

CREATING A SHARED HISTORY: SERIAL NARRATIVES IN  
THE YOUNG WOMAN'S JOURNAL, 1889-1894

by  
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## ABSTRACT

"Creating a Shared History: Serial Narratives in The Young Woman's Journal, 1889-1894" is a cultural press history and textual analysis of contemporary indigenous serial literature in a nineteenth-century Mormon young women's periodical. It tests press historian Catherine Covert's assertions that some of the functions of the press are (1) to be a conservator of values, and (2) to engender harmony and affiliation among community members. The investigator places the Journal within the historical/cultural context from which it was written, and identifies specific messages in the serial narratives that encouraged the preservation of Mormon values and Mormon community affiliation.

The author gives a brief overview of Utah press history, discusses the social and historical forces that shaped nineteenth-century Mormon women, reviews the history of the Journal and its editor, Susa Young Gates, and analyzes the text of the Journal's first five years of serial narratives.

Some of the major affiliative themes were recitations of personal and group suffering and sacrifice for the religion; empathy for Mormons of other generations and

nationalities; defense of Mormon theology and lifestyle; and encouragement to marry within the Church.

Positive depictions of polygamy continued in the stories, even after Mormon leaders issued a public announcement that plural marriage would no longer be sanctioned. The tone of the narratives was ardently defensive of polygamy, and of plural wives, as if they had been written for the benefit of Mormon foes. Inasmuch as they were written exclusively for an audience of young Mormon women, however, many of whom were products of plurality, the defensive stance is notable. Despite recent studies that document continued Mormon participation in and allegiance to polygamy, this author suggests a disenchantment with the practice, at least among young Mormon women. As Covert's assertions would predict, the messages of the Journal's narratives sought to reduce that disenchantment and alienation and to foster bonding with the community.

Covert's assertions about the functions of the press are well supported by all aspects of this study. The thesis is also evidence that contemporary indigenous literature is a rich source of cultural history.

To Bill and my six wonderful children who have been so patient, loving, and understanding.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the Research Question

In recent years, there has been a call for new approaches to the study of journalism history. Catherine Covert was among the scholars who responded to that call with her discussion of new ways to perceive the role of the press in society. In "Journalism History and Women's Experience: A Problem in Conceptual Change,"<sup>1</sup> Covert examines the underlying assumptions of the dominant paradigm of traditional press histories. She says traditional journalism histories have been about winning, autonomy, and change. She says they focus on conflict, winners, the metropolitan media, the autonomous editor, and on progress and expansion. Covert argues that this historical interpretation of the press ignores some important aspects and contributions of the press.

The following study draws on several of Covert's explicit and implied assertions--specifically, that some of the significant and overlooked functions of the press are to be a conservator of values, and to engender

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<sup>1</sup>Catherine L. Covert, "Journalism History and Women's Experience: A Problem in Conceptual Change," Journalism History 8, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 2-6.

concord, harmony, affiliation, and a sense of binding and bonding among the members of a community. These assertions will be examined in the context of a specific press -- the Young Woman's Journal. The Journal was a nineteenth-century monthly, printed in Salt Lake City, Utah, with young Mormon women as its target audience. The study will examine the serial literature in the Journal from 1889 to 1894. It will seek to discover the specific ways in which the literary texts from this particular press demonstrate the efficacy of Covert's assertions and, as a social/cultural history, will concurrently reveal much about the Mormon female experience, and how it was perceived by Mormon women in the late nineteenth century.

#### Literature Review

Press histories have traditionally been institutional and/or biographical studies, focusing on such topics as names, dates, organizations, editorial themes, contributions of particular editors, and political leanings. There has been a thrust away from such institutional approaches among media historians in recent years. The new emphasis in the field is generally dated to the seminal essay by James Carey in 1974<sup>2</sup> in which Carey said

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<sup>2</sup>James W. Carey, "The Problem of Journalism History," Journalism History 1, no. 1 (Spring 1974), and for a discussion of the impact of Carey's article, see "'Putting the World at Peril': A Conversation with James W. Carey," Journalism History 12, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 38-53.

the traditional Whig and progressive interpretations of history are insufficient to an understanding of the relationship between the press and society. Press historians have since heeded Carey's call.<sup>3</sup> Many are now writing press histories "from the bottom up" in social histories of the press, or people's histories. They have studied, for example, the Spanish-language media, Native American journalism, and populist journalism.<sup>4</sup>

In her article "Toward a People's Press History,"<sup>5</sup> Lauren Kessler encourages this emphasis, especially the focus on alternative journalism and the dissident press, printed by "those on the fringes of American society."<sup>6</sup> She says this is an important contribution to history because "alternative journalism has been an essential part of this country's journalistic heritage."<sup>7</sup> Kessler argues that because people at odds with the prevailing norms of society were excluded from the mass press, and found expression in their own publications, "dissident journalism offers insights into the aspirations of those on the fringes as it contributes to our understanding of the

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<sup>3</sup> Lauren Kessler, "Toward A People's Press History," Clio Among the Media 18, no. 2 (January, 1986): 1-3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

major reform movements of the day."<sup>8</sup>

This history of the Young Woman's Journal fits Kessler's description of a dissident or alternative press in more than one way. It was the press of the highly controversial religious social movement known as Mormonism, and it was a women's press at a time of male press domination. The Journal "was produced by women for women," and it thus "serves as a document of a woman-centered reality."<sup>9</sup>

Catherine L. Covert's article, mentioned above, also argues that histories need to be written from women's experience. She says traditional (male) histories emphasize action at the expense of consequences, and rationality to the exclusion of feelings. Her proposed alternative social (or female) approach would focus on: (1) the sorrow, suffering and endurance of the historical characters; (2) the binding and bonding functions of the press in establishing feelings of harmony, affiliation and community; and (3) the cyclical character of revolving time, with repeated messages and reiterated values, as opposed to the progressive, linear model.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> This phrase was used to describe The Courant in Georgia Nesmith, "Gender and Progressivism: Voices from The Courant, 1899-1904," paper presented to the History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at the annual convention, San Antonio, Texas, August 1987.

A sharply contrasting implication comes with invocation of a different sense of time, time perceived as revolving in slow and majestic cycles, time marked by repeated episodes and recurring motifs. Such a sense, certain art historians argue, is particularly consonant with the repetitive rhythms of tasks anciently assigned to women: seeding, hoeing, weaving, spinning, rocking the cradle, tending to the meals. . . . It is provocative to imagine the subjects and themes that could emerge, were this sense of time imposed on journalism history. Certainly the essential patterning of journalism as repetitive, cyclical and periodic would leap to prominence. One would itch to study the implications of repeated messages over time, of repetitive forms, of reiterated values. In this view the press would signify also a conservator of values, not in its usual assumed role as enunciator of the new, as inciter of change.<sup>10</sup>

This investigator responds to Covert's article in two ways. First, it is written with the alternative or female perspective she suggests.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, it tests the validity of her assertions that (1) the press has a binding and bonding function in that it engenders concord, harmony and affiliation among members of a community; and (2) that it is a conservator of values.

A further body of literature relates to this study. As a result of the women's movement, the emphasis on

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>11</sup> As discussed above, this alternative or female approach focuses on the sorrow, suffering and endurance of the historical characters; the binding and bonding functions of the press in establishing feelings of harmony, affiliation and community; and the cyclical character of revolving time with repeated messages.

women's studies and the development of the discipline of Mormon studies, the Mormon women's press has received some attention from historians. The focus has been primarily on the Woman's Exponent, a feminist Mormon publication produced by Mormon women, that was published for 42 years, 1872-1914. While the work on the Exponent is about women, it tends to be in the traditional mode. That is, it is biographical and institutional, with an emphasis on social elites, and on what the women thought and wrote about particular social and political issues.

The Exponent has been the subject of both direct and indirect inquiry. Direct inquiries would include, for instance, Carol Cornwall Madsen's master's thesis in which she explores the editorial content of the Exponent, and her Ph.D. dissertation<sup>12</sup>, which is a biography of the Exponent's editor, Emmeline B. Wells. Indirect inquiry, using the Exponent as a text for researching themes, is even more common. Examples are Gail Farr Casterline's study of the images of early Mormon women,<sup>13</sup> and Lawrence Foster's article, which relies in part on the Exponent to

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<sup>12</sup> Carol Cornwall Madsen, "Remember the Women of Zion: A Study of the Editorial Content of the Woman's Exponent, A Mormon Woman's Journal" (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1977); and Carol Cornwall Madsen, "A Mormon Woman in Victorian America" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Utah, 1985).

<sup>13</sup> Gail Farr Casterline, "'In the Toils' or 'Onward for Zion:' Images of the Mormon Woman 1852-1890" (Master's thesis, Utah State University, 1974).



show the movement of Mormon women from frontier activism to neo-Victorian domesticity.<sup>14</sup> The Exponent has also been used as resource material for more general histories such as Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah edited by Claudia L. Bushman.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, the subject of this study, the Young Woman's Journal, has not received historical attention at all, other than a brief institutional history written by its founder, Susa Young Gates, in 1911.<sup>16</sup> This thesis will open the pages of a periodical that was published for 40 years, was a significant voice in the Mormon female community, and which has not yet been subjected to an historical study. It will reveal, in ways as yet unanswered, how these women perceived the Mormon female experience as of 1889 and up to 1894.

There were important similarities and differences between the Young Woman's Journal and the Woman's Exponent. Among the similarities was that both were written and edited by staunch and devout Mormon females. But there were differences in their goals. Susa's Journal

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<sup>14</sup> Lawrence Foster, "From Frontier Activism to Neo-Victorian Domesticity: Mormon Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," Journal of Mormon History, 6 (1979): 3-21.

<sup>15</sup> Claudia L. Bushman (Ed.), Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah (Cambridge, MA: Emmeline Press Limited, 1976).

<sup>16</sup> Susa Young Gates, History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association from November 1869 to June 1910 (Salt Lake City, UT: The Deseret News, 1911).

was launched for the specific purposes of sponsoring local literature,<sup>17</sup> and providing a vehicle of "instruction and encouragement"<sup>18</sup> for the young women in the Church. The Exponent also had several specific purposes "announced at its inception and adhered to throughout its forty-two-year career:"<sup>19</sup> Among them was to "furnish to the world an accurate view of the grossly misrepresented women of Utah."<sup>20</sup>

These statements of goals reveal a difference in tone between the two publications. The Exponent was a feminist publication--expounding the rights and worth of women generally and of Mormon women, in particular. The Exponent had causes--among them, to proclaim the dignity of Mormon women to the world, and to themselves "at a time when they were threatened by negative perceptions of their religious beliefs, moral standards, intelligence, and even their appearance."<sup>21</sup> Some of its other causes were women's suffrage and the defense of polygamy. The Exponent, unlike the Journal, was also a potent political

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<sup>17</sup> The Exponent also expressed the purpose of encouraging female writers.

<sup>18</sup> Susa Young Gates, History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: From November 1869 to June 1910 (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1911), p. 107.

<sup>19</sup> Bennion, "The Woman's Exponent," 224.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Bennion, 226. See also Casterline, 94.

voice, to the point that contemporary historian Edward Tullidge said at the time that it "now wields more real power in our politics than all of the newspapers in Utah put together."<sup>22</sup>

Both publications espoused the rights of women, both encouraged local writers, both were dedicated to the faith -- but there was a difference. The Exponent was the female response to the criticism heaped on the Mormon church by the world. It was in a sense militant -- or self-defensive. It addressed the needs of its particular historical circumstance.

The Journal, whose voice might have been characterized as "influential" rather than "powerful," began 17 years later than the Exponent, in different historical circumstances. By 1889, when the Journal began, the sanctions against the Church and its members by the federal government had been severe. The Manifesto, the statement issued by Mormon Church leadership proclaiming an end to the polygamy that the Mormons had practiced for half a century, was only a year away. The Saints had suffered. To be Mormon was a stigma in America. There was fear among the older members that the third and fourth generations would fall away from the teachings of their leaders and their parents. They wondered, as the popular

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<sup>22</sup> See Bennion, 231.

Mormon hymn asked, "Shall the Youth of Zion Falter?"<sup>23</sup>

The Journal was a response to a less aggressive climate in the Church -- the Church was in retreat. It was an appeal to the youth to remember their heritage, their ideals, and their faith. Whereas the Exponent specifically sought to speak to others in America about Mormon women, as well as to the women themselves, the Journal spoke only to its own. It was totally indigenous in origin and audience. For these reasons, too, the Journal is an especially useful tool to grasp the culture of Mormonism and Mormon women during this important time of transition in their lives and in their faith. It shows how they spoke to each other.

Susa Young Gates described the Exponent as "conservative, true to truth, pure and exalted in tone, . . . a safe, sound, faithful exponent of woman's place in the world."<sup>24</sup> The same might be said of her Journal, except that it was a faithful record of woman's place in Mormondom.

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<sup>23</sup> See the hymn "True to the Faith" in Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1985), 254.

<sup>24</sup> Bennion, 223.

## Description of the Study and Method

The Young Woman's Journal was not a significant American periodical in terms of mass circulation or national impact. It was a small Mormon periodical, born in Utah in difficult times. Its first issue was circulated while the "feds" were hunting the "polygs," and even the leadership of the Mormon church had been in hiding from those seeking to stamp out Mormon polygamy. The Journal struggled at first, but proved to be as enduring as the pioneer women who themselves struggled to make a home in the inhospitable desert of the American frontier. The Journal began in October 1889 and never really died. It was merged in 1929 with one of the official publications of the Mormon Church, The Improvement Era. It served for 40 years to entertain, inspire and instruct young Latter-Day Saint women.

This study will focus only on the first five years of the Journal. These were significant years in the history of Utah and of the Mormon Church, and thus of the Mormon women and young women who lived in the territory at the time. The first issue came out in October 1889, almost exactly a year before the Manifesto was issued by Wilford Woodruff, the Mormon president, informing the nation that the Church would abide by the antipolygamy laws that had been enacted by Congress. The Manifesto was the result of an intense struggle between the Church and the federal

government over the issue of polygamy. It ushered in a new era of a gradual national acceptance of Utah, and a gradual "Americanization"<sup>25</sup> of Utahns. Congress finally passed the enabling act permitting Utah to become a state in 1894.

The intervening years between the Manifesto and the enabling act are interesting and important in political history, but also from a social history viewpoint -- especially as it relates to Mormon women. Mormon women were at the vortex of the controversy in the "Utah Problem." They were the multiple wives, and the targets of the negative national press.<sup>26</sup> The Journal provides an insight into how they had adapted to the strange life of the isolated West, as members of an unpopular religion/culture; how they had constructed their philosophies of life, their self-images, and their broader images of the ideal Mormon woman; and what shared history and culture they wished to preserve and convey to the younger generation. It reveals their self-perceptions and their interpretation of the Mormon female experience as expressed in the narrative literature of the Young Woman's

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<sup>25</sup> This term comes from Gustave O. Larson, The Americanization of Utah for Statehood (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1971).

<sup>26</sup> Of course, only a relatively small percentage of them were actually plural wives, but all Mormon women were perceived by popular public opinion to be polygamists, and thus they all suffered the onus of the negative publicity.

Journal. For instance, the narratives are instructive as to how Mormon women viewed themselves; how they wanted young Mormon women to think about life and the world; and how they wanted younger women to perceive their elder sisters.

In this study, the Journal will be placed in its cultural/ historical context, and will search for cultural themes in its original text. This study will focus not on opinion and political/religious argument, but on ways of thinking, feeling, and coping with life as revealed in the original regional literature of the time.

The terms social history and cultural history have been used interchangeably thus far in this discussion to imply the study of the regular lives of nonelites within their historical social context. It is recognized, however, that to many historians cultural history differs distinctly from social history. In his essay, "Trends in Social History," Peter Stearns<sup>27</sup> discusses the social history movement within the discipline of history, and says its main impulses were to study (1) ordinary people and (2) the framework of their daily lives. But beyond those general impulses, quantitative methodology became highly important. "Among some historians, in fact,

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<sup>27</sup> Peter N. Stearns, "Toward A Wider Vision: Trends in Social History," in The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 205-230.

quantitative history is social history by definition."<sup>28</sup>

But Stearns maintains that social history "cannot, in fact, point to a distinctive or uniform methodology."<sup>29</sup>

Social historians have studied a wide range of topics from a multiplicity of angles,<sup>30</sup> and the activity has been accompanied by a diversification of methodology.<sup>31</sup>

"Indeed, much of the expansion of social history's effective range of interests has taken directions that do not seem amenable primarily to quantitative analysis."<sup>32</sup>

Stearns says, in fact, that the movement in the field seems to be away from quantification.<sup>33</sup> One such direction of inquiry that is not amenable to quantification is psychological history.

The turning of attention to the history of affective relationships, in terms of gender and generation as well as of family -- perhaps the newest general development in American social history -- directly raises questions of emotional as well as cultural causation.<sup>34</sup>

In the same volume as Stearn's essay is one by Carl Degler that compares women's history and the history of

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 211.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 230.



the family.<sup>35</sup> Degler says that the two fields have not been closely related, and there are significant differences between the two areas of inquiry. Family history has had a "driving concern. . .with quantification or numerical generalization."<sup>36</sup> But "the ideological or valuation origins of women's history have predisposed its practitioners to look primarily to literary evidence since that kind of source best reveals the values and ideology of historical figures."<sup>37</sup>

Robert Darnton also mentions literary history in his essay, "Intellectual and Cultural History."<sup>38</sup>

Social historians of ideas attempt to follow thought through the entire fabric of society. They want to penetrate the mental world of ordinary persons as well as philosophers, but they keep running into the vast silence that has swallowed up most of mankind's thinking. The printed word provides one trail through

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<sup>35</sup> Carl N. Degler, "Women and the Family," in The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 308-326.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 310.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Robert Darnton, "Intellectual and Cultural History," in The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 327-354. Darnton's essay seems to subsume cultural history within the larger class of social history, and does not make clear distinctions between them. He does say, however, that "in passing to cultural history, one moves below the level of literacy and onto territory where history and anthropology meet."

the emptiness, however, because by following it the historian can get some sense of the lived experience of literature. . . .<sup>39</sup>

Darnton says scholars in England and France have pursued this path the farthest, and that *histoire du livre* is a distinct subdiscipline of history.<sup>40</sup> (Darnton's own book, The Great Cat Massacre, is a good example of this approach to history through literature.)

In The Genteel Female,<sup>41</sup> Clifton Joseph Furness makes a plea for the reading and appreciation of nineteenth-century female literature. He says the popular reading material of the past has been scorned and "looked down upon as is the common dandelion among flowers," and unrightly so. He says the "trivial literature"<sup>42</sup> is a good key to understanding past cultures. Through it we gain an "intimate knowledge of the writings, good, bad,

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 343.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 343. See Darnton's footnote, Ibid., 343, for a good overview of the literature on the *histoire du livre*. It reads in part: "For a recent survey of the subject, [see] Raymond Birn, "Livre et Societe after Ten Years: Formation of a Discipline," Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, CLV (1976), 287-312. Several Americanists--notably Stephen Botein, Norman Fiering, and William Gilmore--have already made important contributions to *histoire du livre*, and the discipline is beginning to have an impact on general studies, such as Henry F. May, The Enlightenment in America (New York, 1976)."

<sup>41</sup> The following quotations are from: Clifton Joseph Furness, The Genteel Female (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1931), xv-xviii.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

and indifferent, in which the mass of men have found instruction, inspiration, amusement, and escape."<sup>4 3</sup>

Furness argues that American writing has been especially influenced by women.

This is particularly true of literature intended for popular consumption. . . The women's magazines in America have always been those of widest circulation. The novels and stories of feminine extraction predominate. The volumes of poetry, annuals, gift-books, and keepsakes which catered to the well-read female of the nineteenth century rival even the periodical literature in volume. All this alluvium of Victorian taste has yet to be sifted thoroughly for details significant to our modern curiosity.

Whether regarded as incipient literature, history, or sociology, this material proves engrossing. This body of literature merits consideration not only because it is quaint or amusing. It is of vital interest to us today because it is so real a part of our literal inheritance. In spite of the attempts of modern sophisticated taste to throttle it, it has a throbbing heart and pulsing life-blood still.<sup>4 4</sup>

The methodology of this study is consistent with the above discussions in that it is a social/cultural history of a women's press, achieved through the study of the original text of the contemporary and indigenous literature of the time, and through nonquantitative means. It is a study of the social/cultural/psychological themes present in the serial literature of the Young Woman's

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<sup>4 3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4 4</sup> Ibid.

Journal that establish the community-building function of the press and that serve to conserve Mormon values. It is a literary history of the press, placed in its cultural/historical context.

The investigator does not purport to make claims that the literary themes reflect the actual life circumstances that the women experienced. Carl Degler says "uncovering the actual behavior of women within the family has not been easy."<sup>4 5</sup> One means of accessing such information has been through the use of journals, correspondence and diaries of women. He says when these accounts of actual life experience are compared with the prescriptive literature of the time, "the congruence between them has often turned out to be marginal, a fact that has evoked warnings against careless or misplaced use of prescriptive literature."<sup>4 6</sup> Degler's comment relates specifically to the study of domesticity, but is certainly a caution that should be heeded in drawing conclusions about real-life circumstances from the literary themes that are identified here. In this study, claims will be made about the function of the literature in the Young Woman's Journal in creating a sense of community among Mormon women and in conserving Mormon values. No specific claims are made

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<sup>4 5</sup> Degler, 319.

<sup>4 6</sup> Ibid.

that the historical experiences described in the stories are valid as to actual historical circumstance,<sup>47</sup> or that the prescriptive narratives reveal actual practice.

The concept of "the narrative" also needs to be addressed in this discussion of methodology. An analogy from another discipline, that of legal philosophy, might throw light on the concept of the narrative. As the legal realists of the 1940s were fond of pointing out, in a courtroom situation, the facts of a case are never really known. All the jury can know is what the witnesses tell them -- the narratives that the witnesses construct. The witnesses observe a particular event or circumstance, make note of certain details or generalities, interpret them in various ways, and then construct narratives to relate the event to others. They create a story -- their version of what was. Different witnesses observing the same event can construct totally divergent narratives about the event based on their own abstractions of the facts. As Jerome Frank says in his Courts on Trial: Myth and Reality in American Justice,

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<sup>47</sup> This is not to imply, however, that the historical and autobiographical accounts are not valid. The stories are very revealing of actual settings and events, many of which contribute to historical knowledge of the period. The only implication here is that the historical claims made in the stories have not been investigated for purposes of this study. This study is only concerned with the messages of texts as they were printed and experienced by their readers.

Any one of these defects may seriously interfere with the communication, which is "the attempt of one person to convey some of the products of his own abstracting to another person" who, in turn, abstracts.<sup>4 8</sup>

The American people and the American press had created a narrative abstraction about Mormon women from the very earliest days of the Church. This will be discussed in detail later in this thesis. It suffices to say at this point that the popular narrative about Mormon women was entirely negative. The Young Woman's Journal reveals the Mormon point of view -- the Mormon women's abstraction, or narrative, about themselves. The Journal was started for the express purpose of giving Mormon women an opportunity to create an indigenous literature. It was written by Mormon women specifically for Mormon women. Its literature is a rich source for ascertaining the counternarrative that Mormon women had constructed as their version of the facts.

Twenty narratives will be reviewed. For purposes of reference and cross-reference, three charts appear in the Appendices, which list the stories by the volume and number in which they appear, by the number of pages in each, and by their authors. Two stories from Volumes 1 and 2 will be treated together because the serials overlap and continue from Volume 1 to Volume 2. The volumes

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<sup>4 8</sup> Jerome Frank, Courts on Trial: Myth and Reality in American Justice (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1949), 186.

thereafter are self-contained with all stories coming to a conclusion by the last number in the volume.

Only the serial stories have been selected for review (with the exception noted below), for these reasons:

1. Serial stories were popular in nineteenth-century periodicals and reading them now gives us a flavor of the experience of the readers of the time;

2. Longer stories lend themselves better than short ones to character development and consideration of larger and deeper themes; and

3. A focus on the serial stories allows a good cross-section of themes, authors, and plots, and eliminates bias in the selection of which stories to review.<sup>49</sup>

There are, however, three single-installment stories considered from Volume 1. These have been included because the major serials did not begin until the eighth number, and they make it possible to give emphasis and a point of reference to the kinds of stories and themes that were considered when the Journal first began.

Two questions will guide the analysis of the stories: (1) How do the narratives engender concord, harmony and affiliation among members of the Mormon female community; and (2) How do the narratives function to conserve Mormon

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<sup>49</sup>Some serial stories have not been included because their themes, settings, and characters were entirely non-Mormon. See, for instance, "A Hero for Love" in Volume 1, and "Ruined by Temporizing" in Volume 3. All others have been included.

values?

The texts or stories that will be studied are narratives, and the stories combined create a new text or a combined narrative. This investigator will examine both the individual narratives and the combined narrative to find meaning at all levels. Differences among authors will not be considered. Most of the stories have "bylines." Some, however, are obviously pseudonyms. Cracroft says Susa Young Gates used pseudonyms regularly, especially "Homespun."<sup>50</sup> She also "wrote under the names of Dr. Snufbottle, Mary Foster Gibbs, Amelia, Maggie Farnham, Mary Howe, and possibly many other names that she did not reveal."<sup>51</sup> Of the twenty stories reviewed here, three are by "Homespun," one is by "Genie," one by "Hannah," two are unsigned, and two are identified by initials--one by "W. A. M." and one by "M. L. and L. S." Presumably, at least some of these authors are really Susa Young Gates. No attempt has been made to discover who the authors were, because the thrust of this study is not to identify individual approaches to literature or life, but to describe the themes that are embodied in the combined text of those narratives within a particular time frame. The progression and development will be as follows:

In Chapter I, the Journal is placed in its histori-

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<sup>50</sup> See Cracroft, Susa Young Gates, 34.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.



cal, religious, and social context by briefly reviewing the history of the Utah press.

Chapter II will further place Mormon women in historical context by viewing them as Victorian Americans, frontierswomen, immigrants, and believers in an unusual theology. It will also consider the negative popular images of Mormon women, and the activities of the female achievers in the Mormon culture that seem to belie those images.

Chapter III presents a brief biographical/institutional history of Susa Young Gates and her Journal. Inasmuch as Susa was much concerned with the development of a Mormon literature, in this chapter, the author will also discuss Mormon literature as an introduction to an analysis of the serial narratives in the Journal.

Chapters IV - VIII each represent one volume of the Journal, for a total of five, in chronological order. A synopsis of each story is presented including heavy paraphrasing and quotations. An effort has been made to retain the integrity of the language usage and presentation of the stories so that the reader can grasp their flavor. The ideas in the stories have more historical meaning if they are contextualized in their original language and idiom. As Robert Darnton says, contextualization is an important feature in the history of

ideas, and "meaning is bound up in time and language."<sup>5 2</sup> The stories will also be contextualized by relating them to the historical/cultural themes that will be discussed in the three introductory chapters.

Chapter IX merges the themes of the stories into a combined narrative account, and conclusions are drawn about the function of the narratives in the Young Woman's Journal in creating a sense of community and affiliation for its readers and in conserving Mormon values. The study itself is also evaluated and topics for future research are suggested.

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<sup>5 2</sup> Robert Darnton, "Intellectual and Cultural History," in The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 339.

## CHAPTER I

### THE UTAH PRESS

When Brigham Young's<sup>1</sup> forty-first child,<sup>2</sup> Susa Young Gates, started her Young Woman's Journal in 1889, American magazines in general, and women's magazines in particular, were well-established. While there had been a long history of magazines in America, there was a burst of new activity after the Civil War.

As soon as the war was over, a rapid nationalization process occurred. . . . Nationalization meant a greatly increased national audience for the magazines.<sup>3</sup>

Much of the impetus for the growth of mass magazines came from the postal act of 1879 that allowed magazines second-class mailing privileges.

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<sup>1</sup>Brigham Young was the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from December 27, 1847 to his death on August 29, 1877. He is well-known in American history as the man who led the mass migration of "Mormons" across the great plains and into the valley of the Great Salt Lake. He is also famous for having many wives (reported numbers vary, but perhaps 27) and numerous children (56).

<sup>2</sup>Vicky Burgess-Olson, Sister Saints, (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 64.

<sup>3</sup>John Tebbel, The American Magazine: A Compact History (New York: Hawthorn Books Inc., 1969), 137.

To reach this audience--and to take profitable advantage of the 1879 Postal Act which, in effect, was government subsidy of magazine distribution--a whole new group of magazines sprang up: McCall's, 1870; Popular Science, 1872; Woman's Home Companion, 1873; Leslie's Monthly, 1876; Farm Journal, 1877; Good Housekeeping, 1885; Cosmopolitan, 1886; Collier's, 1888; National Geographic, 1888;. . . and many others.<sup>4</sup>

The most successful magazine founded during this period was the Ladies' Home Journal, which first appeared in December 1883. An interesting coincidence of dates is that the famous Edward Bok, whose editorial and managerial policies caused the Journal to be so enormously successful, took control of his Journal in the very autumn that Susa Young Gates issued her first Journal. There the similarities end, however. Bok's magazine had a circulation of a million by 1900.<sup>5</sup> The readership of Gates' periodical during the early years "varied from fifteen hundred to two thousand."<sup>6</sup> Of course, Bok's intended audience consisted of every woman in America. Gates addressed only the young women (teenagers and young

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<sup>4</sup> James Playsted Wood, Magazines in the United States, 3d ed. (New York: The Romand Press Company, 1971), 95.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>6</sup> Susa Young Gates, History of Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association from November 1869 to June 1910, (Salt Lake City, UT: The Deseret News, 1911), 112.

adults) of Mormon<sup>7</sup> Utah, and thus hers was a specialized religious magazine.

Religious magazines were a staple of the periodical press from the beginning, but after the Civil War they proliferated even more, and came to constitute a large class in themselves. Their number doubled between 1865 and 1885, from 350 to more than 650.<sup>8</sup>

The Young Woman's Journal was not, then, anything new on the American scene. It was also not a pioneer publishing venture for Utah. The Mormons had extensive publishing experience before reaching Utah in 1847,<sup>9</sup> and by the time the Journal began there was already a rich newspaper and magazine heritage, both Mormon and non-Mormon, in the territory.

The first newspaper in the Salt Lake valley was the Deseret News, founded by the Mormon church in 1850, three years after the 1847 pioneer arrival in the valley. The paper was printed on a hand press that had been carried

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<sup>7</sup> The terms "Mormon" and "Church" will be used to refer to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The term "Saints" will be used to describe members of the Church.

<sup>8</sup> Tebbel, 131.

<sup>9</sup> For histories of pre-Utah Mormon publishing, see: Monte Burr McLaws, Spokesman for the Kingdom: Early Mormon Journalism and the Deseret News, 1830-1898 (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1977); and A. Richard Robertson, "A Comparative History of Periodicals of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints" (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1951).

across the plains in an ox-drawn wagon.<sup>10</sup> Printing a newspaper in a new, isolated community in America's far west was a difficult and challenging endeavor.

Not only had the difficulty of finding, purchasing, and transporting the printing press been intensified by the remoteness of Utah, but the effects of isolation continued to shape and permeate the very life and development of the Deseret News. These journalistic Mormon pioneers had to struggle with the difficulty of gathering news, the scarcity of supplies and materials needed to print the paper, and an audience often financially unable to subscribe to the fledgling enterprise.<sup>11</sup>

The Mormons had come west in an attempt to find a refuge where they could practice their new religion.<sup>12</sup> They had experienced discrimination and persecution in every location in which they had previously attempted to settle in the east and midwest. After the 1844 death of their prophet, Joseph Smith, at the hands of a mob in Carthage, Illinois, the new leadership of the Saints determined to move to an isolated location in the west that would allow them total religious freedom. The barren desert of the Great Salt Lake was their choice--surrounded by mountains, and with an inhospitable climate and terrain

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<sup>10</sup> For complete histories of the Deseret News, see McLaws, Spokesman for the Kingdom, and Wendell J. Ashton, Voice in the West (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News Publishing Company, 1950).

<sup>11</sup> McLaws, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr. established the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in western New York in 1830.

that had apparently been uninviting to other white settlers.

The first few years in the valley were spent in arduous labor by men, women and children. Their new home was absolutely nothing but the bare elements of nature. They planted crops on their first day in the valley. They diverted water, built huts and lean-tos, surveyed and cleared land, and did all that was necessary to start a city literally from the ground up. Their vision was to build a model city, to raise their children in the faith, and to establish a Kingdom of God in the desert of the Great Salt Lake.<sup>13</sup>

The primary function of the Deseret News was to facilitate this building of the kingdom.<sup>14</sup> The News was an organ of the Church, and it was "the most important"<sup>15</sup> method of communication the Church had at its disposal to convey information from the leaders to the people in Salt Lake, and to the outlying settlements the Church had

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<sup>13</sup>For information about the early settlement of Utah, as well as the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints before the westward exodus, see: Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, The Mormon Experience (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979); Leonard J. Arrington, Brigham Young: American Moses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985); and Richard D. Poll, ed., Utah's History (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978).

<sup>14</sup>For a thorough discussion of the News as kingdom-builder, see McLaws, 49-69.

<sup>15</sup>McLaws, 50.

established throughout the intermountain west. The paper was used for the purposes of the brethren,<sup>16</sup> and they exerted control over it as they did over almost everything in the valley.

Church leaders exercised control over all social institutions within the Great Basin that promised to become powerful enough to influence public opinion to any degree. When cultural and social societies formed by individuals acting independently of the Church showed signs of too much autonomy, they were taken over by the Church and subordinated to its purposes.<sup>17</sup>

As Monte McLaws has shown,<sup>18</sup> the news in the News was controlled so that it would project a proper image of the Church leaders, and maintain a positive image of the Church for the outside world.<sup>19</sup> The paper was also a vehicle for proselytizing, and it had a large national and international circulation.<sup>20</sup> The News printed the major sermons of the Church leaders, carried notices of scheduled Church meetings in the whole region, printed information about missionary calls and releases, printed

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<sup>16</sup> "Brethren" is a term used by the Mormons in reference to priesthood holders, or "worthy" male members of the Church, and refers especially to the leadership of the Church.

<sup>17</sup> McLaws, 50.

<sup>18</sup> The following discussion of the Deseret News draws heavily from McLaws. Much of the same information can be found in Wendell J. Ashton's Voice in the West.

<sup>19</sup> McLaws, 53.

<sup>20</sup> McLaws, 55.



letters from Church missionaries serving in other parts of the world, and still served the functions of a regular, nonreligious newspaper.

The Saints enjoyed their isolation, but it was brief. The gold rush in California in 1849, just two years after the Saints' arrival, brought thousands of travelers through the Great Basin, some of whom stayed. Non-Mormon merchants also came, as did federal governmental appointees and their families. In 1852, the Church publicly announced the practice of polygamy (plural marriage), which in fact some members had been practicing since before the death of Joseph Smith.<sup>21</sup> This marriage arrangement immediately became a national social and political issue.

By 1856 Republicans were insisting on the right and duty of Congress to "prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism--Polygamy and Slavery."<sup>22</sup>

This situation, combined with political tensions between

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<sup>21</sup> For historical information about polygamy (plural marriage), see: Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith; Prophet's Wife, Elect Lady, Polygamy's Foe (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984); Poll's Utah's History; James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, The Story of the Latter-Day Saints (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1976); Arrington and Bitton, The Mormon Experience. For a moving account of a woman's personal experience as a plural wife, see Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother (Salt Lake City, UT: The University of Utah Press, 1969).

<sup>22</sup> Poll, Utah's History, 165. See Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, The Mormon Graphic Image, 1834-1914 (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1983) for slavery/ polygamy linkage in the popular press.

the Mormons and their nonmember government appointees, led to the Utah War of 1857-58.<sup>23</sup> According to Richard Poll, the war

. . .brought Johnston's Army of 2,500 officers and enlisted men, plus enough civilian employees and camp followers to build almost overnight a city of 7,000 at Fairfield [Camp Floyd]. Many of these became permanent citizens of Utah. The federal appointees who came with this military escort grew into a steady stream of carpetbaggers destined to play a significant role in Mormondom. The Civil War, which cancelled out Camp Floyd, brought 700 California volunteers to establish Fort Douglas as a new gentile center.<sup>24</sup>

Both of the army posts, Camp Floyd and Camp Douglas, had newspapers--the first products of the non-Mormon press in the Salt Lake Valley. Camp Floyd's publication, which ran for only four months (November 1859 through February 1860), was known as the Valley Tan.<sup>25</sup> Four years later, in November of 1863, Camp Douglas began publishing The Union Vedette. Both of these military papers were

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<sup>23</sup> For information about the Utah War, see: Norman Furniss, The Mormon Conflict 1850-1859 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960); Gustive O. Larson, The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1971); and Poll, Utah's History.

<sup>24</sup> Poll, 188.

<sup>25</sup> "'Valley Tan' was a name originally given Utah-processed leather, but had become a designation for other home-manufactured products, including a cheap quality of whiskey. The Tan was a four-page newspaper, with sheets a little larger than those of the News, and with five columns to a page, as compared with four for the News." Wendell J. Ashton, Voice of the West, 97-98.

stridently anti-Mormon, but the Deseret News adopted a nonresponse policy, and made no attempt to answer their charges against the Church and the Saints.<sup>26</sup>

By the second half of the 1860s, Brigham Young's tight control of the social, political, and economic life of Mormondom had disaffected many Mormons as well as non-Mormons in the territory--especially those Mormons who felt it was their right to question the policies of the Church. This critical Mormon-member stance found expression through the Godbeite Movement,<sup>27</sup> in The Utah Magazine, first printed in 1868. What began as a literary magazine grew over time into a newspaper--the Mormon Tribune--that soon became aligned with the non-Mormon<sup>28</sup> Fort Douglas element of the population, and eventually

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<sup>26</sup>For discussions of the military papers and the News' reaction to them, see: McLaws, Spokesman for the Kingdom, and Ashton, Voice in the West. For a discussion of a similar Church policy of nonresponse to other press detractors, see McLaws, and also Luther L. Heller, "A Study of the Utah Newspaper War, 1870-1900" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966).

<sup>27</sup>The leaders of the Godbeite movement were excommunicated from the Church.

<sup>28</sup>The term "non-Mormon" could probably legitimately be read as "anti-Mormon" during this period of history. "The neutral ground, the idea of non-Mormon, was slow in developing: the intellectual battleground centered around things Mormon or anti-Mormon. It was religion, later politics, that gave the edge to life." William Mulder, "Utah's Nordic-Language Press: Aspect and Instrument of Immigrant Culture," (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1947), 122.

became the Salt Lake Tribune.<sup>29</sup> The Deseret News and the Salt Lake Tribune were bitter foes. The News defended the Mormon Church, its leaders, and its policies, while the Tribune opposed the tight control the Church held over the territory. Two of the major issues were the Church's economic policies that strictly forbade mining and capitalizing on the rich mineral resources of Utah, and polygamy, which the Tribune staunchly opposed and exploited as a means of gaining national attention and negative press against the Mormons.

The conflict between the Tribune and the News is known as the Utah Newspaper War. "The two newspapers traded editorial punches for nearly half a century."<sup>30</sup> The stakes were high. This was not a circulation war between two newspapers. It was a contest between the Mormon Church and the rest of American society as represented by the non-Mormon backers of the Tribune. It was a contest between what the Mormons believed to be the Kingdom of God on earth, and what the non-Mormons believed was an oppressive, even perverted, social experiment, contrary to the norms and expectations of the whole of

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<sup>29</sup> For complete discussions of the birth and development of the Salt Lake Tribune, see O.N. Malmquist, The First 100 Years: A History of The Salt Lake Tribune, 1871-1971 (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Historical Society, 1971); and Luther Heller, "A Study of the Utah Newspaper War, 1870-1900."

<sup>30</sup> Heller, 4.

American society. The papers fought over political, economic, and moral issues. The Tribune was the figurative voice of the nation against the Mormons. It never let up in its editorials, its columns, or its humor. "In terms of sheer numbers no other newspaper could equal the Salt Lake Tribune when it came to cartoons about Mormonism."<sup>31</sup> The News was the voice of the Church against its detractors and critics. It was the defender of home production, nonfraternization with non-Members, farming as opposed to mining for economic development, female suffrage, and polygamy (which it perceived to be the Celestial Order of Marriage). All of the heat and contention of the social, economic, and political issues of territorial Utah found voice and forum in the pages of these two papers.

The history of the major Mormon and non-Mormon presses can be conceptualized in terms of Covert's thesis. The primary function of the Deseret News, for example (according to McLaws) was to build the Mormon kingdom. It accomplished this purpose by such means as providing a method of communication, projecting an acceptable image of the Church, printing sermons, and disseminating information about missionary activity. In Covert's terms, all of these functions can be viewed as an attempt to build a sense of community and to promote and conserve Mormon

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<sup>31</sup> Bunker and Bitton, 57.

values. Similarly, the Utah Magazine, started by dissident Mormons, attempted to foster a sense of community with other intellectual Mormons, and to conserve values such as independent thought. The non-Mormon press attempted to engender a binding and bonding among the "gentile" community by articulating grievances against Mormon doctrine and leaders, and by fostering such values as economic development of the territory and monogamy.

There were other publications in Utah that had similar goals. Most of the little Mormon and non-Mormon settlements in and out of Utah had their own papers at one time or another.<sup>3 2</sup>

The pioneer editor usually considered himself a weakling if he did not stand positively and aggressively for or against something. . . [the] frontier editors were singularly capable, courageous journalists, who placed Utah's pioneer newspapers among the Nation's most distinguished and respected spokesmen and historians of those early days. They portrayed the propaganda and public sentiment of earnest groups of people having sharply conflicting views, undergoing a slow but far reaching change through the years. No newspapers of any section of the country, or of any period in the Nation's history, were ever more eagerly awaited or more closely read than those hailing from Utah through the anti-polygamy crusade of the last half of the Nineteenth Century.<sup>3 3</sup>

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<sup>3 2</sup> J. Cecil Alter identified 585 newspapers which had been printed in Utah between 1850 and 1938. See J. Cecil Alter, Early Utah Journalism (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Historical Society, 1938).

<sup>3 3</sup> Alter, 9.

Many of those frontier newspapers were by and for immigrants. Immigrants came early to Utah. In fact, in 1850, the year the Deseret News was launched, while there were 11,380 Mormon members in Utah, there were 33,000 abroad.<sup>34</sup> Most of these came quickly thereafter to the Salt Lake Valley. By 1890, the period of particular interest for this thesis, Utah's population was 210,779, with about 25 percent (53,064) foreign born.<sup>35</sup> Utah, then, was similar to the east coast in that it had a significant first and second generation immigrant population. The majority of the Utah immigrants were from England, but Scandinavians were a fairly close second.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Poll, 178.

<sup>35</sup> Immigration began to decline after 1890. See Poll, Utah's History, chapter 10, and Allen and Leonard, The Story of the Latter-Day Saints, 419.

<sup>36</sup> "By 1900, the golden jubilee of Mormonism's beginnings in Scandinavia, it was estimated that 12,317 had come from Denmark, 6,942 from Sweden, and 2,312 from Norway, not counting small children, estimated at another third. With their descendants, they gave the state a distinctly Anglo-Scandinavian composition." William Mulder, "Utah's Nordic-Language Press," 12.

For more about the Scandinavians in Utah, see William Mulder's other works such as: "Mormons from Scandinavia, 1850-1900: A Shepherded Migration," Pacific Historical Review (University of California), 23:227-246 (August 1954); A Sense of Humus: Scandinavian Mormon Immigrant Humor, (St. George, UT: Department of Printing, Dixie College, 1985; "Norwegian Forerunners Among the Early Mormons," Norwegian-American Studies and Records, vol. 6 (Northfield, MN: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1956); and Homeward To Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957).

While the immigrants came early, the immigrant press came relatively late. The first foreign language press (the Danish Utah Posten) did not appear in Utah until 1873. It was followed quickly, however, by several others, and served the interests and needs of the Scandinavian immigrants for more than 60 years.

. . . the Nordic-language press in Utah was provincial rather than cosmopolitan: they were one-man country newspapers which happened to carry a large section of European news. The comparison is intended to suggest a positive virtue: the papers had variety, editorial strength, and an engaging informality. For the country newspaper, it must be remembered, America holds a high and affectionate regard. Utah may justly feel the same about its immigrant press.<sup>37</sup>

As the above discussion suggests,<sup>38</sup> the people of Utah did not live in an isolated and insulated environment. They were a diverse people, coming together from

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<sup>37</sup>Mulder, "Utah's Nordic Language Press," 123. For more information about the immigrant press, see Ernest L. Olson, "Otto Rydman, Satirist: An Immigrant Editor's Views of the Scandinavian Scene in Utah" (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1949).

<sup>38</sup>This discussion of Utah press history is, obviously, brief and incomplete. By the time the Young Woman's Journal began printing, numerous newspapers and magazines were in print, or had come and gone. This brief overview is given merely as a taste of the press atmosphere which existed in Utah prior to the advent of the Journal. No satisfactory or comprehensive history of the Utah press has been written to date. Students of this topic can, however, get a relatively complete history by reading several published and unpublished sources. Refer to this bibliography, for instance, for general Utah histories. For histories more specifically about the press, see works by Alter, Ashton, Bunker, Holley, Malmquist, McLaws, and Robertson.



many cultural, national, and religious backgrounds to build a new religious society. Theirs was a unique social experience. Their lives were not without conflict--personal, political, and religious. Quite the contrary. They were trying to learn a new religion and to incorporate it into their lives, to initiate and defend a new order of marriage, to survive in an alien natural environment, and to develop a group cohesion and identity. The printed word was important in the lives of Utah's inhabitants. They depended on their papers and publications for news of the world, of the Church, of the missionaries, and for enlightenment and instruction from their leaders. It can be said of the Utah press, as Mulder said of the immigrant press, "there was nothing in [pioneer] life to which the press was not partner."<sup>39</sup>

One of the most influential papers was for females--the Woman's Exponent.<sup>40</sup> The Exponent was "an independent

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<sup>39</sup> Mulder, "Utah's Nordic Language Press," vi.

<sup>40</sup> The Exponent has been studied extensively in recent years. It especially became a subject of interest during the feminist movement of the twentieth century as Mormon women sought to learn how their nineteenth century sisters had felt about the issues of equality of the sexes and equal opportunity. See, for instance Claudia Bushman, ed., Mormon Sisters, (Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing Co., 1976); Carol Cornwall Madsen, "'Remember the Women of Zion': A Study of the Editorial Content of the Woman's Exponent, A Mormon Woman's Journal (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1977); Gail Farr Casterline, "'In the Toils' or 'Onward for Zion': Images of the Mormon Woman, 1852-1890," (unpublished Master's thesis, Utah State University, 1974).

For a male, non-Mormon historian's treatment of the

paper, published with the encouragement and goodwill of Church leaders,"<sup>41</sup> and was the voice of the leading women<sup>42</sup> of Zion<sup>43</sup> for forty-two years. Begun in 1872

to correct misrepresentations of Mormon women trumpeted by anti-Mormons and particularly anti-polygamists to an uninformed Gentile (non-Mormon) world,"<sup>44</sup>

the Exponent had only two editors in its entire forty-two-year history. Louisa Greene Richards was editor for the first five years (1872-1877), and Emmeline B. Wells filled the position for the Exponent's remaining thirty-seven years (1877-1914).

The Exponent was a significant publication for Utah.

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topic, see Lawrence Foster, "From Frontier Activism to Neo-Victorian Domesticity: Mormon Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," Journal of Mormon History, 6 (1979): 3-21.

A point of interest is that a group of L.D.S. women in the Boston area, as a result of their interest in the twentieth century feminist issue and their renewed interest in their early Mormon sisters, started in 1974 a new publication for women entitled Exponent II. See Claudia Bushman, "A Wider Sisterhood," Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought 11 (Spring 1978): 96-99.

<sup>41</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, 180.

<sup>42</sup> The terms "leading women" or "leading sisters" are used by Utah and Mormon historians to refer to a remarkable group of women of this nineteenth century era who excelled in the written arts, politics, medicine, and national and local feminist activity. The term "leading" also implies that these women, while numerous, were probably not fully representative of the typical Mormon/frontier woman of the day.

<sup>43</sup> The term "Zion" is used here and throughout to refer (as they referred to themselves) to the Mormon population of the Salt Lake Valley.

<sup>44</sup> Madsen, "Remember the Women of Zion," p.iv.

It gave voice to the women of Zion and mobilized their many political and charitable efforts.<sup>45</sup> It served an important function in providing an opportunity for Utah women to publish their thoughts, poems and essays, but is remembered more today for its defense of polygamy, and its zealous articulation of the feminist cause.<sup>46</sup> Its editor, Emmeline B. Wells, as well as several other leading women, were deeply involved with the national suffrage movement, and in fact were present at and delegates to many Women's Suffrage Association meetings. For instance, "at a gathering in Washington in 1891, Utah had the second largest number of delegates participating,"<sup>47</sup> and Susa Young Gates, editor of the Young Woman's Journal was a delegate and speaker at the International Conference of Women in London in 1889.<sup>48</sup>

Zion's women had good reason to complain of injustice. They were held in derision by most of the world. But the Woman's

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<sup>45</sup> ". . . leading Mormon women established a distinguished women-managed, -edited, and -written newspaper of their own, the Woman's Exponent, which ranged far and wide over issues of concern to women of the period. . . . Mormon women became an essential part of the culture and economy of frontier Utah. They also developed significant contacts with women's activities of the larger society." Foster, 3.

<sup>46</sup> The reasons and circumstances surrounding the Mormon feminist activity will be discussed later in this thesis.

<sup>47</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, 188.

<sup>48</sup> R. Paul Cracroft, "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Literary Work," (Master's thesis, University of Utah 1951), 15.

Exponent was as ready to expound the common grievances of women everywhere as to defend their own cause. . . . as a vehicle for the expression of feminist ideals, the Woman's Exponent stands apart. Written and published by Mormon women, it shows them to have been no passive recipients of a franchise inexplicably offered by the brethren. From 1872 to the end of the century, the paper demonstrated their desire to speak for themselves, to expose injustice, and to publicize and promote equality of opportunity for the sexes.<sup>49</sup>

The Exponent had been in print for seventeen years by the time the Journal began. It had fought vigorously for the rights of women, and had defended vigorously the right of Mormon women to practice their religion through polygamy if they saw fit to do so. The Exponent was not a deviant, underground publication. It had the full support of the Church leadership, and the editors and contributors to the paper were among the most highly respected and revered Mormon women in the territory of Utah. As will be discussed in later chapters, Susa Young Gates, editor of the Journal, originally thought of including her literature for young women in the Exponent. As plans developed, however, the Journal became a publication of its own with young women as its exclusive target audience. Nevertheless, the ideas espoused by the Exponent were fully espoused by the Journal as well, and the Exponent's success as a women's publication in Utah was the most

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<sup>49</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, 182, 186.

important press precursor to the establishment of the Journal.

It is apparent from this discussion of the Utah press that by the time the Young Woman's Journal began, the Mormons had a substantial journalistic history. It is also apparent that they were adept at using the press to build a sense of community and to reinforce Mormon values. Discussions in later chapters will show how this was done in the Scandinavian and English Mormon presses, and more specifically, how it was achieved in the Young Woman's Journal.

## CHAPTER II

### THE WOMEN OF ZION

The genesis of things is always interesting in whatsoever form it may be manifested; not only in the study of life itself, but also in the consideration of any expression of human activity. Moreover, the interest is doubled in value, when it centers around the lives of peoples who are little known, and whose history reveals ideas and information that are unusual and novel. There is much to attract the casual observer in all that pertains to the peculiar people called Mormons; and this interest is not least active in the lives and labors of the women. Why this is so we shall not here inquire, but the story of the influences which have contributed and which do now contribute to the condition of the women of Zion will prove of vital interest to themselves as well as to others.<sup>1</sup>

-- Susa Young Gates

This chapter will discuss the social milieu and historical forces that made nineteenth century Mormon women what they were by the time the Young Woman's Journal went into print. Six factors that contributed to the local culture will be discussed: American Victorianism; the demands of the frontier; the acculturation of a large immigrant population; the peculiarities of the Mormon

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<sup>1</sup> Susa Young Gates, History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, 1.

religion itself with its attendant demands on Mormon women; the widespread negative images that Mormon women had to come to terms with; and the activities of the "leading sisters," which undoubtedly had an impact on the self-expectations of the more general female population.

### American Victorianism

The first thing that can be said about nineteenth century Mormon women is that they were Victorian women--very much a part of their age and all that the age implied for womanhood. Early converts were Easterners, born before the Civil War. Indeed, the Church had been in Utah for thirteen years, and the population of Utah was more than 40,000<sup>2</sup> by the time the Civil War began. These women came from the age in which women were expected to be "genteel."

In The Genteel Female,<sup>3</sup> an anthology of nineteenth century literature, the image of the Victorian woman takes shape. The book identifies fifteen characteristics of the genteel woman that are apparent in and extracted from that literature. The author, Clifton Joseph Furness,

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<sup>2</sup> See the Utah Vital Statistics chart in Poll, Utah's History, 688.

<sup>3</sup> The following discussion follows closely the outline and development of the book mentioned: Clifton Joseph Furness, ed., The Genteel Female: An Anthology (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931). Victorianism is examined closely here in this literary context because this thesis will focus on the image of late nineteenth century women as seen in their literature.

asserts that the first characteristic of the genteel female was her "cultivation of frailty."<sup>4</sup>

The true Victorian belle not only aspired to be the weaker vessel, but developed this traditional attitude to the point of absolute fragility. The most alluring debutante was she who could faint most often and most fetchingly. It is significant of the general interest in this accomplishment that many helpful suggestions were published concerning approved ways and means of swooning. Also ardent debates as to the propriety of fainting were included in the principal books of etiquette and decorum.<sup>5</sup>

This frailty gave way in the latter part of the century to a concern with health, calisthenics, dress-reform, and outdoor exercise.<sup>6</sup>

The second characteristic of the nineteenth century woman identified by Furness was saccharine sentimentality. This was expressed especially in love poetry devoted to tender passion. Furness says it can be best described by a "row of exclamation points extended to infinity."<sup>7</sup>

Closely related to sentimentality was melancholy--an attitude that Furness calls "ultra-Romantic."<sup>8</sup>

The world of nature. . . was considered a vale of tears. Religion prompted the female to look constantly toward heaven,

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 34.



"where God shall wipe all tears away."  
 This was the only possible compensation  
 for the evils which must be undergone in  
 the flesh. Death loomed appallingly  
 large.<sup>9</sup>

Furness says going to church was a "universal habit" among females,<sup>10</sup> and religion was expressed in literature by an overriding piety.<sup>11</sup> Humanitarianism was another characteristic of the Victorian era. The theme of much of the literature was "sympathy and mercy for the poor, the unfortunate, and the immoral members of society."<sup>12</sup>

Among the other genteel traits identified by Furness were the love of nature,<sup>13</sup> a lack of tolerance for the excesses of fashion,<sup>14</sup> a concern with decorum and genteel deportment,<sup>15</sup> a serious commitment to self-developing pastimes such as elocution and female cultural and literary associations,<sup>16</sup> and an interest in homemade remedies for common ailments.<sup>17</sup> One overriding characteristic was a commitment to and reverence for the proper

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 63

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 63-64.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 172.

place of women and the "influence the wife and mother had upon society."<sup>18</sup>

There was one point upon which all agreed--"woman's rights" advocates and conservatives as well. The final determining factor in civilization was the refining and spiritualizing influence exercised by the Genteel Female.<sup>19</sup>

The term "genteel female" is broad enough to include the feminists of the period. The point of conflict between the feminists and the traditionalists was over the value of participation in activities outside of the home. The feminists or progressives "claimed a right to develop their mental powers and apply them in any way they saw fit."<sup>20</sup> The progressive female also spoke her convictions through literary expression, and the drive for a wider sphere for women became, in time, the woman's suffrage movement.<sup>21</sup> The literary woman was an object of scorn in much of society. An example was Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Her sudden unprecedented fame. . . drew the critical eye of the public to her domestic relations, and she was charged with neglecting her family for her writing."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 256.

One hallmark of the nineteenth century America was the unprecedented interest in female education.

The education of women in England had been practically fossilized for hundreds of years. The established tradition was that an English girl should have for her chief ambition to sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam. In Elizabethan days, it appears, she was instructed only in music, drawing, French, and fine sewing. This was true of the aristocratic class in America also, well down into the nineteenth century. . . . The history of female schooling as a separate and dignified branch of education really begins with the nineteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

These specific characteristics of the genteel or Victorian woman enumerated by Furness are helpful in providing a glimpse into the culture of the past. So, too, is a broader description by Carol Cornwall Madsen that defines Victorianism as attitudes, assumptions and practices expressed in "a social vision and set of behavioral standards that pervaded all segments of American society."<sup>24</sup>

The Victorian creation of an idealized domestic ethos, focusing on piety and purity and other feminine qualities, was, to a large extent, a response to a redefinition of the home and woman's function within it. The home, as the traditional transmitter of a society's

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 267, 269.

<sup>24</sup> Carol Cornwall Madsen, "A Mormon Woman in Victorian America," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Utah, 1985), 1-3. For a graphic description of the Victorian woman, see also Lary May, Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), Chapter 1.

values, became the focus of Victorian idealism, and woman, within her domestic sphere, became the custodian and mentor of the Victorian culture. She both derived this responsibility from and shared it with the clergy.<sup>25</sup>

Madsen says some women found this idealization of the domestic function limiting. They were aware of their "marginality in the economic, political and social processes of society" and participated in the movement for autonomy and social participation. Even so, they never questioned the value of women's mission in the home.<sup>26</sup>

Lary May broadens our understanding of these Victorian themes with his discussion of the amusements of the time.

. . .nineteenth-century Victorians vigorously tried to expurgate sensuality, games, and drink from both public and private life, seeing these joys as antithetical to personal and social order in a society dedicated to ceaseless work.<sup>27</sup>

May says it was the Victorian woman's role to internalize self-control, to make the home the moral center of the community, and to extend those moralizing qualities to the broader community. "Religion was the only activity outside the home which women might do without violating the proprieties."<sup>28</sup> Leisure entertainment beyond reading

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<sup>25</sup> Madsen, "A Mormon Woman in Victorian America," 1-3.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> May, 8.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 9.

was carefully planned to occur within homes or churches. Genteel women going to the theater were chaperoned. Circuses, parades and sports were only appropriate for lower class women. Urban amusements were always divided by class and sex.<sup>29</sup>

Public decorum also extended into private life, particularly wedlock. No period of youthful experimentation was sanctioned for either sex. Women lived with their parents until they married, whether they worked or not. Once wed, those who held that marriage was for personal gratification or indulgence were compared "with the Negroes." Divorce was almost unknown, for unhappiness was no excuse to break up a home.<sup>30</sup>

Most of the above characteristics of Victorianism found expression in the literature of the Young Woman's Journal. For instance, piety, humanitarianism, commitment to self-development, interest in homemade remedies, concern for decorum, and a reverence for woman's place in the home are repeated themes in Journal's stories. Melancholy and frailty, however, are seldom portrayed. Death looms large in the stories, not because it is a psychological fixation, but because it was a fact of frontier life. It is constantly depicted, but as a sadness from which good can arise. Feminism is only expressed in depictions of strong women who demand respect from their husbands. There are no portrayals of Mormon

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 19.

women engaged in political or career activities. Female frailty is rare in these stories. This may have been because of changing American attitudes toward frailty as the century drew to a close, but it is also clear, as the following discussion will show, that these western women had little opportunity to be fragile.

### The Frontier

In addition to Victorianism, and in some ways contradictory to it, a second fact in the lives of nineteenth century Mormon women in Utah was that, whatever their backgrounds or original circumstances in life, they were women of the frontier. The frontier was hard and demanding. It required the work and service of every available person without regard to sex or age. Women were needed to build homes, to break farms, and to provide essential services for the community. The frontier woman may have been genteel, but she was not coddled. Making a home, "the one important social, cultural, and educational institution in a new settlement,"<sup>31</sup> was her primary focus, but her range of activities was by no means restricted to the walls of that home.<sup>32</sup> "While women were valued on the frontier, their life was a difficult one. The hard

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<sup>31</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, xvii.

<sup>32</sup> For discussions about the Mormon frontier woman, see, for example: Casterline, Bushman, Poll, Foster, and Arrington's and Bitton's Sunbonnet Saints.

realities of scratching a living out of virgin land wore settlers out."<sup>33</sup> These were conditions of the westward expansion that all frontier women faced. There were some differences, however, for Mormon frontierswomen.<sup>34</sup> Their husbands and fathers were often away on missions or with their other plural families, leaving the woman alone to manage the house, the children and the farm. They often had to provide other income by seeking other employment such as

midwifery, schoolteaching, spinning and weaving, or the making of clothes, shoes, or hats. Some women picked and dried fruit to sell; others took in laundry or tore and wove rags into carpets.<sup>35</sup>

But the Mormon woman on the frontier did have the advantage of a close community life that was not always available to other frontierswomen who often lived lonely and isolated lives.

Group settlement with planned townships and neighbor interaction was always the rule. Cooperation and the subordination of individual ambition made it possible to get a new town functioning quickly. Successful colonizing of the arid, alkaline desert would probably have been impossible otherwise.<sup>36</sup>

The women in the Journal's stories are always hard-

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<sup>33</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, p. xvii.

<sup>34</sup> The following discussion of Mormon women on the frontier is paraphrased from Poll, Utah's History, 338.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, xvii.

working and independent, in true frontier fashion. Their sense of personal strength, however, does not preclude them from relying heavily on the help and support, both physical and emotional, from their surrounding Mormon communities--and especially the other women in those communities.

### The Immigrants

Another point about nineteenth century Mormon women that frequently seems to be overlooked in historical discussions of the period, or merely mentioned and forgotten, is that so many of them were immigrants.<sup>37</sup> In 1850, 18% of the population of Utah was foreign-born, 31.7% in 1860, 35.4% in 1870, 30.6% in 1880 and 25.2% in 1890.<sup>38</sup> As these figures indicate, more than a third of the residents of Utah in 1870 were first generation immigrants, to say nothing of the large numbers who were of the second or third generations.

Another way of looking at the demographics is to exclude Indians and small children.

In 1870, approximately half the white (i.e., non-Indian) adults in Utah were foreign-born. In 1890, a year for which we have more detailed demographic data, Utah's white population, if we exclude those under ten years of age, consisted of

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<sup>37</sup> See the previous discussion of immigrants in the section about the immigrant press.

<sup>38</sup> Poll, Utah's History, Table G, Ethnic Characteristics of Utah, 1850-1970, 691.



30 percent native Americans with native parents, 35 percent native with foreign parentage, and 34 percent foreign-born. In other words, approximately 70 percent of Utah's white residents had foreign-born parents. A little over half of these foreign-born in Utah's first thirty years were born in the British Isles, and a little less than half in Scandinavia, principally Denmark. Obviously, there was a problem of adjustment to Utah's semiarid land, but there must have been an even more important problem of adjustment between the various nationalities--their language, culture, and way of life.<sup>39</sup>

The presence of so many immigrants in Utah was no accident. The Mormons made a tremendous effort, at great sacrifice of time and personal resources, to bring it about. Mormon men left their families for years at a time to serve missions abroad, and most served multiple missions. Mormon women struggled alone with their families and farms while their men were gone, but were nevertheless devoted to the cause and the missionary call. They also donated their funds, their supplies, and their foodstuffs to the impoverished immigrants who made it to the valley, often opening up their homes until the newcomers could get settled. Mormon women even shared their husbands with the new immigrant women, as it was not unusual for the men to be "called" by the church leadership to take the single immigrant women as polygamous wives.<sup>40</sup> All of this zeal is captured in the phrase "The

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<sup>39</sup>Arrington and Madsen, Sunbonnet Sisters, 1 (emphasis added).

<sup>40</sup>See Bushman, Mormon Sisters, p. 97.

Gathering."

The mission of the Mormons, as outlined by their early leaders, was to gather "scattered Israel" preparatory to Christ's personal rule on earth. In the performance of this mission, more than 100,000 men, women, and children were recruited, organized, and brought to Utah from the Eastern States, Europe, and the islands of the Pacific during the territorial period.<sup>41</sup>

The missionary effort began as soon as the Church was organized in 1830. Missionaries were sent to "every state of the Union, to Canada, and finally in 1837 to Great Britain."<sup>42</sup> Before the members even began their trek to Utah, 5,000 converts who had sailed from Liverpool had joined them in Nauvoo.<sup>43</sup> The gathering gained even more momentum in the Salt Lake Valley with Brigham Young in charge. Through the organizational efforts of the Church leadership and the Perpetual Immigration Fund, converts in England and Europe had a prearranged itinerary for boarding ships and making their way across the ocean and the plains, by covered wagon or handcart, and eventually by train, to their Zion in the Salt Lake Valley.<sup>44</sup> Once

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<sup>41</sup> Poll, Utah's History, 175.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> For discussions of the gathering see, for instance: Arrington's history of Brigham Young; Arrington and Bitton's The Mormon Experience, chapter 7; Allen and Leonard's The Story of the Latter-day Saints, chapter 8; and Poll's Utah's History, chapter 10.

here, however, it became a personal journey to find one's own identity as a citizen in a new country, a new frontier, a new (and polygamous) religion--and, for the Scandinavian Saints, all with a new language.

The importance of the immigrants is central to an understanding of nineteenth century Mormon culture. It was certainly not overlooked by the broader American society at the time.

An obsessive fear of strangers and nonconformists generated such hostility toward the Mormons that many Americans, in the 1850s and later, regarded this movement as entirely foreign and even threatening."<sup>4 5</sup>

The Utah problem during the troubled 1870s and 80s was seen largely as a polygamy problem by the American public, and the polygamy problem was seen largely as an immigrant problem--hordes of unmarried immigrants coming to Utah to become polygamous wives. Many thought an end to immigration would mean an end to polygamy.

In 1879 Secretary of State William M. Evarts issued an official letter instructing the United States representatives in various European nations to assist in suppressing Mormon emigration to this country."<sup>4 6</sup>

The immigrant Mormon sisters bore a double onus--they were immigrants, as well as Mormons. When the Young Woman's Journal spoke to the young women of Zion, it spoke to a group whose roots were largely foreign, and many of the

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<sup>4 5</sup> Mulder, Homeward to Zion, Preface, ix.

<sup>4 6</sup> Bushman, Mormon Sisters, 126.

stories have immigrant heroines.

### The Religion

Another thing that can be said of Mormon women of this period is that they were Mormons. It took a particular mind-set, perhaps, for the first generation of Mormon converts to adopt Mormonism in the first place. They made a conscious decision to accept a new religious doctrine, founded on The Book of Mormon. The book was purported to have been brought forth from the Hill Cumorah in upstate New York in the form of golden plates, hidden there by the last survivor of an ancient American civilization. It should be remembered, however, that at first the new doctrine and a belief in the mission of Joseph Smith were the only leaps of faith. It took a much greater leap of faith, it would seem, for those who joined later, knowing by then that the Mormons were a people despised and often persecuted. Perhaps the boldest of all were those who were converted still later, despite knowing about the Mormons' social experiment with marriage. To the believers, however, the first step of believing in the Book of Mormon was the most important. Once the Book of Mormon was accepted, along with the doctrine of latter-day revelation through living prophets, whatever came thereafter was simply to be accepted, believed, and endured. Those who were born into the L.D.S. religion/culture did not face quite the same circumstance of

embracing the unknown, but upon maturity and awareness of the world and its alternatives, they nevertheless had the option of accepting or rejecting the Church, its tenets, and its demands on their lives.

William Mulder, in a lecture delivered at the University of Utah in 1957, addressed the topic of "The Mormons in American History."<sup>47</sup> His comments clearly place the Mormon movement in the broader American culture of the nineteenth century.

Mormonism. . . is as native to the United States as Indian corn and the buffalo nickel. We have to specify an American Judaism or an American Catholicism, but Mormonism is American by birth, although the United States was long reluctant to accept the distinction. In its New England origins, its utopian experiments and reforms, its westward drive, and its early expansion to Europe resulting in a great program of immigration and settlement, nineteenth-century Mormonism expressed prominent traits and tendencies that were already shaping American society. It was not simply a colorful reflection of the times; it was a dynamic reworking of the diverse elements of American culture. Mormonism is unique primarily in the way it combined these elements, in what it added or neglected, making it now a perfect epitome of its time and place, and now a puzzling contradiction.<sup>48</sup>

Among these diverse elements of nineteenth century American culture identified by Mulder in Mormonism is the

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<sup>47</sup> William L. Mulder, The Mormons in American History, (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah, 1957).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 8.

belief in progress combined with an underlying sense of doom.

The utopian communities of the Rappites, the Moravians, the Shakers, the Fourierists, the Owenites, and the Mormons were at one and the same time an expression of optimism and of disillusionment, a radical rebuke of the imperfections of the existing social order.<sup>49</sup>

Mulder says Mormonism's social experiments were consistent with the times. The Word of Wisdom (which proscribes the use of alcohol, tobacco, and hot drinks)

was [Mormonism's] version of the widespread temperance movement in a day when even bran had its prophets, water cures had become a fad, and Sylvester Graham, who did not believe in using meat, tea, or coffee, gave his name to a health bread.<sup>50</sup>

Mulder says the temperance movement in the broader society was a political force, but in Mormonism it took a moral direction by becoming scripture. Mormonism also tried other popular ideas like economic equality, through its law of consecration and stewardship, and the restructuring of the family unit.

Again, polygamy was Mormonism's version of the daring attempts by contemporaries to modify the basic structure of the family, attempts which ran from the celibacy of the Shakers at one extreme to the free love of the Oneida Community at the other. . . . But polygamy was not a pagan indulgence: a Puritan asceticism disciplined it in practice and an Old

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

Testament sociology exalted it. Only the image of Mormon clerks and farmers seeing themselves as Abrahams and girding themselves for godhood in the eternities to come can fully explain this most imaginative of all doctrines.<sup>5 1</sup>

While Mormons adopted and tried many of the current social trends, they reacted against contemporary interest in progressive religious liberalism and turned, instead, to a committed religious ethic. That commitment led to their settlement in the Salt Lake Valley. Mulder says this early westward trek, which was "best prepared of all western overlanders in terms of purpose, knowledge of the country, organization and equipment,"<sup>5 2</sup> gave the Mormons a "dramatic connection with American history in time and space."<sup>5 3</sup>

Mormonism was at once traditional and different in American experience. As a movement making religion both the center and the circumference of daily life, it released energies that made it a wayward current in the mainstream of our history and earned it a lasting notoriety.<sup>5 4</sup>

There is much in Mormonism that is merely curious, quaint, and picturesque, and much in the past that is lurid. But a leopard is more than its spots. There is much in Mormonism that is moving and significant as the history of a people earnestly seeking New Jerusalem on the

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<sup>5 1</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>5 2</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>5 3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5 4</sup> Ibid., 12.

American frontier and diligently preparing themselves to be its fit inhabitants.<sup>5 5</sup>

Obviously, one of the tenets of the New Jerusalem, as the Mormons understood it, was plural marriage.<sup>5 6</sup> We cannot fully understand Mormon women as of 1889 when the Young Woman's Journal began without understanding the impact polygamy had on their lifestyles, self-images, and expectations. It is beyond the scope of this study to delve into the origins of polygamy, the reasons it was practiced by some and not by others, and the psychological impact the practice had on women. It is important, however, to note that the doctrine was integral to the teachings of the Church and the gospel as the Saints understood it, and even those who did not live in plural marriages were in the interesting position of having to ardently defend it.

The test of the strength of the belief came in the 1870s and 1880s when the gentile<sup>5 7</sup> population began organized efforts to eradicate polygamy. Nonpolygamous Mormon women suffered right along with their polygamous sisters. The most restrictive legislation finally adopted by Congress, following the Morrill Act of 1862 and the

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<sup>5 5</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>5 6</sup> Historians have generally placed the number of polygamous Mormons somewhere between three and twenty percent. See, for instance, Bushman, Mormon Sisters, 108, footnote #19.

<sup>5 7</sup> The Mormons referred to non-Mormons as gentiles.



Edmunds Act of 1882, was the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887. With this law, polygamy was outlawed, many immigrants were denied citizenship, polygamists were disenfranchised, and indeed, all Utah women, who had enjoyed the right to vote since 1870, were also disenfranchised.

Even before the Edmunds-Tucker Act, the battle lines were drawn, and what the Mormons called the "crusade" began. Polygamists went into hiding, assumed false identities, split up families into different homes, instructed children not to reveal the names of their parents, courted, married, and gave birth in secret, established underground networks of communication to help evade the "cohab" hunters, and frequently went to jail. Many polygamous wives and children were disinherited and required to be fully self-supporting. Some lived in loneliness and fear, hiding for as much as a decade.<sup>5 8</sup> The monogamous members of the Church hid them, cared for them, protected them, and defended their right to believe and practice their religion.

The Young Woman's Journal commenced amidst all this turmoil--the "polyg hunting," the difficult court trials in which wives and children were forced to testify against their spouses and parents, and the ridicule and criticism of Mormons in the local and national presses. That polygamy was very much on their minds is reflected in the

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<sup>5 8</sup> See Bushman, Mormon Sisters, 133-155.

stories of the Journal, which idealized the practice, and defended the women who lived it.

Of course, the religion involved much more than polygamy and hiding from federal agents. There were basic tenets of the doctrine and Mormon practice that contributed to the definition women had of themselves in the early days of the Church. Carol Cornwall Madsen identifies and discusses three aspects of the Mormon female's religious experience.<sup>59</sup> The first was that women were integrally organized into the structure of the Church. Joseph Smith himself initiated the organization of the women's arm of the Church, the Relief Society, saying that the restored Church was not complete until the women were organized. The Relief Society had its own leadership and was organized much like the men's priesthood. Women recognized that organizationally they were directed by the priesthood, but in reality they operated independently. The Relief Society was much more than a social club. It identified, addressed, and met basic needs of the community in much the same way as the priesthood did. The fact of being organized into the Church structure gave Mormon women a status perhaps unique in religious institutions at that time. As Madsen observed, "Through

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<sup>59</sup> Carol Cornwall Madsen, "Mormon Women and the Struggle for Definition," Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, XIV (Winter 1981): 40-47. The following discussion closely follows Madsen's article.

it the women of the Church had been given a vehicle by which their voices could be heard, their capabilities utilized, their contributions valued."<sup>60</sup>

A second aspect of the Mormon experience identified by Madsen was the right of the women to use spiritual gifts and to perform spiritual ordinances. The sisters, for instance, gave each other blessings and performed anointings. Third, Madsen says the temple experience was significant for Mormon women in defining themselves and their relationship to the Church. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the Mormon devotion to temple ceremonies, but it should be noted that the system of beliefs and religious rites that relate to the Mormon temple are central to the faith. In essence, the temple links mortals with the dead who have "gone beyond." In the temple, religious rites and ordinances, such as baptism and marriage, are performed for the dead as well as for the living. In the temple, Mormons make commitments to God to obey his will for them, and in return they are promised blessings and status in heaven.

Because the temple holds such a position of prominence in Mormon theology, it was significant to Mormon women that they, like the men, could officiate in ordinances and blessings. According to Madsen,

It is impossible to overestimate the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 43.

significance of temple work in the lives of early Mormon women. As both initiates and officiators, they knew they were participating in the essential priesthood ordinances of the gospel in the same manner as their husbands, their fathers, or their brothers.<sup>61</sup>

Madsen concludes that these three aspects of the Mormon experience gave nineteenth century Mormon women a "perception of shared priesthood. . . . Mormon women felt themselves to be an integral, viable force within the kingdom."<sup>62</sup> This is clearly the self-perception of the women in the stories of the Journal.

#### Negative Popular Images

This sense of importance and value was certainly not reflected in the image of Mormon women held by Americans at large. Negative narratives about Mormon women in the popular American press began early. As Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton have shown,<sup>63</sup> the popular negative image of Mormon women was established in the 1850s.

By the Civil War, both textual and pictorial depictions of the Mormons had firmly established the national stereotypes. There would be later embellishments and elaborations as new events transpired, but these would be variations on themes laid down during or before the antebellum period.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 45, 47.

<sup>63</sup> Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, The Mormon Graphic Image, 1834-1914 (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

Bunker and Bitton identify ten categories of negative depictions of Mormon women. They were seen as commodities (owned by husbands like animals); embattled (involved in domestic strife, as in wife versus wife); impoverished; subjugated (overworked slaves tyrannized by their husbands); worldly (lustful); unsightly; fickle and flirtatious; acquisitive (wives competing for fashions and goods with each other); and domineering. Some of the images are obviously conflicting, but they indicate that Mormon women were linked with many negative female stereotypes.

Gail Farr Casterline has also examined popular images of Mormon women from 1852 to 1890.<sup>65</sup> She finds that the Mormon woman was portrayed as a "haunting, pathetic figure--woman captive, beleaguered, belabored, befouled--woman 'in the toils.'"<sup>66</sup> Casterline suggests that there were other images that could have been depicted during that time that would have better represented Mormon womanhood. Her list of potential alternative images characterizes the Mormon woman as a religious disciple, celestial wife, woman in patriarchy, western pioneer, and emancipated woman. With regard to the last category,

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<sup>65</sup> Gail Farr Casterline, "'In the Toils' or 'Onward for Zion: Images of the Mormon Woman, 1852-1890.'" (Master's thesis, Utah State University, Logan, UT, 1974).

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 29.

Casterline says

By the time the anti-polygamy crusade got under way in the 1870s, Utah could boast of a respectable class of professional and highly literate women who personified the exact opposite of all that the imagery of oppression and degradation implied. Women dominated the medical profession in Utah; a sizeable number were teachers and writers. Through the Relief Society many of them became in effect social workers and businesswomen. The University of Utah was coeducational from its founding in 1850 at a time when many eastern institutions refused to admit female students. The territorial legislature granted women general elective franchise in 1870, becoming the second governing body in America to do so after Wyoming Territory in 1869. Thus there were a number of features whereby the women of Utah could have been viewed as actually forerunners in the process of feminine advancement. . . . Most commentaries, however, failed to note that Mormon women had superior status and opportunities in some areas in comparison to women in other parts of America.<sup>67</sup>

The Journal stories often take issue with the negative Mormon stereotypes, and offer their young readers a positive counternarrative.

#### The Leading Sisters

As Casterline's work suggests, by the time the Young Woman's Journal began, there was a rich tradition in Utah of strong and independent women, staunch Mormons who actively defended the faith. All of the conditions previously discussed somehow combined to produce a

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 77.

remarkable group of leading ladies whose activities marked the paths and set the standards for other females in the Mormon culture.

The term "leading sisters" owes its origins to Maureen Ursenbach Beecher<sup>68</sup> who identifies the leading women, and says they were an "elite group" who "not only led out in matters intellectual, but ruled informally the whole society of Mormon women."<sup>69</sup> The group began to form with the organization of the Relief Society in Nauvoo, Illinois, by Joseph Smith, and solidified in Winter Quarters on the banks of the Missouri River. This was the stopping-over location for the Saints in their trip from Nauvoo to the Salt Lake Valley. Beecher shows, through journals and other records, that a nucleus of polygamous wives, now becoming open about their polygamy where previously it had been hidden, began to meet and instruct each other in the spiritual dimensions of their religion, to teach and learn from each other about their roles as women in polygamy, and to support each other emotionally, as well as through needed help and service. There was an "emotional bonding" that occurred among them during the trying stay at Winter Quarters, and it was here that

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<sup>68</sup> Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "The 'Leading Sisters': A Female Hierarchy in Nineteenth Century Mormon Society." Journal of Mormon History, 9 (1982): 25-39.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 25.

the women who would lead out in women's affairs in Utah identified themselves, set their standards, re-established certain rituals, and thus cemented the ties which held their group.<sup>70</sup>

Once established in Salt Lake, these sisters assumed formal and informal leadership positions among the women, and acted largely autonomously from the male authority structure. Journals and minutes of women's meetings of the time reveal that these leading sisters (especially Eliza R. Snow) were recognized as having authority over the women of the Church. Their instructions were obeyed in the same way that the instructions from the Brethren were obeyed.

As time passed, the original group began to diminish, and a new group of strong leading women began to emerge. Among them was Emmeline B. Wells, editor of the Woman's Exponent, and later, Susa Young Gates, editor of the Young Woman's Journal.

Leonard J. Arrington says the activities and contributions of the leading sisters resulted in female movements for economic independence, for the establishment an indigenous literature, for medical services, and for greater political expression.<sup>71</sup> Arrington argues that,

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>71</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, "Blessed Damozels: Women in Mormon History," Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought, VI, no. 2 (Summer 1971): 25. This issue of Dialogue is known among Mormon historians as the "Pink Issue." It was the first entirely feminist or female issue of Dialogue and is recognized as a significant step in the Mormon



"Mormon women were probably more independent than most Western women."<sup>72</sup>

Among the leading political women was Mattie Hughes Cannon, the first woman state senator in the United States, who was elected in 1896. But long before her election, other Mormon women had fought the fight for women's suffrage and had been engaged in significant political and feminist activity.

Among the leaders in the "movement to establish an indigenous literature" were Emmeline B. Wells and Susa Young Gates.<sup>73</sup> Both of these women found power in their political activities, as well as in their pens. They and the other leading sisters contributed greatly to the ways women in Zion thought about themselves.<sup>74</sup> They were

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expression of women's rights and issues. Arrington's article, cited here, is a seminal article in that it addresses and acknowledges the contributions of women in early Utah and Church history. Most of the significant and scholarly history about early Mormon women has been written since the "Pink Issue" was published, and much is directly related to the people and social forces within the Church which led to the publication of the "Pink Issue" in the first place.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>73</sup> For a complete history of Emmeline B. Wells, see: Madsen, "A Mormon Woman in Victorian America." Susa Young Gates will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>74</sup> For thoughts about why this position of strength for women in Mormon culture seemed to diminish after statehood was achieved, and especially in the twentieth century, see: Anne Firor Scott, "Mormon Women, Other Women: Paradoxes and Challenges," Journal of Mormon History, 13 (1986-87): 3-19; and Foster, "From Frontier Activism to Neo-Victorian Domesticity," 3-21.

models of strength and independence, intelligent and educated women who were also wives, mothers, and dedicated Mormons.

It is perhaps surprising, then, that the leading sisters, or women like them, are not portrayed extensively in the Journal's serial stories. There are numerous instances of females performing blessings and anointings, there is reference to Eliza R. Snow, and there are consistent depictions of strong and decisive women, but there are few politically active, literary, educated, and career-oriented women. A cursory review of these five years of Journal issues, however, shows that these matters were well covered in the magazine's other departments. The serial stories focused instead on matters of romance and family life.

A unique and diverse set of circumstances contributed to the development and culture of Mormon women in the late nineteenth century. These women were finding their identity in a new religion, a new region and, for the immigrants, a new land. By 1889, when the Young Woman's Journal began, the Mormons had lived in the Salt Lake valley and surrounding areas for 42 years--years that had been spent establishing homes, building colonies, creating a previously nonexistent culture, and defending the new and much-maligned religion that they loved. It had been a short history, intensely busy and industrious, but long

enough to establish some norms and expectations for the women of Zion. The pages of the Young Woman's Journal offer a unique opportunity to see how the women constructed their narratives about what it meant to be a Mormon woman, how they encouraged bonding among their sisterhood, and how they advocated steadfastness to Mormon values.

### CHAPTER III

#### SUSA YOUNG GATES AND MORMON LITERATURE

Biographies of Susa Young Gates abound, and since it would be redundant to repeat the same information here, the facts of her life will be sketched only broadly.<sup>1</sup> Her history is especially interesting because her life lasted from the polygamous beginnings of her frontier birth in 1856, to her death in 1933 in a world vastly changed by a myriad of circumstances, including new technologies and a world war.<sup>2</sup> Rebecca Foster Cornwall's description captures the essence of Susa Young Gates' persona. Cornwall says Susa was one of the "grandes dames" of Mormondom, "looked upon by leaders and common-folk alike with fondness, respect, perhaps a measure of fear, and tolerance for their eccentricities."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the chapters about her in: Vicky Burgess-Olson, Sister Saints (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978); and Bushman, Mormon Sisters. See also R. Paul Cracroft, Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Literary Work (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1951).

<sup>2</sup> She was born March 18, 1856, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and died there May 27, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Rebecca Foster Cornwall, "Susa Y. Gates." In Burgess-Olson, Sister Saints, 63-64.

She was the first and only woman to have an office at Church headquarters, and had an unofficial reputation as the thirteenth apostle. Cornwall says the influence of Susa's pen, personality, and ideas on Mormons is immeasurable.<sup>4</sup>

Much of her impact on Mormon culture was surely achieved by way of a lasting impression on young Mormon women through the pages of the Young Woman's Journal. Susa helped define the women of Zion. She, however, was herself a product of her culture and was defined by the cultural influences discussed in the previous chapter. She was a Victorian woman who felt that family life was the most important calling. She gave birth to thirteen children,<sup>5</sup> and specialized in preaching and teaching domestic science. Although she grew up as Brigham Young's daughter in the most favorable circumstances available in

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Of her thirteen children, Susa lost nine to divorce, prematurity, accident, or illness. Joseph Sterling, born in Hawaii, died at age five after the Gates had returned to Provo. Sarah Beulah, having lost an argument with her brother over who was to play villain in a childhood playlet, was shot to death with a gun which had presumably been emptied of bullets. Heber died the day he was born, and three-year-old Brigham died from dye poisoning off a candy wrapper. Of thirteen children, Susa raised only four to maturity: Emma Lucy, Brigham Cecil (who was always sickly), Hal (Harvey Harris), and Franklin Young. Leah and Bailey, children of her former marriage, were reared by others." Rebecca Foster Cornwall, in (Burgess-Olson, Sister Saints, p. 74. Cornwall also discusses more about Susa's first marriage and subsequent relationships with her first children in this same article.

the territory, she was nevertheless a western woman of pioneer heritage, influenced by the independent western mentality. She was a child not only of polygamy, but of the polygamous family that received the most negative national attention. As the daughter of the Mormon prophet, she was fully instructed in the doctrine and social/cultural expectations of the Church. She appeared on the scene far later than the original group of powerful and vocal leading sisters and thus had numerous prototypes after which to pattern herself. All of these ingredients defined Susa. She was an embodiment, a personification, of the major religious/cultural trends of her time and place.

Susa was a working mother. She traveled back and forth by train from her home in Provo (about 45 miles south of Salt Lake) almost every day while she was editor of the Journal. The Journal was her own idea, and she recorded its history in her History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association.<sup>6</sup>

Susa begins her history by telling of her father's concerns about the worldly influence the transcontinental railroad, completed in 1869, would have on his flock of Mormons. He was especially worried about the young women.

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<sup>6</sup>Gates, History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association.

There was a host of young women growing up in Zion, who. . . had not studied the principles of the Gospel, as had their mothers, who had accepted the truth in eastern lands or in a foreign country. The daughters of Zion were passing fair; and coupled with their simple beauty was a freedom of demeanor, bred by the western atmosphere. They were getting the common education that comes from books and schools, and most of them were carefully trained in the domestic virtues. But many there were who did not have the opportunity of studying the principles of the Gospel, in sequence and with intelligent application. The girls were not then sent out on missions, as were their brothers, and so did not acquire that best of spiritual and intellectual training which is given in the heaven-appointed university of missionary life.<sup>7</sup>

The organization that Brigham Young formed for the young ladies was known as the Retrenchment Association. It started with Brigham's own wives and daughters setting the example. The association got its name from its theme --to retrench from "extravagance in dress, in eating, and even in speech."<sup>8</sup> In practical terms, from the girls' point of view, this meant giving up their fancy dresses. Brigham's daughters were not so dedicated as to take the news of the new movement with glad hearts. Susa recounts

It would not be difficult to imagine the consternation of those light-hearted young girls, who grasped at once the thought that to them this new movement meant no ruffles, no ribbons, no furbelows [festooned flounces]. All that lay in the heart of this movement as its deeper

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

meaning, the uplifting, the growth and the spiritual and intellectual culture--all this was overlooked by those merry, thoughtless girls, the oldest of them not much over twenty. The sacrifice was big to them; small wonder there was shrinking and doubt. Nevertheless, it was settled that night that a Spartan plainness of dress was to be one of the distinguishing marks of the new movement.<sup>9</sup>

Susa says this "quaintly termed" Retrenchment Association became a "great reform movement among women" and

was not confined entirely to the young girls; the mothers and wives in Israel were as much in need of a return to the art of simplicity. . . as were the girls."<sup>10</sup>

From its beginning in Brigham Young's parlor, the organization for young women grew. Over the years, the dress requirements changed, and its name changed to the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association--but the intent of the organization in maintaining the purity of the young women and contributing to their religious education and commitment did not. The young women's organization did not have its own publication, as did the other organizations in the Church. Twenty years after the organization of the original Retrenchment Association, the leaders of the young women in Salt Lake City felt a need for a publication of their own. Susa was having the same thoughts in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), where she was living while her husband served a mission there. She

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 13.



wrote to the leadership of the Church as well as the young women's organization--and it was settled that she would begin the journal at her own expense--as was the custom at the time<sup>11</sup>--and be its editor.

She desired to make a contribution to the kingdom in "a literary way"<sup>12</sup> because she felt she had been given the particular gift of writing, and because

the spare time which many have devoted to the pretty trifles with which women delight to adorn their households, or to the making of elaborate and trimmed clothing for themselves and children, I have used with delight in the labors of the pen."<sup>13</sup>

Susa had two very clear goals for the journal: (1) that it be used as a teaching tool more than a polished publication; and (2) that it be used as a forum for local writers.<sup>14</sup>

After all the initial arrangements and plans were

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<sup>11</sup> "There were, in the seventies and eighties, three printed mediums for the chief auxiliary organizations: The Juvenile Instructor, owned and edited by President George Q. Cannon, for the benefit of the Sunday Schools; the Woman's Exponent, owned and edited by Mrs. Emmeline B. Wells, for the use of the Relief Society; and the Contributor, the organ of the Young Men's Association, owned and edited by Junius F. Wells. All of these were excellent publications, but each had its own special line of effort, and no one of them was suitable for [communicating with the young women]." Gates, History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, 101.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 107.

completed, the Journal went to print.<sup>15</sup> It was not easy to get the first subscriptions, which cost two dollars per year. Susa's mother traveled all over the Mormon territory at her own expense to promote the publication. Even so, the number of subscribers reached only 1,500 to 2,000 in the early years.<sup>16</sup>

While the number of subscriptions seems low, it is probably reasonable to assume that each issue was shared widely. Histories of the Woman's Exponent, for instance, tell of that paper's centrality to the Relief Society. Columns from the Exponent were read and commented upon in official Relief Society meetings with regularity. The same was probably true of the Young Woman's Journal in relationship to the young women's organization. The longevity of the Journal, together with the rising status and recognition of Susa Young Gates among the women of Utah, indicates that the Journal was widely read despite its subscription rate. Interestingly, however, by comparison with the Woman's Exponent, which wielded such a

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<sup>15</sup> "Sister Gates. . . went to the office of her friend, Abraham H. Cannon, who was manager of the Juvenile Instructor, and presented the matter to him. She was received with all the warmth of encouragement possible to give. He expressed at once his perfect faith in the ultimate success of such a venture, and consented to assist the young editor in every possible way, and to print the journal at the Juvenile Instructor office, trusting to the subscriptions to pay the expenses, so confident was he of its success." Gates, History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, 106.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 107, 112.

force in the kingdom, Susa's subscriptions of 1,500 to 2,000 may have been higher. According to Bennion, the circulation figures for the Exponent are difficult to ascertain, but in 1885--just four years prior to the Journal's advent--the numbers were probably somewhere between 500 and 1,000.<sup>17</sup>

It required a real passion for the work on Susa's part to edit the Journal for 11 years--from age 33 to 44. In his thesis about Susa and her literary work, R. Paul Cracroft says these were her "busiest and happiest years."<sup>18</sup> Cracroft reports that in addition to her family responsibilities, and commuting daily from Provo to Salt Lake City, during these years she organized the Daughters of the Revolution, the Sons and Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, and the Utah Women's Press Club. She also attended national and international meetings, and entertained prominent American women like Susan B. Anthony.<sup>19</sup>

Rebecca Foster Cornwall lists more of Susa's activities, many of which occurred during this period. She was trustee of the state college in Logan and of the Brigham Young Academy (BYA); she was active in Republican

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<sup>17</sup>Bennion, "The Woman's Exponent," 236-237.

<sup>18</sup>R. Paul Cracroft, "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Literary Work," 29.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, 30.

politics and in promoting physical education; she taught classes in domestic science and parents' classes at BYA; she served as Young Women's president in her ward; she attended summer school at Harvard University; she wrote two novels,<sup>20</sup> and did other extensive writings; she attended the National Council of Women seven times, and she served as the chairman of its press committee for three years; and had five more children.<sup>21</sup>

Susa was obviously an important woman in Mormondom on many fronts, but

it was as a writer and editor that Susa Young Gates liked most to think of herself, just as it was as a writer and editor that most people best remember her.<sup>22</sup>

Susa developed a love of books and literature in her childhood,<sup>23</sup> and it was one of her regrets for her people that they did not value reading and writing enough. One of her lifelong endeavors was to encourage home-produced literature. She felt that the process of writing was important to the intellectual and spiritual growth of the

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<sup>20</sup>The two novels were: The Prince of Ur (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945), originally published in serial form in the Relief Society Magazine, beginning January 1915; and John Stevens' Courtship (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1909), originally published in serial form in The Contributor, beginning November 1895. Both novels were originally published under Susa's pen name, Homespun.

<sup>21</sup>Burgess-Olson, Sister-Saints, 73.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 41.

<sup>23</sup>See Cracroft, "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Literary Work," 4-5.

individual, and that reading materials should be available that reflected Mormon themes and values.

Mrs. Gates initiated the Journal by putting into practice her idea that if there was to be good literature in quantities sufficient to keep her "girls" away from things "of the world," the Mormons would have to write it themselves.<sup>24</sup>

Paul Cracroft says Susa was a crusader for good literature, by which she meant pure or moral literature.<sup>25</sup> The mission and goal of her writing and editing was to solidify the Mormon culture and religion in the hearts of her young readers.

[She] wrote for her own people; and what she developed for the Mormons was the rough draft of their own self-expression too long repressed. There were few outside her Church who felt the need to

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 48. "'Mormonism' is rich in themes for the production of literature, [Susa said,] and one may find subjects for rhyme, for poetry, for a variety of prose works, for the drama, and for the most profound writings; and though our home writers may not be very highly esteemed at present. . . yet those who desire to see Utah take an honorable place in the nation should encourage the author, and help sustain literary labor." Gates (under the pen name Amethyst), "Young Writers," The Contributor (Aug. 1881) II, 348-349, quoted in Cracroft, "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Her Work," 63.

"Our young people do not write half enough. It is of small use to con over a subject and simply repeat in your memory what you have read or heard. Not until you have woven the new thought into the woof of your mind by writing or speaking, preferably writing, is it of real use to you." "Editor's Department," Young Woman's Journal (June 1895) VI, p. 429, quoted in Cracroft "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Her Work," 63.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 48.

listen to her. . . . Nor did she much care.<sup>26</sup>

Susa's legacy as a writer, commentator and editor, Cracroft says, is that she "fostered literary appreciation and literary art among the Mormons."<sup>27</sup> Much of that legacy was in the pages of the Young Woman's Journal.

Susa's definition of literature is not necessarily a widely accepted one. In his essay on Mormon literature, Karl Keller says unequivocally that "there is no literary tradition in the Church. . . . to make mention of a Mormon literature is to make a joke."<sup>28</sup> Keller says Mormons have consistently denied themselves a literature for three reasons: puritanism, paranoia, and apocalypticism. He argues that Mormons harbor a Puritan fear of an imagination that might lead to sexuality and sensuality.<sup>29</sup> They

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<sup>26</sup> "In everything she wrote is evidence of her inclination to point a moral of some kind, to make of her Mormon readers better Mormons. She recognized the existence of evil and the need for it to be present in Mormon literature in either of two ways: either evil should gain a shocking triumph or should itself succumb to the forces of good, so that Mormon readers could be shown an example of how to merit entrance into Heaven. Susa Young Gates attempted to preserve the ideals she believed essential to the progress of her community. While it was important to her to keep them alive in literature, it was more vital that they should not die where she believed them to be needed most--in the hearts of her own people." Ibid., 138.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>28</sup> Karl Keller, "On Words and the Word of God: The Delusions of a Mormon Literature," Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, IV, no. 3 (Autumn, 1969): 13.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 14.

view literature as a tool of Satan,<sup>30</sup> and as a sign that the world is in the final dispensation of time.<sup>31</sup> He also says the writing of Mormon literature has suffered from a series of "greenhorn notions"<sup>32</sup> about the nature of literature: "We have for the most part confused literature with apologetics, as if literature ever had very much in the world to do with defense."<sup>33</sup> Keller argues further that Mormons confuse literature with communication: "If a work of literature doesn't carry 'the Mormon message,' we are tempted to judge it poor literature."<sup>34</sup> A final delusion, he says, that denies Mormons a literature of their own is "the insistence on sweetness and light in the things we read and the things we write."<sup>35</sup>

Keller's essay condemns Mormon literature, and could be challenged, of course, on many points. The essence of the challenge would center on the definition of literature. By his definition, Susa Young Gates never wrote a word that could be considered literature. She would be, rather, the case in point for each of Keller's statements.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

Keller's article was written in 1969, but the discussion about Mormon literature stems back to the early days of the Church. Susa Young Gates' disappointment in the lack of a Mormon literature has already been noted. One of her contemporaries, Mormon Apostle Orson F. Whitney, expressed both his recognition that a solid Mormon literature did not yet exist, and a faith that it some day would, when he said in 1888:

We shall yet have Miltons and Shakespeares of our own. God's ammunition is not exhausted. His highest spirits are held in reserve for the latter times. In God's name and by His help we will build up a literature whose top shall touch heaven, though its foundation may now be low on earth.<sup>3 6</sup>

Many twentieth century scholars argue that the Church has built up a literature. Dale Morgan says emphatically

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<sup>3 6</sup> Ibid., 16. Also, "Home Literature," The Contributor, IX (1888): 297. Also, see Whitney's essay in A Believing People, 203-207.

It is perhaps surprising that in this difficult and trying time for the Church, there should have been so much interest in developing Mormon writers and artists. It was a period of artistic awakening for the Church. The first generation of Mormons from the East, from England, and from Europe had been exposed to the arts as a part of their cultural heritage. The isolation of Utah denied this exposure to the second and third generations. By the late 1880s, many in the Church were aware of the need to bring the arts alive again among the members of the Church--and to express the Mormon experience through the arts. This is probably attested to most poignantly by the Church's patronage of the arts in sending several young artists, called "art missionaries" to study at the Julian Academy in Paris. For the account of this unusual mission, see: Linda Jones Gibbs, Harvesting the Light: The Paris Art Mission and Beginnings of Utah Impressionism (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1987).



that "there is a Mormon literature beyond question."<sup>37</sup> He cites the several Mormon scriptures, Mormon hymnody, poetry, autobiography, and the literary aspects of the formal written histories by and of the Mormons.

Other scholars argue that there was literature from the beginning, but that it diminished over time. William Mulder, in his essay "Mormonism and Literature,"<sup>38</sup> says Mormonism began with a book, The Book of Mormon, and thus "had to make its appeal to a literate following."<sup>39</sup> He tells about a number of well-educated and articulate Mormons, "some of them brilliant, all of them fearless and eloquent,"<sup>40</sup> who wrote in the original Mormon press.

Their tradition, militant and aspiring, persisted in the columns of the early Deseret News, and in the pages of the Contributor and the Young Woman's Journal, to give way at last to genteel moralizing, a tone and manner characteristic of today [1954]. . . . Clearly, Mormonism had literate beginnings which developed early into a distinctive literature, a rich legacy forgotten in the mediocrity of present-day mormon expression.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Dale L. Morgan, "Literature in the History of the Church: The Importance of Involvement," Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, IV, no. 3 (Autumn, 1969): 13.

<sup>38</sup> William Mulder, "Mormonism and Literature." A Believing People: Literature of the Latter-Day Saints, by Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1974), 208-211. The essay originally appeared in Western Humanities Review 9 (Winter 1954-55).

<sup>39</sup> Cracroft and Lambert, A Believing People, 208.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 208.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 209.

In 1974, Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert compiled what they called the "first anthology" of a Mormon literature, and they say it "suggests that Mormon letters are much further underway than many would suspect."<sup>4 2</sup> Cracroft and Lambert say

much of the literary expression of this people has been polemic and didactic, particularly for the first hundred years of Latter-day Saint history,"<sup>4 3</sup>

but one would be "foolish to dismiss the whole first hundred years of Mormon writing as nothing but 'a considerable body of very low grade ore.'"<sup>4 4</sup> There have been, they say, "some remarkable literary expressions."<sup>4 5</sup>

The stories from the early periodicals of the Church have been largely overlooked because of their literary style. Even those historians who have taken very seriously the essays and editorials from these publications have dismissed the literature as silly.<sup>4 6</sup> But this

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<sup>4 2</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>4 3</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>4 4</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>4 5</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>4 6</sup> For instance, note this quotation from Sherilyn Cox Bennion, "The Woman's Exponent: Forty-Two Years of Speaking for Women." Utah Historical Quarterly, 44, no. 3 (Summer 1981): 291-304: "Serial novels were short on humor but long on sentimentality and religious conviction. Heroines were born Mormons, converted to Mormonism, or the ancestors of Mormons. One, Jane Bland, experienced an unusual number of vicissitudes, even considering that they

writing has value beyond its style. As Cracroft and Lambert say, it gives us a glimpse into the minds and souls of the Saints, and is "fraught with expressions of significant human experience."<sup>47</sup> William Mulder touches on the same theme in his discussion of Mormon diaries.

In them we find something of the daily living and dying of men and women both weak and valiant. . . . and it is as a collective expression that Mormon literature makes its greatest impact rather than in any single work so far by any single artist.<sup>48</sup>

It would seem, then, that Susa Young Gates' dream of a Mormon literature is being fulfilled.

It is in reading the indigenous literature, whatever its literary merits, that a people can be understood. We know more about them not only from what they wrote, but by knowing what kinds of things they read. It is with this point of view and an attitude of appreciation for the literary heritage left by nineteenth century female Mormon writers, that the serial narratives from the Young Woman's Journal will now be considered.

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were spread out over fifty-seven episodes. 'True to her nature,' she endured each 'trying ordeal with the greatest heroism, after the first severe nervous shock.' Another heroine reached the height of printed passion, Exponent-style, when her intended 'drew her toward him, looked into her eyes, and, as if satisfied with what he found there, folded her in his arms and kissed her tenderly.'

<sup>47</sup> Cracroft and Lambert, A Believing People, 4.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

## CHAPTER IV

VOLUME 1: OCTOBER 1889 -  
SEPTEMBER 1890

Four narratives from Volume 1 will be reviewed in this chapter, starting with the two-number story "Whatsoever a Man Soweth." Three single-installment stories will then be discussed to give a flavor of the shorter stories, and to emphasize the themes that appear in the first year of the Journal. These stories are "Maggie Hartley's Temptation," "We Tread the Dust," and "Polished Stones."

### "Whatsoever a Man Soweth" by Homespun

This first story in the Young Woman's Journal, written by Susa Young Gates herself under the pseudonym "Homespun," begins on the very first page of the first volume. It is a literary expression of Susa's primary reason for starting the Journal--to encourage the reading of good literature by providing proper reading material for Mormon youth. It also introduces other significant themes such as the importance of a solid and moderate character, obedience to parents and leaders, and plural marriage. The Journal's target audience was young women,

and most of its stories address their interest in romance. Those fictional characters who live by the proper precepts and principles are usually rewarded by winning the hearts of their true loves. This pattern is set immediately in this first tale.

The story begins with the premise that Leonard Fox, the main and tragic character, had been corrupted by the reading of, in the words of his mother, "trashy novels," which have caused him to go "clean crazy."<sup>1</sup> The handsome, tall, and slender Leonard adopted the dramatic and romantic notions, the patterns of behavior and thought, that he constantly read about in his books. His "fatal"<sup>2</sup> habits of novel reading and day dreaming were "almost as debauching as drink."<sup>3</sup>

The object of Leonard's love, the steady and level-headed Dora Miller, thought Leonard was silly and detestable. She loved, instead, Leonard's elder brother Henry. Henry was not aware of it, however, and even though he also loved Dora, he did not seek her attentions because he was aware of Leonard's feelings for her. Leonard sought consolation for Dora's rebuff in suicide. He drank a six ounce bottle of laudanum (a tincture of opium), but the

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<sup>1</sup> Susa Young Gates, ed., Young Woman's Journal, (Vol. 1, No. 1), p. 1. Footnotes hereafter will appear, for instance, as Journal 1:1, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Journal 1:2, 47.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

attempt was unsuccessful.

Dora learned that Carrie, the Swedish immigrant girl who did the Fox family wash, was interested in Leonard. Dora encouraged Carrie to pursue the relationship. Carrie was hesitant because of her social status as "his mother's washwoman."

"Oh, pshaw!," [said Dora]. "What does such a thing amount to in a Mormon community? You are not in the old country, where there are class distinctions as there were in your country. You're just as good as Leonard Fox, or any one else in Utah. He'd never think of such a thing."<sup>4</sup>

Leonard and Carrie married, but only as a point of honor on Leonard's part in not dallying with her heart, and also as a way of hurting Dora. But, Dora's heart was true to Leonard's brother Henry, though Henry still did not know it. He married another woman whom he had learned to love.

Pretty, proud, womanly Dora Miller saw him court and marry another girl with smiles on her own face, and a word of malice or complaint to a living soul never passed her lips. Indeed, the years came upon her, and faded her rosy cheeks, but never for a moment did her heart falter in its devotion to its chosen king.<sup>5</sup>

Leonard became bitter and was cruel to Carrie, and continued in his destructive reading habits. He moved away and left her to fend for herself. While he was gone

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>5</sup> Journal 1:1, 9.

he came to his senses somewhat and realized how cruel he had been, and how much he truly cared for his little Carrie. But--it was too late. She had died in childbirth because she was weakened from the grief of Leonard's departure.

Poor little Carrie! The victim of a cruel, selfish piece of spite, the caprice of a vain, handsome, weak man, her tender heartstrings were not of that wiry strength that could quietly smile and suffer, living all the time a moderately comfortable life; going to meeting, attending amusements and working with cheerful face and steady voice. No, she was not at all like Dora Miller, raised in the matter-of-fact practical school of western life. She was of a weaker mold.<sup>6</sup>

But, "Who can lay even a thorn of blame on your quiet breast where only the sweet pure lilies of love, peace and purity were laid. Rest on, white soul!"<sup>7</sup>

Leonard went raving mad for a time upon hearing the news of her death, but was eventually rehabilitated and became a devoted father to his motherless daughter. Leonard was bad in many ways, but he was not a bad father, nor was he sexually immoral.

Yes, weak he was, and silly in many things, but he was as pure as a virgin. And to Carrie and Carrie alone, had he ever given the strength of his manhood.<sup>8</sup>

Several years later, while Homespun was traveling in

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<sup>6</sup> Journal, 1:2, 46.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 47.

"our settlements down in Arizona," she unexpectedly came across Dora. Dora, who now had a "certain enbon point" [plumpness] had moved to Arizona to live with her brother, and through some untold chain of events that "the Lord brought about"<sup>9</sup> had become the plural wife of her true love, Henry, and mother of his small son.

"And how does Henry's wife feel?"  
[Homespun asked].

"Julia's the best woman in the whole universe," [Dora replied]. "Henry told me once that Julia was as dear or dearer to him than his life, for she had been such a good wife to him; and if I truly loved him I would seek her happiness first, and always spare her feelings. I have honestly tried to do so; and I believe Julia loves me as well as I do her."

"Deary me," [said Homespun]. "All I can say is, Dora, what we sow, we reap; and you sowed faithful prayers and diligent works, and reaped future happiness."<sup>10</sup>

But not so with Leonard. He sowed the dark seeds of poor literature in his mind and reaped nothing but trouble. By the end of the story, however, he was recovering from his destructive habit. As Dora said,

He never dares read a story or novel. Not even the very best. He warns every young person he meets never to read novels. Still I think he carries his warning to an excess. Young folks like something bright and gay to read. And books of novels are as great an educator as the theater. I only wish we had novels or stories written

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 50.



by our own people, with proper lessons taught therein.<sup>11</sup>

The point is obvious that Susa intended for the Journal to thereafter provide the suitable reading material, and that the Mormons as a people needed to begin to develop a body of their own literature.

The story reveals much about the culture of its time. There were parties at the schoolhouse, for instance, and Sunday evening church meetings. Rhubarb was a home remedy for colds, and right-thinking could lift physical and emotional burdens.

Are we not often sicker than we really are because we fancy we are so? The mind raises or depresses the body far more than do medicines administered for that purpose. And to the mind, the imagination is what the mind is to the body. The mind of spirit has a far heavier load to carry if the heavy burden of an excited imagination be laid upon it.<sup>12</sup>

The narrative encourages harmony and affiliation throughout. There is admonition to fathers to be more kind, to mothers to be more firm, and to young people to be more obedient to the counsel of their leaders and parents. Family and community unity and mutual support are frequent messages in the Journal's literature.

The social issue of the Swedish immigrant in this story is notable. While the words of the characters

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>12</sup> Journal 1:1, 5.

proclaim her total equality, the author's comments<sup>13</sup> reveal a perception that western women are made of tougher fiber than the immigrants. Still, the comment is made more in recognition of the demands of the west than in derision of the "sweet" and "pure" immigrant. The place of the immigrant in the culture is a theme often repeated in other stories. In later narratives, however, immigrant women are also depicted as strong, capable, and well able to deal with adversity.

Also of note is the subject of plural marriage. The picture is one of real romance between the husband and each of his wives, and of harmony between the wives. As noted in earlier chapters, this volume came out one year before the Manifesto was announced prohibiting polygamous marriages among Church members. The Endowment House, in which polygamous marriages had traditionally been conducted, however, was torn down in 1889, the year this story was published. According to historians, the Church had actually issued instructions in that year to cease performing polygamous unions.<sup>14</sup> Still, plural marriage is viewed favorably in this and all subsequent narratives.

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<sup>13</sup> See quote in context above. "No, she was not at all like Dora Miller, raised in the matter-of-fact practical school of western life. She was of a weaker mold." Journal, 1:2, 47.

<sup>14</sup> See, for instance, Allen and Leonard, The Story of the Latter-day Saints, 413-415; and Poll, Utah's History, 272.

Clearly, devotion to the principle<sup>15</sup> did not end with the Church's changing stance toward the practice.

"Maggie Hartley's Temptation"  
by Hannah

Unlike the unwavering Dora in the story above, Maggie Hartley was tempted to align herself with an unsuitable mate. Her story emphasizes the evils of flirting, gambling, drinking, and improper courtships, and emphasizes the importance of marrying a worthy man.

Maggie Hartley was the youngest child of a well-to-do farmer in one of our principal cities. She was very fair, with flaxen hair and innocent blue eyes, and of a confiding, sympathetic, impetuous temperament. Pure and innocent in herself, she never thought of aught else in others.<sup>16</sup>

It was this latter quality that caused her to overlook the grave faults in the character of her beloved, Claude Lamont. Her parents did not approve of him, but Maggie could not be dissuaded. For two years they courted, and "to fair Maggie Hartley, life seemed one continuous bright dream, from which there could be no awakening."<sup>17</sup> She did not realize that when Claude was away from her he often "enjoyed a social glass" with his gentlemen friends, beat them at a game of cards, at times became "somewhat intoxicated," and flirted with the

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<sup>15</sup> The term "the principle" is a reference to plural marriage.

<sup>16</sup> Journal, 1:5, 140.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 141.

"superb Miss Peterson."<sup>18</sup>

One day she discovered, however, that Claude had given a photograph of himself to the "heartless flirt," Anna Peterson. Maggie "took Claude to task," and the relationship ended. When Maggie left on an extended trip to visit her relatives, Uncle Rupert's family, Claude's "conduct with Miss Peterson had been most base, and in consequence thereof he had fled."<sup>19</sup>

Maggie's temptation came when, a year later, Claude wrote her from abroad, professing his love, confessing his guilt, and asking for her forgiveness and devotion. Maggie knew of his transgressions far and beyond his behavior with Miss Peterson, but she was tempted nonetheless to answer him with her love. Only the accidental death of her sister's fiance, and the sister's subsequent sickness, kept her from writing.

Seven years passed, and there was another gentleman who wanted her hand in marriage. She could not freely give it, not knowing if she had really given up her love of Claude. Fortunately, however, Claude returned to town just then and went to visit Maggie. "At nine o'clock came Claude Lamont to crave again Maggie's forgiveness and plead for her love." Maggie was nervous and afraid of the response her heart might feel toward him, but she met him

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 144.

with coldness.

"How many lost souls now owe their ruin to you?" [she asked him]. "How shall you sum up the woe and misery you have caused, just because you were once weak in temptation? True repentance will lead men's souls to God. Where has yours led you? Ask yourself, Claude Lamont, if you know of any reason why I should still care for you? True, I gave you the whole sweet love of my youth. But you trampled upon it as a thing of naught. Still I loved you; and had your repentance been sincere and lasting, Heaven only knows what might have been."<sup>20</sup>

Thus freed from her doubts about being able to give her whole heart to her new lover, Maggie was able to marry. But, "poor weak Claude" didn't heed Maggie's warning, and went back to his old vices, forgetting "that an offended God will soon call him to an account for all the suffering he has caused."<sup>21</sup>

The story ends with that hope that Maggie's daughters will be protected "from such sorrow and temptation as came into [Maggie's] young life and so nearly blighted it."<sup>22</sup>

Several of the recurrent themes in the Journal's serial literature run through this story. There is the reminder that much sorrow can be avoided if young people will heed the counsel of their parents. Also, there are the reminders of the importance of choosing a proper mate,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 149.

of adherence to Church standards against drinking and gambling, and of the redemption that can come with full repentance.

Some new issues are also introduced. One is the problem of flattering men and flirting girls. Both mean trouble. These character types become standard as the stories in the Journal progress. Also, there is the allusion to premarital and extramarital sex, a topic that is approached fairly frequently in the stories and poems of the Journal.<sup>23</sup> In the first story, for instance, reference was made to Leonard's sexual fidelity to his wife: "To Carrie and Carrie alone, had he ever given the strength of his manhood."<sup>24</sup> In Volume 4, as another example, there is a poem entitled "Bessie's Mistake: A Ballad of Today." It is about a young woman who was entrapped by the "artful words" of a nonmember "stranger." His "flattering attention," his horse team, and "fancy cutter" so impressed her that she "scorned" her boyfriend John. The stranger did not have good intentions, however, and:

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<sup>23</sup> In his history of Susa Young Gates, Cracroft mentions Susa's opinion that sexual matters should be discussed frankly with young people. He suggests that her opinion probably grew from her own sexual problems in her early marriage, at age 16, in which she was "sexually uninformed and psychologically unprepared for the intimacies of married life." Cracroft, "Susa Young Gates," 8.

<sup>24</sup> Journal, 1:2, 47.

Till ev'ry visit 'neath his power/ She yielded to  
temptation,/ Nor realized the fatal hour,/ So  
great her fascination./ As one may cloy of  
luscious fruit,/ He surfeits who has flirted./ He  
left her, stained with ill repute,/ Betrayed, and  
then deserted.<sup>25</sup>

This story is also typical in its description of the wholesome and acceptable activities of the young people of the day--the balls, the horse and buggy rides, and the extended trips away from home visiting family and friends.

"We Tread the Dust"  
by Ellen Jakeman

Catherine Covert's comments<sup>26</sup> about the cyclical view of time, repeated messages, reiterated values, and conciliation rather than conflict, apply well to this story of a day in the life of a thirty-year-old married mother of five. Her life consisted not of the gay parties and town socials that the young people from the other stories enjoyed. Instead, it took her constant labor from early morning to late night to meet the needs of her household. "Mrs. Vernon did the sewing, cooking, washing, scrubbing, and all the endless array of small matters that festoon like cob-webs the tender name of home."<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the demands of household work, Jane

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<sup>25</sup> Journal 4:1, 1.

<sup>26</sup> See Introduction.

<sup>27</sup> Journal 1:4, 103.

Vernon coped with a demanding and unappreciative husband. He never noticed the tremendous effort it took for her to bring in the water, keep enough wood cut for the stove, care for the children, keep up the gardening and irrigation, make everything from scratch, including sausage, keep up the laundry, and do all of the other chores that were hers alone. She did it all in an organized and efficient manner--but her husband still found reason to complain.

The table-cloth was spotless, the dishes bright and clean, the food well chosen and carefully prepared, but all this he did not see, only that the children's table manners were somewhat at fault, and he criticized them till the very bread in their mouths was bitter.<sup>28</sup>

The reader is able to understand thoroughly the relationship between husband and wife, how strained it had become and how affection had waned, just by glimpsing this one day in their lives.

At the end of the day, through a series of events, Mr. Vernon was out late, and Mrs. Vernon began to fear that he was dead. The prospect that he might not come back to her caused her to reflect on the cause of their problems. She realized that his insensitivity to her great efforts and to her feelings was largely her fault. She had been a quiet and independent worker, and had simply never told him about the trials and efforts of her

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<sup>28</sup> Journal, 1:4, 105.



days.

When the husband returned safely, they sat together in front of the fire as Jane related her day. The two little children had run off that morning, and were finally found at the stream. The older daughter had a problem at school that had required Jane's attention. She had needed to chop wood before she could begin the wash--and numerous other problems that had taxed her to the core. Mr. Vernon listened intently and was surprised at the challenges she faced each day.

When [his wife] had finished he acknowledged that his course had not been right, and then he unfolded to her sensitive mental sight the inner trials of his own "life apart." Not in a spirit of self-justification, but he took her into his confidence, and by many a word and token she realized that she and her children had been the polar stars of his deepest thought and best endeavors. That he had never bothered her with details of this sort before, because he had deemed it rather unmanly to lay the burden of his perplexities, cares and fears upon her shoulders. But somehow the clouds and coldness, the slow accumulations of the past years had melted and made these blessed confidences possible.<sup>29</sup>

The result of their late night talk was a real change in their relationship.

Their lives were not all one beautiful dream even after that, but he saw to it that she had less drudgery and more appreciation, and she gave him more kisses and less criticism. And this is wherein romance differs from real life. . ."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Journal 1:4, 113.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

This narrative's narrow focus on one day allows the detail of daily living to be described--the house, surroundings, and circumstances in which this woman lived, the household tools she had available, and the daily work that she engaged in--even the exact day this story took place.

That particular morning when our story opens, June 10th, 1887, Mrs. Vernon slipped softly out of bed, that she might not disturb her sleeping husband and baby; had swept and dusted the small parlor, putting every tidy, rug and chair into its proper place; gone out and milked the cow, and fed the chickens; carried water for the washing from the mountain stream in front of the door; put up lunch for May and Cecil, her two oldest children, to take to school, and was just putting breakfast on to cook when her husband poked his nose into the kitchen and said: "Jane, I told you there was a button off my gray pants; why did'nt [sic] you sew it on?"

As soon as he was out of the house Mrs. Vernon put the wash boiler over, with water and the requisite amount of lye and soap, brought out the huge basket of soiled linen, assorted the white clothes into two tubs, and while the water was getting hot helped the two older children get ready for school, kissed them good-by, admonished them to be good children, saw them out of the front door, and returned to the kitchen.<sup>3 1</sup>

Later she washed the dishes, planned dinner, hoed the garden, redirected the irrigation water, and visited her daughter's school.

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<sup>3 1</sup> Ibid., 103-104.

The story is rich on many levels. Jane's motherly relationship with her children is shown, not told, by the author. The reader can feel her responses to the baby's warm skin, and her little girl's fear. The relationship between husband and wife is drawn by the careful detail of the verbal and nonverbal exchanges.

He said never a word, but stood looking at her, his foot beating an exasperatingly quick tattoo on the doorstep. All this pantomime meant that he was in a hurry for his breakfast, and Mrs. Vernon knew it very well.<sup>3 2</sup>

The emotional response of the wife is palpable.

For one awful moment she felt that she could **strike** him. Almost afraid of herself, she snatched the baby out of its high chair and fled to her bedroom, locking the door after her. Sinking down on the bed she buried her face in the pillow and sobbed piteously."<sup>3 3</sup>

The authentic emotion and life experience in this narrative contrasts somewhat with less realistic depictions in other Journal stories. The themes and messages, however, remain the same: the centrality of the woman to the home; the centrality of the home to the woman; and the importance of a conciliatory spirit.

#### "Polished Stones" by Genie

Eliza R. Snow, the premier leading sister, is important to the happy ending in this narrative about a "fair young girl, Edith Alton,"<sup>3 4</sup> who almost became

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<sup>3 2</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>3 3</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>3 4</sup> Journal 1:7, 193.

dangerously involved with a flattering and insincere man.

She did not tire of [his flattery], stupid as it might have sounded to one wiser than herself. Gordon was a shrewd, worldly man, and mixed in just enough good sense and pleasing wit with his wily flattery to charm the unsuspecting, guileless girl he had set his heart upon winning.<sup>35</sup>

Edith, who lived in Ogden,<sup>36</sup> came from an inactive convert family,<sup>37</sup> but was persuaded by her friends to attend an official Young Ladies' meeting. The speaker that evening was Miss Eliza R. Snow, "a sister of the Apostle Lorenzo Snow, and president of all the women's associations belonging to our people."<sup>38</sup> Edith was deeply touched by Eliza R. Snow's hour-long address and challenge to the young ladies to become like polished stones.

You, my young sisters, are too easily led away from the higher pursuits of real usefulness, and spend far too much time and strength in the pursuit of idle pleasure. I realize that it is not easy to break away from established customs and, perhaps, be ridiculed by former

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>36</sup> A city north of Salt Lake City.

<sup>37</sup> "Inactive" is a Mormon term describing people who are officially members of the Church but who do not participate in its activities or services. The term inactive is not used in the story.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 197. This Eliza is the premier "leading sister" discussed by Beecher in her article "The Leading Sisters." Eliza R. Snow was also a plural wife of Joseph Smith and then Brigham Young, and was known as the "prophetess" of the Church. It may be somehow significant that she is identified in this story not by her marriages, but by her relationship to Lorenzo Snow.

associates but you must set your faces like flint, and, no matter what comes, stand firm and steadfast for the right. If you once make up your minds to this, and ask God to help you to keep your good resolutions, you will experience far greater happiness in overcoming your desires for vain and empty pleasures than you ever can if you indulge in them all the time, to the exclusion of better and nobler aims in life. If the daughters of Zion would become like polished stones, they must not be as 'the strange children, whose mouths speak vanity;' they must learn to think and talk intelligently, and with wisdom.<sup>39</sup>

Edith immediately resolved to be a better person and to break away from Mr. Gordon.

The chief aim and object of Edith's life now was to gain a correct understanding of the laws of God and learn to live in accordance with them."<sup>40</sup>

She made an extended visit with friends in Salt Lake, met and married a man who was more worthy of her, and became the mother of two small children.

This story is a repetition of earlier themes, especially those of the value of obedience to the counsel of one's leaders, and of the dangers of flattering men. It introduces a new dimension, however, with its reference to Eliza R. Snow. She is mentioned throughout the story with reverence as "the poetess" and "E. R. Snow, the President of the entire Mormon Sisterhood." Eliza died in

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<sup>39</sup> Journal 1:7, 199.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 206.

1887,<sup>41</sup> and this story, published in April of 1890, is undoubtedly meant to preserve her memory and the memory of her impact and centrality to the Mormon community.<sup>42</sup> It is also a reminder of the kinds of spiritual functions the sisters performed for each other in the early days of the Church, which were still being performed until after the turn of the century.<sup>43</sup> "I have just been with [my children] to see Sister Snow," Edith says at the end of the story.

She blessed them, and me, and said if I am only faithful to my trust, (and that's what I mean to be,) they will shine forth among the children of Israel, like plants of renown, and Polished Stones.<sup>44</sup>

The story serves to reinforce the sense of community among

<sup>41</sup> Eliza R. Snow was born January 21, 1804 and died December 5, 1887.

<sup>42</sup> This favorable depiction in Susa's publication of her father's influential and powerful plural wife is notable.

<sup>43</sup> See Thomas G. Alexander, Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1890-1930 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 292-293. "Central to this whole question was the problem of whether women who had been endowed received the priesthood with their husbands or whether they received only the blessings of their husband's priesthood. Currently available evidence indicates that a number of nineteenth-century church leaders including Joseph Smith believed that the endowment actually bestowed the 'privileges, blessings, and gifts of the priesthood' on the women. By the early twentieth century, however, most church leaders were inclined to disagree." Alexander, 293.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 209 (emphasis added). Several of the stories end, as this story does, with the exact words of the titles of the stories.

the Mormon sisterhood, and to bind the sisters together through the depictions of their mutual administrations and spiritual gifts.

## CHAPTER V

VOLUME 2: OCTOBER 1890 -  
SEPTEMBER 1891

Two of the longest stories in the first five volumes of the Young Woman's Journal continue from Volume 1 to Volume 2. These are "The Western Boom" (sixteen installments, 102 pages) by Ellen Jakeman, and "Lights and Shades" (sixteen installments, 90 pages) by L.L. Greene Richards. Two other stories from Volume 2 will also be reviewed, "Love's Sacrifice," by W. T. Forsgren, and "A Struggle for Freedom," by Sophy Valentine.

### "The Western Boom" by Ellen Jakeman

This is the story of a Utah Mormon girl, Mrs. Lawson, who married a non-Mormon. The dire consequences awaiting a Mormon girl who marries a nonmember are again stressed here, and Mormon values, such as simplicity and group caretaking, are reinforced. The major thrust of the story within the Covert framework, however, is in its reinforcement of community through descriptions of Mormon versus non-Mormon culture. It articulates Mormon community characteristics as perceived by the author, and graphically contrasts them with non-Mormon characteris-



tics, thus clearly delineating for the readers a sense of "them" as opposed to "us."

The new bride and her nonmember husband, Mr. Lawson, moved to a California boom town. The town had been the victim of the "boom press." As the Journal's nineteenth century readers undoubtedly knew, the term boom press referred to public relations activities that touted the virtues of particular regions in an attempt to attract settlers and money to those areas. The attractions of the towns were usually largely over-drawn, their negative aspects hardly mentioned.

Throughout the nineteenth century, from the Ohio Valley to the Far West, editors bellowed optimistic refrains describing their towns; each was billed as the "garden spot of the world." Appropriately named sheets like the Herald, Advertiser, and Bugle sounded to the world the virtues, real or imagined, of their community. By presenting a favorable image of a particular town to the outside world and acting in a sense like a local chamber of commerce, the paper attracted people and capital. . . . Indeed, "puffing" the West and particularly the paper's own hometown was probably the principal reason for a newspaper's existence.<sup>1</sup>

It is not surprising that the stories from the Journal

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<sup>1</sup>Monte Burr McLaws, Spokesman for the Kingdom, 60. For a thorough discussion of the "boom press" see also Daniel J. Boorstin, "The Booster Press," The Americans: The National Experience (New York: Random House, 1965), 124-134.

should mention and even center around the newspapers.<sup>2</sup> By 1889, the newspaper was an essential element of life in Utah as well as in the rest of America.<sup>3</sup>

In "The Western Boom," the puff papers had attracted too many people to the unnamed California town. "The town was experiencing that sort of a financial epidemic called a 'boom.'"<sup>4</sup> There was not enough work, and the town was

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<sup>2</sup>An attitude toward newspapers is revealed in this story. The husband in the story went to the newspaper office to complain about an article that had been printed about him. He received no satisfaction. "The man who goes to a newspaper for satisfaction of this nature is a fool then, if he were never one before, and all who have gone on such errands will testify that this is true" (Journal 2:7, 304). With particular reference to the "boom press" the author says, "The town was suffering from over-growth; it would take years as the matter then stood to restore the natural equilibrium; but the 'boomers' still boomed, and a great amount of public work was heralded in the form of city and county buildings, streets and parks; but it was always 'unavoidably' postponed." (Ibid.)

<sup>3</sup>"The most striking evidence of what was happening to the newspaper is to be found in a bare statistical summary. Between 1870 and 1900, the United States doubled its population and tripled the number of its urban residents. During the same 30 years, the number of its daily newspapers quadrupled and the number of copies sold each day increased almost sixfold. Both in numbers and in total circulation the daily newspaper was rising even more rapidly than the city that spawned it. . . . A similar advance was being made by weekly newspapers, serving mainly the small towns and rural areas, but also the suburbs and sections of the cities." Edwin Emery and Michael Emery, The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 201.

<sup>4</sup>Journal 2:1, 242. "Rents are dreadfully high just now on account of the 'boom,' and although everybody seems agreed that it's a good thing for the country, it must be awful for people who have little or no money, and have to rent. The town is full of people brought here by the

overrun with "tramps." Young Mr. and Mrs. Lawson differed in their attitudes toward the tramps. She wanted to feed them--he did not. She thought they should be treated humanely--he did not. She eventually lost her respect for her husband, largely over this issue.

Nothing so silently, so frequently, so utterly destroys the blissful unity, the holy beauty of love, as difference in points of honor, humanity and religion.<sup>5</sup>

The relationships between and among the husband, the wife, and the tramps are about all that occupy the first several installments of the story. In this respect, Furness's description of the Victorian woman as being full of sympathy and mercy for the poor and unfortunate fits the narrative well.<sup>6</sup> Fortunately, however, it has more to offer in terms of cultural and philosophical insight than just the tramp issue.

The husband began mistreating his wife in various ways, and finally insulted her so viciously that, in true Victorian fashion, she "fainted away as if dead" and was ordered to bed for a month by the physician, who diagnosed her condition as extreme emotional shock. In the end,

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lying sensational slush in the papers. Migrating families, men looking for work, speculators, burglars and tramps, and work is practically suspended through this wet weather. I've never seen the benefit of a 'boom' yet, to anybody but a few sharp speculators, and saloon keepers."

<sup>5</sup> Journal 1:10; 343.

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter II.

after a year's worth of installments, the husband died, and the wife returned to Utah with her infant son to be reunited with her Mormon family.

The story, despite its weaknesses, is neither insipid nor shallow. It reveals much about Mormon women, culture, and thought. It is especially useful for unveiling Mormon self-image in the nineteenth century, and for explaining how the members positioned themselves in the larger American society. The broad and overarching theme of the story is a comparison between how the world viewed the Mormons, how the Mormons viewed the world, and how the Mormons viewed themselves with respect to the world's view of them. There is no question that the Mormons were aware of the popular American images about them.

Mrs. Lawson was made aware immediately upon moving to the town that many had a very dim view of her just because she was from Utah. Even a tramp, upon being asked by another tramp if he were perhaps a Mormon was offended:

He had heard of Mormons, of course, for who had not? There was nothing particularly flattering in the supposition that the lean tramp had formed, for the general impression that came to him now, was as of a city of lepers set apart from all mankind; and needy, seedy, broken in fortune, and well nigh broken in heart, he considered the question no compliment.<sup>7</sup>

The townspeople thought the Mormons were "curious" and "dreadful immoral."<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Lawson, however, wondered

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<sup>7</sup> Journal 2:1, 15.

<sup>8</sup> Journal 1:12, 438.

about the morality of a world that could let people go hungry. In her Utah, where the "Law of the Lord" was that "there shall be no poor among you,"<sup>9</sup> the hungry were always fed. By contrast, the attitude of the townspeople was well represented by the remarks of one lady on the street:

Lady: "Dear Mrs. Lawson, isn't it awful about these tramps? There's been more than fifty at my house this week."

Mrs. Lawson: "You fed them, I hope."

Lady: "Fed them! I rather guess not. I can't afford to feed a lot of great hulking men," and she nodded her head so emphatically, that her diamond ear-drops sent out showers of glittering points of light; and the shur, shur, of her rich silk seemed to Mrs. Lawson to say over and over again, "can't afford, can't afford."

Mrs. Lawson's husband was incensed that she would write to her polygamous uncle who was incarcerated in the Utah State Prison as a victim of the crusade. "How dare you write letters to a Mormon jail bird and dishonor the name I have given you, by placing it at the bottom of such a communication?"<sup>10</sup> The Mormon view of those so jailed was quite different, however. To them, the "jailbirds" were political prisoners. In a letter from her mother, Mrs. Lawson read:

The crusade against polygamy is being waged with great bitterness, and the

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<sup>9</sup> Journal 2:3, 107.

<sup>10</sup> Journal 2:4, 155.

misery and suffering that are being engendered in happy and comfortable homes is beyond computation. The venerable and noble men who are at the head of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are in hiding, and the people are like sheep without a shepherd. Men and women who have lived together for forty years are torn asunder by the decree of an ex post facto law, and fine and imprisonment inflicted on the men, and the women left destitute and forlorn in their old age. . . .Is there no crime in the world, that these men should spend so much time and money in crushing out a virtue?<sup>1 1</sup>

The issue of virtue<sup>1 2</sup> is repeatedly mentioned. One old tramp, on his deathbed, revealed that he was once a Mormon, but had succumbed to temptation by a liaison with a woman, and had fallen away from the Church. "[In Mormonism], a man's virtue must be preserved as sacredly inviolate as that of the purest woman."<sup>1 3</sup>

Another example of the contrasts drawn between the Mormon view of "the world" and the Mormon view of themselves is in the use of economic resources. Mrs. Lawson's husband invited her to a ball that would be attended by the most important and powerful people in the town. She was distressed when he bought her an expensive dress to wear for the evening. The dress cost "more than a hundred dollars,"<sup>1 4</sup> and this in a time when \$30 per

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<sup>1 1</sup> Journal 2:3, 107.

<sup>1 2</sup> The word virtue in the Mormon context, apparently, was synonymous with chastity.

<sup>1 3</sup> Journal 2:9, 405.

<sup>1 4</sup> Journal 2:2, 55.

month for rent was disgracefully high. She was not jubilant about her new gown.

She felt no thrill of the innocent pleasure that had stirred her pulses, when as a girl in the far away home, she had donned her simple muslin, through which shone just a mist of the sound rosy flesh of neck and arms, and dainty underwear, her hair in ringlets, and a wreath of carnations in lieu of a bonnet.

She could not help counting the cost; she had been brought up to carefully consider the expenditure of every dollar; for although her father was moderately well-to-do, he had always spoken and acted as if he were but the steward of his wealth and that what his family did not need belonged to the poor in Zion, and to temple building; to educational institutions and an endless array of benevolent and praiseworthy enterprises. He had exhorted them to let their "adornments be the workmanship of their own hands;" and had insisted that they should always "dress as becomes daughters of Zion, not following after the vain and foolish fashions of the world."<sup>15</sup>

The implication of the entire story is that the world viewed the Mormons as evil and degraded, whereas it was in truth the Mormons who were pure, and the world that was not.

I do not mean to say that all the people of the world are vile; that all wealth is dishonestly acquired; that all politics are manipulated in the interest of rings; that honor is dead, and patriotism, a fleshless skeleton, dressed in rags and jeered by statesmen, but something very nearly akin to that does exist.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Journal 2:7, 305.

Another recurring theme is the male/female relationship. It seems to reflect the national trend, related to the suffrage movement, toward a growing sense of equality of worth and power between men and women, and the moral superiority of women. It is also a counter-narrative to the popular negative images that depicted Mormon women as subservient slaves.

"The Western Boom" was written by Ellen Jakeman, who also wrote "We Tread the Dust," discussed above.<sup>17</sup> It exhibits the same sensitive insights into the delicate husband/wife relationship. For example:

Mrs. Lawson withdrew more and more within herself, shunning all private conversations, treating him with that perfect politeness and consideration that makes familiarity impossible, and yet disarms complaint.

He fretted because she did not confide her secret to him, because she did not come and nestle in his arms as she had once done; that she did not weep out her hopes and fears on his breast.

He would be irritable, moody and intensely attentive and considerate by turns, but every succeeding mood was received in the same way.<sup>18</sup>

More important from a cultural perspective are the author's many comments about men and women in general. For example,

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<sup>17</sup> Ellen Jakeman, "We Tread the Dust," Journal 1:4, 103.

<sup>18</sup> Journal 2:7, 307.



Oh! the love that men have for women is, in spite of its fervid strength, often deadly in its selfishness. Not only do the unenlightened men of the world--but those who have drank at the fountain of righteousness, taught in the simple, pure and progressive doctrines of Christ--demand that a woman yield her name and person to the marriage vow; but often, that following this, her habits of life, taste in dress and society, principles, religion, and the very teachings that she received at her mother's knee. Before marriage he is a humble slave, afterward, too often, a heartless and unconscious tyrant.<sup>19</sup>

It seems to be the lot of women to suffer for the mistakes, the sins and the wickedness of men.<sup>20</sup>

Feminism is alive in this narrative.<sup>21</sup> It is clear that the story's advice is that women be feminine and womanly, but not allow themselves to be trampled upon. This, at least, was Mrs. Lawson's stance.

I am not a domestic servant for you to issue orders to. I am your wife, and as such I think I have a perfect right to do as I please in so small a matter as the giving of five cents' worth of stale food to a beggar. I never did a mean, deceitful, dishonest thing in my life, and I shall not begin now. I know women--more shame to the men who have thrust such alternative upon them--who steal and scheme and wheedle to obtain the necessities of life, but I will neither do one nor the other. What you have belongs equally to me, or should do, and I know if a hungry man comes here I shall give him something to eat, I couldn't refuse him.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Journal 2:4, 159.

<sup>20</sup> Journal 2:8, 355.

<sup>21</sup> See, for another example, Journal 2:7, 304.

<sup>22</sup> Journal 1:8, 245.

It should be noted, however, that this strong feminine determination and expression of self-will was probably not general among the Saints. Annie Clark Tanner, a Mormon woman who married in 1883, tells in her autobiography about her own marriage and says she didn't dare disobey her husband. She says obedience was expected in Mormon philosophy. "It was his right to command; it was my duty to obey."<sup>23</sup>

Another important theme in this story is that of the gathering to Zion after conversion to Mormonism. The principle of gathering to Utah was apparently still fundamental doctrine.

He was sorry that he was not going with them, but cheered himself with the thought that not many days should elapse ere he found himself in Utah, for the true spirit of the gospel was upon him--the spirit of gathering.<sup>24</sup>

A recurring factor in the accounts of the conversions to Mormonism in this and other stories is the correlation drawn between Mormon doctrine, and reason, rationality and scientific thinking. The new converts in the stories feel that the truth of the gospel has been witnessed to them by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, but in many cases it is initially the plausibility of the Mormon teachings that

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<sup>23</sup> Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother (Salt Lake City, UT: The University of Utah Press, 1969), 169.

<sup>24</sup> Journal 2:11, 501 (emphasis added).

interests them.

There is something [in Mormonism] that comes nearer to giving me satisfaction than anything I have ever met before. This new system contains that without which all things in theology are a mere delusion and filled with fear rather than peace. Its skepticisms are laced on a basis of fact. The higher spiritual laws are no longer unapproachable mysteries, but may be, in a measure, comprehended as facts, with system, method, order and law. Not that I believe that religion will be reduced to a science, but science is not at war with facts, but fallacies, and it will be used as a means of purification; or rather, as the touchstone of truth. While science in a deeper sense will be exalted by theology. Children need only commandments, but the world of men are full grown today and are questioning those commands, and on the answer rests their salvation. They will no longer brook a great unapproachable Exception, where they are so vitally interested.<sup>25</sup>

The interest in science was widespread and growing in the late nineteenth century,<sup>26</sup> and it is notable that the

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 498.

<sup>26</sup> For instance, the interest in science led to rampant technological innovations. The telephone was invented in the 1870s, patents had been obtained on wireless telegraphy before 1900, the first practical electric light bulb was made by Thomas Edison in 1879, and telephones became available in the 1880s. Mechanization led to the industrial revolution. "National growth and increased wealth meant cultural progress in literature, science, and the social sciences. At higher educational levels, growth of state universities and of private colleges financed by America's new men of wealth resulted in notable advances in the social sciences, as well as progress in the natural and physical sciences and humanities. The period of the 1880s and 1890s was one of intense activity in study and publication, and in every field there were major achievements that helped Americans to meet the challenge of economic and social change. Nor was this great cultural stirring and extension of factual

Mormons aligned their beliefs and theology with that rising faith in the scientific.<sup>27</sup>

All of these underlying currents in the story come together to leave the young lady readers with some clear messages. The first is that the world may seem glamorous (especially California, even in those days), but the virtues of home are better.

She could see it all; the hall with its festoons of evergreen brought from the neighboring hills, the stars and stripes in their accustomed place of honor, the well known motto, "Holiness to the Lord," above the musician's stand. . . . Then she thought of the fluttering joy that had accompanied the preparation of the supper. No French dishes with unpronounceable names, but cake and bread baked by the fair hands of the dancers; butter and jellies, cheese, all home-made, and custards, chickens, turkeys, tarts and numberless creams and combinations all home-made.<sup>28</sup>

No girl properly taught in the principles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, can ever accept the counterfeits of the world and be satis-

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information limited to an intellectual class. Millions shared in the new knowledge through the chautauquas and public study courses that became of major importance toward the close of the century as means of adult education. The world fairs and expositions that caught American's fancy in this period were another means of mass education. Free public libraries spread across the country after 1880. . ." Emery and Emery, The Press and America, 197-204.

<sup>27</sup> See Alexander, Mormonism in Transition, 272-306, for a discussion of Mormon interest in coordinating doctrine with science in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

<sup>28</sup> Journal 2:3, 108.

fied. They must indeed be base, if having seen the light they prefer darkness; if having tasted the sweets of purity, they prefer the scorching draught of license; if having known peace, they prefer the delirium the world calls pleasure!<sup>29</sup>

The other message that the young readers were to take to heart was that it was a grave error to marry a non-Mormon. It always leads to misery, as is evidenced by Mrs. Lawson's marriage. To marry a non-Mormon is to break the "higher commandment, 'be ye not unevenly yoked together.'"<sup>30</sup>

"The Western Boom" is a sixteen-installment warning about the world, a definition and defense of Mormon culture, and a reminder to the young women of Zion that their only happiness lay in faithfulness to their religion and marriage to a worthy member of the Church.

"Lights and Shades" by L.L.  
Greene Richards

"Lights and Shades" is a very different kind of story, although it also defines and defends Mormon community, and reinforces Mormon values. Its major theme is the Mormon narrative about plural marriage. It reflects the community story or group account of how things were. It is a narrative shared with the young readers who perhaps wondered about polygamy and the older

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<sup>29</sup> Journal 2:5, 252.

<sup>30</sup> Journal 1:12, 434.

generation that embraced it.

The story takes place in a small, unnamed Utah settlement, and revolves around the relationships among several families therein. Several of the characters are followed quite closely, but the central figure is young Gwyn Lloyd, a Welsh convert whose parents died on the trip across the plains. The subject of immigrant status is the first to be confronted in the story. Jacob Howe asked Gwyn to marry him, but she answered that she could not.

Gwyn mastered her feelings now, sufficiently to look up again, and said with much feeling.

"Because I am Welsh! And you know very well, that you Americans, do not like the Welsh nor the English, nor the Scotch, nor any one only yourselves!" Jacob suppressed a little laugh that wanted to ripple up from the depths of his kind, warm heart, and said pleasantly.

"Have you heard me say anything that would indicate a dislike for anyone because of nationality? I know that many of our people do act and talk in that way, but my mother has always taught me better; and I do not believe you can recall an instance where you know of my having given offense in that particular."<sup>31</sup>

The matter of polygamy is central to the story, and it reveals much about the inner workings of the system. Jacob was aware of the married Bishop's<sup>32</sup> interest in marrying Gwyn, as apparently was the whole town. This is

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<sup>31</sup> Journal 1:9, 294.

<sup>32</sup> A Bishop is an ecclesiastical leader over a particular geographic area.

not seen as being in the least bit dishonorable.

"The Bishop has been very good to me, always; and his wife is such a lovely woman," said Gwyn.

"I know it," responded Jacob, "and the Bishop wants to marry you. . . ." <sup>33</sup>

Every one in the Ward knew that Gwyn would have been sweetly welcomed into Bishop Smith's family as one of its cherished members, not only by the Bishop himself, but also by his wife and little ones. <sup>34</sup>

Gwyn loved Jacob and consented to marry him. But first Jacob had to visit the Bishop to get his approval and a "recommend" for the Endowment House. <sup>35</sup> He was hesitant to tell the Bishop about the arrangements because, "You know very well that the Bishop loves you." <sup>36</sup> He did go to see the Bishop, however, and told him that he planned to marry Gwyn.

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<sup>33</sup> Journal 1:9, 293.

<sup>34</sup> Journal 2:2, 53. Annie Clark Tanner tells the following in her book A Mormon Mother, 62-63: "[Polygamy] was promoted and practiced almost exclusively by the Church leaders. This was in part due, perhaps, to the fact that only the more prosperous could afford to assume these added obligations. It was taught at the time that the second wife opened the door of salvation in the Celestial Kingdom not only for herself, but for her husband and his first wife. . . .The manner of living polygamy most successfully depended upon the integrity and standards of those involved. Perhaps no two cases were alike. At least there were no fixed rules by the Church pertaining to its practice."

<sup>35</sup> A "recommend" is required from the Bishop before a Mormon can enter the temple, or, at that time, the Endowment House, to be married for "time and all eternity."

<sup>36</sup> Journal 2:1, 12.

The Bishop turned very white and a cry would have escaped his lips but that he restrained it, making a mistake with his pen instead. . . He noticed the error at once and quickly crumpled the piece of paper in his hand, then tore it up and threw it into the waste basket, thus giving slight vent to the surprised pain which he felt.<sup>37</sup>

The Bishop gave Jacob the recommend with his blessings, however, and Gwyn and Jacob were married.

One of the recurrent themes in this story is the issue of jealousy.<sup>38</sup> It is roundly denounced as a canker to the soul, both by the author and by a sermon given in the context of the story.

There is perhaps, no other afflicting spirit with which mortals are ever tormented, so terribly cruel and exacting, both to the suspicious themselves and to the objects of their spleen, as is the spirit of jealousy.<sup>39</sup>

The topic of jealousy is especially interesting because of the tacit rules, which make it clear what kinds of activities and situations warranted jealousy and what did not. For instance, it was clearly not acceptable for

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Related to this issue is a quote, upon which no further comment will be made, from William Mulder's Western Humanities Review article on "Mormonism and Literature," (see Cracroft and Lambert, A Believing People, 210). "Too many writers about polygamy, for example, have never got beyond a preliminary social orientation, or, getting further, have found little more than the old truth that women are jealous creatures" (emphasis added).

<sup>39</sup> Journal 1:12, 448.



a plural wife to be jealous of another of her husband's wives. The selection of the plural wife was, ideally, to be made in unison by the husband and his first wife. The following passage describes the Bishop and his wife after he learned that Gwyn would marry Jacob.

They were among the devout and faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ready and anxious to learn and carry out in their lives, every law and ordinance of the gospel. The divinity of the order of celestial marriage, including plurality of wives, had been made plain to them both, by the unerring testimony of the Holy Spirit; and they were waiting and praying to be led by the same Spirit into a practical experience with it. For some time their hearts had been drawn out toward the little orphan, Gwyn, and often had her name been mentioned in their private, sacred interviews, in what manner, the following will illustrate:

As Fanny arose and advanced towards her husband, enquiring what he had come to tell her, Andrew Smith folded her in his arms and smiled down upon her, though she could discover an unusually serious look in his eyes. He kissed his wife and remarked.

"You were right, Fanny, about little Gwyn."

"Right about her in what respect?" Fanny asked.

The Bishop still smiled, but answered gravely, "That she is not for me."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Journal 2:2, 52. In a real-life situation, Annie Clark Tanner tells of her relationship between her husband's first wife and herself.

"Mr. Tanner began a correspondence with me. In one of his first letters, he requested that our correspondence should be through Mrs. Tanner, his first wife. She was

Bishop Smith eventually took another wife, a younger woman named Ida. After they had been married for some time, and had a child, Gwyn asked the Bishop's first wife if she ever felt jealous.

"Oh! yes, just a little," Fanny answered. "Well, I do not know, either, whether I should say I have never actually felt jealous," she continued, "I know I can truly say I have never had any just cause for jealousy. No reasonable woman could help loving and trusting such a man as my husband, and such a woman as Ida in a way that would make suspicion and jealousy ashamed to come near."<sup>41</sup>

The story makes it clear, however, that it is quite

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two years his senior. They were married when he was nineteen.

"'It would be the proper thing,' he said, 'for your letters to be addressed to her.' Consequently, there were no letters. . . .

"Soon Mr. and Mrs. Tanner came to visit me. When Mr. Tanner proposed that he take me for a walk, I replied, 'No, not for the world would I make Mrs. Tanner feel badly. This is her outing and she is my guest.'

"The next morning she and I went for a buggy ride, which was the customary way to entertain friends in the country. Mrs. Tanner, having observed that I had been comparatively indifferent to her husband, brought up the subject of polygamy. I told her that without her approval, our affair was at an end. . . .

"She then related her father and mother's miserable experience in the principle, and excused herself for the aversion she felt for it, but concluded, 'I have no children although I have been married five years. I can't deprive Marion of a family, and of all the girls I know, you are my choice.'" Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother, 63.

<sup>41</sup> Journal 2:4, 174.

reasonable for a man to feel jealous when other men take an interest in his wife or wives. One of the most dramatic events in the story is a murder attempt precipitated by jealousy. Jacob pointedly remarked to the man who had caused the jealousy, "Whose wife have you been flirting with for the last month?"<sup>4 2</sup> The question implies that a man has good cause to be upset if he suspects his wife has been the recipient of another man's attentions. The men in the story were aware of this prerogative and were sensitive to these feelings in other men.

There were no selfish feelings in the heart of the worthy Bishop, and understanding Jacob's over-sensitive nature as he now did, he took great care not to wound him. . . . the generous and immediate surrender of the kind-hearted "father of the Ward," in favor of Jacob Howe, was taken [by the members of the Ward] as a noble example to all the other gentlemen who had sought the favor of little Gwyn; and, to their honor be it said, they carefully followed that kind and wise example.<sup>4 3</sup>

The importance of following the counsel of one's parents and leaders is again stressed in this story, as is the importance of the extended family unit in day-to-day life. There is constant interaction and close association between parents, married children, grandparents, and great-grandparents. They help each other emotionally, financially, and physically. They rely on each other's

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<sup>4 2</sup> Journal 2:8, 361.

<sup>4 3</sup> Journal 2:2, 53.

counsel, friendship, and support. These depictions encourage binding and bonding and engender concord, harmony, and affiliation among family and community members.

The stories relate frontier home remedies--wild sage and horehound poultices; arnica and vinegar washes; mint, raspberry leaf and peach bark teas.<sup>44</sup> They preserve the details of the social and economic lives of the early settlers. For instance, the story tells that in the summer there were "wool-pickings" to which the girls of the town were invited. The event is described in great detail, and it shows the conscious effort on the part of the author to preserve cultural history in the minds of the readers.<sup>45</sup> In the instance of the wool-picking party

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<sup>44</sup> Journal 2:10, 439-440.

<sup>45</sup> "Our young ladies of today do not know what the old-fashioned "wool-pickings" were like, and perhaps will be interested in a description of them.

"In May or June the sheep were sheared. The best way was to catch the sheep and wash the fleeces first, keep the flock in a clean pasture or field for a day or so and then have the shearing done. But sometimes the men-folks were too much hurried with their spring work to spend time to wash the wool before shearing it. In those cases, the women and girls had to wash and dry it after it was taken from the bodies of the sheep, before it was ready for picking. When it was thus far prepared, it was a common thing for one of the sisters, (they were all brothers and sisters then in the settlements of Utah,) to invite the other sisters of the ward, to come and spend a day with her and help to pick from the wool, straws, burrs or any dirt which had not been removed by the washing. On such occasions the hostess always provided for the company as good a dinner as lay in her power to prepare; and the social chit-chat, songs, etc., were sure to be a treat." Journal 1:8, 286.

in this story, for instance, the accompanying dinner is described. It consisted of a white rooster, three or four chickens, squash pie and custard, choke-cherry pudding, and stewed service-berries.<sup>46</sup> Thus, preserving homey traditions has a community-binding function.

Proper male-female relationships are addressed in this narrative, as in the others. Coquetry is roundly denounced, and premarital sex is an issue. The reader is not made aware of when or where the incident actually occurred--in the back of a horse-drawn carriage? in an over-crowded pioneer home? on the banks of a mountain stream?--but it is clearly the result, as in all the stories, of an innocent girl succumbing to a flattering man.

But he had flattered and pleased her to such an extent that charmed; she seemed also to be chained, and helpless in his power. She never could understand how it was, that she could be so mystified and overwhelmed as to have yielded compliance to his dark, fiendish designs. She only knew when he was gone, that he had stolen from her that which nothing ever could restore, the golden glory of her maiden purity; and left in its stead a cold, dark cloud that would shadow her life forever.<sup>47</sup>

The death of a child also figures prominently in this narrative. Premature death was common on the frontier,

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<sup>46</sup> Journal 1:10, 338.

<sup>47</sup> Journal 2:11, 502.

and it was crucial that people be able to develop a philosophy that made it bearable. Leonard Arrington says "a surprisingly large number"<sup>48</sup> of children suffered the early death of "one or both parents."<sup>49</sup>

A mother might die in childbirth, from tuberculosis (which the pioneers called "consumption"), or from one of the other frequent diseases--cholera, pneumonia, measles, or smallpox. The father might die of an accident, exposure, or, like his wife, of one of the common diseases of the period. The impact on the children is clear. They were brought up by a single parent, or with a second father or mother, or by an uncle or aunt, or by foster parents. These were not always happy arrangements. In many instances it meant poverty, lack of schooling, and going to work at an early age.<sup>50</sup>

A heavy proportion of all the babies died before they were one year of age, and of those who survived infancy, about one-fourth died before they reached sixteen.<sup>51</sup>

Arrington says that even those who survived still had to contend with

long sieges of illness: smallpox, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, diphtheria (which the pioneers called 'putrid sore throat'), and, of course, mumps, whooping cough, and measles.<sup>52</sup>

It was not only the diseases that sapped their strength and energy, but the remedies--heavy doses of emetics,

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<sup>48</sup> Arrington and Madsen, Sunbonnet Sisters, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

laxatives, mustard plasters, poultices, and the green flannel, foul-smelling asafetida bags worn around their necks each winter "to keep the germs away."<sup>5 3</sup>

In the story, Gwyn lost her infant baby,<sup>5 4</sup> but she was able to deal with the tragedy with equanimity because she had previously had a vision that provided her with a philosophy about the death of children. In the vision, it was "revealed" to her that at the First Resurrection, those mothers whose children had died in infancy would embrace their babies with "unspeakable joy and happiness."<sup>5 5</sup> It was such a special privilege to be one of these mothers that the vision left her almost longing for the experience of the death of a child, though she doubted she could "ever bring her mind to face it."<sup>5 6</sup> When she was actually faced with the death of her baby, she was mentally prepared. The narrative was obviously intended to impress the truth of Gwyn's philosophy on the young readers, who would probably someday face a similar circumstance. The vision is emphasized by an asterisked remark at the bottom of the page saying "This circumstance

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<sup>5 3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5 4</sup> "Dean May's study of eighty-one women living in Kanab in 1874 indicates that each mother bore an average of nine children during her lifetime. Four of the eighty-one women studied died in childbirth, and ten percent of the total 701 children born died before age one." Poll, Utah's History, 344.

<sup>5 5</sup> Journal 2:3, 116.

<sup>5 6</sup> Ibid.

is true; the picture is not drawn from imagination."<sup>57</sup>

The story of Gwyn and Jacob ended fifteen years after it began, and in the end, all was well. The flirting had stopped, the jealousy was overcome, the errant Saints had repented, and on their anniversary, Gwyn's husband took another wife.

There was also another bright-faced, white-robed girl, in whom Jacob and Gwyn seemed to take more tender, loving interest than in any one else. It was Fanny Gwyn Smith [the Bishop's daughter], clinging to both Jacob and Gwyn. Fanny earnestly and joyously breathed the covenant which made her one with them forever. After the ceremony was closed, Gwyn, smiling upon Jacob and Fanny with affectionate satisfaction, whispered, "Three hearts, henceforth, not two, to beat as one. My husband, your wife congratulates you and your fair young bride."

Later in the day, when the two were alone, Jacob took Gwyn in his arms and tenderly asked her, "Are you as happy today, my love, as you were fifteen years ago?"

"Yes, Jacob much happier! I didn't know how to be as happy then as I am now." was Gwyn's reply.

Young Ladies, some of you will question the veracity of this last statement. But had you heard the circumstance related by Gwyn's own lips, as some of her special friends did afterwards, you would have

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid. Pentecostal gifts and experiences such as speaking in tongues and receiving visions were common among nineteenth century Mormons. "By the early 1920s the general authorities were actively discouraging such Pentecostal experience within the church." Alexander, Mormonism in Transition, 294.



felt that the simplicity and sincerity of her words and manner, stamped her recital with the indisputable impress of truth.<sup>58</sup>

This assurance to the young readers that Gwyn was happy with her husband's plural marriage is revealing. Apparently, the author did not feel satisfied that all of her readers would immediately see the joy in the event, despite polygamy's long history among the Mormon people, and despite the probability that many of the readers were products of plural marriages themselves. In his history of Susa Young Gates, R. Paul Cracroft quotes her article in the March 1893 Journal in which she expresses the opinion that polygamy was abandoned by the Church because of the negative attitudes toward it by the Mormon women themselves, including, apparently, herself: "Sisters, I stand appalled at the magnitude of my sin and yours!"<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Journal 2:12, 39-40.

<sup>59</sup> R. Paul Cracroft, Susa Young Gates, 10-11. "I am about to take a position in answering this important question [she said, in an article entitled "Why Was the Manifesto Issued?"] which I feel sure will incite ninety-nine out of every hundred women who will read this with a feeling of strong denial. . . . I have a serious charge to bring against you. . . in this matter, and I ask your kind and indulgent attention. . . . I say in all frankness that we, the women of the Church. . . have a grievous sin to answer for, in that we have . . . treated this sacred and holy principle with neglect, sneers, mocking abuse and even cursing and railing . . . . Do you know of any women who have said they would never consent to marry a man who had another wife? . . . Do you know of any woman who has said openly or in private that not one of her daughters should enter into that order with her consent? . . . Do you know of any women who openly rejoiced when the Manifesto was issued. . .? Ask all these questions . . . and I will venture to say that the answers will lead you

The positive depiction of plural marriage in "Lights and Shades," then, can be viewed as a vehicle for engendering affiliation and understanding between the readers, who may have harbored negative feelings about plural marriage, and those who had chosen to live by the principle.

The sixteen installments of "The Western Boom" ran from May of 1890 through August of 1891. "Lights and Shades," also in sixteen installments, ran from May of 1890 through September of 1891. Much had happened in the affairs of the Church and in the lives of the inhabitants of the territory of Utah during this period of time. The major event, of course, was the issuing of the Manifesto in October 1890. These stories began five months before the Manifesto was issued, and ended almost a year afterwards. With this action by the Church, the crusade against polygamy and against the Church was virtually ended. Families returned to life, not as normal, but not under siege. The post-Manifesto period, one can imagine, must have been one of real adjustment to a new condition of life. The Church had changed its policy on one of its most fundamental precepts. The government and public opinion had achieved their purposes, despite the long suffering and faith of the members. Families were restructured. Emotionally and intellectually, life as a

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to some startling conclusions. . . .Sisters, I stand appalled at the magnitude of my sin and yours!"

member of the Church was altogether different.<sup>60</sup>

In view of these changed circumstances, what did these stories mean to their authors and readers? "The Western Boom" is a defense of the goodness and purity of the Church and its people as opposed to the image of degradation that the world held of them. It is also a testament against those who had, in Mormon eyes, wrongly and cruelly mistreated them. It attempts to represent the

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<sup>60</sup> For instance, Annie Clark Tanner, who had lived "on the underground" for several years because of her plural marriage, tells in her autobiography of her reaction to the announcement of the Manifesto:

"With the long years of sacrifice just back of me, I was easily convinced that it was from the Lord--quite as much as other revelations . . . Certainly it was as far-reaching in effect as any other revelation in Church history--perhaps even more.

"It was just a coincident [sic] that the doctrine of polygamy was abandoned on my birthday. My first birthday was an event made possible by it; my whole life had been shaped according to it; and my faith that it was Divine and everlasting was so strong that I compared it with the faith of the three Hebrews who were to be cast into a fiery furnace for their convictions.

"But now I was beginning to wonder: Is God 'the same yesterday, today and forever?'

"I can remember so well the relief that I felt when I first realized that the Church had decided to abandon its position. For all of my earlier convictions, a great relief came over me. At that moment I compared my feelings of relief with the experience one has when the first crack of dawn comes after a night of careful vigilance over a sick patient. At such a time daylight is never more welcome; and now the dawn was breaking for the Church. I suppose its leaders may have realized, at last, that if our Church had anything worthwhile for mankind, they had better work with the government of our country rather than against it." Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother, 129-130.

Mormons as they felt they really were, and gives vent, in narrative form, to their frustration at being wrongly perceived as wicked by a wicked world. It is a self-defense, a positioning after the fact, and a way of reminding the young people of the Church that despite the low esteem in which they were held, they had nothing to be ashamed of, much to be proud of, and that they must not lose the faith.

"Lights and Shades" ends on the theme of polygamy. It began running in the Journal before the Manifesto, and ended nearly one year after it. Why would a story that exalts the doctrine of polygamy be run after the Manifesto?

One reason might be that the tale was too far along, having begun five months earlier, to change the story line. On inspection, however, it appears that this is not the case. In November 1890, the first number after the announcement of the Manifesto, the series is just beginning. In that installment, Jacob was just going to inform the Bishop of his engagement to Gwyn. The story could easily have changed direction at this point.

Another explanation might be that the Journal had purchased the series intact with the first installment, and was obligated to run it as it was written. This also seems unlikely. After three installments, there is a gap of one month before the story resumes. It is possible

that the author did not meet deadline, and if so, the author was writing the story as each number came around and could have fashioned it in any way she wished. Also, the author, L.L. Greene Richards,<sup>61</sup> was a local woman, very much in support of the Church leaders and always as helpful as she could be to the Church publications. She would surely have altered her serial, even if it had been entirely prewritten.

It is probable, then, that it was deemed desirable to have this story run as it is, with its elevated view of polygamy--despite the Manifesto. There are perhaps two reasons for this. The first is that many Church members felt at times that the Manifesto was just a way of making peace with the government, and that polygamy was still a spiritual law that was to be obeyed. There was clearly confusion and ambiguity among the Saints, and even among the Church leadership, about the meaning of the Manifesto.<sup>62</sup> Polygamous marriages continued to be performed after the Manifesto by many men in leadership positions,

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<sup>61</sup> Lula Greene Richards was the first editor of the Woman's Exponent.

<sup>62</sup> ". . .the Mormons' ambivalence about plural marriage, like the other struggles of the 1890s, is indicative of the tension any sensitive person will undoubtedly experience when faced with conflicting loyalties and principles." Alexander, Mormonism in Transition, 12.

tice.<sup>63</sup> This story, which idealizes polygamy, perhaps reflects the view that it was still an acceptable practice despite the Manifesto.

Another reason the story ran as it did was perhaps that it was a defense of the practice, and of those who participated in it. Many of the young readers of the Journal could only remember the Church under siege. Polygamy in their young lives had been vilified by popular opinion, and abandoned by their religion. They had not experienced the relative isolation and peace in which it had existed prior to the crusade. They saw and experienced polygamists in hiding, families in pain, and women and children abandoned. They were aware of the many women who were disillusioned with their polygamous marriages, who had found no emotional satisfaction in the relationship, and who suffered from jealousy and other interpersonal problems with their sister-wives and husbands. Many of the young readers likely wondered how the women of the Church could ever have put themselves in such a position.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> For a complete discussion of post-Manifesto plural marriage, see D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages 1890-1904," Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, 18, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 9-106. See also Alexander, "Recurrent Encounters with Plural Marriage," Mormonism in Transition, 60-73.

<sup>64</sup> Annie Clark Tanner relates: "This changed policy of the Church created a difficult situation for young people who were born in this principle and reared to believe it Divine and everlasting. [There were] opposing

Viewed in this perspective, "Lights and Shades" becomes a defense of culture--not to the world, but to the Church's own young women. It is a narrative that tells a different story--or at least, it tells the story from a different perspective. It tries to instill and preserve in the memories of these young women the sweetness of the small-town Utah experience, and the purity of the ideal of plural marriage. It is an attempt to build a shared history with the younger generation, and to help them understand the way things were from the point of view of the participants. It is a defense of their mothers, and grandmothers, and sisters in the gospel who became involved with polygamy. It portrays them as more elevated beings--more perfect women than even the other members of the Church.

In a key installment in the story, the Bishop's wife explained to Gwyn how she had dealt with her husband's taking another wife. She recognized, she said, that many of her sisters "suffered in plurality."<sup>65</sup> She attributed her success to several factors. First, her husband was a good man, and would never wrong her or take a wife that

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influences which affected half-grown children in that period of adjustment in the Church after the Manifesto became a law. It took the wisdom of Solomon to uphold the Church in its anti-polygamy policy and at the same time to induce the children to honor their father." Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother, 223.

<sup>65</sup> Journal 2:5, 209.

"was not given him by God."<sup>66</sup> Secondly, as Gwyn observed, all three participants continually sought humility and invited the Spirit to be with them.<sup>67</sup>

The wife explained that she was convinced that both she and her husband would have been condemned if they had not entered into plurality, because they had both received a personal revelation of the principle. She refers to the Mormon scripture about plural marriage by saying, "you know the revelation plainly states that if the Lord reveals it to any, and they receive it not, they shall be condemned."<sup>68</sup>

This perhaps sheds light on why some Mormons participated in plurality while others did not. It was the belief, at least of this Bishop's wife, that the scripture referred to personal revelation to each individual member. In this view, plurality was not a general requirement for all members of the Church who had simply read about the revelation in scripture. It is an interesting point of reasoning. The wife further explained,

Some of our people enter into that sacred order without due reflection or preparation and before the Lord has actually revealed it to them; and so they make failures of it.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., emphasis added.



These comments by the Bishop's wife provide a multiple explanatory function for the young readers, and a philosophy for conceptualizing plural marriage. They explain why some Church members participated in plural marriage and some did not. Since to participate was a result of obedience to personal revelation from the Lord, how could the participants be condemned? On the other hand, if they had not received the personal revelation, how could they be expected to have embraced the principle? This point of view serves to justify either position. The only people who are to be criticized as a result of this philosophy are those who practiced plural marriage and did not fare well in it. Either they had participated in the principle without the go-ahead from the Lord, or they had properly entered into it, but had failed because of the weaknesses in their own characters. The principle and purity of plural marriage itself is never questioned here, even though it had been officially abandoned by the Church by the time of the publication of this story.

The Mormon narrative--the concept to be passed on to the younger generation--was of the rightness of the principle, and the weakness of those who practiced it improperly. While the message seems divisive in the sense of criticism of those who did not perform well in the principle, it is affiliative with the broader Mormon culture. Affiliation between Church and family members is

always stressed in the stories. But if there are strains in the system--if there must be a break somewhere--the bond is to hold between the individual and the Church, even at the expense of a break between the individual and other family or community members.

It is unlikely that the young readers pondered long about the broader implications of the philosophy expressed by the Bishop's wife in the story. It is clear, however, that "Lights and Shades" is a narrative preservation of a cultural heritage, offered as a defense and explanation to the young women of the Church at a time of transition, and at the threshold of an entirely new chapter in Mormonism.<sup>70</sup>

The following two stories are very different in tone and plot from "Lights and Shades." Both are about girls who had to choose between their religion and their sweethearts. In the first, the heroine made the "right" decision--she chose the Church. While at first it seemed like the supreme sacrifice, in the end she was rewarded for her faithfulness. The second girl chose, instead, her true love--but it brought her sadness instead of joy.

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<sup>70</sup> These and other similar narratives have been successful in preserving this particular account of polygamy. Present-day Mormon narrative accounts relate the advantages and joys of plural families, the sweetness of the experience for the truly worthy, and hold that those who did not fare well in polygamy were weak or less righteous. And Susa would be interested to know that the women still shake their heads.

Both of the stories are apparently based on real-life people and situations.

"Love's Sacrifice" by W.T. Forsgren

"Love's Sacrifice" is about a wealthy English convert who had to choose between the Church and her fiance. She would rather have had both, of course, but her sweetheart would not hear of it. He was from a proud family, and it would have been a disgrace to be numbered among the unpopular Mormons.<sup>7 1</sup>

Aina, my poor, deluded girl, do you know this sect to whom you have allied yourself is nothing more nor less than those degraded Mormons we hear so much about?<sup>7 2</sup>

You must this night choose between a life of pleasure and happiness, or one of degradation and misery. In other words, Aina, you must now choose between me and this new faith you profess to think so much of.

You have had your choice and have chosen to mingle yourself with this degraded people, you have brought this trouble upon yourself, you will perhaps find comfort in that.<sup>7 3</sup>

Aina realized that she could not "afford to sacrifice [her] religion for worldly pleasure," and her conscience told her "that it is the path of duty"<sup>7 4</sup> to leave her

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<sup>7 1</sup> Journal 2:8, 348.

<sup>7 2</sup> Ibid., 250.

<sup>7 3</sup> Ibid., 351.

<sup>7 4</sup> Ibid., 348.

beloved and gather to Zion.

This story has a happy ending, however. Two years later Aina's fiance himself encountered the Mormon missionaries, who spoke to him in such a "pleasant, intelligent"<sup>75</sup> way, he was compelled to listen. He, too, joined the Church, gathered to Zion, and finally married Aina.

"A Struggle for Freedom"  
by Sophy Valentine

The Danish girl Oline in this story was not so fortunate as Aina. She too had chosen the Church over her fiance's objections, and had been ostracized by her family because of her conversion.

This story gives a flavor of the opposition faced and sacrifice required of Scandinavian converts. Oline knew when she joined the Church that she "would have to give up all that [she] then held most dear: friends, relatives, home and worst of all, love."<sup>76</sup>

There was also the sacrifice of a loved homeland and familiar surroundings.

It was a beautiful sunny day. A light breeze from the sea kept the green foliage in perpetual motion; it whispered of peace and happiness everywhere; it whispered to me, in sorrowful accents, that soon, soon I should no longer refresh my eyes with the lovely foliage of the beech tree, that

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<sup>75</sup> Journal 2:9, 396.

<sup>76</sup> Journal 2:11, 489.

nowhere grows so grand as in my home; that soon, soon my cheek would no more be fanned with the gentle wind from Oresund-- lovely Oresund! bordered with its magnificent beech groves, and swelling with what looked like thousands of swans, but in reality were ships, bearing treasures to and from foreign lands; that soon, perhaps, would I be in a strange land, where the view was hemmed in by stern, towering mountains that, in stony majesty, spoke not of love and happiness, of gentle longings after something, even better--something unknown; but would solemnly point heavenward and remind the beholder of his utter, utter littleness; that soon would the scorching rays of a fiercer sun beat down on my aching head, where there would be no delightful shade to take refuge in; soon would nature speak a language unknown to me.<sup>77</sup>

After some months living in the mission home in Copenhagen as the head housekeeper, Oline made plans to gather to Zion, and was invited back to her home in the north to say good-bye before her departure. The missionaries advised her not to go, fearing that she would forsake the Church and not return. But she felt her faith was too strong to fear such an outcome. Her former fiance was there, and she was persuaded to stay. She changed her mind twice, returning to Copenhagen and then home again. Her loyalties and love were divided. The missionaries and her member friends were distraught--as was she. The last time she returned home she was held a virtual prisoner, and was not able to return.

The woman telling the story comments to the readers

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<sup>77</sup> Journal 2:12, 543.

about nonmember marriages, and the comments apply to other stories as well.

To some of the young lady readers here, it may, perhaps, seem strange that we should take to heart so the circumstance that a Mormon girl married an outsider. But we were wont to look upon such things as the worst fate that could befall our girls. To have known the gospel and left it was to us to have lost the salvation of our souls, and is not that a greater thing than any earthly consideration?<sup>7 8</sup>

The story ends sadly, even though Oline married her true love.

My story is ended. How I wish it could have terminated differently; how I wish I could have said: She struggled hard, but gained the victory, and is now in Zion a faithful wife and devoted mother! But facts are facts, and we cannot alter them. But I feel sure that the good seed of the gospel which was sown in Oline's heart will bear fruit, and I live in hopes that some day she will come back to the fold she left, some day she will gather with the Saints in Zion.

But it may not be till years have passed, Till eyes are dim and tresses gray.<sup>7 9</sup>

Both of these narratives have two thrusts--the comparison of the relative value of romance as weighed against the gospel, and the recounting of the immigrant experience. With respect to romance, the message is clear: the gospel is simply more important. The English girl chose the gospel and, as an implied reward, also got

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<sup>7 8</sup> Journal 2:12, 546.

<sup>7 9</sup> Journal 2:12, 547.

her sweetheart. The Danish girl got her sweetheart, but may never have found happiness because she had given up that which is most valuable in life--her religion.

The stories also refer to the sacrifices the immigrants made in gathering to Zion. William Mulder has documented the experience of the Scandinavian immigrants in his Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia.<sup>80</sup> He tells of the original missionaries to Scandinavia, the hungering of the converts to gather to Zion, the ridicule and hatred they encountered from their families and neighbors when they joined the Mormon Church, their preparations for departure, their difficult crossing of sea and land marred by disease and death, the communal farm-villages they settled in Utah, their language and cultural difficulties and adjustments, and the eventual fulfillment of their dreams of building a new home for their vast posterity in Zion. These little narratives in the Journal only gave their young readers a slight flavor of all the immigrant saints sacrificed and endured, but they did serve to preserve the history for other generations,<sup>81</sup> for immigrants and nonimmigrants alike. Whereas

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<sup>80</sup> William Mulder, Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957). This was originally Mulder's doctoral dissertation for his Ph.D. in the History of American Civilization at Harvard University.

<sup>81</sup> They also augment Mulder's account by referring to the beauties of their homelands as compared to the starkness of the Utah landscape.

"Lights and Shades," discussed above, engendered affiliation with the Church across generations, these stories engendered affiliation with the Church and community across nationalities.



## CHAPTER VI

VOLUME 3: OCTOBER 1891 -

SEPTEMBER 1892

There is a distinct shift in emphasis in the serial literature in this volume as compared to the two before it. The almost fierce Mormon self-defense present in the previous volumes is absent here. Nevertheless, these stories continue to encourage Mormon values, such as purity and temple marriage, and also continue to reinforce a sense of community, especially through the recounting of past Mormon trials. The first two stories are primarily about finding meaning in death, and the third is about the importance of a solid female character. This volume also introduces a new interest in prosperity and politics.

### "Reclaimed" by M.S. and L.S.

This begins as a courtship and marriage story, Mormon-style, but ends on the theme of death. It is a three-number tale about a young girl named Anna Barnes who harbored a secret admiration for an older boy. She kept herself aware of his whereabouts and doings on his mission. She worried about his health, especially when a smallpox epidemic broke out in the town in which he was

serving. When he came home, she carefully put her hair up in "papers," so she would look pretty for him. When it dried, she "pulled at the frizzes."

Anna won her sweetheart, and she and her sister Jennie were married on the same day.

The two girls looked all the most critical could desire in their soft white silk dresses, those emblems of virgin purity, with flowers and lace to complete the picture, and as Anna stood before her newly-made husband, after adding a last touch to the pretty curls, he took both slender hands and surveyed with triumphant love this fairest flower of God's creation, then, with a scarce audible prayer of thanksgiving on his lips, folded his sweet little woman--as spotless as her robe--to his heart, saying, softly, "Anna, darling, may our lives be "fitted to each other as perfect music unto noble words."<sup>1</sup>

This is the first story reviewed in which mention is made of a temple. Previous stories have talked about "going to the City" to be married, which usually meant going to Salt Lake to have an official church "sealing," but this is the first in which the couple goes to a temple.

The marriage, of course, was to take place in the Temple, according to the ordinance of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, of which they were all members. At length the day arrived, and after quite a journey, they reached the fair city that held within its boundaries the sacred house of our God.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Journal 3:3, 103.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 103.

The Endowment House had been built in 1855 and "provided the only place for the performance of temple ordinances until the completion of the St. George Temple in 1877."<sup>3</sup> Temples were completed in Logan in 1884, and Manti in 1888, but the Salt Lake Temple was not completed and dedicated until April 6, 1893. This story from the Journal appeared in the December 1891 issue, and predated the Salt Lake Temple. We don't know where these fictional girls lived, but they must have gone to St. George, Manti, or Logan to be married.

Despite their devotion to their religion, however, Anna and her husband Harold slowly slipped away from the Church. They became wealthy, and spent all their time in pleasure. They built a grand mansion, had three sons, and appeared to have everything in life--but their religion. It was only through the death of their oldest child that they realized the error of their ways.

Their grief is quieter now, somewhat subdued--it has been lulled by the sweet, consoling Spirit of God that now pervades their home and regulates every movement. And Harold Mitchell recalls with heart-rending vividness the lines, "I died to set my father free." Even now he acknowledges the hand of God in taking from him his beautiful first born, for through this blow he feels that he and his have been Reclaimed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Allen and Leonard, The Story of the Latter-Day Saints, 274.

<sup>4</sup> Journal 3:5, 214.

It would have been easy for the author to imply in this narrative that the child's death was the punishment the parents deserved for falling away from the Church and centering their lives on worldly wealth and interests. Dire consequences are often the result, in the stories, of abandoning Mormon values--especially through nonmember marriage. This cause-and-effect is not implied in the death of this child, however. It can be speculated that childhood death was so common an occurrence, and happened in so many "good" families, that such a correlation was perhaps never even considered. At any rate, not even a hint of that kind of correlation is made in this story. The only point is that there can be meaning in death in the salvation of other souls.

"God Knows Best" by Sophy  
Valentine

The death of a child, and the attempt to find meaning in death, is also the theme of this narrative. Helen Morton, the boy's mother, had only this one child. When he died of pneumonia, she wished to stop living too.

With her head towards the wall, wrapt in her own sad and cheerless thoughts she lay mourning the loss of her darling. And thus she had laid since her child was buried, nursing her sorrow, only taking food when faint and outhungered. Her mother had been with her all this time; but both she and Robert had vainly urged her to try and conquer her sorrow, not let it conquer her. In vain they tried to show her that she had duties still waiting for her to perform them.

"I have nothing more to live for," she said sadly but obstinately. "I cannot, I have no desire, my soul has gone out of me! Let me lie here and die."<sup>5</sup>

When Helen's neighbor died, however, leaving a house full of little children, Helen took one look at the unkempt, motherless children, and found a purpose for living. "O, God I thank thee, that thou didst not take me and leave my child behind!"<sup>6</sup> She took two of the little children into her home to be her own.

Helen kept the two children and brought them up in the fear of God. The girl is married now, and is a good and wise mother, while Walter [is] Helen's pride and dutiful son. . . And when Helen with joy and satisfaction looks at her sturdy, handsome boy and thinks of the lovely golden hair angel she laid to rest many years ago, she folds her hands and says with a patient sigh: "God knows best."<sup>7</sup>

#### "Sister Sarah" by Sophy Valentine

"Sister Sarah" emphasizes the importance of substance of character and of solid Mormon virtues. It is a courting story with a twist. The heroine, Sarah Wilkins, was not the beautiful, fair young thing that the girls in the other stories were. She was "fast approaching" thirty years old, "the dread of all maidens."<sup>8</sup> She had spent her

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<sup>5</sup> Journal 3:12, 539.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 540.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 541.

<sup>8</sup> Journal 3:7, 296.

years in caring for her house and her younger siblings because her mother was not in good health.

The descriptions of Sarah's former and current home surroundings are of interest. The latter are representative of the kinds of homes that were being depicted as the Journal reached its third volume.

Sarah's parents had come out to these mountain valleys with some of the earlier settlers and little Sarah came to this world mid poverty and privations and was for several years the only sunbeam that graced her parent's humble hut; for they lived in a low log-house, with ground for the floor and a piece of muslin tacked into a frame for a window, through which it was difficult for the sun to send much light or warmth.

But at the time our story opens the Wilkins did not live in a log-cabin with ground for the floor; not by any means. When prosperous times came to the people in these valleys the Wilkins family was not excluded, but grew with the rest of the Saints in wealth and wisdom. They lived in a nice frame house with carpet-covered floors, easy chairs, curtained windows and slept on spring mattresses. They even had a grand piano...<sup>9</sup>

All of the young women in the three stories reviewed thus far in Volume 3 had nice homes. And as a corollary, all of the young suitors or husbands were in business, rather than farming. Here, the young man, George Hall, worked for Sarah's father in a store.

Brothers Wilkins found him the best clerk he ever had, so willing, so industrious and took such an interest in everything

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 295.

concerning the business. To say nothing of the good sense and business talent displayed.<sup>10</sup>

A new interest in prosperity seems to be exhibiting itself in this volume. Annie Clark Tanner described post-Manifesto conditions that relate to this focus.

The Manifesto brought many changes. It was formerly taught that. . . the larger the family, the greater would be the Kingdom over which the father in the Celestial order of marriage would rule and reign in Eternity. . . .But now that polygamy had been abandoned even those who were still living in the principle of plural marriage began to doubt the propriety of a large family.

Besides, economic conditions were changing and people began to argue that a few children well cared for and educated was more desirable than a large number . . . The passing of the old ideal, to strive and sacrifice for the next world, was followed by a new ideal: 'The Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.' People began to live for this world. This earth and the fullness of happiness here was a new emphasis."<sup>11</sup>

It is clear, however, that this new-found prosperity was not enjoyed by all. The father in this story was angry with his younger daughters and told them,

. . . if the little education I have been able to give you has made you think that you are any better than the girls, whose fathers can't be any poorer than we used to be--and it ain't been so very long ago either--then I'm sorry I've wasted my money so foolishly.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Journal 3:8, 349.

<sup>11</sup> Annie Clark Tanner, A Mormon Mother, 221-222 (emphasis added).

<sup>12</sup> Journal 3:8, 352.

It should be noted that no implication is made, either in the story or in Annie Clark Tanner's account, that the new prosperity of the Saints was a reward for their faithfulness. Quite the opposite, as the above quote from the father shows. Such a claim would have been divisive. Instead, the quote above is affiliative in expressively stating that the affluent are not better than the poor.

In the evenings (with no television), Sarah's sisters occupied themselves with reading, sewing, and drawing. While they had time to study, take music lessons, and become cultured and refined, Sarah tended the house, did the chores, the cooking, and the cleaning. George Hall thought of her as a "modern Cinderella."<sup>13</sup> And while the younger girls took great pride in their education, thinking it made them better than Sarah and the other uneducated girls, their father had a different point of view:

Educated to be sure! You consider yourselves educated I suppose, and what do you know? You can do a little daub-work with a brush, can talk one deaf about history and the fine arts, and have managed to learn your grammar, your arithmetic and your geography and all that--and small thanks to you for it; you have done nothing else all your lives. But can you darn a sock decently; cook a meal fit to eat or iron a shirt that anybody would wear? Tell me that, will you?<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Journal 3:7, 299.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.



As Sarah became increasingly aware of her plainness, her lack of education and charm, she began to despair.

She closed the piano and rested her head in one hand, while her mind conjured up pictures of the future, in which she saw herself as the lonely old maid, whose cares are many and whose pleasures were few; the object of patronizing kindness and good-humored jokes. Perhaps she had done wrong in refusing when she might have married a good man?<sup>15</sup>

Much to her surprise, George proposed to Sarah instead of her sister. The other girl, he explained, was "too unsubstantial" for him. "When I choose a wife I do it with a view to what sort of a help mate she will be for me in the future."<sup>16</sup>

What moral might the young readers have taken from this narrative, at a time when female education was well accepted and common? If the story of "Sister Sarah" is representative of the attitude of the times, it was that education was a good thing, so long as it did not interfere with a woman's true domestic roles of wife and homemaker.

There are two other serial stories in Volume 3,<sup>17</sup> but they will not be reviewed here because they are not about Mormons nor are they in Mormon settings. They have some

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<sup>15</sup> Journal 3:9, 409.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 410.

<sup>17</sup> "Ruined by Temporizing," by Lucinda Lee Dalton and "Her Political Campaign" by Flora Haines Loughhead.

similarity to each other, however, in that they are both about politics. The heroine in "Her Political Campaign" was drafted to become the mayor of her home town. Her feminine touch solved the serious problems of the town, including organized labor, and "the social cancer"<sup>18</sup> of prostitution.<sup>19</sup> As soon as the problems were solved, however, she returned to the higher calling of domesticity to marry and have a family. The story relates to the temperance movement and moral crusades of the era, and its presence in the Journal shows that the Mormons were aware of the social/political activities of their American sisters, and that they approved of them.

National politics was an issue in Utah during this time. Once the Manifesto was issued, the political situation in Utah changed immediately. Up until then, Utah's politics had not revolved around the national Republican and Democratic parties. The two parties in Utah were the People's Party and the Liberal party. As soon as the polygamy issue was resolved, however, the national parties began to vie for Utah supporters. The

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<sup>18</sup> Journal 3:11, 489.

<sup>19</sup> This story culminates, as Lary May says about Uncle Tom's Cabin, "with a moral victory based on the resilience of true womanhood." May says the moral crusades and the temperance movement were "both an effort to broaden the role of women and to further social order." He comments on the literature of this period and says "women began to create even more activist heroines who spread familial ethics beyond the confines of the home." Lary May, Screening Out the Past, 13.

People's Party, the political arm of the Church, was dissolved in June 1891, and the Liberal Party followed not long afterwards. The broader membership of the Church leaned toward the Democrats, but Church leadership favored the Republicans. Church membership split on the issue of which party to join, as did the non-Mormons, and the political realignment found former enemies supporting the same candidates, and former friends opposed.<sup>20</sup>

One of the major issues facing Utah legislators was whether to reinstate women's suffrage, which had been revoked during the crusade. Mormon, as well as non-Mormon, women were deeply involved in the debate and political maneuvering. It is not surprising, with all of this going on, that a concern about politics should find its way into the pages of the Journal at this time. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that the Journal narratives remind their young readers where their proper place remains.

These serial stories in Volume 3, taken together, are different in tone from the ones in the previous volumes. If the serial stories in the Journal were the only history of the time we had available to us, we would probably conclude that the women of Utah were still fully devoted to their religion, but for some reason they no longer felt

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<sup>20</sup> See Poll, Utah's History, Chapter 21, for a complete description of this post-Manifesto political situation.

the urgency to vehemently defend their faith in their narratives as they had in the previous volumes. The quality of their lives was improving, especially in available time, better family income, and more comfortable home environments. Sickness and death were still a major part of their lives and their fears. The Mormon women of Utah were now looking beyond the local political affairs of their state to larger issues such as two-party politics, temperance and reform movements. They recognized a need for female education, and female participation in the political arena to bring about needed changes, but still felt that a woman's true place and pleasures were to be found in the home, tending to her house and the needs of her family. In this regard, they were very much like other American women of their time.

## CHAPTER VII

VOLUME 4: OCTOBER 1892 -

SEPTEMBER 1893

Volume 4 is rich in support for and examples of Covert's thesis that the press functions to conserve values and to engender a sense of community affiliation. The narratives in this volume are widely diverse in subject matter and themes, and are a fertile source of cultural history. The stories were vehicles for many social and religious messages, including: that death of a loved one can be a means to salvation, and that it is often preferable to the circumstances of life; that the Devil can gain power over the minds of individuals through hypnosis and spiritualism; that there are dire consequences for forming alliances with nonmember men; that among the immigrant Saints were strong, capable, and intelligent women who gave up their families and homelands to gather with the Church in the much less inviting Utah desert; that Mormonism is superior to other religions in many ways; and that the press was influential in building up the kingdom in England and Scandinavia, and in encouraging the gathering to Zion.

"Baby Nello's Mission"  
by Kate Grover

The theme of this narrative is by now familiar. It is about childhood death, and the conviction that death is for a purpose. In this case, the purpose is the salvation of the child's father. Baby Nello's father had fallen into the forbidden habits of smoking, drinking, and gambling. The young wife/mother was deeply saddened, and Baby Nello, the toddler, kept asking his daddy why he smoked. One innovation in this story is the faithful reproduction of Baby Nello's precocious baby talk.<sup>1</sup>

Oh, Papa, when 'ou tisse me 'our mouf  
doesn't smell nice like mamma's do. Tant  
'ou frow away 'our moke, den mamma will  
let 'ou tiss her. . . . But I dess Dod  
won't tare if 'ou 'mokes all the bacco  
'ouve dot now if ou'll not dit any more.<sup>2</sup>

It was only when baby Nello died of an unspecified, but lingering, illness that the young father changed his ways. "The baby's death was the means of bringing one back to God who had shown himself deaf to every former call."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The reproduction of dialect and accent is common in these stories. This is just a new variation on the theme.

<sup>2</sup> Journal 4:11, 535-536.

<sup>3</sup> Journal 4:12, 541.

"A Birthday Diamond" (Author  
Unidentified)

The style of this story comes as a surprise in the Journal. It is a mystery--the story of a woman whose beautiful birthday diamond, a gift from her husband, mysteriously disappeared. While they were at the store choosing the diamond, she and her husband noticed a very striking man and unusual man--the villain. The diamond disappeared some weeks later, as did another jewel they had purchased.

The husband began to have grave misgivings about his wife because he saw her outside, walking about in the evenings when she swore she was not. He followed her one night and found that she was not only meeting with the aristocratic, mustached man from the jewelry story, but was giving him jewels!

It was quickly discovered, however, that the vile man was a genius at hypnotism, and had taken the wife under his spell. The wife was shocked that she could be so influenced against her will. "She had read and heard much of the strange spell or power of hypnotism,"<sup>4</sup> but had thought it was a power for good because it had been used in surgical operations in the place of chloroform and other narcotics.

The wife found much religious significance in her

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<sup>4</sup> Journal 4:5, 256.

experience with hypnotism. It reminded her of a sermon she had heard in which it was prophesied that a time would come "when the adversary will have power over the minds of men in ways hitherto undreamed."<sup>5</sup> She felt the time had come, and hypnotism was the power. She realized how important it was to be true to the faith, and that "no power of hypnotism nor any other evil can touch those of God's children who accept His gospel and obey his laws."<sup>6</sup>

Hypnosis and spiritualism were apparently matters of concern during this period. In Volume 1 there is a one-installment story about spiritualism<sup>7</sup> that is a strong warning to young readers against seances and dream interpretation.

This "Birthday Diamond" narrative is built around the quotation about the "power [of the adversary]<sup>8</sup> over the minds of men." It is common in these stories for a scene, or even an entire story, to be structured around a quote from a Church leader. In "Lights and Shades," for instance, Brigham Young came to visit Gwyn's mother-in-law and said: "I have never considered it wise for men to marry more wives than they were capable of supporting well, and rearing more children than they could educate

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 257.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 258.

<sup>7</sup> Journal 1:1, 12.

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to Satan, or the Devil.



and take good care of." The author underscores this by saying, "This truthful statement of President Young's own words is here made by one who heard them uttered."<sup>9</sup> Also note, for example, "Polished Stones" in which the whole story is based on the Eliza R. Snow sermon.<sup>10</sup> The key phrase in "The Birthday Diamond" appears to be a direct quote, perhaps from Joseph Smith. The story says the woman had heard the words

in a sermon uttered by a man long since dead, and whose life had been engaged in carrying out one of the greatest missions of love and mercy to mankind that the modern (empty) Christianity had known.<sup>11</sup>

Structuring the stories around the counsel of Church leaders is a narrative device to reinforce the memory and wisdom of those leaders in the minds of the young readers. It serves an affiliative function in encouraging the readers to look to their own leaders and community members for advice and counsel, thus creating a reliance on a shared set of values and beliefs.

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<sup>9</sup> Journal 2:5, 213. The author goes on to say: "And it is given with the hope that some young readers may accept it as a proof that the authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have never been in the habit of urging their poor brethren to take upon themselves the responsibilities of families which they were unable to properly support--a charge which has often been brought against them."

<sup>10</sup> Journal 1:7, 193.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 257.

"Worse than Death" by Homespun

In this narrative, again about death, a group of women were sitting and visiting together in the nicest home in town.<sup>12</sup> One of them observed that another woman in town, who had recently lost a child to death, had attended a town picnic (in a pink dress) the day after the burial. Many of the visiting women were outraged that the mother was not formally grieving, wearing black, and staying at home.

Their conversation led into this three-part story in which the oldest participant, the owner of the fine house, tried to convince the others that there are many things worse than death.

She began her remarks by saying that it was hypocrisy for Mormons to follow the example of the world in mourning. Mormons know that there is joy in the afterlife for the departed, and "we believe that God orders everything for our good."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The description of the room reveals what an especially nice home looked like then. "The room in which they sat was well furnished, and bore every evidence of being the home of taste combined with ample means and a love of the beautiful. The pictures on the walls were neither too gaudy nor were they incongruous. The curtains and carpets were all chosen with a view to heightening the effect made by the heavy and exquisitely tinted wall paper. The parlor, for such it really was, had nothing cheap nor flimsy to mar the effect of its simple but elegant interior." Journal 4:1, 15.

<sup>13</sup> Journal 4:1, 18.

Why if our dead could speak to us they  
would say, don't shed one tear for me for  
I am supremely happy, and if you will only  
cease grieving for me I can then be at  
utter peace.<sup>14</sup>

This woman expressed the hope that Mormons would adopt the practice, encouraged by one of the church leaders as well as Henry Ward Beecher,<sup>15</sup> of wearing white to funerals instead of black.

As the installments progress, the discussion turns to stories about other people who suffered things that were worse than death. One is about a Mormon woman in Idaho who lost four of her children in six days to diphtheria. She was beside herself with grief and could not be consoled, until she happened to meet an old couple with an even greater grief. They too were Mormons. Their son had gone to work in the mining camps,<sup>16</sup> fallen into bad ways, and ended up killing a man. They were on their way to witness his hanging.

Under the stress of the greatest agony a Saint may know, that of the knowledge that a loved one has sinned in this world with a sin that cuts off all hope of exaltation in the next, the aged parents hastened to

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 19. This reference to Beecher suggests, again, that Mormon women were aware of current American trends and events.

<sup>16</sup> The Mormon leadership was opposed to mining in the state, and the members were encouraged not to participate in the mining operations. This story refers to the mining camps as "that worst of all traps to catch the feet of our young men. . ." Journal 4:2, 66.

meet their beloved and wretched son ere  
his life was cut off from the earth.<sup>17</sup>

When the mother who had lost so many children witnessed the grief of the old couple, she realized there were things worse than death. "Her own loved ones were safe with the dear Father who had taken them home in their youth and innocence."<sup>18</sup>

The last story the visiting women shared among themselves was about a bishop and his wife whose son was dying of meningitis. The father exercised the power of his priesthood, blessing the child constantly and commanding him to live. Of note in this story (though not related to the storyline) is that the mother also blessed the child.

The father and mother would not give up. But kneeling down on the floor beside the bed they commanded the child to live, by virtue of the holy Priesthood which THEY held.<sup>19</sup>

The child did live, but he "was a driveling idiot."<sup>20</sup> He lived for many years in this condition, to the great sorrow of his parents. The implication is that they suffered for two reasons--the condition of their boy, and the misuse of their priesthood powers in confounding the

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<sup>17</sup> Journal 4:2, 66.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Journal 4:3, 103 (emphasis added).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 104.

will of God over the death of the boy.

The narrative ends with the philosophy that

it is the sorrows that we cause ourselves which give us the most pain; the woes sent by our wise and kind Heavenly Father are easy to bear, for accompanying them, if we will ask for it, is a spirit of heavenly peace and resignation.<sup>21</sup>

Many things are worse than death.

"Aunt Ruth's Story" by Sophy  
Valentine

Aunt Ruth told this story before the fire at bedtime for several consecutive nights to a group of her nieces and their friends. It is about one of their relatives, Cousin Clara, who married a non-Mormon. Aunt Ruth told about Clara's tragic experiences because,

Who can tell but that even in this little circle there might perchance be one who will ignore the life-long teachings of her parents and listen to the idle flatteries of a stranger, whom she sees for the first time, and take his lightly spoken words for gospel truth in preference to the words of the mother, who would die to save her child from sorrow and disgrace!<sup>22</sup>

Clara suffered in her marriage. As she learned what kind of man her husband really was, her love turned cold. In the end, after giving birth to two children, she learned that her husband was not only unfaithful to her, but that he had also used a false name when marrying her, had murdered someone, and had planned to murder her with

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>22</sup> Journal 4:1, 3.

poison powder.

This three-part narrative is another warning against the flatteries of men, and especially of non-Mormons. It is a graphic lesson that tells its young readers that befriending nonmember men can lead to unequal, disgraceful and even dangerous marriages. The young woman in this story was fortunate even to escape from her marriage alive.

The lesson of Aunt Ruth's narrative was immediately successful. One of the girls who had listened to the story each night took note of its counsel. A nonmember had proposed marriage to her, but because of the story, she rejected him. Aunt Ruth was delighted. "God be thanked, my child, if I can save one innocent girl from having her slender craft wrecked on the reefs of an unequal marriage, I shall be amply repaid for my pains."<sup>23</sup>

"Thorborg" (Author Unidentified)

It is difficult to tell in some of the Journal narratives if the tale is primarily fictional or biographical. Even in the apparently fictional stories, the authors claim to really know the characters.<sup>24</sup> In the

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<sup>23</sup> Journal 4:3, 109.

<sup>24</sup> For instance, in "The Western Boom," Ellen Jakeman ends her story by saying, "It is just possible that Mrs. Lawson will make Mr. Farce supremely blest--at least, she does not say that I must strike the sentence out." Journal 2:11, 500.

beginning, "Thorborg" appears to be fictional, but as it progresses it becomes apparent that it is about an actual woman.

Thorborg was a relatively wealthy young lady who lived in Frederiksborg, Denmark. Her father was the right honorable Mr. Landsho, royal government officer, postmaster of Frederiksborg. Thorborg and her brother came into contact with a Mormon missionary living in their same building. She resisted her brother's invitations to come listen to the missionary's sermons because of the bad reputation of the Mormons. When she finally did attend, she was "all shaken up" because the other people there were poor, working class people, "the very scum."<sup>25</sup>

In their first conversation, she and the missionary talked about Utah, rather than religion. The missionary gave her a copy of the Woman's Exponent.

Thorborg, like all well educated girls in Denmark, could speak both English, German and French well enough to make herself understood, and she could read English fairly well. She was surprised that there should be clever women among the Mormons. In fact, she "could hardly believe it."<sup>26</sup>

The Journal literature is notably lacking in humor, but one of its rare humorous passages is found in this narrative. One day Thorborg and her brother were entertaining the missionary while their parents were away.

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<sup>25</sup> Journal 4:7, 314.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 316.

When the parents came home unexpectedly, they hid the missionary in the pantry and locked the door. Of course, they were finally found out, but the tension in the story is amusing as the mother and the servant worked about the kitchen preparing dinner, the missionary hid in the pantry, and Thorborg and her brother scurried around, offering to get whatever was needed from the pantry.

The reader of this story learned about some of the customs and daily activities of the nineteenth century Danish. For instance, breakfast was the second meal of the day, taken at ten o'clock.<sup>27</sup> And, when the young people got together they sang,<sup>28</sup> played the piano, played whist, ate, and danced to "bewitching Straus waltzes until both head and heart were dizzy."<sup>29</sup>

Thorborg was eventually baptized--in secret. The story traces the steps in her conversion process. The first incident was when her curate attended one of the missionary meetings and requested time to "unveil the humbug called Mormonism."<sup>30</sup>

The curate soon found that the Bible itself turned against him. What he would bring up against them from the Holy Book actually was in their favor, and he stood there stammering and looking rather

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<sup>27</sup> Journal 4:6, 248.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>29</sup> Journal 4:7, 312.

<sup>30</sup> Journal 4:7, 310.



foolish. Then he took refuge in slander

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She grew tired of the sermons in her own church that concentrated on the "weeping, bleeding, Savior."<sup>32</sup> She was impressed by the missionary's sermon about "the gifts and powers that should follow the gospel."<sup>33</sup> Fearful that she was being convinced by the Mormons, she sought advice from a trusted minister. He warned her to be wary of the Mormons, for they were "the very anti-Christ that is spoken so much about in the Bible."<sup>34</sup> The clinching argument for Thorborg's conversion was the missionary's explanation that the Pharisees and scribes had been well versed in scripture, just as her minister was, but they did not recognize the Messiah when he came.<sup>35</sup> Thorborg was secretly baptized and became a Mormon. Notable in these passages is that the conversion came about by an appeal to reason and to the Bible. No mention is made of the Book of Mormon.

Despite her committed conversion, it was difficult for Thorborg to reveal her secret because she knew it meant that she would be ostracized from her family and

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Journal 4:8, 346.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 350.

<sup>34</sup> Journal 4:9, 408.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 409.

that she would have to leave her homeland.

Then she thought of the wild West, where she would have to make her future home. How dreadful it would be to live without the sea, these lovely woods, teeming with flowers of every kind, these vales and dales, where every foot of ground was cultivated and bore fruit of some sort! How unattractive and wild Utah must be!<sup>3 6</sup>

True to Thorborg's fears, when her conversion was revealed her family was disgraced. They asked her to emigrate and leave her homeland.

The narratives about Scandinavian conversions always include missionaries from Utah. The Journal's young readers probably had a great interest in reading about the activities of the missionaries because so many of their fathers, brothers, friends, and sweethearts served missions. It must have been difficult for them to fully imagine what it was like in those faraway lands. This story describes the building in which the missionaries lived and the surroundings and landscape so well, the reader could imagine the whole picture. The descriptions of the missionary meetings and contacts with nonmembers also gave the readers a sense of what the men were doing while they were away.

Many of the missionaries were married men, and this narrative reassured young wives that their husbands were faithful. Thorborg was attracted to the missionary. She

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<sup>3 6</sup> Journal 4:9, 410.

was convinced that he would be hers. She was shocked and embarrassed to discover that he was married, but the discovery explained his obvious lack of interest in her, other than as a soul to be led to the truth.

In the end, Thorborg married another Danish immigrant and settled in Utah. Her life was not easy, and the narrative serves to remind its readers that there was a great personal sacrifice in joining the Church. "She who was raised in a comfortable home, where everything was plentiful, has tasted the bitterness of poverty. Sickness and death have come to her as to many others."<sup>37</sup> Despite her trials, she kept her happy memories alive by sharing them with the younger generations. She often told her children of her home in Denmark, and of the "lovely sea where she spent so many pleasant hours in her youth."<sup>38</sup>

"The Child Bride" by Helen  
Thompson

This is another apparently true tale of an immigrant convert from Denmark. Her name was Ines, and she was born in April 1827. The story recounts the sad history of Ines' youth, and her childhood marriage, arranged by her father.

This story, too, reveals Danish custom--especially the wedding ceremony. The bride was dressed, "as was the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 414.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 415.

custom of the country then," in

a black gown, with a white apron tied with large bows in front, a white dainty lace collar around her neck. Her hair was sewed up in an odd style. She wore a red cap with a large bow of ribbons at the back, and also to tie it on with, and she also wore her silver-buckled slippers.<sup>39</sup>

Twenty-three carriages filled with relatives drove to the little church for the ceremony. Then there was a "grand supper" at which "Ines had to sit at the head of the table with her husband."<sup>40</sup> The dancing began at ten, and she was required to dance with her husband, with everyone watching.

But another disagreeable thing was awaiting her. That evening at twelve o'clock it was the custom for the bridegroom to change the head-dress of his wife from red to a black cap, as all married ladies must wear black; and after placing the black cap on her head he must kiss her. This Ines dreaded very much, but it was accomplished at last.<sup>41</sup>

Another interesting bit of Danish culture is the description of the "continual flow of festivities" during the long winter evenings.

Ines either had a sociable at her own home or was out to one elsewhere every night; and their chief pastimes at these gatherings were the playing of cards and drinking of whisky for the men; and the women sometimes joined in both. Dancing was also indulged in quite extensively,

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<sup>39</sup> Journal 4:10, 444.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 445.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

generally they would remain till nearly morning.<sup>30</sup>

Ines had a very unhappy marriage, but she found a new joy when one of her servant girls introduced her to Mormonism. The girl walked twelve miles to invite the missionaries to visit Ines. This began a long and satisfying relationship with the missionaries and the few Saints in the area. She was able to purchase a Book of Mormon, a hymn book and pamphlets, but the publication that kept her most in touch with the Church was the Star. As McLaws reports,<sup>31</sup> the Star (actually named the Stjerne) was the Scandinavian paper printed by the Church to attract people to the religion and to Utah. It was printed to accomplish Brigham Young's goal of filling the Salt Lake basin with his own followers.

"Stjerne served Utah as the railroad and land commission circulars served other states," and over 25,000 Scandinavians migrated to Utah between 1850 and 1900.<sup>32</sup>

Ines had to sneak away from home to visit with the Saints and missionaries, and eventually to be baptized in the middle of the night in a small pond. Her husband did not learn of it for years.

Ines' husband began to drink and gamble more heavily, and eventually lost the home and property that had

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<sup>30</sup> Journal 4:10, 446.

<sup>31</sup> See Monte Burr McLaws, Spokesman for the Kingdom, 61.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

belonged to Ines at the time of her marriage. She moved the family to a small cottage, where she raised her children as Mormons, against the wishes of her husband. Her oldest daughter was requested in marriage in a letter from a young man in Utah who had heard about her from one of the missionaries. As the result of this marriage, and the father's death, Ines and all her children were eventually able to emigrate to Utah.

She did not find Zion a bed of roses, but she had been through such ordeals that oppositions she met with were mere trifles. She was sealed to one of the Apostles who now has left this mortal sphere."<sup>3 3</sup>

The story of Ines is filled with detail and is a moving account of a woman struggling in very trying circumstances. This story, like the one before it about Thorborg, seems to reveal a new appreciation on the part of the authors or editor, and perhaps the readers, for the lives and sacrifices of the Scandinavian immigrant Saints. The stories show the circumstances under which conversion took place, the beautiful lands that they chose to leave for their faith, and the importance of the Church press in effectuating the gathering. The stories also recount the activities of the missionaries to these foreign lands. The "Thorborg" story tells about the meetings they held and the way they were treated by the non-Members. The "Child Bride" story tells even more about their living

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<sup>3 3</sup> Journal 4:12, 533.

conditions, their difficulty in finding a place to stay and in finding food to eat, their meetings, their service to and involvement with the Saints. These narratives preserved the Scandinavian experience for their young women readers by recounting the customs and traditions that had been left behind. They tell of the families that were given up, and of the beautiful landscapes, so different from Utah. They explain the conversion process, and record why the decision was made to join the Church. The immigrant stories especially show the function of the Journal narratives in creating a shared history across space, nationality and generation.

## CHAPTER VIII

VOLUME 5: OCTOBER 1893 -  
SEPTEMBER 1894

The stories in Volume 5 are an apt end to this examination of the serial literature in the Young Woman's Journal. They offer a reiteration of all the major themes present in the previous narratives. The first story is about young love, conversion, and gathering. The next is about a young bride's adjustment to marriage and small-town living. The last is a year-long serial that embodies in itself all the major themes of the Journal literature, including plural marriage. The latter two stories address social divisions in Mormon culture, and encourage group understanding and conciliation, as well as a return to or appreciation for simplicity and humble living.

### "David and Rebecca" by W.A.M.

This appears to be another biographical account, this time about the conversions of David and Rebecca, two young Methodist adults who lived with their respective parents in England. David was first attracted to Mormonism when he heard the missionaries (the Elders) preaching on a



street corner about "water baptism."<sup>1</sup> He later attended and was impressed with a Mormon testimony meeting, where he was given a copy of the Book of Mormon, and a pamphlet "The Voice of Warning."<sup>2</sup> These publications from the Mormon press--especially the pamphlet--were the turning point in his conversion.

He had read but a few pages of the Book of Mormon, and therefore could not say much respecting that record; but the "Voice of Warning" he considered the choicest treasure he possessed, and would not part with it for money.<sup>3</sup>

David was not hampered in his conversion by the reputation of the Mormons.

People are not to be judged by their reputation [he said]. The Savior and His apostles had a very bad reputation in their day, but they have become better known, and today they are believed to be the best men that ever trod the earth.<sup>4</sup>

David's conversion was also not opposed by his family. But--Rebecca's was. And, her conversion was not so easily accomplished because of her doubts about polygamy. The Elders answered her questions by reminding her that the scriptures, as well as modern-day revelation, sanctioned the practice. But they also made the point that only "2-1/2 percent of the whole Mormon body have entered into

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<sup>1</sup> Journal 5:7, 316.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 317.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 319.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 318.

that order."<sup>5</sup> They then alluded to a political arrangement or understanding that must have existed between the government and the Church when they said,

you will understand that we, as Elders of the Church, have no authority to teach the doctrine in this land; we are permitted, however, to defend this principle of our religion, when called upon to do so. . ."<sup>6</sup>

Rebecca was satisfied with their explanations, and through the influence of a personal vision in a dream, she decided to become a Mormon. Her parents refused to let her live at home thereafter, so she got work in an art gallery, and was eventually able to emigrate. David and his family, who had all joined the Church, had moved to Utah. Rebecca joined them there and married David. He was called back to his homeland to serve a mission in 1889, and converted Rebecca's parents.

This five-installment story shared the culture of another land with its young readers, and gave them an insight into the reasoning involved in the conversion process of the nineteenth century immigrants. It is again interesting that while Church publications were central to David's conversion, the Book of Mormon, upon which the Church was originally founded, played a very small part.

The story also provides a good picture of the activities of the missionaries at the time. It depicts

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 419.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

street meetings, testimony meetings, and confrontations with ministers. Many of the stories, including this one, contain accounts of healings performed by the missionaries for both members and nonmembers of the Church.

There are also interesting insights into the English culture the immigrants left behind. David and Rebecca, and apparently all of their friends, were well-versed in scripture, and regular attenders at a theology class. Religion was much on their minds. They were also, of course, active young people, and at their outings they participated in sailing, football, cricket, foot-racing and swinging.<sup>7</sup>

Whatever the particular details of these narratives, however, the dominant themes remain. Disobedience to Mormon teachings results in sadness and suffering. Obedience, however, is invariably rewarded. In this case, despite the displeasure of her family at her conversion, Rebecca was eventually rewarded with marriage to her David, and the conversion of her family.

"My Husband and I" by Sophy  
Valentine

"My Husband and I" is a personal story that relates much about Mormon values of the time, but is not openly didactic as are many of the other narratives. The hearts and minds of the characters are revealed--their

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<sup>7</sup> Journal 5:8, 374.

delicate and shifting attitudes and feelings. It's a tender story, full of love, reality, and the intricacies of interpersonal relationships. It functions to conserve traditional Mormon values by spelling out the virtues of country life and simple pleasures and by showing the growing maturity of the young bride as she develops the self-identity of a faithful Mormon.

The story depicts one year in the life of a young bride, as recorded in her journal. Following her marriage, the bride moved with her husband from Salt Lake to his small, unnamed farming community. Her first adjustment was to the "strange" ways of small town people. Then she had small differences to work out with her husband. She wanted finery and luxuries, for instance, even if it meant going into debt. He wanted the small town necessity--a cow.

When the bride received word that her sister was coming to visit, she decided to fix up the attic into a guest room. The reader can picture the little room, and feel the pride and satisfaction the bride felt in her accomplishment. She told all about it in her diary. She and Henry papered the walls themselves. The woodwork was dark red, the only color of "prepared paint"<sup>8</sup> that was in the store. They painted and varnished the floor, and refurbished an old bedstead that they found in the garage.

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<sup>8</sup> Journal 5:2, 71.

They varnished it and "furnished it with a new hay mattress."<sup>9</sup>

I had an extra pair of shams and the spread is cream sateen, with pretty pink flowers, and trimmed with cream lace from an old ball dress, gone out of existence. Two broomsticks, painted black and varnished, serve as curtain rods, and the cheap scrim curtains look as pretty as can be. A large grocery box I laid on the side and looped all around it scrim, over turkey-red calico, and hung over it one of our two mirrors. I had to get a new set of wash things, and I have divided my toilet set with my guest. I also have a few very good prints, which I framed myself, and they set the room off nicely, to say nothing of the loose strips of home-made carpets I have thrown across the floor. Two old chairs I also found in the barn, and Henry mended them nicely, while I painted and varnished them, and tacked on new velvet seats, pieces I had left from a dress. They look very neat. One of my rockers and a few nick-nacks complete the furnishing, and I think the room is just fit for a bride. I have to steal up there several times a day to enjoy it, and I love to sit in the rocker and contemplate the whole, our own handiwork all of it. . . . but of course it is for Daisy that we have made it.<sup>10</sup>

The reader suffers along with the bride when she learns her sister's reaction to the little room.

When I told Daisy we had done it all ourselves she laughed till she was almost sick, and then went to criticizing everything, and then I too could see the faults, of course, but I hadn't noticed them before. . . . I'm quite ashamed of our humble abode.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Journal 5:2, 71.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 72.

The story is full of several such small, yet meaningful events, but centers around a larger one. The bride's new friend, a young mother with two small children, left the children with the newlyweds and went to Salt Lake for a little vacation. She took up company with a nonmember, and never returned. In the end, the young couple, who had just learned that they were going to have a baby of their own, decided to adopt the little children.

One event in this narrative, which is mentioned in several of the others, has not yet been discussed. This is the annual General Conference of the Church that occurs in October. In several of the stories, as in this one, the main characters take their horses and wagons on the train and go to Salt Lake to attend Conference. It is a central religious and social event in many of the stories. The harvest has already been gathered, and the beginning of the winter's social activities seems to be marked by Conference. The visits are not short. It is a long way to travel and, once there, the visitors stay for an extended holiday. The Conference visit to Salt Lake is usually a significant turning point of some kind in these stories. In this one, the bride had a chance to see her mother with new eyes now that she herself was married, and to love and appreciate her more. She was also questioned about her religion by nonmembers on the train. Realizing that she didn't really know much about her church, she

vowed to study and learn.

There is a fairly new element in this story--the errant Mormon. Of course, there have frequently been drinkers, or people who engage in premarital sex, but these have been thin, one-dimensional characters who usually see the error of their ways and, after some traumatic experience, repent. In this story, the mother who abandons her children is not a simple stereotype. The reader is made aware of the hardships she has faced, the love she has for her children, and the attraction she feels for a nonmember, which pulls her away from her responsibilities of motherhood. There is no suggestion that she will repent and come back, or that there are easy labels or solutions for those who go astray in Mormon communities. The story encourages affiliation through tenderness to children, friendship with neighbors, and sweetness between spouses. It stresses continued Church activity and devotion to Mormon standards. Its message is that life offers many options, but true happiness and real maturity are to be found in adhering to the true and simple principles of the gospel.

In the end, the bride found that she genuinely enjoyed her new life in the country.

There is something about living in the country that you never experience in the city. This feeling of oneness; we seem to be all one big family and share each other's happiness or sorrows as much as if

we were I think. I like this. I think it is beautiful.<sup>1 2</sup>

She was even overjoyed when she received her first Christmas present from her husband--a "great, big beautiful brown cow."<sup>1 3</sup>

"Seven Times" by Homespun

It is fitting that the last narrative in these five volumes should be this twelve-part story by Susa Young Gates, originator and editor of the Journal. It touches on all of the major themes present in other stories. It shows her concerns for the young women for whom she had been writing and editing for five years, and evidently shows what kind of story she thought would interest them in 1893-94.

The story begins in a little Utah town in a "well cultivated"<sup>1 4</sup> valley. The description of the town is like a photograph in words of little Utah towns of that period.

The village will look to our imagination just as it does, in reality with plenty of shade trees, houses clustered on the hill and nestling lower in the valley. Through it will run one of our own clear, mountain streams; over it will blow the sweet mountain breezes, and the few adobe houses of some pretension will relieve the general monotony of one story brick, lumber, and log houses, the latter well chinked up and sometimes even plastered on

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<sup>1 2</sup> Journal 5:5, 230.

<sup>1 3</sup> Ibid., 231.

<sup>1 4</sup> Journal 5:1, p. 25.



the outside as well as papered on the inside.<sup>15</sup>

In one of the larger adobe houses lived yet another complex, nonexemplary Mormon. He was the father of a fine family, and an active Mormon--but he took too much of an interest in and too many physical liberties with women. The story centers around the lives and loves of his two older children, Clara and Donald. Clara was a very attractive girl with expressive black eyes.

If you could see her, dressed in her simple white muslin, the plain baby waist, guiltless of restricting corsets underneath, and with enough modest underwear beneath it to merely outline the full, rounded bosom beneath, the healthy large waist encircled with a sky blue ribbon, the tucked petticoat with its elaborate crocheted trimming showing through the clear plain folds of the skirt, the girl's face bright with the rosy bloom of youth and happiness, her cheeks as red as ripe apples, her lips mellow with the emotions of every passing thought, and such bright, sparkling eyes you would have said as I do that she was very pretty.<sup>16</sup>

Clara decided to marry a young suitor, even though the local school teacher, a wise and well-respected man, had asked for her hand in a plural marriage. Her marriage turned out to be very unhappy and disappointing, but she confided it to no one. When she came down with diphtheria, no one would go into the house to help care for her, and her husband was too inexperienced to know what to

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 26

do. The teacher moved in and cared for her in her dying days, built her coffin, and buried her himself. He knew that Clara was meant to be one of his wives throughout eternity, even though another man had "in some strange way won for a time the jewel that was to be a part of his own crown of perfectness."<sup>17</sup>

Clara's brother Donald was in love with the teacher's nonmember sister from Scotland. She was attracted to him, also, but was critical and sarcastic about Mormonism. Donald knew that he could not in good conscience encourage a romance with a nonmember, and Margery refused to take an interest in the Church. Each succeeding number of the Journal tantalizes the reader with the hope that the two of them will get together, only to find them with hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and different points of view. One can imagine young nineteenth century women readers picking up their new issues of the Journal and turning immediately to this story, which ran for a full year, to see what happened between Donald and Miss Margery Stewart.

Margery did not receive her testimony of the Church until Donald had gone to England on a two-and-one-half year mission. She caught diphtheria during the same epidemic that claimed Clara's life. When she was on the verge of death, her brother and Aunt Ellen, a prominent local matron in the Mormon community, blessed her and

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<sup>17</sup> Journal 5:10, 468.

prayed that she would live and gain a testimony, which she did. She and Donald were married shortly after his return from England.

The story is rich in cultural information beyond the story line. One of the most interesting segments is about a trip taken by a group of the young people, chaperoned by Aunt Ellen, to October Conference in Salt Lake. The first leg of their trip was by horse and buggy, and they had to camp out one night before they reached the train depot, after which they took the train the rest of the way. They had special train tickets, evidently at a discounted price, which had an expiration date of about two weeks after conference.

The advent of railroads was an important event for Utah. Brigham Young was anxious to bring them to Salt Lake City, despite the problems that would accompany the influx of gentiles to the valley. The trains would facilitate immigration into Utah, and would improve communication channels for the Church both with the coasts, and with outlying Mormon settlements. Thus, the Church was very much involved with building railroads within the state.

One week after the driving of the golden spike at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869. . . construction began in Ogden on the Utah Central Railroad that was to connect Salt Lake City with the transcontinental line.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Poll, Utah's History, 219.

Church labor crews worked on the rails, and eventually most of Utah was within a few hours or at most within two or three days of rail transportation.

. . . Traffic between towns not served by the railroad continued over rough, unpaved wagon roads, most of them unchanged since early settlement."<sup>19</sup>

This was the condition for the young travelers in this story.

Once the young people in the story reached Salt Lake City, Margery stayed with the Hortons, a family of apostates who had anti-Mormon literature around the house, "books and papers containing shameful stories about the Mormons," including "Mrs. Stenhouses' book."<sup>20</sup>

Social divisions between the members of the Church are more apparent in each volume of the Journal. The implication of this narrative, and "My Husband and I" before it, is that the main division was between the rural or country people and the city folk. In this story, the emphasis on fine clothes, transportation, and city entertainment is associated with the apostate characters. By making this association, Mrs. Gates shows her disapproval of pretentiousness and showy luxury. The Hortons made great fun of country manners and dress, and even of

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>20</sup> Journal 5:6, 271. Fanny Stenhouse was a prominent and well-respected Mormon woman who left the Church, wrote an anti-Mormon book, and lectured around the country about her experiences as a member.

country entertainment, which they described as "quilting-bees, kissing-bees, spelling schools, bobsleigh-riding, country beaus and all." They contrasted those lowly activities unfavorably with their own "sane amusements . . . theatres, concerts, lectures and balls."<sup>21</sup>

It is clear that the coming of the country people to Salt Lake City for Conference was as much anticipated by the city people as by the travelers. The theater fare was "prepared expressly for our friends from the country,"<sup>22</sup> as were the stores. Next to attending the Conference sessions, shopping was the main priority of the Conference visitors. The Hortons were disdainful of the plays that were staged for the benefit of the country people, and felt the same about the products in the stores.

The social differences attributed to horses and buggies are an issue in this story. Margery felt the thrill of riding in a "luxurious carriage" pulled by a

thoroughbred Kentucky mare [which] responded to every movement of her driver's hand. . . . A horse who strained the bit at a two-forty gait in those days was not to be despised.<sup>23</sup>

Margery felt ashamed of Donald's "stupid rig,"<sup>24</sup> "the plain and even ugly vehicle, with the big, clumsy

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<sup>21</sup> Journal 5:7, 331.

<sup>22</sup> Journal 5:6, 273.

<sup>23</sup> Journal 5:6, 271.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 273.

horse."<sup>25</sup>

Mention is frequently made throughout this story and others about hairstyles and wardrobes (or toilettes). These are matters that would interest young women readers. In this story, Mrs. Gates promotes the concept of "home support." Brigham Young was determined to keep the Saints as financially independent from the gentile community as possible, and encouraged the Saints to grow, manufacture, and produce everything they needed. Among the many and various products they produced were silk and woolen goods. After Margery was converted, she "enthusiastically adopted [home support] in every way possible."<sup>26</sup>

That night, she wore a rich, brown woolen dress, from Utah mills; the skirt was made perfectly plain, yet hung with graceful fullness. About the waist she had folds of soft, rich brown silk, and the whole yoke and sleeves were of the same lustrous material.

Many of the girls looked at Margery, and thought they, too, could dress in homemade, if they could afford such stylish suits and such rich trimmings. If they only could or would grasp the secret of Margery's success in dress, they would know it was not expensive clothing, but the judicious choice which led her to success. She was always exquisitely neat. Always her hair was in perfect condition, which didn't mean that it was plastered down, but . . . arranged becomingly to her own face, no matter how other people wore their hair.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 272.

<sup>26</sup> Journal 5:12, 571.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

The didactic message is clear here. Mrs. Gates never missed an opportunity to get a message across to "her girls."<sup>28</sup> In this story, Aunt Ellen is Susa's vehicle for advising and preaching on a wide variety of topics--but especially on choosing the right marriage partner.

"Marriage is the greatest event of your life. Dare you undertake it without knowing you are doing exactly as God would have you do?"<sup>29</sup>

Closely aligned with the concept of home support was that of communal activity and mutual helping. For instance, Margery organized sewing parties for mothers who had "many children, and much sewing to do, besides having little means of their own."<sup>30</sup> The sisters would take in their "picnics" and "spend the day in sewing up all the garments of the family."<sup>31</sup> Mrs. Gates is careful to emphasize here that "gossip was forbidden at these reunions."<sup>32</sup>

Another common theme throughout this story, as in many others, concerns reading material. Novels constantly come under attack--especially if read excessively by young

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<sup>28</sup> Throughout the Journal, Mrs. Gates referred to her readers lovingly as "her girls."

<sup>29</sup> Journal 5:12, 570.

<sup>30</sup> Journal 5:12, 570.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 571.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

people. It is mentioned so frequently throughout the stories that it is reminiscent of twentieth century adult concerns about the appeal of movies and popular music for young people.

Sickness is also a central factor in this narrative, as is the distrust of medical cures, especially at the hand of gentile doctors.<sup>33</sup> The teacher in this story must stay awake night and day to insure that his gentile sister cannot administer "bottles of vile, useless medicine"<sup>34</sup> prescribed by the gentile doctor for his sick son. The Mormons' total faith was in the healing powers of consecrated olive oil, and of priesthood blessings. Here, as in several of the stories, the sick person receives more than one short blessing. The priesthood holders stay with the sick, placing hands upon their heads, for hour upon hour, even all day and through the night, continually invoking the healing blessings of God. Such prayers are always accompanied, however, with the caveat that "Thy will be done." Associated with the blessing is the consecrated olive oil with which the sick person is anointed. The oil is used for other healing purposes also. It is used on burns, for instance, and taken by the spoonful to promote cures of both inner and outer ailments. Also of note is that even in this last volume,

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<sup>33</sup> Journal 5:10, 469.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 470.



as late as 1894, women are depicted as fully participating in the blessing of the sick as priesthood partners.<sup>35</sup>

This narrative was not contemporary to its readers. It was about pre-Manifesto times. It was a reminder of the cultural heritage that Susa wanted to keep alive. The message of this story to its more modern readers was to be true to the faith; to not be ashamed of traditional values, homemade products and goods, and humble activities; to choose a proper Mormon mate; to remember plural marriage fondly; and to rely on God for all things. It was Susa Young Gates' twelve-installment opportunity to share her memories, philosophy and counsel with "her girls."

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<sup>35</sup> Although the story was depicting an earlier period than 1894, it is notable that it would be mentioned here.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

This cultural press history has examined the first five years (1889-1894), of the serial literature in the Young Woman's Journal, a nineteenth century Mormon periodical. It has tested press historian Catherine Covert's assertions that some of the functions of the press are (1) to be a conservator of values, and (2) to engender concord, harmony, affiliation, and a sense of binding and bonding among the members of a community.<sup>1</sup> The author has also sought to discover the specific ways in which the serial literature in the Young Woman's Journal served these functions with respect to Mormon values and the Mormon community.

The broad conclusions are not only that Covert's assertions were well-founded in the instance of this periodical, but also that the primary message of every narrative expressly encouraged the conservation of Mormon values and the binding and bonding of the Mormon community. More definitive conclusions about specific narrative themes will be discussed below.

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<sup>1</sup>See Introduction for further discussion of Covert.

It is somewhat problematic to maintain a clear distinction between the function of conserving values and that of engendering community affiliation. It depends, of course, on the definition of terms. If, for instance, community affiliation means a fairly loose emotional allegiance between or with members of a particular community, that is very different from a definition that implies a genuine association with the community, as in acknowledgement of membership and adherence to group norms. Values are also problematic. One of the most pervasive themes in the narratives studied concerned the importance of marriage within the Mormon Church. Member-marriage can be conceptualized as a value, something of intrinsic worth that is being encouraged and conserved, or it can be conceptualized as something so basic to the community that to encourage it is to encourage not only a value but a norm of community affiliation.

It could be argued, at least in the case of the study at hand, which involves a strong religious community, that there is no distinction that can be drawn between conserving values and engendering community affiliation. To do one is to do the other. To accept Mormon values, assuming they are distinctly Mormon-specific, is to affiliate with the Mormon community. To encourage affiliation with the Mormon community is to articulate and attempt to conserve Mormon values. As will be noted, all

of the major themes could very comfortably be categorized as community-affiliative, and this point of view dominates the following categorization. An attempt will be made, however, to roughly sort the themes of the narratives into both categories, conservation of values and community affiliation, because it seems that there is utility in making such distinctions for some of the themes. The values of domesticity and simplicity, for instance, were also values of the broader American society that were adopted by Mormon women. They are not Mormon-specific in the same way that member-marriage and plural marriage are. On the other hand, themes that specifically encourage harmony among community members, such as marital affection, will be classified with community affiliation, even though they are not Mormon-specific. The goal of the analysis is not to quibble about categories, but to reiterate the dominant themes from the narratives, and to discuss how they functioned to conserve values and engender community. That there are broad areas of overlap is conceded. With these disclaimers, then, the major themes of the stories will now be reviewed.<sup>2</sup>

As the previous chapters have shown, all of the stories in the Journal encouraged high personal standards or values. Susa Young Gates started her periodical for

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<sup>2</sup>The themes are summarized and listed in Appendices D and E.

that very purpose. The stories advocated sexual purity, and proper leisure pastimes. They specifically censured those who engaged in gambling and drinking, premarital sex, and even flirting and flattery. The stories encouraged their readers to be hard-working and useful, and condemned lightmindedness and idle pleasure. Domesticity and simplicity were values espoused by the Journal. Vanity, foolish fashions, and lust for worldly goods were denounced. The young readers were encouraged to value their homes and families, and to seek after peace, rather than worldly pleasure.

These values were generic religious and Victorian values of the day, and were not Mormon-specific. The stories depict them as Mormon values, however, by portraying non-Mormons, especially men, as drinking, gambling, and insincere flatterers, out to damage a good girl's purity, and non-Mormon women as preoccupied with themselves, their fancy clothes, and worldly goods.

The major themes of the stories were all specifically geared to fostering affiliation with and within the Mormon community, and to encouraging binding and bonding among and between members of all generations and nationalities. As discussed in Chapter V, the Journal narratives sought to help their young readers come to terms with the sticky issue of plural marriage. The stories seem to have been a response to a need to reach a sense of closure about the

issue. They describe the ideal plural marriage in which the first wife participated in the choice of the second,<sup>3</sup> and all lived together in love and harmony. This was an important counternarrative to the prevailing popular press account that vilified plural marriage participants. The young readers were aware of the much harsher reality from first-hand experience. They did not need to rely on the national press to tell them that polygamy was hard on women in many ways. Nevertheless, the narratives focused on the positive images of the practice, and as late as 1894 were still creating a narrative history about it that told of its purity and goodness. One might think that the Manifesto would bring an end to stories with polygamy themes. The fact that they continue seems to reveal a perceived need to create some kind of acceptable account of the practice so that the young women could come to terms with their history and with their sisters and mothers who participated in it.

It is possible that polygamy continued to be portrayed positively because of a belief that the practice was still an eternal principle. Plural marriages continued to be performed after the Manifesto by people in high leadership positions in the Church,<sup>4</sup> and the stories

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<sup>3</sup>None of the stories depicted plural families with more than two wives.

<sup>4</sup>See D. Michael Quinn, "New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," 9-105.

may have been an espousal of that position. The nostalgic tone of the stories, however, implies that their purpose was to create a positive narrative about the past to be shared with the young women readers. They also have a defensive tone as if in an attempt to justify and defend the women who participated in plural marriage. That such a defense should be deemed necessary is remarkable, considering the audience of the stories.

The thrust of current historical inquiry into this period<sup>5</sup> seems to be an attempt to confirm that the Church and its leaders had great difficulty in abandoning the practice of polygamy. This textual study of contemporary indigenous literature, however, indicates that there may have been significant disenchantment with polygamy among the mainstream youth of the Church, to whom these stories were directed.<sup>6</sup> In this environment, the stories served as an attempt to conserve a sense of community affiliation in trying times, and to foster appreciation for a basic Mormon value.

Of note is that while the stories helped provide a community account of the practice, none of them helped provide a philosophy for dealing with the Church's

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> A demographic study of those who engaged in the "new polygamy" (post-Manifesto) would be of interest, as well as a study of male versus female attitudes toward the Manifesto.

abandonment of it. This issue may have been dealt with in other single-installment stories, or in the nonliterary sections of the Journal, but its omission in these major stories seems significant. It may reflect a confusion about where the Church really stood on the issue. Or, it may simply reveal a lack of a philosophy to share. There is no indication that a group narrative to explain this event was yet in even the embryonic stage.

Another important theme in the serial stories of the Journal was obedience to the counsel of leaders and parents. This message is community-affiliative in that it encourages the young women to look within their own community group for guiding values and decision-making practices, as opposed to relying on the counsel of others in the "outside world." This goes so far as to discourage reliance on the medical advice of gentile doctors in preference to faith healings through the anointing with consecrated oil and Priesthood administrations of faithful men and women in the Church.

Marriage to a member of the Church, one of the most dominant themes in this periodical for young women, was more than just a value to be encouraged. The very success and future of the Church depended on the continued allegiance of the young. If people drifted away, the movement would die. Member marriages were crucial to keeping young people firmly within their religion, and to



assure that their children would be raised as Mormons.

Marriage within the Church is promoted in the stories by examples of the dire consequences that result from marrying a nonmember, by depictions of joyful member-marriages, and by explicit and overt teachings, warnings and sermons. The importance of this message about marrying within the Church cannot be overstated. Outside marriage was clearly considered "The worst fate that could befall our girls."<sup>7</sup>

One theme that has several different facets in the stories is the message about family and community care-taking. The concern for and caretaking of the poor, the needy and the sick is claimed by the narratives to be an identifying mark of a Mormon community. Non-Mormon communities are depicted as cold and uncaring toward the less fortunate, while it is one of the hallmarks of the Mormon communities, according to these depictions, that no one goes without.

The stories foster group pride by explicitly articulating the differences between the higher standards of the Mormon community, as in the case of the disadvantaged, as discussed above, and the lower standards of non-Mormon communities. Other differences that are described are between theological doctrines of different religions. The narrative accounts are that Mormon doctrine relies on

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<sup>7</sup> See Chapter V.

reason, rationality, and scientific thinking, while the doctrines of other Christian churches are built on contradictions and blind faith.

On a more personal level, all of the stories encourage good parenting and grandparenting, and close affiliation and respect among all family members. Family harmony is highly valued and promoted.

Reiteration of the trials and hardships suffered by the early members of the Church is another affiliative device that is common in the stories. Recitations of group suffering, or individual suffering for the sake of the group values, have a binding effect and provide a shared group history to be recounted from generation to generation. Individuals are strengthened in their convictions through the stories of others who suffered for the same cause. Similarly, the sharing of the happier cultural traditions of the people--such as the pioneer foods, home-remedies, and social activities--fosters a sense of group identity and bonding.

Even the depictions of death were group-affiliative in that they promoted philosophies about death that were inseparable from Mormon theology--especially in the belief of a promised afterlife with one's loved ones if one were faithful to the Church. Death was common, and to promote Mormon theology about it was to encourage lasting affiliation with the Church. To abandon the Church would mean to

lose the chance to live with one's loved ones eternally.

The narratives also served a community-bonding function by sharing the experiences of Mormon females of different generations and of different cultures. The "gathering" resulted in a large immigrant population. Relationships between nationalities were often strained. Group sisterhood was fostered by recounting tales of sisters from other countries and of their personal sacrifices for the Church. The same is true of the stories about former generations. The stories shared the Mormon female experience with the younger generation and offered them a tradition and history with which to affiliate. The depictions of females blessing the sick and offering guidance and counsel provided the image of a strong and capable sisterhood with which the young women could align themselves.

The immigrant stories also fostered an understanding and sense of affiliation with the members still abroad, and with the missionaries who were laboring in the field. Hearing about the positive impact made by the missionaries on the lives of their sisters abroad surely helped create an allegiance to the missionary program that took their fathers, brothers, and sweethearts so far away for such long periods of time.

The highest and overarching value, and the most important affiliative message, is allegiance to the Mormon

Church. Many of the narratives relate tales of tremendous personal sacrifice of family, friends, sweethearts, and homelands for the sake of joining the Church and gathering to Zion. The sacrifice is acknowledged and always encouraged. To choose anything over the Church is always to err. To adhere to Church teachings is always to do right.

This study has focused on the serial literature of the Journal, and is thus very limited in its view. A study of the editorial and nonfiction portions of the Journal, as well as the shorter fiction and poetry, might produce different examples in support of Covert's thesis. The other portions of the Journal would also undoubtedly be rich in cultural history of the period.

There are several topics that one might expect to find in these stories that are not addressed. For instance, while premarital sex is mentioned, abortion is not, even though it was a common American practice in the nineteenth century. As mentioned above, the Manifesto is never mentioned in the narratives, even though it was one of the most important events in the history of the Church. The Word of Wisdom, a currently well-known Mormon doctrine prohibiting the use of alcohol, coffee, tea, and tobacco products, is not mentioned per se in the stories. There is condemnation of drinking, but it seems to be mentioned in more of a Victorian sense than as a

religious tenet.<sup>8</sup> Also, many studies of this period depict Mormon women as active professionally--but the serial stories never mention a career girl. All the young women and mothers in these narratives operate in and around their homes and churches exclusively. Other studies emphasize political activism, but none of these stories show a Mormon woman thus involved. Instead, the women in these Journal narratives are involved only in the traditional concerns of women--relationships, friendships, marriage, children, sickness, death, sorrow, and joy. This is perhaps an indication that the activities the leading sisters were engaged in were not central to the lives of ordinary Mormon women, and/or that even Susa Young Gates did not recommend them as goals to which young women should necessarily aspire. It seemed to be enough to tell them to marry within the Church, to remain faithful to the gospel, and to live well.

The early experiences of the Saints in places like New York, Kirtland, and Nauvoo are not mentioned in the serial narratives. Even the prairie crossing in the covered wagons with all of the rich pioneer lore is never a theme. The stories are very much grounded in their

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas G. Alexander has shown that the Word of Wisdom was not consistently and heavily promoted by the leaders of the Church until after the turn of the century. See Thomas G. Alexander, "The Adoption of a New Interpretation of the Word of Wisdom," Mormonism in Transition, *ibid.*, pp. 258-261.

present and immediate past. It is as if the shared history, at least of the texts examined here, began after the Saints arrived in Utah. Given the political and social climate at the time, this is, perhaps, not surprising. The long government crusade to stamp out the Utah problem took its toll on the Church and its members. The themes of the serial narratives in the Young Woman's Journal studied here reveal the stress. The overall thrust of the stories was a plea to young women to keep the faith, to hold fast, to value their heritage, and to understand and appreciate the women who went before them. The present may have been too intense to allow room for reflection of the more distant pioneer past.

A brief perusal of the nonnarrative portions of the Journal reveals that it addressed many of the same kinds of issues as were addressed in the Exponent--such as women's education, careers, and female political involvement. The editorials in the Journal appear to have taken a strong feminist stance and applauded the work of local and national suffrage leaders. These portions of the magazine need to be studied to provide a more complete picture of its content. It would also allow some conclusions to be drawn about the different kinds of historical insights that are available, if any, between literature and information/editorial articles.

While the major themes of member marriage and

adherence to Church teachings remained the same throughout the five years studied here, there were perceptible changes in the tone of the stories over time. It would be of interest to test the effect of time in future studies by comparing the themes of these narratives with those of later periods in the Journal's 40-year history. It would also be worthwhile to compare and contrast the depictions and claims about Mormon culture in these narratives with actual life experience as recorded in Mormon journals. Another interesting study would be to compare the themes of this literature, which was addressed specifically to the young women, with the literature in the Exponent that was targeted to adult women.

It was the task of the early generations in Mormondom to bring together diverse sets of people and to weld them into a cohesive group with a sense of group identity. As William Mulder has said of the Mormons:

In less than a generation they crossed the continent in one tragic uprooting after another, leaving their houses unsold and their crops unharvested in a dozen communities hopefully begun. . . until the final removal to the West. In the process the Mormons became a genuine people, a covenant folk like ancient Israel with a shared history and at last a homeland. They moved, to use the language of sociology, from near-sect to near-nation. To use the language of literature, they moved within a magnificent metaphor, the image of themselves as latter-day Israel.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>William Mulder, The Mormons in American History, 14.

The serial literature of the Young Woman's Journal was crafted to articulate, promote and conserve the values of that latter-day Israel, and to foster harmony, bonding and affiliation within its ranks.



APPENDIX A

STORIES LISTED BY VOLUME AND NUMBER

Volume 1

- "We Tread the Dust"  
 Author: Ellen Jakeman  
 # Pages: 11 Vol. 1, No. 4
- "Maggie Hartley's Temptation"  
 Author: "Hannah"  
 # Pages: 10 Vol. 1, No. 5
- "Polished Stones"  
 Author: "Genie"  
 # Pages: 16 Vol. 1, No. 7
- "Whatsoever A Man Soweth"  
 Author: "Homespun"  
 # Pages: 15 Vol. 1, Nos. 1-2

Volumes 1 and 2

- "The Western Boom"  
 Author: Ellen Jakeman  
 # Pages: 102 Vol. 1, Nos. 8-12;  
 Vol. 2, Nos. 1-11
- "Lights and Shades"  
 Author: L. L. Greene Richards  
 # Pages: 90 Vol. 1, Nos. 8-12  
 (excluding No. 11);  
 Vol. 2, Nos. 1-12

Volume 2

- "Love's Sacrifice"  
 Author: W. T. Forsgren  
 # Pages: 11 Vol. 2, Nos. 8-9
- "A Struggle for Freedom"  
 Author: Sophy Valentine  
 # Pages: 16 Vol. 2, Nos. 11-12

Volume 3

- "Reclaimed"  
 Author: M. L. and L. S.  
 # Pages: 17 Vol. 3, Nos. 2-5  
 (excluding No. 4)
- "Sister Sarah"  
 Author: Sophy Valentine  
 # Pages: 16 Vol. 3, Nos. 7-10
- "God Knows Best"  
 Author: Sophy Valentine  
 # Pages: 10 Vol. 3, Nos. 11-12

Volume 4

- "Thorborg"  
 Author: Unsigned  
 # Pages: 27 Vol. 4, Nos. 6-9
- "The Child Bride"  
 Author: Helen Thompson  
 # Pages: 20 Vol. 4, Nos. 9-12
- "Baby Nello's Mission"  
 Author: Kate Grover  
 # Pages: 13 Vol. 4, Nos. 11-12
- "A Birthday Diamond"  
 Author: Unsigned  
 # Pages: 17 Vol. 4, Nos. 4-6
- "Worse Than Death"  
 Author: "Homespun"  
 # Pages: 18 Vol. 4., Nos. 1-3
- "Aunt Ruth's Story"  
 Author: Sophy Valentine  
 # Pages: 22 Vol. 4, Nos. 1-3

Volume 5

"Seven Times"

Author: "Homespun"

# Pages: 95

Vol. 5, Nos. 1-12

"My Husband and I"

Author: Sophy Valentine

# Pages: 25

Vol. 5, Nos. 1-5

"David and Rebecca"

Author: W. A. M.

# Pages: 26

Vol. 5, Nos. 7-11

APPENDIX B

STORIES LISTED BY AUTHOR

Forsgren, W. T.

"Love's Sacrifice" Vol. 2, Nos. 8-9  
(11 total pages)

Genie

"Polished Stones" Vol. 1, No. 7  
(16 total pages)

Grover, Kate

"Baby Nello's Mission" Vol. 4, Nos. 11-12  
(13 total pages)

Hannah

"Maggie Hartley's Temptation" Vol. 1, No. 5  
(10 total pages)

Homespun

"Whatsoever A Man Soweth" Vol. 1, Nos. 1-2  
"Seven Times" Vol. 5, Nos. 1-12  
"Worse Than Death" Vol. 4, Nos. 1-3  
(128 total pages)

Jakeman, Ellen

"We Tread the Dust" Vol. 1, No. 4  
"The Western Boom" Vol. 1, Nos. 8-12;  
Vol. 2, Nos. 1-11  
(113 total pages)

M. L. and L. S.

"Reclaimed" Vol. 3, Nos. 2-3 and 5  
(17 total pages)

Richards, L. L. Greene

"Lights and Shades" Vol. 1, Nos. 8-10 and 12;  
Vol. 2, Nos. 1-12  
(90 total pages)

Thompson, Helen

"The Child Bride" Vol. 4, Nos. 9-12  
(20 total pages)

Valentine, Sophy

"A Struggle for Freedom" Vol. 2, Nos. 11-12  
"Sister Sarah" Vol. 3, Nos. 7-10  
"God Knows Best" Vol. 3, Nos. 11-12  
"Aunt Ruth's Story" Vol. 4, Nos. 1-3  
"My Husband and I" Vol. 5, Nos. 1-5  
(89 total pages)

W. A. M.

"David and Rebecca" Vol. 5, Nos. 7-11  
(26 total pages)

Unsigned

"Thorborg" Vol. 4, Nos. 6-9  
"A Birthday Diamond" Vol. 4, Nos. 4-6  
(44 total pages)

APPENDIX C

STORIES LISTED BY TOTAL NUMBER  
OF PAGES IN STORY



	pages
"The Western Boom"	102
"Seven Times"	95
"Lights and Shades"	90
"Thorborg"	27
"David and Rebecca"	26
"My Husband and I"	25
"Aunt Ruth's Story"	22
"The Child Bride"	20
"Worse Than Death"	18
"Reclaimed"	17
"A Birthday Diamond"	17
"A Struggle for Freedom"	16
"Sister Sarah"	16
"Polished Stones"	16
"Whatsoever a Man Soweth"	15
"Baby Nello's Mission"	13
"We Tread the Dust"	11
"Love's Sacrifice"	11
"Maggie Hartley's Temptation"	10
"God Knows Best"	10
TOTAL NUMBER OF STORIES:	20
TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES:	577

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF VALUE-CONSERVING THEMES

Positive Encouragement for:

Sexual purity

Proper leisure pastimes

Reading of good literature

Hard work

Domesticity

Simplicity in dress and lifestyle

Home and Family

Proscriptions Against:

Drinking

Gambling

Flirting and insincere flattery

Worldliness

Lightmindedness

Idle pleasure

Vanity

Foolish fashion

APPENDIX E

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY-AFFILIATIVE THEMES

Member marriage, encouraged by means of:

- (1) Accounts of the dire consequences of nonmember marriages;
- (2) Accounts of the joys of member marriages;
- (3) Sermons, warnings, teachings.

Purity of the principle of plural marriage.

Admiration of the participants in plural marriage.

Obedience to leaders and parents.

Family and community caretaking and mutual support.

Group pride.

Close family relationships.

Recitations of personal and group suffering and sacrifice for the religion.

Sharing of cultural history and traditions.

Understanding, appreciation and empathy for other generations and nationalities.

Death of loved ones as an enticement to remain faithful.

Superiority of Mormon lifestyle.

Superiority of Mormon theology.

Efficacy of the missionary program.

Allegiance to the Mormon Church above all other allegiances.

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