

The World of Joseph Fielding: Chapter 33

Mary Fielding Smith Warned Not to Travel That Year

The pioneers of 1848 began to gather at the Elk Horn outfitting station toward the end of May, moving their wagons across the swollen Elkhorn River on ferries and setting up camps on the west side while waiting for the rest of the company to arrive. President Young visited the camp several times on horseback, finally bringing his family members and wagons on the 30th of May. On the morning of May 31st, the river had risen three feet from the previous day as the winter snows melted. Men worked hard the next week ferrying wagons from the east bank to the west bank and encouraging the cattle to swim across.

The account of Mary being chastised by Cornelius Lott is legendary in the LDS Church. Joseph Fielding does not mention the incident at all in his journal. The bulk of the information comes from the memory of Mary's son, who was nine years old at the time. Young Joseph F. stated that he was present when Captain Lott approached Mary at the outfitting station.¹ Joseph F. remembered that it had taken his mother and Uncle Fielding's families three days to travel from Winter Quarters to the outfitting station.² After arriving and possibly traveling a day to Elder Kimball's camp, they were approached by Elder Kimball and Captain Lott, the latter appearing to have been supervising the cattle belonging to the second company.³



Pioneers moving west in 1848 crossed the Elkhorn River and camped, waiting for their companies.

Joseph F. later wrote the situation from his memory:

After diagnosing our case, considering the number of wagons we had, and the helplessness of the whole company, [Captain Lott] very sternly informed the widow that there was no use for her to attempt to cross the plains that year, and advised her to go back to the Missouri River, and remain at Winter Quarters another year, when perhaps she could be helped. Then the supervisor added: "If you start out in this manner, you will be a burden on the company the whole way, and I will have to carry you along or leave you on the way."

Joseph F., in recounting this event many years later, stated:

I am happy to say, the widow had a little mettle in her, and she straightened up and calmly replied, Father Lott, I will beat you to the valley and will ask no help from you, either."

Joseph F. remembered that he personally "felt grieved and hurt at the harsh treatment and discouraging manner in which this brother had spoken and acted with his mother." Mary and her brother Joseph then unloaded one wagon, yoked their two best oxen to it, and headed back to the Missouri River. There, they attempted to make arrangements for more cattle.

On Friday, June 2nd, Elder Kimball sent Howard Egan back to Winter Quarters to take care of some Church business. He took with him two of his teams for the use of Mary Smith, and was asked to “urge [her] to come as speedily as possible.”⁴

Brother Egan had traveled to the Valley the previous summer with President Young and Elder Kimball. This year he was taking one of his wives and her children in Elder Kimball’s company, and the following year he would take his second wife and her children to the Valley. Upon seeing the strength of Howard’s preparation, Elder Kimball apparently felt this man could spare two teams to aid Mary Smith, and Brother Egan agreed.



Howard Egan provided 2 strong teams for Mary Fielding Smith.

Brother Egan’s wife had given birth to a healthy baby boy alongside the Elkhorn River only a few days earlier, but she and the baby were well enough to make this journey. It was perhaps with tremendous faith and gratitude, in addition to the covenant he had made in the Nauvoo Temple in 1845, that Howard Egan gave up these cattle to help Hyrum Smith’s widow.⁵

With no mention of any of these events except Howard Egan’s loan of the oxen, Joseph Fielding recorded that he and his sister were among the last to leave Winter Quarters, finally departing on the 4th of June, a Sunday, to return to the outfitting station where they knew Elder Kimball was waiting to assist them in crossing the Elkhorn River. After traveling twelve miles, they were met by Brother Egan and his oxen.

Even with the addition of these two teams, Mary Fielding Smith would, from the trail, write:

I suppose no person has made the attempt under more embarrassed circumstances than we have done. It was till very lately quite uncertain whether we could start at all, but right or wrong, we are on the way and I trust it will prove for the best.⁶

Native Americans Attack the Outfitting Station

Elder Kimball’s large company was camped on the west bank of the Elkhorn waiting for the last few families to cross the river, including Joseph Fielding and Mary Smith. Tuesday morning, June 6th, before the arrival of these families later that day, Native Americans raced through the company’s herd of cattle, killing one ox. Men of the camp raised the alarm and followed the intruders. Elder Kimball’s oldest son, just twenty-two, was among those who gave chase to save their cattle. His horse was shot by the attackers and Brother Egan was shot in the arm. Another member of the camp was shot in the back and it was feared the wound was mortal, but he recovered. Jacob Peart, one of the earliest British converts and who happened to be traveling with President Young’s company, wrote that three of the attackers were killed.

Two Companies Under the Direction of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball Depart

Twelve hundred pioneers led by Brigham Young were divided into four large camps of hundreds as they left the Elk Horn outfitting station on June 5th, 1848. Thomas Bullock, the company

clerk, wrote about Lorenzo Snow's hundred:

On the 1st day of June, Lorenzo Snow's company moved off the ground to the Liberty Pole on the Platte, in order to make room for other wagons that came pouring in from Winter Quarters. If any person enquire, "Is Mormonism down?" He ought to have been in the neighbourhood of the Elk Horn this day, and he would have seen such a host of wagons that would have satisfied him in an instant, that it lives and flourishes like a tree by a fountain of waters; he would have seen merry faces, and heard the song of rejoicing, that the day of deliverance had surely come.

Elder Kimball's pioneer company left two days later, also in four hundreds, and was formally called the Second Division.⁷ The military terms, such as winter quarters, and dividing the pioneers into divisions and companies, would have been common terms with both the Americans and the British who were very familiar with military traditions. The intent of the military structure was to keep order.

However, there are several passages of scripture which reflect a military aspect to the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. Section 76 in the Doctrine and Covenants uses the word valiant, which is a military term indicating strength, bravery and heroism. In truth, the Doctrine and Covenants has many military terms. Section 109 describes a force suddenly attacking an enemy: "That thy church may come forth out of the wilderness of darkness, and shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Section 105 includes the petition of the Lord to the saints, "But first let my army become very great, and let it be sanctified before me. . . ." In Section 49, the Lord uses language reminiscent of the Roman leader Vespasian, who did not send his armies out to fight alone, but traveled with them. "I am in your midst," are words which indicate the Savior is at the head of his forces.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God, Martin Luther's well-known hymn, was very familiar to those who knew of the continual wars, attacks and inadequate defenses in the Napoleonic age. However, the hymns of the Restoration are filled with military terms. Elder Parley P. Pratt's hymn, *The Morning Breaks*, the first hymn in the 1985 LDS hymnal, includes the line, "Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled!" The fifth hymn in this volume is *High on the Mountain Top*. The words portray a banner being unfurled, the symbolism depicting a military flag which the troops followed. In this case the poetry depicts the banner to be the gospel truth which the Savior's faithful followers will recognize and flock to support. This imagery was not lost to the pioneers.

The Two Companies Leave the Outfitting Station

Once the companies were underway, company clerk Thomas Bullock faithfully traveled through both trains making a count. President Young's company was about double the size of Elder Kimball's; together they totaled almost nineteen hundred pioneers. Interestingly, traveling amongst this large company of people was young Samuel Harrison Bailey Smith, the nine-year-old son of the prophet's deceased brother, Samuel. Between the two trains were six hundred wagons, over three thousand oxen, one hundred and thirty horses, forty mules, cows and loose cattle, six-hundred and fifty sheep, two hundred pigs and nine hundred chickens. Surprisingly, there were fifty cats which would have been carried in the wagons. Five beehives were among

the companies. One hundred and thirty dogs would have helped herd the loose cattle. Eleven doves were taken, which would have been saved for a start of several dovecotes once they reached the Great Basin. Small numbers of geese, ducks and goats also crossed the plains early that summer.

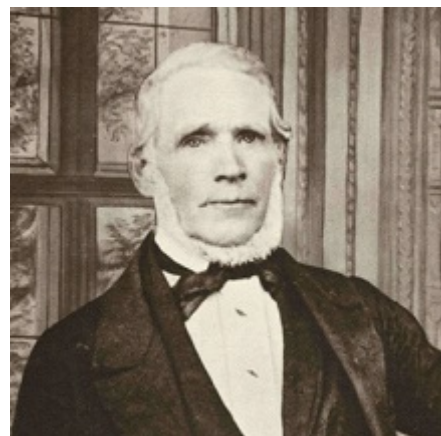
Brother Bullock's records show that there was communication between the leaders in the Salt Lake Valley and those on the plains. The travelers knew, for example, that teams would be sent to help them on their last stretch, allowing the borrowed oxen and wagons to head back to Winter Quarters to be used again the next summer. As a result, some of the loads were cached in the Rocky Mountains and retrieved later.⁸

Apostles Willard Richards and Amasa Lyman led a third company of five hundred across the plains that summer. While they did not leave the Elk Horn station until July, horseback riders between President Young's company and Elder Richard's company exchanged trail information and updated each other on the condition of their companies as these large bodies moved west.

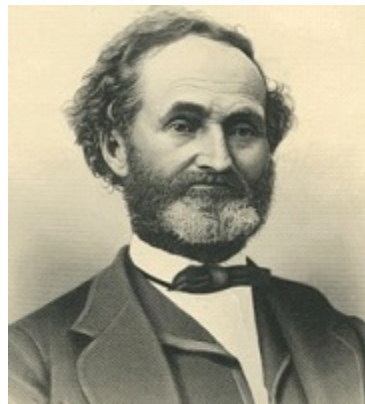
Thomas Bullock's oxen pulled two wagons. One, driven by a friend, was filled with valuable Church records, which the two men carefully managed.⁹

The Company is Organized

Once the Fielding and other families had crossed the Elkhorn, Elder Kimball's company moved west two miles along the South Platte River where they spent the night. On June 8th, they traveled ten miles. After making their camp for the night, they listened to counsel from their leaders and fully organized the company. Joseph Fielding, Mary Smith and their families traveled in the hundred led by Henry Herriman. John Pack was the captain of fifty.¹⁰ Cornelius Peter Lott was appointed to be a captain of the ten families which included the two Fielding siblings and their families.



Henry Herriman, one of the Seven Presidents of Seventy, led Joseph Fielding's and Mary Smith's hundred.



John Pack had crossed the plains in 1847 with Brigham Young.

Young Joseph F.'s memories include being harassed by

Brother Lott. An adult can read his account and sense concern and fear this man had for his travelers, but any trials his family had, young Joseph blamed on Captain Lott. In one account, young Joseph remembered that a woman traveling with Mary Smith had gone on ahead to travel with someone in Brigham Young's company for the day.

Captain Lott was concerned and asked that Mary's step-son John, age sixteen, go ahead on horseback and confirm that. Young Joseph knew there was no reason to worry and felt Captain Lott was being unnecessarily strict and was even putting his brother in danger. When the woman was indeed found safe, young Joseph was smug.

Captain Lott was likely relieved.¹¹

Mary Fielding Smith Drives Her Own Wagon

William McMillan Thompson, who had been adopted by Mercy Fielding Thompson soon after his arrival in Nauvoo, was selected to be the clerk for Elder Kimball's division. Traveling with Brother Lott's company of ten with Mary Smith and Joseph Fielding, he recorded that some of their oxen began the trek west pregnant with calves, and thus were weak. He wrote that because of the shortage of teamsters, not only did Mary drive a wagon, but her twelve-year-old step-daughter Jerusha also drove a wagon. He did not mention that young Joseph F. also drove a wagon, as this was assumed. Joseph F. later said, "I was successful in driving a team for my mother from the Elkhorn River into the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. . . ."¹² William wrote that when the path was a steep decline, the men would drive the wagons for the women, who weren't always strong enough to manage the teams during these dangerous stretches. Young Joseph F. was always proud of the help he gave his mother as they crossed the plains.

Mary Ann and Hannah Fielding Drive Their Wagons

Young Rachel Fielding, who turned nine not long after her family departed Winter Quarters, remembered her trek across the plains throughout her life. Her faith-filled family was led by three British-born parents who had left everything for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Joseph, age fifty-one, drove a heavy wagon with two oxen and two cows, one borrowed from his sister. Hannah, age thirty-nine, rode on the wagon seat next to her sister-wife, Mary Ann, who had left her former husband and sons in Kirtland in order to follow Brigham Young west. In the wagon were Hannah's children, Ellen, age seven, and Heber and Joseph, who turned five and three that summer. Mary Ann's daughter and namesake, age two, would have also been in the wagon. The graves of two infant sons were left behind in Winter Quarters.¹³ Mary Ann was expecting a baby who would be born during the upcoming winter.

Although they started out weak, Joseph wrote, "We seemed to improve in our traveling, and our Cattle improved in their Condition." Rachel wrote:

I was barefooted and I walked most of the way from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake Valley; for our harness was an old one to start with, and we had not gone far on our way when the lines gave out and I had to lead the horse by the bridle. It was rather difficult sometimes on the rough roads, for the horse stepped on my heels so often they kept them sore.

The next day at the Platte River they were able to catch up with President Young's company. Joseph Fielding wrote:

It was an interesting sight to behold in the Morning, a String of Oxen, reaching from one Side of the River to the other, about a Mile, from Brigham's company coming to assist us in crossing, for the Wagons sank into the Sand, and it was hard drawing for the Cattle. So we put our Cattle to our Wagons & put an extra Team to each and got through well. It was indeed an interesting Sight. You might have taken us for two Armies encamped on either Side of the River waiting the Signal for Conflict, but how different was the Case

when we saw almost the Whole Strength of the one wading through the River from one to 3 feet in depth to help their Friends. Here we stayed over Sunday.

The work was too difficult for Joseph to keep a journal across the plains, but the following winter in Salt Lake he wrote a few memories of their trek. He said that often the grass was thin and the companies separated into their tens to find feed for the cattle. He wrote, "Each 10 had to do the best they could."

A very interesting incident was later told by Curtis Bolton, who was a pioneer in Brigham Young's company. He had a heavy wagon and an awkward team, and his oxen would balk at every muddy place in the road. He "was fretting and worrying his cattle and his cattle were fretting and worrying him," and he "was all the time cutting, whipping and hallroing to them." One morning on a muddy trail, his wagon became stuck in mud to its hubs.

President Young spoke to Curtis, saying, "Brother Bolton, that's not the way to drive cattle. Here, let me show you." Brother Bolton reported that he handed "Brother Brigham" the whip, and "he drove and then the cattle went well enough, plowing through the mud without balking." After a mile, President Young handed back the whip and said, "This is the way you drive cattle: Carry the whip over the left shoulder and look the other way."

Brother Bolton followed the telling of that story with these words: "Now, I believe this most excellent maxim will apply to the government of families, conferences, wards, or any charge entrusted to man."¹⁴

In 1917, a year before his death, President Joseph F. Smith spoke at a gathering on Pioneer Day in Salt Lake City. At that time he shared a memory he had of his oxen which he had driven the entire way across the plains:

On September 23rd, next, it will be 69 years since I drove my team into that valley. My team consisted of two pairs, or yokes, of oxen. My leaders' names were Thom and Joe—we raised them from calves, and they were both white. My wheel team were named Broad and Berry. . . . Many times while traveling sandy or rough roads, long, thirsty drives, my oxen, lowing with the heat and fatigue, I would put my arms around Thom's neck, and cry bitter tears! That was all I could do. Thom was my favorite and best and most willing and obedient servant and friend.¹⁵

Rachel, writing from her childhood memories, said:

We had many enjoyable times on the Plains as well as sad ones. Some nights we camped early, and in the evenings we had immense bonfires, and the Saints would gather around the fires and sing hymns or dance and make merry. The bigger the fire the better it seemed, and the spirit with which the hymns were sung was an inspiration. When we camped, our wagons were placed in a circle, thus forming a corral for the cattle for the night. Some nights we had to travel quite late before we found a good camping place, for in many places the grass was scarce or else the water was scarce.

Joseph Fielding was among the many pioneers who enjoyed watching the bison. He wrote:

It is wonderful to see the Buffalo and the Marks of them. For several hundred Miles the Prairie is covered with their Dung, from which one is sure there must be Thousands of them. Our Companies shot many of them; we ate freely of the Flesh and also dried great quantities and brought it on to the Valley.¹⁶

Rachel wrote:

We often saw large herds of Buffalo and then the men would kill one, so we could all have a little meat. Once we saw a large herd of deer, and I was delighted to see how nimbly they ran.

A young girl in President Young's company later wrote:

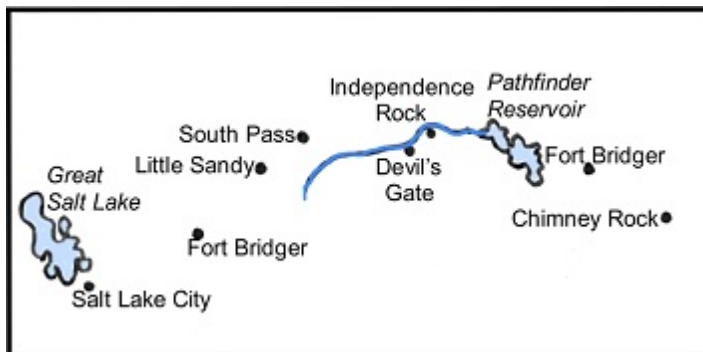
My oldest brother William killed an elk which we ate with great relish. Some of the men killed a buffalo and the train laid over and jerked the meat. Jerking consists of cutting the meat in strips, stringing it on sticks, then smoking it. This meat was not very good even when fresh, as it is very coarse-grained.¹⁷

Hannah told her descendants that when her family wanted butter, they skimmed the cream off the milk and dropped it by large spoonfuls into a can. They would then set the can in the bed of the wagon. Jarring during the day's journey was enough to churn the cream into butter for their evening meal.¹⁸

Unless the Lord Assists Us, We Cannot Get Through

On July 16th, 1848, as the Kimball company camped near Chimney Rock, men from the Valley with teams and wagons met the companies after traveling almost six hundred miles. Mail was carried for the pioneers, and Mary and her brother Joseph received a letter from Mercy, which has not survived. Mary stayed up late to pen a response.¹⁹ Mary, the daughter of a Methodist circuit rider and raised near his green and thriving farm in England, was now used to the military

terminology. She identified her location as the Camp of Israel, Chimney Rock and addressed the letter to her sister in the Camp of Israel, Valley of the Great Salt Lake.



Mary Smith wrote a letter from Chimney Rock to her sister Mercy 600 miles away in Salt Lake City. The Pathfinder Reservoir is modern, created from a dam on the North Platte River.

Mary first mentioned that she had received oxen from the Valley which had come with the men bringing the mail. "I have just received your last letter by the hands of Brother Thomas Kirk, also one yoke of Oxen in good condition which are very acceptable."

Camp of Israel (Rock Chimney) ¹⁸⁴⁸ July 16

My dear Sister

I have just received your last Letter by the hands of Brother Thomas. Think also one spoke of boxes in good condition which are very acceptable. I expect an express to leave this Camp tomorrow morning and take this opportunity to send a few lines to you being the first I have had since we parted which is I believe 13 months ago to day. During this time I have received many Letters and much intelligence from you, some things pleasing and many others very much to the contrary, which has helped considerably to accumulate my load of care, sorrow & perplexity. I have the events of the long period of time all upon my mind at once & it would be useless here to enter into the past, if the Lord spares our lives

Mary Fielding Smith wrote this letter to her sister Mercy from Chimney Rock, almost 600 miles from Salt Lake City. In this letter, Mary expresses her fears that she will not be able to complete the journey.

Mary's son Joseph F., many years later as President of the Church, praised his mother's strength, faith and tenacity in crossing the plains. Mary's Chimney Rock letter makes evident the fact that Mary had done her best to shield her significant concerns from her children. That night, Mary wrote, perhaps quietly referencing her feelings about Mercy's marriage:

I expect an express to leave this Camp tomorrow morning and [so I] take this opportunity to send a few lines to you, being the first I have had since we parted which I believe [was] 13 months ago today. During this time I have received many letters and much intelligence from you, some things pleasing and many others very much to the contrary, which has helped considerably to accumulate my load of care. Sorrow and perplexity. I have the events of the long period of time all upon my mind at once. It would be useless here to enter into the past. If the Lord spares our lives till we meet we may have opportunities enough of answering on matters pertaining to the past. The present is what now concerns us and what you will feel most anxious to hear about you will perceive that notwithstanding all our discouragements.

I am truly thankful to hear that you are all well in health and I pray God most fervently to bless you all and prosper the work of your hands and I thank the Lord for his goodness to me and my Family. We have in general been blessed with good health and have all safely left Winter Quarters. That is, my own Family. I have the five Children, Sister Grinnells

& Jane with me, Brother Joel Terry is with me as a driver on condition that he has a Team back with him for his own use next spring. I have also 2 other drivers, strangers to you which makes my Family pretty large. I assure you, I have to work very hard and drive an Ox Team a great part of the time. I have one yoke of good Cattle to my large Carriage and they have thus far done well, but do not cease to pray for us. We are very short of strength and unless the Lord assists we cannot get through.

Margaret Cahoon, a pioneer in President Young's company, wrote that when they were just a few hundred miles from the Salt Lake Valley, "President Young wished the Saints to send back some of their wagons and oxen to assist the poor Saints at Winter Quarters on the journey the following season. We sent back two wagons, four yoke of oxen and two young men teamsters who had driven our wagons for us."²⁰ This was clearly Mary's concern, that her teamsters would need to leave their train at that point in order to make it safely back to Winter Quarters, and she could not move forward without them. Mary continued in her letter to Mercy:

We have 4 or 5 yoke of borrowed Cattle to be returned this fall which I fear will be impossible if they have to come through as it will be too late. Brother Terry begins to feel very uneasy as he will be under the necessity of going back to his Family before we can get through. I feel most concerned myself for I see no way to liberate him on the road and fulfil my engagements with him. He was to take all the borrowed Cattle back and a Team of mine for his own use and if it is going to be much later than we expected now you see how we are fixed.

While Joseph Fielding had done as much as he could to assist Mary, it seems that they both helped each other. Mary continued:

I have had to do much in fitting out Brother Fielding. You know his circumstances. He is with us with his two women and 5 children the two youngest are left behind amongst many others. Little Hyrum died at the age of 4 months and the next a little Boy about 5 days old. They were Both buried in one grave: more on these subjects when we see you. My poor Lame horse is also buried in Winter Quarters. He died the week before we left there, just when I wanted him most. Brother F is working my Cattle. He has nothing but 1 or 2 Cows and his old Mare. He borrowed one ox to be returned and I think some of us will have to stop by the way.

William McMillan Thompson was a tremendous aid to both Mary and Joseph:

Brother William Thompson is also with us. He has a good Team and one Wagon. His Wife and 3 Children are with him. He has two very interesting little Boys. I think you will be pleased with them. He is a good, useful young Man. He is appointed Clerk for the Camp on this journey. . . .

Mary then openly expresses her fears to Mercy:

I trust that we shall all be enabled to get through in some way or other but certainly I am at a loss to contrive a plan myself at present. I have to continue my prayer to God that he

will interpose in our behalf and open our way before us. I suppose if Brother Terry could start back by the middle of August he might possibly accomplish the journey back in season but he cannot do this [what was appearing to be much later] and come through.

Mary then made a gentle plea for help from Mercy:

Perhaps if a Wagon and the other Yoke of Cattle could be sent with a driver to take Terry's place. The Lord might in answer to our united prayers by some means or other do the rest. I greatly desire to get to some resting place where I can once more feel at home. If the Lord will that it should be so.

Mary's letter was written in a desperate hour. She could not have possibly imagined that her crossing of the plains in the summer of 1848 would be held as a standard of faith and perseverance for generations. Few in the Church today have any idea of how much the Lord actually did sustain her on her journey. Along with Mary's concerns of even reaching the Salt Lake Valley, she worried about the coming winter.

But what is my prospect when I reach you? If permitted to do so can I expect to sit down and rest my worn out body and mind for a little Season? No, I fear not. It appears to me that I have to meet trouble and perplexity with vexation where ever I go. I suppose I shall have to contend with evil spirits which I almost dread to encounter. May the Lord endow me with wisdom and patience that I may be enabled to govern the affairs of my Family in righteousness. I could tell you many things that would be interesting to you, but I consider it unnecessary as I hope before long to see you and as you will have an opportunity of hearing all particulars respecting our Camp &c &c from the bearers of this. I shall not take time to write on these matters. I have not much time to spare for writing.

It is now late and the Children in bed and I must rise early in the Morning to be at my Cooking. I had no Biscuits prepared for the journey and Sister Grinnells is so feeble that she cannot cook and I have nearly all to do. You speak of my buying a Cow but I assure you I have no means. If I knew certainly that the Crops would turn out well with you I should be very thankful as I could then, by selling some Corn and Meal, lighten my load and obtain more help which would be double advantage. But at present I am afraid to take any such step less there should be a failure. I have scarcely any Flour but we have from 15 to 20 Bushels of Wheat which we could not get ground and which might not be needed if the Crops do well. And may the good Lord remember in mercy in this respect. How much do I see and feel our dependence upon him?

May he bless you all in every sense of the word is my constant prayer. And also this Camp of Israel that we may be prospered through the remaining Part of our journey. And may the Lord protect the men who bring this to you that they may speedily reach you in safety. Present my best wishes and respects to Mr. Lawson and Mary Jane. I hope he will not forget the principle thing but in the midst of his labors try to remember the Lord on whom he is dependent for success. I and all the Children long to see all [of you] very much but the distance still looks great. Martha Ann often says, why they go so far every night out of the road. I think we never shall get to the Valley. She still continues to grow

fast but her appetite is very delicate. It is with the greatest difficulty I can get her to eat Corn Meal in any form. Joseph also grows fast, but thinks we travel very slowly. He appears all anxiety to get forward. He can drive a Team very well. I must now say good morning, the Guard Cries past twelve o'clock and I shall but little rest. May the Lord smile upon us and prosper us until we meet is the prayer of your affectionate sister,

Mary Smith

Mary added a touching post script:

I believe I shall leave you to correct all errors as you read along as I have not time to do it. Kiss M. J. for me and the Children. MF.²¹

Mary's faith, demonstrated by her actions throughout her life, is clearly evident in this letter. Of historical interest is Mary's request that Mercy extend her greetings to Mr. Lawson and Mary Jane. In this context, there is no other way to read these words except to understand that James Lawson was a member of Mercy's family.

Chapter 33 Endnotes Pages 498-508:

1. Joseph F. Smith's first person account of this incident is in his biography, *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, pages 147-149. President Smith wrote a letter in 1861 to his brother John stating that his keen memory and feelings over these events had required him to seek forgiveness.

2. The distance today from the Winter Quarters Temple to where I have supposed the outfitting station was is about 14 miles. Joseph Fielding and his nephew Joseph F. Smith put the distance at 25 and 27 miles, respectively. Many factors could affect this distance, including where their homes were in Winter Quarters, and where along the Elkhorn River the outfitting station was.

3. William Burton [no relation to William Walton Burton who crossed the plains in 1854] recorded that on June 18th, 1848, Cornelius Lott was appointed to be the overseer of the company herd. His account is found in the Overland Trail Database. Young Joseph F. Smith clearly remembered Cornelius Lott to be the overseer of the company herd, but the events he described had to have occurred two or three weeks before this. Joseph actually never named his mother's persecutor. However, in the account told by President Smith, the man is known as "Father ____." Cornelius was often called "Father Lott," and I have inserted his surname.

4. The Journal History has many details about the planning and departure of President Young's and Elder Kimball's departures. The reference to Mary Smith is found under the date of 2 June 1848.

5. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 148. "We left Winter Quarters on Sunday, the 4th of June, being about the last. Bro. Kimball's Company was waiting for us at the Elk Horn River, some 25 Miles. When we had got about half the distance there we received from Bro. Egan 2 Yoke of oxen through the Influence of Brother Kimball, and we joined the Company on Tuesday Evening, and the next morning the Co. started." Joseph makes no mention of this being the second trip, and in fact it almost conflicts with his nephew's account. Joseph Fielding entry was written months after the fact. Young Joseph's account was told possibly decades after the actual events took place. Don Corbett, in his biography of Mary Fielding Smith, speculated that Howard Egan had borrowed the oxen. Brother Corbett also named another benefactor, Brother Rogers, who loaned two oxen. (Pages 229-230.)

6. Mary included these sentences in a letter to Mercy, written on July 16th, 1848. That letter, referred to later, is the last in the Mary Fielding to Mercy Fielding Thompson Collection, MSS 2779, held at the LDS Church History Library. It has been digitized and is available online, as are many of the letters I have used in this biography.

7. William Thompson, clerk of Heber C. Kimball's company, referred to the Second Division.
8. Thomas Bullock's records are easily found in the Overland Trail Database, as are the records of the other pioneers whose journals and letters I used.
9. As careful as Brother Bullock was in his records, he did not inventory the wagon for us. How interesting that would have been!
10. Joseph Fielding recorded his commanding officers, and named them differently than Thomas Bullock's record. I have chosen to go with what Joseph wrote. "Brother Young's Co. went ahead, so we all formed two Companies, each Co. being organised into 50, and 10. C. P. Lott was our Captain of 10, and John Pack of 50, Henry Herriman of the 100, with Bro. Kimball at the Head." Thomas Bullock reported this information in a letter he sent once their train was close to Fort Laramie. The letter was sent back by rider to the company of Willard Richards and Amasa Lyman, about a month behind them. He named the four captains of hundreds in Elder Kimball's company as Titus Billings, Isaac Higbee, John Pack and Heber C. Kimball.
11. Life of Joseph F. Smith, pages 149-150.
12. "Boyhood Recollections of President Joseph F. Smith," page 63.
13. Rachel Fielding Burton's memories of the trek come from her 1914 memoirs.
14. Curtis E. Bolton, Reminiscences in Salt Lake Stake, Melchizedek Priesthood Minutes and Records, High Priest Quorum Minute Book, 1848-1860, which is easily located in the Overland Trail Database.
15. Life of Joseph F. Smith, pages 155-157.
16. Joseph Fielding Diary, page 149.
17. Elizabeth Jane Perkins Belcher, from the Overland Trail Database.
18. Biography of Hannah Greenwood Fielding, from the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, author unknown.
19. This letter, referred to earlier, is the last letter in the Mary Fielding Smith to Mercy Fielding Thompson collection, held at the LDS Church History Library. I am greatly indebted to Geneil Loader Harris for bringing this letter to my attention.
20. Margaret Cahoon's account is taken from the Overland Trail Base. She specifically said they were met at "the Sweetwater." Several pioneers mentioned teams arriving from the Valley to help, including Oliver Boardman, also in President Young's company. Brother Boardman said they met the fresh teams at Fort Laramie. Joseph Fielding said that "Several times the Companies received fresh Cattle from the Valley," (page 149).
21. I have corrected a few spelling errors in this letter and added a small amount of punctuation, something I have quietly done with all the early writings of these pioneers. I have never changed intent, but I have made the reading a little easier for a modern reader.