

## MSS 1164

LIFE HISTORIES OF FRANKLIN WEAVER  
&  
SARAH ELIZABETH HOLMES WEAVER

also

SKETCH OF JONATHAN HARRIMAN HOLMES  
&  
JONATHAN H. HOLMES DIARY

[Located at the Church Historical Dept., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St. Salt Lake City, UT 84150. Transcription of above completed July 27, 1993 by Ellen Claire Weaver Shaeffer. The manuscript was obtained by John Duncan Shaeffer at the Church Historical Dept. in Salt Lake City. The front page of the MSS states: "Copies of above, Life Histories of Franklin Weaver and Sarah Elizabeth Holmes, Sketch of Johnathan Harriman Holmes, Johnathan H. Holmes Diary book commenced July 16, 1846; ends September 24, 1848, were obtained by Buddy Youngreen November 26, 1971, from Sarah Weaver Madsen. Mrs. Madsen copied the life histories from a typed copy of the originals owned by Mrs. Sadie Harris Michealsen [Mickelson] of Grace, Idaho. Mrs. Madsen, a great granddaughter of Johnathan H. Holmes, resides in Idaho Falls, Idaho." At least part of the account was written by Sarah Elizabeth Holmes Weaver and copied by Hannah S. Weaver.]

Franklin Weaver was born May 29, 1828 in Allegheny County New York. His family accepted the gospel and joined the Saints in the city of Conias, Pennsylvania. Afterwards they came to Nauvoo where Edward, Franklin's father, worked on the temple. He took cold and died leaving his wife, Martha (Raymer or Raimer) and seven children to survive him.

The mobs began to molest the Saints. At Nauvoo a man entered Martha's home and told her if she denied the gospel he would not [harm her]. She told him she wouldn't, so he told her she had twenty minutes to get out. She and her children hitched a cow and oxen to the wagon. They gathered what little they could and joined a company of Saints on the way of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Later a call came for men to join the Mormon Battalion. Miles Weaver, Martha's son was old enough to join, but Franklin was not. Franklin begged his mother to let him go because he and his brother, Miles, were inseparable. Their mother knew how they felt and consented. She told Franklin he must not lie about his age in order to join. He promised her he would not. When they lined up for enlistment, Miles who was slender and frail, stood in front of Franklin who was larger. The enlistment officer asked Miles his name and age. When Franklin's turn came the officer only asked his name and passed him on.

On the long trip [with the battalion] Miles became ill with a fever. There was little that could be done for the sick. All the men were on foot, so there was no way for those who were ill to be transported. The Captain told Franklin that Miles must be left on the side of the trail

because he was going to die anyway. Franklin was desolate. That night when the company was bedded down Franklin and a friend slipped out of camp and went back to Miles. When they reached him he was alive but extremely weak. They arrived in camp at dawn, with Miles. When the Captain saw how determined Franklin was, he said that Miles could be taken along but he wouldn't be allowed to slow the others down. In addition Franklin must care for his brother. Franklin agreed to take the responsibility. Later Franklin was appointed to one of those who went ahead of the troops and arrange with the Indians for food.

With the disbanding of the Mormon Battalion at San Diego, California, the men marched north to where gold was discovered. Franklin was among them. It was in San Francisco that he met and married Rachel Reed the 12th of March, 1848 by Rev. Addison Pratt. The next morning they started for Utah on horse back with all their possessions on a pack animal. They traveled three hundred sixty miles then joined a company of Saints and finished the journey with them.

Upon hearing that a company of Saints was at Winter Quarters, Franklin thought that his mother would be there. He found instead that she had died at Winter Quarters.

Franklin and Miles [and their families] settled in the Salt Lake Valley. They were called by Brigham Young to go over the Jordan River and take care of the church cattle.

His brother Miles died and left two wives, each named Sarah. Franklin obeyed council and married his brother's two widows.

Franklin moved to Cache Valley with three wives and eleven children July 22, 1859 and located on what was then known as the church farm. He was still working for Brigham Young. Later he moved to Millville and lived there many years. He spent four summers up Blacksmith Fork Canyon taking care of the church cattle. Some years later his health began to fail and he moved to Bear Lake with his wife Rachel and their children. He only lived one year in his new home. He died and was buried in Bennington 12 June 1884 at the age of fifty-six.

To Franklin Weaver and Rachel Reed were born Edward Franklin, Martha, James Dart, Elmina, Frances Cecelia, Mary Jane, George, Horace, Hyrum, Hannah Maud and John Rufus.

To Franklin Weaver and Sarah Clark Weaver [Miles Weaver's first wife] were born Josephine Octaviana, Helen, Samuel Henry and Riley Weaver. (By Miles she had Miles, Joseph, Zelnora, Sarah Jane and Rebecca.) These children were raised by Franklin.

To Franklin and Sarah Elizabeth Homes Weaver [Miles second Wife] were born Miles Franklin, Marietta Elvira, Mirinda Vilate, Jonathan Holmes, Gilbert Oscar, Sarah Lusina, David and Phebe May Weaver.

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## SARAH ELIZABETH HOLMES

Sarah Elizabeth Holmes, daughter of Jonathan Harriman Holmes and Marietta Carter Holmes was born 24 January, 1838 in Kirtland, Ohio. When the Saints were driven to Illinois, Johnathan and Marietta were among them. They built a home at Nauvoo where Johnathan was a shoemaker and bodyguard to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

When Sarah was eighteen months old a little sister, Mary Emma, was born, 25 May 1840. At this time the Saints were being persecuted and driven from their homes. During one of these raids, Marietta Holmes, little Sarah and three-month-old Mary Emma were driven from their home into a storm by an angry mob. When Jonathan returned from work he found his house destroyed by fire and his family gone. Some neighbors who were also driven from their home helped shield Marietta and her children in a shed.

The next day dawned bright and clear. The panic stricken families tried to salvage what they could from their destroyed homes. A family who had escaped the mob offered a home to Jonathan and his family until a new home could be found. This experience proved to be fatal to Marietta. She died August 20, 1840. The next month baby Mary Emma died on Sept 20, 1840, thus leaving Johnathan and Sarah. The Prophet and all the others who were able bodied helped bury those who were killed in the raid.

Joseph Smith insisted that Johnathan bring Sarah to live with him family in the Nauvoo Mansion House. The Prophet's plural wife, Elvira Annie Cowles, took full charge of Sarah.

Sarah's earliest recollections began in the Prophet's home. Many hours were spent sitting in the dooryard watching for the mob so that she could warn Uncle Joseph, as she was taught to call him. Sarah also watched for Porter Rockwell who was her friend and also a bodyguard to the Prophet. Rockwell rode most of the time in order to keep an eye on the Prophet's enemies. Sarah would sit on a large woodpile and watch for him to return. Rockwell was a striking figure as he rode. His black hair was long and he wore a broad brimmed hat and a fringed buckskin coat. When he rode to the Mansion House he would signal to Sarah at some distance. If he took his hat from his head and waved it, then all was well. If he left his hat on his head, Sarah would run to the house and give the warning. Often if time permitted, the adults in the house would move a large cupboard. The cupboard appeared to be full, but in reality was empty. It stood over a secret door that led to the cellar. Joseph would descend to the cellar and the cupboard would be replaced. The mob would search the house and find nothing.

Many times Sarah gazed with awe upon the Egyptian mummies that were kept in the Prophet's home. She also sat on Joseph's lap and looked through the Urim and Thummim. The Prophet had a black horse named Joe Duncan. He used to take Sarah and Joseph Jr. for rides with him. At other times when the noise became too great at the Mansion House, the Prophet would take Sarah and Joseph Jr. to a room and close the door. With a child on each side of him he would kneel and pray.

But all was not strife and trouble at the Mansion House. Whenever the children saw someone approaching at a great distance they would rush to the Prophet and say, "The mob is coming!" Oft times Sarah was the first to reach him. After the children's warning, the Prophet would wait for the others to warn him. If none came, he knew it was a friend. He would take Sarah in his arms and stand holding the doorknob. As the friend entered he

would say teasingly, "Now, Sarah, does that look like the mob?" He would kiss her and put her down.

There was never any jealousy among the children as they were taught that Sarah was like a sister. The evenings Sarah liked best were the ones she and Elvira Cowles would be left at home to care for the family while Sister Emma Smith and Eliza R. Snow would be out caring for and visiting the sick.

The colored cook always had extra lunches and Elvira would tell stories and they would all play games. The cook would feign anger if the children would take cookies without asking.

Sarah always remembered the morning and evening prayers when the Prophet was at home. Nor did she forget her last goodbye when he gave himself up and went to Carthage jail. He took her in his arms and said, "God bless you, my little Sarah. You shall live to testify to my name in Zion."

Just before the martyrdom, the Prophet told Jonathan Holmes to marry Elvira Cowles after his death. On December 1, 1844 Jonathan H. Holmes married Elvira Annie Cowles Smith, thereby making a real home for Sarah, now seven years old. In a year they were blessed with a daughter, Lucy Elvira Holmes born 11 October, 1845.

In 1846 they were among the Saints driven from Nauvoo. While at Winter Quarters the Mormon Battalion was called up. Jonathan H. Holmes enlisted and shortly after his departure his baby daughter died (June 1847) and was buried at Winter Quarters. Elvira and Sarah continued their journey west with the second company of pioneers.

They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in October of 1847. Elvira taught children that winter, thereby making a meager living for herself and Sarah. The Saints were forced to eat buttermilk, wild herbs and roots and wolf meat. They were rationed to one and a half slices of bread daily. Many times Elvira gave her portion of bread to Sarah to keep her from crying from hunger.

The Mormon Battalion [see diary of Jonathan H. Holmes] was disbanded at San Diego, California on July 16, 1847. Acting upon the advice sent by President Brigham Young to the disbanded battalion, Jonathan H. Holmes, along with others, remained in California. He mended and made shoes to procure means to finish his journey to Utah. He made what were called "stogies," [Webster Dictionary: Stogie, from Conestoga, Pennsylvania; a stout coarse boot or shoe] from green hides and sold them for a dollar a pair to the miners who came searching for gold.

After he returned to Utah, he and his family stayed in Salt Lake for sometime. They later moved to a farm at Farmington, Utah where they raised fruit, vegetables and a few cattle and sheep. Jonathan continued his shoemaking trade and Elvira wove carpets and spun wool. Sarah helped herd the sheep and assumed the responsibility for the household and three younger half sisters, Phoebe, Elvira and Emma Holmes.

When still a young woman Sarah met and married Miles Weaver. She married as his second wife 7 January 1855. Within a year Miles died. Sarah then married her husband's brother, Franklin, as his third wife. She became the mother of eight children: four sons and four daughters.

Sarah, with her husband his other wives and children, were among those called by Brigham Young to settle Cache Valley, Utah. She shared the hardships and privations of pioneer life. (Account [that follows] written by Sarah Elizabeth Holmes Weaver and copied by Hannah

I. Weaver.) On one occasion while living in Blacksmith Fork Canyon a band of Indians came to their home and demanded food. Some were in war paint. Franklin was forced to leave his wife and small children at the mercy of the Indians and go to butcher a beef for them. The Indians demanded biscuits, so Sarah made some. There seemed to be only enough flour for one batch. [Earlier] that day Franklin had said they were nearly out of flour. Twice more the savages demanded biscuits and each time Sarah found that there was enough flour to make more. She was indeed blessed for she was able to satisfy their hunger with biscuits, dried apples and milk. She sent her little boy Jonathan, about six, after wood chips. While returning with an armful, one of the Indians tripped him and caused him to fall and cut his lip and bloody his nose. He rushed into the cabin screaming. This frightened Sarah so that she hurried out and told the Indian chief that there would be no more biscuits until he promised that his people wouldn't molest her children and the Indians could carry in the wood themselves.

Franklin returned at dusk with the best beef he could find. This seemed to satisfy the Indians and they took the meat and left in peace. With thanksgiving and gratitude the family fell to their knees and thanked God for His protecting care.

Franklin was living at Millville taking care of the church cattle when Sarah was taken ill with lockjaw. Oscar, their son, was a baby. Franklin was away at the time so friends came to care for her. She steadily grew worse and finally believing her dead they began to prepare her for burial. She could hear everything that was said, but could in no way show them she was alive. At this time an Indian boy was living with the Weaver family. His name was Tecumseh. Tecumseh rode swiftly to where Franklin was working and told him of his wife's illness. At the end of the fast ride Tecumseh's pony dropped dead. Franklin secured horses for himself and Tecumseh and rode to Sarah's side. On arrival, Franklin instructed the women to remove the cold packs and apply warmth. He opened his shirt and held her tightly against his perspiring chest. He held her this way until the women could get hot blankets. Feeling within himself that her time had not come, he administered to her, [saying] that through her faith she would be restored to health. After this severe illness, she recovered and bore three more children.

Sarah belonged to the first Relief Society in Millville. She was a practical nurse and an eye doctor. Many men had come from the surrounding fields, almost blind and Sarah would soon have them relieved. Sometimes the men would be so blind they had to be led into the house, but always Sarah was able to help them. She never charged for her help.

According to the Prophet's blessing Sarah never failed to explain the gospel to whomever she could and she received letters from many missionaries whom she had never seen, asking for her testimony of the Prophet Joseph.

When Franklin Weaver was operating the church farm, Brigham Young visited with the family many times. The children became very excited when President Young came. He came in a shiny black coach pulled by two black horses. The coachman was colored and rode on a high seat in the front while Brigham sat behind. The coachman would stop and the children would ride to the house with President Young. He always had a bag of candy for them.

Sarah had known Brigham Young for a long time. He always stayed for dinner and complimented her on the good food. Brigham was well acquainted with Sarah because she had attended his private school along with his own children.

When Sarah was a widow with four children at home an epidemic of typhoid fever struck the community. Oscar and Lucina were stricken. Oscar recovered but Louie died. She was engaged to be married and her dress was folded away in a chest given to Sarah Cowles that had

belonged to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Louie was buried in her wedding dress. Her fiance, Joe Holt, later married a woman who consented to have Louie sealed to him as his first wife.

When Sarah Holmes Weaver was living at her house in Millville she had a dry farm some distance away, at Clarkston. The only child living at home then was David, who was twenty-six years old. In the winter he hauled wood for the fire and in the summer he sold cedar posts in Logan to help with finances. One summer he began to suffer many headaches but kept on working. When he returned from the dry farm that fall, many times he would drop to his knees by a little stream that passed their home and bathe his head in the cold water. The pain persisted and by the last of February it was so intense that he consulted a doctor in Logan. Soon he was bedfast and the pain was constant. The doctor told Sarah he had a tumor on his brain. There was nothing he could do. When Sarah could not see him suffer any longer, she knelt by his bed and taking his hands in hers, prayed for Heavenly Father to take him, dedicating him to the Lord. He passed away a short time later. David had a sweetheart living a short distance away. She came to visit Sarah. During her stay there she visited David's grave every morning.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the pioneers' entrance into Utah, a huge celebration was held in Salt Lake City. Sarah attended and marched with the colored "Mammy" who had been the cook in the Prophet's home. When Wilford Woodruff told Sarah he would like her to march with her, the colored woman said, "So this is the little Sarah that used to swipe my cookies!"

Sarah Holmes Weaver died 24 May 1908 at the age of seventy years. She was buried at Millville, Utah.

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Another, but similar, version of the above history may be located at:

Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Library, Bingham County D.U.P., Blackfoot, Idaho, Rheba May Weaver Smith, History of Sarah H. Weaver.

## SKETCH OF JONATHAN HARRIMAN HOLMES

[J. H. Holmes was not only Franklin Weaver's father-in-law, but was a compatriot of Franklin's in the Mormon Battalion. Also included in the above mentioned papers was a hand written copy of the obituary of Johnathan Harriman Holmes from the Deseret News (Salt Lake City, Utah) of August 18, 1880:]

Jonathan Harriman Holmes was born in Georgetown, Essex Co., Massachusetts, March 11, 1806, baptized by John F. Boynton in 1832, gathered with the Saints in Kirtland, Ohio in 1834, made his home with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and was much beloved by the Prophet and all others who knew him. He remained with Joseph and was married at his house, April 13, 1837, to Miss Marietta Carter. Wilford Woodruff was married to Miss Phebe W. Carter at the same time. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Frederick G. Williams, and both couples were blessed by the Patriarch's father, Joseph Smith.

Two children were born to Marietta Carter and Jonathan H. Holmes. First, Sarah Elizabeth born 24 Jan. 1838 at Kirtland, Ohio. Second, Mary Emma, born 25 May 1840 at Nauvoo, Illinois. Marietta Carter died 20 Aug. 1840, a young mother twenty years old, in Nauvoo, Illinois, and Mary Emma died 10 Sept. 1840, both of the "black canker" (diphtheria).

After the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jonathan Holmes married Elvira Annie Cowles Smith, a plural wife of the Prophet. Brother Holmes remained with the gathered Saints until their expulsion from Nauvoo. While on his way to the mountains, he enlisted in the Mormon Battalion and served through the campaign.

It was Elvira who mothered Sarah Elizabeth, daughter of Marietta Carter and brought her across the plains as a little nine year old child. Elvira also buried her own first infant daughter, Lucy Elvira, born Oct. 11, 1845 at Nauvoo, died June 1, 1847 while crossing the plains.

Jonathan Holmes left his young wife and daughter with an ox team and a covered wagon on the plains of Iowa when he enlisted to serve as a soldier in the war with Mexico. But they were not alone. The Spirit of Marietta Carter, now freed from earthly limitations, shared their wagon and walked by their side. She was their advocate and ambassador in the Kingdom of Heaven.

During the years from July 1846 to Oct 1848 Jonathan Holmes served his country in the Mormon Battalion. After being discharged he rejoined his family at Salt Lake City.

He resided in Farmington, Davis Co., Utah for over thirty years and was a member of the High Council of the Davis Stake of Zion until his death, Aug. 18, 1880. He left a wife and four daughters, twenty grandchildren and one great grandchild. Brother Holmes could be numbered among the few men on earth who had not an enemy living. He was one of the most innocent, harmless, true and faithful men who have lived in our day, true to his family, his friends and his God.

Note: M. Hughes, Dept. Clerk (1963); 22 documents filed in the estate of J. H. Holmes, Farmington, Utah court house.

The obituary of Jonathan H. Holmes was published in the Deseret News September 1, 1880 [FHLC# 0026598]

