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History Of Louisa Barnes Pratt

S. George Ellsworth

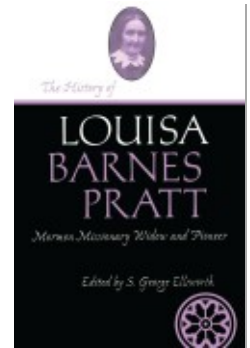
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SOURCES

The biographer of Louisa Barnes Pratt is blessed with a wealth of original documents by primary witnesses. The central actors in this drama were intelligent and literate. They wrote letters and maintained personal records.

Provenance of the Louisa Barnes Pratt Writings

Louisa Barnes Pratt died in her cottage in Beaver, Utah, on 8 September 1880, and was buried in the Beaver Cemetery. Her daughter Ellen Pratt McGary lived nearby and was designated agent for her properties. Louisa had willed her journals to her granddaughter Ida Hunt Udall.¹ We do not know just when or how Ida received the writings, but she had them in 1887 when she wrote: "Dear Aunt Ellen this is your birthday but I cannot tell what age you are without taking time to look grandma's journal over and see what year you were born."² Upon Ida's death, 26 April 1915, her husband, David K. Udall, realizing that his daughter Pauline was unable to care for them properly, living in a small house on a ranch at Hunt with many little children around, took the journals to Nettie Hunt Rencher in Snowflake, Arizona, "for safe keeping."

In 1947, Nettie Hunt Rencher, Pauline Udall Smith, and Louise Willis Levine prepared a typescript from the journals for publication by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.³

Years later, as work progressed on editing the Addison Pratt journals the need to look at the original manuscript of Louisa's journal became evident. Accordingly Nettie Hunt Rencher put them into Pauline Udall Smith's hands, and they were taken to the present editor in Logan, Utah, in October 1955.

In returning the journals to Pauline's family, Mrs. Rencher ("Aunt Nettie") did not request that they be turned over to her family. They were to be used in editing the Addison Pratt journals. There was, however, a sentiment that the journals were held as a stewardship, that upon completion

of the work, the journals would be placed in the Latter-day Saints Church Historian's Office. On 2 April 1987 the original journals of Louisa Barnes Pratt and of Addison Pratt, holograph original manuscripts, were presented to the Archives Division of the Historical Department, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the name of Nettie Hunt Rencher. Typed copies are deposited in the S. George Ellsworth Collection, Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University.

The Writings of Louisa Barnes Pratt (1802–1880)

Of the original diary and journal she wrote, two signatures have survived. They are the following:

Journal A, 26 July 1850 to September 1851. 17 leaves, 19.5 x 31.8 cm.; sewn.

Journal B, 15 April 1852 to 4 December 1852; 15 leaves, 21.6 x 27 cm. 4 leaves, 19.5 x 24.4 cm.; sewn; bound in tapa cloth.

Of her "history," or journal-memoir, all signatures have survived. The eleven signatures are described as follows:

Signature 1, to autumn 1825: 41 *l*, 19.7 x 24.5 cm., pages numbered 1–44; purple ink; sewn, loose.

Signature 2, to winter 1828: 12 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 45–56; purple ink; sewn.

Signature 3, to fall 1833: 22 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 57–78; purple ink; sewn, but threads missing.

Signature 4, September 1833 to June 1844: 36 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 79–114; purple and black ink; sewn, but threads missing.

Signature 5, June 1844 to September 1848: 40 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 115–153 (two pages numbered 132); purple and some black ink; sewn, but threads missing.

Signature 6, September 1848 to May 1851: 28 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 154–199; black ink; sewn, but threads missing.

Signature 7, June 1851 to January 1853: 45 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 200–297; black ink; sewn, but threads missing; pages 213–217 and 238–241 missing.

Signature 8, January 1853 to March 1859: 50 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 298–399; black ink; sewn, but threads missing.

Signature 9, April 1859 to January 1871: 28 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 400–455; black ink; sewn with string.

Signature 10, 1871 to 1872: 22 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 456–499; black ink; sewn, but threads missing.

Signature 11, 1873 to 1880: 26 *l*, 19.5 x 31.7 cm., pages numbered 500–550; black and purple ink; sewn, but threads missing.

It is this journal-memoir, her “history,” or revised journal, that is published here, with the following exception. Journals A and B have been substituted for parallel portions of the journal-memoir and differing portions of the memoir inserted in brackets, affording the reader opportunity to sense the spirit of her original record, perhaps to compare two examples of her writing. As noted above, the holograph journals are in the Archives, Historical Department, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and typescript copies, with pages numbered, have been deposited at Utah State University’s Special Collections.

The following articles were written by Louisa Barnes Pratt and printed in the *Woman’s Exponent*, edited by Louisa L. Greene and Emmeline B. Wells, close friends of Louisa Pratt:

“Scenes on the Island of Tubuai, South Sea Ocean.” 2 (1 November 1873): 87. Extract from the journal of Mrs. L. B. Pratt, kept Feb. 1851. Copied October 18th, 1873, Beaver.

“Scenes on Tupuai. South Pacific Ocean.” 2 (15 December 1873): 110.

“Advantages of Being Old. Incidents of Travel.” 2 (1 February 1874): 135. “Beaver, Jan. 13th.”

“Address. To the Young Ladies’ Retrenchment Association in Beaver.” 3 (15 November 1874): 95. “H. S. Shepherd, Secretary, Beaver, Nov. 6th, 1874.”

Blurb announcing Louisa’s autobiography. 5 (15 August 1876): 44.

“A True Tale of the Past and Present.” 5 (15 April 1877): 169. “Beaver, March 31st, 1877.”

“Finding Fault With Old Folks.” 8 (15 September 1879): 58.

“Filial Affection.” 8 (15 October 1879): 79–80.

Obituary for Jane Neyman. 9 (1 June 1880): 5.

“A Few Incidents.” 10 (1 September 1881): 49. Ellen J. Pratt McGary selection of quotations from LBP.

“A Woman Missionary: Mrs. Addison Pratt on the Society Islands, 1850.” Sixteen installments, vols. 28–31 *passim*.

There are in the Addison Pratt Family Papers (APFP) about 375 items: letters sent, letters received, poems, essays, notes, and memorabilia. Holographs in the S. George Ellsworth Collection, Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University.

The Salt Lake City newspapers failed to mention Addison’s death, and Louisa wrote her own essay-tribute and sent it to an eastern publisher:

“Obituary of a Mormon Elder,” *Phrenological Journal* 56 (March 1873): 203–4.

The Writings of Addison Pratt (1802–1872)

The Journals of Addison Pratt, ed. S. George Ellsworth (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990) includes his memoirs and journal and a comprehensive list of the writings of his close associates under “Sources and Literature.”

The Addison Pratt Family Papers, see APFP above.

Fifteen letters by Pratt have survived either as holographs or as printed in church periodicals. They are listed in *The Journals of Addison Pratt*, 567–68.

The Writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby (1807–1884)

Memoirs and journal in thirty-six signatures, begun at Tubuai, French Polynesia, January 1852. Holographs are in the custody of the Utah State Historical Society, along with a typewritten copy made under the direction of S. George Ellsworth and bound in four volumes; citations are to this typescript. Her memoirs extend to September 1846, the journal-memoir from 10 May 1848 to 7 February 1853, and journal from 10 February 1853 to 2 December 1882.

The Writings of Benjamin F. Grouard (1819–1894)

Journal, 1 vol., 175 pp. Holograph. Ms d 1388, Archives, Historical Department, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, a mission diary, 1843 to 1846, taken by Addison Pratt to the LDS Church in America.

Letters published in the *Times and Seasons* and the *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*. See *Journals of Addison Pratt*, 569–70.

Family history furnished to the author by Mrs. Louise Grouard Mock, Santa Ana, California, October 17, 1955.