



1976

# A History of Female Missionary Activity in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1898

Calvin S. Kunz

*Brigham Young University - Provo*

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A HISTORY OF FEMALE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN THE CHURCH  
OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
1830-1898

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Church History and Doctrine

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

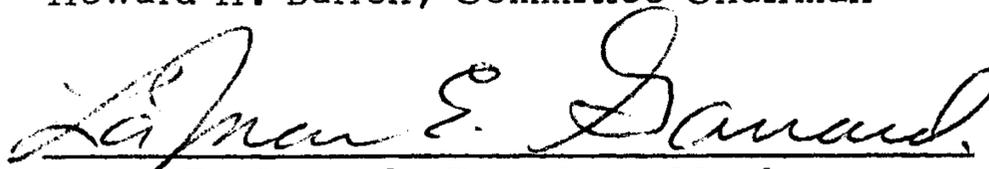
by

Calvin S. Kunz

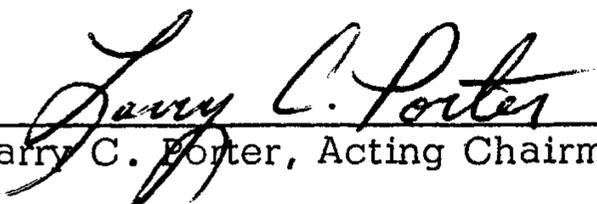
April 1976

This thesis, by Calvin S. Kunz, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Church History and Doctrine of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

  
Howard H. Barron, Committee Chairman

  
Lamar E. Garrard, Committee Member

8/26/75  
Date

  
Larry C. Porter, Acting Chairman

## PREFACE

In 1865 the Church began the practice of "setting apart" Latter-day Saint women to missionary assignments. Therefore, every Latter-day Saint woman who went on a mission beginning in 1865 is classified as an official lady missionary by the author. Even though the names of some women have not appeared on the official missionary records of the Church, they have usually appeared in other reliable documents which associate them with missionary work. The author believes the absence of their names on official records was not intentional by record keepers. They may not have been aware of their activities, or perhaps circumstances were not conducive to the women being set apart before leaving to the mission field.

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the terms "Elder" and "Sister" are used as titles and apply to all male and female missionaries respectively. Therefore, these terms are used throughout this thesis and frequently appear in place of the missionaries' first name, i.e., "Sister" Smith.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express appreciation to my advisory committee, Dr. Howard H. Barron and Dr. Lamar E. Garrard, for their encouragement during the preparation of this thesis.

Dr. Chauncey C. Riddle, Dean of the Brigham Young University Graduate School, and Dr. Larry C. Porter, Acting Chairman of the Department of Church History and Doctrine, and their respective staffs have been very considerate and thoughtful in helping me to complete this work.

Special thanks to the staff at the Church Archives Library of the Church Historical Department for their help and cooperation.

Loving thanks and appreciation to my mother who assisted with the research and provided a home during critical weeks of research.

Above all to my wife, Sharron, and our children for their patience and support and for whom I desired most to complete it.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM .....	1
OVERVIEW--LADY MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES .....	2
Female Religious Activities--Old and New Testaments .....	3
Female Religious Activities--Latter-day Saint Church .....	6
2. BEGINNINGS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT	
1830-1864 .....	10
CHURCH POLICY TOWARD FEMALE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY .....	13
FEMALE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN MISSOURI AND ILLINOIS .....	14
FEMALE MISSIONARY BEGINNINGS IN UTAH .....	18
Louisa Barns Pratt--a Setting Apart .....	18
Lady Missionaries--1851-1864 .....	23
Missionary from Denmark .....	23
THE UTAH AND CIVIL WARS .....	25

Chapter	Page
3. CONTINUED GROWTH AND OFFICIAL EMPHASIS	
1865-1898 . . . . .	27
NUMERICAL ANALYSIS . . . . .	27
SOME REASONS FOR GROWTH . . . . .	28
LADY MISSIONARY POLICY--1865-1897 . . . . .	29
First Lady Missionary Set Apart . . . . .	30
Official Significance and Importance . . . . .	31
Lady Missionary Policy in 1890 . . . . .	32
POLICY CHANGE IN 1898 . . . . .	34
First Presidency's Qualified Approval . . . . .	35
Regular Certified Proselyting Lady Missionaries . . . . .	36
The First Regularly Certified Proselyting Lady Missionary . . . . .	38
MISSION ASSIGNMENTS--1865-1898 . . . . .	38
PARENTHETIC PURPOSES AND MOTIVATIONS . . . . .	40
Visiting Friends and Relatives . . . . .	40
First Parenthetic Missionary Assignment . . . . .	40
Genealogical Missions . . . . .	42
First Six Genealogical Missionaries . . . . .	42
For Most Any Reason . . . . .	45
Polygamy . . . . .	46
Education . . . . .	47

Chapter	Page
Accompany Husbands . . . . .	47
First Independent Lady Missionaries . . . . .	48
THE FIRST SINGLE LADY MISSIONARIES . . . . .	50
Single Lady Missionaries Before 1865 . . . . .	51
Single Lady Missionaries After 1865 . . . . .	52
The First Regularly Certified Single Proselyting Lady Missionaries . . . . .	54
MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE . . . . .	55
4. LIFE STYLE AND EXPERIENCE . . . . .	57
SPECIAL AND GENERAL ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS . . . . .	58
Routine . . . . .	58
Leadership and Teaching School . . . . .	60
Palestine Missionary . . . . .	65
Preaching and Proselyting . . . . .	66
PROBLEMS AND TRIALS . . . . .	70
Personal Relationships . . . . .	70
Learning the Language . . . . .	73
On the Battlefield . . . . .	74
The Clergy . . . . .	75
The Mobs . . . . .	75
Sickness and Death . . . . .	76
First Lady Missionary Death . . . . .	77

Chapter	Page
Blinded Lady Missionary . . . . .	78
Death of a Husband--Birth of a Son . . . . .	78
Death of Three Children . . . . .	79
Insubordinate Lady Missionary . . . . .	80
LIVING CONDITIONS . . . . .	81
Earn Their Own Way . . . . .	81
House Full of Rats . . . . .	83
Lady Missionary Humor . . . . .	84
MODE OF TRAVEL . . . . .	85
5. SUMMARY . . . . .	90
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	94

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The history of Latter-day Saints is replete with stories about its missionary efforts throughout the world. Missionary work in this Church ranks as one of the most important activities, having involved thousands upon thousands of its members through the years.

The participation of Latter-day Saint women in missionary activity before 1899 has been recorded in only a few brief accounts. Since no continuous history of their involvement has been compiled, the purpose of this study will be to provide such an account. The author believes the year 1898 is a good place to end this thesis for two reasons. First, 1898 marked the end of one phase in the development of church policy towards lady missionaries and the beginning of a new one. Second, the numbers of women who became involved in missionary activities after 1898 would have entailed time and research beyond the recommended scope of a project of this nature.

Special emphasis will be given to female missionary activities in the following areas:

1. Latter-day Saint women who were formally called and set apart to labor specifically in proselyting activities. Three categories of proselyting lady missionaries will be differentiated: (a) those who accompanied their husbands; (b) those who were currently married but called separate from their husbands, and those who had been previously married but were not at the time of their call; (c) any who were called that had not been married.

2. Latter-day Saint women called to special missionary functions that directly supported the proselyting cause, such as a call to establish a mission school.

3. Latter-day Saint women who were called to do missionary work incidental to the primary reason for their venture, such as genealogical research or visiting relatives.

4. The philosophy and attitude of Latter-day Saint church leaders and laymen towards women officially participating on a proselyting mission.

#### OVERVIEW--LADY MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

Margaret Brachenbury Crook, author of the book Women and Religion, believes that individuals have a responsibility to develop and "carry forward" a heritage "that concerns men as well as women and offers benefits to both."<sup>1</sup> The author of this thesis is in full agreement

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<sup>1</sup>Margaret Brachenbury Crook, Women and Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 1.

with these sentiments and believes the record made by Latter-day Saint lady missionary activities represents no small part in the portrayal of how feminine involvement has benefited mankind.

Perhaps an increased appreciation of modern Latter-day Saint lady missionary activities can be gained by looking briefly at what may be termed lady missionary work within the church in both ancient and modern times.

Female Religious Activities--  
Old and New Testaments

It is a well-known historical fact that women have not always enjoyed the same social or political status with men. Nevertheless, women among the ancient Hebraic societies, by comparison, were accorded a somewhat higher respect than were women elsewhere during that time. As aptly expressed by one author, Charles C. Ryrie,

It is true . . . that Judaism did share the universal conception of the inferiority of women; but it, unlike Mohammedanism for instance, did not sanction the total subjection of women to men, but rather sought to elevate women in their proper sphere. Neither was there in Judaism the separation of the sexes so common among other peoples, for Hebrew women mixed more freely and often took a positive and influential part in both public and private affairs.<sup>2</sup>

A few examples of Hebrew women and their involvement in religious affairs, although not specifically proselyting in nature, can be cited from the Bible. Miriam, Deborah and Hulda were prophetesses of

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<sup>2</sup>Charles Caldwell Ryrie, The Place of Women in the Church (New York: Macmillan Co., 1958), p. 8.

the Old Testament who were consulted in matters of spiritual and religious concern. Mention is made of a prophetess in Isaiah as well as the prophetess Noakiah.<sup>3</sup>

The New Testament account renders some interesting examples about women who were apparently involved with religious activities of a proselyting nature. Ella F. Smith, in an article entitled "Woman's Mind Equal to Man's" published in the Woman's Exponent, elaborated on the fact that a woman was the first commissioned to go and proclaim the news of Christ's resurrection.<sup>4</sup> It is doubtful that this "commission" constituted any kind of formal call such as in being set apart. Nevertheless, Ella Smith's suggestion takes on further significance when it is realized that the Prophet Joseph Smith had previously called attention to the event describing Mary as "the first at the resurrection."<sup>5</sup> Ella Smith's inspiration for referring to Mary's charge most likely came from Joseph Smith. Edward W. Tullidge, early Mormon author and historian, in turn described the Prophet's remark by saying, "Wonderfully suggestive was his (Joseph Smith's) prompting that woman was the first witness of the resurrection."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>4</sup>Ella F. Smith, "Woman's Mind Equal to Man's," Woman's Exponent, XVIII (April 15, 1890), pp. 177-78.

<sup>5</sup>Edward A. Tullidge, The Women of Mormondom (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1965), p. 76.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

In the Apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians, he entreats the saints to "help those women which laboured with me in the gospel" (Philippians 4:3). Obviously, the women were involved in important activities assisting Paul in his labors, although the exact nature of their activities is not described. Charles Ryrie believes the women held a place of distinction and suggests their labors may have been missionary oriented.

Whatever was their position in the Philippian Church, they held a place of honor and usefulness--perhaps even in evangelistic work--since they are said to have wrestled together with Paul in the gospel.<sup>7</sup>

[The Millennial Star for August 1840] contains an article in which the duties of women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are discussed. Reference is also made to those women with whom Paul labored: ["and it is their privilege . . . to labor with us in the gospel, like the holy women in the days of Paul."<sup>8</sup>]

It is possible that the women Paul was talking about were not missionaries per se. Nevertheless, they labored with a man whose ministry was primarily evangelistic and in all probability the women were involved in like manner.

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<sup>7</sup>Ryrie, p. 54.

<sup>8</sup>Parley P. Pratt, ed., "Duties of Women," The Millennial Star, I (August 1840), p. 101.

Female Religious Activities--  
Latter-day Saint Church

The restoration of the gospel and the founding of the Church in this dispensation came during a time when a significant expansion of female participation in social, political and religious affairs occurred in the United States. Woman's informal participation in church affairs began early in the country experiencing a timid progress especially during the first third of the nineteenth century. Most of the congregations maintained feminine societies involving themselves in primarily non-administrative type functions. Some of the younger, less conservative churches, however, were more liberal about granting female expression and involvement in contrast to these older more partisan sects who were slow to grant participation, especially in church government and public activities.<sup>9</sup> The ordaining of women to the ministry, for example, in the older sects occurred rather late in the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

The absence of female participation in church government was not necessarily the case, however, when it came to missionary movements. For example, E. M. Wherry, in his compilation Women in Missions states:

The first ship that carried American missionaries to the heathen world bore away Harriet Newell and Ann Haseltine

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<sup>9</sup>Ileen A. S. LeCheminant, "The Status of Women in the Philosophy of Mormonism from 1830-1845" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, May 1942), pp. 30-31.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 38-39.

Judson. In 1817 two unmarried ladies were teaching among the North American Indians, and by 1880, 104 had been sent to the different tribes by a single board.<sup>11</sup>

Mr. Wherry further said that missionary work "especially lended itself to women's participation."

The particular philosophy of Latter-day Saints towards female participation in church government, missionary work and other related activities, like many contemporary sects, developed gradually, but steadily as the Church grew in experience and doctrinal understanding.<sup>12</sup>

For example, although Mormon women are not allowed to hold the priesthood of the Church, its holy writ instructed that Emma Smith, wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith, should be ordained to "expound scriptures and to exhort the Church according as it shall be given by my Spirit."<sup>13</sup> This divine injunction, given in July, 1830, accorded her the right to speak in church services and to do missionary work. The revelation was directed specifically to Emma Smith, which, among other things, appointed her as Joseph's scribe.

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<sup>11</sup>E. M. Wherry, (Comp.), Women in Missions (New York: American Tract Society, 1894), pp. 84-86.

<sup>12</sup>LeCheminant, pp. 136, 190, 202, 214.

<sup>13</sup>The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972), 25:7.

In August, 1840, some instructions from Parley P. Pratt, an apostle of the Church during its early beginnings, elaborated on and affirmed the Church's position toward female participation in this and other respects.

. . . it is their privilege and duty to warn all, both men and women, of what God is doing in these last days, so far as they have opportunity, -and invite all to come and submit themselves to the gospel of Christ. . . . Women may pray, testify, speak in tongues and prophesy in the Church, when liberty is given them by the Elders.<sup>14</sup>

During the "Kirtland" and "Nauvoo" periods of Latter-day Saint Church history, Mormon women taught Sunday School and, in Nauvoo, participated in the Church temple ordinances of baptism for the dead and the endowment.<sup>15</sup> In 1842 the Latter-day Saint Female Relief Society was organized at Nauvoo. The purpose of this organization was to provide "relief of the poor, destitute, the widow and the orphan and for the exercise of all benevolent purposes."<sup>16</sup> It also afforded an opportunity for Latter-day Saint women to learn leadership and function as executives within their own society.

Missionary involvement of Latter-day Saint women up to the Nauvoo period and beyond to the turn of the nineteenth century progressed

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<sup>14</sup>Pratt, pp. 100-01.

<sup>15</sup>LeCheminant, p. 203.

<sup>16</sup>Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1908), IV, 567. Hereafter cited as History of the Church; see also LeCheminant, pp. 190-91, 202.

from that of merely accompanying one's missionary husband to that of laboring as an independent, fully certified proselyting missionary. A somewhat detailed account of these women and their missionary work is the basic subject of the foregoing chapters.

## Chapter 2

### BEGINNINGS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT 1830-1864

The first formal missionary labors in the Church are traditionally attributed to Samuel H. Smith. He was the brother of Joseph Smith, the Prophet and founder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Samuel is believed to be the first to proselyte among people other than his friends and relatives.<sup>1</sup> There had not been any formally designated missionaries up to and including the date of the first general conference of the restored Church in June of 1829. The "news" had gone by word of mouth from "friend to friend, from neighbor to neighbor, from relative to relative."<sup>2</sup>

Missionary work between 1830 and 1834 changed somewhat in nature, and appointed missions were gradually becoming more frequent. In presumably every case these missionaries were male converts who, having been ordained as elders, went out and

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Shelton Williams, "The Missionary Movements of the Latter-day Saint Church in New England 1830-1850," (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, June 1969), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Samuel George Ellsworth, "A History of Mormon Missions in the United States and Canada 1830-1860," (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of California, January 1951), p. 67.

warned his neighbor.<sup>3</sup> One of the first of the formally appointed missions occurred during the second general conference of the Church held in September, 1830.<sup>4</sup> Then again at the fourth conference of the Church, held June 3, 1831, in Kirtland, Ohio, another formal mission was planned. This time it was with a two-fold purpose: first, to dedicate the land of Missouri for the building of a temple, and second, to preach the gospel along the way. Included among the designated missionaries was the Prophet's brother, Hyrum. He was accompanied by their mother, Lucy Mack Smith, along with her niece, Almira, an early convert, and others. They journeyed to Pontiac, Michigan, where relatives of Lucy Mack's were visited and Mormonism was introduced to that neighborhood.<sup>5</sup> Although Sister Smith was not an official missionary per se, she, like no doubt many before her, exemplifies feminine involvement in proselyting activities. This for all intents and purposes constitutes "lady missionary" work.<sup>6</sup>

During the next six or seven years additional events occurred in the new church that significantly influenced future missionary labors for both sexes. The Latter-day Saint Church general conference held in Amherst, Ohio, on January 25, 1832, for example, produced activities

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>6</sup>LeCheminant, p. 166.

that spread the work into New England, the Middle States, Ohio and eventually Canada.<sup>7</sup> Three years later proselyting activities expanded again to even greater heights due to the organization and subsequent missionary efforts of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in February and March of 1835.<sup>8</sup> The record shows some increase in the number of women who accompanied their husbands on their missions during this period, although the increase was not proportionate to the overall growth of the missionary force. The author could not find specific evidence of active proselyting on the part of the wives. Nevertheless, it is likely that they became involved to some limited extent as did mother Lucy Mack in 1831.

In June of 1834 Zerubbabel Snow, a prominent figure in Mormon Church history, returned to Ohio from the Zion's Camp Expedition and with his family went to Canada on a mission. While there Brother Snow was obliged to work week days to support his family.<sup>9</sup> During the winter of 1835, David W. Patten, an apostle of the Church and one of its early martyrs, "took his wife and started on another mission to Tennessee."<sup>10</sup> John E. Page, another future designate of the Twelve,

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<sup>7</sup>Smith, History of the Church, I, 242-45.

<sup>8</sup>Williams, pp. 61, 75.

<sup>9</sup>Missionary Record 1830-1854, microfilm, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City, Utah). Hereafter cited as Church Archives.

<sup>10</sup>Andrew Jenson, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901), I, 78.

left Kirtland, Ohio, with his family for Canada on February 16, 1837. During this mission he "buried his wife and two children who died as martyrs for their religion through extreme suffering for want of the common comforts of life."<sup>11</sup> In May of that same year Mercy Rachel Fielding Thompson accompanied her husband, Robert Thompson, on a mission.<sup>12</sup> The wife of Wilford Woodruff, another future apostle and later president of the Church, also accompanied her husband to the mission field in November of 1837.<sup>13</sup>

#### CHURCH POLICY TOWARD FEMALE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

Church leaders were not generally in favor of wives accompanying their husbands on missions. This attitude accounts, in part at least, for the fact that relatively few made the venture. It could also explain why missionary records do not show that any women were officially called and set apart as were the men during this period. [Specific counsel against women going on missions was given as early as June, 1835. In a letter to John M. Burke the Church authorities counseled that "Every elder that can, after he has provided for his family (if any he has)

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<sup>11</sup>Andrew Jenson, Historical Record, V, 57.

<sup>12</sup>Autobiography, Mercy Rachel Fielding Thompson 1804-1847, typescript, Church Archives.

<sup>13</sup>Missionary Records General, 1830-1854, I, Church Archives. Hereafter cited as Missionary Records General.

and paid his debts, must go forth and clear his skirts from the blood of this generation."<sup>14</sup> On August 19 of that same year, the minutes of the High Council at Kirtland, Ohio, records the trial of Almon W. Babbit. During the reproof and instructions portion of the proceedings the council admonished "that it is not advisable for any elder to take his wife with him on a mission to preach."<sup>15</sup> Latter-day Saint Church officials were obviously concerned about the problems that could occur when a man must care for his family and at the same time attempt to be a full-time missionary. This apparently was the case with Zerubbabel Snow and John E. Page as previously cited.

#### FEMALE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN MISSOURI AND ILLINOIS

Persecution of the Church during 1838 and 1839 caused missionary labors to decrease significantly. Thousands of church members were driven from their homes in Missouri until eventually they sought refuge in the state of Illinois. Here the Church proceeded to establish the city of Nauvoo on the east bank of the Mississippi River. They lived in comparatively peaceful circumstances until the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith's death in 1844. Subsequent molestations and persecution

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<sup>14</sup>Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, June 1, 1835, letter to John M. Burke from Presiding Authorities, Church Archives. Hereafter cited as Journal History.

<sup>15</sup>Smith, History of the Church, II, 252.

eventually forced them to the Rocky Mountains during the years 1846 and 1847. The job of reestablishing themselves at Nauvoo and surrounding areas, as before stated, apportioned little time to the business of missionary work.<sup>16</sup> However, the missionary activities that did prevail during these difficult years continued to involve the wives as before.

In the fall of 1840, for example, Olive Grey Frost and her sister, Mary Ann Frost Pratt, wife of Parley P. Pratt, went to England where they remained with their missionary husband and brother-in-law for two years. These ladies are believed to be the first two Latter-day Saint women to cross the ocean in this capacity.<sup>17</sup> Mrs. Charlotte Curtis and the wife of Erastus Snow, a later designated apostle of the Church, also accompanied their husbands on missions during the fall of that year.<sup>18</sup>

In 1841 Elder Willard Richards, another apostle and future member of the First Presidency of the Church, went to Massachusetts with his family.<sup>19</sup>

In the year 1843 the record shows that four more wives accompanied their husbands on missions. Asenath Melvina Banker left with

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<sup>16</sup>Williams, p. 138.

<sup>17</sup>Jenson, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia, VI, 235.

<sup>18</sup>Missionary Records General, November 7, 1840.

<sup>19</sup>Smith, History of the Church, IV, 364.

her husband in April.<sup>20</sup> In that same month, Lewis Robbins and Jacob Gates were given "leave to take their wives."<sup>21</sup> This is the first time mention is made of anyone being given specific permission to take their wives with them. Then Louisa Tanner Lyman, wife of Amasa M. Lyman, an apostle of the Church, accompanied her husband to Indiana.<sup>22</sup>

Phoebe W. Carter Woodruff accompanied her husband, Elder Wilford Woodruff, on a mission to England in 1845.<sup>23</sup>

It is very possible that other women accompanied their husbands during this period from 1838 to 1847; however, the author could not locate any records to that effect until the year 1850.

The fact that relatively few women were involved in missionary labors during the period from 1838 to 1847 was probably due to the prevailing and previously mentioned policy of Church leaders towards lady missionaries.

In May of 1842, for example, the Prophet Joseph Smith addressed the Relief Society at Nauvoo. He warned them that "as females possess refined feelings and sensitivities, they are also subject to overmuch zeal, which must ever prove dangerous and cause them to be

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<sup>20</sup>Missionary Records General, April 1843.

<sup>21</sup>Journal History, April 18, 1843.

<sup>22</sup>Missionary Records General, 1843.

<sup>23</sup>Joyce Augusta Crocheron, Representative Women of Deseret, Biographical Sketches, Brigham Young University Library (J. C. Graham Co., 1884), pp. 37-38.

rigid in a religious capacity."<sup>24</sup> This statement probably represents, in part at least, the Prophet's belief about the nature of women. It would not seem likely, therefore, that he would have been predisposed to commission women as proselyting missionaries like they did the elders at that time.

In 1843 Elders were still being told not to leave on a mission until their families had enough provisions to sustain themselves during their absence.<sup>25</sup> This same advice for women prevailed even after their arrival in the West. In April, 1850, for example, a Church conference was held in Salt Lake City at which time some brethren were called to missions. After the calls were given, President Heber C. Kimball, counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, gave these instructions. "Advise all the elders when they start on missions, to leave their families at home, and then their minds will be more free to serve the Lord."<sup>26</sup>

In spite of this concern on the part of the Church leaders, some significant plans for missionary activities involving women did occur concurrent with the April Conference of 1850.

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<sup>24</sup>Smith, History of the Church, V, 19.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 350-51. Instructions from Brigham Young during a special conference of elders at Nauvoo sometime between April 10 and 12, 1843.

<sup>26</sup>Journal History, Monday, April 8, 1850.

## FEMALE MISSIONARY BEGINNINGS IN UTAH

General Missionary annals of the Latter-day Saint Church reflect virtually no lady missionary activities from the pioneer exodus of 1847 to their Great Salt Lake settlement activities of 1850. Then under the date of April 7, 1850, missionary records show that appointments came for several men to go to the Society Islands. For the first time the record lists the names of the wives who were to accompany them.<sup>27</sup> The women involved with this assignment were Caroline Crosby, wife of Jonathan Crosby; Mrs. Busby (first name not given), wife of Joseph Busby; Jane Tompkins, wife of Thomas Tompkins; Mrs. McMerty (first name not given), wife of "Brother" McMerty (first name not given) and finally Louisa Barns Pratt, wife of Addison Pratt. Addison Pratt was one of the early missionaries to establish a mission in the Society Islands. He was not listed in the above account because of the fact that he had preceded them to the Islands in 1849.<sup>28</sup>

Louisa Barns Pratt--a Setting Apart

Traditionally, Louisa Barns Pratt is believed to be the "first woman called and set apart to fill a mission for the Latter-day Saint

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<sup>27</sup>Missionary Records General, April 7, 1850.

<sup>28</sup>B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1965), III, 386.

Church."<sup>29</sup> On the day of her departure for the Islands, Louisa recorded the event of her being blessed and set apart. In her diary she wrote:

We made a call at President Young's, found supper ready. We partook of their hospitality, and Brother Young blessed me. He said I was called, set apart, and ordained to go to the Islands of the sea to aid my husband in teaching the people.<sup>30</sup>

It is instructive at this point to note that official missionary records do not show any missionary wives as having been officially set apart until 1865.<sup>31</sup> Susa Young Gates, a prominent Latter-day Saint Church member, author and herself a lady missionary, wrote extensively concerning the Latter-day Saint women. In one of her compositions about missionaries of the Church she refers to the time when the Church began the "custom" of formally setting apart lady missionaries.

The custom of setting apart elders before they leave for their missions was evidently not attended to for women until the day when a group of women were sent with their husbands down to the Hawaiian Islands, 15 May 1865.<sup>32</sup>

The missionary record for Louisa Barns Pratt simply states that she "accompanied her husband on his mission to the Society Islands."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Kate B. Carter, Heart Throbs of the West (2d ed.; Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1939), IV, 199.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., VIII, 252.

<sup>31</sup>Missionary Records General, 1856-1880, II, 1865:61.

<sup>32</sup>Susa Young Gates, "Missionaries," Susa Young Gates Papers; Document Case number 19, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>33</sup>Missionary Records General, 1850:32.

The phrase "accompanied her husband" is typical of the records until the year 1865 when specific reference to a "setting apart" begins.<sup>34</sup>

The usual procedure for setting apart male missionaries to their assignment occurred for the men of the Society Island group on April 13, 1850. The document wherein the above event is recorded does not mention anything about the wives of the missionaries being set apart, including Louisa Bams Pratt.<sup>35</sup> According to her diary, as previously cited, she was not "set apart" until May 7, 1850, approximately three weeks later.

It seems plausible, therefore, that the setting apart of women to a mission assignment was not the official intent of the Church or its presiding authorities in 1850. Sometimes, however, individual non-missionary members of a family who were accompanying the missionary were blessed by Church leaders. In 1839, for example, the wives of some missionaries going abroad were blessed by Joseph Smith.<sup>36</sup> In 1877 the infant daughter of Joseph and Sarah Dean, missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, was "blessed" by Elder Wilford Woodruff prior to the family's departure. In contrast to the "blessing" given to Lucy (Dean's infant daughter), her mother and father were "set apart" by Elder Erastus

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<sup>34</sup>Missionary Records General, II, 1865:1.

<sup>35</sup>Journal History, April 13, 1850.

<sup>36</sup>Smith, History of the Church, III, 383.

Snow during the same meeting.<sup>37</sup> Again in 1891 the eleven-year-old daughter of Helen and Isaac Grace, also missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, was "blessed" by Abraham H. Cannon on May 22, 1891.<sup>38</sup>

The information presented above leads this author to believe that Louisa Bams Pratt was "set apart," but probably not by virtue of any official intent on the part of the Latter-day Saint Church or Brigham Young who was its president. She was the only woman in the group and the first in the Church who, with her children, traveled without the companionship of her mate. She was perplexed and frustrated over the venture partially because of some personal difficulties with her husband, Addison. All of these things, without doubt, warranted a blessing at the hands of Church leaders.<sup>39</sup>

Caroline Crosby, wife of missionary designate Jonathan Crosby, and Sister Pratt's own sister, was extremely concerned over her husband's call to a mission. Neither of them were expecting a missionary call because Brigham Young had just recently expressed his belief that they could best serve the Church at home in the Salt Lake Valley settlements.<sup>40</sup> Needless to say, they were surprised when at the April Conference the unexpected appointment came.

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<sup>37</sup>Missionary Records General, II, 1877:130.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 1891-1896, IV, 1891:128.

<sup>39</sup>Carter, VIII, 251.

<sup>40</sup>Autobiography, Caroline Crosby, (typescript), Church Archives, pp. 29-30.

The extent of Caroline's anxieties were probably like Louisa Barns Pratt's, although for somewhat different reasons. She spoke of her feelings about this occasion in her autobiography.

His name was not called with the first that received an appointment, nor until the last day of conference and it took us at last by surprise. The thoughts of being suddenly broken up in all our business affairs occasioned no small degree of confusion in my mind.<sup>41</sup>

Brigham Young and his wife apparently were cognizant of her frustrations also and did what they could to encourage her.

And now it was that friends began to seem nearer . . . many of them came to bid us farewell and wish us much success, among them were Brother and Sister Young . . . . Brother Young proved himself a father and friend indeed to us . . . by . . . wishing us many and great blessings, Sister Young . . . offered me anything she had.<sup>42</sup>

The author could not find any evidence to the effect that Caroline Crosby had been set apart or even blessed. The possibility exists that she may not have recorded such an event, but logic seems to dictate otherwise. If Church policy at that time had been to set apart women to a mission assignment, Caroline would presumably have recorded an event of that preponderance.

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

Lady Missionaries--1851-1864

Three women accompanied their husbands on missions to the Society Islands in 1851. Their names are Jane A. S. Lewis, Mary Jane A. Hammond and Elvira S. Woodbury.<sup>43</sup> Official Latter-day Saint missionary records do not list them.<sup>44</sup> Other documents reveal that Amanda Stevens Lewis, the wife of the above-mentioned Phillip B. Lewis, went to the Society Islands but left the mission field early because of ill health.<sup>45</sup> Two more women also not listed in the official missionary records of 1851 were Elvira Stevens Barney and Christine Bentsen Anderson. Elvira Stevens Barney joined her husband Royal Barney on his mission to the Sandwich Islands.<sup>46</sup>

Missionary from Denmark

Christine Bentsen Anderson was from Denmark and received a call to labor in Bornholm.

In the summer of 1851 she was called by Apostle Erastus Snow to accompany two of the Elders to Bornholm, and help them in their work, by finding a home for them and assisting them otherwise . . . not only did she secure a home for the

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<sup>43</sup>Manuscript History, Hawaiian Mission, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, September 10, 1852, Church Archives; see also Jenson, I, 352.

<sup>44</sup>Missionary Records General, I, 1851.

<sup>45</sup>Jenson, III, 671.

<sup>46</sup>Crocheron, p. 5.

missionaries in her father's house, but she prepared the way for them, in many instances, to preach the gospel.<sup>47</sup>

Although preaching and proselyting are not specifically named as part of her labors during this mission, it is possible that her efforts in "assisting them otherwise" and "preparing the way for the elders to preach" could have involved some kind of proselyting activity.<sup>48</sup>

According to official missionary records there were not any women designated as missionaries during 1852 and 1853.<sup>49</sup> Then in 1854, Caroline Taylor, wife of Apostle John Taylor, the third president of the Latter-day Saint Church, "accompanied her husband . . . on his mission to New York."<sup>50</sup> The wives of two men simply identified as "Collins and Rogers" respectively also accompanied their husbands in the same year. The names of these missionary wives were not given.<sup>51</sup>

Official missionary records of the Church reveal that no women went on missions in any capacity between 1855 and 1865.<sup>52</sup> According to other sources, however, Elizebeth Hoagland Cannon accompanied her

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<sup>47</sup>Jenson, I, 507.

<sup>48</sup>LeCheminant, p. 166.

<sup>49</sup>Missionary Records General, I, 1852-53.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 1854:52.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 1854:72-73.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., II.

husband, George Q. Cannon, on his mission to England in 1860.<sup>53</sup> Elder Cannon had previously been ordained an apostle and called to be a member of the European mission presidency with headquarters in England.<sup>54</sup> It is again possible that other women may have participated in a similar capacity during the same period; however, Elizebeth Hoagland Cannon is the only woman mentioned in any of the documents known to this author.

### THE UTAH AND CIVIL WARS

The responsibility for the absence of female participation in missionary activities up to 1860 rests primarily with the difficulties surrounding the so-called "Utah War." This contest was "waged on the part of the general government for the maintenance of the supremacy of the federal authority in the territory of Utah."<sup>55</sup> The federal government at that time had been led to believe that its vested right to the territory was being challenged by its "Mormon" citizens. Eventually, as events developed, a military "expedition" was sent to investigate. Naturally the Latter-day Saint Church in turn waged the war "in defense of the American principle of the right of local self-government."<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Tullidge, p. 417.

<sup>54</sup>B. H. Roberts, V, 83-84.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., IV, 181.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

Actual combat never did take place between the two sides. The Church, however, made all the preparations it felt was necessary to meet the anticipated military onslaught. Part of their preparation included calling home "all the members of the apostles quorum who were presiding over missions; and quite generally also all the 'Utah Elders;' and all the saints in the most distant outlying settlements."<sup>57</sup>

The Civil War in the United States was the primary reason the Church curtailed sending forth missionaries during the years 1860 to 1865.

As the war between the states grew more severe . . . and absorbed the entire interest of the public thought and attention, President Young's mind was that all elders in the United States should come home. . . . These brethren were called home accordingly, returning in the fall of 1861. This put an end to missionary activity in the United States until sometime after the close of the war.<sup>58</sup>

Finally the termination of the Civil War in 1865 brought about a resumption of and an increase in missionary work for the Church especially in the United States. But a significant proportional increase in female missionary work did not begin until a few years later and inconstantly continued to grow until the close of the nineteenth century.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 240-41.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., V, 105-06.

<sup>59</sup>Missionary Records General, II to VI.

## Chapter 3

### CONTINUED GROWTH AND OFFICIAL EMPHASIS 1865-1898

#### NUMERICAL ANALYSIS

The number of women identified with missionary activities each year between (1830 and 1864 averaged less than one). When the Civil War ended in 1865 the annual rate for females participating in missionary activities increased significantly. For example, from 1865 up to and including 1878 there were nearly two per year. Then the average number of women participants each year from 1879 to 1889 increased to four, and from 1890 to 1898 the yearly average jumped to nearly thirteen.

For some of the years during the period between 1865 and 1879 there is virtually no evidence of any women becoming active with missionary work according to official missionary records. This was the case in the years 1867, 1871, and 1874. In four of those years there was only one woman initiated to missionary work. The highest number during any one year of the same time period was eleven in 1865.<sup>1</sup>

In the period from 1879 to 1889 the figures change considerably. The only year in which there were no women called to missionary work

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., II.

was 1884. The highest number called was in 1886 when eight women went on missions.<sup>2</sup>

The figures change drastically for the period from 1890 to 1898. The lowest number is nine for 1892 and 1893 respectively, with twenty-nine the highest number in the year 1898.<sup>3</sup> The decade of the 1890's is probably the most significant time for lady missionary work except the year 1865. One reason for this is the simple fact that more women were involved in missionary activities during the 1890's than at any previous period of Latter-day Saint Church history.

The scope of this study will not allow for identification by name of each woman who took part in missionary work especially after 1878. An attempt will be made, however, to identify as many as possible but especially those who played the most important roles in lady missionary activities.

#### SOME REASONS FOR GROWTH

The author believes that one of the reasons for the increased participation of Latter-day Saint women in missionary work during the period from 1865 to 1898 has to do with the overall growth of the Church. Naturally, as the membership grew, especially in the mission field, so did the demand for more missionaries in general. This, in turn,

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., II and III.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., IV and V.

increased the possibility for females to respond to that demand. A second reason which could account for the increased involvement of women rests with the fact that in 1865 they began the practice of setting them apart. This suggests that Church leaders may have been more receptive to the idea of female participation in missionary activities, subsequently increasing the incentive for them to take part. It should be remembered, however, that significant increases in female participation did not transpire until fourteen years later in 1879 and again twenty-five years later in 1890. A third plausible factor which could account for the increases as cited had to do with the individual motives of the missionary. Sometimes, for example, women were set apart as missionaries but went for reasons not directly related to the missionary effort, such as performing genealogical research. Nevertheless, they were considered to be missionaries and represent a significant portion of those women who participated.

#### LADY MISSIONARY POLICY--1865-1897

As has been previously discussed in this thesis, the missionary records indicate that it was not until 1865 when the Church began the custom of setting apart women for missionary work. Even though Louisa Barns Pratt was "set apart" in 1850, it was apparently not the official policy of the Church at that time.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>See pages 18-21 in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

On Monday, May 15, 1865, nine women of the Church were set apart as missionaries to accompany their husbands on missions to the Sandwich Islands.

After a showery night and a cloudy morning the day was pleasant in Salt Lake City. At 5:30 p.m. Presidents Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball and Elders George A. Smith and George Q. Cannon set apart Sisters Mildred E. Randall, Mary Green, Telitha Smith, Ana Maria Magdaline World, Mary Ellen Clough, Mary Jane Hammond, Maria Louisa Nebeker, Harriet Lawson and Louisa Jane Bell, to go with their husbands on their missions to the Sandwich Islands.<sup>5</sup>

Mary Jane Hammond, one of the nine women set apart at this time, did not go to the Islands.<sup>6</sup> The next day on Tuesday, May 16, 1865, Emma Smith Wright and Mary Boyden were also set apart for missions to the same place. These two women had not been notified in time to attend the meeting scheduled for the previous day.<sup>7</sup>

#### First Lady Missionary Set Apart

Of the nine women set apart to missionary work on May 15, 1865, records show that Mildred E. Randall was the first.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, she earns the distinction as the first woman to be officially set apart as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints under this new practice.

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<sup>5</sup>Journal History, May 15, 1865.

<sup>6</sup>Missionary Records General, II, 1865:66.

<sup>7</sup>Journal History, May 16, 1865.

<sup>8</sup>Missionary Department Correspondence and General Files, MSS in Church Archives, Salt Lake City; hereafter cited as M.D.C.G.F.

### Official Significance and Importance

It is difficult to specifically determine the degree of importance Church leaders intended to give the calling and setting apart of lady missionaries in 1865. The information available to the author seemed to indicate that they were not anxious for it. It is obvious that in and of itself the act of setting apart, at least, implies official interest and approval; but until the year 1898 Latter-day Saint women in missionary work were not considered to be regular certified missionaries as were their male counterparts.<sup>9</sup> In addition, there apparently was never any distinction intended between those women involved in missionary work who had been set apart and those who had not been before 1898. They who had not been set apart were expected to function in the same manner and with the same authority as did those who were set apart. In 1883, for example, four women accompanied their husbands on missions for the Church. They were Armeda Snow Young to Hawaii,<sup>10</sup> Annie Wells Cannon to the Swiss German Mission,<sup>11</sup> Mary Vidal James and Josephine G. Smith to England.<sup>12</sup> The first two sisters, Armeda Snow Young and Annie Wells Cannon are referred to as missionaries in other reliable sources, but were not listed in the official missionary records. Perhaps

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<sup>9</sup>See page 38 in this chapter.

<sup>10</sup>Carter, X, 402.

<sup>11</sup>Jenson, IV, 181.

<sup>12</sup>Missionary Records General, III, 1883:107, 227.

the discrepancy can be blamed on inadequate record keeping, but the fact remains that a dozen other women between 1865 and 1898 are not listed in the records either. The author questions the possibility that inadequate record keeping was the reason their names are not on the list. It most likely was a matter of responsible authority not intending that women should have to be set apart when circumstance may not have permitted it. In the case of the Elders, however, setting apart was considered essential; because it was intended that they should be the official missionary representatives of the Church. Some evidence exists for the other side of the argument too. For example, Matthew Noall, whose wife was set apart and went with him on a mission to Hawaii in 1885, bemoans the fact that some lady missionaries were under the mistaken impression that they were in the mission field only as "wives" and not as "missionary teachers."<sup>13</sup> In this case at least, a local Church leader interpreted their calling and their being set apart as authoritatively on a par with the elders. It is probably true, however, that Elder Noall believed the Church authorities did not intend to call women on missions, only in exceptional cases.

#### Lady Missionary Policy in 1890

In an article titled "Missionary Work for the Girls," Young Woman's Journal, a periodical of the Church from 1889 to 1902, the following remarks were made.

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<sup>13</sup>Matthew Noall, To My Children, An Autobiographical Sketch (Utah Printing Company, [n.p.] 1947) Church Archives, p. 49.

Now my dear girls, don't jump at the conclusion that we are going to be sent to proclaim the Gospel to the nations of the earth. Such is not your mission, but you have a missionary field of vast importance where your labors, if rightly directed, will be productive of much good.<sup>14</sup>

The author of the article went on to say how the missionary work she referred to was with the "self and associates" and fellow members of the "Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association" of the Church. The author then concluded by saying, "I hope you will labor to that end, and who shall say that your mission is any less noble and grand than that of your brothers who proclaim the gospel to the nations of the earth."<sup>15</sup> This article essentially reflects and describes the philosophy that the Church hierarchy had towards female participation in missionary work in 1865.

In 1891 the president of the Hawaiian Mission, Elder Matthew Noall, wrote a letter to the Contributor, another Church periodical from 1879 to 1896. In that letter he stated: "Generally speaking married men are preferable in this mission, but only so wherein (sic) they are more experienced and may be thus better adapted to advise and counsel as a father among this poor people."<sup>16</sup> It is apparent that the disadvantages

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<sup>14</sup>"Missionary Work for the Girls," Young Woman's Journal, II (October 1890), 29-30. Brigham Young University Library.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Matthew Noall to the Contributor Co., March 22, 1894, quoted in The Contributor, XV (June 1894), 473. Brigham Young University Library.

lady missionaries may have labored under then only served to reinforce what was the official position of the Church at that time.

President Noall, during the same time period, suggested to the Church Presidency in Salt Lake City "that more wives were sometimes sent with missionaries than could be used advantageously in mission work."<sup>17</sup> An answer came back from the First Presidency agreeing with him. It seems apparent, therefore, that even though female members of the Church were now being set apart and their participation was on the increase in 1889 and had been since 1865, the official Church position, as before, was still to not encourage it. According to information available to the author, this remained the case until 1898.

#### POLICY CHANGE IN 1898

The Genesis of a new emphasis on lady missionary activities occurred perhaps as early as 1897 when the president of the European Mission, Joseph W. McMurrin, made application to Church authorities for lady missionaries.<sup>18</sup> It appears from the records that very early in 1898 appeals again came from President McMurrin, this time joined by other local Church leaders calling for lady missionaries.

The First Presidency to-day considered letters received from Elders E. H. Nye of the California Mission, Jos. W.

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<sup>17</sup>Noall, To My Children, p. 69.

<sup>18</sup>Joseph W. McMurrin, "Lady Missionaries," Young Woman's Journal, XV (December 1904), 539. Brigham Young University Library.

McMurrin of the European Mission, and Geo. Osmond of Star Valley Stake, in reference to the good which could be and is accomplished by lady missionaries from Zion.<sup>19</sup>

The author was unable to determine if the appeal spoken of above from President McMurrin was referring to a second call or only the first time in 1897. Be that as it may, the fact is that the interest in this matter was becoming somewhat persistent.<sup>20</sup> In President McMurrin's "letter," he "gave instances in which our sisters gained attention in England where the Elders could scarcely gain a hearing."<sup>21</sup>

#### First Presidency's Qualified Approval

After due consideration of the applications from local Church authorities, the First Presidency decided "it would be a good thing to call other sisters as occasion might require, to do missionary service."<sup>22</sup> In the April, 1898, General Conference of the Church, President George Q. Cannon, first counselor in the Presidency of the Church, referred to this approval and their direct responses to the inquiring stake and mission presidents by saying:

Yes, if these wives are prudent women . . . if they can get a recommend from their Bishops as wise, suitable women . . . It seems as though the Lord is preparing the way for the

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<sup>19</sup>Journal History, March 11, 1898, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup>Gates, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup>Journal History, March 11, 1898, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

women of this Church to do some good in this direction. To some lands under some circumstances suitable women might go . . .<sup>23</sup>

Two days later, during the same conference, John W. Taylor, a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, used these words in referring to President George Q. Cannon's talk: "I desire to touch upon the idea presented by President Cannon, that occasionally wise and prudent women would be permitted to go forth . . ."<sup>24</sup>

Their use of terms and phrases such as, "as occasion might require," "prudent," "under some circumstances," and "occasionally," leads this author to believe that the presiding authorities of the Church were rather anxious to give only a qualified approval to the appeals.

#### Regular Certified Proselyting Lady Missionaries

In spite of the precautionary spirit that may have prevailed over the approval of commissioning women for missionary work in 1898, it was now more possible and authoritative than ever before. Up to now the calls had been "voluntary and more or less desultory"<sup>25</sup> in coming. Technically, the essence of the new policy seemed to center around the

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<sup>23</sup>George Q. Cannon, General Conference Address, Official Report of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 6, 7, 8 and 10, 1898 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 7, hereafter cited as Conference Report.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., John W. Taylor, p. 40.

<sup>25</sup>Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah (Salt Lake City: 1904), IV, 610.

fact that lady missionaries would now be issued certificates. For example, the First Presidency's approval for Chester Campbell and his bride, Ann Dewey Campbell, to go on a mission was recorded this way: "It was decided that Bro. Chester Campbell and his wife should receive a regular missionary call and certificate, . . ."26

Lucy Jane Brimhall referred to the time when she received her certificate while reporting the events leading up to and including her call as a missionary.

. . . I received word to be present at Brother Jesse Knight's home and there be set apart as a missionary to Great Britain. . . . We were then set apart, . . . I was then given a certificate, and am thus numbered among the fullfledged missionaries of the Church.<sup>27</sup>

A less direct reference to the authoritative significance of these missionary certificates for women is implied when Sisters Inez Knight and Lucy Jane Brimhall arrived at their assignment in England. Some of the Elders openly questioned whether or not the Sisters' callings were equal to their own, but "the presidency of the mission made it very clear that the same authority which called the men on their missions also called the women."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Journal History, March 11, 1898, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup>"Biographical Sketches," Young Woman's Journal, IX (June 1898), 246. Brigham Young University Library.

<sup>28</sup>Gates, p. 7.

In July of the same year Sister Sarah Aspen was set apart for a mission to the Eastern States where she joined her missionary brother. Upon their return from their missions, it was reported that along with her brother, Sarah "likewise carried a missionary certificate and engaged in the labor of love."<sup>29</sup>

The First Regularly Certified  
Proselyting Lady Missionary

The first woman to be commissioned and receive a certificate under the new official emphasis being given lady missionaries was Harriet Maria Nye. She was set apart for a mission to San Francisco, California, on March 27, 1898, by Apostle Brigham Young.<sup>30</sup>

MISSION ASSIGNMENTS--1865-1898

Between the years 1830 and 1898 there were well over two hundred Latter-day Saint women involved in missionary work throughout the world. Their travels took them from their homes to several places in the United States as well as places in foreign lands.

Those areas in the United States where lady missionaries labored most often after the Civil War were California, Michigan, the "Northwestern States," New York and Colorado. The place in the

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<sup>29</sup>Journal History, December 3, 1898, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup>Rulon S. Wells, ed. "Arrivals," The Millennial Star, LX (April 21, 1898), 247; see also Young Woman's Journal, IX, 245.

United States where the largest number of women were sent to labor was California. There were thirteen lady missionaries assigned there before 1899 in spite of the fact that the first one was not sent until 1895.<sup>31</sup> The state of New York had seven lady missionaries assigned to work in it between 1881 and 1895. The states of Michigan and Colorado each had three lady missionaries doing missionary work in them from 1888 to 1897.

The foreign country where the most lady missionaries labored was the Hawaiian Islands with fifty-five working there between 1865 and 1899. It was in this mission that the Church had significant real estate holdings such as a mission school.<sup>32</sup> The responsibilities of teaching at the school and other duties related to it were duties obviously thought to be best accomplished by the women. Circumstances like these that prevailed for many years in this mission, no doubt, are some of the major reasons why the Hawaiian Islands ranks first among foreign countries in the numbers of lady missionaries assigned to it.

England is the only other country that comes close to the figure represented for the Hawaiian Islands. Over the same time span there were thirty-seven lady missionaries who traveled to Britain to do missionary work. England is one of the oldest missions in the Church. For years it was the area from which the greatest number of converts were

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<sup>31</sup>Missionary Records General, IV, 1895:228.

<sup>32</sup>See page 60 in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

gained. It was probably easier for the lady missionaries to labor in a country like England than in many other foreign countries where a new language must be learned. It was a place rich with genealogical information for women missionaries whose ancestry originated there. All of these reasons were probably contributing factors for why so many lady missionaries were assigned there.

### PARENTHETIC PURPOSES AND MOTIVATIONS

As previously discussed, the Church maintained a policy of not specifically inviting Latter-day Saint women to take part officially in missionary work until 1898. Consequently, a significant portion of them involved in missionary work did so for reasons not directly related to proselyting activities.

#### Visiting Friends and Relatives

Latter-day Saint women were sometimes set apart to do missionary work while they were visiting their friends or relatives. According to available documents there were nine women between 1865 and 1898 who went in this category.

#### First Parenthetic Missionary Assignment

In 1866 Catherine Horrocks was set apart as a special missionary and accompanied her husband into the mission field. The primary

reason for her going, however, was to visit relatives in Scotland.<sup>33</sup> According to the missionary records it was on her husband's "demise, while on the journey tither (sic) she returned home immediately."<sup>34</sup> Sister Horrocks is the first woman to be called as a missionary whose primary purpose for going was specifically identified as something other than missionary related activities.

The following women were also called and set apart as missionaries while visiting with friends or relatives. Elizabeth H. Goddard was set apart to Great Britain in 1879 to visit her brother, Thomas Goddard.<sup>35</sup> In 1882 Elizabeth Hademan Bird was called and set apart to fill a mission to Sweden together with her husband, "but Elder Edward F. Bird [was] called to perform a mission in Great Britain, [therefore] Sister Bird probably accompanied him to England, and from there went to Sweden to visit with relatives."<sup>36</sup>

Mary Vidal James, who was one of two women set apart to England in 1883, was visiting with her relatives.<sup>37</sup> In 1886 Priscilla M. Stains was set apart for a mission to St. Louis and Pittsburg to visit

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<sup>33</sup>Missionary Records General, II, 1866:19.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>George Goddard's Diary, 1851-1899, IX, April 24 and 29, 1879. Church Archives.

<sup>36</sup>Missionary Records General, III, 1882:50.

<sup>37</sup>Journal History, November 10, 1885.

relatives and obtain genealogical information at the same time.<sup>38</sup> Anna S. Andersen "was set apart October 9, 1888 . . . to accompany her husband, Andrew K. Andersen, on his mission visiting friends."<sup>39</sup> Then in 1893 Rosa Annie Winterbourne Seare was set apart and visited relatives in England.<sup>40</sup> According to the missionary records in 1896, Bertha Jorgensen was set apart "to do missionary labors while in Chicago on a visit."<sup>41</sup> Finally in 1898, Martha Stringfellow Morris "visited her relatives in England and while there was set apart to labor in the British Missionfield."<sup>42</sup> Sister Morris also did genealogy work at the same time.

### Genealogical Missions

Of all the incidental reasons that Latter-day Saint women went on missions, genealogical research ranks number one. There were thirty-four women doing genealogy work as missionaries between 1881 and 1897.

### First Six Genealogical Missionaries

In 1881 Zina D. Young accompanied her foster son, Lieutenant Willard Young, to New York where she was to obtain the records of her

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<sup>38</sup>Missionary Records General, III, 1886:137; see also Gates, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 1888:182.

<sup>40</sup>Journal History, October 16, 1893, p. 9.

<sup>41</sup>Missionary Records General, IV, 1896:379.

<sup>42</sup>Journal History, February 6, 1898, p. 5.

relatives. It is assumed by the author that the records spoken of here were for genealogical purposes. Previous to their going, they were "blessed and set apart by the First Presidency of the Church to speak upon the principles of our faith if opportunity presented."<sup>43</sup> However, she was not listed in the missionary records. It is interesting to note the similarity between the words describing Sister Young's setting apart experience and that of Louisa Barns Pratt in May of 1850. Both events are equally important, although the later takes place in an era when a greater official significance was intended.<sup>44</sup>

Alice Woohead Barker "was set apart for a mission to Europe to do genealogical research work April 13, 1886." Priscilla M. Stains was also set apart for a genealogical research mission on September 6, 1886.<sup>45</sup> In 1888 Mary C. Dalrymple and her daughter, Lucy A., were set apart to do missionary work in Council Bluffs, Iowa, while there for genealogical research.<sup>46</sup> Then in 1889, Mary Swain and Martha C. Young were set apart for genealogical missions to Norway and England, respectively.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Chrocheron, p. 16.

<sup>44</sup>See pages 18-22 in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

<sup>45</sup>Missionary Records General, III, 1886:72, 137; see also Gates, p. 4.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 1888:64-65.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 1889:122-23.

As has been previously stated, the period from 1890 to 1898 saw more women involved in missionary labors than at any other time in Church history. Part of the reason this took place is because of the lady missionary genealogists. For example, in 1890 there were thirteen set apart for missionary work and eleven of them were doing genealogical research. Six of the eleven women accompanied their husbands to England. Two women, Janet Morris and Sarah Bradshaw, went to Scotland, Diana Reid to Canada, Lucinda Clara Harvey to Indiana, and Mary Elizabeth S. Porter to the Middle States in company with her husband.<sup>48</sup>

In 1891 sixteen women were called to missions, nine of whom were for genealogical research. Seven of the nine went to Great Britain in search of genealogy. Caroline A. Hansen Willingbeck went to Denmark, and Ann Caroline Boberg Roat went to Scandinavia and Russia.<sup>49</sup>

In 1892 two women went on genealogical missions. Hanna Barwell Saunders and Victoria E. Carr Fitzgerald were doing research in England and Virginia respectively.<sup>50</sup> In 1893 there were three genealogical research missionaries. Sarah Cherrill went to England,<sup>51</sup> and

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 1890:66-68, 80, 84, 87, 95-96, 106, 151, 277.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., IV, 1891:84, 100, 109, 136-38, 141, 144, 183.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 1892:136, 154.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 1893:174.

Sabra Higbee Naegle and Mary C. Thomas went to Europe.<sup>52</sup> Finally, in 1896 Isabella Webster Haigh, Georgina and Mary Ann Wright Webster went to Wisconsin on genealogical research missions.<sup>53</sup>

For Most Any Reason

It appears that some women in the Church were set apart to missionary labors even though missionary work was not necessarily expected of them. Anna S. Hatch and Elizabeth B. Fox, for example, were both set apart for a mission to New York on September 6, 1886. The primary reason for their calls was to meet Sister Hatch's husband who was on his way home from his mission in England.<sup>54</sup>

In 1888 Elizabeth Jane S. Wilcox accompanied her husband to New York where he was studying medicine.<sup>55</sup> In 1889 Ida Taylor Whitaker was set apart to go to New York. There she met her husband who was returning home from a business trip.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 1894:31, 130.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 1896:401-03.

<sup>54</sup>Lorenzo L. Hatch's Diary, 1884-1887, II, October 27, 1886. Church Archives.

<sup>55</sup>Missionary Records General, V, 1888:140.

<sup>56</sup>John Mills Whitaker, Journal, (typescript), February 14, 1889, p. 203. Church Archives.

## Polygamy

The anti-polygamy crusade against the Church during the 1880's sometimes made it necessary for polygamist members of the Church to leave the country. This was the case with some lady missionaries and was the primary reason why a missionary call came to them.

The first was Julina Lambson Smith who accompanied her husband on a "mission" to Hawaii. Her husband was sent to the Islands with Church records during the time of the so-called "anti-polygamy raids."<sup>57</sup>

Apparently the sisters and their husbands who went to the mission field for this reason were called "undergrounders." It was customary for people who were in hiding on account of polygamy to assume another name. According to Mathew Noall, "one of these undergrounders" present with him in the Hawaiian Islands was Joseph F. Smith, Julina's husband. President Smith's name to the Elders and sisters present was "spate."<sup>58</sup>

Florence Ridges Dean was set apart for a mission to the Pacific Islands under unusual and somewhat humorous circumstances. Sister Dean's husband, Joseph, relates this experience in his diary.

I went up to the president's office. Rode (sic) up on 13 ward delivery wagon. I put my false beard on and no one seemed to notice it . . . . I went down to the Globe. Sally and

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<sup>57</sup>Jenson, IV, 70.

<sup>58</sup>Noall, p. 22.

Florence (his wives) were there and we went up to president's office . . . to be set apart for our missions . . . . They also blessed Sally.<sup>59</sup>

### Education

Some Latter-day Saint women were also set apart as missionaries when going back East for educational purposes. For example, in 1889 Mary E. C. Van Schoonhoven was set apart for a mission to Ann Arbor while attending medical school.<sup>60</sup> Alice Louise Reynolds was set apart to do missionary work while studying at Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Viola Belle Pratt did missionary work while studying music in New York.<sup>61</sup>

### Accompany Husbands

The author believes it is entirely possible that the majority of Latter-day Saint women who accompanied their husbands on missions before 1898 did so with the attitude that they were there as wives first and missionaries second. This was the case with some lady missionaries in the Hawaiian Islands as has already been discussed.<sup>62</sup> In other words, their primary and parenthetic reason for going was to accompany their husbands; and their being set apart as missionaries was perhaps only incidental to their motive.

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<sup>59</sup>Joseph Henry Dean's Journal, 1876-1944, XII, May 23, 1887. Church Archives.

<sup>60</sup>Missionary Records General, III, 1889:1.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., IV, 1892:48, 222.

<sup>62</sup>See page 32 of this chapter.

In October, 1885, for example, Fred Beesley was called on a mission to the Sandwich Islands. Before replying to the call he sought information about whether or not it would be allowable and agreeable to all parties concerned if he got married and had his wife accompany him. His bishop counseled him to find out her feelings about doing so and then act accordingly. Elder Beesley asked his fiancé, "Nellie." "She stated that she had never been desirous of going there, but had not thought much of the matter."<sup>63</sup> Nellie agreed to marry him but desired more time to think about going to the Islands. Finally, after three weeks of "due consideration" she agreed to go with him. Not only were Church leaders not encouraging her to go on the mission, but she herself did not particularly like the idea. Obviously her decision was based primarily on her desire to be his wife and not so much on her desire to be a missionary.

#### First Independent Lady Missionaries

On a few occasions before 1898 Latter-day Saint women went on missions without their husbands. Obviously their motivation was something other than being a wifely companion. The best example of this kind is Mildred E. Randall who went on a mission in 1873.

Sister Randall was not only the first Latter-day Saint woman to be officially set apart and receive a special assignment, but she was the

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<sup>63</sup>Fredrick Beesley's, "Daily Journal of Scenes and Events of a Mission to the Sandwich Islands Commencing October 28, 1885 and Continuing to September 27, 1886," Number One, pp. 1-2.

first to be called on a mission separate from and independent of her husband.<sup>64</sup> No other married Latter-day Saint woman had ever been called under these circumstances prior to that date. Other women had traveled to their mission assignments alone, but their missionary husbands were always there to meet them. This was the second time Sister Randall had been called to the Sandwich Islands. Her assignment, like before, was to teach school and "keep" the mission house.<sup>65</sup>

In 1875 only one woman by the name of Dianah Camp was called on a mission and that was to Texas. The author was unable to determine from any available source whether or not she was called separate and independent of her husband, William Camp. Official missionary records do not list him as a missionary. If her call was independent of him, then she would be the second woman in the history of the Church to receive a call under those circumstances according to the record.<sup>66</sup>

Annie Turner was set apart as a missionary to Wales in 1879. The author was not able to determine if she was accompanying her husband on this mission. The Journal History of the Church under the date of May 12, 1879, records her being set apart but nothing is mentioned about her husband. Under the date of May 20, the Journal History

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<sup>64</sup>Mildred E. Randall to Brigham Young, September 16, 1876, p. 1. Brigham Young Collection located in Church Archives.

<sup>65</sup>Mildred E. Randall to Brigham Young, November 8, 1875, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup>Missionary Records General, II, 1875:114.

of the Church reports her leaving the city of Ogden, but again no mention of her husband. The author believes she traveled independent of him, which would make her the third woman in the Church to so travel in that capacity. Elizabeth H. Goddard, who was set apart for a mission to Great Britain, was another and presumably the fourth lady missionary to go without a husband companion. However, she was accompanied by her missionary son, Joseph, who was going to the same mission. Another reason for her "mission" to Great Britain was to visit her brother, Thomas Harrison.<sup>67</sup>

Several married women may have gone into the mission field without their husbands after this time, but incomplete missionary records rendered it impossible to tell. For example, in 1887 there were seven women called and set apart as lady missionaries. The author was not able to determine if any of their husbands accompanied them except possibly for three of them. However, the missionary records for those three women were still incomplete, rendering it impossible to be certain.

#### THE FIRST SINGLE LADY MISSIONARIES

The determination as to whom is the first single lady missionary in Latter-day Saint history depends a great deal on what period of Church history is involved and how the Church defined a lady missionary at that

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<sup>67</sup>George Goddard's Diary, 1857-1899, IX, April 24 and 29, 1879. Church Archives.

time. Prior to 1865, for example, women involved in missionary work had little, if any, official identity. Technically speaking, regular certified lady missionaries did not exist until 1898. After 1865, when the Church began the policy of setting women apart as missionaries, their roles became more formalized as such. After 1898, of course, they were recognized officially as regular Latter-day Saint missionaries. With this concept in mind a determination as to whom is the first woman in this category can be made with greater accuracy. In some instances the author was not able to determine the married status of a lady missionary because of incomplete records. In most cases such as this, their names were not included with this section.

#### Single Lady Missionaries Before 1865

Christine Bentsen Anderson was not married when she received her call to assist the elders at Barnholm in 1851.<sup>68</sup> As near as this author can determine, she is the first single woman in the Latter-day Saint Church to be called to a missionary activity of that nature.

If it could be positively determined that it was the intent of the Church hierarchy to appoint and set her apart as a regular certified and proselyting missionary, then she would probably have the distinction of being the first single regular lady missionary for the Latter-day Saint

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<sup>68</sup>Mrs. William Sharph, "Christine Bentsen Anderson." Biographical sketch. In Hamilton Gardner, History of Lehi (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1913), p. 331.

Church. However, current evidence to this effect is unfavorable and renders it as an unlikely possibility. The distinction for being the first in this category must, therefore, wait until the year 1898.

#### Single Lady Missionaries After 1865

1886. Lydia McCauslin Young was set apart for a mission to the Northwestern States on April 13, 1886, just two years after her husband died in 1884.<sup>69</sup> This fact establishes Sister Young as the first widowed lady missionary in the Church. Technically speaking, Sister Young is the first single woman to receive a call specifically to do missionary work. This assignment, however, does not carry the same status or intention as did the calls that came to Latter-day Saint women in 1898.

Priscilla M. Stains was also set apart for a genealogical research mission on September 6, 1886. Her husband died on August 3, 1881, placing her in a similar category with Sister Young.<sup>70</sup> She is the first single woman known to the author who went as a genealogical missionary.

1887. Rhoda B. and Francis G. Young, a mother and her unmarried daughter, were set apart for genealogical missions to

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<sup>69</sup>Genealogical Society Temple Records, Genealogy Society, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah) Index Card No. 45.

<sup>70</sup>Journal History, August 3, 1881, p. 3.

Tennessee.<sup>71</sup> Francis, like Sisters Lydia M. Young and Priscilla M. Stains, should not be identified with any intention on the part of Church leaders to call certified lady missionaries at that time.

1888. Maria C. Dalrymple and her unmarried daughter, Lucy A., were set apart to do missionary work in Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1888, while there for genealogical research.<sup>72</sup> Lucy Dalrymple was twenty-three years old and single at this time, not having married until June 27, 1900. There is nothing unofficial about the fact that Lucy Dalrymple was a missionary; but her call, like the others, came before 1898.<sup>73</sup>

1889. Mary Swain, who had been divorced, was set apart in 1889 for a genealogical mission to Norway.<sup>74</sup> As with the sisters previously mentioned, her call should not be identified any differently either.

1892. The same circumstances apply to Alice L. Reynolds and Viola Belle Pratt. In 1892 they were set apart as missionaries while studying at Ann Arbor, Michigan, and New York, respectively.<sup>75</sup> Both of these women were single at the time of their assignment.

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<sup>71</sup>Missionary Records General, III, 1887:207-08.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 1888:64-65.

<sup>73</sup>See pages 51 and 52 of this chapter.

<sup>74</sup>Journal History, October 14, 1885.

<sup>75</sup>Missionary Records General, IV, 1892:48, 222.

1893. Sarah Cherrill was set apart for a mission to England in search of genealogy in 1893.<sup>76</sup> She, too, was single at the time.

1896. Bertha Jorgensen was set apart for a mission to Chicago with her brother, Enoch Jorgensen, in June of 1896. According to the Missionary Records she was sent "to do missionary labors while in Chicago on a visit."<sup>77</sup> The same technical point is again belabored here, in that Sister Jorgensen is not traditionally reported as officially the first single lady missionary for the Church. The Church was now, in 1896, only on the brink of considering single women for "regular" full-time mission assignments.

The First Regularly Certified Single  
Proselyting Lady Missionaries

The first single women of the Church to be commissioned and certified as regular proselyting missionaries were Amanda Inez Knight and Lucy Jane Brimhall. Both women were set apart at the same time on April 1, 1898, by members of what was then the Utah Stake presidency. Their mission assignments were to Great Britain.<sup>78</sup>

The other single lady missionaries in 1898, according to official records were Sarah E. Asepn, set apart on July 6, 1898, to the

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 1893:174.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 1896:379.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., V, 1898:163-64.

Eastern States; Liza Chipman, set apart on September 9, 1898, to Great Britain; and Rhoda C. Nash, set apart on November 9, 1898, to California.<sup>79</sup>

#### MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

The author found very little information concerning any formal analyses or critique on the performance of individual lady missionaries prior to 1900. The documents that were available usually said very little and were obviously designed for elders rather than sisters. They did ask questions concerning matters such as their speaking, writing, and leadership abilities. They also asked whether or not they were healthy, energetic, married, and knowledgeable about the teachings of the Church. In addition the documents asked if the missionary was "discreet," and they always had space for remarks. The evaluations were made by the presiding officer of the mission to which the missionaries had been assigned.<sup>80</sup>

One of the reports witnessed by the author rated a certain lady missionary as "poor" in speaking ability, "fair" in her writing ability and knowledge of Church teachings, but "common" in her education. She was, according to the report, "not very discreet." In the remarks

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 522, 642, 823.

<sup>80</sup>M.D.C.G.F. Missionary Report by President Rulon S. Wells in 1899. Great Britain.

portion of the report she was listed as very "flighty and changeable in all her ways."<sup>81</sup>

A contrasting report for another lady missionary from the same mission president read, "bashful" in speaking ability but "good" in nearly every other category. In the remarks column the mission president added, "She is an excellent woman."<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

## Chapter 4

### LIFE STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

There were approximately 220 Latter-day Saint women involved in missionary activities between 1830 and 1898. Unfortunately only a few made a record of their experiences and sometimes these records seem quantitatively lacking in much descriptive detail or a comprehensive report about their missionary life. It is impossible, of course, to know all of the reasons why this circumstance exists; but some partial explanations seem appropriate. Certainly the general lack of interest in keeping a personal record such as a diary or journal is obvious and universally prevalent among human beings. Latter-day Saint lady missionaries seem to be no exception. The apparent lack of appreciation for the actual or potential significance of their calling, at least among some lady missionaries, must take some of the blame as previously discussed. There is the fact that the Church was anything but deliberate about women being regular missionaries until 1898. Add these factors together and you have female missionary experiences at a premium. Be that as it may, there is sufficient information available which the author believes forms a story worthy of being told.

## SPECIAL AND GENERAL ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

The activities of Latter-day Saint lady missionaries were varied and ranged from that of doing household chores to preaching and proselyting. Before 1898, however, the largest portion of their time was spent in activities other than active preaching and teaching. Because of the fact that they were in the mission field as companions to their husbands, they also shared in some unusual and challenging experiences that were taxing even for the men.

Lady missionary activities, whether routine or unique, were sometimes peculiar to the mission in which the women labored. Those missions established in the Pacific, such as Hawaii and Samoa, are good examples of societies that presented some contrasting and novel experiences. Great Britain and Europe, although different in some respects, were more like the life style of areas from which the lady missionaries originated.

### Routine

Writing letters, cleaning house, preparing meals and tending children occupied much of the time women spent in the mission field. Reading, sewing and teaching their own as well as the native children was not uncommon, especially for the sisters in the Islands. Sister Louisa Barns Pratt was involved in this manner during most of her mission in Tahiti.

Every day found me at the old prayerhouse, teaching the native children in their own language to read and write, my own and the others in English. The remainder of the time I devoted to my journal and letter writing; together with studying that language and translating. Mrs. Tomkins and her two little daughters, I taught regularly.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes the daily routine of activities became boring and perhaps even a little burdensome to lady missionaries.

All days are alike here, dull, dull! As soon as daylight in the morning the bell rings, the people assemble at the Prayer House to read the Bible. We read and talk a little, dismiss, and go to breakfast. Again the bell rings for the children. I teach them to answer questions from scripture, pronounce English words, tell their meaning, etc. Then my own children get their own lessons in English. After this I read, write, and sew. How I long for intelligent associations. The few Americans are the same as one family.<sup>2</sup>

Customary housekeeping and related chores became a necessary task for the women especially. In spite of its daily occurrence, the work was appreciated by most thoughtful recipients.

All the Elders who labored in that field have reason to remember their kindness to them. Under their roof we always found a warm welcome, and it was home--a home which men who were constantly speaking the native language, living in the native houses and having to conform, to some extent at least, to their modes of eating, could appreciate. Sister Hammond's unvarying kindness, her patience and cheerfulness in the midst of privation, and her unsparing labors in our behalf, to sew and do other work for us, which among such a people we had need to have done, as well as his constant efforts for our comfort, will never be forgotten by those who enjoyed their hospitality.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Carter, VIII, 265.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>3</sup>Manuscript History, Hawaiian Mission, March 1, 1852, p. 2. Church Archives.

### Leadership and Teaching School

The first woman to be called to a special and differentiative assignment in Latter-day Saint lady missionary work was Mildred E. Randall. This took place in connection with her first mission in 1865. Susa Young Gates, writing after the fact, tells about this call.

. . . Mildred E. Randall, a school teacher who went to the Islands to open an English school for the dusty Hawaiian children. She was a locally famous school teacher who taught for a number of years the private family school of President Brigham Young, and then was associated with the Misses (sic) Mary E. and Ida Jane Cook in the model graded school attached to the University of Utah in 1872.<sup>4</sup>

She also opened a second English school for the "foreign" children as well as the native Hawaiian children while on her first mission.<sup>5</sup>

Sister Randall was set apart for her second mission assignment to the Sandwich Islands on May 4, 1873. She left Salt Lake City in company with Margaret Mitchell and her family sixteen days later on May 20. She arrived in the Islands on June 1, 1873, and within two weeks again assumed the special mission of teaching school in the Church-owned Laie plantation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Gates, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Journal History, February 15, 1866. Letter to the editor of the Deseret News from Alma L. Smith dated February 15, 1866. Church Archives.

<sup>6</sup>Mildred E. Randall to Brigham Young, September 16, 1876, p. 1.

Sister Randall started with six native children and three other children who belonged to one of the elders.

In about six months my school began to increase in numbers and interest, and continued to do so up to the time I left. The children who have attended the school, during the three years, have improved very much in their English studies. They are quick to learn, and their memories are excellent to retain what they learn.<sup>7</sup>

On May 19, 1876, Sister Jane E. Molen was set apart to teach school in the Sandwich Islands, succeeding Mildred E. Randall. When Sister Molen arrived at Laie, Sister Randall took her to the school and introduced her to all the children. There she gave her instructions concerning the best way to manage the work. Writing about the language barrier she felt Sister Molen could have had with the native children, Sister Randall said, "as they are pretty well advanced in English she will find no difficulty in making them understand her."<sup>8</sup>

Not all lady missionaries had the opportunity to teach school, of course, but they had other kinds of experiences that were commonplace as well as unique in their character.

Sometimes leadership assignments were given to lady missionaries such as presidency over various women's or young people's auxiliary organizations. Time and space would not allow a full account of all who were involved in this manner, but a few are cited below.

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

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

In 1878, Harriet D. Bunting accompanied her husband to England. She is not listed in the official missionary records of the Church, but Andrew Jenson reports that she organized the first Relief Society and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association in the British Mission.<sup>9</sup>

Sarah L. C. Partridge was set apart with her husband for a mission to the Sandwich Islands on May 29, 1882. During her mission she was "elected" president of the Relief Society for the entire mission while her husband was the mission president.<sup>10</sup>

In November of 1885 Elizabeth L. Noall went with her husband on a mission, also to the Sandwich Islands where she became the mission Relief Society president. This assignment gave her the responsibility to teach religious lessons as well as lessons on household management to the native female members of the Church.<sup>11</sup>

Elizabeth Ellen Beesly, who also filled a mission to the Sandwich Islands in 1885, was adept at needle work "and devoted much of her time in teaching the native women to do sewing and fancy work."<sup>12</sup>

Isabelle Far Sears was set apart for a mission to New Zealand in 1885 accompanying her husband. During her mission she "opened and

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<sup>9</sup>Jenson, IV, 181.

<sup>10</sup>Journal History, October 8, 1882, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup>Noall, pp. 27-28.

<sup>12</sup>History of Utah Since Statehood: Historical and Biographical, III, p. 655.

taught" a day school.<sup>13</sup> Apparently Sister Sears' physical condition was too "delicate for this rough life among the Maoris."<sup>14</sup> She was finally released early to return home.<sup>15</sup>

There was only one place in all the documents the author searched through where the office of "treasurer" was referred to as an assignment for a lady missionary. Karen Marie Peterson Kong, although not listed in the record, was called to a mission from Denmark in 1880. Her assignment of labor was to be in the city of Aarhus where she was born. Sister Kong performed the usual types of missionary labors such as selling Church books, distributing tracts and bearing testimony. She was also assigned to act as a "treasurer of the lady missionaries."<sup>16</sup> Other Latter-day Saint lady missionaries probably held treasury assignments in various auxiliary organizations of the Church, but the author thought it was unique for one to have been specifically designated a "treasurer of lady missionaries."

Events sometimes occurred with lady missionaries which were somewhat unexpected yet formed a significant part of their activities. For example, in the Tahitian Islands where Sister Louisa Barns Pratt

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<sup>13</sup>Journal History, February 3, 1887.

<sup>14</sup>William Paxman's Journal, XXIV, 45-6, June 19, 1886. Church Archives.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid, XXV, January 26, 1887.

<sup>16</sup>Carter, II, 318.

labored, the natives had a great deal of faith in the healing powers of the missionaries. Sister Pratt explained that the consecrated oil she carried with her was blessed by President Brigham Young previous to their leaving Salt Lake City. "When I told them from whence it came and the design of it they would invariably bring their sick children to me and request me to annoint them with the holy oil, never doubting but a cure would be expected."<sup>17</sup> Sister Pratt then explained that according to their faith, they were often healed.

A similar experience is told of Sister Libby Noall who was on her mission in the Sandwich Islands after 1885. She had been appointed the Relief Society president of the mission. In addition to teaching religious and household management classes to the female members of the Church, "she helped to annoint women in confinement, giving them a blessing as she did so."<sup>18</sup>

According to the records examined by the author, one sister was involved in the tedious assignment of translating scriptures. She was Catherine A. Love Paxman who was set apart in February, 1886, for a mission to New Zealand accompanying her husband. While on her mission Sister Paxman assisted in the translation of the Book of Mormon into the Maori language.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., VIII, 264.

<sup>18</sup>Noall, p. 72.

<sup>19</sup>Journal History, August 21, 1931, p. 1.

### Palestine Missionary

Eliza R. Snow, the sister to Elder Lorenzo Snow, a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and later the fifth president of the Church, was set apart for a mission to Palestine on October 14, 1872, by Brigham Young. This missionary assignment was unique and special in that one of its purposes was to "observe closely what openings now exist, or where they may be effected, for the introduction of the gospel into the various countries you shall visit."<sup>20</sup> The primary purpose for the trip, however, was to dedicate and consecrate that land to the Lord, "that it may be blessed with fruitfulness, preparatory to the return of the Jews, in fulfillment of prophecy and the accomplishment of the purposes of our Heavenly Father."<sup>21</sup>

Eliza R. Snow was one of eight prominent Latter-day Saint Church members to make the journey. They arrived in Palestine in March of 1873 and traveled to where the dedicatory services were to be held on the Mount of Olives.

In a letter to the editor of the Women's Exponent, a prominent periodical of the Church from 1872 to 1914, Eliza R. Snow wrote about some of their missionary experiences. She described their visit to the

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<sup>20</sup>Roberts, V, 474. Quote taken from a letter of appointment to President George A. Smith signed by President Brigham Young and Daniel H. Wells.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

"Church of the Holy Sepulchre," at that time thought to be the most sacred place on earth by "Eastern Christendom."

We were shown through the varied departments of the edifice, our guide pointing out many "identical" places, where important events of Bible history transpired; . . . On several occasions I took the liberty to question our guide respecting his own faith in some items which he seemed anxious to impress us with as "identical" and, to our great amusement, he shook his head with an expressive smile which he tried in vain to suppress.<sup>22</sup>

The Palestine missionaries returned to Salt Lake City in the month of June, 1873.

#### Preaching and Proselyting

As previously mentioned, preaching and proselyting activities did not make up the majority of female missionary activity prior to 1898. Sometimes, however, the opportunity would present itself and the record indicates that the sisters usually took full advantage of it.

In 1831 Lucy Mack Smith, the mother of Joseph Smith the Prophet, was traveling from New York to her new home in Kirtland, Ohio. While on the journey some of the children in her company became ill. Sister Smith proceeded to find some temporary lodging until they were better able to travel. Sister Smith finally located a place owned by an accommodating and cheerful old woman. The "old lady" inquired as to Sister Smith's religion. "I then informed her that this [Latter-day Saints]

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<sup>22</sup>Eliza R. Snow, Correspondence of Palestine Tourists (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1875), pp. 259-60.

Church was brought forth through the instrumentality of a Prophet, and that I was the mother of this Prophet."<sup>23</sup>

The woman was surprised but interested and invited Sister Smith to visit with her later. When Sister Smith got the children situated, she went to the lady's room. "We soon fell into conversation, in which I explained to her, as clearly as I could, the principles of the Gospel. . . . I continued my explanation until after two o'clock the next morning."<sup>24</sup>

Twenty years later Louisa Barns Pratt was on her way to the Island of Tahiti when some difficulty arose with their ship which could not leave the harbor because of "contrary winds." After some unsuccessful attempts at securing a steamship to tow the vessel out to sea, one finally came. However, the captain of the steam ship informed them that twenty of their number must return to shore temporarily. Sister Pratt stated:

The first event on the boat was a long discussion with a gentleman on the doctrine of the Mormon Church. I preached to him a gospel sermon, bore my testimony to a new dispensation, a renewal of all the gifts and blessings. He seemed greatly surprised. I left for his perusal a pamphlet by Orson Pratt.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Lucy Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and his Progenitors for Many Generations (Liverpool: Published for Orson Pratt by S. W. Richards, 1853), p. 178.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Carter, VIII, 257-59.

It was not an uncommon experience for the sisters to speak at conferences and other Church meetings. They frequently bore their testimony and expounded scriptures to the members of the Church as well as to non-members. Writing about her later experiences while in Tahiti, Sister Pratt said . . . "I have much satisfaction in endeavoring to expound the Scriptures to those who come to me to be instructed. Today I was requested to search out portions of scripture to prove that God exists in a form."<sup>26</sup> Sister Pratt further identified the exact location of the scriptures she used to prove her point and proudly added that she did it with considerable ease.

Documents indicate that lady missionaries were involved in preaching and proselyting activities in the 1870's too. Mildred E. Randall, for example, was apparently involved in some proselyting again for the Church. However, unlike her mission call in 1865, there is nothing in the official missionary records to indicate that she had been called or set apart this time. A copy of a letter sent to Elder George Albert Smith from Mildred E. Randall was published in the Deseret News of January 29, 1870. In the editor's introduction to the correspondence he reveals that she was on a visit to her friends in the state of Virginia. He continued by saying, "Her missionary experiences seem to be of a more felicitous character than that of many of the brethren in the east."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>27</sup>Journal History, January 17, 1870.

In the body of the letter to George A. Smith, Sister Randall requested an extensive amount of missionary literature; then she added:

There is at the present time, much interest in "Mormonism" manifested by the people here. . . have but few books and they are loaned out all the time, the people can hardly wait on each other to read them, . . . I feel to rejoice greatly at the prospects before me; a good work is being begun here. . . . the object of my visit was to do good to my friends, and the Lord has blessed my labors abundantly.<sup>28</sup>

Tracting is a common proselyting method used extensively by missionaries in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Specific reference to tracting as a proselyting method used by lady missionaries in the Church before 1898 occurred only one time in the sources examined by the author.

Sister Ida L. Roberts accompanied her husband to the Samoan Islands in 1897 where she took part in this missionary activity. In a letter to the Young Woman's Journal in May of 1899, Sister Roberts explained the "joy" she gained "in going out tracting from house to house with my husband."<sup>29</sup> She also said that she and her husband "make it a point to go out visiting strangers' houses three and four times a week."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ida Luetta Roberts to the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, Star Valley Wyoming, May 19, 1899, Young Woman's Journal, XI, 126-27.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

## PROBLEMS AND TRIALS

Missionary work was sometimes filled with tragic events for those who participated in it, and Latter-day Saint lady missionaries also shared these kinds of experiences along with the men. Some of the most cothurned happenings of this kind were usually associated with death and disease. There were, of course, other trials of a less tragic nature that plagued Latter-day Saint women in their missionary ventures.

Personal Relationships

Sometimes family problems occurred involving lady missionaries' individual personalities and the emotions these relationships can engender.

One of the best examples of this kind occurred with Mildred E. Randall. Just a few weeks after her arrival in the Islands, her husband, Alfred, became "dissatisfied with the mission or things pertaining to it, and left." Consequently Sister Randall became very "heartsick" and discouraged over this unfortunate event. Commenting about it several years later she said:

I . . . wished to remain, and do all the good I could for the mission, until those who sent me should call me home. He wrote to me a few times during my stay. I began to feel that I was (like his mission) forsaken and deserted.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Mildred E. Randall to Brigham Young, November 8, 1875, pp. 2-3. Brigham Young Collection, Church Archives.

Mildred E. Randall had served nearly eighteen months before returning from this first mission in the fall of 1866. Prior to her departure from the Islands, President Brigham Young wrote a letter of release praising her for the courage she had manifest in completing her mission.

. . . your faithfulness and diligence in staying there after your partner returned home and doing all the good that you could to benefit the people and help the mission is appreciated, and we feel to bless you therefore.<sup>32</sup>

Sister Randall's remarkable service as a missionary was repeated again in the years following. Writing about the missionary labors some years later, Sister Randall said:

I can truly say that all my labors connected with the Sandwich Islands mission have been pleasant. The time seemed to pass very rapidly, never allowed myself to feel discontented or homesick, and I know that I have been greatly benefited by it. Have learned lessons of economy, patience and perseverance (sic) which I could not have learned anywhere else . . . and if it is ever necessary for me to return to the Islands again, I shall be ready and willing to respond to the call.<sup>33</sup>

There were occasions when certain associations significantly tested a lady missionary's moral and physical courage. On one occasion during Sister Sarah L. C. Partridge's mission, she became extremely ill. Her determination, however, kept her doing what she believed was first priority in spite of her weakened condition. On September 8, 1883, Elder Partridge records the following in his diary. "A meeting had been

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<sup>32</sup>Brigham Young to Mildred E. Randall, October 15, 1866. Brigham Young Collection, Church Archives.

<sup>33</sup>Mildred E. Randall to Brigham Young, September 16, 1876, pp. 3-4.

appointed for the Relief Societies . . . at 10 o'clock. Sarah was very poorly, could hardly set up but she determined to try and go."<sup>34</sup>

On another occasion Sister Partridge had an unusual and unpleasant experience that came about because of a misunderstanding between herself and another lady missionary. On Friday, July 25, 1884, some missionaries and their families were planning a picnic. One of the families decided at the last minute not to go. Their reason was only because of what appeared to be the "possibility" of rain, but everyone else in the group went on to the day's activities anyway. In the evening everyone seemed to be feeling "first rate" when the lady missionary whose family did not go on the picnic created a little "scene" by accusing Sister Partridge of insulting her that morning. According to Elder Partridge, that morning when Sister Partridge learned that "Mrs. Y." and family were not going to attend the picnic, she went to "Mrs. Y." and inquired, saying:

Do you really mean to say that you are not going which . . . [Mrs. "Y."] . . . considered insulting and furthermore said that Sarah had insulted her repeatedly before. Sarah explained that she had no intention of insulting her and was at a loss to know how it could be construed . . . [word not legible] an insult and while the matter was under discussion Sister "Y." left the room very abruptly.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Edward C. Partridge's Diary, 1883-1900, V, Saturday, September 8, 1883. Church Archives.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., Friday, July 25, 1884, pp. 154-56.

Elder Partridge thought the incident to be a regretful experience for the reason that it would negatively affect their future conversations with "Mrs. Y." rendering them "more or less unpleasant."<sup>36</sup>

#### Learning the Language

It seems apparent from the documents examined by this author that the majority of lady missionaries who were in countries where they spoke a foreign language did not succeed very well at learning the language. In an autobiographical sketch titled, To My Children, Matthew Noall described some of the lady missionary activities pertinent to his day. He related the difficulties that some missionaries had learning the language. Then he told about the contrasting success of two lady missionaries, one of which was his wife, "Libbie."

And among the wives of the missionaries--though the women were supposed to labor among the natives as gospel teachers--there were only two who succeeded in learning it well enough to converse readily in the Hawaiian tongue. These two were a Sister Cluff, wife of the mission president, and my own wife Libbie. They moved among the native women with great freedom and were a source of comfort and inspiration to them.<sup>37</sup>

Matthew Noall went on to say, as previously mentioned in the study, that one of the main reasons why most of the other lady

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Noall, pp. 27-28.

missionaries in Hawaii failed to learn the language was "due to the pre-conceived idea that they were not there as missionary-teachers but as wives."<sup>38</sup>

### On the Battlefield

Even an event as antithetical as war was experienced by one lady missionary in 1899. Sister Ida L. Roberts was called on a mission in 1897 to accompany her husband to Samoa. She related about how sometimes missionary labors are "hard trials" to pass through and told about their experiences during the period of the Samoan War in 1899.

Since the war started, we have been stationed in Opai, where the guns . . . have been roaring . . . . Not more than two or three blocks from us lie seven men-of-war in the harbor . . . . These boats contain several six-inch guns and a number of smaller ones, and when the firing came . . . I had to put cotton in my ears for fear they would get injured . . . . Hundreds of natives with their faces painted pass our door every day carrying their guns . . . . I have seen most all the dead and wounded as they have been carried in from the battlefield and have had the privilege of attending the burial of the officers and soldiers who were killed just behind our mission headquarters at Fagalii.<sup>39</sup>

Sister Roberts explained further that none of the elders were injured, but the mission house was looted. Fourteen trunks were stolen and all the furniture was destroyed or carried away.

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>39</sup>Roberts, Young Woman's Journal, XI, 126-27.

### The Clergy

Disturbing encounters with clergymen of other faiths occurred rather frequently with Latter-day Saint missionaries throughout the world. Sometimes lady missionaries were right in the middle of it. Sister Ann Dewey Campbell was set apart for a mission to England in 1898. On one occasion, while preaching to a group of people, a Church of England clergyman asked her if she was a Mormon. When the answer came in the affirmative, the clergyman accused them of being "liars and deceivers" and claimed that their "Elders come here to carry off girls and women to Utah. They are murderers and cut-throats."<sup>40</sup> The clergyman spoke for twenty minutes in this vein. Then, at the first opportunity, an Elder Parkin introduced Sister Campbell to the onlookers. She "stepped forward and in a loud, clear voice told of the virtue and morality of the women and men of Utah."<sup>41</sup> The effects of her testimony were positive and erased some prejudiced feelings from the minds of many people listening to them.

### The Mobs

Much of the prejudice that prevailed against the missionaries of the Church in England, and for that matter all over the world, centered around their doctrine of "plural" marriages. Even though the Church had

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<sup>40</sup>Journal History, September 17, 1898, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

officially ceased the practice of polygamy in 1890, the hatred of the people towards the Church, and this doctrine in particular, still persisted. Consequently, the missionaries often experienced bitter persecution for it.

On one occasion, for example, Sisters Inez Knight and Liza Chapman, who had been set apart in 1898, were attending conference in Bristol, England. Upon their arrival at the place of the meeting they noticed groups of people congregating in the road; thinking nothing of it they proceeded. Susa Young Gates tells about the events that followed.

. . . the women accompanied by Inez' brother, Ray, entered the door. Immediately someone shouted, "There is one of them with his two wives." Then it seemed as if people came out of the pebbles. Quickly the road was packed with people. Stones began coming through the window glass. . . .<sup>42</sup>

Finally President Platt D. Lyman instructed one of the elders to escort the sisters home to their apartments. While on the way the crowds followed, "jostling against" them and hitting them with their caps. Sister Chapman became so frightened that she was "almost unable to proceed." Soon they arrived at a police station where, after an hour's wait and a few tears later, the police escorted them home.<sup>43</sup>

### Sickness and Death

There was much sickness that prevailed with the missionaries, especially in the islands of the South Pacific and in New Zealand. On

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<sup>42</sup>Gates, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup>Whitney, IV, 610.

one occasion, after returning from a four-month trip to the northern part of the island, Elder Paxman found his wife and little girl sick. There was no one but their inexperienced Maori friends to take care of them. Soon Sister Paxman recovered, but their daughter did not.

. . . our lovely little girl gradually became weaker and weaker, day by day. We did everything that layed in our power for her recovery . . . it was hard for us to believe that the Lord required us to lay her body down in this far off land, but we were forced to this conclusion.<sup>44</sup>

Their daughter soon died and was buried there on the island. The tremendous faith and courage of Elder and Sister Paxman was made evident when they resolved themselves to accepting the sad event as the will of God.

#### First Lady Missionary Death

A sad and tragic event occurred with the Merrill family while in the Islands during 1891. Sister Merrill was pregnant with their first child when they entered the mission field. Five weeks before the birth of the child she became extremely ill and suffered immensely. The child was finally born on June 28, 1891. Sister Merrill's husband, Joseph, thought the child was dead at first, but it soon showed signs of life. The next day on June 29 the following occurred as recorded in Elder Merrill's journal.

Katie slept well last night. . . . At 1 o'clock I witnessed the death of our baby. And at 3 o'clock p.m. God saw fit to take

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<sup>44</sup>Paxman, XXIV, 168.

my dear wife. It is all I can bare. We left home so happy . . . and now I am left alone . . . bereft of all my earthly joys. . . . Unless I can overcome the sorrow and trials that are now heaped upon me I am crushed.<sup>45</sup>

The child and Sister Merrill were buried on the side of a hill about 200 yards from the mission house. She was the first lady missionary to die while serving on a foreign mission.<sup>46</sup>

#### Blinded Lady Missionary

Another odd and unfortunate event occurred with Elizabeth B. Duffin who was set apart for her mission in December of 1891. She became very ill and then went blind while serving in Hawaii. This event happened after she was attacked with intense pains in her head and back. The suffering was further complicated with fever. Soon she grew weaker; her eyesight began failing until she became completely blind. Elder and Sister Duffin were released from their mission early to return home.<sup>47</sup>

#### Death of a Husband--Birth of a Son

The husband of Annie D. Christensen Stevens, who was set apart for her mission in 1892, was twenty-nine years old and president of the Samoan Mission when he died in April, 1894. He was stricken

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<sup>45</sup>Joseph H. Merrill Journals, Samoan Mission, February 1890 to January 1903, I, 39, (typescript), Brigham Young University Library.

<sup>46</sup>Journal History, July 15, 1891, pp. 6-7.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1893, p. 2.

with typhoid fever further complicated by a heart problem.<sup>48</sup> When Sister Stevens arrived home she was greeted by friends and relatives. "The greetings were necessarily brief, for Sister Stevens was feeling ill and had to retire to bed early; and at 11 p.m. she gave birth to a nice boy."<sup>49</sup>

#### Death of Three Children

Thomas H. and Sarah M. Hilton were also serving as missionaries in Samoa in 1892 when they lost three of their children in less than four years. "Little Jeanette lived less than a year, George Emmett for only seven days, and Thomas Harold for a year and a half."<sup>50</sup>

Sister Moody and her husband arrived in Samoa on November 12, 1894. "She gave birth to a daughter on May 3, 1895, but did not regain her vitality and passed away May 24."<sup>51</sup>

In 1898, Sister Ethel Lowry Ried accompanied her husband to the Samoan Islands. While there she gave birth to a son, but sickness ensued immediately; and upon her return to Utah, she died.<sup>52</sup> In the same year Sister Andriana N. Keilholz accompanied her husband to

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<sup>48</sup>Loren C. Dunn, "Faithful Laborers." The Ensign, V (May, 1975), 26.

<sup>49</sup>Journal History, June 12, 1894, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup>Dunn, p. 25.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Journal History, October 25, 1899, p. 8.

Europe and Scandinavia. Sister Keilholz's husband, Adolf, passed away while they were in the Netherlands.<sup>53</sup>

#### Insubordinate Lady Missionary

Insubordination was another event rare among Latter-day Saint lady missionaries according to the sources explored by the author.

Katie McIntyre Hottendorf was a native Hawaiian girl who had gone to Utah and married Henry Hottendorf, a white man. They were called on missions to Hawaii in 1892. It became immediately clear that Sister Hottendorf was not going to respond favorably to missionary discipline. Matthew Noall, the mission president, describes events that occurred after their arrival.

Rather underhandedly, she opposed our work. She also did much to discredit the faith of the Hawaiian people in the members of the Church in Utah. . . . I concluded that she and her two children should return to Utah and so wrote the [First] Presidency.<sup>54</sup>

The answer finally came approving of her return, but Sister Hottendorf refused to go and insisted on reimbursement for their trip to the Islands. President Noall refused to give it to her, but soon she relinquished and returned to Utah.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., March 19, 1900, p. 8.

<sup>54</sup>Noall, p. 69.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

## LIVING CONDITIONS

Not the least among the problems facing missionaries, especially in some foreign lands, were their living conditions such as with food and shelter. Although distressful and sometimes humorous, most lady missionaries also faced these circumstances with determination.

Earn Their Own Way

There were some remote and uncivilized regions of the world where Latter-day Saint missionaries had to work to sustain a livelihood. This was usually the case in the islands of the South Pacific. For example, Sister Jane A. S. Lewis, who went to the Society Islands with her husband Phillip, had to teach school and sew, "in order to earn means for obtaining the necessities of life."<sup>56</sup>

The same situation existed with Sisters Elvina Woodbury and Patty Perkins, who were also in the Society Islands with their husbands in 1852 and trying to make a living for themselves as best they could. The Protestants on the island of Molokia, where they were laboring, came out openly against the missionaries. Some of the native members of the Church also began to grow careless and indifferent toward them. In some cases they were unwilling to provide food because "it cost them more

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<sup>56</sup>Manuscript History, Hawaiian Mission, May 25, 1852, p. 1. Church Archives.

than the keeping of their former preacher (Mr. Hitchcock), whom they paid 50¢ a piece per month."<sup>57</sup>

In consequence of predicaments of this kind, the missionaries often went hungry and had to change their residence a number of times.

Sister Woodbury offered to teach school for the natives, if they would furnish a house; but they were not sufficiently interested in the matter to build one. Sister Woodbury, however, commenced a school and obtained a few scholars, who for their tuition brought her a scanty supply of food, periodically.<sup>58</sup>

The school Sister Woodbury was teaching increased in attendance until she had about "40 scholars," but it did not last long.

Sister Perkins and her husband, who lived fairly close to the Woodburys during this time, were experiencing similar problems as mentioned above.

As time went on they fared worse and worse for food, which consisted of dry tart poi, sweet potatoes, and salt and occasionally fish; but not in sufficient quantities to satisfy their wants.<sup>59</sup>

Soon Elder Perkins became discouraged and went to the mission president for counsel and advice. The mission president gave them permission to return to Utah because of his wife's failing health.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., September 10, 1852, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

Financial problems burdened some lady missionaries in 1873 too. When Mildred E. Randall went on her second mission, she experienced some difficulty in providing money to help pay for her expenses to the Sandwich Islands. By this time Sister Randall's relationship with her husband had become a little strained because of his leaving his first mission to the islands in 1865. Apparently Sister Randall could not get him to provide for her during this second mission like she thought he should; and she ended up obtaining financial assistance from other sources, including President Brigham Young.

As soon as you spoke to me about coming I wrote to him at Ogden and told him about it, and asked him for some assistance. I thought at least he would give me a decant (sic) outfit, but he did not give me anything. . . . It was with reluctance that he consented to pay for the half of a sleeping birth in the car. Brother Mitchell paying for the other half for Maggie . . . You kindly paying for my passage on the cars and steamer.<sup>61</sup>

#### House Full of Rats

The first night the Noalls arrived in Laie, Hawaii, having been called on a mission in 1885, they were shown to their sleeping quarters. It consisted of a "small dilapidated" room with a ceiling only seven feet high. The side wall had holes in it through which "the trade winds blew . . . with multitudinous noises." Elder Noall describes their encounter with the rats in this manner.

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<sup>61</sup>Randall, Letter to Brigham Young. November 8, 1875, p. 4.

All night long the rats played hide and go seek along the ceiling joists and up and down the curtain. . . . Libbie, who was only twenty years old, chose the inside of the bed because she thought that she would be safe there . . . but they played up and down beside her all night long.<sup>62</sup>

Elder Noall went on to explain that one or two of the rats stopped running long enough to tear part of the leather lining from a pair of shoes he brought with him from Utah.

Elder Noall accepted a welcomed assignment to build new accommodations in which the missionaries could reside. Sister Noall made the curtains, drapes and valances for the new buildings.

#### Lady Missionary Humor

The food for the missionaries in Laie "unwaveringly consisted of mush for breakfast with a scanty supply of milk, sweet potatoes and salt beef for dinner, and combinations of these foods for supper."<sup>63</sup> On one occasion the mission house was extra crowded with people who had come to Laie for a missionary conference. Libbie Noall was supposed to fix breakfast, but the inadequate supply of food would not provide for all the guests. Elder Noall described the ensuing events.

Suddenly a twinkle came into her eyes. "You'll see," she said. When the mush was served an individual dish was, as usual, placed before President Smith. Three serving dishes were set along the middle of the table. One of the elders started to help himself at the same time that President Smith dipped into his portion. The expression of their faces was a

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<sup>62</sup>Noall, pp. 32-33.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

contrast to behold. One was laughing, the other resentful, as Libbie's means of providing food became apparent. She had carefully covered the dish towel which she had placed in the bottom of each of the serving dishes, and the cloth in President Smith's dish with the mush. Neither of the men could imagine what his spoon had touched until at last he could no longer be deceived.<sup>64</sup>

Some of the guests in the group resented the "April fool breakfast" and refused to accept the joke. They went to the store to purchase "oysters and other luxuries" at Church expense.<sup>65</sup>

#### MODE OF TRAVEL

Sometimes the most difficult and dangerous experiences encountered by lady missionaries were occasions when they were traveling to and from their places of assignment. Wagons, for example, were a typical means of transportation for missionaries, especially before the advent of the Transcontinental railroad to Utah in 1869. It was only then that this sometimes distressful mode of travel began to change. When a mission assignment was for a country overseas, they had to travel by ship. It was by this means of conveyance that some lady missionaries had their most perilous experiences.

Louisa Barns Pratt experienced some interesting events during her trip to the Islands of Tahiti.

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., pp. 36-37.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

After exchanging adieus, six wagons started, 24 persons in all, expecting to overtake a small company at Bear River. We found the Weber very high, the water running over the middle of the bridge. We got safely over. . . . We came to Ogden River, had an almost perpendicular hill to come down; the men let the wagons down by the help of ropes; had a severe time in crossing the water. After we crossed the bridge, the wagons mired; the men were in the water up to their waists for more than an hour. Mr. Tomkins was wroth because some who got over first did not come back to help others. After we were out of the water it began to rain severely. We travelled three miles and camped at a brother Chase's to wait for fair weather. We heard afterwards the Weber bridge washed away the night after we crossed over.<sup>66</sup>

When Sister Pratt and her party reached the banks of Sacramento River, they unloaded their wagons. From there they traveled via the Sacramento River to San Francisco and boarded the ship that was to take them to the islands.

The bark was large and convenient, but oh, so dirty! We went on board, chose our berths, expecting to have a good night's rest. No sooner had we laid our heads on our pillows than the mosquitoes commenced their ravages. Like a mob of armed men they invaded our quarters. We all abandoned the cabin and fled on deck, but all in vain; we could not elude their vigilance. Two-thirds larger than insects of the common class, their bites were like the sting of bees. I wrapped myself in a thick blanket, sat in my chair. In spite of all my efforts to cover myself, they pierced me till my feet and ankles became swollen and inflamed. I wore bandages, wet in vinegar, on my wrists, went without sleep till I was completely exhausted.<sup>67</sup>

Two years later Sisters Woodbury and Perkins were having similar transportation problems in the Sandwich Islands. They often found it necessary to move from place to place; because, as previously

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<sup>66</sup>Carter, VIII, 252-53.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 257.

explained, the members of the Church refused to support them in their work. On one occasion Elder and Sister Woodbury were seeking passage from Molokai to the Island of Maui, but the natives were not willing to take them over the channel. Then in answer to earnest prayer they finally found an opportunity to go. While crossing they experienced an extremely rough sea. The boat nearly filled with water several times. The natives were horrified, as death seemed to be eminent at any moment. This particular channel, in which they were attempting to sail, happened to be the roughest of all the channels separating the different islands in Hawaii.

After a terrible experience the shore of Maui was finally reached, and a landing effected among the rocks about five miles from Lahaina. From there, Bro. and Sister Woodbury, drenched to the skin, walked to Lahaina, where they found Elder Perkins and wife living with Uaua who had also returned from his mission to Molokai to his home in Lahaina. Br. Uaua cooked a chicken for his new guests, which was the first meal eaten by them for a long time. In fact, they were actually starving when they arrived at Lahaina.<sup>68</sup>

When the Woodbury's and Perkins were finally ready to leave Hawaii for home, Sister Woodbury found that she had no money to pay her passage. Several attempts were made to borrow money from members of the Church, but they refused. Finally she effected a loan from a non-Mormon.

Paying \$60 a piece for their passage, Elder Perkins and wife and Sister Woodbury sailed from Honolulu, Thursday, Oct. 7,

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<sup>68</sup>Manuscript History, Hawaiian Mission, September 10, 1852, p. 2.

1852, on the sailing vessel "George Washington," but after encountering a very rough sea and contrary winds for several days, and also having a narrow escape from being shipwrecked on the rocks, the ship returned to Honolulu for repairs.<sup>69</sup>

The ship remained in harbor for nearly a week when sail was set once again for the California coast. On this second passage the seas again proved to be very rough. When approaching the American coast the vessel narrowly escaped being wrecked. Finally it landed with passengers anxiously awaiting their turn to disembark.

In 1865 lady missionaries were still braving the same treacherous paths that the Sisters did twelve and fifteen years earlier. On Thursday, May 18, 1865, the group of "Sandwich Island Missionaries" were camped in wagons on the Jordan River near Salt Lake City. President Brigham Young and others rode to their location, where President Young effected an organization among them. George Nebeker was designated as the company's "president" or "captain" with William B. Wright as the "clerk" and Alfred J. Randall as "sergeant of the guard." This was done according to the customary procedure for a caravan of that nature. "The company numbered 9 missionaries, 11 women, 18 children and six teamsters, or 43 souls in all,"<sup>70</sup> traveling in eight wagons.

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>70</sup>Journal History, May 18, 1865; see also Manuscript History, Hawaiian Mission, July 7, 1865, p. 1. Church Archives.

This group traveled for a "tiresome" several weeks over steep mountains and across sandy plains finally arriving in "Lathrop," California. There they traveled down the Sacramento River to San Francisco by means of a steamer, just as Sister Pratt did in 1850. From San Francisco they boarded the ship, "D. C. Murry," and sailed for Hawaii. Arriving in Honolulu Harbor on the morning of July 6, 1865, they changed to a smaller vessel and sailed around the island to Laie where they arrived the next day.

We lay to about one mile out at sea, taking turns in going ashore, each one of us having to jump from the schooner to a small fishing boat (as the waves would wash the two boats together) and were then rowed ashore. After all had landed, thirty-five of us, taking all day, we started for the plantation house, going seventeen of us at a time in a large ox-cart. Our provisions being delayed, we lived entirely upon native food for several days.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Manuscript History, Hawaiian Mission, July 7, 1865, p. 4.

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY

The purpose and justification for this study is to provide a continuous history of Latter-day Saint female missionary activities from 1830 to 1898. Special emphasis is placed on Latter-day Saint women who were formally involved as proselyting missionaries. Female members of the Church on missions with assignments indirectly related to missionary work are considered, as well as women who were called to do missionary work incidental to the primary reason for their venture. Two other important areas were examined in this thesis. They were the official policy of Church leaders towards lady missionaries and the life style and activities particularly characteristic of Latter-day Saint lady missionaries.

Female involvement in missionary activities in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has its informal beginnings in the early 1830's. Their participation in terms of numbers remained inconstant until 1865 when eleven women were designated as missionaries. From 1866 to 1878 the numbers participating were still relatively scarce, but in 1879 and again in 1890 significant increases occurred.

From the early 1830's to 1865, Latter-day Saint women were always in company with their husbands; and little, if any, official

missionary status was given them. Then in 1865 the Church began the practice of setting them apart, which implied at least that the Church intended adding greater emphasis to their missionary station. It was not until 1898, however, that the Church began "certifying" lady missionaries which apparently put them on an equal status with their male counterparts.

It was not until 1873 that the first woman was called on a mission independent of her husband. Only a few women went on missions independent of their husbands after 1873 according to the official missionary records. However, with some of them the author was not able to determine conclusively whether or not they were married, and if they were, whether or not their husbands went with them.

The determination as to whom is the first single lady missionary in the Church depends on what period of Church history is involved and how the Church defined a lady missionary at that time. Prior to 1865, when women were not set apart, Christene Benson Anderson was called to a mission assignment from Denmark in 1851. After the Church started that practice, Lydia McCauslen Young was set apart in 1886. Then after the official certification of lady missionaries in 1898, Sisters Amanda Inez Knight and Lucy Jane Brimhall were the first single women to be set apart.

Between 1830 and 1898 there were well over two hundred Latter-day Saint women involved in missionary work throughout the world. Places most frequented by them in the United States were California,

Michigan, the "Northwestern States," New York and Colorado. Foreign countries where Latter-day Saint women were sent most often were the Hawaiian Islands and England.

Latter-day Saint women went on missions for several reasons. Several went to do genealogy research, while others went to avoid problems pursuant to the so-called anti-polygamy raids in the 1880's. The author knows of at least three women who went for educational purposes and two others who were set apart as missionaries to go and accompany relatives home from their missions. Then, of course, there were those who went to accompany their husbands and perform whatever duties were required of them as missionaries.

Most of the common types of activities that lady missionaries engaged in were determined to a great extent by the area in which they labored. Women assigned to the islands in the Pacific had a daily routine somewhat different from those who labored in the United States, Britain or Europe. Nevertheless, in all parts of the world Latter-day Saint lady missionaries could be seen writing letters, cleaning house, preparing meals and tending children. Reading, sewing and teaching were some other less common activities. Some of the sisters were involved in leadership positions such as Relief Society presidents or were in charge of and the teacher for a mission school. Some of the unusual types of activities included translating the scriptures, anointing and blessing the sick and preaching sermons to non-members.

Latter-day Saint lady missionaries suffered many and varied hardships while serving as missionaries. Death occurred once in a while, either with the missionary herself or with members of her immediate family. One lady missionary even went blind. Sometimes personality problems occurred creating hard feelings and disappointments. Problems with modes of transportation, as well as their eating and sleeping accommodations, were not infrequent. This category of difficulties gave them experiences like sleeping with rats in your bed to riding in a bumpy old ox-cart for several miles. One lady missionary even experienced some of the ravages of war. Others narrowly escaped the angry hands of a mob.

The author believes that many Latter-day Saint lady missionaries have made a significant and positive contribution to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its missionary efforts in the world. The extraordinary faith and courage demonstrated in the life of most Latter-day Saint women who ventured the path of missionary labors from 1830 to 1898 is inspiring.

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A HISTORY OF FEMALE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN THE CHURCH  
OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

1830-1898

Calvin S. Kunz

Department of Church History and Doctrine

M.A. Degree, April 1976

ABSTRACT

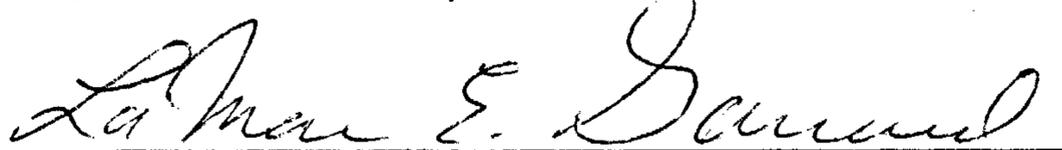
Latter-day Saint female missionary activities informally began in the early 1830's, remaining numerically unconstant until 1879, when a significant increase began. Between 1830 and 1898 over two hundred women had been involved in missionary work, laboring mostly in California, New York, Hawaii and England.

Before 1865, Latter-day Saint women did not have any official missionary status. After 1865, Church officials began the practice of setting them apart. Finally, in 1898 women were "certified" as missionaries which placed them on an equal status with their male counterparts.

Some lady missionaries performed household chores, taught school, preached sermons and presided over female auxiliary organizations. There were some who suffered extreme illness and even death. Others experienced dangerous modes of transportation and extremely poor living conditions. The extraordinary faith and courage demonstrated by many Latter-day Saint lady missionaries has rendered an important contribution to the missionary work of the Church.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

  
Howard H. Barron, Committee Chairman

  
Lamar E. Garrard, Committee Member

  
Larry C. Porter, Acting Chairman