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Post-Manifesto Polygamy

LuAnn Faylor Snyder, Phillip A. Snyder

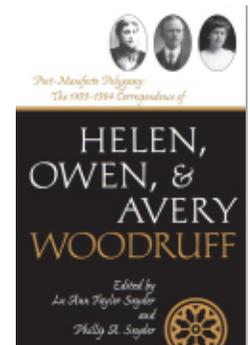
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1900

[Letter 3: Avery to Owen]

[*no letterhead, handwritten*]

Logan Utah
Oct. 25, 1900.

Dear Bro. Woodruff: —

Yours of the 22nd reached me yesterday. It filled me with joy to read its contents.

Sister [Mary Clark] is at school this hour and I choose to write now.¹

I can say that I feel as you do in regards to the matter and think it is all right. I believe too that we have been guided by our Father in Heaven. Do not see how it could possibly be mistaken.

A happier hour of my life was never spent than was during the conversation that we had.² It filled me with joy and gladness that has not departed from me, and I thank God that I am so highly favored for I feel that I am. I feel more and more inclined toward you and have more affection and a higher respect for you than have I ever had for any other. I am satisfied with my lot as yet and think I always shall be. I am also thankful to her who gave her consent and sacrificed that she all ready has for my sake and for principle's sake, for it must have been contrary to the natural feelings, which we all have.³ I do not worry about the financial part of it and think you need not. I will try to be a help meet, any how you know I have not been raised in great luxuries and don't expect them. I will not delay going to the Temple and will be careful, be as you said true as steel. Will be pleased to see you at any time.

I humbly ask God's blessings upon us in all. From One True and Sincere,

[*no signature*]

[Letter 4: Helen to Owen]

[LDS Church letterhead]

November 4, 1900

My Dear Owen: —

This is Sunday and fast day too, and naturally enough, I am wondering where you are and what you are doing and I am wondering too, if your thoughts are with me, as mine are with you.

This is a perfect day as far as weather can make it. Your Mother and I went to Temple fast meeting⁴ and although we had a splendid meeting, I was a little disappointed. Neither Prest. Snow⁵ nor his Councilsor⁶ nor any of the apostles were there, and I wanted to hear some of them speak so very much. Your Mother and Eliza have gone to fast meeting in the Ward and Ruby⁷ has taken the baby out for a walk so I am all alone, just as I want to be so, I thought I would sit down and talk to you.

Last night we were all invited up to Prest. Frank Y's⁸ to supper and Alice & Will⁹ insisted on my going with them but as Asahel [Owen's brother] had room for one in his Surrey I rode with them. We spent a pleasant evening. Bro. and Sister Kelch¹⁰ were to have been there but their little girl has Scarlet Fever and they are quarentined. Br. Kelch will not be able to go East for some time on account of this. I was invited to Sister Empey's¹¹ to a lovely dinner yesterday and I went for I am determined to keep cheerful if it is possible. Sometimes I long to have some one to talk too to sympathize with me but I must wait until you get home for that. Dearest, I do not want you to worry one instant about me for it will unfit you for your labors, which I know are many and arduous. I want you to have a good time and come home looking better for it grieves me to see you looking pale and worried.¹²

I coppied the piece you wanted mailed to you and will send it with this letter.

Have received two letters asking questions about the Big Horn.¹³ Think I can answer them O.K. One from Bro. Crosby,¹⁴ nothing particular.

With my hearts purest love I am as ever

Your affectionate Wife,

Helen.

P.S. Kind regards to Bro. & Sister Ivins¹⁵ and all whom I may know.

[Letter 5: Avery to Owen]

[*no letterhead, handwritten*]

Logan, Utah
Nov. 7, 1900.

Dear Brother Woodruff: —

Yours of 31st and 2nd have come to hand. It indeed delighted me to hear from you, and although there is not much of any thing to write thought it would be a pleasure if nothing more to drop a few lines. Was very sorry to hear that you were not feeling well and my prayer is that the Lord will give you health and strength to preform your labors. We are well and enjoying our school as ever, one would think so any how by the stack of books that we have been studying to night.

I must say I enjoyed going through the Temple and appreciate it too and think if I could always feel like I did then I would be a better girl. Called on Bro. Merrill today who gave kind and encourageing words.

It is not certain whether we will go home holidays or not but think likely we will. Any thin that is for the best suits me, I am not dissapointed but have no doubt that it would have been a pleasant trip.

We are having a spell of good weather now. Expect the climate is delightful this time of the year where you are now.

I will try to patient and contented for truly I have cause to be happy.

Thank you for the asistance you have offered, we are getting along all right at present.

I am as ever with love —

[*no signature*]

[Letter 6: Helen to Owen]

[*LDS Church letterhead, handwritten*]

Nov. 10, 1900.
Salt Lake City Dec 3rd.

My Dear Owen: —

It is quite late and all the folks have gone to bed so I thought I would take this opportunity to write you. Your two letters written at Thatcher [Arizona] reached me to-day and I was so glad to get them but sorry to know you have been suffering from a cold. Why did you not tell me before? You say you will start home Monday Dec. 16. Well look at the date of Monday again and you will find it the 17th. You must have lost

your "calender." I thought you had planned on purpose to hold your Conference at St. Johns [Arizona] on Sat. & Sunday so you could get home one day sooner.

You no doubt know that Prest. Cannon has gone to the Sandwich Islands.¹⁶ He took Carlie and three children with him and expects to be gone two months.¹⁷

Prest. Snow's wife Sarah¹⁸ died yesterday and so he is at Brigham City. I suppose you get all the news in the "Semi-weekly," where ever you go, so I scarcely know what to tell you. Van [Collins] brought the canon wagon home and they dumped your wagon out doors. I got Heber¹⁹ to put it in Mr Doxey's barn however so it is all right.

Our little darling²⁰ does not walk entirely alone but he could if he would. He takes a streak sometimes and walks all around and then will go for several days and not try to walk. He tries to talk but its rather difficult to tell just what he says. He makes you understand just what he wants any way. He fell off the bed to-day and got a terrible bump on his forehead but he did not cry very long. He knows papa's picture on the wall.

The way I feel sometimes I am afraid I will not hold out until you come but hope I will. Will write a few more words in the morning. I love you dearly and want to live to be really and truly your helpmate, and hope I shall never be a burden to you.

Goodnight dearest, goodnight.

All our board is invited to Sister Dougall's²¹ next Monday night and to bring our husbands but as I can not take mine I will remain at home. Will try to follow out your instructions but the oil is so hard for me to take, oh, my. But I think it will help me.

[Letter 7: Helen to Owen]

[LDS Church letterhead]

Nov. 10, 1900.

Dearest Owen:

Yesterday I received your letter written at El Paso [Texas] Nov. 4. I wrote to you the same day, (Fast Day) and told you how I had spent the day and suppose you have received it ere this. You said it seemed a long day to you, well that is just how all Sundays seem to me, I like any day better.

You ask how I am feeling. Some days I feel fine and at other times I am "blue" as "Indago." Yesterday I had Aunt Zina and Aunt Bathsheba down and we spent a splendid afternoon.²² They gave me a lovely blessing and made me some beautiful promises which I firmly believe will be answered if I am humble and faithful. We could not get the Surrey as

Asahel was going to use it, so Asahel took Aunt B. home and I took Aunt Zina. It was dark when we left here and quite dark when I got back home again. But I did enjoy the ride with dear Aunt Zina. She talked all the way up and gave me some good council. Your Mother and Grandma Grant²³ were here and they got to talking about Navoo times and of course drifted on to the subject of Pologamy. It seems strange dear, but the spirit of it seems to be broadcast. I have thought it was my condition that made me think of it so much but I made up my mind that I would not speak about it and see what other people had to say, and invariably someone starts it up. The day after you went I had all the girls here to sew and while I was out in the kitchen getting dinner they were discussing the subject. Up at Prest. F. Y. Taylors, Asahel started it and they kept it going the whole evening, and Bro. Taylor said that he and Bro. Kelch were at Bp. Atwoods a day or two before and they talked it all over and got out revelations and read them. Bro. Cowley,²⁴ it is said, preached a Pologamy sermon at the funeral of Sister Hickman, Van's aunt who lived at Provo.²⁵ Since your Mother received your letter yesterday I think she surmizes something. But she doesn't ask any questions.²⁶

To-day they are going to hold services at the cemetary. The setting or unveiling of your dear father's monument and I wish you were here for I know how well you would like to be present at the exercises.²⁷ Prest. [Lorenzo] Snow is not very well so they are going to have it at One o'clock the warmest part of the day. I am going to drive up and take little Owen. Will write you all about it to-morrow. Your Ma has gone to Taylorsville to attend Relief Society Confrence and will drive back for the exercises at one o'clock.

Alice & Will were over here to supper last night and are very kind and thoughtful of me. Asahel also came in to see me one night this week.

You will no doubt be as much surprised as I when I tell you that Blanche & Joe [Daynes] sent us one of their nice Photos. I must write and thank them for it. Blanche wrote a lovely letter to your Mother. It was full of love for everybody.²⁸

Our baby has a very bad cold in his head and coughs all the time. Last night he nearly had croup. I was up for or five times to doctor him in the night. He doesn't look thin nor pale but he is so cross and peevish. I just tell you a few things he did yesterday to amuse himself. He took the key out of the kitchen door and dug about a square ft. of plaster of the wall with it. I got the big bath tub ready to put him in and went to get a towel, when I got back he had put one of his shoes & stockings in to soak, and was in the act of putting the rest of the clean clothes in. Then while I was in the tub he got the coal oil can and spilt coal-oil all over himself. He plays in the coal bucket all the time. I do not care for these triffls if he will only keep well.

Ida Smith's²⁹ baby is quite sick and all the babies around here have bad colds.

Well my darling I love you still and pray God to bless you in your labors and may you come home happy and well.

Your loving,
Helen.

[Letter 8: Helen to Owen]

[LDS Church letterhead, handwritten]

Nov. 11. 1900

My Dear Husband:

You don't want very much do you? Two letters for every one I receive. I think it ought to be the other way about and you write two to my one.

Will McEwan is going to buy a cow so does not want the brown cow. Bro. [Hyrum K.] North wrote that he could not get any one to bring her in for your price so I suppose it is all right. Will says he knows a man who will take your farm. He has thirty head of cattle of his own and he is very highly recommended by Tate, your neighbor, and also by Mary Price's father. Will says he will come and see me about it but I told him I could not tell him much about it. He will have to wait until you get home Xmas.

We went to the Dedicatory Exercises at the Cemetary yesterday. The day was beautiful, sunny, and warm but Prest. Snow was not there. There were very few present. Will send you a clipping from the news and so will not write the particulars. In the afternoon I went to Sister Writers to dinner. She invited just a few and had it on purpose for me she said. Wasn't it kind of her? There was just Sisters Empey, Harker, [Gusta] Grant, Talmage,³⁰ Hyde,³¹ and Dr. Maggie [Shipp] there and we spent a very pleasant afternoon. I think every day I will not get out again and then some one coaxes me to go and you know that a little coaxing will get me to do almost anything.

Well dearie, this is Sunday again and the day is fast drawing to a close; and for this I am thankful. This makes two Sundays since you went away and only five remain until you will be at home again. It seems a long long time.

The Y.M.M.I. of Granite Stake are holding their Conference to-day. They met in Farmers Ward this afternoon and this evening will meet in Sugar Ward. Will is going to be set apart. Heber and Eliza have been away all day. Ruby [Freeman] went to the Matinee with Mary and has stayed up there all night & all day so Baby and I have been alone all day. He is a

great deal of company though. He is never idle one moment. He lets go of chairs now and takes two or three steps alone and it pleases him so he just laughs about it. He tries to talk and just jabbars away.

When I got this far Mrs. Wallace, Miss Chambers, and Mrs Doxey came in so I scarcely know where I am at.

Bro. Crosby has written you a long letter telling you all the news in camp. I wrote him that you had gone away. What did you tell me to do with the letter from Huber? It has come and I can not remember for the life of me what your instructions were.

You want to know how I am. I feel better than when you left, and am trying not to worry about things of the future, but they will come up before me all the time and it is a constant battle for me to keep cheerful, but I am doing it any way. If you had made different arrangements about your trip I think I would have been a mere shadow when you returned. But as it is, I can make two shadows standing once, instead of having to "stand twice to make one shadow."³² However I don't want you to worry about me I am all right and will try to keep my little worries to myself for it is the better plan I'm sure. You have enough to worry you without me pouring my troubles into your ears constantly. So dear, do not think about that any more but have a good time and come home looking ten years younger than when you left. We are all getting along nicely at home, baby's cold is a little better to-day and hope he will be entirely over it in a few days. You won't need my letters so much now as of old as you will get encouragement and strength from other sources and it seems when I read over what I have written, that it will surely fail to interest you.

You did not leave me a program of your Conferences, so I can not write to the Arizona Stakes until you give me the dates of your Conferences and the place in which they are held.

May God continue to bless you in all your travels and labors is the constant prayer of your loving Wife,

Helen.

P.S. The man mentioned as wanting to take the farm is a Mr. Midgley. Relative to the one who lives down below us.

[Letter 9: Helen to Owen]

[LDS Church letterhead, handwritten]

Nov. 12, 1900.

My Dearest Owen: —

Your dear beautiful letter, written at Juárez [Mexico] came to-day and it was so full of loving words of comfort that it gave me new hopes

and new ambitions, and I have resolved to be a better girl-mamma for I feel that I do not merit all the love and kindness you bestow on me. But deep in my heart I am grateful for it all and I do truly appreciate all the comforts and blessings I enjoy but my actions make you think at times I do not. If I could receive a letter like the last precious one every day, I would be all right but you see I need you all the time, for, left to myself a time, I get discouraged and faint hearted; I know I must get braver and more independent but just now I cannot be, so I must have your good letters very often or I cannot live.

Your prayers, dearest, in my behalf have been answered. I do feel better than when you left me but still I do not feel exactly as I used to. I love just the same but there is something that tries me all the time and I think it will always be so, perhaps in a less degree. But we cannot expect a reward unless we make a sacrifice, and if it were no trial or sacrifice for me, where off would be the blessing. In the course of my life I expect many trials and hardships and I am not shrinking from it in the least, and you must not let my worries trouble you so much. It is my intention to make the best of it and live the best I can but how well I will succeed the future will decide. If we could only continue to live as we have the past three years it would be Heavenly to think of; but ~~chan~~ circumstances must change and we change with them. And in this I think we are improving, we are bringing our spirits into submission to the will of God, in doing so I have selfishness & stubbornness to overcome. I can see now that I have spent my whole life in the gratification of my own selfish pleasure, but in the future I live for others, for you, my nobler purer self, for that's what you are to me, and for my children, precious spirits whom God has entrusted in[^]to[^] my care. I must rise above self and conquer all that is selfish or coarse in my nature.

How very selfish and mean it is for me to want you all for my own, and all your love and affection just for my own comfort and happiness, and still when I think of it, this is all I have been grieving and suffering in my feelings for. Why I ought to want to make others happy and want you to make others happy, and to make others happy I must be happy myself. Now after all this preaching to you, I am just the same little, weak, selfish Helen that you left two weeks, still with a strong determination to become like my ideal a true wife and mother in Israel. This I know means a great deal, years of battles with self; successes one day and total failures another.

Don't think me eccentric, for if you should drop in this minute you would find me the same as when you left not one bit better.³³

When, in looking over this letter, I see that it is all about myself I am reminded that you may be getting weary and would like to hear something of some body else.

Mrs. Doxey was just in and says that Tom Seevey and his new bride are staying with them for a few days. They were married on Election Day.

I called in to see Ida and Hyrum³⁴ this evening to see how their baby is. He was feeling much better. Prest. Smith³⁵ and Bro. Seymour B.³⁶ start for Mexico to night. The papers giving the election returns were all destroyed before your letter asking me to send them came. Perhaps it will satisfy you to know that the Republicans made a clean sweep. So you were wrong when you thought Bryan was elected.³⁷ Jake ~~made~~ won a thousand dollars by the election going as it did, he showed Asahel a check for Three Hundred and said the rest was coming. Prest. Smith will be able to tell you all about the Election I am sure. Sunday School Convention is in Session, will send you the report of to-day's proceedings.

All members of the family are well I believe. Your Ma wrote you yesterday. To-day the Relief Society sisters went and sewed for Emeline all day. Poor girl she is so miserable.³⁸ Aunt Delight³⁹ was there and is looking and felling better. John⁴⁰ is in Virginia and feeling fine.

Well, my dearie, it is real late so I must say Good night. Will take your letter under my pillow to dream on. God bless you Owen dear and keep you well and happy Is the constant prayer of

Your loving Mamma-Girl.

Helen.

[Letter 10: Avery to Owen]

[no letterhead, handwritten]

Logan Utah
Nov. 17, 1900.

Dear Brother Woodruff: —

Yesterday I received your very welcome letters, I thought there would be no use of my calling for my mail very often by the way you wrote and so put it off for some time. But Θ I was so pleased to hear from you I could not express in words the joy it gave me.

We just returned from a lecture at B.Y. given by Pres. Paul of L.D.S.⁴¹ thought it was fine good music in attendance too.

Now I am going to finish my letter this being my third attempt at it, friends have called or I have been interrupted in some other way and although the hour is late thought it my best opportunity.

You must not have heard from me, I wrote to Colonia⁴² about the 4th. We are well, and was glad to hear that you were. I expect you are having an enjoyable time on your hunting tour about now hope you have success. Yes I think I am not so well skilled in the art of using a gun

but that I could stand a little training which I might get on our trip to Yellow Stone?

We have had a long spell of pleasant weather but it is stormy now looks like winter was coming. I like to hear the geography of countrys their civilization and so on and expect you will have a great many interesting things to tell me when you return. I happily look forward to the time when I can be in your company again, would like to have been with you on that lonesome Sunday, we count those days as long ones too. O Brother Woodruff I shall never regret our having met and will always be contented.

Interested in school as ever and especially this week we have had a feast; the Utah Art Institute has had use of our gymnasium hall showing us many beautiful paintings, drawings and designs and some of us have a notion to become artists. Think we will go home holidays. I enjoyed going through the Temple and will go again if I can.

I must not forget to tell you that I have burned all letters and will continue to do so, although it seems like destroying valuable literature.⁴³ Thank you for that pretty little present you sent me. I will keep all secrets in my heart and ask God to guard my words and actions and to bless us in all.

From loving
[no signature]

[Letter 11: Helen to Owen]

[no letterhead, handwritten]

Salt Lake City,
Nov. 19, 1900.

My Dear Owen: —

More than a week has passed since I heard from you but still I am not alarmed since you gave me fair warning that there would be a dearth of letters while you were away in the mountains [Mexico], but I shall expect you to make up for lost time when you get back to civilization.

You will not get this until you reach Thatcher Ariz. You did not tell me whether you were going there with Prest. Smith or whether you and Bro. Ivins would make another trip visiting the far off districts in Mexico.

Your mother has a new "domestic." A Sister Smith who was converted to our Faith in California. She has two sons one Eleven and one Thirteen. Aunt Delight thinks of taking the older one and the younger will stay at your Mothers. I wonder how long it will last. All parties concerned seem delighted at present, but I fear it will be of short duration.

The LDS College closed on account of Small Pox and Heber has gone home.⁴⁴ Arthur Smith does the chores. They think school will start again Monday and I will be glad to have Heber back again. He is one of the loveliest boys I ever new and when he goes away we miss him greatly.

The members of the Sugar Ward S.S. and the Stake Officers surprised Will McEwan last Fri. eve. They had the party at your Mother's as there was a very large crowd present. I went over, but stayed in the kitchen and helped with the lunch. Last Saturday & Sunday was Stake Conference in Our Ward, and they held fine meetings. Apostles Smith, Taylor⁴⁵ & Lund⁴⁶ were present Heber B.⁴⁷ and son Heber came here to dinner. This is all the Conference visitors I had. The Saturday Evening's News gave an exciting piece about an Indian attack upon the Mormon Colony at Pacheco Mex. but as we have had no official report we are inclined to think there is nothing of it or if there is any foundation the story has been exaggerated.⁴⁸

Bro. and Sister Blake of Riverton came to see if their son could board with us. They want to get him into good company and think Heber would be a good companion for him. I told them I did not like to answer them until I had consulted you but he wanted to start right in school now so I told them he might come and stay until Christmas and then if we wanted to make different arrangements we could do so.

I have answered several of your letters that needed a quick reply. One from Walter Graham⁴⁹ asking you to get them round trip tickets for half fare to Logan. He and Julia are to be married this month. I telephoned to Dan Spencer and he arranged with the agent at Bridger to sell them round trip tickets. He said it would only cost one Dollar more to come to Salt Lake so I invited them to come and stay with me but do not know what they will decide to do. I also telephoned to Spencer and got half fare rates for Bro. Cuzzen's wife and daughter from Montpelier to Butte which saved them ten Dollars on each ticket.

We are all getting along about as usual. Eliza takes up her daily labor with the stove and the only way we can ever get a fire is to burn wood so Heber's leisure moments are occupied in chopping wood.⁵⁰ Baby gets sweeter every day. He learns something new almost every day, and he is such a little comfort to me and I am so thankful for him. I am thankful for all that I have and am trying to be thankful for even trials. Susie had a fine baby boy born last Wednesday and is getting along nicely when I heard last.⁵¹

I took baby up and had his picture but they are not good so I will have to take him again.

It has rained and snowed for two or three days and is so muddy that the roads are almost impassable. This afternoon I went to my meeting at Sister Taylor's⁵² and thought I would never get back through the mud

and was covered with snow when I got home. We have made new arrangements for the Journal next year. It is to be Edited and Published by the Genl. Board and all have to help although they appointed a committee of three as the Journal Committee.⁵³ Sisters Talmage, Grant & Goddard⁵⁴ will act as this committee.

Well dear, I sincerely hope you are enjoying your trip and may the choicest blessings of God be ever upon you and keep you well and happy.

As ever I am

Yours

Helen.

[Letter 12: Helen to Owen]

[LDS Church letterhead, handwritten]

Nov. 21, 1900.

Dear Owen:

In writing this letter I am breaking a resolution. I declared I would not write to you again until I received another letter from you but this is a business letter.

J. R. Allen called me to the Phone to-day and said that he had bought Buerchart's share of the hay at the farm. 27 1/2 Tons at \$450 per ton and if you would sell yours for that price he was ready to buy it and pay cash down. He said he must know within the next ten days as they are going to leave in that time. J. R. Murdock⁵⁵ helped him to measure the hay, or it I think he said J. R. did the measuring. I told him I would write immediately to Thatcher and thought we would get an answer in eight or nine days so govern yourself accordingly.

Asahel leaves for New York on the 8, p.m. train and I am going to get him to post this on the train so I must hurry as I have just a few minutes.

We are all getting along about the same as usual. Baby gets sweeter every minute. He is learning to walk and I think by the time you get home he will be able to run and meet you. He sends love & kisses to papa and says he would like to see him very much. He is very good when he's asleep but when awake he is in to everything.

May you always be protected from harm & accident and have the blessings of God to attend you always Is the earnest prayer of your loving
Helen.

P.S. I wrote to Blanche to-day for both of us. Your ma got a lovely letter from Joe [Daynes]. Have not had a word from you for a week and a half.⁵⁶

Hurridly

H.

[Letter 13: Helen to Owen]

[no letterhead, handwritten]

Salt Lake City.
Nov. 23, 1900.

My Dearest Owen: —

This is your natal day and I have been wishing that I could be with you to wish you many happy returns and give you some birthday kisses, but you must take the will for the deed this time. It seems a perfect shame that you have to be away every birthday and that we never can spend the day to-gether.⁵⁷ I have been working on a little present for you but will not send it to you but keep it until you come home. Gusta asked me to go to the Alice Nielson opera this afternoon, and as I wanted to hear Viola Pratt Gillete sing I ventured out to the matinee.⁵⁸ It was just fine. Alice Nielson is such a cute coy little actress then she has a company with some of the best artists in it. You remember Eugene Cowles the Baritone who sang in the Bostonians and several others of that company are members of this one.

Prof. McLellan gave an organ recital in honor of Viola at which she sang. Her voice is not as good as when she was here last.⁵⁹

The News had a short piece in it last night stating that you were among the pursuers of the Apache Indians and was at the burial of the Apache "Kid."⁶⁰ I was very glad to get your letter to-day giving the particulars as I felt a little anxious about you. It seems strange you do not get my letters. Have written four or five and hope you will get them. I just about concluded that you had forgotten ^{^me^} entirely as it has been nearly two weeks since I have heard from you.⁶¹

Have sent two letters to Thatcher Arizona and will send this to Mesa City [Arizona]. I found a program of your conferences in the News or should not know where to address you. It takes such a long [^] — time — [^] for a letter to come; a whole week from Juárez. Your letter written last Friday just reached me to-day (Friday). The baby is in the bath tub with Ruby. I wish you could see him. He is having such fun. He is the greatest little cut up you ever saw. He pats my face & loves me makes the biggest fuss over me and especially when I have been away for an hour or two. Your Ma thought surely she had found out a secret to-night she came over for me to go over and meet a sister who was going to meet you & go to Mexico with you. She said of course I knew all about it. The lady was from Parawan [Utah] and did not get the letter in time to go. She has been here working in the Temple all this week. I do not see how your ma could suspect such an aged person as she. She looks old enough to be my mother.⁶²

I heard to-day that Sister Alice K. is in your company and has two children with her. How ever does she get along with them.

When you get this letter the time will be half gone and I will be so glad to have you back again. Sometimes I feel as though you will not be back in time for the "Tea-party"⁶³ but Oh I hope you are for I feel as though I could scarcely go through the ordeal without you are here; But suppose there would be no choice about it.

The College will reopen next Monday and I will be glad to have Heber back. The little Smith boy went out to live with Aunt Delight to-day and so I got Asahel⁶⁴ to do the chores until Sunday.

Well, Dearest, I love you just the same as ever but there is something changed about me f which I feel will always be so; but we will not shrink from duty whatever it may cost for that in the end will bring true happiness in the Eternal World and that is what we are striving for. Lutie sings a beautiful song entitled "The trials of the road will seem nothing When we get to the End of the Way."⁶⁵ I think Bro. Seymour B [Young] composed it but am not sure. It is getting very late so I will not write more to you this time. Hope you will write oftener now you are getting nearer home.

Baby joins Mamma in sending Birthday loves & kisses and in wishing that you may have many more happy and blessed birthdays.

Your Affectionate Wife.
Helen Winters Woodruff.

[Letter 14: Helen to Owen]

[no letterhead, handwritten, some of the paper damaged]

Salt Lake City.
Dec. 2, 1900.

My Dearest Owen:

Although I have not received a letter from you for nearly a week I will keep up the practice of writing to you on the Sabbath. This is fast day again and I fully intended to go to Temple meeting but was lame this morning so stayed at home. This afternoon however I felt better and went to our Ward meeting, and the people were so slow getting up that it seemed quite a drag.

You are at Mesa to-day and will have received two letters and baby's pictures which I sent you there. Bro. North wrote me that the potatoes were all gone and they had nothing to feed the pigs but oats and lucern and as oats were rather expensive pig feed he thought you would like to sell the pigs and said if you would set a price on each one he would try and sell them for you.

Now I do not know what to do about it. I thought of asking Bro. J. R. Murdock [*paper damage*] set a price on them & sell them [*paper damage*] But then thought I would wait until I heard from you. Does Bro. North have access to the oats if he does I don't think there will be many left. Will you tell me what to do immediately?

Have received several letters from B.H. [Big Horn] Colony and they were all prospering nicely. Julia S. [Sessions] & Walter Graham were coming to Logan to get married last week. You got a letter from David,⁶⁶ he did not get elected Senator. I got a letter from Belle⁶⁷ also; they were all well but her.

The Hay man brought two more loads of hay. Said he would like me to pay him for one load. Will [Owen's brother-in-law] and your Mother have a cow. Mother paid for her and Will pays for the feed and they divide the milk. Eggs are 35¢ per doz. and Butter is 35¢ per lb. so I do not know how we are going to live at that rate. Well dearest you will be home in three more weeks and you cannot tell how glad I will be for I do want to see you so much and so does baby.

I expect a letter to-morrow and if I am disappointed, beware. Don't you think I have done fine writing to you. Have written nine or ten letters [*paper damage*]

Good night my darling,
With Love and kisses from
Owen and Mamma

[Letter 15: Helen to Owen]

[LDS Church letterhead, handwritten]

Dec. 4, 1900.

My Dearest Owen.

You did not want to bother me by telling me of your troubles and I was determined I would not annoy you with my grievances; so instead of telling you what a miserable time we have had with our stove ever since you left will just say that I have Brother Burgon⁶⁸ here building a new chimney. He came here with Heber one day and examined the flue and stove etc. and said the chimney was altogether too small and volunteered to build me a new one so I acquiesced and he and his oldest son are here today doing the job. He says it is the greatest wonder in the world that we haven't had our house burned. The chimney had great cracks in it and the wood work was all blacked with smoke. I think we can be thankful the stove hasn't burned or we would have been homeless.

Bro. North writes me that the wind has blown the top of the hay stack off but says things are going along as well as could be expected under the circumstances. We had bad stormy weather for a week or more but now the weather is perfect, just like Spring.

Sister Lambert⁶⁹ is nursing Maud Woodbury; she had a little girl born yesterday. I was thinking perhaps she would not be through there in time for me and think any way it would be better to have Miss Bullock, she is nursing Susie [Bennion] and will stay with her four weeks for \$28.00 and I will have to pay Sister L \$30.00 for three weeks. I am sure I will have to have her three weeks any way as Eliza has her hands full with the work and could not wait on me much. The post-man will be here soon so I will not write more. I love you dearer than my life and hope you will get home in due time. Only two more weeks. I can scarcely wait that long to see you. I went to Bro. Jack and got my regular allowance but will have to go back and get some more for your debts — \$12.00 for hay & \$2.00 for Milton North. Then there is the money for Blanche & Nellie [Taylor] so that will make nearly \$30.00 from your money. I have had to get a sack of sugar and a ton of coal besides numerous “little things.”

Well dearest Good bye, God bless you and keep you well and happy.
Ever Your Loving Helen.

[Letter 16: Avery to Owen]

[no letterhead, handwritten]

Auburn, Wyo.

Dec. 8, 1900

Dear Clarence [code name for Owen], my very true and esteemed friend:

Your kind letter added so much to my happiness that I have indeed had a joyous holiday. But was again sorry to learn that your health was not the best and hope that you are now feeling better.

We have had some dreadfully cold weather, one of our neighbors tells us that when his thermometer registered fifty below zero it froze up so we can't tell just how cold it was. And I guess it is on account of the change in the weather that so many of the people have such bad colds.

This evening Papa took us for a sleigh ride over to Afton [Wyoming], we called on the Doctor and Mary [Clark] and ^I^ were vaccinated, we are regretting that we did not have it done when we first came home but hope we will take no harm from the exposure going through the mountains. We expect to start back to school about the ninth.

Suit your own convenience and pleasure as to the suggestions in your letter and they will suit me. I feel perfectly satisfied and happy. I am at a loss to express my feelings and appreciation of yours and dear Helen's thoughtfulness of me.

Sister Mary and I have an invitation to attend a party at Afton tomorrow night. I will likely have the pleasure of receiving the package you have sent as Papa has arranged to have it brought in by the Mail.

These things are dear to me but the united affection of you both ~~are~~ is dearer still and I hope to live worthy of it.

The pleasures of home and the association of loved ones makes it hard to leave them again so soon.

May it please the Lord to preserve you all in health and life and bless you with every good thing that you need, is the sincere desire of your loving friend.

Maggie.

[Letter 17: Avery to Owen and Helen]

[no letterhead, handwritten]

Logan Utah
Dec. 21, 1900

Mr. and Mrs. A. O. Woodruff.

Dearest Friends

Received letters from both of you yesterday it was a real treat. Just a few minutes remain before I must be on my way to school and I am going to use them in writing to you. Fear if I don't do it now that it won't be done, as we have so much to see to before leaving on the train to night. We have seven hours work in school and I guess the students that go our way will meet here and we'll all go together, and we must prepare for that. Papa wrote and said that he would meet us at Mt. Pelier [Idaho] if all was well, then won't we have a long sleighride. "Have to stop."

Dear sister I think that photo is a beauty, I know I can love you too and think we will have many good times together. When you think of me you must not think of a girl so small, I only weigh 154 pounds. My birth-day was Mar. 9. was eighteen so I guess you got about the right idea in that regard.

Now as to name. How would "Clarence" do?⁷⁰ I have no reason for choosing it but thought it would answer the purpose. The name you suggested suits me all right. If you write to me during holidays, think it would be best to direct the letters to Papa as the girls that keep the Office are a little curious sometimes about their schoolmates letters and it is often the case that they are opened. You must excuse this scambled letter for I have

had hard work to get a chance to write it. It is now real late and the crowd will soon be here.

I wish you all a merry merry Christmas and happy New Year and my heart is full of good wishes for you. I thank you Bro. Woodruff for that present that is coming. (Think that ring no. eight will be about right)

Yours most affectionately.

Maggie.

Will be happy to meet you.

[Avery's "Autobiography and Recollections": Excerpt B (pages 42–47)]

[*handwritten*]

Come Sept. 15th Mary and I were on our way to Logan and B.Y.C. On arrival we got a list of available room for rent from the College and in a day or so were quite comfortably located in an upstairs room at the Spiermans. This was about five blocks from school — a comfortable walking distance and only three blocks from the main shopping district in main street.

At once we wrote home giving the folks our new address and Father forthwith sent it on to bro. W. In a week or so but without warning I answered a knock on our door. There stood Owen Woodruff as white as a sheet — he was frightened and so was I. In a very few words plans were set to meet that evening after dark on a certain corner of the tabernacle block and O. W. was on his way. This was the first of four meetings with him over a period of about four months when I became his wife.⁷¹

Always I felt he was as perfect as mortal man can be. He treated me as if I were a queen tenderly touching my hand. There was no love making, just beautiful, lofty words of devotion to the principle we were contemplating living and for each other and Helen. She was forever in the picture as she had every right to be. Before I ever met Helen she was lifted on a pedestal before my eyes and I adored her. Owen painted a true picture of her true worth and charm which in all the years I knew her never diminished. Immature as I was — only two thirds their age I wondered if I could ever reach a status that could be compatible with such splendid persons — Owen and Helen. Their desire uppermost was to do the will of God at all times to live worthily in preparation for the celestial Kingdom. To make any sacrifice in this life for a greater fulfilment in the life to come. It meant unselfish devotion to a cause which would fail unless we were united in heart and mind — humble and prayerful before the Lord. In this respect I needed schooling which only time and experience could give.

(When I was eighteen Owen and Helen were twenty eight)

In the presence of Owen and Helen I felt the power of their great love. It enveloped me giving me strength and security. They made me feel that I was wanted, needed in this higher order of marriage roles. Alone and away from them I often was filled with fear, loneliness, frustration in a world of reality where I was appearing and known to my friends and classmates as “Miss Clark” to camouflage the fact that I was a married woman. I had an urge to shout it to the world just who I really was thus freeing pent up emotions. My honest self rebelled against appearing to be what I was not.

Often Mary would find me in tears and chide me for my lack of gratitude. She would say: “You ought to be the happiest woman in the world.” “In your shoes I’m sure I would be, even if I could only see my husband once a year. I mean if he could be your husband.”⁷²

Owen’s special assignment as an Apostle was to take charge of the colonization of Big Horn Basic Wyo. This and his visits to the different missions and stakes of the church kept him away from home much of the time. Weeks went by that I did not see him. Whenever he came to Logan it was to fill a church appointment. I might see him for a few minutes or we spent the night at the house of one of the Stake Presidency. Occasionally I went to Salt Lake or Farmington and stayed the week end with relatives and managed a short visit at Owen’s & Helen’s house.

I think it was the first summer we had lived in the new, large house in *Valley that Owen & Helen came for a week’s visit enroute for the Big Horn. My family made their stay as pleasant as possible especially were we careful to guard Helen’s feelings against any strain of sharing her husband’s time with another woman on this vacation trip. Mother kept me near her coaching me very frequently on how to play my part heroically. “Be happy about it and don’t expect Bro. W. to give you much time or attention” mother said, “not in Helen’s presence. Remember she is our guest.” So I was thrilled when one morning while I was running the “separator” in a back room and Owen rushed in, taking me in his arms for an instant told me how sweet and brave I was. This lifted my spirits — primed me for the day ahead — reassured me of my husband’s love.

As Helen said of herself — “It is as natural for me to be jolly as for the sun to shine” proved to be a fact to all observers. She had her hours and days of feeling blue she told me and had to struggle with self discipline. It worried her that I took life so seriously, and she often asked me if she had made me unhappy — she didn’t mean to.

In July 1903 Owen came to *Valley on his way to the Big Horn Basin in Wyo. bringing Frank Y. Taylor, Pres. of Granite Stake, Van Beebe his brother in law, Isaac Russell and George Gibbs.⁷³ These men were equipped with a commissary wagon to hold their hunting and camping gear. Russell and Gibbs were in charge of this wagon and the two teams of horses. The other three men occupied another wagon.

They all stayed at our ranch several days to visit with our family, to rest their horses and do a little hunting. It was Owen's first trip to the Valley since we were married and now it must be kept a secret from the men with him. As a result I really spent more time with young Russell than I did Owen while Mary and Gibbs seemed very friendly.

The men had been out hunting a couple of days and brought back a fine catch. Besides fresh fish we had great repasts of venison that lasted for days. To furnish the dessert for our fine meal Russell and I took little lead buckets and strolled down to the meadow to pick wild strawberries. Owen sat on the front porch watching just how close our heads came together while we were fairly rooting for the tiny wild berries. He said to me later on: "Make sure Ike behaves himself I can tell he likes you, just give him the cold shoulder or do you want to"? It was an agrivation to me not be able to announce to the world that I was happily married to a grand person whom everyone admired. I had moments of resentment, when I may have used indescression in acting naughty.

It was a busy time on the ranch — father in the midst of haying two of the girls taking turns cooking for the hired men. For two days Mother stayed at the river ranch leaving me and Mary in charge of the meals for our guests. One morning when we kneeled around the breakfast for prayer I called upon Geo. Gibbs to pray. He said: "I never pray, I'm sorry." This really shocked me but I called on bro. Taylor who responded. When we were alone Owen apologized for not having told me that Gibbs who once was a devoted L.D.S. member had his faith upset by attending an Eastern University. That it was the hope of George's father that this trip might help to straighten him out. This episode upset Mary who had become fond of the charming student.

It pleased our guests that Mary and I were such experts at riding tho we were complete novices with the use of a gun or fishing tackle. However, one day when all of us went riding in the "white top" up Stump Creek I picked up one of the guns we had along and pulled the trigger hitting a squirrel perched on a rock a few rods from the road. Every one screamed, the driver stopped the team and one of the boys ran & picked up the dead squirrel. Later on he hung it on the corner of the house as evidence of my skill. It bothered me to know I had taken the life of an innocent little creature just for the sport of it.

To add to the pleasure of their trip one of the men brought along a portable phonograph and a lot of beautiful records. In the cool of the evening we sat spellbound listening to a variety of music. How we missed this luxury when our guests moved on. The one selection which Mary and I have never forgotten — our choice of all the records was: "Your eyes so blue and tender."