Winter Quarters

Ward, Maurine

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CHAPTER THREE

“One of the most Beautyfull valeys”

Aboard the ferry leaving Kimball’s landing in Nauvoo, Illinois, Mary Haskin Parker Richards began, on May 19, 1846, the crossing of the Mississippi River and her journey to a new home, an event reminiscent of her departure from Great Britain across the Atlantic Ocean some five years earlier. Then, young Mary had bade farewell to all of her brothers and sisters and to the land of her birth and sailed with family friends to America and a reunion with her parents. This time, Mary was leaving parents, husband, and friends to accompany her husband’s family as it journeyed to an unknown land in search of a religious sanctuary.

At her husband’s suggestion, Mary began recording her experiences and history in two small notebooks he provided for her. One became the first of at least six daily journals, which began with the river crossing. The other was a retrospective account of her life in England. While Mary kept her journals current, she only worked on the memorandum as time permitted and never completed it. However, the first seventeen years of Mary’s life are vividly portrayed in her descriptive writing.

The Memorandum
September 8, 1823, Chaigley, Lancashire, to December 25, 1840, aboard the Alliance

The Memorandum of Mary H Parker1 I Was Born in Chaigley. In the County of Lancashire. England. Sept 8. 1825 [1823]. My Father. then ocupide a Small. Farm. Near the Foot of Mount Longridge. In one of the most Beautyfull valeys. that my Eyes Ever Beheld. It lay Between 2 mountains. that Extend East and West. in a Stright Line for Near 10 Miles. & are near 10 miles. From the Summit of One. to the Summit of the Other. Forming a Half Sircle.1 In the Senter of the valey. is the River Other [Hodder]. Runing In the Same Derection With the Mountains1 My Father’s House was situwayted On the Main Road Between Preston. & Clithrow. Being 7 miles From the Nearest Town1 The mountain Stream Ran Singing
The Memorandum of Mary Parker, I was Born in Chaigley, in the County of Lancashire, England, Sept. 1525. My Father then Occupid a Small Farm near the Foot of Mount Schoongrige. In one of the most Beautyfull Valleys, that my Eyes Ever Beheld. It lay Between 2 Mountains that Extend East & West, in a Straight Line for Near 10 Miles. I are near 10 Miles from the Summit of One to the Summit of the other, Forming a Half Circle. In the Center of the Valley as the River Other Running In The Same Direction With the Mountains, by My Father's House was Situated on the Main Road Between Preston & Clithrow, Being 1 miles from Nearest Town. The Mountain Stream Ran Singing By The Door, joind by the Warbling notes of an number of Birds.
By The Door. joind by the Warbleing notes of unnumberd Birds Whose melody In the Spring & Samer together with other ajoining Beautys. made my Home apear Delightfull)

My Father had 5 sons and 5 Daughters of whom I was the youngest. when 4 years old I remember One Day standing By the Side of my Mother as She was Sowing the Seam of a garment thinking that I was able to saw as well as She. I Requested the Privilege. She then gave me a Piece of Old Cloth. witch affended me very mutch. She then left the room. so I thought I would try my hand upon her work. On returning & seeing what I had don. She was very willing that I should continu. when 4 years & half old. I was larned to wind Bobins. my Brothers & Sisters. most of them. Being weavers. when 5 years old I could Earn 4 shilings in one week. wich is equal to one Dollar. I Continued to wind Bobings. until most 8 years old. when I was released From this work. Cops [?] being Instatuted In the Place thereof. I went to scool. to miss Jenneta Richards. until most 10 years old)

I then learned to weave. & Continued to do so. For one year. when mrs willson Prevailed with my Mother. to let me live with Her. I Stayed with her 2 months then not likeing Situwaytion I returned Home. went to weaving again. until July 1837 when She again Prevailed with me to go Back & live another 2 months. I then returned Home. Stayed one night. the next Day went to Mr Seeds. who was my [blank space] a very respectable man. they had one Sweet little babe to wich I Became Nurse. in the Spring of 1838 It was reported one Sunday that an Amarican. was to preach. at Mr Richards Chappal accordingly I went in the Evening & heard a discourse Delivered by H C Kimball on the First Princeapals Principles of the gospel. Preached again on Monday & Tuesday Evenings. Babtised 6 Persons of whom my Brother John was one. the rev: mr Richards then Finding that He was loosing all His members Forbid them Preaching in his Chaple. Soon after I heard that my father and Brother Rodger was Babtised the next Sunday after them. my mother and sister Alice was Babtised also. after this the[y] held their meetings In my Father’s House. mr Seeds was very mutch oposed to the Saints and therefore was not willing that I should go to my Fathers House on acount of the meetings. 2 months after this I went home to See my Friends. it being on Sunday the house was filled mrJohn Alston addrest the meeting. follod by several others. I was mutch Pleased with the meeting. & retorned Back with a detarmination to become one of their number On the 21 of July I left mr Seeds. and returned Home. For the Purpoe of Being Babtised. they Said they were very sory. that I was willful to join the Mormons. and if It had not been For that Reason. they could not have Parted with me.) On the 6: of aug [1838] I was Babtised Into the Church of Jesus Crist Christ of Lattarday Saints. By William Kay. On the 11 I was Confirmed by Elders Wilard Richards & Joseph Falding [Fielding]. acordingly I Continued to live at Home. & weave as usal. being Frequently visited by Bro W Richards. J.
John Parker Sr., father of Mary Haskin Parker Richards. Rosabelle Streeper Gwynn collection.

Rodger, or Roger, Parker, brother of Mary Haskin Parker Richards. Photo by A. C. Hull, courtesy of Minerva Craig.

John Parker Jr., brother of Mary Haskin Parker Richards and father of Mary Ann Parker, second wife of Samuel Whitney Richards. Rosabelle Streeper Gwynn collection.

Richard Parker, brother of Mary Haskin Parker Richards; he remained in Lancashire, England. Rosabelle Streeper Gwynn collection.

Alice Parker Corbridge, sister of Mary Haskin Parker Richards. Rosabelle Streeper Gwynn collection.

Ellen Parker Corbridge, sister of Mary Haskin Parker Richards. Rosabelle Streeper Gwynn collection.
Fielding, F. Moon. & several others. from whom we Received good Instructions. & were strengthend From time to time. Being Now in the Church 3 months. I was visited by the Bev. [Rev.] mr. Aaron, a Church of England minister. who being very Desireous for the Welfare of Souls. Came to Convince me of my delusion. asked seaveral questions Concerning Mormonism. One was did I Beleve In Babbtism by Imersion. told Him yes. Asked for the Proff [proof] Refered to the 16 Chap of Mark also the 2 Chap of Acts this he said did not Prove that they Babbtised by Imersion. I then Referd to the 6 Chap of Romans wich speaks of their being buryed with Christ By Babbtism. he then said that those who were then Babbtised all walked In Newness of life I said. it did not Read that the[y] did but rather that the[y] Should. He then asked me if we Beleved the Bible as it Read. tould him I did. Mary Said he you must not. I will Mr Aaron Said I. For I think if the Lord is not able to Speak His word as He Intends it to be. I shall not trust to men to mend it. Then taking me by the arm he exclaimed. Oh Mary­Mary­Mary. Let us Pray. after wich he exprest many good wishes for our wellfare & departed. he often visited us after this and although my Mother & Sister were always preasent. yet he always directed his conversasion to me. often wishing me to attend his Church and hear him preach. but I perfered to Spend my Sabaths. were the gospel was preached p in its purety. on Sunday. morning. our meetings were held at brother James Corbridge's house 3 miles west. In the PM at my fathers and in the evening a bro W Blesdales 2 miles west these I always attended when my health and the weather would permit.

In the Spring of 1840: bro H C Kimball. P P Pratt. O Pratt & O Hyde again retorned to Eng: 2 weeks after they arived. bro Kimball visited us. was quite unwell. Said he had come. porpuse for sister Alice & my self to nurse him. Staid with us One week. in wich time I took mutch comfrt washin his feet. & administering to his wants. he often gave me good instructons. & pronounced many blessings on my head. during this sumer he often viseted & preached at my fathers house. it being the most conveneant house for meeting. he was often invited to Stay with the rest of the breathren yet with about 2 excepsions he allways stayed with us. One time wile washing his feet. he laid his hand upon my head & said. Mary. it Shall be said of you after many years. that you washed the feet of the Searvants of the Lord and administered to their wants. ei4he & the Lord Sayes that whosoever Shall give unto one of my Servants a drink of cold water shall in no wise loose his reward. Mary. you Shall See the day. when the remembrance of what you are now doing. shall be a consolasion to you. for there is great blessings laid up for you if you will be faithfull & adhere to my counsal. for I know you love to do anything for the Saints, and you Shall be blest. yea I say it in the name of the Lord. you Shall have your reworde. another day having been left alone in the sitting room he called me from my work. & desired me to
take a seat by his side. said he had some good counsel to give me if I would
promis to receve & keep it. I told him I wold. he then told me that I must
not get marid until I got to Nauvoo. brother Kimball said I. there is no danger
of that eve I am even to young altogether to young even to think of such a
thing. I know you are young. Mary said he. but remember you are growing
older every day. and I should not be surprised if you were tryed more than
once or twise before you reach Nauvoo. but if you will do as I say you shall
have the desire of your heart. and you shall enjoy greater bllessings than
you can even think of or immaging. you shall have a great porsion of the
Spirit of the Lord and you shall praise God because of the counsel wich I
give you. Sister Mary said he I wish you were with my wife. I know she
would love you and take good care of you. and I am sure you could not help
but love her. aboute the first of March Sister Mary Bleasdal and myself went
to Preston to visit some of our friends arived there aboute 9 oclock in the
morn spent the day very Pleasant & in the evening took a walk with my
cousen Robert Huntington. Sister M[ary] with my cousen John. they took
us through some of the most pleasent parts of the town. gave us some
preasents &C had a very pleasant walk. the next day attended meetting at
the Temperance Hall receved an interoduction to miss Ellen Wilding. In
the evening retorned home accompanied by my cousens R and J. also 2 other
young men. one by the name of W Potter who was very ancious to become
acquainted with me. 2 weeks afterwards he rote me a letter desiring my
company. promising to visit me on Easter Sunday. But having receved. an
invitation from the sisters in Chadborn. to visit them. I accordinly went on
Saturday and spent the eve. at mr Burns. the next morn attended meetting
at Downham. a large company of the Sisters went with me. my Brother John
& also Bro E Corbridge came to accompany me home. had a good meeting
in the afternoon attended meeting at Bro Halls in Chadborn in the Evening
retornado home. Sister Alice told me mr P. had been and was very mutch
disapointed at not finding me at home. he sent me another message by my
cousen to wich I replyed after wich he troubled me no more. Soon after this
a young man named William Willson. solisited my company. and apereared
very unwilling to be refused. One Saboth about the middle of June I went
to Wadington in company with W Kay. attended meeting there in the AM
& in the PM attended meeting at the Mills 8 miles from Chaidgley. in the
evening retorned home. had a pl[ll]easent time. about the 3 of September
[1840] my Parents commenced to make preparations to go to Amarica. On
the 5th took leve of the house where the[y] had lived for forty two years and
their native Country. Sister Alice. and my self accompanied them to
Preston. and at nine oclock. bade them goodbye. it was a very dark Night.
after we lost sight of them. sister Alice fainted and it was for some time before
we could bring her to. it was indeed a gloomy night to us booth. stayed the
night at Bro T [or Y] Richardsonsons. I was very sick all the night. the next morn
I took the railway Car to Longridge 8 miles then walked 6 miles was very sick all the way. reached home about 5 in the eve. after this was sick 4 weeks with the typhus fever. for 3 weeks was quite not expected to live. after which the fever tornd and I soon began to ammend. during my sickness. I was kindly taken care of by my dear Sister Alice. who administered day & night to my wants for which kindness may god reward her. about the 6 of October I went to visit my Sister Ellen. Sister Alice wept. & said she felt as though we should never live together more. Stayed with Ellen 3 weeks then went to visit Sister Isabella at Blackburn 12 miles from Chaidgley. Stayed with her 1 week then returned to get some things. expecting to live with her through the winter. went then back. & stayed with her 3 weeks. On the 7th of December. [1840] my Brother Rodger. & George Rhodas3 come to see me. the latter informed me that he together with Bro Bleasdales folks3 intended to sail for America on the 12. he told me if I would go with them he would furnish me whatsoever means I might be lacking to carry me to Nauvoo. My Bro & the Brethren of the Church Counceld me to go. so I took leave of my sister Isabella on the 8th [December 1840]. about 8 in the morn traviled about 4 miles & came to mellerbrook. found my Sister Ann. and stayed with her 2 hours. then after taking some refreshment took leve of her and her dear family. who wept much at my departure. travild 8 miles on foot and about 5 in the eve came to my Sister Ellens house. found her with a little Daughter near 3 weeks old herself very sick and also her Husband. Stayed & took care of them that night and til noon the next day. then went to see my Bro Richards folks about 2 miles East. Stayed with them till eve then went to Chipping. 3 miles N.W. to see my Bro Roberts folks. acampanied by my sister Alice and Bro E Corbridge visited with them about 2 hours. then bid the family good bye. Bro. R came with me about a mile. he not being a saint I gave him my testimony in regard to my faith in the work wich I had embraced and desired him to join the Church. & to gather with the Saints that I might hope. that one day ere long I might see his face again. I then bade him good bye & left him in tears. with but little hope that [I] should ever see his face more. got to Bro Johns about 11 oclock & slept that night with Sister Alice. the next day viseted among my friends. and at Evening. attended a Prayer meeting at Bro Johns house wich had been called on account of my being coming away. there was a number of Bretheren & Sisters who spoke & promised us their Prayers for our wellfare. we had a good meeting. at the latter part of wich I sung a few verses wich I had Composed as a farewell song to my Brothers & Sisters. Spent that night it being the last. with Sister Alice. the next morning took leave of Brother Richards family also Bro Johns family. traviled one mile and took leave of the spot that gave me birth. called to see our nearest neighbor Mrs Tayler. who came with me about a quarter of a mile and wept most bitterly to part with me about 10 oclock came to sister Ellens found her and William My
Brother in law still very sick. at 9 PM took leave of Brother Rodger and his family also William and Ellen and their dear Infant.

Never shall I forget the feeling that shriled through my bosom this day. while parting with all my dear Brothers & Sisters. and all my kindred who were near & dear to me by the ties of nature. and especialy my Dear Sick Sister and her companion. who needed my assistance. to travel to a distant Port. from there to venture upon the wide Expanded Ocean. behind which to wander in a strange Land in which I should be a stranger. hope at intervals would glimmer in my bosom. there dwells my Dear Parents. but what if God should please to take them to himself. E’er I be permitted to see them. I must bid an everlasting adieu to my native Land and to that dear spot that gave me birth. which had been the dwelling Place of my dear Parents for more than 40 years also of my forefathers for many years before them. ’tis true I was going with a family who had promised to befriend me. but what if they should forget their covenant and leave me a Stranger. in a Strange Land. the trial of parting with my Friends. together with these reflections. caused me to give vent to my tears. which until this time I had endeavored to conceal.

Past through Preston at Sundown the Night was very cold. about 5 the next morn came to Longton. put up at an Inn and took some refreshments. at 7 again proceeded past through several Villages and at 6 in the eve arrived in Liverpool. put up at a Taveran for the night. expecting to go on board a ship the next day. next morn Bro Bleasdale learned from the man with whom he had engaged our passage one week before that he intended to charge us for the same each 10 shillings more than we had engaged to pay. to this Bro B would not agree. and left the ship. Went forthwith and engaged our passage on board the Ealians [Alliance] bound for New York published to sail on the 23th [December]

then went and hired a room. of Mr. Birkinnight. where we lived 11 days. Bro Taylor was at this time delivering a Course of Lectures in the Music Hall [Liverpool] I attended several of them and was highly interested. while here became acquainted with several of the Saints whom I found to be agreeable. The 21st December was a general fast day here among the Saints and I fasted with them. After the AM service’ I went with Sister Birkinnight to a brothers house to see a sister Curtis who had lately arrived from America. She was the first American Woman. I ever saw.

to day I received an invitation’ from 2 young Sisters’ who had lived together in a Gentlemans family for 4 years. to visit them the next day’ with Sister Bir. next day came’ and sis B and myself went and made our visit. enjoyed ourselves exceeding well. found the young lady’s interesting & Amiable. they treated us very kindly’ presented me with some Books’ and requested me to keep them on remembrance of the giver. we stayed with them until 8 oclock in the evening. talking about the good things of the
 kingdom of our God. when after receiving many kind wishes for my wellfare and a promis of their prayers I took a kind leave of them & left them in tears. Bro William Taffingder having spent the eve with us. now very kindly accompanied me to the Ship and conducted me to that part of it that was destined to be my future home or rather my abode for a time all was dark and Gloomy. my freinds also seemed sorrowfull and dejected on enquiring the cause I was told that Bro Rhodes had been out in Town’ and had got Robed of all the Money he had–this brought a change upon our future prospects. he was the only one among us’ that possessed means. & he had promised to defray our expenses from NY to Nauvoo but now our hopes were Plighted

Sister Bleasdale says Mary the Ship will sail in the momin’ what shall we do. I replied our Passage is paid. our provisions are on Board. let us go to NY the Lord is just as able to sustain us there’ as he is’ if we should remain here. and so long as we walk uprightly before him’ we shall have no cause to fear. for he has promised that he will never forsake those who put their trust in him.

On the 23\textsuperscript{rd} [December] about 10 oclock we drew Angker and set sail. we were tawed out by a steam Boat. about 2 miles. which then left us.

it was with feelings of no ordinary kind’ that I took (my l) a last look upon my native shore’ which was now fast fading away’ in the distance. and Launched out’ upon the broad Atlantic Oacen we had a fair wind and our Gallant Ship’ bore us on Magesticly’ at the rate of 8 knotts per hour. Six Oclock Eve about this time most of the Passangers were sick mysilf among the rest. Nevertheless I rested tollerable good through the 24\textsuperscript{th} sister Bleasdale and myself both sick. nevertheless we made out to prepair our food’ and Bros Rhoads and Bleasdale. took it on deck to the fire’ and tended it while it was Cooking. but ‘twas little food I eat

25 Christmas day. pyes & Puddings were made’ and eat’ in all quarters of the Ship. but Mary cared nothing about them for she was to sick to eat.

the next Berth to mine was ocupied by two young Ladys’ who were following their intended husbands to America. one of them was proud and haughty. the other was pleasant and amiable. the latter be came my Companion during the voige. and was always very kind to me when sick. she always accompanied me on dect’ and when there’ remained by my side’ & assisted me to walk from one place to another. her name was Ann.

our Captin was an American. and was very kind. to us. he would often bring a cuple of Chairs out of the Cabin’ for Ann’ and me’ to sat on. in the Portch of the Cabin door. and would then give each of us a rope from the Mast wich stood in front of us’ to ballance ourselfs by. and would then Ask us if we ever enjoyed a nicer Rocking than we was then taking.

I used to ask him then if he did wish his [manuscript ends abruptly]
Nauvoo Temple on the hill, as seen from the river flats. Daguerreotype probably taken by Lucian Foster in the early spring of 1846; courtesy of LDS Historical Department.