

# **Brigham Young's Family: The Wilderness Years**



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After returning from England in 1841, Brigham Young faced one of the sternest tests of his life—a test that was to have sobering and far-reaching implications for himself and the structure of his family. It came when Joseph Smith privately introduced the principle of plural marriage to him as a divine commandment. None “could have been more averse to it than I was when it was first revealed,” he recalled.<sup>1</sup>

If any man had asked me what was my choice when Joseph revealed that doctrine, provided that it would not diminish my glory, I would have said, “Let me have but one wife;” . . . I was not desirous of shrinking from any duty, nor of failing in the least to do as I was commanded, but it was the first time in my life that I had desired the grave, and I could hardly get over it for a long time. And when I saw a funeral, I felt to envy the corpse its situation, and to regret that I was not in the coffin.<sup>2</sup>

Contented with his wife Mary Ann and their three children, and imbued with Western monogamous traditions, Brigham Young “brooded and sorrowed for months” at the prospect of plural marriage.<sup>3</sup> But by mid-1842 his feelings had become reconciled to the point that on June 14 he took as his first plural wife Lucy Ann Decker, whose mother had married Brigham’s brother Lorenzo following a separation from her first husband, Isaac Decker. Joseph Smith officiated at the ceremony and Brigham’s cousin, Willard Richards, witnessed the proceedings. The following year Harriet Cook and Augusta Adams were added to his family; and prior to Joseph Smith’s death in June 1844, Brigham had taken a fourth plural wife, Clarissa Decker, the sister of Lucy Ann.

The death of Joseph Smith created a situation that not only increased Brigham Young’s ecclesiastical responsibilities but also added to his domestic concerns as well. Susa Young Gates explains that following the Prophet’s death her father went to Joseph’s widowed plural wives and “told them that he and his brethren stood ready to offer themselves to them as husbands” in accordance with the tradition of ancient Israel whereby posterity for a dead brother might be born in this life and that “the widows might choose for themselves.”<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, eight of Joseph’s plural wives (Olive Andrews, Emily D. Partridge, Louisa Beaman, Mary Elizabeth Rollins, Rhoda Richards, Olive G. Frost, Zina D. Huntington, and Eliza R. Snow) were married to Brigham Young for the remainder of their mortal lives. By

the time Brigham left Nauvoo in February 1846 to lead the Mormon exodus west, twenty-six additional women had been "sealed" to him for time and/or eternity. And when he died thirty years later, the total to whom he had been married was fifty-five. (It should be noted, however, that many of these "wives" were widows or older women whom Brigham merely cared for or gave the protection of his name. Others were married primarily with an "other-world" spiritual relationship in mind. Sixteen of his wives bore his fifty-seven children. Most of the others who were "sealed" to him were never connubial spouses in the ordinary sense.)<sup>5</sup>

The struggle of Brigham Young to care for his family and at the same time to direct the migration of the Mormon people to a new homeland across some thirteen hundred miles of wilderness is an epic within an epic. Like its larger counterpart, the removal of his family across the Plains is a story of lonesomeness, privation, suffering, and death, with a few moments of serenity and peace sandwiched in between. And if instances of neglect seem evident, it was because personal relationships were necessarily lost in the interest of the Kingdom of God in those trying years:

My time has been so occupied with public business since I left Nauvoo, that my personal friends have been almost totally neglected. . . . The great cause of Zion taken en masse swallows up all minor or personal considerations and wife and children and relatives appear lost as it were and we are obliged to forsake them all to build up the Kingdom of God and bring about a reign of peace upon the earth, therefore you must forgive me for any seeming neglect.<sup>6</sup>

The task of caring for his family at that critical time was complicated for Brigham Young not only by the overwhelmingly larger responsibility of directing the whole Mormon migration but also by the fact that his family had more than doubled in size within six weeks of his departure, adding weight to an already heavy personal burden.

In the evening of February 15, 1846, Brigham Young crossed the Mississippi River to begin the move west. He arrived in the camp at Sugar Creek about 8 P.M. with fifteen wagons and "50 persons . . . of his own family."<sup>7</sup> Some indication of those of his family who may have been with him, at least part of the time during the Iowa phase of the journey, may be determined from the records of the organization of the Camp of Israel at the Chariton River ford on March 27, 1846.

From the beginning, the organization of the Mormon exodus had been imperfect, to say the least. When the move west was first contemplated in Nauvoo, twenty-five men had been named as captains, each with responsibility to choose a hundred families and prepare them for the journey across the Plains. These captains were further directed to divide their companies into groups of fifty and these into groups of ten. Once across the Mississippi River, however, the organizational structure practically dissolved due

to a combination of such circumstances as the wandering of some people back and forth between Nauvoo and the pioneer camps, inclement weather, bad roads, and the poor state of preparation of many who had embarked on the journey. These conditions so mixed and separated people as to almost completely destroy the initial order and make it "impossible to effect anything like a perfect organization."<sup>8</sup>

Attempts were made at Sugar Creek and at Richardson's Point to correct organizational defects, but with little permanent success. Then at the Chariton River on March 27 another attempt was made to organize the camp. Although this effort did not bring permanent order, the extant record of the organization contains the best available information about those of Brigham Young's family who were with him during the initial stages of the exodus. Listed in the roster as the first ten of the first fifty of the first hundred, Brigham's company comprised fifty-one individuals. Among these were eleven of his wives (Mary Ann Angell, Jemima Young, Emmeline Free, Lucy Decker, Clarissa Decker, Emily Partridge, Louisa Beaman, Clarissa Chase, Susan Snively, Margaret M. Alley, and Ellen Rockwood), his six children by Mary Ann Angell, five other children by previous marriages belonging to two of his plural wives, relatives of some of these wives, a nephew and his wife, and other persons connected to Brigham Young by adoption.<sup>9</sup> That the organization established at Chariton River was not completely intact prior to March 27, and that it was not to remain so thereafter, is evident from known movements of some of the participants. Several of Brigham Young's wives traveled, by arrangement, with their own parents or friends. Others remained in Nauvoo to come later.

Emily Partridge, one of Brigham's "proxy wives" (as the widows of Joseph Smith were known),<sup>10</sup> left the City of Joseph with her infant child a short time before Brigham did. Having been secretly married to Brigham, Emily had lived in Nauvoo with her mother and stepfather, William Huntington,<sup>11</sup> where, the previous October, she had given birth to one of the first children of a plural marriage, an event carefully concealed from all but a few.<sup>12</sup>

In writing about her experience in later years, Emily remembered the boats crossing the river as loaded with wagons and people, the heavy snow-storm of February 19, and the cold as she sat on a log, hungry and dejected, her child clasped in her arms. Having become separated from family and friends,<sup>13</sup> she had wandered from one fire to another, "some giving me food, others a place in their tent to sleep." During the inchworm progress of those early weeks, "food was very scarce, a small piece of johnny cake and a little bacon fat to sop it in, constituted a meal. Sometimes we had a little more and sometimes less." In reflecting upon this scene, so emotional that even after the healing influence of many years it still brought tears,<sup>14</sup>

she noted that “President Young had to look after the welfare of the whole people” and therefore “had not much time to devot[e] to his family. But as soon as he could, he made [such] arrangements for his family’s comfort, as his means would admit of.”<sup>15</sup>

When Brigham Young’s company left Mt. Pisgah on 2 June, at least two of his wives who had been with him at Chariton River (Zina D. Huntington and Emily Partridge) remained behind. The Huntingtons had stopped at Pisgah to gain strength and provisions to continue, and William Huntington had been appointed to preside over that settlement. But when Huntington’s health failed and he died,<sup>16</sup> the prospects for Emily and her child’s continuing the journey that year faded. Unable to obtain means and besieged with family sickness, Emily and her mother were forced to stay the winter of 1846–47 at Mt. Pisgah, where they lived in a log hut without coverings on the doors or windows and with a hole in the roof to allow the smoke to escape.<sup>17</sup>

After leaving Pisgah, Brigham had continued on to Council Bluffs on the Missouri River, where he arrived on June 14. To Emily, the silence that closed in behind him was almost unbearable. He did return on July 6 to solicit volunteers for the Mormon Battalion but left again three days later. On the last day of August Emily wrote to Brigham expressing “great satisfaction” with a letter he had written her, the first she had heard from him in six weeks:

Our folks are better than they were but are quite feeble yet. I suppose you have heard of fathers death before this. I was sorry to hear your babe had been sick and hope he is well again by this time. I am the only one in our family that is well. Little Edward [Partridge Young] is quite unwell. I think it is his teeth as he has none through yet. He is ten months old yesterday. He will take a few steps alone. Zina [Huntington] is well and is living with Sister Boss. As to my going this fall, I hardly know what to say. I desire to go and can hardly bear to think of staying here this winter. It seems the most like nowhere of any place I was ever in. Mother does not want me to leave her, and I think it would be selfishness in me to le[a]ve her in her lonely situation. I wish we had means to come but we have not as yet. Lydia [Partridge] has a chill on and I can hardly get time to write at all. I hope you will come down this fall. I want to see you very much and all the rest of the folks up there that I am acquainted with. I do not want to be where I had not ought to be but I do feel as if this was no place for me. Give my love to the girls and take a large share for yourself. I expect there is a great contrast between this letter and some others you have received but I hope you will excuse it; I remain yours and hope to through life.

In a postscript she added, “Zina sends her love to you. I hope you will not show this to the girls.”<sup>18</sup>

Winter at Mt. Pisgah brought better health, but also severe cold. “There I cut down my first and only tree for fire wood,” Emily wrote. She also

recalled the roaming bands of wolves that would howl in the night, "and if they had been disposed they could have . . . come in . . . as there was only a blanket hung up at the door." Finally, in the spring, Emily and her mother joined others from the settlement traveling to the main camp at Winter Quarters and arrived there in time to see Brigham Young shortly before he started for the Salt Lake Valley.<sup>19</sup>

As mentioned previously, while in Nauvoo Emily had kept her infant child in hiding and few knew that she had one. However, after she started the journey west, her relationship to Brigham Young became common knowledge. With knowledge came prejudice. Some thought that "the Lord had given men plural wives for stepping stones for them and their first wives to mount to glory on" and that the plural wives could never rise because of their inferiority. At Winter Quarters curious people would stop at Emily's "to see a 'spiritual' child. One woman told me she thought he was the smartest child she had seen. I said, 'Don't you think they are as smart as other children?' She said 'no', she did not think they were. There was a good deal of that spirit at that time and sometimes it was very oppressive."<sup>20</sup>

Another of Brigham Young's proxy wives was among the first to leave Nauvoo. Traveling with the Stephen Markham family, Eliza R. Snow crossed the Mississippi River on February 13, two days before Brigham Young. Suffering from ill health, she too witnessed the heavy snowstorm of February 19 that "commenced in the night and continued thro' the day," making conditions so disagreeable that she could not leave the wagon. Sensitive to the plight of her people, she was saddened as she passed through Farmington, Iowa, where the inhabitants manifested "more levity than sympathy" toward the homeless exiles.<sup>21</sup>

Deprived of Brigham's immediate association, Eliza cherished the infrequent moments when he would stop to see her as he directed the massive migration. On March 9 she "had the pleasure of the first interview" with Brigham since her departure from the city. Nine days later he "shook hands" with her, and particularly important was his visit on the twenty-ninth when he promised "in the name of the Lord I should get my health." After the company she was with traveled three miles over rough road on April 14, her day brightened when they joined Brigham's camp on the edge of a high sandy prairie. Then, as the President's responsibilities took him further away, the cherished moments became less frequent. Finally, on August 24, as Eliza was approaching Council Bluffs at the reins of her own wagon, the day suddenly became very special to her when Brigham and several others drove up in a carriage, engaged a driver for her team, and invited her to accompany them the rest of the way to camp.<sup>22</sup>

Not all of Brigham Young's family left Nauvoo in the early months of 1846. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner wrote, "We had not means to go

with the church, in fact, we could hardly get enough to eat.”<sup>23</sup> Another who stayed behind was Harriet Cook, the mother of an infant son (Oscar Brigham) born just five days before Brigham had crossed the Mississippi River. An important theme of surviving family letters during the exodus reveals Brigham’s concern for those of his family he was forced to leave behind and his vicarious efforts to care for them. From Richardson’s Point, fifty-five miles west of Nauvoo, Brigham implored his brother Joseph Young:<sup>24</sup> “As you have staed in Nauvoo and I am gon from there, and can-not due for my frends as I could if I was there [I] will caul upon you to help my frends by councel and management.” Brigham authorized Joseph to sell his house and two lots. “They will bring enuph to bring all my frends.” Lest the sale of his Nauvoo property should appear to be a severe trial, Brigham added, “Due not think Brother Joseph, I hate to leve my house and home. No! far from that. I am so free from bondedge at this time that Nauvoo looks like a prison to me. It looks plesent ahead but dark to look back.” He then specified two of his wives who needed help: “Sister Hariot Cook is at Br. [Nathaniel] Ashbys in the [Erastus] Snow house, and sister [Julia Foster] Hampton must be braught with the saints. I [don’t] like to ask or require enny thing that ads to [your] burthen, but if you can look at these maters . . . it will be a favor to me and others.”<sup>25</sup>

Still at Richardson’s Point on March 15, Brigham wrote to his “dear wife,” Harriet Cook. The letter indicates his concern not only for Harriet but also for five other wives (Mary and Margaret Pierce, Elizabeth Fairchild, Augusta Adams Cobb, and Mary Ann Clark Powers) still in Nauvoo, and it tells of the plans he was formulating to unite them with the rest of the family.

I address a fue lines to you by Br. Joseph B. Noble who is a going to return home emeditely after his famely. . . . I expecate[d] to have returned to Nauvoo, but it looks so much like a prison to me that I think I shall goe fu[r]the west instead of going East at present. Br. J.B. Noble will see that you are provi[d]ed for to come comfort[a]ble” and I want you to com with him. . . . I expect Br. Babbott [Almon W. Babbitt] will get a good caredge or wagon and team for you and others. Br. Noble will get a good man to drive it. It is likely Br. John Young and Even [Evan M.] Greene, Sister Faney [Young] and others of my frends will come at the same time. I want you to see Sister [Mary Ann Clark] Powers and have hir watch hir oportunity . . . and start with some one that will bring hir a peace [piece] with spead. . . . I want you to see Sisters Mary and Margret Pears [Pierce], Br. Robert Pears[’s] daughters and see if the Father is [coming]. If not get them along with you if you can. Br. Noble will bring the sister that is there. Sister Betsy [Elizabeth] Fairchilds [I] wish you could bring [her]. Give my love to them all. I want to see you and the little Boy. Tell Sister Augusta Cobb I hope she will be blest. I want [to] see hir again. . . . Be cherful and of good corouge Sister Hariot. We shall soon meet again. . . . I wish you to read this to Sisters Cobb, Powers & Pearces.<sup>26</sup>

Ten days later and fifty miles further west, at Chariton River, Brigham again addressed Harriet in his continuous effort to provide for those he had left behind:

I read your letter to Luca [Lucy Decker]. I was Glad to here from you. I wish Br. John [Young] and Even [Evan Greene] had put 2 horses before the coredge [carriage] and taken you a long with them. We all want to see [you] verry much. I should come back but feele that it would not be safe for me to come to Nauvoo again verry soon. Kiss the Babe [Oscar Brigham Young] for me. The girls talk a gradeal [great deal] about you and wish you [were] with them. They have a tent to themselves. Mary Ann [Angell] is verry kind to them. We have enjoyd ourselves verry well on our jorney though we had much bad wether. I hope you will overtak us before long. Br. Joseph B. Noble will probible bring you and I hope Sister Powers. See Sisters Mary and Margret Pearce if you can. See when they are coming. Give my love to them. Also to Br. and Sister Ashby and the Children. They are a Blessed Famely I think. Sister Hariet bring a fue tin plats cups & co & co [etc.] if you can get them. They will be convenatt [convenient] on the jorney. Earthen [ware] is not worth much and the girls are theray [very] scanty for such things. May the Lord Bless y[ou] and the Little Boy.<sup>27</sup>

In a letter dated April 7 addressed "Dear Friend," Harriet Cook acknowledged the receipt of letters from Brigham of March 15 and 25 and replied that she "should have answerd them sooner, but for the want of something interesting to communicate." She then focused upon her husband's inquiries.

Sister Powers has the imflammatory rumatism. She has not been able to do anything for 3 weeks. She has been confined to her bed some of the time. She is so she can get around a little now. She is determined to go west, she has no inclination to stay here. The way looks dark to her, but she has full faith that it will open. . . . I went to see Margaret and Mary Peirce. They think their Father will start the first of May. I do not know whare Betsey Fairchild lives nor any one that does. I have been to see Sister Cobb once. She never comes to see me. I go in to see brother John [Young] ever[y] day or two. I like him first rate. He says he will take me west when he goes if I do not go before. Sister Ashby['s] babe and mine have had the measles. They are well now. Sister Ashby thinks the way looks dark for them. Their is no prospect of their selling at presant. They keep up first rate spirits, and that makes me feel well. It is so natural for us to partake of the feelings of those around us. They are very kind to me. . . . Brother Noble's family are well. They come over to see me often. We have a great many long conversations about how we shall go west. Martha [Bowker] was over here this morning. She said she was a going to write. . . .

In closing, Harriet asked to be remembered "to all the girls"—her sister wives.

Tell them I expect they all envy me the pleasure of staing in Nauvoo. It seems like an old house deserted of all its inhabitants. I have been up into the Temple. I looked west as far as I could see, but could see nothing of the camp. Give my

best respects to your wife and Elisabeth and Vilate. I close by subscribing myself as ever yours.<sup>28</sup>

While efforts were being made by Brigham Young to bring remaining members of his family west from Nauvoo, word came to him that Harriet was planning to go east, probably to New York to visit her family against whose opposition she had joined the Church in 1842. This information was the topic of a letter to her from Council Bluffs on June 23:

My Dear Hariot. I have jest heard you talked [of] going East. Now I pray you harcon to my council and come to the west. If you have no way to come with the Brethern where I have made provision wright to me the first oportunity and I will send a team after you or come my self. Edman [Edmund Ellsworth]<sup>29</sup> might bring you or you can come with Sister Faney [Young]. I cannot bare the thaught of your going East. You will not enjoy your self if you goe. Come here. Your frends are here. We injoy our selves first rate. I long to see you safe to camp with your bab[e]. May the Lord Bles you and yours. Give my best love to Br. Ashby['s] family and all of my frends.<sup>30</sup>

Although details are missing, Harriet had joined the rest of the family on the Missouri River within a year.

Brigham Young's separation from members of his family was a very severe test for some of those left behind. Writing from Nauvoo, which at the time looked like "a cage of unclean birds" to her, Augusta Adams Cobb expressed "heart felt pleasure" for the "very welcome little note" she had recently received from Brigham but lamented her lonely condition:

I do truly have to walk by faith now, for I have nothing whereon to lean but my heavenly Father . . . and I am left like a poor pilgrim solitary and alone. I think often of what poor old David has said in one of his psalms, that "tho the fig tree blossom not nor the herd bleat in the stall yet I will trust in the God of my Salvation." . . . and if there is nothing left for me but to trust in Him I will endeavour to do that and believe that behind a frowning providence he hides a smileing face. But my dear Brigham you may think all this is quite easy to a soul that truly loves God but let me tell you that for me it has been the hardest strugel that I have ever met with.

Augusta concluded her letter by wishing to be "affectionately" remembered to three of her sister wives, Clarissa Ross, Margaret Alley, and Emmeline Free, whom she regarded as "choice spires."<sup>31</sup>

Mary Ann Clark Powers, another of Brigham's wives to remain in Nauvoo, had commenced the journey into Iowa but because of difficult conditions had returned to the city. In August 1846 she wrote Brigham, "If I could have herd Counsil from your lips I should have been happy but I felt as though I was left to my self. But I have done what I thot was for the best." Her reason for not joining others in the migration at a later time was due to a dream she had had a few nights after her return to Nauvoo, a dream which seemed to confirm her decision to stay. Continuing her letter, she

wrote, “You dont know how much I wanto see you and I hope I shall see you before long. I canot think of staing hear this Winter. It doos not seem to me like Nauvoo, it is so gloomey.” Still sensitive to the need for secrecy in her plural relationship, Mary concluded her letter:

If you do not think it wisdom to write tell Louisa to write it in her letter. I have many things [to] tell you but I have not time now and I must close. And may the Lord bless you all and remember me before the Lord that I may be preserved from eavl and do his will in all things and I Pray that he will hasten the day when I shall be with you and the Saints that I love.

The letter, addressed to “Mr. Brigham Young” was signed only “Yours,” with the comment, “I think that you will know who this is from without the name.”<sup>32</sup>

Unable to continue the migration west when a request for men to serve in the Mexican War drained the male strength of the camp, Brigham Young established Winter Quarters on the Missouri River in the fall of 1846. This community consisted of some seven hundred dwellings and thirty-five hundred people, including a large part of his own family.<sup>33</sup> Just how his large family was housed there is not known in detail. He had at least one home of his own and possibly more. Some of his wives resided separately, or with relatives or friends with whom they had traveled. Eliza R. Snow wrote that after an evening of social activity at Robert Pierce’s (the father of Mary and Margaret), attended by Brigham Young and Mary Ann Angell, Brother Pierce “very politely” conducted Louisa Beaman and herself “home.” That Brigham may have had more than one dwelling and that at least some of his wives lived together is suggested by a poem Eliza composed for “All the Ladies who Reside in the 2d Mansion of Prest. B. Young.”<sup>34</sup> But whatever the living arrangements, not all lived together, nor in equal comfort. Naamah Kendal Jenkins Twiss, writing to a sister in New Hampshire on December 29, reported the mildness of the weather and the fact that “most of the Bretheren have put up log cabins and got into them so they are comfortable.” She added, however, that she and “Sister Green” (Mary Eliza, another of Brigham’s wives) “have to sleep in a waggeon,” and what was more, she had “not slept in a house since last July.”<sup>35</sup>

Winter Quarters presented a scene of intense activity as the Saints worked to protect themselves against the coming winter and to prepare for resumption of the western migration the following year. Disease-ridden, the settlement became the site of much suffering and death. But the picture was not all one of hard work and misery; there was also occasional peace and serenity. The cessation of the westward trek afforded an opportunity for social contacts and the renewal of relationships that in previous months had almost ceased to exist. In September, Eliza R. Snow rejoiced at Brigham’s second visit with her since her arrival at Winter Quarters. She noted the

devotion of Mary Ann Angell during a siege of illness that had left Eliza lying “at the gate of death.” She also wrote, after a visit on November 26, of the “kindnesses” of Louisa Beaman and Clarissa Decker. And by far the highlight of the year was five days between Christmas and New Year’s that Eliza spent with “the girls.” At President Young’s on December 27 she had “the pleasure of supping on a bak’d turkey,” and on the thirtieth spent an “agreeable” afternoon with Brigham, Mary Ann Angell, and Louisa Beaman. The climax of the week came on New Year’s Eve: “To describe the scene . . . would be beyond my pow’r. Suffice it to say, the spirit of the Lord was pour’d out and we receiv’d a blessing thro’ our belov’d mother Chase and Sis. Clarissa [Ross] by the gift of tongues.” Eliza concluded her five-day visit with “the female family” on New Year’s Day with the remark, “my love [for them] seems to increase with every day’s acquaintance.”<sup>36</sup>

The new year brought further rejoicing in the Brigham Young household at Winter Quarters. Within six hours on January 8, midwife Patty Sessions delivered three children, one of whom was the son of Louisa Beaman and Brigham Young.<sup>37</sup> A week later, Eliza R. Snow was visiting Louisa when Brigham, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards stopped in. “President Young held his son, Prest. Kimball blessed him,” and the Church historian recorded the event.<sup>38</sup> Following the blessing, Eliza R. Snow stayed with the mother and child a week, “as I was told to do.”<sup>39</sup>

One morning early in February, Stephen Markham brought Eliza an invitation from Brigham Young to a “family party” to be held that day in the Council House. “The party was an interesting one; five of the Br[other] Young’s being present and one sis[ter]. Probably 100 persons were present in all, and we supp’d at a table that would have done honor to a better cultivated country,” wrote Eliza. “The exercises open’d with singing and prayer, and after feasting and dancing, clos’d with an address by Prest. Young which succeeded one by father Kimball.” After the party, Eliza stayed the remainder of the night with Louisa.<sup>40</sup>

Although not publicized, a significant family event at Winter Quarters in the spring of 1847 was the marriage of Brigham Young to Lucy and Mary Jane Bigelow. The account, written in a somewhat fictionalized style by a daughter of Brigham and Lucy in later years, is instructive regarding the mechanics of his courtship in a plural situation. Sometime after arriving in Winter Quarters in the fall of 1846, sixteen-year-old Lucy Bigelow and her nineteen-year-old sister Mary were approached with matrimonial intentions by a Brother Wicks, who was very persistent in his solicitations. To resolve the matter, the girls, father, Nahum Bigelow, consulted Brigham Young, pointing out the persistence of Brother Wicks, that his daughters were “getting to a marriageable age,” and that he (Nahum) was “quite anxious to see them married to a good man.” The President promised to talk to

the girls about the matter and in a few days came to their home. Lucy was absent, but in the course of Brigham's conversation with Mary he asked her if she wanted Brother Wicks for her husband:

"No, sir; I don't think that I do;" the girl timidly and quietly replied.

"Well, is there any one you do want? The Sisters ought to have their choice in the matter for they can choose but one, and they have a right to select that one. So if you know of any one you would like, tell me who it is."

"I don't know of any one, thank you, Pres. Young."

"Well, now then; how would you like me for a husband, Mary?"

"I can't tell, sir."

"Take your own time to think it over. And you may ask your sister Lucy the same question I have asked you. If you girls would like to be sealed to me, you can tell me whenever you are decided on the matter."

The conversation between Brigham and Mary had occurred in the fall of 1846; but regardless of what her sister might decide, Lucy had resolved never to marry in a plural relationship and "certainly not to such a reserved, dignified man, old enough to be her father." Lucy had hoped that something would happen that would relieve her from the necessity of saying "No" to the President of the Church. Then one evening in early March 1847, amid the preparations for the departure of the pioneer company to the West, President Young again presented himself at the Bigelow home and shortly thereafter received an affirmative answer from Mary. But, since Lucy was absent again, he asked Mary to ascertain her decision. Again confronted with the question, Lucy replied, "I don't know. . . . I'll tell you what it is, Mary, I don't feel as if I could marry him. He's got such lots of wives now, and it don't seem like he could ever be my husband." Finally, Lucy relented and the following Sunday gave her affirmative answer to Brigham:

"Very well then," he said, "we will have the matter attended to on such a day this coming week."

So it happened. The fourteenth day of March, 1847, in the evening of that day, President Young, accompanied by Elders Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, and Ezra T. Benson came down to the Bigelows, and after chatting a few moments the two girls, Mary and Lucy, stood up, and were sealed to Brigham Young for time and all eternity.

Susa Young Gates, daughter of Brigham and Lucy, wrote that no one in Winter Quarters knew about this event, not even next-door neighbors. "It was not till after their arrival in the 'Valley' that the girls became known as wives of Brigham Young, or in reality became such, and then afterwards, were sealed in the Endowment House."<sup>41</sup> Commenting upon the courtship, Susa noted that her father

did not spend any time “courting” girls; his time was far too occupied, and his principles never allowed him to run after girls. When the Spirit of the Lord whispered to him that he should seek such and such a one for a wife, he did so in a quiet, manly, grave way, never with any spirit of coercion on his part, and always leaving as he so often expressed it: “the sparkling to come after.” “Marry first and spark after,” was a favorite aphorism of his, and he carried it out in his own life.<sup>42</sup>

Between the time of his marriage and his departure from Winter Quarters less than a month later, Brigham saw his new bride Lucy only three times: once when he stopped for a few moments at the Bigelows and she was out skating with her brothers on the overflow of the river, another time while she was playing games near the schoolhouse with friends, and again when she was skating on the pond. Susa notes that her mother felt ashamed that Brigham, “so dignified and grave,” should see her romping with her friends. Then, almost as a complete stranger, he left for the great unknown, leaving for the future the time for taking Lucy and Mary from under their father’s roof.<sup>43</sup>

While there were times of enjoyment for the Young family during the winter of 1846–47, they did not entirely escape the trials and sorrows that stalked the land. Tragedy struck on March 16 when one of Brigham’s wives, Mary Pierce, died of consumption.<sup>44</sup> She and her sister Margaret (also married to Brigham) had traveled to Winter Quarters with their father some time after Brigham Young arrived there. Of their journey, Margaret wrote: “We had a comfortable carriage and consequently did not suffer as much as others did during our wanderings through the wilderness.”<sup>45</sup>

By the time Brigham Young left Winter Quarters in April 1847, nearly all of his family that had been detained in Nauvoo had joined him at the Missouri River. Although a few of his wives would continue on to the Great Basin that year, the majority would remain in Winter Quarters to go west with him in 1848. Scattered entries in a small book of notes and reminders, written as Brigham prepared for the departure of the pioneer company, suggest the concern he had for the transportation of his family: “I wish the Presidents of my division to get teams and wagons with teamsters to take my famely with there provisions to our next location.” “Let John Y. Green drive Mrs. Young[‘s] wagon. James Young drive his mothers Sister Jemimas wagon. Let no other teamsters bord with Mrs. Young & Sister Jamima but J. Y. Greene and James Young.” “Let Each one of my famely take what and all they expect to have so there will [be] no division after they leve here.”<sup>46</sup>

Complicating Brigham’s effort to provide transportation for his family were heavy demands upon his personal property. In some instances he was able to resolve the problem by turning to loyal friends. When Stephen Markham agreed to transport Eliza R. Snow, “Pres. Y[oung] said [it] would

be a great accommodation to him as he was short on it for wagons.”<sup>47</sup> Later, when a “heavy church debt” took four of his wagons and eight yoke of oxen, Brigham approached Willard McMullen, whose wife was an invalid, for help. Brother McMullen agreed to take Lucy Bigelow in his wagon in return for her assistance in caring for his wife and the President’s offer to furnish a yoke of oxen and three hundred pounds of flour.<sup>48</sup>

Brigham left Winter Quarters to begin the final leg of the pioneer journey on April 14, 1847. Accompanying him was Clara Decker, the daughter of Harriet Decker, wife of Brigham’s brother Lorenzo. Harriet’s asthmatic condition, and the fact that she was expecting a child, accounted for the exception to the rule that the pioneer company would consist of men only. Clara was one of two women invited along to care for her. Leaving the rest of her family and friends, and clutching fond memories of recent experiences, Clara recalled that she “never felt so badly” in her life as she contemplated her “uncertain pilgrimage.”<sup>49</sup>

Having left all of his family in Winter Quarters except Clara Decker, Brigham naturally turned his thoughts to them as he proceeded west. But the demands on his time and the difficulty of the journey limited the favors he could bestow upon them to “continual prayers,” and an occasional letter written piecemeal over days at a time. Ninety-five miles west of Winter Quarters, on April 20, he found time to write his “dear companion partner in tribulation,” Mary Ann Angell:

I should have written to you by Br. Rockwood but had not time. The Camp was to be organized and a gratedeal to be dun to prepare for mooving. On Sunday I should have written but did not feele able to. I lade abed and thought of a grate deal I should like to say to you. The Camp is in good helth and first rate sperits. They have never felt better in there lives. I think my helth has very much improved yesterday and to day. You menshend in your letter that you herd I lay on the ground the night I left home. I did but due not think it hurt me, but when I arived in camp I found my self complet[ly] tired out. I thank you a thousand times for your kind letters to me more especely for your kind acts and still more for your kind hart. I pray for you and the chil-dren continualy and for all of our famely. I due think the Lord has blest me with one of [the] best famelyes that eney man ever had on the Earth. I due hope the children will be good and mind there mother when I am gon.

Brigham cautioned his two oldest boys, Joseph A. (12) and Brigham Jr. (10), whose youthful vigor in the absence of paternal restraint was no doubt a cause of concern: “My son Joseph you *must not goe away from home* and Brigham also must stay at home. How due [you] sapose I would feele when I come home and find one of my children destoyed by the Indens? I pray this may not be the case.” Two weeks later, twenty miles above the head of Grand Island, Brigham found a little more time to conclude his letter:

I want to wright a long letter but have not time. We are all party well at present though my labour has b[ee]n verry hard for me on the journey. I pray for you continualy. . . . I am glad you are not a going to come on this sumer for I want to be with my famely when they come this journey. . . . I want the bretheren to help my famely whilst I am gon and not aupress them. Joseph and Brigham be good Boys and mind your mother and Ales [Alice], Caroline, little Johnne and finely all my children and famely be you Blest for ever and ever.<sup>50</sup>

After Brigham's departure, the social contacts between members of his family continued in Winter Quarters much as they had before he left. Eliza R. Snow attended several gatherings in the spring of 1847 that were special spiritual experiences for her. On April 26, in company with Margaret Pierce, Jemima Young, and "the girls," she wrote of "a rejoicing time thro' the outpouring of the spirit of God." In early June hardly a day passed that did not find members of the family meeting to "improve in the gifts" of the spirit. "This is truly a glorious time with the mothers and daughters in Zion, altho' thrust out from the land of our forefathers and from the endearments of civiliz'd life," wrote Eliza. The afternoon of June 2 she spent with Lucy Decker, Zina Huntington, Louisa Beaman and Emily Partridge. "E[mily] and myself spoke in the gift of tongues. In the eve. met at Harriets. Had a good time. Sis [Mary Ann] Young join'd me in a song of Zion." At this meeting Mary Ann encouraged Eliza to accept an invitation of the Pierces to go west with them that summer.

On June 8 Clarissa Ross gave birth to a daughter, the second child of Brigham's born at Winter Quarters. Two days later, Eliza visited Clarissa, accompanied by Clarissa's mother Phoebe Chase, and gave the infant a blessing, which may account, in part at least, for its name, Mary Eliza. The day after the blessing was another "glorious time" witnessed by Eliza, Zina Huntington, Emily Partridge, Martha Bowker, Margaret Pierce, Louisa Beaman and others when three of those present experienced the gift of tongues.<sup>51</sup>

Having finally joined the family at Winter Quarters with Oscar Brigham, her infant son, Harriet Cook wrote to her "dear Husband," on June 14, thankful for her "deliverance" and for the improvement of their son from a severe burn.

I feel my weakness at this time, and my inability to perform this task well, but knowing that my greatest fault has been not placing the confidence in you that I ought, I am determined to lay too with all my might and overcome it. . . . O you do not know how thankfull I feel for my deliverance from the powers of darkness that have surrounded me for the last year. My trial has been a sore one, but I have lived through it, and I feel to thank my heavenly Father for his kindness to me, and to you also, for the Lord has made known unto me the integrity of your heart and that all your intentions were pure before him. I have said that I would not follow your counsel, but I now feel that it is my greatest delight. Do not feel that I am unworthy of your love, for I feel to honour you in all things and to submit myself unto thee to do with

me even as thou wilt. I remember thy words to me and I do strive to keep my thoughts a secret in my own breast. . . .

Oscar is well and playful as ever. . . . His arm is almost well. He can use it as well as the other. He was burnt bad but I am glad it was no worse.

Harriet's letter also contained news of Clarissa's addition to the family and greetings from other family members.

Clarisa wishes me to remember her to you for she is to[o] weak to write herself. She has a fine girl. Her name is Mary Eliza. Clarisa is as proud of her as any one could wish. She is geting along first rate. Margaret [Alley] and Emmeline [Free] send their love to you. They are enjoying themselves well and say they should not have any very bad feelings at seeing you. They both live with me, or I with them, just which way your a mind to have it. Emma-line['s] mother [Betsy Strait Free] has a pair of twin daughters and I think Emmeline will follow suit soon.<sup>52</sup>

After bidding farewell to many "who seem dearer to me than life," Eliza R. Snow left Winter Quarters on June 12 in company with Margaret Pierce and her family. They traveled with Jedediah Grant's company that would arrive in the Salt Lake Valley later that year. "I felt a loneliness for a while after parting with my friends but the spirit of consolation and rejoicing return'd and I journey'd with good cheer," Eliza wrote in her diary. A few days later she composed a poem "To Mrs. Mary Ann Young", in response to a request before they parted:

Mother of mothers!  
Queen of queens,  
For such thou truly art,  
I pray the Lord to strengthen thee,  
And to console thy heart.<sup>53</sup>

Six weeks after Eliza and Margaret left Winter Quarters, Brigham entered the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Upon his arrival an immediate concern was the building of a shelter for his family. On August 7 when the Twelve "picked out their inheritances," standing on what came to be the Temple Block, Brigham selected the block to the east. It was decided, however, for maximum protection until more permanent living quarters could be built on the places of inheritance, to build a fort consisting of log and adobe houses at a nearby location. The individual buildings of the fort were to be about eight feet high, fourteen feet wide, and sixteen feet long, with chimneys of adobe, hearths of clay, and all openings toward the inside of the enclosure. Work on the fort began on August 11, Brigham building four rooms and his brother Lorenzo two at the northeast corner. Ten days later he completed his house and moved in.<sup>54</sup>

It was here that Clara Decker lived, to be joined by Eliza R. Snow later in the year. A chest was Clara's only table; the bedstead was built into a

corner, the walls forming two sides and cords wound tightly around pegs forming the “mattress.” Five days after completing his house in the fort, Brigham bid Clara good-bye and started east to bring the rest of his family from Winter Quarters. As he started, one of the company gave Clara a feather bed, but she had become so accustomed to sleeping on the ground or in a wagon that it was some time before she could “appreciate the luxury.”<sup>55</sup>

The month of Brigham’s departure from Salt Lake Valley was a time of both joy and sorrow for the family members back in Winter Quarters. On August 10 Brigham’s seven-month-old son, Moroni, died of “teething and canker,”<sup>56</sup> and on the thirty-first Emmeline Free gave birth to a baby girl who was named Ella Elizabeth.<sup>57</sup>

The journey of Eliza R. Snow and Margaret Pierce to the Salt Lake Valley in the summer of 1847 was not without incident. Eliza recalled two “fearful stampedes” that could have been disastrous had it not been for “the peculiar and special blessing of God.” The first took place one evening after the animals had all been corralled in a hollow square made by placing wagons side by side. Eliza had just retired for the night in a wagon near one of the openings in the enclosure, when the animals, frightened by someone’s shaking dirt from a buffalo robe, suddenly rushed for the exit nearest her. The “bellowing, puffing, and snorting” mass, unable to crowd through the small opening in the corral, “rushed against, and clambered over and upon each other in heaps. . . . The scene was horrible! Some animals died of injuries [and] many had their horns knocked off,” before order was restored.

The second stampede occurred in the daytime as the company had stopped to repair a crossing over a broad slough. The teams were standing hitched to their wagons, two, three, and four abreast, when a sudden noise set the whole train in motion. “With fearful velocity, heedless of crossings and bridges,” charging teams hurtled across the slough. As the stampede began, Eliza was sitting alone in the Pierce carriage holding the reins of a high-spirited span of horses. She prevented herself from being pulled into the rush only by applying her utmost strength to the reins, until Margaret and her mother, who had been away from the carriage, arrived on the scene to help her.

A highlight of the journey that summer for Eliza and Margaret was the meeting, on September 8, of Brigham Young’s company returning to Winter Quarters. Eliza wrote that “Prest. Y[oung], H[eber] C K[imball] and A[masa] Lyman sup’d with us,” after which there were discourses and a song sung that she had written. It was such a “joyful time” and so “deeply interested and absorbed were all” that no guard was posted that night. As a result, the ever-watchful Indians stole some fifty head of horses, including one of Harvey Pierce’s mules. This misfortune materially weakened both companies.

Prior to parting on the morning of the tenth, Brigham came to the Pierce carriage and blessed both of his wives. Eliza then asked "who was to be my counselor for the year to come. He said ERS. I said 'she is not capable.' He said, 'I have appointed her president.' Said he had conversation with Br. P[ierce] about provision[s], that he will furnish me & all will be right."

Some three weeks later, on October 2, after crossing a stream nineteen times, Eliza saw the Salt Lake Valley for the first time. It looked like a "broad rich river bottom," but she was "too sick to enjoy the scenery." The next day she viewed the valley from the confines of the fort and the comfort of a "doby [adobe] fireplace."<sup>58</sup>

Among the greetings brought to the Valley with Eliza and Margaret was a letter from Brigham to Clara Decker:

My dear Clary . . . My helth is good and has been sence I left the valley with the exception of one night. . . . I due feel to bless and pray for you. You have been a grate comfort to me this summer. I miss your society. I wish you to live at home of sister Eliza Snow.

You must pray for me and my safe return. Give my love to your mother. . . . I shall start as early in the spring as I can. . . .

Thursday Morning, the 9th, we have lost seven horses and mules last night. We expect the Indians have stolen them. I almost feele it my duty to return with the companies and see them safe through to the valle. O that I had my famely here.<sup>59</sup>

Grateful for the "good advice" and "kind feelings" manifest toward her, Clara responded to Brigham's letter on October 3. Much of her writing contained thoughts about her husband and those of the family with whom she was particularly close.

My Dear Brigham, with feelings which I never before experienced I write these lines. I feel thankful for the opportunity of sending the same to you and hope they will be acceptable. . . .

I felt very lonesome after you left. It seemed to me I was a lone child though in a pleasant land. Evry thing I saw reminded me of you and your goodness to one who feels herself quite unworthy of it.

She expressed gratitude for her "little house" (rooms in the fort), built by Brigham before he left.

Here I can sit down and let my thoughts wander back to Winter Quarters and fancy I see you surrounded by your family enjoying their sweet society and they yours. I hope so at least. At such times then I am alone I can pray for you and feel quite happy. Though you be far from me you are ever present in my thoughts. I often dream of you generally living my happy days over again but when I wake I find it nothing but a dream and like a sunny morning the remembrance passeth away. But your kindness to me the past summer will never be forgotton. It shall live while memory lives with me. . . .

I hope Mrs. Young [Mary Ann Angell] has good feelings towards me. I remember her kindness to me I assure you. . . . I was glad to hear that Sister

[Augusta Adams] Cobb was in Winter Quarters. How glad I shall be to see your face again in this place. I shall count the months yes the weeks untill that happy time comes. I am lonesome though surrounded by Friends. I miss your society much. . . .

When I think of your poor health and the multitude of care[s] you have on your mind together with the long and tedious journey which ways before you it casts a gloom over my mind and often my feelings overcome me and I sit me down and weep like any child.

Clara closed her letter shortly after a visit from John Young, Brigham's brother. "I was glad to see him. He reminds me much of you in his looks. Pray for me allways. Please excuse all my mistakes. May heavens choicest blessings ever attend you is the prayer of your freind. Yours affectionately."<sup>60</sup>

One of Eliza R. Snow's first acts upon her arrival in the Valley was to write eleven letters to loved ones in Winter Quarters. Among these was a poem for Mary Ann Angell which reflects something of the close bond that existed among some of the wives of Brigham Young:

Blessed be your habitation  
The abode of peace & rest;  
Yes with all that is a blessing  
I would fondly have you blest.  
  
We anticipate the period  
When you to the Valley come  
Haste & leave your Winter Quarters  
Here you'll find a berter home.<sup>61</sup>

Another close relationship had formed between Eliza R. Snow and Margaret Pierce, who had shared the same wagon from Winter Quarters to the Salt Lake Valley. Eliza had suffered ill health right from the beginning of the exodus, and during the last phase of the journey Margaret had cared for her. Shortly after their arrival, Margaret penned these lines to her traveling companion:

I love thee; and I'll n'vr forget  
The time we've spent together  
Thro' many toilsome scenes of west  
And storms of windy weather.  
  
I love thee; & my heart entwines  
Around Thy noble spirit.  
May ev'r ry joy on earth be thine  
Long life if thou desire it.<sup>62</sup>

On October 17, a day too cold to go to meeting, and having just received a half pint of tea and a few dozen crackers from Mrs. Pierce, and feeling "greatly blest both temporally and spiritually," Eliza responded to the kindness of her sister wife:

I love thee with the tenderness  
That sister spirits love.  
I love thee, for thy loveliness  
Is like to theirs above.

.....

I love thee for the kindness show'd  
To me in feeble health,  
When journeying on a tedious road,  
I prize it more than wealth.

I love thee and thou shalt be crown'd  
With blessings not a few  
Joy, peace & plenty shall surround  
Thy path, like summer dew.<sup>63</sup>

After leaving Clara Decker in Salt Lake Valley and passing Eliza R. Snow and Margaret Pierce en route there on his return trip, Brigham Young joined the rest of his family at Winter Quarters on October 30, 1847. He learned that in his absence two of his wives had gone to St. Louis, Missouri, to work and that one of them was still there. Having been persuaded by a local sister that money could be earned to buy clothing and supplies for the trip to the mountains, Lucy and Mary Bigelow had traveled to St. Louis earlier in the year. With the help of local Church members, the sisters had rented a small room and found employment. They soon discovered that it would take all their earnings to support themselves while there. Homesick and discouraged, Mary, with the assistance of local Saints, had returned to Winter Quarters almost immediately, while Lucy remained. Lucy worked at several jobs in succession, including ironing shirts in a shirt factory ten hours a day. She remained in Missouri until the spring of 1848, when word came from her father in Winter Quarters that Brigham had returned and was disappointed to find her gone, remarking that he "would rather have given the last coat off his back than to have her down there." With this news, after an absence of a year, Lucy returned to Winter Quarters and arrangements were made for her to go west with the rest of the family.<sup>64</sup>

On May 26, 1848, Brigham started his final trip to the Salt Lake Valley leading a company of twelve hundred persons and four hundred wagons. Accompanying him was most of his remaining family.<sup>65</sup> His departure from Winter Quarters was the fifth time since joining the Church in 1832 that he had had to leave home and property. Little is known of family details during the 1848 trip west. John D. Lee noted on July 23 that "Louisa B[eaman] Young was delivered of 2 fine Boys which verry much delighted Pres. B. Y[oung], the Father of the children, who with his co[mpany] roled on 3 m[ile]s."<sup>66</sup> Of the trip Emily Partridge later wrote, "We were more comfortably fitted out than we had been at any time before, but on account of ill health the journey was most unpleasant. I do not wish to think of that time."<sup>67</sup>

Brigham Young and his company arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on September 20, 1848. For practical purposes his family was now, for the first time, all in one place. Although he would never be forced to leave his home again, he now faced a new challenge: that of establishing his unusually large and complex family in a permanent home.

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Dean C. Jessee, research historian for the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is the editor of *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons*. The author is indebted to Jeff Johnson, supervisor of processing, LDS Church Archives, for invaluable help in this study. All sources quoted in this study are located in the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City unless otherwise indicated. Some editing has been done for clarity, but it has not altered the meaning. Periods have been put at the ends of sentences and some capitalization has been added. A small amount of punctuation has been inserted to facilitate reading. Spelling remains as in the original.

1. Susa Young Gates Papers, Box 12, folder 3, MS, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.
2. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855–1856), 3:266.
3. Susa Young Gates, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1930), p. 321.
4. Susa Young Gates Papers, Box 12, folder 2, MS, Utah State Historical Society.
5. Records indicate that the following women were sealed to Brigham Young. The sixteen who bore him children are designated by an asterisk: Miriam Works,\* Mary Ann Angell,\* Lucy Ann Decker (Seely),\* Augusta Adams (Cobb), Harriet Elizabeth Cook,\* Clarissa Caroline Decker,\* Emily Dow Partridge (Smith)\* Clarissa Ross,\* Louisa Beaman (Smith),\* Eliza Roxcy Snow (Smith), Elizabeth Fairchild, Clarissa Blake, Rebecca Greenleaf Holman, Diana Chase, Susan Snively, Olive Grey Frost (Smith), Mary Ann Clark (Powers), Margaret Pierce (Whitesides),\* Mary Harvey Pierce, Emmeline Free,\* Mary Elizabeth Rollins (Lightner, Smith), Margaret Maria Alley, \* Olive Andrews (Smith), Emily Haws (Whitmarsh), Martha Bowker, Ellen A. Rockwood, Jemima Angell (Young), Abigail Marks (Works), Phebe Ann Morton (Angell), Cynthia Porter (Weston), Mary Eliza Nelson (Greene), Rhoda Richards (Smith), Zina Diantha Huntington (Jacobs, Smith),\* Amy Cecilia Cooper, Mary Ellen De La Montague (Woodward), Julia Foster (Hampton), Abigail Harback (Hall), Mary Ann Turley, Naamah K. J. Carter (Twiss), Nancy Cressy (Walker), Jane Terry (Tarbox), Lucy Bigelow,\* Mary Jane Bigelow, Sarah Malin, Eliza Burgess,\* Mary Oldfield (Kelsey), Eliza Babcock, Catherine Reese (Clawson), Harriet Emeline Barney (Sagers),\* Harriet Amelia Folsom, Mary Van Cott (Cobb),\* Ann Eliza Webb (Dee), Elizabeth Jones (Lewis, Jones), Lydia Farnsworth (Mayhew), Hannah Tapfield (King). (Research in possession of the author.)

While Maria Lawrence appears on several published lists of Brigham Young's wives, I have found no marriage record to substantiate a union between her and Brigham Young.

6. Brigham Young to George D. Watt, 16 April 1847. Although the words cited here are actually a Willard Richards postscript to the letter, the sentiments go far beyond Richards's own experience.

7. John D. Lee Diary, 15 February 1846, MS.
8. Willard Richards Diary, 27 March 1846, MS.
9. "Record of the Organisation of the Camp of Israel which Took Place at Shariton Ford, I.T. on Friday March 27th and Monday 31st [30th] 1846," pp. 4-5, MS.
10. This terminology is used in Emily Dow Partridge Young's Autobiography and Diary, pp. 3, 27, typescript.
11. Following the death of Edward Partridge, his wife Lydia married William Huntington on 27 September 1840 (*Times and Seasons* 1 [October 1840]:191).
12. Emily Dow Partridge Young Autobiography and Diary, p. 4.
13. Brigham Young had returned to Nauvoo on 18 February and did not arrive back in camp until 22 February. Details that would explain why Emily would be alone with her child are missing from her record.
14. Emily Dow Partridge Young Autobiography and Diary, pp. 3-4, 119. On 16 February 1897, Emily Partridge wrote in her diary: "It is snowing, and I am reminded of 51 years ago, when I was in camp on Sugar Creek sitting on a log with my 3 months old baby in my lap without home or friends. I can truly say I felt desolate indeed. I have been shedding a few tears." Later, on 24 July, she watched the Jubilee parade in Salt Lake City in commemoration of the arrival of the pioneers in the Valley: "The procession came up 5th East past Emily's. So I had a good chance to see it with [out] leaving home. The display was grand. The old pioneer wagons were almost too realistic. They brought back in a forcible manner the horrible journey across the plains. I only sat and cried while they passed."
15. Emily Dow Partridge Young Autobiography and Diary, p. 3.
16. Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1901-1936), 1:370.
17. Emily Dow Partridge Young Autobiography and Diary, p. 4.
18. Emily Partridge Young to Brigham Young, 31 August 1846. "The girls" has reference to Brigham Young's young plural wives.
19. Emily Dow Partridge Young Autobiography and Diary, p. 4. Sarah P. Rich noted the trip of the Huntingtons from Mt. Pisgah to Winter Quarters in March 1847: "The 12 of March we started with all our family also Mother Huntington and her family as president Young had sent a team and Charles Decker with the team to assist Sister Huntington with her family to winter quarters. It was coald wether and continued So nearly all the way." (Sarah P. Rich Diary, 12 March 1847.) Eliza Partridge Lyman noted that Emily and her mother arrived at the Missouri River on 19 March 1847 (Eliza Partridge Lyman Diary, 19 March 1847, MS).
20. Ibid., pp. 3-4, 103, 119.
21. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 13, 19 February; 2 March 1846, MS.
22. Ibid., 9, 18, 29 March; 14 April; 24 August 1846.
23. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner Autobiography and Diary, p. 25, MS, Utah State Historical Society.
24. Joseph Young had been appointed to "preside over the church" in Nauvoo after the departure of the Twelve (Joseph Young Certificate of Appointment, 10 February 1846, MS).
25. Brigham Young to Joseph Young, 9 March 1846.
26. Brigham Young to Harriet Cook, 15 March 1846.
27. Brigham Young to Harriet Cook, 25 March 1846.
28. Harriet Cook to Brigham Young, 7 April 1846.
29. Edmund Ellsworth had married Brigham Young's oldest child, Elizabeth, 10 July 1842.

30. Brigham Young to Harriet Cook, 23 June 1846, MS, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.
31. Augusta Adams Cobb to Brigham Young, 11 March 1846, MS, New York Public Library.
32. [Mary Ann Clark Powers] to Brigham Young, 9 August 1846.
33. Brigham Young to Elders Hyde, Pratt, and Taylor, 6 January 1847, and Hosea Stout Diary, 24 December 1846.
34. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 26 January 1847.
35. Naamah K. J. Twiss to Mrs. Thomas Nichols, 29 December 1846.
36. Eliza R. Snow Diary, September–December 1846.
37. The birth of this child, Moroni, absent from official family lists raises the known total of Brigham Young's children to fifty-seven. The birth of the child is noted in Patty Sessions Diary, 8 January 1847, and Eliza R. Snow Diary, 9 January 1847.
38. Willard Richard's Diary, 15 January 1847.
39. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 15 January 1847.
40. Ibid., 4 February 1847.
41. Susa Young Gates, Biography of Lucy Bigelow Young, pp. 15–20, MS, Utah State Historical Society. Extracts from the biography are edited and published by Miriam B. Murphy in "From Impulsive Girl to Patient Wife: Lucy Bigelow Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 45 (Summer 1977):270–88.
42. Susa Young Gates, Biography of Lucy Bigelow Young, pp. 16–17, Utah State Historical Society.
43. Ibid., pp. 20–21.
44. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 16 March 1847; also Manuscript History of the Church, Brigham Young Period, 17 March 1847.
45. "Margaret Pierce Whitesides Young Exerpts Taken From her Journal," p. 3, typescript. An edited version of this appears in "One of the Pioneers," *Young Woman's Journal* 15 (April 1904): 162–66.
46. Brigham Young Notebook, 9 March 1847.
47. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 18 March 1847.
48. Susa Young Gates, Biography of Lucy Bigelow Young, p. 24, Utah State Historical Society.
49. Clara Decker Young, "A Woman's Experiences with the Pioneer Band," pp. 4–5, MS, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Calif.
50. Brigham Young to Mary Ann Angell, 20 April and 4 May 1847.
51. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 26 April and 1–11 June 1847.
52. Harriet Cook to Brigham Young, 14 June 1847.
53. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 16 June 1847.
54. Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, *Century 1*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:287.
55. Clara Decker, "A Woman's Experience with the Pioneer Band," p. 8, Bancroft Library.
56. "A Report of the Deaths in Camp of Israel Winter Quarters Between the Dates of April 26th & Aug. 18th 1847," 10 August 1847, MS.
57. Journal History, 7 September 1890, p. 4.
58. Eliza R. Snow, "Sketch of My Life," pp. 25–26, MS, Bancroft Library; and Diary, 8–10 September, 2–3 October 1847. Also, Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, 3:298.
59. Brigham Young to Clara Decker, 8, 9 September 1847.
60. Clara Decker to Brigham Young, 3 October 1847.
61. Eliza R. Snow Diary, 5 October 1847.

62. *Ibid.*, 16 October 1847.

63. *Ibid.*, 17 October 1847.

64. Susa Young Gates, *Biography of Lucy Bigelow Young*, pp. 22–24, Utah State Historical Society.

65. When Brigham Young left Winter Quarters in 1848, at least three of his wives did not accompany him. They became permanent casualties of the exodus, or nearly so. One of these was Mary Ann Clark Powers. Unable to leave Nauvoo at the beginning of the migration, she had arrived in Winter Quarters sometime later, only to become disillusioned, apparently by not receiving the attention from her overworked husband that she thought she deserved. Still in Iowa in 1851, she wrote to Brigham requesting to be released from him and among other things mentioned the “bitter cup” she had drunk at Winter Quarters, which she translated as a “cool and distant reseption.” Her association with the Young family officially terminated on 15 September 1851, when her request was granted. (Mary Ann Clark Powers to Brigham Young, 18 June 1851; and Young to Powers, 15 September 1851.)

One whose reunion with Brigham Young was delayed several years, due to conditions attendant upon the migration, was Julia Foster Hampton. Widowed when her first husband died in 1844, Julia was married “for time” to Brigham in Nauvoo less than two weeks before he left the city. Having four children of her own and no means of conveyance to the West, she had remained in Nauvoo with a promise that she would soon be sent for. When several weeks passed and no word came, Julia accepted an offer to live with her father in Jacksonville, Illinois. Completely severed from all communication with the Saints, she eventually accepted a proposal of marriage from an Englishman, Thomas Cole, in the fall of 1847, “being almost compelled to do so on account of having a family of small children . . . and no way of supporting them.” However, after the birth of one child, Cole “proved to be a mean scoundrel,” abusing and beating Julia and the children unmercifully and finally abandoning them for California. In 1855 two Mormon missionaries sent by Brigham Young located Julia and offered her assistance in gathering to the Valley. After being rebaptized, she and her children crossed the Plains to Utah, there to be reunited with the Brigham Young family in November 1855. (Brigham Young Hampton Family Record and Diary, pp. 60–75, MS.)

66. Rober Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee 1848–1876*, 2 vols. (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1955), 1:65.

67. Emily Dow Partridge Young Autobiography and Diary, p. 6.