

LABORING IN THE DESERT: THE LETTERS AND DIARIES OF
NARCISSA PRENTISS WHITMAN AND IDA HUNT UDALL

by

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Presbyterian missionary Narcissa Prentiss Whitman and Mormon polygamous wife Ida Hunt Udall believed God had called them to special missions. These women faced similar challenges in exchanging the comforts of middle-class life for what they felt was a higher calling. In following their chosen vocations, both challenged expectations for nineteenth-century women, coming under scrutiny within and without their faith communities. In order to record their missions, set down their reasons for living as they did and create a space where they felt at home, despite their frequent isolation from friends and kin, both Whitman and Udall wrote extensively about their lives. Their letters and diaries provide rich material for analyzing gender dynamics in nineteenth-century America and shed light on how women literally made history in a time of U.S. expansionism and rapid social change.

In this dissertation, I place Whitman's and Udall's writing in historical and social context, then draw on the relatively new field of women's diary study to present close

readings of their work. To create narratives that gave meaning to their often difficult lives, both writers employed a number of literary strategies: casting themselves as characters in their own work, establishing and revisiting themes from missionary and travel literature, borrowing language from popular fiction and creating dialogues between themselves and their imagined readers.

Because of their roles as geographic pioneers and religious exemplars, Narcissa Whitman and Ida Udall both expected at least some of their writing to be read by relatives and fellow believers, if not during their lifetimes, then after. Their creative and flexible use of literary strategies allowed them to use writing as both a personal resource—a place to vent feelings inconsistent with their missionary personae and to work out challenges presented by frontier travel and isolation—and a public record. They thus created multilayered documents that served the expectations of multiple audiences well enough to remain popular today. Finally, by reifying their own sense of vocation and their impressions of the "frontier" in writing, they participated directly in nineteenth-century Euroamerican efforts to colonize and "civilize" the supposedly empty lands of the American West.

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DEDICATION

For Henry and Cheever, co-laborers

Eric and Janet Long, who introduced me to stories of pioneer women

and Howard Long, who first suggested Narcissa Whitman

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: WOMEN WRITING THE WEST

Home has no attraction for me, compared with the satisfaction and enjoyment every day affords in living here and extending a silent and gentle influence upon these benighted minds, aside from the more public labours of teaching, etc. O, that I could persuade my brothers and sisters thus to consecrate themselves to this heavenly work.

Narcissa Prentiss Whitman, letter from Oregon Territory, September 1838

Why is it, that in carrying out the commandments of God, his children need be so sorely tried? Marriage, under ordinary circumstances is a grave and important step, but entering into Plural marriage, in these perilous times is doubly so.

Ida Hunt Udall, journal entry, May 1882

Born fifty years apart at opposite ends of a continent, Presbyterian missionary Narcissa Whitman and Mormon polygamous wife Ida Udall shared the sense that God had called them to a special mission in life. As the quotations above suggest, the two faced similar challenges when they exchanged many of the comforts of middle-class life for what each believed was a higher calling. In following their chosen vocations—Whitman as an emissary of white culture and religion to Oregon Indians, Udall as a representative of what faithful Mormons believed was a divinely ordained social order—both challenged expectations for nineteenth-century women. Both came under scrutiny inside and outside of their faith communities. Perhaps in an attempt to record their sense of mission and to set down, at least in part, their reasons for living as they did, both Whitman and Udall also wrote privately but extensively about their lives. Their letters and diaries provide rich material for analyzing gender dynamics in nineteenth-century American culture, especially the changing nature of women's roles.

Still more importantly for this project, however, their work sheds light on how women literally made history in the nineteenth century, a time of U.S. expansionism and rapid social change.

Both Whitman and Udall used writing to stay oriented to their missions, missions that involved colonizing the "empty" spaces of the West, engaging with Native inhabitants and earlier white settlers, and advancing an ideology of middle-class, feminine domesticity on a frontier whose Euroamerican "conquerors" have in American history traditionally been gendered male (Armitage "Women's Literature" 5). Much of these writers' colonizing motivation stemmed from religious faith. Living, as they did at times, in isolation from a community of other white women—the relatives and friends in whom they might otherwise have confided--they used their letters and diaries to address religious doubts and work through spiritual and emotional difficulties. Unable to reject their chosen missions without abandoning the faith on which their lives were based, both women engaged with their challenges on paper: responding to detractors, justifying their actions and creating narratives that gave meaning to the "trials" they faced in their often difficult lives.

Though it is tempting to idealize their day-by-day accounts as complete and authentic records of Western frontier life, a close reading of both women's work reminds us that "complete" often means replete with the conflicts and contradictions of everyday life. At times these nineteenth-century writers appear to turn their backs on questions modern readers consider important. Their letters and diaries are, therefore, filled with apparent gaps. For example, throughout her journal Ida Udall maintains a profound

silence on the subject of Indians, despite the fact that she spent many years in areas with large Navajo populations. This gap, however, as I will discuss in the chapters dealing with Udall's work, speaks volumes about how her Native neighbors figured in this writer's Mormon culture; her seeming lack of engagement may be at least partially explained by her membership in a group that was systematically dispossessing Indians. Narcissa Whitman expresses her internal conflict over her baby daughter's accidental death by alternately describing herself as resigned to God's will and suicidally depressed. Such omissions and unevenness remind us that these writers were real women as well as craftswomen, and the presence of these features makes this project necessarily a rhetorical as well as a historically grounded study. For these writers became skilled rhetoricians, not only reflecting the world as they found it but doing their best to shape on paper a frontier in which their own survival (as white women, as missionaries, as mothers) was possible. As diary scholars Stephen E. Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna note, the "ordering and interpretation of events" that takes place in a diary (or letter) can give the writer a sense of control over her surroundings and fate: "By manipulating reality in a diary [women] could sometimes ... lessen the sensation of risk, or make their restricted situation seem more satisfying" (43). From this perspective, what Whitman and Udall choose to leave out of their letters and diaries is as important as what they include in the process of shaping their own reality.

Born in 1858 in the village of Beaver, Utah, Ida Hunt Udall made a choice shared by relatively few of her fellow Mormons when she agreed to a polygamous marriage.

Though the church believed polygamy was divinely ordained, federal laws mandated against it and federal marshals hunted for Udall in the early 1880s as she slipped from farm to farm on the "Mormon Underground" of Utah and northern Arizona, avoiding the capture that would mean being called to testify against her own husband. She spent much of her life as a single parent, rearing six children on a remote mountain ranch that afforded a measure of safety from the threat of prosecution. Nearly fifty years before, another woman had also left home and family for the sake of her faith. Rather than become a wife and mother in her hometown of Prattsburg, New York, in 1836 Narcissa Prentiss married missionary Marcus Whitman, whom she knew only slightly, and set out across the continent to take Christianity to the native peoples of the inland Northwest. Like Udall, Whitman faced opposition to her chosen vocation. Initially hospitable, the Cayuse among whom the Whitmans worked rejected missionary efforts to replace Native culture with Euroamerican values and religion. Their requests that the Whitmans leave, ignored by the missionaries who felt they were doing God's work, became threats that eventually escalated into violence.

In Oregon and Arizona, areas that seemed to lie beyond what Whitman called in her journal "the very borders of civilization" (11) Whitman and Udall were forced to continually redraw those boundaries and to define what qualified as "civilized" for them in terms of race and gender, social class and religion. They were also themselves the subjects of definitions requiring them to constantly renegotiate their position in frontier society. As white, middle-class Victorian women, symbols of white civilization in their rural homes, women like Whitman and Udall were viewed by fellow whites who shared

this Victorian ideology as exemplars of propriety and morality, superior in every way to the Native people whose land they occupied. Yet as members of the conservative Presbyterian and Mormon churches, their first allegiance lay with groups that viewed them as subjects who were, if not actually inferior to white men, then certainly subject to male spiritual and temporal leadership. Since these churches viewed (and in many cases still view) men and women as assigned separate, God-ordained roles, Whitman and Udall were deemed worthy by their own spiritual authorities to instruct Natives but were themselves legally and spiritually bound to heed their husbands' dictates.

Such complex power relationships meant that these women asserted power, or at least what Peggy Pascoe has termed "moral authority" (xvi) in some situations and lacked it in others. Whitman and Udall might find themselves taking an active role in ordering their household affairs or giving instruction to Native women while deferring to their husbands on such basic questions *as* where to live or whether they might pray aloud in meetings. In addition to such constantly changing gender and power relations, they negotiated fluid social boundaries in the cross-cultural encounters of the West. In a frontier environment where social status was less fixed than in their hometowns, these women might have to decide how to relate to a female neighbor who maintained white standards of housekeeping as well as allegiance to her Native culture.

Keeping diaries and writing letters helped Whitman and Udall negotiate these intangible frontiers. Describing prairie travel in a letter home, for example, allowed Narcissa Whitman to assure herself as well as her readers that she was still a "lady" by noting that the party's fur trader escort recognized her special status with gifts of wild

game and a makeshift sunshade. Writing also helped these women maintain a sense of spiritual vocation. For example, noting that a former suitor was uninterested in the "great cause" of plural marriage may have reinforced Udall's sense of having chosen a superior husband. Despite the fact that her polygamist husband was in jail, writing about his (and her own) religious dedication reminds her of why she chose to marry him, and allows her to suggest to herself and other readers that she is better off suffering with a polygamist than enjoying the companionship of a less dedicated Saint.

Historian Julie Roy Jeffrey has noted how important such letters and diaries are in helping modern scholars reconstruct the past. Introducing the reissue of Clifford M. Drury's study of Narcissa Whitman and her colleague Eliza Spalding, Jeffrey writes, "The letters and diaries written by the women of the Oregon mission.. reveal the dynamics of racial and cultural encounters in the West, and suggest the pattern of the future" (Wagons 16). Taking her contention a step further, I suggest that through the apparently simple act of describing their lives on the frontier, Whitman and Udall helped create outsiders' (Easterners and non-Mormons) perceptions of the West, sometimes even prompting those groups to action.

That personal narratives could shape events directly is demonstrated by the dramatic military response to the "Whitman Massacre" of 1847, described by the Whitmans' fellow missionary Henry Spalding in letters sent to family members, New England mission boards and denominational publications. His lurid descriptions of Indian cruelties may have helped spur the U.S. Army's subsequent action against inland Northwest tribes (Whitman, Letters 232-236). Though Spalding's report of the Whitman

killings is, of course, not women's writing but the account of a male missionary whom the Eastern religious establishment had authorized to speak publicly, the heart of his narrative is (as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Three) his own daughter's eyewitness account. In its emphasis on white women's and children's helplessness in the face of Indian attack, Spalding's story likely shaped the perceptions and responses of later Euroamerican settlers—nervous or hostile, fearful or belligerent, according to what they read and believed. Like Spalding's account, Whitman's journal and letters were part of a body of writing that helped set the stage for white settlement. Journals such as Whitman's and Udall's reinforced their authors' and readers' beliefs (that polygamy was divinely ordained, for example) and shaped their actions in a world that was, for the diarist engaged in crafting it, now at least partly of her own making.

In Context: The Letters and Diaries of Narcissa Prentiss Whitman and Ida Hunt Udall

Although the West has long existed as a gendered space in the American imagination, its heroes all white male pioneers and cowboys, feminist scholars are now analyzing the importance of women in the West. While the first scholars to examine women's lives focused on middle-class white women whose writing was relatively accessible, more recent scholarship has attended to other groups: black and Native American women, immigrants from Asia and eastern Europe, working-class and slave women whose life stories have been harder to track down.' In studying history and literature, as in feminist political action, the diversity of women's experiences makes it

imperative to hear as many voices and analyze as many stories as possible to understand and adequately represent the range of women's contributions to the national narrative.

This dissertation participates in such recent scholarly efforts by focusing on writing by women from two groups: Protestant missionaries and Mormons. It is not unique in attending to missionary women's experience as recorded in letters and diaries; such historical study has already been undertaken by Joan Jacobs Brumberg in her studies of Ann Haseltine Judson and the Judson family and by Jane Hunter and Patricia Grimshaw in their work on American women missionaries in China and Hawaii.³ These valuable studies detail the background and motivation of the women, many of whom shared Narcissa Whitman's New England roots, charged with spreading the Christian gospel and the gospel of American domesticity abroad (Grimshaw 169). Brumberg, Grimshaw and Hunter were among the first to suggest that women played more than a supporting role in the mission field: as Grimshaw notes in the introduction to her study, "Whether in the writings of early mission historians or in those of later scholars ...the enterprise appears predominantly a male endeavor and the participation of women is virtually invisible" (xix). Her work, along with Brumberg's and Hunter's, goes a long way towards rectifying this omission. In Chapter Two of this study, I have relied on the work of these and other scholars in providing background information for my analysis of Whitman's letters and journal.⁴ Agreeing with them that female missionaries played a key role in imposing American values and religion on other cultures, I describe Whitman's work in the context of other missionary writings to suggest that writing itself was a key element in missionizing efforts.

As the subjects of scholarship, Mormon women have been more fortunate than Protestant missionary women in that their experience has received much attention in the past thirty years. Scholars have chronicled their contributions to Utah settlement, their roles in church and family life and their present-day status. Their letters and diaries have been made accessible by a number of (mostly Mormon) scholars, reflecting the church's doctrinally-based interest in genealogy and history as well as the ongoing Mormon project of creating a common narrative, a project I will discuss more fully in Chapters Four and Five. Kenneth W. and Audrey M. Godfrey and Jill Mulvay Derr have produced an excellent anthology, Women's Voices, from the letters, memoirs and diaries of nineteenth-century Mormon women; such documents also provide rich source material for what is still one of the best collections of essays on Mormon women. Edited by LDS historian Claudia L. Bushman and now in its second edition, Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah offers accessible, thought-provoking analysis of a wide range of topics, from faith healing to feminism in the nineteenth-century church. Finally, sustained studies of individual Mormon women's lives have been produced by such scholars as Jennifer Moulton Hansen and Maria S. Ellsworth, who have edited, respectively, the letters of polygamous wife Catherine Cottam Romney and the writings of one of this study's subjects, Ida Hunt Udall.

My project differs from those above in that it does not use letters and diaries as source material for recovering the writers' experience. Rather, I focus on the writing itself, examining how the writers use language, style and theme to tell the story of their lives. Before discussing in more depth my proposed analysis of Whitman and Udall's

writing, however, it will be worthwhile to note how such an analysis fits into the relatively new field of women's diary study.

Women's Diaries in the Academy

It would be better, instead of speculating what Mary Carmichael might write and should write, to see what in fact Mary Carmichael did write ... For it is useless to say Tes, yes, this is very nice; but Jane Austen wrote much better than you do,' when I had to admit that there was no point of likeness between them.

Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own

Until fairly recently, the letters, diaries and memoirs of ordinary women were not the kind of writing literature departments considered fit subjects for critique. Prior to that time, personal writing receiving the most scholarly attention was done by men: the soldier's Civil War diary, journals of explorers like Lewis and Clark, or literary journals such as those of Emerson and Thoreau. Such diaries were lifted into the literary realm by recognition of their writers' stylistic skill or by the fact that they recorded events considered important (by traditional historians), such *as* exploration. Efforts to recover women's experiences in history, however, brought to light many hitherto unpublished women's writings. In the early 1970s, popular anthologies such as Penelope Franklin's Private Pages and Mary Jane Moffat and Charlotte Painter's Revelations: Diaries of Women enlightened twentieth-century readers about their foremothers' lives. Soon enterprising scholars were unearthing unpublished women's writing from attics (where Harvard student Joanna L. Stratton had the good fortune to discover her great-grandmother's collection of eight hundred Kansas women's memoirs) and from archives where women's letters and diaries were filed under their husbands' and fathers' names.

Both literary and historical scholars were bound to examine this writing for the simple reason that such forms were often the most accessible to ordinary women and thus the sole repositories of their thoughts and records of daily activities—the only clue, as Moffat and Painter wrote in the introduction to their anthology, to "what has been going on inside women's heads over the centuries" (4). Though many women of the nineteenth century and earlier lacked the leisure, education, connections or desire to write and publish in literary forms, many others could and did write letters, keep diaries and pen memoirs. As Lenore Hoffman has noted, "These materials are "nontraditional" only in the sense of their exclusion from the literary canon. They are, in fact, women's traditional literature" (Hoffman and Culley 1). Just as women who did not participate in the *haute couture* crafted quilts of great artistry and originality, many women who did not or could not write sermons, essays or poetry created art in their letters and diaries.

In the 1980s, literary scholars began attending to diaries' form as well as their content. Stephen E. Kagle's three book-length collections of diary excerpts focus on how form, theme and language use differ among American writers' diaries from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth century. These otherwise invaluable studies excerpt few women's diaries (Kagle leans heavily on diaries by well-known male writers) and his choice of those few parallels the use of such records by historians to supply a monolithic "female perspective" on events like Overland Trail migration.

Historians, however, must be credited with attending more quickly than English scholars to ordinary women's writing. In his studies of emigrant women's diaries, John Mack Faragher theorized that the "woman's experience" on the overland trails differed

substantially from men's; along similar lines, Lillian Schlissel and Julie Roy Jeffrey argued that diaries showed a multiplicity of female experiences as well as substantial differences in male and female perspectives.⁵ Jeffrey's work paralleled that of early diary scholar Elizabeth Hampsten, who argued that to be understood, women's diaries required the adoption of special "reading practices" including attention to code words for events like sex and pregnancy and to textual patterns and repetitions ("Tell Me All You Know"). Historian Gayle R. Davis provided early background for this work by suggesting that white female settlers used diary writing to cope with the challenges of the frontier experience.

Such close attention to language opened the way for the study of women's diaries under the rubric of autobiography. One of the first questions asked was whether women's writing differed qualitatively from men's. Estelle Jelinek argued in the 1980s that diaries' repetitive, episodic structure, as well as their generally private status, qualified them as particularly appropriate representations of female lives (which presumably could also be described as sequestered, repetitive and directionless) (Women's Autobiography xiii). More generously, Penelope Franklin suggested describing diaries as "flexible" and "all-encompassing" (xv) while Harriet Blodgett borrowed the title of her anthology of English women's diaries from Virginia Woolf's description of her journal as a "capacious hold-all." Theorists such as Margo Culley analyzed the influence of material conditions on women's writing, tracing the feminization of the diary genre to (middle-class and literate) nineteenth-century white women's increased sequestration in the home (3-4). Judy Nolte Lensink argued, from a

practical standpoint, that women's diaries should indeed be considered autobiographies, in part because they were the only form in which many women were able to create and sustain a narrative of their lives ("Expanding" 39). Her position, that such documents qualify as autobiographies partly because of the writers' use of literary techniques such as imagery and persona (40), stimulated my own thinking about diarists' use of stylistic features to speak (or avoid speaking) about certain events.⁶ The latest anthologies of autobiography criticism, such as Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson's Women, Autobiography, Theory, include some essays on diaries, letters and memoirs as well as forms of autobiography such as testimonio and oral history, demonstrating the extent to which "nontraditional" forms are now seen as an important part of literary studies.

In keeping with the increasingly inclusive nature of scholarship on autobiography, diary study since the 1990s has also been increasingly attentive to the critical triad of race, class and gender. Scholars have examined the small body of work by nonwhite women available from the nineteenth century, as Geneva Cobb-Moore does in discussing Charlotte Forten Grimke's journals. Helen M. Buss, writing on British women in nineteenth-century Canada ("A Feminist Revision of New Historicism") and Elizabeth R. Baer, writing about Lucy Buck's Civil War diary (*Ambivalence, Anger and Silence*) have analyzed diarists' self-construction as middle-class white "ladies." As Margo Culley points out in the introduction to her anthology A Day At a Time, women who had the time and means to keep diaries tended to be white and middle-class and to value reading and writing over oral tradition (xi). Such considerations highlight the significance of the most recent scholarly attempts at recovery and analysis of texts by

working-class and nonwhite women. For example, Liz Stanley and others have analyzed the extensive diaries of Hannah Cullwick, a Victorian maidservant who had a long, intimate relationship, partly in writing, with London man-about-town Arthur Munby, later her husband. While diaries and letter collections by women whose lives, like Cullwick's, were lived on the fringes of middle-class literacy are hard to find, such writing offers an opportunity to explore women's self-construction in terms of class, gender and power relationships.

The relatively young field of women's diary study still has much ground to break. Suzanne Bunkers' and Cynthia Huff's collection of critical essays, Inscribing the Daily (1996), is the first (and so far, only) collection dealing solely with diaries. Its contributors address a variety of issues: the very definition of the genre, as Judy Nolte Temple contends that fragments of a dream-vision journal count as a diary ("Fragments as Diary"); the relationship of diaries to fiction, in Stephen E. Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna's essay "Rewriting Her Life" and degrees of audience awareness, as Lynn Z. Bloom describes a continuum extending from "public" diaries (those demonstrating a clear sense of audience beyond the writer) to "truly private" diaries such as midwife Martha Ballard's, virtually indecipherable to readers who lack background information ("I Write For Myself and Strangers").

Recent Ph.D. dissertations have analyzed the rhetoric of women's diaries by addressing, as Bloom does, the question of audience. In a 1992 study, Deborah Ann • Martinson compared the presumably "private" personae in diaries by published writers Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and Violet Hunt to the personae of their more

public memoirs. Folklorist Ruth Staveley Bolzenius examined nineteenth-century American women's responses to overland trail travel in 1996, categorizing her subjects' work by the writer's "degree of self-consciousness of a reading audience and the constructedness of the narrative," intriguing questions I also take up here. In 1997, Kathryn Dianne Carter discussed attention to audience in diaries by nineteenth-century Canadian women, contending (as I do below) that diarists' work is always "situated in real or imagined communities of readers." Of course, as Suzanne Bunkers ("Public *and* Private Records") and Margo Culley (*A Day At a Time*) have separately pointed out and as my own work will show, part of each diarist's task is precisely that: to locate herself in relation to the communities where she writes and lives.

Finally, while a number of scholars have produced fine editions of single diaries or collections of letters and diaries by nineteenth-century women, the first sustained monograph on women's diary literature did not appear until 2001.⁷ In *She Left Nothing in Particular: The Autobiographical Legacy of Nineteenth-Century Women's Diaries*, Amy L. Wink discusses how three nineteenth-century women's diaries helped support their writers' sense of identity during times of transition and upheaval (for example, the Civil War), and functioned as coping tools when the writers found themselves in situations over which they had little control, such as marriage to an abusive husband. Wink argues that diaries helped women order and comprehend their lives; she examines, as do I, each writer's stylistic choices for clues to how she accomplished this end on paper. But our projects explore different avenues in women's diary study. While the sense of vocation Whitman and Udall shared is certainly bound up with identity and

while, *as* we shall see, both women did use writing to order their experiences and cope with challenges, my primary concern is not how they maintained their psychic equilibrium. Rather I examine how, in writing, these women created and modified their concepts of what they believed were God-given and permanent (indeed, eternal) vocations.

From the moment each applied for her post in writing—the young, unmarried Whitman by letter to the board of foreign missions, the single Udall to her prospective husband's first wife—she assumed the rhetorical stance required by such an application: humble, serving a cause greater than herself, willing to suffer for her faith. In subsequent letters and diary entries, both Whitman and Udall show how this stance of humility and idealism is tempered by actual experience. For example, when another plural wife receives the parlor organ Udall longs for, and when the Natives Whitman hopes to convert reject her Bible lessons, their writing reveals the tensions between missionary ideals and worldly challenges. Without abandoning her vocation or undercutting her public role, each writer has to decide how to describe and explain such difficulties. Letters and diaries thus provide a space for the writer to recreate herself as "missionary," "civilizer," or family peacemaker, not in the world she may initially have imagined (Narcissa Whitman writes to her family, as she sets out across the continent, "How I wish you were all with me, going to the dear heathen!") but in a harsher and more challenging reality.

Finally, I suggest throughout my analysis how this sense of spiritual mission, developed and maintained in letters and diaries, is implicated in the process of white

Western colonization. Imagining herself as a cultural as well as a religious missionary, a belief supported by her correspondence with the editor of Mother's Magazine and with other white missionaries and mothers on the frontier, inspired Whitman's strictness in maintaining house rules at Waiilatpu and thus perhaps helped foster the difficulties between missionaries and Indians that led to the "Whitman Massacre" and its sequels for Natives and whites. Likewise, in the very act of journal writing Udall imagined herself participating in a tradition of Mormon martyrdom begun by her beloved ancestress, "Grandma Pratt"; her continued writing, in the tradition of Louisa Barnes Pratt's voluminous journals, signaled Udall's continued commitment to the faith whose goal was to establish God's earthly kingdom in the Great Basin. Insofar as the world created in journals and letters constituted a reality Whitman and Udall could comfortably inhabit, it also provided a place from which they could act: planting gardens, whitewashing walls and floors, welcoming some visitors to their homes and restricting others' access. In very real ways, the written word shaped the West.

Pioneers and Missionaries

A story is not just a story. Once the forces have been aroused and set into motion, they can't simply be stopped at someone's request. Once told, the story is bound to circulate; humanized, it may have a temporary end, but its effects linger on and its end is never truly an end.

Trinh Min-ha, from Woman, Native, Other

When Narcissa Whitman became a missionary to the Northwest Indians in 1836, she joined a relatively small number of Protestant women in foreign missions, though even Olen American missionary fervor—as evidenced by the establishment of mission

boards, missionary societies for children and adults, and enthusiasm from the pulpit on behalf of the "perishing heathen"—was growing along with the country's imperial aspirations (Hutchison 46, 60-61). Whitman, a schoolteacher who spent much of her time assisting at revival meetings and doing benevolent work, entered the mission field forty years before the field saw a major influx of women and at least sixty years before foreign missions became a female-dominated calling (Hunter 14).

Chapters Two and Three of this project are devoted to Narcissa Whitman's work. In Chapter Two I discuss her upbringing in western New York's "burned-over district" exploring the ideological underpinnings of her role as a missionary and suggesting why missions attracted her. In summarizing Whitman's background, I have relied on both Julie Roy Jeffrey's 1991 biography Converting the West and the earlier work of Clifford M. Drury, a Presbyterian minister and devoted amateur historian who published a number of meticulously researched works on the Oregon mission (1836-1847) from the 1930s through the 1960s. Both Jeffrey, whose work is grounded in contemporary feminist scholarship, and Drury, who describes the missionaries as heroic pioneers instrumental to the "opening" of the West, are meticulous investigators. Jeffrey draws extensively on Drury's research but takes careful note of their different perspectives.

While I concur with Jeffrey in Chapter Two that Whitman was poorly prepared for the realities of the mission field, I also contend that her writing helped her to successfully adjust the focus of her work. (Since her study is oriented towards history rather than literature, Jeffrey understandably leaves this stone unturned.) Her letters show Whitman expanding a single aspect of her original mission, the charge to create and

maintain a Christian home, into a new vocation, evangelical motherhood. Not coincidentally, motherhood itself was being elevated in the popular culture of Whitman's lifetime to the status of a religious calling (Douglas 99). While some married female missionaries resented the time domestic tasks and child rearing took from their work of proselytizing the heathen, Whitman wrote that "the Lord has filled my hands with other labors" (Letters 213) and devoted herself to caring for a large family of adopted children. Chapter Three presents a close reading of Whitman's travel journal and letters home, showing how she develops herself as a character in her own writing, establishes and revisits themes from missionary and travel literature, and creates a document layered with meaning for multiple audiences. Writing letters and diary entries allowed Whitman to reconcile her publicly approved choice of a missionary vocation with her dislike for Native culture. By emphasizing the self-sacrifice required for mission life and describing her adopted children as heaven-sent, Whitman could air her frustrations with the Indian work without seeming to abandon her vocation.

Like her predecessor Narcissa Whitman, Ida Udall made a choice shared by just a few of her contemporaries who were willing to live their faith by becoming polygamous, or plural, wives. In nineteenth-century Mormonism, the mission field was reserved for men until 1898 (Bushman, Mormon Sisters xli); marriage and family, church work and domestic labor were women's arenas for service and thus plural marriage, touted by church officials as the restoration of an ancient, Biblical family order, offered Mormon women the best chance to demonstrate the extent of their faith. Thus Ida Udall likely

entered polygamy with a sense of mission similar to that which prompted Narcissa Whitman to cross the plains.

Chapters Four and Five of this project are devoted to Udall's work. In Chapter Four, I describe her background as a third-generation Mormon, arguing that family stories of sacrifice for the church influenced her choice to enter the demanding lifestyle of polygamy. This chapter includes a brief history of the church from its inception in 1830 and a discussion of women's roles in a proudly patriarchal culture that nonetheless offered nineteenth-century women opportunities to transcend traditional roles. I also discuss Udall's role in furthering white Southwestern colonization, particularly her part in the Mexican-Mormon contest to dominate the settlement of St. Johns, Arizona. In Chapter Five, I discuss Udall's use of the language of popular fiction to describe tensions in the early days of her plural marriage, then move to analysis of two sections from her later journals to argue that, like Narcissa Whitman, Ida Udall used writing to reify her position not only as a Christian but a white "lady" on a frontier she perceived as rough and uncivilized. Finally, I detail her reconstruction in writing of the Mormon community whose support sustained her in difficult times, and show how at moments of stress Udall managed, in her journal, both to express anger at her husband's presumed neglect and to assure herself of his love and their joint commitment to the faith.

Writing Themselves Into Position: Diarists as Colonizers of the American West

The men Whitman and Udall married are remembered a century later as key figures in the "settling" of the American West. Marcus Whitman, trained as a physician, became a missionary to the Cayuse Indians in what is now eastern Washington State. As I will describe in Chapter Two, the establishment of the Whitman mission at Waiilatpu near the present town of Walla Walla encouraged white settlement in the Northwest. In late 1842, Marcus Whitman traveled East on mission business and returned the next fall guiding a wagon train of emigrants (Drury, Wagons 148). Between 1843 and 1847, Waiilatpu was a popular stop on the Oregon Trail, where emigrants could rest, buy supplies and trade information with other westward travelers (Drury, Wagons 142). The Whitmans' impositions on their Indian hosts (for example, their insistence on exclusive rights, without compensation, to land the Cayuse had intended as a shared resource) (Jeffrey, Converting 165) eventually resulted in a Native uprising in which the Whitmans and a number of white emigrants were killed (Whitman, Letters 230-234). The aftermath of what white settlers termed the "Whitman Massacre" (Delaney 21, Saunders 31) included the 1850 hanging of five Indians convicted of the killings, and military action against the Cayuse and Nez Perce that culminated in their eventual confinement on reservations (Jeffrey, Converting 165; Miller 124).

Ida Udall's husband David King Udall was as instrumental in pioneering white settlement in the desert Southwest as Marcus Whitman was in the Pacific Northwest. Like many Mormon men of a certain age and social standing, Udall held the rank of bishop in the church. Unlike some, however, he supported the cause of polygamy

personally. Shortly after his 1882 marriage to Ida Hunt, he was tried and imprisoned on a charge of perjuring himself in a land claim case, a charge that Udall family historians contend was manufactured by anti-polygamy factions in the town of St. Johns, Arizona (M. Ellsworth 71, 110). Though the 1880s was a period of federal crackdowns on Mormons, with the government attempting to wrest control of Utah Territory from the church officials who formed its de facto government (Bigler 318) Udall was pardoned by President Grover Cleveland in 1885 (M. Ellsworth 142). Despite years of legal battles, David Udall continued to visit and support Ida, his second wife and even took a third wife in 1905, after the church had ceased to officially sanction new plural marriages. Udall's prominence in the church and, of course, his eleven children made him the patriarch of an Arizona-based family that includes former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall and Senators Morris Udall and Gordon Smith.

Though Marcus Whitman and David Udall received more attention than their wives in life, and while it is primarily their names that are noted in modern histories, Euroamerican colonization of the American West was far from an exclusively male enterprise. Advancing the Christian gospel and the Mormon faith on the frontier meant advocating certain domestic standards and values, of which nineteenth-century white women were designated guardians (Kolodny 53-54, 110-111). While I will discuss those standards in more detail in Chapters Two and Four, it is important to note that Narcissa Whitman and Ida Udall each played a role in extending Western white settlement and that the process of writing helped reify the values they believed should predominate where they lived.

The Whitmans and Udalls belonged to groups of white Americans determined to displace indigenous populations and, sometimes, previous settlers. Since both women believed they numbered among God's elect and lived among heathen (in Whitman's case, the Cayuse and Nez Perce and, to some extent, the French-Canadian, Catholic fur traders of the Hudson's Bay Company; in Udall's, the Mexicans, Indians and (Anglo) non-Mormons, or "Gentiles," of the Southwest) both writers needed first to construct themselves as superior to outsiders in order to reinforce their belief in the worth of their own practices. Christian missionaries like the Whitmans played a large part in displacing Native populations as they established a presence that paved the way for more whites to colonize Indian lands (Whitman, Letters 182, 183). Christian ideology described Indians as "savages" ignorant of divine truth, poor stewards of God's gifts who were unworthy to occupy their own land because they had failed (from a white perspective) to work it efficiently (Whitman, Letters 174).⁸

In her letters home, Whitman portrayed the Cayuse among whom she worked mainly in negative terms. At best, they were pitiable "perishing Indians" (Letters 69) at worst "wicked," "troublesome" and lazy by the Calvinist missionaries' standards (Letters 57). She characterized Cayuse women as ignorant mothers who bound their babies (cruelly, in her view) to cradleboards and washed clothes inefficiently in streams instead of washtubs (Journal 48). As the heroine of her own writing, Whitman portrayed herself as not only spiritually but technologically and domestically better informed than those around her. Brought up to value only her own culture and charged by the mission board with converting the Cayuse to Christianity and white ways, Whitman could hardly have

described Natives as competent and enlightened without nullifying her vocation; she consequently used writing to reinforce her sense that she and her fellow missionaries were the only lights in a "land of spiritual darkness and heathenism" (Letters 70).

In the "contact zone" (to borrow Mary Louise Pratt's term) where Whitman and Udall met new peoples, both attempted to explain contests for geographic and spiritual terrain by placing them in the context of a divine plan. While Mormon theology granted indigenous peoples a place in the Americas and in scripture, it was not a particularly desirable one: American Natives were classed as descendants of a fallen race (Bigler 64). While the Book of Mormon taught that native people shared a common ancestry with white Latter-Day Saints, it also held that these "Lamanites" had long ago wandered from righteousness and could return to God's fold only by becoming Mormons. Like the more mainstream Protestant missionaries in the Northwest, the Latter-Day Saints were interested in accepting Indians only on white terms.

In addition to dominating their Native neighbors, the Udalls and other Mormon settlers found themselves in conflict with Gentile (non-Mormon) ranchers, including the Mexican Catholic inhabitants of northern Arizona. As I will discuss at length in Chapter Four, the Latter-Day saints considered themselves God's elect and the Great Basin their promised land. Thus, like most white American settlers, they believed land was theirs for the taking. Organized for quick expansion through collective enterprise, Mormon settlers clashed frequently with other Anglo ranchers who felt they had a similar divine flat—or Manifest Destiny--to claim what had formerly been Mexican or Indian land (M. Ellsworth 68-69). Both groups took land, as Spanish colonists had done before them,

away from the Navajo sheepherders and Ute hunter-gatherers who had, until the 1600s, been the desert's main inhabitants.

In competing with Mexican and Gentile settlers for land in St. Johns, Arizona, the Latter-Day Saints worked hard to present themselves as saintly indeed: orderly, peace-loving citizens harassed by the rough denizens of a disreputable frontier. For example, when David Udall was arrested for perjury, Ida Udall noted in her journal that a "low-down saloon-keeper" brought him in on a "trumped-up charge"; she described her husband as a victim in the town's land struggles, innocently engaged in building houses for new emigrants (M. Ellsworth 71). Udall's account of this community quarrel (like Whitman's reports on Cayuse women) supports Brigitte Georgi-Findlay's assertion that white women writers are "implicated in expansionist accounts" even as they "formulate positions of innocence and detachment" (xi). By inscribing her vision of Mormon innocence and Gentile chicanery in her journal, Ida Udall contributed to a Mormon communal narrative that, read and reread, strengthened the Latter-Day Saints' resolve to literally hold their ground.

Public and Private Narratives

Ifind it in vain to expect my journal will escape your eyes ... I have therefore determined to address my journal to you. I shall at all times address you with the unrestrained freedom of a fond & confiding wife. When therefore you have leisure & inclination to know my heart, you may here find it ready for converse.

Missionary Mary Richardson Walker, June 1839

Letter to her husband, Elkanah Walker, left in her journal

In attempting to keep a journal or record of the most important events of my life, I earnestly desire the blessing of God to be upon my labors. That what I write may someday be a comfort and help to my children if I should be blessed with any, and that nothing herein recorded may cause aught but pride & pleasure to the peruser.

Ida Hunt Udall, Memoir, c. 1874

Because of the positions Narcissa Whitman and Ida Udall held in their communities as pioneers and exemplars of faith, they might have expected that their writing would eventually fall under the scrutiny of posterity or fellow believers. As Suzanne Bunkers points out in her introduction to the diary of Caroline Seabury, a Northerner who taught school in Mississippi during the Civil War, many nineteenth-century diarists wrote not only to produce a record they could "look over in after years," in Seabury's words, but to share their experiences with family members and friends (Bunkers, Seabury 16). Both Whitman and Udall belonged to large, close families with (particularly among Udall's ancestors) a strong tradition of personal writing; both were also members of faith communities that encouraged keeping journals and writing memoirs. Mormons, in a holdover from the Puritan tradition of spiritual autobiography, were counseled to keep journals to chart their spiritual progress as well as to help maintain the family and genealogical records necessary for church work (Bell 172) while missionaries' letters were an important means of securing home congregations' support. Often printed in denominational publications such as the Missionary Herald, they were also circulated privately among the writers' friends and relatives (Whitman, Letters 69, 235).

On the other hand, both Whitman and Udall used writing for far more than spiritual meditations or dispatches from the mission field. Unlike Whitman's fellow

missionary Eliza Spalding, whose diary consists mainly of copied sermons and reflections on her scripture reading (Drury, Oregon 205-206) both women describe their daily lives in great detail. While they may have wished to record "important events," as Udall notes above, or offer "comfort and help" to posterity, Whitman and Udall also used their letters and journals for private as well as church-sanctioned purposes. Writing not only helped them place challenges in perspective and construct explanations for their own or God's actions: because these two women were often isolated from friends and family members on their frontier homesteads, both found substitute confidants in writing and drew support from the narratives they created. They were far from the only white women on the frontiers who needed support, or who found solace in the act of writing. From her mission station near present Spokane, Washington, missionary Mary Walker wrote, "If I were to yield to inclination, I should cry half my time without knowing what for" (qtd. in McKnight 33). Instead, she evidently wrote. The most faithful diarist among the Oregon mission's five women, in ten years she wrote over a hundred thousand words (Drury, Oregon 22-23).

Narcissa Whitman engaged in one of the most popular forms of nineteenth-century writing when, at her mother's request, she began a journal of her trip from upstate New York to the Northwest. At journey's end, she mailed her diary home for her family to read. Over the years she wrote often to her parents and siblings, describing her living conditions, reporting on the mission work and often begging them to join her. Despite the fact that Whitman's letters often went unanswered, sometimes for as long as two years, she continued to write frequently. Her persistence in writing letters home

when she received no replies for years suggests that the writing itself became both a necessary practice and a source of strength and satisfaction, helping her order her experiences in a new environment. As I will show in Chapter Three, Whitman's journal and letters also allowed her to reconcile her public role as a missionary with her private dislike of frontier life. Nineteenth-century mission boards dictated that female missionaries be active proselytizers for Christianity and the domestic gospel, tirelessly maintaining their mission homes and helping "heathen" women organize theirs in more "civilized" ways (Grimshaw 7, 114). Charged with the difficult task of teaching the Cayuse white values, Whitman first cast her (frustrated) self as a martyr in letters home, then reconfigured her mission as motherhood when she took in a family of white orphans. To allow a retreat from Indian evangelism without renouncing her chosen vocation, she emphasized her devotion to a second calling that took the place of the old.

Narcissa Whitman's journal and letters are both available in published form. While at Fort Vancouver in the autumn of 1836, Whitman made two copies of her original journal for relatives. All three are extant. Whitman College in Washington State (named for the missionaries but founded by a colleague) holds the original and one copy, with the University of California at Berkeley holding a third (Whitman, Journal 71-72). The edition of Whitman's journal I have used here is a published copy based on one of the manuscripts held at Whitman College. Librarian Lawrence Dodd notes that the manuscript was prepared for printing by comparison with the two other copies of Whitman's journal, and that additions and corrections were made only in cases where a word was unclear as written or appeared to have been omitted accidentally (Whitman,

Journal 72). Whitman's own spelling, usage and punctuation are retained in the published version of her journal. Attesting to the ongoing popularity of the Whitman story, a phenomenon I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Two, Narcissa Whitman's overland trail journal went through five printings between 1982 and 2000. Her letters, published by the same small press that printed her journal, are held in manuscript at Berkeley's Bancroft Library, Whitman College's Penrose Library and the Oregon Historical Society archives in Portland, Oregon, where I have consulted originals. Because of its easy accessibility and minimal editing, however, I have relied for this project primarily on the published collection of Whitman's letters, which includes a few letters by her husband, Marcus Whitman. This collection of Narcissa Whitman's letters has proved nearly as popular as her trail journal, going through three editions in ten years.

Married forty-five years after the Whitmans set out across the continent, Ida Udall, like Narcissa Whitman, began a journal on her honeymoon. The diary she kept from 1882 to 1886 includes a record of the two and a half years she spent on the "Mormon Underground," hiding from U.S. marshals. In documenting the beginning of her life as a polygamous wife, she too was recording the start of a mission. In four years of entries, Udall's journal reveals not only how a Mormon plural wife lived but how she used writing to maintain her faith and sense of personal vocation despite persecution. The Mormon church expected plural wives such as Udall to be a living witness to the holiness of polygamy. Mormon women in general were counseled by church leaders to honor their husbands and the authorities, get along with any "sister" wives who might join their families, and do church and charitable work. "If we work unselfishly for the

Cause of truth," David Udall wrote to Ida early in 1885, "our lot will be a pleasant one" (M. Ellsworth 95). Though Udall was a devout Latter-Day Saint when she married, she needed strong faith in the polygamous cause to maintain this conviction through difficult times. The journal offered her a place to pray, to express her feelings in imaginary dialogues with her husband and to complain without (as she may have imagined) burdening or discouraging fellow Mormons. The tension between her need to express doubts and fears and the expectation that she would set a religious example is apparent early in Udall's diary when, downplaying her own difficulties, she manages to complain and thank God simultaneously: "What a privilege to suffer in such a glorious cause" (M. Ellsworth 54). Writing in her journal also allowed Udall to maintain her sense of participating in a divine plan, recasting her difficulties as heaven-sent trials and opportunities for spiritual growth.

Ida Udall's devotion to polygamy takes center stage in the edition of her writing published by her granddaughter, Maria S. Ellsworth, as Mormon Odyssey: The Story of Ida Hunt Udall, Plural Wife. Following Ellsworth's death, Udall's private papers, including her journal, autograph album, letters and an annual diary or "birthday book," were bequeathed to Utah State University at Logan, where they are now being catalogued. Six of Udall's letters are also among the David K. Udall papers at the University of Arizona, Tucson. I have used photocopies of Udall's journal and letters for this study, and have also relied on the published version of Udall's work for easy reference. In Mormon Odyssey, Ellsworth has reproduced the journal as is, without changes in word order, spelling, punctuation or capitalization (M. Ellsworth xiii). A

careful editor, Ellsworth notes the presence of excisions to the manuscript, suggesting that David Udall likely made them while the journal was in his possession.

As the popularity of Narcissa Whitman's journal and Maria Ellsworth's devotion to her grandmother's work suggests, these women's letters and diaries have indeed come to serve the multiple audiences they imagined as they wrote. Letter writing helped Whitman feel she was keeping in touch with her family and offering her perspective on the Oregon mission to fellow Christians in the East. It also allowed her to maintain a sense of control over her missionary experience as she highlighted events according to her own values. The story she told her Eastern friends of missionary self-sacrifice and Cayuse backwardness still echoes in white histories as part of the familiar Western mythology of pioneer suffering. Similarly, Udall's journal allowed her to confront the challenges of plural marriage on her own terms; through her record of polygamous life, she also participates posthumously in the Mormon narrative of courageous settlers and nineteenth-century believers willing to live their faith in radical ways.

As their writing reveals, both Whitman and Udall experienced much change and stress in the course of fulfilling their chosen roles. While the churches they belonged to were a source of support, they were also the source for many of the gender expectations these women faced. According to an address given by one mission board secretary to a departing group, female missionaries were to "help cheer the brethren" (male missionaries) but also to serve the Lord in a multitude of ways: in "their domestic concerns, in the education of the heathen children . . . by their assiduous attentions, their

affectionate offices, their prudent suggestions, their cheering influences and their unceasing prayers." As if this were not enough, they were directed to "show the rude and depraved islanders an effective example of the purity and dignity ... the salutary and vivifying influence, the attractive and celestial excellence, which Christianity can impart to the female character" (qtd. in Grimshaw 25). Similarly rigorous standards of selflessness prevailed for Mormon women and particularly for plural wives, whom Brigham Young exhorted to be devoted mothers, subservient to their husbands' leadership. As Young preached: "Do not ask whether you can make yourselves happy, but whether you can do your husband's will if he is a good man . . . Where I find women jealous of each other, and watching their husband, I would ask, 'Where are your children?' They are nearly all the time in the mud or in some other mischief" (qtd. in Goodson 103). These rigorous standards were added to the more general rules of behavior for nineteenth-century women: whether pious, pure and submissive "true women," as Barbara Welter contended thirty years ago, or hearty, useful and self-denying, as the heroines of fiction by writers from Louisa May Alcott to A.T.J. Bullard suggest, white, middle-class nineteenth-century women were (at least in theory and in fiction) the agents of moral uplift. On them rested the responsibility for domestic bliss. It was, in part, in response to these expectations that Whitman and Udall crafted the stories of their lives.

Notes

Examples of the former are Lillian Schlissel, Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey and Julie Roy Jeffrey's Frontier Women: The Trans-Mississippi West as well as Glenda Riley's Women and Indians on the Frontier. Classic works of feminist scholarship, these focus mainly on white, middle-class women's responses to Western life. More recent works, attentive to a wider range of women's experiences, include Writing the Range: Race, Class and Culture in the Women's West, edited by two longtime scholars of women's history, Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, and Brigitte Georgi-Findlay's The Frontiers of Women's Writing.

² "The Case of Ann Haseltine Judson: Mission Hagiography and Popular Culture, 1815-1850." In R. Keller, L. Queens, and H. Thomas, eds., Women in New Worlds: Historical Perspectives on the Wesleyan Tradition. Vol. 2. Nashville: Parthenon P, 1982. See also Mission For Life: The Story of the Family of Adoniram Judson. New York: Free P, 1980.

³ In The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China, Jane Hunter includes a particularly useful discussion of the role of American domesticity in Christian missions. See especially her chapter titled "Domestic Imperialism." Patricia Grimshaw's study Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii discusses missionary women's role in colonizing the islands and makes excellent use of their own writing to provide a detailed picture of their experiences in Hawaii.

⁴ Though its focus on women's activities is limited, William L. Hutchison's Errand to the World provides valuable historical context. Hutchison argues for the impossibility of separating American foreign mission efforts from U.S. imperialism. Particularly helpful in understanding Protestant missions to North American natives are Robert Berkhofer's Salvation and the Savage, the work of Michael Coleman, and James R. Gibson's agricultural history of the Pacific Northwest.

⁵ I refer here specifically to Faragher's study Women and Men on the Overland Trail (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979) Julie Roy Jeffrey's Frontier Women: The Trans-Mississippi West, and the second edition of Lillian Schlissel's Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey (New York: Schocken, 1992).

⁶ Now writing under the name Judy Nolte Temple, Lensink has recently turned to analysis of the diary of Nevada woman "Baby Doe" Tabor, whose writing lacks apparent coherence except in recurrent images and themes ("Fragments as Diary").

⁷ In addition to the letters and diaries of Mormon writers Ida Hunt Udall and Catherine Cottam Romney mentioned above, I refer the reader to "All Will Yet Be Well": The

Diary of Sarah Gillespie Huftalen, 1973-1952 edited by Suzanne L. Bunkers, as well as "A Secret to be Burned": The Life and Diary of Emily Hawley Gillespie, 1858-1888.

The Native perspective holds that they simply refused to exploit the land's natural abundance and exhaust its resources as white settlers did (Grinde and Johansen 32).

CHAPTER II

THE WIFE FOR A MISSIONARY: NARCISSA PRENTISS WHITMAN

Mrs. Whitman was very weakftom loss of blood, and I am convinced that she did not last long after being beaten and thrown face down in the mud, with the blankets and settee on top of her.

Matilda Sager Delaney, A Survivor's Recollections of the Whitman Massacre (1920)

Many Pacific Northwest schoolchildren learn the story of the "Whitman Massacre." Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, as adult Northwesterners and Western history buffs may remember, were Presbyterian missionaries who worked among Cayuse and Nez Perce Indians in what is now eastern Washington state. Their work, which had begun when they arrived in the Northwest from New York in the fall of 1836, came to an end on November 28, 1847 when they and some emigrants staying at their mission were killed by a small group of Natives.

The massacre story as generally told is based on accounts by white survivors, which do not always agree precisely but which do make it possible to establish an outline of events. Marcus Whitman, a physician, was killed first, struck from behind with a tomahawk as he spoke with two Indians who had come to the mission requesting medicine (Sager 62). The Whitmans' adopted son John Sager, seventeen years old, was killed reaching for a pistol to defend himself and Whitman (Sager 62). His brother Frank and a number of male emigrants, members of Oregon Trail parties stopping at the mission, were also shot. In all, the Indians killed fourteen whites between November 29

and December 5, 1847, and held some forty emigrants captive for a month until they were ransomed by Peter Skene Ogden, then chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company (Whitman, Letters 232). The mission itself was destroyed.

Narcissa Whitman was the only white woman killed, shot when she looked out her front door at the chaotic scene of Cayuse and emigrants struggling (Drury, Wagons 165). The location of the shot, described variously by eyewitnesses as lodging in her breast or arm (Drury, Wagons 165), suggests that whoever shot her was aiming for the heart—a heart, as a mission colleague later wrote, the Indians perceived as proud and cold. Like most of the whites killed that day, however, Whitman did not die instantly but retreated upstairs with several of her adopted children and a wounded man named Andrew Rogers, the mission schoolteacher who had become her close friend (Sager 60-61). Positioning an old gun barrel at the corner of the upstairs landing, Rogers temporarily held off Indians who were looting the house. Finally, however, one of the Indians indicated that the Cayuse planned to burn the mission but save the women and children (Sager 102-103). As Rogers and a mixed-blood Iroquois named Joe Lewis carried Whitman from the house on a settee, the Indians opened fire on both whites (Sager 62). Whitman's body, witnesses said, was dumped in the mud of the mission yard (Sager 62; Drury, Wagons 168).

A few of the emigrant families who were camped at the mission managed to escape in the confusion, but the Cayuse succeeded in capturing the rest (Saunders 35). The Cayuse treated their captives much as they treated Native slaves (Ruby and Brown, Cayuse 15), taking a few young women as wives, killing several of the men and setting

the rest to manual labor (Sager 23). The plan to kill all white missionaries in the area was not totally successful; missionary Henry Spalding, who had his own station a hundred and twenty-five miles from the Whitmans and whom the Indians tried to ambush as he passed the Whitman mission on horseback, was warned by friendly natives and a Catholic priest of the attack, and managed to elude capture (Whitman, Letters 250). Shortly after the killings, however, the Whitmans' colleagues left their nearby mission stations and Protestant missionary efforts in the inland Northwest were ended, at least for a time.

Historians agree that the Whitman killings had several causes (Drury; Ruby and Brown, Guide; Jeffrey, Converting; Peterson and Peers). The Whitman mission, called Waiilatpu (a descriptive Indian name meaning "place of the rye grass") was located on Cayuse homelands. When the Whitmans arrived in 1836, the Cayuse had invited the missionaries to settle on their land, and even helped them build a house (Jeffrey, Converting 115). But far from sharing the house and land with their hosts in accordance with Indian ideas of land tenure (Grinde & Johansen 37) the Whitmans offended them by interpreting the offer to share living space as the granting of European-style property rights to exclusive use and ownership. Accordingly, they fenced their yard and garden and welcomed Native visitors only in certain parts of the mission house (Whitman, Letters 65, 94). When the Cayuse attempted to adjust to the Whitmans' terms by requesting payment for the land, the missionaries refused, arguing that they had done the tribe a favor by settling there at their request and that they understood the land had been a gift (Whitman, Letters 122). Given this precedent, the Cayuse disliked seeing more

whites arrive. They feared (correctly) that the missionaries' countrymen planned to take the rest of their land. The mission supplied increasingly larger emigrant trains each fall, from just over 100 in 1842 to nearly 5,000 in 1847, the year of the killings. For the Indians, seeing so many whites arrive must have fueled the fear and anger leading to the killings.

Besides threatening Cayuse land, white emigrants brought white diseases.

Though the food, rest and medical care they received at the mission helped many whites recover, the same treatment was not as effective for the Cayuse, who had lower natural immunity to diseases such as measles. According to Drury, some Indians concluded that Dr. Whitman was deliberately saving white lives and allowing Cayuse victims to die, or even deliberately poisoning them. When the emigrant train of 1847 brought measles to the mission, some emigrants died, and several of the Whitmans' adopted children became ill, but white rates of illness and death could not compare with Indian mortality. Close to half the tribe died. Their deaths capped a year that had begun with a particularly hard winter, in which local tribes had lost almost half their livestock and game had been scarce (Drury, Wagons 161). Threatened with an epidemic on top of starvation, it was small wonder that in 1847 a few of the remaining Cayuse, grieving and furious, decided it was time to cast out the missionaries who seemed to bring them nothing but shortages, sickness and death.

Besides their disappointment at the missionaries' ungenerous treatment, and their fear of the losses imposed by white emigration, the Cayuse killing of the Whitmans was rooted in what Euroamerican settlers perceived as a "life for a life" tradition. Early in the

mission, Narcissa Whitman noted in a letter the Cayuse practice of killing their medicine men, or tewats, when a patient died:

It has been, and still is the case with them, when one dies in your care they will hold you responsible for his life, and you are in great danger of being killed. The only way of pacifying them is to pay them well for the good you have endeavored to do them. (Letters 51)

As Whitman suggests, the dead person's family sometimes accepted payment in lieu of revenge for their family member's death; accounts of the toll exacted from Native physicians come down to us mainly from white sources. Narcissa Whitman was not the only settler to believe that practicing medicine among the Cayuse was a dangerous profession, however; Archibald McKinlay, chief factor at Fort Walla Walla from 1841-1847, noted that the Cayuse "shot seven of their own medicine men by the fort during my five years' stay there, and probably over three times that number altogether" (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 163). The Cayuse apparently recognized Marcus Whitman as the white equivalent of their tewats, laying claim as he did to both spiritual leadership and healing powers (Hann 40; Miller 106). On several occasions, leaders discussed whether they should take his life to avenge a Cayuse death (Whitman, Letters 49). Perhaps by virtue of his powerful personality, Whitman was able to avert this revenge for almost a dozen years. A number of other white missionaries and traders had been threatened by Indians who demanded they vacate tribal land, but few other whites were actually killed (Drury, Wagons 227-228, 277). Watching their numbers dwindle as the whites increased, however, a few Indians decided it was time for Whitman to pay a price long overdue.

Narcissa Whitman's killing seems to have had special meaning for the Indians (later, I will discuss its significance for whites as well). In a typical raid, Cayuse warriors

killed enemy men, stole horses and goods, and enslaved women and children (Ruby and Brown, Cayuse 15). Marcus Whitman, a powerful figure who had brought invaders into Cayuse territory and whom some Indians suspected of poisoning them, clearly had to be killed if the Cayuse had any hope of stopping the influx of emigrants and sickness--but why his wife? Evidence suggests she was killed deliberately, not accidentally in the confusion. Eleven-year-old Eliza Spalding, the daughter of fellow missionaries who was fluent in Nez Perce, was attending school at the mission in November 1846 and witnessed the attacks. She heard the Indians decide to spare all the women and children except for Narcissa Whitman (Drury, Wagons 166). Shortly afterwards, the wounded Whitman was carried out, shot, slashed in the face with a whip and left to die in the mud of her own yard.

As I will show in this chapter, missionary women were charged with both Christianizing and "civilizing" their Native charges (Hutchison 15). During her eleven years at Waiilatpu, Narcissa Whitman worked hard, in hopes of convincing them to adopt Christianity and white ways, to make the Cayuse aware of their sins and to show them how inadequate, if not downright wicked, their traditional ways were. Her goals were much like her friend Mercy Whitney's in the Hawaiian mission: in Patricia Grimshaw's succinct terms, to effect "the conversion and reform of ignorant sinners" and the redemption of "a society held to be degraded and disordered when judged by the rigid values of their American culture" (193). After 1843, however, the year that saw the first large influx of emigrants into the country over the Oregon Trail (Gibson 134), Whitman began focusing her attentions less on the Indians and more on the perceived needs of her

own family and those of white visitors. In this change of focus, her biographer Julie Roy

Jeffrey sees the explanation for her violent death:

The mutilation of her body suggests the deep anger [the Cayuse] felt at this white woman who had failed to be their friend, who had threatened them with hell, who had held herself and her children apart from them. As her friend Henry Perkins wrote after her death, Narcissa had failed to be 'familiar—sympathizing—open hearted' (Converting 221)

Sadly, it was likely Narcissa Whitman's strict adherence to her mission--her efforts to avoid any taint of "heathenism" in her household and her stringent upholding of white standards of cleanliness, privacy and personal property that made the Cayuse view her as proud, haughty and distant. In so doing, she became a too effective symbol of white civilization for a people who had come to hate and mistrust whites. Had she been able or willing to reach the Indians on their own terms, to enter their lodges and speak their language more fluently, it is possible that she and her husband might have survived. As this chapter will show, however, nothing in her background prepared her to act this way and, unbending in her white principles, Narcissa Whitman created the reality in which she died, maintaining her belief in "savage Indians" until the end.

"An Unheard-Of Journey for Females": Women Missionaries Cross the Plains

*Jesus shall reign where e'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
American missionary hymn, 1810*

The first diary Narcissa Whitman ever kept was a record of her journey from her home in western New York across the continent and over the Rocky Mountains to Fort

Vancouver on the Columbia River. She and her husband, physician and missionary Marcus Whitman, had come west from New York with fellow missionaries Henry and Eliza Spalding and Henry Gray to establish a Protestant mission to the Indians of the inland Northwest. The missionary party traveled on horseback and by wagon, escorted by fur traders and accompanied part of the way by Indians from the Nez Perce tribe, one of the native groups to whom they hoped to bring the gospel (Drury, Wagons 30). The Whitmans' 1836 journey was remarkable in the history of white settlement for at least two things: it was widely believed to be the first time white women had crossed the Rockies and it was the first time the trip was made with a wagon (Marcus Whitman, a man of notable stubbornness, brought one from Missouri as far as the Boise River) (Whitman, Journal 32).

These twin accomplishments were not key to establishing Protestant missions in the Northwest, but they were central to the Northwest's colonization by white settlers from the States. Before Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding made the trip, popular wisdom held that because of the rigors of the journey and white women's supposed physical frailty, family migration to the Far West was impossible except by ship, a mode of travel far too expensive for most Americans (Drury, Wagons 32). By showing that white women could survive the overland trail and by settling in an area *as yet uninhabited* by white families, the Whitmans and Spaldings set a precedent for the emigrants who followed. While Methodist missionary Jason Lee had established a mission in the Willamette Valley in 1834, he settled in an area that, according to historian James R. Gibson, "had lost most of its Indians by then to warfare and disease" and was populated

by retired Hudson's Bay Company employees drawn to the prime farmland (151). Furthermore, since the Lee party was all-male, the Willamette mission was not at first a family affair. The Whitmans and Spaldings, by contrast, established stations on the inland Columbia Plateau, an area still inhabited mainly by aboriginal peoples (Bard 30). Apart from a few fur company personnel, the missionaries were the region's first white settlers; underscoring the couples' intent to stay, both missionary families had children in the first year.

Narcissa Whitman's record of the overland trip is one of the earliest transcontinental travel accounts by a white, middle-class Eastern woman. Likewise, her letters from Waiilatpu offer some of the first views of the far Western frontier through the eyes of one charged with teaching Native inhabitants white ways and religion. As one of the first white women settlers in the West, Whitman inhabited a landscape largely populated by Indians and male trappers and traders, people against whom she defined herself and whom she sought to influence. Just as her writing offered a counterpoint to the (mostly) male-authored accounts of Northwest travel by authors such as Joshua Carver, Lewis and Clark, and fellow missionary Samuel Parker, the self inscribed in her diary and letters was intended to stand as a beacon of domesticity in what Whitman herself called "the thick darkness of heathendom" (Letters 56).

While the Spaldings established their mission, Lapwai, near the Clearwater River in present-day Idaho, the less remote Whitman mission was located in an area already well-traveled by Indians and fur traders, near what became the Oregon Trail. The Whitmans' assistance to emigrants grew out of their original Indian mission. When the

Oregon mission was racked by internal strife in the early 1840s, Marcus Whitman undertook a risky autumn ride east to plead with his superiors at the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions not to close the stations. He returned the following year having met and helped guide a train of almost a thousand white emigrants from the States (Gibson 134; Whitman, Letters 216). From 1843-1847 the Whitmans provided food, shelter, and medical care to many travelers, and even adopted a family of children whose parents had died on the trail. They were thus instrumental in furthering the cause of white emigration and settlement in the far West.

While in many ways Whitman's background did not prepare her for her original mission of converting the Cayuse, it did prepare her for her role as "civilizer" of Western lands. In this chapter, I will show how all these factors--the assumptions underlying Indian missions, the mission board's expectations for women missionaries, the birth, in the evangelic ferment of western New York, of Whitman's desire to serve God and her personal determination to recreate a Yankee village in Oregon—inspired her not to grow close to the Cayuse women whose souls she was charged with saving, but to create a home that *was* a model for other emigrants and to educate the white children who were to become settlers in their own right.

In the next chapter, I will discuss how Whitman defines her position on what was (at least to her) a geographic and cultural frontier in terms of race, class and gender and how she uses writing to legitimize a shift in focus from her original vocation of Indian evangelism to that of motherhood. While missionary women were charged with bringing American domesticity to native people and while motherhood, in the popular culture of

Whitman's time, was fast attaining the status of a sacred mission, these seemingly overlapping roles were not wholly compatible, and Whitman used writing to negotiate between them. She wrote to her parents that "the Lord has . . . filled my hands" with task of caring for her adopted family, suggesting that she sought divine approval for her change of focus (Letters 213). As background for my analysis, this chapter will describe the origins and aims of Indian missions and discuss why Whitman was drawn to mission work, how she prepared for the mission field and why the Cayuse responded to the Whitmans as they did.

Such context is necessary in order to understand why Whitman presents herself in her diary as she does. Exploring the ideological underpinnings of her missionary role can help readers understand why, for example, Whitman frequently portrayed herself as a martyr and what role such apparently irrelevant elements as household cleanliness and fences played in evangelism. Knowing whom she might have taken as models of wifehood, motherhood, Christianity and forbearance can likewise illuminate her writing for what it is, a complex autobiography created to serve the rhetorical demands of multiple audiences.

Manifest Destiny and the Oregon Mission

As the story of Waiilatpu's transformation from a remote outpost to an Oregon Trail landmark shows, a mission to Oregon's Indians suited the interests of an expanding United States. As a result of the War of 1812, the country agreed to hold the Pacific Northwest jointly with Great Britain, whose fur traders dominated the region. The treaty

of joint occupation was renewed in 1827. By then, however, a growing white American population was looking westward in search of new, cheap land. During the 1830s, a shift in European fashions from beaver to silk hats caused a decline in the fur trade. Great Britain grew more willing to loosen its hold on the region, while the Panic of 1837 in the eastern U.S. spurred many Americans' interest in a region where farming was reportedly easy (Schlissel 20).

As the Whitmans' role in Oregon emigration suggests, Protestant missionaries favored U.S. expansion, at least when it promised to bring them like-minded neighbors. In his agricultural history of the Pacific Northwest, James R. Gibson contends that Marcus Whitman "could justifiably be labelled a conscious agent of American imperialism" (155). Whitman wrote to a relative in 1846 that "I have adopted Oregon as my country" and urged him to join the next emigration: "It is quite important that such a country as Oregon should not fall into the exclusive hands of the Jesuits [nor] under the English government" (Whitman, Letters 216). Though their original intent was to convert the Indians, after ten years with few converts both Whitmans had turned their attention elsewhere and had begun to view as inevitable the disappearance of a people who seemingly failed to appreciate their lessons in farming and Christian doctrine. As the passage above shows, by 1846 Marcus Whitman no longer included Northwest natives in his vision of the future.

Chauvinistic as he was, Whitman was not unique among Protestant missionaries. Such an attitude was almost a necessary prerequisite for service in Protestant missions, subsidized by a government that saw them as a kind of advance guard serving to break

down tribe and band cohesiveness, familiarize Indians with white ways and thereby (at least in theory) render aboriginal lands a safer place for white settlers (Berkhofer, Salvation 106, 130-134). U.S. government funds made possible the establishment of remote stations like those in Oregon (Coleman 39), for a territory like the Pacific Northwest, rich in natural resources, was highly attractive to both British and American imperial eyes. The Whitmans' religious mission was ill-fated, ending when Marcus, Narcissa and a number of emigrants were killed by a group of natives in late 1847. When U.S. troops arrived, ostensibly to punish only those responsible for the killings, the Whitmans' efforts to save Northwest Indians from what they believed was eternal damnation proved to have been only a prelude to a series of world-changing events for the Cayuse and Nez Perce.

At Work in the Fields of the Lord: Protestant Missions to Native Americans

Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:19-20

The Origins of Indian Missions

From the earliest days of English colonization, Protestant missions to North American Indians incorporated three key concepts. The first was that native people were "heathen": that they were superstitious, rather than spiritual, and that tribal culture and language were in virtually all cases and all respects inferior to white culture and English (Hutchison 27). The second was that at least some Indians not only needed but also wanted to hear the gospel. From the early days of New England colonization, some

Indians had expressed interest in white religion, perhaps as a means of coping with a world changed by white arrivals (Calloway 43). The notion of missionizing Indians gained strength in the nineteenth century, as Protestant visions of the millennium and the new theology of the Second Great Awakening sparked enthusiasm for foreign missions and reports spread throughout the denominations of Northwest natives seeking teachers (Miller 54, 87). The third concept, springing from the first two, was that Indians needed to be "civilized" as well as Christianized, persuaded to abandon their traditional culture and adopt white ways (Calloway 43).

Since they believed white ways were superior to Indian ways, missionaries viewed their work as benevolent, arguing that assimilation offered tribal peoples their only chance to survive in a country increasingly dominated by white settlers (Hutchison 68). As missionary Henry Spalding wrote, "We point [the Nez Perce] with one hand to the Lamb of God ... [and] with the other to the hoe, as the means of saving their famishing bodies from an untimely grave" (qtd. in Drury, Whitman, Vol. I, 243). For Protestant missionaries to the Indians, teaching native people to live like whites was as high a priority as converting them to Christianity and Euroamerican-style farming which, partly because it emphasized the importance of exclusive property ownership, seemed an ideal vehicle for teaching white values (Berkhofer, Salvation 70). Of course, requiring Indians to live year-round on individual plots of land also suited white interests, as allotment laws enacted later in the century made abundantly clear (Bard 56; Peterson and Peers 165).

Most missionaries felt Indian religion was as primitive as the native culture and lifeways they abhorred_ David Brainerd, perhaps the most famous missionary to the Northeastern tribes, believed not only that Native religion was pure superstition but that Indians in general lacked the moral foundation for spirituality. When a native elder told Brainerd his people's creation story, Brainerd took it as evidence that the tribe had no concept of the sacred (Hutchison 27). John Edwards, a missionary to the Choctaw, described such rituals as rainmaking while claiming that the Choctaw were "a people without God" (Coleman 84) and Eliza Spalding wrote of her eagerness to introduce the "blessings of civilization and religion" among the Nez Perce. In her eyes, this populous tribe with its complex social organization and systems of belief had neither (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 191). These missionaries seem to have been both unable and unwilling to see evidence of spirituality in any tradition but their own.

As early as 1630, however, English Christians believed the "heathen" felt their spiritual lack. An emblem struck to represent the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 depicts a native man pleading, "Come over and help us" (Hutchinson 10). These words, known to historians and theologians as the "Macedonian cry," come from a New Testament story of the apostle Paul, who saw a vision of a man from Macedonia pleading for the gospel (Acts 16:9-10). The representation of the heathen as requesting Christian teachings was thus a missionary trope well-established even in the earliest days of colonization. Drawing as they did biblical parallels to almost all their actions, the first New Englanders were well equipped to see native Americans as modern-day Macedonians and themselves as apostles to the New World.

Despite this Biblical precedent, English colonists focused more on establishing settlements where they could practice their faith than on sharing that faith with the Indians (Bowden 112). The Puritans saw themselves, not aboriginal Americans, as God's chosen people. As latter-day Children of Israel, they expected God to remove 'inferior' peoples from their path as he had removed Old Testament Canaanites from the ancient Hebrews'. The epidemics of European diseases that decimated Indian populations reinforced the English sense of being God's favorites. William Bradford, governor of Plymouth colony, attributed the "great sickness" in which "of a thousand, above nine and a half hundred [Indians] died" to "the marvelous goodness and providence of God" (Stannard 238). In fact, Puritans found Biblical precedent not only for converting Indians but also for killing them. As historian David Stannard points out, English colonists viewed their own genocidal attacks on Indians as a judgment of God who, many believed, was helping them eliminate their "enemies," in the same thoroughgoing and gory way as the Old Testament inhabitants of the Promised Land had been eliminated on the Hebrews' behalf. Just as the Old Testament hero Joshua had destroyed Canaanite cities, "not sparing anything that breathed," Stannard notes, English leaders such as John Endicott and John Mason burned Indian villages and their inhabitants, not sparing "women, children and feeble old men" (Stannard 113-114; Joshua 10:22-28, 30-43 and 11:9-23).

Converting the New World's Indians became more important to English colonists in the millennial visions of the First and Second Great Awakenings. Both Cotton Mather and, later, Jonathan Edwards saw New England as a potential "staging area" for the

millennial reign of Christ (Hutchison 38). Particularly in New England, ministers preached that Christ's return was, if not imminent, pending in the next century or so (Phillips 8). Preparation for the millennium included bringing lost lambs back into God's fold, and here native Americans had a special role to play. Some prominent Puritans and many ordinary folk considered Indians descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel, scattered by God in the Old Testament but one day to be reunited (Cross 81; Hutchinson 52).' In this scenario, the aim in converting Indians was not native peoples' own happiness but the fulfillment of prophecies important in white culture and religion (Phillips 17, 19).

By the Whitmans' time, missionaries had reason to believe the Indians themselves were requesting the gospel. In 1833 a Methodist paper carried the story of four Indians who arrived in St. Louis, Missouri, apparently requesting Christian missionaries for their tribe. "Hear! Hear!" the story was headlined. "Who will respond to the call from beyond the Rocky Mountains?" (Peterson and Peers 84). This tale of the "wise men from the West" as one minister called them, was picked up by other papers and likely seen by both Marcus and Narcissa Whitman (Jeffrey, Converting 39). As J.C. Bard aptly notes, the report was "instantly mythologized" (8); even today, historians Jacqueline Peterson and Laura Peers point out, Northwest tribes disagree on who the emissaries were and whether they requested Protestant missionaries or Catholic priests. These scholars also note that there were actually four Native delegations sent to St. Louis in the early 1830s, apparently in search of white spiritual power (83). In any case, by 1833 the Boston-based American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) had already made

the decision to send a mission to Oregon, and this new "Macedonian cry" merely added impetus to the plan (Jeffrey, Converting 39). The notion that Indians were asking for Christian teachers was enough to fire both Protestants and Catholics with enthusiasm.

"Beyond the Rocky Mountains": Missions to the Inland Northwest

The Indians of the Columbia Plateau, among whose neighbors were the Salish and Blackfeet who had traveled to St. Louis, may have been prepared to meet white missionaries through a series of eighteenth and early nineteenth-century events. Historian Christopher L. Miller argues that the arrival of horses and guns along trade networks from the Plains had placed what he calls an "unbearable strain" on Plateau culture (41). Donald Grinde and Bruce E. Johansen concur that the arrival of horses, guns and liquor as well as the mercantile capitalism imposed by fur traders from the East placed great stress on traditional Plains and Plateau culture. The arrival of horses, guns and trade goods, these scholars argue, sparked changes in hunting, migration and warring patterns (Grinde & Johansen 28, 30). Climatic changes, including a volcanic eruption, and epidemics of European diseases (which often preceded whites along trade routes) also contributed to the strain of change (Miller 33, 35).

Faced with a number of such challenges in succession, Columbia Plateau Indians may have been attracted, as Miller asserts, to the new religious ideas spread by Iroquois working in the fur trade and by their Southwestern trading partners. Both Southwestern and Iroquois Indians had been missionized by Catholic priests by the late 1700s (Peterson and Peers 49). The Nez Perce and Cayuse probably also learned of Christianity from two

Indian youths who attended a Hudson's Bay Company boarding school in present-day Winnipeg. The youths brought religious ideas and Bibles home with them, sharing what they had learned with fellow Natives who may actually have been expecting the fulfillment of prophecies (Miller 57). For a number of years, native prophets had predicted the coming of teachers who would help the Indians (Miller 43; Peterson and Peers 14, 17). The following is an English retelling of a prophecy by the Blackfoot seer Shining Shirt:

Shining Shirt was given a vision about the future. He prophesied the coming of fair-skinned men wearing long black robes who would teach the Indians a new way of praying and a new moral law. The Black Robes would bring peace, he predicted, but their arrival would also mean the beginning of the end of all the people who then inhabited the land.
(Peterson and Peers 17)

Like white prophets of the millennium, Shining Shirt predicted the end of the known world. A Coeur d'Alene version of the prophecy suggests that native visionaries foresaw, if not the annihilation of Indian people, great change and loss:

A great evil is coming. An enemy more powerful than any you have ever known will surround you . . . There will be much bloodshed. Much sorrow. Gather your strength. Before the enemy three ravens will come to you. Their teachings will help you survive the coming onslaught.
(Hale 1)

Faced with a stressful present and the promise of more troubled times, some Plateau Indians were willing to seek spiritual power and knowledge from the white culture that had already sent them horses, guns and disease. While anthropologist Eugene S. Hunn contends that Indian prophets' visions were probably shaped by rumors about white technology that traveled along trade routes (250) Miller argues for a synchronicity of Indian and white millennial visions that earned the missionaries a hearing. He asserts

that the Indians listened to white missionaries, at least for a time, because their own prophets had foretold the value of the missionary message (92). Meanwhile, the Indian delegations to St. Louis were greeted enthusiastically by both Protestants and Catholics who heard the call for teachers through the filter of their own millennial expectations.

Light for the Perishing: Evangelical Presbyterianism

The Whitmans' efforts among the Indians were directed from Boston by the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Founded in 1810, the board oversaw the missionary efforts of Presbyterian, Congregational and Dutch Reformed churches in the northeastern U.S. (Hutchison 45). Early in the nineteenth century the ABCFM sent missionaries to China, India, Burma and Palestine, and had what it considered a great success in Hawaii, where missionaries arrived at the right political moment to gain a foothold among clan chiefs (Grimshaw 40-41). The board also established Indian missions in the southeastern U.S., which were closed when Andrew Jackson forced the tribes westward (Jeffrey, Converting 36). Because of the Hawaiian mission's success and the eastern Indian removals, the ABCFM turned its attention to the continent's far west.

To the Indians of the Columbia Plateau, ABCFM missionaries carried Calvinism with an evangelical twist, the old doctrines of Puritan New England warmed by the enthusiasm of revivalist Charles G. Finney and his ilk (Coleman 11). Finney, who was active in western New York during the Whitmans' and Spaldings' youth, was a largely self-taught, itinerant preacher who was ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1824

despite the fact that, as historian Whitney Cross notes, "he did not even know the Confession of Faith," a statement of the denomination's basic tenets (159). His skill at making converts prompted the church to accept him, however, and in the 1820s and 30s Finney swept through the towns of New England, New York and Pennsylvania, bringing thousands into church (Cross 154). His revival style influenced regular church services, which came to include spontaneous public prayers by both men and women and stirring music intended to melt sinners' hearts.

The influence of this emotional evangelism is apparent in Narcissa Whitman's descriptions of her personal devotions and her missionary work. In her letters, she characterized people she found congenial as "warm-hearted revival Christians" and used words like "melting," "sweet," and "precious" to describe times she felt especially close to God. Finney's revivals influenced her work with Northwest Indians as she sought in her mission subjects the signs of repentance she had seen in fellow New Yorkers: "the tearful eye, the solemn countenance, and the anxious heart bursting forth with the inquiry 'What must I do to be saved?'" (Letters 70). Whitman seems not to have considered that cultural differences might have kept Indians from showing the tearful repentance that was not only accepted but expected at revival meetings thousands of miles to the East. She wrote of witnessing to one Cayuse man: "I have been reading to him the fifth chapter of Matthew. Every word of it seemed to sink deep into his heart ... his mind is somewhat waked up about his living with two wives" (Letters 130). To Whitman, any signs of agitation did not suggest anger at the missionaries' criticism, but signified that the all-important spiritual struggle was under way.

Adherents of this emotional, evangelical form of Christianity downplayed the doctrine of predestination, the Calvinist idea that some souls have been saved and some damned from the beginning of time. Such a shift of emphasis was crucial to foreign missions. Finney argued that "the sinner's cannot is his 'will not'"—in other words, that remaining unsaved constituted a willful refusal of divine grace (Cross 159). Historian Michael Coleman notes that nineteenth-century Presbyterian missionaries "wrote and acted as though salvation were offered to all" (36) and Julie Roy Jeffrey concurs:

The Second Great Awakening . . . drew its energy from a new theological understanding of the individual's ability to work toward his or her own salvation. Rejecting the traditional doctrine suggesting that individuals were powerless to determine their spiritual fate, evangelical Protestants believed that each person could seek conversion and win salvation. (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 12).

Added to a sense that the millennium was at hand, the notion that all could be saved ignited the foreign mission movement. If all could be saved, all must have a chance to hear the gospel, and it behooved Christians to spread the good news as quickly as possible around the globe. Though their spiritual forebears were Calvinists, the Whitmans and their colleagues were caught up in the fervor of the Second Great Awakening when they devoted their lives to missionary service.

The Oregon missionaries brought the Nez Perce and Cayuse a Calvinism that was inclusive and optimistic compared with its New England predecessors (Phillips 6-7). However, they were still preaching an exclusive theology. The Whitmans would doubtless have concurred with statements of faith such as that found in the 1838 Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church:

By the sin of our first parents we lost our original righteousness, and became guilty before God . . . we are by nature totally depraved, destitute of holiness ... there is no other ground of justification [i.e. salvation] than the righteousness of the Redeemer . . . received by faith alone . . . and . . . without the renewing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, no sinner can either return to God, or be prepared for the holy joys of his presence. (qtd. in Coleman 35)

In order to be saved from the hell white missionaries described, the Indians would have to give up their own spiritual practices. While Plateau tribes had apparently incorporated some elements of Christianity into traditional life before white missionaries came (Ruby and Brown, Cayuse 64-65) many Natives balked at abandoning their own religion altogether, as the missionaries demanded.² The Whitmans and their colleagues were not satisfied with Native interest in learning "scripture names and history;" they wanted evidence of troubled consciences and changed hearts (Letters 92). Thus, after a short honeymoon period with their respective tribes, they found the Indians resisting the Christian message. One of the Cayuse suggested to Narcissa Whitman that the missionaries' lessons simply did not speak to them: "'Your instruction is good; the wise and discreet appreciate it; for the mass of us, we hear it, but it falls powerless upon our hearts, and we remain the same still' (Letters 136). Others openly rejected what they heard, especially when the missionaries used scripture to criticize them. Whitman reported "They regret every application made to the hearts and lives of the people and call it bad talk, mutter and often tell [Marcus Whitman] to stop for they have heard enough" (Letters 92).

The Whitmans, of course, refused to back away from what they saw as the hard duty of pointing out sin. Reproving a young man who exacted payment in the form of

goods and horses for the death of a relative, Marcus Whitman insisted such traditions were a sin and that "if he did not tell [the Indians] plainly of their sins the Lord would be displeased" (Whitman, Letters 111). Judging the Cayuse guilty of the "want of faith and a holy heart," as Narcissa Whitman wrote to her parents (Letters 118) they refused to allow the Indians even the slightest degree of hope for the state of their souls until they felt the process of conversion was complete. Such a conversion, missionaries taught, was the only way Indians could save themselves from the hell both Protestants and Catholics depicted as a fiery place of torture. Eventually, however, some Cayuse decided that the waves of white emigrants entering their land and the missionaries whose own establishment was rapidly expanding posed a greater danger to the tribe than the terrors of the Christian afterlife.

Christianization and "Civilization"

Dr. Whitman showed the Indians how to cultivate their little patches. There was not very much cultivation about anything, however.

Matilda Sager Delaney, A Survivor's Recollections of the Whitman Massacre

As I have already noted, the missionaries of the ABCFM were as concerned with acculturating Oregon's Indians to white ways as with evangelizing them. They wanted the Indians to abandon their traditional hunting, gathering and trading rounds and take up farming instead. But the missionaries' program of Christian education involved not only teaching Indians to farm but revamping gender roles and encouraging the wholesale adoption of white clothing, technology and daily habits.

As mission historian Henry Warner Bowden notes, "civilizing" Indians meant attention to seemingly minute details. "Evangelists in the field ... insisted that schoolchildren cut their hair, wear trousers and dresses, use soap, water, and combs, adopt English names, sit in chairs, eat with forks, and perform chores around the house and farm" (169). Such changes were loaded with meaning for Indians and whites. To the missionaries, long hair on men and boys was a sign of effeminacy and cloth—not hide or bark—was the proper material for clothing. Missionary Eliza Spalding proudly described the appearance of three Nez Perce women who, under her tutelage, wove enough cloth to make themselves European-style woolen dresses:

They look to me much more comfortable and respectable in these dresses than in any others I have ever seen them wear. . . Jacob's wife, Abigail Ann and Matilda have knit themselves leggins [sic] ... Some appearances of civilization and improvement I think, we now really see. All Glory to God if any good has been accomplished through our instrumentality. (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 216)

As this passage shows, renaming even adult Indians ("Jacob" "Abigail Ann" and "Matilda") was part of the process of replacing traditional culture with white ways. Missionary efforts to transform Native culture through dress and handwork were not a wholesale success, however. Eliza Spalding notes that instead of copying her own, presumably more somber choice of colors for their undergarments, her Nez Perce neighbors accessorized their new woolen dresses with "yellow stockings, which colour [sic] I should not fancy for my own use" (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 216). Convinced of their cultural superiority, however, none of the missionaries researched Indian customs before making their expectations known; moreover, modifying those expectations, as Spalding's statement shows, would have meant adjusting their definitions of the

"respectable" and "civilized," thus calling into question the work they had been sent to do.

The idea of work itself—the Calvinist ideal—was yet another area where missionaries hoped to change Indian values. On the frontier, the Oregon missionaries worked ceaselessly to support themselves and expected those around them to work equally hard. Narcissa Whitman wrote to a friend about her adopted children,

I must be with them or else they will be doing something they should not, or else not spending their time profitably. I could get along some easier if I could bring my mind to have them spend their time in play, but this I cannot. (Letters 207)

While they too worked hard to survive, Michael Coleman has noted that the Nez Perce and Cayuse did not distinguish as sharply as the missionaries between what was "play" and what was "profitable" (66). To the missionaries, Indian men seemed lazy because their main activities of practicing horsemanship, hunting and raiding were pursuits the transplanted New Englanders viewed either as leisure or as morally wrong.³ On the other hand, Indian women seemed like hapless beasts of burden whose husbands, apparently too lazy to take over what in white culture were men's tasks, allowed them to dig roots and erect the family lodge (Green 29; Ruby and Brown, Cayuse 15).

To the missionaries' chagrin, Cayuse and Nez Perce men showed little interest in fanning. Traditionally, bands from these tribes followed a cycle of migration that included digging for roots, fishing, hunting buffalo and traveling to trade fairs such as the fur rendezvous in the Rockies and an annual gathering at The Danes (Bard 9-12; Zucker 7, 30). Such a system worked because of a natural abundance of plants and game. The missionaries, however, saw little value in seasonal migration and recognized that

competition for game and fish from whites, whose arrival they saw as inevitable, would strain the land's resources and starve the Indians. Marcus Whitman believed that seeing the results of agriculture would convince the Cayuse to change their ways: "When they have plenty of food they will be little disposed to wander" (qtd. in Jeffrey, Converting 124).

The Cayuse the Whitmans met in 1836 were a small tribe, probably between 400 and 500 people organized by families and bands (Bard 17; Ruby and Brown, Cayuse 15). They were, however, already feeling the pressure from white competition for buffalo on the Great Plains. Ruby and Brown sum up the movement of buffalo in response to white arrivals in the nineteenth century:

The buffalo . . . which began migrating to western slopes of the Rocky Mountains in the second decade of the nineteenth century, were pushed there by American fur hunters east of the Continental Divide [who typically carried just enough food to see them to buffalo country, then lived exclusively off the animals they could kill en route]. Receding eastward in the third decade of the nineteenth century, buffalo became extinct on the western slopes [of the Rockies] after the 1840s. (48)

The Cayuse and other Plateau hunters would thus have had to travel farther east than usual in the first years of the Whitman and Spalding missions. The longer spring migration gave them less time than ever to spend near the mission sites, cultivating their lands and hearing the Christian message. In the missions' later years, the buffalo began to disappear altogether. Missionary Elkanah Walker, sent by the ABCFM in 1838 as part of a reinforcement party for the Whitmans and Spaldings, wrote that "game is becoming scarce on [Indian] hunting grounds & unless they are prepared to gain a livelihood (sic)

in some other way the sad consequence of their starvation must take place" (qtd. in Gibson 161).

Some scholars, however, have pointed out that Indians were loath to adopt agriculture not only because they were used to migrating but also because they disliked some of its products (Coleman; Jeffrey, Converting 124). Many native peoples preferred a diet of the wild foods they were used to—game birds to the missionaries' chicken, buffalo and salmon to beef and pork. Missionary attempts to supplement the Indian diet could actually be detrimental to traditional ways of life, as when hogs imported from the east dug up and ate roots that were a staple of the native diet (Ruby and Brown, Indians 78).

As with the adoption of Christianity, some Indians were willing to add farming to their seasonal cycle but few consented to abandon tradition entirely. From a white perspective, such practice was pathetically wrong-headed. As missionary Asa Smith wrote of the Nez Perce, "As yet their cultivation has scarcely diminished their wandering at all. Seed time & harvest confine them where their fields are & between these periods they are usually wandering ... when they return [they] find little or nothing" (qtd. in Gibson 180). Zucker, Hummel and Hogfoss note, however, that the missionaries were "unaware of the careful planning and environmental soundness behind the nomadic lifestyle they were so quick to condemn" (61). While the missionaries viewed agriculture as the only virtuous way to make a living (Berkhofer, Salvation 70), some Indians saw it as a violation of the earth (Jeffrey, Converting 124). While root digging was acceptable because the creator had provided roots for people to find, Plateau tribes did not cultivate

camas and other food sources, believing they grew best where naturally occurring. Tilling the earth with an iron plow could be seen as an aggressive act. Indian prophet Smohalla argued, "You ask me to plow the ground! Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's bosom? Then when I die she will not take me to her bosom to rest" (qtd. in Gibson 186). Living with the earth in its natural state was more important to Indians than to the missionaries, who placed a great value on the land's potential to produce commodities in large amounts.

It was not only native reluctance, however, that hampered missionary efforts to produce Christian farmers on the Columbia Plateau. Most of the mission stations were sited on land unsuitable for farming (Gibson 153). The Plateau is irrigated today by water diverted from the dammed Columbia River, but without that irrigation the crops that cover much of the region today would not grow. The Plateau contained canyons, streams filled seasonally with migrating salmon and forested hillsides that were home to deer and elk. The prairie grasses housed rabbits and other small game, while camas prairies and berry thickets provided food that was gathered by Indian women. But for the Whitmans, Spaldings and their missionary charges, drought on the plains was a harsh fact of life. Farms and gardens required, then as now, extensive irrigation and, given the choice between living off the land's natural produce or digging ditches where there was little water, most Indians chose the former.

In the years before trucks and modern logging equipment, the land's natural features presented another problem for would-be farmers, both white and Indian: lack of ready access to timber (Whitman, Letters 46). Natives lived not in wooden longhouses

like their coastal neighbors but in lodges covered with hide or tule mats (Whitman, Letters 49; Zucker 7) or sometimes, in winter, in underground homes (Hunn 189). The Spaldings, on a relatively well-timbered site near the Clearwater, were able to build a log cabin, but the Whitmans' first house was adobe. Wood had a more important use even than home building, however: fencing. Without fences, it was difficult to keep the famous Cayuse ponies out of wheatfields, or to deter Indian dogs and the indigenous wolves and coyotes from picking off the sheep the missionaries had brought from Fort Vancouver to start their own flocks (Whitman, Letters 65).

Finally, most of the missionaries lacked the background to be successful farmers. Marcus Whitman was a physician, the son of a tanner; Henry Spalding was a minister who had grown up in foster homes. Of the five ABCFM missionaries who participated in the Oregon mission of the 1830s, only one of the men actually came from a farm (Gibson 173). Nevertheless, the missionaries were determined to succeed in their agricultural and settlement efforts. Marcus Whitman built a sawmill in the Blue Mountains, and cut and sawed pine boards to build another house and fence the garden (Whitman, Letters 91). Whitman and Spalding resorted to poisoning wolves and paying a bounty to Indians who agreed to kill their pet dogs (Miller 91-92). Of course, such strict measures did not endear the missionaries to their Indian neighbors.

The missionaries' claim that their presence would benefit the Indians was ironic. Historically, missionaries had preceded white settlement, which meant Indian displacement. As Waiilatpu's importance as a rest stop on the Oregon Trail shows, the missionaries were advance scouts for the white emigrants already wiping out the buffalo

on the Great Plains. That they believed their purposes were benevolent is important in understanding Narcissa Whitman's writing. Belief in the superiority of white culture meant she did not question whether a farming life would make the Cayuse happier, or feed them better, than traditional hunting and gathering, while her Christian beliefs meant practitioners of other religions were destined for terrible punishment in the afterlife. Like most nineteenth-century white Americans, the Whitmans thought of the Northwest as empty land to be settled and farmed. Neither Narcissa Whitman nor her coworkers perceived that by trying to stamp out Native traditions and welcoming white settlers, they were harming the very people to whom they claimed to offer help.

The Wife for a Missionary: Narcissa Whitman's Preparation for the Field

If any need the solace of a dearer self—if any need a sharer in their joys and sorrows, it is the lone, dispirited, weary missionary.

Anne Tuttle Jones Bullard, The Wife for a Missionary (1834)

Mrs. Whitman was not adapted to savage but to civilized life. She would have done honor to her sex in a polished & exalted sphere . . . As for myself I could as easily have become an Indian as not. I could gladly have made the wigwam my home for life had duty called. But it was not so with Mrs. W. She kept her original sphere to the last.

Reverend Henry Perkins, Methodist missionary at The Danes, Oregon
To Narcissa Whitman's sister Jane Prentiss, October 1849

Narcissa Prentiss Whitman was a twenty-seven-year-old teacher from western New York when she crossed the continent to teach the Indians of the Columbia Plateau to sing hymns, read the Bible and plant vegetable gardens. Though she had no practical knowledge of Indian life, the ABCFM considered her qualified to enter foreign missions (Drury, Wagons 29). For her time, she was relatively well educated; she had taught both regular and Sunday schools; and, perhaps most valued by the mission board, she had

turned her religion into action at home. Influenced by the excitement of religious revivals in her home region, she was experienced at working with white converts and worshipping with like-minded evangelical Christians. Her practical preparation for Indian evangelism, however, was virtually nonexistent.

Narcissa Prentiss grew up in a middle-class family in Prattsburg, in a region of western New York called the "burned-over district" because the fire of religious revival swept it so often during the Second Great Awakening (Cross 6). Her parents, Stephen and Clarissa Prentiss, were transplanted New Englanders who believed in hard work and were known to their neighbors as serious and respectable. Stephen Prentiss, a builder who helped carve Prattsburg from the woods of Steuben County, eventually rose to some local prominence, serving as a local magistrate and earning the title of "Judge" (Jeffrey, Converting 9). From birth, Narcissa Prentiss was firmly in the middle class, but she was also the child of parents who had colonized a frontier, just as she and Marcus Whitman would do in Oregon. In moving west as a young married woman, she was repeating a family pattern, and it might have seemed natural to her to expect a similar ending in the arrival at Waiilatpu, *as a* Prattsburg, of more white settlers and the establishment of a thriving Yankee town. It was certainly this goal that the Whitmans tried to achieve.

Narcissa's mother, Clarissa Prentiss, seems to have had a strong influence on her daughter's religious development (Jeffrey, Converting 16-18) and guided her at least part of the way towards her choice of vocation. As the Prentisses' eldest daughter during a time when family religious life was increasingly dominated by women, Narcissa (who experienced conversion at the tender age of eleven) followed in her mother's footsteps

from the start, doing charitable work and assisting at revivals (Drury, Whitman 105). Clarissa Prentiss, who had herself been converted in a revival shortly before her daughter's birth, worked hard to bring all nine of the young Prentisses into the church (Jeffrey, Converting 15). While she had limited success with some of her older sons, Clarissa and her eldest daughter were, perhaps, especially close. Narcissa wrote from the mission field that she missed her old custom of "pour[ing] into my mother's bosom all my feelings, both sad and rejoicing" (Letters 44). Clarissa helped organize the Female Home Missionary Society of Prattsburg and enrolled all her children in the local Youth Missionary Society (Jeffrey, Converting 17). Her closeness to a parent who provided such an example of devotion might have made it more surprising if Narcissa had not chosen a religious vocation.

The young Narcissa Prentiss' reading was another potential influence, consisting as it apparently did of religious books, tracts and papers rather than novels. She wrote to her sister Harriet from Waiilatpu, "Do you comfort ma by reading to her such books as Dwight's Theology, Doddridge's Rise and Progress [and] Milner's Church History, as Narcissa used to do in her younger days?" (Letters 104). Historian Leonard Sweet notes these volumes were among "the standard textbooks for ministerial candidates"—heavy going for a young girl unless, perhaps, she might need her knowledge of church history and theology later in life (91). Quite possibly the devout Clarissa Prentiss hoped her daughter would marry a minister or missionary and groomed her accordingly; Whitman wrote from Waiilatpu in 1841 that she and Marcus were "living on" the "mental culture .

.. stored up in our childhood and youth" and referred to her "substantial" reading "which treated the immortal mind" (Letters 115).

Narcissa also read church papers such as the Missionary Herald that printed letters from actual missionaries in the field. Such tales from exotic lands might have filled the void left by the fiction Mrs. Prentiss forbade her girls to read (Whitman, Letters 115). As Jane Hunter notes, "Girls censured for reading romantic fiction . . . could feel elevated by their reading of similarly sensational true stories about missionaries" (31).

One such tale, printed not in church papers but as a separate religious tract, was the pathetic story of Harriet Atwood Newell. A nineteen-year-old New Englander, Harriet Atwood agreed to accompany her missionary husband Samuel Newell to Burma, but died in Calcutta of a tropical disease before ever reaching the mission field. Newell's memoirs, edited by her minister Leonard Woods, included portions of her letters and diaries as well as a biographical sketch. She apparently declared on her deathbed that she did not regret leaving home, and expired with a prayer on her lips. While Newell and women like her were certainly brave to undertake the rigors of life abroad, such accounts were more sensational than practical, offering as they did an idealized portrait of sainthood rather than practical information on missionary life. Nonetheless, Whitman later claimed that Newell's story had inspired her to become a missionary (Jeffrey, Converting 17). Familiar with Newell, she would also have known the story of Newell's more famous friend, Ann Haseltine Judson, a missionary who died abroad after a heroic career that included rescuing her husband from a Burmese jail (Brumberg, Mission 101). Her reading thus saturated the young Narcissa Prentiss' mind not just with theology and

Biblical knowledge but with missionary lore. The next chapter suggests how such tales influenced Whitman's writing about her own mission work.

Finally, though Whitman asserted that she eschewed "the light and vain trash of novel reading" as a young woman, Clarissa Prentiss might have allowed her daughters the 1834 tract The Wife for a Missionary. Written by Anne Tuttle Bullard, author of such similarly improving works as The Reformation, the book follows prospective missionary Everett Lacy as he searches for a suitable companion. In a series of sketches, young women readers are warned against following fashion, neglecting charitable works, and indulging in a brooding and overly inward spirituality. The book portrays marriage as a serious partnership, furnishing sad examples from Lacy's college days of young men who chose wives too early, ending up with partners too old, too young, too feeble or too frivolous to make good missionary wives. The right "wife for a missionary" turns out to be one Helen Scott, an indefatigable distributor of religious literature ("there was not a family within three miles of her destitute of a Bible"), visitor of the poor, and "living sacrifice in active, every-day, hearty service in the Lord's cause" (Bullard 138, 142). Though the book's function as prescriptive literature is emphasized by the slight plot (it ends, not with a marriage, but with Lacy's decision to propose to Helen Scott) this very quality might have endeared it to evangelical mothers as suitable "light" reading (at least, compared to Timothy Dwight's Theology.) Whether or not Narcissa Prentiss read The Wife for a Missionary, which was popular enough to have entered a second edition by 1835, Bullard's ideas certainly suggest the standards to which, as a missionary wife, she would have been held.

Finally, for a young woman of her time and place, church work itself might have been sufficiently rewarding to prompt Narcissa to take up missions *as* a sort of extension of home revivals. With the arrival of the Reverend George Rudd, a new and evangelically minded minister in Prattsburg, Narcissa began to assist at revival meetings, kneeling to pray with repentant sinners and gaining a reputation for her singing voice (Drury, Whitman 105). She may have imagined herself doing similar work with Indians. And church work, with its fervor for conversion and missions, was exciting and sociable. Many of the converts at revival meetings were women who (like the female members of the congregation praying at their sides) found there both emotional excitement and the freedom to express those emotions in an acceptable channel by singing, praying and speaking of spiritual things (Brumberg, Mission 79-80). Many of these enthusiastic religionists received some degree of censure from the community, if not from religious authorities. They were sometimes accused of trying to draw attention to themselves, taking too great a leadership role in church life or, as in the case of Harriet Atwood Newell, indulging their own selfish desires—marrying for love and traveling abroad for excitement's sake. Censured or not, however, the highly charged atmosphere of prayer meetings and revivals must have been a welcome complement, even an antidote, to the evenings Narcissa Prentiss spent reading theology to her mother. Foreign missions, like revival work, afforded an opportunity for activism that helped young women like Narcissa feel they played an important part in hastening the millennium.

The idea of actively *serv*ing God, as Bullard's fictional character Helen Scott shows, was central to nineteenth-century evangelism. A changed heart was supposed to

produce a changed life. "The seal of conversion was action," notes church historian Leonard Sweet (87) and Clifton J. Phillips concurs in identifying a "new activism" in New England Calvinism (6). Such activity had special meaning for women, for whom doing benevolent works could replace some of the sense of purpose lost as a market economy replaced home industry (Cott, Bonds 6). As I suggested above, it also offered women a chance to transcend the confinement of traditional gender roles. As Ann Taves writes, "Evangelicalism not only provided the opportunity for . . . women to gather within female societies and academies, it also called some of them to take on new 'unfeminine' roles" of leadership or at least assistance to a professional husband (58). While preaching was frowned on in most circles, many evangelical groups allowed women to pray out loud, not only in women's meetings but also in "mixed" groups. This was a freedom to which Narcissa Whitman, at least, became accustomed (Drury, Wagons 134). The role of a minister's or missionary's wife virtually assured women a place of leadership in their communities. Sweet concludes,

The most common vocational fantasies of Evangelical women in nineteenth-century America involved becoming a minister's or a missionary's wife. Both roles represented lives devoted to soul-winning, and both permitted women a public, assertive form of usefulness: the wives of missionaries functioned as missionaries ... and the wives of ministers functioned *as* ministers. (91)

At least on the pages of the Missionary Herald, mission work may have seemed the ideal vocation. As Whitney Cross notes, women of Whitman's time and place had few promising vocational options: "At this period, in all parts of the United States, women led unexciting lives . . . Schoolteaching, the boarding house, or work at the mills might be substituted for marriage, but all three required hard labor for slight rewards"

(87). Like the temperance and antislavery crusades, taking the gospel to the heathen seemed to offer scope for more talents than were required for running a home and rearing children.

Her mother's example, a lifetime of religious reading, a possible aptitude for saving souls and the wish to use her talents in a larger sphere than Prattsburg—all these could have motivated Narcissa Prentiss to become a missionary. Actually entering the field, however, proved challenging for a single woman, requiring a series of difficult steps to demonstrate her commitment. Even after volunteering at a missionary meeting in her hometown and sending her application—with three glowing testimonials to her "Christian character"—to the board, Narcissa had to wait six months until the Reverend Samuel Parker, a Presbyterian minister who was organizing a mission to Oregon, sent Marcus Whitman her way. Whitman, a practicing physician from a neighboring town, had also declared his interest in going to Oregon but, in deference to the ABCFM's preference for sending married missionaries, was looking for a wife. In the course of a weekend, Narcissa Prentiss and Marcus Whitman agreed to marry and enter the mission field together. Whitman and Parker immediately left for Oregon to find a mission site (Drury, Wagons 29-30; Jeffrey, Converting 55).

Such hasty courtships, and marriage on slight acquaintance, were not unusual among missionary couples (Hunter 90-91). Of the four couples who arrived in Oregon as reinforcements in 1838, two had met just weeks before marrying, and three had married specifically in order to enter the mission field (Drury, Oregon 42, 51). In her study of the women of the ABCFM's Hawaiian mission, Patricia Grimshaw notes that most of them

married in order to enter the field, rather than because they were already engaged, but that most mission couples did grow close once they were married (70-72). A sense of shared religious devotion was urged on missionary couples as a better basis for partnership than romantic love (Bullard 132) but love could certainly develop even out of the stresses of the mission field. After six years of marriage, Narcissa Whitman wrote tenderly to Marcus: "Where are you tonight, precious husband? I hope . . . you are sleeping sweetly. Good night, my loved one" (Letters 142).

Marrying a mate she barely knew was only the first hurdle most young single women faced in entering the mission field_ The next step was leaving her friends and family behind at home, quite possibly forever. Missionary women looked for precedent to the Old Testament story of Rebecca, who agreed to leave her country to marry Isaac, son of the patriarch Abraham, sight unseen. Her words of assent, "I will go," became a rallying cry for female missionaries (Grimshaw 1). For those missionaries, as for the Biblical Rebecca, there was real courage behind the brave words. Many aboriginal peoples, like those inhabiting the South Pacific's Marquesas Islands, were thought to be cannibals; some (understandably, considering their experiences with trade vessels' rapacious crews) were hostile to any white presence (Grimshaw 123). Traveling by ship or wagon meant danger from weather, disease and accidents, and frontier life included the possibility of starvation. Because overseas travel was so arduous and expensive, asserting "I will go" meant voluntary exile. Despite the example of heroic missionaries such as Ann Judson and Harriet Newell and the satisfactions of pursuing a vocation, the

wrench of parting with loved ones and the dangers of the trip were compelling reasons to stay home.

For missionaries in Marcus and Narcissa Whitman's time, the boards' primary criteria were Christian character, dedication and a suitable helpmeet. Aside from having to make written application to serve and to submit letters of recommendation (usually from ministers) the members of the Oregon mission had to meet only a few basic requirements. They had to be in reasonably good physical health. There were, however, no physical examinations and boards occasionally accepted candidates who should have been disqualified. For example, the Whitmans and Spaldings began their journey with another newlywed couple, the Satterlees, who had been assigned to a mission among the Pawnee. Martha Satterlee, already in poor health as the journey began, died of tuberculosis before ever reaching the field (Drury, Wagons 37). Though there were no psychological examinations for prospective missionaries any more than there were physical exams, the boards also expected that both male and female missionaries would be mentally stable and possess some practical skills that would enable them to get along in the field.

Marcus and Narcissa Whitman were both well suited professionally for the mission field, even by modern standards. Marcus Whitman was a physician and, like many female missionaries, Narcissa was trained *as* a teacher (Grimshaw 5). In addition to teaching Sunday school, she had taught several terms of school to children of varying ages (Drury, Wagons 27). Her work in "female meetings" and societies was also an apparent asset. Since female missionaries were expected to work mainly with women

and children, both Narcissa and the Board considered her training and experience ample preparation for the mission field. As it turned out, teaching white children and praying for the sinners of Prattsburg, New York was no preparation for work with Indians. But training in anthropology or cultural sensitivity was simply not part of the program for missionaries in the 1830s, and Narcissa Whitman came west armed with the classroom methods and conversion techniques that had worked on whites in the East. Convinced of their own cultural superiority, none of the Oregon party would have considered modifying their program or adopting some native customs in order to forge closer bonds with those they hoped to convert.

But what would Narcissa Prentiss have expected from the mission field she would share with her new husband? Foreign missionaries were warned to expect hardship and even martyrdom. At least, as I have noted, most realized they were leaving home, never again to see their families. Clarissa Chapman set out for Hawaii expecting "to labor, toil and die in heathen lands" (qtd. in Grimshaw 15). Missionary literature made it seem as if women in particular ran the risk of dying in the field. As Barbara Welter notes, "When married women are mentioned in missionary reports it is most often in connection with their cheerful and holy demise" ("She Hath Done" 116). However, she argues, such reports may have been skewed by boards interested in promoting the Christlike self-sacrifice of mission work: "Death had a value to the mission cause, and was exploited and publicized as a vindication of it" ("She Hath Done" 116). Marianne Noble argues that "conduct books and religious biographies went so far as to promote such fantasies of martyrdom" in support of the passive, angelic cultural ideal of womanhood that came into

vogue in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (44, 47). While Noble argues that the idea for female service was passive, not active (47), prescriptive literature such as The Wife for a Missionary promote a distinctly workaholic activity level for missionaries in the field; the word "useful" appears numerous times in Whitman's journal and letters, always in reference to specific activity. Nonetheless, the image of female missionaries as martyrs was a persistent part of the evangelizing ethos. The Whitmans' colleague Eliza Spalding, whose poor health made death in the field—or anywhere--a real possibility, wrote that she was "not only willing, but anxious to spend and be spent in laboring to promote my Master's cause among the benighted Indians" (Drury, Wagons 183). To women steeped in the idea that they could change the world with loving service, dying for the sake of the heathen, as Christ had, was the ultimate statement of devotion.

In reality, missionary life was not much riskier than staying home. Childbirth and illness took so many lives in the States that Welter asserts, "Insofar as we have any statistics, missionary women lived about as long as their counterparts who stayed home. If they were lucky enough to be sent to Hawaii, their actuarial prospects substantially increased" ("She Hath Done" 117). Though she did die in the field, Narcissa Whitman outlived her younger sister Mary Ann, who stayed home, by several years, and Eliza Spalding died of tuberculosis only after leaving Lapwai for Willamette Valley, where she was less vulnerable to Indian attacks but much more vulnerable to the climate (Drury, Wagons 232). As a number of missionaries discovered, daily life in a strange culture, rather than immediate danger from hostile natives or disease, was often the hardest part of mission work.

Exporting Domesticity: American Women in Foreign Missions

To American women, more than to any others on earth, is committed the exalted privilege of extending over the world those blessed influences, which are to renovate degraded man, and "to clothe all climes with beauty"

--Catharine Beecher, A Treatise on Domestic Economy (1842)

[The Indians] are so filthy they make a good deal of cleaning wherever they go, and this wears out a woman very fast. We must clean after them, for we have come to elevate them, and not suffer ourselves to sink down to their standard

--Narcissa Whitman, letter to her mother (May 1840)

Because spreading the gospel was so closely linked with spreading a way of life, most Protestant missionaries who entered the field before the Civil War were married. Mission boards felt that married missionaries of both sexes were safer in the field from potential hostilities and sexual temptation than single ones (Grimshaw 6). As ABCFM secretary Rufus Greene wrote, "Wives are a protection among savages, and men cannot long . . . make a tolerable home without them" (qtd. in Welter, "She Hath Done" 113). Designated assistant missionaries by the board, Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding were expected to work with Indian women and children. Eliza Spalding hand-printed copybooks for her Nez Perce students and painted watercolors to illustrate Bible stories, while Whitman taught the Indians hymns, read the Bible with them and led services in her husband's absence (Drury, Wagons 123; Whitman, Letters 49, 130). Wives' civilizing mission, however, was at least as important as their role in evangelism (Bromberg, Mission 80). As Brigitte Georgi-Findlay notes, female missionaries "not only carried the gospel to the 'heathen' women of the American West, but they were also encouraged . . . to teach them how to make an American home, how to prepare American food, make American clothing and care for the sick" (246). The passage from Eliza

Spalding's diary, above, in which she describes the achievements of the Native women she calls "Abigail Ann" and "Matilda" shows how complete a transformation the mission boards hoped to accomplish, even to persuading Indian women and girls to wear knitted stockings instead of deerskin leggings. Ann Douglas has pointed out how thin became the line between housewife and missionary in the nineteenth century; just as religious crusaders such as Mary Lyon and Ann Haseltine Judson used domestic affairs as a medium for teaching gospel lessons to servants and "foreign" children (106), Spalding saw teaching Nez Perce women to knit as an important step in Christianizing them and Narcissa Whitman viewed rearing her family of orphans as a sacred trust.

As secretary Rufus Greene's remark above shows, mission boards saw the establishment of Christian homes as a significant benefit of sending married missionaries into the field (Grimshaw 103). The mission home was intended to serve two purposes that were somewhat at odds with each other: it was to be a refuge for the missionary family from the alien host culture but also a model home for the heathen, a setting in which missionary wives might teach American ways by example (Hunter 116). Many missionaries found this model home aspect of the mission stressful. As Jane Hunter notes:

In practice, missionary women themselves found evangelical domesticity trying ... Missionary women had worked hard to make their homes into oases of civilization in the deserts of heathendom, and welcomed with ambivalence inquisitive visitors who smelled of garlic, opened drawers, and banged on precious pianos. (116)

While Whitman noted, late in her mission, that she hoped she was setting an example for the Cayuse through the habits she taught her children (Letters 207), her letters make clear

that she preferred not to share actual living space with Indians even in the interests of teaching them white ways. Her Cayuse visitors were often of the wrong sex, in the wrong place at the wrong time by her own, Euroamerican domestic standards. As she once wrote to her mother, "The greatest trial to a woman's feelings is to have her cooking and eating room always filled with four or five Indians—men—especially at meal time" (93). As part of her civilizing project, Whitman would have had to exclude men from the kitchen, which in white culture was essentially a female domain, *as* well as to discourage uninvited guests at mealtime. These were lessons the Cayuse interpreted as rudeness. Whitman and emigrant Mary Saunders both noted that the Indians were displeased with being restricted to a separate "Indian Hall" in the mission house (Letters 94) and, later, crowded out of even that by white emigrants staying at the mission (Saunders 19). The faraway mission board's hopes for "home influence" on the heathen seem to have gone unrealized at Waiilatpu.

While Narcissa Whitman initially worked at both direct evangelism and domestic tasks, she came to devote her greatest efforts to rearing her own children and creating a refuge for the missionaries and other whites at Waiilatpu. One of the Whitmans' adopted children, Catherine Sager Pringle, described the results in recalling her first sight of Narcissa Whitman and the mission in 1844:

We expected to see log houses, occupied by Indians and such people as we had seen about the forts. Instead we saw a large white house surrounded with a picket fence. . . Mrs. Whitman was a large, well-formed woman, fair complexioned, with beautiful auburn hair . . . She had on a dark calico dress and gingham sunbonnet. We thought as we shyly looked at her that she was the prettiest woman we had ever seen. (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 151-152)

Her reference to "such people as we had seen about the forts" suggests how, to the Whitmans and other settlers, the mere presence of a white woman in such a frontier setting was a noteworthy symbol of "civilization." The white-painted house and picket fence suggest New England, a region with a long history of Anglo-American settlement, while Pringle's description of Whitman as "fair complexioned" and her note that she was wearing a sunbonnet suggests that Whitman, like many white women on the Western frontiers, continued to value Eastern standards of femininity despite her years on the prairie. Pringle's description of Whitman as a "large, well-formed woman" indicates that the missionaries were well nourished by the mission farm and garden. In all, Pringle's description suggests how determined both Whitmans must have been to create an environment they considered (and fellow whites instantly recognized *as*) "civilized." While the missionaries had hired some carpentry done by a colleague who was a carpenter (Whitman, Letters 91), the house, fence and interior woodwork would have required much labor, labor we know Marcus and Narcissa did themselves (Drury, Wagons 122; Whitman, Letters 95). That Whitman viewed her domestic efforts as evangelizing by example, however, is shown in her 1846 letter to fellow missionary Laura Brewer. She writes, "I feel distressed sometimes to think I am making so little personal effort for [the Indians'] benefit, when so much ought to be done, but perhaps I could not do more than I am through the family" (Letters 207). From the mission boards' injunction to provide a Christian home as a model for the heathen, Whitman developed a mission in which she taught her original subjects solely by (as she believed) example.

Though Whitman did teach Indians, both children and adults, in her early years at Waiilatpu (Letters 57) in accordance with this revised conception of her mission she concentrated, after 1843, on developing a school for the children of her own and other missionary families. Apart from a few of her mixed-blood adoptees, the school was for white pupils only. This mission school also served the children of overland trail emigrants who were wintering at the mission (Whitman, Letters 212). That Whitman saw rearing and educating her own children as a mission equal to her original vocation is clear from her letters. "No responsibility is greater than the care of so many immortal souls to train up for God," Whitman wrote about her family in the spring of 1846 "and we must be the ministers" (Letters 197). She was supported in the attitude that motherhood itself was a sacred mission by contemporary writers on domestic life who emphasized the mother's role as evangelist to her children. The author of a work entitled The Mother at Home. New England divine John Stevens Cabot Abbott, called childrearing a process of "elevating immortals" (61) and admonished mothers that "Eternal destinies are committed to your trust" (38). In similar fashion, one of Whitman's favorite authors, the Reverend William Alcott compared housekeeping to evangelism. "What mission, foreign or domestic, has higher claims, even as a Christian enterprise, than the mission of the house-keeper?" rhapsodized Alcott in The Young House-Keeper (1839) a publication Whitman may well have read (Letters 59). In shifting her focus from direct work with the Indians, Whitman may also have felt justified by reading Alcott's comparison of missions and domesticity: "Despite the pangs felt on reaching a foreign, inhospitable shore," he wrote in the same volume, "amid half naked, half fed, half brutal savages"

(39), it required "more self-sacrifice to be a missionary to a household than to a foreign country" (41). The opportunity for self-sacrifice, a Christian virtue that was touted highly as a reason for becoming a missionary, was, in the opinion of at least some writers, even greater in domestic life than on the "foreign shores" where Whitman found herself. As for the Cayuse, while Whitman reasoned that her mission was to provide an example of Christian living for them, her writing suggests a practical stance more like neglect. As she wrote to her sister Jane six months before the mission ended "I should like to say much about the Indians, but cannot" (221). Having left them, as a subject, to the end of her long letter detailing mission life, she had simply run out of room to write about them (221).

Part of the reason Whitman shifted her focus away from direct work with the Indians was, her letters suggest, her uneasiness in the Cayuse's presence. As I will show below, her preparation for the field gave her no sense of what kind of behavior to expect from full-blooded Indians living in the traditional manner. Even on her journey to Oregon, Narcissa Whitman's first experiences with Indians were limited. The missionaries traveled with two Nez Perce youths, "Richard" and "John," whom Marcus Whitman had brought east with him to assist with the overland crossing. On the Great Plains, Whitman also had the opportunity to meet some Pawnees on a reservation (Letters 20). The Green River Rendezvous, where the party rested, hosted thousands of Indians, but Whitman apparently spent more time talking with white traders than did Eliza Spalding, who took the opportunity to practice her Nez Perce by talking to Indian women (Jeffrey, Converting 82-83). Finally, she spent time with the mixed-blood wives and

children of fur company officials at Fort Vancouver. All these experiences were brief, however, occurring in circumstances where Whitman was a traveler surrounded by other whites; in the next chapter, I will discuss how she constructed a persona in writing that allowed her to relate to them as an outsider, with a sense of innate superiority constructed by discourses of race, gender and class.

Once the missionary party reached Fort Vancouver, Whitman had one more opportunity to observe Indian life before settling on a station. Because the male missionaries of the party, Henry Spalding, Marcus Whitman and William Gray, were busy selecting mission sites and because Narcissa Whitman was pregnant in the fall of 1836, she and Eliza Spalding stayed at the Fort eight weeks, long enough for Whitman to get her first taste of Northwest life. At the request of chief factor Dr. John McLoughlin, she taught singing to the Fort's schoolchildren. She may have felt that she was beginning her mission work with them, for many were of mixed European and Indian heritage and spoke little English (Drury, Wagons 102, 107). These métis children, however, were hardly similar to the Cayuse she would encounter at Waiilatpu. Robert Berkhofer points out that mixed-blood children living among whites were relatively highly motivated to learn English and white customs (Salvation 21).

Whitman may also have felt she was becoming acquainted with native women when she spent time with Marguerite Wadin McLoughlin, the chief factor's wife. Like many fur company wives, Mrs. McLoughlin was of mixed European and Native heritage, the daughter of a Swiss trader and his Indian wife (Brown 142). A few weeks later, at Fort Walla Walla, she made another mixed-blood acquaintance in Catherine Pambrun,

wife of the fort's chief trader Pierre Pambrun. Both Mrs. McLoughlin and Mrs. Pambrun practiced some Native customs of which Whitman disapproved: Mrs. McLoughlin rode horseback astride (Letters 40) and Mrs. Pambrun did her washing in a stream. By contrast, Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding had come sidesaddle all the way across the continent. Though Narcissa was apparently not successful at persuading Mrs. McLoughlin to use a sidesaddle, she did show Mrs. Pambrun how to use a wash barrel and persuaded her not to carry her baby on a cradleboard (Drury, Wagons 125). She was heartened by what she must have viewed as successes. But if she thought she would find full-blooded Cayuse women as easy to get along with as Marguerite McLoughlin, who lived and dressed much as an upper-class, Eastern white woman might (Hale 110, 112) or as amenable to her suggestions as Catherine Pambrun, who had a French-Canadian, Catholic husband and white relatives, Whitman was badly mistaken.

Like female missionaries to other foreign fields, Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding had been sent to the mission field primarily to reach native women. In countries such as China and India, male missionaries were not allowed into female living space, so female missionaries were essential if native women were to hear the gospel (Hunter 15). As part of the perennial "civilizing" thrust of American missions, missionaries were also charged with improving what they believed to be the woefully low status of women in non-Christian countries. Practices such as *suttee* in India and footbinding in China were perceived by American and British missionaries as signs of the pagan darkness inhabited by women in non-Western, non-Christian cultures (Brumberg, Mission 90; Hunter 22). The same moral indignation that carried American temperance and anti-vice crusades

forward fired missionary imaginations with zeal to rescue heathen women from the cruelties of non-Christian husbands and fathers.

Native American women were not exempt from this white perception of degradation. On the journey over the Rockies Whitman noted in her journal, "Feel to pity the poor Indian women, who are continually traveling in this manner [i.e., long distances by foot or horseback] during their lives, and know no other comfort. They do all the work and are the complete slaves of their husbands" (Letters 23). Such views were common among nineteenth-century white women (Green 51; Riley 21). While anthropologist Eugene S. Hunn notes the ethnocentricity that contributed to this view of Indian women as drudges, he also notes what Whitman apparently did not: Plateau women's roles as the gatherers in a hunter-gatherer society required highly sophisticated knowledge of plants, growth cycles and terrain, the maintenance of complex social networks and the use of technology adapted over thousands of years (209-210). Unfortunately, Whitman and her colleagues saw only women "forced" to carry baskets on their backs, to tan hides or to dig for roots, all activities completely alien to "woman's sphere" in white culture. Riley writes, "The predominant image of the Indian woman was the squaw: an unfortunate, inferior, exploited female who carried out all the essential work while the males of her family played at fishing, hunting and war games" (21). Whitman reiterated this commonplace about heathen women's suffering when she wrote on arrival at Waiilatpu, "The women are slaves to their husbands here, as well as in other heathen countries" (Letters 50). Of course, such belief in her own culture's superiority was essential to sustain Whitman's sense of missionary vocation; she could not have

described Cayuse women as perfectly well off without negating a large part of her reason for coming West.

As part of their project to raise Indian women from this perceived degradation, the missionaries urged Indians to adopt new gender roles, divisions of labor and marital ideals. They hoped, as I have noted, that Indian men would give up the hunt for planting and plowing. They also urged Indian women to stay at home, finding their habit of leaving for the camas prairies or berrying grounds, apparently on a moment's notice and often for weeks at a time, disturbingly unfeminine by white standards (Coleman 93). Plateau Indian women, however, not only prepared meat, tanned hides, sewed clothing and cared for the family lodge; their gathering activities provided over 50% of the average band's diet (Bard 11). Thus female migrating or "wandering," as the missionaries called it, was essential to Indian survival.

Unaware and apparently uninterested in learning why Indians lived as they did, however, Whitman seems to have felt daunted by the Cayuse women's difference from her and their apparent disinterest in learning what she was charged with teaching them. Missionaries often taught native women white domestic skills by employing them as servants (Georgi-Findlay 43) but the Cayuse women seemed uninterested in working for the Whitmans. Whitman wrote to her family that they were "impressed with the idea that all who work are slaves and inferior persons," complaining that "the Indians do not love to work well enough for us to place any dependence on them" (Letters 48, 59). In fact, if Whitman had investigated, she would have found Cayuse women so busy with their work

of gathering food and tanning and sewing hides (Bard 11; Hunn 209-210) that they had little time to master new ways of cooking and cleaning on their white visitor's behalf.

Because she employed no Cayuse women, Whitman was unable to teach her mission charges white standards of housekeeping, and Indian methods were perhaps very different from Whitman's. A passage from D'Arcy McNickle's novel The Surrounded suggests how Native women might have viewed the missionaries' efforts to "civilize" the environment they regarded as a wilderness. In the scene below, the character Catherine, a Salish woman who has witnessed the arrival of Jesuit missionaries, remembers watching nuns clean their newly-built, European-style house:

She had watched the strange women sweep a floor with rush brooms. She had seen them wring a cloth out of water and wash away the black footmarks where the carpenters had walked ... It seemed that you could not live in a house as you lived outdoors or in a teepee . . . you moved it and the dirt fell out. Besides, you did not mind a little dirt. (170)

With thirty or forty native children gathered in the mission kitchen in a Walla Walla spring, however, it was impossible for Whitman to keep her floor free of muddy footprints. She wrote to her parents, "We have had a school ever since we returned from Brother Spalding's, and my kitchen has been filled with [Indian] children morn and eve, which has made my floor very dirty, besides it is open and cold" (Letters 55). That her visitors were Natives and that school was conducted in the kitchen suggest additional reasons for Whitman's agitation. As Susan Armitage notes, "On the frontier, not even the domestic sphere, woman's special space, was private," a source of stress for many white women who were used to reigning supreme in this domain ("Women's Literature" 8).

Whitman seems to have construed the civilizing portion of her mission to include rigorous policing of boundaries between Indian and white, clean and dirty, indoors and outdoors, making as few concessions as possible even when faced with the exigencies of frontier life. Her role as the guardian of domestic space even allowed her to challenge male authority by criticizing her husband. During the harsh winter of 1845-46, when Marcus Whitman brought some wet sheep into the kitchen to keep them from freezing, the missionaries' adopted daughter Matilda Sager remembered that "Mrs. Whitman was very indignant that he had turned the kitchen into a sheep pen" (Delaney 13). Whitman complained on another occasion that Cayuse men had been visiting in her kitchen, a common occurrence on the Western frontiers (Armitage, "Women's Literature" 8). Again, however, Whitman's expressed concern was with the "dirt" Natives brought with them and the labor it cost her to erase traces of their presence. She wrote, "We must clean after them, for we have come to elevate them and not suffer ourselves to sink down to their standard" (Letters 93). Whitman's complaints show how unwilling she was even to consider such "sinking." As a missionary, her goals were somewhat different from those of many frontier women. The boundaries drawn by Euroamericans, to her mind, existed to teach lessons about Christian family and group relations and gender roles, and maintaining these boundaries was an important part of her mission.

As with domestic standards of gendered space, privacy and cleanliness, the Whitmans' attempts to transmit white ideals of marriage to their Cayuse hosts seemed doomed to failure. "Plurality of wives exists among all the tribes here," Narcissa Whitman wrote home. "Their excuse is, with many wives they have plenty to eat, but

where they have but one they have nothing" (Letters 50). Given the amount of food women contributed in the Columbia Plateau's hunter-gatherer society, this "excuse" probably reflected economic reality.⁴ Polygamy, however, was a sin in the missionaries' eyes (despite Old Testament precedent). While the Whitmans lectured their Indian hosts on the matter, the Cayuse questioned the missionaries' ideal of companionate marriage.

Narcissa Whitman described one Indian leader's rejection of white marriage customs:

Te-lou-ki-ke said to my husband this morning: 'Why do you take your wife with you to Mr. Walker's? Why do you not go alone? You see I am here without my wife; why do you always want to take your wife with you when you go from home? What do you make so much of her for?' He told him it was good for me to go with him; that we were one, and that wives were given as companions. He replied 'that it was so with Adam because a rib was taken from him to make his wife, but it was not so now; it was different with us'. (Letters 94)

This was not an unusual Indian response to missionary attempts to change Indian culture (Berkhofer, Salvation 107; Calloway 44). Te-lou-ki-ke rejected the idea that he should treat his wife as Whitman treated Narcissa, on the grounds that the two men belonged to different cultures, each with its own customs ("it was different with us"). Berkhofer contends that emphasizing such differences was one way Indians resisted white demands that they change. He cites the example of some Sioux Indians who argued with a missionary that "White men were made wearing clothes to work . . . But we were made naked to dance, hunt and go to war." Furthermore, the Indians argued that their traditional way of life *was* as divinely ordained *as* the missionaries' customs and that following it was essential for their spiritual and temporal salvation—the same claim missionaries typically made for white ways. "If we should abandon the customs of our ancestors," these Indians argued, "the Wakan [creating spirit] would be angry at us and

we would die" (qtd. in Salvation 107). Such resistance shows Native people rejecting the missionaries' demands by turning their own terms—God's will, God's anger--back on them.

Even in the areas of childbirth and childrearing, where mission boards fondly supposed white and Indian women might find common ground, Narcissa Whitman and her Cayuse counterparts were poles apart. Accounts by native women are not available, though the Reverend Henry Perkins may have expressed the opinions of Cayuse women and men when he wrote after the missionaries' deaths "It was the common remark among them that Mrs. Whitman was 'very proud'" (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 155). Whitman herself, conditioned to view all "heathen" customs as inferior to American ways, described Cayuse mothers as inadequate parents and their children as pathetically neglected: "Many infants die because their mothers have not milk for them, and they know not how to prepare food to feed them or have no means to do it" (Letters 55). Even the métis Mrs. Pambrun was not up to the standard of white motherhood. Whitman reported to her family that Mrs. Pambrun, who assisted with the birth of Whitman's child, was unable to dress the newborn Alice Clarissa correctly "having been accustomed to dress her own in the native style." Interestingly, Whitman seems to have bypassed this golden opportunity to teach Mrs. Pambrun more about white customs, writing that she simply dressed Alice herself the next day (Letters 47), beginning the pattern of retreat from direct instruction just a few months into her mission.

While it was not unusual for white missionaries to be shocked and repelled by Native dress, diet or housing customs (Grimshaw 164, 170), Whitman seems to have

made few efforts to overcome her qualms and reach out to the Cayuse women on either their terms or hers. In retreating from Indian contact, she *was* not unique among the Oregon mission's women: Sarah Smith, so uncomfortable at her remote station that the Nez Perce christened her "the weeping one," seems to have retreated into ill health. Mary Walker wrote with frustration that her growing family consumed all her time, leaving none for evangelism (Drury, Oregon 268; Wagons 278). Only Eliza Spalding seems to have made the Nez Perce among whom she lived her first priority, doing every missionary task from teaching Indian women to weave, knit and sew to running the Lapwai printing press, trusting her baby daughter, meanwhile, to some Indian children's care (Drury, Wagons 212-13). Whitman seems to have found most satisfaction in the later mission years surrounded by a large family of adopted, mostly white children, supervising the activities of a mission turned emigrant way station.

The Sacred Calling: Narcissa Whitman's Second Vocation

I might write half a sheet about our dear daughter, but have not time. Mr Hall says much to us about the evils of allowing her to learn the native language ... In order to prevent it it appears that I must take much of my time from intercourse with the natives.

Narcissa Whitman to her sister Jane Prentiss, May 1839

God made mothers before he made ministers.

Theodore Cuyler, Presbyterian minister

Missionary mothers faced the same conflict between public and private responsibilities as missionary wives. Charged with dedicating their energies to saving the heathen, they also bore the main responsibility for bringing up their children *as* Christian Americans thousands of miles from Euroamerican civilization and the organized church

(Grimshaw 7). While the Christian family was supposed to be an example for the heathen, missionary mothers feared the host culture's pernicious influence on their children, and shed tears over the best way to fulfill a calling that had come to be considered a sacred trust (Grimshaw 131; Hunter 104). Many female missionaries chose or were forced to cut back on evangelism as their families increased (Grimshaw 129). Some found it frustrating to spend time on domestic chores when they felt called to the work of teaching and translating, work they often found more spiritually satisfying and intellectually challenging than child care or housekeeping (Grimshaw 135). The mother of three small children and a newborn baby, Mary Walker, occupied by such pioneer necessities as making cheese with deer rennet, struggled with the sense that she was unfaithful to her spiritual calling. She wrote, "As to doing something for the Indians, when can I expect to? When can I find time for private devotions?" (Drury, Oregon 268). Other missionary women, Whitman among them, became so discomfited by the sights, sounds and smells of foreign life they seized the opportunity domestic duties afforded to retreat into the mission compound.

Simply because their time and energies were limited, most wives had to give greater emphasis to one or the other of their contradictory roles. Methodist missionary Jason Lee wrote that Eliza Spalding, who maintained her vigorous program of evangelism despite her ill health and growing family, "was so oppressed with labor, that she could not have the society of even her own little daughter" (Drury, Wagons 211). Despite her early ambitions to help the "dear Indians," however, by the end of her life Narcissa Whitman had shifted her focus decisively to white domesticity. By the mid-

nineteenth-century, when white, middle-class mothers were being encouraged to think of their work as a sacred calling, Whitman—dismayed by Indian resistance to her lessons--made the short step from foreign evangelism to missionary motherhood.

Narcissa Whitman gave birth to her daughter, Alice Clarissa, in March 1837, just three months after arriving at Waiilatpu. Alice's birth on Cayuse land was a potential bond between the missionaries and their hosts, and the Indians seem to have been willing to consider the little girl a member of the tribe. Whitman wrote, "Fe-low-ki-ke, a kind, friendly Indian . . . said she was a Cayuse te-mi (Cayuse girl) because she was born on Cayuse wai-tis (Cayuse land)" (Letters 47). By the time Alice was eighteen months old, she was forging her own bonds with the Indians. As Whitman wrote, "I discover her much inclined to imitate and talk with them . . . The old chief Cut Lip says he does not expect to live long, and he has given all his land to her" (Letters 62). Whitman, however, alternated between trying to keep her daughter away from the Cayuse and using her to demonstrate the superiority of white childrearing methods. While the joyous occasion of a birth could link Native and white cultures, the Whitmans supposed that they, not the Indians, would control what was transmitted along those connecting lines.

The Whitmans' response to Cayuse interest in their daughter exemplifies the conflict missionary mothers faced in the field. As Jane Hunter and Patricia Grimshaw have shown in their studies of nineteenth-century missions in China and Hawaii, the roles of missionary and mother were often at odds. The missionary's job was to engage with native women and children, while the Christian mother's duty was to screen her own children from heathen influences. Hunter notes that most missionary mothers in China

taught their own children at home, while their Chinese playmates (if they were allowed to have any) went to the mission school (107). Narcissa's worries for Alice Clarissa were little different from those recorded by many missionary mothers and her solutions not always as extreme. While she tried to keep her daughter from singing too many hymns in Nez Perce rather than English, Lucy Thurston of the Hawaiian mission kept her children from communicating with Hawaiians at all while they were young (Grimshaw 133). Just as missionary mothers in China were concerned when their children's first words were in Chinese or when they played with Chinese dolls, Alice was a source of both delight and anxiety to the Whitman lest she adopt native language and ways too thoroughly (Letters 78).

Not all the mothers of the Oregon mission were as cautious as Narcissa Whitman, who wrote that she rarely let Alice out of her arms until she was almost a year old (Letters 55). Eliza Spalding wrote about her own daughter and namesake:

Little Eliza is a great favorite with the natives . . . and they are so determined to take her into their own arms, that they sometimes almost rend her from mine, and frequently when I am busy about my work, take her from the cradle and not infrequently I have the mortification to pick a flea or a louse from her clothes . . . (qtd. in Drury, Where Wagons Could Go 203).

Despite the telling link she makes here between Natives, dirt and infestation, this passage suggests that Spalding was more tolerant towards the Indians than Whitman. Nonetheless, she shared Whitman's concerns about Christian motherhood in "heathen lands" to the extent that, as soon as the reinforcement party appeared in the summer of 1838, the two organized the Columbia Maternal Association. Highly popular in the east, maternal associations were a part of the new professionalization of motherhood that

advocated an increased role for middle-class white women as moral guardians and guides as their practical economic importance in the home decreased. Maternal associations were formed by groups of women, usually affiliated with a church, for mutual support in childrearing. The movement was especially popular with missionary women such as those in Oregon and Hawaii, who used the movement's journal, Mother's Magazine, to keep up with the latest childrearing developments and sometimes reported on their progress from the field (Grimshaw 130). In meetings, women met to read and discuss child-rearing literature and to pray for their children's salvation. The charter of the Columbia Maternal Association suggests mothers were not to be just guardians but evangelists, responsible for their children's spiritual well-being. The missionary mothers had a new mission:

Sensible of the evils that beset the young mind especially in a Heathen land, & confident that no arm but God's can secure our children . . . from the dangers that surround them, to bring them early into the fold of Christ and fit them for usefulness here & glory hereafter, we the subscribers agree to form ourselves into an association for the purpose of adopting such methods as are best calculated to assist us in the right performance of our maternal duties. (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 208)

While the Oregon Mission's women, living on widely separated stations, were unable to meet regularly in person, they did agree to pray for their children at set times each month and subscribed to Mother's Magazine. Narcissa Whitman, named "corresponding secretary" of the association, also sold subscriptions to other white women in Oregon (Letters 188).

Even after Alice Clarissa's tragic death by drowning at age two, Narcissa Whitman inclined more and more towards taking motherhood as her mission, adopting

three children of mixed native and European heritage to rear as her own (a not infrequent missionary practice I will discuss further in the next chapter). As the mission's Indian work stalled, the Whitmans turned their eyes and hopes to the country's increasing white population. In that group Narcissa Whitman at last found a family like the one she had left in New York. The children of emigrants Henry and Naomi Sager arrived at Waiilatpu in October 1844 (Delaney 8). The Sagers, seven in all, ranged from five-month-old Matilda to thirteen-year-old John. Their parents had died on the trail, leaving the children dependent on fellow travelers to guide them to the mission, by now an important way station. The Whitmans legally adopted the children, and all the Sagers remained at the mission until the Cayuse uprising in November 1847, when the two oldest boys, John and Francis, were killed along with their adoptive parents. In her reminiscences, Matilda Sager Delaney remembered Marcus and Narcissa Whitman as kind but strict parents who stressed the importance of hard work, routine and religious training:

We had to plant all the gardens and raise vegetables for the immigrants who came in for supplies . . . We had to wipe the dishes and mop the floors. We had verses of scripture to learn each morning which we had to repeat at the family worship. The seven verses would be our Sunday school lesson . . . Sometimes we had to walk in the afternoon. Mrs. Whitman would go with us; we would gather specimens and she would teach us botany. (8-9)

The seven Sagers, her three mixed-blood adoptees and Marcus Whitman's teenage nephew Perrin made eleven children under Whitman's care. Accustomed to a large family, and with seasonal white "company" from the States, she seemed to feel more at home at the mission than ever before. She wrote to her family,

My family is large and I have much to see to in the care of so many children. Although they are not mine by birth, yet I am interested in them and am much better pleased than if I had not the opportunity of acting the part of a mother. It is a satisfaction to feel that we are doing good and saving many individuals from being worse than useless in this world and lost in the world to come. (Letters 218)

The notion that without her influence her children might have become "worse than useless" on earth and been "lost" for eternity echoes the maternal association's resolution, quoted above, to train their children for "usefulness here & glory hereafter." As I have noted, nineteenth-century evangelicals considered the proper Christian life—the path to "glory"—to be one of useful work, not idle contemplation; hence the gardening, dishwashing, scripture memorization and even the addition of mental exercise (learning botany) to physical (taking walks) that Whitman required of her adopted brood. With all this activity to supervise, Whitman could have had little time to spend visiting the Cayuse women's lodges or teaching their children hymns and Bible verses. Nurturing her own new family had become Whitman's mission. But while the missionary wives of China and Hawaii could, under some circumstances, retreat into domesticity and allow their husbands and colleagues to carry on the work of teaching and evangelizing native people, by the time Narcissa Whitman turned from Indian work to her own family the Oregon missionaries were enmeshed in struggles with their Cayuse hosts. Her focus on the mission house and school, her adopted children and the white emigrants arriving in ever-greater numbers only added to Indian anxiety and resentment and, perhaps, helped precipitate the end of her mission.

Remembering Narcissa: The "Whitman Massacre" as Captivity Narrative

My dear sister Narcissa . . . and my beloved Dr. Whitman . . . have been murdered, and their bones scattered upon the plains—the labors and hopes of many years in an hour at an end, the house of the Lord, the mission house, burned, and its walls demolished, the property of the Lord to the amount of thousands of dollars, in the hands of the robbers, a once large and happy family reduced to a few helpless children, made orphans a second time, to be separated and compelled to find homes among strangers . . . our infant settlements involved in a bloody war with hostile Indians and on the brink of ruin—all, all, chill my blood and fetter my hands.

Henry Spalding to Stephen and Clarissa Prentiss, April 1848

The story of what became known, shortly after it happened, as the Whitman Massacre has retained its power for over a hundred and fifty years because it is essentially a captivity narrative. Such tales, which in a common North American form feature savage Indians and helpless white colonists, have been popular since the earliest days of North American colonization and influenced popular fiction from the 1820s on (Derounian-Stodola ix; Sayre 1).⁵ The story of the "Whitman Massacre" excited much popular sympathy at the time and led, in the short term, to the hanging of five Cayuse accused of murdering the whites killed at the mission. The tribe itself was forced to sign away its homelands and enter a reservation in June 1855 (Ruby and Brown, Cayuse 204). Despite these killings' ramifications for hundreds of Cayuse and Nez Perce, however, what most Westerners familiar with the story remember about this episode is the killing of Marcus and Narcissa Whitman.

In part because of what historian David Stannard has termed the "American holocaust"--the sustained efforts of European colonists to wipe out the Native people of the Americas--the white American imagination remains fixed on tales of Indian savagery. Dwelling on stories of raids, massacres and Indian captivity, Shari Huhndorf notes, is one

way for white conquerors to justify their own violent appropriation of Native lands (171). Susan Armitage contends that myths of the frontier served this purpose in the American West: "As the frontier expanded . . . projection of the urge for violence onto the Indian provided a splendid rationale for white retaliation. Protection of white women, the symbols of civilization, and the extermination or removal of Indians went hand in hand" ("Women's Literature" 6). Meanwhile, white history memorializes the Whitmans (a statue of Marcus Whitman tops Washington State's capitol building) as brave pioneers who died in the attempt to spread American democracy and opportunity beyond the borders of the States.

A brief analysis of three versions of the Whitman massacre story may suggest how this came about. Because the stories of both women captives and women missionaries have, in history, been so often retold by their ministers to serve the evangelical purpose of uniting and inciting the faithful, it is essential to examine Henry Spalding's account of the killings. In addition to being a rejected suitor of Narcissa Whitman's and her fellow missionary, Spalding, the first ordained clergyman to serve in the Oregon mission, was Whitman's minister for several years. Her story in his words is thus on a par with the Reverend Leonard Woods' hagiography of missionary Harriet Newell or the numerous stories of Ann Haseltine Judson, another early nineteenth-century missionary made famous by her martyrdom.

Matilda Sager Delaney's account offers an interesting counterpoint to Spalding's version. Unlike Spalding, Delaney was a witness to (and survivor of) the attacks, though she was a young girl at the time. Her narrative was published in 1920 by the Daughters

of the American Revolution, a fact that highlights both the Whitmans' status as pioneer martyrs and the special status their deaths conferred even on their adopted children.

Finally, the account given by amateur historian (and Presbyterian minister) Clifford M. Drury in his book on Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding is of interest because it reproduces, a hundred years after Spalding's account, some of the same anxieties about the helplessness of white women and children and the cruelty of "wild" Indians.

As Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola notes, a captivity narrative typically details the capture of a member of a majority group by members of a minority. Though it may seem that the Whitmans, their adopted sons and the handful of white emigrants who died were a minority in Indian country, for five years wagon trains of as many as a thousand whites had been passing the settlements of a tribe, the Cayuse, numbering in the low hundreds. Moreover, the Indians near Waiilatpu saw their numbers dwindle from disease every time whites passed through (Drury, Wagons 163; Whitman, Letters 225). The white population at Waiilatpu itself was growing as white children wintered at the mission to attend school and emigrants spent the winter resting up. With the Willamette Valley already dominated by American and Canadian settlers, the Indians knew they were outnumbered.

The story of the Whitman massacre incorporates two more important features of the captivity genre, the sundering of families and the mistreatment of women and children. As in many such tales (the captivity narrative of Mary Kinnan, for example, and the Oregon Trail story of Emeline Fuller) the father, Marcus Whitman and the oldest son, John Sager, of the besieged family are killed immediately. The daughter of Oregon

Trail emigrants, thirteen-year-old Emeline Fuller cared for a number of other orphans from her wagon train when Indians killed several adults. Her pathetic story includes an account of having to eat some of her younger siblings, who died of hunger and exposure before the children were found by other whites (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 151). Virginia settler Mary Kinnan, held for three years by the Shawnee, included in her narrative of captivity a diatribe against Indians in general as a scourge on white women and children. She wrote, "The Indian murderer plunges his knife into the bosom of innocence, of piety and of virtue . . . the cries of widows, and the groans of orphans daily ascend, like a thick cloud, before the judgment-seat of heaven" (qtd. in Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 30). Stories of the Whitman killings similarly center on the figures of helpless women and children. In Clifford Drury's version, Narcissa Whitman exclaims, "The Indians will murder us all," and "I am a widow!" emphasizing her helplessness for the benefit of white readers. Drury also records that when the Indians attack Marcus Whitman, his wife is helping one of her adopted daughters bathe; the frightened girl, in another pathetic image, runs naked and screaming from the bedroom and has to be called back to dress (Drury, Wagons 165). Matilda Sager Delaney, on the other hand, remembers Whitman calmly telling the children to dress (16).

These images of fatherless families and of terrified women and children underscore the idea that Indians were savage and unfeeling. As Derounian-Stodola reminds us, "propaganda accuses outsiders of terrorizing mothers and babies" (xxii), and Spalding's narrative emphasizes the Indians' cruelty to the captive women and children. Three white children die from measles (Spalding does not stop to enumerate the Indian

children who have died that autumn from the same disease); three young women are "beastly treated" and forced to "become wives to the murderers" and two sick emigrant men are beaten to death, "cut to pieces" and left where the captives must step over their bodies for forty-eight hours (231). Spalding adds his reports of rape, mutilation and cruelty to the powerful description of a white woman's body lying in the mud to suggest that savagery has, at least temporarily, triumphed over "civilization."

Completing the picture of savagery are the captivity narrative's images of white settlements in ruins. Just as Mary Rowlandson describes her "House on fire over our Heads" and Cotton Mather, in his retelling of Hannah Dustan's captivity, notes the Indian's "Burning [of] about half a Dozen Houses" (Derounian-Stodola 13, 59), Henry Spalding emphasizes the destruction of the Whitman mission's buildings and grounds: "the mission house burned, its walls demolished [and] the property of the Lord to the amount of thousands of dollars, in the hands of the robbers" (Whitman, Letters 231). The Cayuse did loot the mission house and burn the buildings, and Drury, emphasizing Cayuse vengefulness, notes that they even cut down the fruit trees planted on the mission site (Wagons 170). Of course, given the years of Indian-white conflict that preceded the killings, it hardly seems surprising that the Cayuse were eager to erase the signs of white occupation. None of these accounts emphasizes the Indian suffering that prompted the Cayuse to try to eradicate the whites from their land; their behavior suggests a wish to erase the missionary presence completely and perhaps even return to a time before white settlers arrived.

Like many captivity narratives, the Whitman story has religious significance for its white readers. Narcissa Whitman's story as told by Henry Spalding is a story of missionary martyrdom, the all too real culmination of a role she imagined for herself in writing. Spalding compares the suffering of her lingering death to Christ's: "Think of Jesus in the hands of the cruel Jews" (Whitman, Letters 233). Describing Narcissa as "ready to live or die for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" Spalding describes her reaction on being shot:

She immediately arose and kneeled by the settee on which lay her bleeding husband, and in humble prayer commended her soul to God and prayed for her dear children who were about to be made a second time orphans and fall into the hands of her direct murderers. I am certain she prayed for her murderers, too. (Whitman, Letters 233).

Christlike, Whitman (at least in Spalding's version of the story) intercedes for her persecutors. The dying missionary becomes a type of Christ, whose love for the ungrateful unconverted also brought about his death. Such sacrifice, Spalding suggests, should stir other Christians to vigorous evangelism. Similarly, Spalding's vivid picture of the ruined mission, coupled with the images of his helpless daughter Eliza and other young white women would have reminded readers (as Annette Kolodny points out in her discussion of Mary Rowlandson's narrative) of the Biblical sufferings of Israelite prisoners in Babylon (Kolodny 19). Such a reminder would emphasize white settlers' right to live on Indian lands—their "promised land"—while suggesting the necessity and indeed the inevitability of divinely sanctioned rescue. Apart from the Biblical parallels certain to strike home with Eastern congregations, Spalding's letter may have spoken to still one more set of anxieties, those belonging to current and prospective white colonists.

Kolodny suggests that stories about female suffering in the wilderness, which she argues had become the "central drama" of the captivity narrative by the early nineteenth century, fulfilled a necessary function for nineteenth-century readers. She suggests that captivity tales may have allowed women settlers to "safely confront the unhappy experiences of their westward migration," (their fears, for example, that they might be harmed by the Natives who sometimes visited white homesteads) by seeing in print their worst fears about the process of settlement (33).

Spalding's vivid images and his use of Biblical tropes should remind us how deeply invested he was in the story of his fellow missionaries' demise. In the tradition of many women's captivity narratives, Spalding's version of the Whitman killings subordinates both Narcissa Whitman's experience and his own daughter's eyewitness account to his authorial control. Like so many female captives before and since, Eliza Spalding tells her story through the agency of her minister, a writer who edits her experience to serve his ends. That Spalding is writing for publication—is in effect writing a sermon—becomes clear at the end of his letter, where he directs Stephen and Clarissa Prentiss to send printed copies to ABCFM secretary David Greene in Boston, Calvin Stowe (Harriet Beecher's husband) at Lane Theological Seminary, and the Christian Observer in Philadelphia. Like other captivity tales prepared by ministers, Spalding's account of the killings is intended for a wide audience.

The story of the Whitman massacre provided justification, if any were needed, for the U.S. to strengthen its military presence in Oregon. Spalding's story practically assures such an outcome with its closing description of troops seeking the Cayuse

responsible for the killings. In his account of the killings, an early detachment of the army is outwitted by deceitful members of the tribe and Spalding warns of their escape's possible consequences: "a bloody war with the settlements, which may end in the massacre of every family" (Whitman, Letters 230). The prospect of more killings, and the extension of Indian wrath to the more settled Willamette Valley, would certainly suggest to white readers that the United States needed to move aggressively to quell Indian aggression. As Shari Huhndorf writes, such a tale "attempts to establish the validity (even the inevitability) of the conquest, even as it inverts the power relations at work" (171). The image of Narcissa Whitman, the helpless missionary mother, seems to plead for rescue when, in fact, it was the Cayuse whose existence was threatened.

Transplanted New Englanders fired with missionary zeal in the "burned-over district" of western New York, Marcus and Narcissa Whitman were people of their time. They believed their version of Christianity and their Presbyterian values of continual industry and property acquisition were superior to all others, and they thought themselves generous, even self-sacrificing, when they set out to impose those values on a very different people. Convinced that their way of doing things was divinely approved, they inevitably clashed with their Indian hosts, who finally attacked in a bid to reclaim their land and preserve their own people from what they perceived as the immediate threat of death from measles and the long-term consequences of continued white settlement. Though accounts sympathetic to the Whitmans portray the Cayuse as dangerous or, at the very least, ignorant and misguided, white settlement and appropriation of Indian lands

actually put them in more danger than any whites. Nevertheless, the story of the beleaguered missionaries is still popular, at least partly because it suggests whites won their occupancy of the Northwest in a fair contest rather than by the overwhelming force of numbers. As I will show in the next chapter, the letters of even such an early white settler as Marcus Whitman himself betray an awareness that Euroamerican settlers are preempting Indian lands; both Whitmans give space in their later letters to explaining why Cayuse and Nez Perce populations are shrinking, suggesting that they realized their own presence had not been beneficial to those they ostensibly set out to help. Later settlers, especially those in the Willamette Valley where Native populations were eradicated largely by European diseases, may have felt a similar anxiety, even guilt, about prospering on land whose original inhabitants had died so precipitously and often pathetically. In the next chapter, I will examine how Narcissa Whitman herself used the power of narrative to assure her Eastern readers and herself of the value of her missionary vocation, her reason for coming West. For just as writing like Spalding's "massacre" story and Whitman's colorful narrative of prairie travel gives modern Americans a sense that they belong in the West by portraying their ancestors' struggles, it was writing that brought Whitman to Oregon and that kept her there.

Notes

'As I will show in Chapters Four and Five, this view had its counterpart in later Mormon views of American Natives.

²

Protestant missionaries in particular required an immediate switch of allegiance, demanding that Natives renounce their old beliefs completely and practice the new faith. Peterson and Peers note that Jesuit missionaries to the Northwest Indians enjoyed a greater initial success than their Protestant counterparts, in part because they allowed their Indian hosts to piggyback Christian observances onto traditional spiritual practices, at least at first (24, 97). They also contend that Catholic missionaries had more initial success in reaching Native people because of what they term a "conjunction of visions" in Native and Catholic spiritual practice. They cite the importance of chant, the use of sacred colors, the veneration of sacred objects and the emphasis on ritual held in common by traditional Plateau Indian religion and nineteenth-century Catholicism (23-24). Protestant denominations viewed such observances as pure idolatry, whether Natives or Catholics practiced them.

³

Horsemanship and hunting were also activities of the British leisure class. The practically minded, jingoistic Americans Marcus Whitman and Henry Spalding, both of whom had raised themselves from lower- to middle-class status by earning, respectively, an MD and a degree in theology, may have been disturbed by the sight of Cayuse warriors apparently disporting themselves in an activity typically practiced, in white culture, by men of higher social standing than the missionaries themselves. In discouraging Cayuse men from these pursuits, Whitman and Spalding may have sought to place Indians in the lower social class to which, in white culture, darker-skinned people were often relegated.

⁴While Ruby and Brown suggest that multiple wives, like large horse herds, were a status symbol for Cayuse and Nez Perce men (Cayuse 17) anthropologist Eugene S. Hunn tends to concur with Whitman's Indian informant. Emphasizing the importance of women as food gatherers in Plateau society, he suggests that husbands with several wives were, at least in part, well off because more women provided them with resources (205). Ruby's analysis, which also suggests that polygamy was practiced because it allowed efficient provision for widows and gave Cayuse men more opportunities to father children, seems based on a Euroamerican concept of men as primary food providers and neglects the fact of intermarriage among bands of Indians from different "tribes" (Hunn 65).

⁵

Gordon Sayre usefully notes that the "conventional version" of the captivity narrative (whose outline I rehearse below), involving white women and children attacked by Indians in a frontier settlement, is but one of many historical variations on the captivity narrative, which he contends may include slave narratives and other forms of autobiography (5-6).

CHAPTER THREE

"MY SOLITUDE WOULD QUICKLY VANISH": THE JOURNAL AND LETTERS
OF NARCIS SA PRENTI SS WHITMAN

When I read some of the private letters of female missionaries, written without effort, and with deep emotion, and my own heart melts and resolves good for Zion, I wish I could whisper in the intensity of my feeling to every sister on mission ground, Write, write, write! You can kindle the flame of benevolent energy throughout the villages of your country, if you will but speak the word and stir up the mind by way of remembrance.
Anne Tuttle Jones Bullard, The Wife for a Missionary (1834)

The overland diary she kept at her mother's request was a great responsibility for Narcissa Whitman. Essentially, her task was to write a book for *an* audience of family and friends. Though the rigors of traveling on horseback over the Rockies did not allow her to write detailed daily entries, Whitman, like Thoreau writing Walden, kept field notes and created her journal later. She recorded the trip in detail from the missionaries' July rendezvous with fur traders at Green River, Wyoming, to their arrival at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River in early September. Whitman also kept a diary in letters covering her years at Waiilatpu (1836-1847).

While her letters and journal helped her communicate with loved ones and fulfill the responsibilities suggested by the passage above, assuring supporters of her dedication and firing fellow Christians' imaginations with sympathy for the heathen, they also served another purpose, enabling her to reconcile her public choice of a missionary vocation with her private dislike for Indian culture and aversion to frontier life. In her letters and diary, Whitman used writing to reinforce her status *as* a middle-class Christian

woman, a symbol of Eastern white domesticity in a wilderness populated by Indians and (male) fur traders. By emphasizing self-sacrifice and casting herself as a martyr, Whitman was able to air her frustrations without abandoning her conviction--or her public declaration--that God had called her to the mission field. Though Whitman eventually shifted her focus from evangelizing the Indians to caring for white emigrants and orphans, she carried on the part of her original mission that called for domesticating the physical frontier.

As I noted in the last chapter, middle-class, Euroamerican ideals of feminine domesticity were central to Whitman's role as a Christian missionary and colonizer of the West. Expected to teach Native women white domestic skills, female missionaries were also charged with maintaining the mission home as a model for the "heathen." While in her late letters, Whitman does allude to this method of evangelizing by example, her writing generally suggests that her efforts were directed to a new end: not converting the Indians but maintaining the mission home as a refuge for the family she nurtured so carefully and perhaps (as Waiilatpu grew busier each autumn), a model for white emigrants of the homes and farms they too could create further West.

In this chapter, I will discuss the audience for Whitman's journal and letters, including what readers might have expected from her writing and how she responded by continually redefining herself as missionary, martyr and mother. I will show how Whitman's autobiographical persona evolved from the hardy, optimistic traveler of her overland trail journal through the longsuffering missionary of letters from the early mission years (1836-42) and the capable mother of the later period (1843-47). Her self-

presentation both challenged and fulfilled her audience's expectations for a middle-class white "lady" who had chosen a missionary life. It also, as I will show, helped Whitman accomplish two tasks: maintain her sense of identity and spiritual vocation and fulfill, by constantly renegotiating its terms in writing, her mission to spread Christianity and white domestic values on the frontier.

"Dear Parents" and "Beloved Christian Friends": The Audience for Narcissa Whitman's

Journal and Letters

I have been able to write something of a journal _from Rendezvous here ... as I have been situated for a few weeks past, have taken time to copy it, & as it requires several sheets, have put it into this form, as being the most compact for sending. It must answer for all, in the room of letters, for I have not time to say more.

Narcissa Whitman, My Journal

Narcissa Whitman wrote the letter above to her family from Fort Vancouver, the Hudson's Bay Company post on the Columbia River where the Oregon missionaries went for supplies and advice before settling on their stations upriver. While the men of the party—Marcus Whitman, Henry Spalding and Henry Gray—stayed at the Fort just a short time before setting out to establish mission stations, Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding spent nearly two months at Fort Vancouver, giving Whitman ample time to create a journal from her notes. She copied the journal out twice by hand, sending copies to her mother-in-law and a maternal aunt as well as to her immediate family. Though it seems the journal was primarily intended for Whitman's family, she herself had been attracted to the mission field partly through other missionaries' stories; thus, based on her own experiences, she might have expected her writing to be shared, at least with church

members and friends. The quotation that opens this chapter from Bullard's The Wife for a Missionary suggests that even "private" communications from the mission field were circulated for their inspirational value.

The same is true of Whitman's 126 extant letters, which date from her marriage in February 1836 to the end of the mission in November 1847. The audience for Whitman's diary and letters, while larger than most twenty-first century writers would expect, was not unusually wide for her time. Travel journals, like today's snapshots and videos, were kept to share with family and friends who could not go on a trip (Schlissel 148). Such documents either came home with the traveler or were sent back from a convenient way station. The quickest way to send mail from Oregon in the 1830s was via the Hudson's Bay Express, a group of fur traders traveling by boat and on horseback from Fort Vancouver to Montreal twice a year. Their travel time of six months was much faster than sending letters around the Horn, a journey that took eighteen months one way (Whitman, Journal 48, 64). Once the Whitmans arrived in Oregon, mail service was so infrequent and letters so rare they became a precious commodity to both Eastern and Western recipients and thus were usually shared, at least among family members. But even had she possessed the paper, time, stamina and fuel for frequent letters, the demands of establishing a mission station and trying to teach the Cayuse white ways would have made it almost impossible for Whitman to write regularly and separately to each member of her large family. Thus most letters were addressed to more than one recipient. Occasionally, she began writing to a single family member only to realize by the letter's end that she had produced what amounted to a missionary dispatch. As she concluded a

letter to her younger sister Jane: "This letter is free plunder. Jane, I will write to you again. What I say to one, I say to all" (Letters 13).

Whitman's frequent instructions about a letter's audience suggest that not sharing letters was the exception. In October 1841, for example, she acknowledges the overlapping functions of her letters as missionary report and family communication when she indicates that only part of a letter on mission activities should be shared:

This much of the letter concerning the Indians. We would be glad if Harriet, or some one would copy it and send it to Brother Augustus Whitman ... The remainder . . . we hope will be kept in your own bosoms, at least until you hear from us again. (Letters 118)

While letters in general might be shared, missionary reports tended to be heavily edited to give Christian readers an impression of harmony and productivity (Hutchison 69). Here, Whitman does the editing herself by restricting readership. After adding a copy of one of Marcus Whitman's letters to her own, she writes, "Again I would ask that this might not be circulated. It may do injury" (Letters 118). Such insistence on privacy suggests that all the Whitmans' letters from the field were potentially public documents unless they directed otherwise.

Whitman's audience may be imagined in three concentric circles of family, friends and acquaintances, including members of the Presbyterian congregations of western New York where she grew up and heeded the mission call. The first circle, family, is the audience addressed in the cover letter for her travel journal: her parents, siblings and their spouses, a dozen people in all. (Marcus Whitman's mother, who received a copy of the journal, and his relatives are also included in this group.) The second and third categories of friends and acquaintances include more distant relatives,

church friends and Christians the missionaries did not know personally. Supported by the ABCFM in Boston and the larger evangelical community, missionaries were expected to share their experiences and report on their progress, female missionaries—following in the footsteps of role models such as Ann Haseltine Judson, first wife of famed Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson—no less than male (Brumberg, Mission 86). Whitman occasionally addresses her wider audience directly, as in this letter written at journey's end from Fort Vancouver:

Will not my beloved Christian friends the disciples of Jesus unite with us in gratitude & praise to God for his great Mercy. It is in answer to your prayers that we are here. (Journal 42)

In the same passage, Whitman is quick to reassure her "Christian friends" that she is ready to begin work, but still needs their support:

Feel to dedicate my[self] renewedly & unreservedly to His service among the heathen & may the Lord's hand be as evidently manifest in blessing our labours among them [as] it has been in bringing us here, & that too in answer to your prayers, beloved Christian friends. (Journal 42).

The sense that congregations back home were praying for them was important to missionaries, who could easily begin feeling isolated in the field where there were few other Christians. Home congregations also provided important supplies for missionaries who, as the Whitmans and Spaldings did, raised their own food and were paid no salary (Drury, Wagons 131). Her letters show that clothing, eyeglasses and reading material were among the items Narcissa Whitman asked for and received during her years in the field. Partly in order to keep the contributions coming, missionaries needed to remind their home congregations how much such remembrances counted.

Only once did Narcissa Whitman write for publication. In 1846, she wrote a letter to the editor of Mother's Magazine, the journal of the maternal association movement, explaining why she had shifted focus from working with the Indians to caring for her adopted family of orphans. I will discuss this letter below, as an important marker in Whitman's construction of her missionary role, but for the moment it is sufficient to note that since the maternal associations had not only professionalized motherhood but helped elevate it to the status of evangelism, a letter from an actual missionary acknowledging the importance of a maternal vocation must have been very welcome.

Initially, however, Whitman seemed to shy away from the prospect of publication. When her sister Jane had the overland trail diary printed, perhaps in a local paper, Whitman wrote, "I regret you should have it printed . . . for it never was designed for the public eye" (Letters 63). In this case, however, the disclaimer seems a bit disingenuous, perhaps an echo of the "feeble pen" disclaimer that prefaces so much nineteenth-century women's writing. In fact, as she notes in her cover letter, Whitman prepared her journal carefully, sewing the sheets into a booklet and titling them *My Journal*. Though the massive migrations to Oregon and California had not begun in 1836, when Whitman wrote her journal, missionary biographies were already popular (Brumberg, Mission 70) and it is certainly possible that Whitman envisioned herself writing for a more public audience, if not in her journal then at a later date.

Though Whitman herself distinguishes between her journal and letters home when she designates the journal a letter substitute, the two display a similar sense of audience. Because Whitman often started a letter weeks or months before she could hope to send it,

the letters, like her journal, are made up of a series of dated entries. Diarists often address their journals as companions, and for Whitman, writing is clearly a substitute for the companionship of friends and family members. As she writes to her mother,

Sweet as it used to be, when my heart was full, to sit down and pour into my mother's bosom all my feelings, both sad and rejoicing; now, when far away from the parental roof, and thirsting for the same precious privilege, I take my pen and find a sweet relief in giving her my history in the same familiar way. (Letters 44)

Besides underlining the importance of writing as a personal release, this passage suggests that Whitman's sense of self rests on her social attachments to others, and that writing bolsters this sense of identity (the sense that Whitman is the "same," to borrow her significant repetition, as she has always been). As she writes to her siblings Edward and Jane "If E. and J. would come in . . . Surely solitude would quickly vanish, as it almost appears to, even while I am writing" (Letters I28). At times, she addresses family members as if she were in their presence ("Now, Sister Julia") reminding them that she is still a part of their circle by references to home ("I have not yet found any of Ma's bread. Girls, if you knew how I would relish even the driest morsel you would save every piece carefully" Journal 17). Describing Marcus Whitman's skill at cooking buffalo meat, she writes, "I believe Mother Loomis [Marcus' mother] would give up to him if she were here" (Letters 21). Placing her family in these scenes in her journal and letters suggests that Whitman maintained her identity by imagining them with her, at least in writing. As Suzanne Bunkers suggests, by providing a place where Whitman can address her family, the journal itself functions as a family member (Seabury I6).

This concept is key to understanding Whitman's letters and journal as an autobiography constructed as part of a social conversation. In part because her religious background taught her to value expressing (certain) emotions, Whitman seems most satisfied when she can share her feelings with a community. Her writing thus mirrors the kind of active Christianity she grew up with. In an essay on New England women's memoirs, Ann Taves characterizes the "outwardly oriented and active form of Congregationalism" (57) practiced by Jonathan Edwards' spiritual heirs as emphasizing both self-examination and the importance of sharing one's conviction with a community of believers. As a young woman, Narcissa Whitman participated actively in community religious life. As the above examples show, her journal and letters are highly social documents. Her emphasis on writing as a means of feeling close to her loved ones, her pleas for more letters, and even her running characterization of herself *as* alone in the wilderness underline the importance she attached to being part of a group. As Margo Culley has pointed out, twentieth-century notions of letters and diaries as the "private arena of the 'secret self'" must be laid aside, at least in part, when reading nineteenth-century texts in which the writer's life is "usually complexly interwoven with the life of family and community networks" ("Women's Diary Literature" 4). As an early nineteenth-century writer, Whitman never lays a Romantic emphasis on solitude or pure individual consciousness; her writing, shaped by her reading, always turns outward rather than inward.

Narcissa Whitman works out her identity *as* missionary, mother and wife in letters to her family with an intensity equal to that of the twentieth-century diarist whose

more individualized notion of the self leads her to keep a secret diary. Yet because Whitman wrote so much without receiving a reply, sometimes for years, the letters themselves came to represent her social circle. As the real circle did at home, the circle of friends and family created in writing was her confidante and sounding board. As she described and explained mission events to her faraway family, she worked them out for herself, finding a "sweet relief" in telling her story as she understood it.

That Whitman's autobiographical self is a highly social one is emphasized by the theme of loneliness and isolation that runs through her writing, coloring both her early self-characterization as cheerful and bold and her final incarnation as a happy, capable mother surrounded by her adopted family. The theme of isolation provides context for all three of her autobiographical personae. Most letters to her family and missionary associates open with a plea for letters or company. A relatively early letter from the mission, written in September 1838 to her sister Mary Ann, sounds the plaintive note that characterizes so many of Whitman's letters home:

It gives me great satisfaction to have this opportunity of answering letters from beloved friends at home—a privilege I have not before enjoyed since I have been here. I am sorry you or sister Jane should hesitate so about writing me ... You cannot be more anxious to hear from me than I am to hear from you. (64)

Narcissa Whitman had good reason to be "anxious to hear" from her family. She and Marcus had settled at Waiilatpu in December 1836, but—owing in part to the timing of mail service—it was nearly two years before she received a letter from her sister Jane in July 1838. This was closely followed, it must have seemed, by Mary Ann's letter in September. As one of the first white women to emigrate from the States to the Far West,

Whitman's loneliness was echoed by many who made the trip later. One woman wrote to her mother, "You do not know how miserable I feel about you, for I have not received a line from any of my family" (qtd. in Jeffrey, Frontier Women 93). Whitman reproaches her brother-in-law: "Why is it that I never receive a letter from you? Have you no time to write, or have you forgotten me?" (157). She describes letter writing as a poor but essential substitute for face-to-face contact with her loved ones: "O what I would give for one short hour of conversation, counsel and prayer with the dear objects of earliest and continued affections, my father and my mother" (Letters 114). Under the circumstances, this passage suggests, the least her parents can do is write.

For a woman who had grown up in a large family and led an active social life, the isolation of Waiilatpu must sometimes have seemed unbearable. Of course, Whitman's isolation was relative: the mission was surrounded by Indian lodges at least part of the year, and the Whitmans had a Hawaiian couple and at least one mixed-blood teenage girl living with them *as domestic help*—Catherine Pambrun, wife of the chief factor at Fort Walla Walla, lived twenty-five miles away—hardly next door, but close enough to stay with the Whitmans for two weeks when their daughter was born (Whitman, Letters 47). On the other hand, while making approving notes about the Pambruns as neighbors, Whitman seems to have been very aware of the differences in their background and beliefs. While Mrs. Pambrun "appeared well," and while her husband was kind and "very much the gentleman," she also notes that Mrs. Pambrun was of mixed white and Indian ancestry, and spoke little English (Journal 41). Pierre Pambrun was a Roman Catholic, a practitioner of "heartless forms and ceremonies" (as Whitman's fellow

missionary Eliza Spalding put it) with which the Presbyterian Whitmans had no sympathy (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 186). To Narcissa Whitman, her companions at the mission—Cayuse and Nez Perces families, Hawaiian and Catholic French Canadian couples—seemed foreign, "heathen," even frightening. As companions, they certainly counted for less in her mind than the family and friends she missed, and whom she reproached for not writing to her more often. "It has been so long since I received a single letter from any of the dear friends at home," Whitman writes to her mother in the spring of 1840. "Could they know how I feel and how much good their letters do me, they would all of them write a great deal and write often, too" (Letters 93). In emphasizing her isolation at the mission, Whitman underlines her distance not only from her loved ones, but from "civilization," the more homogeneous, white American culture of home. Her stress on this theme emphasizes both that the Whitmans are truly living the missionary life, immersed in a strange culture, and that she, at least, has not forgotten the domestic values of family and home.

Explorer, Martyr, Mother: Narcissa Whitman's Self-Characterization

The major device structuring Whitman's personal writing is character. The heroine of the letters and journals is a Narcissa Whitman who evolves from the earliest journal entries to the last letters through three major personae: hardy traveler, long-suffering missionary, and conscientious, capable mother. These personae are rooted in specific nineteenth-century expectations for white, middle-class women and in the specific challenges of Whitman's public role and private life.

In her earliest writing, including her letters from the Missouri River and overland trail, Whitman portrays herself as cheerful and resolute. Having finally both married and apparently found her calling at the relatively late age of twenty-eight (Jeffrey, Converting 54) she had, as I will show, much to prove to both her home audience and herself.

During the early mission period of 1836-1842, characterized by culture shock and missionary power struggles, the Narcissa Whitman of letters home is a "solitary missionary," (despite the dozens, sometimes hundreds of people surrounding the mission) who describes relying on God to sustain her through the expected trials. Writing from this period is a means of reconciling her culture shock with the conviction that she was divinely called to assist the very people whose ways shocked and alienated her. This persona sounds the theme of self-sacrifice most strongly; demands for letters are also strongest during this period. Letters from the later mission period, 1843-1847, have a more positive tone, as Whitman describes her growing family of adopted children and the mission's work with emigrants. Through letters to friends and colleagues, she redefines her usefulness in a mission of domesticity rather than direct evangelism, and also redefines herself as a mother after the loss of her only biological child. Plans for family members to come west fill these later letters. Whitman writes from the center of a home where she has established herself as a model of white domesticity in an area increasingly populated by white Americans.

As male travelers sought to define themselves in categories such as soldier, settler and explorer, women defined themselves as lady, mother and wife, working within and against conventional ideas of what these roles should mean. Because Narcissa Whitman

was among the first Euroamerican women to cross the continent, she was positioned, in the Eastern eyes watching her progress, as a pioneer. Despite the fact that the mission board was willing to send white women overland, popular wisdom held that the trip was too strenuous for them. White women who wanted to preserve their decorum had to ride sidesaddle, a less comfortable and more demanding mode of travel than riding astride ((Drury, Wagons 32). Furthermore, before the peak years of Oregon Trail emigration, most Easterners—missionaries, artists like George Catlin and naturalists like John James Audubon—traveled with fur company caravans who knew the way and had established relationships with local Indians. These caravans traveled fast, from twelve to thirty miles a day, a pace thought much too demanding for white women. Travelers slept and ate outdoors and wagons were mainly used for freight rather than travelers' comfort. One writer for the New England Magazine opined in February 1832 that "Only parties of men could undertake the vicissitudes of the journey; none who ever made the trip could assert that a woman could have accompanied them" (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 32). Actually trying to colonize the West was impossible, such writers argued, because white women could never reach it overland, the shortest and by far the cheapest route.

The same popular wisdom suggested that white women on the plains might endanger their male companions by inviting Indian attack. In a letter to the mission board, Henry Spalding quoted the advice of well-known painter George Catlin, himself recently returned from a trip West:

He says he would not attempt to take a white female into that country for the whole of Am[ericaj] . the enthusiastic desire to see a white woman every where prevailing among the distant tribes, may terminate in unrestrained passion, consequently in her ruin . . . the fatigues of the

journey, he thinks, will destroy them. 1400 miles from the mouth of the Platte, on pack horses, rivers to swim, and every night to spend in the open air, hot suns and storms. (qtd. in Drury, Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Vol. 1 166)

Familiar nineteenth-century narratives of dark-skinned men "ruining" white women preceded and informed such fears. Nonetheless Spalding, whose own wife Eliza was shortly to make the trip despite poor health, concluded on a practical note: "But this like the other objections you see is supposed. No female has yet made the trip" (166). Catlin, of course, failed to mention that the fur company rendezvous where the missionaries would stop was a gathering place for white trappers and traders, many of whom spent months alone in the mountains and most of whom had not seen a white woman for many years (Jeffrey, Converting 81). English explorer Richard Burton, who crossed the continent in 1860, described the prototypical trapper or "western man" as one who was "inflamed by scenery and climate, difficulty and danger . . . superstitious" and "a transcendental liar"—at least as ripe a candidate for Christian missionary influence, it would seem, as any Native (92). The annual fur rendezvous was known not only for trade but for free-flowing liquor, carousing and fighting—certainly no place to take a lady.

Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding were aware that there were those who thought they could not, or should not, make the trip. But they had pledged themselves to serve the Northwest Indians. Eliza Spalding, whose health was never robust and who, along with missionary Henry Gray, became ill on the fur company's exclusive diet of buffalo meat, seems to have resigned herself to the prospect of death on the trail. At Fort Laramie, Wyoming she wrote in her journal,

This day we are to leave this post, and have no resting place in view till we reach Rendezvous 400 miles distant. We are now 2,800 miles from my dear parents' dwelling, expecting in a few days to commence ascending the Rocky Mts. Only He who knows all things, knows whether this debilitated frame will survive the undertaking. His will, not mine, be done. (Drury, Wagons 192)

Both male and female missionaries were also committed, at least in theory, to spending the rest of their lives in the kind of "toil and privation" Whitman mentions so often.

Missionary fiction, tracts and reports from the field had primed them to expect hazards of which sleeping in the open might be the least. If Harriet Newell could (at least according to her biographer) die of a tropical fever in Calcutta with the name of Jesus on her lips, Whitman and Spalding could certainly cross the plains on horseback.

Still, the questions Whitman had to answer—for herself, her family and her potential public—were many. Would she prove physically and mentally capable of withstanding the journey's rigors, or would travel render her unfit for missionary work? And how would Indians respond to white women? Her overland journal shows a Narcissa Whitman conscious of all the eyes upon her. She must have known that if she and Eliza Spalding could make the trip, their success would help open the way for family emigration to the Oregon Country, something the U.S. government was eager to promote as a means of winning the land from Britain and the Indians. Narcissa felt called upon to report positively on the trip whenever possible, both to reassure those at home that she was safe and to suggest that if she got along, other women could make it, too.

Faced with all these expectations, it is hardly surprising that the first persona Whitman creates on paper is that of the hardy traveler. In her earliest letters home, written as the missionary party traveled by steamboat to Missouri, Whitman emphasizes

the excitement of the trip and extols the virtues of her new husband Marcus, burying homesickness and apprehension in zealous missionary rhetoric. On her honeymoon (the Whitmans married just days before setting out for the mission field) she initially seems fired with equal enthusiasm for marriage, Indian missions and the challenges of travel in the West. Even a minor boat accident is an opportunity for sightseeing: "We are now fast upon a sand-bar," she writes, "but think we shall soon get off. Can scarcely resist the temptation to stand out [on deck] to view the shores of this majestic river" (Letters 10).

Whitman glosses over her disappointment at finding no mail from home waiting in St.

Louis:

Husband has been to the office, expecting to find letters from friends at home, but finds none. Why have they not written? Seeing it is the very last, last time they will have to cheer my heart with intelligence from home, home, sweet home, and the friends I love. *But I am not sad* [Emphasis Whitman's.] My health is good. My mind completely occupied with present duty and passing events. (Letters 10).

The language of this passage, even more than the content, suggests how hard Whitman is working to appear the dedicated missionary. Her mind does seem occupied with "home, home, sweet home" and her insistent cheerfulness (though the "friends she loves" have not bothered to write) like protesting too much. This is an unusually emotional passage for Whitman. The repetition of the words "last" and "home" is an unusual usage for a writer who seldom repeats words for emphasis, suggesting a relaxing control over her diction and, in the lack of parallel construction (*very last, last; home, home, sweet home*) even the sound of sobs; the final two sentences, by contrast, are short and clipped, suggesting repressed emotion.

Whitman's stoicism in such a passage is rather unusual. Most women who emigrated West expressed grief in their letters and journals at leaving their friends and family, in particular their mothers, sisters and female friends. Many wrote in an especially sad vein during the first days of the transcontinental journey. Emigrant Agnes Stewart wrote to her friend Martha, who stayed at home,

O Martha my heart yearns for thee my only friend ... I will never forget thee . . . I know I can never enjoy the blessed privilege of communing with thee yet look for the loss of one I will never see on earth . . . I cannot bear it. (qtd. in Schlissel 30)

Though she wrote long letters to her family and reproached them for not writing as often or as extensively to her, Whitman's writing contains no such outbursts. In her first days as a missionary, Narcissa Whitman seems to have been highly aware of the standard to which she might be held. Female missionaries were supposed to be pious, self-sacrificing and brave, persisting in the face of expected trials; thus, the most effusive expression of yearning Whitman permits herself is addressing letters to her "Dear, dear parents." Even Ann Hasseltine Judson, wife of Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson and highly touted in the popular press of the 1820s and 30s as an example of missionary fortitude, was somewhat more expressive. When her friend Harriet Newell (whose biography Whitman claimed as inspiration for her mission call) died in India, en route to the mission field in Burma, Judson wrote with emotion:

Harriet is dead. Harriet, my dear friend, my earliest associate in the Mission, is no more. O death, thou destroyer of domestic felicity, could not this wide world afford victims sufficient to satisfy their cravings, without entering the family of a solitary few, whose comfort and happiness depended much on the society of each other? (qtd. in Brumberg, Mission 48)

Judson was memorialized in a collection of noteworthy women's biographies as "rank[ing] with Saint Agnes and Saint Cecelia" where her (Protestant) biographer, one Samuel Lorenzo Knapp, contended that Judson "will be remembered for ages, as one deserving of high praise in the churches" (qtd. in Brumberg, Mission I7). Published in New York in 1834, this account was one Narcissa Prentiss might well have read by the time she met Samuel Parker, the missionary who recruited both her and Marcus Whitman to the field, in November of that year. Despite the fact that even this icon of female missionary fortitude vented her grief on the page, Whitman kept up her stiff upper lip throughout her overland trail journal and early letters. Even at St. Louis, Missouri, the last large town the missionaries would see before entering the prairie, Whitman sounded a determinedly positive note, despite a suggestion that she actually felt frightened and disoriented. She wrote:

It seems to me now that we are on the very borders of civilization . . . At this moment my feelings are peculiar. I hardly know how to define them. I have not one feeling of regret at the step which I have taken, but count it a privilege to go forth in the name of my Master, cheerfully bearing the toil and privation that we expect to encounter. (Letters I1)

Confronted with the need to transform negative feelings into something acceptable for a missionary, Whitman resorts to ministerial rhetoric to distance herself from her concrete fears. Even sentimental references to "home, home, sweet home" and "the friends I love" seem inadequate. Sadness and regret, her writing makes clear, are inappropriate for the missionary; cheerfulness and duty are all-important, and the hardships of travel a privilege borne for the sake of Christ. As I will show in Chapter Five, Ida Udall makes the identical move in a diary entry written the night before her

wedding; also claiming that she cannot describe her feelings, she resorts to stylized public language to mask them. The "peculiar" feelings Whitman claims she cannot define are perhaps some of the least acceptable for a brave young missionary: regret, grief, terror at leaving the familiar world behind, longing for home and perhaps even resentment of loved ones who, safe in the bosom of "civilization," do not write.

Casting herself as a cheerful, zealous missionary is also one way Whitman defines herself in the unfamiliar landscape beyond "the very borders of civilization." She can enter it confidently by remembering her mission, to bring American domestic values and Christian religion to what, from her Eastern perspective, is an uncivilized land and a benighted population. Whitman writes herself into this position of superiority and mastery in two ways. The first is by depicting herself standing physically above choice scenery (in what Mary Louise Pratt has termed the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" attitude) or at the center of groups, receiving the attentions of fur traders and Indians like a queen of the Plains (Pratt 201, 215). When a buffalo crosses the wagons' path, she reports: "Sister Spalding and myself got out of the wagon and ran upon the bluff to see him" (Letters 17). Surveying the male buffalo, a majestic and dangerous animal, from this removed, yet commanding position, Whitman suggests that even Eastern white females (including "Sister Spalding," physically the party's weakest member) can dominate the West. Trappers and traders seem to pay court to the missionary women, and Whitman notes that she and Eliza Spalding "were favorites of the company," as she lists presents of fresh salmon, fried cakes and game (Letters 26-30). Whitman herself is treated like a queen:

Mr. McLeod kindly offered his [tent] for my use, and when I arrived in camp found it pitched and in readiness for me . . . about 3 o'clock he came

into camp loaded with wild ducks, having taken twenty-two. Now, mother, he had just, as he always did during the whole journey, sent over nine of them. (Letters 30).

Even the domestic animals at Fort Walla Walla seem to recognize Whitman's special status and pay her tribute:

While at breakfast ... a young rooster placed himself upon the sill of the door and crowed. Now whether it was the sight of the first white woman, or out of compliment to the company, I know not, but this much for him, I was pleased with his appearance. (Letters 33).

Indians, in Whitman's writing, are placed on a par with Fort Walla Walla's rooster. Just as painter George Catlin, in his lament for the supposedly vanishing West, linked Native people with the buffalo that were their prey (Berkhofer, Indian 89), Whitman's description of some Pawnees' reaction to white women echoes her description of the rooster:

They seemed to be very much surprised and pleased to see white females; many of them had never seen any before. They are a noble Indian—large, athletic forms, dignified countenances, bespeaking a noble existence within. (Letters 20)

According to Whitman, all denizens of the West, from chief trader Alexander McLeod (a powerful figure in the Hudson's Bay Company hierarchy) to Native peoples to barnyard animals seem, in Whitman's writing, to recognize her perceived natural superiority and to welcome her presence among them. Her description of meeting the Pawnees, in particular, suggests what kind of relationship the missionaries hoped to have with their Northwest Indian hosts. She describes the missionaries as in complete control of the scene, depicting them as graciously stopping to speak to a group of Indians (already confined to a reservation) who are "going to the fort [Laramie] to receive their annuities."

Describing the Native reaction to seeing white women, she writes, "We ladies were such a curiosity to them. They would come and stand around our tent, peep in, and grin in their astonishment to see such looking objects" (Letters 21). Although Whitman portrays herself and Spalding as curiosities, she keeps firm control of the perspective here. Instead of imagining through Indian eyes how the two women must have looked compared to most other prairie travelers, she chooses to emphasize the amazed Native reaction. This allows her to suggest to her readers (and perhaps to emphasize for her own benefit) just how "primitive" these Indians really are; from the missionary perspective, they are certainly in need of instruction, as the sight of a white woman is a "curiosity" to them. Whitman concludes, "When we had said what we wished to them, we hurried on" (20). Rather than the "unrestrained passion" George Catlin predicted, Indians in Whitman's journal view white ladies with childlike wonder. In her early writing, Indians are either "noble" and "dignified" or simple and shy, and encounters with them are controlled by whites, who disseminate their message (the Indians, in Whitman's descriptions, rarely speak), then leave when they feel ready.

Between them, Whitman and Catlin express a range of popular nineteenth-century stereotypes of Natives, all of which influence Whitman's writing to a degree over the years. Catlin's warning about taking white women across the plains draws on the idea of native peoples as rapacious savages, while his project of painting the "vanishing Indian" and lament for the Indian and the buffalo spring from the Romantic myth of the Indian as the noble, yet simple child of nature (Berkhofer, Indian 89). In ascribing predatory sexuality to Indian men, Catlin reveals his chauvinistic fear of them, while Whitman's

early descriptions of Indians either infantilize or dehumanize them, a rhetorical move that may also stem from fear, especially of adult men very different from her husband and colleagues. The Pawnee in the passage above are described as childlike, simple, and shy; in a letter home, she reminds her family about one of the Nez Perce youths with the party by noting, "'Tis the one you saw at our wedding," reducing "Richard" to the status of an object by calling him "it" and "the one" (Letters 17). Whitman's view of Native women, discussed in the last chapter, is traditional both from the missionary standpoint that held that women in all non-Christian cultures were oppressed (Hunter 21) and for nineteenth-century frontier women: she notes in her journal that "Indian women . . . do all the work and are the complete slaves of their husbands" (Letters 23). The overland trail journal shows that Whitman found the very "poor heathen" she expected: noble unfortunates, gazing with childlike wonder at the picture of civilization presented by white women.

In keeping with her "hardy traveler" persona, Whitman describes herself as enjoying physical fortitude and robust health on the journey over the plains. "Everyone who sees me compliments me as being the best able to endure the journey over the mountains," she writes in an early letter, comparing herself favorably to fellow missionary Eliza Spalding (Letters 13). In fact, she emphasizes just how much the overland journey agrees with her: "I never was so contented and happy before, neither have I enjoyed such health for years" (Letters 16). Even the diet of buffalo meat, which sickened many an Eastern traveler, seems to suit Whitman at first. She writes, "So long as I have buffalo meat I do not wish anything else." Again she contrasts herself with

Eliza Spalding: "Sister Spalding is affected by it considerably – has been quite sick" (Letters 21).

Such emphasis on robust physical health may seem at odds with the idea of the cultured Eastern lady on a mission to (among other things) feminize Native women who seemed degraded and downtrodden in part because of their physically demanding lives on the plains. It is important to note, however, that Whitman draws on two distinct sets of ideals for female missionaries: the self-sacrificing martyr, willing to spend her all and die for Christ, exemplified by her suffering colleague Eliza Spalding ("Only He who knows all things knows whether this debilitated frame will survive the undertaking") and the relentlessly "useful," hardy doer of good works, exemplified in fiction by such characters as the practical evangelist Helen Scott ("There was not a family within three miles of her destitute of a Bible"). As her later writing will show, Whitman draws on both ideals, depending on which best allows her to reconcile her immediate situation with her goals and self-conception as a missionary. In the early days of travel, fired with idealism, she draws on the ideal of hardy usefulness and writes, "I am contented and happy, notwithstanding I sometimes get very hungry and weary." Her sense of Christian duty, she makes clear, keeps her spirits up: "Long for rest, but must not murmur" (Letters 23).

As I noted in the last chapter, the choice of a missionary vocation allowed young women to transcend the conventional script of marriage, motherhood and a home life more or less like their own mothers'. In asserting that she can stand the rigors of the trail, however, Whitman is far from assuming a tough, masculine persona. The "hardy traveler" shows Whitman challenging gender boundaries in some ways--by adopting a

spiritual vocation and by leaving home—while reinforcing the ideology of middle-class white femininity in her descriptions of daily life.

Part of this process of reinforcement is the second way in which Whitman asserts her mastery over the West, by describing wilderness travel in domestic terms. She depicts herself as not only coping but triumphing over prairie hardships through housewifely forethought and the judicious use of a Dutch oven. Despite her newfound ability to eat like a trapper and endure long hours in the saddle, Whitman is careful to emphasize that the rigors of the trail have not eroded her domestic skills or sense of the proprieties. Rather than being masculinized or "roughened" by life on the trail, she instead depicts herself as extending a domestic influence over the trappers, traders and Native youths with whom she travels, suggesting thereby how closely intertwined were here appointed tasks of proselytizing and "civilizing" the West.

The missionary party carried provisions for the first leg of the trip, ten days or so before the fur caravan from Missouri, with which they traveled, reached the buffalo herds of the Great Plains. On this part of the journey, Whitman did some of the party's cooking, including baking bread over fires made of buffalo dung (Drury, Wagons 50). She writes that she finds it "very easy" to bake outdoors: "Tell mother I am a very good housekeeper on the prairie" (Letters 16). Remaining ladylike, as well as efficient, on the prairie means "roughing it" with a smile:

Our table is the ground, our table-cloth is an India-rubber cloth used when it rains as a cloak; our dishes are made of tin . . . Each one carries his own knife in his scabbard, and it is always ready to use . . . It is the fashion of all this country to imitate the Turks ... We take a blanket and lay down by the table, and those whose joints will let them follow the fashion . . . I fix

myself as gracefully as I can, sometimes on a blanket, sometimes on a box, just as it is convenient. (Letters 16)

Such discomfort, Whitman's humorous description suggests, is not long to be endured.

In any case, she depicts herself seated "gracefully," like a queen on her makeshift throne, smilingly putting up with hardship. This multilayered passage emphasizes her status as a lady, one who warrants a box even when the men sit on the ground. Her reference to "the Turks," which ascribes different degrees of gentility to Europeans (the English and Scottish fur company officials) and Americans vs. Asians, might have evoked for Whitman's nineteenth-century readers a vision of exotic royalty; if so, it is a deft touch in keeping with her description of making do, since royalty who were believed to sit on the ground were not quite "civilized," no more genuinely regal in Euroamerican eyes than a box or blanket was a suitable lady's seat. Finally, in this passage, Whitman suggests that gender can also be a marker of racial difference. The Indian women she has passed on the trail who are "the complete slaves of their husbands," (Letters 23, 50) are from her perspective unlikely to be invited to "fix" (seat) themselves on a blanket or box and look "graceful" while their male companions sit on the ground.

Comments from other pioneer women suggest the care with which Whitman constructs her story of wilderness travel, writing humorous descriptions of circumstances about which others complained bitterly. Pioneer Lodisa Frizzell wrote from the Oregon Trail: "Not having tables, chairs or anything it [sic] is very hard on the back," while minister's wife Esther Hanna complained about cooking and baking on the trail: "It is very trying on the patience to cook and bake on a little green wood fire [any kind of wood was rarely available] with the smoke blowing in your eyes so as to blind you, and

shivering with cold so as to make the teeth chatter" (qtd. in Schlissel 80). Why is Narcissa Whitman so "graceful," such a "good housekeeper" by contrast? Her determined good humor may be due to the circumstances under which she traveled. As guests of the fur company caravan, the missionaries enjoyed conveniences, such as the occasional loan of tents and a share of game, unknown to later emigrants who were responsible for their own provisions (and who were often not skilled hunters, as the traders were) (Schlissel 25). On the other hand, Whitman was likely responding, at least in part, to the dual pressures of being one of the first white women to cross the continent and living up to models of missionary fortitude such as Harriet Newell and Ann Judson when she created her "hardy traveler" persona.

In her study of European travel writing, Mary Louise Pratt comments on the "comic irreverence" deployed by African explorer Mary Kingsley, who makes fun of both real and imagined dangers and describes the riverboat she sails on in domestic terms in order to assert her own form of mastery over an unfamiliar landscape (214-15). Whitman uses this very technique to describe being ferried across the Snake River on an Indian canoe. She writes "O! if father and mother and the girls could have seen us in our snug little canoe, floating on the water" (Letters 28). She domesticates the canoe crossing by describing it as an amusing spectacle for her family, even though the women actually crossed by boat because the water was too deep to be safely forded on horseback; the men of the party swam (Letters 28). But by describing the "snug little canoe" as if she and Eliza Spalding were out for an afternoon on the lake, Whitman demonstrates her mastery of both the strange, Indian canoe (the Indian who doubtless

piloted it is never mentioned) and her indifference to the dangers of one of the Far West's great rivers.

In addition to her care in defining herself as a lady and a tourist on the frontier, Whitman is always careful to define herself as a Christian. She notes that the missionaries try not to travel on the Sabbath, and that on that day, they "have worship immediately after supper and breakfast" (Letters 17). At Fort Vancouver, the Whitmans and Spaldings define themselves further as evangelical Protestants, in opposition to the Anglican Reverend Beaver from England and the Scotch Presbyterian and Catholic fur company officials, partly by refusing wine with their meals until their hosts no longer offer it: "they know that we belong to the Tetotal Society" [sic] Whitman writes (Letters 40). Such meticulous self-definition in writing allows her to reinscribe a core sense of identity and purpose, as she continually reminds herself, along with her readers, of why she came west in the first place.

Fort Vancouver society offers Whitman yet more opportunity for self-definition as she chooses how to describe the mixed-blood wives of Hudson's Bay Company officials and her own relations with them. During her weeks at the Fort, Whitman records spending time with Marguerite Wadin McLoughlin, wife of Fort Vancouver's chief factor, who was the daughter of a Swiss fur trader and a Native (Cree) mother. She also spent time with another company wife, Amelia Connelly Douglas, the daughter of a Scottish chief factor and Native mother (Drury, Wagons 100). Jennifer S.H. Brown's study of family relationships within the Northwest fur trade highlights the idea of "race" as a socially constructed category and social class as mediated by "race": no matter how

high their husbands' status in the company, many Europeans viewed women like Amelia Douglas, who in 1859 became the first lady of Vancouver Island, as permanently of low status because of their Indian blood (Brown 215). For her part, Whitman emphasizes her hostesses' native heritage when she describes them simply as "natives of the country (half breed)" (Journal 50). Although she allows that Mrs. McLoughlin is "one of the kindest women in the world" (Journal 58) she also suggests that she falls short of true (white) womanhood by "keep[ing] her old fashion of riding gentleman fashion," which is, as Whitman notes, "the universal custom of Indian women generally." Though Whitman and Spalding have been "recommended to use these saddles" with their modestly "high backs and fronts," Whitman writes "We have never seen the necessity of changing our fashion" (Letters 40). Although she notes that her husband Marcus accepts a gift of "leather pantaloons"--a costume borrowed from Native culture, in which hides were frequently used for clothing--from Chief Factor John McLoughlin, as more suitable for horseback riding than cloth trousers (Drury, Wagons I04) Whitman herself is apparently determined to borrow nothing, particularly in those instances (such as learning to ride astride) when so doing would involve crossing gender as well as cultural lines. While entering the physical wilderness offered her the chance to escape some of the more confining aspects of Eastern femininity, such as the sidesaddle, in many cases she explicitly refused to abandon convention, focusing instead on what she saw as her mission of bringing the gospel and white domesticity to the Northwest's natives.

That Narcissa Whitman made this trip across the continent, in the face of so much authoritative advice against doing so, seems to suggest that she was a nonconformist,

ready to defy gender conventions by facing physical challenges and taking on a leadership role. As I noted in the last chapter, however, Whitman grew up immersed in the evangelical culture of New York's "burned-over district," an area where religious revival was a way of life. Becoming a missionary to the "heathen" was not only an acceptable but a praiseworthy choice for a young person, and pious literature, from the missionary correspondence printed in church papers to didactic novels such as Bullard's The Wife for a Missionary, provided many models of heroic missionary life. As I have noted, one script for missionary wives dictated willing self-sacrifice, including the willingness to die in foreign service, even though most of the work was domestic: providing companionship, a home and children for the male missionary to prevent him from being tempted to participate excessively in the host culture, and performing the same kind of home visits to the sick, tract and Bible distribution, and instruction in literacy and household industry that pious women were expected to perform in their hometowns (Grimshaw 101; Hunter 128). Ann Douglas notes, apropos of what she terms this "assimilation of ministerial and feminine functions" that "just doing what came naturally as a capable and devout young girl apparently involved saving souls *as a* kind of unintended although by no means unwished-for byproduct" (106); conversely, while entering the mission field required a degree of adventurous spirit, a large part of the mission itself was housework.

The second persona that appears in Whitman's diary and letters is the dedicated and longsuffering missionary. This missionary persona, which conforms to the first of the two feminine missionary ideals mentioned above, does appear in early letters

intertwined with the "hardy traveler." Dedicated and self-sacrificing, this is the Whitman who "does not regret, even for a moment" going to the "dear Indians" (Letters 17).

Though she has met very few actual Indians (except the "simple" and "shy" Pawnee who, though curious, seemingly stood at a respectful distance), she portrays herself early on as a missionary to one of the party's Nez Perce helpers, a young man called Richard. In this self-portrait, however, Whitman seems as much tourist or amateur anthropologist as missionary:

I have become very much attached to [him]. 'T is the one you saw at our wedding; he calls me mother; I love to teach him—to take care of him, and hear them talk. There are five Nez Perces in the company, and when they are together they chatter finely. (Letters 17)

Though Whitman's self-characterization in this passage foreshadows the mother figure her letters depict years later, Richard and his Nez Perce compatriots again seem more like pets than human beings in Whitman's depiction of her domestic universe. Not only does the dehumanizing abbreviation "'t" suggest, as I noted earlier, that Richard is an object rather than a person, but the word "chatter" suggests squirrels or monkeys rather than human beings. In reporting that Richard calls her "mother" and recounting that she "loves to teach" him, she suggests that he is a child who needs attention and care. Power is clearly divided along racial lines, with the white woman depicted as capable teacher and powerful, nurturing mother while the Nez Perce youths are childlike, amusing in their "chatter" and in need of instruction.

Instead of recording that she talks with the Nez Perce members of the party, as Eliza Spalding did (the young men's company on the trail provided an invaluable opportunity for language study and, despite Spalding's ill health, she apparently

progressed much faster than Whitman) (Jeffrey, Converting 82-83) Whitman apparently only listens to their "fine chatter," which seems more a curiosity to be marveled at than a potential means of vital communication. Like housekeeping on the prairie, missionary life and her relations with Indians seem like a happy game in Whitman's letters; life on the prairie is a curiosity she observes without participating enough to be changed by its strangeness.

A tone of self-sacrifice *as* well as dedication marks Whitman's missionary persona in her letters from Waiilatpu, particularly in the early mission years of 1836-1842. After spending the autumn of 1836 at Fort Vancouver, Whitman, by then six months pregnant, traveled up the Columbia River to Fort Walla Walla. By early December she and Marcus, who had gone ahead to the mission site twenty-five miles from the fort and built a rudimentary house with help from William Gray and some of the Cayuse, were reunited. Whitman's letter to her mother, begun December 5, 1836 closes with a description of the mission's "lovely situation":

We are on a beautiful level—a peninsula formed by the branches of the Walla Walla River, upon the base of which our house stands . . . as far *as* the eye can reach, plains and mountains appear. (Letters 46)

This description of the mission property—which, as I discussed in Chapter Two, was actually loaned to the Whitmans by the Cayuse—is the last time such a positive, even romantically optimistic view of the Northwest, land or people, appears in Whitman's writing.

The feelings that Whitman had earlier professed herself unable to describe—the suggestion, for example, that she was afraid to set out past the "very borders of

civilization"—she could not express openly in her diary and letters home because they suggested less than total dedication to the missionary cause. Once settled in the field, however, Whitman could complain in a limited way. As her early reading had taught her, missionary life was full of trials to be endured with God's help; thus, she could write about problems if they were cast as God's chastisement or portrayed as routine and expected hardships. That missionaries were expected to suffer was pointed out in ABCFM secretary David Greene's farewell sermon to the missionaries who crossed the plains to Oregon in 1838, two years after the Whitmans and Spaldings. The overland journey and life in Oregon, he warned, represented

.. an untried, and in some respects, an unpleasant mode of life. The shelter, and the quiet apartments of a comfortable house, either by night or day, you must temporarily forego; you must look for no well furnished table, no permanent resting place, and none of the security and retirement of home. (qtd. in Drury, Oregon 50)

Because missionaries were supposed to suffer, Whitman was free to write about the vicissitudes and discomforts of frontier life, provided she did so in a way that confirmed for her audience both her dedication to missionary work and her determination to remain a lady (and thus an emissary of white civilization) even in the wilderness. For example, in a letter from the early days at Waiilatpu, she described losing a native servant girl to illness. Since this young girl was part of the missionary household, proselytized and renamed "Sarah Hull," and since she presumably died far from her people (John McLoughlin, chief factor of Fort Vancouver, had sent her upriver to work at Waiilatpu as a domestic), the Whitmans were responsible for her funeral. Because Marcus Whitman was away on a medical mission, however, Narcissa had to take charge. In this case, what

she saw as her responsibility, to provide an example of Christian burial rites for the Cayuse, trumped the gender conventions dictating that she limit her mission to domestic work and behind-the-scenes teaching. Although, as I noted earlier, Whitman was accustomed to praying out loud in public, preaching was another matter, frowned on in all but the most radical evangelical circles. Faced with the responsibility of conducting a funeral and even delivering the funeral sermon, Whitman cast the incident as a "trial," and was quick to reassure readers that her natural inclination was to lean on male authority. She wrote, "If ever I felt the presence of my husband necessary to sustain me, it was while passing through such a scene." In Marcus Whitman's absence she relied on God, who "sustained and comforted me" sufficiently to carry out the funeral (Letters 65). Whitman's home audience could be reassured that she was carrying out her missionary duties without usurping proper male authority, while Whitman herself was able to vent her dislike for certain aspects of missions by emphasizing how she suffered in completing her duties.

In other letters, Whitman uses a similar strategy to complain of the problems of missionary life, turning descriptions of hardship into apparent proof that the Whitmans are doing their job. She describes the difficulty she and Marcus experience in establishing the mission farm on land "exposed to every depredation, without a fence, and not only our own stock [to be kept out of the precious crops] but the Indians', too" (Letters 65). When her family increases with the birth of Alice Clarissa in March 1837, so do her perceived trials and sense of isolation: "You know not what it is to be a mother in heathen lands," Whitman writes, "so full of anxiety and constant care, and no kind

sister to lend a helping hand" (Letters 66). Again, she emphasizes the difference between the "civilized" life of her readers in the States, whose crops and stock are separated by fences and who can count on relatives to lend a hand, and life at Waiilatpu, where, as she frequently points out, the Whitmans have sacrificed even these former essentials for the sake of the "heathen."

A still clearer picture of Whitman as self-sacrificing missionary emerges in her letters from 1836-1842. For example, before the mission farm began to prosper, the Whitmans had to eat horsemeat instead of the beef and pork they preferred. Whitman writes to her family: "We have killed and eaten ten wild horses bought of the Indians. This will make you pity us, but you had better save your pity for more worthy subjects" (51). It is worth noting here that mentions of food—its kind, quality, and quantity—serve throughout Whitman's writing as a gauge of how well things are going. Her overland trail journal is filled with notations about what the party ate and where they found it, including long entries on the agriculture and cuisine of Fort Vancouver, which sounds from Whitman's journal like the Biblical Garden of Eden: "Here we find fruit of every description, apples, peaches, grapes, pears, plums, and fig trees in abundance" (Journal 37). Part of Whitman's emphasis on food, of course, had to do with the monotony of the fur traders' diet (fresh buffalo meat was replaced by dried *as* the staple food when the travelers crossed the Rocky Mountains) as well as, presumably, with a fear of starving in the wilderness. Thus it is partly relief that makes the "fresh salmon, potatoes, tea, bread & butter" followed by "a feast of melons" worth mentioning as part of the missionaries' welcome at Fort Walla Walla (Journal 40). Avoirdupois, likewise, was a measure of

good health on the frontier, and Whitman writes from Fort Vancouver, by way of describing a successful trip across the plains, "If Mother could see me now she would not think my cheek bones were very prominent" (Journal 57). To write from Waiilatpu of subsisting on horsemeat (and to use the word "pity" twice in a single sentence mentioning the fact) is to point up the privations the missionaries are suffering for the gospel cause.

Motherhood in "heathen lands," as she describes Waiilatpu, provides Whitman with another occasion to cast herself as the self-sacrificing missionary. Childbirth is lonely with only Marcus Whitman and Catherine Pambrun, the wife of Fort Walla Walla's chief factor, to assist her. "Thus you see, beloved sisters, how the missionary does in heathen lands. No mother, no sister to relieve me of a single care" (Letters 47). The prospect of rearing her baby daughter, Alice Clarissa, "among savages" provides yet another theme for lamentation. (As I noted in the last chapter, bringing up "American" children in a foreign host culture gave most missionary parents cause for concern.)

Whitman writes,

O, the responsibilities of a mother! . . . Ye mothers of the maternal associations, let me beg an interest in your prayers, especially for your unworthy sister, now she has become a mother, and for my little one. (Letters 50)

Much of this responsibility, apparently, involved keeping a white child clean and free from too much contact with the mission Indians. "I have kept [Alice] entirely off the floor this winter until within a fortnight past," Whitman writes in the spring of 1838. "My kitchen has been filled with children mom and eve, which has made my floor very dirty" (Letters 55). Though Eliza Spalding, who lived at the Lapwai mission station in present-day Idaho, 125 miles away, does not mention constantly carrying her daughter,

she does mention what happened when the Nez Perce picked up little Eliza, and indicates how she too clung to white domestic standards when she notes picking "a flea or a louse from [the baby's] clothes" after the Indians held her (qtd. in Drury, Wagons 203).

Most missionary families, as I have noted, struggled with the question of how much native contact to allow their own children. Would playing with Indian children encourage "heathen" habits? Children just learning to talk picked up languages quickly, and the missionaries' children made useful interpreters. Whitman wrote to her sister Jane that eighteen-month-old Alice Clarissa was particularly fond of hymns in Nez Perce, and was "repeating some part of them most of the time" (Letters 62). As the entry from Eliza Spalding's diary shows, the presence of children in missionaries' families could also help forge bonds between the adult missionaries and those they hoped to convert. The Cayuse at Waiilatpu seem to have been as interested in Alice Clarissa as the Nez Perce at Lapwai were in little Eliza Spalding. Whitman writes

It makes them very much pleased to think she is going to speak their language so readily. They appear to love her much. The old chief Cut Lip says 'he does not expect to live long, and he has given all his land to her'. (Letters 62)

Like most missionary parents, however, Whitman worried that allowing her daughter too much contact with the Cayuse host culture would be developmentally and spiritually harmful:

Situated as I am, I know not how I shall succeed in training her as I ought. So many Indians and children are constantly in and about our house, and recently I discover her much inclined to imitate and talk with them, or they with her. (Letters 62)

Rather than rejoicing that her daughter and the Cayuse seemed to enjoy each other's company, Whitman saw continued contact as potential contamination. She wrote to her sister Jane that her family lived "in the midst of heathen, without one savory example before our eyes" (Letters 59). While Whitman believed it was her maternal duty to keep Alice free of the taint of heathenism, her aversion to Cayuse ways was probably an important factor in her own martyrdom years later at their hands.

The Whitmans' earliest disagreements with their Cayuse hosts provided a third opportunity for Narcissa to describe missionary life as a series of trials and herself as a martyr to the Christian cause. The first conflicts centered on Marcus Whitman's attempts to treat some of the Cayuse who were ill. While some of the Indians were willing to try the new missionary's medicines, others consulted traditional healers, or *tewats*. Whitman's Cayuse patients brought their culture with them to the doctor, however, and their expectations gave the Whitmans pause. Although, as I noted in the last chapter, the practice of giving gifts to dead patients' relatives may have been more common than the life-for-a-life policy described in European accounts (if it had not, the office of *tewat* would have been permanently vacant long before the Whitmans arrived) the missionaries felt their lives were at stake in a contest with the devil, the only power they believed could possibly inspire Indian efforts at spiritual and physical healing. They saw *tewats* (who relied on chants, dances and sacred objects as well as medicinal plants) as agents of Satan and their work as "a deception, and not of God" (Letters 51). The Plateau Indians, like members of many other cultures worldwide, believed physical illness could be a manifestation of spiritual problems (Hunn 193); nonetheless, Narcissa Whitman wrote

that Cayuse medicine was useless at best, "a species of juggling" and "playing the fool" (Letters 49); at worst, it was a powerful influence on the people the Whitmans hoped to convert. Whitman writes, "They [the Indians] believe that the *tewat* can kill or make alive at his pleasure" (Letters 110). If Marcus Whitman undertook to cure the Indians, and like them assumed the status of a spiritual leader (Hunn 198), he was in direct competition with Indian medicine men and in the same jeopardy if his medicines failed. (Since Whitman carried medicines like calomel, lobelia and cayenne pepper (Letters 11) and since bleeding and purging were still common remedies, from a twenty-first century perspective it is difficult to imagine that his cures were much more successful than the *tewats*.) The Cayuse gave Whitman credit as the powerful figure he claimed to be, and warned him accordingly when he treated a chief's wife:

Umtippe got in a rage about his wife, and told my husband, while she was under his care, that if his wife died that night he should kill him. The contest has been sharp between him and the Indians, and husband was nearly sick with the excitement and care of them . . . through the great mercy of God to us, none of them died to whom medicine was administered. (Letters 50)

Narcissa Whitman clearly took Umtippe's warning seriously. She wrote to her family, "You see our situation. If ever we needed your prayers and sympathies, it is at the present time. If you would have us live, and not die, you must pray" (Letters 51). Her letter portrays a new mother anxiously protecting her child, threatened by mysterious "heathen" customs, painfully eking out a living in the wilderness.

The suggestion that she might actually be martyred in the mission field does appear in Whitman's letters. An early letter to her sister Mary Ann, written in the fall of 1838, includes several anecdotes about the tragic losses incurred by other missionary

families—or, as Whitman narrates them, exacted by the wilderness as the price of serving God. She recounts how Methodist missionary Jason Lee returned from a trip to find his wife and newborn son dead and how another missionary wife lost her infant son on a canoe passage of the Columbia. "Thus, you see," she writes, "dangers stand thick on every side" (Letters 65). Death also threatens her own family, as she describes when she writes, "Little A.C. [Alice Clarissa] is quite sick—has a high fever, and her mother is full of anxiety about her—so much so that she cannot sleep, for her dear father is more than 300 miles from home" (Letters 66). Of course, her daughter's illness may be the inspiration for Whitman's list of missionary losses, as though by recounting others' griefs she can ruminate indirectly on the possibility that Alice might die. She describes herself as vulnerable to tragedy that could strike at any moment. Missionaries were expected to face trials, faraway lands to be fraught with peril, and this letter depicts Narcissa Whitman, missionary, anxious yet vigilant at her post in the field.

In her account of a winter journey the missionaries made to the Spalding mission at Lapwai (near present-day Lewiston, Idaho), Whitman dramatizes the hardships of missionary life, painting a vivid picture of winter travel for those at home:

When the sun went down it found me sitting by the root of a large tree on stones with my babe in my arms, watching by moonlight the movements in crossing our baggage and horses. This was the only piece of wood in sight and with a few bunches of wild sage a fire was made against it to warm me while waiting to cross. (Letters 54)

This Dickensian picture, with its careful scene-setting and even the detail about the sparse availability of firewood, seems carefully calculated to excite sympathy in readers at home. Given that most of Whitman's readers were also steeped in the Bible, it might also

have suggested the birth of Christ or perhaps the holy family's flight from Herod into Egypt (elsewhere, Whitman describes Oregon as "a land of darkness, as Egyptian darkness itself" suggesting that the missionaries' sojourn in what, to them, was a spiritual wilderness) (Letters 56). Whitman places herself and her daughter Alice at the scene's center, reducing Marcus and his helpers to "movements" more peripheral to the scene than the sheltering tree. Whitman is the "solitary missionary" in this scene, a phrase she uses repeatedly to describe her feelings of isolation. Depicting herself as alone even when others were present suggests the nature of Whitman's feelings of isolation from certain people: her immediate family, other white women, Christians who share her particular brand of belief. As a "solitary missionary, overwhelmed with cares and labor, and ready to sink under them," (Letters 62), and a "solitary missionary in the land of darkness" (Letters 56) she ultimately concludes "mother . . . would pity me" (Letters 93).

The need to demonstrate proper missionary dedication, however, is such that Whitman emphasizes the impossibility of returning home, even for a visit. Such an idea was not entirely unheard-of; though nineteenth-century missionaries were not allowed regular furloughs as most are today, Marcus Whitman did return to the United States in 1842, when the fate of the Oregon mission seemed to hang in the balance. Strife within the mission had escalated to the point that he and his four male colleagues had written letters of complaint to the ABCFM in Boston (Drury, Wagons 159). Though the complaints were mainly about Henry Spalding, and though Spalding had apologized and worked with the other missionaries to rectify matters, the reconciliation came too late to stop the board from sending orders to close both Waiilatpu and Lapwai (Jeffrey,

Converting 160). Notice of the closure, which arrived at Wailatpu in September 1842, spurred Whitman to make the journey East to plead that the missions be kept open (Jeffrey, Converting 173).

Because the journey across the Rocky Mountains in autumn was risky, however, and because Marcus needed to travel fast, Narcissa Whitman stayed behind. From a practical standpoint, Whitman succeeded: the mission's governing board listened to his arguments and agreed to keep the Oregon missions open despite the missionaries' differences and the fact that they had made virtually no converts among the Indians (Jeffrey, Converting 134, 154). In addition, Marcus Whitman made himself politically useful by helping guide an emigrant party across the plains the following year.¹ It must have been agonizing for Narcissa Whitman to know that her husband would visit, in the East, the family she longed to see (he made a side trip from Boston to the Whitman and Prentiss homes in western New York). Writing a year before Marcus' 1842 visit, however, she had answered her mother's question, "Do you never talk about visiting home for the sake of recruiting your exhausted strength?" She replied,

We often talk about the pleasure it would give us to see our friends and native land, but that we shall ever go home is uncertain. Indeed, we never expect to. We feel that our lives are too far spent to allow us to devote as much time *as* would be necessary to visit our friends and return . . . Should our health require a change of circumstances it may not be considered necessary for us to go home unless some other object is to be accomplished by it for the good of the cause. (Letters 114)

The picture this passage presents is one of total dedication. Neither exhaustion nor ill health, and certainly not the simple desire to see friends and family, will induce the Whitmans to return while mission work remains to be done. In fact, missionaries Asa

and Sarah Smith, who arrived in Oregon in 1838, did leave their post among the Nez Perces in late 1841 because of Mrs. Smith's poor health. Rather than leave the mission field, however, they sailed for the ABCFM's Hawaiian mission, where they stayed for nearly four years. Perhaps Whitman had a similar change of station in mind should her health require a "change of circumstances." Since the fall of 1840, she had written of ill health and exhaustion, but continued to insist on her willingness to suffer and die for the missionary cause:

I wish it did not hurt me so to write. I am very weak and feeble, and much thinking or excitement overcomes me . . . Rest is not for us in this world. Dear mother says it seems as if she might see us again in this world. I do not know as I have such a thought . . . I have long felt it more probable that we should never meet, and have thought more of meeting my friends in heaven than in this world ... Our united choice would be to live and die here--to spend our lives for the salvation of this people. (Letters 103).

Whitman's repeated references to her own and Marcus' lives as currency to be spent for Christ, and later as "too far spent" to attempt a visit home, recall a Biblical image used by the apostle Paul, who wrote of his missions "I am being poured out like a drink offering" (2 Timothy 4:6). Whitman, and her home audience, would certainly have known this passage. The only drawback to dying in mission service, an account in the 1842 Missionary Herald suggested, was that death in the field might discourage other Christians from going abroad. The periodical's obituary for one Mrs. William Walker, who succumbed to typhus in Africa, noted that "Her chief concern, when told that she must die, was lest her death should deter others from going to impart the blessings of the gospel to that land." The idea of willingly giving one's life---or at the very least, giving

up creature comforts--for sake of the "perishing heathen" was central to missionary ideals and originated with Christ, the model for all missionary self-sacrifice.

In her letters from the period 1837-1842, Whitman again paints vivid scenes of missionary hardship. For example, she imagines for her family the winter weather

Marcus Whitman encounters while traveling:

There has been almost constant high wind ever since husband left and increasing cold. Feel considerably anxious concerning him, lest the deep snow and cold may make his journey a severe one . . . He never has been obliged to encounter so much snow before, and I do not know how it will affect him. (Letters 130)

At the letter's end Whitman reiterates, "It has been stormy and cold every day since he left" (I33). In an earlier passage, she enjoins her sister Harriet:

Think of [Marcus] traveling alone this cold weather. The first [day] after he left his warm home, the wind blew very hard and cold—he with but two blankets, sleeping on the ground alone; and since, it has rained almost every day, and sometimes snowed a little. (Letters 104)

Though it seems unlikely that Marcus Whitman, who had been a country doctor in western New York, was unaccustomed to traveling in the snow, her husband's dedication—not the presumed hardship itself--is the point of Whitman's description, as she emphasizes how the missionaries suffer for the "cause of Christ" (Letters 104). Such detailed descriptions of difficulty contrast with the comforts she imagines her loved ones enjoy. Of course suffering, in Calvinist theology, was thought to lead to spiritual growth, as minister Leonard Woods pointed out in his funeral sermon for missionary Harriet Newell: "Times of persecution and distress have a favorable influence upon Christian character. In such seasons . . . [Christians] are reduced to the necessity of feeling that they have . no hope of enjoyment from any other quarter. Accordingly, they make a

more unreserved surrender of everything for Christ" (qtd. in Noble 46). In an 1841 letter to her parents, Whitman alludes to a well-known missionary hymn to suggest that missionaries have opportunities for spiritual growth home that congregations lack: "There are no flowery beds of ease here, but it may be said to be so with Christians in my native land" (Letters 119). One verse of this hymn, often sung at services where missionaries called for assistance, runs as follows:

Shall I be carried to the skies
On flow'ry beds of ease
While others fight to win the prize
And sail through bloody seas?

Such hymns might have sparked guilt in Christians, presumably less dedicated than the missionaries, who chose to stay at home; home congregations were spurred, not just to financial support for foreign missions, but to send more missionaries, often young people like Marcus and Narcissa Whitman who were stirred by the visitors' message. Whitman's other letters suggest she may have been trying this way to induce some of her family to join her at Waiilatpu. In the Whitmans' case, there were no bloody seas to sail through (though Narcissa Whitman describes the hazards of the Columbia River) but vivid pictures of missionaries traveling at night through the snow could suffice.

Despite its dangers, Whitman also suggests that the simplicity of missionary life could serve as a hedge against spiritual pitfalls. Whitman suggests that at home, "The danger of being deceived [i.e. led into sinful living or doctrinal errors] may be greater possibly there than here" (Letters 119). The missionaries believed affliction could mean God was teaching them important lessons. As Whitman wrote of a bout of illness,

I must not repine or murmur at the dealings of my Heavenly Father with me, for he sees it necessary thus to afflict me that His own blessed image may be perfect in me. O, what a sinful, ungrateful creature I am—proud and disobedient. (Letters 132).

Whitman's final 'trial' was the death of her daughter, Alice. Just twenty-six months old, the little girl drowned in the Walla Walla River in May 1839. At least in part because of the circumstances of her death, Whitman was forced to cast the loss as God's chastisement ("the Lord meant it should be so") (Letters 79) or else believe that she and Marcus were partly to blame. Describing Alice's death, Whitman admitted in a letter to her parents that she and Marcus had been reading after Sunday worship and had barely heard their toddler announce, "Supper is almost ready. Let Alice get some water" (Letters 85). "Being absorbed in reading," Whitman wrote, "I did not see or think anything about her—which way she went to get her water" (Letters 85). Whitman reported asking her teenage servant Margaret to look for Alice a few minutes later, but apparently failed to ask the results. Margaret looked for Alice but, not finding her, continued her meal preparations and it was only when another domestic helper found two cups in the river that Marcus and Narcissa grew anxious. One of the Indians retrieved Alice's body a few minutes later (Whitman, Letters 79, 85).

Whitman's own account of the accident suggests that she felt responsible. To her parents, she described in detail the steps she and Marcus had taken to warn Alice of the river's dangers. Marcus had "put her in, to frighten her" *as* well as drowning a sick dog before her eyes to impress her with the river's deadly power (Letters 79, 83). Whitman remembered her daughter solemnly repeating warnings to avoid the water (Letters 83) and professed herself puzzled by Alice's boldness: "I had never known her to go to the

river or to appear at all venturesome until within a week past. Previous to this she has been much afraid to go near the water anywhere" (Letters 79). The Whitmans, of course, were new parents, well-educated but perhaps unprepared for a toddler's whims and rapidly changing sense of personal competence. "Mysterious event!" Whitman wrote of the accident. "We can in no way account for the circumstances connected with it" (Letters 79). That Whitman devotes so much space to how her daughter could have drowned suggests an effort to come to grips both with the event and the idea that she had failed as a mother.

Close to her daughter and drawing great satisfaction from her role as mother, Whitman seems to have spiraled briefly into suicidal depression after Alice's death. She wrote, "She will not come to me, but I shall soon go to her" (Letters 80) and "It will be but a few more days, and then we shall meet in heaven" (Letters 89). Without abandoning the faith of a lifetime, however, Whitman could not escape the idea that God had willed Alice's death. Struggling to discern the divine plan, she advanced two contradictory lines of reasoning in her letters. In the first, God had taken Alice in order to wean the Whitmans from worldly affections and redirect them to their original mission of spreading His word, while in the second, God had taken Alice to protect her from the taint of "heathen lands" and particularly to save her from neglect (accidental or otherwise) by parents bound to evangelize those very heathen. To her friend Elvira Perkins, a missionary at The Dalles, Whitman expressed the first view when she wrote, "Now we see how much we loved her, and you know the blessed Saviour will not have His children bestow an undue attachment upon creature objects without reminding us of

His own superior claim" (Letters 79). To her father, however, Whitman wrote, "Our situation and responsibilities require that most of my time should be spent in teaching school, which I could not do without her having been exposed to the contaminating influence of heathenism and very much neglected" (Letters 91). That doing God's work was apparently so incompatible with being a good mother highlights Whitman's ambivalence about her missionary calling—an ambivalence perhaps heightened when her daughter drowned while she read what was (on the Sabbath) undoubtedly religious material.

Despite her insistence on God's providence in grief—on "how much He comforts and sustains me in this trying moment" (Letters 80) Whitman's almost longing references to her own impending death suggest that this trial, at least, has weakened her resolve to remain in the field. Biographer Julie Roy Jeffrey suggests that Whitman felt guilt over Alice's death that she could only vent in statements about death and heaven. Jeffrey writes,

Having blamed Cayuse mothers for their negligence, [Whitman] had paid more attention to her reading than to her daughter. In the end ... although Narcissa accepted some of the implications of newly emerging ideas that a child's welfare depended more on a mother's care than on the decision of an all-powerful God, she could not hold herself accountable. (Converting 145).

To do so would have been to undermine both her mission (was she not the exemplar of good motherhood, as well as Christianity, for the native and mixed-blood women of the area?) and the identity it underpinned. If a child was indeed a gift from God, she had failed in a sacred trust by failing to safeguard that gift. "Solitary and alone," attributing her child's death to God's will was the best way Narcissa Whitman

could maintain the missionary persona that was becoming essential to maintaining her own sanity.

`All of the family are well': Narcissa Whitman as Capable Mother

Home is the mother's place, and here must her best energies be expended.
Fidelia Coan, ABCFM missionary to Hawaii

The problem almost all missionary mothers faced—how to continue in their missionary vocations when they, rather than their husbands, also bore primary responsibility for raising their own children—was sometimes solved by sequestering mission children from "heathen influences" or by sending them to school in the States (Grimshaw 133). Many, though certainly not all, mission mothers dropped evangelism in favor of their maternal duty, simply because combining the two required a terrific physical and mental effort. The aptly named Fidelia Coan was able to continue teaching a school for native Hawaiians and rearing her own family for a full ten years before, encumbered with four children, she finally conceded that she could not do both (Grimshaw 137). Narcissa Whitman was unique among her missionary contemporaries in that, even after the death of her biological child, she found a way to make motherhood her primary role. Once childless, Whitman was perforce (as she acknowledged in letters to her father and to fellow missionary Elvira Perkins) thrown back on her original vocation of ministering to the "dear heathen." However, instead of teaching Bible verses to Cayuse children, and inducting Native women into the mysteries of spinning, knitting and sewing, as Eliza Spalding was doing despite her ever-increasing family, Whitman adopted several mixed-blood orphans and eventually an entire family of emigrant

children from the States. By gradually increasing her family of orphans, Whitman was able to combine evangelism (as she "civilized" her charges with Yankee zeal) and motherhood. Her genius was in convincing herself and her audience that motherhood itself was a mission, and that in turning her attention to her own hearth and home she was still yielding to the Saviour's "superior claim."

The shift in family structure that gave mothers rather than fathers, primary responsibility for childrearing had already occurred by the time Narcissa Whitman gave birth to Alice in 1837 (Douglas 74) and, even on the far Western frontier, Narcissa Whitman was able to participate in the professionalization of motherhood. A part of this movement in which missionary mothers, far removed from the familiar settings of village, church and Sunday School were eager to participate included the formation of mutual improvement associations and the perusal of books and magazines on childrearing (Grimshaw 130). With Eliza Spalding and the wives of the 1838 mission party (not all of whom yet had children) Whitman formed the Columbia River Maternal Association and was elected corresponding secretary. Later, she sold subscriptions to Mother's Magazine, the national journal of the maternal association movement, to missionary and fur company wives. Mother's Magazine was also the venue for the only work Whitman published voluntarily in her lifetime, appropriately enough a letter in which she explained to readers why she had changed focus from ministering to the heathen to caring for her adopted family.

In her letter addressed to Mrs. A.G. Whittelsey, the editor of Mother's Magazine, Whitman describes the seven Sager children she and Marcus adopted in late 1844 as sent

by God: "brought to our door" by "a mysterious Providence" (281). Regarding their adoption, she writes, "I was led to see the hand of the Lord was in it, and that if He appointed me to the work, He would give me grace and strength" (281). Despite her note that "we had in our situation as missionaries already more labor than we could well attend to" she describes coming to see rearing these orphans as a mission in itself, in that it involved "train[ing] them all up for [God's] service and glory" (281). In fact, the Whitmans had considerably more success, by their own lights, with the Sager girls as missionary subjects than they had among the Cayuse: as Whitman writes in her letter to Mother's Magazine, "we have presented the five younger ones to God, in the solemn and interesting ordinance of Baptism" (282). In this letter, she suggests that other conversions at the mission have sprung from the "salutary" home influence at Waiilatpu: "We have a trembling hope of the conversion of the three eldest boys" (presumably Marcus Whitman's nephew Perrin Whitman in addition to the Sager boys, John and Francis) and "one young man of the last immigration" who "found the Saviour precious to him, after he came to winter with us" (282). The Indian mission has apparently become incidental, the white children the primary mission subjects, though Whitman stresses the "model home" aspect of her mission when she writes, "The Indians . . . are led to wonder how it is that we should feel so much interest and sympathy for [the white orphans] when they are not at all related to us" (282). From her perspective, Whitman was modeling Christian love in caring for her adopted family; in requesting the "earnest prayers of the mothers of your Maternal Association" she was requesting prayers for

what her letter clearly shows was a religious mission: "training ... the souls of our tender charge . . . up for His cause and glory" (283).

In the later mission years of 1843-1847, Marcus and Narcissa Whitman seemed to settle in at Waiilatpu and become comfortable with the work they did. In November 1846, Narcissa wrote to her mother, "Husband says he never has felt more contented and . . . usefully employed than for the last year and the present" (Letters 214). The Whitmans' chosen work, however, was less and less the Indian evangelism that had brought them to Oregon. In 1842, the first small party of emigrants from the states had passed Waiilatpu, and on his return from the East in 1843, Marcus Whitman had helped guide a much larger party of close to a thousand emigrants. Groups of settlers came every year after that in late summer and fall, right up to 1847 when the Whitmans were killed (Drury, Wagons 158-9).

Marcus and Narcissa Whitman switched much of the focus of the mission from converting and civilizing the Cayuse to providing food, shelter and instruction to white emigrants. From 1843 on, the Whitmans drew heavily on their crops and other produce to supply the emigrant trains (Whitman, Letters 176). One of the Whitmans' adopted children, Matilda Sager Delaney, wrote in her memoirs that the children planted gardens to "raise vegetables for the immigrants who came in for supplies" (8). After six frustrating years with the Indians, the emigrants—almost all of whom spoke English—must have seemed to the Whitmans much easier to work with, and their presence also provided the social interaction with other whites that Narcissa Whitman, at least, had missed so much. Delaney wrote, "During the summer when the Indians went

to the buffalo grounds, we were alone and we looked forward to the coming of the immigrants as one of the great events of our life" (9). The emigrants were also temporary mission subjects, with some families staying all winter at Waiilatpu (Delaney 8). Both Whitmans saw ministering to the emigrants as equally important *as* their original mission of evangelizing the Indians. Narcissa wrote in the spring of 1844, "Settlers are coming into the country like a flood and every one of these needs the gospel preached to them as much as the heathen" (Letters 172). Expecting the imminent disappearance of Native populations who refused to adopt white culture—or who simply could not adopt it fast enough, in his view, to assimilate successfully to Euroamerican culture--Marcus Whitman took an even more pro-emigrant position:

I have no doubt our greatest work is to be to aid the white settlement of this country and help to found its religious institutions . . . Although the Indians have made, and are making, rapid advances in religious knowledge and civilization, yet it cannot be hoped that time will be allowed to mature either the work of Christianization or civilization before the white settlers will demand the soil . . . (Letters 174)

The march of white civilization, as Marcus Whitman saw it, was inexorable, its progress part of a divine plan. He was not alone in believing that Oregon's native population was less deserving of both missionary attentions and the right to inhabit their own homelands than the white emigrants were. Missionary Gustavus Hines wrote in 1840, "The hand of Providence is removing [the Indians] to give place to a people more worthy of this beautiful and fertile country," Oregon's Willamette Valley (qtd. in Zucker 61). The most appropriate action for missionaries was to shift their attentions to the settlers. Concurring with Hines' report, Narcissa Whitman wrote in 1844 that the Willamette Valley missionaries had already adjusted to the change:

The Indians of the Willamette and the coast are diminishing rapidly; but they [the missionaries] have another work put into their hands . . . Mr. Clark and Mr. Griffin, ministers of our denomination, are settled near on the Tualatin plains and are doing much good in the way of schools and preaching. (Letters 172)

As missionary historian Clifton J. Phillips notes, missionaries experienced a "conflict of aims" once other white settlers began arriving in the West. He writes that "Missionary strategy was a divided one, directed partly toward the heathen Indians, and partly toward white colonists" (18); neither Whitman nor Hines, however, query why the Northwest tribes are "diminishing rapidly" suggesting simply that white settlement is providential (like the adoption of the Sager children, a work "put into" the missionaries' hands, the natives "removed by the hand of Providence"). As I suggested in the last chapter, white settlers and especially white missionaries, who had been expressly charged with preserving Indian populations both spiritually and temporally through "civilization and Christianization," may have been expressing a sense of guilt in such rationalizations. It was certainly possible to see, comparing the flourishing white homesteads at Waiilatpu and in the Willamette Valley, that Euroamerican settlers were prospering where Indian populations had vanished or were shrinking. In the following letter to a relative, Marcus Whitman argues that since the Cayuse have not made the most of their earthly opportunities, at least from a Yankee perspective, it seems only right that they relinquish their land to those he claims show more initiative. In a kind of Christian version of Darwin's "survival of the fittest" theory, Whitman writes,

The Indians have in no case obeyed the command to multiply and replenish the earth, and they cannot stand in the way of others doing so. A place will be left them to do this *as* fully as their ability to obey will permit

... No exclusiveness can be asked for any portion of the human family.
(Letters 174)

Since the Indians seemed to him to be destined for extinction while the white population grew, Marcus Whitman improved the mission farm with white emigrants' comfort in mind, planting more crops to feed the yearly visitors and building an "emigrant house" where weary families could bunk while recuperating at the mission.

Narcissa Whitman's role in the newly refocused mission was, of course, that of mother. Alice Clarissa had drowned in June 1839. Shortly thereafter, she began adopting children. In 1840, she agreed to take in the mixed-blood daughter of Joe Meek, a mountain man she had met on the way West, and in 1841 she adopted Mary Ann Bridger, daughter of explorer Jim Bridger. The following spring, Whitman added a third child to her family of orphans, the son of a native woman and a Spanish trapper, whom she named David. Missionaries occasionally adopted native children as one of the most effective ways of "civilizing" within the host culture, taking in its youngest and presumably most impressionable members. The children were often renamed after friends of the missionaries, who sometimes agreed to act as financial sponsors, or after famous figures of the Protestant faith; at one point, for example, Oregon missionary Mary Gray planned to rename two Nez Perce children Hannah More and Lyman Beecher (Drury, Oregon 244). Of her own mixed-blood adoptees, Whitman wrote to her sister Jane that the "poor little outcasts" were "a comfort to me, in [Marcus'] absence, especially" (Letters 129). Adopting children allowed her to recapitulate the maternal role she had played with Nez Perce youths Richard and John on the overland trail; Native

children, however, could be physically controlled and, perhaps, did not challenge or resist her teachings as thoroughly as Cayuse adults.

By January 1844, the number of children at the mission had grown to six, with David, Mary Ann and Helen joined by two orphaned English emigrant girls, Ann and Emma Hobson, and Marcus Whitman's nephew Perrin Whitman, aged thirteen, who had returned to Oregon with him from New York (Whitman, Letters 166). Though the Hobson girls moved on to the Willamette Valley in the spring, the fall of 1844 brought the seven orphaned Sager children to the mission, and by the following June, the Whitmans had officially adopted them. Including Perrin Whitman and the three mixed-blood children earlier adopted, the addition of the Sager family brought the number of children officially under the Whitmans' care to eleven.

In letters from the period 1843-1847, Narcissa Whitman presents herself as a dedicated and enthusiastic mother, at least as vigilant in supervising her adopted family as she had been with Alice Clarissa. The Whitmans were, in fact, even stricter about contact between the Cayuse and their mixed-blood charges than they had been with their biological daughter. Whitman wrote of her children, "We confine them altogether to English and do not allow them to speak a word of Nez Perce" (129). From the missionary perspective, this policy made sense; the more quickly Mary Ann, Helen and David forgot what was literally their mother tongue, the more quickly they would assimilate to white culture. Whitman even fashioned crude European-style dolls for the girls to keep them from using cradleboards when they played house: "They have a great disposition to take a piece of board or a stick and carry it around on their backs . . . so I

thought I would make them something that would change their taste a little" (Letters 129).² Moreover, while she was willing to take in mixed-blood children, she saw maintaining ties with little David's biological family as an annoyance. From an Indian standpoint, Narcissa Whitman and the boy's family were linked once she agreed to take him in (Hunn 203, 223); from the missionary perspective, the grandmother who had brought him to the mission should have cared for him herself. Since she was not able or willing to do so, Narcissa Whitman reasoned, she certainly should not expect visitation rights or meals at the mission. But "So it is with them," Whitman writes. "The moment you do [the Cayuse] a favor [i.e., taking in David] you place yourself under lasting obligations to them, and must continue to give to keep their love strong towards you" (Letters 13I).³ While Whitman is willing to take over the lives of young, malleable native children, accommodating their older relatives—and making concessions to a native culture that emphasized reciprocity and recognized extended family ties—was not in her mission plan.

The Whitmans were apparently as unbending in disciplining their adopted children as they had been in demanding a change of heart from the Cayuse. Since these new charges were smaller and more malleable, they apparently had better success in changing their behavior. Narcissa Whitman wrote to her sister Jane that Helen, who at two was "stubborn and fretful and wanted to cry all the time if she could not have her own way" was at four "a comfort to us, although she requires tight reins constantly" (Letters 129). Matilda Sager Delaney remembered that her adoptive parents were loving but strict. She wrote in her memoirs:

The Whitmans were New England people . . . teaching and disciplining us in the old Puritan way of raising and training children ... We had a church and Sunday school every Sabbath and we had our family worship every morning and evening. We had certain things to do at a certain hour . . . discipline was strict and when we were told to do a thing, no matter what, we went. (8)

Caring for the orphaned Sagers, in particular for baby Henrietta, Whitman seems in her element. It is a joyous, capable mother who appears in a late (1846) letter to her sister Harriet. In a virtual treatise on child-rearing, Whitman discourses on the virtues of daily bathing and the evils of sweets and indulgence like an Oregonian Catharine Beecher. "Every one of my girls goes to the river all summer long for bathing," she writes, and "they would as soon do without their dinner as go without that . . . I avoid as much as possible giving my children candies, sweetmeats, etc. such as many parents allow their children to indulge in almost all the while" (Letters 202). She even boasts of improving on her own mother's system of child rearing: "I used to think mother was the best hand to take care of babies that I ever saw, but I believe, or have the vanity to think, we have improved upon her plan" (Letters 200). In her maternal role, Whitman can truly shine as an expert. Matilda Sager Delaney's reminiscences suggest that she adapted her early training as a teacher to the task of motherhood, for example, by having the children collect and press prairie flowers in order to study botany (12).

However, as publications like Mother's Magazine insisted—supported in this insistence by at least one actual missionary in the field, Whitman herself--motherhood included responsibilities even more important than children's physical well-being and intellectual training. A mother was responsible for no less than her children's souls, and it was this charge that made motherhood a mission for Narcissa Whitman. "My sincere,

ardent, and abiding wish is to train [my children] up for God and eternity, and not for their transient existence in this life," she wrote to fellow missionary Laura Brewer (Letters 187). The Sager girls, at least, were baptized and Whitman wrote, "I am desirous to see them Christians," perhaps following a conversion experience similar to what she had known at age eleven (Jeffrey, Converting 19).

In letters to her fellow missionaries, Whitman's focus appears to have shifted from the emphasis on solitude and suffering prevalent just before and after Alice's death, to a joyous preoccupation with her new charges. To one missionary friend, she cites her "numerous family of children" as a reason for not writing more frequently. Fully a quarter of the letter is a description of her situation:

I have six girls sewing around me—or rather five, for one is reading, and at the same time my baby is asking to go and bathe ... So it is from morning until evening; I must be with them or else they will be doing something they should not . . . Now all the girls have gone to bathe, and this will give me a few moments to close my letter in peace. (Letters 207)

Her voice is strong and opinionated, and Whitman at last sounds happy, though burdened; she can no more express a sense of relaxation, which might suggest idleness to her reader, than she can allow her adopted children an unsupervised moment. Beyond what she viewed as the borders of civilization, she has managed to create the sort of domestic paradise she was charged with establishing, in this case a feminine universe peopled by a (white) mother and daughters. Her charges are neither her own children, nor the Natives she was sent to proselytize, but after eleven years at Waiilatpu, Narcissa Whitman has apparently succeeded in "civilizing"--at least, sufficiently to write about it--a small patch of the plains. No longer does she cast herself as the "solitary missionary"

in the wilderness. For one thing, because of the sheer number of young children around her, the focus of Whitman's days has shifted dramatically away from the Cayuse. For another, with emigrants staying in the bunkhouse and even occupying the special room originally built for Indian lessons and worship, no one could claim to be isolated at Waiilatpu in the middle 1840s, at least in the winter; the mission simply sheltered too many people.

As the children became her mission, Whitman's depictions of the Indians in her letters relegated them to the background. As on her overland hip, the people she had ostensibly come West to save took on the status of scenery in her writing. In November 1846, a year before she was killed, Whitman mentioned the Cayuse only in passing in her final paragraph. She wrote, "I would be glad to speak of the Indians, but one sheet is too small to contain all" (Letters 213). Her letter home is filled, instead, with detailed descriptions of the emigrants staying at the mission, the mission school and her Sunday school routine. "By this mother will see that both my hands and heart are usefully employed," Whitman writes, "not so much for the Indians directly, as for my own family" (213).

The missionaries' greatest hope was that the Indians would remain "quiet"—an obliging part of the scenery--in the face of increasing white settlement "The Indians are anxious about the consequence of settlers among them," Marcus Whitman wrote in 1844, "but I hope there will be no acts of violence on either hand" (Letters I74). In her own letters, his wife seemed less sanguine: "The influx of emigration is not going to let us live in as much quiet, as it regards the people, as we have done" (Letters I75). Her writing

suggests the hope that her mixed-blood and white children's presence would promote friendship between the Cayuse and the missionaries; on two occasions, she remarks in her letters that the Indians enjoy "see[ing] so many white children growing up in their midst" and that the Indians are attached to the children (Letters 207, 213). Delaney's account of the mission killings does suggest that the Cayuse treated the white children kindly, perhaps intending to adopt and re-acculturate them in much the same manner as the Whitmans had done when they adopted children of mixed heritage. Most important here, however, is that Whitman foregrounds her children and her own role as mother in these later letters, relegating the people she originally intended to serve to a distant second place.

Narcissa Whitman's autobiography, as contained in her overland trail journal and in her letters, is still read today. Her overland trail journal of 1836, published by Ye Galleon Press, went through five editions between 1982-2000, while her letters from Waiilatpu of 1836-47, published by the same press, went through three between 1986-1996. Though her initial descriptions of overland travel and pioneer life have an undercurrent of sadness, as she describes a sense of loneliness and isolation on the frontier, Whitman also creates herself as mistress of her situation. Faced with the question of whether white women could or should cross the continent, she wrote with an eye to satisfying the missionary aesthetic of cheerful service as presented in missionary fiction, presenting herself *as* physically resilient, cheerful and ever mindful of her civilizing role. She described herself as an agent of white "civilization," surveying the

prairie and its natives from commanding heights and apparently succeeding, by dint of her domestic skills, in turning the man's world of the prairie into a place fit for ladies, complete with fresh milk and freshly baked bread. From Waiilatpu, when the long reality of mission life sets in, Whitman turns the complaints most frontier women voiced into a recital of missionary trials, insisting as she vented her fears and frustrations that even the worst "trials" were sent by God to strengthen the missionaries and hone their spirituality. Her free expression of the vexations of mission life was legitimized by the Calvinist and missionary aesthetics that held suffering to be both an integral part of the Christian life and an expected part of service in foreign fields.

After her daughter Alice's birth, Whitman addressed in writing the question with which most missionary mothers struggled: whether motherhood or her original vocation should take priority. As she turned away from her original mission to the Cayuse and, voluntarily, returned to motherhood after Alice's death by adopting an ever-growing brood of children, she began to describe motherhood itself as a calling equal to her original evangelical vocation—a stance in which she was supported by the popular magazine to which she sold subscriptions. As the missionaries' relations with the Cayuse became more distant and troubled, and white emigrants' demands on life at the station increased, Whitman described a way of life that resembled her own early years. With their increased focus on her children, the mission school and religious education for emigrants, her letters home were part of the changing world at Waiilatpu, a world in which the Cayuse featured less and less.

As Whitman wrote home about her life, the story she crafted shaped her perception of reality. Her writing may have helped her remain physically on the frontier, an environment we know at least one of her colleagues, Sarah Smith, was unable to tolerate for long (Drury, Wagons 278). Allowing her a sense of mastery over her unfamiliar environment, and a strong vocational identity in unfamiliar physical and emotional space, writing might even have helped keep Whitman from actually descending into depression and madness, as some women did on the Western frontier (McKnight 26). She could vent her complaints if she cast them as challenges to her faith and could, later, reinforce her own sense of contentment as the center of her adopted family.

And what of her writing's effects on others? More missionaries did come in 1838 to support those at Lapwai and Waiilatpu, *as* Whitman begged so often in her letters, but those who came had already left home in the spring of 1838, too early for any of Whitman's letters to have brought them. The mission itself, like most Protestant missions to the Indians, was closed within less than a dozen years. Perhaps the most lasting effect of Whitman's writing was on the readers who fell under its influence after her death. Not her writing, but the story of a white woman who was killed, along with her family, by Indians moved the US Army to pursue the Cayuse, the state of Oregon to hang five Indians at Oregon City in 1855 after a much-publicized trial, and many white settlers to feel justified in taking land from its Native inhabitants. The writing itself was preserved by relatives and in libraries, partly because of Whitman's lively portrait of travel and settlement and partly because of her skill at presenting herself as the

sympathetic heroine of her own tale, changing as circumstances changed at the mission. By telling, from her own perspective, what became a classic tale of beleaguered white settlers, Whitman helped assure that the Indians by whom she felt surrounded would one day be surrounded by whites.

Notes

Marcus Whitman's journey East is still the subject of debate by historians who argue that his primary purpose was political (bringing American white settlers to Oregon to help seize the land from Natives and the occupying British) and those who contend that he was motivated purely by religious feeling and an altruistic desire to continue missionizing the Indians. Insofar as this controversy still continues, I side with William Hutchison, the historian of Protestant foreign missions who argues that Manifest Destiny and a sense of religious mission were inextricably intertwined in the nineteenth-century mind. This certainly seems to have been the case with Marcus Whitman.

² A doll one of the Cayuse women made for Elizabeth Sager provides an interesting counterpoint to Whitman's toycraft. The beautifully detailed miniature of a Native cradleboard, on which lay a doll dressed in beaded clothing that would itself have required many hours of work, suggests both the maker's pride in her own culture and her affection for the little girl with whom she clearly wished to share part of a Cayuse childhood. At the time she received this gift, Elizabeth Sager would have been between seven and ten years old. See Drury, Where Wagons Could Go, for a photograph of this doll (15I) now in the collection of the Whitman National Monument museum near Walla Walla, Washington (Drury, Wagons 154).

Eugene S. Hunn gives an interesting explication of the complex webs of kinship and exchange found in Columbia Plateau Indian societies, which included the Cayuse and Nez Perce to whom the Whitmans ministered. His discussion of gift-giving and exchange between non-relatives (223-225) suggests that had the missionaries been more open to participating in Native customs, they might have enjoyed more success in spreading the gospel or, at least, might have survived their time in the West.

CHAPTER IV
A STUDY IN SAINTHOOD:
MORMON POLYGAMY IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY SOUTHWEST

The choice egotism of the heart called Love . . . subsides into a calm and unimpassioned domestic attachment: romance and reverence are transferred, with true Mormon concentration, from Love and Liberty to Religion and the Church.

English explorer Richard Burton, The City of the Saints (1862)

There are women in this very house whose hearts are full of hell, and in that room is a woman who has been a perfect fury ever since Brother Young married Sister Amelia Folsom. Brigham Young dare not enter that room or she would tear his eyes out.

Zina D. Jacobs Smith Young, plural wife of Brigham Young
Quoted in The Anti-Polygamy Standard, January 1882

An accomplished traveler, Sir Richard Burton nonetheless spent just three weeks in and around Salt Lake City, "the city of the Saints." While his words sprang from a brief acquaintance with Mormon polygamy, the feature of Mormonism about which his readers in England were perhaps most curious, the words of Zina D. Young testify to the fact that while such "calm and unimpassioned domestic attachment" may have been a Mormon ideal, in reality it was impossible to eliminate jealousy and passion even from marriages based on a religious principle. Burton is perceptive in noting, however, that polygamy could redirect spouses' energy away from an exclusive focus on each other, towards the church and God they believed commanded the practice. Plural wife Martha Hughes Cannon spoke of the spiritual conviction she deemed necessary to practice this lifestyle, especially in the face of non-Mormon scrutiny, when she wrote that polygamy

required "a thorough knowledge from God, that the principle for which we are battling and striving . . . is ordained by him." Likewise, a journal entry by Cannon's contemporary Emmeline B. Wells illustrates how polygamy's difficulties drove individuals to seek comfort in faith. "O my poor aching heart," she wrote, "when shall it rest its burden only in the Lord" (qtd. in van Wagoner 94-95). Ida Hunt Udall, the polygamous second wife whose work I have chosen for this project, called polygamy a "glorious cause;" like many of her fellow plural wives, she considered polygamy her special religious mission.

Udall was a third-generation Mormon, the daughter and granddaughter of dedicated Latter-Day Saints whose family history emphasized their sacrifices for the church. Udall was born in a covered wagon at Hamilton's Fort, Utah in 1858 and in her memoirs she wrote, "It seems to have fallen to my lot to be a traveler ever since, much as I dislike that kind of life" (M. Ellsworth 5). Born Ida Frances Hunt, she was the eldest child of devout parents who were emigrating, at the church's request, to a remote settlement in southern Utah when she was born. The Hunts moved many more times over the course of their firstborn daughter's childhood, frequently leaving home, friends and relatives to settle new territory for the expanding church. Their sense of devotion to their faith was passed on to Ida, whose diary, letters and memoirs tell her story.

As her memoirs suggest, Udall herself spent her life on the move for the sake of her religious beliefs. In 1882 she married fellow Latter-Day Saint David King Udall, a 30-year-old bishop in the church who was already married to one wife, Eliza Luella Stewart, called Ella (M. Ellsworth 41). Just two years later, she entered the so-called

"Mormon Underground," a network of homes and farms where polygamists and their wives could hide from the U.S. marshals who were then in Utah Territory enforcing the 1882 Edmunds Act. This federal law, which forbade polygamy in U.S. territories, contained other provisions that were designed not only to stop the Mormon practice of plural marriage but also to clip the wings of Utah's flourishing theocracy (Bigler 318; Van Wagoner 119). The Underground's very existence illustrates how dedicated the Latter-Day Saints were to their way of life, and underlines the fact that nineteenth-century Mormondom was a special place where special rules applied. In order to provide context for my analysis of Udall's writing in Chapter Five, in this chapter I will give a brief overview of early Mormon history, paying particular attention to what it meant to be a woman and a polygamous wife in nineteenth-century Utah. This background will help to place Udall's life and writing in the context of faith, gender relations, and her position *as* a colonizer of "new" territory seized by the church from Mexican and Native peoples.

While the early Republican party led by Abraham Lincoln had vowed in the 1860s to abolish the "twin relics of barbarism, slavery and polygamy" (Van Wagoner 85) and the Eastern moral reform establishment, led by such luminaries as Harriet Beecher Stowe, lobbied for Mormon women's emancipation from a lifestyle they considered sexual slavery (Sheldon 117, 122) the Saints argued fiercely for their constitutional right to free exercise of a religion whose tenets included taking more than one wife (Bigler 218). Most of the Mormon minority who practiced polygamy did so for spiritual reasons, in obedience to a divine command or at least the urgings of church leaders (Goodson 93; Van Wagoner 91, 97-99). And while most plural wives (and many husbands) reported

that the practice was demanding, polygamy had rewards as well as challenges for the women who practiced it. As the daughter and granddaughter of polygamists, Ida Udall deliberately chose to become a plural wife, viewing it as an important step both in the advancement of God's kingdom on earth and in her own spiritual development.

"I Must Join None of Them": A Brief History of the Latter-Day Saints

My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join . . . I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong.

Joseph Smith, founder, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

To discover what it meant to be a nineteenth-century Mormon woman, we must step back and examine what, in the first place, it meant to be a nineteenth-century Mormon. The members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints or, as they are popularly called, Mormons, trace their roots to an area near Palmyra, New York where the faith was born in the early nineteenth century. Here, as in much of the rest of western New York, the first twenty years of the century saw so many revivals that the area became known as the "burned-over district" (Cross 3). The young Joseph Smith was virtually a contemporary of Narcissa Prentiss, and the same spirit of revival that moved her to become a missionary may have inspired Smith's heavenly visions. In the Mormons' official church history, Smith described the New York of his childhood as a hotbed of religious enthusiasm:

There was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion . . . great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people, some crying "Lo, here!" and others, "Lo, there!" Some were contending for the Methodist faith, some for the Presbyterian, and some

for the Baptist ... priest contending against priest, and convert against convert. ("History of the Church" 1:5-6, Book of Mormon)

As historian Whitney Cross has noted in his classic work on western New York during this period, it was not unusual for members of the same family to belong to different denominations, including some that had significant doctrinal differences with one another (142). This was the case in Narcissa Whitman's family (Jeffrey, Converting 28) as well as among the Smiths, who as a group were almost evenly split between Presbyterians and unchurched "seekers" (Shipps 8). Smith's account suggests how revivals by competing denominations could lead to spiritual confusion and, perhaps, a sense of frustration among would-be converts who desired, as did young Smith, to know which church to join. Cross suggests that the Mormon faith gained currency in western New York in part because it offered a degree of certainty, in the form of clear-cut answers to most of the doctrinal controversies raging in the area during the Second Great Awakening (146).

Out of this religious ferment, a new church was born when the young Joseph Smith began to see visions. Church history relates that around 1820, when Smith was a teenager, God spoke to him, affirming the truth of Christ's teachings but warning the youth against actually joining any of the district's many churches, and promising further direct revelation (Smith, History 1:14-19; Bushman and Bushman 14). Three years after what is known in Mormon history as the "First Vision" (Shipps 9) an angel named Moroni, whose gilt statue appears on the spires of Mormon temples today, appeared to tell Smith of a book made of golden leaves or "plates" (Smith, History 1:51-54) that was hidden in a hillside near Smith's home. In 1827, following a series of spiritual tests,

Moroni finally allowed Smith to take possession of the plates. According to the angel, the plates contained a portion of the Christian gospel that God had kept hidden until the appropriate time. Now, Moroni told Smith, this time—the "latter days" of the Second Great Awakening--had finally arrived. The young Joseph Smith was to translate the plates, publish their message, and preach the good news that the millennium was finally at hand (Bushman and Bushman 14). The doctrine that Mormonism was the Christianity of ancient times, restored to humankind after centuries of apostasy, eventually gave the new faith its name: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

It is important to understand that Smith's vision fell well within the recognized spectrum of religious experience for his time and place. As I noted in Chapter Two, millennial expectations were rife even in staid, long-established denominations during this time. The example of the Millerites (forerunners of today's Seventh-Day Adventists), who in 1842 gathered and waited, dressed in white, on hilltops and in cemeteries for what they believed was the Lord's imminent descent (Foster, Religion 12; Whitman, Letters 215) suggests that Smith's report of talking with a single angel would not have met, in his day, with all the skepticism a twenty-first century audience might muster. Nor, as I note below, was the history contained in the Book of Mormon wholly unfamiliar to his nineteenth-century audience.

The golden plates told a story of Christ in the Americas, living among descendants of the ancient Hebrews who had emigrated west from Israel before the Babylonian captivity (Shipps 25). According to the Book of Mormon, God had called the patriarch of these New World Hebrews, a man named Lehi, to leave Jerusalem and found

a colony of the faithful overseas. Lehi, accompanied by his family, traveled over land and sea to do so. It is worth noting that his story provides precedent for the Saints' later, repeated "gathering" to new locations and for their travel on missions overseas, as well as for Ida Udall's repeated moves to save her husband from prosecution; the idea of leaving the familiar for the unknown in the service of faith is deeply rooted in Mormon culture and doctrine. Particularly pertinent to this study is also the fact that the Mormon emphasis on record keeping is based in Mormon scripture: as historians Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton note, Lehi's party made a "dangerous return to Jerusalem for forgotten records" (32) setting a precedent for the Saints to come.

According to the Book of Mormon, Lehi had two sons, Nephi and Lamar', who quarreled, not unlike the Old Testament brothers Cain and Abel. Mormon scriptures relate that (in a more populated version of the Cain and Abel story) Laman's descendants, who were eventually to become the ancestors of the American Indians, annihilated the descendants of Nephi, spiritual ancestors of the Latter-Day Saints, in a great battle (Bigler 64). Thus (as I will discuss in more detail below), while the nineteenth-century Saints considered themselves spiritual heirs of Lehi and Nephi, they also believed they were kin to the aboriginal Americans, whom Mormon scriptures promised would return to the fold before Christ's return (Bigler 64; Doctrine & Covenants 49:24).¹

Moroni, the angel who appeared to Joseph Smith in his visions of the 1820s, was according to Mormon scriptures the sole survivor of the cataclysmic battle that wiped out the descendants of Nephi. With the help of his father Mormon, a Nephite warrior and historian, he had previously engraved the history of these ancient peoples on the golden

plates (Arrington & Bitton 9). Smith's history relates that Moroni hid the plates in the hillside where they remained until God commanded them found. As Moroni had said, Smith was the prophet whom God had chosen to restore the true church in the "latter days" of the nineteenth century (Shipps 26). Church history holds that Smith translated the plates from their original language of "Reformed Egyptian" into the English Book of Mormon (Bushman and Bushman 20). The process took Smith several years, during which he proselytized family and friends and gained support for his new church in the local community. When the Book of Mormon was published and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints officially founded in 1830, a band of not quite fifty converts formed the first group of believers (Kern 140).

While it did gather converts in and around Smith's home in western New York, the fledgling church also met with opposition from the very beginning from those who doubted Smith's account of divine visitations and golden plates. Smith's father-in-law, Isaac Hale of Harmony, Pennsylvania, believed that the young man was simply engaged in a popular activity of the time, recreational digging for treasure in Indian burial mounds (Shipps 12), while the skeptical wife of convert Martin Harris may actually have destroyed a portion of the manuscript in her disgust at what she deemed a hoax (Shipps 16). Certain aspects of the new religion, however, may have been particularly attractive to those who did convert. Whitney Cross notes that all male converts were allotted some position in the church's hierarchy, which was deliberately organized without trained and paid ministers; this organizational style appealed to converts' spirit of democracy, while the church's emphasis on earthly blessings as well as rewards in the hereafter may have

seemed especially attractive in the boom-and-bust times of the 1830s (145).

Furthermore, as Smith's account of his vision makes clear, the Mormons were a millennial sect, believing Christ's return was imminent. They differed from most millennialists, however, in believing that they were to create Christ's kingdom for him, gathering in one location to build a material Zion in preparation for the Lord's return (Bigler 35). "People will I establish in this land," Mormon scriptures report Jesus *as* saying, "and it shall be a New Jerusalem"—not in heaven, but "in this land"—on earth in North America (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 20:22). Much as their Puritan forebears had done two hundred years before, the first Mormons believed they were to found a "city on a hill"—in this case, the literal kingdom of God.

Such a spiritual home, however, required real land for Mormon homes and farms, and the Saints' attempts to carry out what they believed was a divine plan made them *as* unpopular with their non-Mormon neighbors, whom they called Gentiles, as the Zionists were in Palestine over a hundred years later. They abandoned their first settlement with a temple, in Kirtland, Ohio, after a dispute over the formation of their own bank which, historian David L. Bigler notes, "flooded the area with worthless money" (26). The next settlement, in Missouri, was abandoned when the Mormons' growing numbers and group solidarity made non-Mormon Missourians nervous enough to run them out of the state (Bigler 27; Van Wagoner 9). The kingdom of God on earth was, of course, governed by church leaders, and such theocracy was dubbed un-American; the Saints' commitment to operating—and voting--as an economic and political bloc made them unpopular almost everywhere (Bushman and Bushman 40).

From Missouri the embattled Saints moved on to Illinois, where they founded a settlement named Nauvoo. Governed by Joseph Smith, Nauvoo was what historian Jill Mulvey Derr terms "a church-dominated city-state" ("Strength" 157). So robust was its growth that by 1842 this boomtown had a population of ten thousand, making it the largest city in Illinois after Chicago (Bigler 27). In 1844 Joseph Smith ran for president of the United States on the ticket of the independent, Mormon-organized People's Party. By that time he was already mayor of Nauvoo, commander of a militia half the size of the regular U.S. Army, known *as* the Nauvoo Legion, and the local chief justice as well as the Mormon prophet (Bigler 28).

It was at Nauvoo, during a period of prosperity and expansion for the young church, that Smith shared with a few close associates the heavenly revelation he had received on reinstating the Old Testament practice of polygamy, the lifestyle that became so central to Ida Hunt Udall's life and writing (Bigler 28; Van Wagoner 20). While the scope of this study does not permit a detailed discussion of Smith's complex thought on polygamy, scholars agree that the primary Mormon argument for the practice was simply that it was divinely ordained (Foster, *Religion*; Hardy; Van Wagoner). Smith and other church leaders argued that polygamy was a key part of restoring the ancient church's patriarchal order, and polygamy was referred to in Mormon scripture as "doing the works of Abraham," (Hardy 5, 10) a concept I will discuss in more detail below.

Historian Lawrence Foster notes that while Smith may have considered introducing the doctrine of polygamy as early as 1831, just after the Book of Mormon's publication, he was concerned that the membership (which had swelled from 62 in

September 1830 to over 600 in the summer of 1831) (Brigham 209) would find so shocking that converts would desert en masse. "If I were to reveal to this people what the Lord has revealed to me," Smith commented at the time to Brigham Young, who would later succeed him as the Mormon prophet, "there is not a man or a woman that would stay with me" (qtd. in Foster, Religion 137). By the time the Saints settled in Nauvoo in 1839, however, the church was flourishing sufficiently for Smith to introduce this controversial doctrine to a few men in the upper echelons of church leadership (and, of course, to a select group of female members *as well*). Jill Mulvay Derr notes that church leaders were first formally introduced to the doctrine in 1841, though a few may have been aware of Smith's leanings on the subject earlier ("Strength" 161). Despite Smith's caution in waiting until the time seemed right and introducing polygamy to a limited few, however, it was impossible to avoid a firestorm of criticism over polygamy even among the Saints at a prosperous time. When the membership at large got wind that Smith and others were practicing polygamy, a storm of accusations, confessions, denials and excommunications followed. The state of Illinois charged Smith with adultery and polygamy and the Nauvoo paper, the Expositor, expressed the divided sentiments of the Mormon community by speaking out against Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum, pleading for them to recant their immorality and return to orthodoxy. In response, Smith ordered the Expositor's press destroyed; his critics, who fled Nauvoo, returned fire by charging him, in the Gentile courts, with destruction of property (Hardy 11). Joseph and Hyrum Smith were jailed with other church leaders at Carthage, Illinois in June 1844. On the afternoon of June 27, 1844, the Carthage jail was stormed by a mob and Joseph

and Hyrum Smith were shot and killed. Though their deaths, as I will show in the next chapter, united many of the faithful who considered them martyrs, their deaths marked the beginning of the end for the Mormon kingdom at Nauvoo.

Just sixteen years old, the already troubled church split definitively after Joseph Smith's death. Some of the Saints, including Smith's first wife, Emma Hale Smith, and his eldest son, Joseph Fielding Smith, returned to Missouri to form the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Bushman and Bushman 53). While this group adhered to many of the original doctrines of the church, they vehemently denied that Joseph Smith had ever taught or practiced polygamy (Van Wagoner 75). The main body of the Nauvoo Saints, however, moved west in 1847 under the leadership of Brigham Young, in what was likely the nineteenth century's most organized overland migration. The Mormons moved in companies of tens, twenties and fifties, sending groups ahead to plant crops for travelers coming behind (Bigler 40). The first company of emigrants reached the Valley of the Great Salt Lake in July 1847, and it was Young who famously pronounced "This is the place . . . where the Lord's people will dwell." Converted to a faith that claimed to be the only true church on earth, cemented as a body of believers by the experience of both impressive prosperity and harsh persecution, the Mormons, by the time they reached the Great Basin, firmly believed they were the inheritors of the ancient Hebrews' mantle: they were indeed God's chosen people.

The Mormon Kingdom in Utah

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

Isaiah 2:2

Like the ancient Hebrews crossing the Jordan and the English Puritans arriving on the shores of New England, the Saints who entered Utah in 1847 viewed the territory *as* their Promised Land, a place far enough from the Gentile world's persecutions to enable them to start building the kingdom anew. But while the Salt Lake valley sheltered few white settlers in 1847, what would shortly become Utah Territory was still a part of Mexico, while Native groups of Shoshoni, Ute, Southern Paiute and Navajo had an even more compelling claim to what were their ancestral homelands (Bigler 63-64). Like New England's Puritans, however, the Latter-Day Saints saw themselves as the only ones who counted. Drawing, *as* their English forebears had, on the Biblical story of Israel's exodus from Egypt, they viewed their arrival in Utah as a spiritual beginning. As historian Jan Shipps puts it:

When Brigham Young led the Saints across the plains, he led them not only out of the hands of their midwestern persecutors but backward into a primordial sacred time. As the original Israelites had been, so these new Israelites were "once again at the beginning," *in illo tempore* . . . The task the Mormons confronted in the Great Basin was nothing less than starting at the beginning to people a holy land and build God's Kingdom. (118)

Because their physical settlement was also God's kingdom, the sacred and secular, spiritual and material were not separate for committed Mormons, any more than church and state had been in their attempts to establish the kingdom in Ohio, Missouri or Illinois.

Shippo contends that "the essential worship in the LDS pioneer world was building up the kingdom and inhabiting it" (125). The daily tasks done by each missionary and midwife, farmer and housewife, and recorded in family journals were not just chores but acts of worship dedicated to a sacred end.

In the early days of Mormon colonization in Utah, there were many such tasks to be done. The Saints had settled in the Great Basin, a relatively dry region, which earlier white emigrants had apparently not considered especially desirable. Arrington and Bitton note that average rainfall was only ten to twelve inches per year and much of the land was mountainous. The kind of rich, easily farmed soil most settlers, who hoped to farm, were seeking was rare (111). Historian David Bigler notes that while the Mormons were not the first whites to enter the Salt Lake Valley when they arrived in 1846 (31), other Euroamerican emigrants had so far preferred what contemporary explorer and surveyor John W. Gunnison called in 1852 "the golden empire rising to life and influence on the shores of the Pacific Ocean": the fertile valleys of California and Oregon and, of course, the literal gold that attracted thousands of emigrants west after 1848 (14). As Wallace Stegner writes, "The whole intention of [most emigrant] trains was to get an early start, as soon as the grass greened up, and then get *through* the West as fast as possible. The Mormons were an exception, a special breed headed for sanctuary in the heart of the desert" (70).

Prior to the Mormons' arrival in the Great Basin, both missionaries and explorers had also visited the area but had not stayed. In 1776, a group of Catholic priests had ventured as far as Utah Valley, south of the Great Salt Lake, seeking an overland route

from New Mexico to the Catholic missions in California, but had returned to home without establishing either a route or a mission (Bigler 31). Traders and trappers had long traveled through what would become Utah Territory, seeking beaver pelts for the fur trade; explorers Jedediah Smith and Jim Bridger and Hudson's Bay Company executive Peter Skene Ogden (the same man who bartered for white emigrants' release at Waiilatpu after the Whitman killings in 1847) had also visited the Great Basin (Bigler 32). A California-bound emigrant train, including one white woman, had passed through the area in 1841, six years before the first Mormon emigrants arrived. Noted explorer John C. Fremont followed these emigrants' trail in 1843, and in 1846, the notoriously ill-fated Donner party spent eleven days cutting a trail into the Salt Lake Valley, a route used the next year when the first party of Mormons under Brigham Young arrived (Bigler 32-34). Though they were hardly the first to arrive in their "promised land," the Latter-Day Saints were the first large party of emigrants whose goal was to settle permanently in the Great Basin.

By the time David and Ida Udall were married in the 1880s, just thirty-five years after Brigham Young led the first pioneers into the valley, outposts of the church had been established from Idaho to southern California (Rosenvall 54). Both the Udalls were descendants of Mormon pioneers: David was the son of an English couple converted by missionaries in 1848 (Udall and Nelson 279), while Ida was a third-generation Saint whose grandparents on both sides had been among the first American converts to Mormonism in the 1830s (M. Ellsworth 3-4). They belonged to a church which, when David Udall was born in 1851, numbered some 60,000 members. By the time Ida Hunt

was born in 1858, membership had swelled to nearly 80,000 (Bringhurst 209) while, by the time the Udalls were married twenty-four years later, it had doubled again to 160,000 (Arrington and Bitton 140; Bringhurst 209). The years following the arrival of the first settlers from Nauvoo had been devoted to bringing the rest of the Illinois Saints overland, making new converts overseas in locales ranging from Great Britain (from which David Udall's parents emigrated in 1851) to the South Pacific, and growing or finding enough food and water to support the Mormons already in Utah as well as the growing tide, which continued well into the 1860s, of new immigrants (Arrington and Bitton 139). David Udall's parents were representative of the majority of European emigrant converts. British converts constituted the majority of the European Saints, with Scandinavia and the rest of northern Europe accounting for another quarter of the new arrivals (Arrington 498; Wahlquist 132).

There is some scholarly debate about the social status of emigrants from Europe. In the nineteenth century, intimations in the Eastern press that Utah was populated with the dregs of Europe's factory class contributed to the anti-polygamy arguments noted below. Historian Alan Grey notes that many did come from the "poorer classes" most affected by the Industrial Revolution; however, Rebecca Bartholomew suggests it was nativist prejudice that prompted the Eastern U.S. press to report that Great Basin was being populated with destitute Mormon emigrants, the Old World's "dregs" (3). She argues, based on the records of the church's Perpetual Emigrating Fund where emigrants' trades were recorded, that at least half the arrivals from the Old World were tradespeople or artisans, with some working poor (weavers and other factory workers) also making the

trip (33-34). In any case, converts were not generally drawn from England's aristocrats. Yet the practical skills most emigrants brought with them, and the church system of settling new arrivals where their skills were most needed, contributed to the rapidity with which the church could start new colonies.

As the church grew in these early years under Brigham Young's leadership, it also introduced a number of doctrines that called upon members to express their faith in daily life. In 1852 came the announcement of polygamy as an official church doctrine to the main body of the membership (*as* opposed to its limited introduction under Joseph Smith at Nauvoo in the 1840s, discussed above), and the beginning of its open practice among the Saints. From the fall of 1856 through the early summer of 1857, the church also underwent a period of revival known as the "Reformation." Church leaders proposed to "wake up the saints" whom they felt had grown lax or complacent in religious observance. As Arrington and Bitton note, "The images of the toilsome journey across the plains and the demanding task of building new homes and cultivating the desert have often given the romantic impression of complete devotion to the Mormon cause, but such fidelity naturally was not unanimous" (212). Accordingly, Brigham Young rebuked a congregation in Salt Lake for "lying, stealing, swareing [sic] committing Adultery, quarrelling with Husbands wives & children & many other evils" (qtd. in Bigler 123). Church members were encouraged to dedicate themselves anew to the faith, and this encouragement extended even to outlying Mormon colonies. As Ellen Pratt McGary wrote from the church settlement at San Bernardino, California, to a friend in Salt Lake City, "All the true hearted Mormons are being baptized over again, those who are not, are

not considered members of the church" (G. Ellsworth 36). One of the reforms these leaders urged upon the Saints was personal cleanliness: along with prayer and attention to scriptures, the importance of weekly bathing was emphasized as a means of setting the Mormons apart from their neighbors. (No less a Saint than Brigham Young himself, however, admitted that this doctrine was "not for everybody") (Bigler 128). Just as they built up the material Kingdom of God on earth, nineteenth-century Mormons were urged to purify their bodies as befitted a chosen, holy people. The Reformation, following as it did closely on the church's official announcement of polygamy to the membership at large, was also a period of when Mormons differentiated themselves socially from their Gentile neighbors. Strongly encouraged from the pulpit to adopt what the church taught was the family order of heaven, Mormon couples contracted more plural marriages during 1856-57 than at any other time during the forty-four years polygamy was officially sanctioned by the church, as members strove to express their spiritual commitment (Goodson 92). The emphasis on being "true hearted," however, extended to the quality as well as quantity of Mormon unions. Also during the Reformation, Brigham Young declared a two-week period in which unhappy plural wives could be released from their marriages. A number did leave their husbands during this period, though precisely how many is unknown (Bigler 126).

If the Reformation functioned as a warning to backsliders and an occasion for the faithful to unite behind church leadership, so did the so-called "Utah War" of the 1850s. Federal feeling had grown against the theocracy in Utah, despite the fact that as soon as the Saints had arrived there Brigham Young had sent some 500 Mormon troops to aid the

United States in the Mexican War (Arrington 21). (The value of this as a gesture of Mormon solidarity with the federal government was, of course, somewhat undercut by the fact that the war's outcome directly benefited the Saints: much of Utah Territory was Mexican land until 1849.) Brigham Young, the church president and prophet, was also Utah's territorial governor, and in the face of church control of territorial offices, courts and juries a number of federal appointees simply left the territory because they felt threatened or ignored by the Mormon authorities who were the territory's de facto leaders (Bigler 58, 63, 65). Finally, in 1857, President James Buchanan sent a force of some 2,500 troops to occupy Utah territory and uphold the authority of non-Mormon officials there (Bigler 141). For their part, the Saints determined to resist what they saw as an invading army. Settlers from as far away as San Bernardino, California were called back to Utah in the fall of 1857 so the Saints could resist as a body (although a few, underlining the seriousness of Young's call to gather and resist, refused to participate in what they termed "rebellion" against the U.S. government) (G. Ellsworth 49).

As a result of this call for Mormons to retrench and return to Utah, some Mormon villages were permanently abandoned, and two important supply stations in present-day Wyoming were actually burned as part of a strategy for hindering the progress of federal troops (Rosenvall 57). Manning the mountain passes with just over a thousand troops, the Mormon command managed to send out additional bands of militiamen to destroy three government supply trains before they could reach soldiers wintering at one of the burned-out forts (Bigler 152). The "bloodless war" petered out before it really began, however, when federally appointed governor Alfred Cumming was installed following

negotiations between Brigham Young and a presidential peace commission. Mormon historians Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton suggest that for his part, Young "realized the futility of open warfare against the U.S. Army," while the U.S. Congress, in turn, grew concerned at the prospect of provisioning and maintaining such a large force in a faraway territory (particularly in light of the apparent Mormon determination to cut off supply lines from the start) (168). The advent of the Civil War ushered in an era of laissez-faire federal policy towards Utah; while both federal officials and loyal Saints recognized Brigham Young as the unofficial head of the territorial government and the church, his leadership met with little resistance during these years.

These events of the 1850s functioned to solidify church membership, uniting the Saints against the Gentile world outside Utah. (The decade also witnessed most of the major conflicts between Mormon settlers and Indians as the church expanded its colonizing efforts beyond the Salt Lake Valley. I will discuss these "Indian wars," as white settlers called them, in more detail below.) In the 1870s, the church saw Young's establishment of an experimental, cooperative economic system called the United Order. Designed to make the Saints economically self-sufficient, with the capacity to produce goods for Gentile markets without being dependent on them, the program was launched in a number of Mormon villages and involved cooperative farming and manufacturing and the pooling of resources and assets (Arrington and Bitton 126). Since it was tried only in certain villages, however, and since each village implemented the Order's principles somewhat differently, Mormon Utah never became completely communitarian. (Historian Kimball Young also points out that its egalitarian ideals were at odds with the

basic structure of the church, organized as a hierarchy in which many members strove to rise) (210). The United Order was replaced in 1899 by the tithing system designed to support only the church (rather than, as in the nineteenth century, a commonwealth). Under this system, all faithful members donated a certain percentage of their income to the church (Arrington and Bitton 250). Cooperative stores, however, were established in most Mormon villages during this period, and church members were encouraged to patronize Mormon rather than Gentile merchants. Mormon economic and social cooperation certainly aided women like Ida Udall when, during her years in hiding, she relied on a network of devout Saints united against "outsiders" to make her living.

Mormons and Their Neighbors: Relations with Natives and "Old Settlers"

The grass was gone, the food that grow natural was gone, there's no wood ... they give us ration [sic], that's gone too. Scarce all the time. We almost go naked. They give goods in those days, even shoes for everybody, little children... They couldn't keep up. We almost all go naked ... but they manage to have[a] little piece of goods, you know, for the women and children. And that's the way they got us to become white people.
 Yavapai woman, recalling her Arizona tribe's experience on the San Carlos reservation in the 1870s

Like most groups of white settlers, the Mormons established themselves in the American West by dispossessing the native inhabitants. As instrumental to Mormon westward movement as they were to the advance of other white groups, many groups of Plains Indians gave permission to the Mormons leaving Nauvoo in 1846 to establish large temporary camps along the Missouri, from which emigrant trains could start each spring (Arrington 20, 22). Without Indian permission, however, the Saints constructed other way stations and freighting yards on Indian lands along the "Mormon Trail" that

stretched from Nebraska to Salt Lake in the 1850s. As Leonard Arrington notes, these were not simple forts or corrals but small Mormon colonies in themselves, including farms, sawmills and housing for permanent residents who acted as caretakers (167).

Once settled in the Salt Lake Valley, the Mormons claimed friendship with the Native inhabitants, the various bands of Utes living south of the Great Salt Lake around freshwater Utah Lake and, in the areas of present-day southern Utah and Nevada, the Southern Paiutes (Bigler 63). The church's official Indian policy was benevolence, summed up in the claim attributed to Brigham Young that it was "better to feed than to fight" native peoples (Burton 268, Rosenvall 53). Because of who they believed themselves to be based on Mormon scripture, however, the Saints' approach, like that of the New England Puritans, was somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, like their Puritan forebears, the Mormons believed that their particular brand of religion offered Indians their only chance for salvation; they went a step beyond some Puritans in claiming that Mormonism offered Natives a chance to reclaim their place in God's ancient order. Mormon theology held that, as descendants of the Book of Mormon's Lehi, who had become a hero by emigrating to the Americas from Jerusalem at God's command, the native peoples of North and South America had once been Christians, though their faith had lapsed (Arrington and Bitton 145). Elsewhere, Mormon scriptures encouraged divinely sanctioned intermarriage, by means of polygamy, between Mormon men and Indian women as a way of rendering the Lamanites, or Indians, "white and delightful" in God's sight. Assimilation through intermarriage with devout Mormons was, from a Latter-day Saint perspective, part of the project of restoring Indians to the

fold that included God's people (Hardy 5). Like his predecessor Joseph Smith, Brigham Young supported the idea of Saints taking Indian plural wives (Hardy 5, 16)² though the practice seems never to have become popular, possibly owing to white stereotypes about Indian women.³

On the other hand, the Mormons believed (as had their Puritan predecessors) that they themselves were God's chosen people, divinely led to take possession of the Indians' land. Establishing their own settlements was, accordingly, their first priority. Though the Saints entered the Great Basin in 1847, it was not until 1855 that the church mounted a substantial Indian missionary effort (Bigler 93). It is important to note, however, that missions could not be divorced from non-missionary settlement. The church generally sent to missionaries an area where colonies were planned in order to proselytize the Indians and prepare them for the arrival of more Saints, a process David K. Udall describes clearly in his memoirs (Udall and Nelson 72-77). Natives who resisted conversion were sometimes dismissed as unregenerate savages who stood in the way of God's people and their kingdom-building efforts. Brigham Young reportedly told some Mormon settlers that older Indians who rejected missionizing efforts would simply have to "die and be damned" (qtd. in Bigler 65).

Historian Lynn A. Rosenvall's study of Mormon settlements suggests the vigor with which the church established new colonies. Between 1847 and 1900, Mormon settlers founded 497 separate settlements, most in Utah and Arizona but also in California, Idaho, New Mexico, Wyoming and Nevada (Rosenvall 52). Brigham Young suggested that villages be established every ten miles north and south of Salt Lake City

(Peterson 94). The church was able to establish so many settlements in part because of the great numbers of converts arriving from Great Britain and northern Europe. The church established a system, called the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, to enable even the poorest emigrants to come to Utah immediately, under the principle expressed in Mormon scripture that the Saints should "gather" in Zion, by advancing them funds for the overland (and often, overseas) trip (Bigler 52).

As the Saints colonized increasing amounts of Indian land, conflict was inevitable. The beginning of missionization in 1855 was, not coincidentally, the beginning of one of the bloodiest periods of Indian-white conflict in Utah, the "Walker War," named for a Native leader called Walkara or "Walker" by the Mormons. Struggles began as colonists moved onto the relatively fertile, game-rich and populous Native lands south of the Great Salt Lake (Rosenvall 53). The account of Lieutenant John W. Gunnison, who surveyed Utah Territory for the Army Corps of Engineers in the early 1850s, noted that the Latter-Day Saints had settled on all of the area's best land, the few narrow strips of fertile valley that were watered until midsummer by snowmelt from the Wasatch Range (14-15). In a land of little rain, such well-watered areas supported the timber, game and fish stocks the Indians depended on, and it was these very areas the ever-increasing Mormon population appropriated first.⁴ Arrington and Bitton note that while the Salt Lake Valley itself formed "a kind of no-man's land" between the Utes to the southeast and the Western Shoshoni to the west and southwest, by spreading southward towards Utah Lake the Saints soon infringed on Ute territory and particularly on the lush, highly desirable and productive land around Utah Lake (112). Everywhere

the Mormon farmers settled, their cattle devoured what little grass the territory produced; in the more fertile areas, settlers diverted streams for irrigation, shot the game on which Natives depended for food, and fished the lakes and streams using methods designed for maximum extraction (Arrington 151; Bigler 92, 99). The Indians viewed this, understandably, with dismay.

Though Mormon settlers claimed friendship with the Indians, the very architecture of their settlements, surrounded by wooden stockades or earthen walls, suggested that they expected conflict with the people whose land, game and timber they were appropriating (Peterson 95). Even bands of missionaries were clearly on the defensive from the start. Though a group of thirty men sent to proselytize Native people in Utah Valley in early 1849 promised peaceful relations, historian David Bigler notes that the settlement they named "Fort Utah" included a stockade and a fourteen-foot tower, visible outside the fort, on which an iron cannon was mounted. Bigler notes, "That it was made for defense was obvious to the natives" (69). In English, the missionaries spoke of peaceful coexistence, but their cannon suggested strongly that Natives who tried to dictate terms to the settlers would be overruled, violently if necessary. In fact, historians Richard and Claudia Bushman estimate that through disease, starvation and armed conflict with whites, the Native population of Utah was indeed much reduced after the Mormons' arrival, from an estimated 18,000 in 1847 to just 3,500 in 1890, six years before the territory achieved statehood (128).

Just how efficiently the Native population was reduced when Indians struck back at the people they considered invaders is suggested by some of the white settlers'

accounts. When a group of Natives raided some Mormon herds in June of 1851, a captain in the Utah Militia requested "strickenine [sic] and arsenic" to poison both the Indians' wells and the meat of the stolen and butchered cattle: "We want to give the Indians' well a flavour," wrote Captain William McBride. "A little strickenine [sic] would be of fine service, and serve instead of salt for their too-fresh meat" (Bigler 73). In this case, the Mormon policy of "feed instead of fight" was far from benevolent.

It is crucial here to note that Mormon and non-Mormon historians differ substantially in the amount of space they give to the nineteenth-century Saints' relations with the Indians and in their emphasis. The former emphasize the church policies of organized trade with natives, and its benevolent projects, such as the Relief Society's gifts of dresses and quilts to Indian women (Arrington and Bitton 150) while the latter (for example, Bigler) are more inclined to dwell on the rapacity Mormon settlers shared with their Gentile counterparts: the desire for land, the belief that land not under white methods of cultivation was "empty" and unused, and the American sense of manifest destiny given extra impetus among Mormons by the belief that they were building God's kingdom. While the history of Indian-Mormon interaction shows the church both feeding and fighting Utah's native peoples, it must be remembered that both approaches were directed towards the same end, that of establishing the "kingdom of God in the tops of the mountains," which was the Mormons' sacred goal.

While the church aimed to colonize, it also aimed to "civilize" the region's Indians. To this end, Brigham Young took a hand in the Ute Indians' trade in the slaves,

mainly children, that they and New Mexican (Spanish) traders had purchased or stolen from other native tribes such as the Southern Paiutes (Arrington and Bitten 150; Sheridan and Parezo 176). Young first encouraged church members to purchase the children themselves and raise them as Mormons, then pressed the territorial legislature to pass an act making the Indian slave trade illegal. When enacted, however, this 1852 territorial law simply changed the prisoners' masters from Mexicans (to whom they had traditionally been sold or traded for horses) to Mormons, since (as one contemporary observer noted), it specified that Indian women, children and other prisoners would owe up to twenty years' indentured service to their Latter-Day Saint "benefactors" (Burton 270). Just as Narcissa Whitman had seen herself as the benefactor of her mixed-blood adoptees, teaching them Christianity and white ways, so Mormons believed growing up under the influence of the restored gospel was the greatest boon on earth. As humanitarian *as* "rescuing" these slaves may have seemed to the nineteenth-century Saints, however, Young's decision also undercut Native economies (Ute and Navajo) (Sheridan and Parezo 176) while providing an additional source of both labor and, occasionally, converts for the expanding Mormon kingdom. In a program similar to that of slave adoption, Indian women and children who survived Mormon-Indian battles were also sometimes "placed" by their Mormon captors in Latter-Day Saint homes (Bigler 66, 68; M. Ellsworth 34) in a corollary to the legally sanctioned program of forced Indian acculturation.

The 1850s, which saw these conflicts and the passage of this law, also saw Mormon settlers pressing southward into Indian lands. By 1865, Utah natives had signed

a treaty with the U.S. government consigning them to reservation land in the eastern part of the territory. One result of this step was the most serious and prolonged Indian-white conflict in territorial history, the "Black Hawk War" in which a young leader named Black Hawk led groups of warriors against Mormon settlements over a four-year period. Arrington and Bitton note that Black Hawk's campaign prompted the church to abandon some twenty-five settlements (156), some of them permanently (though Rosenvall contends that most of the abandoned settlements were ultimately deemed unsatisfactory for reasons unrelated to Indian conflict, such as a lack of water for irrigation (53). The majority of Utah's Indians, however, remained on reservations after 1865 (Arrington and Bitton 157).

The Indians of Arizona, where Ida Udall lived for part of her life, were dominated by white settlement at a different rate than those in Utah. While some native bands still "roamed" Arizona, in the words of David K. Udall, who was sent by church authorities to serve as bishop of a church settlement near the Mexican town of San Juan in 1880, his letter of appointment advised him to "cultivate a kindly feeling and seek the Spirit of the Lord for guidance" in his interactions with Natives, "that no difficulty shall arise with the government and your neighbors on account of the Indians" (Udall and Nelson 70, 73). As this directive suggests, such difficulty was apparently a possibility. While Udall noted in his memoirs that the Indians he met en route to San Juan were "friendly" due to their prior contacts with Mormon missionaries (Udall and Nelson 70) in 1881 he helped organize a twenty-man militia of both Mormons' and Gentiles to "protect ourselves against the Apache Indians" (Udall and Nelson 86). Rothschild and Hronek note that

some of Arizona's Indians, the Pima and Maricopa, for example, had been placed on reservations as early as 1859 (xxii); according to Rosenvall, however, "Indian problems in Arizona continued to occur some two to three decades after such conflicts had ceased in Utah" (53). In fact, five Western Apache groups skirmished with white settlers from the 1850s onward. Despite federal attempts to confine what Bruce E. Hilpert notes were members of "more than twenty" different bands (often hostile to each other) to a single reservation in the 1870s, Indians led by Geronimo and others continued to resist the appropriation of their lands until well into the 1880s (72). Beyond his note that a militia was organized, however, whether any Apache bands "troubled" the Mormon, Mexican and Gentile ranchers of San Juan earns no further mention in David K. Udall's memoir.

A final aspect of Mormon-Indian relations relevant to Ida Udall's self-definition in her journal is the link between Mormons and Natives in Gentile minds. As I will discuss at more length in the next chapter, Udall's journal contains virtually no mention of Utah or Arizona's Indians. In leaving them almost completely out of her account, it is possible that she was (intentionally or unintentionally) dissociating herself from peoples whom many Gentiles viewed as the Saints' political and military allies. Because Mormon scriptures spoke of a shared ancestry between "Nephites" and "Lamanites" and advocated intermarriage between Indians and whites, and because some Mormon missionaries announced to the Indians that they (along with white Mormons) were destined by God to inherit Zion, as early as 1831 federal Indian agents charged the Saints with sowing subversion among East Coast tribes to whom the church sent missionaries. Mormon settlers in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois were accused of telling Indians they

would inherit the earth, and conspiring with local Indians to destroy white Gentile settlements (Arrington and Bitton 146). As David Bigler points out, some Mormon scriptures and nineteenth-century sermons do suggest the possibility of armed conflict between Mormons and Gentiles, with Indians—the Lamanites, described as a "remnant of Jacob" contending in support of their Saintly kin (64-64, 342).

The nineteenth-century controversy over just who—a group of Paiute Indians, Mormons disguised *as* Paiutes, or members of both groups--was really responsible for the notorious Mountain Meadows Massacre, in which 135 emigrants from Arkansas were murdered near present-day Cedar City, Utah in 1857, did nothing to allay Gentile settlers' fears that Mormons and Indians intended to cooperate in wresting their land from them (Bigler 169, 174).⁵ As it happens, Ida Udall was born in Iron County, Utah, where the killings took place. Though she would have been a mere six months old at the time of the bloody event, she was a teenager by the time John D. Lee, the only church member ever charged for taking part in the killings, was tried in Beaver, Utah and later executed (Bigler 178). Because of these connections between the Mountain Meadows Massacre and her birthplace and hometown, Udall must have been mindful of this terrible incident and the associated conviction, in the minds of many Gentiles, that Mormons and Indians had worked together to kill non-Mormon emigrants.⁶ It is certainly possible that she did not write about Indians in her journal because she had little contact with them; it is also possible, however, that (in part for these historical and cultural reasons), she deliberately chose to write about other aspects of her life, downplaying Native interactions by failing to inscribe them and thus to give them importance. In any case, Gentile fears of

Mormon-Indian military cooperation apparently persisted after Mountain Meadows: in 1875, for example, a gathering of two thousand natives at the farm of Mormon missionary George Washington Hill frightened the citizens of the predominantly non-Mormon town of Corinne (Bigler 343) causing mass hysteria despite the absence of any action, violent or otherwise.

By not writing about the Native women who were, at least in some areas, her neighbors, Ida Udall also effectively remained silent on the popular Gentile connection between Mormon and Indian women. The women of both groups were often portrayed in outsider accounts as the degraded victims of masculine domination. Narcissa Whitman's references to the "poor Indian women" of the Plains tribes, whom she saw as "the complete slaves of their husbands" (Letters 23) are echoed in the comments of another white female emigrant, one Mary Fish, who remarked that the women of a Mormon handcart company "must be sadly in want of husbands to level themselves to brutes" pulling small, wheeled wagons across the plains (qtd. in Riley 230). Both Mormon and Indian women were seen by their counterparts from the East as degraded "slaves" and "brutes" because they did heavy manual labor (work the observers presumed they would not have done unless forced to by men) and, of course, because Mormon and Indian marriage practices differed from middle-class Victorian norms. That observers such as Fish and Whitman were themselves the subjects of masculine authority—that they, perhaps, enjoyed less autonomy than women belonging to many Native groups—is not noted in their accounts, which equate female "freedom," at least in part, with freedom from traditionally masculine chores.

As the above descriptions of Native and Mormon women travelers as pitiable "slaves" and "brutes" and many other unflattering, highly racialized Gentile critiques of polygamy also show, the image of the degraded Native woman was embedded within the stereotype of the downtrodden plural wife. Though Ida Udall's writing often includes a proud defense of polygamy, as the next chapter will show, she never addresses the Gentile critiques conflating Mormons with Indians. The early Mormon doctrine advocating Indian-white intermarriage prompted contemptuous remarks in the Eastern press about men who would consider marrying "squaws" and white women who would consent to share their homes with Native wives (Hardy 40).⁷ Indian women, described in one nineteenth-century account as unattractive to many white men because they were covered with "dirt and bear grease" (Hardy 5), seemed, in these mocking Gentile accounts, fitting partners for Mormon polygamists--reportedly less discriminating in their choice of wives. Udall may attempt to combat the image of degraded Mormon womanhood by writing pridefully (at least at times) about her life in polygamy; at the same time, she may strive to avoid the plural wife-Native wife association that sometimes appeared in anti-polygamy propaganda by simply remaining silent on the subject of Native women.

Whether or not Udall deliberately excluded Indians (and particularly Indian women) from her writing is impossible to know. Her silence on the subject, in the face of historical evidence suggesting she may well have lived near Southern Paiute and Navajo women in southern Utah and northeastern Arizona, may be significant. The fact is that whether or not Native women were present in Udall's landscape, in her journal they are

simply invisible. Udall's journal of her wedding trip, begun in the spring of 1882, does suggest how far Native people had been pushed to the edges of Mormon consciousness just thirty-five years after the first Saints entered the Great Salt Lake Valley. Though the wedding trip she describes is a trip through Navajo homelands, hardly an Indian appears except in place names (Navajo Wells, Navajo Spring) or as part of the scenery (at one stop, she notes the presence of "A great many Navajoes [sic] . . . with sheep") (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 59). What her account does record, however, is the progress of the Mormon party: whether they found grass and water, what neighbors or relatives they encountered and how well her fellow Saints were accomplishing their objects, whether settling on the land, driving cattle or traveling to the temple to practice their own faith.

In part because of the European heritage they shared with Mormon settlers, the Spanish and Mexican inhabitants of southern Utah and northern Arizona were not vanquished by European diseases as Native peoples were; colonizers themselves, they came into conflict with some Mormon settlers in the Southwest. More physically present, perhaps, in Udall's world than Indians, they are a far greater presence in her journal, where she describes them as playing a role in Gentile opposition to polygamy and Mormon expansion. As the church expanded into northern Arizona in the 1870s, Mormon missionaries and other colonists came face to face with Mexican "old settlers" with prior claim to the land.

Ida Udall's husband, David K. Udall, was appointed bishop of the new Mormon settlement of St. Johns, Arizona, in 1880. (At the time, he was not married to Ida Udall but only to his first wife, Eliza Luella ("Ella") Stewart Udall.) His memoirs, written with

the assistance of his daughter, Pearl Udall Nelson, provide a window on Mormon-Mexican relations in at least one Southwestern settlement. In the first place, the town's very name suggests the two groups' struggle for dominance in the area: the Mexican settlers had named their village San Juan, a name that was anglicized by the later Mormon arrivals to St. Johns. The church began settlement efforts in the area by sending a handful of men as missionaries to the Indians in the late 1870s (Udall and Nelson 70, 74). While David Udall recorded in his memoirs that these missionaries had established "friendly" relations with local tribes (Sheridan and Parezo concur that missionary Jacob Hamblin, in particular, was influential in averting both white-Indian and intertribal conflicts) (177), relations with local Gentiles were apparently not so friendly. However, the church's determination to locate a settlement in San Juan seems only to have been strengthened by the Saints' perception of anti-Mormon feeling in the area. As David Udall remembered,

In the fall of the year 1879, Ammon M. Tenney, Indian missionary to this country, purchased land in and near the Mexican town of St. Johns. He did this with the approval of Apostle Woodruff [Wilford Woodruff, later president of the church] who thought it wise to establish a Mormon settlement there. The majority of the white settlers living there were bitterly anti-Mormon, some of them having taken part in driving the Saints from their homes in Missouri . . . Woodruff said, 'We must hold St. Johns at all costs, or it will become a second Carthage to our people in Northern Arizona.' (Udall and Nelson 74)

Woodruff's reference to Carthage was not purely classical. To the Mormons, "Carthage" meant Carthage, Illinois, the sleepy Missouri River town in whose jail Joseph and Hyrum Smith had been martyred in 1844 and from whose environs the Saints of Nauvoo had emigrated to the Great Basin. As Woodruff's comments suggest, Mormons in the West

were determined not to be driven out of their new Promised Land by hostile Gentiles, as they had been in the East. The church accordingly proceeded with settlement plans. Tenney and other leaders purchased land and water rights from two Gentile ranchers, the brothers Barth, and began laying out a town in the characteristic Mormon grid pattern (Peterson 95; Udall and Nelson 76). In his role of bishop, an appointed church official whose role in the nineteenth-century church included financial as well as spiritual oversight of the local congregation (Arrington and Bitton 207-208), David Udall's initial duties included surveying land for the new settlement (Udall and Nelson 76). He was thus a highly visible figure in San Juan (now renamed St. Johns) from the very beginning of Mormon settlement there, a circumstance that later contributed to his legal troubles (M. Ellsworth 72).

The Mormon settlement pattern itself was highly visible on the desert landscape. Just as the stockades constructed by Mormon missionaries to the Indians had spoken loudly of Mormon intentions to settle and stay at any cost, Mormon villages, laid out in a distinctive foursquare pattern and surrounded by farmers' fields and communal grazing grounds sent their neighbors a message: the Saints were present, they were well organized and they intended to stay and thrive. As historian Charles S. Peterson notes, the Mormon village layout was an "insignia of territoriality." He writes, "If a man's home be his castle, the village represented an almost irrefutable Mormon claim" (96). The Mexican settlers of San Juan, who had arrived several years before Mormon missionaries, were displeased not only that the church had purchased land upriver from them (effectively giving them control over rights to water from the Little Colorado River)

and but that, after a few months of camping in wagon boxes west of town, they were establishing a permanent settlement.

Barely three weeks after David Udall's arrival, the new bishop was presented with a letter of protest. Signed by thirty citizens of San Juan, it accused the Mormons of plotting to "surround and oppress" their neighbors, claiming that they planned to prevent San Juan from expanding and arguing that "every townsite is entitled to this [right of expansion] especially every Catholic town which has its rights by antiquity." The Mexican settlers requested that the Mormons confine themselves to the area where missionaries had already temporarily located, although *as* they complained, even this settlement was "already too extensive" (Udall and Nelson 78). Much of the trouble—as suggested by the phrase "rights by antiquity" in the San Juan citizens' protest—may have stemmed from the fact that the Barth brothers were selling land that had become part of Arizona Territory after the Mexican War (Officer 19) but that had originally been granted to Spanish colonists by the European crown. For example, they had apparently deeded to Ammon Tenney, one of the Mormon missionaries, two and a half acres of land belonging to one Marcus Baca, whose signature came first on the petition (Udall and Nelson 79). David Udall's memoir suggests that Baca was not the only Mexican settler who felt his land was sold out from under him by the Barth brothers (Udall and Nelson 77). The Mormons were thus caught from the beginning in land conflicts between groups of previous settlers, both Mexican and Anglo Gentiles.

In an attempt to establish legal title to the settlement, one of David Udall's first actions as bishop was to draw up a new contract for the land the church had purchased,

noting that the provisions of the original bill of sale were so sketchy he feared the claim would not stand up in court (Udall and Nelson 80). Nevertheless, land and water rights were the subject of "contention and litigation" for several years, and Udall's first imprisonment, in 1884, was the result of a conviction for perjury when he vouched for the fact that his neighbor (and fellow church member) Ammon Tenney had "proved up" on a homestead claim. The town of St. Johns was essentially two towns, Mexican and Mormon; on arriving, the Saints elected one O.C. Overson Justice of the Peace and named others to various municipal offices, including constable, despite the fact that San Juan already had a Justice of the Peace: Marcus Baca (Udall and Nelson 77).

The struggles over land and water and the Mormon determination to establish a settlement in what they had deemed hostile territory from the start made for a rocky road to neighborliness between Saints and Gentiles. As I will show in the next chapter, Ida Udall frequently described the Mexican settlers of St. Johns in unfavorable terms, and the Mormons were loath to employ a Gentile doctor even in emergencies. Forced together, however, as when citizens united to meet a perceived threat from the Apache Indians or when the (Gentile) county board refused to allow the school district to be divided into Mormon and non-Mormon sections (Udall and Nelson 86), the groups could coexist in relative peace. David Udall notes that while the Mexican and Mormon boys in town acknowledged the ethnic and cultural divide, nicknaming each other "gravy" and "chili," Mormon children also added some "Spanish" games to their schoolyard repertoire (Udall and Nelson 90); as a young girl in nearby Beaver, Utah Ida Udall learned to speak Spanish and played the guitar. Ultimately, however, the Mormon attitude towards their

Mexican neighbors, as expressed by David Udall, was not so different from Narcissa Whitman's attitude towards the Cayuse when she wrote, "We have come to elevate them, and not to suffer ourselves to sink down to their standard" (Letters 93). About the county mandate that Mexican and Mormon children should be schooled together, Udall wrote in his memoirs: "For nearly twenty years all the children in the town attended the same school, and it was a trial to our people. But perhaps in the long run it was a blessing, because it soon raised the living standards of the Mexican people" (Udall and Nelson 86). In their relations with the Indian and Mexican inhabitants of lands they wished to settle, the Saints were determined to further their own colonizing plans despite others' prior claims and in the face of protest or resistance. They were also convinced, for the same theological reasons that made them believe their presence in Utah Territory was divinely ordained, that they had much more to offer their non-Mormon neighbors than native peoples or Catholic Mexicans had to offer them.

Sister Saints: Women's Place in the Mormon Kingdom

If some women had the privilege of studying they would make as good mathematicians as any man. We believe that women are useful not only to sweep houses, wash dishes, and raise babies, but that they should study law . . . or physic.

Brigham Young, 1873

Farewell, hopes of fame and fortune / I must bid you all good-bye / While I go to boil potatoes, / And prepare the chicken pie.

Mary Jane Mount Tanner, Fugitive Poems

Polygamy as the Mormons began practicing it openly in the 1850s drew national attention to gender relations in Utah Territory. Anti-Mormon accounts in the Gentile press paid more attention to the presumed degradation of women in plural marriage than

to the fact that early Utah society offered some women more than this opportunity to step out of traditional roles. In the interests of kingdom-building, Brigham Young encouraged Mormon women to train as doctors, work as telegraph operators and take up other professions traditionally closed to women (Peavy 125). Utah women could vote as early as 1870, though Congress revoked their franchise under the 1887 Edmunds-Tucker Act, one of two successors to the 1862 Morrill Act designed to stamp out polygamy and weaken the church's temporal power. (Woman suffrage was reinstated as a condition of Utah statehood in 1896) (Cannon 169, 171). Finally, the church boasted a women's auxiliary known as the Relief Society. Though its founder was Joseph Smith and its organization patterned after that of the all-male church hierarchy, this benevolent association was run entirely by women. The Relief Society published a semi-monthly newspaper, the Woman's Exponent, from 1872-1914, which provided a forum for discussion of such issues as plural marriage, woman suffrage, health and dress reform and Mormon doctrine, as well as a place for Utah women to publish fiction and poetry. The Exponent, which in her study of Mormon poet Mary Fowler folklorist Margaret K. Brady calls "a symbol of the independence and productiveness of Mormon women," gave them a place to participate in national debates (112). In addition to publishing their own newspaper, Relief Society members played a significant economic role in the kingdom. They raised money to build temples, collected grain and clothing for the poor, and supplied the church's Indian trading posts (May 226, 229). They supported, with dollars and labor, Utah's fledgling silk industry, begun to ensure Mormon women would have a supply of home-grown cloth (May 225-232).^{1°}

Besides their participation in the institution of plural marriage, however, benevolent work, suffrage and the professions were not the only opportunities Mormon women had to step out of traditional roles. In the first years of settlement, many Mormon wives and mothers did farm work and heavy work such as making adobe bricks or plowing in addition to their more traditional domestic labor (Peavy 101). As Mormon settlement spread to southern Utah, Arizona and even Canada and Mexico, areas progressively more remote from the urban center Salt Lake City had become, some Mormon women lived under frontier conditions well into the twentieth century. Though her adult life spanned the turn of the nineteenth century, Ida Udall lived on her mountain ranches at Hunt and Round Valley, Arizona much as she might have done in the Salt Lake Valley fifty years before, raising pigs and chickens, milking her own cows and cooking for boarders and ranch hands (M. Ellsworth 200, 210).

In some cases, the practice of polygamy actually supported individual women in nontraditional pursuits. Plural wife Ellis Shipp attended medical school on the East Coast while sister wives cared for her four children at home in Utah (C. Arrington 61). Martha Hughes Cannon, MD, another plural wife who earned a medical degree, also became the first woman in the U.S. to serve as a state senator (Cannon 170). The practice of polygamy allowed some women to be mothers and to pursue professional careers over a hundred years before this was common for their non-Mormon counterparts. Plural wives could also cooperate economically to support their families. All of David K. Udall's wives worked to support themselves and their eleven children: Ella Udall opened an ice cream parlor in St. Johns, Arizona and later leased and managed a hotel (Udall and

Nelson 175), while Ida and her "sister wife" Mary Linton Morgan, David K. Udall's third wife, ran a ranch together, cooked for boarders and supervised their sons' work on the farm and with a U.S. mail route (M. Ellsworth 200, 251).

While the church's program of kingdom-building through cooperation inspired church leaders to call women to the professions, and the practice of polygamy allowed or prompted them to take on new economic roles, Mormon theology decreed a subordinate role for women in keeping with the church's goal of restoring an ancient, Biblical social order. Mormon women, their leaders preached, would be blessed for faithfully carrying out their traditional duties, which were invested with a higher spiritual significance. As Apostle Parley Pratt exhorted them, "It is the sisters' privilege to make and mend, and wash, and cook for the Saints" (e.g. male Saints) (qtd. in Charles 57). Furthermore, while they might become doctors, telegraph operators or businesswomen if the church called them to do so or if economic necessity pressed, Mormon women were not—whatever their educational achievements or earning power--to supplant men as spiritual leaders. In Mormon doctrine, then as now, the husband was the family's divinely appointed head. Female Saints were enjoined to remember their place, while men were commanded to take the lead in spiritual as well as temporal matters. As Brigham Young preached, "Let our wives be the weaker vessels, and the men be men, and show the women by their superior ability that God gives husbands wisdom and ability to lead their wives" (qtd. in Charles 57). In another sermon, Young defined woman's proper role thus:

One thing is very true, and we believe it, and that is that a woman is the glory of the man; but she was not made to be worshiped by him. As the Scriptures say, Man is not without the woman, neither is woman without the man in the Lord ... woman is not made to be worshiped anymore than

was man. Woman has her influence, and she should use that in training her children in the way they should go; if she fails to do this she assumes fearful responsibilities. (qtd. in Arrington and Bitton 199)

Rather than following the Victorian cultural shift that exalted women as moral and spiritual leaders in the home, guiding their children and even their husbands by means of "woman's influence" (Douglas 45) and extending their influence into the political arena by virtue of what Peggy Pascoe has called "female moral authority" (xviii), the Mormon leadership was proudly and unequivocally patriarchal. In such a value system, women might be fit exemplars for each other and for children, but not for adult men. Apostle Parley Pratt admonished church members that "It is not the privilege of the sisters to teach the brethren or usurp authority over them ... Women may pray, testify, speak in tongues, and prophesy in the Church, when liberty is given by the elders but *not* for the *instruction* of the Elders in their duties" (qtd. in Charles 57; italics Pratt's).

Such clear directives to follow only where men led, coupled with the exigencies of frontier survival and, later, the necessity some plural wives faced of supporting themselves could lead to the paradoxical state of affairs described by Arrington and Bitton:

There was . . . no rest for women in Utah in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Women worked side by side with men in building homes of sun-dried adobe, digging irrigation ditches, planting and harvesting crops, and fighting grasshoppers and crickets ... as men and women struggled together, sex roles often merged. But in doctrine the Victorian concept of 'true womanhood' held sway: Woman's duty was to be 'subservient and dependent,' the women reminded each other, as they set about building houses, managing herds, establishing schools, creating communities. (224)

Though their example describes the Mormon pioneer period, the memoirs of women such as Annie Clark Tanner, whose polygamous husband left her and her seven children to support herself, and Ida Hunt Udall, who earned much of her own and her children's living, show that Mormon women faced the conundrum of keeping their proper place while performing masculine roles well into the twentieth century.

The Practice of Plural Marriage

He had always determined, deep down in his resolute heart, that nothing would ever induce him to allow his daughter to wed a Mormon. Such a marriage he regarded as no marriage at all, but as a shame and a disgrace.

Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet*

The passage above, in which a fictional father speaks from the vantage point of a Gentile among Utah Mormons, suggests what negative press Mormon marriage practices received outside Utah. From its introduction by Joseph Smith in the 1840s right up to the well-publicized present-day trial of Mormon fundamentalist Tom Green, polygamy has been the most sensationalized and spectacularly divisive tenet of the Saints' faith. As I have noted, the secret practice of polygamy played a part in the arrest and eventual assassination of the church's first prophet, Joseph Smith. Announced publicly in 1852, the doctrine was practiced with official church sanction for less than forty years until its public renunciation in 1890 by church president Wilford Woodruff (Bigler 355; Bushman 94). Though some of the Saints continued to practice plural marriage after the turn of the century, polygamy gradually died out among the main body of Mormons following a second official ban in 1904 (Dredge 148-49). Despite Mormon polygamy's short official life, however, it would be impossible (even in a larger study than this) to

examine what B. Carmon Hardy has called a "branching and tantalizing ... subject" in which "boundaries are difficult to draw" (xix). Accordingly, my goal in this section is simply to provide sufficient background on the practice for a discussion of Ida Udall's journal in Chapter Five.

Called variously polygamy, plural marriage, celestial or patriarchal marriage and simply "the principle" polygamy as practiced by nineteenth-century Mormons generally involved a man's having more than one wife at a time.⁹ It was called patriarchal marriage after Old Testament patriarchs such as Abraham, Jacob, David and Solomon who had multiple wives (Van Wagoner 3). Polygamy, church leaders preached, was an important part of the restoration of an ancient, Biblical family order (Foster, Religion 139; Peavy 75; Tanner 62). As Helen Mar Whitney, a prominent apologist for polygamy who authored a pamphlet entitled Why We Practice Plural Marriage argued, "The noblest men and women, anciently, the most highly favored of God were the founders on this earth of the patriarchal order of marriage" (Mormon Women's Protest 51). Mormon scriptures commanded the faithful: "Go ye and do the works of Abraham [i.e. many multiple wives]; enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved" (Doctrine & Covenants 132:32). It was not just the simple promise of salvation, however, that earned for polygamy the designation "celestial marriage." Mormon scriptures foretold that polygamists would be, in the afterlife, among the most exalted beings, ascending to the most desirable level of heaven and able to create worlds and become gods in their own right (Doctrine & Covenants 132:37; Embry 42).

Finally, plural marriage was called "celestial" because it was particularly conducive to the social expression of Mormon theology on marriage and childrearing. Mormon doctrine teaches that an ethereal realm called the "pre-existence" is filled with spirits awaiting human incarnation. According to this doctrine, these spirits are best served by being born as Latter-Day Saints, since it is from observant Mormon parents that they will, as human children, learn the true gospel (Embry, Families 45). (As B. Carmon Hardy notes, many nineteenth-century Saints believed that God had reserved the most "choice" spirits for birth into plural families) (15). Since polygamous families tended to have more children than monogamous families (Embry, Families 44) polygamy was clearly God's way of bringing as many of these spirits to earth as possible, to be born into Mormon families. "I thank God that I was privileged to be born among His chosen people," the young Ida Hunt wrote in her journal (4). Furthermore, since it was only by marrying and bearing children that Mormon women could enter the highest ("celestial") heaven, polygamy offered celestial blessings to women as well. Polygamous families thus had a special link to the "celestial" realm; blessed with the best spirits from the pre-existence, they played an important role in establishing God's kingdom on earth and offered their members the chance at an especially exalted eternity.

As this theological basis suggests, polygamy was referred to as *the* principle in Mormon circles because allegiance to it was so central to the faith. As David Udall wrote in his memoirs, "In accepting Joseph Smith as a prophet of God, logically I accepted the revelation given to him in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 132 on the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, which included the plurality of wives" (Udall and

Nelson 97). Practicing polygamy was proof of a Saint's commitment to the church. Precisely because its practice made the differences between Latter-Day Saints and their non-Mormon neighbors so visible, in the latter half of the nineteenth century polygamy became the thin end of a Gentile-driven wedge designed to separate the Latter-Day Saints, if not from their religion, at least from their substantial earthly kingdom.

It is worth noting that Mormons were not the first to base arguments for polygamy on the Christian Bible. Both John Milton and Martin Luther, for example, supported the idea of divinely sanctioned polygamy to a degree. Milton alludes to the practice in Paradise Lost, and in A Treatise on Christian Doctrine defends Biblical patriarchs such as Abraham and David against the suggestion that they committed adultery by marrying multiple wives (Cairncross 128). Two hundred years earlier, Luther had made a similar argument, contending that polygamy was not a sin, since Abraham and other Old Testament patriarchs had practiced it with divine approval (Cairncross 48-49). Luther also made the practical suggestion that Henry VIII simply take a second wife after Catherine of Aragon failed to produce an heir, since he interpreted the Bible to forbid divorce but contain precedent for polygamy (Cairncross 49).¹⁰ Mormon apologist Orson Pratt followed in these theological footsteps, drawing freely on Milton and Luther's writings (Hardy 105 n. 3) to point out, as they had, that polygamy was practiced with divine sanction in the Old Testament and was nowhere condemned in the New (Foster, Religion 201). Of course, polygamy had its adherents in contemporary, non-Western cultures as well, but this fact did not speak in its favor to nineteenth-century American Gentiles determined to rescue Mormon women from a lifestyle they associated with the

"degraded" peoples of Asia and Africa. As I have already noted, anti-polygamy activists appealed to Victorian racism to cast Mormon polygamy in a light that would horrify their readers in New York and Boston, calling Mormon homes "harems" and referring to Mormonism as "the Asiatic Church" (Foster, Religion 220; Sheldon 122).

Most Mormons, at least initially, shared the repugnance of other Americans for plural marriage. When, in the early 1840s, Joseph Smith first shared with a few associates the revelation from God telling him to take additional wives, most were shocked and few, if any, were interested in embracing the doctrine. Church leader John Taylor later described his reaction: "I had always entertained strict ideas of virtue, and I felt as a married man that this was to me . . . an appalling thing to do" (qtd. in Bushman and Bushman 94). Likewise, Brigham Young (who later took twenty-seven wives) reported that when Smith revealed the doctrine to him, "It was the first time in my life I had desired the grave" (qtd. in Bushman and Bushman 94). Smith's first wife Emma was apparently so resistant to this new doctrine that Smith received a second divine revelation, specifically commanding "mine handmaid, Emma Smith, [to] receive all those who have been given to my servant Joseph," with the promise of a blessing if she did and a curse if she did not (Doctrine & Covenants 132:52). Even this special dispensation, however, appears to have only partially convinced Emma; Smith seems to have concealed knowledge of most of his other wives from her, and she became known as a staunch anti-polygamist after his death (Van Wagoner 75).

The Latter-Day Saints were people of their time, steeped in nineteenth-century morality. They were artisans, farmers, and merchants, not a small group of upper-class

free thinkers like the participants at Brook Farm or the Oneida Perfectionists (Foster, Religion 76). Converts came from New England, Ohio and Missouri, the Midwest and later from Europe, drawn to Utah Territory by the promise of plenty of land, heaven on earth through community organization, and permanent ties with their loved ones in the next. Stability, authority, certainty through the restoration of Christ's true church—this was the message of the Latter-Day Saints, and Smith's revelation on marriage and family structure seemed to turn it all topsy-turvy. Gradually and quietly throughout the 1840s, however, a few Mormons began "living the principle."

Once church members began openly practicing the doctrine in the 1850s, the Gentile press portrayed the church as a hotbed of licentiousness, filled with men eager to prey on young women and discard exhausted older wives. "What they call their religion offers a perpetual premium for men's lusts," a writer for Harper's opined in 1881, the year before David and Ida Udall were married. "Their teachings kill the germ of chastity in the hearts of childhood before it is ever warmed into life, and destroy the honor and sacredness of the home" (qtd. in Sheldon 122). Mormon men were portrayed in the press as sexual predators eager to discard their first wives for young maidens, and plural marriage shown as no better than legalized prostitution. Harriet Beecher Stowe was among the famous speakers who exhorted East Coast women to rise up in defense of their downtrodden Mormon sisters, linking polygamy with another famous cause as "a slavery which debases and degrades womanhood, motherhood and the family" (qtd. in Young 5)11

In 1862, ten years after church leaders openly acknowledged the practice of polygamy, the Morrill Act was passed forbidding bigamy in U.S. territories. Provisions of this federal law also disincorporated the Mormon church, limited its right to own property in excess of \$50,000 and denied church leaders the right to perform legal marriages (Bushman and Bushman 89; Bigler 218). Fortunately for the Latter-Day Saints, the Civil War had broken out and the Morrill Act went largely unenforced. In any case, the Mormons argued that they were protected by the Constitution's guarantee of freedom—and free exercise--of religion. Asserting that the Morrill Act was unconstitutional, the Utah Saints continued the practice of plural marriage (Van Wagoner 108) and even requested that the Morrill Act be repealed in 1867 (Embry, Families 8). The result was the introduction of the Cullom Bill, an 1870 attempt to put teeth into the earlier legislation (Embry, Families 9).

In response to the Cullom Bill's introduction, some three thousand Mormon women rallied in Salt Lake City and signed a petition protesting its provisions. One of the speakers, Harriet Cook Young, announced that the women had gathered "to express our indignation at the unhallowed efforts of men who . . . would force upon a religious community . . . either the course of apostasy, or the bitter alternative of fire and sword" (qtd. in Cannon 163). Another speaker, Sarah M. Kimball, also claimed First Amendment rights in arguing that polygamous Saints were simply "believing and practicing the counsels of God, as contained in the gospel of heaven" (Cannon 163). These Mormon women argued that not only were they not degraded by the practice of polygamy, but that, through the spiritual exaltation it promised, they attained equality

with their husbands in the heavenly realm. By "unit[ing] themselves to noble and pure men," speaker Helen Mar Whitney argued, plural wives could become "queens" in heaven (Mormon Women's Protest 50). The numbers of women gathered in Salt Lake City, and their fiery defense of polygamy prompted one reporter for the New York Herald to write that "in general knowledge, in logic and in rhetoric the so-called degraded ladies of Mormondom are quite equal to the Women's Rights women of the East" (qtd. in Van Wagoner 109). While the Cullom Bill did not pass, the Edmunds Act of 1882, which as historian Jesse L. Embry notes was essentially a series of amendments to the Morrill Act, broadened the definition of punishable offenses from bigamy to "unlawful cohabitation" and provided for harsh penalties, from fines and imprisonment to disenfranchisement for polygamists (Embry, Families 10).

As the number of polygamy prosecutions increased following the 1882 Edmunds Act, Mormon women gathered again in Salt Lake City. At an 1886 gathering of some two thousand women in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, speaker Prescindia L. Kimball portrayed "the horrors of the inquisition revived for our destruction" as she protested against plural wives' being asked in open court whether they were pregnant, and the identity of their children's fathers. In her speech, Kimball painted a vivid picture of True Womanhood under siege, describing "free-born, pure-minded and delicate women" who were "brought before a cruel and prejudiced court by lewd and debauched deputies" and "insulted and brow-beaten by malicious officials" (Women's Protest 11). Certainly this was the fate Ida Udall hoped to avoid by hiding on the Underground. As Peggy Pascoe has noted, Mormon women protesters turned anti-polygamy activists' claims that they

needed protection back on them when they argued not only that plural marriage preserved chastity (in contrast to the monogamous marriages of "Federal officials who marry one wife and degrade as many women as they choose") (Women's Protest 9) but that womanhood's despoilers were not Mormon patriarchs but federal marshals (Pascoe 66-67).

It is important to note that, in contending publicly for their right to polygamous marriage, the Mormon women protesters were not arguing that plural marriage was easy or enjoyable. While they did advocate plurality as a means to marital chastity, they were mainly arguing for Utah's right to self-government and, what went hand in hand with political self-determination in a virtual theocracy, their right to practice their religion without interference. However, the fact that Utah territory made six bids for statehood between 1848 and 1887, all denied, and that statehood was finally granted in 1896, after polygamy was officially abolished by the church makes clear that the federal government was unwilling to allow any state to establish itself on such a theocratic basis (Bushman and Bushman 89). Historian Carrel Hilton Sheldon contends that virulent anti-polygamy rhetoric was mainly a mask for the political concerns of non-Mormons most concerned, as they had been in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, by the Saints' cohesiveness and power:

Though the Mormon church's exclusivism was the basis of fierce opposition among Utah gentiles, and their growing political power frightened some observers, neither cause could arouse the nation against the Mormons . . . The church seemed most vulnerable on the polygamy issue, and it was thought that the end of polygamy would mean the end of Mormonism. (115)

Despite bad press, protests and prosecutions, from the 1850s through the 1880s the church leadership encouraged Mormons to practice plural marriage (M. Ellsworth 43;

Goodson 93). It was, perhaps, not fear of the Morrill Act and its successors but the daunting prospect of radically restructuring their families that kept most Mormons from entering the principle. Though estimates of the number of practitioners vary widely, they show fairly clearly that in general, less than half the membership was polygamous at any one time. Church-affiliated historians Richard and Claudia L. Bushman estimate that "perhaps 9 percent" of adult males were involved (88) while Stanley Ivins and Kimball Young have concluded, respectively, that up to twenty or twenty-five percent of Mormon men lived in polygamy (qtd. in Van Wagoner 230; Young 444). Polygamy figures were revisited in the 1980s by Larry Logue and Lowell "Ben" Bennion, who contended that in some parts of Utah, as much as forty percent of the Mormon population was polygamous; figures were even higher in some parts of Mexico, where many polygamists fled to escape prosecution in the U.S. (Logue; Bennion; qtd. in Embry, Families 38). Location clearly made some difference to the proportion of polygamists to monogamists, as some Mormon communities provided relatively safe havens for the practice of plural marriage. Furthermore, the Bushmans point out usefully that during the Underground years, between 1882-1890, many plural marriages were contracted in secret, making an exact tally difficult for that time (Bushman and Bushman 88.) In any case, the variation in numbers shows that despite Gentile impressions, plural marriage was far from universally practiced by nineteenth-century Mormons. As my discussion of Ida Udall's writing will show, this lifestyle was a choice—as she wrote in her journal, "a grave and important step," (27) taken very seriously by most who practiced it.

In fact, given the reception that greeted Joseph Smith's early revelations and the statistics suggesting that (even during the peak years of the Reformation) most of the Saints remained monogamous, we may well wonder: who did practice plural marriage? A number of scholars have linked plural marriage among Mormon men with higher social standing, which in Mormon circles generally included standing in the church hierarchy. Historian Kimball Young argues that polygamists tended to be church leaders and to be comparatively well off (105) while Jessie L. Embry concurs that "polygamous husbands were more likely " than monogamous men to hold positions of authority at the regional (stake) level (Families 120). Attaining a church position sometimes preceded marrying in polygamy, as in the case of David Udall, who did not marry his second wife, Ida, until after he became bishop of St. Johns, Arizona. On the other hand, church leaders often encouraged men seeking leadership positions to take plural wives (Van Wagoner 97). Church leader George Q. Cannon, a state senator and polygamist, declared he would find it difficult to support monogamous candidates for leadership positions (Bushman 93) and Udall was encouraged to practice polygamy by church officials, even though he was already a man of some standing in the church (M. Ellsworth 43). Entering "the principle" was a sign of commitment to the church, especially during times of federal prosecution (Hardy 84).

Polygamy, of course, tested women's commitment to the church as well as men's. Every polygamous household needed at least two women who were willing to share a husband. And while Mormon women did band together to protest federal anti-polygamy laws, gathering en masse to protest Gentile interference in their way of life, a willingness

to demonstrate and petition did not always mean willingness to support polygamy personally or cheerfully. Mormon scriptures commanded unity among the body of believers: "Ye must be one, and if ye are not one ye are not mine" (Doctrine & Covenants 38:27). This commandment suggests how women could gather to protest anti-polygamy legislation, which struck at the heart of Mormon identity and the Mormon fight for self-determination, despite the fact that many did not practice polygamy. In protesting Gentile interference, they were coming together, as scripture commanded, with their sisters (and brothers) in the faith. Coming together in the bonds of marriage, however, meant a lifetime commitment, more challenging than signing a petition to Congress.

In theory, the command that believers were to be "one" applied to Mormon households as well as to the main body of the Saints. Zina D. Young, one of Brigham Young's wives, wrote in 1845 that "union in Families is the first requisite [sic] before any great exaltation can take place" (qtd. in Den, "Strength" 157). Historical evidence suggests, however, that while perfect union was the ideal, in practice there was great variation in the degrees of willingness, consent and cooperation among plural wives from courting and engagement onward. Some first wives prodded their husbands to enter polygamy and actually helped choose second and third wives (Goodson 95). On the other hand, there were those who refused to even consider the idea. "That's right, Jody," one wife reportedly remarked. "You get another wife—and I'll get another husband" (qtd. in Arrington and Bitton 200). Some Saints married sisters, reasoning that actual family members might find it easier to follow the principle of "unity in Families" than women who were strangers to each other. However, as Jesse L. Embry points out, prior

relations between wives who were biological sisters could be loving—or highly competitive (Families I4I). Some plural wives were friends; such connections could make for particularly amicable households, as in the case of Ida Udall and Mary Linton Morgan, who were close for many years before David Udall took Morgan as his third wife (M. Ellsworth 189, 229).¹² Ida even speculated in her journal that she and Mary might have known each other as spirits in the pre-existence when she wrote, "We must have been associated together in another sphere" (206). Under such circumstances, the command to preserve unity and harmony must have been easier to obey.

As was the case with relations between plural wives, relations between husbands, wives and children in polygamy varied a great deal. Working out even the most basic details, such as where family members would live, required both commitment to "the principle" and flexibility in adjusting to the new lifestyle. While Philip Kilbride points out that all non-Western polygamous cultures include rules for fair treatment of plural wives (in Islam, for example, these ground rules appear in the Koran) (41-42) Jessie Embry contends that nineteenth-century Mormons practiced polygamy too briefly to work out such rules. Mormon polygamists thus attempted to adapt the ideals of monogamous marriage to polygamous family life ("Effects" 59). While popular Gentile images of polygamy depicted plural wives and their children all living together, as did many of Brigham Young's wives and children (Goodson 100), it was quite common for wives to have separate residences if the family could afford it (Bushman and Bushman 88). Wives might thus live a few feet from each other or many miles apart. Ezra Clark's first two wives, Mary and Susan, lived across the street from each other in Farmington,

Utah (Tanner 5). The amount of time the husband spent with each wife was also something couples had to work out (Young 178-79). While many established regular visiting schedules, for various reasons some spent significantly more time at the home of one wife (Embry, Families 82-83). For example, partly because David Udall's first wife, Ella, was somewhat reluctant to accept his other wives, Ida and Mary, into the family (M. Ellsworth 43, 200) and partly because he married them during the period of federal polygamy prosecutions, he spent less time living with them than he did with Ella. The first two Udall wives, Ella and Ida, lived together from time to time, but Ida spent much of her marriage either on the Underground or in relatives' homes, in large part because of the need to avoid prosecution, which posed an additional challenge to plural families struggling to live a new lifestyle.

Like the demands of pioneer life, the challenges of polygamy forced Mormons, both men and women, to adopt a degree of gender flexibility. Although in theory, polygamy supported Mormon leaders' emphasis on patriarchy by allowing one man to head a family of several women and many children, such patriarchal leadership was sometimes theoretical rather than practical. As I noted in the last section, wives who lived apart from their husbands (as many plural wives did when their husband was on a mission, absent on business or simply visiting another family) were de facto heads of household, rearing children, overseeing farm production, supporting themselves and contributing significantly to the family economy (Goodson 104; Tanner 5, 10). In practice, some even exercised religious leadership in the home. Since all faithful Mormon males over twelve years old hold a certain level of religious authority, called

"the priesthood," and since, as I have shown above, the church's official policy held that women should defer to male spiritual leadership, Margaret Ivins Bentley should, strictly speaking, have turned the responsibility for conducting family prayers and religious exercises over to one of her sons in her husband's absence. However, as her son Anthony remembered, "she thought [it] was unnatural" to relinquish what she saw as a parental role, and assumed the leadership role herself, "presid[ing] and conduct[ing] when my father was not there" (qtd. in Embry, Families 117).

The question of whether Mormon women were downtrodden—either neglected or sexually exploited by their husbands--in polygamy, as so many Gentile activists of the time would have it, intrigues scholars today, and the study of women's status in polygamy has been an important part of Mormon studies in the last thirty years. ¹³ It is important to note that for a few plural wives, as I mentioned at the beginning of this section, polygamy could offer the chance to share or even escape some of the domestic labor long associated with traditional wife- and motherhood. Sharing living space and domestic responsibilities with co-wives could, of course, increase the storm and stress in a family, but it could also leave individual wives more time to pursue work outside the home: writing, practicing medicine or midwifery, or participating in religious ceremonies. It could also mean having someone with whom to share parenting duties when a husband was gone. A husband's absence did not, in a polygamous marriage, necessarily mean being left without a co-parent or economic partner, since sister wives often took on those roles.

On the positive side, then, polygamy could mean both freedom and support: freedom from exclusive responsibility for household chores and child rearing, economic support and emotional companionship within the family. Of course, in the case of plural wives living in separate households, those left without a partner when their husbands were gone could grow as lonely and frustrated as monogamous wives and mothers often did with the struggle to support themselves and their children. Plural wife Josephine Streeper Chase complained in her journal that her husband, George, had left her to run the family farm "without one nickel to help myself. He expects to come back in two weeks" (4). She later reflected "seems to me [husbands] ought not to make widows of us" (5). Under such circumstances, a congenial relationship with a sister wife might have been preferable to being left to head the household alone.

The question of women's sexuality in polygamy is not so easily traced in Mormon women's writings as that of emotional companionship or economic support. Part of this is due to the fact that middle-class, nineteenth century white women who kept diaries and wrote letters were unlikely to write directly about such subjects as sexuality, birth control, pregnancy or menstruation (Schlissel 106-111). Of Mormon polygamy, however, plural wife Martha Hughes Cannon famously remarked, "If a woman's husband has four wives, then she has three weeks of freedom every single month" (qtd. in Bushman 94). Cannon's professional credentials, impressive in the twenty-first century (she was a state senator and one of the first Mormon women to earn *an MD*) suggest that she may have been referring to freedom from household responsibilities; indeed, like Ellis Shipp, M.D., she may have relied on her sister wives for domestic assistance while

she studied and practiced her profession. However, her comment also suggests that polygamous husbands maintained a kind of rota for conjugal visits (some did; Young 179-180) and thus that she may have been speaking of sexual freedom as well.

Although the topic of Mormon sexuality in polygamy is too complex to give any but the barest outline in this study, it is important to note that plural marriage offered men more opportunity for (heterosexual) erotic satisfaction than it did women.¹⁴ It is possible that wives who lacked a strong romantic interest in their husbands, or who hoped to avoid the frequent pregnancies common in a culture advocating large families and discouraging contraception (Kern 155), might possibly have felt a sense of "freedom" in plural marriage that was less available in monogamy. Evidence does not suggest, however, that polygamous wives actually experienced any more relief from pregnancies (the only available measure of sexual activity among this group) than their monogamous sisters (Embry, Families 37; Kern 183).

While according to Mormon doctrine, sex was for reproduction only, and self-gratification or sex for the mere satisfaction of erotic urges was condemned by church leaders as a sinful waste of the opportunity to provide more earthly homes for spirits waiting in the pre-existence (Kern 154) Mormon leaders also officially subscribed to the Victorian belief that the male sex drive was much stronger than its female counterpart (Hardy 87). They also contended, *as* contemporary Gentile observer Elizabeth Wood Kane noted, that polygamy was more healthful for women than monogamy because it freed them from the supposedly enervating attentions of their husbands during pregnancy and lactation (67; Young 187). Thus, at least in theory, plural marriage was ideal for

both sexes. Allowing men additional marriage partners helped them contain their sex drive within the bounds of matrimony and gave them the opportunity to increase their families without endangering the health of a single wife by too much sex. Mormon apologists further contended that plural marriage was more conducive to virtuous behavior than monogamy, since polygamous LDS husbands had no need to seek out prostitutes for sexual gratification (Foster, Religion 203).

Given the theological basis for plural marriage, however, with its emphasis on bringing as many spirits as possible into mortal bodies, and the corollary doctrine that sex was for reproduction and birth control was a sin (Gunnison 69; Hardy 91) polygamy meant frequent pregnancies for most women. Jesse L. Embry's study shows that most plural wives bore between six and ten children each (37) which was, as Louis Kern points out, only slightly fewer children than monogamous wives (Kern 183). As Elizabeth Wood Kane noted in her journal, "Theory has failed, if one may judge from the relative ages of the children in most Mormon families. All the wives who have any children at all have quantities of them" (67). Given her educational and political achievements and the fact that she herself had several children, it is possible that Martha Hughes Cannon's reference to "three weeks of freedom" each month simply meant she was free, much of the time, to order her life and household *as she pleased*, a not inconsiderable compensation for the loss of a husband's companionship in such a highly patriarchal culture. Lawrence Foster cites the case of plural wife Jane Snyder Richards, whose husband "was away so much she learned to live comfortably without him" ("Mormon Women" 280). Despite the extraordinary commitment required to practice polygamy,

and the emotional, legal and practical stresses it placed on both husbands and wives, it offered Mormon women a hand—whether through "freedom" or sacrifice—in crafting a new kind of life for themselves and their families.

‘The Dear Face I am So Hungry to See’: Ida Hunt Udall's Lonely Mission

I thank God that I was privileged to be born among His chosen people. That he blessed me with kind, loving and noble minded parents, and [I] pray that I may always prove myself worthy of these blessings.
Ida Hunt Udall, "Memoir," 1878

Why would a young woman enter polygamy in the first place? Anti-polygamy and anti-Mormon sentiment focused on the image of Mormon men sexually exploiting young maidens and inveigling them into the practice. But while polygamy's critics argued that women were forced by fear for their souls or at least their financial futures to participate in a form of marriage none would have entered willingly, a look at the young Ida Hunt's decision to become a plural wife may shed light on the aptness of these critiques. Examining why Udall might have chosen polygamy will also illuminate her descriptions, in journal and letters, of "life in the principle."

Udall's own writing and her family's accounts suggest that as a young woman she was as attractive, marriageable and equipped with friends, education and talent as any young woman in her social milieu. She attended three years of high school taught by a professor from Salt Lake City and could read and write at a high level, composing occasional verse for friends and reading newspapers and novels (M. Ellsworth 30). Like many middle-class Victorian girls she kept an autograph book for her friends to write in, made annual entries in a "birthday book," and, judging from photographs, sewed

fashionable clothes for herself. The Hunt family was a lively one and her parents welcomed their teenage children's friends. Udall's sister May described the Christmas of 1876 when six friends came to stay: "We danced, playcd games, recited, sang, had step dancing, etc. evcry evening, and Christmas Eve we spent nearly the whole night in jollity" (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 31). By the time she was twenty, Udall had at least one serious suitor, Johnny Murdock, who proposed in 1881 (M. Ellsworth 36, 41). It seems clear that she did not marry polygamously because she was having trouble finding a marriage partner.

One of the Saints' more pragmatic arguments for polygamy was that it provided homes for women who were too plain, too old or too recently emigrated to be chosen as a first or only wife, as well as for widows who needed the financial support and security a husband could provide (Goodson 94; van Wagoner 90). Some marriages were probably contracted for such practical reasons. For example, one Danish Saint was encouraged by church authorities to marry several recently arrived Danish converts in succession, in part because he (and, of course, his other wives) were the only ones in town who spoke their language (Goodson 97). David Udall's third wife, Mary Linton Morgan, was apparently added to the family at the suggestion of church authorities who saw her struggling to support her three young sons after the death of her first husband (M. Ellsworth 200). While Udall did marry her, the two had no children and did not live together, suggesting that the marriage was in name only, the church's way of providing for this particular widow and her children. After Ida Udall's death in 1915, Mary moved away from the family (though David contributed to her financial support to the end of his life) (M.

Ellsworth 229). Ida Hunt, however, was neither an immigrant nor a widow, but a popular young woman. Furthermore, family records suggest that she had no need to marry for financial support. Her father, John Hunt, was well enough off to give her a heifer each year beginning on her eighteenth birthday (M. Ellsworth 17) and she herself was earning a living teaching school, sewing, and copying court records (M. Ellsworth 30). She was trained in bookkeeping and could speak Spanish, two skills that helped her get the job in the co-op store where she met her future husband (M. Ellsworth 43). Well educated, with skills and connections, Ida Hunt had no need to marry for financial reasons alone.

A major reason for Udall's decision to enter polygamy seems to have been her personal sense of dedication to the church and, in particular, her desire to live up to a long family history of devotion and sacrifice. In a brief memoir written in 1874, when she was sixteen, Udall describes herself as descended from a long line of dedicated Mormons, some of whom married in polygamy. Her grandparents on both sides of the family belonged to the first generation of Mormon converts, and her paternal grandfather had taken a second wife in Nauvoo (M. Ellsworth 3) well before the doctrine was officially announced in 1852, suggesting that he belonged to the inner circle of Saints trusted by Joseph Smith. This grandfather, Jefferson Hunt, had also served before Ida was born in the Mormon militia, a group organized in 1857 to fight the federal troops sent to Utah (M. Ellsworth 5). Her maternal grandmother, Louisa Barnes Pratt, raised four daughters essentially alone while her husband, Udall's maternal grandfather Addison Pratt, was overseas, serving a mission in the South Pacific. Family lore held that Mrs. Pratt was forced to trade her house in Nauvoo for a broadcloth overcoat when the Saints

left Illinois for Utah (M. Ellsworth 5). While Pratt's journal does record disposing of her home and furniture at a Joss (G. Ellsworth, History 76-80), her granddaughter's narrative omits the details, painting in one broad stroke the financial hardships Pratt suffered.

The difference between Pratt's detailed journal account of leaving Nauvoo, and her young granddaughter's more general emphasis, points up the importance of family and church history in Ida Udall's own life. While the details of the young Ida's brief memoir suggest an impressive Mormon pedigree, their greatest significance lies in the fact that they constitute a narrative of self-sacrifice passed down orally by family members and inscribed by the teenage writer. A favorite from birth of "Grandma Pratt," young Ida Hunt accompanied her on trips and lived in her home (G. Ellsworth, History 274, 305). Thus she must have heard as a young girl, from her grandmother as well as (presumably) from her parents, many stories emphasizing the importance of faith and self-sacrifice. The thrust of this Saintry narrative is exemplified in an entry from Louisa Barnes Pratt's journal of 1857. Called back to Utah from the Mormon settlement in San Bernardino, California, at the time of the "Utah War" with federal troops, Pratt determined to stay there, with the main body of the Saints, despite the fact that she missed her home and relatives in California. She wrote, "I thought we should be steadfast and endure hardness as good soldiers" (G. Ellsworth, History 285) a philosophy Ida's memoir celebrates as she records what her ancestors suffered for their faith.

As a writer, Udall would also have been aware that her journal and letters were joining an ever-growing collection of family records. Again, her beloved grandmother provides an example. A dedicated diarist, Louisa Barnes Pratt kept a journal covering the

years 1825-1880, which she edited into a document of some 550 pages. At her death, she willed her diary to Ida Udall (G. Ellsworth, History 380-381). As the teenage Ida Hunt memorialized her relatives, she must have been reminded that her own part in family history was still unwritten; as an adult, she would have been conscious of that her writing participated in a larger, communal narrative.

Her family's history of devotion to the church likely played a part in inspiring Udall to take up the challenge of a polygamous marriage, especially since church leaders presented polygamy as more challenging but also of much greater spiritual worth than monogamy. According to Mormon doctrine, as Larry Logue points out, plural wives had the opportunity to become "queens" in heaven, the wives of faithful male polygamists who would themselves attain godlike status (4-5). A doctrine that promised such great rewards, he notes, was only to be practiced by God's "faithful children" (8). Just as David Udall was "called" by church president John Taylor to take a second wife as proof of his devotion to the faith (M. Ellsworth 43) Ida considered herself "called" to plural marriage, describing herself as "striving to obey the commandments of God" in marrying David Udall (M. Ellsworth 54). Since Mormon women were not allowed to serve as missionaries until 1898, but from the first all were urged to build the kingdom by becoming wives and mothers, many took polygamy as their mission instead. As Udall's contemporary Annie Clark Tanner wrote of considering a proposal to become a plural wife: "Perhaps this mission, this destiny, was to be mine" (59). Entering plural marriage was the life choice that offered Ida Udall the best chance to show that she, too, was

capable of the kind of commitment and sacrifice her parents and grandparents had made for their faith.

Life "In the Principle"

*A newspaper was published in St. Johns, by one George McCarter, whose sole mission was to misrepresent and vilify our people . . . every issue contained low vulgar articles about some of **our** leading men's private affairs. My name frequently came out in glowing colors, calling me a prostitute, mistress etc. That was very hard for our brethren to bear, but they treated it with silent contempt, and quit reading the paper altogether.*

Ida Hunt Udall, Journal, March 1884

The passage above shows how Udall used writing to distance herself from the Gentile criticism so often directed at Mormon plural wives. Rather than describing how she felt at reading her name in "glowing colors" in the local paper, she attributes negative emotions only to "our brethren," describing the "leading men's" response without mentioning that she shared their feelings. But this distancing strategy could not hide the fact that practicing polygamy had powerful repercussions in her life: spiritual, material, emotional and legal.

Much of the legal trouble the Udalls faced stemmed from the fact that after Utah became a territory in 1850 it came under federal jurisdiction. The greater independence of states as opposed to territories was, of course, one reason the Saints had hoped to achieve statehood shortly after entering the Great Basin, and why they continued to lobby for it while practicing polygamy (Foster, Religion 199). The 1862 Morrill Act, however, had outlawed bigamy (effectively, plural marriage) in U.S. territories. Thus, in the eyes of the U.S. government, then as now, only one marriage at a time was legally binding. David and Ida Udall were not, in a legal sense, even married. When the Edmunds Act

was signed into law in March 1882, two months before their marriage, polygamy became a felony rather than a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$500 and five years in prison (Embry, Families 9), while even "unlawful cohabitation," a charge more easily proved than polygamy because it required no evidence that a ceremony had taken place, was punishable by a fine of \$300 and six months in prison (Embry, Families 10; Foster, Religion 222). If the Udalls lived together publicly, David ran the risk of imprisonment for, at the least, unlawful cohabitation. This was why Ida left her home with David and Ella in St. Johns in 1884, two years after her marriage, to spend more than two years on the underground. Under the later (1887) Edmunds-Tucker Act, she could be forced to testify in court against the man she and most of her fellow Mormons regarded as her husband, and her testimony could legally be used against him (Embry, Families 11). Because of this risk, even after she emerged from the underground in 1886 Ida Udall moved frequently and lived apart from David and Ella much of the time (M. Ellsworth 186-193).

In addition to adjusting to the compromised legal status that kept her on the move for much of her life, Ida Udall had to meet, like all plural wives, the emotional challenges of sharing a husband. Her sister wife, Ella Udall, seems never to have been enthusiastic about sharing David; though she claimed to believe in polygamy as a holy principle, she accepted Ida into the family only reluctantly and may have been downright unwilling for David to marry Mary Linton Morgan, his third wife (M. Ellsworth 54, 200). Her reaction was not atypical. Polygamous wives, like their monogamous sisters, wanted expected companionship with their husbands and could be jealous of co-wives (Goodson 92). "My

heart is rather heavy," wrote Ellen Spencer Clawson to a friend when her husband brought home a new wife:

I never thought I could care again if Hiram got a dozen wives, but it seems *as* though my affections return with double force, now that I feel as if I had lost him but I expect he thinks as much of me as ever, only in a different way you know a new wife is a new thing, and I know it is impossible for him to feel any different towards her at the present still it makes my heart ache to think I have not the same love. (G. Ellsworth 33)

Despite her valiant efforts to be sanguine about the arrival of her husband's young bride, and the sympathy she expressed for his more immediately displaced second wife, her sister wife Margaret (of whom she wrote "I suppose she thought he would never get another") Clawson concludes: "it is woman's nature to be jealous" (G. Ellsworth, Dear Ellen 33). While Vilate Kimball, the first wife of church official Heber C. Kimball, recommended that plural wives try to avoid feeling a romantic attachment to their husbands (Van Wagoner 103) this must, as Ellen Clawson's letter suggests, have been easier in theory than in practice. While Ella Udall's journal, if she kept one, is not available, Ida's shows her strong affection for David. She describes him as "the one dearest on earth to me," calling him "my boy," "my dearest boy" and her nickname for him, "Dade" (M. Ellsworth 53, 174). Her descriptions of Ella's behavior on their wedding trip suggest that her sister wife loved their shared husband equally well and, as I will show in Chapter Five, one of the most important emotional adjustments Ida made in polygamy (and expressed in her journal) was making peace with Ella.

The federal persistence in prosecuting polygamists made even husbands' honest attempts to treat plural wives lovingly and fairly, more difficult, adding to the emotional pain all parties suffered. For example, during the Underground years of 1884-86, Udall

received letters from her husband through his first wife, the only one to whom he could write without fear of revealing Ida's identity and whereabouts. Ella, however, was not always quick in sending on the mail, and the strain of remaining incommunicado was difficult for Ida. To add insult to injury, David often addressed Ida as "my dear sister" signing his letters "your affectionate brother" to maintain the family cover (M. Ellsworth 116, 124). In her journal, Udall described the frustration she felt at this lack of acknowledgement, and at the prospect of having to remain incognito even after David was released. Replying to a letter in which Ella Udall bemoaned David's imprisonment, Ida noted in her journal, "I told [Ella] .. she could look forward to having a husband, a home, and a *name*, which were blessings I might never enjoy in this life" (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 127). The thought of her husband's situation was also an emotional burden. When friends invited her out one evening, Ida could only imagine the contrast between her gay surroundings and her husband's in prison:

Banished far from home, and all that is dear, in the confines of that dreary prison. Oh! How my heart ached. I could no more have danced, than I could laugh at a funeral . . . Oh Dade, I never missed you as I do tonight! Will this great unquenchable longing in my soul for your society and companionship never, never be satisfied? The world seems so lonely, so loveless without you. (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 131)

As a plural wife married in 1882, at the beginning of the most vigorous anti-polygamy prosecutions, Udall could not hope for the same open acknowledgement that plural wives had received a few years earlier. Yet even though David received a special Presidential pardon from Grover Cleveland in 1885, and though the church's 1890 Manifesto officially forbidding further plural marriages allowed couples married prior to

its issuance to remain married, Ida never lived with her husband for long and acted for much of her life virtually as a single parent to their six children.

Materially, practicing polygamy was somewhat difficult for the Udall wives. In theory, a polygamous husband had to be able to support all his wives and children and, as Mormon scriptures commanded (Doctrine & Covenants 83:2,4), he generally did provide the family's main support (Embry, Families 90). However, letters, diaries, memoirs and oral history suggest that almost all plural wives (like most monogamous frontier women) made significant contributions to the family income (Embry, Families 95; Young I66) as did their children (Embry, Families 100). Sharing the limited resources of a husband who was in prison meant lean economic times for both Ella and Ida, but as in many polygamous marriages one wife seems to have received somewhat more financial support than the others (M. Ellsworth I89). For example, David Udall purchased an organ for his wife Ella, who lived in St. Johns, Arizona with him, while Ida, then living on a ranch outside of town, worked and saved to buy her own (M. Ellsworth 195). Martha Hughes Cannon's letters to her husband, Angus, show what the emotional repercussions of such differences in treatment could be. Cannon wrote angrily:

How do you think I feel when I meet you driving another plural wife about in a glittering carriage in broad day light? [sic] I am entirely out of money—borrowing to pay some old standing debts. I want *our affairs speedily* and *absolutely* adjusted—after all my sacrifice and loss you treat me like a dog—and parade others before my eyes—I will not *stand* it.
(Qtd. in Van Wagoner 96, emphasis Cannon's)

The church promised polygamous wives spiritual rewards to make up for all the challenges they faced: the threat of prosecution, the pain of loneliness, the pangs of jealousy and, at times, the necessity of supporting themselves and their children with

minimal financial assistance. As I noted above, Mormons who practiced polygamy were promised that they would attain the highest level of glory after death; one leader preached that "without obedience to that principle no man can ever attain to the fullness of exaltation in celestial glory" (qtd. in Bushman and Bushman 92). Church leaders counseled polygamous Mormons that the difficulties they faced, including prosecution and prison, were sent by God to test their faith (Hardy 50). Although, as I will show in the next chapter, Ida Udall occasionally complained and even raged at David in her letters from the Underground, demanding to know why he did not write or visit more often, he reproved her for her "impatience," reminding her in a letter she copied into her journal, "God and His Church first, families next" (Journal 190). The thought that she was undergoing trials for the sake of her faith (that, as her husband counseled her, "These trials we are passing through are for our perfection") (Journal 190) was, perhaps, both a solace for her pain and a reason for Udall to suppress her feelings. As her writing shows, she could and did feel anger, loneliness, frustration, resentment and regret. But the spiritual call to polygamy and the benefits of entering celestial marriage, she was called to believe, would make it all worthwhile. Polygamy was the way of life the Saints expected to practice not only after the millennium arrived on earth, but in the next world, and they looked forward eagerly to the time when their earthly devotion would be rewarded.

As the British traveler Sir Richard Burton noted, plural marriage did at least one thing for Mormon women involved in "the principle," as well for those who were not plural wives. It forced them, "with true Mormon concentration," as he expressed it, to

think on their "Religion" and their church. The challenges of sharing a husband and managing their families within a new social order forced women to consider whether they really were the degraded, downtrodden creatures the Eastern papers, and antipolygamy crusaders, claimed they were. The period **in** Mormon history when polygamy was openly practiced also produced the Woman's Exponent—written, published and staffed by women--and saw Deseret Hospital founded with a woman at its head (May 228). Such achievements were possible at least in part because the constant debate over plural marriage and Utah women's status created a rich dialogue in the territory about who Mormon women were and why they lived as they did.

`The Lord is Having a Record Kept': The Place of Writing in Nineteenth-Century Mormon Culture

Your many trials, hardships and wanderings I keenly feel, and earnestly pray that you, one and all may have strength according to your day. The Lord is having a record kept of every trial you pass through which will redound to our exaltation . . . This world and its joys sink into insignificance compared with the joy in this faith. The strength we receive now is a partial reward for faithfulness.

David K. Udall, to his wives Ella and Ida Udall, October 1885

I have continued to keep up a journal in the best manner my circumstances would allow, and dictate my history from time to time ... so that the labors and sufferings of the first Elders and Saints of this last kingdom might not be wholly lost to the world.

Joseph Smith, Journals, December 11, 1841

The theme of earthly sufferings for a heavenly reward runs through much of Ida Udall's writing, as it does through her husband's letter from prison, above. Focusing on the idea of sacrifice in a "glorious cause" doubtless helped her both to give vent to feelings of sadness and frustration and to reconcile herself to the conditions that caused her distress. The content and style of Udall's journal and letters suggest that the process

of writing helped her bear up under the "trials," she and her family saw as heaven-sent, placing their struggles in the framework of a Mormon narrative, begun by Joseph Smith himself, in which "Elders and Saints" struggled to establish God's kingdom in the world's last days.

Writing served similar purposes for the Saints at large. Not only did writing bring Mormon scripture into being, when the church prophet received new revelations that were written down and shared with the faithful, but all church members were encouraged to take a hand in writing their own history, the history of a group whose early years had been spent almost constantly on the move. "Believing that they were indeed the Latter-Day Saints," as folklorist Margaret K. Brady writes, "and that they were living an important mission at a very important time, [Mormons] kept diaries to record their part in the endeavor . . . they wanted to keep these records for their descendants, who might then be able to acknowledge the contributions that their family had made to the Mormon mission" (169). As I noted earlier, in the period from 1830 to 1847, when the first group of settlers finally reached Utah under Brigham Young's leadership, the Latter-Day Saints were driven out of one settlement after another, sometimes with scant opportunity to collect their possessions. Once they entered Utah, Mormon colonists were dispersed once more, as Young and other leaders dispatched them in groups of a few dozen families at a time to colonize the Salt Lake Valley and outlying areas (Grey 92-94). Intending to settle God's earthly kingdom as quickly *as possible*, the Mormon leadership had sent families to establish villages as far away *as* Idaho and San Bernardino, California, by the early 1850s (Rosenvall 51). Without the large, centralized records depositories for which

Salt Lake City is famous today, the peripatetic Saints had to keep their own church and family records. Small and portable, journals fit the bill admirably.

The format and appearance of Ida Udall's journal strongly suggests her sense of participating in the endeavor of writing Mormon collective history. Her entries, written in the past tense, suggest that she wrote at the end of each day (and occasionally, perhaps, even a day or two after the events recorded took place). Her handwriting itself, almost always regular and even, supports the idea of daily writing at a relatively quiet time. Throughout the manuscript journal, Udall seldom crosses out or blots a line or even a word. Her teenage memoir and the letters written after she suffered a stroke in 1905 are in a less regular hand, and some agitation is visible in the entries from the period in 1886, near the end of her daily journal, in which she records being angry with David: the slant of her penmanship is more pronounced and individual letters less carefully formed than in the majority of diary entries.

Udall also obviously took a great deal of trouble in copying her husband David's letters in her journal. Some take up several pages, but she has copied them, apparently word for word and letter for letter, as she faithfully reproduces even David's misspellings, in the same even, flowing script she uses in her own daily entries. She positions the letters on the journal page with date, salutation and closing sentiments positioned as they would be in a letter. The care Udall takes to reproduce her husband's letters as completely and precisely as possible suggests the importance she attached to keeping a family record.

Besides being a practical way for this mobile people to keep track of individual and community life, however, Mormon journal-keeping was rooted in the Puritan tradition of self-examination (Brady 168). Prospective Mormons were, like members of some other Protestant Christian sects, encouraged to seek a specific conversion experience, a "burning in the bosom" that would convince them of the Book of Mormon's truthfulness (Shipps 28; Book of Mormon, Moroni 10:4). They were also urged to examine themselves in prayer, to read scriptures individually and to keep journals to record their spiritual experiences *as well as* family and church events (McConkie 397; Shipps 43). As Brady notes, "Mormons . . . sought to record the ways in which they as individuals were helping to bring about the Kingdom of God, even in their daily activities" (169). Thus Latter-Day Saints were advised to fulfill both a public and a private function in personal writing: to keep accurate records and to attend to their spiritual lives.

The fact that even the church-prescribed function of Mormon diaries was dual, however, suggests the complexity inherent in these documents. At the time Ida Udall began writing, in 1882, the idea of the woman's diary as an intimate book was well advanced in non-Mormon, nineteenth-century culture (Hunter, "Inscribing" 52), a culture with which even devout Saints like the young Ida Hunt had some contact (as a teenager, she *was* devoted to that Victorian artifact, her autograph album, and recorded her pleasure at receiving a birthday gift of popular literature: 'Scotts Complete Poetical Works' [sic] beautifully bound in red-morocco and gilt" in 1880) (M. Ellsworth 283, 18). The concept of the intimate personal journal appeared in much popular fiction of the

period, including one of the novels Ida records that she and Ella Udall read aloud on the trip to David and Ida's wedding in St George (M. Ellsworth 58). A brief discussion of the diary's role in such literature is relevant before embarking on a study of Udall's own journal in the next chapter.

The 1872 novel West Lawn, by bestselling author Mary Jane Holmes, opens with a scene in which the young heroine, Dora, is writing in her diary. The time is late evening and Dora is alone, writing about her affection for a neighbor, one Dr. West. In this initial scene, Dora is either writing (and thereby giving the reader, Holmes makes clear, a picture of the inner thoughts and feelings she dares not share even with beloved friends) or pausing to look in the mirror, assessing her outward appearance. These apparently parallel actions underline the idea of the diary as a (psychic) mirror, emphasizing a function seemingly opposed to that of the Mormon group record. Dora's diary is her confidante as well as a reflection of herself. Just as her body is contained (and revealed; Holmes records that she wears night clothes and her hair down) in the physical space of her private chamber, her inner life, too, is both revealed and contained in the pages of her book. The novel is partly structured around Dora's diary entries, which comment on the action and reveal her motivations to the reader. The implications for diary writing are clear: a woman's private diary is where she inscribes her innermost thoughts, a place where she is free to be a less guarded version of herself.

Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse have pointed out the significance of fiction in modeling and encouraging such private confidences on the page. They contend that popular novels such as Pamela and Robinson Crusoe helped form, in the eighteenth

century, a new middle-class consciousness of private space itself (the individual bedroom; the private diary) (158, 202). By writing, as Dora does, in her bedroom or other private space alone at night, Udall helps reinscribe this consciousness of privacy and the individual self. Her familiarity with novels like West Lawn, in which the heroine's diary serves as a plot device, would have given Ida Udall yet another template for her own writing, that of private reflection.

Rather than assume that the public and private functions of Ida Udall's diary exist independently of each other—appearing, perhaps, by turns—I suggest that they operate simultaneously. A given diary passage may thus be read on several levels: as spiritual self-examination, family record and expression of feelings. Finally, Udall's diary may be read as a deliberate effort at autobiography, an attempt to have her say about a life in which so many events were out of her control. While she lacked the time, resources and, perhaps, the inclination to produce a traditional autobiography, she was certainly aware both of the conventions of such texts and the possibility that her life would seem as worthy of memorial as the lives of her parents and grandparents. All Mormons were encouraged to feel that they were important parts of the kingdom; Udall's difficulties practically demanded that she create a heroic narrative for her life, while the church's struggles over plural marriage plunged both Utah and the Saints into a national drama. At the center of the storms over polygamy, Udall may well have felt that though she could not write a formal autobiography, she could at least leave sufficient material for her story to be written.

Notes

'As Whitney Cross points out, the belief that Native Americans were descended from the Biblical "Ten Lost Tribes" of Israel was not uncommon in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America. This belief certainly predates publication of the Book of Mormon (Cross 81).

² In this, of course, neither Smith nor Young was alone among nineteenth-century thinkers. B. Cannon Hardy points out that the idea of Indian-white intermarriage as a means of "saving" the Indians from what whites assumed would be physical and cultural extinction was in circulation well before Smith suggested his followers take Indian wives. Lydia Maria Child treated the subject of Indian-white intermarriage in her novel Hobomok (1820).

³ Hardy offers a short but useful bibliography of white publications on Indian-white intermarriage dating back to the eighteenth century, and notes that such schemes generally failed because so many Europeans viewed Natives as "filthy" and "degenerate." As Rayna Green, Glenda Riley and others have pointed out, it was the rare Indian woman whom whites perceived as "noble" and attractive; though the figure of the Indian princess made its way into Euroamerican mythology, the figure of the degraded "squaw" held at least equal sway in white pioneer imaginations. It seems, for example, to have been the stereotype Narcissa Whitman applied to Cayuse women.

⁴ Gunnison's description makes the fertile valleys of Utah Territory sound like the Garden of Eden: "Wild game abounds for the table," he wrote, "and the angler can choose his fish, either in the swift torrents of the kanyons [sic] where the trout delights to live, or in the calmer currents on the plains" (20). While this was not quite as glowing as some accounts of Oregon Territory's pastoral glories (one tall tale featured pigs "running about . . . already cooked, with knives and forks sticking in them so that you can cut off a slice whenever you are hungry") (qtd. in Schlissel 21) if Mormon missionaries' reports to prospective emigrants were anything like Gunnison's it is hardly surprising that thousands arrived in the space of a few years.

⁵ In his history of Utah Mormonism from pioneer days to statehood, Bigler devotes a full chapter to the Mountain Meadows killings. Another useful account is Juanita Brooks' The Mountain Meadows Massacre (Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1970).

⁶ The fact that the emigrants killed at Mountain Meadows were Arkansans held special meaning for the Mormons, as that state had shortly before been the scene of an attack on Mormon apostle Parley P. Pratt. Evidence (Brooks; Bigler) suggests that in fact, Mormons were responsible for the Mountain Meadows attack, and blamed Indians who may or may not have taken part.

⁷The image of the black African slave was also present in Gentile antipolygamy literature. The children of Mormon polygamous marriages (between whites) were described as "white negroes" whose physical features included "low foreheads" and "thick, protuberant lips" (qtd. in Hardy 40-41).

⁸Though the Relief Society still exists today, its main emphasis is on supporting Mormon women of childbearing age who play the church-approved roles of wife, mother and homemaker. Cheryl May has advocated a return to the nineteenth-century pattern of Relief Society activities: feminist, practical, oriented towards economic support of the Mormon community, relief of the poor, and the academic and vocational education of female church members. See her essay "Charitable Sisters" in Claudia L. Bushman's Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah.

⁹As B. Cannon Hardy notes in the introduction to his study of polygamy (xxii), there were some exceptions. For example, a woman posthumously "sealed" or married for eternity to prophet Joseph Smith might marry a living man later in life. Also, as most scholars of the subject have pointed out, the technical term for nineteenth-century Mormon marriage practice is polygyny, meaning multiple wives; I agree with Hardy that the term polygamy is more useful in part because it is what Mormons (and Gentiles) called, and still call, the practice today.

¹⁰John Cairncross' study After Polygamy Was Made a Sin provides far more historical context for polygamy in Western culture than is possible to allude to here. Those wishing to know more should consult this wide-ranging, erudite and delightfully readable work, which includes the views of Napoleon and Rousseau as well as a fascinating discussion of the sixteenth-century Munster Anabaptists.

"Anti-polygamy propaganda prevails even today. In an anthology on women of the American West, published in the late 1970s, Dorothy Gray writes that Mormon women were "lured into polygamy," trapped by unscrupulous men in a system that church leaders "relentlessly pushed upon their fellows" (89). Women converts from Great Britain and Scandinavia were, in Gray's account, "carefully herded" by Mormon missionaries across the plains to the "desert fastness of Utah" (90) from which, presumably, no escape was possible. She argues that "religious devotion—blind and submissive ... drew women into subjecting themselves to a condition that was for most of them heartbreaking" (90). Television news shows covering the Tom Green trial in 2001 took a similar line, portraying Green's wives and women in the few enclaves of Mormon fundamentalism where polygamy is still practiced as helpless victims of masculine lust. The journals and letters of Ida Udall show that many women (and men) did find plural marriage emotionally and spiritually trying but, as the next chapter will show, no careful reader of Udall's diary could agree that her devotion was "blind and submissive."

¹²Jessie L. Embry's study, in particular, offers an intriguing and valuable discussion of the relationships among plural wives, which could range from cool to close.

¹³Of particular value are the previously mentioned study by Jessie L. Embry, Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle; Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah, edited by Claudia L. Bushman, and Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavinia Fielding Anderson.

¹⁴The question of whether any Mormon women, particularly plural wives who were emotionally close and living in proximity, shared erotic relationships is yet unexplored as far as I am aware. For obvious theological reasons, the LDS church frowns on homosexuality and Mormon scholars have not taken up the question. Women's nineteenth-century writing supports the existence of strong emotional ties between women, but, as Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and others have shown, women's affectionate and even eroticized language does not necessarily indicate a physical relationship. Sister wives often acted as domestic partners in the absence of their shared husband; in such cases, where there was emotional closeness between wives, it seems that such relationships could constitute a marriage within a marriage (elements of the plural marriage ceremony, such as the first wife's placing the second wife's hand in the husband's and standing or kneeling between the new partners, also suggest that wives were "married" to each other). Whether the element of sexuality was present in any of these relationships is worth investigating, with the caveat that evidence either way may be scarce and highly subject to interpretation.

CHAPTER V

LOCATING HERSELF: THE DIARY OF IDA HUNT UDALL

I knew the principle of plural marriage to be correct—to be the highest, holiest order of marriage. I knew too, that I might fail to live the holy life required and lose the blessings offered . . . If the Lord would have manifested in answer to my sleepless nights of prayer that the principle of plural marriage was wrong, and it was not the will of Heaven that I should enter it, I felt I should be happy. But it only made me miserable beyond endurance when I tried to recede from the decision I had made to enter it.

Martha Crag= Cox, plural wife of Isaiah Cox

As the above lines show, many polygamous brides saw the decision to become plural wives as a conversion, a spiritual experience whose proddings they could not ignore. No matter how deep their spiritual conviction, however, in practice the first steps into polygamy could be difficult. In this chapter, I will begin at the beginning of Ida Udall's career as both a diarist and a plural wife to examine her use of the language and tropes of popular fiction in describing the watershed event of her marriage. I will also analyze a later diary section written while Udall was living on the "Mormon Underground" to show that even in the apparently simple recording of daily activities this diarist reconstructed and reified her own position in the tight-knit community of Latter-Day Saints. Briefly exploring the "us against them" narrative so important to nineteenth-century Mormons, I will suggest that to women like Ida Udall, a sense of themselves as good Saints was all-important, shaping and, perhaps, nearly subsuming self-identity

marked by characteristics as seemingly basic as race, class and gender. Finally, I will analyze Udall's dialogue with her husband and other male relatives over plural marriage, suggesting that the challenges she posed to plural marriage in writing served (like her inscription of Mormon community) to reinforce her position within Mormon patriarchy.

A note on the text: while Ida Udall's journal was published as part of Maria S. Ellsworth's Mormon Odyssey, for the purposes of this chapter I have drawn on my own photocopy of the manuscript journal. All references to Udall's journal in this chapter refer to the manuscript rather than the published journal.

The Honeymoon Trail Diary

In the short opening section of her diary, written while she *was* on the "Honeymoon Trail" traveling to and from her wedding in St. George, Utah, Udall experiments with different writing styles to describe the journey's emotional challenges, and uses rising and falling action to create and control the story of her wedding trip. While the notion that diarists drew on literary models of language and rhetoric to serve their purposes is not original to this project, to the best of my knowledge it has not been applied to Mormon life writing. Diary scholars Steven E. Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna have suggested that for many female diarists, writing was a process of constructing alternate life scripts. They contend that selecting and revising events, writing dialogue and featuring themselves as their tales' heroines allowed diarists to feel and sometimes act from an increased sense of power and autonomy. Kagle and Gramegna argue that,

particularly for diarists in difficult situations--traveling on the frontier, for example, or legally bound to tyrannical husbands--"the techniques of fiction might offer a sense of empowerment by controlling reality as it became fixed by pen and ink" (55). After all, as they point out, most diarists knew writing had shaped reality for Richardson's Pamela. In this section, I will use Kagle and Gramegna's theory to explore Udall's use of language and plotting techniques.

For Udall, the tensions that made it necessary to speak indirectly through the artful use of language and plot stemmed, as always, from her position as a devout Mormon facing challenges posed by her faith. Prompted to write by the same devotion to Mormonism that convinced her to enter plural marriage, Udall also knew, as I noted in my introduction, that what she wrote would likely be read someday not only as part of Mormon collective history but as a record of spirituality and a source of inspiration. Aware that her diary would never be completely private, Udall had good reason to search for acceptable ways to express her feelings on the difficulties of polygamy. Appropriating literary language allowed her to speak when direct, everyday language might reveal feelings unacceptable for a devout Latter-day Saint.

Creating a plot for the story of her wedding journey allowed Udall to manage events as they happened, to fit them into a coherent pattern and to project a hopeful future, a necessary task for one committed to a lifestyle that was coming, even as she entered it, under ever-increasing scrutiny by the world outside Utah. While it is

physically contiguous with the rest of the daily diary she kept for four years (1882-1886) Udall's Honeymoon Trail diary was written separately from the rest of her journal, during a time when she was away from home, friends, family and her usual work. This section records a special, even sacred time of integration into the inner circle of polygamous Latter-Day Saints, and as a record of this time has a strong sense of plot, including a discrete beginning and ending. The wedding journey story is bracketed by Udall's notation of landmarks in the spectacular scenery of southern Utah and northern Arizona; as a writer, she uses such notations of landmarks and time to compare the trip north with the homeward journey and reflect on how things have changed. On the one-month anniversary of her wedding day, she writes, "I believe we are all three far happier than we were one month ago today, which is indeed encouraging" (59). This statement signals the conclusion of a narrative that also employs the techniques of rising and falling action to express the writer's struggle to integrate herself into the community. Three entries in particular are written in the dramatic prose style of popular fiction, a style markedly different from that of other entries. These entries also incorporate plot elements of sentimental fiction, most notably the strong male hero and the heroine's quest for a happy marriage and family.

Udall begins her journal in May 1882, on the day she sets out with her husband-to-be, David Udall, his first wife Ella and their daughter Pearl to travel from the small Mormon settlement of Snowflake, Arizona, to St. George, Utah along what became

known as the "Honeymoon Trail" after the many devout couples who traveled along it to marry in the St. George temple. The trip of about 400 miles takes modern-day reenactors some four and a half days to complete by wagon (Brown 49, 53); the Udalls took almost three weeks to reach St. George, traveling between seven and twenty-five miles a day and stopping for several days to visit Ella Udall's relatives in the settlement of Kanab, Utah. Traveling at this relatively slow pace, then, Ida had ample time to reflect on her decision to enter plural marriage.

Family records suggest that Udall's soon-to-be sister wife, Ella Udall, was reluctant to share her husband with another woman. Such reluctance was not unusual, even for first wives who believed plural marriage was divinely ordained. As Jesse L. Embry notes, "It was especially difficult for a first wife to believe in the principle. She had been her husband's sweetheart, his lover, and it was hard to share his affections with another woman" ("Effects" 57). While Ida had written to Ella shortly after David proposed marriage, assuring her that she would not entertain the proposal without Ella's consent, Ella's response of March 1882 was hardly enthusiastic. "If [polygamy] is the Lord's will," she wrote back, "I am perfectly willing to try to endure it," but, she added, "My feelings are such that I can write but briefly on this subject" (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 45). Udall's Honeymoon Trail entries suggest that Ella's feelings had changed little in the weeks between her reply and the May wedding. In his memoirs, David Udall noted that while both he and Ella had been reared in polygamous homes and while "Ella told me

during our courtship that she believed the doctrine of plural marriage to be uplifting and divine," when they were faced with the practical adjustments necessary for adding a third person to their marriage, both of them were "sorely tried" (qtd. in Udall and Nelson 98). However, while David Udall at least had the benefit of being attracted to Ida, describing her in his memoirs as "charming" and a "womanly woman" (Udall and Nelson 97) Ella looked forward only to, as David put it, "divid[ing] my love with another woman" (Udall and Nelson 98).

Faced, like any prospective bride, with her own set of fears and expectations as well as the obvious reluctance of her co-wife, Ida initially leaves Ella and the rest of the Udalls out of her journal completely, avoiding almost all mention of her fellow travelers but covering an amazing variety of subjects instead: the necessity of avoiding horse thieves and the threat of highway robbery, the proximity of the new A&P railroad, and the availability of fresh milk and butter on the road, to name just a few (52-53). After two weeks of travel, however, she finally mentions her feelings, venting them in a series of long entries whose language shows the influence of both religious discourse and sentimental fiction. Finally, as she records tensions abating after the wedding, her writing style changes once again, with entries falling into a pattern more consistent with her later work.

Language, Style and Plot in the Honeymoon Trail Diary

And now it was the day before the bridal. ... With the quiet which had suddenly fallen upon the household, a terrible reaction had come to her, and as if waking from some horrid nightmare, she began to realize her position, to feel that only a few hours lay between herself and a living death.

Mary Jane Holmes, West Lawn (1874)

Udall's initial entries demonstrate precise attention to the details of travel, almost as if she wants to leave markers for those coming behind: herself in later years, perhaps, or posterity. She opens the journal by noting time and place exactly: "On the evening of Sat. May 6th 1882 I left my dearly loved home in Snowflake, Apache Co., Arizona in company with Bro. and Sister D.K. Udall, and their baby Pearl to make a short visit to Utah" (51). Udall refers to her "dearly loved home," as if wishing to locate herself in familiar territory. The fact that she does not mention the trip's purpose may be partly attributable to the renewed federal interest in prosecuting polygamists under the new (1882) Edmunds Act; plural marriages contracted in the 1880s were usually discreet, if not clandestine (Tanner 64; Godfrey 338, 361) and many plural marriages were not publicly recorded (Iverson, Antipolygamy 58). That Udall names her fiancé by his initials, however, and sets herself so clearly outside the family group she is soon to join suggests some apprehension at the trip's outset.

Following this landmark initial entry, Udall focuses almost exclusively on traveling conditions. For example, her entry for May 7 reads, "Reached Woodruff for noon. Took dinner with Bro. and Sister Chas. Jarvis. Did some trading at the Central Co-op.

Were detained there several hours on account of the rain which continued to pour down" (51). Writing about the weather and noting the distance traveled is common in women's diaries of frontier travel (Schlissel 115) but, as later entries show, this pattern represents unusual circumspection for Udall. Particularly in light of Ella Udall's feelings about entering polygamy and the later references in Ida's journal to the "constant strain" and "anxiety" of the trip, she appears to have been deliberately avoiding any mention of the party's emotional state. In an entry made one week after starting for St. George, Udall finally mentions her fiancé, but she does so obliquely. She writes, "Nooned at the Cedar Ridge. Here was the first moment's private conversation I had with David after leaving home, so my spirits were considerably lightened" (53). This mention, almost in passing, of her relationship with "David" (not, in this entry, "Brother D.K. Udall") opens the way for readers to speculate on the cause of her previously low spirits and suggests that Udall consciously controls her text in order to speak about feelings which, expressed in plain language, might seem incongruous or inappropriate.

Diary scholar Suzanne Bunkers describes this strategy of speaking selectively about certain topics as "encoding," a method she contends is employed by many nineteenth-century women diarists to avoid direct comment on unfavorable situations. By including everything but a discussion of the party's relationships and her impending marriage in her daily entries, Udall renders these topics conspicuous by their absence. As Bunkers writes, "Encoding . . . enables a writer to use speech and silence selectively . .

to address a variety of issues ("Midwestern Diaries" 195). Again, when Udall gives details about crossing the mountains, what she does comment on points up what remains unsaid. When she records that "Our team . . . (faithful old Dock and Suse) managed to take the load over the 'Back Bone' without help or unloading" (53) her affectionate mention of the horses—by name--makes her non-mention of the party's human members more conspicuous.

On May 21, four days before her wedding, Udall finally devotes space to a description of her feelings about the trip. Not only does the diary's content change from notes on grass, water and supplies; the language of this entry is different from the previous entries' terse recording. She writes about feeling out of place at a happy reunion with some of Ella Udall's relatives: "With all the merriment, I felt lonely and depressed. Like a stranger in a strange land" (26). The contrast of individual sadness against a happy backdrop and the use of the simile mark the first instance of Udall's figuring herself as a romantic heroine--in this case, a martyred one. In the next lines, she describes tension between herself and Ella, and again her language is different from the clipped notations of preceding weeks:

The sorrow another was passing through seemingly on my account, though I was powerless to help it; the constant strain my mind had been on during the whole journey, lest by word or look I should cause her unnecessary unhappiness, had weighed upon my spirits greatly, and I retired from the scene that evening with a feeling of dread and fear at my heart impossible to describe. (26)

The feelings of the past two weeks are brought into the open at last, but held at arm's length by this dramatic language. Calling her feelings "impossible to describe" seems to be a rhetorical move meant to signify the extent of Udall's despair, especially since she does describe them quite precisely: in the same passage where she claims inability to describe her emotions, she reports feeling "powerless," experiencing a sense of "strain" in Ella's presence and having low spirits and a sense of "dread and fear." She declines from this fever pitch by casting herself as a heroine rescued by her lover: "Afterwards was greatly reassured by a moonlight walk and conversation with the one dearest on earth to me, who brought light and hope to my heart once more, with his loving encouraging words" (26). This picture of David Udall as rescuer is, according to Nina Baym, "traditional" in much nineteenth-century popular fiction (40).¹ As Marianne Noble notes, "Sentimental authors idealized characters who sympathized with and assisted those who suffered," (64) and David (like a character in yet another novel *Ida* records reading on the trail, Thornton Hastings in Mary Jane Holmes' The Rector of St. Mark's, whose significance I will discuss at greater length below) is able to perform this sympathizing and assisting function for *Ida*.

Interestingly, however, even in this passage where she writes about her own feelings, Udall continues to avoid naming the people who spark those emotions. Ella Udall is "her" and the husband-to-be, David Udall, is cast as a fond, but nameless lover. Udall's reference, in speaking of Ella, to "another" also recalls a passage from one of the

popular novels she records reading as the party travels. In Mary Jane Holmes' The Rector of St. Mark's the title character, young minister Arthur Leighton, appeals to God for strength to bear a disappointment in love:

Falling upon his knees, with his face bowed to the floor, the rector of St. Mark's prayed as he had never prayed before, first for himself, whose need was greatest, then for Lucy, that she might never know what making her happy had cost him, and then for Anna, whose name he could not speak. 'That other one,' he called her, and his heart kept swelling in his throat and preventing his utterance so that the words he would say never reached his lips. (386)

This passage not only suggests a rationale for Udall's avoidance of David and Ella's names but also provides a clue to the possible origin of her shift in prose style. Sentences both in the above passage from Udall's journal and in Holmes' novel are relatively long, organized on the rhetorical principle of parataxis (the placing of parallel elements side by side, with little subordination of ideas) and punctuated simply by commas. Udall's claim that her feelings are "impossible to describe," and the image she presents of herself as virtually paralyzed by "dread and fear," find their counterpart in the fictional clergyman's inability to speak on certain subjects, even to God.

In effect, Ida Udall allows David to be the speaker in this entry, as her final lines suggest that she is recording his "loving encouraging words." She writes, "I finally went to bed, feeling that in striving to obey the commandments of God, with a pure motive I had everything to live for. No matter how severe the trial, what a privilege to pass through it, in such a glorious cause" (26). Such formal language suggests a sermon like the

one David Udall could have given that very afternoon when (Ida records) he spoke in church (26). It also suggests a precedent in popular fiction for husbands and lovers as spiritual leaders. In many novels, romance and scripture are not strange bedfellows. For example, even as she inscribes herself a "happy, happy woman" in the closing pages of her diary, Dora West, heroine of Mary Jane Holmes' *West Lawn*, records her husband's injunction: "God has been very good to us. Let us love him through the coming year more than ever we have done before" (279). Elsewhere, Dora notes that "my precious husband has been the means of leading me to the source of all happiness," (270) aligning the romantic fulfillment she finds in marriage with a spiritual awakening: "He says I was a Christian before, but ... it was a cold, tame kind of Christian" (270). Similarly, for Ida Udall, her "conversion" (as Latter-Day Saints termed it) to polygamy (M. Ellsworth 259, n. 38) only comes to fruition with marriage.

Despite her descriptions of David Udall as comforter and spiritual advisor, Ida's journal entries suggest that she, like so many of her counterparts in fiction, will prevail against the sorrow and depression she describes through her own goodness: by keeping her "motives" pure and "striving to obey the commandments of God" (26). Such language suggests that the specter of sin, in the form of sexual immorality, did hang over polygamous marriages; Udall's prayer, inscribed on her wedding night, "may Heaven help me to keep the vows I have made sacred and pure" (27) shows her concern with avoiding such sins. Her earlier mention of David's "loving words" as well as the "glorious cause"

in which she is enrolled also suggests both earthly and heavenly rewards for good behavior. The language Udall chooses for this single outpouring, after weeks of describing where the party nooned and camped, suggests both familiarity with popular literature and reluctance to express such feelings in everyday language. The way Ida Udall deals best, even in private, with the trip's emotional ups and downs is by borrowing the language of fiction and figuring herself as a heroine in one of the novels she reads.

The Udall wedding marks another occasion for romantic language in the diary. This entry's beginning, in its precise notation of time and place, reminds us of the departure from Snowflake: "This afternoon at half past 5 o' clock in the Holy Temple of the Lord, I was sealed for Time and all Eternity to David King Udall, the only man on Earth to whose care I could freely and gladly entrust my future, for better, for worse" (55). Both dutiful recorder and romantic heroine reappear in this entry. Udall borrows language from popular culture (as her great-grandson Mark Ellsworth reminds me, the words "for better, for worse," familiar from the Protestant wedding service, are not spoken at Mormon unions) and notes that "the sacred name of *wife* was whispered for the first time in my ear, causing my heart to flutter with a strange new happiness" (55). The momentous-sounding phrase "for time and all eternity," also used by Mormon diarist Nancy Clement Williams to describe her 1889 plural marriage (Godfrey 361) is actually borrowed from the marriage service. Mormon doctrine teaches that partners married in a special temple ceremony are "sealed" to each other, not only till death but in the afterlife,

and both Williams and Udall seem to have found this solemn phrase appropriate for the entries recording their weddings.

Finally, a single entry in Udall's post-wedding record of events is written in language that again seems borrowed from fiction. She writes, "On the road home Ella and I had several long confidential talks. Told over our mutual trials and sorrows, and got to understand each other better. O, if we could always be frank and open with each other, how many heart-aches would be saved" (28-29). Phrases like "mutual trials and sorrows" have a stock sentimental flavor, as do exclamations such as "O, if we could always . . .". This and the earlier entries written in flowery, romantic language record times when Ida, David and Ella directly confront the changes plural marriage has brought to their lives. In her entry for May 21, Ida describes her depression at Ella's apparent sorrow as well as her talk with David about polygamy; on May 25, she describes her wedding and on May 29 she describes sharing her feelings with Ella, to whom she has portrayed herself as an unwilling rival in earlier entries. Udall uses such language and writes descriptions of isolation and reunion only at certain points in her narrative. Whether she deploys these techniques consciously or not, they are clearly part of her strategy for recording feelings that might be difficult (indeed, to cite her own claim, "impossible") to describe in the same plain language she uses to record daily activities.

Folklorist Margaret K. Brady notes that the use of "poetic language" in other nineteenth-century women's diaries marks the "elaboration of particularly significant

themes" (173). This strategy may help Udall keep strong emotions within accepted bounds, both for her own sake (since dwelling too long on, or speaking too plainly about her fears in plural marriage, for example, might shake her resolve to enter it) and that of her Mormon audience. Borrowing the language of "woman's fiction" may also help her envision herself living its plot: one of that genre's virtuous heroines, guided by a godly husband's counsel, her virtuous strivings ultimately rewarded in a happy home. As Kagle and Gramegna suggest, "By adopting elements from works of fiction a diarist can redefine the past, alter the perception of the present, and control the future" (41). Conversely, describing her feelings of depression or Ella's pain directly might mean placing undue emphasis—at least in the eyes of those convinced that plural marriage was sacred—on the human costs rather than the "divine principle" involved. Dramatizing the present's difficult moments provides Ida Udall with both distance from, and control over the tensions of her early days in polygamy.

Shortly after the wedding, Udall's language undergoes yet another shift when she begins to note time spent with her sister wife Ella. She records details of domestic cooperation without drama: "Ella & I went shopping again" (55). Traveling south from St. George, the Udalls spent two additional weeks with Ella's relatives in the town of Kanab. From this point on, Ida Udall's journal is filled with the names of her newly acquired relatives, and with detailed lists of activities that suggest how fully she entered into the life of her new family. The process of integration was doubtless helped by the

fact that the family was polygamous: Ella's brother, Tommy Stewart, had two wives, Mary and Fanny, with whom Ella and Ida spent much of their time (M. Ellsworth 57, 261). On May 30 she and Ella "spent the day visiting, making lace handkerchiefs"; the next day Udall notes "Sister Mary and I did the family washing. Ella and Fanny getting dinner" while on June 3 the women "enjoyed a family gathering at Aunt Macy's" and "had dinner and supper together" (57). It is worth noting what I will discuss in more detail below, that the world portrayed at this point in Udall's journal is almost exclusively a female world of sewing, visiting and eating. David Udall is not mentioned by name until nearly a month after the wedding, suggesting that while he may indeed have been the one "dearest on earth" to Udall her most important and necessary integration was into the world of polygamous wives.

In these latter entries, Udall focuses on family relations, in sharp contrast to early entries. For example, she describes an excursion to the lake with Ella's relatives: "We were supplied with the best of Picnic, and a borrowed guitar which we used to good advantage during the day" (57). Since Udall played the guitar and was known for her singing, we may imagine she was a center of attention (though she modestly does not record this). She does, however, give plenty of details: "We enjoyed ourselves swinging, talking, reading, singing & eating until near sundown when we started homeward, well pleased with our day's amusement" (57). This particular outing seems to mark a transition for Udall from outsider to family member, and contrasts sharply with her sense

of being a "stranger in a strange land" among the same people less than a month before. Departing for Arizona, she writes, "During our two weeks stay .. I had made many dear friends whom it was a trial to part with. It was also a great cross to Ella, who was leaving her old home and all her relatives" (58). Ella, barely mentioned on the trip north except as "Sister D.K. Udall" is now an object of sympathy, a friend whose emotions are worth recording in Ida Udall's diary. By June 20, even "Bro. Udall" has been recast in more intimate terms, as when Udall writes "Lost the small water keg and David was obliged to go back two miles for it" (59). She mentions an intimate family occasion: "This was the anniversary of little Pearl's second birthday, and she chattered about it all day" (59). Including herself in the party's adventures, Udall seems to have adjusted to her new status.

In a final entry, Udall reflects on the past weeks and reverts briefly to romantic language in a passing acknowledgment of the trip's difficulties: "It has been clouds and sunshine intermingled" (59). This backward look calls our attention to the way Udall's entries fit a dramatic plot structure, with initial tension building to the climax of unhappiness when Udall first reveals her feelings and is "rescued" by David. This is followed by the apparent climax of the trip, the wedding ceremony, though as it follows the description of Udall's own despair and resolution the record of the ceremony itself is relatively brief and anticlimactic. The wedding is followed by renewed struggles with Ella, a second resolution (this time between Ella and Ida, rather than Ida and David) and

the denouement of peaceful family travel. Marianne Noble points out that the "loss of union and drive toward its restoration" are the "twin conditions" on which the plots of much nineteenth-century popular literature are based (65); the emotional peaks and valleys in the entries where Udall employs fictionalized language suggest the driving plot of so much popular fiction may feature as well. In describing herself as an outsider among Ella's relatives, Udall recreates the condition of the orphaned and/or friendless girl of many nineteenth-century novels. She describes herself as "powerless" but introduces the figure of a powerful "encourager," her lover David, who encourages her by moonlight to obey God's commandments and thus save herself from paralyzing "dread and fear." Union between man and wife is glorified (Udall writes in her journal "the sacred name of wife was whispered . . . in my ear") (28) and in the final scene between wife and wife, the Udall party's domestic unity is complete. Noble and Nina Baym both assert that fictional heroines seek a domestic unity: "mother and child, or husband and wife, or friend and friend" (Baym 27; Noble 65). Udall presents us with a narrative of courtship and tension, including a rival, secret meetings, and assurances of the lover's fidelity. Ending with a wedding, and the appearance of happily ever after, this is a plot that might, with a little adjustment, have come straight from one of Udall's own favorite novels.

Locating the diary persona within familiar narrative forms is an important strategy for Udall, as she weathers physical and emotional relocations and adjusts to the circumstances of her marriage. Shifting the responsibility for her language onto familiar

conventions relieves her temporarily of the burden of her own subject at points when what she might write in her diary seems too painful to describe, while the return to a less elevated tone and style marks her adjustment to the new role of plural family member.

"Exiles From Home:" The Underground Diary

*I felt tired and worn out from moving so much. The baby was heavy and was in my arms all the time. . . . To walk the streets without fear, to see and shake hands with friends, and to go to meeting seemed like a joyous experience to **me**. . . I lived part of the time with my brother Joseph and was as contented as possible when word came I must move on and be very quiet about it because I had been tracked*

Annie Clark Tanner, "The Underground" from A Mormon Mother

The second section of Udall's journal I have chosen for analysis covers the three-month period from July to October 1886. During this time Udall was living on the "Mormon Underground" as she had since mid-1884 when David Udall was arrested. Two years later, she was still living quietly despite the fact that David had received a presidential pardon from Grover Cleveland and been released from jail in December 1885 (Udall and Nelson 170). Polygamy was still illegal in Utah Territory, and federal marshals continued to search out suspected "cohabs" right up to the time church president Wilford Woodruff issued the 1890 proclamation known as the Manifesto that forbade Latter-Day Saints to contract further plural marriages (Van Wagoner 147). The 1887 Edmunds-Tucker Act, successor to the 1882 Edmunds Act, provided for particularly stringent penalties against polygamists, so even after David Udall's release from prison it would have been highly imprudent for the Udalls and their children to

openly share a single home (Van Wagoner 135). As the second wife, it fell to Ida Udall to live more circumspectly (M. Ellsworth 193).

From Christmas 1885 to October 1886 Udall lived with her in-laws in the town of Nephi, Utah, approximately fifty miles south of Provo (M. Ellsworth 80). After his pardon in December 1885, David returned to the home in St. Johns, Arizona, that he shared with his first wife Ella and their small daughters (M. Ellsworth, Appendix 1). Throughout 1886 Ida, who had not seen her husband since May 1885, grew increasingly impatient for David to join her and their baby daughter Pauline (Udall and Nelson 206). Remaining hidden while David was in jail had been hard enough; the journal entries suggest it was even more difficult to continue the separation once he was free.

I have chosen this section of Udall's journal for study because, like the Honeymoon Trail section of her diary, it shows how one plural wife used writing to help her meet polygamy's challenges: separation from her husband, financial uncertainty, the exigencies of single parenting and the lack of what monogamous wives took for granted: in Udall's own passionate words, "a husband, a home, and a *name*" (148). In this portion of her journal, Udall fitted her own story into the larger narrative of her Mormon community, a story of earthly sufferings and spiritual rewards.

The journal from July-October 1886 is a multifaceted document. In its faithful recording of the details of work, worship and family life, it emphasizes plural wives' dependence on the community of Saints at large, and particularly the community of other

women with whom they spent so much of their time. As I will discuss in more detail below, many polygamous wives were, at least from time to time, de facto single women who depended greatly on their "sisters" (in Mormon parlance, a word for fellow Saints as well as co-wives) for economic and emotional support. Udall's journal highlights the importance of community through attention to three specific activities: work (both domestic and paid), visits with friends and relatives, and worship with other Latter-Day Saints. In describing or simply noting down all these activities, Udall reconstructs the web of social relationships that supported her as a plural wife and, in so doing, enmeshes herself ever more securely in her chosen way of life.

Udall's journal from this period is also a dialogue between herself and her husband over plural marriage itself, as she reports calling her husband to account for his long absence and copies his written responses into her journal. In this three-month section, Udall seems to struggle with her decision to become a plural wife, accusing her husband, as other plural wives sometimes did, of neglect and lack of love. Yet the dialogue between her complaints, the remorse she describes at sending bitter letters, and the quoted reproofs from her father, father-in-law and David himself ultimately serve not to indict a neglectful husband but to reinforce the importance of (male) church authority and of obedience to church doctrine even above family ties or personal feelings. In analyzing this section, I will show how Udall reproduced in her journal the conditions that kept her in

polygamy_ By describing her circumstances in writing, Udall reinforced their influence and reified her position as a member of what she believed to be God's earthly kingdom.

"Widows and Orphans": A Plural Wife in the Mormon Community

Yesterday was the anniversary of the Young Ladies organization. They had an ice-cream and strawberry festival. Bess Sparks bought a ticket and insisted on my going with her. . . I took my own money along for extras but I was treated so much I did not have occasion to spend it. Will Bryan is so thoughtful of the widows & orphans.

Ida Hunt Udall, letter to David K. Udall, July 1, 1886

One of the most important ways that Mormon communities supported the practice of polygamy was by providing work for plural wives who needed to support themselves. The church had a longstanding policy of helping emigrant converts survive financially, not only by providing funds for the overland journey and organizing settlement but by finding them gainful employment *as soon as they arrived in Utah* (Arrington and Bitton 136). A British traveler of the 1860s described the organized process of placing new emigrants where they could be most useful:

An emigrant train had just come in, and the bishops had to put six hundred persons in the way of growing their cabbages and building their homes. One bishop said he could take five bricklayers, another two carpenters, a third a tinman, a fourth seven or eight farm-servants, and so on ... In a few minutes I saw that two hundred of these poor emigrants had been placed in the way of earning their daily bread. (qtd. in M. Cross 103)

A plural wife living apart from her husband relied at least in part on a similar network of church members, friends and relatives for financial support. Udall's record of work not only shows how she supported herself financially in David's absence, but suggests that

she was able to survive for long periods (with only occasional support from her husband) precisely because she belonged to a tightly knit group that ensured its collective economic survival by engaging all hands in what was seen as the Lord's work: any work, from selling bottled fruit to raising silkworms, that increased the financial self-sufficiency of Utah Mormons. She did not work for Gentiles, but for the many "sisters" who hired her to sew for them and for the local church-run co-op where she was engaged as a clerk and bookkeeper.

David K. Udall's father (also named David) and his third wife Rebecca took Ida into their home in Nephi, Utah, where she lived on and off for years. While she notes in her journal contributions to the household that were quite clearly unpaid domestic work, such as picking peas and making currant jelly (200) and while, even from a distance, she did domestic work for her husband, sewing a special garment for David to wear when he worked in the temple (200), many entries show that Udall supported herself with two skills in particular, sewing and bookkeeping. In the three-month period from July-October 1885 she sewed "a dress for Aunt Millard" (200) did sewing for a Mrs. Wright and her friend "Sister Paxman" (203-4) and for a Mrs. Neff (205). Many of these people are mentioned in other entries not just as employers but *as* friends; on August 10' 1885, Udall records "Went to a birthday surprise at Sister Paxman's" (206). She also "post[ed] books for the Co-op Store" for several days in August 1885 (208) and earlier that year wrote to David that she had "copied some 80 pages in the County Records" (M.

Ellsworth 245). Finally, she engaged in what had become one of Utah women's home industries when she spent a week in August 1886 preserving peaches, "picking, cutting, drying and bottling, till I was tired of the sight of them" (204). Udall's contemporary Annie Clark Tanner notes in her memoirs that preserved peaches from Utah were a desirable commodity in Eastern markets and that her own mother, a polygamous second wife who otherwise depended on her husband for funds, could "exchange [peaches] for cash"; this work was thus one more way Mormon women could earn money to call their own (Tanner 40).

As a single mother, however, Udall could only go out to work if child care was available, and the senior Mrs. Udall, with whom she lived, was apparently not always equal to the task of caring for the nearly two-year-old Pauline. Of the county records job, Udall wrote, "I am glad it is through for it is too much for Aunty [Mrs. Udall] to have the responsibility of looking after the baby when she is so sick and cross with teething" (M. Ellsworth 245). While she did bookkeeping, she reports that a friend's sister cared for Pauline (208); at other times she hired a young girl as a babysitter, as when she records "little Mary Anderson kept baby" (210). Friends sometimes cared for Pauline so Ida Udall could attend church. In plural households where some or all of the wives lived together, caring for children was a responsibility women often shared (Goodson 103). For example, plural wife Martha Cragun Cox reported that in the plural household where she lived with two other wives, "One always stayed at home and took care of the children

and the house" while the others attended church. Even the babysitter was not entirely bereft of religious instruction, however: Cox notes that when two wives, rather than one, attended church "we generally came home with a correct idea of what was given in the sermon" and could report on it (qtd. in Godfrey 286). Ida Udall lacked this built-in child care system, but managed to support herself financially and enjoy social events by cooperating with other church members. Her record of visits, with nearly every entry recording a neighbor's call, a choir practice, a visit to the theater or simply a shared meal demonstrates the extraordinary social cohesion of the Mormon frontier world, a world where a woman far from her husband was never a woman alone.

In similar fashion, Udall's record of church meetings attended and fast days observed shows how crucial support from church authorities and fellow members was to "life in the principle." For frontier Mormons, as for most observant Saints today, church membership was not merely a matter of Sunday observance but involved many weekly and monthly meetings. The first Thursday of every month was a fast day, including a meeting to which members brought the food they had saved by skipping meals for distribution to poorer church members, for example, recent immigrants. Fast meeting participants could also share their "testimonies," personal spiritual experiences or convictions they deemed edifying for their fellow Saints (Arrington and Bitton 210). This kind of impromptu sharing was a source of community support. By her own record, in the three-month period from July-October 1885 Udall attended Thursday fast meetings at

least twice (204) and Sunday meeting and Sunday school nearly every week (206). She also attended one Pioneer Day celebration marking the anniversary of the Saints' arrival in Utah (203) conferences of the Relief Society, Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association and Primary Association (church auxiliaries for women, young girls and children respectively) (208) and two regional, three-day gatherings for the faithful known as Quarterly Conferences (Arrington and Bitton 207). Such an attendance record suggests how much Udall drew her ability to continue practicing polygamy, emotionally as well as economically, from the Mormon network of church members, friends and relatives.

In addition to noting meeting attendance, Udall occasionally describes the level of support religious observance gave her in plural marriage. Of the Relief Society conference she attended in August 1885, she wrote, "O how I enjoyed those meetings. For the first time in my life I heard women testify that the Prophet Joseph had sealed them as plural wives to their husbands" (208). Since Smith had been killed in 1844, eight years before the Mormons publicly acknowledged the doctrine of plural marriage, those women, like Ida Udall, would have had to keep the fact of their marriages quiet, at least to some degree. Hearing them testify must have made Udall's own path seem less lonely, and suggested the possibility that she too might acknowledge her marriage—and describe her struggles—with pride in later years.

Udall does record several instances of informal encouragement in plural marriage. On August 1, 1885 she writes in her journal, "Rec'd splendid family letter from Ammon

Tenney, in Prison. Part was addressed to Hon. F.S. Richards & Jno . Stewart. He wished me to copy theirs & send them which I did" (200). In this instance, a letter from her brother-in-law reminds Udall that other Saints too are separated from their families. By copying and sending Tenney's letter, she participates in a network of communications and mutual support. She also reports a sense of encouragement when her sister-in-law writes of David Udall fervently praying for her and Pauline (209) as well as when friends admire the baby who must have seemed at times her only evidence of David's love and her status as a married woman (203). Even the simplest daily entries for this section from July-October 1886 suggest how keeping a diary—recording that she picked peaches or went to meeting--helped Udall stay oriented, reminding her of the part she played in the Mormon community.

In Udall's journal, the Mormon community mostly appears as a supportive network of relatives and friends. She does, however, differentiate between "true Saints" and hypocrites. Recording the news of her brother-in-law Ammon Tenney's pardon in October 1886, she writes, "What joy those few words brought to the heart of every true Saint" (212). True Saints, by Udall's definition, are clearly those who support plural marriage and rejoice when its adherents are freed from prison; hypocrites are those who "mistreat and neglect their families" by abandoning their plural wives (in a legal maneuver I will discuss below) while "pretending to be good saints" (209-210). However, Udall also describes Mormons who do not support the principle of plural marriage. One

example is a former suitor, Johnny Murdock, whom she describes as "ill-at-ease and in a hurry to go" when they meet: "vastly different from the days when we were 17 instead of 27" (123). Ascribing his unease to the fact that she became a plural wife, instead of his bride, Udall concludes that the still-single Murdock "takes little stock in the *great cause* which we are interested in" (123, italics hers). She draws yet another example from the family of her Aunt Louisa, whose household she describes purely in negative terms. Louisa's husband, a man named Tom Willis, is "an apostate" Mormon who "does all he can to injure our people" (i.e. "true Saints," polygamists and their supporters). Udall writes, "He has threatened that he would report me to the officers instantly if he only knew my whereabouts, and would consider it his duty" (134). Despite this apparent risk, she visits the Willis home; her description of her uncle as a "bitter" man, and her grown cousins as "great rough fellows, who smoke and swear" makes clear that she equates unhappiness, disorder and coarse masculinity with an anti-polygamy stance (135). Tom Willis and his sons are not portrayed as hypocrites in the journal but rather outright enemies of Udall's "great cause." Finally, recording that her Aunt Louisa blames plural marriage for contributing to the death of Udall's mother, Udall suggests that her aunt is simply deluded, writing "Poor woman, she will find out her mistake some day" presumably in heaven (135).

Significantly, the entries recording Udall's two days of visits to the Willis family also include a detailed description of a contrasting figure, a former Sunday School teacher

who has himself been recently jailed for practicing plural marriage. She describes "Brother Fotheringham" as "filled with the good spirit" and notes that he "entertained us with an account of his life in the Salt Lake Pen . . . pictured my situation *as* the most enviable one to be imagined, and even complimented me on being much better looking than I used to be" (134). In the world of Udall's journal such a man, who can spin amusing yarns about jail time and convince a lonely single mother that she is a religious heroine, is a "true Saint"; in contrast to Aunt Louisa, who blames a neglectful polygamous husband for her sister's untimely death, Brother Fotheringham suggests that plural marriage has improved Ida Udall's looks. Such an apparently topsy-turvy world, in which "trials" produce good effects and painful separations are occasions for rejoicing, indicates just how fully Udall relies on a special Mormon narrative to maintain her faith in polygamy.

Some verses written by a friend in the autograph book Udall kept as a kind of auxiliary journal express the paradox that happiness is found in suffering. Their presence also emphasizes the degree to which Udall drew support from female friends in her efforts to practice polygamy faithfully. As historian Jill Mulvay Derr notes, "The role of the plural wife as collectively understood by Mormon women required both spiritual commitment and emotional suffering, and those who took on the role entered a sisterhood that assumed common aspiration and commiseration" (165). The writer, one Lucinda Dalton, was like Udall a plural wife who supported herself by teaching and writing

(Iverson, Antipolygamy_56). She reminds Udall, using the words of Christ, that her husband David's jail time is worth a heavenly reward:

'When for My sake ye are reviled
Thrice blessed then are ye'
Thus spake the Pure and Undefined
This promise he shall see. (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 118; italics author's)

Udall herself, her friend continues in verse, is blessed (though her husband is absent and she, like David, is "reviled" by antipolygamists) by the presence of "the baby-treasure you have won" (her daughter Pauline) and "troops of friends." The poem concludes

So rich in these, can you be poor?
Thus blessed, how *can* you grieve?
The minor trials you endure
Must not your soul deceive. (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 119; italics author's)

For "true Saints," at least according to these verses, happiness consists in the hope for a better world. Despite the Mormon emphasis on building an earthly kingdom, it seems clear that at least during the era of polygamy prosecutions many Saints were uncertain whether their rewards would be bestowed in this life or the next.

"Outsiders" and "Enemies": A Tale of the Latter-Day Saints

The officers went to the house to inquire for me on two occasions, even questioning little Pearl, in the yard, as to my whereabouts. But she adroitly answered 'I don't know.'
Journal entry, Ida Hunt Udall, August 1884

The Mormon response to the federal government's polygamy prosecutions was one that had become a classic in the years since the church's inception: they viewed themselves as a people persecuted for righteousness. While the years since the Saints'

1847 arrival in Utah had seen organized efforts to build up the territory as an exclusively Mormon kingdom—including, as I noted in the last chapter, resistance to federal political control during the 1850s (Bigler 141-158) and communitarian social experiments designed to make Zion economically independent (Bigler 264-66)—Mormons reacted to the federal marshals' arrival by viewing themselves, as they had in the period from 1830-1847 when they were moved on from one prospective Zion after another, as not just a separate but an embattled group (Hardy 58). As Udall's account of her Sunday school teacher "Brother Fotheringham" shows, men jailed for polygamy became heroes of the faith. No doubt drawing on accounts such as hers, historian Richard Van Wagoner notes that "polygamy sentences became a mark of status and honor" among observant Mormons (121). The church supported polygamists materially as well as morally: on his 1885 release, David Udall wrote to Ida of the cash gifts he received from church authorities (who had, of course, been the ones to suggest he enter polygamy in the first place) (M. Ellsworth 145). The Mormon Underground was made up of loyal Mormons who closed ranks against what Annie Clark Tanner called "outsiders" and "our enemies": the "anti-Mormon agitators" who quizzed children about their parents and made dawn raids to arrest suspected polygamists (Tanner 75-76). In practice, however, plural wives like Tanner and Udall were sometimes afraid to reveal their children's parentage even to church authorities (Tanner 111). Such caution suggests that the clear distinction these women drew in their journals and memoirs between polygamy loyalists and those who

might turn them in was part of a narrative of Saints and outsiders, created at least partly in hopes of pinning down a more ambiguous reality.

From the church's earliest days to the present, the Mormon church's story of itself has been a tale of suffering filled with Biblical parallels and designed to bind this "peculiar people" together. Contemporary LDS historians emphasize Gentile persecution of the fledgling church in New York, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois (Arrington and Bitton; Bushman and Bushman). Gentile writers are quicker to point out that the Saints were harassed not just for their faith but for economic and political practices that included bloc voting, trading mainly (or only) among themselves and making public their intent to take over towns or whole counties to build their earthly Zion (Bigler; Hardy). In the nineteenth century, however, Mormons saw themselves not only as the sole representatives of God's church but as the last lovers of freedom in a corrupt nation. The following lines from a hymn by Eliza R. Snow, the Mormon counterpart of prolific Protestant hymn writers such as Anna B. Warner or Fanny J. Crosby, express the Saints' sense of themselves as an embattled band both spiritually and politically:

Let us go—let us go to the ends of the earth
 Let us go far away from the land of our birth;
 For the banner of "freedom" no longer will wave
 O'er the patriot's tomb--o'er the dust of the brave

Let us go—let us go from a country of strife
 From a land where the wicked are seeking our life
 From a country where justice no longer remains—
 From which virtue is fled and iniquity reigns.
 (qtd. in Godfrey 162)

The killings of church prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum in Carthage, Illinois only added to the Saints' sense of being a persecuted minority in a larger world of hostile, treacherous Gentiles. They drew on the Bible to frame their experiences. Convert Sally Randall wrote to her family from Nauvoo, Illinois, the Mormon settlement whose population reached 10,000 before it was abandoned in the wake of Joseph Smith's death, "If you can imagine to yourselves how the apostles and saints felt when the Savior was crucified you can give something of a guess how the Saints felt here when they heard that their prophet and patriarch were both dead and murdered, too, by a lawless mob" (qtd. in Godfrey 141).

Church members looked back even farther, to the Hebrew exodus of the Old Testament, to find parallels for their migration to Utah (Godfrey 120). Historian Richard H. Jackson notes that while the reality of crossing the plains was not especially rigorous for most Mormon emigrants, church leaders who later memorialized the journey from Illinois to Utah frequently used words like "desert" and "trackless waste" to describe the trail, calling a "miracle" what records suggest was a well-organized migration of some 60,000 people over a period of years (1-2). (It is also worth noting, as I mentioned in the last chapter, that Mormon emigrants received significant assistance from Indians. The "trackless waste" they crossed was, in fact, the home of numerous people.) Ida Udall participates in this tradition of magnifying emigrant struggles in her 1878 memoir, describing her parents' return from California to Utah in 1858 as a "weary journey over

deserts, sand & rocks" (M. Ellsworth 4). Emphasizing the hardships of travel served to unite Mormons with a sense of communal suffering and effort in the service of their faith.

The period of Utah settlement from the 1850s-1870s saw a revisiting of the "Mormons vs. Gentiles" mentality that characterized the early—and fleeing—church. The federal government's crackdowns on polygamists fit perfectly into the Mormon narrative of themselves as persecuted saints. As in the classic captivity narrative, Mormon stories of federal marshals' depredations focused on prosecution's effects on the helpless: old men, young (often pregnant) women, and children. Annie Clark Tanner wrote, "Homes were broken up and families scattered among relatives or friends . . . Polygamists were warned or smuggled to safety. Mothers ran with their babies to the neighbors; old men took to the fields" (75). David and Ida Udall's letters show how fully they participated in this Mormon narrative. David writes to Ida "in exile among strangers" while Ida describes her daughter Pauline as a "poor little exile" and "little refugee" (156-7) and herself as an "exile" (87) and "one alone in a strange land" (70).

Such a worldview, in which Udall describes herself as part of a small, persecuted band of Saints, suggests that she thought of herself first and foremost as a Mormon. Her writing shows, however, that this apparently primary identity integrates elements of her self-definition by race and class as well as in terms of gender. Just as Narcissa Whitman sees herself as a "light" in the "thick darkness of heathendom" surrounding Waiilatpu, Udall sees her eastern Arizona ranch as an outpost of the Mormon church. For example,

when she complains in 1906 of her isolation from her fellow Saints, she writes, "I wonder why it is that two people who dearly love to go to meeting as Aunt Mary [David Udall's third wife, Mary Linton Morgan] and I do should be banished to a lone ranche [sic] for months at a time" (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 211). She concludes, "I have to think it is for the good of our boys," who are, she later reasons, less vulnerable to the temptation to drink and smoke (and thus violate church health laws) on the "ranche" than they might be in the city. By rearing her sons in the country, Udall suggests, she can work for the Mormon cause even if she and "Aunt Mary" are the only believers around: "I had far rather spend my whole life here than to have one drinking smoking boy" (qtd. in M. Ellsworth 211). Yet it is precisely because of her social standing as a polygamous wife, her status as a white Mormon colonist and her responsibilities as a Mormon woman that she lives on a "lone ranche" in eastern Arizona. In the section below, I will discuss how Udall expresses her identity in terms of race, class and gender, how her self-definition in these terms comes to constitute her identity as a Mormon and how this identity is worked out in her record of life with her Gentile neighbors and her husband.

Mormons and Mexicans: Race and Social Standing in Ida Udall's Southwest

Our home and our town were outstanding in hospitality so we were often told Good housekeeping was a hobby with many of our womenfolk and what a blessing it was, for without clean, tidy homes a civilized way of life could not have survived the trying days of pioneering.

David K. Udall, describing St. Johns in his memoir Arizona Pioneer Mormon

To be Mormon in the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century was, almost without exception, to be white. As I pointed out in the last chapter, most European emigrants to Utah Territory came from the British Isles and Scandinavia (Wahlquist 132). Mormon scriptures offered justification for the faithful's belief in the spiritual superiority of lighter- to darker-skinned groups of people; as I noted in the last chapter, church doctrine also held that Indian or "Lamanite" intermarriage with white Mormons would eventually render Natives "white and delightsome" in the eyes of a God who apparently preferred fair complexions.²

The predominance of Northern European ethnicity among the Saints is reflected in Udall's writing, in which the nonwhite inhabitants of Utah and Arizona are virtually invisible. While her parents, John and Lois Hunt, did emigrate briefly to Savoia, New Mexico, in 1877 as part of a church mission to the Navajo when Ida was nineteen (M. Ellsworth 31, 34), she kept no detailed account of their mission years either in her teenage memoir or her later, daily journal (M. Ellsworth 283). Her granddaughter and editor, Maria S. Ellsworth, notes that Udall did sewing for Navajo women (34). Sewing was a form of employment she engaged in all her life to earn needed cash. That Udall undoubtedly knew Indian women but did not write about them, then or later, suggests that her primary attention was elsewhere: while the Navajo of New Mexico were seen by the church as in need of missionaries, and while Mormons and Natives traded, Native culture was apparently not sufficiently important, in her eyes, to record in writing.

The conditions that made this highly visible invisibility possible include the fact that Udall grew to adulthood in the 1870s. By the time she began her journal in 1882, Utah's Native population, as I discussed in Chapter Four, had shrunk to a fraction of its size at first Mormon-Indian contact. Southern Paiutes inhabiting the St. George area of southern Utah, where the Udalls were married, had largely lost their homelands by the 1880s and led a "precarious life . . . unable to keep their annual rounds" of hunting and gathering because of the presence of white settlers and farms (Sheridan and Parezo 179). The Indians of northeastern Arizona, where Udall would spend her later years, had also either been decimated, as in the case of the Grand Canyon-area Yavapais, Hualapais and Yumans (Sheridan and Parezo 100-104) or sent to reservations by the 1870s and 1880s (Rothschild & Hronek; Niederman). On the other hand, members of the one Native group, the Dine or Navajo, mentioned in Udall's writings were, during the period of her family's mission in New Mexico and her early marriage, attempting to reestablish their tribal economy and culture following white attempts to forcibly assimilate them in the 1860s (Sheridan and Parezo 11-17). Though infrequent, her mention of these Natives suggest that they were the group most visible to Udall, particularly since they traded extensively with Anglo settlers (Sheridan and Parezo 18). Though David Udall's memoir does record that in September 1881, he and other members of the St. Johns town council formed a twenty-man militia to protect citizens against "the Apaches" (Udall and Nelson 86), his account does not make clear whether the townspeople organized to combat

specific threats or a more generalized anxiety. (The 1880s, of course, were the period when the famous Chiricahua Apache leader Geronimo was active in his resistance to federal efforts to confine members of his and other Apache bands to reservations (Sheridan and Parezo 70-71). In the words of Mormon diarist Cedenia Bagley Willis, whose parents pioneered white settlement in eastern Arizona, times were unsettling with "Geronomo [sic] on the war path") (4). Since Ida Udall was not, after her marriage, part of a family called to missionary efforts, and since the church oversaw the majority of trade with Indians (Arrington and Bitton 149-150) other than informal trading conducted by missionaries in the field, conditions may have made it possible for her to live without a daily awareness of the Natives whose land she inhabited.

On the other hand, Udall records frequent interactions with the other nonwhite, non-Mormon group inhabiting southern Utah and northern Arizona, her Mexican neighbors. Udall settled briefly in the town of St. Johns, Arizona, just after her marriage. She had learned Spanish as a teenager in New Mexico, and family records note that she had at least two Mexican acquaintances there, both apparently Mormon converts as her neighbors in St. Johns were not (M. Ellsworth 34). Throughout her journal, Udall notes Mexicans mainly for their "wicked influence" and, more specifically, their antagonism to the Mormon settlers of St. Johns. Approaching the first home she would share with Ella Udall, Ida writes, "Our neighbors on three sides were Mexicans, and I felt that the wicked influence and spirit surrounding the place had something to do with the forebodings I had"

(61). In speaking of a "wicked influence," Udall may have been referring to the fact that most, if not all, of her Mexican neighbors were Catholic (Udall and Nelson 78). Mormon discourse on polygamy held that the Roman church had first warned ancient Christians away from the practice of polygamy; church leaders had thus termed Catholicism "the mother of harlots" because, they argued, monogamy was much more conducive than polygamy to the vices of prostitution and adultery (Hardy 100). As a plural wife and the daughter of a polygamist, Udall would certainly have been aware of this doctrine. The details she records suggest how Udall characterizes the "wicked spirit": violent and anti-Mormon. In an entry in her diary from the spring of 1882, for example, she notes that the Mexican settlers of St. Johns honored the town's patron saint with a bullfight (34) culminating *in* a brawl in which two Mormon settlers were killed and others jailed.

What Udall does not note are any instances of peaceful daily interaction with her "neighbors on three sides;" instead, she repeatedly discounts their neighborly value, emphasizing in her writing how little the Udalls consider them true fellow settlers. For example, when Ella Udall gives birth to her second child, Ida writes, "The night was dark & rainy, but on Ella awaking me at 11 o'clock, I immediately ran for Bro[ther] Ammon Tenney, our only neighbor, besides Mexicans, who soon brought Sister Rizpah Gibbons, the only midwife in the place"—or, at least, St. Johns' sole Mormon midwife (37). Running the extra distance to a fellow Saint's house, this entry suggests, is worthwhile if it means avoiding turning to Mexican neighbors for help; her distinction between Mormon

and Mexican neighbors here weaves the theme of racial distinction into the established Mormon narrative of Saints versus outsiders. Again, Udall writes her Mexican neighbors deliberately out of the story when she records the Tenneys' move across town "leaving us with no near neighbors, excepting Mexicans" (38). Like Narcissa Whitman at Waiilatpu, Udall describes a sense of isolation in the midst of many people; also like Whitman's, her isolation is less literal than imposed by the constraints of her cultural narrative.

In Udall's journal, distinctions of social standing are, like distinctions of race, an important part of the distinction between Mormon and Gentile. Race and class as categories for social definition overlap in entries that consistently portray Mexicans as the antithesis of "our people," the "substantial citizens" of St. Johns. Both Mexican and Anglo Gentiles appear in Udall's writing as almost comically violent and uncouth, while Mormons on the frontier are portrayed as relatively genteel. While, as I have noted, many Mormon converts were workers and tradespeople (Bartholomew 33) and most settlers lived in tents and wagons under frontier-survival conditions (M. Ellsworth 34) striving for middle-class "refinements" was part of the Mormon effort to produce a kingdom worthy of God's approval. That Udall herself strove for a middle-class home, even on the family's isolated mountain ranch, is clear from her daughter Pauline's description:

There were petunias blooming in the window or mignonettes in the yard. On the wall hung pictures, the frames of which she had fashioned from

pine cones. The Mexican [adobe] house often ran tubs of water through its leaky roof, yet she never gave up the yearly going over its ceilings and walls herself with the whitewash brush. (193)

Letters and family records record that Ida Udall had a bad heart (M. Ellsworth 193) and that the ranch at Round Valley (near the present-day town of Eagar, in northeastern Arizona) lay at an elevation of 7,000 feet (M. Ellsworth 188). Even without these handicaps, such heavy housework as whitewashing would have placed enormous demands on Udall's physical strength. Yet like many white frontier women, Udall struggled to maintain middle-class domestic standards of cleanliness and home decoration; those standards' significance, to her and to other women, is underscored by her daughter's laudatory record. The white female mission to "elevate" and "civilize" worked as strongly in the cause of spreading Mormon culture as it had for Narcissa Whitman on the Pacific Northwest frontier fifty years before.

An important way in which the Udalls marked their middle-class standing and English heritage was through their possessions. Family records note that Udall managed to add an organ to her ranch's furnishings in 1898 (M. Ellsworth 195). The item mentioned most frequently, however, was not Ida's but Ella Udall's set of Haviland china, which she had purchased *as* a young woman and brought with her to her marriage. The Udall family not only used this china on every possible special occasion, but recorded its use in loving detail. For her eldest daughter Pauline's fifteenth birthday, family lore holds that Ella "prepared a delicious breakfast and served it on her Haviland

china, which was only used for special occasions" (M. Ellsworth 196). In his memoirs, David Udall remembered that "when Church authorities and other visitors came to see us and [Ella] set the table with her lovely china, I felt our simple meals were 'fit for a King' [sic] (Udall and Nelson 90). This touch of refinement signaled to family and visitors alike that even in the "trying days of pioneering," the Udalls had not forgotten middle-class standards; even more importantly, recording this detail ensured that future generations would know their pioneer forebears aspired to "civilized" standards. The same function is fulfilled by Udall's mention in her journal of the many typically Victorian middle-class amusements she and her neighbors attended: ice-cream socials, "lawn fetes" (206), visits to the theater and a performance by the "Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir," the forerunner of today's famed Mormon Tabernacle Choir. This last, she judiciously pronounced "first class" (216).

In addition to attending such events, Ella and Ida Udall organized "refined" activities for the people of St Johns; while their collaboration helped forge a bond through shared domestic values, such events were also part of how Mormons differentiated themselves socially from other frontier inhabitants. Just as the Mexican inhabitants of St. Johns celebrated the feast of San Juan, the town's patron saint, the Saints (many of whom were British emigrants) celebrated what David Udall points out in his memoir was a distinctly English holiday, May Day, in "a true English fashion" (Udall

and Nelson 90). When she and Ella organized the town May Day celebration in 1884, Ida

Udall described the event in her journal as follows:

The Y.L.M.I. [Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement] and Primary associations joined together in celebrating the day, each crowning a Queen and braiding a Maypole. . . The exercises were all in the meeting house . . . A bounteous picnic was partaken of at noon. In the afternoon the primaries engaged in the dance, and in the evening a Leap year Ball was given by the Young Ladies. (70)

Her formal syntax and vocabulary ("bounteous" "engaged") suggest Udall intends to memorialize the day for posterity. If so, she also memorializes her sense of the social gulf between the Gentile and Mormon inhabitants of St. Johns, noting that

About 5 o'clock a shooting affray between Mexicans and cowboys took place, chasing each other through the "Mormon town" firing their guns incessantly, and many threats were made that our party would be broken up at night, but their courage failed them before putting their threats into execution, and the party was a complete success. (M. Ellsworth 70)

Her language here suggests that the "shooting affray" is a concern not because it places citizens in danger but because the disturbance threatens the ball. The ball, of course, given by the young ladies of the "Mutual Improvement Association," is a symbol of Victorian middle-class "civilization" while the rough-riding "Mexicans and cowboys" symbolize a Wild West the Mormons hope to erase. Apparently, such disturbances were a perennial problem in the early days of Mormon settlement in St. Johns. David Udall described in his memoirs that "our neighbors and the strangers in our midst looked upon the dances as public affairs, and came in numbers, bringing with them their guns and their whiskey" but that since the Mormons deemed these cowboys "not desirable associates for our wives

and daughters" they appointed "doorkeepers" to keep uninvited Gentiles from attending. He writes, "It added somewhat to the anti-Mormon feeling for a time, and then all decent men came to respect our plan" (Udall and Nelson 87). It was the "indecent men," apparently, who threatened the May Day Ball in 1884.

Despite the frightening image of bullets flying around the children's maypole dance, Ida Udall's description of the May Day ball recalls the memory of Tom Sawyer at a Sunday School picnic, setting up as it does a nearly identical contrast between "civilized" feminized society à la the Widow Douglas and a mythical rough-and-ready West. The section of St. Johns associated with feminine, middle-class values was the "Mormon town," a designation Udall borrows several times in her journal (38, 51). Because Mormon settlements were laid out in a grid pattern, as I noted in the last chapter, even in a mixed settlement of Mormons and Gentiles the Saints' part of town would have stood out. (Furthermore, David Udall noted in his memoirs that the official Mormon townsite was located just west of the original Mexican settlement of San Juan; while settlers like the Udalls lived in San Juan temporarily, they surveyed lots and built permanent homes on their own "side" of town) (Udall and Nelson 76, 78; M. Ellsworth 62-63). The separation between the Saints and their neighbors—the "whole Jew, Gentile and Mexican town" as Ida Udall wrote in one journal entry about a land dispute (50-51) was more than physical, however. As Charles H. Peterson suggests, "The [Mormon] village . . . was a sanctuary, a place of worship and a place of self-policing control" (95).

Udall's writing offers a perfect example of how the village's boundaries were in fact "self-policed," with her journal functioning as an instrument of this control.³ Though she places the designation "Mormon town" in quotation marks, indicating that it was probably not a Mormon coinage, she borrows it because it reflects the cultural gulf she (and, at least by her account, her Gentile neighbors as well) perceives between Mormons and Gentiles.

"I Loved His Wives": Gender and Mormon Women's Culture

To me it is a joy to know that we laid the foundation of a life to come while we lived in that plural marriage, that we three who loved each other more than sisters, children of one mother love, will go hand in hand together down through all eternity.

Plural wife Martha Cragun Cox, "Memoir"

As her comparison of the "solid citizens" (many of them "young ladies") who attend lawn fetes and May Day balls in "Mormon town" with the violent (male) "cowboys and Mexicans" of St. Johns makes abundantly clear, Mormonism, middle-class status and feminine domesticity are closely associated in Udall's journal. Furthermore, as I noted in the last chapter, feminine domesticity among the Saints (as in much of nineteenth-century America) included subservience to men.⁴ Though some Mormon women were trained in traditionally masculine professions such as medicine, their training was always acquired at church authorities' behest, under their supervision and for the benefit of Zion as a whole rather than for the sake of individual advancement. Despite their opportunities to cross traditional gender lines, Mormon women were not encouraged to reject or question the masculine authority of fathers, husbands and church leaders. As

a subcategory of Latter-Day Saints, Mormon women were to be subservient even when they were not financially dependent on male relatives; those responsible for building up the Mormon kingdom in so many ways were allowed little say in the direction their own lives or the church as a whole would take. One effect of this "separate and unequal" policy was that Mormon women existed in a special subculture, within which they socialized with and depended on other women (to, perhaps, an even higher degree than Carroll Smith-Rosenberg identifies among white, middle-class nineteenth-century women in the larger culture) (Foster, "Mormon Women" 213; Smith-Rosenberg, "Love and Ritual" 331). Another effect was to force women who had doubts, questions or challenges to find creative ways to live within the standards of obedience demanded by the church. In this section I will note the ways in which Ida Udall's journal shows the importance of this female network, while in the next, a discussion of the dialogue Udall created in her journal between herself and her husband, I will show how she used writing to reconcile herself to her church's demands that women be obedient to men.

Udall's Honeymoon Trail diary suggests that the main challenge in entering plural marriage was Ella Udall's reluctance. The omission of Ella's name in early diary entries (22-23) Ida Udall's record of mixed emotions before the wedding (26) her special note of Ella's reaction to the ceremony (27) and her description of sharing her wedding night with her sister wife (28) all demonstrate the importance of bonds between women in Mormon culture and especially within polygamy. Further, the list of specific activities she records

engaging in with Ella on the trip home is fairly long. In addition to the shopping, sewing, visiting and "long confidential talks" noted above, the two read novels (31) and make candy (33) on the way home activities essential not to physical but, surely, to emotional survival on this interpersonal frontier.

Udall's Underground diary shows just how much of her network was made up of other Mormon women. As I have shown, it was women who hired her to do sewing (203-5) "kept" Pauline while she went to church (206) and invited and accompanied her to social events (216). In addition to the women's auxiliary meetings that Udall describes as an important source of support, she takes time to describe in detail the occasion of a "blessing" by her friend Olive Moffatt (53). Similar to the practice called "laying on hands" in modern-day, fundamentalist Protestant denominations, the LDS practice of blessing involves physical contact, prayer and sometimes anointing with oil. While Udall had received formal blessings before from male church leaders and relatives (M. Ellsworth 32), this blessing by a female friend warrants a special description. Udall writes,

.. Sister Olive Moffatt came up to see me, & before starting home, she asked me if she should do as she felt inspired to do. I eagerly answered "yes," and with no one in the room but we, two, she placed her hands on my head, and gave me one of the greatest blessings I ever received, promising me life and health, and the blessings of sons and daughters that should be mighty in the Kingdom of God. Although a young woman, she is one of great faith, and I felt great joy in listening to her words, knowing there was a power in them. (M. Ellsworth 71)

Nineteenth-century Mormon women sometimes administered blessings, though in the twentieth century the practice is mainly restricted to male church members (C. Bushman

2). The amount of space Udall allows for this description suggests that the practice was somewhat unusual and that being blessed by another woman meant a great deal to her.

Plural marriage could forge some of the deepest connections between Mormon women. The writer quoted above and at the beginning of this chapter, Martha Cragun Cox, lived much of her life in the same rugged Southwest landscape Ida Udall inhabited. The third wife of one Isaiah Cox, Martha, like Ida, lived a frontier life with her children, struggling to support her family by teaching school (Godfrey 282-284). In her memoir she admitted that she became Cox's plural wife not because she was in love with him "as lovers love" but because "I loved his wives and the spirit of their home" (qtd. in Godfrey 278). Though Isaiah Cox was apparently unable to provide all his family's financial support, the three wives he married prior to the federal anti-polygamy prosecutions of the 1880s worked hard to support each other. They named each other's babies, applied their ingenuity to equip Martha's schoolroom (the family breadboard, painted, became a blackboard) and divided the housework according to their skills and inclination, as Martha described:

Lizzie was the dressmaker for the house ... She was also the best sales woman of the house. She generally did most of the buying, especially the shoes. . Auntie did darning and repairing. I seldom patched anything. She did it all for me. She never ironed the clothes. I did, most of that. . . . Whenever one was indisposed she was not obliged to tie up her head and keep serving about the house but she could go to her room and be down knowing that her children and all her share of the work would be attended to. (qtd. in Godfrey 286)

Cox wrote these memoirs at the end of her life, long after plural marriage had been forbidden by the church's 1890 Manifesto. Her editors suggest that she hoped to convey a sense of polygamy's importance to an earlier Mormon generation, impressing younger Saints both with its difficulty and the degree of spiritual conviction needed to enter and live in "the principle" (Godfrey 272). What stands out from even a brief reading of her autobiography, however, is Cox's rich experience of life not with her husband Isaiah but with his two first wives, Henrietta James and Elizabeth Ann Stout Cox (Godfrey 417). Despite the difficulties she describes in adjusting to communal life, it seems clear that her "sister wives" were Cox's emotional and social anchors and her partners in many ways.

Had the Edmunds Act of 1882 and the subsequent political climate in Utah Territory not made secrecy necessary for plural wives, Ella and Ida Udall might have lived together in similar fashion, supporting each other emotionally during their husband's absences, grieving the loss of a child together and pooling their financial resources, as the Cox wives had in the 1870s. When the two put on the St. Johns' May Day celebration, Ida Udall records that both women enjoyed themselves. She writes, "Ella and I retired at about 10 o'clock, much gratified with our day's pleasure . . . We left David to the care of a young lady partner (Miss Ada Babbitt)" (52). The important business of May Day was clearly Ella and Ida's project, one they worked hard on and which, for Ida Udall at least, was so satisfying because she and her co-wife were able to work together. During the 1880s, however, polygamy's challenges began to outweigh its rewards for both

husbands and wives. While earlier plural wives could provide significant companionship for each other, the 1880s were for most polygamous families a time of separation, with individual members thrown back on the larger Mormon community. Only in rural areas such as Mexico or the Udalls' Round Valley ranch could co-wives like Ida Udall and Mary Linton Morgan share a happy home. When the relationship between plural wives was harmonious, their bond could be among the most significant in a Mormon woman's life.

"My Hasty Cruel Words": Ida Udall's Challenge to her Husband

It seemed to me that there could be no greater blessing than to have a husband that one can truly love and who is living in a way that his wife can honor and look to him for advice, and whose wisdom far surpasses her own. Every true woman has not this satisfaction, and I feel greatly blessed and favored.

Journal entry, Annie Clark Tanner, December 1889

Her journal shows that Ida Udall viewed polygamy as her special mission, a demanding calling that would one day yield heavenly rewards. On the other hand, her Underground diary shows that even her Saintly patience was exhausted after months of moving from place to place and living far from her husband. Even after David Udall's release from federal prison in December 1885, Ida stayed with the senior Udalls in Nephi. By July 1886, she had grown impatient. Since Udall frequently copied her correspondence into her journal, the diary contains letters from her cousins, sisters and friends as well as Ella and David Udall. By reporting on her own feelings in journal

entries, summarizing her letters to David and copying his replies into her journal, Udall is able not only to maintain a family record of polygamy's day-to-day dynamics but to create a dialogue between husband and wife on plural marriage. Though her journal entries express anger, doubt and fear and she characterizes some of her letters as "cruel" and "harsh," the dialogue in her journal does not serve to break Udall free of Mormon patriarchal authority, but rather helps reinscribe her position more clearly within it. The section of her journal I will treat here is the same as that covered earlier in my analysis of her daily activities, including entries (and letters) from July-October 1886.

In her entry for July 13, 1886, Udall reports in her journal that after seven months of freedom David has finally "said he would try to come and see us in September, which lightened my heart wonderfully" (202). The next mention of a letter from David, however, in early August, notes a discussion of his new sheep-ranching venture. "I have bought 3700 head of Nathan Barth paying him \$1.75 for the old ones and \$1.00 for the young ones, in yearly installments of \$15.00 with 10% per annum," David Udall wrote to the wife he had not seen for over a year (203). The rest of the letter contained details of polygamy trials and church business. Still, the crisis apparently did not come until early September. After waiting weeks for word of her husband's impending visit, Udall recorded receiving a "note" with more discussion of the sheep business and only "two or three words of love" (205). She wrote in her journal:

I had looked so anxiously for a letter telling more about his expected visit in September that I must confess I felt rather hurt and slighted at this short

hastily written note saying not a word in regard to it. I sat down that evening and penned a short cool answer, asking him if he had wished me to burn it because there was so little in it. Then I cried nearly all night and felt perfectly wretched. It seemed to me the longer our husband and father was away from us the less he cared to see us, and I prayed earnestly that God would give him strength and courage to do his whole duty by all of his family. (205)

Her tears apparently cooled Udall's anger. She concluded her diary entry by noting that the next morning "I added a few more words to the letter which sounded more cheerful and posted it" (205). David Udall, however, seems to have been impervious to his wife's hints. His next letter, which Ida noted receiving on September 13, was his third since making the promise of a September visit. She recorded that it included church news, an update on Ella Udall and her children, and more on the wool business. Most crucial, however, was David's remark that, according to Ida, "He was so full of business he did not know whether he would be able to come to Utah before November or not" (206). She wrote in her journal:

Oh! How angry this last sentence made me. He never said he was sorry to disappoint me, nor made any particular excuse, but talked as though it would be all right with me, whenever it suited his convenience to come. For months past I had wondered if I could possibly endure life till September, when he had led me to believe I would surely see him. Now . . . to have all my fond hopes blighted, without one word of palliation by the one I had thought so true and tender . . . I sat down immediately and, while I was still in a passion, wrote a most cruel reply, and took care to send to post before I had time to relent. I told him he need not worry about coming at all on my account . . . I thought I had fooled around long enough, for someone who did not care a snap for me, etc., etc. (206-7)

Such a detailed journal entry—when, it is important to note, she had already vented her feelings once in her "most cruel reply"—suggests just how angry Udall was. Much of her language, however, recalls the retreat into sentimental euphemism of the Honeymoon Trail diary: expressions such as "in a passion," "fond hopes blighted" and "true and tender" suggest that Udall is once again relying on the stock phrases of Victorian fiction to avoid the plainer language that might express an inappropriate degree of anger. The notation that she deliberately sent off her reply without taking "time to relent" suggests that she felt her earlier complaints had gone unheard because she had modified them to avoid hurting David's feelings. Finally, her characterization of her own letter as "cruel" suggests two possibilities, depending on the audience Udall envisioned reading her entry someday.

If imagining that she wrote only for herself, Ida might have called her remarks "cruel" because she felt David really did care for her, and was neglectful rather than truly unfaithful_ (In polygamy, of course, a husband's special attention to one wife could make others as jealous and angry *as* if he had gone outside the marriage for companionship or sex.) (Goodson 102). In suggesting that he did not "care for" her, however, she may also have been giving vent to a fear that David, after his stay in prison, had simply decided to abandon the practice that had put him there; by challenging him to "do his duty" she was challenging his faith., asking him to show whether he was what she called a "good Saint" (209) or a hypocrite. Such remarks might be called "harsh" not because they were unjust

accusations but because calling a polygamist Mormon's faith into question was a serious matter. In the aftermath of the 1885 Edmunds Act, which imposed harsh penalties on Mormons who "unlawfully cohabited" with more than one woman, some polygamists did choose to live with and financially support just one of their wives (Tanner 236; Van Wagoner 124). Of course, in the eyes of the federal government, only the first wife was a legal wife at all, putting plural wives in a precarious position (Arrington and Bitton 202).

As Udall wrote in her journal:

I had so many examples, that I saw daily around me, where men professing to be the best of Latter Day Saints would send their plural wives away from them, and seemingly take no more care or trouble about them, than they would mere acquaintances, and the law furnished them a cloak under which to neglect and mistreat their families and break the holy covenants they had made. (209-10)

She did have some reason to feel nervous about the separations involved in practicing plural marriage in the 1880s. She herself had been sent into hiding on the Underground nearly two years before, and was acquainted with a number of other women who were living apart from their husbands on the Underground (M. Ellsworth 133).

Keeping in mind, however, that in part because of her special status as a plural wife she wrote for posterity, Udall's characterization of her challenge to David as "cruel" may be seen as rapid, self-protective recanting. While in Mormon doctrine marriage itself, when performed in a special ceremony called "sealing," enabled the partners to remain joined in the afterlife, the highest level of heavenly glory was accessible only to those joined in plural or "celestial" marriage (Doctrine & Covenants 131: 1-4). The principle of

plurality came not just with a carrot, however, but with a stick. Church founder and prophet Joseph Smith had preached in 1843 on the subject of the "new and everlasting covenant" of plural marriage that "if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory" (Doctrine & Covenants 132: 4). While modern Mormons consider this scripture superseded by church president Wilford Woodruff's "Manifesto" of 1890, which forbade contracting any marriage "forbidden by the law of the land" (Doctrine & Covenants 292) and construe the term "celestial marriage" simply to mean marriage in a Mormon temple (McConkie 118) Udall in 1886 would have been aware that she was railing against a way of life her church considered sacred. By explaining that she sent off her reproof while she was still angry, and characterizing her comments as "cruel," Udall suggests to potential critics that she is not reprobate but simply overwhelmed with emotion. Finally, her use of the term allows her criticism of David to stand, while she anticipates others' disapproval of her "impatience" by rebuking herself.

Such thoughts of her more public audience, of how her children, grandchildren or even church historians might perceive her complaints, and recognition of the fact that her husband could legally abandon her, might also have inspired some of the remorse Udall records in the wake of her letter and angry entry. Though she writes, "I never admitted to Aunty" (the senior Mrs. Udall) "that I was sorry for what I had done" she insists, "I felt very unhappy, and laid [sic] awake many an hour weeping and praying over the matter"

(207). By September 26, two weeks after receiving David's letter putting off his visit, she describes a thorough, even abject repentance:

In the depths of humility I wrote to David asking him if he could ever forgive me for the hasty cruel words I had written. Telling him how I had suffered with remorse but it had taken me all this time to thoroughly repent, and I now felt if there was any thing [sic] I could do to atone for that wrong, I would be glad to do it. (209)

Udall's choice of Biblical *terms*—*repent, atone*—to describe her feelings suggests not just the immersion in scriptural language that might characterize a devout person, but her placement of herself on a level with Biblical sinners for criticizing her husband. Rather than chastising David for neglect, Ida Udall has come to consider herself the offender for drawing attention to his absence.

If she had not repented on her own, however, the correspondence copied and recorded in Udall's journal shows that the male members of her family would have pressed her to do so. Her challenge to David sets in motion a chain of patriarchal action and support—for him. While David's stepmother—herself a plural wife--supports Udall's questioning of her husband (*as she writes, "Aunty only gloried in my spunk, said he deserved a good going over"*) (207) his father comes swiftly to his defense: "Father [David Udall, senior] remonstrated with me, saying that while to us it would appear that David was rather neglectful, we did not know his circumstances and could not understand his motives" (207). Shortly thereafter, Udall records "I received a letter from pa" [her own father, John Hunt] "in which he takes me severely to task for writing as I did to

David . . . D. had given him my letters to read, and had also unburdened his heart to him, and pa was full of sympathy for him in his trials and lonely situation" (209).

(Presumably, Ida's father was referring to David's inability to publicly acknowledge his whole family or house his wives in the same town; ongoing prosecutions and the strong Gentile presence in St. Johns made it less than welcoming for plural families) (M. Ellsworth 46). Both John Hunt and David Udall senior, it is worth noting, were polygamists; each had three wives (M. Ellsworth 99, 175).

Finally, Udall records a letter from David himself, copying it into her journal. She notes that he wrote, "It is nearly two months since I received a letter from you only those two cruel notes . . . I know you have repented them. If not I will lecture you when I see you as a lover does his sweet-heart" (211). David Udall concurs with Ida here about the need to "repent" of her "cruelty" but also makes light of her complaints in his promise to "lecture" her. His next reference to her reported rebukes is to dismiss them entirely, *as* when he writes on October 15 that "Those hastily written words will go into oblivion never to be remembered against you" (214). Far more serious a sin than appearing to neglect one's plural wife, these responses make clear, is anger at one's husband. Dissatisfied or not, Udall's feminine role is to be subject to her husband and abide by his decisions without complaint

Emphasizing the connection of husbandly and church authority in the Saints' world, David Udall sends his wife words of prophecy as well as absolution, spiritual as well as earthly forgiveness. He writes:

I have a testimony [a Mormon expression meaning "spiritual conviction"] that the day of deliverance is near at hand, and that we will have joy in the earth. The Lord will visit with blessings and not with cursings. For the trials and sacrifices you have endured for your husband and religion I promise you eternal Glory with the sanctified, with husband and children if we will continue faithful. . . My forgiveness is unaloid [sic] . . . Go to the temple and rejoice before the Lord and He will hear and answer your prayers. . . And be assured that you have a husband's blessing. (217)

Such a response is a reminder of why plural marriage was also called "patriarchal marriage." While nearly every Mormon man could be a patriarch in his own family (Arrington and Bitton 225) David Udall was also a man of some standing in the church. As a bishop, the Mormon equivalent of a Catholic parish priest today, he had the authority to hear confessions of sin and judge church members' spiritual fitness (McConkie 90; Arrington and Bitton 212) thus doubling his qualifications to both judge and forgive his wife's transgressions. He did, however, follow his declaration of absolution with some very ordinary excuses: since his release in December 1885, he wrote, he had been busy reestablishing the family farm, settling church business and getting started in the sheep trade (218). When he writes, "In all I thought I was doing right," he sounds more the plaintive, guilty husband than the Mormon leader he was (M. Ellsworth 41). Ida's reconstruction of her anger and frustration, and David's string of

excuses, show that polygamy, considered a spiritual principle, was lived by very ordinary people, subject to jealousy and thoughtlessness despite their efforts to be "good Saints."

Ida Udall's journal ends in November 1886. She was on her way south to join her family in Beaver, Utah, hoping to meet her husband soon. Twenty-eight years old, with a daughter who was nearly two, she hoped to make a home with David for Pauline, or at least to see him more often than she had for the past two years while on the Underground.

Perhaps sadly, Udall's hope for "a husband, a home and a name" was to be only partially realized. She moved many more times in the course of her life, always keeping a low profile as the battle over polygamy raged between the federal government and the Mormon church. She lived with relatives and friends, then settled on David's sheep ranch in Round Valley, Arizona (M. Ellsworth 188). Later, she shared her own homestead with David Udall's third wife, Mary Linton Morgan, her own six children and Mary's three sons (M. Ellsworth 200). The ranch location was named Hunt, the family name Ida Udall kept using for most of her life in order to avoid attracting attention as a plural wife (M. Ellsworth 193). While David spent enough time visiting Ida to father her six children, he continued to live primarily with his first wife Ella. The birthday book Udall kept for most of her life, a yearly journal in which she recorded each birthday's circumstances and noted how and with whom she spent the day, notes far more birthdays spent away from

David than with him. All her life Udall was to have only a share in her husband; her close network of support was made up in later years of her daughter Pauline, David and Ella's daughter Pearl, her friend and co-wife Mary Linton Morgan, her brothers and sisters and her sons. With their help she earned a living on the ranches at Round Valley and Hunt.

Though eking out a living in rural northern Arizona and rearing her six children presumably kept Udall from making daily entries after 1886, she did continue the yearly entries in her birthday book for many years. In her daily diary from 1882-86 she had chronicled an intense period of her life when she had both the need and the opportunity to write: without her own home to maintain or a husband and many children to care for, and with the loneliness and concerns of life on the Underground to occupy her mind, Udall made time for a substantial amount of writing in her daily round. In so doing, she left an important account of polygamous life for Mormon posterity and curious Gentile readers; she negotiated her own position within the proudly patriarchal system of nineteenth century Utah Mormon culture; and she left what may justly be called an autobiography, a carefully crafted, artful reconstruction of a life.

Notes

Baym does, however, differentiate (as the basis for her work on what she terms "woman's fiction") between writing that presents women *as* self-reliant heroines and that which features them as helpless and in need of rescue. Baym refers to works that follow the latter pattern as "novels of sensibility," heirs to the seduction novel à la Samuel Richardson and Susanna Rowson. For my purposes in examining Ida Udall's remarkable language shifts, it is sufficient to note elements that clearly seem borrowed from popular fiction. Examining which genre conventions Udall adheres most to is, perhaps, a subject for future study.

² The historical status of black Americans in the Mormon church is quite different from that of American Indians. Newell G. Bringhurst offers a useful discussion of this subject, which is far too complex to be treated here. The doctrinal thought of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and other LDS church leaders evolved as the Mormons moved across the country and adapted to national political conditions. Neither blacks nor Jews were awarded the special kinship status, mentioned in Mormon scripture, of American Indians; as "the children of Old Cain," Brigham Young argued in the 1850s, blacks were unworthy to hold the "priesthood," normally tendered to male church members over age 12 (Bringhurst 123). Both blacks and Jews could receive the Mormon gospel (i.e. be converted) but church leaders prophesied that in general, members of these groups would be among the last converts before the millennium. Jews and "Cainites," according to Brigham Young, "cannot come in until the rest of the [human] family come in and receive their blessings" (Bringhurst 135).

³ The classic work on this kind of societal control from within is, of course, Michel Foucault's Discipline and Punish, which offers a comprehensive (though at times sensational) exposition.

⁴ It should be noted here, however, that Peggy Pascoe, Jane Tompkins and others have argued that many nineteenth-century women, in particular the relatively well-educated, white middle-class women most associated with moral reform movements, wielded the values of "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" with authority. (Tompkins applies this argument to writers of sentimental fiction, for example Harriet Beecher Stowe.) This "female moral authority," to borrow Pascoe's term, formed an important basis for (as she describes) women's benevolent efforts, among them anti-polygamy activism. Pascoe argues that it was the very fact that polygamy, and Mormonism in general, stripped women of their claim to moral authority that fired the antipolygamy crusade.

CHAFFER VI

EPILOGUE

In choosing the subjects for this study, I was influenced in part by personal considerations. Just over a decade ago, having made several new friends who happened to be Mormon women, I was struck by the similarities between the Latter-Day Saints' prescription for women's lives, and the views that were voiced, albeit less directly, from the pulpit of my own Presbyterian church. My friends appeared bound to a set of life choices—early marriage, submission to male authority, motherhood as a woman's primary goal—that seemed outdated and restrictive to me but which they took seriously, as an article of faith. Though I knew that not all Mormon women followed this path, the fact that many, including my own friends, chose it and that it paralleled the path advocated by other conservative religious groups stirred my curiosity. In the congregation to which I belonged, most members at least rendered lip service to women's pursuit of higher education and careers—yet when I was a college student, every eligible bachelor visitor was thrust into my path. My Mormon friends seemed less ambivalent than I about whether it was better to settle down early or postpone marriage (or at least childrearing) for college or a career. While I wasn't sure I wanted to follow their example, I wondered why the choice between home and personal ambition seemed so clear-cut for them and not for me. What was it about this faith that sparked such devotion?

Though some of my own relatives and friends held essentially the same beliefs about women's lives as the Latter-Day Saints, it was the Mormon patriarchy I set out to investigate (since it governed a church that was like my own, yet unfamiliar, I hoped to hear something new on the subject of women's roles that might still apply to my own, as well as my friends', choices. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young also seemed more colorful than what were, to me, the familiar gray Reformation figures of Knox and Calvin). I wanted to discover the tradition of this American church that remained so proudly patriarchal at the end of the twentieth century, and in particular, to learn about the women who had lived under its authority from the earliest days. Were my Mormon friends, like the Old Order Amish, deliberately choosing to live as their foremothers had more than a hundred years ago?

Fortunately for me, Mormon scholars had (as I noted in Chapter One) begun studying their own past some twenty years before, and had published some of the journals that had been preserved as part of a collective history. These writings, which included Mormon Odyssey, the published version of Ida Hunt Udall's journal, made clear that the question of whether my Mormon friends were choosing to live "in the past" had no simple answer. Even if they were, the nineteenth-century Mormon past seemed little less complex and fraught with choices and opportunities for women than the present could hardly accuse any of my friends who did seek to live like their foremothers of beating a retreat from modern-day challenges, or choosing the sequestered world of *kinder, kirche, kuche* for simplicity's sake under the guise of serving God.

What was described in these nineteenth-century diaries and letters was neither an easy life nor, in most cases, a simple one. What the work revealed, however, was the writers' sense of vocation, of participation in an endeavor greater than themselves. The diaries of Ida Udall's contemporaries suggest that she was one of many Mormon women who lived as if she were answering a call, incurring the same kind of curiosity (and occasional disapproval) with which I scrutinized my friends' lives. The history of Mormon polygamy, in particular, is rife with examples of women willing to live lives conspicuously different from those of their non-Mormon contemporaries because they were convinced they did so for a greater good. These women were willing to buck the nineteenth-century trend towards love matches and companionate marriage and instead to choose their mates based on promises of future glory and the thought that they were doing their part to hasten Christ's return. As Chapter Four shows, their choices were at least as mystifying to the women's rights advocates of their time as my Mormon friends' choices were to me.

Even now, writing like Ida Udall's and Narcissa Whitman's contributes to the ongoing dialogue about women's lives, faith and choices. My own feminist scrutiny of other women's lives may be said to parallel, though on a much smaller scale, the nineteenth-century antipolygamy crusaders' critique of their Mormon contemporaries. Like those nineteenth-century Gentiles--and like Narcissa Whitman and her missionary contemporaries, who firmly believed their lot as Christian women was superior to that of any of their "heathen" sisters around the globe--I too am slower to investigate the patriarchal underpinnings of my own world than to attempt to root out such apparent evils

elsewhere. Udall's perspective can shed light on such questions as: why do Mormon women live as they do? By choice? Because they are or forced by the church to abandon other opportunities (from my perspective, a career; a traditional marriage, from the nineteenth-century critics' standpoint)? In leaving a record, Udall places herself and her historical perspective permanently in the debate, while her writing itself contributes to it by suggesting her agency as simultaneous crafter of a narrative and a life.

Through the work of crafting her life story, Ida Udall helped me to see Mormon women in relation to my own evangelical background. As I noted in Chapter Two, Narcissa Whitman is a Presbyterian as well as a pioneer heroine. She is still remembered in fictionalized accounts as an icon of refinement on the prairie as well as a strong-willed proponent of white domesticity. It is important to recognize that while I may look to these nineteenth-century writers for their perspective on the changing nature of women's roles, their words and lives play a part in other people's narratives as well, and that some of these people are men. For example, Ida Udall's great-grandson speaks reverently of his ancestor's willingness to sacrifice her personal comfort for the cause of polygamy. As the title of her published writings suggests, the stories of her Underground sojourn have acquired near-mythical status, while the family history of devotion is invoked as a standard for judging everyday actions in the present.

Narcissa Whitman too provided inspiration for more recent Western settlers. Among those she inspired was my paternal grandfather, who believed unequivocally in the nineteenth-century story of progress through technology. Much as the Whitmans came to believe that Oregon rightly belonged to their kind of people—Anglo-American,

evangelical Christians with plows and hoes—and worked to promote their settlement in the West, my grandfather Howard Long, who was willing to winter in a shack on Alaska's North Slope in the 1960s, believed that yet another frontier should be "opened" for the sake of the resources it could provide to an ever-increasing American population, as hungry for oil as its nineteenth-century ancestors were for land. For him, as for many Westerners then and now, the Whitmans and their mission colleagues were heroic figures not just because of their bravery in crossing the plains or their dogged attempts to evangelize Northwest tribes, but because they attempted to reshape both land and people according to their own vision. Believing that Narcissa Whitman was as determined and, in her own way, as instrumental as her husband in attempts to "civilize" those at Waiilatpu, and feeling that Marcus Whitman had received the lion's share of scholarly attention (Julie Roy Jeffrey's biography of Narcissa Whitman came too late for him) my grandfather charged me, near the end of his life, with someday telling Narcissa Whitman's story.

Years later, when I began reading Whitman's work as part of my research on women's diaries, I was struck that both she and Udall considered themselves missionaries, drawing inspiration for their often difficult lives from a similar sense of vocation. Both willingly devoted their lives to causes they saw as greater than themselves. Though Ida Udall was not formally designated a missionary by her church, her decision to enter plural marriage made her as visible (paradoxically, even on the Underground) as Narcissa Whitman, who was officially commissioned by the American Board to carry the gospel and the supposed benefits of white culture to the inland

Northwest tribes. Indeed, both women were on missions: missions to prove their devotion to their faith by taking up extraordinary challenges, and missions to spread that faith, in a material sense, by joining groups that set out to colonize the West. Though coincidental, it seems fortuitous for a study set in the nineteenth century that these two writers were born exactly fifty years apart. Despite the intervening years, filled with technological change and advancements in written communications, their letters and diaries show that writing fulfilled many of the same functions for both women.

What I hope this project has provided are new ways of reading Whitman's and Udall's texts, and others like them, and new ways of thinking about diaries, autobiographies and letters from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. Written by flexible craftswomen who were able to simultaneously imagine several audiences for their work, Whitman's and Udall's diaries shed light on how these women, uniquely positioned to give their own perspective on Western settlement, were themselves implicated in the process of colonization. Both saw the moral as well as the physical terrain surrounding their homes as a desert. Udall described her home in a predominantly Mexican neighborhood of St. Johns, Arizona as "surrounded by a wicked influence and spirit" (61) while Whitman referred to her mission station's location in the "solitary wilds of Oregon" (Letters 93). Unpopulated by believers of their own stamp, not yet divided into gardens and farms, Arizona and Oregon were, to these writers, a blank page, an empty space they set out to fill with the power of their own values and beliefs. Both wrote diaries that sustained them personally, enabling them to maintain the sense of

mission they brought to marriage. Through their narratives and the day-to-day duties that comprised their mission work, they influenced others' views of a West they themselves constantly sought to change. Interestingly, both did so not by assuming traditionally masculine, assertive roles but by participating in traditional women's work transformed and justified by a sense of higher calling. Whether housekeeping teaching, evangelizing or helping to build their frontier homes, both women played a role in changing the Western landscape and in so doing, had a profound effect on the lives of their indigenous neighbors and of fellow Anglo-American settlers. In the writing they turned to again and again, they planned and then relived these activities and it was in such writing--their letters and diaries—that Whitman, Udall and writers like them brought into being their vision for the frontier and began to shape its future.

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