

FOREWORD

One hundred and fifty years ago our great grandfather, Franklin Weaver, eighteen years old, was preparing to strike out and "Win the West." Along with his brother, Miles, he was preparing to fight the enemies of his country, to protect the faith of his family and to blaze new trails all across this vast and largely unsettled western North American continent. He was born in New York state, but before his life was over, he had been to the shores of the Pacific Ocean then back to the Great Basin of the Rocky Mountains. Much of this distance was covered on foot, for he was part of the longest infantry march in history.

In 1980, when our family visited historical church and family sites across the United States, we actually re-traveled many of Franklin's early paths as we put 6,000 miles on the odometer of our Ford van. As we sped along paved highways, it was hard to envision Franklin, on foot, traversing those same roads, then just wagon trails. When we learned that even new trails were cut out of the wilderness by this pioneer ancestor and his companions, we were quite astounded.

As I have labored to construct a recounting of his life, I have come to recognize more fully and to acknowledge with a broader understanding the toils and tears of my forebears. Franklin's life was never easy nor comfortable. Yet it was not unhappy nor unmanageable. He just did it. And he did it well, even if there were times when he surely doubted it. As far as I can determine, despite his struggles, he lived his life with faith, loyalty and good cheer.

Franklin regarded the life of his grandfather who fought in the Revolutionary War, as heroic, but not his own. Today, we can see the heroism in Franklin's life, but certainly not in ours. Through the prism of time our forebears take on the aura of "the Hallowed Spirits," as we think of them. Someone could point out that Franklin spent much of his life being just a cowboy—that he was never prominent in civic, church or business affairs. But somehow, the appellation, "Cowboy," the very symbol of strength and vigor of the old west, seems tribute enough!

Keeping in mind both the variety and subjectivity of some of the documents that follow, we can feel both the closeness and the distance between our world and his. I have tried to lead the reader to keep an open mind about what life was like for Franklin a century-and-a-half ago. It would be a mistake to judge our forebears by the standards of today's world, which is certainly a mix of the high and the low. I hope the reader will gain some new insights in understanding the lives of our ancestors—by letting the records they left behind speak for themselves—their

loves and loyalties—to God and to each other. During the past six years I have assembled over 200 documents that mention the name of Franklin Weaver, or his immediate family.

Franklin learned early to read and write. He valued education and saw to it that his children had the advantages of education where possible. Among his children were talented musicians. Talented artists were among his grandchildren. Among his great-grandchildren there are likely represented all the arts, professions, vocations and employments known. Perhaps a few heroes will be found among them. On a family tree that dates back to the year 400 AD, there are sure to be found both heroes and villains. The computerized FamilySearch Ancestral File produced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints lists approximately a thousand descendants of Franklin Weaver (Version 4.15, 1995). And there are probably many more.

Several years ago when I accepted the task of organizing a branch Family History Center, I renewed my interest in my ancestors. This pursuit in genealogy was first sparked during my days as a student at Brigham Young University, but gathering family data had been laid aside for quite a few years as I joined my husband in building a subdivision and rearing a family.

I knew, however, that a history had indeed been written about the life of my great-grandfather, because I had received a handwritten copy of the Life Sketch of Franklin Weaver from a dear, sweet lady—Sarah "Sadie" Harris Mickelson, a granddaughter of Franklin. Though I never met her personally, I corresponded with her during my days as a student at BYU, and she sent me her handwritten histories of Franklin and Sarah Clark Weaver. I typed and mimeographed them to share with members of my immediate family.

I was fascinated! These ancestors of mine seemed larger than life with their deeds of bravery and sacrifice. I wanted to learn more about them, especially Franklin Weaver. And as I have done that, I have felt a strong connection to him and have gained an appreciation for his life and contributions. I never knew my great grandfather, Franklin. I never even knew my grandfather, Franklin's son Riley, because he too, died before I was born. But I feel that I have learned to know them. And I love them.

In preparing this history I have gathered only source materials about Franklin Weaver and his world. I do not presume to know his mind or to judge his motives. As far as I have been able to determine, there has been no record left in his own hand, except for a small pocket diary noting the names and dates of birth and death of his children, which, after his death, was updated by someone else, probably his wife, Rachel. But his own words do not speak to us. Only the records do. And I will let the documents speak—for Franklin and others who were close to him. I have not written to entertain nor have I written for a market. My simple goal, like my own thinking, has been to assemble the facts.

If the time-line's chronology seems to break the train of thought about the topic at hand, then it reflects real life. Life does it just that way! It keeps interrupting us. I have been very grateful for a quiet time in my own life to pursue this project. It has warmed my heart to read the histories recorded by loving hands and hearts of those who've had a story to tell. When the grandchildren want to hear about the "olden days," we now have a few more tales to tell.

It would be well to point out that the history of this family is closely tied to the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In presenting Franklin Weaver's chronology I have included those events in church and national history that have had a direct bearing on the decisions and movements of the Weaver family. Ours is a heritage to be prized and honored, one

that links us powerfully with the unique past of our church and of our nation. Franklin's silent footprints have become a powerful witness of the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. I would like my own witness to stand beside his. I want my grandchildren to know about their forebears—about their struggles and sacrifices—about their hopes and dreams—their faith and their fears. Perhaps if enough of us do something about preserving our heritage we can hold at bay the escalating mindlessness of much of the popular culture. The following thought, done in calligraphy and framed by one of our patrons, hangs in the Clovis Branch Family History Center:

"Family is everything. It defines you—the heart of your spirit, the heritage of your smile, not only the color of your eyes, but how they see the world. You are bound by kinship. You add your own link to the chain, and that's where you strengthen or weaken what you've been blessed-or-burdened with. That's where you use the indefinable quality that belongs to you alone, the bit of uniqueness you pass on to your children for good or bad, the part of you that will always be separate from those who share your name, your blood, and your past." Lola Shiner

There never seems to be a good stopping place in a project like this, because as soon as it goes to print, more source data will surface. If I have failed to include some pertinent information, please, dear reader, forward it to me for inclusion with a "Supplement" to our title herein.

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OUR HERITAGE

*We're Weavers at the loom of life,
Each day the spindles turn the strands,
But we control the weft and warp,
The tapestries are in our hands.
The lights and darks of every hour
Are added to the pattern length,
Tho we must weave them carefully
To multiply the fabric strength.
Our forebears in that "used to be,"
Left us a loom of sturdy frame.
Let's weave it with the choicest threads
To magnify the Weaver name.*

Adah L. Lempke

29 May 1828 - at Scio, Allegany Co., New York:

Franklin Weaver was born to Edward and Martha Raymer [or Raimer] Weaver.¹ Franklin was probably² the third son, born after Horace and Miles.³

The Weaver's were not newcomers to the United States. Their coming preceded the American Revolution by more than a century and a half, with the first Weaver, Clement, landing in Rhode Island in 1632. Franklin's father, Edward Weaver, was the namesake of his own grandfather, Edward Weaver, patriot of the American Revolution, who fought in Captain Amos Hutchins' company, Col. Lewis Du Bois' New York regiment.⁴ The Weavers were farmers. But then so was almost everyone. George Washington thought of himself primarily as a farmer--a farmer-statesman, to be sure, but a farmer nevertheless.

1 June 1828 - at Crawford County, Pennsylvania:

Ebenezer Brown and his wife Ann Weaver, sister to Edward Weaver, bought land in Summerhill, Crawford Co., PA. The Brown family went to Crawford County with Ann's parents, John and Catherine Weaver. Edward and his family would follow, but not until after 1830 because we find him listed on the 1830 census, still in Scio, New York.

1830 - New York :

The United States Federal Census for Scio Township in Allegany County, New York lists Edward Weaver as head of household with three males under the age of five, one between five and ten, one male of thirty and under forty, presumably himself, one female between five and ten, and one between twenty and thirty, presumably Martha, for a total of seven.⁵ Who are these additional unidentified children? One could speculate that they were temporary residents, placed in the care of Martha, or that they were in fact children of Martha and Edward Weaver that died before the next census enumeration.

1 December 1830 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Christiana Rachel Reed, future first wife of Franklin Weaver, was born to John Haynes Reed and Christiana Gregory Reed. The family lived at Masonville, Burlington Co., NJ. A few years after John Reed's death in 1832, at age 37, the widow and her family returned to Philadelphia.⁶

27 January 1831 - Clinton County, Ohio:

Sarah, future first wife of Miles and then Franklin Weaver, was born to Samuel and Rebecca Garner Clark. Samuel Clark received the new church in November of 1832 at Clinton, Ohio, but his wife, Rebecca, who was a Quaker did not. Eleven years later, however, "she dreamed that she attended an apple peeling bee, where neighbors would get together and peel apples and dry them, as canning had never been heard of. She dreamed that none could peel the apples the right way except Samuel, so that converted her. She thought his way the right way, so the whole family became [Mormons]." ⁷

"As the Church grew, so did the persecution heaped upon its members by unsympathetic people...[however] ... missionaries found great interest in their message among the people of Kirtland, Ohio, near Cleveland. This caused the New York leaders and members to look westward and most of the devout members moved to Ohio in 1831 ... Many converts ... wanted to be closer to the church leadership and associate with more fellow believers, so whole congregations migrated to the states of Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and later, on to Utah. In fact, these migrations were so widespread that by 1850 almost all New York state branches had disappeared. [Over] 1,400 New York natives appear in the first census of Utah Territory in 1850." ⁸

1833 - Conneaut, Crawford County, Connecticut (later Pennsylvania):

Franklin's uncle, Ebenezer Brown, sold his land in Summerhill and bought 100 acres in Conneaut, Crawford County, then a part of the huge state of Connecticut. Edward, Martha and family, who also moved to Conneaut, may have done so around this time.⁹

1831-1834 - Kirtland, Ohio:

"Church life in Kirtland, Ohio, from 1831 to 1834 revolved around the Newel K. Whitney and Co. store. For eighteen months, this store served as the headquarters of the Church..."¹⁰ At least eighteen meetings and conferences were held in the store between December 3, 1832 and June 21, 1833.¹¹ Perhaps the Weavers took part in these meetings and conferences.

2 March 1835 - Conneaut, Connecticut:

Franklin's next younger brother, Gilbert, was born in Conneaut, Connecticut, which later became a part of Crawford County, Pennsylvania. There is also a lake named Conneaut in Crawford County, Pennsylvania, not far from Conneaut City in Ohio, which lies along the route beside Lake Erie and is close to the Pennsylvania state line. "Until 1800 this strip of land was claimed by Connecticut as a Western Reserve. The national government then sold large tracts to land speculators, among them Turhand Kirtland, who left his name on a town that figured prominently in Mormon history."¹² The greatest concentration of Saints centered in northern Ohio, where Kirtland and nearby Hiram became nerve centers of the growing church... The area designated by revelation as an assembly place "for a little season" lay along the northern edge of the Allegheny Plateau in northern Ohio. The New York Saints found hundreds of members ready to welcome them when they arrived in Ohio, and the law of consecration was soon to be introduced among them.¹³

1830-1838 - Kirtland, Ohio:

"Great personal sacrifices were made by early converts who gathered in Kirtland, Ohio. Some converts had been disowned by their families; others lost the companionship of friends. A number experienced great financial losses as they left their homes, businesses and properties to gather with the saints in Ohio."¹⁴ Martha Raymer Weaver was one who was no longer considered part of the Raymer family. "Heeding the counsel of the missionaries, many left their homes and loved ones to begin a new life among the Latter-day Saints."¹⁵ Martha never saw her Raymer relatives again.

13 June 1835 - no place is mentioned:

Ebenezer Brown and presumably his family members that would qualify (age eight or over) were baptized.¹⁶ He was still living in Crawford County, Pennsylvania. It is possible that Edward and Martha Weaver were baptized on or around this date or as late as January of 1836 when their son, Miles was baptized.

7 January 1836 - no place is mentioned:

Miles Weaver, two years older than Franklin, was baptized at age nine, by Peter Shirts, a member of some standing in the Church.¹⁷

January 1837 - no place is mentioned:

Franklin was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at age eight.¹⁸ It is known that Edward and Martha Weaver and their children, except for Horace Racio Weaver, their oldest son, joined with the "Mormons" during this period.¹⁹

May 1837 - at Kirtland, Ohio:

Economic forces combined to create the famous panic of that year that closed hundreds of banks throughout the United States, including the Kirtland bank, which had previously been in financial distress. The Weavers as well as many members of the new church began making plans to leave the Kirtland area.

before April 1837:

It was sometime during this period Edward Weaver and his family moved to Missouri. Although Jackson County, Missouri had been designated as the future Zion of the American Continent in 1831, the largest concentration of Latter-day Saints remained in the Kirtland, Ohio area. The Saints had been ejected by violence from Jackson County, Missouri in 1833 and 1834 but were determined "to go back upon our lands ... if possible."²⁰ There is no evidence that Edward was a part of that first contingent of Saints to go to Missouri; but, he did take his family to Missouri in 1837. Edward, Martha and Franklin are listed as among the Missouri Saints 1831-1841,²¹ possibly settling in Huntsville, Randolph County, or Far West, Caldwell County.²²

24 April 1837 - Missouri:

Franklin's sister, Martha Elizabeth Weaver was born.²³

3 March 1838 - Missouri:

Marinda Bridget Weaver, sister of Franklin, was born to Edward and Martha Weaver.

March 1838 - Kirtland, Ohio:

Many more of the Kirtland "Saints" began the trek from Ohio to Missouri. The Kirtland Camp of pioneers is organized "which left the city on July 6 with 515 people, 27 tents, 59 wagons, 97 horses, 22 oxen, 69 cows and 1 bull...arriving Oct 2... at Far West, Missouri, and settling at Adam-ondi-Ahman."²⁴

16 April 1838 - Kirtland, Ohio:

Someone who would later become an important figure in the Weaver's family history was William Draper. From his autobiography:

I started from Kirtland April 16, 1838, with my wife (Elizabeth) and five children...I traveled on (toward Far West, Missouri) until sometime in June, when I was

*taken with a severe fit of sickness, so that I was obliged to camp by the way. Under a large oak tree on a nice plot of grass I took up my abode for a little season. This was at Huntsville, Randolph, Missouri..... After lying there for several days I was taken up by a good Samaritan and lodged in the house of a brother by the name of Edward Weaver, where my wants were amply provided for and I soon began to revive and get better.*²⁵

August 1838 - Far West, Missouri:

Franklin's aunt and uncle, Ebenezer and Ann Weaver Brown and family moved from Peru, LaSalle, Illinois where Ebenezer's sister Hannah and her husband had a hotel, to Far West, Missouri.²⁶ Exactly when they had moved to Illinois from Crawford County, Pennsylvania is not clear.

28 October 1838 - Caldwell County, Missouri:

Following Gov. Boggs infamous "Order of Extermination," the Haun's Mill massacre occurred during which seventeen Mormons were killed, including old men, women and children. The next day at Far West, the state militia demanded that the Mormons leave the state of Missouri. No other group in the world, outside the Holocaust, have had an extermination order placed upon them.²⁷ By April of 1839 nearly all the Saints in Missouri had crossed the Mississippi River and found refuge near Quincy, Illinois. But there were still about five hundred Saints in the Kirtland area as late as 1841. "The Weavers would have been in Missouri during the bloodiest time, election day fight at Gallatin, Haun's Mill massacre, and [the] confinement of Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail [the] 1st of December 1838."²⁸

2 January 1839 - Far West, Missouri:

The family's stay in Far West was short.²⁹ In March, with the persecutions against the Church reaching a feverish pitch, Edward Weaver and family along with Ebenezer Brown and family moved on with the rest of the dispossessed Saints to find a home in Illinois. The two families settled south of Nauvoo in Quincy, near Pleasantville, [Pleasant Vale] Pike County, Illinois.³⁰ "The new gathering place [of Latter-day Saints] encompassed several settlements in Hancock County and neighboring regions in Illinois and Iowa. Nauvoo, however, was the center place, and soon gained political and economic influence in western Illinois."³¹ However, most of the membership of the church was living in the county and in surrounding counties. As the main impact of the expulsion from Missouri diminished, families spread out to work wherever they could, many moving hundreds of miles south, east and north, and some into Iowa.³²

1840 - Pike County, Illinois:

The United States Federal Census for Pike County, Illinois listed Edward Weaver as a head of household.³³ William Draper was also listed as a head of household in Pike County.³⁴ According to the census Edward Weaver had one male child 5-10 (Gilbert), 2 male children 10-15 (Miles & Franklin), 1 male child 15-20 (Horace), 2 female children under 5, (Martha &

Marinda). Cecelia was born in 1840, but evidently not until after the census taker had visited the Weaver household. This data disputes the theory that Horace Weaver never came with the family to Illinois. However, it does not confirm the speculation that perhaps there were two additional unknown children in this family, who were counted in the 1830 federal census of Scio, New York.

1 December 1840 - Pike County, Illinois:

Edward, now forty-one years old, made his last will and testament. What motivated his decision to do this is not known. Perhaps his health was a concern. He expressed a desire to be buried near Aury Brown, a neighbor, who was buried in what is now called Stoney Point Cemetery. He appointed William Draper, Jr. "my trusty and much esteemed friend" to be the sole executor of his will.

January 1841 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

"The Prophet [Joseph Smith] announced by revelation that baptism for the dead was a temple ordinance. Even though the temple was far from completion, a temporary, oval baptismal font was hewn from pine and placed on the back of twelve wooden oxen. It was dedicated in November 1841, and no more baptisms for the dead were performed in the [Mississippi] river." ³⁵

The Nauvoo years were pivotal in historical importance to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the growth, organization and doctrines of the Church. Two controversial doctrines taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith at Nauvoo concerned sealing and plural marriage. The doctrine of sealing whereby

no covenant or vow made between people on this earth is of force after death unless sealed by priesthood authority. This includes the marriage covenant. If marriage is performed or sealed by that authority, the marriage partners are promised that if they do not violate their sacred obligations, their marriage covenant will "be of full force when they are out of the world." This is the "new and everlasting covenant." In Nauvoo many husbands and wives were sealed by the power of the priesthood in the temple. Since the doctrine also provided that sealings could be performed in behalf of the dead, many whose spouses had passed on were sealed to them by proxy. The same revelation that clarified the sealing power also explained the doctrine of plural marriage. Under priesthood authority, it declared, ancient prophets had been given more than one wife, and if the Lord for any reason should command it again, the practice was right and valid when entered into under the direction of the priesthood. To Joseph Smith, this far-reaching doctrine was only one of the several necessary parts of the restoration of the ancient order of things in the dispensation of the fullness of times.³⁶

However, the doctrine of plural marriage caused the Church much persecution. It was, nevertheless, only one of the things that ultimately provoked their prejudiced, illegal and pathetic removal from Illinois, a politically volatile frontier.

17 January 1841 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

Edward Weaver was ordained to the office of High Priest,³⁷ an ecclesiastical office in the church in which one is called to minister, preside, or preach the gospel.

6 April 1841 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

Approximately ten thousand people from Nauvoo and surrounding areas celebrated the 11th anniversary of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with the laying of the four cornerstones of the Nauvoo Temple. Sarah Conover (future wife of Gilbert Weaver), who was almost seven years old, recalled the event. "[I] saw the temple during its construction and saw its completion when the capstone was laid May 24, 1845 by Brigham Young."³⁸

25 September 1841 - Pleasant Vale, Pike County, Illinois:

On this day a conference of the Pleasant Vale branch of the Church was held. William Draper was the president of the branch with Edward Weaver and Ebenezer Brown as counselors. The branch had a membership of 166 including 29 officers.³⁹

19 December 1841 - Pleasant Vale, Pike County, Illinois:

Franklin's sister, the youngest child of Edward Weaver, was born: Julia Cecelia Weaver at Pleasant Vale, Pike County, Illinois.⁴⁰

1840-1841 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

Edward Weaver acted as proxy for baptisms for his deceased grandfather, Edward Weaver, for his deceased uncle, Gilbert Weaver, and other deceased Weaver relatives.⁴¹

2 June 1842 - Quincy, Illinois:

Ann Weaver Brown, wife of Ebenezer Brown and sister to Edward Weaver, died. "Ann had been ill for some time. To care for her, Phebe Draper Palmer came to live at the Brown home. Phebe was a widowed mother of four children and the sister of Ebenezer's friend, William Draper."⁴² Ann was buried on Honey Creek. A marker, however, has been placed beside Ebenezer's in the Draper, Utah cemetery.⁴³ Honey Creek or (Sugar) Creek was about five miles from Carthage, Illinois. The families remained close. Ebenezer Brown and Phoebe Draper Palmer married later in 1842, combining their families.

November 1842 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

Edward Weaver worked as a craftsman on the Nauvoo temple. Among his tools, as listed in the probate court's bill of appraisal,⁴⁴ were two stone chisels, five wedges and a mason line as well as a set of masonry trowels. While Edward worked on the construction of the Nauvoo temple, he caught cold, which developed into pneumonia. "He suffered all the persecutions that the Saints went through at that time. Grandfather Edward Weaver fell victim to the unhealthful conditions which prevailed in Nauvoo..."⁴⁵

2 December 1842 - Pleasant Vale, Pike County, Illinois:

Edward Weaver died. He was buried as requested, "I desire to be decently...buried in the church yard in district number one, in Township five south six west, near Aury Brown..."⁴⁶ in probably what is now called Stoney Point Cemetery. No grave marker has been located for Edward. There were only a very few old grave markers left in the cemetery before it was vandalized about 1992.⁴⁷ Edward Weaver was only forty-three years old. He left a bereaved wife and seven children whose ages ranged from nineteen to infancy.



Stoney Point Cemetery,
Pleasant Vale Township,
Pike County, Illinois

January, February and March 1843 - Pike County, Illinois:

Various papers relating to Edward Weaver's probate are recorded by the Pike County, Illinois, probate court.⁴⁸

27 June 1844 - Carthage, Illinois:

The martyrdom of Joseph Smith the Prophet and his brother Hyrum Smith, the Patriarch of the Church, was carried out by an armed and disguised mob who broke in to the Carthage jail.⁴⁹ When little Sarah Conover, the girl that would later marry Franklin's brother, Gilbert, heard the news she "threw herself on the bed and cried brokenheartedly and exclaimed, 'What will become of us now?'"⁵⁰

1844-1845 - Pleasant Vale, Pike County, Illinois:

*"Though Church authorities continually cautioned against haste, a spirit of anxiety pervaded Nauvoo... A rumored marauding, called a wolf hunt, against outlying settlements in Sept. 1844 was thwarted... but in...1845 the anti-Mormons...began burning Mormon homes... One after another, unprotected families were forced from their log farm homes to watch the vigilantes set the torch."*⁵¹

The widowed Martha Weaver and her children were driven from their home by such an anti-Mormon mob.

*"Grandmother Martha Raymer Weaver was left with seven children... At the time of his [Edward's] death, the Saints were suffering all kinds of persecution from their enemies. Gilbert Weaver was eleven years old [seven, by some accounts] at the time of his father's death. [Franklin would have been fourteen.] Gilbert tells the story of how their home was burned. The scene of it was riveted on his memory throughout his life. The leader of the mob was a large, burly and murderous demon, who had been burning the Mormon's homes. He told...Martha that if she would denounce Mormonism she would not be molested. Her strength and her faith in our Gospel was very significant, and she faced this wicked man with defiance and dignity, 'You may burn it and be damned!' His answer was, 'I'll give you twenty minutes to get out.' With the help of her seven children she gathered the most necessary and needed articles and threw them into the wagon. There was no time for packing. She had one oxen and a cow. The boys yoked them together to the wagon and drove away. ...Martha remembered a nice fat pig ready to kill so she sent the boys back to see if it had been spared, but it was burned to a crisp."*⁵²

Martha's story has also been told in a Church Educational System publication.⁵³ It is presumed that Martha and her family found refuge within the city of Nauvoo itself. Hers was not the only family who had such an experience. That the Saints banded together to help one another has been well documented. Nevertheless, that did little to diminish the suffering that was so widespread. In a literary tribute to Martha, a granddaughter, Sarah Weaver Madsen Hulse, wrote the following poem:

DEAR HERITAGE

*What do we think of when we read of her?
With head held high, asserting staunchest faith;
Stripped of the haven that she held so dear,
Facing the hardships, ever true 'till death.*

*Thanks Grandmother dear, for your ever trusting heart.
Faith such as yours will bless us our lives thru--
Helping us chart our wavering steps with firmer tread,
Lifting us up to climb to your stature, too.*

November 1845 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

In spite of the fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith had been martyred, work went forward on the temple. By the fall of 1845

"the upper floor of the temple was nearing completion, and the Saints were anticipating this new spiritual experience with great enthusiasm. Church leaders and their wives provided drapes for the windows and canvas to divide the main hall into four rooms, borrowed carpets for the floor and decorated the walls with borrowed paintings and mirrors. The Saints had been raising potted plants and shrubs in their homes during the winter, and these were taken to the temple, the House of the Lord, to create a setting of beauty and peace for the presentation of the temple ceremony. Beginning December 11, 1845, the endowment ceremony was performed regularly for eager groups of Saints, and... sessions were held around the clock." ⁵⁴

By February 7, more than 5,600 ordinances had been administered to tithe-paying members.⁵⁵ Many parts of the endowment ceremony, or ordinance, can be seen in ancient religious ceremonies. The unique meaning attached to them by the Latter-day Saint faith made them a distinct part of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ as taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

27 January 1846 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

Martha Weaver received her endowment in the Nauvoo Temple,⁵⁶ and was sealed, by proxy, to her deceased spouse, Edward Weaver. The proxy was none other than Edward's friend, William Draper. That same day Martha became a plural wife⁵⁷ of William Draper. "She felt more secure having a husband and father for herself and children. She was married to William Draper for time [this life] only."⁵⁸ "It was no doubt easier for William's first wife, Elizabeth, to accept Martha into the family, for she, too, was helped greatly when the Weavers took all the burden of nursing her husband back to health."⁵⁹

January 1846 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

Following a season of home-burnings by armed mobs and despite pacifistic measures taken by Brigham Young, it was announced by the Nauvoo high council circular, "Times & Seasons," that a "resting place" would be sought in some good valley in the neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains.

February 1846 - Nauvoo, Illinois:

An orderly withdrawal of the Mormons from the Nauvoo area was planned for April. However, with growing political pressure from those who were alarmed by the progress and prosperity of the Saints, indictments were issued to arrest Brigham Young. Rather than risk interference, it was decided that the Saints would depart immediately. At least two thousand were already prepared to go, and thousands more could be ready within weeks. The first group crossed the Mississippi on February 4, utilizing skiffs and flatboats. Then on February 24, the river froze over, thus facilitating the crossing.⁶⁰

20 April 1846 - Illinois:

From William Draper's autobiography: "I left Pike County about the 20th of April, 1846 and went to Nauvoo where I added to the family and to the outfit, and on the first day of May crossed the Mississippi and took the trail to follow those who had started before us through a wilderness where no white inhabitants lived."⁶¹ Nearly twelve thousand Mormons had crossed the Mississippi by the middle of May. William Draper had taken several additional plural wives in addition to Martha Weaver, all of whom he shepherded across Iowa to the relative safety of Winter Quarters, near present day Council Bluffs. Besides the headquarters campsite there, the Saints established dozens of temporary stopping places on both sides of the Missouri River.⁶²

4 February 1846 - New York, New York:

On the very same day that the first group of homeless Saints had crossed the icy Mississippi, Elder Samuel Brannan set sail on an "old worn out sailing vessel"⁶³ for a five-month sea voyage to San Francisco Bay. He had been encouraged by Brigham Young to gather eastern Saints for the trip.⁶⁴ Aboard the ship was Franklin Weaver's future bride, Christiana Rachel Reed. She and her widowed mother and sister were among a company of Saints numbering 70 men, 68 women, and 100 children who sailed out of New York harbor aboard the ship "Brooklyn." Some of these passengers had come to New York City with but little more than their passage money. When the sailing date was postponed, many were left behind because what money they brought had been spent for food and lodging.

The choice of a leader could hardly have been better for the purpose of founding a new colony... Brannan devoted much of his time and attention to the welfare of the whole Mormon people besides attending to the business of preparing things for the [sailing] company. It was thought by some that the government would take steps to

*prevent the Mormons migrating on the ground that they intended to take sides with either Mexico or England against the United States, and there was considerable work done to arrange things so that this step would not be taken.*⁶⁵

Rough, gloomy weather was encountered at the outset of the voyage. Then they experienced terrific storms in which the waves ran so high that they covered the decks. The captain on one occasion gave up the ship for lost.⁶⁶

They made their first anchorage at Juan Fernandez, a small island belonging to Chile, on May 4. Taking in wood and water, they remained there five days. The voyage was then continued and the ship arrived at Honolulu on June 20, where it remained ten days. Continuing the voyage they arrived at San Francisco on July 31, 1846. The ship's log showed a journey of twenty-four thousand miles.⁶⁷

*In a storm off Cape Horn, a sailor was washed overboard and the passengers suffered greatly from being confined so closely [in] their crowded, stuffy state-rooms. Provisions became so scarce that each passenger was limited to one biscuit a day, and the water became so stale that it was nauseating to drink and a number of dead [9] were lowered into the sea. Among the dead were two children belonging to Mrs. Robbins, who also gave birth to a girl on the ship, who was named Georgina Pacific Robbins. A boy was also born on the voyage who was named John Atlantic. When land was sighted the captain made a speech to the passengers praising them and said he had never sailed with braver voyagers. Six months after setting sail, they heard the welcome salute of the guns at the Fort at San Francisco, then little more than a mining camp.*⁶⁸

After landing at San Francisco, then called Yerba Buena, the passengers had no place to live but in tents. A few families went out to the dilapidated Mission Dolores⁶⁹ and sixteen families partitioned the deserted customs house with quilts and lived there. Yerba Buena became a Mormon settlement. The Californians were amazed at the cargo unloaded from the ship. They saw the first harrow to be brought to California, a five-ton printing press, seeds, tools and utensils of all kinds, household furniture, candle and bullet molds, bolts of cloth and thread as well as schoolbooks and slates. The whole little band had but one cook stove however, and in its oven were baked pies that sold for a dollar apiece. Eggs were worth \$12.00 a dozen in the camp.⁷⁰ "In a short time they were seeking work at whatever tasks presented themselves... A party of twenty were sent into the San Joaquin valley to prepare for the coming of the Saints by the overland route, as it was expected that they would come to California."⁷¹

6 July 1846 - Winter Quarters, Iowa:

Back at Winter Quarters Gilbert Weaver, age 11, was baptized by William Draper, his step-father.⁷² Since Franklin's birth the Weaver family had come a long way. From New York to Ohio, thence to Missouri and Illinois the family unit had been intact until the death of Franklin's father, Edward. Their westward movement reflected the frontier spirit of Americans but more particularly the westward push of the Mormons as they fled their persecutors. Martha,

Franklin's mother, was tired. She had given birth twice while her family endured the persecution of Missouri. Another child was born in what she thought would be a permanent home in Illinois. She had buried her husband, then defied a mob who burned her home. She remarried, perhaps for protection, but found herself exposed to the hazards of yet another pregnancy, her eighth. Though her spirit was strong, her body began to reflect the results of her trials. Recognizing the Lord as the source of her strength, yet she did not fail to draw comfort from the support of her strong teen-aged sons.

Though their mother Martha's life was drawing to a close, the Weaver boys' adventures were just beginning.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 1:

1. The town of Scio in Allegany Co., NY is still in existence. The name has not been changed to Olean. Olean is in Cattaraugus Co., NY some distance away.
2. The 1830 census throws a question on this assumption. See genealogical data in Appendix E.
3. Lucius E. Weaver, History and Genealogy of a Branch of the Weaver Family, (Rochester, NY: 1928), p. 422: "Edward Weaver was born Aug. 15, 1799, at Saratoga, NY. He died at Nauvoo, IL, probably about 1845. He was a farmer and after the family removed from Dryden, NY, he lived on a farm at Scio, NY, later removed to Portville, NY and thence to Conneaut, PA. He became interested in Mormonism and went with the Mormons to Nauvoo, Illinois."
4. His military record file number is S43,280 in the National Archives, Washington, D.C.
5. Because all the early (prior to 1850) federal censuses listed only the name of the head of the household, we can only make deductions about the rest of the family by studying the profile (boxes checked by the census taker). We are puzzled about the identity of the two additional children, one male and one female. (FHLC film #017144, p.176.) Two other Edward Weavers are in New York in the 1830 US census. One is in Olean, Cattaraugus Co., NY and he has the identical family profile as the Edward of Scio. There is also an Edward G. Weaver in Dryden, Tompkins Co., NY. We find an Edward Weaver in the New York state census of 1835, living in Dryden, Tompkins Co. whose profile does not fit *our* Edward Weaver. (The 1835 NY state census for Dryden Township, Tompkins County, NY, FHLC# 0856513.) This would lead us to rule out the Edward of Dryden for the 1830 census, but it still leaves the question of two additional children even if *our* Edward was in Cattaraugus Co. in 1830, an option which appears unlikely, since we know Edward Weaver was in Scio in 1822 and in 1826. Franklin's two older known brothers were Horace Racio Weaver, born 12 October 1822 at Scio, Allegheny, NY and Miles Weaver, born 22 May 1826, Scio, Allegheny, NY. However, we are still left with the question of the identity of two children not identified by family records.

6. Mary Daines Weaver & Barbara Weaver, Horace and Adelaide Wright Weaver First Annual Family Reunion (Idaho: 1958), p.2, 3. Also History of Horace Weaver, (Book of Remembrance of Horace Weaver family), in possession of editor, p. 2.
7. Sarah Emeline Harris Mickelson, History of Samuel Clark Sr., MSS in possession of editor, p. 1.
8. Loren V. Fay, "Mormon Pioneers From New York State," New York Yesteryears, Vol. 27, Spring, 1984, pp.105, 106.
9. Jennie Brown Hollist and Imogene Brown, Ebenezer Brown and His Descendants, (Ebenezer Brown Family Organization) [FHLC#1035525]
10. "House of Revelation," The Ensign, January, 1993, p. 31.
11. Church News, (Week ending March 11, 1989) p. 14.
12. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, The Story of the Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976) p. 61.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
14. Church News, (Week ending March 11, 1989) p. 14.
15. Milton V. Backman Jr., The Heavens Resound--A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830-1838 (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1983).
16. Hollist & Brown, p. 3.
17. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Early Church Information File, [FHLC# 0820139]. Peter Shirts was an interesting character in Mormon history. He "was one of the leaders of the Nauvoo Legion. Helped build the Nauvoo Temple and was closely associated with Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and other leaders of the church," according to Frank Esshom, Pioneers & Prominent Men of Utah (Salt Lake City: Utah Pioneers Book Publishing, 1930), p. 1159.
18. Ruth Haycock Wynder, Family Group Information Sheet, MSS in possession of Ruth Wynder, Salt Lake City, Utah.
19. Lucius E. Weaver, p. 422. Also, Weaver Family [no author given], MSS in possession of editor: "Franklin's brother Horace Racio Weaver who never joined the church, finally emigrated with his family around 1889... One of his daughters, Mary Weaver Baker became a member [of the Church] and settled at Marysville, Idaho, which was named in her honor as she and her sons built the first house in that place. Horace went to the Boise country to live and is buried there."
20. Allen & Leonard, p. 92.
21. Wayne J. Lewis, Mormon Land Ownership As a Factor in Evaluating the Extent of Mormon Settlements and Influence in Missouri 1831-1841 (Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1981), p. 160.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 84: There were only eight Mormon families who lived in Randolph County during this time, none of whom owned land.
23. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Patriarchal Blessing Card Index, [FHLC# 0392693]. A family genealogical family group record shows her to have been born at Scio, Allegheny, NY, but the editor believes that to be incorrect.
24. Allen & Leonard, p. 115.
25. Delbert Morley Draper, The Mormon Drapers, (Salt Lake City: Draper, 1958), p. 130.
26. Hollist & Brown, p. 3.
27. Statement made by Senator Orrin Hatch April 7, 1996, on the CBS television show "Sixty Minutes."

28. Arlen Clement, The Valiant Ones, the Clement and Weaver Families (Salt Lake City: By the author, 1990), p. 82.
29. On this date Ebenezer and Ann Brown received their patriarchal blessings at the hands of Isaac Morley, an ordained patriarch of the Far West Branch of the Church.
30. Hollist & Brown, p. 4.
31. Allen & Leonard, p. 151.
32. Early Mormon Research Institute, The Nauvoo Journal, (V.2, #1, Jan. 1990), p. 38.
33. Virginia Hart, 1840 Census Index for Pike County, Illinois p. 94 [FHLC# 6088600].
34. Ibid., pp. 3 and ll.
35. Allen & Leonard, p. 169.
36. Ibid. p. 170.
37. Early Church Information File [FHLC#1750724].
38. Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Library, Sarah Jeannette Weaver, My Mother, Brief Sketch of the Life of Sarah Elizabeth Conover Weaver, MSS, p. 1.
39. A portion of this record is in the possession of Virginia Hart, researcher, Box 92, Pleasant Hill, IL 62366.
40. Patriarchal Blessing Card Index, [FHLC# 0392693]; also Early Church Information File.
41. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Baptisms for the Dead, 1840-1845, (Salt Lake City, GSU, 1958), Vol. A, 1840-1841. p. 75 [FHLC#0183376]. This is the document that refutes the Lucius E. Weaver statement that Gilbert was Edward's father. John Weaver was still living at that time, so would not have been eligible for proxy ordinances. This is also supported by the closeness of the Edward Weaver family and the Ebenezer Brown family. Ann Weaver Brown was the daughter of John Weaver, and wife of Ebenezer Brown. Ann and Edward were both children of John Weaver. That Edward Weaver was the son of John, not Gilbert, is also supported by the Ebenezer Brown family bible in possession of E. Ray Brown of American Fork, Utah.
42. Hollist & Brown, p. 3.
43. Ibid.
44. See Appendix-D for the full probate file transcription.
45. Daughters of Utah Pioneers Library, Ida Rachel Weaver Haycock, History of Gilbert Weaver, Utah Pioneer of 1848, MSS, p. 1.
46. Court Records of Pike County, Illinois; Probate Records, p. 45-47; [FHLC#1314859].
47. Telephone conversation between genealogist Virginia Hart and editor, 1995.
48. Court Records of Pike County, Illinois; Probate Records, p. 45-47; [FHLC#1314859]. See appendix D.
49. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Doctrine & Covenants (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1981), Section 35.
50. Alice Weaver Stoddard, My Mother, Brief Sketch of the Life of Sarah Elizabeth Conover Weaver, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Library, p. 1.

51. Allen & Leonard, p. 211.
52. Haycock, p. 1.
53. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Teaching the Topics and Themes: A Beginning Course Teacher Manual, Prepared by Church Educational System, 1987, p. 47, 48, Pictures 197, 198.
54. Allen & Leonard, p. 170.
55. Ibid., p. 210.
56. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Nauvoo Temple Endowment Register 1845-1846, p. 209, 210. [FHLC# 977.343/N1 K29c].
57. Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1958), p. 522: "Plural Marriage [polygamy]: In the early days of this dispensation, as part of the promised restitution of all things, the Lord revealed the principle of plural marriage to the Prophet [Joseph Smith]. Later the Prophet and leading brethren were commanded to enter into the practice, which they did in all virtue and purity of heart despite the consequent animosity and prejudices of worldly people. After Brigham Young led the saints to the Salt Lake Valley, plural marriage was openly taught and practiced until the year 1890. At that time conditions were such that the Lord by revelation withdrew the command to continue the practice, and President Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto directing that it cease."
58. Nauvoo Temple Register, p. 210.
59. Draper, p. 13.
60. "Nationally, history books show no concern about the tragedy of the Nauvoo Saints, unlike other wronged groups in America's past. But the fact remains that never in the entirety of American history has mob or vigilante action forced a major city's almost entire population to vacate, become homeless, and leave behind a substantial city of streets, houses, gardens, fences, public halls, and commercial buildings built entirely by their own hands. Nauvoo's peak population was just under 12,000 residents, with 3,000 to 5,000 Saints living in surrounding settlements. Best estimates are that 12,000 to 14,000 of some 17,000 Saints in that area participated in the exodus; the rest stayed behind and dropped out of Church membership." William G. Hartley, "Saints Leave Beloved Nauvoo," Church News, Week ending March 9, 1996, p. 7.
61. Draper, p. 129.
62. In Iowa, numerous celebrations marking the exodus 150 years ago took place in 1996. The town of Seymour, Iowa celebrated "Come, Come, Ye Saints" Day April 14, 1996. At Garden Grove, Iowa, the Mormon Trail Elementary School did units and programs to mark the founding of their town. The Mormon Trails Association (more than 90 percent non-LDS) from Moravia, Iowa also participated in the Exodus Commemoration, Feb. 3-4, 1996, when dozens of bonfires burned in communities along the Mormon Trail in Iowa and Nebraska. The fires symbolized kinship of local residents with members observing the 150th anniversary of the Nauvoo exodus. "Iowans honor Saints' trek across 12 of their counties," Church News, Week ending March 30, 1996, p. 8, 9. Also "Non-LDS in 3 states honor 1846 exiles by lighting bonfires," Church News, Week ending February 10, 1996, p. 11.
63. Lyla Faun Weaver Bennett, Biographical Sketch of the Life of Rachel Reed Weaver, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Library, MSS, p. 1.
64. Allen & Leonard, p. 214.
65. Fish, p. 35: "This scheme ...seems to have been a proposition of A. G. Benson & Co., with President Polk as silent partner `to stop all interference by the government if the Mormon leaders would sign an agreement to transfer to A. G. Benson & Co. the odd numbers of all lands and town lots they may acquire in the country where they may settle.' This proposition was rejected by the leaders of the Church."
66. Bennett, p. 1.

67. Fish, p. 36.

68. Cache County D.U.P. Museum scrapbooks [FHLC#1421954]: One survivor of the *Brooklyn* lived beyond a celebration, on July 24, 1940, remembering the voyage.

69. Norma Baldwin Ricketts, Mormons and the Discovery of Gold (Placerville, CA: Pioneer Press, 1966), p. 7.

70. Pearl Batt Hulse, History of Christiana Rachel Reed and Franklin Weaver, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Library, MSS, p. 1.

71. Fish, p. 36.

72. Early Church Information File, [FHLC# 0820139]. Gilbert Weaver, in 1870 or later, stated that he was baptized and confirmed by William Draper in 1840, (Millville Ward Records, FHLC# 0026139) but, that cannot be correct, because he would have been only five years old at the time.