

Bring Them to Zion

The 1856 Handcart Emigration
Organization, Leadership, and Issues



Don H Smith
with the assistance of Mark C. Austin

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SALT LAKE CITY

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Preface

For many years, I was aware of the work that Don was engaged in while he gathered information for this book on the 1856 handcart companies. For about fifty years, he continued to gather information from a wide range of places and subjects, and eager family members contributed to his effort. Don had plans of publishing a book about his findings, but there were always more details to first be investigated. He became interested in testing some of his questions about the construction of the handcarts. He had others help build handcarts with varying constructions to test his theories. Then he began building handcart parts and constructing various handcarts while attempting to duplicate the methods that the pioneer craftsmen may have used. He was always impressed with what they were able to accomplish.

For Don, there was always another idea that he felt compelled to check out, and it seemed obvious that there would be no end to additional investigations. Not wanting to see all that research lost to time and mortality, a few years ago I volunteered to help Don prepare his manuscript to be published. He consented. Little did I know what my volunteering would lead to. Here was a mountain of information that needed to be whittled down to a single book. That process was at times particularly painful, especially to Don, cutting out parts that he had a close attachment to. After making painful cuts, there were immediately more to be made. When the publisher recommended making even more cuts, I was hesitant but eventually agreed that they should be made. I knew if I didn't help Don with his book, it would never be published in our lifetimes. I could not deal with the thought that all of the work that had been done would just disappear.

As the cutting and editing of Don's massive original manuscript was being done, we were faced with the challenge of cutting content but still ensuring that Don's wealth of citations remained appropriately intact. That process often resulted in lumping several citations together at the end of some paragraphs.

Some of the information that was cut from the original manuscript has been salvaged and now forms the basis of a separate self-published book. That book contains stories of the members of the Willie Handcart

Company. Those stories cover the time before, during, and after the pioneer trek.¹

I have some personal ties to this book. My great-great-grandfather was James Gray Willie, captain of the Fourth Handcart Company of 1856. Previously, I knew a fair amount about him and his handcart company, but working on this book opened my eyes to so much more information. In the summers of 2006 and 2007, my wife and I served as missionaries at the Mormon Handcart Historic Sites in Wyoming. Specifically, both years we were assigned to Sixth Crossing where the Willie Company was rescued. That service experience was helpful as I worked through the manuscript, and it made working on it much more meaningful to me.

In the process of researching this particular pioneer migration, there were at times nuggets found that were particularly interesting. One such nugget relates to the deaths in the 1856 handcart companies. In February 1857, Brigham Young asked each of the captains of the companies how many among them died as they crossed the plains to Salt Lake City. Their response to his request was given in March 1857. The answers were particularly informative.²

Years ago, Don recognized the need to weigh the events of the 1856 handcart emigration in more than a folkloric fashion. Because of the many erroneous misconceptions that have been published, a concerted effort was therefore required to better detail the events that led up to the emigration and to its late start. The design of the carts, their construction, and their origin had also been misunderstood or misrepresented and were in need of clarification. As a byproduct of his long-term study, Don learned that some of the handcart writings, which have long been held up as historical absolutes, are laced with questionable claims. Some writers have portrayed the handcart scheme as an ill-conceived, poorly organized, and haphazard affair, led by uncaring and inexperienced leaders. The execution of that emigration has also been classified as inferior by Latter-day

1. The plan is to have this self-published book available to the general public in FamilySearch Catalogs and the Church History Library.

2. Brigham Young, letters to James G. Willie, Edward Martin, Daniel McArthur, Dan Jones, and Edward Bunker, February 19, 1857 (<https://tinyurl.com/hcdeaths1>). James G. Willie reported to Brigham Young that there were sixty-seven deaths in the Willie Company. Edward Martin reported to Brigham Young that there were ninety-eight deaths in the Martin Company. The total reported trekking deaths for the two companies was 165. Immigrants' Accounts, 1864–57, 38 (<https://tinyurl.com/hcdeaths2>).

Saint standards of organization, with the participants being portrayed as ignorant dupes. As a means of testing the validity of the above claims, Don begs the reader to judge the actual events according to accepted organizational standards. At the same time, he wishes to give the readers the materials necessary to judge for themselves whether the information that has been handed down is a true representation of the 1856 handcart history, and to a greater extent, the history of the Willie Handcart Company.

The loss of life that resulted from the delayed overland journeys caused one noted writer, Wallace Stegner, to conclude that the Latter-day Saint flair for organization completely failed during that emigration season. He went so far as to use the words “criminally careless” in his description of the failure. Stegner conveys the impression that no single person was in charge at the Iowa camp, and that the leadership shifted, from time to time, from one individual to another. He also implies that, after the first two (it was actually three) shiploads of emigrants arrived in the Iowa camp, leaders were completely unaware that two additional ships carrying emigrants were on their way. According to Stegner, these unexpected arrivals forced the leaders to hurriedly slap together a stream of carts made entirely of green wood. Further reading of his exposé creates doubt about the thoroughness of his research because he records the emigrants passing through Ellis Island. This would be quite a feat, considering the facility was not opened until thirty-six years later! Even some of the returning missionaries who watched the plan unfold championed elements of the above theme. Their chief complaint centered on the construction of the handcarts by craftsmen from within the emigrant ranks, the delays presumably caused by this assignment, and a dislike of the basic design of the carts. A more recent writer blames the emigration field leaders for their failure to consider the overall welfare of their charges: “I have become convinced that, when grave risk is involved, some leaders lack the practical experience and sense of responsibility to adequately protect the lives and welfare of those they have been called to serve.”³

3. Dorthie Kjerstine Clemmensen Dahl, FamilySearch; Johan Andreas Jensen, “Profiles from the Past: Converted in Jail”; Leroy and Ann Hafen, Forward in *Handcarts to Zion*; Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail*, 221–38; John Chislett, “Narrative,” 313–14; Daniel D. McArthur to Wilford Woodruff, January 5, 1857; Truman Leonard, Journal, July 12, 1856; John Jaques, Journal and History, in Stella Jaques Bell, *Life History and Writings of John Jaques*, 99; William Woodward to Wilford Woodruff, February 17, 1857; Howard A. Christy, “Weather, Disaster, and Responsibility: An Essay on the Willie and Martin Handcart Story,” 9.

Although Don is not a descendant of handcart pioneers, he became intrigued with the participants in the 1856 emigration experiment. His obsession with those people led him to put in thousands of hours, thousands of dollars, and thousands of miles across fifty years studying the handcart history. He has placed special emphasis on the Willie Handcart Company because his children, through their mother, are descendants of the leader of that company. In his research, he has tried to leave no stone unturned.

Before the days of the internet, Don and other family members wrote numerous letters to older generations of handcart-emigrant descendants and conducted interviews with them. They were rewarded with copies of diaries and letters written by some of the participants in the original trek, plus numerous family histories. During visits to the Church History Library, the Family History Center, and elsewhere, Don has scoured the contents of numerous journals, account books, Perpetual Emigrating Fund ledgers, newspapers, letter books, and Seventy's histories, written during or relating to the handcart era. Don's pursuit has taken him to Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, England, and Scotland, searching for related information. Three years of his life were spent in Europe where he became conversant in the Scandinavian languages and the customs of the Scandinavian people. One fifth of the members of the Willie Handcart Company were from those nations, and he has been able to find information about most of those individual participants from census records, land records, and parish registers found in those countries. His visits to county record offices in England, libraries in Denmark and England, and the British Museum's newspaper collection at Collingdale have uncovered items never before brought to light.

Don spent many of his youthful years on a farm driving draft horses attached to iron-tired wagons, similar to those used by the pioneers, and working with cattle. Those experiences provided him with the essential background needed to evaluate emigrant travel across the American plains with similar animals. As a 4H club member, he learned the amount of time required to train cows for the show ring, which gives him a good perspective on the amount of effort needed to train an ox to pull a wagon. He has been in a runaway with a team of horses attached to a sheep camp, a type of covered wagon, and knows, firsthand, the terror such an experience generates. The sheep camp ended up in a potato patch on its side with the horses down and its passengers forced to extricate themselves through a narrow back window. He spent a week in the mountains living

in such a sheep camp and slept in a tent for several weeks while working for the National Park Service.

Don was trained as a shop teacher; therefore, he is acquainted with the basics of wood and metal working. This gave him a step up with regard to analyzing the handcarts and their construction. Upon completing college training, he entered the United States Air Force and trained as a pilot. During this training, he became well acquainted with maps and aerial photographs, skills that have helped him to plot the route of the Willie Handcart Company from England to Salt Lake City. Because he would not sign up for an extended time, he was released from the Air Force and went on to become a dentist. Most of his training in anatomy, physiology, pathology, and so on was received in the University of Washington School of Medicine, where he was sufficiently enlightened to understand the physical complications brought on by hypothermia, a starvation diet, and any diseases encountered during an overland trek. On one of his own journeys across Wyoming, he was bitten by a tick and ended up with tick fever. This experience adds personal flavor to the above background. To get a firsthand knowledge of how an emigrant might feel as a passenger aboard a ship of sail, Don was transported between Portsmouth, England, and New York City aboard a sailing vessel, the *Christian Radich*.

With these decades of research and expertise, Don clearly has the qualifications necessary to pursue a project of this magnitude.

Some of the issues of the 1856 Handcart Emigration that are addressed in this book include:

- What were the strengths of the handcart system leadership?
- What caused the delays for the handcart companies of 1856?
- Why were their tents not ready when the Willie Company arrived at the Iowa City campground?
- What handcart construction was performed by emigrant craftsmen at the Iowa City campground?
- Did the leadership at the Iowa City campground know that the last two ships (*Thornton* and *Horizon*) were coming with emigrants that would be in the last two handcart companies?
- Why was green wood used in the handcart construction?
- Should the pioneers in the last two handcart companies (Willie and Martin) and in the two wagon trains have stayed over the winter of 1856–57 in the Florence region?

A Note on the Combined Journal Entries

In several chapters (Chapters 7–12 and Chapters 14–15) the information from original pioneer journals recorded during those time segments were combined to create a single entry for each day. Together they are the Combined Ocean Journal, Combined NY Journal, Combined Train Journal, Combined Iowa Camp Journal, Combined Iowa Trek Journal, Combined Florence Journal, Combined Journal to Ft. Laramie, and Combined Utah Trek Journal. Entries from these journals provide the reader with a wide view of what was happening each day. Original sources for each of the combined journals are listed in the notes. As much as possible, the language of the sources has been retained with occasional editing for consistency and readability.

Acknowledgments

Don and I would like to thank our wives for their patience with us while we were busy working on this book and for the many times we were unavailable to participate in other activities. At the same time, they were extremely encouraging in our work and enthused when they saw progress being made. They continued to be hopeful that the book would someday be finished. We would also like to thank the many, many other individuals who have contributed in various ways to help create this book.

Mark C. Austin,
with the assistance of Don H Smith

CHAPTER 1

Problems and Frustrations of the 1855 Emigration

Beginning with their 1846 forced exodus from Nauvoo, Latter-day Saints who chose to follow Brigham Young and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith had experienced a full decade of organizing and executing overland immigrations. For sixteen years they had shipped emigrants from England to the United States, with the British Parliament praising them for their efficiency and consideration for the welfare of their emigrating adherents. With such a diversion from earlier emigration successes, one is forced to inquire what went wrong in 1856. What happened to explain the twenty-six-day delay between the May 14 arrival at the Iowa outfitting camp and the June 9 departure of the first handcart company?¹

Many of the criticisms that have been heaped upon the handcart emigration field leaders point to a sermon delivered by Young on November 2, 1856. Among his remarks, he told the Saints:

Last year my back and head ached, and I have been about half mad ever since, and that too righteously, because of the reckless squandering of means and leaving me to foot the bills. Last year, without asking me a word of counsel, without a word being spoken to me about the matter, there was over sixty thousand dollars of indebtedness incurred for me to pay. What for? To fetch a few immigrants here, when I could have brought the whole of them with one quarter of the means.²

Young's expression of frustration, however, does not take into account disease, river flows, increased western migration, business cartels, supply and demand, politics, and thievery. These were just but a few of the problems encountered by the field leaders of the 1855 emigration, including Apostles F. D. Richards and Erastus Snow of the Quorum of the Twelve.

1. Leroy Hafen and Ann Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, 56–60; Kate B. Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West*, 4:147–49, 338–40; Richard Francis Burton, “Burton’s City of the Saints,” 198–99; *Second Report from the Committee on Emigrant Ships; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index*, 108–17.

2. Brigham Young, November 2, 1856, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:69.

One of the nation's severe cholera epidemics occurred in 1855 and was especially virulent in New Orleans. There, the season's first five emigrant ships entered the Louisiana port and transferred their passengers to steamers that would carry them up the Mississippi River to St. Louis. From New Orleans to St. Louis, these passengers were exposed to cholera's deadly bacillus, and a great loss of life ensued. Later in the year, Latter-day Saint emigrant ships instead arrived at ports in Philadelphia and New York. The cost of transporting emigrants from Liverpool to New Orleans or to east coast cities was about the same, but the cost of transporting them from the east coast to St. Louis was 50 percent higher than from New Orleans. The exposure to cholera, however, was significantly less in the overland route from the east coast, and thus it was Brigham Young himself who ordered the change in ports of entry because of these health issues as well as the presence of Apostle John Taylor in New York.³

Now that the Kansas Territory was open for settlement, Latter-day Saint emigration agents, in the fall of 1854, contacted potential developers in the area with the idea of making that region the outfitting and starting point for the 1855 emigration. These contacts had been made both in person and by letter. They suggested this location because of its abundant grazing for draft animals, good water supply, shortened route to the plains, and proximity to the Missouri River. In a meeting held on February 6, 1855, Atchison's shareholders decided to appropriate the funds needed for the development of the region. These developments required the building of warehouses, docking facilities, and other amenities necessary to accommodate the Salt Lake, California, and Oregon traders and emigrants.⁴

The 1855 transportation from St. Louis to Atchison was severely hampered by the low volume of water in the Missouri River, which was so low that five steamboats were forced to unload freight fifteen miles below Lexington, Missouri, in order to continue their journey. The Saints aboard one such vessel were compelled to leave some of their luggage behind, awaiting an improvement in river conditions; John Burnside was left to look after it. To complicate matters, a Danish component of the emigration landed in Leavenworth, Kansas, instead of Atchison because their boat became grounded on a sandbar. (There is also evidence suggesting that the

3. *St. Louis Luminary* (November 11, 1854): 6; *St. Louis Luminary* (May 11, 1855): 98; "Deadly Epidemics in St. Louis History," USGenNet; *The Herald of Freedom* (May 19, 1855): 3; Don H Smith, "Leadership, Planning, and Management of the 1856 Mormon Handcart Emigration," 126.

4. *Squatter Sovereign* (February 20, 1855): 2.

boat captain and some of his fellow officers had monetary interests in the development of the Leavenworth community, as the two communities were in fierce competition for the trade.) This mishap cost many lives due to the heavy cholera outbreak found in and around Leavenworth; it also produced additional expenses of transporting these Danes on to Atchison. To compensate for the revenues lost through decreased loads, the boat owners raised the fees for both freight and passengers, and they formed a pact between them to maintain these higher prices. This cartel held tightly because of the heavy traffic generated by the opening of Kansas and Nebraska for settlement. With the emigrants already in the pipeline, the field leaders were forced to pay these unplanned monetary increases.⁵

The large migration to Kansas and Nebraska increased the demand for wagons, supplies, and draft animals, which in turn raised the prices for these items. Many of the settlers, headed for the above two territories, arrived in Kansas City by boat and obtained their required needs from the same sources as the Latter-day Saint emigrants. This region was, likewise, the source of supplies for Santa Fe traders who sent off 41 wagons, each loaded with 6,500 pounds of cargo, and a week later purchased 83 yoke of oxen in a single day. Six Salt Lake City-based merchants were also outfitted in this region; they required 304 wagons, 3,210 oxen, and 513 tons of goods. One of these companies with its 107 wagons employed 130 teamsters; if the ratio of men to wagons was constant, then 369 teamsters were needed by the six companies. The Salt Lake freighters generally obtained many of their required teamsters from among the most capable of the young emigrant men. Like the Santa Fe traders, these Salt Lake firms stepped into the arena and competed for the same resources.⁶

When the first load of Saints arrived at her dock, there were only six houses in Atchison, and there was a need for tradesmen and other employees to carry out the building demands. Some of the emigrants were employed in this effort and labored under the direction of Andrew Siler, a Utah missionary serving in that region. Other Saints found employment in Missouri while awaiting their departure for the West. These emigrants were encouraged to seek such employment as a means of reducing their

5. *Squatter Sovereign* (March 27, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (May 29, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (June 12, 1855): 2; Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 16:441; Milo Andrus to Erastus Snow, *St. Louis Luminary* (May 5, 1855): 94; *The Herald of Freedom* (February 24, 1855): 2; *The Herald of Freedom* (May 12, 1855): 1–2.

6. *The Herald of Freedom* (May 26, 1855): 3; *The Herald of Freedom* (June 2, 1855): 2; *Deseret News* (November 21, 1855): 292.

maintenance costs. Several of them were also engaged in building a double-wide log cabin, plowing, planting, and fencing a hundred-acre farm that had been preempted by the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company at Mormon Grove. Cholera victims, their required nurses, and men working elsewhere appear to have resulted in the shortage of able-bodied herders that left the emigration's cattle in precarious situations. That year's migration to Oregon, California, Utah, Kansas, and Nebraska left large herds of animals scattered all over the prairies in the region. This led to cattle owned by the Saints getting mixed in with that of other emigrants, and when the time arrived to hitch the draft animals to the wagons, they found many missing and were compelled to purchase replacements. The expensive replacements were insufficient in number, forcing the leaders to leave thirteen wagons loaded with church supplies on the road west of Atchison. The heavy demand for draft animals and the high prices they commanded also threw the doors wide open for thieves who took advantage of the situation. It takes little imagination to guess what became of some of the missing draft animals when the region was frequented by marauding pro-slavery Missourians who thought nothing of shooting a man in the field for his animals or removing them, at gun point, from a wagon loaded with supplies for destitute settlers. They had no respect for Latter-day Saints or their property, which was graphically shown when they drove them from Missouri sixteen years earlier. (The savings in maintenance expenses derived from the emigrants' outside work may, in the end, have been surpassed by the added burdens placed on both the 1855 and 1856 emigrations as a result of this money-saving idea.)⁷

Atchison's primitive facilities, competition for resources, cholera, lack of manpower, and low water levels delayed the emigration and the departure of some of the Salt Lake freighters. All of this contributed to humanitarian

7. *Squatter Sovereign* (February 3, 1855): 4; *Squatter Sovereign* (April 3, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (April 17, 1855): 3; *Squatter Sovereign* (May 8, 1855): 2–3; *Squatter Sovereign* (May 15, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (June 12, 1855): 2–3; *Squatter Sovereign* (August 7, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (September 5, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (September 18, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (September 25, 1855): 3; *Squatter Sovereign* (October 2, 1855): 2; *Squatter Sovereign* (July 1, 1856): 2; Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 1:340; Charles Ramsden Bailey, *Autobiography*, 6–10, 12; Archibald McFarland, *Reminiscences*, 8–10; Richard Ballantyne to Erastus Snow, *St. Louis Luminary* (April 27, 1855): 90; *Kansas Historical Quarterly* (November 1950): 386–88; Alice Nichols, *Bleeding Kansas*, 100, 160–63; *Millennial Star* 17 (September 15, 1855): 577–80.

concerns that pressured emigration leaders to accelerate the emigration to Utah. However, because of a shortness of funds, Apostle Erastus Snow “informed the Saints who had then arrived [in St. Louis], that the prospects for many of them to cross the Plains this season was quite small, as the means in his hands at that time was quite inadequate to carry them all through.” Seeing the “sorrow and many tears” that Snow’s announcement caused, Daniel Spencer, who had arrived in St. Louis on May 30, 1855, from his mission in England, told the distraught Saints that he had been “sent . . . over to assist Elder Snow in getting them all to the [Salt Lake] Valley this season, and that [his] faith was quite strong that it would be accomplished.”⁸

Spencer put his faith to work and assisted the Saints in traveling from St. Louis through Atchinson and on to Mormon Grove. There, he joined with Snow and continued helping the emigrating Saints prepare for their trek to Utah. The last three emigrant trains left Mormon Grove on July 28, July 31, and August 3, 1855. These trains did not enter the Salt Lake Valley until October 24, October 28, and November 2. The final freight-carrying train did not reach Salt Lake City until November 19 and was forced to cross the mountains in deep snow.⁹

When the 1855 emigration was viewed through the eyes of one who saw it firsthand, rather than from afar, we get a different picture than the one portrayed in Brigham Young’s November 2, 1856, sermon. As Daniel Spencer’s brother Orson wrote in August 1855, just a couple months before dying of malaria in St. Louis,

A great work has been accomplished in fitting out with teams and provisions about three thousand Saints. Imagine more than half the thousands of cattle, to be wild and unaccustomed to the yoke, and a much larger portion of the drivers as unacquainted with driving as their oxen to the yoke, the labor of supervision becomes considerable. A system of order in the distribution of provisions and cattle, and wagons, and drivers, and conductors has been arranged mostly out of the raw materials, with all the precision that attends a regular army, and all without salary or pay.¹⁰

8. *Millennial Star* 17 (September 15, 1855): 577–80.

9. Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West*, 4:140; “Journal of James Starley,” 175; *Deseret News* (November 21, 1855): 292.

10. *St. Louis Luminary* (August 11, 1855): 150; Smith, “Leadership, Planning, and Management,” 124, 130–33, 141, 160–61.

CHAPTER 7

Aboard the *Thornton*

The April 5, 1856, issue of the *Millennial Star* reports:

The scarcity of ships for the more northern of the American ports has caused a considerable rise in the prices of passage. . . . We cannot expect to know the scarcity or plenitude of ships any great length of time before securing one, as this depends upon the fluctuations of commerce, and upon the winds, which at winter and spring seasons sometimes blow adversely for weeks together.¹

The next day, April 6, the *Thornton* made her appearance in Liverpool, and the mission office began negotiations for her use in transporting emigrants. By April 11, the contract was signed with the date of departure set as May 3. Immediately, letters of notification began to be sent out. If the letters were received within a day or two after their transmission, then the desired roughly three-week notification period would have been met, but this was not always possible.²

It was only after information of the safe arrival of the Scandinavian emigration component in Grimsby had been received at mission headquarters that final arrangements could be made for the *Thornton's* scheduled departure. Although the ship had arrived in Liverpool on April 6, she made her first appearance in the Bramley-Moore Dock on April 17. However, according to the notice sent to John Linford, she was said to remain in the Nelson Dock until April 13. Incidentally, the two docks were adjacent to each other.

The end of the Crimean War on March 30, 1856, with the Treaty of Paris, resulted in a great effort to bring troops home and thus put a strain on shipping and also elevated prices. In addition, a shortage of carts available for loading and unloading ships added further delays that may have interfered with the timetable sent out to the emigrants. Furthermore, shippers may have waited until a later date to enter the dock because of the scheduled May 3 departure. (For each day in dock, the shippers were assessed a fee, and for monetary reasons, they wanted to keep their dock stay to a minimum.) The extended wait in Liverpool also cost the ship-

1. *Millennial Star* 18 (April 5, 1856): 218.

2. *Northern Times* (April 7, 1856): 4; British Mission Office (hereafter BMO) to Messrs. Guion & Co., April 6, 1856; Franklin D. Richards to Elder H. C. Haight, April 11, 1856.

ping company money; therefore, the captain and company officials were anxious to speed up the vessel's sailing date. For these or other unknown reasons, on or about April 29, Mr. Norris, the shipping company's representative, requested the departure date be moved from the third to the second of May. Apostle Franklin D. Richards was willing to make this concession, so long as the passengers were allowed to board the vessel and stow their luggage on April 30. Although passengers were not allowed to board until May 1, the May 2 departure from the dock was still accomplished. To facilitate any such changes in departure plans, the suppliers of the food stuffs, medical provisions, and tenting materials also had to be notified, which required additional work for the office staff.³

All who were traveling with the Perpetual Emigrating Fund's assistance were required to sign promissory notes or bonds for their fare before boarding the vessel. Three of their number were given crew positions, and they reported to the ship early in the morning to receive their assigned duties. John Patterson and Henry Boden were appointed cooks, and Edward Griffiths was made steward. These positions were mandated by the newest British passenger act, which required:

Every "Passenger Ship" . . . shall have on board a seafaring Person, who shall be rated in the Ship's Articles as Passenger's Steward . . . and who shall be employed in messing and serving out Provisions to the Passengers, and in assisting to maintain Cleanliness, Order, and good Discipline among the Passengers, and who shall not assist in any way in navigating or working the Ship. . . . Every "Passenger Ship" . . . shall also have on board . . . Two seafaring Men . . . who shall be employed in cooking the Food of the Passengers.⁴

The day's delay in boarding the Saints might be an indication that some of the materials needed for the journey were slow in arriving. The tenting materials and food supplies were not ordered until April 29, and the tenting supplier was not told to deliver his goods until May 2. One might envision the docks cluttered with late-arriving barrels, crates, boxes, bundles, and sacks, all of which required loading before the passengers

3. *Liverpool Telegraph & Shipping Gazette* (April 18, 1856); *Liverpool Daily Post* (April 17, 1856): 3; BMO to Messrs. Guion & Co., April 29, 1856; BMO, Letter to Messrs. Jefferey, April 29, 1856; BMO, Morrish & Co. to Cearn and Brown, April 29, 1856.

4. Peder Madsen, Journal, May 2, 1856; F. D. Richards to Messrs. Guion & Co., April 30, 1856; *Laws Relating to the Carriage of Passengers by Sea*, 34–35.

were admitted. The heavy items were taken aboard both as ballast and for the generation of additional revenue.⁵

When the emigrants arrived at the pier, they saw, for the first time, their packet ship lying in her berth with her three masts pointed heavenward and her sails neatly furled on their yards. Careful observation showed her to have three full decks, a deck house aft, a midship's deck house, and a topgallant forecastle. Housed in this latter structure were most of her forty-five crew members. The vessel was approaching two years of age; her keel was laid Christmas Eve 1853, and she was launched June 7, 1854. She was built by one of the foremost shipbuilders of the day, W. H. Webb of New York. To show their trust in the vessel, the shippers, the captain, and Webb all held shares in her ownership. Although she was securely tied to the pier with thick hemp ropes, she fought her restraint by bobbing up and down with every movement of the water beneath her hull. There must have been a flurry of activity about her as the crew and dock hands prepared the vessel for boarding.⁶

Unknown to those who waited on the dock to board the *Thornton*, the ship had just recently undergone a needed overhaul, the reason for which reveals some of the difficulties of shipping between the United States and England. On her previous journey between Liverpool and

5. The ship, at the time of sailing, had in its hold and elsewhere 376 tons of coal, 4 casks of iron, 13,141 bars of iron, 4,387 bundles of iron, 1,136 bundles of steel, 1,767 bundles of sheet iron, 239 strips of iron, 1,781 boxes of tin, 276 ingots of tin, 23 casks of hardware, 12 cases of merchandise, 12 bundles of merchandise, 3 casks of merchandise, 30 boxes of glass, 90 packages of gum, 690 sacks of salt, 2,210 bales of cotton, wool, rags, and sponges, 31 containers of tobacco, 179 miscellaneous bundles, 1 case, 1 bag, 12 miscellaneous casks, and 195 items marked "cs." Each of the items, here listed, was ordered by a specific American firm. To this cargo were added F. D. Richards's piano, two cases for Brigham Young, a case of guns, a crate of crockery for C. G. Webb, a cask of China for Daniel Spencer, the late Elder Walcott's two chests and hat box, sufficient passenger provisions and medical comforts, 1,600 yard of Nankeen, 56 pounds of thread and 100 needles, plus all of the passenger's luggage. The heavy items were taken aboard both as ballast and for the generation of additional revenue. BMO to Messrs. Jefferey, Morrish & Co., April 29, 1856; BMO to Carns and Brown, April 29, 1856; *New York Journal of Commerce* (June 16, 1856): 6; F. D. Richards to Daniel Spencer, May 8, 1856.

6. Charles Dickens, "Allowed to Board," 7:115; W. H. Webb certificate book; *Thornton* registration certificates (1854), 55, 58, 62, 65, 67.

New York, she had encountered severe weather, as indicated in the following newspaper article:

Capt. Collins, of ship *Thornton*, from Liverpool, arrived yesterday, reports; Jan. 5 and 6, 80 miles E. by S. of Sandy Hook, experienced a hurricane from N.N.E. with snow; spilt every sail, they being securely furled at the time; at daylight found a perfect wreck, all sails torn from the gaskets and gone; the head of the main top mast and fore and main yards sprung. Skylights, with everything moveable above decks gone; the upper between decks flooded with water, and the ship without canvas to steady her, laboring heavily, and sea running very high.⁷

Thursday, May 1, 1856.

Later in the afternoon, although the ship was not yet ready for the passengers to come aboard, two women were allowed to climb the gang-plank while the sailors were still disinfecting and renovating the ship. Janet McNeil from Haddington near Edinburgh, Scotland, had begun labor and at 5:00 p.m. safely delivered a fine boy with the aid of her female companion. When all was in readiness, the remainder of those waiting to come aboard was allowed to do so. The passengers were assigned their berths and proceeded to temporarily arrange their luggage, make up their beds, and acquaint themselves with their surroundings.⁸

Later in the evening, the Scandinavian contingency arrived on foot, accompanied by a taxi which carried those who were ill among them. The fare was 2 shillings and a sixpence. At 8:00 p.m., they joined the 608 British subjects who were already aboard the *Thornton* and were assigned berths below the second deck with which they were well satisfied. By late evening, order and tranquility prevailed among the 560 adult, 172 children, and 29 infant emigrants who found themselves on the ship.⁹

7. *New York Times* (January 15, 1856): 8; *New York Times* (January 21, 1856): 1.

8. A brief sketch of the life of Margaret McNeil Ballard, FamilySearch.

9. Combined Ocean Journal. This is information taken from the James G. Willie Emigrating Company Journal and the journal of Peder Madsen; hereafter, Combined Ocean Journal. By adding these figures together, one obtains a total of 761, but this number was raised to 764 before sailing. More Saints arrived in Liverpool than ordered with the hope they could accompany some of their friends. This prompted Richards to ask the shipping company on May 1 if it would allow 30 or 40 more passengers than the 740 originally scheduled. The food supplies ordered were for 740, and an adjustment had to be made to accommodate the additional people. This is another reason why supplies may have been late in arriving. The increased number of passengers shows that the

The order and character of the *Thornton's* passengers were quite different from those sailing on other ships. These Saints were not unlike another shipload of Mormon emigrants who were visited by Charles Dickens in the London harbor seven years later. Among the passengers on that later ship *Amazon* were Sarah and John Boden, the mother and brother of Henry Boden, one of the Latter-day Saint cooks aboard the *Thornton*. Dickens wrote about the passengers on the *Amazon* in his *All the Year Round*. Quoting the captain, he writes:

The most of these came aboard yesterday evening. They came from various parts of England in small parties that had never seen one another before. Yet they had not been a couple of hours on board, when they established their own police, made their own regulations, and set their own watches at all the hatchways. Before nine o'clock, the ship was as orderly as a man-of-war. . . . A stranger would be puzzled to guess the right name for these people . . . I should have said they were in their degree, the pick and flower of England.

Dickens adds:

I went on board their ship to bear testimony against them if they deserved it, as I fully believed they would; to my great astonishment they did not deserve it; and my predispositions and tendencies must not affect me as an honest witness. I went over the *Amazon's* side, feeling it impossible to deny that, so far, some remarkable influence had produced a remarkable result, which better known influences have often missed.¹⁰

The Latter-day Saint emigrants were much better off than most others who were left on their own to arrange their affairs in Liverpool. Emigrants who were required to fend for themselves were plundered from the moment they arrived in the city until they departed. The emigrant runner was the principal offender; it was he who would lay in wait for the unsuspecting new arrival to appear. With a front of good neighborliness, he would arrange transportation and take the emigrant to a lodging house, to the money changer, and to the grocer and provision dealer. At each stop, inflated prices were charged for misrepresented quantities and qualities of goods and services. The runner would receive a cut at each stop. Superimposed upon this process were pickpockets and thieves who

company accommodated Richards to a degree. F. D. Richards to Messrs. Guion & Co., May 1, 1856; F. D. Richards to Daniel Spencer, May 8, 1856.

10. Charles Dickens, "The Uncommercial Traveler," 9:119–23; Sarah Boden, FamilySearch; Henry Boden, FamilySearch.

were on the lookout for any loose piece of property they could get their hands on.¹¹

Friday, May 2, 1856.

Between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m., the *Thornton* left her mooring in the Bramley-Moore Dock. During the day, several Liverpool Elders visited the ship and her passengers.¹²

For Chesterton Gillman, age 66, of Great Yarmouth, ships were not a new thing because he was a sailor by profession. Apparently, acting on behalf of some family member, a Mr. Hurry of Liverpool was opposed to Gillman's emigration. Hurry appealed to Apostle Richards to get Gillman off the vessel, but Richards put him off until the next day when he planned to go aboard at clearance time. Richards might have intended to let Gillman decide his own destiny and didn't want any potential legal action that might interfere with the ship's sailing. The *Enoch Train*, which sailed from this port March 23, was stopped while departing, and Richards certainly didn't want such interference with the current company.¹³

Saturday, May 3, 1856.

At 11:30 a.m., the government inspector and doctor arrived on board accompanied by Elder F. D. Richards and his entourage. [Each emigrant passed by the doctor for a token examination. Special arrangements had to be made with the shipping company because of the medical condition of several of the passengers.]¹⁴

A medical inspection was always performed on all persons that would be arriving in New York. This was done at the request of the New York Commissioners of Emigration in order to determine if there were any among the emigrants who needed immediate medical care and to provide

11. *Millennial Star* 17 (February 3, 1855): 72; *Littell's Living Age* 26 (September 14, 1850): 492–97; Parliamentary Papers, John Bramley Moore's testimony before the House of Commons Select Committee on Passengers' Act, June 27, 1851; Louise Hamilton, "Awaiting Departure."

12. Combined Ocean Journal, May 2, 1856.

13. F. D. Richards to Mr. Hurry, May 2, 1856; J. D. T. McAllister, Journal, March 23, 1856.

14. Combined Ocean Journal, May 3, 1856; F. D. Richards to Messrs. Guion & Co., May 5, 1856.

hospital treatment where such a need existed. It was also utilized to discover those who, from extreme age, chronic disease, orphanage, pregnancy, lunacy or idiocy, were liable to become public burdens. The shippers were required to assume responsibility for all passengers aboard who were shipped on their vessels. If the commissioners determined that any ship's passengers fell into the above category, they assessed the shipper a penalty which they called commutation. This commutation required a fee of \$75 plus a three-year guarantee for the individual's support, but it was not strictly imposed.

A letter from Richards to the shipping company Guion & Co. discussed the medical liabilities and guarantees of some of the emigrants:

Messrs. Guion & Co.

May 5, 1856

Gentlemen:

The undersigned individuals [there were fourteen individuals on the list], passengers per ship *Thornton* for New York, being considered by you liable to extra commutation money, I hereby agree to refund what you may be required to pay in respect of such passengers by the Emigration Commissioners on your presenting the vouchers for the same.

I also agree to pay the death penalty viz. \$10 on each of the following individuals [there were seven individuals on the list] should they die on the passage out.¹⁵

I am yours respectfully,

Tower Chambers, Liverpool

F. D. Richards
per J. Linforth¹⁶

Five (and probably all seven) of the above persons were taken off the ship and put ashore because they did not pass inspection, but they were allowed to reboard after the above agreement was made.¹⁷

There were some who may have had difficulty passing scrutiny, but they took steps to avoid the watchful eye of the doctor. One of the Moulton girls had just recovered from smallpox and still had some unhealed lesions on her hand, so she wore a pair of gloves to hide them from the doctor. He asked her to remove her right glove, but the lesions were on her left hand, which allowed her to pass unhindered.¹⁸

15. Section 14 of the US Passenger Act of 1855 stipulated that a \$10 death penalty fee be assessed for everyone over eight years of age who died aboard ship of natural causes.

16. F. D. Richards to Messrs. Guion & Co., May 5, 1856.

17. Andrew D. Olsen and Jolene S. Allphin, *Follow Me to Zion*, 72.

18. Moulton Family Histories, Thomas Moulton, FamilySearch.

Saturday, May 3, 1856, continued.

By 1:00 p.m., the inspection was completed, and Elder Richards addressed the emigrants. He counseled them to carry out Captain Collins' instructions and appointed Elder James G. Willie as their president with Elders Millen Atwood, Moses Clough, and Johan A. Ahmanson as his counselors. The Saints aboard voted to sustain these appointments. Elder Richards promised that if they would abide by the instructions which were given, they would have a prosperous journey. In parting, he blessed them by the authority of the Holy Priesthood and in the name of Jesus Christ. As he and his entourage left the ship at 3:00 p.m., accompanied by Elder Willie, the passengers produced a volley of cheers as a means of appreciation.¹⁹

Richards had also written a letter of appointment for the company of emigrants with religious instruction for their travel:

To the Saints on board the ship *Thornton* hence to New York 2 May 1856
Beloved Brethren

Elder James G. Willie is appointed to preside over you during your voyage. Elders Millen Atwood, Johan A. Ahmanson, and Moses Clough are also appointed counselors and assistants to Elder Willie; to aid him in the duties of his Presidency among you. And we exhort all the Saints on board to hearken diligently and obey their instructions in all things, being diligent to keep the commandments of God and remember your prayers, in the season thereof, that the Holy Spirit may abound in your midst and the care of the Lord be continually over you while you journey to Zion. Brothers and sisters remember your covenants with the Lord, live pure and holy before each other and before Him that His smiles and approbation may be upon you, and you shall be blessed with a safe and prosperous passage and in being delivered from the evils which lie about your path. I commend you to the tender mercies of our Father in Heaven who will not forsake his obedient children. Hoping soon to see you again in the land of Zion, I am your brother in the everlasting gospel.²⁰

F. D. Richards

One of the twelve apostles and President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Europe

To Willie, Richards wrote a more detailed letter of instructions:

19. Combined Ocean Journal, May 3, 1856.

20. Franklin D. Richards, Letter of Appointment of James G. Willie, May 5, 1856.

Elder James G. Willie
Dear Brother

2 May 1856

In connection with the letter of appointment in which you are made president of the company of Latter-day Saints sailing to New York per *Thornton* I hand you this letter of instructions as a guide to the performance of some of the duties that will devolve upon you.

You receive, herewith, a complete list of all the passengers, showing first the number of tickets on which their respective names appear, and secondly the number of bonds which the respective P. E. Fund passengers have signed, and which distinguishes them from ordinary passengers. Annexed to the list you will find a copy of the P. E. Fund bond, and reference to the same will show you that all P. E. Fund passengers are, thereby, required to sign receipts at various stages of the journey to Utah for the expense of the passage from place to place. For the passage to New York, I have prepared receipts which are ready to receive the signature of the passenger, and I place the same in your charge. They show the indebtedness of the respective passengers as far as New York, and should be signed prior to landing and give up to Elder Daniel Spencer or to any of agent he may have appointed to receive them.

Should any passenger object to sign the receipts from having prepaid passage on any portion of the nine pounds it will be sufficient to inform them that whatever amount they may have paid here will be placed to their credit to apply on settlement with the president of the P. E. F. Company in Utah.

In obtaining signatures to the receipts each person able to do so must write his or her name, or where any members of a family cannot write, the head of the family or some member of it should write it for them. Where none of the persons concerned can write, of course, their names must be written for them. All who do not write their own names but are capable of making their mark and understanding the nature of it must do so. All the receipts bear numbers corresponding to those on the bonds which have been signed here by the passengers, which numbers being placed opposite the names of the persons concerned in the list of passengers will enable you in a moment to find the proper receipt for any person or family. This business will never-the-less need care to prevent any person or family from signing another's receipt.

As receipts will be given at other stages of the journey as before expressed I hand you, herewith, a parcel of blank forms to be delivered to Elder Spencer or his agent.

It is possible that you may be required to take charge of the P. E. F. Emigrants in their journey across the country to Iowa City, in which event you would have to superintend the signing of receipts for that stage. The amounts for these receipts would consist of railway fare, and any extraneous expense incurred during the journey. The receipts signed at this stage of the journey should bear the same numbers as those signed prior to landing at New York.

I have shipped aboard the *Thornton* 1,600 yds. Nankeen, 70 lbs. thread, 1 C needles of which 1,390 yds. Nankeen, 64 lbs. thread are for the use of the P. E. F. emigrants to make up into tents and wagon covers which require for a tent 55 yds., for a wagon cover 26 yds. The balance Nankeen and thread you will please supply per persons holding orders upon you as follows:

Name	Nankeen	Thread
John Lewis	70 yds.	2 lbs.
R. Whitehead	70 yds.	2 lbs.
Ruth Bellington	70 yds.	2 lbs.

The ordinary emigrants will make their tents upon the old plan which required 44 yards. I give you a draft of the same. [Each of the above individuals has sufficient Nankeen to fabricate both a wagon cover and a tent.]

I also furnish you with £800 (\$3,880) intended for payment of the passage of the P. E. F. passengers from New York to Iowa City and which you will please hand to Elder Spencer or his agent on your arrival at New York. I furnish you with a bill of lading showing the quantity of provisions I have shipped for the passengers, and great care should be exercised during the whole passage in serving them out that no waste may be made. The steward is required to keep an accurate account of the packages as they are opened, and at the termination of the voyage render the same to you, which deducted from the quantity expressed in the B/L [bill of lading] will show you what quantity you have to receive from the captain. The provisions received from the captain you will please hold subject to the order of Elder Spencer or his agent.

A list of any births, deaths or marriages that may occur during the passage should be kept, and forwarded to me with the report of the passage. Among the Scandinavian passengers there are some, besides the P. E. Fund passengers, who require to go west and who are prepared to pay their passage. These brother Ahmanson can point out, and you should introduce the matter to Brother Spencer or his agent, that they may be included in the contract for forwarding West the P. E. F. passengers. The same holds good with respect to the British passengers, except that it will be necessary for you to ascertain which they are who desire to go West, among those not P. E. F. emigrants.

F. D. Richards²¹

Saturday, May 3, 1856, continued.

Elder Ahmanson called the Scandinavian Saints together for the purpose of enlightening them regarding that which had been taking place. He told them that Elder Willie had been appointed President of the entire company by Elder Richards and that he had been made his counselor,

21. F. D. Richards to James G. Willie, May 2, 1856; Anna F. Tait, "Dear Brother and Sister Turnbull," 478-79.

assistant, and president of the Scandinavian division of the company. While addressing them he gave further instructions and recommended cleanliness and order. Seven days provisions were issued which consisted of bread, meat, pork, tea, sugar, oats, wheat flour, rice, etc. Water, they were told, would be issued on a daily basis. The Danes were pleased with their general conditions and especially with their cooking situation. They felt they had been assigned the best time and place to carry out this domestic task.²²

Late in the evening, Elder Willie returned to the ship with his final instructions and immediately began to carry them out. He appointed Elder Atwood to preside over the main deck, Elder Ahmanson over the Danish Saints of the lower deck, and Elder Clough to preside over the English Saints of the same deck. This was done to facilitate order in meetings, cooking, and etc. The upper deck was divided into four wards, with presidents over each, and the lower into three wards, with similar presidents over these Saints. Paul Gourley was appointed to take charge of the sixth ward, part or all of whom were from Scotland, and he was reported to be a kind, good man. Elder John Chislett was appointed captain of the guard and was instructed to allow no crew member below deck without the permission of the ship's captain or his first mate. The appointments of Edward Griffiths as steward, with general oversight over provisions; of George May as clerk; and of John Patterson and Henry Boden as cooks, were reconfirmed.²³

Packet ships like the *Thornton* were driven hard and did not provide refuge for lazy crew members. It was not uncommon to find the most unsavory characters among the best seamen. Such men had to be controlled by a hard-nosed master and mate. To show any type of humanity toward them might be interpreted as a sign of weakness. The elders were well aware of the type of people with whom they were dealing and did not want them in the passenger quarters.

After each ship load of passengers departed, letters of instructions and information were sent from Liverpool to the individuals who were connected with the emigration in the United States. (The letters relating to the *Thornton's* company are found in Appendix B.)

22. Combined Ocean Journal, May 3, 1856; "Voyage in An Emigrant Ship," 128–29.

23. Combined Ocean Journal, May 3, 1856.

Sunday, May 4, 1856.

Before dawn made its appearance (3:00 a.m.), the *Thornton's* crew manned the capstan which in turn gave power to the windless that lifted her heavy anchors and allowed her to be towed out of the Mercy into the Irish Sea. When she was well away from land, her sails were set to conform to the wind sock's direction. At about 8:30 a.m., the tug boat was disengaged and returned to Liverpool. Filled with a north east breeze, the towering sails took over and began to propel the ship in a southward direction.

To properly commemorate the Sabbath, the Scandinavian Saints gathered for a Church service at 10:00 a.m. Elder Ahmanson and his two counselors, Elders Svensen and Larsen, delivered sermons. They encouraged their listeners to preserve a spirit of love and unity and to set an example of cleanliness and order for the English section of their deck. At the conclusion of their remarks, Hans Rasmussen was called to the office of a priest and Anders Jørgensen to that of a teacher. The ordinations of the two, thus called, followed immediately. Meanwhile permission was sought from the captain to hold a general meeting on deck which he willingly granted. Even the elements cooperated and presented the company with beautiful weather. At 11:00 a.m., the meeting commenced with congregational singing followed by a prayer delivered by Elder Willie. Then Elders Willie and Atwood gave instructions to the Saints. They counseled them to maintain cleanliness and order and to carry out all instructions which were given them from time to time. This advice was cheerfully accepted, and a spirit of unity prevailed among the emigrants.

During the day a small group, consisting of Captain Collins, Elder Willie, Minnie Ann Cook, and Emily Hill, were gathered in the captain's cabin to witness the marriage of Alan M. Findlay to Jessie Ireland. The marriage was performed by Elder Atwood. Favorable weather conditions and a suitable environment created a state of excitement and joy among the Saints which produced spontaneous singing on board. Four of the emigrant men played musical instruments on deck, and others danced to the music which they created. While this merriment was in progress, St. George's Channel carried the ship from the Irish Sea into the Atlantic Ocean.²⁴

24. Combined Ocean Journal, May 4, 1856; *Millennial Star* 18 (May 3, 1856): 577–80; Allan Findlay, FamilySearch; Henry Hamilton, Journal, April 20–29, 1856; Tait, "Dear Brother and Sister Turnbull," 478–79.

Monday, May 5, 1856.

Daylight ushered in another beautiful morning with accompanying fair winds, but the rocking of the vessel brought on motion sickness. Many were confined to their beds throughout the day, and most felt some discomfort. The captain, doctor, and other ship's officers did all in their power to make the emigrants comfortable. The seafaring Scandinavians seemed less affected and were invited to sing on deck by Elder Willie. They sang a variety of songs, some to national melodies. The English and Scottish Saints recognized some of the tunes, but the words sounded strange, especially to those who had never heard a foreign tongue before. Music and dancing followed the singing. Little Rasmie Rasmussen took a turn for the worse and was confined to the ship's hospital. As the sun went down it began to storm, and even the hearty Scandinavians began to experience seasickness. A light, east by south east, wind moved them along. This placed them south of the coast of Ireland where two ships were seen following them. A ship spoke to them during the day.²⁵

Tuesday, May 6, 1856.

At 3:00 a.m., the day began with the birth of Sarah Moulton's seventh child, a baby boy. She had been a member of the Irchester Branch of the Bedfordshire Conference. The baby was given the name Charles Alma. Many of the passengers were still seasick, but most went on deck to get some fresh air. Those who were able to do so helped scrub the decks and care for the sick. Elders Willie and Atwood visited the sick and administered the comforts and luxuries which had been purchased for that purpose. The ship's captain and doctor were also unremitting in caring for them. At the beginning of the day, the Saints in each ward were gathered for prayers. These gatherings often included songs and instructions. The day came to a close in a similar fashion. Good south, south east breezes were accompanied by some rain. Four ships were sighted, heading toward England. After the ship rounded the southwestern tip of Ireland she sailed in a northwesterly direction.²⁶

25. Combined Ocean Journal, May 5, 1856.

26. Job Smith, *Diary and Autobiography*; Thomas Moulton, *Memories*, FamilySearch; Combined Ocean Journal, May 6, 1856.

Wednesday, May 7, 1856.

There was a storm from the northwest. The wind was favorable, and they traveled a long way in a westward direction. Seasickness still prevailed among many of the passengers. There was good cooperation between the Saints, evidenced by the respect each exhibited for the rights of others and by the obedience they showed to the leaders who had been placed over them. In the afternoon, provisions were issued to the company, consisting of potatoes, rice, mustard, and vinegar. Cooking was done for the sick who were unable to do so. [The cooking facilities were found in one of the deck houses, and even with the best organization there was always a line waiting to use those facilities.] At 7:30 p.m., Rachael Curtis, seventy-five years of age, died. She was from Norton, Gloucestershire. She had been in a declining state before leaving Liverpool. Prayers were offered in the different wards both mornings and evenings. This practice was to be continued during the voyage. In summary, the sky was cloudy with a south west wind.²⁷

Thursday, May 8, 1856.

Although seasickness still plagued the emigrants, there was a gradual improvement. At 10:00 a.m., a bell was sounded to inform everyone that the time had arrived for the funeral services of Rachael Curtis. Her remains were placed in a canvas bag and an American flag placed over it. Elder Willie offered a prayer which was followed by a few words read from the bible by Captain Collins. The body was then consigned to the deep to await the resurrection of the just. Captain Collins manifested much kindness on this occasion.

At 4:00 p.m., additional provisions were issued which consisted of potatoes, rice, oats, mustard, and vinegar. Rasmine Rasmussen died of inflammation of the brain from which she had suffered for the past three months. Appreciation was expressed for the quality of care which she and the other sick had received from the ship's doctor. Because of her condition, it was deemed wise by the captain and sanctioned by Elder Willie to bury her as soon as possible. At 5:00 p.m., at the ringing of the bell, the captain, the ships officers, the crew, and many of the passengers gathered to pay their last respects to Rasmussen. Elder Ahmanson offered a prayer, in his native tongue, followed by remarks

27. Combined Ocean Journal, May 7, 1856.

from the captain, after which her remains were deposited into the sea. Pleasant weather, with light north east winds.²⁸

Friday, May 9, 1856.

Nearly all had recovered from their seasickness, and a large number now attended the morning and evening gatherings; harmony prevailed. In the evening, the weather became pleasant, and many of the emigrants went on deck. Twenty-two of the younger men were chosen as night watchmen at the hatchways to ensure that no disorder took place below decks. The Scandinavian contingency took their turn at watch every fifth night, in rotation with the English. During the day, they experienced rain and fog, accompanied by a south-southwest wind; two ships were also seen. The vessel's course was still in a northwest direction.²⁹

Saturday, May 10, 1856.

The morning was fine, never-the-less, the weather was described as unstable. Although the ocean was turbulent, there was little seasickness. Captain Collins continued to do all he could to make the passengers comfortable. The vessel was propelled in a northwest direction by winds from the west. Two ships were also seen during the day.³⁰

Sunday, May 11, 1856.

With the permission of the captain, the English-speaking Saints gathered on the main deck at 11:30 a.m. for a Sunday service. Under a clear sky, the meeting commenced with singing by a choir which had been formed, followed by a prayer given by Elder Findlay. Elder Atwood then addressed the group on their present duties and other matters. Elder Willie also spoke but, due to illness, was brief in his remarks. The speakers stood on the poop deck which was located above the forward cabin. Meanwhile the Scandinavians convened a separate meeting in their own quarters. Like the gathering above, this too was commenced with song and prayer. Elder Ahmanson gave a sermon which included instructions on orderliness and

28. Kempsford Parish Records; Wilford Woodruff, Journal, April 1, 1840, 431; Wilford Woodruff, Journal, baptism record 1840 (June 11, 1840), 391; Combined Ocean Journal, May 8, 1856; Tulstrup Parish Record.

29. Combined Ocean Journal, May 9, 1856.

30. Combined Ocean Journal, May 10, 1856.

cleanliness. Four men from their group were appointed to see that these instructions were carried out. During the afternoon, Captain Collins, accompanied by Elder Willie and others, visited the passengers below decks. Everyone appeared happy, and the children played. Later, many went on deck where they conversed and sang songs. The captain stated they were now one thousand miles from Liverpool. At the time the ship's position reading was taken, light rain accompanied by light winds from a west by south direction were experienced. The ship sailed northward.³¹

Monday, May 12, 1856.

The northern-most point in the journey had been reached, and the ship was now headed in a south-west direction. Although the sea was turbulent, sailing was good, and the ship moved at the rate of twelve miles per hour. Lists were made up and handed out which designated the time each group was scheduled to pick up its water and other provisions.³² Everyone appeared to get along with each other, and no profane language was heard among the passengers to indicate otherwise. The emigrants enjoyed clear to cloudy skies and the ship was propelled by a northwest breeze.³³

Tuesday, May 13, 1856.

The day was beautiful and was accompanied by calm seas. Another ship was seen in the morning. All were called on deck where it was proposed that the day be spent in devotional exercises; all agreed. The day had been set aside as a day of fasting. Captain Collins showed his willingness to cooperate by providing the passengers with temporary seating on the main deck and by furnishing them with wheat bread, intended for use in the administration of the sacrament. The meeting commenced with a customary song by a choir followed by a prayer uttered by Elder Willie. Sermons were delivered by Elders Willie, Atwood, Chislett, and Clough, after which the entire English section partook of the sacrament. When they were finished, the Scandinavians came

31. Combined Ocean Journal, May 11, 1856.

32. The ship's water supply was carried in a large iron tank that was placed on the keelson, in the midship's region. It was pumped up to the deck each day where it was measured out by the ship's carpenter, who was assigned that responsibility.

33. Combined Ocean Journal, May 12, 1856.

on deck and shared in the sacrament; Elders Ahmanson, Svensen, and Larsen officiated. These same elders then addressed the group followed by an address by Elder Willie. He spoke on the events of the world from the creation forward. His remarks were translated by Elder Ahmanson. He expressed his satisfaction with the Scandinavian Saints to whom he gave his blessings. Some of the English passengers stayed on deck to observe the Scandinavian meeting; one of them remarked, "It is strange to hear men talk so long and then be ignorant to what they say." Singing followed the discourses. In the evening the captain gave the children some tarts and etc. Some sky rockets were set off which presented a fine appearance. President Baker [likely in charge of one of the wards] requested the English to assemble in their wards for family prayers. After these requirements were satisfied, some of the English emigrants went to see the captain and others. A light northerly wind propelled the ship in a southwestward direction toward its destination.³⁴

Wednesday, May 14, 1856.

The morning was calm and fine, but the wind in the afternoon was more gale like. John Linford was called to take charge of part of the Saints in the ward to which he belonged to ensure that they received their designated provisions. At 10:00 a.m., potatoes and pork were distributed to the passengers. The children ran about playing cat and mouse or any other thing they wished. A meeting was held in the young men's ward in which they were given the opportunity to bear their testimonies. Many stood and expressed joy with their inclusion in a journey to the land of Zion. Elder Atwood concluded that it would be advantageous to hold a testimony meeting in each of the wards, once a week. This proposition was wholeheartedly accepted and so ordered. The captain and the doctor continued to administer to the few sick that were found among the passengers. The ship tacked north under the influence of a light westerly wind. A steamer was seen in the distance.³⁵

Thursday, May 15, 1856.

When the Saints arrived on deck, they were greeted by a cold, piercing wind. Smelt [small, melting] icebergs were seen, coming from the north.

34. Combined Ocean Journal, May 13, 1856.

35. Combined Ocean Journal, May 14, 1856.

One of the sailors was working aloft with a spar pick,³⁶ and it happened to fall, landing on Sister McPhail's hand. Some of these are made of wood and others of metal. Luckily, this one was made of wood and did little damage, but the first mate struck the sailor several times in the face, drawing blood, because of the mishap. That evening, the captain invited the passengers to come on deck to observe the launching of some rockets he intended to send up; they made a picturesque appearance in the water. The variable wind caused the ship to tack north, northwest at times and south, driven by a west-northwest wind on other occasions.³⁷

Friday, May 16, 1856.

The ship met baffling winds from the west all day. The sky was clear, and five ships passed the *Thornton* heading east. During part of the day, the course was southwest but at 5:00 p.m. was changed to the northwest. The prayer assembly, in the Scandinavian ward, was held at 8:00 p.m.³⁸

Saturday, May 17, 1856.

Strong gales from the west were encountered throughout the day, accompanied by a very heavy head sea [waves coming from directly ahead]. Regardless of the conditions, very few were plagued with seasickness. The southwest course was changed to the north at 4:00 p.m. Provisions were issued: bread, salt, potatoes, tea, sugar, flour, green peas, rice, mustard, and vinegar. At 8:00 p.m., the Scandinavians gathered for prayer and counsel. The four men who were appointed to maintain order and cleanliness gave their report. Some of the Scandinavians were requested to be more orderly and clean by keeping themselves off the beds, as much as possible, and to go on deck more often. Few were sick among them, and none were in danger. Elders Ahmanson, Svensen, and Larsen sermonized a great deal on both temporal and spiritual affairs.³⁹

36. An implement used on sailing vessels to adjust the supporting mechanism of the sails.

37. Combined Ocean Journal, May 15, 1856; Archibald McPhail, Journal, FamilySearch.

38. Combined Ocean Journal, May 16, 1856.

39. Combined Ocean Journal, May 17, 1856; William Woodward, Journal, May 16–17, 1856.

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