



BLESSED DAMOZELS: WOMEN IN MORMON HISTORY

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Historians have long recognized the role of women in the development of Western civilization and culture, but for some reason the role of women in Mormon history has been overlooked. Among both Mormon and non-Mormon writers the idea seems to have prevailed that Mormon men held all the important policy-making positions, and were therefore the ones who determined the course of events. In addition, there has been what might be called a male interpretation of Mormon history.¹

Where authors do mention women, as in the case with contemporary novels and accounts, they are usually depicted as depraved and ignorant dupes; or they are stereotyped, as in their granddaughters' eulogies, as unbelievably saccharine angels; or they are conventional objects of coarse humor. Mark Twain, in *Roughing It*, has the following to say of Mormon women.

Our stay in Salt Lake amounted to only two days, and therefore we had no time to make the customary inquisition into the workings of polygamy and get up the usual statistics and deductions preparatory to calling the attention of the nation at large once more to the matter. I had the will to do it. With the gushing self-sufficiency of youth I was feverish to plunge in headlong and achieve a great reform here — until I saw the Mormon women. Then I was touched. My heart was wiser than my head. It warmed toward these poor, ungainly, and pathetically "homely" creatures, and as I turned to hide the generous moisture in my eyes, I said, "No — the man that marries one of them has done an act of Christian charity which entitles him to the kindly applause of mankind, not their harsh censure — and the man that marries sixty of them has done a deed of open-handed generosity so sublime that the nations should stand uncovered in his presence and worship in silence."²

In an attempt to determine the role of women in Mormon history, I have spent a pleasant few months reading women's diaries, autobiographies, and letters, as well as their novels, poetry, and non-fictional works. I am now able to say with confidence that among the early Mormons who passed most of their

*Adapted from Leonard Arrington's presidential address to the Western History Association's annual convention at Omaha, Nebraska, 10 October 1969.

¹See my article "The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 3 (Summer 1968), esp. pp. 61-62.

²Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (2 vols., New York, 1913), I, 101.

adult lives in the Great Basin there were a number of formidable, intelligent, resourceful, and independent women who deserve to be remembered.

Mormon women were probably more independent than most Western women. For one thing, the men were often away on missions of one kind or another so that the women had to provide a livelihood for themselves and their children, as well as send occasional expense money to their husbands. For another thing, the practice of plural marriage insured that, in the case of many families, the husband could not manage his farms and other enterprises on a day-to-day basis; this had to be done by his various wives and their children. The women often held cooperative "bees" to build houses, canals, and fences and to make quilts. Finally, the inhospitable nature of the Great Basin and the isolated character of most of the settlements must have required women to be more self-reliant and self-sustaining than settlers in less harsh areas. Three examples illustrate this womanly spirit of independence.

The first is found in the diary of Christina Oleson Warnick. It is evident from this diary that Mrs. Warnick helped build her house, being primarily responsible for the fireplace and chimney. She dug irrigation ditches; she plowed, planted and fertilized the land while the men put in the dam; she cut the wild hay along the river bottoms and stacked it for the cows for winter; she grubbed the brush and sheared the sheep; she took in washings and spun and wove cloth; and she always walked from one village to the next with her knitting in her hands.³

A second example comes from the diary of Mary Julia Johnson Wilson. She tells the story of a young man who was leaving in one week on a mission, but had no suit to wear. When the neighbor women heard of this, they went to work with the result that "one Sunday the wool was on the sheep's back, but by the next Sunday it had been clipped, cleansed, corded, spun, woven, and made into a splendid suit and was on the back of the missionary as he delivered his farewell address in the little church house."⁴

The third example is based on an entry in the diary of John D. Lee. One day when Lee was away from home, John Lawson, one of his neighbors, and George Dodds, Lawson's son-in-law, commenced to chop down the trees and willows that grew along a creek that ran through Lee's property. This was just behind the house occupied by Emma and Ann, Lee's two youngest wives. They both went out and asked Lawson to stop, stating that they needed the shade for their ducks and chickens. But Lawson paid no attention to their protests, so they sent for their husband. Lee and his son Willard came on the run, took Lawson's axe away, and ordered him off the place. Early the next morning Lawson returned with additional help and began once more cutting away the brush from the creek bed. This time Ann had no time to send for help. She filled a pan with boiling water and when Lawson disregarded her protests, she threw it at him. She was so far away that it fell harmlessly in front of him, and he said, "Pour it on," and continued his chopping.

Desperately, Ann ran back to the house and returned with Emma and

³"Miscellaneous Pioneer Interviews and Sketches: Christina Oleson Warnick," p. 4, Mormon Diaries, Journals, and Life Sketches, Box 12, Library of Congress.

⁴*Ibid.*, "Mary Julia Johnson Wilson," Box 10, p. 31.

a pan of hot water each. Seeing that they were determined, Lawson held up his ax, and told them to stand back. Emma threw her water at him, and when his attention was diverted, Ann sprang at him and grabbed the arm that held the ax. They both fell, with Ann on top. "When I with several others reached the scene of action," wrote John D. Lee in his diary,

I found them both on the ground & Ann with one hand in his hair & with the other pounding him in the face. In the mean time Emma returned with a New Supply of hot water & then pitched into him with Ann & they bothe handled him rather Ruff. His face was a gore of blood. My son Willard finally took them off him.⁵

Self-reliance among Mormon women is evidenced not only in such individual experiences as these, but in organized group efforts as well, a number of which were instituted over a hundred years ago. The first of these was the reorganization of the Relief Society and the establishment of a group in each ward or settlement in the years 1867 and 1868.⁶ These groups carried out a variety of cultural, educational, and economic programs. Among other things, they mobilized support for young women to go east to study music, law, art, and medicine. Some groups specialized in programs to help the Indian women of the region. Under the direction of the Relief Society, a Young Ladies' Cooperative Retrenchment Association was organized in 1869 to promote habits of order, thrift, industry, and charity. Realizing the high responsibilities resting on them, the young ladies said, "We feel that we should not condescend to imitate the pride, folly, and fashions of the world." "Real beauty," they declared, "appears to greater advantage in a plain dress than when bedizened with finery. . . . We shall avoid and ignore as obsolete . . . all extremes which are opposed to good sense, or repulsive to modesty." The young women resolved to retrench in dress, in table settings, in speech, in light-mindedness — "in everything not good or beautiful." This organization still exists today as the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association.⁷

Later, the women of the Relief Society organized Primary Associations for children in each of the wards and settlements. In this way, through the Primaries, Retrenchment Societies, and Relief Societies, there existed a program for training women in matters of health, in economics and business affairs, in literature, and in politics. The women were trained to support the men, to be sure, but also to be self-reliant, when necessary, in thought, word, and action.

⁵*A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848-1876*, Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds. (2 vols., San Marino, California, 1955), II 129-130. Compare also Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee: Zealot-Pioneer, Builder-Scapegoat* (Glendale, Calif., 1961), p. 282.

⁶The women who originally organized the Relief Society in 1842 had shown their independence even in the naming of the auxiliary. Joseph Smith, John Taylor, and Willard Richards suggested that they call it the Nauvoo Benevolent Society. The women, however, were of a different opinion. They excused the elders from the meeting and then unanimously agreed to name it the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo. See "History of the Relief Society," *The Woman's Exponent*, 31 (February, 1903), 69; also original minutes in the library of the Relief Society Building, Salt Lake City.

⁷Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association* (Salt Lake City, 1911), pp. 5-13.

These beginnings were significant in four movements: (1) the movement for economic independence, (2) the movement to establish an indigenous literature, (3) the movement to provide medical services, and (4) the movement for greater political expression.

MOVEMENT FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

The success of the drive toward economic independence within each home, village, valley, and within the territory is illustrated by the following report of the Sanpete Stake Relief Society for 19 May 1879. According to this report, these women, in a two-to-three-year period, had done the following:

- Gathered 21,507 dozen Sunday eggs to use for charitable and philanthropic purposes.
- Made 504 quilts.
- Made five rugs and 3,633 yards of rag carpet.
- Gathered 11,093 bushels of wheat.
- Collected 111 books for their library.
- Acquired four acres of land.
- Manufactured 1,084 yards of cloth.
- Donated \$5,310 to temples.
- Helped 399 families of missionaries, and sent off \$2,925 to missionaries in the field.
- Made 52,550 visits to the sick.
- Clothed and prepared for burial 299 corpses.
- Built seven Relief Society halls.
- Held two bazaars or fairs.
- Built one co-op store, acquired shares in three stores and two mills and one thresher.
- Made 11,199 pounds of cheese.
- Donated \$5,965 to the emigration fund.
- Spent \$2,159 for surprise parties for the poor.⁸

Clearly, the women of the Relief Societies were heavily involved in the economic life of the Mormon community.⁹

MOVEMENT TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN LITERATURE

In the year 1870, two young converts who had been teachers in eastern schools came to Utah. They were Mary and Ida Ione Cook. They came from Oneida County, New York, where their father was a noted doctor and educator. Trained at Syracuse (New York) Teachers College, they had accepted positions to teach at St. Louis, Missouri, where they were converted to Mormonism. Upon reaching Utah they set up a model school with which Brigham Young was much impressed. In 1872, when John R. Park, the leading Utah educator who taught the President's children, went to Europe as a missionary, Brigham Young incorporated his own family school as well as classes of the University of Deseret and Deseret University High School into the school operated by the Cooks. Among other things, the Cook sisters introduced the principle of grading.

⁸Susa Young Gates, "General Relief Society Movement," in "History of Mormon Women," MS., Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City. Cited from *Woman's Exponent*, 1894.

⁹See also Leonard J. Arrington, "The Economic Role of Pioneer Mormon Women," *Western Humanities Review*, 9 (Spring, 1955), 145-164.

Before they came, the children all sat in one hall, the little ones in front, the larger ones back according to size and age. Classes recited as they were called to the front by the tap of the teacher's bell. The one teacher gave instructions in A.B.C.'s, geography, arithmetic, spelling, history, and back to "C.A.T. spells cat, children."¹⁰

Two of the remarkable students of the Cook sisters during these years were Louisa Lula Greene and Susa Young, both of whom came to play a major role in initiating literary work among Mormon women. Louisa Lula Greene founded the *Woman's Exponent*, said to have been the first "permanent" woman's magazine west of the Mississippi and second in the nation after the Boston *Woman's Journal*. Lula later became the plural wife of Levi Richards, raised a notable family, and published numerous poems, children's fiction, editorials, and feature articles in Salt Lake City periodicals. Her successor as editor of the *Woman's Exponent* was Mrs. Emmeline B. Wells, mother of eleven, who served as editor for more than forty years.

Lula's companion, Susa Young, founded and edited the *College Lantern*, said to be the first Western college paper, and later the *Young Woman's Journal*. She also married and bore thirteen children.

Through their magazines, Louisa and Susa encouraged the writing of literature; under their stimulus, more than three dozen books of poetry, autobiography, and history were published by Latter-day Saint women in the 1870s and 1880s. Literally scores of women wrote creditable autobiographies and diaries which were never published. Susa herself wrote nine books, including the first Mormon novel by a Mormon and a major biography of her father, Brigham Young. Also active in politics and women's organizations, Susa helped organize the National Household Economics Organization, served as a delegate and speaker to five Congresses of the International Council of Women, served as a delegate and officer of the National Council of Women, and was the Utah organizer of Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, and National Woman's Press Club. She attended several Republican National Conventions, served as an officer of the Relief Society and Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association, and was a member of the Board of Regents of Brigham Young University and Utah State Agricultural College. In Utah she entertained such prominent American women as Ella Wheeler Wilcox, May Wright Sewall, Clara Barton, and Susan B. Anthony; carried on correspondence with Tolstoy, William Dean Howells, and other literary figures; published several woman suffrage pamphlets; and left many shelves of unpublished dramas, novels, short stories, and biographies. Twenty-two pages are required just to list her writings. After a miraculous cure from a debilitating illness in middle age, she also went daily to the Salt Lake Temple and wrote the first Mormon genealogical treatises. Unquestionably, the prolific and assertive Susa Young Gates was a versatile and talented writer and organizer.¹¹

¹⁰Gates, "Women in Educational Fields," in "History of Mormon Women," pp. 68-88.

¹¹See the Susa Young Gates papers in the Utah State Historical Society Library. See also Paul Cracraft, "Susa Young Gates: Her Life and Literary Work" (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1951).

MOVEMENT TO IMPROVE MEDICAL SERVICES

From the Mormon pioneer belief that women ought to be attended by women doctors, the Mormon community in the 1870s and 1880s produced the most remarkable group of women doctors in American history. Romania B. Pratt, an early student of the Cooks at the University of Utah, was the first young Latter-day Saint to go east to study medicine. Her interest stemmed from having seen a friend die for the want of medical assistance. She writes,

I saw her lying on her bed, her life slowly ebbing away, and no one near knew how to ease her pain or prevent her death; it was a natural enough case, and a little knowledge might have saved her. Oh, how I longed to know something to do, and at that moment I solemnly vowed to myself never to be found in such a position again, and it was my aim ever afterward to arrange my life-work that I might study the science which would relieve suffering, appease pain, prevent death.¹²

The wife of Parley P. Pratt, Jr., and the mother of seven children, Romania Pratt went to Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia in 1873, and graduated in 1877. She served as an intern in, among other places, Boston and Philadelphia, after which she returned to Utah to practice and teach. She returned to the East in 1881-1882 to the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, and became a specialist in performing operations on the eye. In Utah she held classes in obstetrics twice a year or more, and eventually some seventy-five women received instruction from her. She worked for the establishment of the Deseret Hospital and became its first Resident Physician.

The second Utah woman to go east to study medicine was Margaret Curtis Shipp, who went to Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia in 1875. She returned after a month — homesick. Immediately thereafter, Ellis Shipp, a sister-wife — for this was a polygamous household — left home, and received a degree in 1878.

Ellis Shipp is a little-known but fascinating Mormon woman. She was married at the age of nineteen to Milford Shipp. Nine days after her third son was born her husband was called on a two-year mission to Europe. Ellis supported her little family with no more than a cow, an orchard, and a garden plot. She sewed and knitted and took in a student boarder, but was not satisfied with her ability to care for and educate her children. She had had only one year of formal schooling, and so she developed a plan of study, arising every morning at 4 a.m. so she could put in three solid hours of study before her household began to stir. She continued this practice after her husband returned from his mission. Various entries in her diary relate her early morning program of studying poetry, history, English grammar, hygiene and health. When her sister-wife Margaret returned from Woman's Medical College homesick and lonely, Ellis decided to go in her place. On 10 November 1875, she wrote:

¹²Annie W. Cannon, "The Women of Utah: Women in Medicine," *Woman's Exponent*, 17 (1 September 1888), 49.

What a strange fatality! This morning I start for Philadelphia to attend the Medical College. Oh, Heavenly Father, give me strength to endure the separation from my loved ones, and power to succeed in my endeavors to gain a knowledge of Medicine — that my life may be noble and useful upon the earth.¹³

After almost a year of study, Ellis found it necessary to return to her home in Salt Lake City for health reasons. After three months of recuperation, she was ready to go again. But by then she was pregnant, family finances were exhausted, and it seemed impossible for her to return to her studies. She wrote:

September days of 1876 brought many hours of conflicting emotions. The urge to complete that which under the circumstances seemed an impossible thing to do still lived within my tenacious soul. I listened to the protests from those I loved, which I felt were made in loving concern for me. And yet I could not turn from inner convictions of what I felt the beckoning forces. As far as I was personally concerned I had no fears. I knew the trying ways of strict economy and could endure cold and hunger and, yes, the mortal sufferings of Motherhood which in Maytime would come inevitably to me. My faith had driven every fear and dread from out my soul and all I lacked was Milford's word to go. However, everything seemed so far away from that desired accomplishment. I suffered silently, and yet prayed to One in whom I trusted perfectly and felt He knew and would overrule for what was best.

And now, the morning of September 26, 1876, my husband, scanning the morning news, suddenly read aloud, "Tomorrow morning Utah students take the train for eastern colleges along with missionaries going to many eastern lands!" I hid my face to hide my tears when a kind voice said, "Ellis dear, would you really like to join this company?" My answer, "Yes, yes, I truly would." (pp. 238-39)

She then writes:

Then, as the morning hour was near and I whispered pleading words to the father of our precious ones I left for him, that he should most tenderly love and guard and shield them, a painful silence came. . . . Suddenly he grasped my hands and said, "I cannot give my sanction to such a momentous thing — under such circumstances to undertake what really is impossible, the unwise thing to do." At once I jumped to my feet and spoke to my husband as I ne'er had spoken to him before! "Yesterday you said that I should go. I am going, going now!" It seemed it could not be that I could ever do such a disrespectful thing. (pp. 239-40)

Ellis did leave home on 17 September 1876 to start for Philadelphia, suffering guilt feelings for having defied her husband. She wrote that night in her diary:

Oh, never did I suffer as I have today. I have parted from my darlings before but never under such circumstances. Oh, Heaven help me to endure this agony. Oh, I pray my Father to preserve them, keep them safe till I return. My dear, dear husband and

¹³*The Early Autobiography and Diary of Ellis Reynolds Shipp, M.D.*, Ellis Shipp Musser, ed. (Salt Lake City, 1962), p. 172. Subsequent references will appear in the text.

my darling children — oh, how fondly do I love them. How can I live from out their presence? I have been urged on by a something, I know not what, to take this step. Heaven grant that it may prove a wise one. . . . Oh, if Milford had only felt differently, if he had but pronounced upon me his blessing, how much stronger I would feel. (pp. 240-42)

A few days later, after arriving in Philadelphia, Ellis wrote:

What I suffered the first day and night after my arrival my pen can never tell. How bitter, how great was my remorse. I feared I had been rash, that I should have paid more heed to the advice of my friends and especially of my own dear husband. . . . When I left home last September it was under very peculiar circumstances. Milford gave me all the money that he had, so noble and generous that he was, I was loath to take it, still it was my only alternative. I felt something impelling and urging me on, a feeling that I could not resist. I felt that I must return to Philadelphia and complete my studies, and I came although I had but one hundred and fifty dollars to pay my fare here, pay for my professors' tickets, my rent, board, and not knowing where the next was to come from. (pp. 244-46)

New Year's morning of 1877 came, and Ellis had but one dollar left. She wrote:

I was just reflecting what I should do and had concluded that I would be obliged to give up some of my lectures and try and sell some models, when I heard the postman's well-known ring. . . . I opened the letter and was surprised to see it was from my dear Sister Lizzie [Elizabeth, her husband's plural wife], for I know she had been home for some time visiting her mother and I had not yet learned of her return. But what was my astonishment on opening still farther to have fall into my lap a *fifty dollar order*, all the result of her own patient labor, and all for me. (247-48)

A few months later she received another \$50 order from her "noble sister Lizzie":

How grateful do I feel and how much increased do I feel my responsibilities. . . . How pure and heavenly is the relationship of sisters in the holy order of Polygamy. Even the kindred ties of blood could not be more pure and sacred, nor more unselfish and enduring. How beautiful to contemplate the picture of a family where each one works for the interest, advancement and well being of all. *Unity is strength.* (pp. 252-53)

In May, Ellis gave birth to a daughter, Olea. Then at the end of her second year, her sister-wife Maggie came to work toward her degree:

A day never to be forgotten for it has brought such glorious news from my dear husband. For months he has been studying *law* and will be admitted to the bar next March. He has kept this a secret, thinking to surprise us in the spring, but he concluded to allow us to share in the hopeful joy that fills his heart. Oh, how thankful, how happy I am to know . . . that that noble loved one has at last entered a field wherein he will have full scope for exercise of his rare and brilliant talents. Heaven bless him. (p. 276)

Finally, in early 1878, she experienced "joy inexpressible" when she received news that her husband was admitted to the Salt Lake Bar as an Attorney and Counselor at Law. A few days later Ellis herself graduated from Woman's Medical College.

As Utah's second woman M.D., Dr. Shipp treated patients in the Salt Lake Valley as well as her own family (she had seven children). She became a member of the General Board of the Woman's Relief Society and the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association. She attended the National Council of Women as a Mormon delegate, and read papers on the care and training of children. There she became intimately acquainted with Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth C. Stanton, Clara Barton, and other well known women. Her life exemplified an idea expressed in an editorial in the *Woman's Exponent*:

Whatever other qualities it may engender, it [polygamy] develops strength in character. Women are left to depend more upon their own judgment and to take more fully the charge of their own home and affairs. It brings out latent and dormant powers. A wife becomes literally the head of her household.¹⁴

MOVEMENT FOR GREATER POLITICAL EXPRESSION

On 12 February 1870, the Utah territorial legislature passed without opposition an act to grant suffrage to the women of Utah.¹⁵ Although the Wyoming legislature had previously passed a similar measure, Utah women were the first in the nation to vote for municipal and territorial or state officers. At a municipal election held just nine days after the approval by the legislature of the woman suffrage bill, Seraph Young, a niece of Brigham Young, voted in the Salt Lake City election and was thus the first woman in the nation to vote in such an election.

The Utah act, however, did not provide that women could hold political office; their expression was limited to serving on party central committees, attending party caucuses and precinct nominating meetings, and voting at regularly scheduled elections. Agitation for further rights, and encouragement in the exercise of such rights, was conducted regularly by the *Woman's Exponent*, which carried on its masthead throughout most of its history the slogan: "The Rights of the Women of Zion and the Rights of the Women of all Nations." The *Exponent* carried articles about woman's suffrage and other women's activities in almost every issue. Beginning in 1879 Utah women took an active part in the National Woman's Suffrage Conventions.

Unfortunately, conflicts between Mormons and the federal government led the national Congress to pass the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 which prohibited Utah women from voting. When Utah held its Constitutional Convention in 1895 in anticipation of statehood, however, a clear majority voted to restore woman suffrage to the state constitution, and this was rati-

¹⁴*The Woman's Exponent*, 13 (1 November 1894), 81.

¹⁵The best treatment of this is found in Thomas G. Alexander, "An Experiment in Progressive Legislation: The Granting of Woman Suffrage in Utah in 1870"; and Jean Bickmore White, "Gentle Persuaders: Utah's First Women Legislators," in *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 39 (January 1970).

fied by Congress. Grover Cleveland signed the constitution and full suffrage including the right to hold political office was conferred upon Utah women in 1896. Shortly after that Mrs. Lillie Pardee was appointed clerk of the Utah Senate, and was the first woman to sign the credentials of a United States Senator.

The first woman state senator in the United States was Mattie Hughes Cannon, who was elected in 1896 and served two terms in the Utah upper chamber. Mrs. Cannon, intellectual and witty, studied medicine under Dr. Romania B. Pratt in Salt Lake City. Then, in 1878, she went to the University of Michigan, graduating in 1880. Not content, she went on to earn an M.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, and then attended and graduated from the National School of Elocution and Oratory in Philadelphia. Upon her return to Salt Lake City she was appointed resident physician at the Deseret Hospital.

In the elections of 1896 after Utah had become a state, her husband Angus Cannon (to whom she was a plural wife), was chosen to stand as one of the Salt Lake City Republican candidates for the Utah State Senate. Mrs. Cannon agreed to stand as one of the Democratic candidates. In the election, she received 11,413 votes to 8,742 for her husband. She proved to be a brilliant and energetic senator. She championed the measure creating the State Board of Health, and was appointed one of its members. She sponsored the state's first Pure Food Law, and defeated the lobby that tried to abolish the State Board of Public Examiners which prevented incompetents from practicing medicine. She secured passage of a bill to authorize Utah to educate the deaf, mute, and blind, and became a member of the board of the Deaf and Dumb School. She sponsored and secured passage of a bill requiring seats for women employees; a bill to erect a hospital for the State School for Deaf, Dumb, and Blind; and a bill to create a Vital Statistics Law.

CONCLUSION

Having made positive contributions in economics and business, in literature, in the professions, and in politics, the Latter-day Saint women set a record of which the area can be proud. Moreover, the Mormon tradition of womanly independence and distinction should inspire a later generation of women who are seeking their rightful place in the world. Our pioneer women's success in combining Church service, professional achievement, and family life, while somewhat intimidating, should awaken modern Latter-day Saint women to their own opportunities and responsibilities.