

Joseph William Linford

(1842-1914)

The Quiet Link of Faith



By Mark Empey Linford

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Preface

One of my lifetime goals has been to write a book. In my mind, it didn't need to be a best seller or the great American novel, or even published, but it had to be something I was passionate about. So, during a period when I was recovering from an illness, I decided to give it a try, but the big question was what I would write about.

The answer came to me suddenly one day out of the blue. At the time, I was thinking about what a difference one person's life could make to his or her posterity. My great, great grandparents, John and Maria Linford are classic examples. Living in Graveley, England in 1842 they were the only members of their respective families to be baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1856, their faith in the Mormon Church was so strong that they took their family and immigrated to the United States to gather to Zion. As handcart pioneers they were part of the ill-fated Willie Handcart Company. John Linford died on the banks of the Sweetwater River in Wyoming from exposure, but his wife and three of their boys—George, Joseph and Amasa—were rescued and arrived safely in Salt Lake City.

John and Maria's decision to be baptized set the course for literally thousands of Linfords. The impact was that their family line lives in the United States, mostly in Utah, Idaho and California. The family that they left behind is still in England. To this day, most of John and Maria's posterity is Mormon. This religion has been passed along from generation to generation.

This book, however, is about Joseph William Linford, the third son of John and Maria. He is my great grandfather. I choose to write about him because I believe he is the link between John Linford's sacrifice and my family's faith today. Joseph Linford and his brothers and mother had every reason to become bitter about their experience with the Willie Handcart Company and the death of father and husband. Joseph could have washed his hands of Mormonism as had so many before him when they met with adversity. He could have left Salt Lake City and headed for California or Oregon to seek his fortune elsewhere. But he didn't. Instead, he chose to embrace the gospel and father a large posterity that will forever revere him for his testimony and his life.

Joseph William Linford was a humble man who lived a simple life. There are no books about him that I can find. That is not to say that he wasn't an extraordinary man. His life was shaped by the events of early Mormon history and he was an eyewitness to events that shaped Mormonism. He knew many important historical figures of the era, including President Brigham Young, Apostle Charles C. Rich and James Willie.

Joseph was part of the great missionary harvest in England, being born into the church in 1842 right after his parents were baptized. He was a handcart pioneer in 1856. His family

evacuated their home in Centerville, Utah because of the Utah War in 1857. As a teenager, he was a teamster that drove a wagon and yoke of oxen eastward across the mountains and plains to meet a new group of Mormon pioneers and guide them back to Utah. At 24, Joseph was part of the colonizing party that settled the Bear Lake Valley in Idaho. There, he married Mary Bratton Rich, daughter of the apostle Charles C. Rich. Together, they were parents of nine children. He was a farmer. His children lovingly described him as a naturally wise, learned man, who never had the advantage of receiving much of a formal education. Throughout his life, he was an active churchman, holding many different callings. Later in his life, he was a county commissioner.

I have drawn from many fine histories, autobiographies and memoirs to present the best picture possible of Joseph William Linford's life. It is my hope that I can pull them all together into one concise document. More specifically, my goal is to overlay the life of Joseph William Linford with the historical and theological contexts of the time. I do this in the hope that anyone related to the Linford family will understand the courage and greatness of this good, humble man.

Finally, there might be some who complain that this book is too religious and really a church history book in disguise. The simple fact is that you cannot examine the life of Joseph William Linford without understanding Mormonism and its history. In most cases, they are inseparable. Likewise, you cannot write about Joseph Linford without the history of his parents, his brothers, his wife, his children, Charles C. Rich, Joseph Rich and many others.

Mark Empey Linford
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Chapter One

Liverpool, England-- May 4, 1856

To say that Joseph William Linford was excited would be an understatement. As he stood on the deck of the Thornton, a three-masted passenger sailing ship about to embark for America, he could not possibly have imagined what life would hold for him, not only in the next six months, but throughout his entire life. He did not know that this voyage was the start of a new life, one where he would experience unspeakable tragedy and joy. At age 14, Joseph only knew that this was an adventure of a lifetime.

Called Joe by his parents and brothers, he was short in stature but strong for his age, having worked on neighboring farms to help support his family. In most ways, he was like any other lad living in rural England, except for one thing—he was a Mormon boy.

As the ship was tugged out of the river, Joe was joined by his father and mother, John and Maria, one of his older brothers George and his younger brother Amasa. They were accompanied by 742 other people, all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (and known as Mormons), from England and Denmark. His oldest brother James did not accompany the family on the voyage because he was serving as a Mormon missionary in the English Mission.

Like their fellow-passengers, the Linfords were about to fulfill a long-held dream of gathering to Zion by leaving their home and immigrating to America where they would join their fellow Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Thornton would cross the Atlantic Ocean to New York City where the immigrants would travel by train to Dunkirk, New York. After taking the steamboat to Toledo, Ohio on Lake Erie, the group would again take trains to Chicago, Rock Island and Iowa City. In Iowa City, they would prepare for the final stage of their journey. There, they would be formed into a handcart company to walk the remaining 1,300 miles pulling a handcart with all of their possessions.

Many were baffled why Joseph's family would leave England and start a new life in the American West. After all, his father was a skilled craftsman—a boot and shoe maker—and for many years the Linford family lived a comfortable middle-class existence. His grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins did not share the faith of his parents, John and Maria, who embraced the Mormon Church in 1842. They could not understand the strength of their faith and their devotion to this strange new religion from America.

Joseph William Linford's entire life was shaped by the decision of his parents to be baptized. At the time, he was only 10 months old. It's not surprising then, that to understand Joseph's life story, we need to become acquainted with his parents. In order to do that, we must go back 14 years to Graveley, Cambridgeshire, England.

Chapter Two

Graveley, England 1842 to 1856

Joseph William Linford was born on 30 March, 1842 in Graveley, Cambridgeshire, England to his parents, John Linford and Maria Bentley Christian Linford. The fourth of six children, he was preceded in birth by Maria Mary Linford (born in 1834), James Henry Linford (1836), George John Linford (1838) and Joseph William Linford (1840). He also had a younger brother, Amasa Christian born in 1845. Both his sister Maria and his brother Joseph passed away as infants soon after they were born. Although it may seem strange to us today, it was not unusual for parents to give the same name of a deceased child to the next sibling. Thus, Joseph William Linford was named after his deceased older brother. At the time of Joseph's birth, his father was 33 years old, his mother was 28 and his surviving older brothers were aged five and three. Amasa was born three years later.

Putting Joseph's birth year in historical perspective helps to understand his lifetime. The American revolution notwithstanding, with the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 the British Empire ruled the world with its maritime superiority and far-flung colonies. In 1842, England was under the reign of Queen Victoria. Crowned in 1837 at the age of 18, she ruled for the next 64 years. During this period, England underwent dramatic economic and societal changes. Due to the industrial revolution, England had become the leading industrial nation in the world. Textiles became England's leading export, and this increased demand for coal to feed the textile factories. This led to the expansion of the coal industry and hastened the development of coal mining.¹ One impact of the industrial revolution was that there was a shift of population away from agriculture towards industrial urban employment. Manufacturing centers appeared in Manchester, London and Birmingham. Liverpool, with its docks, became a major center of transportation and emigration while London was the seat of government.

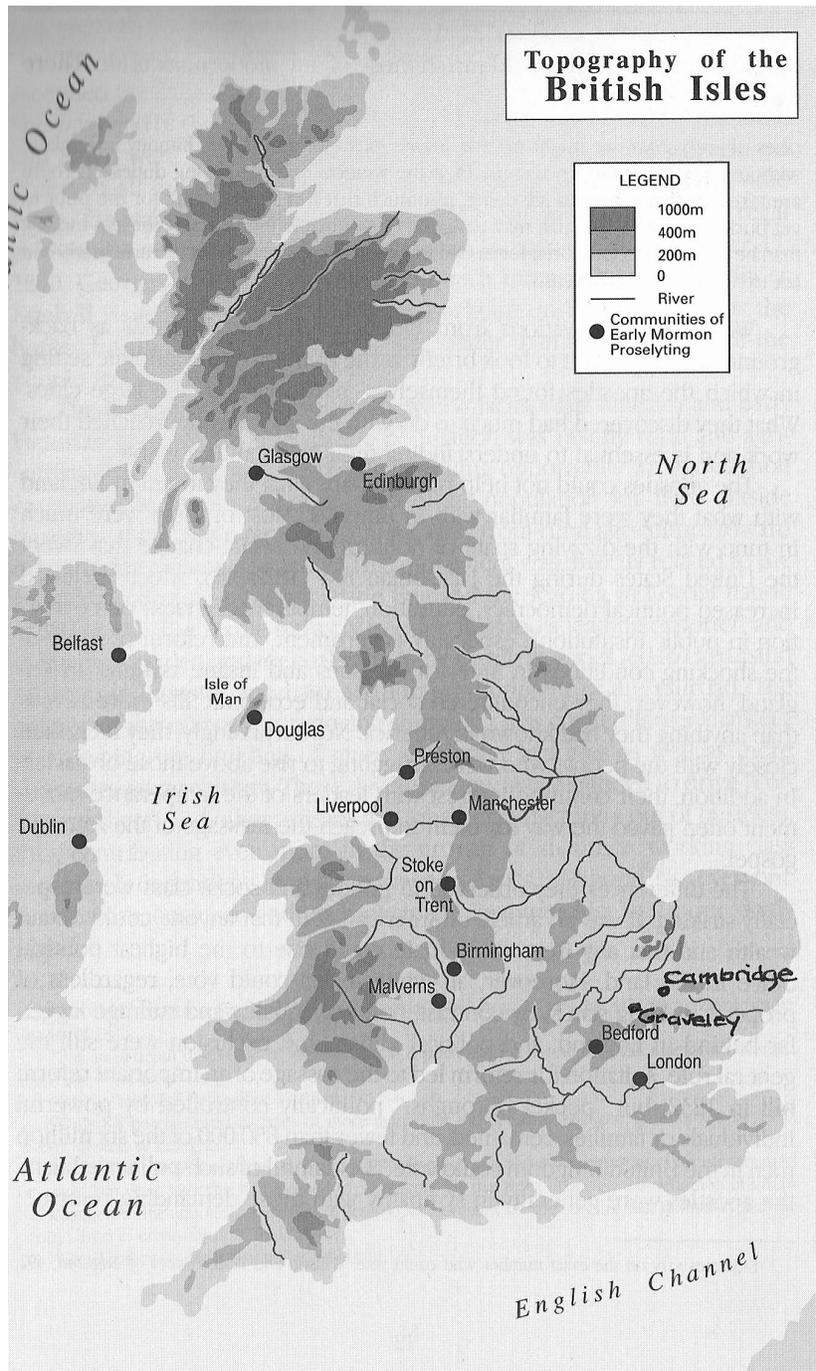
A second change was the widening of the economic gap between the rich and the poor. This was especially critical to the success of the Mormon missionaries that first came to the British Isles in 1837. Brigham Young and Willard Richards made these observations about the economic and social conditions that they found in England in 1840 in a 12 page report to the First Presidency of the Church. They reported that English society was divided into three classes: "Lords, Tradesmen & mechanics and laborers, or in other words, the highest, the middle & lowest classes."² The apostles also noted "the multitude of beggars who filled the city streets" and "that crime, drunkenness, gambling and swearing were all commonplace and that opportunities for education among the poor were shameful. They complained of child labor, low wages, factory lockouts and miserable living conditions."³

¹ James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, David J. Whitaker, *Men With a Mission 1837-1841 The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles*, pp. 13

² *Ibid*, page 10

³ *Ibid*, page 10

Meanwhile, in the United States the gospel of Jesus Christ was being restored which would completely change the lives of John and Maria Linford's family. Joseph Smith's first vision occurred in 1820. The Book of Mormon was printed in 1830, the same year the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was established. The first missionaries to the British Isles, Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde, were called in 1837. Later, in 1840, during a time of strife and turmoil for the church in Missouri, a revelation from the Lord commanded nine of the twelve apostles to proclaim the restored gospel throughout the British Isles. There, they experienced phenomenal success. In December 1842, nine months after the birth of Joseph William Linford, his parents were baptized members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



The Linfords in England

While England was undergoing a rapid transformation to an industrial urban society, life in Graveley remained largely rural and agricultural. Graveley and Eltisley, where his father was born, are small adjacent towns separated by a few miles. Part of Cambridgeshire, they are located roughly 60 miles north of London and 20 miles southwest of Cambridge.

Little is known about the Linford family and what we do know is found in the *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, Joseph's oldest brother, written in 1919. This volume contains some recollections of his great-grandfather, grandfather and his father and mother. It also contains some revealing insights on characteristics that have been passed down through the Linford line to today. (See Appendix Three)

James Linford noted that his family had traditionally worked as farmers and that it was in his grandfather's generation that some family members found new trades. The Linfords owned the land they farmed which put them in the middle class. James notes in the preface of his book: "Up to the time of Grandfather, it appears that the Linford family had been farmers almost exclusively, but in his day a great change came to them; Uncle James became a baker, Uncle Towers a wheelwright, and my father a boot and shoemaker."⁴ Of his grandfather, John Linford, he wrote: "I am able to give a more complete account of the life of my grandfather, John Linford, as I was personally acquainted with him and saw how he farmed his land and disposed of its products. I also became acquainted with the obstacles that farmers had to contend with in that period."⁵

The obstacles that he mentioned had particular reference to John Linford who suffered from the uncertainties that all farmers face:

When he was married, he had enough money to have kept himself and his family, if he had put it out at interest; but being raised a farmer, I suppose he could not see anything but farming, and strange as it may seem, he was ruined by two wet harvests in succession. His sheep took the foot rot and died, and the grain grew in the shocks. I have heard my grandmother say that when the grain was ground into flour and made into dough, it was so soft that she had to hurry it into the oven to prevent it from running out of the pans. My [other] grandfather, William Christian, was ruined by the same wet seasons. To make matters worse, he had gone security for a neighbor who had failed to pay his bonds.⁶

Certain family characteristics become evident over the generations and may bring a smile to the members of today's family who still experience them. Most striking are several statements that the Linfords were known to be retiring in their manners. James Linford, the great grandfather of James Henry Linford is described as follows: "He was a farmer by vocation, living mostly on lone farms. How many generations of the family had been raised under the same conditions is not known, I think a great many, for a prominent characteristic

⁴ James Henry Linford, *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, February 1914, pp V in preface

⁵ Ibid, pp V in preface

⁶ Ibid, pp2

of the family was that they were very retiring in their manners.⁷ And, showing that this trait was passed down from father to son, James Henry Linford describes his grandfather, John Linford, as a loner: "He was a medium sized man, being about five feet eight inches in height and was of fair complexion; a farmer by vocation, he always preferred to live in a lonely place."⁸ Apparently, he liked to live in lonely places because he had little interest in other people: "He was a very quiet man and had but little to say to any one; the family said that he never entered into conversation with any one, outside of members of his family, except on business. Notwithstanding the fact that he was so quiet and reserved, he was an all-around good man."⁹ While we don't have many descriptions of John Linford (the father of Joseph Linford) and Joseph Linford, it appears that they also were men of few words.

While the Linfords might not have been engaging conversationalists, they were known and respected as hard workers. Describing his grandfather, John Linford, the autobiography describes his strength and work ethic.

In his day, farmers were accustomed to market their grain in four-bushel sacks; the grain was sold by sample on market days or it was all taken directly to the market where buyers would inspect the grain and pay according to quality. There were always men ready to carry these large sacks into the warehouses, up long flights of stairs. The sack rested on the full length of the back and was held in place with a stick which the porter placed across the bottom; their hats were like sailors' southwesters only their peaks were longer and so extended farther down their backs. I have seen my grandfather load these huge sacks of grain into a cart without help.¹⁰

Finally, there appears to be an independent streak in the Linfords when it came to religion. The family was very religious but did not join any of the local churches. "He (James Linford) the great grandfather of James Henry Linford) was a religious man and it was his custom to hold cottage meetings at his house on Sunday afternoons, and people from his own and neighboring villages attended regularly. To what religious society he belonged, I never learned."¹¹ James Henry Linford also notes that: "My grandfather (John Linford) did not belong to any religious society. He spent his Sunday afternoons reading his Bible and looking after things on his farm."¹²

James Henry described his father, John as being well read in the Bible who took delight in handling it in defense of the Mormon Church.

I well remember the Curate of the Church of England calling on him to show him he was in error, as soon as the Curate began to talk his limbs commenced to shake. Father invited him to sit down but he stammered out, "Mr. Linford, I came to show you that you are in error, but I don't think it will be of any use." Father told him that he ought to have more faith than that in his labors as a minister of the Gospel, but he had nothing more to say and left the house as quickly as he could. On another occasion a Roman Catholic lady called; after some conversation on religious matters, each defending his side of the question from the Bible, the

⁷ Ibid, pp 1

⁸ Ibid, pp2

⁹ Ibid, pp3

¹⁰ Ibid, pp 2

¹¹ Ibid, pp 1

¹² Ibid, pp3

lady seeing that she was losing in the argument exclaimed, "I don't believe your Bible, it says Jesus Christ stole a donkey, and left the house in a hurry."¹³

John and Maria Linford

Little is known about the childhoods of John Linford or Maria Bentley Christian Linford. Again quoting from the *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*: "My father, John Linford, was born at Eltisley, Cambridgeshire, England, August 28, 1808. Father lived on the farm until he was apprenticed to learn the boot and shoe trade. After his apprenticeship expired, he started a business at Graveley."¹⁴

Boot and shoe making was a skilled trade that required an apprenticeship. Passed down from the middle-ages, the system of apprenticeship was designed to train skilled craftsmen. Most of the training was done on the job working for an employer who helped the apprentice learn his trade. An apprentice would serve his master for numerous years, generally seven or more, to work off the debt of his learning. Boys apprenticed to a trade were typically 14 to 16 years old. Based on the year he was married and assuming that he had finished his apprenticeship, it seems likely that John was indentured at the age of 15 or 16.

Life as a boot and shoe maker was demanding but one of the attractions was that trade allowed the apprentice to become self-employed.

Boot and shoe makers worked twelve hour days or longer. "Well it wasn't easy and you had to work hard at it to make a job at all. We shoemakers always died poor! poor but happy! The shoe maker was always a popular figure in a village."

With a long apprenticeship, low wages and such stiff competition from so many, it's surprising that any youngsters at all were attracted to shoe-making. But it gave a lad a chance eventually to be his own boss, self employed, in a trade with a constant demand for his products! though the better the boot, the longer it lasted, and the poorer the shoemaker!¹⁵

Not much is known about John's two brothers and seven sisters. It appears that the Linford family was relatively well off because the children received some education. Speaking of his father's family, James said, "They apparently received a good common education and John became well read in the Bible as the years went by. No mention is made that any of them, except John, joined the Mormon Church."¹⁶

John married Maria Bentley Christian on June 24, 1833. John was 24 and Maria was 20 years old. Maria was born in Graveley, Cambridgeshire, England on April 10, 1813. Her granddaughter, Eliza Linford Denio, shared this recollection of Maria who spoke about her childhood and her mother: "From what she told me of their home life, I think her mother must have been a superior woman, a good manager and fine housekeeper. I am sure that grandmother (Maria) inherited her sterling qualities, but as a girl she was not very strong

¹³ Ibid, pp7-8

¹⁴ Ibid, pp4

¹⁵ *The Way We Were*, www.aohg.org.uk/www/clothes3.html

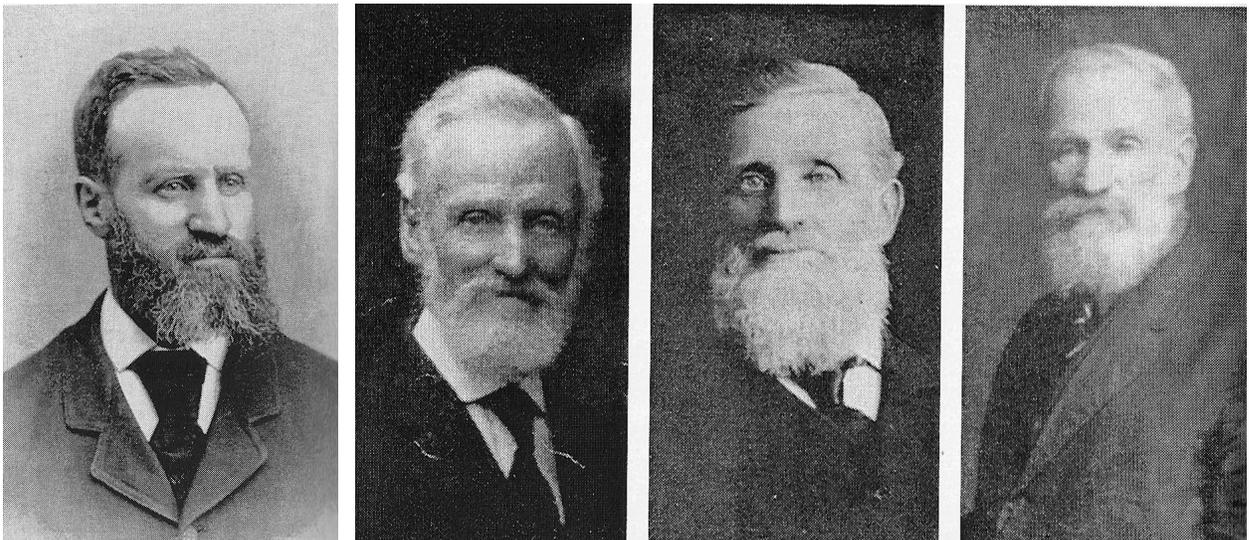
¹⁶ Golden C. Linford, *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 172



and healthy, and her mother was worried when she wanted to get married on account of her health.¹⁷ Maria has also been described as "very dignified and lady-like and very particular about her personal appearance."¹⁸

A year after their marriage, their first child and only daughter, Maria Mary Linford was born. She died shortly after her birth. Not to be deterred, John and Maria had children at regular intervals: James in 1836, George in 1838, Joseph William in 1840 (deceased), Joseph William in 1841 and Amasa Christian in 1845. Maria must have been a strong woman to raise four energetic boys while her husband was putting in long days at his boot and shoe shop. With the birth of Amasa, the boys would have been ages nine, seven, four and a newborn. (See Appendix Three)

Maria Bentley Christian Linford



Sons of John and Maria Linford: (from left to right) Joseph, James, George and Amasa

If James's experience is any indication, the boys of John and Maria Linford received an education typical of their middle class upbringing.

When I was six or seven years old, I attended a school of first grade kept by an old lady. She had but one room in which she kept school and did her house work. Instead of the rod she used the dishcloth.

¹⁷ Eliza M. Denio, *History of Maria Christian Linford Rich*, pp 2

¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp 4

When I was about twelve years of age, I attended a private school at Offord, kept by Mr. Wadsworth; the school was four miles from where I lived, and during the whole winter, I walked that distance morning and evening. I did not learn much as I was not far enough advanced in my studies. The tuition for the lower grades was twelve cents a weekí .

Father was a boot and shoemaker and I being the oldest child was kept at home to go on errands and, soon as I was able, to work at the shoe trade.¹⁹

Childhood of Joseph William Linford

Of Joseph's childhood, we are fortunate to have some life sketches that were written by his children.

One family story recorded by his daughter, Eliza, tells of a dispute he had with the village bully.

Like every other boy Joseph had his disputes and occasional fist fights with some quarrelsome fellows who wanted to have their own way all the time. He had been taught by his father to be peaceable and never start a fight, but to defend himself to the best of his ability if he were forced to do so. Being a Mormon boy probably kindled more opportunity for confrontation than for most. On one occasion he came home after having been badly handled by the village bully. His oldest brother, James, was indignant, not only with the other boy, but with Joseph for not defending himself better. He said, "Now Joe, you come with me. You are going to thrash that boy or I will thrash you myself." With this persuasion, he managed to whip the bully.²⁰

As previously mentioned, his parents were baptized into the Mormon Church shortly after Joseph was born in 1841. Because his parents actively lived their religion, they taught Joseph the principles of the Gospel from a young age. His parents insisted on their children observing the principles, including observing the Sabbath Day. Because there was no Mormon Sunday School in their village at the time, they attended a sectarian school.²¹ Eliza comments:

I have heard Father and Uncle Amasa talking about those early religious activities; and I decided that Sunday, at that time, was not filled with unalloyed pleasure for them. The Sunday School officers were very strict and did not hesitate to use the rod when they thought it necessary in maintaining order. After classes they were marched into the chapel where they had to sit and listen to the preacher for an hour or two, and at home they had to be quiet and orderly, and not bring criticism on the Church for it was known that the family was Mormons.²²

Joseph's youngest child, Leona, makes this observation about Joseph's education in her sketch. "Leaving England so young as he did (14 years) he did not get much schooling, and in those days it was quite out of the question to get schooling here. He did much to educate himself. He was an extensive reader. I can still remember his reading to the family in the evenings, when the chores were all finished."²³

¹⁹ *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 10-11

²⁰ Eliza M. Denio, *History of Jos. W. Linford*, pp 1

²¹ *Ibid*, pp 1

²² *Ibid*, pp 1

²³ *Linford Family History*, pp 243

Even while John Linford's boot and shoemaking shop prospered, economic necessity dictated that each of the boys work. In another sketch about Joseph's childhood, we learn that "His father was a shoemaker, a business that did not afford sufficient occupation for all of his boys, consequently as they grew up they were obliged to seek employment elsewhere. As soon as Joseph was old enough, he worked for one of the farmers of Graveley."²⁴ Eliza describes some of the farm work Joseph might have done:

As soon as Joseph was old enough he worked for one of the farmers of Graveley, doing light work as a boy of his age could do. Farming in that day was carried on very differently than it is today. The grain was cut with a scythe and bound into bundles by hand. Hay and grain was hauled in two-wheel carts, the rack reaching out behind, as well as in front above the horse, which was led to the yard where the cart was unloaded. The grain was threshed out by hand and put into very large sacks.²⁵

The Gospel is Preached in England

"Now behold, a marvelous work and wonder is about to come forth among the children of men. Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see ye that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day...For behold, the field is white and ready to harvest..."²⁶

Mormons regard this scripture as a revelation from God and as a commandment and promise to faithful members who spread the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no better example of the fulfillment of this promise than the apostolic missions to Great Britain between 1837 and 1841. It is estimated that during this time period and through 1852, the total number of convert baptisms reached 57,000.²⁷

The preaching of the Gospel in Great Britain was unique in many ways. This was the first and only time in the history of the Church that the entire Quorum of Twelve Apostles has been called as a body to labor overseas in one mission field. But most surprising (and a testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith's divine inspiration) was the timing of the missionary calls. Many must have wondered about the Prophet's curious timing when he directed through revelation that the twelve were to go to England in 1840 because the Church at that time was in crisis. There was dissension within the quorum with six of the original twelve gone— five had apostatized and one had passed away. The Church was undergoing severe persecution in Missouri. Yet Joseph Smith directed the Quorum to leave their families and deprive the Church of much needed leadership to cross the Atlantic to the British Isles. Ultimately, nine of the twelve apostles answered the Lord's call. These apostles included Heber Kimball, Orson Hyde, Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, George A. Smith, and Orson Pratt. Three of these men--Brigham Young, John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff--would later lead the church for the next 54 years after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

²⁴ *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 49

²⁵ *History of Joseph W. Linford*, pp 1

²⁶ *Doctrine and Covenants, Section 4 verses 1 and 4*

²⁷ Evans, *Century of Mormonism*, pp 244, as cited in Essay by Malcom R. Thorpe, "The Field Is White Already to Harvest" found in the appendix of *Men With a Mission 1837-1841*, pp323

Upon their arrival, they discovered that the Lord had prepared Great Britain for a great harvest of souls. As one author notes: "The field was white because ground was prepared and seeds were planted long before the missionary-apostles arrived. Changing political, economic, and social conditions contributed toward creating an environment conducive to Mormon missionary work. So too, did the religious circumstances of the times" ²⁸

The appeal of this strange new religion was found in its simplicity and close adherence to Biblical references which were immediately recognized by those who studied the Bible. Many of these people did not believe that the pageantry and mysteries offered by Catholicism, the Church of England and Protestantism were from the scriptures. One early convert summed it up when he wrote that he was "impressed by the simplicity and unassuming manners and the authority and assurance with which they (Mormon missionaries) spoke, together with the Plainness in which they proved their principles from the Bible."²⁹ Another convert, William Lang, a young farm laborer said that he attended the Anglican Church "about as much for fashion or form as anything else." However, when he first heard a Mormon elder preach, he reflected: "What a contrast! Instead of long robed Gentleman preaching sprinkling of Infants, Hell and damnation &c I saw a man (who) looked like a farmer in plain attire quoting from Holy Scriptures and preaching the Gospel of Christ in its ancient purity."³⁰

Mormonism had much to offer because people conversant with the Bible could recognize that gospel as it was taught in the New Testament. Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton noted in *The Mormon Experience* that:

Its message as preached and accepted in the 1830s and 1840s was usually simple: God has spoken again, and Joseph Smith is his prophet. The heavens are not sealed but God is again revealing his will to men. God exists, a real being of material body. The Father and Son are literal, separate beings. The true church of Jesus Christ is restored to earth with authority to act. The gifts of the spirit enjoyed by Christians at the time of apostles are again available to the faithful. Salvation is to be attained by faith, repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, steps to be followed, of course by unbroken faithfulness to the end. In the Book of Mormon, in Joseph Smith's revelations, in pamphlets and sermons, those were the claims advanced by Mormon missionaries.³¹

Two other teachings of the Church also had great appeal. The first reaffirmed New Testament teachings that the earth was now in its last days preparatory to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Many passages of scripture address the last days spoken of in the New Testament such as Matthew Chapter 24 and the Book of Revelation. And the Doctrine of Covenants underlines the need of the children of God to repent and be baptized. "And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days."³² Converts recognized the significance that the name of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints signifies.

²⁸ Essay by Malcom R. Thorpe, "The Field Is White Already to Harvest" found in the appendix of *Men With a Mission 1837-1841*, pp324

²⁹ *Men With a Mission 1837-1841 The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles*, pp 335

³⁰ *Ibid*, pp 328

³¹ Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, pp 27-28

³² *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 1: 4

The second teaching that appealed to many converts worldwide was the commandment of gathering to Zion. Several times in the Doctrine and Covenants, saints were commanded to gather to Zion. “Yea, verily I say unto you again, the time has come when the voice of the Lord is unto you: Go ye out of Babylon; gather ye out from the nations, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion.”³³ As pointed out in *The Mormon Experience*: “Mormons thus tended to see themselves as modern Children of Israel, chosen to raise a holy city to the Lord as Saints of the Latter-days, looking forward to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, they had to unite and purify themselves.”³⁴ The fact that many of the Saints were poor and oppressed made the idea of gathering to America for a new fresh start even more appealing.

The first mission to England in 1837 demonstrated that Mormonism was not just an American religion and that people of faith around the world would embrace it. Apostles Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde were called to head the mission accompanied by Elders Willard Richards, Joseph Fielding and others. They arrived at Liverpool on July 20, 1837.

Elder Joseph Fielding was responsible for some of the immediate success enjoyed by the missionaries in Preston. During the long trip over the Atlantic Ocean, Elder Fielding fervently prayed that the Lord would soften the heart of his brother, the Reverend James Fielding, and other relatives.

Three days after landing, they preached at Preston, in the Chapel of Reverend James Fielding. Seven days later nine converts were led into the waters of baptism. The foundations for a great missionary achievement had been laid.

The success of the Elders was far beyond their expectations. The Church membership in England in the succeeding years doubled and redoubled at an amazing rate. Soon a stream of emigrants was to cross the ocean in search of the new Zion. Branches of the Church were established in Eccleston, Wrightington, Heskin, Euxton Bath, Daubers Lane, Chorley, Whittle, Leyland Mass, Ribchester, Thornley, Clithero, Waddington, Downham and other places around Preston.³⁵

The missionary experience of Wilford Woodruff illustrates how the English people were prepared to receive the gospel. Wilford Woodruff was an exceptional missionary. President Heber J. Grant once said of him: “I believe that no other man who ever walked the earth was a greater converter of souls to the gospel of Jesus Christ.”³⁶

At the beginning of his mission, Elder Woodruff sought the Lord in prayer. He recounted: “Believing it to be my privilege and duty to know the will of the Lord upon the subject, therefore, I asked my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ to teach me his will in this thing and as I asked, the Lord gave, and showed me that it was his will that I should go immediately to the south of England. I conversed with brother William Benbow upon this subject, who lived in Herefordshire and had friends still residing there, and much wished me

³³ *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 133:7&12

³⁴ *The Mormon Experience*, pp 127

³⁵ William Edwin Berrett, *The Restored Church*, pp 132

³⁶ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church—Wilford Woodruff*, pp 89

to visit that region of country, and (he) generously proffered to accompany me to his brother's house and pay my fare, which I readily accepted.

On March 4, 1840, Elder Woodruff and William Benbow arrived at the home of William's brother John. "In one hour after I arrived at his house," recalled President Woodruff, "I learned why the Lord had sent me there. I found a company of men and women, some six hundred, who had banded together under the name of United Brethren, and were laboring for the ancient order of things. They wanted the Gospel as taught by the prophets and apostles, as I did in my youth."

The Benbow family quickly accepted the message of the Restoration, and William returned to Staffordshire "after having the happy privilege of seeing his brother John Benbow, and all his household . . . baptized into the new and everlasting covenant." Elder Woodruff stayed in the area for about eight months. He later recalled: "The first thirty days after I arrived in Herefordshire I baptized forty-five preachers and several hundred members. We brought in two thousand in about eight months' labor."

Referring to this experience, President Woodruff wrote: "The whole history of this Herefordshire mission shows the importance of listening to the still small voice of God and the revelations of the Holy Ghost. The Lord had a people there prepared for the Gospel. They were praying for light and truth, and the Lord sent me to them."³⁷

The Conversion of John and Maria Linford

Like his father and grandfather, John Linford can be described as a Christian "seeker." Loosely described, seekers were people who had a testimony of Jesus Christ, who were well read in the Bible and who drifted from church to church as they sought to find the teachings, ordinances and organization described in the New Testament. They wanted to find the Church of Jesus Christ that existed during the Savior's ministry.

It's interesting to note that many of the early converts to the Church were seekers. These included Joseph Smith, his family and men who later became apostles.

Before their conversion to Mormonism, most of the early apostles were "seekers." That is, they were believers of God and Christ but were not satisfied that traditional Christian churches taught or practiced the ancient gospel of Christ in its simple purity, and they were seeking a restoration of that gospel. Their conversions, for the most part, came through reading the Book of Mormon, receiving a personal spiritual witness of its truthfulness, and becoming convinced that Joseph Smith was a prophet, chosen by God, through whom the priesthood and the ancient Church of Christ had been restored. Their own early seeking no doubt helped them empathize with many in the British Isles who were experiencing a similar quest.³⁸

Although the new Mormon converts weren't labeled as seekers, here is how one newspaper described them:

Mormonism is making rapid progress in England, particularly in the manufacturing districts and in Wales. Furthermore, its converts are not made from the lowest ranks; those sought and obtained by the Mormon apostles are mechanics and tradesmen who have saved a little

³⁷ Ibid, pp 90-91

³⁸ *Men With a Mission 1837-1841, The Quorum of Twelve Apostles in the British Isles*, pp.4-5

money, who are remarkable for their moral character, but who are exposed to delusion from having as Archbishop Sharp expressed it, “studied the Bible with an ill-balanced mind”³⁹

This perfectly describes John and Maria Linford. They were very religious people who knew the Bible. There are no indications, however, that they had ill-balanced minds. They attended Methodist meetings at the home of John Fielding. It is not surprising then that John and Maria would be open to listening to the message of the Mormon missionaries. Evidence indicates that their decision to join the Mormon Church was not a snap decision. For example, Maria told her granddaughter Eliza Denio about the first time she heard the Mormon Elders:

She told me about the first gospel sermon she ever heard. Some Mormon elders came to the village where they lived and advertised a meeting for Sunday. I suppose it was out of curiosity that she and grandfather and her father, who was staying with them at the time, went to hear them. They were very much impressed. Her father said, “Why, it is the old gospel come to earth again.” But the elders left before any more came, great-grandfather had died.⁴⁰

Their son James describes the conversion of John and Maria and their years in the Church before they immigrated to Zion.

Before hearing the Gospel my parents attended Methodist meetings held at the home of John Fielding, an uncle of President Joseph F. Smith. About the year 1837, Joseph Fielding, a brother of John Fielding, came from America as a Latter-day Saint missionary; he visited his brother John but received a cold reception. Joseph remained but a few days as he could not make much headway preaching the Gospel to the people of that vicinity because of the respect the people had for his brother John.

Elder Fielding left Graveley for Preston, where he joined other missionaries laboring in that vicinity. During his absence John Fielding met with an accident which caused his death. Joseph Fielding then returned to Graveley and took up missionary work amongst the people. A good man by the name of John Wheeler was the first to be baptized by Elder Fielding, and so interested was he that he began at once to hold meetings at his house and preach to the people. In a short time a number were added to the church and amongst them were Father and Mother. They were baptized by John Sheffield of Bedford, Bedfordshire, England, December 9, 1842. John Wheeler was president of the Graveley Branch for a number of years with my father as his counselor.⁴¹

One interesting thing to note is that while the account by James makes it seem like John and Maria were baptized shortly after John Fielding baptized John Wheeler (perhaps in 1838), it was another four years before they became members of the Church. The decision to be baptized could not have been an easy one, especially because no other members of their families were converted. In fact, they met with opposition from their families and considerable opposition from other churches in the vicinity.

James continues with a description of their early years in the Church.

³⁹ Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young, American Moses*, pp 85

⁴⁰ *History of Maria Christian Linford Rich*, pp 2

⁴¹ *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 4

About the year 1848, there came to President Wheeler's home a man by the name of Collins; he brought with him a recommend from President Parcel of the Passingbone Branch of the Bedford Conference. Mr. Collins represented himself to be a Latter-day Saint and presented his recommend as proof. In the evening, President Wheeler brought Mr. Collins to see Father; after some talk back and forth, Father told President Wheeler that Collins was an imposter and he personally would have nothing to do with him, but President Wheeler did not see it that way.

A short time before the above circumstances occurred, the Primitive Methodists began to persecute the Saints and had raised quite an excitement in Graveley and the surrounding villages. Mr. Collins learned of the excitement from President Wheeler, and offered to meet the minister, a Mr. Poole, in a public discussion. After leaving Father on the occasion above referenced to, they called on Mr. Poole and made arrangements for a discussion between Mr. Collins and the Reverend Mr. Poole.

By this time excitement ran high, all classes of people expected to see Mormonism put down and out. It took some little time to make arrangements for the discussion and in the mean time Collins had turned against the Saints and gave out notice that he would expose Mormonism, all religious parties joined his standard. They clubbed together and bought him a new suit of clothes, and not before he needed it. He was entertained in the best homes in the village.

Father wrote to President James H. Flanagan of the Bedford Conference telling him of the excitement; he came as soon as possible, and after learning of existing conditions, made arrangements to take Mr. Collins place in the discussion that had been planned.

The discussion was held in a large barn and people from the surrounding villages came to hear it as it was the first debate that had ever been held in Graveley or its vicinity. It had proceeded but a little time before Mr. Poole and his friends began to see that, according to the rules governing the discussion, President Flanagan had the best of the argument; Mr. Poole began to vilify the character of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the members of the Church. A man by the name of Thomas Fielding put his hand over the mouth of President Flanagan to prevent him from speaking. The meeting was finally broken up by a mob of several hundred men that had made a vow to put Brother Flanagan into a pond of water that was near to the place of the meeting. To prevent them from carrying out their plan, the Saints gathered together, put Elder Flanagan in their midst, and walking as close as possible conducted him to Father's house. At the time I was about fourteen years of age, and to this day I well remember the determination I had to protect a servant of the Lord with all the powers that I possessed. Some of the members of the branch learned later that the mob was from other villages; and the young men of our village, learning of its designs, told the mobbers that they had better leave him alone. The warning was heeded.

After the excitement had died down somewhat, those who had taken Mr. Collins into their homes had no further use for him, but he was not so easily disposed of; he kept up his calls on former friends much to their annoyance, often calling at midnight or even later. Amongst the number so annoyed were some of my father's relatives, especially two old maid cousins, to whom he had taken a special liking.⁴²

As noted before, John Linford was a skilled craftsman with a relatively prosperous boot and shoe making business. Before his baptism, he employed several men and some of his boys. But religious persecution, much of it from his own family, would soon threaten the livelihood of his family.

⁴² Ibid, pp 6

Owing to the severe persecution of the Saints of Graveley, Father, being one of the leaders, suffered from the loss of business to such an extent that he had to part with his workmen. His relatives had been among his best customers as they were well-to-do farmers; but they said, -If we cannot persuade him to give up Mormonism, we will starve him to it by withholding our work⁴³

Certainly, relations with the families of both the Linfords and Christians could not have been easy for John and Maria, especially when you consider that they were members of the Church for 14 years before they emigrated to the United States. John, who as we have noted was well-read in the Bible, was undoubtedly aware of the scripture found in Matthew speaking of the sacrifices that come with accepting the Gospel:

Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not the cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.⁴⁴

It appears that John and Maria were exceptionally faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ and were not afraid to make sacrifices for their testimonies.

James describes the faithfulness of his parents:

During those hard times, Father kept open house for the Elders as usual, and they never knew the straightened circumstances that we were in; neither did any one else. My noble mother stood by my father without a murmur in this hour of trial. It was a dark outlook for a husband and father as financial ruin and starvation stared him in the face. We thanked the Lord for turning away the trial .

John Wheeler, the first president of the Graveley Branch, left for America on his birthday, September 13, 1849 and Father became president of the Branch, with the Fenstanton and Godmanchester branches added.

From the time Father became a member of the Church in 1842 until he emigrated in 1856, he kept open house for the Elders, paid donations to help buy glass for the Nauvoo Temple, contributed to the tithing fund and also contributed to the support of the local branch. Our house was used for religious meetings, three being held each Sunday.⁴⁵

The Perpetual Emigration Fund

Fourteen years had passed since John and Maria were baptized in 1842. During that time they saw many of their friends and church members leave their homes in England to be with the church in the United States. For example, John Wheeler, the man who was President of the Graveley Branch when the Linfords were baptized, left for America in 1849. The Linfords had saved for many years to make the journey. Unfortunately, the boycott of John Linfords business made it impossible to put aside sufficient funds. It was only through the

⁴³ Ibid, pp 6

⁴⁴ The Bible, *St. Matthew*, Chapter 10:34-39

⁴⁵ *The Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp7

formation of the Perpetual Emigration Fund and the introduction of handcart companies that made it possible for the Linfords to leave England in 1856.

The idea behind the formation of the Perpetual Emigration Fund (PEF) began with the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1844. His untimely death led to the expulsion of the Saints from Nauvoo in February, 1846. Brigham Young and the Council of the Twelve Apostles were faced with a new dilemma—how to transport the Saints, rich and poor, from Illinois to their new home in Utah. Brigham Young vowed that no one would be left behind. “Before leaving Nauvoo, Brigham Young and others had pledged themselves to use all their influence, and if necessary, their property, to remove all the Saints of that city to the Rocky Mountains.”⁴⁶

After the Saints made their way to the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young sought to overcome the difficulties that came with an aggressive missionary program and the commandment for these new converts to gather to Zion. The Perpetual Emigration Fund was established to financially assist church members who desired to join the main body of the Church in Utah by making non-secured loans from a revolving fund. This fund is described in *The Restored Church*:

The extensive missionary activity of the Church in the years following the initial settlement of the Salt Lake Valley doubled and redoubled the Church membership. These new members were located in all parts of the world but prompted by the “Spirit of Gathering” and the encouragement of Church Leaders, a continuous migration began to pour into the Valley of the Mountains. In September, 1849, Brigham Young and his counselors proposed the creation of a revolving fund for the purpose of helping the poor membership reach Salt Lake City.⁴⁷

The First Presidency wrote a letter of instruction that explained the PEF to members and Church leaders:

In the first place, this fund has been raised by voluntary donations and is to be continued by the same process and by so managing as to preserve the same and then to multiply...When the Saints thus helped arrive here, they will give their obligations to the Church to refund to the amount of what they received, as soon as circumstances will permit, and labor will be furnished to such as wish on the public works, and good pay, and as fast as they can procure the necessaries of life, and a surplus, that surplus will be applied to liquidating their debt and thereby increasing the Perpetual Fund. By this it will readily be discovered that the funds are to be appropriated in the form of a loan rather than a gift. The Perpetual Fund will help no idlers, we have no use of them in the valley.⁴⁸

The fund assisted European and British Saints who had many different needs. Some were well off while others lived in poverty. The one common bond is that they all desired to gather to Zion to worship their God.

Potential emigrants were divided into three classes. The first were those unable to pay any part of their way from Europe. The fund covered all expenses of their trip, but they were

⁴⁶ *The Restored Church*, pp 277

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp 277

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp 278

expected to reimburse such expenses after they reached Utah, either by working on church projects beyond the 10 percent labor tithing expected of all Mormons or by donating their surplus produce or cash to the church. A second class of PEF-assisted emigrants, known as ten-pound companies, was composed of those able to donate some part of their expenses. As expenses rose, the ten-pound plan became thirteen-pound and then fifteen pound plans. A third group were the cash companies, those able to pay all costs of the journey but who utilized church-chartered ships and organizational facilities.⁴⁹

Here is a description of the arrangements made for emigrant families like John and Maria Linford.

After arranging sufficient financing for the voyage, a potential emigrant gave his name to the PEF shipping agent in Liverpool. When the agent had enough applications to fill a ship, he chartered a vessel and notified passengers of the time of embarkation, price of passage, amount of baggage allowed, and other particulars of the voyage.

Local church organizations were responsible for organizing their potential emigrants and shepherding them to Liverpool, the chief port of the European Mormon emigration. For British Saints this meant little more than a short train or ferry ride, but Scandinavian, German, French and Italian converts, who made up a significant portion of the emigration by the mid-1850s, often found the first leg of the journey difficult. The Scandinavian Saints usually united to charter their own ship to Liverpool.

At Liverpool the emigrants boarded waiting vessels. Aboard ship, the agent appointed a president and two counselors (usually missionaries returning to America) to preside over the company. After receiving a sustaining vote of the group, the presidency divided the company into wards or branches, usually along the lines of the travelers' home districts. Each ward or branch was then provided with presiding officers and assigned a separate portion of the ship; on at least one occasion they were separated by family section.

Once underway, the emigrants were expected to rise at an early hour, clean their quarters, assemble for prayer, and then eat breakfast. Choirs, language classes, dances and theatricals occupied much of the time while on board ship.⁵⁰

While we don't know for sure, it is likely that the Linfords traveled as part of one of the ten pound plans. The fact that they arranged to travel by handcart-company (and not by oxen pulled wagons that the more prosperous Saints used) indicates their need for financial assistance.

⁴⁹ *The Mormon Experience*, pp 131

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp 131-132

Chapter Three

Departing for Zionô April 28, 1856

The power of the gathering to Zion was so strong that the Saints sang about it during their services. Hereôs one popular hymn still sung in Mormon congregations today by Richard Smyth, a convert from Dublin.

*Come to Zion*⁵¹
(*Israel, Israel, God is Calling*)
Israel, Israel, God is calling-
Calling thee from lands of woe;
Babylon the Great is falling;
God shall all her towers oerthrow.
Come to Zion, come to Zion
Ere his floods of anger flow.

Israel, Israel, God is speaking.
Hear your great Delivererôs voice
Now a glorious morn is breaking
For the people of his choice.
Come to Zion, come to Zion
And within her walls rejoice.

Israel, angels are descending
From celestial worlds on high,
And to man their powor extending,
That the Saints may homeward fly.
Come to Zion, come to Zion
For your coming Lord is nigh.

Drawn by stirring calls like this hymn, John and Maria planned to leave England in the spring of 1856 with their four sons: James, George, Joseph and Amasa. Like other Mormon emigrants, they faced several challenges. First, they needed to quickly raise as much cash as possible to pay for their portion of the trip and to last them until they got to Utah and start a new livelihood. Second, because they could only take the bare necessities to start a new life that would fit on a handcart--mainly clothing and tools-- they needed to dispose of their possessions that they had accumulated throughout the course of their lives. One can imagine how emotionally taxing this was on Maria as she packed for the voyage.

The family sold as much of their household furnishings as possible. A family history notes: ôIn a small account book, which is still in the family, it is recorded that a pair of steelyards, a bureau, dining table, pier glass, set of china, buffet, china cups, saucers, teapot, six knives and forks, six rush bottomed chairs, an oval copper boiler and some other things, brought

⁵¹ *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, #7

only five pounds.⁵² The same history notes that John worked at farming to supplement his earnings as a boot maker. Symbolically, one of the last things John did before their departure was to make enough shoes for the family to last the long trek across the plains.

But before they could leave they were surprised to learn that James would not be accompanying them because of a mission call.

In the early part of 1856, my parents expected to emigrate to America and about the same time my father was asked by Pastor Lavender and President Thomas C. Gregg if he were willing for me to go as a traveling Elder. They promised that if the family should emigrate, I would be released to go with them; however, when my parents received their notice of the time the ship would sail, my name was not on the notification. The only thing my family could do was to give up going or leave me to be a missionary. They had made arrangements to emigrate that year not doubting that I would be released to go with them. It was a great disappointment to all of us. I think I see the hand of the Lord in what occurred, for had I gone with my parents I might have died on the journey, as I was never healthy and strong and undoubtedly could not have withstood the hardships suffered by the handcart company. A few days before Father received notice of the time when the ship would sail, I was at home on a short visit. I dreamed of parting with my parents and brothers, the dream was so real that I felt sure that I would not accompany them to Zion. When I arose in the morning the first person I met was my mother. I told her that the family would go to America that year but that I would not go with them. Up to that time, she had not doubted the promise of the Elders that I would be released to go with the family.⁵³

Leaving England without James was one of many unexpected changes to their travel plans during the trip.

The *Thornton*

About three weeks before their embarkation, PEF agents notified John and Maria that they would be sailing on the *Thornton*, one of two ships that the presidency of the British Mission had chartered to meet the unexpected needs of English Saints. Unfortunately, both the *Thornton* and the *Horizon*, departed very late in the season in order to get the Saints into Salt Lake City before winter.

Throughout January and February, President Richards had continually urged the necessity of getting off early. The winter's severity, with hard times and high prices, sharpened the Saints desire to emigrate. Many of these, carried away with the idea of gathering to Zion that season, left their various employments even before arrangements had been made for their transportation. The result was that some of them were left to choose between the alternatives of remaining in Great Britain during the winter to starve or go to the poor house, or else run the risk of a late journey across the plains. They chose the latter course, in which the presidency of the British Mission, seeing no better way out of the difficulty, acquiesced, and chartered the ships, *Horizon* and *Thornton*.

Brigham Young, upon learning of the late departure of the last emigrants was greatly concerned, and wrote Orson Pratt, new President at Liverpool: "The mail has just arrived. The emigration are all late, owing, I suppose to the difficulty of obtaining ships. It would be

⁵² Eliza M. Denio, *Biography of John Linford*, pp 1-2

⁵³ *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 12-13

much better when it can be accomplished to have the emigrants shipped earlier in the season. They should land early in May, and not much, if any after the first of the month⁵⁴

The *Thornton* was a new ship, built in 1854. Like most ships of its class, it had three masts, 3 decks, a square stem and billet head and weighed 1422 tons. Its dimensions were 191øx 40øx 29ø It had a capacity for 765 passengers.

Outside of its late start on May 4th, the *Thornton* was much like the other seven ships that the Church had chartered for the 1856 emigration season. These eight ships carried an amazing mix of nationalities bound for Zion.

The numbers of natives of the various countries may be classified as follows: From the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland: English 2611, Scotch, 367; Welsh, 667; Irish, 54; American, 19; from the French Mission (Channel Islands), 9. The total number from the Scandinavian Mission is 615, of which there are: Danes, 502; Swedes, 67; Norwegians, 46. The total number from the Swiss and Italian Mission is 50: from the Swiss Cantons, 19; from Piedmont, Italy, 31. There are also 2 from the East India Mission and 1 from Germanyø making a grand total of 4395 souls.⁵⁵

All of these ships safely reached their destinations in New York and Boston after voyages that varied in length from 38 to 65 days.

The *Thornton* was under the command of Captain Charles Collins. It carried 764 Mormon converts. The majority was from the British Isles but the ship carried 163 Scandinavian Saints, mostly from Denmark. According to records, 484 Saints were being assisted by the PEF with the remaining 280 paying their own way.⁵⁶

Before embarking for America, a presidency was called made up of returning missionaries who had served in the British mission. James S. Willie was sustained the president of the Saints on the *Thornton* along with three councilors.

One councilor, Elder Atwood, was to preside over the main deck, Elder Ahmason over the Danish Saints of the lower deck and Elder Clough over the English Saints. The first deck was divided into four wards, the lower deck into three wards. This was for convenience of holding meetings, cooking and general organizational dutiesí .John Chislett was appointed captain of the guard with instructions to permit none of the crew below without permission of the captain or his first officer.⁵⁷

Elders Willie, Atwood and Clough had served as missionaries for nearly 3 years and 4 months.

⁵⁴ Leroy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 47-49.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, pg47

⁵⁶ Note: For the family of A. Merrill Linford and Nelda Elaine Empey Linford, the manifest of the *Thornton* indicates that there was a family of Empeys on board. It identifies Jesse Empey as being age 31 and a farmer and shows his wife Mary--age 29, Williamø age 7, Jamesø age 6, Annø age 4 and Sarahø infant. The Empeys are identified as traveling to Salt Lake City. Based on our family genealogy, however, it is uncertain if they are related to the William Adam Empey line who was momø great grandfather and who was born in Canada.

⁵⁷ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 184.

It has long been remarked that Mormons conduct their business with an organizational genius. Charles Dickens, the famous English novelist, visited a departing ship full of Mormon converts and wrote of his surprise at the efficiency of the operation:

Two or three Mormon agents stood ready to hand them (the emigrants) on to the inspector, and to hand them forward when they had passed. By what successful means a special aptitude for organization had been infused into these people, I am, of course unable to report. But I know that, even now, there was no disorder, hurry or difficulty. I afterwards learned that a dispatch was sent home by the captain before he struck out into the wide Atlantic, highly extolling the behavior of these emigrants, and the perfect order and propriety of all their social arrangements. I went on board their ship to bear testimony against them, if they deserved it, as I fully believed they would; to my great astonishment they did not deserve it, and my predispositions and tendencies went over the *Amazon's* side, feeling it impossible to deny that, so far, some remarkable influence had produced a remarkable result which better known influences has often missed.⁵⁸

Crossing the Atlantic

Surprisingly, the best description of the Linfords departure from England and life on board the *Thornton* comes from John Linford himself. Although a quiet man by nature, John was inspired to start a diary that documented their voyage.⁵⁹ Devoid of emotion, the diary is silent about his feelings that must have come with leaving his ancestral home and the extended Linford and Christian families. No doubt it was an exciting and bittersweet period in his life, but one he stoically accepted. (Note: spelling, capitalization and punctuation are as written in the diary. &c is the term used for etc.)

1856, April 28th

Left Gravelly taken train at Offord. Paid 13s.10.1/2d to Peterboro Staid over Night left for Liverpool Paid 4£.11s.8d Weighted for train at Blisworth Station 3 hours and stoping at every Station We arrived at Liverpool half Past seven secured the Luggage and got to this House About 9-or ten went to Bed Something after 11.

Slept until 5 rose at 6. Wednesday 30/May 1 Went to the office &c. May 2nd Came on board the ship Thornton and secured our births. Saturday was visited by F.D. Richards Gave some Council &c May 4 Launched out with a steady gale Watches set at the hatch way

Sunday received instruction from President Willie &c ó

Munday saw 2 Ships following the Saints generally sick I Myself Jos and Amasa some Geo not. Tuesday I am better. Saw four Ships going toward England Prayer and singing in Each of the wards. Five in number. Thursday Two Deaths an aged woman 75. and a

⁵⁸ *The Restored Church*, pp 279.

⁵⁹ John Linford, *The Diary of John Linford*. Note: According to Golden C. Linford, the original entries were made in a small, black, leather-bound notebook, four and one-half inches long, three inches wide, and one-half inch thick, with a metal clasp on one end. Attached to one side of the cover is a long, leather loop made to hold a pencil. The diary is now in the possession of the LDS Church Historical Library. Whenever there is a blank line () in the transcript it indicates the entry is illegible because of the pencil writing being smudged.

Danish Child. There is a Doctor with the Captain to Attend the Sick but he has not much to Do ó the Captain reads over the Corps, but Allows the Elders to Pray over them first &c.

Friday rainy the Saints better 13 Hundred Miles from L-pool

Saturday 10 fine morning a good gale rise at Six bed at Nine Cook by wards

Sunday 11 Held Meetings up Deck, The Captain give President Willie the privilege of standing up on the Poop Deck that is over the first Cabin ó Munday 12 Good Sailing 12 miles an hour &c Tuesday Calm sea, Cleaned our Ward &c Called up Deck to hear Preaching by President Willie Elder hatwod, M. Clough his councilers ó Also Elder Chislet ó until it was Diner time. Partook of the sacrament. The Daines Came up to Preach &c it is strange to hear Men talk so long and them be Ignorant of What they Say. But they have one their President Can talk English. Elder Willie Addressed them. Then their President Interpreted What he said &c After this some Singing, (and be not Alarmed if you should hear that we have 2 or 3 fiddlers on board and some Dancers too). In the Evening the Captain and others his Companions 2 feemails 3 men &c send up some _____ (grand tea) Wednesday 14. Morning Calm Afternoon more gales ó I was called to take part of this ward to see that they had their water, Pork, Beef &c. Unexpected to me as I did not ask for an office. I am well & All my family. And we Enjoy ourselves first rate ó Tea is now ready the Children run About and Play at Cat after the Mouse or any other thing they Please ó

As John's diary indicates, the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was mostly uneventful. Leaving Liverpool, many Saints, including John and his family, became seasick. Only Amasa seemed to bear up well but the rest quickly found their ðsea legsö after some days in bed.

The ship's log indicates that part way on the voyage, a fire broke out destroying a significant part of the food storage.⁶⁰ This might explain the calling John Linford received to be responsible for the distribution of food to his company. One of his fellow passengers, Thomas Moulton, gave a description of their diet on the *Thornton* after the fire: ðThe main food aboard the ship was rice, sugar, musty oats and meat which was white with salt. The food was boiled in salt water and then washed off. The passengers would eat, then clamor for water. No one could get their thirst quenched as the supply of water was too short.ö⁶¹ Once again, Mormon organization was notable. After the fire, the Captain of the *Thornton* said he would have turned back if his passengers had not been Mormons.

For most of the trip the weather and winds remained favorable. Occasionally, the *Thornton* met with heavy seas. On one occasion the ship tacked north and came within view of icebergs. On May 24th, ðstrong gales from the north-northwest were even more severe. All passengers remained below decks in their beds as they had difficulty standing in the pitching ship. This gale blew them free from the ice to which they had been close.ö⁶² On June 8th,

⁶⁰ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp183

⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp185

⁶² *Ibid*, pp185

they entered a thick fog and remained in the fog through June 10th. They were about 120 miles from New York when they met the pilot to take them in.

The *Thornton* was towed into the New York harbor on June 14th, a relatively fast passage of only 41 days at sea. At a meeting held as a testimonial to Captain Collins, the Saints expressed gratitude for his kindness. He also spoke and remarked that this was the finest lot of emigrants he had taken across the sea.⁶³

On to Iowa City, Iowa

Upon arriving in New York City, the Saints were met by Apostle John Taylor and Nathaniel H. Felt who gave them a warm welcome and instructions. After two days rest, the Willie Company departed New York City on June 17th to travel to the trailhead at Iowa City. There, they would be met by PEF agents to prepare them for the next stage of the journey—pulling handcarts filled with all of their possessions for the remaining 1,300 miles to Salt Lake City.

Traveling in those days was not easy or convenient even by train and steamboat. It took the Willie Company nine tiring days to get to Iowa.

On the seventeenth of June, the company left New York and traveled by rail to Dunkirk, New York where they boarded the steamer *Jersey City* and sailed to Toledo, Ohio (via Lake Erie), where they arrived on the twenty-first. The following day they reached Chicago. While at Toledo the emigrants were treated unkindly by the railway hands. On the twenty-third the company left Chicago by rail in two divisions, one leaving a few hours after the other. At Pond Creek the emigrants learned that the bridge at Rock Island had collapsed while a train passed over it. Apostle Eratus Snow and other elders from Utah were on the train when the accident happened, but escaped unhurt. On the twenty-sixth, emigrants continued the journey from Pond Creek and arrived at Iowa City the same day.⁶⁴

Making it to Iowa City had been relatively easy for John, Maria and their boys. They were in good health and they had traveled without major delays that had plagued some emigrant parties. Only one dark cloud seemed to appear on the horizon for the remainder of the trip— it was now June 26th very late in the season to be making an overland trek of 1,300 miles by foot.

⁶³ Ibid, pp186

⁶⁴ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVIII pp 330, 478,542,554

Chapter Four

Sixth Crossing of the Sweetwater River, Wyoming Territory October 21, 1856

Joe woke with a start. It was early in the morning, the sun had not risen and it was bitterly cold. The wind blew hard as it seemed to continually howl on that barren Wyoming wasteland. The snow from the night's storm had almost collapsed the tent. His brothers, George and Amasa slept fitfully beside him as did the 16 other Saints who shared their tent. He became aware that something was wrong, terribly wrong. He could no longer hear his father's labored breathing. He looked across the tent and saw his mother bowed over the inert body. She was silently crying and he realized that his father had died during the night.

The passing of Joe's father, John Linford did not surprise him. John had been sick since mid-August when the Willie Handcart Company passed through Florence, Nebraska. At first, he tried to shrug it off and insisted on taking care of his family. He pulled the handcart for hours on end and helped set up the tent at night. As the captain of his tent, John went out of his way to assist other Saints who were struggling. But it became more and more difficult. First he suffered from fevers and soreness associated with the ague. He felt constantly fatigued. Finally, he suffered from debilitating bouts of diarrhea.

His condition worsened with the series of ill-timed delays that plagued the Willie and Martin handcart companies. Because their handcarts were hastily constructed using green wood, they constantly broke down, requiring hasty repairs and lost time. The delays caused the company's provisions to run short forcing them to cut rations again and again. Finally, the weather turned unseasonably cold early in the autumn, leaving the handcart pioneers to struggle in mud and finally in snow along a deteriorating trail.

John's condition worsened as the voyage dragged on into October and he needed to ride in the cart. Most of the burden of pulling the cart fell on George, age 17, but much was also expected of Joe and Amasa. Maria strained desperately to hold the family together. She led the family with a deep-seated faith that would ultimately get them through this nightmarish experience. One thought must have been in the back of the minds of her surviving sons: *After all of our sacrifices to come to Zion, why would God allow this to happen to us?*

Hoping to shore up the faith of her sons, Maria shared with them one of her last conversations with her husband. "As he lay dying, Maria asked him if he was sorry if he had come. He said, "No Maria, I am glad we came. I shall not live to reach Salt Lake but you and the boys will and I do not regret all that I have gone through if our boys can grow up and raise their families in Zion."⁶⁵

⁶⁵ *Biography of John Linford*, pp 3

Chapter Five

Iowa City, Iowa June 27, 1856

Imagine the emotions of the Linfords as they got off the train in Iowa City. Undoubtedly, the boys were excited to begin on the handcart phase of their journey as soon as possible. Everything in America seemed so different than what they knew in England. They had only heard about the vast, unsettled plains filled with buffalo. Their native land had no mountains like the Rocky Mountains, and they had romantic notions about encounters with Indians and cowboys. This was to be an adventure of a lifetime.

For John and Maria, however, their excitement about being one last journey away from Salt Lake City was likely tempered by the challenges they would face over the next three months. John and Maria had every reason to feel confident that they could pull a handcart over the next 1,300 miles. Three handcart companies had already hit the trail before them in 1856, and there were no reports of any problems. But so much was new to them. After all, they came from a small village in lush England. They knew about boot and shoe making and farming. They were not hardened pioneers. They did not yet have the frontier skills they would need to survive. They had to learn how to deal with hot summers and cold winters that became more extreme as they traveled west. They had to get used to a new, rough diet. They had to deal with new illnesses and diseases. All they had was faith that they would learn and that the Lord would protect them.

Wallace Stegner, author of many books about Mormons and the West, wrote this about Mormon pioneers like the Linfords. A non-Mormon, Stegner presents the facts but doesn't quite grasp the spirit of the gathering that motivated the Saints to come to Zion.

In all its history, the American West never saw a more unlikely band of pioneers than the four hundred-odd who were camped on the bank of the Iowa River at Iowa City in early June, 1856. They were not colorful—only improbable. Looking for the brown and resolute and weather-seasoned among them, you would have seen instead starved cheeks, pale skins, bad teeth, thin chests, all the stigma of unhealthy work and inadequate diet. There were more women than men, more children under fifteen than either. One in every ten was past fifty, the oldest a woman of seventy-eight; there were widows and widowers with six or seven children. They looked more like the population of the poor farm than like pioneers about to cross the plains.

Most of them, until they were herded from their crowded immigrant ship and loaded into the cars and rushed to the end of the Rock Island line and dumped here at the brink of the West, had never pitched a tent, built a campfire. They had not even the rudimentary skills that make frontiersmen. But as it turned out, they had some of the stuff that makes heroes.⁶⁶

The Handcart Plan

Even with the Perpetual Emigration Fund, it is unlikely that John and Maria would have ever been able to immigrate to Utah because of their financial situation. They were not alone. It has been estimated that prior to 1856, the Church was only able to bring one in

⁶⁶ Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion*, pp 221

twenty of the members who wanted to come to Utah.⁶⁷ Brigham Young's goal had always been to gather as many Saints to Zion as quickly as possible. The cost of transportation remained the single biggest obstacle to be overcome. What made it possible was the handcart plan that he outlined in 1855.

Although he had toyed with the idea for several years, President Young introduced the plan after an unexpected chain of events that underlined the necessity of a cheaper mode of transportation. The first was a cricket infestation and drought in 1885 that resulted in poor harvests. The food shortage led to food rationing and an economic downturn in the Utah Territory. Many questioned if the valley could support a larger population. Second, poor crops translated into reduced tithes paid to the Church and even smaller contributions to the Perpetual Emigration Fund. Hard currency was in short supply. The downturn was so severe that several in the Church urged the First Presidency to cut back or cancel emigration plans for 1856.

Brigham Young, however, was not one to let short-term events dictate his vision of the gathering of Zion. He knew that thousands of Saints would literally walk to Utah if there was some way to provide for their provisions and carry a small amount of their belongings. After all, he reasoned, walking across the plains was no novelty. Most of the early Mormon pioneers walked beside oxen-drawn wagon trains. If anything, the ox-drawn wagons actually slowed down the company. Here is how Brigham Young explained the plan to the President of the European Mission in September, 1855:

I have been thinking how we should operate another year. We cannot afford to purchase wagons and teams as in times past. I am consequently thrown back upon my old plan to make hand-carts and let the emigrant foot it and draw upon them (the carts) for the necessary supplies, having a cow or two for every ten. They can come just as quick, if not quicker, and much cheaper can start earlier and escape the prevailing sickness which annually lays so many of our brethren in the dust. A great majority of them walk now, even with the teams which are provided, and have a great deal more care and perplexity than they would have if they came without them.⁶⁸

The handcart plan certainly accomplished Brigham Young's goal of hastening the gathering but it came at a terrible cost.

From 1856 to 1860, nearly 3,000 emigrants traveled to Zion by handcarts in 10 companies. They employed 653 carts and 50 wagons. The eight companies that left the Missouri River in June or July came through successfully and without undue casualties. In fact, they out-traveled the usual ox teams and often complained of being slowed down by the accompanying wagons. Only two of the companies, caught in the unfortunate combination of a late start and an early winter, suffered from terrible loss.⁶⁹

Of the total 2,962 handcart pioneers there were an estimated 217 deaths from the Willie and Martin companies and a total of about 250 for all ten companies.

⁶⁷ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 28

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, pp 29-30

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp 194

Description of a Handcart

In Mormon culture today, a popular activity for youth is a pioneer trek. Youth and their leaders are provided with a handcart and for several days, they push and pull the carts over dirt roads and trails. It gives the youth some idea of what their pioneer ancestors endured, but only a very small idea. For one thing, the modern-day handcart is built with cured wood and held together with steel nuts and bolts so they don't break down. The wheels also use iron rims. Four or five youth pull the cart with loads usually about one hundred pounds for 15 to 20 miles.

Contrast the pioneer trek with the real experience of the handcart pioneers to get a real appreciation for their courage and bravery. Imagine pulling a handcart weighing up to 200 pounds 15 to 20 miles a day every day of the week with the exception of the Sabbath. Trails are uneven—sometimes they are pure mud, sometimes they are covered with snow and sometimes they are so dusty that you can't see anything in front or back of you. You must ford every river and stream. There is no shelter for bad weather during the day out on the trail. There is a constant fear of the Indians who have already attacked several emigrant parties heading to Oregon. No one, except the aged, sick or infirm, get to ride in a wagon. If you get sick, you just keep going because there is no place else to go. Provisions are in short supply along the trail so you have to carry everything you need. Everyone walked. Or as the Primary song puts it, "Pioneer children sang as they walked and walked and walked and walked..."

Here is how one convert described the handcart: "In length the side pieces and shafts were about six or seven feet, with three or four binding crossbars from the back part to the fore part to the body of the cart. Then two or three feet space from the latter bar to the front bar or singletrees from the lead horse or lead man, woman or boy of the teams. Across the bars of the bed of the cart we usually sewed a strip of bed ticking or a counterpane. On this wooden cart, of a thimbleless axle, with about two and one-half inches shoulder and one inch point, were often loaded 400 to 500 pounds of flour, cooking utensils, and a tent."⁷⁰

Another more understandable description is provided by Stegner: "flimsy boxes on wheels set up to the usual five-foot track of a wagon. Some were no more than open frames covered with ticking, and with the side pieces extended into shafts that were joined at the front by a crossbar against which a man could set his hands or chest. Others were the heavier and solider family carts with hooped covers. These sometimes had iron axles; but the rims of many were merely wrapped with raw-hide, and some had both axles and rims of unprotected wood."⁷¹

Preparing for the Handcart Trek

The Mormon efficiency and organizational talent that were so apparent in Liverpool hit a road bump in Iowa City. Actually, the system for providing emigrants with handcarts and provisions worked well for the first three handcart companies that preceded the Willie and Martin companies in 1856. These groups, totaling 815 people, were able to leave Iowa City

⁷⁰ *The Restored Church*, pp 280-281 Note: a singletree is a pivoted bar by which the wagon is drawn; a counterpane is a heavy cloth cover; a thimbleless axle is a plain axle with no provisions for prevention of wear.

⁷¹ *The Gathering of Zion*, pp230

before the end of June, and all arrived safely in Salt Lake City by the beginning of October. The *Millennial Star*, the church's newspaper in England carried this report of preparations being made to greet the Saints as they arrived in Iowa City: "We have a very cheering letter for Elders G.D. Grant and W. H. Kimball who were at Iowa City March 20th. They contracted for 100 hand-carts of excellent quality, at about two guineas each (\$10). There were good prospects for work. Under the wise and judicious management of Elders Taylor and Spencer, we believe that nothing will be wanting to make the handcart operation a successful one."⁷² Even with these preparations, the first companies of emigrants arrived on May 12, and had to wait nearly four weeks as preparations were being completed.

By the time the large Willie Company with 500 people arrived on June 27th, closely followed by the Martin Company with another 576 people, the PEF system was overwhelmed. Simply put, PEF agents had never planned for so many emigrants to make the trek in 1856. In addition, communication between Salt Lake City, Liverpool and Iowa City was sketchy and contradictory at best.

For the Perpetual Emigration Fund travelers (of the Willie and Martin companies), more than 250 handcarts and dozens of tents were required. Whether the failure to have the carts ready for the Saints upon their arrival was due to lack of timely advice from England concerning the number needed (mail service then being very slow); to inability to get the required help or materials for construction; or to belief that the Saints could better afford to help make the carts than to pay for their being made, can hardly be determined. In any event, few foresaw the fatal consequences of the situation. Chauncey G. Webb, who superintended the making of carts at Iowa City, put every available man to work on construction of the vehicles; the women made the tents.⁷³

During the three weeks of delay at Iowa City, the passengers of the Thornton were organized as the Fourth Handcart Company. James G. Willie had been the president of the Saints on the Thornton and was called to be the captain of the Fourth Handcart Company. Edward Martin, who was also returning from a British mission, was called to be captain of the Fifth Company.

Willie's company comprised 500 persons. They had 120 handcarts, 5 wagons, 24 oxen, and 45 beef cattle and cows. They divided the company into groups of 100 persons, with sub-captains over each of these. Additionally, leaders for each tent of twenty persons were called. In a brief memoir by Amasa Linford, he tells us that John Linford served as the leader of his tent. Once again, as on the Thornton, John Linford was called to provide leadership because of his integrity and faithfulness. Here is an entry in the John Linford diary that lists the people assigned to his tent:

Age of the Hundred, or Tent

John Linford,	48
Maria Linford,	43
George J. Linford,	17
Joseph Wm. Linford,	14

⁷² *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 55-56

⁷³ *Ibid*, pp92

Amasa C. Linford,	12
Mary Ann Britin --	50
Samuell Gad,	41
Eliza Gad,	41
Alfred Gad,	20
Jane Gad,	17
Wm Gad,	12
Maryann Gad -----	8
Sarah Gad,	5
Isic Gad,	1
Daniel Gad,	1
Maryan Funnel	62
Elizabeth Funnel	23
Maryann Miller	30
Ann Howard,	30

“The duty of the company captain,” writes Joseph Argyle, Jr., who pulled a cart in the first company and whose father was a tent captain, “was to look after everything in general to see that the company was provided with all provisions that they were able to carry and to assist in all that would aid for the betterment of the company. The tent captain was expected to give all his time and attention to his company, to make sure that all allotments of one pint of flour for each person were given every twenty four hours and to equalize as nearly as possible all labor, or to act as the father over his family.”⁷⁴

John Chislett, a sub-captain over 100 persons, explained how the organization of the Willie Company worked.

The third hundred were principally Scotch; the fifth, Scandinavians. The other hundreds were mostly English. To each hundred there were five round tents, with twenty persons to a tent; twenty hand-carts, or one to every five persons; and one Chicago Wagon, drawn by three yoke of oxen, to haul provisions and tents. Each person was limited to seventeen pounds of clothing and bedding.

The strength of the company was equalized as much as possible by distributing the young men among the different families to help them. Several carts were drawn by young girls exclusively; and two tents were occupied by them and such females as had no male companions.⁷⁵

Compounding the late start for both the Willie and Martin companies was the problem of poorly built handcarts. PEF agents faced the challenges of finding a sufficient amount of labor and lumber to build the carts. Critics have accused the Church of waiting to build the handcarts after the emigrants had arrived to save on labor costs by having the Saints build them.

The materials for the carts were in short supply. Some of the lumber they purchased turned out to be green, unseasoned wood. The result was that there was considerable shrinking,

⁷⁴ Ibid, pp59

⁷⁵ Ibid, pp93-94

warping and cracking of the boards as the carts entered more arid parts of the west. Worse, many of the handcarts used only wooden wheels with no iron rim. Wheels were already breaking down as the Saints pulled into Florence only 277 miles down the road from Iowa City. This caused more delays. One Saint reporting on the arrival of the Willie Company in Florence made this observation: "The companies stay here longer than they otherwise would in consequence of their carts being unfit for their journey across the Plains; some requiring new axles, and the whole of them having to have a piece of iron screwed on to prevent the wheel from wearing away the wood."⁷⁶

Iowa City to Florence— July 15th to August 11th

After 19 days of building handcarts and sewing tents, the Willie Company departed from Iowa City for its first leg of the trip to Florence, Nebraska on the Missouri River, a distance of 277 miles. It must have been quite a picture to see a caravan of 120 handcarts and five wagons spread out over the trail. The train stretched out over miles. Surprisingly, given their greenhorn status, they made remarkably good time and covered the distance in little less than four weeks. Traveling every day of the week except one-half of Sunday, they covered approximately 10 miles a day. This pace, however, was actually slower than what the handcart plan called for— a pace of seventeen miles a day for sixty days. None of the ten companies ever matched that rate.⁷⁷

An average day began when the bugle would wake the Saints up at 4 a.m. They would then have their breakfast, grease the handcarts, pack their luggage and tents and perform the other preparatory chores. They would then begin the day's journey around 7 to 8 a.m. On Sundays, the company would travel only in the morning. The remainder of the day would be occupied with resting, washing, praying, holding meetings and other appropriate Sabbath activities.⁷⁸

Nothing has been written about the experience of the Linford boys during this first part of the handcart trek. Based on journals kept by other families, however, we can make some reasonable guesses what it must have been like. It seems apparent that each of the boys would take turns helping to pull the handcart. At this point, George was 17, Joe was 14 and Amasa was 11. No doubt much was expected of George, being older. Children his age often took on the same tasks as adults. Joe and Amasa would have been kept busy with other daily chores, gathering firewood and buffalo chips as fuel for fires. They would have also helped to pick berries, fetch water and tend livestock.

But there was still plenty of time for play and games. As mentioned earlier, one of the things that set Mormon emigrant parties apart was the number of children that came along with their families. The children had plenty of playmates. Journals talk about children playing games, singing, enjoying stories around the campfire, exploring and even flirting with the opposite sex.

The company arrived at the Missouri River about August 11th. They crossed on a steam ferry boat and then stopped at nearby Florence, about six miles from present-day Omaha.

⁷⁶ Ibid, pp94

⁷⁷ Heidi Swinton and Lee Groberg, *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story*, pp 33

⁷⁸ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp.192

The *Council Bluffs Bugle* gave this description of the Willie handcart company as it arrived in Florence:

A few days since, in company with Colonel Babbit, Secretary of Utah, and several citizens of this place, we visited Florence, N.T. (Nebraska Territory) and there found encamped about 500 of the faithful, all in good health and spirits. We learned that the train had been but three weeks in coming from Iowa City, and that all were healthy, cheerful, and contented.

Having seen several handcart trains pass through this city and cross the ferries at Elkhorn and Loup Fork, we could not help but remark the enthusiasm which animated all classes and ages. We saw the butcher dealing out a splendid beef to the crowd and were informed that the allowance was one half pound each, one pound of flour per day, and the usual quantities of molasses, sugar, etc. Many, however, have private supplies, which enable them to live very comfortably.

It may seem to some that these people endure great hardships in traveling hundreds of miles on foot, drawing carts behind them. This is a mistake, for many informed me that after the first three days travel, it requires little effort for two or three men or women to draw the light handcart with its moderate load of cooking utensils and baggage.

It is, also, a fact that they can travel farther in a day and with less fatigue than the ox teams.

These trains are composed of Swedes, Danes, Germans, Welsh, Scotch and English, and the best evidence of their sincerity is in the fact that they are willing to endure the fatigues and privations of a journey so lengthy.

This is enthusiasm—this is heroism indeed. Though we cannot coincide with them in their belief, it is impossible to restrain our admiration of their self-sacrificing devotion to the principles of their faith.⁷⁹

The trip from Iowa City to Florence had two impacts on the Willie Company— one positive and the other negative. The first was that the 277 miles and one month's travel had hardened the Saints to the trail. This leg of the journey introduced the Saints to the rigors of the trail. Because the Saints could buy provisions in scattered settlements along the road, their handcarts were lighter than they would become later. They were now beyond the aches and pains of unused muscles and were becoming acclimated to the weather— their once pale faces were sunburned or tanned. Although their handcarts were even then breaking down, they were becoming adept at making repairs on the fly.

The second impact would lead to disastrous consequences. Up to this point, the Willie Company had enjoyed a remarkably smooth voyage. There had been a few deaths on board ship and the Thornton had made good time on the voyage between Liverpool and New York City. There had been no deaths to this point with the handcart company. In general, the Saints were healthy and well fed.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the summer, it is little wonder that most of the Willie Company believed that the remainder of the trip to Salt Lake City could be completed

⁷⁹ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 94-95

without incident. Obviously they felt that the Lord was with them. The *Millennial Star* had promised the Lord's protection before they started the journey:

The mode (handcarts) now proposed to the Saints for traveling up to Zion so nearly resembles that of ancient Israel in the wilderness, that it must elicit the favour and blessing of the Lord upon it. The gathering poor, if they are faithful, have a right to feel that the favour of God, angels and holy men is enlisted in their behalf. The present plan is peculiarly the Lord's and it will have our special prayer and most untiring efforts for its success.⁸⁰

This was the mindset of the Saints of the Willie Company as they held a meeting in Florence to vote on whether they would continue the handcart trek to Utah or lay up for the winter at Florence. Ironically, Florence was the location of Winter Quarters where Brigham Young and the pioneers of 1846 had wintered.

The Debate to Continue the Trek

Amasa Christian Linford, the youngest son of John and Maria Linford, wrote a short life sketch in his later years. In a concise, Linford-like description, he wrote about the mass meeting held in Florence to determine what the Saints would do with the winter season approaching.

The company reached Winter Quarters about August 15th where a council was held to decide whether to continue their journey that season or to camp for the winter, it being so late as to make it impossible to reach their destination before cold weather came on, all of the Elders excepting Levi Savage were in favor of going on, so they overruled him and continued the journey, starting from Winter Quarters about August 18th.⁸¹

This statement fails to show the amount of debate that actually took place before and during the meeting. Most of the leading Elders in the company felt that they must make the decision because as John Chislett wrote: "The emigrants were entirely ignorant of the country and the climate—simple, honest, eager to go to Zion at once." Chislett continued: "The elders seemed to be divided in their judgment as to the practicability of our reaching Utah at so late a season of the year. The idea was entertained for a day or two of making our winter quarters on the Elkhorn, Wood River, or some eligible location in Nebraska; but it did not meet with general approval. A monster meeting was called to consult the people about it."⁸²

At the general meeting, it appears that the leading Elders— including Church Emigration agents George D. Grant, William H. Kimball as well as the Willie Company captain and sub-captains: James Willie, Millen Atwood, William Woodward, John Chislett and Levi Savage-- spoke to the company listing the advantages and disadvantages of laying up for the winter. The reasons to continue moving on were compelling. Due to the size of the company, the logistics were overwhelming. What would the emigrants do if they stayed? Could they find any work? How would they provide shelter and food for themselves during

⁸⁰ Ibid, pp 40-41

⁸¹ Amasa Christian Linford, *An Autobiographical Sketch of Amasa Christian Linford*, as cited in the Autobiography of James Henry Linford, pp 53-54

⁸² *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story*, pp 38-41

the winter? Would not the Lord protect them by tempering the weather? In the end, with the exception of Levi Savage, all of the Elders urged the Saints to continue on.

Levi Savage made a passionate appeal to the Saints to stay in Nebraska during the winter and continue on in the spring. "Savage, with tears running down his cheeks, reportedly plead for the old, weak (weak) and sickly to stop until another spring....that if such undertook the journey at that late season of the year, that their bones would strew the way."⁸³ Another records Savage as prophetically saying "(We are) liable to have to wade in snow up to our knees and shovel at night, lay ourselves in a thin blanket and lie on the frozen ground without a bed" (The company could not) cross the mountains with a mixed company of aged people, women, and little children so late in the season without much suffering, sickness and death."⁸⁴

Ignoring Savage's pleas, the majority of the Saints decided that they would continue on their way to Zion. Savage, who later would show great kindness to John Linford as he lay on his death bed, spoke to the Saints after they had voted: "Brethren and sisters, what I have said to you I know to be true; but seeing you are to go forward, I will go with you, will help you all I can, will work with you, will rest with you, will suffer with you, and if necessary, I will die with you. May God in his mercy bless and preserve us."⁸⁵

The appeal of Levi Savage did touch the hearts (or perhaps nerves) of some of the Willie Company. Heidi Swinton and Lee Groberg note in *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story* that one hundred of the Saints chose to stay behind in Nebraska.⁸⁶ Thus, the Willie Company departed Florence on August 18th with approximately 400 people.

Florence to Fort Laramie— August 18th to September 30th

John Linford's diary notes that he caught a bad cold in Florence that got progressively worse. James Henry Linford's third party account claims that his father first became ill in Iowa City. Regardless, given the state of his health in Florence, the Linfords had every reason to spend the winter in Nebraska with the 100 Saints who laid up there. John and Maria knew of the potential dangers ahead of them because Levi Savage had specifically begged for the sake of people like John that the entire Willie party winter in Florence. But John and Maria would have none of that. Fourteen years after their baptisms in 1848, their desire to reach Zion was so great that they would throw caution to the wind. Perhaps a better way of describing their decision to continue is to say that they put their faith in the hands of the Lord.

The Willie Handcart Company left Florence on August 18th. Based on the progress of the first three handcart companies, it was felt that the company would arrive in Salt Lake City in late October. From Florence, the Mormon trail followed the Platte River across Nebraska for approximately 500 miles to Fort Laramie just within the borders of present-day

⁸³ William W. Slaughter and Michael Landon, *Trail of Hope—The Story of the Mormon Trail*, pp 119

⁸⁴ *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story*, pp 41

⁸⁵ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 96-97

⁸⁶ *Sweetwater Rescue: The Willie and Martin Handcart Story*, pp 41

Wyoming. At first, the Saints made good progress, and Levi Savage's warnings were forgotten. They had repaired their handcarts in Florence and experienced fewer breakdowns. One thing made this leg of the trip more demanding was the decision to add an additional ninety-eight pound bag of flour to each handcart. The extra food was a precaution to give the Saints a safety cushion in case they met with unexpected delays. Levi Savage noted that, "The weight of the flour soon took its toll. The flour on some carts draws very bad."⁸⁷

Elizabeth Jackson, a member of the Willie Handcart Company, kept a very detailed journal of the trek. Of the trip across Nebraska, she wrote, "We continued our toll day after day, pulling our handcarts with our provisions or rations, our little children etc. through deep sands, rocky roads or fjording [sic] streams. It was a dreary journey. Many miles each day were traveled ere; with tired limbs, we reached camp, cooked super, ate and retired for the night to rest, to pursue our monotonous course the following day."⁸⁸ No doubt, part of the drudgery of the journey was that the meals were always the same. At this point, the daily food ration consisted of one pound of wheat flour per person per day, with a supplement of meat provided by the beef cattle accompanying each group. Any wild game the company could shoot was an added bonus.

Up to this point in the trek, the Willie Handcart Company had more worries from the harassment of frontier settlers who did not like Mormons than they had from Indians. That changed on August 29th when the Company passed the burning wagons and dead bodies of the Almon Babbit party. The Babbit party, made up of Mormons, was on its way to Utah when they were attacked by a band of Cheyenne warriors. The Willie Party stopped and buried the dead. This must have been a taste of the dangers of what lay ahead of them. Susanna Stone Lloyd who witnessed the scene wrote, "Colonel Babbit's teamsters were a day or two ahead of us with a train of goods which was seized by the Indians. We traveled on and felt the Lord would protect his Saints. Nevertheless, the company doubled their guards at night."⁸⁹

Unexpected problems slowed the handcart company's progress. For one thing, the increasing aridity of the Nebraska plains and the extra weight of the flour began to take its toll once again on the company's handcarts. The handcart repairs in Florence turned out to be temporary fixes. John Chislett, one of the company captains, noted, "Dust ground into the wood and wore down the axles. When a cart collapsed, it was difficult for the owner to see the long line move on without him while he remained behind with a few crude tools, struggling to repair the damage. The fates seemed against us."⁹⁰

Broken down handcarts were nothing compared to the next disaster that occurred on September 3rd. Ever since leaving Florence they had seen increasingly large herds of buffalo. This was viewed as a good omen because it helped to supplement the food supply. No one could have predicted what happened next as described by Emma Jones:

⁸⁷ Ibid, pp 43

⁸⁸ Ibid, pp 47

⁸⁹ Ibid, pp 38

⁹⁰ Ibid, pg 46

One evening, as we prepared to stop for the night, a large herd of buffalo came thundering towards us. It sounded like thunder at first, then the big black animals came straight for our carts. We were so scared that we were rooted to the ground. One of the captains, seeing what was going on, ran for the carts which were still coming in, jerked some of the carts to make a path for the steady stream of animals, and let them come through. They passed us like a train roaring along.⁹¹

As the buffalo stampede overtook the Saints, it enveloped most of the company's livestock, including 30 oxen and beef cattle. The men of the company spent the next three days searching for the livestock but with no success. On the last day, a huge thunderstorm broke upon the plains at dusk and washed away all of the tracks so it became impossible to track them down.

One crisis led to another. With the loss of most of their oxen to pull the supply wagons, the captains of the Willie Company had to lighten their loads. As at Florence, each handcart had to carry an additional hundred pound of flour. The carts which had been so light from Iowa City to Florence, were now sagging beneath the extra weight. The journal of Peter Madsen describes the new back-breaking burden put upon the Saints: "Sunday, September 7th. Weather: beautiful. It was decided that the handcarts should be loaded with sacks of flour and tents from the supply wagons. These, namely five wagons, should then be drawn with twelve oxen and the best cows. This is done to continue the journey with the strength we have. We can't move too fast, but necessity dictates that we traverse the wild waste, where we are surrounded by wild people and animals as fast as possible."⁹² Some journals now note that there was considerable murmuring in camp. This is understandable as the members of the Willie Company now had to subsist on a wheat diet, having lost most of their source of protein with the loss of the cattle.

Back on the road again, trying to make up for lost time, the Saints had a nice surprise to lift up their spirits. As dusk fell on their camp, they saw a small party on horseback and in carriages approach them. The party turned out to be President Franklin Richards (who had been released from his calling as the President of the European Mission) and 19 others, including George D. Grant and William H. Kimball, the PEF agents in Iowa City and one of Brigham Young's sons, Joseph A. Young. The party was returning to Utah and traveling so fast that they overtook the Willie Company even though President Richards had only arrived in America on July 26th. President Richards was no stranger to most of the Saints because he had helped arrange their passage to Utah through the PEF. His presence and promises to send supplies served to buoy up the Saints and give them strength.

The visit was described in the Willie Company Journal:

President Franklin Richards' arrived just before dusk in three carriages and two wagons' He promised' that if a Red Sea should interpose, they should by their union of heart and hand, walk through it like Israel of old, dryshod' He promised that though they might have some trails to endure as proof to God, and the brethren, that they had the 'true

⁹¹ Ibid, pp 46-47

⁹² Ibid, pp 47

gritö. He also promisedö if possibleö he would leave provisions, bedding, and other supplies at Laramie to help sustain the companies until they reached the Valley.⁹³

The Willie Company struggled on. On September 15th, they noted the first frost in camp, a sign of the unseasonable weather that they would soon experience. The strain of the travel began to show in the health of the Saints. The Willie Company records six deaths in September. Levi Savage notes in his journal that one of them was Jesse Empey who passed away on September 22nd at Devilø Gate. öSeptember 22: öBrother Empey departed this life at half past 1 p.mí .One of his hands and arm was nearly covered in soresí .but no one thought him dangerous.ö⁹⁴ His name sometimes gets lost because it was noted either as Empey or Impy on some the companyø records and not Empey as it appeared on the *Thornton's* manifest. He left behind his wife and four children who survived the trek and eventually made it to Salt Lake City.

After 42 days of hard travel, the Willie Company arrived at Fort Laramie, 500 miles from Florence. The good news was that they were more than half-way to the Valley. The bad news was that it was September 30th and the provisions that President Richards had promised them werenø there.

Brigham Young and the Rescue

Leaving the Willie Company on September 12th, Franklin Richards sensed the urgency of getting to Salt Lake City to send back relief for the struggling handcart parties. Although no major catastrophes had yet occurred, there was plenty to worry about. He had left the Willie Company suffering from a shortage of food having lost its cattle herd. The Martin Company was nine days behind the Willie Company. And he had been unable to buy any provisions in Fort Laramie with the exception of some buffalo robes to help protect the Saints from the cold. All told, there were still 1,200 emigrants out on the trail with winter fast approaching.

His party arrived in Salt Lake on October 4, twenty-two days after they had left the Willie Company. It was a beautiful fall day with no indications of an early winter. Upon meeting with Franklin Richards, Brigham Young was stunned that there were so many Saints still out on the trail. He later wrote to Orson Pratt that, öWe had no idea there were any more companies upon the plains until our brethren arrived, presuming that they would consider their late arrival in America and not start them across the Plains until another year.ö⁹⁵ That very evening, Brigham Young called for a council to discuss the situation. öPresident Young, a practical man, believed that the situation was critical and would require immediate and vigorous action. He learned the general location of the handcart companies and the late ox-trains. With specific information on their numbers and supplies, he calculated what would be required for effective reliefö⁹⁶

By coincidence, the next day was the regularly scheduled semi-annual conference of the Church. Based on the news brought by Franklin Richards, this was to be no ordinary

⁹³ Ibid, pp 44

⁹⁴ Ibid, pp 51

⁹⁵ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 119

⁹⁶ Ibid, pp 119

conference. Standing before a large congregation of Saints who had no idea of the dangerous situation facing the handcart companies out on the plains, Brigham Young made a heart-felt conference address unique in the annals of Church history.

I will now give this people the subject and the text for the Elders who may speak to-day and during the conference. It is this. On the 5th day of October, 1856, many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts and probably many are now seven hundred miles from this place, and they must be brought here, we must send assistance to them. The text will be, *to get them here.* I want the brethren who may speak to understand that their text is the people on the plains. And the subject matter for this community is to send for them and bring them in before winter sets in.

That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people. This is the salvation I am now seeking for. To save our brethren that would be apt to perish, or suffer extremely, if we do not send them assistance.

I shall call upon the Bishops this day. I shall not wait until tomorrow, nor until the next day, for 60 good mule teams and 12 or 15 wagons. I do not want to send oxen. I want good horses or mules. They are in this territory and we must have them. Also, 12 tons of flour and 40 good teamsters, besides those that drive the teamsí .

I will tell you all that your faith, religion and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. *Go and bring in those people now on the plains.* And attend strictly to those things which we call temporal, or temporal duties. Otherwise your faith will be in vain. The preaching you have heard will be in vain to you and you will sink to *Hell*, unless you attend to the things we tell you.⁹⁷

Brigham Young's appeal to the Saints to send relief brought an outpouring of charity and donations. Young men volunteered to be teamsters, families offered their wagons and livestock, valuable flour was stockpiled and women sewed tents, clothes and blankets. After all, every Saint in Utah had been required to make the trek across the plains. They all knew of the hardships that the handcart emigrants faced. No one felt that Brigham Young was over-reacting because the worst nightmare for any pioneer was to hit winter weather on the trail with short food supplies. The lessons of the Donner Party in 1846 were not far removed.

Two days later on October 7, the first wagons and teamsters left Salt Lake City. This first relief company consisted of 27 hardy young men and sixteen wagons of food and supplies pulled by four mule teams. Many more would follow over the course of several weeks. By the end of October, two hundred and fifty teams were on the road to give relief.⁹⁸

The first relief party hoped to meet the Willie handcart company at Fort Bridger. However when they arrived after six days of travel, that hope was shattered. The relief company pushed on to Green River, arriving there on October 15th, but there was still no news. Not finding any sign of the handcart companies, rescuer Daniel Jones wrote: "Our hearts began to ache when we reached Green River and yet no word from them."⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid, pp 120-121

⁹⁸ Ibid, pp 125

⁹⁹ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 68

The party pushed on to South Pass. Franklin Richards had left a message for the handcart companies that supplies would be waiting for them there. Once again, there was no sign of the companies. From there, an express party with only one wagon and four riders went ahead to the headwaters of the Sweetwater River. The weather ominously took a turn for the worse. A severe storm and cold weather overtook the scouts--snow continued for three days.¹⁰⁰ Finally, on October 19th, the express scouts rode into the Willie camp with the news that a supply train was on its way.

The relief party reached the Willie Company on October 21st, too late to save John Linford.

Fort Laramie to the Sixth Crossing of the Sweetwater—September 30 to October 21

After leaving Florence, the Willie Company's experience could be used as a case study for Murphy's Law, which sardonically states the theory that if anything can go wrong, it will. From Fort Laramie, the luck of the Willie Company went from bad to worse. At this point, only first-hand journal entries of the handcart company can adequately describe this horrific experience.

September 29, 1856—Levi Savage: "Went to the fort. Brother Richards has no cattle provided for us here and no other provisions made."¹⁰¹

September 30, 1856—John Chislett: "Arrived at Fort Laramie, having necessarily expended considerable time in the repair of handcarts up to that point. The fort's shelves were bare of food supplies except for a couple of bushels of crackers, some rice, and a bit of bacon. No oxen were available to replace those lost in the buffalo stampede earlier in the month."¹⁰² "The provisions that we expected were not there for us. Captain Willie called a meeting to take into consideration our circumstances, conditions, and prospects, and to see what could be done. It was ascertained that at our present rate of travel and consumption of flour, the latter would be exhausted when we were about three hundred and fifty miles from our destination. It was resolved to reduce our allowance from one pound to three-quarters of a pound per day, and at the same time to make every effort in our power to travel faster."¹⁰³

Sunday, October 8th—Levi Savage: "This morning when we arose, we found the best ox on our team died. In the weak state of our teams, the loss impaired us much. Our old people are nearly all failing fast."¹⁰⁴

October 10th—John Chislett: "Captain Willie picked up thirty-seven buffalo robes at the trading post at Richard's Bridge near Fort Casper; they had been purchased by Elder Richards and left behind for the emigrants and the cold undoubtedly ahead. Supplies Elder Richards indicated in a letter for the company, would be ferried from the Valley to South

¹⁰⁰ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 125

¹⁰¹ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 51

¹⁰² *Ibid*, pp51

¹⁰³ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 101

¹⁰⁴ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 64

Pass.¹⁰⁵ "An examination of our stock of flour showed us that it would be gone before we reached that point (South Pass). Our only alternative was to still further reduce our bill of fare. The issue of flour was then to average ten ounces per day" ¹⁰⁶

About October 12th—John Chislett: "We had not traveled far up the Sweetwater River before the nights, which had gradually been getting colder since we left Fort Laramie, became very severe. The mountains before us, as we approached nearer to them, revealed themselves to view mantled nearly to their base in snow and tokens of a coming storm were discernable in the clouds which every day seemed to lower around us."¹⁰⁷

October 14th—Robert Reeder: "Nights were getting colder and some would sit down by the roadside and die. My younger sister, Caroline, seventeen years old, after traveling all day and seeing the camp being made for the night, took off her apron [gather] some sagebrush in it. She sat down to rest, leaning on her bundle, exhausted. They found her chilled and dying and carried her into camp. She died without regaining consciousness. She, like others, was buried in an unmarked grave, and the camp rolled again."¹⁰⁸

About October 15th—Levi Savage: "The people are weak and failing very fast. It requires great exertion to make any progress."¹⁰⁹

With starvation and exposure claiming more lives, Captain Willie decided on a drastic measure to buoy up the Saints. He announced one morning that all the animals in the company would be killed for fresh meat.

About October 16th—Sarah James: "We were cold all the time. Father told us one night that the flour was gone. Father was white and drawn. I knew that mother was worried about him, for he was getting weaker all the time and seemed to feel that there was no use in all the struggle. We were all so hungry that we didn't stop to think what it would do for our wagons. How good the soup tasted made from the bones of those cows, although there wasn't any fat on them. The hides we used to roast after taking the hair off them. I even decided to cook the tatters of my shoes and make soup of them. It brought a smile to my father's sad face when I made the suggestion, but mother was a bit impatient with me and told me that I'd have to eat the muddy things myself."¹¹⁰

October 19th—Sarah James: "We were huddled in our covers, close to each other for warmth. It was snowing and we were so tired. Suddenly we heard a shout, and through the swirling snow we saw men, wagons and mules coming towards us. Slowly, we realized that help had come."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp64

¹⁰⁶ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 101-102

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp102

¹⁰⁸ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 68

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, pp 68

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp71

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, pp80

About October 19th—The Autobiography of James Henry Linford: ðMother told me that my brother George was at times the only able bodied man in their company (she probably meant tent). The snow was lying deep on the ground, the streams of water were very cold, and the elderly women could hardly be persuaded to cross them; they said they would rather die. George would often carry them through the water on his back.ö¹¹²

October 19th—John Linford Diary (probably written by George Linford): ðThe 19th of October we mett a snow storm and soon after we mett the brethren from the Valley brother Wetlock and Young about 270 miles from the valley We had eaten up our flour mix We have been relying upon ___ hundred weight of biskett for a week ____ __ people then we came to camp and in the morning we were snowed in and had got all our biskets among us Brother Willie went to meet the wagons on a mule and father died the 21 October 1856 down by the sweetwater river at 5 oælock in the morning He had been ill from Florence first the feaver and ague and then weakness and the diareah The journey was to much for himö¹¹³

October 20th—John Chislett: ðWe pursued our journey with the renewed hope after untold toil and fatigue, doubling teams frequently, going back to fetch up struggling carts, and encouraging those who had dropped by the way to little more exertion in view of the soon-to-be improved condition. We finally, late at night, got all to campô the wind howling frightfully and the snow eddying around us in fitful gustsí .Being surrounded by snow, out of provisions, many of our people sick, and our cattle dying, it was decided that we should remain in our present camp until the supply train reached us.ö¹¹⁴

October 21st—Amasa Linford: ðWe finally reached camp (on October 20th) where some five died the first night fifteen died the second, among whom was my father, John Linford. Fifteen were put in one grave. While father was sick and just before he died of starvation, Levi Savage emptied his flour sack to make him some skilly as it was called; after eating this he died.ö¹¹⁵

October 19th to October 21st--John Chislett: ðWe had found a good camp among the willows, and after warming and partially drying ourselves before good fires, we ate our scanty fare, paid our usual devotions to the Deity and retired to rest with hopes of coming aid. In the morning the snow was over a foot deep. Our cattle strayed widely during the storm, and some of them died. But what was worse to us than all this was the fact that five persons of both sexes lay in the cold embrace of deathí .It was resolved in council that Captain Willie with one man should go in search of the supply train and apprise the leader of our conditioní .They were absent three daysô three days which I shall never forgetí .The recollection of it unmans me even nowô those three days! During that time I visited the sick, the widows whose husbands died in serving them, and the aged who could not help themselves, to know for myself where to dispense the few articles that had been placed in my charge for distribution. Such craving hunger I never saw before, and may God

¹¹² *The Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp8

¹¹³ *John Linford Diary*

¹¹⁴ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 80

¹¹⁵ *Life Sketch of Amasa Linford as found in Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 53

in his mercy spare me the sight againí .On the evening of the third dayí .after Captain Willieø departure, just as the sun was sinking beautifully behind the distant hills, on an eminence immediately west of our camp several covered wagons, each drawn by four horses were seen coming towards us. The news ran through the camp like wildfireí .Shouts of joy rent the air; strong men wept till tears ran freely down their furrowed and sun-burnt cheeks, and little children partook of the joy which some of them hardly understood, and fairly danced around with gladness. Restraint was set aside in the general rejoicing, and as the brethren entered our camp the sisters fell upon them and deluged them with kissesí .That evening, for the first time in quite a period, the songs of Zion were to be heard in the camp, and peals of laughter issued from the little knots of people as they chattered around the fires. The change seemed almost miraculous, so sudden was it from grave to gay, from sorrow to gladness, from mourning to rejoicing. With the cravings of hunger satisfied, and with hearts filled with gratitude to God and our good brethren, we all united in prayer, and then retired to rest.ö¹¹⁶

Sweetwater River to the Salt Lake Valleyô October 22nd to November 9th

Looking back 62 years later, this is how Amasa Christian Linford, who was then 11 years old, described the remainder of their trek to the Salt Lake Valley. ôAfter waiting several days in a starving condition for help from Utah, the train arrived with what supplies could bring; part remaining with us and part going on to meet the next companyí .The teams were only able to haul the sick and the helpless, the remainder having to pull their handcarts as before until they reached Fort Bridger where we met with a sufficient number of teams and conveyance to haul the company from there to Salt Lake City, where we arrived on the ninth of November, 1856.ö¹¹⁷

This reminiscence, tempered by more than a half a century, states the historical facts but does not begin to describe the nightmarish experience that awaited the Willie and Martin companies after the supply wagons arrived. Although they now had food, the Willie Company was still about 270 miles from the Salt Lake Valley with the Martin Company 90 miles behind them. After departing from the Willie camp on the headwaters of the Sweetwater River, the next three days would bring the worst part of the Mormon Trail. They would have to climb Rocky Ridge to summit the Continental Divide at South Pass, topping 7,300 feet in elevation. More pressing was the fact that if the series of storms that had already slowed them down continued, they faced the very real threat that they would be snowed out of the high mountain passes for the remainder of the winter. Little wonder then, that Brigham Young sensed a catastrophe of epic proportions and moved to send out rescue parties as quickly as possible.

On October 22nd, the Willie Party buried nine more people and left camp. It appears that a total of 29 people, including John Linford, had passed away during the three day stay at this camp. The Willie Company journal noted that the helpless and sick were able to ride in the rescue wagons, but most had to continue with their handcarts. They traveled eleven miles that day and two more Saints passed away. They were now coming to the foot of Rocky Ridge.

¹¹⁶ *Trail of Hope*, pp123

¹¹⁷ *Amasa Christian Linford*, pp 53

Levi Savage described October 23rd as the worst day of the entire journey. The company traveled 16 miles, part of which was up Rocky Ridge, a steep five mile ascent. Trudging through deep snow along a deteriorated trail, into a snow storm and a biting, howling wind from the northwest, many men, women and children could endure no more. In fact, journals relate that so many men were overcome with exhaustion that women shouldered the burden of pulling the carts up the ridge. "Father collapsed and fell in the snow", Sarah James remembered. "Mother knew in her heart he had given out, but perhaps, she said, in a few minutes with some rest, he could come on [to the camp]." She took the cart and pressed on. "Toward morning some of the captains who had gone out to gather up the stragglers came into camp bearing the dead. William James, Sarah's father, was among the deceased."¹¹⁸

The sacrifice paid by the Saints was so dear, that the posterity of these good people must never forget. John Chislett, one of the captains of the Willie Company describes these days in such excruciating detail that it brings tears to the eyes of even the most hardened souls.

A few days of bright freezing weather were succeeded by another snow-storm. The day we crossed Rocky Ridge it was snowing a little - the wind hard from the north-west - and blowing so keenly that it almost pierced us through. We had to wrap ourselves closely in blankets, quilts or whatever else we could get, to keep from freezing. Captain Willie still attended to the details of the company's traveling, and this day he appointed me to bring up the rear. My duty was to stay behind everything and see that nobody was left along the road.¹¹⁹

He continued:

I had not gone far up [the hill] before I overtook a cart that the folks could not pull through the snow, here about knee-deep. I helped them along, and soon we overtook another. By all hands getting to one cart we could travel; so we moved one of the carts a few rods, and then went back and brought up another. After moving in this way for a while, we overtook other carts at different points of the hill, until we had six carts, not one of which could be moved by the parties owning it. I put our collective strength to three carts at a time, took them a short distance, and then brought up the other three. Thus by traveling over the hill three times - twice forward and once back - I succeeded after hours of toil in bringing my little company to the summit.

Once they had reached the summit, the three-to-four mile stretch to camp was also a struggle with Strawberry Creek cutting across the trail. Chislett continues:

We started one team to cross, but the oxen broke through the ice and would not go over. No amount of shouting and whipping would induce them to stir an inch. We were afraid to try the other teams, for even should they cross, we could not leave the one in the creek and go on.¹²⁰

Chislett went ahead for help.

After some time I came in sight of the camp fires, which encouraged me. As I neared the camp I frequently overtook stragglers on foot, all pressing forward slowly. I stopped to

¹¹⁸ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp91

¹¹⁹ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp128

¹²⁰ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 92

speak to each one, cautioning them all against resting, as they would surely freeze to death. Finally, about 11 pm I reached the camp almost exhausted. I had exerted myself very much during the day in bringing up the rear carts up the ridge, and had not eaten anything since breakfast. I reported to Captain Willie and Kimball the situation of the folks behind. They immediately got up some horses, and the boys from the Valley started back about midnight to help the ox teams in. The night was very severe and many of the emigrants were frozen. It was 5 am before the last team reached the camp.

There were so many dead and dying that it was decided to lie by for the day. In the forenoon I was appointed to go round the camp and collect the dead. I took with me two young men to assist me in the sad task, and we collected together, of all ages and both sexes thirteen corpses, all stiffly frozen. We had a large square hole dug in which we buried these thirteen people, three or four abreast and three deep. Two others died on that camp ground.¹²¹

Finally some good news reported by Chislett marked the beginning of the end of the journey:

Near South Pass we found more brethren from the Valley, with several quarters of good fat beef hanging frozen on the limbs of the trees where they were encamped. These quarters of beef were to us the handsomest pictures we ever saw. After getting over the Pass we soon experienced the influence of a warmer climate and for a few days we made good progress. At Fort Bridger [on November 2nd] we found a great many teams that had come to our help. The noble fellows who came to our assistance invariably received us joyfully, and did all in their power to alleviate our suffering. From Fort Bridger all our company rode, and this day I also rode for the first time on our journey.¹²²

Of the remaining trip to Salt Lake City, there is one final entry in the John Linford diary. As noted, it was most likely written by George and it states: "Oct 29 taken our dinner in the territory of Utah. 30 crossed the green river 165 from Sault Lake City."¹²³ Of the remainder of the trip, nothing else has been noted so it can be assumed they made the trip without further incident.

The Willie Handcart Company, including Maria Linford and her three sons, George, Joseph and Amasa, arrived safely in Salt Lake City on November 9th, 1856.

The Handcart Plan in Perspective

Contentious debate has surrounded the handcart plan within the church and between church members and nonmembers ever since 1856. Did the human cost of the plan justify this low cost mode of transportation to get so many to Zion?

There are plenty who point fingers at Brigham Young. Critics point out that he overlooked the human costs associated with his plan in order to get willing emigrants to come to Utah. He must have known about the late start of the Willie and Martin companies in 1856. They believe he was willing to sacrifice the blood of a few to accomplish the building up of Zion.

Others share their blame. Franklin Richards has been pointed out as one who allowed the last two ships to depart England so late in the year. Many also hold him responsible for the

¹²¹ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 128-129

¹²² *Ibid*, pp 130-131

¹²³ *John Linford Diary*

poor communications between England, Iowa City and Salt Lake City. Some feel that he should have known that once the Saints had arrived in the United States, there would be no stopping them with Zion so close. The PEF agents in Iowa City get blamed for not having the handcarts ready when the Willie and Martin companies arrived. Up to a month was lost as the handcarts were built with poor materials which later contributed to their slow pace of travel. Finally, critics point the finger at James Willie and Edward Martin. They should have refused to let the emigrants continue their journey once they reached Winter Quarters.

But how did the actual members of the Willie and Martin companies feel about it? The authors of *Trail of Hope* summarize how many of the Saints felt. "From those in the Willie, Martin, Hunt and Hodgett companies, was the Mormon Trail a trail of hope or a trail of death? Some would apostatize, embittered at those who sent them west so late. However, for many the trail of survival did not prove a trial of their faith. Many viewed their experience as did Elizabeth Jackson: "I believe the recording angel has inscribed in the archives above, and that my suffering for the Gospel's sake will be sanctified unto me for my good."¹²⁴

James Talmage in his *Articles of Faith* talks about the role of faith in suffering that non-believers can never quite understand. He writes, "As in former days so in the present the saints have been sustained through all their sufferings by the sure knowledge of divine approval; and the faith of righteous men has ever grown through a consciousness of their sincere and devoted endeavor."¹²⁵

As noted earlier, you would have had a hard time convincing John and Maria that the handcart plan was a bad idea, because without, it the Linfords would most likely not have made it to Zion. As he was dying, John Linford said that he was glad to sacrifice his life if it had some purpose. "I am glad we came. I shall not live to reach Salt Lake but you and the boys will and I do not regret all that I have gone through if our boys can grow up and raise their families in Zion"

His sacrifice was a blessing to his posterity. Maria and all of her sons lived as faithful members of the Church. Joseph W. Linford and his wife, Mary Bratton Rich Linford raised nine children who were all faithful members of the church. That faith continues to be passed along.

This is not to say that the experience of the Willie Handcart Company didn't leave scars on those who survived and suffered. Joseph Linford's youngest daughter Leona wrote a sketch of her father and noted his reaction to the handcart experience.

He crossed the plains with the Handcart Company and they had such a very tragic time that the rest of his life he hated to talk about his experiences. I remember once, they were having a Twenty-Fourth of July celebration in St. Charles. The committee wanted father to pull a handcart in the parade. He was very indignant. He said he made a jackass of himself once because he couldn't help it, but he was not doing it for anyone's pleasure.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ *Trail of Hope*, pp 129

¹²⁵ James Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, pp 24

¹²⁶ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 243

Tribute to Maria Linford

One of the keepsakes that Maria brought across the plains was a bowl and saucer. Although broken during the crossing of the plains, they were later mended and have remained in the family serving as a reminder of her courage and faith. The following is a poem that was written as a tribute to Maria.

On Breaking and Mending for Maria Christian Linford

By Kathryn Clement¹²⁷

Balancing the bowl and saucer in one hand,
She spooned weak broth between the split,
Dried lips of her husband. Dreams,
Born of a new faith, had carried them
Over an ocean and across a land
Stretched with vast, treeless prairies,
Or wrinkled by grim, granite peaks.
Here in late October, so unlike
The gentle autumns of Cambridgeshire,
They had come to a high, cold plain
Where wind and snow circled
Like a pack of snarling wolves.

He no longer spoke. Only the faint rise
And fall of his chest signaled life.
She lay down beside him, choked
By bitter blackness, the night extending
Like the endless miles. In the morning
They buried him, scratching way
The surface of crust of ice, placing his body
With thirteen others in a shallow depression,
Covering them with a shroud of snow.

She reloaded her meager belongings,
Carefully packing the remaining bowl
And saucer from her mother's china.
With her small son, she pulled the handcart,
Wallowing through three miles of snow,
Her sodden skirts hindering each step.
Evening came, and seeking a bond
With loved and familiar things, she reached
For the bowl and saucer and watched, stunned,
As they slipped from her numbed fingers.
The cup shattered, spilling roses across the snow.
The saucer rolled over the frozen ground, hit
A protruding rock, and separated like a cracked egg.

She cried her hard tears then, knelt,
And with shaking fingers slowly, tenderly
Collected the fragments. She cradled them
In her woolen scarf, not knowing someday
They would mend like faith
Seamed by acceptance and be whole again.

¹²⁷ Kathryn Clement, *On Breaking and Mending for Maria Christian Linford*, originally published in *Prize Poems of National Federation of State Poetry Societies* 1986.

Chapter Six

Centerville, Utahô April, 1864

There was so much to be done as Joe hurried to load the wagon. He placed bags of seed in the wagon bed along with other farm implements they would need for planting as soon as they arrived in the Bear Lake Valley. Joe, his mother and step-father, Joseph Rich and his younger brother Amasa were part of the Charles C. Rich colonizing party called by Brigham Young to create a new Mormon outpost. Indescribably beautiful but with a harsh climate, Bear Lake country is a high mountain valley situated on a beautiful 30 mile long lake straddling the Utah and Idaho border. Life would not be easy.

Joe, now 22, was a full grown man who had changed so much since he crossed the plains as a 14-year-old boy with the ill-fated Willie Handcart Company. For one thing, he was now an experienced frontiersman who knew about the harsh realities of the West. Just the previous year, the Church called him to drive a team of oxen back across the plains to Florence, Nebraska to meet a new party of immigrating Saints. Then he had accompanied the party back to Utah as a guide, giving them assistance during the long journey back to Salt Lake.

In the eight years since coming to Utah, Joe's family had experienced many things that they could never have imagined in England. Upon arriving in Salt Lake City, Maria found it difficult to provide for her family working as a maid. The job paid little and she could not keep her sons with her. She hated the arrangement of having the boys live with other families who had taken them in. She had not left her home in England and lost her husband on the handcart trek to have her family ripped apart.

In 1857, the Lord blessed the Linford family in a most surprising way. Maria became the second polygamous wife to Joseph Rich in order to provide for her family. Although this was a marriage of convenience, Joe's step-father was a wonderful man who treated the Linford boys like his own sons. In a genealogical twist that occasionally happened as a result of polygamous marriages, Joe became a step-brother to Apostle Charles C. Rich, one of the great men of the Church. From that point, the relationship between the Rich and Linford families became intertwined, which proved to be a great blessing to Joe throughout his life.

The next year, the Rich and Linford families were forced to evacuate their Centerville farm and move to Provo because of the arrival of the United States Army. President Buchanan sent Johnston's army to subdue Brigham Young. Was this a repeat of history? The Saints had not forgotten their experience in Missouri and Nauvoo. Fortunately, the conflict was resolved without bloodshed and life returned to normal.

Now, seven years later, Joe was leaving behind a comfortable home to heed a prophet's call, this time to extend Zion. But he had much to be thankful for because his time in the Salt Lake Valley would bless him for the rest of his life.

Chapter Seven

Centerville, Utah 1856 to 1864

In order to understand the life that Maria and her sons would carve out for themselves in Utah, it is important to have an historical perspective of the settling of Zion. Just as in England, historic events that shaped the Church and the United States dictated the experiences of the Linfords.

It was no mistake when Brigham Young guided the Saints to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Brigham was simply following the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith who in 1842 prophesied that the members of the Church would eventually find refuge in the Rocky Mountains. Understanding that difficulties would only get worse in Nauvoo, the Prophet stated that the "Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains. . . some of you will live to go and assist in making settlements and build cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains."¹²⁸

When the 1847 pioneers first saw the Salt Lake Valley, many of them were dismayed. They only saw a desert surrounded by mountains and bordering a salt lake, far removed from civilization, a land that no one would want to settle. And that is exactly what Brigham Young wanted. He wanted to find a land far removed from the United States. After being expelled from Missouri and Nauvoo without what the Saints felt was the due process of law, he began to search for a desert location so isolated that no one else would want it. It was only in such an environment that the Kingdom of God could be established and the Saints could practice their religion without interference. If the land was hard, requiring much labor to sustain the Saints, then in Brigham's opinion, so much the better.

The hope for independence from the United States was shattered less than six months after the Saints arrived in Utah. Mexico seeking to end the Mexican-American war, ceded to the United States the control of Texas and the land making up the present-day states of Utah, California, Nevada, and parts of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming on February 2, 1848. Still, because Salt Lake City was at least 500 miles from any other major city, church leaders felt that no one would want to settle in Utah when they could travel on to California and Oregon. What they didn't count on was the discovery of gold in California in 1849 (ironically enough by members of the Mormon Battalion). Suddenly, Salt Lake City became a major stopping point for 49ers gearing up to cross the Great Salt Lake Desert on the Overland Trail.

Church leaders also didn't foresee the complex political factors that led to the Utah War in 1857. The so-called "Mormon Rebellion" prompted newly elected President James Buchanan to dispatch 2,500 troops to Utah. Thus, in the nine years from 1847 to 1857, Salt Lake City had become a major stop for transcontinental migration and a political powder keg that drew the nation's attention. Brigham Young's worst nightmare had become reality in a surprisingly short time as the influence of "gentiles" became pervasive throughout the Utah Territory.

¹²⁸ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp19

In spite of (or perhaps because of) these intrusions from the outside world, when the Willie Company arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1856, they found a thriving city. Estimates put population in the Utah Territory at approximately 40,000.¹²⁹ In the eight years since the pioneers arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, colonizing parties had already been sent to Brigham City and Ogden to the north, Tooele to the west and to Provo, Nephi, Parowan and even San Bernardino to the south. Work had started on the Salt Lake Temple in 1853 which wouldn't be completed until 1876. Temple ordinances were performed in the Endowment House. The Saints used the Old Tabernacle which was built in 1852 and which seated 2,500. Today's current Tabernacle would not be completed until 1867. The Beehive House and attached Presidential office were constructed in 1854.

For all of this growth, the Utah Territory was still isolated from the rest of the United States in 1856. There was no telegraph until 1861 and the transcontinental railroad would not be completed until 1869. The Pony Express operated during the 1860s. Essentially, news and people traveled only as fast as the fastest horse available.

The Arrival of the Willie Handcart Company

The Willie Company arrived in Salt Lake City on Sunday, November 9, 1856. Some of the survivors remember the day as sunny but very cold. Brigham Young had mustered all of the Saints' resources to see that the Willie and later the Martin companies were well cared for upon arriving in the valley. John Chislett recalled:

President Young had arranged with bishops of the different wards and settlements to take care of the poor emigrants who had no friends to receive them, and their kindness in this respect cannot be too highly praised. It was enough that a poor family had come with the handcarts to insure help during the winter from the good brethren in the different settlements.¹³⁰

Brigham Young understood that the members of the Willie and Martin handcart companies would need special attention and care. His instructions to the Bishops and Saints showed his common sense and pragmatism. "I do not want to see [these pioneers] put into houses by themselves. I want to have them distributed in the city among the families that have good and comfortable houses. Prayer is good, but when baked potatoes and pudding and milk are needed, prayer will not take their place."¹³¹

Journals also indicate that Brigham Young was greatly moved by the sacrifice made by the handcart pioneers. Knowing that their deaths and suffering could have been averted with the proper communications and planning, there is no doubt that Brigham Young felt a mixture of emotions—frustration, anger, empathy and perhaps even some sense of blame. Mary Goble, a member of the Martin Handcart Company, shared this remembrance of Brigham Young in her journal: "We arrived in Salt Lake City at nine o'clock at night the eleventh of December, 1856. Three of the four that were living were frozen. My mother

¹²⁹ Weber State College and Brigham Young University, *Atlas of Utah*, pp 94.

¹³⁰ *Handcarts to Zion*, pp 131

¹³¹ *Sweetwater Rescue*, pp 123

was dead in the wagon. Early [the] next morning Brigham Young cameí .When he saw our condition, our feet frozen and our mother dead, tears rolled down his cheeks.ö¹³²

Fortunately, the Linfords did have someone waiting for them as they arrived in Salt Lake City so they weren't farmed out to some Saints they didn't know. John Ford, an old family friend from Graveley, took them to his home in Centerville where they rested for a time. He then made arrangements for the boys to be placed in the homes of nearby Saints while Maria looked for work and a proper home. Amasa Linford summarized the arrangements:

We arrived on the ninth of November, 1856. Here we found the snow quite deep and the weather very cold. The Bishops of the various wards took care of as many of the company as they could temporarily until places could be secured for the winter. John Ford of Centerville met the company in Salt Lake City and took our family to his home until we could find a home. I was sent to Ogden to live with a Mr. Rawlins. I remained there until April Conference, when I went back to Centervilleí .¹³³

What Amasa doesn't mention is that the same arrangement was made for his brother Joe to live with the Rawlins. Joe and Amasa worked for Mr. Rawlins doing chores and other tasks common for boys of their age. They were also permitted to attend school during the winter. Seventeen year old George went to live with John Wood of Centerville.

Maria soon found household work with a Mrs. Cherry, also living in Centerville. By all accounts, she was very unhappy with this arrangement because she was not allowed to have her sons come in the house to visit. Ellen Denio, Maria's grand-daughter, wrote that: "They [her sons] could call on her at her place of employment, but if they wished to share a piece of candy or other treat they had been given, they all had to sit out in the yard, as they were never invited in the home."ö¹³⁴ One can imagine Maria's frustration from being separated from her boys.

This situation only lasted a few months; however, as the fortunes of the Linford family unexpectedly took a drastic turn for the better. Maria and her sons were reunited thanks to a controversial tenet of the Mormon Church— polygamy. It is ironic that the practice of polygamy, which helped to create such an explosive rift between the Utah Territory and the United States, would be responsible for the happiness of Maria and her sons.

The Principle of Plural Marriage

It is not known when John and Maria first became aware of the doctrine of plural marriage. Certainly, they knew about it before they started their journey to Zion in 1856. The practice of polygamy started in 1841 in Nauvoo but was not publicly acknowledged by the Church. At that time, only a small number of the leading brethren were invited by Joseph Smith to participate in the principle. By the time the Saints had reached the Salt Lake Valley, the practice was first preached to the Church at a special conference held on August 28 and 29, 1852.

¹³² Ibid, pp123

¹³³ *Life Sketch of Amasa Linford*

¹³⁴ *History of Jos. W. Linford*, pp 2

From a doctrinal point of view, most members of the church were able to accept this principle for a number of reasons. First, the Old Testament mentions plural marriage and states that Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Solomon, David and others each had several wives. Second, members believed they lived in a dispensation of restoration, when all things spoken of in the scriptures would be restored through revelation. Third, believing that they lived in the latter days, polygamy was a means of raising up a righteous generation unto the Lord. Finally, members were taught that plural marriage was just a small part of a larger principle--eternal marriage--which is discussed in Doctrine and Covenants Section 132. It is important to note that a person does not need to practice plural marriage in order to enjoy the blessing of eternal marriage.

The doctrine of eternal marriage, which has attracted so many converts to the Church, is described in the *Mormon Experience*:

From at least as early as 1842, Mormons have believed that a man and woman could be married, or sealed together for eternity in sacred temples or (in the early days of the Church) other specially consecrated places. If they are true to the exacting covenants of fidelity to each other and obedience to God that are part of the ceremony, Mormons believe they can not only enjoy a never-ending union but, through the special creative powers made possible by that union, can realize most fully their own true natures. This will ultimately enable them to become like God himself if they meet the tests of life successfully. This belief has implications for the nature of God, man, and the path of salvation.¹³⁵

While John and Maria would have rejoiced in the principle of eternal marriage, undoubtedly they would have had a hard time accepting plural marriage. And while most of the leadership of the church was expected to participate in plural marriage, that doesn't mean that they were enthusiastic about it. Besides being an economic hardship, the idea of polygamy collided with moral assumptions they had grown up with. Brigham Young declared that when he initially heard of the revelation on plural marriage, "it was the first time in my life that I desired the grave." Orson Pratt, later a vociferous defender of polygamy, came close to abandoning the faith after his first encounter with the new marriage system.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, most of the Saints invited to participate in plural marriages eventually overcame their qualms:

Others were equally distraught. Disbelief [in the doctrine of plural wives] was followed by a reluctant willingness to consider the possibility and finally by acceptance of the reality. Some received their personal conviction in dreams or revelations. An intolerable tension was established in the minds of Mormon leaders who were told about polygamy. On the one hand, they believed Smith was a prophet of God and they had committed their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to the cause of the restored gospel. On the other hand, polygamy flew in the face of their traditional sense of morality. Accepting a spiritual confirmation was the way most Mormon leaders were able to retain the consistency of the commitment.¹³⁷

While many non-members of the church focus on what they perceive to be a licentious practice, they fail to recognize that in many instances polygamy offered marital

¹³⁵ *The Mormon Experience*, pp 186

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 198

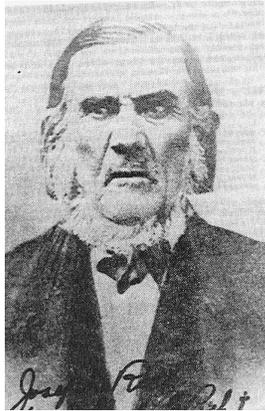
¹³⁷ *Ibid*, pp 198

opportunities for those that might not have had them and support and care for sisters in temporal need.

Church leaders were urged to marry and provide a home for worthy women of the community, who had been denied the opportunity for the development of personality which comes from married life. At the end of the first year's migration to Utah the number of women exceeded the number of men. That excess of women continued for half a century. Under the Mormon practice of plural marriage these women were absorbed into family life. The practice was necessarily limited, only about two percent of the men eligible for marriage having more than one wife. Nor was the law applicable to the general population of the territory or even to the general membership of the Church. Only those men who obtained the sanction of the President [Brigham Young], who kept in mind the character and fitness of the individual, could marry a second wife, and then only with the consent of the first wife.¹³⁸

Maria Linford Marries Joseph Rich

If there was ever a compelling argument for the practice of polygamy, it would be the marriage of Maria Linford and Joseph Rich. At some point early in 1857, Maria's troubles



became known to Joseph Rich. Rich was one of the most respected men living in Centerville. He was the father of Apostle Charles C. Rich, a farmer and President of the local High Priest quorum. His first wife, Nancy O'Neal, passed away shortly after entering the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Joseph remained a widower for five years, and then he married and was sealed to Elizabeth Howard, in 1853. At that time, he was 66 years old, and Elizabeth was 60.

Joseph wanted to provide a home for Maria and her sons, so he proposed a "marriage of convenience" to Maria to be his second wife. Maria greatly desired the security Rich offered, but felt

Joseph Rich

troubled about what her husband John might think about plural marriage. After all, Joseph Rich was 71 years old and she was only 42. Also, she did not want to be sealed to Rich because she wanted to be sealed to her deceased husband John.

Showing the goodness of his heart, Joseph Rich understood the anxieties of Maria Linford and suggested to her that she be sealed to John for eternity and that he would marry for time. Brigham Young performed the marriage on July 26, 1857. Maria was formally sealed to her husband, John Linford, in temple rites at the Endowment House on October 29, 1859. Joseph Rich was proxy with Brigham Young performing the sealing.

Maria's life with Joseph Rich is described in his life history by his grand-daughter Ursula Rich Cole.

They [the Linfords] had been in Utah all separated and struggling for bare necessities when Joseph Rich offered them all a home. Maria was married to him for time as a plural wife on

¹³⁸ *The Restored Church*, pp 316

July 26, 1857 when she was 42 years of age. She worried for a time that her dead husband might not understand, but she was sealed to her first husband. Then he appeared to her in a dream and she was happy after that.¹³⁹

Maria's oldest son James, later said:

We never had a home in Utah until Mother married Father Rich. We loved him as our own father for he was a real father to us. The history continues: "Joseph truly loved them, too. He was always kind, just, considerate, as well as firm. He said little, but that little counted. He helped James towards starting to earn his way. When James was married in Joseph's home he gave them the only chair they had, a real old one that had been in the Rich family for a long time. A nice party was given.

The marriage of Joseph and Maria proved to be beneficial to both families. Joseph's wife, Elizabeth, had a stroke which did not make her entirely helpless but she could scarcely wait on herself after, so Maria took the responsibility of the home. As Joseph was not a young any more he appreciated the help of her sons, Joseph and Amasa. Before long the two older boys went out for themselves, but they always had a home to come to.¹⁴⁰

The story of Maria's marriage to Joseph Rich wouldn't be complete without providing more details about her vision of her husband John. Eliza Denio describes how her grandmother Maria felt:

Grandmother told me that she worried a lot wondering if she had done the right thing [marrying Joseph Rich], and what her husband, Grandfather Linford, would think about it. Finally, one night she had a dream or vision in which her husband appeared to her and told her not to worry about it any more, that it was all right, and he knew she had done it to get a home for her children. After this she felt better.¹⁴¹

Denio further describes Joseph Rich: "But her husband was kind and devoted to her and the boys. One time when his son Charles came to see him he informed him that they were very good boys and he thought as much of them as he did of him. Charles laughed and told him he was very glad to hear it."¹⁴²

The Utah War

With her marriage to Joseph Rich, Maria now had all the things that she had prayed for. Her family had reunited; she was married to a man who had pledged to look after her boys as his own, and she could now enjoy the blessings of living in Zion. Little did she realize that only two days before her wedding, on July 24th, Brigham Young learned of a new threat to the safety and security of the Saints. Ironically, this time the persecution came from the very body that was supposed to protect them—the United States Army.

On July 24th, Brigham Young and many of the Saints were at Silver Lake in the Big Cottonwood Canyon celebrating the tenth anniversary of the pioneer's arrival in the Salt Lake Valley. Ironically, American flags were used to help provide decorations. At noon,

¹³⁹ Ursula Rich Cole, *History of Pioneer Joseph Rich 1786-1866*, pp 13 found in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church History Library.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, pp13

¹⁴¹ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp226

¹⁴² Ibid, pp226

four men just arrived from the Mormon Trail rode into the celebration and sought out Brigham Young for an urgent conference. They told President Young that the United States Army and supply trains were already en route to Utah. This caused a great deal of confusion, because while the messengers were correct about the army's approach, they couldn't say for certain why the army was coming. They could only report the rumors that they were to come to suppress the Mormons.¹⁴³

One can only imagine the reaction of Brigham Young. The Saints had been driven out of Missouri and chased out of Nauvoo. They had chosen to settle an isolated and unwanted desert to get away from the meddling of the United States government. And now they learned that they were going to be suppressed for some unspecified reasons. Brigham Young set the defiant tone that would be adopted by the Saints: "Liars have reported that this people have committed treason, and upon their representation the President has ordered out troops to assist in officering the territory. We have transgressed no law, neither do we intend to do so; but as for any nation coming in to destroy this people, God Almighty being my helper, it shall not be."¹⁴³

It's hard to pinpoint one specific reason why President James Buchanan adopted such a drastic course of action of sending an army to Utah. Since acquiring the Utah Territory from Mexico in 1846, the government didn't know what to do with the Mormons and their open practice of polygamy. Worse, the tendency of the Saints to operate a theocratic government, in spite of a federally appointed civil government frustrated enemies of the Church. Thus, the "Utah Problem" had no easy solutions.

At first, President Millard Fillmore tried to appease the Saints by appointing Brigham Young as Territorial Governor. At the same time, however, both Presidents Fillmore and Buchanan repeatedly appointed a string of anti-Mormons to federal offices and judgeships in the territory. Predictably, this policy of governing ended in disaster. Many of the appointees refused to stay in Utah and spread reports of lawlessness and sedition among the Mormons.

Typical of the friction between the federal appointees and the Saints was Federal Judge William Drummond. He was among the most vocal of the appointees in spreading anti-Mormon propaganda, so it is little wonder that he was the most disliked appointee in Utah.

Drummond was an immoral and unprincipled man. Leaving a wife and children without support in his own state of Illinois, he appeared in Utah accompanied by a harlot, whom he introduced as his wife, and who often sat on the bench with him. His drunken and dissolute habits caused the Saints to despise him and their feelings were ill-concealed. When his immorality and neglect of his family was revealed he left the territory in disgrace. While the reports of Judge Drummond and others stirred the President to issue his drastic order, the real causes of the war which followed were largely political.¹⁴⁴

Politically, Mormons had few, if any, friends in Washington D.C. The South feared that Utah would be granted statehood as a free state and it would not lend any support to the

¹⁴³ *The Restored Church*, pp 326

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp 322

Saints' cause even though it supported states' rights in general. The Republican Party's platform in 1856 stated that it opposed the "twin relics of barbarism" polygamy and slavery. Not to be outdone, James Buchanan, the newly elected Democratic President, looked upon Utah as a convenient scapegoat to divert the attention of the country from its support of the South and slavery.

In May of 1857, President Buchanan decided to replace Brigham Young with a new territorial governor, Alfred Cumming, and new federal judges. To make a show of force, he would send an army of 2,500 soldiers to enforce compliance. It should be stated that the use of the army was intended for show only. The orders to the army stated that "in no case will you, your officers or men, attack any body of citizens whatever, except on such requisition or summons, or in sheer self defense."¹⁴⁵ Unfortunately, no one bothered to tell Brigham Young and the Saints about their intentions, a mistake that almost had catastrophic consequences.

Brigham Young took immediate action to defend the Utah Territory. His objective was to buy time to negotiate with the government by keeping the Army out of Utah until 1858. First, he mobilized all of the settlements, their manpower and resources. He instructed the Nauvoo Legion to be held in readiness to march at the shortest possible notice. Every Mormon settlement was told to conserve the grain supply and stockpile food. Some settlements such as San Bernardino and Carson Valley, were disbanded and recalled to Salt Lake City. Second and most importantly, he devised a defensive strategy to harass the approaching army. Scouts were sent out to learn the location, strength and equipment of the Army. At the same time, expeditions were sent to locate the best places in the mountains for making a guerilla resistance to slow down the troops.

Against all odds, the strategies worked. Orders to Utah Militia Officers instructed their troops to:

to annoy [the U.S. Army] in every possible way. Use every exertion to stampede their animals and set fire to their trains. Burn the whole country before them, and on their flanks. Keep them from sleeping at night by night surprises; blockade the roads by falling trees or destroying river fords where you can. Watch for opportunities to set fire to the grass before them that can be burned. Keep your men concealed as much as possible, and guard against surprise.¹⁴⁶

Cut off from their supply trains, and finding the supply points at Fort Bridger burned down, the army was bogged down and forced to make winter quarters on Black's Fork. The army endured intense suffering during the winter. Brigham Young had taken a great gamble and won. But in retrospect, it was a risky strategy.

It was miraculous that the Utah Expedition did not end in a blood bath. Unleashing military force is always easier than restraining it, and for the Mormons to attempt harassment of the invaders and destruction of supply trains while avoiding the taking of life and open battles, was on the face of it a delicate combination that would not seem to have much chance of success.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ www.history.net.com/utah-war-us-government-versus-mormon-settlers

¹⁴⁶ *The Restored Church*, pp 328

¹⁴⁷ *The Mormon Experience*, pp 167

With the Army stopped for the winter, negotiations began in earnest. Colonel Thomas Kane, a long-time friend of the Saints traveled at his own expense to Salt Lake City to offer his services to Brigham Young. He brought convincing information that the army's intention was not to wage war and that Alfred Cumming was an honorable man. Although not completely convinced, Brigham Young shared with him the demands of the Church. Kane traveled to Black's Fork where he met with Alfred Cumming and Sidney Johnston, the Commander of the Army, and presented the Mormon view. There, he convinced Governor Cumming that he should accompany him to Salt Lake City where he was assured of a cordial reception.

Governor Cumming was impressed by the resolve of the Saints and their preparations to evacuate Salt Lake City and to burn everything upon their departure. During negotiations, Brigham Young accepted Cumming's appointment as the new governor of the Utah Territory and as well the new federal appointees. In return, Cumming compromised with Brigham Young that the Army would pass through Salt Lake City without stopping and camp at least 40 miles away. He would also write a letter describing the true state of affairs to the president in Washington, D.C.

Meanwhile, President Buchanan was facing increasing political opposition to the costs of the Utah War. Important newspapers in the East wrote critical editorials about the folly of the so-called war. In April, President Buchanan appointed a peace commission to travel to Utah that carried with them a proclamation of pardon.

Even before negotiations with Governor Cumming started, Brigham Young ordered a mass exodus of the Saints out of Salt Lake City and settlements to the north and sent them to Utah County to gain leverage.

While negotiations were still in progress, Young decided on a dramatic gesture. This was a decision to move south to abandon the entire northern sweep of the territory to the army, leaving men behind with instructions to set fire to any settlement the soldiers made move to occupy. Adopting the "Sebastopol Plan" which had served a similar purpose in the Crimean War, Young was attempting to muster some national sympathy while demonstrating that the Mormons were not willing to submit to a blatant military occupation of their homes. Throughout the spring the Mormons streamed to temporary encampments near Provo and further South.¹⁴⁸

Bloodshed in the Utah War was averted. The *New York Herald* described the episode this way: "It was a good war. Killed, none; wounded, none; fooled, none."¹⁴⁹ Political critics called the war Buchanan's blunder which would help cement his reputation as one of the nation's most ineffective presidents. As the *Mormon Experience* notes:

The President of the United States had dispatched the largest peacetime army in the nation's history to oversee the installation of a half dozen officials in a minor territory. He had done so without thorough investigation of charges made by a few disgruntled or economically interested individuals. He had neglected to notify the Mormons or to inquire after their

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, pp 168

¹⁴⁹ www.history.net.com/utah-war-us-government-versus-mormon-settlers

viewpoint until a year after the expedition was sent. The Mormons, in turn, had once more been uprooted from their homes, interrupted in the development of the territory and labeled a rebellious people.¹⁵⁰

Beyond the fact that the Joseph Rich families were evacuated from Centerville to Utah County, we know little. The *Sketch of the Life of Joseph William Linford* written by his son Joseph W. Linford is typically understated and says simply: "During the year of the move, he went south with the Saints returning the same summer."¹⁵¹ It is left to us to imagine their fears of repeated history—persecution first in Ohio, then in Missouri and finally in Illinois—that accompanied the evacuation before the arrival of Johnston's Army.

The Centerville Years

Returning home, the Saints found that homes and crops untouched. At last, Maria and her sons realized their long-held dream of life in Zion with all of its blessings. During this time, the two youngest boys, Joe and Amasa, lived with Maria and Joseph. James Henry was still on his mission in England and George was living with his employer in Centerville.

For Joe, these were the years when he matured and grew from a teenager to a man. Although he received some education during the winter months, his time was mainly spent laboring on the Rich farm and doing other chores necessary for life on the frontier. Joseph and his brother Amasa were great helps to Joseph Rich.

Even though the Utah Territory had been settled for more than ten years, there were still plenty of dangers that came with providing for the Rich families.

When Joseph reached early manhood he frequently worked in the mountains, getting out timber for firewood and building purposes. At one time he and his brother Amasa and a young man named John King, went up on a mountain in the winter to cut trees. King went on one side of the mountain, but Joseph and Amasa remained on the other side, and it was well for them that they did for a snowslide occurred which buried King, killing him instantly.¹⁵²

Joe was not afraid of hard work and those around him valued for his goodness and willingness to help.

During his time in Centerville Amasa simply notes that: "I helped to build the first meeting house in Centerville. I lived there for five or six years, working in the canyon in the summer and on the hill in winter and doing general farm work."¹⁵³

Unlike Joe and Amasa, George never lived with Maria and Joseph Rich although he was close by in Centerville. He lived with John Wood, his employer, for several years. It was there that he contracted typhoid fever and without the good care of the Woods he would have died. Typical of his work, he spent one winter hauling rock for the Salt Lake Temple,

¹⁵⁰ *The Mormon Experience*, pp. 169

¹⁵¹ Joseph W. Linford, *Sketch of the Life of Joseph William Linford*, as cited in the Autobiography of James Henry Linford, pp 51

¹⁵² *History of Jos.W. Linford*, pp 2

¹⁵³ *Life Sketch of Amasa Linford*

driving three yoke of cattle. Later, like most of the other Linford boys, he would work for Charles C. Rich.

At the very young age of 19, George was ordained a Seventy. Church leaders were impressed by his spiritual nature and willingness to serve. Early in the spring of 1864, he was called on a mission back to his England where he served in the Bedfordshire Conference. While there, he visited his Grandmother at Graveley; at the time she was living with her daughter Louisa May Sanford. "She was very sick and when she caught sight of my brother [George] she cried out, "Oh my John!" meaning my father; she turned to the wall and cried bitterly, and did not live very long afterwards."¹⁵⁴ Apparently, John and Maria were never able to reconcile their sacrifices for the Church with their families in England. On his return from his mission, George married Eliza Wheeler in 1868 and settled down in North Ogden, Utah.

The most exciting event of these good years was the return of James Henry in 1861. Now 24 years old, his mission in England had lasted four and one-half years. So much had happened to his family during his mission and the passing of time had aged all of them. He describes his joyful reunion.

I arrived in Salt Lake City on Sunday evening, September 15, 1861. My three brothers met me and took me to Centerville, Davis County, Utah, where Mother was living. I met her for the first time in over four and one-half years, during this time conditions had made a great change in her. Father had sold his belongings to emigrate to Utah, leaving me behind, a boy missionary, nineteen years old; they had crossed the sea in a sailing vessel; had camped out in the open near Iowa City, Iowa; and had camped out and dragged a handcart twelve hundred miles across the great plains, suffering from exposure to cold and lack of food; and, finally were worn out by dragging their handcarts under these adverse conditions. Then a supreme test came in the loss of her husband who succumbed and was buried on the Sweetwater; no wonder she did not look as she did when I last saw her.¹⁵⁵

James, never very healthy, arrived in Utah sick with a fever; but with good nursing from his mother he soon returned to health. Wasting no time, he married Zillah Crockett in January 1862, four months after he arrived in Centerville. With much help from his stepfather Joseph Rich, he spent the next several years working at several trades to earn a living. These included shoemaking, trading, farming and a general laborer.

Down and Back Companies The Church Train System

Beyond the life sketches of Joseph William Linford by his children and some mentions of him by his brothers in their histories, perhaps nothing says more about his character than his calling to be a teamster as part of the Rossel Hyde "down and back" company in 1863.

Now 21 years old, Joe had reached the stage of life when he should have been looking to get married and pursuing an occupation. It was also the time when young men were called to the mission field. Already, Joe's brother James had served a four and one-half year in mission in England and his brother George would be called to be a British missionary the following year in 1864. But, as his stepfather Joseph Rich got older, more of the burden of

¹⁵⁴ *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 45

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, pp 26

running the Rich farm in Centerville fell on the shoulders of Joe and Amasa. Joe was needed at home and for good reason. He was now a man who could drive a team of horses or oxen, plant and harvest crops, cut firewood, hunt and understand the dangers of unpredictable weather and Indians. He was no longer a just a pioneer, but a frontiersman actively involved in building up Zion.

Given his age and talents, it is perhaps not a surprise that Joe's local ward called him to be part of a down and back company in 1864. Also known as the Church Train System, this was a new, more efficient and safer immigration system devised by Brigham Young to replace the handcart companies.

The most successful immigration device during the 1860s was the Church Train System. Recognizing the large numbers of converts in Great Britain and Scandinavia who were still anxious to migrate, Brigham worked out a new immigration procedure. In 1860 his nephew, Joseph W. Young, helped to prove that oxen could leave the Salt Lake Valley in the spring, carry flour to be deposited for the use of the immigrants along the way, load freight and immigrants at the Missouri River and return to the valley the same season in good time and full health. Instead of commissioning agents to purchase the hundreds of oxen and horses needed each summer to haul the immigrants and their baggage to Salt Lake Valley and that became increasingly difficult to do during the Civil War Brigham decided to assign each ward and settlement to send an apportioned number of drivers, teams and wagons to the Missouri Valley each spring for a down and back trip. They would pick up immigrants at the rate of ten to twenty persons per wagon, and transport them back to Utah.¹⁵⁶

Mormons recognize that to be assigned or called to do something means that this act is done voluntarily without compensation for a person's time or use of their equipment. As *The Restored Church* notes, "These teams and teamsters were supplied gratis by volunteers, who responded readily to calls from the First Presidency. Their sacrifice in time and means to aid brethren in the Gospel whom they had never yet seen is illustrious of the love which dominated the whole movement to build the kingdom of God."¹⁵⁷

One can imagine the emotions of Joe when he received the call to be a teamster. Driving a six yoke of oxen, he would help provide the food and assistance that were sorely lacking during his crossing of the plains in 1856. When help finally arrived, the men and boys providing assistance to the handcart companies from the Valley must have seemed like angels. One can readily understand why this calling must have appealed to Joe.

Joe's calling to render assistance to the immigrating Saints was an honor much sought after by the young men of the Utah Territory. Joe's daughter, Eliza Denio, wrote about his experience.

On May first 1863 Joseph left, in Captain Rosel Hyde's company for Florence Nebraska to meet and assist a company of Saints to Utah. He drove a team consisting of six yoke of unbroken oxen. It must have been a difficult and strenuous job to hitch up and train these cattle to draw a wagon. But they were probably well broken during the two months or more it took to make the journey. They had to wait a few weeks at Florence for the company of Saints to arrive, so they hired out to farmers of the locality, thus earning a little money and helping to

¹⁵⁶ *Brigham Young, American Moses*, pp 283

¹⁵⁷ *The Restored Church*, pp 282

pass the time during their enforced wait. They started home August 13th and arrived in Salt Lake City October 13th, a little more than five months from the time they started their journey. While he was at Sweetwater camping ground Joseph tried unsuccessfully to locate his father's grave.¹⁵⁸

While Denio states the facts of the trip, she doesn't capture the responsibilities that came with Joe's calling. One author describes the duties that came with this calling and how these men were viewed with respect and honor.

Each captain had a crew of at least one teamster per wagon and an assistant [captain], a chaplain, a quartermaster, hospital steward, a camp guard, and a night guard for the stock. In addition to helping coordinate the donation of supplies, local ward bishops were assigned the yearly duty of selecting men to fill these positions. They were usually unmarried men in their late teens and early twenties. No doubt most of them preferred the adventurous life on the plains to working the farm during the hot, dry months of summer. It also gave these young men a chance to be the first to meet young, unmarried female emigrants. Referred to as the "boys," "Utah boys," "Mormon boys" or "American boys" they carried a well-earned heroic status with the emigrants as well as their own communities. As the "boys" hit the Mormon trail eastward, they settled into the routine of their individual duties. After the captain, whose word was law, the teamster was probably the next most significant position in the success of a wagon company. He needed to be confident and at ease with handling oxen. To be a teamster required the skills to prevent the always-threatening stampedes, pace the oxen to avoid fatigue and safely guide ox and wagon over rough terrain and through water crossings. His other duties included the nightly check for wheel stress and the greasing of the axles. Each morning brought the yoking and hitching of the usually reluctant and uncooperative cattle.¹⁵⁹

This passage speaks volumes about Joe and his responsibilities as a teamster. Evidently, he was also well-liked. Denio notes that during the trip Joe formed lifelong friendships with some of his fellow "boys." Among these friends were Samuel Matthews, John Morton and Lancing Allred, who settled in Bear Lake Valley. They were fast friends all their lives.

Interestingly, James Henry Linford was a member of one of the first down and back companies to Utah when he reunited with his family in 1861 after his mission. His description of the journey gives a good idea of how the Saints traveled and how the new system helped safeguard the emigrating Saints from hunger, fatigue and bad weather from late crossings. Under the "down and back" system, the Church Trains safely transported an average of three thousand immigrants to the valley each summer.

After staying in Florence for two months and ten days, I commenced my journey across the plains on June 30, 1861, in Captain Ira Eldridge's Company. I was appointed captain of the wagon and my duties were to draw the provisions and keep peace in our little company. The company was called together morning and evening for prayers. In forming camps after the day's journey, the wagons were drawn into a circle to form a corral. When the cattle were unyoked, they were given into the care of the herders who took them to the feed which was located by the captain of the guard. There were men appointed every night to guard the camp; this guard was made of men appointed and fitted out by the several wards of Utah. Often the teamsters were the owners of the outfit. All of the able bodied

¹⁵⁸ *History of Joseph W. Linford*, pp 3

¹⁵⁹ *Trail of Hope*, pp 140-147

emigrants walked from Florence to Utah, a distance of a thousand miles. The emigrants often had a concert or dance by the light of the campfire. Take it all in all it was a nice trip for the healthy and strong. I enjoyed the journey very much until I took sick with mountain fever which remained with me until I got to Utah. The captain and teamsters were very kind to the emigrating Saints.¹⁶⁰

In a long life, perhaps one of the best things that Joe Linford was ever called was ōUtah Boyö.

¹⁶⁰ *Autobiography of James Henry Linford*, pp 24-25

Chapter Eight

Charles C. Richô Son, Husband, Father and Apostle of the Lord

Because his father was a branch president of the church in Graveley, Joe met many church leaders and missionaries as he grew up in England. It's likely that he met some of the Presidency of the British Mission which typically consisted of members of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. These men included giants of the church like Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff and John Taylor who later became presidents of the church. The Saints revered these men and looked to them for leadership and guidance in both their spiritual and temporal affairs.

Mormons believe that men in this dispensation who serve in the Quorum of Twelve Apostles hold the same office as the apostles that Jesus Christ called and set apart during his ministry on earth. They are called to be "special witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ." Church members sustain them as "prophets, seers and revelators." Indeed, we believe that the Melchizedek Priesthood, the right and authority to act in the name of God, was conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by the ancient apostles Peter, James and John.

As a young boy in England, Joe could have never dreamed that one day he would be related to an apostle of the Lord as both a step-brother and later son-in law. That man, Charles C. Rich, would exert a mighty influence of good on Joe's life. As we have already seen, Joe's first connection to Charles C. Rich was through his mother's marriage to Joseph Rich, Charles's father, in 1857. Later, it was through Charles C. Rich that Joe helped colonize the Bear Lake Valley and where he eventually married one of his daughters, Mary Bratton Rich.



Apostle Charles C. Rich

Perhaps no man, other than his father, had more of an influence on Joe's life. So, just as one cannot understand the life of Joseph Linford without understanding Mormonism, it is also essential to be familiar with the life of Charles C. Rich.

Charles C. Rich was born in 1809 to Joseph and Nancy O'Neil Rich in northwestern Kentucky. Charles was the oldest son who was followed by four daughters— Artimesia, Jane Ann, Minerva and Nancy. The Rich family lived on the frontier, first in Kentucky, then later in Indiana and Illinois. Charles received a basic education and training as a cooper but it appears that most of his time was spent working on the family

farm. They were described as "scrupulously honest, independent, self-reliant, good neighbors, helpful of others, rather out-spoken, but made few pretensions of any kind and least of all on religion. They knew their Bibles and were devout, but it ended there."¹⁶¹

The Riches first encountered Mormonism in 1831 when Charles was 22 years old. He and his parents were skeptical of the claims of the missionaries and did not immediately accept the gospel. But, at the same time, the Riches had difficulty in letting Mormonism go.

The Riches had heard some terrible things of one religious sect called Mormons, so when two of their elders came they wanted little to do with them. However, they couldn't be inhospitable and took the preachers in a bit reluctantly. These elders, Lyman Wight and John Corroll, carried such an astonishing message that it was hard to believe. After long discussions they left some literature and journeyed on. The Riches were surprised [and] confused. Each had always stood by his convictions. Now they were groping for the right and had to know for themselves. The winter of 1831-32 they put in more thought, study, and prayer on religion than they had done in all their lives before. Each felt that he had to know for himself. It became the all important topic of conversation. The result was that when Elders George M. Hinkle and Daniel Cathcart arrived, Joseph, Nancy Charles and Minerva then 16, were baptized by Elder Hinkle in April 1, 1832, and confirmed by those elders on the water's edge. Then the Spirit of God seemed to rest upon them, their minds and hearts were open, greater light and knowledge came to them.

Artimesia, Jane Ann and 11-year old Nancy hadn't entirely made up their minds when a few days later Joseph Smith, Newel K. Whitney and Jesse Gause came on their way to Missouri. Artimesia's youngest daughter, Adell, later said that her mother was wholly converted under the preaching of Joseph Smith. She told of her wonderful conversion and experiences many times to her children and her friends thinking they would be led to believe in the Church. Adell added, "What she knew, she knew, and there was no doubt about it." The Prophet Joseph Smith baptized Artimesia, Jane Ann and Nancy a few days after the others in April, 1832.¹⁶²

At the family's insistence, Charles traveled to Kirtland to see the Prophet again. He went some 600 miles and taught the Gospel message on the way. During this trip, he was ordained an Elder by Zebedee Coltrain. Arriving in Kirtland, he and the Prophet became fast friends. Later, he received his endowments in the Kirtland Temple and was ordained a High Priest by Hyrum Smith. During the period of 1832 to 1838, Charles divided his time between farming and serving as a missionary for the church.

Joining the Saints as they gathered to Missouri, the Riches moved to Far West in 1836. Two years later, Charles married Sarah De Armon Pea. During this tumultuous time, Charles played a prominent role in the defense of the Missouri Saints putting his life in jeopardy several times.

While carrying a flag of truce between the camps of the Saints and the mobocrats, he was shot at, about ten yards distant by Samuel Bogart, a Methodist preacher and a mob officer. At the battle of Crooked River, when David Patten fell mortally wounded, and while bullets were flying thick and fast, he laid down his sword in the heat of the battle and administered

¹⁶¹ *History of Pioneer Joseph Rich*, pp 7

¹⁶² *Ibid*, pp 7

the ordinance of the laying on of hands to the dying hero; after which he resumed the sword, assumed command and the battle of Crooked River was won by the Saints.¹⁶³

As a leader of the Saints' defense, Charles and his family were driven from Missouri to Nauvoo in 1839. There, he served as a member of the Nauvoo High Council as well as a member of the city council. He was also an original member of the Council of the Fifty, which had been organized by Joseph Smith to govern the temporal affairs of the Saints. He also served as a member of the Nauvoo Legion. After the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1844, Charles rose to the rank of Major General.

As a church leader, Charles was expected to participate in the doctrine of plural marriage. "It was at this time that Charles Rich was called upon to take additional wives. As the doctrine was explained to him and Sarah D., it was made clear that the practice was "essential to our future glory and exaltation hereafter."¹⁶⁴ The decision must have been a difficult one for both Charles and Sarah D., especially since Sarah, as the first wife, had to agree to the proposal before her husband could marry a plural wife. In her journal, Sarah D. expressed her feelings toward plural marriage:

Many may think it very strange that I would consent for my dear husband whom I loved as I did my own life and lived with him for years to take more wives. This I could not have done if I had not believed it to be right in the Sight of God, and believed it to be one principal of his gospel once again restored to earth, that those holding the priesthood of heaven might by obeying this order attain to a higher glory in the eternal world.¹⁶⁵

Although we don't know if Charles initially had misgivings about the doctrine of plural marriage, we do know that he followed the advice of the prophet with typical obedience. He married three additional wives in 1845—Eliza Ann Graves, Mary Ann Phelps and Sarah Jane Peck. Before leaving Nauvoo in 1846, he married Emeline Grover and in 1847 at Winter Quarters he took Harriet Sargent as his sixth wife.

Accepting an offer of marriage as a plural wife was also a difficult decision. Eliza Ann Graves, Charles' second wife and the mother of Mary Bratton Rich who later married Joseph William Linford, initially accepted his offer and later backed out, only to accept his offer a second time.

When Charles Rich and his wife Sarah D. decided that the doctrine of plural marriage was divine and that they should live it, they sat down together to decide who should be chosen to live "Celestial Marriage" with them. Both agreed on Eliza Ann Graves as their first choice. Apparently sometime toward the end of 1844 Charles Rich approached Eliza with the proposal that she enter his family as his wife. At the time of the proposal she accepted his offer, but when he came to take her to the temple she apparently lost her nerve and "told him she just couldn't accept polygamy yet." Charles, "being a very understanding man," consented to her wishes, asked her to consider his offer for one or two months, and said that he would return at that time to receive her final answer. After a period of earnest prayer in which she asked God to guide her footsteps, Eliza decided that polygamy was of God, and

¹⁶³ Andrew Jenson, *LD.S. Biographical Encyclopedia Volume 1*, pp 102

¹⁶⁴ Leonard J. Arrington, *Charles C. Rich—Mormon General and Western Frontiersman*, pp 288

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, pp 288

when Charles returned she accepted his proposal. They were married in the Nauvoo Temple, according to the ceremonies prescribed for "Celestial Marriage" on January 2, 1845.¹⁶⁶

Eliza Ann Graves was a woman of faith and strength. She was born on June 3, 1811 at Waterford, Vermont, the oldest of three children. According to Leonard Arrington, Eliza was a small and sickly child but was very gifted at sewing.

Eliza was never very strong as a child, and so as a way of providing for herself she was taught the tailoring trade by her mother's sister, who was skilled in the art. Eliza Ann was taught to make suits entirely by hand, since sewing machines were not in use at that time. Eliza, who at twenty was five feet two inches tall and weighed ninety-eight pounds, moved to Erie City, Pennsylvania, with her family in 1832. There she and her mother, also a skilled seamstress, opened up a shop with a few apprentices. They were doing very well in their business when they were introduced to the Mormon Church. Mrs. Graves and two daughters accepted its teachings and were baptized into the Latter-day Saint Church.¹⁶⁷

As devoted members of the Church, the Graves family moved to Nauvoo in 1841. She quickly established herself as the "best seamstress in Nauvoo." It was during this period that she became well acquainted with prominent Church leaders when she tailored clothes for them. She knew the Prophet Joseph Smith personally and greatly mourned his death.

In 1846, General Rich helped organize the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo. He presided over the Mount Pisgah Branch, one of the intermediate stops for the Saints between Nauvoo and Winter Quarters. In 1847, he caught up with the main body of Saints at Winter Quarters where he departed for the Great Salt Lake on June 14th. Charles was called as the military leader of the 1847 Emigration Company, which followed Brigham Young's advance company and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in October 1847. Charles then served as a counselor in the Salt Lake Stake Presidency and as a member of the Council of the Fifty. With his father, he opened farms in Centerville in 1848.

The next year, at the age of 39, he was called to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. In setting apart Charles as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, President Brigham Young invoked the blessings of heaven upon him:

Brigham Young promised Charles Rich that he should be "mighty & great & thy wisdom expand, increase & grow until thou shalt understand the things of God & magnify his name" even until he should "not be one whit behind the chiefest of the Apostles." A final part of the blessing uttered by President Young was a prophetic admonition: "What thou art called to preside over mattereth not."¹⁶⁸

Because Rich had proven himself to be an effective leader and faithfully obedient in all of his callings, Brigham Young often looked to him establish Zion, either through colonization or through missionary work. In October 1849, Rich accepted a call to assist Amasa Lyman in supervising Mormons in California. Between 1851 and 1857, Rich and Lyman established a relatively prosperous economic colony at San Bernardino, which served as a

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, pp 290

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, pp 290 Note: Interestingly, Charles C. Rich was one of the missionaries that she met in Erie City as she and her family were investigating the Church.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, pp 134

way-station for immigrants traveling to Utah via the Spanish Trail.¹⁶⁹ With the closing of the San Bernardino colony in 1857 because of the Utah War, Charles returned to Utah. There, he served as an aide to General Daniel Wells of the Nauvoo Legion during the Utah War. Between 1860 and 1862, Charles joined Lyman in England as part of the European Mission presidency.

More will be written about Brigham Young's call to Charles C. Rich to colonize the Bear Lake Valley in 1863 in the next chapter. Suffice it to say, after a lifetime of sacrifice and moving his families from one location to another, Charles finally found a home for his considerable posterity. Although he finally had his families together, that does not mean that the calling was easy. Instead, it was a struggle that required all of his leadership. He had to maintain the colony in the face of severe winters, poor harvests, delicate Indian relations and isolation.¹⁷⁰

Charles served as a much beloved spiritual and temporal leader of this high mountain colony for the remaining 26 years of his life. Brigham Young so appreciated Charles's service that in 1864, he named Rich County, Utah, and the town of St. Charles, Idaho, after him. He died on 17 November, 1883 at the age of seventy-five, the father of 51 children and grandfather of 85.

A fitting tribute to Charles C. Rich was given to him by Judge Jonathan Wright who was speaking to his then wayward son. He said:

If you could meet Charles C. Rich, you'd find your ideal man— one who would do what's right under any circumstances. Brother Rich always acts from principle, never prejudice. He has an unusual sense of justice and great moral courage. He is never afraid to take the part of those he thinks are in the right. I've met him a good many times and I know from my own experience that this is true.¹⁷¹

Mary Bratton Rich and the Evacuation of Nauvoo

Just as we learned about the Willie Handcart Company's experience through the eyes of Joseph Linford, the life of his wife Mary Bratton Rich Linford provides a vivid description of the evacuation of Nauvoo and the exodus of the Saints to the Salt Lake Valley.

Mary Bratton Rich, the first daughter of Charles C. Rich and Eliza Ann Graves, was born on February 2, 1846, and was among the very first polygamous children born in the church. And it is very probable that she was the last polygamous child born in Nauvoo. Eliza Ann Graves was expecting her child to be born in late February or March 1846, but her premature birth was both unexpected and the cause of difficult circumstances for the entire family.

With the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum, tensions between the Saints, mobocrats and the State of Illinois only worsened. They grew to the point that no peace was possible under any terms. Brigham and the members of the Twelve knew that

¹⁶⁹ Utah History Encyclopedia, *Charles C. Rich*, www.media.utah.edu/UHE/r/RICH,CHARLES.html

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp1

¹⁷¹ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 314

the need to move once again was inevitable, but they wished to push back the date until the Nauvoo Temple could be completed. They knew that the Saints would need the reserve of faith that would come with the endowment ceremonies practiced in the temple. Additionally, they wanted to make sure that they had adequate time to make preparations for the move. They stipulated that they would leave when the grass grows and the water runs, reluctantly promising to evacuate the city of Nauvoo by April 1846 to avoid further hostilities.

Notwithstanding this promise, hostilities increased and the safety of the Saints was imperiled.

Nauvoo's neighbors, however, would not wait. Early in September (1845) a mob of three hundred began the systematic burning of outlying Mormon homes and farms. Brigham reported on September 15 that forty-four buildings had been destroyed. The terrified Saints, upon Brigham's advice, fled to Nauvoo, and 134 teams and wagons were sent from the city to aid in the evacuation.¹⁷²

Violence increased, and news reached Nauvoo that militias were being formed to drive out the Saints before the agreed upon date. The only course of action the Church could follow was to move up the date of departure to February 4th. This of course, meant that not all the preparations for departure were complete and that winter was still in full force. Once again, as in Missouri, the Saints evacuated their homes to an unknown destination in the worst of all possible conditions.

Charles C. Rich, as a church official and a commander in the Nauvoo Legion, needed to depart Nauvoo quickly to fulfill his callings. He had planned to leave on February 4th with all of his families, but Mary was born two days earlier. Charles was forced to leave Eliza Ann, her mother, Phoebe Palmer Graves, and two-day old Mary behind while the rest of the family crossed the Mississippi into Iowa. According to Rich family records, Charles told the new mother, "Eliza, I cannot take you; it would certainly mean certain death to you and the baby. What shall we do?" Eliza reportedly answered, "Bless me, Charles; and if you promise me I will be safe, I am not afraid."¹⁷³

Mary's premature birth was just the beginning of troubles for Eliza Ann Graves and her family. Many years later, Mary received a letter written from Sara D. Rich (the first wife of Charles C. Rich) who recalled her birth.

Mary, you have one noble thing to remember and comfort you now that your dear mother is no more, and that is that you are the first polygamous child to your father's house, and that too under the most trying circumstances to your dear mother for you were born two days before she was to have started with your father and our family to travel into the wilderness, as we then called it. Her things were at that time sent over the river preparatory for our start. But you, dear child, although no bigger than a pint of cider, must come along and frustrate all of our plans in that respect. Well do I remember your being handed to me by the doctor to put the first clothes that you ever had. Then came the trial for your dear mother. She had

¹⁷² Brigham Young, *American Moses*, pp 124

¹⁷³ Charles C. Rich, pp 90

to be left behind among those who would persecute her. But God gave her faith to endure it all.¹⁷⁴

The fact that Eliza Ann survived seven months alone in Nauvoo and eventually made it to Utah with her family is nothing short of miraculous. In a life sketch of Mary Bratton Rich Linford, her daughter Eliza M. Denio recounts the many situations the young family had to overcome.

Eliza's mother remained with her in Nauvoo. The child became very sick and notwithstanding they did all in their power for her, she seemed to grow worse. They called in William Anderson, who was later killed in the Nauvoo battle, to administer to her. He promised Eliza that her child would recover and that she would live to see the mother of a large family, which prophecy was fulfilled.

All through the summer months the mob continued to harass and annoy them and to add to their troubles. Their provisions gave out and they had no money to buy more. In their hour of need the Lord raised up a friend to them. The wife of one of the mobocrats, who evidently had a kind heart, brought them flour, sugar and other things they needed. They hesitated to use it fearing it might be poisoned, but as starvation was staring them in the face they decided to try it and found it all right. They learned months later that Eliza's husband had sent her money by a man he trusted but who had failed to deliver it.¹⁷⁵

The situation worsened. By mid-May, nearly 12,000 Saints had crossed the river and only 600 exiles were left including Eliza and her family. The mobbers became bolder in their persecutions. "Nights were made hideous by their howling and yelling and acts of violence". At times the mob would come to the door in the middle of the night and utter the most blood-curdling yells and laugh with fiendish glee knowing they had frightened the two women nearly to death.¹⁷⁶

In August, a deal was brokered by the State of Illinois, in which the remaining citizens of Nauvoo would accede to the demands of the mob and depart from the city within sixty days. But the mob would not stick to their word.

In total disregard for the legal government of Illinois, Brockman marched a force of 700 men against Nauvoo. His propositions to the Saints were so outrageous that a force of 150 to 300 men was raised to resist him. On September 10, 11, and 12, firing on both sides ensued. On the 13th, a real battle took place. The resistance was so determined that the attacking force was driven back to their encampment. As the state made no move to aid the stricken city, it was decided in council to surrender rather than to shed blood in defending a city they were so soon to abandon anyway.¹⁷⁷

The Mormons agreed to surrender their arms and the city itself for the promise of safety while crossing the river. Those who were able left immediately. Approximately 640 destitute Latter-day Saints were forced to cross the river in September.

¹⁷⁴ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 261

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 262

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 262

¹⁷⁷ *The Restored Church*, pp 227

Eliza Ann, her mother and seven-month old Mary left Nauvoo just three days before the battle. Even at this point, their long awaited trip to reunite with their families almost cost them their lives before they even reached the other side of the Mississippi:

A man was coming to Nauvoo from Winter Quarters who promised to bring Mary and her mother back with him. Charles gave him money to bring them over the river in a ferry boat, but thinking he could save that money for himself, he said nothing about having it and proceeded to take them across the river in a small rowboat. When some distance from shore the boat started to leak and they narrowly escaped drowning, by rowing rapidly back to shore. He then took them over in the ferry boat, as he should have done in the first place.¹⁷⁸

The 1847 Trek to the Salt Lake Valley

As a general rule, those left behind in Nauvoo after the initial evacuations in the spring were Saints whose poverty did not allow for the purchase of the teams, wagons and provisions necessary to make the trip to the west. This was particularly true of those who were forced to leave in September and October after the mob had demanded the complete evacuation of Nauvoo. These were the Saints that Mary and her small family joined.

Unprepared, but forced to leave the city to save their lives, the exiles crowded into makeshift tents on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River. Many became sick because of several September rain storms that left them drenched. Word of the condition of the ðpoor campð reached the Twelve, and they soon sent a relief company back across Iowa with tents, wagons and provisions. Even in these dire times, the faithful saw the hand of the Lord in a miraculous event. ðPractically destitute on October 9th, they organized for the journey west. On that day flocks of quail, exhausted from a long flight, settled across the bottom lands. The hungry Saints easily and gratefully caught them with their hands. Food had been provided when badly needed.ð¹⁷⁹

At this time, Charles and the remainder of the family were staying in Mount Pisgah, Iowa. One of the things that set the Mormons apart in their western migration was their willingness to plan and provide for the Saints who would follow them for many years afterwards. After their expulsion from Nauvoo, Brigham Young directed the Saints to set up four way stations to provide food and a place of rest. Crops were planted at each of the way stations to provide food for the Saints who were following. One was at Garden Grove located 150 miles from Nauvoo. The second was Mount Pisgah, just 27 miles to the northwest and 100 miles east of Winter Quarters. The third was at Council Bluffs (on the outskirts of present-day Omaha), and the fourth was Winter Quarters at Florence, Nebraska.

Each of the way stations was governed along the lines of priesthood authority. In Mount Pisgah, for example, a presidency was called with William Huntington as president and Ezra T. Benson and Charles C. Rich as counselors. These men were responsible for the planting and harvesting of crops on a 1,000 acre farm, providing provisions for arriving Saints, maintaining lines of communication, improving roads between way stations, and regulating the flow of traffic between camps. Additionally, Charles was given the special responsibility of ensuring the safety of the Saints from local Indians and rumored

¹⁷⁸ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 263

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 264

Missourians. After the death of President Huntington from a disease known as black cankers, Rich was called to be the president of the camp. This work was so demanding that Rich found it difficult to look after his own families.

It was at Mount Pisgah that Eliza Ann, her mother, and baby Mary finally rejoined the rest of the family. Tears of joy must have been shed at the reunion. Eliza and her small family had been separated from her husband for 10 months in very trying circumstances. In February of 1847, Brigham Young requested that the Rich family leave Mount Pisgah and move to Winter Quarters in preparation for the push west.

Brigham Young left Winter Quarters in early April with a vanguard company of pioneers to scout possible destinations for the Saints.¹⁸⁰ Brigham Young arrived in the Salt Lake Valley sick with Mountain Fever on July 24, 1847. Wilford Woodruff describes the arrival of the Saints at the valley:

When we came out of the canyon in the full view of the valley I turned the side of my carriage around open to the West, and President Young arose from his bed and took a survey of the country. While gazing on the scene before us, he was enrapt in vision for several minutes. He had seen the valley before in vision, and upon this occasion he saw the future glory of Zion and of Israel, as they would be, planted in the valleys of these mountains. When the vision had passed, he said: "It is enough. This is the right place. Drive on!"¹⁸¹

The Rich family followed in one of the later companies that left in 1847. They departed from Winter Quarters on June 14th and arrived on October 2nd, 1847. Thankfully, the trip across the plains was uneventful for the Riches, although traveling in a rocking wagon could not have been easy with one and a half year old Mary. One incident is recorded that involved Eliza Ann and Mary:

At one time they had been forced to make a dry camp at night, and to proceed the next day without water. The oxen were very thirsty and when they had gone quite a distance they could smell water a long time before they came to it. They became unmanageable and ran away with the wagon. Eliza became frightened and gathering Mary in one arm, and a small child she was caring for in the other, she jumped out of the wagon while the oxen were running. They might have been killed but miraculously escaped injury.¹⁸²

Life in the Salt Lake Valley

With the arrival of the tenth and final pioneer company in the fall of 1847, there were now approximately 2,000 Saints living in the valley. This was a precarious time for Brigham Young and the Twelve. The Saints had not been able to grow enough food during the summer and fall to sustain everyone through the winter, so the pioneers had to live off the provisions they had brought. Everything hung in the balance on the success of growing crops of grain, potatoes and vegetables the next year in 1848.

¹⁸⁰ Note: For the family of A. Merrill and Nelda Linford, it is interesting to know that William Adam Empey, mom's great grandfather was part of Brigham Young's vanguard pioneer company but he did not arrive in the Great Salt Lake Valley with them because he was called to stay and operate a ferry on the Upper Platte River. He was described as a "pioneer in every sense of the word. In the pioneer band he was a notable member, for he never was known to refuse to answer to the call of duty."

¹⁸¹ *The Restored Church*, pp. 260

¹⁸² Mary L. Gibby, *History of Mary B. Rich Linford*, pp. 1-2

Brigham Young had been warned by mountain-man Jim Bridger and others that the biggest threat of living in the Great Basin was the unpredictability of the weather. They raised doubts that the spring would come too late, there would be killing frosts in the summer and winter would come too soon. Brigham Young, in his journal, noted: "Bridger considered it imprudent to bring a large population into the Great Basin, until it was ascertained that grain could be raised; he said he would give \$1,000 for a bushel of corn raised in that basin."¹⁸³ If the pioneers could not successfully grow crops, it would make for a catastrophic turn of events. Additionally, the Saints had no way of knowing the type of welcome they would receive from the local Indian tribes.

Brigham Young was either the world's luckiest man or a prophet of God in making the statement that the Salt Lake Valley was the right place. Historians have commented on magnitude of this gamble to move more than 12,000 people to an uninhabited desert wilderness. Brigham Roberts made these observations on the decision to colonize the Great Basin:

To appreciate the heroism of this Latter-day Saint movement to the West, one must contemplate the chances taken by these companies which followed the Pioneers. It was late in the season when they started from the Elkhorn—the latter part of June—too late for them to put in crops that season even if they stopped far short of the Eastern base of the Rocky Mountains. They barely had provisions enough to last them eighteen months, and then if their first crop failed them in the new mountain home selected, starvation must follow, for they would be from eight to ten hundred miles from the nearest point where food could be obtained, and no swifter means of transportation than horse or ox teams. It was a bold undertaking, this moving over two thousand souls into an unknown country, and into the midst of tribes of savages of uncertain disposition, and of doubtful friendship. Had it not been for the assurance and support and protection of God, it would have been not only a bold but a reckless movement—the action of madmen. But as it was, the undertaking was a sublime evidence of their faith in God and their leaders.¹⁸⁴

The first several years in the Salt Lake Valley were difficult at best. It is likely, that the Rich families, like the other Saints, worked tirelessly and suffered from hunger. Consider the experience of Apostle Parley P. Pratt and his family who arrived late in 1847. Speaking of 1848, he notes:

We had to struggle against great difficulties in trying to mature a first crop. We had not only the difficulties and inexperience incidental to an unknown and untried climate, but also swarms of insects equal to the locusts of Egypt, and also a terrible drought, while we were entirely inexperienced in the art of irrigation; still we struggled on, trusting in God.

During this spring and summer my family and myself, in common with many of the camp, suffered much for want of food. This was the more severe on me and my family because we had lost nearly all our cows, and the few which were spared to us were dry, and, therefore, we had no milk to help out our provisions. I had ploughed and subdued land to the amount of near forty acres, and had cultivated the same in grain and vegetables. In this labor every woman and child in my family, so far as they were of sufficient age and strength, had joined to help me, and had toiled incessantly in the field, suffering from every hardship which

¹⁸³ *The Restored Church, pp 257*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid, pp 268*

human nature could well endure. Myself and some of them were compelled to go with bare feet for several months, reserving our Indian moccasins for extra occasions. We toiled hard and lived on a few greens and on thistle and other roots. We had sometimes a little flour and some cheese, and sometimes we were able to procure from our neighbors a little sour skimmed milk and buttermilk.

In this way we lived and raised our first crop in these valleys. And how great was our joy in partaking of the first fruits of our industry.¹⁸⁵

Like the Pratts, life for the Rich families was difficult. Leonard Arrington describes the challenges of the frontier:

During that first difficult winter the Rich family—except for Emeline, who spent the winter with her father's family—lived in the fort. They lived first in tents, then in two dirt-covered rooms, and finally in some log rooms built by Charles in the "north fort." Although the sturdily built log or adobe cabins were well able to withstand the winds of winter, their gently sloping roofs—constructed of poles, brush, and earth—failed to shed the spring rains, resulting in much discomfort to the occupants.¹⁸⁶

It was under these conditions that a second child was born to Eliza Ann. The baby, a daughter named Eliza Ann, lived for less than a year. Seeking to improve the quality of their lives, Charles C. Rich moved several of his families (including Eliza Ann and her family) frequently during their first ten years in the valley. First, they moved to the community at Big Cottonwood. There, another child was born to Eliza Ann on June 30, 1850, a girl named Francis. Later they moved to Farmington and finally settled in Centerville where they lived until 1864.

The Centerville home, located about twelve miles north of Salt Lake City was on sixty acres of prime farm land. It was built 1849-50 as a home for two of Charles wives--Eliza Ann and Sarah Jane. The home, which is now part of Pioneer State Park in Salt Lake City, was built with three rooms. The middle room was a common living area with a kitchen, while the other two rooms were separate quarters for the two families. Eliza Ann and her two daughters, Mary and Francis, lived on one side while Sarah Jane lived in the other end with her four children.

Mary lived in Centerville between the ages of four and eighteen. In a brief sketch of her life, Mary recalls her Centerville years: "We settled in Centerville, where I grew up and attended school and in 1858, went south with the move, when Johnson's Army entered the state. When the excitement was over, we returned in the fall of the same year."¹⁸⁷

These were happy years for Eliza Ann and her children. Eliza spun, dyed and wove cloth to help support them. They lived close to Joseph Rich, the father of Charles C. Rich and his two wives. Additionally, Mary and her sister were surrounded by half-brothers and half-sisters from the other wives so they were never alone.

¹⁸⁵ *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, pp 363

¹⁸⁶ *Charles C. Rich*, pp 126

¹⁸⁷ Mary B. Rich Linford, *Sketch of the Life of Mary B. Rich Linford*

During those years Mary received a good education in Centerville. This was put to good use when her father asked her to become Bear Lake's first school mistress. Mary noted that: "Then my father was called by President Young to help settle Bear Lake Valley. My mother's family accompanied him, arriving in Paris May 29, 1864. I taught school here in the summers of 1865 and 1866."¹⁸⁸ The school was attended by her young brothers and sisters who were children of the different wives of her father and other small children of the town as well. The love of reading and learning remained with her throughout her life.

One thing that was frequently missing from the Centerville home was her father, Charles C. Rich. With his calling as an Apostle in 1849, Rich became even more involved in the administration of the Church. Brigham Young valued Rich as both a colonizer and a missionary. As a result, he was often gone for years at a time from his Utah homes. For example, when Rich was called as leader of the San Bernardino, he asked his wives to decide where they wanted to reside. Three of his wives, including Eliza Ann, decided to stay in Utah, providing for themselves as best they could.

This meant that Mary did not often see her father. Perhaps to fill the void, she became very attached to her grandfather, Joseph Rich, who was always there. Interestingly, Mary must have known Joe Linford during this period but the four year age difference between them meant that they would have different friends and interests.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid

Chapter Nine

Paris, Idaho December 6, 1866

Charles C. Rich smiled as he performed the marriage ceremony. All marriages were cause for celebration in this remote Bear Lake Valley outpost, but this one touched the hearts of so many in the attendance and perhaps even more for Rich. For he was not only the presiding elder of the church authorized to perform the marriage, today he was also the father of the bride and the friend and mentor of the groom. This was the marriage of Joseph William Linford and Mary Bratton Rich.

The people who shaped the lives of Joe and Mary packed into the small home of the bride's mother to witness the nuptials. For Joe's mother, Maria Linford Rich, this wedding validated her faith to marry Joseph Rich as his second wife ten years earlier. The Lord had blessed her in unexpected ways for her life of sacrifice and obedience. This day was one of those blessings. She must have felt the presence of her late husband John, who as he lay dying on the cold plains of Wyoming said that he did not regret their decision to gather with the Saints to Utah if his boys could grow up and raise their families in Zion.

Mary's mother, Eliza Ann Graves Rich was thrilled because in this wedding she saw the fulfillment of a blessing given to her daughter Mary as a sickly infant in Nauvoo. The blessing promised her that she would live to gather with the saints, grow to womanhood, and become the mother of a large family. Eliza approved of the young man from England. She knew that her first-born daughter was marrying an honest, hard working man who was true to the church and his family.

Bursting with joy, no one was more pleased than Joseph Rich. As the grandfather of Mary (to whom he was particularly close) and as the step-father of Joe, no one knew the quality of the young couple better than he. He felt honored that it was to him that the young couple came to talk when they decided to get married. Joseph Rich passed away a few months later but everyone felt grateful that he lived to see the wedding.

For Joe and Mary, the marriage marked the beginning of a rich and joyful life. They would spend the rest of the lives in Bear Lake country, first in Paris and later in St. Charles, as they raised their large family. Little did they realize that when the Charles C. Rich party entered the Bear Lake Valley in 1864, they had finally arrived home for the rest of their lives after years of moving from place to place in order to settle Zion.

Chapter Ten

Paris, Idaho--1864 to 1885

Among the many descriptions of Brigham Young—both good and bad, one cannot be argued. Young has been called “perhaps the world’s greatest modern colonizer.” He dreamed of building an empire in the Rocky Mountains that would insulate the church from the outside influences that were sure to come.¹⁸⁹ From the earliest days after the Saints’ arrival in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, Young systematically sent out colonizing parties to stretch the boundaries of this empire from the parent colony in Salt Lake City to California and Nevada in the West, to Arizona in the South, to Idaho in the North and Colorado in the East.

He had a unique philosophy that a Mormon could make a living anywhere that an Indian could exist. During his thirty years in Utah more than 360 settlements were established under his direction. The Saints called to colonize these settlements felt they were building the Kingdom of God on earth. Or as one early settler of the Bear Lake Valley put it in his short diary, “The days are hot and nights cold, our desire is to build up the cities of Zion and by the help of the Lord we hope to accomplish it.”¹⁹⁰

Brigham Young felt a new urgency to settle outlying areas surrounding the Salt Lake Valley in 1862, when the U.S. Congress passed a new Homestead Act. Under the provisions of this law, the government offered new settlers 160 acres of land for homesteading for only a small filing fee. While this was incentive enough to prompt President Young to action, an executive order by President Abraham Lincoln really set the wheels in motion to colonize the Bear Lake Valley.

Coincident with the passage of the Homestead Act, President Abraham Lincoln had ordered the Third California Volunteers, comprising 750 and 1,500 men to establish a camp (Fort Douglas) on the east bench overlooking the Salt Lake Valley. These Union troops were instructed to prevent Indian hostilities and keep “an eye” on the Mormons. Their leader, Colonel Patrick Connor, was openly hostile towards the Mormons and their religion and he announced a policy of encouraging settlement of available areas by non-Mormons in order to overcome Mormon political influence. “My policy in this territory has been to invite hither a large Gentile and loyal population, sufficiently by peaceful means and through the ballot box to overwhelm the Mormons by mere force of numbers.” Knowing the existence of the beautiful unoccupied valley northeast of Cache Valley, Young and Rich thought it an opportune time for Mormons to possess it.¹⁹¹

While Charles C. Rich supported the need for colonization, that didn’t mean he wanted to lead the expedition. Rich attended a meeting of the Twelve and other church authorities in Logan in August, 1863 to discuss the matter. It was decided that a company of men would go to the Bear Lake Valley that fall. Prior to this meeting, Elder Ezra T. Benson told

¹⁸⁹ Russell R. Rich, *Land of Sky-Blue Water*, pp 1-2

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp 20

¹⁹¹ *Charles C. Rich*, pp 247-248

Brigham Young that Rich would like to lead the company. When Young asked Rich about it, he remarked, "that he did not feel like volunteering."¹⁹²

Despite arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, by 1864 Charles C. Rich had lived in Utah for only a total of six years. Church callings had kept him away from his new home. First, he helped colonize San Bernardino as part of the California Mission from 1850 to 1858. Later, he served in the European Mission Presidency from 1860 to 1862. During these periods, he lived away from most of his wives and children. Not surprisingly, Rich felt less than excited at the suggestion that he lead the party to colonize the Bear Lake Valley in 1863.

Knowing Rich's reservations, Brigham Young flexed his priesthood authority without directly assigning him to the calling. In the Logan meeting, Young stated his mind:

Now what I am about to say you will do well to keep to yourselves. We have it in our minds to settle Bear Lake Valley; I for one would like a settlement there. As yet I have said nothing to anyone but Brother Benson. Now if you will keep this matter to yourselves, nobody will know anything about it, but otherwise, it will be telegraphed to old Abe Lincoln by some of these (Army) officers, and then it will be made a reservation to prevent us getting it.

Then turning to Rich, Young repeated: "Brother Benson thought you would like to go there. I never had a feeling about it, but Brother Benson and me had a talk on the subject and he thought you would like to go." Rich replied, "So far as pulling up stakes and moving my entire family, I would rather not do it." Young countered, "I will tell you what I would do; I would rather have my family together." Rich tried once more, "Mine are all together now, except for my first wife." Apparently the exchange ended there, and Rich knew he would soon have the unpleasant task of uprooting his families once more.¹⁹³

The Colonization of the Bear Lake Valley

"Beyond the fact that the country was known to be in the high altitude and therefore very cold and subject to deep snows in winter, little else was known." Joseph Rich¹⁹⁴

"We are making a settlement in Bear Lake Valley; some one hundred families will be there this fall. Brother Charles C. Rich is the leader of the company; it is one of the best places in the mountains—we want to keep out the devils if possible; they have troops all about us laying their snares and traps." Heber C. Kimball¹⁹⁵

As illustrated by Joseph Rich and Heber C. Kimball, the Saints had limited knowledge about the Bear Lake Valley. However, the area had long been known by local Indian tribes, mountain men, fur trappers and early explorers. Fortunately, given the area's fierce winters, none of these groups thought this area was habitable for large groups of people dependent on agriculture.

¹⁹² Ibid, pp 249

¹⁹³ Ibid, pp 249

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, pp 250

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, pp 254

White-mountain men and trappers discovered Bear Lake as early as 1811. During the summers of 1827 and 1828, the mountain men held their annual rendezvous in the Bear Lake Valley near Round Valley. There they exchanged winter furs for food, guns, ammunition and supplies. U.S. Army Captain E. Bonneville who explored Bear Lake in 1833-34, noted the lake's abundant trout and other small fishes. The list of explorers and adventurers who traveled through the Bear Lake Valley reads like a who's who of the American West, including John C. Fremont, Kit Carson, Bill Sublett, Jedediah Smith and Jim Bridger. Later, in 1843, the Oregon Trail skirted the Bear Lake Valley (but never within sight of the lake) by going through present day Montpelier, Idaho.

By the end of the summer in 1863 Charles C. Rich yielded to the strong-willed Brigham Young and accepted the call to lead the colonizing party. Once in motion, Rich quickly found plenty of Saints who were excited by the prospect of free land and were willing to pull up stakes for a new start. In September, a small vanguard company of 32 men, a cart and two wagons left Franklin, Idaho for the Bear Lake Valley. A group of permanent settlers would follow later in the fall with a large group of Saints coming in the spring of 1864.

One of Rich's first priorities was to speak with the chiefs of the local Indian tribes. He first met with Chief Washakie of the Shoshones who roamed the Bear Lake area. Later, he met with Tighe, a Bannock Chief. He asked their permission for the saints to come and live there. "The Indians responded favorably, on the condition that the Mormons would agree to leave the southern end of the valley open as a camping ground. Washakie also wanted it understood that, when the whites succeeded in growing crops, Indians would expect to receive food when they visited the area."¹⁹⁶

The willingness of local Indian tribes to allow the Mormons to settle in their territory reflects the respect which Mormons accorded the Indians.

Rich's attitude toward Indians differed from that of the typical westward-moving pioneers. It was evident to the Mormon leadership that they were encroaching on Indian ancestral land and Rich instructed his followers to maintain the agreements between the Mormons and the Indians. Only once did Washakie treat the whites badly, and then only after the Mormons had moved into the south end of the valley in violation of the agreement. In retaliation, Washakie broke down the fences and let his horse feed on the new crops.¹⁹⁷

Traveling from Franklin, Idaho to the Bear Lake Valley was relatively easy. Leaving on September 15th, the party spent four days clearing the trail, building bridges and dug-ways, and constructing fords for those who would follow. After arriving in the valley, the party explored the valley and made preparations for the families who were to shortly follow. Rich made the decision to move the camp to the present site of Paris, Idaho. He also found time to send a detailed report to Brigham Young. In it, he described the valley as "sixty to seventy miles in length and ten to fifteen miles wide. The lake's he estimated as being

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, pp 253

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, pp 253

thirty miles long and eight miles wide and he noted, "the water is remarkably clear with a sweetish taste and is said to abound with fish of the finest quality"¹⁹⁸

Thirty families wintered in Bear Lake the first year of 1863. Fortunately, these Saints were blessed with a surprisingly light and open winter that may have created some unrealistic expectations for the pioneers to follow the next year.

The Rich Family Moves to Bear Lake

Charles C. Rich decided that his families would not make the move to Bear Lake until the spring of 1864. As he predicted, his families were reluctant to leave. The thought of leaving their increasingly comfortable and prosperous homes in Utah, along with the advantages of education and lessons for the children, made the move a difficult one. They considered the move as being "thrust out onto the frontier" once again.¹⁹⁹

On the positive side, for the first time since entering into polygamy, Rich would have his entire family together, including six wives and thirty children (some of the older children were already married). The move would also give the growing Rich family room to expand, with plenty of free land for the children and grandchildren.

The motivations of the family are well stated in the short history of Joseph Rich, the father of Charles C. Rich, by Zula Rich Cole. She states that:

In the fall of 1863 Charles answered a call to lead in settling Bear Lake Valley. His family had been somewhat scattered since coming to Utah, but in the spring he moved them all to Paris Idaho.

Though a feeble, old man of 78, Joseph wanted to go also for he felt that at last they could be together again and pioneering held no terrors for him.

Then there was another good reason for Charles, Joseph and others wanting to go. The free land was about gone and laws would shortly go into effect to prevent more from being taken, but this was still available. By Joseph going, besides what he had, his two stepsons, Joe and Amasa Linford, got good farms. The other two Linford boys wanted to go but George was called on a mission to England early that spring. James H. sold out and was all ready to go but Charles advised him not to on account of his tiny son, James H. being sick. This advice was ever after appreciated. They lived in Joseph's old home in Centerville for a time and ran the farm.

Joe Linford, then 22, went to Paris in May, 1864 to get things ready for the family and late that summer when Charles returned to Bear Lake, Joseph and his family went with him. All the Riches there lived rather close to each other. Like the others, Joseph had a small, dirt-roofed house with only the ground for a floor. The previous winter had been very mild, but this year cold Bear Lake did her very worst. Snow almost buried them. This was followed by roaring blizzards. Then came cold such as some of them had ever experienced before. Since no one was prepared for such a winter, all suffered greatly and many of their animals froze to death. Mary Ann Rich said of their first two years there "We nearly starved and

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, pp252

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, pp 254

froze to death. Joe and Amasa Linford slept in a wagon box all that first winter. They had indeed become seasoned pioneers.²⁰⁰

Even this account of the Riches' first winter in Bear Lake Valley is understated. In fact, the winter of 1864-65 was so harsh that it almost scuttled the colony before it was fully established. Warning signs of the unforgiving nature of the area's climate were evident as early as their first summer. Late frosts happened on July 5th and even later. The frosts stunted the corn and destroyed much of the spring wheat crop. What was left of the wheat crop had to be boiled to eat and even then its smell was described as deplorable. Making a bad situation worse, most of their potatoes rotted because the saints did not have sufficient time to dig cellars for storage.

Winter hit early and hard. Rich wrote President Young a letter in early December in which he stated "severe storms set in. The snow was three to six feet deep across the mountains."²⁰¹ This was particularly significant because the storms had cut off the Bear Lake Valley from nearby settlements and Salt Lake City. With the roads closed, no food supplies could get through and messengers could do so only by using snow shoes. When Rich wanted to attend General Conference in April, he had to snowshoe the forty miles from Paris to Franklin before he could travel to Salt Lake by horse and buggy.

Writing to Young again in January, Rich struck a note of anxiety concerning food supplies. Upon conducting a survey of the 1,100 inhabitants he noted a definite shortage of wheat, potatoes and other grains. His concern was as much for his own families as for the rest of the saints.

However difficult the situation was for the six Rich families, conditions were much worse for many of the others. Descriptions of the hardships suffered by the saints in Bear Lake sound hauntingly like some of the histories about hunger and suffering from the handcart companies in 1856.

Evan Greene had seven milk cows and a horse freeze to death. His daughter, Rhonda Greene Bullock, was expecting a baby but the snow was so deep it was impossible to get help when she lay in childbirth. Both she and her baby died on November 26th but it was impossible to dig graves through the snow and frozen ground. The bodies were kept frozen in the snow until they could be buried in the spring. A steer belonging to John Clifton fell through the ice and drowned. It was skinned and divided among the families. Although the meat was black, it tasted better than boiled wheat. As spring approached, the Cliftons had only one quart of flour left, so the children were kept in bed to conserve their strength. According to the Thomas Innes family, soup bones were passed from house to house as long as there was some flavor.²⁰²

Discontent among the saints grew as the winter stretched on. Reports of the previous year's mild winter had fooled many optimistic saints. Most were not prepared for hunger and death. Representatives from the small communities formed a committee to discuss the

²⁰⁰ *Pioneer Joseph Rich*, pp 14

²⁰¹ *Charles C. Rich*, pp 262

²⁰² *Ibid*, pp 263

situation with their leader, Charles C. Rich. Many had already decided to leave in the spring.

During the meeting, they discussed the situation in detail. Rich listened sympathetically. Finally, time came for him to respond. To this day, his remarks demonstrate the faithful obedience that exemplified the man. They also illustrate why President Brigham Young was so insistent that Charles C. Rich accept the calling to lead this settlement.

Brethren, in the fall of 1863, President Young called me into his office and said, "Brother Rich I want you to go up to the Bear Lake Valley and see if it can be opened for settlement; and if it can, I want that you should take a company there and settle it.

That was all I needed. It was a call. I came up here with a few brethren; we looked over the valley and although the valley was high, the snows heavy and frosts severe, there was plenty of water for irrigation purposes and plenty of fish in the lake and streams. So with a company I came here and settled with my family.

There have been many hardships. That I admit. And these we have shared together. But if you want to go somewhere else, that is your right and I do not want to deprive you of it. If you are of one mind to leave here, my blessing will go with you. But I must stay here, even if I stay alone. President Young called me here, and here I will remain till he releases me and gives me leave to go.²⁰³

Many saints did leave in the spring, but even more stayed. They faced continual challenges, everything from tensions with the Indians to poor crops and unpredictable weather. Those that stayed however, were eventually blessed. Many of these original settlers believed that the Lord would temper the weather to make a success of the colony. Brigham Young also promised the saints to make the Bear Lake colony a success stating that the Lord would bless the climate through their faith and prayers:

When you have your ground plowed in the fall, and sow a grain that will mature early, there will be no trouble in harvesting as good crops there as we do elsewhere in this country. The settlement of the country, accompanied as it is by the faith and prayers of the Saints and the blessings of the land by the Priesthood will produce a modification of the elements there, as they have produced a modification in all the valleys which we have settled.²⁰⁴

Mary Ann Phelps Rich, the third wife of Charles C. Rich, also believed that the climate had been moderated. Speaking of the saints who decided to stay in the Bear Lake Valley, she described frontier life in the new colony:

That is most of them did [stay] and they were never sorry for it, because the climate soon commenced to moderate. They built grist-mills and saw-mills and made ditches and put up fences, surveyed the town and laid it off, and commenced to build comfortable houses.

But it was several years before we got a good house. My husband had so much public work to do that he could not get better houses for us at that time. His motto was: "Church work before private." I put my rag carpet up over head to keep the dirt from coming down on us and tried to keep things as comfortable as possible, but could not do much.

²⁰³ Ibid, pp 264

²⁰⁴ Ibid, pp 272

We lived in our log cabins for several years, then our sons grew up and they built lime kilns and made brick and burnt them to help build houses for their mothers. With what means my husband could get together he managed, with the help of the boys, to put up brick houses and fix us up comfortable.²⁰⁵

Maintaining peaceful relations with the Indians remained a high priority for Rich and the saints. It is easy to forget that the Battle of Bear River had been fought just the year previous when Colonel Patrick Connor and his California Volunteers massacred nearly four hundred Shoshone and Bannock Indians on the Utah-Idaho border, not far from the Bear Lake Valley. Despite Rich's best efforts, tensions remained high. The Bear Lake settlers had to walk a fine line between showing the proper respect for the Indians and maintaining their own rights. The *Autobiography of Mary Ann Phelps* provides this description of the relationship between the Indians and Mormons.

The first few years after our arrival in Bear Lake the Shoshone and Bannock Indians would come in large companies and camp near us, demanding bread, beef, etc. For several years they came about twice a year, and we would have to get a man who could make them understand, to explain to them our right to live there. They thought we were intruding upon them, this being their hunting grounds. We had to furnish them with blankets, clothing, flour and meat. I generally took them several beefs each year to supply them. In this way we kept peace with them, and we never had any trouble with them. My husband knew how to manage them. Old Indian Chiefs will come to my home to this day and talk about the big Captain, meaning Mr. Rich, and say, "we eap like him"²⁰⁶

The Linfords in Bear Lake

Once again Joe Linford was doing what he enjoyed. Now in April 1864, Joe was 22 years old and driving an ox team bound for the Bear Lake Valley. Accompanied by Charles C. Rich they made their way to Franklin, Idaho and then into the valley. While Joe felt excited to be on the move again, in at least one respect he was disappointed. He had wanted to be part of the small vanguard party that Rich had led the previous fall to explore the valley. His skills as a frontiersman would have been greatly valued but at the time he was guiding a train back to the Salt Lake Valley as part of his calling to the "down and back" companies of 1863. When he arrived home in October, it was too late to make the trip. That didn't matter to Rich however, for it was now that he greatly needed his sons, like Joseph and John Rich and the Linford boys to make preparations for the Rich families soon to follow.

In the annals of the American West, the move of the Rich families from the Salt Lake Valley to the Bear Lake Valley in 1864 was virtually unprecedented in its size and scope. For Charles C. Rich had the daunting task of moving six wives, thirty children, one grandchild and his father with his two wives and two grown stepsons. Included in this party were Maria Linford Rich and two of her sons, Joseph and Amasa. If Rich was stretched with the responsibilities of taking care of his own family, the burden was multiplied many times over because he was also responsible for the economic and spiritual well-being of nearly a thousand other saints.

²⁰⁵ Mary Ann Phelps Rich, *Autobiography of Mary Ann Phelps Rich*, pp 37

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, pp 38

The Rich and Linford families arrived in June. Many of their cabins were already completed, while other structures were still under construction. Rich had located all his families in the same area— in fact, each of the six houses had a view of the other five. By modern-day standards the cabins were primitive and yet it was said by the pioneers that they were surprisingly comfortable. Each had three rooms with a fireplace and rock chimney. The roof had layers of willow branches and straw and was topped with a thick layer of sod. The ground was barren with a dirt floor. The walls were built up of un-hewn logs that were chinked with mud inside and out and covered with a coat of mud plaster.

Paris and surrounding communities were abuzz with activity. Everyone worked feverishly to prepare for winter, making ready their own property, as well as helping with communal projects. Joe kept busy with farm chores, building cabins and fences, digging irrigation ditches, and constructing communal infrastructure such as roads and schools. Women, especially, learned to be resourceful:

With no other resources to rely upon, the six wives provided for their families with what they could make themselves. They made clothes from wool which they carded, spun and finally knitted or wove into the finished product. From the Indian women some of the wives learned to tan hides and make durable leather clothing for cold winters. Their food came from their own gardens, fields and animals. Their bread often came from flour that they ground themselves. Their homes were filled with furniture made by the men and the lights consisted of candles that they made.²⁰⁷

All was not hard work however. One family history noted that “Joseph participated in all the inconveniences and hardships of pioneer life but plenty of pleasures as well. They danced and had amateur theatricals in the long winter evenings. They had sleigh rides and they did not forget their Sunday mornings.”²⁰⁸

One gets an idea of the talent and character of Joe Linford by an experience his oldest brother, James Henry Linford, recorded in his autobiography.

October 15, 1865, I started to Bear Lake Valley to bring back cattle and wagon that I loaned Joseph W. in the fall of 1864. He had come down to buy flour for the winter and to do some trading. His team consisted of two good ponies and I took along a small mule; he had a light wagon and it was loaded with 700 pounds of flour, our bedding and a few other things. Our first day’s journey was from Centerville to a mile or two north of Ogden. In the evening it began to rain and snow. After a hard day’s travel we camped the next night at Mantua in Brigham Canyon. Here we found the farmers wearing wooden clogs and heavy woolen socks, the snow was about four inches deep there and the farmers were threshing their grain by water power, and they seemed perfectly at home in the snow. The next day we found the road very muddy from Wellsville to Logan.

On nearing Mink Creek north of Franklin, we heard the noise of campers, my brother said that he believed the noise was made by Indians already camped. My hair began to raise a little, and I asked what he would do if they were Indians; he said we would camp among them, and you may fancy how I felt as I never had been used to Indians. As luck would have it they were settlers going to Bear Lake. At this good news my hair began to lay down.

²⁰⁷ *Charles C. Rich*, pp 261

²⁰⁸ *History of Jos. W. Linford*, pp 3

We started early next morning for the dug-way, thinking to be among the first to climb over the divide; but we found that three other outfits had camped at the foot of the dug-way and they were already moving their ox teams; their wagons were prairie schooners heavily loaded and they had to double teams to get up, using four to eight yoke of oxen to the wagon. This made the mud almost knee deep.

We began the ascent with our light load but could not make it, so had to carry our flour one sack at a time on the horses to the top. We then hitched the team to the empty wagon and again started to climb but the mud was so deep and sticky that we had to pull to one side amongst the brush; this road was quite sideling and to prevent the wagon from turning over, I stood on the upper side and leaned from it as far as I possibly could. In this way we succeeded reaching the top of the dug-way without accident.

Toward evening the storm cleared and it became very cold. We camped a mile or two from the dug-way in the timber; we found a fire left by other campers, gathered wood and made a good one. Having traveled all day without eating we were very hungry. We had been longer on the road than we expected, on account of bad roads, so we ran out of provisions and we were a long day's journey from our destination.

My brother was equal to the situation; he took a tin cup and melted snow, in the water he stirred flour until it became stiff enough to be rolled out into a long strip, he then took a stick and rolled the dough around it, and set it before a hot fire and baked it. I never ate bread that tasted sweeter.

We left a good fire when we went to bed. Presently we heard the noise of wagons traveling in the snow, the owners had camped over the divide in the open. The weather was so cold that they could not hold their oxen so had to come to the timber for shelter; you should have seen the men, women and children dance around our fire.

Next morning we continued our journey down the canyon over a very rough road, part of which was over swamps made passable by being corduroyed with small poles. In the evening we arrived at Mother's home cold and hungry. The experience gained on the trip well repaid me for my trouble.

I did not stay longer than one day in Bear Lake Valley as Brother Charles C. Rich was sending teams to Cache Valley for bread stuff, so I thought it would be a good chance for me to travel with them for company. We started about noon and came as far as Liberty and camped near a house occupied by Solomon Hale. Joseph came along with me to see me through the mountains to Cache Valley. Before leaving we filled my wagon box full of hay so there would be no need to turn the cattle out to feed.²⁰⁹

The Wedding of Joseph W. Linford and Mary Bratton Rich

By the time he was 24, Joe Linford had already lived what many would consider a full life, one that spanned continents, endured tragedy, served his fellow saints and refined his faith. He had now become a man in every sense of the word— a pioneer and frontiersman, a colonizer, a brother, and son. On December 6, 1866 he became a husband and everything changed.

Little is known about the romance of Joe and Mary except that they had known each other for years having grown up in close proximity in Centerville and Paris and that they shared common family members. They were also both close to Joseph Rich, who served as their

²⁰⁹ *Autobiography of James H. Linford*, pp 30-32

surrogate father while they grew up. At some point, their acquaintance blossomed into romance. One author, Ezra J. Poulsen, described the life of the Rich (and Linford) children and noted that they worked together, played together and worshiped together.

And what a healthy, lively brood they were! Joseph (Rich), who with the single exception of Sara Jane was the oldest, looked over and made them the subject of endless jokes. But he observed them too, with love and admiration. Charles, only two years younger than he, was now twenty one, and in love with Jane Stock, whose parents had moved to Fish Haven on the lake shore. John, now eighteen, loved horses and cattle, and spent much of his time riding, and looking after his father's livestock, as well as that of other settlers in the valley. He liked Bear Lake, and showed no desire to go back to the city, especially since he was in love with Deseret Collings, daughter of James Collings, one of the original settlers. Then, there was Mary, daughter of Eliza Ann, Charles Rich's second wife, now a grown young lady, in love with Joe Linford, and her sister Frances, age fourteen.²¹⁰

We do know that in the spring of 1866, when Mary was twenty, she accompanied her mother and sister, Frances, to Centerville and Salt Lake City to visit friends and relatives. While in Salt Lake City, she became very ill with what was known as mountain fever. For a period of time she struggled for her life, but her parents refused to give up hope. They remembered the blessing given to Mary as a very sick infant by the martyred William Anderson in Nauvoo. "He administered to the baby [Mary] and promised her that she would live to gather with the Saints, grow to womanhood, and become the mother of a large family."²¹¹ Once again, through faith and prayer and the administration of the elders, Mary's life was spared. She was able to return home to Bear Lake in the fall of the year. Perhaps her absence and the health scare prompted Joe Linford to action in making an engagement with her.

One family history does make a comment about their engagement. It shows that sometimes a girl's father, even if he is an Apostle of the Lord, can be wrong in his assessment of a daughter's future.

Mary taught school in Paris in the summers of 1865 and 1866. It was during this time that she fell in love with Joseph William Linford. When he asked her father for Mary's hand in marriage Apostle Rich rather hesitated. He told Joseph that Mary had always been a delicate girl and was not very strong, and that he doubted if she would ever be able to have any children. However he gave his consent and they were married. Although Mary was always frail and only weighed about 90 lbs. they became parents of nine children.²¹²

As already noted, Joseph and Mary were married by her father, Charles C. Rich in a civil ceremony on December 6, 1866 in Paris, Idaho. They were later sealed for eternity in the Salt Lake Endowment House on October 5, 1869.

With his marriage to Mary Bratton Rich, Joseph entered a new phase of his life, one that lasted for his remaining 47 years. Priorities changed. Although the young couple still needed to help provide for the extended Rich and Linford families, they now focused on starting their own family. Joseph and Mary became first and foremost devoted parents to a

²¹⁰ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 267-268

²¹¹ Mary L. Gibby, *History of Mary B. Rich Linford*, pp 1

²¹² Iola Linford Stocking, *History of Mary Bratton Rich Linford*

family that eventually grew to nine children. Making ends meet was a full-time job for both parents.

Joe changed with the additional responsibilities that come with being a husband and father. He was no longer known as Joe Linford, but now addressed as Joseph Linford. He grew a beard that was common with the men of his era and never again shaved it off. And after years of continual moving, Joseph and Mary lived the rest of their lives in Bear Lake County, Idaho. They never moved more than 10 miles from their original homes in Paris.

Starting Out Life Together in Paris, Idaho

Joseph and Mary lived in Paris close to their respective families for the first 19 years of their marriage. We know that as an early settler Joseph received two allotments of land--one within Paris for his residence and a second outside the settlement for his farm--because the Mormon system of colonization was used in Bear Lake. Under this system, Brigham Young encouraged the Saints to live together in towns on small acreages (usually one and one-fourth acre lots) and to commute to their farms located outside the settlements. For farming land, the land nearest the settlements was divided up into five-acre lots; the land next farthest out into ten acre lots, and that still further out was divided into twenty acre lots. Beyond this was plenty of meadow and hay land that was appropriated in one way or another. In order to ensure fairness, settlers received both their city lots and their farms through drawing lots.²¹³

Much of what we know about their early years together comes from life sketches written by their children. For example, Eliza Denio describes how they set up their household:

When they began housekeeping they did not go to a large furniture store and buy several hundred dollars worth of furniture, as young people do now-a-days, but they had two chairs, one in which the husband had woven a rawhide seat, a bed, a large box for a table, a box for a cupboard, a fireplace and one room in which to live. But they had that which will make any home happy-- a devoted love for each other, and a knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.²¹⁴

Joseph eked out a living for his family doing whatever he could to provide food and earn much needed money. Even though Joseph was an experienced farmer, he had never encountered severe conditions that came with the 6,000 feet of elevation that came with his new home. Like other Mormon farmers in the Bear Valley, his primary crops were grains such as wheat, oats, barley, hay and corn. In his excellent book, *Linford Family Heritage*, Golden C. Linford detailed the difficulties of growing crops:

The crops in the valley were fairly good in 1866, the year Joseph and Mary were married, but the next summer was a disastrous one. The three enemies of good crops in Bear Lake were the frosts, the grasshoppers, and the ground squirrels. Minute books from the various wards make frequent references to crop conditions during those early years, referring to damage being done by the above-mentioned plagues. Some years the grasshoppers and crickets were so numerous they caused near crop failures. If that was not enough, frosts

²¹³ *Land of Sky-blue Water*, pp 89

²¹⁴ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 269

often occurred to damage and reduce yields in gardens and crops. Squirrels always were present and sometimes they took a severe toll when in great numbers.²¹⁵

Living in the Bear Lake Valley not only took a lot of work, but it also required a sense of humor. In one entry of a minute book of a Stake Priesthood meeting, the following report was made assessing the outlook for that year's crops:

Although the hoppers took about one-third of the grain and a killing frost destroyed two-thirds more a week ago, still the prospect now is fair for a half crop. With all the disadvantages of the season, I think there will be more grain grown in this valley this year than any previous season. Oats and barley are particularly good. Our corn crop is nothing to brag on, though superior to former years.²¹⁶

Undoubtedly, Mary must have grown a vegetable garden on their city lot to supplement the farm. Good gardens were not hard to grow if they could withstand the late and early freezes. Primarily they grew potatoes and carrots, especially because they stored well during the winter in root cellars. They also cultivated other vegetables such as tomatoes, pumpkins, squash, peas, cabbage, cucumbers, onions and string beans.

While growing crops may have been discouraging, the Saints quickly discovered that Bear Lake's abundant areas for grazing made it possible to raise herds of beef for markets in Idaho, Utah, Wyoming and Montana. One author notes that: "With the cash received from this source they could buy their flour deficit in Cache Valley and haul it over the mountains. It also furnished them with proceeds to buy many other badly needed goods."²¹⁷

For Joseph and Mary farming was not sufficient to meet the family's needs. Joseph supplemented his income in other ways. Some of his time was spent hunting because of the plentiful wild game. Deer, elk, antelope, ducks, geese and fish could be found in abundance. In the winters, Joseph would often travel to the mountains for firewood and logs. Still he looked for other ways to get ahead. His daughter notes "During the early years of his married life he with his brother Amasa and two other men Chris Wallentine and Charlie Oakey, bought a threshing machine with which they threshed grain for the farmers of Paris and surrounding towns."²¹⁸

Raising A Family in Zion

Before discussing the children of Joseph and Maria Linford, it is necessary to understand the importance of families in Mormon theology. According to Bruce R. McConkie in *Mormon Doctrine*, the family is the basic unit of the Church and of society:

Among the saints the family is the basic unit of the Church and of society, and its needs and preservation in righteousness take precedence over all other things. True family organization always consists of a husband and wife who have entered into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage; and if the couple so united are blessed with children, they too become members of the family. Eternal families have their beginning in celestial

²¹⁵ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 270-271

²¹⁶ *Land of Sky-Blue Waters*, pp 71

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp 72

²¹⁸ *History of Joseph W. Linford*, pp. 4

marriage here in mortality. Faithful members of them continue in the family unit in eternity, in the highest heaven of the celestial world, where they have eternal increase.²¹⁹

Little wonder then, that both Joseph and Mary took their marriage seriously and looked to start a family (and a large one) as quickly as possible. If Mary's father worried that his daughter's health would prevent her from having children, time soon proved him wrong. Both Mary and Joseph had great faith in the blessing that she received in Nauvoo as an infant. Up to this point, the blessing had proved true—first she had recovered from her illness and then she was healthy enough to join the Saints and go to Utah. Now they both exercised their faith to fulfill the promise that she would be the mother of a large family.

There must have been great joy with the birth of their first child, a boy, Joseph W. Linford Jr. born in 1867. The baby was healthy. This explains why Joseph and Mary Linford, although married civilly in 1865, were later sealed to one another, along with their first child Joseph, in the Salt Lake Endowment House in 1869. After this sealing, all of their other children were born in the covenant.

Soon seven more children would follow at regular two to three year intervals while Joseph and Mary lived in Paris. It is interesting to follow these newborns and the names given to them to honor members of the family. Eliza, named after her grandmother Rich, was the first daughter, and she was born in 1870. John Charles, most likely named after Joseph's father John Linford and Mary's father Charles C. Rich, was born in 1872. James, named after his uncle James Henry, was born in 1875. George Christian—Chris—named after Joseph's brother, was born in 1875. Phoebe followed in 1880. Mary—Mamie—was named after her mother and was born in 1882. The last child born in Paris was Amasa Rich Linford, honoring his uncle Amasa and the Rich family, born in 1885. Frances Leona was later born in 1888 after they moved to St. Charles.

144 years have passed between the wedding of Joseph and Mary in 1865 and the writing of this history in 2010 and it is instructive to learn how this young couple successfully raised a large family. How did the Linford family with a father and mother, nine children and a mother-in-law create a home that by all accounts offered an environment of security and happiness?

Histories of the family give us glimpses of their every-day life. Clearly, the abundance of material goods wasn't necessary for a contented home. We know that the Linford's means were limited and that even putting food on the table was at times difficult. There were no hospitals and the children were born at home with the help of midwives. We know that their home by modern standards was very small with few rooms and even less privacy. They had no indoor plumbing, or any of the modern-day conveniences that we take for granted—no electricity, no telephones, no water heaters, no refrigerators and no furnaces. Transportation was limited to horse and carriages—no mini-vans or Suburbans to carry the entire family! And yet, they seemed to get along just fine. Surely, there are some lessons here for their descendants.

²¹⁹ Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp 273

One thing that the Linford household had in abundance was a commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Both Joseph and Mary had quiet, strong testimonies and served in the Church. Not surprisingly, Joseph, like his father before him, preferred to serve in the background without a spotlight. Of his ordinations and callings in the Church, *Linford Family Heritage* says simply, “Joseph was ordained an elder in the Church on November 7, 1863 by Dr. Sprague; ordained a seventy May 11, 1884, by Joseph F. Smith; [and] ordained a high priest May 31, 1908, by W.W. Richards. He was a ward teacher for many years, in fact until the day of his death”²²⁰

In biographical sketches of their parents, many of the children mention the commitment of Joseph and Mary to the gospel. For example, Leona stated: “Father was very devoted to the Church. He never did allow any of us to say anything but the very best about any of the Church authorities. He always said when you began to complain of the authorities you were on the road to apostasy.”²²¹ Mary remembered: “Joseph was a kind and loving father who made companions of his children. In the long winter evenings he and his family would gather around the table and he would read aloud some interesting book. In this way the Bible and Book of Mormon were read, as well as other good books which were interesting and instructive.”²²²

When asked to sum up her married life, Mary Linford was very succinct but nevertheless showed justifiable pride in the faithfulness of her children to the gospel of Jesus Christ:

I was married to Jos. W. Linford, December 6, 1866 and became the mother of nine children— Jos. W., Eliza M., John C., James W., George C., Phebe A., Mary E., Amasa R., and Francis L. My children were all married in the temple for which I am very thankful. Two of my sons have filled foreign missions and all are active members in the church.²²³

The Last Years of Maria Bentley Christian Linford Rich

Maria Linford Rich accompanied her husband, Joseph Rich, her sons and the families of Charles C. Rich to the Bear Lake Valley in 1864. While this was difficult enough, Maria soon had a new challenge to face— she would shortly become the primary caretaker for both her husband and sister-wife whose health had failed in the harsh Bear Lake climate. But once again, the small woman from England who had faced so many difficulties, was more than equal to the task.

Joseph and the [Linford] boys made every effort to make things more comfortable before the next winter. He must have worked too hard for in 1865 he had a paralytic stroke which left him entirely helpless. His wife, Elizabeth, who was 75 could get around a little but was not able to wait on herself. Maria and the boys truly had their hands full, but Charles’s family helped them out. Charles’s wife, Mary Ann, who spent much time there said how pleased Father Rich was to have them come and he was happy to have her give the needed help in caring for him.²²⁴

²²⁰ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 278

²²¹ *Ibid*, pp 279

²²² *History of Jos. W. Linford*, pp 4

²²³ Mary B. Rich Linford, *The Biographical Sketch of Mary B. Rich Linford*

²²⁴ *History of Pioneer Joseph Rich*, pp 15

Shortly after Joseph and Mary's wedding, Joseph Rich passed away on July 23, 1866. Charles C. Rich divided all of his father's property between his two wives. Elizabeth moved to her son's home in Utah. Joseph and his new bride invited Maria to live with them. She lived with them for the next 18 years and witnessed the births of seven of their nine children. She was greatly loved by her grandchildren who had many fond memories of her. Here are the recollections of Eliza Denio:

As grandmother lived with us most of the time since my earliest recollection until a year previous to her death, I believe I was really better acquainted with her than most of her grandchildren. She seemed just as near to me and just as much a part of the family as my parents. I used to sleep with her; and I loved to sit in her room and hear her related stories of her life. I must have wearied her with my questions. I was an inquisitive youngster and wanted to know all about her early life in England.²²⁵

Denio continues:

She was very active in church duties, being president of the Relief Society in Paris and afterwards was for many years counselor to the Stake Relief Society President, Sister Lindsay. She aided in getting the Primary Association organized and did much to encourage and help it along.

I was very proud of grandmother and loved to have her visit the Primary with me. I thought I was much more fortunate than the other children who did not have such a wonderful grandmother.

She was extremely dignified and lady-like, and very particular about her personal appearance.

She continued to live with us until the early summer of 1884, when in compliance with her request father took her to Ogden to visit her sons and their families. I went with them. We put grandmother's rocking chair, well padded with pillows in the covered wagon and made her as comfortable as possible for the journey. Uncle Amasa also went along; and when we got to Ogden Uncle James came from Kaysville to see his mother, so she had her four sons together for the first time in many years, and she was happy.

The following summer she wanted to come home and we went after her the last of September. We found her very ill and on the second day of October, 1885 she passed away and was buried in North Ogden Cemetery.²²⁶

In death, Apostle George Albert Smith, who later was President of the Church, gave Maria a stirring tribute by as he dedicated the marker at her grave. His words are as applicable to her descendants today as they were over 100 years ago.

We meet here on this sacred spot to do honor to this dear sister, Maria Bentley Christian Linford Rich. Keep her name in full in your records. She was filled with love, sacrifices, and devotion to family and church and great hardships endured for them. She never lost her faith as long as she lived.

She married after reaching the valley in order to have a home for her boys. She was happy to be the wife of Brother Joseph Rich, father of Apostle Charles Rich. She had seen in a dream that her departed husband, John Linford, was pleased with her. I knew the Rich family and can imagine the love father Joseph Rich had for the Linford boys, which he called his own. This dear sister cared for Brother Joseph Rich as he did for her and the two

²²⁵ *A Sketch of the Life of Maria Christian Linford*

²²⁶ *A Sketch of the Life of Maria Christian Linford*

younger boys. My soul is stirred when I see all these younger generations. Will you live true to the faith of your ancestors? There is royal blood in your veins. Do strive to be worthy of all the sacrifices your ancestors have made for youí .

I congratulate you, everyone, on your heritage. You will receive the same blessings as your worthy ancestors, but only if you keep the commandments of the Lord as they did. The woman, Maria, and her husband will be here and happy when they meet you in the resurrection. This will be right here on this earth, and Jesus Christ will be our King. Honor her name.²²⁷

The Last Years of Charles C. and Eliza Ann Graves Rich

In many ways, perhaps because Eliza Ann had the smallest family, she seems to be the forgotten wife of Charles C. Rich. And yet, we know that she was a noble woman, one who sacrificed and endured hardships, and one who seldom complained. She had cause to complain about the move from Centerville to Bear Lake because of her fragile health. But in her desire to reunite with Charles and the other families, she said nothing of her suffering, even though the harsh climate of Bear Lake only served to further weaken her.

Charles' other wives and children remember Eliza as being a kind and gentle woman. They loved her for her willingness to help others. She not only used her skills as a seamstress to sew clothes for the Rich families, but also to prepare burial clothes for the deceased in the community. When the first Relief Society was organized in Bear Lake, she was called as first counselor.

After living in Paris for ten years, Eliza Ann went to live with her daughter Frances in Cache County, Utah. She lived there until her death on June 2nd, 1879— one day before her sixty-eighth birthday. Eliza Ann was the only wife of Charles Rich to precede him in death.

For 16 years, Charles Rich was consumed with the colonization of the Bear Lake Valley. As if this wasn't enough, he also had demands placed on him as an Apostle of the Church and a member of the Utah State Legislature. Twice a year, he would travel to Salt Lake City for the April and October general conferences. Arriving home from the general conference in October 1880, Rich suffered a stroke.

After returning to Paris from the conference in October 1880 he suffered a paralyzing stroke, the first in a series that lasted for more than three years. The attack occurred while he was dressing for a meeting and paralyzed his left side, although he was still able to move his right arm and leg. His words became slurred, and he almost completely lost his ability to speak. The six-foot-or-more giant of a man was temporarily down, but he fought back with a tenacious desire to continue his work. Later he said, "I did not know if I would live long, I felt so badly, although I think it would have been all right with me, for I had no fears of death."²²⁸

For the next three years, Rich suffered a series of debilitating strokes, each worsening his condition. For a while, he sought care in Logan and Salt Lake City, but eventually he was returned to his home in Paris. He spent much of this time in bed, with care being given by his wives. Finally, on November 17, 1883, Charles C. Rich passed away. Most of the

²²⁷ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 231-233

²²⁸ *Charles C. Rich*, pp. 309-311

members of his family were present. The next day would have been the twentieth anniversary of his arrival in Bear Lake Valley.²²⁹

Many words have been written about the greatness of Charles C. Rich. There is no more succinct tribute to this man than the monument to Charles that was dedicated on the Paris Tabernacle grounds in 1937. The monument reads:

*In honor of Charles Coulson Rich
Pioneer builder of the West
Major-General of the Nauvoo Legion
Alderman of the City of Nauvoo in the time of Joseph Smith
Pioneer of Utah 1847
Colonizer of Bear Lake Valley 1863 where he lived and died
Husband of six wives and father of fifty children
Friend of the Indians, humanitarian
Apostle of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 35 years
One of God's noblemen²³⁰*

²²⁹ Ibid, pp. 318

²³⁰ *Monument to Charles C. Rich*, Paris Tabernacle, Paris, Idaho

Chapter Eleven

St. Charles, Idahoô March 30, 1912

Seventieth Anniversary of Jos W. Linford

Saturday, March 30th, was the 70th anniversary of the birth of Hon. Jos. W. Linford, our County Commissioner from the first district, and was celebrated at his home in St. Charles by his sons and daughters and their families, coming from far and near and partaking of a beautiful repast at the old home.

With other splendid edibles, there was a smoking English plumb pudding placed directly in front of Mr. Linford, which he served his children in good old English style.

Mr. Linford was born in England 70 years ago, coming to America with his parents when a small boy. He crossed the plains in the celebrated handcart company that endured such hardships, and finally reached Salt Lake City in early winter often leaving a large portion of their numbers by the way side. Mr. Linford's father was one of the many whose grave is unknown, having died on the plains from exposure.

The children presented their father a gold watch in commemoration of the occasion.

Paris Post newspaper article acknowledging the 70th Birthday of Joseph W. Linford on April 5, 1912.²³¹

Days after his 70th birthday, Joseph and Mary sat on their front porch and reflected on the events of the last several days. Joseph had not wanted a big fuss made over his 70th birthday but secretly he was touched that his family cared enough to come back to Bear Lake country for the party. He was always thrilled when the family got togetherí he and Mary loved seeing their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Joseph felt that this was the closest thing to heaven on earth.

Joy is a good word to describe Joseph's feelings. As he and Mary reminisced, they couldn't help but feel that they had been blessed by the Lord. Although they had tragically lost their daughter Phoebe to a mysterious illness and all of their parents were now gone, they knew that they would be together with them again. They had loved living in St. Charles, first at the farm on the shores of Bear Lake and now in the city. Both places had been perfect homes for their family as they grew up and moved out. Joseph was keeping busy in his retirement as a County Commissioner which was an unexpected honor. But most of all, as they aged, Joseph and Mary had grown even closer together in their love. Yes, the Lord had truly blessed them.

²³¹ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 278

Chapter Twelve

St. Charles, Idaho--1885 to 1931

By 1885 Joseph and Mary had reached middle-age. Life was filled with endless chores, raising children, family obligations and fulfilling Church and civic callings. Joseph was now 43 years old and Mary was 39. Their eight children, all living at home ranged in ages from 18 to a newborn boy named Amasa Rich Linford born in January.

Perhaps the biggest change in their lives was that they no longer had the responsibility of caring for their aging parents. Mary's mother had passed away in 1879 and her father followed in 1883. Joseph's mother had lived with them through 1884, when she went to live with another son. There, she became ill and passed away in October 1885.

Suddenly, the obligation to continue living in Paris to be close to the Rich and Linford families vanished. They were free to move to a home that better suited their needs. They purchased a farm on the shores of Bear Lake near St. Charles, which was close to the farm of Joseph's brother Amasa. Constantly together, the brothers' families grew close. .

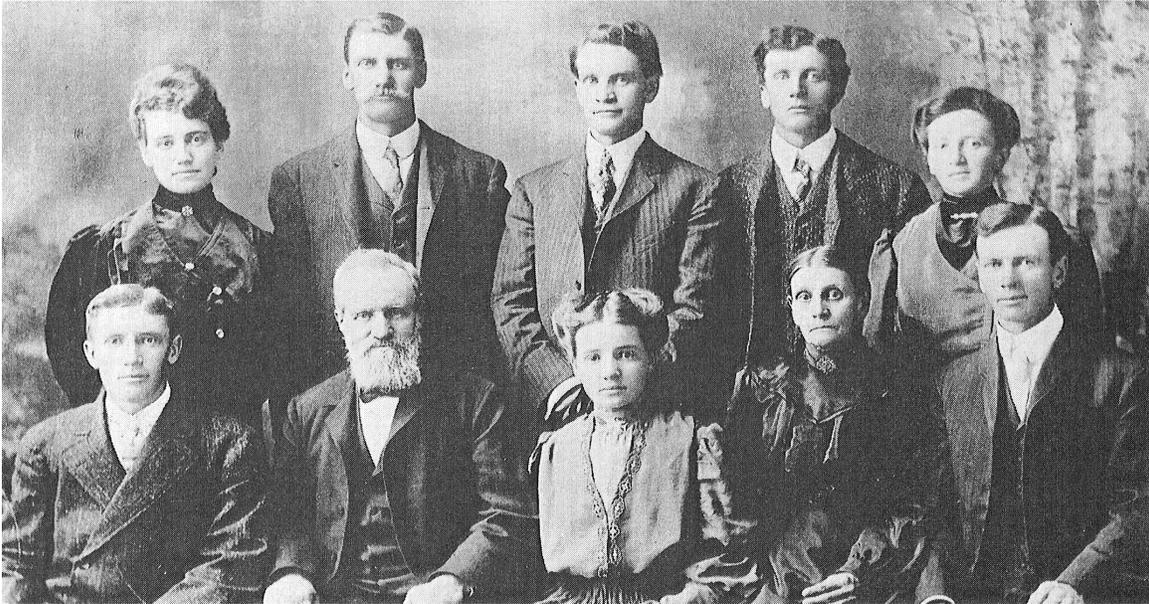
In a life sketch of Joseph, daughter Eliza tells of the move to St. Charles where her parents had purchased a farm. She shares some memories of her childhood, growing up at Bear Lake.

In the spring of 1885, he moved with his family to St. Charles, a town eight miles south of Paris, where he bought a farm on the shores of the beautiful Bear Lake shore, which he and his boys worked very successfully. Life was very happy indeed for the Linford family at this time. Their home was facing the lake, with green fields and meadows between. Nothing could be more beautiful than the sunrise on the lake or the moon shining on the placid water. The house was roomy and comfortable with a cozy porch to sit on in the long summer afternoons. Though Joseph and the boys worked hard at farming there was time for swimming and boat riding. They possessed a gill net which they would set in the lake in the evening and collect the fish in the morning, large beautiful lake trout and suckers. Wild game was plentiful and the boys would hunt sage hens and prairie chickens on the hills bordering the farm on the West. They also shot many wild ducks in the ponds by the lake. Wild berries grew on the low foothills and the boys and girls loved to gather them. In the winters when the deep snow was crusted on the hills they would pull their hand sleighs up the hill and have fun coasting down. An Uncle's family lived very close and the children of the two families were inseparable companions. School days were happy too. As they were two miles from town they drove to school in the winter, the children of the two families piling in the long sleigh. How they did enjoy these drives. Their team was covered with sleigh bells, and the school kids all along the way would run to catch on when they heard the bells coming. Yes, life at this time held very many pleasures for the family.

Joseph was a kind and loving father who made companions of his children. In the long winter evenings he and his family would gather around the table and he would read aloud some interesting book. In this way the Bible and Book of Mormon were read, as well as other good books which were interesting and instructive. He played ball and outdoor sports with his children; and he and their mother made home the dearest spot on earth to them to which they could bring their friends and be assured that they would receive a cordial welcome. He taught his children the principles of the Gospel and encouraged them in doing their duties in the ward. He was never known to criticize an authority of

the Church in the presence of his children. He was honest and upright in all his dealings, and was honored and respected by all who knew him.²³²

Three years after moving to St. Charles, Mary gave birth in 1888 to her ninth and final child, a girl named Frances Leona. Amazingly, given the scarcity of doctors and the distance to the nearest hospital, all of the Linford children were born healthy. No mention is made of any health problems within the family.



The family of Joseph and Mary Linford (date of photo between 1905 and 1910). Seated from left to right: Amasa, Joseph W. Sr., Leona, Mary and Charles; standing Mary (Mamie), Joseph W. Jr., James, George & Chris, and Eliza.

The Linfords also weathered some dark days. Perhaps the darkest came with the death of 12 year-old Phoebe, who was Joseph and Mary's fifth child and second daughter. Phoebe's death is described in a life sketch of her sister Mary & Mamie Linford Gibby by her daughter:

The children loved each other and their dearest friends were each other. Phoebe, two years older than Mamie, played and slept together. But one fatal day, the 4th of August 1892, Phoebe died quite suddenly after suffering great pain.

Uncle Joe told me that mysterious malady they called & consumption must have been appendicitis as that is what it was called then. It came suddenly, painfully and no one could save her. However, Grandma insisted, & I should never have allowed her to go swimming in that cold lake the day before she died. That is what did it. To her the & Bear Lake Monster was the lake itself from then on, and she would try to keep me from entering its beckoning waters while visiting her and Uncle Joe and Aunt Esther.²³³

While the death of Phoebe was difficult, the children speak of their youth in an almost idyllic fashion. It would be easy to be skeptical about her memories of growing up except

²³² *History of Jos. W. Linford*, pp 4

²³³ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 282-283

that they seem to be shared by all of the other children. For example, here is a short biographical sketch of Joseph Linford written by his daughter Leona.

Joseph W. Linford was a rather dignified Englishman. He was quite particular what kind of language his family used. We must use no slang or swear wordsí .Father seldom lost his temper, but we all knew that when he told us to do something we were supposed to do it without argument.

Father used to like to play games with his family. We always had some outdoor games. He was also a good farmer and gardener. We always had a good orchard and nice vegetable gardení Father was a man everybody had great respect for, and his family loved him dearly.²³⁴

Amasa Rich Linford, my grandfather, was their youngest son, and shared these recollections:

The old home was a happy one, even though we had no automobiles nor electric lights or telephones for many years. I remember when the first auto went past the place. It was quite a novelty.

We would always have to drive a team whenever we went to church or entertainments or the store.

Father and mother were good, honest, honorable, hard-working people and had the love and respect of all who knew them. They were very close to their family and any of us felt free to talk over any problem we had with them or ask advice. They had a sense of humor and we had a lot of fun together.

Father was short. I imagine about five feet six inches tall and rather stocky. I think he must have started wearing a beard soon after he was married. It seems to have been the custom in those days. I never saw him without it. Mother was short too and slender. I think she never weighed over ninety pounds. But she was tough. I remember when she had her teeth pulled, she sat down and I think it was twenty-one out without taking a thing to deaden the pain.²³⁵

Amasa was once asked about the parenting style of his parents, specifically if his father was a stern disciplinarian. His response is very telling about his parents: òWeæd get around and tell jokes and stories and laugh in the evenings and father enjoyed having the family be there. He was never sternô nobody ever hated to see him come around-- everyone liked to be in his company.ö When asked which of his parents was the disciplinarian in the home, Amasa laughed and replied, òOh, we didnøt have one. Weæd talk things over and theyæd tell us what they wanted us to do, my parents would, and we just did it, we didnøt think of anything else.ö²³⁶

Mary Linford was fondly remembered by her children and her nephews and nieces as well. Her niece, Mary Collins Anderson recalls happy memories of her aunt.

²³⁴ Ibid, pp 279

²³⁵ Ibid, pp280

²³⁶ Amasa Merrill Linford, *Interview with Amasa Rich Linford—January 17, 1967*

She was a tiny woman like her mother. Dear Auntie, as we lovingly called her, had those piercing black eyes with a sparkling crinkle in the corner of them. I am her namesake. We loved her as we loved our own mother!

Auntie was a good housekeeper: her home was always in order and she always had a clean apron to put on in the afternoon when her work was done. I don't believe her hands were ever idle. I remember as a young girl, watching her mend and sew. I was always interested in her handbag because she always had peppermint, and candy was a mighty scarce article in those days.

Auntie should have lived in this age, for she loved a fast ride. She wanted a good fast horse when she went anywhere. Once when Uncle Joseph hitched up a frisky team to take Auntie from the farm south of St. Charles to town to do her shopping, the team ran away. Down the road they dashed, and Uncle Joseph had all he could do to keep them on the road, headed for town. Instead of Auntie's being frightened, she enjoyed the ride. Her only regret was that some of her eggs were broken.

She enjoyed a good joke, even at her own expense. She loved to whistle. In her day it was considered unlady-like to whistle. She said once when she was a girl, whistling to herself, she looked up and saw her father coming up the walk. He came in, and looking around, asked, "Is one of the boys here?" Grandmother replied, "No." He smiled and said, "Why, I thought I heard one of them whistling."

Auntie was fearless: she was not afraid to face anything or anybody, even though she was so tiny. At one time, when Uncle Joseph was away from home working, she heard a disturbance in the corral among the livestock. She lighted her lantern, and regardless of what might be, went out to see.²³⁷

One of Joseph and Mary's grandchildren, Louise Gibby Facer, interviewed her mother Mary about life in St. Charles. Her recollection of the interview gives a glimpse of life in the Linford home and notes how her grandmother loved to read, a gift that has been passed on to her descendants.

Here the children enjoyed the summers working on the farm and cooling off in the lovely Bear Lake. The winters found the family enjoying "family night" every evening. My grandmother [Mary Linford] told us she would sit and mend or sew while "father" [Joseph Linford] read to the children from the precious books, some of which his father had brought over by handcart. Mentioned were James Fenimore Cooper, two by Charles Dickens, the Holy Bible and a precious first edition of the Book of Mormon. Mary [the daughter of Joseph and Mary] told me that at the time of her mother's death at 84, she was reading Ben Hur and without glasses. And so it was, I suppose, instilled in all the children the love of reading.²³⁸

The Passing of Joseph W. Linford

As the children grew older, married and moved out, Joseph and Mary decided in 1909 that the farm was too big of a burden and decided to "retire" to a smaller home in St. Charles. The farm had been a good home for their family and they were happy to turn it over to some of their boys. Mary Linford Gibby speaks fondly of the 24 years that the Linfords lived there in her life sketch of her mother:

²³⁷ Mary Collins Anderson, *Sketch of Mary Bratton Rich Linford*

²³⁸ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 282

Many happy years were spent by the family in this home. The children grew up and married. Two of the boys filled foreign missions. All received fairly good educations and were active in Church work. In the spring of 1909, Mary and her husband turned the farm over to some of their boys and moved into town, St. Charles. Here they lived happily till the spring of 1914.²³⁹

Joseph enjoyed good health into his seventies, so his death came as a surprise. He passed away unexpectedly due to heart trouble on March 21, 1914 at the age of 72. Joseph left behind his wife and eight children. Surely, one of the joys in his life was his large and growing family. At the time of Joseph's death in 1914, the family had grown to include 24 living grandchildren. Eventually that number would increase to 41.

Like his father, Joseph was a man of few words. He never wrote a book or even left behind a journal to describe his life and testimony. He never held a high Church office. More important though, his wife and children loved him. He was respected by all those who knew him. He was a hard worker and honest. He was a man of his word. He had a testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That testimony is his most important legacy. His faithfulness justified the sacrifice of the life of his father John Linford. Surely, Joseph's life had been influenced by the hope and prayer of his father that his boys would grow up and raise their families in Zion. And that is exactly what Joseph W. Linford did. In doing so, he blessed the lives of his posterity for generations to come.

Of his funeral, the ward minutes of his funeral follows:

Funeral Services held March 24th 1914 over the remains of Bro. J.W. Linford who passed away March 21st.

Bishop Ola Transtrum presiding.

Present on stand, Stake Pres. Wm. Rich of the Presidency, Bishops Wm. Morgan and Samuel Hymas of Liberty and Sharon Wards. Samuel Mathews of Liberty and Amasa Rich of Paris, and some of the local Brethren, Singing O' My Father, etc.

Prayer offered by Jeppa Monson.

Brother Mathews first speaker spoke of his acquaintance with Bro. Linford from his youth, gave some of the history of Bro. Linford, and their crossing the plains together and endured hardships upon their journey. Spoke of his coming to Bear Lake, spoke of his good character and the good he had done, the good family he has raised, consoled the family.

Brother Lansing Allred, next speaker. Spoke of his early acquaintance with Bro. Linford, and the many times he shared his company when in their youth. Asked God's blessing upon the family.

Pres. Wm. Rich made some consoling remarks, spoke of the excellent character of Bro. Linford, and the worthy life he has lived and his salvation is sure. Made consoling remarks.

²³⁹ Mary L. Gibby, *History of Mary B. Rich Linford*

Bp. Hymas spoke of his pleasant acquaintance with Bro. Linford, and his good judgment and character, spoke of the short separation and the hope of a resurrection. Made comforting remarks.

Bp. E.M. Pugmire next speaker. Made some comforting remarks. Also spoke of the good qualities of Bro. Linford. Illustrated beautifully the life he had led, also illustrated life itself.

Bp. Transtrum made a few remarks, spoke of the good record of Bro. Linford and the example he has set for his family, may they follow his example.

Choir sang a closing selection.

Benediction by Bp. Wm. Morgan.

Grave dedicated by Counselor J.A. Hunt.²⁴⁰

The Passing of Mary Bratton Rich Linford

Mary Linford struggled with the sudden loss of her husband. They had been married for 48 years, and with the exception of a few nights when Joseph was away from home for business, they had never been apart. For the next 17 years, Mary lived as a widow spending time at her home in St. Charles and visiting her children. These years are described by her daughter Mary Linford Gibby.

Here [in St. Charles] they lived happily till the spring of 1914 when Joseph died very suddenly of heart trouble. This was a great blow to Mary. In all their long married life they had never been separated except for a few days at a time, and that occurring but a very few times. It was hard for her to get used to being without him, but as the years rolled along she became reconciled and had a peaceful and tranquil old age. She had many friends who loved to call on her, and she enjoyed going to church. She often visited her children in different towns of Utah and Idaho, staying as many weeks or months with them, as she desired.

While on one of these visits to her daughter Mary L. Gibby in Pocatello, Idaho, she accidentally fell down the basement stairs striking the cement floor. She was injured very badly, and was ill for a long time, and never fully recovered from the fall, though she was comparatively well and able to get around as before.

It was a great pleasure to all her children and grandchildren as well, to visit her in her home. Many pleasant days were spent there, and Mary was never so happy as when surrounded by her family.

In the spring of 1931 she was visiting her son James in Logan. While walking past the washing machine which was in motion she unthinkingly put her hand on the wringer and immediately it was drawn in the rollers, mutilating it badly. As her son's wife was ill, her daughter from Brigham City took her to her home and cared for her till her death which occurred April 4, 1931.

Her body was taken to her home town, where funeral services were held, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the St. Charles cemetery.²⁴¹

She was 84 years old at the time of her death. Funeral services were held in St. Charles on April 7, 1931. The *Ogden Standard Examiner* announced her death in this obituary:²⁴²

²⁴⁰ *Linford Family Heritage*, pp 283-284

²⁴¹ *History of Mary B. Rich Linford*

Services on Tuesday for Mary R. Linford

Brigham City, April 4. Mrs. Mary Rich Linford, daughter of Apostle Charles C. Rich and Eliza Graves, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hervin Bunderson, where she had made her home during the past winter, this morning. The body may be viewed at the home of the daughter, 176 North First East, Brigham City, Sunday afternoon and will be taken Monday morning to St. Charles, Idaho where funeral services will be conducted in the ward chapel Tuesday, April 7, at 2 o'clock. Interment will be in the St. Charles cemetery. Mrs. Linford was born in Nauvoo, Ill, February 11, 1846, just a few days prior to the expulsion of the Latter-day Saints from that community. She came to Utah with her parents in 1847. She was one of the few people surviving who came to Utah during the first year of its settlement, and probably she was the oldest member of the church born of a polygamous marriage. The family made their home first in the old fort at Salt Lake City, and later they moved to Centerville where Mary grew to young womanhood. In 1864 Apostle Charles C. Rich was called by the church to lead a group of pioneers into the Bear River valley. His families went along, making their home in Paris until 1885, when they moved to St. Charles, Idaho, where they have since resided. Mrs. Linford is survived by 12 brothers and eight sisters, and the following children: Joseph W. and George C., St. Charles, Idaho; Mrs. E. M. Denio and Amasa R., Salt Lake City; J. Charles, Centerville; Bishop James W., Logan; Mrs. Hervin Bunderson, Brigham City. There are 33 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Mary Linford was an elect woman who had great faith in the blessings of the Lord. Twice, her life was saved through the power of priesthood blessings. She should have died as an infant in Nauvoo but a priesthood blessing promised her that she would become a mother of a large family. As a 20 year old young woman, she became very ill and it was thought that she would die. Once again, a priesthood blessing was pronounced restoring her health. Even so, she was small and frail. Upon her marriage, her father despaired that she would never have children. But that fear didn't stop her and her husband Joseph. Together, they had a family of nine children. Undying faith in the Lord is the legacy that she has left her posterity.

²⁴² Ogden Standard Examiner, April 4, 1931

Appendix One

An Interview with Amasa Rich Linford

Amasa Rich Linford was the eighth child and youngest son of Joseph and Mary Linford. In his later years at the age of 82, he was interviewed about growing up in the Bear Lake Valley by his son, Amasa Merrill Linford. The following is a transcript of that interview which took place on January 17, 1967.²⁴³ Although his memory is somewhat faded with old age, the interview contains some very touching insights on his parents and grandparents, growing up in St. Charles, his brothers and sisters, getting married and raising a family.



Amasa Merrill Linford with his father Amasa Rich Linford

Merrill Linford: “I remember that all of the pictures I’ve seen of your dad had a full beard. Is this the way you remember him?”

Amasa Linford: “I never saw my dad without a beard—he always kept it neatly trimmed—I can hardly imagine what he looked like without it.”

Merrill Linford: “Was it the custom at that time for men to wear beards?”

Amasa Linford: “Yes. Then at that age most of them wore beards. My uncle [Amasa] lived a block down from us and he had a beard just about like my fathers and other men of corresponding age usually wore the beard.”

Merrill Linford: “Did you ever wear a beard or mustache?”

Amasa Linford: “I never had a beard or mustache because by then it was quite out of style. You see young fellows going around today with beards and mustaches but to me they look funny.”

Merrill Linford: “Tell me a little about your dad and mother when you were a kid. For example, when all your brothers and sisters were at home—was he the stern disciplinarian type?”

²⁴³ *Interview with Amasa Rich Linford—January 17, 1967*

Amasa Linford: "No. We'd get around and tell jokes and stories and laugh in the evenings and father enjoyed having the family be there. He was never stern, nobody ever hated to see him come around. Everyone liked to be in his company."

Merrill Linford: "Well now, unless your family was different from most families, somebody had to be the disciplinarian. Who did this job?"

Amasa Linford: "Oh, we didn't have one. We'd talk things over and they'd tell us what they wanted us to do, my parents would, and we just did it, we didn't think of anything else."

Merrill Linford: "Didn't I hear you say once that your father held a position in the county?"

Amasa Linford: "He was a county commissioner for a time and his work took him around the valley there and all through the county. He did very well at that position I think."

Merrill Linford: "Let's go back and talk about your father's brothers, he didn't have any sisters."

Amasa Linford: "He had three brothers. Two brothers came over with the handcart company, the older one, Uncle James, was serving a mission in England at the time and he didn't come when the others did."

Merrill Linford: "Tell me about these brothers. Did you get to know all three of them?"

Amasa Linford: "I knew two of the brothers. I don't recall that I ever knew the other one. My father and his younger brother lived in Bear Lake, that was Uncle Amasa. The two of them came to Bear Lake with Joseph Rich and his son Charles C. Rich. Joseph Rich married my father's mother after they got to the valley here. My grandfather, of course, died on the plains coming over."

Merrill Linford: "So Charles C. Rich was not actually your grandfather?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, Charles C. Rich was my mother's father. So he of course moved his families to Bear Lake Valley and brought my father and other uncle Amasa with him. I remember once someone said to Joseph Rich something about Joe and Amasa not being his sons and he said, 'I want you to understand that I think just as much of those two boys as I do my own son'."

Merrill Linford: "You mentioned your father and brothers coming over in the handcart company. Do you remember any stories they told about this trip?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, some. My father was 14 years old and Uncle Amasa was younger, he was 12, I believe. This was the Willies Company and the other brother [George] that came with them was 17 years old. He was kind of a husky, young fellow. In crossing, the company had to wade streams occasionally and Uncle George would help them out. Some of those women when they got to the stream and they had to wade, they would almost give up. They said that they would rather die and be buried here than to wade in that cold water. So Uncle George, he carried them across, I guess what you would call piggy back. They'd hang on his back and he'd carry a lot of them across that way, of course, others did that too."

Merrill Linford: "Tell me something about your brothers. Uncle Joe was the oldest wasn't he?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, he was pretty well grown up when I was born. He was a farmer. My sister Eliza was next to him."

Merrill Linford: "You were next to the youngest, is that right?"

Amasa Linford: "I was the youngest boy, and my sister Leona was the youngest."

Merrill Linford: "Of your brothers and sisters growing up, which would you say you were closest to?"

Amasa Linford: "I was closest to Chris I guess. He was a few years older than I was, but he was the youngest boy except me and we were kind of left because the other boys were off to work and school, and Chris and I were there alone. We were very friendly."

Merrill Linford: "Tell me a little about your sisters. Of course, Leona I know very well and Eliza I know well. Tell me about the others."

Amasa Linford: "Well, Eliza was the oldest and she married Joe Denio and she moved out when I was just a kid so she wasn't home much after that."

Merrill Linford: "Did they move to Salt Lake?"

Amasa Linford: "No."

Merrill Linford: "That's right, he was a traveling man, wasn't he?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, he did things like that, but they lived in Paris more than anywhere. They lived in St. Charles a while. Then after Eliza, my next sister was Phoebe."

Merrill Linford: "Did I know her?"

Amasa Linford: "No, you didn't know her; she died early when she was 12 years old. She was about four years older than I was. She had typhoid fever, I think, and she died. Then Mamie, her name was Mary but we all called her Mamie— she was two years older than I and she was always home. She was a light-hearted, laughing girl."

Merrill Linford: "When did she die?"

Amasa Linford: "She hasn't been dead for many years."

Merrill Linford: "Oh that's right— she was a Gibby. She married George Gibby and she has her family here in Salt Lake City."

Amasa Linford: "And then Leona was the youngest one. She is younger than I and she is kind of the baby of the family. We all thought so much of her and humored her and babied her. She's always been a very sweet girl."

Merrill Linford: "I can remember that we were looking at that picture of your family and she was a beautiful girl."

Amasa Linford: "She was. She married Herman Bunderson."

Merrill Linford: "Now Herman has been a life-long friend of yours, hasn't he?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, he was raised in St. Charles and he's younger than I am but I've known him all my life and we went to school together and all. He's a very fine fellow. They live in Brigham City now."

Merrill Linford: øDo you remember when we were at your place just a few months ago and we were going through that box and there were a lot of old picture post cards? I remember that a lot of them were from Herman to you before they were married. He must have had a real sense of humor.ö

Amasa Linford: øHe did and he does now. After I was grown up and going to a bunch of places to do carpentry work, Weber Canyon and other places, I used to correspond with him some.ö

Merrill Linford: øTell me a little about your schooling. You went to elementary school in St. Charles. Is that right?ö

Amasa Linford: øSt. Charles, yes.ö

Merrill Linford: øAnd that was up to eighth grade?ö

Amasa Linford: øYes, thatø about right. We didnø go so much by gradeø weø go by sixth reader, eighth reader. Eighth reader is about eighth grade I guess.ö

Merrill Linford: øHow old were you when you left to go down to Logan?ö

Amasa Linford: øI was at the age when you graduate from high school, about 18.ö

Merrill Linford: øWhen you were in Logan at B.Y. College, this is when you met Mom, is that right?ö

Amasa Linford: øThatø right.ö

Merrill Linford: øNow Iøve heard mom kid about this before, Actually, you knew some of her brothers before you met her. Is that right?ö

Amasa Linford: øThatø right. I was in the same class as one of her brothers and we were good pals. That was Weseley. He had died since and it was through him that I met my future wife.ö

Merrill Linford: øWhat was this story about how you bought her or traded for her?ö

Amasa Linford: øWe had drawing classes together, Weseley and I, and he ran out of drawing paper. I told him Iød make a bargain with himø Iød give him some paper for his sister. I had met her, I guess, or seen her at least, so he said all right. So he got his paper and he went home and told Carrie that he had traded her off. She said, -what for?ø He said for drawing paper. She said, you value me high. Iøve said since, that I havenø made many good bargains in my life, but I thought I did pretty well then.ö

Merrill Linford: øWell then you started to go with her and about how long was it before you were married?ö

Amasa Linford: øI guess it was a number of monthsø I donø remember just how long. I think we didnø go to school the next year.ö

Merrill Linford: øYou married in the Logan Temple and then following the marriage there, did you go right to St. Charles, or did you live in Richmond?ö

Amasa Linford: øWe switched around. We lived for a time in St. Charles and then again in Richmond. Quite a bit later, we came to Salt Lake.ö

Merrill Linford: "This traveling back and forth from Logan to St. Charles and Richmond fascinates me, especially in this day and age. At that time of course you were traveling by horses and wagons, weren't you?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes."

Merrill Linford: "How long would it take you to go from St. Charles to Logan?"

Amasa Linford: "Sometimes we made it in one day. It wasn't so far, especially if you had a light rig. Sometimes we would have to camp."

Merrill Linford: "You made the trip of course many times. Did you and Mom go alone or did you always have other people?"

Amasa Linford: "No. We'd go alone but we'd take anybody that wanted to go."

Merrill Linford: "Shortly after you were married, I have heard reference to the time that you and Mom were living in St. Charles. You were farming then, weren't you?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, we took care of the farm out there. Of course, I could still get away and do carpentry work, and it was someone in town."

Merrill Linford: "Was it you and Chris? Was he married?"

Amasa Linford: "He wasn't married until after I was."

Merrill Linford: "But you and Chris ran the farm there for awhile while Mom was up there?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes."

Merrill Linford: "The first two children that were born to you and Mom did not live. One of them as I recall was still-born and the other died shortly after. Is that right?"

Amasa Linford: "I think that's right."

Merrill Linford: "Did you ever have any medical explanation why these two children died?"

Amasa Linford: "No. It was never explained to me exactly. I think that the doctor said that we would never have any that would live."

Merrill Linford: "I've heard Mom say that she was told by the doctor at that time that she could not have any more and that she would never have a child that would live."

Amasa Linford: "I think one of the doctors gave her that idea."

Merrill Linford: "I believe you mentioned that one of the children that died was born in St. Charles, and a neighbor took it down to Richmond for you."

Amasa Linford: "Yes, that was the second one, I think, and we already had one buried in Richmond so we wanted to keep them together, so one of the neighbors there took his light rig and took it down."

Merrill Linford: "Do you remember who that was?"

Amasa Linford: "It was one of the Rich boys."

Merrill Linford: "Then you moved to Richmond was that because there were more carpentry jobs down there?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, I think that was it, and Carrie wanted to be with her mother when she had another baby to take care of her. That also influenced us to move there."

Merrill Linford: "I've heard stories from Mom that when you were young, you had a motorcycle. She also mentioned something about an accident you were in. Was this right after you were married?"

Amasa Linford: "That was after I was married. I was working carpentry work and sometimes work would be in other towns quite a distance from there. My pal that worked with me had a motorcycle, and I had one, so we could go quite a distance."

Merrill Linford: "Who was that?"

Amasa Linford: "That was Louis Booth. But I quit using it because I had a little accident on the thing. It broke apart and disconnected in some way and threw me on the ground and the motorcycle on top of me."

Merrill Linford: "Were you injured?"

Amasa Linford: "No, not seriously. I didn't get it repaired and didn't use it anymore."

Merrill Linford: "I guess it probably scared Mom more than it did you, didn't it?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, I guess it did."

Merrill Linford: "I believe I was two years old when we moved to Salt Lake. Was this prompted by having more work available for you here?"

Amasa Linford: "Yes, I think we thought it would be better for us all around work and other conditions."

Merrill Linford: "Your sister Eliza was here in Salt Lake at that time wasn't she and didn't we stay with her down in Doobie Court?"

Amasa Linford: "I believe we did for awhile."

Merrill Linford: "We moved around quite a bit. After we got here, I can remember some of the places. I can remember that we lived right across the street from East High. I don't remember it, but I've heard about it."

Amasa Linford: "Yes, we lived up there on 1300 East for awhile in the back part of the store on the corner. We lived in a number of places I don't remember them all."

Merrill Linford: "I remember the duplex on 500 South and from there we moved to 300 South and 1000 East that big house on the corner and then from there I can remember I was a Deacon, so I must have been 12 years old we moved to 4th Avenue, and I believe we lived there until I was in high school. Then you bought the place on 200 South."

Amasa Linford: "I guess that's about how it was."

Merrill Linford: "Today is now January 18th 1967, and Letha and Roy have dropped in. I've just played this tape for them. While Letha is here, I thought it would be a good idea to get her comments on not only this tape, but some of the incidents a long-time ago when she was young. Do you have any suggestions or corrections you'd like to make to it?"

Letha Linford Wilcox: "Well the one addition I can think of right now that you certainly ought to include is the story of Mother falling in the lake. I can't imagine how you left it out!"

Merrill Linford: "You're right! maybe I left it out because I can't tell it very well. That's one of those stories we've heard all of our lives, so let's see if we can reconstruct it here. Why don't you go ahead and tell it, and Dad can correct us if you're wrong."
Amasa Linford: "If you can't remember the facts, just make it up."

Merrill Linford: "That's the way most of these stories come about anyway. What was the story? Let's go back a little bit. I wasn't sure when Dad and I were making this tape exactly how many of us kids were born in Bear Lake. I wasn't, but were you and the other girls?"

Letha Linford Wilcox: "I think all of the girls were born in Bear Lake."

Merrill Linford: "Well then, how old were you when they moved to Richmond?"

Letha Linford Wilcox: "Carrie was three years younger than I and she was a baby when we moved to Richmond so I wasn't much more than four when we moved because we got there before I started school. This incident when mother fell in the lake was when they were having a farewell party for us just prior to our move to Richmond. At this time Dad and Mom and all of us kids—except you because you weren't born yet—had gone out in a rowboat on Bear Lake. When we were out a little way, Carrie, the baby, started to get fussy and cross and she wanted to come back in. So, we came back to the pier and mother stood up in the boat and reached her out to Uncle Joe to take the baby. Somehow she lost her balance just as Uncle Joe took the baby and she grabbed hold of the pier with her hands and her feet were still in the boat. She couldn't hang on and fell in the lake. The only thing I can actually remember about the story is how Dad was rolling on the ground and laughing. He laughed and he laughed and he laughed. Mother, of course, being all wet, someone had to take her in the buggy clear back to home in St. Charles to change her clothes. When she came back, he was still laughing about it like it was the funniest thing that ever happened."

Merrill Linford: "There was another interesting sidelight to that story. Who was the man that made the comment?"

Amasa Linford: "Ed Pugmire."

Letha Linford Wilcox: "This was later. -Carrie—he says, -I understand there was a tidal wave and I didn't know what caused it until I heard you fell in the lake. There was another little sidelight on this too. Someone, I don't remember who, took a picture of mother just as she got out up on the pier and she was shaking out her dress and it was all wet. They not only took the picture but they put it on a postcard and started to mail it all around."

Merrill Linford: "Are any of those postcards still around? I wish I had one."

Letha Linford Wilcox: "Mother was so mad when she saw that postcard she got in the mail."

Merrill Linford: "What a priceless treasure that would be if you could find one."

Letha Wilcox Linford: "I have no idea where any of them might be now but they did mail them to all of the relatives."

Merrill Linford: "That a dirty trick."

Letha Wilcox Linford: "I can remember seeing it. She was kind of stooping over, holding her dress shaking the water out of it on the picture."

Merrill Linford: "Did you see Dad rolling in the background?"

Letha Wilcox Linford: "No, I missed that."

Appendix Two

Keeping Family Lines Straightô The Strange World of Mormon Genealogy

The family lines of Joseph and Mary Linford can be very confusing for even the most experienced genealogist, so it is beneficial to understand the unique relationships between the Linford and Rich families. Much of the confusion is due to the fact that both families practiced the doctrine of plural marriage that was endorsed by the Mormon Church between 1841 and 1890.

As previously noted, Joseph Linford's mother, Maria Bentley Christian Linford Rich, was originally married to John Linford before his death on the Sweetwater River in 1856. In 1857, she married again, this time to Joseph Rich as his second wife in a polygamist marriage. Joseph Rich was the father of Apostle Charles C. Rich. Charles C. Rich married Eliza Ann Graves as the second of his six wives. Their first daughter was Mary Bratton Rich who later married Joseph William Linford. This unique family circle created the following relationships for Joseph and Mary Linford.

The Relationship of Joseph W. Linford to:

Joseph Rich: Step-Son

Charles C. Rich: Step-Brother and Son-in-Law

Eliza Ann Graves Rich: Step Brother-in-Law and Son-in-Law

Mary Bratton Rich Linford: Step-Uncle and Husband

The Relationship of Mary Bratton Rich Linford to:

Joseph Rich: Granddaughter

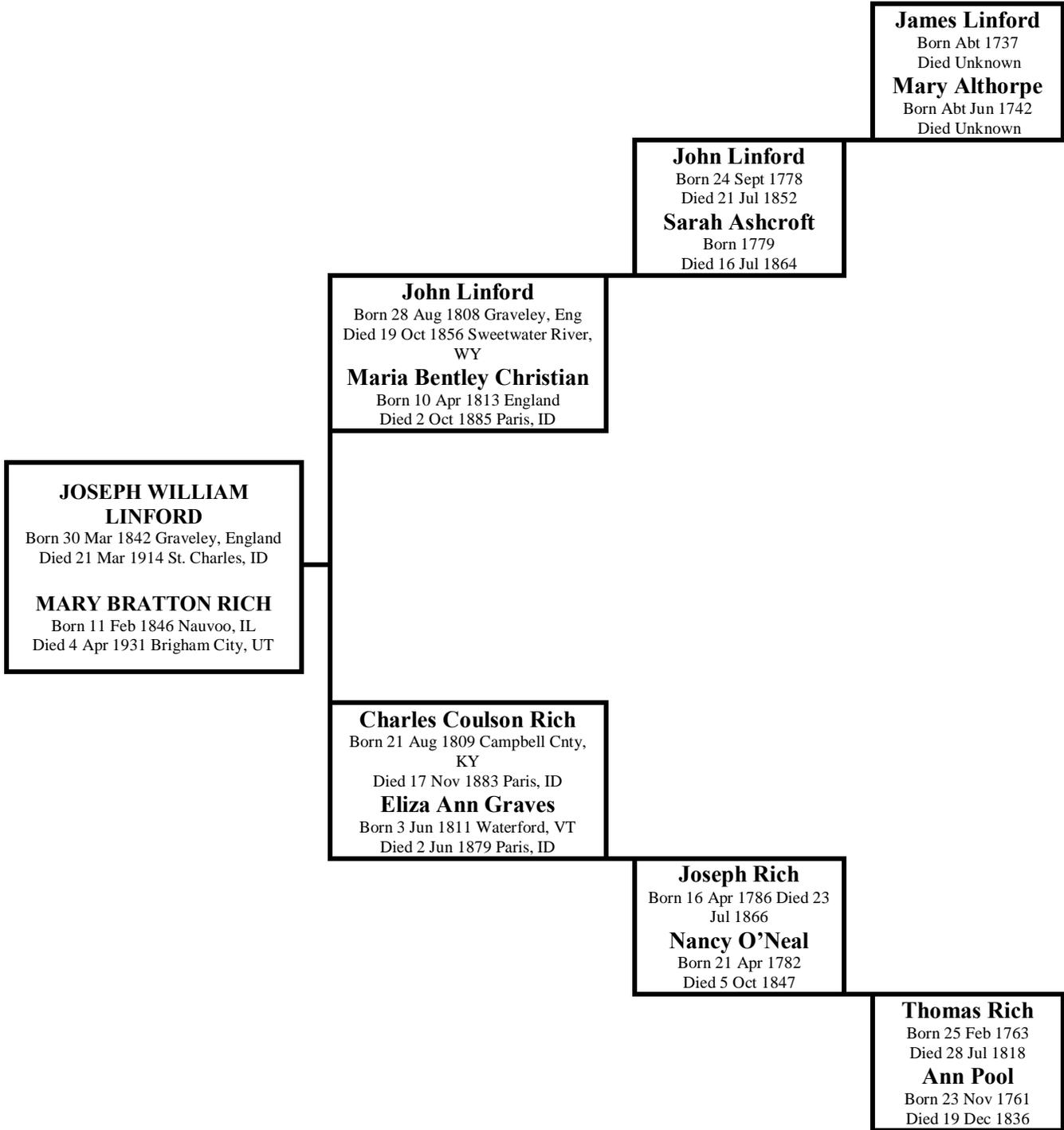
Charles C. Rich: Daughter

Maria Bentley Christian Linford Rich: Step-Granddaughter and Daughter-in-Law

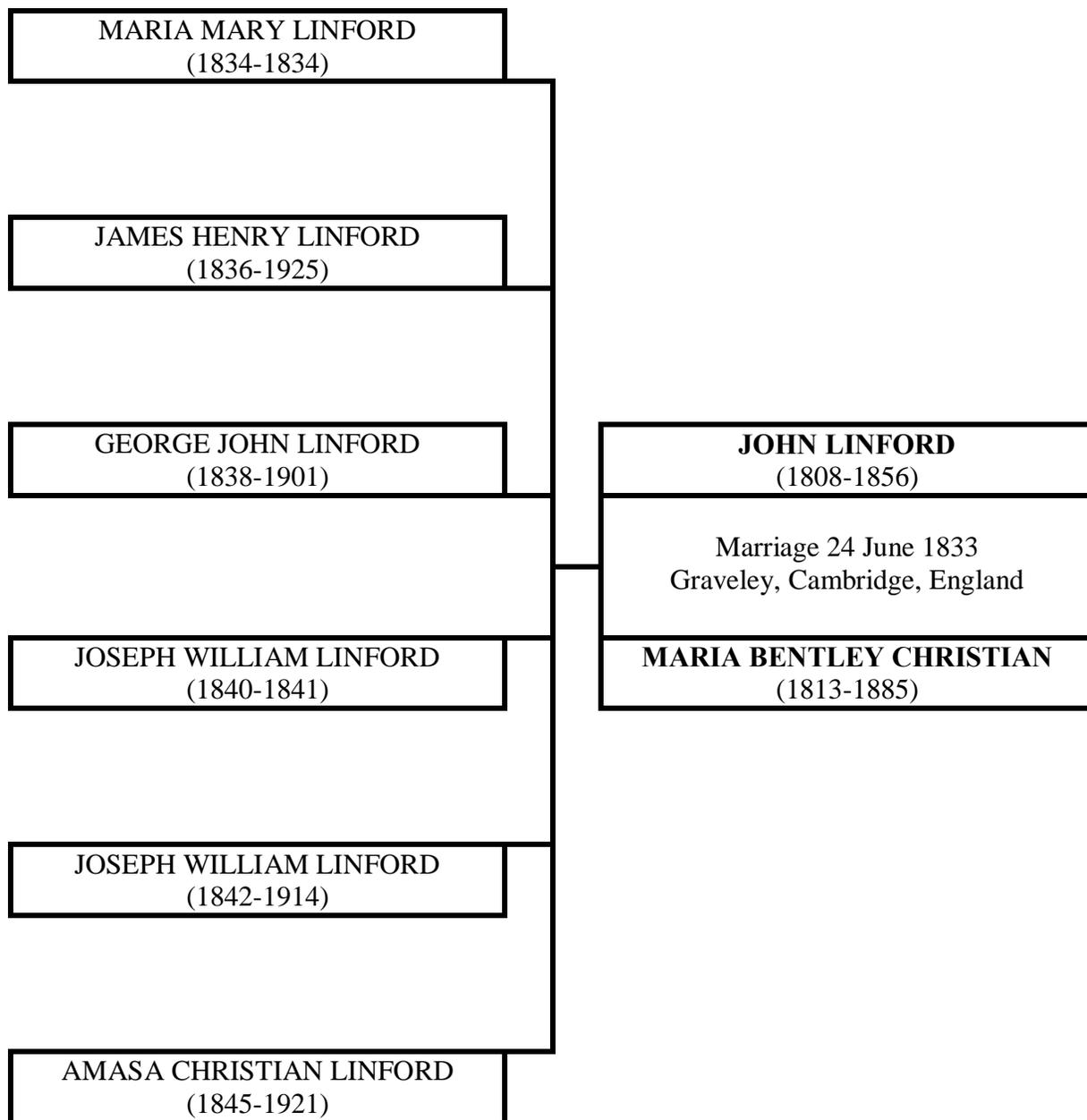
Joseph William Linford: Step-Niece and Wife

Appendix Three

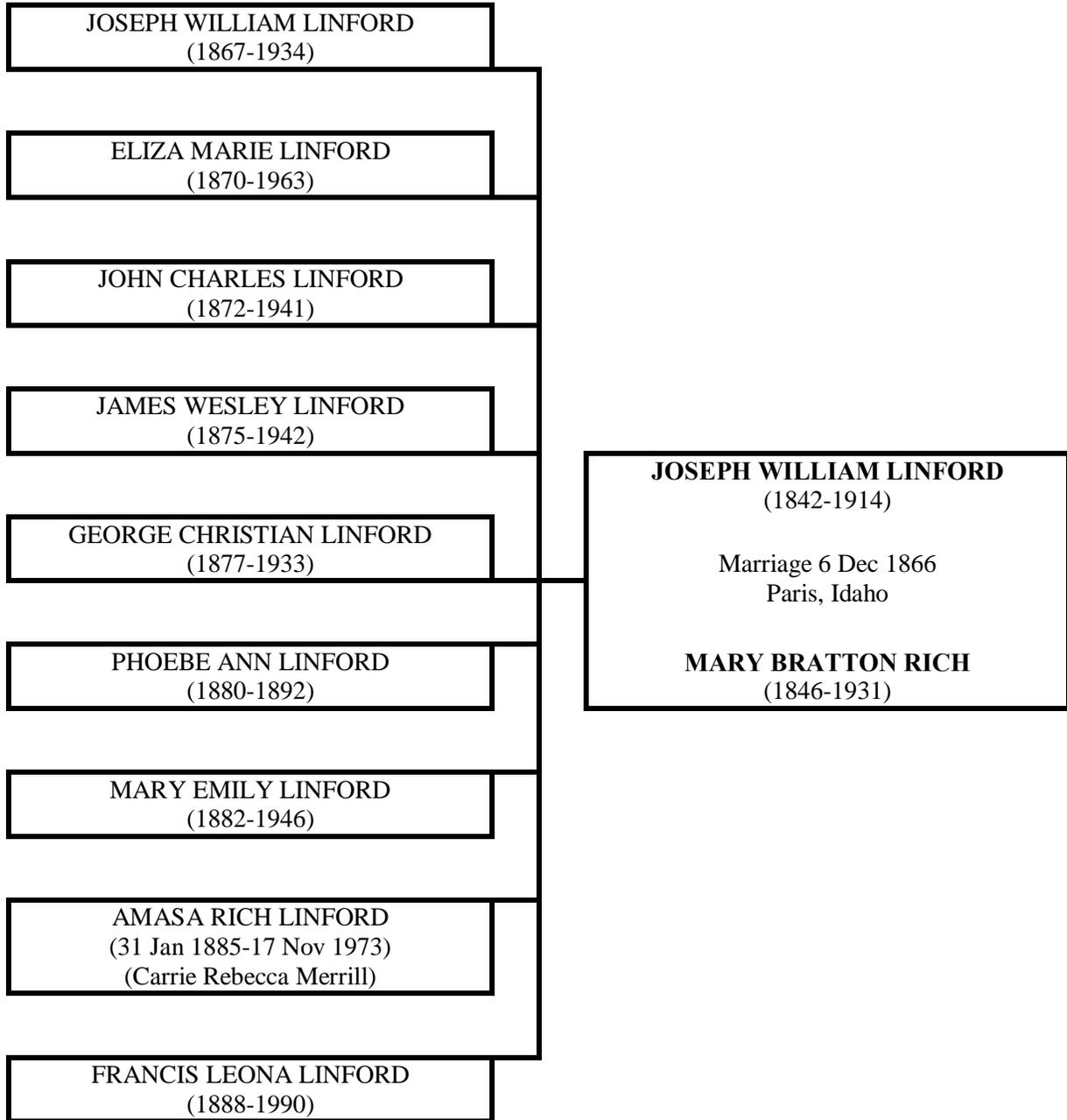
**PATERNAL PEDIGREES OF JOSEPH WILLIAM LINFORD
AND MARY BRATTON RICH LINFORD**



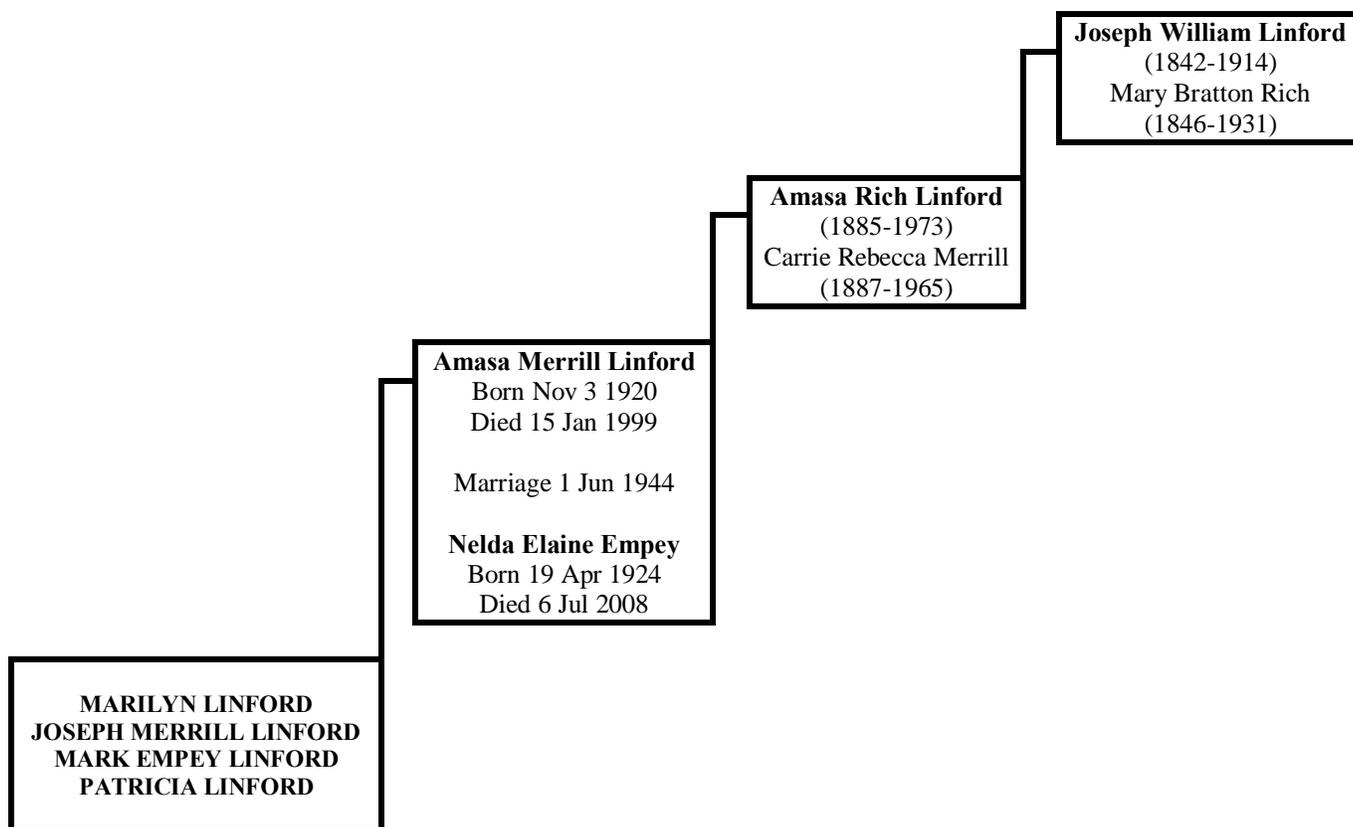
THE CHILDREN OF JOHN AND MARIA LINFORD



THE CHILDREN OF JOSEPH AND MARY LINFORD



THE PATERNAL LINE OF THE AUTHOR



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