

**SAMUEL TURNBOW  
ALABAMA'S FIRST MORMON CONVERT**

**by  
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When one thinks of Mormon pioneer history, the word “Alabama” does not immediately come to mind. If you search the index to the six-volume *History of the Church* under the word “Alabama,” you will find nothing. If you examine the reference work *Studies In Mormon History, 1830-1997, An Indexed Bibliography* by Allen, Walker, and Whitaker, for the subject “Alabama,” you will find nothing. The same is even true if one refers to the index of the four-volume *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*.

The same could be said for other major reference sources covering the 200 years since the birth of Joseph Smith, but perhaps the point has been sufficiently made. But the point is **not** that Alabama has no important connections to Joseph Smith and Mormonism. In other words, there is no need to erect historical roadside markers at the major highway entrances to

the State of Alabama which read: “Within the boundaries of this state, between the years 1830 and 1850, with respect to the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith and the church he founded, nothing happened.”

Rather, the point is that Alabama’s rich array of connections to Joseph Smith and his religious movement have heretofore gone virtually unnoticed by the historians, both Mormon and non-Mormon alike, and both Alabamian and non-Alabamian alike. There is no intellectual insult that surpasses being ignored, as the Mormon academic community itself well knows from past lonely experience.

A couple of years ago, I read in the *Church News* about the baptism in 1873 of Chief Sagwitch of the Shoshone Nation who had experienced a series of dreams and requested baptism.<sup>i</sup> The baptism was performed by a highly successful Mormon missionary to the Indians, conversationally fluent in their language, named George Washington Hill. As I read the article, I said to myself: “I bet I am the only mortal on planet earth who knows that George Washington Hill was baptized by a native Alabamian and that he married a native Alabama girl.”<sup>ii</sup> And then a more sure thought struck me: I may be the only person on planet earth that cares.

This native Alabamian who baptized Hill was Benjamin Clapp.<sup>iii</sup> Clapp also baptized at least two members of Brigham Young's vanguard company,<sup>iv</sup> as well as James Madison Flake of Mississippi<sup>v</sup> whose son William Jordan Flake is half the namesake for Snowflake, Arizona.<sup>vi</sup> Furthermore, Clapp baptized Alabama's first convert, as I will discuss shortly.

In truth, early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with significant Alabama connections participated in many important events and contributed to the most prominent movements of the church. For example, there was an Alabamian at the Battle of Crooked River,<sup>vii</sup> and he was on the Mormon side! There was another Alabamian in the Mormon Battalion,<sup>viii</sup> another in Brigham Young's vanguard company,<sup>ix</sup> another who worked on the Nauvoo Temple and fought in the Black Hawk War,<sup>x</sup> and another who fought with Lot Smith's raiders in Echo Canyon.<sup>xi</sup> At least six Alabamians were buried at Winter Quarters, five of the six being from one family,<sup>xii</sup> and more were buried in unmarked graves along the Platte.<sup>xiii</sup>

Alabamian John D. Holladay, for whom Holladay, Utah, is named, holds the record for the longest wagon trek of any Mormon family to the Salt Lake Valley.<sup>xiv</sup> He was one of approximately 20 Alabamians who arrived at

Ft. Laramie a full year ahead of Brigham Young, wintered in Colorado, and then entered the Salt Lake Valley only five days after Brigham Young.<sup>xv</sup>

By the way, John Brown, a southerner from Tennessee, who had labored as a missionary in Alabama,<sup>xvi</sup> planted turnip greens on the valley floor within 8 days of Brigham Young's arrival.<sup>xvii</sup> That may sound like pure trivia to a Westerner, but true Southerners don't trust people who won't eat turnip greens.

Two pre-exodus missionaries to Alabama, Hayden Church and Absolom Porter Dowdle, married their Alabama converts.<sup>xviii</sup> These two women and many other Alabama Mormon women played silent and unrecognized roles in colonizing the Mormon west.<sup>xix</sup> One Alabama widow was a founding pioneer of Ogden, Utah,<sup>xx</sup> and other Alabama women were part of the Cotton Mission to "Dixie" in 1861.<sup>xxi</sup>

William Carter, the first Mormon to plow ground in Salt Lake and St. George, was married to two Alabama women, at the same time of course.<sup>xxii</sup> Being married to only one Alabama woman myself, he has my greatest admiration. My wife Dianne is not in here is she? (Just in case you were wondering, neither Alabama woman was a cousin of Brother Carter.)

On a very serious note, there is one significant reason why **less** Alabama Mormon history has been written, a reason for which Alabamians can be truly thankful. At least thus far, Alabama is the only state amongst its abutting neighboring states of Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Florida that cannot be accused of violently murdering a Mormon because of his religion.<sup>xxiii</sup>

The remaining focus of my presentation today will relate to Alabama's first convert baptism into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was baptized on March 3, 1840, in rural Perry County, Alabama, and his name was Samuel Turnbow.<sup>xxiv</sup> What occurred in Samuel's life prior to his baptism seems to be as equally noteworthy as what occurred afterwards.

On June 11, 1829, as the Book of Mormon was being submitted for copyright in Utica, New York, by 23-year-old Joseph Smith, Samuel's father, 66-year-old Issac Turnbow, lay on his death bed in Perry County. Issac, the son of a Revolutionary War soldier, was a God-fearing, Bible-reading, Tennessee volunteer under General Andrew Jackson, and had purposefully never joined a church.<sup>xxv</sup>

The following quote is taken from the personal memoirs of Samuel

Turnbow which he penned while living in Utah. According to his record, Samuel was called to his dying father's bedside and told that before the Second Coming of the Lord:

[T]here shall first be raised up prophets and apostles who will preach the gospel to this generation, and that it was near at hand, even at their doors...and that a great prophet would soon appear amongst the people who would declare the principles of the everlasting gospel...[,]prepare the way of the Lord,...[and] bring in all the former blessings, and the Church of Christ will be established with all its gifts with Apostles who will receive revelations from God....<sup>xxvi</sup>

Over the next four years, Samuel, a non-slaveholder, engaged in the grinding physical labor associated with non-mechanized farming, often pondering his father's last words.<sup>xxvii</sup> Then in the early predawn morning of November 13, 1833, there occurred an unprecedented meteor storm wherein fiery shooting stars are said to have been as numerous as flakes of falling snow.<sup>xxviii</sup> This phenomenal meteor storm became the inspiration for a national hit song a century later entitled "Stars Fell On Alabama,"<sup>xxix</sup> and those words from that song currently adorn Alabama's car tags, replacing the less racially sensitive phrase, "Heart of Dixie."

In those early morning hours of November 13, 1833, Joseph Smith was

aroused from his sleep in Kirtland, Ohio, by a brother who urged him to come behold the stars falling from heaven.<sup>xxx</sup> In those same early morning hours in Alabama, while lying in his bed, Samuel experienced a vision.<sup>xxx1</sup> There suddenly appeared at Samuel's bedside an aged person who, according to Samuel, escorted him on a journey along a dark and stormy path wherein their way to safety was made manifest by a narrow shaft of light that became brighter as Samuel fervently prayed in the name of Jesus Christ. In time they arrived at a house where Samuel saw the prophet Joseph Smith, whom he had never met and whom he would never meet in life.<sup>xxxii</sup> This young prophet, whose name was not revealed in the vision, was preaching to others the first principles of the gospel and, after consecrating a bottle of olive oil, healing the sick, the blind, and the deaf.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Wrote Samuel, "These things passed before my eyes and I knew that this man was a righteous man and a Holy prophet of God...."<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Almost seven more years would pass before Samuel was taught the restored gospel by missionary Benjamin Clapp.<sup>xxxv</sup> The teaching process was short because Samuel quickly recognized and joyfully received the principles taught as being the very same principles he had heard in his prior vision. He

was baptized.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Samuel was a powerful member missionary. He successfully introduced his newly found religion to several close relatives<sup>xxxvii</sup> and two sets of neighboring families,<sup>xxxviii</sup> as well as others, and thus assisted in establishing by 1843 two thriving branches of the church in his county.<sup>xxxix</sup>

After serving a five-month mission to Mississippi<sup>xl</sup> and then selling on New Years Day of 1846 his 160-acre farm for approximately half its value,<sup>xli</sup> Samuel Turnbow and his wife Sylvira and their six living children, like other Alabama families, became part of the faithful who gathered to the Zion of Nauvoo<sup>xlii</sup> and then to the Zion of the Salt Lake Valley.<sup>xliii</sup> Along the way, the Turnbows buried a child in Iowa,<sup>xliv</sup> survived that first harsh winter in Winter Quarters,<sup>xlv</sup> and, in the summer of 1847, birthed another child in a temporarily halted wagon box on the plains of Nebraska.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Other early Alabama members of the church who failed to heed the warnings of church leaders to sell their lands and gather with the main body of the church incurred a double penalty. First, those who remained in Alabama suffered through the turmoil, ravages, and heartbreak of the Civil War, and the long-term economic devastation that came in its aftermath.

Church members who remained in Alabama lost whatever pre-war wealth they had accumulated. Secondly, Alabama members were left without ecclesiastical direction by a church headquarters consumed with regrouping and colonizing the west. None of Alabama's seven pre-exodus congregations<sup>xlvii</sup> survived the general migration west. Is it not ironic that in Samuel's beloved Perry County, Alabama, where he labored to establish two thriving branches of the church, a truly outstanding accomplishment for the Nauvoo period, there are today no branches of the church?

But the now countless descendants of the faithful Alabama Mormon pioneers who gathered to Zion are on the whole dedicated contributors to the building of the kingdom, Latter-day Saints who have sung in the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, served missions across the globe, and faithfully filled callings and assignments in numbers untold without fanfare or accolades. Indeed, they are part of what makes up the very backbone of the LDS Church—ordinary, unsung, non-heroes who simply “get the job done.”

As we pause to recognize the Prophet Joseph Smith in this the 200th anniversary of his birth year, we might reflect for a moment on a singular type of evidence for his prophetic calling that the false prophets find difficult

to duplicate. And that is this: There are many credible stories of people who had never heard of or met Joseph Smith, and while living in locations where Joseph Smith had never lived or visited, they dreamed dreams and had visions relating to Joseph Smith and his work—dreams and visions sufficiently real and powerful to compel the recipients thereof to sell their lands and personal possessions, endure the persecutions attendant to joining an infant, unpopular, and misunderstood religious movement, and confront the hardships associated with a total relocation hundreds of miles away to an unknown place to face with bare faith in Christ an uncertain future.

May I close with the words of the Old Testament Prophet Joel followed by a personal thought on Mormon history.

And it shall come to pass...that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

\* \* \*

And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth. (Joel 2: 28; 30)

In my humble opinion, no historian, notwithstanding his or her erudite education, extended experience, exhausting evidence, or elevated office, will ever be able to fully and accurately account for Joseph Smith and his

monumental accomplishments, unless that historian gives complete and adequate consideration to the direct interventions of God, which interventions I believe to be historical facts.

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## ENDNOTES

i. John L. Hart, "Native Americans Own Sacred Site," *Church News* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Morning News, March 29, 2003), 7.

ii. George Washington Hill was baptized in early June of 1847 by Benjamin Clapp who was born in Huntsville, Alabama on August 19, 1814. Hill was baptized in Winter Quarters shortly before he departed with his family for the Rocky Mountains. He requested baptism from Clapp after attending a debate between a challenging protestant minister and Clapp, a seasoned missionary who had earlier served four productive missions, one to Kentucky (1838) and three to Alabama and Mississippi (1839-1840; 1843-1844 with 118 baptisms; 1844-1845 with 15 baptisms). Clapp had also teamed as a member-missionary with Wilford Woodruff on 15 different occasions in 1835 and 1836 in Kentucky. [See endnote no. iii.] Carol Cornwall Madsen, "George Washington Hill," *Journey To Zion - Voices From The Mormon Trail* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1997), 355-373.

George Richard Hill, the oldest son of George Washington Hill, reported that his father later told him the following about the debate which took place in a log cabin:

The argument of Elder Clapp was so complete, the picture he drew so beautiful, and the promises held out so grand to the obedient, that [I]...approached Elder Clapp and said: 'Here is water; I must be baptized.'

Ralph O. Brown, *The Life and Missionary Labors of George Washington Hill* (Provo, Utah: unpublished abstract of thesis submitted to Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library catalogue no. 378.2, B81, 1956), 16.

George Washington Hill married Cynthia Utley Stewart on September 18, 1845. Hill was a non-Mormon at the time of the marriage. Miss Stewart was born in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama on January 15, 1823. She, too, was baptized by Clapp, the baptism being performed in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama on May 25, 1842. The Hills were in the 1847 Abraham O. Smoot company of pioneers with Samuel Turnbow and wife Sylvira Turnbow, Alabama's first converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "Cynthia Utley Stewart Hill," *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. II (Salt Lake City, Utah: International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 1353-1354.

iii. Benjamin Clapp, at age 31, had been set apart by Apostles Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, and George A. Smith on

December 2, 1845 as one of the Seven Presidents of the Seventy. He was shortly thereafter assigned as one of the first to officiate in the Nauvoo Temple. Clapp had previously been ordained a Seventy on October 20, 1844.

Clapp, at the age of 20, was baptized into the church in western Kentucky by Wilford Woodruff, a 28-year-old missionary serving as an ordained priest in the Aaronic Priesthood. Clapp was baptized on June 21, 1835 while he and his young family were living in Graves County, Kentucky near his parents who lived across the county line in Calloway County, Kentucky. The two Clapp homes were successful locations for Woodruff's cottage meetings. Woodruff either stayed with the two Clapp families or conducted meetings in their homes, or both, on 24 occasions between April 14, 1835 and September 11, 1836. Benjamin Clapp, as a member missionary, accompanied Woodruff in his missionary labors 15 times between October 23, 1835 and September 18, 1836.

Clapp was ordained a teacher by Woodruff on August 18, 1835 in Clapp's father's home. Clapp was ordained a priest by Woodruff at a conference held on February 26, 1836 in Clapp's father's home. Clapp was ordained an elder by apostle David Patten at a conference held in Calloway County, Kentucky on September 3, 1836.

The following appears in the personal journal of Wilford Woodruff under the date of September 19, 1836 with regard to the gathering to Missouri:

Is a day long to be remembered by me  
& others in consequence of the interesting  
scenes transpired with the saints of God  
in the south. Isaiah & others of the ancient  
prophets testify to us of the great events of  
the last days especially of the literal gathering  
of Israel. They say the Saints shall gather  
from the east & from the west & that the north  
shall give up & the south keep not back. [See  
Isaiah 43:5-6] This interesting day had now  
arrived. Yea the 19<sup>th</sup> of Sept 1836 when  
some of the saints of God in the south began  
to take their families[,] their chariots[,]  
wagons[,] their oxen, their horses[,] their tents[,]  
their armor & move towards Zion as the children  
of Israel according to the command of God....

The company consisted of four families with three Elders as follows: Lewis Clapp & his family, John Camp & his family, Albert Petty & his family & Elder Benjamin Clapp & his family, also Elders Boydstun & Cathcart.

\* \* \*

This company of the south were principally the first fruits of my ministry.

\* \* \*

I endeavored to lay before them the worth & value of the cause they were engaged in & that they were the first in fulfilling the prophets who spake of the south keeping not back & that it would be recorded upon the archives of heaven to be read in the day of eternity that they were the first fruits of the south who had spread their tents for Zion.

In 1838, Clapp participated in the Battle of Crooked River. (See endnote no. vii.) Clapp and his young family endured the Missouri persecutions and were a part of the mass expulsion from the state as a result of the infamous extermination order of Governor Lilburn W. Boggs. In 1843, Clapp took part in the rescue of Joseph Smith who had been kidnaped. On June 12, 1844, Clapp received his patriarchal blessing from Hyrum Smith who would be murdered about two weeks later. In the blessing, Clapp was told that his name would be “perpetuated from generation to generation.” On August 7, 1846, Clapp was appointed by the apostles to serve on the high council in Winter Quarters. In July of 1850, Clapp was appointed chaplain of the first company of saints to cross the plains with the aid of the Perpetual Immigration Fund. On January 9, 1851, Clapp was appointed to the city council in newly incorporated Great Salt Lake City. In 1855 he was appointed president of the Texas Mission and from there later led a wagon company of saints to the valley. Sadly, on April 7, 1859, while living in Fort Ephraim, Utah, he was excommunicated for selling hay and wheat to U. S. occupation forces under General Albert Sydney Johnston in contravention of his bishop’s counsel. In an escalating conflict with his bishop on this issue, Clapp encouraged other members of the church to join him in such church-prohibited sales. Clapp died six years later on October 31, 1865 in California, still firm in the faith but without his membership. [Several historical writings contain an erroneous death date of 1860.] His temple blessings were posthumously restored. Clapp is

thus far the only native Alabamian who has served as a general authority in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The foregoing information on Clapp is taken from the following sources: S. Dilworth Young, "The Seventies: A Historical Perspective," *Ensign Magazine* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, July 1976), 14; Andrew Jenson, "Benjamin L. Clapp," *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Andrew Jensen History Co., 1901-1936) 195 (catalogue no. BX8670.J451b, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University); Eugene Olsen, et al., *History of Benjamin Lynn Clapp* (unpublished manuscript in possession of the author, undated), 10-23; Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff-Story of His Life and Labors* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1964, 6<sup>th</sup> printing 1975), 57-61; *Wilford Woodruff's Journal* for time periods covering 1835 and 1836; Andrew Jenson, *Church Chronology*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1914), 30,41; Lawrence R. Flake, "Benjamin Lynn Clapp," *Mighty Men of Zion* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Press, 1974), 408-409.

iv. Benjamin Clapp baptized James Wesley Stewart (8th Ten) in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama and Joseph Lazarus Matthews (Captain of the 14<sup>th</sup> Ten) in Neshoba County, Mississippi. "Biographies of the Original 1847 Pioneer Company," *1997-98 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1996), 143;151.

v. Osmer D. Flake, *William J. Flake, Pioneer-Colonizer* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, April 2000), 3-4; Carol Ann McQuilkin, *Journey of Faith: Mid-Nineteenth Century Migration of Mississippi Mormons and Slaves* (Fullerton, California: manuscript thesis presented to California State University, 1996), 24-30.

vi. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, "Snowflake, Arizona," *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 1154-1155.

vii. Benjamin Clapp, a native of Huntsville, Alabama, fought at the Battle of Crooked River. This armed conflict was between a company of Missouri state militia and a contingent of Mormon men who were intent upon freeing three prisoners being wrongfully held under threat of execution by the Missouri militia. The successful rescue of the three prisoners occurred on October 25, 1838 in northern Ray County, Missouri. Combined casualties from both sides were 4 killed and 13 wounded. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, "Crooked River, Battle of," *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 265-266.

Following this battle, Clapp along with Samuel Smith (the younger brother

of the prophet Joseph Smith) and several others escaped a posse of approximately 50 pursuing Missouri militiamen by the timely aid of a blinding snowstorm. Lawrence R. Flake, "Benjamin Lynn Clapp," *Mighty Men of Zion* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Press, 1974), 408.

viii. Jeduthan Averett was a private in Company D under Nelson Higgins. After arriving in Santa Fe, he became a part of Captain James Brown's sick detachment to Pueblo, the third such sick detachment to join the Mississippi/Alabama Saints.

The Mormon Battalion was a U.S. military unit of about 500 Latter-day Saint men who served in the Mexican War of 1846-1848. This military unit holds the unique distinction of having accomplished the longest infantry march in American military history. The main body of the force marched more than 2,000 miles, a distance greater than half the North American continent, and 474 miles of the march was through the trackless deserts of the southwestern United States. Norma Baldwin Ricketts, *The Mormon Battalion-U.S. Army of the West, 1846-1848* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1996).

In 1836, Averett was married in Perry County, Alabama to Holly Jane Tingle, a native of Bibb County, Alabama. He was a longtime resident of the State of Alabama and was residing in Perry County, Alabama in 1843 when he and his wife were baptized into the church by Elder James Brown who would later serve as Averett's commanding officer in the battalion. Averett served as branch president of the Five Mile Branch of the church in Perry (now Hale) County, Alabama until he left Alabama in 1845 for Nauvoo. After entering the Salt Lake Valley with other battalion members and the Mississippi/Alabama Saints, he returned to his family in Winter Quarters. He served in a branch presidency in Potawattamie County, Iowa before migrating with his family to Utah in 1852. In Utah, he was employed for six years (1852-1858) by Brigham Young. Shirley N. Maynes, "Holly (Holla) Jane Tingle Averett," *Five Hundred Wagons Stood Still-Mormon Battalion Wives* (Sandy, Utah: self-published, 1999), 41-44. (The fact of Averett's longtime residence, marriage, and conversion in Alabama has been inadvertently omitted from almost all historical publications relating to members of the Mormon Battalion, there only being mention that Averett was born in North Carolina.)

According to his obituary in the *Deseret Evening News* of January 11, 1902, he died in Springville, Utah with 71 grandchildren surviving him.

Samuel Turnbow, the primary subject of this article, was present in July of 1846 in Council Bluffs, Iowa when Jeduthan Averett and the other members of the Mormon Battalion participated in a going-away party and received a farewell

address from President Brigham Young. *Memoirs*, 41. (See endnote xxiv for an explanation of the citation to “*Memoirs*.”)

Averett was not the only man with Alabama connections to work for Brigham Young. Issac, a former slave, was Brigham Young’s coachman. Issac had labored on the cotton plantations of Mormon convert Thomas Bedford Graham in Alabama and Mississippi. Heber J. Grant, who later became president of the church, was saved by Issac and Brigham Young from a near-frozen condition when Heber J. Grant was about 6 years of age. Kate B. Carter, *The Story of the Negro Pioneer* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1965), 33-35.

ix. James Wesley Stewart was a member of the 1847 pioneer vanguard company. Stewart was born May 19, 1825, in Fayette County, Alabama. He was the son of George and Ruthinda Baker Stewart who were founding stalwarts of the Sipsey Branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in northwest Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. (“Sipsey” is sometimes mistakenly spelled “Cyptry” in early historical writings, probably due to a misreading of the personal handwriting of correspondent missionary John Brown.) He later served a mission to the southern states where he met Jane Grover, whom he married. They lived first in Davis County and then Morgan County, Utah. He died at age 87 on March 22, 1913, in Cokeville, Wyoming. “Biographies of the Original 1847 Pioneer Company,” *1997-98 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1996), 151. James Wesley Stewart fathered 25 children by two wives. His second wife was Elzira Corbitt. *Family Group Sheet* submitted by James W. Stewart and on microfilm at Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

Four younger brothers of James Wesley Stewart, namely George Rufus Stewart, William Anderson Stewart, Isaiah Lawrence Stewart, and Joseph Virgil Anderson Stewart, were also 1847 Mormon pioneers who arrived in the wake of the vanguard company. The Stewart brothers had five sisters who were likewise pioneers of 1847. All ten of the children were born in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, with the exception of the youngest, a girl born in Missouri four months after her father’s death while the fatherless family was attempting to find the main body of the saints. In Utah, George and William married daughters of Jonathan Browning, the famous gunsmith and weapons inventor. There is a very large posterity of Stewarts which derive from these ancestral lines. William, for instance, fathered 23 children by two wives. William later served as bishop in both Central and Annabelle, Utah, as well as a legislator and justice of the peace. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, “William Anderson Stewart,” *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. IV (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 2464-2467; *Family Group Sheet*

submitted by Nina Frances Baker and on microfilm at the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

A son of James Wesley Stewart became a city councilman and county commissioner in Morgan County, Utah. Frank Elwood Esshom, "James W. Stewart," *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Western Epic, 1966), 1187.

x. John D. Holladay, Jr., the oldest son of John D. Holladay of Marion County, Alabama, labored on the Nauvoo Temple. In the spring of 1845, at age 19, he traveled from Alabama to Nauvoo. Holladay probably traveled with Abraham O. Smoot who was returning to church headquarters in May of 1845 after serving as Alabama's first mission president. Smoot labored in Alabama and Mississippi from December 19, 1844 to May 1845 after having been called at the October 1844 general conference. Smoot was set apart on November 3, 1844, by John Taylor. Taylor had only recently recovered from wounds received in the mob's attack against Joseph Smith, himself, and others at the Carthage Jail. Smoot arrived back in Nauvoo after the conclusion of his mission on May 27, 1846.

Smoot's mother-in-law, Esther McMeans, was a resident of Decatur, Alabama. Smoot had baptized her while on a mission in Tennessee in 1841.

While the youthful Holladay lived with the Smoot family in Nauvoo, he worked in the stone quarry procuring rock for the temple and chopping timber on the river above Nauvoo. In the fall of 1845, he worked on the roof and tower of the temple. He became seriously ill in September of 1845, but recovered and returned to Marion (now Lamar) County, Alabama in December of that year. He last resided in Alabama in March of 1846 when the family departed for the Rocky Mountains one year ahead of Brigham Young's 1847 vanguard company. Avis Milton Holladay, Sr., *The Holladay Family* (Nashville, Tennessee: self-published, 1994), 177; Loretta D. Nixon and L. Douglas Smoot, *Abraham Owen Smoot-A Testament of His Life* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1994), 130-132; Archibald F. Bennett, "Abraham O. Smoot, Pioneer," *Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 79 (1944), 467 (catalogue no. BX8605.1N7 at Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University); C. Elliott Berlin, *Abraham Owen Smoot, Pioneer Mormon Leader* (Provo, Utah: thesis presented to Brigham Young University, 1955), 36-38.

The Black Hawk War was a seven-year (1865-1872) Indian War. Black Hawk was a Ute chief who led a confederacy of various Native American tribes which made raids on Mormon settlements. Peterson, John A, "Black Hawk War," *Utah History Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1994) 43-44.

John D. Holladay, Jr., who had migrated continuously from Alabama to Colorado, then back to Mississippi, and then to Utah (all between 1846-1848), and then to California, and then back to Utah (1851-1857), was a resident of Santaquin, Utah at the time of his enlistment in the Black Hawk War. Avis Milton Holladay, Sr., *The Holladay Family* (Nashville, Tennessee: self-published, 1994), 177-178; John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 66-71.

xi. John Gillenroy Turnbow, born September 13, 1833 in Perry County, Alabama, was part of Smith's cavalry. Olive G. Stone, *Turnbow-Turnbough Family of U. S. A* (Provo, Utah: self-published, 1970) 119.

The Utah War of 1857-1858 was the largest military operation in the United States between the Mexican War and the Civil War. President James Buchanan, based on inaccurate information, felt it necessary to order 2,500 federal troops to enforce the installation of the newly appointed territorial governor for Utah, Alfred Cumming. The troops were led by General Albert Sidney Johnston who would later become a Confederate General and die in the Civil War at the Battle of Shiloh.

Lot Smith led a Mormon cavalry that impeded the federal troops by burning the ground before them, capturing hundreds of government cattle, and burning three supply trains. These actions delayed the advance and forced the federal army into winter quarters 100 mountainous miles east of Salt Lake City. During the stall, peace was successfully negotiated. Daniel H. Ludlow, editor, "Utah Expedition," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, Vol. 4, (New York, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 1500-1501.

xii. Winter Quarters was in present-day Florence, Nebraska on the west bank of the Missouri River. It was a place of temporary layover for a large portion of the Mormon exodus from the United States in 1846. The Mormons had been driven by force from Nauvoo, Illinois, a city built by the Mormons and inhabited by more than 15,000 of them at the time of their expulsion. Nauvoo is the only city in the United States to ever come under siege by fellow Americans. Fatigue, malnutrition, disease, and exposure resulted in the deaths of some 2,000 Latter-day Saints in the general area of Winter Quarters between June 1846 and October 1848. Daniel H. Ludlow, editor, "Winter Quarters," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, Vol. 4, (New York, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 1568-1569.

Few families, if any, experienced more death in Winter Quarters than did the family of Samuel Walton Utley of Perry County, Alabama. As a result of contracting measles, compounded by exhaustion, malnutrition, and exposure

associated with the conditions surrounding expulsion-travel, five of the eight family members died. Henry Lafayette Utley, age 7, died on October 3, 1847; Maria (a/k/a Mariah) Berry Utley, the mother, died October 14, 1847; James Williams Saunders Utley, the oldest son, died November 5, 1847; son Jacob Jefferson Utley died November 12, 1847; and a daughter named Sarah Utley, age 16, died November 18, 1847. At the time of these deaths, the Utleys were permissively living in the vacated log cabin built by Alabama neighbor Samuel Turnbow who had left in the spring of 1847 with the first wave of Mormon pioneers. The father, Samuel Walton Utley, would himself later die of cholera in Nebraska while on the trail to Utah. Winnifred Harker Smith (granddaughter of Winter Quarters survivor Harriet Temperance Utley), *Sketch Or Autobiography of Harriet Temperance (Utley) Carter*, unpublished manuscript presented to the Dixie Camp of Daughters of Utah Pioneers in St. George, Utah on May 14, 1953. *Family Group Sheet*, submitted by Frances Baker and on microfilm at Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

Two orphaned Utley children, Harriet and Gabriel, reached Utah in 1852 and were taken in and cared for by their former Alabama neighbors, Samuel and Sylvira Turnbow. (See endnote no. xxii regarding Harriet Utley.) Gabriel Marion Utley, then age 8, had been born in Perry County, Alabama on the very same day that Joseph Smith was murdered in Carthage, Illinois. Gabriel Utley was the sole survivor to adulthood of eight Alabama-born Utley boys, born to brothers Samuel and Little John Utley. Gabriel Utley became a blacksmith, married, fathered 15 children, served in a bishopric in Mesquite, Nevada, and later moved to “Dixie” in southern Utah. He died in 1929. Frank Elwood Esshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Western Epic, 1966), 1221.

According to a written statement by Grace Pixton McEvan, granddaughter of Harriet Temperance Utley Carter, McEvan had the privilege with a few others in 1936 of unveiling the Winter Quarters Monument containing the names of her deceased ancestors.

Robert Dowdle, a resident of Franklin and Lawrence Counties, Alabama, died in Winter Quarters on September 5, 1847. Harold L. Dowdle, M.A., Ph.D., *Robert Dowdle, Sr., and His Descendants* (Provo, Utah: Stevenson’s Genealogy Center, 1990), 194-198. Several of Robert Dowdle’s family members migrated successfully to Utah, including his son Robert Hughes Dowdle, a native of Lawrence County, Alabama. Robert Hughes Dowdle had been born on the day that the church was organized, April 6, 1830. He fathered 27 children by two wives and served as a constable and justice of the peace in Utah. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, “Robert Hughes Dowdle,” *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart*

*Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. I (Salt Lake City, Utah: National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 705-707.

xiii. Other Alabamians dying along the trail include, but are not limited to, Samuel Walton Utley, Elizabeth Rutledge Utley, Martha Ann Smith Utley Adams whose full term, or near full term, unborn child also died within her womb, and the 3-year-old daughter of Martha Ann Smith Utley Adams. “Harriet Temperance Utley Carter,” *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. I (Salt Lake City, Utah: International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 515-516; “Elizabeth Rutledge Utley,” *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. IV (Salt Lake City, Utah: International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 3186-3187.

Sarah Ann McCrory Graham died on the trail during the Iowa phase of the march from Nauvoo. Kate B. Carter, *The Story of the Negro Pioneer* (Salt Lake City, Utah; Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1965), 33-34. Also buried on the Iowa trail was the infant daughter of Samuel and Sylvira Turnbow whose name was Laura Ann Turnbow. Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff-History of His Life and Labors* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1964, 6<sup>th</sup> printing 1975), 250. (See endnote no. xliv.)

xiv. Holladay and his large family left Marion County Alabama in March of 1846. They traveled to nearby eastern Mississippi to join John Brown’s Rocky Mountain-bound group. From there they traveled to Independence, Missouri, then to Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, then approximately 300 miles south to Pueblo, Colorado, then back to Ft. Laramie, Wyoming, then into the Salt Lake Valley, arriving on July 29, 1847, only five days after Brigham Young. Holladay’s family and extended family, which included one daughter who was married to Allen Smithson and another daughter who was married to Absalom Porter Dowdle, constituted one of the two largest family clans in the so-called Mississippi Saints. The Holladay relatives in this clan were:

John Daniel Holladay and wife Catherine Holladay and six of their unmarried children, John Daniel Holladay, Jr., Karen Holladay, Keziah D. Holladay, David Holladay, Thomas M. W. Holladay, and Lenora Holladay (8) [John Daniel Holladay, Jr. did not remain in Pueblo, but returned with John Brown and others to Mississippi that winter.]

Sara Ann Holladay Dowdle and husband Absalom Porter Dowdle and their child born in route, Sarah Catherine Dowdle (3)

Letitia Holladay Smithson and husband Allen Freeman Smithson and their children John Bartley Smithson, Sarah Catherine Smithson, James Davis Smithson, and Mary Emma Smithson (6)

Others with significant Alabama connections were also with the group, including George Washington Bankhead and Benjamin F. Matthews, both of whom were born in Alabama. Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, Vol. 2 (Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1959), 456; 467.

The group as a whole has probably been called “Mississippi Saints,” as opposed to “Alabama Saints,” because there were more Mississippians than Alabamians and the group was led primarily by Mississippi men, particularly John Brown, a native of Tennessee, who had married a Mississippi convert to the church and resided with her in Mississippi prior to the migration west. However, leader John Brown left the group after the sojourners safely arrived in Pueblo. The new ecclesiastical leader became Absolom Porter Dowdle, a native of Franklin County, Alabama. Avis Milton Holladay, Sr., *The Holladay Family* (Nashville, Tennessee: self-published, 1994), 172-178; Norma B. Ricketts, “The Forgotten Pioneers: Parts One and Two.” *Crossroads*, Vol. 8, Nos. 2,3, and 4 (Oregon-California Trails Association, Spring, Summer, and Fall 1997), Part One 1-12, Part Two 5-9; John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 66-71; Carol Ann McQuilkin, *Journey of Faith: Mid-Nineteenth Century Migration of Mississippi Mormons and Slaves* (Fullerton, California: manuscript thesis presented to California State University, 1996), 57-77; Stephen L. Carr, ed., *Holladay-Cottonwood: Places and Faces* (Holladay, Utah: Holladay-Cottonwood Heritage Committee, 1976), 8-10.

xv. *Id.*

During the 1846 trek through Missouri, John D. Holladay instructed his 10-year-old son, Thomas M. W. Holladay, to undertake a journey for the purchase of a bushel of wheat. Thomas traveled on horseback 100 miles round trip to Taos, Missouri where he purchased a superior grade of wheat which became the seed wheat for the so-called Taos wheat. This wheat became universally known as the best wheat in the inter-mountain west. Thomas later married co-traveler Ann H. Matthews in San Bernardino, California in 1856. Ann had been baptized in Mississippi by Benjamin Clapp in 1846. She and her husband had 10 children. Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2 (Salt Lake City, Utah: Sons of Utah Pioneers Memorial Foundation Publishers, 1901), 396-397; Avis Milton Holladay, Sr., *The Holladay Family* (Nashville, Tennessee: self-published, 1994), 180-181.

xvi. John Brown arrived in Alabama on August 24, 1843. He married a convert from Mississippi, Elizabeth Crosby, on May 21, 1844. He served in Alabama and Mississippi from time to time in connection with various assignments

until he permanently left to join the vanguard pioneer company in 1847. John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 41,50,71.

Historians are tremendously indebted to John Brown who regularly kept a journal of his activities. It is through his journals that we obtain most of the known information about the seven pre-exodus branches of the church in Alabama.

xvii. Turnip seeds were planted by John Brown not later than August 1, 1847. By that time, all of the seeds that had been earlier planted on July 24, 1847, which may also have included turnip seeds, had successfully sprouted. John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941) 78, 81.

xviii. On December 19, 1844, in Perry County, Alabama, Hayden Church married Sarah Ann Arterbury, a native of Dallas County, Alabama. Church had baptized Miss Arterbury into the Boguechitto Branch of the church in Perry County, Alabama on October 25, 1843. Shirley N. Maynes, "Sarah Ann Arterbury Church," *Five Hundred Wagons Stood Still-Mormon Battalion Wives* (Sandy, Utah: self-published, 1999), 115-116.

On September 6, 1845, in Marion County, Alabama, Absolom Porter Dowdle, a native of Franklin County, Alabama, married Sara Ann Holladay, a native of Marion County, Alabama. Dowdle had previously baptized Miss Holladay, along with her parents, some eligible siblings, and several slaves in Marion County, Alabama in 1844. As a part of the Mississippi/Alabama Saints, Sara Ann Holladay Dowdle holds the unique distinction of being twice pregnant during her trek to the Salt Lake Valley. She birthed one child on May 6, 1846, (Sara Catherine Dowdle), and another (Martha Jane Dowdle) was born November 15, 1847 not long after her arrival in the valley, being the first child born in Sugar House. Avis Milton Holladay, Sr., *The Holladay Family* (Nashville, Tennessee: self-published, 1994), 172-179; Kate B. Carter, *The Story of the Negro Pioneer* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1965), 50.

xviii. In addition to Sarah Ann Arterbury Church and Sara Ann Holladay Dowdle, there are the following 31 Mormon pioneer women (not an exclusive list) who were either born in Alabama, lived in Alabama, converted in Alabama, or had other significant Alabama connections: Harriet Temperance Utley Carter, Sophronia Ellen Lenora Hart Turnbow Carter, Jane Elizabeth Thomas Berry, Caron Haploch Holladay Bingham, Talitha Cumi Ann Bankhead Dennis (married in Alabama to the Sheriff of Marion County, Alabama), Henrietta Landrum Dotson, Sarah Ann Robinson Dowdle, Eliza Jane Stewart Ensign, Sarah Ann McCrary Graham, Cynthia Utley Stewart Hill, Catherine Beasley Higgins

Holladay, Mary Ann Adair Mangum, Sarah Ann Dowdle Mathis, Mildred Caroline Utley Maughn, Elizabeth Carson Lewis Mortensen, Susannah Baird Smith Pierce, Mary Catherine Mathis Woodard Pratt, Martha E. Graham Proctor, Ruthinda Baker Stewart, Holly Jane Tingle Averett Edwards Thomas, Margaret Eliza Utley Tolman, Sylvira Caroline Hart Turnbow, Elizabeth Rutledge Utley, Sarah Frances Mangum Richey Cazier White, Elizabeth Carter Whitmore, and Mary Ann Callahan Lisonbee Nichols Wimmer. A short biography of each of the foregoing women is set forth in *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, a four-volume work published by the International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers in 1998.

Seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Dunn, a native of Greensboro, Greene County, Alabama, was sealed in the Nauvoo Temple as a plural wife to William W. Phelps, a prominent church leader who wrote some of the most beloved LDS hymns and who served as clerk and scribe for the Prophet Joseph Smith. *Nauvoo Temple Endowment Record*; Susan Easton Black, *Membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1848* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1989).

Diannah Greer Camp and husband Williams Washington Camp were living in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, where they had been married and their first five children were born, when they joined the LDS Church. While later living in Tennessee, they reportedly built and outfitted with horses and mules 50 wagons which they donated for the use of poorer members of the church in Nauvoo who were hurriedly preparing for their departure west. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "Williams Washington Camp," *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. I (Salt Lake City, Utah: National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 452-453; Barbara Jean Faught Sherratt Walker, *Stories I Have Been Told About Margaret Henrietta Camp Brantley Baird and Her Parents William Washington Camp and Diannah Greer*, unpublished manuscript dated July 22, 2001, in possession of author; Kate B. Carter, *The Story of the Negro Pioneer* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1965), 39-40.

Martha Catherine Youngblood Lewis, a native of Perry County, Alabama was the second wife of Cache Valley, Utah pioneer Neriah Lewis and bore him 10 children. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "Neriah Lewis," *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. II (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 1446-1448.

Lucinda Wilson Smithson, a native of Jackson County, Alabama, a traveler with the Mississippi/Alabama saints, and an original Mormon settler of San Bernardino, California, was the wife of William Cox Smithson and bore him nine children. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "William Cox Smithson," *Conquerors of*

*the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. IV (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 2399-2400.

Amanda Leggroan Chambers, an African American, was the wife of native Alabamian Samuel D. Chambers. Samuel was born in Pickens County, Alabama, on May 21, 1831. He was baptized in Mississippi as a 13-year-old slave boy in 1844. Following the receipt of his freedom at the end of the Civil War, he saved his money from menial jobs, bought an ox cart, and migrated to Utah in 1870 with his wife, bringing with him a small party of African American relatives. He and Amanda lived out their days as very faithful members of the church in Salt Lake City. William G. Hartley, "Samuel D. Chambers," *New Era* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, June 1974), 47.

xx. Original Ogden, Utah pioneer Ruthinda Baker Stewart (1807-1871), the widow of George Stewart, was a pre-exodus 1842 member of the Sipsey Branch in northwest Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. "Ruthinda Baker Stewart," *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. IV (Salt Lake City, Utah: International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 2951; Ruth Ann Burch Stowell (granddaughter of Ruthinda Baker Stewart), "Ruthinda Baker Stewart" within the chapter "Immigrant Pioneer Women," *An Enduring Legacy* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1986), 55-66. This latter article erroneously states on page 57 that Ruthinda Baker Stewart's daughter, Cynthia Stewart, was the first person in Alabama to be baptized. In truth, Samuel Turnbow had been baptized more than two years prior to Cynthia Stewart.

xxi. At the October 1861 General Conference, Brigham Young called approximately 300 families to migrate to southern Utah. A major purpose was to promote the manufacturing of cotton textiles, the supply for which had been largely cut off by the Civil War. Prior church-directed, cotton-growing experiments in southern Utah had proven sufficiently successful. Brigham Young assigned this project to many who were southerners and already familiar with planting, growing, harvesting, ginning, and spinning cotton. Several Alabamians were among those who received the assignment. The overall plan was called the "Cotton Mission" and southern Utah afterwards took on the nickname of "Dixie."

One Alabamian who accepted the assignment was blacksmith Little John Utley of Tooele, Utah, formerly of Perry County, Alabama. *Under Dixie Sun, A History of Washington County* (St. George, Utah: Washington County Chapter, Daughters of Utah Pioneers), 85-93.

Another Alabamian accepting the assignment was John Monroe Moody, a native of St. Clair County, Alabama, having been born there on February 16, 1822. In Utah, he served as a territorial legislator for two terms, and later in St. George,

Utah as school trustee, justice of the peace, and alderman. He also served as the first bishop of Thatcher, Arizona. He fathered 19 children by four wives. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "John Monroe Moody," *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. III (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 1699-1702. Another Alabamian eventually settling in Thatcher, Arizona was Lauderdale County native Solomon Joseph Despain who had served in Granite, Utah as the first bishop, as well as postmaster and justice of the peace. He fathered 27 children by three wives. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "Solomon Joseph Despain," *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. I (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 687-689.

Former Marion County, Alabama resident Harrison Pearce and his elder son John David LaFayette Pearce also partook of the Cotton Mission. Harrison had been a part of the earlier 1857 cotton-growing experimentation in Washington County, Utah where he served in the first branch presidency of that county. Harrison Pearce later became the first postmaster in Washington County, Utah, and was elected to the city council of St. George and subsequently as its sheriff. He fathered 13 children by three wives. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "Harrison Pearce," *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. III (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 1962-1964; *Under Dixie Sun, A History of Washington County* (St. George, Utah: Washington County Chapter, Daughters of Utah Pioneers), 85-93; Finley C. Pearce, *Will and Ida Pearce: A Biography of "Dad and Mama,"* (Yorba Linda, California: Shumway Family History Services, 1993) 6-12.

Former Livingston, Alabama resident Umpstead Rencher, Jr. was also part of the Cotton Mission to southern Utah. He and his wife Elizabeth Jemima Philpott Rencher had 13 children, the first three being born in Livingston. Florence C. Youngberg, editor, "Umpstead Rencher, Jr.," *Conquerors of the West: Stalwart Mormon Pioneers*, Vol. III (Salt Lake City, Utah: The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers, 1999), 2172-2174.

There were several Alabama women among those who were called to make the long move southward. Included were the wives of William Carter and Hayden W. Church. *Under Dixie Sun, A History of Washington County* (St. George, Utah: Washington County Chapter, Daughters of Utah Pioneers), 85-93.

There was somewhat of a race among the pioneers to stake out the better home and farm sites. One of William Carter's young Alabama wives, Sophronia Ellen Lenora Hart Turnbow, was desirous of a good garden spot. She eagerly cleared a space with hoe and shovel in advance of the wagons. Unfortunately, she

grubbed on the wrong side of the stake which marked her family's claim. It has been jokingly said that she went down in history as having done the first public roadwork in St. George. "The Cotton Mission," *Utah Historical Society Quarterly*, No. 3 (July 1961), 20.

xxii. Glen M. Leonard, "Briton Plowed First Half-Acre In The Valley," *Pioneer Magazine* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Sons of Utah Pioneers, Summer 2003), 4-5. William Carter, a British convert, joined the church the same year as Samuel Turnbow, 1840. The iron moldboard of Carter's famous plow, which is all that remains of it, is housed in the Museum of Church History and Art. According to the newspaper obituary of one of Carter's Alabama-born widows, Harriet Temperance Utley Carter, Carter is also credited with having turned the first sod preparatory to the construction of the Salt Lake Temple. (St. George, Utah newspaper of July 18, 1925)

At age 67, Carter was awarded a gold medal in honor of his plowing accomplishments. In an 1888 acceptance letter to President Wilford Woodruff, written in the prison where Carter was incarcerated for polygamy, Carter reported that he had plowed for two weeks at Garden Grove during the trek from Nauvoo to Winter Quarters. This is support for the claim sometimes made that Carter was also the first migrating member to plow in Iowa for the benefit of following exiles. Annie C. Johnson, *History of William Carter* (St. George, Utah: self-published manuscript, presented to the Dixie Camp of Daughters of Utah Pioneers, March 12, 1953).

The photographer who captured the most prominent existing photograph of Carter came upon him when he was, of course, engaged in plowing.

Carter's two Alabama wives were Harriet Temperance Utley and Sophronia Ellen Lenora Hart Turnbow, both natives of Perry County, Alabama. Miss Utley, at age 18, married Carter on November 23, 1853. She was his second wife in a congenial plural marriage. Miss Turnbow, 15 days short of age 16, married Carter on February 8, 1857. Carter's two Alabama wives bore him 17 children. "Harriet Temperance Utley Carter," *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. I (Daughters of Utah Pioneers), 515-516; "Sophronia Ellen Lenora Hart Turnbow Carter," *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. I (Salt Lake City, Utah: International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 519.

xxiii. In northwest Georgia, missionary Joseph Standing was murdered by a mob of 12 men on July 21, 1879. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, "Joseph Standing," *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 1187.

In Hickman County, Tennessee missionaries John H. Gibbs and William S.

Berry, and church members Martin Condor and James Hudson, were murdered by a mob at the commencement of a Sunday church meeting being held in the Condor home on August 10, 1884. Mrs. Condor, the mother of the house, was shot in the hip and crippled for life. This event is known as the Cane Creek Massacre. B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 6 (Salt Lake City, Utah: 1930), 90-98.

In Mississippi, missionary Alma P. Richards of Morgan County, Utah mysteriously disappeared in August of 1888 in the vicinity of Meridian. His disappearance occurred during a time of intense anti-Mormon sentiment in the general area. The exact cause of death, however, remains an unsolved mystery with at least three prevailing theories, each theory having some supporting evidence: (1) murder because of his religion; (2) murder in connection with a robbery; and (3) accident associated with travel by train. If he was murdered, evidence of the murder was intentionally obscured by staging a fabricated, train-caused, accident-appearing death. Unknown to the church, his unidentified mangled body was buried by locals following an inconclusive coroner's inquest. Several months after his death, the body was exhumed and returned to Utah for reburial. "Murdered in Mississippi," *Deseret Evening News* (Salt Lake City, Utah: June 7, 1889); "Partly Solved," *Deseret Evening News* (Salt Lake City, Utah: June 8, 1889).

In Florida, branch president George Canova was ambushed and killed in 1898. It is believed that this murder was primarily, if not solely, because he was a "Mormon." His murder remains unsolved to this day. In 1947, Canova's grandson, Alvin Chance, was called to preside over the first stake organized in the southeastern United States, the Jacksonville Florida Stake. This was the first stake outside of the intermountain west to be completely organized with local leadership. Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, "Florida," *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 383.

Admittedly, Alabama has certainly had its share of anti-Mormon violence, especially in the post-Civil War era. One such occasion was the subject of a general conference priesthood session address by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. An incident was reported regarding missionary Frank Croft who was forcefully abducted by an Alabama gang of anti-Mormons and prepared for a whiplashing of his bare back. He was spared such brutality when the leader of the gang read a letter from Elder Croft's mother. The letter had fallen from Elder Croft's pocket as he was stripped for the planned whipping. The mother's letter quoted Bible scriptures relating to persecution and then encouraged

her son to exert Christ-like forgiveness toward his persecutors because they knew not what they did. Russell M. Nelson, “Our Sacred Duty to Honor Women,” *Ensign* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 1999), 38-39.

Openly overt persecution was associated with some of the very earliest missionary labors in the state. When John Brown arrived in the area of the Sipsey Branch in northwest Tuscaloosa County, Alabama in the late summer of 1843, his arrival was met with local opposition, as had that of prior missionaries to the area. Wrote he: “A mob of some sixteen or eighteen men patrolled the neighborhood the evening of our arrival, threatening to lynch the elders and drive them out of the country.” John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 43. Referring to the same mob activity more than a year later, John Brown stated in a letter to church headquarters that “such things were not countenanced by the most prominent citizens....” Letter of August 17, 1844 from John Brown in Monroe County, Mississippi to the *Times and Seasons* in Nauvoo, Illinois, published on November 1, 1844 in Vol. V, pages 702-703 under an article titled “Communications.” Ironically, Alabama, like other deep south states, has been a place where hatred and hostility from some were often counterbalanced by the heartiest of hospitality from others.

On April 30, 1845, slightly less than one year after the murders of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith, and slightly less than one year before the saints would begin evacuating Nauvoo, Brigham Young sent a letter to Alabama’s governor, Benjamin Fitzpatrick, stating in part as follows:

We are, many of us, citizens of your state....  
Will it be too much for us to ask you to  
convene a special session of your State  
Legislature, and furnish us an Asylum,  
where we can enjoy our rights of conscience  
and religion unmolested?

Typed transcript of letter dated April 30, 1845 from Brigham Young in Nauvoo, Illinois to Gov. Benjamin Fitzpatrick in Montgomery, Alabama located in the Alabama Department of Archives and History. See also *History of the Church*, Vol. VII, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1974), 402-404. There is no record of a response, an understandable decision from a political-career point of view. (The original letter was stolen from the Alabama Department of Archives

and History several years ago, and only a typewritten transcript remains.)

There has been at least one occasion where protection was afforded Mormon missionaries by the highest civil authority in the State of Alabama. But the very fact that such protection was felt necessary is a strong indication of the anti-Mormon atmosphere in the state. Governor Joseph F. Johnston, a Civil War veteran who served as governor from 1896-1900, ordered the publication of the following executive proclamation in all of the newspapers of the state after personally hearing in his office the report of two elders. These two elders had been driven out of Coffee County, Alabama at the urging of some professional clergy in the area:

To the Sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, constables, justices of the peace and the chiefs of police throughout the State of Alabama. You are hereby ordered to make the "Mormon" Elders your special wards, and to protect them from religious bigots and fanatics. The Constitution of Alabama guarantees absolute religious liberty to all sects and I am determined to see that the law is strictly obeyed, even if I have to call out the entire Nation Guard to enforce it.

The foregoing quote is taken from a letter written by C. M. Hauser of Washington, D.C. to U. S. Senator Reed Smoot in Provo, Utah under date of September 1, 1907. This letter is maintained as Document No. 3MS7863 at Church Archives.

While living in Birmingham, Alabama, Hauser, a member of the church, had developed a friendship with Governor-to-be Johnston as his piano tuner. Hauser accidentally encountered the two expelled missionaries in Montgomery, accompanied them to the governor's office, and introduced them to the governor. Governor Johnston was later elected to the U.S. Senate in 1907, and the primary purpose of Hauser's letter was to introduce Johnston to Senator Smoot.

For a biography on Governor Johnston, see Samuel L. Webb and Margaret E. Armbruster, *Alabama Governors-A Political History of the State* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 2001), 127-133.

Interestingly, Alabama's other simultaneously elected senator was John H. Bankhead, Sr., whose several ancestral cousins named Bankhead and Holladay had joined the church in the 1840's and immigrated to Utah.

xxiv. Most of the biographical information relating to Samuel Turnbow

contained in this article is taken from Samuel's personally authored memoirs. He authored a brief autobiographical sketch of his life while living in Utah. The original is a fragile, cardboard-covered volume comprising 56 pages of pen and ink.

Although he was at least 72 years of age when he authored the last of his memoirs, the dates and factual information contained in them, which are capable of being independently verified from other reliable sources, have proven to be very accurate. This suggests that he may have maintained from time to time important records of events in his life which were of assistance to him in writing the memoirs that we now have. Samuel Turnbow did not die until 1890, 14 years after the latest period covered by his memoirs.

A copy of his memoirs is maintained in the Special Collections Division of the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University. Hereinafter the handwritten memoirs of Samuel Turnbow will be cited as "*Memoirs*." The cited page numbers will be taken from a typewritten copy of his memoirs titled *Genealogical and Blessing Book of Samuel Turnbow With Brief Sketch of His Life, 1804-1876*. This typewritten copy was made from a previous typewritten copy which was produced in 1941 from the original pen and ink. This older 1941 typewritten copy was produced by Mrs. Mina Hardy of the Utah Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration, under the supervision of Dale Morgan.

Samuel Turnbow was born near Lexington, Kentucky on October 16, 1804. He was the son of Issac Turnbow and Margaret Tallkitten Turnbow, being the 9<sup>th</sup> of their 13 children. Samuel lived in Alabama from age 8 until he left the state with his immediate family, never to return, at age 41. *Memoirs*, 35; *Family Group Sheet* submitted by Olive G. Stone and on microfilm at the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

The exact baptismal date of March 3, 1840, is taken from an undated record titled *High Priest's Genealogy*, microfilm 924617, Item 4, Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

xxv. *Memoirs*, 35-36.

Samuel Turnbow's paternal grandfather who fought in the American Revolution was Andrew Turnbow. He lived to be 106 years of age. Samuel's father, Issac Turnbow, moved from Kentucky to Tennessee when Samuel was about six years of age. On October 18, 1813, when Samuel was barely nine years of age, his 50-year-old father Issac enlisted in Tennessee as a short-term volunteer in the army of Major General Andrew Jackson. Issac served in the War of 1812 in a company of Mountain Rangers for four months and two days, mustering out on February 19, 1814, with \$82.57 in payment for his services. Issac's endeavors as a

soldier were focused on locating and defeating bands of Creek or Muscogee Indians in the area that would become the Alabama Territory about three years later. Two of Issac's sons, Robert and Jacob, also served in the War of 1812.

Like thousands of other frontier soldiers, Issac Turnbow obtained an enticing, personal view of the pristine wilderness south of Tennessee. This was an unsettled, Indian-inhabited land of virgin pine and hardwood forests with year-around, free-flowing creeks and wide, navigable rivers. There were also many fertile fields previously cleared by the agricultural labors of the woodland Indian tribes.

Following his military stint, Issac made the decision to seek a new homestead in the beautiful Alabama Territory. Issac first moved his family to what would become Bibb County, Alabama, where his final two children were born, Sarah and Joseph. The latter child was born on December 19, 1819, only five days after Alabama became the nation's 22nd state.

Issac's restless, ambitious nature soon led him farther south to a site in the Cahaba River Valley in what would become the Hamberg community of south Perry County, Alabama, located about 20 miles upstream from the new state capital at Cahawba. On December 5, 1820, Issac secured a patent on 160 acres in Section 29, Township 18 North, Range 8 East, from the U. S. Government. Olive G. Stone, *Turnbow-Turnbough Family of U. S. A.* (Provo, Utah: self-published, 1970), 1-3; *Tract Book of U. S. Patents*, Perry County Probate Office, Marion, Alabama, page 160.

Issac was survived by his 62-year-old widow, Margaret, who had given birth to their 13 children, the last being Joseph who was born when his mother Margaret was 52 years of age. Issac's last will and testament gave Margaret use of Issac's farm so long as she lived. Samuel was 24 years old and had four younger siblings when his father died. He helped his aged mother provide and care for his four younger siblings after their father's death on June 11, 1829.

Later in the same year that his father died, Samuel married 15-year-old (based on birth date on her grave stone) Sylvira Caroline Hart. According to *1820-1832 Marriage Records*, license no. 410, Probate Office of Perry County, Alabama, they were married on September 25, 1829. Their first of 11 children, John Gillenroy Turnbow, was born about two years later on September 13, 1833. Their first eight children were born in Perry County, Alabama. *Family Group Sheet* submitted by Reba Turnbow Johnson and on microfilm at Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

Samuel's mother Margaret died on August 5, 1835, about six years after his father Issac died. The very next day, Samuel's wife gave birth to twin boys Issac

and Warren, neither of which lived through the day. Samuel stoically attended to the three family burials. Eventually Samuel would be called upon to bury four more of his and Sylvira's children of varying ages. *Family Group Sheet* submitted by Reba Turnbow Johnson and on microfilm at Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

xxvi. *Memoirs*, 35-36.

xxvii. *Memoirs*, 36. Wrote Samuel: “[B]eing much interested in the duties of life, I remembered all my father’s sayings and his honest way to live an exemplary life which I dwelt upon much in the hours of my meditations.”

xxviii. John E. Hall, “When Stars Fell On Alabama,” *Alabama Heritage Magazine*, No. 55 (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama and University of Alabama at Birmingham, Winter 2000), 16-23.

xxix. Lyricist Mitchell Parish and composer Frank Perkins collaborated in 1934 to produce the famous song “Stars Fell On Alabama” which Billboard Magazine named as one of the outstanding songs of that year. It was first played publicly by Guy Lombardo and his orchestra. Popular singer Jimmy Buffet, a native of Mobile, Alabama, recorded a rendition in 1980. John E. Hall, “When Stars Fell On Alabama,” *Alabama Heritage*, No. 55 (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama and University of Alabama at Birmingham, Winter 2000), 23.

xxx. *History of the Church*, Vol. I, Second Edition Revised (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1973), 439.

xxxi. *Memoirs*, 36-37.

xxxii. *Memoirs*, 37-38. Joseph Smith was killed in Illinois on June 27, 1844, about one year and eight months before Samuel traveled to Illinois for the first and only time.

xxxiii. *Memoirs*, 38. In this same vision, Samuel received a blessing under the hands of a patriarch and saw persons dressed in beautiful white temple clothing. These two elements of the vision were literally fulfilled when Samuel saw Abraham O. Smoot’s temple clothing 13 years later and received his patriarchal blessing from Joseph Smith’s uncle 14 years after his vision. The temple clothing was shown to Samuel in an effort to teach of the eternal nature of the family, such teaching being given as a comfort to Samuel and Sylvira who had just buried the lifeless body of an infant daughter on the plains of Iowa. *Memoirs*, 40-41;42.

xxxiv. *Memoirs*, 38.

xxxv. Benjamin Clapp and J. D. Hunter were called to inaugurate missionary work in the State of Mississippi in early 1839. Hunter returned home that fall, but Clapp remained in the mission field to labor. Lamar C. Berrett,

*History of the Southern States Mission* (Provo, Utah: thesis presented to Brigham Young University, July 1960) 208.

Clapp's encounter with Turnbow was more than a chance meeting. Clapp ventured into Perry County, Alabama in February 1840 in search of Turnbow and his family. Turnbow's oldest sibling by 12 years was a brother named Stephen Turnbow. This older brother had married Clapp's oldest sister by 21 years, Mary Clapp, in Huntsville, Alabama on August 11, 1813. At the time of this marriage, Samuel Turnbow was eight-years old and Clapp had not yet been born. Stephen and Mary Clapp Turnbow had a son named Jefferson Turnbow who was the same age as his uncle, Benjamin Clapp. Benjamin and Jefferson associated with one another in Kentucky in the 1835-1836 time frame. Both of them became members of the Church. It is unlikely that Benjamin Clapp and Samuel Turnbow had ever met one another prior to this 1840 encounter, but Benjamin Clapp knew of Samuel Turnbow through Samuel's other family members. *Family Group Sheets* for both families on microfilm at the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

Clapp was not the first LDS missionary to seek converts or preach in the State of Alabama. That distinction belongs to Lysander Mason Davis, a native of the New England area, who at age 23 was passing through Alabama and Georgia in route to his mission destination of South Carolina. The following two sentences appear in an 1878 history of Montgomery, Alabama under the date of October 7, 1839:

A Mormon preacher delivered a sermon in the old Court House in this city. He was the first representative of Joe Smith's fanatics who visited Montgomery.

*City Directory and History of Montgomery, Alabama* (Montgomery, Alabama: Society of Pioneers of Montgomery, Inc., 1971), 76, being a reprint in part of an 1878 work by Messers. Beale and Phelan, assisted by M.T. Blue.

Davis arrived in South Carolina in late October or early November, 1839. The preaching along the way to South Carolina gives Davis claim to being the first LDS missionary in Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and perhaps the other southern states through which he passed and preached. His letter to church headquarters in Nauvoo indicates that he passed through eight states from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean, always receiving sufficient food and accommodations from the local people. Letter dated December 3, 1839, from Cross Keys, Union District, South Carolina, published in *Times and Seasons*, Vol.

1, p. 60. As to his being the first missionary in South Carolina, see also Andrew Jenson, *Conference Report*, April 1925, p. 107.

Davis enjoyed success in South Carolina and by April of 1840, Davis was in jail as a result of the actions of “hireling priests.” Letter dated April 29, 1840, from Union, South Carolina jail published in *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 1, p. 118. Evidently, Davis did not go west with the saints. He fought for the Union in the Civil War, and was a prisoner of war at the Weldon Railroad, Virginia and the infamous Andersonville, Georgia POW camps. *Ancestry.com, American Civil War Soldiers*, record 338576; *Ancestry.com, Andersonville Prisoners of War*, reference 412, p. 112. Interestingly, after the war, Davis married a much younger woman from South Carolina and was living with her in Bethel, Wilcox County, Alabama at age 64 when the 1880 federal census was taken. Family History Library Film 1254035, NA Film No. T9-0035, p. 397A.

xxxvi. *Memoirs*, 39. Samuel gives his baptismal date as March of 1840. Samuel does not mention the place of baptism. It could have been in nearby Boguechitto Creek or the not too distant Cahaba (sometimes spelled Cahawba) River. Family tradition seems to favor the latter. Samuel does not say whether his wife Sylvira was baptized with him or not at that time. A relatively recent history contained in *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude* indicates that she was baptized four years later on March 1, 1844 in the Cahawba River, but the author has not been able to document the later baptismal date. This relatively recent history definitely has some date errors in it on some other points. It seems more likely that she was baptized on the same occasion as her husband Samuel. “Silvira/Sylvira Caroline Hart Turnbow,” *Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Vol. IV (Salt Lake City, Utah: International Society of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1998), 3168-3169.

xxxvii. Other Turnbow relatives joining the church in Perry County were Samuel’s brothers named James Turnbow and Joseph Turnbow, and a sister named Hannah Turnbow. One of James Turnbow’s slaves named Jack preceded his master in baptism by two weeks and appears to have been the first African-American male baptized in the State of Alabama. His baptismal date was October 25, 1843. John Brown’s autobiography also mentions baptizing a William Turnbow, but this could possibly be Whiting Turnbow, another brother of Samuel. John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 43-44.

Samuel’s brothers James and Joseph attended the first multi-unit conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints held in the State of Alabama. This conference was held on February 10, 1844 at the Sipsey Branch in northwest

Tuscaloosa County. Conference minutes indicate that there were then 43 members of the Boguechetto Branch where the Turnbows were members. John Taylor, editor, *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, No. 12 (Nauvoo, Illinois: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, July 1, 1844) 573.

xxxviii. Samuel states that he assisted in raising up a branch of the church with 56 members. *Memoirs*, 39. This would have been the Boguechetto Branch. The word “Boguechetto” means big creek in Choctaw Indian. The two sets of neighboring families who joined the church were the families of brothers Samuel Walton Utley and Little John Utley.

xxxix. The two branches were the Boguechetto Branch of which Samuel was a member and the Five Mile Branch located 30 miles to the north in an area which is today a part of Hale County.

xl. *Memoirs*, 39. Before departing on his mission, Samuel was ordained a priest by Elders John Brown and Benjamin L. Clapp on the evening of March 21, 1844, in Perry County, Alabama. John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: John Zimmerman Brown, 1941), 45.

xli. This deed is recorded in *Deed Book H*, page 479, in the Probate Office of Perry County, Marion, Alabama. According to this deed, Samuel Turnbow’s home and 160 acres, described as the West Half of the Northeast Quarter and the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 30, Township 18 North, Range 8 East, were sold to Hamilton S. Graham for \$400.00. The author surmised the depressed sales price by studying other sales in the same general area for the same general time period.

The original *Tract Book* for Perry County, Alabama indicates that Samuel Turnbow had received a patent for this property from the United States of America on March 29, 1834.

xlii. Samuel was determined to follow the counsel of his church leaders to gather to church headquarters in Nauvoo, Illinois. He had been given this counsel by mission president Abraham O. Smoot who had stayed in Samuel’s home on March 14 and April 12 of 1845. Samuel had also traveled as a companion with Smoot on the 30-mile horseback trip from the Boguechetto Branch to the Five Mile Branch on March 17, 1845. *Personal Journal of Abraham O. Smoot*, Special Collections Division, Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University for the three dates indicated, pages 233, 234, and 237.

Missionaries to Alabama had also taught of Joseph Smith’s 1832 prophetic warning that there would be a bloody civil war between the northern states and southern states over the slave question which would commence in the State of

South Carolina. See *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 87.

In the autumn of 1845, Elder William Stewart of the Sipsey Branch brought a church-directed circular to the members requesting that they remove themselves to Nauvoo in preparation for going into the “wilderness” with their church leaders. *Memoirs*, 40.

Compounding these incentives to leave Alabama was yet another. Religious persecution and bigotry was a fact of life. The conversion successes that missionaries of the church like James Brown, John Brown, Hayden W. Church, James W. Cummings, Absalom Porter Dowdle, Benjamin L. Clapp, and others had enjoyed in Alabama in the early and mid-1840's engendered increased suspicion and resentment. The more successful the missionaries, the greater became the resultant fear and opposition from those who for one reason or another felt threatened by the presence of devoted adherents to this very peculiar Christian religion. It is no secret that much of the anti-Mormon excitement was promoted by protestant ministers who held the highest position of respect in the eyes of the southern people of that day. In comparison with the then-prevailing (and still prevailing) religious tradition of strong opposition to claims of modern revelation, and in comparison with a near belligerent defiance for non-Biblical scriptures, the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints indeed constituted a very strange new set of beliefs.

Outright falsehoods easily fueled the natural suspicion with which this unusual and unknown religion was viewed. Common falsehoods included assertions that “Mormons don't believe in Jesus Christ, they just worship their prophet ole Joe Smith,” and “Mormons don't believe in the Bible, they only believe in that ‘gold Bible’ of ole Joe Smith.” Unfortunately, these falsehoods were often propagated in fiery sermons from the pulpits of other Christian churches, thus adding an air of truthfulness and accuracy to such totally incorrect notions.

Samuel and his co-religionists would have known that there was absolutely no hope in their lifetime of turning public attitude into one of religious tolerance, much less general acceptance. There were no resources available to them in rural Alabama to effectively combat the general lack of knowledge or the spread of inaccurate information about their religion. The Turnbows and their Utley neighbors, as well as others, were the objects of criticism, scorn, and ridicule for their religious beliefs. Few of Alabama's 650,000 inhabitants in the mid-1840's had actually ever seen a “Mormon,” much less closely associated with one in any meaningful way.

Near universal persecution was easily engendered in an era when

newspapers were the only means of mass communication. The major newspaper publications of the day were generally hostile to “Mormonism” and seem to have been anxious to print everything presented to them, or which they could contrive, that slandered the church or its leaders. Many innocent church members like the Turnbows suffered persecution because of the mischaracterization, distortion, or misrepresentation of their beliefs.

Giving heed to the message to “gather to Zion,” Samuel and his family understandably left Perry County, Alabama, never to return. Their first destination of Nauvoo was 700 miles away in a slightly northwesterly direction, and it was winter. Wrote Samuel, “To fill this counsel, I then sold all that I possessed and came by steamboat to Nauvoo about the middle of February 1846.” The Turnbows were in Nauvoo at the time of the public dedication of the Nauvoo Temple on May 1, 1846. The Turnbows remained in Nauvoo until June of 1846 when they departed for their journey through Iowa in company with leaders Wilford W. Woodruff and Abraham O. Smoot. *Memoirs*, 40.

xliii. The Turnbows were in Abraham O. Smoot’s fifth company, sometimes referred to as the fourth 100, consisting of 318 pioneers, several of whom were fellow Alabamians. This company departed Winter Quarters on June 17, 1847. The first of their company arrived at the end of their 1,000-mile journey to the Salt Lake Valley on September 25, 1847. “History of the 1847 Pioneer Companies” and “Pioneer Companies That Crossed the Plains,” *1997-98 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1996), 120-121;168.

Perhaps a short biographical sketch of Abraham O. Smoot, Alabama’s first mission president, would be in order. Smoot played an invaluable role in the subsequent history of the church. After making the 1847 trek west as a pioneer company leader, Smoot made several return trips east to lead other Mormon pioneer groups to Utah, became the second mayor of Salt Lake City, served foreign missions to England (1851-1852) and Hawaii (1880), played a major part in the establishment of Brigham Young Academy (forerunner of Brigham Young University) where he served 20 years as the first president of its Board of Trustees, served as mayor of Provo, Utah, and in the territorial legislature. Smoot’s son, Reed Smoot, became an apostle of the church and served a 30-year sterling career in the United States Senate, but only after enduring four years of intense anti-Mormon senate investigations (1903-1907) to determine whether or not a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints could be loyal to his constitutional oath as a United States senator. Loretta D. Nixon and L. Douglas Smoot, *Abraham Owen Smoot-A Testament of His Life* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1994); Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard

O. Cowan, "Smoot, Reed," *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 1144-1145.

Returning to Samuel Turnbow's travels in Smoot's 1847 pioneer company, Samuel had a leadership role. As captain of the Fifth Ten in George B. Wallace's first fifty, Samuel was leader to 34 other souls in 20 wagons with 121 oxen and cows. Only one day after their departure, Jacob Weatherbee of Wallace's company was killed by Omaha Indians. *The Historical Record*, Vol IX, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Historical Association, December 1890), 114-115.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September, 1847, Brigham Young and other authorities who were returning to Winter Quarters met with the Smoot company at Pacific Springs just west of the continental divide. It has been reported that this company "crossed the plains and mountains in as good a shape and with less loss than any of the other companies." *The Historical Record*, Vol. IX (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Historical Association, December 1890), 116.

Smoot's sister, Martisha Smoot Smith, was in his wagon company. She was a southerner and had been baptized into the church by Benjamin Clapp. Her daughter, Sarah Ann Smith, age five at the time of the trek, would later marry Samuel Turnbow's son, Robert Franklin Turnbow, age eight at the time of the trek. Robert Franklin Turnbow and his wife Sarah Ann Smith had 11 children. Robert served in the bishopric of the Farmers Ward in Salt Lake City. Theresa Martishia Turnbow Brown, *Biography of Robert Franklin Turnbow* (unpublished manuscript in possession of author); Susan Easton Black, *Membership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1848*, Vol. XLIII (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1989), 492-495.

In mid-September or early October of 1847, Samuel and his family gazed at last with feelings of exhilarating triumph and humble gratitude upon the Great Salt Lake Valley. They had finally reached their mountain home, an uncoveted desert wilderness far removed from Perry County, Alabama, and the confines of any civilization. They had endured the 1,000 mile, four-month trek. They had braved the near constant threat of Indian attacks, witnessed the singular spectacle of massive thundering buffalo herds, and climbed and descended with herculean effort majestic mountainous terrain. *Memoirs*, 43.

Upon their arrival, Samuel immediately helped with the united effort to build fortifications against the Indians, dig irrigation ditches, and claim the desert floor for agricultural pursuits. *Memoirs*, 43.

On June 30, 1850, Samuel's first of two Utah children was born, a son named Samuel Joseph Turnbow. But Samuel's joy was offset by the death on November 16, 1851, of his 15-year-old daughter Epsy Adeline Turnbow who had

successfully crossed the plains and mountains with the family. On April 26, 1853, Alma Turnbow was born. Alma was the last of Samuel and Sylvira's 11 children. Tragically, Sylvira died the day after giving birth to Alma. She was 37 years of age. Then 17-month-old Alma died on September 22, 1854, followed by 6-year-old Samuel Joseph Turnbow on June 14, 1856. Only five of Samuel and Sylvira's eleven children reached adulthood. Four of those five children who reached adulthood were born in Perry County, Alabama. The only other survivor was the daughter born on the plains of Nebraska. The five surviving children generated a very large posterity which continues to increase. *Family Group Sheet* submitted by Reba Turnbow Jonson and on microfilm at the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University; Olive G. Stone, *Turnbow-Turnbough Family of U. S. A.* (Provo, Utah: self-published, 1970).

In 1856 Samuel was sent on a mission to Las Vegas to mine for lead, part of the church's effort to maintain total temporal independence. He returned to Salt Lake in 1857 shortly before the approach of General Albert Sidney Johnston's Army. This federal army of approximately 2,500 troops, having orders to invade Utah, was sent by President James Buchanan to quell a non-existent "Mormon rebellion" fabricated by frustrated federal bureaucrats assigned to positions in the Utah Territory. Samuel removed his family 30 miles south to Lehi for safety and then prepared to help defend Salt Lake City against the invading army. *Memoirs*, 44; Clark Larsen, "The War That Never Was," *Pioneer Magazine* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Sons of Utah Pioneers, Spring 2001), 4-11.

Samuel Turnbow, in fulfillment of longevity promises in both his father's deathbed pronouncement and his patriarchal blessing, lived to the age of 86, dying on November 19, 1890. He died in Salt Lake City, Utah where he had served in the bishopric of the 14<sup>th</sup> ward. *Memoirs*, 8, 36, 42. John Smith, *Patriarchal Blessings* (Winter Quarters, Nebraska: January 31, 1847) Book E, no. 48, p.255. Andrew Jenson, *Church Chronology*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1914), 189. Samuel was told in his above cited patriarchal blessing of 1847 that "thy posterity shall be numerous like Ephriam, [and] thou shalt have an honorable name among the saints forever...[and] not a word of this blessing shall fail, even so, amen."

xliv. Infant Laura Ann Turnbow, born July 27, 1845, in Perry County, Alabama, died June 11, 1846, in the camp of Israel near Mt. Pisgah, Iowa. Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff-History of His Life and Labors* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1964, 6<sup>th</sup> printing 1975), 250; Olive G. Stone, *Turnbow-Turnbough Family of U.S.A.* (Provo, Utah: self-published, 1970), 119.

xlvi. In Winter Quarters, Nebraska's first city, Samuel assisted many of the

fatherless families left behind by the departing battalion members. He engaged himself in the laborious work of cutting and rafting logs down the Missouri River. These logs were used to hastily construct cabins for the approximately 5,000 religious exiles living in Indian Territory on the west bank of the river by the end of December in 1846. *Memoirs*, 41-42; Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, "Winter Quarters," *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 2000), 1349-1350.

xlvi. While camped at the mouth of the Loupe Fork of the Platte River near present day Grand Island, Nebraska, Sylvira Turnbow gave birth on June 25, 1847 to the first child born in Smoot's Company during the journey, a daughter named Margaret Ann Turnbow. *The Historical Record*, Vol IX, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Historical Association, December 1890), 116.

Margaret Ann Turnbow was the 9<sup>th</sup> child born to Samuel and Sylvira Turnbow. The infant survived the arduous trek to Utah, worked in the household of Wilford Woodruff as a child, grew to adulthood, married Jerome K. Mitchell (stone cutter for the Salt Lake Temple), reared 11 children, and lived to age 85, dying in 1932. Olive G. Stone, *Turnbow-Turnbough Family of U. S. A.* (Provo, Utah: self-published, 1970), 259.

xlvii. These seven Alabama branches of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were the Sipsey (Tuscaloosa County), Boguechetto (Perry County), Five Mile (Perry County, now Hale County), Little Bear Creek (Franklin County), Lauderdale or Cypress (Lauderdale County), Russellville (Franklin County), and Marion (Marion County, now Lamar County) Branches.

When John Brown made a journey through eastern Mississippi as an emigration agent for the church in 1851, he reported in his journal: "There are a few scattering members of the Church in this country. I visited them but found them generally cool and not much interested about Zion. I did not feel like preaching publicly in this section." John Brown, *Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown*, arranged by John Zimmerman Brown (Salt Lake City, Utah: self-published, 1941) 117-118.

Organized proselyting on a regular basis would not be reestablished in the areas covered by the seven pre-Civil War branches in Alabama until after the formation of the Southern States Mission in 1876. Today there are six stakes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints headquartered in the State of Alabama: Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery, Bessemer, Mobile, and Dothan. There are today approximately 23,000 members of the church in approximately 70 congregations who call Alabama their beloved home.