

Benjamin Jenne
and Sarah (Snyder) Jenne
Richards



A Family History

by Shelley Dawson Davies

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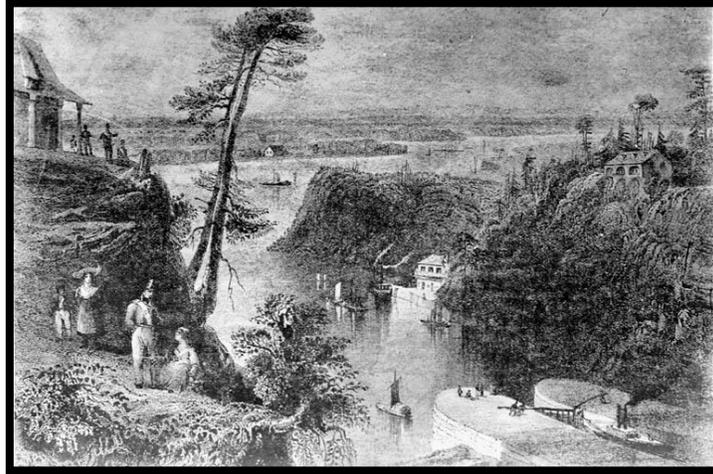
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Chapter 1

Good News

The Gospel is Declared



*Canada's Rideau Canal provided a navigable waterway
Between Lake Ontario and the Ottawa River.*

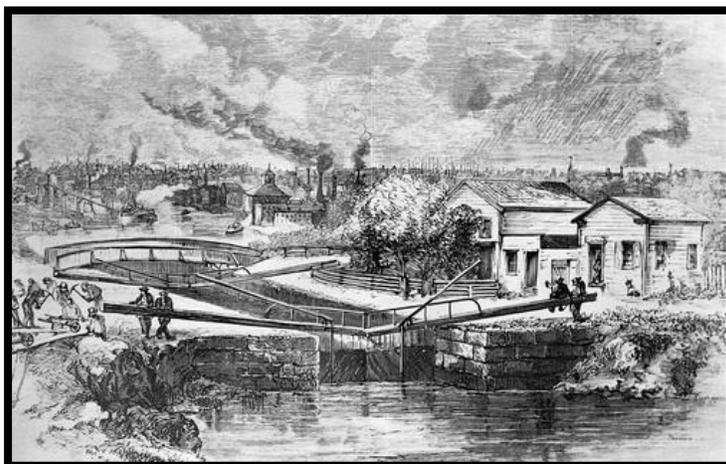
Upstate New York in the early 1820s was a young place, full of hope and the bustle of business. Thanks to trade opened up by the Erie Canal, there was money to be made transporting goods to markets in New York City and beyond, and towns were sprouting up all along its route. Farmers like Sarah Snyder's¹ parents, Isaac² and Lovisa,³ were among the many families searching for just the right opportunity on the lush lands bordering Canada. It wasn't easy leaving their farm in Ontario, where Isaac's large family was successfully established, but Jefferson County, New York, promised a better future for the Snyders and their three children, so they agreed to try their luck in the United States.

Jefferson County had long been part of New York's frontier, but by the time Sarah's family arrived, rustic log cabins were being replaced by fine frame homes and barns, giving the countryside "quite a civilized appearance."⁴ It was in this pastoral setting where Sarah grew to be a skilled homemaker and confident young woman, ready for marriage at the age of seventeen to Vermont native Benjamin Jenne.⁵

Benjamin and Sarah followed the Snyders when they relocated to Canada's Rideau Canal district two years later. It was during this same year the first missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints arrived in Upper Canada, preaching a remarkable message: after almost two thousand years, God had once again spoken to a prophet. The timing was right. By April, 1833, there were one hundred and fifty members of the church in the Kingston region, with a branch organized right in Earnestown, where Benjamin and Sarah lived.⁶ Hundreds more faithful men and women were converted over the next few years as Elders William Harris and John E. Page travelled through the area, sharing their message and *The Book of Mormon*.

Sarah was the first member of the family to be converted after hearing Elder Page preach,⁷ but fearing their reaction, she at first she kept her baptism hidden from her parents. After all, the Mormons were said to be only "ignorant and poor people" easily influenced by charlatans and their "gold Bible."⁸ Isaac and Lovisa were understandably upset when they learned of their daughter's conversion from a neighbor, who knocked on their door with the shocking news, but Sarah's bed-ridden brother Robert⁹ was delighted. Robert, who had been studying the scriptures and praying for guidance, found truth in Elder Page's message. He was not only baptized, but healed of his ailment after a blessing by Elder Page.¹⁰

Robert immediately made his way to church headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, where he met with the Prophet Joseph Smith and was ordained a missionary. Upon returning home to Ontario in 1838, Robert was successful in converting and baptizing his parents and brothers Samuel,¹¹ Chester¹² and George.¹³ Only Jane¹⁴ and Jesse,¹⁵ the two youngest members of the family, remained unconvinced.¹⁶



A canal outside of Chicago, Illinois, in the 1840s.

Leaving For Zion

Even while the Saints were building their temple in Kirtland, Joseph Smith was establishing a gathering place in Far West, Missouri, where a future city of Zion would stand. By 1839, attacks against the church in Ohio and Missouri had forced the church to abandon both of their cities. The Saints were encouraged to regroup on lands Joseph Smith purchased along the Mississippi River in Illinois, at a place he called Nauvoo. It was a difficult sacrifice for Benjamin and Sarah to walk away from the farmstead they had worked so hard to build, but they were committed to the gospel and made plans to sell their land.¹⁷ The Jenne and Snyder families packed up their wagons and began the fifteen-hundred miles journey west in the autumn of 1839.

The long road to Nauvoo became more demanding the farther the families travelled until sickness forced them to winter over in La Porte, Indiana, twenty miles from the shores of Lake Michigan. Among the sick was Jane, whose health continued to fail, despite doctors' efforts. "They finally gave me up," recalled Jane, especially after she "had a stroke of paralysis." Robert was determined to help his sister, offering her a blessing. "I could then see for the first time that he had received the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, and that God had blessed him with the gift of healing," Jane later recalled. "I could then see it was my duty to be baptized. I requested my brother to take me out of my bed and baptize me."¹⁸

Three hundred people gathered along the shore as Robert cut a hole in the ice for his sister's baptism, threatening him with arrest for submersing so sick a person in the freezing water, "but when I came out the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me and I spoke to those present and told them at I was now well," said Jane. "I never went to bed anymore, I was well from that time."¹⁹

Robert was on hand later the same winter to heal Sarah, who was stricken with a fever so severe she was not expected to live. "They cut her beautiful hair, the fever was so bad," Sarah's seven-year old daughter Lovisa²⁰ recalled. "[Uncle Robert] came in the night, laid his hands on her head, anointed her with oil, and administered to her. She was healed from that time. In the morning, the neighbors asked what doctor she had. She told them none, the Lord had healed her."²¹ Sarah also relied on her brother when her toddler Jane²² was bitten by a rattlesnake. Robert comforted the child in his arms, poured oil over her swollen thumb and prayed. Soon the little girl was entirely healed.²³

In the spring of 1840 Samuel, Robert, Chester and George started on the three hundred mile journey toward Nauvoo, accompanied by their spouses and children. Isaac, Lovisa, Jane and Jesse remained in La Porte, along with Benjamin and Sarah. La Porte proved to be an important stop for missionaries travelling from Nauvoo to points east, and the Jenne and Snyder families often hosted the Elders as they passed through, including a young man by the name of Franklin D. Richards,²⁴ who married Jane the following year.²⁵

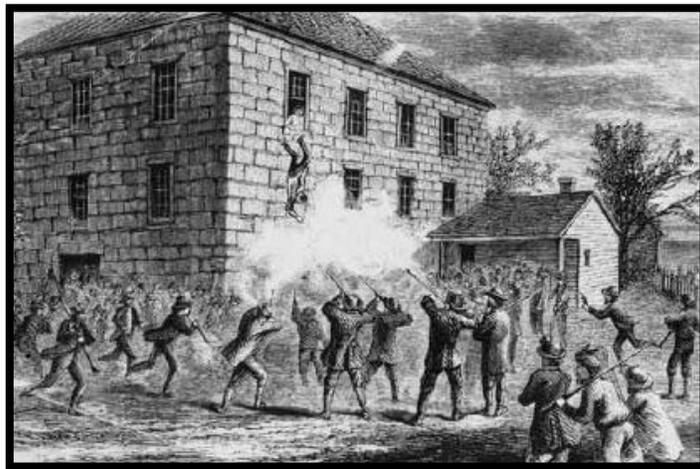
During the three years Benjamin and Sarah spent in La Porte, they experienced the joy of little Roseanna's²⁶ birth and the sorrow of five-year old Chester's²⁷ death. Sarah had already lost two small sons before leaving Ontario,²⁸ but with her faith in the Lord, she found the strength to carry on.

The Jennes eventually made their way to Job Creek,²⁹ just outside of Carthage, Illinois, where they settled on a farm³⁰ near Sarah's brothers Samuel and George.³¹ Fortunately for Sarah, the rest of her family was nearby, as well, with her parents living in Nauvoo itself, only a few blocks away from Jane and Franklin Richards,³² and Chester farming property near the edge of town.³³

Maybe it was the stress of moving so much, or the pain of losing several small children; it could have been that Benjamin lost his testimony or never had one in the first place.³⁴ Whatever the reason, it was around this time when Benjamin began the progressive abandonment of his wife and children. It started with his failure to be

a good provider and his absence from home,³⁵ obliging Sarah to send little Jane to live with Isaac and Lovisa in Nauvoo,³⁶ even before she gave birth to Maria³⁷ in January, 1844.

Her father's sudden death the next month was "a very severe loss"³⁸ to Sarah, who found the shock of Joseph and Hyrum Smith's murder four months later almost more than she could bear. "I heard the noise of the drumbeats and the noise and uproar that the mob was making," said Lovisa, who was "at home near Carthage at the time our dear ones were martyred. When we heard the shots and the noise, my mother said, 'They have murdered our Prophet and Patriarch!' She took sick from the time she heard shots and noise. We tried to comfort her and tell her perhaps it might not be true, but we soon found it was too true. We lived so near, it did not take long for the word to come. The mob was so elated over doing so great a deed, that they spread the news far and near. They will have their reward. We mourned long for our dear ones and could not be comforted. It was the saddest time I ever saw."³⁹



The martyrdom of Joseph Smith at the Carthage jail.

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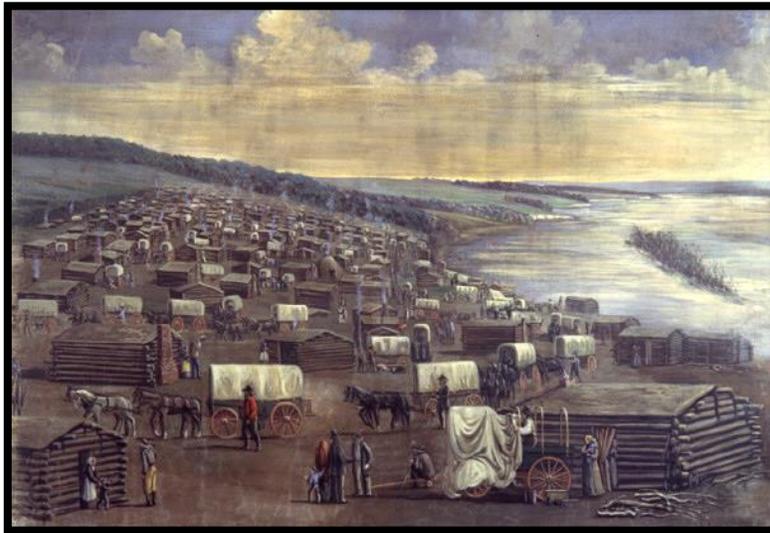
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Chapter 2

Winter Quarters

Trials and Tribulations



C.C.A. Christensen's view of Winter Quarters, Nebraska

Anti-Mormon ruffians were outraged when Joseph Smith's death failed to destroy the church as they had planned. Worse yet, thousands of new English converts flooded into Nauvoo and the surrounding communities at such an alarming rate that something had to be done. Enemies of the church increased their persecutions against the Saints until Joseph's successor, Brigham Young, finally agreed to lead his people out of Illinois. The first wagons rolled westward in February, 1846.

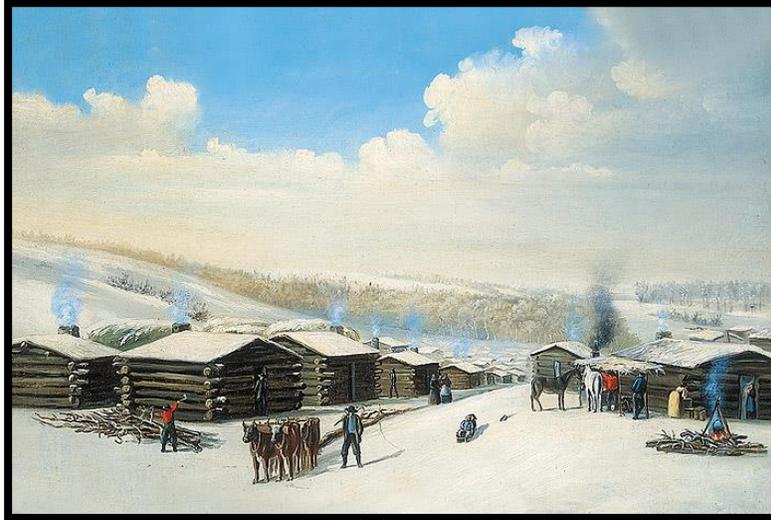
Benjamin had left Nauvoo five months previously,⁴⁰ settling several hundred miles north, where Sarah eventually joined him in a final effort to rescue her marriage. She gave birth to her ninth child, Brigham,⁴¹ near Chicago in January, 1846. The already fragile relationship between Benjamin and Sarah became even more strained when Sarah rejoined her extended family back in Nauvoo soon after receiving news of the planned exodus.

It was time of uncertainty and struggle. Although a temporary encampment had been established along the Missouri River at Winter Quarters, Nebraska, thousands of destitute Saints found themselves scattered across Iowa during the summer and autumn of 1846, including the extended Snyder family. With her mother and brothers already headed toward Nebraska, Sarah teamed up with the Jane and Franklin Richards family, who left Nauvoo in early June. They were ill prepared for the journey west, outfitted with little more than a canvas tent and an old ox-drawn wagon,⁴² and soon after arriving at the Sugar Creek way station Franklin was called on a mission to England.

Sarah struggled through the next few months to feed her six children and care for Jane and Franklin's second wife Elizabeth,⁴³ both bedridden with illness, all while trying to earn enough money for the onward trek. "We could not stay in Nauvoo any longer, but could not go on for want of means," said Lovisa, who was fourteen years old at the time. "There was a gentleman gave my mother a recipe for making ginger beer and very nice ginger cake. He kept a restaurant. My mother done well making beer, cakes, and pies."⁴⁴

Even after leaving Sugar Creek, Sarah continued to shoulder the responsibility for the families, aided by Lovisa, who "harnessed a team every morning, unharnessed it at night, drove it all day, then had to go to work, and soon as we got to camp, washing, cooking, and anything there was to do," Lovisa recalled.⁴⁵ Sarah tended to Jane as she gave birth to a son,⁴⁶ comforting her at his death an hour later. "When the little baby died, my Mother took the lid from a large chest she had, and had a coffin made for the baby. We were away from any settlement. We carried the baby twelve days until we arrived at Mount Pisgah, where some of the Saints stopped awhile, and many were buried."⁴⁷

Although Sarah and Jane were happy to find their mother at Mt. Pisgah,⁴⁸ hardships and sickness continued to follow them. Jane's three-year old daughter, Wealthy,⁴⁹ languished in ill health, weakening as the family travelled toward Winter Quarters. One day while passing by a field of potatoes, Wealthy asked if she could have her favorite vegetable. "My mother went to the house and stating our circumstances asked for some potatoes for my dying child," said Jane. "A rough woman heard her story impatiently through and putting her arms on her shoulders marched her out of the house saying, 'I won't give or sell a thing to one of you damned Mormons.' And I turned in my bed and wept as I heard the grandmother trying to comfort my little on in her disappointment."⁵⁰



Winter Quarters' rough cabins offering minimal Protection against the bitter winter.

Israel in the Wilderness

Little Wealthy died soon after the family arrived in Winter Quarters later that fall, one of over three hundred Saints who would succumb to disease and the effects of a poor diet “We had much sickness caused from the hardships we had to endure,” said Lovisa, who also noted the deaths of her Uncle Franklin’s second wife and her “own little brother over the winter. Then I took sick, was sick all winter, came near dying. We had lost at that time four of our loved ones. The persecutions and hardships we had to pass through were unlimited. We had very poor living, mostly corn meal from bread, no vegetables. It was very hard on the people, caused much sickness. We had what they called scurvy, black leg, and canker; with it I had all three. My mouth was so bad with cancer that I never tasted food for six weeks, only as sometimes, the folks would toast some crusts of bread, browned it, and made coffee with it, and I would drink it.⁵¹

It was almost impossible to avoid sickness, given the inadequate housing of quickly constructed sod houses and logs cabins. Jane described her cabin as “small, about twelve by fourteen, just large enough for two little beds and a fire place. We had no furniture worth mentioning. We would sit by the fire on the beams that extended out towards the fire place, though we each had a rough chair. The floor was of rough boards hewn from logs, but preferable to the damp ground. I would sometimes go to my sister-in-law and say, ‘Shall I freeze or ask you for wood,’ and so we lived. Often my clothes would

be frozen stiff about my ankles, remaining so day after day that you could hear them rattle as they struck against anything. What was there to thaw them out? ...The roofs were made of logs laid across with flags spread over them and earth spread over these. This was partial protection from the rain, but when once it was soaked through in a heavy storm then we were at the mercy of the rain.”⁵²

Despite illness and exposure to the elements, Sarah managed to keep her family alive over the winter, relying as many residents did on trade with surrounding communities for food and supplies. Everyone looked forward to spring, when crops could be planted and plans made for the Saints to continue onward to their promised land.

The first emigration company left Winter Quarters under Brigham Young’s direction in April, 1847, with the goal of establishing a permanent settlement in the Salt Lake Valley. All summer long and into autumn, the Saints worked to lay in supplies for the coming winter, preparing for emigration at the first opportunity. Sarah once again faced a long, difficult winter on the prairie’s edge with little more than her faith to sustain her.

Leaving for the Valley

Sarah was among the Saints who found hope in Brigham Young’s announcement for wagons to roll west in the spring of 1848. Jane was delighted to be reunited with her husband when Franklin returned from England in May, and was further encouraged to learn her family was assigned to leave for Salt Lake that very summer in a wagon train led by Franklin’s brother Willard Richards. Although Sarah’s husband had also made his way to Winter Quarters sometime before 1848,⁵³ Benjamin may not have contributed very much to his family’s welfare, as Sarah found it necessary to send two of her daughters, sixteen-year old Lovisa and ten-year old Sarah Jane, west with the Richards family in July.⁵⁴ It would require an additional year of preparations before Benjamin and Sarah were able to travel, and by then another child, William,⁵⁵ had been added to the family. The Jennes signed up with an unknown wagon company, possibly accompanying Sarah’s mother Lovisa, brother George and his family,⁵⁶ arriving in Salt Lake October, 1849.⁵⁷

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Chapter 3

A Family Divided

Sarah Remarries



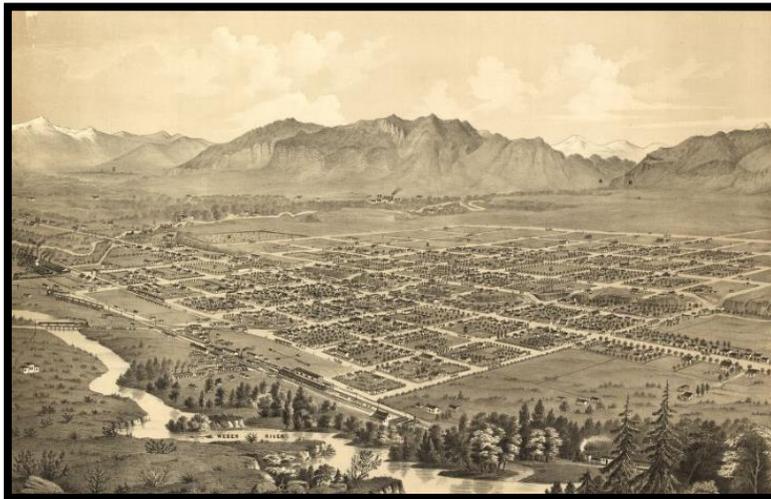
Franklin, Jane and Sarah Richards

There was a tearful reunion when Sarah's family was reunited in Zion in 1849. Although establishing a new household in the desert would not be easy, no longer would Sarah be separated from her children. She was grateful for the continued support offered by her sister Jane and their mother Lovisa, who had by then separated from her second husband and was living in Salt Lake City near her daughters.⁵⁸ Unfortunately, there was also marital trouble for Sarah after Benjamin apostatized from the church and left his family for California's gold fields soon after arriving in Zion,⁵⁹ but Jane and Franklin Richards once again came to her aide. As a recently ordained apostle encouraged to live the principle of celestial marriage, Franklin took Sarah as a plural wife in October, 1849, with Brigham Young's blessing.⁶⁰ The Jenne children, already fond of Franklin, found him to be a loving father figure and were happy to be part of his household.

Two children were eventually born to Sarah and Franklin, but both little Robert⁶¹ and Lucy⁶² died as infants, and after seven-year old Maria died in 1857, Sarah contented herself with mothering her grandchildren as they arrived and helping Jane with her family. Life as an apostle's wife in Salt Lake City was often interesting, but by the time Sarah neared the age of sixty, she longed for a quieter routine, moving next to Lovisa and her husband Jared Roundy in the small town of Wanship,⁶³ in the mountains of Summit County. Sarah spent many years as Wanship's Relief Society President and became known

not only for her skill in managing the women's organization but as a "comforter at the bedside of affliction,"⁶⁴ so much so that Brigham Young himself called Sarah as president of the Relief Society across Weber County in 1872. In addition to presiding over all branches of the organization in the stake, Sarah directed "retrenchment and economy in dress, moral, mental, and spiritual improvement" and "established the manufacture of homemade straw bonnets and hats, which industry has furnished employment to many."⁶⁵

Jane and Franklin had moved to Ogden in the 1870s,⁶⁶ and now that Sarah's church duties took her all over Weber County, she could often found visiting the Richards' even after making her home with son Will and his wife Laura⁶⁷ after their 1874 marriage in Wanship.⁶⁸



The growing city of Ogden, Utah, in 1875.

Franklin D. Richards

Franklin D. Richards served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from February 12, 1849, until his death in 1899. A short time after his appointment to the Twelve in 1849, Richards accepted a missionary call to England where he served as president of the British Mission and later as president of the European Mission. In these positions Richards acted as editor of The Millennial Star and director of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund's operations in Europe, making immigration to Utah possible for thousands of poor Saints. Franklin eventually returned to Britain three more times as mission president.

Richards became a polygamist in 1846 when he married Elizabeth McFate. He later took a dozen more plural wives, beginning in 1849, when he married Sarah Snyder, Charlotte Fox and Susan Sanford Peirson on the same day in October, 1849. Richards added Laura Altha Snyder in 1854, followed by seven more wives in 1857, a total of thirteen families to care for.

Richards served the community over the years as a member of the Utah Territorial Legislature, a university regent, civic and military officer, church historian, and president of the Utah Genealogical and Historical Societies.

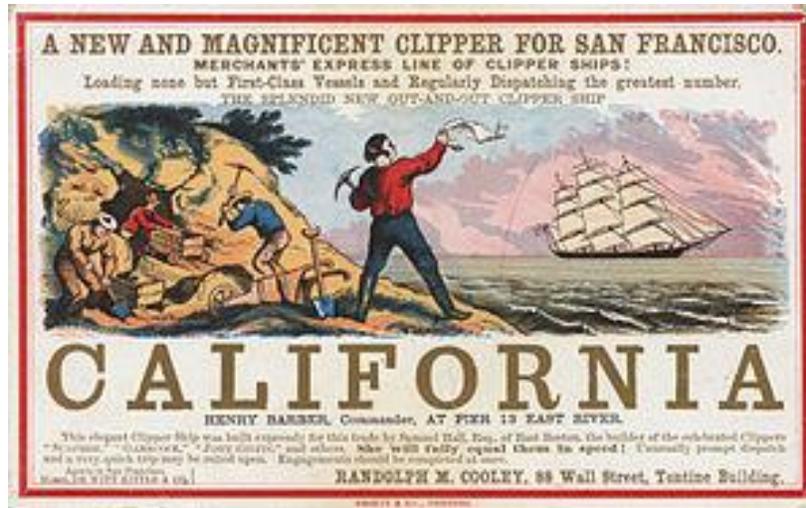
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Chapter 4

Starting Over

A Fractured Family



Benjamin was among the hundreds of thousands of men who rushed to California seeking a fortune in gold.

Mormon pioneers like Benjamin and Sarah Jenne were not the only immigrants entering the Salt Lake Valley in 1849. As many as ten thousand gold seekers passed through that year on their way to quick riches in California, spurred on by tantalizing tales of shinning nuggets available for the taking.⁶⁹ The previous winter had been harsh, with food so scarce the Saints were forced to eat wolves, hawks, crows and dogs, but with renewed hope, they planted and planned for a bountiful harvest the coming autumn. What they received instead was plague of crickets which stripped their fields and weakened the faith of some, who were tempted to join the “forty-niners” in the pursuit of wealth.

The lust for gold was threatening enough to the struggling colony that Brigham Young repeated admonished his people to “get cured of your California fevers as quick as you can,” emphasizing his displeasure for those who abandoned Zion with the admonition, “If you Elders of

Israel want to go to the gold mines, go and be damned.... I advise the corrupt, and all who want to go to California to go and not come back, for I will not fellowship them.”⁷⁰

The lure of easy money was too strong for Benjamin, who defied Brigham’s decree and deserted both his church and his family soon after arriving in Salt Lake.⁷¹ He struck out for the gold fields before the autumn leaves turned in 1849, eventually making his way to one of the Sierra Nevada’s scruffy mining camps. By 1855, Benjamin had remarried⁷² and set up a household in Poor Man’s Gulch where a son, Benjamin Junior,⁷³ was born that October.⁷⁴ Even though the placer mines at Poor Man’s Gulch eventually produced over \$100,000 dollars’ worth of gold,⁷⁵ Benjamin didn’t see much of it. After his wife’s death he and Ben Jr. returned briefly to Utah in 1856,⁷⁶ before moving on to a new life back east in 1860.⁷⁷

Benjamin spent some time living Ohio,⁷⁸ probably not far from his brother Ansel’s⁷⁹ farm in the village of Amherst, just south of Lake Erie.⁸⁰ Here he married for a third time. Two children, Martha,⁸¹ Joseph,⁸² were born before Benjamin moved his family to upstate New York in 1867.⁸³

Benjamin ran a prosperous farm during the eleven years he lived in St. Lawrence County, New York, cultivating many acres of wheat, oats, barley and buckwheat.⁸⁴ Two more daughters were added to the family, Cora⁸⁵ in 1868, and Sophsona⁸⁶ in 1870,⁸⁷ before something disrupted the household in the late 1870s. Whether the family dissolved due to divorce or death, Benjamin decided to abandon his farm and younger children, returning to Utah with Ben Jr. in 1878.⁸⁸ Martha, Joseph and Cora remained in New York, where they later married and raised families of their own. What became of Benjamin’s wife Mary⁸⁹ and her daughter Sophsona is unknown.



The Strange Case of Benjamin and His Wives

Details about Benjamin's marriages are confusing and conflicting. Most information of the family is based on Judith Jenney Gurney's *The Jenny Book: John Jenney of Plymouth and his Descendants, Compiled from the manuscripts of Bertha W. Clark and Susan C. Tufts*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Gateway Press, Inc., 1988), a detailed, but undocumented genealogy which conflicts on some points with other sources.

According to Gurney, Benjamin married "a widow named Maria Burns"⁹⁰ who became the mother of two children, Mary (born 1857, in Bountiful, Utah; died 1864) and Benjamin A. (born 22 October, 1858, California). This information differs with a biographical sketch on Benjamin A. found in *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho* (Chicago, Illinois: Lewis Publishing Company, 1899), page 181, which states Benjamin Junior's mother was "Annie Ann Richardson, who died in giving birth to her only child" on 22 October, 1855, at Poor Man's Gulch, California.⁹¹

Gurney claims Benjamin "separated from Maria Burns, took their two children, and returned to St. Lawrence Co, New York, where he married Martha Hall."⁹² Gurney attributes three children to Martha Hall: Martha (born 1863), Joseph (born 1865) and Cora (born 1868). She also notes Benjamin "in late life took a fourth wife, Mary Jordan."⁹³

While Benjamin eventually moved to upstate New York, he spent several years living in Ohio, where both Martha and Joseph were born in the 1860s, according to the 1900 U.S. census.⁹⁴ Benjamin Jr.'s biography also confirms Ohio residency from 1859 to 1867.

Benjamin was living in St. Lawrence County, New York, by 1870, when the U.S. census documents his children as Benjamin Jr., Martha, Joseph, Cora and eight-month old Sophosona. His wife, however, is not Martha Hall, but Mary E., twenty-six years younger than her husband. Is this Mary Jordan?

Both Mary and little Sophsona disappear from the records after 1870, possibly due to death. Benjamin, accompanied by Benjamin Jr., returned to Utah in 1878,⁹⁵ leaving Martha, Joseph and Cora in the care of relatives or friends until they were of age.

Martha married Alvin J. Taylor⁹⁶ in 1883.⁹⁷ The couple lived in Gouverneur, Saint Lawrence County, where they became the parents of three daughters: Grace,⁹⁸ Myrtle⁹⁹ and Mable,¹⁰⁰ who gave them nine grandchildren. Alvin died in 1924, followed by Martha two years later in 1926. Both are buried in Gouverneur's Riverside Cemetery.¹⁰¹

Joseph and his wife Clara¹⁰² made their home in Rossie, sixteen miles from Gouverneur, after their 1887 marriage.¹⁰³ Neither of their children, a daughter Iola,¹⁰⁴ and son Hubert,¹⁰⁵ had offspring of their own. Joseph died in 1925, and Clara died 1948. Both are buried in the Spragueville Cemetery, Antwerp, Jefferson County, New York.¹⁰⁶

Cora married James Lawrence,¹⁰⁷ in 1899.¹⁰⁸ The couple lived in Richville, New York, where they raised two daughters,¹⁰⁹ Mary Beatrice,¹¹⁰ who had nine children, and Helen,¹¹¹ who had six children. Cora died in 1919, and James died in 1828. Both are buried in the Riverside Cemetery, Gouverneur, New York.¹¹²

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- ⁷⁰ *Ibid*, page 43.
- ⁷¹ Lovisa (Jenne) Roundy, "Personal History of Lovisa (Jenne) Roundy," undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- ⁷² Maria Burns (1810-), #L652-W82, www.familysearch.org
- ⁷³ Benjamin Ansel Jenne (1855-1928), #LDM9-G8K, www.familysearch.org
- ⁷⁴ *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho* (Chicago, Illinois: Lewis Publishing Company, 1899), p.181
http://books.google.com/books?id=TB5PAAAAAYAAJ&dq=benjamin+jenne+idaho+falls&source=gbs_navlinks_s
- ⁷⁵ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Hills_\(Tuolumne_County\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Hills_(Tuolumne_County))
- ⁷⁶ Benjamin Jenny, Utah 1856 Statehood Census Index 1850-1890, Salt Lake County, Willow Creek Ward, page 599, www.ancestry.com
- ⁷⁷ *Illustrated History of the State of Idaho*, p.181.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁷⁹ Ansel Seth Jenne (1808-1881), #L61D-9KJ, www.familysearch.org
- ⁸⁰ Ansel Jenne household, 1860 U.S. census, Lorain County, Ohio, town of Amherst, Archive Collection Number: T1159; Roll: 23; Line: 10; Schedule Type: Agriculture, www.ancestry.com
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- ⁸² Joseph E. Jenne (1865-1925), #LKGZ-3Y9, www.familysearch.org
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- ⁸⁷ Benjamin Jenne household, 1870 U.S. census, Saint Lawrence County, New York, town of Fine; Roll: M593_1097; Page: 221B; Image: 447; Family History Library Film: 552596, www.ancestry.com
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- ⁸⁹ Mary E. (-) Jenne (1832-), #LKGC-18T, www.familysearch.org
- ⁹⁰ Judith Jenney Gurney, *The Jenny Book: John Jenney of Plymouth and his Descendants, Compiled from the manuscripts of Bertha W. Clark and Susan C. Tufts*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Gateway Press, Inc., 1988), page 224.
- ⁹¹ Benjamin Jr.'s birthplace is noted as California on the 1880 U.S. census. William H. Jenne household, 1880 U.S. census, Summit County, Utah, town of Wanship, Roll 1338; Family History Film #1255338, Page: 22B, Enumeration District: 073, www.ancestry.com
- ⁹² Gurney, *The Jenny Book: John Jenney of Plymouth and his Descendants, Compiled from the manuscripts of Bertha W. Clark and Susan C. Tufts*, page 224.
- ⁹³ *Ibid*.
- ⁹⁴ Alvin Taylor household, 1900 U.S. census, Saint Lawrence County, New York, town of Gouverneur; Roll: 1156; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 0094; FHL microfilm: 1241156,

www.ancestry.com See also: Joseph Jenne household, Saint Lawrence County, New York, town of Rossie; Roll: 1158; Page: 2B; Enumeration District: 0138; FHL microfilm: 1241158, www.ancestry.com

⁹⁵ *Illustrated History of the State of Idaho*, p.181.

⁹⁶ Alvin Jonathan Taylor (1862-1924), #LKGZ-1TP, www.familysearch.org

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⁹⁸ Grace May (Taylor) Cummings (1884-1958), #LKGZ-MMX, www.familysearch.org

⁹⁹ Myrtle E. (Taylor) Hill (1889-after 1930), #LKGZ-MSW, www.familysearch.org

¹⁰⁰ Mable S. Taylor (1892-1948), #LKGZ-M3Z, www.familysearch.org

¹⁰¹ Inventory of Riverside Cemetery, Gouverneur, New York,

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¹⁰³ Joseph Jenne household, 1900 U.S. census, Saint Lawrence County, New York, town of Rossie, Roll: 1158; Page: 2B; Enumeration District: 0138; FHL microfilm: 1241158, www.ancestry.com

¹⁰⁴ Iola (Jenne) Stress (1892-1978), #LKGZ-QHD, www.familysearch.org

¹⁰⁵ Hubert Jenne (1907-1964), #LKGZ-QD5, www.familysearch.org

¹⁰⁶ www.findagrave.com

¹⁰⁷ James Edward Lawrence (1869-1928), #LKG6-8P5, www.familysearch.org

¹⁰⁸ James Lawrence household, 1900 U.S. census Saint Lawrence County, New York, town of Gouverneur; Roll: 1156; Page: 19A; Enumeration District: 0092; FHL microfilm: 1241156, www.ancestry.com

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¹¹⁰ Mary Beatrice (Lawrence) McAdam (1899-1981), #LKG6-D9G, www.familysearch.org

¹¹¹ Helen "Nellie" Gladys (Lawrence) Facey (1901-1974), #KPSS-WHB, www.familysearch.org

¹¹² www.findagrave.com

Chapter 5

Final Days

Carrying On



The entrance to Idaho's Insane Asylum in Blackfoot, where Benjamin spent his final years.

By the summer of 1880, Benjamin and Ben Jr. were living in Wanship, Utah, at the home of Benjamin's son, Will. In addition to Will's wife and their three small children, Sarah, still married to Franklin Richards, was also living in the same household.¹¹³ Although the situation was unusual, everyone got along with each other well enough that when Will moved his family to Gentile Valley, Idaho, in the early 1880s, Sarah,¹¹⁴ Benjamin, Ben Jr. and his bride went, too.

Soon after the birth of his first child in 1882,¹¹⁵ Ben Jr., a young and adventurous man, pushed on father north to Soda Springs, where the railroad generated enough business to support the hotel and restaurant he opened there.¹¹⁶ He spent several years in Shoshone,¹¹⁷ another railroad town, before finally settling in Idaho Falls with his wife, children and aging father. For a time, Ben was able to accommodate his father at Burgess House, one of the hotels he and his wife Katie¹¹⁸ managed in town,¹¹⁹ but eventually Benjamin Sr.'s physical and mental health deteriorated until his care became too much for the family. Ben was forced to place his father in an institution thirty miles south in Blackfoot.¹²⁰

While patients at the Idaho Insane Asylum were admitted for a variety of mental illnesses, Benjamin was among “the feeble-minded and helpless class of the old who require increased care.”¹²¹ Benjamin passed his final days performing small tasks in the hospital garden, barns and laundry until his condition became critical. He died at the age of ninety on 18 February, 1896.¹²²



Franklin and Jane Richards on the front porch of their Ogden home.

Sarah

Sarah remained part of Will’s household, living in Ogden¹²³ for some time, not far from Jane and Franklin Richards’ home where she was a frequent visitor. Sarah often accompanied her sister and husband on speaking tours around northern Utah, addressing numerous meetings of young Mormon women and members of the Relief Society, along with other church authorities such as Joseph F. Smith and President Wilford Woodruff.¹²⁴

Sarah was well-loved and respected in the community, thanks to her years of service and her many visits to the ladies’ auxiliary organizations. She was among “twenty-one aged ladies” brought in carriages to a dinner party honoring pioneer women in June, 1893. After servings of ice cream, cake and fruit, a group of young ladies “called with their mandolins and guitars and favored our dear grandmas with sweet music,” reported the society section of *The Ogden Standard Examiner*. Sarah and other guests spoke of their

experiences in “the early days...It was indeed, affecting to witness such a gathering and listen to the varied experiences which many had passed through in over eighty years of life in this changeful world of ours.”¹²⁵

Sarah spent the winter in Ogden, moving to Will’s farm house in Plain City the next spring.¹²⁶ Her strength was beginning to fade and by the end of September, she was ill enough to cause her family worry. Will wrote to his siblings about their mother’s worsening condition and they began making their way to her bedside. “O, I could hardly endure it to wait there and not know but what my mother was dying without seeing me,” wrote her daughter Olive,¹²⁷ who took the train from Gentile Valley, Idaho. “I got to Will’s about 11 o’clock, found my darling mother alive and O so glad to see me. She kissed me and said ‘Olive you are not too late. I could not die until you came, but now I am ready to go in an hour. I can die in peace now.’”¹²⁸

Sarah, lucid until the end, gave final advice to her children before she died on the evening of 4 October, 1894. Friends and family gathered for a modest funeral service held at Will’s house two days later, after which “we had to see our darling mother borne from her home...in a white hearse with a lovely span of white horses,” recalled Olive. Sarah’s family accompanied her body to the Salt Lake City cemetery, where she was “laid beside the darling daughters and loved sisters¹²⁹ that left us so many years ago.”¹³⁰

Sarah was remembered by *The Desert News* for her “quiet heroism, of lessons of faith and its triumphs ... which extended over the greater part of this century and which embraced nearly fifty-eight years of experience in the church. There is something to console, something to encourage and something to build up in every home where the Gospel is dear.”¹³¹

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- ¹¹⁴ *The Deseret News*, 26 January, 1895.
- ¹¹⁵ Ada Blanch Jenne, "Augustus William Pearson-Ada Blanch Jenne family group sheet," <http://www.manncrk.com/gen/f417.html>
- ¹¹⁶ *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho* (Chicago, Illinois: Lewis Publishing Company, 1899), page 181
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- ¹¹⁷ Judith Jenney Gurney, *The Jenny Book: John Jenney of Plymouth and his Descendants, Compiled from the manuscripts of Bertha W. Clark and Susan C. Tufts*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Gateway Press, Inc., 1988), page 267.
- ¹¹⁸ Katherine "Katie" (Suttor) Jenne (1856-1931), #MR79-2ZN, www.familysearch.org
- ¹¹⁹ *An Illustrated History of the State of Idaho*, page 181.
- ¹²⁰ *The Idaho Register*, Vol. XVI issue 47, page 1, 21 Feb 1897.
- ¹²¹ "Idaho State Hospital South,"
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- ¹²² *The Idaho Register*, Vol. XVI issue 47, page 1, 21 Feb 1897.
- ¹²³ R. L. Polk and Company, *Ogden City Directory, 1892* (Salt Lake City, Utah), page 183, William H. Jenne, 500 23rd Street, Ogden, Farmer.
- ¹²⁴ *The Ogden Standard Examiner*, 17 December, 1893.
- ¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2 July, 1893.
- ¹²⁶ *The Deseret News*, 26 January, 1895.
- ¹²⁷ Olive Sophronia (Jenne) Peck (1835-1920), #KWJZ-87S, www.familysearch.org
- ¹²⁸ Olive Sophronia Jenne Peck, "Journal for 1894-94," typescript, #KWJZ-87S, www.familysearch.org
- ¹²⁹ Sarah was buried next to her daughter Roseanna (Jenne) Hansen (1841-1872) and the three small children she lost soon after arriving in Utah: Maria Jane Jenne (1844-1851), Lucy Jenne (1854-1854) and Robert Jenne (1850-1850). Plot F-13-3-1, www.findagrave.com
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