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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Genevieve Jane Long for the Master of Arts in English were presented May 18, 1994, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Genevieve Jane Long for the Master of Arts in English presented May 18, 1994.

Title: "Self Was Forgotten": Attention to Private Consciousness in the Diaries of Three Mormon Frontier Women

This study discusses diaries by three Mormon women on America's southwestern frontier. These diaries cover a period stretching from 1880-1920. The study explores how these diarists (in a culture that was and remains highly communitarian and which valued, for women, the primary roles of helpmeet and mother), leave the imprint of individual as well as cooperative consciousness in private writings.

As authors, diarists display remarkable persistence in maintaining and elaborating on a daily text. Since diaries are a type of private writing engaged in even by women who--because of education, social class, or life circumstances--do little other writing, women's diaries offer significant clues to women's writing strategies and goals.

Most study of women's diaries positions these texts as footnotes to history or the literary canon. This study discusses the interplay between persona, tone and style, a diarist's life experience (pioneering, for example) and Mormon

expectations for women. Consistently positioning women as helpers in building a millennial kingdom, Mormonism deemphasizes the very act which keeping diaries encourages them to begin: placing the self in a position of (literal) authority. In these diaries, the writers have been able to include or omit what they choose from daily narrative, signaling meaning through shifts in style or tone. As writers, these women function as authorities in their individual and communal lives.

Three diaries form the core of this study. The Udall diary is taken from a published version edited by her granddaughter, Maria S. Ellsworth. The Chase diary comes from the University of Utah's archives, from among papers of the diarist's husband, George Ogden Chase. The Willis diary was edited from manuscript and donated for this study by Kim Brown, who supplied photocopies of both her typescript and the original Willis manuscript.

"SELF WAS FORGOTTEN": ATTENTION TO PRIVATE CONSCIOUSNESS
IN THE DIARIES OF THREE MORMON FRONTIER WOMEN

by

GENEVIEVE JANE LONG

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
ENGLISH

Portland State University
1994

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For supporting me through nine months of writing, and underwriting the project with their computer, I would like to thank my family, including Karla Leary Dinsmore, who first sent me to the library in July 1993.

Robert and DeNai Bateman and their daughter, Michelle Bateman Baade, opened their home to me and helped with field research in Utah. Doris Sessions Rigby of the Cherry Park ward in Farmington, Utah lent me Patty Sessions' extensive diary, while Lisa Quist, Randall Bateman and Michelle Baade explained patriarchal blessings and many other aspects of Mormon history and culture to me.

Kim Brown, who first transcribed Cedenia Willis' manuscript diary, donated photocopies of both manuscript and typescript for this study. Her earlier work on the diary, and the generosity of Cedenia Willis' family, made the Willis chapter possible.

Pauline Beard, Dina Rozelle Barnett and Nancy Porter all patiently read, reread and offered suggestions throughout this project. Thanks are also due to Polly Stuke, for her patience in helping me format and edit my own manuscript.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Can I ever forget that parting with my mother? No one knew my mother as I did. How I love her! She only thought, What can I do for my children? Self was forgotten . . ."

So wrote Cedenia Bagley Willis in 1913, describing events that had taken place over thirty years before. Her memoirs tell the story: in August 1880, Cedenia's parents, who had been living near her in frontier Taylor, Arizona, moved away. Cedenia and her husband were struggling to farm near an Apache Indian reservation with, as she recorded in her diary, "Geronimo on the war path." The dangerous surroundings and harsh farming conditions of northern Arizona had been bearable for Cedenia Willis until her mother left. She wrote, "I went out in the waving corn, prayed to my Father in heaven, cried myself sick . . . [we] had come so far to be near her, and then to part. It was years before we met again" (8).

Throughout Willis' memoirs and her later diary, we hear echoes of this theme: the devotion of children to their mothers, and women's sacrifices for husbands and children. For Willis, motherly sacrifice and mother-child closeness symbolized a home whose foundation lay not on a particular farm, or in a single cabin, but within the bonds of kinship, which her mother's presence played a crucial role in maintaining. The highest praise Cedenia

Willis could give her mother was, "Self was forgotten"--and family and home were all. On the other hand, Willis herself kept a diary and wrote her memoirs. While the memoir was ostensibly intended for her children, both memoir and diary involve significant reflection on the events of her life, and exploration of her feelings.

This study focuses on diaries kept by three Mormon women who lived on America's southwestern frontier, between the Salt Lake Valley and the Grand Canyon.¹ The diaries cover a period stretching, roughly, from 1880-1920, though Cedenia Willis takes us both back to the 1860's, and forward into the twentieth century. All three women were (according to the evidence of their diaries and of church and family records) devout Mormons, devoted to churchgoing, teaching Sunday School and doing charitable work. They also worked at colonizing and farming the arid Southwest alongside their husbands, parents and children. The question we will explore here is: how do these three women, living in a culture that was and is highly communitarian,²

¹ Diaries used for this study are by Josephine Streeper Chase (from a photocopy in my possession of the diary typescript, from the George Ogden Chase Collection, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah) Ida Hunt Udall, excerpted from Mormon Odyssey: The Story of Ida Hunt Udall, Plural Wife, by Maria S. Ellsworth (Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1992) and Cedenia Bagley Willis (photocopies of diary typescript manuscript, in my possession, donated by Kim Brown of Portland, Oregon). Background information and notes on the text of individual diaries are treated in more depth in separate chapters.

² Mormons had a church welfare system, grain-saving and land-sharing programs, and other cooperative and communal organizations right from the start; despite the twentieth-century church's reputation as a capitalist bastion, most of these programs still exist today.

and which valued, for women, the primary roles of helpmeet and mother, maintain a sense of self, leaving the imprint of a private, as well as cooperative, consciousness in their private writings?

Not only does the simple act of keeping a diary, year after year, suggest that self was never quite forgotten by these Mormon women; the positioning of each writer within her private text, and the ways in which each organizes her diary (often using literary devices, such as plot and theme) suggests that these women are not only creating structured, artful narratives in their diaries, but are also engaged in constructing and re-constructing the self at the diary's heart.

Since Mormonism exists more or less in the margins of American history, notations on history and culture will necessarily be a part of this study. While we could approach these diaries through the lens of Mormon history, which, since it may be unfamiliar to some scholars, is also included as needed, our primary focus is not on American history, or the history of Mormonism, but on the place of private writing in a culture which placed great emphasis on unity and community. The inherent paradox of these Mormon women's diaries is that diaries are, by nature (however self-consciously a writer may deny it) private mirror-gazing. Writing in a diary means not only recording events, but re-collecting them through the act of choosing which events to record and remember. A diarist, like a writer of fiction, is thus constructing a narrative that not only reflects, but speaks for the inscribing self.

Mormon women's diaries, which, as we shall see, were written within the context of a group engaged in producing its own collective history, provide a

kind of counterpoint to that history: one voice in a wilderness of text. Historically, most scholars have focused on the forest rather than individual trees, choosing to study Mormon (and most other) women's diaries as footnotes to official history and canonical literature.³ However, we will read here not only through a historical and cultural lens, but through the diarists' words themselves: the lens of language.

THE MORMON FRONTIER

To understand diaries by Mormon frontier women, we must first understand the environment in which they were written. Nineteenth-century Mormon women belonged to a community which saw itself as the only group on earth possessing the true gospel. The Latter-Day Saints drew heavily on the Old Testament for their community symbols: in their Exodus narrative, for example, they were chased by irate Gentiles (the Mormon designation for all non-Mormons, including Jews) from New York through the South and Midwest to Illinois, and finally to remote and rocky Utah. The Mormons felt called to establish the kingdom of God "in the tops of the mountains," as the prophet Isaiah had foretold. Thus Brigham Young, standing above the Salt

³ Examples of this kind of diary study include articles by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "Women's Work on the Mormon Frontier" (Utah Historical Quarterly 49 (1981): 276-290) and Jessie L. Embry, "Effects of Polygamy on Mormon Women" (Frontiers 7.3 (1984): 56-61). Books that take this approach to Mormon women's private texts include Claudia Bushman, ed., Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah (Cambridge, MA: Emmeline Press Limited, 1976) and the diaries of Martha Spence Heywood, edited by noted Mormon historian Juanita Brooks (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1978).

Lake Valley with the first pioneers of 1847, made his famous declaration:

"This is the place," meaning the Mormons' Promised Land.

Utah, to the Mormon emigrants, was Zion, the literal Kingdom of God established on earth. Further, historiographer Jan Shipps suggests that Zion, to the Mormons, was much more than a place geographically remote enough to afford them physical safety. Drawing as they did on the Exodus metaphor, she comments,

. . . when Brigham Young led the Saints across the plains, he led them not only out of the hands of their midwestern persecutors but backward into a primordial sacred time. As the original Israelites had been, so these new Israelites were "once again at the beginning," *in illo tempore* . . . The task the Mormons confronted in the Great Basin was nothing less than starting at the beginning to people a holy land and build God's Kingdom. (118)

It is essential to remember that, for Mormon pioneers like the diarists we will study, church and state were never really separate, as they must be for most contemporary Saints. Shipps argues that,

. . . nineteenth-century Saints . . . lived so clearly in the kingdom, *in illo tempore*, that the sacred and the not-sacred simply cannot be considered separately . . . the essential worship in the LDS pioneer world was building up the kingdom and inhabiting it. (125)

Thus, the daily tasks each Mormon woman recorded in her diary were not just chores, but acts of worship dedicated to a sacred end. Eventually, of course, the Latter-Day Saints' determination, high birth rate, and organized missionary and emigration programs did make Utah a substantial "Kingdom of God." The Mormon settlers managed to make arid land produce, and amassed substantial material wealth. By the 1880s, just thirty-five years after Brigham Young led the first pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley, outposts of

the church were scattered from Idaho to Southern California. The federal government was exerting pressure on Mormons to give up both the unique practice of plural marriage and (perhaps more threatening to the notion of a United States) the State of Deseret's substantial financial holdings. This was the backdrop against which our three diarists wrote.

All three of these women--Josephine Streeper Chase, Ida Hunt Udall, and Cedenia Bagley Willis--were, at some time in their lives, pioneering at the very edge of civilization, in new territory marked by the church for settlement. Mormon settlers usually moved in family groups, forming planned farming communities as their church leaders directed. Chase and, to a greater extent, Willis and Udall passed most of their lives in communities dedicated to breaking new ground for Zion, carving the wilderness into a Promised Land. All three women drove wagons, herded cattle, and forded the Colorado River time and again. They sold their own produce and harvested crops. Two of them--Chase briefly and early in her marriage to George Ogden Chase, and Udall for all her married life--were the polygamous wives of Mormon elders. To understand how these diarists functioned, and wrote, in a world very different from our twentieth-century universe, it may be helpful to briefly explore the Mormon church's expectations for women.

Women On the Mormon Frontier

The Mormon world, in many ways, is for its women members today a Victorian world: a world where the highest levels of heaven are reserved for the married, chastity is monitored by local bishops, and a woman's primary

centers are still husband, children and home. For nineteenth-century women, however, Mormonism presented a radical alternative to Victorian mores in the doctrine of plural marriage. Moreover, the church's emphasis on female submission to husbands and fathers seems, perhaps, less surprising to us in a nineteenth-century context than it does today.

Despite the ties of church organization, the world of Mormon frontier women was frequently an isolated one. Women were often alone for weeks or months on the family farm, far from friends and family, or (in the case of some plural wives) hiding on the "Mormon Underground" among kindly strangers. Women were frequently de facto heads of households, when the church called their husbands to do mission work or survey new territory. Thus, tensions between the theoretical and real positioning of women in Mormon communities, reappear consistently in these diaries, as Chase, Udall and Willis struggle to define a self according to the dictates of both frontier reality, and the church's expectations for female Saints.

For women on the Western frontier, the Victorian ideal of True Womanhood--described by Elizabeth Jameson as "piety, purity, domesticity and submissiveness to male authority"⁴ --frequently boiled down to the twin values of self-forgetfulness and sacrifice. Frontier women sacrificed homes, possessions, their own health and the health and lives of their children to survive in early Western communities. The call to selflessness was, perhaps,

⁴ Jameson, Elizabeth. "Women As Workers, Women As Civilizers: True Womanhood in the American West." Frontiers 7.3 (1984): 1-8. See also Barbara Welter's study, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," American Quarterly 18 (1966): 151-74.

particularly insistent for women like Chase, Udall and Willis, who belonged to the Mormon community. Saintliness, for a Mormon woman, was found through caring for her children and home. Brigham Young, who led the Latter-Day Saints from Illinois to Utah, defined the role of Mormon women this way:

One thing is very true, and we believe it, and that is that a woman is the glory of the man; but she was not made to be worshiped by him. As the Scriptures say, Man is not without the woman, neither is woman without the man in the Lord . . . woman was not made to be worshiped anymore than was man. Woman has her influence, and she should use that in training her children in the way they should go; if she fails to do this she assumes fearful responsibilities. (199)

Contemporary Mormon doctrine is also clear about the role of righteous women. Bruce R. McConkie explains, in Mormon Doctrine, that,

Setting the pattern for her daughters for all ages, Eve's mortal mission included two special assignments: 1. She was to be a help meet for her husband (Moses 3:20) and 2. She was to bring forth children. . . . Thus woman's primary place is in the home, where she is to rear children and abide by the righteous counsel of her husband. (844)

A revelation to Joseph Smith, the church's first Prophet, concerning his wife Emma, spells out clear consequences for women who fail to obey their husbands' authority (and, by implication, God's). Emma Smith consistently spoke out against her husband's revelation on the sanctity of polygamy, and the Mormon scripture Doctrine and Covenants records this revelation, given through Joseph Smith:

And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me . . . And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her if she

abide not in my law . . . And again, verily I say, let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses; and then shall she be forgiven her trespasses, wherein she has trespassed against me; and I, the Lord thy God, will bless her, and multiply her, and make her heart to rejoice. (244)

Mormon women thus were doubly responsible, both in this life and in the next, for obedience to God and their husbands. The basis for this authority was clearly established in both the Bible and The Book of Mormon. As Mormon historians Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton write,

Drawing from the long-accepted Christian tradition that woman was naturally under subjection to man because Eve, the archetypal woman, had been 'first in transgression,' church leaders taught that woman's obedience to priesthood leadership, particularly to her own husband (provided he was righteous) would redeem her from the "curse of Eve." (225)

Women who neglected to be both helpmeet and devoted mother would thus meet not only with disapproval in this life, but punishment in the next.

Despite this strong patriarchal tradition (devout Mormons still receive "patriarchal blessings" to guide them through life) turn-of-the-century Mormon women were more powerful within their society than we may imagine. Mormon women wrote for the Relief Society newspaper, the Woman's Exponent, which was devoted to news of the church and current political issues, including polygamy and woman suffrage. Relief Society members raised money for temples, and collected grain and clothing for the poor. In the 1840s and 1850s, and until well after the turn of the century in portions of southern Utah and Arizona, Mormon women worked alongside the men to farm the barren southwestern soil.

Education and some professions were open to Mormon women willing to use their talents to build up Zion. Women were encouraged to write, and frequently to work outside the home, even in traditionally male-dominated professions.⁵ Ida Hunt was balancing books for the local Co-op store when she met her husband, David Udall; David's first wife, Ella, was (before her marriage) the first telegraph operator in Utah, male or female.

However, Victorian standards of femininity, even where the demands of Mormon settlement and kingdom-building allowed for a blurring of strict gender roles, required that female Latter-Day Saints remember their God-ordained place, even in the earliest days of settlement. Arrington and Bitton comment on this paradox in The Mormon Experience:

There was . . . no rest for women in Utah in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Women worked side by side with men in building homes of sun-dried adobe, digging irrigation ditches, planting and harvesting crops, and fighting grasshoppers and crickets . . . As men and women struggled together, sex roles often merged. But in doctrine the Victorian concept of 'true womanhood' held sway: Woman's duty was to be "subservient and dependent," the women reminded each other, as they set about building houses, managing herds, establishing schools, creating communities, seemingly unaware of the irony. (224)

The practice of plural marriage formed part of the reason many Mormon women had a large measure of independence and responsibility. Husbands were not only away on business; they tended to divide their time, by the day, month or year, between plural wives. Wives frequently lived in their own

⁵ Two women who have become famous examples are Martha Hughes Cannon and Ellis Shipp, who both earned medical degrees. Both were plural wives who attended Eastern medical schools while sister wives cared for their children at home.

homes, and were visited by their husband in turn. The alternative arrangement generally involved several "sister wives" living together, a practice which sometimes led to family strife, but often afforded each wife a chance to pursue her own interests. Martha Hughes Cannon, plural wife of state senator Hugh Cannon, is said to have commented, "If a woman's husband has four wives, then she has three weeks of freedom every single month." As Nancy Woloch notes,

Mormons defended it [polygamy] as an improvement on women's conventional roles. "Plural marriage" they contended, gave every woman in the community the opportunity for a husband, a home, children, and entry into heaven with the man of her choice. Men, to be sure, ran the Mormon community, just as they dominated public life in the outer world. But each plural family was its own female community, with all aspects of marriage, from domestic work to sexual relations, divided among two or more wives. Mormon women, like Mormon men, defended the sect and claimed that it improved their status within both family and community. (189)

On the other hand, Arrington and Bitton suggest that polygamous and monogamous marriages were not particularly different in their effects on participants. They write, ". . . for the most part, Mormon women saw the anxieties and frustrations of polygamy as no greater than the tensions of the monogamous marriages some of them had known in their younger days" (230). That tensions did exist between sister wives is evident from diaries like Ida Udall's; that those tensions were more extreme than any faced by monogamous couples is not clear. What the evidence of Mormon women's diaries does support is that their strong sense of spiritual community and sisterhood gave Mormon women significant support for a practice which the

rest of the Victorian world found repugnant. As Carol Cornwall Madsen notes:

Mormon women's social order shared many characteristics with the female culture identified by women's historians. But a study of Mormon women within the context of their religion illustrates the discontinuities within the overarching paradigm of women's culture and the strong identity Mormon women gained from their religion. The most obvious difference for Mormon women was the habitual absence of men which intensified the female orientation of their daily lives. The normal male/female interfacing within the home was continually disrupted as husbands left to attend to Church callings or their other families, leaving women not only as caretakers of their domestic sphere but as providers and spiritual leaders as well. (53)

Not only the practice of plural marriage, and frequent isolation from their de jure spiritual leaders, but their responsibilities in Zion united Mormon women. The earliest pioneers and their children, the generation which colonized the Southwest, were bound together by belief in a millennial kingdom. They differed from settlers in Oregon Territory or California in that they were not embarking on individual ventures, but on a collective, holy mission. As Wallace Stegner writes,

. . . the whole intention of [westward moving wagon] trains was to get an early start, as soon as the grass greened up, and then get *through* the West as fast as possible. The Mormons were an exception, a special breed headed for sanctuary in the heart of the desert, a people with a uniquely cohesive social order and a theocratic discipline that made them better able to survive. (70)

As we have noted, the primary mission of Mormon women was responsibility for children; both bearing children, and rearing them in the faith. Most Mormon women served, throughout their lives, as Sunday School or church primary school teachers, as well as participating in the usual sewing, canning, and merchandising sponsored by the women's auxiliary, the Relief

Society. Most important to the Saints, however, was church growth, and the birth of many Mormon children meant many more hands to plow, plant and raise buildings and temples to the Lord.

MORMON WOMEN'S DIARIES: WRITING THE HISTORY OF ZION

All westering pioneers faced the difficult task of recording family and community history in new places which lacked records depositories, or even neighbors with long memories. The job of establishing recording systems, and maintaining old family ties while establishing a new community, frequently fell to women. As Karen Offen writes, ". . . in both immigrant and black communities, it has been women who have maintained the structure and culture of the ethnic community, as well as the extended family ties" (62). Part of the way women have done this, historically, has been through writing, recording events as they happen to the family and its neighbors. Woloch describes what upheaval moving west was for women, and what prompted them to write letters and journals:

. . . women moved as members of families, not of their own volition. Westward treks were initiated by men in search of economic advancement and often struck women family members, in the words of one diarist, as a 'wild goose chase'. . . Women migrants lost their friends and relatives, churches and homes . . . For the woman migrant, moving west seemed to mean moving backward in time, away from the benefits of modern life and into a harsh frontier world. (142-3)

Mormon pioneer women were faced with both the responsibility of maintaining records and ties and the losses accompanying migration under systematized harassment. Each time the early church moved, members met

indifferent or hostile Gentiles, and were either driven further westward, often violently (printing presses, significantly, were among the first things destroyed in Mormon towns), or simply shunned. When Brigham Young led the first settlers into Utah, the church was still less than twenty years old and, to a large extent, had to write its own history. Mormons arrived in Utah, a wild territory inhabited mainly by Indians and trappers, after years of persecution and the assassination of their Prophet, Joseph Smith. Their losses had been heavy, and in Zion, they started again from scratch, building and farming. Maintaining family histories was essential to their temporal survival as a cohesive group.⁶ The official church position on private record-keeping is recorded by McConkie in Mormon Doctrine:

Members of the church should keep accurate family records of births, marriages, deaths, blessings of children, baptisms, ordinations and items of this sort which pertain to their own welfare and which may be of benefit to posterity. There is no particular obligation to keep a daily journal, but special worthwhile events should be recorded and preserved. (397)

Women's diaries which recorded "special worthwhile events" (the list above covers almost everything that could possibly occur in any family or community) are valued by church members today for their historical and genealogical usefulness to the community. However, not every group of settlers on the frontier valued women's diaries as much as the Mormons did.

⁶ Contemporary Latter-Day Saints, because of their kingdom-building endeavors, can seem to outsiders hyperaware of personal and collective history. The modern church maintains vast genealogical libraries, and operates a computerized family record system in Salt Lake City which is available for use by the general public.

As Shipps suggests, no group needed individual histories as much as the Latter-Day Saints, simply because in Utah they were starting again at the beginning in a new land.

Writing At History's Center: Frontier Women As Diarists

The demands of frontier survival would seem to have limited the lives of most women so that there was no time for self-discovery, no chance to pay attention to what one was thinking and feeling. However, frontier life itself often seemed to motivate women to write. In a study of diaries by Texas frontier women, Harriette Andreadis suggests some of the motivations behind these private writings:

Women in frontier Texas, like their counterparts in other frontier states, wrote diaries and journals either for themselves or for others; for themselves, as a record of their own experience or, frequently, in an attempt to impose order on their daily lives; for others, for exchange with intimate friends and neighbors, as a record of their lives for their relatives (especially sisters) in other states, and for their children (particularly their daughters). (181)

Diaries, then, instead of being a distraction from the necessities of frontier life, were one way of coping with its stresses and strains. In this regard, Suzanne Bunkers suggests that nineteenth-century women diarists were not very different from diarists today. She writes,

. . . most nineteenth-century . . . women who kept diaries did so for reasons that are not unlike the reasons why women continue to keep diaries today: to define the self, to understand how one's self is shaped by interactions with others, to express emotions otherwise repressed, to view one's life and work as important, and to create a forum for commentary on relationships, institutions and events. (8)

Of course, nineteenth-century women lacked the institutionalized encouragement for self-reflexivity and introspection, the cultural sanction for

emotional mirror-gazing, and the vast forum for comment on "relationships, institutions and events" that twentieth-century women have in such large measure, in the form of self-help books, psychotherapy, college courses and workshops. What they did have, we know about chiefly through such private media as ordinary women's writings, saved either by design or by chance.

Bunkers comments that,

. . . These women's private writings (i.e. diaries, letters, memoirs) offer one of the most reliable indicators of what their lives were like and of how they perceived themselves, both as women and as writers. (8)

In Mormon culture, because each individual voice contributes to a collective history that is still relatively short, the diary or journal is valued, and family diaries are bound and preserved as "Books of Remembrance." As we will see, literary scholarship on diaries by both Mormon and non-Mormon women has also focused mainly on the value of private writings as historical documents, a form of writing that took place in the margins of traditional history and literature. The persistence of diarists, however, in maintaining and elaborating on their texts, suggests that it is worthwhile to look beyond what diaries contribute to history, to their usefulness in the context of women's lives; as clues, that is, to women's strategies both of writing and, through writing, positioning the self in a communal culture. On one level, Mormon women's diaries function as valuable historical and social records, like many other journals of travel and settlement. On another level, however, they provide us with clues to the writers themselves, not simply as figures of historical drama, but as the authors of their own lives.

WOMEN DIARISTS: KEEPING THE FORGOTTEN SELF

Writing Out Loud: The Self in a Church-Sponsored Text

That the Mormon church not only sanctioned but encouraged journal-keeping raises the question of degrees of self-censorship on the part of a devout diarist. While we may read Mormon diaries with an eye to their authors' location of self in daily events, should we expect a faithful Mormon woman (who might, in fact, use her diary partly as spiritual autobiography), to put a consistently uplifting spin on reality? The problem of spiritual obligation in contemporary Mormon women's diaries is addressed by Elouise Bell, who describes a diary workshop at the University of Utah this way:

Many women are constricted in their journal writing because of a variety of "shoulds"--all that they have been told a journal "ought" to be . . . Some women have a strong feeling that they *should* keep a journal, whether because, on their own, they want a record of their lives or because they have been told they should keep such a record. (For example, continuing the Puritan tradition, women of the Latter-Day Saint, or Mormon, persuasion . . . are counseled to keep a journal just as they are asked to read scriptures, attend church meetings, visit the sick, and perform other religious duties). (83)

Diaries that the writers felt they had to keep, as Bell describes, might present an opaque surface of saintliness to the reader. Of course, the opacity of all private writing, at least to readers distanced from the author in one sense or another, presents this problem to varying degrees. The practical answer seems to be reading each diary as a special case, deciphering the author's codes and trusting the words she chose as guides through a potential maze. None of the three diarists in our study, incidentally, mentions that she keeps

her diary because the church asked her to or rewards her for it; the only writer who mentions a specific purpose for her diary is Willis, who claims to write for her children.

Chase, Udall and Willis all use their diaries as a place to record and release emotions few others, even devoted mothers or sisters, must have seen: feelings about their husbands that they disliked admitting even to themselves, spiritual doubts, waverings where circumstance admitted of none. A sense of each writer's private consciousness emerges, perhaps unsurprisingly, in the space between milk and grocery accounts, travel records ("crossed two creeks today") and records of births and deaths. Frequently, a writer's thoughts must be interpreted from hints or significant anecdotes that appear over and over. None of the diarists takes an overtly pious tone: the demands of frontier life are often emphasized, however, sometimes with Scriptural parallels. Though these women occasionally burst into praise of the Lord or Prophet Smith, the picture their diaries present is one of ordinary women doing their best with human resources, drawing additional strength from their Mormon faith.

Despite the support these three women drew from their beliefs, however, it is important to note that LDS culture requires, as Bell notes above, some things (participation in church activities, attention to spiritual growth, and a degree of harmony with the Mormon community) that could function as potential sources of tension for women whose private feelings were not in line with the group's. These sorts of feelings might be recorded in a private diary using a strategy Suzanne Bunkers calls "encoding." Encoding seems to be used by diarists who have feelings they cannot, or will not, write down in

plain, direct language. Bunkers suggests that encoding appears in the kind of conflict-laden situation we have described:

. . . encoding tends to be more evident in a writer's work when it is necessary to suppress one's ideas or when one's right to speak has been denied. The writer's use of encoding in her diary or journal, then, becomes her way of breaking silences . . . of finding avenues in which to speak, either directly or indirectly, about what has previously remained unspoken. The importance of encoding cannot be overestimated, for it enables a writer to use speech and silence selectively (whether consciously or unconsciously) to address a variety of issues in her diary or journal. (195)

Self-reflexivity, in the diaries of conscientious, spiritually minded writers, might be encoded, marked by the use of recurring patterns or consistent attention to one particular theme. Attention to a private consciousness, when that consciousness seems other than socially correct, may often happen through slips of the pen, and the necessary belief that while writing, the diarist (however vital and faithful a Latter-Day Saint she is) is, at long last, alone.

Piecing the Quilt: Inscribing Through Pattern and Design

The most overtly self-reflexive diarist of the three we will study here, at least by twentieth-century standards, is Ida Udall. Her entries vary from a few lines to several pages, with longer entries devoted to discussions of feelings about her husband, hopes for the future, and descriptions of her first child, Pauline. The least prolific, and also the least familiar-sounding, is Josephine Chase, who uses her diary to keep records, writes a line or two at a time about family and church events, and stops writing altogether for seven months after the death of her four-year-old daughter, Clara.

None of these women begins her diary out of an overtly expressed desire for self-discovery. Chase seems to be in the habit of daily recording; she keeps a sporadic diary for the better part of twelve years, and the portions quoted here are typical of the kind of records she kept. Udall, more dramatically, starts her diary on the day she leaves home to get married, and Willis starts writing when, believing death is approaching, she decides to leave her children a record of family history.

Each of these three diarists weaves random and routine daily events into a careful pattern through the use of devices such as repetition and omission. Chase's story, for example, is told through the recurring problems, in her diary, of sickness, death and grieving. Udall, on the other hand, sets out to dramatize her wedding trip, creating a narrative with tension, climax and denouement, and uses romantic language in her narrative to help the reader see her as a romantic, martyred-but-triumphant heroine. Finally, Willis inscribes repeatedly--in memoir, letters and diary--images that represent the idea of home to her, as frontier settler, traveler, mother, daughter and wife.

Discovering the patterns each diarist weaves is essential to reading these private documents. While the diary is counted a literary genre, each diarist, as we will see, recreates the form in the image of her own individual experience, so that there finally exists no such entity as the quintessential Mormon frontier diary. We must also keep continually in mind that self-reflexivity was not necessarily these diarists' primary purpose for writing, even though diaries performed an important function in keeping (as opposed to forgetting) the self for each writer. In searching for ways in which these

women maintained the self within a matrix of daily, community activity, we are catching these writers not, perhaps, as they most wanted to appear, but in unguarded moments. Our search is for what "slips out," and for what those repeated or unguarded lines can tell us about each woman's experience.

Women's Writings: Public Artifacts, Private Texts

In terms of the literary canon, any serious study of women's private writings breaks relatively new ground. Women's diaries, as Suzanne Bunkers notes, are important in challenging the idea of autobiography as limited to carefully constructed life-texts, generally written by famous men. Bunkers writes,

Women's diaries in particular provide fertile ground for . . . exploration because they challenge the reader to expand the traditional definition of autobiography to include texts written day by day, many with no editor except the writer herself, many with no statements about an intended audience and few, if any, preconceptions about the shape which the completed text would take. (8)

Trudelle Thomas, advocating the study of women's pioneer diaries, argues for these diaries' value as literary artifacts, strewn along the path of literature's mainstream like pots and pans abandoned along the overland trails:

Writing by women, overwhelmingly excluded from a male-governed literary institution, can be a rich source for understanding women's experience. Such writing often takes the forms relegated to the bottom rungs of the hierarchy of literary genres; surviving literature by women far more often assumes the form of letters, diaries, memoirs and "popular" novels rather than the traditionally male genres of poetry and "serious" novels. (7)

We might argue that women's diaries, however neglected, furnish us not only with valuable records of what life was like as a Mormon frontier woman,

for example, in the 1880s, but also represent a mother lode of opportunities for literary exploration. How are style, tone, theme, and narrative structure employed by women who position themselves, daily or almost daily and over periods of years, as writers in charge of their own texts?

As we have noted, the focus in most studies of women's diaries is on private writing's value as footnote to history. Steven E. Kagle, in Late Nineteenth-Century American Diary Literature, argues that (despite the rarity of "good" diaries by women) some at least are valuable parts of the literary-historical record:

Women in this period faced limitations on their educations, roles, and opportunities for expression; yet many produced fine diaries. The private nature of the diary form often provided them with a means to deal with subjects and express attitudes not sanctioned by the male-dominated society in which they lived. Moreover, some women diarists were in positions to produce particularly valuable records. This situation is especially evident in their diaries of the westward migration. (9)

Note that Kagle values fine diaries of the westward migration (such as the Oregon trail diary of Helen McCowan Carpenter, which he selects as an example) not for the signature of the writer, or the ways in which many writers use their diaries to deal with the problems and issues of overland travel, but as records of a specific, historical event.

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, on the other hand, describes women's imprint on events, or even "non-events," through the medium of their diaries, as intrinsically important to an understanding of the way women use language and position themselves in the world. She comments,

These letters and diaries provide us with a unique opportunity to hear women's own words directly, not filtered through a male record.

Male voices have so often drowned out or denied women's words and perceptions that the rediscovery of women's unique language must be our first priority--and our first defense, as women scholars, against the undue influence of theories formed in ignorance of women's experiences. (29)

Finally, as Helene Cixous writes in "The Laugh of the Medusa," arguing for the importance of a language (and, by implication, a literature) that includes both men and women in a common tongue:

It's not to be feared that language conceals an invincible adversary, because it's the language of men and their grammar. We mustn't leave them a single place that's any more theirs alone than we are. If woman has always functioned "within" the discourse of man . . . it is time for her to dislocate this "within," to explode it, turn it around, and seize it . . . to invent for herself a language to get inside of. (1235)

In keeping a diary or writing her memoirs, the Mormon frontier woman who (even though her church did and still does sanction diary-keeping) had far less cultural approval than women do today for inventing her own discourse, found at least one place to privately and repeatedly say what she thought, inventing, if she wanted to, her own language.

SEEKING THE "PRIVATE SELF": SUBVERSION OR SUBMISSION?

When I began to read diaries by Mormon frontier women, I expected to find a kind of split between the outwardly faithful Saint and the private writer rebelling against the demands of community and patriarchy. I expected plural wives to revolt against their status, jealously murmuring against husbands and sister wives. I looked, in Mormon women's diaries, for subversion of authority as the outcome of women's attention to a private voice. As we have seen in our glance at Mormon history, and in Willis' praise of her mother as one who

forgot herself for husband, home and children, a "subversive" Mormon wife and mother would not be one who openly disapproved of the church's foundations, but might be one who gave primacy to the idea of "self" over her God-appointed helping role. If even the act of writing in a diary furnished one of the cornerstones of Zion, what place was there for Mormon women to keep, rather than forget, their own private histories? Chase, Udall and Willis must have envisioned themselves passing on wisdom, family lore, and faith itself to their children and grandchildren. Searching for any kind of subversion in such a text, positioned as part of the history of God's people, began to seem a naive and impossible task. Yet the very nature of a diary, or of any autobiographical writing, is to elude the constraints of writing public history because it establishes an intimacy with the inscribing self which may confound the writer's "public" intentions. The diary offers secrecy as well as opportunities to demonstrate (for example) one's spirituality. Thus, while Mormon women's diaries are frequently inspiring and uplifting, they also provide us with examples of how women who were publicly positioned as helpmeets, with carefully delineated areas of authority, managed also to position themselves as authorities in private discourse.

Picking Up Signals: The Nineteenth-Century Diarist

The most obvious place to look for a diarist's self-positioning would seem to be in the entries in which these women write specifically about themselves and their feelings. More often than not, however, private feelings are seldom openly addressed in the diaries read for this study. This characteristic is not

peculiar to Mormon women's diaries. Discussing nineteenth-century frontier diaries in general, Gayle R. Davis observes that, "The lack of emotion in most diaries surely reflected the value of the times on emotional restraint and 'accepting God's will' as proper methods for facing traumas" (12). Instead of an open expression of feelings of grief, anger or hopelessness, then, a diarist's emotional stress, or a significant shift from record-keeping to introspection, would be indicated by changes in an entry's tone, from plain to romantic language, or signaled by an omission of fact revealed, perhaps, by information in a letter or later entry. A recurring theme of homesickness, or a diarist who cast herself as the heroine of her diary's narrative, tells us what matters to each writer, about feelings which may go unwritten, yet are never completely hidden. Parts of the self these writers (as Victorian women, Saints, dutiful daughters, or loyal wives) wanted to forget or never acknowledge, are revealed through the silences in their private writings. None of our three diarists ever overtly says, I am afraid of Indians, don't want to leave our farm, know my husband loves his first wife better, even in her private journal where the only audience is presumably the self. However, all of those messages emerge through what is unwritten, avoided, or spelled out through bald configurations of events.

Caveat Lector: What Should We Expect?

While reading these Mormon women's diaries, through the lens of the language each woman uses to construct her personal vision, we must remember that nineteenth-century diarists' expectations for language use and

for what could or would be written in a diary were different from twentieth-century notions about private writing. As Harriette Andreadis writes,

. . . before the late 1880s, the writing of diaries and journals was . . . not conceived of as the "record of individual consciousness" we are accustomed to expect in the twentieth century. Rather, the writer was more likely to see herself as part of the social fabric and to express herself accordingly, without introspection and without the articulation of ideas and feelings. Consequently, the self revealed is often only fragmentarily visible through the interstices of accounts of daily life. Nineteenth-century private writings are . . . limited in what they can tell us. The self-portraits they present are more partial and less self-conscious than those of contemporary "public" autobiographers or of twentieth-century diarists, but they may well be more honest and ingenuous. (183)

We must look, when reading these Mormon women's diaries, through the "interstices" in diaries that, at first glance, appear to be seamless collections of family records or daily recitals of chores. All three diarists become, at least briefly, introspective during times of stress, or at points where the pattern of daily life is interrupted. Where the diary loses its effectiveness as an ordering force for daily events, the mask of saintly womanhood slips free as well. The writing self eventually is visible in the patterns each diarist creates, piecing days together like blocks in a quilt of her own design. Andreadis observes that patterns may be easier to spot in specific places in the diary:

. . . some of these writers at times attempt to voice thought and feelings not customarily expressed and to articulate a sense of self. In these cases, the writers rarely describe the joys of their experience, but instead tend to dwell on the less satisfying aspects of their situations, as though the privacy of the written diary or journal has given permission to express what might otherwise be repressed. (184)

Thus, what makes the study of private consciousness in nineteenth-century women's diaries intriguing is partly how diaries have changed. We

cannot look for the self expressed as candidly, even determinedly, as it might be in a twentieth-century diary; we read instead for pattern and repetition. What we expect of a twentieth-century diary (intimate, perhaps even shocking) is different from what writers in previous centuries expected and wrote. We know that Puritans and Quakers kept spiritual journals, that many New England colonists kept brief, record-style diaries, and that prominent men (Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards) kept voluminous records of their spiritual and intellectual--though rarely emotional--lives. Many of these diaries were written with the expectation that someone other than the author would not only read them one day, but learn from them. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, diaries were beginning to turn inward, to explore the inner world of the writer rather than functioning solely as records. Finally, young Victorian girls were encouraged to keep diaries as a form of self-discipline, and daily writing became one of the marks of a Victorian lady.

The Record of Self: (In)Significant Moments

Despite these shifts in the diary's function, however, women, particularly on the frontiers and overland trails, never stopped recording births, deaths, and marriages, along with failed crops, church socials and washdays. Elizabeth Hampsten suggests that even the "record-keeping" aspects of a diary represent an affirmation of the writing self:

Diaries . . . are not particularly private documents. Rather . . . they affirm a public acknowledgement, and hence, importance, to lives that their writers suppose ought not to pass unnoticed. Even the most laconic entries show a belief that the written word lends permanence, and makes what happened "true" as no other marker could. (58)

Although what Willis seems to admire most about her mother--that "self was forgotten" in devotion to her children--is part of Victorian and Mormon expectations for women, Willis as writer (through the simple act of keeping a journal) also keeps, instead of forgetting, herself. Similarly, even though Chase--who often seems like the busiest housewife in Centerville, Utah, caring for fifteen children, sick horses and neighbors, and her husband, the traveling Elder Chase--appears to devote all her energies to others, a careful reading of her diary belies this first impression. Despite the space devoted to "Dry goods \$1, butter 75 cents, spices 25 cents" (1) the diary also functions as confidante and repository for such reflections as, ". . . I would rather take a whipping than ask for our needs. I think Husbands ought to know what is needed and do their best" (4). Chase is not simply keeping household records in her diary, any more than Willis is only writing to inspire her children. And when Udall, recording her husband's polygamy trial, copies his prison letters into her journal, she is not only taking notes for posterity, but relieving her own feelings about the situation:

. . . I cried nearly all night and felt perfectly wretched. It seemed to me the longer our husband and father was away from us the less he cared to see us, and I prayed earnestly that God would give him strength and courage to do his whole duty by all of his family. (167-8)

All three of these women have their strongest obligations outside the self: in children, husband and community life. However, the fact that they wrote down, in solitude, the events of their lives and their reactions to those events, speaks for a common sense of necessity--the necessity of keeping the self, however privately, instead of allowing one's daily work to be forgotten. These

diaries by Mormon frontier women are ultimately a message from their writers to the busy, non-writing selves, as well as to posterity. As Margo Culley writes,

. . . the writing act itself implies an audience and this audience will be the vehicle of preserving the life-record (in the act of reading) despite the passage of time and inevitable change. Even the phrase "keeping a diary" suggests resistance to time, change, and, ultimately, death . . . the essence of the impulse to keep a diary is captured in 'I write, therefore I am.' And will be. (20)

Chase, Udall, and Willis all inscribe events from their daily lives, and memorialize themselves, in the following pages. Their diaries were originally written on scraps of paper, scribbled to pass lonely hours, or hidden in the interest of covering over unhappy secrets. These diaries, finally, are a triumphant record; they have not, after all, been forgotten, but lasted despite the best efforts of time and our notions about their importance or lack of it, as documents. The diaries have, against all odds, been kept, and as Culley suggests, by reading them once more we too are part of the act of keeping.

A NOTE ON DIARIES AND JOURNALS

Diaries, Journals and Memoirs: An Academic Question?

Before turning to the diaries of these Mormon frontier women, a final and perhaps academic question should be addressed. Readers may wonder: what, precisely, is the difference between a diary and a journal? The memoir, as a genre of private writing, is more or less understood to be a *memory* of the author's, but can the other two be separated from each other? Suzanne Bunkers sheds light on this question in her notes to "Diaries: Public and Private Records of Women's Lives," where she comments,

I use the terms diary and journal interchangeably because I have found few texts that can clearly be labeled a diary *or* a journal. Most incorporate characteristics of the diary (e.g. brief descriptive entries, daily reports of events) as well as of the journal (e.g. lengthy, introspective entries, narratives and commentary). (24)

As Bunkers notes, texts in this study which adhere closely to prescriptive guidelines are rare.

Diaries, journals and memoirs which perfectly follow the guidelines of grammar, usage and spelling are also rare. In all three diaries, I have normalized the writers' spelling where the original seemed confusing, and added punctuation where its absence would create a stumbling block for anyone not reading the entire diary and/or its editorial footnotes. The focus here is not on the diary as a textual editing problem, but on the diary as an occasion for both the construction of meaning, and the exploration of private and public life.

CHAPTER II

STRENGTH TO HOLD OUT:

THE DIARY OF JOSEPHINE STREEPER CHASE

Centerville, Sept. 2, 1901

Mr. Samuel W. Egbert

Dear Sir:

I haven't the pleasure of knowing you but I want your ~~consent & blessing to marry your daughter~~ daughter for my wife. Please let me know by return mail if I may have her.

I have her consent, also her mother's. She and her mother (Mrs. Egbert) are both willing. Now with your consent & blessing we will be married the 26th or 27th of the present October.

Please let me know by return mail.

Very Respectfully,

John W. Chase

Centerville, Davis Co., Utah

This letter, written by Josephine Streeper Chase's son Jack, is part of a collection of her private papers in the University of Utah's manuscript collection. The papers Josephine Chase accumulated throughout her life serve as the best corroboration for the concerns she expresses in her diary, which she kept for thirteen years, from 1881-1894. Among her papers--which, as seems to be generally the case with women's private papers, are filed under the name of her husband, George Ogden Chase--we find letters, accounts books, bills, her Sunday School attendance record and teacher's manual, and

this rough draft of her son's marriage proposal. The Chase diary itself, now filed with other family papers, was originally hidden. According to library volunteer Fae Decker Dix, who transcribed Chase's manuscript, it was found stuffed into a window box outside the Chase home.

It seems characteristic of Josephine Chase both to hide her diary, and to save the above memento of a step in the life of one of her fifteen children. Chase, perhaps, exemplifies most dramatically the kind of Mormon wife and mother who really did forget herself in the service of husband, children and home. Her children are chief characters in the diaries, forming both a part of her daily burden, and her consolation for illness and hard work. A day seldom passes in the Chase diary without mention of at least one of the children: their travels, their jobs, their hardships and loves. The older daughters--Kate, Fanny and Alice--provide significant support for Chase, helping both financially and emotionally. The death of another child, Clara, devastates her mother so that she abandons her diary for more than a year. Chase's life revolved, as her diary and papers show, around her family: not only around the business of keeping food in the house, but also around small joys, such as the valentines her daughters received at school.

Josephine Streeper Chase was born in Philadelphia in 1835. She emigrated to Utah as a child, attended school until about age sixteen and, after a stint as a schoolteacher, became the second wife of prominent Mormon elder George Ogden Chase in 1856. Chase was a polygamous wife for only a short time; Elder Chase's first wife, Emily, eventually divorced him

and later remarried. Thus, Chase's diary, unlike Udall's, makes little mention of her sister wife.

The Chase marriage seems particularly fruitful even by the standards of pioneering Mormons, who needed children to build up both territory and church. The Chases had fifteen children and one foster daughter. Josephine Chase kept house on a farm in Centerville, Utah, outside present-day Salt Lake City but in what was, in 1881, a rural area. George Chase was frequently absent from home, at work on other family enterprises or away on church business. This meant that Josephine was essentially the head of a large household, often thrown back on her own financial resources and what her children could contribute. At least two Chase daughters taught school, as Chase had before her marriage; another worked as a clerk in Salt Lake City, and both sons and daughters, along with occasional neighbors and hired hands, helped out with farm chores and at harvest time.

George Chase's frequent absences caused his wife much frustration, perhaps less because she missed George personally than because of the responsibilities left to her, a woman, within a male-dominated community. She depended on her sons to plan and carry out trading activities and farm projects that her health and domestic chores did not allow her or her daughters to do. Thus, the pace of life in the Chase household seems hectic most of the time, as the demands of feeding and clothing sixteen or seventeen people, plus frequent visitors, eliminate most of Chase's chances for leisure. Her diary shows that she takes time for two things: reading (usually the Bible

or her Sunday School lesson) and writing in her diary. These are the activities which help her "hold out," as she puts it, through the daily round.

The diary portion we will look at comes from a typescript by Fae Decker Dix, a volunteer at the University of Utah's Marriott Library. Excerpted here is a fifteen-page segment of the diaries, covering April 1881-January 1889, and containing 85 entries. Dix's cover sheet for the typescript serves as introduction:

These diary entries, often interspersed with household accounts, are transcribed from hand-written notes kept by Josephine Streeper Chase from 1881-1894 . . . The entries were written on pieces of many kinds of paper such as used envelopes, newspaper wrappers, accounting sheets, pages salvaged from children's notebooks, and occasionally on fine monogrammed stationery; salvaged, too, at times from parts of letters. Other entries are recorded in a leatherbound book which might have been intended as the permanent diary into which the original notes would finally be copied. (1)

These excerpts from Chase's diary probably come closest to our notions of what a diary, as opposed to journal or memoir, should be. Chase, despite some long silences, writes nearly every day when she is writing. The weather and her children's activities are regularly recorded, as are financial dealings and records of staples and produce bought and sold. The family papers contain half a dozen of Chase's pocket account books, devoted to various grocers and farmers, with one, for example, recording the family milk expenditures in neat columns. (Chase also saved meticulous records of her Sunday School class attendance, checking off weekly who was there and what they did). Particularly for 1881, her diary looks like all record-keeping; she records community births and deaths, the baptism of a son (by Elder G. Chase) and the illness of a family horse. Chase seems to use her diary as a

backup system for her account books, as well as a place for personal memories or reflections.

Perhaps in keeping with her bent for accurate recording, Chase's style was to write briefly and regularly in her diary. This makes her it look something like a contemporary desk diary--not a place, at first glance, for pouring secrets out, but a series of hints about each day's events. (At second glance, a close reader will realize that the terseness of many entries represents a distillation of feeling, and that Chase uses her diary to sum up, in a few words, days or months of grief, or infinite peace). Reading this diary carefully, it is hard to miss the writer's tired tone. As Dix notes,

The diary does not portray the image of a happy woman contentedly supporting her husband in church callings. Rather it bespeaks overwhelming weariness . . . obedience surmounting doubt, artistic yearnings, and frustrated dreams. These thwarted dreams rise up from the journal like a plaintive cry, a mirthless pleading. (169)

However, the simplicity and shortness of Chase's sentences and entries belies their depth. Typically, she records one event per sentence. For example, her first entry, for April 19, 1881, reads: "Had a birthday for Dave. Had the Streepers and Smith and Cheney and Parks children down. Had a nice time. Had 2 or 3 presents" (1). Three days later, on April 22, she writes: "Had a birthday for Kate. Had Mrs. Barber and Ruth and Mr. and Mrs. Parrish and their first born also . . . Ruth and Ivy" (1). Yes, this is brief recording; but notice that this diarist records not only which child had a birthday, but that, instead of mentioning how old Dave and Kate were, notes what is important to her: who came.

Chase's entries, according to Dix's notes in the typescript, are generally unpunctuated. Stops are clearly indicated by the diarist's brisk move to the next event, giving a general impression of both fragmentation and continual forward movement. Of the 85 total entries in Josephine Chase's diary from 1881-89, 39 are one or two lines long, and 20 more are between three and five lines long. What is recorded, however, in these short entries, tells us both why they are not longer, and what is so important that it bears recording regardless of time and space constraints. For example, even though parties had to be fitted into the routine of farm work, parties (especially for children's birthdays) were important to the Chase family both as precious social occasions, and occasions for rejoicing because children, on the Western frontiers, frequently died very young.

As well as centering on her children and family events, Chase's diary works by organization around several themes frequently found in frontier women's writings: hard work, overwork, illness, and death. Keeping her large household fed, clothed and cared for, and the bills paid, took up all Chase's energy. Family accounts depict a small, fragile woman, who struggled with ill health most of her life. In her diary, she focuses repeatedly on illness and death: deaths of neighbors, the construction of a graveyard fence, her children's illnesses. She concentrates on both the causes (cold, fatigue, natural sickliness) and the effects of illness (death, funerals, the grieving process). She also focuses on financial difficulties, and complains regularly about the overwhelming burden of her domestic chores. Without exploring any of these themes in great detail--her frequent illnesses and her work load

form at least part of an explanation for the short entries--she throws these topics into sharp relief with repeated mentions.

Attention to sickness and death stands out in Chase's diary as perhaps the most dramatic example of her entries' interconnection through theme. Mentions of these topics are woven consistently throughout the diary. For example, in one of the first entries, in May 1881, her son Mike's horse is very sick, and Chase finds this worthy of mention (though part of her concern is probably financial). On May 24, she asks a neighbor to stay overnight with her, ". . . for little Clara was sick and it was lonesome" (2). On May 25, she laments, "Oh dear, I wish Clara was well" (2). The next entry recounts her own long, delirious dream during a brief illness:

This morning I saw the funniest sight as I lay in my bed. The walls of both rooms looked so strange, all grey and white like snow falling, and oh, so gloomy . . . the walls were beginning to turn around and I was fainting but they restored me, Pa, Kate & Fanny. It took all of them for I was very sick. (2)

While she is ill, Chase has violent dreams about "some campers fighting and killing" and a dream about "a beautiful baby boy" after which "I got a little better" (2). Without analyzing her dream, Josephine does take the time to record its details.⁷ She also records that her four-year-old daughter, Clara, is ill on the same day. "Her cough is terrible. She vomits often and her nose has bled several times, but she is a little better today, I think" (3).

⁷ Dix explains that telling dreams was "a common pastime of the period" and that the Chase family and guests would often relate their own dreams as evening entertainment. This helps to explain why Chase pays attention to the details of a dream when she so rarely gives details of other, seemingly more important, events.

Twentieth-century readers may wonder why, despite the frequent incidence of illness in Chase's diary, and particularly given the violent symptoms of Clara's illness, there is no mention of a doctor. Bruce and Eugene Campbell explain, in a modern history of Utah, that doctors were uncommon in the early days of territorial settlement, and rare in many areas until well into the twentieth century. As we have noted, infant mortality was extremely high in pioneer days. The Campbells write,

In the first generation (c. 1847-77) almost one-third of the deaths were of infants under one year old, and another third were of children not yet five . . . Pioneer medicine relied primarily on Thompsonian herb doctors; local midwives; family remedies based on practical experience, tradition, and superstition; and "faith healing." (282)

By the Chases' time, things were changing only slowly. Midwives were common by 1881, and Mormon families relied on their services to help with both births and illnesses. They also relied on the church practice of anointing and blessing the sick.⁸ Chase, for example, records feeling better from an illness after a visit by Brother William Smith, despite the fact that he "only laughed at me" and did not formally bless her.

The primitive state of frontier medical care, and the frequency of epidemics in Utah Territory (the Campbells also record that an 1880 diphtheria epidemic killed over 700 people) [282] accounts for at least part of

⁸ In the early days of Mormonism, and until well into the twentieth century, the practice of anointing and blessing the sick--which today is done only by male church members--was carried out by both males and females. Women could gather to pray for a sick or troubled sister and give her a blessing on their own. In contemporary Mormon practice, the authority for laying on of hands is restricted to males.

Chase's focus on death and illness. However, she discusses her health thoroughly as she discusses few other topics. She mentions several times that her health has always been "poor," and the possibility, to readers of her diary, seems strong that her daughter Clara will die. Subconsciously, Chase may have prepared herself for the loss of a child by keeping the possibility continually in mind (ghoulish as this may sound to a contemporary ear).

Annotations of loss continue: on the 13th of June, "Brother Stoker was buried" (6). On the 25th, "Sister Tingey's little son is to be buried," (6) and Chase herself is sick again, enough to "keep the children up to wait on me, for Pa had not returned" (6). By July 23, Clara is frighteningly worse. The diary records, "Little Clara was taken suddenly sick today. Her hands went cold and she went very pale and sick at the stomach" (8). On the 19th, which (perhaps with a hint of foreshadowing?) is Clara's fourth birthday, the entry reads, "Uncle Joseph Young is dead and is to be buried today. Kate and Fanny are gone to [the] funeral" (7).

More details: later in February, Chase "took a chill, had high fever" (9) but is well the next day. She attends "Brother Miles' funeral at meeting house" (9) in February and, near the end of March, "took a chill, was very sick until next morning, had one each day for five days after" (9). On March 28, she records both the building of a graveyard fence and that her daughter Kate, though busy teaching school, "has been very kind to me in my sickness" (9). She notes, "rest of the family all well" (9). In the brief entries for 1888, no family illnesses are mentioned, but Chase hears of one death and dreams of another. On January 16, 1889, she mentions, in her single-line entry for

the day, that "I went to Sister Adams' funeral & a surprise in evening for Brother & Sister Ford" (11). On the 18th, the entry is "Tom Jennings' son buried today" (11). On January 22 a friend, Sister Ore, is too sick to come for a visit, and on January 26 Mr. Chase has a "sick spell" (13). On January 27, Chase herself feels none too well, and stays home from church; in the course of a visit, neighbors mention another death. "Mr. and Mrs. C. told us Mr. Mark C. died yesterday. Well, they had lunch & then sang hymns until 9 o'clock" (14). On the 28th, Sister Ore's husband contracts her illness, and is "very helpless" (14) unable to bring his wife to visit.

Chase's repeated mentions of illness and death eventually come to symbolize the potential for disorder in her life (what if creditors come calling? what if a child dies?) while simultaneously helping her fit both real and anticipated catastrophe into a pattern of day-to-day hardship. Writing continually about illness and death becomes, for Chase, a way of saying: this happened to me, it has happened to you, and disastrous though it is, it will happen again; so, to remind ourselves, we inscribe it here. If Chase feels overwhelmed by her "many cares" it is because she lives in a universe that is, very often, overwhelming. Her world is, as she is willing to write after the death of her daughter, "a sad place of trouble and sickness and separation" more often than not.

Despite her emphasis on topics that might be expected to produce strong emotion, Chase, of the three diarists, seems to shy away most frequently from recording what she feels or thinks, except obliquely or in a sudden outburst of emotion. On the evening of May 24, 1881, she writes in frustration,

Eph Garns staid all night in cabin, for little Clara was sick and it was lonesome and George had started off without saying one word to me. I never could get used to such ways from him, though I have been made mad too many times, I am sorry to say. (2)

She vents her feelings, and then moves on: "Well, they got back all safe" (2).

This seems to be a pattern of Chase's; when the diary seduces her into pouring out her heart, she moves on swiftly to commonplace events. After her four-year-old daughter, Clara, dies, she explains in her diary (to whom?) that she has been too sad to write for seven months, then adds: "I have been visiting at Sister Randall's with other friends" (9). Instead of recording the details of her daughter's death, or using the diary as a place to express her grief, she rapidly sidesteps the painful memory. This brief mention of tragedy accords well, perhaps, with Mormon expectations for stoicism (after all, Clara has returned to her celestial home) though not with our modern view of a diary's function as, at least occasionally, an emotional dumping ground. However, even Chase's control slips in the final entry for 1882. Written less than a month after the first, its tone spirals downward, from mundane domestic details into a lament over her dead child. She writes,

Oh how pleasant it seems this evening, sitting by the pleasant fires, the children all washed and gone to bed, and I am tired, for I have many cares . . . I often think of my deary that left me, and it hurts me terrible. I cry and cannot bear it sometimes, and to me this earth seems a sad place of trouble and sickness and separation. (10)

Even here, however, Chase pulls up short, admonishing herself in the final line, "Josephine--it is bed time and all is well" (10). Undoubtedly, Clara's death is a blow for Chase, if the way it curtails her journal writing is any indication (she gives this event as the reason she stops writing for seven

months). On the other hand, death can seem almost routine (at least by twentieth-century standards) in its occurrence in the writings of frontier women, and we cannot forget that it was never merely an event among many, no matter how brief the description.⁹

Even simple recording, we may suppose, sometimes led Chase into uncharted emotional territory. Attention to private consciousness, in this instance, amounts to a checking of emotions by the public self, a self clearly trained to obey the injunction printed on one of Josephine's writing tablets: "Be always happy and be useful." Turning inward too far, particularly when the inner self was grieving, or giving in to despair instead of remaining faithful and calm, would not only upset the balance of the household and the rest of the family, but flout existing standards for Victorian and especially Latter-Day Saint mothers, who would see their children in a happy afterlife. So, while Chase needs to record something about Clara's death, to include it in her record both as family event and part of an ongoing pattern of trials, her grief is perhaps too fresh to record the details, or even to spend much time with her diary. As Gayle R. Davis writes,

. . . most [frontier diarists] seemed to have tried to preserve their mental equilibrium by avoiding the direct expression of feelings or serious analysis of the meaning of their experiences . . . Even when

⁹ Since Latter-Day Saints, unlike Protestants of a more Calvinistic bent, view the soul as inherently good, even children who had not yet been baptized (at the age of eight) were heaven-bound. In fact, children were regarded as much closer, both temporally and spiritually, to heaven, since they had had less time than adults to forget their divine life in the "pre-existence." This Wordsworthian view of human nature reminds us that Mormonism has theological roots not only in the Old Testament but in nineteenth-century Romanticism.

recording events that would predictably evoke strong feelings, no emotions are noted by many of these writers . . . the motivation for their writing is just as important a consideration as is the particular content. Such predictable entries may well indicate a desire for control, organization and continuity . . . By ritually enumerating the visitors, the quilts, the changes in the weather, even the deaths, significance and pattern were established. Experience was made tangible, finite, and controllable instead of remaining frighteningly unpredictable. (11-12)

Another, quite different example of weaving death into this diary's daily pattern comes from August 1881. Chase slips into a rare descriptive moment while writing about both a child's funeral, and the beauty of a summer day:

We went to funeral at Mrs. Rockwood's. Her little boy looked beautiful in his Casket sitting on center table. Fresh flowers lay on & around and the French window open. We had a lovely view of the Salt Lake and the country around while the Bishop and Brother Porter spoke comfort to the mourners. (8)

This is the first, and one of only a few, descriptive passages in Chase's diary. The image of the child seems to refer us to a more heavenly home than even the Salt Lake Valley, which (this entry must remind us) was Zion for the Saints. Chase uses romantic language and details in her description; the flowers, the word "beautiful," a description of lake and countryside, and clergymen "speaking comfort" all seem designed to point us towards a higher plane, where the spiritual and personal, rejoicing and grief, are juxtaposed. For Chase and her Mormon neighbors, this funeral presents the heavenly face of death, part of the pattern for every Saint.

Illness, however, particularly Chase's own, is not always mentioned in such a spiritual light. She writes that, on the day after the Rockwood child's funeral, she was ". . . taken sick at stomach, had to sit and bathe my head and hands to keep myself from fainting" (8). Once again, even this sudden

illness is woven into the domestic fabric: "Then Uncle Will and Brother John Ford came to bring their new mowing machine on our wheat" (8). Another look at Clara's death shows us again how thoroughly Chase worked at the incorporation of death into daily patterns. She writes,

I have not touched my journal 7 months. Just 4 months tomorrow since my dear little girlie died. Oh what sorrow I have gone through. We were all so sick. I have been visiting at Sister Randalls with other friends today. I enjoyed myself and my sleigh ride home very much. (9)

The first three lines of this entry state the obvious (that the journal has lain untouched for a long time), revealing a fact not logically (but perhaps causally) related to the first (her sick daughter has finally died), and attempting to fit the child's death into a pattern of family illness: "We were all so sick." In other words Clara, about whom her mother has worried for months already, was the one to succumb to this particular attack. The abrupt topic change which follows these three crucial sentences, may indicate both a reluctance to dwell on details (who was sick? how and when did Clara die? was Chase herself ill, perhaps too ill to write regularly?) and a desire to concentrate on the present, and fit tragedy in with other events.

The topic change also illustrates both the lack of traditional literary proportion, and the resistance to more stylized narrative forms, which are often characteristic of the diary genre as opposed to, for example, the chronologically ordered novel. In fiction or even autobiography, the pairing of a child's death and a social visit would be rarely, if ever, found. The deemphasizing of an event so obviously devastating to its recorder is also characteristic of pioneer women's writings, according to Trudelle H. Thomas.

She argues that it is far from unusual to find dramatic events and everyday chores described in the same entry or line. She writes,

A trait which cuts across educational or financial boundaries is the tendency in women diarists toward understatement and obliqueness. Events which one might expect the diarist to treat melodramatically . . . are instead downplayed . . . The tendency toward understatement often results in outright omission of events modern readers would expect to be recounted in detail. (9)

Thomas' research, and Davis' theory that many women diarists avoided openly expressed emotion for the sake of their mental health, suggests that many diarists (as Davis also points out) use their diaries to help fit events, particularly tragic ones, into a recognizable pattern. That they may do this for, as Davis theorizes, the sake of psychological order (because if literal order is impossible, as it often was on the frontier or in lives like Josephine Chase's, perhaps mental and emotional order will suffice) helps us understand why Chase never writes in detail about certain events, yet keeps mentioning them, however obliquely, over and over. It is important to note, moreover, that this diarist does not omit a tragedy from her diary; she simply omits the diary from her daily routine.

We can only guess at Chase's feelings in the months after her daughter's death. Her diary tells us little about her day-to-day reaction, and despite one or two outbursts in its pages, there are only brief mentions to give us hints. For example, a month after the rare breakdown in her diary, Chase reports on her recovery from yet another brief illness: "I am better. Pa and a lot of the brethren are out digging holes for a fence around graveyard" (9). This entry seems chillingly apropos in the light of recent entries, and suggests that

multiple deaths occurred over the winter, filling the graveyard enough for it to need a definite boundary. Given Chase's state of mind, and the fact that she stops writing again at the end of March 1881, she may also be thinking of both Clara's place in the graveyard, and her own future place there, while watching construction on the fence.

Chase keeps a journal for only two months in 1882, and her entries center around sickness and death (the graveyard fence, the chill she catches in snowy weather). It seems particularly significant that following her attempt to start writing again, in the spring of 1882, there is a gap in the diary of four and a half years, until November 1888.

The second major thematic grouping in the Chase diary--and one which is, perhaps, less disturbing to the reader than the discussions of illness and death--centers around Chase's accounts of her overwhelming work and weariness in the face of financial cares and household chores. These chores and the responsibilities Chase faces as deputy head of a large household, are seldom mentioned without reference of all cares to God. Chase clearly clings to God for strength to accomplish her daily round, perhaps because she cannot cling to George. She writes frequently about her backbreaking series of household chores, but also refers, again and again to a message in church, or a moment of prayer, which supports her emotionally as well as spiritually.

A common refrain in the Chase diary is too little money and too much to do, which situation seems exacerbated by George's constant absence and the sheer size of the household. On June 13, 1881 (after recording that "Brother Stoker was buried today") Chase writes in frustration that "Pa started off this

morning to go North" (probably to Ogden or southern Idaho, where the family had business interests). She fumes, "He has left me without one nickel to help myself. He expects to come back in two weeks" (4). The family is not only without a father, but has company: "Brother Smith is with us" (4). Chase gives a nod to divine mercies ("I thank the Lord for his kindness") but concludes pragmatically that "I should fare slim if it were not for Kate's school money" (4).

Chase's attention to money matters amounts to almost an obsession in her private papers, until we remember that neither she nor her creditors had an alternative to keeping meticulous, handwritten records. Over and over, in this diary, the same lists of staples appear, providing a handy index to the prices of sugar and flour in rural Utah. May 13, 1881, for example, was a busy day for the Chase household: "Sold 2 bee hives for \$7. \$5 in cash & 2 gallons and a half molasses" (1). A grocery list follows: "Dry goods \$1, butter 75 cents, sugar 25 cents, spices 25 cents, broom 50 cents, currants 25 cents, soap \$1, tea 50 cents, coffee \$1" (1). Sugar appears twice more on the list, after the initial mention, bringing the total bought that day to \$1.25, or five pounds. Why it was not all recorded on the same line is a mystery of accounting, perhaps a clue to just what a busy day May 13 was.¹⁰ On June 7, 1881, Chase again records an item twice, this time strawberries, which were in season--one purchase of 50 cents and one of a dollar. The grocery lists are

¹⁰ Utah's highway signs today bear their numbers inside a stylized beehive, the symbol of industry and community Mormon pioneers selected for Deseret. It seems appropriate that--like many Mormon farmers--the Chases kept bees.

an amusing key to her sweet tooth, always listing the staple of sugar, as well as items such as "crackers 15 cents, currants 5 cents, candy 25 cents" (3). On the 10th of June, a week later, Chase buys more sugar (50 cents) crackers (5 cents) candy (5 cents) and "lickerish" (5 cents). She writes, "I have been very blessed today with good things to eat." In this entry, however, the mundane is juxtaposed with the spiritual, in the form of a plaintive cry:

I pray the Lord to forgive me of my many sins and continue his mercies towards me for it takes so much to keep my large family that I am exercised so much in my mind that it most overcomes me. Sometimes I think it comes harder over me than Pa for I have to be here all the time. I would rather take a whipping than ask for our needs. I think Husbands ought to know what is needed and do their best. (4)

The tone of this entry, for June 10, 1881, varies dramatically, shifting from a grocery list to a reflective, guilt-filled prayer composed of long, run-on sentences that convey the writer's feelings of desperation. Clearly, Chase feels free to ask the Lord for help with her overwhelming chores, but not her husband; the diary here seems to function as a substitute for the sympathetic listener she longs for, and a place to hold her husband to a standard she dares not openly ask him to live up to ("I think Husbands ought to know what is needed and do their best").

Harriette Andreadis, in her study of women diarists in frontier Texas, found attitudes towards husbands that are similar to Chase's in the diaries she studied. Chase's tone of frustration, and veiled accusations of George, are combined with pleas to the Lord for mercy and forgiveness, as the diarist complains, excuses herself, and feels guilty in the space of a single entry. Andreadis writes,

Professing their loyalty and affection, they [diarists] almost invariably complain of their husbands' indifference, insensitivity, impatience and lack of warmth. Self-accusation then follows for the harboring of disloyal thoughts. (189)

Andreadis also describes women diarists' guilt over any sense of "perceived failure to fill their expected role" (189) i.e. the role of loyal, uncomplaining Victorian wife and mother. In Chase's case, her role as Mormon wife and mother is to be supportive of her husband's travels on church business, secure in the knowledge that she is helping him to build the kingdom of God on earth. However, the diary demonstrates that she feels angry, not saintly, and that her anger causes her to feel guilty: "I pray the Lord to forgive me of *my* many sins" (4). Andreadis argues that many women diarists position themselves this way: feeling guilty even in private for their husbands' slights. She writes, ". . . their feelings are turned inward, where they fester as self-accusation and feed a sense of personal inadequacy" (189). Chase declares, over and over, that her work is too much for her, that her daughters are unable to help her adequately, or that she simply feels unequal to the responsibilities of running the home, farm and family; yet, as this passage demonstrates, she also seems to perceive the inadequacy as partly her own, dealing with frustrations in her diary by asking God to give her more spiritual strength, or to help her "hold out." After describing a busy Sunday, filled with visits from neighbors, hymn-singing and Sunday School lessons, Chase writes, "The Lord has given me strength to hold out another day, [and] for it I thank him" (14).

Reading her diary, we can sympathize with Chase's need for daily prayer. Her entries speak of life lived at a busy, often frantic pace. On May 25, 1881, her description of farm life contradicts romantic pictures of a simpler time:

. . . my cares weary me to death and there is no end to them. Caring for the children, cooking and mending and dress making. I don't have much of the latter. I have to make over old things so much it makes it tiresome. (2)

On May 26, Chase has a fainting spell from exhaustion (and records two dramatic, feverish-sounding dreams). She complains that her back "seems most broke" (3) from overwork. "It takes so much to keep my large family," she laments, on June 10, 1881, and on the 16th records, "Pa is gone and the cares of children and providing and the chores are too much for me" (5). In these entries, Chase once again casts herself as head of the family (she is the one "keeping" her large family) but reproaches George subtly for his absence.

Chase frequently mentions the Lord's gifts and blessings in conjunction with a specific need or complaint ("I thank the Lord for his kindness. I should fare slim if it were not for Kate's school money" (4). Emotionally, having someone to bring immediate needs to (other than the absent George) seems to help Chase preserve her equilibrium, and the ties of Mormon community serve as a significant stabilizing force as well. Church and Sunday School, Relief Society, priesthood meetings and conferences, are all mentioned as they occur, and are clearly part of the regular fabric of life. Without the structure of meetings, and regular reminders of the importance of faith, Chase and her Mormon sisters might well have perished in an emotional desert, praying for individual strength to hold out. For Chase,

however, both prayer and writing in her diary seem to be necessary occasions for private unburdening and cleansing.

The church functions as a supporting framework for Chase and her family, providing a community life in which everyone shares, and sponsoring social events that relieve the monotony of farm work. In the entry for May 20, 1881, the diary records that some neighbors visited, and that the company "talked of gospel and other things" (1). On May 22, a neighbor and his son pay the Chases a visit, and they all attend Sunday School together. Chase records, in this day's entry, that the message was about a common Mormon heritage. "Brother Felt spoke very well, tried to shew the children what brought us to these valleys" (2). She mentions that her husband and Uncle Will attend the semi-annual church conference "at Kays ward" (present-day Kaysville, Utah) and meet church dignitaries: "six of the twelve [apostles] there" (2). The sheer accessibility of the highest-placed church members tends here to heighten a Mormon sense of community, for Chase as it does for Ida Udall, who records that her husband spent several days with the visiting Brigham Young.

On May 25, 1881, however, Chase's spiritual concerns are more private than communal. She worries about her daughter, Clara. "Somehow she has always been sick off and on ever since she was born. That dreadful cough scares me, and today it made her nose bleed . . . I wish I knew what to do for her. Oh dear, I am tired too, and my cares weary me to death and there is no end to them" (3). At a loss, Josephine turns once again to the Scriptures: "I have read in [the] Bible every little while to comfort myself or say my

prayers to my Heavenly Father, which he does answer many times or I could not stand it" (2).

Along with pleas for spiritual help in the face of overwork or illness, the idea of blessings and answered prayers pervades the language of the Chase diary. On May 26, 1881, she writes, "God bless my children," (3) for their goodness to her when she is ill. In the next entry, after recording a busy day, she writes, "I try to be thankful for all the blessings we enjoy" (3). On June 9, 1881, she is ill again, and records that, "[I] thought I would certainly send for Brother Porter to come and administer to me and Clara" (3). The power of the Lord to answer prayer and to bless is directly followed by the power of a patriarchal (in the literal, Mormon sense) figure in relieving suffering and sickness, and the only Mormon patriarch who seems not to relieve Chase's suffering is her husband, Elder Chase. On June 19, she drives to church alone in a borrowed wagon, and frets again at her husband's absence:

It makes me so nervous to go out alone with the children. I think pa is very hard on me to go and leave me without one cent and tell me to do the best I can. Seems to me they ought not to make widows of us. I am broken hearted. But I try to trust in the Lord. (5)

Despite the difficulties of traveling to church, the family attends regularly. The next Sunday, June 26, she takes the children to Sunday School. "Had a pleasant time singing and reciting lessons. Elder Matthews encouraged the children to be faithful to their religion. We are on our way home and someone sees Pa coming home. All well" (6). In the light of previous entries, one wonders who was most reached by the reminder to be

faithful to her religion. Chase was apparently moved by it, since taking the children to church seems no easy task. On August 7, she writes,

Sunday we had to hurry to get ready for church. It tires me out to get a large family ready so often. Brothers Layton & Gilbert preached, then Sunday School in afternoon, then children to care for and chores, necessary evils, then they all go walking. (9)

Sundays might seem to be a day of rest from some chores for the Chase family, but apparently, the burden falls on Josephine Chase, who laments that after all the hurry and bustle, she is left alone at home: "I am always here" (9). The theme of church as supporting framework, however, and spirituality as a source of inner strength, reappears in later excerpts from the diary. In January 1889, Chase attends a Relief Society Conference, where "Aunt Zina" (probably Zina Young, a wife of Brigham Young) speaks inspiringly enough to be recorded in the diary. On January 20, Chase teaches Sunday School to a class of three. "They read in Book of Mormon and I heard them say Bible lesson for review" (11).¹¹ On January 24, despite a long day of cooking for visitors, Chase hopes to "learn my Sunday School lesson if I could" (12). On the other hand, church duties do irk her when they get in the way of daily farm life. On the 25th, she fumes,

This morning when I came out of my room--breakfast table waiting to be cleared off, fires to replenish, and chores too numerous to mention. Bro. Chase was gone to a priesthood meeting at Farmington & left Frank & David to load up hay . . . C. Rollins [a neighbor] is in the Barn helping them. (12)

¹¹ Teaching Sunday School was a regular part of Chase's life for years. Among her papers is an attendance book from 1887, listing a somewhat larger class of seven.

Clearly, the head of the Chase family had duties at home which were neglected in favor of his priesthood meeting, and though the meeting may have had the loftier claim, in Chase's eyes domestic work seems equally important. Although it was the duty of the Mormon wife (or wives) to be faithful in her responsibilities as wife, mother and housekeeper, so that her husband was free for specific kingdom-building activities such as going on missions (the average absence was about three years) attending priesthood meetings and conferences, and moving the family when called to other parts of Utah Territory to set up communities there, Chase seems to balk at much of the responsibility this lays on her shoulders. The reality of her home and farm life is so difficult that maintaining a saintly facade seems to have taken its toll. Here, in her diary, she can confide her frustrations at having to take charge of more than she believes herself able to handle, playing the head of a household without a husband's support.

The Chase diary is, perhaps uniquely Mormon in that it offers us a picture of life in a tightly knit community made up not only of immediate family members, but of friends and neighbors who seem truly to be brothers and sisters, working together to achieve a common goal. This diarist, despite her perpetual weariness, and the potential for disorder in her daily existence, is not isolated, as was frontier diarist Amelia Buss when she wrote from her Colorado mountain farm:

This is the Lord's day and no Sabbath bell invites one to church . . .
No one knows the loss I feel but those that have had the same
experience. I have good books to read, and they in a measure fill up
this aching void, but I thirst for something more. (22)

Chase, despite her cares, is able to record busy days like this one:

After dinner every one of my family went to Sunday School. We had an interesting time, studying lessons for our review next Sunday . . . The Lord has given me strength to hold out another day, [and] for it I thank him. (14)

Mormon settlers, despite the difficulties they faced in a particularly barren section of the West, settled down in communities, meeting regularly to support each other and, as the Chase diary frequently records, to talk of the "gospel and other things" (1). Chase's job is particularly difficult because of the Mormons' continual church and territorial expansion, which required her husband's frequent absences from home. The Chase family was, moreover, as part of Zion, not oriented only to subsistence but to making a profit. Visitors were taken in because they were brothers and sisters in the faith; they were not only extra mouths to feed but frequently extra helping hands. However, even though Chase seems to have little time for writing, she does write, inscribing repeatedly the consciousness of a private self in an overwhelmingly communal culture. She records her fears about death and sickness, along with feelings of inadequacy, and sometimes despair, in the face of household responsibilities. She draws strength both from confiding in her diary, and from her sense of belonging to a spiritual community. We find Chase leaning sometimes on her children, depending at other times on the kindness of neighbors, but always looking upward for divine help and doing what she can, supported by faith.

CHAPTER III

LOCATING HERSELF:

THE HONEYMOON TRAIL DIARY OF IDA HUNT UDALL

My 23rd birthday, March 8th, 1881, I passed with my parents, brothers and sisters . . . after dinner we had cake, wine, toasts etc., Grandma Hunt promising me every desire of my heart, beginning and ending the list with a good husband.

Birthday Book, Ida Hunt Udall

Ida Hunt Udall was born in a wagon at Hamilton's Fort, Iron County, Utah, in 1858. In her memoirs she wrote, ". . . it seems to have fallen to my lot to be a traveler ever since, much as I dislike that kind of life" (5). She was born to pioneer parents so dedicated that they were moving by wagon to Utah, at the request of church officials, when Ida, their first child, was born. The diary excerpted here is taken from a collection of her private writings and records edited by her granddaughter, Maria S. Ellsworth. The collection includes memoirs of Udall's early life in Beaver, Utah; a birthday book, or annual diary, running from 1873-1905; and her daily journals, which cover the period May 1882-November 1886.

Udall, of all three diarists, is the one who seems to explore unfamiliar emotional events in her journal, and to record her thoughts and feelings about events, as well as the events themselves. Shortly after her marriage to David Udall, Ida was forced into hiding with several other polygamous wives, since

plural wives could be subpoenaed and held to testify against their husbands on federal polygamy charges. The Udall journal from her two years in hiding records a turbulent, if mostly forgotten, time in American history. From the 1870s through the 1890s, Utah Territory, governed largely by the Mormon church, was torn by a struggle over statehood on the one hand, and the doctrine of polygamy, outlawed repeatedly by the U.S. government, on the other. Women like Ida Udall were caught in the middle. The "Mormon Underground" was a network of isolated farms and busy city households where plural wives could hide out, constantly on the move to avoid being found by federal marshals. The part of Udall's journal we will look at here, however, is part of a happier time; two months of travel, anticipation, conflict and excitement which Udall records as part travelogue, part romantic novella.

Like Chase, Udall records what happens each day, but the emphasis is not the significance of daily events as part of a larger pattern, but on working out specific personal conflicts; for example, the tension between her belief in plural marriage as a holy institution, and the realities of life as David Udall's second wife. She, not the first wife, Ella, will be (although she does not know it on her wedding trip) the one who has to hide from federal marshals, whose existence lands David in prison, and who must always be addressed, in his infrequent letters, as "My Dear Sister." The entries for Ida's wedding trip record her anticipation of both happiness and a tension which continues, with higher and higher stakes, throughout her marriage.

Many entries in this section of the Udall diary borrow from the Victorian genre of travel writing. Udall records details and impressions of the trip: how

far the party traveled each day, who they met on the road, what they did for diversion ("Made some molasses candy, for a change"). Several entries, however, are reflective, and two in particular are much longer than the rest; while most entries average five to eight lines, these two are well over 20 lines long. On May 21, and later on May 25 (which is her wedding day) Udall pours out her heart on the twin subjects of David and plural marriage.

Ida Hunt was a popular girl, the eldest daughter of a middle-class family in Beaver, Utah. Her father was a local bishop and the entire family was active in the church. According to family records, she was locally famous for her singing and sweet temper; she and her sisters taught school and clerked at the local co-op store, where when Udall was twenty-four she met David K. Udall. Udall was a Mormon elder, looking for a second wife to help him fulfill what the church considered God's injunction for all devout Mormons and particularly for church officials: the practice of plural marriage.

The Udall wedding trip was a protracted affair by today's standards, involving weeks of slow progress by wagon and extended stays with friends and relatives. Perhaps aware that her life was changing dramatically--that the writer who left Snowflake would not be the woman who returned--Udall kept a detailed journal of the trip.

Udall's marriage to David Udall was far from easy. As a second wife after the church's Second Manifesto, which forbade the contraction of plural marriages after 1890, she was part of a diminishing, not growing, branch of the sisterhood. Furthermore, she lived away from her husband much of the time, or with Ella Udall's family. Both of these situations put strain on Udall

to sacrifice and adjust for the purposes of family harmony. She suffered from bad teeth and a heart condition, and had her first stroke at the age of fifty. In the story this diary tells, the journal entries recording her wedding trip seem like a foreshadowing of the conflicts and struggle that marked the rest of Udall's marriage and family life.

Udall's first diary entries combine precise attention to the details of travel with a suggestion of underlying anxiety about her future state. On the surface, these early entries are highly specific, as if the diarist wants to leave markers for those coming behind. Her initial entry offers an example:

On the evening of Sat. May 6th 1882 I left my dearly loved home in Snowflake, Apache Co., Arizona, in company with Bro. and Sister D.K. Udall, and their baby Pearl to make a short visit to Utah. We started about 4 p.m., traveled about seven miles, and made a dry camp for the night, which proved to be a wet one before morning, it having rained incessantly all night. (51)

Udall not only refers to her "dearly loved" home, but writes as if she wishes to ground herself as well as potential readers with regard to its location. There also seem to be significant omissions. For example, the entry gives us no hints as to who Brother and Sister Udall are, naming Udall's future husband by his initials and setting the diarist decisively outside the family group. In the face of the shift in identity which will come with marrying David (and his wife, "Sister Udall") the way in which Udall locates herself in this entry suggests mixed feelings at the outset of the trip.

Udall's next few entries, which record the first week of travel, are detailed but (perhaps intentionally, as we see from the tone of later entries)

seem impersonal in tone. These entries center on weather and traveling conditions. For example, on May 7th Udall's entry reads,

Reached Woodruff for noon. Took dinner with Bro. and Sister Chas Jarvis. Did some trading at the Central Co-op. Were detained there several hours on account of the rain which continued to pour down. Camped 2 miles below Woodruff. (51)

On May 8th, Udall again records weather and the camping site, and notes the march of technological progress into Arizona Territory. "During our stay [in camp] several trains thundered by reminding us that civilization was really forcing its way into this new land" (51). Not only camping conditions, but the encroachment of technology on the desert, seem to occupy more of Udall's attention at this point than do family relations. Entries on May 9th and 10th provide brief travel details, recording David's choice of hard, muddy roads down the right bank of the Little Colorado River in order to avoid horse thieves. On May 13th, Udall laconically records an average day of travel, with the routine broken by the purchase of milk and butter.

Came to the Ranche for Breakfast. Enjoyed the fresh milk and butter which we could purchase there very much. Nooned at Moancoppy Wash. The wind blew a perfect hurricane. Camped that night at Willow Springs. (53)

One explanation for the briefness of Udall's travel entries, and their consistent focus on external details of the trip (coupled with a seeming indifference to her traveling companions) may be that travel by wagon and the exigencies of camping out allowed little time in the day for writing.

Another possibility is raised by Elizabeth Hampsten in her comments about diary style. She writes,

The spare style that acknowledges only material details . . . is intentionally that way. Although schooling has taught us to value whatever is different, separate, and of higher worth--the "climax" of a story or "topic" sentence of a paragraph--the diaries of working women tuck any unusual event into patterns repeated day after day. In a well-regulated life, nothing ought to happen, and astonishments are likely to occur by mistake . . . Should anything out of the ordinary occur, that even is fitted as closely as possible into the pattern. (56)

Travel diaries, though they record unusual incidents and scenery, do tend to focus on details like those Udall records. Typically, women diarists on the overland trails wrote about concerns similar to Udall's: grazing, water, weather. The patterns of a trip were formed by writing about events, and the stress of travel seems mitigated by a sense of the pattern inscribed in regular records of how a trip was going.

On the other hand, Udall's concentration on the details of travel, coupled with her seeming aversion to mentioning family relations, suggests that tensions existed on the trip to Utah. Udall's silences under these circumstances tell us much more about the days before her wedding, than the events she records do. The emotions "encoded" here (to use Suzanne Bunkers' term) contrast with Udall's expression of emotion in later entries.

On Sunday, May 14th, a week into the trip, Udall reveals to the unenlightened reader (and, perhaps, acknowledges to herself) why she is making "a short visit to Utah." She writes, "Nooned at the Cedar Ridge. Here was the first moment's private conversation I had with David after leaving home, so my spirits were considerably lightened" (53). In the previous

week's entries, she has given us little indication that her spirits are low. However, her careful attention to weather and camping conditions, and thorough record of geographical relocations, underscores her reluctance to write about family relations. In this portion of her journal, what Udall is not discussing is likely to be what is most on her mind. The fact that she waits a week for a "moment's private conversation with David" (not, in this entry, Brother Udall) indicates how matters stand between Ida and Ella. Udall's record of her wedding trip functions, at least part of the time, through silence about significant events; the reader must decode her assiduous jotting down of externals for what it is, a careful encoding of her anxieties about the trip.

For a few days after the conversation with David, Udall's journal proceeds uneventfully, at least on the surface. She records, on May 16th, the details of fording the Colorado River. "Our team, a large span of American horses (faithful old Dock and Suse) managed to take the load over the "Back Bone" without help or unloading" (53). The affection with which Udall mentions the horses makes even more conspicuous the lack of mention of others in the family--specifically, Ella and Pearl--by name.

On May 18th, Udall records seeing the grave at one of their camps of "a young lady 20 years of age, Miss May Whiting from Brigham City, Arizona" who "had got this far on the road to Utah in company with her mother & brothers when she died. Poor girl! My heart ached to think of her being buried in that lonely place" (54). Udall seems to identify with this young woman, a few years younger than herself, who died far from home and was buried in a "lonely place." Though deaths on the road were not uncommon,

even in the 1880s, this one particularly seems to affect Udall, who, interestingly, makes no mention of the rest of the party's reactions.

On May 20th, the party reaches Kanab, Utah, Ella Udall's hometown. Udall notes location and time carefully once again: "Just 2 weeks from the day we left Snowflake, and two years from the day I arrived in that place¹² . . . after my long stay in Utah with Grandma Pratt" (54). Her precise chronology emphasizes the intervening changes without making detailed mention of what has transpired, both since Udall left home two weeks previously, and since her earlier visit to Kanab. The family plot thickens here, as Udall meets relatives of both David and Ella:

We put up at Sister Udall's brother Tommy Stewarts, whose second wife, Mary, is also a sister of Bro. Udall. Unfortunately he was not at home, but his two pretty young wives gave us a hearty welcome. Took supper the first evening with Aunt Macy, Ella's aunt, and also stepmother. (54)¹³

The intricacies of families joined by plural marriage required careful recording and explanation. Since David was brought up by his father's second wife, and Udall's father also had a plural wife, polygamous family arrangements were nothing new to any of the Udall party. On the other hand, the single Ida Hunt must have been keenly aware, at this point, of the

¹² Kanab, not Snowflake. Ida had previously been to Kanab, Utah, as she notes in the following line.

¹³ Ella's father had married sisters, so Aunt Macy was not only Ella's aunt but her father's plural wife. She brought Ella up after the death of her biological mother. Ellsworth writes, in her notes to Udall's journal, "Latter-Day Saints also used the word *Aunt* to designate a plural wife other than the natural mother." (257) Ida Udall, for example, called her father's plural wife Aunt Matilda.

relationship between Brother Stewart's two wives, since she was a few days away from becoming a plural wife herself.

That her feelings were not altogether tranquil is shown in the diary entry for May 21, 1882, four days before her wedding. She writes, "With all the merriment, I felt lonely and depressed. Like a stranger in a strange land" (54). The metaphor of self as lonely sojourner marks one of the first times Udall uses romantic imagery to describe her feelings. She characterizes herself as passive and fearful in the following lines:

The sorrow another was passing through seemingly on my account, though I was powerless to help it; the constant strain my mind had been on during the whole journey, lest by word or look I should cause her unnecessary unhappiness, had weighed upon my spirits greatly, and I retired from the scene that evening with a feeling of dread and fear at my heart impossible to describe. (54)

Udall does not, however, reveal her feelings only in her journal. She confides in her future husband, and writes, ". . . was greatly reassured by a moonlight walk and conversation with the one dearest on earth to me, who brought light and hope to my heart once more, with his loving encouraging words" (54). What David's words might have been is hinted at in Udall's final, upward look:

. . . I finally went to bed, feeling that in striving to obey the commandments of God, with a pure motive I had everything to live for. No matter how severe the trial, what a privilege to pass through it, in such a glorious cause. (54)

The entry's last lines recall the uplifting language of sermons, or perhaps words borrowed from David's comforting speech. The language Udall chooses for her sudden outpouring of feeling, after weeks of entries that inform us about where she "nooned" and camped, suggests a familiarity with

popular literature in its references to moonlight walks and loving words.

Udall's sudden shift in language suggests a reluctance to express feelings of "dread and fear," or depression on her wedding trip. Udall casts this stop in Kanab as its own miniature narrative, weaving a dramatic story out of the party's happy arrival, her own depression amid general rejoicing, and the illumination lent by her fiancé.

Perhaps the leisure from traveling, and the proximity of not just Ella but her female kin, underlies this sudden outpouring of feelings of "dread and fear" in Udall's diary. Feelings she has previously not hinted at (though has suggested through the avoidance of all references to family relationships) are brought into the open, albeit held at a distance by Udall's adoption of the metaphors of sentimental fiction and the uplifting language of the church.

We learn in this entry what we can only conjecture from previous ones: Ella is unhappy about the impending marriage, and Udall, at least, is unable to relieve Ella's feelings. Udall also casts David not as "Brother Udall," traveling companion, but as her comforter and spiritual guide, assuring her of the purity of her motives. Udall would expect her husband, a Mormon male in good standing with the church, to have a direct line to God through the authority of the priesthood. Thus, David Udall is a rescuer twice over: once from the standpoint of Victorian romance, and once from the view of a Mormon woman seeking reassurance from God, or at least His direct representative.

Udall's concerns, listed in the entry's final lines, have to do with her personal motivation for marrying David. She seems to wonder whether she is

becoming his wife for the sake of a divine commandment, or because she wants to, and can. According to family records and her own diaries, Udall was seldom without beaux as a girl, and even broke off an "arrangement" with another man after meeting David. She describes him, halfway through her wedding trip, as "dearest on earth to me"--suggesting that spiritual guide though David is, the prospect of marrying him is not endured for the sake of spirituality. Udall seems, in this entry, to question the intrinsic worth and even spirituality of plural marriage, calling it, almost in the same sentence, a "glorious cause" and a "trial" as well as a "privilege." In her diary, Udall portrays herself as both heroine and martyr, struggling in a cause which may be "glorious" and "privileged" but is also trying.

Entries for the next days in May, which follow the wedding party's path from Kanab to St. George, Utah, relate more details of travel, including the note that Ella's sister is now traveling with the Udalls (perhaps to provide Ella moral support for the approaching wedding). On May 24th, the Udalls stay with yet another sister of Ella's, and Thursday, May 25th, brings the second long, reflective entry in the wedding diary. Udall heads it "Thursday, May 25th, 1882" (in contrast to the casual headings "May 24th" "22nd" "23rd" "21st Sunday" given to previous days). This entry's beginning reminds us of her record of departure from Snowflake:

This afternoon at half past 5 o'clock in the Holy Temple of the Lord, I was sealed for Time and all Eternity to David King Udall, the only man on Earth to whose care I could freely and gladly entrust my future, for better, for worse. (55)

This solemn affirmation is followed by a note about Ella's reaction to the ceremony. Udall observes that "after a talk with Prest. J.D.T. McAllister (by whom the ceremony was performed) she, Ella, seemed to feel much cheered" (55). On the other hand, the situation still seems less than ideal. Udall writes,

Oh! if she could only feel happy and reconciled, I should feel that my life was indeed a happy one. Why is it, that in carrying out the commandments of God, his children need be so sorely tried? Today I have made the most solemn vows and obligations of my life. Marriage, under ordinary circumstances is a grave and important step, but entering into Plural marriage, in these perilous times is doubly so. (55)

Not only is Udall aware of Ella's objections, but the political ramifications of polygamy are not lost on her. David, her own father and many friends suffered under the government's prosecution of polygamists, and she is aware of the outside world's resistance to Mormon doctrine. She prays, in this entry, for help in keeping her vows, and for love in her marriage, noting that "the sacred name of wife was whispered for the first time in my ear, causing my heart to flutter with a strange new happiness" (55).

The reappearance of Udall's romantic, "sacred wife" persona (complete with "fluttering" heart) contrasts with entries suggesting the extent of her previous depression, as when she uses the phrase "I had everything to live for" (54). This expression hints at what Udall might feel she had to live for if she were not obeying a righteous command. Given the Gentile outcry against polygamy as social, legal and moral outrage, Udall and other plural wives needed the support of the Mormon social framework--both female and male approval--to survive emotionally in polygamy.

Support from her sister wife seems to be forthcoming when Ella and Ida Udall finally talk, at Ella's instigation, on David and Ida's wedding night.

Udall records,

During the night, Ella, being unable to sleep, and thinking likely I was the same, came into my room, and mentioned for the first time to me our relationship to each other, and we talked long and earnestly of our hopes and desires for the future, both feeling much happier for the same. (55)

As a nineteenth-century Mormon diarist, Udall mentions no consummation of her marriage to David. (We may even conjecture that none took place that night, since polygamous unions tended to follow rules of convenience rather than a specific code of sharing; with all three spouses under one roof, David and Ida probably deferred time alone till later). Instead, the breakthrough comes between Udall and Ella. This entry contains the first mention of a real conversation between them on the trip.

The next few days are spent in St. George, visiting friends and relatives. Udall begins to mention time spent with Ella, as on May 26th: "Ella & I went shopping again." The entry for May 27th (probably written retrospectively, as Udall sometimes did, on the 29th or 30th) records that the party "Started from St. George at three p.m., arriving in Kanab Monday May 29th, feeling much happier than I did when I left it, which I believe was the case with all the party" (57). Even after her uplifting talk with David, on the evening of the 21st, Udall was perhaps not feeling as confident as the final lines for that date indicate. She refers to the marriage ceremony itself as having smoothed things over between herself and Ella:

After our visit to the Temple there seemed to be a feeling of peace and union between us which had not existed before. On the road home Ella and I had several long confidential talks. Told over our mutual trials and sorrows, and got to understand each other better. O, if we could always be frank and open with each other, how many heart-aches would be saved. (57)

Instead of casting herself as innocent or martyred here, Udall expresses her feelings in plain words, describing a second episode of bonding between herself and Ella without the distancing effect of romantic language. She uses simple, direct words to describe "a feeling of peace and union which had not existed before," but, we assume, did exist once she and Ella "got to understand each other better." The diary persona, here, also sounds much older than in previous entries, in which Udall is "powerless" to take action, or has a "fluttering" heart. Udall's candid recording of the party's emotional shifts, which go largely unmentioned before the wedding except in the entry for May 21st, bears out the idea that she was putting a bold face on things as the party started for St. George, attending to external details to avoid writing about the tensions present in the Udall family.

The party's second stay in Kanab, longer than the previous one, sounds from Udall's diary like a vacation. On June 1st, she records that "Sister Mary and I did the family washing" (57)--washing for a family of which she is now a part. The other two wives did the cooking: "Ella and Fanny getting dinner, in which we were joined by the Marriger family" (57). In this entry, at least, the Mormon argument that polygamy made domestic work easier for women by splitting the load between more hands seems borne out.

Udall's journal for these two weeks provides us with an inside look at the female community fostered by plural marriage. Tommy Stewart's wives, Mary and Fanny, play hostess to David Udall's wives, Ella and Ida. The women have a "carpet-rag bee" at Aunt Macy's on June 3rd, and Udall records that they "had dinner and supper together" strengthening the new family bonds. The 4th, apparently a busy day, has only one line entered: "We made dress, hat and collar for little Pearl" (57). Udall's welcome is, initially, limited to only the women of the Stewart family, thus emphasizing the importance of the bonds between wives; she notes on June 5th that "Bro. Tommy, our host, came home for the first time since our arrival" (57).

In these entries, Udall is not focusing exclusively on weather, cooking or horses, but instead on human relationships, indicating that perhaps family relations are improving. On June 6, the Stewart family and guests ("three wagon loads in all) goes on an outing to the "Cave Lakes." "We were supplied with the best of Picnic," Udall writes, "and a borrowed guitar which we used to good advantage during the day" (57). Udall not only played the guitar, but taught it, and was known in both Beaver and Snowflake for her singing voice, so we may imagine that she was a center of attention. She writes, ". . . we enjoyed ourselves swinging, talking, reading, singing & eating until near sundown when we started homeward, well pleased with our day's amusement" (57). This family outing seems to mark the transition, for Udall, from lonely outsider to reasonably contented family member, contrasting sharply with her sense of being "a stranger in a strange land" less than a month before.

Udall's journal entries for June 7th through the 11th detail more of the social life the Udalls enjoy with Ella's family, friends and neighbors, who seem to be rapidly becoming Ida Udall's friends as well. On Sunday, June 11th, church president Erastus Snow introduces Udall to his wife as "the grand-daughter of her old friend Sister Addison Pratt" a fact Udall notes in her journal, and which may have reinforced her growing sense of family ties in Kanab (her previous visit there had been with Grandma Pratt). On June 12th, the family's final day in Kanab, Udall indicates how well she has settled in when she writes,

Left Kanab enroute for Arizona Territory . . . During our two weeks' stay there, I had made many dear friends whom it was a trial to part with. It was also a great cross to Ella, who was leaving her old home and all her relatives except one sister. (58)

The return trip to Arizona seems to be far more lighthearted, and the subjects of Udall's entries more varied, than on the trip from Snowflake. Udall seems to be recording adventures rather than simply weather, food and scenery. On June 16th, she volunteers to drive some wild horses for relatives of Ella's who catch up to the Udall party. Udall as "Bacaro" [sic] is a dramatic change from the serious chronicler of the trip north. On the 17th, she and Ella read aloud to each other in the wagon: "During the day read from Mrs. S. J. Holmes novel entitled "West Lawn" [sic]" (58). On the 18th, they read yet another novel: "Read 'The Rector of St. Marks.' Same author" (58). Even crossing the Colorado River seems enjoyable: "I never enjoyed a boat ride more, although the water was very high" (58). By June 20th, "Bro. Udall" has been recast in Udall's journal as "David": "Lost the small water keg

and David was obliged to go back two miles for it" (59). She also mentions a family occasion in her journal: "This was the anniversary of little Pearl's second birthday, and she chattered about it all day" (59). Udall may see herself, now married and reconciled to some extent with Ella, as having come through the crisis of a plot with herself as heroine. In writing about the party's adventures, including (but not limited to) her own, she seems to turn outward as part of her readjustment to a larger world. Here, she is not using the details of travel to avoid discussing her feelings, but instead reengaging with a world outside the Udall family drama.

Not only family events, but the various dangers of the road, rate space in Udall's journal on the trip home. On June 18th, she notes that they are joined by "two men with pack mules . . . if they were only good men, how glad we should be of their company for it was running a risk to travel alone" (58). On the 21st, the family meets "a hard looking crowd" of prospectors: "4 men with 12 head of mules and horses" who fortunately let them "pass in peace" (59). On the 22nd, more prospectors show up, asking to buy grain. Udall writes, "Their manner indicated that if we refused, they would take it anyway" (59). She adds a note of praise for her husband in this entry. ". . . David thinking 'valor's best part was discretion' under the circumstances sold them a few pounds and they departed" (59). David is ill after this incident, though the two are apparently not connected. Udall records that on the next day he is recovered, so "we bought fresh butter and milk and went on our way rejoicing" (59). This "rejoicing" contrasts with Ida Udall's apparent strain and Ella's unhappiness on the trip to Utah. While camping on June 23rd, the two

women make a treat for the family: ". . . made some Molasses Candy, for a change" (59).

Udall reflects on the month of June in her entry of the 25th as the party camps near home, having met up with friends. She writes,

Thus passed the first month of my married life. It had been clouds and sunshine intermingled, with more happiness, in the mane [sic] than I had anticipated. I can say truthfully that I believe we are all three far happier, than we were one month ago today, which is truly encouraging. (59)

She does not specifically mention rereading her travel journal, but glancing from the entries for early May to the later ones in June, a lightening of tone is impossible to miss. Happiness, however, is tempered with some upsetting news, brought by fellow travelers, of ". . . the murder of Bro. Nathan Robinson of Reidhead by the Indians a few days before. I was much shocked to hear it" (60). Even more shocking is the report of a shootout between Mexican settlers (frequently not on the best of terms with Arizona Mormons) and a local ranching family in the Udalls' home town. Despite this sad news, however, Udall exclaims, "Oh! It seemed so pleasant to get back home again, with father, mother, brothers & sisters" (60).

The Udall wedding trip ends here. The day after arriving in Snowflake, David, Ella and Pearl start off again for their home in St. Johns, Arizona. Ida Udall is left to live with her family "till we see which way the wind blows, and some arrangements can be made for my safe keeping" (60). (By "safe keeping" she may simply be referring to new living arrangements, or more probably to being kept safe from Gentile persecutions of polygamists).

Between June 28th and July 18th there are no entries in the journal. On July 18th, however, David passes through town on a business trip to Albuquerque, and Udall notes in her journal that the news from her new family members--Ella and Pearl--is good. "Said Ella and Pearl seemed much better in health for the long trip they had enjoyed" (60). This must have been good news indeed to Ida Udall, in whose honor the "long trip" was made. Doubtless Udall, though she does not openly say so, hopes that Ella's emotional health is good as well, and that the comfortable relations they established in Kanab will continue.

Udall notes that, on July 24th, David is able to spend Pioneer Day¹⁴ with the Hunts on his way home from Albuquerque. His bride writes simply, "I enjoyed the day very much, being the first of David's society I could freely appreciate, since our marriage" (60). If the newlyweds have spent time alone together before this, two months after their wedding, it has been brief. There is no romantic language in this entry, only the mention of "enjoyment." David spends two days with his second wife, then sets off for home, giving us an idea of how precious--and perhaps frustrating--his limited company must have seemed to Udall. Her entries, however, are simple, factual and short. Ida Hunt Udall, plural wife, ends her honeymoon where she began it, in her father's home.

¹⁴ Pioneer Day, July 24, marks the anniversary of the date in 1847 when Brigham Young led the first pioneers through Emigration Canyon into the Salt Lake Valley. In Utah, this holiday is celebrated much as July 4 is observed in the rest of the United States.

Locating the diary persona within familiar narrative forms, particularly in the face of travel and life changes, seems to be a crucial strategy for Udall, as she weathers physical and emotional relocations. Shifting the responsibility for language onto the conventions of familiar genres relieves her temporarily of the burden of her own subject, at points when what she might write in her diary seems too painful to discuss openly. She reverts back to everyday language, tone, and style at the point where her emotional relocation to the role of plural wife seems accomplished, at least to some extent. The Udall diary thus functions as a record of one woman's expanding relationships and emotional relocation within her community. Throughout the wedding trip, Udall uses her diary as record, confidante and, finally, as a tool for locating herself in a wilderness of new experience.

CHAPTER IV

LONGING FOR HOME: THE DIARY OF CEDENIA BAGLEY WILLIS

The last diary we turn to is, in some ways, not a diary in the sense that the Chase or Udall diaries are. Cedenia Willis' diary is partly memoir, and partly the sort of daily record we have already seen and are used to calling a "diary." While Chase and Udall both use their journals to record events more or less as they happen, Willis' diary is a combination of family history, autobiography and open letter to her children.

Willis begins writing her memoirs in 1913, and starts keeping a daily diary nearly ten years later, after the death of her husband. The diary transcript includes Willis' memoirs, a journal without daily dates from the period 1913-1922, and a few pages of a daily journal from 1923-24. Excerpted here are passages from the early part of Willis' 1913 memoir, covering the years 1854-1906, and part of her journal from 1922.

The first portion of the Willis diary, the 1913 memoir, is written as a loosely chronological narrative. Willis may skip suddenly from describing a marriage to chronicling a death in a sentence or two, or she may build a narrative out of a series of family events. Entries in the memoir are not dated, but she indicates the year for most events, starting with her birth in 1854 and working forward to the death of her husband, Merrill Willis, in 1922.

While Willis' memoir may lack the immediacy of a traditional daily record, her work retains a diary's impressionistic quality. She often associates, in her writing, events that at first glance seem unrelated, and only fit after careful reading. The juxtaposition, at one point, of her daughter Mary's death with a sudden separation from her mother (also named Mary) is one example.

Willis composes her memoirs with the stated intention of passing them on to her children. She aims to inspire them to greater faith, as well as to remind them of family history. Despite this clear articulation of an audience for her memoirs, however, the Willis diary is not a closed text, accessible to only her children and grandchildren. Her diary tells us as much about her everyday life as a wife, mother, widow, and writer, as it does about her spiritual life, about what she describes as "this comfort which comes to me" (35) from the Mormon gospel. Reading Willis' memoirs, we discover what it was like to pioneer dangerous territory, lose farm after farm to drought, live alone with small children through harsh Utah winters, and cling to small domestic things for comfort (flowers, her Relief Society sisters, one "beautiful home" in Salt Lake City). Willis writes openly about her loneliness, and grieves over the scattering of her children. These memoirs may, indeed, have inspired them to greater faith, but what emerges most strongly from her diary and letters is the portrait of an ordinary woman who wrote and rewrote her family history, determinedly stamping a vision of home on all our memories.

Willis begins her memoirs in Salt Lake City, in January 1913, at the age of fifty-eight. She and her husband Merrill are living--for the only time in their married life--near a city, in a large, modern home. Perhaps the respite

from hard farm labor, which marks most of Willis' reminiscences, is what gives her a chance to write. She and Merrill also worked in the Salt Lake Temple for several months, and the church's emphasis on genealogy and family history may have inspired her to begin as she does: "I have felt impressed of late to write a few lines to my children that are left to me, as four now sleep on the hillside" (1).

The "few lines" Willis writes, and the events she chooses to include in her narrative of family life and faith, demonstrate for us what matters most to her: initially, a grounding in both literal time and in Mormon history, which began some thirty years before Willis' birth in 1854. This diarist, the daughter of emigrants who made the long, difficult trip from Illinois to Utah, never forgets her position as a faithful Saint, the daughter of Zion's early settlers. She writes,

Am now 58 years of age. Was born in the year 1854, 22[nd] day of November in Grantsville, Toole Co., Utah. My parents arriv[ed] here the year before from Winter Quarters, where the Saints had been driven from Nauvoo, crossing the Plains in Daniel Miller's company, 1863. (1)

The next order of business is family history, which she sets out as comprehensively as possible: "My Great Grandfather Eli Bagley was an Army Surgeon in the Revolutionary war, followed the war to the close. My great Grandmother's name was Hannah Staples, [a] French girl from Canada . . . " (1). Willis describes her childhood in Grantsville, Utah: school, parents, baptism into the church. She describes herself as a timid child, who "never wanted to be scolded" (3) claiming that her older sister, Melissa, was "always my father's favorite" (3) while Willis, throughout the diary, identifies strongly

with her mother, Mary Bagley. What later becomes a strong focus on home and family appears immediately, as she writes about watching her mother work around the house: "I have followed mother to the willow patch where she has burned the willows for ashes to make the soap. I have been lulled to sleep many a night by the busy hum of the spinning wheel . . . " (1). While most of the incidents Willis records do not bear out her early self-characterization as oversensitive, timid or clumsy (on the contrary, she seems to bear up matter-of-factly under the hardships of pioneering) the world of her diary does seem divided symbolically into safe haven and threatening outside world.

The "outside" world, for Willis, is not necessarily the physical outdoors, since the Willis ranch at Taylor, Arizona, for example, is a peaceful home for nearly twenty years. Threats to domestic peace and security, however, often do appear in the out-of-doors: Indians (who are usually assumed to be dangerous, though Willis only records one disturbing incident) and crop-ruining weather are the primary examples. Threats can also appear indoors, even within the walls of home, as in the case of life-threatening attacks of diphtheria or asthma. Throughout the Willis diary and memoir, the code word "home" seems to stand for times or circumstances in which order and stability prevail: "home" signifies good crops, health for the family, and the presence of loved ones. Willis' initial grounding of her readers in the memoir, by giving precise names, dates and places whenever she can, and references to both Mormon and literal time, also signifies a wish for stability,

order and positioning in family narratives.¹⁵ However, there is still more to home than names and dates, as we will discover. Willis frequently describes her physical home in strongly pastoral terms, particularly with a recurring description of flowers in bloom and bees buzzing around the door. She appears to have an idyllic physical conception of home which is stylized enough to be a code word for happiness.

The theme of home, in one sense or the other (and frequently in parallel literal and symbolic senses) runs through Willis' writing from the beginning of her memoirs, shaping her view of events. When Willis is four, her mother moves house temporarily with the children, while Mr. Bagley is serving in Johnson's Army, a Mormon militia. When the family is reunited in Grantsville, Willis describes "my childish joy when we returned to see the little whitewashed adoby home" (2). In 1864, when Willis is ten, her father is "called by Brigham Young to Dixie, Southern Utah to help build up that forbidden [sic] looking country" (3). The memory of leaving Grantsville calls up, for Willis, the first set of pastoral images that appear repeatedly in her diary: "I see the grape vine arbor, the graveled walks, the strawberry beds, the apple orchard . . . it seemed such [a] beautiful home to me" (3). This picture of a perfect garden--wherever it is--continually appears in the diary, in

¹⁵ Note that Ida Udall, in the initial entry for her wedding trip, is also precise about details such as starting time, distance traveled, giving the full names of her traveling companions and stating the party's destination. Udall and Willis, with their exacting references to places and dates, are both grounding private writing in public chronology, in Willis' case certainly with an eye to posterity.

contrast to places which Willis views, from either a child's or adult's perspective, as inhospitable. Julie Roy Jeffrey suggests that part of the significance of gardens and flowerbeds, for women living on the Western frontiers, lay in the boundaries involved: straight lines and fences around garden patches, or borders and definite beds, provided breaks in an often overwhelmingly bleak or visually stunning landscape, effectively creating an interior space outdoors. Jeffrey writes, "One can see them [gardens] as signs of female determination to make a small mark on the landscape, to carve out a piece of land that was colorful, pretty, and an appropriate setting for a home" (74). The boundaries of a family's homestead might extend out of sight, but a yard or garden both expanded the house's living space psychologically, and made the open spaces of Utah and Arizona more comfortable visually. "In their efforts to make their surroundings homelike," Jeffrey writes, "women tried to soften what was often a sharp contrast between the world of nature and the world of the family" (75).

In the process of trying to mitigate the tension between home and outside environments, safety and danger, Willis often attributes negative feelings to her mother. She records that she and her mother were close, and we may assume, reading the entries in which her mother is afraid or disheartened by facing a new landscape, that Willis feels some of these emotions herself. By recording her mother's feelings, she is valuing them, making them important and noticeable, and this suggests that her mother, in a sense, speaks for Willis. Speaking through someone to whom she is extremely close (she describes herself repeatedly as a "loving daughter") seems to

function, for Willis, as a way of voicing fears indirectly, either because it is too threatening to acknowledge her own fear in writing, or because she avoids complaining about her own lot by pitying her mother's. Moreover, in the memoir directed to her children, sprinkled with anecdotes about miraculous visions and sudden spiritual insights, too much expression of worry or complaint seems inconsistent with the diary persona of a woman who depends exclusively on the gospel of Jesus Christ. Willis remembers arriving in southern Utah with her family after a three-hundred-mile journey by wagon, and writes:

Then on to Dixie. Poor mother, as she gazed on the forbidding looking country with its sand hills, its little stretches of land, with its mountains of black [and] red malipi rocks. How sick mother was, pined for her home. Father had to assist her up the twists, dugways along the road. (4)

The description of her mother's fatigue and sickness may parallel the fatigue and sickness Willis herself feels at points in her family's long series of moves, but the feelings are attributed to her mother.

Willis' closeness to her mother seems to overcome even the urge, at times, for a settled, peaceful home. In 1878, shortly after her marriage, Willis seems to instigate a family move, asking her husband Merrill to accompany her parents to Arizona. Being with her family, especially her mother, seems to be security enough for Willis, at least temporarily: "I pled with my husband to go that I might be with my mother. What loving daughter does not know my feelings?" (6) She mentions, almost casually, that "Merrill sold our home, farm" (6) which seems a significant event given that the first thing she mentions about her marriage is that "Merrill built us [a] comfortable home"

(6). Despite the fact that she travels to Arizona with three boys under seven, Willis almost seems to relish the journey. "I drove my team of mares all the way, [and] sometimes it was storm[y]" (6). At journey's end, however, what she misses is a place to call her own: "How I longed for home sweet home" (6). Once again, she ascribes similar feelings to her mother: ". . . how my heart ached for dear mother, such dreary looking country . . ." (6).¹⁶

While traveling, the Willis and Bagley families seem to take their home--at least in terms of emotional location and identity--with them as much as possible, occasionally stopping to locate themselves in the heart of a desert landscape. En route to Arizona, for example, they hold a full-fledged May Day celebration in which, Willis relates, "My sister Melissa was crowned queen" (6). After a risky Colorado River crossing, the party rests:

. . . pitched our tents, unfurled the American Flag Merrill and I had made before leaving home, got the Organ from the wagon and as the Pioneers our fathers [and] mothers had done we danced on the big flat rocks, my father [and] mother passing through it all again. Surely they will get their reward. (6)

Getting out the American flag, and holding an outdoor dance, provides both a sense of continuity with their Mormon forebears (Willis' parents, as she mentions here, were among the earliest settlers in Utah, crossing the plains in

¹⁶ While southern Utah and Arizona draw thousands of tourists every year to the spectacular canyons and rock formations, to the eye of pioneering Mormon farmers, homesteading this country must have looked dreary indeed. Despite the church's determination to settle and farm all of Zion, Wallace Stegner writes that "Now, a hundred and forty years after their hegira, they [Mormons] have managed to put only about 3 percent of Utah's land under cultivation" (70). Mary Bagley, with her reluctance to face life in the forbidding new desert, seems to have been "right" after all.

1853) and a way of civilizing the desert, proving that even under the harshest conditions life could still be enjoyable and, in some sense, domestic.

After three months, however, the excitement of the move begins to wane, and the wish for a settled location creeps back. Willis records mournfully, "Oh dear no home, being three months on the way, such hard journey . . . how I longed for a house to sit in, something beautiful to gaze upon. No, this was all to be made" (7). They finally reach a Mormon settlement, the town of Forest Dale. This town is too near both Navajo and Apache Indian reservations for Willis' comfort, but its inhabitants celebrate the Fourth in such style, despite their surroundings, that, as Willis records, "The men all concluded they wanted to live in Forest Dale. Mother objected, had she not went [sic] through enough with the Indians?" (7)

Mary Bagley's pleas, however, apparently went unheard. Willis never mentions an instance in which men bowed to women's wishes to stay at home, rather than moving on; the move to Arizona with the Bagleys was probably not made entirely at her own suggestion. The knowledge that a home could so suddenly be abandoned (as when, after eighteen years of settlement, Willis abruptly records: "Merrill wanted to leave Taylor") probably accounts for the importance of all types of "home" in this diary and memoir. In the case of Forest Dale, where the men suddenly decide to settle, Willis again records her mother's fears without mentioning any of her own: "Mother hardly got out of the wagon for [a] week, so frightened, heart sick" (7). Helen M. Buss, writing about women who traveled with their husbands in the Canadian wilderness, sheds some light on pioneer women's concentration, in diaries, on

themes of home, suggesting that strong emotions such as anger and fear were often veiled, while more typically "feminine" or acceptable emotions could be revealed in the journal:

. . . the very real, personal trials of these journeys emerge . . . through the intensification of . . . acceptable emotions, such as homesickness (especially for the mother) or a worshipful attitude towards the husband which would perhaps seem excessive to a twentieth-century reader . . . If we read the less respectable emotions between the lines, even . . . formal diction does not wholly obscure the fear that must lie behind . . . the complete dependence these women must have come to feel on the kindness of the men who brought them thousands of miles from home and family. (11)

Mary Bagley and her daughter Cedenia Willis had, ultimately, minimal say about where their husbands chose to settle; if Merrill and Eli enjoyed the congenial neighbors in Forest Dale more than they feared the proximity to Geronimo, their wives could do little beyond stay in the wagons and long for home.

Willis' description of where the family did live while the new home was built demonstrates, in a single, telling sentence, why pioneer women valued their houses so much, and wept at leaving them. She writes, "The men got city lots, put up log houses, mud roof, dirt floors, then the rainy season set in" (7). Willis wintered in the wagon box with her three boys, in a tent fashioned of the wagon's top, with ". . . the covers being drawn together to a ridge pole in center, having made my little boys suits from the brown ducking tent" (7). Apparently, neither Willis nor her husband had anticipated having to use that tent again. Eventually, however, the Willises settle down on a hundred-acre ranch, and after what Willis succinctly describes as "fourteen years [of] hard

toil," (7) end up with a home they can be proud of. The pastoral imagery appears again in Willis' description of the ranch:

Merrill built lumber house with porches where we spent the summers. There were always provisions and fruit in Summer, with bee hives full of honey, a boat on the dam where they could go boat riding. The boys, the horses, cows, all loved the ranch. (8)

That this vision was not achieved without struggle is pointed up in a single sentence, in which Willis compares her family's settlement in this outpost of Zion to the original efforts of Mormon pioneers. She writes, "I doubt if our parents had harder times settling Utah than some did here" (8).

Despite the importance of place in her definition of home, for Willis a symbolic sense of "home" seems as frequently connected to persons as to location (witness the relish with which she drives her team to Arizona, scarcely regretting the loss of her "first home"). Around 1880 she records two crucial partings--the loss of her firstborn daughter Mary, and her mother's (or rather, father's) move away from Taylor. These two events rate the same number of lines in her memoirs. First comes the death of three-month-old Mary (her fourth child and firstborn daughter) from whooping cough: "This was our first great grief, this was the first parting in death" (8). The whole family "knelt around a little mound where the green grass was waving, [and we] laid our little treasure alone" (8). Her mother's move appears equally saddening, but this time, Willis mourns alone. She writes, "I went out in the waving corn, prayed to my father in heaven, cried myself sick. Had come so far to be near her and then to part. It was years before we met again" (8). When her oldest son, Merrill Junior, marries, she writes about this event as

well in terms of loss: "This was the first parting by marriage, the second vacant chair in our home. How we do miss them when they leave us" (9).

Home, for Willis, meant not only having loved ones gathered around her table, but freedom from the dangers that still beset frontier families in the 1880s. Indian attacks feature regularly in her reminiscences. As a little girl, she is terrified by bullet holes in the schoolhouse door, made by some "chained Indians" the townspeople had imprisoned. On their way to southern Utah, the Bagley party, including ten-year-old Cedenia Bagley, is frightened by Indians. Willis remembers:

One day [at] noon the little company was stirred by the blood curdling yells war whoop of a dozen Indians or more as they dashed down the hill into our camp. Father picked up his revolver from the wagon . . . where he had lain it . . . mother got into the wagon holding gun cartridges while sister and I got behind mother. (4)

Encounters like this, for Willis and her mother and sister, seem to represent the farthest possible point from "home." Indian attacks seem doubly frightening to women who never record a sense of being able to defend themselves from possible harm. In northern Arizona, Willis is nervous enough to record, at the end of one journey through reservation land, that "Home did look good to me" (10).

Disease is another disrupter of the peace Willis longs for. She remembers an attack of diphtheria which struck her family with no doctor near: "We fasted, prayed as we never had done before" (10). Her son Samuel is temporarily crippled and nearly dies of "inflammatory rheumatism" (11) during another family move, this time in winter from Arizona to New Mexico. Later, in Utah, the whole family comes down with chills and fever

on a summer outing, so that Merrill, driving the wagon, is barely able to get his family home: "Would drive a little ways, then stop the team [and] throw up as he sat in the spring seat over the wagon wheel" (14). Willis soberly adds, "That was our first pleasure trip in Weber County" (14).

Sickness and death for Willis (and, as we have already seen, for Chase) seem to represent a fundamental undoing of order and thus, of the concept of home. In the late 1800s, settlers who were seriously ill frequently died, so that illness presented a much greater threat to family stability and the continuity of home life than it does today. Willis writes about the idea of home not only as a place with flowers blooming and bees buzzing around the door, but as a situation: with family members healthy and gathered nearby.

That home, for Willis, is intricately tied to the idea of health and companionship, both literally and metaphorically, is even more evident in a later section of her journal, written in 1922. The circumstances are quite different from those under which she begins the first memoir dedicated to her children, in 1913. This part of her journal is not a memoir, but a daily record charting the progress of Merrill's final illness and her own grief. Merrill eventually dies with Willis at his side in October 1922, and she leaves the home where they settled, in Mesa, Arizona, to live with her daughter Lily in Los Angeles.

Merrill's death and the move to Los Angeles mean for Willis nothing less than homelessness. She is deprived, in early widowhood, of both of the "homes" that appear as important symbols of stability in her memoirs. In theory, the children (particularly, perhaps, her eldest daughter Lily) are

supposed to provide a home for Willis, since her husband no longer can, and the assumption (made by Willis and her children) is that she is incapable of living alone: that she is, literally, rootless and homeless without her husband. This means that she will be a permanent guest in the home of one or another of her children until she dies.

Willis, however, does not appear to view her children as the kind of companions that Merrill was: "my life's companion, my husband in life after 52 years of joy, pain, sorrow, struggle, sickness, death" (27). She reflects, "Now I am left alone in life" (28). For a woman with five surviving children, this may seem an odd sentiment. However, most of her children live far away (Los Angeles, Oregon, Idaho) and not all of them, as her repeated exhortations to them suggest, are faithful Mormons, increasing the emotional isolation and sense of homelessness Willis seems to feel. She refers twice in one entry, written during her stay at Lily's, to "My children, you who do not have faith" (30) and "My children, you who are indifferent to these things" (30), meaning the gospel. Perhaps anticipating a reunion with Merrill in heaven, she prays that all of her children will also become believing Mormons, so the whole family can be reunited after death,¹⁷ this time in

¹⁷ In Mormon doctrine, the family is an eternal unit; husbands and wives who are married in the temple are sealed to each other "for time and all eternity," while parents frequently have their children sealed to them as well, also in the temple, to ensure that all the members will meet in heaven. However, to be part of a sealing ceremony, the family members or married couple must be members of the Mormon church in good standing. Apparently, not all of Cedenia's children were as dedicated to the church as she, a fact which causes her anxiety and pain throughout the diaries.

their heavenly home. Her spirituality bears her up in loss and uncertainty, as she clings to the routines of faith, recording that she regularly slips away from the family for evening prayers in Lily's back yard. She writes, "I wasn't happy without my evening prayer" (30). Possibly either Lily or her husband did not share Willis' faith; the concentration in these passages on children who do not have faith, as opposed to those who do, suggests one possible reason why Willis never really feels at home in Lily's house.

The simplest reason for Willis' unhappiness during this period is, of course, her recent bereavement after a long and apparently happy marriage. She grieves deeply and openly in her diary, recording her depression and near-collapse with a freedom quite different from Chase's stoic suppression of grief. She writes, "[I] was alone in a strange land among strangers . . . [I] would grieve until it seemed my heart would break" (29). Immediately after Merrill's death, Willis describes their home using the garden imagery that marks so many of her descriptions of home, but makes it clear that she no longer feels at home:

Friday morning at about four o'clock his [Merrill's] roses were blooming, the mocking birds were singing in the umbrella trees, but I was alone. My children were far from [me] in my great grief and parting. No son's arms to clasp & soothe my aching heart (no home) after Merrill had worked so hard to make them [homes]. How I longed for my children in this dark hour. (28)

She sets up a contrast here between the peace of home, with birds singing and flowers blooming, and her feelings of grief and loneliness. Besides emphasizing Willis' feeling of isolation in surroundings which have always signaled peace to her, this entry illustrates that, however uncomfortable she

may feel about life with her children, their presence does represent home to her in the form of kinship ties, and that her farm, despite having all the physical markings of home (birds, flowers) is home no longer without those ties. Some material possessions seem to symbolize kinship ties as well. For example, giving away a phonograph to her eldest son Merrill reminds Willis again that she has "no home." She writes, "Gave Merrill [Junior] the little phonograph that Merrill and I had bought to while away the long hours & dark nights in Nevada, when the snow lay deep . . ." (28). At the end of the long entry that records Merrill's death, she reemphasizes the idea that separation from him means separation from all that means home, or stability, to her: "I write these lines with no home" (29). The underlining is hers.

The move to Los Angeles with her daughter seems to be a brief but crucial uprooting, a transition from life as wife and mother to life as a widow. Willis seems, at first, befuddled by grief, focusing solely on loss and displacement. Not surprisingly, she casts every new experience in terms of the old home-building years with her husband. Seeing California for the first time, she writes, "I felt to exclaim from the bottom of my heart, Why could not our path [have] been laid in such beautiful country? What [a] wonderful home we would of [sic] had, Merrill [and] I and our children" (29). While Willis is in Los Angeles, her vivid memories of home seem to include a husband who is alive. She writes,

Tuesday we reached Lily's home near noon. That longing for home came to me with its despair. Felt [I] was just visiting. My mind wandered back to the little house where Merrill [and] I had lived. [I] could see the little vineyard with him working in it, could see him tying up the grape vines of the arbor, his roses [and]

chrysanthemums blooming, the rocking chair sitting where I had left it. (29)

Note that here, the images of flowers and domestic industry are once again part of the picture of a happy home, not a place of loss, as they are immediately after Merrill's death. However, the memories of her loss depress Willis, coloring all her perceptions of California and life with her children: "I would exclaim, how Merrill would of enjoyed this, what bee country, what apiary we would of had. I became very unhappy" (30).

To relieve her grief, Willis describes taking refuge in nature and prayer. She takes long walks in the hills near Lily's suburban home:

I used to wander until I was worn out. Would climb to the hills, Urban Heights, where [I] could gaze far off over Los Angeles when the sun was shining bright, could see the mighty ocean. [I] would kneel down on those hills, pour out my soul to my father in heaven. In sobs [and] tears I have plead for his comforting spirit that [I] might be brave, [and] face my life. (30)

Her description of kneeling and pouring out her soul in prayer reminds us that we have seen this mode of dealing with grief twice before in Willis' memoirs. The first time occurs when she and her family bury the infant Mary, in August 1880, and she writes, "We as a family knelt around a little [mound] where the green grass was waving" (8). The second time Willis seeks refuge in prayer and nature is when her mother moves away and she writes, "I went out in the waving corn, prayed to my father in heaven, cried myself sick . . ." (9). This familiar pattern suggests a temporary stepping outside of the traditional boundaries of home, particularly when a distressing event threatens those psychic boundaries. Perhaps by praying in the wilderness, or as near wilderness as she can find in Los Angeles, Willis is using physical and

psychological distance from her "broken" home to cross into a sacred space (near her heavenly home) where she can draw comfort from God.

Willis' account of her final excursion to Urban Heights seems to support this idea. She writes,

The hills had now become [a] sacred place for me. Went there on fast days where [I] fasted, prayed for strength to meet my changed condition in life. On this day . . . I mounted the top of the great hill which was so sacred. Stayed the more [sic] part of the day. (31)

This overt expression of a sense of sacred spaces includes a description of how solitary prayer has helped Willis cope with loss and her sense of homelessness. Instead of writing in her diary, as she does immediately after Merrill's death, that "a pall of blackest darkness surrounded me" (27) and that she is "left alone in life" (28) she describes her widowhood with more distance and calm, as "my changed condition" (31). She may still be alone, but her language is less the language of despair than that of someone who both grieves, and is able to inscribe the word for her state: changed. Language itself functions here as a tool for helping Willis accept her losses. As Margo Culley writes,

Marriage, travel and widowhood are all occasions creating a sense of continuity seemingly broken or lost. This can most clearly be seen in the numbers of women who left family and friends to travel West and used journals as a vehicle for maintaining severed networks. They were strongly informed by a sense of audience that shapes their accounts of wondrous and unfamiliar sights and their efforts to come to grips with a new life. (20)

Willis seems still to view her children as an eventual audience for her journal, as the repeated references to "you who do not have faith" and exhortations to trust in the gospel, demonstrate. While recording the past, and coming to

terms with the present, then, she is also beginning to reach forward into the future, to children and grandchildren. As Willis travels west, however briefly, in recent widowhood, she uses the diary to ground herself and track her mourning as it changes and finally moderates into some acceptance of Merrill's death.

Partly, of course, it is again the passage of time which finally lifts Willis' depression (although her stay in Los Angeles is not long, roughly three months). Part is certainly due to her steadfast clinging to prayer and the rituals of faith, and the pursuing of sacred space where she can feel spiritually at home. Sacred space, of course, is an integral part of the Mormon perception of religion: Utah, as Zion, is a sacred gathering place "in the tops of the mountains," temples are sacred spaces, and the home, as a small representation of the larger family of Saints, is a sacred space of its own.

Part of Willis' recovery is also due, perhaps, to her renewed faith in her future, and to a reminder of her past: the money with which she finally buys a train ticket for Salt Lake City, one of her old homes, comes from her Relief Society Sisters in Elko, Nevada with a letter of condolence. Although, when Willis writes about her final walk on Urban Heights, she mentions Merrill, the mention does not include a notation about her subsequent depression or grief. She writes simply, "How Merrill would of enjoyed these wanderings" (31).

The theme of home, for Willis, serves as a kind of lens through which she examines her world. In the course of her journal and memoirs, Willis moves through several different conceptions of home. In her earliest world, home is the literal pioneer cabin of rough walls and safety, and the world outside

home is best represented by unsettled country and Indians, real or imagined. Later, the adult diarist inscribes, over and over, her pastoral vision of a securely bounded, prosperous farm and garden. This vision appears most poignantly in her description of the Willis family farm in the summer of 1920:

. . . my flowers were a riot of bloom . . . the currant bushes were bending with ripe currants, with the raspberries hanging red from the vines and my dear garden with such cabbage carrots every vegetable one could desire. The bees, the humming birds were flitting among the flowers. (24)

Willis also creates "home" through kinship ties, particularly with her mother, whose move devastates her, and with Merrill, whose death leaves her (to some extent literally, but to a far greater extent emotionally) with "no home" (28). Home appears for her in the sacred spaces she seeks out for prayer. She also finds her own home in the space she finally creates in the opposition between self-with-children (a home symbolized only through kinship ties, not literal ownership of space) and self-with-Merrill, in the homes she loved.

Willis eventually returns to the house she shared with Merrill in Mesa, Arizona after shuttling between children for a few months. She describes her return home:

The roses were blooming, Merrill's roses . . . the Carolina Poplars which he had put in the ground as switches were waving in the breeze, 14 feet high . . . Merrill's chair was sitting by the table just where he ate his last meal, the same calendars were hanging on the wall, his rocking chair was sitting under the little arbor . . . just as I had left it. (33)

The return home seems to give Willis a sense, in this passage, of recapturing the past. She records that the next evening, after she cleans house thoroughly

and moves in, she feels both literally and emotionally "at home": "There was a peace came to my heart, felt my loved ones were near me" (34).

In her last home, in Mesa, Willis is sometimes lonely without the company of family, but secure in her choice of place and occupation: doing Relief Society and temple work, and supporting herself by sewing and hooking rugs to supplement her pension as an Indian War veteran's widow. What Willis ultimately chooses is solitude in a space rendered sacred by memory, by both her writing (memoirs, letters, diary) and work in the church Genealogy Society. In a final sense, we may regard Willis' diary itself as yet another form of home: the space in which she inscribes her family history, Mormon testimony and innermost feelings. This diary is, finally, the place where, with self and others, she is most at home.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Exploring the worlds Cedenia Willis, Ida Udall and Josephine Chase create through language leads us inevitably back to the central question of how each writer's private consciousness emerges in the environment of her diary. Each of these three women uses writing to answer the needs of her inner and outer lives. Chase, our first example, keeps a daily diary for twelve years, using it to record her own life, the doings of neighbors and children, and her relationship with a husband who seems to ignore her when he is home. Chase records income and outlays of funds, keeps track of family events, and gives vent to at least some of her feelings of frustration, doubt, anger and grief in the privacy of her diary.

Chase seems to employ the diary as an ordering place for her chaotic life. The form of her original manuscript--scraps of paper, envelope backs and children's writing tablets--suggests that her diary reflected her life in its outward disorder. That the diary was found with a leatherbound book, however, into which some entries had been transcribed, indicates that Chase looked forward, at least, to a time when order would be possible in both her diary and (perhaps by association) in her life as well.

Though Ida Udall has fewer domestic cares than Chase, she uses the diary of her two-month wedding trip to help her make the transition from

single adult to plural wife, in a way that recalls Chase's use of a diary to make the transition from public disorder to internal order. Udall employs precise details of time and place which serve not only as a record of events, but as grounding for her at a time of particular upheaval. She also deploys literary language to locate herself as a character in the diary, borrowing from sentimental novels to cast her fears in a familiar context. This helps Udall to see herself as a heroine, and gain necessary distance from her own anxiety by embedding it in her writing.

In the Chase diary, the inclusion of details as part of a pattern of recurrent events allows Josephine Chase to construct an ordered vision of her daily life. In the Udall diary, it is language itself which allows the diarist scope for inner relocations during a period of external change.

Cedenia Willis locates herself in her memoir and diary by referring to a single, controlling symbol, the idea of home. From the pioneer cabin of childhood to the home in Mesa where she returns after Merrill's death, Willis consistently uses geographic location to signify a spiritual home. Kinship ties--particularly bonds with her mother, children and husband--also represent this kind of home for Willis. Personal, sacred spaces in which she feels "at home" are places where she recovers from grief (widowed, Willis describes her loss as "homelessness") in order to return gradually to the public world. The connection between writing and family, made explicit in the first lines of Willis' memoir, suggests that the diary itself represents, for this writer, yet another kind of home.

All three diarists use a private consciousness preserved by the diary-keeping self as one way of maintaining internal equilibrium in a shifting external world. The strategies they employ--Chase's ordering through detail, Udall's use of literary modes to map her own sense of private upheaval, Willis' repeated return to physical and spiritual homes--help each writer develop a private space, a zone of mediation between individual and community consciousness. Diaries provide a way for these women to accomplish difficult relocations, whether literal or symbolic; to reconcile the demands of their particular community (immediate or plural family, church, Kingdom of God) with the confusion, frustration, anxiety and joy felt by the private self.

The injunction printed on one of Chase's writing tablets, "Be always happy and be useful" must have seemed impossible to follow in the face of a child's or husband's death, or jealousy over a sister wife. Diaries, however, seem useful for all three of these women, who by recording the details of events and feelings, ultimately use their writing as a way of creating space for both public and private selves.

For readers, these Mormon women's diaries may be useful in several ways. First, as many scholars have observed, women's diaries in general enlarge the literary canon, both expanding our expectations for autobiography and narrative, and furnishing historical background for major canonical works. Further, these diaries belong to a parallel canon of American literature: the body of largely unpublished writing by women, slaves, immigrants and, sometimes, by authors who were all three, which stands alongside works

already published and canonical. In recent years, we have acknowledged the potential of this "other" canon, which includes such works as women's diaries and letters, to lend our study of literature a valuable new perspective, one which may augment or subvert the canon we have known longer.

These three diaries by Mormon frontier women thus provide us with new histories, new records of travel and settlement, new mythologies of America. Their records, as part of a parallel canon, have as much to say to us as do familiar works on these subjects, by authors from John Smith to John C. Fremont. Just as Mary Rowlandson's perspective on the native culture she lived in for six weeks differs from Cotton Mather's perspective on the "devils" surrounding the Massachusetts Bay colony, Chase, Udall and Willis offer us what may become companion views or useful counterpoint to the writing we already possess about the American West by writers like Lewis and Clark, Twain or Stegner.

Diaries, memoirs, and family letters like those Chase saves may never become part of mainstream American literature. Our "other" canon may remain a separate literary stream, bearing along a less trumpeted series of parallel voices which speak, not so much from the margins of literature, but from an adjacent page. These diaries are, however, perhaps most significant in offering us a glimpse of writing very separate from traditional histories, sermons and poems. These private writings are part of a genre made use of by women from medieval to contemporary times: letters, brief memoirs, diary entries made hastily in time stolen from cooking, ironing or plowing. Letters and diaries by women, of course, predate and inform the "great" works of

Western literature, particularly the early novel in epistolary form (Pamela, for example, or The Coquette). Letters and diaries separate from fiction, however, are worth studying for the writing they contain, for their craft, style and content, as well as in terms of how they inform our existing canons and historical narratives. It is important to ask, not just, "How does this inform the canon we know?" but "How does this text function as an example of women's writing?" In other words, how does a text--worked on daily or almost daily, often over a period of years--produced by an author whose intentions may range from leaving edifying records for posterity to coping with private anxieties, take shape? In this study, we have focused on that question in terms of observing the patterns that emerge from private writing, writing constructed as part of a transaction between community and individuality.

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