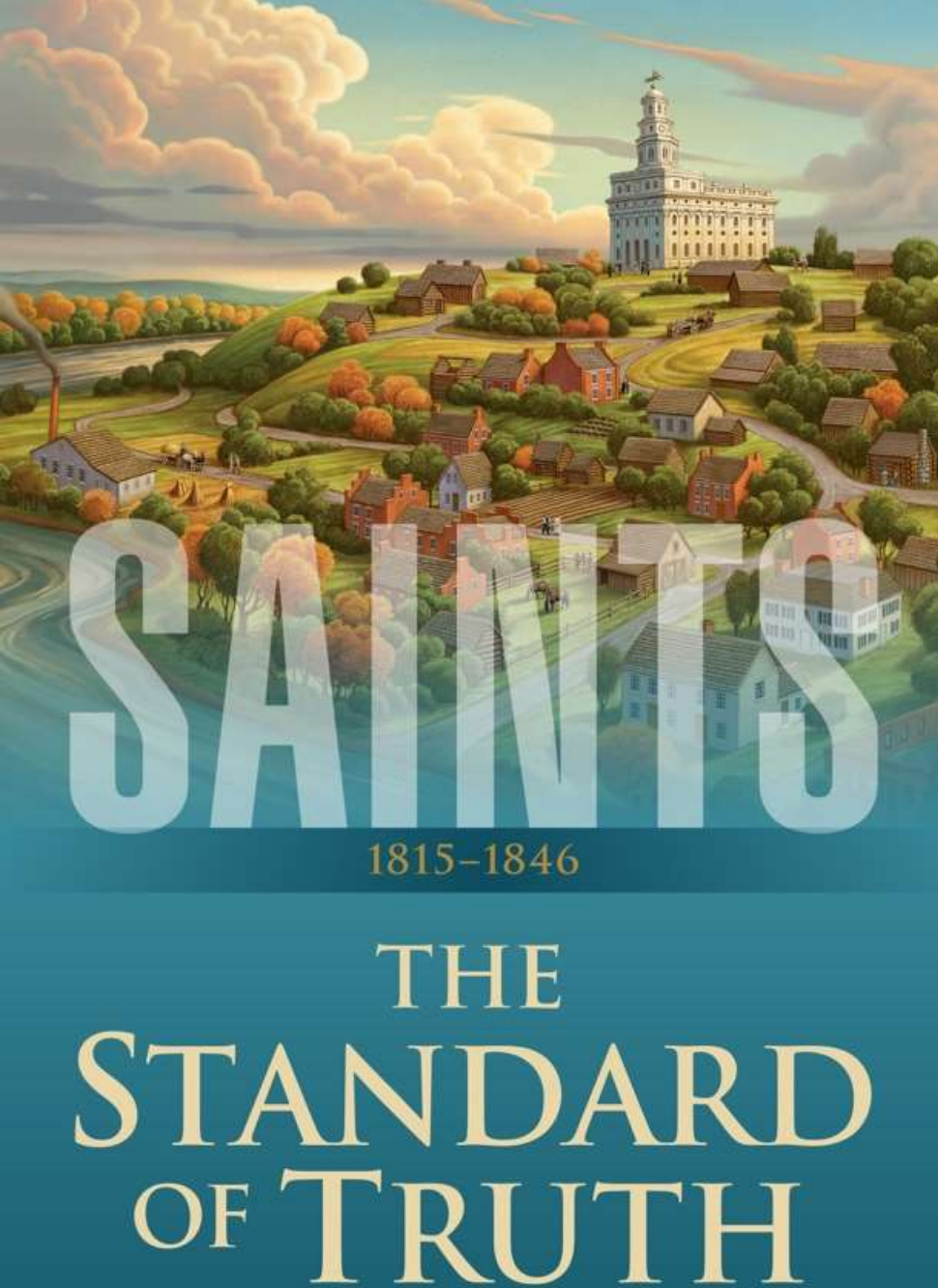


WOMEN'S STORIES IN  
**SAINTS:**

THE STORY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
IN THE LATTER DAYS

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# What is *Saints*?

A new four-volume narrative history of the church researched, written, and published under the direction of the First Presidency.

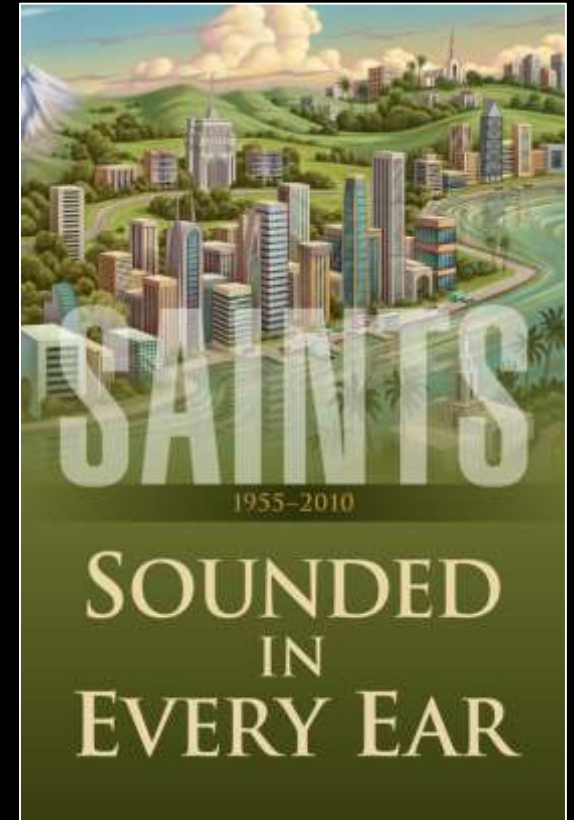
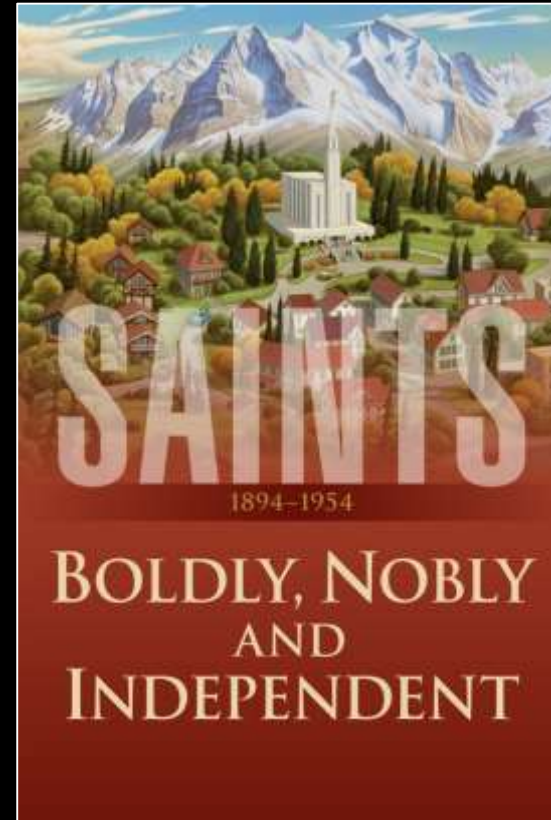
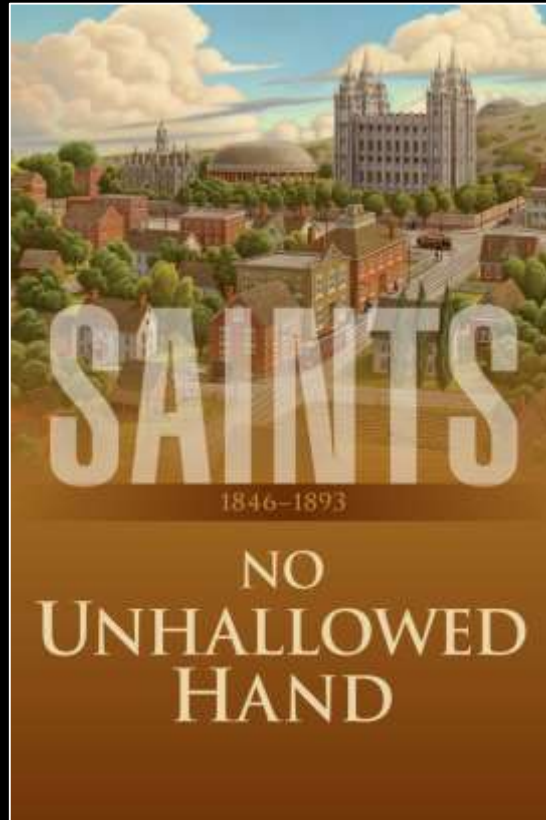
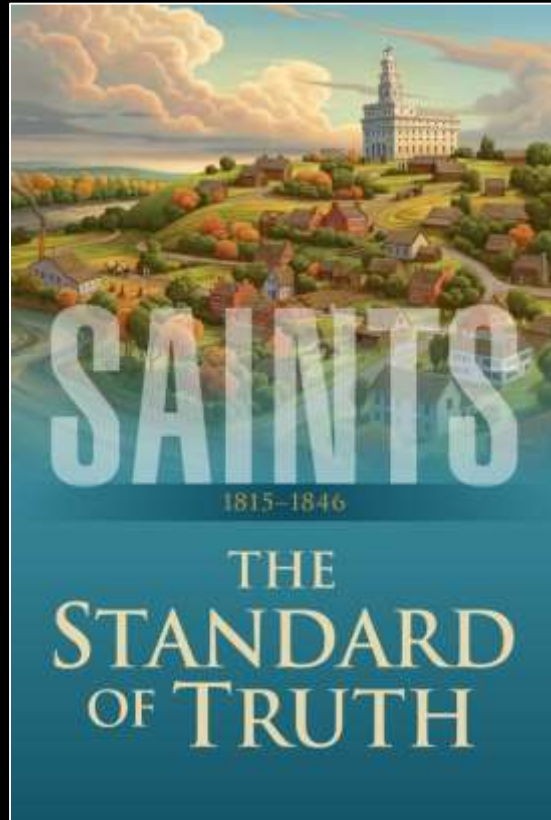
The first official multi-volume history of the Church since B. H. Roberts' *Comprehensive History* (1930).

Volume 1 available September 4, 2018.

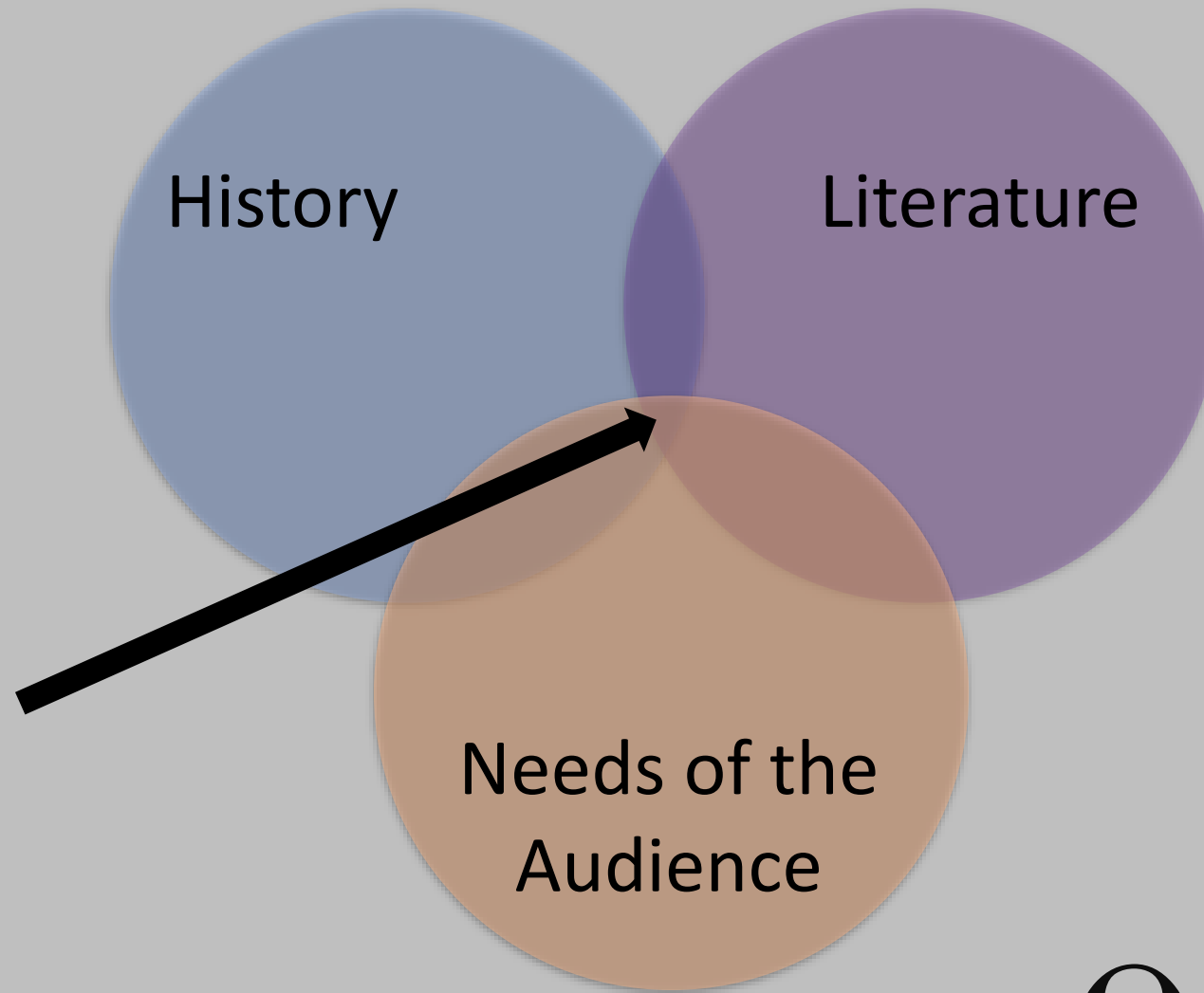








*Saints* is a representative global history of the Church for a general audience.



**Our Goal**

# What about women's stories in *Saints*?

Why is this something we need to talk about?



# Elder Quentin L. Cook

“We need to listen to the voices of women from the past—to hear their counsel, learn from their examples, and be strengthened by their testimonies.”

“Out of Obscurity: How Merciful the Lord Has Been”

BYU-Idaho Devotional, 12 June 2018



# Three Reasons





# 1.

A representative history  
must be representative.



16,118,169 Total Church Membership, April 2018

“The total Church membership consisted of 90 males for every 100 females in 2011.”

Arielle A. Sloan, Ray M. Merrill, and J. Grant Merrill  
“Gender Distribution of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Worldwide”  
*BYU Studies* 53.1 (2014): 144.

7.1 Million Approximate Relief Society Membership, 2018

# Representation Matters

“Representation in [a narrative] signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation.”

George Gerbner and Larry Cross, “Living with Television: The Violence Profile,”  
in Toby Miller, ed., *Television: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*, Vol. 2, 134.

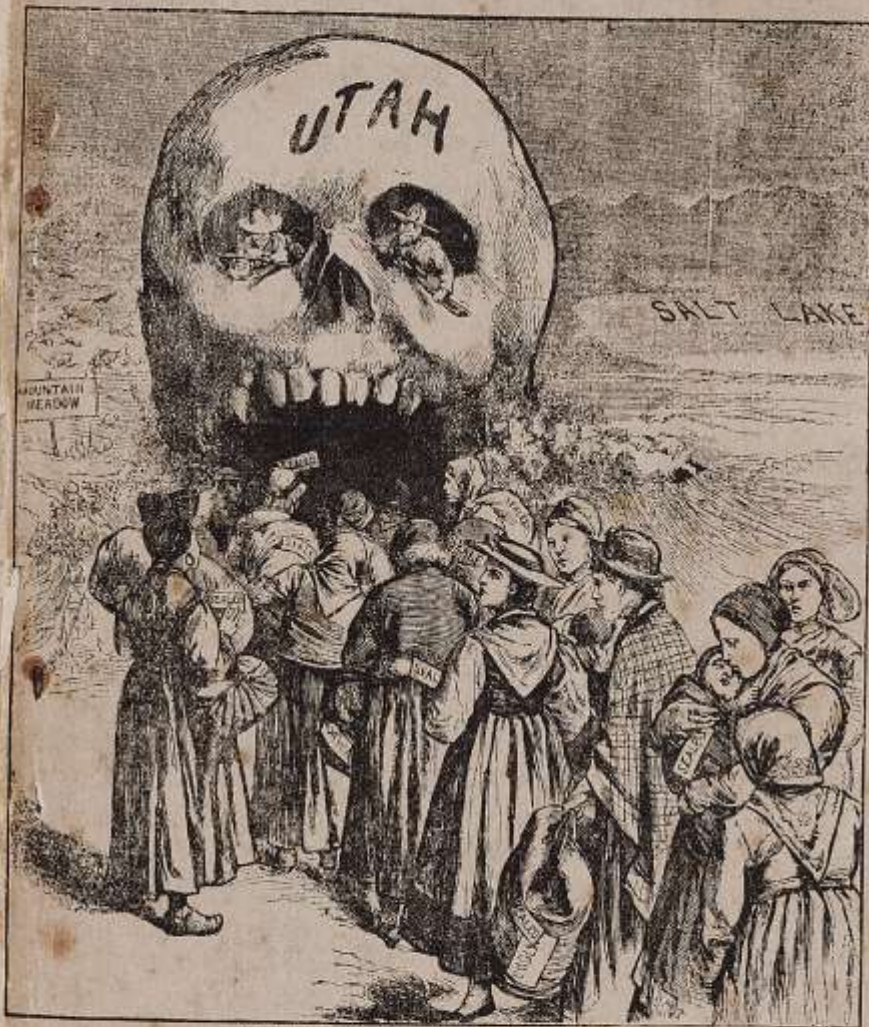






STARTLING REVELATIONS, FOR SAINTS AND SINNERS.

## HELL UPON EARTH!



HOW WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE ENSNARED.

## ILLUSTRATED.

BY W. JARMAN, EX-MORMON PRIEST. FROM SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

## Piney Ridge Cottage

The Love Story of a "Mormon" Country Girl

### CHAPTER I.

Piney Ridge lay as a dot of green against the gray hillside. All around it stretched a barren, unplowed country. At the back loomed the mountains, in front the sage-brush covered plain extended for many miles to the low hills on the other side of the valley. The nearest railroad station, that of Croft, was fifteen miles away in that direction.

Strangers who had driven for the first time across those far-reaching plains, had wondered at so much land lying unoccupied. "Why," one had exclaimed, "here is room for a nation! And these young trees"—meaning the sage-brush—"what a forest there will be when these grow up!" This was before irrigation had conquered the desert, or dry-farming had been made a success in this arid region of western America. The great "Flat" is now covered with fields of wheat and alfalfa, while shade trees and young orchards

# 2.

The rising generation  
needs role models.





# President Bonnie L. Oscarson

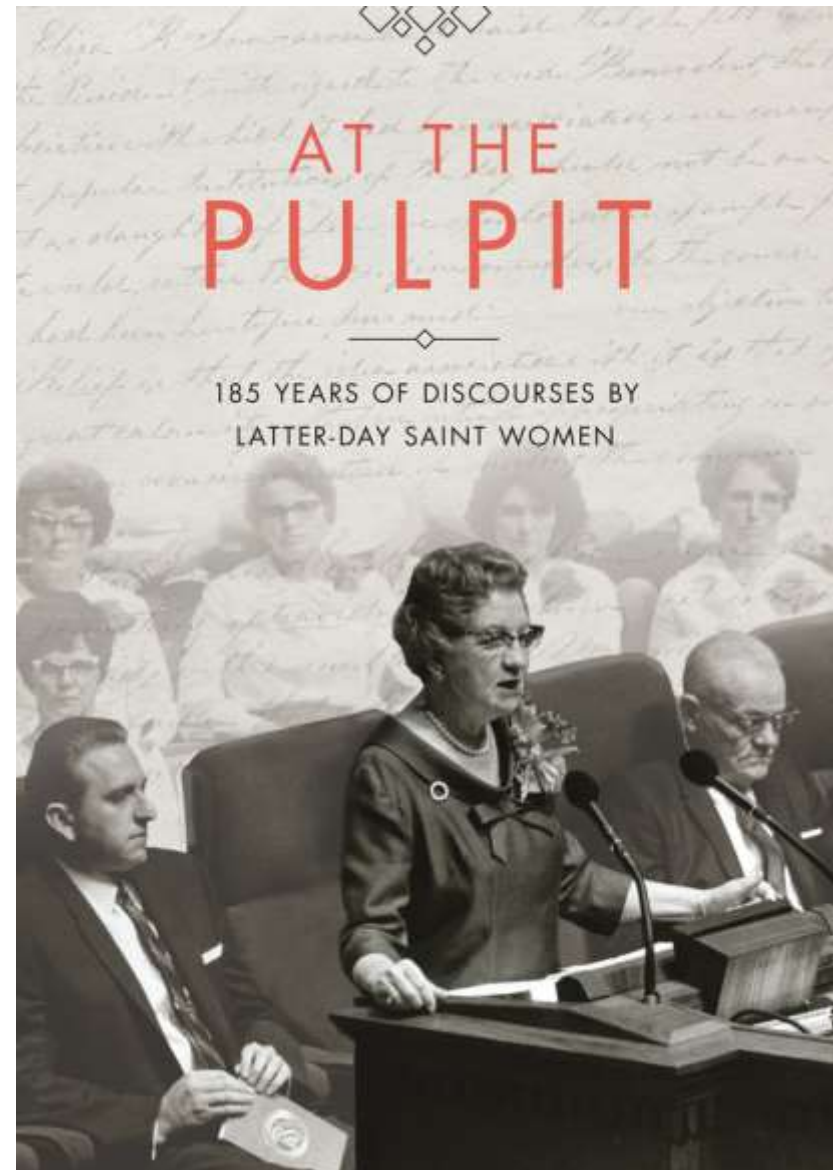
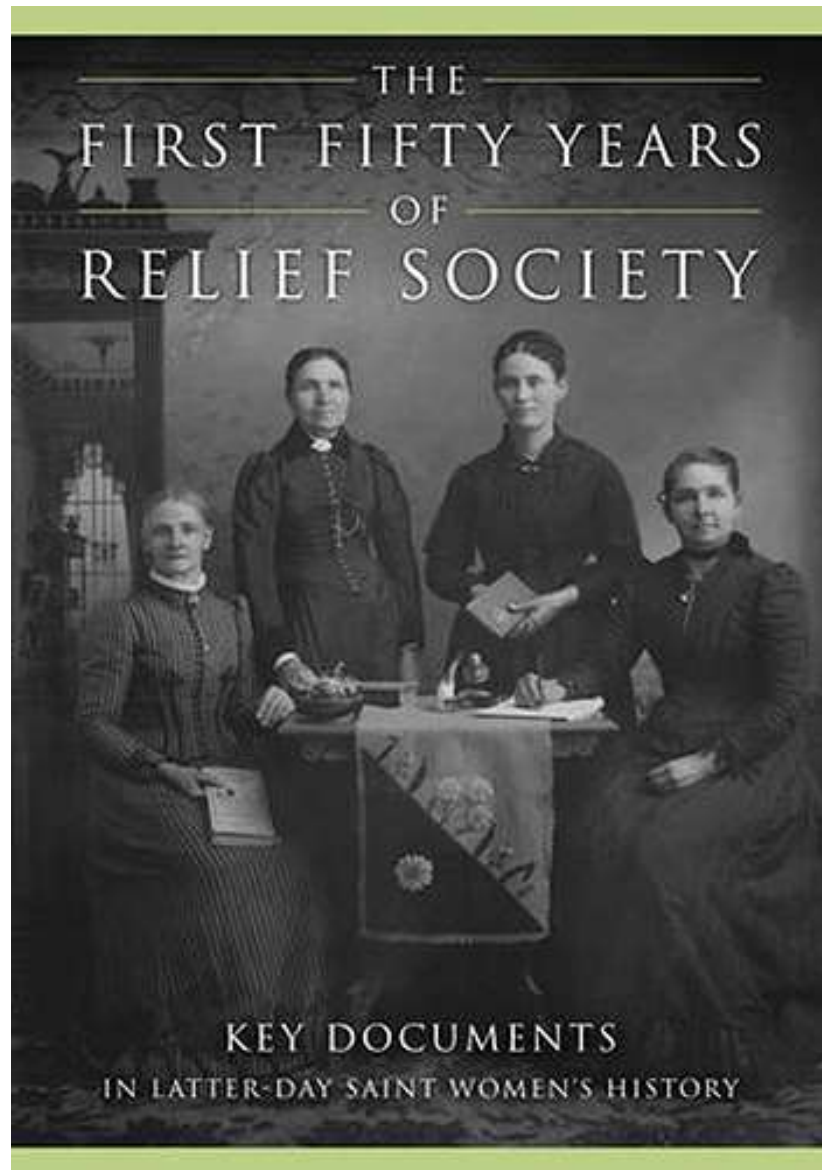
“All women need to see themselves as essential participants in the work of the priesthood. Women in this Church are presidents, counselors, teachers, members of councils, sisters, and mothers, and the kingdom of God cannot function unless we rise up and fulfill our duties with faith. Sometimes we just need to have a greater vision of what is possible.”

“Rise Up in Strength, Sisters in Zion,” October 2016

# 3.

Women have always been  
key players in the  
Restoration.







Can you name ten women from  
Church history?

# Women in Recent Church-Produced Histories

| History/Date of Publication                          | Year Covered/<br>Pages | Women<br>Mentioned (appr.) |
|--|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Our Heritage</i> (1996)                           | 1805-1996<br>(191/146) | 35                         |
| <i>Church History in the Fulness of Times</i> (2003) | 1638-2003<br>(365/649) | 70                         |
| <i>Daughters of My Kingdom</i> (2011)                | 1842-2011<br>(169/181) | 82                         |
| <i>Saints, Vol. 1: The Standard of Truth</i> (2018)  | 1815-1846<br>(31/586)  | 120                        |

|                           |                          |                          |                           |                         |                     |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Lucy Mack Smith</b>    | <b>Nancy Towle</b>       | <b>Eliza Snow</b>        | Sarah Carter              | <b>Louisa Beaman</b>    | Lois Pratt          |
| Sophronia Smith           | Eliza Johnson            | Jerusha Smith            | Sarah E. Woodruff         | Mary Beaman Noble       | Polly Stringham     |
| Katharine Smith           | Emeline Miller           | <b>Lydia Bailey</b>      | Caroline Butler           | Ruth Maughan            | Mary Felshaw        |
| <b>Emma Hale</b>          | <b>Phebe Peck</b>        | Margaret Correll         | <b>Agnes Smith</b>        | <b>Margaret Cook</b>    | Philinda Stanley    |
| <b>Polly Knight</b>       | Anna                     | <b>Leonora Taylor</b>    | <b>Drucilla Hendricks</b> | <b>Sarah Kimball</b>    | Esther Gheen        |
| <b>Lucy Harris</b>        | Patty                    | <b>Isabella Walton</b>   | <b>Amanda Smith</b>       | Sophia Marks            | Sister Chase        |
| <b>Mary Whitmer</b>       | <b>Sally Phelps</b>      | <b>Mercy Fielding</b>    | Alvira Smith              | Philinda Merrick        | <b>Jane Manning</b> |
| <b>Elizabeth Marsh</b>    | <b>Mary E. Rollins</b>   | <b>Mary Fielding</b>     | Ortencia Smith            | Desdemona Fullmer       | Rosannnah Marks     |
| Sally Knight              | <b>Caroline Rollins</b>  | <b>Caroline Crosby</b>   | Mary Stedwell             | Althalia Robinson       | Elizabeth Durfee    |
| <b>Thankful Pratt</b>     | Harriet Partridge        | Sabre Granger            | Lydia Cleminson           | Nancy Rigdon            | Ellen Douglas       |
| <b>Rhoda Green</b>        | <b>Vienna Jaques</b>     | <b>Phebe Carter</b>      | <b>Sarah Cleveland</b>    | Sophia Packard          | <b>Emily Hoyt</b>   |
| <b>Phoebe Rigdon</b>      | <b>Lydia Whiting</b>     | Mary Ann Frost           | Anna Fordham              | Elvira Cowles           | Jane Jones          |
| <b>Lucy Morley</b>        | Cecelia Dibble           | <b>Jennetta Richards</b> | <b>Zina Huntington</b>    | <b>Catherine Warren</b> | Repa                |
| <b>Abigail Daniels</b>    | <b>Vilate Kimball</b>    | Ann Walmesley            | Bathsheba Bigler          | Ann Hunter              | Telii               |
| Lucy G. Morley            | <b>Mary Ann Angel</b>    | <b>Fanny Alger</b>       | Fanny Young               | Lucy Ann Decker         | Ruhamah Derby       |
| <b>Ann Whitney</b>        | Miriam Young             | Betsy Eames              | Ann Cannon                | Ruth Clayton            |                     |
| Julia Murdock             | <b>Nancy Holbrook</b>    | <b>Marinda Hyde</b>      | Jane Benbow               | Melissa Johnson         |                     |
| <b>Emily Partridge</b>    | <b>Eunice Holbrook</b>   | Ellin Richards           | <b>Mary Maughan</b>       | <b>Louisa Pratt</b>     |                     |
| <b>Lydia C. Partridge</b> | <b>Sister Vose</b>       | Eunice Woodruff          | <b>Jane Law</b>           | Ann Pratt               |                     |
| <b>Eliza Partridge</b>    | Betsy Parrish            | Eunice Franklin          | Harriet Brunson           | Ellen Pratt             |                     |
| Cinthia McLellin          | <b>Caroline Tippetts</b> | Lydia Partridge          | <b>Jane Neyman</b>        | Frances Pratt           |                     |





# Emma Hale Smith

(1804-1879)

Arguably the best-known woman in Church history.

Known for D&C 25, the first hymnal, and the organization of the Relief Society.

EMMA COMMUNICATED REGULARLY WITH Joseph over the following days and weeks. When they could not meet in person, they exchanged letters. When she could evade the lawmen who watched her every action, she joined him at a safe house and strategized about their next move. Often she relayed Joseph's messages to and from the Saints, choosing which people he should trust and dodging those who meant him harm.<sup>5</sup>

With sheriffs threatening to search every house in Illinois if necessary, Joseph knew the Saints worried that he would soon be captured and taken back to Missouri. Some of his friends urged him to escape to the pine forests north of Illinois, where Saints were harvesting timber for the temple.<sup>6</sup>

Joseph hated the idea of running away, preferring to stay in Illinois and see the crisis to the end. But he was willing to go if that was what Emma wanted to do. "My safety is with you," he wrote. "If you and the children go not with me, I don't go."

Part of him yearned to take his family somewhere else, if only for a short time. "I am tired of the mean, low, and unhallowed vulgarity of some portions of the society in which we live," he told Emma, "and I think if I could have a respite of about six months with my family, it would be a savor of life unto life."<sup>7</sup>

Emma responded to his letter later that day. "I am ready to go with you if you are obliged to leave," she wrote, "but still I feel good confidence that you can be

protected without leaving this country. There are more ways than one to take care of you."<sup>8</sup>

The next evening, she wrote a letter to Illinois governor Thomas Carlin assuring him of Joseph's innocence. Joseph was not in Missouri when the assassination attempt took place, she reasoned, and he was innocent of the charges against him. She believed that Joseph would never get a fair trial in Missouri and would likely be murdered instead.

"I beg you to spare my innocent children the heart-rending sorrow of again seeing their father unjustly dragged to prison, or to death," she pleaded.<sup>9</sup>

The governor responded to Emma a short time later. His letter was polite and carefully worded, insisting that his actions against Joseph were motivated strictly by a sense of duty. He expressed hope that Joseph would submit to the law, and he gave no indication that he was willing to change his mind on the matter.<sup>10</sup>

Undeterred, Emma wrote a second letter, this time explaining why arresting her husband was illegal.

"What good can accrue to this state or the United States, or any part of this state or the United States, or to yourself, or any other individual," she asked the governor, "to continue this persecution upon this people, or upon Mr. Smith?"

She sent the letter and waited for a reply.<sup>11</sup>

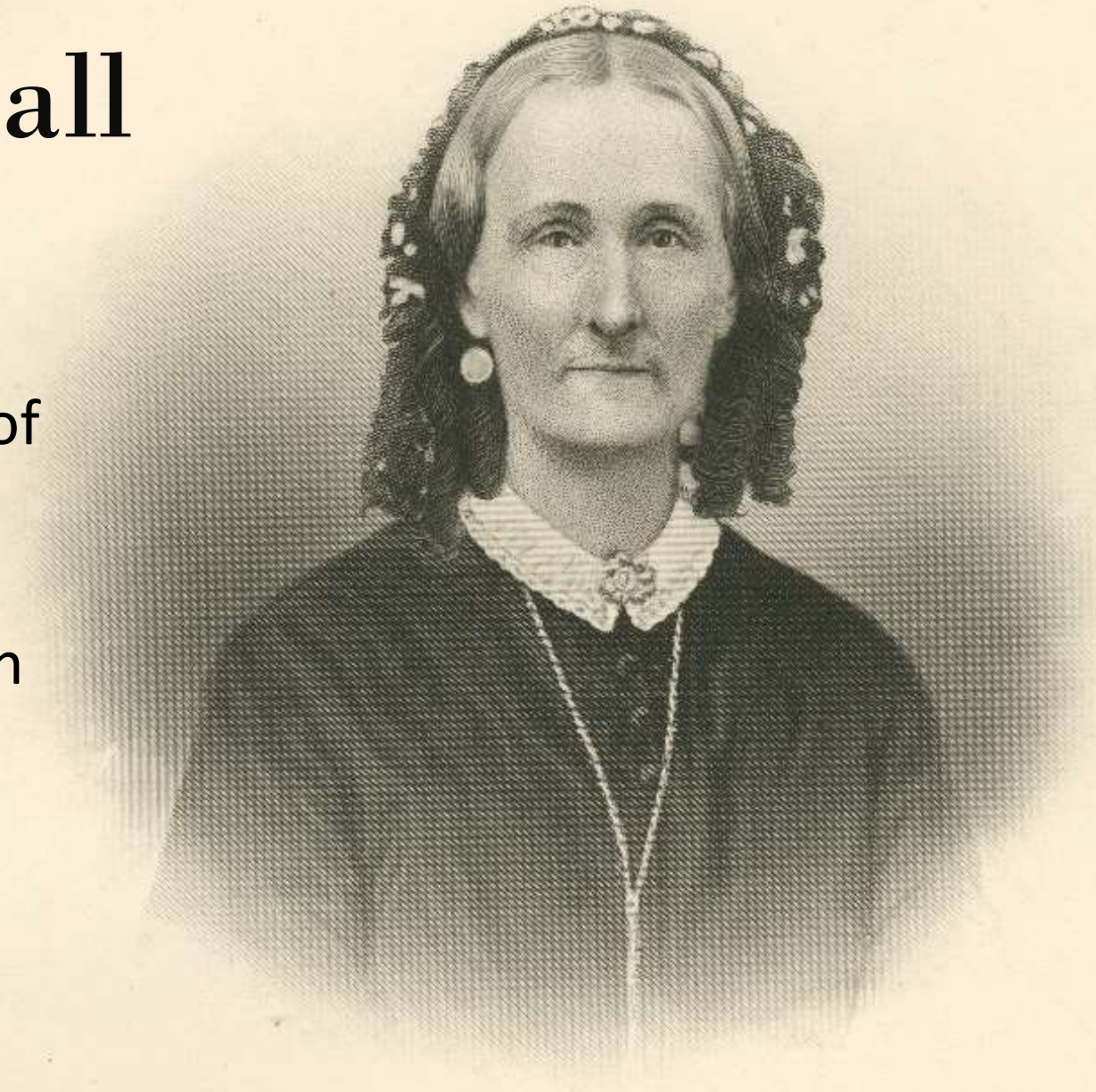


# Vilate Murray Kimball

(1806-1867)

Wife of Heber C. Kimball and mother of Helen Mar Kimball.

Best-known for her part in the “Hurrah for Israel!” story.





extended his hand to Oliver and said he wanted to drop any disagreement that had come between them. Oliver shook his hand, and they parted ways.<sup>38</sup>

Joseph, Sidney, and Hyrum arrived back in Kirtland a few weeks later. In the homes of relatives, Hyrum found his five children still mourning the sudden loss of their mother, who lay buried in a cemetery beside the temple. With his new responsibilities in the First Presidency, Hyrum had no idea how he would care for them on his own.<sup>39</sup>

Joseph encouraged his brother to marry again and recommended Mary Fielding.<sup>40</sup> She was kind, well educated, and committed to the church. She would be an excellent companion for Hyrum and a caring mother for his children.

Hyrum proposed to Mary a short time later. At thirty-six, she had received more than one marriage proposal in her life, but she had always declined them. Once, her mother had warned her never to marry a widower with children. If she agreed to marry Hyrum, she would instantly become a mother of six.

Mary considered the proposal and accepted. She already admired the Smith family, thought of Joseph as a brother, and respected Hyrum for his humility.<sup>41</sup> They were married the day before Christmas.<sup>42</sup>

MANY SAINTS WERE RELIEVED to have Joseph back in Kirtland, but any hope that he could restore harmony

to the church soon evaporated. Warren Parrish, Luke Johnson, and John Boynton were meeting weekly with Grandison Newell and other enemies of the church to denounce the First Presidency. Former stalwarts like Martin Harris soon joined them, and by the end of the year, the leading dissenters had organized a church of their own.<sup>43</sup>

A short time later, Vilate Kimball wrote her husband in England about the state of the church in Ohio. Knowing Heber's love for Luke Johnson and John Boynton, who had been his fellow quorum members, Vilate hesitated to tell him the terrible news.<sup>44</sup>

"I have no doubt but it will pain your heart," she wrote Heber. "They profess to believe the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants but in works deny them."<sup>45</sup>

At the end of the letter, Marinda Hyde added a note to her husband, Orson. Marinda's older brother was Luke Johnson, and the apostasy was just as heartbreaking for her. "Such times in Kirtland you never witnessed as we now have," she wrote, "for it seems that all confidence in each other is gone." She had to watch and pray to know for herself the right course to take through the perilous times.

"If ever I wanted to see you in my life," she told Orson, "it is now."<sup>46</sup>

Nothing seemed to temper the dissenters' feelings. They claimed that Joseph and Sidney had mismanaged the Kirtland Safety Society and cheated the Saints.

Warren believed that a prophet should be more godly than other people, and he used the Safety Society's demise to show how Joseph fell short of this standard.<sup>47</sup>

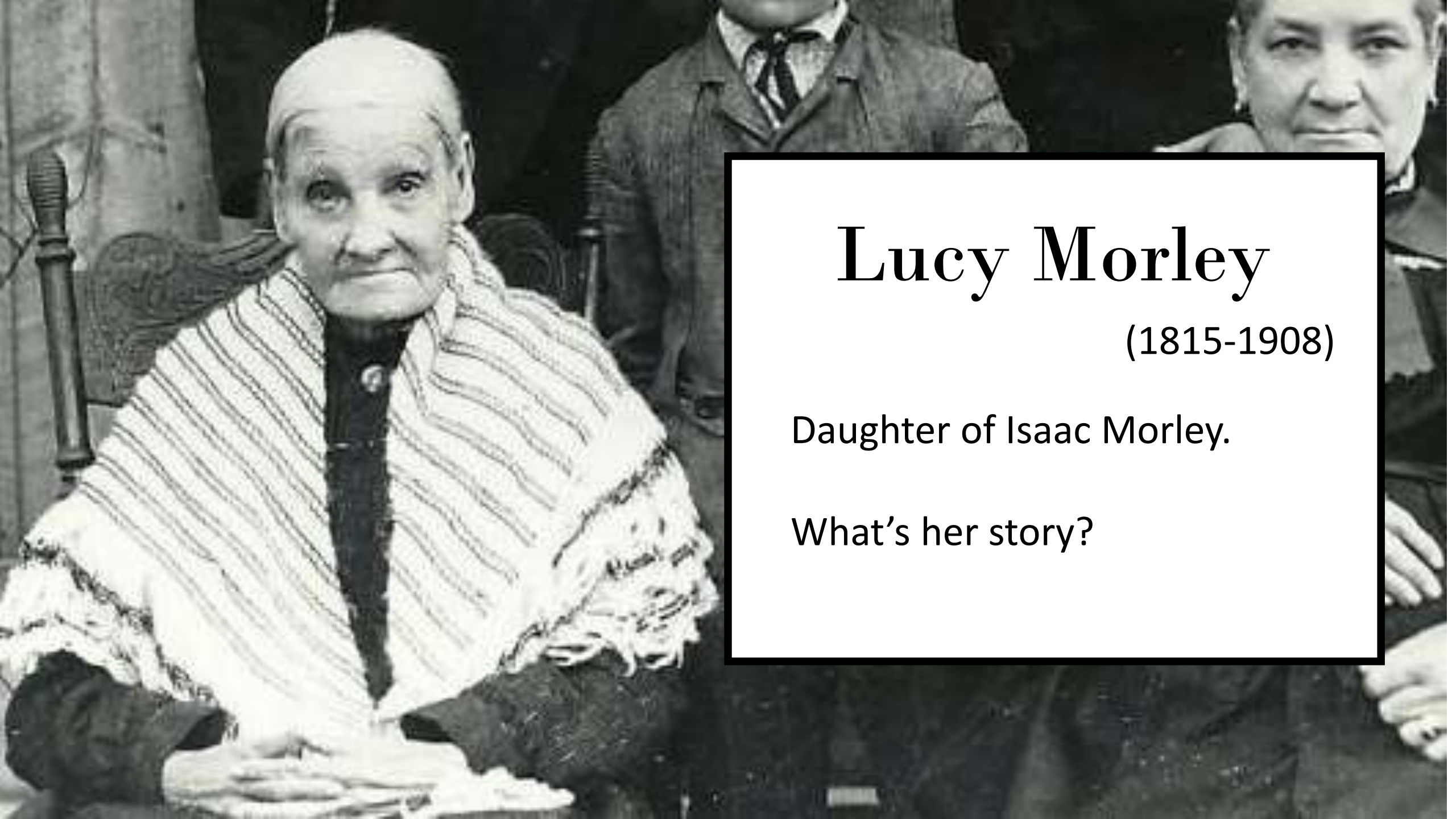
After months of trying to reconcile with the leading dissenters, the Kirtland high council excommunicated them. The dissenters then seized the temple for their own church meetings and threatened to drive anyone who was still loyal to Joseph out of Kirtland.

Vilate believed the dissenters were wrong to turn away from the Saints, yet she felt sorrow for them rather than anger. "After all that I have said about this dissenting party," she wrote Heber, "there are some of them that I love, and I have great feeling and pity for them."<sup>48</sup> She knew the collapse of the Safety Society had tried them spiritually and temporally. She too thought that Joseph had made mistakes while managing the institution, but she had not lost faith in the prophet.

"I have every reason to believe that Joseph has humbled himself before the Lord and repented," she told Heber. And she trusted that the church would weather the storm.

"The Lord says, he that cannot endure chastisement but denies me cannot be sanctified," she wrote. That might mean facing hostility in Kirtland alone while she and the children waited for Heber to return from his mission. Or if things got worse, it could mean abandoning their home and moving to Missouri.

"If we shall have to flee," she told Heber, "I shall."<sup>49</sup>



# Lucy Morley

(1815-1908)

Daughter of Isaac Morley.

What's her story?





## Gathered In

In the fall of 1830, not far from Kirtland, fifteen-year-old Lucy Morley finished her usual housework and took a seat beside her employer, Abigail Daniels. As Abigail worked her loom, moving a weaving shuttle back and forth through crisscrossing threads, Lucy wound yarn onto thin spools. The cloth they wove would go to Lucy's mother in exchange for Lucy's services around the Daniels house. With many children under her roof, and no teenage daughters, Abigail relied on Lucy to help keep her family clean and fed.

While the two worked side by side, they heard a knock at the door. "Come in," Abigail called out.

Glancing up from her spool, Lucy saw three men enter the room. They were strangers, but they were well dressed and looked friendly. All three of them appeared

to be a few years younger than Abigail, who was in her early thirties.

Lucy stood up and brought more chairs into the room. As the men sat down, she took their hats and returned to her seat. The men introduced themselves as Oliver Cowdery, Parley Pratt, and Ziba Peterson, preachers from New York who were passing through town on their way to the West. They said the Lord had restored His true gospel to their friend, a prophet named Joseph Smith.

As they spoke, Lucy quietly attended to her work. The men talked about angels and a set of gold plates the prophet had translated by revelation. They testified that God had sent them on their mission to preach the gospel one last time before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

When they finished their message, the rhythmic clatter of Abigail's loom stopped, and the woman turned around on her bench. "I do not want any of your damnable doctrine taught in my house," she said, angrily waving the shuttle in their faces.

The men tried to persuade her, testifying that their message was true. But Abigail ordered them to leave, saying she did not want them polluting her children with false doctrine. The men asked if she would at least feed them. They were hungry and had not eaten all day.

"You cannot have anything to eat in my house," Abigail snapped. "I do not feed impostors."

Suddenly, Lucy spoke up, horrified that Abigail would speak to servants of God so rudely. "My father lives one mile from here," she said. "He never turns

anyone hungry from his door. Go there and you will be fed and cared for."

Fetching their hats, Lucy followed the missionaries outside and showed them how to get to her parents' house. The men thanked her and started down the road.

"God bless you," they said.

After the men were out of sight, Lucy went back into the house. Abigail was at her loom again, running the shuttle back and forth. "I hope you feel better now," she said to Lucy, clearly irritated.

"Yes, I do," replied Lucy.<sup>1</sup>

AS LUCY PROMISED, THE three missionaries found a hearty meal at the Morley home. Her parents, Isaac and Lucy, were members of Sidney Rigdon's congregation, and they believed that followers of Christ should share their goods and property with each other as one large family. Following the example of saints in the New Testament who tried to have "all things common," they had opened their large farm to other families who wanted to live together and practice their beliefs separate from the competitive, often selfish world around them.<sup>2</sup>

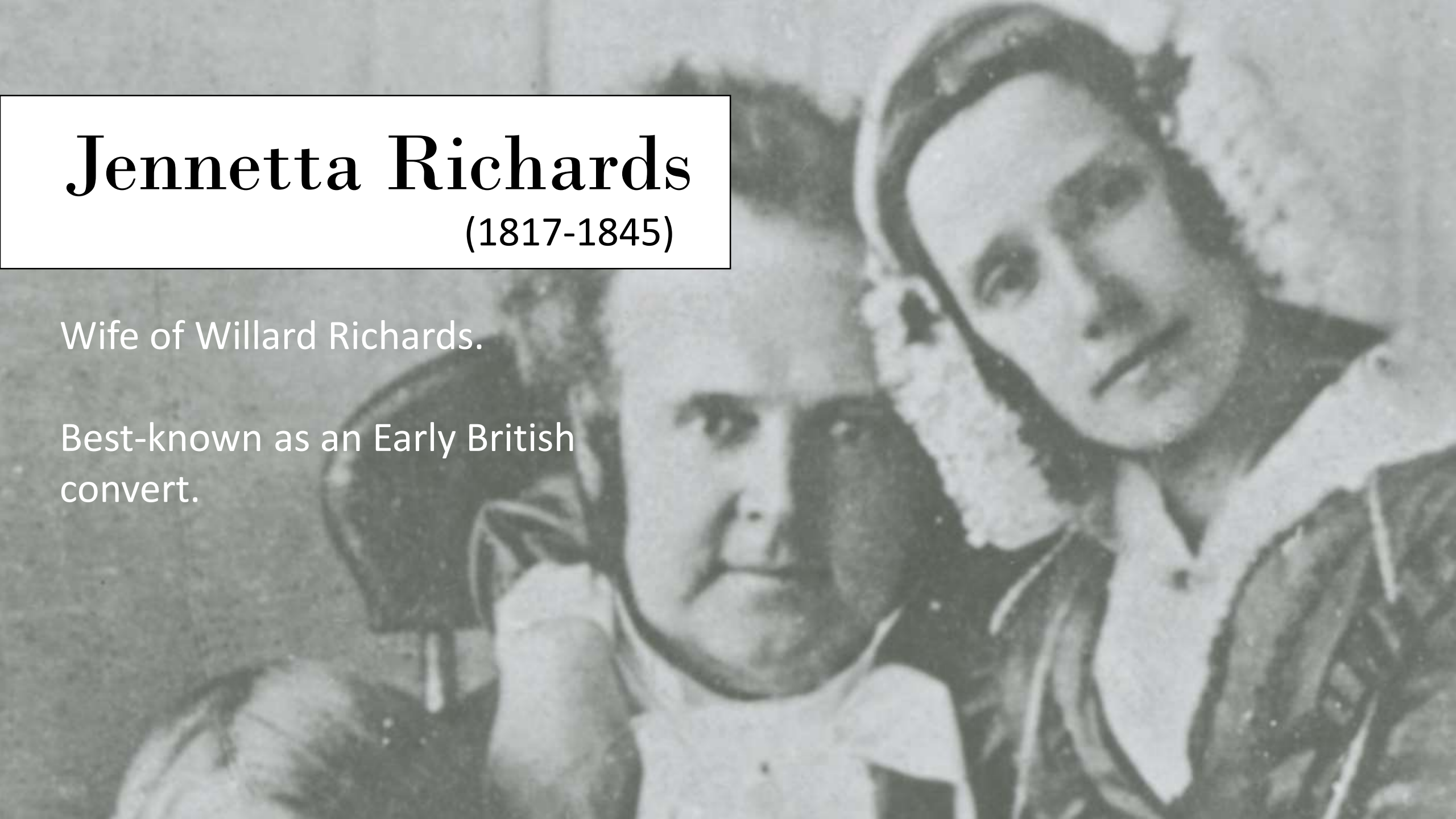
That evening, the missionaries taught the Morleys and their friends. The families responded to the missionaries' message of preparing for the Savior's return and millennial reign, and around midnight, seventeen people were baptized.

# Jennetta Richards

(1817-1845)

Wife of Willard Richards.

Best-known as an Early British convert.







## Move On to the West

When Jennetta Richards made a short trip to Preston, England, in August 1837, her friends Ann and Thomas Walmesley had much to say about a group of missionaries from America.

Ann had been sick for years, slowly wasting away until she was little more than skin and bones. When Heber Kimball preached to her, he promised that she would be healed if she had faith, repented, and entered the waters of baptism. Ann was baptized into the new church soon after, along with eight others, and her health began to improve steadily.

Many of the people who were baptized had belonged to the congregation of James Fielding. Although Reverend Fielding had allowed the missionaries to

preach in his church, he refused baptism himself and had come to resent the loss of his parishioners.<sup>1</sup>

Jennetta was intrigued by the message of the American missionaries. She lived in a small rural village called Walkerfold, fifteen miles from Preston's smokestacks and crowded streets. Her own father was a Christian minister in the village, so she had grown up with the word of God in her home.

Now, only weeks away from her twentieth birthday, she was curious to learn more of God's truth. When she visited the Walmesleys, she met Heber and was struck by what he said about angels, an ancient record written on gold plates, and a living prophet who received revelations from God, like prophets of old.

Heber invited Jennetta to hear him preach that evening. She went and listened and wanted to hear more. The following day, she heard him preach again and knew his words were true.

The next morning, Jennetta asked Heber to baptize her. He and Orson Hyde followed her to the banks of the River Ribble, and Heber immersed her in the water. They then confirmed her at the river's edge.

Jennetta wanted to stay in Preston with the other Saints after her baptism, but she needed to return to her parents in Walkerfold. She was eager to share her new faith with them, yet she was unsure how her father would respond to her decision to join with the Saints.

"The Lord will soften the heart of thy father," Heber told her. "I will yet have the privilege of preaching in his chapel."

Hoping he was right, Jennetta asked Heber to pray for her.<sup>2</sup>

JOSEPH TRAVELED THAT SAME summer to Canada to visit the Saints in Toronto. In his absence, Joseph Sr. spoke at a Sunday meeting in the Kirtland temple about the floundering Safety Society. He defended his son's character and condemned the actions of the dissenters, who were sitting at the other end of the room.

As the patriarch addressed the Saints, Warren Parrish stood and demanded to speak. Joseph Sr. told him not to interrupt, but Warren bounded across the room and forced his way onto the stand. He seized Joseph Sr. and tried to pull him away from the pulpit. The patriarch cried out for Oliver Cowdery, who served as the local justice of the peace, but Oliver did nothing to help his old friend.

Seeing his father in danger, William Smith sprang to his feet, threw his arms around Warren, and dragged him off the stand. John Boynton lunged forward, unsheathing a sword. He pointed the blade at William's chest and threatened to run his fellow apostle through if he took another step. Other dissenters drew knives and pistols from their pockets and surrounded William.

The temple erupted in chaos. People scrambled for doorways or escaped out nearby windows. Constables

church. Many of them sympathized with Warren Parrish and his new church in Kirtland. Like Warren, they were determined to oppose the prophet.<sup>5</sup>

Day by day, as the Saints awaited Joseph's return to Far West, Oliver's disdain for church leaders grew. He doubted they would understand why he acted as he did. "With the unreasonable and ignorant," he scoffed, "we do not expect to be applauded or approved."<sup>6</sup>

He still had faith in the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the gospel, and he could not forget or deny the sacred experiences he had shared with the prophet. They had been brothers and the best of friends, fellow servants of Jesus Christ.

But now those days were a distant memory.<sup>7</sup>

AFTER JENNETTA RICHARDS RETURNED to her home in Walkerfold, England, her parents, John and Ellin Richards, learned with interest about Heber Kimball and her baptism. Taking out a pen and paper, her father composed a short letter to the missionary, inviting him to preach at his chapel.

"You are expected to be here next Sunday," he wrote. "Although we be strangers to one another, yet I hope we are not strangers to our blessed Redeemer."

Heber arrived the following Saturday, and the reverend greeted him warmly. "I understand you are the minister lately from America," he said. "God bless you." He ushered Heber into his home and offered him something to eat.

The family visited with Heber late into the night.<sup>8</sup> As Jennetta watched the men get acquainted, their differences were apparent. Her father was seventy-two years old and had preached from the pulpit in Walkerfold for more than forty years. He was a small man who wore a brown wig and read Greek and Latin.<sup>9</sup> Heber, on the other hand, was tall and broad and had a bald head. He was not yet forty and had little education or social polish.

And yet they became fast friends. The next morning, the two men walked to the Walkerfold chapel together. Knowing an American missionary would be preaching, more people than usual had come to the meeting, and the tiny chapel was filled to overflowing. After the reverend opened the meeting with singing and prayer, he invited Heber to preach.

Heber took the stand and spoke to the congregation in the language of a common man. He talked about the importance of faith in Jesus Christ and sincere repentance. He said a person needed to be baptized by immersion and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by someone who had proper authority from God.

Like the converts in Canada a year earlier, the people in Walkerfold responded readily to the message, which fit with their understanding of the Bible. That afternoon, more people came to the chapel to hear Heber preach again. When he finished, the congregation was in tears and Jennetta's father invited him to preach the next day.

Soon Jennetta was not the only believer in Walkerfold. After Heber's Monday sermon, the people

in the congregation begged him to preach again on Wednesday. By the end of the week, he had baptized six members of the congregation—and the people of Walkerfold were pleading to hear more.<sup>10</sup>

ON MARCH 14, 1838, JOSEPH, Emma, and their three children arrived in Far West after nearly two months on the road. Eager to welcome the prophet to Zion, the Saints greeted the family with a joyful reception. Their friendly words and kind embraces were a happy change from the dissent and hostility Joseph had left in Kirtland. The Saints that crowded around him had a spirit of unity, and love abounded among them.<sup>11</sup>

Joseph wanted to make a fresh start in Missouri. Saints from Kirtland and from branches of the church in the eastern United States and Canada would soon arrive. To accommodate them, the church needed to establish stakes of Zion where they could gather in peace and have the chance to prosper.

Oliver had already scouted the area for new gathering places, and his report was promising. But Joseph knew he had to address the growing dissent in Far West before the Saints could begin any new settlements. It grieved him to see friends like Oliver falling away from the church, but he could not allow discord to flourish in Missouri as it had in Kirtland.

Joseph credited the leadership of Thomas Marsh and the high council for the relative peace in Far West.





# Emily Partridge

(1824-1899)

Daughter of Edward and  
Lydia Partridge.

Perhaps best-known as a  
plural wife of Joseph Smith  
and Brigham Young.

together and ensured that their relationships continued beyond the grave.

Yet up to now no women and only a handful of men had received the endowment, and many Saints were still unaware of the eternal marriage covenant. Joseph clung to the promise that he would live to finish his mission, and he yearned for the temple to be completed so he could introduce the Saints to these ordinances. He continued to feel like time was running out.

Still he sprinted forward, urging the Saints to keep pace. He believed extraordinary blessings were available to those who received sacred ordinances and obeyed God's laws. Now, more than ever, his goal was to extend the divine knowledge he had received to a greater number of Saints, to help them make and keep covenants that would uplift and exalt them.<sup>3</sup>

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER FROZE solid that winter, blocking the usual traffic of rafts and riverboats up and down the water. Snow fell often, and icy winds cut across the flatlands and over the bluff. Few Saints stayed outside long since many of them had only low shoes, thin jackets, and threadbare shawls to protect them from the cold and slush.<sup>4</sup>

As the end of winter approached, a bitter chill still hung in the air while Emily Partridge washed clothes and tended children at the Smith home. For more than two years, she and her older sister Eliza had been living

and working with the Smiths, not far from where their mother lived with her new husband.<sup>5</sup>

Emily belonged to the Relief Society and talked often with the women around her. Occasionally she would hear whispers about plural marriage. More than thirty Saints had quietly embraced the practice, including two of her stepsisters and one of her stepbrothers. Emily herself knew nothing about it firsthand.<sup>6</sup>

A year earlier, however, Joseph had mentioned that he had something to tell her. He had offered to write it in a letter, but she asked him not to do so, worried that it might say something about plural marriage. Afterward, she had regretted her decision and told her sister about the conversation, sharing what little she knew about the practice. Eliza appeared upset, so Emily said nothing more.<sup>7</sup>

With no one to confide in, Emily felt like she was struggling alone in deep water. She turned to the Lord and prayed to know what to do, and after some months, she received divine confirmation that she should listen to what Joseph had to say to her—even if it had to do with plural marriage.<sup>8</sup>

On March 4, a few days after her nineteenth birthday, Joseph asked to speak with Emily at the home of Heber Kimball. She set out as soon as she finished work, her mind ready to receive the principle of plural marriage. As expected, Joseph taught it to her and asked if she would be sealed to him. She agreed, and Heber performed the ordinance.<sup>9</sup>

Four days later, her sister Eliza was sealed to Joseph too. The sisters could now talk to each other and share what they understood and felt about the covenants they made.<sup>10</sup>

THE SAINTS CONTINUED TO defend Joseph against the accusations in John Bennett's exposé. Much of what John had written was embellished or flatly untrue, but his claim that Joseph had married multiple women was correct. Unaware of this fact, Hyrum Smith and William Law fiercely denied all of John's statements and unwittingly condemned the actions of Saints who obediently practiced plural marriage.<sup>11</sup>

This made Brigham Young uneasy. As long as members of the First Presidency remained unaware of the practice, he believed, their condemnation of polygamy could prevent Joseph and others from fulfilling the commandment of the Lord.

Joseph had already tried without success to teach his brother and William about plural marriage. Once, during a council meeting, he had barely broached the issue when William interrupted. "If an angel from heaven was to reveal to me that a man should have more than one wife," he said, "I would kill him!"

Brigham could see that Hyrum's and William's actions exhausted Joseph. One Sunday, as Brigham finished his evening chores, Joseph arrived unexpectedly at his door. "I want you to go to my house and preach," Joseph said.



from Nauvoo, they had blessed a sick child, and the child was healed by their faith.

"We went on our way," Jane said of their journey, "rejoicing, singing hymns, and thanking God for His infinite goodness and mercy to us."

"God bless you," Joseph said. "You are among friends now."

The Mannings stayed in the Smith home for a week. During that time, Jane searched for a trunk she had shipped to Nauvoo, but as far as she could tell it had been lost or stolen along the way. Her family members, meanwhile, found places to work and live and soon moved out.

One morning, Joseph noticed that Jane was crying and asked her why. "The folks have all gone and got themselves homes," she said, "and I have got none."

"You have a home right here if you want it," Joseph assured her. He took Jane to see Emma and explained the situation. "She has no home," he said. "Haven't you a home for her?"

"Yes, if she wants one," Emma said.

Jane quickly became a part of the busy household, and the other family members and boarders welcomed her. Her trunk never turned up, but Joseph and Emma soon provided her with new clothes from the store.<sup>31</sup>

THAT FALL, AS HER family settled into their new house, Emma became increasingly troubled over plural

marriage.<sup>32</sup> In His revelation to her thirteen years earlier, the Lord had promised to crown her with righteousness if she honored her covenants and kept the commandments continually. "Except thou do this," He had said, "where I am you cannot come."<sup>33</sup>

Emma wanted to keep the covenants she had made with Joseph and the Lord. But plural marriage often seemed too much to bear. Although she had allowed some of Joseph's plural wives into her household, she resented their presence and sometimes made life unpleasant for them.<sup>34</sup>

Eventually, Emma demanded that Emily and Eliza Partridge leave the house for good. With Joseph at her side, Emma called the sisters into her room and told them that they had to end their relationships with him at once.<sup>35</sup>

Feeling cast off, Emily left the room, angry at Emma and Joseph. "When the Lord commands," she told herself, "His word is not to be trifled with." She intended to do as Emma wished, but she refused to break her marriage covenant.

Joseph followed the sisters out of the room and found Emily downstairs. "How do you feel, Emily?" he asked.

"I expect I feel as anybody would under the circumstances," she said, glancing at Joseph. He looked like he was ready to sink into the earth, and Emily felt sorry for him. She wanted to say something more, but he left the room before she could speak.<sup>36</sup>

Decades later, when Emily was an old woman, she reflected on these painful days. By then, she better

understood Emma's complicated feelings about plural marriage and the pain it caused her.<sup>37</sup>

"I know it was hard for Emma, and any woman, to enter plural marriage in those days," she wrote, "and I do not know as anybody would have done any better than Emma did under the circumstances."<sup>38</sup>

"God must be the judge," she concluded, "not I."<sup>39</sup>

# Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

“Mormon sisters wanted God to remember them; they wanted their family and friends to remember them; and though they didn’t always admit it, many of them also wanted future generations to remember them.”

“Remember Me: Inscriptions of Self in Nineteenth-century Mormonism”

Holbrook and Bowman, eds., *Women and Mormonism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, 45.