



THE TREK ACROSS IOWA

Time Line

Date	Significant Event
4 Feb. 1846	Saints began crossing Mississippi River
1 Mar. 1846	Camp of Israel left Sugar Creek
26 Mar. 1846	Reorganization of Camp of Israel at Chariton River
15 Apr. 1846	Song "All Is Well" composed at Locust Creek
24 Apr. 1846	Garden Grove founded
16 May 1846	Mount Pisgah founded
14 June 1846	Original Pioneer Company reached Missouri River
1–20 July 1846	Mormon Battalion recruited
Sept. 1846	Winter Quarters established
Sept. 1846	Battle of Nauvoo and evacuation of poor Saints

WHEN THE SAINTS crossed the Mississippi River into Iowa, they began a new quest for a home where they could build the kingdom of God without oppression. The way to this new refuge was not easy; it exacted toil, sacrifice, and death, and the first leg of the journey—the trek across Iowa territory—proved to be the hardest. The main “Camp of Israel” took 131 days to cover the 300 miles they traveled across Iowa. The Pioneer Company a year later took only 111 days to cover 1,050 miles from Winter Quarters to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Inadequate preparation, lack of knowledgeable guides, delays, miserable weather, and difficult terrain made the Iowa journey one of the most trying in the Church’s history. Nevertheless, these hardy folk knew no such word as fail. The Iowa journey simply hardened their resolve and provided valuable experience for the future.

THE TREK BEGAN IN SORROW

The first wagons rolled out of Nauvoo to the ferry on 4 February 1846. Once across the Mississippi they broke a nine-mile trail to Sugar Creek, set up camp, and awaited the arrival of Brigham Young. During February over three thousand people crossed the river under the direction of Hosea Stout, captain of the Nauvoo police, and gathered at Sugar Creek.

Leaving Nauvoo was an act of faith for the Saints. They departed without knowing exactly where they were going or when they would arrive at a place to settle. They only knew that they were on the verge of being driven out of Illinois by their enemies and that their leaders had received revelation to locate a refuge somewhere in the Rocky Mountains.

Although springlike weather facilitated an early departure from Nauvoo, severe weather arose soon thereafter, which both hampered and blessed the already harried exodus. On 14 February it snowed and on 19 February a northwest wind brought eight inches of snow, a very cold night, and “much suffering in the camp, for there were many who had no tents or any comfortable place to lodge: many tents were blown down, some of them were unfinished and had no ends.”¹ After Brigham Young had left Nauvoo and crossed the river to the Iowa side, the mud became so deep his teams had to be yoked double to pull the wagons up the hill to Sugar Creek camp.² A week later the temperatures plummeted and the Mississippi froze over, hastening the abandonment of Nauvoo by allowing numerous Saints to cross on the

◀ *The Winter Quarters monument, located in Omaha, Nebraska, was dedicated 20 September 1936. The monument depicts the agony of pioneer parents burying a child. On the monument is the following inscription:*

“That the struggles, the sacrifices and the sufferings of the faithful pioneers and the cause they represented shall never be forgotten. This monument is gratefully erected and dedicated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

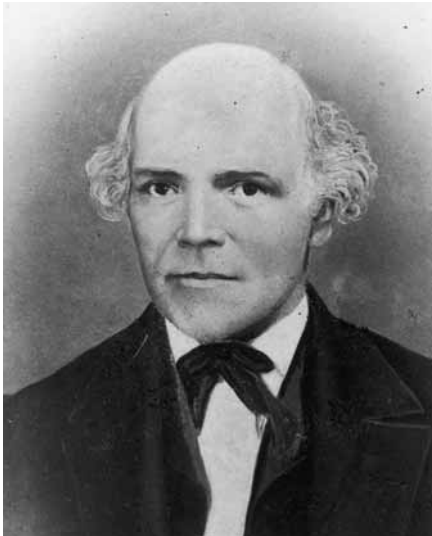
“First Presidency: Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., David O. McKay.

“Sculptor, Avarad Fairbanks, a descendant of pioneers buried here.”

The Nauvoo brass band (also known as William Pitt's brass band) was organized in 1842 to accompany the drills of the Nauvoo Legion. The band frequently played for social and religious gatherings, at patriotic and other celebrations, at arrivals and departures of important people, and as background to steamboat excursions. They even raised funds and built the Nauvoo Concert Hall in 1843.

During the first half of the Iowa trek the band not only provided entertainment for the weary Saints after a long day's march, but they also obtained money, provisions, and equipment through concerts for the settlers in towns and villages along the route.

After arriving in Garden Grove, the band dispersed as some of its members returned to Nauvoo, some went on to Winter Quarters, and others stayed in Garden Grove. In Utah the band was revived for a time and performed functions similar to those it had provided in Nauvoo.



William Pitt, a British convert and all-around musician, was the leader of the Nauvoo brass band, both because he was well versed in music and because when he left England he took with him a large collection of music arranged for brass instruments. Pitt had a reputation as an excellent flutist, but he preferred the violin and other instruments. He was one of three members of the band to travel to the Salt Lake Valley with the original Pioneer Company.

ice. Because of the extreme cold, however, many people, including Brigham Young and Willard Richards, fell ill at Sugar Creek. Also several women gave birth in the cold, makeshift camp; they and their new babies suffered most from exposure to the cold, wind, and snow.

Lack of food also plagued the departing Saints. Wishing to be with their leaders, many of them had failed to follow the counsel to be prepared before leaving. Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and a few others had begun the journey from Nauvoo with a year's supply of provisions, but most others left with hardly any food. Their unpreparedness caused some, who had brought provisions and were willing to share, to deplete their supply within a few weeks. President Young had the overwhelming responsibility of being a father to all. One journal entry manifests his discouragement: "Unless this people are more united in spirit and cease to pray against Counsel, It will bring me down to my grave. I am reduced in flesh so that my coat that would scarcely meet around me last Winter now laps over twelve inches. It is with much ado that I can keep from lying down and sleeping to wait the resurrection."³

In spite of the harsh conditions, there was some merriment in camp. Almost every night William Pitt's brass band played the popular grand marches, quick-steps, and gallops of the time. Around the campfires the people danced to fiddle music and sang favorite songs as well as new ones that they composed for the occasion. One such was "The Upper California":

*The Upper California—Oh that's the land for me!
It lies between the mountains and the great Pacific sea;
The Saints can be supported there,
And taste the sweets of liberty.
In Upper California—Oh that's the land for me!*⁴

Upper California referred to a largely undefined area administered by Mexico comprising most of the present states of Utah, Colorado, Nevada, and California.

Brigham Young noted that the Saints "were patient, and endured all their privations without murmuring." A month later he added, "I did not think there had ever been a body of people since the days of Enoch, placed under the same unpleasant circumstances that this people have been, where there was so little grumbling, and I was satisfied that the Lord was pleased with the majority of the Camp of Israel."⁵

THE CAMP OF ISRAEL MOVES WEST

The Saints did not begin leaving the encampment at Sugar Creek until 1 March 1846. The last week to ten days were largely dominated by discussion of travel plans and organization of the line of march. From the start the main body of Saints was known as the "Camp of Israel," with Brigham Young as its president. As with ancient Israel, there were companies and

captains of hundreds, fifties, and tens. In the next two years more Old Testament parallels were made, as illustrated by terms such as, *Zion being in the tops of the mountains, chosen people, exodus, Mount Pisgah, Jordan River, Dead Sea, making the desert blossom as a rose, and a modern Moses* in the person of Brigham Young.

Part of the Saints' delay in leaving resulted from concern for the best route across Iowa. Eastern Iowa had been open to settlement since the Black Hawk Indian War of 1830–32, but beyond a hundred miles west of the Mississippi River the population was sparse, the roads few and bad. Furthermore there were numerous rivers and streams to traverse. The camp also faced the decision of where to cross the Missouri River. The Saints wanted to avoid crossings in the state of Missouri where there was still anti-Mormon sentiment.

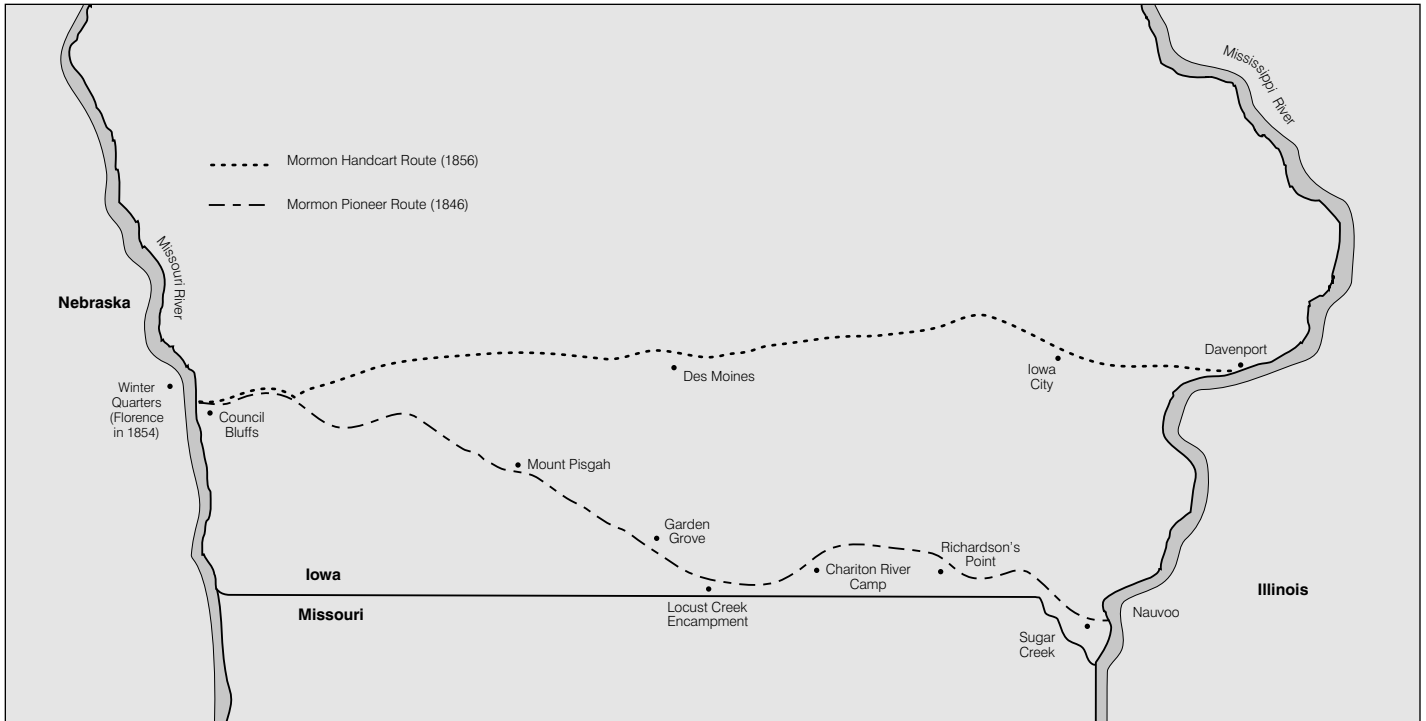
When the Saints renewed their march, they planned to reach the Missouri by mid-April, plant small acreages along the way for those following, establish a portion of the camp somewhere west of the Missouri as a farm or way station for future travelers, and dispatch a swift company to the mountains with seeds to plant a spring crop. A Pioneer Company headed by Stephen Markham was sent ahead to scout the best routes, find trading settlements, build bridges, and make other preparations.

Three fundamental problems, however, inhibited the progress of the Saints across Iowa. The first was the lack of adequate food supplies. Each company had two commissary agents assigned to contact settlers and negotiate for food and provender. Because of the lack of provisions in general, many men found work in eastern Iowa towns to pay for needed supplies. William Pitt's brass band presented formal concerts in many Iowa communities to raise more funds. With large numbers of men on the job instead of in the wagons, progress was painfully slow. This explains why most of the camp tarried almost three weeks at Richardson's Point, only fifty-six miles from Nauvoo. Brigham Young was only halfway across Iowa when, because of his generosity, his family's own provisions were depleted. The other Apostles were in the same situation.⁶ On 24 March, Hosea Stout reported that half of his men were out of provisions. And the problem grew worse before they arrived at the Missouri River.

The second problem was the disorganization of the camp, which was spread for miles across eastern Iowa. Several riders were kept busy just carrying dispatches between the leaders of the separated companies. Driven to exasperation by the disorder and by the adventurous, independent, and competitive spirit of Bishop George Miller and others, Brigham Young saw the necessity of establishing firmer control over the camp. He demanded stricter obedience and cooperation and dispatched a letter of rebuke to those who were far ahead of the rest of the camp, telling them to return for a council.

Stephen Markham (1800–78) accepted the gospel in Ohio in 1837. A prosperous farmer and faithful Saint, he sold his possessions at the counsel of Joseph Smith to help sixty people move from Kirtland to Far West, Missouri. During the Nauvoo era he served as a bodyguard for Joseph Smith and again sacrificed a new home (moving into a tent) to help the Prophet pay legal fees.

He was with the Brethren in Carthage, but was refused entrance to the jail a few hours before the Martyrdom. In addition to his pioneering role in Iowa, he was also a member of the first Pioneer Company to the Salt Lake Valley and subsequently was active in the colonization efforts in Utah.



Two important Mormon trails crossed Iowa. The northern trail was the route of the handcart companies in 1856. The pioneers of 1846 traversed the southern route. Most of the camp remained at Richardson's Point for nearly two weeks to improve their organization during a spell of bad weather. Nevertheless, by the time they reached Chariton River, about one hundred miles west of Nauvoo, they had only averaged two to three miles per day, many people were widely scattered, and some had even returned to Nauvoo. A major reorganization was required.

The 1846 route hugged the Missouri border because of the proximity to civilization. Church leaders intended to cross northwestern Missouri to Banks Ferry, an important staging place for points west on the Missouri River. Hostile reaction from the Missourians led them to turn north again.

Further west, at Locust Creek, William Clayton composed the hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints." Garden Grove, one of two "permanent" settlements, was just about halfway across Iowa, being 144 miles west of Nauvoo and 120 miles east of the Missouri River. The Saints reached Garden Grove on 24 April, and on 18 May, Mount Pisgah was designated by Parley P. Pratt as the second permanent camp. Brigham Young celebrated his forty-fifth birthday there on 1 June 1846.

Parley P. Pratt, who was with Miller, was severely reprovved along with the others. What followed demonstrated that the Spirit was prompting Brigham Young. Parley P. Pratt said, "For Bishop Miller, who was a leading and active member of our camp, has since left us and gone his own way, having refused to be led by the counsels of the Presidency; and removed to Texas. And here I would observe that, although my own motives were pure, so far as I could know my own heart, yet I thank God for this timely chastisement; I profited by it, and it caused me to be more watchful and careful ever after."⁷

On 26 March on the banks of the Chariton River, Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball regrouped the camp into three companies of one hundred families each. Although travel thereafter was more orderly, improved organization could not overcome the third and perhaps most challenging problem of all—wet spring weather. Sudden melting snows, almost constant rain, swollen creeks, interminable mud, and violent wind retarded progress. Brigham Young's comment late in March, that they had passed through only one mud hole that day "which was about six miles in length," illustrates the effects of spring thaws and rains that left the roads and campsites a bog.⁸ Diaries and journals show that it rained or snowed for at least eleven days in March, beginning on the tenth. The weather continued to deteriorate in April, and it rained or snowed half of the month, including every day of the last week. So many wagons mired in the mud that travel was reduced to less than half a mile per day.

They had a particularly bad day on 6 April. Hosea Stout said it "was of all mornings the most dismal dark and rainy after such a fine day as

yesterday was. . . . This day capped the climax of all days for travelling. The road was the worst that I had yet witnessed up hill and down through sloughs on spouty oak ridges and deep marshes, raining hard, the creek rising. The horses would sometimes sink to their bellies on the ridges, teams stall going down hill. We worked and toiled more than half the day and had at last to leave some of our wagons and double teams before we could get through." That evening after most in the camp had retired, the wind began to blow. Hosea had not secured his tent with stay ropes and "had to get out of my bed and hold it a long time in the wind and rain which beat upon me until I was wet thoroughly nor could I leave to secure it because it would blow down." He stood there until some of the brethren came to his assistance.⁹

Eliza R. Snow recorded that the wind was a "perfect gale attended with a heavy shower of rain—and several of our habitations were leveled and the roofs of our wagons barely escaped the wreck of elements."¹⁰ The weary travelers awoke the next morning to a little snow, a slight freeze, and a rising creek. With clothes and bedding often drenched and with the cold temperatures, frequent illnesses and occasional deaths further hindered travel.

By 15 April the camp found itself on Locust Creek near the present-day Iowa-Missouri state line. William Clayton, frustrated with the slow progress of the camp and the burdens of caring for a large family, gratefully received news that his plural wife, Diantha, left behind for care and safety in Nauvoo, had given birth to a healthy boy. He thereupon composed a new song of praise to the Lord entitled "All Is Well" (today called "Come, Come, Ye Saints"), which became an anthem for many Mormon pioneers who subsequently crossed the plains to the Great Basin.



William Clayton (1814–79) was born in England and was among the first to accept the gospel there in 1837. He emigrated to Nauvoo in 1840, and his skills in writing and accounting were quickly recognized. In 1842 he became Joseph's clerk and private secretary, and he served in similar capacities throughout his life.

He was the Nauvoo Temple recorder. In Utah he was treasurer of ZCMI, territorial recorder of marks and brands, and territorial auditor of public accounts. He is perhaps most noted for recording the revelation on plural marriage on 12 July 1843 and for writing "Come, Come, Ye Saints" near Corydon, Iowa.

*Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear;
But with joy wend your way.
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—
All is well! All is well!*

*.....
We'll find the place which God for us prepared,
Far away in the West,
Where none shall come to hurt or make afraid;
There the Saints will be blessed.
We'll make the air with music ring,
Shout praises to our God and King;
Above the rest these words we'll tell—
All is well! All is well!¹¹*

As rain continued to pour into the swollen Locust Creek, Church leaders began to revise their plans. The agonizing delays, the sufferings of the

travelers, the weakened condition of their draft animals, the unaffordable high prices for feed grain, the disrepair of the wagons and equipment, their rapidly depleting food supplies, and no prospects for better weather all contributed to a reevaluation of the Saints' course. The dream of reaching the Rocky Mountains later that season was fading.

ESTABLISHMENT OF WAY STATIONS AND MOVING ON TO THE MISSOURI

At Locust Creek the Brethren prayerfully forged a new plan to establish farms or way stations along the route west. By 24 April the pioneers reached a place they named Garden Grove, sixty miles northwest of Locust Creek and about halfway across Iowa. Within three weeks they had broken 715 acres of tough prairie sod, built cabins, and established a small community. A high council was called to regulate both Church and civic affairs, and two hundred people were assigned to improve this first way station.

Garden Grove did not have enough timber to accommodate all the companies soon to arrive from Nauvoo, so the brethren sent scouts to explore the region. Parley P. Pratt located some grassy hills crowned with beautiful groves twenty-five miles northwest of Garden Grove. He was overjoyed. Referring to the mountain Moses saw the promised land from, Parley cried out, "This is *Mount Pisgah*."¹²

A few days later Brigham Young arrived and immediately organized a second way station at Mount Pisgah. Another high council was appointed, and several thousand acres were cooperatively enclosed, planted, and farmed. One of the new leaders, Ezra T. Benson (great-grandfather of the thirteenth President of the Church), declared, "This was the first place where I felt willing in my heart to stay at, since I left Nauvoo."¹³ Soon Mount Pisgah outstripped Garden Grove in size and significance. Both, however, were important pioneer way stations from 1846 to 1852.

During the first of June 1846 an advance company, including members of the Twelve, left Mount Pisgah and headed for the Missouri River. Although they were two months behind the original schedule, the Brethren still hoped that an express company would be able to make it to the Rocky Mountains by fall. It took only fourteen days to cover the final one hundred miles to the Council Bluffs area on the Missouri River, partly because they enjoyed the unfamiliar luxury of dry trails and abundant grass. Temporary headquarters were established at Mosquito Creek on Pottawattomie Indian land. They found that their first task was to prepare landings and a boat to ferry the emigrant wagons across the Missouri. This was accomplished in just two weeks.

Nevertheless, two issues remained unresolved. Where would the Saints winter on the Missouri, since they were still on Indian lands? And was there still time for some of the Apostles and others to press on to the West before the onset of winter storms? The latter issue was decided after consultations



The first permanent camp established for the benefit of those to follow was Garden Grove. Samuel Bent, Aaron Johnson, and David Fullmer were called to preside over the settlement at Garden Grove.

John R. Young remembered, "They were instructed to divide the lands among the poor without charge; but to give to no man more than he could thoroughly cultivate. There must be no waste and no speculation."¹⁴

Samuel Bent died in Garden Grove on 16 August 1846.



Mount Pisgah, the second permanent camp in Iowa, was established 18 May 1846 and presided over by William Huntington, Ezra T. Benson, and Charles C. Rich. Many of the Saints who left Nauvoo after Brigham Young caught up with the camp here, and part of the Mormon Battalion was recruited here.

Pisgah was maintained as a camp until at least 1852 and at its height had a population of over three thousand Saints. Noah Rogers, who had recently returned from a mission to the South Sea Islands, was the first to die and be buried here. Many others also died and were buried here. In 1886 the Church purchased the one-acre plot where the cemetery lay and in 1888 erected a monument to mark the site.

with Captain James Allen of the United States army, who arrived on 1 July to raise a battalion of Mormon soldiers. With the loss of so many men to the battalion, the westward migration was delayed for a season.

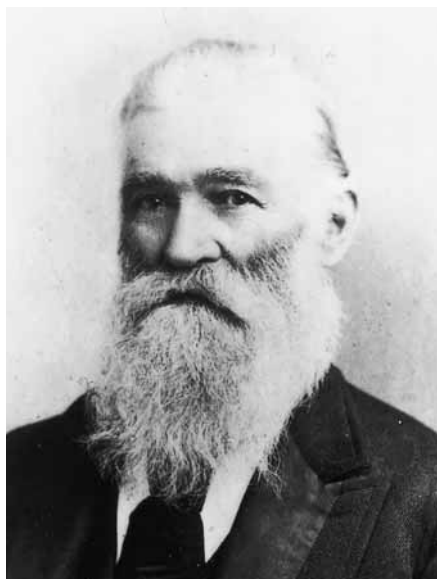
CALL OF THE MORMON BATTALION

In 1845 the United States annexed Texas, thereby angering Mexico, which still claimed much of Texas territory. Mexican troops and United States dragoons had a skirmish on 24 April 1846, but Congress did not declare war until 12 May 1846. American expansionists were excited about the war because it offered an opportunity to acquire territory extending to the Pacific Ocean. President James K. Polk, himself an expansionist, included in his war aims the acquisition of New Mexico and Upper California. The U.S. army of the West was charged with conquering this vast territory.¹⁵

The war with Mexico came precisely when the Latter-day Saints were petitioning in Washington, D.C., for assistance in their move west. Before leaving Nauvoo, Brigham Young called Elder Jesse C. Little to preside over the Church in the East and to go to the nation's capital with a request for help. Elder Little was assisted by his friend, twenty-four-year-old Thomas L. Kane, son of John Kane, a prominent federal judge and political associate of President Polk. Thomas had worked with his father as a law clerk and was therefore well-known in Washington, D.C. Together Little and Kane negotiated with officials for government contracts to build blockhouses and forts along the Oregon Trail, but the war with Mexico provided a better opportunity for the Saints and the government to help each other.¹⁶

With Kane's urging, Elder Little suggested in a letter to President Polk that although the Saints were loyal Americans, the government's refusal to assist them could "compel us to be foreigners."¹⁷ Polk did not want the Saints to join the British interests in the Oregon territory nor to antagonize the Missouri volunteers in the army of the West, so, following conversations with Elder Little, he authorized the recruiting of five hundred Mormon volunteers after they reached California. This way he could retain the loyalty of the Saints without antagonizing any anti-Mormons. But when Secretary of War William Marcy wrote to Colonel Stephen W. Kearny at Fort Leavenworth, Polk had apparently changed his mind because Kearny was authorized to immediately enlist a Mormon battalion. In late June, Kearny sent Captain James Allen to Mormon encampments in southern Iowa to recruit the volunteers.

Captain Allen went first to the new Mormon settlement of Mount Pisgah. There he encountered stiff opposition to the plan. Elder Wilford Woodruff, en route to join his fellow Apostles at the Missouri River, was suspicious. He recorded, "I had some reasons to believe them to be spies and that the President had no hand in it. We however treated them with civility and directed them on to Council Bluffs to lay the case before the President."¹⁸



Jesse C. Little (1815–93) was serving in 1846 as president of the mission in the New England middle states. He left his family temporarily in the East and traveled to Nebraska, where he joined Brigham Young and the original Pioneer Company seventy miles west of Winter Quarters.

After entering the Salt Lake Valley, he returned to the East where he continued serving as a mission president until 1852, when he and his family went to Utah. In 1856 he was called to serve as second counselor to Edward Hunter in the Presiding Bishopric, a position he held until 1874.

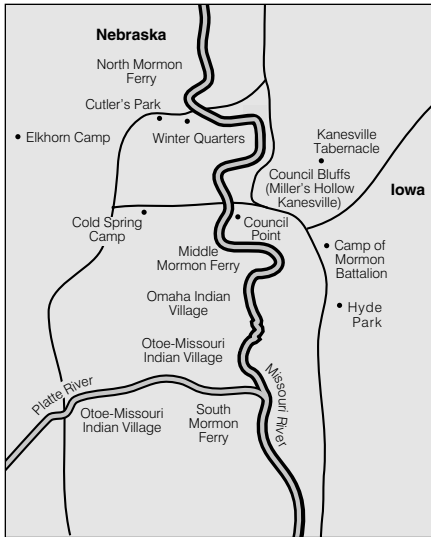
Messengers dispatched by Elder Woodruff warned Brigham Young of Captain Allen’s mission two days before he arrived in Council Bluffs. Before greeting him, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards hurriedly met in Orson Pratt’s tent, where they “decided it was best to meet Captain Allen in the morning and raise the men wanted.”¹⁹ President Young realized that Allen’s request was probably the result of Elder Little’s negotiations. The Brethren also recognized that the request for Mormon men provided an opportunity to earn desperately needed capital for the exodus and provided a rationale for establishing temporary settlements on Indian lands. During negotiations Captain Allen assured the Church that they could remain on Indian lands during the winter.

After Allen recruited the men at Council Bluffs, President Young spoke to the Saints and tried to clear their minds of prejudice against the federal government. He said, “Suppose we were admitted into the Union as a State and the government did not call on us, we would feel ourselves neglected. Let the Mormons be the first men to set their feet on the soil of California. . . . This is the first offer we have ever had from the government to benefit us.”²⁰ On 3 July, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards went east to recruit more men. Before they arrived in Mount Pisgah, every Latter-day Saint had opposed the venture, but after their several recruiting speeches, many able-bodied men signed up.

Recruiting continued until 20 July, the day before the battalion’s departure to Fort Leavenworth. Within three weeks five companies of one hundred men were organized. Both Thomas L. Kane and Jesse C. Little had arrived at the Missouri River and assured the Saints that there was no adverse plot behind the government’s request. Church leaders promised that the families of the volunteers would be carefully provided for. Brigham Young selected the officers over each company and counseled them to be fathers to the rest of the men. He also counseled the volunteers to be faithful soldiers, keep the commandments, and abide by the counsel of their leaders. He promised that if they conducted themselves properly, they would not have to fight. A farewell ball was held in honor of the battalion on a cleared square along the Missouri River on the evening of Saturday, 18 July. At noon on Tuesday, 21 July, they began their historic march.

ESTABLISHING WINTER QUARTERS

With the battalion gone, energies were directed toward finding a suitable winter way station. Even prior to the call of the battalion, Brigham Young had concluded that most Saints would settle at Grand Island on the Platte River. It was the longest fresh water river island in America, with rich soil and abundant timber. One drawback, however, was the existence of unfriendly Pawnee Indians in the area. The arrival in camp of Thomas L. Kane and Wilford Woodruff in mid-July modified the Grand Island plan. Kane suggested that the federal Office of Indian Affairs would interfere less with Mormon settlements on the Missouri than at locations further west.



This map shows the main Mormon settlements along the Missouri River in 1846–47. Grand Island was west along the Platte River. There were about twelve thousand Church members scattered throughout the country in 1846; approximately four thousand were in Winter Quarters.

Elder Woodruff came with sad news that Reuben Hedlock, temporary presiding authority of the Church in England, was channeling money originally earmarked for emigration purposes into schemes for his own enrichment. Furthermore, apostate James J. Strang had deployed Martin Harris to England to work with Latter-day Saint congregations. Unless something was done immediately, the Church stood to lose a great deal in the British Isles. Elder Woodruff also reported on the condition of the Saints in Nauvoo who were too poor to leave for the West. By late July 1846 the Brethren concluded that a main encampment would be established on the west bank of the Missouri River and other camps scattered throughout western Iowa. Also, Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, and John Taylor were dispatched to England to solve the problems of the Church there.

In August, explorers located a temporary site, known as Cutler's Park, three miles west of the river. But after negotiations with both Otoe and Omaha Indian tribal leaders, Church leaders decided to establish the camp closer to the river itself. A good area near a proposed ferry site was selected in early September and surveying was begun. By the end of the month a town of 820 lots had been laid out and some lots spoken for. Winter Quarters, as the Brethren called the community, came into being.

RESCUING THE NAUVOO "POOR SAINTS"

Over two thousand Saints left Nauvoo by mid-March 1846, and additional hundreds left in both April and May. But many still remained in the city. Before leaving, President Young had appointed three men—Joseph L. Heywood, John S. Fullmer, and Almon W. Babbitt—to act as legal trustees to sell Church and private properties, pay the most pressing debts and obligations, and provide for the safe departure of those unavoidably left behind. He also assigned Orson Hyde to supervise the completion and dedication of the Nauvoo Temple.

Temple workmen completed their assignment by the end of April, and the sacred edifice was prepared for dedication. Wilford Woodruff arrived from his mission to Great Britain in time for the ceremonies. On 30 April, at a private dedication, Joseph Young offered the dedicatory prayer. Orson Hyde, Wilford Woodruff, and about twenty others dressed in their temple robes dedicated the house of the Lord.

Wilford Woodruff recorded, "Notwithstanding the many false prophesies of Sidney Rigdon and others that the roof should not go on nor the house be finished and the threats of the mob that we should not dedicate it, yet we have done both."²¹

The next day, 1 May 1846, Orson Hyde offered the prayer at the public dedication. Elders Hyde and Woodruff then left for Iowa to join the rest of the Twelve.

When opponents of the Church realized that not all the Saints were going to leave Nauvoo by summer, persecution began anew. Men and women

harvesting grain were attacked and some were severely beaten. This type of harassment lasted all summer and into the fall of 1846.

Meanwhile the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles decided to sell the Nauvoo Temple to raise funds for outfitting the remaining Nauvoo Saints. All attempts to sell the edifice failed. By mid-August less than fifteen hundred Saints remained in Nauvoo, some of them new converts from the East who had arrived too late to join the earlier companies. Most of them had exhausted their savings just to reach Nauvoo and now looked to Church leaders as their only hope to proceed West.

By the second week in September the anti-Mormons were determined to drive the Saints out of Nauvoo. Approximately eight hundred men equipped with six cannons prepared to lay siege to the city. The Saints and some new citizens, numbering only about 150 fighting men, prepared to defend the city. The Battle of Nauvoo began on 10 September, with sporadic firing. During the following two days there were minor skirmishes. On 13 September an anti-Mormon column advanced in an attempt to rout the defenders. A spirited counterattack led by Daniel H. Wells saved the day, but there were casualties on both sides. The battle continued the next day, which was the Sabbath.

On 16 September, the "Quincy committee," which had helped keep the peace in previous months, interceded once again. The Saints were forced to surrender unconditionally in order to save their lives and gain a chance of escaping across the river. Only five men and their families were allowed to stay in Nauvoo to dispose of property. Those who could quickly crossed the river without provisions or additional clothing. Finally, the mob entered the city, looted homes, and desecrated the temple. Some Saints who were not able to escape fast enough were beaten or thrown into the river by the mob.

Refugee camps of five to six hundred dispossessed men, women, and children, including those who had been left as too sick to travel, were scattered along two miles of riverbank above Montrose, Iowa. Most people had only blankets or bowers made of brush for shelter and little more than boiled or parched corn to eat. Some died. Bishop Newel K. Whitney purchased some flour and distributed it among the poor camps. The Church trustees went to river towns, including St. Louis, pleading for money and supplies for the refugees, but because of religious prejudices they only raised one hundred dollars.

On 9 October, when food was in especially short supply, several large flocks of quail flew into camp and landed on the ground and even on tables. Many of them were caught, cooked, and eaten by the hungry Saints. To the faithful it was a sign of God's mercy to modern Israel as a similar incident had been to ancient Israel (see Exodus 16:13).

Even before they realized the terrible plight of the Nauvoo Saints, Church leaders in Iowa had sent a rescue mission, and when word of the Battle of Nauvoo reached Winter Quarters, a second mission was mobilized. Brigham Young declared:

“Let the fire of the covenant which you made in the House of the Lord, burn in your hearts, like flame unquenchable, till you, by yourselves or delegates . . . [can] rise up with his team and go straightway, and bring a load of the poor from Nauvoo. . . .

“ . . . This is a day of action and not of argument.”²² Rescue teams arrived in time to save the Saints from starvation and winter exposure. The poor Saints were dispersed throughout various camps in western Iowa. A handful made it all the way to Winter Quarters.

ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS

Throughout the fall of 1846, the nearly twelve thousand Latter-day Saints in various parts of the Midwest prepared for winter the best ways they could. The headquarters of the Church was at Winter Quarters in Indian territory, where almost four thousand Saints resided by the end of the year. Another twenty-five hundred were camped on Pottawattomie Indian lands on the east side of the Missouri River. An estimated seven hundred people were at Mount Pisgah, six hundred at Garden Grove, at least a thousand were spread throughout other parts of Iowa, and five hundred were in the Mormon Battalion on their way to California. Many Saints gathered for the winter in Mississippi River towns; the Mormon population in St. Louis swelled to fifteen hundred.²³ Never had the Church’s membership been so scattered and so poorly housed. The phrase “Zion in the wilderness” aptly depicts the Church’s difficult situation during the winter of 1846–47.

Even in these conditions, the presiding Brethren tried to provide adequate church and civil government for the Saints. High councils were organized in the main camps to superintend ecclesiastical and municipal affairs. At Winter Quarters this council was called the “municipal high council.” In early October, Brigham Young divided Winter Quarters into thirteen wards, but he soon increased the number to twenty-two to facilitate the care of the members of the Church. In November the high council voted that even smaller wards be created and “that every laboring man be tithed each tenth day to be applied for the benefit of the poor, or pay an equivalent to his Bishop.”²⁴ Although under this arrangement bishops cared primarily for the temporal needs of the people, it was another step in the development toward the ward organization that exists in the Church today.

To enhance their economic well-being, many wintering Saints traded with settlements in northern Missouri and in Iowa for hogs, grain, vegetables, and emigrant supplies. Some young men sought employment to earn money to pay for these goods. The Saints were expected to pool their resources for the good of all.²⁵

Sickness and death stalked the camps of the Saints. The hasty, wintry exodus from Nauvoo earlier in the year, the exhausting trek across Iowa, the endless spring storms, insufficient provisions, inadequate and improvised shelter, the forced exodus of the poor from Nauvoo, and unhealthy

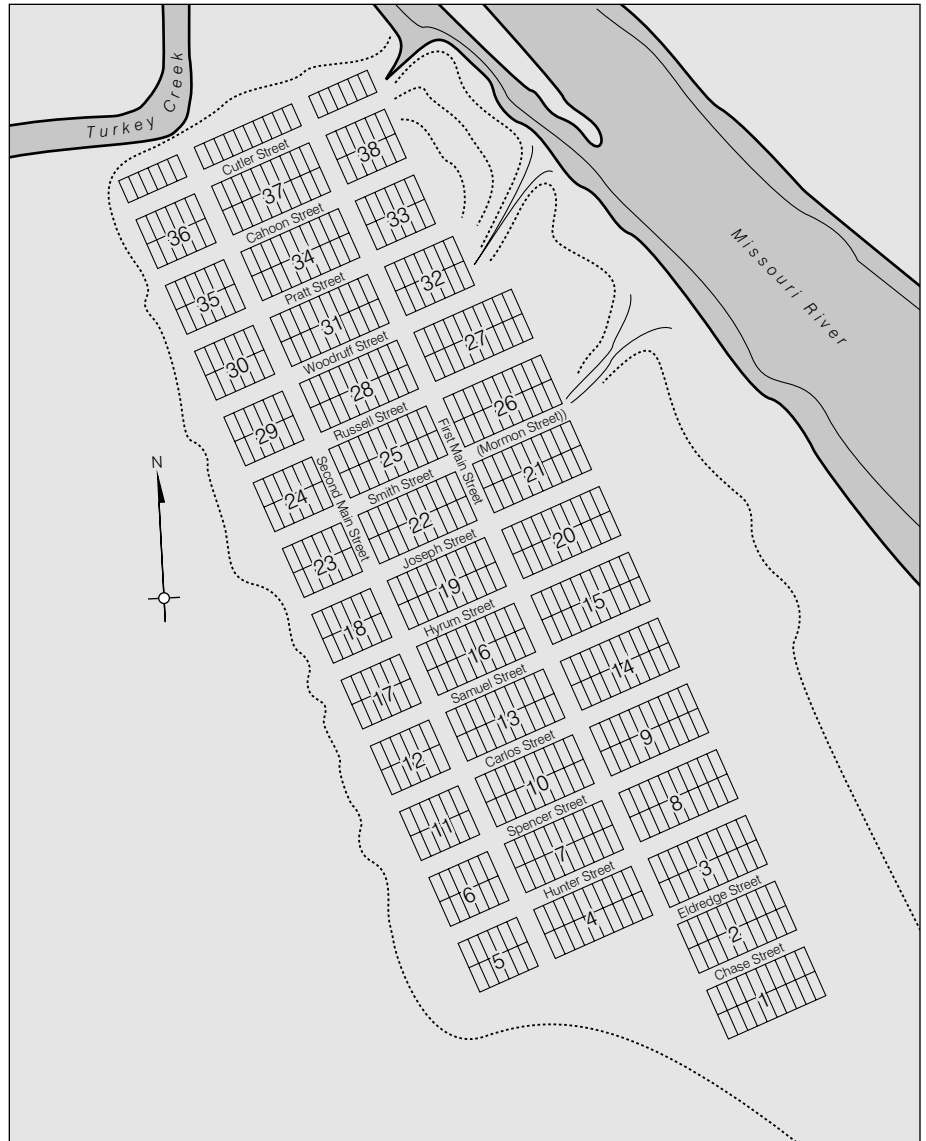


Courtesy of Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Ogden, Utah

Jane Richards (1823–1913) made the trek across Iowa late in 1846 without her husband, Franklin D. Richards, who was on his way to England. Franklin D. Richards was a high priest who would be called into the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles three years later. Jane’s little daughter, Wealthy, was ill and died at Cutler Park after weeks of incredible suffering. Sister Richards recounted the incident:

“A few days previously she had asked for some potato soup, the first thing she had shown any desire for for weeks, and as we were then travelling, we came in sight of a potato-field. One of the sisters eagerly asked for a single potato. A rough woman impatiently heard her story through, and putting her hands on her shoulders, marched her out of the house, saying, ‘I won’t give or sell a thing to one of you damned Mormons.’ I turned on my bed and wept, as I heard them trying to comfort my little one in her disappointment. When she was taken from me I only lived because I could not die.”²⁶

Once the location for "winter quarters" was decided upon, the first necessity was to survey the site. The plat was laid out in forty-one blocks with 820 lots. Streets and spacing of buildings were properly supervised.



riverbank environments all took their toll. During the summer many travelers suffered from the exposure-related diseases of malaria, pneumonia, and tuberculosis. Lack of fresh vegetables brought on a plague of scurvy, which the Saints called "black canker." Serious sickness was no respecter of persons or position, and many of the leaders, including Brigham Young and Willard Richards, became seriously ill. Wilford Woodruff wrote, "I have never seen the Latter Day Saints in any situation where they seemed to be passing through greater tribulations or wearing out faster than at the present time."²⁷ Over seven hundred people died in the camps by the end of the first winter.²⁸

But all was not sorrow, especially in Winter Quarters. Life there could still be generally pleasant, rewarding, and meaningful. Church meetings were held twice a week, and the sermons from the leaders raised the morale of the entire settlement. Many family meetings were held as well. After

much of the hard labor of establishing the community was complete, Brigham Young encouraged the wards to celebrate with feasts and dancing. Women often came together in neighborhood groups to gather food, quilt, braid straw, comb each other's hair, knit, wash clothes, and read letters.

Throughout the winter of 1846–47, additional preparations were made for continuing the westward exodus. Though the Church and its members had suffered almost beyond measure during the previous year, the Saints still harbored fond hopes for the future. Much was learned in 1846 that would pay tremendous dividends in the future.

ENDNOTES

1. Willard Richards, in *History of the Church*, 7:593.
2. See Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), p. 123.
3. Elden J. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1846–1847* (Salt Lake City: Elden Jay Watson, 1971), pp. 150–51.
4. Thomas E. Cheney, ed., *Mormon Songs from the Rocky Mountains*, reprint ed. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1981), p. 68.
5. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, pp. 44, 131.
6. See "History of the Church," *Juvenile Instructor*, 1 Oct. 1882, p. 293.
7. Parley P. Pratt, ed., *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, Classics in Mormon Literature series (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985), p. 307.
8. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 106.
9. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, p. 149; spelling and punctuation standardized.
10. Eliza R. Snow, "Pioneer Diary of Eliza R. Snow," *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1943, p. 208; spelling standardized.
11. "Come, Come, Ye Saints," *Hymns*, no. 30.
12. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, p. 308.
13. Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 16 July 1846, Historical Department, Salt Lake City, p. 21.
14. John R. Young, *Memoirs of John R. Young, Utah Pioneer, 1847* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1920), p. 19.
15. This paragraph is derived from James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976), pp. 225–26.
16. See Allen and Leonard, *Story of the Latter-day Saints*, p. 227.
17. In Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 217; see also B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century One*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1930), 3:72.
18. Wilford Woodruff Journals, 26 June 1846, LDS Historical Department, Salt Lake City; punctuation and capitalization standardized.
19. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 202.
20. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 205.
21. Wilford Woodruff Journals, 30 Apr. 1846; spelling, punctuation, and capitalization standardized.
22. Journal History of the Church, 28 Sept. 1846, pp. 5–6.
23. See Richard Edmond Bennett, "Mormons at the Missouri: A History of the Latter-day Saints at Winter Quarters and at Kanesville, 1846–52—A Study in American Overland Trail Migration," Ph.D. diss., Wayne State University, 1984, pp. 173–75.
24. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, p. 464.
25. Derived from Allen and Leonard, *Story of the Latter-day Saints*, p. 236.
26. In Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), p. 246.
27. Wilford Woodruff Journals, 17–21 Nov. 1846.
28. Bennett, "Mormons at the Missouri," pp. 280–92.