History Of Louisa Barnes Pratt

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Mr. Pratt was appointed to go again to the island. I did not feel reconciled, but I bore it as patiently as I could. Brothers Rich and Cox came to give him a parting blessing. It was great and good! They also gave me one. Said I should be blessed in the absence of my companion, with the necessaries and comforts of life, that my mind should be buoyed up under trials. They also laid hands on Ephraim who had then a sick turn. The 14th day of Apr my husband started on his mission. The two eldest daughters accompanied him to the foot of the mountain. Mr. J. Dyer came with his team to take him on his way. So we were left again, to struggle on with the ills of life alone. Not knowing when the “father” would return, or whether he would come at all.

Brother C. W. Wandall was then installed as school teacher. My two youngest girls were attendants. He was a competent teacher, and they improved rapidly under his tuition. There was a celebration for “May Day,” appointed; to be held in a grove several miles distant. Lois was chosen for the May Queen, although a young lady grown. She was required to make a speech before the audience; which was expected to be very large. She felt the undertaking to be enormous in its nature; but when she found there could be no excuse, or permission to withdraw, she went forward with a self reliant air and performed well her part. Joseph Hunt addressed the Queen in a most dignified manner. The whole affair was published in the San B news.
[Grouard's Disaffection]

About this time Mr. Grouard commenced to lecture in the place, on science and natural laws. Spiritual philosophy was bearing with heavy weight on his mind. I wished much to hear him lecture, but he being considered weak in the faith of the gospel, and leaning towards spiritualism, the sisters did not attend his lectures, for fear of publick remarks. At length he moved two miles out of town, and commenced farming. It was a poor looking place in the woods. The rabbits destroyed everything as fast as it grew. How much out of place he seemed there! Designed by nature for a public man, then spending his time to no good effect. His last wife was an intelligent agreeable woman.

There was a report in circulation, that Mr. Pratt did not intend returning to that country, that his intention was to spend his days on the islands. Neither myself or daughters believed the report, had any foundation in truth, yet it was not agreeable to hear it. It was enough for us to be left again without hearing evil prophecies.

"May Day" came, and our minds were diverted. Every thing was arranged in good order beneath the shade of large embowering trees. The children flocked together like doves to their windows. More than a thousand people were assembled. The fairy queen appeared with her maids of honor. A platform was erected and on it she was seated in a large armed chair covered with some emblem of royalty, then the two maids of honor crowned her with a beautiful wreath of roses. The first maid addressed the assembly in a very becoming manner. Next Mr. Joe Hunt addressed the queen, in a brilliant style. Lastly, the queen made a speech to her subjects, informing them what they had to expect during her reign. Mr. Wandall conducted the whole affair in his graceful and easy style. The picnic was spread sumptuously. The band of music poured forth their loudest strains and dancing of the children closed the exercises.

Shortly after this I received a letter from Henry Boyle containing intelligence from Mr. Pratt. Brothers, Pratt, Boyle, Layton, and Potter, had taken passage on board the Steamer Sea Bird, and were badly treated. There was something relating to the voyage of which I had reminded Mr. P. previous to his leaving home; and when the ill usage was administered I think he would give me credit for having a little foresight. Again it devolved on me to manage my own business, and provide for my family.

Brother Wm J. Cox was my unvarying friend. If any thing was likely to go wrong, I went to him for counsel. If my cattle strayed, he was the one to send his boy and horse to find them. He never denied me a favor which I asked of him. The Saviour's words were, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."
During the month of May a circumstance transpired which affected me sorely. A new graveyard was fenced in, and many of the dead had to be removed. Sister Lewis who died on the mountain, her child which was buried in Los Angelos and our dear little Emma Grinelle were removed to the new burial ground. I could never endure the thought of disturbing the silent slumbers of the dead. The sad scenes of the past were all brought back. Whenever my mind was afflicted I resorted to outdoor exercise. I had my garden to till, and though the task was hard, it often prevented my giving way to despondency. How much the mind needs change, as well does the body to keep it healthy.

[John Eldredge]

Important scenes were often transpiring. Missionaries returning from foreign countries. My house was open to receive them. Then my heart would be cheered by hearing of the spread of the gospel in the old world. In the spring of 56 Bro John Eldridge returned from his mission to Australia. I felt rejoiced to see him return alive and well but Oh! the sad tale he had to tell us!

The vessel on which he embarked was wrecked. In a furious wind-storm the vessel parted in the centre and five persons were drowned, two mothers and three children were washed out of the cabin. The part broken off was then carried by the waves, and one end touched the reef, so the remaining passengers were taken off and their feet set on the rocks. Previous to this, a rope was stretched from the vessel to the reef and tied to the rocks. Some were saved by letting themselves down into the water and clinging to the rope, thus making their escape to the Island; which was uninhabited. There they remained three days and nights without food or drink. They were then taken off and conveyed to another island.

On that Island without inhabitants, they found fish and turtle on which they lived two months. Then a vessel came to their relief and took them to Tahiti, where they remained for one month. Then Bro’s Graham and Eldridge embarked for San Francisco, leaving the other passengers to come after. Bro’ Eldridge spoke in publick with a humble chastened spirit; made beautiful remarks; in regard to the miraculous manner in which his life had been preserved. At times he appeared abstracted and melancholy. The cries of the poor perishing women were ringing in his ears.

The two Elders soon left us and started on to Salt Lake. With them four teams went, loaded with provision for the poor saints in Utah. Emigration being great, there was danger of suffering. There were no rail
ways to convey supplies speedily; but a whole season was required to make a journey to the frontiers and return.

[Ellen’s Marriage to William McGary]

Previous to their departure an important event took place. On the 26th of May 1856 my eldest daughter was married to Wm McGary. Bro’ E’e was invited to attend, being as he was a very old acquaintance. When I informed him of the approaching ceremony he appeared pleased; which gave me a little encouragement, although I did not feel quite happy over the affair. There was a cloud in the horizon, which though far from threatening, was not like the clear blue sky, serene, and inspiring bright hopes of long sunshine. The event had been kept private from the public, and even from the nearest neighbors. After the ceremony which was performed by Ellen’s uncle Crosby, and refreshments were served, our spirits revived; and as toasts were offered in abundance, the scene closed with mirthful conversation. Great surprise was manifest in the community when the fact was known. In general it was not fully approved, I cannot say I am in favor of private weddings.

A few days passed ere the secret began to be divulged. Then a wedding party was demanded. The guests invited did not know for what occasion they were to assemble. At the opening of the exercises the newly married couple were introduced. It was a surprise to nearly all present. There were great congratulations; and the party was a merry one. E’s father was then on Tahiti; her sister Frances was in Los Angelos. That they could not be present at the first wedding in the family, was a source of regret.

[Louisa’s Island Boy Ephraim]

I had daily cares pressing upon me. My fruit orchard and garden required great labor as nothing would thrive without irrigation. My little island boy was some comfort to me; though on my mind a constant anxiety; early showing the habits of his race, a constant desire to ramble about, could not bear confinement. When no more than six years old he would wander away, and then like his elder brother sleep out in some nook or corner, whereever night overtook him. I could never lie down at sleep till I found him.

When interrogated why he did not come home, his excuse would be a fear of being corrected for staying so long! I did not mean to be severe, but thought it my duty to break him of his wandering propensities. How nature shone out in those two boys! Bright shrewed, and witty, with loving dispositions; but their Indian traits it seemed impossible to overcome.
The History of Louisa Barnes Pratt

[The Fourth of July]

About the first of June Sister C. and I were summoned to attend a court, for the first time in our lives. Y.L. Sparks and wife had separated, both suing for divorce. We were questioned and cross questioned, heard many disagreeable things. Our testimony was in favor of the woman. We answered the questions as quick as possible and withdrew. The case was decided in favor of the wife, and a bill of divorce obtained. An artful woman was the first cause of the unhappy affair.

Lonely indeed is a woman's life if her husband must be always gone from home. Besides the burden of providing for her family there are hours when her heart longs for sympathy, and her children cannot supply the place of a husband. There was a woman whose name I forbear to mention, who did me a great injustice. My spirit was deeply wounded, but with her I could not reason. I had never wronged her, and at different times in her life I had sought to do her good. Her conduct towards me was the sin of ingratitude. Let Him who knows the secrets of all hearts, judge between us.

The Fourth of July drew nigh, and I helped to make a new flag for the occasion. Eight yards in length, and five in width. Mr. C. W. Wandall was the director in chief. He treated the ladies employed to make it very politely; brought in dainties to help out the dinner, which Sister Lyman prepared, and served.

Mr. Wften [?] made one in our family circle, and at our social parties. He was fine looking and very intellectual, often entertained us with the history of his early life. He had seen great sorrow. He had married a wife in his youth every way calculated to make him happy; their love was reciprocal. In the gold excitement he went to California. She did not freely give her consent. She left Nauvoo and went to her friends in N. York City. While in Cal, his relatives wrote to him that she had clandestinely left there with a strange gentleman. For several years her place of residence was unknown to him. At length he heard she was married and settled in Florida. His daughter wrote him a letter with full particulars. This cast a shadow over his whole life. In the midst of mirth, and scenes of joy a close observer would discern a shade of sadness on his brow.

The Presidents of that branch of the church Amasa Lyman and C.C. Rich were highly respected by our unbelieving neighbors, although it was well known that they had four wives each, all living in that place. They did not seem to think it their business to interfere with our domestic relations so long as the leading men sustained good business characters, were moral, temperate, and industrious; helped to improve the country, by building mills, and making lumber to build up other settlements. They seemed proud to have us for neighbors. Mr. Lyman was
renounced for being an eloquent speaker. Mr. Rich for a wise counsellor. And the whole people for being honest, upright, cheerful, and progressive. On the “Fourth” we had a grand celebration. A score of flags and banners were waving in wind. I had charge of the young school girls and arranged them to join the procession. “Mothers in Israel” with banners. Fathers, and all classes; every thing in the best style, and order. C.W. Wandall delivered an oration.

In one respect we were disappointed. We had expected the stage to arrive from Los Angelos on 3d day with Frances and the Misses Smith. The coach did not come in, neither the ladies. They however came the following day, made a short visit. Frances was not well. How it afflicted me to see wasting away her form once so elastic and energetic! Like a deer she would bound; her spirits buoyant as a bird’s that glides through the air; fearless of all beneath it. The climate there was too oppressive in summer for her weak lungs. I would sometimes walk out in the middle of the day, as necessity would demand, and so excessively hot would be the earth it would injure my shoes; and almost blister my feet. Such heat, with such a rich soil, and kept moist, there is no bounds to the growth of vegetation.

[Mr. Ball. The Twenty-Fourth]

There was an interesting incident which I had forgotten to mention, which happened about the third year of our residence in San B’o. There were several young men in town who were accustomed to call often at the house and spend the evening in singing. Mr. P. was then at home. Our eldest daughter played the flutina, & often sang to entertain company. It was reported that a celebrated singer had arrived from upper California. The young gentlemen acquaintance were authorized to invite him to call. Accordingly they came on a certain evening and presented the stranger; introducing him as “Mr. Ball.” I thought the name sounded familiar, but not an inkling came to my head that he was the son of an old friend. We soon found he was a comical fellow, and also a good singer.

In the course of the evening I asked him what state he hailed from. He replied, “Massachusetts.” “ah,” said I, “my native state.” “Indeed, and when did you leave there?” “In 1829. I kept a sewing establishment in Athol, and boarded with a family by the name of Ball. The lady was my particular friend. She had three children, the eldest a boy named Francis, at that time four years old.” He stared at me, and says, “was your name Miss Barnes?” “It was.” “That lady was my mother, and I am that boy!” No suprise could surpass mine! There was the boy I taught to sing songs when only three, or four years old. He could repeat correctly the childish songs I taught him; for the singing of which he earned many a cent, as he went about the shops and publick places. He still continued the practice
earning money by his musical talents. He was afterwards a frequent caller, and we had long conversations, about his mother and the family.

A correspondence was then opened between his mother and myself, which revived reminiscences of days long past and gone. The old familiar names of our acquaintance were often referred to, and their history would occasion alternate joy and sorrow, as I learned the good or ill fates that fell to their lots. Over this young man the mother had great anxiety; although possessing a brilliant intellect he was not in all respects a pattern of sobriety. To be a renowned humorist was his highest ambition. The characteristics of his childhood were fully developed in his youth.

Mr. Grinelle came and spent a few weeks with us. Oh! how he mourned for his lost child! His last tie to earth is broken. He is not only a widower but childless. When we talked of her last illness, of all her endearing words, of her attractions, her sweet temper, her loving disposition, how our hearts throbbed with grief! That one so lovely must be torn from us who prized her so much; when other children with comparatively no charms to bind them to their kindred and guardians, are permitted to live and grow, to mature, and come even to old age. The ways of providence how mysterious!

A deep solemnity rested on my mind. I walked the house and tried to pray. As I walked in the dooryard a calm spirit came over me. I thought of my utter loneliness, which none can know what sympathy it demands unless similar trials have fallen to their lot. Wm McGary who often helped me in my labors, started on a three months tour among the Spanish settlements, with a thresher. On the 24th July there was a military ball in town. Bro’ Cox invited me to be his partner, his wife not being able to attend. I felt reluctant in accepting the invitation, but concealed my real feelings and consented to go. It was a crowded assembly; and all things considered, it was a grand affair

[Pages 325-327 are missing from the manuscript. They are also missing from the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers transcription.]

[Social and Domestic Affairs]

In Sept. 56 Elder Fleming returned from Australia where he had been on a mission. He was our neighbor in Nauvoo and we were pleased to see him once more. He spent several days with us and gave us an interesting account of his labors in New South Wales. Previous to his leaving S.L. he had taken a second wife; her name was Nancy Henderson. Ellen had received a letter from that City that said Nancy had broken her marriage vows and married a man who did not belong to the church. We were in company where all were cheerful, when it occurred to Ellen the news she
had heard. Without due consideration she related the circumstance to Bro' Fleming. A shadow came over his features like a storm cloud in the sky, his cheerfulness was at an end. For the evening and indeed for succeeding days, I was very sorry that E should have been so thoughtless.

From that time Bro' F seemed in a reverie, and in haste to go on his way home. We learned afterwards that the girl's choice had not been a wise one; but she was not restored to fellowship in the family she had left, and where she was honored and respected.

There was an excitement in town about the exit of Dr. Burress. He had left pretending to go to San Francisco to buy drugs and return. Soon news came that he had embarked on a steamer bound for U. States. He had borrowed money of different persons, a gold watch of one, left a few debts standing out, but no agent to collect them. He was a man we all had confidence in! We were led to marvel what could have induced the man to forfeit the good opinion of a community where he had been so much respected.

I had my lot to tend and to irrigate. Frequently my turn would come to water in the night, that to me seemed very hard. I thought the men should consider me a lone woman, no husband or son, should give me the water in the day and they should take it at night. I sometimes thought men had not sympathy for women whose husbands were sent away; no salary that they could send relief to their families. My Nephew Alma Crosby a young boy sometimes assisted me when I was obliged to irrigate in the night. My vineyard now began to bear grapes in great abundance, thus rewarding me for all my toil. Lois was an assistant in Mr. Wandall's school had twenty dollars pr month. I had many things to be thankful for, but there seemed a seated malady on my heart. My eldest daughter was comfortably situated. Her husband was ambitious and enterprising in his way, but he lacked that high culture, so very desirable in a companion, he often made rash speeches. Oh, how admirable is a becoming form of speech! a happy method of conveying ideas and sentiments. What an accomplishment! but how few possess it in this rude and wild country. I harden my heart; and try to be reconciled to things for which I have no attraction or affinity.

There were southern people belonging to the branch, who had come there with colored servants; they employed me to write letters for them to send to their kindred and sweethearts in Salt Lake. They had a peculiar form of inditing which I was required strictly to observe. Many a favor in the way of labor did I obtain from them as a reward for writing their letters; besides the merriment it afforded, to read over the letters and observe their simple style, so peculiar to that race of beings.

Having many things to worry and perplex my mind I often had sleepless nights. For that reason I contracted the habit of sitting up in my
bed and reading till a late hour; thus inducing sleep. One night I was arroused suddenly by feeling heat through the bedclothes. I had been holding the lamp in one hand and my book in the other; falling asleep unknowingly my lamp had tipt over, the oil spilled out and the spread caught fire. It being woolen it did [not] flash quickly; and I awoke in time to save my bed from being consumed. That was a warning to me to avoid reading with a lamp in my hand. We had a beautiful place; but it required energy and great care to keep it in a flourishing condition. I once complained to Pres't Lyman that I had so many years been left with the care of a family to manage my own business out doors, and in, a husband always gone from home. “Well sister Pratt you have lived, have you not?” “Most certainly I have,” I replied. “Then what does it matter?” said he. “The struggle for life is our business here.”

But my reasoning was, that it was hard to have our energies taxed to their fullest extent, and that continually. That the raising of a family devolved naturally on a united head, not all on the weaker one. He showed me that I was called to make sacrifices for the gospel of Christ; that if I bore my burdens cheerfully great would be my reward.

[On the Spanish Settlements]

We often took rides to the Spanish settlements, where we were hospitably entertained; feasted on grapes and wine, and fruit of various kinds. Although the people are kind I dispise their manner of living. They generally build their houses on an elevated spot. The road runs through their towns on low land, their buildings are on very high points. Nothing disgusts me more than an old spanish building. Themselves their houses and cattle, are all of the same type.

Oh! the contrast between nature in her primeval state and her condition when highly developed and cultivated! How desirable is progress! On the Islands of the Pacific I was charmed with nature. There was a simplicity about the natives, and their manner of life that seemed in keeping with their isolation, buried from the world as they are, it is not strange they should have habits peculiar to themselves. But it is not so with the Spanish; for centuries they have lived on the borders of civilization; and yet they will keep their old native traits of character. They build their houses of adobies the walls three feet thick, no glass in their windows, a close shutter to be closed at night, when necessary; a ground floor solid as rock. Their beds are made of wool; pillows the same. You might as well lay your head on a log of wood for softness, as on one of their pillows. But they look attractive. In the first place they have cases made of pink silk; then a cover of fine muslin trimmed with lace. Invariably white counterpanes.
At their "Fandangoes" they will treat you to wine, whiskey and tobacco. They will pass around first what they call sigarites. Each lady is offered one. The Spanish ladies will accept, as a matter of course. The American ladies always refuse. When they all commence smoking you may breathe if you can. The ladies wear rich dressing, and their shawls are beautiful.

[Apostles Rich and Lyman, John M. Horner]

Oct 8th. 1856. Bro' C.C. Rich returned from San Francisco, brought letters from Mr. Pratt and Frances. The former had just returned from Tahiti, the french would not allow him to preach there. He was greatly surprised to find our daughter there. She had gone from Los Angelos unexpectedly to us all, the circumstance had caused me great uneasiness, as I knew she was in failing health. But when I heard her father was with her my mind was relieved.

Mr. Lyman was a renowned preacher of righteousness. He often expatiated with great energy on the condition of females in the married state. Their incessant labors in raising a family, the indifference with which many men treated their wives. He would set forth in a clear light how their condition might be ameliorated with proper forethought on the part of the husband. The reader may perhaps ask whether he practiced what he preached? I believe he did. He was never known to be a tyrannical or fault finding man. His exhortations to his wives were to help each other, bear the burdens of life. To be kindly affectioned one to the other, thus lightening the cares devolving on each separately. Bro' C.C. Rich was not counted so great a reasoner, but distinguished for wise counsel in all difficult cases, a peace maker; always encouraging charity, and brotherly love. Under the administration of these two men we had a peaceable, industrious thriving community.

It is my testimony gained by experience, that people living in a good climate where the necessaries of life are easily obtained are not so selfish, or covetous. They will help each other from a principle of gratitude feeling thankful that providence has placed them in propitious circumstances, where they can accumulate means to provide for their own wants and help others. I remember the liberality of the saints in San Francisco in the year '50. They had money plenty and it was disbursed to the needy as free as water. To the company of Elders, we met at San Pedro as we were moving to the Lower Country, (men sent on missions to foreign countries,) the brethren in Francisco gave seven thousand dollars, 7000. John M. Horner gave $1000 from his own purse. Times changed in that City, and he became bankrupt. After a few years he measurably redeemed himself.
Mr. H'r was a man who wanted to make business for every body. He would hire men by the score, give them all the highest going wages; then take their money to oblige them and pay them interest on it. His liberality would never have injured him had he been farseeing enough to have apprehended a reaction in financial affairs. His wife was more cautious, and often reminded him of his danger. She could see breakers ahead; and safer would it be for men in general if they were more disposed to hearken to the counsel of a wise and prudent wife. Mr. J.M. Horner was a resident of San Hosa valley, where fortunes were sometimes made in one year, raising potatoes. There came a time when their price would not pay for digging. Thus were fortunes reversed.

In the lower country the market was not so fluctuating. Floods were not common as in UC [Upper California]. The rust on wheat was what we had to fear. Heavy dews in succession were the main cause. I saw two hundred acres in one field, a large heavy growth, all ruined with rust; so the owner never entered it with his reaper. The Spaniards had a way of preventing the dews from injuring the grain. They would tie a larracette between two horses, then gallop the animals through the grain; the rope would switch off the water settled on the heads. It is an old saying, that “one part of the world know not how the other portion live.” It is very true. A more delightful climate for flowers cannot be found on the continent, as far as I know. A mile from town Col. Jackson’s lived. He was a lawyer, but his wife was a horticulturalist. It was a favorite resort to walk from town in the cool of the day; there to regale on fruit, admire the orchard and flower garden.

Mrs. Jackson cultivated the garden, raised the vegetables, the fruit and flowers. Her husband scarcely knew what there was growing on the premises. She was a romantic woman, with ideality large; therefore strove to have everything beautiful around her. It was really enchanting to take a botanical review of her roses! such a variety! Oh! the beautiful boquets that were sent to town from her garden! Besides her floral predilections she was a fine singer! Her music to all lovers of that art attracted as many as the flowers. She had an instrument called a seraphina; that in a new settlement attracted as much attention as a grand piano would in an older place. The Col. was a polite gentleman, and they had two pretty little daughters. What heart so stoical as not to admire such a place of resort? I endeavored to imitate the ladies example in the production of flowers, but had not her skill in fruit growing.

[Trip to Los Angeles and San Gabriel Mission]

Oct 21st [1856]. Ann L. and myself took the coach for Los Angelos. We staid at the “half way house” the first night; had supper and breakfast, paid $2.00. The next day we went to Mr. Tompson’s at the Monte. A publick
At the breakfast table I heard a long exposition of Mormonism, from Judge Drummond, a noted Federal official. I looked upon him with indignation! There were several gentlemen at the table and I was not introduced, consequently I did not feel free to reply to his remarks. I thought of the words of Job in his affliction. "My spirit burned within me, and I kept silence even from good words, but it was pain and grief to me." In reply to his slanderous epithets, I could have told him about his leaving his wife in the States and taking a woman from Philadelphia and bringing her with him to S. Lake; there introducing her as his wife. Was soon exposed by a letter written from his lawful wife to a friend in the City.

The following day we pursued our journey to San Gabriel, where was a Catholic church. A huge ancient building. I would judge it might have been standing a hundred years. We visited Mr. Strickton's orchard. It filled me with admiration to gaze upon the immense pear trees loaded with fruit, and such enormous sized pears. I had never beheld till then; having never seen them growing in a climate so congenial to the growth of all kinds of fruit. While in San Gabriel, I attended a Spanish funeral. Such a scene was entirely new to me. The cannons roared a dozen times. Small arms and fire crackers, loud singing and praying. The floor in their Temple was laid with rocks. I kneeled on them for such a length of time that I became very weary. A great many candles were placed around the edge of the coffin, as the large procession paused at every few rods singing and reading prayers. At length they entered the ancient building all falling on their knees. Back of the altar hung the pictures of Christ and the virgin Mary. St. Peter and some others.

Four bells there were belonging to the house, which were rung so often one could scarcely endure the noise. I visited a Mrs. Hall from Mass; her husband Frank Hall a trader in San Gabriel. It seemed pleasant to meet a lady from my native state. I felt at home with her. She was not a member of the Mormon church, neither was she an opposer! She treated my religion with respect; and when I taught her the doctrine of healing the sick by faith, she seemed deeply interested; being subject to frequent ill turns herself. We at length made our way by coach to Los Angelos. We stopt with Mrs. Picket and her two interesting daughters. The lady was formerly the wife of Don Carlos Smith, (the prophet's brother:) who died from exposure when pursued by a mob. She afterwards married a young man, a Mr. Picket.

Mr. P. [Picket] at this time was in San Francisco, in the printing business. Sister P sustained her family by dress making. She was highly esteemed by the people of that City, and largely patronized. By her second husband she had a pair of twin boys. Respectively named Don Carlos, and William. Her youngest daughter Josephine was naturally gifted as a writer of poetry; was unfortunate in her marriage, was separated from her
husband which caused her deep affliction. This gave pathos and sublimity to her poems, awakened the tender sensibilities of her nature; she wrote with an inspiration which aroused the sympathies of the publick, they aided her in her endeavors to sustain herself. She improved her education, became a popular teacher; was enabled to help her mother. The eldest daughter married a sheriff, who was killed by desperadoes. Mrs. Picket moved to San Francisco, where her eldest daughter went, to visit, died, and was brought to Los Angelos and buried by the side of her husband.6

There were daring deeds done in that county. I passed a house where an old man was robbed of a thousand dollars. The robbers entered his house tied him hand and foot, took his money and left him bound. In that position he remained for a considerable time, until a neighbor fortunately happened in and liberated the poor man! No clue to the robbers.

Nov. 9th we returned to San Gabriel. Stopt with Mrs. Hall to wait an opportunity to go home. It was decided that A.L. should remain with her for a few weeks and I must go home without her. I reluctantly consented. The following day 10th was my fifty-fourth birthday. Mrs. H. [Hall] thought we should do something to make it memorable. So we resolved to take her new babe only two weeks old, and go on a visit to Mr. Stockton’s where the great pear orchard was located.

There was no conveyance at our disposal, so we started out to take our chances. We very soon hailed a Spaniard going after wood. He kindly took us on, and conveyed us safely to the place. We passed a pleasant afternoon. Mr. S. [Stockton] and myself held a discussion on Mormonism; I found him a sensible intelligent man; not prejudiced against our religion. He took Mrs. H. and I home in his carriage at evening; and thus passed my fifty fourth birthday. I was led to review my life, and the scenes through which I had passed, all my sufferings and sorrows. And although they had been many and great, yet I could see how the hand of the Lord had been stretched out over me to preserve my life in times of danger; how my children had been spared to me, and I felt there was more to be thankful for, than to complain of.

I began to prepare to go home and leave my daughter. Mr. and Mrs. Hall were extremely kind, did all in their power to make our stay agreeable. The place was settled mostly with eastern and southern people. But oh! the Spaniards were too many, for me to admire the place! I cannot endure them! To see the dark dismal looking beings dressing like the whites, adopting the airs and habits of a superior race, and yet so unlike them. I can look upon the poor Indians with more complacency, because they are unassuming; they make no pretentions to civilized life, I can pity them. From the others I turn with feelings of repugnance!

On the 12th day I left San Gabriel in company with Mrs. Burns, a friend who was going home with me. We came to Thompson’s hotel
called, Mrs. Lewis was there with several children, one pair of twins. They had just escaped from a fire, the night previous; their house and every­thing in it was burned.

That unfortunate lady was Mrs. Tompson’s daughter. In her infancy she fell in the fire, and was terribly burned. Her face was greatly disfig­ured, but as she grew up with good nature, and good sense, she was fortu­nate in marrying a good substantial man. It was indeed a sorrowful sight to see her with such a family and think what a foe fire had been to her! We travelled on by moonlight that night. The Coach driver was a merry fellow and there were other lively gentlemen aboard; so our journey did not seem tedious. We lodged at the “Half way House,” reached home at three the ensuing day. I had presents for my little Island boy, and he was delighted to see me come. Ann Louise was left behind, but Mrs. Burns was an intimate friend of my daughter’s. An evening party was at once proposed, guests invited, which came off the same evening, to the satis­faction of all concerned.

[Frances’ Marriage to Jones Dyer, Mid-November 1856]

Soon after my arrival, a letter came from my daughter in San Francisco, containing intelligence of her marriage! This created surprise and excite­ment! I could not say I felt pleased, neither did I allow a sensation of dis­pleasure. A solemnity rested on my mind, and I secretly uttered a prayer to my Father in heaven that it might result in the health and happiness of my dear girl! I knew the young man Mr. Jones Dyer, to be an honest industrious person; had a good business character, and a considerable property. She would be separated from me, her father was with her then, but would not long remain. She would be located away from all the fam­ily. She wrote a hopeful letter, said she was happier than she ever had been, or ever had expected to be, that her pathway had hitherto “been strewed with thorns;” the future she said “wore a brighter aspect.” I restrained my tears, and wrote a cheerful letter to Mrs. Hall, and my daughter in San Gabriel. The weather was unfavorable to a cheerful state of mind, for there was a terrible wind storm!

[William J. Cox]

Wm J. Cox was appointed President over the temporal affairs of that Branch of the Church, in the place of David Seeley, who was removed for convenience, and not for unfitness, as I understood. They were both good men. Bro’ C was the man I have mentioned often in my history as being my unvarying benefactor, in the absence of my husband; when cares crowded heavily upon me. In the midst of the great windstorm I
have spoken of, I went in to see Sister Cox who also, as well as her husband, was a kind benevolent being, full of sympathy for the sorrowing. A woman in feeble health generally. I found her at that time in a sad plight. Being in an open house, there was no escape from the dust! Sick in bed, the wind blowing at intervals a complete hurricane; her situation seemed truly pitiable! But there was no remedial, till the wind ceased. I prayed that the old tornado might stay his fury! I remained an hour, nearly suffocated; then between the gusts, ran to my house; which was not so accessible to dust. I thought any condition preferable to being buried alive!

High winds in that country were frequent, but not often so fearful! Mr. Burns, the lady’s husband who came up with me from San Gabriel started just before the storm to come after his wife. The dust blinding himself and team, he lost the road, and had it not been for some horseback men who came to his assistance, would have been in a sorry condition! The country was subject to drouth; consequently we had to resort to irrigation. After a severe gale of wind we might expect a gushing rain, which happened at the time above mentioned, and it proved a blessing to the country, causing the grass to spring, in time to save the stock. About that time I received a letter from Salt Lake, with cheering intelligence. The Saints were rejoicing in the Lord, and praising Him continually.

Shortly after receiving the cheering news from Salt Lake that the Saints were prospering, another letter came from Emeline Rich to T Swartout, giving an account of the terrible sufferings of the Hand Cart companies! Two were still back on the plains, or had perished with cold. Those who had survived and had made the valley had camped without wood to make fires often, a great scarcity of bedding, short of provision, yet they succeeded in reaching the settlement; but as the letter expressed, “the most heartrending sight that ever was seen!” How quickly pain follows pleasure! One day we rejoice, the next we are called to mourn. I was led to reflect what this gospel had cost! What did it cost formerly? Why should it cost less in this our day?

[The Grouards]

On the 28th Nov [1856] Sister Grouard came in from her lonely retreat with her little daughter, where she had been confined two months, suffering all that a human being could for the want of society. I was happily surprised. Such is her destiny since her husband has become disaffected in the church.

They have turned their attention to spiritualism, but that does not seem to be an anchor to their souls, sure and steadfast; they miss the fellowship of the Saints. The poor woman started home 2 1/2 miles, drawing her little child in a carriage. It seemed lonely to see her go.
[Religious Experiences]

I was at the time every day expecting Ann Louisa home from San Gabriel in the stage. At length word came that she was detained on account of the severe illness of Sister Morse’s daughter, who had come on a visit to Mrs. Hall’s and was not able to be moved. She had gone from San B. to that village to stay in a friend’s family; was a companion of my daughter’s, was visiting her, when she was taken violently ill. I went immediately to see Mrs. Morse and inform her, carried the letters I had received, read them to her sons as she was not at home. When she returned, and heard the news, she was greatly alarmed! As soon as possible she made preparations to go to her child. She felt timid about going alone. Her niece Harriet H. consented to go with her, and they started amidst our prayers and blessings, that they might bring back the “sick girl” alive! Word soon reached us that the physician had given her up; they requested that the Saints would pray for her life to be spared. I went to the store, got a bottle of olive oil, with a view of having it consecrated for the special benefit of the afflicted girl. Bro Cox came to my house, with a few others who felt a sympathy for the sorrowing mother, and we united our hearts and voices in prayer. A more fervent petition I never heard than Bro’ C. offered up; every word was full of meaning. I felt a witness that the prayers would be answered. The oil was consecrated and sent to them. The young lady had returned who went with the mother, bringing no encouraging word. I wrote to A.L. to come by the next stage if she could be spared, and to sister Morse to be of good cheer, for we were all praying for her daughter’s recovery.

Christmas day was drawing nigh, so I made a star to represent the star of Bethlehem. Dec 25th. The anniversary of our Saviors birth, was celebrated, by firing guns and making a noise in the streets; many not even knowing the meaning of the term, Christmas. In the evening I went to a confirmation meeting. Fifty persons were confirmed. Mr Lyman lectured; spoke loudly against the use of whiskey and tobacco. The coach came in but my daughter was not in it. I learned the reason however; the carriage was filled before it reached her place of residence. On the 28th, while at the dinner table a carriage drove to the gate, and behold, Ann Louisa alighted! great was our suprise and joy. She brought the good news that the “sick girl” was mending! rehearsed to us the particulars of her dangerous illness, which was painful to hear; yet we rejoice, believing that our prayers would be answered.

Jan 1st 1857. There was a New year’s ball across the street from my dwelling; the music seemed inspiring, but I felt solemn: my husband far from home, I was full of thoughts, trying to immagine what might come to pass that year! I opened the bible to see if a promise would meet my
eye, it fell on the 23d psalm. The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. I felt comforted believing there were blessings in store for me the coming year. The Stage came in and brought news that the "poor girl" was still weak and low; none but those who had faith in the promises of God believed she could recover; but we would not doubt. At the same time the mail came in from Salt Lake and brought me a letter from my old friend Constantia Hutchinson. She complained of sore trials and secret griefs: She is one whose soul is formed for high enjoyments, but fate marked her in early life for a victim of disappointment. She needs the grace of God to sustain her, and I pray, she may have that grace!

Prayer meetings were frequent, and the youth seemed to be awakened to the need of reform. There was a time appointed for the renewal of our covenants; and many of the Saints went to the waters of baptism. I went with my daughters, and fifty others at the same time. It seemed "a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." I had been reading of the persecutions of the protestants in France in 1500. I felt to thank my Heavenly Father that we lived under a Republican government; that those fearful times had passed away, and the votaries of religion were more free from danger. On the 8th day a boy came to tell me that one of the young oxen his father had in keeping for me breaking to work was very sick. I went on horseback a mile from town to see him, carried medicine in a bottle. He was one of the most beautiful animals I ever saw. The man had worked him when the weather was too warm. As I gazed on his noble form I said, "every thing lovely in nature must die!"

And so it proved; he being of finer mold than his mate, must die first. The following day there was a tremendous earthquake! It terrified me exceedingly! While it lasted I could not stand on my feet. I thought the world was turning over! the house appeared to rise a foot from the ground, and swing from east to west. It was several days before the earth was still, and I was constantly in fear of another shock! It affected me something like the rolling of a vessel; as it did several other persons.

Mr. and Mrs. Grouard came into town preparing to go to upper Cal, concluded to leave the eldest daughter with Ellen McG’y. The little island girl was willing to stay. I felt sorry they were not contented to remain with us. The reason was they had changed their views in matters of religion. By the impression of the spirit I said, "it is not a wise move," and thus it proved. Sorrows came upon them, and they were away from sympathizing friends.

At that time the preaching was warmly devoted to the wants of the poor Hand Cart companies. Our sympathies were all excited in their behalf. I never felt a more willing heart to give. Wagons were soon loaded with boxes of clothing and bedding, and taken to Salt Lake.

On the 16th there was another earthquake. Causing one woman to be convulsed, and another complained that her hearing was affected.
The earth shook for one minuete, but it did not affect me as the first did. The earth looked wavy, like the waves of the sea. What convulsions there must be beneath us, and what danger is liable to overtake us at any moment!

The same day Bro’ C.C. Rich called; he always had a comforting word for any one. I read to him a copy of a letter I had written to Mr. Pratt; he seemed much pleased with it, said it could not be changed for the better. My mind rested on that subject. I had been fearing, that I had written something I ought not. I then wrote to my daughter F’s and explained to her satisfaction, what before she did not fully understand.

In 57 Jan 3th there was a great excitement in the country about Robbers, plundering and murdering! We were alarmed for the safety of our friends in Los Angelos. Mr. Peterson the sheriff at Los A, had been killed. The Dragoons were in pursuit; report said thirty mexicans had been killed by them. The people began to talk loudly about going to Salt Lake. A vigilance committee was organized, several mexicans were hung, near San Gabriel. Every one was excited and telling some new thing. Just then the papers came from Salt Lake all dressed in black! Bro’ Jenediah Grant was dead. Two very touching discourses by Pres’t Young and Heber C. Kimball were recorded in “Deserett News.” Previous to his departure he had an important vision, concerning that world to which he was hastening. Every thing he saw there, was typical of things here, only more ethereal, far more beautiful! It was of deep interest to us all. He related his vision, and soon closed his eyes on all earthly scences.

Brother and Sister Hammond who had been on a mission to the Sandwich Island and returned, had been living more than one year in that place. They were pleasant agreeable persons, and we all felt much attached to them. But their faces were set towards the mountains, ever after the earthquake. And the terrible depredations by the robbers in the adjoining counties made them still more anxious to go to the body of the church. She was a dear good woman, and full of sympathy for every troubled heart. When I was unjustly censured by the “cruel woman” I mentioned in a former chapter, she was my soothing friend. She knew I had aimed to do right and when my spirit was wounded by an act of ingratitude, she reminded me I must look for redress; and that I should banish every feeling of ill will towards my enemy.

[The Grouards Leave San Bernardino]

Feb 8th. The last evening before Bro’ Grouard’s started on their journey to the Upper Cal, they spent at my daughters, Wm McGary’s, Mrs Jackson the floral lady, was present. Mr. G. was very silent. There seemed a spell upon us all. We had all been (only a few months before,) on terms of
great intimacy, now there was a restraint laid upon us. Our spirits did not harmonize. We felt unwilling to refer to the subject. We all knew the cause of why our friends were leaving; that they had believed in a doctrine which we denied as being the doctrine of Christ; and they believed it was in advance, and several steps in progression. They took a sorrowful leave of us, and we saw them no more. From California they went to Illinois. Death removed some of their treasures; and whether they are happier in their new faith, and more resigned to the events of providence is a matter of great doubt. I cannot believe they are.⁷