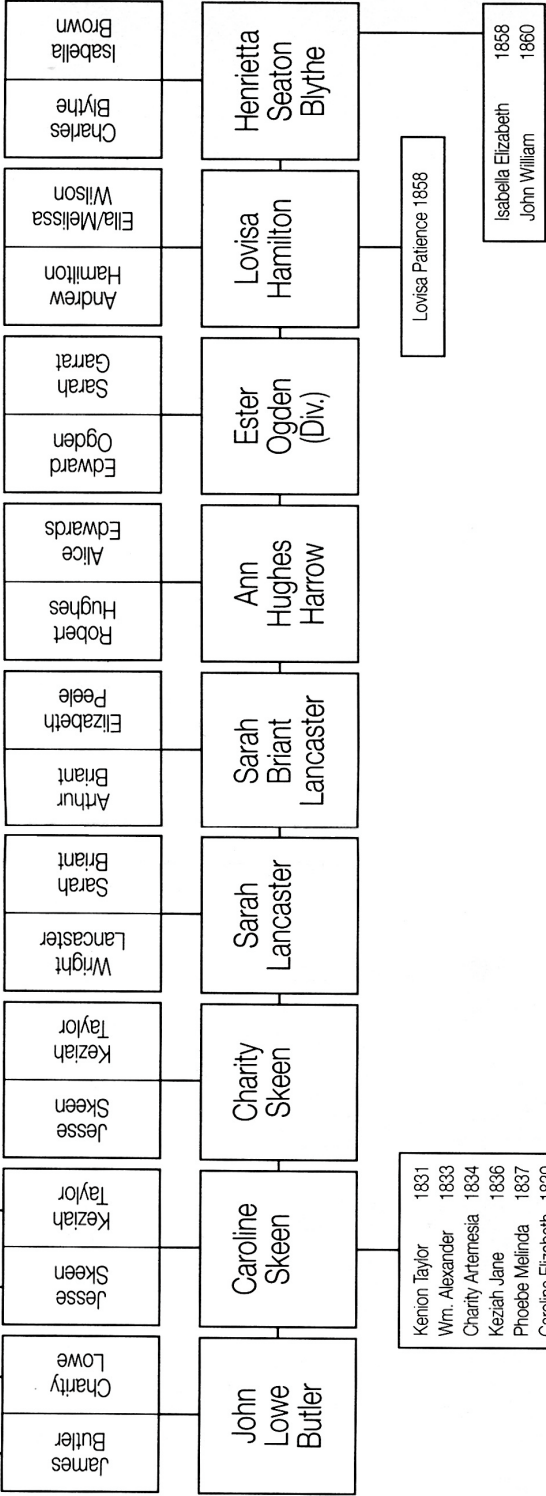
About the Author

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In 1993 Hartley received awards for best article from the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association. As an active Latter-day Saint, he has served as a missionary in New York, a bishop, and a stake high councilor. He and his wife, Linda Perry Hartley, live in Murray, Utah, and are the parents of six children.

Families of John Lowe Butler and his Spouses

William Butler	Phoebe Childress	William Lowe	Margaret Farr
Alexander Skeen	Sarah	Robert Taylor	Ann/Nancy Herring



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Dedicated to Helen Thurber Dalton

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Preface

Early Mormonism badly needed “a few good men” who could handle dangerous, physically strenuous, confrontational, or volatile situations. Husky John Lowe Butler was one of a score of this type who helped the Church, including such better-known figures as Hosea Stout, Howard Egan, Charles C. Rich, John D. Lee, and Porter Rockwell.

Most converts to the young faith, like most Latter-day Saints today, were gentlefolk, decent souls who lacked experience with wilderness survival, or interacting with Native Americans, or police and military duty, or being victimized by armed opponents. Therefore, in strenuous, dangerous, and primitive situations, the church called for assistance from its corps of tougher men. Because of this, John, who converted to Mormonism in 1835, for a quarter-century saw his and his family’s lives constantly interrupted by difficult assignments handed him by the Church’s first two prophets.

In 1838 John whacked for himself his first niche in LDS history with an oak club. At the Gallatin election fight in Missouri that August, John walloped several Missourians who were assaulting Saints trying to vote. John, however, would be bothered if that act alone were all that Saints and descendants today knew of his many labors for his faith. During anti-Mormon turmoil in Missouri, John became a Danite and militiaman defending his people. In Nauvoo Joseph Smith called John to be one of his twelve official bodyguards, an officer position in the Nauvoo Legion. John thereafter filled several Legion assignments. After Joseph Smith’s death, Brigham Young chose John to be one of his bodyguards, and John also helped guard the Nauvoo Temple.

Between 1840 and 1847 he served four special missions among Native Americans, two of which Joseph Smith ordered. Brigham Young sent John to help stabilize James Emmett’s Iowa Expedition in 1844-45. Then, President Young called John to merge the Emmett group into a large contingent of Saints who wintered among Ponca Indians instead of at Winter Quarters.

In Utah Territory John helped the LDS Church claim Green River ferries from mountain men. At Spanish Fork he had Indian Farm responsibilities, made

complex by the Utah War. He was a Utah militia officer. And, rare among Mormonism's corp of frontiersmen, John became an ecclesiastical leader, called by President Young to be a pioneer bishop to unify the Spanish Fork settlement.

Like frontiersmen Hosea Stout and John D. Lee, whose diaries are published, John was a writer. Before he died in 1860 he penned a lengthy autobiography. His record is one of only a few firsthand records written during and about Mormonism's first three decades. John's writings, being recollection, offer more reflection and explanation than do the Stout and Lee diaries. Although John's autobiography has been accessible to scholars for years, too many researchers of pre-1860 Mormonism have not examined it. Those who have used it, often fail to understand some key episodes John discussed.

John's autobiography is in two versions, one short and one long, penned in an old ledger book. The book, preserved in the LDS Historical Department, measures 38 by 16 centimeters. John's short history spans nine pages, his long version ninety-nine pages. The short version is in his handwriting. But the long version, which includes the text of the short version, is in different handwriting, probably that of his wife Caroline. It is dated February 26, 1863, nearly three years after his death. No explanation concerning copyist or contents is given. Internal evidence indicates the copyist, using text John penned elsewhere (which has disappeared), retained his wording, changed some spellings, and added minor punctuation. Whether or not the copyist inserted content material not originally John's cannot be determined; however, word patterns and usage indicate the long version is almost entirely John's words and contents.

In 1904 grandson James Alma Butler donated the ledger book containing the autobiography to the LDS Church Historian's office. Butler descendants and various libraries have typescripts of the autobiography, but versions vary slightly from each other, in part because the original is so difficult to read due to some poor spelling and almost no punctuation. Therefore, in the appendix we provide a new transcription that has been proofread against the original handwritten autobiography. Original wording and spelling are retained, but punctuation and paragraphing are inserted to facilitate reading.

In 1985 the John Lowe Butler Family Organization, through Ross Butler of Ontario, Oregon, decided to produce a John Lowe Butler biography. They contracted with me as Director of Brigham Young University's Family History Research Services Center to write the history. Butler relatives loaned me thick genealogical and historical research files, based upon which I did further research in LDS and other sources. Then, when my book-length manuscript was nearly ready for family publication, we changed plans. My colleagues at the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at BYU agreed with me that

the Butler history and autobiography had such importance for LDS history that it merited scholarly treatment. So, the Butler project became an official Smith Institute venture, assigned to me to upgrade.

For two reasons John's rich and lengthy autobiography does not lend itself well to being edited and published on its own, an approach we considered. First, too many big chunks of John's recollections deal with LDS history events about which solid research and understanding are lacking or inadequate, including the Indian missions, Emmett Expedition, Ponca venture, Utah County's situation during the Utah War, and John's labors as Spanish Fork bishop. New and full historical explanations of those matters were needed before readers could make sense of John's observations. Second, John's record suffers from several knotty chronological tangles and confusions, too complex to explain easily in editorial notes.

Thus, what follows is an in-depth history based extensively on John's own writings. Probably 80 percent of the autobiography is woven into the narrative through quotations, paraphrase, or distillation, clearly identified as coming from John. Most spelling and grammar in the quotations from John's autobiography has been corrected in the text, which is not true of the transcript found in the appendix. In addition, extensive information culled from secondary and primary historical sources is wrapped around and woven into the autobiographical account.

John's autobiography is an important record for pre-1860 LDS history. His account of converting to Mormonism in revival-torn central Kentucky is possibly the best narrative penned by any participant in that tempestuous religious firestorm. John tells about an LDS branch in Kentucky of which the LDS Historical Department is not aware. His stories about the Saints' exodus from Missouri during the winter of 1838-39 are the most extensive available. John's is the only record we have of two Indian missions he and James Emmett attempted before Joseph Smith's death. John's description of Joseph Smith's 1843 kidnapping contains facts not found elsewhere. His writings about the Emmett Iowa expedition to Fort Vermillion, 1844-46, and Bishop Miller's Ponca encampment in 1846-47 are fundamental sources about these misunderstood ventures. Also important is his information about early Spanish Fork, plural marriage, the Mormon Reformation, the Utah War, the role and labors of pioneer bishops, and LDS family life.

I express gratitude to many librarians and consultants who helped with this project, especially those at the LDS Church Historical Department; LDS Family History Library in Salt Lake City; Harold B. Lee Library at BYU; National Archives in Washington, D.C., and its branch in Alexandria, Virginia; Sumner

County (Tennessee) Historical Society; Harrison County (Iowa) Historical Society; state historical societies in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Utah; and public libraries in Franklin, Kentucky; Quincy, Illinois; Hannibal, Kansas City, Uniontown, and St. Joseph, Missouri; and Council Bluffs and Marshalltown, Iowa.

Butler descendants were most helpful. Ross Butler and Helen Thurber Dalton not only provided voluminous research files, genealogies, and books, but they obtained materials from their vast network of relatives. Helen was an incredible sleuth. Karl Butler and Tom Richardson provided proofreading and motivation. Etta Mayberry and LaRae Johnson shared file information. Records provided by Butler relatives are in the Butler Family Archives (designated BFA in source notes) in possession of the Butler Family Organization.

I am grateful to fellow historians, including Smith Institute Director Ronald K. Esplin for letting this become an Institute priority project and Richard Jensen and Ronald Walker for critically reading the manuscript. Howard Christy of BYU University Publications provided critical readings, as did my mentor and model historian, Leonard J. Arrington. James L. Kimball, Jr., of the LDS Historical Department library and historian for Nauvoo Restoration Inc., was an important resource person. Michael S. Riggs did property identifications and deed searches in Missouri. Genealogists Ray Lazenby and Thomas Johnson Krussbek provided genealogical help. Gretchen Sipes of Marshalltown, Iowa, kindly took me to Mormon Ridge and shared her files relating to the “Mystery of Mormon Ridge.” Historians Richard Bennett, David Whittaker, and Stephen LeSueur offered insightful criticism of the parts of this study that I presented as scholarly papers at the Mormon History Association’s conferences in 1991 and 1993.

Smith Institute administrative secretary Marilyn Rish Parks provided proofreading, initial copyediting, and formatting as the manuscript was prepared for publication. Finally, I owe much to students in my Writing Family History courses at BYU whose enthusiasm for their semester projects kept me enthused about this one.

I am responsible for errors of fact or interpretation that might appear, except for any found in the genealogical data, which material came from responsible genealogists in the Butler Family Organization.

INTRODUCTION

A Southern Wedding

At the wedding celebration held in their home, parents of bride Caroline Skeen surprised her with three special gifts. According to family tradition, Jesse and Keziah Skeen gave her an expensive sidesaddle so she could ride horseback in style, like a Southern woman of breeding should. They also presented to her and new son-in-law John Lowe Butler - handsome, tall, and blue-eyed - two of their most expensive presents: two slaves.¹

Wedding festivities centered in the Skeens' "Mansion House," barely on the Tennessee side of the Kentucky border. The date was February 3, 1831 - contemporary with President Andrew Jackson, whose Tennessee mansion, the "Hermitage," stood a short distance south of them. Jesse and Keziah no doubt stretched Southern hospitality as far as proud parents could on this occasion.

The wedding linked two solid Southern families, the Kentucky Butlers and the Tennessee Skeens.² Butler and Skeen homes stood but a few miles apart, separated by gently flowing Drake's Creek and an invisible state border. The groom, twenty-two, and the bride, eighteen, had been close neighbors.

Caroline's parents quickly learned that their new son-in-law was cut from different cloth than were they. Soon after the wedding, John freed the two slaves who had been wedding gifts. The Butlers did not believe in slavery, although they had lived for years among slave owners.³

John's willingness to be guided by personal values, even at the expense of offending new in-laws, was a harbinger of things to come. Within four years, such independence led John and Caroline to cut themselves off from friends and relatives by converting to Mormonism and leaving Kentucky. Instead of adding a new generation to their Southern families, they uprooted and replanted themselves among the Latter-day Saints. For the next quarter-century John and Caroline cast their lot with the Saints in Missouri, Illinois, Sioux Indian country, Nebraska, and finally far away in Utah Territory.

John and Caroline both died in Utah, leaving behind a numerous non-Southern posterity who mourned their passing but saluted their choice as young marrieds to embrace Mormonism and move west to help settle the American frontier.

CHAPTER ONE

Troubled Kentucky Boyhood

As a boy and youth in west-central Kentucky, John Lowe Butler did not know that life would shortchange him. By Bible teaching, John could expect to live three score years and ten. However, during his growing-up years, John fell victim to severe illness and accident such that he was fortunate to even reach adulthood; and he would die at fifty-two after two years of failing health. But if he was shortchanged in years, he was not cheated out of living, and the panorama of his life experiences, which include so many significant events of early LDS Church history, make his story one worthy of note.

From John Lowe Butler's birth until his marriage, poor health was only one of a number of factors that shaped his character, personality, circumstances, and responses to life. That the primary shaping force in his life came from one or both of his parents, James and Charity Lowe Butler, seems certain, though John devotes no serious attention to his father and mother in his autobiography.¹ He did pen many pages about his early years, insightful for what he does say and made curious by what is left out, such as his parents, the family home and property, schooling, or friends. Such matters, apparently, were either too normal and usual or too bothersome for him to want to discuss. Rather, he chose to dwell on a boyhood troubled by health crises and religious turmoil. A careful reading of his record reveals that these influences—parents, health, and religion—together with several others help explain John's decisions, actions, and personality during his adult and Mormon years.

Parents and Siblings

John was born on April 8, 1808, in a section of Warren County, Kentucky which soon became part of a newly created Simpson County. His father, James Butler, about twenty-six years old at the time of John's birth, was from North Carolina. James was part of the third Butler generation descended from an Irish immigrant ancestor.² John's mother was Charity Lowe, twenty-four years old, a North Carolinian by birth.

Census records say that John's father was living in the Drake's Creek area of the county as early as 1800. In 1801, about the time he married Charity Lowe, he became the county's justice of the peace.³ Apparently James and Charity settled on land belonging to her Lowe family along Drake's Creek and became a farm couple.⁴ John's mother gave birth to fourteen children, four of whom were stillborn. John was the fourth child.⁵

<i>Child</i>	<i>Birth</i>	<i>Spouse</i>
William	1802	Beulah Peden
Elizabeth	1804	Sandy Mays; [Mr.] Forsythe
Sarah	1806	Dickson Allen
John Lowe	1808	Caroline Skeen
Thomas	1810	no name
Vincent	(ca) 1812	no name
Lucy Ann	(ca) 1814	Reuben Allred
Edmund Ray	1822	Lydia Thornton
James Morgan	1824	Catherine McColl
Lorenzo Dow	1826	Ann Binnall

As the second son, John became his family's right-hand man after his older brother William married Beulah Peden and moved from home. Even after his own wedding, John stayed on his parents' property and helped them. Simpson County tax records for 1831 and 1833 list him but not his brother William. When father James died in 1835, John, not William, became the legal agent for his mother Charity, and John served as something of a substitute father for his younger brothers and sisters. When he converted to Mormonism, so did his mother. When he decided to leave Kentucky to join the Saints in Missouri, his mother and her minor children went with him.

Time and Place Contexts

John spent his boyhood at a time and locale dynamic in America's history. Kentucky had been a state for sixteen years. John was born two months before

Jefferson Davis and forty miles southeast of his birthplace and ten months before Abraham Lincoln and seventy miles southwest of his birthplace.⁶ When John was two, Henry Clay became one of Kentucky's United States' senators and served for the next four decades.⁷

Before John was four, terrible earthquakes jolted the region. Tremors on December 16, 1811, and January 23 and February 7, 1812, followed by hundreds of aftershocks were collectively called the New Madrid earthquake, named for a town at the epicenter, 200 miles west of the Butler farm. New Madrid tremors were felt as far away as Canada, Boston, and Washington, D.C. Though young at the time, John certainly heard about the cataclysm during his growing up years, particularly the sudden creation of eighteen-mile-long Reelfoot Lake where land sank not far away. This massive quake instilled respect in the entire generation of Kentuckians for the power and surprises of nature.⁸

John was four years old when the War of 1812 broke out, and he was nearly seven when 2500 Kentucky militiamen fought under General Andrew Jackson in the war's final battle at New Orleans. Presidents during his boyhood were James Madison (1809), James Monroe (1817), and John Quincy Adams (1825). However, the Butlers were among the "simple landbound yeomen whose sources of information about the outside world were severely limited."⁹

A Rural Lifestyle

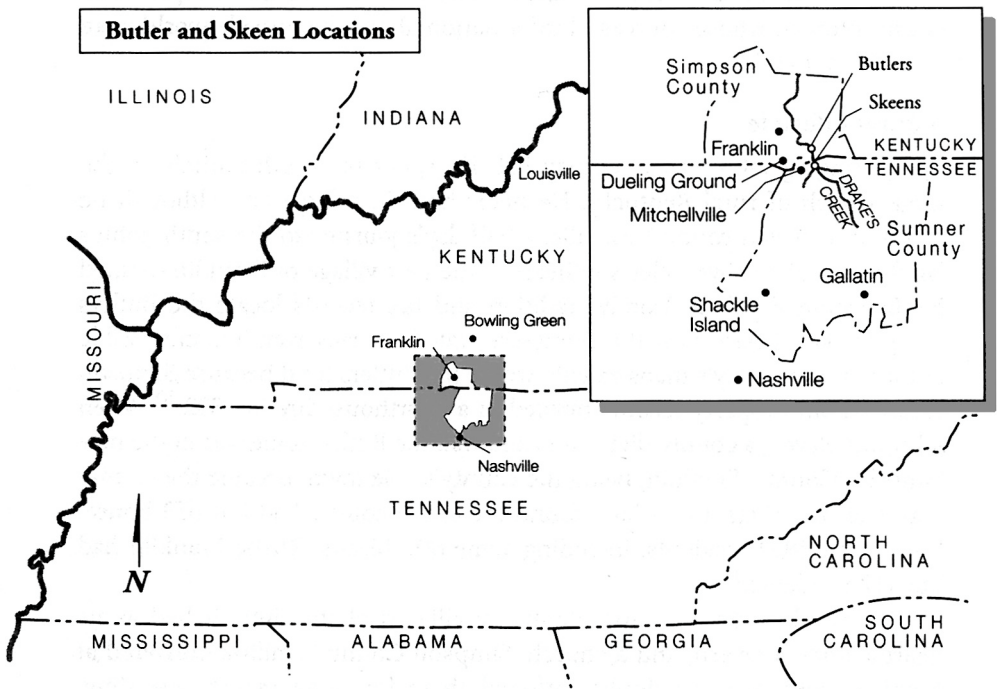
By upbringing John was a country lad. He spent his youth entirely in the same stretch of rural Kentucky. He never lived in a large city, although he could have visited young Nashville, a half-day's journey to the south. John's family lived about five miles southeast of the new village of Franklin—named for Benjamin Franklin. Family tradition and tax records locate the Butlers along Drake's Creek, near the Tennessee state line. However, it is impossible to pinpoint on today's maps exactly where the Butlers lived because Simpson County's old property records burned in a courthouse fire in 1832.¹⁰ When John was eleven, a county division meant that the Butler home was in the new Simpson County. Franklin, being the county's sole town, became the county seat. Census takers a year later found the entire county had but 673 households with 4852 residents, including some 800 blacks. Rustic Franklin had but 112 residents.¹¹

If Franklin was like most Kentucky villages of the time, it had as its heart a store, a tavern, and a church. Simpson County's militia mustered at Franklin, and men no doubt gathered there for pony racing, wrestling, fighting, or "general uproar." In such towns Saturday was court day, when justices of the peace handled legal matters. Saturday was also the day that farmers came to

town to make purchases at the country store. We can assume that Franklin, like other county seats in the region, was the scene of political meetings where rival candidates electioneered, after which liquored-up men often engaged in “an epilogue of oaths, yells, loud blows, & gnashing of teeth.”¹²

Young John, a son of farm parents, spent more time farming than doing anything else. His fingers learned the feel of dirt, mud, weeds, horse sweat, leather saddles, blisters from plowing and chopping, hog-scalding steam, winter ice along Drake Creek’s edge, ashes in hoppers being saved for soap, and the stickiness of wild honey scooped from holes in trees. His skin felt the texture of homemade soft cotton and rough wool clothes and of rubs with pennyroyal mint leaves to ward off mosquitoes. He smelled rich fragrances from hickory-smoked hams and sausages, boiling maple, burning tallow candles, and apple blossoms.

The babblings of meandering Drake’s Creek brightened his boyhood years, as did the crackle of lightning during summer rainstorms, the sloshing of rain water running off the roof into hollow-log cisterns or rain barrels, and dogs



barking during exciting squirrel hunts. His eyes must have scanned white sheets of sun-bleached flax drying in the yard, dried yellow-brown tassels of ripe corn, the orange of sweet potatoes and pumpkins, and brilliant reds and yellows of leaves during autumn. His mouth became accustomed to the taste of plow dust, winter grapes, hickory nuts, maple sugar, and herb teas his mother brewed to cure sicknesses.¹³

Small farm Kentuckians in those days came home to bite into “sizzling meat and oozing yams” for supper.¹⁴ Most farms had a hog, a few chickens, and a small orchard. Corn was the main crop, providing families with hominy, meal, and white mule whiskey.¹⁵ Cooking most often was done at

great yawning fireplaces that would hold a back log as big as a full-grown man. Here at these great, sooty chimneys meals were cooked in iron kettles hanging on blackened cranes, on spits that held large cuts of juice-dripping meat, and in three-legged ovens nearly buried with hot ashes.¹⁶

Simpson County’s tax assessor recorded in 1831 that John’s parents owned 389 acres of third-rate land and five animals.¹⁷ The best county lands were worth \$5 per acre and poor lands \$1.50; theirs was valued at \$3 per acre. That year John, newly married or soon to be, was taxed for two animals valued at \$60. Measured by tax assessments, the Butlers were closer to poor than well-to-do. They owned no slaves. Clearly, the pleasant lifestyle eulogized in composer Stephen Foster’s “My Old Kentucky Home” was not theirs. Of the South’s three tiers of social classes, the Butlers were not in the gentry or middle class group; they were yeoman farmers.¹⁸

John helped his family cultivate lands that were slightly rolling. Clayish soil, productive but not particularly rich, allowed them to grow Indian corn, wheat, and probably some tobacco.¹⁹ In his autobiography John tells of riding a horse, of a barn by the family’s orchard, of horses being fed corn tops, and of working in a clearing. John said the family lived in a house, not a cabin.

Traveler George William Featherstonhaugh passed near the Butlers’ neighborhood in a stagecoach on October 5, 1834. He described what he saw along the way and heard from tavern tipplers while following the old Cumberland Trace from Nashville north to Bowling Green. He was not complimentary. The area, he said, was “uninteresting country” with good secondary soils not as fertile as the lowlands. He saw “tolerably good timber” and “good tobacco and corn growing.” The settlers, he judged, “are so poor and slovenly that, with few exceptions, there is nothing but dirt to be seen in the

taverns.” Local people were “cut off from every source of improvement and seem contented with the comfortless conditions they exist in.”²⁰

David Lewis, a contemporary of John living seven miles to the northwest and who converted to Mormonism when John did, wrote about his own family’s home and farm. David’s account provides a sense of what the Butlers’ circumstances most probably were like:

My father had 400 acres of beautiful land—about 100 acres in a farm, the remainder of his land was timber land, [and] a large two story double house on a publick road three miles east of the Town of Franklin. A beautiful yard surrounded the house about one acre square neatly covered with blue grass . . . [and] mulberry and cherry trees bore splendid fruit. A beautiful orchard on the west . . . joined to the yard. . . . There was apples, the early and late sweet and sour, pears, peaches, plums, persimmons, cherries, and on the farm was the wild cherry black haws [?] mulberry and walnuts.²¹

Mostly, the Lewis family raised corn, David said, but also oats, tobacco, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, beans, peas, cabbage, onions, melons, pumpkins, cotton, flax, and rye. Wheat, he noted, “was the most uncertain crop we tried to raise.” The climate was “very mild and pleasant.” The farmland was “not very rich, it [had] taken [a] great deal of work to cultivate the land. Timber was plenty and good. Range for stock [was] poor, wild game scarce.”²²

Women made their families’ wearing apparel, so they and their children carded and spun cotton and wool. Females handled the washtub, cooking, “and all the common housework,” while boys and men worked in the fields.²³ Parents used superstitions and backwoods tales to instill simple values in their children. David’s mother, for example, while combing his hair said there was a mole on his neck and “that is a sign if you ever steal anything that you will be hung.” This threat scared young David away from stealing.²⁴

John Butler’s rural upbringing resembled David Lewis’s and despite health problems, he learned enough from farmwork so that in adult years he could break untamed land, plow, plant, and harvest. He could ride and drive horses and he was skilled with axes and guns.

John wrote nothing about his schooling. His lengthy autobiography, however, is a testament to his having had adequate schooling or tutoring during his youth. In fact, he himself taught school while in his early twenties. He lived before dictionaries were household items, so he spelled words phonetically: *becaws*, *determind*, *wepon*, *lookd*, *waggan*, and *familey*.²⁵

John Butler felt comfortable away from towns and cities. Not being city bred or city refined, he was blunt and straightforward in his dealings, which sometimes offended the more sophisticated, genteel, and politic urban types.

Being a Southerner

John, of Virginia and North Carolina heritage, grew up within a system of patriarchal, clannish families characteristic of the South. "In Kentucky and her sister states," Southern historian Steven A. Channing observed, "the patriarchal family unit remained the principal instrument for managing the labor of kin and slave. Paternal authority determined what was acceptable and what was deviant behavior."²⁶ Family allegiance, he noted, was paramount.

Marriage ties were as extraordinarily important to the poor as to the wealthy. Both sought to preserve their family security, its property, and its prestige, for the integrity of the clan was the surest guarantee against personal failure and social chaos. That was the democracy of the breakfast table. All had rights, all spoke with self-assurance, but all knew their place within the hierarchy from head to foot, and were ready to fight to defend it.²⁷

As if explaining the hatred John felt from his father-in-law after converting to Mormonism and deciding to move Caroline away from her people, Channing noted that with each family "anything that threatened their clan, or clannishness in general, was to be resisted."²⁸

John, like all Southerners, had to take a stand regarding the South's "peculiar institution" of slavery. Kentucky's geography and agriculture were not conducive to the large-scale plantations found in the deep South, so slave-owning families comprised but a quarter of Kentucky's total population. Nevertheless, "the state's agricultural economy was undeniably dominated by farmers who were slaveholders." Simpson County's population in the antebellum years was close to one-sixth slaves.²⁹

Slave controversies flared during John's youthful, impressionistic years. He was born the year the Kentucky Abolition Society was organized. He was twelve when national politicians bitterly debated the spread of slavery and then approved the Missouri Compromise, which admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. He was fourteen when Denmark Vesey led a futile slave revolt in South Carolina, sending three dozen blacks to the gallows. John passed through boyhood while Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln were boys reacting to slavery, too.

John's autobiography does not discuss his political beliefs, but, being a Kentuckian, he must have imbibed some Southern resentment of the federal government. He knew of the Great Debate of 1830 when Yankee Daniel Webster championed federal authority over the states. In 1832 he heard about South Carolina's Nullification Act, declaring a federal tariff unlawful, and Congress' passing a Force Bill to make the state comply. The states' rights controversy of that generation, a historian reminds, "seems remote to us, but to those who took part and who lived with it, it was of immense importance."³⁰ Certainly John heard strong opinions and legal arguments taking the position that good citizens could challenge government infringements on personal rights. John would apply this reservation against authority personally when the Missouri state militia mistreated him and other Mormons in 1838 and when a federal army marched against Utah Latter-day Saints in 1857.

Violence seemed woven into Southerners' behavior. A bicentennial history of Kentucky says that, to outsiders, pre-Civil War Kentucky society looked like a bundle of conflicting parts: statute law mixed with lynch law, Christian charity with heathen brutality, philanthropy with disregard for human life.³¹ Accounts of early Kentucky tell of widespread profanity, vulgarity, drinking, and fights "in which biting and gouging were essential elements."³²

Dueling was a manifestation of the violence common to the region. Because Tennessee had outlawed dueling, Tennesseans created Linkumpinch, a dueling ground over the state line in Kentucky on the main road from Nashville to Franklin, four miles away from the Butlers' farm. Today a historical marker tells of two famous duels there which John and his neighbors undoubtedly knew and talked about:

NOTED DUELING GROUND. 1819–1827, known as Linkumpinch. Tennesseans fought two famous duels here. Gen. Sam Houston, in Sept. 1826, severely wounded Gen. Wm. White . . . March 1827, attorneys R. M. Brank and C. M. Smith dueled. Brank was killed. Smith disbarred by Tenn. court action which brought end of dueling here.³³

David Lewis, John's contemporary, felt that local people were "generally very kind to each other, except when angry at each other, then they are cruel." He mentioned violence he had seen:

Fighting with knives, dirks, stones and clubs was common in my country, but I never taken a part in no such wickedness. I have often seen several in number on each side fight with these weapons with

intent to kill until the whole would be scared that none was able to do each other harm, some black eyes and other bloody noses, others in gores of blood which was frightful to see.³⁴

When John and Caroline Butler later moved to Missouri, John encountered violence, was not surprised by it, and knew how to handle it. He felt his two-minute election day fight at Gallatin in 1838 was tame when compared with violence back home in Kentucky where, he said, he had witnessed his fellow citizens “fighting through each other for six or eight minutes” with clubs, knives, and brickbats.

Independent-minded Grandfathers

John’s two grandfathers were rebels whose exploits and examples no doubt seemed heroic to young John’s mind. Grandfather William Butler gained fame in his day and since as a leader of the North Carolina Regulators in Orange County, who protested “dishonest sheriffs, excessive taxes, and extortionate fees.” William was among the Regulators who were arrested, freed by outraged citizens, convicted, declared to be outlaws, hunted, fomentors of a riot, and repelled at the Battle of Alamance in May 1771. Britain branded William Butler and the Regulators criminals, but local citizens and later historians called them patriots, much like the Sons of Liberty in Massachusetts. When the War for Independence broke out, William and his brother John fought against the Crown.³⁵

John’s other grandfather, William Lowe, fought in the Revolutionary War for North Carolina and was a religious maverick possessed by a pioneering spirit. After marrying Margaret Farr in 1778, the two wished to change their lives, and they gave themselves to much prayer and Bible reading. She joined the Baptists; he became a Methodist. They moved to South Carolina where he joined the Baptists and was set apart to the ministry. He preached for a few months but then was excluded for heresy, the nature of which was not recorded. After a brief association with the Dunkards, a Baptist sect that practiced triple immersion, he never affiliated again with any denomination. In the spring of 1796 he and Margaret moved to Sumner County, Tennessee. That fall he opened a trail over the ridge into what is now Simpson County to become the first white settler there. He continued to exhort his neighbors and preach his own brand of Christianity but did not baptize or build up any particular church.³⁶

John knew Grandfather Lowe personally, but Grandfather Butler died eighteen years before John was born. However, John’s sense of family and belonging was starched by stories he heard about these two men. Both had dared

to rebel against the status quo, something John would do when he converted to Mormonism, despite the opposition of neighbors and relatives.

Family Respectability

John grew up feeling he came from respectable stock. In 1796 his grandfather and grandmother Lowe were the area's first settlers. Their daughter Charity, who became John's mother, was then about sixteen years old. William Lowe receives county credits for manufacturing the first axe, plow, spinning wheel, and hominy mill, and preaching the first sermon. He also performed the first wedding, which was his daughter Charity's marriage to James Butler on March 2, 1802. John's uncle, John Lowe, was a respected justice of the peace in the Drake's Creek area during the mid-1830s. Grandfather and Grandmother Lowe's children intermarried with Gilliland, Gibson, DeBerry, and Heffington families in the county.

When John was born he represented the third generation of his kin living on family lands by Drake's Creek. He belonged to a moderate-size family network of Lowe grandparents, uncles and aunts on his mother's side, and an uncle and aunt on the Butler side, all of whom were property owners.³⁷

Westward Movement

While John inched toward manhood, the trans-Mississippi West was opening up to settlers. He was born five years after the Louisiana Purchase. Missouri became a state when he was thirteen. The year 1824, when he was sixteen, brought a mass migration from Kentucky to Missouri and Illinois. People "lingered in Kentucky long enough to brood a new generation" then moved on themselves. During the 1820s, fabled frontiersman Daniel Boone moved from Kentucky to Missouri.³⁸ Drucilla Hendricks, a Butler neighbor who converted to Mormonism when John did, said that "in the year 1829 the great hue and cry came from the State of Missouri. It surely was the garden of Eden" in the eyes of her husband's relatives, most of whom moved there.³⁹ When John later moved to Missouri in 1836, it was not a risky decision or unusual, except for his religious motive for relocating.

Health Problems

John reached adulthood against severe odds. About age seven he fell victim to "the inflammatory rheumatics"—apparently rheumatic fever—which passed "from my feet to my finger ends in every joint." Poor health followed. He suffered "an impaston [infection] in [his] leg," and when it began to mend he "took dropsy in [his] left eye." For thirteen days his eye was swollen shut. When he opened it, people said "it looked like a hog's eye after it had been scalded." A

doctor warned that the eye would be difficult to save, but it apparently healed. By age twenty John had suffered “twelve hard attacks of the rheumatics”—probably arthritis—being attacked once and sometimes twice each year “in the spring and fall.” Accidents added to his poor health: “During this time I came near being killed three different times by horses throwing me and once by a large frame cart bed falling on me, which caused the rheumatics to return on me.”⁴⁰

When he was eighteen, pain attacked his left side, and his arm, thigh, and leg “began to shrink and fail [him],” such that he feared he would lose the use of that side altogether. This neuromuscular problem, possibly polio, was unrelated to the rheumatic attacks. “I was so reduced that my mother would carry me from one room to another with ease.”⁴¹ This attack caused him to reflect seriously “about my future existence and I often thought what the Lord wanted of such a being as me upon the earth.” He “desired either to have my health restored and become like other boys at my age or die, for I did not like to live in that way.” But, despite sicknesses, he “grew very fast” late in adolescence. Finally, by age twenty-two, he “was getting better than ever I expected to be. I was able to labor at light work.”

John’s boyhood health problems had four effects on him. First, after being physically hampered for so long, he seemed to relish hard, outdoor work. In many situations as an adult he taxed his physical strength severely. Second, his illnesses made him ponder death and its meaning, causing him to think deeply about religion. Third, by keeping him indoors in need of nursing, his sickness bonded him more closely to his mother than might have happened otherwise. They had much time to talk and to understand each other. Possibly that is why she accepted his conversion to Mormonism and became a convert herself. Finally, the illnesses probably contributed to his early death at age fifty-two.

Physical Size

By age twenty-two John stood six feet tall. About five years later he “took a second growth and grew two inches and a half and grew verry stout indeed, and my health became strong, and I felt like as if I could handle any two men on the earth.” This physical strength, when linked to his independence of mind, religious conversion to Mormonism, and sense of duty, led to his receiving dangerous assignments for his religion.

Religious Turmoil

By age seven, John said, he had often heard his Methodist parents discuss God, sin, and salvation. (In 1826 his parents named a son Lorenzo Dow in honor of

the famed Methodist preacher—as did the parents of Brigham Young.) These discussions, John said, left deep impressions on his mind and soul. John’s family attended church services, but where or how far away is not known. Possibly they dressed up each Sunday, women in bonnets, men with shoes blackened by fat and soot, and rode into Franklin.⁴² More likely, they attended a country church within a mile or two of Drake’s Creek. John tells of attending a Methodist class regularly but mentions no church building. Death hovered so near and so often during John’s boyhood that he frequently had “serious reflections on futurity.” Local revivals inspired or aggravated such ponderings. Bible-shouting preachers’ crusades for souls caused him aching religious anguish which found no ease before he became an adult and married.

When his youth ended, John the adult stepped forward, much conditioned by heredity, upbringing, geography, health, and strong personalities. However, two more major life influences awaited him. One was Caroline Skeen. The other was Mormonism.

CHAPTER TWO

Caroline Skeen of Tennessee

Caroline Skeen, like her husband John Butler, was the offspring of the pioneering generations who settled along Drake's Creek near the Kentucky-Tennessee border. Born on April 15, 1812, in Sumner County, Tennessee, she was the biological and social product of parents who had come from the Carolinas. Caroline's mother Keziah Taylor was part of a Taylor family who had quickly attained prominence in Sumner County. Caroline's father found success also, although he, unlike the Taylors, brought no family network with him. Apparently Caroline's parents did well financially, in part because Caroline's father married into the Taylor family and its real estate.

Taylor Pioneers

Early in the 1790s Keziah's parents, Robert and Nancy Taylor, left Jones County, North Carolina, and claimed sizeable stretches of wilderness land along Drake's Creek.¹ When the Taylors arrived, whites had been settling in the area for a decade, mostly near present-day Nashville, and Indian-white skirmishes were still occurring.² Keziah was the fifth of ten Taylor children, all born in North Carolina. All but two later moved to Sumner County.³ Tennessee was part of North Carolina until Tennessee was granted statehood in 1796, two years before Keziah married Jesse Skeen. Gallatin became the seat of Sumner County, and a courthouse opened there in 1803.⁴ Court records lightly track the Taylors and Skeens, and include Caroline's marriage to John Lowe Butler.⁵

Keziah grew up with a fairly good standard of living that her pioneer parents had managed to establish. An 1801 list of her parents' possessions⁶ shows that, in addition to farm implements—plows, hoes, sickles—the family owned tools to cut trees, hew boards, tap maple trees, tan and craft leather products, make barrels, and do blacksmithing and carpentry work. For hunting they had traps and three guns. Grinding stones turned corn into meal. They had two spinning wheels, five weaving “reeds,” and two churns for butter. Eighteen head of cattle provided meat, milk, leather, and plow-pullers. Sixty hogs provided ham, bacon, and sausage meat. Two mares and four colts were for pulling or riding, although the family had but one saddle, a woman's saddle. Household goods were minimal: a dutch oven, skillet, and four other pots and pans, four beds, five chairs, two chests, one mirror, two cases of knives and forks, eleven pewter plates, fifteen pewter spoons, twelve basins, and three pewter serving dishes. No table or stove is listed. On April 15, 1799, Keziah's father, “sick and weak” at age fifty-five, wrote his will. He bequeathed to his wife “my plantation whereon I now live,” household furniture, “all my money,” and “my stock, cattle and hogs, and horses.” Children received various parcels of land along the creek, except for Keziah and Jesse, who already owned Taylor land, probably received as a gift.⁷

Jesse Skeen

Jesse and Keziah, Caroline's parents, were married in 1798. Jesse, born in 1764 in South Carolina to Alexander and Sarah Skeen, had, like the Taylors, lived in Jones County, North Carolina, before the 1790s.⁸ His Skeen ancestry traces back to the mid-1200s in Scotland.⁹ His grandfather, John Skene,¹⁰ born about 1703 in Charleston, South Carolina, was his first American-born forebear.¹¹ Two years before Jesse and Keziah married, Jesse's mother, Sarah Skeen, filed her will, which shows she was then a widow with few possessions—one hundred acres of land, seven cows, five calves, and a few household items—to leave to her children. Jesse was bequeathed a mere twenty shillings—about one English pound.¹²

Caroline's Family

Keziah was twenty or twenty-one when she married, and Jesse was thirty-three, which suggests this was a second marriage for him. The couple moved onto a parcel of Taylor land by Drake's Creek, farmed it, and in time built a “mansion house” to live in. Between 1801 and 1822 Jesse and Keziah became the parents of ten children, all born in Sumner County, of whom Caroline was the seventh.

<i>Children</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>Spouse</i>
Nancy	1801	1875	William McGlothlin
Sarah	1802	1858	John Groves
Elizabeth	1804	1884	Unmarried
Rachel	1806	1866	Anderson A. Meador
Charity	1808	1854	John Lowe Butler ¹³
Kenion Taylor	1809	1869	Pamela Ann Rollins Lowe
Caroline Farozine	1812	1875	John Lowe Butler
Alexander David	1815	1893	Mary Blevens
John Gilbert	1818	1899	Elizabeth C. Harrold
Mary/Polly	1822	1854	Mr. Bowen

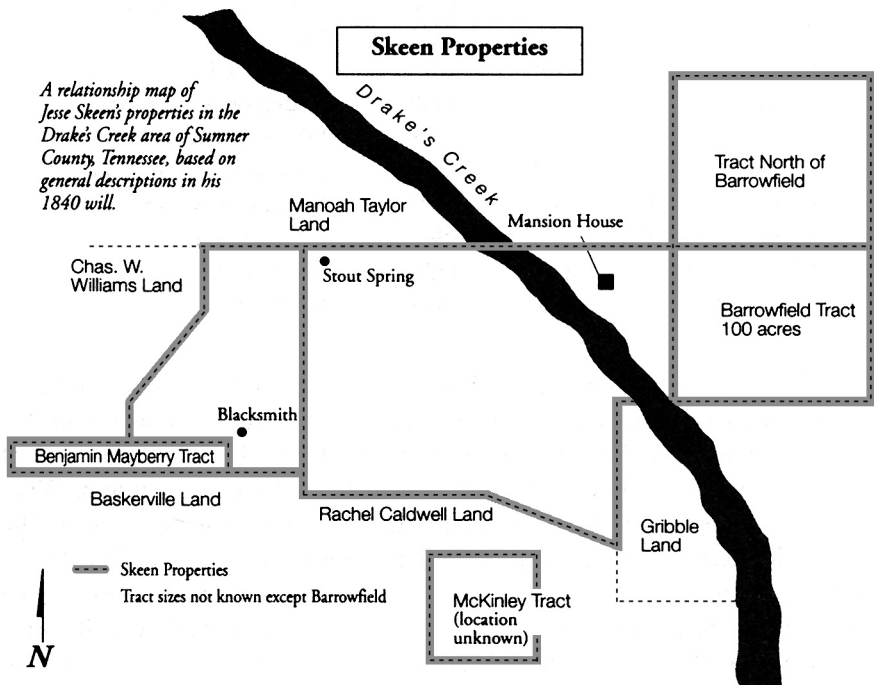
Caroline's sisters Elizabeth, Charity, and Mary (or Polly) were deaf and dumb. In 1830 the county had twenty-four people with this impairment. No evidence exists that the Skeen children attended school or even had a school nearby. Very likely they were taught at home by parents or tutors. What special training, if any, the three deaf daughters received is not known. The year before Caroline married John Butler, she was the only daughter left in the "mansion house" who was not deaf—her three sisters who had no hearing impairment had already married.¹⁴ Her position as a middle child in a household with black house "servants" probably spared her from most of the harder domestic work. A family story says that she never combed her own hair before her marriage—a "Mamma" did it for her.¹⁵

Caroline had reason to feel family pride about her father's and her Taylor relatives' status in the county. Jesse was well regarded, evidenced by his serving as an administrator of dozens of estates.¹⁶ Caroline's uncle Robert Taylor was a prominent cabinetmaker, "master carpenter," millworker, and builder.¹⁷ In the Shackle Island community in the southwest area of the county, three stately homes and one church that he designed and built using slave labor still stand and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: "Old Brick" (1804), the Taylor-Montgomery House (1824), the Old Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1828), and "Graystone" (1830).¹⁸

Caroline, during her young years, interacted with her Skeen siblings and her Taylor uncles, aunts, and cousins. Some of their names were perpetuated in the Butler family as first or middle names of Caroline and John's children and posterity.¹⁹

Small Plantation

As near as can be determined, Caroline's family lived along Drake's Creek about 3.5 miles east-northeast of present-day Mitchellville. They owned land on



both sides of Drake's Creek.²⁰ Taylor Road presently runs across or close to the western border of their lands.²¹ By 1816, Jesse owned 850 acres at "Waters Drake Creek."²² The Skeens' "mansion house" was on the creek's east side.²³ In time Jesse came to own 600 additional acres across the border in Kentucky, near the Butlers, who became his agents, or caretakers, for it.²⁴

The Skeen family's farmlands were originally grasslands, similar to those that the Butlers worked, with scattered stands of oak, hickory, walnut, maple, and other hardwood trees.²⁵ Like other local farmers, the Skeens produced hay for their cattle, corn for livestock and for whiskey stills, and probably cotton and some tobacco, which by 1840 was the county's chief cash crop. The Skeens' goal was to be self-sufficient. Records do not indicate whether they produced any surplus to sell or use for barter. Most county farmers produced their own manufactured goods or patronized small industries located on the larger plantations. The nearest village to Caroline's family was Mitchell's Crossroads,

or Mitchellville, founded about 1820 some three miles west of the Skeens.²⁶ Horse races, weddings, civic holidays, and elections provided social occasions for the Skeens to gather with their neighbors.²⁷

Slave Owners

In 1830 John Butler found, while visiting Caroline, that the Skeen household of twenty-two people included twelve slaves: two males and five females under age ten, and two males and three females between the ages of ten and twenty-four. This meant Caroline's family was not of the yeoman class, like John's parents. Nor were they gentry who owned a large number of slaves. Rather, they were middle-class—those who owned five to fifty slaves.²⁸ Most of Jesse's neighbors owned no slaves, but those who did owned two to four, usually a man and his wife and children. Caroline's older sister Sarah and husband John Groves owned seven. A few white families had more than ten. Slaves comprised one-third of Sumner County's population: 7,257 of the 20,569 residents were slaves.²⁹

It is very likely that John became acquainted with some of the Skeen field slaves or house "servants." How well the Skeens treated their slaves is not known. Throughout the South, cruelty and mistreatment abounded even though slaves were a major investment. Small planters like Jesse usually did not employ overseers to supervise their slaves. Skeen slaves lived either in the "mansion house" or nearby in slave quarters—cabins or simple shacks. Religious owners sometimes let their slaves join in the family's Bible reading and prayers.³⁰

John heard slaveowners, perhaps even Jesse Skeen, defend the "peculiar institution" by claiming that their negroes' lives were easier and more rewarding than those of Irish immigrant laborers or factory hands in Northern States. In the South John and Caroline seldom heard the term *slave*. The word used was *hand* or *servant*. "The master usually referred to the skilled workers among them by trade, as 'my mason,' 'my blacksmith,' 'my carpenter'; and to the group collectively as 'my people,' or 'the negroes,' or 'the force.'"³¹ Jesse Skeen referred to his slaves as "a certain negro girl named Susan," "my negro woman, Sylvia," "my negro man, Jim," "my negro boy, Anthony," or "my negro Pracilla." Regarding "my negro man, Ned," Jesse stipulated that "if he behaves well, he is to remain in the possession of my daughter Elizabeth, and if to the contrary, he is to be sold."³² Assuming average value, Caroline's family bought or bred upwards of \$4,000 worth of slaves, a sizeable investment in a despotic labor system.³³

Jesse's attitudes toward ownership and control as expressed in his will, coupled with his later harshness towards his son-in-law John Butler for

becoming a Mormon, indicate that he would punish any slave who failed to obey him. His slaves were also subject to Tennessee's detailed, restrictive slave code that was in place by 1830.³⁴

Religion

What religious beliefs the Skeens held or what denomination they favored, if any, is not known. Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches grew tremendously during and after revivals fanned the fires of religious sentiment throughout Sumner County in 1800 and 1801, and it became "the cradle of Methodism" in Tennessee. In Caroline's birth year, 1812, prominent Methodist bishop Francis Asbury organized a conference at Fountain Head, ten miles south of the Skeens.³⁵ However, Tennessee and denominational histories identify no congregations as being in the Skeens' neighborhood while Caroline lived there. Locals received some religious fare from itinerant preachers, Methodist circuit riders, and occasional revivals. During the late 1820s Caroline and her family undoubtedly knew about and reacted to the same intense religious warrings that bothered John Butler downstream from them (see chapter 3).

Caroline's uncle Robert Taylor, the builder, was a Presbyterian. He and son Alexander were church elders in the Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which he built.³⁶ Massive maple and cedar trees today densely shade the church's cemetery where headstones mark the graves of Robert and other Taylor kin.³⁷ Caroline's mother died sometime between 1822, when her last child was born, and 1840, when father Jesse's will does not mention her. Jesse died in 1842. Apparently neither was buried in a church cemetery.³⁸

When Caroline Skeen and John Butler married, they started in on what should have been a Southern family lifestyle similar to that of their parents and married siblings. Caroline's upbringing pointed her towards becoming a Southern lady on a substantial farm, with or without slaves. But when they became Latter-day Saints, their life course changed radically. Caroline's conversion so horrified Jesse Skeen that it pounded a permanent wedge between father and daughter. Converting, too, caused her to sacrifice some finer things of life she could have enjoyed near Drake's Creek within her family network. When her father died six years later, his will bequeathed property and slaves to his children but nothing to Caroline.³⁹

Because of their conversion, Caroline and John, children of pioneer families, would find themselves in wilderness situations where they had to learn how to survive and pioneer—much like their Butler, Lowe, Taylor, and Skeen grandparents and parents had already done.

CHAPTER THREE

Religious Conversion

John passed through emotional hell while trying to find spiritual heaven. His autobiography describes in detail his religious wrestlings during his early years and paints a revealing picture of religious confrontations and denominational battles in his region.¹ His descriptions seem exaggerated, but they are not; they fit well with what historians have discovered about the period. “Never was there a time when religious controversy caused greater and more unrelenting excitement on this continent than was manifest in Kentucky during the years 1829 and 1830,” one historian concluded.

The contest was civil war. The contending parties were all members of the same churches and associations. The strife pervaded every department of society. The mad spirit of the hour entered the council chamber, pervaded the worshipping assembly and invaded the sacred precincts of the hearthstone and family altar. Every form of public worship became a subject of wrangling and debate.²

John’s discussion is one of the fullest first-person accounts by someone caught up in that religious eruption. His account also ranks as one of the most detailed and revealing yet found concerning the conversion process among Mormonism’s first generation.

Campbellite Controversies

John’s becoming a Latter-day Saint was due in good measure to religious fires Alexander Campbell ignited during the 1820s. By 1823 Reverend Campbell and

his ‘schismatics’ were stirring up hot debates in southern Kentucky about Christian missions, Bible societies, theological education, creeds, confessions of faith, paid clergy, associational constitutions, and church covenants.³ Campbell’s crusade spawned an “extensive revival” which produced some 15,000 baptisms. But the attacks and counter-preaching by denominations seeking prominence produced “general confusion, approaching anarchy” and engendered “the bitterest feelings of which Christians are capable.” Even when the revival ended in 1830, confusion and irritation continued for seven years.⁴

Anguish of Soul

John said he was raised as a Methodist. In 1828, when he was twenty, “there was a great revival among the different sects of all denominations.” This was, he said, “as great an excitement as I ever saw.” He and his friends went to the preachings “and tried to learn the ways of the Lord.” He sought but could not find answers he needed. He went to a Methodist camp meeting determined that “if there was such a thing as religion I would seek after it and get it if I could.” During several days of revivals his friends “got religion” and professed a remission of their sins. They urged him to “go to the mourner’s bench,” but he refused. He wanted to find religion personally, not publicly, “and keep it as my own property letting no one know it.”

After one meeting John and his friends started home, “all rejoicing but myself.” They passed the house where three of the boys lived, and the family “was rejoicing” with “a shout almost equal to the camp meeting.” This made John feel worse—because they were so happy and he “could not feel so.” He waited outside, then “concluded to stiffen myself up and keep them from knowing there was anything the matter with me.” He entered the house amid the shouting. But when walking across the room “there was a power came on me that threw me to the ground, and every nerve in me seemed to be numb, and my hands cramped, and the first thing I knew I cried for the Lord to have mercy upon me.” This upset John because others then knew he was seeking religion. “I lay there for six hours,” he said, “but I did not think it more than one.” Finally the numbness left and feeling returned, and with it returned his discouragement about not finding God.

He attended more church meetings and struggled in his soul over whether or not to answer the preacher’s “call for mourners” for whose conversion the congregation could pray. To go up to the mourner’s bench, he felt, would do him no personal good but it might cause someone else to go forward for whom it would be good. “I continued going for some time until I really thought that it

was a sin and a shame for such a one as I to ask them to pray for me. I stopped going to the mourner's bench, but continued to go to meetings."

At one Sunday class meeting he "felt awful and had for some time." The class leader discovered how troubled he was and "tried to encourage me all he could but to no purpose." John sat there and pondered his condition. "I thought I could see every sin I ever committed" and felt a sinking feeling. With all his soul he called upon God "to forgive me a sinner and all of an instant the burden left me." He felt like rejoicing but then a "voice" whispered to him: "You have yet to preach the Gospel to the world." That thought "struck a damper on my feelings." Yet his previous heavy burden seemed lifted so he "that day gave my hand to the Methodists" but only "on trial." He then began to search the scriptures for himself, which moved him away from Methodism. He came to believe that "baptism by immersion was right," which made him wonder which church "to join permanently." The Methodists wanted him to stay. So did his Methodist parents because "it looked well for all the same family to go to the same church." But "baptism by immersion seemed right to me though I had been christened when a child, and the Methodist[s] would not baptize the second time."

After a few months, the revivals "passed over" and "the different sects began to contend about dividing the converts." They "contended about their authority" and "the true order of the Church." David Lewis, John's contemporary who also became a Mormon about the same time John did, said of this period: "[T]here was Methodist Baptist Presbyterians and Universalians or Dunkards, and they disagreed about the scriptures."⁵ John listened to all the claims, read the scriptures, and "prayed most fervently to know the right way," but "so much division and strife" only troubled him more:

One would rise up and say they was called of God to preach the Gospel and point out his tenets, saying "this is the way, walk in it." Another would rise, saying he was called of God and this is the way, &c., and so on through them all. All pointing different ways.

This competition made him think "more seriously" and search deeper in the scriptures and pray "to know the right way." He felt darkness. The "voice that spoke to me when in the class meeting" told him to preach, but "I could not think of doing it, for I saw clear the one who was best read and the best orator could whip out the rest, and then some one else would come along and put him down, & so it went on, all in confusion. I said in my heart it could not be of God." He vowed that "when I could come to know the true order I would stand up for it, and even lay down my life if necessary" for the truth. "Singular solemn feelings" sometimes troubled him so badly that he could not labor. He could free

his spirit only by talking religion with anyone who would listen. At some point he began to feel “there was something in the East that I was looking for.”

Rebellion and Resolution

John interrupted his recollections at this point to note that he married Caroline Farozine Skeen on February 3, 1831. Then he resumed his religious account. A Baptist told John that unless he preached, as the Spirit had told him to do, “the Lord would chastise me till I would obey.” But John refused to preach “Predestination doctrine,”⁶ although he still favored baptism by immersion. His father, anxious for him to be a Methodist, “went fifteen or twenty miles to get a Methodist Priest who would immerse some five or six that desired it.” John was baptized. But local Methodists who watched the ceremony “made all kinds of fun and game of us possible.” To see professing Christians make light of God’s commandments hurt John’s feelings so much that he “concluded that I would not live with a people that would do so.” So, he “went to the baptists and was baptized again, thought he told them that he did not believe a word of their “Predestination Doctrine.”

Unfortunately, after being immersed by both Methodists and Baptists, John “still felt no better in spirits.” Baptists insisted he had been called to go out preaching, but he did not believe in their doctrines. In his heart he “felt all the time that I was willing to stand for the truth if I could find it.” He continued to seek and pray. He “found many things in the Scriptures that proved a true order anciently, Apostles, the various gifts, &c, but I could not connect anything together to satisfy my mind, and it all looked like a mess of confusion.” He was so troubled that he worked “but little,” feeling he could not try to gain the world while losing his soul.

In August of 1832 his mind was so bothered that he rode out to talk to a Baptist. Receiving chastisement instead of consolation, he rode back home “rebellious.” He decided to stop going to meetings, because they were “all contention and nothing that I could depend upon,” and to quit reading the Bible, because “I could not comprehend it.” Likewise, he rebelled against praying because he could not get answers. “If he would not answer me when I prayed, I would quit praying to him.” John decided he would be as “independent as God” and would halt his religious quest. At home he told Caroline of his decisions, which “hurt her feelings very much.” He headed to the barn in the orchard to put his horse away. There he noticed severe damage to trees and fruit done by a wind storm. Did God cause that damage just to punish him? The thought made him even angrier.

I stood up looking towards the heavens saying I would not preach such stuff as my Baptist brethren told me I would have to preach. And if he thought he would make me to try it and I would quit praying to him, for he would not answer me and I would be as independent as he.

While in the act of criticizing heaven, he saw several lightning flashes. "I know you can strike me dead with lightning," he yelled heavenward, "but pop away if you wish for I will neither preach, pray, go to meeting, nor read the Scripture any more." He felt, he said, "as though I was seven or eight feet high."

But John's debate with God continued. John fetched corn tops for his horse and started to put fodder in the rack when he heard a voice saying to him, "I will set on you a refiner's fire." John turned towards the voice but saw no one. He searched the barn but found nobody. "I certainly thought that some one spoke to me for the voice was so audible, but yet, I still heard no one, neither saw I anyone." This experience set him "to thinking of what I had been doing. I had been defying God." He returned to the house, told Caroline what had happened, and decided to reread what Malachi wrote about "refiner's fire" in the Old Testament. "I read it through twice and closed the book with a determination never to open it again, but made up my mind to go once more and pray, and it for the last time."

He walked towards "a place in the field where I often went to pray." About fifty steps from the house "my whole mental powers seemed to be drawn out to God to know the truth, and the true order of his Kingdom, and if I could only know that, I would do anything even to the laying down of my life if necessary." Again a voice spoke to him, saying, "stand still and see the salvation of God and that will be truth." That instant "a light shone round me. I was filled with the Spirit of the Lord and saw clearly that God would save all the workmanship of his hands, and truth would stand or be set up in our midst and it will not need propping up as the sects of the day had continued to do." From that moment he began "to look for something to come forth different to what we then had in any church. I often told my brethren that the truth would stand alone and might be told by an illiterate man. It could not be put down." Content at last that truth would find him, he went to church meetings again. "They would call upon me to speak, and sometimes I would be so filled with the spirit that I did not know what I did say, but those that heard me said that it was a warning to repent."

Family Death and Births

John's uncertainties about religion were not eased by the death of his father James, who died in 1834 or early 1835 in his mid-fifties. County tax records for

1835 list James as “deceased” and son John as the executor. John is also recognized there as an agent for Jesse Skeen, his father-in-law, and for Vincent Butler, John’s twenty-three-year-old brother—Vincent either lived out of the county or was not competent to act for himself.⁷

John and Caroline Butler had also started having children. On November 17, 1831, Caroline gave birth to a their firstborn, a son she named Kenion Taylor after her brother. On April 20, 1833, William Alexander was born, but he lived only four months. On June 13, 1834, Charity Artemesia was born. John, to help provide for the family, taught school because he was “unable to do much hard work, being very sickly from my boyhood, suffering very much from the rheumatics.”

Mormon Missionaries

By 1833 Simpson County had six Baptist, two Presbyterian, and two Methodist churches and a “Big Springs” church.⁸ John continued to attend Baptist meetings “but gained nothing by it, for the Spirit of the Lord was not there and where the Spirit of the Lord is not there is little to be learned.” During a church meeting on March 1, 1835, word came that two Mormon elders would preach that evening at the home of John’s uncle, John Lowe. John decided to go and hear the strangers preach, prompting his Baptist friends to send two of their members along to “protect” him.

Simpson County people knew little about Mormonism before these elders arrived. It was a new faith, less than five years old. Adherents, mostly converts of New England background, had gathered together in Kirtland, Ohio, near Cleveland, and on the Missouri frontier. Believers trusted in the revelations which came through the church’s young founder, Joseph Smith, who was not quite three years older than John. Converts became missionaries who won more converts, and by 1835 the fledgling faith had perhaps 4000 to 6000 adherents. They were called Mormons or Mormonites or Latter-day Saints.⁹

At the meeting, sitting between his Baptist escorts, John expected the elders to preach from the Mormon “golden bible.” They did not. “To my astonishment they commenced preaching the first principles as set down in the New Testament.” John “knew every word they said to be truth for I had the testimony of it.” They answered questions he asked. John’s protectors saw how “taken up” he was with the elders’ message and feared he would convert.

The two elders were James Emmett and Peter Dustin.¹⁰ Elder Emmett, five years older than John, was a fellow Kentuckian born in Boone County on February 22, 1803. He and his wife, Phoebe, had lived in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois before 1831. Emmett was baptized a Mormon by Lyman Wight in

1831 and labored as an elder in Missouri from 1832-1834. Peter Dustin was in his fifties, born in 1781 at Grafton, New Hampshire. Like Emmett, Dustin had been in Missouri as early as 1832. On September 10, 1834, Dustin substituted for Elder Orson Pratt as a member of the Missouri High Council. Two months later, he applied for permission to go on a preaching mission, as did James Emmett, to serve another mission. The council authorized both men to be missionaries and sent them out together.¹¹

John invited the elders to hold meetings in his home if they wished. "I then started for home thinking and weighing over in my mind the doctrine and principles that had been held forth that evening." He said that "my mind was lit up more than it had ever been before and I could begin to see clearly the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." When he reached home his mother, Charity, who was staying with them, asked what he thought of the Mormons. He said they either were preaching the everlasting Gospel or were "the greatest impostors that I had ever seen or heard." She chided him about flitting from the Methodists to the Baptists and now being drawn towards the Mormons.

The next day he "started to work in my clearing," but had not walked a hundred yards from the house when "the same feelings of rebelliousness came over me." He turned back to the house, opened his Bible, and prayed for "an understanding heart." He felt Mormonism was "the nearest right of anything I had heard yet" and that his wait for truth was ending. Feeling the need to learn more about Mormonism, he again listened to the elders preach. Caroline was with him.

They preached about the order of the Kingdom and I had never heard anything so plain in all my life before. Any child could understand it all. It was just the thing that I had been hankering after, and now I felt to rejoice and was perfectly satisfied they were sent of God as the Saints of old. I went home thanking my Heavenly Father for the blessings that He had bestowed upon me from time to time. And I felt to go forth and obey His commandments.

He asked Caroline what she felt about the elders' message. "She said she thought they were men of God, and that it was the only true Church of God and the only way to be saved." The next day John reclined on his bed to ponder his long religious quest and to contemplate what the voice meant which had told him "to stand still" and await "the salvation of God." Suddenly the voice came to him again, saying, "this is truth that you have been hearing, now choose or refuse."

He knew that to convert would bring ridicule upon him and Caroline. “Now I was at a standstill to know what I should do. I saw the sacrifice I had to make in losing my good name, and also what little property I had, that it would go too if I joined these Mormons.” He believed that the elders were sent by God. “What could I do? I had promised the Lord that I would serve and obey him and even lay down my life for the Gospel[‘s] sake if necessary, and what was my property against my life? Why nothing at all, and if I lost my good name it would be to gain a better one.” He covenanted with God “to obey the first chance.” He felt good. He rejoiced. He “then felt the spirit of God rest down upon me with this testimony that it was right.”

Baptisms

The next day, March 9, 1835, eight days after the elders’ first sermon, John and Caroline went to a nearby pond or stream, perhaps Drake’s Creek. About 2:00 P.M. Elder Emmett led them into the water and baptized them. Several others were baptized that day, and even more during the following weeks. Mother Charity’s sister, Patsy Ann Beezley Lowe DeBerry, who was John’s age, was baptized on March 10. The elders scheduled a confirmation meeting at the Butlers’ home for two days later. There, the elders confirmed nine people, John noted, “and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us. Five spoke in new tongues, myself being one of the number.” In the midst of this conversion experience, John lost his grandfather, William Lowe, the man who himself had been a religious maverick. William died on March 17.

In Simpson County, Elders Emmett and Dustin baptized twenty-two converts and then organized a branch.¹² David Lewis and wife Duritha, married four months, were baptized and confirmed by the two elders on March 24. The elders ordained Benjamin Lewis, David’s brother, an elder and John Butler a teacher.¹³ Once the branch was created, John recalled, “persecution raged so that we had to run the Elders off and had to do the best we could, but the Lord was with us and watched over His little flock, and built us up in the Kingdom of God.”

When John’s mother heard the elders had gone, she cried. “Oh what a fool have I been,” she lamented, “to have heard the Gospel for two weeks and then to let the Elders go and leave me unbaptized.” (Why branch president Lewis could not baptize her is not recorded.) Meanwhile, one of Caroline’s deaf sisters, Charity Skeen, paid Caroline a visit in order to learn what the fuss was about. The sisters communicated by gestures and perhaps by writing. “How is it,” Charity asked, “that the Methodist and the Baptist and all other denominations could preach and no one would say anything to them, while if the Mormons preached they were hooted at, laughed at, fun made of them by everybody, and

threatened to be murdered by some and persecuted by all?" Caroline answered that the elders preached "the true and everlasting Gospel" and that she and John had been baptized. When Caroline taught her what the elders had preached, Charity desired baptism, too. But Caroline warned against it because "her Father was very much opposed to Mormonism."

The elders returned, John said, because "they knew that they had something to do." When they found Charity Butler and Charity Skeen ready for baptism, they knew why they had been prompted to return. The elders "baptized them, blessed them and departed on their journey rejoicing." John's sister Lucy and younger brothers Edmund, James, and Lorenzo Dow were also baptized.

Little did Elder Emmett or the Butlers realize how much and how often their lives would intertwine during the next decade.

Hendricks Neighbors

Elders Emmett and Dustin also converted James and Drusilla Hendricks, a Baptist couple the same ages as John and Caroline, who lived near the Butlers.¹⁴ When the Hendrickses first heard the elders preach, Drusilla believed immediately, but James spent more than a month debating in his mind for and against Mormonism. In the meantime, one of Drusilla's sisters and some neighbors were baptized, and Drusilla wanted to be. "When I went to the Baptist church every one looked down on me as though I had committed the unpardonable sin. They prayed and preached about us going to the Mormon meetings." She said that the elders made the Bible "a new book to me," "an unsealed book," and they told her "what to do to be saved and it was so plain and simple. I never was so happy in my life."¹⁵

Drusilla and James went to a Mormon baptism. "When the baptizing was over," she said, "we all sat down on the ground, the Elder in the midst, while he preached and explained the scriptures." This had a profound impact upon James, who spent several days deciding what to do. Sensing James might be baptized, his brother-in-law sent him word that "if he offered himself for baptism, they would get two hundred men and tie him and the Elder to trees and give them two hundred lashes each."¹⁶ The elders had appointed another meeting at the Butlers', Drusilla said, "which was to be their last meeting in this neighborhood." Meanwhile, people were trying to raise a mob to drive the elders off. The Hendrickses took a change of clothing to the Butlers' and found "the house and yard was full of people." At the close of the services, one of the missionaries asked if any wished to be baptized. James and Drusilla came forward. "We went to the water and the people all followed" to witness the ordinance.¹⁷

The Hendrickses were in attendance when the unnamed branch was organized. Everyone, Drusilla said, “felt grieved to part with the elders.” It was a memorable farewell.

The privilege was given to any who desired to speak. Some spoke in tongues while others interpreted what they said. Others spoke by the spirit of God in their own tongue and we all praised God for we had all drank of the same spirit. We loved one another and met together often and had good meetings and it was now that persecutions began.

James Hendricks’s father and some of his family were living in Missouri. One of James’s brothers wrote to ask them about the character of Mormons there. Saints had settled in 1831 in Jackson County, Missouri, but by 1833 local vigilantes had driven them out of the county. James’s brother received back letters, apparently negative, from county authorities and signed by about twenty citizens. James borrowed the letters and invited “Brother Butler” to his house to hear them read. The letters, Drusilla said, “did not prove anything to us.”¹⁸

That night, neighbors threw rocks at Hendrickses’ home, put pig troughs on top of the gates, propped the wagon up with the tongue sticking into the air, stood “every trumpery” [useless articles and junk] on end, and piled rocks in front of the gate. This so worried James that he purchased a gun, but rather than using it he sought legal protection. The Hendrickses “got proof against the mob and had them arrested and made them pay for their mischief.” James and Drusilla’s relatives snubbed them. “We had no society except the few Saints in the Branch,” Drusilla said. Branch members buoyed each other up, she said, and “we were happy though high and low scoffed at us.”¹⁹

Uncle John’s Protection

Caroline’s father Jesse Skeen bitterly opposed John and Caroline’s conversion to Mormonism. He was then seventy years old, intolerant, and vengeful. After visiting the Butler home while the elders were staying there overnight, probably after a preaching meeting, Jesse spread falsehoods about them to rouse the people. He told whomever he met that John, Caroline, John’s sister Lucy, and the elders “all slept together in one bed on the floor.” Locals believed Jesse’s tale because he had always been “a very truthful man.” John’s Uncle John Lowe was a justice of the peace. Smelling a bad rumor, he checked the facts and then made Jesse sign a “lie-bill” or confession with his own hand.

But Jesse, not to be suppressed, issued threats against the elders’ lives. Family tradition tells of one of Jesse’s slaves who secretly came to John and

Caroline in the night to warn them. Hurrying to cover the miles between the houses, he arrived almost out of breath. “Massa angry,” he told Caroline, “he’s been melting lead, running it into the bullet molds all evening, making bullets to kill the Mormon elders.” Caroline awakened John and the elders. The three men hurriedly dressed, went to the barn, saddled three horses, and rode away before daylight. Caroline gave the slave a skillet cake to eat on the way home. He hurried back to his home, arriving undetected before sunrise. Caroline slept but little after the slave left, fearing what her own father might do. But nothing happened.²⁰ The two elders slowly made their way to Kirtland, Ohio, the Church’s headquarters, by the last week in May. Elder Dustin left from there two weeks later to fill a mission to Upper Canada.²¹

John recollected that soon after the elders left, “rowdies” decided to block a road leading to the Butlers’ house. They dragged down a pile of logs and blocked the road so no one could pass except on foot. Justice of the Peace Lowe heard about the vandalism, visited the spot, saw that the story was true, and walked to the Butlers’ home. He told them to do nothing except to wait until the vandals boasted about their deed, incriminating themselves. At a public meeting two weeks later, Mr. Lowe overheard some men bragging about blocking the “Mormon road.” So he challenged them. “Now you had better go back and replace every log where you got them from and if you do not I shall take care to put a heavy fine upon you.” The next day, John noted, about a dozen men worked nearly a full day clearing the road.

John said that a store belonging to John Finn in Franklin, five miles from his home, caught fire and burned down and that people accused John of setting the fire. Several other incidents occurred, John said, that were “all lain upon the back of John L. Butler.” A man named John Mitchell threw rocks at John and another Mormon and then bragged about almost killing some Mormons. Justice Lowe confronted Mitchell, who hung his head and confessed his wrongdoing. “I am glad you owned up to it,” the officer said, for “I should have fined you very heavy had you not been sorry for what you had done.”

John respected his uncle, John Lowe. “The Judge was a first rate good man,” John credited. “He did not believe in Mormonism, but he believed in folks having their rights. He was a good Republican”—meaning a believer in the rights of the people.

Moving to Missouri

Despite some local unfriendliness, John said, the new Saints “enjoyed ourselves well” that first year. Meanwhile, the Butlers “closed up our business” and made plans to move to the Latter-day Saint settlements in Missouri that LDS leaders

wanted built up. During much of 1835 and early 1836, John said he “was selling off my farm, houses and everything that I could not take with us.” Caroline gave birth to daughter Keziah Jane on February 25, 1836, two months before the family uprooted. Like the Butlers, the Hendrickses “sold out during the winter, settled all our finances ready to start for Missouri in the spring.”²²

Caroline’s father continued in his bitter feelings against her and John “and tried to do us all the harm he could.” About a month before the Butlers departed, Jesse three times sent threats that he would shoot John if he tried to leave. “I sent word back to him,” John said, “that I had a good rifle and could shoot as good as he could and if he came to my house when I was going to start, or before, I would shoot him first if I could.”

Peacemaker John Lowe visited the Butlers a day before their departure. “Bring me John’s rifle quick,” he called to Caroline, “there is a flock of turkeys and I want to kill one.” He said he would bring the gun back directly. When John arrived home he could not find his rifle. Caroline told him his Uncle John had it. “Now,” John said, “suppose the old man [Jesse] should come to kill me, I should have no weapon to defend myself with at all, and that will be a good go.” “Do you think that he will come?” she asked. John said he could not tell. When they started on their journey, they passed by Uncle John’s property. He came out to bid them good-bye and handed his nephew his rifle, still loaded. “He only wanted to get it out of my possession into his own, for, said he, ‘John, I should not like to see you kill the old man.’”²³

According to Drusilla Hendricks, the cluster of Drake’s Creek Mormons began their journey from Simpson County on May 1, 1836— John recalled that they left in April. In the company were the Hendrickses, the Thompson Kimball family, and the Butler families. Branch president Benjamin Lewis emigrated separately, spending time on the way in Illinois where he converted his brother, Tarleton Lewis. In the Butler contingent were John, twenty-eight, Caroline, twenty-four, children Kenion, five, Charity, almost two, and infant Keziah Jane. Also traveling with them was John’s mother, fifty-four, his sister Lucy Ann, twenty-one, and his brothers Edmund, fourteen, James, twelve, and Lorenzo Dow, eleven. John’s aunt, Patsy Lowe DeBerry, did not go along, nor did Caroline’s deaf sister Charity. John was fortunate to be taking his mother and younger siblings along; Caroline had to forsake her entire family network.²⁴

The company’s well-loaded wagons rolled northwestward “without much trouble,” Drusilla said. They crossed the Ohio River and moved across southern Illinois, following dirt roads and highways, and trying each evening to camp at spots which had water and feed for their teams. Occasionally they stopped at roadside inns or in towns for food and rest. They stopped at “Knight Prairie”

where the men went to town, found where to buy cattle, and located some Latter-day Saints who were “as glad as we,” Drusilla said, to meet each other. Two couples named Clark and Lane “came back with our men and stayed two nights.” The co-believers “sang, prayed, and praised God for the light we had received.” Moving on, the company stopped at a stream well populated with fish, staying just long enough to “lay in a supply.” After a month of traveling and stopping, the company crossed the Mississippi River on a ferryboat. Then they entered the Missouri prairielands, bound for the northwestern corner of that slave state. They arrived just when the hot, humid, summer season was about to begin.²⁵

Regarding his family’s trek to Missouri, John wrote just a simple summary:

We bid our friends good bye, and started on our journey. It was about the first of April [May]. We had three hundred miles to go before we reached Missouri. We traveled with ox teams. We had one yoke of cattle give out, and we had to get another yoke. We had pretty good travelling considering.

Their destination was Clay County, on the north side of the Missouri River across from Independence. There the Saints had stopped temporarily after being forced from Jackson County. The new headquarters for Missouri Mormons was at the village of Liberty, in Clay County. Nearing the end of their trek, the Butlers had to wonder what life would be like in a society of Latter-day Saints. They hoped, certainly, to meet the Prophet when he visited Missouri. They hoped their Southern children would be treated well by Yankee Mormons from northern states. They knew they had to figure out quickly where they could obtain a house, land to farm, and pastures for animals. They conserved their money and supplies to make them last until John could find a farm. Would they be expected to consecrate their belongings, as Saints in Missouri had done before? They expected to receive some rude treatment, even persecution, by some Missourians.

As newcomers, they had plenty to hope for, and plenty to fear. Two years would leave more fears than hopes fulfilled.

CHAPTER FOUR

Northern Missouri Pioneers

Bad news greeted the Butlers almost as soon as their Kentucky wagon halted in Clay County, Missouri. On June 29, 1836, local residents met at the county courthouse in Liberty and passed a resolution demanding that the Mormons leave the county. Clay County had received the Saints forced from Jackson County in 1833 with the understanding that their stay would be temporary. Church leaders accepted the request and instructed the Saints to prepare to vacate the county by summer's end.¹ Hearing this, the newly-arrived Butlers had every reason to move on and seek farmland elsewhere. However, they were now part of a community of Latter-day Saints where individual needs were subordinate to the group's best interests. Church leaders, not John and Caroline, would decide where they should relocate. So, the Butlers squatted or rented until August, awaiting directions. There is indication that they bought property in Ray County, by the Clay County border, but did not move there.²

The Butlers became acquainted with some of the Latter-day Saints living in temporary shelters or renting from locals,³ as they mingled with exiles from Jackson County, the 1,200 or more forced out by armed citizenry late in 1833.⁴ "We had great times in talking of their trials in that county," Drusilla Hendricks said.⁵ Apparently the Butlers and Hendrickses renewed friendships with Elder Emmett, whose family was among the Jackson County refugees. The Kentucky group, John said, "found many Saints rejoicing in the New Covenant, and I realized myself, too, that what I had embraced was the truth from God."

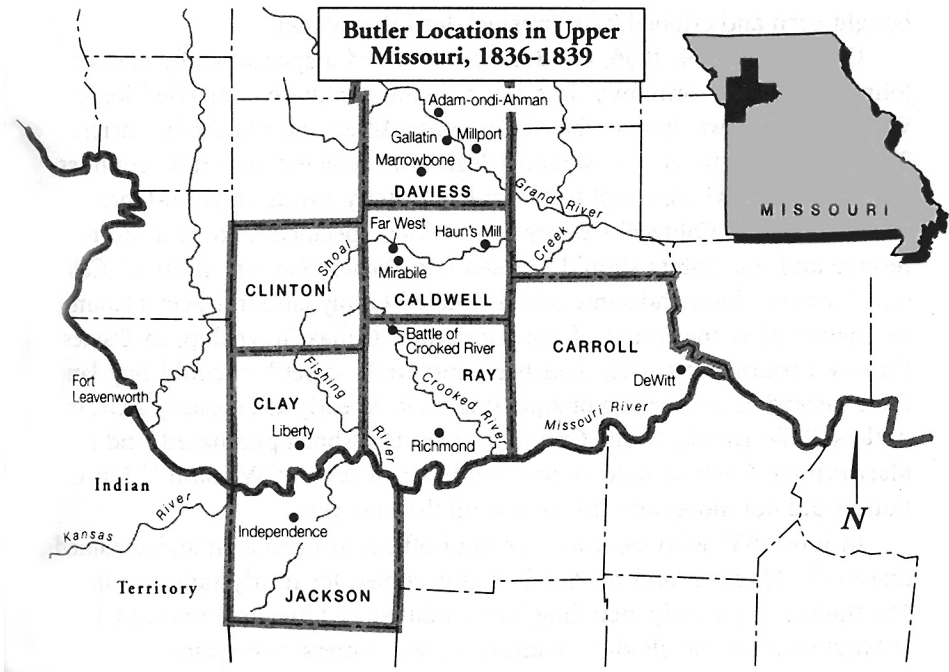
When the Hendrickses bought fifty acres of Clay County property, locals resented it because they violated an informal understanding that Saints would not buy real estate in the county.⁶ The man who had owned the land prior to the one who sold it to the Hendrickses visited them and ordered them to sell it to him. Aided by four friends, he made threats. But when twenty Mormon men suddenly appeared, “the man wilted,” Drusilla said, “and agreed to be rather decent,” ending the confrontation.⁷

Gradually the Saints “all gave up our land and agreed to go to Caldwell County,” Drusilla noted, but not without feeling wronged. “Not one solitary instance of crime against any of our people has been recorded in either [Jackson or Clay] county,” the Saints informed Missouri’s governor, Daniel Dunklin.⁸ In response he told them to submit their problems to the courts, but cautioned them that some cases of “individual outrage” could be so popular that the courts would not intervene. In part justifying the earlier mobbings in Jackson County and to give a warning for the future, he went on to say that “when one man or society of men become so obnoxious to that sentiment as to determine the people to be rid of him or them, it is useless to run counter to it.”⁹

Mirabile Settlement

Saints streamed northward and slightly east into unsettled parts of northern Ray County during August 1836. Along a sizeable stream called Shoal Creek, leaders platted and started building Far West, intending it to be the main LDS settlement. There, Church agents purchased approximately 1,600 acres to resell to the Saints.¹⁰ An estimated 3,000 Saints, with wagons, herds, and flocks, moved to the region.¹¹ “Our leading brethren worked day after day to accomplish this move,” Drusilla recalled.¹² John said that his family moved there in the fall and “assisted in making the first settlements.”

Two-thirds of the LDS families pouring onto the prairies lacked enough money to make down payments on land, but the Butlers were among the other one-third because they brought money with them from Kentucky—savings, or proceeds from the sale of their home and farm, or both.¹³ During fall and winter, John settled his family on land two miles south of Far West, in what became the Mirabile settlement. He intended to buy that land, but he also looked for other property to purchase. The Butlers, Emmetts, and Hendrickses picked farm sites next to each other. Within the one square mile shown on maps of Mirabile Township as Section 26, the Butlers owned about 120 acres. Eleven others laid claim to the rest of the square mile, including Porter Rockwell, Samuel Kimball, and James Emmett. Among those who owned land bordering on that square mile



were Emmett, James Hendricks, and Reed Peck.¹⁴ Mirabile was two miles south of Far West.

By taking up residence on land that was two-thirds prairie and one-third timber, John and Caroline faced a new kind of sod—covered soil to cultivate and near-treeless horizons to become accustomed to.¹⁵ When John's plow first sliced prairie sod late that summer, he knew that the Saints had arrived at an awkward time—too late for planting and nothing to harvest. Wisely, he had claimed land that included a patch of timberland, giving his family access to wood. While autumn gradually engulfed the prairies, John and Caroline prepared for the cold season. John cut and hauled firewood and timbers for buildings and fences. He built a cabin, hammered together pens and fences for their stock, and cut, collected, and stacked grasses for animal feed. The Butlers opened a crude wagon path from their home to the nearest wagon road being developed by the new settlers.

One evening the Mirabile pioneers spotted a prairie fire flickering towards them three miles away. Men set backfires, but not in time. Settlers ran for their lives. "The grass was tall and the flames were high," Drusilla said, "and when we reached the house the flames reached the [hay] stacks and burned them up. The house was filled with cinders but we saved it."¹⁶ With their haystacks

damaged, the settlers contacted nearby farmers and bought corn and cribbed it for livestock feed that winter.

On December 4, 1836, the Butlers celebrated a special family occasion. John's sister Lucy Ann, two days shy of being twenty-two, married Reuben Warren Allred, twenty-one, the son of James Allred and Elizabeth Warren.¹⁷ That same December the Missouri legislature created two new counties, Caldwell and Daviess, out of northern Ray County. Saints and non-Mormons understood that Caldwell County was created specifically to be a Mormon reserve and that Saints should not settle in Daviess County, north of Caldwell. However, John and some others decided to buy land in Daviess County no matter what the intent of the legislature. Colfax Township, in Daviess County's southwest corner, had been surveyed, so settlers could buy land there instead of preempting or squatting on it. As early as February 1837, the Butlers, Philo Dibble, Elisha Groves, and David Osborn purchased land near Marrowbone Creek—a mile or two southeast of present Winston.¹⁸ But the Butlers did not move onto this land until the next year.

In June 1837 John went to state land offices at Lexington and obtained title to the Mirabile land his family had occupied for nearly nine months.¹⁹ The Butlers, apparently including John's mother and his three brothers, lived at Mirabile until mid-1838—two autumns, two winters, two springs, and one summer. John's autobiography says little about the community there. These were seasons of carving livelihoods from the land and of helping neighbors do the same. Son Kenion, school-age, might have attended the log school built at Mirabile.²⁰ John recorded that a young woman named Melinda Porter boarded with his family and taught school, but he does not make clear if she taught in his home or at the school house.²¹

Far West served as the Church center for Missouri and as county seat for Caldwell County. The first county elections put Latter-day Saints into the key public offices: two judges, thirteen magistrates, a county clerk, and all the military officers. To outsiders, the sudden growth of Far West and the conversion of prairies into farms and towns was magical.²² By July 1837 Far West consisted of about one hundred buildings, including eight stores. Farmers in and around the town planted and worked some three hundred farms totaling several thousand acres. A handful of gristmills did a brisk business.²³

On occasion some of the Butlers must have gone back and forth the two miles to Far West to shop, visit, and attend church and civic events. On July 3, 1837, about 1,500 Saints assembled to witness the laying of cornerstones and the first excavations for a temple at Far West. Possibly some of the Butlers attended also. Temple walls never rose more than one or two feet, however, before the

Saints were ordered out of Missouri sixteen months later.²⁴ During the summer of 1837, residents formed a county militia composed entirely of Mormons commanded by Colonel Lyman Wight, who received a military commission from Governor Lilburn W. Boggs.²⁵ It seems likely that John and all able-bodied men were part of that militia.

For pregnant Caroline Butler, the summer heat and humidity were particularly uncomfortable. On December 16, 1837, she gave birth to a daughter, Phoebe Melinda.²⁶ The baby's middle name, Melinda, apparently honored Melinda Porter, the young teacher boarding in their home.

The Butler family's first opportunity to see the Prophet Joseph Smith in person came during October or November of 1837, when President Smith and his first counselor Sidney Rigdon visited Far West from Kirtland. On that occasion the Prophet organized the Far West Stake, complete with a high council and with a stake presidency composed of his longtime friends and followers from New York: David Whitmer, John Whitmer, and William W. Phelps. Then the Prophet returned to Ohio.²⁷

Far West Stake leaders organized a branch of the Church at Mirabile and assigned James Emmett to be the branch president.²⁸ John, an ordained teacher, assisted Emmett. No other branch officers were identified. Branch members attended sacrament meetings, probably in someone's home. Perhaps the Butlers, like the Hendrickses, "never missed a meeting for we loved the Saints."²⁹

Early in 1838 the Butlers heard reports from Far West about disaffection or misconduct by several Church stalwarts. In February the high council there rejected the entire stake presidency and replaced it with Apostles Thomas B. Marsh and David W. Patten as presidents pro-tem until Joseph Smith could come from Ohio and settle things.³⁰ He arrived in mid-March, having fled from problems and dangers in Kirtland. With him came Apostle Brigham Young, whom the Butlers had never seen before. In the next months, such disaffected notables as William W. Phelps, John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Apostle William E. McLellin were excommunicated. During this dark hour, the Church not only lost several leaders but saw some of them become influential antagonists to the cause.³¹

High Council Court

On a smaller scale a critical spirit also crept into the Butlers' neighborhood, triggered by a timber dispute. Samuel Kimball,³² James Emmett, John Butler, and James Hendricks jointly held claim to some timberland. Kimball felt wronged by how the other three claimed their shares of trees, so in May 1838 he complained to the Church's bishop in Missouri, Edward Partridge. Bishop

Partridge heard both sides and decided against Kimball. But Kimball was still unhappy, so the four claimants agreed to have another man, Isaac Higbee, divide the timber fairly. Higbee did his best, but, again, Kimball felt cheated, so he complained to neighbors about branch leaders Emmett and Butler, calling them rascals and scoundrels. He accused Bishop Partridge of being an unfair judge, easily bought. Apparently Kimball took timber from land that had been ruled not his. Branch President Emmett disfellowshipped Kimball, denying him the right to partake of the sacrament, for two reasons: Kimball had refused to abide by Bishop Partridge's decision, and Kimball physically abused his own children.³³

Offended, Kimball formally appealed to the Far West High Council, which heard the case on June 28 and 29, 1838. Kimball charged Butler, Emmett, and Hendricks with defrauding him, lying and slandering, and forbidding him to take communion. Several witnesses appeared, including John's mother and the Butlers' boarder, Melinda Porter. Witnesses testified that Emmett had disfellowshipped Kimball, that Kimball dealt harshly with his family, and that Kimball refused to let his children attend church meetings while Emmett and Butler were branch officers. At the high council court, John formally charged Kimball with "slandering myself and others, and destroying other people's property, and rendering his family unhappy."

After hearing from disputants and witnesses, the high council decided that Bishop Partridge's land decision against Kimball was invalid, and therefore Emmett was wrong to forbid Kimball to partake of the sacrament. While Emmett pleaded the trio's case, he became abrasive about the council's decision, so council president Thomas B. Marsh chastised him "and condemned the Spirit he was of." President Marsh also determined that Kimball was wrong to speak against the bishop and the council. He ordered Kimball to confess his fault "in public congregation" to those he had slandered and to treat his children "as a man of God" or he would be excommunicated. President Emmett was ordered to apologize to the council for offending them, to publicly denounce the "delusive spirit" he had manifested, and to confess he had slandered Kimball. President Marsh declared that John Butler had wronged Brother Kimball and therefore must confess his mistake to Kimball. Apparently all parties complied with the court's decision, for stake minutes say no more of the matter.³⁴

Marrowbone, Daviess County

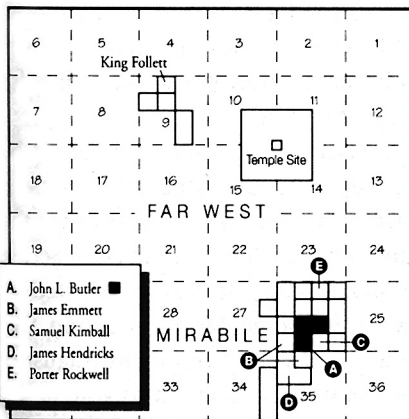
In April 1838 Joseph Smith, by revelation, instructed Saints to gather into "regions round about" Far West to create more settlements and stakes.³⁵ Because multitudes of followers were arriving from Kirtland and elsewhere, more land was needed. In response to this demand, on May 29, 1838, leaders platted a

settlement in Daviess County—a county supposedly off-limits to the Saints. LDS leaders started a settlement overlooking the Grand River which they named Adam-ondi-Ahman (nicknamed “Diahman”), meaning “the place where Adam dwelt.”³⁶ Diahman was a mere five miles north of the tiny county seat of Gallatin.

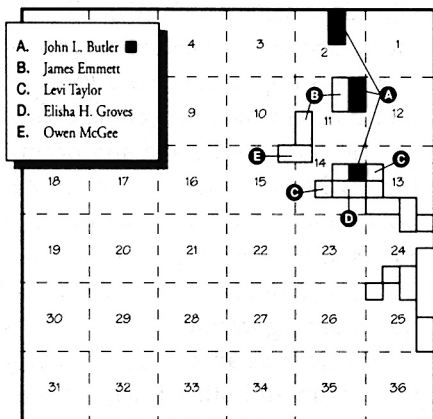
By summer John had moved his family to Colfax Township in Daviess County where he owned 160.37 acres of land in Sections 11, 14, and 2.³⁷ When added to their 120 acres in Caldwell County at Mirabile, the Butlers owned nearly 300 acres. This Daviess County settlement was “composed principally of a better class who were able to purchase their lands and improve them.”³⁸ The family chose to set up residence on eighty acres up from Marrowbone Creek in Section 11, on a small ridge.³⁹ The Butlers now lived eleven miles southwest of Diahman, eight miles west-southwest of Gallatin, and fifteen miles due north of Far West.

Marrowbone’s population grew to about one hundred residents,⁴⁰ and once again, James Emmett relocated with the Butlers. He owned property west of the Butlers. Elisha H. Groves bought the land south of them, and Levi Taylor owned the farm to the east. Samuel H. Smith, the Prophet’s younger brother, also lived at Marrowbone, at a site not identified.⁴¹ At a July 1838 priesthood conference at Far West, part of the Marrowbone Creek settlement was renamed Ambrosia.⁴²

**Butler Properties in Caldwell
and Daviess Counties**



Mirabile Township, Caldwell County, Missouri



Colfax Township, Daviess County, Missouri

1 square = 640 acres or 1 square mile

Eight miles to the east, in Monroe Township, Saints established a small settlement called Honey Creek. Among the residents there were Perry Durphy, Roswell Stevens, Henry Belt, and a family named Daley. Levi Stewart and his three brothers, Riley, Jackson, and Urban, “obtained a preemption right to a quarter section of land, with thirty acres under improvement and built a good house.” New convert John D. Lee, a Kentuckian, bought property including a spring, a small lake filled with various kinds of fish, and a grove of hickory and oak.⁴³ Some of these neighbors were with John at Gallatin, trying to vote, when the election day brawl broke out (see chapter 5).

Anti-Mormon Reactions

By summer 1838 approximately 1,500 Saints had settled in Daviess County. At Diahman they built a store and selected a temple site. On June 28, John Smith, Joseph Smith’s uncle, became president of the new Adam-ondi-Ahman Stake, with Reynolds Cahoon and Lyman Wight as counselors.⁴⁴ Wight was also leader of the LDS militia in the county. The Diahman settlement, John Corrill noted, “stirred up the people of Daviess in some degree” because “they saw that if this town was built up too rapidly it would injure Gallatin, their county seat.” Wight said at summer’s end that Diahman had two hundred houses and forty families living in wagons. Diahman had outgrown Gallatin.⁴⁵

When Latter-day Saints began spreading out from Caldwell into nearby counties, local residents became bothered because they knew that “the Saints could have easily dominated any of these smaller counties, each of which had plenty of available land for Mormon settlements.”⁴⁶ In neighboring Carroll County, sixty miles downriver from Diahman, John Murdock and George M. Hinckle bought for the Church the town called DeWitt, and Saints moved there. Dewitt is located where the Grand River flows into the Missouri River. Mormons hoped the Grand River would become a transportation lifeline for them, along which they could boat goods and people.⁴⁷

However, by buying and occupying DeWitt, even though welcomed by those who sold them the land, Mormons upset most of the other settlers. Locals met, voted to expel the Mormons, and sent two men to order the Saints to leave by August 7. Carroll County citizens felt that vigilante action to expel undesirable people was as legitimate as any activity conducted by the county government.⁴⁸ Agitators waited for some Mormon action that would serve as an excuse to employ force against the Saints. On August 6, when John and other Daviess County Saints went to Gallatin to vote in the county election, they expected merely to vote, not to be part of a fight that would mark the beginning of violence soon to escalate into what Missouri history books call the state’s “Mormon War.”

CHAPTER FIVE

Danite and Militia Captain

John Butler was a Danite. He acknowledged, in an account of the election day fight not in his autobiography, that he had been a Danite in Missouri,¹ and some of his contemporaries identified him as one.² But to publicly state John's Danite connection is tantamount to painting him with a black brush, given the popular stereotypes about Danites being sinister "Destroying Angels."³ Because the term *Danite* carries very negative connotations, an in-depth explanation is required to present John's activities as a Danite in a proper and fair light.

Danite Stereotypes

During and immediately after the 1838 Missouri Mormon War, state investigators obtained testimony claiming that secret units of dangerous Danites had defended Mormon interests.⁴ Even after the Saints had fled Missouri, Danites appeared in fiction and anti-Mormon writings as a secret band of fanatical cutthroats who swore oaths to murder, rob, and lie for Church leaders and to protect the Saints from the law. Latter-day Saint historian B. H. Roberts observed that belief in the Danites as Church operatives "is quite general among non-Mormons; and every irregularity that has occurred in the Church since those Missouri days, every act of violence in the frontier life of Utah, almost every militia movement in which 'Mormons' have been engaged, has been set down as so many acts and movements of the 'Danites.'" Nineteenth-century publishers, eager to sell books, found and fed an appetite among readers for sensational

Danite tales. By 1900 some fifty novels, including Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Dynamiter*, told of Danite murders and mayhem. Some anti-Mormons, to prove the falseness of the LDS faith, spread dark rumors about supposed Danite "blood atonement" killings.⁵

Historians have painted blurry pictures of the Danites. LDS histories usually admit Danites existed but were apostates acting without Church sanction, a position expressed in Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* and in B. H. Roberts' *A Comprehensive History of the Church*.⁶ Such a view, if correct, would make John a rebel against Church leadership and an apostate, which he never was. During the 1960s, Leland H. Gentry was the first LDS historian to demonstrate that Church leaders knew about and approved of the earliest Danites efforts. He identified the various stages of the Danite movement and took the position that only at a later stage did Danites perform illegal acts outside of Church leaders' awareness.⁷ A 1987 prize-winning book about the 1838 Mormon War claimed Joseph Smith not only knew about Danites but led them on offensive raids.⁸ A 1989 history of Mormonism, nationally recognized, noted that the Danites "quickly evolved into an aggressive, malicious secret police force, and eventually into a nineteenth-century version of storm troopers."⁹ Such have been the prevailing explanations about Danites.

How then should John's involvement with Danites be viewed? Could John have been a practicing Christian and also a Danite, or are the terms contradictory? Recent revisionist scholarship about Danites provides some sensible answers.¹⁰ Danites were "fundamentally different" than the stereotype, and the secret evil-doers image fits at most only "the more radical fringe" of Danites, which means that "it is unfair to continue to use the term Danite to cover only an aberration."¹¹ Danite controversies flourish only because "both Mormons and non-Mormons have fundamentally failed to grasp what the Danites were, and this misunderstanding is only perpetuated in the continued use of the term in ways that critics of the Church early attached it to."¹²

An estimated three hundred to four hundred men belonged to Danite groups between June and November 1838. The units were created to perform public safety and military tasks, and their assignments shifted in response to the changing problems faced by the Saints. It is certain that some Danites played the thief, and it is possible, although unproven, that one or two were murderers. But a balanced assessment indicates that John and other Danites operated similarly to how National Guard soldiers or civil defense units do in American communities today, providing manpower to assist in wartime efforts and in a range of community emergencies during peacetime.

A Kingdom in Peril

Most Latter-day Saints in Missouri, including founder-prophet Joseph Smith, were by nature peaceful, trusting Christians. They were not accustomed to violence, either as givers or receivers. Most believed in Christian decency and in the rule of law. They saw themselves as loyal American citizens and wanted to obey law enforcement officers and court judges. Many of their own grandparents, including John and Caroline's ancestors, had fought in the American Revolution and helped to establish the American Republic.¹³

However, by late 1838 the Saints had learned three disturbing realities about their American society. First, they found that clusters among supposedly civilized people in New York, Ohio, and Missouri could become brutish through distrust, misunderstanding, dislike, jealousy, bigotry, or covetousness. In 1831, seven years before the Danites were organized, Mormons first entered Missouri. In frontier Jackson County they built homes, farms, shops, and mills. They owned cattle, sheep, pigs, and horses. When armed riders had driven them from the county in mid-winter 1833 and confiscated their properties, the assaulters, vandals, and pillagers were not arrested, tried, or convicted. Victims received no compensation.

Second, Saints found that lawyers, judges, juries, justices of the peace, sheriffs, county militias, and governors could not always be trusted to uphold citizens' constitutional rights. Lyman Wight, a veteran of the War of 1812 who had been victimized by Missourians in Jackson and then Clay County, expressed pointedly his disdain for legal "protections":

L. White [Wight] . . . addressed them . . . declaring that he owed nothing to the laws—the laws had not protected him—he had been on the rack these seven years—he had suffered enough—God did not intend him to endure more—and that he would not yield to the laws of Missouri—he would sooner die and be buried.¹⁴

When Clay County citizens in 1836 ordered the Mormons out, the Butlers and the others knew this was a clear violation of their constitutional rights. They became victims because the civil authorities would not help them.

Third, Saints discovered—and were bluntly told by high government officials—that they could not count on others to defend them but must rely on their own defenses to thwart mobbings, vandalism, persecutions, stealing, vexations and expensive court cases, beatings, arson, and killings.¹⁵

At the heart of the Saints' militancy in upper Missouri and at the core of the Danite controversy lies the question: How much deprivation and aggression must a people endure before they have the right to defend themselves?

Certainly, in antebellum Missouri, if not in most states of the union, a double system of justice operated. Traditionally, communities felt they had the right to control their own destinies, by law if possible, by force if necessary. Vigilante action, when enough in the community wanted it, served as a non-governmental enforcement of the “will of the people,” and state governments rarely interfered when local citizens vented outrage at undesirables. Latter-day Saints understood this extra-legal method of solving problems, and even adopted it themselves when they were a majority, but they nevertheless resented being victims of it.

Mistreatment by outsiders was one problem, but mistreatment by disaffected Mormons was another matter. This small group of estranged Saints, rather than quietly separating from the faith, threatened to do physical harm, publish slander, and take back property donated to the Church. In the sacred Kirtland Temple, defectors with bowie knives and pistols had threatened believers—behavior shocking by that generation’s standards and by ours.¹⁶ When dissenters in Caldwell County became troublesome, LDS leaders felt they had a right to defend the Church’s well-being. By 1838, in Far West, the Saints felt they had their backs to the wall, between anti-Mormons within and without the Church, and quite naturally, they became fearful and defensive.

The Prophet, seeking to obey a divine mandate to establish the Kingdom of God physically on earth, had seen his attempts in Jackson and Clay counties ruined by irate local citizenry. But when these losses happened, the Church could still rely on their stronghold in Kirtland. However, early in 1838 the Kirtland base dissolved due to financial problems and disaffections. Far West and Caldwell County thus became the base of the Kingdom. At Far West the Church made a last stand to maintain its organization, its press, its finances, its program of gathering and creating a Zion society, and its hopes to erect a temple. After three defeats in five years, Church leaders, forced to choose between another defeat and self-defense, chose defense. They publicly warned persecutors within and without that the Church would no longer turn the other cheek but would henceforth defend itself.

LDS scriptures spelled out when retaliation was proper. An 1833 revelation, now Doctrine and Covenants section 98, explained the Lord’s law of vengeance as formerly given “unto mine ancients.” God’s people should not go out to battle unless commanded, it said. However, if anyone proclaims war against the Lord’s people, the Saints must make three attempts to “lift a standard of peace.” The Lord cautioned that vengeance was his, but stated that if on a fourth provocation the Saints were required to act, then he would not hold it against them but “would justify them in going out to battle.” In that case “the Lord . . . would

fight their battles” until his people “had avenged themselves on all their enemies.” The revelation said men must forgive “until seventy-times-seven,” but only if the trespassers repent. When no repentance is shown, Saints must forgive three times. But for a fourth offense, “thou shalt not forgive him” and the wrong-doer must “reward thee fourfold in all things wherewith he has trespassed against thee.”

Church leaders posted no official tally of offenses in public, but Saints probably counted the expulsion from Jackson as one provocation and the forced departure from Clay County as a second. Persecutions in Kirtland and its collapse might have been seen as a third offense. Expected abuses of Saints in northern Missouri could easily run the count up past four.

Non-Mormons disliked LDS bravado and bragging that God had given them an inheritance in Missouri that they must not abdicate. The Saints felt compelled by divine mandate to build communities and a temple in Missouri to expedite Christ’s second coming, and they felt militant because they believed God would help them defend the settlements they were building for him. “Mormon militarism,” a scholar recently observed, was “a strange mixture of the American revolutionary idea of the defense of natural rights” and “a millennialism that drew heavily upon Old Testament and Book of Mormon models of warrior-saints.”¹⁷

Driving Out Dissenters

Revelations taught that unrighteous Church members could contribute to defeat for the Kingdom. In a revelation dated February 24, 1834, now Doctrine and Covenants section 103, the Saints learned that if they failed as a people to observe “all” the Lord’s words, “the kingdoms of the world [would] prevail against them.” Dissenters, the revelation taught, could not be allowed to remain among the Saints: salt that lost its savor should be “cast out and trodden under the feet of men” (Matt. 5:13). An earlier revelation, now Doctrine and Covenants section 98, stated that anyone breaking the Lord’s covenant “shall be cursed in his life and shall be trodden down by whom I will.” By 1838 apostates were damaging the Church, but “the more the Church expressed its disapproval for the divisive efforts of the dissenters,” historian Leland Gentry observed, “the greater the latter’s endeavors to divide and conquer.” Dissenters drew up plans “to set up a new Church organization.”

Repeated attempts were made to discredit the leadership of the Church, consecrated lands were sold without permission, letters of discontent were sent abroad, and the law was used as an instrument of pain rather than of justice. The result was an even further widening of the breach. Excommunication was the only step left for the Church.¹⁸

After fleeing from Kirtland, Joseph Smith and counselor Sidney Rigdon complained that “they had been harassed to death, as it were, for seven or eight years, and they were determined to bear it no longer, for they had rather die than suffer these things.”¹⁹ As a result, the Church took action early in 1838 to protect itself from dissidents and hostile outsiders. First, the Prophet penned and circulated a “Political Motto,” or manifesto, wherein he exalted the United States Constitution and the standard of democracy but criticized “tyrants, mobs, aristocracy, anarchy, and toryism, and all those who invent or seek out unrighteous and vexatious lawsuits, under the pretext and color of law, or office, either religious or political.”²⁰

Then, President Rigdon directed the stern “Salt Sermon” on June 17 at any Saints who, like salt, had lost their savor. He said, referring to the 1834 revelation, that “it is the duty of the Saints to trample [such people] under their feet” (D&C 103:10). As a third measure, eighty-four LDS men signed and circulated a resolution ordering dissenters Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, W. W. Phelps, and Lyman E. Johnson to leave the county. In response, many of those named quickly fled from Far West on June 19, 1838.²¹ A fourth action, which newspapers beyond Missouri’s borders reprinted, was Rigdon’s stirring Fourth of July address at Far West. He ended his otherwise excellent tribute to America’s Declaration of Independence with a fiery declaration of the Mormons’ independence from unlawful oppression:

Our cheeks have been given to the smiters—our heads to those who have plucked off the hair. We have not only when smitten on one cheek turned the other, but we have done it again and again, until we are wearied of being smitten, and tired of being trampled upon. We have proved the world with kindness, we have suffered their abuse without cause, with patience, and have endured without resentment, until this day, and still their persecutions and violence do not cease. But from this day and this hour, we will suffer it no more.

“We will bear it no more,” he continued; “our rights shall no more be trampled upon with impunity.” Using a phrase that would come back to haunt the Saints, he said that attackers would face “a war of extermination, for we will follow them, till the last drop of their blood is spilled, or they will have to exterminate us.” Though the Saints would never be the aggressors, he announced, “We proclaim our liberty on this day.”²²

Listeners cheered President Rigdon. The Church gave his speech a stamp of approval by printing and distributing it.²³ Not surprisingly, when local

newspapers reprinted it, northern Missouri citizens became outraged at Rigdon's belligerence. Later, after the Saints were driven from Missouri, some LDS leaders made Rigdon a scapegoat and blamed him for inflaming Missourians against the Saints. In 1838, however, his sentiments offended neither the Prophet nor most believers.²⁴

John Butler's autobiography says nothing about these four efforts to convince apostates to leave the fold and non-Mormons to cease bothering the Saints, no doubt because he was away from Far West, establishing a farm at Marrowbone in Daviess County.

Danites and Militiamen

Sampson Avard founded a Danite organization about the same time as President Rigdon's Salt Sermon. Rigdon said that "the Danites were organized for mutual protection against the bands that were forming and threatened to be formed." Luman Andrus, an early Danite, said the unit "was got up for our personal defense; also of our families, property, and our religion."²⁵ Danites were first called "Brothers of Gideon," later "Daughters of Zion," and finally "Danites."²⁶ The term *Danite* apparently was derived from the tribe of Dan, which fought offensively and defensively for ancient Israel,²⁷ or from the biblical book of Daniel that prophetically foretells of God's kingdom in the last days rolling forth as a stone without hands and growing, crushing all nations in the process, until it fills the earth.²⁸

Danite purposes evolved through three stages.²⁹ First, in June 1838 Avard organized Danites to deal with apostates. Evidence indicates that President Rigdon knew about them and gave them his blessing.³⁰ What influence these Danites had over apostates was won by intimidation and threats, not by force.

By the end of June, the dissenter problem eased and a second Danite phase began. From then until October, Danites devoted themselves to preparing to defend the Saints in case of outside attack. As the number of Saints living in Daviess County increased, so did threats to drive them out. In response, a Danite unit was formed at Diahman on July 14. The unit met on several Saturdays. On July 21 and 28 many county men were initiated into the band's purposes and ritual. Apparently John became a Danite at one of the July meetings.³¹ Recruits were chosen by invitation. Danites held private meetings; learned military maneuvers; swore oaths of secrecy, support, and obedience to leaders; and developed special signs and signals by which to identify one another. Some of Joseph Smith's most dedicated followers joined the Danites.³²

Danites were not a secret organization. Church leaders and rank-and-file members knew of their existence. Danites marched and drilled "freely and

openly in Far West and Diahman.”³³ They marched as a unit in the Fourth of July parade at Far West, and the Church’s *Elders’ Journal* noted with nonchalance that Danite leaders held positions of prominence at the day’s ceremonies.³⁴ Historian Stephen LeSueur observed that “the surprisingly casual, matter-of-fact references to the Danites” by several contemporaries “indicate the group was well known among the Saints in Missouri” and accepted.³⁵

During this second stage, Danite activity is hard to trace because the Church also organized an Army of Israel. Just prior to John Butler’s August 6 election fight, stake leaders asked Daviess County LDS men to meet at Diahman. “Every man obeyed the call,” John D. Lee explained many years later. John Butler went. “At the meeting all the males over eighteen years of age, were organized into a military body, according to the law of the priesthood, and called ‘The Host of Israel.’” The basic units contained ten, fifty, and a hundred men, each headed by a captain. Lee said that “the entire membership of the Mormon Church was then organized in the same way,” by companies. He remembered that John Butler was “one of the Captains of the Host of Israel.”³⁶ How many men Captain Butler had in his militia unit is not known. Militia units were open to all able-bodied men, had no secret oaths or passwords, and did not have the same officers as did the Danites.³⁷

At the same conference at which the army was created, Lee noted, a Danite unit was also created.³⁸ Lyman Wight of the Diahman stake presidency commanded this body, although Jared Carter and Sampson Avard apparently were the supreme commanders. Other Danite officers included³⁹ Judge Elias Higbee, Captain General; George W. Robinson, Colonel; Reynolds Cahoon, Diahman Stake counselor; Dimick Huntington; Anson B. Call; Allen J. Stout; Hosea Stout; Moses Clawson; John L. Butler; and Luman Shurtliff.

Diahman Danites met regularly between July 14 and September 1, but did little more than talk during what was for them a “relatively quiet” period.⁴⁰ They very likely held military-type drills, training to be “protectors against mob attacks.”⁴¹ Because Danites belonged to the Army of Israel, too, it is impossible to know which hat men like John Butler wore when they went into active duty—Danite or militia. Historian Leland Gentry determined that at that time “little, if any, effort was made to distinguish between one’s activities in either group.”⁴²

Militiamen/Danites filled several useful purposes in their communities. The men became emergency laborers similar to National Guard units today who, in time of crisis, picked up, hauled, and distributed food and clothing; built sandbag walls during floods; and helped open emergency roads. Joseph Smith ordered his militia to care for vulnerable families “in this time of alarm.” He instructed that “one company would be engaged in drawing wood, another in

cutting it, another in gathering corn, another in grinding, another in butchering, another in distributing meat.” In this way, “all should be employed in turn and no one lack for the necessities of life.”⁴³

A third Danite stage of activity, involving defensive retaliation, came when war broke out in October 1838. Apparently working in connection with the Host, or Army, of Israel, the Danites defended the Saints by riding into the countryside to intercept invading mobs, rescue Saints and Saints’ properties, spy, burn buildings being used by or useful to the enemy, and forage for food and supplies.⁴⁴ During October the Church fielded two militia units authorized by General Alexander Doniphan, commander of the First Brigade of the Third Division of Missouri militia from Ray County. It is probable that units in both the militia and the Danites were the same.⁴⁵ John was actively engaged in this defensive military activity (see chapter 7).

Charges against Danites

By standards of everyday living, Danite secrecy and bluster seemed ominous to contemporaries, and sensational testimony following the Mormon War made the image even uglier. But the realities were hardly so sinister. To outsiders, the Saints appeared to be strange indeed, because of beliefs in prophet-leadership which smacked of dictatorial power, their millennial fervor, their unified and pooled political and economic practices, teachings about controlling Missouri sites, talk about allying with Indians to bring judgment against corrupt mankind, and religious fervency.⁴⁶ After already harboring misgivings about these odd religionists, most of whom were nonslaveholding northerners, non-LDS Missourians found it easy to believe the worst rumors about the sect and to justify citizen action against them. However, they should have expected that the Saints, when they had sufficient numbers, might adopt the same vigilante-type tactics which Missourians felt justified in using against them.

Historian Juanita Brooks argued that Utah’s Mountain Meadows Massacre is understandable only if the “war hysteria” of the times is recognized. Similarly, the secret, oath-bound, militaristic Danite activities are understandable only if it is recognized that Latter-day Saints by mid-1838 had adopted a wartime mentality. They felt they were being pushed into war, and, fearing attack, they determined to defend themselves. Most of the seemingly sinister Danite practices in stages two and three are hardly strange if seen as military preparations for war situations.

For example, critics link the Danites’ secret meetings with diabolical purposes. Why else would men attend Danite meetings “well armed, some had swords, some had pistols, and others had guns and cow-hides”?⁴⁷ But another

explanation is possible. Today's police and military planning meetings can be private without being sinister, to ensure that operational plans are protected. Furthermore, Danites held meetings not just to talk but also to practice military drills, so taking arms to the militia meetings is to be expected.

Danite oaths not to betray each other, the breaking of which could bring the death penalty, seem devious at first glance. However, modern soldiers face severe punishment if they disobey orders not to tell the enemy more than name, rank, and serial number. Treason in wartime is a capital crime. So Danite oaths against revealing information about the unit's members or strategies should not seem out of line. If a Danite committed a crime, Danites claimed the right to try him themselves and administer fair penalties, avoiding the civil legal system. Military units traditionally have retained the right to court martial their own members independent of civil courts. Because Missourians proved that they might not give Mormons fair trials, Danites, as military men, swore to protect each other at any cost from Missouri's civil lawmen and courts. (It is notable that while Danite rhetoric about oaths and capital punishment is documented, no evidence exists that it was more than talk.)

Anticipating hostilities between Mormons and Missourians, Danites took oaths to "sustain, protect, defend and obey the leaders of the Church under any and all circumstances unto death," a covenant some consider tyrannical. However, such a vow by any military force in wartime—to strictly obey and defend their commander-in-chief—hardly seems unreasonable.

Danite use of secret signs and passwords has been disparaged, but, again, such rituals serve pragmatic purposes in wartime. Army guards and sentries have employed passwords for centuries. Armies, spies, and intelligence units develop coded ways to recognize trusted individuals. In Missouri in 1838, good guys did not wear white hats and bad guys black, so the fact that Danites adopted a system of hand signals and grips to identify one another nonvocally had some practical purposes. For example, John Butler and other Danites learned a sign or token of distress. John D. Lee said that when the sign was given, other Danites were obligated to render help "even at the risk of certainty of death" or be considered cowards and traitors. The sign was made, he said, "by placing the right hand on the right side of the face, with the points of the fingers upwards, shoving the hand upwards until the ear is snug up between the thumb and fore-finger."⁴⁸

Not many days after becoming a Danite, John Butler would put this signal of distress to good use when Missourians' attempts to block him and other LDS men from voting caused near-fatal hand-to-hand combat at Gallatin.

CHAPTER SIX

Election Fight at Gallatin

Of the millions of local and county elections held in America since the Republic began, almost all are forgotten by history. In the state of Missouri, very few county elections held during the 1830s mattered enough to merit mention even in histories written locally. But the Daviess County election of August 1838 was an exception. The election became historic because the fighting it generated initiated the Mormon War in Missouri. County and state histories in Missouri and histories by and about the LDS Church recount that fateful election.

Because John Butler was a key combatant in the election day brawl, his name is mentioned in many of those histories. With a seven-pound, yard-long, heart-of-oak timber, John literally clubbed his way into minor fame on August 6, 1838. His writing of the “most colorful and complete recording” of the fight helps to bring him prominence.¹ Prior to his autobiographical rememberings of the event, John had written a separate version, and both are vital records of the event.² Of some eighteen accounts of the election day battle, only his two and those by John D. Lee and Levi Stewart came from firsthand witnesses.³

Election Day

John and Caroline Butler had moved into Daviess County by June 1838. Non-Mormon settlers who had preceded them were few and scattered.⁴ When Missouri designated Caldwell County as a “reserve” for Mormons, the understanding with the Saints was that if they wanted to settle in any other

northern counties, they must first obtain the consent of two-thirds of the non-Mormon residents of the township in the county they wished to enter. Apparently Saints located in Daviess County “by written permission of the few Gentile [non-Mormon] settlers there.”⁵

By purchasing property in Colfax Township at the Marrowbone settlement, John was entitled to vote in August for county and state officers at Gallatin, the county seat. During the spring and summer, gentile residents were becoming uneasy about the large numbers of Mormons taking up land in their county. Some wanted the land saved for themselves. Others simply distrusted the “religious aliens.”⁶ By election time the Mormon newcomers at Diahman, Marrowbone, Honey Creek, and elsewhere numbered perhaps one-third to one-half of the county’s voters.⁷ Because Saints tended to vote as a block, concern spread that Mormon votes could control election outcomes. As a result, non-Mormon candidates visited Diahman to campaign among the Saints for votes, and talk was heard around Gallatin of ways Mormons might be prevented from voting. Two weeks before the election, Judge Josiah Morin at Millport informed John D. Lee and Levi Stewart that “it was predetermined” by locals “to prevent the ‘Mormons’ from voting, and thereby to elect Col. Wm. P. Peniston who led the mob in Clay County.” He advised Lee and Stewart to come prepared for resistance. For reasons not clear, Mormons dismissed such warnings and went to the polls unarmed and individually.⁸

Election day was Monday, August 6. When John hitched his two horses to his wagon that morning and headed toward Gallatin to vote, the day was already warm and humid. John said that a Brother Gee, “who lived close by us,” accompanied him—apparently Owen H. McGee, who owned land within a mile of the Butlers.⁹ To reach Gallatin, a tiny village of perhaps ten cabins outlining a town square on the west bank of the Grand River, the men had to drive about thirteen miles on a winding road.¹⁰ A small frame house, twelve by fourteen feet, stood at the square’s southwest corner and served as the polling place. “When myself and Brother Gee got there,” John said, “there was a large crowd of folks.” Dozens of Missourians mingled in front of the building, waiting for the polls to open at 11 A.M. Some Mormon men stretched out on the grass, also waiting.¹¹ Local candidates campaigned among the voters.¹² John D. Lee said that the Missourians outnumbered Mormons about eight to one. John believed that about forty or fifty Missourians were there, compared to the eleven LDS voters present. Besides himself, Mormons he identified were Hyrum Nelson, Riley Stewart, Abraham Nelson, William Jackson Stewart, Moses Daley, George Washington Vorheis, Samuel Brown, Perry Durphy, Father Harvey Olmstead, and John D. Lee.

Voting was by voice, not secret ballot.¹³ When voting time arrived, John said, “there was a rush to the polls on the part of the Missourians until they were principally through with the voting.” John blamed William Peniston for stirring up the fight. Peniston’s family were original settlers in the county and he was a man of some influence. He was running for the office of state representative, and he did not want Mormon votes to defeat him.¹⁴ Peniston, John continued, “stood upon the head of a whiskey barrel, and made a very inflammatory speech against the saints, stating that he had headed a company to order the ‘Mormons’ off their farms and possessions” in Clay County and bragged that “he did not consider the ‘Mormons’ had any more right to vote than the niggers.” Apparently Peniston called Mormon leaders “horse thieves, liars, [and] counterfeiterers” who claimed to work miracles but could not.¹⁵ John heard Missourians assert that Mormons did not vote to suit them so Mormons must not vote at all. “Now this the Saints did not like,” he said, “to be deprived of their liberty and rights, so some were determined to go and put in their vote. Now for my part I felt like backing every one for it was our right.” John witnessed Peniston invite his friends to enjoy the whiskey that freely passed around. While men “drank freely,” John “retired a little back from the crowd, rather behind the little grocery.”

The Fight

When Mormon Samuel Brown tried to vote, Dick Weldon, who was “well armed” and drunk, started badgering Brown, who was a small man.¹⁶ He called Brown “a damned liar” and then struck him. Brown backed away, defending himself with an umbrella. When Abraham Nelson tried to pull Weldon off Brown, a half-dozen men struck him on the head and face and ripped his clothes. Perry Durphy, trying to protect Brown, grabbed Weldon’s arm. Several Missourians then swarmed Durphy, striking him with clubs and boards and knocking him down. Abraham Nelson’s brother, Hyrum, leaped into the melee and struck Missourians with the butt of his whip.¹⁷

When the fighting started, John was away from the crowd and behind the little store and was startled by the shouting and commotion. “I heard the word ‘G—damn ‘em! kill ‘em G—damn ‘em!’ From the noise and bustle I knew there was fighting. I felt at first not to go in amongst them, for I did not want to have any trouble.” He “wished to vote and thought after voting I would start home immediately, for I did not like the spirit manifested.” He stepped around the building and saw Missourians attacking Mormons with sticks, clapboards, and shakes. “They were all in a muss together,” he said, “every one of the Missourians trying to get a lick at a ‘Mormon.’” He noticed “four to a dozen mobbers” thrashing one Mormon and “damning ‘em.”

John, being a Danite and militia captain, was under obligation to defend the Saints: “The first thing that came to my mind was the covenants entered into by the Danites to the effect that they were to protect each other.” So, running towards the fray, he “hollowed out at the top of my voice saying ‘O yes, you Danites, here is a job for us.’” Because the Missourians were “well armed,” John picked up a large “stick” from a pile of split oak logs. John D. Lee described these “clubs”:

[T]here was a lot of oak timber, which had been brought there to be riven into shakes or shingles, leaving the heart, taken from each shingle-block, lying there on the ground. These hearts were three square [three- sided], four feet long, weighed about seven pounds, and made a very dangerous, yet handy weapon; and when used by an enraged man they were truly a class of instrument to be dreaded.¹⁸

John said that while gripping the oak weapon, he conversed with his conscience:

Many thoughts ran through my mind. First I remembered that I never in my life struck a man in anger, had always lived in peace with all men and the stick I had to fight with was so large and heavy that I could sink it into every man’s head, that I might chance to strike. I did not want to kill anyone, but merely to stop the affray, and went in with the determination to rescue my brethren from such miserable curs at all hazards, thinking when hefting my stick that I must temper my licks just so as not to kill. Furthermore, when I called out for the Danites, a power rested upon me such as one as I never felt before.

Calling out for peace and for the men to quit fighting, John began “tapping them as I thought light,” but to his surprise “they fell as dead men, their heads often striking the ground first.” He struck none “except those who were fighting the brethren.” He spotted six to eight men attacking “old Mr. Durphy” and a dozen men battering Brothers Olmstead and Nelson, so he “continued to knock down every man I could reach that was lifting a stick against the brethren.”

John fought his way through to his beleaguered coreligionists and then, during a short pause in the warfare, surveyed the situation. “I looked and saw some of the men lying on the ground as though they were dead, some with their friends holding them up and some standing leaning against the little grocery.” Riley Stewart chose that moment to punish the fight’s instigator, Dick Weldon. With an oak log he hit Weldon with “an overhanded blow on the head, cutting

the side of his head three or four inches in length, the skin pulling down.” Lee said that “Weldon fell nearly on me, and appeared lifeless. The blood flowed freely from the wound.” To John, Weldon looked “like he was certainly killed,” so John told Stewart “he had better leave, for he had killed a man.” Stewart had sprinted some twenty or twenty-five paces, John observed, when about a dozen men chased after him “throwing sticks and stones at him and anything they could get, swearing they would kill him.” Lee recalled that “the Mormons were yelling ‘Save him!’ and the settlers yelled ‘Kill him; d—n him!’” John hollered for Riley to circle back, believing “we could do better business when together.” Riley tried to run a circuitous route back. Then, according to Lee, who had never seen John before,

the Danite sign of distress was . . . given by John L. Butler, one of the captains of the Host of Israel. Butler was a brave, true man, and a leader that it was a pleasure to follow where duty called. Seeing the *sign*, I sprang to my feet and armed myself with one of the oak sticks. I did this because I was a Danite, and my oaths that I had taken required immediate action on my part, in support of the one giving the sign. I ran into the crowd.¹⁹

John chased after one pursuer who was drawing “a glittering dirk, the blade some six inches long, waving it in the air, and at the same time swearing it should drink Stewart’s heart’s blood.” Because the man was several steps ahead, John “sprang with all the power that was in me to overtake him before he met Stewart.” The man stuck the knife into Riley’s shoulder blade, bending the point an inch or more. At that moment John “reached forward as far as I could and hit him on the side of the head and fetched him helpless to the ground.” “The mobbers would have used Riley up,” John D. Lee and Levi Stewart said, “if Butler had not rescued him.”

As soon as John struck the man, a “loaded horse whip” smashed John between his shoulders. “It did not seem to hurt me much only I felt that I could take them all if they would come along. Just as the fellow struck me I turned round and struck an under handed lick and just fetched it under his chin and broke his jaw in two places, and down he came. And we had no more trouble with him.”

A non-Mormon youngster, Joseph McGee, who watched the fight, vividly recalled John’s fighting ability:

I saw one poor Mormon trying to make his escape from two Missourians who were pursuing him. He had a butcher knife sticking

between his shoulders. They would no doubt have succeeded in capturing him had not another Mormon by the name of John L. Butler seized a big club and rushing in between them and their victim dealt them such blows that he felled them both to the earth and allowed the Mormon . . . to escape.²⁰

“Captain Butler was then a stranger to me,” Lee said in his account, “and until I saw him give the Danite sign of distress, I had believed him to be one of the Missouri ruffians, who were our enemies.” Lee almost clobbered a Mormon by mistake, but a Missourian hit the man first, whereupon the man gave the distress sign, so Lee assisted him. Then, Lee continued, “Capt. Butler was attacked from all sides, but, being a powerful man, he used his oak club with effect and knocked a man down at each blow that he struck, and each man that felt the weight of his weapon was out of the fight for that day at least. Many of those that he came in contact with had to be carried from the field for surgical aid.”

According to John, Dick Weldon’s brother arrived, saw Dick “lying in his gore,” and vowed to kill every Mormon in the county. Washington Vorheis, a Mormon, knocked the agitated man flat with a large rock. The surprised man rose with his mouth badly cut and bleeding, and, John noted with some glee, began to cry: “They had killed Dick and smashed his mouth boo, hoo, hoo, and off he ran bellowing in the brush.” John looked for candidate Peniston “to get a good clip at him,” but the man “ran up to the Grocery on the hill” and escaped.

John also recalled a strange, accidental weapon which helped the beleaguered Saints. Brother Olmstead, before the fight, was carrying a half-dozen earthen bowls with cups and saucers wrapped in a new cotton handkerchief tied to his wrist. When a mobber struck him he raised his arm in self-defense, and the blow shattered the dishes. Olmstead then grasped the bundle of broken pottery and swung it like a weapon. “When the affray was over,” John noted, “I saw him empty out his broken earthenware on the ground in pieces not larger than a dollar and his handkerchief looked like it had been chewed by a cow. I have thought ever since that time that they had fun to pick the pieces of earthen ware from their heads, for they certainly were pretty well filled.”

Lee called the affair spirited but short. “The severe treatment of the mob by the Danites,” he boasted, “soon ended the battle.” Nine men, he counted, had their skulls broken and many others were seriously injured.²¹ John said thirty men had their heads bloodied, and that he knocked down six or eight himself. (His prowess became legendary, for in 1840 Sidney Rigdon said that John “with his own hands whipped some twenty men.”²²) None of the injuries proved fatal.

"I never struck a man a second time," John noted. He had felt a surge of almost superhuman power while defending his brethren. "I felt like I was seven or eight feet high and my arms three or four feet long, for I certainly ran faster than I ever did before and could reach further and hit a man, and they could not reach me to harm me." In retrospect, and with a strange twist of logic, John wondered if perhaps God had used him at Gallatin to save the souls of the Missourians by preventing them from becoming murderers. John said that later, while in Nauvoo, "the thing opened up to my mind that I was operated upon by a spirit to save them by knocking them down to keep them from killing the saints which would have sealed their damnation."

Young Joseph McGee termed the election brawl "the great knock down between the Mormons and the Missourians." He had witnessed many "knock downs," he said, "but none on so grand a scale. Pistols were not used. Rocks and clubs were in demand, and an occasional butcher knife slipped in."²³ John considered the affair, which lasted but "two minutes from the first to the last blow," a minor fracas compared to election fights in Kentucky. Back home he had watched combatants "fighting through each other for six or eight minutes with clubs, knives, [and] brickbats." But such fights had "not the tenth part of the execution done," meaning men eliminated from the contest, as the Gallatin battle produced.

Retreats and Rumors

When the fighting stopped, both sides treated their injured. Riley Stewart, whom the Missourians dearly wanted to capture and punish for what he did to Dick Weldon, crossed the Grand River to dress his wounds. "After the violence had ceased," John D. Lee said:

Captain Butler called the Mormons to him, and as he stood on a pile of building timber, he made a speech to the brethren. He said that his ancestors had served in the war of the Revolution to establish a free and independent government—one in which all men had equal rights and privileges; that he professed to be half [hale?] white and free born, and claimed a right to enjoy his constitutional privileges, and would have his rights as a citizen, if he had to fight for them; that as to his religion, it was a matter between his God and himself, and was no man's business; that he would vote, and would die before he would be driven from the polls.²⁴

John's version of this speech says that "we gathered our men on some hewn house logs and told the mob that we would fight as long as blood run warm in our veins, if they still persisted, but they begged for peace after they saw their men lying round." An election officer came to John "and said we could come to vote, but I told him that I did not care whether I voted or not." The man persisted, so John started to walk back towards the polling house, and Missourians backed away to clear a path for him. "I had not yet put down my stick, and he saw it, and said, 'For God's sake put down your stick, there is no use for it now.' But I told him that I had no weapon and I did not care about leaving it, for it had been a good friend to me. 'For God's sake don't come here then.' So I turned back and he kept on. It was only a bite to draw me in."

John "saw that if I went in the poll box, they would be all round me and thus take me prisoner, and so I declined voting." The Missourians wanted to take John prisoner because they blamed him "for some of their men who were dead and would die," though none did. John told them he was a law abiding man and "did not intend to be tried by a mob." Recruits began arriving in small parties, "cursing and swearing, and armed with clubs, pistols, dirks, and some guns." The Mormons, being unarmed, knew it was time to head for safety. Samuel Smith, the prophet's brother and John's neighbor, came to John and said, "let us go home." John rode with Samuel, apparently on horseback, to where he had left his wagon, but the wagon was missing. Samuel took John to the Smith home, approximately three miles from the Butler home.

Meanwhile, Brother Gee had started home with John's team. Caroline Butler was outdoors and saw the wagon coming. She went to meet it but saw only one man in it, standing up and whipping the horses along at full speed. Caroline, by then some distance from the house, met the upset driver. "Why Brother Gee," she asked, "what in the world is the matter? Where is Mr. Butler?" Surprised, he asked, "Why, isn't John Butler come home? I thought that he would have been home by this. He has killed five or six men at the Election." Gee drove past Caroline, stopped at the house, leaped out, and started for home, leaving the horses for Caroline to unhitch. "She took them off the wagon and fed them," John said, "and then waited anxiously for my return," which did not happen that night.

In Joseph McGee's view, the Missourians were victorious at the "knock down."²⁵ Most accounts agree that John's actions ended the fighting, that the Mormons claimed victory, and that but few if any Mormons voted.²⁶ Lyman Wight, who came from Diahman soon after the election fight, said he "was followed to the polls by three ruffians with stones in their hands" who were "swearing they would kill me if I voted." Wight implies that he voted. John said

he himself did not vote.²⁷ When votes were counted later, Peniston was defeated, and John Williams was elected the county's state representative.²⁸

Meanwhile, Levi Stewart and John D. Lee fled the fight scene and rushed to their homes in the Honey Creek settlement. Being but five miles from Gallatin, and because Riley Stewart lived among them, the Mormons there feared swift retaliation by the Missourians. They hid their families in a thicket of hazel bush and guarded them through the night "while the women and children lay on the ground in the rain."²⁹

John did not return to his family until the next morning. His autobiography does not say why, but most probably he spent the afternoon, evening, and night doing militia service. As a Danite and Host of Israel captain, he had a major responsibility for the protection and defense of his Marrowbone settlement. During his absence from home, most likely he was coordinating efforts to ensure the safety of neighbors, scouting, patrolling, and on guard duty.

Apparently none of the men felt it was safe enough for them to leave their families and neighborhoods long enough to ride to Far West or to Diahman with news of the fight. Not until the next day did word of the Gallatin affair reach the two Mormon centers, news brought by nonmembers who related false information. The initial reports, which leaders later said were false rumors purposely created to make Saints resort to aggression, said that a mob had killed two of the Mormons who tried to vote. Informants added that Missourians would not allow the bodies to be taken and buried and that Daviess residents were determined to drive the Saints from the county.³⁰ "There was a great fight on the election ground in Gallatin," Diahman Saints heard. "Trouble has began in real earnest—for stabbing with knives, throwing of stones, clubs, staves, &c., is the order of the day, in every direction. Brother Butler knocked down and laid open, in a frightful manner, the skulls of several citizens, with a bludgeon."³¹

Diahman military leaders quickly called together nearly 200 armed men to defend the town from an attack "that was hourly expected." Women and children were collected into one place and guarded. Anticipating a lengthy siege, men butchered two beeves and cooked up cornmeal for an emergency food supply.³² Reed Peck recalled that "an exaggerated account of a bloody massacre of some of the Mormons was rapidly circulated through Caldwell County," causing 150 Danites/militiamen to ride hurriedly toward Gallatin to protect and rescue Saints in the vicinity.³³

Prophetic Warning

On Tuesday, the morning after the election fight, John had breakfast with Samuel Smith. He checked on his family and then rode some fourteen miles to

Far West and gave Joseph Smith a firsthand account of the fight, apparently just before Joseph led a group of men to Diahman. The Prophet gave John a direct command. "He asked me if I had removed my family. I told him no, I had not. Then, says he, 'Go and move them directly and do not sleep another night there.' 'But,' said I, 'I don't like to be a coward.' 'Go and do as I tell you,' said he."

John returned to his home two hours after dark. He told Caroline: "We must pack up our things and leave here directly, for Brother Joseph has told me to." She was "very glad," John said, for "she had been wanting to move for a long time." During the night they loaded one wagon and drove it about a mile-and-a-half down to Levi Taylor's home. Caroline and Melinda Porter, their boarder, packed up another wagonload by the time John returned. "We all started off about the break of day," he said, and went again to the Taylors'.

At sunrise or soon after, Brother Gee saw a large party of men approach and surround the Butlers' house. Thinking the Butlers were still at home and in great danger, he ran down to Levi Taylor's for help. He was thrilled to find the Butlers there. Said John: "I then saw the hand of the Lord in guiding Brother Joseph Smith to direct me to move my family away, for if he had not, why in all probability we should all have been murder'd, and I felt to thank God with all my heart and soul."

John drove one wagon to Far West that day, and Caroline followed the next day with the other wagon. Why the Butlers moved to Far West rather than Diahman, headquarters for John's military unit, is not clear. John and Caroline took up residence on the Follett farm west of Far West. Their decision not to resettle on the farm they had occupied a few months earlier indicates that they had probably rented or leased it to someone else. John does not record where his mother and his brothers were then living. Within three or four days following the election, most Marrowbone and Honey Creek settlers deserted their homes and moved to Diahman or south to Far West for mutual protection.

Among the Saints, in the midst of war fears and preparations, John became something of a hero whenever the election battle was talked about. When Joseph Smith's official history dealing with 1838 was compiled in 1845 (after Joseph's death), it paid special tribute to John and others involved in the election fight: "Blessed be the memory of those few brethren who contended so strenuously for their constitutional rights and religious freedom against such an overwhelming force of desperadoes!"³⁴

Around Gallatin, however, "some of the citizens threatened those Mormons that had distinguished themselves in the battle," John Corrill noted. Hardly had blood dried on John's oak club before wild rumors and reports rippled through

Daviess and surrounding counties, mentioning him by name. Unfortunately, though no one died, earliest reports of the fight claimed that the Mormons had killed several men at Gallatin. Outraged at the thought, many Missouri citizens planned retaliations.

News of the election fight, like a burst of wind on hot coals, ignited into flames many resentments already smoldering across Upper Missouri among non-Mormons and Mormons alike. As subsequent events soon made clear, “the excitement did not terminate with the fight.”³⁵

CHAPTER SEVEN

Losing a Civil War

The fortunes of the Butler family faded fast during the eight short weeks following John's election-day brawl. Civil strife escalated into warfare that cost them dearly, as they suddenly lost four parcels of land and two cabins.¹ They could not harvest their Marrowbone corn and they lost their hogs, so food became short. Rumors regularly circulated that armed Missourians were headed their way, which created constant worry. Close friends were killed and wounded at the Battle of Crooked River and at Haun's Mill. Danite responsibilities and army duty kept John away much of the time. When the Saints finally lost what amounted to a civil war fought in three counties, John took flight to avoid arrest.

Danite/Militia Duty

Histories identify dozens of acts, reactions, and encounters that occurred between the election brawl on August 6 and the capture of Far West in early November that comprise the Mormon War. John participated in many of the war's movements, but his autobiography skims over his actual military work in favor of a short summary statement of events prior to Far West's fall: "The Saints were still persecuted in every corner." Fortunately, records kept by others provide a few glimpses of his military activity.²

Early on August 8, with a two-day-old bruise on his back, John drove one wagon load of his family's goods to Far West. Then he rode north, passing near his deserted Marrowbone farm, and joined LDS militiamen and Danites

assembling at Diahman. Joseph Smith assumed command of the armed forces gathering there and sent three Danite leaders to visit Judge Adam Black, a mile from Diahman, and demand he sign a prepared note agreeing not to join or assist anti-Mormon mobs. When he refused, Joseph Smith led a posse of about one hundred men, including John Butler, to the judge's house and surrounded it. Judge Black recognized John and several of the other mounted men.³ The judge, known to favor expulsion of the Mormons from the county, reluctantly signed his own statement that he would not "attach" himself to any mob.⁴ Mormon riders then visited other leading citizens in the county, including the sheriff, asking them to sign similar statements.

Such intimidations seemed appropriate to the Mormons in the wake of constant rumors warning that Missourians were massing to come against them. But filtered news that a small Mormon army had threatened a judge intensified local feelings against the Saints. Because some in the Mormon posse had come from Caldwell County, the group broke a Missouri law banning armed forces from passing from one county to another without official permission.⁵ The next day, with angry Missourians preparing to shed Mormon blood, a delegation of local citizens met with LDS leaders and both sides agreed to uphold the law. Mormon militiamen returned to their homes.

Meanwhile, Judge Black, accompanied by two friends, rode to Ray County and filed exaggerated charges that some five hundred Mormons had threatened to kill him and others and to drive old citizens out of Daviess County. Their complaints produced writs for the arrest of several in the posse who had been at the judge's home. The judge named John Butler as one of the posse, so it is probable that an arrest warrant was issued for him.⁶ On August 16 Joseph Smith refused to be tried on the writ anywhere in Daviess County, believing he could not receive a fair trial there. His refusal fed local beliefs that Mormons had decided to ignore Missouri law.

Finally, after delays and compromises, Judge Austin King, a circuit judge not of Daviess County, agreed to handle the matter. On September 7 an outdoor hearing was conducted barely inside Daviess County, close enough to Caldwell County for Far West men to rescue Joseph Smith if needed. While evidence did not support charges of Mormon lawlessness, Judge King, to keep peace, ordered Joseph Smith, Lyman Wight, and George W. Robinson to appear before a grand jury trial on misdemeanor charges in November. Others accused by Judge Black were called to a court of inquiry on September 18. Three magistrates, convening under the protection of General David R. Atchison, heard evidence then bound the defendants over on misdemeanor charges for the November trial. It is not known if John was among those charged in this case.⁷ The *Missouri Republican*

Daily reported that General Atchison's investigation convinced him that Judge Black's charges of murder threats "were entirely false and groundless" and that the Mormons, not Black, were the injured party.⁸

Too Many Armed Men

Captain John Butler was originally part of the Daviess County Danites and militia, assigned to the Diahman command. By moving to Far West he most likely became part of the militia structure in that section, but LDS troops moved back and forth between the two settlements, as needs required. Young non-Mormon Joseph McGee lived near the road connecting Far West and Diahman. He said it "was constantly filled with Mormon troops going backward and forward between those two places."⁹ Among Mormons and non-Mormons groups formed, dissolved, reformed, marched here and rode there. John's memory in 1859, unaided by a journal, could not have recalled, and did not, very much about his militia comings and goings late in 1838.

At Far West, Warren Foote noted what being on constant military alert was like. "The Malitia of this county, who were all 'Mormons' had been ordered to meet at this place, to take measures to defend themselves against the mob." Foote wrote on September 6, the day before the Judge King hearing just across the county line, that "the Malitia at Far West, were ordered not to leave that place under penalty of law, but to hold themselves as minutemen, and be ready at a moment's warning, armed and equipped to repel the mob." When the hearing ended peacefully two days later, Foote wrote that "the Malitia were granted the privilege of returning home today." In another two days, Foote said, the militia at Far West was again assembled, and some were sent to Diahman, but after three days most of the militia disbanded. A month later Foote attended a Sunday church meeting, but "just as the meeting closed, there was an alarm given, that a company of armed men were approaching the town from the south. The men immediately ran for their guns."¹⁰

Early in September vigilante groups were forming in eleven counties to drive the Saints from Daviess County. Armed groups of men, the Saints discovered, could appear anywhere in the county. At Joseph Smith's outdoor hearing on September 7, an armed crowd of Daviess County residents watched, while the Far West militia stood ready for action a half-mile away. By September 10, vigilantes from Daviess, Clinton, and Livingston counties started to harass Mormon settlers, taking prisoners and arms. Hearing rumors that those forces would move against Diahman, the Diahman militia prepared for a siege, sent out spies, and captured forty-five rifles and three gun runners headed for the vigilantes. Judge King called out the state militia, so General Atchison ordered

two hundred state troops from Clay County and two hundred more from Ray County to head for Daviess County. On September 12, sixty heavily armed locals entered DeWitt and ordered Mormons to leave. These sixty became part of a larger force of some one hundred and fifty men from Carroll County that Dr. W. W. Austin led into Daviess County and camped near Gallatin. Mormons mustered three hundred to four hundred men at Diahman to counter Austin's men. To keep the two armies apart, General Atchison's four hundred Missouri soldiers positioned themselves between them. After Atchison convened the September 18 hearing regarding Judge Black's charges (noted above), hostile forces from outside the county disbanded.¹¹

Daviess residents offered to buy out or sell out to the Saints, and if that failed, to force Mormons from the county. Many agreed to sell to the Mormons, so land exchanges began. "Davis County is now in the possession of the Brethren," Albert P. Rockwood reported on October 6.¹² But local citizenry became aggressive again. Early in October armed citizenry assaulted DeWitt, in Carroll County, where approximately seventy Mormons tried to repulse them. Reinforcements swelled the attackers' ranks to between four and five hundred men. Dr. Austin turned over command to county militia leaders and "the vigilantes organized into a regular militia battalion," electing a brigadier-general, colonel, lieutenant-colonel, and major.¹³

On October 7 General Hiram G. Parks, sent to help stop hostilities, reported to General Atchison that "nothing seems so much in demand here (to hear the Carroll county men talk,) as Mormon scalps."¹⁴ Parks, fearing his men would join the vigilantes, marched them back to Richmond. Word came that Governor Boggs refused to interfere and that "the quarrel was between the Mormons and the mob."¹⁵ Outnumbered and lacking any civil support, Mormon Colonel George Hinkle, a DeWitt resident, agreed to surrender. Mormons left DeWitt on October 11. Seventy wagons moved the homeless to Caldwell and Daviess counties. They were paid for their town lots but not for other losses. Two small units of Missouri militia, perhaps one hundred men total, went to Far West on October 15.¹⁶

Spurred by success at DeWitt, vigilante leaders decided to march into Daviess County. They planned to drive the Saints out before they became too numerous—and before November 12 when the Saints could legally buy lands they had occupied as squatters at Diahman.¹⁷ General Atchison appealed in vain to Governor Boggs to "put down this spirit of mobocracy" and to end a bad situation that was "disgraceful to the State."¹⁸ Meanwhile, more than three hundred LDS militia reinforced the two hundred already at Diahman. Very likely Captain John Butler was there.

A State of War

For ten weeks after the election battle, nothing the Mormon Danites or militia units did “could seriously be construed as a Mormon attack.”¹⁹ Armed Mormons had been acting defensively, and a somewhat sympathetic sector of the public felt that “the Mormons would never act only upon the principle of Self defence.”²⁰ But when armed citizenry illegally pushed Saints from DeWitt and Carroll County, the course of the contest changed. On October 14 and 15 the Prophet made clear that henceforth there would be no turning of the other cheek. “Who is so big a fool as to cry the law! the law! when it is always administered against us and never in our favor?” he asked. “All are mob,” he was heard to say, including the governor, the militia, and the whole state. “We will not give another foot and I care not how many come against us, ten or ten thousand. God will send his Angels to our deliverance.”²¹ Latter-day Saint leaders decided that if the governor expected both sides to settle the matter themselves, then security required that Mormons take preemptive actions instead of merely reacting. Calculated nonviolence was discarded and replaced by a policy of clearing the countryside beyond Diahman and Far West of enemies.²²

Joseph Smith took command of all the Mormon military and vowed to use it “to put down the mob or die in the attempt.”²³ By then the Danite units were absorbed into “a single Mormon force with a consolidated command.” What had been “an elite group of defenders of the faith” was assimilated into the open organization, “which now conscripted every able-bodied man for community defense.”²⁴ Some LDS soldiers went forth believing that the Saints would soon start winning a series of victories leading to the Kingdom of God taking over the world, as prophesied in Daniel.²⁵

Mormon acts of defensive aggression cannot be understood without understanding that, in the eyes of the Mormons, a state of war had commenced. No longer did they see the contest merely as a civilian clash. No notarized declaration of war was pronounced and posted, but in attitude and militia conduct such was the case. Warren Foote, for example, struggling to have his journal make some sense of events in late October, wrote, “I shall merely give a brief account of our troubles in this war (for it cannot be called anything else).” Other of his entries speak of “the usages of war,” and “war times.”²⁶ “The Prophet, Joseph Smith, said it was civil war,” John D. Lee recalled, and “that by the rules of war each party was justified in spoiling his enemy.”²⁷ War, as LDS leaders knew, has different rules than those designed to handle civil and criminal problems during peacetime through sheriffs, justices of the peace, lawyers, and courts.

Marauding anti-Mormon bands were the most urgent problem the army had to deal with, but the Saints' food shortages were almost as worrisome. According to Joseph Smith's *History*, on October 9 "our provisions were entirely exhausted and we were worn out by continually standing guard." Food had become so scarce that some suffered severely.²⁸ On October 15, General Alexander Doniphan told the Saints that Carroll County vigilantes were marching again to Daviess County and that his own troops could not stop them. LDS military leaders decided to go to battle, if necessary, to stop the invasion. About three hundred troops marched into Daviess County, bringing the total of LDS militiamen there to about five hundred. John was among them. The plan was to fight, but snow, which fell fast and deep, interfered on October 17 and 18.²⁹ Missouri riders, meanwhile, drove Mormons living in isolated areas from their homes. Refugees streamed into Diahman and Far West, severely straining housing and food supplies. Mormon leaders faced a crisis in which hundreds of lives could be lost if food were not obtained.

During wartime, armies then and since have lived off the land in order to survive. LDS soldiers who were sent out on patrol were ordered to find their own food and to retake food, cattle, and property to replace that which Saints had lost to Missourians.³⁰ Warren Foote explained the survival policy quite plainly when writing about the October 17-21 period: "Now in order to sustain themselves, the Mormons took their enemies corn, cattle, hogs etc. according to the usages of war."³¹ This was war, Oliver Huntington said, and "if we must live in war, we must have something to eat."³²

John's autobiography does not indicate that the Butlers were seriously hungry. Probably their situation was like those who could say: "Our wants were mostly supplied; not because we had so much, but because we had learned to lessen our wants."³³ Poorly clad and meagerly fed Saints suffered intensely when the snows fell. Most vulnerable were the elderly and the mothers with babies, who badly needed blankets, beds, coats, and food. Benjamin F. Johnson saw among the refugees "immeasurable suffering." So many of them had cattle, grain, hogs, and supplies out in the countryside but could not go out and retrieve them. The only chance for survival, Johnson said, was "to go out in foraging companies and bring in what we could find without regard to ownership."³⁴ John felt the same way, as time would show.

Defensive Raids

On October 18 word reached Diahman that mobs were burning houses in Daviess County, forcing women and children to flee for safety. One who fled was Joseph Smith's sister-in-law Agnes M. Smith, whose house had been

plundered and burned, forcing her to travel nearly three miles and wade the Grand River carrying two small children.³⁵ That day, with weather improved and despite eight inches of snow on the ground, the Mormons launched four defensive operations, one of which John participated in.³⁶ Their military purposes were several: to rescue endangered Saints in the countryside, to spy, to find and drive off vigilantes plundering in the county, to destroy buildings housing enemy sympathizers or supplies, to retaliate in kind for Mormon homes that had been burned, to retrieve Saints' possessions from cabins and farms they had deserted, and to forage for food, clothing, bedding, and supplies to support the army and the hard-pressed families at Far West and Diahman. Killing was not part of the plan, and none occurred.

Of the four companies, Jonathan Dunham's men, who were on foot, were a roving group. Lyman Wight's eighty riders entered Millport, the enemy's headquarters, and found the town deserted. They raided and burned houses, including the home of William Peniston, who had incited the election fight. This was the first of two preemptive destructions of non-Mormon centers of the county.³⁷ As a second preemptive strike, the third company, Apostle David Patten's posse of 150 men, rode into Gallatin. They scared away a small group of Missourians and took possession of the town. In retaliation for damages done to the Saints at DeWitt, and to obtain food and supplies for themselves and refugees, they rounded up clothes, bedding, and merchandise and carried it back to Diahman. They also captured a cannon intended to be used against the Saints. Before leaving they torched several buildings.³⁸

There is no question that Latter-day Saint rangers burned buildings at Millport and Gallatin. In Oliver Huntington's view of non-Mormon and Mormon sorties, "both seemed to be mutually agreed to rob and plunder all they could."³⁹ In peacetime such acts are arson, vandalism, and robbery—clearly crimes. But in wartime they are military actions serving strategic purposes.

Mounted on Joseph Smith's horse, Captain Butler rode with the fourth company, Seymour Brunson's unit of about one hundred horsemen. They trotted to the Grindstone Forks area in Clinton County, on Caldwell County's west side. There, rumor purported, a large vigilante force was organizing. Along the way Brunson's men drove some settlers from their homes, confiscated belongings, and burned a few houses. At Grindstone Forks they discovered that seven Mormon homes had been burned. Local residents, they learned, had also hidden a cache of arms and munitions to be used against the Saints. Reacting to the arson and the arms cache, Brunson's men ordered the Missouri residents to vacate, taking only what belongings they could carry. Captain Butler and the

other riders then took belongings left behind by the Missourians and torched some homes as retaliation for the burning of Mormon homes there.⁴⁰

Benjamin F. Johnson, in one of the other companies, participated in a raid on “Taylor’s settlement” on the Grand River and then took a circuitous route home. Johnson’s group approached the Grindstone Forks area where the Brunson company had just been. Johnson and his companions found an empty house, went inside, built a fire, and stretched out on deer skins. They slept perhaps two hours when, Johnson said, a voice suddenly woke them:

“Who is there?” was repeated again and again. More asleep than awake I answered, “Me!” “What’s your name?” came next, and I said, “Benjamin F. Johnson.” My name was passed around the house and I knew we were surrounded. Directly I heard one of the party say, “I know him,” and he at once dismounted and came in. I saw it was Brother John Butler, whose acquaintance I had made in a snowstorm a few days before.

During the earlier meeting Benjamin had noticed that John, “one of our most valiant men,” had nothing “but some green cowhide on his feet as moccasins.” So Benjamin had given John “my only shoes.” Benjamin, knowing he and his men were lost, asked John where they were. John said they were on the right road but about nine miles from home. According to Benjamin, John “had been out on special commission and was riding the Prophet’s black horse, ‘Charley.’ He told his companions to return to Diahman, and that he would remain with us, which he did.”⁴¹

The next morning John led Benjamin and his companions about two miles “towards our enemies’ camp.” In the smoldering ruins of a house they found a flock of chickens, “one of which we soon had boiling with onions in a stray dinner pot.” They quickly ate the onions and chicken half-cooked, not wanting their enemies to find them. Nearby, they spied “an old bell cow, and cattle scattered about on the prairie.” John saw an opportunity. Benjamin said:

While we were getting our breakfast, which was not long, Brother Butler had taken a gourd shell with salt and commenced calling, “Sook bos! sook bos!” The bell cow at once started for the salt, with all the cattle after her, and soon he was ahead on old Charley with a herd of cattle following. As it went by us we fell in behind and followed to Diahman.⁴²

Phineas Richards said that during that week the elders “went at it and drove the mob by the hundreds, hunted them from every valley, from every secret place. They fled like wind . . . leaving their cannon and many other valuable things behind which were taken as spoil.”⁴³ John D. Lee, who was with Captain Dunham’s unit, said that “the men I was with took a large amount of loose property, but did not while I was with them burn any houses or murder any men. Yet we took what property we could find, especially provisions, fat cattle and arms and ammunition.”⁴⁴ Returning militiamen donated—consecrated—what they had foraged, including items retrieved from the Saints’ abandoned properties, at a storehouse kept by Bishop Vinson Knight at Diahman. John’s contingent brought to Diahman “nearly forty head of good beef cattle for our famishing people,” which were “consecrated” for Church use and penned. These cows, Johnson said, were “a godsend indeed, and so regarded by all.”⁴⁵ Butler’s work as a forager added luster to the hero image earned at the election fight.⁴⁶

Perhaps John’s feelings were similar to those of Bishop Vinson Knight, who told a friend a few months later that “I would not have you think that all that the Mormons have done is exactly right, but when men are pushed as were the Mormons they will do almost anything to save their lives and the lives of their families.”⁴⁷ John most likely would have said “amen” to Oliver Huntington’s plain and poignant explanation of why the raids were necessary:

Some might ask why did we take their cattle sheep honey etc. But as for this it is plain and evident, that when they had taken ours and driven all the farmers, or nearly all, into the cities and besieged us round about, that whoever went without [outside] must go in the night secretly or by a sufficient force to repel all invaders; that we must live; and as we were at open hostilities with each other, we must have the privilege, or take the privilege of retaking as much as they took from us; or in other words we must live.⁴⁸

Some Mormons plundered just for the joy of it, or to enrich themselves, or because they believed God wanted them to ruin the Gentiles. Sampson Avard apparently led a “maverick contingent” of Danites so engaged.⁴⁹ But such were extremists carrying out their own agendas and not what Church leaders ordered. “Men stole simply for the love of stealing,” John D. Lee observed, and committed “inexcusable acts of lawlessness.”⁵⁰ One Danite claimed that Avard ordered his men to “take to yourselves spoils of the goods of the ungodly

Gentiles” and to ruin the Gentiles by plundering them, whereupon Danite officers ignored his counsel.⁵¹ These enthusiastic thieves, who in John D. Lee’s eyes “were never really converted, were never really true Saints,” contributed more than anyone else to the evil Danite image that soon spread far and wide.⁵²

Mormon aggressions were primarily defensive in the face of offensive movements by others threatening them. Nevertheless, to Missourians unwilling to admit a state of war existed, and who had no way of seeing things from the Mormon point of view, these were “desperate crimes.”⁵³ In a war situation, John’s efforts were militarily praiseworthy in the eyes of his people and commanding officers. In peacetime, his actions would be considered criminal.

One wonders why John’s autobiography is silent about his military labors as a Danite and militiaman. Several reasons can be suggested. Possibly he lived to regret or at least feel dislike for the “war duty” he had to perform. Very likely he chose not to talk about Danites because by then the prevailing stereotype of the band as secret thugs was too hard to combat. Perhaps, as this chapter illustrates, too much explaining and writing would be required to tell his experiences properly, and he opted to let Joseph Smith’s history of the Mormon War, then in print, tell the details. Possibly, too, his silence had something to do with his taking a Danite oath of secrecy about Danite affairs.

One other possibility might outweigh the rest. The time period in which John wrote his autobiography, 1859 and 1860, could have caused the silence. Federal troops controlled Utah, and the recent Mountain Meadows Massacre had inflamed military and government investigators and public opinion, unleashing anew charges about Mormon Danites killing people. In that vengeful setting, John could have decided it was wise not to discuss Danites in his writings in case his pages fell into the hands of those bent on persecuting the Saints.

Short Civil War

When news about the four Mormon raids in and around Daviess County became public, it sounded the death knell for the Saints’ sojourn in Missouri. Reaction came swiftly and overwhelmingly. Civil war now was openly two sided. General Hiram Parks, who lacked enough reliable troops to intervene, reported to the state government that the Saints were now the aggressors.⁵⁴ Both sides continued to raid, take prisoners, pilfer, and destroy, while snow and cold weather caused great suffering among the Mormon and non-Mormon refugees. Mormon troops “completely gutted Daviess County,” a resident claimed.⁵⁵

Residents in nearby counties where Saints had been mistreated worried that armed Mormons might come their way. In anticipation of this, Captain Samuel Bogart's Ray County recruits disarmed or drove most Mormons from that county. On October 24, in violation of orders to patrol the county line, Bogart's men entered Caldwell County and captured two Mormon spies. To repel Bogart's invaders and to rescue the captives, Mormon militia led by Apostle David W. Patten moved toward them. The two opposing forces clashed in the Battle of Crooked River. Apparently John was not involved. Mormons routed Bogart's men, but three of them were killed, including Patten, and seven wounded. The Butlers' Kentucky friend James Hendricks was shot in the neck and paralyzed. Mormons thought they killed perhaps thirty Missourians but, in fact, killed only one and wounded six. John recorded simply that Patten was killed and Hendricks wounded. Apostle Patten's death stunned the Saints, for, as John D. Lee put it, "it was believed that God would defend the Saints" and "that all of the battles between Danites and Gentiles would end like the election fight at Gallatin, and that the only ones to be injured would be the Gentiles."⁵⁶

Wild reports of the battle told non-Mormons that Captain Bogart's company had been massacred. Reaction was instant, according to Generals Atchison and Doniphan:

The citizens of Daviess, Carroll, and some other northern counties have raised mob after mob for the last two months for the purpose of driving a community of fanatics, (called Mormons) from those counties and from the State. Those things have at length goaded the Mormons into a state of desperation that has now made them aggressors instead of acting on the defensive.⁵⁷

Missouri troops massed, and Governor Boggs issued private military orders to General John B. Clark to stop the Mormon defiance of law and their warfare. He instructed General Clark to take soldiers and march to northern Daviess County, unite with other forces already in the field, take command of them all, treat the Mormons as enemies, reinstate the citizens of Daviess into their homes, and block the retreat of Mormons to the north. The most famous, or infamous, of his instructions was that the Mormons "must be exterminated or driven from the State if necessary for the public peace."⁵⁸

The Saints, not aware of the size of army assembling to suppress them, prepared defenses at Diahman and Far West as best they could. Diahman had

1,000 people but only thirty to forty houses, so most families lived in tents or wagons despite winter weather. Far West, as of the summer, had about 150 houses and two hotels.⁵⁹ But by October refugees doubled its population to 4,000. According to Warren Foote, “many are camped out in the open weather, and are suffering in the cold.”⁶⁰ Colonel Wight commanded about three hundred men at Diahman and Colonel Hinkle six to seven hundred at Far West, including John.

For the Butlers and other residents, provisions ran low. Soap was rare, clothing and shoes were “dear,” and milk was becoming scarce. Pumpkins were plentiful several miles out of town, but there was little fruit within twenty miles.⁶¹ On October 22 Albert Rockwood described the city’s activity and the wide range of civil defense work being done by Danites/soldiers:

Far West is the head quarters of the Mormon war. The armies of Israel that were established by revelation from God are seen from my door every day with their Captains of 10s, 50s and 100. A portion of each Day is set apart for drill, after which they go to their several stations (viz): 2 companies of 10s are to provide the families with meal, 2 provide wood, 2 or 3 build cabins, 1 company of 10s collect and prepare arms, 1 company provide meat, 1 company are spies, one company are for express, 1 for guard, 2 companies are to gather in the families that are scattered over the counties in the vicinity, 1 company is to see to and provide for the sick, and the families of those that are off on duty. Others are employed in gathering provisions into the city.⁶²

The next day Rockwood noted the return of several mounted militiamen, among whom was perhaps John Butler:

Last night about 7 o’clock the cavelry that went from this place to Adam-ondi-Ahman came in under the tune of Yanke Duodle, their number was about 130[.] these are the horsemen of Isreall, President Rigdon gave them a short address suited to the occation when all the people said Amen.⁶³

John’s autobiography tells about a Missouri soldier named Nathan who visited the Butlers while John was away on some military assignment. Apparently this man was part of General Alexander Doniphan’s troops who approached Far West about October 28. John likely recorded the story to pay tribute to Nathan’s courage, to show that Missouri militiamen feared the

Mormons, and to explain that some Missourians liked the Saints. Nathan was part of “the mob” which approached Far West, John said, but was a draftee, not a volunteer. The Butlers were “well acquainted” with him. When Nathan’s captain ordered the men to make willow switches with which to beat the Mormons, Nathan refused. “I never done the Mormons any harm and they will not do me any harm,” he explained. Nathan said he was going into Far West to see an old friend. Soldiers warned him the Mormons would kill him. He said he was not afraid and walked into town and found the Butlers. “When he got there,” John said, “he told my mother that he had come to have some supper and stay all night.” He told her that the militia intended to “kill all the Mormons off” but he had not come to fight. Nathan’s comrades became worried when he did not return after three or four hours, so five or six men came “to fetch him away.” Nathan told them he planned to sleep that night with the Butlers, “that he was not going to sleep out of doors when he could sleep in a house.” At breakfast the next morning he told the Butlers “that if the mob drove the Mormons away that his house was a home for them as long as they had a mind to stay.” He left and, instead of rejoining the army, went back home. When soldiers came looking for him that day, Mother Butler told them he had headed for home.

For the Butlers and others bottled up in Far West, the twenty-four hour period from evening on October 30 to evening on October 31 was emotionally tense, taxing, and finally heartbreaking. By dusk on the 30th, Missouri troops—the column was a mile long—had moved menacingly towards the city. “The armies of Israel were soon in battle array to receive them,” reads Albert Rockwood’s diary entry.⁶⁴ Commander-in-chief Joseph Smith directed some three hundred men to form a defensive battle line. Unless John was out on spy or messenger duty, he was certainly in those ranks. When the feared army retreated, Far West men and helpers spent the entire night building breastworks out of wagons, planks, logs, and rails, behind which militiamen could position themselves and be protected. “About 40 fires can be seen in our enemies Camp,” Rockwood noted that night. “Little or no sleep in City last night,” he added; “Women were e[m]ployed in looking and picking the most valuable articles supposing a terrible battle would take place in the morning and perhaps evry house fired.” During the night, about one hundred reinforcements arrived from Diahman.⁶⁵

Wednesday, the 31st, became a day of watchful waiting. By morning, Far West’s makeshift barricade extended three-fourths of a mile along the city’s south side, with slight flanks at the ends.⁶⁶ Residents could only hope for two types of good news—an army pull-back or the arrival of government negotiators committed to working out a truce. About 8:00 A.M. the army moved “in line of

Battle” towards Far West but then, seeing the fortifications, retreated. After that, however, waves of bad news slowly suffocated the city as the hours plodded by. Mormon spies came in every few hours bringing news of mob depredations “in every quarter for miles around.” Reinforcements made the army facing Far West formidable. By 4:00 P.M., Rockwood said, about 2,200 horsemen and 1,000 foot soldiers had assembled. But, despite the worsening odds, he said, the Saints “all made up our minds to defend our city untill the last man should fall to the ground.”⁶⁷

During the day word reached Joseph Smith about a massacre of Saints the day before at Haun’s Mill about sixteen miles to the east, but he did not make it public knowledge immediately.⁶⁸ When the full facts about the tragedy became known, they revealed that eighteen Mormons had been killed and twelve to fifteen wounded by approximately 200 to 250 militia, mostly men from Livingston County, apparently without knowledge of the governor’s extermination order.⁶⁹ Victims included men, women, and children. Among the dead was Benjamin Lewis, the Butlers’ branch president in Kentucky. Friend David Lewis was among the wounded. In fairness, accepting that a war situation was in place, these killings should be considered not as murders committed by private citizens but as a military atrocity—“nothing more than the cruel results of war.”⁷⁰

Joseph Smith, hurting from news of the Haun’s Mill tragedy and realizing a massive Missouri army was ready to besiege Far West, decided to prevent further bloodshed if possible. He sent five negotiators—Colonel George Hinkle, W. W. Phelps, Reed Peck, John Corrill, and Arthur Morrison—to work out terms for peace. The negotiators met with acting commander General Samuel D. Lucas and Missouri militia officers. Apparently this is when the Saints first learned about the governor’s extermination order.⁷¹ The five were given no chance to discuss terms for peace but instead received blunt orders to surrender. Just before sunset, under false or misunderstood pretense, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, Lyman Wight, and George W. Robinson left the ramparts thinking they would be negotiating and were instantly taken prisoner.⁷²

John’s autobiography tells of the day when Joseph Smith was delivered into the Missouri militia’s hands, but he recorded what he heard over the years, not something he personally witnessed. John expressed his disdain for George Hinkle, a man John did not know personally, who he felt betrayed the Prophet:

While I was in Far West Joseph Smith and Hyrum were taken prisoners. A man by the name of Hinkle came to Brother Joseph and Hyrum and told them that the mob wanted to compromise with them,

but they must come unarmed, and so Brother Joseph and Hyrum went, and when they met so that they could see each other, this man pulled off his coat and stood with his back to them, that was [a signal] for them to come without arms. Well, they met, and this kind friend said, “Gentlemen, there are your prisoners.” So they just took them, and of all the yelling and whooping, cursing and swearing, it was done then. Some of the brethren went with Joseph and Hyrum.

Defeated City

When night encased Far West in blackness, the Butlers and other very tired residents pondered their dire situation. The fighting had ended, and the “Mormon War” in Missouri was over. They debated Joseph Smith’s fate and reacted to the shocking news of the governor’s extermination order. Oliver Huntington, like many Saints, understood the edict to mean that if they were not out of Missouri by the next spring, “the Governor has ordered us all to be killed.” Although John did not record his reaction, he no doubt felt, like Huntington, that “this was dreadful news, and came like deafening peals of thunder.”⁷³

John recollected that during the night a brother named Daniels⁷⁴ “was so mad that he went and got an old horse pistol and loaded it pretty heavy and then crawled out in the brush and fired it off.” This little act of defiance scared the Missouri night guards. According to John, “the confusion in their camp was laughable for their officers gave command to their men ‘fall into rank and prepare your arms, for the Mormons are upon us,’ and they surely thought that it was so.” But after the guards “heard no Mormons coming and all was quiet again; they went back to their fires and some went to bed.” But the excitement was not over. “After awhile ‘whang’ went the old pistol again, and they did not know what to do. They mustered together again and got ready to kill every ‘damn Mormon’ that came in sight, but none came in sight, so they went to bed again, and so he [Daniels] kept it up till morning.”

Through the next week, soldiers controlled the lives of the Saints in Far West and Diahman. Latter-day Saint prisoners were taken out of the county to be jailed and tried. Mormon men at Far West and Diahman were disarmed. Some five hundred Mormons were forced to deed over their land titles to the state of Missouri to help defray Mormon War expenses. Soldiers paraded en masse through Far West and conducted searches for weapons. Some soldiers plundered and damaged Mormon property by tearing up floors and ruining haystacks while supposedly looking for guns, shooting hogs and cattle wantonly, taking turkeys and chickens, and letting their horses trample grain fields.

Another fifty Mormon men were identified as law-breakers, arrested, and sent off to prison. Consecrated properties deposited at Diahman by John and other Mormon raiders were captured and made available to Missouri residents wanting to claim them. For the Butlers this was a bitter week.

John's autobiography records several episodes relating to this period of army occupation. He particularly relished little acts his people did to defy the soldiers. Regarding the surrender of arms in which he participated on November 1, for example, John wrote:

They still kept guard about the place, and they took a great many prisoners, some forty or fifty, and they were hunting pretty close after me, but I kept myself from being known by them. They all formed a hollow square, and gave orders for the Mormons to bring all their arms and lay them down in the square, so I went and got my rifle and sword. It was counselled by the brethren to lay down our arms for it would be better for Joseph and Hyrum. I laid down mine.

But John admired Alexander McRae⁷⁵ for protesting during the disarmament spectacle:

There was one man came to lay his arms down, and he walked into the middle of the square and looked around him upon the black looking villains. And then swung his sword around his head and threw it, point foremost till it struck the ground and buried it in the ground eight or ten inches, and said "if you have got my arms you have not got my spunk."

One of John's granddaughters said that John called the surrendering of his arms "the hardest thing he ever did."⁷⁶ With the weapons confiscated, the soldiers marched John and the other disarmed men back into Far West, under guard. Later that day 2,500 of General Lucas's troops paraded through the streets of Far West, some taunting the Mormon soldiers and Danites. Knowing the army intended to arrest many Mormon militiamen, John hid out that day and prepared to escape that night. During the day he was almost captured but was saved by Caroline's quick thinking:

They came back and surrounded the city and was going to take all the males prisoners, and through the day we had to hide anywhere that we could. I had my horse hitched inside the field, my wife was at Brother Hendricks's. As I went to get my horse I took my bridal off the pickets, and was going to get him, and my wife came and snatched the bridle of me and went and hung it back on the pickets. I never spoke, neither did

my wife, but she came and took me out again and told me that there had been six men watching my horse for to get me for the last three or four hours. As it happened while this transpired they were reading a piece of paper, so that they saw nothing and suspected nothing.

Missourians, John said, “kept a guard round the city” that night. Between sixty and one hundred men, fearing arrest, chose to slip away from Far West and Diahman and flee from Missouri.⁷⁷ John needed one more day before he felt he could make his escape. He decided that if he must be a fugitive, what better way to move from place to place than to be a missionary? Therefore “the night after the mob took Brother Joseph and Hyrum,” he said, “I asked Brother Isaac Morley to ordain me to the office of a Priest and I would join some Elder and help to roll forth the Kingdom of God.” Brother Morley complied by giving John a higher ordination, to the Melchizedek Priesthood: “He laid his hands upon me and ordained me to the office of an Elder.” Church priesthood practices at that time stated that men were ordained according to Church needs and not simply promoted through a series of priesthood offices. Aaronic priesthood offices of deacon, teacher, and priest were filled by adults, not boys and young men. When a man was sent forth as a missionary, he needed to be a priest or elder.⁷⁸

On November 2, the second day of the surrender, distrustful Mormons were called to the town square by beating drums. There, some five hundred men were required to deed their property to Missouri to pay for expenses of the war.⁷⁹ John boycotted the confiscation signings and instead hatched a legal plan with fourteen other men to dispose of their properties in a better way.⁸⁰ By written “deed of gift” they granted, bargained, sold, and conveyed their properties to David Fullmer, a Church elder, in return for five dollars apiece. John deeded 200.37 acres—the three land parcels in Daviess County and one in Caldwell.⁸¹ The land, to which each of the men held proper title from the Lexington land office, was to serve benevolent purposes for the Church. In part the contract reads:

But they [the sellers] do here state to the Church that when these lands are sold, Bishop Partridge is to have the fund and by him [it] is to be given to the most distressed of the sisters and their children. . . . Brother Fullmer is not to sell these lands to any one of the mob now under John B. Clark, this deed is to be held by Bishop Partridge until the money for the lands is paid.⁸²

With property matters taken care of, John sneaked out of Far West that night, November 2. On November 9, the deed was notarized by Judge Elias Higbee, a Mormon who still held his judgeship in Caldwell County, and entered into the county's deed record book. John's signature is absent because he was gone by then, but his "mark" is affixed. A notation by Judge Higbee says that the purpose of the transaction was so that the Church could sell the land "to get means from friends in Illinois and Ohio" to aid "our destitute women and children now hemmed in by one John B. Clark and his men."⁸³

Because popular opinion among Gentiles in upper Missouri blamed Mormons for causing the warfare, Judge Austin King conducted a biased investigation into alleged Mormon wrongdoings. At the Richmond Court of Inquiry held between November 12 and 29, 1838, he tried to determine if prosecutors' evidence warranted a trial of sixty-four Mormons accused of driving settlers from their homes, torching houses, and stealing property. A second focus was the Battle of Crooked River, and a third involved claims that Mormon leaders were guilty of treason. First witness Sampson Avard testified that he helped organize and direct Danite units but that such were subject to the LDS First Presidency. Mormon dissenters, some of whom Danites had helped flush from Far West, reinforced Avard's testimony that Joseph Smith directed Danite plundering in Daviess County. The few Mormon believers allowed to testify said nothing to refute the charges of Church-sanctioned Danites. Judge King ordered twenty-four defendants to stand trial, sent eleven to jail, and released twenty-nine. The inquiry failed to investigate anti-Mormon vigilante action, including the killings at Haun's Mill. Attempts in the state legislature to investigate the Mormon War fizzled. Joseph Smith, meanwhile, discredited Avard and other dissenters who had testified against the Church.⁸⁴

After the Richmond testimonies, Danites became legendary villains and bogeymen in the populace's imagination and sensational publications. Stories swirled around Missouri and beyond that portrayed Danites as feared gangs, bound by oaths of secrecy, who murdered and stole whenever Mormon leaders asked them to. Crimes allegedly committed in the Nauvoo area and later in Utah often were attributed to supposed Danites. Charges, rumors, and speculations that abounded during the nineteenth century periodically resurrect in this century. However, Danites ceased to exist following the Fall of Far West, and calims to the contrary are unsubstantiated.⁸⁵

When Far West surrendered and the Mormon War ended, the Butler family could be grateful Captain Butler had not been injured or killed during his assignments as a militiaman and Danite. But one wound the war did inflict on the family was John's being forced to flee and leave them behind. As it turned out, it would be four months before John would see his family again.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Winter Exodus to Illinois

Crossing a stream in the blackness of night, with frigid November water slapping at his bare chest, naked John Butler murmured for the first time in his life about being a Mormon. His unhappiness was in part due to lack of sleep for the previous two nights; leaving Caroline and the children behind made it worse. As long as he lived, he never forgot how disgruntled he felt on the night of November 2, 1838, when he made his escape from Far West:

Well, I went then to go through the guard which was not a very pleasant job. But however I started, and got along first rate with the help of God. But I had never felt to murmur till this time. I had to cross the creek and take off my clothes and tie them on my head and wade through. The banks on either side was almost straight up and down, and the water was bitter cold, and when the water came up to my breast it chilled me through, and then I felt to murmur by the time that I got out. But I prayed the Lord to bless me and give me his Holy Spirit to enable me to hold fast to the principle of eternal salvation.

Crossing the creek put John beyond the guards, but he still had to be very careful to avoid capture for many more miles and days. What route he walked is not discernible from his writings. He said he went to a Brother Hubbard's home where he stayed out of sight for four days. "I had to keep pretty close," he said. From there he slipped away to a Brother Head's home, where he stayed for a

little over two weeks. While there, when strangers asked him his name, the thirty-year-old fugitive answered two-thirds truthfully, “John Lowe.” Using this strategy, he “got along very well.” John, known as Captain Butler during the Mormon War, was one of dozens of Mormon husbands and fathers who that month were quietly and quickly finding ways to pass from Missouri without being identified and arrested.

On the Run

Many, if not most, of the Mormon militiamen who escaped and became fugitives headed for unsettled regions of present-day Iowa, sixty to eighty miles to the north. Charles C. Rich and Hosea Stout were among twenty-eight men who escaped in small clusters in that direction. Other men sneaked southward to the Missouri River and took boat passage downriver to St. Louis. A few went west to Ft. Leavenworth, just across the Missouri River in Kansas.¹

In December John began his secretive journey through the Missouri countryside on horseback, accompanied by Elias Higbee, who had been a captain-general of the Danites, and fellow Simpson County convert, David Lewis. “Myself and brethren stopped at a place one night,” John recalled, “and asked a man we saw if he could give us something to eat and a night’s lodging.” Apparently this was in Livingston or Carroll County. The “old man,” as John called him, asked where they were from. “I told him that we were from Clinton County” (a few miles west of his home), which was not true. “‘Oh,’ said he, ‘you are from the other side of the damn Mormons. And what are they doing at this time? They are getting rubbed out, ain’t they?’” John “answered that I did not know much about them.” “‘Yes,’” the man said, “‘you can stop all night, and welcome. I know you must be tired.’” The man told his wife to get a supper ready for the weary visitors. “So she bustled about and went to work and got us a good supper,” John said, “and then we had a little conversation, but I avoided Mormonism as much as possible, and answering questions about it.”

After the three Mormons went to bed, someone came to the house, called the old man by name, and told him to come down to the door “‘for there is a damn Mormon down here, come down from the Mormons to see his mother-in-law and sister. . . . Now, we are going to give him perfect hell.’” The man of the house declined the offer, saying he had company and could not leave them. “‘Well,’ said the fellow, ‘I am sorry, for I should like you to have the fun of the job as well as ourselves.’” The old man seemed curious: “‘What’s the fellow’s name?’” “‘I think it is Riley Stewart they call him,’” the ruffian answered and then left. John felt relieved, but he worried about Riley, the man John saved at the Gallatin election fight:

I thought that when he first came and told his tale and said that there was a Mormon here that some of the mob had got on our track and was going to have a go at us, but I found out afterwards that it was not us. I felt greatly relieved when I heard it although I felt sorry for Riley's condition for they were bound to ill-treat him if they caught him, which I hoped that they would not.

About ninety minutes later the ruffian returned and "said that they had done it [whipped Riley] for him. He said that they had lots of fun with him seeing him try to help himself." Stewart survived the beating and later was among the Saints in Nauvoo and in Utah.² David Lewis, who was with John, corroborated John's account:

In December 1838 I in company with John L. Butler and Elias Higby went in Illinois State to settle the affairs of my brother Benjamin that was killed. Where we stopped the first night, a large mob assembled late in the night and we at first supposed that they intended to abuse us. But we soon found that they was going to whip Riley Steward a Mormon that was at his mother-in-law's in that neighborhood, and wanted the assistance of our landlord; he refused his assistance, and told them he had the company of three Kentuckians, for thus we told him we was, and they left and severely beaten Steward as we was afterward informed.³

Near daylight John, Higbee, and Lewis left without breakfast. According to John:

We got up in the morning about daybreak, and I can tell you we was not long in getting away. We saddled our horses and got ready. And the old man said that we must stay to breakfast. But I told him that we were in somewhat of a hurry and that we would not stop. Well, he said that he was very sorry, but that we must have our own way. The old lady said that we must take some biscuits in our pockets to eat on the road, so we took them and started on our journey, wishing them good morning. I found out that Riley Stuart had caught hell sure enough as the fellow said. He was pounded over the head, and it liked to have killed him. He was laid up through it.

Despite snows, cold, and meager food, John reached safety in Quincy, Illinois, on the Mississippi River's east side across from Missouri. He either crossed the far northern edge of Missouri or the southern part of the Iowa

Territory. How long it took him to reach Quincy is not known. By roads of that day the distance from Far West to Quincy was about 180 miles. Other fugitives made the trek in eleven to fifteen days, averaging ten to fifteen miles per day.⁴

At Quincy, into which Mormons were continually streaming, John taught school for a short period. An old man who was sympathetic to the needy Mormons hired John to teach his children and grandchildren and a few neighbors' children—twenty or more students. John taught school into January, as did his friend “Brother Lewis”—probably David Lewis who had escaped with him. Otherwise, John marked time until his family and his mother and brothers could reach Quincy.

Wintering at Far West

On November 3, the day after John left, soldiers searched house to house in Far West looking for withheld weapons. They visited the Butler home and confronted Caroline. John reported what Caroline told them:

They came to my house and asked my wife for all the arms she had. She told them that I had given them all up. And the officer said, “have you not got any small arms such as revolvers or small pistols, bowie knives, or the like?” She said, “No, I have not, and if I had you would not get them, so you may as well be gone.” He answered and said, “We have come to search and take all we can find.” Well, she said, “you may search if you want to.” Well, he said, “I suppose we can take your word.” They then left and went somewhere else.

General John B. Clark arrived on November 4 and took command of army affairs. Saints were not allowed to go in or out of the city, and their main food was parched corn.⁵ General Clark conducted a two-day investigation of Mormon crimes, which led to his ordering fifty-six more men arrested and marched to Richmond for court hearings. John's name was not on the list.⁶ General Clark rebuked the Saints and urged them “to scatter abroad, and never organize yourselves with Bishops, Presidents, etc.” He gave the Saints, including John's wife and mother and both women's children, until spring to leave Missouri.

Meanwhile, up at Diahman, when soldiers tried to find out which men had been part of the raiding parties, the Saints would not cooperate. For safety's sake they conveniently blamed all supposed thefts on Danites who had already fled north and east. Danites became “the scapegoats of the people.” Such a handy place to hang the blame, however, saved Saints at Diahman from arrest, except

for one, Benjamin F. Johnson. During November the Diahman Saints were forced to move to Far West, which added to the refugee burden there.⁷

After John escaped, Caroline faced three difficult tasks. She had to worry about whether or not John had reached safety and how and when the family would see him again. He faced risks of capture, accident, injury, and sickness. Albert Rockwood noted on December 2, four weeks after John left, that of the “missing brethren” who had escaped, “we know not where they are among the Gentiles or Lamanites, But verry [sic] few of them have been heard of.”⁸

Caroline’s second task was to provide for the family. They faced winter deprived of the corn they had grown on their Marrowbone farm, which vigilantes had prevented them from harvesting. Butler family petitions filed later in Illinois for compensation from Missouri show food-related losses. John’s mother, Charity Butler, sought reimbursement for three acres of corn, two acres of oats, 700 bundles of corn fodder, hay, and sheep.⁹ John and Caroline sought compensation for 240 acres of land worth \$2,400, three yoke of oxen, a corn crop in Daviess County, and hogs.¹⁰ By late November, Rockwood said, most crops around Far West were unharvested because men had been too busy for eight weeks doing military duty to be able to work the farms. Potatoes still in the ground were “froze solid.” Theft by soldiers added to the distress: “Our houses are rifled & our sheep & hogs, & horses [are] drove off before our eyes by the Missourians who come in small companies well armed. Here is no law for poor Mormons.”¹¹

Caroline’s third task was one Governor Lilburn Boggs imposed on her. To respond to his extermination order, she had to find some way to move family belongings and the children from Missouri before spring.

John’s autobiography tells of two experiences at Far West that Caroline had with Emma Smith’s family while Joseph was in prison. Joseph Smith, Sr., announced in December that a prayer and fast meeting would be held to petition God in behalf of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, to “enable them to bear the cruelties that they had to suffer.” Mother Butler and Caroline went to the meeting about sunrise. When Saints arrived at the building they found the door locked, but there were people inside. They assumed those inside were praying. Then Joseph Smith, Sr., and Apostle John Taylor arrived. They learned that “some of the apostates” had occupied the building to prevent the Saints from holding their meeting. Then, John said,

He [Father Smith] called to them to open the door, but no one answered or took any notice whatever. By this time several had gathered together and some of them wanted to take an ax and cut the door down, so that

they could get [in]. But Father Smith said, “No, we must not do that.” And Brother Taylor said that “if they had deprived us of meeting in the house they could not deprive us of praying to God our Heavenly Father to look down in tender mercy upon His servants and enable them to bare their afflictions and the wrongs that they had to pass through.”

Father Smith decided to conduct the meeting in a nearby, smaller house. “They that cannot get inside can hear outside,” he said, “and we will have a good meeting, although the Devil has tried to frustrate our design.” The Saints did hold their meeting, John’s account continues, “and them that were there said that they never saw such a meeting. The Lord was with them, and that to bless and answer their prayers.” When the meeting broke up about 4:00 P.M., the apostates still occupied the larger building. Among the apostates, John said, were Whitmers, Thomas B. Marsh, “and a great many more.” John never heard what their business was, but he presumed it was “some plan to help and destroy Mormonism.”¹²

According to what John heard from Caroline, William E. McLellin, a former apostle turned apostate, stole some of Emma and Joseph’s personal belongings late in December.¹³

Him [McLellin] and another man went into Brother Joseph’s house and commenced searching over his things. And Sister Emma asked him why he done so for, and his answer was, because he could. He took all the jewelry out of Joseph’s box and took a lot of bed clothes and in fact, plundered the house and took the things off.

John recorded the theft story because Caroline had a chance to help Emma replace some needed items: “While Brother Joseph was in prison he suffered with the cold, and he sent home to his wife, Emma, to send him some quilts or bed cloths for they had no fire there and he had to have something to keep him from the cold.” Emma sent the bedding, but the donation left her family without enough covers in mid-winter. The Butlers rendered assistance:

My wife was up there when the word came, and she said that Sister Emma cried and said that they had taken all of her bed clothes, except one quilt and blanket, and what could she do? So my wife, with some other sisters said, “Send him them and we will see that you shall have something to cover you and your children.” My wife then went home and got some bed clothes and took them over to her.

Winter Exodus

Caroline and the children were deprived of John's protection and muscle in the heart of winter—December 1838 and January and February 1839. By late January, when legal protests against the expulsion order failed, Saints began forming a stream of evacuees that flowed for three months from Far West east toward the Mississippi River, mainly to Quincy, Illinois.¹⁴ Caroline had reason to fear the trek and camping out during unstable winter weather with four young children. Caroline could not care for small children and drive her wagon at the same time, and none of her children were old enough to drive yet. Needing a driver, she made a deal with Abraham O. Smoot and Martha, his bride of three months.¹⁵ The Smoots lacked a team, so their wagon was useless. Abraham agreed to drive the Butlers' wagon and two-horse team for Caroline, in return for which Caroline let the Smoots put their baggage into the light Butler wagon. The company included one man, two women, and children ages seven, four, three, and one.¹⁶

In February 1839 the Butlers and Smoots headed east for Quincy. "They started, but it was bitter cold, and they suffered fearfully," John recounted, "but by the help of God they were enabled to stand and bear it." Though she did not travel with Caroline's party, John's mother also left Missouri at this time with John's brothers, who were ages sixteen, fourteen, and twelve. John's married sister, Lucy (Mrs. Reuben) Allred, also left Missouri separately from Caroline. Mormon refugees moved as individual families or in small clusters of wagons rather than in large wagon trains. Their route curved southeasterly and then eastward, passing near present-day Keytesville and Huntsville, Missouri.

Soon after starting, Caroline's eyes became infected. Sister Smoot walked beside her and led her along for five or six days. Baggage filled the wagon, so Martha and Caroline probably took turns riding next to Abraham, the driver, while the other walked with and carried children. Some nights they had to scrape away snow beside the wagon in order to spread out beds on the ground.¹⁷ They averaged a meager ten miles per day. During the trek the three adults had cause to worry about wind, clouds, wet ground, cold temperatures, and health. By late afternoon each day they had to start searching for a campsite with feed for their horses and wood for a campfire.

John's autobiography is one of the richest records written about the Saints' winter exodus because he includes several human interest stories about the journey. These are stories which Caroline related to him, not experiences he had himself. For example, while the Smoots and Butlers were walking one cold day, as John heard it, they called at a nearby house and asked if they could warm the children. The man of the house, out in the yard, said yes, go in. But the wife met

them at the door and refused to let them enter. "I am afraid," she said, "that you Mormons are diseased and I don't want it to get into my family." Martha Smoot, offended, responded: "You will have it soon enough, if we do not bring it to you." With no warmth to be had there, the Butlers and Smoots moved on.

A second story tells of a kindness shown John's family. One day while Martha was sitting in the front of the wagon with three-year-old Keziah Butler on her lap, one of the horses began to kick. It struck Martha on the knees and Keziah above the eyes. Both screamed loudly, and Caroline ran back to aid them. She found them both bleeding badly. A woman living in a nearby house ran to learn what was wrong. Seeing the injuries, she rushed back to her house and brought back her camphor bottle, some brown paper, and a pan of warm water. She said she was sorry to see the Mormons suffer so much and be driven from their homes. Being close to a large number of Saints camped near the mouth of the Chariton River near present-day Keytesville, Missouri, Caroline went on ahead and brought back some elders who gave Martha and Keziah blessings. "They got some better," John wrote, although "the cork of the horse shoe was pretty sharp and the kick was a heavy one."



On another very cold day, while traveling, the children began to cry because of the cold. So the Butlers and Smoots went to a nearby home and asked the woman there if they could come in and warm themselves. She said nothing. They asked again. She made no answer. So they decided to walk in. While they crowded around the fire, the woman went into the next room and never spoke to them. After warming themselves, they started on the journey again. But the hard-heartedness of local residents, which the woman's silence seemed to show, made them sad.

When the Smoots and Butlers reached the mud-coated Mississippi River shoreline, they found plenty of timber. Abraham cut down a dry tree, piled up the branches, and ignited a very large fire. Soon the owner of the land came along and accused the group of wasting his wood. "There is plenty of it," Abraham said, "I don't think you will miss one old dry tree." "You think I can find no use for such wood?" the owner complained. "I can, so I want you to cut no more." Then the man left.

John, twenty years after the Missouri exodus, still felt enough resentment to pen in his autobiography his denunciation of the hard-heartedness that Missourians had shown his wife and children and Church authorities. Such souls, he wrote, "will have to suffer for the ill treatment of the Saints." God causes the prophecies of His servants to come to pass to the very letter, he added, so "they need not think that they will escape, for the Lord is just and He will punish those that have ill treated His children and shed the blood of His servants the Prophets." Had he lived five more years and read about how badly Missouri suffered during the Civil War, he might have seen that as confirmation of his faith that God "will not let His servants go unavenged."

Sheltered at Quincy

During their four-month separation, John and Caroline felt urgent concern about each other. John, in Quincy, inquired of arriving refugees about his family's whereabouts. On February 23, the Quincy Whig reported that Saints were "coming in from all quarters" and that "for several days they have been crossing at this place, bringing with them the wreck of what they could save from their ruthless oppressors."¹⁸ At one point John "heard of the Saints coming from Far West" so he crossed the river "to inquire for my wife." He finally learned that his family would arrive in a day or two. Rather than wait in Missouri, which was "enemy territory" where "all this time there were men all around watching and hunting for me up and down as if I were some wild beast of prey," he returned to Quincy. "They were not sharp enough to catch me," he boasted, "for the Lord was with me."

John's narration then editorializes about jailed LDS leaders who could not leave Missouri. With a bitter tone he wrote that Missourians, most of them Christians, captured several of "the brethren" and hauled them to prison "to answer for what they had never done." Some of these Bible believers "thought they were doing God service by taking these brethren and throwing them into prison." John compared such people to "folks in olden time when Jesus Christ was upon the earth and the Apostles" who persecuted these righteous men.

Caroline and the children reached the freezing Mississippi River on March 10 or 11, after a three-week journey, but they could not cross it. "The river was blocked with ice so that boats could not run," John said, so he rowed a canoe across to meet them. Their feelings upon being reunited after four months are not recorded but can be imagined. John failed to find a way to bring the Butlers' wagon across the river, so he spent the night in Missouri with his family. When morning came he and Abraham Smoot crossed over to Quincy in the canoe, leaving their families with the wagon. A day or two later a ferry finally dodged through the floating chunks of white ice and brought the women and children across.

Quincy was a new city, standing on the east bluffs overlooking a point at which the Mississippi River swings westward. It was named for John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, who had left office in 1833. Quincy boasted fertile soil which produced excellent grain crops as well as forests of oak, hickory, and walnut. Game abounded. German immigrants who first settled Quincy included skilled craftsmen and laborers who made the town a manufacturing center for stoves, plows, organs, furniture, carriages, and farm wagons.¹⁹

Many Quincyites were abolitionists, so during its first years Quincy became a station for the Underground Railroad. Slaves escaping from the slave state of Missouri could cross the river and find refuge in Quincy. Sympathizers hid the slaves until they could be sent to the next station and eventually to freedom in northern cities or Canada. Quincy's compassion for slaves fleeing Missouri readily transferred to Mormons fleeing Missouri.²⁰ Regarding the Mormon arrivals, the Quincy Whig said on February 23 that "They appear, so far as we have seen, to be a mild, inoffensive people, who could not have given cause for the persecution they have met with."²¹ Quincy's hospitality stemmed more from pity than from acceptance or mutual respect. While townspeople let the suffering Saints crowd into farms, sheds, huts, and tents, the refugees were thought to be "generally of the poorer and more illiterate classes."²²

Still, Quincyites opened their hearts and hearths to wave after wave of Mormon refugees who washed ashore, including the Butlers. On February 25,

1839, two weeks before Caroline crossed over, citizens met and adopted measures for the relief of the Mormons.²³ They asked a committee of LDS men for facts about the needy. The Mormon response, signed by John's traveling companion Elias Higbee and by John P. Greene, stated that "if we should say what our present wants are, it would be beyond all calculation; as we have been robbed of our corn, wheat, horses, cattle, cows, hogs, wearing apparel, houses and homes." The Mormons counted about twenty widows who were entirely destitute and innumerable able-bodied men who wanted to work but were "destitute of means to supply the immediate wants that the necessities of their families call for." "Give us employment," the committee pleaded, "rent us farms, and allow us the protection and privileges of other citizens."²⁴

Within days the Quincy committee passed a resolution which said that the Saints "are entitled to our sympathy and kindest regard." They formed another committee to squelch the raising or circulating of anti-Mormon "excitement." Any Mormons who because of sickness or destitution found themselves homeless, the committee decreed, should appeal directly to Quincy citizens for assistance. Further, the committee agreed to help find employment for those "who are able and willing to labor." "By every law of humanity," the committee said, the Saints "are entitled to our sympathy and commiseration."²⁵

Barely two weeks after these Quincy resolutions, John's family stepped ashore in Quincy. By then, according to Bishop Edward Partridge, Quincy was "full of our people."²⁶ Immediately the Butlers looked for a place to stay, for food, and for work. "We then had no place to go and it was bitter cold," John said. The old man for whom John taught school, whose name John forgot, treated them generously. The man operated a large butcher shop down by the river and a large wholesale store by the boat landing. He also owned and rented out ten or twelve small houses he had built. John said that when the man saw the plight of Mormon refugees pouring into Quincy, he told his tenants to seek other living quarters "for the Mormons were coming and they had no place to go and he was going to let his apartments to them."

The old man came to John and told him to bring his family up to one of his houses where they could live for awhile. The man never charged them rent. He then told the Butlers to go to his butcher shop and take meat when they wanted some. "There were three or four other families living close to us that were Mormons," John said; "they were living in his houses that were joining ours. He treated them all with kindness," which "seemed a new thing to us to be treated with so much kindness," John confessed. "The Lord opened their hearts so that His Saints should not suffer so much as they had done in the forepart of the

winter.” John observed that Quincy people “generally were kind” to the Saints “all over the place.”

Missouri was rid of its Mormon problem, except for a few jailed Latter-day Saint leaders. Attitudes then, and for a long time after, admitted that Missourians victimized the Mormons through extralegal force but asserted that the Mormons deserved it. “The Missourian throughout showed a characteristic impatience of legal formalities and determination to solve the problem by the most direct and expeditious methods,” a later history of northwest Missouri observed. “While the Mormons could secure no protection from the law, and in many cases were simply plundered, they were undesirable citizens and their expulsion, apart from the methods employed, was an advantage to the state.”²⁷

John and his family resided in Quincy for only three or four weeks. Perhaps John attended a Church conference, at which Apostle Brigham Young presided, in Quincy on March 17. By vote the conference excommunicated about a dozen dissenters who bore some blame for the Missouri troubles the previous summer and fall.²⁸

The Butlers, wanting to farm as early in the year as possible, moved about ten miles from Quincy—which direction is not stated. They rented a farm and planted, knowing that their stay would last only until Church leaders chose a new gathering place.

CHAPTER NINE

Illinois and Sioux Missions, 1839-1841

After the Butlers found safety in Quincy in March, they watched wave after wave of Mormon refugees flow into town during the next five weeks. By mid-April, residents of Caldwell and Daviess counties in Missouri enjoyed knowing that all the Mormons were gone and had left behind cabins, fences, farmlands, and belongings that could not be reclaimed. The homeless Latter-day Saints scattered in and around Quincy found cause to rejoice, however, for Joseph Smith escaped from Missouri and joined them on April 22. In an environment relatively free from persecution and hostile treatment, the Saints turned the year 1839 into a season for regathering and for rejuvenating Church programs, including missionary work.

When John wrote about Quincy and early Nauvoo matters, he made mistakes when it came to dates. He anchored his chronology on sequences as much as dates, but some dates cannot be right if his sequential order is accepted. Fortunately, corroborating records make more accurate dating possible for matters John addresses in his autobiography relating to the Quincy and Nauvoo years.

Petitions for Redress

Even before Joseph Smith reached Quincy, he instructed his people to record statements documenting their sufferings and losses over the years in Missouri. This instruction, later included in Doctrine and Covenants section 123, said in part:

We would suggest for your consideration the propriety of all the saints gathering up a knowledge of all the facts, and sufferings and abuses put upon them by the people of this state [Missouri]. And also of all the property and amount of damages which they have sustained, both of character and personal injuries, as well as real [estate] property. And also the names of all persons that have had a hand in their oppressions.¹

Making this record, Joseph Smith instructed the Saints, was “an imperative duty” that the Saints owed to God, to those who suffered, and to the rising generations.² In response, many visited local civil authorities and filed official statements. On May 6, 1839, John appeared before Carlo M. Woods, clerk of the circuit court for Adams County, Illinois, and filed a certified claim for “damages and losses” his family suffered in Missouri between 1836 and 1839.³ He asked for reimbursements for property loss and massive punitive damages for his family’s suffering and denial of civil rights, as listed below:

Expenses moving to Missouri	50
240 acres land	2,400
3 yoke of oxen	225
Crop of corn, fodder, hogs, sack of millstones, Daviess County	200
Plow and other farming tools	40
Moving from Missouri to Illinois	20
Exposure of health of family	10,000
Defamation of character and for citizenship	10,000
Total	22,935

John’s brother-in-law Reuben Allred documented a claim the same day, as did many other Saints.⁴ Mother Butler filed an affidavit a week later, seeking reimbursement for three acres of corn, two acres of oats, seven hundred bundles of corn fodder, sheep, and hay, and \$2,000 for privations and moving expenses.⁵ The Butler relatives’ claims were among 491 that Joseph Smith later took to Washington, D.C., and presented to Congress in hopes that the federal government would pay some of the damages.⁶ As a preface to these petitions, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee wrote a “Memorial” that reviewed in detail the wrongs endured by the Saints in the state of Missouri. Dated January 27, 1840, the statement devoted several lines to the Gallatin election battle. While it carefully avoided names of participants, including John,

it did show how that event was perceived and interpreted by Joseph Smith less than two years after it happened:

A mormon went to the polls to vote, when one of the mob standing by, opposed his voting; contending that a mormon had no more right to vote than a negro. One angry word brought on another until unfortunately blows ensued. They [Smith, Rigdon, and Higbee] are happy nevertheless to state that the mormon was not the aggressor; having acted as they believe entirely on the defensive. Others joined in the assault; not one or two, but many against the mormon. His brethren seeing him thus assailed by numbers and exposed to great bodily injury, interfered to rescue him from his perilous situation, when others of the mob came and joined in the affray; being determined, as they said, "that the mormons should not vote". A general riot now commenced; the mormons being determined to exercise the right of voting as citizens of the county; and the mob being equally determined that they should not—victory in this instance decided on the side of right.⁷

Armed with affidavits, Joseph Smith personally led a Mormon delegation to Washington, D.C., late in 1839 to formally seek redress from the federal government.⁸ They met with President Martin Van Buren, who apparently said, "Your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you."⁹ They filed the memorial and petitions, including John's, with the Senate Judiciary Committee, who shortly rejected it.¹⁰ The original affidavits were brought back to Nauvoo and are now in the LDS Church Historical Department archives.¹¹

Church leaders sent off other appeals. In the fall of 1844, 3,419 Saints signed a fifty-foot-long petition as part of a final appeal to Congress for redress. John signed it, as did Caroline, Mother Butler, and John's brothers Edmund, James, and Lorenzo. LDS emissaries delivered this "Scroll Petition," but neither Congress nor President John Tyler would receive it. "We have tried every department of government to obtain our rights," emissary Elder Orson Hyde lamented, "but we cannot find them."¹² The Butlers never received one cent of compensation for their Missouri losses.

Missionary in Illinois, 1839-40

To provide a living for his family during 1839, John furrowed and planted rented acreage outside of Quincy. During five years as a Latter-day Saint, his service in local church callings had been minimal by today's LDS standards but

normal for his time period. In Kentucky and Missouri, he was an ordained teacher, assigned to visit and monitor the well-being of other Saints. Just before fleeing to Quincy, he had been ordained an elder in anticipation of doing missionary work, which he did not do during the winter months. By the time green spears poked out of the plowed prairie, however, he had received and accepted a missionary assignment.

On May 19, 1839, Seventies officers met in council at Quincy with Henry Harriman presiding. They gave approval for John and seven others to be ordained seventies. John says he was ordained by the Seventies' Senior President Joseph Young, Brigham Young's brother. The office of seventy, first instituted in 1835, was a missionary calling in the LDS Church. Men ordained as seventies became members of a quorum consisting of seventy members. At Quincy members of the Church's two or three seventies quorums were scattered, so quorum leaders recruited new members and tried to keep LDS proselyting work going. What quorum John enrolled in is not known.¹³

John's field of missionary labor was the state of Illinois. On June 1 he received an official letter of recommendation, or license, to preach.¹⁴ "I had to leave my crop in the hands of my brothers till I returned," John wrote, "which was not till the next January." For about seven months, he said, "we preached the Gospel to the people and they behaved to us like gentlemen," indicating that he worked with one or more missionaries. Despite their labors, he admitted, "we could not induce any of them to join us or to believe in the principles of Eternal Life and Salvation."

On December 29, 1839, Caroline gave birth to a daughter, Caroline Elizabeth, "near Quincy," an event John might have come home to experience.¹⁵ His mission ended in January. By then Latter-day Saints were gathering thickly upriver at a river-bend townsite called Commerce, renamed Nauvoo by the Saints, and across the river from Commerce in Montrose, Iowa Territory. After his mission, John visited Nauvoo to find a place to live. His autobiography incorrectly states that Joseph Smith did not move to Nauvoo from Quincy until "the forepart of the year forty" due to sicknesses. In fact, Joseph moved there the year before, on May 10, 1839, soon after escaping from Missouri. What John refers to must be Joseph's *return* to Nauvoo in early March 1840 after an extended visit in the eastern states:¹⁶

About March [1840] Joseph and Hyrum moved up [Joseph returned] to Commerce, and I went up just after them to look at the place and see how I should like it. Brother Joseph asked me if I was coming to live there. I told him that I wanted to live where he did. "Well," said he,

“you have not got your family up here yet, have you?” I told him no, I had not moved them up yet, but that I had come up just to look at the place. Brother Joseph then said, “You will come over to my house and stay while you are here, and till you move your family up.” I thanked him for his kind offer.

John’s first job in Nauvoo was working for the Prophet. “I went to work after I had been there some three weeks to pay for my board, and helped Brother Joseph to fix up his fence and to plow his lot and do up his garden for him.” John then moved his family up to lodge in temporary quarters while he built a house and fenced “my lot upon the hill.” Daughter Charity Artemesia was baptized in April 1840, soon after the family arrived in Nauvoo.¹⁷

At Nauvoo John “found a whole lot of folks very sick. It was a very sickly place indeed.” When he questioned Joseph Smith about the suitability of the location, Joseph replied that “it was a low, marshy, wet, damp and nasty place, but that if we went to work and improved it, it would become more healthy and the Lord would bless it for our sakes.” John praised Nauvoo’s rapid growth. “At that time every one was building and you could look over the little settlement and see the hand of industry in every corner of the town,” he recalled. When the Butlers became residents, Nauvoo consisted of perhaps 250 homes. “Some of them are neat frame buildings,” the *Peoria Register* reported, “but the greater portion are log cabins designed for temporary habitation.”¹⁸

According to John, “things prospered with everybody and the Saints began to look for better times than they had seen lately.” By better times he meant better than the terrible sicknesses the Saints had suffered during 1839 while he was away on his mission and which he saw personally during 1840. “Nearly every family was down sick and the sufferings we had to encounter with is beyond the knowledge of any man except he passed through it.” Casualties that year included forty-six-year-old Bishop Edward Partridge in May and then Joseph Smith, Sr., who passed away after a summer-long sickness.¹⁹ John wrote that the Saints drained the swamp and wet bottomlands “so that it became dry and a great deal more healthy.”

John recalled that “the City Council met and changed the name of the place [Commerce]; the name hereafter was Nauvoo.” Postal officials changed the name from Commerce to Nauvoo on April 21, 1840. That year’s federal census for Nauvoo lists John’s mother, Charity Butler, age fifty-eight, with three unnamed sons—who would be Edmund, eighteen, James, sixteen, and Lorenzo Dow, fourteen—and three elderly, unidentified women who were probably boarders. John is listed with one unnamed son—Kenion was then eight—and

with four unnamed daughters—Charity Artemesia, six, Keziah, four, Phoebe Melinda, almost three, and infant Caroline Elizabeth. John was thirty-two and Caroline twenty-eight.

Nauvooers, John boasted, helped by God and fervent prayer, “built a large City and made every improvement that could be made.” One improvement he singled out was the building of a wharf that initiated regular riverboat traffic between St. Louis and Nauvoo. Reflecting on the entire span of six years of Nauvoo development, he praised how quickly Nauvooers built warehouses and granaries. These storehouses, he exaggerated, “were filled to overflowing by the blessings of God and the industry of the Saints.”

First Sioux Mission, 1840

Saints building homes in Nauvoo had something in common with many American Indian tribes living north and west of them. In 1830 Congress passed the Indian Removal Act which exchanged tribal lands within the states for new homes in the West. By the Indian Intercourse Act of 1834, Congress created an Indian region in the West and established a string of forts to keep Indians inside the region and whites out. President Andrew Jackson oversaw the signing of nearly one hundred treaties with various tribes that sent native men, women, and children west, sometimes smoothly and at other times violently. Parts of present Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa became reserves for the removed Indians. Relocations put these people fairly close to Latter-day Saints and made them accessible to LDS missionaries via the Mississippi River and its tributaries.²⁰

On May 4, 1840, Phoebe Woodruff wrote to her apostle-husband Wilford in England and told him that “an Indian with his wife & daughter has embraced the fulness of the gospel & Been baptized in Commerce. The Indian is an Interpreter of six tribes, & the Indian says all of those tribes will receive the work.”²¹ This was probably Lewis Dana, an Oneida,²² with his white wife, Mary Gont. LDS records show that Lewis and Mary were baptized in Nauvoo in May 1840, that Lewis was ordained an elder in 1841, and that he and Mary were sealed together in marriage in the Nauvoo Temple in October 1845.²³

A visit by some of the neighboring Indians to Nauvoo prompted Joseph Smith to send missionaries on a limited basis into Indian areas. For the first probe, he chose James Emmett and John Lowe Butler. (John dates this mission incorrectly as 1842.²⁴) Both were trusted men, faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and possessed militia experience. Phoebe Woodruff’s letter told Wilford that “two Elders with their families (Brothers Butler & Emmet) have gone out among the Indians on a mission.” To this news Apostle Woodruff responded with satisfaction:

I Pray God the Eternal Father in the name of Jesus Christ to roll on his work among that people & turn ther [sic] captivity & spedily [sic] overshadow them with the light of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Roll on O ye mighty wheel of the Kingdom of God untill ye become a mountain & fill the whole earth.”²⁵

Apostle Woodruff called the Emmett-Butler mission “the first commencement of the work among the Lamanites,” knowing that prior attempts had been quick and temporary.²⁶ Woodruff, Joseph Smith, James Emmett, the Butlers, and other believers in the Book of Mormon knew the book must be taken to Indian descendants of the Lamanites and Nephites described in its pages. Soon after the Church was organized in 1830, Joseph Smith sent four men from New York to “the borders of the Lamanites” by the Missouri River to preach to Indians.²⁷ They labored in 1830-31 but without success. Subsequently the Church proselyted little among Indians. If the Saints had done so while in Missouri, they would have added explosive fuel to the anti-Mormon fires already flaring.

John’s writings say his mission was among Sioux Indians.²⁸ He and Emmett took their families along, even though, John admitted, Joseph Smith had warned him that if he did he would “be back in less than six months.” Accompanying John and Caroline were their five children, including an infant. James and Phoebe Jane Emmett, in their mid-thirties, took along five children ranging in age from sixteen to four. John described several of their mission experiences but did not tell where they went. His descriptions of lakes, wildernesses, and Indian locations, however, strongly suggest that they pushed into present-day Minnesota.

At that time, several subgroups of the N’Dakotah Sioux inhabited an arc of wilderness curving southwesterly from Lake Superior to the border of present-day South Dakota. The headwaters of the several major rivers that feed into the Mississippi are in this region. Bands of M’Dewakantons Wahpakootas, Wappatons, Sissetons, Yanktons, and Warpetonewaks were there, too. Many Indians lived near lakes in villages ranging from twenty to a few hundred dwellers. Some hunted buffalo on the prairies farther west toward the Missouri River.²⁹ Perhaps John’s autobiography fails to name places where he went because he never heard the names. For a good part of the time, his writing indicates, he did not know where his group was. Later he became familiar with the Iowa River and the Des Moines River, so had he gone up either of those routes in 1840 he most likely would have named them. He mentioned nothing about going through Iowa settlements to reach the Indian country. Therefore, it



seems likely that the two families went up the Mississippi River valley and then pushed westward by horse and wagon along the Turkey, Upper Iowa, Root, or Cannon rivers, which flow into the Mississippi.

Two factors suggest they entered the Winnebago or the Wahpakootas (or Warpekutey) lands just north of the settled parts of Iowa Territory and west of Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. First, logic argues that they would go to the nearest Sioux tribes and not penetrate farther into the uncharted interior than necessary. Second, because John says nothing about Fort Snelling, a landmark he would remember which stood where the St. Peters, or the Minnesota, River merges into the Mississippi, they probably did not go that far north up the Mississippi.³⁰ Wherever it was they went, John rejoiced at the beauty of the primitive lands they entered:

If any of my readers have ever seen the western world before it was trod upon by civilized nations you will know what kind of a country it was. It was bordered around by sloping hills and a chain of fresh water lakes in the center of the valley. Game abounded there and the birds

sang forth their notes to their Maker; the fawn played by their dams and the whippoorwill chanted forth his notes in the evening when the sun had sank to rest behind the western hills.

John's assessment of his mission was that they "had but little success amongst the Indians this time" for "they did not like us at all. They stole our horses and shot our cattle and came very near shooting us." The venture, he noted, had been difficult for the women and children. They "had seen much hardships. They had to live on crab apples and honey for nine weeks and nothing else to eat, only what game we could kill once in a while."

By late summer the disappointed group headed back to Nauvoo. "We started our folks towards home," John wrote, but "Brother Emmett and myself was to stay and find our horses." One wonders how the families traveled without the men. Apparently, at an existing main road the families went ahead by wagon, guarded and assisted by sixteen-year-old Simpson Emmett. John and James Emmett searched for and found their horses, but their decision to stay behind almost cost them their lives. After they found their animals, "the Indians took them from us again, then we had to fly for our lives." The two white men, apparently on foot, "started to go right between two lakes and the Indians tried to head us to way lay us and kill us. We had then not tasted one bite for eight or nine days." John prayed fervently for help to escape and to find food:

We got to the point between the lakes and headed them without any interruption from the Indians. I could not tell the reason only that the Lord was our friend and changed the mind of the Indians so that they turned back from their bloody design, for they meant to kill us if they only could catch us.

John and Brother Emmett then adopted the difficult double strategy of keeping on the move while staying out of sight:

Whether they got to the point before us and got tired of waiting or whether they did not get there till afterwards, I cannot tell. But one thing I know, that they were so blood thirsty that they would have devoured us if they could only have seen us.

The two amateur frontiersmen traveled many miles before they felt safe. By then, however, they were weary and faint from hunger and desperately needed food. "We had our rifles with us," John explained, "but we had not seen any

game at all, everything seemed to be far away when we wanted them close.” After passing the “point of the Lakes,” they came to a stream running into a lake to their right. John, discouraged and desperate, suddenly felt a divine prompting: “The Spirit of the Lord told me that if I will turn aside and go down to the river I should find something to eat. I told Brother Emmett and we turned aside and went down to the stream.” But like a thirsty desert traveler seeing mirages, John imagined he could see game. Apparently by now he was in the early stages of starvation because he was hallucinating:

Well, as we were going down I had several thoughts come into my head. I could fancy seeing a nice fat deer standing on the bank of the stream cooling his thirsty tongue. Then I thought I could see some good fat elk grazing on the green bank of the stream, but we had got there and I could see no deer nor any elk.

Seeing game that did not exist, John became angry and doubted the promptings. His mind darkened, and he murmured in his soul and asked God why they had come so far and found nothing to eat. Forlorn, he scanned the stream and wondered which way to hike, “for we were weak and could hardly walk.” Then, while staring blankly into the flowing waters, he saw the answer to his prayers:

I had not my eyes long in that direction when all of a sudden I saw thousands of fish in the water and fine large ones they were, too. I looked with wonder and astonishment, and I thanked the Lord for His mercy and loving kindness unto us, and I asked His forgiveness for doubting Him, and prayed for His Holy Spirit to enable me to put my trust in Him more than I had hitherto done.

The two amazed men caught fish “and fed our hungry appetites.” After feasting and resting, they resumed their journey towards Nauvoo, thanking God for His watchfulness and blessings. John rejoiced “that He did deliver us from the blood thirsty savages and enabled us to arrive home safe without any harm to ourselves.” Apparently they returned on foot. Twelve miles from Nauvoo, they stayed overnight and then John found a horse and rode to Nauvoo to attend the final day of October general conference.³¹ John then backtrailed to help bring Caroline and the children home. It is not known where he found them. He merely said that he found them “all pretty well.”

In Nauvoo, John reported his missionary labors to Joseph Smith, who listened and then asked John if everyone returned safely. "I told him that we had got home safe, but it was by the blessing of God." John probably rehearsed how the Spirit had guided him to the fish. Joseph praised John and James Emmett's safe return but then told them to take a second mission. "Now go and try it without your family and you shall not be hurt." This time John left Caroline and the children in Nauvoo. "They were all pretty well at that time," he recalled, "although they had seen much hardships."

Second Sioux Mission, 1840-41

James Emmett and John journeyed into the wilderness again, this time during late fall. But the two elders "had little success for they [Indians] did or could not understand the principles of the Gospel." The men returned home on February 14, 1841, one day before Caroline gave birth to a baby girl, whom they named Sarah Adeline.

John and Brother Emmett were not the only missionaries sent out from Nauvoo to visit Indian groups. Jonathan Dunham left about the same time as John left for his first mission, but he headed west to present-day Kansas. After he returned, he and three others went on a short proselyting mission among Indians in the eastern states. During the next few years, Dunham and others went west beyond the Iowa settlements and made contact with Sac and Fox Indians and the Pottawattamie. Occasionally, a delegation of Indians visited Nauvoo prior to Joseph Smith's death in 1844.³²

John's two missionary ventures to the Sioux were the first of a series of contacts he would have with Indians because of church callings. By 1841 John Butler and James Emmett had gained survival skills for wilderness living and for working among Indians. Emmett had learned to speak Sioux, and John could understand it a little. Twice more Emmett and John would undertake missions among tribes by the Missouri River, leading large-scale expeditions. Later, in Utah Territory, John would help oversee an Indian farm in Spanish Fork.

After his second Sioux mission, John resided among his own people and, for the first time in four years, had a full farm season at home. The Mormon War in Missouri had cost his family the 1838 harvest. In 1839 he was away on a mission while his brothers tended to his rented fields. During the 1840 growing season he had been away on missions among the Sioux. For the good of the Butler family, he needed to stay home and work, earn, and produce. But neither he nor his family expected that his body, strained by wilderness hardships, would again be afflicted with "rheumatics" that would hamper his ability to labor.

CHAPTER TEN

Nauvoo Family

In Nauvoo, the Butlers heard several versions of English spoken other than their own Southern dialect. They could easily tell which Mormons were from the South, from New England, or from Great Britain. Aurelia Spencer, about ten years old, was of New England stock. Her family lived next door to the Butlers in Nauvoo, and she thought the Butler children talked funny:

One thing which seemed very odd to me was the queer talk of some of the children, and no doubt our language was just as strange to them. We were regular yankees, and used to stay “stun” for stone; while they being southerners would say, “I reckon”, and, “quit that” instead of “stop that.” In calling the cows they would say “sook bossy;” and what we called “hasty pudding,” they called “mush.”¹

Despite language and other cultural differences, Nauvoo’s people became the Butlers’ friends and neighbors, though during the city’s short seven-year existence, John spent but three or four years living there. Mission calls to Illinois and Kentucky and then the family’s participation in James Emmett’s expedition in Iowa made his life in Nauvoo a disrupted one. In Nauvoo, as it had been in Missouri and would be in Utah, one of John’s church roles was to handle special errands, to carry out difficult and sometimes dangerous assignments. But despite John’s calls that took him away, in Nauvoo the Butlers finally had an opportunity to feel “at home” for the first time since leaving Kentucky in 1836.

Home and Work

Nauvoo records list John's occupation as "farmer," but he did other tasks as well to provide for his family. During 1841 he became afflicted once again with "a spell of rheumatics," or rheumatism, from which he "suffered a great deal but not so much as I used to before obeying the Gospel." For income, he "teamed for one and another," using wagon and horses, "hauling up goods from the [riverboat] landing into the city." He also did blacksmithing. Isaac Hill, a brickmaker, said that in 1844 he "commenced making brick in co[mpany] with John Butlar," but whether John produced bricks to sell or for his own use is not stated.² By then several brickyards supplied thousands of bricks to feed Nauvoo's growing appetite for buildings made of brick.

The Butlers survived but did not prosper in Nauvoo. Their fledgling city was "economically immature." It hosted no major industries, only small craft and home enterprises. Nauvoo had no banks or local currencies, so citizens transacted business by bartering and with vouchers and promissory notes.³ Nauvoo was a walking city, so pedestrians mingled and visited a good deal. Nauvoo was a river city where residents experienced the whine and sting of mosquito bites, aromas of frying catfish, the coldness of river water while bathing, reflections of afternoon winter sun glinting off white river ice, boats of all sizes and shapes floating upriver and down, and shrill whistles and clanging bells from riverboats near the shore landings.⁴

John said he built a home on the hill near the temple site. Nauvoo sprawled out on two levels, the flatlands near the river and lands some seventy feet higher on the bluffs, with the connecting slopes also occupied. Many Church leaders lived on the flats, where most of modern, restored Nauvoo now stands. The blufftop area prospered and grew because its location was drier, had fewer insects than the "flat," was more healthful, and offered lower-priced building lots.⁵

Nauvoo land records show that John contracted to buy three land parcels in Nauvoo. As early as December 10, 1839, John agreed to pay \$450 for lot 4 in section 49, three blocks due north of the temple. He put no money down. In 1841, due to delinquent taxes, E. L. Pierson took over that property. John's primary purchase was lot 4 in block 63 on the northwest corner of Cutler and Page Streets, three blocks north and one block east of the temple site. His family first settled there. John contracted to buy this property for \$350, payable in annual installments of \$87.50. He paid nothing for it until November 1, 1844. About the time the Butlers first occupied this home, a newcomer described Nauvoo as a town of poor people who lived in "many log, many frame, and many brick houses."⁶ What type of house the Butlers built is not known.

a-half story brick house and later added two rooms to the back.⁸ In the fall of 1842 Spencer opened a store in the front of his home that he operated during winter months. He taught school in the home's "bigger downstairs room." Spencer was a city councilman, chancellor of the University of Nauvoo, and became the city's mayor in 1845. Aurelia said that a Sister Warren Smith, who had lost her husband and son at Haun's Mill, lived in the house across Page Street (east) from the Butlers.⁹ James and Drusilla Hendricks, the Butlers' Kentucky friends, lived in the same block on lot 3. The Hendrickses finished their house in 1842, and Drusilla kept boarders to generate income.

Charity Butler lived nine blocks north of John, on the northern edge of town, perhaps two blocks from the Mississippi River.¹⁰ Her sons living with her were old enough to help her; in 1844 they were ages twenty-two, twenty, and eighteen. John's married sister Lucy Allred lived near the river, on the northwest corner of Lumber and Wells streets, three blocks east of Joseph Smith's original cabin home.¹¹ Reuben, Lucy's husband, was a blacksmith and, like John, a member of the Nauvoo Legion. Lucy became the mother of three girls and a boy in 1840, 1841, 1843, and 1844—John's nieces and a nephew.¹²

In Nauvoo John and Caroline became the parents of Sarah Adeline, as mentioned earlier. Then, on February 28, 1844, John Lowe, Jr. was born, and family tradition says that Joseph Smith blessed the baby the next month.¹³ It is noteworthy that these two babies did not die. Being a river city, Nauvoo was a sickly place, especially during summers when malaria and other "river fevers" raged. Babies were especially vulnerable.¹⁴

Butler children received some schooling, smatterings at least, in Nauvoo. From July 15 to October 28, 1842, four of them attended a common school with 101 students taught by Henry I. Young in Benjamin L. Clapp's home: Kenion, ten; Charity, eight; Keziah, six; and Phoebe Melinda, four. When that term finished, John became a trustee for the school at which Lucy Groves was teaching.¹⁵ Lucy conducted school two blocks northwest of the Butler home, at the corner of Back (Woodruff) and Joseph streets. The school met from October 31 to December 22, 1842. One student listed is "C. Butler"—probably young Charity.¹⁶

The Butlers maintained a meager standard of living and simple lifestyle much like other Nauvoo residents.¹⁷ Most Nauvoo houses were small and crowded. Furniture was basic. Beds, on floors or on interlacing rope webs strung from bedposts, used mattresses made of straw and feathers. A woodburning fireplace or iron stove provided heat, but only if men and boys made regular trips to river islands or shore thickets to cut wood. For lighting, candles and lard lamps were common. An outhouse served as toilet and garbage pit. Flies were a

constant nonwinter problem. Baths required a large tub or dips in the river. Drinking and culinary water came from wells.¹⁸

Nauvoo people ate simple diets, unbalanced nutritionally.¹⁹ Home gardens and farm animals were vital.²⁰ In season, people ate fresh corn, beans, radishes, lettuce, pumpkins, and greens. Fresh fruit included wild plums, blackberries, grapes, currants, peaches, pears, and apples. Out of season, lacking refrigeration, townspeople ate vegetables stored in root cellars, dried corn and beans, nuts, preserved jams, and pickled and salted meats. From kettles and fry pans came flour and cornmeal pancakes, bread, cakes, and pies. Honey was the main sweetener. From cows came milk for drinking and cooking and cream for butter. Fresh fish from the river and wild game shot on the surrounding prairie sometimes graced the dinner table. Chickens were a source for eggs and meat, and pigs provided pork chops and roasts, ham, and bacon. A Butler family pig story from the Nauvoo years says that one time while John was away from home, the Butlers' old mother pig produced piglets. When the piglets became "pretty good sized," one by one "every pig but the mother was stolen." Caroline told son Kenion, about age twelve, that they had better kill the old sow to be certain they had meat for the family. So she and Kenion killed and dressed the large pig.²¹

Nauvoo housewives, aided by children, cooked constantly. But "the most time consuming task in any home," one Nauvoo expert noted, "was making clothes." The era of spinning wheels was almost gone and the day of ready-made clothes and sewing machines was yet to dawn, so Caroline and other women hand-sewed clothes from store-bought yards of cloth and store-bought patterns. Manufacturing soap from ash and lye was another laborious home task. So, too, were laundering, hanging clothes on outdoor lines and bringing them in, and ironing.²²

In 1842 Englishman Francis Moon gave some comparisons between costs of living and wages being paid in Nauvoo:

A man that works on a farm is paid a dollar per day or something equal to it. . . . If a man be employed in digging potatoes, he receives one-fifth of what he digs, if he goes to cutting corn he receives one-eighth; for making a pair of boots (and the maker does not find the leather), they give about a dollar-and-a-half. A pig a month or five weeks old is sold for 25 cents—a good cow about 14 dollars. Flour is about 4 dollars and fifty cents per barrel, a barrel weighs 196 pounds; potatoes are sold for 20 cents per bushel, good beef is sold for 3 cents per pound, pork at the same; butter is at about 10 to 14 cents, sugar at 12 cents per pound.²³

Temple Construction

By October 1840 Joseph Smith had started teaching Saints that they could be baptized as proxies for deceased individuals who had not been baptized while alive:

The Saints have the privilege of being baptized for those of their relatives who are dead, whom they believe would have embraced the Gospel, if they had been privileged with hearing it, and who have received the Gospel in the spirit, through the instrumentality of those who have been commissioned to preach to them while in prison.²⁴

In response, proxy baptisms began to be performed in the Mississippi River and elsewhere.²⁵

On January 19, 1841, just before John returned from his second Indian mission, Joseph Smith received a revelation that commanded the Saints to build a temple and an inn for visitors called the Nauvoo House.²⁶ The temple was to have a baptismal font for baptisms for the dead. The revelation gave dire warnings that the temple be built quickly or else “ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead, saith the Lord your God,” and the Saints were commanded to “labor with all your might.”²⁷ Accordingly, a temple site was selected “on a bold eminence overlooking the river” three blocks from the Butlers’ home. On April 6, 1841, at a well-attended ceremony, authorities laid the temple cornerstones. Workmen labored through the summer and fall of 1841 to excavate and wall the temple’s foundation, and by November the Saints were doing baptisms for the dead in a wooden font in the basement.²⁸

The Butlers accepted the doctrine of baptisms for the dead and participated in the ordinance. In 1841 John, as a proxy, was baptized for his grandmother Phoebe Butler, his uncle William Butler, his aunt Naoma Butler, and his great aunt Ann Butler. On dates not recorded he was baptized for his great uncle John Butler and his aunt Elizabeth McConnell. Caroline was baptized in behalf of her mother, Keziah Skeen, her grandparents Robert and Nancy Taylor, her father’s brother John Skeen, and a friend named Abraham Tribble. Mother Butler served as a proxy for the baptisms of her deceased sons Vincent and William L.; her father, William Lowe, and mother, Margaret Farr Lowe; her husband James’ mother, “Artimasa”; her father’s brother John Lowe; her father’s sister Nelle Lowe; her grandmother Melvina Butler; and her cousins John Lowe, Charity Gilliland, Margaret Bechison, and Martha Garrason. Records say that at Charity Butler’s request, a baptism was performed for her husband, James Butler.²⁹

Nauvooers paid close attention to the temple's progress. A report in April 1842 said that "a large number of workmen are engaged in raising the walls of the temple." By October 30 the walls stood between four and twelve feet high. During 1843 workmen added "tier upon tier" to the walls. By then three cranes were lifting limestone blocks up onto the walls. The temple project dominated Nauvoo life and set its pace. Each morning the Butlers heard a bell at the temple site toll at 7:00 A.M. to start the day. It tolled again at noon and 1:00 P.M., and a last time at 6:00 P.M. Oxen plodded through city streets, pulling heavy slabs of stone hanging from sturdy wagons, moving towards the temple site.³⁰

In 1843 Joseph Smith moved his family into the newly built Mansion House, which John called "a nice large house" and "a splendid building." It served as the Smiths' residence but also as a hotel and meeting place for civic and Church business. Meanwhile, the Nauvoo House, intended to be three stories high, received its second story walls before construction stopped and never resumed.³¹

Religion and Worship

Nauvoo was intended to be a religious city. Saints gathered there primarily to enjoy a righteous environment and to be tutored by their prophet. The heart of Nauvooers' religious ritual was the Sunday worship services, which included sermons and sometimes the sacrament. Strange for a religious city, Nauvoo had no churches for neighborhood worship:

During the whole Nauvoo era the church did not build a single ward chapel. Meetings were held in private homes and stores or mills, on board the Mississippi boat *Maid of Iowa*, in the Seventies' Hall, in the Concert Hall, and in the temple as it neared completion in the spring of 1846. When weather permitted, open-air services were held in various places within the city limits.³²

Three outdoor sites were big enough to allow several hundred people to congregate for meetings—the temple grounds, the East Grove four blocks to the east of the temple, and the West Grove two blocks west of the temple. On Sundays, John, Caroline, and the children attended some of the worship meetings and heard Joseph Smith and other Church authorities preach.³³ Nauvooer James Palmer recalled that on Sundays

the Saints assembled in a grove near the sight [sic] of the Temple where was erected a Stand or platform for the speakers and it was nearly

always filled by our leading officers. . . . The prophet did not always address the meetings but when he did all ears were opened and the most profound silence was observed, and those that spoke in his presence no matter what subject allowed themselves to be corrected if needed, which was done by him in a kind and christianlike manner.³⁴

Joseph Smith became more of a teacher and expounder of doctrine at Nauvoo than he had been before. Publicly he taught his people new principles relating to a premortal existence, God's being an exalted man, ordinances for the dead, and eternal marriage. Though John and Caroline accepted these "new" doctrines, some members did not, apparently including John's brothers. Privately the Prophet taught a select few about plural marriage and temple endowments.³⁵

For administrative purposes city officers subdivided Nauvoo, like many American cities then and since, into municipal wards—three in 1839, four in early 1842, and thirteen late in 1842. For each city ward the Church assigned a bishop to recruit and support temple laborers and care for the needy. Worship and quorum meetings, however, were the responsibility of the Nauvoo Stake and were not a concern of ward bishops. The Butlers lived in the Second Ward, with Isaac Higbee as their bishop.³⁶

Being believers, John and Caroline were expected to pay offerings and three types of tithes: a one-time payment of a tenth of what one owned, a tenth of one's increase thereafter, and a labor tithe from men of one work day in ten on Church projects. Labor tithing to help build the temple "became a test of faith, since anyone who did not tithe was barred from its ordinances."³⁷ An evidence that they paid tithes is that the Butlers received temple blessings before they left Nauvoo.

A Women's Society

Caroline and Mother Butler joined the new Nauvoo Female Relief Society and attended some of its meetings. On March 17, 1842, Joseph Smith met with several women and formally organized the group. Its purpose was to "provoke the brethren to good works in looking to the wants of the poor" and to strengthen the morals and virtues of the community. Sisters elected Emma Smith as president, who then chose Sarah M. Cleveland and Elizabeth Ann Whitney for counselors. During subsequent weekly meetings, those wishing to join the society were admitted—if members judged the nominees to be virtuous and circumspect. On April 28, 1842, Caroline Butler became a member at the society's sixth meeting, held in the lodge room above Joseph Smith's store.³⁸

On that occasion the society accepted fifty new members. Joseph Smith instructed those present to act well in their respective callings and not to aspire to higher ones. He explained that “the Church is not now organized in its proper order, and cannot be until the Temple is completed.” He approved of sisters laying on hands to heal the sick through faith. He predicted, probably to the discomfort of Caroline and others, “that the church would not have his instruction long, and the world would not be troubled with him a great deal . . . that according to his prayers God had appointed him elsewhere.” He counselled the ladies to “by your good example provoke the Elders to good works.” Their organization, he said, was at its core a “charitable Society” and that “it is natural for females to have feelings of charity.” His concluding counsel was that “all are responsible to save themselves.” John’s married sister Lucy joined the society on May 13, 1842. A week later his mother also became a member.³⁹

At the society’s meeting on June 16, 1843, sisters responded to Joseph Smith’s call made the previous Sabbath for Saints to assist the temple committee. Women offered to board temple workers, collect materials, knit, sew, wait on the sick, repair old clothes, and donate soap, flax, and milk. President Emma Smith proposed getting wool to furnish elderly ladies with yarn to knit socks for the workmen for winter use.⁴⁰ One day a committee member asked Caroline for a temple donation. She wanted to do her share but she had nothing to give, which bothered her. A few days later she and her children were in a wagon near the outskirts of Nauvoo when she spotted two dead buffalo. She thought of a way to make a temple contribution, and she and the children pulled the long hair from the manes of the buffalo. At home they washed, carded, and spun the hair into coarse yarn from which Caroline knitted eight pairs of heavy mittens, which she donated to rock cutters working in the dead of winter at the temple site.⁴¹

Apparently Caroline was very artistic, and to raise money for the temple, she made and sold tablecloths of a material like oilskin on which she painted decorations.⁴²

Growth forced the Relief Society to divide into four wards in the summer of 1843. Caroline’s Second Ward group met separately once a month.⁴³ By early 1844 nearly 1,400 women had joined the society. But that year, due to President Emma Smith’s opposition to the doctrine of plural marriage, the society ceased to meet and did not resurrect until years later in Utah.⁴⁴

Quorum and Lodge

John, who had been ordained a seventy near Quincy in 1839, participated in irregular seventies meetings in Nauvoo. Such gatherings, involving men who

were returned missionaries but who expected to go on additional missions, featured doctrinal and practical discourses and testimony bearing.⁴⁵

John also joined Nauvoo's Masonic Lodge. Illinois had several lodges, so Hyrum Smith, Bishop George Miller, and Latter-day Saints who had been Masons decided to organize a lodge in Nauvoo. The Nauvoo Masonic Lodge met first on December 19, 1841, and held meetings on the first and third Thursdays at 6 P.M. Hyrum Smith served as Worshipful Master pro tempore until his death. Illinois Grand Master Abraham Jonas conferred upon Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon the ultimate honor of Freemasonry, making them Masons at Sight. Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, and "almost every one of the early Apostles," along with many other LDS leaders, became Masons. On July 7, 1842, John petitioned for membership. His application stated he was a farmer by occupation. The lodge accepted him on July 25.⁴⁶ The Masons met in the upper room of Joseph Smith's store until the men built their own hall. On April 5, 1844, approximately 550 Masons from Nauvoo and elsewhere attended the dedication of the Masonic Temple. This three-story hall was "one of the most imposing buildings in Nauvoo" and served as a meeting room for the city council and other groups and as a cultural hall.⁴⁷

Cloak Blessed by a Prophet

Sickness sometimes was rampant in Nauvoo, and Joseph Smith went among the people and administered to them. On occasion he blessed cloth articles that could be used by others in healing and blessing the sick and afflicted.⁴⁸ For the benefit of the Butler family, he blessed John's large broadcloth cape or cloak. During the rest of their lives, John and Caroline wrapped this cloak around family members when they became ill. In time the coat passed to the next generation. In 1945 Bertha M. Butler wrote that the family of John Lowe Butler, Jr., inherited the cloak:

The family would often put it around an afflicted person and through their faith in the blessing of the cape they were made better. The cape became old and somewhat shabby and was finally cut into ten pieces, one piece each for the ten [nine surviving] children of John L. Butler II. My husband John Lowe Butler III received one piece of the cape and I have had it in my possession for nearly 30 years.⁴⁹

Unsaintly Saints

Mixed with Nauvoo's religious people were some who were less than righteous. John wrote about one such sister with whom Caroline had contact. "There was a

widow woman lived close to us that had her husband die. She had been kept by the Bishop of the ward and some of the neighbors. My wife used to take her quantities of food.” One day this lady refused to let the visiting sisters come in. They asked Caroline why the lady acted that way, and Caroline said “that she had thought for several months that she kept company with those she ought not to.” So the Relief Society sent Sister Chapman and Sister Lewis to visit. The lady told them to mind their own business. The sisters accused her of harboring a negro, taunting her to let them in, but she would not open the door. The lady complained to the police, so the next day an officer took the two women before a justice of the peace “to answer for what they had done to the poor widow.” Two men had to post a \$500 bond before the ladies were set free. At the next Relief Society meeting, Joseph Smith asked the sisters how they were and then told them to watch the lady even closer. Then, John said:

One of the sisters wanted to go and see her one morning. And there being no smoke coming out of the chimney she thought that she was not up and did not like to go. So my wife went with her, and they found the house empty and the bird flown away, and we never heard of her since.

John told this incident in order to make a point about the thousands of people flowing into Nauvoo: “There was several such persons in Nauvoo and always will be, for the net gathers all kinds of fish, and there is bound to be some that are no account and of no use.”

Kentucky Visit

John, while writing his autobiography, became confused about the timing of a trip he made to Kentucky. In one place he says that a Joseph Smith kidnapping episode—which occurred in 1843 but which he dates earlier—happened “in the summer before I went to Kentucky.” Thus he seems to say he went in the fall of 1843. However, he also asserts that he made the Kentucky trip the fall after his Indian mission, which other records date as 1840-41 but which he dated later. Careful evaluation indicates that he went to Kentucky in the fall of 1842.⁵⁰

John went back to visit his and Caroline’s relatives. That he was on a mission seems likely. According to Church records, he received an elder’s license on September 24, 1842,⁵¹ which indicates that he was leaving for a mission—and his account says his departure for Kentucky was in September. That August, Joseph Smith had called for “every elder who can” to “go forth to every part of the United States” in order to refute former member John C.

Bennett's recent anti-Mormon lectures and writings and "to preach the Gospel."⁵² Joseph wanted these missionaries "to deluge the States with a flood of truth." John said that his Kentucky trip lasted three months during which time he not only visited but also preached the gospel to his relatives and old friends.

He said he left his family in Nauvoo in September and journeyed back home, where he contacted relatives and friends in Simpson County, Kentucky, who were "all pretty well and bitterly opposed to the principles of the Kingdom of God." He felt they were "full of the devil and persecution." He also visited friends in Sumner County, Tennessee, and found there, too, "many of them bitter opponents against the Church. I bore my testimony to them and left them to meditate upon the words that I had spoken unto them."

John found that his wife's thirty-four-year-old sister, Charity Skeen, who was deaf and dumb, still believed in Mormonism. She wanted to go with him to Nauvoo. But her adult brothers, probably Kenion, Alexander, and John Skeen, tried to stop her. Only John's uncle, John Lowe, treated him with kindness and agreed to help him take Charity away. The situation became tense. John said:

Well, her brothers threatened to shoot me if I offered to take her away, and her other sisters that was deaf and dumb [Elizabeth, 38, and Mary, 20] cried and made so much to do they were afraid that their brothers would kill me. I told them not to fear although I knew that I was in very close quarters.

John makes no mention of Jesse Skeen trying to stop him, which also corroborates the 1842 date of the trip. Jesse died on January 16, 1842, and had he been alive at the time of John's trip, he would have threatened John more than his sons did.⁵³

On the day before Christmas, John prepared to leave. After breakfast he and Charity started off in a carriage or light wagon, despite loud crying by Charity's sisters. "I never heard such mournful cries in my life before as the two sisters made when they had to part with their sister," John said. "I thought that they would go distracted, but we wished them good bye and started on our journey to Nauvoo." While passing Uncle John Lowe's house, John told his uncle good-bye. But trouble was brewing:

As it happened Charity's brothers had gone down in the settlement to get a lot of fellows to help them run me off. They had gone while I started with Charity, and as Providence willed it, after we had driven some two or three miles, we came to two roads and I did not know

which to take. So I took the left hand road and drove on just as usual as if nothing was [in doubt], tho I could not see any difference in the travel upon the roads for one was traveled about as much as the other.

The two traveled on without being bothered by anyone. Meanwhile, as John later was informed:

Charity's brothers came back to the house and found us gone. They were then so enraged that they went and got their horses and called upon their friends to help them bring back their sister that had been stolen from them by that damned Mormon Devil. They jumped upon their horses and got their rifles and started after us as fast as their horses legs could carry them. But the Lord was bound to foil them in their mad intentions, for they rode on till they came to the fork in the roads, [and] they then took the right hand road and traveled along at headlong speed, while we took it easy and comfortable on our journey. So they got but little for their trouble.

He learned from relatives why his pursuers had not found him and Charity:

When they had ridden on for two or three hours they began to think that I had flown on the road with railroad speed. So they thought that it was no use going any farther, for I had so much better horses than theirs to out run them so they thought surely that they would have caught us before that time, it being about mid-day. Well, they had to return home without us and we kept on our journey.

"The two sisters that were at home," John said, "were glad when they heard that they had not found us." John firmly believed

that they would had taken Charity home and have killed me and buried me right there on the spot. But the Lord's protecting hand was over us and ever near to help or defend us from our enemies. I felt to thank Him for His mercy in delivering me out of their hands.

Sometime close to New Year's Day, John and Charity reached Nauvoo safely. Caroline "was very glad to see her sister," John said. Charity was four years older than Caroline. Now John bore some responsibility to care for three women in Nauvoo—his mother, his wife, and his sister-in-law. The latter, within two or three years, would become John's first plural wife.

Even before the Nauvoo Temple was finished, LDS temple ordinances were implemented gradually among select insiders whose faithfulness and commitment were unquestioned. Joseph Smith administered initiation-type ordinances in May 1842. On July 16, 1843, he taught in his Sunday sermon that full salvation required eternal marriage. In a discourse on August 27, 1843, he discussed advanced, sacred blessings, asserting that the “design of the Almighty in making man” was “to exalt him to be as God.” He explained that old traditions must be put aside. On September 23, 1843, John and Caroline went to the home of John’s married sister Lucy Allred. The Allreds lived only a few blocks from Joseph Smith’s residence. There, Patriarch Hyrum Smith performed a new ordinance for John and Caroline. He sealed them together in celestial marriage, binding them together not only until death but into the eternities. Interestingly, Joseph Smith presented the first temple ordinances five days after John and Caroline were sealed. From then on, some twenty-six men and twenty-nine women received their endowments before these ordinances were administered in the temple late in 1845. John and Caroline were not among the few who received their endowments outside of the temple. John would be endowed in the Nauvoo Temple late in 1845 (see chapter 15), but Caroline would not receive her endowments until 1855 in Utah (chapter 22).⁵⁴

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Ordained Bodyguard

Among Latter-day Saints, no folklore surrounding the Nauvoo period is more pervasive than claims that an ancestor was Joseph Smith's bodyguard. Apparently any man who ever rode with Joseph Smith or was in a semidangerous situation with him became, in the grandchildren's tales, a bodyguard. Officially, the Prophet designated and ordained twelve Nauvoo Legion men to guard, protect, and defend him, and John Butler was one of these twelve. Danger was occasional, not constant, so John's guard tasks varied. Frustrated Missouri authorities wanted Joseph Smith arrested and returned to Missouri, and anti-Mormon sentiment sometimes simmered in the countryside just beyond Nauvoo. Also, a disgruntled Saint in the city could pose a sudden threat at any time.

Most of what John and the other eleven did to guard the Prophet will never be known because the primary task of protecting is prevention—the presence of protectors prevents a happening—and history rarely tracks nonhappenings. John's work as bodyguard, however, did involve him in two serious situations of importance to history: an attempted arrest and kidnapping of Joseph Smith in June 1843 and Joseph's martyrdom a year later.

Twelve Protectors

Following the Missouri troubles, LDS leaders harbored “understandable distrust for state troops not of their own control.”¹ For self-protection, they obtained a city charter from the Illinois legislature permitting them to create their own state militia unit. On February 3, 1842, the Nauvoo City Council initiated a militia

called the Nauvoo Legion. The next day Joseph Smith became its commanding officer, with the title of Lieutenant-General. Stephen Markham, with whom John later would share leadership work in Spanish Fork, Utah, was made a Legion captain. Hosea Stout, with whom John would serve as a Nauvoo policeman and who would later clash with John at Winter Quarters, became a second lieutenant.²

In addition to general officers, Joseph Smith selected a personal staff, including twelve assistant aides-de-camp to be lifeguards bearing the rank of “Captains of Infantry.” Joseph picked John to be one of his twelve guards and aides-de-camp, along with Thomas Grover, Christain M. Kreymeyer, John Snyder, Alpheus Cutler, Reynolds Cahoon, Henry G. Sherwood, Shadrack Roundy, Vinson Knight, and three of John’s friends from Missouri—James Allred, Elias Higbee, and Samuel H. Smith.³ By having twelve guards instead of just one or two, Joseph Smith was able to rotate assignments depending on who was available and how many guards were needed. John’s autobiography says Joseph “ordained” him to his calling as lifeguard. By then, John enjoyed the rare privilege of being a trusted confidant and friend of the Prophet, who was two years older than John.

A Butler family story says that because John was a trusted friend of Joseph Smith, he and Caroline went to the Prophet’s home “many times” and that Joseph Smith came to their home “frequently.” John and the Prophet, both being tall and strong men, “often wrestled together.” Although Joseph rarely was thrown by anyone, John sometimes beat him. One time the Butlers rode in a wagon past the Smiths’ residence. “Seeing them, the Prophet came to the wagon and after pleasant conversation, finally challenged John L. to a wrestling match.” John was recovering from an illness but felt he could not refuse. Joseph Smith won.⁴

The Nauvoo Legion, named for the famous legions of ancient Rome, enrolled at its peak perhaps 3,000 men in more than twenty-six companies. Every able-bodied male of military age was required by state law to serve in a community’s militia. At first men provided their own arms, then the state sent them cannons, muskets, pistols, rifles, yeagers, and swords.⁵ Given Church endorsement and backing, the Legion quickly became recognized as “the best-trained military unit in the West at that time.”⁶ John, a Legion officer, wrote nothing about the Legion’s routine of meetings, drills, or parading. Certainly he participated in some of their special public appearances, if for no other reason than to guard the Prophet. One such spectacle was the Legion’s dress parade for “review” on July 3, 1841, as part of Fourth of July celebrations. Led by the martial band, the companies paraded past General Smith, after which he “made

an eloquent and patriotic speech” to them. Another splashy public event for the Legion was its day-long field exercise on May 7, 1842, when 2,000 men staged a sham battle under General Smith’s direction.⁷

Kidnap and Rescue

John’s most intense service as a guard came when Joseph Smith was taken prisoner in June 1843. Nearly 200 miles north of Nauvoo, Joseph was surprised and arrested by Sheriff Joseph Reynolds of Jackson County, Missouri, assisted by Constable Harmon T. Wilson of Carthage, Illinois. They carried a Missouri warrant and an extradition order signed by Governor Thomas Ford of Illinois and hoped to whisk Joseph to the Mississippi River, take him aboard a waiting riverboat, and deliver him to Missouri authorities. When news of Joseph’s arrest reached and stunned Nauvoo on Sunday, June 25, two horseback companies literally did not spare the horses to try to reach and rescue him. One hundred and seventy-five riders made up two companies, and John rode with one. Just before they left, Apostle Wilford Woodruff brought out a barrel of rifle powder, from which every man filled his powder horn or flask. Another company of seventy-five boarded the *Maid of Iowa* riverboat to patrol the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, planning to intercept Joseph if the officers tried to move him by boat.⁸

John, writing in 1859, recalled several aspects of the rescue. He said that men claiming to be peace officers “waylaid” Joseph and took him prisoner. Then, John said incorrectly, Emma Smith (it was William Clayton) brought Nauvoo the news that Joseph had been captured. John stated:

I, at that time had been ordained one of Joseph’s life guards, so some thirty [originally 175] of the brethren with myself started to go to Brother Joseph and rescue him from the blood thirsty wretches if we could. It took us some time for we did not get on the right track for a while.

With horse hooves pounding prairie dirt roads and dust flying, John galloped north in Peter W. Conover’s company on a marathon ride that would last some forty hours. Conover later gave Joseph Smith a detailed description of the posse’s course:⁹

I started with General Wilson Law [brigadier general of the Legion], William Law and about 175 men on Sunday, the 25th of June, at 8 P.M. in the direction of Peoria; traveled part of the night; about 1 o’clock next morning Gen. C. C. Rich took 35 of the company and continued towards Peoria. The two Laws, with their company, started up the river

road in the direction of Monmouth. We traveled till daylight on Monday morning, crossed Honey Creek, eat a cold breakfast and fed the horses.

They rode north until noon, Conover continued, when they halted to consult about what to do next. They decided to send a cadre of the most skilled militiamen ahead and picked John to be one.

A consultation was held, and ten of the best mounted men, viz: Thomas Grover, Peter W. Conover, Zebedee Coltrin, Graham Coltrin, Philemon C. Merrill, Philander Colton, Henry Hoyt, William L. Cutler, Daniel F. Cahoon and John L. Butler were selected to take the nearest road to Dixon, with instructions to continue until we found you [Joseph Smith].

John and the other nine followed a middle road between Oquaka and Monmouth, riding hard until 2:00 A.M. They rested for an hour, Conover said, “then passed through Hendersonville on to the prairie about 9 A.M., at which time we met Col. Stephen Markham.” Markham, they learned, had been with Joseph Smith at the time of the arrest. He had just left the Prophet and was rushing back to Nauvoo with instructions from Joseph for General Wilson Law. Markham, upon meeting Conover’s posse, decided to join them, and sent a replacement to give General Law the message. “We made a halt at Andover, where the inhabitants refused to sell us food,” Conover continued. At Andover, the rescuers sent Daniel Cahoon and Henry Hoyt back to Monmouth to tell the larger posse to wait there for further orders. John’s unit rode two miles, obtained corn at a farmhouse, and then moved on until they met Joseph Smith. Joseph said that when he spied Conover and William L. Cutler, the advance men of John’s squad, he rejoiced: “I am not going to Missouri this time. These are my boys.” While they were talking, Markham, Captain Grover, John Butler, and the four others arrived.¹⁰ The rescue party forced Joseph’s abductors to deal with him legally and provided protection while a judicial solution was found in Illinois.

During the next day or two, John heard Joseph Smith tell about his four days of captivity and saw the flesh along Joseph’s rib cage “which was black for about eighteen inches in circumference on each side” where Reynolds and Wilson had punched him with their pistols.¹¹ Not having witnessed the events Joseph related, John confused and blended together into one person three local men Joseph said had helped him. Joseph’s history says that on June 23 a Mr. Dixon, who kept a hotel in the town of Dixon, insisted that Joseph be treated properly. Joseph then was helped the next night at Paw-paw by elderly David

Town, who stood up to the two lawmen and warned them they could be lynched. Joseph also said that Lucian P. Sanger, owner of a stagecoach, let the group use his coach and accompanied it when the captors and captives headed south. John's misconception was that Dixon, Town, and Sanger were the same person. According to John:

Now these Missourians took him [Joseph Smith] to a house belonging to an old man [Mr. Dixon], and asked him if he would let them have a room to put their prisoner. Now while they were going and after they had got there, there was [a] fellow [Reynolds or Wilson] with a revolver pointing it to Joseph's ribs, and once in a while he would give him a poke with it, until he had taken the skin off in more than one or two places.

Well, the old man heard by some of his folks that they had ill-treated their prisoner. So he thought that he would go and see the prisoner. So he went to the door and it was fastened so that he could not get in. They were counciling together what they would do with him [Joseph Smith]. I expect the old man demanded admittance but they would not let him in, so he told them that he was coming in, or he would set fire to the place and burn them up but what he would go in. So they let him in. "A pretty thing," said he, "to keep a man out of his own house when he had kindly let you have a room to secure your prisoner."

When Mr. Dixon entered the hotel and talked with Joseph Smith, John said, he saw Joseph's injured ribs. John continued:

So he asked Joseph whether he had been ill treated. Joseph opened his shirt bosom and showed him his side which was then bleeding, "if you call that ill treatment, why I have been ill treated." The old man looked and said, who done it, and Joseph said his captors. The old man said, "Gentlemen, you have abused this man shamefully and I tell you, you can't do such things in my house, and I tell you how we serve folks that don't go by the laws of the Constitution of the United States. We just take them by lynch law, and I can tell you that you must not abuse a prisoner in this part of the State or you will be very apt to know of it."

When Mr. Dixon learned that Reynolds and Wilson had not fed Joseph supper, he brought Joseph a fine meal and arranged for Joseph to sleep on a bed:

He then asked Joseph whether he had anything to eat. He said that he had not. Why, said the old man, "these other men have had something

to eat, why did not you get some?” “Because,” said Joseph, “they would not give me any.” “Never mind, you shall have some.” “Oh,” said they, “he is only a damn’d Mormon.” “Well,” said the old man, “Mormon or no Mormon, he is a man and a citizen of the United States and he has got to have justice and he is a going to have it so long as he stays with me.”

They then growled about something, but the old man went off to get something to eat for Joseph. He gave him something good to eat and told him that he should have a bed to sleep upon, but that them other fellars would have to find their own for they should not sleep with him.

John said that Joseph told the hotel keeper that Emma had gone back to Nauvoo and that he expected that someone would soon arrive to help him. “The old man then told Joseph that he would keep him there till some of his friends should come to his assistance.” At this point in his story, John felt a need to praise the good man for assisting Joseph Smith:

His treatment to Joseph was very kind. If it had not been for him, I don’t know how Brother Joseph would have fared. But the Lord was his guardian Angel and He would just let things go so far and no farther. He softened the old man’s heart so that he should have justice done him, and to bring about His purposes.

John understood that the old man “got some of his friends and took Brother Joseph and started to Nauvoo with him,” which is not correct. The one who assisted Joseph on the journey was Mr. Sanger, the stagecoach owner, not innkeeper Dixon.

Despite mixing some story elements, John’s version contains unique details about this tense situation not found in other accounts. John noted that the owner threatened to burn the house down if the officers did not let him see Joseph, that Joseph had been refused food, that the owner fed Joseph and gave him a bed but not Reynolds and Wilson, and that the man and his friends protected Joseph until legal help arrived.

When John’s rescue posse met up with Joseph, the Prophet had been a prisoner for four days. He was convinced that if his arresters took him into Missouri, he would be killed. This was the most serious threat to Joseph’s life since his arrest at Far West, Missouri, nearly five years earlier. John had to feel a bit confused when he tried to figure out the relationship of arresters and arrestees in the mixed group surrounding Joseph Smith. Joseph was under arrest and in the custody of Reynolds and Wilson. But, Reynolds and Wilson had

themselves been arrested by the sheriff of Lee County, Sheriff Campbell, who questioned their right to take prisoners and accused them of kidnapping. The sheriff, however, relied on locals and armed Mormons to help him move Joseph Smith to Quincy for a fair habeas corpus hearing before Judge Stephen A. Douglas. It was clear a wise judge was needed to untangle the two levels of arrests involved.¹²

When Reynolds and Wilson saw John's group ride up, and then a larger force join them, they feared for their lives. Merged into a large procession, the rescuers, captors, and captives moved together to Andover and lodged for the night. Apparently John and several Mormon riders spent Tuesday night patrolling the town's perimeter.¹³ On Wednesday, June 28, the large party moved briskly, covering forty miles, and stopped at a farmhouse near Monmouth. When Reynolds and Wilson continued to conspire to flee with Joseph Smith, Sheriff Campbell locked them in an upper room for the night. Thursday, after passing Monmouth and Oquaka, the group encountered about sixty Mormon riders commanded by General Wilson Law. Rethinking the Quincy destination, Joseph convinced the three lawyers he had retained to represent him to let Nauvoo's courts handle the case. Near nightfall the party stopped at Michael Crane's farm on Honey Creek. Brother Crane killed a flock of turkeys and chickens and fed "a substantial supper" to this group of about one hundred men, including John.¹⁴

Meanwhile, in Nauvoo the Saints rejoiced when they learned Joseph was coming, and they planned a royal welcome for him and his rescuers. Riders in Joseph's party stopped long enough to decorate their horses' bridles with prairie flowers. Joseph's large group was met outside Nauvoo by the Nauvoo Brass Band and a train of carriages.¹⁵ "Sister Emma sent Joseph out some clean clothes," John said, "but Joseph said his brethren was as dirty as he, and he was not going in clean and his brethren dirty." John noted that "the dust upon the road then was four or five inches deep." Joseph rode into town on horseback, Emma at his side. He directed Colonel Albert Rockwood, in charge of the lifeguards, "to place my Life Guards," meaning John and Abraham Hodge, "in their appropriate position in the procession."¹⁶ Joseph and his guards were followed by the stagecoach, carriages, and horsemen. In celebration, guns fired and the cannon boomed. John's memory of this procession, with him riding behind Joseph, was vivid:

The folks all heard of our arrival home and they all came out and lined the street on both sides. Brother Joseph was first and then Brother Hodge and myself, his life guards, and then came the officers that took him prisoner, and then the rest of the brethren. The folks, both men and

women and children, were glad to see their leader again, and out of the hands of murderers. They took off their hats and bonnets and hush'd him all the way up the street. Brother Joseph took off his hat and looked round upon the people and shouted, "Hosannah to God!" The officers said that the people thought a good deal of him. "Yes," said Brother Joseph, "they are the best people in the world."

John's duties as bodyguard did not ease when the parade delivered Joseph to the Mansion House, the Smiths' stately home. Joseph let the two arresting officers, now his hostages, dine with him and then leave Nauvoo. Said John:

I went home with Brother Joseph to the Mansion House and saw the prisoners safe under guard. They did not know what to think. They thought that they were about done for. They thought that they would be killed. They took their trial. But Brother Joseph did not want to hurt them at all, so he let them go home and told them in the future to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them. They looked very sheepish. They went home and left us once more to ourselves.

Nauvoo City Policeman

On December 29, 1843, Mayor Joseph Smith swore into office Nauvoo's official police force of some forty handpicked men. Jonathan Dunham became the captain of the force. His top officers included some of the Saints' more rugged and courageous men—Hosea Stout, John D. Lee, James Emmett, Howard Egan, and John Butler.¹⁷ Mayor Smith's instructions to the police were specific. Part would be on duty day and night, he said, while the others rested, and then they would alternate. He wanted the police to show courage but not belligerence while enforcing order.

If the blood-thirsty hell hounds of Missouri continue their persecutions, we will be forbearing until we are compelled to strike; then do it decently and in good order, and break the yoke effectually, so that it cannot be mended; the mob have been so repulsed in their last attempt at kidnapping, they may stand in fear, at least for a short time.¹⁸

"Let us keep cool as a cucumber on a frosty morning," Mayor Smith urged John and the other police, reminding them that soft words turn away wrath. He warned the lawmen to "keep out of Missouri" at all costs. He asked the men to keep a strict account of their time on duty and to study the city's ordinances. Their main task was to enforce the city's ordinances and preserve the peace. As mayor, he wanted them to "ferret out all grog shops, gambling houses, brothels,

and disorderly conduct; and if a transgressor resists, cuff his ears.” However, they were not to endanger their own lives. “If anyone lifts a weapon or presents a pistol at you, take his life, if need be, to preserve your own.” Joseph admitted that his life was constantly in danger. He felt greater fear of “some little dough-head of a fool in this city” than of Missourians. “I am exposed to far greater danger from among ourselves than from enemies without,” he said. Joseph then blessed the police that in doing their duties well they would earn the “full confidence of Israel.”¹⁹

Dangerous June

In the presidential election year of 1844, Latter-day Saints at Nauvoo disliked the candidates of the national parties. As a result, Joseph Smith became the Saints’ candidate. In February the Church published his *Views of the Powers and Policy of the Government of the United States* and mailed it to about two hundred leaders nationwide. Campaigners carved the country into districts to which elders were called at April conference and sent to preach the gospel and to campaign for candidate Smith.²⁰ Apparently John was one called, because on April 14 he received a seventy’s license signed by Senior President of the Seventies Joseph Young and clerk John D. Lee. It authorized John to preach the gospel.²¹ His autobiography does not mention this mission.

In and around Nauvoo, meanwhile, anti-Mormon pressures rose. “There was lots of apostates there so that Brother Joseph could not make a move hardly without its going abroad to the mobs,” John recalled. “Times began to get so that our persons were not safe,” and “Brother Joseph’s life was not safe at all.” John knew firsthand that Joseph “had several life guards to go with him when he went any where” because officials outside of Nauvoo “had issued writs for him several times to try to get him into prison again, but they could not prove him guilty in any way whatever.” John’s impression was that Joseph’s opponents “ill treated him shamefully and sometimes threatened to kill him on the spot.”

Like water in a pressure cooker on the kitchen stove, anti-Mormon feelings during June 1844 simmered, then boiled, then blew off the lid. Non-Mormons continued to seethe about rumors of secret practices in Nauvoo, including polygamy, the size and independence of the Nauvoo Legion, and the Saints’ political power in the election year. But what set the water boiling were a few malcontents within the Church who came out in open opposition to Nauvoo norms. On June 7th an anti-Mormon newspaper, the *Expositor*, appeared in Nauvoo, promoted by William and Wilson Law, Charles Ivins, Francis M. Higbee, Chauncey L. Higbee, and Robert D. and Charles A. Foster. These men criticized “insupportable oppression” by Nauvoo’s “Ministerial powers” and

supposed immoral behavior and abuse by Church leaders. They called for repeal of the Nauvoo Charter. In response, irate city officials judged the newspaper to be libelous and a public danger and ordered the marshall to destroy the *Expositor* presses, which he and his associates did.²²

That act, seen beyond Nauvoo as un-American, brought tensions to a furious boil. For several days “great excitement” swept the adjoining counties. In Nauvoo, meanwhile, Joseph Smith’s bodyguards had reason to fear Joseph might be harmed by the *Expositor* promoters, who obtained a warrant for the arrest of eighteen men who approved of or helped in destroying the press, including the Prophet, on charges of “riot.” Francis Higbee “made some threats” against Joseph.²³ During the days that followed, rumors and threats circulated freely. One rumor said the Mansion House would be levelled. Another talked of blood running knee-deep in Nauvoo. Reports circulated that messengers had gone out from Nauvoo in all directions “to try to get up a mob” to attack the city. Someone said that 1,500 Missourians were poised to cross into Illinois at Warsaw to join local anti-Mormons. On June 17 Mormon leaders heard that the Law brothers planned to burn the *Nauvoo Neighbor* printing office and that “the Mob is still increasing in numbers in Carthage and other places.”²⁴

Church leaders, hearing such rumors, took bold measures to prepare for Nauvoo’s defense, and John was in the thick of the maneuverings. On June 17 Joseph Smith placed the Nauvoo Legion under the command of the city marshall and told the troops to “take every precaution” to prevent groups of citizens [gathering] along the river or boat landings and to “allay every cause and pretext of excitement as well as suspicion.” He ordered Colonel Rockwood, in charge of John and the other bodyguards, “to call out my guard and staff” to meet with him.²⁵ The next day, Joseph designated Jonathan Dunham as major-general of the Legion, with colonels Stephen Markham and Hosea Stout in charge of the Legion’s two main divisions. He declared Nauvoo to be under marshall law because there was “good reason to fear that a mob is organizing to come upon this city.” He ordered that “no person or property pass in or out of the city without due orders.”²⁶

On June 19 General Smith reviewed the Legion, then ordered General Dunham to post picket-guards on all roads leading out of the city. The next day Joseph went “with my staff” and General Dunham to the prairie east of Nauvoo to inspect defensive trenches being dug there. He ordered men to begin manufacturing artillery. On June 21 he again rode “with my guard” and conducted a review of the Legion. Two days later he relaxed his orders to the picket-guards, telling them to let people pass and repass “without hailing.” Meanwhile, trenching continued on Nauvoo’s east border.²⁷

On the evening of June 22, bodyguards John Butler, Alpheus Cutler, and Abraham Hodge joined Joseph in a meeting with his brother Hyrum, Willard Richards, John Taylor, W. W. Phelps, William Marks, Porter Rockwell, and others in the upper room of the Mansion House. Joseph read to these trusted men a letter from Governor Ford seeking Joseph's surrender to civil authorities outside Nauvoo. "There is no mercy here," Joseph lamented. The men openly discussed possible responses, after which Joseph decided he and Hyrum must cross the Mississippi and escape "to the West" that night. When the meeting ended, Joseph privately talked to John and Hodge outside, beyond the hearing of others, and gave the two a secret assignment. He told them to take the Church's riverboat *Maid of Iowa* to the upper landing—not far from Mother Butler's home—and put the personal effects of his and Hyrum's families on board. Then, he said, have the boat go down the Mississippi and up the Ohio River to Portsmouth, Illinois, where John and Hodge would hear from him. Joseph shook hands with his two bodyguards, then assured Hodge, "let what will come, don't deny the faith, and all will be well." Late that night Joseph, Hyrum, Willard Richards, and Porter Rockwell crossed to Iowa and hid. But by sunrise, word came to Joseph from Emma and others urging him to return. Reluctantly, Joseph dropped his plan to escape to the West and returned to Nauvoo. John and Hodge's *Maid of Iowa* mission was canceled.²⁸

John, rather than retell the well-known events leading up to the murders of Joseph and Hyrum, merely stated that people accused Joseph and sought to arrest him again and again,

but they could not prove anything that was against the laws of the Constitution of the United States against him and would have to deliver him up again. This made them more enraged than ever, and they gathered together in places to council together and plan the best method of making away with him.

While writing about the dangerous final days of the Prophet, John expressed unveiled outrage at those who wanted to shed blood, most of whom he felt were Missourians or local men prodded by Missourians:

The Missourians was red hot mad, their blood thirsty souls were boiling over to get hold of him to tear him to pieces like dogs upon their prey, and so it went on. The spirit of murder was in their hearts to the overflowing. They were going to overthrow Mormonism and put it down under foot. They strove with all their might and mind to get hold of the authorities to put them to death, but they could get no hold on them.

Martyrs Without Bodyguards

Very early Monday morning, June 25, Governor Ford sent orders for Joseph Smith to go to Carthage by 10:00 A.M. that day “without escort.” If Joseph did not comply, “Nauvoo would be destroyed and all the men, women and children that were in it.” So, after sunrise, Joseph and those among the eighteen charged with “riot” headed for Carthage, some twenty miles away. John, Abraham Hodge, and Henry Sherwood were three of Joseph’s bodyguards who rode with the group. When they passed the temple, Joseph, sensing he would never return, remarked that “this is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens.” Four miles from Carthage the group stopped at Albert Fellows’ farm. There, about sixty Illinois militiamen met them, carrying instructions from Governor Ford for the Nauvoo Legion to surrender all state arms that had been issued to it. Joseph Smith countersigned the order and then told John and others with him, “I am going like a lamb to the slaughter.”²⁹

Joseph and his company rode back to Nauvoo to ensure the surrender of the arms, then fifteen men, including John, rode back towards Carthage in the evening. At 9:00 P.M. they reached the Fellows’ farm again and stopped for half an hour. There, apparently, Joseph’s guards had to leave him.³⁰ John recalled that

the mob issued a writ for Brother Joseph and Hyrum and they were taken to Carthage jail. I and some more of his life guards went with him. We were all willing to live or die with them. He, Brother Joseph, spoke to us all and told us that he was like a lamb led to the slaughter. He also spoke to Brother Hyrum and wished him to return home with us.

John and the other bodyguards desperately wanted to accompany and protect Joseph. “We begged of him to let us stay with him and die with him, if necessary,” John wrote, “but he said, no, we were to return to our home. And Brother Hyrum said that he would stay with Brother Joseph.” Joseph rode into Carthage, and John and other defenders retreated silently, overwhelmed by sadness:

For my part, I felt that something great was going to transpire. He blessed us and told us to go. We bade them farewell, and started. We had twenty miles to ride, and we went the whole distance without uttering one word. All were dumb and still and all felt the spirit as I did myself. I cannot express my feelings at that time for they overpowered me. I felt like the Prophets of the Lord were about to be taken from us

and that they were going to await their doom, the same as the Lord his when He was here upon the earth. We went to our homes like so many sheep that had lost their shepherd, knowing not what to do.

Many years later one of John's daughters told her own daughter that John often said he was "never so loathe to do anything in his life as he was to leave the prophet."³¹

John bid Joseph Smith good-bye late Monday night. On Thursday afternoon, June 27, at 5:16 P.M., Joseph and Hyrum were murdered in Carthage Jail. John, in telling about the martyrdom, wrote what he heard then and in subsequent years, but interspersed his comments with feelings he still harbored fifteen years later:

Some of the brethren visited them in the jail. Brother John Taylor was with Brother Joseph and Brother Willard Richards was with them. Then the governor sent troops there to protect the prisoners from the mobs that came there to take the lives of the brethren. They did go and guard the jail, but it was very poorly done. The mob came and demanded the prisoners and if they would not give them up they would tear down the jail and take them. Any how they were all blackened up so that folks should not know them, but they were known, every one of them, and the first one will not escape the punishment in wait for them. There was ministers of the Gospel, there was lawyers, and the pious men of the day there, but woe unto them for they have shed the blood of innocent men, and the penalty is a heavy one.

These villains, John continued, "fired into the door and windows" of the jail "and burst the door open, but were repulsed by those inside, and some were knocked down." John described how the murders happened, as he understood it, and in doing so he retold a story that spread through Nauvoo and circulated for decades after the martyrdom but was not true. It involves a bright light stopping a mobber from mutilating the Prophet's body:

Brother Joseph was shot from a window and fell outside. They then put him up against the well in the yard and shot him. And there was a young man rolled up his sleeves and took a large butcher knife and went up to cut off his head. But the Lord spoke and said that it should not be done, and the earth was darkened and the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled through the Heavens for they had murdered the Prophets of God and their blood had cried unto the Lord for vengeance

on their murderers. There was a flash of lightning struck the fellow that held the knife and frustrated his design. They were all frightened and they run away.

John's story of the light and the young man with the knife stemmed from a supposed eyewitness report by William M. Daniels, published in Nauvoo in 1845 by Lyman O. Littlefield and circulated again in 1857 in the *Deseret News*—just before John wrote his recollections. The story gained such currency that, a few years later, Mormon artist C. C. A. Christensen's panorama painting of the Carthage Jail scene depicted the heavenly light striking and stopping a knife-wielding mobber. However, facts show the Daniel's story was untrue, and it has dropped out of official Church histories.³²

John noted that John Taylor was wounded, Willard Richards was unhurt, and that "it was only the Prophets that were slain." Then John again voiced criticism of the men responsible for the murders:

They were led on by the devil and his army and they gloated over their bloody deeds. They were like so many demons from hell, but when their work was done they were glad enough to get away, although they said they had put an end to Old Joe and that the Mormons would all be put down. But they little knew that the Lord said that it should no more be thrown down.

Watchful Mourning

Excruciating grief stabbed John, Caroline, and their family when they heard the terrible news the morning after the murders. Throughout Nauvoo on that gloomy Friday, many found it hard to accept the deaths because they had seen Joseph delivered from danger time and again. Many believed that Joseph "had a charmed life, that mobs could not have the power to destroy him."³³ On Friday morning, General Dunham issued orders for the entire Nauvoo Legion to meet on the parade ground east of the temple at 10:00 A.M. John most certainly was there. "They met accordingly, when addresses were delivered, and exhortations given to the Saints to keep quiet, and not to let their violently outraged feelings get the better of them." About noon Legion officers counselled together and then rode out to meet the hearse-wagon bringing the bodies from Carthage, covered with brush to block the sun.³⁴ By the time the little caravan was a mile east of the temple, it became a formal funeral procession, led by the City Council and Joseph Smith's staff, including John. The bodyguards in the procession were Alpheus Cutler, Capt. A. C. Hodge, Thomas Grover, Reynolds Cahoon,

Shadrack Roundy, John Snyder, Christian Kreymeyer, Lewis D. Wilson, William Marks, James Emmett, John L. Butler, and Samuel H. Smith.³⁵ They were followed by other Legion officers and scores of citizens. The cortege moved along Mulholland Street “amid the most solemn lamentations and wailings that ever ascended into the ears of the Lord of Hosts to be avenged of their enemies.”³⁶ The procession wound its way down to the Mansion House, where the bodies were taken inside. A multitude of perhaps ten thousand gathered, and Willard Richards, W. W. Phelps, and others urged them to be peaceable and calm and not to retaliate.³⁷ The next day, June 29, thousands moved solemnly through the Mansion House to view the martyrs’ bodies. The Butlers were there, including daughter Charity Artemesia, who “experienced the gloom and deep sorrow of that sad occasion.”³⁸ That night John did not return to his home and apparently helped to secretly bury the body of Joseph Smith within the walls of the unfinished Nauvoo House.³⁹

During the next day and night, the Legion was on guard, expecting an attack by the mobs.⁴⁰ Regarding the numb, tense days following the martyrdom, John chose, once again, to pen feelings instead of historical details:

The Saints all felt it when Brother Joseph was killed. They could not tell the reason why it was, but their hearts seemed to melt within them and they mourned and knew not what for. And when the tidings came they were sore distressed, and prayed that the Lord would avenge the blood of His servants the Prophets. And truly He will for He has said so, and He will keep His word. But Mormonism will still roll on till it breaks in pieces all the other nations, which will have to be accomplished before a great many years. Then there will be righteous judgment and the wicked will be punished for their unjust deeds.

Only with the slow passing of days and weeks did Nauvoo’s dark moment, like the blackness of night, gradually lighten and become a new morning for Latter-day Saints. Close associates of Joseph Smith had heard him teach that some or all of the Saints must relocate to the Rocky Mountain regions in the near future. John was one who knew. So was his friend James Emmett, who had been assigned by Joseph Smith three months before the martyrdom to help move Saints into the untamed West. Within weeks of the martyrdom, Emmett organized an expedition and invited John to join, but John refused. However, five months later, after Apostle Brigham Young had taken charge of the Saints, the Butlers would find themselves in the upper Iowa wilderness participating in Captain Emmett’s controversial venture.

CHAPTER TWELVE

James Emmett's Expedition

Between the June 1844 martyrdom and the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo in 1846, the Butlers participated in four of six projects the Twelve tried to complete for Joseph Smith. The Nauvoo Temple needed to be completed, and the Saints needed to receive their temple endowments. Exploring companies headed into western America to find LDS settlement sites. Missionaries had to be deployed to foreign lands and to tribes of American Indians. And, the doctrine and practice of plural marriage needed to be introduced selectively to trusted Saints. The Butlers, by participating in these efforts between 1844 and 1846, saw their lives drastically changed. They headed into western wildernesses, lived and labored among Indians, received their temple endowments, and became a polygamous family.

Mid-1844 Uneasiness

John devoted only three brief sentences in his autobiography to the Nauvoo developments of late 1844. He recalled that the Saints “still went on preaching the Gospel” and that “the mob got hot again and began their persecutions against us and trying to put down Mormonism. Thus things went on till Brother Brigham sent me up the Iowa River.” John did not mention the well-known August conference where some attenders, including his wife Caroline, witnessed the transfiguration of Brigham Young to suddenly look and sound like Joseph Smith while presenting the Twelve’s claim to be Joseph’s successor.¹

In saying “the mob got hot,” John referred to the months following the martyrdom when leaders feared anti-Mormon violence and tried to quell it. They directed the Nauvoo Legion, in which John was an officer, to perform defensive duties in and around the city.² By September John was reappointed as an official bodyguard, this time for Brigham Young and other Church leaders. The other guards were Alpheus Cutler, Reynolds Cahoon, James Allred, Thomas Grover, George Cremer, Abraham C. Hodge, Shadrach Roundy, Cornelius P. Lott, Dunbar Wilson, Henry G. Sherman, and Samuel H. Smith.³

John’s notation that “we still went on preaching the Gospel” referred to a large-scale send-off of missionaries and expansion of the seventies quorums, which bore primary responsibility for proselyting. New quorums were created, and John was reassigned to the new Eighth Quorum, organized on October 8, 1844.⁴ Volunteer labor by some seventies, including perhaps John, constructed a two-story, brick Seventies Hall by the year’s end, one of late-Nauvoo’s most important buildings.⁵

Second Wife Charity Skeen

John recorded that Caroline and her sister Charity Skeen “were both sealed to me before we left Nauvoo” on December 23, 1844. To be taught about celestial marriage and have a second wife sealed to him, John had to be a trusted insider in the eyes of the Twelve. He was one of but a few dozen men so selected. John, Caroline, and Charity became a polygamous family six years before plural marriage was publicly announced as an LDS practice.⁶

Scholars believe that the principle of plural marriage might have been revealed to Joseph Smith as early as 1831. During the 1830s he told missionaries to the Indians that one day LDS married men would marry additional wives from among the Indians. At Nauvoo Joseph secretly married several women as plural wives and taught the doctrine to a few trusted colleagues.⁷ On July 12, 1843, he dictated a formal revelation authorizing polygamy.⁸ God wanted righteous priesthood bearers to marry more than one wife, it reads, “to multiply and replenish the earth” in accord with biblical patterns established by the honored Old Testament patriarch Abraham. When the revelation was presented to the Nauvoo Stake High Council a month later, it astonished and divided the group. Despite opposition, the Prophet believed that the Church could not progress until men and women started living this “most holy and important doctrine.”⁹

Few, when taught the ancient principle, were not troubled by it. When he learned of it, Brigham Young “desired the grave.” Heber C. Kimball became “ill in mind and body” and paced the floor, wringing his hands and weeping. Eliza

R. Snow, whom Joseph Smith married as a plural wife, said “plurality” at first was “very repugnant to my feelings.” Before Joseph’s death, several of his closest friends became polygamists.¹⁰ Neither John’s autobiography nor Butler family stories record how he or Caroline or Charity reacted to the plural wife doctrine. No doubt they had sober discussions, deep soul searches, and intense prayers before taking the step. On December 24, 1844, John and Caroline were sealed together for eternity, and then Charity Skeen, Caroline’s deaf-mute sister, was sealed to John as his second wife.¹¹ Charity was a reasonable choice because John and Caroline knew her and liked her and because she was already in the household. Charity was John’s age, thirty-six, and four years older than Caroline. Being single at her age and impaired in speech and hearing, her chances for marriage were slim. (Charity immediately went into the Iowa wilderness with John and Caroline. Later, she did not go west to Utah but was taken back to Kentucky by a brother. Where she died is not known. She bore John no children.)

Sent to the Emmett Expedition

In December, 1844, President Young called the Butlers on a difficult mission. He asked John to take his family beyond Iowa’s frontier settlements, overtake James Emmett’s expedition up the Iowa River, and help lead them. He picked John because of John’s two previous wilderness ventures with Emmett and because Brigham trusted John, his bodyguard. To tell about the Butlers’ lives as part of the Emmett expedition cannot be done briefly. An in-depth look is required before anyone can make sense of John’s lengthy discussion of the expedition in his autobiography.

Emmett’s controversial venture is not unknown, but what has been written is based on limited research.¹² A consensus among historians is that James Emmett was a “renegade,” his expedition an act of disobedience, and his followers “misled.”¹³ This assessment, although more correct than wrong, is too simplistic and judgmental to be informative. Because John and James Emmett were associates, and because John became Captain Emmett’s second in command, it is unfair to the descendants of the Butlers, of James Emmett, of families in the expedition, and to LDS history not to finally clarify the Emmett experience. Here, and in the next chapters, is an extensive, revised history of the Emmett trek into Iowa and present-day South Dakota from late-1844 to mid-1846.¹⁴

Emmett’s Western Assignment

At the time Emmett headed west, he was forty-one years old and had been a practicing Latter-day Saint since 1831, longer than almost anyone in Nauvoo.

After Emmett had converted the Butlers to Mormonism in 1835, they had been close associates in Missouri, on the two Sioux missions, and in Nauvoo where Emmett and John shared the responsibilities of being both bodyguards for Joseph Smith and city policemen.¹⁵

Emmett's expedition sprouted from seeds Joseph Smith sowed when he proposed LDS settlements in the western wilderness.¹⁶ Joseph and the Saints felt the spirit of "Manifest Destiny" then permeating America and calling for the country to enter and annex Texas, Oregon, Canada, and other parts of the continent. Joseph Smith urged that the United States "grasp all the territory we can."¹⁷ He wanted Saints planted in the west beyond the United States because of a divine mandate he received to take the restored gospel to Indian peoples and because beleaguered Saints needed a place of refuge.¹⁸

In 1843 the Prophet sent Jonathan Dunham among the Indians in present-day southern Iowa.¹⁹ An LDS colony in the Wisconsin forests, led by Apostle Lyman Wight and Bishop George Miller, tried to befriend Indians.²⁰ On January 12, 1844, Joseph Smith requested the Twelve to send a company "to explore Oregon and California, and select a site for a new city for the Saints," preaching wherever they could. When only four men volunteered, the Twelve picked James Emmett and thirteen others to go: Samuel Bent, Joseph A. Kelting, David Fullmer, Daniel Spencer, Samuel Rolfe, Daniel Avery, Samuel W. Richards, Amos Fielding, Charles Shumway, John S. Fullmer, Thomas S. Edwards, Moses Smith, and Rufus Beach. "I want every man that goes to be a king and a priest" who "when with the savage nations [would] have power to govern," Joseph told the recruits. These men were to scout throughout the West, visit Indian tribes, and select a settlement site among Indians where some should remain while others returned to pilot LDS settlers there.²¹ Emmett and the expedition expected to leave by spring.

Early in 1844 Joseph Smith organized a Council of Fifty to direct Church temporal projects, including western ventures.²² Nine apostles sat on the council, along with James Emmett and about forty others.²³ In March the Council of Fifty discussed how best "to secure a resting place in the mountains, or some uninhabited region, where we can enjoy the liberty of conscience." Two weeks later they petitioned Congress to authorize the Latter-day Saints to raise a large army to promote American interests in the West. In April Joseph Smith pronounced that Zion was the whole of North and South America, not just Missouri. Henceforth, Nauvoo was to be the center of LDS expansion into the hemisphere.²⁴

To Elder Emmett's credit, he took seriously his assignment to help lead an expedition west. But he postponed his departure because he was assigned to go

to Ohio and campaign for Joseph Smith in the U.S. presidential election.²⁵ Emmett finished his campaigning mission just before the martyrdom. Then, according to Apostle Heber C. Kimball, he tried to take a group of fifty men west even though told “not to take a man from this city.” Leaders sent a party in pursuit of Emmett, who was “called to account” and apparently rebuked by Joseph Smith.²⁶ He continued to be one of Joseph Smith’s official bodyguards and must have agonized when the Prophet was murdered. After the martyrdom, Emmett stood guard while pall bearers secretly buried the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum.²⁷ By then Emmett felt “that he had been given a mission by the Prophet which the latter’s death made only the more obligatory upon him.”²⁸

He “became impatient to leave” because “he didn’t want to wait until the Saints were driven again before he left Nauvoo.”²⁹ Emmett later said that he left “not the Church, but the United States.” He, like many other Saints, felt that “I have been acquainted with the manner they have treated this people since Jackson County, after they had driven them, murdered Joseph, the appeals that had been made, and no notice taken.” He “did not go because I had not the same faith as the Church, but I went to get rid of the surrounding Gentile world.”³⁰

To be a Latter-day Saint that summer was to be fearful. With most of the Twelve not back from campaign missions, July became dangerous because of the non-Mormons’ intent to control the general election scheduled for August. Outsiders warned Nauvooers of the “absolute necessity of great caution” by the Saints; “a small error on your part,” an apostle was told, “will put the country in a blaze that will not be early extinguished.”³¹

Recruiting

By midsummer Emmett was recruiting people for an expedition he intended to lead. With Church leadership away and the Church’s future clouded, there was no one in Nauvoo who could say with authority to him or anyone else “you must do this” or “you can’t do that.” Pressing daily decisions about Church and Nauvoo matters could not be made. On July 12, the stake president tried to call priesthood quorum presidents together to pick someone to manage Church financial affairs, but Apostle Willard Richards and Bishop Newel K. Whitney blocked the meeting.³² On July 30, Bishop George Miller and Alexander Badlam failed in an attempt to call a Council of Fifty meeting to “organize the Church.”³³ Leadership uncertainties lingered for five weeks following the martyrdom. As late as August 5, Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith’s first counselor, felt that the Saints were divided, the anti-Mormons “had them,” and that in terms of leadership, “everything is in confusion.”³⁴

Finally, on August 6, Apostle Brigham Young and others returned to Nauvoo and took charge of the Church. Most Saints accepted the Twelve, led by senior Apostle Brigham Young, as Joseph Smith's successors. President Young urged that the temple be completed so people could receive their endowments but cautioned that if Satan blocked the project, "we will go into the wilderness and we will receive the endowment, for we can receive an endowment anywhere."³⁵ Emmett, it seems, seriously doubted that the temple could be finished before mobs forced the Saints from the city. In mid-August Lyman Wight preached from the stand about taking a company away in the wilderness, a plan the Twelve approved the next day.³⁶

Adding stress to the summer were economic hard times Nauvooers suffered. Weeks of pre-martyrdom persecutions coupled with heavy rains hindered most farming or building. As a result, by July there was "but little employment and but little means of subsistence at the command of the Saints."³⁷ Citizens afraid of bloodshed and unable to provide for their families were ripe for invitations to leave and start over somewhere in the West.

Emmett recruited privately and personally. Volunteer James Holt recalled that Emmett "wished us not to reveal it to anyone, not even to our wives, where we were going." Some critics, then and now, have seen this as evidence that Emmett tried to hide his activities from the Twelve. Holt, however, said the secrecy was necessary because "everything was in such an uproar that he [Emmett] was afraid a great many would follow, and it would cause suffering." Common sense says that Emmett would want to pick who went and to control the make-up of his company. Why invite a flood of too many volunteers, many of whom might be liabilities, which a public announcement of his venture might produce? However, despite private recruitings, word leaked out. Holt reported that "it got rumoured around to such an extent, that a whole settlement on Bear Creek [Liberty Branch] joined us."³⁸

Histories dealing with the Emmett expedition impute that those who went were less-than-faithful Saints. No doubt some were this type, but a large part of the nearly 150 recruits did not enlist because of discontent with the Church or its leadership.³⁹ Recruit Enoch Burns emphasized in his reminiscences that before leaving he paid his tithing, an act that was "evidence that I did not think of leaving the church"—this was in reaction to stereotypes then painting his group as apostates.⁴⁰ The core of Emmett recruits later went west to Utah, a testament to their religious loyalty to both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.⁴¹

Recollections and diaries of the recruits identify several reasons why people joined with Emmett: (1) Most believed that Joseph Smith had ordered the venture and authorized Emmett to pick those who should go. Bishop George

Miller, a member of the Council of Fifty who later merged Emmett's company with his, "testified" to James Holt that summer that Emmett had been appointed by Joseph and could pick others to go. Emmett chose Holt as one.⁴² (2) Like Emmett, some worried souls wanted to escape persecutors and government injustices. Lyman Hinman said he left because he was "desiring to find a place where we could breathe free."⁴³ (3) A number of recruits felt they were fulfilling the Church's mandate to carry the gospel to the Indians. Kentuckian Isaac Riddle, then fourteen, said the Riddle family of ten joined the expedition because, "Looking for more peaceful quarters, we met James Emmett, a friend of the Prophet, who had been called to fill a mission to the tribes of Indians in the north and northwest. We joined his party."⁴⁴ (4) Some believed, like William D. Kartchner, that they were supposed to be a vanguard of "a few families to emigrate to the Missouri River and put in crops preparatory to the Church moving from Nauvoo westward." Moses Smith, for one, said they had "the duty of commencing a settlement in the Indian country, at a place to be selected by them for that purpose, where a part of them were to remain while the rest should return to pilot out a large company with families, stock, etc. to extend the settlements."⁴⁵ (5) Some enlisted to be with friends or relatives in the expedition. Holt said Emmett chose John Butler to go (John declined) and that John recruited a friend named Edwards who recruited others.⁴⁶ At Bear Creek Branch, twenty miles south of Nauvoo, presiding elder Zachariah D. Wilson invited his branch members to enlist, including two newlywed couples—William and Margaret Casteel Kartchner and James and Rebecca Nelson.⁴⁷ Recruits undoubtedly were told of Emmett's prior experiences in Indian country and had reason to believe they could trust his expertise as a frontiersman.

Disapproved Departures

Starting early in August 1844, Emmett's recruits left the Nauvoo area separately or in small groups. Lyman Hinman was among the first to go, leaving on August 3.⁴⁸ On August 11, Brigham Young complained against a growing fever to leave Nauvoo and specifically against Emmett's venture.⁴⁹ But only one day later the Twelve approved the plan of Lyman Wight, George Miller, and Lucien Woodworth to take an expedition to Texas.⁵⁰ Such a decision could only have encouraged Emmett to leave, for he held a commission from the Council of Fifty he felt was equal to that of Wight's. By August 18, rumors circulated that the Twelve publicly disapproved *but secretly approved* of the companies then leaving, a rumor Brigham Young tried to squelch. "No man has any right to lead away one soul out of the city by the consent of the Twelve," he ordered, except for Wight and Miller. This statement stamped Emmett's venture as

unauthorized. The Twelve wanted every family, other than those in the Wisconsin pinery group, to “stay here in Nauvoo, and build up the Temple and get your endowments; do not scatter.” Rumors saying those with Wight and Miller could get their endowments in the wilderness, they explained, were false. Those leaving Nauvoo, they implied, were cowards. North and South America would not become the land of Zion, they warned, until the temple was built and endowments obtained.⁵¹

How could common people enlisting in Emmett’s venture not be confused by public statements, private rumors, and approved departures from Nauvoo? Emmett’s recruits continued to leave. Allen Russell stated that “as near as I can remember, we started about the last of August.”⁵² Enoch Burns said he started on September 4.⁵³

During five days in September, the Twelve tried to convince Emmett to cancel his expedition. Apostle George A. Smith said the Twelve spent part of September 2 trying “to Prevent Division in the Church” by endeavoring to counsel James Emmett and “prevent him from taking A Party away from heere contrey from counsel, he was Stuborn.”⁵⁴ The next day, when leaders rescinded Sidney Rigdon’s preaching license, they “also with Drew our Fellowship from Jams Emet and Zachariah Wilson for not following Counsel.”⁵⁵ Then, or during the next several days, Brigham Young “talked as plain as any man could” with Emmett, but Emmett indicated he would not be counselled and apparently said, “I can’t come back.” Heber C. Kimball said Elder Young chastised Emmett at the Kimball house, and at a meeting at Orson Hyde’s home Emmett “refused to submit to council.” John Taylor felt that Emmett was “decoying” Saints away by deceptive statements. Willard Richards said he talked with Emmett “and found the most stubborn disposition of any man in the world. I was disgusted with him.”⁵⁶

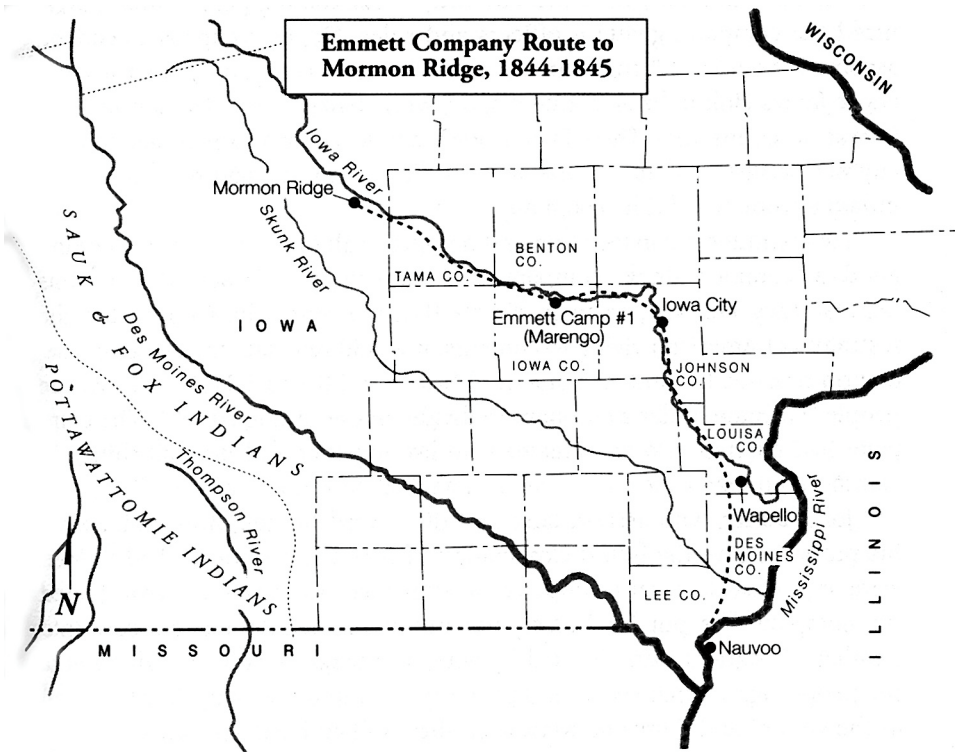
On September 8, four days after Elder Wight left, the Twelve once again preached against divisions.⁵⁷ To followers of Wight and of Emmett still in Nauvoo, the Twelve said to show themselves and to leave without fear—and without apostolic blessing—but warned all others to stay.⁵⁸ That day the Twelve talked again with Emmett, who promised to hearken to counsel and return in the morning and get advice.⁵⁹ The next day, Apostles Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith tried to dissuade Emmett from “taking away a party of misguided Saints into the wilderness,” but failed.⁶⁰

Whether or not John Butler heard of this debate between the Twelve and Emmett, for some reason he opted not to go with his longtime friend. He wrote that Emmett “wanted me to go again with him, but I refused.” Emmett left by mid-September and caught up with his recruits who by then were moving into

Iowa's interior. On October 7 Church clerk William Clayton penned a criticism of Emmett's expedition. "There are but few gone with him," Clayton wrote, "but there are enough to go to destruction with one man for that is their fate."⁶¹ Nauvoo leaders worried so much about this group that four months later President Young would send John Butler to help them keep the faith.

Up the Iowa River

Emmett's enlistees were told to outfit themselves with wagons, teams, and supplies and meet at a rendezvous point up the Iowa River beyond Iowa City. Their route was up the Mississippi's east side and across the river on ferries at Ft. Madison or Burlington, Iowa Territory. They then traveled northward ten or twenty miles and reached the Iowa River near its mouth. There, some loaded onto flatboats and were poled or pulled upriver. Others followed primitive roads near the western shoreline. About September 19, Lyman Hinman's group of four or five wagons passed through Iowa City and moved about thirty-five miles up the river's west side "to the upper trading post," the Poweishek post, some five miles beyond what James Holt called "Kitchen's Settlement."⁶²



On today's maps, "Kitchen Settlement" was just west of South Amana, and the Emmett Camp was by Bear Creek where the town of Marengo is now located. Prior to 1838 the U.S. government built a post and Indian farm for Musquakie and Poweishek Indians just west of present-day South Amana. Indians were moved out in 1843 and settlers took up the land. A. P. Kitchen lived at the trading post, then William Downard opened a store there, and Charles Kitchen cultivated the farmlands. Charles, Absalom P., and Joseph M. Kitchen opened a sawmill on Bear Creek five miles away—two miles east of present-day Ladora. The trading post and developments around it are the "settlements" beyond which the Emmett people said they moved.⁶³

At Emmett Camp,⁶⁴ some 150 to 200 Saints built temporary log cabins and shelters.⁶⁵ Notably, Marengo histories say the town's first settler, Robert McKee, who came a few weeks after the Mormons left, first occupied a small log cabin vacated by Mormons.⁶⁶ Some Saints worked in nearby settlements for food and goods. Several men labored in lumber camps for provisions.⁶⁷

Emmett Camp stayed at this place for more than three months, during which time two deaths occurred. Acting Bishop Holt's wife died in October and his son in November. Gardner Potter and Evelina Hinman were married in December, probably by a civil authority at the trading post. Emmett organized the company, giving it officers and rules. He, as company president, assumed the role of "trustee-in-trust" in charge of company properties and chose James Holt to be an acting bishop, with Henry Hinneman and Jackson Stewart as counselors. There is no evidence this bishopric was ordained or in any way served by virtue of priesthood callings. Emmett had no authority to ordain anyone nor did he claim any.

He instituted a consecrating and pooling of all property for the common good—a "common stock" company.⁶⁸ He and the people agreed to do this because they believed, as many Saints did, that once the Church left the restraints of American civil governments, it would reinstate the law of consecration revealed by God and practiced briefly in Missouri. Holt said that the people "all came under a covenant to divide up everything equal." "The company had entered into an agreement to live together and have all things in common, no man called anything his own," Allen Russell recalled.⁶⁹

John Butler, who arrived later and discovered he, too, must consecrate his property, gave the fullest explanation of how the system worked.⁷⁰ Men were appointed to receive property, he explained, for when a person joined the company "he put his horses into one man's hands and his cow into another's." Matters were decided by vote, and majority votes ruled. By vote the people agreed that everyone's property went into the camp "for the good of the whole"

and if anyone went back they walked back. No one could call his property his own. It did not matter if someone put in more than another. At the journey's end the property would be equally divided.

At Emmett Camp, before the Butlers arrived, officers took stock of the group's provisions. Apparently people were supposed to bring everything needed, because Captain Emmett had no Church money or general fund with which to buy food and equipment for the company. As happened fifteen months later with the first wave of Saints who left Nauvoo, not everyone with Emmett came properly supplied—evidence that the expedition was not carefully planned and supervised at departure time. To solve shortages, men left Emmett Camp and worked in nearby settlements for pay or goods. Others hunted. Allen Russell noted that just before Christmas, one hunting party bagged “squirrels, pheasants, turkeys, prairie hens and quail for the Christmas feast. The women did the cooking in great style.”⁷¹

For James Emmett, this camp served as a place for his people to prepare to head into the wilderness. Any needed food, cattle, and equipment must be obtained here. So, officers requisitioned many less-than-essential personal items which had trade value—fine clothes, furniture, and the women's feather beds and jewelry—and bartered them with local people. “We sold everything we did not need,” Acting Bishop Holt said, “and bought corn and teams, and everything was divided out equally.”⁷² However, what leaders called requisitioning some Saints called stealing.⁷³

The Butlers Join Emmett

By December someone came down the Iowa River and carried stories to Nauvoo that some Emmett people, lean on resources, were stealing from other Saints and from Iowans.⁷⁴ John heard hints that the Emmett party “were driving off cattle and stealing.” In reaction to incoming reports, Brigham Young sent John to help police the company's conduct. According to John, President Young

called me and told me to go and get ready to start to Emmett's Company, and said he, “there is some good people in the company, and I hate to see him carrying them to destruction, and it must not be, for you must go and save them from destruction,” so I went up the river to the camp and stay'd with them.

That John, Caroline, and Charity accepted this winter assignment shows they possessed strong loyalty to the Church and a good deal of courage. Although winter thus far had been mild, it was risky for anyone, especially

women and children, to move beyond the thin fringe of Iowa Territory settlements. Nevertheless, the Butlers loaded their things and left Nauvoo between Christmas 1844 and New Year's Day. They considered this a temporary mission and left property behind, probably in the care of John's brothers, married sister, and mother.

Before leaving Nauvoo, John and Caroline received patriarchal blessings at the hands of John Smith, Joseph Smith's uncle. Patriarch Smith's blessing mentions John's mission to the West. "Thou shalt be a mighty man in gathering the remnants of Jacob," he promised, meaning the Indians; "thy way lieth in the wilderness among the Lamanites & thou shalt be mighty in bringing them to a knowledge of their Fathers, & also to a knowledge of the Savior." John was told that if he obeyed God, he would prosper, lead many to Zion, have great strength among enemies "like a Sampson," gain "an inheritance in Zion," see Israel gathered, and hold great possessions. Patriarch Smith told Caroline that if her faith failed not she would have "power and benefits of the Holy Priesthood in common with thy companion," "faith to heal the sick in thy house," power over the destroyer, "the ministering of Angels to comfort thee" in the wilderness journeyings, and a numerous posterity to include "men of war." Caroline would live, he said, "until thou art satisfied with life and every good thing." Her name would be known as "a Mother among the Lamanites."⁷⁵

With a heavily loaded wagon and a team of horses or oxen, John led his two wives and seven children, ranging in age from thirteen to one, along established roads through sparsely settled Iowa counties. The hundred-mile journey to Emmett Camp took them at least four days. They arrived about January 1, 1845. Captain James Emmett and his company excitedly welcomed the Butlers, but not all were pleased, because John's arrival caused Captain Emmett to uproot the camp and immediately push his people into the wilderness, in spite of the hardships of winter weather.⁷⁶

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

With Emmett in the Wilderness

Captain Emmett aimed his expedition northwesterly, diagonally across present-day Iowa. Captain and recruits agreed that the goal of their mission was to explore uncharted parts of the West and to find a receptive Indian group among whom they could settle. Some Emmett people thought they would reach the Missouri River near today's Omaha and Council Bluffs, but Captain Emmett led his company on a route much farther north.

Moving Upriver

When the Butlers arrived at Emmett Camp, they found Emmett's followers to be ill-equipped, short on food, and facing the coldest part of winter. James and Rebecca Nelson, whose memories of the Emmett expedition were bitter, saw in John's arrival an endorsement by the Twelve of the Emmett expedition—as did Emmett. Said the Nelsons:

We . . . removed to Iowa River and organized. The ideas we had gathered were such that we expected one of the twelve [Lyman Wight] as a guide; the excuse was that the twelve had not been able to wind up and arrange their business, so they sent Emmett as a substitute. Brother Butler came among us at this time as being sent from Bro. Young, stating that Bro. Brigham had sent his blessings and the blessings of the Lord with word for the brethren to take good care of the women and not suffer them to go barefoot in cold weather.¹

John brought instructions, the Nelsons added, that the camp “remove into the wilderness out from the settlements, but not so far but what they could go for grain to subsist on until they could raise it as it was their [Nauvoo Saints] intention to come on.” Immediately after the Butlers’ arrival, Captain Emmett ordered his company to break camp and move upriver. The Nelsons, resentful about the sudden start, said Emmett moved because he suspected that Nauvoo leaders would call him back. “His fears were so great,” they said, “that his orders were to pack up and march in the middle of winter.”² It is possible that Emmett feared the Twelve might halt his venture. Or, equally likely, he responded to John’s instructions for the group to move beyond the settlements. Implicit in this instruction is the fear that charges of stealing from or misusing private property of locals might bring trouble to the camp. It seems clear, too, that three months of camping had depleted the area of forage for animals and game for food. Captain Emmett later would tell the Twelve his company relocated because “there was no game there.”³

Apparently Captain Emmett hoped that at this camp his group, lacking Church-provided resources, could stockpile enough supplies for an extended wilderness trek. But by January they had accumulated little surplus. More time there would not increase their reserves but in fact would drain them. Emmett knew that his people must find a settlement location by early spring in order to plant crops for summer and fall harvesting. They could ill afford to use valuable spring planting time moving. A mild winter made a January journey feasible—it is notable that of Emmett’s people who wrote accounts, including those most bitter about the company’s hardships, only one complained about snow or unusual cold.⁴ During this move from Emmett Camp, a count showed 130 in the wagon train.⁵

For several weeks the Mormon company moved “slowly up the [Iowa] river”⁶ some fifty or sixty miles because “there were as yet no trails or routes opened across the unbroken and unsurveyed wilderness of prairie beyond Johnson County.”⁷ Lyman Hinman said they “traveled from bottom to bottom on River staying from one day to three weeks in a place just as we found feed for our cattle.”⁸ Kartchner said his wagon, a commissary wagon, was so heavily loaded that “my young wife and others able to walk were compelled to walk, many times in water shoe-deep for we had no path and many of us had our feet so swollen we could scarcely put on our shoes in the morning.”⁹

About the time the wagons began rolling, Elizabeth Jane Pierce Burns gave birth to son Franklin on January 3. Other births took place but are not identified. Company officers ordered that mothers receive five pounds of flour when a son was born, four pounds for each new daughter.¹⁰ On February 1 Armstead

Moffett married Captain Emmett's daughter Mary Jane. Because they were beyond civil jurisdictions, Captain Emmett no doubt performed the ceremony.¹¹

During the plodding progress upriver, the company's food supplies dwindled because their hunters failed to find expected game. Lyman Hinman complained that Indians went ahead of them and killed or scared the game.¹² Captain Emmett became dictatorial regarding food; he and Acting Bishop Holt imposed strict rationing. Kartchner recalled that "our provisions were placed in provision wagons, except a few sacks of grain which were placed in my wagon and others he [Emmett] could trust and we began to draw rations."¹³ Holt said that "provisions were rationed out daily" and "each person received only half a pint of corn a day."¹⁴ Individuals scavenged and hunted for food for the common good. The Nelsons pulverized elm bark to bake for bread and to thicken soup and said the people ate crab apples and unseasoned meat from cattle that died.¹⁵ Hinman said the people dug wild potatoes, and that artichokes, onions, leeks, and peas supplemented their half-pint of corn per head per day, "which was all the Bread stuff we had."¹⁶ Teenage hunter Isaac Riddle remembered that

the winter of 1844-45 was so severe that game was very scarce. Many a time I remember that one squirrel or duck was divided between the four families that constituted the party. Our rations ran short, and for some time we lived on one-half pint of corn per day to each individual.¹⁷

Acting Bishop Holt recalled that "great was the suffering of all the camp" due to hunger. The Nelsons felt it wrong to be hungry when commissary wagons "abounded with plenty," but they showed no concern that the food supply was dangerously low.¹⁸ Some disgruntled members later claimed that Emmett officers starved them while letting others eat well. Favoritism sometimes was shown when food was distributed. There are indications that Captain Emmett withheld food from those who did not do their share of the work. Some in the group, John implied, knew how to live off the land better or to live more frugally than others.

The death of Acting Bishop Holt's baby in February underscores how harsh life became and how bitter some feelings turned. Holt, whose wife and son had died at Emmett Camp before the Butlers came, gave his infant son to Mary Kartchner to care for. When the baby developed the "itch," or lice, which the Kartchners had, Holt placed the boy in the care of Miss Parthenia Overton for two months. Then Sister Rebecca Nelson cared for the lad. But he died on February 10, 1845, of starvation. Mrs. Nelson filed a memorandum at Winter Quarters a year later in which she bitterly complained about Captain Emmett's

rationing. It starved everybody, she said—everybody *but* Emmett, Holt, Stewart, and Butler, who, in her opinion, “lived to suit their own taste.” She claimed that the dead infant’s father had refused to give her milk and flour she requested. “I made flour gruel without salt and fed it on that,” she said; “It was 7 months old when it died, and suffered a lifetime in those few months. I speak of this to show that all natural affection appeared to be shut out from their [leader’s] hearts.” However, the father said Mrs. Nelson withheld food from the baby. She “took advantage of my absence,” he said, “to glut herself,” nearly starving to death his other children, too.¹⁹

Winter Camp at the “Big Woods”

By mid-February 1845, the Emmett company stopped at a “Big Woods” a few miles northwest of present-day Marshalltown, Iowa, near the state’s center, about one hundred miles upriver from today’s Iowa City and some sixty miles past the Poweshiek Indian post. A Johnson County history says that “here they made a winter camp, building rude cabins and mud huts and tent shelters as best they could, and slashing down young trees for their starving animals to browse upon the tender twigs and unopened buds.”²⁰

At least one time wagons were sent back to the settlements to return with corn and cattle, obtained by trading.²¹ But food dwindled, campers suffered, and sufferers squabbled. Because of discontent, John Butler said, the company voted on its pooling agreement several times. Moses Smith’s daughter gave birth in February. For her and the baby’s welfare, the Smiths decided to quit the expedition. Emmett, sticking to the consecration rules, refused to let them take their property. Allowed to take only the clothes on their backs, the Smiths accused Captain Emmett of stealing and left. The trek back to Nauvoo took them at least six days. They reached Nauvoo by February 24, 1845.²²

Three days after Smith arrived, Church leaders pumped him for information about the Emmett company. Members of the Twelve and some “Council” members—probably the Council of Fifty—met with him in Willard Richards’ office. They wanted to know how large a group Emmett had with him and if the people were for or against the Twelve’s leadership. Moses informed them that the camp contained some thirty-five households and estimated they were about 160 miles northwest of Nauvoo. He told about the company’s sufferings and bitterly complained of being mistreated. He felt certain the majority “would be counselled by the 12” and if told to stop would stop, or if told to go on, they would.²³

After hearing Smith’s report, several of the Twelve vocalized dislike for Captain Emmett.²⁴ Apostle John Taylor charged that “Emmett wants to be a big

man and take the lead of this Church,” an emotional overreaction. Brigham Young and Orson Pratt said they had “no confidence” in Emmett until he showed obedience to the Twelve, a reasonable reaction. Some suspected Emmett was sponsoring a wilderness alternative to being in Nauvoo, a course that would give Saints no revelation, intelligence, or success. When Emmett’s hopes to work with Lamanites were mentioned, President Young asserted that Joseph had given him, Brigham Young, the keys for directing the Church’s outreach to the Lamanites, and Emmett lacked his permission. A fear was expressed that Emmett might be operating in league with Lyman Wight on some unapproved side venture. President Young decided that “Emmett is out of our control—he has flung himself out of the Priesthood,” so he immediately announced that “we have dropt James Emmett & Lyman Wight” from Church fellowship. Irony tinges the fact that action against Captain Emmett was taken partly because of criticisms by Moses Smith, who a few months later rejected the Twelve and became an apostle in the apostate movement headed by his brother-in-law James J. Strang.²⁵

Lyman and Spencer’s Investigation

After Moses’ report, Nauvoo authorities opted to send Apostle Amasa Lyman to visit the Emmett Saints and deliver a “good fatherly letter of instruction.” That same day President Young revealed his secret about John Butler, telling the Nauvoo High Council that “Bro. Butler went according to my council” and that “I never leaked this to any one yet.” He explained that John “will see me again and report to me.” Lyman chose Daniel Spencer to accompany him, and Moses Smith served as their guide.²⁶

The trio left Montrose, Iowa, on March 3 on horseback. They traveled about thirty miles a day on a route from Montrose northward to Lowell, Washington, the English River, then northwesterly to Bear Creek and across Honey and Walnut Creeks where they reached the “Ioway” River, near present-day Chelsea in Tama County. They followed the southern shore of the Iowa River sixteen miles and reached Moses Smith’s campsite, near present Montour. There they found an Emmett defector, one of the Edwards family. The next day, March 9, the travelers rode twenty-five miles and reached Emmett’s camp, which they said was some sixty miles from the last settlement (present-day Marengo).²⁷

Apostle Lyman said they found about 150 souls “in a deplorable condition” of poverty and hunger. The people “brightened up” when he and Spencer arrived because the official status of their visitors signalled to the group that they “were not entirely cut off” from Nauvoo. Lyman claimed the company’s hunger was “caused by the rigid enforcement of Emmett’s measures.” Emmett had

decreased food rations to less than a pint of corn—three gills and then only two—per day. Even though the commissary had “considerable corn” for spring planting, Lyman learned that “sometimes 3 day rations last 6 or 7 days.” The people had “grown very poor” and “the suffering they have endured is too bad to talk about.” When a cow died, Lyman noted, “they go to work and eat it.” Five women had been confined in tents or wagons after giving birth that winter. Lyman felt sickened by the suffering he saw.

Lyman and Spencer learned that most of the people “were under the impression that the move [Emmett expedition] was directed by the order of the Twelve.” Emmett “had them all blinded.” The people were united and had put all their property together, calling it “common stock.” Emmett was trustee-in-trust “and Butler [was] second in command.” Emmett had convinced people “to consecrate wife, children, clothing, everything,” all of which Acting Bishop Holt controlled in such a manner that no one could “control a second suit of clothes.” Lyman heard about one brother who wanted to leave the group but was told by Emmett: “Did not you covenant to stand by us? If you want to be a covenant breaker, you can.”

Acting for the Twelve, the two elders sternly rebuked Emmett for willful behavior. But he “did not afford any disposition to follow the advice of the Twelve,” Lyman said. Emmett told the two he did not object if the Twelve wanted to live longer among the Gentiles, but he had endured enough at gentile hands. He supposedly said to them that he would go ahead with his expedition “against the advice of God, man or the devil.” Lyman’s report said that John Butler “told me they had performed a miracle by moving so far without costing a dollar,” a statement Lyman challenged because “I found that the Sisters had sold their all” to help supply the company.²⁸ John obviously meant the move had not cost *the Church* any funds. John later reported that when Lyman, Emmett, and he discussed “the covenant concerning our property,” Apostle Lyman “told us if we had Covenanted to walk [away from our property] when we left, to keep our covenant.”²⁹

Elder Lyman delivered one letter to Captain Emmett from the Council of Fifty and one to the Emmett company from the Twelve. The first letter was conciliatory. It acknowledged that Emmett had been constant and faithful and that he had suffered in many ways. The Council of Fifty saw no need to reprove those who, when Joseph was killed, honestly left under false impressions. But they fully supported President Young and the Twelve and told Emmett that the Church was never so united as it then was. The time to vacate Nauvoo was not yet, they added, for the temple and Nauvoo House had to be finished first.³⁰

The Twelve's letter to the camp probably upset several, because in it the Twelve accused Emmett of disregarding proper authorities and lightly esteeming their counsel. They had labored hard to persuade him to obey counsel, it read, but he had persisted in his course and led the people, like a severed branch, from the body of the Church. If the people wanted the temple built and to receive the priesthood and sealings, and if they truly wanted to teach the Lamanites, they could only do it "by taking our counsel." Refuse to follow Emmett, the letter concluded, unless he honors the Twelve's authority.³¹

Lyman and Spencer counselled the company to act in a spirit of unity. They did not advise the people to return because many had disposed of their "inheritances" and had no homes or jobs in Nauvoo. Rather, Lyman and Spencer told them to "make a settlement" somewhere. Emmett and his followers, after hearing the visitors' counsel, "said they would abide it."³²

Lyman believed that many discontented members wanted to return to Nauvoo but were too ashamed because of poor clothing. While Lyman was there, the camp apparently took a vote about stopping or going on. "More than half was for stopping," Lyman said. Guns were brought in and piled, so those going on ahead would take them. The others were "commanded to stand and their tents were searched," making some feel wrongly disarmed in the wilderness. Lyman disliked this central arsenal, noting that the company had "more arms than men."³³

Lyman and Spencer stayed but one night then headed back for Nauvoo. They reached Moses Smith's camp on April 10. The next day they left Smith, a Brother Bingham or Byington, and "the Edwardses" there, passed by "Ioway City" on April 13, and went through Columbia City, Crawford, New London, Augusta, and Fort Madison to reach Nauvoo on April 15. Spencer calculated the return trip to be about 180 miles.³⁴

After hearing Lyman and Spencer's report about the Emmett company, President Young again expressed dislike for the venture. At a March 16 public meeting, he called on Elder Lyman to describe the plight of the Emmett people. Lyman's news, when discussed in Nauvoo, must have troubled John's mother, brothers, and married sister. After Lyman finished speaking, Brigham publicly criticized Emmett and preached a moral lesson he felt the company's distress taught. Those people went headlong into misery and suffering, he said, and thus not one of them could claim heaven's protection or blessing. Such a blanket condemnation would have offended members of the John Butler family, whom Brigham had sent to the Emmett group, had they heard it. The company's sufferings, the Church leader continued, "add nothing to their exaltation." He had told Emmett that "if he went he would get into trouble." President Young

ended his sermon by warning that “Religion is one thing and fanaticism is another,” meaning Emmett was a fanatic. He viewed the Emmett people’s suffering as proof that they were behaving unrighteously.³⁵ (However, were President Young judged two years later by the same standard, when his own followers died by the hundreds at Winter Quarters, he might have called such a cause-and-effect standard unfair.)

Tapping Maple Sugar

The Emmett company had camped “where the hard Maple trees were quite plenty,” and the Butlers and others tapped the trees to make sugar.³⁶ This spot, apparently part of the “Big Woods,” was “at a point on the Iowa River near present Albion, northwest of Marshalltown, Iowa, where some low hills ever since have borne the name Mormon Ridge.”³⁷ In that area the combination of gradually warming days but freezing nights, characteristic of March, causes maple sap to run. Collectors cut gashes in the tree trunks three or four feet above ground and pounded in a spout or trough down which sap dripped into buckets or kettles. Men built fires and women boiled the sap to evaporate the water out, leaving behind thick maple syrup or soft or hard sugar.³⁸

In the Butler family a tale circulates about the family making sugar, which very likely happened at this camp. The story says Caroline’s two deaf sisters were in the camp; in reality only sister Charity was there. In the family’s version, Caroline Skeen Butler and her two deaf sisters boiled sugar cane syrup. Then, to make extra sugar, they stayed up all night, taking turns keeping the pot boiling. When they finished, the two sisters put sugar cakes in a deep wooden box and Caroline put hers in a different box. But when the company prepared to break camp, the captain—meaning Emmett—collected sugar the family had boiled, planning to share it equally among the company. He received Caroline’s sugar, then asked for the sugar in the deep box. Deaf sister Charity shook her head “no.” The captain went to the box and stooped over to lift up the sugar. Charity raised a big wooden paddle menacingly above his backside. He quickly raised up, shouting. But each time he stooped to get the sugar she raised the paddle, without saying a word, and each time he jumped up and shouted at her. Curious Saints gathered to see what was causing the commotion. The captain yelled at Caroline to make the sisters give up the sugar. She said, the story claims, “I cannot, it is their sugar, they made it at night, and no one else worked at night.” The captain’s dilemma produced laughter from the spectators. Finally someone told him the two sisters were deaf. They were very efficient at talking with their hands, but in this case the paddle seemed to work best. When the captain saw that the crowd sympathized with the sisters, he left without taking

their sugar. The company moved on and soon used up its sugar. Then the Butler women dipped into the extra sugar they had saved and rationed it out to the children, the elderly, and those weary souls struggling to walk.³⁹

Such family stories survive, folklorists find, because of universal truths they convey about the participants. This story, then, although garbled, has most likely passed down through the generations because it seems to capture and convey in one situation several of the main “truths” of the John Butler family’s experience in the Emmett expedition: John’s frequent absences that left the women on their own, the courage of Caroline and Charity, the severe shortage of food, the hardiness of the people in adversity, the sharing which people did even if it meant breaking the rules, and the women’s dislike for Captain Emmett.⁴⁰

“Camp Division”

Elders Lyman and Spencer’s March visit increased discontent within the expedition’s ranks. Already some dissenters, including the Edwardses, had moved to a small camp a day’s journey downriver. Dissenter F. M. Edwards, whom John Butler considered a troublemaker, returned to Nauvoo by March 26.⁴¹ The Emmett camp in the Big Woods became known by the company members as “Camp Division.”⁴² Kartchner said that at some point rations were reduced to but one-fourth pint of corn per day, which caused “complaint and desertion.”⁴³ Captain Emmett felt that he himself could live on very little food and expected others to do the same. “They did not suffer more than I did,” he later said. Anybody who chose “to act his own pleasure, on his own hook” suffered, he said, because they would not follow leaders’ instructions. When such became ill, that person had “nobody to blame but himself,” Emmett maintained.⁴⁴

Emmett, anticipating a demanding journey across uncharted prairies to the Missouri River, wanted to prune from the ranks those who would be a detriment to travel. His severe rationing might have been designed in some cases to convince some he disliked to quit the expedition. He ordered several elderly women to be separated from their families and sent back to the Iowa settlements before the main push westward. This decision sparked resistance.⁴⁵ The Nelsons said Emmett sent the older women back with a poor team and wagon. This was a “cruel separation,” the Nelsons said, because the women pleaded not to be separated from their grown children on whom they depended for support. Tom Edwards drove the wagon containing ten days’ rations, and three men went along to build a bridge. Of Emmett’s decree, the Nelsons asserted that “no good spirit dictated his conduct, the spirit of evil cruelty and tyranny was manifested in all his actions.”⁴⁶

After the party of older women left, several company members rebelled, led by Zachariah Wilson, whose mother had been sent back. Captain Emmett disarmed the rebels. He arrested four, including James Nelson. He threatened to execute Wilson. A trumpet blast announced an evening general meeting of the camp. There, Captain Emmett verbally lashed the dissidents. The next morning, at another meeting, people voted against having the four arrested men shot. After two days under guard the four and other defectors were allowed to leave. Captain Emmett gave them rations—five gills of corn for the five-day journey—and “took our teams from us and left us to find our way back the best we might,” said James Nelson. The group included infants and children up to age ten.⁴⁷ In his autobiography, John Butler is critical of some of those who left, at least those whom he knew had been thieves while in camp.

James Nelson and one other man went ahead toward the settlements and passed the old women on the way. When the two reached “the settlements,” people took pity on them and gave them teams and provisions to go back for the families.⁴⁸ Returnees suffered extreme hardship. “John Flowers was so starved and reduced,” Kartchner said, that when he reached Iowa City his legs gave out and he walked on his hands and knees to a house to ask for food.⁴⁹

Among those who quit the expedition and went back were Mr. and Mrs. Russell and a son; Thomas Edwards, Thomas Edwards, Jr., and William Edwards; Chester Loveland and family; Jimmie and Rebecca Nelson; Sister Hart; John Flowers and family; Wiley Flowers (who left his family); Samuel Coon and family; Elissi St. Marie and family; Stephen F. Casteel and sister Emeline (was Mrs. Savage); James Hickman and family; Zachariah Wilson and wife; and Finley Page and wife.⁵⁰ This was a sizeable defection, amounting to perhaps one-third of the total company. When accounts by those who became bitter are weighed together, they show quite clearly that Emmett lacked the personality and the leadership skills needed to win and keep the people’s loyalty. They say that he radiated cruelty, not empathy; force, not respect; anger, not love; and distrust rather than confidence.

However, to assess the man fairly, other factors should be considered. First, any person who is a strong leader will generate critics. Second, many leaders, including good ones, seeking to stop crises resort to drastic measures (curfews, martial law, censorship) that are not popular. Third, the majority of Emmett’s company, including the Butlers, stayed with him even though they had ample opportunities to go back, which indicates things were not as bad as others claimed they were.⁵¹ Fourth, some of the defectors had disobeyed company rules, had not done their share, or had been thieves. Fifth, some of those who left, including Moses Smith and Zachariah Wilson, soon afterwards proved to be

disloyal to the Church and the Twelve, indicating that Emmett might not have been their root-problem after all.⁵²

False Arrests for Stealing

Defectors could not take their consecrated properties with them. Such an act, by company rules, was theft. Such people, though, felt leaders who confiscated the properties were the real thieves. Several felt lifelong bitterness about losing their property in this way. John's autobiography, when discussing the matter years later, became defensive. Knowing that the Emmett company, including the officers, had gained a reputation for stealing, and knowing he himself had been arrested by Iowa authorities on false charges of stealing, John explained at length what happened. He knew some Emmett people were dishonest. As second in command, he had found it necessary to ask some rascals to leave the camp.

They had got pretty well along in the art of taking what did not belong to them and applying it to their own use. They would pick up a yoke and put it in their own wagons and say that it would come handy if they wanted to yoke up any more team.

One man, John observed, had no coat "so one of the brethren lent him one and when he went to go off they took the coat from him." This man felt robbed, so he, with others, went down to Iowa City and filed criminal charges against Emmett officers for stealing this coat and some cattle. Critic William Kartchner, who stayed with the Emmett camp, said that Emmett defectors at Iowa City regained their strength for two weeks and then some led a posse back to try to reclaim properties taken from them.⁵³ On foot, a sheriff-led posse reached the Emmett camp at the "Big Woods" on April 15. John recalled that "the officer of justice came and took several prisoners, myself with the rest." Those arrested with John were Lyman Hinman, William Potter, Gardner Potter, Armstead Moffett, and Enoch Burns. Captain Emmett, according to critic Kartchner, "fled in haste" to escape arrest.⁵⁴

A local history published in 1883 termed this posse action the "Mormon War" and called it a "ridiculous and pitiful episode in Johnson County history."⁵⁵ One of the Iowa posse, Thomas Banbury, recalling matters two decades later, said the Emmett group had reached the "Big Woods" northwest of present-day Marshalltown and camped for the winter. Ruffians—he did not say they were disaffected Emmett members—hanging around a Poweshiek Indian trading post (today's Marengo), twenty-five miles above Iowa City, reported

that Mormons were robbing. They asked Sheriff Major P. McAlister to take a posse and arrest the leaders. Complainants joined the posse. "Like an army of conquest," the posse marched twenty to twenty-five miles per day. When they approached the Mormon camp, the men prepared to do battle. Two entered the camp and demanded surrender but "found a lot of peaceable, harmless, half-starved men, women, children, dogs, and cattle, utterly inoffensive, but all everlasting hungry." Sheriff McAlister showed them his arrest warrants for a score of men and subpoenas for many witnesses.⁵⁶

John distrusted local lawmen, a lesson he had learned in Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois. Experience told him that some men used legal authority as a pretext for taking property. John discovered this posse of seventy-five men contained several who planned to plunder the Emmett camp. In the posse, he said, were "a great many" Emmett defectors. So, distrusting the posse and the disgruntled Saints with them, John "got my pistol and buckled [it] on, and got my rifle and went and stood by the fire in front of the tent. I was standing there when the officer came and read the writ to me and said that I was his prisoner." The two sparred with words. "I told him that I was not well," John said, but "he said that I would have to go with him." John answered "that I would, provided that he would pledge himself that no one of his party would stay behind. He said that he would not do it." John refused to go. The man, no doubt intimidated by John's size, pistol, and rifle, "then went to his party and told them about it. He then came back to me and told me that he would keep his pledge." Even at that point, John said, "some of them had already began to plunder farther down the Camp."

If any of those not arrested wanted to leave and go back to the settlements, the sheriff offered, they could accompany the posse. Three women and a few men responded. Taking the five prisoners, the posse started toward Iowa City.⁵⁷ John kept his arms "to defend myself with, for it was in the heart of Indian Country." Posse and prisoners traveled five to ten miles and camped, where trouble quickly brewed. The Iowa history says that they camped on a low flat place. Deputy Sheriff Thomas Banbury guarded the prisoners.⁵⁸ John recorded that "I had just about finished my supper when one of the fellows got up and said 'hurrah, who will volunteer to go back and get some horses and cattle?'" Several men stood up to go, so, John said, "I finished my supper, put on my pistol and got my rifle and said that I would go." But "the officer said that I was his prisoner." John said to the other prisoners, "won't you go with me?" They said they would. But, the lawman asserted, "you are my prisoners." John backed him down. "'No matter', said I, 'if any man goes I shall go with them,' and I told him that he had not kept his word." The man said he could not prevent the

men from going. “Then, said I, ‘you cannot keep me for I am bound to go if any one else goes.’” Facing a fight, the lawman “then told the men that they could not go.” He authorized the prisoners to guard the ones wanting to pillage, and then placed other guards over John and the prisoners. John identified those wanting to plunder the camp.

Now the very ones that had us taken were the ones that had stolen the cattle and had left the company because I had told them they had to quit it. I pointed out some of them to the officers, and asked them if they could not remember when they brought in a yoke of cattle, and another when he brought in a cow, and they could not deny it.

Deputy Sheriff Banbury’s version corroborates John’s recollection remarkably well. As printed in the Johnson County history, Banbury told the same basic story John did, except he confused John with one of the Porter men:

Before and after the “grand army” stopped for camp, the roughs wanted to go back to the Mormon camp themselves, and let the rest go on. With regard to this, a leading and stalwart Mormon named Porter [Butler], made a strong speech, and said if the sheriff permitted them to go, he would go too, or die right there in the effort. During the dispute over this matter it became apparent that the whole thing was a plot of the roughs to get all the fighting men away from the Mormon camp so they could go there without risk, to plunder the camp and ravish the women. When this secret had fairly leaked out, the camp became divided into the law-and-order party and the roughs party—the latter determined to go back and the former determined that they should not; and Mr. Banbury says that for nearly an hour it seemed as if they would certainly come to bullets and knives, and have a bloody fight right there, among themselves. He had promised Mr. Porter [Butler] that if any of them went back he would go along, and Porter [Butler] should go too. The sheriff’s party finally prevailed, however, and none were permitted to go back.⁵⁹

During John’s first night with the posse, rains flooded the ground with six inches of water. Amid “storm and misery” a woman gave birth. Then all marched for two days, except the mother and child who rode in a supply wagon. The posse left all the women in the group at the Poweshiek Indian agency, from where O. G. Babcock brought them to Iowa City in an ox wagon.⁶⁰ Prisoner Hinman recalled that the posse and prisoners traveled an estimated 130 miles back to Iowa City in four days.⁶¹

According to the county history, the accusers disappeared before the group reached Iowa City:

When the cavalcade had got back as far as the Poweshiek agency [Marengo], the men who had made the complaint against the Mormons, and brought all this cost and trouble on Johnson County stopped, telling Sheriff McAlister to go on, and they would follow the next day, and overtake him before he reached Iowa City, and be ready to appear against the prisoners.

John remembered that before the group reached Iowa City “the officer began to see that it was not us that had been doing the mischief. They said that we could go if we liked. I said ‘no, we had a writ and we wanted to appear at court to answer for what we had done.’” Posse and prisoners arrived in Iowa City on Saturday, April 19, about 10:00 P.M., Hinman reported, and they were “lodged in jail and the key turned upon us and we had the solid comfort and pleasure of lodging upon the hard timbers for a bed instead of the ground” to wait until the court convened on Monday.⁶²

On Monday, the county history explained, the sheriff’s prisoners “were brought before Squire Hawkins for examination, but not a single complainant or witness appeared against them, and they were at once discharged.”⁶³ The prisoners appeared in court twice that day, morning and afternoon, but when no witnesses showed up, Hinman said, the “States Attorney abandoned the case and the court discharged us.”⁶⁴

Despite the bother and risks, the arrests produced some benefits for the Emmett people. John bragged that the officials “had to fit us out with provisions to return to our families.” The Iowa version agrees: “Their guns and baggage were restored to them and some provisions supplied for their return journey,” it states and then notes that a Masonic connection helped, too:

Most of these Mormon men were Freemasons [including John], and when the diabolical plot against them was made known, and confirmed by the fact that their accusers never dared to appear in court where law and reason ruled, very naturally a strong interest and sympathy was awakened in their behalf. As a result of this they were supplied with many things for the relief and comfort of their destitute people at the camp, and they departed with light hearts and heavy loads.⁶⁵

Particularly discussed among residents was the baby born during the posse trek back to Iowa City. According to the Johnson County historian:

Of course a great many jokes were perpetrated by the men on one another about that baby born in camp. Its own father was along—a funny little Frenchman [Elissi St. Marie?]. The sheriff being commander-in-chief of the expedition, was asked why he did not go and act as midwife to the poor woman. He replied, “By G-d, that sort of tactics wasn’t taught where he got his military education.” The woman, in spite of her hardships, came up all right, and when she reached Iowa City about two weeks afterward, the baby was bright and healthy, with sharp and cunning black eyes. A few ladies furnished the destitute mother with some garments for herself and child. The parents went back to Illinois.⁶⁶

Regarding the released prisoners’ departures, Hinman related that “we left the city and friends by bidding them good-bye and a hearty Master Mason grip.” From his forced-march to the city, Hinman’s legs and feet were swollen during the return hike, so his son-in-law, Gardner Potter, had to carry “Father Hinman” on his back across some swollen streams. John and the other freed men returned to the Emmett company on April 29, after a two-week absence. By then Captain Emmett had moved the Saints twelve miles farther up the Iowa River. Of the reunion John said simply: “We returned and found them all well.”⁶⁷

The “Mystery of Mormon Ridge”

The Emmett company contributed to legends about “Mormon Ridge” that have circulated in central Iowa since the 1850s.⁶⁸ “The Mystery of Mormon Ridge,” the story of Mormons camped and suffering there, is a confused blending of various stories, folklore, facts, and fictions which residents heard and shared over the years. The local tale includes elements obviously blended in from the deadly Latter-day Saint winter at Winter Quarters (250 miles away) and from the handcart treks (the trail ran one county south of Marshalltown) that included hundreds of deaths near the Rockies during a bitter winter. Marshalltown’s expert on the mystery, Gretchen I. Sipes, admitted that it has become wrapped within many “interesting legends” that together are “a confusing hodgepodge of clues.”⁶⁹

Some pieces of the legend clearly fit the Emmett party, but Mrs. Sipes feels that “most of them don’t.”⁷⁰ The mystery involves (a) a Mormon company who camped on the ridge, (b) intense hunger and suffering, (c) dictatorial conduct by leaders, (d) government wagons helping to rescue people, and (e) a baby born and left behind. These five elements, with allowance for exaggerations, stem

from the Emmett company's experiences there, which occurred before white settlers arrived.

However, other pieces of the legend do not fit the Emmett group, such as those saying that (g) the supposed disaster happened after white settlers were in the area after 1847, (h) perhaps 1,000 Mormons wintered there sometime between 1847 and 1852 on their way from Nauvoo, (i) the group was trapped without shelter for months, (j) the Mormons suffered massive deaths from starvation and disease, (k) early settlers claimed that Mormon Ridge had many graves on it, and (l) the survivors pulled two-wheeled carts to Council Bluffs and then to Utah.⁷¹

Only two solutions to the mystery seem possible. One is to show that some story parts stem from the Emmett company and that other parts are misinformed folklore absorbed from the Winter Quarters and handcart episodes. The other resolution would be to prove, first of all, that there are numerous pre-1850 graves on the ridge (none have been found yet), and then discover some record of a large, tragedy-ridden, phantom Mormon company, as yet unknown to history, who camped there. What is known and provable to date is that the Butlers and others in the Emmett company in early 1846 are the only Mormons who camped at length anywhere near "Mormon Ridge" before the legends sprouted.⁷²

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Camp Vermillion

As Emmett understood the letter brought by Apostle Amasa Lyman, he had two choices: return to Nauvoo or relocate his company to a safe place. He chose the second. Accordingly, the Butlers and the other twenty-one outfits in the Emmett company spent May and some of June 1845 traveling and camping together on a northward and then westward course across rough northern Iowa prairies. Maps and Indian agent reports show that the region they traversed was remote, unsettled, roadless, and uncharted. Allen Russell said the landscape was “wide rolling prairie” with “very little timber.”¹ The small wagon train trudged through Sioux hunting territory, a risky gamble for unauthorized white intruders.

Slow Trek to the Missouri

John’s autobiography says little about the Emmett company’s month-long move 150 to 200 miles from Camp Division. Possibly that was because the trek covered dull land with few names and landmarks and lacked notable events. Lyman Hinman said the company started out from the camp, which was twelve miles beyond Camp Division, on May 2, 1845.² They followed the Iowa River for a week or two, entering “Indian Neutral Ground” where federal agents and army patrols rarely ventured.³ About mid-May, near the headwaters of the Iowa River, the wagon train turned west. “We drove out on a very large prairie without road or trail,” William Kartchner said, and could move only three to six miles per day because of thick wild grasses and several streams that hampered

progress.⁴ He told a St. Louis reporter a few weeks later that the company moved “without compass or anything else to guide them except the rising and setting sun.”⁵

Kartchner recalled that they crossed Skunk River—probably the Boone River—and then a swift river with steep banks which he thought was the Des Moines. Four days later they reached a deep creek with no timber—probably the Little Sioux—and had to slide their wagons across on their axletrees on two poles. Then, by traveling northwest for several days, they reached and were stopped by the Big Sioux River, which is now Iowa’s border with South Dakota. “Here we made a cottonwood raft,” Kartchner said, and spent three days “working hard” to cross the wagons on the raft-ferry, using ropes.⁶

Allen Russell felt it providential that “we did not see an Indian until we reached the Missouri.”⁷ But though Sioux were no problem, finding food was. Those who adjusted to living off the land complained less than those counting on the commissary wagon for their sustenance. Isaac Riddle noted that they fished the streams and “obtained plenty of fish of different kinds.”⁸ Allen Russell, who spent much time hunting and foraging, said the company had good pasture and easy food, and their menu sometimes included squirrels, pheasants, turkeys, prairie hens, quail, wild potatoes, fish, and oxen slaughtered after they became too weak to pull the wagons.⁹ Emmett admitted his camp lived sparingly but was healthy. “We would have as much as we could eat,” he challenged, “if we would be industrious.”¹⁰ Lyman Hinman, however, complained that near the end of the trek the group was living on a half-pint of cut greens and roots and on less than a half-pint of corn per day which was “most miserable, shrunk, mouldy, and rotten.”¹¹ Kartchner lamented that “for six weeks his daily allowance of Indian corn was a pint tin cup half full.”¹² He also criticized Emmett for stopping their rations during the three-day crossing of the Big Sioux River, which forced “our women” to have to hunt “Sioux roots and wild onions to eat.”¹³

Because Mary Winn was pregnant as well as hungry, her husband John went out hunting and shot a wild grouse, which, by the rules, he turned over to the company’s commissary. But when he found a honeycomb, he kept it for personal use. He, Mary, friend James Wilson and Wilson’s wife enjoyed honey at a meal. The Winns’ version is that when Captain Emmett found out about their honey, he made an example of Winn by threatening him with a firing squad. Then, rashly, he kicked John and Mary and the Wilsons out of the wagon train with only the clothes they were wearing. According to Winn, Indians found the couples and provided them three horses and supplies which enabled them to return to Nauvoo.¹⁴ Another version of this confrontation terms it a mutiny.

Some of the men became unruly and mutinous and nothing but persuasion, and the severest threats of the leaders, and others who were willing to prosecute the journey, together with the fact of getting so far into the wilderness, that the road back had more terrors than the course ahead, was this mutinous spirit finally subdued, and all were again intent upon reaching the great goal, the Missouri.¹⁵

“Many became dissatisfied,” Kartchner believed, because they were heading far north of their “supposed destination,” the Council Bluffs region.¹⁶ Once they crossed the Big Sioux River, the Mormons encountered a party of Sioux hunters, the first Indians they had seen since before Camp Division. Captain Emmett, speaking their language, gave the concerned Indians a satisfactory explanation about his purposes. The next day French traders, who were hunting buffalo, met them.¹⁷ These men, Kartchner recalled, “said they lived at Fort Vermillion, a few miles due west and invited us to the Fort.” Allen Russell said the Frenchmen were surprised the Sioux had not killed the Mormons. Finally, on June 7, after traveling for thirty-six days, the Emmett company reached the Missouri River valley and camped on the northeast bank. Frenchmen led them to their ramshackle fort. The haggard Americans camped first “a little above” the fort and then moved down below it. Kartchner said Frenchmen and Indians came into the camp and “accused us of being starved, which made Emmett mad.”¹⁸

Fort Vermillion was a trading post established in 1835 by P. Chouteau, Jr., and Company, French fur traders. They located the post on the Missouri River southeast of the mouth of the Vermillion River—near present-day Burbank and the Iowa state line.¹⁹ The American Fur Company maintained the post from the late 1830s until 1851, trading with the Lower Sioux tribes.²⁰ Allen Russell said the Mormons found Fort Vermillion to be four or five log cabins and about fifty acres of corn four inches high, located on a beautiful spot close to the Missouri River’s shore. He made no mention of the Vermillion River, more than a mile west, for which the post was named.²¹ According to South Dakota legends, the Vermillion River gained its colorful name from the reddish wood in willows along its bank, or from red paint Indians put on their faces, or from the red stone along its bank. Lewis and Clark, while exploring the Missouri, called it the Red Stone River.²²

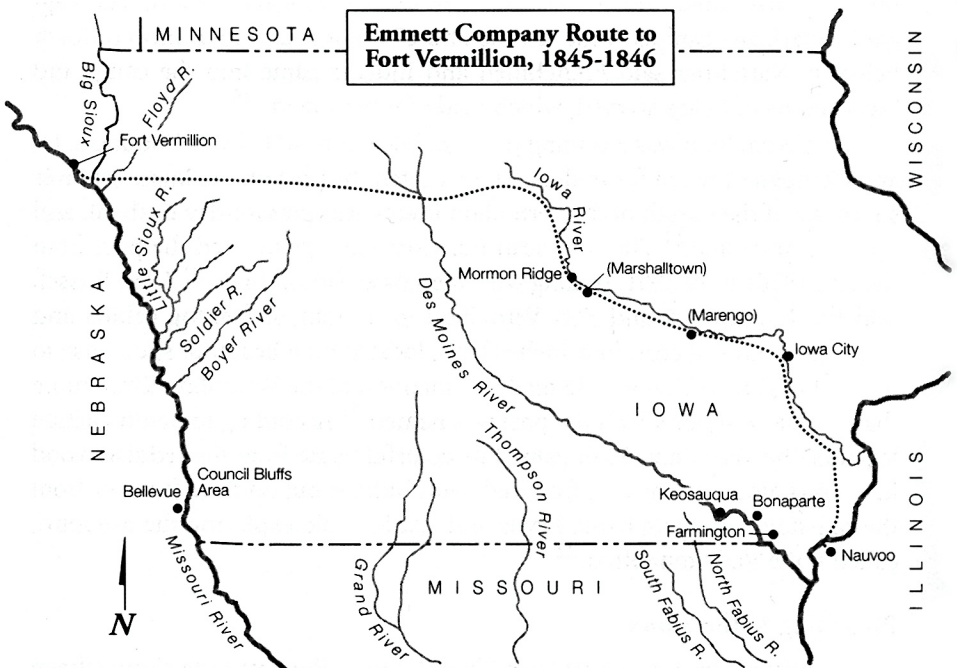
Preaching to the Sioux

One day after arriving at Fort Vermillion, Captain Emmett rode about fifteen miles to meet Sioux Indian chiefs who were drying buffalo meat. He found these

Sioux living in 300 lodges, two families per lodge. Seven Indians returned with him to the encampment, bringing the Saints badly needed bales of dried buffalo meat as a present. One of the chiefs was named Henry, pronounced “Onree,” whom Kartchner believed was “a half Frenchman.” Henry had been educated at a Protestant school at St. Petersburg, in present-day Minnesota.²³ John acted as a company contact man with the Indians:

There was a large quantity of Indians round and about us. I made a medicine dinner and their chief and a young fellow by the name of Henri, a half breed, came to dinner and swore to be friends. There was a man, a mountaineer, by the name of Breyner [Brewyer]. He was out hunting when this took place. He was a very handsome man, and very over-bearing.

Captain Emmett wasted little time in carrying out the religious purpose of his expedition—preaching Mormonism to the Indians. James Holt, recalling this episode nearly forty years later, said:²⁴



We made a feast for them, giving them the best we had. Emmett handed the chief Henry the *Book of Mormon* to read, and after he had read the preface and explained it to his comrades, they all gave a great shout for joy. They danced, sang, shouted, and had a joyful time. Emmett asked them why they were so happy. They told him that their great chief, who had died twenty years ago, had told them that the whites would bring them in this very year, the record of their forefathers. They had almost forgotten it until he had presented him this book. They felt to rejoice, because the words of their Prophet had come to pass.

When Emmett explained his hopes to move his people to the Rocky Mountains to settle, Indians warned him about desolate plains ahead that lacked buffalo and water. They wished the Mormons to stop with them and teach them to farm. They warned that the season was too late for wagons to reach the mountains. Emmett said the Indians “promised us peace and safety” and offered to let the Mormons “stop till next Spring, raise corn, then go on.”²⁵ Holt said the Indians told Emmett “he was perfectly welcome to take his men and hunt, and kill all of the buffalo around here they wished. They could help him and the Mormons would not be harassed by the Indians.”²⁶ Apparently Emmett wanted to keep moving and cross the Missouri, but, Hinman recalled, “could not with the means that we had.” So they settled near the fort.²⁷

Camp Vermillion

Famished Saints eagerly devoured buffalo meat, a taste new to some of them. During their first few days at Fort Vermillion, Holt said, they “killed two or three loads of buffalo which greatly helped us in our provisions.” Emmett said his men “went to hunt buffalo when we pleased.” No doubt John was one of the hunters. “There are tens and thousands [of buffalo], I could not count them,” Emmett said; “I guess 1000 in company, in a few hours then another company sometimes of 500, 1000.” If a buffalo scented a human, the whole herd ran wild. Hunters killed only what they needed but did not kill bull buffalo, which were as big as two oxen. They butchered and then loaded the buffalo meat into their wagons. “Best meat in the world,” Emmett thought. The white families tended to prefer calf meat, which was “first rate” and “tender.” Hunters dressed the skins to make moccasins and buffalo robes for winter warmth. “We had lots of meat,” Isaac Riddle boasted.²⁸

Also around the camp were deer, bears, wildcats, antelope, turkeys, prairie dogs, and wolves. For guns the company had “old U.S. pieces,” “heavy yagers,”

and “a new musket.” Fishermen brought in catfish, pike, and pickerel.²⁹ The settlers had plenty of salt for the meat, obtained by trading buffalo robes to Indians who collected salt from a salt spring near the camp.³⁰

At first the Butlers camped in their covered wagon, probably in the box removed from its wheels. Building shelters could wait until they plowed and planted. Emmett said his company “labored all in common.” In a stretch of bottomlands two to three miles wide and thirty miles long to the north, the farmers planted “a little early corn,” approximately fifty acres of buckwheat, and some turnips, peas, and beans. They built a corral, and their cattle foraged along the river bottoms. Then, with farms underway and cattle cared for, men took axes and felled cottonwood trees in a large grove southeast along the river’s edge. Using logs hewed on two sides, they constructed a corn storage house about twenty feet long, eight feet wide, and ten feet high, with a small door at one end. They also started work on log cabins. For a cabin roof the men applied split timbers, hay, and mud. As summer wore on the men did some building and cut hay for the French traders.³¹

In July the *General Brooke* riverboat made its annual appearance at the post on its way down the Missouri from the Yellowstone River hauling furs and buffalo robes for the American Fur Company. A number of Saints “were anxious to come down on her,” the Kartchners reported, “but were prevented by Emmett and his connexions, who number some six or eight men,” because “the strictest watch was kept over the disaffected to prevent their going on board.”³² The disgruntled Kartchners, helped by Henry, got aboard with only the clothes on their backs and bitter feelings. They said John Butler and Bishop Holt searched their belongings and kept valuables and heirlooms. “Butler accused me of stealing a pot. My wife said her mother owned it ever since she could recollect,” Kartchner said; “The last search by Brother Butler left us very destitute.” Again, company rules required the confiscations. The young couple reached St. Louis on July 18, and a local newspaper, based on the Kartchners’ interview with a reporter, printed an error-riddled article about the Emmett company.³³

Emmett at Nauvoo

Obedying his March instructions from Nauvoo, Captain Emmett headed back to report the camp’s location to the Twelve once his settlement was launched. It is possible, as critics suggest, that Emmett made the trip when he did in order to counter criticisms he expected the Kartchners to level against him when they reached Nauvoo.³⁴ “We had peace while he was gone,” Holt said; “the Indians treated us very kind.”³⁵ John, being second in command, presided over the little

colony for several weeks during Emmett's absence. In early August Captain Emmett met with Brigham Young, Apostle Heber C. Kimball, and several bishops at Nauvoo. Emmett told the council that he felt the letter Amasa Lyman had brought him "was friendly and a good letter." It gave him, he said, two choices: to return or to locate in a safe place. He took the second option and searched for a site where they could obtain food and be close to buffalo herds. Emmett said he and his company wanted to "hold on with the church." They numbered "about 100," including some thirty men over age twenty-one and no one older than fifty.³⁶

Emmett appealed to regain his Church standing lost the previous September. "Although I'm considered an apostate," he told leaders, "I do not consider it so." He was "perfectly willing to comply with the authority of God, it is here, nowhere else." But Emmett's pledges of loyalty to the Twelve brought rebuttals. Apostle Taylor said Emmett knew he was going contrary to counsel, and that if the whole Church took Emmett's course "there would have been no church." Taylor admonished that "no one in the Kingdom has power to do just as he pleases."

Regarding Emmett's hopes to convert Lamanites, Taylor argued that "you nor any man can ever do it except they are sent according to counsel." Emmett replied that the Twelve had no firsthand knowledge of his sentiments regarding the conversion of the Lamanites, then explained that "if I was among them I should try to teach them temporal affairs and be sure to teach them the Book of Mormon, in the course of time they would understand that the Great Spirit would open their understanding." Emmett bore testimony that "I have seen 2 or 3 times [that] unless the power of God is with a man he could do nothing with the Indians." Apostle Lyman, based on his March visit to the Emmett company, complained that Emmett told people that their sacrifice and mission would earn them blessings and endowments equal to those who finished the temple at Nauvoo.³⁷

At the end of the hearing, the Twelve decided to give Emmett "his place in the Church" as long as he would "hearken to counsel." Apostle John E. Page rebaptized Emmett, who was reconfirmed and then reappointed to his office. The Twelve insisted, however, that two or three men return with Emmett to the Vermillion camp.³⁸

Fullmer and Sherwood's Visit

To accompany James Emmett, the Twelve sent John S. Fullmer, one of the men appointed by the Council of Fifty in 1844 to go west, and Henry G. Sherwood, Nauvoo's marshal.³⁹ Before leaving, the three received blessings. Also, each

carried a copy of the same letter to the Emmett Camp, no doubt in case one or two of them failed to arrive.⁴⁰ Fullmer and Sherwood secretly carried with them written authority “to lead, direct and instruct Emmett’s company” in a letter addressed to “The Saints in Camp who left Nauvoo with James Emmett in 1844.”⁴¹ The written instructions from President Young began with:

Know ye, that James Emmitt, having led a company of the saints away from Nauvoo, contrary to council, and having returned to Nauvoo, made satisfaction to the authorities . . . , agreed to resign the Presidency in said Camp, and abide the decisions of the Councils of said Church; has been rebaptized, ordained, and restored to the full fellowship of the Church.

The letter appointed Sherwood and Fullmer “to preside over said Camp of the Saints” and to counsel them as circumstances demanded and when led by the Holy Spirit. The two were empowered “to appoint whomsoever they shall select to preside over said Camp, when they shall leave the same.” The two were also told to commit the Saints to the Twelve’s leadership and rebaptize them.⁴²

Emmett, Sherwood, and Fullmer left on horseback on August 13. They rode up the dragoon trail along the Des Moines River to Raccoon Barracks (present-day Des Moines), then westward. They dodged officials who might think they were illegal Indian traders, crossed dry lands and suffered from thirst, avoided a disturbance between Pottawattamie and Sioux Indians, and encountered deep streams with miry bottoms and steep banks, as well as severe storms that caused creeks to overflow. During the trek, Captain Emmett “became almost insupportable, and he appeared unwilling to pilot us to his camp,” Fullmer said, but they convinced him to do his duty. The party reached Camp Vermillion on September 13, after a month’s travel.⁴³

There, Fullmer said, they found about one hundred Mormons “in better condition than we expected,” meaning “they were tolerably well provided with provisions but somewhat destitute of clothing.” Fullmer and Sherwood, due to the effects of dried buffalo on their digestive systems or to a river fever or both, became violently sick with fever and chills for a week or more. While the two were unable to “attend to business,” Emmett tried to turn his people against them, suggesting their illness indicated the Lord was displeased with them. But “John L. Butler and a few others had spirit enough to understand the spirit of these charges.” When Elder Sherwood recovered, he rebaptized and reordained John as a sign of recommitment. John then helped carry Elder Fullmer to the river and rebaptized him for his health. Sherwood and Fullmer explained their mission to the Saints and gave instructions about “their temporal welfare.” Many

seemed glad to hear their counsel and felt they had been misled by Emmett. Then, Fullmer said, “Emmett opposed us and finally claimed equal authority with us.” Whereupon the two pulled out Brigham Young’s letter giving them the presidency. Emmett retracted and signed the letter saying he “fully and cheerfully” concurred with its instructions. The dispute at an end, “the saints went forth and were all rebaptized by Elder John L. Butler” to put themselves in full Church fellowship.⁴⁴ Enoch Burns said the baptisms were required “as a token of fellowship with the Twelve.” He added that “this was the first I knew that Emmett was on his own hook”—had been acting on his own authority and not for the Twelve.⁴⁵

Apparently to avoid a schism, the two elders reappointed Emmett as president. They told the Saints to stay there, build cabins for the winter, procure buffalo meat, befriend the Indians, and prepare to move west the next spring to a destination the Church would announce. Fullmer’s report of their mission noted that the camp agreed to receive counsel from the Twelve, had been rebaptized, and were “organized into a branch” with Emmett as president.⁴⁶

The two elders then requested John to be their guide and caretaker on their return trip to Nauvoo because they felt too feeble to travel by themselves. The camp “delegated Elder John L. Butler to go forthwith to Nauvoo” to receive for them instructions from the Twelve.⁴⁷ Captain Emmett, wanting to guide them back himself, disagreed with their choice, but in Fullmer’s eyes “his recent behavior as a guide disqualified him.” Emmett would have his revenge after John left.⁴⁸

Near-Massacre

While preparing to leave, John, Sherwood, and Fullmer became embroiled in a dangerous dispute about a horse trade they made with Indians that “came near proving fatal to the whole camp.”⁴⁹ John provided much detail about this crisis because, being one of the most dangerous situations he ever faced, it was etched sharply into his memory. He felt certain that without God’s intervention he and his people would have been killed. To journey by river, Sherwood and Fullmer had to sell their “church” horses. The incident started when Fullmer traded one horse to John in exchange for a watch and forty dollars. Fullmer traded the other horse to Brewyer for the same amount. Emmett felt the horses had been traded for too small a price and he refused to surrender them from his corral because he wanted them for buffalo horses.⁵⁰ Then, according to John:

One day I was riding the horse out and who should come but Brewyer. He came and caught hold of the bridle and told me to get off. I told him

that I did not think that I should. He said that it was his horse and he would make me get off. I told him that it was my horse and I had bought and paid for it. He said that it was not my horse and he wanted me to get off, or he would make me.

John faced his challenger: "I had a cutlass with me. I drew it, and told him to let go. He did not, so I struck at him. He dodged and let go his hold." Fullmer's report said that Brewyer was married to two of Chief Eagle's daughters, so Brewyer sent word to the chief to return with warriors, which the chief did. Brewyer gave the Indians whiskey and sold them guns and ammunition on credit if they would kill the Mormons. Chief Eagle promised to do it.⁵¹ John's version explains the deal similarly: Brewyer "went to the Indian chief and told him that he wanted him and his tribe to go to work and kill all the men, women and children off and he would reward him. He [the chief] said that he would do it."

More than a thousand Indians were camped in the vicinity, so the Mormons stood no chance of success in any kind of battle.⁵² Chief Eagle told Henry that he and his tribe were going to kill the Mormons. Henry wielded influence among the French traders and the Indians around the fort.⁵³ His schooling had convinced him that Indians should learn farming skills from whites, so, John said, Henry opposed Brewyer's massacre plans.

Henri said, "Yes, go and kill all of them that have taught you to spin and to make cloth and to raise corn, to make sugar, and to live comfortable. Yes, go and kill them all off and then you will be always left Indian, for no more will come for they will be afraid that you will kill them all off, so that they will not come any more of them."

James Holt said Henry changed the chief's mind but almost too late to stop bloodshed. Indians "so drunk they were hard to control" gathered a half-mile from the Saints' camp. They moved to the camp and were "in the act of raising their guns to shoot us down" when "the chiefs ran in among them knocking their guns right and left, and shouted to them to stop." During the skirmish "a great many guns discharged and the bullets whistled among our wagons, some over and some under," nearly hitting some Saints. "Our people were greatly frightened," Holt continued, "especially our women and children who cried and screamed, thinking we were all going to be massacred."⁵⁴

Chief Eagle, needing to placate both Brewyer and Henry, proposed a compromise. John recalled that "the old chief said that if they would tell them the ones that had offended them [then] he would have them put out of the way. Brewyer then told him which ones it was that he wanted killed." Brewyer named

John as one. The chief knew John and did not want to harm him, so he discussed with John another compromise:

The old chief came to me and told me that he did not want to kill me, but if I would give him a mare and colt that I had, he would make a treaty with me. So I told him that I had done nothing to hurt any one and I could not see why it was that they wanted to kill me. But I told him that I wanted to keep good friends with him, so he could have the mare and colt. He thanked me and told me he would give me a horse and saddle. He done so and they were worth all I gave him.

Meanwhile, John said, Brewyer tried to cancel Henry's influence on the chief:

Well, all this time a Frenchman had Henri in his house giving him whisky to make him drunk and locked themselves in. But he did not get so drunk as the Frenchman wanted him to. Brewyer was mad because the Indians had not killed me. He must have revenge on some one, so he pitched his spite on Henri and killed three horses for him.

Intimidation backfired, and it inflamed the dispute. Brewyer, John continued, soon felt the wrath of the very Indians he had wanted as allies.

Now Henri's brother-in-law knew of it [the killing of Henri's horses], so Indian-like he went to avenge his brother's rights. And he shot nine horses and told Brewyer that he had taken three for one. But he had wasted his ammunition in killing the horses and as ammunition was very high up there and hard to get, he must kill three more horses to pay himself. And Brewyer stood by and dare not say one word.

Before the conflict ended, several Indians appeared before John's tent where Captain Emmett was sitting. Emmett leveled his gun, "but was instantly prevented from firing" by Henry, who was trying to settle the dispute. Henry's wife, through tears and entreaties, influenced the several chiefs, including Chief Eagle, to spare the Saints. Henry, to help restore peace, held a feast for Elders Fullmer and Sherwood, providing vegetables, fowls, and meat, including a "fine fat dog of small size."⁵⁵

John and the Saints escaped without harm, because of Henry's intervention and God's blessing. Fullmer said that even with Henry's help, "in ordinary circumstances these efforts would have proven unavailing but the Lord had compassion on his people and turned the wrath of the Indians aside."⁵⁶ "The

hand of God seemed to be over us,” Holt believed, “and we escaped by almost a miracle.”⁵⁷ John expressed profuse gratitude to God for this narrow escape:

So you see how the Lord punishes those that does His servants an injury. They are bound to meet with their desserts no matter in what circumstances they are placed. The punishment is bound to overtake them and the Saints of God, if they only live true to their faith and true to their God and obey the counsels that are given to them from time to time by those that are set over them. No matter where they go, no matter in what circumstances they are placed, or what trials they have to pass through, the Lord is near unto them, and that to bless them. He has truly blessed me in all my journeys and has ever been near me to help and guard me from all evil designing men. He has delivered me out of their hands, and I feel to thank Him for His tender mercy towards me.

For Caroline, Charity, and the Butler children, word that John must return to Nauvoo with Elders Fullmer and Sherwood was bad news indeed. They faced a second winter in the wilderness and knew they would suffer some hardship without John’s help in providing basic food and firewood. They knew that sickness or disease could easily strike them or him while he was away. Children needed their father’s influence. The family lived among Indians and whites who could turn and become the Saints’ deadly enemies overnight. Also troubling was John’s trip by canoe down the unpredictable Missouri River. While it would be an easier journey than riding overland, it was fraught with possible dangers—tricky river currents, Indians and frontiersmen and Missourians along the way, hunger, sickness, or injuries. Then, the next spring John would have to make the long return trip to Vermillion. His departure provided him and his family not one good reason to be happy.

Winter at Camp Vermillion

At an unknown date, either soon after reaching Fort Vermillion or right after John left, the Saints moved from their original site near Fort Vermillion to establish Camp Vermillion one-and-a-half miles down the Missouri.⁵⁸ No doubt frictions with Indians and fur traders made it wise to put some distance between them and the Mormons.

During John’s absence, the Butler family faced and survived repeated difficulties. Because the Emmett company had voted that John, not Captain Emmett, escort Elders Fullmer and Sherwood back to Nauvoo, Emmett spitefully chose not to assist John’s family while he was away. John learned that

... after I was gone they counselled building houses for the winter, and there was none to build one for my folks. So some of the brethren spoke to Emmett about it. And he said that he was not going to build houses [and] for them that voted for him [John] to go was the ones to build him a house.

A Butler family story, showing how precarious the Indian-white relationships were at Camp Vermillion, tells of an accident that happened while men were cutting trees for logs for cabins. The workmen bound logs together and “snaked” them to the settlement. One day a small Indian boy riding the logs was badly hurt, so “the Chief told them that if the boy died that a white child would be taken as a ransom.” Apparently the boy lived.⁵⁹

When autumn came the buffalo herds left, which caused the Butler family and the other settlers “hard times.” Men cut and stacked hay for the winter, but “the stacks caught fire and burned it all.” Snow was deep and clothes were scarce. Buffalo robes were used for beds. Herdsmen kept the livestock in the bottomlands where bushes, pea vines, and grass served as winter feed. Hunters killed some wild game for food, but it was not enough.⁶⁰

Government Indian agents found out about the Mormons camped at Vermillion and did not like it. Thomas H. Harvey, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, sent agent Andrew Drips to the site. In December 1845 Drips reported back. He had visited the Mormons and found them unable to move because their animals were “altogether unfit for duty.” The Saints promised, he said, to leave in the spring. “The Indians do not object to their remaining with them until that time.”⁶¹

That winter the Saints occupied “a fort of log cabins.”⁶² When food supplies dwindled, the Butler family suffered, in part because Captain Emmett gave the family no sustenance until pressured by others. John recorded what Caroline later told him:

Now, whenever I killed any game I always divided with Emmett. It had been voted that the whole camp should throw their stuff together and fare alike, when they first started. But they did not all fare alike, for my wife was often without meat. And Emmett’s folks had killed four fat deer, but the first mite never came to the share of my family. Now, this was while I was gone. When I went away they all voted for me to go and they would see that my family did not suffer for want if there was any in camp.

But the promise was not kept. “Now, Emmett was mad and did not want me to go at all,” John wrote, “and said after that he did not vote for to help to take

care of my family. The Indians had made the company a present of forty bales of dried buffalo meat and none of that came to the share of my family.” Sympathetic friends complained to Captain Emmett about the Butlers’ mistreatment:

One of the brethren asked my wife one day if she had not got some meat from Emmett. It was Brother Potter. He seemed surprised. She told him that she had received not the first mite. He then asked her if he had not given her some buffalo meat. She told him that she had not gotten any meat at all. “Why,” said he, “damn such a man.”

Potter then challenged Emmett, forcing him to give some meat to the Butlers:

On that night there was a meeting and every one was to speak their feelings. And Brother Potter got up and spoke his feelings and said that Sister Butler was suffering for the want of some meat and that she had not had any. And Emmett said, “how do you know that she has had no meat?” “Why,” said he, “she is here.” And he said to her, “have you had any meat, Sister Butler?” She answered, no, she had not seen or tasted of any.

“Well,” said Emmett, “let them that voted for John L. Butler to leave his family go to work and take care of them.” “Well,” said he, “if that is the case we will do it and she shall have some meat if I have to go and kill the fattest ox in the company, which I will do.” But Emmett said that he would give her some buffalo meat. So the next morning he gave her some meat.

One Church goal the Emmett recruits were committed to fulfill was to befriend and work peacefully with Sioux in the area. John learned about one elderly Indian woman who liked his family and brought them dried berries and dried buffalo meat “to satisfy their pangs of hunger” that winter:⁶³

During the winter an old squaw came to see Caroline and told her she had just lost her only daughter. She asked Caroline if she had a mother, and Caroline told her she did not have one alive. The old squaw wanted Caroline to call her “grandmother.” All winter long she kept the little feet of the children covered with warm buckskin moccasins. They called her “grandmother squaw.”

Caroline was so ill during the winter that “they did not think that she would live for six months,” John later learned. “My family had been living on a half

pint of corn per day.” John was told how Chief Henry’s kindness probably saved Caroline’s life. Caroline became “dangerously ill” because she gave her bread rations to her children and survived only on fresh meat. This unbalanced diet, the “heavy work” of caring for her family, and then nursing an injured Indian baby made Caroline ill. Severe dysentery gradually weakened her. Concerned neighbors tried to help. One day two women were washing her “almost deathlike face” when Henry came to the door. Upon seeing her so ill, he took action to help her—scaring her family in the process:

When my wife was sick Henri went down with his horse and a small cart to get some provisions. He got two hundred [pounds] of flour, fifty weight of coffee and some sugar and tea. When he came back he came and got one of my little girls [Keziah] and took her away. Sister Packet came and said “what is he going to do with the child?” My wife rose up in her bed and said, “what is he going to do with my child?” and told Sister Packet to watch and see. He took her to his house and after a while she came out with a pan of flour on her head and a pint of sugar and some tea and told her to give it to her mother for she needed it to make her well. So Sister Packet runs and helped the child to bring it in for it was about as much as she could carry. My wife was truly thankful for it, for she could not eat the corn, and if she did it seemed to throw her back again.

Henry explained to Keziah that her mother must eat no more meat, but that every day she must have a cake of bread made of the flour. Caroline soon was better.⁶⁴

No messengers or mail passed between Camp Vermillion and Nauvoo from the time John left in early October until he returned the next April. John must have worried not a little about his two wives and children and prayed earnestly for their protection. When he did return, he was angered to learn how poorly his family had been treated by some Camp Vermillion Saints, particularly by Captain Emmett, the man who had converted him and Caroline to the gospel. It was perhaps fortunate for Captain Emmett, and for John, that Emmett was absent from Camp Vermillion when John arrived to reclaim his family and learned how poorly they had fared.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Shutting Down Nauvoo

John, acting as guide and caretaker for sickly Henry Sherwood and John Fullmer, left Camp Vermillion on October 3, 1845.¹ Their plan was to float down the Missouri River to St. Louis and then book passage on a Mississippi steamer up to Nauvoo. Apparently John expected to go to Nauvoo, permanently close down his home, and rejoin Caroline and Charity at Camp Vermillion the next spring. He had no idea that the Church leaders, during his absence, would order everybody to leave Nauvoo the next spring. Hence John would be part of a mass migration, not a solitary traveler, for the first part of his return trek to Vermillion.

Canoeing Downriver

For their river journey, Fullmer said, the three hacked a canoe out of a large cottonwood tree. Traveling with the trio, in a separate canoe, were two Frenchmen transporting a load of furs downriver. “Piyy was one,” John said, “and he was going to pilot us down the river to St. Joseph.” The two teams paddled out into the blue-green Missouri currents with provisions to last to Council Bluffs. But because the river was low and unfamiliar, they navigated slowly, taking more time than planned. Their food supply was inadequate, and each night they camped on the shore and hunted game. One night, Fullmer said,

we saw a large flock of turkeys going to roost near by. One of the trappers, Elders Butler and Sherwood started out for a hunt by

moonlight, one shot nine, one eleven, and the other thirteen times without so much as ruffling a feather. The Frenchman cursed his luck and swore his gun had a spell on it. In the morning Butler went out and at the first shot brought down his turkey, this served us one day.

The five continued downriver, watching each day for game along the shore or in the sky. While camped one night, one of the Frenchmen shot a “fine” deer. Venison nourished the men for most of the remaining eight days.²

Twenty miles above St. Joseph, Missouri, John left the canoe party to go overland on foot, clandestinely. He knew that he was still a disliked man in Missouri because of the Gallatin election brawl. Being tall and easy to identify, he avoided Missouri towns. His account resumes:

Just before we got to St. Jo there was a feeling came over me that I must not go by St. Jo for some purpose or other, I could not tell. So I told Bro. John S. Fulmer and Brother Sherwood that they could take a steamboat [at St. Joseph] and go down to St. Louis and from there to Nauvoo, and I would go across the country.

John walked alone through the northern Missouri countryside with which he had some familiarity. “I was thirteen days in going across to the Mississippi River, and I had some trials to pass through. For four days I never tasted a bite of food, but the Lord was near to bless and comfort me on my journey.” Later, John learned from Fullmer and Sherwood that his decision to go overland proved providential. Someone on the river—perhaps the Frenchmen, if they arrived at St. Joseph before the elders—mentioned that John Butler was soon to reach the city. Some vengeful men who had been at the Gallatin election fight heard this news and planned a brutal reception for John. “There was five men armed with revolvers and bowie knives,” Fullmer and Sherwood told John, “and they asked them if that was the canoe from Fort Vermillion. They told them that it was. The men then said that they wanted them to show them John L. Butler.” Fullmer told them that John was not there. “‘Well,’ said they, ‘we know that he is here.’” Not so, the canoe travelers insisted. “Well, they said, that fellow had lied to them for he said that there was a canoe coming down the river and John L. Butler was in the canoe with two more Mormons.” The armed men “then began to curse and swear, that if he was there they would damn soon put an end to him. They were men that had been in the general election in Daviess County and they thought that they would put an end to me, when they had a chance.” Sherwood and Fullmer told the men that they had been fooled. Sherwood and

Fullmer continued on by steamer from St. Joseph to St. Louis and up to Nauvoo, arriving on October 29, 1845.³

City Winding Down

John, after a ten-month absence from Nauvoo, returned and reported to President Young. Young felt anxious about the vulnerable Emmett colony. “That winter Brother Brigham wanted me to return to Emmett’s Company and take charge of it, and bring it back and not let them go any farther,” John recalled. “I could not return in the winter seasons for we had to go through two hundred miles of wilderness and the snow was very deep and it was Indian country.” So John was able to remain in Nauvoo for the next five or six months.

John arrived in Nauvoo after the dramatic October conference at which the Twelve told the Saints to prepare to vacate Nauvoo and move west the next spring. He learned that a month before he arrived violence against Mormons living in outlying areas had been the main catalyst that caused leaders to seek a safer location. In November he heard for himself how night riders killed Edmund Durphy at Morley’s Settlement and how non-Mormon law enforcement officials let the accused killers go free without a trial.⁴ Near the year’s end John saw Saints right and left trying to trade homes and property for items they needed for the exodus.

Church leaders requested every family to obtain a good wagon, three yoke of cattle, two or more cows, one or two beeves, any sheep possible, 1,000 pounds of flour in sturdy sacks, a good tent, food, tools, cooking utensils, and bedding.⁵ Late in 1845 it seemed like every available building in Nauvoo had become a shop where wagons, harnesses, and other necessary articles were being manufactured for the journey. Shipments of lumber arrived, and the wood was seasoned and kiln dried before being used to construct wagon boxes. Iron was imported. Blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, and other workmen were constantly busy.⁶ John was a blacksmith, so he probably spent time and energy that winter sweating beside a blazing furnace, forcing puffs of air from bellows to blow the fire hotter, his hammer clanging the glowing-red metal he held firmly on his anvil with hot tongs.

Temple Fireman, Guard, and Officiator

One change John noticed in Nauvoo was that the impressive white stone temple looked nearly finished. During his absence, masons had completed work on the walls.⁷ Parts of the temple were serving as meeting rooms, even though carpenters and glaziers had not finished interior woodwork, painting, and furnishings. “The Temple was being fixed up,” John learned, “so that the folks

could get their Endowments and receive their washings and anointings.” Temple ordinance work began in December. Apostle Heber C. Kimball noted on December 6 that Brigham Young came to his home on the way to the temple, and John was with him. On December 10 the temple opened for worthy Saints to receive the sacred endowment rites. When John’s Eighth Quorum of the Seventies was assigned to help administer temple ordinances, John participated.⁸

A federal marshal arrived in Nauvoo on December 17 with writs for the arrest of the Twelve and Bishop George Miller and searched the temple for them in vain. During much of the day only a few men were in the temple—a doorkeeper, two clerks, a scripture translator, and John, who was serving as a temple fireman and guard.⁹ That evening much temple ordinance work was done. The giving of washings and anointings continued until 10:30 P.M., after which Hans Christian Hansen brought in his violin and the men still there, including John, “danced before the Lord,” not rambunctiously but with “perfect order and decorum.” Others who participated included Brigham and Joseph Young, Jedediah M. Grant, Benjamin L. Clapp, John D. Lee, and John Lytle. The group then retired to an upper apartment in the temple where, clerk John D. Lee noted, “we celebrated the Praise of God by Singing & Prayre.”¹⁰

On December 18 at 5:00 A.M., stoves were lit in the preparation and washing rooms—fire building was probably one of John’s duties as a fireman. That day John was one of fourteen men chosen to be temple officiators, directed by Brigham Young. Discussions that evening turned to the Rocky Mountain west. “It is now ten oclock at night,” clerk John D. Lee wrote in the Seventies Record Book, “and we are listening with intense interest at the reading of a California Pamphlet which gave quite an interesting account of the location of that country.” John was one of five men who stayed through the night to guard the temple.¹¹

John officiated again in the temple on December 19, along with Apostles Heber C. Kimball, George A. Smith, and Orson Hyde, Nauvoo policeman Hosea Stout, Bishop George Miller, and others. Once again, on December 26, after a long day of temple work, the ordinance workers relaxed. Three men played their instruments while Joseph Young, the senior president of the Seventies; John Pack, president of John’s Eighth Quorum; John; Levi Hancock; John D. Lee; and David Candland “danced before the Lord.” The next day John, in addition to his normal fireman duties, was assigned to be one of seventeen temple officiators during the next week.¹²

On December 30 the last group of Saints receiving their temple ordinances finished about 10:00 P.M. John and others stayed at the temple. After some private ceremonies by those present, two men “struck up several lively and

animating tunes upon the violin & flute,” clerk Lee said, and “the spirit of the Lord rested down in power upon us, & while our hearts were filled full, we danced before the Great I am.” Then, “after Praising the Lord in the dance we Set down and celebrated his Name in Songs divine, in fine we were led by the influence of the Comforter.” Ann Whitney sang in an unknown tongue, and President Young and Bishop Newel Whitney gave the interpretation. Presidents Young and Kimball spoke in a foreign tongue, and the Holy Spirit filled the temple “to overflowing.” President Young concluded in prayer and thanksgiving “for our deliverance and protection” about 1:00 A.M. Some went home; others slept that night on “pallets upon the carpets” and on temple sofas. Those who stayed overnight were Presidents Young and Kimball, Apostles Lyman and Erastus Snow, and nine others, including John.¹³

John’s temple service continued into January 1846. On Saturday, January 3, after a full day of administering washings and anointings, he and several others stayed the night in the temple. On January 13 a council was held in the temple to determine who was prepared to go west should the Saints suddenly leave. That evening priesthood quorums met separately in the temple to do ordinances and pray for blessings. Twelve seventies and four elders met in “room no. 10,” possibly John among them. First they prayed for several ill Saints and then for the Lyman Wight group and James Emmett’s company in their far-distant winter camp. They prayed for the Lamanites “that they might be favorably disposed towards the Saints.” They also prayed for the Church leaders and “for the saints that they might be favored in making waggons and raising means to migrate west.”¹⁴

John received his own temple ordinances and endowments on December 15, 1845. His sister Lucy and her husband Reuben Allred obtained theirs on December 20. John’s mother received hers on January 5, 1846, his brothers James Morgan and Lorenzo Dow on January 21, and brother Edmund Ray on January 29.¹⁵

Wives Three and Four

Common sense suggests that single women in Nauvoo became concerned about having to move into the wilderness using wagons and teams, which men normally handled. Some men, particularly those few dozen authorized to marry plural wives, must have felt some sense of duty toward single women needing assistance. John found himself in an awkward position—a man with no family to move and therefore able to assist someone needing help. Propriety precluded his taking any single women in his wagon and camping with such. Perhaps that is why, during this period of intense preparation to leave, John married again.

“While I was in Nauvoo that winter,” he wrote, “I took two more wives and they were sealed to me in the Temple.” On February 6, 1846, Sarah Lancaster was joined to him as his third wife by Brigham Young. John was then thirty-seven and Sarah thirty-nine. In March, Sarah’s mother, seventy-four-year-old Sarah Lancaster, was sealed to John as his fourth wife, a charitable priesthood act of sealing not meant to create a man-and-wife relationship.¹⁶

The Lancasters, who were backyard neighbors to the Butlers in Nauvoo, were from North Carolina but most recently from Indiana. By 1840 father Wright Lancaster apparently was dead. By 1841 mother Sarah, daughter Sarah, and married son Wright joined the Church and moved to Nauvoo. Nauvoo’s 1842 tax records show that mother and daughter were living behind the Butlers. The younger Sarah, family stories say, became good friends with Emma, Joseph, and Hyrum Smith.

When John’s turn came to join the exodus from Nauvoo, younger Sarah accompanied him. But the older Sarah decided not to go west into the wilderness. Instead, she returned to Indiana to live the rest of her days with other of her children.¹⁷

Far away at Fort Vermillion, meanwhile, Caroline and sister-wife Charity and the children heard nothing all winter from John. They had no way of knowing about John’s new wife or about the wholesale evacuations from Nauvoo. Brigham Young had decided that Church contacts with the Emmett group would be through John Butler but not until winter loosened its snowy grip on the northern prairies.

Departing Nauvoo

John wrote very little about the exodus from Nauvoo, one of Latter-day Saint history’s epic events, even though he and a new wife were part of it, as were his mother and siblings. He apparently felt that routine details about packing wagons, ferrying across the Mississippi, and day-by-day ploddings across eastern Iowa were familiar enough to his generation that he need not repeat them. Rather, his narration dealt with his unique role in that mass migration: his special assignment from Brigham Young to go up to Camp Vermillion and bring the Emmett company back to rejoin the main body of the Church.

Latter-day Saints vacated Nauvoo in three distinct waves. A large mass of around 2,000 Saints left in February and early March of 1846, directed by President Young. A second, larger movement took place in April and May. And a final group, the poor Saints, were expelled from the city by armed vigilantes in September. John joined the tail end of the first departures.

He left Nauvoo soon after marrying the senior Sarah Lancaster in March, on an unknown day. Very likely, John, because of his recent experience with the Emmett company, was a source of good advice for acquaintances regarding what to take and what to leave behind. Without Caroline and the children's input, he traded off or discarded family possessions he could not haul west.¹⁸ Older Sarah departed for Indiana and younger Sarah traveled west with him, he said, in a wagon and with a team that replaced the outfit he drove to and left at Camp Vermillion.

John moved along the muddy Mormon Trail faster than others who left when he did because he felt obligated to catch up with President Young. He knew that Young wanted to send him to Camp Vermillion as soon as possible to help the Emmett company coordinate its movements with the main migration of the Latter-day Saints.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Retrieving the Emmett Company

On March 8, 1846, Brigham Young's lead companies were in their second day of camping at Richardson's Point, fifty-five miles from Nauvoo, near present-day Bloomfield, Iowa. That day President Young and his fellow leaders framed a travel schedule for the Church's advance parties. They voiced concern about Captain Emmett's group approximately three hundred miles northwest and George Herring's Indian mission about two hundred miles south. While designing plans for an advance company to rush towards the Rocky Mountains during 1846, leaders felt that the Emmett company, already farther west, should participate. Brigham Young therefore recommended that

John L. Butler might go to Emmet with one or 2 more & that we must divide & arrange the camp so that a part might cross the Mountain to the Great Basin soon enough to plant seed this spring, that we must ascertain how many men can go forward from the camp & leave their Family . . . that 300 men were wanted for the expedition.¹

Vermillion Assignment

On March 16 still at Richardson's Point, Church leaders decided to veer their expected line of travel southwest across the northwestern corner of Missouri to cross the Missouri River at Bank's Ferry, a popular Oregon Trail operation fifty-five miles north of St. Joseph.² The council agreed to send John to notify the Emmett company about the Church's travel plans. He had apparently reached

Brigham Young's lead company, the Camp of Israel, and was contributing his frontier expertise to vanguard companies led by Bishop George Miller and by Apostle Parley P. Pratt. The main body of the Camp of Israel had been halted by rain and mud at Richardson's Point; Captain Bent's company was about three miles ahead; Captain Roundy's was fourteen miles ahead; captains Orson Pratt, Peter Haws, and Elisha and Elijah Averett's companies were seventeen miles ahead; and captains Parley Pratt, Bishop Miller, and Charles Shumway were on the Chariton River bottoms about forty-five miles ahead.³

On March 22 Brigham Young's headquarters camp crossed the Chariton River and established a new stopping point atop the river's steep west banks. That "rainy and unpleasant" day, John was with the Miller and Pratt companies camped on East Shoal Creek seven miles west of the headquarters camp. That evening Bishop Miller, Parley and Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, John Smith, and others met and decided that, due to feed shortages, they should hurry ahead to the Grand River and its settlements. They "immediately dispatched" two messengers, John Butler and Elisha Averett, to deliver Parley Pratt's letter of suggestions about travel options to Brigham Young.⁴

John and Averett reached Brigham the next day, a day when pea-sized hail whitened the ground.⁵ According to Newel K. Whitney's diary, John carried recommendations that the Camp of Israel backtrail twenty miles or more east of the Chariton "in order to get on a road which goes thro the settlements as the country through which we are now travelling affords us scarcely any provender for our cattle." Leaders, however, wanted to move closer to Missouri, not go northwesterly, so they sent Averett back with word for Miller and Pratt to stay put until the Mormon migration could be restructured.⁶

On snowy March 24 John left the Chariton camp to rejoin Miller's company, which had moved four miles to Middle Shoal Creek. Before John left, Brigham Young told him to instruct Miller, Pratt, and others up ahead to bring to him immediately "a perfect history of their numbers and situation, so the [entire] Camp could organize." One day passed and no report came. By the morning of the second day, March 26, Brigham Young became irritated and sent a messenger to find Miller and Pratt. But by midday several men from Miller's camp arrived, including John. At 2:00 P.M., when President Young met with company officers, John was present. The council then appointed James W. Cummings to ride with John to Fort Vermillion.⁷

On March 26, 1846, at President Brigham Young's request, the Camp of Israel's clerk William Clayton, who three weeks later would write "Come, Come Ye Saints," penned a "long letter" for John to deliver to the Emmett company. In it the Twelve instructed the group to move west to meet and merge

with the Camp of Israel at Fort Laramie.⁸ The letter also provided a progress report about the exodus from Nauvoo. “We have felt considerable anxiety to have a messenger dispatched to you ere this,” it read, “but have had no opportunity untill the present.”⁹

The letter contained not one word of criticism of the Emmett people. In fact, in it Brigham semiapologized to them for earlier criticisms about their Nauvoo departure. He informed Emmett’s people, knowing they felt the same way, that “the time had fully come for this church to be transplanted into a far distant country in order to carry out the designs of our heavenly father.” He was saying, in essence, that the Church and the Emmett company now shared the same purpose. “The spirit of removal had taken such deep root in the minds of the great majority of the saints that they could not have been hired to stay” in Nauvoo, he said, perhaps by way of sympathizing a little with the Emmett company’s feelings of twenty months before. Young said that the “only cause” for the Church staying in Nauvoo as long as it did “was to give the Saints Those blessings in the Temple, for which they had labored so dilligently” to build, then kindly implied that those who followed Emmett had missed out: “[W]e gave endowments to about Eight thousand of the Saints.” Knowing how harshly the Twelve once had criticized the Emmett company’s sufferings and poverty, Brigham admitted that “the principal part of the company with us are poor and unable to help themselves” and complained that many left Nauvoo “before they were in some measure prepared for the journey.” Fully supportive and conciliatory towards the Emmett company, he said that “we feel to bless you, and pray our heavenly father to fill you with his spirit, to direct your movements, preserve you in health and peace.” He expressed hope “that we may soon strike hands with you in a healthy country where we can worship God according to his law.”¹⁰

Later that day, President Young presided over an extensive reorganization of the Saints’ travel system at Parley Pratt’s encampment near the east fork of Shoal Creek.¹¹ John left the next day for west Shoal Creek where he prepared for the long journey, no doubt making travel arrangements for his wife Sarah and their outfit. Cummings, who would accompany John to Camp Vermillion, made preparations at the main camp.¹²

John did not know it at the time, but his few days of associating with Bishop Miller’s company marked the beginning of an association with Miller which would resume three months later, after John’s return from the north.

Finding Council Bluffs

James Cummings’ diary provides rich details about John’s daily activities during their difficult two months of travel to find Camp Vermillion and return to

Council Bluffs.¹³ It traces a tale deserving its own place in the literature of survival in America's western wildernesses. On March 30 Cummings rode to Bishop Miller's camp "where I found Br. John L. Butler awaiting my arrival." The next day they left camp on horseback at 1:00 P.M., intending to ride 175 miles to Council Bluffs across uncharted and roadless prairies. They carried a tent, sleeping blankets, cooking gear, a few clothes, and a meager supply of food—some parched corn and a little bacon. Of the two, John was the frontiersman, the hunter, the route finder, the survival expert. Cummings, thank goodness, became the chronicler.

That evening they camped in a point of timber where "Br. Butler went out and shot three squirrels which constituted our supper." The next morning they moved eight miles, "stoped and let our ponies rest," then traveled another eight miles to Whitebreast Creek where they camped. Game was scarce due to lack of thick timber. They killed a squirrel for the next day's breakfast. Misfortune struck that night. John's horse caught a foot in its rope and fell on tree roots which killed it—a devastating blow to their plans. In the morning they "had to pack all our baggage on the one pony and travel on foot ourselves." John shot a duck which they dried and took with them and ate for supper. They covered fifteen miles that day, still headed west-northwest.

After advancing about twelve miles on April 3, storms and thunderings made them halt by 3:00 P.M. They crossed a trail running from "the barracks" at present-day Des Moines southwest toward Missouri and met a man—the first human they had seen since Miller's Camp—who said they were forty miles from the barracks and forty from Missouri. At night John and Cummings "pitched our tent in some scattering timber and struck up a fire to dry ourselves being verry wet from the rain." John hunted but came back empty-handed, so the men boiled corn for dinner.

Rain kept them from traveling the next day, "Brother Butler being quite unwell with the rumatism." On the 5th they had to find their horse, which had wandered a mile away, and, after boiling corn and a little bacon for breakfast, they walked across "verry rough" country for twenty miles. They intersected a road connecting the barracks to "Scott's Trading Post" on the Grand River, where they entered Pottawattamie Indian hunting grounds. The next day, wanting to make some progress before threatening clouds poured down rain, they skipped breakfast and hiked twelve miles before the rains came. They camped in some timber where they found Indian wickiups that had been used perhaps a month before. Strong northerly winds that night froze the ground and chilled the men.

On April 7 the two men started late after locating their horse, which had wandered eight miles away. When the Indian trail they were following bent too northerly, they resumed their west-northwest course. In the afternoon they struck an Indian trail heading west and followed it. They saw a flock of turkeys but could not catch up to them. They noticed fresh pony tracks in the trail, followed them, and spotted a wild pony ahead but could not catch it. After camping, John rode their only horse and chased the pony again but still could not catch it. For dinner they ate a "scant allowance" of boiled corn. John got up early the next morning, rode for five miles, and finally located the same pony. "It was verry wild at first but he succeeded in catching it," Cummings noted. The two-year-old pony was "so small it was not fit to ride." They loaded some baggage on it, which made enough room on their horse for one of them to ride, and they took turns. Resuming their journey at 1:00 P.M., they covered eight miles and camped in timber by a stream, two rods wide, that they felt was the east fork of the Grand River. They camped in an Indian campsite where they found another wickiup, a sharpener, tin coffee pot, small axe, and a fresh grave. "We had the good luck to shoot a duck soon after we camped."

On April 9, a cold day, the men moved twenty-five miles, following the same "well beaten" trail until they came to what they thought was the middle fork of the Grand River. "We were much fatigued," Cummings wrote. That night, mist, rain, and snow coated the tree limbs with ice. The next day they could not travel due to snow, rain, and wind. They killed one squirrel and two ducks "for which we were verry thankful having lived on boild corn for several days." Stiff winds made that night "very tedious." On April 11 John and Cummings awoke to find that the ground had frozen. Trees still were coated in ice. The ground thawed and became slippery. "The travelling very bad," Cummings wrote. Eight miles brought them to a river they thought was the west fork of the Grand. They kept going along the Indian trail and camped on a branch of the Nodaway River, about 110 miles from the Church's Chariton campsite.

Trees were still icy the next day, April 12, when they advanced twelve miles. In the afternoon they met a Pottawattamie Indian, Wacakasuck, who spoke Sac, "so Brother butler could converse with him." When Wacakasuck saw the little pony, he claimed it because it belonged to an Indian woman in his camp. Wacakasuck then invited the two men to his wickiup three miles west on the trail. "He treated us very kindly and gave us some maple sugar to eat" and mush made of pounded corn. Mats made of "flag" (like cattails) covered the wickiup, except for a hole in the top to let smoke out. John and Cummings put their baggage inside the wickiup and received mats to sleep on. Cummings

noticed the Indian had pots, pans, cups, saucers, knives, and forks. The two ragged Mormons learned they were one day from an Indian village called Polawas and three days away from the Missouri. Other Indians arrived before nightfall.

The next day Indians cooked the duck John had killed the day before and baked cornbread. They served John and Cummings strong coffee with maple sugar which, Cummings said, “went verry well.” Boiled corn and bacon contributed to what he said was “a verry good breakfast.” Indian hunters arrived and built more than a dozen wickiups and “formed quite a village.” All had families with them and “seemed well disposed towards us.” They gave John and Cummings sugar and honey to eat several times during the day, and when the Pottawattamie chief from the village, “a good looking fellow,” arrived, he dined with the guests.

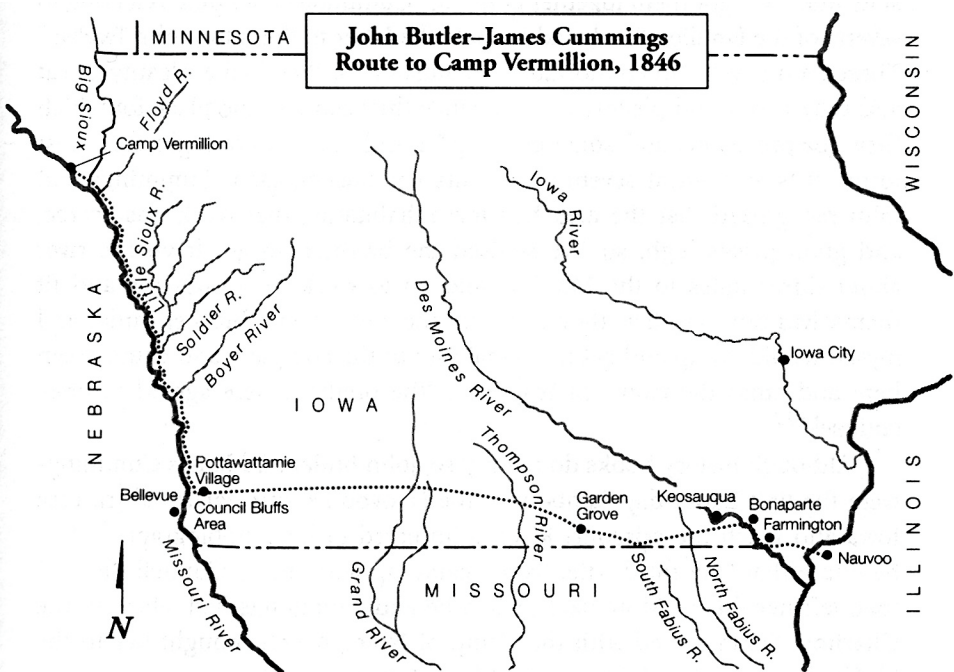
After a second night at the wickiup, John and Cummings took the trail to the Indian village, fifteen miles away, by the Nishnabotna River, near present-day Lewis.¹⁴ They stopped with some Sac Indians who had remained with the Pottawattamie when their tribe had left for higher land a half-mile from the river. The houses were built of bark and “shaped considerable like a house but very irregularly situated, no two of them fronting the same way.” This was the Indian’s summer quarters. Their corn fields were small but well cultivated. Timber was scarce. John and Cummings here found two traders from the bluffs who said part of the Vermillion company had come down to the bluffs. Some Indians had been to Nauvoo and asked if the two Mormons were from “Smith Town.” “When they found that we were mormons,” Cummings said, “they seemed to be well pleased and treated us verry kindly.” One of the Sacs “had seen brother Butler in Nauvoo.”

On April 15 “we eat a dish of boiled corn with the Indians in the morning” and then departed. The two men left the village and headed for Council Bluffs, covering twenty-five miles on the Dragoon Trail that connected the “barracks” with Council Bluffs and that passed through the Pottawattamie village. During the day they found a trader and a “half-breed” whose mules, loaded with goods to trade to Indians, were mired in a stream bottom. “We helped them out for which they thanked us verry kindly.” During the day, John or Cummings shot two small “wood ducks,” the size of a quail, for supper.

Finally the two men and one horse approached the long-sought-for bluffs. On April 16 they crossed broken or up-and-down land, including a series of small creeks with deep, muddy bottoms and steep banks. By sunset they reached the bluffs at a point Cummings said was halfway between Traders Point and the Pottawattamie Mill, places he had heard were ten miles apart. At Traders Point,

or Point aux Poules, the United States government manned an Indian subagency, and Peter Sarpy operated a ferry across the Missouri to his American Fur Company trading post, located about where Bellevue, Nebraska, now is.¹⁵

Below them, the Missouri bottoms appeared to spread some eight to ten miles wide. The two tired men hobbled the horse and camped without a tent, only to get soaked by early morning rain. Getting from the bluffs to the settlement was not easy because they could not find a road. At one point their horse slid on its side into mud, so they had to unpack him and pull him out. Following a trail winding along the sides of the bluffs, they encountered a creek they could not cross. For five or six miles that day they were “climbing over the bluffs and through the bottoms.” At an old, rotting bridge they found what had been a wagon road and followed it past a point in the bluffs and along bluff bottoms for several miles until they reached a farm belonging to an American who had an Indian wife and several houses occupied by half-breeds. They arrived at this settlement after traveling fifteen hard miles.



The name Council Bluffs, by then, was used loosely. Cummings used it to refer to the area that now bears the name, but in presettlement days the term could refer to a long stretch of bluffs on both sides of the Missouri or to particular bluffs twenty-five miles north on the Missouri's west side.¹⁶

At the settlement, eight miles north of Traders Point and therefore near the center of today's Council Bluffs,¹⁷ John and Cummings "found some of the brethren of Emmett's company." This small cluster of Saints had left Camp Vermillion on February 19 and reached the Council Bluffs area on March 15. They included Lyman Hinman, his family, and six other families.¹⁸ They were all firm in the faith, working, and obtaining needed supplies. The last that they knew, "brother Emmett's company was nearly out of provisions when they left as the buffalo was very scarce during the winter, they had not laid in any meat and the Indians were also suffering from the want of provisions."

Of the seven Vermillion families, four were at the settlement, two were eight miles upriver, and a Brother Wilson had gone south to the Missouri state line. "We got them together at night," Cummings recorded, referring to several of the families, "and read to them the letter to them from the Twelve." These Saints were "in comfortable circumstances, they had a plenty to eat and they had found plenty of work since they came to the place for which they got provisions and some clothing." Local prices were high: corn cost forty cents and wheat seventy-five cents per bushel, cash. Cummings and John recognized that the area had few inhabitants, that work was scarce, and grain prices high, so "we advised the brethren to go down the river about thirty miles to the Mo. line and go to work for provisions and fit themselves out as well as they could for the journey and brother Butler and myself would go up and get the remainder of the company and come down here and cross the river." In response, "the brethren here agreed to obey counsel."¹⁹

Although history books do not say so, John Butler and James Cummings were the first Latter-day Saints from the Nauvoo exodus parties to traverse Iowa and reach the Missouri River. John erred in his autobiography when he wrote that "My third wife, Sarah, came up with me to Council Bluffs. I then left her there." More likely, when he and Cummings had left from the Chariton, Sarah stayed with the Camp of Israel, which brought her to the bluffs about the time John returned from Camp Vermillion.

John and Cummings stayed the next day with their Mormon friends "to restore our pony and ourselves." During the prior two-and-a-half days the two had eaten the equivalent of one meal and were "very much fatigued."

Rough Trek North

On April 19 John and Cummings left the Mormons' encampment to head north towards Camp Vermillion. Today's I-29 from Council Bluffs to Sioux City generally follows the route John and Cummings took. They started out on a trail running eight miles over the bluffs and then stayed on the Missouri River bottoms. They reached Pigeon Creek, thirty feet wide, and crossed it easily. Hiking eight more miles along the bottoms between the bluffs and the river, they reached the Boyer River (pronounced "Boo-yeah"), fifty feet wide and ten to fifteen feet deep. Failing to find a fording place, they unloaded the horse and swam it across and, hand-carrying their baggage, carefully walked across a fallen tree. After ten more miles over a "beautiful, sandy bottom," they camped.

The next day, because they brought enough bread and meat with them to last until Camp Vermillion, they did not need to cook and therefore left camp early. For awhile they found and followed the trail of the Hinman group. At 10:00 A.M. they crossed Soldier Creek and at noon rested and ate by a beautiful lake.²⁰ It was three miles long and a half-mile wide, surrounded by cottonwoods and covered with ducks and geese. They killed two ducks for food. Afternoon travel brought them to another lake and then to the Little Sioux River, which they followed upstream for four miles on a footpath between the river and the steep shoreline. They found a place to ford, eighty feet across, used it, and resumed their journey. After traveling what they believed was fifty miles, they camped on a prairie without wood and water and spent a very thirsty night.

They started early to find water on April 21 and reached a pond about 11:00 A.M. Warm rain fell off and on. The trail disappeared so "we had to make our own way without any track" and mostly walked in the wide bottomlands of the Missouri. Their horse began to fail, "so we were obliged to slacken our pace." On the 22nd they moved through bottoms that had been burned, but in the afternoon tall grass, weeds, and bushes made it "verry bad traveling." At 3:00 P.M. they came to the Missouri River itself, the first time they actually touched it. Thick brush forced them to follow a slough back towards a bluff and to hike around its hilly winds. During the day they saw deer, turkeys, and "game of all kinds." That afternoon Cummings became ill and by nightfall was suffering from chills, fever, and "bowel complaint," illness he felt was caused by being rain-soaked the day before.

The next day Cummings suffered from headache and a cold, but the two kept moving. When the river met bluffs, leaving little or no bottomlands to walk on, they had to "wind around through the bottoms and over the hills the best way we could." They reached Willow, or Clear, Creek,²¹ sixty feet wide, where Sioux City is now, and followed it up to find a place to cross. When water

proved to be horseback deep, John stripped off his clothes and carried their belongings over on his shoulders, allowing Cummings to cross on horseback. From a bluff they saw the Big Sioux River nearing its mouth. For Cummings, who was still suffering, the day was twenty-five miles of “winding through the hollows and over hills” amid showers, hail, and heavy thunder. By then he had not eaten for thirty-six hours and his severe headaches and diarrhea made him miserable.

On April 24 he and John reached the Big Sioux River and went along it “over the bluffs and through the hollows.” In the morning John shot a deer, which they packed and took with them. They found a possible crossing place, where a creek entered the Big Sioux, so John “went about making a raft.” He cut green cottonwood poles with his hatchet, tied them together with withes (flexible branches), and covered the frame with willows and bushes. By dark he had not finished. So, the next morning, April 25, he completed the raft. After putting it in the river, the men found it would carry only the baggage. So, letting their horse cross on its own, the men took off their clothes and “were obliged to swim” in the cold water, helped by a strong current and a favorable wind. On the other side they dressed, ate bread, and boiled some deer meat, and then, no doubt excited, they headed for the Vermillion Camp twenty miles away. At 3:00 P.M. they arrived at their destination, after an eight-day trip upriver that covered some 130 miles. John had been absent from his family for almost seven months—since October 3.

John immediately spotted Caroline across the Missouri River and was told she was picking artichokes. Little did he know she had been stranded there and endangered for several days. According to John’s autobiography, a few days before he arrived Caroline had heard that two men named Short and Hall were going to cross the river—apparently the Missouri—so she asked to go along to gather roots for her children. “They said, yes,” John wrote, “but they did not want to be bothered with a lot of women.” The Butlers’ Indian “grandmother” volunteered to help Caroline, in gratitude for food the family had shared with her. The weather was “not very warm.” Caroline and “Grandmother” crossed the river and were left there for four days with nothing to eat but roots. They made a fire and piled leaves to make a bed. They called across the river where people heard them, but no one would row across to pick them up. “My wife laid down on the fourth day, for she was very weak and feeble,” John said, “and she dreamed that I had come back and that I was standing on the other side of the river.” Caroline awoke and actually saw John “standing on the bank of the river with Charity and Phoebe.”

In the meantime, Brother Hall had spotted John coming and, fearing punishment, decided to quickly retrieve the stranded women. He “put out of the fort and down to the river through the brush,” John said, “and got into the canoe and went across to my wife to bring her across.” When he got there, Caroline asked: “Is not Mr. Butler come?” Hall said no. She protested “that she could see me standing on the bank on the other side of the river.” The man said her eyes must be better than his if she could see that far. Crossing the river, Caroline watched the far bank, but Hall told her to keep her head down because the river had risen and “timber came down,” making him fear the boat would tip over. When they reached shore, John “was there to receive them.” He was angry about Caroline’s being stranded for four days:

I did not know hardly how to keep my hands off of Hall, I felt like I could tear him to pieces. Brother James Cummings said that they had ought to have their throats cut for serving a lot of women like that. And my wife asked Hall what he had told her that lie for that Mr. Butler had not come. He said that he thought that she would get so excited that they would be tipped over and all be drowned. My wife asked him if he thought that she had no sense.

John, based on several tales of mistreatment and deprivation that his family members recounted, summarized that “no one can tell the trials and hardships the women had to pass through” during his long absence.

Closing Camp Vermillion

One of the first things John and Cummings noticed was that Captain Emmett was missing. Cummings wrote that Emmett had taken seven horses east to sell. John recalled that “we found that Emmett had traded for a squaw and had gone to St. Peters on the Mississippi.” When John told the camp they needed to start for the bluffs,

Sister Emmett was alone and I asked her if she wanted to go with us. She said, “yes, and be as quick as you can, for if Emmett was here I am sure that he would not let me go.” Well, I told her that I would take her with me if she wanted to go whether he was willing or not. Well, she said, “let us go before he comes.”

Cummings counted nine buildings in Camp Vermillion. Eight cabins, including a blacksmith shop, were built of logs small in circumference. Roofs

were made of straw and dirt. The ninth building was Captain Emmett's home, which was better than the rest. It stood two stories high and was built of cottonwood logs hewed on two sides. It had a loft and floors of sawn boards. His family, his son's family, and his son-in-law's family lived there. Apparently it served as a storehouse, too.

Vermillion Saints had already started vegetable gardens, including some potatoes, and had planted two acres of wheat. James Holt recalled that the Vermillion Saints had "put in garden seeds and were preparing to plant corn and raise a crop when John Butler returned." Their plan, Cummings observed, was to plant "considerable" because their food supply was meager. There was no meat in camp, Cummings found, except when they killed a duck or game animal. Whites and Indians had suffered that winter because the buffalo left earlier than expected in the fall. Corn could not be bought for any price.

John was dismayed to learn about his family's hardships and particularly Caroline's terrible sickness (see chapter 14). He found camp members to be in "poor condition" and that his own family had little food on hand. "Sister butler had about one bushel of corn that constituted the bread stuff for her family of 10," Cummings learned, "and she said she [as] was well off for bread as most of the camp," although Emmett's families had five or six bushels of corn, obtained through his blacksmithing work for Fort Vermillion clients.²²

At "early candlelight" John and Cummings called a meeting at Emmett's cabin where they read the Twelve's letter to the people. John and Cummings, however, exercising their own judgment, vetoed the Twelve's orders for Vermillion Saints to head west for Fort Laramie. "They had no provision to start with and could not obtain it where they was," Cummings explained; "we learned that it was about 600 miles from Vermilion to Ft Laramie and it would be about impossible for us to go across there, the country was so rough."²³ Instead, the two men instructed, the Saints must go south and join the Camp of Israel where it would cross the Missouri. Allen Russell recalled that when the camp heard this news, many felt "new life" and were "happy to know that we would soon be with the main body of Saints, and traveling towards the Rocky Mountains."²⁴

John, Cummings wrote, sensed the people did not want to leave before Captain Emmett returned. John spoke against delay, saying he would "gather up his effects and go to the Counsel bluffs as soon as possible." The next day, April 26, the camp's men met in the woods where John and Cummings urged them to leave for the bluffs as soon as possible. There was urgency, they said, because at the bluffs they would still have time to obtain provisions. Those in attendance agreed, but they needed more time because their wagons were "very much out of

repair” and because they had commitments to do some plowing for some Fort Vermillion people.

John recalled that “it took about three days to get ready and to get our cattle all together”—it was in fact nine days. No preparations could be made on the 26th due to rain. On the 27th John began his gradual dismantling of the company’s “all things in common” system by getting the people to agree to make an equal division of all corn and wheat reserved for seeding. Cummings helped Bishop Holt divide it. Each of the fifty-six persons received three quarts of wheat and three pints of corn, along with four gallons of honey. At a meeting that evening, Cummings said,

Br. Butler urged the propriety of complete divison [of all property] but all the rest were against him and wanted to keep it common stock. Thought they were organized according to the Kingdom of God and thought they had better remain so until they got up with the [main] camp if no longer and they all being against him carried the day.

On April 29 Cummings complained in his diary about rain and dawdling people—trip preparations “seem to drag.” Plowing still had to be done for a Frenchman named Moses and for Henry, the man who saved the Saints from a massacre the previous fall (see chapter 14). That day and the next, buffalo returned to the area. Indians killed one, Cummings said, and an “Old Squaw”—probably the Butlers’ adopted “Grandmother”—brought Caroline a portion on May 1. This was the first buffalo meat Cummings ever tasted.

Slowly, men fixed wagons and the plowing was done for Henry and Moses, while women and children, cranking a hand grinder, prepared coarse corn and wheat for the journey. No doubt John did some blacksmithing with Emmett’s tools. On May 2 a buffalo hunt pulled Indians away from the Camp Vermillion area which, Cummings noted, “was greatly in our favor,” because whites expected Indians to bother them if they tried to leave. Saints mentioned that they thought Emmett had promised the Sioux that if the Saints left, he and a blacksmith, or he as blacksmith, would stay among them.

Cummings described a conflict which arose on May 3 between Brewyer, the trader who had fought with John about horses the fall before, and fur company employee Charles Puckett (or Packett). Charles had married an LDS woman—John identifies her as Axey Sargent—and moved her into Fort Vermillion with him. Axey decided to leave with the Saints, but Charles had contracted to work until July. When she packed up his clothes and brought them to Camp Vermillion, Brewyer suspected Puckett would desert the post. So three

men came from the fort and verbally attacked the Pucketts, took Charles Puckett back to the fort and banned Axeey from going there. So the Vermillion Camp had to figure out how to take her and her belongings along with them. (John's recollection is that Puckett fled with his bride and left behind all his possessions. In fact, though, Axeey traveled with the Saints and her husband did not.)

According to Cummings' diary, a considerable number of Indians gathered near Camp Vermillion on May 3 and 4 to cross the Missouri River as a war party. Saints tightened security and locked horses in the fort at night. Finally, on May 5, the loaded wagons pulled out in midafternoon. Dressed in threadbare clothes and lacking food, the Saints gladly "broke up camp," Allen Russell said. While Saints were still in sight, some Frenchmen and Indians picked through the rubble left behind in the deserted cabins. Frenchman Moses and a half-breed went with the wagons, wanting to go to Council Bluffs. There was some risk that Indians might pursue the wagon train to steal cattle and horses, so the half-breed agreed to act as interpreter in case of Indian problems.

Trek South to the Bluffs

According to Cummings' calculations, Captain Butler's train included 59 people in 12 families, 14 wagons, 19 yoke of oxen, 1 mule, 1 horse, and 29 cows—18 of which were milk cows. This was considered a small wagon company. Among the adults was Mrs. Emmett, who, Cummings said, was tired of Captain Emmett's "oppression & tyranny." Her children came, as well. Also in the group were newlyweds Allen Russell and Harriet Massina Hutchins, married on March 21 by James Emmett.²⁵ For food the train carried three quarts of breadstuff per person and no meat except for a little veal. Their first afternoon of travel moved them twelve miles along John and Cummings' trail.

Two family stories tell how sad "Grandmother Squaw" felt to see the Butlers leave Fort Vermillion. One story says she knew they were leaving, and the other indicates she did not. When she learned of their departure, the first story says,

she mourned for her children, who must leave her. As a test of her real love for them she planned a pair of moccasins for each pair of feet. She worked and wept and finished for each child, ten in number, a pair of buckskin shoes. Her next attempt was to be a pair with bead decorations as a mother's gift to her daughter.

But the camp moved. She found them gone, wailed mournfully, and began to follow. When ready to retire the camp heard her mournful cry. By campfire

light “she worked and mourned until near the break of day. Then, wrapped in her blanket, she lay near their covered wagon and continued her mournful wail,” until the entire camp had finished preparations for their second day’s journey.²⁶

According to the other story, “when the call came to break camp, the old ‘grandmother squaw’ did not know it.” The Butlers’ wagon train moved out ten miles and camped.

Long after they had gone to bed, Caroline heard a low moaning cry coming nearer and nearer. The poor old squaw had followed them all the way to bid them good-bye. She brought with her a deer’s pouch, or stomach, filled with pounded dried deer meat as a gift for Caroline. She gave directions to make a kettle of soup with just a handful of the meat. All night long she sat by the camp fire to finish a pair of beaded moccasins for Caroline.²⁷

Their second day of travel brought the Emmett company to the Big Sioux River, where they stopped to build a raft from cottonwood logs and willows. Two lodges of Indians crossed the river and camped by them. Here the Emmett stock found good grazing. Allen Russell recalled that grass “had got up a little” so that their stock “could get a little green grass with the dry.”²⁸ The next day the company built an abutment into the river to let wagons reach the finished raft. Some heavier wagons had to be partly unloaded. After strenuous work, five wagons were across the river before dark. On May 9 the other wagons were floated across; herders swam the oxen and cows over; and, said Cummings, “about 1 o’clock we were all safe over the river bag and baggage.” A Frenchman from Fort Vermillion named Seim joined them after the crossing. They moved on another three miles, bridged a creek,²⁹ and camped in the bluffs. At a meeting that evening the company voted to sustain John and Cummings to dictate affairs of the camp until they reached the main camp of Saints.

During the next three days, which were warm, they traveled over rough land and followed a crooked route, veering once quite a distance from the Missouri in order to avoid the bluffs. To cross “runs,” or gullies, they had to fill some with rushes. At Willow Creek,³⁰ four miles from its mouth, they built a bridge using long timbers and willows covered with dirt and the next day hand-pulled wagons across and then drove the stock over. Sioux City now stands in that location. By May 12, Cummings said, the company used Sergeant Hill,³¹ a pinnacle near the Missouri, as a guidepost while they moved across blufflands. That day, Simpson Emmett killed a very large buck. For two days the wagons followed rather straight courses, despite “very hard traveling” in the Missouri bottomlands, and camped on May 14 by the Little Sioux about a mile above where John and Cummings had camped. By then, Cummings reported, the river had risen five

feet higher than he last saw it. A deer and “several fine fish” provided evening meals.

Crossing the Little Sioux proved to be a terrible task. Men went upriver and constructed a raft from “good dry cottonwoods.” They floated it down and hauled it ashore before dark. That evening “Br. Stewart found a bee tree that had forty-five lbs. of honey in it,” which the Saints collected. When morning came, men discovered they had moved the raft too far downstream so they spent much time pulling it a half-mile upstream. Wind blew so hard “we had to lie still” the rest of the day. At an afternoon meeting the company discussed Sister Puckett’s needs in terms of the common property. Men wanted to know what portion of the property she claimed. She said she wanted a yoke of oxen, a wagon, and a cow. They said she brought no oxen, cow, or wagon into the company but they would grant her a cow. She was not satisfied. Her case triggered a general discussion about camp property since they had left Nauvoo. Apparently accusations of unfairness and theft were raised. John asked if they remembered the warning he brought them from Nauvoo, and they said they did. He said if any in the party were guilty of “the crimes”—Cummings journal does not say what these crimes were—the sin was on the wrongdoer’s shoulders. John mentioned the need to divide up the property, but “some not wishing to, no more was said.”

On May 17 the wagon train crossed the Little Sioux and moved on to the three-mile-long lake John and Cummings had passed on the way up. They named it Lighthouse Lake because of a “fabrick” or fabrication high on the bluff, built by Indians, which resembled a lighthouse. Supper included fish that night. The next day they covered twelve miles and stopped at Soldier or Willow Creek to build another raft. John again called a meeting to see what the company wanted to do regarding their property which, Cummings observed, “still remained as publick property agreeable to their former agreements and covenants.”

Broth Butler said he considered it his prerogative to counsel them in those matters inasmuch as Brother Emmett was not with them and no prospect of his overtaking the camp before they reached the settlement and it was necessary to enter into some arrangements in order to obtain provisions when they got to the settlement, as he was acquainted with the organization entered into by the general camp at [Iowa River].

After much discussion “they all voted that Br. Butler and myself should ascertain what property there was in camp and dispose of it to the best advantage

to fit out the camp with clothing, provision and other necessities for the journey with the exception of Stewart. He wished to consider the subject.” On May 19 they crossed the river, and on the 20th, despite rains which created mud that stuck to the wagon wheels, they reached the Boyer River three miles too far from where they hoped to cross. The next day rains kept them in camp, but men made some progress in building a raft. That night the camp agreed to make a list of all the tools in camp before deciding what to do with them. On May 22 they finished the raft and at another meeting, where a “spirit of union appeared to prevail,” all voted “to divide the tools equal among the camp.”

On May 23 the company crossed the Boyer River by noon, moved southward, stopped two hours to fell a bee tree and collect forty-five pounds of honey, and reached Pigeon Creek—a total of eight miles. There they made an extended stop because rains made the creek too high to cross and because there was no wood nearby with which to build a raft. While stopped, the company agreed to divide the tools and guns, so three men appraised the items and then “each one was to take his equal portion.” Then the wagons were appraised and divided up. “The brethren all said they were satisfied,” Cummings journalized on May 24. (Cummings’ dating here and perhaps for the last week of his diary has a problem. He said May 24 was a Sunday, but calendars show that May 24 was a Monday; here we use the dates he gives, even though they might in fact be one day off.) By the 26th, his entry shows, provisions were running out, so people dug “Sioux roots,” which Cummings said grew abundantly on the bluffs and were very nourishing.

The next day was sunny but the water level stayed too high to cross. According to Allen Russell, the women took advantage of the good weather to launder clothes “for they expected to see some strangers” shortly. This “day off” was the occasion when, John said, the members “divided our property according to our agreement and covenant.”³² Allen Russell likewise noted the historic disbursement:

The men concluded to divide up their property and each one have his own and do with it as he pleased, for from the time that we came to gather in the fall of 1844 on the Iowa River we had all things common and no one called anything his own. So a committee of three was appointed by the company to divide the property that was left according to the best of their judgment, to each family according to the size of the family. So most of the property was divided that day before dark. What few traps [baggage] that was left undivided that day was divided after wards when we were camped again down on the line of Missouri.

Cummings' diary gives May 27 as the date when "the brethren brought forward what they had in possession and selected out such articles they did not wish to take over the mountains that they might know what they had to dispose of when they got to the settlement to buy provisions with." At last, John, after exercising patience and gentle persuasion, had dismantled the "all things in common" system. Today, standing but a few miles west of this historic campsite is the Mormon Bridge which carries U.S. Interstate 680 across the Missouri River into Nebraska.

Stream levels fell enough for the company to cross Pigeon Creek the next day. "We started on our journey again," Allen Russell said, "feeling pleased that we had got our property divided without any dissatisfaction. All expressed satisfaction in that regard." Cummings rode ahead to the settlement³³ to obtain food, and he bought three bushels of corn. He found that Brigham Young's Camp of Israel had not yet arrived, and he also discovered that a Frenchman named Narsis, who had stolen horses from the Vermillion Saints, had been there but had left before the wagon train arrived at 5:00 P.M. The next morning Cummings visited the Indian agency at the Traders Point to seek help in locating the stolen horses. There he found Major Thomas H. Harvey, the federal Indian Agent from St. Louis, and a Major Andrews from Washington, both of whom were visiting the area. Responding to Cummings' request, they sent an army officer, Captain English, to the upper settlement to try to find the Frenchman. Agent Harvey suggested that the Saints send someone to an Indian council being held in a week to ask Sac Indians if they had bought the stolen horses. That day John moved the wagon train nine miles to Traders Point and then another mile to Mosquito Creek.

Major Harvey, not knowing what Mormons believed, invited Cummings to explain the Church's teachings. That evening Cummings "preached upon the principles of the gospel as we believe them." In attendance were several Missourians, traders, and half-breeds, as well as a large number of Indians, including Pottawattamie Chief Joseph Laflumboy, a half-breed who understood English. Harvey and Andrews, Cummings said, "manifested good feelings towards us as a people." Major Andrews bought copies of the Book of Mormon, a *Voice of Warning*, and a history of the priesthood to read and then to deposit "in the National library at Washington." However, R. B. Mitchell, resident Indian subagent at the point, radiated a spirit of opposition.

Temporary Encampment

Because the Vermillion people needed employment, clothes, and food, John and Cummings led them the next day, May 30, fifteen to twenty miles beyond the

settlement to Keg Creek, near present Glenwood.³⁴ The next day Cummings rode south another fifteen or more miles to see the Hinman people near the Missouri state line. He found them occupying Indian lands. They were “well and stocked with provision ready to start the Journey” for the Rocky Mountains. Cummings learned that two men, Charles Shumway and J. W. Langley, had visited there from the main Mormon camp.³⁵ About 5:00 p.m. the rest of the Emmett company arrived. “We left Fort Vermilion on the 5th and arrived at the line of Mo on the 31st,” Cummings jotted in his diary, “making 26 days that we were on the road.” At that moment Brigham Young’s Camp of Israel was at Mt. Pisgah, some 120 miles to the east, and would not reach the Missouri River for two more weeks. On June 1 John regulated the camp, obtained some meal to last the Saints a few days, and then rode with a Brother Allen to Traders Point to attend the Indian council. Camp members, meanwhile, repaired wagons to “get ready for the journey.” On that day James Cummings’ fine journal concerning his Vermillion mission and his partnership with John Butler ended.

The Emmett group “stayed to rest and to recruit their teams and other stock” and to “fix up for crossing the Missouri River to go west,” Allen Russell said. “[W]e camped for two or three weeks and there we got more corn meal which was very acceptable, for we had been living on rations for about one year and a half and had not had one good meal of bread of any kind.”³⁶ Some sought employment downriver at Fort Leavenworth, just beyond St. Joseph.³⁷ Meanwhile, a small party of Mormons in twelve wagons arrived from St. Louis and tried to join the Emmett settlement, but United States officers refused to let them cross the Missouri state line because of orders prohibiting “all suspicious persons” from crossing the state line.³⁸

On June 11 Cummings and William Potter reported the Emmett group’s arrival to Church authorities who had reached the west fork of the Nishnabotna River.³⁹ The next day President Young sent Potter back with a letter recommending that the Emmett group “outfit themselves for the mountains” but “stay where they are, until they hear from us again.”⁴⁰ Soon, Allen Russell said, orders came “for our company to fit ourselves up the best we could, and join Bishop George Miller’s Company and travel with him to the west.” These orders officially ended the James Emmett expedition. Some of the company would stay together and maintain an identity of their own for another year, but not with Emmett as their leader.⁴¹

Reputation Assessment

Criticisms of the twenty-two month Emmett venture center on Emmett himself. It is clear that he disagreed with the Twelve. It is a fact that he refused to call off

his expedition when told to halt. Historian D. Michael Quinn's study of the Council of Fifty shows that several were dropped from that council for belief problems—loss of faith, breaking Church rules, and not following the new Church president—but also that others, including Emmett, lost standing due to political differences:

In several cases, however, the [disaffection] problem was centered in the Council of Fifty itself. Alpheus Cutler, James Emmett, Peter Haws, George Miller, Lyman Wight, and Lucien Woodworth all felt that Brigham Young blocked their personal missions in the Council of Fifty, missions they claimed came from Joseph Smith. They did not agree that the Council of Fifty derived its authority from the Church and was subject to Church leadership and, therefore, dissented from the Church in order to preserve what they felt were their missions in the Kingdom of God.⁴²

Anyone judging Emmett, however, should recognize that his expressed motives for leaving and his economic practices in the wilderness match closely what the Twelve themselves advocated just one year after Emmett left for the wilderness. At the October 1845 conference, the last general conference held in Nauvoo, leaders announced the evacuation of the city by spring and explained reasons why Saints should be willing to head into the wilderness. To convince people to uproot, Apostles Parley P. Pratt, George A. Smith and Heber C. Kimball offered some of the very reasons and rationales used by Emmett—viewpoints apparently shaped for them, as for him, during Council of Fifty sessions in 1844.⁴³

The Saints needed to leave the United States, the three apostles asserted, Emmett-like, so they could practice equality and consecration. Elder Pratt warned that “the Lord has been trying to bring us for the last fifteen years to his Celestial law so that we may say ‘here is our property, our wives, our children, our lands, our Clothing, our all, do with us as seemeth Thee good.’” Had Saints done this in Jackson County, he said, “we would not need to have been scourged and chastened.” “If ye are not one” in possessions, he quoted from scripture, “ye are not mine.”⁴⁴ Apostle Smith likewise emphasized that the Latter-day Saints must learn to consecrate. “When the revelation was given in Caldwell to consecrate their surplus property to build a house for the Lord and feed the poor few could understand it.” But Missouri militia equalized the Saints, he said, such that “when we landed in Illinois we were about all alike. We came to Hancock [County] pretty equal.” But, in Nauvoo, “we now find many wealthy and many

poor. How can we all be made equal?" By moving again, he said. "I want every man to dispose of his property and sacrifice it that every man who wishes to go shall remove beyond the rocky mountains."⁴⁵ Apostle Kimball reinforced the message. "The time is coming," he said, "when every man will lay down his all at the apostles feet, but it has taken us a good scourging for 15 years to come to this."⁴⁶

This trio of apostles forthrightly told the Saints that to move west required them to pool property for the good of the whole. To their remarks, Elder Emmett, had he been present, would have uttered a heartfelt "amen."

Then, also like Emmett, the three preached that the Saints must free themselves from an unjust American legal system. Elder Pratt said Saints must move beyond "one small town or city or county or State or where the hand of oppression can rest upon them." God would lead them, he promised, to a wider field and "give them room to act where they can enjoy liberty and law, where there will be no one to say we crowd them." He wanted to "breathe the air without having to pay for it." "Let us go," he urged, "where the people can rule."⁴⁷ Apostle Smith hammered the same point, admitting that Church leaders "have thought for a long time of going to a place where we could enjoy liberty." He confessed that he had "long wanted to leave this land of liberty and go to a place where God owns the land."⁴⁸ Apostle Kimball, similarly bothered, affirmed to conference attenders that "we want to take you to a land where a white man's foot never trod." Why? Because "we are not accounted as white people and I don't want to live with the white people." Captain Emmett had strongly argued this very position when recruiting his expedition fourteen months earlier.

During the Emmett expedition, and in subsequent years up to the present, people with Emmett became branded as less-than-faithful Latter-day Saints. They were not admirable people, widespread opinion said, because they had followed a man of doubtful loyalty, were suspected of stealing, and had become poor, sickly, and pitiable folk. Disaffected Emmett people gave credibility to these views because several complained openly about harsh leaders, terrible suffering, and loss of property.

Early in 1848, two years after Vermillion Camp closed down, a Brother Coons—probably Samuel Coons—brought a Church court case against James Emmett's son, Simpson. The case was heard by a tribunal consisting of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball of the First Presidency, Presiding Bishop Newel K. Whitney, and one high councilman for each side of the dispute. The court called John Butler to be its expert witness. John gave lengthy testimony about the company's consecrations and some alleged abuses. When John finished,

President Young pronounced that the consecrating and covenanting by Emmett people had no binding power because no priesthood authority directed it. The judges then decreed that all remaining Emmett company properties be returned to their original owners and that no more such cases be brought before ecclesiastical courts.⁴⁹

Brigham Young, based on what he heard about life at Camp Vermillion, also said he disliked Captain Emmett's method of gaining Indian confidence. "Emmett and his company never washed hands or faces for months," he complained, "and in other things conformed to the Indian manner of life, a course which they supposed would win them favor with the Indians"—which President Young considered to be a foolish strategy.⁵⁰

marriage. She was the second child of Mr
 Margaret Lowe. My grandmother before he
 married Mrs. Kerr, they had eight children
 viz. who married David Hopington &
 who married my father James Butler, &
 who married John Perryberry, James
 Kerr, Agass, who married John Gibbons,
 who married Jacob Gibson, Percy Kerr &
 married John H. Perryberry. My grand-
 father Butler had one brother I never heard
 of his name was John. I have heard things
 come from Ireland, my grand father's fore-
 parents came from England. My grand mother
 came from Germany or her branch comes
 from England. This is the best of my rec-
 ollection. I was the fourth child
 into their names as follows William who
 married Dulah Reden, Elizabeth who mar-
 ried Mary Mays. They had two children and
 she then married — Horseyth, who mar-
 ried Dickson Allen. she died with her

A page of John Butler's own handwriting in his autobiography.

Mrs. Kerr on the twenty eighth of Sep-
 tember named him after himself John Lee

 Chapter Sixteenth
 Spores began to get so that our pa-
 rents were not safe. Brother Joseph's life was
 in danger all the time. He had small pox
 and was to go with him when he was
 ill. They had small pox & you know
 as to try to get him into prison again
 they could not prove him guilty
 any way what ever but they all
 shamed fully and sometimes they
 shall have on the spot, they
 were to cartage goods to try him
 once again but they could not do
 thing that was against the law
 constitution of the United States
 and would have to do
 it up again this made them more
 grieved than ever and they gathered
 them in places to council together
 about the best method to take

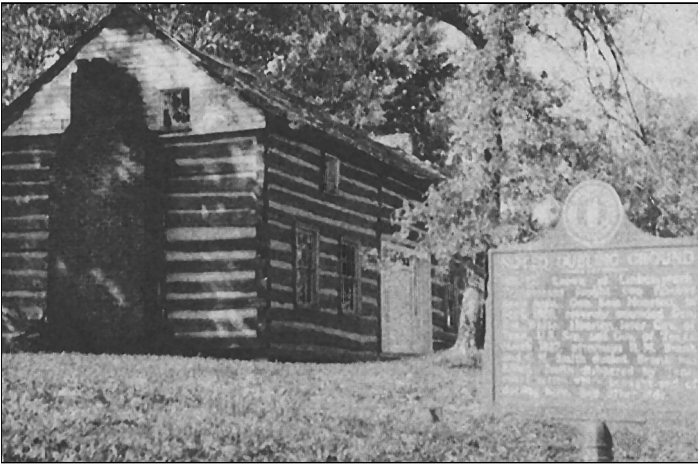
A page of John's longer autobiography, as copied by wife Caroline or another relative.



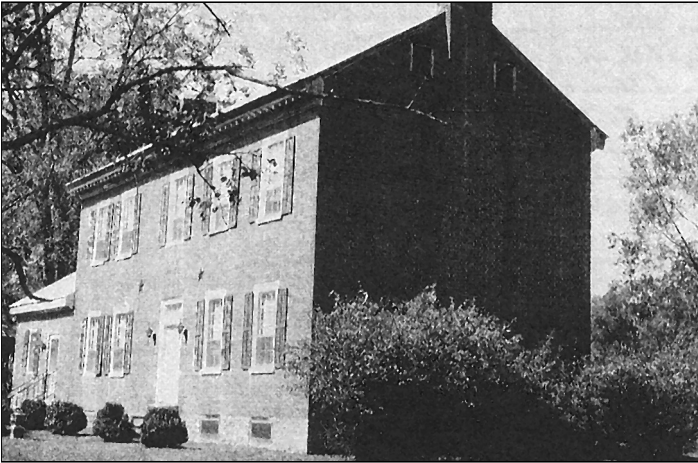
Typical landscape by Drake's Creek at the Kentucky-Tennessee border, near where the Butlers and Skeens lived.



Drake's Creek near where John and Caroline grew up.



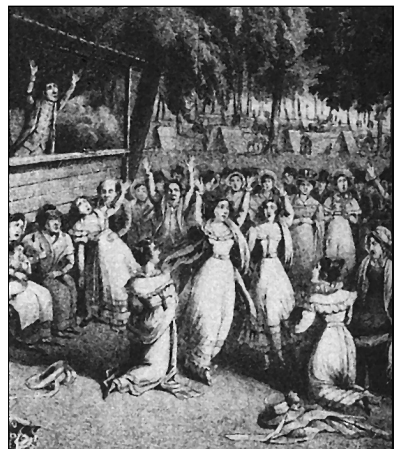
Historical marker honoring Linkumpinch, the dueling ground west of the Butlers' home. The Duncan Inn was a stagecoach stop during John's Kentucky years.



The "Old Brick" home built in 1804 by Caroline Skeen's Uncle Robert Taylor, a prominent builder in Sumner County, Tennessee.



Headstones in Skeen Cemetery located in Simpson County, Kentucky, near the Butlers' property. Caroline Butler's beloved brother Kenion Taylor Skeen is buried here.



Kentucky scene depicting revival twenty years before those that inflamed the Butlers' neighborhood in Simpson County, Kentucky.

I Jesse Skeen of the County of Sumner State of Tennessee
 do hereby certify that I have for my son Union
 Skeen loan given & conveyed to my son two lots
 in Sumner County on the waters of Rocky Creek on
 tract of land the boundaries as follows Beginning
 at a white oak on the north side of tract of land
 running thence north 30 poles to a stake in Jesse P. Adams
 South boundary and in his spring branch thence East
 with his line to a rock 216 poles, thence South 30 poles
 to a Spanish Oak on the North bank of tract of land
 thence East with a marker line 60 1/2 poles to a white
 Oak stump with paint on thence South nine and a
 half poles to a corner beam on the South side of
 tract of land thence East thirty poles to a white Oak
 on the South side of tract of land thence South 30
 East 149 poles to a stake with paint on thence North
 84 1/2 West 108 poles to a stake thence North 160 poles
 to the Beginning containing one hundred and seven acres
 also one other tract bounded as follows Beginning at
 a Black Oak ferry Alderson's South well corner
 running South 3 1/2 East with a marker line 138 poles
 to two small black walnuts & corner to Jesse P. Adams
 thence East 8 poles to a small Hickory thence South
 12 1/2 poles to a small post Oak & corner to Francis Bush
 thence South 83 East 94 1/2 poles to a Spanish Oak then
 -ce North the poles to two small Hickories & black Oak
 in ferry Alderson's South boundary thence well with
 his line 111 1/2 poles to the Beginning containing one hundred
 acres be the same more or less it being in District No.
 17. I do hereby certify that the above mentioned lands
 unto the said Union Skeen his heirs & assigns forever
 I do covenant with the said Union Skeen that I have a
 good right to convey the same & that the same is an
 in Cumberlands. In witness whereof I have hereunto set
 my hand & affixed my seal this 28th of July 1841

Jesse S. Skeen

Benjamin F. Felt

Henry F. Eady

State of Tennessee Personally appeared before me
 Sumner County And: McElhiney Clerk of the County
 cannot at said Sumner County Jesse S. Skeen the do.
 nor with whom I am personally acquainted and who
 acknowledged that he made and signed the within
 Deed of Conveyance for the purposes therein contained
 Witness my hand at office this 18th day of Oct 1841.

And: McElhiney Clerk

Registered & Liberated Oct-1841

J. L. Buzzard
 J. W. S. H. H. H. H. H.



Present-day Mirabile, Missouri, where the Butlers owned property, 1836-38, two miles south of Far West in Caldwell County.



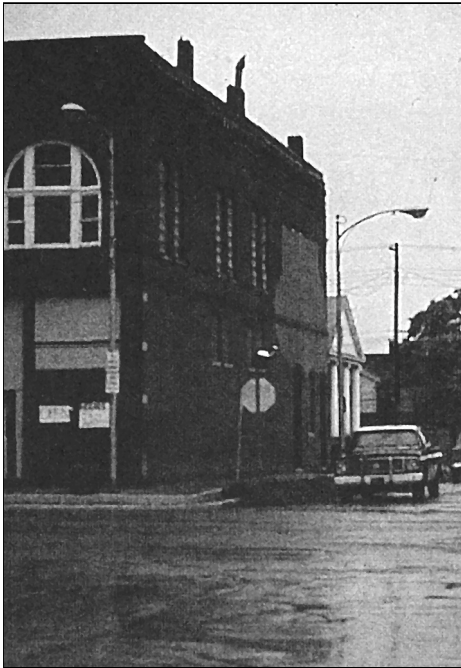
Probable location of Butler cabin and 160 acres of farmland, 1838, eight miles southwest of Gallatin at Marrowbone Settlement in Daviess County, Missouri.



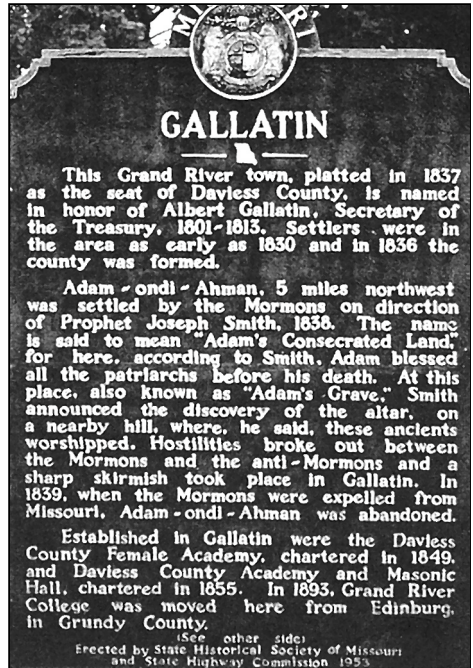
*Depiction of Gallatin election fight August 6, 1838, in which John heroically defended Mormons being attacked by Daviess County residents (illustration in *Mormonism Unveiled*, 1877).*



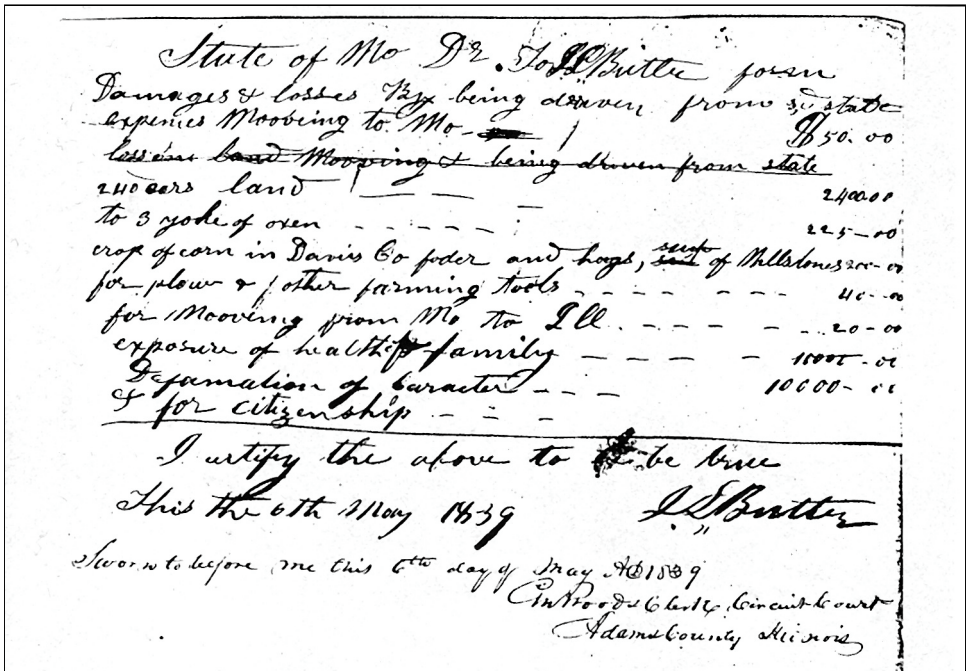
Family quilt depicting John Butler at the Gallatin election battle, quilted by Cleo Simon.



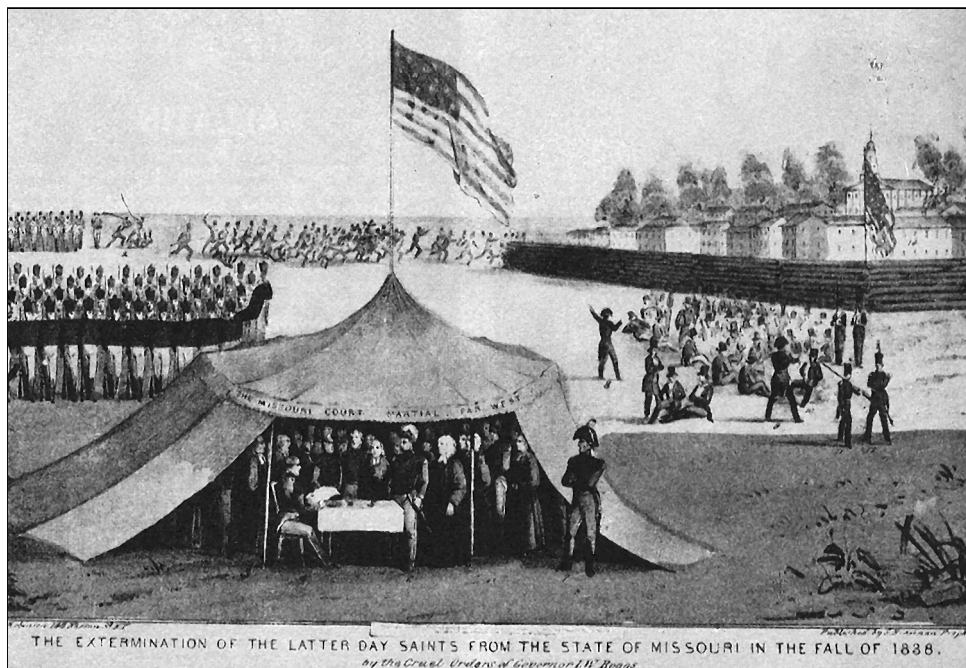
Southwest corner of courthouse square, Gallatin, Missouri, site of polls where John tried to vote and of the August 6, 1838, fight.



Historical marker in front of Daviess County courthouse, Gallatin, Missouri, telling of the 1838 Mormon troubles.



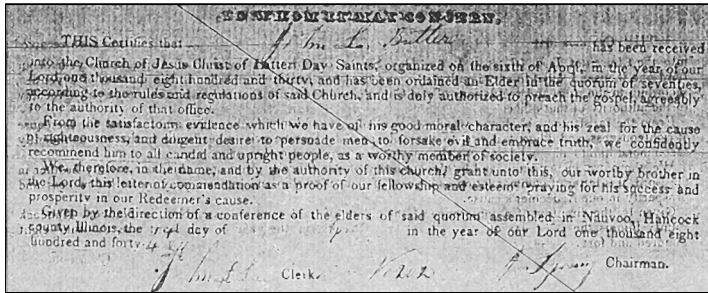
Petition for Redress signed by John Butler at Quincy, Illinois, seeking reimbursement for personal and property losses in Missouri.



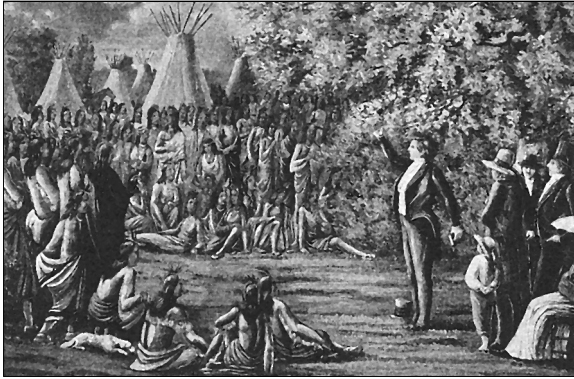
Depiction of the Mormon surrender at Far West, Missouri, in October 1838 that ended the Mormon War in Missouri (Courtesy LDS Archives).



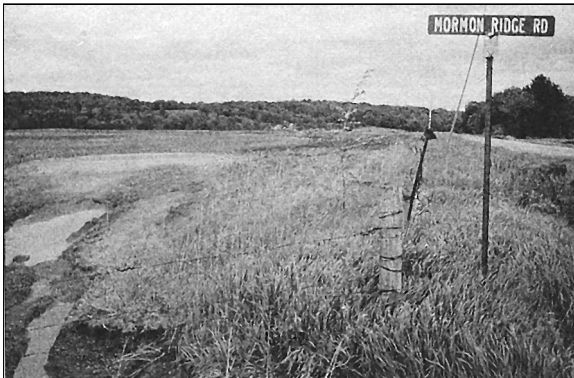
Painting, "Winter Exodus from Missouri," by C.C.A. Christensen. John's autobiography vividly describes his family's experiences during this exodus.



*John's
Seventies'
Certificate,
1844
(Courtesy
LDS
Archives).*



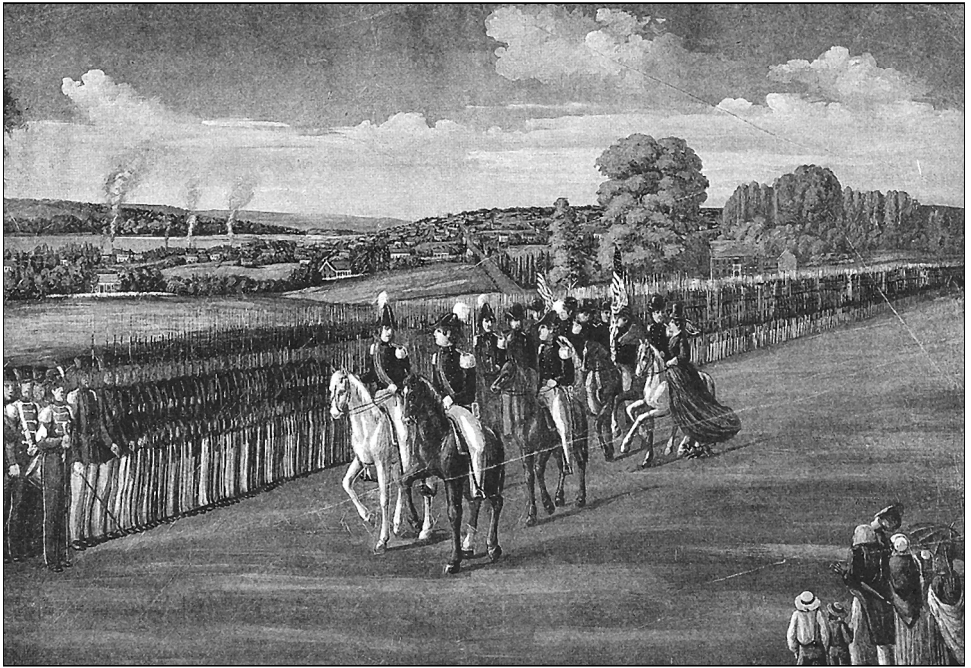
*Painting, "Joseph Smith
Preaching to Indians," by
C.C.A. Christensen. Joseph
sent John on two private
missions (1840-42) to
Indians near present-day
Minnesota.*



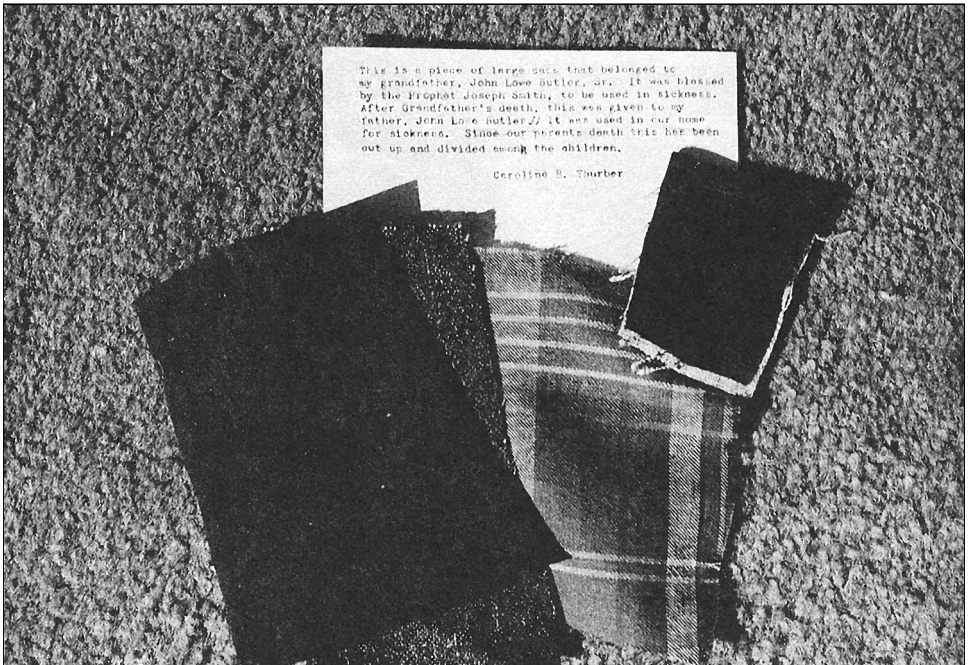
*Mormon Ridge near
Albion, Iowa, where the
Emmett Company
camped February-April,
1845.*



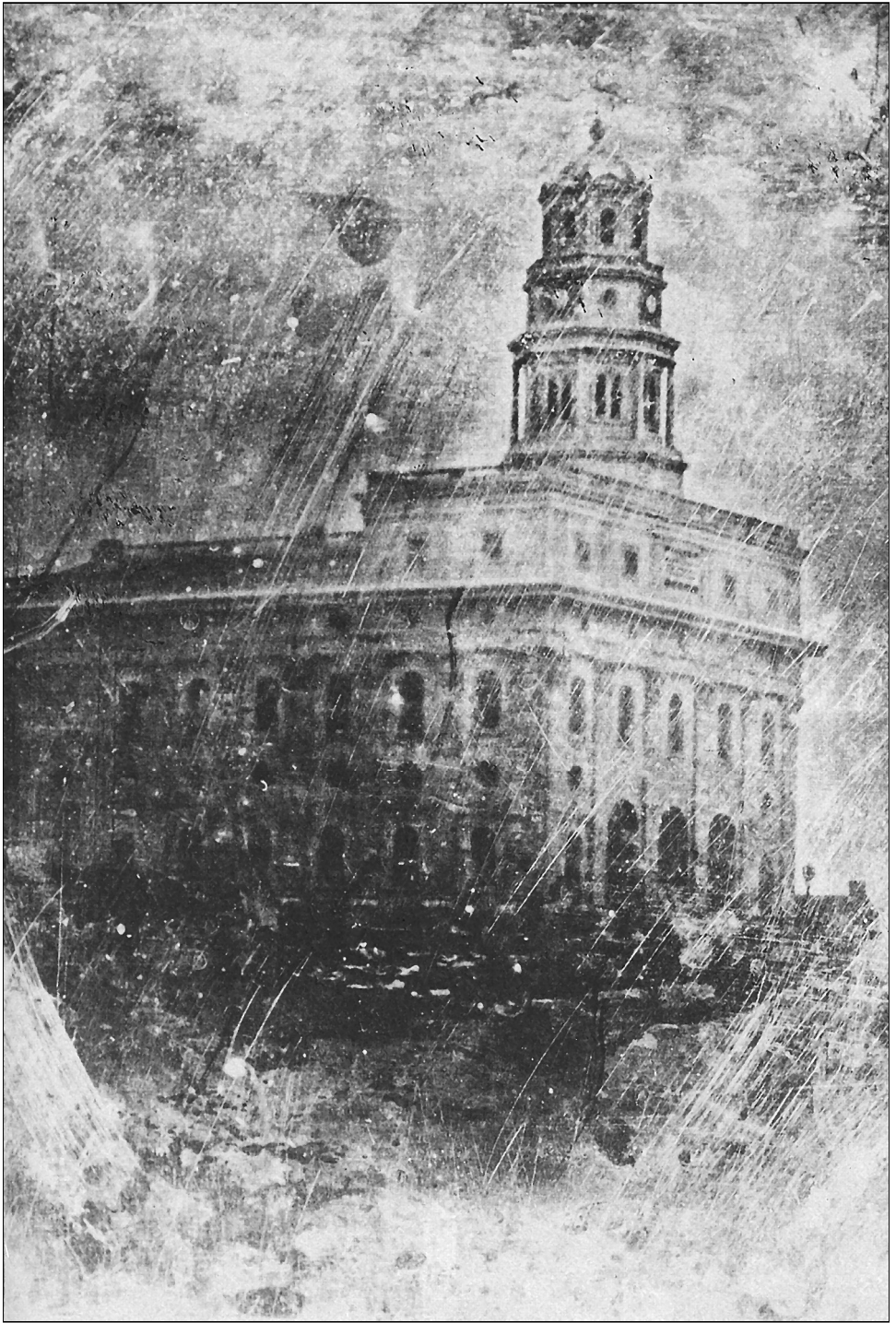
*Historical Marker,
Burbank, South Dakota,
near site by Missouri
River of Fort Vermillion
where the Emmett
Company, including
John's family, wintered
1845-1846.*



Painting, "Joseph Smith Reviewing Nauvoo Legion," by C.C.A. Christensen. John Butler was on General Joseph Smith's staff as one of twelve official bodyguards.



Pieces of John Butler's cape/cloak. The cloak was blessed by Joseph Smith to be used to heal the sick, and it served that purpose for two generations in the Butler family.



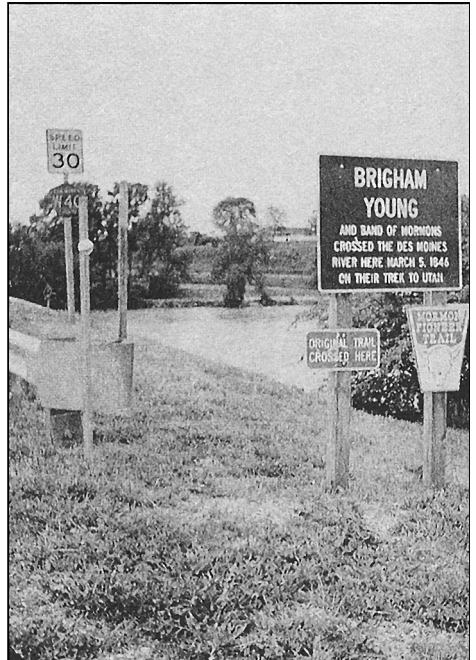
Nauvoo Temple, 1846. John Butler served as a fireman and guard in the temple late in 1845 and helped administer endowments that winter (Courtesy LDS Archives).



Nauvoo. The Butlers lived three blocks from the temple on the other side of it. They were Nauvoo residents 1840-46 (Courtesy LDS Archives).



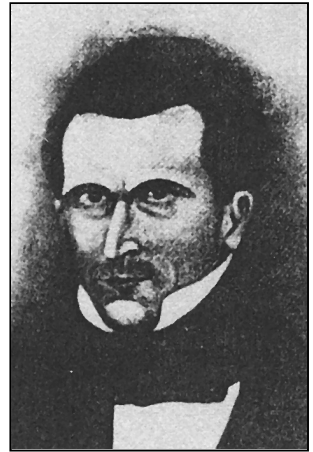
Brigham Young, Senior Apostle and LDS Church president, 1844-77. In Nauvoo John was one of his official bodyguards. Brigham Young sent John to help control the James Emmett Expedition, 1844-45.



Site of the Mormon Trail ford of the Des Moines River at Bonaparte, Iowa. John and plural wife Sarah would have crossed here in March 1846.



Looking southwest across Chariton River bottoms (Iowa). At Chariton Camp on bluffs in background, Brigham Young sent John ahead to bring the Emmett Company, including John's family, back from Camp Vermillion, March 1846.



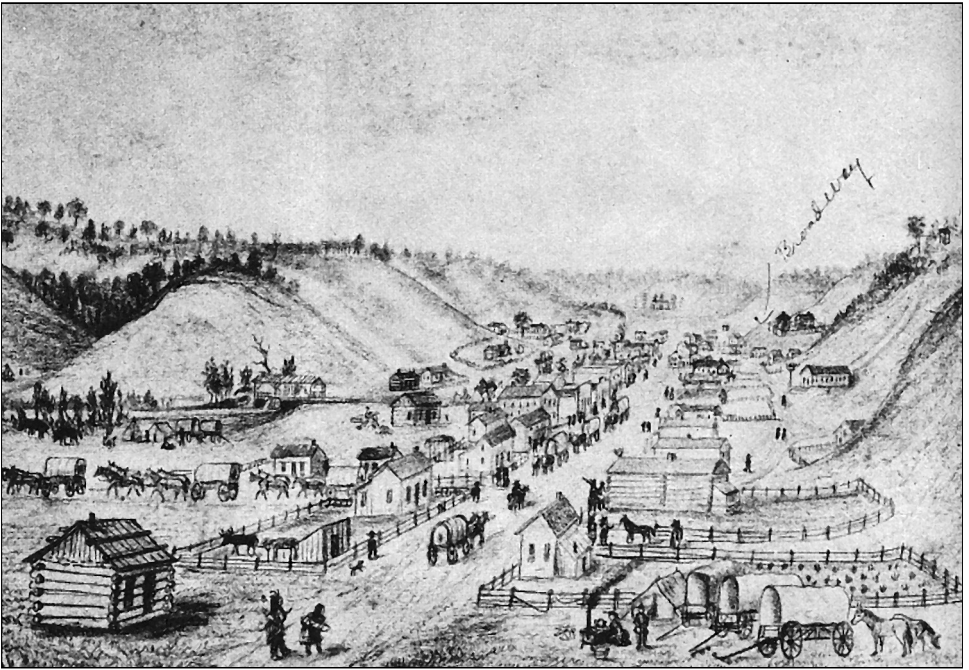
Bishop George Miller, who led three wagon trains, including the Butlers', to winter at Ponca Camp, 1846-47



Ponca Camp Memorial near Niobrara, Nebraska, honoring those who died there during the winter of 1846-47. Erected by Jesse Knight in 1908.



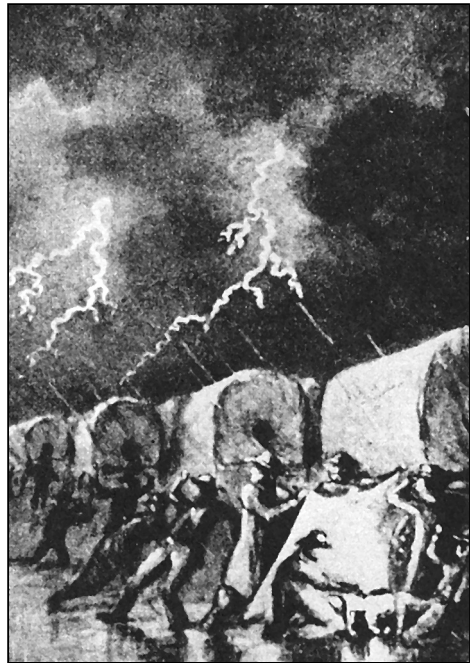
The Niobrara River, where it flows by the site of the Ponca Camp of 1846-47.



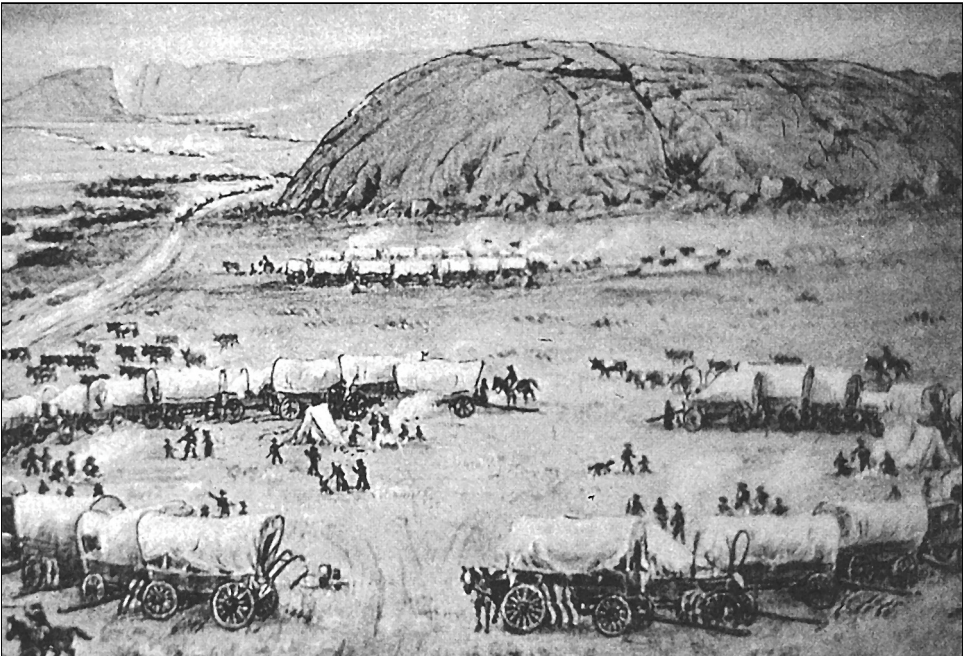
George Simon's drawing of early Kanesville, 1849-51, looking east (Courtesy of Council Bluffs Public Library). The Butlers lived near Kanesville, 1848-52.



Looking west at Missouri River Valley from Fairview Cemetery atop bluffs in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Very likely John buried his brother Edmund here in 1849.



A lightning-storm-triggered stampede caused great damage to the Kelsey wagon train, requiring John to do much blacksmithing.



Painting of Mormon wagons circled at Independence Rock, by William H. Jackson. The Butlers, in the Kelsey wagon train, camped near here in mid-September, 1852.



Unveiling of John Lowe Butler plaque in Spanish Fork's Memorial Square. Butler family representatives with the author (far right), June 1991.



"Old Fort" memorial in Spanish Fork City Park, honoring the 1854 fort site two blocks to the south and its inhabitants, including the Butlers.

John C. Butler: Amen God

Y^e it known by these presents that I John C. Butler of Salt Lake City in the County of Utah and Territory of Utah, for and in consideration of the good will which I have to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and among other things to wit for said Church's successors in Office and Agency all my claim to and ownership of the following described property to wit

Two lots & three in Block 170 cont. 50 acres	
Also the East half of Lot four Block 103	
and Lot 2 in Block 100 cont. 60 acres the above land is in Patent Survey of 300	
acres located in the above said Section 100	\$ 220. 00
Also One House with two rooms in Salt Lake	100. 00
One Gate of Cedar's Wagon	100. 00
2 horses at \$40 each & calves at \$10 each	130. 00
12 head of Sheep at \$10 per head	90. 00
One Pig	5. 00
2 bottles of Glass at \$50 each	100. 00
One lot of Potatoes with trees	125. 00
Substance of furniture, Boxes, Hardware	100. 00
One half of one hundred and thirty sheep	250. 00
Farmer's tools & One Year	25. 00
Total Two thousand & thirty two Dollars	\$ 2025. 00

John Lowe Butler consecration deed, August 14, 1855.

together with all the rights, privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging or appertaining I also covenant and agree that I am the lawful claimant and owner of said property and will warrant and defend the same unto the said Trustees or their successors in Office and Agency against the claims of my heirs, assigns or any persons whomsoever

In witness whereof

Given at Salt Lake City

John C. Butler (S)

Charles W. Smith

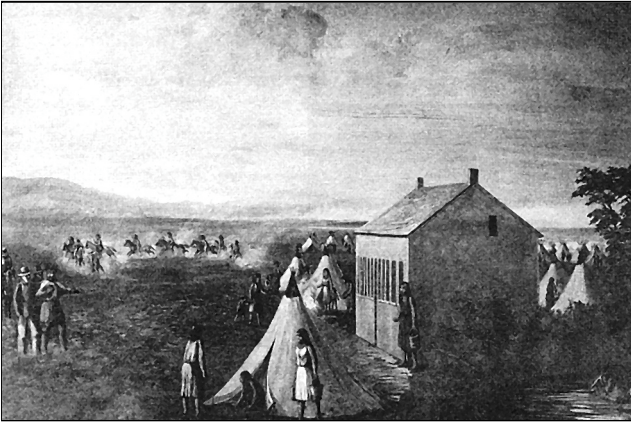
George W. Adams

President of Utah

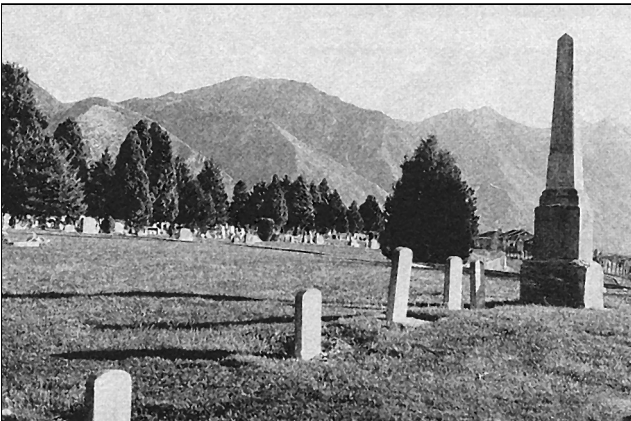
County of Utah

I, George W. Adams, judge of the Probate Court of the above said County do hereby certify that the Sign of the above transfer is, in every respect, to me, appears the genuine copy of original and is a correct copy of the original and is, in every respect, correct the foregoing transfer

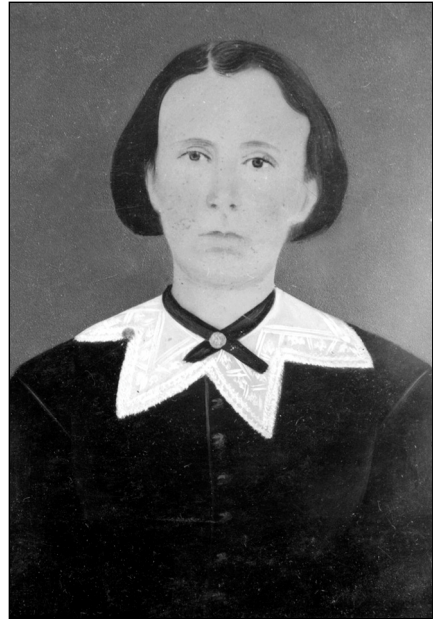
George W. Adams, Judge Probate



Painting of Spanish Fork Indian Farm, by C. C. A. Christensen. Bishop Butler closely watched the work of the federal agent in charge, Dr. Garland Hurt.



John's memorial and the Butler family plot, Spanish Fork City Cemetery, looking southeast.

[illegible]

Caroline Skeen Butler, John's first wife.

Page from August, 1860, federal census of Spanish Fork, Utah, showing John's wives and children. John had died four months earlier.



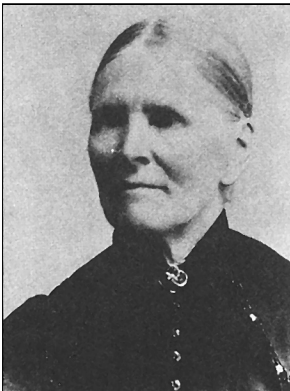
Children of John and Caroline. Front l to r: John Lowe Butler II, Kenion Taylor Butler, James Butler, Charity Artemesia Butler Thorton. Back l to r: Adeline Butler Allen, Lucy Ann Butler Barton, Keziah Jane Butler Redd, Phoebe Melinda Butler Sevey, Alvaretta Farozine Butler Robinson, insert: Thomas Butler.



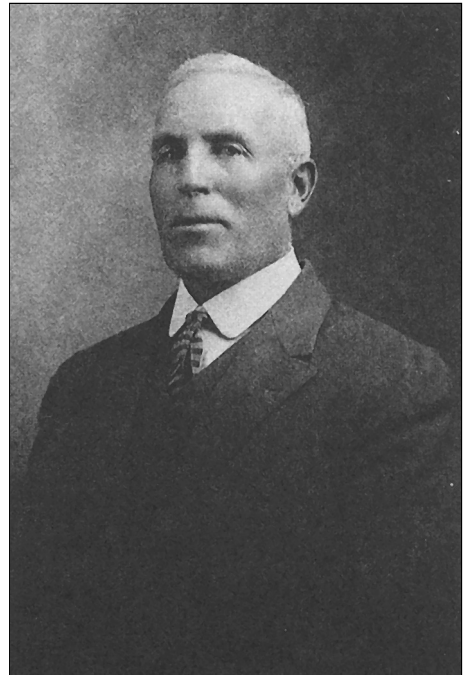
Lovisa Hamilton Butler Olney, John's 6th wife, posed here with her daughter by John, Lovisa, and children by Moroni Olney (center).



*Lovisa Butler
(Mrs. William)
Austin. John's
daughter by wife
Lovisa Hamilton.*



*Henrietta Blythe Butler Powell,
John's 8th wife.*



*John William Butler, John's son by Henrietta, born
four months after John died.*

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

North to the Niobrara

During June 1846 the Butler family camped with Emmett company associates near the Missouri border, south of Council Bluffs, where many “brethren who were able” worked in nearby settlements.¹ There they waited for Mormon caravans from Nauvoo to reach and commence crossing the Missouri River.² On June 12 Brigham Young’s encampment near Indian Village sent Bishop George Miller’s company and two others ahead to cross the Missouri and head for the Rocky Mountains. That same day, Young sent word to John Butler to ready his group to join the Rocky Mountain companies. Tell no outsiders, the letter cautioned, “about our exit to the mountains.”³

Bishop Miller, leader of the advance parties, was one of the Church’s most capable organizers and businessmen. He was a general bishop for the entire Church, along with Bishop Newel K. Whitney. In Nauvoo, Bishop Miller had served as the high priests quorum president and a leading voice in the Council of Fifty. At age fifty-two, he was seven years older than Brigham Young, nine older than James Emmett, and fourteen older than John Butler. During the Nauvoo departures, the bishop’s company was assigned to move ahead of the main group to explore routes, improve trails, build bridges, and obtain food supplies.⁴

When the advance companies reached the then-unbridgeable Missouri on June 13, they started building ferryboats.⁵ A day later the main companies started arriving at Council Bluffs. There, Bishop Miller, by assignment, outlined

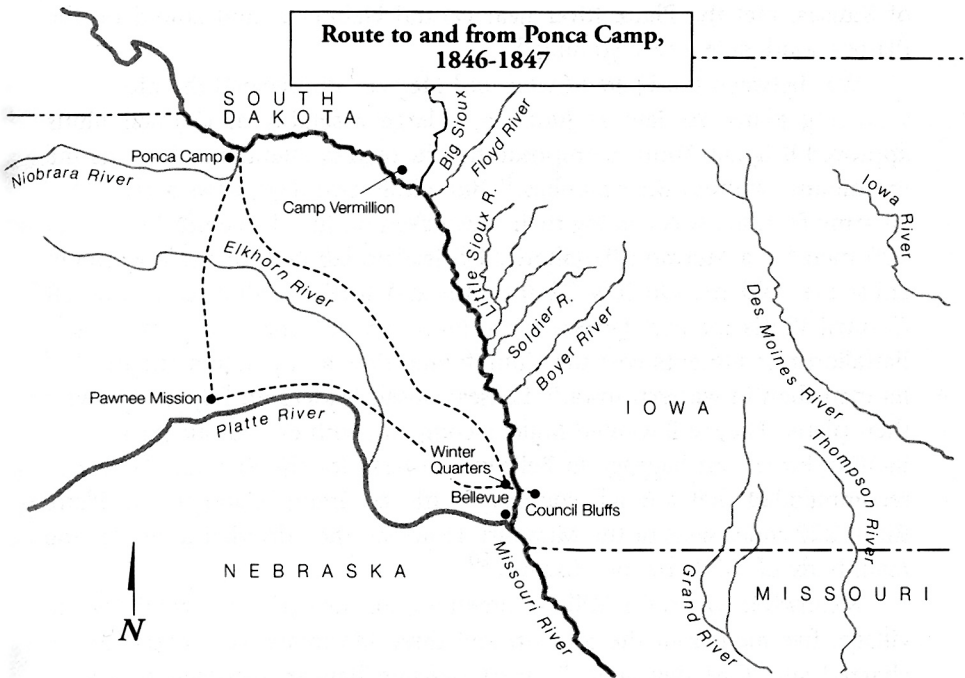
instructions for the Saints regarding camping, trading, herding, and boat-building. Leaders consulted with trader Peter Sarpy, who operated the American Fur Company trading post a half-dozen miles downriver at Bellevue, with Pottawattamie Indian leaders, and with government Indian agency officials located across from Sarpy's post to be certain the Saints abided by trade regulations. Some danger existed that federal authorities in Missouri might try to stop the Saints from moving west, so Brigham advised his leading men "to be wise and say little" about LDS intentions. As more and more Nauvoo wagon companies arrived, a "Grand Encampment" expanded eastward from the river for eight to ten miles.⁶

James Emmett rejoined his company, and John said that Emmett "was as mad as he well could be, for he said that he had bought a squaw and he intended to end his days at the Vermillion Fort." Forbidden to take her away from the tribe, he had traded her for a horse and decided to rejoin his group for the trek west. On June 15 John, as camp president, wrote to Brigham Young and informed him that "Br. James Emmett has returned and all is right, as such we recommend him as being in full fellowship in the branch."⁷

On June 18 the American Fur Company contracted with Bishop Miller to send wagons up the Platte River 120 miles and freight back 90,000 pounds of furs for \$1,000.⁸ Desperately needing money for the migration, Church leaders approved the contract. To augment Miller's wagons, they asked John "and the Mormons with him" to quickly join Miller's company "to go after the furs."⁹ However, before the combined company was ready to roll west, Sarpy suddenly canceled the deal. Thus it appears that the Butler company did not go to the bluffs, and the Miller train stayed on the east side of the Missouri for about two weeks. On June 29 the Saints put into service a large, newly built ferryboat, and from then on it constantly moved wagons across the Missouri.¹⁰

Pawnee Mission War Zone

In mid-June, 114 miles west of the Missouri, Sioux Indians raided, sacked, and burned a Pawnee Indian village and a Presbyterian mission station a mile west of it, both located by Plumb Creek and the Loup Fork of the Platte River (about eight miles southwest of present-day Genoa, Nebraska).¹¹ On June 27 fleeing Protestant missionaries and government agents arrived at Bellevue and reported the attack. Because they decided to close the mission, they arranged for Bishop Miller's company to go to the station, salvage possessions, and haul them back to Bellevue. On July 6 Miller led thirty-two wagons which ferried across the Missouri, and three days later they started west.¹² On the west side of the Missouri, Captain Butler merged his company of perhaps twenty wagons with



Miller's thirty-two.¹³ When Emmett's group was "put under Bishop Miller," one of Emmett's critics at the time gloated that Emmett finally had been "stripped of his kingdom."¹⁴ However, Emmett, a superb frontiersman and fellow Council of Fifty member with Miller, soon would become Miller's right-hand man. Years later, Miller praised Emmett's valuable frontier expertise in glowing terms: "The excellencies of this man Emmit as a skillful hunter and pioneer cannot be too highly spoken of; he was perhaps never excelled, even by the renowned Daniel Boone."¹⁵

"We crossed the Missouri River," John summarily wrote, "and went on up to the Pawnee Village." Caroline and the children accompanied John, as did plural wife Charity Skeen Butler. It is possible that John's third wife, Sarah Lancaster, had been with the main group of Saints and that John took her along, too.

The Mormon route west from the bluffs area was along an established "Platte River Road." Wagons rolled overland about forty miles to the Platte River and then traveled up its north side. This wagon road had been the north branch of the Oregon Trail, the route to Oregon preferred by fur trappers and missionaries during the 1820s and 1830s. By the 1840s it had been replaced in general use by the southern branch of the Oregon Trail which in relation to

present geography ran from Independence, Missouri, across part of Kansas, met the Platte River near central Nebraska, and stayed on the Platte's south side into Wyoming.¹⁶

War between the United States and Mexico complicated the Mormons' westering plans. As late as June 28, a large assembly at Council Bluffs approved Brigham Young's proposal that the men in attendance "go over the mountains" without their families.¹⁷ But within two days, news arrived that an army recruiter was coming their way. Asked on July 1 to contribute up to 500 men for a Mormon Battalion, LDS leaders labored for three weeks to enlist the soldiers. On July 22 the fifth and final Battalion company left Council Bluffs for Fort Leavenworth. John was not one of the enlistees.¹⁸ Battalion recruitments cost the Church vital time and perhaps one-third of its men then in western Iowa.¹⁹ Losses caused leaders on July 12 to revise their plans. They still wanted Miller's company, with or without the wagons hauling Protestant baggage to Bellevue, to head for the Rockies. They also recommended that a small company settle at Grand Island in the Platte River, 220 miles west of the Missouri. However, they decided to winter the main body of Saints by the Missouri.²⁰

Meanwhile, when the Miller-Emmett wagons neared the burned Pawnee village, five men from the mission and three Mormons went ahead to the charred site. One day later, Emmett, sensing danger, recruited nearly all able-bodied males in the Miller Company, with John probably among them. They hurried west and apparently saved the eight outnumbered whites from a Ponca Indian war party "without the shedding of blood."²¹ The Protestants gave the Mormons the mission station's corn and grain in return for the hauling work. On July 22 seven Mormon wagons headed east, loaded with the evacuees' cargo.²²

Bishop Miller's teamster, William C. Staines, said the Mormons found around the burned village "several fields of grain ready for harvesting, with potatoes, turnips and sweet corn, as well as a large quantity of wheat, barley and oats already threshed and housed. This was handed over to our camp" by the missionaries who had been supervising the farm. For Miller, this food payment was a divine gift "better for us than money." Saints, including the Butlers, spent about two weeks harvesting and threshing the standing grain, shelling corn, and sacking food for their Rocky Mountains trek.²³

While salvaging food, the whites were startled by the sudden appearance of several Ponca Indians—a different group than the ones who had threatened them earlier. Staines described the scene:

One morning, before the dew dried off so that we could proceed to threshing, we saw persons walking in the distance, and, by the aid of a

glass, distinctly ascertained that the objects were eight Indians approaching. They came up without hesitancy, and when I interrogated them through James Emmit, who acted as interpreter, we ascertained that they consisted of the principal chief of the Ponca Indians [Tea-Nuga-Numpa, or Buffalo-Bulls-Two"]²⁴ and seven chiefs or braves, who had come to offer assurances of peace to the Pawnees, lest they might think that the Poncas had taken part in the burning and sacking of the Pawnee village. We pitched a tent for them, and extended our hospitality toward them.²⁵

To reinforce the small Miller expedition and to get their own advance companies headed for the Rockies, Brigham Young and Apostle Heber C. Kimball each organized and sent off a wagon company. The Young train, with sixty-seven wagons and 227 people, started west on July 21, and the Kimball train started soon after. Members of the Twelve hoped they themselves could join these wagons before or at Grand Island, Nebraska, but efforts to obtain donated teams to transport them failed. On August 2 the Young-sponsored train met Bishop Miller's group at the Loup Fork River in Nebraska. They crossed on August 4 and camped. That evening the Kimball-sponsored train arrived with seventy-three wagons.²⁶

Anson Call and Bishop Miller estimated the combined Miller-Young-Kimball train contained about 200 wagons. John said that "there was about one hundred and fifty families." Another estimate said 500 to 600 people were involved. Compared to the others in the company, the Emmett people, having already spent two years on the frontier, were poor.²⁷ Brigham Young ordered the three trains to advance to the Rockies together.²⁸ Miller claimed overall leadership, but Newel Knight, a leader in the Young train, challenged Miller's assumption. To settle the leadership question, two men, Knight and John Kay (who represented Miller), rode back to Brigham Young for clarification.

Expedition Postponed

When the seven Mormon wagons freighting the missionaries' belongings arrived back from the Pawnee Mission on July 27, bringing firsthand reports about that area, Brigham Young decided the vacated Pawnee village might make a good settlement site. So, on August 1, he sent the teamsters back bearing a letter to Bishop Miller. It presented a scaled down plan for the advance companies. Winter most of the people at the Pawnee village, the new orders said, but send a small group farther west to Grand Island. Then, perhaps twenty or thirty wagons could push all the way to Fort Laramie to winter. But none

should try to cross into the mountains. A key instruction was, “Use your own judgment with regard to wintering.” But wherever they settled, the letter continued, “In the spring we will overtake you & all cross the mountains together.”

Brigham Young, needing to find winter quarters by the Missouri for more than 12,000 people, added that herds could be sent back to the main encampments, but he gave no hint that any wagons or people should return to winter with the main group. Young advised Miller that he planned to establish a winter quarters for the main encampment some forty miles up the Elkhorn River near its headwaters, or somewhere between the Elkhorn and the Missouri. This statement essentially gave approval for wintering sites in the prairie areas sizeable distances north from the Platte River Valley.²⁹

When the August 1 orders reached the advance companies and canceled the push to the Rockies, the Butlers had three good reasons to feel disappointed. Their western progress that entire spring and summer had been meager. They faced yet another winter in the wilderness at some makeshift camp. And, they had reaped no 1846 harvest to restock their food bins, except for the share of food they received from the Pawnee village. By not giving up and returning to civilization, the Butlers showed strong loyalty to their religion, their leaders, their call to work with Indians, and the plan to establish LDS settlements in the Rockies someday.

Ponca Offer

Poncas, waiting at the burned village for Pawnees to return, heard about Brigham Young’s orders and warned that the Mormon “big captain” knew nothing about Indian customs. The Pawnee’s village was unsafe, they cautioned, being in an Indian war zone involving Poncas, Pawnees, and Sioux. Pawnees, they added, wintered horses at Grand Island, and if Mormon herds grazed there the Pawnees would kill the cattle and drive the Saints away. The Ponca chief then made an offer to the adrift Mormons. Winter at his village, he invited, near where the Running Water, or Niobrara River, empties into the Missouri. There, abundant rushes would serve as cattle feed. He could guarantee the whites’ safety because “it was his country.”³⁰ Saints were told the village was three or four days away—but Indians, unfamiliar with how slowly wagons move over roadless prairies, underestimated the travel time. The actual distance was about ninety-five miles and eleven days travel time.³¹

On August 8, Bishop Miller received another letter from Brigham Young that, once again, revised the travel plan. It canceled both the mini-expedition to Fort Laramie and the Grand Island encampment.³² Instead, they were to “settle

as near together as circumstances will permit to be able to resist any encroachments from the Indians.” Young, presuming the three wagon companies would stay in the vicinity of the Pawnee village, gave veiled advice for Saints to be missionaries there:

You are on fishing ground and have the best of nets and hooks, spread your nets, bait your hooks and live by fishing and leave not one inch of ground unoccupied. You have long wanted a chance to fish, and now you can spend the winter at it and no telling how many you may salt before spring.

Young’s letter appointed Bishop Miller to be president of the combined trains and nominated a high council to manage spiritual and temporal affairs.³³ The people assembled and sustained Miller as president and twelve men to be a governing council.³⁴

George Miller	Erastus Bingham	David Lewis
Newel Knight	John Mikesell	Hyrum Clark
Joseph Holbrook	Thomas Gates	N.W. Bartholomew
Anson Call	Titus Billings	Charles Chrisman

Absent from this leadership list is James Emmett, a clear sign of demotion. In fact, none who were with Emmett in Iowa were named to the council. Captain Miller, according to one man in the camp, possessed “considerable energy and perseverance” but was “hasty” in temperament, “rigid and strenuous” regarding camp rules, and “inclined to make enemies to himself instead of friends.”³⁵

Despite disappointment that the westward journey was postponed, council member Newel Knight noted that “a general union seemed to prevail.” Council member Anson Call said scouts searched for possible winter locations by the Loup Fork or along the Platte but found only “impractical” campsites. Finally, the leaders decided to accept the Poncas’ offer of a suitable winter quarters. To journey there proved to be about the same distance the group would have traveled had they backtrailed to the Saints’ main encampments by the Missouri—about a hundred miles to either place.³⁶

Assessments then and later mistakenly claimed that the Ponca decision was an act of rebellion against Church leadership and that Miller went north in order to “gratify his roving disposition.” Such judgments about Miller at the time stemmed from some Church leaders’ fears that Miller “was running wild through the Council of Emmett.” Evidence shows, rather, that the decision was made carefully and by unanimous vote of the council.³⁷ John, loyal to Brigham

Young, gives no hint in his autobiography that he thought the decision wrong. Senior council member Knight, a leader of Brigham Young's contingent and devoted to the Twelve, voted in good conscience for the Ponca destination. He noted that on August 9 the council heard Ponca chiefs describe their lands. He considered their report "favorable as far as we could ascertain." The council agreed it was unwise to stay in the Indian war zone around the Pawnee village. Knight concluded it was "advisable" to go among the Poncas because "we can get permission from them" and because "we can in all probability winter our stock there better than at any other point we can attain to this winter." For practical reasons, and not to challenge the Twelve, the council accepted the Ponca site.³⁸

For the due-north trek, by terms of their agreement with the Protestant missionaries, Saints loaded "as much grain and potatoes as we could get into our wagons" at the Pawnee Mission. Staines said these were the first potatoes they had obtained since Nauvoo. They filled "every corner in our wagons" with foodstuffs but still left much behind to waste. On August 13 the large wagon train started out, led by Miller and the Ponca chief. Miller assigned fourteen families to stay at the Pawnee Mission under Jacob Gates' leadership, probably to cultivate goodwill with the Pawnees. The group remained there until early October then returned to the Missouri.³⁹

Creating the Ponca Camp

John's autobiography devotes several pages to the Butlers' experiences at Ponca Camp. Episodes he records make sense only when fitted into the general happenings at the encampment. But, as was the case with the Emmett expedition, no in-depth history of the Ponca venture has been written.⁴⁰ As a result, historians, working with only partial understandings, have been critical of the trip, its leaders, and its participants. Therefore, to tell the Butlers' story properly, it is fitted here into a broader, new history of the Ponca Camp.⁴¹

During August 1846 the Butlers spent eleven hot days in a caravan of 160 to 175 wagons going almost due north, laboriously traversing half the width of present-day Nebraska.⁴² Initially they crossed "uneven," "rather barren," and very rough terrain.⁴³ Caroline was then three months pregnant. The big company passed over "wild but beautiful prairie," forded streams, and made roads over swamps and rough places.⁴⁴ After crossing the upper Elkhorn River, the travelers spent August 20 covering twenty miles without water. When they encountered immense buffalo herds, Emmett and others killed a few, but only with Ponca permission.⁴⁵

On Sunday, August 23, the group reached the Ponca village near the confluence of the Niobrara with the Missouri (west and south of present-day

Niobrara, Nebraska). This Indian encampment was a hub for some two thousand Poncas. It bordered the “swift flowing,” muddy, shallow but broad Niobrara River, bordered with oak, ash, and walnut trees.⁴⁶ It is noteworthy that the Butlers, since leaving Camp Vermillion four months before, had traveled 300 miles but were back on the Missouri River only eighty miles west of Camp Vermillion. Their travel route, when mapped, traces out a large letter “U” with about three one-hundred mile stretches.⁴⁷ This was John’s fourth Indian mission, following the two he and James Emmett had taken from Nauvoo and the Vermillion venture. It is not recorded how John, Caroline, and Charity felt about the Ponca Indians as compared to the Sioux they knew at Camp Vermillion.

Excited Ponca Indians swarmed the white newcomers, amazed at the size of the white man’s caravan. They eagerly examined cattle, sheep, hens, and pigs. Staines said that “many of them had never seen an ox before, and but few had seen many white men.”⁴⁸ That evening “Indian bucks, squaws, and papooses” peeked inside the dusty, circled wagons. Mounted Indians suddenly rode in, fired guns, whooped, and yelled—a frightening ceremony of welcome. Indian and Mormon leaders smoked the peace pipe.⁴⁹ Sister Emmett superintended a feast for the Poncas who, Captain Knight noticed, “are very fond of coffee, sugar, cakes, and biscuits.”⁵⁰ The second day, August 24, the Saints again made a feast for chiefs and “numerous Indians who came to see us.” Mormons gave the Poncas corn, lead, powder, and tobacco, and again the peace pipe passed around. Saints promised to plant corn and to do blacksmith work for the Indians, if needed.⁵¹

On August 28, after several days with the Poncas, the Mormons picked a settlement site more than five miles down the Missouri and marked out a fort to the north of White Creek.⁵² Men armed with scythes, rakes, and pitchforks began haying and felling trees for logs. But the Poncas, following a deadly sunrise raid by the Sioux, asked the Mormons to settle closer so their numbers would deter future attacks.⁵³ Saints debated about moving or staying, and then on September 7 the camp relocated upriver on the north side of the Niobrara, two miles from its mouth. However, a cluster of discontented people led by Asahel Lathrop and a Brother Richardson moved farther down the Missouri to their own site.⁵⁴

The old Ponca chief, after convincing his people to share timber with and feed the whites, died on September 12.⁵⁵ By mid-September workmen had staked out Ponca Fort. John and other men started to build cabins. “Our houses were built so as to form a square around an area of five or six acres,” Wilmer Bronson wrote. “The doors of the houses all faced the square with portholes at the back side of the houses, opposite their door” through which to shoot at

attackers. Cabin roofs were made of support boards covered by hay and then dirt. One structure served as a meeting room and dance hall. On September 23, men quarried rock and hauled it to the fort for chimneys. Two large gates, locked at night, secured the fort's entrances. When the fort was finished, Bronson said, "we felt ourselves tolerably safe."⁵⁶ Not doing justice to his and his family's own labor and sweat, John merely wrote of that month's labors, "we went to work and built a fort." By winter, Fort Ponca's perimeter walls included at least 110 cabins.⁵⁷

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Winter at Fort Ponca

Even before building cabins, men and boys formed into crews cutting riverbottom hay for livestock feed for winter. Of equal concern was fall and winter food for people. Bishop Miller apportioned out the grain brought up from the Pawnee Mission, and the Butlers received their share.¹ In September's sunshine, wild plums ripened here and there and were harvested. Hunters went in pursuit of deer, elk, antelope, raccoons, wood ducks, ravens, turkey buzzards, pelicans, and wild geese.² On September 28 Judson Tolman caught two hundred pounds of catfish in the Missouri.³

Group and Private Enterprises

From the beginning, the Ponca Saints pooled labor when cutting hay, herding, hunting, and logging.⁴ But, at a council meeting on September 27, Emmett tried to convince people "to let all we have be in common, and all draw rations alike." He "did not like to see one eat Biscuit, drink Tea, coffee, and sugar, whilst another eat corn bread." He felt all should "fare alike in all things." If they did this, Emmett said, they would be "abundantly blessed." The present time, he argued, is the time to do good, and they "should not wait until we see our brother gasp before we divide our substance." Strongly held doctrinal beliefs made Emmett favor the "all things in common" policy, but so did his sympathies for people in his company, who, compared with the Young and Kimball people, were destitute.⁵ John's autobiography, while not mentioning Emmett's position, takes to task some selfishness he saw exhibited towards the Emmett people.

After Emmett made his case, Hyrum Clark, a council member, spoke against consecrating without the Twelve's authorization. Knight supported Clark by warning that "when the order is properly introduced, it will not bring darkness nor discord." Bishop Miller openly disagreed. He "said he understood the principle of consecration and the principles Emmett has advanced were correct." He and others present had been at the October 1845 conference when the three apostles had preached such principles. Miller pointed out that the Saints now were "fairly out from under the gentile yoke and he was going to preach every principle that he understood." He advised people not to disregard him because "the Lord had his eye upon him" and because "he had communion with God and knew what he was doing," insinuating that God wanted them to enter the united order.⁶

A week later, the council again discussed the "common stock" idea. President Miller "said his Bishoprick made it his right and prerogative to attend to the consecration of properties in this Church," independent of the Ponca high council.⁷ Brigham Young, hearing rumors by mid-September about possible pooling of resources at Ponca, wrote a letter warning against it, saying that "until we are more perfect, all such attempts will end in poverty and confusion."⁸

While nature splashed the Missouri valley's plant life with reds and yellows, schism between the Ponca camp's president and council widened. Knight warned Bishop Miller that "the voice of this council is not valid without the sanction of our president, so his voice is not without the majority of the council." President Miller, he charged, "has repeatedly wholly disregarded council, and required the people to observe rules and regulations made and given by himself independent of this council." God's house is one of order, Knight reminded, but disunity among leaders upsets the community.⁹ Because of Miller, Knight wrote in December, "the union which had prevailed in our camp was withered like the tender plant that has sprung up after a refreshing shower but is soon nipped by the frost."¹⁰ Council resistance prevented the pooling of resources at the Ponca camp.

Departures and Ventures

By early October the Ponca Indians departed westward for their winter hunting grounds. Indians packed up their lodges, kettles, and possessions and closed down their village, a dramatic scene for the Saints to behold. Staines penned this word picture of the "Indian nation on the move":

In advance could be seen the chiefs and some of their braves on horseback. Next came the squaws, leading horses packed with their

lodges and camp-equipage. Next came the old men and old women, with their lodges packed and drawn by dogs with poles strapped on their backs. With these were young men and maidens, all on foot. Those who had babies strapped them upon a board. . . . All the young men and boys had bows and arrows; and when traveling they had a good time, testing their skill by shooting rabbits and small birds. When in camp a great deal of their time was spent in shooting at a mark.¹¹

During fall and winter, teams of Ponca Saints performed three types of errands as directed by the council. Some men went down to Winter Quarters and back, a distance each way of some 150 miles, carrying mail and trading for badly needed supplies.¹² In late October, for example, Bishop Miller and other teamsters drove forty wagons to Winter Quarters to obtain supplies and for Miller to meet with the Twelve.¹³ On November 29 Vincent Shurtliff and Jacob Houtz returned from Winter Quarters with supplies and mail. They brought news of sicknesses rampant in Mormon camps, the September “Battle of Nauvoo,” and “war with Mexico . . . raging.” On December 11 Miller and Emmett left to attend a “grand council” meeting at Winter Quarters, and teams went with them to obtain provisions.¹⁴

A second type of venturing involved men going west to winter-camp with the Poncas¹⁵ or to arrange for postwinter trading.¹⁶ Brothers Shurtliff and Houtz were the camp’s licensed Indian traders.¹⁷ In mid-September, near present-day Council Bluffs, these two men contracted with trader Peter Sarpy for goods to trade to the Indians in return for pelts the Ponca Saints would deliver the next spring.¹⁸ Joseph Holbrook noted on February 12 that John was among a handful who went up the Niobrara about thirty miles to trade. But the Indians were not ready, so on March 1 another group went back to try to trade again.¹⁹ By then, with the winter hunt almost finished, Indians started bartering furs with Mormon traders and with Sarpy’s agents.²⁰

A third activity from Fort Ponca was exploring, something Brigham Young requested and specifically asked John to consider doing. Miller told President Young that the Ponca location, rather than being off the trail west, sat on “the nearest and best route to the pass in the mountains.” It was, he said, a level road all the way to Fort Laramie.²¹ To test the route, Emmett, Joseph Holbrook, and William Matthews left on October 14 for what became a six-week, 200-mile exploring venture west and 200 miles back along the Niobrara, not reaching Fort Laramie.²² On November 28 they gave to the Ponca high council a favorable report concerning the route.²³ On December 27 leaders at Winter Quarters agreed that by spring a pioneer company would go up to the headwaters of the

Niobrara River, cross the Black Hills (in Wyoming, not the more famous South Dakota Black Hills), and put in crops near the head of the Yellowstone River.²⁴ It was clearly expected that Ponca Saints would head west via the Niobrara and not the Platte, saving perhaps three weeks of unnecessary travel.²⁵

Brigham Young asked the Ponca council to send two scouts upriver to explore the Great Bend of the Missouri, but no one went because horses and men “were pretty well worn out.”²⁶ Young also recommended that Miller send Emmett and Butler to investigate sources of the Yellowstone River and the forks of the Tongue River:

The thought occurred to us, that perhaps Bros. Emmet & Butler might like to explore that country this winter & see if there was a chance for a good location [stopping place] or any other speculation in that vicinity & become familiar with routes, &c. We have written the thought, but have no particular council on the subject, only if such a thing should be, from choice. Let Br. Butler keep a critical Record with his own hand, from day to day & hour to hour of all their movements & observations & report the same to us without delay.²⁷

For reasons not known, neither John nor Emmett undertook such an exploration, which could have taken them north and northwest of Fort Laramie along the present Wyoming-Montana border.

December Fire

Ponca Camp enjoyed fair weather until mid-November, when rains came that changed to snow and “mantled” the ground in white. But mild, dry weather returned, turning the yellowed prairie grasses into fire hazards.²⁸ During the week before Christmas, the settlers watched distant red lines of prairie fires creeping towards them. Then, the evening after Christmas, northwest winds suddenly “blew a perfect gale,” rolling orange flames “mountain high” towards the fort.²⁹ About 200 Mormons formed bucket brigades between river and fort to shuttle and toss “great quantities of water” on outside walls and haystacks.³⁰ Amid smoke and crackling flames, people grabbed household effects and carried them down to the river for protection. John recorded a curious story about this crisis. He recalled that Hyrum Clark, busy carrying items to the river, suddenly remembered he had left his sick wife back in their cabin. Dropping everything, he raced back but could not find her. He panicked. Caroline and other women finally found her inside the fort gate.

When flames burned to within two or three hundred yards of the fort—a scene “awful yet grand”—cattle and horses panicked and ran in all directions,

leaping over wagons and fences. Flaming chunks of dried manure, tossed by fire-caused wind gusts, rolled through the corrals and stockyards, setting fire to haystacks, woodpiles, and fences. Smoke became “intensely suffocating,” forcing people to move a few rods east to the river, some throwing water in their faces to prevent choking. Caroline was then seven or eight months pregnant and had a large brood of children to protect. By 11:00 P.M. the fire passed by. Joseph Holbrook believed that “if it had not been for the cabins being built of green logs our fort must have been burnt.”³¹

John said that when flames flared high enough to ignite the dry grass covering some roofs, people grabbed kegs of gunpowder from their cabins and lugged them down by the river to prevent explosions. He told about one missing powder keg—apparently to show how Ponca Saints misjudged each other. The day after the fire, he said, people retrieved powder kegs from the shores. One brother’s keg was missing, so a search of cabins found it in John Kay’s dwelling. Naturally, people accused Kay of theft. He asserted that his own keg was missing and that someone else put the disputed keg in his chest. “They began to look down upon John,” John Butler said, “and talked to him about it pretty strong.” They called him a liar and sinner, but he insisted he was innocent. They talked of disfellowshipping him. Finally, a man confessed that he had combined two kegs of powder into one, tossed the empty keg into the river, and put the full keg in Kay’s chest. Kay, whom people had vilified, suddenly became a man of integrity again, John reported.

One day after the Ponca Saints’ “narrow escape from almost utter destruction,” they inspected the damage. “The whole country looks black from last night’s burning,” Holbrook said. Burned haystacks forced Saints to drive cattle and horses up the river to rush bottoms, with a few herdsmen watching them. Each time the feed “became exhausted,” herdsmen moved the livestock farther upriver—by spring they were twenty-five miles from the fort.³²

Winter Survival

Fort Ponca was an outpost serving people committed to religion. During eight months there, Ponca Saints worshipped, partook of the sacrament, fasted and prayed, were baptized for health, and participated in priesthood blessings. Sunday worship meetings were held outdoors in the center of the fort when weather was not too cold. Knight noted that during November the council conducted weeknight prayer meetings in various cabins. When Bishop Miller arbitrarily canceled church meetings after November 30, high councilors ignored his edict and conducted Sunday worship meetings later in December.³³

Religious fare satisfied the soul but not the stomach. Food for the body became scarce. Anson Call admitted that they “lost many of our cattle” to winter deaths and to Sioux Indian raiders.³⁴ In mid-November Knight confessed that “our meals are often scanty.”³⁵ James Holt said that, “the rations that I received at Puncaw were very small” for his family of five. People “searched out everything we could to sustain life.” They tried to make biscuits out of elm bark. They sampled garfish eggs but found them poisonous. They ate “lion roots” (prairie dandelions), artichokes, and “hog potatoes” (wild potatoes or Indian turnips).³⁶ John wrote that Caroline, expecting a baby about February, ate a scanty diet of corn and fish but had no meat or bread.

Poor food caused sickness and some deaths. On December 20 Joseph Holbrook complained that “we are now living on bread and water and that on short allowance, one-half to two-thirds of the camp have no better.” On January 31 he reported that “many of our brethren are low in spirit.”³⁷ Wilmer Bronson said that scurvy, a disease later found to be caused by a lack of vitamin C, “threatened at one time to depopulate the entire camp.” Ponca Saints, like multitudes dying at Winter Quarters, needed potatoes or other vegetables to supplement their meager, unbalanced diet. In February Bronson’s mother Lucy died from scurvy. Wild herbs and roots, he noted, helped diminish the disease.³⁸ At least twenty-three Ponca Saints died that winter, some from scurvy.³⁹ A burial ground was established on bluffs two miles west from the fort. (Searches have failed to find the site.⁴⁰)

Stalwart Newel Knight died on January 11, 1847, from inflammation of the lungs, probably pneumonia.⁴¹ His son Jesse Knight was then only two years old. More than sixty years later, in 1908, Jesse, a wealthy Utahan, erected a monument near the Ponca Fort site to honor his father and others who died there in 1845-46. The solid marble monument, sixteen feet tall, features a shaft rising from a base eight feet wide. It bears the names of Newel and ten other Ponca Saints buried there. But it also serves to memorialize all the Latter-day Saints who wintered at Ponca. The death rate at Ponca, when percentages are compared, was at least as high as that at Winter Quarters and in Mormon camps in Iowa. At Florence in north Omaha, Nebraska, stands the better-known Winter Quarters monument, honoring Saints who died there and in other Mormon settlements that same winter.⁴²

Reputation Problems

Some Saints, based on rumors they had heard, considered Emmett a renegade who had disobeyed Church leaders and judged those who had been in his expedition to be unfaithful Saints, an assessment confirmed, they felt, by the group’s poverty. John complained of some who “looked down upon us in

Emmett's Company and threw out hints and slang, such as, 'oh they are not strong Mormons, they belong to Emmett's companies.'" This snobbery offended John and he recorded instances of it in his autobiography. One such case related to the scurvy plague. "They called it the black leg," John said, "and many died with it." The Emmett people suffered little scurvy compared to the others whom he judged were "well to do" and who "lived on the best." He suspected that "high living" combined with terrible heat the past summer caused their "black leg." Although "the folks in the other company were lying nigh unto death by the dozens," John said, "there was only one in our company that had it." To halt the scurvy, some Saints requested special priesthood blessings. John told of one woman who needed a blessing but refused to accept it from anyone in Emmett's group. She asked Caroline Butler "who she [Caroline] thought was the best one to get to lay hands on her, and my wife told her that her husband [John], she thought, was the best." This shocked the woman. "Why," she said, "he is not a strong Mormon." In reply, Caroline "said that we were as strong as any in the camp." But, the lady protested, John had "went off with Emmett's Company, and they drove off cattle and horses that did not belong to them. Why, he should never lay hands upon me."

John recalled another scurvy victim who had learned that the Emmett company had little of the disease. Why, she wondered, did this group of "scorned and despised" people escape the scurvy? She sent for John. "I went across to see what she wanted me for." He told her only one woman in the Emmett group had scurvy. "She drew a deep breath and sighed" and said, "Well, it was very strange" and that "she could not see what was the reason." John told her he thought the cause was that her company had been living too well, unlike the Emmett group:

We have had no meat or bread this winter, only a little corn and fish when we could get them, and this is the third winter that we have been in the same fix. We had seen hard times, but I thought that I would rather see hard times than to be taken down with disease.

The distraught lady confessed she had mistreated the Emmett group and asked John what might happen to her:

"I have despised your company and would not give the sick and hungry one morsel of any thing to help them in their trouble. Now I am sick myself and there is no one to comfort me. Oh what shall I do? Do you think I shall die?" said she. "Perhaps I shall die and go to hell for my wickedness. Do you think that I shall go to hell?" I said that I did not

know; the man that refused Lazarus the crumbs from his table was a rich man and he went to hell. She asked me to lay hands upon her [give her a priesthood blessing]. And she said that she felt better afterwards.

Caroline gave birth to son James Butler on February 5, 1847. This was one week before John left on a trading venture to the absent Poncas. When a Sister Bronson learned that the Butlers lacked flour, John said, she assisted Caroline and the new baby:

She told her little girl to fill a pan with flour and get some sugar and a little tea and she said to me, take that to my wife; she would give her that much . . . [At times] all seemed dark to her and she could see the devil at times. I tried to comfort her. She asked me if I thought that she would die. I told her that I had seen lots sicker folks live. I took the flour, sugar, and tea home to my wife, and it was a blessing to her for it was a rarity out there for us to have flour bread.

Friends of those in the Emmett group had good opinions of them. Eliza Ann Peirson, for one, had briefly met up with Lyman Hinman's family, friends of hers, during the July Missouri River crossings just prior to the Ponca venture. She reported that the Hinmans were in the Miller Company and "seem cheerful and firm in the faith. And would not be willing to exchange places with any of their eastern friends." Many of the Emmett people, including the Butlers, had similar convictions about the faith and their circumstances.⁴³

Revelation and Leadership

Late in November, President Young sent word for Bishop Miller and James Emmett to come to Winter Quarters, which they did, on foot, by Christmas.⁴⁴ Council of Fifty discussions produced the decision, mentioned above, that Ponca Saints should go west up the Niobrara towards the headwaters of the Yellowstone River, apparently near today's Casper, Wyoming.⁴⁵ President Young invited Bishop Miller to move down to Winter Quarters to help Bishop Newel K. Whitney manage the Church's finances. Miller went into Missouri for goods for the Ponca Camp and then returned to Winter Quarters. There he learned that on January 14 President Young had presented a revelation to the Church regarding how the trek west should be organized. This "Word and Will of the Lord," now Section 136 in the LDS Doctrine and Covenants, instructed the Saints to organize into companies led by three-man presidencies and subled by captains of hundreds, fifties, and tens "under the direction of the Twelve Apostles."

Bishop Miller disliked the revelation because he believed the Council of Fifty, not the Twelve, should direct the move west. He was displeased, too, by how Brigham Young had swelled the Council of Fifty's membership and, he claimed, changed its purposes. Miller also chafed at Brigham's plan to reestablish a First Presidency for the Church; he believed the Church must have a prophet-leader instead. Miller felt "broken down in spirit" by what he believed was "usurpation" of authority by the Twelve and because of "oppressive measures" he felt the Twelve were taking. Deeply troubled, he was "from this time, determined to go with them no longer" and to separate himself and his family from the westward venture.⁴⁶

Bishop Miller returned to Fort Ponca, followed by new Apostle Ezra T. Benson and Elder Erastus Snow from Winter Quarters. On February 7 and 8 the visitors presented Brigham Young's new revelation to the camp, which then numbered 396 Saints, including 98 men. Elders Benson and Snow stayed two weeks. Elder Benson did public preaching, which the Saints appreciated, having been "so long isolated from the body of the Church." In accord with the new revelation, Elder Benson nominated camp officers—including John—for a westward trek that spring, and Ponca Saints voted to sustain them. With Miller now ordered to do bishopric work at Winter Quarters, Titus Billings, Erastus Bingham, and Joseph Holbrook became the Ponca group's presidency, a leadership change that sparked no recorded criticism among the Ponca Saints. Hyrum Clark was installed as a captain of hundred. David Lewis and Vincent Shurtliff became captains of fifty. John Butler and nine others were selected to be captains of ten wagons each.⁴⁷

Dissolving Ponca Camp

On February 9 Elders Benson and Snow, along with Bishop Miller and others, departed for Winter Quarters.⁴⁸ Brigham Young listened carefully to what these men reported about conditions by the Niobrara. What he learned convinced him that the Ponca company was too poorly equipped and supplied to head west that spring as planned. So on March 25 he wrote to the Ponca settlement, canceling earlier orders that they push for the Rockies. "We understand that you have not provision as a people, to fit you for this journey," he said, so "return to this place, or somewhere in this vicinity as speedily as your situation will permit." Then, he added, "retaining your present organization, put in crops" and "prepare yourselves to go at a future day."⁴⁹

Lydia Knight said the Ponca Saints left for Winter Quarters on April 10.⁵⁰ Before departing they repaired wagons and oxen yokes. Wilmer Bronson explained that the hard winter and Indian thefts meant the group lacked enough

healthy animals to move everything. “We were compelled to leave a great deal of our household effects and nearly a hundred bushels of corn,” he lamented. “In one hour and a half from the time the first wagon rolled across the river,” he added, “the entire fort consisting of one hundred and fifty houses, together with their appendages—such as stables, stockyards, etc., was left destitute of human life.”⁵¹ Saints believed the fort would serve the Poncas well when the group returned from buffalo hunting. But, scarcely had the Mormons crossed the Niobrara when twelve Sioux in war costumes met them and seemed pleased to learn the fort was vacant. That evening the Saints, camped about three miles from the fort, saw smoke and flames rising from the fort’s direction, and fire lighted up the earth for miles around. Saints felt “a degree of regret in beholding the results of six months of hard labor and toil consumed in so short a time.”⁵² As a small consolation, Ponca Saints have earned modest fame in Nebraska history for being the first white people to pioneer in upper Nebraska.⁵³

Ponca Saints spent ten days covering the 150 miles to Winter Quarters. They moved south thirty miles along the Bazille Valley (passing where the main business street in Creighton now is), then rolled southeast to the Logan River valley and followed it southward. They moved along the east side of the Elkhorn River and then turned east. They arrived at Winter Quarters, Bronson said, “in good health and spirits” and “were kindly and hospitably received.” There, Anson Call said, “our organization was dissolved.”⁵⁴

About ten Ponca families settled together near Winter Quarters in what was named, appropriately, Ponca Camp.⁵⁵ Lydia Knight, part of this group, said that instead of “settling all together according to instructions,” most of the other families “began to scatter.”⁵⁶ The Butlers stayed at Winter Quarters. One Ponca cluster, led by Titus Billings, crossed the Missouri by ferry and settled together seven miles north along Mosquito Creek.⁵⁷ James Holt said, “When we got to the Bluffs our company was broken up.” He, Emmett, and others went south into present-day Fremont County, Iowa, where they “took up farms” and found employment in nearby settlements.⁵⁸

Bishop Miller had returned to Winter Quarters a few weeks earlier. By midyear he would grow disaffected from the Church. Emmett, too, soon left the fold. Emmett’s wife and children, however, kept the faith. Said John of this final departure of the man who converted him to Mormonism: “Emmett did not come to Winter Quarters but kept on till he came to Cub Creek, there he stayed with his family. He did not come where the Church was at all, but stayed away. He did not come to see any, nor come near us.”⁵⁹

Later that year, in 1847, in the new Ponca Camp near Winter Quarters, some of the Ponca Saints held a meeting to bless children born during the

previous several years. On that occasion, speaker William W. Major observed that the Ponca experience was one which brought out the true character of people. “We have been tried sore in the wilderness,” he said. “The trial has been severe that we have passed thro—Starvation, Cold, Nakedness.” Such trying circumstances, he believed, “brings us out in our true character. It shows out each individual in their true standing.” To such an observation, John Butler, who recorded examples of selfishness and of people misjudging others, and who watched with regret his gospel mentor and friend James Emmett veer from the faith, might have uttered a loud “amen” had he heard it.⁶⁰

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Kanesville Separations

When the Butlers reached Winter Quarters in April 1847, their twenty-eight-month-long effort to move west came to a halt. Little did John suspect that his family's waiting period before taking the Mormon Trail would not be months or even a year but would extend to five years. They would spend a first year at Winter Quarters, then four years across the river in or near the emerging Mormon city of Kanesville. One result of the five-year delay was that, for various reasons, John's mother, his second wife Charity, and his three younger brothers would never reach Utah.

Winter Quarters

Soon after the Ponca Saints arrived at Winter Quarters, John "fenced a piece of land, grubbed it and put in about six acres of corn and raised a crop this summer." This was his first chance to do serious farming since 1844. "We got in our corn," he recalled, "but all of it did not ripen. It was put in late." By then he needed to help provide for three wives and for eight children ranging in age from fifteen to under a year.

Rejoining the main body of Saints enabled John to find out about Church events that had happened during his absence at the Niobrara. He learned particulars about the final, forced evacuation of Nauvoo the previous September, causing him to complain in his autobiography against those who drove Saints out "on the point of the bayonet." At Winter Quarters he once again faced chilly reactions towards those who had been part of the Emmett expedition.

Now most of the folks looked down upon us as cold apostate Mormons, and they despised us and threw out insinuations about us, and said, “Oh, they were not worth our notice, they belong to Emmett’s Company and they are thieves. They drove off cattle that did not belong to them.”

Such backbiting caused Brigham Young, after his return in October, 1847, from the first Utah trek, to defend John’s reputation. According to John:

Brother Brigham got to hear about it, and he . . . told them from the stand that he wanted them to quit their talk, for there was good and honest souls in Emmett’s Company. And as for John L. Butler, he had sent him himself from Nauvoo to Emmett’s Company, and told him that he wanted him to go and try to bring them back. For if they still went on as they were going they would all go to destruction, and there was good and honest folks in that company. “Now,” said he, “I have used John L. Butler for a cane in my hand to bring those people in subjection to the laws and commandments of God.”

John added that President Young praised him and urged all Saints to be united and loving:

And, said he, “Brother John L., I bless you in the name of the Lord and may you always obey the councils that are given to you from time to time. Now, brothers and sisters, I want to hear no more of this from this time. Love one another and strive to help one another and do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Union is strength and is from the Lord. Now may God bless you and enable you to love him and keep His commandments, and to do the things that is right at all times is my prayer in the name of Jesus Amen.”

Such preaching helped, John said, because after that “the Saints had a great deal better feelings towards us and we did not have the slander that we had been hearing.”¹

Winter Quarters, Nebraska’s first city, was located in what is now Florence in northern Omaha. Compact, it was crowded onto a stretch of flatland along the south bank of the Missouri River, about fifty feet above river level. Serving as a temporary home to several thousand Saints, at its peak it included some 800 houses—two-story homes, log cabins, sod houses, and dugouts. A Council

House was the Church's central meeting place. Apostle Willard Richards's octagon-shaped home served as a residence and office. What housing the Butlers had is not known.²

During the winter of 1847- 48, Caroline's Tennessee kin created problems for the Butlers. "The first winter my wife Charity's brother came for her to go and pay a visit home with him," John said, "and when he got her home he took her to Tennessee and then left her." Charity, Caroline's deaf-mute sister and John's second wife, never returned from Tennessee and died there among her Skeen relatives.³

During the winter of 1848-49, John locked horns with Winter Quarters police captain Hosea Stout, an episode not mentioned in John's autobiography. Stout, a rough-hewn frontiersman like John and a man subject to snap judgments and to holding grudges, penned in his journal harsh feelings about John.⁴ On November 21, 1847, Stout was on trial before a bishop for allegedly beating up a Brother Murdock. During the trial, Stout wrote, "several on the opposite side swore to positive lies." The most absurd lie, he said, "was John L. Butler who swore that he was more than forty rods off and herd me beat Murdoc with a large club & he could hear the licks distinctly which sounded like beating an old dry Buffalo skin." Stout said he only struck Murdock across the arm and did not disable him. Stout recorded Butler's "perjury," he said, "because I want to remember it against him. I can never view him in any other light than a corrupt perjured villain."⁵

On January 5, 1848, a man unhappy about how the Emmett company properties had been distributed sought property restitution through a high council court at Winter Quarters. John, the defense's main witness, explained how Emmett people had made covenants stipulating that if they disaffiliated from the expedition, they forfeited their belongings. The key issue in the trial was whether or not such covenants were binding. The council asked Brigham Young to decide the matter. He decreed that Emmett had no right to require such covenants, so the covenants "were null and of no effect." Then, to end Emmett property cases, the council agreed that in the future any disputed properties would become Church property. Stout relished Brigham Young's decision against Emmett, which, he gloated, "of course up set all Butlers Hobbies while he was endeavoring so hard to make it appear that Emmett was a very good honest man."⁶

Another contemporary record that mentions John is a petition hundreds of Saints signed to establish a post office at the Miller's Hollow settlement (present-day Council Bluffs). Among those who signed are John, his son Kenion (who was then sixteen), and a James Butler, probably John's brother.⁷

Kanesville Settlements

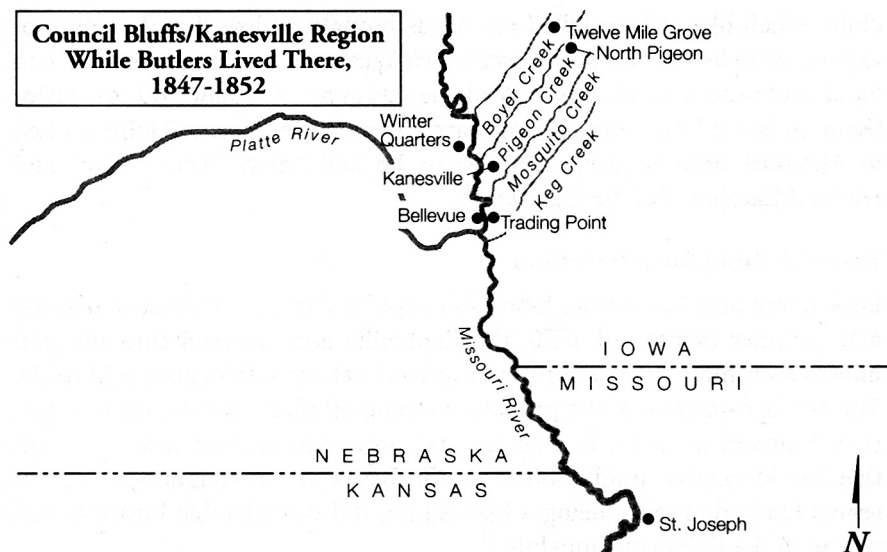
In 1848, Winter Quarters' two-year existence ended. Saints were required to leave the Omaha Indian lands. As historian Gail Holmes has simplified it, the "well-prepared" went west to Utah and the "less-prepared" crossed east into Iowa.⁸ The Butlers were among the less-prepared. "We stayed in Winter Quarters that winter," John said, hoping to join the migration west the next year. But in the spring of 1848, he noted, "folks were going to start to the Great Salt Lake," including Brigham Young and his family.

The folks all got ready to start. I was going too, but I had no provisions and scarcely any clothes, and Brother Brigham said to me, "I would not try to go this year, John L., but go over the river to Pottawattamie and make something to bring your family comfortably."

Thousands of other Saints moved across the Missouri to Pottawattamie Indian territory around the Iowa bluffs. "We then moved over and several families moved over with us," John said. "I got a farm there and worked some at my trade, blacksmithing." Miller's Hollow, in what is now downtown Council Bluffs, became the Saints' headquarters settlement and was renamed Kanesville in 1848.⁹ Apostle Orson Hyde became the area's leader by virtue of being "President of the Church east of the Rocky Mountains." Kanesville was a Mormon city for four years, 1848-1852:

. . . the Kanesville that grew out of Miller's Hollow on Indian and Mosquito creeks continued longer than anticipated, involving itself in Iowa politics, coping with large numbers of British Mormon immigrants, accommodating onrushing waves of California-bound gold seekers, and witnessing continued threats to Church unity.¹⁰

Thousands of Saints streamed from and through Kanesville on the way west each year to Utah. It served as Mormonism's eastern capital, a temporary gathering center, and the outfitting point for LDS wagon trains. In nearby groves and along local streams, Mormon hamlets proliferated, bearing such names as Honey Creek, Pigeon Grove, High Prairie, and Plum Hollow. By late 1848 more than forty LDS branches were organized in these tiny settlements, supervised by the Pottawattamie Stake High Council under Elder Hyde's direction. Daughter Sarah Adeline, however, said they lived for awhile at Pigeon Creek, where John baptized her in 1849, then moved to the Kanesville area. John named no specific location where his family stayed, only "Pottawattamie."¹¹



Kanesville, while the Butlers lived in the area, included a log tabernacle, Apostle Orson Hyde's home, an old blockhouse built before the Mormons arrived, a two-story schoolhouse, the *Frontier Guardian* newspaper office, several general merchandise stores, a bakery and confectionery establishment, drug store, wagon shops, gunsmiths, watchsmiths, harness makers, and blacksmiths. At Council Point, four miles to the south, riverboats regularly unloaded freight and immigrants, including some 6,000 British converts by 1852. By that year, Kanesville's population, though marked by constant departures and arrivals, approximated 5,000.¹²

Butler Family Separations

According to John, his plural wife Sarah "became dissatisfied of the way we were living." He gave no explanation of the problem. She felt sufficiently bothered that John "took her and went down to Weston in Missouri," between St. Joseph and Independence. There, to help provide for his large family, he "worked with my team" in good weather and "in the coldest of the weather I worked at the cooper trade." Although Weston is sixty miles from Gallatin, site of the election-day brawl nine years before, he apparently did not feel endangered by working there.

John lived away from Caroline and his children during the winter of 1848-49. "While I was away my wife bore me a daughter," John noted. Lucy Ann was born on February 3, 1849. In April he visited his family. But after two or three

weeks at home, he said, “I was taken down with the congestive chills which like to have killed me. I was brought so low that they did not expect me to live or ever to get over it.” He recovered and then “went back to Sarah and went to work again.” While he was gone, “Caroline and son Taylor [Kenion] farmed that summer and raised a good crop of corn.” John worked in Missouri until January 1850, when he and Sarah “went home” and rejoined Caroline and the children.¹³

Emmett’s Gold Rush Invitation

Back home near Kanesville, John “still kept on farming.” During the spring and summer months of 1850, the Kanesville area boomed through gold miners swarming there to outfit for overland treks to California’s gold fields. The city became one of the primary jumping off places for the mass migration. Demand for animals, wagons, and provisions pushed prices so high that few Mormons could afford to outfit themselves to emigrate to Utah. It seems likely that John, being a blacksmith, did considerable business that year with the California hopefuls.¹⁴

James Emmett was one who succumbed to the pull of the California magnet and invited John to go with him. As John recalled it:

While I was there in Pottawattamie, Emmett came there. Brother Hyde and some more of the brethren came there to preach and Emmett was there. He came to me and asked me to go to California with him. . . . I told him no, I would not go, for I was going to Great Salt Lake.

John identified then what was the heart of Emmett’s disaffection from Mormonism. Emmett told him, “You need not be afraid of your religion, for the Priesthood was taken from the earth when Joseph was murdered.” Emmett stated to John that Brigham “had no authority to govern and control this people, and that we could do a great deal better in California.” Emmett “begged me to go,” but John “told him that I would not renounce my religion for gold, and that he would have to get some one else to go with him.” Emmett started, John said, “but no one went with him, only his daughter, Lucinda. And he took her along with him to do his cooking and to wait on him.” Even Emmett’s wife would not go with him, John learned,

. . . so he left her behind him in Pottawattamie. She did not want to leave the Church of Jesus Christ, but wanted to hold on to the faith, and go to the valleys of the mountains with the Saints of God to dwell there where no mob could come and drive them out.

To head for the gold fields was, for Emmett, a strange reversal of his earlier self. It had not been six years since he had left Nauvoo vowing never to live again among Gentiles. But now he chose to go to California where Gentiles were streaming, rather than moving to Utah, a place Gentiles wanted to avoid.

During Emmett's final years his character continued to decline, marred by anger and by rejection of family and religion. He left his wife and two younger children behind—family sources disagree whether he left them while in Iowa or in Utah—but took eighteen-year-old Lucinda with him to California to be his housekeeper. She went unwillingly but feared his temper if she refused. They stopped in Salt Lake City, where Lucinda met up with the young man she wanted to marry, Sanford Porter, Jr., who was returning from Mormon Battalion duty. Because Sanford would not renounce belief in polygamy, Emmett refused to let him marry Lucinda. This broke her heart, but her sobbings and misery earned her a whipping from her father.

Emmett and Lucinda settled in San Bernardino where he claimed some land, built a cabin, and tried to raise watermelons for syrup. One time he beat Lucinda when he thought she had destroyed his choice watermelon seeds; in fact, a rat had carried the seeds away. Another time he whipped her for letting a batch of watermelon syrup burn. Family sources indicate Emmett and Lucinda went to the upper Sacramento River and had some success panning for gold. Sometime after Emmett's death, on December 28, 1852, Lucinda moved to Utah and married Armstead Moffett. According to Lucinda's daughter, Emmett denied the validity of the Book of Mormon and died as an apostate from Mormonism. Most of Emmett's family, meanwhile, had come west and settled in Utah, and in the 1850s Emmett's wife, Phoebe, was sealed as second wife to Bishop Sanford Porter, Sr.¹⁵

Family Matters

Charity Lowe Butler, John's mother, died on April 25, 1851. Her death was noted in the May 16 issue of Kanesville's *Frontier Guardian*. She was in her sixty-ninth year, it reported, and died in the North Pigeon settlement, located up Pigeon Creek fifteen to twenty miles north-northeast of Kanesville.¹⁶ Two weeks after her death, on May 9, 1851, John and Caroline became parents again when son Thomas was born.

John's sister Lucy had moved with her husband Reuben Allred to the Missouri River by June 1846, where Reuben built and operated the Mormons' first rope ferry across the Missouri. After enlisting in the Mormon Battalion and serving as a private in Company A, he returned from military service late in 1847. Reuben and Lucy were living near Miller's Hollow in June 1848 when

daughter Druzilla Emeline was born. In 1849 Lucy's family joined a wagon company heading for Utah, so John did not see her again for three years.¹⁷

John's brother Edmund Ray, either at Nauvoo or while in Iowa after the exodus, married Lydia Thornton of Pickering, Ontario, Canada. They had two children, but both died in infancy.¹⁸ John wrote that in the spring of 1849, when Edmund apparently was working in Missouri, he "was taken very sick and he could not get up to us, and he sent for me to fetch him up." John, himself barely recovered from a near-fatal sickness, "hitched up my horses and went down after him [Edmund], and he said that if he died there that he would have to be buried among the Gentiles and he did not want to be left here all alone." John drove his twenty-seven-year-old brother home but "he died in two or three days." John wanted to give Edmund a proper burial, so he "had a coffin made and put him in and then I had another one made that was larger than the other, and then I put the small one into the large one and put charcoal in between the two." John took the coffin "up to the Saints burying ground"—probably the cemetery atop the bluff north of and overlooking Kanesville, which is today's Fairview Cemetery north of downtown Council Bluffs.¹⁹ John "had him interred there with the Saints according to his wish." Edmund's widow, Lydia, twenty, now had lost two children and a husband.²⁰ John took comfort in the fact that his brother "was in the Church, was baptized when he was ten years of age, and was a young man when he died. He was a good Mormon."

John's brother Lorenzo Dow filled a proselyting mission to England. While working in Hartlebury in Worcestershire, he met and perhaps helped convert Thomas Binnal, his wife Lady Mary Magden, and their daughter Ann. Lorenzo married Ann during his mission. On September 28, 1848, the Binnals boarded the sailing vessel *Sailor Prince* as part of a Mormon company of 311 souls. Lorenzo, only about twenty-two years old, served as the company's president. After fifty-six days at sea the *Sailor Prince* landed near New Orleans. Elder Butler and most of the Saints then moved by riverboat up the Mississippi River and most stopped at St. Louis to find work. Lorenzo and Ann stopped at Linneus, Missouri, for a few months. Apparently a daughter, Mary, was born there early in 1849. The young family then moved up to Kanesville, where Lorenzo introduced Ann to his relatives.²¹

Ann's mother died of cholera soon after the family reached Iowa. In 1851 Lorenzo and Ann moved north about thirty miles to a Mormon settlement at Twelve Mile Grove. They chose not to go west with the Saints. One family story says they stayed behind because they disliked polygamy. They took up land northwest of Twelve Mile Grove in Boyer Township in 1854, in present-day Harrison County, where Lorenzo built one of the area's earliest mills, a

combined grist- and sawmill, powered by the Boyer River. The next year he opened a general store at the mill. In 1858, when the area received a post office, Ann became postmistress and she named the place Woodbine, the name of the old English home where she was born. The 1860 census lists them living there with eight children under age eleven and with Ann's father, Thomas. After the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) commenced in 1860, Lorenzo and Ann joined it. "Mr. Butler was one of the most energetic and enterprising men of the early settlers," a county history affirms. In 1865 he sold the mill and "opened a first class country store." Lorenzo became Woodbine's mayor in 1882. He died on August 2, 1884, at age fifty-eight. Ann lived until March 6, 1914. Prominent RLDS leader Charles Derry preached her funeral sermon. Lorenzo and Ann had eleven children.²²

John's brother James Morgan lived in the Mormon settlements along the Missouri during the 1847-48 winter and signed the post-office petition. He married Catherine McColl (McCole, McCall), born in North Carolina.²³ In March 1851 they settled in Upper North Grove in Union Township (which became Dow City later) in Crawford County. This was about twenty miles northeast of James' brother Lorenzo Dow's family in Woodbine. James's was the second cabin in the township.²⁴ Soon after the Butlers arrived, the settlement was raided by Indians. When Mrs. McColl, the mother-in-law, tried to defend the property, Indian raiders slapped her and took what they wanted. This raid convinced the Butlers they were too far away from civilization, so they moved south into Shelby County for the next six years. Then they moved back and settled in the vicinity of Arion, where James lived out his days. James and Catherine had six children. "Mr. Butler was one of our first attorneys," a local history recorded, "and occupied several positions of importance in the county." During the Civil War he was captain of a company of home guards, who saw duty "defending the frontier" against Indians. James died in the "prime of life," but specific details are lacking.²⁵

CHAPTER TWENTY

Trail Dust and Danes

Late in 1851 Latter-day Saints in the Kanessville area received orders to move west and totally vacate their Iowa settlements. “Gather to Zion,” the Church’s First Presidency admonished, “and fail not.” “What are you waiting for? Have you any good excuse for not coming? No!” They urged Saints to “evacuate Pottawattomie and the states, and next fall be with us.”¹ To oversee the migration, Apostles Ezra T. Benson and Jedediah M. Grant arrived from Utah Territory. That winter thousands of Saints, the Butlers among them, sold or traded farms, homes, and possessions; bought, borrowed, or rigged up wagon outfits; and rounded up supplies for the three-month journey.

On May 1 the first of the twenty-one Latter-day Saint wagon trains which outfitted at Kanessville in 1852 ferried across the Missouri River.² Others followed as fast as they could board flatboat ferries—which could handle only two or three wagons at a time. Crossings were made at the Upper, or Mormon, Ferry near Winter Quarters, the Middle Ferry near Kanessville, and the Lower Ferry six miles south at Bellevue, Nebraska. From the ferry landings the travelers took trails which converged about ten miles into Nebraska, near where the Elkhorn River enters the Platte.³ By late summer, Kanessville and surrounding settlements were all but emptied of Mormons. Gentiles soon changed the name of Kanessville to Council Bluffs, and, as historian B. H. Roberts observed, “everything that marked the vicinity as a resting place of the exiled and gathering saints, was in a few years obliterated.”⁴

Kelsey Wagon Train

In early June Kanessville's *Frontier Guardian* reported that "our streets are still thronged with emigrants bound for Oregon, California, and Salt Lake. Although thousands have crossed the river at this point, still thousands are yet remaining to be crossed." The year's emigration, the paper added, included more women and children than ever before, many of whom had "barely sufficient" for the trek.⁵ Estimates say 10,000 Saints went west in 1852, nearly double any previous year's total, making it the largest emigration year in LDS history. A Utahn heading east against this heavy westbound traffic estimated that he passed about 1,400 teams.⁶

Mormons, however, were but one-seventh of the unusually heavy overland trail traffic that year. Further straining trail resources—firewood, prairie grasses, campsites, stream crossings, buffalo chips, and buffalo—were 50,000 non-Mormons bound for California and 10,000 for Oregon.⁷ Travelers were so numerous that wagon trains rarely were out of sight of another train.

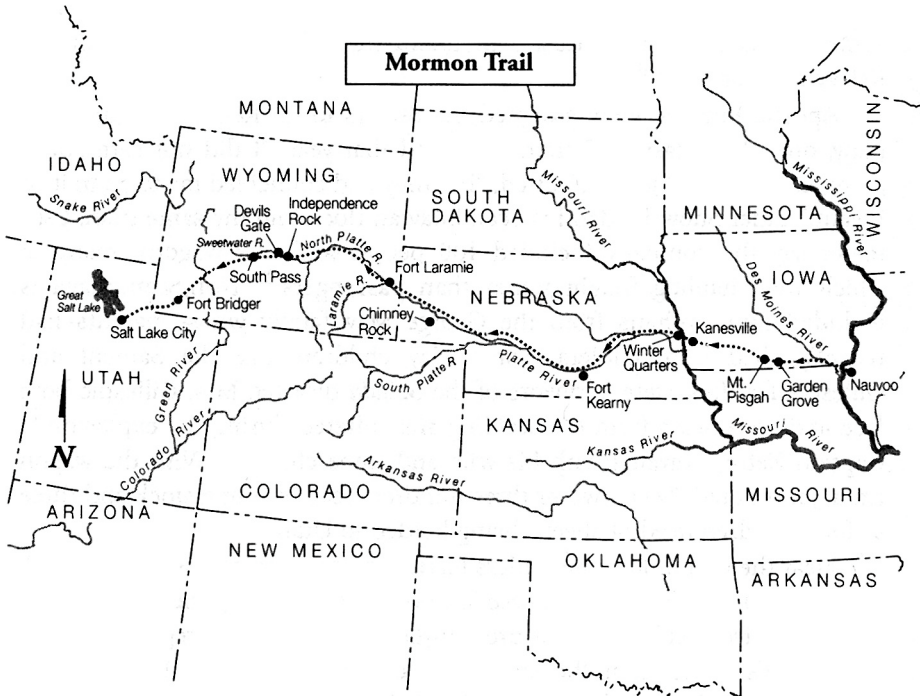
John, age forty-four, and Caroline, forty, contributed a big family to the migration wave. Fortunately, six of their ten children were above age eleven and could take care of themselves and be of major help: oldest son Kenion Taylor, by then called Taylor, was twenty and a good handler of cattle and wagons; Charity turned eighteen two weeks after they crossed the Missouri; Keziah Jane was sixteen; Phoebe Melinda fourteen; Caroline Elizabeth twelve; and Sarah Adeline eleven. The youngsters were John, Jr., eight; James, their Ponca-born child, five; Lucy Ann, three; and Thomas, barely a year old. Apparently plural wife Sarah, forty-six, traveled with them.

The Butlers collected near the Missouri's eastern edge at a staging ground jammed with wagons, oxen, horses, and Saints from "the States" and Europe waiting to be organized. Apostle Erastus Snow arrived in charge of twenty-eight Scandinavians he had sent from Denmark. These were the first converts from Scandinavia to immigrate to Utah.⁸ The Butlers mingled, too, with British Saints shepherded by Elder Eli B. Kelsey. Kelsey, an Ohioan, earned stature during his mission to Scotland and because of his work as an assistant editor for the LDS biweekly *Millennial Star* newspaper. But his reputation as a leader had just been tarnished by a decision he made at St. Louis. Anxious to keep LDS immigrants moving towards Kanessville, he chartered a less-than-desirable riverboat, the *Saluda*, when better quality vessels refused to steam up the ice-choked river. In early April the *Saluda* fought and dodged ice and reached Lexington, near Independence, Missouri. There, the *Saluda's* boilers exploded, killing two dozen Saints. News of this worst-ever tragedy to strike LDS immigrants filled newspapers nationwide. At the Kanessville outfitting grounds and during the trek

west, the Butlers must have learned some details about the disaster firsthand from the *Saluda*'s survivors in Kelsey's wagon train.⁹

Apostle Erastus Snow assigned the Butlers to Eli Kelsey's wagon company, one of the last LDS trains outfitted that year. "I did not care about going in that train," John admitted, "but they had counselled me to go in it so I went." Elder Snow herded his Scandinavian flock into the same train. Estimates say the company included 100 people and fifty wagons, many of which were hauling freight rather than passengers.¹⁰ Non-Scandinavians included four orphans from the George May family whose parents had recently died from cholera. Some May children, like the Sargent and Gillespie families, were survivors of the *Saluda* disaster. Mrs. Gillespie bore face and neck scars from the scalding she suffered during the explosion.¹¹ Captain Kelsey traveled with his wife and three children. With the wagon train, John noted, "were two or three hundred head of young stock and three or four hundred head of sheep" being herded to Utah.

Near the first of July, the Butlers ferried their wagon across the Missouri. The Mormon Trail's general course followed westerly along the north side of the Platte River. Midway across present-day Nebraska, the Oregon and California trails came from the southwest and met the Platte River at Fort Kearny, then followed the south side of the river parallel to the Mormon Trail. Two-thirds of the distance across Nebraska, trail landscape changed from prairie grasses to barren plains with scattered rock monuments like Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluff. Northwest into Wyoming the Mormon Trail, ever gaining altitude, passed Fort Laramie and then crossed the Platte, merging with the Oregon-California Trail and continuing northwesterly. Near present-day Casper, the trail crossed and left the Platte for two days of dry travel to the Sweetwater River. The trail followed the Sweetwater, crossing it several times, and rose in elevation until it crossed the continental divide at a gentle saddle called South Pass, 7,100 feet above sea level. Bending southwest towards Great Salt Lake, the trail skirted and climbed mountains and passed Fort Bridger. While the Oregon Trail forked away towards the northwest, the Mormon Trail penetrated southwest into the rugged Wasatch Mountains and up to 7,700 feet before bringing travelers into the Great Salt Lake Valley at an elevation of 4,300 feet. The distance from the Missouri River to Salt Lake Valley was about 1,100 miles. Depending on weather, health of oxen and passengers, and breakdowns, travelers expected to average fifteen miles per day—more miles when the route was straight, level, wide, and hard packed, and fewer when it encountered miry ground, fords, steep climbs, and narrow passages.¹²



Captain of Danes

John's company assignment in the Kelsey Train was to do blacksmithing. During the first days on the trail, however, he had to help Danes learn to drive ox teams. Danes disliked the American method of putting oxen in yokes, so they made harnesses in regular Danish fashion. But once harnessed, the oxen became frightened and "struck out in a wild run." Danes had to be converted to believe that yokes and whips were necessities.¹³ Christian Raven was appointed captain of the Danish "ten," meaning ten wagons, but he lacked driving skills. As John told it, "none of them had ever driven an ox team before and they could not get along at all." Captain Kelsey assigned John to replace Raven, though John spoke no Danish.

John said that for him and son Taylor, it was "a fine [difficult] job to fix them. They had yoked up their cattle some one way and some another. Some of their [wagon cover] bows were too large, some too small." Butler father and son "went to work and fixed up the yokes and bows," John said. Then they "paired the cattle as well as we could." After that, the company "got along a great deal better, but they were still green about driving." John taught the foreigners other basics of "ox-teamology":

If they had a good ox that would pull, they would make him pull the whole load. And if they came to a tight place the poor critter would get the whip more than any other ox in the team. I told them that they must not do so, or they would have half their team dead before they got half way. I told them to make their cattle all pull at once, as much as they could, and to whip the ones that would not pull and not the ones that were pulling the whole load. Well, they learned how to drive a little better after a while, but it was hard work to get them into it.

Augusta Dorius, who made the trek at fourteen, recalled that “in our particular company there were twenty-eight from Copenhagen. We were presided over by Captain John Butler.” She thought the covered wagons “were the most remarkable vehicles I had ever seen.”¹⁴ Many of the Danish immigrants spoke no English. Among Captain Butler’s group were Christian Raven, wife Maren, and their children; Rasmus, Ingerline, and Stine Petersen; Conrad, Wilhelmine, Johan, and Edward Schvaneveldt; Niels Jensen, wife, and child; Hans Hansen, Ferdinand F. Hansen, Bertha S. Hansen, Johanna Andersen, Cecelia Jorgensen, Carl Jorgensen, and Augusta Dorius. Also in the company were Ole Ulrick Christian Munster and wife Marie, who were baptized in 1850 at the first LDS baptismal service held in Denmark, and their child, Adolf.¹⁵

Nebraska’s Platte River Road

From the start of their journey, the Butlers heard disturbing reports about two threats to trail travelers that year: cholera and Indians. Cholera freely infected emigrants, and travelers’ journals describe hundreds of fresh graves dotting the trails on both sides of the Platte. Early in their trek the Butlers saw graves of Saints felled by cholera. But, according to John, the Kelsey Company itself suffered minimally from the deadly disease:

The cholera raged fearfully that season. There were lots that were laid low on the account of it, but we did not have it in our Company so much as they did in others. There was only two died of the dreadful disease, and one old lady died with old age. But in other companies there were scores and scores died. The scene was fearful to look upon: the folks were laying here and there, some dead, some dying, some very sick, and some not knowing when it would be their turn. There were sometimes as many as six and seven buried in one grave, and feather beds and sheets, blankets, pillows and clothes were left laying in every direction, all along the road.

John heard that among the “considerable California emigration that season,” most of whom traveled on the south side of the Platte, people died of cholera “by the hundreds.”¹⁶ He shared a belief then common that somehow their route, across from the main Overland Trail, was the healthier side:

We went up on the north side of the Platte. Feed was better on that side, and it was more healthy on that side. Somehow or other the folks on that side were not troubled with the cholera half so bad as they were on the south side.¹⁷

Butlers had reason to worry, too, because of Indian activities that year. Along the Platte, Pawnee and Sioux were stopping emigrants and demanding tolls. Very likely the Butlers heard about several trail skirmishes that year in which Indians had tried to exact tolls and, in one case, to plunder uncooperative trains, which led to whites killing nine Indians in one incident, seven in another, and four in yet another.¹⁸

The fifty white-topped Kelsey wagons started west about July 11, 1852. At first women rode in the wagons but soon preferred to walk.¹⁹ The wagons crossed the Little and Big Papillion creeks and reached the broad, shallow, gray-green Platte River about July 15. For long distances the Platte was “a river without trees” along its banks, but many creeks and streams fed into it, along which wood could be obtained. Captain Allen Weeks’s wagon train of a similar size leap-frogged the Kelsey Company. During the next three months, the two trains took turns passing each other. A diarist in the Weeks train, Evan M. Greene, often mentioned the Kelsey train and described weather, scenery, and experiences common to both trains.²⁰ On July 20, Greene noted, his Weeks train reached the Loup Fork River and found the Kelsey Company was there, ferrying across the river. Several from the Weeks train visited the Kelsey train that night. They found Captain Kelsey and his son very ill, so they “blessed them.” (The Butlers had been at the Loup Fork crossing six years earlier with the Miller Company before it turned north to Ponca.)

Greene noted that the next day, July 21, was “a fine pleasant morning” during which both trains moved on, passing over hills and difficult roads. On July 23 Greene mentioned that Taylor Butler came to the Weeks train with three yoke of oxen “for the relief of my company.” On July 24 the trains separately celebrated Utah’s Pioneer Day.

Once every week or two both trains “laid over” a day so that women could do laundry, bake, and clean out and repack the wagons, while the men set tires and mended chains, lashings, and wagon covers. About July 28 both trains were

at Wood River, a popular resting, laundering, and bathing stop. During their first two weeks of travel, the Butlers continued to pass graves of cholera victims.

Late July weather conditions were often “excessively hot.” August 1, by contrast, was rainy with a cool wind. On August 2 the Butlers camped after crossing Elm Creek. During that day they saw buffalo near bluffs. The next day, in cool weather, the Weeks train passed them and camped about a half-mile away. A day later, while approaching Skunk Creek, the Butlers again saw many buffalo. A traveler at that spot two months later encountered “thousands of buffaloe” and observed that “the roar of the buffaloe and howl of the large White Wolves is certainly astonishing. It is impossible to see the farther end of the herd. Surely these must be the Lord’s cattle on the thousand hills.”²¹

Traveling an average of fifteen miles per day, the Butlers walked while their oxen pulled up and over four miles of a heavy sand road before camping near Carion Creek. Augusta Dorius recalled that at some point—perhaps here—the Butler brigade witnessed a terrifying buffalo stampede:

One of the singular incidents that happened en route was the occasion of a stampede of a herd of buffalo which came directly toward our wagon train. The stampede ran, providentially, just in front of the wagon train and it appeared almost a cyclone of dust. This caused a great commotion and almost a stampede among the horses and oxen of the train. The few rifles available were used and fortunately enough for the emigrants a few buffalo fell which were prepared and this gave us extra provisions for the long journey ahead of us.²²

By August 7 the Butlers were leaving the prairies—and the firewood for 200 miles—and entering the arid high plains region then considered to be worthless desert. Lacking firewood, the travelers benefitted from dried buffalo dung. Tan “buffalo chips,” with a texture similar to dry, rotten wood, served as a fast-flaring, aromatic fuel for camp and cook fires. Some Butler children probably could have said, like Augusta Dorius, that “it became part of my regular duty to gather buffalo chips for the camp fires.” To cook a meal required two to three bushels of the strange fuel.²³

August 8 and 9 brought rain. About August 10 Captain Butler’s ten forced their oxen to pull the wagons up and across large sand hills for three or four days. The Platte River, their main source of water, remained nearby to their left. By mid-August the Butlers could look across the river—nearly a mile wide there but very shallow—and see the white canvas tops of one of the largest wagon trains of the year, the Church’s Deseret Manufacturing Company train carrying

heavy sugar refining machinery. Captain Phillip De LaMare's forty wagons were heavy-duty "great Santa Fe prairie schooners," each pulled by eight yoke of oxen.²⁴

The Kelsey train passed Cobble Hills (about forty miles east of Chimney Rock), near where they met the first Indians they had seen on the trek. On August 18 diarist Greene in the nearby Weeks train wrote that Indians came to their camp—about 200 Sioux men, women, and children, with horses, dogs, loges, and furniture. Augusta Dorius noted that sometimes Indians demanded a toll in return for safe passage:

Upon another occasion nearly a dozen Indians came on their horses and approached the emigrant train. A great deal of apprehension was felt by the emigrants as they felt that an impending disaster was before them. They thought this was the first contingent of Indians that lurked in the ravines near the trail. But our daily prayers were answered. . . . The Indians spread their blankets by the side of the trail and each [wagon] was required to give its toll of food to the Indians as it passed.²⁵

Augusta and other girls, and no doubt some of the Butler children, occasionally walked ahead of the wagon train "as far as we dared go on account of the Indians, and then we waited for the wagons." By flickering lights cast off from evening campfires, Augusta recalled, "all joined in the fun of dancing and singing," aided by one fiddler in the company. After fires burned down, women usually slept in the wagons, the men outside.²⁶

On August 20 Greene recorded that the Kelsey and Weeks trains camped about ten miles apart. They then were probably fifteen miles or less east of Chimney Rock. A severe, deafening nighttime thunderstorm deluged the campers, and lightning killed a man in the Weeks train. A similar storm, date not recorded, stampeded cattle in the Butlers' company. Captain Kelsey, John complained, assigned John to help repair damages caused by the stampede:

One day we were driving along and there was a storm coming up. There was a flash of lightning struck the ground, the man said just ahead of his oxen. They [the oxen] turned out and started to run [and] with that frightening the other team behind him and it started. That started some more, so they stampeded and broke four wagons down, some spokes broke out, felleys [rims] broke out, points off from axle trees, and tongues out, reaches [connecting rods] broke, and there it was, all smashed up together. I had the job to fix them all up.

Hammer, anvil, and stubborn iron created clanging that rang through the high plains camp, while John's fuel and bellows produced fire hot enough to soften iron sufficiently to be reforged. This repair episode is one of three John recorded wherein he expressed his dislike for Captain Kelsey's stinginess. Two of the wagons John had to repair were Kelsey's freight wagons. "I fixed them all up and of course I thought that he would pay me," John said. But Kelsey told John that his duty in the train was to fix wagons and shoe cattle without charge. "I told him I was put into the company to fix up the wagons and to shoe cattle, but not without pay." John priced "the iron work I done on his wagons and it came to thirty-three dollars exactly, and I only charged him the same price that I should have charged any one in the States." Kelsey refused the bill, which upset John: "I never got a cent for what I done for him and he had any amount of goods, and he would not even let my son Taylor have a pair of shoes." What Captain Kelsey expected, John believed, was for John to give him special treatment. "I never done a thing for any of the rest, setting tires, shoeing cattle, or anything, but what they were glad to pay me for my labor. I always got my pay from them when the work was done." Kelsey never paid. "Well, we got along without it," John admitted with irritation, "and done very well."

A Mormon Trail "soap story" circulates among Butler descendants, its lasting value, apparently, to show how valuable flour became during the trek west. Caroline, the vignette says, skillfully made needed soap while traveling across the plains. She gathered what fat she could from dead animals along the way and marrow from the bones. These ingredients she cooked in water in which she had first soaked cottonwood ashes. Properly boiled, the mix became soft soap. She kept a barrel of this soft soap in the back of the wagon to use whenever the wagon train stopped long enough for women to launder the dirty clothes. One day Caroline made biscuits from flour obtained from other travelers. She gave each of her children a biscuit, which they thought was a special treat. Daughter Sarah Adeline chose to save her biscuit to eat later. She accidentally dropped it into the soap barrel, "but she fished it out, washed it, and ate it anyway," the story concludes.²⁷

Continental Divide Country

Near Fort Laramie the Kelsey wagons passed the Weeks Company again on August 26. John, because of his blacksmith needs and his responsibilities as a captain of ten, very likely paid a visit to the fort to obtain needed items. The complex then included several large frame buildings and "a good fort," a store and bakery, and served as a "station of government troops."²⁸ Six days beyond Laramie, John recalled, his wagon train halted for six days while he repaired four wagons. A week or two later the two trains passed a village of Cheyenne

Indians moving down to river bottoms hunting buffalo, and the wagons slowed down to allow the Indians to pass. Even in this high country, herds of buffalo were “in abundance.”²⁹

On September 9, while the Kelsey train was at the final Platte River crossing (now the city of Casper), rider George Matson arrived from Utah to serve as their pilot and guide. From the Platte crossing, the wagons managed the two-day streamless pull across to the Sweetwater River. Running about 130 feet wide and two feet deep, this river became their water source for the next three weeks.³⁰

As soon as the Mormon Trail met the Sweetwater, it passed between it and Independence Rock, one of the best-known landmarks on the overland trails. Like thousands of curious people before them, some Butler children could have walked to the rock, climbed on it, and perhaps added names to those already written or carved on its sides. According to a diarist who was there a few days after the Butlers, Independence Rock was “about 150 feet high, nearly round and quite smooth. It is a lonely rock close to Sweetwater ford” and “here are Written 1000s of Names, some gold diggers, some Oregon, and other travelers.”³¹ From there the trail followed the Sweetwater River.

From September 15 to 17, not far from Independence Rock and near a neighboring trail curiosity—the towering and split Devil’s Gate—the travelers suffered from cold and rainy weather. Then on September 18 a “severe cold storm” struck—one report said the snow reached two feet deep and the temperature fell to zero.³² A day or two later the Kelsey passengers rejoiced to meet Utah relief wagons bringing them food and spare animals. Regarding this difficult segment of the trip John said, “we traveled on pretty comfortable, but our provisions began to run kind of slack, then we did not feel so good.” During the final week of September they crossed the continental divide at South Pass and then faced intermittent mountainous travel rougher than any experienced before. Leaving South Pass they saw, scattered in the sagebrush, castaway items strewn by California gold seekers of that year, including broken guns and bent gun barrels. They passed Pacific Springs, a “Buitiful clear Springs & A noted Camping Place.”³³ By then the big Deseret freight wagon train, hauling sugar equipment, was traveling with or near them. About September 25 the Kelsey train passed eighty-one elders eastbound to do missionary work. One, Elder Edward Stevenson, voiced concern in his diary about the Kelsey and Deseret trains because they were “rather late in the season with families” and “it is Cold in this high Part of the world.”³⁴

The Butlers’ train reached the Big Sandy River and then the Green River. By then, as John remembered it, their food supply was so low that it would not

last the entire journey. Bateese's trading post was by the Green, but its cupboards, unfortunately, were bare.³⁵ Captain Kelsey, meanwhile, had left his train by mid-September and traveled ahead with Apostle Snow to Salt Lake Valley. The two returned and rejoined the wagon train at Green River. With them were other riders, including Joseph Toronto, a young, recently returned missionary.

Captain Kelsey and Elder Snow decided to send the company's herd of 300 two- and three-year-old heifers ahead into the valley. Taylor Butler helped them. "My son Taylor engaged with him [Kelsey] to help drive them in," John said. "Kelsey had had several taking care of his stock, but they had lost some and he knew that Taylor was good at hunting cattle, or taking care of them, so that is the reason that he hired him." John said that Toronto, one of Brigham Young's hired hands, was shocked when he learned that the company was almost out of flour. "He did not know much about hardships and the trials of hunger." John said that Toronto "thought that the folks would all die if they did not have any bread." Toronto told Caroline Butler "that he would go on into the Valley and tell Brigham to send out some food to them that had none," and he promised to help bring the food back. Clearly, beside the Green River, the Butlers and the rest were in a precarious situation—traveling during a season when snowstorms could strike anytime and lacking sufficient food as well.

John said that Toronto "was a Frenchman and had been brought up pretty well"—meaning he was not a cattle handler. The night before Toronto and Taylor Butler left, Captain Kelsey again manifested what John felt was stinginess. Kelsey had killed a beef, and he planned to let the young herdsmen take only beef and bread but no other food. John said that one of Kelsey's own sons "went to him and asked him if he was not going to let them have any thing else and Kelsey said that it was good enough for hired hands." Kelsey's son complained that the beef was so lean it had no fat, and he wondered how they could cook it. "Boil it," Kelsey replied. "What, that tough stuff?" the young man asked, while the other hands listened. Then, John noted, the boy said he was going to have something better than that, "so he went to the wagon and Kelsey never said anything, and the boy went up and got about ten pounds of tallow, ten pounds of sugar, and twenty pounds of coffee, and a lot of dried apples, and some other things." With the expanded food supply, Taylor and the others started for the valley.

Rejoining the Gathered Church

LDS authorities stated on September 30 that "the companies who were on the plains, have been pouring in almost incessant streams, and report a comfortable

supply of food for the teams.”³⁶ On October 1, somewhere near the Ham’s Fork or Blacks Fork river, the Kelsey train halted to wait out a heavy snowstorm. Three or four days later they passed Fort Bridger. On October 6 they caught up with the Weeks train again. The next day both companies crossed the Bear River and headed for the Weber River to follow it down Echo Canyon, entering present-day Utah.³⁷

Meanwhile, Taylor, Joseph Toronto, and the herdsmen had reached Salt Lake City. There, according to John, Toronto kept his promise to Caroline:

Joseph Toronto went in and told Brother Brigham that the folks were there starving to death and that he must send them out some food. So Brigham went round to every house and told them that he wanted some bread for the Company. And he went to the bakers and got all the crackers that were in the shop and got some flour and loaded up a wagon and started it back to meet us.

While the Kelsey train carefully descended narrow Echo Canyon, they met Toronto riding ahead of the relief wagon. John wrote:

The women had gone on ahead one morning at the mouth of Echo Canyon, and there they met Joseph Toronto. He said to my wife, “Sister Butler, I have brought you some things to eat.” Now there was some smiling faces and some jumping for joy, I can assure you, when they heard this news. My wife asked him where it was. He said that it would be here directly, and he told her all about how he and Brother Brigham had went and got loaves of bread from the folks in the city.

While dividing out food that evening, Captain Kelsey again acted selfish, by John’s reckoning. “When the wagon came and we had camped,” John said,

Brother Kelsey came to me and said, “John L., you divide out the provisions.” “But” said he, “keep the crackers for ourselves and give them the bread and flour.” I told him that I would serve them out and he said all right.

John chose to be more generous than Captain Kelsey had proposed:

When I went to serve out the provisions I served out the crackers first and gave all alike. And it pleased me to see the children, how delighted they were to have bread once more, and their little faces brightened up, and it was a pleasure to see them.

When Captain Kelsey discovered what John had done, he was furious:

Bye and bye Kelsey came along and he was as mad as a wet hen. And he said that if he had known that I had been going to serve out the crackers that I should not have served them out at all. He said that he told me to keep the crackers for ourselves. "Yes," I said, "I know you did but I gave them to the women and children." I liked crackers as well as he did and [I said] "so does them dear children." He went off mad.

To aid that season's last emigrant companies, the Church sent out other relief wagons from Salt Lake Valley. Brigham Young sent to the Kelsey Company and the Deseret Company flour and cattle, in charge of Joseph Horne and Abraham O. Smoot.³⁸

From Echo Canyon the Butlers' train averaged but eight miles per day, moving "up and down in the canyons."³⁹ Finally, the wagons rolled up and over Big Mountain and Little Mountain and entered Great Salt Lake City on October 16, 1852. The Weeks Company had preceded them by four days, but the cumbersome Deseret Company would not arrive for another month.⁴⁰

Apostle Erastus Snow personally welcomed the Kelsey train, visited Captain Butler's ten, and gathered his little Scandinavian flock to his home for their first meal in Zion. Although the Butlers did not hear Brigham Young's admonitions to the Smoot Company who had arrived a few weeks earlier, their own first observations about valley conditions and common sense told them the same facts of pioneer life he had expressed:

By your labour you can obtain an abundance; the soil is rich and productive. We have the best of wheat, and the finest of flour as good as was ever produced in any other country in the world. We have beets, carrot, turnips, cabbage, peas, beans, mellons; and I may say, all kinds of garden vegetables, of the best quality.⁴¹

The Butlers and other new arrivals quickly learned what their predecessors had accomplished since 1847:

All of the improvements that you see around you have been made in the short space of 4 years; 4 years ago this day there was not a rod of fence to be seen, nor a house except the Old Fort, as we call it, though it was then new, all this that you now see has been accomplished by the industry of the people . . . our settlements extend 250 miles south, and almost 100 miles north.⁴²

Almost eight years earlier, as far back as December 1844, the Butlers had started west expecting to be part of the Mormon colonizing of the western wildernesses. In October 1852 the reality of that dream finally stood boldly before them in the form of adobe houses filling square blocks neatly laid out, a Council House, a Temple Block with a tabernacle (the Old Tabernacle, not the present one), extensive farms, and a settlement network of some 18,500 Saints. The Utah that the Butlers entered was a United States territory, with Church president Brigham Young serving as the officially appointed territorial governor. Utah Territory contained several organized counties, each with LDS officials as its civil leaders. A resurrected Nauvoo Legion was the territory's official militia. A university had been started. In Utah, it seemed, Nauvoo had been transplanted, enlarged, and improved, and had few Gentiles to bother it.⁴³

When the Butlers reached downtown Great Salt Lake City, the LDS First Presidency was encouraging new arrivals to settle in Juab Valley, Fillmore, Iron County, and Tooele, and had appointed a committee to help them find homes in yet-unsettled places. Several families in the Kelsey train set out for Tooele Valley.⁴⁴ "A great portion" of the emigration, the First Presidency noted, "appear to be wending their way to the southern settlements."⁴⁵

By then the Butlers were veterans at pioneering, having been well-schooled in the Iowa wilderness, at Camp Vermillion, at Fort Ponca, and along the Iowa bluffs near Kaneshville. John and his large family, while walking about and inspecting Mormonism's thriving capital city, sensed for the first time in years, certainly since living in Nauvoo, that finally they could have some kind of permanent home.

Of the several Butler converts in Kentucky seventeen years before, only John and Caroline and his sister, Lucy Butler Allred, became Utahans. Mother Charity Butler and John's brother Edmund had died. His brothers Lorenzo Dow and James stayed in Iowa and forsook the Mormon Church as led by Brigham Young. John's second wife, Charity Skeen Butler, was in Tennessee. John's immediate family became the only twig transplanted to Utah from his Butler family tree in the South. The twig, in new and strange soil, would struggle to survive.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Pioneering on Indian Lands

John, Caroline, Sarah, and Caroline's children arrived in Utah when patches of autumn reds and yellows were fading on the towering Wasatch Mountains. Like thousands of other newcomers fresh off the Mormon Trail late in 1852, they worried about how soon winter weather would engulf the mountain valleys. They had to decide quickly where to live and stopped briefly in Salt Lake City. No work or housing attracted them there, but they learned that they were needed to help strengthen new settlements in valleys to the north and south. To produce food and clothing for three adults and ten children—the offspring ranged in age from twenty-one to two—the Butlers needed a good-sized farm. So, they looked beyond the Salt Lake Valley for sparsely settled places where virgin land could be claimed without up-front money.

John located his sister Lucy Butler Allred, who had reached Salt Lake City three years before. From her he learned that she and her family were also uncertain about where they wanted to live. (They would move the next year to Spring City, in central Utah.) When John heard about a new settlement called Palmyra, some sixty miles south of Salt Lake City, he and friend George Wilson visited the place to assess its farming possibilities. John said that Wilson at first “thought he could build a mill there” but later changed his mind. Nevertheless, John staked out a farm site in the settlement. Then, leaving Caroline and the children in the relative safety of Salt Lake City, he and plural wife Sarah headed south to create some kind of start for the family.

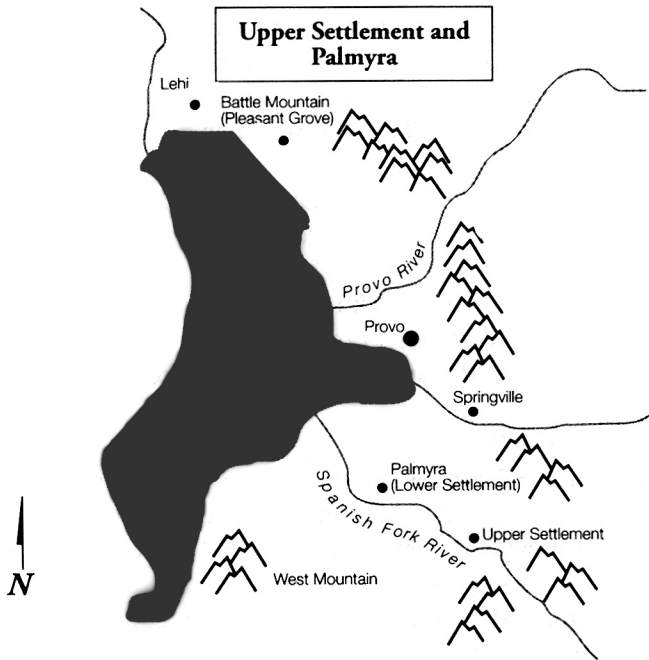
Some Saints in the Butlers' position, particularly those from southern states, decided to move on to the newly-founded Mormon colony in what became San Bernardino, California.¹ But the Butlers opted to help develop the Utah region in accordance with counsel then being given by LDS leaders. "These Valleys are the place of gathering for the saints," the First Presidency stated early in 1853; "this city is the place to build a Temple unto the Lord our God, and any, and all persons who go hence [away from Utah], do so, without the approbation of the Presidency, except those who may be sent on missions, or business."² Very likely the Butler adults felt they had experienced enough of outpost living while at Camp Vermillion and Fort Ponca and wanted to live within the main Mormon settlements this time.

Palmyra by 1852

Two years before John and his family arrived in Utah, the Spanish Fork River's bottomlands had attracted several Mormon farmers. Located at Utah Valley's southeast edge, the site was twelve miles south of Provo and five from Springville. Settlers in Utah Valley found a fifty-mile crescent of land around Utah Lake's shore, ranging from five to twenty-five miles wide between lake and mountains. Several mountain streams flowed into this rim of land, and settlements quickly sprang up along the streams, the chief one being Provo. Utah Valley's elevation is about 4,500 feet above sea level.³

To grow anything required water from the streams for irrigation. Higher soils nearer the mountains produced strawberries, grapes, melons, peaches, apricots, and cherries. Loam soils on the benchlands served well for these fruits, as well as tomatoes. Loose, sandy soils in the lower benchlands required large amounts of fertilizer to make them productive, but in the best valley land, clay loams and sands were hospitable for potatoes, grain, hay, and other crops. At the lake's edge, waterlogged lowlands generated pasture grasses.⁴ The shallow lake, averaging eight feet in depth, contained good amounts of large trout (now called Bonneville cutthroat trout), as well as suckers, chubs, and mountain whitefish.⁵ For most of the year snow could be seen on the Wasatch Mountains to the settlers' east. Mountain ravines contained pockets of timber, which pioneers used for buildings, fences, and fuel.

The moderate-sized Spanish Fork River flowed through the fertile lakeside plain, offering those willing to construct dams and canals a supply of water for irrigation. Seventy years earlier, in 1776, this stream and its canyon had given a Spanish exploring expedition, the Dominguez-Escalante party, a route down to Utah Lake. In their honor the canyon and river were named Spanish Fork.⁶



Two years before the Butlers arrived, Enoch Reese began working land along the river bottoms, assisted by employees Charles Ferguson and George Sevey. (George later married the Butlers' daughter Phoebe). Other settlers arrived, clearing crude farms that interrupted the natural scrub growth and building houses beside the river. These first settlers clumped somewhat together in what came to be known as the Lower Settlement, located about 1.5 miles northwest and downriver from present Spanish Fork.⁷ During the winter of 1850-51, families headed by John Holt, John H. Redd, William Pace, and others created an Upper Settlement about four miles upriver and east from the Lower Settlement. The Holts, Redds, and Paces were Tennessee people. The next spring these families broke land, built a primitive irrigation system including the "South Ditch," cultivated, and planted. By late summer 1851 the Upper and Lower Settlement farmers produced a decent crop, the first Mormon harvest along the Spanish Fork River.⁸

That fall, more settlers arrived, including John W. Berry, Albert K. Thurber, and Stephen Markham, and their families. The two settlements now had enough people together, about 100, to merit a formal LDS Church organization. On December 21, 1851, a branch of the Church was created for them and called Palmyra, with Stephen Markham as presiding elder.⁹ In those days the Church considered a new settlement, no matter how small, to be a stake. To be properly

organized, the new stake must have a president and at least one bishop—in essence, a stake with one ward.¹⁰ Markham became Palmyra’s president, with John Holt and John H. Redd as counselors. William Pace was called to be the Palmyra bishop. For counselors he chose John W. Berry and Lorin Roundy. Apparently the presidency had responsibility for spiritual matters and some Church discipline, while the bishopric focused on temporal and financial developments.¹¹ Palmyra residents in both Upper and Lower Settlement were “very poor,” according to town historian George A. Hicks, who noted that President Markham expended his own funds and also borrowed money to provide seed grain for the people.¹² In 1852, Palmyra—pronounced “Palmyree” by some—elected a mayor.¹³

The Butlers Become Palmyrans

Late in 1852 John and Sarah parked their wagon in Palmyra’s Upper Settlement near the Tennessee families. (Sarah never bore any children.) Racing against the onset of winter, they labored to build a shelter and break land for a farm. Apostle George A. Smith visited the Palmyra settlements soon after John and Sarah arrived and wrote a description of it. Palmyra’s houses, he reported, were mostly constructed with adobes and logs. Lands had been surveyed and divided into 360 lots of about 100 square rods of ground each, a temple or public square of thirteen acres, and four school squares of 1.5 acres each, with streets six rods wide. The public square, he said, commanded a fine view of Utah Valley. A good adobe school house measuring twenty-two by thirty-five feet had been built. Smith counted about sixty families living there, presided over by President Markham.¹⁴

For the divided Butler family, part in Palmyra and the rest in Salt Lake City, that winter season was “cold and stormy, with many strong winds.”¹⁵ One November snowstorm dropped three inches of snow; another deposited one to two feet. Palmyrans suffered “a great loss of cattle” that winter.¹⁶ In Salt Lake City, Caroline and her children tried to leave to join John and Sarah but could not because, John said, “the snow was so deep” and because an ox and a cow had died. The ox was needed for transportation and the cow for milk. So Caroline and the children stayed “at the Warm Springs” at Salt Lake City’s north end for four weeks after John left before they could move.

John’s first family joined him and Sarah by February 1853. That month brought mild and pleasant weather, as did March.¹⁷ In April at least some Butlers trekked north to Salt Lake City to attend the Church’s general conference. Not only was this the Butlers’ first conference in Utah, but it was also the occasion for the laying of the Salt Lake Temple cornerstones. Daughter Charity, then eighteen, later recalled attending the solemn ceremony.¹⁸

By April 1853 the Butlers and all Utah pioneers felt extremely isolated. No mail had arrived since the previous November, and because of this “long silence from the east,” they still wondered who had been elected president of the United States the past November, Whig nominee General Winfield Scott or Democratic candidate Franklin Pierce. News finally arrived that Pierce had won.¹⁹

Some early Palmyrans lived in dugouts. These were pits “four to five feet deep, with steps leading down into the room from one end, and a roof usually made of willows and mud.”²⁰ Regarding their first months there, John wrote, “we lived on the creek until July.” Daughter Charity recalled that the family first lived in a little three-sided shanty behind someone else’s house. “At one time, the baby was sick,” Charity said, referring to Thomas, who was born in May 1851, “and when he smelled meat cooking in the other house, he cried for some of it.” Caroline traded a “tidy,” apparently a hand sewn doily, for a little meat for the child.²¹

The Spanish Fork river flowed high that spring when the deep mountain snowpack melted.²² Despite heavy runoff, John Lowe, Jr., was baptized, probably in June and most likely in a dammed stream or in Utah Lake. Apparently this was the spring when, according to a grandchild, the river flooded and drowned their faithful oxen, Dick and Larry. “The loved animals had brought them safely across the plains, and Caroline and the children wept.”²³ It is likely that some of the Butlers’ school-age children—Caroline, Sarah, John Lowe, James, and Lucy—attended the settlement’s little schoolhouse that year. Among early Palmyra teachers were Emma Ottesen, Silas Hillman, and Albert K. Thurber. Students had to bring their own supplies and books.²⁴

Their first years as Utah pioneers required hard physical labor, as once more—as they did in Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska—the Butlers swung axes and steered plows to tame lands that were still in a raw, natural state. In time John and adult son Taylor cleared off and claimed two farms. But until their first harvest, the thirteen Butlers suffered for want of food. “Times were hard,” a family recollection says, “and often Caroline walked five miles to milk a cow so that her family could have milk.” Family stories mention that one time, “when flour was scarce she would parch some corn and grind it and add milk.”²⁵ John recorded that during the winter of 1853-54, his second in the area, he sold his last yoke of oxen to buy food for his family. The Butlers then could not ride in or haul with their wagon, so they traveled on foot or hitched rides with neighbors. When daughter Charity was older:

she often told her children how the family went to search for segos and other wild roots for food. She said that many times in Utah, she was as hungry at the close of a meal as before, the portions were so small. She told of how corn bread baked in large drippers was cut into equal sized pieces, and very small because of the size of the family.²⁶

In March 1853 local Church leadership was reorganized. Apparently the president and bishop system was not working well, and the position of president was eliminated. President Markham then became the bishop of Palmyra Ward, and Bishop Pace continued to be a bishop for a Church branch in the Upper Settlement.²⁷

The Walker War, 1853-54

The Butlers and other Palmyrans had settled on Indian lands. Utah Valley had long been a favorite hunting and fishing spot for Timpanogats Ute Indians, who stayed in the area despite the Mormon settlements.²⁸ Mormons first took up land at present-day Provo in 1849, upsetting the Utes. An initial policy of benevolence and efforts to convert the Indians failed, so, to stop Indian thefts and threats, LDS leaders in 1850 had ordered militia to undertake a “selective extermination campaign” in Utah Valley, and many Indians were killed. Latter-day Saints made clear their intention to possess all good valleys southward from Salt Lake City at whatever cost. As one historian observed, the first few years of LDS colonization “proved disastrous for the Indian.” Indians found themselves “overwhelmed by pioneers moving onto their hunting and camping territories.”²⁹ But, after June of 1851, LDS leaders determined it was less costly to pay for losses caused by Indians than to raise militia expeditions, so the policy became one of keeping whites and Indians apart, dealing fairly, proffering Indians food and other assistance, and taking ruthless action when Indians did not behave.³⁰

During the Butlers’ first summer in their new home, Indian troubles flared up all around them. In July 1853 a Springville resident killed an Indian, triggering the Walker War, named for the Ute war chief Walkara.³¹ Indians near Payson, a few miles south of Palmyra, shot Mormon guard Alexander Keele in retaliation. That night, July 18, a messenger rushed into Palmyra warning of a pending Indian attack on Payson. Several volunteers immediately marched to Payson, joined by men from Springville and Provo.³² Meanwhile, Palmyra citizens gathered inside the schoolhouse for protection. Despite guards, Indians tried to steal the Palmyrans cattle but failed to escape with any. During the fracas, a neighbor of the Butlers was shot in the thigh. On July 24 John Berry and Clark Roberts were wounded by Indians at Summit Creek (present

Santaquin). Frightened, the residents deserted and moved to Payson. During the next weeks, Indians and whites skirmished in Juab County and east of Salt Lake City. "The situation now became so serious," an expert on the Walker War assessed, "that traveling from settlement to settlement, unless accompanied by a strong guard, was extremely perilous."³³ By mid-August farmers were harvesting under guard and herding cattle to safe meadows.³⁴ On August 19, 1853, Governor Brigham Young ordered the territorial militia, including many Palmyra men, to be ready to march against the Indians. Bishop Markham, a man "valiant" in his efforts to protect the Saints, was appointed a colonel in the militia, which was called the Nauvoo Legion, during this crisis.³⁵

October saw more war-related deaths. Most notably, United States government surveyor Captain John W. Gunnison of the Topographical Engineering Corps and seven of his men were killed on October 26 by Chief Kanosh's Pahvant band near present Richfield.³⁶ Two weeks later, Indians burned six houses at Summit Creek. Church leaders had long counselled the Saints to build forts, and the Indian depredations caused a flurry of fort-building. By late 1853, the First Presidency reported, "the weak settlements, which the Indians mostly annoy, are being strengthened up, and forts are built or nearly so, in all the settlements."³⁷

Palmyra's 404 residents "forted up" in the Lower Settlement and the Butlers and other Upper Settlement people moved downstream and into Fort Palmyra for the winter. Bishop Pace, for a season, lost a congregation to preside over.³⁸ John H. Redd's sawmill on the Spanish Fork River became a war casualty: Indians burned it down in 1853, a \$6,000 loss to the community.³⁹ Fort Palmyra was forty rods square with walls ten feet high. Cabins, built to adjoin each other in order to create an outer wall, formed a hollow square that served as corral and stockyard. Some cabins and walls were made of large mud blocks and adobe. Families lacking cabins built dugouts in the ground inside the fort. This was the first of two forts the Butlers lived in during the next two years.⁴⁰

Guards were posted fall and winter. But during a snowstorm in November 1853, Indians stole about fifty head of stock and drove them up Spanish Fork Canyon. Then, on February 26, 1854, Indians drove off nearly eighty cattle from the Palmyra and Springville herds.⁴¹ There were other thefts. In his autobiography, John, who had lived among Indians at Vermillion and Ponca, discussed the Walker War at length:

We had turned all our cows over the river under the mountain and the Indians began to be very hostile, so that the Upper Sttlement folks had

to leave their houses and go down to Palmyra, which was about four miles down the Creek to the west.

Well, two or three days afterward the Indians took off all our cattle, some three or four hundred head, and leaving us with only one cow, drove them up Spanish Fork Canyon. The men were called out to go and fetch them back, but they [the cattle] had been gone two days when the boys started and when they got up the canyon there were a great many [cattle] shot down, some had been shot with arrows; they found plenty dead, and where the Indians had killed them, but they got none alive.

Despite dangers from Indians, community life went on. Late in January 1854, John was called to jury duty. He helped decide a murder case involving Charles Noyce who was accused of beating an elderly woman to death. On January 28 John and the other jurists returned a verdict of guilty of second degree murder, and Noyce was sentenced to prison for ten years.⁴² While living in Fort Palmyra, John and Caroline became parents of their last child, Alveretta Farozine, born on March 26, 1854.

The Walker War lasted until mid-1854, when a Mormon-Ute peace council ended hostilities. As a peace gesture, Indians returned fourteen head of cattle stolen from Palmyrans. Chief Peteetneet of the Spanish Fork Ute tribe came down from the canyon with four lodges and camped in the Palmyra fort. His band then reclaimed their camping ground on the lower river, which they had occupied before the Mormons came. Obeying the advice of Brigham Young, who was Utah Territory's Indian Agent, Palmyrans built a house for Peteetneet.⁴³

The Walker War had been a costly affair for the pioneers. Casualties included nineteen whites and many Indians killed. Several smaller Mormon settlements had been broken up, and their inhabitants had relocated to larger towns.⁴⁴ Indian thefts nearly ruined many Mormon families. John said that "it liked to have broke up the folks, the Indians running off the cattle. They took many of the brethren's last yoke of cattle and for some of them, the last head, and it took them a long time to get any more."

Green River Blacksmith, 1854

When winter gave way to spring in 1854, several Upper Settlement families left the fort and returned to their homes and farms. Evidently the Butlers moved back, too, or at least resumed work on their farmlands upstream. The Butlers had to manufacture much of what they needed; according to a life sketch about daughter Charity:

Charity learned many things from her resourceful mother, and among them, the art of weaving. First, the wool from a few sheep kept by the family was sheared by the men. Then she helped her mother wash the wool, which after drying, had to be pulled apart and then carded into batts, then rolls, spun into threads on a spinning wheel, and then woven by hand on the homemade loom in their home. She also knew the different shrubs from which different colored dyes could be produced, using these and blue dye produced from the indigo. These dyes were used to color the threads and made beautiful cloth.⁴⁵

Charity also helped Caroline knit warm stockings for the family. Charity, however, knitted more slowly than her sister Keziah did, so Keziah would offer to knit her stockings if Charity would sew dresses for her in return.⁴⁶

The Butlers had survived their second winter in Utah, but by the spring of 1854 they faced a great need for additional food and income. So John, after he and Taylor finished spring planting, put his hand to blacksmithing again. His plan was to set up shop on the overland trail near Fort Bridger, servicing wagon trains headed for Utah, California, or Oregon. John's choice of the Bridger area no doubt was influenced by two actions Church leaders took late in 1853 regarding the region. At October general conference they called thirty-nine men on a colonizing mission to the Green River area surrounding Fort Bridger to pacify, civilize, and proselyte among Wind River Shoshone Indians. John had filled similar missions himself and knew his experience could prove useful again. Then, because Utah Territory included the Fort Bridger area, the legislature created Green River County in 1853 and granted licenses for Mormons to operate trailside businesses there, including ferries across the Green River northeast from Fort Bridger.⁴⁷ John's autobiography discusses his decision to leave his family and try his hand, hammer, and forge back on the trail:

Soon after I sold my last yoke of cattle for bread stuff and I did not know hardly what to go at that summer. At last I bethought me that I would go out to Fort Bridger and take me my blacksmith tools and work at my trade. And I made a bargain with John W. Mott that I would give him the first fifty dollars that I earned if he would take the wagon and my tools out there for me. He said he would do it. So I got ready to start.

However, Bishop Markham tried to stop John's departure. Local leaders sometimes excommunicated Saints who deserted Utah and called them "backtrailers." Markham either suspected that John would not stop at Fort

Bridger, or he feared that with John gone, the Butler family might become a drain on the settlement. The two men had known each other for more than a decade, since the time when Markham was a captain and John a special guard in the Nauvoo Legion. Both were minor heroes of sorts, John because of his defense of Mormon voters in Missouri and Markham because of the bayonet wounds in his legs received from mobbers in Carthage just before Joseph Smith was assassinated.⁴⁸ Despite their long acquaintance, Markham and John locked horns over John's blacksmithing plan:

Brother Stephen Markham came to me and asked me if I was going back on the road. I told him I was and he said that if I did that I would be disfellowshipped and that I ought to be disfellowshipped for thinking of such a thing. I asked him what I should do, there was my family naked almost and only bread enough to last them till harvest, and I had sold the last yoke of my oxen to buy that for them, and I was going out there to get something to help to make my family comfortable.

Facing possible Church discipline, John bypassed Bishop Markham's authority and asked President Brigham Young for permission to go.

And I told him [Bishop Markham] that he might disfellowship me if he pleased. I should go straight to Brigham and ask him if I can go, "and if he says go, I am going, and if he says stay, I shall stay." So [I said], "John [Mott], put the tools in the wagon and let us be off." I went to Brigham when I got into the City. And Brother Brigham said, "You go, Brother John, and may God bless you." And said he, "don't stay at Bridger, but go on to Green River and you shall be blessed and prospered."

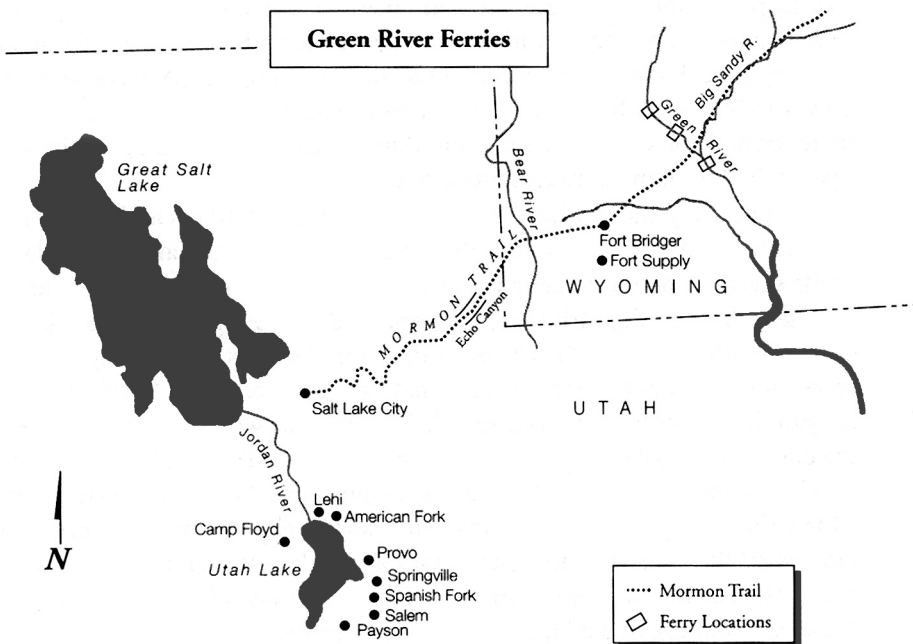
So, with President Young's blessing, John traveled 113 miles from Salt Lake City to Fort Bridger and then another fifty or more miles to one of several Green River crossing sites. Two years later he smiled a little when Stephen Markham himself was sent by President Young on a mission to that area.⁴⁹

While John was away, Caroline and Sarah ran the household, cared for the children, and managed the farms with assistance from the older children. Food was scarce. During John's absence, two Indians visited Spanish Fork, bringing eleven cows to trade. "They brought two of my cows and a yearling," John said, "and wanted two blankets for bringing in the cows." So Caroline

traded off the yearling for two blankets and was very glad to get the cows. But they were dry. And we only had one cow that gave milk and

she did not give much, and it did not go far among so many. There was thirteen in the family and they did not have anything to live on, only bread. They used to get buttermilk from Brother Markham's folks and they thought that that was a blessing.

In 1854 two dozen Mormons, including four women, operated ferries and a trading post at the Green River crossing points.⁵⁰ These ferries were located within a thirty-mile stretch along the Green, upriver from and also just below where the Big Sandy flows into the Green—some twenty to fifty miles northwest of present-day Green River, Wyoming.⁵¹ When John reached what his contemporaries called the middle ferry, he knew the people who operated it, apparently non-Mormons William and Alice Hawley, so he stayed with them. Mrs. Hawley charged John a "fair price" for his board and room. John arrived at the Green River by mid-May 1854. A group of men outbound from Utah for missions passed through and noticed John. They paid Hawley to use the ferry on May 19, the day after he stretched his ferry rope across the rising river for the first time that year. They wrote back to Salt Lake City that they had received money and materials to help them on their journey from David Brinton, Hosea Stout, and John Butler, who were at the ferry.⁵²



John stepped into an unstable, dangerous, near-lawless state of affairs at the Green. Mountaineers had no taste for letting Mormons take control of the Green River trade and ferrying businesses from them. These rough, independent men snubbed Utah Territory's new law that gave Mormons a monopoly on the ferry business. They felt the Utah legislature had no right to control licenses and levy taxes in the area and they intended to force Mormon ferry operators out of business. A year before, a Mormon posse had attacked mountaineers who were operating ferries and killed two or three of them. Hatred festered.⁵³

John, who had survived troubles with Missouri ruffians and vigilantes, Fort Vermillion traders, and Sioux and Ponca Indians, once again found himself in a dangerous power struggle. Utah's territorial government, controlled by the LDS Church, again needed some tough men to defend its stand. Two other rugged Kentuckians there with John were Hosea Stout and Bill Hickman, seasoned lawmen and militiamen. Stout was the county's new prosecuting attorney and Hickman the new sheriff. That Stout's diary of his summer at Green River does not mention John may indicate that Stout's dislike for John, expressed during their Winter Quarters days, continued.⁵⁴

Governor Brigham Young had sent more than 100 men to the Fort Bridger area to pacify and to "civilize" Indians there. These men built Fort Supply, close to and in competition with Fort Bridger, an act offensive to the mountain men. By June 1 the mountaineers with their Shoshone allies were ready to drive the Mormons from the area. Lawless types passing through in wagon trains bound for California were an added threat, because they might side against the Mormons if trouble broke out.⁵⁵

Stout's diary shows what life was like for John and others at the ferry settlements. On May 28, Stout said, the Green overflowed its banks. That day a crude breed of men were hanging around town: "The Mountaineers as usual throng in here to day drinking, swearing and gambling," Stout noted. His entry the next day said, "had a cold wind from the West followed by a severe snow storm." Mountaineers brought that day to a close with "hard drinking & gambling." On June 6 Stout noted: "the day was wound up according to the custom by fiddling, drinking and gambling in Earl's and McDonalds grocery." The men partied until 2:00 A.M., ending with "a knock down." Stout added that the grocery's gambling table was "well patronized" every "law day" when the court was open, and that Captain Hawley ran another grocery and a Mr. Blazzard a brewery. Attorney Stout did most of his legal work in a "miserable old log house" that served as the county courthouse.⁵⁶

Indian missionary James S. Brown, working among the Shoshones, also penned a description of the people and place where John was.

The country was new and wild, and while there were some very good people, the road was lined, with California immigrants and drovers, many of them of a very rough class, to say the best of them. They would camp a day or two on the river, and drink, gamble and fight; then the traders and rough mountain men, half-caste Indians, French and Spaniards, were numerous; there were also blacksmith and repair shops, whisky saloons, gambling tables, and sometimes there would be a perfect jam of wagons and cattle, and two or three hundred men. There were quarrels and fights, and often men would be shot or stabbed.⁵⁷

Judge William I. Appleby, the chief territorial officer there, said that the Mormons lived with much fear during those May, June, and July days. He himself was

sick and disgusted with the scenes of riot, drunkenness, blasphemy, gambling etc. of the Emigrants and Maintainers (some exceptions), & excitement from the Indians, produced on account of the Whites running several Ferries on the Said River, some nights when we retired to rest, not knowing but what we might be murdered before the morning sun rose.⁵⁸

John mentioned in his autobiography two flare-ups which came close to bloodshed. On June 18 a frightened ferryman from the upper crossing at Kinney, ten miles away, rushed to see Judge Appleby. He complained that a party of about three dozen mountaineers had driven him off, threatened to kill him, taken his ferry, and were pocketing the tolls. In response, Judge Appleby sent a posse of eight men to Kinney, who, finding the mountaineers drunk, retook the ferry without bloodshed.⁵⁹

A second crisis, John said, was caused by Indians. On June 15 several lodges of Shoshones camped at the outpost for an extended stay. They warned the Mormons not to cut timber, build houses, establish a settlement, or operate ferries unless they had Shoshone wives.⁶⁰ Two weeks later, Chief Washakie and a companion visited the ferry settlement, inspected Captain Hawley's ferry boat, the brewery, bakery, store, court room, whiskey saloon, blacksmith shops (which included John's blacksmith setup), and card tables. After much drinking, the chief became angry and ordered the whites to cross the river by the next morning, or his men would attack. John and his compatriots quickly tossed belongings into wagons and ferried across the river. But when sunrise came, a sober Washakie arrived and said the Mormons could return to their dwellings. The "big scare" had passed.⁶¹

Missionary James Brown called the period from May 13 to July 8, 1854, in the Green River area “one of the most hazardous, soul trying, disagreeable experiences of my life.”⁶² In the midst of all this, John tried to keep his forge hot, his anvil ringing, and his gun handy. While Mormons and non-Mormons threatened each other, one wagon train after another reached and ferried across the Green. Anxious travelers patronized the businesses there, including John’s blacksmith shop. During the middle months of 1854, trail traffic was reduced by three-fourths from two years before. The California-Mormon trails had about 60,000 travelers in 1852, 27,500 in 1853, and only about 15,000 in 1854.⁶³ Nevertheless, John did a good amount of business: “I went to work and fitted up a shop and built a forge and went to work. I made any amount of money there.”

In a less serious vein, John recorded a hard bargain which his landlady, Mrs. Hawley, tried to make with him:

The woman that I lived [lodged] with bought several feather beds, and she got me one that weighed forty pounds for three dollars. And I asked her to sell me one and she wanted one dollar per pound for the feathers and she would not take a cent less. I thought that that was a pretty good speculation, for none of them cost her two bits a pound. And she would not let me have one without I paid her one dollar per pound. So I did not get one.

Some customers paid John for his services by trading him worn-out cattle or horses they needed to leave behind.⁶⁴ This proved to be a blessing for his family, when he was able to graze these animals back to health:

I made fifteen head of stock while I was out there. They were poor when I bought them and they could not go any farther, their being worn out. I turned them out on good feed, where they could get plenty of food and water, and they soon recruited up their strength and began to look well. I then would trade them off for some more that were poor and I served them the same.

By fall, John drove his small herd back to Palmyra with the assistance of James Hicks, whom John paid by hauling the man’s luggage for him. John’s summer blacksmithing plan had worked, and he returned home with earnings needed by his large family. He reached Palmyra in time to help with fall farmwork but intent upon repeating his successful blacksmith work on the trail again the next summer.

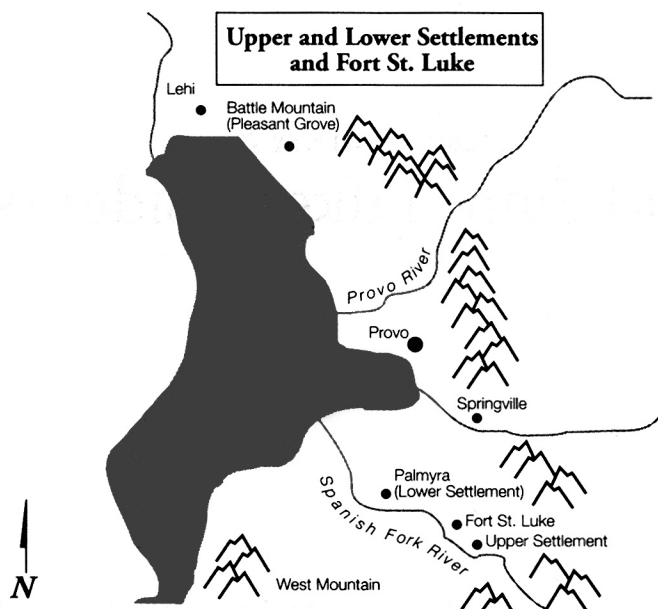
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Fort Saint Luke Residents

When John returned home from the Green River to Upper Settlement in Palmyra late in 1854, he “found all my family pretty well.” He arrived in time to help residents build another fort. Even though the Walker War was over, Upper Settlement families wanted a fort closer to their homes, instead of having to rely on Fort Palmyra. John H. Redd and other spokesmen asked Apostle George A. Smith for permission to build the new fort. Elder Smith, who had handpicked the Lower Settlement site, rebuked Redd for his idea. Undaunted, Redd and others appealed to President Brigham Young. Already Lower Settlement farm soils were showing mineral problems, and ground below the fort site was softening from a high water table. President Young approved Redd’s fort idea and site: “This is where the city should have been in the first place,” he responded. Soon, John and others built Fort Saint Luke, as they called it for reasons no one knows, not far from the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon, where the city of Spanish Fork now is.¹

The New Fort

When Apostle Smith inspected the new fort construction project in November, he found sixteen houses, each a story-and-a-half tall, being constructed around a central square, their windowless backs forming the fort’s outside walls. “It is a good commencement,” he reported, “and will do honor to the builders.” But he offered the people some unrealistic advice about protecting the cattle. “It will be necessary,” he said,



to enclose about the fort fifteen or twenty acres with a wall eight feet thick and fifteen feet high to secure their stock, as they are located so near the mouth of the canyon that they will be liable to be troubled with marauding parties of horse and cattle thieves [from up the canyon].²

The fort stood on the east side of present-day Spanish Fork's Main Street, between Second and Third South, fronting on Third South. Near the fort's center was a well and a pump.³ The adobe fort, when finished, was one of the best fortifications found in any Mormon settlement. John, proud of the fort he helped build, penned a good description of it. The walls: "The outside wall was two feet thick and twenty feet high." Dimensions: "It was one hundred feet long running north and south and sixty feet wide east and west." Entrances: "There was only one entrance, and that was a large gate, large enough to admit a wagon." The gate:

The gate was made of two inch plank made cross ways double [four inches thick], and put together with large stud nails, and two folding doors swung on the inside, and a large cross piece at the top. This gate faced the south; it was built this way for a protection against Indians.

The Butler family vacated their cabin and became one of about nineteen families who lived in Fort Saint Luke during the winter of 1854-55.⁴ Two

FORT SAINT LUKE RESIDENTS

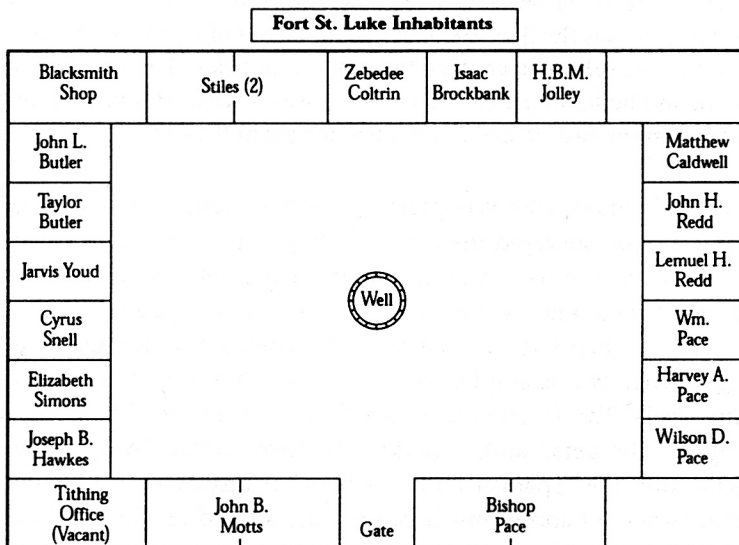
weddings on December 5, 1854, performed by Bishop Pace,⁵ put two of the Butler children as newlyweds into their own households in the fort. Son Taylor, twenty-three, married twenty-year-old Olive Durfey, who was born in Upper Canada.⁶ Third daughter Phoebe married George Washington Sevey. Phoebe was almost seventeen; George, who was born in New York, was twenty-two.⁷ According to John's history, George "was here alone. He left all his folks back in the States." Not until the next year would the Endowment House open in Salt Lake City where temple marriages could be performed; in 1858 the couples received temple endowments and sealings.⁸

John named as other residents of the fort that winter the following:

Briant M. Jolley	Amos Stiles	James Youd
John Redd	Cyrus Snell	Matthew Caldwell
Mrs. [Elizabeth] McKinley	Joseph B. Hawks	Isaac Brockbank [Sr.]
John W. Mott	Zebedee Coltrin	William Pace
Harvey A. Pace	Wilson D. Pace	

Other sources identify some families John did not list, including Orville Simons, Philo Allen, and Lemuel H. Redd.⁹

An unattributed diagram of the fort circulates among fort dwellers' descendants. It shows John's family occupying a cabin in the northwest part of the fort, located between Taylor and Olive's cabin to the south and a blacksmith shop John had on the north corner. Phoebe and George Sevey's site is not indicated.



This map of the old Spanish Fork Fort (Fort St. Luke) was drawn from memory by George D. Snell

John said the fort dwellers created a night corral for the cattle but did little fencing: “Our corral was on the outside about sixty feet from the fort. We drove our cattle on the bench and bottom to feed, and corralled them at night.” While the Butlers cramped themselves in their confining cabin, a few events that winter were more than routine. On February 2, 1855, daughter Sarah Adeline received her patriarchal blessing under the hands of Isaac Morley. She was fourteen.¹¹ Father John received another patriarchal blessing on February 26, 1855, from Patriarch Morley. The blessing, among other things, told John that he would stand at the head of his large family “to be a Father to thy posterity and yet become a Patriarch” to them. Like Abraham of old, John would be called “the Father of the faithful.” His posterity would “revere thy name . . . down to the latest ages of thy generations.”¹² Taylor and Olive also received their blessings that day.¹³

Birth of Spanish Fork

On January 19, 1855, the Utah Territorial legislature granted the Palmyra-Fort Saint Luke settlement a city charter, allowing it to create a government and to be renamed Spanish Fork.¹⁴ In May, Spanish Fork held its first election, picking Matthew Caldwell as mayor. By then, following a mild winter, people had moved out from Fort Saint Luke and started building around it what they hoped would be permanent homes.¹⁵ Apparently the Butlers stayed in the fort for one more winter. John described those who were the first to build houses on the newly-selected Spanish Fork townsites:

There were some few that commenced to build out the next spring. Philo Allen was the first. He built a house about fifty yards from the Fort on the west side. William Holt built on the east side. Then Snell went to work and built him a house on the northeast corner. Hawks built him a house on the east of Snell. And [they] fenced in their lots.

James C. Snow, who was president of the Utah, or Provo, Stake and a county surveyor, surveyed the town, platting it into nine blocks, each block twenty-four rods square and containing eight lots. A main north-south street, eight rods wide was graded.¹⁶ At first, many people built dugouts, not cabins, on their lots. Dugout dwellers generated some ridicule in neighboring towns. For example, Spanish Fork, Provo, and Springville boys became rivals. The factions nicknamed each other the “Provo Pacers,” the “Springville Sharpers,” and, because of so many families living in dugouts in Spanish Fork, the “Spanish Fork Gophers.” A history of Springville points out that “when a band of our

herdboys met a band of ‘Gophers’ out in the clay-beds an encounter was sure to ensue, in which slings, switches, and mud-throwers were called into requisition.”¹⁷

Despite the name change to Spanish Fork, the settlement continued to be called Palmyra by contemporaries for the next several years. John believed, before he died six years later, that the little cluster of homes comprising Spanish Fork was a town that one day would “become a city.” The spot “was a beautiful situation,” he noted, “but the canyon wind was tiresome, and it was very gravely and the dust flew about so when the wind blew.”

By early 1855 the Butlers were seriously into farming. “I had taken up a farm in two places,” John noted, “one over the Creek and one on the County Road on the west side and [we] were going to farm it that summer.” Early that year, he said, “I went over to Hobble Creek with John W. Mott to help him build a threshing machine. I made all the iron work and he got the wood work, and it was a separator.” John was half-owner of the thresher. Spring produced a fast thaw of the mountain snowpack, so that early 1855 was called the year of the high water.¹⁸

Blacksmith at Fort Bridger

After finishing the threshing machine, John “made ready” to return again to Green River County to blacksmith for a second season. “I hired a hand, his name was John Long, and as soon as we got ready, which was in April, we left for Bridger.” This time John “took my wife Sarah and my daughters Charity and Keziah with me and left the rest at home.” Probably John hoped the females could earn money there by cooking or doing laundry for travelers stopping at the post.

However, unlike the year before, John’s blacksmithing proved unprofitable in 1855. Mormon traffic was about the same as in 1854— eight Mormon companies instead of seven. But non-Mormon numbers dropped to a mere 1,500, one-eighth what they were in 1854.¹⁹ A life sketch of Charity says that she and Keziah baked bread, washed and ironed gold rushers’ soiled clothing, and did many other helpful things, while the travelers rested and recuperated before continuing their journeys west. Often these men had to lighten their loads, so at a minimum cost they traded off valuable merchandise. In this way, Charity and Keziah obtained material for clothing for themselves and the rest of the family.²⁰ Regarding his reduced business that summer, John wrote:

I did not meet with so much success that summer [1855] as I did the summer before. I hired another hand to help me, his name was Callen Ramsay. I did not have much for him to do out there so I sent him in [to the LDS settlements] and the girls with him.

John apparently made a trip home in August (see below) but did not give up his venture to the Bridger area until fall. The LDS Church purchased Fort Bridger in August, 1855, a development John did not record, perhaps because he was visiting his family at the time.²¹ Joshua Terry, John Wakely, and John Pulsipher, who were missionaries sent to work with Indians in the Green River area, encountered John on September 28. Pulsipher's journal noted, "when we arrived at Fort Bridger Brother John L. Butler who was working there gave us a cheese, we took a part of it and sent the balance to our boys at the Fort [Fort Supply], and asked the Lord to bless and reward him."²²

Drought and Grasshoppers

Meanwhile, at Spanish Fork, after a high spring runoff, unusually dry weather marked the spring and summer months. Drought conditions damaged the farmers' crops and also produced a devastating grasshopper invasion. Infant Rocky Mountain locusts can only hop but when grown they fly in swarms that darken the sky like clouds. Where these hoppers flew in from is not known, but they appeared almost every year in nineteenth-century Utah, even though Utah was not one of their primary breeding grounds.²³ As early as May the First Presidency learned that Utah County crops were "almost entirely destroyed by the ravages of grasshoppers, rendering their hard exertions and labours of their hands fruitless." In mid-June hoppers still were ravaging whatever plants popped up. Then, vegetation that somehow survived the hoppers "suffered much from the drought."²⁴ The 1855 grasshopper invasion, was the worst in Utah in that century. Approximately 70 percent of Utah's cereal, vegetable, and fruit crop was destroyed. In Salt Lake County, even third plantings of crops fell victim to the hoppers. Lucy Ann Butler, six, helped her family sweep hoppers into ditches, and she praised seagulls that she saw attack the hoppers that year.²⁵

John wrote in detail about the grasshopper invasion, a terrifying phenomenon of nature that he described in such vivid detail he must have witnessed it himself. So, either he had returned home from Fort Bridger for a short stay in May and was there when the plague struck, or he witnessed an invasion near Fort Bridger.

Now, the Saints had lost all their crops that summer. Their grain had come up splendid and some of it was in the ear. And one day the sun was darkened and there was kind of a mist before the sun, and every one thought it was going to storm. But on observing closely you could see that the air was thick with small objects, or specks about the size of the point of a needle. It was about eleven o'clock in the morning.

As the day advanced the objects became plainer and you could see insects flying in all directions. There was so many and so thick that you could not distinguish what they were, whether they were gnats, flies or what. But about the middle of the afternoon they began to fly lower and lower till they lit, and come to look they were grasshoppers. And there was not a blade of wheat or oats, barley, corn, or anything that was green that was not literally covered.

John was amazed at how destructive the grasshoppers were and with what speed they worked:

I have been into a field of grain and counted as many as twenty-seven grasshoppers on one blade of wheat, and there was not a blade in the whole field that did not have, or was not covered with the vermin. They could mow a field of grain in a day so close to the ground that the field would look as if it had just been sown. On any piece where they went they would destroy it and there was no help for nor any way to save it in the world.

Beleaguered farmers, seeing the ruination of their food supply, struggled in vain to stop the invaders:

Sometimes the whole settlement would turn out men, women and children and try to drive them in the creeks or rivers, and they would drive them in till the water would be right thick with them. And then it would seem as if there would be ten times as many come in their place. You could not stir for them. If you went into a field you could not walk without stepping upon twenty or thirty at every step.

John felt that he was witnessing a historic pestilence, even worse, perhaps, than the locust plagues that ravaged the fields of Egypt during Moses' time:

It was nothing to be compared with these grasshoppers for they were all through the Territory the same. The folks dug ditches for them to jump into and had them half full of water and they would jump and jump and jump into the ditches till the ditch would be full, and then they would crawl over on the others that were in the ditch then.

I have been trying to give a description of how many there were, but I have fell far short of the mark for no one could begin to tell it nor begin to imagine how they poured down like rain.

Desperate families agonized over the near-total losses of their crops. “They eat every blade of grain and every spear of grass,” John said. Because grazing grasses were gone “the cattle liked to have starved to death.” Then, the grasshoppers left as suddenly as they had come—something John probably did not witness personally but only heard about—in part blown into the Great Salt Lake by winds:

But they all flew up one morning and darkened the skies and all lit in the Salt Lake. There the strength of the salt killed them. Fresh water will not drown them. They might be in the water for twelve hours and if they came alongside of a twig they would get out and in an hour they would be as well as ever.

Apostle George A. Smith reported that immense piles of grasshoppers landed in Great Salt Lake, lining its shores an inch to two feet thick, and giving the lake a green appearance.²⁶

When the hopper pestilence ended, the Butlers and their neighbors planted their parched soil again and again, trying to grow something before winter struck. According to John:

When they were gone the wheat and grain sprung up, and the folks watered it, and cut it for hay. If they had not, some of their cattle would have starved to death that winter for the feed was all destroyed by the grasshoppers.

Butler Consecration Deed

Although John and Caroline converted to Mormonism too late to be part of the Saints’ efforts to live the law of consecration in Missouri, as part of the Emmett Expedition, they had consecrated their private possessions to the group as a whole. In the mid-1850s President Brigham Young asked Saints to consecrate their possessions to the Church, to be used for the good of all, “an effort that clearly sought to revive the Law of Consecration and Stewardship established earlier under Joseph Smith.” The movement took place, apparently, in every Utah county. Essentially the Saints transferred title to their properties to the Church, but none of the properties were transferred; donors did not receive stewardships tailored to their particular needs but instead retained their properties to manage as they had done before. The movement was designed to help unify the people but mainly served as a test of faith.²⁷

Apparently less than half of the LDS families in Utah passed the test. In Utah County, about 865 families consecrated lands and such personal property

as firearms, tools, and bedding.²⁸ The Butlers were one of but few Spanish Fork families whose consecrations are documented. John's deed of consecration is recorded in Utah County Deed Book B.²⁹ It is dated August 16, 1855, which indicates that he must have come from Fort Bridger for another visit home. The Butlers deed is important not only as a testament of the family's faith but also as an inventory of what the family possessed in 1856. The full text of the consecration deed reads:

Be it known to those present that I, John Lowe Butler of Palmyra City in the County of Utah and Territory of Utah, for and in consideration of the good will which I have to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints give and convey unto Brigham Young Trustee in Trust for said Church, his successors in Office and Assigns, all my claim to and ownership of the following described property, to wit:

Lots two and three in Block 173 cont[aining]: 80 Acre[s]

Also the East half of Lot 4 in Block 143

And Lot 3 in Block 142 cont[aining]: 60 Acres

The above land is in Peteetneet Survey of far-

ming land in the aforesaid Ct [county] & Territory,	Value \$ 840.00
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Also One House with two Rooms in Palmyra	100.00
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One Yoke of Oxen and Waggon	140.00
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4 Cows at \$30 each & 3 Calves at \$6 each	130.00
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18 head of Sheep at \$5 per head	90.00
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One Pig	6.00
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2 Cooking Stoves at \$50 each	100.00
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One Set of Blacksmith tools	125.00
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Household furniture, Beds, Bedding	100.00
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One half of an undivided threshing machine	350.00
--------------------------------------------	--------

Farming tools & one gun	25.00
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Total Amt. Two thousand and twenty-two dollars	\$2022.00
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together with all the rights, privileges, and appurtenances thereunto belonging or appertaining. I also covenant and agree that I am the lawful claimant and owner of said Property and will warrant and forever defend the same, unto the said Trustee in Trust, his successors in Office and Assigns, against the claims of my heirs, cosigns, or any person whomsoever.

John Lowe Butler [Seal of Lucius Scovil]

Witnesses:

Lucius N. Scovil

Charles W. Moeller

George W. Adair

Territory of Utah

County of Utah

I Isaac Higbee Judge of the Probate Court of the aforesaid County do certify that the Signer of the above transfer, personally known to me, appeared this fourteenth day of August A.D. 1855 and acknowledged that he of his own choice, executed the foregoing transfer.

Isaac Higbee Judge Probate

Recorded August 16, 1855

Two years later, deed books show, son Taylor consecrated his and Olive's properties worth \$1,185.³⁰ There is no record of any deed transferring title back to the donors, so at some point everyone just assumed that the original consecration deed was no longer valid.

Five days after John consecrated possessions on behalf of his family, Caroline went to Salt Lake City. She finally received her temple endowments, and then she and John were sealed again in marriage on August 21, 1855.³¹

Icelanders

Late in 1855 Samuel and Margrita Bjarnson and Helga Jonsdottir, the first Utah pioneers to come from Iceland, began homesteading in Spanish Fork. In time several Icelandic families clustered in the Butlers' community, and Spanish Fork gained a unique niche in national history for being "the first permanent Icelandic settlement in the United States."³² If John was at Fort Bridger when Samuel Bjarnson's wagon train passed there, possibly he influenced Samuel to locate at Spanish Fork. Iceland immigrants became not only neighbors to the Butlers but also members of the ward over which John soon would preside as bishop.

Daughter Charity, a Plural Wife

John's second daughter to wed, Charity Artemsia, became a plural wife to Hamilton Monroe Wallace. This match upset Caroline and bothered John:

In the month of August [1855] there was an old Mormon came from San Bernardino by the name of Wallace, and he went and lived in the City awhile and bought him a house and lot. He sold out and came down to Spanish Fork and stayed at my house. And he asked me for my daughter Charity.

Wallace, age forty-one, "had one wife," John said, and "I did not know what to say hardly." John "asked him if he had got my daughter's consent, he

said that he had.” Wallace said “that he was going back to San Bernardino to settle up his business there and he wanted to take Charity with him, that it would be a nice trip for her.” John learned from the suitor that “he was pretty well to do.” John then talked to Charity:

I went and asked my daughter, Charity, if she wanted to be his wife and to go with him. She said, yes. Now this was the first of my girls that went into plurality, and so I talked to her and told her that I hoped that she was not running into it without knowing what she was doing. But I knew that she understood the principle, and if she got a good man that she would do very well.

A Church patriarch married the couple on October 4, 1855. “Father Morley came down and married them,” John noted. Spanish Fork’s eligible bachelors did not like an outsider picking one of the town’s girls for his bride, so they made plans to harass Wallace. According to John:

They were married and there was quite a stir with the boys and they were going to run Wallace’s carriage down to the slough, and his wife was asleep in it. But when they found out that Wallace was not in with her they let her alone. I had to place a guard over his mules or the boys would have run them off, and they would be no where to be found for a week or two.

John said that Caroline “did not much like their getting married for she thought that Wallace was not the man for Charity. However, they were married and started on their journey” to San Bernardino. John says that Charity’s sister Keziah was quite upset that her sister was moving away.³³ Charity’s marriage to Mr. Wallace was short-lived. He refused to return to Utah when the Utah War threatened, but he let her return in 1858, with a generous divorce settlement in hand.³⁴

Late in 1855 John and Caroline’s first grandchildren were born. Daughter Phoebe and husband George Sevey became parents of a daughter, Hannah Caroline, who was born on November 12, 1855.³⁵ Then on November 15, Taylor and Olive had their first child, Sarah Olive, born at Palmyra.

The Famine of 1856

Because of the “almost total loss of crops” during 1855, Utah’s pioneers faced a hungry fall, winter, and spring.³⁶ To compound the food shortages, Mother Nature sent a second disaster—a killer winter. Deep snows and subfreezing

temperatures took cattle by the thousands. John discussed this hard winter and the famine conditions the Saints faced during February and March 1856:

Now folks had but little grain on hand, not near enough to do them till the next harvest, so they did not know what to do. But they began to ration out to themselves first a pound of flour per day, and then half a pound, and so on to make it last till harvest.

I came in from Bridger in the fall and found things in this fix. It was a hard winter, and I had not made anything out there, and it was going to be hard with us I could see before the next harvest. Wheat was up to four and five dollars per bushel, and then you could not get it hardly with begging and praying for it.

During the ruthless winter the Butlers turned their best cow out and, John complained, “the Indians took a fancy to her and killed her and eat her, so there was an end to her.”

The Butlers began the new year, 1856, with the wedding in Spanish Fork fort of their third child to marry. Keziah, almost twenty, became a bride on January 2, 1856, marrying Lemuel H. Redd. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Redd.³⁷ The newlyweds lived in the fort until spring and then left for Las Vegas to fill a mission in place of Lemuel’s father, who had been assigned to go there to help establish a lead mining colony.³⁸

John called this period “the year of the hard times for food.” A measles epidemic, also noted by other residents, added to troubles. “Most of the folks in Spanish Fork had the measles,” John said; “my family were nearly all down with it.” In the Butler family “there were nine confined to their beds at once, and we had a very sick time of it, too. Lemuel and Keziah had it, too, across the Fort. There was not many escaped from it that did not have it before.” Hungry people that winter and early spring rationed food and shared with the destitute. Old-timers, when recalling the famine of 1856, spoke of surviving on fish, milkweeds, and bran. George Hicks noted that locals ate fish because fish were abundant in the Spanish Fork River and in Utah Lake.³⁹

Despite hunger, normal settlement activities continued. During the winter John was called again to jury duty, this time to the county’s grand jury during its December term. Then, in late April 1856, the probate court needed “twelve good and lawful citizens of this county” for jurists. John was picked, served during part of the trial, and was paid \$2.00 plus \$1.20 for mileage. Jurists serving with him included friends John W. Berry and Albert K. Thurber. John’s service as a juror is evidence that he was a solid, responsible citizen in the county.⁴⁰

By 1856 John had been a Latter-day Saint for more than twenty years. During those years he had accepted numerous church assignments which benefitted his people and which shaped how he spent his time and energies. One more major calling awaited him. President Young, disliking the disunity he saw in Spanish Fork— or, as it was still sometimes called, Palmyra City—selected John to be the settlement’s new bishop with a mandate to unify and upgrade it. No one then knew John had less than four years in which to do the task before death would terminate his services.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Bishop of New Spanish Fork

Fort St. Luke and Fort Palmyra were two forts two miles apart. Spanish Fork and Palmyra were two villages too close together. For these two settlements to abut each other was a cause of friction. Who had jurisdiction—Bishop Pace, from the new settlement, or Bishop Markham?¹ Who decided where to run fences and ditches? Who made the rules and regulations? Final authority was unclear and disagreements popped up between the two groups. For example, during the summer of drought and then the killing winter, residents of the two settlements squabbled “partly on account of cattle doing damage in each other’s fields,” John observed. Once when Spanish Fork livestock wandered into Palmyra fields, a resident recalled, the Palmyrans rounded them up and impounded them. In response, Spanish Fork boys sneaked into Palmyra at night, opened the pen, and tried to retrieve their animals but were grabbed and chastened by Palmyrans.²

Brigham Young was troubled to learn of “your dissensions and divisions you are suffering in common in your feeling loss of confidence in each other, also loss of property in labor, crops, etc.” It was time for the two settlements to be merged and unified. John Butler would play a key role in that restructuring.³

Bishop of Merged Settlements

In February 1856 John W. Berry, an Upper Settlement pioneer favoring the new Spanish Fork location, visited Brigham Young and urged that Palmyra be vacated. President Young agreed. He had long felt that Palmyra was poorly

located due to its low and swampy land and the alkali that irrigation waters brought to the surface, ruining crops. Even though Palmyra had three times as many people as the other group,⁴ he knew the people needed to move from there up to better farmlands at Spanish Fork. He decided that a leadership change was necessary to expedite the move and help unify the people, and he felt that John was the man to do the job.⁵

Perhaps to help smooth the way for the change, leaders called Spanish Fork's bishop, William Pace, on a mission to England. Then, Utah Stake President James C. Snow visited Spanish Fork and appointed John as acting bishop and John W. Berry to be the ward president. With Palmyra's demise, Bishop Markham was released as a bishop. Snow reported his actions to Brigham Young, who approved them.⁶ John noted that "I was then put in his [Bishop Pace's] place by the people of Spanish Fork." He believed that he was merely acting as bishop until Bishop Pace returned. But when John visited Salt Lake City soon after his appointment, "Brigham asked me if I had been ordained to the office of bishop. I told him that I had not, neither did I want to be." However, the Church president, who had known John for more than a decade, responded: "I want you to be ordained to the office of Bishop and go to work and build a city at Spanish Fork, and go right ahead building up the kingdom of God." John replaced both Bishop Pace and Bishop Markham of Palmyra. He recorded his version of a blessing Brigham gave him: "Brother John, the Lord be with you and comfort you in all your undertakings and give you His Holy Spirit to enable you to govern the people aright that you are placed over." John was ordained a high priest on May 27, 1856, by John Young, patriarch of the Church.⁷ Until then John had been a seventy in the Eighth Quorum.

President Young gave John a formal letter of appointment and instruction, dated May 29, 1856. He told John to read it publicly to the ward members.⁸ A day or two later John held a meeting at Spanish Fork of all Palmyra and Spanish Fork residents—the combined ward had 500 to 550 members by then. Utah Stake President James C. Snow presided. The meeting took place in the new bowery, a pole frame covered with boughs erected for the occasion by volunteer labor and materials on the southwest corner of Spanish Fork's public square. John read to the congregation President Young's instructions and asked the people to get the spirit of it.⁹

The letter authorized Bishop Butler "to obtain, receive, and collect into your possession, all the books, papers, and accounts pertaining to the Bishoprics of Brothers Markham, and Wm. Pace." Anyone having such papers, books, or accounts was requested "to give them to Bro. Butler for his office."¹⁰ The letter gave Palmyrans and Spanish Forkers detailed orders designed, President Young

believed, to promote union and cause “your immediate temporal salvation.” Previously Brigham had told Brother Markham that those who wanted to continue to live in the old Palmyra fort might do so if they could prevent their cattle from destroying others’ crops. But now he redirected the Saints to keep no stock in or about the fort, not even a cow or calf, and keep guards at all such places as Bishop Butler indicated as necessary. Bishop Butler, Young said, was authorized to tell Palmyrans who refused to move to Spanish Fork where to range their stock. The people must be united in building up outside fences to secure crops, and then, afterwards, they could make as many “division fences” as were necessary. “Many of you take up more land than you can fence for, make ditches for, or cultivate if you had it enclosed,” the Church president complained. He ordered that in all such cases, the land must be given to persons who would fence and cultivate it.

To keep cattle out of pastures and to protect herds from being raided by Indians coming down the canyon, President Young ordered that a wall be constructed. “Brethren, be united and work together,” he admonished, “build a good Spanish wall from the Springville wall to the Spanish Fork [River] as soon as it can be done; make such portion of it now as will secure your crops.” Of utmost importance, he added, “in all things be submissive to your local authorities.” The existing main road from Springville to Payson passed by Palmyra Fort. That route must be changed, President Young ordered, so that the road passed directly from Springville to Spanish Fork, crossed the river there, and then continued on to Payson. When the new road was fit for travel, the old road was to be closed and the old bridge moved up to the new road. Make these fencing, wall, and road changes immediately, he said, “for it is important, not only for you, but for all the community to have all the grain preserved.” He felt great concern that nothing hurt the year’s farm production, so essential due to the previous year’s agricultural disasters.¹¹

After John finished reading the letter to the congregation, the people were asked to vote to sustain him as their new bishop, which they did. Members also sustained John W. Berry to be John’s first counselor—the initial idea of having Berry be ward president was changed for some reason. On June 1 Bishop Butler presented George Wilkins to be his second counselor, and he also received a sustaining vote. George was ordained as John’s counselor on June 6, 1856, by Zebedee Coltrin.¹² George, in his early thirties, was from New Hampshire. He was soon to be John’s son-in-law as husband of Caroline Elizabeth. A faith-promoting story was often told by George: Years earlier, before his baptism at age twenty, he had acquired a habit of using profanity and could not break it. But immediately after baptism he felt no more inclination to swear. With this

call to be John's counselor, George, by career a farmer, began a long career as a public-spirited citizen of Spanish Fork, later serving on the city council.

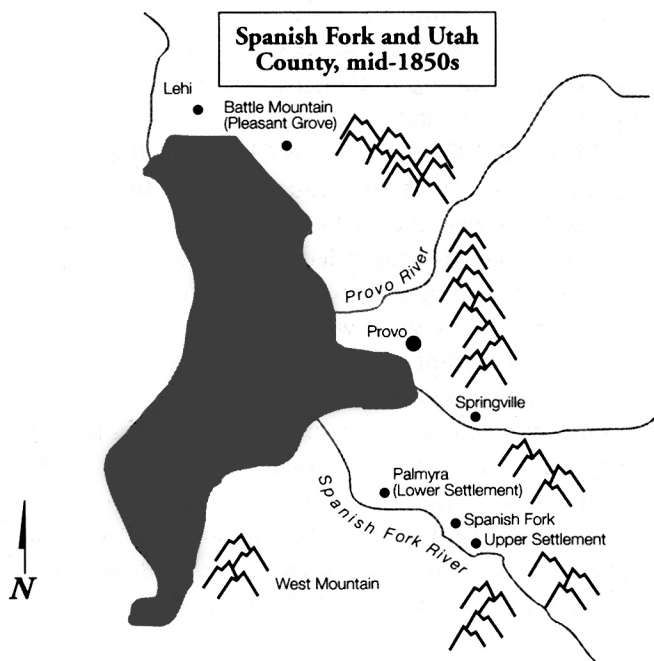
Bishop Butler had regular contact with Church headquarters through his visits to Salt Lake City and by visits and letters from President Young, the First Presidency, and Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter. "I went down to the City [Salt Lake City] several times," John said, "and received instructions how to do and how to be enabled to build up the Kingdom." John's mail from Church headquarters contained general instructions sent to all bishops but also specific communications to him personally.

John noted that Brigham Young "told me that the people of Palmyra was to leave their places and come and build in Spanish Fork," a change some Palmyrans did not favor. John said that, following his ordination,

I returned home and asked the Lord to bless me and enable me to build up His Kingdom. I told the folks at Palmyra that they had to move to Spanish Fork City. Some of them did not like it. There were some that always had a bitter feeling against the folks at the Upper settlement and they did not like the idea of having to move up and live with them. However, they were willing to obey the counsel given to them from Brigham.

In order for Palmyrans to relocate, Spanish Fork had to make adjustments to accommodate the new citizens. Therefore, Bishop Butler gave immediate attention to four urgent projects. First, as incentive to Palmyrans, John "had the city [Spanish Fork] surveyed and laid off in blocks and city lots" in order to make more property available for houses and to provide more streets for transportation. Next, to open more farmlands, he arranged for new irrigation ditches. He directed that a water channel be "brought down from the river up above the upper settlement. We had to put in a dam to get the water on the lowest bench." This project "took several weeks to accomplish." Third, following orders, John put men to work to build the Spanish wall. But these workmen, he noted, suffered from the lingering food shortage:

I then went and made a field company and got them to get up a community and go to work and put a wall from the river west of the County road and bring it north and then down to the river. Well, they went to work and put up the wall, although some of the men at the time lived on nothing in the world but bran and weeds.



A contemporary government map shows the adobe wall running almost west to east, from the lower Spanish Fork River east toward Springville. The wall “was a great undertaking for them, but the Lord was with them and helped them,” John observed.¹³

Then, as a fourth project designed to benefit the community but also to employ workers, “the folks built a bridge across Spanish Fork River. They got timber out of the mountains and went to work and put it right up.” For reasons not stated, John decided against moving the former bridge up from Palmyra, as Brigham Young had advised, and opted to erect a new one. One resident called this “a most excellent frame bridge.” The project was “accomplished in a week at a cost of twelve hundred dollars.” The bridge was a key part of the new main road heading north to Springville and south toward Payson.¹⁴

Pioneer Bishops

Pioneer era bishops operated differently than do their modern counterparts. Pioneer bishops, for example, did not have handbooks, priesthood executive committee meetings, stake high council advisors, ward budget moneys sent regularly from Church headquarters, computerized tithing clerks, or monthly personal priesthood interviews with the stake president. During John’s lifetime

the wards had no youth auxiliaries except perhaps a children's Sunday School. To understand John's work as a bishop, as discussed in this and the next three chapters, it is helpful to pause here and explain what pioneer bishops did.

During the 1850s, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints spun a large web of settlements across present-day Utah. In the Church organizational structure, bishops were the key officials upon whom the success and well-being of these settlements depended. In their wards, bishops were the highest authority recognized by the people in matters spiritual but also temporal.¹⁵ In pioneer Utah "the ward was more than the basic ecclesiastical unit—it was the most important political unit and, except for the family, the most important social unit as well."¹⁶

In religious matters then, as now, bishops were a ward's highest authority, but in John's day they had fewer guidelines and hence more latitude to shape local policies and practices. They were responsible for public and private religious behavior within the ward boundaries. They arranged for meeting places for religious services, had charge of church meetings on Sundays and other days, and made certain the sacrament was provided to members. They dealt with apostates. They supervised the blessing of babies, baptisms, and some priesthood ordinations, particularly of Aaronic Priesthood males. They performed weddings, conducted funerals, blessed the sick, and comforted the grieving. They called and supervised a small corps of ward teachers, or block teachers, who visited the members regularly and checked on their commitments. All this is fairly similar to what today's bishops do.¹⁷

However, pioneer bishops did more than modern bishops in being community referees and judges, either trying to settle disputes personally or conducting church courts to decide cases brought before them. Often they were asked to or volunteered to arbitrate disagreements about land boundaries, water entitlements, unpaid debts, property damages, husbands' nonsupport of families, and verbal and contractual agreements gone sour.

By scriptural mandate and for practical reasons—because there were no governmental social services agencies—pioneer-era bishops had to oversee the providing of basic welfare needs in their jurisdictions: food, shelter, and assistance for the poor and needy; jobs for the unemployed; homes and care for the handicapped, disabled, and incapable; medical and nursing aid for those needing it; and visits and watch-care for the elderly, widowed families, and the lonely.¹⁸

A serious fire on a summer day in 1856 was an example of the many situations John responded to as the ward's welfare director. Spanish Fork contained many ramshackle, makeshift shelters, where people lived until they

could construct more durable homes. “The folks all moved up from Palmyra and began to build,” John recalled; “they had to make shanties out of lumber and willows and anything that they could get.” Then, to the residents’ horror, a spectacular fire burned up one of the dwellings. John described the excitement:

Captain Davis¹⁹ had made a shanty of willows and he had stacked his grain close by. And one day the wind was blowing pretty hard and a spark flew from the chimney into the willows and caught the shanty on fire. And that blew and caught the stacks and burned nearly everything that they had, and all the grain was destroyed entirely.

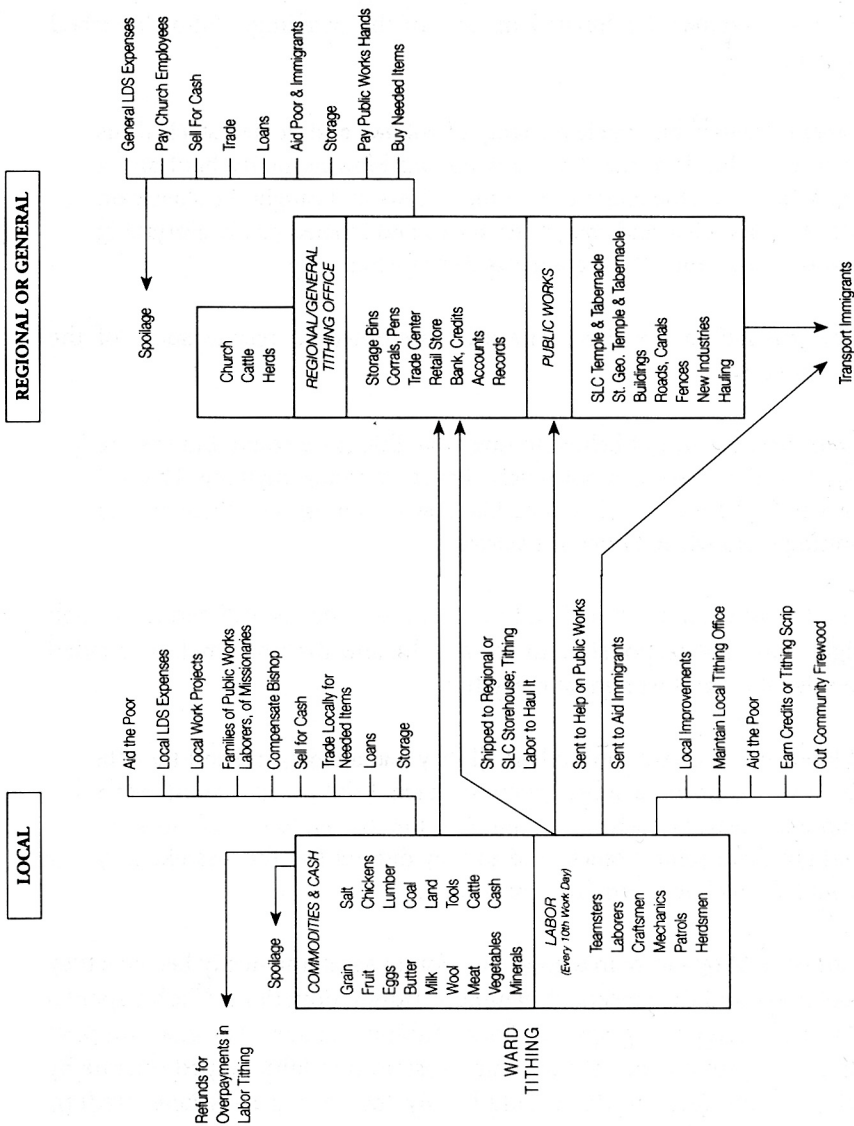
John rushed to the fire scene and attempted to rescue some of the Davis’s property:

I was down there and helped to save what things we could, but the fire raged so that there was not much chance of saving anything. The willows had all got dry and burned like powder almost, and there was no putting it out when it once got started.

The fire burned out but flared up again, so citizens watched it through the night. John felt responsible to see that he and the ward members aided this family who had lost almost everything:

I knew it was pretty hard to lose all they had almost, and so I thought that I would get up a subscription for them. I did so, and raised over a hundred bushels of wheat for him. And the women folks went to work and got them some clothes. And so they did not feel the loss like they would if it had not been done for them.

Pioneer bishops were in a good position to assist the needy because they were receivers and dispensers of members’ tithing donations.²⁰ John spent a great deal of energy being Spanish Fork’s tithing manager. The chart on page 290 shows the complexity of the tithing system that John helped operate by receiving, accounting for, dispensing locally, forwarding elsewhere, trading, granting loans, and accepting credits. Bishop Butler was expected to conduct a year-end tithing settlement with each family head.²¹ People donated one-tenth of their increase but paid in “kind,” not cash, which required a tithing storehouse to receive and store the donations.²² Instead of building a tithing office from the ground up, John used a remodeled house:



Tithing System During the Era of Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter, 1851-1883

I went to work and fixed up John W. Mott's house for a tithing office and got Brother Raymond for a clerk. I hired two men then to build a tithing corral, which was used for a stray pen, public corral and stack yard for tithing hay and cane. I had it built out on the south east corner of the Fort.

Hay and wheat were easy to store. But perishables like butter, eggs, and cheese had to be sold, given to the poor, or sent to Salt Lake City. John received some animals as tithing and had problems keeping them penned:

I had no corral of my own, yet I had corral room. But there were no poles there, and so I stacked my grain in the tithing stack yard. But it got nearly all destroyed for I had bought some goats of Reuben Allred [his brother-in-law] and they were in among the [tithing] sheep and they would jump anyplace. No matter what kind of a fence it was, they used to jump over the wall and get at the grain.

I had a stake and rider [connector pole] on the top of the wall. These goats would jump and walk right on the pole that was for a rider and they would run on the top of it as good as they would on the ground. And the sheep learned to follow them so that there was nothing to stay them, and I had to send them off.

On June 12, 1856, President Young asked bishops south of Salt Lake City for all the tithing sheep they had and informed them that William Pickett could drive them north to put them on "the island"—probably Antelope Island in Great Salt Lake. Bishops were asked to feed Pickett and his herdsmen when they came through their communities.²³

The summer of 1856 baked Spanish Fork hot and dry, and "much destitution was experienced by the masses of the people through the want of provisions" until harvest time.²⁴ In July the First Presidency complained about "the continued drouth, the failure of the streams, the destruction by insects and by cattle allowed to run at random, or miserably herded." Strenuous efforts by all, they said, were needed to provide "sustenance for the present and incoming population."²⁵ Bishops, including Bishop Butler, enforced "a rigid economy and distribution to the destitute, preventing any great amount of suffering."²⁶

Another responsibility bishops bore was to maintain public safety, security, and morality in their wards. They tried to ensure that order was maintained, using Church authority to call troublemakers to task or requesting civil enforcers to do it. Bishops could exert considerable authority to close down or regulate

disreputable places and activities, such as liquor selling or Sabbath Day merchandising. They monitored social conduct in public, including dances and dramatic productions, and in private, such matters as family abuse situations, drunkenness, and adultery. They had a strong say in how the local militia operated and often were part of the militia's leadership. They determined community responses to outsiders, particularly toward Indians and non-Mormons.

Bishops were also promoters and directors of community services and public works projects. Some tithing was paid in labor by men and their teams, so bishops could utilize donated labor and equipment on projects needed by the community. Bishops often became involved in developing roads, bridges, meetinghouses, schools, amusement halls, water systems, fencing projects, community herd grounds, new farm products and equipment, and police and fire services. To cite one example from John's experience, John wrote to Brigham Young asking permission to enlarge the city's boundaries. On September 8, 1856, Brigham Young wrote back to him: "You are at liberty to enlarge the limits of your city in such manner as yourself and council shall deem most advisable." Young was pleased "to learn of your prosperity and the good spirit which prevails in your midst."²⁷

Bishops were agents at the local level for providing materials and manpower needed by Church headquarters. The Presiding Bishop and the First Presidency often called on bishops to send in flour, butter, meat, cheese, hay, poles, firewood, and other items from tithing storehouses or from member donations. Bishops received requisitions for men to serve as teamsters, to work on public projects, to help bring in immigrants, to colonize elsewhere, and to carry out military tasks. Bishop Butler responded to several of such requests.

Visitors to Utah then and historians since agree that no church or civil officer was more contributory to the development of pioneer Utah's towns and settlements than the local bishop. In part, a bishop's importance was due to the Church being small enough for General Authorities to deal directly with bishops rather than going through stake presidents, as they did after 1877.²⁸ Bishop Butler, therefore, was a member of a small but vital fraternity of leaders upon whom depended the success or failure not just of a congregation but of a community.

It is noteworthy that few of Mormonism's rugged frontiersmen became ecclesiastical leaders. Porter Rockwell did not, nor did Bill Hickman, Hosea Stout, John D. Lee, Howard Egan, or Ephraim Hanks. John Butler's service as a ward bishop makes him quite unique as a frontiersman in the annals of LDS history.²⁹

Family Matters

Occasionally Indians came to the Butler home—the residency of the “big chief” of Spanish Fork—to beg for flour, which was often in scarce supply. On one occasion, a large Indian came for flour and son Taylor said to John: “Let him work for his bread as we have to do.” This angered the Indian. A short time later Taylor was hauling a load of wood in a canyon, and the same Indian met him and reminded Taylor of the criticism. The Indian ordered Taylor off his load of wood and whipped him unmercifully until Taylor could barely stand. The Indian and his companion then took Taylor’s lunch from the wood rack. Returning to Taylor, they asked him to shake hands with them and they could be good friends, if he would not talk against them anymore. They helped him up onto his load of wood. Wounded, and so sick he could hardly sit up, Taylor returned home.³⁰

Because of the drought and crop failures the year before, and famine conditions that grew as the winter ebbed, farmers in 1856 planted with an urgency bordering on desperation. They needed food as early as they possibly could grow it, and most, John noted, did quite well:

Well, the folks put in their crops, and folks put in their early vegetables so that they could have something to eat. I put in considerable grain myself but I did not have much time to attend to it, and the cattle got into it and destroyed a great deal of it. But the most of the folks done pretty well and raised good crops. The land had had a rest.

After the harvests, the First Presidency assessed the year’s growing season and saw mixed results. “The wheat crop of this season was good, but corn was rather light and potatoes were almost an entire failure.”³¹

In the fall of 1856, daughter Keziah Jane and husband Lemuel Redd returned from Las Vegas. They arrived barely in time for Keziah to deliver her baby. “They had not been in long,” John said, “before Keziah was put to bed with a son,” born on October 5; “they named him Lemuel Hardison after his father.” This was John and Caroline’s third grandchild.³²

Handcart Rescues

Late in 1856 some 1,200 LDS emigrants in the Martin and Willie handcart companies and the Hunt and Hodgett wagon trains became trapped in western Wyoming by severe snowstorms. When word of their predicament reached Utah, Mormon bishops received urgent orders to send out rescue teams. From October to December, streams of quickly recruited outfits poured eastward,

transporting food, clothing, and bedding. To keep some trail segments open through snows four feet deep and drifts up to twenty feet high, men shoveled, and teams rolled back and forth, packing down the snow. Some wagons served as ambulances, pushing back to Utah much faster than the other wagons.³³ Bishop Butler described the handcart crisis as he learned about it in Spanish Fork:

Now the emigration across the plains was very late. They all got caught in the snow. They were strung from Weber River to Fort Bridger, and there they was starving and freezing to death. It was dreadful the accounts. Brother Brigham gave orders in all the settlements to rig up teams to go back and bring the sufferers in. Now the snow was from six to fifteen feet deep and there was no road broke across the mountains at all.

John received specific orders about what Spanish Fork should send:

The word came down to me to rig up six teams and send two men to every team for teamsters. And there were to be four mules or horses to each wagon, and the wagons were to be loaded with horse feed, provisions, clothing and every comfort of life that could be sent. Now, this all was to be done by donation. So I called the people together and told them the situation of their brethren and sisters, and then we had to rig up teams and send men out.

To recruit rescuers, bishops turned to seasoned men and older boys, preferably veterans of the Walker War or other military situations. Bishop Butler did the same.³⁴ Spanish Fork sent five wagons and teams—one shy of the assessment—and thirteen “young and able bodied men.” Jack Cloward was the group’s captain, and Taylor Butler went as assistant captain. The Butlers’ son-in-law George Sevey also was a rescuer.³⁵ According to John:

Well, we got them all rigged up, and I never had less trouble getting up such an expedition, for the Saints were willing and on hand to do almost anything. My son, Taylor, I sent out with them to superintend the expedition.

Apparently Spanish Fork’s teams were among the last called and rolled into the snow-clad mountains when the crisis was at its worst. “This was in December,” John said, “and it was bitter cold. The snow in the Valley here was eighteen inches deep on the level, and it was snowing in the mountains all the

time.” Taylor, George Sevey, and the others performed a courageous mission, one which the Butlers at home worried about. When Taylor returned, he gave John many firsthand details about the harrowing experience the rescuers had, and John recorded parts of what Taylor told him:

He drove a wagon as well, and he told me how he found the Saints, and how the road was. He said that there were teams reached nearly from the City to Fort Bridger. They had to have men shoveling out snow and breaking the road, and in some places the snow was up above the wagon bows on each side. And they found the Saints in an awful condition. Some with their feet froze and some with their fingers froze, and they had no food to eat, and he said that he never saw such a sight before. It was dreadful, and he said that they [the rescued] were so over-joyed they did not know what to do hardly.

Deep snow not only made it hard for men to keep the trail open, but it blocked off easy access to firewood:

They were all picked up and fed [the people] and clothes given to them. When they camped at night, there were a whole lot of the boys would break a road to a tree and cut it down for firewood. And when they were coming back, they never saw the sun for six days, and it snowed all the time, and they had to break the road over again. And in coming down the Big Mountain they never locked a wheel but gee’d off and let the hub of the off wheel drag in the snow, and so they came down.

By the scores, survivors arrived in Salt Lake Valley, which was itself cold and covered in white. Bishops were instructed to take in these sufferers and find lodgings and medical care for them. Spanish Fork received its share to nurse, according to John:

They brought some of the folks to Spanish Fork and I never saw such objects in my life as they were. There was a young man that George Sevey brought down with him that looked like a shadow. He would reel to and fro when he walked—he was so weak and his toes were froze. George hired him for a year.

A history of daughter Charity says that “some were sent to the Bishop’s home in Spanish Fork. One poor victim whose leg had been amputated cried all

night from pain in that limb even to the end of his toes, though the limb was gone.”³⁶ More than 200 people in the trapped handcart and wagon companies had perished. The toll would have been much greater had not Utah communities and bishops sent out rescuers to help the others.³⁷

In early 1856 John had accepted the mantle of bishop, adjusted it to his broad shoulders, and then he wore it during four of Mormonism’s most historic and dramatic years. Not only did he, as bishop, have to deal with the tail end of the famine of 1856 and the year-end handcart rescues, but he also found himself pulled into the middle of two strong currents—unleashed by the Mormon Reformation and by the Utah War—that he was obligated to help his people navigate.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Reformation and Plural Wives

While summer's heat slowly cooled during September 1856, Mormon leaders started fanning Utah pioneers' spiritual coals to red-hot intensity. The First Presidency initiated a reformation, a crusade to generate deeper spirituality, firmer commitments to teachings and commandments, repentance for past wrongs, better social behavior, and, ultimately, a people worthy to merit God's blessing and protection. Essential to this "Mormon Reformation" was a call for people to renew their original baptismal covenants. Were they willing to accept baptism like they had done before? Were they willing to make themselves worthy to be baptized, just like the first time, through needed repentance and by making restitutions and reconciliations where necessary? Then, would they publicly go down into the water and demonstrate a new commitment by being rebaptized?¹

Strong sermons at conferences in Kaysville on September 13-16, 1856, opened the reform campaign. Jedediah Grant, a member of the First Presidency, called on Saints there to repent and be rebaptized. He was aided by home missionaries—the year before, Church leaders had divided Utah into home missionary districts and called men to attend conferences in those districts and preach solid gospel messages.² John Young was the general authority assigned to take the reformation into settlements south of Salt Lake City, starting in Spanish Fork. Young was Brigham Young's brother, a recently sustained patriarch, and president of the high priests quorum in the Salt Lake Valley.³ John Butler recalled that he was instructed to hold a special ward conference on September 27-29.

Just before conference some of the Elders came down from Great Salt Lake City, Brother John Young and some more, and they held a conference. The folks went to work and built a bowery on the public square, and we held conference under that. They preached to us good doctrine and said that Brother Brigham said that the folks wanted a reformation among them.

When the conference opened, Patriarch Young spoke and then supervised a mass rebaptism on September 27. “They told us that we had to go to work and be baptized again and live our religion more than we had done,” John said. Since the 1830s a person could receive the ordinance of rebaptism for several reasons—as a sign of reentry into Church activity, for health, when entering united orders, and as preparation for marriage.⁴ In fact, Church statistics for 1855, the year before the Reformation, show that, since their arrivals in Utah, 182 Palmyrans had been rebaptized and 30 in Spanish Fork.⁵ Under Patriarch Young’s direction, home missionary James Hovey rebaptized Bishop Butler and his counselors John W. Berry and George W. Wilkins, and then, John noted, the bishopric “went to work and re-baptized all the folks and re-ordained [reconfirmed] them members of the Church of Jesus Christ.” In fact, rebaptized Saints were reconfirmed in the bowery by Patriarch Young, Stake President James C. Snow, the bishopric, and twelve other elders. Some four hundred people accepted the ordinances. It seemed to be a spiritual feast for those in attendance: “the Spirit of God was poured out to a great degree, and peace and happiness characterized the assembly.”⁶

In the afternoon session of the conference, the congregation listened to several speakers, including John. According to ward minutes, “Bishop Butler said that he felt well and had a glorious time at this conference; wished at all times to be obedient to counsel, and exhorted the Saints to follow in that course.” The conference continued the next day. John closed the morning session with prayer and offered the opening prayer at the afternoon meeting. A final meeting that evening, one report said, saw many pour forth their souls in “a great manifestation of the power of God.” The bishopric “expressed their joy at the proceedings.”⁷

John recorded, “They [the visiting authorities] told me that I had to go to the City [Salt Lake City] and get my instructions as to what I should do.” John obeyed:

I went down to the City and went to Brother Brigham. And he asked how I felt and how I was getting along. I told him. He then gave me instructions what to do and how to do and told me that I had to be

baptized there [in Salt Lake City] and then go back and baptize the folks [still needing it] and ordain Teachers to go round and visit the Saints.⁸

On October 8, 1856, Utah bishops met together with Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter and his counselors, Leonard W. Hardy and Jesse C. Little. Bishop Butler was one of a large number of bishops who were rebaptized by Bishop Hardy in a newly-completed font and reconfirmed by Bishops Hunter and Little.⁹

John said he returned home, told his counselors what to do, and set them to work. “We then appointed meeting and began to feel the blessings of God poured out upon us.” As instructed, John chose men to be teachers to visit the families in his ward:

I divided the ward into four parts and put a teacher over every part. Levi Harmon was the Teacher for the first part, Charles A. Davis for the second part, Henry Garfield for the third, and Stephen R. Wells for the fourth part.

While reformation labors continued, John felt concern about the community’s food supply on the eve of winter. So he called on ward teacher Charles Davis to “find out how much wheat there was in the City, and he brought me a report and it said nine thousand bushels of wheat and two thousand bushels of corn. I thought that that was pretty well for Spanish Fork.”

John believed that the reformation was a good thing for his people. “They all felt well and happy in doing as they were told,” he said. “The reformation was going on first rate” in his opinion.

Brother Brigham and councillors made a catechism, or code of laws for the Saints to go by. And all the Bishops [or teachers they assigned] had to get the people one by one by themselves and ask them these questions that were on the code of laws. And if the people had broken any of these laws, they were told to do so no more, and they were all forgiven for what they had done. All their former sins were to be remembered against them no more.

This period of soul-searching, repenting, and confessing became, as a later observer noted, “a watershed as far as forgiveness of sins was concerned. For those who confessed their transgressions and expressed a willingness to do better, there was no court action, no period of probation or suspension.” It was “a time of mercy” but it was temporary; future sins would not be pardoned so

easily.¹⁰ The catechism that Bishop Butler and the ward teachers used with the families included more than two dozen questions treating a wide range of subjects:¹¹

Have you committed murder, by shedding innocent blood, or consenting thereto?

Have you betrayed your brethren or sisters in anything?

Have you committed adultery, by having any connection with a woman that was not your wife or a man that was not your husband?

Have you taken and made use of property not your own, without the consent of the owner?

Have you cut hay where you had not right to, or turned your animals into another person's grain field, without his knowledge?

Have you lied about or maliciously misrepresented any person or thing?

Have you borrowed anything that you have not returned, or paid for?

Have you borne false witness against your neighbor?

Have you taken the name of the Deity in vain?

Have you coveted anything not your own?

Have you been intoxicated with strong drink?

Have you found lost property and not returned it to the owner, or used all diligence to do so?

Have you branded an animal that you did not know to be your own?

Have you taken another's horse or mule from the range and rode it, without the owner's consent?

Have you fulfilled your promises in paying your debts, or run into debt without prospect of paying?

Have you taken water to irrigate with, when it belonged to another person at the time you used it?

Do you pay your tithing promptly?

Do you teach your family the gospel of salvation?

Do you speak against your brethren, or against any principle taught us in the Bible, Book of Mormon, Book of Doctrine and Covenants, Revelations given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, and the Presidency of the Church as now organized?

Do you pray in your family night and morning and attend to secret prayer?

Do you wash your body and have your family do so as often as health and cleanliness require and circumstances will permit?

Do you labor six days and rest, or go to the house of worship, on the seventh?

Do you and your family attend Ward meetings?

Do you preside over your household as a servant of God, and is your family subject to you?

Have you labored diligently and earned faithfully the wages paid you by your employers?

Do you oppress the hireling in his wages?

Have you taken up and converted any stray animals to your own use, or in any manner appropriated one to your benefit without accounting therefor to the proper authorities?

Saints who had done wrong were expected to confess to the persons they had injured and to make restitution and satisfaction. Catechizers were not to pry into personal sins that were between the person and God. Some sins were to be confessed to a bishop or other proper authorities.¹² According to John,

this made the people feel good, and we held our meetings and they felt free to pray or speak their feelings. They would speak in tongues and prophesy in the name of the Lord. Every family held family meetings and they spoke or prayed just as they were led. All were rejoicing and happy and everything went on just as it ought to.

Overall, the Mormon Reformation seemed to cause a spiritual renewal in Utah's wards. Church attendance rose; tithes and offerings increased; community morale improved; and, as a bonus for the believers, many backsliders and apostates left the territory. Because of the reformation, "significant improvement had taken place spiritually and physically."¹³

But, religious zeal also produced an underside to the reformation. John's autobiography shows no awareness of it, and there is no history of the reformation's impacts specifically on Spanish Fork. Elsewhere, however, for many individuals and communities the push for righteousness produced, in some, intolerance and mean-spiritedness towards Mormons unwilling to get enthused and non-Mormons living or passing through Utah. Some sermons told sinners their deeds were so bad that atonement for such could only come through the shedding of their blood. Nonconformists were told to leave the territory or be forced out. Sternness or improper probings by home missionaries and teachers alienated and "raised a spirit of opposition and rebellion."¹⁴ "As with any reform movement," the foremost historian of the reformation reminded, "there were problems, excesses, and improprieties."¹⁵ Some murders in Utah County were blamed on blood atonement teachings. George Hicks, who

experienced the reformation in Spanish Fork, stated in his brief history of the community that the movement reminded him of the Spanish Inquisition and that its rhetoric was full of “bombast.”¹⁶

The religious crusade lasted for several months. In a letter dated 10 December 1856, the First Presidency urged all bishops to “be fathers to the people” and to “lead them on, step by step, until they shall wax strong in the knowledge of things, both temporal and spiritual, pertaining to the Kingdom of our God.”¹⁷ Catechizing, rebaptizing, and the reform impulse to do better continued into the first half of 1857.

Butler Plural Marriages

One “reform” the reformation pushed was for men and women to enter into plural marriages. Evidence indicates that “no period of Mormon history demonstrated a devotion to polygamous duty more than the two-year period of 1856 and 1857, known as the Mormon Reformation.”¹⁸ A Salt Lake woman at the time observed, “This is the greatest time for marrying I ever knew.”¹⁹ Marriage rates climbed because Saints felt obligated to embrace “the principle.”

Plural wives, like their husbands, viewed polygamy as a practical and honorable means for providing marriage and motherhood to thousands of women who may have otherwise remained unmarried in a monogamous world. Church leaders pronounced over and over that plural marriage countered various social evils. Above all they stressed that the principle was commanded by God to raise a righteous generation. Mormons nearly always entered polygamy because they believed it was essential to their salvation, that God required it of them.²⁰

Bishop Butler was one who responded to this demanding instruction. He requested and received Church permission to marry more women. Three wives were sealed to him on March 9, 1857, he said, “in the sealing room by Heber C. Kimball in Brigham Young’s office.” They were Ann Harrow, age sixty-two, Lovisa Hamilton, nineteen, and Esther Ogden, seventeen.²¹ John, who was forty-eight, two years later wrote matter-of-factly about these marriages:

I started down to the City in March [1857] in company with George Wilkins, my second councillor. I took three women down with me to be sealed to me. Their names are as follows: Ann Harrow, Lovisa Hamilton and Esther Ogden. I arrived there on the seventh, on the eighth went to meeting, and on the ninth was sealed to my women.

Ann Harrow was an elderly widow from Cheshire, England, born in 1795.²² Lovisa Hamilton was born in Illinois in 1837 to Andrew M. and Ella Wilson Hamilton. She was baptized in 1848 and came west with her family in 1852. They settled in Springville, where John evidently met Lovisa.²³ Esther Emily Ogden was born in Cheshire, England, one of nine children of Edward and Sarah Rooth Garratt Ogden. “Esther’s folks I know nothing about,” John wrote. Other records show that the family converted in 1848.²⁴ During their 1853 emigration Esther’s father died.²⁵ The large family settled in Salt Lake City, where Esther and twin sister Lucy found work as domestic helpers in Brigham Young’s home. Possibly President Young introduced Esther to John Butler. The young English lass stayed married to John only a few months. Said John: “In August I divorced my seventh wife, Esther, being that she was not satisfied with her situation and wanted to leave me. I obtained a bill of divorcement for her and she left me and went to the City.”²⁶ The other two new wives stayed with John until he died.

On the same day that John married Ann, Lovisa, and Esther, his daughter Sarah also married. “Brother Philo Allen asked me for my daughter Sarah Adaline. I told him that if she was willing I was; they were married, and the same day as I took my three women. She is second wife to Philo.” A month later Caroline Elizabeth, another Butler daughter, married John’s counselor in the bishopric. “In April George [Washington] Wilkins asked me if I would give him my daughter, Elizabeth. I told him I had no objections providing she was willing. So they got married. She was his second wife.”²⁷

In that marrying year, 1857, John took one more plural wife, his last, Henrietta Seaton Blythe. “In September on the eighth day I was married to a young woman by the name of Henrietta Blythe. She was my eighth wife, and was married to me by Daniel H. Wells.” Because Henrietta’s life story has been written, more is known about her than the other plural wives. She was twenty-six years old when she and John married. She was born in Scotland in 1831, converted to Mormonism in 1853, and came to Utah in 1856. When her boyfriend, Samuel Moffatt, went to California to hunt for gold, backslid from the faith, and never returned, she accepted advice from Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter, with whom she lodged, to marry Bishop Butler.²⁸

One Spanish Fork resident who knew the Butlers, George Hicks, in a history he wrote of the town, thought local men became too eager to take extra wives.²⁹ However, the 1860 census shows that Spanish Fork, after the reformation, was a solidly monogamous settlement. Of 192 households, only a dozen families can be identified by census data as polygamous.³⁰ Of those twelve, John S. Fullmer and John Butler had five wives each (three of John’s

had left him by then), but the other ten men had only one extra wife. Records do not say how John housed his five wives, how he divided his time among them, how well the wives got along with each other, or what John's children thought of the new women in the family. John lived with new wives Ann, Lovisa, and Henrietta less than three years before he died in 1860. Of John's new wives, Henrietta bore him a daughter, Isabella Elizabeth Butler, on June 11, 1858, and a son, John William Butler, after John's death. Lovisa gave birth to a daughter, Lovisa Patience Butler, on Christmas Eve, 1858.

A vast literature about LDS plural marriage has emerged in recent years.³¹ Studies of plural marriages in early Utah have established that breaking from monogamy was hard for both men and women. Few Saints became polygamists eagerly. Leaders, including bishops, were under obligation to have more than one wife to set an example for the general membership. However, most men did not enter "the principle," and those who did typically added but one wife—minimal obedience. Research shows clearly that most of those who took the step were motivated by religious belief and desire to be obedient, not lust. "Despite constant exhortation from the pulpit to live the principle of polygamy and the resulting group pressure to conform, most men remained monogamous," most studies have found. The percentage of polygamous households "varied considerably from community to community," but of communities closely studied to date, barring a few small towns or unusual circumstances such as at Orderville, almost all were predominately monogamous.³²

Usually the first wife was the adult hardest hit emotionally when a new wife entered the family circle. This was particularly true of women in their middle years, like Caroline, whose husbands courted and married women young enough to be their own daughters. That Caroline disliked John's marriages in 1857 is documented in a statement John penned in the back of his autobiographical notebook. He titled it "A Vision I had in Nov. 1857," which the family has deleted from circulating typescripts of John's record. John's account begins by saying his wife Caroline had been troubled with feelings against plurality, "giving me trouble in my domestic circle." She was honest in her feelings but "would oppose me most vehemently sometimes." She complained "how she had always been with me in all my trials, had borne a large family of children to me" and then requested something "that it was not her right to dictate, trying to rule the priesthood." Because he and she argued often about what she could do, "my mind was drawn out to God," John wrote, "to know what manner of spirit" was troubling her.

Then he saw a vision in which there appeared a personage filled with light, except for a dark circle over his head. John knew this personage was the devil transformed into an angel of light. John saw this light reflecting upon Caroline

like the rays of the evening sun. In the vision John said his eyes were opened and he saw this evil influence throughout the world and the Church. "I saw many fall under his influence." John found that the only way to escape the influence "was to do just as we was told by them that was over us." John saw that this evil personage used "sharp, shrewd reasoning" such that "I saw to reason with him it was more than I would dare to do for that is all he wants, and if he could keep reasoning, his point is gained." The vision shifted, and John beheld "those that done as they were told" going forth upon the earth "upon the principle of eternal increase of wisdom, knowledge, and power." There his account ends abruptly because the next page, where it once continued, is torn out of his book. Why only part of the account has been removed, and who removed it, remain a mystery.

Peaceful Interlude

For the Butlers and most Mormon pioneers, three external events—famine, reformation, and handcart rescues—added an exciting texture to the year 1856. Compared to that, the first half of 1857 was calm and routine for Spanish Fork people. Husband and father John dealt with family responsibilities regarding housing, meals, household work, farm labors, and religious practices. "I set my family in order," he said, "and told them to attend to their secret prayers and ask God to bless them and enable them to do what was right."

To help his community and to supplement his income, John started a sawmill. He petitioned the territorial legislature for water rights, needing water power for his mill and wanting more irrigation water for his settlement. On January 14, 1857, the legislature passed "An Act Granting John L. Butler and Aaron Johnson the right of water from Spanish Fork River." The act empowered the men to take one-fourth of the water from the river channel "at or near the head of a slough near Spanish Fork City, and convey the same on the best possible route to a tract of land known as the Springville survey, plot D." Water was granted, the charter said, "for irrigating."³³

About this time John's sister Lucy and husband Reuben Allred and family were staying with the Butlers. They had lived in Tooele since 1853, then moved to Spring City and to Ephraim where Reuben became a bishop. "Reuben Allred came from San Pete and lived awhile with us," John said, "till he could build him a house." While staying there, Lucy gave birth to a son, John L. Allred, on February 9, 1857, named after John Butler.³⁴

Sickness struck the family while the Allreds were there. "We had quite a sick time with the children," John noted. "My sister Lucy Ann's little baby and Taylor's little girl [Sarah, about fifteen months old] were very sick indeed. We did not expect either of them to live, they were so sick, but it pleased the Lord to spare their lives and they got well."

Bishop's Work

"I was busy all the time doing ward business," John said, referring to late 1856 and early 1857. As noted, he supervised land use, responded to Church calls for manpower, received and managed tithing, sent out block teachers, and conducted church meetings. Also, "I had several difficulties to settle in the ward," he said, "some with husbands and wives and told them to make it all up, and live their religion." He performed a number of church ordinances and ceremonies. He said he "had to marry folks at different times and bless children and one thing and another, that it took up the greater part of my time." His first counselor, John W. Berry, was called on a mission late in 1856. John chose Albert King Thurber to be his new first counselor.

Bishop Butler responded to assignments sent to him from Church headquarters. Because the winter of 1856-57 was severe, the Church moved its cattle herd from the Great Salt Lake area southward. Part was driven to the Payson area. On February 1, 1857, President Young instructed John to help protect those livestock against two recently released convicts. "We consider it wisdom to be on our guard in relation to the stock of the settlements generally and to our stock especially our horses now on the range near the south end of Utah Lake lest they attempt to make a break upon them." Assign a few men to be ready to act in case of an emergency, Brigham advised, and have them make "a short trip around to see that all things are right." Then Brigham added two instructions. First, "We do not expect there would be any prosecutions for false imprisonment or tale bearers left for witnesses," which seems to translate, "if they steal the livestock, you have the right to kill them but not in public." The other was to "be vigilant in these matters and not allow yourself to be taken unawares. Or to use an old-fashioned phrase, of not locking the door until after the stock is stolen."³⁵

On February 11, 1857, President Young asked John to use Spanish Fork tithing and ward resources to pay a debt the Church owed to a man moving to Spanish Fork. A Brother Sinnert "wishes to look out a small piece of land in your neighborhood." The Church owed Sinnert \$485 and "would like to pay him in improvements, of which perhaps you may get some on Labor tithing." John was instructed to find the man "such a place as may come to this amount." John should give the brother farming implements if he needed them, and if more were needed to bring the value to \$485, then John should "let him have such things as he might need on tithing, food, stock or other things."³⁶

Another February 1857 letter conveyed counsel to Bishop Butler from President Young about an unnamed difference between Stephen Markham and Zebedee Coltrin that was causing trouble in the Spanish Fork Ward. Markham

was then in Salt Lake City. Brigham told John, “I wish you and the brethren in your ward, to say nothing in this matter, or to Brother Markham; till Brother John Young goes up to your place, and he will settle the matter, and tell bro. Zebedee Coltrin to hold on.” Then President Young pointed some gentle criticism and advice at John about being a bishop: “Bror. John there are many masters, but how few Father’s—governing & ruling mildly as saviors in the Kingdom of God.” Brigham signed the letter, “Your friend and brother.” Apparently the Church president was alluding to some report he had heard that indicated John was being too authoritarian toward someone, possibly Stephen Markham.³⁷

On March 3 Brigham asked John to help James Keiller of Spanish Fork start for his mission to the Sandwich Islands. The next day, Brigham wrote again to John, this time about Enoch Reese who had returned from a mission and “is going to your place to see about his land. You will recollect, that Bror. Reese had to leave his land in consequence of the Indian difficulties; I would like to have Bror. Reese dealt kindly with, and he have his rights in the matter.”³⁸

Henry Hamilton from Dundee, Scotland, was among the handcart immigrants who settled in Spanish Fork. He kept a diary, and his entries serve like tiny windows through which to see bits and pieces of day-to-day living in Spanish Fork activities.³⁹ His notations specifically mention Bishop Butler and some of his activities. Newcomer Hamilton participated in the Mormon Reformation launched a few months before he arrived. He said that on February 12, 1857, he was “catechised” by Bishop Butler. Two weeks later he went to see Bishop Butler “as he desired to employ me.” Hamilton attended a Sunday meeting on March 15 that was held in the fort because “the wind was high.” He attended church meetings on Sundays and on Tuesday evenings.

Spring of 1857, according to Hamilton’s diary, was a busy season in Spanish Fork. He recorded that a cultural event rolled into town that March, when an artist, most likely Philo Dibble, held a public showing of his panoramic paintings of Church history scenes. According to Hamilton, there were scenes of Joseph Smith’s speech before the Nauvoo Legion and of Joseph at Carthage Jail after falling from the window. The artist “and others” gave descriptions of the scenes.⁴⁰

During April a number of those who had arrived the previous fall were rebaptized. The militia was reorganized and grouped into platoons. Planting season started in earnest, so Bishop Butler called a special meeting in the Third Ward schoolroom to see who needed wheat for seed and help with plowing. Hamilton himself needed two bushels of seed wheat, about two acres plowed, and two acres harrowed. On May 4 Hamilton contacted Bishop Butler “about

getting some poles, but he would not sell them but wanted me to go and cut some for him and he would pay me \$2 per day in poles.” The Scotsman headed into the mountains and, working hard, obtained a few poles. At a meeting on June 6, Ute Chief Peeteetneet spoke and told the people that this valley, compared to lands that Indians held by the Snake River, was productive land. During June, Hamilton and other males irrigated, cut new ditches, and erected fences. Hamilton helped a landowner put up a section of the “Spanish wall” that townsmen were then building. A new Seventies quorum was created for their area, the Fiftieth Quorum, and men were enrolled in it.⁴¹

Responding to orders from Bishop Aaron Johnson, the lieutenant-general commanding the Peteetneet Military District, Bishop Butler called Spanish Fork infantrymen to a muster and election in the public square on June 15, 1857. This and military balloting in nearby towns elected Aaron Johnson the district’s brigadier general, John S. Fullmer a colonel of infantry, Bishop Charles B. Hancock a major of Payson’s infantry battalion, and John a major in charge of an infantry battalion. Activated units provided men to patrol the Mormon Trail to protect immigrants, to guard and monitor approaches to communities, to check on Indian activities, and to watch for problems.⁴²

According to Church records, the ward held another rebaptism service on July 5, supervised by Bishop Butler.⁴³ With warm summer weather starting, John received two tithing instructions. One was a circular addressed to all bishops dated June 22, 1857, instructing them to save as much tithing hay as possible, because the next winter the Church cattle would be distributed among their settlements.⁴⁴ A second letter, dated July 10, 1857, was addressed to “southern bishops,” including John. It requested them to forward all available tithing sheep and ewes to Salt Lake City.⁴⁵

Along with demands on his time as bishop, John worked with his family on the farms and probably at the sawmill. John remembered this as being a pleasant period, a brief time of calmness for his family and his settlement:

The spring was beautiful and the folks were busy putting in their grain and garden seeds. And everything looked fresh and beautiful. The grass was springing up fast and the cattle began to pick up and look well. We were all enjoying ourselves and living happy.

The calm was short-lived. Worried riders from the Missouri valley soon brought distressing news from “the States” that would initiate the Saints’ worst crisis since the Illinois persecutions.

War Clouds and the Indian Farm

On July 24, 1857, Spanish Fork residents publicly celebrated Pioneer Day with food and festivities, unaware of the bad news that had just reached Church leaders. At a similar social in Big Cottonwood Canyon above Salt Lake City, Saints heard the gloomy report brought by riders from the east that LDS mail carriers had discovered a federal army supported by vast supply trains heading for Utah—part of a military campaign against the Latter-day Saints. News about the possible autumn invasion probably reached Spanish Fork the next day, ruining the community's short string of tranquil months.¹

Subsequent news reports clarified the purpose of the military movement. United States President James Buchanan had dispatched the army in response to unsubstantiated reports that LDS leaders and the Saints had abused and were in rebellion against federal authority. Soldiers were ordered west for two purposes: to escort a newly appointed governor to replace Brigham Young and to uphold, enforce, and, if necessary, reimpose federal authority over Utah Territory and its reportedly disloyal Mormons.²

For the Butlers, government action against them and their coreligionists was nothing new. They had experienced it firsthand in Missouri and Illinois. John's autobiography conveys, with a tincture of contempt, his reaction to President Buchanan's anti-Mormon actions.

The United States had put Buchanan in as President of the United States, and he was going to put down Mormons, and he was very much

embittered against the people of this Territory. And he began to look up soldiers to come out here. He was determined to do some great thing, while he was in the presidential chair.

John thought the size and equipage of the army excessive, based on what he heard during and after the Utah War.

In the States they did not know what to do. They went to work and fitted up an army with everything that an army would want to go anywhere in the world—the best fitted out company or army the United States or any other country ever turned out. They started for the Great Salt Lake City. There was three thousand men that bore arms, besides teamsters and herders, and there was about ten or a dozen trains loaded with provisions, tobacco and clothing and everything that you could mention.

These trains were ox-teams and they had baggage wagons with six mules on each wagon, the best mules that the United States afforded, and new harnesses. They had their cannon with them and was going to sweep the Mormons from the face of the earth. Their Commander-in-chief was General [Albert Sidney] Johnston, and there was Mr. [Alfred] Cumming [who] was to be Governor of Utah Territory.

With danger still weeks away, normal village and agricultural pursuits proceeded as summer waned. Spanish Fork resident Henry Hamilton noted on August 4, for example, that he sold one town lot, after which Bishop Butler granted him a new one, apparently to benefit Hamilton's upcoming marriage.³ John recalled, "we raised our crops and enjoyed ourselves, and the Lord blessed us." However, he admitted, people did suffer because "there was no goods came in that summer on account of the army coming up here, and that made clothing very dear and hard to get."

Nauvoo Legion Major

Lack of field activity by the territorial militia—the Nauvoo Legion—following the Walker War prompted Utah's legislature in February of 1857 to revitalize and restructure it.⁴ This action was initiated independent of the federal army's threat against Utah that came months later. Governor Young was Commander-in-Chief, and Daniel H. Wells, Young's counselor in the LDS First Presidency, continued as Lieutenant General. Wells, the top hands-on commander, issued General Order Number One on April 11, "To Enroll for Military Duty," decreeing that all able-bodied white males between ages eighteen and forty-five

were subject to military duty. It specified that the Legion be organized into platoons, companies, battalions, regiments, brigades, divisions, and departments. It divided Utah into thirteen military districts, one being the Peteetneet Military District, comprising all of Utah County south of Provo, including Spanish Fork. Brigadier General Aaron Johnson, Springville's bishop, was given command of the district.⁵ The Nauvoo Legion structure can be diagrammed as follows:⁶

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Numbers of Troops</i>	<i>Top Officer</i>
Division	2000 (2 brigades of 1000)	Major General
Brigade	1000 (2 regiments of 500)	Brigadier General
Regiment	500 (5 battalions of 100)	Colonel
Battalion	100 (2 companies of 50)	Major
Company	50 (5 platoons of 10)	Captain
Platoon	10 (10 rank-and-file men)	Captain

During spring and summer a series of general and special orders called for recruitments, elections of officers, musterings, inspections, assignments, and restructurings of units. In response to General Order Number One, Aaron Johnson sent Albert K. Thurber to enroll all males of militia age living between Springville's south border and Payson's north border and, in addition, to encourage men older and boys younger to volunteer. Thurber arranged for the recruits to gather on Spanish Fork's public square on April 20, where they elected officers and were organized into companies and platoons.⁷ John was elected captain of the first company of infantry, containing five platoons, in the First Regiment in the Peteetneet Military District.⁸

Acting on Aaron Johnson's orders, John gathered together Spanish Fork's units at the public square on June 13 to formally elect for the military district a brigadier general, colonel, and three majors and to have their arms and ammunition inspected.⁹ A June 15 muster roll indicates that John briefly was captain of what was redesignated as Company H, in the Fourth Battalion in the district. In Company H, John and nine other officers, including First Lieutenant Charles Davis and Second Lieutenant Zebedee Coltrin, commanded forty-nine privates in five platoons. The fifty-nine men had but twenty muskets and four rifles among them. John owned one of the rifles as well as a half-pound of rifle powder, two pounds of lead, and a powder horn.¹⁰ His superior officer was Colonel John S. Fullmer, who supervised the Peteetneet District's battalions.¹¹ At that meeting John was promoted to major and given command of two companies. A short time later, another restructuring put him in command of the Third Battalion consisting of companies E and F.¹²

John's counselors in the bishopric, Albert K. Thurber and George Wilkins, were each majors in charge of one Spanish Fork battalion, with Wilkins' unit being a juvenile company. Major Charles B. Hancock commanded the Payson battalion to Spanish Fork's south side. By July's end, General Order Number Five instructed that all Legion units adopt and learn Handel's Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics, which explained formations and positions of officers and men for parade, marching, and battle situations.¹³

Utah War Preparations

On August 5 Brigham Young, who was still the governor until his replacement arrived, issued a governor's proclamation to the "Citizens of Utah" to prepare the pioneers to resist the approaching armies. It declared martial law, forbade any armed forces from invading Utah Territory, and called for Utah militiamen to "hold themselves in readiness to march" to repel any invasion. Martial law meant that no one could pass into or through Utah without a permit from territorial officials.¹⁴

By early August a somber mood permeated Utah settlements, as is evidenced in instructions sent to regiment colonels and passed on to the soldiers and their communities. Specific preparations for possible war were prescribed. The first order was for a number of colonels to each send two companies of ten men to the mountains to observe approaches made toward the settlements "that we may not be taken by surprise." Ominously, the same order warned that "the time may come when we shall have to lay everything waste and go into the mountains, therefore let us be preparing for such an event." One preparation specifically ordered was that grain be secured and conserved: "Be careful that not a kernel is wasted. Do not have it foolishly or needlessly fed to horses but let it be preserved, and instruct the people to be economical in using it, use potatoes and vegetables that cannot be preserved and save the grain." The Saints were told to "drop other business and thrash out the grain and secure it first thing. This is the first business to attend to."

The order also instructed colonels to "have your eye out for good safe places in the mountains where grain can be cached and where women and children can be safe in case we have to take to the mountains." Further, "be storing up clothing of a substantial kind. Fix up and keep in repair our wagons and take care of our property and not let anything go to waste." Also, "find a safe retreat in the mountains for [live]stock." Another step was to prepare Indians for the arrival of the United States army. "Instruct the Indians that our enemies are also their enemies and how . . . they must be our friends and stick with us for if our enemies kill us off, they [Indians] will surely be cut off by the same parties."¹⁵

On August 15 Henry Hamilton recorded that Colonel Fullmer came to Spanish Fork and read General Wells's preparation orders "desiring us to be in readiness for any emergency that may occur" by stockpiling grain and sending mounted men with provisions for sixty days for a "Mountain Expedition." Spanish Fork's quota was fifteen men, a baggage wagon, and a hundred pounds of flour per man. Names were called out and the men agreed to go.¹⁶

Spanish Fork provided fifteen "efficient men" and one baggage wagon with four horses to pull it and two teamsters to drive it. Bishops were faced with the task of finding horses for the recruits. Supplying soldiers was a hardship on communities, and some responded reluctantly, so Aaron Johnson ordered his subordinate officers to requisition belongings of the Saints, if necessary, to outfit the men. Bishop Butler was absent, for reasons not known, so counselor Wilkins filled the assignment by obtaining horses from John H. Redd, Isaac Brockbank, and others. Women donated butter, eggs, cheese, and chickens.¹⁷

Ward minutes describe the fifteen men's hectic mustering day on August 17. At 7:00 A.M. the fifteen assembled and a captain was appointed. Colonel Fullmer and Major Thurber addressed them, "after which in the absence of Bp. John L. Butler they were blessed and dedicated to the service of God in connexion with their horses, wagon and arms and all that they had by A K Thurber first council to the Bp." Then the recruits rode to Springville. At noon word came, apparently from Springville, that three more men were needed for the "Mountain Expedition," so Taylor Butler, Lewis Barney, and John P. Chidester enlisted and obtained horses. The minutes add that "today most of the citizens of the ward are busily engaged in securing the grain, cutting and hawling," and preparing for thrashing.¹⁸

The next day, August 18, the enlistees from Spanish Fork returned from Springville, furloughed with orders to keep themselves in readiness. Samuel J. Raymond, Bishop Butler's tithing clerk on the one hand and Major Butler's adjutant on the other, took charge of militia baggage and provisions the men deposited in the tithing office for storage. Their horses were held "in reserve."¹⁹ A week later, on August 25, the ward received a call to donate crackers, lead, and shot. Some of the militia left that day for the mountains.²⁰ Meanwhile, Colonel Fullmer held in readiness as a home guard the units that did not leave, including the battalions led by John and his counselors.²¹ Some select men went with patrols sent to watch the various canyon approaches to Utah Valley. Others were sent to reinforce units elsewhere or to monitor and communicate with Indians in Uintah Valley. At some point Colonel Fullmer asked for ten to twenty men from the Peteetneet Military District to help find hiding places in the Great Basin wilderness for women and children, should the army invade Utah.²² But

by and large the Spanish Fork militiamen stayed at home and went about their normal daily work, subject to instant call-up. Periodically they mustered, conducted marching and formation drills, practiced with arms, received instructions, and presented themselves for inspections of arms, ammunition, and horses.

A mixture of Mormon bravado and fear is evident in military orders issued in September, such as one dated September 18 sent to Legion units in the Provo Military District:

Many and deep are the scars which the knife of the legalized assassin has inflicted upon us. It is now fiercely at and determinedly at our heart. It shall not enter. The hand that points it shall be smitten. God will avenge our many wrongs. It is the privilege, the sacred duty of the Nauvoo Legion, to rally for their rights, and preserve the family of their hearths by repelling this unprovoked invasion.²³

Spanish Fork's Indian Farm

In the eyes of most Mormons, the federal government, by sending troops against Utah, had declared itself to be their enemy. A pressing worry, especially for Spanish Fork residents, was how to keep Indians from siding with the army against the Mormons. John felt particular anxiety about Indians associated with the government's Indian Farm that was downriver to the west and northwest of Spanish Fork, on the west side of the river and extending to Utah Lake. The 1,300-acre farm and reservation had been functioning for three years.²⁴ As part of the treaty ending the Walker War, Governor Brigham Young, who was also Utah's Superintendent of Indian Affairs, had worked with subagent Dr. Garland Hurt, a non-Mormon, to create three Indian farms. One was located in Millard County, another in Sanpete County, and the third at Spanish Fork.²⁵ These farms were created to teach Indians how to farm, raise grain, and manage livestock to produce their own food.

Although the goal was for Indians to do the farming, Mormon assistance and skills were needed to keep the farms operational. Joseph Ellison Beck, a Pennsylvanian and LDS pioneer of 1849, became the farm's first superintendent.²⁶ He served one year under Church direction and then was supervised by federal agent Hurt.²⁷ Mormon men from Provo, Springville, Spanish Fork, Salem, Payson, Benjamin, and Spring Lake were called to help farm the reserve. These men plowed the land, built log huts for the Indians, dug ditches, and built canals for irrigation. "Uncle Sam had sent an Indian Agent [Hurt] out here and he came down to Spanish Fork and built a house," John



explained, “and fenced in a large tract of land and called it the Indian farm. He raised a large amount of grain and corn and gave some of it to the Indians.” John said that Agent Hurt

was supplied with money and goods from the government to pay hired hands for their labor. He hired about fifty men and bought cattle and cows till he had a herd of about five or six hundred head. He had a brand made and recorded, and the brand was ID. He put a dam in the river about half a mile above the house and dug a canal to the farm to bring out the water to water the farm. He done a great deal of good at that time in giving employment to about fifty hands and in putting a little money in circulation. He paid his hands forty dollars per month, twenty in cash and twenty in store goods.

Like John, Dr. Hurt had lived in Kentucky, although he was a Virginian by upbringing. He was an educated, respected medical doctor who gained wide influence among the Indians at the farm. He first lived with the Becks, and then he and the Becks moved into a new two-story adobe house that became known as the Indian Trading Post.²⁸ John’s account indicates no major dislike or animosity on his part toward the agent:

He was a professional doctor and went by the name of Doctor Hurt. He had an Indian interpreter by the name of Richard James. There was several young Indian boys took a fancy to go to work. The Doctor got some clothes and dressed them up and made them wait on him, and go on errands, wait at table, and so on. And they got so as they could understand English pretty well, and they learned to talk English.

Agent Hurt's Escape

On the surface, Agent Hurt at first worked acceptably with Governor Young. But he became an opponent to the Church, primarily because of its attempts to proselyte among the Indians. "His opposition to their [LDS] Indian policy was more determined than that of any other man in this period," historian Norman F. Furniss concluded, "and he further antagonized the Church by winning a wide influence among the tribes under his jurisdiction." Hurt's letters to Washington "influenced the Government's decision to impose military occupation upon Utah."²⁹ When the army headed west to subjugate Utah, Mormons had good reason to fear that Hurt would try to ally the Indians with the army. John noticed minor problems Spanish Forkers had that summer with the Indian Farm and observed how the coming of the army upset the local relationships:

The Indians, they would come and camp down by the [Indian] farm and turn their horses into the field, and they would get into our grain [near the farm], run all through it and destroy it, and we could not raise anything for them, hardly. We had a very good harvest that summer [1857]. And the folks were getting up their stuff and securing it in for winter, when word came down from Brigham to be on hand and have plenty of powder and lead and to clean up our rifles and to be on hand at a moment's call. This made some of the men start [to worry] about them [Indians] but they were soon ready for anything that should come along.

When Brigham Young placed the territory under martial law, John said, "this put Gentiles [like Agent Hurt] in a sweat, they did not know what to do." A military decision was made that if Agent Hurt tried to leave the Indian Farm without the required pass, he would be arrested and taken into custody. But Hurt managed to escape, and in a formal report of the affair to Brigham Young, Brigadier General Aaron Johnson blamed John.³⁰ John, in his autobiography, defended himself against the accusation. "There is confusion surrounding Hurt's hasty departure from Utah late in September 1857," the standard history of the Utah War states, meaning differing accounts of what happened do not mesh in

some instances.³¹ What follows is an explanation of John's activities relating to Hurt's escape.

By mid-August 1857, while local militia units were being organized, Brigadier General Johnson warned the Legion's commanding officer, General Wells, that Dr. Hurt was turning local Indians into enemies of the Saints.³² Between September 11 and 17, Indians brought word to Agent Hurt that a large company of non-Mormon emigrants had been massacred in southern Utah. This came to be known as the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and it occurred on September 11 near Cedar City, Utah. "It soon began to be talked about among the employees at the farm that all the emigrants on the southern road had been killed by the Piede Indians," Hurt said, "but Indians insisted that Mormons, and not Indians, had killed the Americans." By September 23 Hurt had evidence that some Mormons had persuaded Indians to massacre the emigrants and were themselves involved. Such news most certainly made Hurt, knowing he was disliked by LDS authorities, fear for his own security. The next day he made plans to escape and link up with the approaching army.³³

By September 24 Major Butler told Brigadier General Johnson of a report from interpreter Dick James at the Indian Farm that Dr. Hurt planned to leave soon with Indians for the Fort Laramie area by way of the Uintah Valley. Two days later Colonel Hancock of Payson gave Johnson a similar report obtained from an Indian. Hancock understood that Dr. Hurt and his party would take ten head of cattle and as many horses as they needed but would leave the other animals at the farm in charge of old Chief Peteetneet, who would leave soon afterwards and take all the remaining horses and cattle from Spanish Fork. Hancock's informant named four chiefs who "although they work about the Farm and profess to be our friends, yet secretly they are our enemies." Whites employed at the farm, too, seemed to be in league with Hurt and the Indians. Hancock suspected Hurt's escape would take place in a few days when Mormon men were away attending General Conference. Local leaders were fearful that Hurt, if he left, would help the army with its invasion of Utah or would bring Indian allies against the Saints. Were Dr. Hurt to escape, Bishop Hancock said, "we shall be under the necessity of forting ourselves up." Hancock did not want the Indian Farm properties left "in possession of the Indians" to "feed our enemies" but believed that Mormons should take over the reservation. Johnson, in reply, ordered Hancock to watch the farm but not to make it look like anyone expected the escape. Johnson immediately left for Salt Lake to discuss matters with Brigham Young.³⁴

That Sabbath day, September 27, conflict came. John's account, when meshed with others, provides a fairly accurate sequence of the day's events. Just

after midday dinner, according to John, “there was news came to me that old Doc Hurt was going to slip his quarters and take up his abode in the mountains with the soldiers.” So John “went out and I called all the men in Spanish Fork together and told Col. John S. Fullmer to take command of them and go and take the Doctor.” John and Fullmer knew “it would take all the men we could raise for there was about two hundred Indians with him. James [Hurt’s interpreter] came to me and told me that he did not know anything” about Hurt’s plan to leave that day. Colonel Fullmer sent a note to Springville for Johnson, who was due to return that day, stating that seventy-five to a hundred Indian warriors had guarded Dr. Hurt’s premises the night before and were “ready to fight for him at the drop of a hat.” The note explained that Fullmer, Colonel Hancock, and Major Butler had consulted and decided to take Dr. Hurt prisoner that day, as soon as they could raise a force large enough to “awe them into submission, without shedding a drop of blood.” When that happened, they hoped to have a council with the Indians and “show them that the Dr. is blinding them with promises.”³⁵

John claimed that his plans for dealing with the Indian Farm situation did not include a call for help from outside Spanish Fork. “I found out afterwards,” he said, “that the two Bishops, one of Payson and [one of] Springville knew that the Doctor was about to leave before I received the news, and they had started their men.” Whatever the contact, Colonel Fullmer at some point ordered Major A. B. Wilde to bring 100 men from Springville, which he did. Diarist Hamilton said six wagon loads arrived “suddenly” from Springville under Wilde’s command. They joined Legion men from Spanish Fork and Payson, creating a combined force of 250 to 300 Mormons by the Spanish Fork bridge south of town. They sent a small contingent of twenty militiamen with the intent of entering Spanish Fork Canyon to post guards there, but Indians blocked them.³⁶

Meanwhile, the main force crossed the bridge and marched along the south bank of the river. Approaching the main house on the Indian Farm, they found it controlled by about 150 “very excited” and armed Indians who kept them eighty rods back from the building. Indians demanded to see a Mormon “captain.” Major Butler tried to go in alone but was stopped. Indians told John that Dr. Hurt had already fled. They released into John’s hands translator Dick James, who had been kept as a prisoner. James handed John a letter in which James said Dr. Hurt had escaped west, to West Mountain a few miles away and by Utah Lake, and that Hurt had officially appointed Butler to be the government agent for the farm to handle all business.³⁷ “The Doctor had fled and the Indians—all but about twelve—were left to cover his retreat,” John said. “The Mormons pursued him. And they [Indians] were riding backwards and forwards and

whooping and yelling and telling us to come on and fight them.” Colonel Fullmer and other officers joined Major Butler near the farmhouse. Carefully they considered what John had learned and then decided to give him command of the situation and dismiss the large posse. Colonel Hancock later said, however, that he personally “was opposed to giving up the chase, without searching the Farm.”³⁸ Colonel Fullmer was the ranking Legion officer present. John explained the factors that led to the decision to disband the troops:

I knew that it was of no use to fight them [Indians] for that would not bring the Doctor back. So we held a council about what we should do. Some wanted to follow him and fight their way through, but the Doctor was on a horse as good a one as was in the Territory. And then he was well armed and had an escort of twelve Indians, the best warriors there was in the whole tribe. And another advantage he had of us was about ten or twelve miles the start, and our men were on foot without anything to eat. And the men were not united either to follow them, for some wanted to go and others did not.

Believing it was possible that Hurt in fact was hiding until dark before trying to escape up Spanish Fork Canyon, John decided that “if a guard was placed at the mouth of the canyon and on the mountains” that “we might yet have a chance to catch him.” By council decision or indecision, “we had to give the chase up,” John said. “We returned home and nothing done,” except that John “placed a guard at the mouth of the canyon.” That evening, about 11:00 P.M., Brigadier General Aaron Johnson arrived back in Springville from his conference with Brigham Young and learned that Hurt had fled.³⁹

Dr. Hurt wrote his own version of his Sabbath escape. That morning, he said, some half-dozen Indians rushed into his office warning him that Mormons had come to kill him. He looked outside and saw “some 75 to 100 armed dragoons stationed in the road about a mile from the house.” Another Indian came in and said that “Spanish Fork canyon was full of mormons armed with guns and pistols, and said they were going to kill me.” Indians learned that armed men were coming from Springville and from Payson. Interpreter Dick James brought Hurt a note from Bishop Butler “stating that he had learned from various sources I intended going out with the Indians in violation of the marshal law now in force. He felt it his duty to inform me that I could not leave, that they were resolved to enforce the law at all hazards.” Dr. Hurt, irritated that he should be menaced while filling his government duties and fearing he might become a victim of “brutal revenge,” gathered government papers and needed

clothing and escaped on horseback with three Indians and one white man. He rode west instead of east, planning to loop south and then ride east, but a posse from Payson blocked him. He stayed hidden until dark, then returned to the Indian Farm and during the night or the next day, Monday, escaped up the canyon disguised as an Indian.⁴⁰

On Monday morning, John learned some details about Hurt's escape.

There was news came to me that the Doctor had fled over to the west mountain, and that a man by the name of William Maxfield had followed him with half a dozen men into a small canyon. But the Indians were too many for them. They sent a runner to Payson for more men, and he [Maxfield] stayed till dark watching them. And no men came to his assistance and the darkness was so great that he could no longer see them.

As John understood it, "the Doctor and his escort came across the Valley and went up Spanish Fork Canyon and passed the guard somehow or other without their knowing anything about it."

By late Sunday night rumors were swirling that Indians were driving off the Spanish Fork herd. Brigadier General Johnson ordered that there be no pursuit of supposedly missing cattle until he had time to investigate the situation early Monday morning.⁴¹ After a sleepless night, Johnson received an express letter from Brigham Young at 4:00 A.M. Young, not knowing of Hurt's escape, instructed Johnson to convey Indian Agent Hurt to Salt Lake City. "Be sure and not get into a collision with the Indians if it can by any possibility be prevented," Young warned, "and give them plainly to understand, that all the Government property at the Indian Farm, at Spanish Fork is actually under my control." Young told Johnson to keep sufficient militia at home to secure that area and suggested that a few men might be sent into the Uintah Valley to find out what was happening with Indians there. Young authorized Johnson to deliver government cattle at the Indian Farm to any Indians in the area who were destitute of food.⁴²

At 6:00 Monday morning, Johnson headed for Spanish Fork. After talking with excited people there he found that decisions made the day before "did not seem straight to me." Trying to interrogate interpreter Dick James, Johnson wondered why John, Thurber, and others helped James too much with his answers "and seemed anxious to keep him right." Johnson summarized Hurt's escape simply: "The bush had been shook, and the bird flown."⁴³ Then Johnson, accompanied by Majors Butler and Thurber, visited the Indian Farm. All Indians had left and some Indian lodges were standing but were "generally thrown down." Checking the main house, they found windows broken "and everything

seemed out of order, the trimmings on the carriage were torn off, the doors open, some furniture broken, and the house had been plundered to some extent, it seemed a perfect scene of waste and confusion.” The men made an inventory of the farm properties. They found that Indians had taken ten head of government cattle and some horses but had left behind sixty head at various places. At the farm Johnson counted twelve stacks of wheat, eight acres of potatoes, ten acres of standing corn, four wagons, and one carriage. He ordered the standing corn to be cut and directed men to round up the remaining government cattle.⁴⁴

Agent Hurt had appointed Butler to replace him as agent responsible for the government’s farm properties, but Brigham Young’s letter the day before, written without knowledge of Hurt’s escape, told Johnson to take charge. After completing the inventory work, Johnson “concluded that Bishop Butler had better take all in charge, and it was really within his jurisdiction” until further orders came from Governor Young.⁴⁵

Johnson returned to Springville and wrote a report to Young, in which he attached blame for Dr. Hurt’s escape to Butler and Fullmer. He complained that a force was raised to arrest Dr. Hurt “but it proved a failure” because Colonel Fullmer found the Indians too excited and because he acquiesced to Bishop Butler’s proposal to dismiss the forces, “not even a guard being set for the night.”⁴⁶

On Monday, Colonels Fullmer and Butler feared that Indians would try to drive the government cattle away, so they requested that Johnson keep back some of the mounted militia who were heading north. Instead, Johnson, who did not believe the Indians would return and fight for the cattle, ordered Colonel Fullmer to corral and guard the herd within the city limits and that Fullmer and Butler confer with the Indians and pacify them. Obeying instructions, John and Fullmer met with Indians who promised to return what horses they had taken and agreed to stay in the neighborhood and call on the Mormons “as usual” for supplies. Fullmer informed Johnson that John “promised to supply them as formerly, and all be friendly.” Fullmer added that “all seems to be right” with the Indians. He won permission from Johnson to herd government cattle on their usual ground and corral them on the Indian Farm because the city’s pasture was “scarce” and “we have no suitable corral.”⁴⁷

Meanwhile, Dr. Hurt, totally dependent on Indians’ help, “after wandering for 27 days through mountains and deserts in company with the Utah Indians,” linked up with the federal army in the Bridger area.⁴⁸

The Escape Controversy

Agent Hurt’s escape created a stir in Utah Valley and at Church headquarters. Brigham Young did not receive word of Hurt’s departure until Tuesday

afternoon, September 29.⁴⁹ In Johnson's formal report, he criticized Bishop Butler's naivete for believing that Agent Hurt would not drive off cattle or allow Indians to hurt Mormons. Johnson believed Hurt "was a damned rascal, and would do all he could against us." Johnson disliked the "apparent indifference" he found among Spanish Fork leaders, including John.⁵⁰ John, writing his memoirs only two years later, felt some need to defend his reputation and explain his actions:

I have since heard a report that I had something to do in the escape of Hurt, that I knew of his intended flight, and that I was a friend of his. Now, I can truly say before God and man, and God shall be my witness, that I knew nothing, neither had I any conversation with him on the subject at all. No, I am innocent of the report that has been spread about me, and the ones, whoever they may be—I know that I have enemies—and the very ones that should have been my greatest friends, but the sin will fall upon their own shoulders. God knows that I am not guilty, neither would I be guilty of such a thing [helping Hurt escape] while I am in the Church of God and God gives me His Holy Spirit to enable me to do what is right. Well, I am free from any such report and I feel thankful to God my Heavenly Father that I am.

John said that he had directed a two-pronged search for Dr. Hurt. First, he sent a team of men on a long route "out on the road into Echo Canyon" to intercept Hurt. Then he "sent three men up Spanish Fork Canyon to explore a little and to see if anything could be seen up there" of Hurt's tracks or trail. One of the three scouts he sent was his son Taylor. The trio "went up there," John said, "but they saw nothing of a suspicious nature." When it became clear that Hurt had escaped, the searchers came home.

That John did not help Hurt escape seems clear. That he could have done more by way of surveillance and calling for reinforcements to prevent the escape also seems evident. A speculation is warranted here. In Agent Hurt's report of the affair he naturally tried to make himself look good, so he might have stretched the truth when he talked of local threats to kill him. But, if he was not exaggerating, if the threats were genuine, and if John believed them, John could have been careless or slow in stopping Hurt on purpose. Horrifying reports of Mormons being participants in the Mountain Meadows Massacre were less than two weeks old. If John coupled that news with Parrish-Potter religious murders that March in Springville where Bishop Johnson presided, it is conceivable that, to prevent the possible killing of a federal agent, John did not act vigorously when Hurt made his escape.⁵¹

Hurt's departure eased the tensions that his influence among Ute Indians had been causing. His exit produced the best resolution in the long run for Mormon-Indian relations at Spanish Fork and for Mormon dealings with the federal government, something his imprisonment or harming him would not have done. Soon after Hurt left, John wrote to Brigham Young to say that Dr. Hurt had assigned him, John, to take charge of the place. In response Brigham wrote to Bishops Johnson and Butler on October 5, saying the arrangement Hurt made with Butler was fine:

As the matter now stands it will probably be best for Bishop Butler to continue in charge, according to his authority from Dr. Hurt, and manage the affairs of the Agency for the best interest of the Government, the Indians that farm &c was designed for, and the fair adjustment of claims by citizens for labor, cattle, tools, &c. And Bishop Johnson is hereby released from any further charge or responsibility in that business, since Bishop Butler is nearer the farm than is Bishop Johnson, and will undoubtedly manage with reasonable prudence and good judgment.⁵²

A few days later Young wrote to the federal Superintendent of Indian Affairs, recommending that John at Spanish Fork, Bishop Warren Snow at Manti, Bishop Lewis Bronson at Fillmore, and Bishop Philo T. Farnsworth at Beaver be appointed to act as Indian agents to handle local affairs for the government.⁵³ In December Young urged another federal Indian agent, George W. Armstrong, to warn Indians to cease their hostile attitudes towards Mormons in the Spanish Fork area. Young expected Armstrong would need to call on the bishops in that neighborhood to operate the farm for another year "as there is no prospect that the U.S. government will extend any assistance."⁵⁴

Ward Matters

John, as bishop, attended to a variety of church matters in the summer and fall of 1857. He helped with rebaptisms on July 5 and reconfirmations on September 27.⁵⁵ In September, with harvests underway, he began accepting tithing wheat and other products, with Henry Hamilton serving as his tithing clerk.⁵⁶ Fall coolness meant ward meetings could not be held outdoors. Therefore, according to Hamilton, in order to fit inside buildings with limited seating capacities, the ward was subdivided into smaller units called wards—which were in fact subwards without separate bishops. At least three subwards were created, each of which met within its own boundaries. At a Thursday evening assembly on September 24, Hamilton said, people in his neighborhood agreed to have weekly meetings in his "third ward" schoolhouse.⁵⁷

Despite such external complications as drought, grasshopper invasions, the Reformation and the outbreak of the Utah War, pioneer women constantly filled vital economic roles in family and community. According to pulpit rhetoric, they were expected to sustain themselves if need be and to teach their daughters “to pursue some useful avocation” so that when they became wives “they may be able to sustain themselves and their offspring.” Part of a female’s domestic role, according to the First Presidency, was to

sew, spin, and weave; to cultivate vegetables, as well as flowers; to make soap, as well as cakes and preserves; to spin, colour, weave, and knit, as well as work embroidery; to milk, make butter and cheese, and work in the kitchen, as well as in the parlour.⁵⁸

John’s ability to carry out his time-consuming duties as militia major and bishop depended in large measure on Caroline and the other wives being able to produce much of the food and clothing the Butler family needed.

During the mid-1850s women in Spanish Fork and several other Utah towns created the first LDS Relief Societies since the days of the Nauvoo organization. At first the units formed to assist Indians, but they soon turned to helping needy Saints, too. In 1856 Utah societies collected food and clothing to aid sufferers during the famine and then to help with the handcart rescue effort. Society sisters also washed, anointed, and cared for the sick. A variety of group projects became vehicles for helping sisters develop their own domestic skills and spirituality.⁵⁹ Spanish Fork women organized a Relief Society on September 14, 1857, to help with militia needs for the Utah War. Three Relief Society presidencies were chosen, one for each subward in the ward. Rhoda Snell, president in the “First Ward,” selected John’s plural wife Sarah to be her first counselor.⁶⁰

While summer’s shadows lengthened and fall quietly enveloped Utah, army drums were beating ever closer to the Bridger area, which was the main eastern entry point into Mormon country. Within nine months, soldiers would march through Salt Lake City and establish a large military base in Utah County. For John the Legion major, the soldiers’ occupation of Utah would lead to reduced militia work on his part. For John the Mormon bishop, the invasion by hostile armed men would force a practical reduction in public meetings and church services and would be a source of new evils to challenge LDS standards. For John the family man, as for most Utah County residents, the Camp Floyd post would mean more money in circulation, new markets for local products, and a better standard of living.

Utah War Disruptions

Hearing news reports about the progress of the United States Army units marching towards Utah was, for the Butlers, like watching a distant prairie fire moving ever closer to Fort Ponca. Without a miracle or extraordinary statesmanship by someone, the federal troops would clash in mountain passes with the Nauvoo Legion and bloody warfare could reach Utah's heartland. John, writing his autobiography barely a year after the war threat ended, devoted many pages to the "Utah War" so recently on his mind. For him as Saint, father, bishop, and militia major, this was an event of epic proportions that he chose to discuss at length.

Winter of Waiting

During late 1857 and early 1858, John faced no shortage of church and community responsibilities. In September, as noted previously, he married plural wife Henrietta Blythe. To prevent Indians from driving Mormon cattle up Spanish Fork Canyon, he directed townsmen in September and October in erecting a mud wall across the canyon mouth. Then, militia men took turns standing guard to protect the cattle.¹ September and October harvests required John to devote time to handling tithing donations. During that labor he became ill, contributing no doubt to his two-year decline in health that would end his life in 1860. "I found the bishop was still poorly," tithing clerk Henry Hamilton wrote in his diary on October 4, 1857. A main tithing concern, Hamilton noted, was the storing of donated hay. On a matter separate from tithing business,

Hamilton recorded that Bishop Butler visited him on November 7 and performed the wedding ceremony for Hamilton and his fiancée, Janet Johnston. Then John attended the wedding supper. Hamilton added that Bishop Butler “said he felt well in marrying us, and that he believed the Lord was pleased with us.”²

During the final quarter of 1857, the Butlers and their neighbors harvested potatoes, threshed wheat, and shucked corn.³ On November 28 tragedy struck a local family, no doubt eliciting responses from Bishop Butler. George Foster, his wife, and their young child lived in a dugout. Two beams in the roof collapsed, dropping heavy dirt on the Fosters. Neighbors rushed to dig them out. The wife and child survived but George was dead, killed by a timber. He was buried the next day.⁴

The Mormon militia carried out surveillance of the army near Echo Canyon during this time, and John relished the news he received of their exploits:

The army now was very near the line of this Territory. There were several thousand of the boys out in the mountains, and Lot Smith was Captain over the mountain rangers and was scouting about over the mountains, sometimes here and sometimes there; sometimes right in sight of the soldiers and then right away from them.

He mentioned Legion strategies to control Echo Canyon, through which the army would have to pass:

General H. Wells was out among the boys giving them orders what to do. He had them to build batteries on the top of the mountain and pile up rocks so that if the enemy came they could roll down rocks upon them and they would be dashed to pieces. The canyon was narrow for three or four miles down and there was no chance to get in but by this road, [so] that the army would not come in but they camped upon Ham’s Fork.

When Major Lot Smith’s few dozen mounted guerrillas burned three wagon trains loaded with army supplies on October 4 and 5 by the Green and the Big Sandy rivers,⁵ John rejoiced:

Lot Smith went out upon the road to the Big Sandy and burned up seventy-five [seventy-two] wagons for Miller [Majors] and Russell [who were] freighting provisions for Uncle Sam. And he went up to the wagon master and told him to corral his team. He wanted to know by

what authority he had to tell him to corral his wagons. Lot told him by the authority of this revolver, and he pointed it to his head.

He [wagon master] told the men to corral their wagons; they corralled, and Lot told the men that if they had anything in the wagons of their own that they could get it out, and he told them to be sharp about it. He then told his boys to set fire to the wagons and drive the cattle off up in the mountains. They did so, and the wagons all burned up, and the mark of the fire remains to this day and will do so for years to come.

Because the long columns of soldiers and supply wagons were poorly commanded, facing the onset of winter weather, and expecting strong resistance from Mormon guerrillas controlling narrow Echo Canyon, they stopped and pooled near Fort Bridger's ruins in November. The fort, by then owned by the Mormons, was partly in ashes because Nauvoo Legion riders had torched its wooden structures on October 2, as well as their own Fort Supply ten miles south, so the army could not use them.⁶ General Albert Sidney Johnston arrived to assume command of the army, which by then involved more than 2,400 soldiers and supply personnel. Desperate to establish quarters for the winter, federal troops created Camp Scott in the vicinity of Fort Bridger's remains. Latter-day Saints in Utah, grateful for the invasion's delay, felt a measure of safety until spring.⁷

Because John was experienced at handling livestock, he gave particular attention to the army's severe losses of cattle through lack of feed and because of theft by Legion cavalry:

The boys brought the cattle in to Salt Lake City and Brigham had them turned upon good range where they would live all the winter. The soldiers kept on Ham's Fork and . . . would not venture in any farther for they thought that the mountains were full of Mormons . . . the winter set in upon them and they could not stir about as they had done. Their cattle that remained huddled together and starved to death.

A shortage of salt caused army cattle to die in droves. According to John, "Brother Brigham heard of their condition of their being without salt, so he got up a load and sent it to them but they would not accept it." In response to this prideful refusal, "the man that took it [salt] out spilled it on the road side, for he would not haul it back again."⁸ John also noted that

In the summer afterwards [men found that] there was several places where the cattle [during winter] got together. Some two or three

hundred head in a gang had all died, and their bones lay bleached in the sun and they covered acres of ground just as thick as they could lay. Their cattle all died off [because] their salt give out.

For John, the cattle losses, which were due more to freezing weather than to a lack of salt, were a sign that God stood on the side of the Saints. “There they were, poor ignorant souls didn’t know that they had come to fight the Lord’s Anointed and fight against God Himself,” John wrote; “they little knew the power they were fighting against.”

Mormon militiamen assigned to patrol and control Echo Canyon during the winter months also suffered much, and John’s ward was one of many that sent supplies to the exposed men:

Echo Canyon was well fortified and if they [the federal army] had attempted to come down they would certainly have been all destroyed. The boys out in the mountains got pretty short of clothing and we had to make a collection for them, such as socks, shoes, pants, shirts, mittens, and sent them out to them to make them comfortable. The mountain rangers done the most damage for they would go right into the soldiers’ camp and take revolvers and guns from under their heads and would not be seen.

Second Indian Farm Dispute

Early in 1858 Bishop Butler became involved in a dispute about his responsibilities at the Indian Farm.⁹ Brigham Young had given John one set of instructions in October and then issued a contradictory set to a federal subagent for Indian matters, Major George W. Armstrong. At issue was Bishop Butler’s paying off Indian Farm obligations by disposing of the farm’s grain, stock and other property. On February 8, 1858, President James C. Snow of the Utah Stake and Bishop Aaron Johnson accompanied Major Armstrong to investigate the problem. In Spanish Fork they found “some little excitement as well as some threatening” relative to the matter. Apparently John had paid people with farm items in order to settle accounts owed them, as he had been instructed. Snow and Johnson preached that evening, easing local tensions.¹⁰

At another meeting held the next morning, the two men read instructions Brigham Young sent to Bishop Butler, dated October 5, 1857, soon after Agent Hurt’s escape. These told Butler to take the agency of the farm and make a fair adjustment of property to the best interest of the government and the claims of citizens. Then, the investigators reviewed the letter Brigham Young had sent to

Armstrong on October 16, less than two weeks after the Butler letter. Armstrong was instructed to take the agency of the Indian farms and to call on Butler and others to assist him. Then, in a December letter, Young told Armstrong to use the property to the best interest of the government and the Indians. Armstrong claimed that his authorizations, being more recent, superseded Butler's.¹¹

John maintained he had the right to pay off Mormons, most of whom were his fellow townsmen, to whom the Indian Farm owed pay or property. Investigators found that many tools and some harnesses were missing from the farm since the September inventory Bishop Johnson had taken. Interpreter Dick James had disposed of two horses and two colts that belonged to the farm, claiming them as payment for what Dr. Hurt owed him. Besides, he argued, he had recovered them from Indians who had stolen them, so he claimed the right to dispose of them. The investigation found that although the farm had 1,500 bushels of wheat, if all claims against the agency were settled, nothing would be left to feed the Indians or to operate the farm.¹²

Because John became "very sick," the hearings stopped. Investigators ordered that nothing at the farm be taken away until their investigation was finished. Records of the meetings add that "it is a general time of sickness of severe colds like it was last fall, only worse." Then, reporting on another kind of health, it said: "The brethren are spirited here in fitting up for [to fight] the army."¹³ How the Indian Farm claims finally were settled is not known. Many Indians by then, apparently, had left the farm and moved into eastern Utah. On March 11, 1858, Brigham Young answered an inquiry from John about suffering Indians, saying he had invited those who wanted to return to Mormon settlements to do so and that Bishop Johnson of Springville was authorized to provide them with tithing wheat and flour.¹⁴

"Move South" Influx

In March 1858 Henry Hamilton wrote that the Butlers' sawmill was operating but needed logs to saw, so John hired him to help. On March 8 and 9 Hamilton "went to the Kanyon to get some logs for the Bishop's mill." In another entry, Hamilton mentioned an instance when he became a victim of Bishop Butler's lapse of memory. John gave a newcomer in town some of Hamilton's property. When Hamilton noticed the man digging a cellar on his lot, Hamilton told the stranger he owned it because Bishop Butler had given it to him, but the man refused to stop digging unless the bishop told him to. Hamilton visited John, who admitted he had forgotten to whom he had given that land. John offered Hamilton a new lot up on the bench, which Hamilton refused. Can you pay the man for his work, John asked. Hamilton hesitated, because the man had dug the

cellar in the wrong place. So John went down to talk to the man, but he, hearing that Bishop Butler was coming, disappeared for reasons not known.¹⁵

On March 26, 1858, Spanish Fork residents learned that Saints in counties north of theirs received orders from Brigham Young to “move south.” Before doing so, the homeowners were to prepare their houses to be torched if necessary to keep dwellings, foodstuffs, and crops from hostile soldiers hands.¹⁶ The plan was “to send families, grain, stock etc. to different locations south where we can sow grain, plant potatoes, sugar cane, corn, and other vegetables.”¹⁷ Two days later the Butlers and their neighbors were ordered to cease sowing wheat because odds were high that they would be out of the area by harvest time.¹⁸ Earlier, on March 21, President Young had announced a bold plan of deserting settlements where the army might come and torching buildings if the army proved hostile. Each congregation north of Utah County “was assigned a provisional destination in Utah, Juab, Millard or Iron counties.”¹⁹

Utah County bishops received special instructions from President Young to assist those people who were vacating homes in finding temporary places to live:

We shall need many teams for the present movement, and we expect you to assist us as much as you can consistently, and to furnish covers to the wagons you send to our aid, so far as you have them. You can begin to send the teams here for families, &c. as soon after next Sunday, the 28th [of April], as you can get ready; and many of the families and other loading can be unloaded in your county for a time, as we shall not sow nor plant any more here this season, you will see the propriety of raising all the potatoes, flax and sugar cane you may be able to do. The standing army [Nauvoo Legion] is superceded, and the justice requires that the property collected for our army be returned to those who furnished it, at least so far as they call for it.²⁰

In April the move began in earnest and soon involved some thirty thousand Saints.²¹ Bishop Butler’s ward sent several wagons, though the exact number is not known. Joseph Ellison Beck furnished two teams, and he and his son went to Salt Lake City to help the move.²² Thousands of Mormons with wagons and cattle streamed into Utah County where most stopped and created temporary camps. Others kept going southward into central Utah. In Spanish Fork dozens of the uprooted families created makeshift shelters or camped in their wagons. John helped his community respond to the sudden influx:

He [Brigham Young] ordered the people in the North and in the County of Great Salt Lake to move south and take all their families and all their stock and as much provisions as they could take along with them and told them that if the soldiers were determined to come in and kill them that they were to set fires to their houses and leave them a ruined city.

And the folks did move south and Brother Brigham moved his family south as far as Provo. There was but one woman left north of the point of the mountains and she was doing writing for the Church. The City did look a desolate place for the folks were all gone south, except a few men left to guard the city. And teams were scattered from the City to Sanpete [County]. It was like one train. The folks put straw and shavings in their houses ready to burn them up when the word came from Brigham.

Diarist Hamilton said that on April 11 he attended a Spanish Fork Ward meeting in the old fort and found many newcomers from Salt Lake County there. Two weeks later, at church again, he observed that a good many more newcomers were arriving.²³ Some frustration, perhaps caused by the crowd of homeless people, made John use force on one troublesome brother. He whipped a man named Riley “with a stick” for making “considerable trouble” in the ward about a property line dispute. When the Utah Stake high council heard the case on April 24, 1858, on appeal, they determined that “the Bishop was too fast” in his reactions.²⁴

In the midst of much community excitement over the new people moving in and the expected arrival of the federal army, John’s plural wife Henrietta gave birth to her first child, Isabella Elizabeth, on June 11, 1858. Henrietta was twenty-seven years old. Isabel, named for Henrietta’s mother, was one of two children John would father by Henrietta within a three-year period.

Camp Floyd Close By

Alfred Cumming, the new governor of Utah Territory, persuaded in part by easterner Thomas L. Kane’s personal lobbying at Camp Scott in behalf of a peaceful resolution of the conflict, rode to Salt Lake City ahead of the army to measure the Mormons’ reactions to his appointment. Along his route, Mormon soldiers resorted to what John thought was a clever ruse to make Cumming think the Mormon army was bigger than it was:

As he was coming down Echo Canyon— he came along there in the night—he would come to a camp fire of Mormons. The boys built fires

all the way down the canyon, and they all got to the top fire, and when the old Governor got to the fire the boys give three cheers for Brigham Young. The Governor stopped and spoke a few words to them. He then went on and the boys all started for the next fire and got there before the Governor and were ready to meet him. The Governor stopped and spoke a few words to them again thinking that he was talking to another lot of men. He started again and again. The boys started to the next fire and got there before him, and so they kept on doing all the way down the Canyon.

Governor Cumming, John said, “began to be frightened for he really thought that the mountains was swarming with Mormons.” Based on hearsay accepted as fact, John claimed that Cumming “said that he never was more surprised in his life. He said that he did not think [before] that there was one sixteenth part as many Mormons as he saw in the canyon.” What John heard was that “the boys had built up about twenty-five fires, and there was about five hundred of them; that would make it appear twelve thousand five hundred men, when the old Governor had only seen five hundred in all.”

Saints spread a lot of stories that were more wishful thinking than fact about how afraid the federal troops were of the Mormons, and John recorded some of these. For example, he wrote down this falsehood, thinking it was true: “Now, when they [federal troops] had been out there all winter, their wrath was cooled down and they did not feel so much like fighting Mormons. They wanted to make treaty and they sent Governor Cumming in to Salt Lake City.” In fact, however, the army was eager to shoot it out with the Mormons’ militia and resented Governor Cumming’s venture into the city ahead of them.

While the war was being debated, most of Spanish Fork’s farmers diligently plowed and planted. President Young and other LDS leaders visited with John on May 23, 1858, and learned from him that “the people of Spanish Fork would not get through planting corn until the last of next week.” By then John and son Taylor had new properties to develop. County deed books show that on January 5, 1858, John bought twenty acres of land from son-in-law George W. Sevey for \$100.²⁵ In February Taylor had two lots surveyed for himself, totalling about 116 acres.²⁶

Complex peace talks between Governor Cumming, the peace commissioners sent by President Buchanan, and LDS leaders produced a peaceful resolution of the conflict on June 12.²⁷ Governor Cumming was recognized in his office and General Johnston’s vast army was allowed to enter the Mormon valleys without resistance. War was averted, John correctly noted, because Governor Cumming discovered firsthand that Utah was not in a state of

lawlessness as reported. He found that the territorial records had not been destroyed by Mormons, as anti-Mormons had reported to government officials back east, which was one of the main justifications used to send the army to Utah. So Governor Cumming reported that Mormons, with regards to these papers at least, were law-abiding citizens who had been falsely accused.²⁸ Mormons rejoiced over Cumming's report, versions of which circulated quickly by word of mouth, gaining embellishment along the way. John's version is slightly overstated but basically accurate:

He [Cumming] came in to Brother Brigham and Brigham treated him with respect and when the old Governor saw the things as they were he said that the Mormons had been foully misrepresented, and that he would stand for the rights of the people. And said that he never was in a place before where so much order and obedience was carried on. He sent word to Gen. Johnston that he had found the people of Utah good citizens of the United States and that they meant to uphold the laws of the United States. And that the United States, or the leaders of the United States, had done very wrong to send an army out here to make the people of the Territory of Utah come to obedience to the laws of the United States when they were the only people in the United States that observed the laws strictly. And, said he, they are good people and industrious and minded their own business.

Peace terms stipulated that the army must establish its camp a good distance from the Mormon populace. Federal soldiers marched reluctantly to the west side of Salt Lake Valley and then found a suitable site for a military base in Cedar Valley in the northwest part of the Butlers' own Utah County, several miles west of Lehi. During July 1858 they established Camp Floyd.²⁹ This act, John noted, ended the Mormons' plan to torch their homes if war broke out:

They did not have the job to burn them up for the soldiers came to terms, and they were to come in and go on to the west side of the river Jordan, but they were to march right through and not molest anything at all. Well, they came in and went and camped at the crossing of the river and then went about seven miles above up into the cedars.

On June 30 President Young announced that Saints could return to their homes, which they did during July and August.³⁰ However, according to John, some decided to remain in Spanish Fork, making his workload as bishop additionally burdensome:

Brother Brigham gave orders for the folks to move back again if they wanted to, and a great many moved back and a great many stayed.

There was a great many came to Spanish Fork City and they covered the bottom and made dug outs under the side of the benches. And the cattle ranged on the benches and they ate all the feed off so that our own cattle fared very slim that fall. The folks came to me to give them places to build and I had so much to do that I did not know hardly which to begin at first. I did not have time to eat meals I was so busy.

Last Ward Meetings

Diarist Hamilton said that during May, before the “Move South,” people had returned north, both the locals and the newcomers used the Spanish Fork bowery for religious and public meetings. A record of some of the church meetings held in 1858 survives, giving glimpses of Bishop Butler’s labors. For example, on May 23 the ward clerk noted that “Minutes of Ward meetings until this date were on scraps of paper and are lost.” That day Bishop Butler made a strong appeal for the cattle to be cared for so that grain would not be damaged. Three elders—Coltrin, Chidester, and Dorrity—spoke in support of John’s appeal. Counselor Thurber urged mothers to keep their daughters home at night and parents to stop young men and young women from racing about the streets at night.³¹

By June the bishopric was conducting Sunday morning and afternoon meetings outdoors in the bowery. The typical meeting agenda was a prayer, a choir number, a speaker, and a prayer. The 2:00 P.M. meeting included an opening hymn by the choir, a prayer, a speaker, administration of the sacrament, and a benediction. At the June 20 morning meeting, Apostle Orson Hyde preached. He warned that despite the recent reformation, many Saints exhibited coldness and had not made proper restitution—apparently for damages their cattle had caused. He cautioned women against leaving their husbands, saying they would lose the Spirit if they broke their marriage covenants. He also warned sisters not to sell butter to soldiers for a “trifle”—meaning to keep it for their own people’s use or else get a good price for it.³²

At the morning worship service a week later, Bishop Butler conducted and opened with prayer, after which Brothers Pace and Enoch Reese spoke about their recent proselyting missions. In the afternoon John W. Berry reported about his fourteen-month mission. Then, a Brother Draper reported on his trip to Provo to talk with President Young. The army, he said, passed through Salt Lake City “without hurting a twig,” and people could return to their homes. Speaker Draper added that leaders counseled the people to “remain quiet and wait for orders.”³³

On July 4 Bishop Butler conducted the two Sunday meetings and also preached. He recommended that brethren take some livestock down to the lake

because the people who had camped there during the Move South had “removed back.” He “spoke of the destitution of people as it regards clothing.” He encouraged his ward members to patronize the Church’s “currency,” issued that spring and summer by the Church’s Deseret Currency Association to counteract a shortage of any kind of currency in the territory. By mid-July several thousand dollars worth of this currency, based on cattle capital, was having “beneficial effects.”³⁴

By edict from Church headquarters, all church meetings were cancelled in mid-July, and in Spanish Fork no more were held that year.³⁵ One reason usually given for such a dramatic act, which hurt the Church spiritually, was that wards needed to become organized again following the disruptive Move South. But, cancelling meetings does not help a unit organize itself. More likely, the policy was implemented to prevent Saints from making inflammatory remarks in church meetings that might incense the newly-arrived soldiers. Two pieces of evidence support this view. The first is a warning issued by Bishop Jesse C. Little of the Presiding Bishopric to a gathering of bishops on October 28, 1858: “If there are any meetings, let them be prayer meetings, religious meetings. Be wise, kindle no fires that will be hard to put out.” A second is Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter’s caution given the bishops on December 9, 1858: “In respect to meetings . . . be careful to control all that may be said, for an enthusiastic Mormon is more dangerous than an apostate.”³⁶

Cancelled church meetings symbolized the fact that Mormon life in Utah would never be the same as long as the army was stationed nearby. Henceforth, Bishop Butler and all local LDS residents would live in fear of the gentile power so near. But they also would seek ways to profit by selling to the army and by buying army surplus items.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

The Final Two Years

By mid-1858, with the war threat ended, the Move South over, and the United States soldiers building Camp Floyd, John did not know he had but two years remaining to live. For the first year, he continued to labor in the thick of Spanish Fork's religious, civic, and economic affairs. But in 1859 his health failed, which required him to disengage more and more from his bishop's labors until he became more the observer than the participant in life. However, had it not been for this health difficulty, John might not have had or taken the time to write his recollections about his eventful life.

Butler Sawmill

Archibald Gardner, one of Salt Lake Valley's leading millers, was a Move South Saint who stopped in Spanish Fork. He remained there to become a business partner with John, and the two of them opened a sawmill in 1858. Decent timber was not close by, and loggers had to make two- and three-day trips into the Wasatch Mountains to fell trees for Spanish Fork's construction needs. Gardner arranged for a millrace to be dug to bring water power to the mill. The Gardner-Butler mill not only sawed lumber but also produced badly needed shingles to be used on Spanish Fork roofs that until then had been covered with mud, straw, brush, willows, and other inadequate materials. But by this time, adobe homes were replacing log and wood ones, and they needed shingled roofs.¹ Of this business venture, John recalled:

I had partly put up a saw mill and Archy Gardener came down here and moved his family here and put a house up for them. He then came to me and told me that he would take a share in the saw mill if I was willing, but he said that it was not in a good place and would have to be built up higher. So we had it moved and finished it.

Gardner, once the sawmill was operational, decided to erect a gristmill at the sawmill site. It opened in December 1859, four months before John died. John explained:

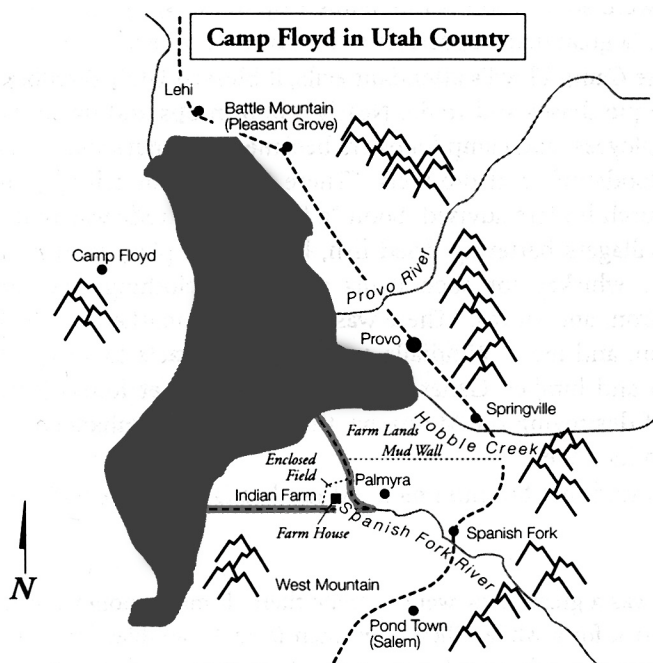
He then said that he thought that it was a good place to put up a grist mill, and that he thought that he would get a grant for to put up one. He did so.² And when the saw mill run he went to work and put up one of the best grist mills in the Territory. He made the [mill]race larger and put the grist mill just below the saw mill on the City main water ditch. It was a good thing for Spanish Fork for [until then] they had to go to Springville mill to get their grinding done, and they had to go to Pondtown [Salem] to get their sawing done. So it was a great benefit to the ward.

Brother John Murray came down here in the move south and he had put in mills for Archy Gardener down North, and Archy got him and Brother Reed³ to put up his grist mill. They both of them bought land here and calculated to make their home here.

Army Evils and Blessings

By spring many Indians had returned to Spanish Fork and its Indian Farm, and Spanish Fork residents tried to coexist peacefully. On June 3, 1858, President Brigham Young was in Provo and asked Bishop Butler “to furnish four or five head of beef cattle (tithing) to Petetenete, Sanpitch, White-eye, Tabby and their Bands who will stop at the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon.”⁴ Meanwhile, Camp Floyd sprang up across Utah Lake and near its northwest shore. “The soldiers,” John said of Johnston’s Army, “went over into Cedar Valley and . . . they built their barracks and took up their quarters there.” Their hostile presence made Latter-day Saints cautious about what they said and did with regards to Indians and to non-LDS people in the area.

Camp Floyd, beginning in early July, sprouted amid cedar-dotted rangeland near present Fairfield, Utah, to become a major army base in the intermountain west.⁵ According to General Johnston’s biographer, “eventually Camp Floyd was a neat military cantonment of almost four hundred adobe huts, each housing



a group of six or eight soldiers. Besides the huts, there were extensive warehouses, headquarters buildings, mess halls, smithies, and stables.” By fall, General Johnston’s command had 2,900 men. The base was formally dedicated on November 9, 1858.⁶

Bishop Butler disliked the evil influences that the army, with its “camp followers,” brought into his county. Other records show that seventeen saloons, “with their accouterment of gamblers, prostitutes, slickers, and thieves” opened near Camp Floyd in “Frogtown” and “Dobieville” to accommodate the soldiers. Six miles from the base, in Fairfield, shootings and murders became common.⁷ One soldier said Fairfield included “Saints, Gentiles, Mountaneers, Greasers, Loafers Thieves, Black Legs [swindlers], Rum sellers, Lager Beer Brewers and the Lord know what else; every house is [a] grog shop—or a Beer-shanty.”⁸ John disdained these dens of iniquity located so close to his town that they tempted local Saints to sin:

They made quite a fine place over there, but it was like going into hell at once for the whoredom and murder and profane language was fearful. I never troubled them myself, but there were several went from this ward, which I was very sorry to see, for when they were here they seemed to be pretty good Saints, but when they went over there they drank in the spirit that was there and they soon went by the board.

Not only were some good Saints tainted by the worldly enticements, John noted, but “a great many apostates went out there to live.”

Despite Camp Floyd’s attendant evils, it blessed Utah Territory through large-scale purchases and trade. Nearly 4,000 troops and up to 3,000 suppliers, employees, and camp followers became consumers and purchasers of Mormon foodstuffs and products. “There is no sin in selling grain to the army,” Church leaders advised. Soon “a flourishing trade was built up, with Mormon villagers bartering dried fish, buttermilk, pies, vegetables, butter, eggs, and . . . whiskey for such items as money, clothing, tea and coffee, pieces of iron, and stoves.” There was also a good market for Mormon hay, straw, grain, and meat. Windfalls came from contracts to supply the army with grain and lumber. General Johnston’s biographer found it ironic that “instead of destroying the Mormons, the Army vastly enhanced their prosperity with its trade.”⁹

John found that Mormon men did not hesitate to trade with or work for the army:

There was a great many went to trade there. It made money stir round very brisk for a while. They hired men to make adobies for them and give them one dollar per hundred and there was lots of men that would make six and eight hundred per day, so that they made a good deal of money. They also hired men to chop cord wood in the mountains and gave three dollars per cord, cedar wood.

Some of the lumber the army used to build barracks at Camp Floyd came from John’s sawmill, bringing fifty dollars per thousand feet to Gardner, John, and their employees.¹⁰

John did criticize one flourishing trade that too many supposed Saints found too profitable to avoid— selling whiskey:¹¹

The people would go over there with whiskey and trade it to the soldiers for clothes, pistols, and one thing and another and get them for nothing, almost. They would get a good overcoat for about two dollars worth of whiskey, and they could get a revolver for about the same, and then the soldiers would tell the officers that they had lost them, so they would get another, and [traded] their clothes the same.

Local Saints were also fortunate to be able to buy army surplus goods, paid for by American citizens’ tax dollars and then sold at low prices. Periodically the army auctioned off condemned food and surplus animals and equipment. It

offered bargain prices for items needed by the Saints, such as mules, bacon, boots, and wagon doubletrees.¹² Surplus sales began in July of 1859 with the army selling 2,000 mules that Mormons eagerly bought for prices ranging from \$60 to \$140 each.¹³ At one sale the army disposed of 3,500 large freight wagons. These oversize vehicles cost at least \$150 in the Midwest but sold in Utah to the Saints for \$10 each. Mormons bought the wagons and used them for granaries or stripped them of iron to make nails.¹⁴ John's autobiography tells of some of the bargains he personally heard about:

They had a great sale over at Camp Floyd. They advertised the sale of mules and wagons, harnesses, saddles, and they were to be sold at auction and were to be knocked down to the highest bidder. Some got splendid mules for sixty dollars a span. The wagons were priced at thirty dollars each and anyone could get one for that amount. The wagons cost in the States eighty-five dollars each at wholesale price, so they did not make much on that speculation.

The mules would cost at least one hundred dollars a head and their harnesses was almost given away for you could get them for three dollars a set. They were good harnesses but had but one line, and if any one would purchase a whole team they would throw in the harness, stretchers, double trees, fifth chains and give them in for nothing, so that you could get a wagon, three span of mules, harness and everything for two hundred and ten dollars, about the worth of one span of mules. But they were short of money and had to have it for to pay the soldiers.

Camp Floyd and its soldiers provided other local benefits. Army patrols reduced Indian dangers, explored, and helped to build roads. John told of one expedition that went up Spanish Fork Canyon and built part of a short-cut road (where U.S. Highway 6 now runs) to Sanpete County:

Now there was a call from the United States for some of the army to go this way and some of them to go that way. One part went to Mexico and they came up Spanish Fork Canyon and went up the Spanish trail. Now, they had to make a road all the way after they got up to the Forks of the Canyon. They made a road so as they could pass over, but no road to stand [permanently].

Now, by making a road about seven or eight miles it would take you to Sanpete in half the time that it would take the other way [via Nephi]. There is a creek [Thistle Creek] that runs down into the right hand Fork and by making a road up there it will save the folks one day's drive from Sanpete.

John believed “that the road will be put through some time or other.” His prediction came to pass, and today’s driver can easily go from Spanish Fork to Manti and other Sanpete County towns via U.S. Highway 6 up Spanish Fork Canyon and then south on U.S. 89 near Thistle. John felt that the soldiers should put in such a road and undertake other such projects.

The soldiers’ ranks thinned, John heard, because “there was a great many deserted and they would send an officer and about a dozen men after them, and perhaps about four or five would return out of the thirteen.” Just before his death in early 1860, John observed that “there was only enough soldiers left to take care of the barracks and to be on hand if the Indians went to making any fuss.”¹⁵

For some reason, perhaps delicacy of feelings of the females involved, John failed to comment on what one soldier termed “the butchery at Spanish Forks.” Five companies of soldiers from Camp Floyd, seeking Indians who had brutalized a Spanish Fork mother and her daughter, marched to the Spanish Fork Indian Farm on October 2, 1858. There, they killed one of the two suspects. The soldiers banned the Indians from the farm, confiscated all the potatoes and corn they could carry, and destroyed the rest in hopes the Indians in the area would scatter. The Indians retaliated that month by running off Indian Farm cattle and attempting to burn the Indian Farm’s buildings. Indian-white relations became tense and hostile during the next months. Gradually, however, Indians returned to the farm reservation, a few at a time.¹⁶

Failing Health

For John, 1859 was his last full calendar year to live. It started well, if for no other reason than he became a father again a week before. Twenty-one-year-old plural wife Lovisa Hamilton gave birth on Christmas Eve day, 1858, to her only child by John, Lovisa Patience Butler. This was John’s fourteenth and next-to-last child.¹⁷ On February 13, 1859, John attended the Sunday meeting of the Third Ward (sub-ward). Henry Hamilton noted that Bishop Butler did not give spiritual advice but talked instead about keeping hogs and sheep out of others’ fields. The next day, February 14, residents voted for city officers. Apparently John helped select candidates and then discovered that many townspeople did not like the choices of the Church leaders. “This was the first time that ever I see the Saints voting against those who were nominated by the authorities of the Church,” Hamilton said, “but the Bishop gained the day.”¹⁸

By spring 1859 Bishop Butler felt too ill to carry the full load as bishop. Patriarch John Young visited him and found him in poor health. John requested that Young arrange for someone else to be appointed to take general direction of affairs at Spanish Fork, so he had only tithing to look after. Patriarch Young

recommended that John Berry preside, but Brigham Young, George A. Smith, and Ezra T. Benson decided on May 5 that Elders Smith and Benson should visit Spanish Fork and lay the matter before the people.¹⁹ On May 8 Apostles Smith and Benson installed John W. Berry as the settlement's new president—no president had been in place since Berry's departure for a mission almost two years earlier. Elder Smith ordained him.²⁰ Spanish Fork once again had a president and a bishop, a dual leadership structure.

Ward presidents, an anomaly today, were an experiment of sorts during Brigham Young's presidency. Earlier, in Church concentrations outside of Nauvoo and then during the Winter Quarters and Kanesville sojourn, many LDS branches had both a president and a bishop.²¹ Apparently the perception behind this double leadership structure was that every ward was but a stake in embryo, which, when fully organized, would have a president, bishop, high council, and patriarch.²² During the 1850s several LDS settlements in the West had both a president and bishop, including San Bernardino in California, and Nephi, Manti, and Spanish Fork in Utah.²³ As late as 1862 President Brigham Young touted the two-leader concept: "As soon as the elders have wisdom sufficient to magnify their calling and Priesthood, we will give to every Branch, no matter how small the Ward, both a Bishop and a President."²⁴ Elder Orson Hyde followed President Young's talk by telling General Conference attendees that he had thought to dispense with the office of president in the country settlements but was "happy to inform you that I have never heard of any feeling of difficulty between the President and Bishop at Spanish Fork." But in most communities, he pointed out, President Young placed the two positions, president and bishop, upon the shoulders of the same man.²⁵ In practice, the double leader system produced disagreements between the two heads, and, instead of being widely implemented, the idea quietly died out.²⁶

At church meetings on Sunday May 15, 1859, President Berry presided and Bishop Butler spoke about tithing "and exhorted people to pay their tithing if they expected to receive the blessings."²⁷ John said that making John Berry president "relieved me of the labor that I had to do." That is, the ward president apparently planned and conducted church meetings and handled spiritual matters, leaving the bishopric to concentrate on tithing and assisting the poor. John's counselors, Albert King Thurber and George Wilkins, shouldered some of his remaining tasks. In fact, Brigham Young sometimes considered counselor Thurber to be Spanish Fork's acting bishop; an 1859 list of Utah bishops in President Young's papers, for example, lists Thurber as the bishop, not John, although John was still recognized formally as the bishop.²⁸ Thurber's autobiography says he became bishop of Spanish Fork in 1859, which means

that he was acting in John's place much of the time, handling most of the bishop's functions but was not officially the bishop.²⁹ In pioneer-era Utah, bishops served for life and were not released for health reasons, for missions, or for short-term absences from their ward. When they could not do their jobs, usually a counselor temporarily became an acting bishop for the ward.

During the three years when John was an active bishop, he performed no less than twenty-five marriages. The Spanish Fork Ward Record of Members lists couples he married, and the names include those of many founding families, such as Creer, Fullmer, Jolley, and Reese.³⁰ The same records identify seven ward members who died while John was bishop: James P. Durphey, Gundall Johnson, Dolly Patience Holt, Anna Morris, Hugh Clotworthy, John H. Redd, and Lydia Rebecca Thurber.

Two weeks after John Berry became the ward's president, John started his autobiography. On May 20, 1859, he penned this explanation of his project:

My health is very poor at this time and has been for near two years, on the decline. I shall make a short account of my life up to the present that my wives and children can have my testimony to look at after I am gone behind the vale, but if I recover from the present affliction I will write more on the same subject hereafter.

While recalling his past, John described some of the problems his health was causing him at the time:

I have had the palpitation of the heart very bad lately and I do not have the health that I used to have. I feel myself gradually wasting away. I have to lay up [go to bed] some times, I am so sick. And my mind is so full that I cannot attend to my duties, and I have to put my councillors to work and do what I cannot do myself.

A concerned father, John wrote some comments about his two divorced daughters, starting with Charity:

My daughter Charity obtained a bill of divorcement from her husband, Mr. Wallace. He had taken her to California and had not used her altogether right so she would not live with him any longer. For instead of his coming back as he represented to me, he stayed there and did not sell out or make any preparation to come at all. She is living with my daughter Phoebe. She has let her have one of her rooms.

In regards to daughter Elizabeth's divorce, John wrote: "My daughter Elizabeth also obtained a divorce from George Wilkins" because "she and the first wife could not agree at all with one another and she thought that they were better apart."

Later that spring, 1859, Spanish Fork residents were forced to examine their own personal reactions to the Mountain Meadows Massacre that took place in southern Utah almost two years before. By May, newly appointed Indian Agent Jacob Forney brought from southern Utah sixteen to eighteen children who had survived the massacre. For a few days or perhaps weeks he lodged these orphans at the Becks' home at the Indian Farm. According to Beck family tradition, Mrs. Beck cared for the children until relatives from the East came for them.³¹ Although John did not mention this matter, he had to have known about it.

Final Days

Information about John's final year is skimpy. He spent some of his time writing his autobiography. He blessed a baby, George Cable Mayer, on September 3, 1859.³² Apparently the Butlers received a prize at the Utah Territorial Fair that fall for an entry created by one of John's wives; the list of winners includes "J. L. Butler" who received a first prize for "best hearth rug, rag."³³ Caroline and Sarah, and probably Ann and Lovisa and Henrietta, participated in the Spanish Fork Relief Society, which continued to function after the Utah War ended—one of only three or four in Utah that did so.³⁴ John attended or at least heard about his eight-year-old son Thomas's baptism on November 6, 1859.

Two General Authorities visited Spanish Fork on February 21, 1860, and found "increasing enterprise" under President Berry. They learned that the Gardner-Butler gristmill was operating successfully, and a new central schoolhouse, double the size of the ward meetinghouse, had been completed on the southeast corner of the public square.³⁵

Assistant Marshall Jesse Bishop took Spanish Fork's 1860 census four months after John died. His findings present a detailed picture of John's community and the ward he officially headed as it was when he last knew it.³⁶ By government tally, Spanish Fork had 1,041 residents. Males outnumbered females by a mere thirteen. Forty percent of residents who listed places of birth (412 of 914) were foreign-born. One-third of the population was born in the British Isles—168 from England, 66 from Wales, 61 from Scotland, and 16 from Ireland. John had associated with quite a few Danes, given the fact that Spanish Fork had 56 by mid-1860. One-fourth of the people, or 247, many of them youngsters, were Utah-born. Only 31 were Southerners, including two Butlers and three blacks that were part of the Redd family. Canadians numbered 27,

New Englanders 29, Midwesterners 131, and 54 people had been born in the eastern United States.

A sizeable percentage of children and youth, 223 total, had attended school during the previous twelve months. Marshall Bishop identified only eight adults who could not read or write. The town had 2 blind residents, 2 insane, and 2 “idiotic.” The census taker identified 282 dwellings in Spanish Fork but labelled 95 as “unoccupied.” The town’s 192 family units lived in the other 187 dwellings.

Spanish Fork was overwhelmingly an agricultural town. In terms of professions, occupations, and trades, the census taker identified 294. Fully three-fourths, or some 170, were farmers or farm laborers. For tradesmen, the community had 5 carpenters, 5 shoemakers, 3 blacksmiths, 3 associated with milling, 3 tailors, 2 seamstresses, 2 stone cutters, and but 1 butcher, brickmason, cooper, fisherman, printer, wagonmaker, and tinsmith. Four men were involved in merchandising. Six were community officials: a bishop, ward president, justice of the peace, Indian Farm agent, and 2 interpreters. Several immigrants listed their maritime occupations from the Old Country that were practically useless in Spanish Fork: 2 sailors, 2 seamen, and 1 sea captain. In terms of household help, the town had 1 servant, 3 domestics, and 1 cook. More than being mere census statistics, these were real people, most of whom John knew personally by the time of his death. These were his people, and he was their shepherd and leader.

On March 26, 1860, two weeks before John died, President Young sent his failing friend this advice:

Owing to the state of your health I have thought it best for you to roll the burden of all the business affairs of your Ward upon br. Thurber your First Counselor. This will free your mind from much care, and at the same time afford you ample opportunity to counsel and direct in your Bishopric, so far as your health may permit.³⁷

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

Life Worn Out Early

I went down to the [Salt Lake] City and the first day I was taken sick and spit up blood, and I have not been well since.” So begins the next-to-last paragraph of John’s autobiography written between May 1859 and April 1860. “I have not been well since and have been confined to my bed off and on since that time,” he continued. “Now I am getting worse all the time. I fear that I have seen my best days.”

Sensing he was dying, John called his children in to talk to them. According to John Jr., he “bore a most wonderful testimony of the truthfulness of the Restored Church of Jesus Christ.” He told his family that “the greatest desire of his heart was that his children and children’s children would be and remain faithful” to the religion to which he had devoted his life since converting. So urgent was his admonition that he “paced the floor and his face turned blue with anxiety over his children.”¹

John died on April 10, 1860 (not 1861 as some records say), after “a lingering illness.” The heart palpitations he mentioned indicate possible heart failure or complications related thereto. Damage caused by the rheumatic fever and “rhuematis” he had suffered throughout his lifetime perhaps contributed to his death.² It became a family belief that John’s “inflammatory rheumatism” in his younger years had been cured by his baptism and was “rebuked,” so that “for the rest of his life he was free from this affliction” until his last year. Then, the old disease made a comeback and “with it came leaking of the heart and dropsy.”³ John died relatively young, only two days past his fifty-second birthday.

Ever since his conversion to Mormonism, John had been denied the chance to settle in one place for very long. As a Latter-day Saint he had lived a year in Kentucky, two in Missouri, one in Quincy, five in Nauvoo, two moving from Iowa to South Dakota to Nebraska, four in southwest Iowa, and seven in Spanish Fork, not counting two summers near Fort Bridger. All were stops along the path he followed to find and help build the Kingdom of God. This time John left home for yet one more frontier, the most challenging one of all, the great frontier of death—for which his lifetime of religious questing and commitments had been preparing him. John’s body was buried in a cemetery on the benchlands east of Spanish Fork. Years later it was moved to the city cemetery—even his shed body seemed unable to stay long in one place.⁴

Family Left Behind

Henry Hamilton’s diary mentions John’s passing. Hamilton recorded on April 10 that John Lowe Butler and Joseph Sweetman were buried. “Both died on the 9th and good men,” he reported, missing John’s death date by a day. “The first was our Bishop,” Hamilton continued. “Left a large family.” Sizeable family it was. Not counting the married children who had left home, John’s household then numbered five wives, seven children, two divorced daughters living at home, and two grandchildren. Four months later the census taker listed eighteen in the Butler household, including two hired hands:⁵

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Birthplace</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Caroline Butler	48	Tennessee	
John Butler	16	Illinois	Farmer
James Butler	13	Iowa	
Lucy Ann Butler	11	Iowa	
Thomas Butler	9	Iowa	
Alveretta Butler	6	Utah	
Caroline E. Butler [Wilkins]	20	Illinois	
Charity A. Butler [Wallace]	25	Tennessee	
Caroline M. Wallace	2	California	
Hamilton M. Wallace	1	Utah	
Ann Butler	65	England	
Sarah Butler	54	N. Carolina	
Henrietta Butler	30	Scotland	
Isabella Butler	1	Utah	
Lovisa Butler	22	Illinois	
Lovisa Butler	1	Utah	
John McHale	25	Ireland	Farm Laborer
Elias B. Stockton	28	Ohio	

Also in Spanish Fork, according to the census, were two of John's married children and their families: Taylor Butler and Phoebe Butler Sevey. John's last child was born one week after the census taker finished his count. Wife Henrietta, who was five months pregnant when John died, gave birth on August 11 to John William Butler—his first name honoring the deceased father he would never see.

After John's death his wives and children did not have easy lives. The 1860 census, which lists the Butlers' real estate and personal property taxation valuations, shows that the Butlers were neither dirt poor nor well-to-do but were above average. Most family units in Spanish Fork possessed property with taxable values of \$100 to \$200. Caroline's property was valued at \$650—\$150 for real estate, the rest for possessions and livestock. By comparison, married son Taylor had \$1,100 worth of taxable property, and Phoebe and George Sevey \$900. Caroline's household was still struggling and had not "arrived" at a comfortable living level like that enjoyed by the ten wealthiest families in town, whose taxable values for property ranged between \$1,700 and \$7,500.⁶

One would wish that the Butlers, after having made huge sacrifices in order to be obedient Latter-day Saints, could have enjoyed more personal wealth and property by this time in their lives. John's ability to accumulate property during his seven Spanish Fork years was hampered by having a very large family (including five wives), by allowing two daughters with troubled marriages to move back home, by needing to spend much time being a bishop and on militia matters, and because of health problems. It is worth noting that most of the wealthiest men listed above had no plural wives in town, and those who did had but one extra wife.

John left an estate not sizeable but somewhat complicated. It consisted of land and livestock, which could be sold or divided up easily, and a sawmill partnership, which had to be sold to be divisible. In June 1861, when the family needed money "for the present support of the minor children of the deceased," the court approved the sale of John's half-interest in the sawmill with proceeds to be used for that purpose. But no buyers were found. Late in 1863 and early 1864 the executors informed the probate court that the family could not finish dispersing the estate because of a \$250 to \$300 debt owed by it. The court authorized Taylor and Caroline to take profits from the mill and apply those to the debt. Because the Butler children who married during John's lifetime "received small presents from their father when they left, such as a cow and a few sheep," Taylor convinced the court that such gifts ought to count as part of their inheritances from the estate "if they now ask for distributive shares." As legal heirs the court recognized Caroline and her children, Henrietta and her two

minor children, Lovisa Butler (who had remarried) and her child by John (Lovisa Patience), and widows Sarah and Ann. Widow Henrietta was named as legal guardian for her two children by John. Finally, the court ordered the mill sold and the proceeds fairly distributed.⁷

Records do not show who inherited what, except a family history says that widow Henrietta received “quite a few sheep and a few horses” for her share of the inheritance.⁸ It would seem, lacking evidence or even hints otherwise, that John’s property was equitably divided up among the heirs.

By three wives, John had fathered fifteen children—six sons and nine daughters. Of the other five wives, Caroline’s sister Charity had returned to Tennessee in 1846 and died among her kin there; the elderly Sarah Lancaster left Nauvoo and returned to her family in Indiana; the younger Sarah Lancaster conceived no children by John; Ann Hughes was too old to have children when John married her; and young Esther Ogden divorced him after but a few months. Of John’s fifteen children, Caroline’s son William Alexander died young in Kentucky. After John’s death, Henrietta’s daughter Isabella died in 1872 at age fourteen. But thirteen Butler children reached adulthood. All thirteen received temple endowments, indicating a commitment to the faith of their parents. Of the thirteen, only Thomas did not marry.

Wife Caroline Skeen. After John died, widow Caroline suffered “many trials and troubles.” She helped her young sons with farm work and shearing sheep. At John’s death, the “full responsibility” of farming and providing for Caroline and children still at home fell upon sixteen-year-old John Lowe Butler II. He even hauled logs down from the canyon to build a home for John’s other wives. In 1864 matriarch Caroline moved her family south to Paragonah, Utah, thirty miles northeast of Cedar City. With her were sons John, nineteen; James, sixteen; Thomas, twelve; and daughters Lucy Ann, fourteen; and Alveretta Farozine, nine. Before long, Indian problems prompted them to move east forty difficult miles to Panguitch. They returned to Paragonah in 1866. John II and younger brothers James and Thomas fought in the Black Hawk War, a series of Indian-white skirmishes that marred parts of Utah in the 1860s. John, James, and Tom received some schooling; about the year 1868 they lodged with James Adams’ family in Paragonah while attending school for a year.⁹

Caroline “worked” wool for people in return for a share of it and did carding, dyeing, spinning, and weaving of cloth for clothes for her children. Caroline put her sewing skill to strange use one day when a man nearly severed his thumb with wool shears and she successfully sewed it back on. A family story says that she once received a blessing from two visitors, promising that she and her children would never go hungry. Sometimes she had to scrape the

bottom of the barrel carefully, again and again, but each time she somehow came up with meal, similar to the widow's barrel blessed by Old Testament prophet Elijah. Once, a stranger came to her door and left her a dressed mutton without saying a word.¹⁰

In 1871 the family moved again to Panguitch as part of a group called to resettle the area under the leadership of George W. Sevey, Phoebe Butler's husband. At that time, five of Caroline's adult children lived in or near Panguitch—John, James, Thomas, Phoebe, and married daughter Sarah Adeline Allen and family. Caroline's youngest, Alveretta Farozine, was still living at home with her. "The Butler family was a close-knit family, with great love and loyalty toward one another," a grandchild observed.¹¹ The three Butler brothers—John, James, and Thomas—engaged in ranching and in milling lumber and shingles. The "Butler Brothers" partnership became well-known for running Morgan horses and sheep on their ranch. After John married Nancy Franzetta Smith in 1873, Caroline lived with them until her death on August 4, 1875. She was buried in Panguitch, but later John took her body back to Spanish Fork and had it buried beside her husband. A newspaper report of her passing paid particular tribute to her religious commitments: "in all the trials and privations through which she passed, she exhibited much fortitude and patience and an undeviating faith in the gospel of Christ."¹²

Wife Ann Hughes Harrow. After John's death, Ann stayed in Spanish Fork. Within John's family she was known as "Grandma." Ann participated in Relief Society and taught some school. Alveretta Farozine Butler was one of her pupils. By then Ann was about seventy years old, bent over, and walking with a cane. Alveretta talked a friend, Emma P. Evans, into going to school with her. One day "Grandma" slapped Emma in the face with "an old boney fist" for forgetting an alphabet letter, so, when Ann died in 1866, young Emma refused to attend the funeral. At burials, Emma said, children were expected to throw flowers into the grave, but Emma said she would have thrown rocks into Ann's grave.¹³

Wife Lovisa Hamilton. About a year after John's death, Lovisa married Moroni Olney. By him she had nine children, the first in March 1862 in Utah County. She and Moroni, a farmer, eventually settled in Smithfield, Cache County, Utah, seven miles north of Logan. In 1884 Lovisa was sealed in the temple to Moroni, rather than to John. She died in Smithfield in 1924, fourteen years after Moroni's death.¹⁴

Wives Sarah Lancaster and Henrietta Blythe. After John's death, wife Sarah Lancaster Butler lived briefly with sister-wife Henrietta Blythe Butler.¹⁵ They became close friends. Sarah, who was childless, helped take care of

Henrietta's daughter Isabella. Henrietta became the first plural wife of John Powell, a man for whom she had worked as a youngster in St. Louis, on June 18, 1864. Henrietta took John William Butler with her when she and Mr. Powell went to live at Deseret, Meadow, and then Fillmore, but she left daughter Isabella with sister-wife Sarah, apparently because childless Sarah had never had a child to raise. Henrietta also took along the livestock she inherited from John. She had seven children by John Powell. She named her firstborn Sarah, after her sister-wife. Mr. Powell died in 1902. Four years later Henrietta married again, to Allen Russell, and they spent ten years doing temple work in the Manti Temple. She died at Fillmore, Utah, in 1924, sixty-four years after the death of her first husband, John Butler.

Henrietta's children by Mr. Powell praised three of Henrietta's qualities: her integrity, her philosophy that "God will provide," and a "very spiritual nature."¹⁶ A family story about her underscores her spirituality. In her later years, while staying briefly with the Robert T. Burton family in Salt Lake City, she noticed a Burton child afflicted with St. Vitus' dance. She felt she should give the child a blessing, asked permission, which was granted, and "in the blessing she told the child that she would be healed." When one of Henrietta's daughters visited the Burtons later on "they testified to her that the child was healed through that blessing."¹⁷

Sarah, meanwhile, stayed in Spanish Fork and participated in Relief Society activities through the years. She was a charter member when the Spanish Fork Relief Society was reorganized on July 2, 1875.¹⁸ Henrietta's daughter Isabella was living with Sarah when Isabella died at age fourteen on November 25, 1872, of a cause not recorded. "Aunt Sarah was always very kind to Isabella," one of Henrietta's grandchildren noted.¹⁹ When John's widow Lovisa became sealed to her next husband, rather than to John, her namesake daughter, wanting to keep her connection to John, arranged to be sealed to him and childless wife Sarah (see daughter Lovisa discussion below). That Sarah was well liked by sister wives Henrietta and Lovisa is a tribute to her character. A Spanish Fork neighbor considered Sarah a "lovely woman."²⁰ Sarah became a temple worker in the St. George, Manti, and Logan temples. At her funeral in Spanish Fork in 1900, it was observed that she died "much respected by all who knew her for her goodness and integrity of character."²¹

St. George Temple Visit

Two decades after John's death, of his large family only plural wife Sarah and Caroline's son Taylor remained in Spanish Fork. On October 7, 1881, Caroline's children gathered at the St. George Temple and all were sealed for eternity to John and Caroline, except Thomas who, being unmarried, chose not to come.

Apparently the children felt that their parents' sealing, which had been performed before there was a temple, should be redone in a temple.²² The siblings stayed several days and "did a good deal of baptismal work and some endowment work for the dead." It seems likely that they used John's detailed genealogy information about his ancestry, recorded in his autobiography, while doing this proxy work. They found other names filed at the temple of people in their ancestry, so Taylor hired temple clerk Frank Farnsworth to copy names from the temple record of Butler ancestors into a large record book of his own.²³

While together in St. George, the Butler children sat for a formal portrait. Because Thomas was not present, they included his photograph in the portrait. At that time, the family lived in three geographic clusters: mother Caroline and married daughters in the Panguitch, Paragonah, Harmony, Pinto area; oldest son Taylor in Spanish Fork; and three sons at Richfield.

Kenion Taylor Butler and Olive Durfee	Spanish Fork
Charity Artemesia and Amos Thornton	Pinto
Keziah and Lemuel H. Redd	Harmony
Sarah Adaline (Mrs. Philo Allen)	Panguitch
Phoebe Melinda and George Sevey	Panguitch
John Butler and Nancy Franzetta Smith	Richfield
James Butler and Charlotte E. Topham	Richfield
Alveretta Farozine and Jas. C. Robinson	Paragonah
Lucy Ann and Joseph Barton	Paragonah
Thomas	Richfield

When the Manti Temple opened in 1888, Caroline's children agreed to go there once a year and spend a week doing temple work. The custom was carried on for years. Because Manti is close to Spring City, the group was sometimes joined by relatives of John's sister Lucy. She and husband Reuben Allred, who were parents of eight children and an adopted Indian girl, had settled in Spring City. Lucy died there on December 16, 1884, and Reuben outlived her by twelve years.²⁴

The Children as Adults

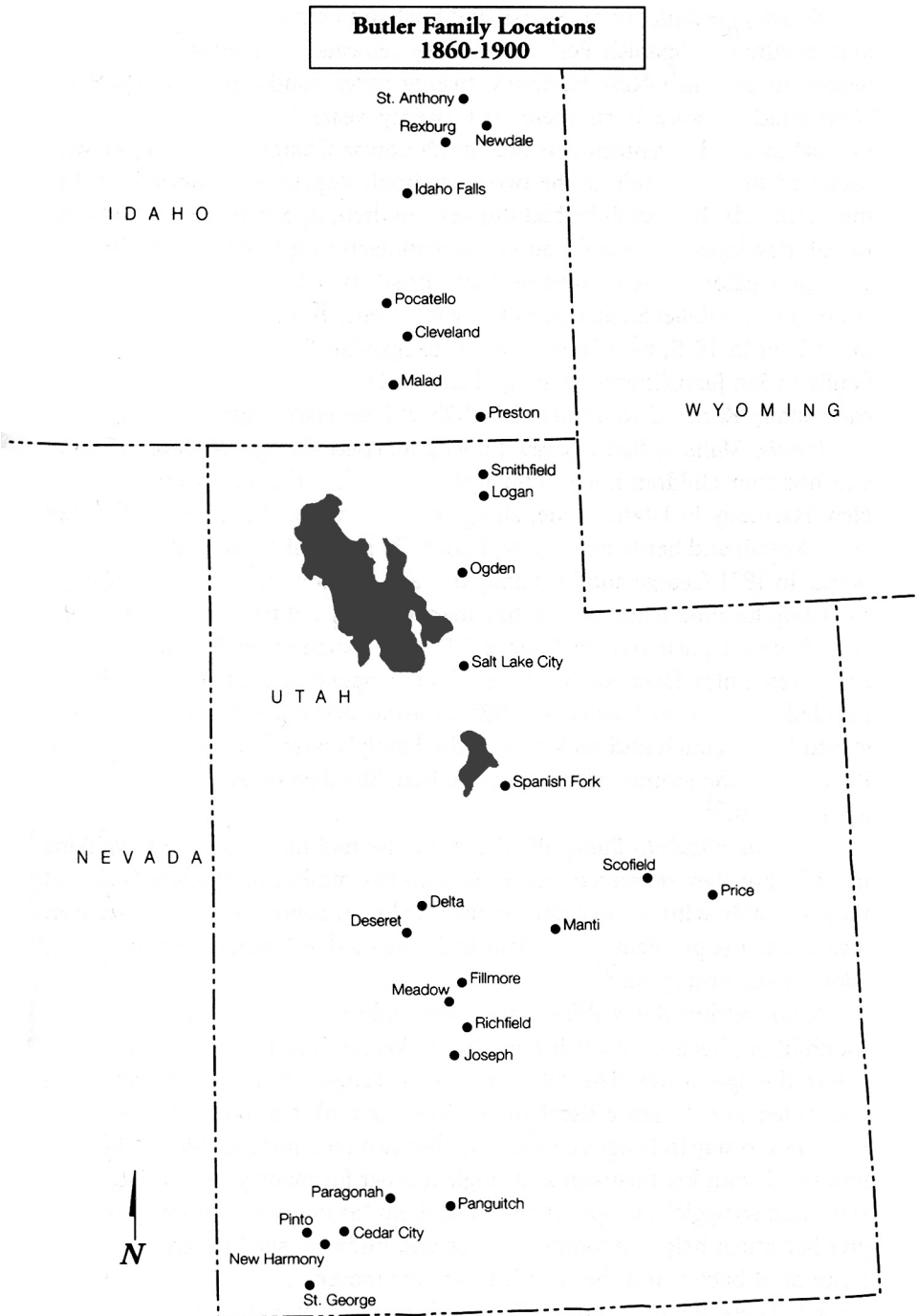
Kenion Taylor Butler. Taylor and wife Olive made their home two miles south of Spanish Fork. They had nine children. For a time they owned some fifty acres.²⁵ By trade Taylor was a farmer. He also helped operate a sawmill, apparently the Gardner-Butler mill.²⁶ Taylor saw military service as an officer during Utah's Black Hawk War in the 1866.²⁷ Taylor was six feet four inches tall. His brothers John L., James, and Tom were all over six feet tall, ram-rod

straight, and had piercing black eyes. “The four of them together made a sight that always called for a second look,” a relative noted.²⁸

In September 1882 Taylor became a missionary in the Southern States Mission, with headquarters in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where his mission president was Brigham H. Roberts. While proselyting in Alabama, Elder Butler developed “brain fever” and was given an honorable release. He returned home from his mission on October 16, 1883, and had poor health until his death on May 1, 1886. A few minutes before his death he sang a “heavenly hymn,” then said, “Lord help and forgive me.”²⁹

Charity Artemesia Butler Wallace Thornton. With money from her husband, H. M. Wallace, from whom she had separated, Charity built a little home in Spanish Fork near the Butlers and bought a small farm and milk cows to help provide for her two children. She became a skilled weaver. Amos Thornton, a young married man from southern Utah, stopped at Spanish Fork and renewed his friendship with Charity—the two had liked each other as youths in Nauvoo. Back then, Charity and Amos’ sister Lydia had been such good friends that each vowed to name a child after the other when they grew up. Charity became Amos’ second wife in October 1862, and she went with him to southern Utah. Pinto, some thirty miles southwest of Cedar City, became her home for the rest of her life. She and Amos had seven children, born between 1863 and 1873. Charity fulfilled the girlhood vow by naming a daughter Lydia, and her friend Lydia named a daughter Charity Artemesia Adams. One of Charity’s sons died at age sixteen; daughter Charity Artemesia died when a few months old; and son Taylor, who looked like Grandfather John Lowe Butler, died at age fifteen. Adding to Charity’s losses, her married daughter Caroline Whipple died following childbirth. For Charity, losing these children was a “great sorrow.”

At first Charity lived in the same cabin with first wife Mary Whittaker Thornton. Amos was Pinto’s acting bishop for a time, and he and his family helped build the St. George Temple. He and Charity attended the dedication service. In Charity’s early years in Pinto, she and her sister Keziah (Mrs. Lemuel) Redd in New Harmony, about twenty miles away, frequently visited each other. Charity also visited her mother Caroline and sister Farozine in Paragonah, some sixty miles distant. For many years Emily Emmett Eldredge, a granddaughter of Captain James Emmett, came to Charity’s Pinto home for visits. About 1882 Charity and Amos separated and she received a third of the family’s property. Her last years were rather lonely because her children had moved away. She died December 16, 1908, at Pinto. A daughter said of Charity that “her religion was everything to her. She was a spiritually-minded woman and loved the Gospel.” In her later years, she enjoyed doing temple service.³⁰



Keziah Jane Butler Redd. Keziah and husband Lemuel Hardison Redd had four children in Spanish Fork before they relocated to southern Utah and helped to establish New Harmony, twenty miles southwest of Cedar City. Nine children were born there. For twenty years Lemuel was a bishop. Lemuel married seventeen-year-old Sariah Louisa Chamberlain in 1866, who occupied the south side of the two-story brick duplex while Keziah lived in the north side. By Keziah he had thirteen children, by Sarah Louisa, fourteen. Keziah developed the usual household manufacturing skills but also became an expert tailor of men's suits and an "artist" in rug making. She served as counselor in a Relief Society presidency for twenty-five years. Lemuel married Mary Holt in 1879, who later returned to Spanish Fork. He moved Louisa's family to San Juan County, Utah, and later to Old Mexico but spent time with each family. Keziah died on May 15, 1895, at New Harmony.³¹

Phoebe Malinda Butler Sevey. Phoebe married George W. Sevey in 1854 and had four children born in Spanish Fork before the family was called to New Harmony in Utah's Dixie, along with several neighbors, including her sister Keziah and her family. There, Phoebe helped build her family an adobe home. In 1871 George and his family moved to Panguitch, where he presided as bishop for nine years. George had married Margaret Imlay as a plural wife, "which was a great trial to Phoebe." Phoebe ranched on Panguitch Creek about ten miles from town. There, George operated a sawmill. When he decided to move to Mexico in 1885 to avoid arrest for polygamy, Phoebe stayed in Panguitch and took care of the family's farm, livestock, and ranch. Phoebe was the mother of fourteen children. She died on August 14, 1892, at age fifty-four.³²

Caroline Elizabeth Butler Wilkins. Caroline had married George Wilkins in 1857, but they separated. She lived with her mother in Spanish Fork and then, possibly, with her married brother Taylor. At some point she became an invalid but the problem is not identified. She died at Goshen on February 3, 1866, at age twenty-six.³³

Sarah Adeline Butler Allen. Sarah and Philo Allen became the parents of six children, born in Spanish Fork, South Weber, and Paragonah. Four died before the age of five. The Allens moved to Panguitch in 1871. When Philo was called to help settle Escalante in 1874, he took his first wife, but Sarah preferred to stay in Panguitch and raise her two remaining children. She lived separated from her husband as a single mother for many years, and it was "a very hard struggle" to support and raise them "as her husband was unable to give her much help." Becoming a nurse and midwife, she brought more than a hundred babies into the world. Later, she moved to Manti to be a temple worker. There she met John H. Tuttle, whom she married in 1895. She was a Manti temple ordinance worker

for fourteen years until her health failed. She then lived with relatives in Panguitch until she died on June 20, 1923.³⁴

John Lowe Butler II. John moved with mother Caroline to Paragonah, Panguitch, and then back and forth to each again. He and younger brothers James and Thomas fought in the Black Hawk Indian War, and John had his horse shot out from under him by Indians. On June 23, 1873, John married Nancy Franzetta Smith of Parowan, and they became parents of ten children. Mother Caroline lived with John's family until her death in 1875. John was in the San Juan Expedition in 1879, but he crossed the Colorado River by way of Lee's Ferry and not through the awful Hole-in-the-Rock chute and crossing.³⁵ In or about 1880 some ruffians hit John with a board, smashing his skull. He suffered from the injury for the rest of his life. He and his brothers operated a ranch at Panguitch and formed a sawmill and shingle mill partnership, which John managed. In 1881 the Butler Brothers partnership dissolved and the three men moved to Sevier County, Utah, where John homesteaded near Joseph, Utah. The next year he became a polygamist by marrying Sariah Johnson, which led to his serving six months in prison. He and Sarah had six children. A mining claim south of Richfield that John held became the Butler-Beck Mine, a short-lived venture. "He went into the sheep and cattle business," a family wag said, "and drove them into a mine, and they never came out again." On December 30, 1898, he died at Richfield of Bright's disease at age fifty-four, survived by two wives. A daughter described John as being "a kind, loving father."³⁶

James Butler. James also moved with his mother to southern Utah. While involved in the Black Hawk War, he was shot in the side but his ribs deflected the arrow, preventing it from penetrating. James, as part of the Butler Brothers partnership at Panguitch, superintended the ranching operations. He and Thomas made a trip to California and bought a fine stallion, paying \$1,000 for it, and thirty-five brood mares for \$3,500. "They made good money as long as they were cooperating and helping one another," a daughter recalled. On March 2, 1874, he married Charlotte Elizabeth Topham. They had six children. About 1882 they moved to Richfield. "The Butlers loved horses and largely made their living with them." James kept a colony of bees, earning him nicknames of "Honey Jim" and "Beeswax Jim." Seeking income opportunity and a warmer climate for Charlotte, who was ill, the family decided to move to LDS colonies in Mexico. They "converted all that they had into horseflesh" and shipped them to Colonia Juarez for resale there. By train the family reached El Paso, Texas, in the fall of 1899. There, Jim contracted typhus fever and during the train trip into Mexico he became delirious. Son James Albert took his father back to Utah for treatment, but James died in Provo on March 27, 1900, and was buried in the

Butler plot in Spanish Fork. He was fifty-three. Wife Charlotte died a few months later, on August 24, and was buried in Colonia Juarez. Older children took care of the younger ones. James was described as being “a rather sweet, quiet, and gentle man.”³⁷

Lucy Ann Butler Barton. Lucy moved south with her mother’s family. On October 9, 1866, she married Joseph Penn Barton as his second wife. They had twelve children, all born in Paragonah, and all but one reached adulthood. Joseph acted as a doctor and dentist in Paragonah, and his first wife was a midwife. He kept about a hundred stands of black bees and traded five-gallon cans of honey for cloth and leather. Lucy tanned and cured deer hides from which she made gloves to sell. She bought a few sheep and from their wool made cloth and stockings. “She was a very beautiful woman,” according to a granddaughter. Lucy died on August 18, 1935, twenty-two years after her husband.³⁸

Thomas Butler. Thomas was the youngest member of the Butler Brothers partnership in Panguitch—he was seven years younger than John II and four years the junior of James. He is the only one of John’s six sons who never married. In the Panguitch operations, Thomas rode the range and was “a wonderful sheep, cattle and horse man.” When the partnership dissolved in 1881, Thomas lived with John’s family in Sevier County for awhile and continued to work with cattle. He received his temple endowments in 1883 and compiled Butler genealogy records into a notebook entitled “Mr. Thomas Butler Family Record, Corrected from History written by his father.” In 1888 he made arrangements for the John Lowe Butler memorial and family headstones in the Spanish Fork Cemetery (see below). He filled three missions to the southern United States, laboring “with great zeal and faithfulness.” He died on April 16, 1892, at age forty. The cause of death was blood poisoning “superinduced” by malarial fever contracted while in Virginia. According to his obituary, he was well and widely known in southern Utah.³⁹

Alveretta Farozine Butler Robinson. Alveretta was six when her father died, and she continued to live with mother Caroline in Spanish Fork. In 1861 she received the first pair of shoes she ever owned. One of her schoolteachers was “Grandmother Harrow,” John’s oldest plural wife, but Alveretta received only six weeks of formal schooling in her entire life. She and her sister Lucy helped drive the family’s cows to Paragonah when mother Caroline first moved there. She moved with Caroline to Panguitch, back to Paragonah, and then back to Panguitch. When she was seventeen she married twenty-two-year-old James Coupe Robinson on October 2, 1871. They had thirteen children. She and James owned “quite a nice farm” when the children were younger, and then they

operated a 200-acre ranch near Panguitch Lake. Their ranch house was built of lumber and slabs milled nearby. Alveretta became efficient at making buckskin gloves. She died on January 10, 1940, fifteen years after the death of her husband.⁴⁰

Lovisa Patience Butler Austin. After John's death, little Lovisa moved north with her mother, who had married Moroni Olney, to live most of her youth in Smithfield, Utah. She married William McIntire Austin on February 12, 1877, in Clarkston, Cache County, Utah. Seven years later, on October 29, 1884, they had their marriage sealed for eternity in the Logan Temple. Of their thirteen children, nine reached adulthood.

When mother Lovisa was sealed to Mr. Olney, instead of to John Lowe Butler, daughter Lovisa was forced to choose between being sealed in eternal relationships to her mother or to her father. This caused her much anguish: she loved her mother, but she felt great concern that she "could not rob the dead." Logan Temple records show that she was sealed to her father, John Lowe Butler, and to his plural wife Sarah Lancaster. James Butler, one of John's sons by Caroline, stood as proxy for his father in Lovisa Patience's temple sealing.⁴¹ Six of Lovisa and William's children received the middle name of Butler. William and Lovisa moved across the border into Bannock County, Idaho, living much of the time in Cleveland, where six of their children were born and where Lovisa died on November 14, 1924. William had died there twelve years earlier.⁴²

John William Butler. John William, the son of plural wife Henrietta, was born four months after John Lowe Butler died and stayed in or near Spanish Fork until Henrietta remarried in 1864. He moved with his mother and stepfather to Deseret in Millard County, Utah. His daughter said the family "almost starved to death on the farm in Deseret." John William seemed to "lack a consistent Father-Mother image and the lessons a family learns as his later life would indicate." He grew up being a half-brother to the seven Powell children. He served a mission in the Southern states from April 1882 to November 1885. After returning, he homesteaded near Richfield, not far from Butler half-brothers. There he met Betty Christina Bulow, a daughter of Danish immigrants. He and Betty married on May 25, 1890. He was twenty-nine, she was twenty. Five children were born to them at Richfield between 1891 and 1900. Hard times forced him to go first to Idaho and then to Alberta, Canada, seeking work. After selling off first their water rights and then their land, he tried working in coal mines and then at a mine sawmill. He was working above ground at the Scofield Mine in 1900 when an explosion killed two hundred miners; he was unhurt.⁴³

Soon after that, John William's wife and children moved to her parents' home and he left the family for about two years, prospecting or seeking work. He came home briefly then left again, and soon after his departure his wife, Betty, divorced him. He later homesteaded on land in Newdale, Idaho, where neighbors said he was quiet, read a lot, never spoke of his family, and was very religious. He filled three LDS missions. He died at age eighty on November 12, 1939, at Newdale, Idaho.⁴⁴

Longevity. John Lowe Butler lived only to age fifty-two. Due to illness or accident, but not to genetics, his four sons by Caroline likewise did not live long lives. Taylor died at fifty-four from an illness contracted while serving a Church mission. John died at fifty-five from effects of a head injury. James died at fifty-three from typhus. Thomas died at forty, also from a disease contracted while serving as a missionary. The average life span of Caroline's sons was fifty. Caroline's daughters, including three who lived into their eighties, had an average life span of sixty-six years.

Posterity. By three child-bearing wives John had eleven children who themselves became parents. Had John lived to see their children, he could have counted 114 grandchildren, an average of ten children per pair of parents (one son had two sets of children by two wives). Five of John's seven daughters who became parents had twelve children or more. Of John's 114 grandchildren, 91 (80 percent) reached maturity.

Butler Graves

Southeast from Spanish Fork's town square and east of where the Old Fort once stood is Spanish Fork's city cemetery. A row of west-facing, yellowing headstones runs north and south, with one towering above them all, marking the John Lowe Butler family's plot. In 1888 Thomas Butler contracted for a large monument and seven small marble headstones to be erected there. The east side of the eight-foot monument is inscribed to honor John, the north side Caroline, the west side John's third and fifth wives, Sarah and Ann, and the south side five others: daughters Caroline and Isabel (Isabella), grandsons Kenion Taylor (1859-60) and Thomas L. Butler (1871-1875), and family friend Elias Stockton (1857-1861).⁴⁵ Each of the seven small headstones has a name on it, honoring (from north to south) Isabel (Isabella) Butler, Sarah L. Butler, Thomas Butler, Ann H. Butler, Caroline F. Butler, John Lowe Butler, Caroline E. Butler, and granddaughter Rachel Allen.⁴⁶

On August 15, 1964, John Lowe Butler descendants held a family reunion, the first of many. They gathered at the cemetery, having obtained for the occasion legal permission to open the monument to inspect records deposited

inside. Led by Ross Butler of Ontario, Oregon, the family opened the headstone compartment and carefully removed an early copy of the Book of Mormon, slightly damp, and family genealogy records. Then they resealed the headstone. The LDS Church's weekly newspaper, *The Church News*, gave the historic event generous coverage.⁴⁷

The Blessed Cloak

Widow Caroline inherited and used John's "blessed" cloak (see chapter 10) when family members were ill and then gave the cloak to her son John Lowe Butler II. He used the large, long, circular cloak to heal his children who were sick. When he himself was dying he sat by the fireplace, draped in the cloak. By the time John's widow Nancy died in 1913, the black broadcloth cape with plaid lining had turned brown with age and was moth eaten. So a daughter, Jane, cut the cloak into pieces, which she gave to her family members and to cousins. These swatches of cloth have become treasured inheritances within today's Butler-related families. John's large cloak proved to be too small to provide even small segments of it to everyone who now comprises his numerous posterity.⁴⁸

John Lowe Butler: an Assessment

No one today knows exactly what John Lowe Butler looked like. No photographs of him survive, if any were taken. His autobiography says he stood six feet two-and-one-half inches tall and was “stout.” A small clue regarding his physical appearance is tucked inside a comment his daughter Charity Artemesia made when her teenage son Taylor Thornton died. Taylor, she said, “looked like Grandfather Butler with his blond hair and blue eyes.” Interestingly, this grandson died young from complications from rheumatic fever, the disease that disabled John in his youth.¹

When the record of John’s entire life is reviewed, what does it reveal about his character and personality? His autobiography, while lengthy and detailed, contains little introspection, and it is possible to gain only limited entrance into his thinking and feelings. Any assessment of his character must be drawn from his actions and patterns which surface in the information he chose to record.

Most evident and beyond dispute is that John was a religious man from his youngest days forward. After his conversion to Mormonism, by action and statement he demonstrated a fixed belief in God and this new religion. His conversion was not shallow but was deeply rooted, and his faith withstood several severe storms: apostasies he saw in Missouri involving leaders such as David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery; Joseph Smith’s death and questions it raised regarding succession and senior Apostle Brigham Young (which John’s writings show no concern over); the disaffections of his gospel mentor and frontier associate James Emmett; and criticisms and accusations about John’s

character during and after his service as a Danite, in the Emmett Expedition, in the Ponca venture, and as the bishop responsible for monitoring activities at the Spanish Fork Indian Farm. John was a stalwart Latter-day Saint.

John linked himself and his family to several difficult and unusual LDS practices, including plural marriage, moving wherever the Saints gathered, and the law of consecration. Because Joseph Smith and Brigham Young fully trusted John, they called him to fill several extremely difficult assignments. And both chose him to personally protect them as an official bodyguard. He served as a pioneer bishop, a difficult and taxing assignment.

Whenever his religion allowed him to settle in one place long enough, John was by trade a farmer, blacksmith, and sawmill operator. He could coax wheat and hay and corn from Kentucky, mid-western, and Utah soils. He understood the basics of animal husbandry and worked with horses, oxen, cows, pigs, sheep, and chickens. He was a good horseman and capable wagon driver. He had some skill with a canoe. His ability with anvil, hammer, and forge let him shoe horses and oxen but also moved him into the world of the mechanic to pound and twist and cast such objects as wheel rims and sockets, wagon parts, and farm machinery. Because he had to build several homes for his families, and through his sawmill labors, he gained some ability in carpentry and woodworking.

John was not sophisticated. He never visited a city larger than Nauvoo or Great Salt Lake City, which is not typical of the early LDS convert. He never saw St. Louis, located somewhat close to his Missouri homes and easily accessible by boat from Nauvoo. His mission experiences did not take him to or through any large urban areas. His movements were on or close to unsettled frontier regions. As a result, his attitudes and reactions were more backwoodsish than urbane. His boyhood education was basic. He could read and write adequately for his generation, simple skills that led him to accept brief stints as a schoolteacher. But, measured by his autobiography, he showed no inclination toward matters intellectual or philosophical. Although deeply religious, he penned no ponderings about doctrinal matters after his conversion to Mormonism. Lacking, too, is evidence that he read widely, other than in the Bible, or that he was interested in music, art, or culture.

Though possessing a fundamental education and several useful skills, John, with his family, fought poverty for most of his years as a Latter-day Saint. The Butlers owned substantial property in Missouri, but lost it due to persecutions and received only slight compensation. In Nauvoo they managed to reach a somewhat respectable living standard, only to be sent off into the wilderness where they experienced severe want and destitution in the Emmett expedition and with the Miller encampment at Ponca. While waiting near Council Bluffs to

depart for Utah, they enjoyed perhaps two seasons of prosperity out of four there, but only enough to be able to outfit for and move to Utah by way of the Mormon Trail using their own resources. Pioneering in Spanish Fork, John, Caroline, Sarah, and the other plural wives gradually established housing that was a step above primitive but too crowded for their large family. They owned two farms, a fair amount of livestock, and a partnership in a sawmill. By 1859 their property and possessions put them somewhat above average for their town. They stood poised on the verge of prospering when, unfortunately, John's health failed. Had he lived with reasonable health for one more decade, indications are that his families would have fared quite well in Spanish Fork.

John was a committed family man. His several absences and separations from Caroline and the children were Church-ordered or caused by economic necessity. John took great pains to include in the opening of his autobiography a lengthy genealogy list of his and Caroline's relatives. Each time he wrote of marrying a new wife, he included her lineage. He and Caroline picked as first and middle names for their children the names of Butler and Skeen relatives. By three wives he fathered fifteen children. It seems that he exercised the normal patriarchal authority expected of males in that day, no more and no less.

That plural wife Sarah accompanied John from Kaneshville to Weston, Missouri, then from Salt Lake City while he located land in the Palmyra settlement, and again out to Green River suggests John favored her over wife Caroline. However, Sarah, being childless, was more free to go with John in situations where his entire family could not. Having no children to care for enabled her to travel with John and help with domestic tasks and provide companionship rather than leaving him to be alone through these stretches, which monogamy would have required of him and his family.

John had leadership ability that his church called on constantly at the grassroots level but not in regional or general capacities. In Missouri he was given military responsibilities as a Danite and militia captain. After that, however, his leadership callings involved situations in which someone was needed to settle differences, straighten out problems, or unify separate groups. From Nauvoo he was dispatched into Iowa to be the number two leader and stabilizer of the Emmett expedition. Later he was sent to bring the Emmett Saints from Fort Vermillion to rejoin the main body of the Church, at which point he was their captain instead of Emmett. Crossing the plains he was pressed into service to be a captain of ten Danish wagons when their captain could not manage the inexperienced immigrants. While residing by the Spanish Fork River, John was called upon to unite the Lower and Upper Settlements into one

community and then to give the emergent town of Spanish Fork spiritual and temporal leadership as its first bishop.

Like most people with forceful personalities, John's record in terms of interpersonal skills is mixed. He was one who could get difficult jobs done, tasks which required physical strength and will power, so he was assigned several strenuous, dangerous, and unusual tasks—militia duty, exploring ventures, and leadership positions. Sometimes these led to his being criticized and, in his eyes, misjudged. In response, he devoted generous space in his autobiography to explaining himself with regards to charges of being a less-than-faithful Mormon because he was a Danite or traveled with James Emmett or wintered at Ponca or failed to prevent Indian Agent Hurt's escape. Occasionally he clashed with people who had strong personalities, men such as Captain Emmett, policeman Hosea Stout, Bishop Stephen Markham, and Bishop Aaron Johnson. President Young counselled John at least once to be more of a father than a dictator to his ward. On one occasion John, as bishop, whipped a troublemaker in his ward and was reprimanded by the stake high council for reacting "too fast."² When defending himself against fellow-Mormons, he was not vindictive. But his resentment of non-Mormons who abused him, his family, or his religion was not restrained. John's record of his extensive contact with Indians exhibits general regard for them and a concern for fairness in dealing with them.

Available records indicate that John died neither beloved by throngs of people, nor disliked by many. His death was not a major news item beyond Utah County, although slow deaths preceded by debility do not receive headlines like unexpected ones do. Overall, he seemed to have been well-regarded: people in his ward gave him sustaining votes, his townsmen in the Nauvoo Legion elected him to be their major, the county called on him for various civic duties, and Archibald Gardner went into partnership with him.

To his lasting credit, John attracted a family loyalty among those who knew him best. Family tradition is that the Butler children who were old enough to be around him before he died "all idealized their father to an unusual degree all through their lives." One reason was that "he had a good sense of humor." His daughters remembered "his teasing, when he would invite them to kiss him when his face was covered with shaving lather."³ Ten of John's children named a child after him.

Widow Caroline made certain that her grandchildren knew about John. One granddaughter noted that "it was largely through her I came to know Grandfather Butler. She was so devoted to him, had gone through so much for and because of him, and had stood by him so loyally that I acquired the same

feelings for him.” Hearing about John and Caroline’s pre-Utah struggles made indelible impressions on the grandchildren’s generation. So touched were they by John and Caroline’s story about Grandmother Squaw’s generosity, that one of them performed proxy temple work for her. Another indication of family respect is the fact that several sketches and stories about John are in the files of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, submitted by various of John’s female descendants.⁴

John also deserves some accolades for his writings. Family, church, communities, and historians are in his debt for writing an extensive autobiography.⁵ Only a small percentage of Mormons or anyone else who lived in the early nineteenth century wrote histories of their lives or kept diaries. Forced to his room by failing health, John used his last year-and-a-quarter to pick up his pen and write down his recollections. He did this not to be a writer or a chronicler of history but in order to explain and gently advocate his religious beliefs and to communicate something about his life’s labors to his posterity after his death. With both purposes in mind and aware that he was dying, he concluded his autobiography, and his life, with a forthright personal testament affirming that he had given his best for his religion:

I fear that I have seen my best days, but I can say that I have done my best to help to roll forth the Kingdom of God.

I have seen and been through many trials and close places, and my family have suffered from want, and I have always felt to give God praise for all things which came unto us for our good.

And I can bear my testimony to this work, I know that it is the Kingdom of God for the Lord has blessed me with the knowledge thereof.

I have seen the sick healed under the power of the Priesthood.

I have seen the power of God displayed in many places.

And I have always felt to do my best in all things that I have had to do.

My prayer is that all of us who are in the Kingdom of God may be led to do what is right in the sight of God at all times, is the prayer of your humble servant. Amen.

John Lowe Butler.

The twig of the Southern Butler family that John and Caroline transplanted from Kentucky to Utah soil took root, struggled, survived, and in time thrived. John’s children and grandchildren and their multiplying posterity have become a

large and spreading tree in the American West and beyond. Many branches of that tree maintain a keen sense of their Butler roots and value the Mormon heritage John and his wives passed along to them. Five and six generations later, his transcribed autobiography still is being copied, circulated, and cherished by scores of descendants.⁶ Swatches of John's cloak, blessed by Joseph Smith, are still coveted by descendants. His family made certain that John was included in a 1989 book containing Simpson County, Kentucky, biographies.⁷ A plaque placed in downtown Spanish Fork, where only a few of his relatives still reside, honors him and his wives and children.⁸ A formally organized John Lowe Butler I Family Organization holds reunions and disseminates genealogical and biographical information to John's descendants.⁹

Though dead, John survives. Through his writings and by being a common ancestor of hundreds now living, John Lowe Butler continues to be of some influence in a world he departed more than 130 years ago.¹⁰ That is a respectable legacy for the man who once was a Kentucky farm boy so ill for so long that he doubted he had a future and so disabled that he seriously wondered, regarding himself, "what the Lord wanted such a being on earth for."

APPENDIX

John Lowe Butler's Autobiography

(Transcribed and edited by William G. Hartley, 1993)

Editor's Preface

This transcript was made from the original John Lowe Butler Autobiography on file at the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. It is a newer and slightly different transcription than the one currently filed with the handwritten original and ones circulating among Butler descendants. The original autobiographical writings are penned in an old ledger book once intended for recording financial transactions. The book measures 38 cms. long by 16 cms. wide and has lined pages.

In accord with the handwritten original, this typescript contains both the short and the long versions of John's autobiography. John first wrote what is now a short version of his history. It discussed his life only up through his conversion to Mormonism in Kentucky, and then it ended with a quick overview of the rest of his life—he thought he was dying and was out of time to finish his life story in detail. The short version seems to be in his own handwriting. Nine pages long, it appears in the front of the ledger book and was finished in May 1859.

But John found time and strength during the next eleven months before his death to finish the history. He used paper other than the ledger book. He began his long version by repeating the short version but in the process made several small corrections and added the equivalent of four paragraphs of new genealogical material and three paragraphs of information about his religious conversion. Then, when he reached the point where the short version left off, he wrote in detail about his life after his Kentucky conversion, producing a long version.

In 1863 one of his wives or someone else copied John's entire long version into the ledger book that already contained the short version. The long version covers ninety-nine pages. Internal evidence indicates the copyist did not make corrections or content changes and that he or she felt committed to rendering an accurate copy of John's autobiography as he penned it. Therefore, the transcription that follows accurately renders the copyist's version rather than putting the material into modern and correct English.

The ledger book, then, contains John's short version in his own handwriting followed by the long version copied in someone else's writing. Handwriting in the ledger book is still in good condition. The ink is dark enough to read and the paper is in

reasonably good condition. But the penmanship is not easy to read. Spelling of many words is phonetic, a practice common to mid-nineteenth century writers, making it hard for present readers to know what hundreds of the words are. The original lacks punctuation, another practice common then, so reading it is quite difficult and requires much patience.

Wishing to respect John's original document and the copyist's long version as much as possible, but needing to make John's statements usable for modern readers and scholars, we have edited the transcript according to the following standards:

(1) Original spelling is retained. In cases where a word is not understandable to modern readers, we have inserted the modern word in square brackets []. Original capitalization of words has been retained.

(2) Punctuation is inserted where the text indicates it needs to be. Almost all periods and most commas are additions. We start sentences thus formed with a capital letter. When the ending of a sentence is uncertain, no punctuation is attempted. Every question mark, colon, and semi-colon is an addition. While exclamation points seem appropriate in several places, none have been added.

(3) All quotation marks in the text have been added. Several times John indicates he is retelling what someone else said but uses no quotation marks, so the marks have been inserted where narration clearly indicates they need to be.

(4) We have created paragraphs both where the changes in subject matter are obvious and in many other places to break up overly long narration passages.

(5) Basic factual errors and other editorial corrections or explanations are inserted within square brackets [].

John Lowe Butler Autobiography, Short Version, From His Handwritten Original

A short history of the life of John Lowe Butler

I was born in Simpson Co. Ky., Aprile 8th 1808. My Father name was James Butler. He was the 5th child of Wm. and Phebe Butler. My grand mother was named Childres [Childers or Childress] before her marriage. My Grandfather Butler had 9 children: Elizabeth whooo married James McKonnel, John, William, Thomas, James, Samuel, Aaron, Edmund, & Fany whooo married Joseph Plumer.

My Mothers name was Charity Lowe before her marige. She was the second child of Wm and Margaret Lowe. My granmother before her mariag to Lowe was Farr [or Fair], they had eight [eleven] children: Dorithy whooo married David Hefington; Charity whooo married my Father James Butler; Mary Ann whooo married John Derryberry; Barney [Barnabas]; John, Agnes whooo married John Gililland, Nancy whooo married Jacob Gibson, Patsy Ann whooo married John W. Derryberry [John Wesley DeBerry]. [Not mentioned are Maurine, who married John Gibson; Katie, who died when age three; and Margaret, who married Isaac Shell.]

My grand Father Butler had one Brother I ever herd of, his name was John. I have heard their Father came from Ireland. My grand Father Lowe['s] Parents came from England. My grandMother Lowe came from germany or her Parants came from there. My Grandmother Butlers fore parents came from England. This is the best of my recollection of my Geneology.

I was the fourth child of my Parents. There names as follows: William whoo married Bulah Peden; Elizabeth whoo married Sandy Mays, they had two children and mays died, she then Married _____ Forsythe. Sarah married Dickson Allen, she died with her 3rd child; John Lowe (myself); Thomas; Vinson [or Vincent]; Lucy ann whoo married Reuben W. Allred. Then my mother had 4 children mite say all still born, nun lived but a few hours. She then had Edmund, James Morgan, [and] Lorenzo Dow her last born.

From my first remberans I had serious reflections on futurity. My Parents being of Methodist faith and hearing them talk it had impresions on my mind that [I] never have forgot. When about seven years of age I was taken with the inflamatory rheumatics. It passed from my feet to my fingers in every joint and left me in verry poor health. And shortly after was taken with what the doctor called an imposten [infection] on my leg. And after it began to mend took the dropsey in my left eye. It was thirteen days swollen so that the sight was not seen and when I could open it they said it looked like a hog's eye after scalding it and it was with difficulty the doctor could save it.

From a time until I was in my twentieth year I had twelve hard attacts of the rheumatics, it takeing me at least onst a year and sometimes twist, say spring and fall. During this time I came near being killed three diferant times by horses throwing me and onst by a large frame cart bed falling on me, which caused the reumatics to return on me. When in my nineteenth year the pains fell in my left side and my left arm, thigh, and leg began to shrink and fail me so that I began to think I would loose the use of that side. I was so reduced that my mother could carry me from one bed to another in her arms. But through the means used the lord began to restore my limbs a gain. So that when I was twenty two years old I was geting better than I ever expected to be geting, able to labour at lite work.

During the last attact I began to have serious reflections at times about my future existance and often thought what the Lord wanted such a being on earth for and desired either to get well and be like other boys of my age or let me die for I did not want to live in that way. Notwithstanding the much afflictions I had, I grew fast and when twenty two I stood six feet high or near to it.

When in my twenty first year [1828] there was a great revival amongst the sects of all denominations, as great an excitiment as I ever saw. And I went to the meetings with my comrades & tried to learn the wayes of the lord but could not see that there was any chance for me, and be gan to be concerned deeply. And there was a Methodist camp meeting that I concluded to go to and thought if there was such a thing as religion I would seek and get it if I could. While at this meeting which lasted three or four days most all my companions a associats profosed a remission of there sins and I left a lone which made me feel wors than ever. They tried to get me to go to the mourners bench but I was

too stubern for that but made up my mind if there was such a thing as religion I would have it and keep it as my own property leting no one know it.

The meting broke up and we all started home all rejoising but myself. I felt miserable going with them and had to pass the house of whom three of the youths belonged that was rejoising. When they met there mother who was a pious Presbyterian there was a shout allmost equal to the camp meeting. It made me feel still wors to see them so happy and could not feel so. They all got in the house and I taried out for a while, and finily concluded to stiften myself up and keep them from thinking there was any thing the mater with me, at the same time determined if there was such a thing as religion to find it and keep it to myself. And [I] started in the house where they still was shouting and when crossing the room there was a power came on me that threw me to the floor and every nerve in me seemed to be numed and my hands cramped and the first thing I knew I cried for the lord to have mercy on me. I thought now they all had found out that I was seeking religion and that made me feel very mean. I lay there for som six hours and did not think was more than one, felt cam [calm] when I first rose but it was not long till darkness and the same bad feeling came on me a gain.

Meetings now was common and I attended them and when there was a call for mourners I would go not thinking it would do me any good but thought by my going forward it mighte cause some one to go that it would do good for. And continued going for a number of times untill I realy thought it was a sin for such a one as me to ask tham to pray for me, and stoped going to the mourners bench but continued to go to meetings. And one sunday at classmeeting, I felt awful and had for some time. The class leader ast me how I felt, I told I felt bad. He talked to me and tried to encourage me all he could but to no purpose. I sat there and looking at my condition I seemed to have a view of my self—I thought I could see every sin I ever committed. And while in this condition I felt as though my seat was sinking under me all at onst & I felt with all my soul to call up on God to forgive me a sinner. And all of an instant the burthen left me and I felt to rejoice for a minute or two and stoped to think what such a change ment. I thought, “is this religion?” There was a voise whispered to me and said I had to preach the gospel. That struck a damper on my feelings and my enjoyment stoped though I did not feel the same heavy burthen that I felt before.

I that day gave my hand to the methodist on trial and from that time began to search the scriptures for myself and began to think of what society I would setle down to Join permanantly, for during my searching the scriptures I desided Baptism by imersion was right. The methodist did not like for me to leave them said I had got a hope among them and I should stay with them, my parents desiring much to have me stay with them in the same church. That looked well to see all of the same family go to the same church. But baptism by imersion seemed to be right to me though I had been Crisened when a child, and the methodist would not baptise the second time.

By this time a few months had passed over and the revival stoped and the diferant sects began to contend about dividing the converts and they contended about there athority, the true order of the church, &c. I went to hear all, and said but litle, read the scriptures and prayed most ardently to know the right way. And my troubles increased as

I saw so much division and strife—one rise up and say they was called of God to preach the gospel and point out his tenates saying “this is the way walk in it,” an other would rise saying he was called of God and this is the way &c., and so on through them all, all pointing diferant ways. This made me think more seriously than ever, and search the scriptures and pray to know the right way.

My mind became more dark and began to fall some what into deistaste [Deistic?] principals. And that voise that spoke to me when in class meeting had wait [weight] on my mind, but the thoughts of attempting to hold forth any doctrin of the diferant sects I could not think of doing it, for I saw clear the one whooo was best read and the best orator could whip out the rest, and then some one els would come a long and put him down, & so it went on all in confusion. I said in my hart it could not be of God. My mind was still troubled about preaching the gospel, and sid [said] and covinanted in my hart when I could come to know the true order I would stand up for it and even lay down my life if necessary for the truth as it existed in heaven or the true order of his kingdom.

A bout this time there was a singular solom feeling came on me generally in the fore part of the day from 7 to 9 oclock my spirit would be troubled so that I could not labour and would not get read [rid] of it without talking about religion. And this caused me to begin to try to speak in meeting, but it would return on me a gain & a gain and nothing would relieve me but [to] empty out my feelings. This as well as I recollect was in the year of ‘28 when this trouble would come on. It felt to me there was something in the east that I was looking for. I thought of the Jews whooo looked for the son of Man coming from the east, &c. This trouble seemed to increas on me and I talking of my troubles to anyone that I had a chance to talk to. And the baptist said that the Lord intended I should preach and would chastise me till I would obey, and further, I would have to preach predestinarian doctrin for that was the only truth that did exist.

Well my mind still was to be baptised by immersion, and my Father, being anxious for me to stop with him in the methodist church, went 15 or 20 miles to get a methodist Priest whooo would immers some five or six that desired it. And when it was attended to the methodist came to see it and made all manner of fun and game of us posible. That hurt my feelings to see those profesing to be saints mak light of the commandments of God, and finely concluded that I would not live with a people that would do so, and went to the baptist and was baptised a gain, telling them at the same time I did not believe one word of their predestinarian doctrin as held forth by them, but as they valued baptism by imersion.

But when that was all don I still felt no better in spirits. The Baptist would say to me that god would chastise me till I would preach the gospel according to there faith that I could not believe. But still in trouble I felt all the time that I was willing to stand for the truth if I could find it. I still continued searching the scriptures and praying to know what to do. I found many things in the scripture that proved a true order of things anciently, apostles, the various gifts &c., but I could not connect any thing to gather to satisfy my mind, and it looked like a mess of confusion.

I had been to meeting and prayed and searched the word of god diligent and could find no relief to my mind. And in Aug 1832 my mind had ben troubled so that I did to try

to work but little. For I thought if I should gain all the world and lose my soul it would advantage me nothing. So one day I rode out to see a Br. Baptist and was telling my troubles. He began as usual, the lord would continue to chastise me till I would preach their faith. This had great weight [weight] on my mind and started home.

While on my way home a rebellious spirit came over me and I made up in my mind that I would stop going to meeting for it was all contention and nothing that I could depend upon, and if I read the word of god I could not comprehend it, and when I prayed I could get no answer and finely concluded that I would be as independant as god. If he would not answer me when I prayed I would quit praying to him. And as he would not give me an understanding of the scriptures I would quit searching them and lay all a side.

When I got home I told my wife what I had decided to (for in the mean time I had married a wife and had two children which I will speak of after this). It hurt her feelings very. I went to put my horse up. My barn was up by my orchard. When I got there found that wind storm that had passed when gone through the day had broke down several apple trees and knocked off a quantity of fruit. I felt angry to think he [God] would send such a storm, and, still feeling this independant spirit, stood up looking toward the heavens saying in my mind I would not preach such stuff as my Baptist Br. told me I would have to preach. And if he thought he could do it to try and I would quit praying to him for he would not answer me and I would be as independant as he was. While in this exercise of mind there was several streaks of lightning passed before me in the heavens. I said "I now [know] you can strike me dead with lightning but show a way if you wish for I will not preach, pray, go to meeting, nor read the scriptures any more." I felt as though I was 7 or 8 feet high.

I then [got] some corn tops for my horse and started to feed him. When in the act of stepping in and putting the fodder in the rack there was a voice spoke to me saying "I will set on you as a refiners fire." I turned about to see who it was. Saw no person. Looked round the barn for I thought it was certainly some person for the voice was audible. This put me to thinking what I had been doing defying God and so forth. As I went down to my house I concluded to read one more time old Malachi—it speaks of refiners fire, &c. And when I got in the house told my wife what happened while putting up my horse, and sat down to read for the last time and read Malachi through twice and closed the book, with a determination never to open it again, but had made up my mind to go one more time to pray and it for the last time.

I started to a place in the field where I often went to pray. I got about fifty steps from the house. My whole mental powers seemed to be drawn out to God to know the truth and the true order of the Kingdom, and if I could only know that I would do any thing even to the laying down of my life if necessary. While in this exercise of mind there was a voice spoke to me saying "stand still and see the salvation of God and that will be truth." That instant a light shone round me. I was filled with the spirit of the Lord and saw clearly that god would save all the workmanship of his hands and truth would stand up or be set up in our midst and it would not kneed propping up as the sects of the day had continually to do. From this time I began to look for something to come forth different to what we had

then in any church. I often told my brethren that the truth would stand a lone and might be told by an illiteral man, it could not be put down.

Things pased on tolerable well. These times I went to meeting and they would call on me to speak and some times I would be so filed with the spirit I did not know what I did say but those that heard me said was warning the people of a judgement to repent, &c.

On the 1st day of March 1835 when at a baptist meeting, word came to me that two mormon elders would preach on that evening at my uncle John Lowes and I said I would go. My Baptist Brethren opposed me but I told them I was going to hear them for myself. They then appointed two brethren to go with me, and when we got to meeting seatid to gather one on each side of me. The Elder rose up to speak, and I expected they would speak from there golden bible and to my astonishment they commensed on the first principles as set forth in the new testament. This astonished me. I knew every word they said to be truth for I had the testimony of it. I ast them a few questions they answered. I then told them that my house was a home for such men as long as they wished, and invited them to hold meetings at my house, and started home, thinking of what I had.

Next morning started to work in my clearing, got about one hundred yards from my house and the same old horrible feelings came over me. I turned rite round and went back to the house and commensed to search the scriptures, and pray, and went to hear the elders on thursday following. They preached about the order of the kingdom, to my satis faction. On friday I was reading and lying on my bed resting. My mind took a travel back over my troubles from the time I had serious reflections. And when it came up to the time the voice spoke to me and told me to stand still and see the salvation of God and that would be truth, and the voice of the same spirit said "this is the truth that you have been hearing, now chuse or refuse."

I saw the sacrifice I had to make in loosing my good name in the world and also what little property that it would go also, if I joined. And while on my bed covinanted in my hart to obey the first chance and I felt the spirit of the lord rest upon me with this testimony, it was right.

On the next monday, the 9th March 1835, about 2 oclock P.M. was baptised by James Emet. Six others was baptised the same day my wife being one of the number. There was some more babtised. The elders had a confirmation meeting at my house, 9 was confirmed and the holy ghost was poored out on us to the full. 5 spoke in new tongs, my self being one of the number. The elders continued to preach and baptised 22, organised a branch, ordained Benjamin Lewis Elder and myself teacher.

May the 20th 1859.

My health is verry poor at this time and has been for near two years, on the decline. I shal make a short acount of my life up to the presant that my wives & Children can have my testimony to look at after I am gone behind the vale, but if I recover from the presant affliction I will write more on the same subject hereafter.

[Thinking he might not live long, John wrote the following brief summary of his life from 1835 to 1844.]

After the little branch was organised by the Elders James Emitt & Peter Dustan, persecution raged so that we had to run the Elders off. But we enjoyed ourselves well, & in a little more than one year we all closed up our business & left for Missouri to join the saints in Zion & landed in Ray Co at Father James Allreds on the 16th of June/36.

Found Many saints rejoicing in the new covenant. I realized to my full satisfaction that what I had embraced was the truth from God. I was with the saints in the move to Caldwell & Davis Counties and assisted in Making the first settlements there. Was at the Election in Davis County when the saints was refused the privilege of voting And took an active part in rescuing the few that was there from a furious Mob, and the Lord did strengthen my body far beyond the common strength of Man, so much so that the enemy could not stand before me. It was the power of God that was with me to my own astonishment.

From this time which was in August 1838 the Mob raged worse till the saints was expelled from the state which was in 38 and 9, when I had to flee for my life, I felt firm in the work and called on Father Isaac Morley to ordain me to the office of a Priest, thinking I would join some faithful Elder & help to build up the Kingdom in that way. I forget the day of the Month only it was the night after we laid down our arms in Far west when Father Morley layed his hands on me he Ordained [me] to the office of an Elder. I then left the state & went to Illinois, & in the summer of /39 if I mistake not I was Ordained to the office of seventy under the hand of Joseph Young & others. This ordination was at a conference held east of Quincy Ill.

Moved to Nauvoo in /40 passed the trials of sickness [and] sufferings that the saints had to encounter there & took a tour of Six Months amongst the Sux Indians. Had several close places to pass but was delivered by the power of [God] as was predicted by Joseph Smith at the time of our departure. In /42 I visited my friends in Ky & Tennessee found many of them very bitter against the church. Remained in Nauvoo till the fall of /44 after the death of Joseph Smith. I was through the trouble & trials when he was martyred.

John Lowe Butler Autobiography, Long Version, Copied in Somebody Else's Handwriting Three Years After His Death

[On February 26, 1863, someone copied into the ledger book a title for a lengthy project to be written there. The title is:

“A Short History or the Byography of John L. Butler partly from his own writing.”

The copyist intended to write down John's history by drawing from his long autobiography written during the eleven months before he died and by adding information from other sources (but did not). At first the copyist changed John's first person account into third person, but within the first paragraph quickly gave up on that. The writer ended up only copying John's long autobiography, penning some ninety-nine pages.

*By comparing the first nine pages of the long version with the shorter, earlier autobiography that John himself wrote in the ledger book, it becomes clear that John's use of the shorter materials in his long version included several spelling changes, a few word changes, some minor deletions, the addition of information about genealogy matters, and the insertion of new details about his conversion experience. New statements, if sizeable, are highlighted in **boldface type** when they appear below. Slight variations from the short version, however, are not indicated.]*

Index to the History of John Lowe Butler.

[Obviously created by the copyist]

First Chapter

His birth and byography of his folks, his sickness in his young days, also his opinion of religion. [Pages] 1 to 7

Second Chapter

His marrage with Caroline Skeen and her byography, the births of his Children, and his obeidiance to the everlasting Gosple and departure from Kentucky. 7 to 17

Third Chapter

His journey to Missouria and move to Coldwell County, his move from there to Davis County and from there to far West, the Birth of his daughter Phebe, the mob taking Joseph & Hyrum Prisoners and then surrounding the town, and departure for Illinoia 17 to 28

Fourth Chapter

His arrival in Quincy Ill., his occupation there, the journey of his wife and children from far West to Quincy, his removal to Nauvoo, his mission to the soux Indians, his narrow escape from them and return home, his second mission and return home. 28 to 37.

Fifth Chapter

His occupation in Nauvoo, his departure for Kentucky, his return home and his going to rescue Joseph from a mob of Missouriaans, his return with Joseph, his Mission in Illinoia and return home, the birth of his second son. 37 to 44

Sixth Chapter

The percutiations of the saints and the arest of Joseph and Hyrum, his mission to Emmets Camp and his trials there, his return to Navoo, his marrage to his third and for the wifes and his return to Emmts (Emmett's) Camp, and his departure for the Mountains, his being to late to go, and then his return to winter quarters [added later in family transcripts: his move accross the river and his journey across the plains and his departure to Green River]. 44 to 73.

[Added later] Seventh Chapter

[Added later] His trip out to Green River and marage of his children the armye of the United States his apointment in the Bishoprik his sickness and latter part of his days. 73 to 99.

A Short History or the Byography of John L. Butler partly from his own writing. Feb. 26th 1863.

He was born in Simpson County Ky, April 8th 1808. He says: My father was James Butler. He was the fifth child of William and Phebe Butler. My Grand Mother Butler's name was Childres [Childers or Childress] before her marrage with my Grand Father. They had nine children: Elizabeth who Married James McKonnel, John, William, Thomas, James, Samuel, Aaron, Edmund, and Fanny who married Joseph Plumer.

My Mother's name was Charity Lowe before her marrage. She was the second child of William and Margret Lowe. My Grandmother's name before her marrage to Lowe was Farr [or Fair]. They had eight [eleven] children: Dorothy who marrid David Heffington; Charity who married my Father James Butler; Mary Ann who married John Derryberry; Barney [Barnabas]; John; and Agnes who married John Gilliland; Nancy who married Jacob Gibson; Patsy Ann who married John William Derryberry [John Wesley DeBerry]. [Not mentioned are Maurine, who married John Gibson; Katie, who died when age three; and Margaret, who married Isaac Shell.]

My GrandFather Butler had but one brother that I ever heard of. Their Father came from Ireland. My GrandFather Lowe's Parents came from England. My GrandMother Lowe came from Germany or her parents came from there. This the best recollection I have of my Geneology.

I was the forth child of my parents, their names as follows: William, who married Bulah Peden; Elizabeth, who married Sandy Mays, they had two children and Mays died; she then Married Forsythe; Sarah married Dickson Allen, she died with her third child; (John Lowe myself); Thomas; Vincent [or Vinson]; Lucy ann, who married Reuben W Alred; then my mother had four children all of which you may say were still born; she then had Edmund; James Morgan; Lorenzo Dow her last born. **Edmund married Lidia Thornton, they had three children, he then died. James married Catherine McCole [McCool or McCall], they had seven children the last account. Lorenzo Dow married Ann Binnel, they have eight children.**

From my first remembrance I had serious reflections on futurity. My Parents being of Methodist faith and hearing them talk about it, it had impresions on my mind that I shall never forget. When about seven years of age I was taken sick with the inflamatory rheumatics. It passed from my feet to my finger ends in every joint. It left me in verry poor health, and shortly after I was taken with what the Doctor called an impaston [infection] in my leg. And after it began to mend I took the Dropsy in my left eye. It was swoolen for thirteen days so that the sight could not be seen, and when I could open it they said it looked like a hog's eye after it had been scalded. And the Doctor said it would be difficult to save.

From that time till I was in my twentieth year I had twelve hard atacts of the rheumatics, it taking me at least once a year and sometimes twice, in the spring and fall. During this time I came near being killd three diferant times by being thrown from horses and once by a large frame cart falling on me which caused the rheumatics to return on me. When in my nineteenth year pain fell in my left side, and arm and thigh and leg began to shrink and fail me so that I began to think that I should loose the use of that side altogether. I was so reduced that my mother could carry me from one room to another with ease in her arms but through the means used the Lord began to restore my limbs again so that when I was twenty two years of age I was getting better than ever I expected to be. I was able to labour at light work.

During the last atact I began to have serious reflections at times about my future existance and I often thought what the Lord wanted of such a being as me upon the earth. And I desired either to have my health restored and become like other boys at my age or die for I did not like to live in that way. Notwithstanding the sickness and trials I had to pass through I grew verry fast. I stood six feet when at the age of twenty two.

When in my twenty first year [1828] there was a great revival amoung the diferant sects of all denominations. As great an excitement as I ever saw. I went to the meetings with my comrads and tried to learn the ways of the Lord but could not see that there was any chance for me and began to be concerned deeply. There was a Methodist camp Meeting that I concluded to go to and thought if there was such a thing as religion I would seek after it and get it if I could while at this meeting which lasted three or four days most all my companions and associates profosed a remissions of their sins and I left alone. That made me feel worse than ever. They tried to get me to go to the morners bench but I was to stuburn for that but I made up my mind if there was such a thing as religion I would have it and keep it as my own property letting no one know it.

The meeting broke up and we all started home all rejoyceing but myself. I felt miserable going with them and had to pass the house of whom three of the youths belonged that was rejoycing when they met their mother who was a pious Presbyterian. There was a shout almost equal to the campmeeting, it made me feel still worse to see them so happy and I could not feel so. They all got in the house and I tarried out for a while and finely concluded to stiften my self up and keep them from knowing there was any thing the matter with me, determinen at the same time if there was such a thing as religion to find it and keep it to myself. And [I] started in the house when they were still shouting. When crossing the room there was a power came on me that threw me to the

grond and every nerve in me seemed to be numb and my hands crampd, and the first thing I knew I cried for the Lord to have mercy upon me. I thought now they all had found out that I was seeking religion and that made me feel verry mean. I lay there for six hours but I did not think it more than one. Feeling came [calm?] when I first arose but it was not long till Darkness and the same bad feeling came back to me again.

Meetings were now verry common and I attended them and when there was a call for mourner's I would go, not thinking it would do me any good but I thought that by my going forward it might cause some one to go that it would do good for. I continued going for sometime until I really thought that it was a sin and a shame for such a one a I to ast [ask] them to pray for me. I stopt going to the morner bench but continued to go to meeting, and one Sunday at Class Meeting I felt aufel and had for some time. The Class Leader askd me how I feld. I told him that I felt bad. He talk'd to me and tried to encourage me all he could but to no purpose.

I sat there thinking of my condition. I seemed to have a view of my self, I thought I could see every sin I every committed and while in this condition I felt as though my seat was sinking from under me all at once. Thus I felt with all my soul to call upon the Lord God to forgive me a sinner. And all of an instant the burden left me and I felt to rejoice for a minute or two, then I stopd to think what such a change ment. I thought is this religion? There was a voice wisperd to me and said "you have yet to preach the gosple to the world." That struck a damper on my feelings and my enjoyment stopt though I did not feel the same heavy burden that I felt before.

I that day gave my hand to the Methodists on trial, and from [that] time began to serch the scriptures for myself and began to think at what sosiaty I would settle down to join permanent, for during my searching the scriptures I desided baptism by imersion was right. The Methodist did not like for me to leave them, said I had got a hope amongst them and I should stay with them. My Parents Desiring much for me to stay with them in the same church, it lookd well for all the same family to go to the same Church. But baptism by imersion seem'd right to me though I had been Christened when a child, and the Methodist would not baptize the second time.

By this time a few months had pass'd away and the revival stopt and the diferant sects began to contend about deviding the converts and about their Athority [and] the true Order of the Church. And I went to hear all and said but little, read the scripture and pray'd most fervantly to know the right way. My troubel's increased as I saw so much division and strife and one would rise up and say he was call'd of God to preach the Gospel and point out his tinates [tenets], saying "this is the way, walk ye in it," and another would rise up saying he was called of God and this is the way &c, through them all all pointing difereant ways. This made me think more seriously than ever and search the scripture and pray to know the right way.

My mind became more dark, and began to fall some what into deistate [deistic?] Principal. And that voise that spoke to me when in class meeting had weigh'd heavily on my mind. But the thoughts of attempting to hold forth any doctrin of the diferant sects I could not think of doing it, for I saw clear the one who was the best read and the best orator could weigh out the rest, and then some one else would come along and put him

down, and so it went on all in confusion. I said in my heart it could not be of God. My mind was still troubled about preached the Gospel and said and covenanted in my heart when I could come to know the true Order I would stand up for it and even lay down my life if nessasary for the truth as it existed in heaven or the true order of the kingdom of God.

About this time there was singular sollomn feelings came on me generally in the forepart of the day from seven till nine Oclock my spirits would be troubled so that I could not labour and could not get rid of it without talking about religion. And [it] caws'd me to begin to try to speak in meeting, but it would return on me again and again and nothing would releace me but to poor out my feelings. This is as well as I can recolect of the state of things in the year 28. When this trouble would come on it felt to me there was something in the East that I was looking for. I thought of the Jews who look'd for the son of man coming from the East &c. This trouble seemed to increase on me and I talking of my troubles to any one that I had a chance to, and talk to the Baptist [who] said that the Lord intended that I should preach the Gospel and would chastize me till I would obey and, further, I would have to preach Predestranarian doctrin for that was the only truth that did exist.

Well my mind was still to be baptizen by immersion and my father, being anxious for me to stop with him in the Methodost Church, went fifteen or twenty miles to get a Methodist Priest who would immerce some five or six that desired it. And when it was attended to the Methodist came to see it, and made all kinds of fun and game of us possiable. That hurt my feelings to see those professing to be saints make light of the commandments of God and finely concluded that I would not live with a people that would do so and went to the baptist and was baptized again telling them at the same time I did not believe one word of their Predestinarian Doctrin as held forth by them but as they valued baptism by imersion.

But when that was all done I still felt no better in spirits. The baptists would say to me that God would chastize me till I would preach the Gosples according to the faith that I could not believe. But still in trouble I felt all the time that I was willing to stand for the truth if I could find it. I still continued to search the scriptures and praying to know what to do. I found many things in the scriptures that proved a true order anciently, apostles, the various gifts &c., but I could not conect any thing together to satisfy my mind, and it all look'd like a mess of confusion.

Chapter Second

1831. On Feb the third eighteen hundred and thirty one I was married to Caroline Farzine Skeen Daughter of Jessy and Kiziah Skeen. Her mother's maden name was Taylor. Caroline was the seventh child. She had six sisters and three brothers. Nancy was the first born. She was born on the first of January [Feb. 7] 1801. She married William Macglothling [McGlothlin]. They had eight children that we know of. Sarah was next born in eighteen hundred and two. She married John Groves. They had five children. Elizabeth she was deaf and dumb. She was born in eighteen hundred and four. She never was married. Rachiel was next. She was born in eighteen hundred and six. She married

Archibald Medows [Meador]. They had six children. Charity she was born in eighteen hundred and eight. She was Deaf and dumb. She was never married].

Kenyon Taylor was born in eighteen hundred and ten [1809]. He married Permelia [Pamela] Low, Daughter of John and Mary Low[e]. They had six children all boys. Caroline Farzine born in eighteen hundred and twelve, married to John Lowe Butler, had twelve children, seven girls and five boys. Alexander David was born in eighteen hundred and fourteen [1815]. He married Mary [Stevens]. They had six children. John Gilbert was born in eighteen hundred and sixteen [1818]. He married Malinda _____ [Mary Blevens]. Whether they had any children or not is not known. Mary [or Polly] who was the youngest was born in eighteen hundred and eighteen [1822]. She was deaf and dumb. She was never married. Robert Taylor was Father to Kiziah Taylor [and Ann or Nancy Herring was the mother].

In eighteen hundred and thirty two I pray'd and Search'd the word of God diligently and could find no relief to my mind. I still went to meeting but my mind was greatly troubled so that I did not care to work but little. For I thought if I should gain the whole world and lose my own soul it would be no advantage to me whatever. So one day I rode out to see a brother Baptist and made known to him all my troubles. He began as usual and answered me and said that the Lord would continue to chastize till I would Preach their faith. This had great weight upon my mind so I started for home.

And while on my way a rebellious spirit took hold of me and I made up my mind that I would stop going to meeting for it was all contention and nothing to be depended upon. And if I read the word of God I could not comprehend it. And when I pray'd I could get no answer. And finally I concluded that I would be as independent as God himself. If he would not answer me when I pray'd I would quit praying to him, and as he would not give me an understanding of the scriptures I would quit searching them and lay all aside.

When I got home I told my wife what I intended to do and when I had told her it hurt her feelings very much indeed. I then went to put up my horse. My barn was up by my Orchard. When I had got there I found that a wind storm had pass'd over when I was away and had destroy'd several of my fruit trees by blowing them down and had blown off a great deal of fruit from the other trees. When I saw what had happened I began to feel very angry to think that the Lord should send such a storm to do me so much damage. And still feeling the same independent spirit I stood up looking towards the heavens saying I would not preach such stuff as my baptist Brethren told me I would have to preach. And if he thought he would make me to try it and I would quit Praying to him for he would not answer me and I would be as independent as he. While in this exercise of mind there was several streaks of lightning pass'd before me in the heavens. I said "I know you can strike me dead with lightning but pop away if you wish for I will neither Preach, pray, go to meeting, nor read the scripture any more." I felt as though I was seven or eight feet high.

I then got some corn tops for my horse and started to feed him. And when in the act of stepping in and putting the fodder into the rack there was a voice spoke to me saying "I will set on you a refiners fire." I turned about to see who it was that spoke to me but I saw no person. I then look'd round the barn but saw no person. I certainly thought that some

one spoke to me for the voice was so audible but yet I still heard no one, neither saw I any one. This set me to thinking of what I had been doing. I had been defying God and so forth. As I went down to the house I concluded to read one more time old Malaci—it speak's of refiners fire. And when I got into the house I told my wife what had hapened when putting up my horse up. I then sat down to read for the last time Old Malaci. I read it through twice and closed the book with a determination never to open it again, but made up my mind to go once more and pray and it for the last time.

I started to a place in the field where I often went to pray. I got about fifty steps from the house[when] my whole mental powers seemed to be drawn out to God to know the truth and the true order of his Kingdom, and if I could only know that I would do any thing even to the laying down of my life if nessessary. While in the exercise of mind there was a voice spoke to me saying “stand still and see the salvation of God and that will be truth.” That instant a light shone round me. I was fill'd with the Spirit of the Lord and saw clearly that God would save all the workmanship of his hands and truth would stand or be set up in our midst and it will not need proping up as the sects of the day had continued to do. From this time I began to look for somthing to come forth diferant to what we then had in any church. I often told my bretheren that the truth would stand alone and might be told by an illiterate man. It could not be put down.

Things passed on tolerable well. Those times I went to meeting and they would call upon my to speak and sometimes I would be so filled with the spirit that I did not know what I did say but those that heard me said that it was a warning to repent. **In eighteen hundred and thirty one on the seventeenth of November my wife bare unto me a son. I was keeping school at that time for I was unable to do much hard work being very sickly from my boyhood suffering verry much from the rheumatics. I still attended the meetings but gained nothing by it for the Spirit of the Lord was not there and where the spirit of the Lord is not there is little to be learned. In eighteen hundred and thirty three on the twentieth of April another son was born unto us he only lived about four months. We named him William Alexander. The other boy was named Kenyon Taylor. In eighteen hundred and thirty four on June the thirteenth a daughter was born unto us we call'd Charity Artamesia.**

On the following March, the first day, eighteen hundred and thirty five when at a baptist meeting, a word came that two Mormon Elders would preach on that evening at My Uncle John Lowe's. I said I would go and hear them. My Baptist Brethren oposed me but I told them I was going to hear them for myself. They then apointed two brethren to go with me and when we got to meeting seated together one on each side of me. The Elder rose up to speak. I expected they would speak from their golden bible but they did not and to my astonishment they camenced preaching the first principals as set down in the new testament. This astonished me. I knew every word they said to be truth for I had the testimony of it. I asked them a few questions and they kindly answered them. I then told them that my house was a home for them as long as they wished.

While they were Preaching, my Baptist Bretheren sat on either side of me and said to one another “how John is taken up with them, see his mouth is wide open to swallow it all, this droctrin will just suit him for it is what he has been seeking after. He will leave us

now and join these Mormons, he never was satisfied with the Methodist so he left them and joined us and he did not believe in our doctrine now he will join these Mormons and believe every thing that they preach.”

I invited the Elders to come to my house and hold meetings there if they wished. I then started for home thinking **and weighing over in my mind the doctrine and principals that had been held forth that evening by the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints. My mind was lit up more than it ever had been before and I could begin to see clearly the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.** I arrived home and My Mother was then staying with us. I told them of the Principals of the Gospel. My mother said “well John what do you think of these Mormons?” I told her that I thought that they preached the true and everlasting Gospel or they were the greatest imposters that I had ever seen or heard. “Yes,” said the old lady. “that is just like you, you was not content with the Methodist, then you joined the Baptist, and they do not suit you, now you will join these Mormons.” “I suppose,” I told her, “The Lord said try all things and hold fast that which is good.”

The next morning I started to work in my clearing but I had not got more than one hundred yards from the house when the same feelings of rebelliousness came over me. I then turned right round and went back to the house, took up my bible, and began to search the scriptures and pray **to the Lord to hear and answer my prayer and to bless me with an understanding heart so that I could see and know for myself. I knew it was the nearest right of anything I had heard yet and I believed that it was this that the Lord had [said] to me to stand still and wait for the truth. I continued to call upon the Lord and to read the scripture. I was determined to find out more about these mormons** so I went to hear the Elders Preach again on the next thursday.

They Preach'd about the Order of the kingdom **and I had never heard any thing so plain in all my life before. A child could understand it all. It was just the thing that I had been hankering after. And now I felt to rejoice and was perfectly satisfied they [sic] were sent of God as the saints of old. I went home thanking my heavenly father for the blessings that he had bestow'd upon me from time to time, and I felt to go forth and obey his commandments. I asked my wife what she thought of the Mormon Elders. She said she thought that they were men of God and that it was the only true Church of God and the only way to be saved.**

On friday, the next day, I was lying on my bed reading and resting my mind. I traveled back over my past history and thinking from the first time that I had serious reflections up till the time that the voice spoke to me and told me to stand still and see the salvation of God and that would be truth and the voice of the same spirit said “this is truth that you have been hearing, now choose or refuse.”

Now I was at a standstill to know what I should do. I saw the Sacrifice I had to make in losing my good name and also what little property I had that it would go to if I joined these Mormons. **But then it was the truth that we had heard and the Elders were sent of God to preach the true and everlasting Gospels. What could I do? I had promised the Lord that I would serve and obey him and even lay down my life for**

the Gosple sake if nessessary and what was was [sic] my property against my life? Why nothing at all. And if I lost my good name it would be to gain a better one. So while I lay on my bed I covenented with my Eternal Father to obey the first chance. **I then felt better and to rejoice that I was so blessed of God.** I then felt the spirit of God rest down upon me with this testimony that it was right. So on the next Monday, the ninth day of March, eighteen hundred and thirty five, about two Oclock in the afternoon I was led into the waters of baptism by Elder James Emet and baptized for the remission of my sins. There was some six or eight baptized the same day my wife being one of the number. There were more baptized after that. The Elders apointed a comfirmation Meeting to be held at my house on the twelvth thursday evening. There were nine confirmed and The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us. Five spoke in new tongues, Myself being one of the number. The Elders continued to Preach and baptize till twenty two were baptized. And they then Organized a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints, ordained Benjamin Lewis an Elder and myself a teacher. After the little branch was organized by Elders James Emett and Peter Dustan percicution raged so that we had to run the Elders off.

[Editor's Note: Here is where John's short version of the autobiography ends, except for his two paragraph summary of 1835 to 1844. Here he commenced his lengthy completion of his autobiography]

And [we] had to do the best we could but the Lord was with us and watched over his little flock and built us up in the kingdom of God. My mother, when hearing that the Elders had gone, began to cry and say that they should come back for she had not been baptized yet. And when we told her that they were gone and we knew not wither, she said "O what a fool have I been to have heard the Gosple for two weeks and then to let the Elders go and leave me unbaptized," and she went on finely about it. But it so hapened that they took a notion to come back again for for [sic] something they could not tell what, but they knew that they had something to do.

Now my wife's sister, Charity, was deaf and dumb, and hearing [learning of] the fuss that was made about the Mormons she came to my wife and asked her the meaning of it all. My wife told her as well as she could by signs. She then asked my wife why it was that the Methodist and the Baptist and all other denominations could Preach and no one would say anything to them, while if the Mormons preached they were hooted at, laughed at, and fun made of them by every body, and threatened to be murdered by some and percicuted by all? She could not under stand how it was, so my wife told her that it was the true and everlasting Gosple that they preached and that they were sent of God, and also that she had been baptized for the remission of her sins. The Lord then opened her understanding and she told my wife that she would be baptized to by the men sent of God. But my wife told her that she had better not, as her Father was verry much opposed to Mormonism and that he would lay all the blame upon her [Caroline]. But Charity persisted in being baptized. This all took place Just after the Elders had departed.

So when the Elders turned back again, they knew that the Lord wanted them for some wise purpose. And when they came into the house there were two sisters waiting to be baptized. So they baptized them bless'd them and departed on their journey, rejoicing in the Lord their God. We met together and enjoy'd our selves, worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

And during the rest of the year I was selling off my farm houses and everything that I could not take with us (to go to zion). And while we remained there it so happened that a store belonging to John Finn in a small town called Frankling [Franklin, the seat of Simpson County] about five miles from where we lived caught fire by some means or other. Well they blamed it on to me and said that I had set fire to it for to burn it down. And several other accidents that occured about that time it was all lain upon the back of John L Butler.

My wifes Father was bitterly opposed to Mormonism. He came to our house and stay'd over night when Brothers Emmett and Dustan was staying with us. And [he] went and told it all about to who ever he met that me and my wife and my Sister Lucy Ann and the Mormon Elders all slept together in one bed on the floor. And every body beleived that it was true because my father in law was or allways had been a verry truthfull man. Now Mr. John Lowe, my mother's brother, was Justice of the Peace and he heard all about it, so he felt it his duty to look into the matter. So he went to see my fatherinlaw and made him sign a liebill [admission he lied] with his own hand.

And a little while after the Elders was gone there was a lot of rowdies came and fill'd up the rode. There was a rode between two feilds and logs roled up together on either side, so they just dragged them down into the rode and piled them up so that no one could pass except on foot. Mr. John Lowe heard of it and came down to see wether it was so or not. And when he got there he found that he had been informed rightly. He had to get off of his horse and come the rest of the way on foot. He told us to say nothing about it at all, and them that done it would tell of themselves. There was a public meeting some two weeks after, and there were some there that commenced talking about how nicely they had stopt up the Mormon rode. So Mr. Lowe happened to hear them, so he said "now you had better go back and replace every log where you got them from and if you do not I shall take care to put a heavy fine upon you." So there was about ten or a dozen men came the next day and cleared the road again. And it took them a great deel longer to put them back than it took them to place them there. They were at it nearly all day.

The Judge was a first rate good man. He did not beleive in Mormonism but he beleived in folks having their rights. He was a good republican.

One night as I and another brother was talking over matters together, wize [whizz] came half a dozen rocks by our heads, so we thought we had better take care of our heads. We then stooped down under the logs and the rocks went over us. Well we never said any thing about it till a few days after one John Mitchel told some of his neighbours that he and some more like'd to have kill'd two Mormons the other night throwing rocks at them. He knew they must have hurt them verry bad for he heard the rocks bounce off of them. Mr Lowe heard of the affair and got on his horse and rode down to John's and, says he, "John I have heard a bad tale about you and I have come down to see you about

it. I heard that you and some more of your companions threw rocks at the Mormons. Now tell me did you do it or was you telling a lie? Now tell me.” John hung down his head and said that he did but he knew that it was wrong and he hoped that he would forgive him and he would do so no more. “Now John,” says the Judge, “I am glad that you have owned up to it for the Mormons has got the rocks and I should have fined you verry heavy had you not been sorry for what you had done.”

Well all this time I was preparing to move my family, which concisted of myself and wife and three children, my mother, sister, and three brothers. My fatherinlaw still held bitter feelings against us and tried to do us all the harm he could. About a month before we started he said that if I ofered to go he would shoot me, and three times he sent me that message. I sent word back to him that I had a good rifle and could shoot as good as he could and if he came to my house when I was going to start or before, I would shoot him first if I could.

On February 25th, eighteen hundred and thirty six, My wife bore me another daughter. We called her Kiziah Jane. She was about a month and eight days of age when we started. A day or two before we started I was out, and My Uncle John Lowe came down to our house and call'd to my wife and said to her, “Caroline bring me Johns rifle quick, there is a flock of turkies and I want to kill one,” and said he would bring it back dirictly. And when I returned home I miss'd my rifle and said “where is my rifle?” My wife said that My Uncle John Lowe had come and got it to go and shoot some turkies but would be back dirictly with it. Now said I, “supose the old man should come to kill me I should have no weppon to defend myself with at all and that will be a good go.” “But,” said my wife, “do you think that he will come?” I said that I could not tell. Well we started and we had to go by my Uncle John. He came out to bid us good bye and in his hand brought my rifle. It was still loded. He only wanted to get it out of my posession into his own “for,” said he, “John I should not like to see you kill the old man.”

Chapter Third

1836 We bid our friends good bye and started on our jurney. It was about the first of April. We had three hundred miles to go before we reached Missouria. We traviled with ox teames. We had one yoke of cattle give out and we had to get another yoke. We had pretty good traviling concidiring. We arrived at Father James Allred's in Ray County [Missouri] on the sixteenth of June and found many saints rejoicing in the new covenant, and I realized myself to that what I had imbraced was the truth from God. The Saints there were much percutied. And they went and layd out a county and called it Coldwell [Caldwell] County. The saints all moved there and called it far West. I moved there myself and assisted in making the first settlements. But first we moved into Clay County and stayd there a little while, and from there into Coldwell County. We moved there in the fall and stayd there two winters, and from there we moved from to Davis [Daviess] County.

I went with Brother Gee—he lived close by us—and we went to the Election in Davis County when the Saints was refused the priviledge of Voting, and resqued some of the Saints from a furious Mob. And the Lord did strengthen my body far beyond the

strength of man—just after I Joined the Church I took a second groth and grew two inches and a half and grew verry stout indeed and my health became strong and I felt like as if I could handle any two men on the earth. Well when Myself and Brother Gee got there, there was a large Crowd of folk's. Soon after the Election comenced it was rumered around [that] the Mormons should not vote. And that drew the bretheren together and they comenced talking about how there had been a man going round amongst us finding out who the Mormons was going to vote for. And when they heard, it made them Mad, and they said that the Mormons should not vote. Becaws the Mormons did not vote to suit them, they must not vote at all.

Now this the Saints did not like, to be deprived of their liberty and right. So some were determind to go and put in their vote. Now for my part I felt like backing every one for it was our rights. There was Riley Stuart, Hiram Nelson, myself and another man, I cant think of his name just now, but we all started to go and put in our votes. I was about the last one. And the brother that was on a head got knocked down, and then Brother Riley Stuart interfeared for him, and one of the Mob rushed at him with a knife. Riley turned and run when he saw the man draw his knife. I then run after the ruffen, and as it happened I saw an oak stick lying in the rode. It was split—one of those stiks they have to build chimneys with. And just as the fellow struck Stuart, I struck him. And as I struck him there had been another fellow running after me with a loded horse whip and struck me right between the shoulders, but it did not seem to hurt me much only I felt that I could take them all if they would come along. Just as the fellow struck me I turned round and struck an under handed lick and just fetched it under his chin and broke his jaw in two places and down he came and we had no more trouble with him. There was so much excitement after that, that I could hardly tell what did transpire.

But one of the Brethern had a large cotten handkerchief full of earthenware, and some fellow broke some of them with a stick, and he then made a wepon of them and commenced breaking the rest of them over their heads. I know that I knocked them right and left every one that came in my reach and I know that there were over eight or ten. There was one fellow comenced bawling when he saw one of his companions lye Motionless on the sod. He said that they had kill'd poor bill [bill is crossed out and Dick Wilding written over it]. And a brother hearing the poor fellow wailing for his companion thought that he would give him something els to cry for. It was Washing Vorus. He up with a rock and threw at him and struck him right in the mouthe. He bah hoo'd and cry'd out "what d n nd hard licks those d m d Mormons do hit." They then commenced carrying off the men that had been knock d down and some kill. And some were standing up against the fence and against the house with the blood running from their heads and faces, and I expect that some of them was from the effects of the teacups and sawsers. How ever they lookd pitifull objects indeed, and when it was all over Brother Vorus looked at the crockery ware and there was not a peice left the size of an inch and the handkerchief and all was covered with blood.

The Officer then came up to Me and said that we could come and vote, but I told him that I did not cair wether I voted or not. But he said that I'd better come and put in my vote, so I started on behind. I had not yet put down my stick and he saw it and said

“for Gods sake put down your stick. there is no use for it now.” But I told him that I had no wepon and I did not cair about leaving it for it had been a good friend to me. “For Gods sake dont come here then.” So I turned back and he kept on. It was only a bite [bait] to draw me in and then they would have taken me or used me up.

[Inserted here is John Lowe Butler's detailed account of the election fight, as recorded in the LDS church's Journal History, August 6, 1838, pp. 3-6. John wrote this at an unknown date, probably at Nauvoo to help compilers of Joseph Smith's History of the Church.]

“A short account of an affray that took place between the Latter-day Saints and a portion of the people of Daviess county, Mo., at an election held in Galatin August 6, 1838:

Polls opened with the usual ceremonies. There were present about forty or fifty Missourians and some eight or ten of the saints (viz) Hyrum Nelson and Brother Rily Stewart, Jackson Stewart, Moses Daley, Washington Voris, Father Harvey Olmsted, Samuel Brown and Perry Durphy. There was a rush to the polls on the part of the Missourians until they were principally through with the voting, when Wm. Penniston, one of the candidates, stood upon the head of a whiskey barrel, and made a very inflammatory speech against the saints, stating that he had headed a company to order the “Mormons” off of their farms and possessions, stating at the same time that he did not consider the “Mormons” had any more right to vote than the niggers. When he has through, he called on all hands to drink, which they did, for whiskey passed free, and they drank as freely. I at this time retired a little back from the crowd, rather behind the little grocery, near by, where they were voting. I heard the word G—damn ‘em! kill ‘em G—Damn ‘em! From the noise and bustle I knew there was fighting. I felt at first not to go in amongst them, for I did not want to have any trouble, but wished to vote and thought after voting I would start home immediately, for I did not like the spirit manifested. It then came to my mind that they might be fighting the brethren, and I went to where the affray was and saw they had attacked the brethren with sticks, clapboards (or shakes) and anything they could use to fight with. They were all in a muss together, every one of the Missourians trying to get a lick at a “Mormon.” It made me feel indignant to see from four to a dozen mobbers on a man and all damning ‘em and G—damning the “Mormon.” The first thing that came to my mind was the covenants entered into by the Danites to the effect that they were to protect each other, etc. and I hollowed out to the top of my voice saying, “O yes, you Danites, here is a job for us.” I saw they were all well armed with clubs or some other weapon to fight with. I turned round and ran a few steps to get a stick and I soon found one suitable, though rather large; it was the piece of the heart of an oak, which I thought I could handle with ease and convenience. Returning to the crowd many thoughts run through my mind. First I remembered that I never in my life struck a man in anger, had always lived in peace

with all man and the stick I had to fight with was so large and heavy that I could sink it into every man's head, that I might chance to strike. I did not want to kill anyone, but merely to stop the affray and went in with the determination, to rescue my brethren from such miserable curs at all hazards, thinking when hefting my stick that I must temper my lick just so as not to kill, and furthermore when I called out for the Danites a power rested upon me such as one I never felt before. When I got in reach of them, I commenced to call out aloud for peace and at the same time making my stick move to my own utter astonishment, tapping them as though light, but they fell as dead men, their heads often striking the ground first. I took great care to strike none except those who were fighting the brethren. When I first commenced there was some six or eight men on old Mr. Durphy, and a few steps further some ten or a dozen men on Brother Olmstead and Brother Nelson, but they were so thick around them that they could not do execution to advantage. I continued to knock down every man I could reach that was lifting a stick against the brethren. After getting through and seeing the brethren on their feet, I looked and saw some of the man lying on the ground as though they were dead, some with their friends holding them up and some standing leaning against the little grocery. While gazing on the scene Bro. Riley Stewart had in his hand (what the backwoodsman calls a knee) to place between weight poles on log cabins—a piece of timber about 2-1/2 feet long, small at one end, and struck Dick Welding an over handed blow on the head, cutting the side of his head three or four inches in length, the skin pulling down. It looked like he was certainly killed. I told Stewart he had better leave, for had killed that man; he then started to run and got off some twenty or twenty-five paces, when some ten or a dozen men took after him, throwing sticks and stones at him and anything they could get, swearing they would kill him. I saw they would overpower him and called for him to come back, for we could do better business when together, and he took a little circuitous route to keep from meeting those pursuing him. At the crisis one of them mob drew a glittering dirk, the blade some six inches long, waving it in the air, and at the same time swearing it should drink Stewart's heart's blood. He started to meet Stewart, as he was returning back to the crowd. As he was several steps ahead of me, I sprang with all the power that was in me to overtake him before he met Stewart. Just as he and Stewart met, he made a blow at his neck or breast, but as Stewart was passing in a run, his dirk passed over his left shoulder close by his neck and struck in his right shoulder blade and bent the point of it round as much as an inch. Just as he made his lick I reached forward as far as I could and hit him on the side of the head and fetched him helpless to the ground, and at the same instant received a blow from one behind me with the butt end of a loaded horse whip which took me right between the shoulders. I felt the jar only in my breast and had I not been stooping forward, as I was at the time I made my blow, he would have taken me on the head, no doubt, and perhaps fetched me down. While Stewart was running off, James Welding, Dick's brother, came along and saw his brother lying in his gore; he bawled and swore that they had killed Dick. He stooped down and picked up a stone, swearing he would kill every "Mormon" in

Daviess county before Saturday night. Just as the word came out of his mouth, Washington Voris, standing near him, hit him square in the mouth with a stone that would weigh near two pounds (I think) and straightened him out on the ground. He soon gathered up and as he rose with his mouth badly cut and bleeding, he put his hand on his face and began to cry, saying that he never saw people hit as hard as the "Mormons." They had killed Dick and mashed his mouth too, hoo, hoo; and off he ran bellowing in the brush. I will mention another occurrence which took place. Bro. Olmsted previous to the affray had purchased half a dozen earthen bowls and as many tea cups and saucers which he had tied up in a new cotton handkerchief and swung to his wrist. One of the mob struck at him when he raised his arm, the blow striking the bowls and saucers and broke them. He then commenced using them over their heads, and when the affray was over, I saw him empty out his broken earthenware on the ground pieces not larger than a dollar and his handkerchief looked like it had been chewed by a cow. I have thought ever since that time that they had fun to pick the pieces of earthen ware from their heads, for they certainly were pretty well filled. The whole scene was soon over; I don't think it lasted longer than two minutes from the first to the last blow. I have seen as many as two hundred men at an election in old Kentucky, fighting through each other for six or eight minutes with clubs, knives, brick bats, etc., and not the tenth part of the execution done. I believe there was as many as 30 men with bloody heads and some of them badly hurt. I believe that I knocked down as many as six or eight myself. I never struck a man the second time, and while knocking them down, I really felt that they would soon embrace the gospel, and felt the spirit as above stated to rest upon me with power. I felt like I was seven or eight feet high and my arms three or four feet long, for I certainly ran faster than I ever did before and could reach further and hit a man, and they could not reach me to harm me. Col. Penniston who was the author of the scrape ran up to the Grocery on the hill. I looked out for him to get a clip at him.

I never spoke of the power that I felt for two years and upwards until later Bro. Joseph preached in Nauvoo that the time would come that the sinners would have to have their heads cut off to save them, the thing opened up to my mind that I was operated upon by a spirit to save them by knocking them down to keep them from killing the saints which would have sealed their damnation. After the fight was over, we gathered our men on some hewn house logs and told the mob that we would fight them as long as blood run warm in our veins, if they still persisted, but they begged for peace after they saw their men lying round, and came to me and wanted me to go and vote. I told them I would, if they would clear the road to the polls which they did immediately and started to vote; but I saw that if I went in the poll box, they would be all round me and thus take me prisoner, and so I declined voting. They then said they must take me prisoner for some of their men who were dead and would die. I told them I was a law abiding man, but I did not intend to be tried by a mob. I then mounted a good horse and left."

[End of insert]

And then Brother Samuel H Smith came up to me and said “let us go home.” But when I got to were I had left my wagon I found it gone, so brother Smith said “come and go home with me,” which was about three miles from my house. Brother Gee started home with the team, and my wife going out of doors saw the team and started to meet it. But there was but one man in the wagon and he was standing up and had the whip in his hand laying it onto the horses and the horses going at full speed. My wife had got some distance from the house when she met him, and she said to him “why Brother Gee, what in the world is the matter? Where is Mr. Butler?” “Why,” said he, “is nt John Butler come home? I thought that he would have been home by this.” “Why,” said he, “he has kill’d five or six men at the Election.” And on he drove past my wife and stopt at the house and got out and started for home, leaving the horses all hitched up and leaving my wife to take cair of them. She took them off the waggan and fed them and then waited anxiously for my return. But I returned not till next morning after breakfast from Brother Smiths.

I concluded to ride over to far West some fourteen Miles from where we lived and I saw brother Joseph Smith—he resided there. He asked me if I had removed my familey. I told him no I had not. “Then,” says he. “go and move them directly and do not sleep another night there.” “But,” said I, “I dont like to be a coward.” “Go and do as I tell you,” said he. So I started back again and got home about two hours after Dark. I then said to my wife, “we must pack up our things and leave here directly for brother Joseph has told me to.” My wife was verry glad for she had been wanting to move for a long time. So we loded up one wagon lode and took it down to Brothers Taylors about one mile and a half. And my wife and Melinda Porter, a young woman that was boarding with us, she was keeping school, they packed up another wagon lode by the time I got back and we all got started off just about the break of day.

Now about sunrise or a little while after, Brother Gee saw at the distance a large body of men. He said that he thought there was about thirty odd. He whatched them come towards the house and surrounded it. He then run down to Taylors to tell them that we were all kill’d, I suppose, and when he saw us, he said, “O I am so glad that you are here for there are about thirty men around your house to kill you all.” I then saw the hand of the Lord in guiding Brother Joseph Smith to direct me to move my familey away, for if he had not why in all probability we should all have been murder’d, and I felt to thank God with all my heart and soul.

I then started on to far West and my wife folow’d me the next day. We stopt on the west side of far West and went into Follets farm to live.

While in Coldwell My wife bore me another daughter on the sixteenth of December eighteen hundred and thirty seven. We named her Phebe Malinda. She is about nine months old [when Butlers moved to Far West]. The saints were still pericuted in every corner, and while I was in far West Joseph Smith and Hiram were taken prisoners. A man by the name of Hinkle came to brother Joseph and Hiram and told them that the Mob wanted to compromis with them but they must come unarmed. An so brother Joseph and Hiram went. And when they met so that they could sea each other, this man pulled of his coat and stood with his back to them—that was for them to come without arms. Well they met and this kind friend said “gentlemen there are your prisoners.” So they just

took them. And of all the yelling and [the] whooping cursing and swaring, it was done. Then some of the Brethern went with Joseph and Hiram. The Mob then took them off and came back.

The next day they came back and surrounded the City and was going to take all the males prisoners. And through the day we had to hide any where that we could. I had my horse hitched inside the feild. My wife was at Brother Hendrex's. And as I went to get my horse I took my bridal off the pickets and was going to get him, and my wife came and snatched the bridle of me and went and hung it back on the pickets. I never spoke, nether did my wife, but she came and took me out again and told me that there had been six men whatching my horse for to get me for the last three or four hours. As it happened while this transpired they were reading a peice of paper so that they saw nothing and suspected nothing. There had been a battal fought on Goose creek by the Mormons and Mob, and severale were kill'd and wounded. Amongst the killd was David Patten, one of the Twelve, and brother Hendrix was shot right through the neck.

At night they still kept on guard round the City. And Brother Dannels was so mad that he went and got an old horse pistle and loded it pretty hevey and then crawled out in the brush and fired it off. And the confusion there was in their camp was laughable, for their Officers gave them command to their men fall into rank and prepare your armes for "the Mormons are upon us," and they surely thought that it was so. They heard no Mormons coming and all was quitt. Again they went back to their fires and some went to bed. And after awhile whang went the old Pistle again and they did not know what to do. They muster'd together again and got ready to kill "every damn Mormon that came in sight," but none came in sight, so they went to bed again. And so he kept it up till Morning.

Well I went then to go through the guard which was not a very pleasant job. But however I started and got along first rate with the help of God. But I had never felt to murmur till this time I had to cross the creek and take off my close and tye them on my head and wade through, and the banks on either side was allmost strate up and down, and water was bitter cold, and when the water came up to my breast it chill'd me through, and then I felt to murmur by the time that I got out. But I pray'd the Lord to bless me and give me his Holy Spirit to enable me to hold fast to the principals of eternal salvation. I got through the guard and went to brother Hubbards and stay'd with him four days in which time I had to keep pretty close. I went from there to Brother Heads and stay'd with him a little over two weeks. And when I was there I used to tell the folk's that my name was John Lowe and some knew no diferant, so I got along very well.

When the mob came to far west there [came with them a man] by the name of Nathan. [I] was weell aquaintion with him. He would not volenteer to come and fight the Mormons, so they drafted him and made him come. So just before they got to far West the Captain told the men to cut a whole lot of switches and hang them on their saddle, so that if the Mormons should whip them out that they would have something to make the horses faster. But Nathan did not get any switches, and they said "why do you not get some Nathan?" His answer was, "I have no cawse for any, for I never done the Mormons any harm and they will not do me any harm." So when they got to camp and the baggage

wagon had come up, Nathan said that he was going over to the city to see an old friend of his. And they told him that the Mormons would kill him if he did. He told them that he was not afraid. So he started over to my house, and when he got there he told my Mother that he had come to have some supper and stay all night. She asked him who all them men were that had down on the City. He told her that they were a Mob come to kill all the Mormons off. Well said the old lady “you have come with them have you not?” Nathan said he had, but not to kill the Mormons. They had forced him to come to fight them, but they could not force him to shoot and he was going home in the morning.

Well about three or four hours there came five or six men to fetch him away. They said that the Captain had sent them after him. Nathan told them that he should not go for he could sleep in the house and that he was not going to sleep out of doors when he could sleep in a house. So he said that they could go and tell their Captain so. Well they went back and Nathan stopt, he had his breakfast in the morning and told the folks that if the Mob drove the Mormons away that his house was a home for them as long as they had a mind to stay. Well he wished them good luck and started, but not back to the camp but back home. Now the Captain sent over in the day to see where he was. They enquired of my Mother where he was, and she told them that he had gone home, so they had to go back without him.

They still kept guard about the place and they took a great many prisoners, some forty or fifty. And they were hunting pretty close after me, but I kept myself from being known by them. They all formed a hollow square and gave orders for the Mormons to bring all their arms and lay them down in the square, so I went and got my rifle and sword. It was counceled by the brethern to lay down our arms, for it would be better for Joseph and Hiram. I lay’d down mine, but there was one man came to lay his arms down and he walk’d into the midle of the square and looked around him upon the black looking villians, and then swung his sword around his head and threw it point foremost till it struck the ground and buried it in the ground eight or ten inches and said, “if you have got my arms, you have not got my spunk.” He then retired and gave room for more.

And a while after that there came some five or six men to search for arms. They came to my house and asked my wife for all the arms she had. She told them that I had given them all up. And the officer said, “have you not got any small arms such as revolvers or small pistles, beawe [bowie] knifes or the like?” She said, “No I have not. And if I had you would not get them so you may as well be gone.” He answered and said, “We have come to search and take all we can find.” Well, she said, “you may search if you want to.” Well, he said “I suppose we can take your word.” They then left and went some were else.

And while I was away, about December [1838], Father Smith gave out that there would be a prayer and fast meeting for brother Joseph and Hiram while they were in prison, for the Lord to bless them and enable them to bear the cruelties that they had to suffer and pass through. My Mother and my wife went to go to meeting. It was to open about sunrise in a place that was built by Joseph. But when they got to the door it was locked and they thought that they were at prayer. And Father Smith and his folks and Brother John Taylor came up and they said to them, “Why do you not go in?” They said

that they were at Prayer. "At Prayer?" said Father Smith. "No, it cannot be." So he tried the door and found it locked on the inside. He said that some of the Apostates had got there before them and that they had done it to break up there meeting. He called to them to open the door, but no one answered or took any notice whatever.

By this time several had gathered together, and some of them wanted to take an ax and cut the door down so that they could get [in]. But Father Smith said no we must not do that. And Bro. Taylor said that if they had deprived us of meeting in the house they could not deprive us of praying to God our Heaven Father to look down in tender mercy upon his servants and enable them to bare their afflictions and the wrongs that they had to pass through. So Father Smith said, "Let us hold Meeting in this house," pointing to one of the houses belonging to one of the brethrin, "and they that cannot get inside can hear out side and we will have a good meeting although the Devil has tried to frustrate our design." They did hold meeting and them that were there said that they never saw such a meeting the Lord was with them and that to bless and answer their prayers. They broke up about four o'clock in the afternoon. And the apostates had not come out yet there was the Witneys [Whitmers] and Thomas B Marsh and a great many more in there. What their business was I never found out, but some plan to help and destroy Mormonism.

Some few days before that a man by the name of Maclelling [William E. McLellin], one who had been high in the Church and kingdom of God and had held the office of one of the twelve, him and another man went into Brother Josephs house and comenced searching over his things. And Sister Emma asked him why he done so for, and his answer was becaws he could. He took all the julery out of Josephs box and took a lot of bed clothes and in fact plunder'd the house, and took the things off.

And while Brother Joseph was in prison he suffered with the cold and he sent home to his wife Emma to send him some quilts or bed cloths, for they had no fire there, and he had to have something to keep him from the cold. It was in the dead of winter. My wife was up there when the word came and she said that Sister Emma cried and said that they had taken all of her bed clothes except one quilt and blanket, and what could she do? So my wife with some other sisters said [to Emma], "Send him them and we will see that you shall have something to cover you and your children." My wife then went home and got some bed close and took them over to her.

Well all this time I was on my way to Illinoia. There was Brother Elias Higby and David Louis with myself. The night after the mob took Brother Joseph and Hiram, I asked Brother Isiac Morley to ordain me to the office of a Priest and I would Join some Elder and help to role forth the kingdom of God. He laid his hands upon me and Ordained me to the Office of an Elder. Well Myself and bretheren stopt at a place one night and asked a man we saw if he could give us something to eat and a nights lodging. He asked us where we were from. I told him that we were from Clinton County. "Oh," said he, "You are from the other side of the damn Mormons, and what are they doing at this time? They are getting rubed out aint they?" I answer'd that I did not know much about them. "Yes," said he, "you can stop all night and welcome. I know you must be tired." So he told his wife to go to work and get a good supper ready for these men for they were tired and hungry. So she bustl'd about and went to work and got us a good supper. And then

we had a little conversation, but I avoided Mormonism as much as possible and answering questions about it.

After we had went to bed there came a man to the [house] and said, calling the man by name, "Come down with me," said he, "for there is a damn Mormon down here [who] come down from the Mormons to see his Motherinlaw and Sister himself. Now we are going to give him perfect hell." The old man told him that he could not go with him to night for he had company and could not leave them. Well, said the Fellow, "I am sorry for I should like you to have the fun of the job as well as ourselves." "Whats the fellows name?" said our host. "Wall now I think it is Riley Stuart they call him." He then went off.

I thought that when he first came and told his tale and said that there was a mormon here that some of the Mob had got on our tract and was going to have a go at us but I found out afterwards that it was not us. I felt greatly releived when I heard it, although I felt sorry for Rileys condition for they were bound to illtreat him if they caught him, which I hoped that they would not. But the same fellow came back in about an hour and a half and said that they had done it for him. He said that they had lots of fun with him, seeing him try to help himself.

Well when we got up in the Morning about daybreak—and I can tell you we was not long in getting away—we saddeld our horses and got ready. And the old man said that we must stay to breakfast. But I told him that we were in some what of a hurry and that we would not stop. Well he said that he was verry sorry but that we must have our own way. The old lady said that we must take some biscuits in our pockets to eat on the rode, so we took them and started on our jurney wishing them good Morning. I found out that Riley Stuart had caught hell sure enough as the fellow said, he was pounded over the head and it liked to have kill'd him. He was layed up through it.

Chapter Four

1839. We arrived at Quincy, Illinois, and I went and stayed with an old man there and kept school. And brother Louis kept school to. I taught the old mans children and his Grandchildren and some few neibours children—some twenty or more. And I kept school till January. And in Febuary my wife started for Quincy with the rest of the saints. And Brother O. A. Smoot having no team said to my wife that he would drive her team for her if she would let him put his traps [luggage] in the waggon. So she let him do it. And we had no boy big enough to drive team, Taylor being only seven or eight years of age. Well they started [eastward toward Illinois] but it was bitter cold and they suffered fearfully, but by the help of God they were inabled to stand and bare it.

My wife after she had started had verry sore eyes, and sister Smoot had to lead her along for five or six days. I had but two horses and a very light waggon so that they could not ride. They were walking on one day and they called at a house and asked to go in and warm the children. The Man of the house said yes, go in and warm. They went to the door and his wife was there. They told her that they were come to warm themselves and children. She said that she could not think of such a thing as to let them in for they might

have some desise about them and she had a house full of small children and they might catch it. "I am afraid," said she, "that you Mormons are disessed and I dont want it to get into my family." Sister Smoot made answer and said, "You will have it soon enough if we do not bring it to you." So they went on again.

One day they were going along and Sister Smoot was sitting in the front end of the waggon and had my daughter Kisia in her lap. And they had a horse in that would kick once in a while and he began to kick, and struck Sister Smoot on the knees and my daughter on the eyebrow. They both screamed lowdly and my wife went running back to see what was the matter. She found them both bleeding most fearfully. Ther was a woman come out of her house, for they hapened to be passing by a house at this time, to see what was the matter. She soon saw and she run into the house and got her camphor bottle, some brown paper, and a pan of warm water and brought it to them and helped them all she could, and said she was right sorry to see the Mormons suffer so much and be drove about from place to place. They were close to the Mouth of Shariton river and there were lots of Saints camped there, and my wife went and got some Elders to go and lay hands upon Sister Smoot and my daughter Kisia. They got some better. The cork of the horse shoe was pretty sharp and the lick was a heavy one.

On another day as they were going along they got so verry cold that they did not know what to do. The children were all crying with the cold. They went up to a house and asked the woman within if they might come in and warm. She said nothing. They asked her again. She made no answer so they said, "Let us go in and warm any how." So in they went, and the woman went off into thee next room and never spoke to them at all. But they sat there and warmed themselves and children good and started on their journey again.

But it was a hard trial for women and children to pass through [due to] the severity of the wether and the hard heartedness of the people. But they will have to suffer for their illtreatment of the Saints. And indeed they are suffering at this time. God will cause the Prophysys of his servants to come to pass to the verry letter. They need not think that they will escape, for the Lord is just and he will punish those that have illtreated his children and shed the blood of his servants the Prophets. Wo unto the Nations of the earth for there shall be wars and rumeurs of wars and blood shed and murder through the world, for they have not hearkened to the voice of the Lord and have killed his chosen Servants and drove his children into the wilderness and have made them to suffer and pass through the most bitter trials, and their blood have long since cried unto the Lord for Vengeance upon their enamies, and his punishments are bound to be fulfilled. He will not let his servants go unavenged.

Well it still kept bitter cold, and my wife and children suffered verry much indeed. And there was an old lady got one of her feet wet and she liked to have froze it. But Sister Smoot gave her a dry stocking, and that saved her from freezing. But they had to lead her to camp there the brethren had a large fire built so that they could not get within six feet of it.

They still traviled on till they came to the [Mississippi] river. There was plenty of timber there and brother Smoot cut down a dry tree and piled up the branches and set fire

to it. It made a verry large fire. Bye and by the owner of the land came along and said he to the folks, "You burn wood as if it was your own." "Well there is plenty of it," said Brother Smoot, "and I dont think that you will miss one old dry tree. Besides, it would lay here and rot." "You think," replied the stranger, "that I can find no use for such wood? But I can tell you that I can, so I want you to cut no more," and he then went off and left them to their own medatations.

[In Illinois] I had heard of the Saints coming from far west and had been over the river to enquire for my wife. I heard that she was comming and would be there in a day or two, so I went back again. All this time there were men all around whatching and hunting for me up and down as if I were some wild beast of prey. But they were not sharp enough to catch me, for the Lord was with me and that to bless me and guard me from all evil designing men. They were taking the Bretheren, them that they thought had any influence, were ever they could lay their hands upon them, and drag them of to prison there to answer for what they had never done. And the most of these men were christian men, those that beleived in Jesus Christ and the bible and were as religious as thay could well be. These were the men that were dragging off the servants of God, men that were inocent of the crimes they said they were guilty of, and some of them but verry few thought they were doing God service by taking these brethren and throwing them into prison. They were like the folks in olden time when Jesus Christ was upon the earth and the Apostles.

My family arrived on the other side of the river. I then took the cannu—for the river was blocked with ice so that the Boats could not run—and went across to fetch them over. But I could not get our waggon over, so I stayd there that night. And myself and Brother Smoot went back into Quincy and left our family's with the waggon. The Ferry boat made a passage through the ice in a day or two afterwards and fetched our famileys over. We then had no place to go and it was bitter cold, yet it was about the twelvth of March. There was an old man—I forget his name just now—kept a large butcher down by the river and a large wholesale Store down by the Boat landing. He also had ten or twelve small houses that he had built on purpose to rent. He told some of his tennants that they had to seek other apartments, for the Mormons were coming and they had no place to go to, and he was going to let his apartment to them.

So the old gentelman came to me and told me to bring my family up to one of his houses. And we could live in it till we had been there a little while so that we should have a little time to look about us and get a place. He also told us to go down to the butchers store and get some meat when we wanted some. He never charged us any thing for what we had. There were three or four other famileys living close to us that were Mormons. They were living in his houses that were joining ours. He treated them all with kindness. It seemed a new thing to us to be treated with so much kindness. The Lord opened their hearts so that his Saints should not suffer so much as they had done in the forepart of the winter. The folks generally were kind to our bretheren all over the place.

In the summer of thirty nine, if I mistake not, I was Ordained to the Office of Seventy under the hands of Joseph Young and others. This ordination took place at a Conferance held east of Quincy Illinois. We lived in Quincy about three or four weeks

and then moved out about ten miles from Quincy and rented a farm and put a Crop in. I then was caled to go on a Mission to Preach the Gosples in Illinoia. So I had to leave my crop in the hands of my brothers till I returned, which was not till the next January. Preached the Gospel to the People and they behaved to us like gentelmen, but we could not induce any of them to Join us or to beleive in the Principals of Eternal Life and salvation. While I was on this Mission, Brother Joseph and Hiram was releaced from prison. They came over to Quincy and the Govenor told them that they might go and build a settelment in Commerse that was up the river from Quincy. But it was the Most sickly place in the state, so Brother Joseph concluded to Move in the forepart of the year forty [1839].

My Wife bore me a daughter on December the twenty ninth eighteen hundred and thirty nine. We named her Caroline Elizabeth. About March Joseph and Hiram moved up to [returned to] Commerse and I went up just after them to look at the Place and see how I should like it. Brother Joseph asked me if I was comming to live there. I told him that I wanted to live where he did. Well said he, "You have not got your family up here yet have you?" I told him no I had not moved them up yet but that I had come up just to look at the place. Brother Joseph then said, "You will come over to my house and stay while you are here and till you move your family up." I thanked him for his kind Offer.

And when I got over to the house I found a whole lot of folks verry sick. It was a verry sickly place indeed. I asked Brother Joseph what kind of a place it was. He said it was a low, marshy, wet, damp, and nasty place but that if we went to work and improved it it would become more healthy and the Lord would bless it for our sakes. I went to work after I had been there some three weeks to pay for my board and helpt Brother Joseph to fix up his fence and to plow his lot and do up his garden for him. Then My family was moved up and I built a house and fenced my lot upon the hill. We were all Mormons but one and his name was Daniel H Wells. He was Squire of Hancock County at that time.

Every one was building and you could look over the little settlement and see the hand of industry in every corner of the town. Things prospered with every body, and the Saints began to look for better times than they had seen lately. It began to be a more healthy country and folk's began to be strong again. It was a serious time when nearly every family was down sick, and the sufferings we had to encounter with is beyond the knoledge of any man accept he pass through it. But thanks be to God our Heavenly Father, he heard and answered our prayer when we called upon [him], he blessed us and the land for our sake, and it yealded and brought fourth in abundance so much so that the folks did not know what to do with their stuffs. They built warehouses and graineries and they were filled to overflowing by the blessings of God and the industry of the Saints—for they had to labour to get things around them, but they prayed unto the Lord to bless the labours of their hands and he did so.

And they built a large City and made every improvement that could be made. Down in the bottom it was all swamp and low wet places. The Saints went to work and draned it all off so that it became dry and a great deel more healthy. The warf was also improved and the boats used to run regular down to St Louis, Mo. The City Councill met and

changed the name of the Place, the name hereafter was Nauvoo. Brother Joseph built him a nice large house. They called it the Nauvoo Mansion. It was a splendid building.

In eighteen hundred and forty two [1841] we commenced to build the temple of the Lord. The corners stones were lay'd and dedicated by Bro Joseph and Hiram and some other brethren. Things were still in a flourishing condition and the Saints were still industrious, and they were happy for the Lord had blessed them in all their undertakings.

In eighteen hundred and forty two [1840] I started on a mission to the soux Indians, Myself and Bro Emmett. And Brother Joseph said you are not going to take your families along with you are you? "That is what I have understood," I replied. Well said he, "you will be back in less than six months." However we started.

Now it was a beautiful Country as ever a man would wish to set his eyes upon. If any of my readers have ever seen the western world before it was trod upon by civilized Nations, you will know what kind of a country it was. It was bordered around by slooping hills and a chain of fresh water lakes in the center of the valley. Game abounded there, and the birds sang forth their notes to their Maker. The fawn playd by their dams and the wipoorwill chanted forth his notes in the evening when the sun had sank to rest behind the western hills.

We had but little success amongst the Indians this time. They did not like us at all. They stole our horses and shot our cattal and came verry near shooting us. We started our folks towards home, my family numbering my wife and five children. Well as I say we started them for home, and Brother Emmett and myself was to stay and find our horses. We stay'd and found them, but the Indians took them from us again. Then we had to fly for our lives. Now we started to go right between two lakes, and the Indians tried to head us to way lay us and kill us.

We had then not tasted tasted [sic] one bite for eight or nine days. I prayed to the Lord to look down in Mercy upon us and strengthen us and enable us to endure the trials and sufferings of hunger that we had to pass through. We got to the point between the lakes, and headed then without any interruption from the Indians. I could not tell the reason only that the Lord was our friend and changed the mind of the Indians so that they turned back from their bloody design, for they ment to kill us if they only could catch us. Wether they got to the point before us and got tired of waiting or wether they did not get there till afterwards I cannot tell, but one thing I know—that they were so blood thirsty that they would have devoured us if they could only have seen us.

After we had passed the point of the Lakes there was a stream of water run into the Lake running on our right hand. And the Spirit of the Lord told me that if I would turn asside and go down to the river I should find something to eat. I told Brother Emmett, and we turned asside and went down to the streem. We had our rifles with us but we had not seen any game at all. Everything seemed to be far away when we wanted them close. Well as we were going down I had several thoughts come into my head. I could fancy seeing a nice fat deer standing on the bank of the streem, cooling his thirsty tongue. Then I thought I could see some a good fat Elk grazing on the green bank of the stream, but we had got there and I could see no deer nor any Elk. My mind was darkened, and I felt to

murmer and called upon God and asked him why he had caused us to come so far out of our rode and then not find any thing to eat.

I cast my eyes upon the streem not knowing which way to go or what to do, for we were week and could hardly walk, I had not [turned] my eyes long in that directian when all of a sudden I saw thousand of fish in the water—and fine large ones they were to. I looked with wonder and astonishment, and I thanked the Lord for his mercy and loving kindness unto us. And I asked his forgiveness for doubting him and prayed for his Holy Spirit to enable me to put my trust in him more than I had hitherto done. We then caught fish and fed our hungry apatites. And then starting on our jurney [and] thanked God for his watchfullness over us and his blessings unto us. And the Lord did continue to pour down his blessings upon us so that He did deliver us from the blood thirsty savages and enabled us to arrive home safe without any harm to our selves.

We arrived about twelve miles from Nauvoo on the night of the fifth of October [1840]. I wanted to get to Conferance it being the next day so I got up the next Morning and got on a horse and went to Nauvoo to conferance and I got there just as it commenced. I then went back after my familey and brought them home and Brother Joseph asked me if we all got back safe and well? I told him that we had got home safe but it was by the blessing of God. He said that he was Glad that we had got home safe, and he said, “Now go and try it without your family and you shall not be hurt.”

So I left my family in Nauvoo. They were all pretty well at that time, although they had seen much hardships—they had to live on crab apples and honey for nine weeks and nothing else to eat, only what game we could kill once in a while. Well I started back again with Brother Emmett to the Soux Nation, but we had but little success for they did or could not understand the principals of the gospel. So we had to return home again On the fourteenth of Febuary, and my wife bore my a daughter and we named her Sarah Adaline on the fifteenth of Febuary [1841] the next day after my return. I stayed alittle while and then left for Kentuckey

Chapter Five

1842. I stay'd till fall before I left for Kentucky. I follow'd teaming through the summer, but I had a spell of the rheumatics that spring and suffered a great deel—but not so much as I used to before obeying the gosple. I had no farm then, so I teamed for one and another, hawling up goods from the landing into the city. I left Nauvoo in september and started on my jurney to see My friends. I found them all pretty well and bitterly opposed to the principals of the kingdom of God. Yes they were blinder than ever to the truth of the work of God. They would not see themselves nor let any one else see if they could help it. They were full of the devil and percucution. I also went and visited my friends in Tennessee and found many of them bitter opponants against the Church. I bore My testimony to them and left them to meditate upon the words that I had spoken unto them.

My wife's sister that was deaf and dumb, Charity [Skeen], I found her still clinging to the kingdom of God and wanted to go home with me to Nauvoo, but her brothers try to

stop her from going with me. My Uncle John Lowe was the only one that treated me with kindness. He told me that he would do all he could for me, for I was going to take Charity home with me. Well her brothers thretaned to shoot me if I offered to take her away. And her other sisters that was deaf and dumb cried and made so much to do [because] they were affraid that their brothers would kill me. I told them not to fear, although I knew that I was in very close quarters. I got ready to go one Morning, the day before Christmas, and went down just after breakfast and got Charity and started. And I never heard such mornful crys in my life before as the two sisters made when they had to part with their sister. I thought that they would go distracted, but we wished them good bye and started on our jurney to Nauvoo.

I called at my Uncles, John Lowe, as I passed and wished him good bye. As it hapened Charitys brothers had gone down in the settelment to get a lot of fellows to help them run me off. They had gone while I started with Charity, and, as Providence willed it, after we had driven some two or three miles we came to two rodes and I did not know which to take. So I took the left hand rode and drove on just as usual as if nothing was the [matter]. I could not see any differance in the travel upon the rodes for one was traveled about as much as the Other. Well we traveled on and had no one to molest us in any way whatever.

Well, Charities Brothers came back to the house and found us gone. They were then so enraged that they went and got their horses and called upon their friends to help them bring back their sister that had been stolen from them by that damned Mormon Devil. They jumped upon their horses and got their rifles and started after us as fast as there horses legs could carry them. But the Lord was bound to foile them in their mad intentions for they rode on till they came to the fork in the rodes. They then took the right hand road and traveled along at headlong speed while we took it easy and comfortable on our jurney. So they got but little for their trouble. When they had riden on for two or three hours they began to think that I had flown on the rode with railrode speed so they thought that it was no use going any farther for I had so much better horses than theirs to out run them. So they thought surely that they would have caught us before that time, it being about mid day. Well they had to return home with out us and we kept on our jurney.

The two sisters that were at home were glad when they heard that they had not found us, for I realy think that they would had taken Charity home and have killed me and buried me right there on the spot. But the Lords protecting hand was over us and ever near to help or defend us from our enemies. I felt to thank him for his mercy in deliviring me out of their hands. Well, we arrived home safe at Nauvoo and My wife was verry glad to see her sister.

There is one circumstance that I have missed putting down. In the summer before I went to Kentucky [incorrect], Brother Joseph started with his wife Emma, started to visit her friends [June 1843]. I expect some of the decenters told some of the Missouria, and a Mob came over and put themselves up as Officers of the Peace to take him to Missouria and make away with him. They [Smiths] were going to Stone river to see her friends and on the way they waylaid him and took him prisoner. And Emma did not know what to do,

so she started back again to Nauvoo. Now these Missourians, they took him to a house belonging to an old man and asked him if he would let them have a room to put their Prisoner. Now, while they were going and after they had got there, there was fellow with a revolver pointing it to Josephs ribs and once in awhile he would give him a poke with it until he had taken the skin off in more than one or two places.

Well the Old Man heard by some of his folks that they had ill treated their Prisoner, so he thought that he would go and see the prisoner. So he went to the door and it was fastened so that he could not get in. They were counselling together what they would do with him [Joseph Smith]. I expect the old man demanded admittance, but they would not let him in, so he told them that he was coming in or he would set fire to the place and burn them up but what he would go in, so they let him in. "A pretty thing," said he, "to keep a man out of his own house when he had kindly let you have a room to secure your prisoner in." So he asked Joseph wether he had been illtreated. Joseph opened his shirt bosom and showed him his side which was then bleeding. "If you call that ill treatment, why I have been illtreated." The old man looked and said, "Who done it?" And Joseph said, his Captors. The old man said, "Gentleman you have abused this man shamefully and I tell you [you] cant do such things in my house and I tell you how we serve folks that dont go by the laws of the Constitution of the United States. We just take them by lynch law. And I can tell you that you must not abuse a prisoner in this part of the State or you will be verry apt to know of it."

He then asked Joseph wether he had any thing to eat. He said that he had not. Why said the old man. "These other men have had something to eat, why did not you get some?" "Becaws," said Joseph, "they would not give me any." "Never mind, you shall have some." "Oh," said they, "he is only a damn'd Mormon." Well, said the old man, "Mormon or no Mormon, he is a man and a citizen of the United States and he has got to have justice and he is a going to have it to so long as he stays with me." They then growled about something but the old man went off to get something to eat for Joseph. He gave him something good to eat and told him that he should have a bed to sleep upon but that them other fellars would have to find their own, for they should not sleep with him.

Joseph told him about Emmas going back to Nauvoo and that he expected there would some one be along to help him out of his difficulty. The old man then told Joseph that he would keep him there till some of his friends should come to his assistance. His treatment to Joseph was verry kind. If it had not been for him I dont know how Brother Joseph would have fared, but the Lord was his guardain Angle and he would just let things go so far and no farther. He softened the old man's heart so that he should have Justice done him and to bring about his purposes.

Well all this time Emma had gone back to Nauvoo and told the Brethren that Brother Joseph had been taken by a mob. I at that time had been ordained one of Josephs life guards, so some thirty of the brethren with myself started to go to Brother Joseph and resque him from the blood thirsty wretches if we could. It took us some time for we did not get on the right track for a while. Well we met them coming back. The Old Man had went and got some of his friends and took Brother Joseph and started to Nauvoo with him. The Mob was taken also and brought with him except two or three. Them that

abused Bro Joseph so mean, they went home the next day, fearing I expect that the old man would bring his threts into realaties. So they put for home. Now we met Brother Joseph and his escort, and we had not been with him more than half an hour when there was about three hundred of the Brethren came up all Mounted and ready for any thing that might transpire. The old man gave up Joseph after his thanking him for his hospitality and kindness to him. The brethren took the mob prisoners, and the Old Man and his friends wished us good day and started for home. And we started for home to.

Sister Emma sent Joseph out some clean clothes. But Joseph [said] his brethren was as dirty as he and he was not going in clean and his brethren dirty. The dust upon the rode then was four or five inches deep. The folks all heard of our arrival home, and they all came out and lined the street on both sides. Brother Joseph was first and then Brother Hodge and myself, his life guards. And then came the officers that took him prisoner and then the rest of the Brethren. The folks both men and women and children were glad to see their leader again and out of the hands of murderers. They took off their hats and bonnets and husahd him all the way up the street. Brother Joseph took off his hat and looked round upon the people and shouted hosannah to God. The officers said that the people thought a good deel of him. "Yes," said Brother Joseph. "they are the best people in the world."

I went home with Brother Joseph to the Mansion house and saw the Prisoners safe under guard. They did not know what to think. They thought that they were about done for. They thought that they would be killd. They took their trial, but Brother Joseph did not want to hurt them at all, so he let them go home and told them in the future to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them. They looked verry sheepish. They went home and left us once more to our selves. But there was lots of apostates there so that Brother Joseph could not make a move hardly with[out] its going abroad to the mobs.

There was a widow woman lived close to us that had her husband die. She had been kept by the Bishop of the ward and some of the neighbours. My wife used to take her quantties of food. So one night when I was gone out, one of the Sisters that lived close by went to her house and she would not let her in. She asked her the reason. She said that she had company and she would open the door to nobody. So the sister came to our house and My wife told her that she had thought for several Months that she kept company with those she ought not to. So they agreed to go to Sister Chapman and Sister Louis and get them to go up there and ask her the reson that she acted so, and would not open the door to the sister who had treated her with so much kindness. So they went and asked her, and she said that it was none of their business. Well, they said, "well I dont see the reason why you cannot let us in." She was looking over the door—there was a space above the door—and she said that she had company and she would not let us in. They then spoke up and said, "Well, I would be ashamed if I had a niger in the house with me," and every taunting words that they could to induce her to open the door, but she would not so they went home.

So the next day an officer came to take the women before the justices of the Peace to answer for what they had done to the poor widow. Well the justices bound them over to keep the peace under five hundred dollars bonds. There were two brethren there that went

their security and the women were set at liberty. They were very frightened at first, not knowing what they were brought up to court for. After that the sisters held a relief Society Meeting and Brother Joseph came along and asked the sisters if they had been hurt. They told him they guessed not. Well, he said, "I want you to look after that woman more close than you have ever done before and I shall take care that the Bishop does not feed her any more." Well one of the sisters wanted to go and see her one Morning, and there being no smoke coming out of the chimney she thought that she was not up and did not like to go [alone] so my wife went with her. And they found the house empty and the bird flown away, and we never heard of her since. The sisters thought that would be the end of her, that some time she would come up missing. There was several such persons in Nauvoo and always will be, for the net gathers all kinds of fish and there is bound to be some that are no account and of no use.

Things prospered with the saints all over the city. And the City still improved and look'd well. I was called with Brother Louis to go on a Mission into Illinois to preach the Gospel to the people. We started in eighteen hundred and forty three in July but we did not have much success. We gathered out some few honest in heart, but the most of the folks were very bitter against us, and they were getting wores every day and were percuting the saints more and more. They were not so kind as they were when we first went there. Their kindness dwindled away till it became hatred, and a saint was an obnoxious thing in their sight. Well we asked no odds of them if they would only let us alone. We had brought them the word of life and salvation and they could please themselves either to obey the commandments of God or to let them alone. We fulfilled our mission by the help of God and returned home early in the spring of eighteen hundred and forty four.

My wife bore me another son on the twenty eighth of February we named him after myself, John Lowe.

Chapter Sixth

1844. Times began to get so that our persons were not safe. Brother Joseph's life was not safe at all. He had several life guards to go with him when he went any where. They had issued writs for him several times to try to get him into prison again, but they could not prove him guilty in any way what ever. But they illtreated him shame fully and sometimes threatened to kill him on the spot. They took him to Cartherage gaol to try him over and over again, but they could not prove any thing that was against the laws of the constitution of the United States against him and would have to deliver him up again. This made them more enraged than ever, and they gathered together in places to council together and plan the best method of making away with him. The Missourians was red hot mad, their blood thirsty souls were boiling over to get hold of him to tare him to pieces like dogs upon there prey. And so it went on. The Spirit of murder was in their hearts to the over flowing. They were going to over throw Mormonism and put it down under foot. They strove with all their Might and main to get hold of the athorities to put them to death but they could get no hold on them.

The Temple was being fixed up so that the folks could get their Indowments and recive their washings and anointings. The Mob issued a writ for Brother Joseph and Hyrum and they were taken to Carthage goal. I and some more of his life guards went with him. We were all willing to live or die with them. He, Brother Joseph, spoke to us all and told us that he was like a lamb led to the slaughter. He also spoke to Brother Hyrum and wished him to return home with us. We beged of him to let us stay with him and die with him if nessessary, but he said no, we were to return to our home. And Brother Hyrum said that he would stay with Brother Joseph. For my part I felt that something great was going to transpire. He blessed us and told us to go.

We bade them farewell and started. We had twenty miles to ride and we went the whole, went the distance without utering one word. All were dumb and still and all felt the spirit as I did myself. I cannot express my feelings at that time for they overpowered me. I felt like the prophets of the Lord were about to be taken from us and that they were going to await their doom the same as the Lord did when he was hear upon the earth. We went to our homes like so many sheep that had lost their shephard, knowing not what to do.

Some of the brethren visited them in the gael. Brother John Taylor was with Brother Joseph and brother Willard Richards was with them to. Then the govenor sent troops their to protect the prisoners from the Mobs that came there to take the lives of the brethren. They did go and guard the goal but it was verry poorly done. The Mob came and demanded the prisoners and if they would not give them up they would tare down the goal and take them any how. They were all blacked up so that folks should not know them, but they were known every one of them, and the first one will not escape the punishment in wait for them. There was ministers of the Gosples, there was lawyers, and the pios men of the day there. But woe unto them for they have shed the blood of Inocent and the penelty is a heavy one. The[y] fired into the door and windows and burst the door open, but were repulsed by those inside and some were knocked down. Brother Joseph was shot from a window and fell outside.

[Here John perpetuates a false story that gained widespread popularity among Nauvoo Saints:] They then put him up against the well in the yard and shot him. And there was a young man roled up his sleeves and took a large butcher knife and went up to cut off his head but the Lord spoke and said that it should not be done and the earth was darkend and the lightening flashed and the thunder roled through the heavens for they had murdered the prophets of God and their blood had cried unto the Lord for vengeance on their murderers. There was a flash of lighten struck the fellow that held the knife and frustreated his design. They were all frightened and they run away.

Brother Taylor was shot in the brest but the ball struck his watch and broke it all to peaces. And that saved his life. Brother Hyrum was kill'd and lying in his blood. Brother Richards was not hurt at all. It was only the prophets that were slain. They [mob] were led on by the devil and his army and they gloted over their bloodey deeds. They were like so many demons from hell, but when their work was done they were glad enough to get away, all though they said they had put an end to old Joe and that the Mormons would all

be put down. But they little knew that the Lord said that it should no more be thrown down.

The Saints all felt it when Brother Joseph was Kill'd. They could not tell the reason why it was, but their hearts seemed to melt within them and they morned and knew not what for. And when the tidings came [of the murders] they were sorely distressed and prayed that the Lord would avenge the blood of his servants the Prophets. And truly he will for he has said so and he will keep his word. But Mormonism will still role on till it breaks in peaces all the other Nations which will have to be acomplished before a great many years. Then there will be righteous judgment and the wicked will be punished for their unjust deeds.

We still went on preaching the Gosple. The mob got hot again and began their percuitions against us and trying to put down Mormonism.

Thus things went on till Brother Brigham sent me up the Iowa river. We started about Christmas and wintered on the Iowa river in Emmets company. Brother Brigham sent me up the[re] to tend to afairs up there, for they were steeling and carrying on. Emmet started in september to go to the Mountains, and he wanted me to go in his company, but I told him that I would not go for I was going to stop and go with brother Brigham. He returned and wanted me to go again with him again, but I refused to go with him again. They were driving off cattall and steeling. and the news came to brother Brigham, and he called me and told me to go and get ready to start to Emets Company and, said he, "there is some good people in the company and I hate to see him carrying them to distruction and it must not be for you must go and save them from distruction." So I went up the river to the camp and stay d with them. They had got pretty well along in the art of taking what did not belong to them and aplying it to their own use. They would pick up a yoke and put it in their own wagons and say that it would come handy if they wanted to yoke up any more team. There was a man in the company that had no coat so one of the brethren lent him one. And when he went to go off, they took the coat from him and he went down to Iowa City and told the Officers of Justice that they had been steeling cattal and had stole his coat from him.

So the Officer of Justice came and took several prisoners, myself among the rest. Now when the Officers had taken us prisoners there, they came up to us, some seventy five of them, and a great many that had belonged to the [Emmett] company was in the crowd. So I got my pistle and buckled [it] on and got my rifle and went and stood by the fire in front of the tent. I was standing there when the Officer came and read the writ to me and said that I was his prisoner. I told him that I was not. Well he said that I would have to go with him. I told him that I would—providing that he would pledge himself that no one of his party should stay behind. He said that he would not do it. So I said that I would not go. He then went to his Party and told them about it. He then came back to me and told me that he would pledge himself, and I was to go on the condition that he would keep his pledge. Some of them had allready began to plunder farther down the Camp. I kept my arms to defend Myself with for it was in the heart of the Indian Country.

So we started and got about ten miles and camped for the night. I had just about finished my supper when one of the fellows go up and said, "Hurah, who will volenteer

to go back and get some horses and cattal?" Several got up, so I finished my supper put on my pistol and got my rifle and said that I would go. But the officer said that I was his prisoner. I said to the brethren, "Wont you go with me?" They all said yes. "But you are my prisoners." "No Matter," said I, "if any men goes I shall go with them." And I told him that he had not kept his word. He said that he could not keep them from going. Then, said I, "you cannot keep me for I am bound to go if any one else goes." He then told the men that they could not go. So he placed us brethren guard over them that wanted to go back for plunder, and then placed a guard over us.

Now the verry ones that had had us taken were the ones that had stolen the cattal and had left the company becaus I had told them they had to quit it. I pointed out some of them to the Officers and asked them if they could not remember when they brought in a yoke of cattal and another when he brought in a cow, and they could not denigh it. By the time that we had got down there [to Iowa City] the officer began to see that it was not us that had beng doing the mischief. They said that we could go if we liked. I said, no, we had a writ and we would apear at court to answer for what we had done. So we apearred at Court and we were discharged. And they had to fit us out with provisions to return to our families. We returned and found them all well.

[John does not tell about the Emmett Company's move in April, May, and June of 1844 across Iowa past present Marshalltown and up the Iowa River to its head, then due west across Iowa to the northern shore of the Missouri River. There the group settled by tiny Fort Vermillion, a fur-trading post, a site now in South Dakota close to the Iowa border. His account resumes here by discussing Ft. Vermillion matters.]

[*Ft. Vermillion*]. There was a large quantity of Indians round and about us. I made a medesine dinner and the chief and a young fellow by the name of Henri a half breed came to dinner and swore to be friends. There was a man, a Mountaineer, by the name of Brenyer. He was out hunting when this took place. He was a verry hansem [handsome] man and verry over baring. Brother Brigham sent two Elders to me to tell me to come down. He wanted to see me. Brother John S Fulmer was one of them and he had a horse to trade and he traded it to me for a watch and forty Dolars. He then traded with Brenyer for the same amount a watch and forty dolars. And Emmet came and said that it was to little for the horse and that he would take the horse him self.

One day I was riding the horse out and who should come but Brenyer. He came and caught hold of the bridel and told me to get off. I told him that I did not think that I should. He said that it was his horse and he would make me get off. I told him that it was my horse and I had bought and paid for it. He said that it was not my horse and he wanted me to get off or he would make me. I had a cutlas with me. I drew it and told him to let go. He did not so I struck at him. He dodged and let go his hold. He then went to the Indian Chief and told him that he wanted him and his tribe to go to work and kill all the men womin and children off and he would reward him. He said that he would do it.

He then went to Henri and told him that him and his tribe were going to kill all the folks of men, womin, and children. Henri said "Yes, go and kill all off them that have

taught you to spin, and to make cloth, and to raise corn, to make sugar and to live comfortable. Yes go and kill them all off and then you will be allways left Indian, for no more will come, for they will be afraid that you will kill them all off, so that they will not come any more of them.” Well the Old chief said that if they would tell them the ones that had offended them, and he would have them put out of the way. Brenyer then told him which ones it was that he wanted killd, and the Old Chief came to me and told me that he did not want to kill me, but if I would give him a mare and colt that I had, he would make a treaty with me. So I thought that it was better to let him have them then to endanger Myself and familey. So I told him that I had done nothing to hurt any one and I could not see why it was that they wanted to kill me. But I told him that I wanted to keep good friends with him, so he could have the mare and colt. He thanked me and told me he would give me a horse and saddle. He done so and they were worth all I gave him. Well all this time a frenchman had Henri in his house giving him whisky to make him drunk and locked themselves in. But he did not get so drunk as the frenchman wanted him to. Brenyer was mad because the Indians had not killd me. He must have revenge on some one, so he pitched his spite on Henri and kill’d three horses for him. Now Henris brother in law knew of it, so Indian like he went to avenge his brother s rights, and he shot nine horses and told Brenyner that he had taken three for one. But he had wasted his amanition in killing the horses, and as amunition was verry high up there and hard to get, he must kill three more horses to pay himself. And Brenyner stood bye and dare not say one word.

So you see how the Lord punishes those that does his servants an injury. They are bound to meet with their deserts no matter in what circumstances they are placed the punishment is bound to overtake them. And the saints of God, if they only live true to their faith and true to their God and obey the counccills that are given to them from time to time by those that are set over them, no mater were they go, no matter in what circumstances they are placed, or what trials they have to pass through, the Lord is near unto them and that to bless them. He has truly blessed me in all my jurneys and has ever been near me to help and guard me from all evil, designing men. He has delivered me out of their hands, and I feel to thank Him for his tender mercy towards me.

About this same time we had a weding there. Charles Packet was a frenchman, and could not speak a word of English when first he came there. He married Axey Sargent. He was hired to brenyer, so he had to leave after a while and run away and leave all he had except his clothes.

I had left there at that time to return to Navoo with John S Fulmer and Brother [Henry] Sherwood. We started on the seventeenth of October [1845] in company with two frenchmen. Pigy was one, and he was going to Pilot us down this river to St Joseph. There was five of us all together in the canoo. Just before we got to St Jo there was a feeling came over me that I must not go by St Jo, for some purpose or other I could not tell. So I told Bro John S Fulmer and Brother Sherwood that they could take a steam boat and go down to St Louis and from there to Navoo, and I would go across the country. I left them and started. I was thirteen days in going across to the Mississippi river. And I had some trials to pass through—for four days I never tasted a bite of food but the Lord was near to bless and comfort me on my journey.

Well Brother John S Fulmer and Brother Sherwood told me that they kept on down the river and when they got near to St Joseph there was five men armed with revolvers and boye knives and they asked them if that was the canoo from fort Vermillian. They told them that it was. The men then said that they wanted them to shew them John L Butler. Brother Fulmer told them that he was not there. Well said they, "We know that he is here." They then told them that he was not there. Well, they said that that fellow had lied to them for he said that there was a canoo coming down the river and there was John L Butler was in the canoo with two more Mormons. They then began to curse and sware that if he was there they would "damn soon put an end to him." They were men that had been in the general Election in Davis [Daviess] County and they thought that they would put an end to me when they had a chance. They [Fullmer and Sherwood] said that the fellow had only told them to fool them. The Brethren then took the Boat and went down to St Louis.

I stay'd in Navoo all that winter and work'd in the Temple, giving the Saints their endowments. That winter Brother Brigham wanted me to return to Emmets Company and take charge of it and bring it back and not let them go any farther. I could not return in the winter season for we had to go through two hundred Miles of wilderness and the snow was very deep and it was an Indain Country.

[John does not tell about the Saints' exodus from Nauvoo, his own departure, his trek with the Saints across part of Iowa, or his hard trek back to Camp Vermillion with James Cummings, whose diary details the trip, early in 1846.]

I returned [to Fort Vermillion] with Brother James Cummings and arived about April [1846]. I found the camp in a poor condition. My wife had been verry sick. Indeed they did not think that she would live. For six Months My familey had been living on a half pint of corn per day, and the suferrings that they had to pass through was verry bitter Indeed. There was an old squaw that lived there asked my wife if she had no Mother. She told her no that her Mother was dead. She said that she would be a mother to her. So my wife told her that she was willing to, it it [sic] being the tradition of the tribe. The children always call'd her "grandmother" after that. One day Brother Short and Brother Hall were going across the river and my wife asked them if she could go across and gather some roots for her children. They said yes but they did not want to be bothered with a lot of women. The old squaw said that she would go and help her for she always gave her somthing to eat when she came to her fire.

So they went over and were left over there for four days and nights and nothing in the world to eat but roots. They made a fire and gathered up some leaves and made a bed as well as they could. It was the first of April and not very warm. They called to the folks on the other side of the river. They heard them but none came to bring them back, and there was the children left by them. Seven small children. John was then a baby. My wife laed down on the forth day for she was verry week and feeble, and she drempt that I had come back and that I was standing on the other side of the river and as she drempt she

awoke and said that "your Father [has] come. See him." And she looked and sure enough I was standing on the bank of the river with Charity and Phebe in my hands.

Now Hall had seen me in the distance and had put out of the fort and down to the river through the brush and got into the canoo and went across to my wife to bring her across. And when he got there, she said, "is not Mr Butler come?" He said, "No, he was not," and she said that she could see me standing on the bank on the other side of the river. He said that her eyes were better than his if she could see that far. Why said he, "it is a mile and a half wide here and you cant see that far well." We got into the cano and they started back. My wife kept her eyes upon me and I went away and my wife said to Hall, they were all gone from the bank. He said, "dont look at them, but look at the water, here it is verry dangerous and if we tip over we all shall be drowned." My wife said that she guessed that there was no more danger there than where they had crossed. He said there was, for it boiled up trimendious. The river had raisen the day after they had got over there and the timbr came down so that it was dangerous to cross at that time. Well they got to the shore and I was there to receive them.

There was both my women, Caroline and Charity. They were both sealed to me before we left Navoo. I did not know hardly how to keep my hands off of Hall. I felt like I could tare him to peaces. Brother James Cummings said that they had ought to have their throats cut for serving a lot of womin like that. And my wife asked Hall what he had told her that lie for, that Mr Butler had not come. He said that he thought that she would get so excited that they would be tipped over and all be drowned. My wife asked him if he thought that she had no sence.

When my wife was sick, Henri went down with his horse and a small cart to get some provisions. He got two hundred of flour fifty weight of coffee and some sugar and tea, and when he came back he came and got one of my little girls and took her away. And sister Packet came and said, "What is he going to do with the child?" My wife rose up in her bed and said, "What is he going to do with my child?" And [she] told sister Packet to watch and see. He took her to his house and after a while she came out with a pan of flour on her head and a pint of sugar and some tea. And [he] told her to give it to her mother for she needed it to make her well. So Sister Packet went and helped the child to bring it in, for it was about as much as she could carry. My wife was truly thankfull for it, for she could not eat the corn and if she did it seemed to throw her back again.

Now when ever I killed any game I always devided with Emmet. It had been voted that the whole camp should throw their stuff together and fare alike when they first started. But they did not all fare alike, for my wife was often without meet and Emmets folk's had kill'd four fat Deer, but the first mite never came to the share of my family. Now this was while I was gone. When I went away they all voted for me to go and they would see that my family did not suffer for want, if there was any [food] in camp. Now Emmet was mad and did not want me to go at all and said after that he did not vote for to help to take care of my family.

The Indians had made the company a preasent of forty bales of Dried buffalow meet, and none of that came to the share of my family. Now after I was gone, they comenced building hoases for the winter and there was none to build one for my folkes.

So some of the Brethren spoke to Emmet about it and he said that he was not going to build houses for them, that those that voted for him to go was the ones to build him a house.

One of the Brethren asked my wife one day if she had not got some meat from Emmet. It was Brother Potter. He seemed surprized [when] she told him that she had received not the first mite. He then asked her if he had not given her some buffalo meat. She told him that she had not gotten any meat at all. Why, said he, "damn such a man." On that night there was a meeting and every one was to speak their feelings. And brother Potter got up and spoke his feelings and said that Sister Butler was suffering for the want of some meat and that she had not had any. And Emmet said, "How do you know that she has had no meat?" Why said he, "she is here." And he said to her, "Have you had any meat Sister Butler?" She answered no, she had not seen or tasted of any. Well, said Emmet, "let them that voted for John L. Butler to leave his family go to work and take care of them." Well, said he, "if that is the case, we will do it, and she shall have some meat if I have to go and kill the fattest ox in the company—which I will do." But Emmet said that he would give her some buffalo meat. So the next morning he gave her some meat. No one can tell the trials and hardships the women had to pass through.

While I was in Nauvoo that winter I took two more wives and they were sealed to me in the Temple. My third wife was Sarah Lancaster. She was sealed to me on the twenty-eighth of February, eighteen hundred and forty six, by Brigham Young. She was daughter of Wright and Sarah Lancaster. Her mother's maiden name was Briant. She was daughter of Auther and Elizabeth Briant. Her maiden name was Peelle before she married Briant. Sarah's Grand Father's name was William Lancaster. He married Sarah Sanders. Her Brothers and sisters are as follows: her Oldest Brother Briant he died an infant; Rex, Lawrence, Ocky were next all boys; Elizabeth her oldest sister; William Sanders; Sarah; and Wright. Rex married Farabe Hemby. They had six children. Ocky married Mariah Wever. They had nine children. Elizabeth was married to Thomas Widup. They had eight children. William Sanders married Lucinda Meek. The last account they had seven children. Wright married Mary Davidson. They had nine children and are in the Church.

My fourth Wife was sealed to me in March. She was the mother of my wife Sarah. Her name was the same, Sarah Lancaster.

My third wife Sarah came up with me to Council Bluffs [spring of 1846]. I then left her there. Her mother my fourth wife was old and she thought that she was too old and feeble to go on such a journey as it was to Salt Lake so she went back to Indiana from Nauvoo. Sarah my third wife was born in Wane County North Carolina on the twenty-third of March eighteen hundred and six. My fourth Wife Sarah was born in the same place on the twenty-eighth of June seventeen hundred & seventy one.

Well as I said I left Sarah at the Bluffs [Chariton River encampment]. My self and Bro Cummings went on to Emmet's Camp [Camp Vermillion] and when we got there we found that Emmet had traded for a squaw and had gone to St Peter's on the Mississippi river. So I told the Brethren and sisters and told them what Brother Brigham had said and that we had to start to Great Salt Lake. It took about three days to get ready and to get our

cattal all together. Sister Emmet was alone and I asked her if she wanted to go with us. She said, "Yes, and be as quick as you can for if Emmet was here I am sure that he would not let me go." Well I told that I would take her with me if she wanted to go wether he was willing or not. Well she said, "Let us go before he comes. I expect him home in two or three days." So we all packed up our things for to go down to the [Missouri] river. We started on our journey.

When Emmet came to us he was as mad as he well could be for he said that he had bought a squaw and he intended to end his days at the Vermillian Fort. So he had to lose his squaw. He traded a horse for it but he could not bring her away from her tribe.

We crossed the Missouria river and went on up to the Pawnee Village there the Indains and whites had been fighting with one another. And we had to stop there two weeks which made it so late that we could not go. But Brother [George] Miller said yes, we can get through well enough. But there had been no [LDS] companys gone yet; there had only been the [gentile] Pioneers through. So we all started across [due north across Nebraska] to the Missouria river again and camped there for the winter [Ponca Camp] on a river called the running water [Niobrara].

We went to work and built a fort. There was about one hundred and fifty famileys. There was three fifty's: Brother Brigham got up fifty famileys and Brother Miller fifty and Emmits company about fifty famileys. [Miller and Emmett people comprised one fifty, and the 3rd fifty was one sent by Heber C. Kimball.] And Brother Brigham put Brother Miller in Captain of the hundred and fifty.

Now the other companies look down at us in Emmits Company and throwed out hints and slang such as "oh, they are not strong Mormons—they belong to Emmets companies." It was that winter that a deseese came into our midst and they called it the black leg [scurvy]. And many died with it and it mostly fell on the [other] two companies, they were well to do had plenty and lived on the best. And I dont know wether it was the high living and the hot wether that had been that summer—it had been fearfall hot that summer for there were two dogs and five sheep died it was so hot. How ever, the deseese came and there was only one in our campany that had it while the folks in the other company were lying nigh unto death by the dozen's. And one of the sisters asked my wife one day who she thought was the best one to get to lay hands on her [give a priesthood blessing on the sick]. And my wife told her that her husband she thought was the best. Why said she, "he is not a strong Mormon." My wife said that we were as strong as any in the camp. "And besides," [the woman said] "he went off with Emmits Company and they drove off cattal and horses that did not belong to them. Why, he should never lay hands upon me."

Now there was a womin there that had the deseese verry bad and she had heard that Emmet s Company did not have it only one woman. She did not know how it was they were clear from it, and they all had it, and the people that they had scorned and despized were free from it. And one day she saw me go into the house and she sent for me. So I went across to see what she wanted me for. She asked me if it was true that we did not have the deseese in our company. I told her that there was only one that had it. She drew a deep breath and sighed. Well she said, it was verry strange she could not see what was

the reason. I told her that I thought it was the high living they had. Now said I, "we have had no meat or bread this winter only a little corn and fish when we could get them and this is the third winter that we have been in the same fix. We had see hard times but I thought that I would rather see hard times that to be taken down with deseese."

"Yes," she said, "I have despized your company and would not give the sick and hungry one morsel of any thing to help them in their troubles. Now I am sick myself and there is no one to comfort me. Oh what shall I do? Do you think I shall die?" said she. "Perhaps I shall die and go to hell for my wickedness. Do you think that I shall go to hell?" I said that I did not know [but that] the man that refused Laseras the crumbs from his table was a rich man and he went to hell. She asked me to lay hands upon her and she said that she felt better afterwards.

On Febuary the fifth, eighteen hundred and forty seven, my first wife was confined with a son. I had no children with my other wives. We named and blessed him and called him James.

I was over to sister Brunson again and she said that she had heard that my wife was put to bed and asked me if we had any flour. I told her we had not. So she told her little girl to fill a pan with flour and get some sugar and a little tea and she said to me take that to my wife. She would give her that much any how. She said that she allways felt better when I was with her for when I was away all seemed dark to her and she could see the devil. At times I tried to comfort her. She asked me if I thought that she would die. I told her that I had seen lots sicker folks live. I took the flour sugar and tea home to my wife and it was a blessing to her for it was a rareity out there for us to have flour bread.

Well thus things went on. There is another inciden that I must mention. There was a great many folks had kegs of powder. The Indians set fire to the long grass. It is verry high and the folks roofs was made of this grass. And so they took their pouder kegs down by the river side to keep them from the fire and from exploding. And a man by the name of Hyrum Clark was helping to carry the things down to the river. Well he had got about half way to the river [when] he dropped the things that he had and cried out, "why I ve left my wife sick in bed and left her there [and] she might be burnt up before now." So away he ran to the house and wrapt his wife up in a blanket and run down the fort and sat her down on a door step and went to get something for her to set on.

And as it hapened there was no one in the house and when he came back, instead of coming down the string [row or line of people or cabins] that he took his wife he went down the other string and could not find her. He began to shout that he had lost his wife, and there he was runing about like a crazy man not knowing what to do. "Ah," he cried, "My wife I ve lost and she will be burnt up." And the folks all gathered round to help find her. They thought that she was in bed and that she had got out her self. At last my wife and some more went into the fort gate and there she sat. And she spoke to her husband and said, "dont you know where you sat me down?" He had being so excited that he could not tell where he was going.

The next day the folks went to get their powder, and Brother drapers keg was no where to be found. So they went to searching the houses. Now John Kay had a keg and the man that was working for him by the name of Smith said that he had put it away in

the chest, so John thought no more about [it]. However they found drapers keg in John house, and John looked for his keg but it could not be found high or low. So they began to suspicion John, and they asked him if he had not put it there him self. He said that he had not touched the kegs at all, for his man had got the keg and put it in the chest him self. So they asked the man if he knew any thing of Kays keg. He said that he did not know anything at all about it.

Well they did not know what to think about it at all. But every body beleived that John had taken the keg or given his man instructions to take and put it in the chest. But John still denighed it, and they told him that he might as well own up to it first as last, for it would be found out some way or other. Now it was verry strange where John's keg had gone to. No one could tell where in the world it could be, and they began to look down upon John and talked to him about it pretty strong. John told them that he would never own up to a thing that he had never done. And they told him that he was sining before God and man and that he would have to answer for his sins. He said that he had nothing to answer for and that he did not want to hear any more about it, for he had not been guilty of what he had been accused.

Well they talked about disfelowshipping him. And Smith came up and said that he put the keg there him self, and that he thought that it was Johns, that he had taken Draper s keg and filled up Johns and threw Drapers keg in the river. But it turned out to be Johns that he threw into the river. Draper examined the keg and said that there had been about three pounds and a half of powder put into the keg, so he took it out and give it to John. This made quite a differant feeling for John. The folks were all against him for not owning up to it like a man, now they thought a great deel more of him for not owning to what he had not done. But John had lost his powder and Smith was the man to look to for it. They said he looked verry sheepish about it. He was hired to John and he could stop it out of his wages. Wether he did or not is more that I can say.

We left running water [Ponca Camp] about the first of April as soon as the grass began to come up we went down to winter quarters. And [we] went and fenced a peice of Land, grubbed it, and put in about six acres of corn, and raised a crop that summer. Now there were a great many mormons there and Brother Brigham with the rest. Now the most of the folk's look'd down upon us as cold apostates Mormons, and they despized us and threw out insinuations about us and said. "oh they are not worth our notice, they belong to Emmets Company, and they are theves; they drove of cattal that did not belong to them." Well Brother Brigham got to hear about it and he said and told them from the stand that he wanted them to quit their talk for there was good and honest souls in Emmets Company, and as for John L Butler he had sent him himself from Nauvoo to Emmets Company and told him that he wanted him to go and try to bring them back for if they still went on as they were going they would all go to distruction and there was good and honest folks in that company.

Now said he, "I have used John L Butler for a cane in my hand to bring those people in subjection to the laws and commandments of God." And, said he, "Brother John L. I bless you in the Name of the Lord and may you always obey the counccills that are given to you from time to time. Now brethren and sisters I want to hear no more of this from

this time love one another and strive to help one another and do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Union is strength and is from the Lord. Now may God bless you and enable you to love him and keep his commandments and to do the things that is right at all times is my prayer in the name of Jesus Amen.”

The Saints had a great deal better feelings towards us and we did not have the slander that we had been hearing. Emmet did not come to Winter quarters but kept on till he came to Ceb [Keg] creek. There he staid with his family. He did not come where the Church was at all but stay'd away. He did not come to see any, nor come near us.

We got in our corn but all of it did not ripen. It was put in late. We stay'd in Winter quarters that winter and the folks were going to start to the Great Salt Lake in the spring. Brother Brigham and his family were going.

[Here John writes a few words about the exodus from Nauvoo but in terms of “them” and not “we.” He seems to be talking about the last Saints who were forced out in September 1846 after the “Battle of Nauvoo,” and he exaggerates their ill treatment by persecutors.]

They had all been driven out of Nauvoo on the point of the baonit [bayonet]. They had murdered and robbed them and burnt their houses and had driven them right across the river. They were not satisfied with their blood thirstyness in murdering the Prophets of God, but they must drive his children out of the country in the dead of winter and they had to leave their homes and comfortable firesides, and to turn out in the cold and travel on foot, old men and women and young children, women with their infants on their bosoms turned out of their homes and their houses set fire to right before their eyes. And they had to leave the City at the point of the baonit and if they faltered or lagged behind they were shot down or killed with the Baonit. Thus they were served. No one can tell or any one have any idea of what they had to suffer and pass through they could not have begun to stand it if the Lord had not been with them to bless and comfort them. They crossed over the river to Montrose and stayed there till spring opened and then they moved on to Winter quarters.

And the next spring we moved down there [Winter Quarters] and put in our crops and staid there the next winter, eighteen hundred and forty seven and eight. In the spring [1848] the folks all got ready to start. I was going to, but I had no provisions and scarcely any clothes, and Brother Brigham said to me, “I would not try to go this year John L, but go over the river to Potawatamy and make something to bring your family comfortable.” We then moved over, and several families moved over with us. I got a farm there and worked some at my trade, blacksmithing.

The first winter my wife Charity's brother came for her to go and pay a visit home with him. And when he got her home he took her to Tennessee and then left her. This was while we were at winter quarters.

My wife Sarah, after we moved over the river [to Iowa side] became dissatisfied of the way we were living. So I took her and went down to Weston in Missouri. There I work'd with my team and in the coldest of the weather. I worked at the cooper trade. I left my first wife in Pottawatamie. I started home and got there about the first of April. While

I was away my wife bore me a daughter on the twenty third of Febuary, eighteen hundred and forty nine, and we called her Lucy Ann. While I was home, which was two or three weeks, I was taken down with the conjestive chills which like to have kill'd me. I was brought so low that they did not expect me to live or ever to get over it.

However I got well again and I went back to Sarah and went to work again. And my wife Caroline and son taylor farmed it that summer and raised a good crop of corn. I remained were I was till the next January and took my wife Sarah and went home that same spring [1850].

My brother, Edmund Ray, was taken verry sick [in Missouri] and he could not get up to us. And he sent for me to fetch him up. I hitched up my horses and went down after him and he said that if he died there that he would have to be buried among the gentiles, and he did not want to be left there all alone. He died in two or three days. And I had a coffin made and put him in, and then I had another one made that was larger than the other and then I put the small one into the large one and put charcoal in between the two, and then took him up to the Saints burying ground [probably present Fairview Cemetery in Council Bluffs] and had him interd there with the Saints according to his wish. He was in the Church, was baptized when he was ten years of age, and was a young man when he died. He was a good Mormon.

While I was there in Pottawatama, Emmet came there. Brother Hide [Orson Hyde] and some more of the brethren came there to preach and Emmet was there. He came to me and asked me to go to Callifornia with him. He was going. I told him no I would not go, for I was going to Great Salt Lake. "Oh," he said, "You need not be afraid of your religion, for the Priesthood was taken from the earth when Joseph was Murdered," and that Brigham had no athority to govern and controle this people and that we could do a great deel better in California. And he beged me to go. I told him that I would not renoance my religion for gold, and that he would have to get some one else to go with him if he wanted any one to go with him.

He started, but no one went with him, only his daughter, and he took her along with him to do his cooking and to wait on him. His wife, Mrs Emmet, would not go with him. So he left her behind him in Pottawatame. She did not want to leave the Church of Jesus Christ but wanted to hold on to the faith and go to the valeys of the Mountains with the Saints of God to dwell there where no mob could come and drive them out. No [now] the Saints were going out of their reach.

I still kept on farming and staid their till the spring, eighteen hundred and fifty two. My wife bore me another son. He was born May the ninth day, eighteen hundred and fifty one. We called him Thomas. He was about one year old when we started for Great Salt Lake. We got all ready and started to the river. There were folks crossing here, there, and every where. And we crossed over, and Erastus [Snow] put me in Ely B Kelseys train for a blacksmith. I did not cair about going in that train but they had councilled me to go in it, so I went. There were two or three hundred head of young stock and three or four hundred head of sheep. There were fifty famileys. There were ten waggons of Danes. The Captain of them was Brother Ravin. He was captain for a while, but none of them had ever drove an ox team before and they could not get along at all. So they put me in

Captain over them, and Taylor and myself had a fine job to fix them. They had yoked up their cattal some one way and some another. Some of their bows were to large some to small, and so they had it.

We went to work and fixed up the yokes and bows, and then paired the cattal as well as we could. And then they got along a great deel better, but they were still green about driving. If they had a good ox that would pull, they would make him pull the whole lode, and if they came to a tight place the poor critter would get the whip more than any other ox in the team. I told them that they must not do so or they would lose half their team dead before they got half way. I told them to make their cattel all pull at once as much as they could, and to whip the ones that would not pull and not the ones that were pulling the whole lode. Well, they learnt how to drive a little better after a while, but it was hard work to get them into it.

The colara raged fearfully that season [1852]. There were lots that were laid low on the account of it, but we did not have it in our Company so much as they did in others. There was only two died of the dredfull deseise and one old lady died with old age. But in other companys there were scores and scores died. The seen was fearfull to look upon. The folks were laying here and there. Some dead, some dying, some verry sick, and some not knowing when it would be their turn. There were sometimes as many as six and seven buried in one grave, and feather beds and sheets, blankets, pillows, and clothes were left laying in every direction all along the rode. There was considerable California emegratian that season, and they died of it by the hundreds. Their teams were very heavily ladened and their cattel got verry poor by the time that they got into the mountains. They had to sell off their cattal and waggons and tools and provisions, and get mules and pack through to California.

We went up on the north side of the Platt. Feed was better on that side and it was a more healthy on that side. Some how or other the folks on that side were not troubled with the colara half so bad as they were on the South side. We traviled on pretty comfortable but our provisions began to run kind of short, then we did not feel so good. We stopt six days on the West side of Laramie. I had to fix up four waggons. One day we were driving along and there was a storm coming up and there was a flash of lightning struck the ground, the man said just a head of his oxen, and they turned out and started to run, with that frightening the other team behind him. And it started and that started some more, so they stampeeded and broke four waggons down, some spokes broke out, felleys broke out, points off from axel trees, and tounges out, reiches broke, and there it was all smashed up together.

And I had the job to fix them all up. And two of them belonged to Ely B Kelsy. They were his goods wagon. I fixed them all up and of course I thot he would pay me for fixing his two wagons. But he said that I was put in the company on purpose to fix up wagons and shoe cattel. I told him I was put into the Company to fix up the wagons and to shoe cattel, but not without pay. I counted up the Iron work I done on his wagons and it came to thirty three dollars exactly, and I only charged him the same price that I should have charged any one in the States. Well I never got a cent for what I done for him, and he had any amount of goods, and he would not even let my son Taylor have a pare of

shoes. Now I never done a thing for any of the rest—setting tire. shoeing cattel, or anything—but what they were glad to pay me for my labour, and I allways got my pay from them when the work was done. Well we got along without it and done verry well.

When we got to green river we had got out of food, and Kelsy was going to send his Young stock on a head into the Vally. Him and Erastus Snow had three hundred two and three year old Heifers, and my son Taylor engaged with him to help drive them in. Now there was a Young fellow by the name of Joseph Toronto—he came down with Kelsy and Snow—and he said that he mostly stayd at Brighams when he was in the Valley, and he said to my wife that he would go on into the Valley and tell Brigham to send out some food to them that had none. Now he was a french and had been brought up pretty well, I guess. However he did not know much about hardships and the trials of hungar. He thought that the folks would all die if they did not have any bread, so he said that he would go in and bring some out. Taylor was to start that morning with the young stock. Now Kelsy had had several taking care of his stock but they they [sic] had lost some, and he knew that Taylor was good at hunting Cattel or taking care of them, so that is the reason that he hired him.

Kelsy killed a beef that morning and was going to start the boys off with bread and beef and nothing else. So his son went to him and asked him if he was not going to let them have any things els. And Kelsy said that it was good enough for hired hands. “Well, but see how lean the beef is and every bit of the Tallow has been taken out. How are we to cook it?” “Boil it,” said Kelsy. “What? That tough stuff?” said the boy. And the hands could hear every word. So he said “I am going to have something better than that,” so he went to the wagon—and Kelsy never said any thing—and the boy went up and got about ten pound of tallow, ten pound of sugar, and twenty pound of coffee, a lot of dried apples, and some other things, and they then started off for the Valley.

Well, Joseph Toronto went in and told Brother Brigham that the folks were there starving to death and that he must send them out some food. So Brigham went round to every house and told them that he wanted some bread for the Company. And he went to the bakers and got all the crackers that were in the shop, and got some flour, and loded up a wagon and started it back to meet us. The womin had gone on ahead one morning at the mouth of Echo Canyon and there they met Joseph Toronto. And he said to my wife, “Sister Butler, I have brought you some things to eat.” Now there was some smiling faces and some jumping for joy, I can asure you, when they heard this news. My wife asked him were it was. He said that it would be here directly, and he told her all about how he and Brother Brigham had went and got loves of bread from the folks in the city.

When the wagon came and we had camped, Brother Kelsy came to me and said, “John L, you devide out the provisions.” But, said he, “keep the crackers for our selves and give them the bread and flour.” I told him that I would serve them out, and he said all right. Now when I went to serve out the provisions I served out the crackers first and gave all alike. And it pleased me to see the children, how delighted they were to have bread once more. And their little faces brightened up, and it was a pleasure to see them. Bye and by Kelsy came along, and he was as mad as a wet hen. And he said that if he had known that I had been going to serve out the crackers, that I should not have served them

out at all. He said that he told me to keep the crackers for our selves. "Yes," I said, "I know you did, but I give them to the woman and children," and I liked crackers as well as he did and "so does them dear children." He went off mad.

Well, we went into the City and went down in company with George Wilson to Spanish Fork. He thought that he could build a mill here, but he did not. I brought my wife Sarah down with me and left Caroline and the children in the City. They started down here in december but the snow was so deep and one of the oxen died, and a cow died, [so] that they had to stop at the warm springs for fore weeks before they could get down here. And, well, we lived on the creek till July. We had turned all our cows over the river under the mountain, and the Indians began to be verry hostile so that the Upper settelment folks had to leave there houses and go down to Palmyri, which was about four miles down the Creek to the West. Well two or three days afterward the Indians took off all our cattl, some three or four hundred head, and, leaving us with only one cow, drove them up Spanish Fork Canyon. The men were called out to go and fetch them back but they had been gone two days when the boys started. And when they got up the Kanyon there were a great many [cattle] shot down, some had been shot with arrows. They found plenty dead and where the Indians had killed them. But they got none alive.

Well the next spring my wife [Caroline] bore me another daughter. She was born on the twenty sixth of March, eighteen hundred and fifty four. We named her Alvaretta Farezine. Soon after I sold my last yoke of cattel for bread stuff and I did not know hardly what to go at that summer. At last I bethought me that I would go out to Fort Bridger and take my blacksmith tools and work at my trade. And I made a bargan with John W Mott that I would give him the first fifty Dollars that I earned if he would take the wagon and my tooles out there for me. He said he would do it. So I got ready to start. And Brother Stephen Markham came to me and asked me if I was going back on the road. I told him I was and he said that if I did that I would be disfellowship'd and that I ought to be disfellowship'd for thinking of such a thing.

I asked him what I should do? There was my family naked almost and any bread enough to last them till harvest, and I had sold the last yolk of my oxen to bye that for them, and I was going out there to get something to help to make my family comfortable. And I told him that he might disfellowship me if he pleased. I should go strate to Brigham and ask him if I can go, "and if he says go, I am going, and if he says stay, I shall stay. So John [Mott], put the tools in the wagon and let us be off." I went to Brigham when I got into the City and Brother Brigham said. "You go, brother John, and may God bless you." And, said he, "dont stay at Bridger but go on to green river and you shall be blessed and prospered."

Well, I went and while I was gone there was two Indians came in with eleven head of cattel and they brought two of my cows and a yearling and wanted two blankets for bringing in the cows. So my wife traded off the yearling for two blankets and was verry glad to get the cows. But they were dry and we only had one cow that gave milk, and she did not give much, and it did not go far among so many. There was thirteen in family and they did not have anything to live on, only bread. They used to get buttermilk from Brother Markem's folk's and they thought that that was a blessing.

Chapter Seven

1854. When I got out to Green river there was a familey there that I was aquanted with keeping the Ferry there, so I stay'd there. And she done for me and charged me three Dollars per day for my board. I thought that was pretty [high]. Well I went to work and fitted up a shop and built a forge and went to work. I made any amount of money there. The woman that I lived with bought several feather beds and she got me one that weighed forty pounds for three Dollars and I asked her to sell me one and she wanted one dollar per pound for the feathers and she would not take a cent less. I thought that that was a pretty good speculation, for none of them cost her two bits a pound, and she would not let me have one without I paid her one Dollar per pound. So I did not get one.

I made fifteen head of stock while I was out there. They were poor when I bought them and they could not go any farther, their being worn out. I turned them out on good feed where they could get plenty of food and water, and they soon recruited up their strength and began to look well. I then would trade them off for some more that were poor, and I served them the same, and brought them my self, fifteen in number. I came in home in the fall, and James Hicks helped me to drive them in for me, and I hauled his lugage in for him.

I found all my family pretty well. The cow that I had left, they had being feeding her, and she had got fat and they turned her out that winter. And the Indains took a fancy to her and killed her and eat her, so there was an end to her. It liked to have broke up the folks—the Indains running off the cattel. They took many of the brethrens last yoke of cattle and for some of them the last head, and it took them a long time to get any more.

Just after I returned home my son Taylor and My daughter Phebe were Married. They were married on the second of January eighteen hundred and fifty four. Taylor married a young woman by the name of Olive Derfy, Daughter of Royal and Lidia Derfy. They lived in Palmyra. My daughter Phebe was married [December 5, 1854] to a young man by the name of George W Sevey, son of George and Hannah Sevy. He was here alone. He left all his folks back in the States.

Early the next spring we moved up and built a fort between Palmyra and the Upper settelment. There was about twenty Famileys of us. There was Briant M Jolley, James Youd, Syrus Snell, Mrs Mackenley, Joseph E Hawks, John W Mott, William Pace, Harvey A Pace, Wilson D Pace, Amos Stiles, John Redd, Mathew Caldwell, George W Sevey, Isic Brockbank, Zebede Coltrin, and my self. The out side wall was two feet thick and twenty feet high. It was one hundred feet long running North and South and sixty feet wide East and West. There was only one entrance and that was a large gate, large enough to admit a waggon. The gate was made of two inch plank made cross ways double and put together with large stud nails and two folding dores swung on the Inside and a large cross peice at the top. This gate faced the south. It was built this way for a protection against Indians. Our carell [corral] was on the out side about sixty feet from the fort. We drove our cattal on the bench and bottom to feed and carelled them at night.

There were some few that camenced to build out the next spring. Philo Allen was the first. He built a house about fifty yards from the Fort on the West side. William Holt built on the East side. Then Snell went to work and built him a house on the North east corner. Hawks built him a house on the east of Snell and fenced in their lots. It was to become a city some day, I knew. It was a beautiful situation but the Kanyon wind was tiresome, and it was very gravelly and the dust flew about so when the wind blew.

I went over to Hobble Creek with John W Mott to help him build a thrashing Machine. I made all the iron work and he got the wood work done, and it was a seperater. And when I had finished over there I came home and went to work making ready to go out to bridger. I hired a hand, his name was John Lang, and as soon as we got ready which was in April we left for Bridger. I took my wife Sarah and my daughters Charity and Keziah with me and left the rest at home. I had taken up a farm in two places, one over the Creek and one on the County rode on the West side, and they were going to farm it that Summer.

I did not meet with so much success that summer [1855] as I did the summer before. I hired another hand to help me. His name was Callen Ramsay. I did not have much for him to do out there, so I sent him in and the girls with him.

Now the saints had lost all their crops that summer. Their grain had come up splendid and some of it was in the ear, and one day the sun was darkened and there was kind of a mist before the sun. And every one thought it was going to storm. But on observing closely, you could see that the air was thick in small objects or specks about the size of the point of a kneedle. It was about eleven o clock in the morning. As the day advanced, the objects became plainer and you could see Insects flying in all directions. There was so many and so thick that you could not distinguish what they were—wether they were nats, flies, or what. But about the midle of the afternoon they began to fly lower and lower till they lit. And come to look, they were grasshoppers, and there was not a blade of whet or oats, barley, corn or any thing that was green that was not literly covered. I have been into a feild of grain and counted as many as twenty seven grasshoppers on one blade of wheat, and there was not a blade in the whole feild that did not have or was not covered with the vermin.

They could mow a feild of grain in a day so close to the ground that the feild would look as if it had been just sown. On any peice where they went they would destroy it and there was no help for nor any way to save it in the world. Some times the whole settelment would turn out—men womin and children—and try to drive them in the creeks or Rivers. And they would drive them in till the water would be right thick with them. And then it would seem as if there would be ten times as many came in there place. You could not stir for them. If you went into a feild you could not walk without steping upon twenty or thirty at every step. There was nothing ever seen to equal it. We have read of the plages of Egept and ahay [?]. The varmint being piled up in heaps, it was nothing to be compared with these grasshoppers. For they were all through the Territory the same and the folks dug ditches for them to jump into and had them half full of water and they would jump and jump and jump into the ditches till the ditch would be full. And then they would crawl over on the ones that were in the ditch there.

I have been trying to give a description of how many there were but I have fell far short of the mark, for no one could begin to tell it, nor no one begin to imagin how they poured down like rain. How ever they eat evry blade of grain and every spear of grass, and the cattle liked to have starved to death. But they all flew up one Morning and darkened the skys and all litt in the salt lake. There the strength of the salt killed them. Fresh water will not drown them; they might be in the water for twelve hours and if they came along side of a twig they would get out and in an hour they would be as well as ever.

When they were gone the wheat and grain sprung up and the folks watered it and cut it for hay. If they had not, some of their cattle would have starved to death that winter, for the feed was all distroyed by the grasshoppers. Now folks had but little grain on hand, not near enough to do them till the next harvest. So they did not know what to do but they began to ration out to themselves first a pound of flour per day, and then half a pound, and so on, to make it last till harvest. I came in from Bridger in the fall and found things in this fix.

It was a hard winter, and I had not made any thing out there and it was going to go hard with us, I could see, before the next harvest. Wheat was up to four and five dollars per bushel and then you could not get it hardly with beging and praying for it. On the second of January, eighteen hundred and fifty six, my daughter Kiziah was married to a young man by the name of Lemuel H Redd, son of John and Elizabeth Redd. They were married in the Fort and lived in the Fort till he was called to go to las Vagus on a mission which was some time in the spring. His Father was to go down in the fall. There was lead mines down there and Brigham wanted a place made down there so that the mines could be opened and carried on to supply the territory with the article.

Bro William Pace had been put in Bishop after Stephen Markem, and at April conferance he was called to go to England on a mission. I was then put in his place by the people of Spanish Fork, and after a while I went down to the City and Brigham asked me if I had been ordained to the office of Bishop. I told him that I had not—neither did I want to be. But he said, “I want you to be ordained to the Office of Bishop and go to work and build a city at Spanish Fork, and go right ahead building up the kingdom of God.” And he ordained me and blessed me and said, “Brother John, the Lord be with you and comfort you in all your undertakings, and give you his holy spirit to enable you to govern the people aright that you are placed over.” He also told me that the people of Palmyra was to leave their places and come and build in Spanish Fork.

I returned home and asked the Lord to bless me and enable me to build up his Kingdom. I told the folks at Palmyra that they had to move to Spanish Fork City. Some of them did not like it. There were some that always had a bitter feeling against the folks at the Upper settelment and they did not like the idea of having to move up and live with them. How ever, they were willing to oby the counceill given to them from Brigham. I had the City surveyed and layd off in blocks and City lots and had a water dich [ditch] brought down from the river up above the uper settelment. We had to put in a dam to get the water on the lowest bench. When the City was layd off It took several weeks to acomplish this object. I then went and made a feild company and got them to get up a

commity and go to work and had to build up a wall from the river west of the County rode, and bring it North and then down to the river. Well they went to work and put up the wall, all though some of the men at the time lived on nothing in the world but bran and weeds. It was a great undertaking for them, but the Lord was with them and helped them. And then the folks built a bridge across Spanish Fork River. They got timber out of the Mountains and went to work and put it right up. Well the folks put in their crops, and folks put in their early vegetables so that they could have some thing to eat. I put in considerable grain myself, but I did not have much time to attend to it, and the cattle got into it and destroyed a great deel of it. But the most of folks done pretty well and raised good crops. The land had had a rest. The folks all moved up from Palmyra and began to build. They had to make shanties out of lumber and willows and any thing that they could get.

Brother Captain Davis had made a shantie of Willows and he had stacked his grain close by. And one day the wind was blowing pretty hard. And a spark flew from the chimney in to the willows and caught the shantie on fire and that blew and caught the stacks and burnt nearly every thing that they had, and all the grain was destroyed entirely. I was down ther and help to save what things we could, but the fire raged so that there was not much chance of saving any thing. The willows had all got dry and burnt like pouder allmost, and there was no putting it out when it once got started. Well they watched the fire till night and thought that it was out, but the fire broke out again in the night and they had to get up and whatch it again. They watched it till it went owt. Well I knew it was pretty hard to lose all they had almost, and so I thought that I would get up a subscription for them. I did so and raised over a hundred bushels of wheat for him. And the womin folks went to work and got them some clothes, and so they did not feel the loss like they would if it had not been done for them.

I went to work and fixed up John W Motts house up for a tithing Office, and got Brother Raymond for a Clerk. I hired two men then to build a tithing Corell, which was used for a stray pen, publick corell, and stack yard for tithing hay and Cane. I had it built out on the South East corner of the Fort. I had no corell of my own yet. I had corell room but there were no poles there, and so I stacked my Grain in the tithing stack yard. But it got nearly all distroyed for I had bought some gots [goats] of Rubin Alred and they were in among the sheep and they would jump any place no matter what kind of a fence it was. They used to jump over the wall and get at the grain. Well I had a stake and rider on the top of the wall. Well these goats would jump and walk right on the pole that was for a rider, and they would run on the top of it as good as they would on the ground. And the sheep learnt to follow them so that there was nothing to stay them and I had to send them off.

Well just before Conferance there was some of the Elders came down from Great Salt Lake City—Brother John Young and some more. And they held a Conferance. The folks went to work and built a bowery on the publick square, and we held Conference under that. They preached to us good doctrin and said that Brother Brigham said that the folks wanted a reformation among them. And they told us that we had to go to work and

be baptized again and live our religion more than we had done. And they told me that I had to go to the City and get my instructions as to what I should [do]. I went down to the City and went to Brother Brigham and he asked how I felt and how I was getting along. I told him. He then gave me instructions what to do and how to do, and told me that I had to be baptized there and then go back and baptize the folks and ordain Teachers to go round and visit the saints. Well, I returned home and set my councillors to work, which were Albert K Thurber [John W. Berry] and George Wilkins. And I told them what they were to do. So Brother John Young came down and Preached to us, and we went to work and rebaptized all the folks and reordained the members of the Church of Jesus Christ. We then apointed meeting and began to feel the blessings of God poured out upon us.

But before this, in the month of August, ther was an old Mormon came from San barnideno by the name of Wallas, and he went and lived in the City [Salt Lake City] awile, and bought him a house and lot. He sold out and came down to Spanish Fork and stayd at my house. And he asked me for my Daughter Charity. He had one wife then. Well, I did not know what to say hardly. I asked him if he had got my daughters concent. He said that he had. He told me that he was going back to San bardeeno to settel up his business there, and he wanted to take Charity with him and said that it would be a nice trip for her. He was pretty well to do, and I went and asked my daughter Charity if she wanted to be his wife and to go with him. She said yes. Now this was the first of my girls that went into purality, and so I talked to her and told her that I hoped that she was not runing into it without knowing what she was doing. But I knew that she understood the principal and if she got a good man that she would do verry well. They were married and there was quite a ster [stir] with the boy's. And they were going to run Wallas carriage down to the slough. And his wife was asleep in it. But when they found out that Wallas was not in with her, they let her alone. I had to place a guard over his mules or the boy's would have run them off, and they would be no where to be found for a week or two. Father Morley came down and married them. My wife did not much like their getting married for she thought that Wallas was not the man for Charity. How ever they were married and started on their jurney.

They had not gone more than five days when they met Lemuel and Kiziah [incorrect year]. And Kiziah turned in and had a good cry. She did not know what to make of it, her [sister] going off to California with Wallas. They [Lemuel and Keziah] got in here in about a week or ten days. The mission was given up. They had not been in long before Kiziah was put to bed with a son. He was born on the sixth [5th] of October [1856]. They named him Lemuel Harding after his father. Taylor and Olive also had a daughter. She was nearly nine months of age then. She was born on the fifteenth of November [1855] and they named her Sarah Olive. George and Phebe had a daughter, to, at the same time. She was born on the fourteenth of November [November 12, 1855]. They named her Hannah Caroline. That was three grandchildren that I had.

There is another thing that slipt my memeory. That is, in the year of the hard times for food [1855-56], the most of the folks in Spanish Fork had the measels. And my family were nearly all down with it. There were nine confined to their beds at once and we had a

very sick time of it to. Lemuel and Kiziah had it, to, across the Fort. There was not many escaped from it that did not have it before.

We had a very severe winter this winter, and the snow was very deep in the Canyon. But the brethren turned out and made a road up into the wood and built a bridge when the snow was two and three feet deep and so cold it was hard work to keep from freezing to death. They all felt well and happy in doing as they were told.

The reformation was going on first rate. Brother Brigham and councillors made a caticism or code of laws for the Saints to go by, and all the Bishop's had to get the people one by one by themselves and ask them the questions that were on the code of laws. And if the people had broken any of these laws, they were told to do so no more and they were all forgiven for what they had done. All their former sins were to be remembered against them no more. This mad the people feel good and we held our meetings and they felt free to pray or speak their feelings. They would speak in tongues and prophsy in the name of the Lord. Every family held family meetings and they spoke or prayd just as they were led. All were rejoicing and happy and every thing went on just as it ought to.

Rubin Allred came from Sanpeet and lived awhile with us till he could build him a house. We had quite a sick time with the children. My sister Lucy Ann's little baby and Taylors little girl were very sick. Indeed we did not expect either of them to live, they were so sick. But it pleased the Lord to spare their lives and they got well.

The United States had put Buchanan in as President of the United States, and he was going to put down Mormons, and he was very much imbittered against the people of this territory. And he began to look up soldiers to come out here. He was determined to do some great thing when he was on the Presidentall chair.

Now the Emigration across the Plains [in 1856] was very late. They [Martin and Willie handcart companies and Hunt and Hodgett wagon trains] all got caught in the snow. They were strung from Weber river to Fort Bridger and there they was starving and freezing to death. It was dredful, the accounts. Brother Brigham gave Orders in all the settlments to rig up teams to go back and bring the suferers in. Now the snow was from six to fifteen feet deep and there was no road broke across the mountains at all. Well the word came down to me to rig up six teams and send two men to every team for teamsters, and there were to be four mules or horses to each waggon, and the wagons were to be loaded with horse feed, provisions, clothing, and every comfort of life that could be sent. Now this all was to be done by donation. So I called the people together and told them the situation of their brethren and sisters, and then we had to rig up teams and send men out for them. This was in december, and it was bitter cold. The snow in the Valley here was eighteen inches deep on the level and it was snowing in the mountains all the time. Well, we got them all rigged up, and I never had less trouble getting up such an expedition, for the Saints were willing and on hand to do almost anything.

My son Taylor I sent out with them to superintend the expedition. He drove a waggon as well, and he told me how he found the Saints, and how the road was. He said that there were teams reached nearly from the City to Fort Bridger. They had to have men shuveling out snow and breaking the road, and in some places the snow was up above the

waggon bows on each side. And they found the Saints in an awful condision, some with there feet froze, and some with there fingers froze, and they had no food to eat, and he said that he never saw such a sight before, it was dredfull. And he said that they were so overjoyed they did not know what to do hardly. Well, they were all picked up and fed and clothes given to them. When they Campd at night there were a whole lot of the boys would break a road to a tree and cut it down for firewood. And when they were coming back, they never saw the sun for six days and it snow all the time, and they had to break the road over again. And in coming down the big Mountain they never locked a wheel but gee-'d off and let the hub of the off wheel drag in the snow and so they came down.

They brought some of the folks down to spanish fork and I never saw such objects in my life as they were. There was a young man that George Sevey brought down with him that looked like a shadow. He would reel two and fro when he walked, he was so weak, and his toes were froze. George hired him for a year.

I was busy all the time doing ward business. I took the Office of my first Councillor [Berry] from him as I was Councillid by Brother Brigham and Brother Grant, and I had a vote taken on it. I chose Bro A K Thurber in his place. I had several difficulties to settle in the ward, some with husbands and wives, and told them to make it all up and live their religion. I divided the ward into four parts and put a Teacher over every part. Levi Harmon was the Teacher for the first part, and Charles A Davis for the second Part, and Henry Garfield for the third, and Stephen R Wells for the fourth Part. I got Mr C A Davis to find out how much wheat there was in the City, and he brought me a report and it said nine thousand bush of wheat and two thousand bushels of carn. I thought that that was pretty well for Spanish fork.

I had to marry folks at diferant times and blessings children, and one thing and another, that it took up the greater part of my time. I set my family in Order and told them to attend to their secret prayers and ask God to bless them and enable them to do what was right. I went down to the City several times and received instructions how to do and how to be enabled to build up the kingdom.

I started down to the City in March [1857] in Company with George Wilkins, my second Counciller. I took three woin down with me to be sealed to me. There names are as follows: Ann Harrow, Levisa Hamilton, and Ester Ogdon. I arived there on the seventh. On the eighth went to meeting and on the ninth was sealed to my woin.

Miss Ann Hughes was married to Lewis Harrow. He died in the West Indies. She embraced the Gospel and came to Salt Lake and was sealed to me on the ninth of March eighteen hundred and fifty seven in the sealing room By Heber C Kimball in Brigham Young Office. Her mothers name was Allis Edwards before she married Robert Hughes. Her [the mother's] mothers name was Ann Hancock before she married John Edwards. Anns Fathers Father name was Lewis Hughes. He [Lewis Hughes] married Ann [Hancock]. Ann [Hughes] had one child by her first husband Louis Harrow. It was a girl. They named her Ester. Her [Ann's] Brothers and Sisters where as follows: Lewis John died when an Infant; Robert; Andrew; Ann; Elizabeth; and Allis. Lewis married Mary Neek they had four Children; Andrew [married] Ellen Hackerslay, they had five children.

Allis was married to Thomas Johnson, they had six children: Charles, Batwen, Marion, Jenet and Isabel she was the last child.

Levisa was daughter of Andrew and Malissa Hamilton. Esters folks, I know nothing about them.

I came back from the City and atended to the affairs of the ward. Brother Philo Allen asked me for my daughter Sarah Adeline. I told him that if she was willing, I was. They were married and the same day as I took my three woin. She is second wife to Philo. In April George Wilkins asked me if I would give him my daughter Elizabeth. I told him I had no objection providing she was willing. So they got married. She was his second wife.

The spring [1857] beautifull and the folks were busy puting in their grain and garden seeds, and every thing look fresh and beatifull. The grass was springing up fast and the cattle began to pick up and look well. We were all enjoying ourselves and living happy. In the States they did not know what to do. They went to work and fitted up an armye with every thing that an armye would want to go any where in the world, the best fitted out company or armye the United States or any other Country ever turned out. They started for the Great Salt Lake City. There was three thousand men that bore arms besides Teamsters and hearers, and there was about ten or a dozen trains loded with provisions, tobacco, and clothing and every thing that you could mention. These trains were ox teams and they had baggage waggons with six mules on each wagon, the best mules that the united states aforded, and new harness. They had their cannon with them and was going to sweep the Mormons from the face of the earth. Their Comander in Cheif was General Jonston and there was Mr Cumming was to be governor of Utah Territory.

Well on they came, and we raised our crops and enjoyd ourselves, and the Lord blessed us. There was no goods came in that summer on account of the army coming up here, and that made clothing verry deer and hard to get.

Uncle Sam had sent an Indian Agent out here, and he came down to Spanish Fork and built an house and fenced in a large track of land and called it the Indian farm. He raised a large amount of grain and carn and gave some of it to the Indians. He was suplied with money and goods from goverment to pay hired hands for their labour. He hired about fifty men and bought Cattle and cows till he had a heard of about five or six hundred head. He had a brand made and recorded, and the brand was ID. He put a dam in the river about half a mile above the House and dug a canall to the farm to bring out the water to water the farm. He done a great deel of good at that time in giving employment to about fifty hands and in puting a little money in cerulation. He paid his hands forty dollars per month—twenty in cash and twenty in store goods. His name was [Garland] Hurt. He was a profeshenal Doctor and went by the name of Doctor Hurt. He had an Indian inturpreter by the name of Richard James. There was several young Indian boys took a fancy to go to work. The Doctor got some clothes and dressed them up and made them wait on him, and go of arends, wait at table, and so on. And they got so as they could understand English pretty [good], and they learned to talk English. The Indian they would come and camp down by the farm and turn their horses into the feild, and they

would get into our grain and run all through it and destroy it, and we could not raise any thing for them hardly.

We had a very good harvest this summer and the folks were getting up there stuff and securing it in for winter when word came down from Brigham to be on hand and have plenty of powder and lead and to clean up our rifles and to be on hand at a moment's call. This made some of the men stare about them, but they were soon ready for any thing that should come along.

In August I divorced my seventh wife Ester, being that she was not satisfied with her situation and wanted to leave me. I obtained a bill of divorce for her and she left me and went to the City.

And in September on the eighth day I was married to a young woman by the name of Heneretta Blythe. She was my eighth wife and was married to me by Daniel H Wells on the eighth of September, eighteen hundred and fifty seven. She was the daughter of Charles and Isabel Blythe. Her mother's name before her marriage to Blythe was Brown and her mother's name was Marion Lindsay before she married Brown. Henrietta's father's name before she married Blythe [Charles Blythe's father] was Fins [Flyns?].

She [Henrietta Blythe] was born in Chatstown a small town in Midlothian Scotland on the sixth of June, eighteen hundred and thirty one. Her brothers and sisters ran thus: James was the oldest, he married Margery Fairborn; Ann, she married a Bruce; Marian, she married a Bruce—they were Brothers; Naismith; Janett; Charles; and Thomas. Whether the last four were married before were married or not we cannot tell. This is the biography of my wife Heneretta's folks as near as she can give it.

Brother Brigham sent down for a company of men to go out on the road, for the army was on our borders and that he was not going to let them come in. He put the Territory under Marshal law. This put the Gentiles in a sweat [sweat]. They did not know what to do. And one Sunday just after dinner there was news came to me that old Dock Hurt was going to shift his quarters and take up his abode in the mountains with the soldiers. I went out and I called all the men in Spanish Fork together and told Col John S Fulmer to take command of them and go and take the Doctor. I knew it would take all the men we could raise for there was about two hundred Indians with him. Dick James came to me and told me that he did not know any thing about it. John S Fullmer took command of his company went down to the Bridge and crossed over and went down on the bench on the other side. By this time the news had fled to Springville and Panguitch [Payson] and there was a company came out of each place. There was about two hundred and fifty men in the three companies.

The Doctor had fled and the Indians, all but about twelve, were left to cover his retreat should the Mormons pursue him. And they were riding backwards and forwards and whooping and yelling and telling us to come on and fight them. I knew that it was of no use to fight them for that would not bring the Doctor back. So we held a council about what we should do. Some wanted to follow him and fight their way through but the Doctor was on a horse as good a one as was in the Territory, and then he was well armed and had an escort of twelve Indians, the best warriors there was in the whole tribe. And

another advantage he had of us was about ten or twelve miles the start. And our men were on foot without any thing to eat. And the men were not united either to follow them for some wanted to go and others did not. And I thought that if a guard was placed at the mouth of the Canyon and on the mountains and we might yet have a chance to catch him. I found out afterwards that the two Bishops, one of Pasan and Springville, knew that the Doctor was about to leave before I received the news and they had started there men.

Well we had to give the chase up. We returned home and nothing done. I placed a guard at the mouth of the Canyon and all became peace and quietness around as if nothing had happened to disturb us. The next morning the guard came down and reported themselves. There was news came to me that the Doctor had fled over to the west mountain and that a man by the name of William Maxfield had followed him with half a dozen men into a small Canyon, but the Indians were too many for them. But they sent a runner to Pasan for more men and he stayed till dark watching them and no men came to his assistance, and the darkness was so great that he could no longer see them. They went home, and the Doctor and his escort came across the Valley and went up Spanish Fork Canyon and passed the guard somehow or other without their knowing any thing about it.

I have since heard a report that I had something to do in the escape of Hurt, that I knew of his intended flight, and that I was a friend of his. Now I can truly say before God and man, and God shall be my witness, that I knew nothing neither had I any conversation with him on the subject at all. No. I am innocent of the report that has been about me and the ones who ever they may be—I know that I have enemies and the very ones that should have been my greatest friend—but the sin will fall upon their own shoulders. God knows that I am not Guilty, neither would I be guilty of such a thing while I am in the Church of God and God gives me his Holy Spirit to enable me to do what is right. Well, I am free from any such a report and I feel thankful to God my heavenly Father that I am.

I gathered up men and sent them out on the road into Echo Canyon. I also sent three men up Spanish Fork Canyon to explore a little and to see if any thing could be seen up there. One of the men was Taylor my son. They went up there but they saw nothing of a suspicious nature.

The army now was very near the line of this Territory. There were several thousand of the boys out in the mountains. And Lot Smith was Captain over the Mountain rangers and was scouting about over the mountains, some times here, and some times there, some times right in sight of the soldiers, and then ride away from them. General H Wells was out among the boys giving them orders what to do. He had them to build batteries on the top of the mountain and pile up rocks so that if the enemy came they could roll down rocks upon them and they would be dashed to pieces. And the Canyon was narrow for three or four miles down and there was no other chance to get in but by this road, [so] that the army would not come in, but they camped upon Hams Fork.

Lot Smith went out upon the road to the big sandy and burnt up seventy five wagons for Miller and Russell [who were] freighting provisions for Uncle Sam. And he went up to the wagon master and told him to call his train. He wanted to know by what authority he

had to tell him to caroll his wagons. Lot told him, "by the athority of this revolver," and he pointed it to his head. He told the men to caroll their wagons. They carolled and Lot told the men that if they had any thing in the wagons of their own that they could get it out, and he told them to be sharp about it. He then told his boys to set fire to the wagons and drive the cattel off up in the mountains. They did so and the wagons all burnt up, and the mark of the fire remaines to this day and will do so for years to come. The boys brought the cattel in to Salt Lake City and Brigham had them turned upon good range where they would live all the winter.

The soldiers kept on hams Fork and went to and fro, up and down, and would not venture in any farther for they thought that the Mountains were full of Mormons. They campt at last and the winter set in upon them, and they could not ster about as they had done. Their cattle that remained huddled together and starved to death. In the summer after wards there was several places [visible] where the cattle got together, some two or three hundred head in a gang had all died and their bones lay bleached in the sun. And they covered acres of ground just as thick as they could lay. Their cattle all died off and their salt give out, and there they was, poor ignorent souls didnt know that they had come to fight the Lords Anointed and fight against God himself. They little knew the power they were fighting against. Well Brother Brigham heard of their condition of their being without salt, so he got up a load and sent it to them. But they would not accept it. So the man that took it out spilt it on the road side for he would not haul it back again.

Echo Kanyon was well fortified and if they had attempted to come down they would certainly have been all distroyed. The boys out in the mountains got pretty short of clothing and we had to make a colection for them, such as socks, shoes, pants, shirts, mittens, and sent them out to them to make them comfortable. The mountain rangers done the most damage for they would go right into the Soldiers Camp and take revolvers and guns from under their heads and would not be seen. Now when they had been out there all winter their wrath was cooled down and they did not feel so much like fighting Mormons.

They wanted to make treaty, and they sent Govener Cumming in to Salt Lake City. And as he was comming down Echo Kanyon he came along there in the night he would come to a camp fire of Mormons—the boys built fires all the way down the Kanyon. And they all got to the top fire, and when the old Govener got to the fire the boys give three cheers for Brigham Young. The Govener stopt and spoke a few words to them. He then went on and the boys all started for the next fire and got there before the Govener and were ready to meet him. The Govener stopt and spoke a few words to them again, thinking that he was talking to another lot of men. He started again, and again the boys started to the next fire and got there before him. And so they kept on doing all the way down the Kanyon.

And the Govener was never more surprized in his life. He began to be frightened for he realy thought that the mountains was swarming with Mormons and he said that he never was more surprized in his life. He said that he did not think that there was one sixteenth part as many Mormons as he saw in the Kanyon. The boys had built up about twenty five fires and there was about five hundred of them. That would make it appear

twelve thousand five hundred men, when the old Govenor had only seen five hundred in all.

Well he came into Brother Brigham and Brigham treated him with respect. And when the old Govenor saw the things as they were he said that the Mormons had been foully misrepresented and that he would stand for the rights of the people and said that he never was in a place before where so much Order and Obediance was carried on. He sent word to Gen Jonston that he had found the people of Utah good citizens of the United States. And that they ment to uphold the laws of the United States. And that the United States or the leaders of the United States had done verry wrong to send an army out here to make the people of the Territory of Utah come to obedience to the laws of the United States when they were the only people in the United States that observed the laws strictly. And, said he, they are good people and industrious, and minded their own business.

Well, he took his place as govenor of the Territory of Utah, but Brigham was our Govenor still and what ever he said it was law and Gosples. He ordered the people in the North and in the County of Great Salt Lake to move South and take all their famileys and all their stock and as much provisions as they could take along with them. And [he] told them that if the soldiers were determined to come in and kill them that they were to set fires to their houses, and leave them a ruined city. And the folks did move south, and Brother Brigham moved his family south as far as Provo. There was but one woman left north of the point of the mountains and she was doing writing for the Church. The City did look a desolate place, for the folks were all gone south except a few men left to guard the city. And teams were scatered from the City to Sanpeet, it was like one train. The folks put straw and shavings in their houses ready to burn them up when the word came from Brigham.

But they did not have the job to burn them up for the soldiers came to terms. And they were to come in and go on to the West side of the river jorden. But they were to march right through and not molest any thing at all. Well they came in and went and campd at the crossing of the river Jorden and then went about seven miles above up into the cedars. And Bro Brigham gave orders for the folks to move back again if they wanted to. And a great many moved back, and a great many stayd. There was a great many came to Spanish fork City. And they covered the bottom and made dug outs under the side of the benches. And the cattel rainged on the benches and they ate all the feed off so that our own cattle fared verry slim that fall. The folks came to me to give them places to build, an I had so much to do that I did not know hardly which to begin at first. I did not have time to eat meals I was so busy.

I had partly put up a saw mill, and Archy Gardener came down here and moved his family here and put a house up for them. He then came to me and told me that he would take a share in the saw mill if I was willing. But he said that it was not in a good place and would have to be built up higher. So we had it moved, and finished it. He then he said that he thought that it was a good place to put up a grist mill and that he thought that he would get a grant for to put up one. He did so, and when the saw mill run he went to work and put up one of the best grist mills in the Territory. He made the race larger and put the grist mill just below the saw mill on the City main water dich. And it was a good

thing for Spanish Fork, for [until then] they had to go to Springvill mill to get their grinding done and they had to go to Pond town [Salem] to get their sawing done. So it was a great benifit to the ward. Brother John Murray came down here in the move south and he had put up mills for Archy Gardener down North. And Archy got them to put up his grist mill. Him and Brother Reed, they both them bought land here and calculated to make there home here.

The soldiers went over into Ceder Vally and campt there and named the camp Floyd, and they built their barracks and took up their quarters there. There was a great many apostates went out there to live, and there was a great many went to trade there. It made money ster round verry brisk for a while. They hired men to make adobies for them and give them one dollar per hundred, and there was lots of men that would make six and eight hundred per day so that they made a good deel of money. They also hired men to chop cord wood in the Mountains and gave three dollars per cord cedar wood.

The people [Mormons] would go over there with wisky and trade it to the soldiers for clothes, pistles, and one thing and another, and get them for nothing almost. They would get a good over coat for about two dollars worth of wisky, and they could get a revolver for about the same. And then the soldiers would tell the officers that they had lost them so they would get another, and their clothes the same. There was a great many deserted and they would send an officer and about a dozen men after them, and prhaps about four or five would return out of the thirteen, and so it went on till their army was not neer so strong as it had been.

They had a great sale over at Camp Floied. They advertized the sale of mules and wagons, harness, sadels, and they were to be sold at auctan and were to be knot down to the highest bidder. And some got splendid mules for sixty dollars a span. The wagons were priced at thirty Dollars each, and any one could get one for that amount—the wagons cost in the States eighty five Dollars each at wholesale price, so they did not make much on that speculation. The mules would cost at least one hundred Dollars a head, and their harness was almost given away, for you could get them for three Dollars a set. They were good harness but had but one line, and if any one would perchus a whole team they would throw in the harness strechers, double trees, fifth chanes, and give them in for nothing, so that you could get a wagon, three span of mules, harness and every thing for two hundred and ten Dollars—about the worth of one span of mules. But they were short of money and had to have it for to pay the soldiers.

They made quite a fine place over there, but it was like going into hell at once for the whoredom and murder and profane language was fearfull. I never troubled them myself but there were several went from this ward, which I was verry sorry to see, for when they were here they seemed to be pretty good Saints but when they went over there they drank in the spirit that was there, and they soon went by the board.

Now there was a call from the United States for some of the Army to go this way and some of them to go that way. And one part went to Mexeco, and they came up Spanish Fork Kanyan and go up the Spanish Trails. Now they had to make a road all the way. After they got up to the Forks of the Kanyon they made a road so as they could pass over—but no road to stand. Now by making a road about seven or eight miles it would

take you to Sanpeet in half the time that it would take the other way. There is a creek that runs down into the right hand Fork, and by making a road up there it will save the folks one day s drive from Sanpeet. I think that the road will be put through some time or other. There was only enough soldiers left to take care of the Barracks and to be on hand if the Indians went to making any fuss.

During this time, John W Berry was sent to England on a mission and he had returned after been gone two years.

I have had the palpatation of the Heart verry bad lately and I do not have the health that I used to have. I feel myself graduly wasting away. I have to lay up some times I am so sick and my mind is so full that I cannot attend to my duties. And I have to put my counsellors to work and do what I cannot do my self.

My daughter Charity obtained a bill of devorcement from her husband, Mr Wallas. He had taken her to Callifornia and had not used her altogether right, so she would not live with him any longer, for insted of his comming back as he represented to me, he stayd there and did not sell out or make any preparatian to come at all. She is living with My Daughter Phebe, she has let her have one of her rooms. My daughter Elizabeth also obtained a devorce from George Wilkins. She and the First wife could not agree at all with one another, and she thought that they were better apart.

Brother George A Smith and Ezra T Benson came down to Spanish Fork City and they put John W Berry in Presidant over the Branch, and that releived me of the labour that I had to do before.

I went down to the City and the first day I was taken sick and spit blood, and I have not been well since and have been confined to my bed off an on since that time. Now I am getting worse all the time. I fear that I have seen my best days. But I can say that I have done my best to help to role forth the Kingdom of God. I have seen and been through many trials and close places, and my family have suffered from want, and I have allways felt to give God praise for all things which came unto us for our good.

And I can bare my Testimony to this work. I know that it is the Kingdom of God, for the Lord has blessed me with the knoledge there of. I have seen the sick healed under the power of the Priesthood, and I have seen the power of God displade in many places. And I have always felt to do my best in all things that I have had to do. And my prayer is that all of us who are in the Kingdom of God may be led to do what is right in the sight of God at all times, is the prayer of your Humble Servant. Amen.

John Low[e] Butler

Notes

Abbreviations used:

BFA: for Butler Family Archives.

LDS Archives: for the Archives of the Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

LDS Family History Library: for the Family History Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Notes for Introduction

1. The only account of this wedding is found in L. Duffin, “Sketch of Jesse Skeen,” 1. Some of Lydia’s facts in the rest of the sketch are wrong. For example, she says, based on thirdhand information (Caroline to daughter Charity Artemesia to granddaughter Lydia), that after the Civil War Jesse’s slaves asked to live with him, and he consented. Jesse, however, died in 1842, long before the war.

2. Ibid. This version says that John’s father, James Butler, performed the marriage, which seems unlikely. The wedding license was issued by Tennessee—see Whitley, *Marriages of Sumner County*, 83. This record says Archibald B. Duval performed the ceremony on January 29 and that Caroline’s brother Kenion was best man. I used the February 3 date from John’s autobiography.

3. Duffin, “Sketch of Jesse Skeen,” 1.

Notes for Chapter 1, “Troubled Kentucky Boyhood”

1. John Lowe Butler, Autobiography. The autobiography has a short version and a long one. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from and references to his autobiography used in this book are from the long version.

2. John’s great-grandfather Edmund Butler came from Ireland about 1720 and settled in Virginia. The Butlers, of Norman origin and with the name of Walters, came to Ireland with William the Conqueror and received the title of Chief Butler of Ireland. An international group, The Butler Society, of Kilkenny, Ireland, tries to keep tabs on all Butlers in the world.

3. M. Jackson, *Federal Censuses of Simpson County*, 9. In November 1801 the Logan County Court ordered that James Butler in Drake’s Creek Settlement fill the justice of the peace office for the county.

4. In 1811 James Butler paid for a survey of a 200-acre parcel; see Murray, *Deed Abstracts of Warren County*, 102 (number 416, dated June 29, 1811).

5. By the time John reached twenty, in 1828, three of his siblings probably had married: William (26) to Beulah Peden, Elizabeth (24) to Sandy Mays, and Sarah (22) to Dickson Allen.

6. Jefferson Davis was born where Fairview, Todd County, now is. Abraham Lincoln was born just south of Hodgenville in present-day Larue County.

7. Clift, et al., *Kentucky in Retrospect*.

8. Penick, Jr., *The New Madrid Earthquakes*.

9. T. Clark, *Kentucky*, 72.

10. Simpson County Historical Society, *Simpson County*, 6; Beach and Snider, *Franklin and Simpson County*.

11. Ibid.
12. Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 187.
13. Ibid., 1–150.
14. Ibid., 6.
15. Davenport, *Ante-Bellum Kentucky*, 3.
16. Ibid., 6.
17. Simpson County, Kentucky, Tax Lists, 1831, p. 11, microfilm, LDS Family History Library.
18. The three classifications were by Daniel R. Hundley in 1860 and are cited in Eaton, *Waning of the Old South Civilization*, 12–13. Composer Stephen Foster, a border Yankee in Cincinnati, began publishing “plantation melodies” in 1848 with “Oh! Susanna.” He wrote “My Old Kentucky Home, Good Night” in 1852. The first verse (“the sun shines bright on my old Kentucky Home”) seems to glorify pleasant plantation life, although the other verses sorrow over the plight of slaves.
19. Simpson County Historical Society, *Simpson County*, 6; Collins, *Historical Sketches of Kentucky*, 531.
20. Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion Through the Slave States*, 226–27.
21. D. Lewis, Life Sketch, 5–6.
22. Ibid., 6.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 7.
25. “In the nineteenth century most people, especially those with little education, continued to write words as they sounded, and . . . used punctuation and capitalizations as it suited them . . . even those who were well-educated were often erratic, uncertain, and . . . incorrect in much of their usage.” Among famous men who used the spell-it-as-it-sounds method were Ulysses S. Grant, President Andrew Johnson, Joseph Smith, and Brigham Young. Partridge, “Nineteenth-Century Spelling,” 79–80.
26. Channing, *Kentucky*, 92.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 93.
29. Ibid., 95.
30. Wiltse, *New Nation*, 122.
31. Channing, *Kentucky*, 93. See also Graham and Gurr, *Violence in America*.
32. Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 183; Greenberg, “The Nose, the Lie, and the Duel.”
33. The Linkumpinch dueling grounds marker is located at the front of The Duncan Inn, a registered historic site on Kentucky Highway 31-W, barely north of the Kentucky border and the I-65 interchange with 31-W.
34. D. Lewis, Life Sketch, 4, 6.
35. Powell et al., *Regulators in North Carolina History*, xv–xxi, 577–78.
36. Costigan, “William Lowe”; McDuffie, “William Lowe.”
37. M. Jackson, *Federal Censuses of Simpson County*, 6. Charity’s brother John Lowe married Mary Ann Gilliland, and Charity’s sister Agnes married John Gilliland. Deed records in 1811 show William and Margaret Lowe selling 100 acres for \$200 to their son-in-law David Heffington and 100 acres of land next to James Butler’s lands to James’ brother-in-law James McConnell for \$20. Charity’s sister Mary Ann Lowe married John Deriberry or DeBerry, and in 1811 they sold 100 acres of land patented in William Lowe’s name that was part of a survey done in the name of James Butler. See Murray, *Deed Abstracts of Warren County*, 102 (number 511, dated July 13, 1811). John’s oldest brother and sister married into families whose names today mark geographic features of Simpson County: William married Beulah Peden (Peden Mill Road), and Elizabeth married Sandy Mays (Mays Branch of Sulphur Fork Creek).
38. T. Clark, *Kentucky*, 99–110. Ross Butler of Ontario, Oregon, inherited metal fire tongs that family tradition says John’s father James forged from Daniel Boone’s pack saddles. Ross E. Butler to the author, May 13, 1991, B.F.A.
39. Hendricks, “Historical Sketch,” 10.
40. Doctors to whom I’ve described John’s symptoms agree that he undoubtedly had an attack of rheumatic fever as a child. In the early days of medicine recurring attacks were common, which caused arthritic conditions, although such usually caused heart problems. Accidents could trigger

such attacks—it didn’t take much to cause flare-ups. John’s death at age 52 could have been linked to rheumatic heart problems.

41. Doctors to whom I described this attack agree it was separate from the rheumatic/arthritis problems. Rheumatics attack both sides. To attack one side and cause muscles to atrophy is unusual. If it were a stroke, unlikely at his young age, he would have had others in subsequent years, but he did not. It must have been a neuromuscular problem. One possibility is polio, which can attack one side, cause atrophy, and from which some patients recover without permanent crippling.

42. Drake, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky*, 188.

Notes for Chapter 2, “Caroline Skeen of Tennessee”

1. Sumner County has two Drake’s Creeks, one in the southeast and one in the north where the Taylors settled, which on maps today is called West Fork of Drake’s Creek.

2. In 1765 Henry Scaggs was the first white explorer to enter the Cumberland region, then occupied by Indians. Hunters followed. In 1778 Thomas S. Spencer became the county’s first permanent settler, at present-day Castalian Springs. In 1779–80 settlers under the leadership of James Robertson, John Donelson, Stockley Donelson, and George Freeland claimed lands at the Cumberland River’s “big bend” near present Nashville. Soon, small settlements dotted the Cumberland-Tennessee drainage area. Goodspeed Histories, 797–99.

3.

<i>Child</i>	<i>Birth</i>	<i>Marriage</i>	<i>Spouse</i>
Herring	1772		Unknown
Betty/Betsy	1773	1800	Leonard Dugan
Lucy	1775	1793	Whitehead Joiner
Robert	1777	1802	Margaret Kirkpatrick
Keziah	1777/8	1798	Jesse Skeen
Manoah	1779	1800	Elizabeth Taylor
Benjamin	1781		Unknown
John	1782	1806	Barbara Mason
Ann/Nancy	1783	1803	David Bradley
Polly/Molly	1787		Joseph McGloughlin

4. Lamar, *Reader’s Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Tennessee, Settlement of.”

5. Few tax records survive, and fires destroyed the federal censuses for Sumner County for 1790, 1800, and 1810, so government data about the Skeens and Taylors are sparse. See Whitley, *Marriages of Sumner County*, 83, and Sumner County Tax Records, August 25, 1789, microfilm, Sumner County Archives, Gallatin, Tennessee.

6. Inventory of Robert Taylor’s Estate Personal, December 29, 1801, holograph, Sumner County Archives.

7. Robert Taylor’s will is dated April 15, 1799; see Sumner County Estate Book I, pp. 56–57, Sumner County Archives, copy in BFA. Robert died within two years. His will bestowed properties to his children, except land on the north side of a creek “where Jesse Skeen lives,” which indicates Jesse and Keziah already had received Taylor land. Jesse’s will identifies land using the loose Southern system of surveying based on landmarks. See Lamar, *Reader’s Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Land System, Southern.”

8. The 1790 North Carolina census does not list Jesse, so perhaps he had already relocated to Sumner County. Sumner’s 1790 census was destroyed by fire, so it cannot be checked. Sumner’s 1789 county tax records do not list him.

9. Jesse’s earliest identified ancestor is Robert De Skene, born in Scotland about 1257 A.D. After this Robert, the Skeens married into families named Mercer, Forbes, Gillespie, Fullerton, Kenny, Taylor, and Palmer. A part of Aberdeen called Skene became the family’s birthplace for several generations, starting with Alexander de Skene, born about 1482. A son of this Alexander bears the name of Skeen, not de Skene. Later family locations in Scotland include Tilliebirloch,

Newtyle, Kingswell, and Dumbreckin, as well as Aberdeen. Jesse's immigrant ancestors were John Skene, born in 1649, and his wife, Helen Fullerton, both of Aberdeen. In 1671 they became parents of Alexander Skene, whom records say was "of Barbadoes Islands." John the immigrant died in 1687 in New Jersey. Son Alexander married Jemima Kenney, also "of Barbadoes Islands." Their son John, born in South Carolina, was Jesse's grandfather. See Skeen Family Group Charts in BFA.

10. Even in Jesse's time the family used both spellings, Skene and Skeen.

11. Jones County's 1786 census lists a Jesse Skeen as head of a household with eight people. Probably this is the same Jesse who became Caroline's father. Jesse's neighbors in that census were people named Cox and Metts, families into which his sisters Rebekah and Mary would marry. Kenan, *State Census of North Carolina*, 88.

12. Last Will of Sarah Skeen, May 29, 1796, Jones County, North Carolina, typescript copy in BFA.

13. In Nauvoo John married Caroline's sister as his first plural wife (see chapter 12).

14. Marriage and spouse information on family file copy of Jesse and Keziah Taylor Skeen family group chart, BFA. Whitley, *Marriages of Sumner County*, 44, 54, 81.

15. O. Smith, *Recollections*, 1.

16. See S. Wilson, *Sumner County; Whitley, Sumner County Will Books; Index to Lawsuits, and actual lawsuits on microfilm*, Sumner County Historical Society, reels 5091, 5102, 5107, 5111, 5119, 5168, 5090, 5118, and others.

17. W. Durham, *Old Sumner*, 32.

18. *The Shackle Island Community*.

19. In 1820, when she was eight, the Sumner County census listed several of Caroline's uncles and aunts on the Taylor side, most of whom had children or grandchildren who were her cousins. The children or their spouses in that census are Robert Taylor, Benjamin Taylor, John Taylor, David Bradley, and Joseph McGloughlin. Whitehead Joiner and Manoah Taylor lived two counties west in Montgomery County.

20. The land was probably within the mile upstream from where Grace Creek flows into Drake's Creek from the southwest, which spot is about a quarter mile south (upstream) of where the Ford Road bridge today crosses Drake's Creek.

21. Circumstantial evidence points to this location. First, family tradition says John Butler's grandfather Lowe in Kentucky and Jesse Skeen in Tennessee had lived "but a mile apart" and that their farms were separated by a stream of water (see L. Duffin, "History of Caroline Farozine Skeen Butler," 1). Jesse therefore could not have lived more than a mile "into" Tennessee from the borderline. Second, an 1878 county map pinpoints residents by surname, and several names in the location in question match surnames of families into which Grandfather Taylor's children or Jesse's children married, such as McGlothlin, Bradley, and Groves. Third, comparing the 1878 map's names with 1830 and 1840 census names near Jesse's name, we find several matches, such as Clampett, Burnett, Peyton, Taylor, and Dorris. Fourth, Jesse's 1840 will says some of his land bordered on Manoah Taylor's land, which we find was close to present-day Taylor Road. Finally, Jesse deeded to son Kenion two land parcels in 1841 on "Tract Branch," an east-west running stream; maps show such a stream at the site identified and another at the southern edge of the site—either could be the "Tract Branch" mentioned. See Jesse Skeen to Kenion Skeen, Deed, July 27, 1841, Sumner County Deedbook 18, p. 3; D. G. Beers & Co., Map of Sumner Co., Tennessee, 1878, Sumner County Archives.

22. Sumner County Tax Assessment Lists, 1816–1822, Sumner County Archives.

23. Jesse's will lists a tract of land on the east side of Drake's Creek on which stood his "mansion house," two tracts located west of Drake's Creek, a 100 acre "Barrowfield tract," land "north of Barrowfield tract," the "McKinley tract," the "Benjamin Mayberry Tract," and an "old mill tract" in Kentucky. In 1841 Jesse deeded to Kenion two parcels of land "on the waters of Drakes Creek on Tract Branch," one of 111 acres, the other 100. Jesse's will is dated March 24, 1840, copy in BFA. An addendum to the will, spelling out land for son Kenion, is dated July 21, 1841, Sumner County Deed Book 18, p. 3, Sumner County Archives. His will was probated on March 10, 1842.

24. The Simpson County, Kentucky, 1831 tax list notes that John Butler and father James were agents for Jesse Skeen's 389 acres of "3rd rate" land, 200 more acres of third rate land, and five animals. Records for 1835 again list John Butler as James Skeen's agent for 245 acres of second-rate land.

25. Sumner County was agricultural. Its highland ridge rises 800 to 900 feet above sea level and sends waters on one side down into the Red River that joins the Cumberland, and waters down the other slope into the Drake's Creek, Little Trammell Creek, and other streams flowing northward into the Barren River in Kentucky.

26. W. Durham, *Old Sumner*, 20.

27. Within 3 miles of their home, the Skeens had three dozen neighbors. The 1830 census taker listed the several surnames immediately before and after the Skeens who were neighbors and friends: John Bradley, Eli Purdue, Richard Hobely, Roodel Martin, Samuel Allen, Sr., Jesse Dorris, Lavina Dunning, Daniel Purdue, James Mayberry, Jacob Barnett, Elish Barnett, James Bandy, Elizabeth Bradley, John S. Atcheson, William Burnett, Archibald Laing, John Hinton, Samuel Middleton.

28. These three Southern classes were identified by Daniel R. Hundley in 1860, as cited in Eaton, *Waning of the Old South Civilization*, 12–13.

29. 1830 Census for Sumner County has slave totals at the end of the county's enumeration; Skeens are listed on p. 179. See also W. Durham, *Old Sumner*, 285.

30. W. Durham, *Old Sumner*, 285.

31. Wiltse, *New Nation*, 159.

32. In 1840, Jesse still owned ten slaves. His will that year identifies his slaves as Slave girl Susan, Negro boy Anthony, Negro man Jim, Negro man Sam, Pricilla, Negro girl Tauny, Negro man Ned, Negro woman Sylvia, Negro woman Mary, and Mary's child James. Jesse's 1841 codicil to the will told executors to prevent slaves willed to his deaf daughters from being taken out of Tennessee. A new slave, six-year-old Davina, he ordered should be freed at age sixteen. Regarding the will and codicil see note 20 above.

33. Prices of slaves varied in Sumner County. Historian Walter T. Durham noted a man named George who was worth \$1,000 and a twenty-four-year-old woman worth only \$250. The average value of slaves, he calculated, was about \$400, but skilled slaves who were blacksmiths, brick masons, and carpenters were worth three times that. W. Durham, *Old Sumner*, 288–89.

34. Codes prohibited slaves from possessing guns, leaving the master's premises without a written pass, owning property, testifying against whites, being freed unless the county court ruled that they had performed "meritorious service," hiring their own time, and selling goods without a master's permission. The code forbade whites from encouraging or aiding a slave to run away. See Miller and Smith, *Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery*, s.v. "Tennessee, Slavery in."

35. W. Durham, *Old Sumner*, 12.

36. *Ibid.*, 344.

37. Personal observations by the author during visit to the cemetery in October 1988.

38. Probably Keziah and Jesse were buried on their farm near the "mansion house" in a family graveyard which has since disappeared. Their deaths are not listed in Tennessee cemetery records. See Snider and Yorgason, *Cemetery Records*.

39. Jesse slighted one other child, Sarah, leaving her but "one dollar, for reasons known to myself." To the other children he deeded land and/or slaves.

Notes for Chapter 3, "Religious Conversion"

1. Quotations and information in this chapter are taken from the long version of John's autobiography unless otherwise indicated.

2. J. Spencer, *History of the Kentucky Baptists*, 40–41. Other relevant histories are Edgar, *History of the Primitive Baptists*; Clifford Roland, "History of the Disciples of Christ"; Arnold, *History of Methodism*; Carter, *History of Methodist Churches*; McFerrin, *History of Methodism*; E. Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*; McDonnold, *Cumberland Presbyterian Church*; Posey, *Frontier Mission*; and Posey, *Religious Strife on the Southern Frontier*.

3. J. Spencer, *History of the Kentucky Baptists*, 616–17.

4. *Ibid.*, 40–41, 598, 621, 642, 644.

5. D. Lewis, *Autobiography*, 8.

6. Primitive Baptists adhered to a "strict Calvinism." See Crismon, *Baptists in Kentucky*, 155.

7. Simpson County, Kentucky, Tax Lists, 1835. A court record for May 18, 1836, indicates that James had died by then. It says that James' wife Charity dropped a lawsuit against R. Gilliland, an action usually taken by a woman when her husband was deceased. See Simpson County Tax Lists, 1835; Simpson County, Kentucky, Court Order Book E, May 18, 1836.

8. Wicker, *First Baptist Church, Franklin, Kentucky*, iv.

9. General LDS histories for this period are J. Smith, *History of the Church*; Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*; and Allen and Leonard, *Story of the Latter-day Saints*. For the founding period, see Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism*, and Backman, *The Heavens Resound*. Missionary efforts are discussed in Bitton, "Kirtland as a Center," and Berrett, "Southern States Mission."

10. Regarding Emmett, see Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 3–4 and footnotes 1–9. Emmett was baptized in July 1831 by Lyman Wight and ordained an elder by Wight and John Corril, according to an Emmett family Bible—see H. Moffett, "'Diary' of James Emmett," 2. No life sketch of Dustin has been found.

11. Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 44, 53, 98, 100.

12. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 14. At a February 26, 1836, conference in Kentucky, seven branches were identified but not this one centered around the Butlers. See LDS Church, Manuscript History for Kentucky.

13. *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (July 1835): 160. Emmett and Dustin wrote on July 2 that they had baptized 22 since last December. In August Benjamin Lewis ordained David Lewis an elder. See D. Lewis, Autobiography, 2.

14. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 9–31.

15. *Ibid.*, 12–13.

16. *Ibid.*, 13.

17. *Ibid.*, 13–14.

18. *Ibid.*, 14.

19. *Ibid.*, 14–16.

20. This story circulated two generations later. See L. Duffin, "Sketch of Jesse Skeen."

21. A letter from W. W. Phelps in Kirtland to his wife says Dustin and Emmett arrived in Kirtland "last week." See Journal History, June 2, 1836. Regarding Dustin's Canada mission, see Journal History, June 11 and October 21, 1835. The Journal History is a day-by-day scrapbook history of the LDS Church compiled by the Church and located in the Historical Department.

22. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 16.

23. Within eight weeks of the departure of the Drake's Creek Saints, an ugly anti-Mormon confrontation occurred about 100 miles southwest, in Carroll County, Tennessee. Citizens, ministers, and law enforcers resolved to arrest "Mormon preachers" Warren Parrish, David W. Patten, and Wilford Woodruff and evict them from the county. Defended by about "twenty brethren and warm friends," the accused received a jaundiced trial. Facing a mob bent on violence, they were "allowed" to leave the county. See J. Smith, *History of the Church* 2:447–48.

24. After Caroline's father's death in Sumner County in 1842, many of her brothers and sisters stayed in the area and appear in the 1850 federal census. Her deaf sister Mary, or Polly, died in Simpson County in 1854. Today a Skeen Cemetery is located in Kentucky near where John and Caroline lived. Her brother Kenion Taylor and wife are buried there. The cemetery is 2 miles east of Franklin, and 3.7 miles southeast on Highway 73, then 3 miles south on a gravel road and 300 yards west hidden at the west end of a grove of trees. See *Simpson County, Kentucky, Cemeteries*, 329.

25. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 16–20.

Notes for Chapter 4, "Northern Missouri Pioneers"

1. For a discussion of decisions related to the Saints' departure from Clay County, see Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 26–46.

2. W. Lewis, "Mormon Land Ownership." On page 30 Lewis says: "In 1835 Lyman Wight, John L. Butler and others bought land in Ray County near the Clay County line." His source is Ray County Deed Book C, p. 121. However, the Butlers did not arrive until 1836.

3. The best study of the Latter-day Saints in Clay County is Parkin, "Latter-day Saints in Clay County."
4. Allen and Leonard, *Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 103.
5. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 18.
6. They were in Lyman Wight's "neighborhood," and Wight held land near the south bank of the Fishing River about five miles above William's Landing on the Missouri River. This land was next to the main east-west road that reached the county seat of Liberty, about six miles to the west. See Parkin, "Latter-day Saints in Clay County," 205, and a property map on 203.
7. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 18.
8. Edward Partridge and others to Governor Daniel Dunklin, July 7, 1836, in *Journal History*, July 7, 1836.
9. Daniel Dunklin to W. W. Phelps and others, July 18, 1836, in J. Smith, *History of the Church* 2:461–62.
10. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 32–33.
11. W. Lewis, "Mormon Land Ownership," 84. Chart titled "Total Mormon Population Verified in Each County" shows 2,650 as Caldwell County's peak population.
12. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 18.
13. Wayne J. Lewis calculated that during all of the Missouri period of LDS history, an estimated 2,830 LDS families lived in Missouri, but only 78 "were verified as owning Missouri land." See his "Mormon Land Ownership," 70–71.
14. Caldwell County Deed Book A, County Court House, Kingston, Missouri. On June 12, 1837, John bought the eastern one-half of the southwest quarter of Section 26, Mirabile Township, Caldwell County—eighty acres. On June 17 he added forty more acres, being the northwest quarter of the southeast quarter, Section 26, Township 56, Range 29 West.
15. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 47.
16. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 18.
17. Just before the family entered Clay County, John said, they stopped briefly with the Allred family in Ray County. Possibly they knew the Allreds—James' son Martin, two years older than John Butler, was from Warren County, Kentucky (like John, until Simpson County was taken from Warren County). The visit either started or furthered Lucy and Reuben's friendship. For Allred family data, see Black, *Members of The Church*, s.v. "James Allred."
18. W. Lewis, "Mormon Land Ownership," 40. His source documenting this purchase is Daviess County Original Land Entry Book.
19. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 18.
20. P. Wilcox, *Latter-day Saints on the Missouri Frontier*, 171.
21. Melinda Porter was born in 1814, the daughter of Sanford and Nancy Warriner Porter. She married Ezra A. Chipman in 1839 and died in 1890. See Black, *Members of The Church*, s.v. "Sanford Porter."
22. Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 3.
23. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 53–54.
24. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 2:496–97. A local man years later commented on the fact that the walls did reach this short height; see Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 64.
25. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 58–59.
26. Family genealogy records list Far West as Phoebe's birthplace, but she probably was born at Mirabile.
27. Far West Conference Minutes, November 7, 1837, in J. Smith, *History of the Church* 2:522–24.
28. Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 186–87, 190–95.
29. Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," 19.
30. High Council Minutes, February 10, 1838, in Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 141.
31. About John Whitmer, see J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:8; about David Whitmer, see *ibid.* 3:18–19; about McLellin, see *ibid.* 3:31 and note; and about Phelps and John Whitmer, see Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 149.

32. This Samuel Kimball might have been related to Thompson Kimball, who left Kentucky with the Butlers and Hendrickses. A man named Samuel Kimble or Kimball appeared as a Missouri witness for the prosecution against the Saints but said little more than that he heard Joseph Smith accuse Missouri of being a “damned mob.” See *Journal History*, November 13, 1838.

33. Facts in the case were presented during the high council trial. See Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 186–87, 190–95 (May 13 and June 28 and 29, 1838).

34. Two decades later Elder Marsh, after apostatizing and spending years away from the Church, returned and resided in the Spanish Fork Ward in Utah over which John Butler presided as bishop.

35. Doctrine and Covenants 115:17–18. The revelation is dated April 26, 1838.

36. Matthews, “Adam-ondi-Ahman,” 29–31, and Gentry, “Adam-ondi-Ahman.”

37. See land deeds for Mirabile Township in Lexington District Land Records, June 12, 1837, in Daviess County, Deed Book A, Gallatin, Missouri, p. 205. John’s Land Patent for Section 11 is recorded in General Land Office, Washington, D.C., vol. 25, p. 125. John owned the eastern half of the north quarter of Section 11, southeast quarter of the north quarter of Section 14, and the west 2/45 of lot #2 in the north quarter of Section 2. These three parcels were in Township 58 N Range 29 W and are listed in John’s “Prisoner Deed” in Caldwell County land records, copy in BFA.

38. J. Hunt, *History of Daviess County and the Mormon War*, 162.

39. *Ibid.*

40. W. Lewis, “Mormon Land Ownership,” 85.

41. L. Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, 253.

42. Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 200 (July 6, 1838); Lee, *Confessions*, 55. Davis County property records show that owners in Ambrosia were different than the ones in Marrowbone, so only part of Marrowbone was renamed Ambrosia. Michael S. Riggs, to the author, May 1993, notes in BFA.

43. P. Wilcox, *Latter-day Saints on the Missouri Frontier*, 176; The Littlefield family operated a “halfway” house store midway between Far West and Diahman, a few miles from Marrowbone; see Littlefield, *Reminiscences of Latter-day Saints*, 34.

44. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:38–39.

45. P. Wilcox, *Latter-day Saints on the Missouri Frontier*, 172. J. Greene, *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons*.

46. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 55.

47. Gentry, “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri,” 163–64.

48. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 56–57.

Notes for Chapter 5, “Danite and Malitia Captain”

1. “John Lowe Butler Account of the Election Troubles in Gallatin,” *Journal History*, August 6, 1838, 3–6. When and why John wrote this account is not known. I have inserted a full transcript of this account into John’s autobiography in the appendix of this book. John said: “The first thing that came to my mind was the covenants entered into by the Danites to the effect that they were to protect each other, etc. and I hollowed out to the top of my voice saying ‘O yes, you Danites, here is a job for us’” (3).

2. During the fight, John gave the Danite’s signal of distress; see Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 59.

3. Biographies of two other of the Latter-day Saint frontier strongman types capitalized on the Danite stereotype. “Wild” Bill Hickman’s life was sensationalized by dime novelist J. H. Beadle and published in 1872 as *Brigham’s Destroying Angel, Being the Life, Confession, and Startling Disclosures of the Notorious Bill Hickman, the Danite Chief in Utah*, edited by J. H. Beadle (New York, 1872). Porter Rockwell has become the premier Danite type in fiction and history; his standard biography is Harold Schindler, *Orrin Porter Rockwell: Man of God, Son of Thunder*, rev. 2d ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1983). “Of all who joined the order, no one suffered the notoriety of membership more than did Orrin Porter Rockwell,” his biographer notes. “Indeed, he went to his grave branded with the inglorious title of Danite chieftain” (33).

4. The main contemporary sources identifying sinister Danites are Swartzell, *Mormonism Exposed*; Corrill, *Brief History*; Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*; and testimony by Sampson Avard and other disaffected Mormons in *Document Containing The Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*

5. Whittaker, “Danites”; Cornwall and Arrington, “Perpetuation of a Myth.” See, for example, Tanner and Tanner, “The Danites.”

6. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:179–82, stated that Danites were Sampson Avard’s invention and operated unknown to Church leaders. Roberts asserted that Danites “do not exist . . . and never have existed in the church with the sanction and authority of that church; nor with the knowledge and approval of the responsible officers of the church.” *Comprehensive History* 1:508.

7. Gentry, “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri” and “The Danite Band of 1838.”

8. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 112–28.

9. Winn, *Exiles in a Land of Liberty*, 123.

10. Revisionists who present more balanced views include Anderson, “Atchison’s Letters”; Whittaker, “The Book of Daniel”; and Jessee and Whittaker, “Albert Perry Rockwood Journal.”

11. Whittaker, “The Book of Daniel,” 172. Whittaker’s discussion challenging the stereotype of “hit squad” Danites is on pages 166–174. His explanations temper previous critical interpretations. For the main source on which Whittaker based his explanation, see Jessee and Whittaker, “Albert Perry Rockwood Journal,” 4–41.

12. Jessee and Whittaker, “Albert Perry Rockwood Journal,” 4–41. The quotation is found on page 12. Rockwood’s observations provide a needed balance to the oft-cited accounts by William Swartzell, Reed Peck, Sampson Avard, John Corroll, and other disaffected Mormons.

13. As examples, see the author’s history of the extended Joseph Knight family, comprising more than eight family units, who as respectable New Yorkers converted to Mormonism in 1830 and suffered severely at the hands of aggressive Missourians: “*They Are My Friends*”: *A History of the Joseph Knight Family, 1825–1850* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Press, 1986). Genteel Eliza R. Snow and her brother Lorenzo are similar examples, as is the author’s ancestor Edmund Durphy, who was shot by mobs at Morley’s Settlement, Illinois, in late 1845. Another of the author’s ancestors, Albert Miner, descended from a noteworthy New England founding family, was a Missouri victim, and died in 1848 from effects of being in Missouri and Nauvoo. These early converts to Mormonism, and most Mormons in the 1830s, were peaceable people.

14. Swartzell, *Mormonism Exposed*, 32.

15. Ibid., 27; *Senate Document* 189, 2.

16. Roberts, *Comprehensive History* 1:405–6, esp. note 34.

17. M. Hill, *Quest for Refuge*, 69.

18. Gentry, “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri,” 113.

19. Corroll, *Brief History*, 23.

20. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:9–10.

21. Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 6–8; E. Robinson, *The Return*, 218–19.

22. *Oration Delivered by Mr. S. Rigdon, on the 4th of July, 1838* (Far West, MO: The Journal Office, 1838), reprinted in Crawley, “Two Rare Missouri Documents,” 517–27; Corroll, *Brief History*, 32.

23. *Oration Delivered by Mr. S. Rigdon*, in Crawley, “Two Rare Missouri Documents,” 517–27.

24. Gentry, “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri,” 144. Reed Peck says he and a few other Saints disliked and disavowed the speech; see *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 8–9. Michael S. Riggs, in “Where Cain Killed Abel,” 14, using Vietnam War terms, said some Saints were doves but most were hawks.

25. Rigdon and Andrus are quoted in Gentry, “The Danite Band of 1838,” 428. LeSueur believes that “the evidence suggests the Mormon leaders’ fear of violence was exaggerated, even unfounded” (*Mormon War*, 51). But the formation of defensive units could in and of itself be considered evidence that problems were expected—not merely an excuse to be militant, as LeSueur assumes.

26. Sampson Avard testimony in *Senate Document* 189, 1. For a discussion of the use of the various names, see Gentry, “The Danite Band of 1838,” 429.

27. In Nauvoo, Joseph Smith said the term Danite grew out of his use of the word when discussing the defense of the Israelite tribe of Dan of ancient Israel, as told in Judges 18; see J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:155.

28. Whittaker, “The Book of Daniel.”

29. Gentry, “The Danite Band of 1838.”

30. Ibid., 446–48.
31. J. Thompson, “A Chronology of Danite Meetings.”
32. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 40.
33. J. Thompson, “A Chronology of Danite Meetings.” Thompson, in part, draws from John Smith, Diary, typescript, LDS Archives, entries for August 4 and 18 and September 1, 1838.
34. *Elders’ Journal* 1 (August 1838): 60.
35. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 45.
36. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 56–60.
37. Gentry, “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri,” 218–21. Danite officers were Avar, Cornelius P. Lott, Jared Carter, George W. Robinson, Philo Dibble, and Seymour Brunson, Jr. Commanding the Armies of Israel were Joseph Smith, Lyman Wight, Seymour Brunson, George M. Hinkle, and David Patten (220–21).
38. Ibid.
39. *Senate Document* 189, 17.
40. J. Thompson, “A Chronology of Danite Meetings,” 13.
41. Gentry, “The Danite Band of 1838,” 429.
42. Ibid., 440.
43. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:182.
44. J. Thompson, “A Chronology of Danite Meetings,” 12.
45. Gentry, “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri,” 218–21.
46. Such fears are clearly enunciated in testimonies against the Saints found in *Senate Document* 189.
47. Swartzell, *Mormonism Exposed*, 20.
48. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 57.

Notes for Chapter 6, “Election Fight at Gallatin”

1. R. Durham, “The Election Day Battle at Gallatin,” 43.
2. John’s early version, which is not in his autobiography, is undated but probably was written in Nauvoo before 1846 to help the compilers of Joseph Smith’s history. It is found in the Journal History, August 6, 1838, 3–6. Because of unnecessary citation complexities required to keep both accounts separate in this chapter, information from both is blended here without discrimination. In the appendix, the Journal History version is inserted as separate material within the text of John’s autobiography.
3. John D. Lee and Levi Stewart were the only other firsthand witnesses who wrote about the struggle. Their joint statement is in Journal History, August 6, 1838, 7–8. Lee, in his *Mormonism Unveiled*, pages 56–60, gives another detailed description of the fight in which he emphasizes the Danite aspects. Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* 3:56–59 deals with the event, drawing heavily from Lee and Stewart. Other versions are secondhand. See R. Durham, *Various Accounts of the Election-day Battle at Gallatin*.
4. McGee, *Grand River Country*, 10.
5. *History of Caldwell and Livingston Counties, Missouri*, 117–18.
6. Bushman’s phrase in his “Mormon Persecutions in Missouri, 1833,” 20.
7. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 59.
8. Lee and Stewart account in Journal History.
9. Original Land Entries for Daviess County. Owen H. McGee owned the northwest sixteenth of section 14 and the northeast corner of section 15.
10. McGee, *Grand River Country*, 11. McGee said that he lived about three miles south of present-day Winston, which was two miles farther away from Gallatin than were the Butlers. McGee said Gallatin was fifteen miles by road from his home—on maps the direct-line distance is ten miles, and it is eight miles from the Butlers’.
11. Lee and Stewart account in Journal History.
12. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 60.
13. P. Wilcox, *Latter-day Saints on the Missouri Frontier*, 213.

14. John P. Greene says that Peninston was a candidate for state representative (J. Greene, *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons*, 18), but P. Wilcox (*Latter-day Saints on the Missouri Frontier*, 211) says Peninston was seeking the sheriff's office.
15. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:56–59.
16. Lee and Stewart Account, Journal History, August 6, 1838; Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 58.
17. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:57.
18. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 59.
19. *Ibid.*, 56–60.
20. *Story of Grand River Country*, 10.
21. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 60.
22. Rigdon, *An Appeal to the American People*, 17.
23. McGee, *Grand River Country*, 10.
24. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 60.
25. McGee, *Grand River Country*, 10. Another local man, Peter H. Burnett, felt that in the fighting “the Mormons had the best of it.” See his *Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer*, 57.
26. Reed Peck said Mormons claimed the victory (*Reed Peck Manuscript*, 15). John Corril said “The Mormons got the better” of the battle (Corrill, *Brief History*, 27). Sidney Rigdon, in *An Appeal to the American People*, 15–17, said few if any voted. Lee and Stewart said “very few” Mormons voted (Lee and Stewart Account, Journal History, August 6, 1838, 7), although Lee wrongly claimed late in life that “the Mormons all voted” (Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 60).
27. Testimony of Lyman Wight, *Times and Seasons* 4 (July 15, 1843): 265.
28. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 67.
29. Lee and Stewart Account, Journal History.
30. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:58; Swartzell, *Mormonism Exposed*, 28.
31. Swartzell, *Mormonism Exposed*, 28.
32. *Ibid.*, 28–29.
33. *Ibid.*; Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 15.
34. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:59.
35. Liberty, Missouri, Western Star, September 14, 1838, quoted in Mulder and Mortensen, *Among the Mormons*, 96–97.

Notes for Chapter 7, “Losing a Civil War”

1. J. L. Butler, Affidavit, May 6, 1839, in C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 150.
2. Literature about the Mormon War is sizeable and is addressed adequately in bibliographies in LeSueur's *Mormon War* and Gentry's “Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri.” LeSueur's study is somewhat biased in favor of Missourians in the dispute. Gentry devotes nearly 200 pages to the struggle (167–351), told from an LDS perspective. For discussions in standard histories about this period of Mormonism, see J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:59–85, 149–224, 403–66; Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 3:447–93; and Corril, *Brief History*, 27–37. Several testimonies taken during Missouri's investigation of the war are found in *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*
3. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:59–63. Black's exaggerated testimony appears in *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 15–16.
4. On July 27, ten days before the election fight, Black certified that he concluded to go with others and ask the Mormons to leave the county peaceably. His associates, William Bowman, John Brassfield and James B. Turner, posted an unsigned notice at Millport warning Mormons to stay on the west side of the Grand River. Those who settled on the east side would be “drove back.” See statements by Bowman, Brassfield, and Black in C. Johnson, *Missouri Redress Petitions*, 746–49.
5. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 67.
6. *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 15. Judge Black's second deposition, dated August 28, 1838, listed several names, including some who had been involved in the election fight: John Lowe Butler, Harvey Olmstead, Hiram Nelson, Abraham Nelson, and Riley Stewart. But it is not clear if John was named as one to be arrested.

7. George A. Smith was one of the prisoners brought to this hearing, and others he named were Alanson Ripley, Lyman Wight, Vinson Knight, S. R. Stoddard, and Alanson Brown. See his account in "History of George Albert Smith," entry for September 17, 1838.

8. *Missouri Republican Daily*, October 1, 1838, 2. Subsequent developments in the Mormon War apparently caused the November trial to be postponed. At a Grand Jury hearing on April 9, 1839, the charges were heard again and co-defendants named, but the case was not resolved before Joseph Smith and other prisoners escaped and the trial process ground to a halt. See J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:310–17.

9. McGee, *Grand River Country*, 11.

10. Foote, "Autobiography," 23–24.

11. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 88–93.

12. Jessee and Whittaker, "Albert Perry Rockwood Journal," 19.

13. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 103.

14. Statement of General Hiram G. Parks to General David R. Atchison, October 7, 1838, in *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 37.

15. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:157.

16. The capture of DeWitt is discussed in LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 102–11; J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:81–85, 149–66; and Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 194–212.

17. Rigdon, *An Appeal to the American People*, 31.

18. General Atchison to the Governor, October 16, 1838, *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 39.

19. Anderson, "Atchison's Letters," 26.

20. Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 22. Chariton County representatives early in October investigated the conflict zone and reported that Carroll County citizens were the aggressors and that Mormons were acting entirely on the defensive, seeking peace, and wanting civil authorities to intervene. See "To the Citizens of Howard County, October 7, 1838," *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 40.

21. Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 18–19.

22. Anderson, "Atchison's Letters," 26.

23. Foote, "Autobiography," 30.

24. Anderson, "Atchison's Letters," 27.

25. M. Hill, *Quest for Refuge*, 92.

26. Foote, "Autobiography," 25 (October 21, 1838).

27. Lee, *Confessions*, 70.

28. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:158.

29. Six inches of snow fell at Far West, according to Foote, "Autobiography," 25.

30. Corrill, *Brief History*, 37, and Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 20.

31. Foote, "Autobiography," 25.

32. O. Huntington, "Diary," 31.

33. *Ibid.* His statement about reducing wants referred to the September and October portion of his recollections.

34. B. Johnson, *My Life's Review*, 37.

35. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:163.

36. These four operations are described in Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 20–22, and Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 253–61.

37. Phineas Richards to Wealthy Richards, January 21, 1839, cited in M. Hill, *Quest for Refuge*, 91; Anderson, "Atchison's Letters," 28.

38. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 253–54.

39. O. Huntington, "Diary," 33 (late 1838 reminiscence).

40. Gentry, Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, 255–56.

41. B. Johnson, *My Life's Review*, 41.

42. *Ibid.*, 42.

43. M. Hill, *Quest for Refuge*, 91.

44. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 72.
45. B. Johnson, *My Life's Review*, 42, and Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 256.
46. B. Johnson, *My Life's Review*, 42.
47. Vinson Knight letter quoted in Anderson, "Atchison's Letters," 31.
48. O. Huntington, "Diary," 33.
49. Jessee, ed., *Papers of Joseph Smith*, Vol. 2, 297 note 1.
50. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 72.
51. Phelps, "Missouri Persecutions," 4.
52. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 71.
53. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 121.
54. General Parks to General Atchison, October 21, 1838, *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 47.
55. McGee, *Grand River Country*, 11.
56. Lee, *Confessions*, 75.
57. David R. Atchison and Alexander W. Doniphan to Lt. Col. R. B. Mason, October 27, 1838, photocopy, LDS Archives.
58. *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 61.
59. Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 245–46.
60. Foote, "Autobiography," 25 (October 28, 1838).
61. Jessee and Whittaker, "Albert Perry Rockwood Journal," 24 (October 23, 1838).
62. *Ibid.*, 23 (October 22, 1838).
63. *Ibid.*, (October 23, 1838).
64. *Ibid.*, 25., (October 30, 1838).
65. *Ibid.*
66. Pratt, *Autobiography*, 184–85.
67. Jessee and Whittaker, "Albert Perry Rockwood Journal," 26.
68. Rockwood's journal first mentions the massacre on November 2, in *ibid.* Blair, "The Haun's Mill Massacre."
69. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," tries but does not make a convincing case that the perpetrators acted with knowledge of the extermination order (306). See note 9 in LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 164.
70. Williams, ed, *History of Northwest Missouri* 1:560–61.
71. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 168–69.
72. For representative discussions about whether Colonel Hinkle betrayed Joseph Smith, see J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:188–89; Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 342–45; George M. Hinkle, "Letter to W. W. Phelps, August 14, 1844," *Journal of History* 13 (October 1920), 448–53; and LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 175–77.
73. A recall of late 1838 developments is in O. Huntington, "Diary," 34.
74. Historians have thought John wrote "Donnets," but close reading of his handwriting shows that he wrote "Dannels," undoubtedly phonetic for Daniels. Several men named Daniels were among the Saints at that time, but the identity of the one mentioned by John is not clear.
75. LeSueur, *Mormon War*, 178.
76. L. Duffin, "History of Charity Artemesia Butler," 5.
77. See discussion in next chapter.
78. Isaac Morley was a patriarch and an assistant or counselor in the bishopric; see Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 124–25, 209, 226, 277. Early LDS priesthood practices and patterns are discussed in Marrott, "History and Functions of the Aaronic Priesthood"; Launius, "A Survey of Priesthood Ordinations, 1830–1844"; and Hartley, "Nauvoo Stake, Priesthood Quorums, and the Church's First Wards."
79. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 83.
80. Apparently some apostates stood to lose their property, too, in the wholesale confiscation of Saints' lands, as John Corрилл and Oliver Cowdery were among the fifteen who signed the deed of gift. The others were John, David Jones, Philo Dibble, John S. Owen, Peter Tetrick, Ransom A.

Beecher, John Jamison, Avery Smith, John Paxton, Joseph Rich, Charles C. Rich, Burr Riggs, and John Kellion, “all being Latter-day Saints.” Deed Record T, Caldwell County Recorder’s Office, Kingston, Missouri, 156–57.

81. John deeded 40 acres in section 14, 80 acres in section 11, and 40.37 acres in section 2, all in Colfax Township, Daviess County, and 40 acres in section 26 of Mirabile Township. Another 80 acres in that same section 26 is not mentioned, so probably it had been sold earlier.

82. Deed Record T, Caldwell County, 158. The prison deed, due to courthouse fires, was refiled in 1870 but cancelled in 1901.

83. Deed Record T, 156–58, and Deed Record No. 57, 472, in Caldwell County Recorder’s Office, Kingston, Missouri. The properties in Daviess County were sold in 1839 to settle a judgment against John, but the sale was not legal. John sold the three land parcels to Burrell Tetrick on October 13, 1840, but the deed, issued in Illinois, apparently was not recognized in Daviess County. Sheriff William Peninston sold these three properties, again, at public auction to pay a debt owed to Samuel and Arthur, merchants. But that transaction did not work either. An 1861 sale of these same lands involved a forgery, and it too was nullified. Finally, in 1898, title legally passed to others. See property title searches and deed copies in Missouri Land File in BFA.

84. LeSueur, Mormon War in Missouri, 195–218; J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:229–232.

85. See Chapter 5, endnotes 3–5.

Notes for Chapter 8, “Winter Exodus to Illinois”

1. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1: xvi; Arrington, L., *Charles C. Rich*, 60; J. Little, “Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young,” 57–59; Dimick B. Huntington account in *Journal History*, November 1, 1838, 3–4; S. Kimball, “The Saints and St. Louis.”

2. Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 291.

3. D. Lewis, *Journal*, 36.

4. Arrington, L., *Charles C. Rich*, 342.

5. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:202.

6. A list of the accused is in *ibid.* 3:209.

7. O. Huntington, “Diary,” 36.

8. Jessee and Whittaker, “Albert Perry Rockwood Journal,” 32 (December 2, 1838).

9. Charity Butler’s total claim was for \$2,000. She filed her petition on May 13, 1839, in the circuit court in Adams County, Illinois. See C. Johnson, *Missouri Redress Petitions*, 150–51.

10. John Butler’s claim for \$22,935, written on May 6, 1839, is one of the largest filed. In addition to land and farm losses, he wanted \$10,000 for exposure-caused health problems of his family and \$10,000 for defamation of character and loss of citizenship. C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 150.

11. Jessee and Whittaker, “Albert Perry Rockwood Journal,” 28, 29 (November 19, 25, and 29, 1838).

12. Thomas B. Marsh, resigned president of the Apostles, spent many years out of the faith, then rejoined, and later taught school in the Butlers’ community in Spanish Fork, Utah, where John Butler was his bishop.

13. This statement by John was used in the 1980s by Utah document forger Mark Hofmann to try to bilk LDS document collectors of vast sums of money in return for bogus McLellin Papers he claimed to have found. See Turley, *Victims*, 112–45. McLellin supposedly stole the items while Emma was away visiting Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail; see Newell and Avery, *Mormon Enigma*, 77–78. McLellin’s diaries are being published in *BYU Studies* in 1994. They contain no information relating to McLellin’s activities in late 1838. There is no corroborating evidence for McLellin’s alleged theft.

14. Hartley, “‘Almost Too Intolerable a Burthen.’”

15. Abraham O. Smoot was born in 1815 in Owen County, Kentucky, and converted to Mormonism, like John and Caroline, in 1835. He had been arrested at Far West and, while a prisoner, married Martha T. McMeans on November 11, 1838. See Jensen, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 1:485–86.

16. The children were Kenion, Charity, Keziah, and Phoebe. One of John’s granddaughters recorded a story she heard from her father, John Lowe Butler II. It said that when packing up to

leave Missouri, the family could not find their second horse, a gray mare. Caroline held a family prayer in the middle of “rubble”—items being left behind. They pleaded for help and soon heard the horse whinny at the gate, which to them was an answer to their prayer. Caroline much regretted having to leave behind a treasured bureau, “something few people had.” O. Smith, *Recollections*, 2.

17. Hartley, “*They Are My Friends*,” 132.
18. *Quincy Whig*, February 23, 1839.
19. D. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County* 1:9–10, 17–18.
20. Ibid. 1:452; Buckingham, “Mormonism in Illinois,” 175.
21. *Quincy Whig*, February 23, 1839.
22. Buckingham, “Mormonism in Illinois,” 175.
23. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:263, 265–69.
24. Ibid. 3:269–70.
25. Ibid. 3:265–69.
26. Ibid. 3:272. The life sketch of Abraham O. Smoot in Jenson’s *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 1:486 says the Smoots reached Quincy on March 8, which would be four days before the Butlers.
27. Williams, *History of Northwest Missouri* 1:154–55.
28. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:283–84.

Notes for Chapter 9, “Illinois and Sioux Missions, 1839–1841”

1. Doctrine and Covenants 123:1–4. This section is taken from a lengthy letter Joseph Smith wrote in Liberty Jail on March 25, 1839, to Saints at Quincy and scattered abroad and particularly to Bishop Edward Partridge. The full letter, signed by Joseph, Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Caleb Baldwin, and Alexander McRae, is in J. Smith, *History of the Church* 3:289–305.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 123:7–15.
3. C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 150.
4. Ibid., 123–24.
5. Ibid., 149–50.
6. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:250–51; C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, xix.
7. C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 108–9.
8. Ibid., 101–2; J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:21, 40, 74, 80.
9. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:80.
10. Ibid. 4:90–93 contains a copy of the Senate Judiciary’s Report concerning the Memorial and petitions. The published report mentions the election “riot” (90). The committee concluded that Congress had no jurisdiction in the matter and that the Saints should use federal and Missouri courts to file for redress. But states cannot be sued by citizens without giving consent, which Missouri certainly would never grant the Saints. And it was too costly and too impractical for individual Saints to bring charges against individual Missourians. So no legal recourse was feasible. See B. H. Roberts’ discussion of legal options in introductory pages, *ibid.* 4: xxvi–xxx. For the Church’s point-by-point criticisms of the Senate report, see *ibid.* 4:107–9.
11. C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, xxi.
12. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:88, 124, 131, 286; C. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 563, 581.
13. Journal History, May 19, 1839. Others who became seventies with John were Joseph Outhouse, Rodman Clark, George W. Crouse, Tarleton Lewis, Eli Chase, Alonzo LeBaron, and Frederick M. Cox. The standard history of seventies work is Baumgarten, “Role and Function of the Seventies.”
14. Journal History, June 1, 1839.
15. John Lowe and Caroline Skeen Butler Family Group Record, BFA.
16. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:89.
17. John Lowe and Caroline Skeen Butler Family Group Record.
18. Peoria, Illinois, *Register*, May 23, 1840, in Journal History for that date.
19. D. Hill, *Joseph Smith, The First Mormon*, 268.
20. “Indian-white relations” in Lamar, *Reader’s Encyclopedia*, 364.
21. Woodruff, Journal 1:483 (July 13, 1840).

22. The five, later six, tribes that comprised the Iroquois confederacy occupied most of upstate New York until the American Revolution. They were the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and, by 1722, the Tuscarora. After the Revolutionary War the tribes lost their lands and fled or were forced to move. The Oneida, of which Dana was probably part, had relocated in Wisconsin by 1832. See “Iroquois confederacy” in Lamar, *Reader’s Encyclopedia*, 379–80.

23. [Kimball, H. C.], “Scenes from Nauvoo,” 186.

24. Woodruff’s diary proves the 1840 dating, as does John’s statement that he returned from the second Indian mission the day before his daughter Sarah Adeline was born, which was on February 15, 1841.

25. Woodruff, *Journal* 1:403 (July 13, 1840).

26. Ibid. *Lamanites*, a Book of Mormon term, was often used by the Saints to refer to Native Americans of any tribe.

27. Doctrine and Covenants 32.

28. Within the Siouan family of languages are the Crow, Hidasta, Winnebago, Manda, Iowa-Oto, Omaha-Osage-Panpa-Quapaw-Kansa, Dakota, and the Santee-Yankton-Teton Sioux groupings. See “Indian languages” in Lamar, *Reader’s Encyclopedia*, 544.

29. An excellent map showing these Sioux groups is Morse and Breese, *Iowa and Wisconsin, Chiefly from the Map of J. N. Nicollet*, 1844. Also useful is a report from Indian Agent Amos I. Bruce (St. Peters) to Superintendent John Chambers (Burlington, Iowa), June 15, 1841, that describes how many and where various sub-groups of Sioux were located; see Iowa Superintendent 1838–49, Letters to Office of Indian Affairs.

30. Readers are left to speculate about where the Butlers and Emmetts went. South of Fort Snelling and west of the Mississippi River is a section containing a clustering of lakes and rivers that answer John’s description. On current maps it is between Northfield and Mankato, Minnesota. If John and Emmett chose to go farther into Indian country, which seems unlikely, much of Minnesota northwest of this clustering is riddled with hundreds of lakes and streams that could be sites of this mission.

31. John’s autobiography says that on October 5, 1840, he was twelve miles from Nauvoo, so the next morning he went to Nauvoo in time for the commencing of the day’s sessions. However, the conference ended on October 5, as it did the next year. So John was wrong about the October date.

32. An excellent study of LDS attempts to proselyte among Indians up to the mid-1840s is Walker, “Seeking the ‘Remnant.’” His information about Jonathan Dunham’s missions is on pages 24–25. For Indian visits to Nauvoo, see J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:401; 5:365, 479–80; 6:401–2.

Notes for Chapter 10, “Nauvoo Family”

1. A. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 23–24. Aurelia was born October 4, 1834, so she was between 9 and 11 years old when she knew the Butlers in Nauvoo.

2. I. Hill, *Journal*.

3. Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 91, 126–27, 153; two essential bibliographies regarding Nauvoo history are Poll, *Nauvoo and the New Mormon History*, and Leonard, *Recent Writing on Mormon Nauvoo*.

4. Rowley, *Nauvoo: A River Town*.

5. Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 188.

6. Nauvoo, Original Property Owners Book. Joseph Fielding to Parley Pratt, January 1842, in *Millennial Star* 3 (August 1842): 77.

7. The tax collector that year assessed John for the east quarter of lot 4 in Wells block 5, on the northwest corner of Page and Young streets. This lot previously had belonged to Horace M. Alexander, a Kentuckian. “1842 Tax Records Index of Hancock County, Illinois (A. Milton Kimball),” *The Nauvoo Journal* 2 (April 1990): 48. In August 1842 a tax list was compiled for property owners in the county. It was taken just six months after an 1842 census of the county. John L. Butler is listed on page 220 of the tax list. Charity Butler is on page 221. City of Nauvoo, Tax Assessment Book for Ward Two.

8. Nauvoo City Tax Records, 1841, 1842, 1843, in Nauvoo Restoration, Inc., files, Salt Lake City, Utah.
9. Holzapfel and Cottle, *Old Mormon Nauvoo*, 51–53; A. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 23–24.
10. The first was the east 3/4 of lot 1 in block 3 in the Hyrum Smith addition. She also bought lot 2, which at first was listed in her son Edmund’s name, then hers. Tax fees indicate that she had a house on lot 1 and used the other land for pasturage. “Charity Butler,” Nauvoo Restoration, Inc. index.
11. Lot 4 of block 159.
12. “Reuben Allred,” Nauvoo Restoration, Inc., Index.
13. O. Smith, *Recollections*, 2.
14. See “Sickness and Death” in Givens, *In Old Nauvoo*, 112–30.
15. Other trustees were Joseph Parker, Waldo Littlefield, Horace Evans, and James Huntsman. “John Lowe Butler” and “Lucy Groves,” Nauvoo Restoration, Inc., Index.
16. Ibid; Nauvoo Common Schools Record, LDS Archives, and published in “Nauvoo School Records,” *The Nauvoo Journal* 1 (January 1989): 24–25, 32.
17. An excellent social history of Nauvoo is Givens, *In Old Nauvoo*.
18. As noted in chapter 8, the Butlers left furniture behind in Missouri. O. Smith, *Recollection*, 2.
19. Givens has a chapter on “Food and Drink” in *In Old Nauvoo*, 194–206.
20. Also, many families cultivated small farms on their one-acre city lots. Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph*, 79.
21. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 7.
22. Givens, *In Old Nauvoo*, 191.
23. Francis Moon letter in *Times and Seasons*, October 1, 1842.
24. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:231.
25. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 2:66.
26. Doctrine and Covenants 124.
27. Ibid.
28. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 2:67.
29. Nauvoo Baptism for the Dead Index, LDS Family History Library.
30. Blake, “Illinois in 1844,” 110.
31. Holzapfel and Cottle, *Old Mormon Nauvoo*, 150–53, 162–64.
32. Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph*, 69.
33. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:448; Holzapfel and Cottle, *Old Mormon Nauvoo*, 47–48, 59–60.
34. Palmer, *Reminiscences*, 69.
35. Lyon, “Historical Highlights”; Porter and Backman, “Doctrine and the Temple in Nauvoo.”
36. Hartley, “Nauvoo Stake, Priesthood Quorums, and the Church’s First Wards.”
37. Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 208. For a full discussion of the three kinds of tithes, see Hartley, “Edward Hunter.”
38. Nauvoo Female Relief Society Minutes, March 17 and April 28, 1843. The standard history of the LDS Relief Society is Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*. The beginnings of the society at Nauvoo are explained on pages 23–58.
39. Nauvoo Female Relief Society Minutes, April 28, May 13 and 20, and June 16, 1843. Joseph Smith’s April 28 discourse is fully discussed in Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 43–50.
40. Nauvoo Female Relief Society Minutes, June 16, 1843.
41. *Heart Throbs of the West* 7 (1946): 385.
42. O. Smith, *Recollections*, 1.
43. Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 35.
44. Ibid., 33, 35, 60–63.
45. Baumgarten, “Role and Function of the Seventies,” 28–30.
46. “John Lowe Butler,” Nauvoo Restoration, Inc. Index.
47. Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph*, 106–7; Holzapfel and Cottle, *Old Mormon Nauvoo*, 108–10.

48. Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 221–23, and illustration 89, a patch from the Butler cloak.

49. Bertha Butler Thurber, “John Lowe Butler’s Cloak,” BFA. Bertha said that at a Daughters of Utah Pioneers meeting where she told about the cape, a sister who did not feel well eagerly grasped the cape, believing it could heal. “She said when she touched it there was a great thrill went all thru her body, she gave testimony that this piece of cape really carried healing power with it. She felt the power go thru her system and has been better since that time.” In 1957 Zettie Butler Christiansen, another daughter of John Lowe Butler, Jr., told her daughter Laurel, “When our family were youngsters we knew that if we were ill, if we wrapped a certain cloak around us we would get well. The cloak was one which was blessed by the Prophet Joseph Smith for the purpose of healing the sick and was given to my grandfather John Lowe Butler, Sr., who in turn gave it to my father, John Lowe Butler, Jr. Each of father’s children, including those of his second wife, were given a piece of the cloak.” Zettie Butler Christiansen, typed copy of statement in BFA.

50. It is possible that one purpose for John’s visit was to find out why his wife Caroline had received no inheritance when her father’s will was probated earlier that year.

51. Nauvoo Elders License Book, 103, microfilm of holograph, LDS Archives.

52. Journal History, August 26 and 29, 1842.

53. Nauvoo’s 1842 census does not list Charity Skeen as a resident, which she would have been had John’s trip been earlier. Jesse’s will was probated on March 10, 1842. Jesse probably would have written Charity out of his will had she gone with the Mormons before his death, like he did Caroline. But his will, copy in BFA, bestowed on Charity her share of his property.

54. Ehat, “Introduction of Temple Ordinances,” 25–30, 78, 84; Sealing Book for Nauvoo Temple, 695.

Notes for Chapter 11, “Ordained Bodyguard”

1. Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph*, 95.
2. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:294–96.
3. Ibid. John’s name is not found on the lengthy list of Illinois Militia Commission records, 1841–1844, copy on file at LDS Archives.
4. Sweeney, “A History of the Nauvoo Legion in Illinois,” 8, 102.
5. Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph*, 98, 100–102.
6. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 4:382, 601.
7. L. Duffin “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 6.
8. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 5:446–47.
9. Journal History, June 27, 1843.
10. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 5:449.
11. Ibid. 5:442.
12. Joseph explained the strange double-arrest situation this way: “I was a prisoner in the hands of Reynolds, agent of Missouri, and Wilson, his assistant. They were prisoners in the hands of Sheriff Campbell, who had delivered the whole of us into the hands of Colonel Markham, guarded by my friends, so that none of us could escape.” Ibid. 5:459.
13. Captain Thomas Grover, with whose group John had been riding, was out on patrol early the next morning. Very likely, John was with him or doing similar scouting work. Ibid. 5:451–52.
14. Ibid. 5:456.
15. Ibid. 5:458.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid. 6:149–50, and Journal History, December 29, 1843.
18. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:150–52.
19. Ibid.
20. D. Hill, *Joseph Smith, The First Mormon*, 372–78.
21. Certificate 202, Seventies Licenses, LDS Archives.
22. D. Hill, *Joseph Smith, The First Mormon*, 391–96. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:444.
23. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:433.

24. Ibid. 6:452, 481, 486, 495.
25. Ibid. 6:493–94.
26. Ibid. 6:496–97.
27. Ibid. 6:505, 507, 520, 528, 532.
28. Ibid. 6:545–62.
29. Ibid. 6:554–55.
30. Ibid. 6:552–55.

31. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 9.

32. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 2:332, 334. Jessee, “Return to Carthage”; see numerous index listings for William Daniels in Oaks and Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy*; Jensen and Oman, *C. C. A. Christensen*, 105.

33. Robert Taylor Burton said he was one of many who so believed, in Seegmiller, “*Be Kind to the Poor*,” 46.

34. Journal History, June 28, 1844.

35. Ibid.

36. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:626.

37. Journal History, June 28, 1844.

38. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 9.

39. Ibid., 9–10; Holzapfel and Cottle, *Old Mormon Nauvoo*, 151.

40. Journal History, June 29, 1844.

Notes for Chapter 12, “James Emmett’s Expedition”

1. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 10. The earliest account of this event was penned several months later; see England, “George Laub’s Nauvoo Journal.”

2. Seegmiller, “*Be Kind to the Poor*,” 47.

3. Young, Diaries, September 7, 1844.

4. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:305; General Record of the Seventies, Book B, and Eighth Quorum of Seventy Minutes, LDS Archives, make no mention of John Lowe Butler other than noting he is a quorum member; Baumgarten, *The Role and Function of the Seventies*, 32–33.

5. In Nauvoo today, a replicated Seventies Hall stands like a crown jewel among Nauvoo Restoration’s buildings.

6. Sealing Book for Nauvoo Temple, 695; For a discussion of early LDS polygamy, see the first seven chapters of Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*.

7. D. Hill, *Joseph Smith, The First Mormon*, 339–40.

8. Doctrine and Covenants 132.

9. D. Hill, *Joseph Smith, The First Mormon*, 345.

10. Ibid., 346–47, 353. Disaffected John C. Bennett charged leaders with practicing “spiritual wifery.”

11. John Lowe and Caroline Skeen Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA.

12. The standard starting point for studying the Emmett Expedition is Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt.” Gerald E. Jones gives a balanced preliminary view in “An Early Mormon Settlement in South Dakota.” Also, see Richard Bennett’s “Mormon Renegade.”

13. Richard Bennett says in “Mormon Renegade,” 218, that Emmett was not “an outright claimant of Joseph Smith’s sceptre” but was “at least an opponent of many of Brigham Young’s policies.” See Pulsipher, “Autobiography,” for a contemporary’s negative image of the Emmett group. LDS historian Andrew Jenson termed Emmett an “apostate Mormon” who led “misguided” people in his letter to Lyda Lisle Greene of Chicago, July 18, 1936, copy in Marshalltown, Iowa, Public Library, and in BFA.

14. Accounts of participants other than John Butler include Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt”; “The Emmett Company, as Told by William Decatur Kartchner”; “William Decatur Kartchner”; Lyman Hinman Letter to Brother and Sister Taylor; Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns; Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum; Moses Smith’s “Obituary”; “Autobiography of Isaac Riddle”; “Isaac Riddle Tells His Own Story,” 169–71; “John Winn”; Russell, “Journal.”

15. Chapter 3 gives biographical information about Emmett and tells about his converting the Butlers and others in Kentucky. Chapter 11 mentions him as bodyguard and policeman in Nauvoo. Emmett left no journal or autobiography. His descendants have written sketches of him based on outside sources. See H. Moffett's composite, "'Diary' of James Emmett"; Sorenson, "History of James Emmett"; and N. Moffett, "A Sketch of the Life of Lucinda Emmett Moffett."

16. Christian, "Mormon Foreknowledge of the American West"; Esplin, "'A Place Prepared,'" 88–91.

17. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:243–44.

18. Walker, "Seeking the 'Remnant'."

19. An account of Dunham's six-week trip across present southern Iowa and back is in J. Smith, *History of the Church* 5:541–49.

20. Ibid. 6:255–60; Rowley, "Mormon Experience in the Wisconsin Pineries."

21. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:223–24.

22. On the Council of Fifty, see Quinn, "Council of Fifty," and Ehat, "'It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth'."

23. Emmett was admitted to the Council, along with Apostles Orson Hyde and Wilford Woodruff, on March 13, 1844; see William Clayton journal excerpts cited in Ehat, "'It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth,'" 266, and Flanders, *Nauvoo*, 292–93.

24. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 6:260–61, 275–77, 318–19.

25. Moses Smith's "Obituary." This indicates that three men who later were in Emmett's expedition filled campaign missions: James Holt to Tennessee, Emmett to Ohio, and Moses Smith to Michigan. See Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 6.

26. Apostle Willard Richards witnessed Joseph Smith rebuking Emmett, and Apostle Charles C. Rich said he knew about it. See Bullock, Minutes, February 27, 1845.

27. Sorenson, "History of James Emmett," 5.

28. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 6.

29. Ibid.

30. Minutes, Brigham Young Papers, August 4, 1845; Emmett's faithfulness had caused him hard times and threats. He was driven by mobs in Kentucky, driven from homes in Missouri, nearly killed on Indian missions with John Butler, threatened on another mission, and his namesake son was killed by lightning in Nauvoo (J. Smith, *History of the Church* 5:513).

31. W. Douglas Knox to Willard Richards, July 25, 1844, in Journal History, July 25, 1844.

32. Journal History, July 12, 1844.

33. Ibid., July 30, 1844.

34. Ibid., August 5, 1844.

35. Ibid., August 8, 1844.

36. Ibid., August 11 and 12, 1844.

37. Parley P. Pratt, Willard Richards, John Taylor, and W. W. Phelps, "To the Saints Abroad," Journal History, July 15, 1844.

38. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 7–8, 22–23.

39. Identified as being in the Emmett company, at least for part of the trek, are the following: Jude Allen, the Butlers, Enoch and Elizabeth Burns and two children, Jesse Burns, Stephen and Emeline Casteel and family, Samuel Coons, Thomas Edwards and family, William Edwards, John Flowers and family, Wily Flowers, Henry Heneyman (Hinman), James Hickman, Lyman Hinman and family, James and Parthenia Holt, William Holt, William and Margaret Kartchner and family, Chester Loveland, Armstead Moffet, James and Rebecca Nelson, Finley and Sally Russell Page, Gardner and Evelina Hinman Potter, William Potter, John and Elizabeth Riddle and four daughters and four sons; Allen and Harriet Hutchins Russell, James Russell, Jonathan and Nancy Russell, Elicsi St. Marie and family, Moses Smith and family, Jackson Stewart and wife, James Wilson and wife, Thomas Wilson, Zachariah Wilson and family, and John and Mary Jane Akers Winn and family. See personal accounts listed earlier and lists of company members in Gerald E. Jones, "Some Forgotten Pioneers," 205, and Russell, "Journal," 6. John mentions a Sister Pasket in his autobiography.

40. "Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns."

41. Among Emmett followers who went on to Utah are Emmett's family and the Allens, Enoch Burns, Butlers, Hinmans, Holts, Kartchners, Lovelands, Moffatts, Nelsons, Potters, Riddles, Russells, Wilsons, and Winns.
42. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 22.
43. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847.
44. Riddle and Riddle, *Isaac Riddle and His Family*, 14.
45. "William Decatur Kartchner," 336; Moses Smith's "Obituary."
46. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 22–23.
47. "William Decatur Kartchner"; Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum.
48. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847.
49. Young, Diaries, August 11, 1844.
50. Journal History, August 12, 1844.
51. Young, Diaries, August 11, 1844; Woodruff, *Journal* 2:443 (August 18, 1844); Journal History, August 18, 1844, 1–4. Nevertheless, in the spirit of Emmett's venture, and perhaps to preempt it, on August 19 the Twelve ordered Jonathan Dunham to supervise all trading and business between Saints and Indians; see Richards, Diary, August 19, 1844.
52. Russell, "Journal," 6–8.
53. "Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns."
54. G. Smith, Journals, September 2, 1844.
55. Ibid., September 3, 1844.
56. Bullock, Minutes, February 27, 1845.
57. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, September 4, 1844, 2.
58. General Minutes, September 8, 1844, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives.
59. G. Smith, Journals, September 8, 1844.
60. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:269–70.
61. William Clayton to Wilford Woodruff, October 7, 1844, Woodruff Papers, LDS Archives.
62. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337; Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 8, 9, and 23.
63. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847.
64. Lillie, *Marengo the County Seat*, . . . , 9–10, 23–25, 32, 47, 137, 236–38. The Trading Post was located in T83, R10, Section 33–35.
65. This name has been given to the group by the author.
66. Lyman Hinman, on page 1 of his letter, says the group numbered 200 (June 27, 1847); Holt says 25 to 39 families (Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 24). Kartchner says when the group left Emmett Camp, it numbered, by Hinman's count, 130 and declining due to desertions ("William Decatur Kartchner," 337). Gerald E. Jones' list of Emmett company members identifies only about 80, or half of those who went, in his "Some Forgotten Pioneers," 205.
67. Dinwoodie, *History of Iowa County Iowa and Its People*, 35, 181.
68. Ibid.
69. "Emigrating to Oregon," *Niles National Register* 68 (August 2, 1845): 339.
70. Russell, "Journal," 9–10.
71. Kanesville Municipal High Council Minutes, January 5, 1848.
72. Russell, "Journal," 9–10.
73. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337, and Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847; Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 24.
74. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337.
75. No substantiation of these rumors about stealing from local Iowans has been found.
76. John Smith, Patriarchal Blessing Book 6:44, LDS Archives, typescript in BFA.
77. Council of Fifty clerk William Clayton lamented on January 1, 1845, that all of the special projects designed by the pre-martyrdom Council of Fifty had failed. Historian Andrew Ehat summed up Clayton's reasoning: "The Council had not met in eight months. It had not revived itself to undertake any of the 'measures of Joseph.' No California, Oregon, or Texas scouting parties materialized. The campaign for the Presidency of the United States was terminated not only before

the election but even before a national convention. The mission among the Lamanites never got underway” (“‘It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth,’” 273). However, had Clayton viewed Captain Emmett’s venture as a Council of Fifty project, he might have penned a fairer assessment. Emmett’s perception was that he and his party, ready to cross into Lamanite territory, were laboring at great sacrifice to accomplish the scouting and Lamanite parts of the Fifty’s plans.

Notes for Chapter 13, “With Emmett in the Wilderness”

1. Nelson, James, and Rebecca Nelson. Memorandum, 1.
2. Ibid.
3. James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845, General Minutes, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
4. Accounts by the Nelsons, Burns, Holt, Hinman, Kartchner, Winn, and John Butler do not make snow and cold a major problem. Isaac Riddle said the winter killed off game (Riddle and Riddle, *Isaac Riddle and His Family*, 14). Allen Russell’s journal (p. 7) states “we had lost many of our cattle on account of the hard winter.” (See chapter 12, note 14 for a list of accounts by or about those in the company.) That the Butlers would go up to the First Camp from Nauvoo at the end of December indicates a mild season. In February Moses Smith left the Emmett company and traveled 170 miles to Nauvoo, returned with Elders Lyman and Spencer, and then they returned to Nauvoo in early March. Their report makes no complaints about snow or cold. The early-April posse that came to the Emmett Camp near present Marshalltown from Iowa City had only rain problems.
5. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 337.
6. Ibid.
7. *History of Johnson County, Iowa*, 528. James Holt said they moved between fifty and one hundred miles. The distance from Kitchen’s Settlement to Mormon Ridge is 55 miles direct or perhaps 60 to 70 travel miles. See Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 24.
8. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 1.
9. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 337.
10. Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 2.
11. Genealogy data from name files in Black, *Members of the Church*; Apostle Amasa Lyman report to the Twelve in Bullock, Minutes, March 16, 1845.
12. Lyman Hinman, Letter, June 27, 1847, 1.
13. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 337.
14. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 23–24.
15. Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 3.
16. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 1.
17. Riddle and Riddle, *Isaac Riddle and His Family*, 14.
18. Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 1.
19. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 23–26, and Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 6.
20. *History of Johnson County, Iowa*, 528.
21. Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 3.
22. Richards, Diary, February 24, 1845.
23. Moses Smith’s “Obituary.” Richards, Diary, February 27, 1845.
24. Bullock, Minutes, February 27, 1845.
25. Ibid.; “Dates of Interest in Church History in Wisconsin,” *Church News*, August 1, 1992, 8.
26. Nauvoo Municipal High Council Minutes, February 27, 1845. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:377–78, 383–85. The latter pages contain Elder Lyman’s report of the mission. Daniel Spencer was one chosen with Emmett a year earlier to be in the western expedition.
27. D. Spencer, Journal, entries from February 28 to March 15, 1845. When Spencer reached Emmett Camp he was accompanied by Elder Lyman, someone named Baington (Byington?), Franklin Richards, and “old Fomany [Tommy?] Edwards,” but Edwards and possibly others had joined Lyman and Spencer on the way.
28. Bullock, Minutes, March 16, 1845.

29. Ibid.
30. Winter Quarters Municipal High Council Minutes, January 5, 1848.
31. Nauvoo Municipal High Council Minutes, February 27, 1845.
32. Lyman and Spencer reported in Nauvoo on March 15 and 16, 1845. See J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:383–85; W. Huntington, *Diaries*, March 9, 1845. In a February 25 entry, Huntington reports that Lyman and Spencer were told to go to the Emmett group and tell them to stay where they were.
33. Bullock, Minutes, March 16, 1845; George A. Smith, Journal, March 15, 1845.
34. D. Spencer, Journal, April 11–15, 1845.
35. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:385.
36. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 1.
37. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 25. Morgan’s site information came from *The History of Marshall County, Iowa* (Chicago), 324. What is called Mormon Ridge today is three miles west and slightly north of Albion, Iowa, which itself is seven miles northwest of Marshalltown. Mormon Ridge Road, unpaved, runs along the top of it. The ridge’s southeast point overlooks the junction of Minerva Creek, from the west, and the southeast-flowing Iowa River. However, one early Iowa map places a Mormon Hill two miles east and six north of the ridge and not by Minerva Creek—see *Chapman’s Sectional Map of Iowa* (Iowa State Department of History, Des Moines, Iowa, 1856) that shows “Mormon Hill” eight miles north of Marietta.
38. Faragher, *Sugar Creek*, 15–17.
39. This is a thirdhand story, recorded by Olive Butler Smith in 1967 and told to her when she was a teenager by her father, John Lowe Butler II.
40. W. Wilson, “In Praise of Ourselves.”
41. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:29. This entry is for March 26, 1845. Edwards sought counsel from Hosea Stout, apparently about whether to stay with Emmett or bring his family back to Nauvoo.
42. Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 3.
43. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 337.
44. James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845.
45. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 337–38.
46. Nelson and Nelson, Memorandum, 4.
47. Ibid., 5.
48. Ibid., 3–5.
49. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 338.
50. Ibid., 337–38. Jones, “Some Forgotten Pioneers,” 205. The Pages are not on Kartchner’s or Jones’ lists but are mentioned in Russell, “Journal,” 7. Russell says Finley Page had just married his sister Sally Russell, and they both went back, as did his (Allen Russell) parents and his brother Horace.
51. Even James Holt, whose account complains about widespread suffering as much as anyone, stayed with the group.
52. Moses Smith became an apostle in James J. Strang’s church. Zachariah Wilson moved to Ohio and Indiana, although later in life he rejoined the Saints in Utah and died there; see “Zachariah Wilson,” in Black, *Members of the Church*.
53. “William Decatur Kartchner,” 338.
54. Ibid.
55. *History of Johnson County, Iowa*, 527.
56. Ibid., 528.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., 529.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 1.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., 2.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.; Russell, "Journal," 7.

68. An early mix of fact and fiction is in Nettie Sanford's version in *History of Marshall County, Iowa* (Clinton, Iowa), 18, 122. The story in its most elaborate and confused form is in *The History of Marshall County, Iowa* (Chicago), 318–26, where the author credits two dropout Mormons, George W. Voorhees and Thomas Gordon, for his thirdhand information—which they gave many years before to a judge who later told it to him.

69. Gretchen I. Sipes to the author, April 23, 1991, BFA.

70. Gretchen I. Sipes, as of 1993, has been Marshalltown's expert and earnest detective on the Mormon Ridge mystery. In the 1950s she believed the Mormon group was the Emmett company, but after struggling to incorporate all the local lore into the story, she decided she must find a Mormon emigrant group unknown thus far in history records. She kindly gave me copies of her file materials, including her short typed discussion, "The Legends of Mormon Ridge"; her 1950s account called "The Story of Mormon Ridge"; her "Mormon Ridge Mystery" in *the Marshalltown Times-Republican*, February 9, 1988; Mrs. Wesley Halladay's recollections in "Experiences of Mormon Visitors in 1850–51 Recalled by Pioneer," *Times-Republican*, November 3, 1925; and "Band of Starving Mormons Wintered in County Before City Was Born," *Times-Republican* centennial issue in June-July 1953.

71. I believe the Emmett company is the Mormon group at the core of the Mormon Ridge stories, to which naive local folks long ago attached a lot of Mormon-related stories they heard here and there, mainly the handcart saga and the Winter Quarters deaths. No doubt the ideas about big numbers, largescale deaths, and wheeled carts came from local discussions of handcart companies who crossed Iowa in the 1850s just south of Marshalltown, from deaths in the Martin and Willie handcart groups in the west, and from the widespread Mormon deaths in 1846–47 at Winter Quarters. The baby and soldiers story are corruptions of the story of the Iowa City posse's taking some Emmett dropouts back with them and briefly leaving behind the new mother and baby. If the Emmett people buried one or two on the ridge, possibly within the next decade early white settlers and travelers buried others in that "cemetery," so that "Mormon cemetery" and "numbers of graves" merged in local lore to become "many Mormons buried there." But no one has yet proved there are any graves on the ridge.

Notes for Chapter 14, "Camp Vermillion"

1. Russell, "Journal," 7.

2. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 2.

3. U.S. Public Survey Map B, "Sketch of the Public Surveys in Iowa," n.d., National Archives. To find the Emmett route I have relied on two large period maps: W. Barrows, *A New Map of Iowa, Accompanied with Notes, by W. Barrows* (Cincinnati: Doolittle & Munson, 1845); and *Iowa and Wisconsin, Chiefly from the Map of J. N. Nicollet*, handwritten notation on bottom "Deposited in the Clerks' Office for the Southern district of New York, May 8, 1844," both maps at the National Archives.

4. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337–39.

5. Newspaper article based on Kartchner's report at St. Louis, *Niles National Register* 68 (August 2, 1845): 339–40.

6. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337–39. The wagon count is his. If they moved up the Iowa River for at least ten days, and averaged but five miles a day, fifty miles would put them above present-day Iowa Falls. To go west from there they would not intersect the Skunk River. But the Boone River did have to be crossed before the Des Moines.

7. Russell, "Journal," 8.

8. "Isaac Riddle Tells His Story," 170–71.

9. Russell, "Journal," 7.

10. James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845.

11. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 2.

12. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337.

13. "John Winn," 347–350.

14. Kartchner's report in *Niles National Register* 68 (August 2, 1845): 340.
15. "William Decatur Kartchner," 337.
16. James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845.
17. *Ibid.*; "William Decatur Kartchner," 339; and Russell, "Journal," 8. Emmett's people were the first Latter-day Saints to enter present-day South Dakota.
18. Today a good-sized rectangular historic site sign on a post honors Fort Vermillion and mentions the Mormon encampment. It stands on Lower Road, also called Military Road, in tiny Burbank, a crossroads town seven miles southeast of Vermillion and next to the Missouri River. The sign reads: "Fort Vermillion. On May 6, 1837 the American Fur Company steamer 'Yellowstone' stopped on the river bank to the south and put Francois LeRoi ashore to set up a fur post, which remained as such until 1851. In 1845 James Emmett led a party of 200 Mormons west from Nauveau [sic], Illinois and they wintered 1845–46 at Fort Vermillion."
19. Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West* 3:952, and *ibid.* 2:927 (1935 edition); Schell, *The History of Clay County, South Dakota*, 12–13. The post apparently was a few miles southeast of the mouth of the Vermillion River, according to Sneve, *South Dakota Geographic Names*, 147. Another Vermillion Fort of an earlier date, sometimes called Dickson's Post, stood about twelve miles west of the Vermillion River midway between it and the James River, near present-day Gayville (Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*; Schell, *The History of Clay County, South Dakota*). The city of Vermillion now is on high ground up from the river, where it was relocated during the Missouri River floodings in the 19th century.
20. Russell, "Journal," 8.
21. D. Robinson, *Encyclopedia of South Dakota*, 759; Sneve, *South Dakota Geographic Names*, 147.
22. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 27–28. Kartchner mentioned a "Mr. Henry" who was a half-breed with an Indian wife ("William Decatur Kartchner's Story," 4). This information is missing in the published "William Decatur Kartchner," in *Our Pioneer Heritage*. Fullmer and Sherwood refer to him as a half-breed named Ongee, "an educated and influential man" (J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:496–97).
23. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 28.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 2.
27. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 27; James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845; Riddle and Riddle, *Isaac Riddle and His Family*, 14. For a thumbnail history of the Vermillion settlement, see Jones, "An Early Mormon Settlement in South Dakota."
28. James Emmett's information in Richards, Diary, August 2, 1845.
29. James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845.
30. Riddle and Riddle, *Isaac Riddle and His Family*, 14; James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845; Russell, "Journal," 8.
31. *Niles National Register* 68 (August 2, 1845): 340.
32. "William Decatur Kartchner," 339. A report riddled with errors appeared in "Emigrating to Oregon," in *Niles National Register* 68 (August 2, 1845): 339–40. Its errors include statements that the Emmett company arrived 200 miles *above* the mouth of the Vermillion, that some stayed there, and that only 36 Saints were still at the fort.
33. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:433–34; James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845.
34. James Emmett Hearing, August 4, 1845.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Sherwood was Nauvoo's elected marshal. John S. Fullmer had volunteered for the western exploring expedition early in 1844 and was with Joseph Smith in Carthage Jail before the martyrdom. An account of their mission to Vermillion is recorded in J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:495–98.
37. Richards, Diary, August 12, 1845.
38. Nauvoo Municipal High Council Minutes, August 12, 1845.
39. *Ibid.*

40. Ibid.
41. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:495–96.
42. “Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns,” 61.
43. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:494–98; Henry G. Sherwood and John S. Fullmer, Statement, Nauvoo Municipal High Council Minutes, September 22, 1845.
44. Nauvoo Municipal High Council Minutes, September 22, 1845.
45. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:496.
46. John S. Fullmer’s observation, in *ibid.*
47. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:496.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid. 7:497.
50. Ibid. Historian Dale Morgan believes Brewyer was Theophile Bruquiere, in Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 30, note 62.
51. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 31.
52. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:496–97.
53. Ibid. 7:497.
54. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 31.
55. Cummings, Diary, April 25, 1846.
56. “The Mormons and the Indians,” *Heart Throbs of the West* 7:385.
57. “Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns,” 61; Riddle and Riddle, *Isaac Riddle and His Family*, 14; Russell, “Journal,” 8.
58. Drip’s letter is cited in Jones, “Some Forgotten Pioneers,” 208, note 31.
59. “Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns,” 61.
60. There are two versions of the story. See Ellen R. Bryner, story in *Deseret News* article copied into Journal History, August 6, 1931; Luella A. Dalton story in *Heart Throbs of the West* 7:386.
61. *Our Pioneer Heritage* 16:236–37. See a similar account in *Heart Throbs of the West* 7:385.

Notes for Chapter 15, “Shutting Down Nauvoo”

1. John S. Fullmer’s report of his and Sherwood’s “Mission to James Emmett’s Encampment” is contained in J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:495–98. Fullmer says the three men left Camp Vermillion on October 3; John’s autobiography incorrectly says October 17. Later, Fullmer would be a fellow townsman of the Butlers in Spanish Fork and a co-officer with John in Utah’s Nauvoo Legion.
2. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:497.
3. Ibid. 7:497–98.
4. Ibid. 7:528–30. In the “Record of the Proceedings of the Quincy Riflemen,” Vol. 1, Quincy, Illinois, Historical Society, entries trace the search for and arrest of men charged with the murders, and the matter ends with the November 24, 1845, notation: “Morse & the other prisoners were brought before Justice Stevenson for trial, when the charge was withdrawn, it being found impossible to obtain a conviction in the present state of this county” (117).
5. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:454–55.
6. Lyon, “The City That Moved 1400 Miles,” 34. For a good survey of what brought about the decision to leave and of preparations made that winter, see Miller and Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph*, 185–97.
7. Arrington, J., “Construction of the Nauvoo Temple,” 353–78.
8. H. Kimball, Journals, December 6, 1845; J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:541–43.
9. J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:554.
10. General Record of the Seventies, Book B, December 17, 1845.
11. Ibid., December 18, 1845.
12. Ibid., December 26, 1845; Journal History, December 19 and 27, 1845; J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:555.
13. General Record of the Seventies, Book B, December 30, 1845.
14. Ibid., January 3 and 13, 1846.
15. Nauvoo Temple Endowment Register, on the dates included.

16. Nauvoo Temple Index to Sealings. The younger Sarah had received a temple endowment on January 20, her mother on January 29.

17. The 1850 census for Indiana shows Sarah living with her son William and his wife Lucinda and their large family. Sarah apparently died during the 1850s. Wright Lancaster, John Lowe Butler's brother-in-law, also went east instead of west. He is listed in the 1850 and 1860 Wayne County, Indiana, censuses. However, Wright and wife Mary and their children went to Utah in Captain James Wareham's independent wagon train, arriving in Salt Lake City on September 16, 1862. See *Journal History*, September 16, 1862.

18. The date that John's mother Charity and her sons left Nauvoo is not known. Nauvoo property records show that on April 25, 1846, Charity Butler officially deeded a house and lot in Nauvoo to a Kentucky party for \$75, so perhaps she did not leave until then.

Notes for Chapter 16, "Retrieving the Emmett Company"

1. Richards, *Diary*, March 8, 1846.
2. Watson, *Manuscript History*, 90 (March 16, 1846); Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 37, and 247, note 44.
3. Watson, *Manuscript History*, March 16, 1846.
4. Orson Pratt, *Journals*, March 22, 1846; Watson, *Manuscript History*, 100 (March 23, 1846).
5. Orson Pratt, *Journals*, (March 22, 1846), 329; Watson, *Manuscript History*, 100-101 (March 23, 1846).
6. Whitney, *Diary*, March 23, 1846; Watson, *Manuscript History*, 100 (April 23, 1846).
7. Watson, *Manuscript History*, 102 (April 24, 1846) and 104-5 (April 26, 1846).
8. Lee, *Diary*, March 26, 1846; Clayton, *Journal*, March 26, 1846; Watson, *Manuscript History*, March 26, 1846; *Journal History*, March 26, 1846.
9. Brigham Young to James Emmett and All the Saints in Company With Him, March 26, 1846, Brigham Young Draft Letter Book, Vol. 2, typescript, LDS Archives.
10. *Ibid.*
11. On March 27 the Camp of Israel was reorganized in Elisha Averett's tent at Shoal Creek, six to eight miles west of the Chariton headquarters. Due to men returning to Nauvoo, others dropping out to work, and separations caused by bad roads, a reorganization was needed. Three companies of 100 containing six companies of 50 were structured and captains appointed over the nine units. Procedures for obtaining and distributing food through commissaries were set. Stephen Markham was placed in charge of a hundred pioneers to be the trailblazers, road engineers, and campsite selectors. Watson, *Manuscript History*, 106-9 (March 27, 1846).
12. Watson, *Manuscript History*, 111 (March 27, 1846).
13. Unless otherwise noted, the account that follows of the trip to Camp Vermillion and back is taken from Cummings, *Diary*, on the dates indicated.
14. A historical marker, once at the site but now in the Lewis, Iowa, Town Park, tells about Indian Town. The site itself is found by going west out of Lewis on Minnesota Avenue for about one mile; Indian Town was located on the west bank of the Nishnabotna River and to the north of the road bridge.
15. Traders Point, or Point aux Poules, was on the Iowa side of the river, across from present-day Bellevue, Nebraska, and about eight miles south of present-day Council Bluffs. Peter Sarpy operated an American Fur Company trading post at present Bellevue, and a ferry over to Traders Point. Iowa Highway 370 now crosses a bridge to Bellevue about where the ferry crossing was.
16. Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade in the West* 3:949.
17. Based on Cummings' mileage estimates, he and John descended the bluffs about 2 miles southeast of the Iowa School for the Deaf near where U.S. 275 crosses Pony Creek. The settlement Cummings mentions must have been within a mile of the old blockhouse, south and west of it, an area that is now part of downtown Council Bluffs. For historical geography of the area, see three discussions by resident expert Gail George Holmes: his twenty-page pamphlet, *Winter Quarters Revisited*; "The LDS Legacy in Southwestern Iowa,"; and "Seven-year Epic Flowed Along Missouri River with Tragedy, Triumph."

18. Lyman Hinman Letter, June 27, 1847, 2.
19. The Missouri state line is some 50 miles south of present-day Council Bluffs.
20. I am unable to identify this lake. Today, just north of the mouth of the Boyer River is the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, an important stopover point for migrating ducks and geese. These birds concentrate in the area during fall migrations to the Gulf Coast and during their return in March and early April each year. The refuge is approximately thirty miles north of Council Bluffs and is west of Missouri Valley, Iowa, on U.S. 30.
21. On today's maps this would be the Floyd River. John and Cummings crossed it where Sioux City now is.
22. Cummings, Diary, April 25, 1846.
23. This decision was made at Council Bluffs, after talking to the Hinman group of Vermillion Saints and is noted in Cummings, Diary, April 17, 1846.
24. Russell, "Journal," 8.
25. Ibid., 9.
26. Luella A. Dalton story in *Heart Throbs of the West* 7:386.
27. Ellen R. Bryner story in *Deseret News* article copied in Journal History, August 6, 1931.
28. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 32; Russell, "Journal," 8; Cummings, Diary, April 25 and 26, 1846.
29. Probably the present Rock River.
30. The Floyd River where Sioux City now is.
31. A town called Sergeant's Bluff is located four miles south of present-day Sioux City, Iowa. At the top of Sergeant's Bluff is a stone obelisk monument honoring Sergeant Charles Floyd, said to be the only person to die on the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804–1806.
32. Kaneshville Municipal High Council Minutes, January 5, 1848.
33. Cummings called it the upper settlement, but it not clear how this settlement differs, if at all, from the settlement where he and John had spent a day before their trip up to Vermillion. Cummings probably refers to this as the upper settlement to differentiate it from the settlement around Traders Point.
34. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 33.
35. On April 27 the Camp of Israel at Garden Grove had sent the two men to tell George Herring and Brother Dana, two Indian interpreters laboring 200 miles south of Ft. Leavenworth, to rejoin the main body of Saints. See Lee, Diary, April 27, 1846.
36. Russell, "Journal," 9.
37. Clayton, *Journal*, June 10 and 11, 1846; and Journal History, June 11, 1846; Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 33; Brigham Young to William Huntington and Council, June 14, 1846, in Brigham Young Draft Letter Book, Vol. 1. St. Joseph is 80 miles from the Iowa border, and Ft. Leavenworth is another 50 miles downriver.
38. Whitney, Diary, 34 (June 11, 1846).
39. Cummings, Diary, June 9, 1846; Journal History, June 10 and 11, 1846. Watson, *Manuscript History*, 172 (June 1, 1846).
40. Watson, *Manuscript History*, 183 (June 12, 1846).
41. Russell, "Journal," 9.
42. Quinn, "Council of Fifty," 182–83.
43. Conference Minutes, October 6 and 7, 1845, Miscellaneous Minutes File, LDS Archives.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Kaneshville Municipal High Council Minutes, January 5, 1848.
50. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 3:458.

Notes for Chapter 17, “North to the Niobrara”

1. Whitney, Diary, June 11, 1846.
2. Cummings reported the camp to be thirty miles south of the bluffs. See Clayton, *Journal*, June 12, 1846.
3. Lee, Diary, June 12, 1846.
4. Brigham Young complained sometimes about Miller and others being too far ahead. For a negative interpretation of Bishop Miller, focusing on conflicts with Brigham Young and the Twelve, see Bennett, “‘A Samaritan Had Passed By,’” and Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 44–46, 150–59, and 225–26. Miller’s autobiographical letters are in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla.” See also Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 33.
5. Journal History, June 13, 1846.
6. Lee, Diary, June 14, 1846; Watson, *Manuscript History*, June 14–19, 1846.
7. John L. Butler to Brigham Young, June 15, 1846, Brigham Young Incoming Correspondence, LDS Archives.
8. Journal History, June 18, 1846.
9. Lee, Diary, June 19, 1846.
10. Journal History, June 29, 1846.
11. William Clayton’s *The Latter-day Saints’ Emigrants’ Guide*, published in 1848, says this village was 110 miles from Winter Quarters; see Stanley B. Kimball’s edition of the guide (St. Louis, MO: The Patrice Press, 1983), 44–45. George E. Hyde, in his map inserted in *Pawnee Indians* (University of Denver Press, 1951), pinpoints the Pawnee Mission by Plumb Creek, midway between where Cedar and Beaver Creeks flow into the Loup Fork and locates the Pawnee Village a mile or two west of the mission station.
12. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 106–7; Samuel Allis gives the figure of forty families in his “Forty Years Among the Indians,” II, 167–68.
13. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 107, said his company had 32 wagons. Staines also said Miller had 32 wagons. Anson Call, in the Brigham Young company that joined Miller’s party at Pawnee Station, said Miller’s group had 52 wagons. See Call, *Journal*, 36. That means the Emmett people must have provided about 20 wagons.
14. Hosea Stout. See Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:168–69 (June 20, 1846).
15. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 111.
16. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 7; S. Kimball, *Historic Resource Study*, 52–53.
17. Minutes of Meeting at Mosquito Creek, June 28, 1846, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
18. One of Captain Miller’s teamsters did enlist, which shows that company members knew about the enlistment call. See Staines, “Among the Poncas,” 10.
19. Estimating the number of Saints at or near the bluffs at about 8,000, a generous figure, and that 1 in 5 was an adult male, then the army took 500 of 1,600 men, or almost one-third.
20. Journal History, July 14, 1846.
21. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 160. An account by one of the Presbyterian missionaries is Allis, “Forty Years Among the Indians,” 2:167–68.
22. Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 161.
23. *Ibid.*, 107. Staines, “Among the Poncas,” 10. A good summary of this Pawnee hauling venture is found in Morgan, “The Reminiscences of James Holt,” 154, 161.
24. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 108, says the chief’s name was Tea-Nuga-Numpa; Staines lists it as Ta-nugar-number in “Among the Poncas,” 12; Anson Call gives it as Nucanumpa in Call, *Journal*, 36.
25. Staines, “Among the Poncas,” 12. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 107, 108.
26. Knight, *Journal*, July 21–August 4, 1846. Joseph Holbrook said the company had 72 wagons, 230 people, 268 oxen, 142 cows, 35 calves, 132 sheep, 34 young cattle, 22 horses, 2 mules, and 3 pigs. See his entry for July 24, 1846 in Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*. Hosea Stout reported on July 27 that Brigham was going to cross the Missouri and might go on to

Grand Island and on July 31 that Brigham and others “were agitating the subject to stay near where the main camp now is or go on to Grand Island which resulted in the decision to stay.” Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:181, 182.

27. Call, Journal, 35, 36. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 107. Enoch Burns said the Emmett people at the Loup Fork River linked up with two other wagon trains sponsored by Apostles Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball; see “Biographical Sketch of Enoch Burns,” 62. See also “Life of Wilmer W. Bronson,” 48.

28. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 107.

29. Journal History, August 1, 1846.

30. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 108.

31. Call, Journal, 36; Miller (Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 108) said he was told the distance to the Niobrara could be covered by an Indian on horseback in two days. Critics claim Miller deceived Brigham Young by saying the distance was not more than fifty miles north. See Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 87.

32. Journal History, August 4, 1846; Brigham Young to Bishop George Miller & the Capt of Fifties at Pawnee Village and West, August 4, 1846, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives. Miller, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 108.

33. Ibid.

34. Call, Journal, 36.

35. “Life of Wilmer W. Bronson,” 49.

36. Knight, Journal, August 9, 1846; Call, Journal, 36. A mileage tally in Joseph Holbrook’s journal (Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*) for August 1846 shows 103 miles from the Loup Fork crossing, about 8 miles southwest of present-day Genoa, to the Ponca village. Current highway maps put the distance from that Loup Fork crossing to Omaha at approximately 99 miles. As noted above, William Clayton’s 1848 travel guide says this village was 114 and 1/4 miles from Winter Quarters.

37. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 3:158; Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 87. Bennett, in “*A Samaritan Had Passed By*,” 10, is inaccurate to claim that Young instructed Miller to preferably return to the bluffs. Seymour Bronson recalled that Young told the party “that we should return to Winter Quarters,” a recollection that is in error, in “Life of Wilmer W. Bronson,” 49–50. Journal History, August 20, 1846.

38. Knight, Journal, August 9, 1846; Anson Call, one of the council, liked the Ponca idea (Call, Journal, 36); Joseph Holbrook of the council said a “good spirit” prevailed in council deliberations that included the Ponca decision (Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 40); Staines said “the council decided to go with the Poncas” (Staines, “Among the Poncas,” 11); Holt said “The Saints in council agreed to accompany the Ponca chief to his village. . . .” (Morgan, “Reminiscences of James Holt,” 156).

39. Knight, Journal, August 9, 1846. “The council decided to go with the Poncas,” Staines said in his “Among the Poncas,” 11; Miller said the council “unanimously agreed” to go with the Ponca chief, in Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 108. Also, Brigham Young’s advice about “fishing” or being a religious influence among Indians probably helped these Saints decide to winter among the friendly Poncas; Mills, “De Tal Palo Tal Astilla,” 108. Critics wrongly say the Gates group disaffected from supposed Miller usurpation. According to Gates’ September 9 letter to Brigham Young, the group in fact had required “much persuasion” to agree to stay at Pawnee Station. Journal History, August 20, September 9, and October 10, 1846.

40. The best attempt to tell the Ponca Camp story is Morgan, “The Reminiscences of James Holt,” 151–79. Richard E. Bennett, by slighting the Butler autobiography and Newel Knight’s journals, is critical of the composition, motives, and experiences of the Ponca expedition in a survey history of their months by the Niobrara in his otherwise excellent *Mormons at the Missouri*, 84–89 and 150–59 and the related notes.

41. The history of Ponca Camp which follows is based on records kept by Ponca Camp members, including Butler, Bishop George Miller, William C. Staines, Wilmer W. Bronson, Anson Call, Joseph Holbrook, and Newel K. Knight, as well as official LDS records.

42. Wagon totals given in Journal History, August 20 and September 15, 1846. The September 15 report by two men from Miller's camp said it contained 175 wagons, not counting some who had become disaffected.

43. Staines, "Among the Poncas," 12. Their almost due-north journey, according to Joseph Holbrook's history (Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 40–44 [August 12–23]), was 103 miles as follows:

- 8/12 Cross Loup Fork to north side [about 8 miles southwest of present-day Genoa, where the Pawnee Station was]
- 8/13 04 miles, camp on Willow Fork
- 8/14 14 miles, prairie dry and somewhat sandy
- 8/15 12 miles, camp by small stream called Beaver Creek [probably between present Boone and Albion]
- 8/16 03 miles, Sunday
- 8/17 06 miles and cross Beaver Creek [near present Loretto]
- 8/18 13 miles and camp on waters of Elkhorn River
- 8/19 09 miles, prairie sandy in morning, cross Elkhorn in evening [near present Neligh], camp at deserted Indian encampment on river bank
- 8/20 15 miles, saw number of buffalo
- 8/21 06 miles
- 8/22 16 miles, buffalo like herd of cattle, killed 3
- 8/23 05 miles and arrive at Poncas' village by mouth of the Niobrara River

44. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 50.

45. Staines, "Among the Poncas," 13; Bronson, "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 50; Knight, Journal, August 20, 1846.

46. Knight, Journal, August 23, 1846; Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 41 (August 23, 1846). Descriptions of the Niobrara are 1843 observations by naturalist John James Audubon, in Audubon, *Audubon and His Journals* 1:502. The 2,000 Poncas figure is from Staines, "Among the Poncas," 13.

47. Using loose calculations, we estimate 130 miles south from Camp Vermillion to Council Bluffs, 30 miles down from Council Bluffs and 30 miles up which cancel each other out, about 100 miles west from Council Bluffs to Pawnee Village, and 95 miles north to Ponca Camp, for 325 miles.

48. Knight, Journal, August 23, 1846.

49. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 51.

50. Knight, Journal, August 23, 1846.

51. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 41 (August 24, 1846).

52. Ibid., August 28, 1846; Knight, Journal, August 28, 1846.

53. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 51.

54. Knight, Journal, entries for September 1846.

55. Ibid.; Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 42 (September 12, 1846).

56. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 42 (September 23, 1846). The day before he says he put hay on his roof. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 52. Bronson said that in late December, young people and some older ones were enjoying themselves in a dance in a "dancing room" (53).

57. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 42 (September 8, 1846).

Notes for Chapter 18, "Winter at Fort Ponca"

1. The Butlers probably received an amount similar to what James Holt received—six bushels of corn, forty pounds of flour, and some poor oats. See Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 162.

2. Audubon, *Audubon and His Journals* 1:502.

3. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 42 (September 28, 1846).

4. Journal History, September 15, 1846; Winter Quarters Municipal High Council Minutes, September 15, 1846.

5. Knight, Journals, September 27, 1846.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., October 4, 1846.
8. Young to Bishop George Miller, September 20, 1846, in Winter Quarters Municipal High Council Minutes for September 20, 1846.
9. Knight, Journals, September 17, 18 and 23, 1846.
10. Ibid., December 19, 1846.
11. Staines, "Among the Poncas," 17.
12. Holbrook's journal gives daily mileage during his trip to Winter Quarters, March 21 to April 6, 1847, totalling 152 miles. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 50.
13. Journal History, October 24, 25, 26, 29, 1846; Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:206–7 (October 25, 1846); Mills, "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla," 110.
14. Knight, Journals, November and December 1846 entries.
15. Five young Mormons went with them, including Staines.
16. Two who went were John Kay and Frederick Bainbridge.
17. Journal History, September 15, 1846; Winter Quarters Municipal High Council Minutes, September 15, 1846; Knight, Journals, September 30, 1846.
18. Journal History, September 15, 1846; Winter Quarters Municipal High Council Minutes, September 15, 1846.
19. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 49 (February 12 and March 1, 1847).
20. Staines, "Among the Poncas," 39–40.
21. Journal History, October 24, 25, 26, 29, 1846; Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:206–7, (October 25, 1846).
22. Knight, Journals, October 5 and 14, 1846.
23. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 46 (November 28, 1846); Knight, Journals, November 28, 1846.
24. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:221.
25. On present maps Ft. Laramie lies approximately 315 miles due west of the Niobrara site and about 450 miles from the Winter Quarters site. So, from Ponca Camp, Laramie was 140 miles or about ten days closer than from Winter Quarters. However, the route used then between Winter Quarters and Ponca Camp measures about 150 miles. Therefore, for the main body of Saints to go from Winter Quarters via Ponca Camp to Laramie was not significantly shorter or longer than the Platte River route. For Ponca Saints to go 150 miles to Winter Quarters and then the 140 extra miles to Ft. Laramie would add 3 to 4 weeks of unnecessary travel.
26. Knight, Journals, December 5, 1846.
27. Brigham Young to President George Miller & Council, at Ponca, November 25, 1846, in Winter Quarters Municipal High Council Minutes of that date.
28. Knight, Journals, November 16, 1846.
29. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 47 (December 25 and 26, 1846); Knight, Journals, December 25 and 26, 1846.
30. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 47 (December 26, 1846); Knight, Journals, December 26, 1846.
31. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 53. Knight, Journals, December 26, 1846; Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 47 (December 26, 1846).
32. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 54.
33. Knight, Journals, November 1, 3, 5, 18, December 19, 1846, and January 1847 entries. Holbrook's journal (Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*) tells about some Sunday meetings. He noted on September 20, 1846 (42), that the people "held a meeting and administered the sacrament" and that on October 11 (43) "Brother George Miller preached." On November 22 (46) he, William Matthews, and Emmett, while exploring along the Niobrara, had their own sacrament service. Back at Fort Ponca, on November 29 (46), Holbrook "attended meeting with the saints."
34. Call, Journal, 37.

35. Knight, Journals, November 17, 1846.
36. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 162. Gar are fish with elongated bodies resembling a pike and have long and narrow jaws—sometimes called "needlefish." Some have foul, tough skin. Roots of the prairie dandelion, also called false dandelion or goat chicory, were eaten raw by early settlers on the Upper Great Plains. Another type, called blow balls, doonhead, or Lion's tooth, has deep white taproots that settlers served as a cooked vegetable or a coffee substitute. Hog potatoes could be the "fairy spud" or "wild potato" whose sturdy bulbs were eaten raw or boiled, or the prairie turnip, also called prairie potato, whose large, turnip-like roots were boiled, roasted, or eaten raw. See Runkel and Roosa, *Wildflowers of the Tallgrass Prairie*, and also their *Wildflowers of the Iowa Woodlands*.
37. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 47 (December 20, 1846) and 49 (January 31, 1847).
38. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 53.
39. Not all of the 23 who died at Ponca have been identified. Those known are Mr. and Mrs. Calvert, Lucy Bronson, Ann Boyce, Mrs. Rufus Pack, Mrs. Spicer Crandall, Mrs. Newel Drake, Mrs. Dame, Gardurout Noble, Benjamin F. Mayer, Mr. and Mrs. Nowlen or Knowlen, Judson Tolman's daughter, and Newel Knight.
40. "Search for Lost Graves," *Niobrara (Nebraska) Pioneer*, June 28, 1901, copied into Journal History, July 9, 1901, 7.
41. Knight, Journals, January 11, 1847, entry by Lydia Knight.
42. Regarding the Newell Knight Monument see Hartley, *They Are My Friends*, 178–180; Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 137. During the winter of 1846–47, Bennett estimates that 723 westering Saints died: 400 in the Winter Quarters area, 150 across the river, 80 at Mt. Pisgah, 70 at Garden Grove, and 23 at Ponca.
43. Eliza Ann Peirson to Sister Susan, July 19, 1846, *Richards Family History*, 263.
44. Journal History, November 25 and 26, 1846.
45. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:221 (December 27, 1846). In the 19th century the spelling was Caspar, when Fort Caspar was there, but recent maps spell it Casper. See Haines, *Historic Sites along the Oregon Trail*, 182.
46. Mills, "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla," 111–12.
47. Journal History, January 27, 28, 29, 30, February 8 and 15, 1847. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 58. Holbrook and Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 49) lists the new officers in the February 8, 1847, entry: Captains Butler, Chandler Holbrook, Anson Call, V. Myers, and men with last names of Bartholomew, Tuttle, Stanley, Boyce, Dalton, and Houtz.
48. Holbrook and Holbrook, *History of Joseph Holbrook*, 49 (February 9, 1847).
49. Journal History, March 25, 1847.
50. Knight, Journals, Lydia Knight's notations.
51. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 58, 59.
52. *Ibid.*, 59.
53. "The Mormon Winter Camp on the Niobrara," *Nebraska History* 5 (January–March 1922): 4–5. Ponca Indians were moved in 1877 from the Niobrara River region to Indian Territory (Oklahoma); see N. Hunt, *Brevet's Nebraska Historical Markers and Sites*, 4.
54. "Life of Wilmer W. Bronson," 59; Call, Journal, 37. Isaac Riddle described the route during a visit to Niobrara in 1901; see "Search for Lost Graves," *Niobrara (Nebraska) Pioneer*, June 28, 1901, copied in Journal History, July 9, 1901, 7. Joseph Holbrook's journal provides mileage and route information (see chapter 17 note 50).
55. [Gates], *Lydia Knight's History*, 73.
56. Knight, Journals, Lydia Knight notations.
57. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 166.
58. Morgan, "Reminiscences of James Holt," 163.
59. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1 (early 1847 entries); Miller went to Texas and later affiliated with Mormon apostate leader James J. Strang on Beaver Island in Lake Michigan. Miller headed for California in 1856 but died later that year in Illinois. Miller and Emmett were

disfellowshipped from the Church in October 1847. See Pottawattamie High Council Minutes, October 3, 1847. On November 8 Elder Hyde informed Brigham Young that the high council withdrew fellowship from Miller and from Emmett “and his company,” meaning those then living with Emmett south of Kanessville; see J. Smith, *History of the Church* 7:618. Miller was excommunicated a year later. See also Pottawattamie High Council Minutes, December 3, 1848.

60. For blessing children, see Minutes of Meeting of Ponca Camp, Winter Quarters, October 3, 1847, LDS Archives.

Notes for Chapter 19, “Kanessville Separations”

1. This public statement by Brigham Young has not been found in official minutes available to researchers. John’s autobiography is the only place this expression is recorded.

2. Jesse and Keziah Taylor Family Group Record, BFA. Charity’s deaf-mute sister, Mary Skeen, married a man named Boren, possibly Bartley Boren (1850 census, Sumner County, Tennessee). She died as Mary Skeen Boren on July 7, 1854, and was buried in the Boren cemetery, two miles east of Mitchellville. See Snider and Yorgason, *Cemetery Records*, Item 13–18.

3. The standard scholarly history of Winter Quarters is Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*.

4. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 183, said Stout “seemed to glory in his role and in the unpopularity of his position” as police captain. The police force succeeded in keeping order but sometimes used questionable tactics, such that “they earned a dreadful reputation and were popularly despised.” On occasion they functioned as a morality squad. “With all their excesses,” Bennett concluded, “the police were a necessity.”

5. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 1:288.

6. Ibid. 1:294–95.

7. Journal History, January 29, 1848.

8. Holmes, “LDS Legacy in Southwestern Iowa,” 56.

9. Holmes, *Winter Quarters Revisited*, 11; Holmes, “LDS Legacy in Southwestern Iowa.”

Kanessville was named in honor of Thomas L. Kane, the Pennsylvanian who helped the LDS Church in the East with publicity and on government matters. See Kanessville, Iowa, Manuscript History, April 6–8, 1848.

10. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 215, 220.

11. Kanessville, Iowa, Manuscript History, 1848 entries and September 15, 1849; Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 212–13, 216–17; “Sarah Adeline Butler Allen Tuttle,” 1.

12. Kanessville, Iowa, Manuscript History, September 15, 1849, entry lists the businesses.

13. Sarah Butler is listed in the 1850 federal census of Iowa as living in Pottawattamie County; see alphabetized index entry in R. Jackson, Iowa 1850 Census Index.

14. Martin and Dustin, “Omaha-Council Bluffs Area,” 5.

15. Sorenson, “History of James Emmett”; N. Moffett, “A Sketch of the Life of Lucinda Emmett Moffett”; A. Miller, “In Remembrance of Phebe Jane Simpson Emmett Porter”; H. Moffett, “Diary” of James Emmett.”

16. Pigeon Creek, flowing southwesterly, passes by present-day Crescent, Iowa, which is just east of the Mormon Bridge that crosses the Missouri River to Florence, Nebraska. Neither Richard Bennett nor Gail Holmes, the current experts regarding locations of the early southwestern Iowa LDS branches, has pinpointed where North Pigeon settlement was, other than to indicate it was up Pigeon Creek close to the present-day Harrison County line.

17. “Stories of the Mormon Battalion,” 431.

18. B. Duffin, “Extracts from ‘A History of the Early Life of Charity Artemesia Butler Thornton . . .,’” 8; Wilcox, *Roots of the RLDS in Southern Iowa*, 190–91.

19. Older graves are near the cemetery’s east summit. Some headstones date back to the late 1840s, but cemetery records for the early period are missing. Historian Gail Holmes estimates that many hundreds of, possibly a thousand, Saints were buried in the cemetery during the 1846–1852 period. Regrettably, unlike the impressive monuments at the Winter Quarters burial ground where some 300 died, no marker yet memorializes the Saints buried in Fairview Cemetery. See Kanessville Cemetery discussion in Holmes, “Notes on Pioneer Sites,” 5–6.

20. Edmund Ray and Lydia Thornton Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA. Lydia Thornton Butler later married Joshua Adams and raised a family by him.

21. Sonne, *Ships, Saints, and Mariners*, 174. Dalton, "Butler Pedigree," 2-3; "Mrs. Ann Butler Answers Summons," extensive obituary in unidentified Woodbine, Iowa, newspaper, March 20, 1914, photocopy in BFA.

22. "Mrs. Ann Butler Answers Summons"; Waterman, *History and Description of Harrison County*, 13; "Lorenzo D. Butler," 104. The Butlers' Woodbine home stood on the south side of 4th Street between Lincoln Way and Walker. Six of Lorenzo and Ann's eleven children were still living when she died. Two lived in Woodbine, one was in Texas, and three were in Ontario, Oregon (of the five who moved there). A labelled picture of Lorenzo, Ann, and nine children, dated about 1870, is in BFA. Ross Butler visited with one of Lorenzo's grandsons, William Thomas Butler, age 82, in the 1960s in the Ontario, Oregon, area. See Ross Butler statement, September 26, 1964, typescript, BFA.

23. James Morgan and Catherine McColl Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA.

24. Section 29, which starts two miles south and one west of Dow City; Wilcox, *Roots of the RLDS in Southern Iowa*, 292-93, 313.

25. Bell, "History of Union Township and Dow City"; James and Charity Lowe Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA. In 1964 descendant James Frederick Butler (Boise, Idaho) reflected about his Butler line running back from him to James. He judged the family to have been on the whole well educated and prosperous. "You do not find Butlers with police records," he noted; "they are several cuts above their neighbors when it comes to being bright. They are sharp. They are money makers. They like horses." James Frederick Butler, typed statement, April 26, 1964, BFA.

Notes for Chapter 20, "Trail Dust and Danes"

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

2. For a listing of all the LDS-organized wagon trains of 1852, see S. Kimball, *Historic Resource Study*, 139-41.

3. Baldwin, "A Mormon Bride in the Great Migration," 58.

4. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 3:328. As of 1993, no LDS sites in downtown Council Bluffs are marked or memorialized, including sites of the log tabernacle, the *Frontier Guardian* office, the music hall, and the Kanesville cemetery. A large Mormon Trail marker stands in downtown Bliss Park, erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution. On Council Bluffs' south edge, near the entrance to the Iowa School for the Deaf, is an LDS marker honoring the enlistment of the Mormon Battalion. Council Bluffs once was a Mormon community that lasted half as long as Nauvoo and held half as many LDS people, but compared to historic Nauvoo, which touts its LDS roots, Council Bluffs has yet to honor and promote its vital founding years and sites.

5. "Emigration," *Frontier Guardian* 4 (June 4, 1852).

6. Thomas Margetts estimated 1,400 wagons and no less than 10,000 Saints. See Jenson, "Church Emigration," 417.

7. Unruh, *The Plains Across*, 85.

8. Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 48-49; *Heart Throbs of the West* 1:445.

9. Lloyd, "Explosion of the Saluda," 277-78. A reprint of "Explosion of the Saluda Steamboat" from the *Missouri Republican* appeared in the Latter-day Saint newspaper in England, the *Millennial Star* 12 (May 29, 1852): 220-22. The best narrative history is in Jenson, "Church Emigration," and the author's unpublished essay "Don't Go Aboard the *Saluda*!" A useful summary is in Sonne, *Saints on the Seas*, 103-4. See also Spies, "The Story of the 'Saluda'." In 1991 descendants of *Saluda* survivors erected a memorial marker in the eastern section of the Lexington cemetery honoring those who died.

10. Stevens, "Autobiography," 467. Passengers in the Kelsey train were Captain Kelsey, his wife, and three children; Alexander Gillespie and wife Agnes; Charles King and wife; Michael Kalz and family; John and Sarah Sargent and children; James Sloan and wife; Jane and Joseph Wait; Charles Warner and family; Henry Green; Thomas Hickens; James Hurst; William Johnson; Levi Kile; John Boyle; William Dorr; William Fowler; Noah Gee; J. F. Martin; M. Wilber; E. P. Rollins; E. W. Pell; Sarah McGee; a Miss Wiseman; Emma Randall; Joseph Louis; Sarah and Alvina

Mackley; Zebedee Coltrin; and four of George May's children. See *Journal History Supplement*, 120–22 (December 31, 1852).

11. Elder Kelsey listed for English Saints the names of those killed and injured in the *Saluda* explosion and mentions that Mrs. Gillespie was scalded about the head and face; see "Further Particulars Concerning the Saluda Explosion," *Millennial Star* 12 (June 26, 1852): 282–83.

12. For general discussions of trail geography, sites, mileage figures, demographics, and travel life, as well as a thorough bibliography of the vast literature about the Mormon Trail, see S. Kimball, *Historic Resource Study*, and S. Kimball's *Historic Sites and Markers*. The best one-volume story of the trail and those who traveled it is Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion*. A published account of trail travel in 1853, one year after the Butlers' venture, is Piercy, *Liverpool to the Great Salt Lake Valley*.

13. Jenson, "Church Emigration," 459.

14. Stevens, "Autobiography," 467.

15. Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 48.

16. Baldwin, "A Mormon Bride in the Great Migration," 59. "The cholera is raging on the south side of the Platte at a dreadful rate," one traveler noted, causing emigrants to flee to the north side. See Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 85.

17. Ezra Meeker, on the Mormon Trail that year, said he met a train of eleven returning wagons, all driven by women because not a single male remained alive in the entire train. He believed the trail on the north side of the Platte was healthier until opposite Fort Kearny, where California Trail travelers crossed over to be on the healthier side and in the process made cholera prevalent on both sides. West from the Ft. Kearny crossing, Meeker said, "the dead lay sometimes in rows of fifties or more." See Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 85, and Unruh, *The Plains Across*, 88.

18. Unruh, *The Plains Across*, 132, and Stevens, "Autobiography," 468.

19. Stevens, "Autobiography," 467.

20. E. Greene, *Journal*.

21. Stevenson, *Journals*, October 14, 1852.

22. Stevens, "Autobiography," 468.

23. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road*, 57.

24. E. Greene, *Journal*, August 13, 1852; Arrington, L., *Great Basin Kingdom*, 116–17.

25. Stevens, "Autobiography," 468.

26. *Ibid.*, 467.

27. "Soap Story," retold by Paralee Eckman, July 1986, typescript, BFA.

28. Stevenson, *Journals*, October 9, 1852.

29. *Ibid.*, October 4, 1852.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Stevenson, *Journals*, September 30, 1852.

32. E. Greene, *Journal*, September 18, 1852; De LaMare, "Sugar Machinery Brought to Utah, 1852," 453. Four years later, in mid-October, a snowstorm would trap the Martin and Willie handcart companies near the site, with fatal consequences.

33. Stevenson, *Journals*, September 17, 1852.

34. *Ibid.*, September 25, 1852.

35. *Ibid.*, September 24, 1852; E. Greene, *Journal*, September 28, 1852.

36. Franklin D. Richards to Samuel W. Richards, September 30, 1852, *Millennial Star* 12 (December 11, 1852): 667–68.

37. E. Greene, *Journal*, early October 1852 entries.

38. De LaMare, "Sugar Machinery Brought to Utah, 1852," 453. Jenson, "Church Emigration of 1852."

39. E. Greene, *Journal*, October 10, 1852.

40. Jenson, *History of the Scandinavian Mission*, 49.

41. Brigham Young remarks to A. O. Smoot Company, September 3, 1852, in *Journal History*, September 3, 1852.

42. *Ibid.*

43. May, "Demographic Portrait of the Mormons," 48.
44. Bullock Minutes, September 19, 1852.
45. Young to John M. Bernhisel, September 29, 1852, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.

Notes for Chapter 21, "Pioneering on Indian Lands"

1. Arrington, L., "Mississippi Mormons."
2. J. Clark, Messages 2:109–10 (February 19, 1853).
3. Janetski, "Utah Lake," 6–7; E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 13–14.
4. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 18–19.
5. Janetski, "Utah Lake," 6–8.
6. The ten-man expedition sought an overland route between Santa Fe, New Mexico, and new missions in Alta, California. They headed north and west from Santa Fe on July 29, 1776. Guided by Ute Indians, they descended Spanish Fork Canyon, reaching Utah Lake on September 23–24. The fathers preached Catholicism to friendly Utah Valley Indians. The fathers described Utah Valley as having good pasture, abundant water, wood in the mountains, and a hospitable climate. They wanted Spain to open a mission there. After bending into central Utah, their route took them back to Santa Fe by January 2, 1777, completing a 2,000-mile trek. Many Utah place names honor them, including Escalante Forest, Escalante River, Escalante Valley, Escalante Desert, and the town of Escalante. See Alter, "Father Escalante Journal"; Bolton, *Pageant in the Wilderness*; T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*; Poll, *Utah's History*, 40–51. A monument commemorating the visit was placed in Spanish Fork's City Park in 1923, a tribute to "the first white man to look upon this valley." *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 17.
7. T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*, 31.
8. *Ibid.*, 31–32.
9. "Spanish Fork," in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 823–24.
10. Hartley, "Organization of Wards and Stakes."
11. T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*, 31–33.
12. Cited in *ibid.*, 35.
13. Hamilton, *Diary*, February 10, 1858.
14. "Palmyra," in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 631.
15. First Presidency, Ninth General Epistle, April 13, 1853, in J. Clark, Messages 2:113–14.
16. T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*, 36.
17. *Ibid.*, 114.
18. L. Duffin, "History of Charity Artemesia Butler," 18.
19. First Presidency, Ninth General Epistle, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:111.
20. T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*, 38.
21. L. Duffin, "History of Charity Artemesia Butler," 18.
22. First Presidency, Tenth General Epistle, October 13, 1853, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:121.
23. L. Duffin, "History of Charity Artemesia Butler," 20.
24. "Early Elementary Schools," *An Enduring Legacy* 5:381.
25. "George Washington Sevy, Colonizer," *Our Pioneer Heritage* 16:237.
26. L. Duffin, "History of Charity Artemesia Butler," 18.
27. "Spanish Fork," in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 824; Hillman, *Autobiography*, says in an entry for March 22, 1853, that on that date the Upper Settlement was formed into a branch with Pace as bishop, and Markham became bishop for Palmyra City.
28. An excellent discussion of the various branches of Utes living in Utah at the time the Mormons came is Janetski, *The Ute of Utah Lake*. See also O'Neill, "History of the Ute Indians."
29. Campbell, *Establishing Zion*, 100–101, 111.
30. Christy, "Open Hand and Mailed Fist," 224, 231–32.
31. "Walker War," in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 918–19.
32. T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*, 42.

33. Gottfredson, *Indian Depredations in Utah*, 57. Material dealing with the Walker War is found on pages 43–83.
34. Christy, “The Walker War,” 408.
35. Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 4:712 and 3:677.
36. Gottfredson, *Indian Depredations in Utah*, 59–74; Campbell, *Establishing Zion*, 111.
37. Brigham Young Letter to August Farnham, October 31, 1853, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:125.
38. “Spanish Fork,” in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 824.
39. A. Redd, *Lemuel Hardison Redd, Jr.*, 13.
40. *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 7. A monument honoring Fort Palmyra was erected in 1933 (6).
41. First Presidency, Eleventh General Epistle, April 10, 1854, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:132.
42. Utah County, Probate Docket Book 1, December 27, 1852, to September 1859, Utah County Courthouse, Provo, Utah.
43. T. Warner, *The Domingues-Escalante Journal*, 46.
44. Gottfredson, *Indian Depredations in Utah*, 83.
45. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 21–22.
46. *Ibid.*, 21.
47. Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Supply*, 12, 17–14, 25–29.
48. Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 3:676.
49. Brigham Young to Stephen Markham, June 15, 1857, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
50. Unruh, *The Plains Across*, 245.
51. Reynolds, “Green River Ferries”; Chadey, “Green River Ferries.” Chadey says that southwest from South Pass the overland trail “began to fan out” because of climate, grass conditions, fear of Mormons and Indians, and impatience, but that “seventy-five percent of the crossings were made in a 30-mile section of the river” (252). See map showing several approximate ferry sites in Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Bridger*, 45.
52. Journal History, May 19, 1854.
53. Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Bridger*, 65; Hilton, “Wild Bill” Hickman, 35–42.
54. Hilton, “Wild Bill” Hickman, 35–57; Hickman sketch in Van Wagoner and Walker, *A Book of Mormons*, 118–24; and Hosea Stout life sketch in Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 3:530–34.
55. Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Bridger*, 57–59. Thirty-nine men were called in October and that group left in early November, followed by another group of fifty-three that Elder Orson Hyde recruited.
56. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:519 (June 9, 1854).
57. Brown, *Life of a Pioneer*, 333.
58. Appleby, *Autobiography and Journal*.
59. Brown, *Life of a Pioneer*, 357. Brown confuses the chronology, saying the posse drove the mountaineers from the ferry after Washakie’s June 30th visit. But Stout’s journal says this posse activity occurred a few days after the June 15 visit by renegade Elisha Ryan and seven Shoshoni. Stout says the posse was 8 men, not 14 as Brown claims. We use Stout’s information because it was recorded closer in time to the events. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:521 (June 18, 1854).
60. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:514–22.
61. Brown, *Life of a Pioneer*, 340–41.
62. *Ibid.*, 345.
63. Stewart, *The California Trail*, 303, 309, 310, gives figures for California-bound travelers and says 1852 was 52,000, 1853 about 20,000, and 1854 some 12,000. Unruh in *The Plains Across* gives these figures: (1952) 50,000 for California and 10,000 for Utah; (1853) 20,000 and 8,000; (1854) 12,000 and 3,167; see his chart on page 85 and also pages 232, 240.
64. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 18–19, says that Charity and Keziah went with John for two summers to the Bridger area. He went to that general region in 1854 and 1855, but there is no evidence they were with him there in 1854.

Notes for Chapter 22, “Fort Saint Luke Residents”

1. Hicks, “History of Spanish Fork,” 11–12. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 51–55.
2. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 52–53.
3. Ibid., 51; *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 13.
4. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 52.
5. “Kenion Taylor (1831) and Olive Durfey (1834) Butler,” 2.
6. Olive was born June 28, 1834, in North Crosby, Upper Canada. Her parents were Royal Durfey and Lydia Ablass.
7. George Washington Sevey was born February 25, 1832, in Leroy, Genesee County, New York. In early records Sevey sometimes is spelled Sevy.
8. “Endowment House,” in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 230; John Lowe and Caroline Skeen Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA.
9. *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 13.
10. The map is in the files of La Rae Johnson of Spanish Fork, Utah.
11. Patriarchal Blessing of Sarah Adeline, January 1855, BFA.
12. Patriarchal Blessing of John Lowe Butler, Palmyra, February 26, 1855, BFA.
13. “Kenion Taylor (1831) and Olive Durfey (1834) Butler,” 3.
14. *Revised Ordinances of Spanish Fork City*, 1.
15. J. Clark, *Messages* 2:167.
16. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 53–54.
17. D. Johnson, *Brief History of Springville*, 30.
18. Aaron Johnson, Autobiography and Life Sketch.
19. Unruh, *The Plains Across*, 85; Mattes, in *The Great Platte River Road*, 23, says travelers across the trails in Nebraska in 1855 numbered about 5,000, but his figures include Mormon companies.
20. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 19.
21. Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Bridger*, 66.
22. Pulsipher, *Journal*, 51.
23. Grasshoppers caused most of the insect damage in pioneer Utah. Drought and grasshoppers historically have made joint appearances. See Bitton and Wilcox, “Grasshopper Problem.”
24. First President, Thirteenth General Epistle, October 29, 1855, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:177.
25. *Deseret Evening News*, May 13, 1875; Bitton and Wilcox, “Grasshopper Problem,” 342–43. “Lucy Ann Butler Barton,” 1.
26. Journal History, June 20, 1855.
27. Arrington, May, and Fox, *Building the City of God*, 63, and all of chapter 4, “Property On the Altar: The Consecration Movement of the 1850s,” 63–78.
28. Ibid., 65.
29. Deed book B, County Clerk’s Office, Utah County Courthouse, Provo, Utah, 355–56.
30. Kenion Taylor Butler Consecration Deed, January 1858, Utah County, Territorial Record Book H, pp. 163–64, microfilm, Utah County Recorder Office, Provo, Utah.
31. John and Caroline Skeen Butler Family Group Chart. BFA.
32. “First Icelandic Settlement,” *Treasures of Our Pioneer Heritage* 5:26–28. In 1938 the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers erected a lighthouse-shaped Icelandic monument at Ninth East on Canyon Road in Spanish Fork. It honors 15 Icelandic pioneers who settled in Spanish Fork between 1855 and 1860. They lived on the bench in the southeast part of town. See *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 15.
33. John mistakenly says that Keziah was married by then. He makes a point that Charity’s sister Keziah became upset about Charity moving away but then says that Charity and Wallace had barely left Spanish Fork when they met Keziah and Lemuel Redd returning from their trip as newlyweds to the Las Vegas Mission. John adds that a few days later Keziah gave birth to son Lemuel. But his facts are wrong. Lemuel and Keziah did not marry until two or three months after Charity married Wallace—in January 1856. Lemuel and Keziah went to Las Vegas in 1856 and their son Lemuel was born on October 5 in 1856, not 1855.

34. They later divorced. She remarried on October 4, 1862, to Amos Griswold Thornton.
35. John says November 14 rather than November 12, but family group sheets favor the November 12 date.
36. J. Clark, *Messages* 2:203 (December 10, 1856).
37. Spanish Fork Ward Record of Members, LDS Archives.
38. A. Redd, *Lemuel Hardison Redd, Jr.*
39. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 48; Hicks, "History of Spanish Fork," 9.
40. Utah County, Probate Docket Book 1, December 1855, April 23, 29, May 3 and 9, 1856.

Notes for Chapter 23, "Bishop of New Spanish Fork"

1. Markham, Palmyra's first branch or ward president, was ordained to be Palmyra's bishop on March 22, 1853, just before the Upper Settlement people moved down to Fort Palmyra. See "Spanish Fork," in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 824.
2. Hicks, "History of Spanish Fork," 12–13.
3. Brigham Young to Bishop John Lowe Butler and the Brethern of Palmyra and Spanish Fork City, May 29, 1886, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
4. See population figures in note 9 below.
5. Regarding the soil problem as a cause for removal, see "Palmyra," in Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 631.
6. Ward Meeting Minutes, Spanish Fork Record of Members, LDS Archives.
7. Spanish Fork High Priests Record Book B, 4, 12.
8. Brigham Young to John Lowe Butler, May 29, 1856, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
9. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, information before the June 1, 1856, entry. Church statistics compiled on August 6, 1855, list Palmyra's population as 371, Spanish Fork's as 113, for a total of 484 (Journal History, August 6, 1855). That year's immigrants had not arrived by the time of that counting. The 1860 federal census tallies just over 1,100 residents. An estimate of 500–550 for spring of 1856 therefore seems reasonable.
10. Brigham Young to John Lowe Butler, May 29, 1856.
11. *Ibid.*, and Arrington, L., *Great Basin Kingdom*, 148, uses the term "agricultural disasters."
12. Spanish Fork Ward Meeting Minutes, Spanish Fork Record of Members. George Wilkins filled a mission to England in 1871–72 and led a company of 602 immigrants back. In 1876 he filled a mission to Massachusetts and New Hampshire. He married his first wife, Catharine A. Lovett, in 1846; Caroline E. Butler was his second wife, and he married Mary M. Moyer in 1886. A neighbor said of George: "We have known him as a wise and careful counselor, a kind and affectionate husband, a true, loving and devoted father and an honorable citizen, neighbor, and friend." (Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 2:162.)
13. Burr, Map of Survey of the Indian Reservation, 1856.
14. Journal History, June 19, 1857; Hicks, "History of Spanish Fork."
15. The explanation of pioneer bishops' responsibilities that follows is based on discussions in the biweekly bishops meetings in Salt Lake City, as recorded in Presiding Bishops Meetings with Bishops, 1849–1884, LDS Archives. On the work of bishops, see Hartley, "Edward Hunter." An excellent biography of a pioneer-era bishop is L. Arrington's study of prominent Salt Lake bishop Edwin D. Wooley—*From Quaker to Latter-day Saint*. A survey history of the office of bishop is Beecher, "The Office of Bishop."
16. Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 208.
17. Hartley, "Ordained and Acting Teachers."
18. Mangum and Blumell, *Mormons' War on Poverty*, 46–74.
19. John does not make clear who Captain Davis and family were. Spanish Fork's 1860 census lists three men named Davis: Daniel H. Davis—not the Mormon Battalion captain who was Daniel C. Davis and died in 1850—has no family; Charles A. Davis, listed with a family, became Spanish Fork's postmaster (see Esshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*, 837). The most likely candidate in the census—if the Davis John mentions had not moved by then—is John T. Davies, who has a family and whose occupation is listed as "mariner."

20. Types of tithing and the complex processes entailed in collecting, storing, and dispersing the tithes are explained in detail in Hartley, “Edward Hunter.”

21. For bishops to settle tithing, instead of higher officers, was a program newly implemented about the time John became bishop. See Hartley, “Ward Bishops.”

22. Arrington, L., “The Mormon Tithing House.”

23. Brigham Young To The Bishops, South, June 12, 1856, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.

24. As recalled in First Presidency, Fourteenth General Epistle, December 10, 1856, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:203.

25. J. Clark, *Messages* 2:189 (July 9, 1856).

26. J. Clark, *Messages* 2:204 (December 10, 1856).

27. Young to Butler, September 8, 1856, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.

28. Hartley, “Priesthood Reorganization of 1877.”

29. Defining who Mormonism’s “rugged frontiersmen” were is a highly subjective judgement. Several strong men were lawmen and militia figures but are not usually considered in the same breath with Rockwell, Stout, Lee, Egan, and Hanks. Of the other category, three notables served in ecclesiastical positions: Charles C. Rich, who became an apostle; Robert T. Burton, who served in the Presiding Bishopric; and Lot Smith, who became a stake president in Arizona.

30. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 19.

31. Clark, *Messages* 2:202–204 (December 10, 1856).

32. Lemuel Hardison Redd and Keziah Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA.

33. Arrington and Cornwall, *Rescue*, 28, 33.

34. *Ibid.*, 8.

35. Hicks, “History of Spanish Fork,” 9.

36. L. Duffin, “History of Charity Artemesia Butler,” 20.

37. Arrington and Cornwall, *Rescue*, 24; Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, 131, 140. About 67 out of 500 in the Willie company died and 135 of 576 (about one-fourth) in the Martin company; see L. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 158.

Notes for Chapter 24, “Reformation and Plural Wives”

1. The most thorough examination of the reformation is Peterson, “The Mormon Reformation.” A shortened version is Peterson’s “The Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857.” For a study of the reformation’s primary promoter, see Sessions, *Mormon Thunder*, especially chapters 16 through 19.

2. Humphries, “Missionaries to the Saints,” 76–77.

3. John Young’s obituary, *Journal History*, April 27, 1870. He was ten years older than Brigham, had served as a stake president in the 1840s in Kirtland, arrived in Utah in the second company in 1847, was sustained as president of the Church’s high priest quorum in February 1849, and was sustained to be one of the patriarchs on October 8, 1853. At the October 1856 general conference, he was again sustained as high priests quorum president.

4. Quinn, “Rebaptism at Nauvoo,” 226–28.

5. Statistical table in *Journal History*, August 6, 1855.

6. *Journal History*, September 28, 1856.

7. *Ibid.*, September 29, 1856; Ward Meeting Minutes.

8. John’s autobiographical account makes it sound as if ward rebaptisms took place after his rebaptism during the Salt Lake conference in October. But it is not plausible that the entire ward was rebaptized twice within a month’s time—during the September 27–29 conference and then after John returned from Salt Lake in early October. Lists of people rebaptized and the dates, however, do not exist. Without evidence of a second mass rebaptism in October, the one held in late September, which contemporary sources document, seems to be the only community-wide one John conducted.

9. A list of bishops rebaptized is in Presiding Bishopric Minutes of Meetings with Bishops, October 8, 1856. Regarding the font, Brigham Young wrote to Thomas S. Smith on October 7, 1856, and said, “We have finished a font near the endowment house, which has been dedicated, and is now used for baptisms,” in Brigham Young Papers.

10. Peterson, "The Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857," 75.
11. Ibid., 70.
12. Ibid., 71–72; "The Reformation 1856–57," 20.
13. Peterson, "The Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857," 76–77.
14. Edward Hunter, Presiding Bishopric Minutes of Meetings with Bishops, November 25, 1856.
15. Peterson, "The Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857," 72.
16. Hicks, "History of Spanish Fork," 13. Hicks suggests that murders in Utah County were linked to reformation zeal, but says there were none committed in Spanish Fork.
17. First Presidency, Fourteenth General Epistle, December 10, 1856, in J. Clark, Messages 2:206.
18. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*, 92.
19. Ellsworth, *Dear Ellen*, 38.
20. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*, 90.
21. Philo Allen, who married John's daughter Sarah Adeline that same day, was one of the witnesses; Endowment House Sealings, Book C, 90.
22. Ann Hughes Harrow was born on February 15, 1795, and was "from" Nestlin or Neaton, Cheshire, England, the last of seven children born to Robert Hughes and Alice Edwards. She had been married to Lewis Harrow, who had died in the West Indies. They had a daughter, Ester. Ann embraced the gospel at an unknown date and came to Salt Lake City. Ann's brothers and sisters were: Lewis, married Mary Neck, four children; John (died as an infant); Robert; Andrew, married Ellen Hackersley, five children; Elizabeth Allis, married Thomas Johnson, six children; and Ann.
23. Lovisa Hamilton was born on September 25, 1837 (church records say September 9), in Mendon, Adams County, Illinois. Lovisa's father became a Seventy in 1839 (Journal History, May 6, 1839). Her family was at Charleston, Lee County, Iowa, on April 30, 1845, when son Andrew B. was born (Early Church Members File, LDS Family History Library). Lovisa was baptized on April 6, 1848 (family group chart for Moroni Downey Olney and Lovisa Hamilton, BFA). The family came west in 1852 in the Bryant Jolly Company. An Andrew M. Hamilton sketch is in Esshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*, 911. Later the Hamiltons lived in Richfield, Utah. Hamiltons are mentioned in D. Johnson, *Brief History of Springville*, 17.
24. Esther was born on August 6, 1839, in Stalybridge, Cheshire, England. Father and Mother Ogden were keepers of the Angel Inn. They rented the hall to Mormon missionaries and were converted by the singing and preaching of the men. Edward was baptized on September 17, 1848, followed by the rest of his family who were old enough, including Sarah, on October 10, 1848. The Ogdens emigrated from England in 1853 aboard the *Camillus*. By this time the father was blind. They came west in the John Brown wagon train that left Keokuk, Iowa, on July 1, 1853. Edward died on the east bank of either the Bear or the Weber River on September 7, 1853, and was buried by bonfire light in a shallow grave. Next morning, Mother Ogden had her children gather rocks to cover the grave to protect it from wolves. The large family settled in Salt Lake City and survived the hard winter in a dugout. Perhaps Esther married so young because there were too many children at home for her widowed mother to support.
25. "Biographical Sketch of Edward G. Ogden," typescript, LDS Archives.
26. The LDS Church Historical Department's Crossing the Ocean Index lists an Ogden family from Mottram in Logdendale, Cheshire, who sailed in 1853 on the *Camillus*: innkeeper Edward, 40, Samuel 17, William, 15, Esther E., 13, Lucy, 13, Elizabeth, 10, Edward, 5, Mary, 3, and Sarah, 44. The Crossing the Plains Index lists a man named Ogden in the John Brown Company dying in 1853 at the Bear River. Esther's youngest sister, Mary Garratt Ogden, married Brigham Young. During the "Move South," despite Esther's divorce from John Butler, the Ogden family stayed at Spanish Fork in their wagon and in a dugout. They returned to Salt Lake City, but in 1859 Esther's brothers William and Edward worked in Spanish Fork. In 1861 the Ogdens moved to Kaysville. On February 16, 1861, Esther was sealed to John Letham as his plural wife, and she later married William Bosworth. See John Lowe Butler and Esther Emily Ogden Family Group Sheet, and group sheet for John Letham and Helen Peterson, in Esther Ogden File, BFA.
27. Sarah Adeline was age 16 when she married Allen. Apparently Bishop Butler performed the ceremony in President Heber C. Kimball's office; see "Sarah Adeline Butler Allen Tuttle," 1.

28. S. Rogers, "The Life of Henrietta Seton Blyth"; Endowment House Sealings, Book C, 226.
29. Hicks, "History of Spanish Fork." Regarding plural marriages then taking place, a member of Bishop Butler's ward, Margaret Adams, wrote to her non-member brother: "Brother George, it is nothing to see a man having 5 or 6 wives near and maintain them respectable and provides for them. But here you can't see any prostitutes nor women walking the streets making their living by it." Margaret Adams Letter, June 26, 1858, photograph of holograph, LDS Archives.
30. Percentages of polygamous households varied from one settlement to the next. Studies suggest that 40 percent of St. George households were polygamous compared to a 15 percent rate in Springville and 5 percent in South Weber. See Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*, 91.
31. When the author became a full-time historian in 1972, the literature on polygamy was sparse. Since then, there has been an avalanche of writings on the topic. See Scott's bibliography, "Mormon Polygamy." A full study of St. George polygamy is Logue, *A Sermon in the Desert*.
32. Most studies deal with the later period, particularly the 1880s, when St. George had perhaps 40 percent of its families living polygamously, Bountiful nearly 30 percent, Springville 15 percent, and Orderville high at 67 percent. See Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy*, 137.
33. Journal History, January 14, 1857. This grant repealed a previous grant of December 27, 1855, to Aaron Johnson, William Miller, and John Berry and their associates.
34. Reuben Allred family group sheet shows John L. Allred was born in Spanish Fork, which seems to date the Allreds stay with the Butlers.
35. Young to Butler, February 1, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
36. Young to Butler, February 11, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
37. Young to Butler, February 19, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
38. Young to Butler, March 3, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
39. Hamilton, Diary.
40. Philo Dibble displayed panoramic, painted scenes from Church history and had hopes of establishing a Church museum. Two known scenes were of Joseph Smith addressing the Nauvoo Legion and of the martyrdom. Each scene filled 128 feet of canvas. Dibble had Robert Campbell design the scenes and Campbell and William Major paint them. See Journal History, July 11, 1848. The Historian's Office Journal on April 22, 1862, notes that Dibble was exhibiting paintings and lecturing (LDS Archives).
41. Hamilton, Diary, May 4 and June 6, 1857.
42. Aaron Johnson to John Lowe Butler, June 13, 1857, and Johnson to C. B. Hancock, July 10, 1857, in Cook, *Aaron Johnson Correspondence*, 28–29, 40–42.
43. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, July 5, 1857.
44. Young to Butler, June 22, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
45. Presiding Bishop, Circular Letter, Outgoing Correspondence, LDS Archives.

Notes for Chapter 25, "War Clouds and the Indian Farm"

1. Spanish Fork's dance is mentioned Hamilton, Diary, July 24, 1857. B. H. Roberts provides a good discussion of the arrival of the riders and the July 24 celebrations in *Comprehensive History of the Church* 4:234–38.
2. The standard monograph about the Utah War is Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*. See also Charles Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, 185–237, and Hafen and Hafen, *The Utah Expedition*.
3. Hamilton, Diary, August 4, 1857.
4. Hansen, "Nauvoo Legion in Utah," 10, 12–14.
5. *Ibid.*, 18–22.
6. *Ibid.*, 16–34.
7. Aaron Johnson to Albert K. Thurber, April 17, 1857, in Muster Rolls, Peteetneet Military District, Utah Territory Military Records.
8. Aaron Johnson to Daniel H. Wells, April 21, 1857, Military Records.
9. Aaron Johnson to Captain John L. Butler, June 13, 1857, Military Records.

10. Peteetneet Military District Muster Rolls, June 13, 1857, Military Records.
11. Peteetneet District, Muster Roll of Field and Staff, June 15, 1857, Military Records.
12. Aaron Johnson to Charles B. Hancock, July 10, 1857, Military Records.
13. "General Orders #5," July 31, 1857, copy in Military Records.
14. Proclamation, August 5, 1857, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
15. Brigadier General's Office to Col. W. B. Pace, August 13, 1857, Military Records; see also Stott, Search for Sanctuary
16. Hamilton, Diary, August 15, 1857.
17. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, August 17, 1857; Alan Johnson, *Aaron Johnson*, 460.
18. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, August 17, 1857, included in Spanish Fork Ward Record of Members, LDS Archives.
19. Ibid., August 18, 1857.
20. Ibid., August 25, 1857.
21. Ibid.
22. D. Johnson, *Brief History of Springville*, 44.
23. General Order, September 18, 1857, issued by Colonel William B. Pace and James C. Snow of the Provo Military District, Military Records.
24. "Indian Farm at Spanish Fork," 126–27. Beeton, "Experiment with Indian Farms." The farm, originally 640 acres, was expanded to cover 12,380 acres in early 1856; see Burr, Map of Spanish Fork Indian Reservation, 1856.
25. Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 48, and Larson, *Outlines History of Utah*, 153–55. A Daughters of the Utah Pioneers marker erected in 1935, located in Leland, Utah, says that the Spanish Fork Indian Farm Reservation included twenty square miles extending from the state highway and Spanish Fork River to Utah Lake. It was created in 1854. The reservation was closed in 1867 when the Indians removed to the Uintah Basin. "The Spanish Fork Indian Farm Reservation," *An Enduring Legacy* 2:57–58; *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 5.
26. Joseph Ellison Beck was born May 31, 1810, in New Jersey, married Hannah Forsyth, became a Philadelphia meat-packer, and he and his wife converted to Mormonism in the 1840s. Reaching Utah in 1849, they moved from Salt Lake City to Spanish Fork in 1852. Beck was known as "Pappy" by the Indians. His family homesteaded near Benjamin, Utah. He died October 13, 1903. Jensen, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 2:594, and "Joseph Ellison Beck," *An Enduring Legacy* 1:159–61.
27. "Indian Farm at Spanish Fork," 129.
28. Ibid., 127. Later excavations in the area for roads turned up skeletons, beads, and trinkets just north of where the agency house stood, indicating that Indians once were settled there.
29. Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 47–52; D. Bigler, "Garland Hurt."
30. Aaron Johnson, "General Report," Military Records.
31. Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 48–49.
32. Ibid., 48.
33. Garland Hurt report in Senate Document 42, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 94–95, as reprinted in Brooks, *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 251–53.
34. Aaron Johnson, "General Report."
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.; Hamilton, Diary, September 27, 1857.
38. Aaron Johnson, "General Report."
39. Ibid.
40. Garland Hurt to Col. A. S. Johnston, October 24, 1857, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs Papers, Utah Superintendency, 1849–1880, National Archives. Regarding Hurt's being disguised as an Indian, see John T. Mowry to John T. Hardy, September 27, 1857, in Aaron Johnson, "General Report."
41. Aaron Johnson, "General Report."
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Garland Hurt to Col. A. S. Johnston, October 24, 1857; Beeton, "Experiment with Indian Farms," 22–26.
49. Journal History, September 29, 1857.
50. Aaron Johnson, "General Report."
51. For reference to the Parrish-Potter murders, see Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church* 4:176, note 26, and Alan Johnson, *Aaron Johnson*, 560–63.
52. Brigham Young to Aaron Johnson and John Butler, October 5, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
53. Brigham Young to Superintendent of Indian Affairs, October 16, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
54. Brigham Young to G. W. Armstrong, December 5, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
55. Spanish Fork Ward, Record of Members, Ordinance lists dated July 5 and September 27, 1857, LDS Archives.
56. Hamilton, Diary, September 1857 entries.
57. Ibid.
58. First Presidency, Fourteenth General Epistle, December 10, 1856, in J. Clark, *Messages* 2:208.
59. Jensen, "Forgotten Relief Societies"; Spanish Fork Relief Society Account Book, 1857–89, LDS Archives.
60. Spanish Fork Relief Society Minutes, September 14, 1857. Catherine A. Wilkins was second counselor.

Notes for Chapter 26, "Utah War Disruptions"

1. Hamilton, Diary, September and October 1857 entries.
2. Ibid., October and November 1857 entries.
3. Ibid., October, November, and December 1857 entries.
4. Ibid.
5. Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 109.
6. Regarding the burning of the forts, see Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Bridger*, 99. After Mormons paid Jim Bridger a half-payment of \$4,000 on August 3, 1855, they occupied the fort and renovated it. The final \$4,000 was paid to Bridger's partner, Louis Vasquez, in October 1858; Gowans and Campbell, *Fort Bridger*, 63–78.
7. Charles Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston*. Furniss uses the figure of 2,400 in *Mormon Conflict*, 156.
8. Some enterprising soldiers salvaged some of the salt and sold it in camp at high prices; see Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 151.
9. Journal History, February 8, 1858.
10. Ibid., February 9, 1858.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Young to Butler, March 11, 1858, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
15. Hamilton, Diary, March 1858 entries.
16. Hamilton, Diary.
17. Brigham Young "To The Officers North of Great Salt Lake City, Ecclesiastical, Civil, Military," March 24, 1858, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Archives.
18. Hamilton, Diary, March 28, 1858. Mormon leaders sent scouts to explore the White Mountains and other less-explored regions of the Great Basin to locate possible sanctuaries into which the Saints might escape if war broke out. See Stott, *Search for Sanctuary*.
19. Poll, "The Move South," 68, 71.
20. Brigham Young to John Lowe Butler, March 24, 1858, Brigham Young Papers. See the same instructions in Young to Aaron Johnson, March 24, 1858, in Cook, *Aaron Johnson Correspondence*, 121–22.

21. Poll, "The Move South," 77.
22. Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 2:594.
23. Hamilton, Diary, April 11 and 15, 1858.
24. Journal History, April 24, 1858.
25. Ibid., May 23, 1858; Utah County Deed Book E, 242, County Records Office, Provo, Utah. The land was located on the west side of lot 3 in block 4, Spanish Fork Survey.
26. February 2, 1858, Surveyors Certificate, Spanish Fork city survey of Building Lots, Lots 2 and 3 in Block 7 for 116.5/160.
27. Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 197. By May 21, 1858, the Nauvoo Legion had disbanded. Governor Cumming reported that day that there were no bands of armed Mormons in the territory except some men under his control in Echo Canyon; see Journal History, May 21, 1858.
28. Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 87.
29. Ibid., 202.
30. Poll, "The Move South," 82.
31. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, May 23, 1858.
32. Ibid., June 20, 1858.
33. Ibid., June 27, 1858.
34. Ibid., July 4, 1858; Arrington, L., Great Basin Kingdom, 188–90; "Currency Association," *Our Pioneer Heritage* 1 (1959): 36–37.
35. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, July 11, 1858, note that orders from Church headquarters cancelled public LDS meetings. According to Poll in "The Move South," 84, "No ward meetings were held in Salt Lake City until late in August 1858, and by instructions from the First Presidency, ward meetings throughout most of Utah were held only on an as-needed basis until late in the year."
36. Presiding Bishopric Minutes of Meetings with Bishops, October 28 and December 9, 1858.

Notes for Chapter 27, "The Final Two Years"

1. Hughes, *Life of Archibald Gardner*. Hughes notes that Gardner later built a much needed gristmill at a cost of about \$13,000.
2. On December 17, 1858, Spanish Fork passed an ordinance granting Gardner sufficient water to run a grist mill in the city. See Hughes, *Life of Archibald Gardner*, 71.
3. Probably Arthur Reed, listed in the 1860 census of Spanish Fork as a millwright, age 62.
4. Young to Butler, June 3, 1858, Brigham Young Papers.
5. Moorman and Sessions, *Camp Floyd and the Mormons*.
6. Charles Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, 192, 218–19.
7. Alexander and Arrington, "Camp in the Sagebrush," 9–10; Godfrey, "Women of Johnston's Army," 173.
8. Stowers and Ellis, "Charles A. Scott's Diary," 175–76.
9. Arrington, L., *Great Basin Kingdom*, 197. Charles Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, 219.
10. Hughes, *Life of Archibald Gardner*, 71.
11. Unfortunately, Moorman and Sessions in *Camp Floyd and the Mormons* misread John's autobiography which caused them to write mistakenly that "One of the opportunistic Mormon suppliers of hard spirits was John Lowe Butler, who claimed that he exchanged liquor 'for clothes, pistols and one thing and the other . . .,'" 82–83.
12. Arrington, L., *Great Basin Kingdom*, 198.
13. Alexander and Arrington, "Camp in the Sagebrush," 16.
14. Arrington, L., *Great Basin Kingdom*, 198.
15. One soldier noted in December 1858 that "Desertions are quite frequent among the soldiers at this fort, and scarcely a night passes without one or more taking 'French leave.' They all strike for California. . . . No pursuit is made, and the fellows who are dissatisfied walk off in open day without the least fear of being retaken." Langley, *To Utah With the Dragoons*, 129.
16. Moorman and Sessions, *Camp Floyd and the Mormons*, 197–200; Langley, *To Utah With the Dragoons*, 98–100, 104, 127.

NOTES

17. Some family group charts of John and eighth wife Henrietta Blythe list a middle child, Caroline, born in 1859 and who died in 1875. Where this information came from is a mystery. Most Butler descendants and Henrietta's descendants through her second husband, John Powell, maintain that Henrietta and John Butler had only two children, Isabella (1858) and John William (1860). Possibly Henrietta had a stillborn child, which gave rise to this idea of a middle child. See S. Rogers, "The Life of Henrietta Seton Blythe," 5.

18. Hamilton, Diary, February 13 and 14, 1859.
19. Journal History, May 5, 1859.
20. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, May 8, 1859.
21. Beecher, "The Office of Bishop," 10. Pottawattamie High Council Minutes 1848–52.
22. Hartley, "Organization of Wards and Stakes."
23. See manuscript histories of San Bernardino, Nephi, Manti, and Spanish Fork in LDS Archives. Beecher, "The Office of Bishop," 22–23.
24. Brigham Young Sermon, April 8, 1862, *Journal of Discourses* 10:33.
25. Orson Hyde Sermon, April 7, 1862, *Journal of Discourses* 10:31.
26. Hartley, "Organization of Wards and Stakes," 53.
27. Spanish Fork Ward Minutes, May 15, 1859.
28. Filed with Brigham Young Diary, 1859, LDS Archives, no specific date indicated.
29. Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 1:520.
30. Spanish Fork Ward, Record of Members. Marriages Bishop Butler performed:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Groom</i>	<i>Bride</i>
02/13/57	Joseph Matteson Thomas	Lovisa Colton
04/18/57	Henry Sykes	Harriet Luce
08/23/57	William Roche	Ruth James
10/14/57	Gudman Gudmanson	Mary Jacobs
11/07/57	Henry Hamilton	Jennet Johnston
—	George Carlyle	Ann Giles
1857	Jn. W. Snell	Ann Lucilla Beck
1857	Albert Gay	Mary Ann Dorrity
1857	John Bushby	—
1857	Thomas C. Martin	Eliza Jenkins
02/04/58	James Adams	Martha Moffett
02/21/58	Wm. Lunchford	Mary Ann James
02/22/58	Wm. Creer	Sarah Miller
02/22/58	John Banks	Mary Creer
05/20/58	George Gee	Christiana Steward
05/23/58	Wesley W. Jolley	Mary Ann Chambers
07/28/58	Isaiah M. Coombs	Fanny McLean
09/09/58	William Monroe	Emily Davis
09/30/58	Isaac Lowe	Mary Slater Tasker
10/12/58	Philip Sikes	Margaret Blackwell
10/13/58	Walter T. Barney	Sarah Matilda Farr
11/19/58	David Y. Sharp	Ann Clements
01/23/59	Amos Hawks	Mary Malinda Wight
01/23/59	Jas. Eli Ashcroft	Lavinia Elizabeth Fullmer
02/13/59	Geo. B. Ogervie	Jane M Austin
03/08/59	Duncan McIsaac	Caroline Reese

31. Beck, "Family History of Joseph Ellison Beck." Indian Agent Jacob Forney brought sixteen children from southern Utah and had them with him in Salt Lake City on May 5, 1859. See Brooks, *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 253–60, 264.

32. Mayer, *Reminiscences and Diary*.
33. *Journal History*, October 9, 1859.
34. Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 82; Spanish Fork Relief Society Account Book, 1857–89.
35. E. Warner, *History of Spanish Fork*, 72. The visitors were Apostles Charles C. Rich and Erastus Snow.
36. 1860 Federal Census for Spanish Fork, Utah.
37. Young to Butler, March 26, 1860, Brigham Young Papers.

Notes for Chapter 28, “Life Worn Out Early”

1. O. Smith, “John Lowe Butler I, His Testimony.” Olive here recorded what she remembered her father, John Lowe Butler II, telling her. That John I “turned blue” indicates possible heart disease.
2. Author’s conversation with Dr. Quentin Harris, February 18, 1993. Dr. Harris said that John’s boyhood rheumatic fever could have been related to rheumatic heart disease.
3. Hatch, *Mother Jane’s Story*, 8.
4. “Old Pioneer Cemetery Monument,” *Historical Monuments Located In or Near Spanish Fork, Utah*, 11. A marker erected there in 1941, says: “Pioneers were buried here between 1851 and 1866 when this cemetery was abandoned.” Many bodies were removed and interred in the present-day Spanish Fork City Cemetery, including that of John Lowe Butler.
5. Hamilton Diary, April 10, 1860; 1860 Federal Census for Spanish Fork, Utah. A child named Caroline, which some family records erroneously say was born to Henrietta in 1859, never was born or else was stillborn (see note 17, Chapter 27).
6. 1860 Federal Census for Spanish Fork, Utah. The top ten residents and their total taxation valuations were farmer John W. Berry, \$7,500; farmer Cyrus Snell, \$5,620; farmer Stephen Markham, \$5,000; farmer Joseph Beck, \$4,300; merchant Erastus Curtis, \$3,700; miller Archibald Gardner, \$3,200; wagon maker William Holt, \$2,650; merchant William Draper, \$2,200; millwright Arthur Reed, \$1,700; and farmer William Pace, \$1,700. Berry’s real estate valuation, \$5,000, was the highest. The wealthiest person was credited with owning the Spanish Fork Indian Farm, so he is excluded from the list: Andrew Humphreys, Indian Agent, had real estate tax-valued at \$20,000.
7. Utah County Probate Record A, June 25, 1861, January 9 and March 14, 1864, Utah County Clerk’s Office, Provo, Utah.
8. S. Rogers, “The Life of Henrietta Seton Blyth,” 5.
9. Dalton, *History of Iron County Mission*, 344.
10. L. Redd, *The Utah Redds*, 366–67.
11. Dalton, “Life and Times of John Lowe Butler II,” 38.
12. Thurber, “History of John Lowe Butler II”; Barton, “Lucy Ann Butler Barton”; L. Redd, *The Utah Redds*, 375.
13. Spanish Fork Relief Society Account Book, 1857–1889, entries for early 1860s; John Lowe Butler and Ann Hughes Family Group Sheet, BFA; “Alvaretta Farozine Butler,” 135; E. Little, *Diaries and Autobiography*.
14. Moroni Downey Olney and Lovisa Hamilton Family Group Chart, BFA.
15. S. Rogers, “The Life of Henrietta Seton Blyth,” 4–7.
16. *Ibid.*, 5, 8.
17. *Ibid.*, 8. Regarding healing blessings administered by women, see Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 67–68, and Newell, “Gifts of the Spirit,” 118–19. The standard history of Robert T. Burton does not mention this event; see Seegmiller, “*Be Kind to the Poor.*”
18. Spanish Fork Relief Society Minutes, Book 2.
19. S. Rogers, “The Life of Henrietta Seton Blyth,” 6.
20. E. Little, *Diaries and Autobiography*.
21. Sarah Lancaster Butler Obituary, *Deseret News*, October 25, 1900.
22. Butler family genealogy charts state that John and Caroline were “sealed” on September 23, 1843, in Nauvoo. John said he was sealed to Caroline and her sister Charity Skeen by December 1844. No temple was operational then. It is not certain they had received the temple endowment by then, a prerequisite to temple marriages. John received an endowment in the Nauvoo Temple on December 15, 1845, but possibly this was a reendowment. He was sealed to the two Sarah

Lancasters just before leaving Nauvoo. Caroline received an endowment or reendowment on August 21, 1855, the date when she and John were sealed—or resealed—in celestial marriage. By then all of their children had been born. In 1881 the children, apparently uncertain about who, if any, of them had been “born in the covenant” because of the parents’ pre-temple sealing, had the sealing ordinances performed in the St. George Temple.

23. L. Duffin, “History of Thorntons, Early Life in Pinto, etc.,” 23.
24. Ibid., 23–24; Reuben Warren Allred and Lucy Ann Butler Family Group Chart, BFA.
25. On November 6, 1868, a Farm Land Survey indicated Kenion was surveying nearly 29 acres, and other entries show he owned 21.86 acres touching the Spanish Fork River on its north edge. See Utah County Deed Book J, pages 177 and 288, County Recorder’s Office, Provo, Utah.
26. “Kenion Taylor (1831) and Olive Durfey (1834) Butler,” 6.
27. Taylor enrolled as a second lieutenant who was fifth in command in Captain Caleb W. Haws’ unit of cavalry riders. His unit mustered in on August 10, 1866, and shortly headed for Sanpete County. On August 16 he transferred to Col. L. John Nuttall’s cavalry detachment at Payson and took command of twelve of the detachment’s sixty men. Col. Nuttall’s cavalry rode to Sanpete County and then spent three months in Sevier and Paiute counties. Taylor’s detachment was mustered out on October 24, 1866. See Utah Territorial Militia Muster Rolls, Calvary Detachment, Second Division Nauvoo Legion, entries August through October 1866, microfilm, Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.
28. Hatch, *Mother Jane’s Story*, 4, 14.
29. Kenion Taylor Butler Obituary, *Deseret News*, May 26, 1886; “Kenion Taylor (1831) and Olive Durfey (1834) Butler.”
30. L. Duffin, “History of Thorntons, Early Life in Pinto, etc.”
31. L. Redd, *The Utah Redds*; A. Redd, *Lemuel Hardison Redd, Jr.*
32. “Phoebe Malinda Butler Sevy,” *Our Pioneer Heritage* 16:246–49. “George Washington Sevy, Colonizer,” *Our Pioneer Heritage* 16:229–43; “Thomas Sevy,” in *Alter, Utah, The Storied Domain*, 393–94.
33. “Alvaretta Farozine Butler,” 135.
34. “Sarah Adeline Butler Allen Tuttle,” typescript, BFA; Philo Allen and Sarah Adeline Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA; “Sarah Adeline Butler” in Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* 3:38.
35. D. Miller, *Hole-in-the-Rock*.
36. Dalton, “History of John Lowe Butler I and John Lowe Butler II”; Dalton, “The Life and Times of John Lowe Butler II,” 61; Thurber, “History of John Lowe Butler II”; O. Smith, “My Father and Mother.”
37. Thurber, “History of John Lowe Butler II”; Dalton, “The Life and Times of John Lowe Butler II,” 61; O. Smith, “My Father and Mother”; Sorensen, *Simon Baker and His Descendants*, 142–43, 666, 669, 672–76; K. Butler, *The Family of John Topham*, 3–5; Romney, “The James Butler Family”; Karl D. Butler, “Life and Death of James Butler.”
38. Joseph Penn Barton and Lucy Ann Butler Family Group Sheet, BFA; Meldrum, “History of Joseph Penn Barton.”
39. “Mr. Thomas Butler Family Record, Corrected from History written by his father,” photocopy in BFA; Thomas Butler Obituary, *Deseret News*, April 16, 1892.
40. “Alvaretta Farozine Butler”; R. Butler, “Alvaretta Farozine Butler Robinson.”
41. Kirkland, “Lovisa Patience Butler”; Carma W. Austin to Don S. Austin, October 27, 1958, copy in BFA. Finn A. Thomsen to Vida Lund Austin, March 8, 1966, BFA, says that “had it been known that she [Lovisa Patience] had been Born in the Covenant, her sealing action [to John and Sarah] would undoubtedly have been disapproved.”
42. William McIntire and Lovisa Patience Butler Family Group Chart, BFA.
43. Powell, “Tragedy at Scofield.”
44. “John William Butler”; John William Butler and Betty Christina Bulow Family Group Chart, BFA.
45. Monument and headstone information is from author’s on-site notetaking and “Butler Plot in Spanish Fork Cemetery,” based in part on LaRae Johnson lists and drawings of June 8, 1964.

46. According to cemetery deeds, the plots do not match the headstones. Sarah Lancaster's grave is next to John's, and Caroline's is four plots north and one west. In order, north to south, the plots are for Thomas L. Butler, Kenion Taylor Butler, Elias Stockton (1861), Isabel Butler, Caroline E. Butler, Ann Harrow Butler, Sarah L. Butler, and John. Caroline's plot is next to Isabel's on the west. Spanish Fork City Cemetery, Cemetery Deeds, Lot 4, Plat A, John Lowe Butler Graves.

47. "Valley Pioneer's Tombstone Dismantled by Descendants," Provo, Utah, *Daily Herald*, August 19, 1964 (August 8 was the event). "Butler Family Enjoys Reunion; Opens Vault in Headstone of Former Spanish Fork Bishop," *The Spanish Fork Press*, August 13, 1964. "Gravestone Yields Rare Treasure," *Church News*, August 15, 1964.

48. Olive B. Smith, Statement, June 1967, and Jane Butler Nielson, Statement, March 3, 1972, in "The Cape or Cloak" in Dalton, "Life and Times of John Lowe Butler II," 82–83.

Notes for Chapter 29, "John Lowe Butler: an Assessment"

1. L. Duffin, "History of Thorntons, Early Life in Pinto, etc.," 23, 36.
2. Young to Butler, Feb. 19, 1857, Brigham Young Papers.
3. B. Duffin, "Extracts from 'A History of the Early Life of Charity Artemesia Butler Thornton . . .,'" 21.
4. Hatch, *Mother Jane's Story*, 15–16.
5. Recent histories that draw from and cite John's autobiography as a source of information include Bennett's *Mormons at the Missouri*, LeSueur's *Mormon War*, Moorman and Sessions' *Camp Floyd and the Mormons*, Walker's "Seeking the 'Remnant,'" Allred's, *Spanish Fork*, and Newell and Avery's *Mormon Enigma*.
6. The provenance of John's autobiography after his death is somewhat unclear. The best probability is that Caroline kept the autobiography for a period of time and then gave it to firstborn son Taylor. What is certain is that Taylor's son James Alma Butler donated the original to the LDS Church Historian's Office in 1904. Because no copy of the autobiography had been made for the family, Winona Richards and Erma Christensen Osmond went to the LDS Church Historian's Office in the 1930s to make a copy. One read out loud from the original while the other typed. They mimeographed the fifty-eight-page typescript. Later approximately sixty copies were sold to Butler descendants at a family reunion in Salt Lake City in 1974. Since then it has been recopied and even retyped several times. See Dalton, "History of John Lowe Butler I and John Lowe Butler II," 6.
7. "Butler-Lowe" in Simpson County Historical Society's *Simpson County, Kentucky*, 170–71.
8. "Family Honors Early Spanish Fork Bishop," *Spanish Fork Press*, June 27, 1991.
9. A family organization existed in the early 1900s. Several reunions were held in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. A John Lowe Butler Family Organization was created on July 11, 1959, in order "to perpetuate the memory and genealogy of the descendants and forefathers of John Lowe Butler I" by socializing, compiling family records, having temple ordinances done "in behalf of all his dead relatives," and passing on history and genealogy "to all his descendants." See "Preamble and Constitution of John Lowe Butler Family Organization," typescript copy in BFA.
10. His work with cattle became a slight legacy in the family. Several descendants, including some now living, are experts regarding horses.

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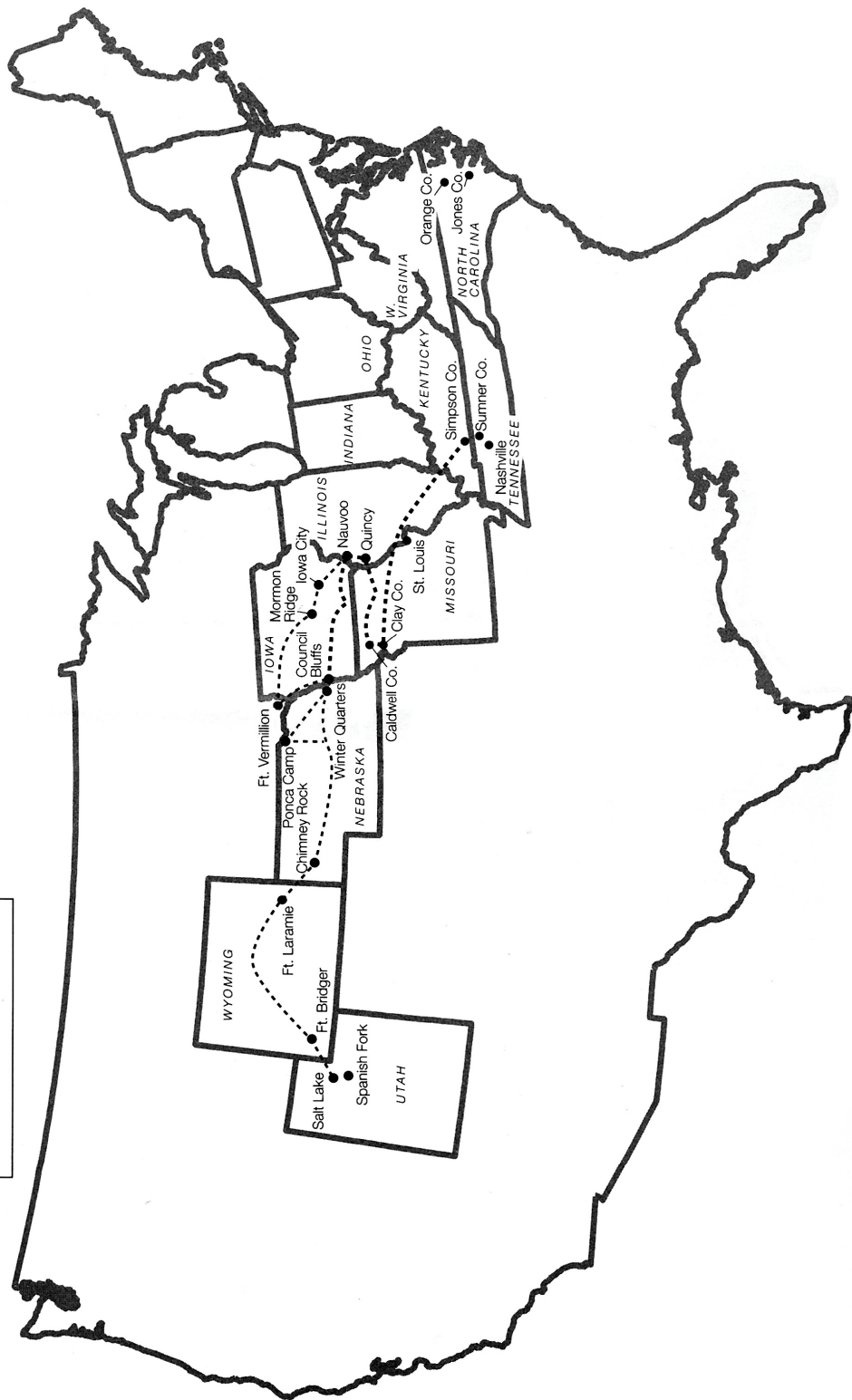
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