

WOMEN MISSIONARIES  
IN  
THE EASTERN STATES MISSION  
OF THE LDS CHURCH  
1915 - 1932

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I. Introduction

One of the hallmarks of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which sets it apart from many other religions is its missionary system. Numerous members of this church (hereafter call the LDS Church) have joined its ranks due to the efforts of the missionaries, while many who are not LDS members associate the church with what they have seen of the missionaries. Because of the emphasis on having a positive public image as well as gaining converts, the LDS church has placed great importance on its missionary program.

Unlike churches which employ the services of many women in their missionary activities, the active proselyting force of the LDS Church throughout its history has overwhelmingly been men. The first woman missionary did not appear until 1898, nearly seventy years after the founding of the church. Even since that time, however, the numbers of women missionaries in the LDS Church have been very small compared to the number of men.

Even though these women have been a small minority, the everyday experiences that they had as missionaries in the early decades of the twentieth century were not significantly different from the men's missionary experiences. In fact, as will be shown, their lives were very similar.

This study deals with the women who served in the Eastern States Mission of the LDS Church between 1915 and 1932. The main focus of this study will compare the experiences of selected men and women missionaries who were in this mission during this time period. First, a brief history of missionary work up to 1915 in the LDS Church will be discussed. Then a brief history, a description of the organization, and statistics of the Eastern States Mission will be examined. Following this will be a look into the everyday experiences of men missionaries. The concluding portion of this study will deal with four case studies of women missionaries where their experiences will be analyzed.

## II. Overview of Missionary Work in the LDS Church, 1830-1915

The LDS Church began its missionary program even before the official organization of the church in 1830. Every available man was sent out to spread the message of this young, struggling church to those who would be willing to listen. The early missionaries were very unprepared compared to their modern-day counterparts. They would leave their homes and families having received very little notice and rush off on foot toward an unknown direction with only very scant literature. These men would travel from town to town, receiving food and shelter from anyone willing to offer it.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the late nineteenth and early twentieth century these methods of traveling around the countryside at random began to change.

The missionaries of the early 1900s were much more likely than their predecessors to move into a town, find an apartment, and remain stationary for several months. Tracting, or door-to-door contacting, began to be employed to help locate people who might be interested in listening to the missionaries.<sup>2</sup>

The missionaries themselves in the first quarter of the twentieth century were also more prepared than were the ones of the 1800s. Prospective missionaries received interviews before they left ascertaining their spiritual, intellectual and physical preparation.

After 1899 special missionary training courses were offered at six colleges and universities in Arizona and Utah.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the nineteenth century the majority of missionaries were married men, called by church leaders to serve for an unspecified period of time. They were asked to leave their families and occupations behind, entrusting their wives and children to take care of matters in their absence. By the late 1800s and into the early years of the twentieth century, this practice of calling married men into missionary service gradually declined. They began to be replaced by young, single men who did not yet have family responsibilities. Even though married men continued to leave on missions throughout the first quarter of the 1900s, their numbers were quite small compared to those of the young, unmarried men.<sup>4</sup>

Another type of missionary was introduced at this time. Women, who had not served missions previously, were first called into service by church leaders in 1898. However, women did not constitute a very significant percentage of the total missionary force in the first few years. Of the 866 total missionaries sent out by the LDS Church in 1902, only twenty-seven were women.<sup>5</sup>

Many of the early female missionaries, like the early male missionaries, were married. Unlike the men, however, women would not leave their families behind. Instead a woman would accompany her husband on his mission. In the Eastern States Mission, for instance, five of the nine women beginning their missions from 1909 to 1913 were

serving with their husbands. These were couples who had already raised their children and were willing to spend time together in the golden years on a mission. In the Eastern States Mission it was not until the outbreak of World War I in Europe when the majority of women serving on missions would be young and unmarried.<sup>6</sup>

### III. The Eastern States Mission

At its founding, the church was located in upstate New York, and the early missionaries naturally chose this general vicinity to begin their proselyting. One place where Joseph Smith, the founder of the LDS Church, wanted to preach was in Salem, Massachusetts. Preaching along the Eastern seaboard continued in the early days of the church as the importance of this area, along with the Indian territories, parts of the South, and the British Isles, was emphasized by church leaders.<sup>7</sup>

Proselyting efforts in the Eastern United States continued and by 1839 the work had progressed to the point where an official "mission" (a specific organization with missionaries in a defined geographical area) was formed. The formation of this mission was second only to the British Mission created two years earlier.<sup>8</sup>

After having been discontinued and reorganized several times throughout the 1800s, the Eastern States Mission was finally reorganized in 1893. Up to 1929 the boundaries of the mission stayed fairly static and in that year West Virginia became part of a different mission. Parts of southern Ontario and Quebec were included for a brief interval during the mid-1920s. Other than this portion, the boundaries of the mission included all of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, and West Virginia.<sup>9</sup>

There were five mission presidents in the Eastern States Mission in the time period studied, 1915-1932. These men were chosen by LDS Church leaders to be ecclesiastical and administrative leaders over the mission. These five were: Walter P. Monson, George W. McCune, B. H. Roberts, Henry H. Rolapp and James H. Moyle.<sup>10</sup>

The numbers of missionaries at any one time ranged anywhere from 100 to 250 and were separated into twelve conferences (later called districts) depending on which geographical area they were in. Each conference was presided over by a conference president, usually one of the young male missionaries. The East Pennsylvania Conference, for instance, included southern New Jersey, northern Delaware and everything in Pennsylvania east of Harrisburg. There were anywhere from twelve to sixteen missionaries serving in the larger conferences such as East Pennsylvania at any one time and as few as six or eight in the smaller ones such as Vermont and South West Virginia. Women numbered anywhere from two to six in these conferences.<sup>11</sup>

Table 1 gives relative statistics on the numbers of women in the Eastern States Mission. The years 1908-14 were included to show the dramatic rise in 1915.

TABLE 1 - NUMBER OF WOMEN MISSIONARIES DEPARTING TO THE EASTERN STATES MISSION, 1908-1933. COMPARED TO THE TOTAL NUMBER DEPARTING TO THE EASTERN STATES MISSION.<sup>12</sup>

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>%</u>	
1908	0	88	0	1921	22	72	31	
1909	2	115	2	1922	23	75	31	
1910	4	100	4	1923	15	63	24	
1911	0	78	0	1924	18	75	24	
1912	2	79	3	1925	19	120	17	
1913	1	70	1	1926	24	95	25	
1914	9	64	14	1927	17	77	22	
1915	21	82	26	1928	25	94	27	
1916	15	97	15	1929	34	87	39	
1917	23	89	26	1930	23	54	43	
1918	17	42	41	1931	17	42	40	
1919	23	168	15	1932	11	24	46	
1920	22	111	20	1933	10	34	29	
						<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>397</u>	<u>2035</u>
						<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>% - 20</u>	

Several interesting things are shown from these figures. The numbers of women missionaries were almost nonexistent in the Eastern States Mission until the outbreak of World War I in 1914. In that year nine women departed for the mission field - all of them being young and unmarried compared to the older, married women who had served previously. The sudden rise in women missionaries in that year presents a perplexing phenomenon. Even though hostilities in Europe began in 1914, the United States did not enter the war until 1917 and therefore, young men could still have served missions for the first three years during that war. However, it is entirely possible that more young men might have shied away from mission service thinking that they should prepare for war in case they might have to go.

A second explanation for this rise could have been the policies of Mission President Walter P. Monson. Monson may have requested more women missionaries from LDS Church headquarters, but there is certainly no evidence to suggest this.

The Great Depression, which began in late 1929, certainly had an effect on the numbers of missionaries departing. The 1929 total of eighty-seven dwindled to fifty-four the next year, forty-two the year after that, and reached a low of only twenty-four departures in 1932 before climbing slightly to thirty-four in 1933. The proportion of the total that women missionaries comprised during these

economically difficult years reached and even surpassed the level of 1918, with nearly half of the 1932 departures being women.<sup>13</sup>

Missionaries, who either receive aid from their families or finance their missions themselves, are just as susceptible to financial difficulties as anybody else. The higher percentage of women missionaries during the depression years is related to the fact that families were unable to send their sons because their labor was desperately needed on the farms of their parents. Young women, however, were not needed as much to help on the family farms and were therefore more likely to serve on missions if they or their families could have afforded it.

Another factor which demonstrates the greater need for male labor at home is the length of time spent on a mission during the depression. Missionaries were able to get early releases because of financial troubles at home and the ones most likely to receive an early release were the young men. Several of the men in the Eastern States Mission were released early during the depression. Of the sixty-three men who departed in the years 1931-1933, only thirty-eight were able to complete their two year term.<sup>14</sup>

The women missionaries, meanwhile, were much more likely to complete their prescribed term of service. Of the thirty-four that departed from 1931-1933, twenty-seven fulfilled their terms. Another statistic which portrays this quite clearly is the average number of months that missionaries served during the depression. The average for the women was twenty-two while the same figure for men was twenty months.<sup>15</sup>

An additional statistic of interest is the age of the women when they left on their mission. The average for fifty-three of the 277 women that departed to the Eastern States Mission from 1908-1927 was twenty-six. Of those fifty-three, only six were under age twenty-one, with seven being over thirty. The average age of eight male missionaries between 1915 and 1932 was twenty-one with three men tied for the youngest at age nineteen with the oldest being twenty-four.<sup>16</sup>

#### IV. Description of Men's Missionary Activities

While male missionaries were normally younger than the women, their activities and daily experiences were not considerably different. The similarities began even before the missionaries arrived at their designated mission area. Aaron Mendenhall from Mapleton, Utah, for example, received instructions from LDS Church leaders in Salt Lake City for two days, then took a train ride to New York City for five days (visiting Chicago and Niagara Falls on the way). Upon arrival in New York he saw the sights of New York for four days, spent two more days at his conference president's residence in Baltimore before arriving at his assigned field of labor. He left his home on December

7, 1915 and arrived in Salisbury, Maryland to begin work on December 22.<sup>17</sup>

While in New York, Mendenhall toured the Statue of Liberty, the New York Aquarium and the Woolworth Building, using the subway for transportation. In Baltimore, he saw a movie and spent an entire day visiting with the other missionaries. The initial events in which he acted more like a tourist than a missionary, were common for both the men and women of the Eastern States Mission.<sup>18</sup>

Upon arrival in Salisbury, Mendenhall proceeded to carry out his missionary duties. He spent numerous hours reading and studying, sometimes spending an entire day indoors because of foul weather or the illness of his companion. His diary contains many entries which read "spent the day reading because of the rain." While it was true that he did more studying on days when there was inclement weather, there were many occasions that on the days he did work, he would spend either the morning or the afternoon reading. The curriculum for study included reading the Scriptures and religious books and pamphlets by LDS authors on church doctrine and practices.<sup>19</sup>

After his initial month of training from his first companion, Mendenhall then began to spend a good portion of his time involved in missionary work by himself. He would visit members of the LDS Church and "investigators" (those learning about the LDS faith and were considering joining it) and go tracting while his companion did the same thing or stayed home.<sup>20</sup>

Mendenhall also took in cultural events such as movies, plays, and other entertainment. When the weather was cooperative he would travel around the area viewing the sights and looking for places that would make good photographs. The majority of this activity was not done alone, but in the company of his companion and the other missionaries.<sup>21</sup>

John Edmunds, from Salt Lake City, Utah, left for the Eastern States Mission towards the end of 1919 and after arriving in New York was sent to work in the Connecticut conference. While in New York, he was amazed by the bustling traffic and subways of that huge city.

Edmunds, like most of the missionaries, was from the isolated Rocky Mountain area and found the world of New York City overwhelming and foreign to anything he had encountered before.<sup>22</sup>

While he was still in New York, Edmunds got a taste of what he would be doing for the remaining two-and-a-half years. Along with the other missionaries that were present, he took his turn at speaking at a street meeting. He did not like it at first but soon got used to it and later even enjoyed it. He participated in street meetings on a consistent basis in the three cities he served in: Springfield, Massachusetts; Bridgeport, Connecticut; and New Haven, Connecticut.<sup>23</sup>

For the street meetings, Edmunds had to go to city hall to obtain a permit where he was assigned a specific corner with certain blocks of time for preaching. Wednesday and Saturday nights were the regular nights for street meetings. However, on occasion he spoke in as many as two or three meetings per night, several nights a week. He estimated that he had spoken in anywhere from 300 to 400 street meetings during his mission. All of the missionaries, both men and women, that were serving in a city would all get together and, after opening with a song, would take turns speaking on different aspects of the LDS Church doctrine.<sup>24</sup>

John Allen from Salt Lake City, Utah, left Salt Lake on the train in August of 1922 and spent nearly three years--about thirty-four months--in the Eastern States Mission. He was also heavily involved with street meetings. He stated that even though tracting from door-to-door was the "backbone" of missionary work, a great number of street meetings were also held to help the missionaries contact prospective investigators. Like Edmunds, Allen did not like street meetings initially, but later said:

*I got so I like street meetings. We'd go out there Saturday night and try to stop the crowds going to the theatre and coming out of theatres, mostly coming out. It almost scared me to death to start with, but when I got used to it, I liked street meetings, and we had lots of very good contacts. People would stop and talk to us at the meeting and then we would go and visit them. We had a lot of success with street meetings.*<sup>25</sup>

Allen also spent a lot of time engaged in door-to-door tracting, the other method that missionaries used to find potential investigators. He was constantly tracting in his assigned areas, both alone and with his companion. He says "we were supposed to tract five hours a day for about five days a week."<sup>26</sup>

The results of tracting for the men missionaries varied greatly. Aaron Mendenhall found success and states that he got invited in four times one day and spent six hours tracting another day by only contacting six homes and received excellent treatment.<sup>27</sup> John Allen found the people in West Virginia to be more receptive to his message than those in Connecticut. Speaking of the latter area, he says that "it's difficult to be turned down 90 percent of the time" and would much rather be in a street meeting.<sup>28</sup>

Weldon P. Jensen from Brigham City, Utah, arrived in New York to begin his missionary duties in January of 1929. While he performed his tracting and street meeting responsibilities like the other men, he emphasized the social activities that were often a part of the missionary's life. Shortly after he began working in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Mission President James H. Moyle gave permission and

even encouraged the missionaries to attend the Presidential Inauguration of Herbert Hoover in Washington, D.C. Along with the other missionaries present, Jensen was awed by the city of Washington and the spectacle of the Inauguration.<sup>29</sup>

Jensen also spent considerable time with the women missionaries of the Eastern States Mission. While stationed in Harrisburg, he tracted alone out in the country for three days before hitchhiking to Reading, Pennsylvania to visit an LDS family. In Reading, he visited the women missionaries located there. Along with one of the women, he managed to get a ride back to Harrisburg in time for a street meeting.

Often at street meetings his companion would fail to make it, as would the companion of a woman missionary so Jensen and the one woman missionary would proceed to conduct the street meeting. He said that he enjoyed these street meetings because "Sister Peters and I could go on for hours without end."<sup>30</sup>

Jensen also associated with the women missionaries in his other area in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Wilmington, Delaware. He would have dinner with them on many occasions and when several missionaries had a recreational outing at Atlantic City one day, he had dinner and walked along the boardwalk with Mary Wozzley, one of the women missionaries. Later when he was being transferred from Wilmington, he gave Mary (whom he later married) and her companion each a goodbye kiss.<sup>31</sup>

These experiences of men missionaries involving the journey across the United States, the arrival in the Eastern States, reading and studying church doctrine, tracting, street meetings, and cultural and social events were, as will be seen shortly, very similar to those of the women missionaries. However, there were some differences in their missionary activities.

One of the activities denied to women because of the safety factor involved was doing country or traveling work. John Edmunds, for instance, spent several weeks away from his assigned city area traveling in the country, tracting out rural residents. This kind of work was called "going without purse or scrip" because the missionaries took no money and relied upon the people for their food and shelter. Edmunds said one time he went out for a week and slept in barns and washed in streams and horse troughs.<sup>32</sup> Other activities reserved exclusively for men were leadership roles such as conference presidents and the performing of LDS Church ordinances such as baptism, confirmation and blessing the sick, privileges accorded only to male priesthood holders.

Women also had roles which men usually did not perform. Several women, such as Margaret Holmes, would spend a part of their mission working as stenographers or bookkeepers in the mission office.<sup>33</sup> Others served as Mission Relief Society Presidents and accompanied the mission president on his mission tours (the Relief Society is

the official LDS women's organization). Still others conducted Relief Society bazaars and workshops in their respective areas.<sup>34</sup>

Despite these few differences, the experiences of female missionaries in the Eastern States Mission closely paralleled those of the male missionaries. These similarities will be shown as the lives of four women missionaries are examined in the next section.

#### V. The Nature of Women's Missionary Work

The nature of the missionary work for women in the Eastern States Mission is revealed in the daily activities of four women missionaries who served between 1915 and 1932: Edna Stohl, Margaret Holmes, Mary Wozzley, and Mary Pulley.

##### Edna Stohl

Edna Stohl, from Brigham City, Utah, said receiving a mission call wasn't that big a surprise for her because she wanted to spend a part of her life involved in missionary work. She says "not that I felt at all capable, but that I knew it would do me a great deal of good."<sup>35</sup> She departed Salt Lake City on June 16, 1915 and spent two days sightseeing in Chicago where she also saw a vaudeville show.

She then visited Niagara Falls and upon arrival in New York City, toured the aquarium and the Statue of Liberty. While still in New York, the new missionaries all went to Broadway and saw a picture show.<sup>36</sup>

She was sent to New Haven, Connecticut and began her missionary work which, like the men missionaries, consisted largely of tracting and street meetings. In New Haven she managed to get in her share of social events. She attended the fireworks show on Independence Day and went paddling in the ocean with an LDS member woman friend and toured the tall buildings in New York City with four other women missionaries. In New York City, she also went to a movie with a male missionary and went to a party on Coney Island with eighteen missionaries from the New York and Connecticut areas.<sup>37</sup>

At a farm in Vermont, the mission president and an LDS Apostle held special meetings with one of the meetings for just the women missionaries. At the conclusion of the meeting, Edna attended a mission-sponsored dinner and a large dance held in a tent on the farm.

Following these activities in New York and Vermont, she returned to New Haven and continued her missionary duties for ten more months when she got an early release due to her father's failing health.<sup>38</sup>

##### Margaret Holmes

Margaret Holmes grew up in the farming community of Raymond, Alberta, Canada and had never given much thought to serving a mission

until her bishop approached her about the possibility. Writing in retrospect she said, "I will always be grateful to Bishop Jim Meeks for promoting my being called on a mission."<sup>39</sup> She said that when she first decided to serve a mission, her purpose in going was to "see the world."

Margaret spent parts of two days in Salt Lake City in 1922 before her departure and then she took a train to New York City along with several other missionaries. The ride lasted four days as the missionaries were able to get in some sight-seeing when they visited Chicago and Niagara Falls on their way. After spending three days in New York City, Margaret was on her way to her new assignment in Philadelphia. She was to spend the next seventeen months in this large eastern city. She had never lived for any length of time in a large city and now to be in the far-off, strange place must have seemed shocking at first. But she handled the cultural change with ease and after the first few weeks was already well adjusted to her new mode of life.<sup>40</sup>

Less than a week after she arrived in Philadelphia, she had her first experience at tracting, an activity that she would perform on countless occasions in her two-and-a-half year mission. Her journal entry for February 14, 1922 records the following:

*...I moved into the room with my new companion. I had my first experience tracting after dinner today. Sister Johnson did most of the talking. We went to 22 doors, had one invitation in and was given 5 cents at one door. I resolve that I will be able to stand the test OK. Elder McCune called and we had dinner and Relief Society at home this evening.*<sup>41</sup>

This first experience tracting relieved her of her fears that she would be an inadequate missionary, a feeling that many, including male missionaries, experience just prior to departure and in the beginnings of their missions. These feelings of inadequacy and lack of preparation are natural to all new missionaries, and in nearly all cases, the feeling wears off after the first few days.

Even though she was assigned a companion (who was also her roommate), she spent a good deal of time doing missionary work on her own. Her diary is full of instances of her tracting, visiting investigators, and attending meetings alone.<sup>42</sup>

While she spent a good deal of her time on missionary work, some of her time was spent in other matters. She (as well as her companion) studied constantly. Reading religious material constituted the majority of their studying. Very early in her mission Margaret committed to read the Bible.<sup>43</sup> Shopping was another one of her pursuits that competed for her time. She was always mentioning going downtown to buy a certain coat, hat, or dress fabric.<sup>44</sup>

While sewing and cleaning were some of her domestic duties, cooking was something she or her companion did little of. They were well-fed by the members and investigators of the church as well as by people whom they had met tracting. Keeping in close contact with the members of the church was an important activity for the missionaries as they not only ate meals with them but held priesthood, Relief Society and cottage meetings (the teaching and discussion of gospel topics in a member's home).<sup>45</sup>

The elders and women missionaries were always spending a great deal of time together. They would not only attend meetings together but would dine, visit sites, spend hours visiting in each other's apartments and attending cultural events together. Missionaries also spent plenty of time at movies, plays and other entertainment. Margaret and her companion along with the elders on occasion would take in shows--every couple of weeks or so. A typical journal entry following such an event is as follows: "We went to see Al Jolson in 'Bombo.' He was good. It was the first night in Philadelphia."<sup>46</sup>

#### Mary Wozzley

Mary Wozzley left her home in Bountiful, Utah to serve a mission to the Eastern States in July 1929 and stayed at Palmyra, New York, at the former home of Joseph Smith, for several days before arriving at mission headquarters in New York. Her arrival at Palmyra coincided with an annual mission conference and celebration on July 24 (Mormon Pioneer Day). Her mission president, James H. Moyle, conducted the celebration. By the first of August she was at her new assignment in Wilmington, Delaware.<sup>47</sup>

In speaking about the purpose of her going on a mission she said:

*Missions were different in those days, they had a two-fold purpose. Today you go out to convert people. In those days people were very prejudiced and you went out to make friends with the people and show them a little bit of what Mormonism is like but they also tried to educate the missionaries who went because many of these missionaries lived in a little valley in Southern Utah or Idaho... That is the only time in their life they ever got out, so we were told to take in any kind of cultural things that we could take in.*<sup>48</sup>

One of the first things noticed about her mission is the awe and surprise she felt about the eastern United States and how different it was from her Utah home. She was particularly impressed with how much it could rain in the east and the beautiful, green scenery. She was also impressed by her trainer, or first companion, who was "lots of fun," would not let her get homesick and above all, had a

burning testimony of the LDS faith and helped Mary find out how to study the church doctrines and how to understand them.<sup>49</sup>

Mary had some unique experiences when she was in Wilmington. There was no LDS Church in town so she and her companion would spend their Sundays at different churches. Afterwards they would find a minister and talk to him. After working throughout Wilmington, they worked in towns in the surrounding countryside. In the town of Rockland, Pennsylvania, they met a family of inactive LDS members. Mary and her companion spent the next several months working with this family by cooking, sewing, cleaning and taking care of the children, largely because the mother was incompetent and unable to perform these tasks. The missionaries ran a Primary (a church curriculum for children) for the kids of this family and other children out in Rockland.<sup>50</sup>

Eventually the women were able to obtain the use of a lodge and, after sweeping out the cigarette butts and beer bottles, used the building as a meeting house for the few members in the Rockland area. She says that only a few people attended at first, but after they were organized "we had a few people come from other churches."<sup>51</sup>

Mary had several other interesting experiences. Because she and her companion practiced the piano at a local church (the reverend allowed them to because they were missionaries), an LDS Church authority from Salt Lake City who came to tour the mission asked them to accompany him as his pianists on his mission tour.<sup>52</sup>

Another experience shows her ingenuity in trying to find people to whom to teach the doctrines of the LDS Church. She searched the obituaries of the newspaper and happened to find out about a family who had recently lost a little girl. She approached the grieving parents, who were obviously worried about the spiritual welfare of their daughter, and explained to them the comforting tenets of Mormon doctrine regarding the afterlife. The family became very friendly toward her, and the father, who ran a newspaper business, put some good articles in the paper about the missionaries. Because of this favorable publicity, they found more success in their daily tracting activities.<sup>53</sup>

Mary, like Margaret, had her share of cultural experiences. She had elegant meals at the local country club, had several dinners with the other missionaries, including the male missionaries, took in all the cultural things she could in Philadelphia and Harrisburg, and made a trip with several other missionaries to Atlantic City for a day so she could "get cultured." She certainly followed the injunction that missionaries "are to get all the culture and everything [they] could get while [they] were out there as well as doing missionary work."<sup>54</sup>

## Mary Pulley

Mary Pulley, from American Fork, Utah served in the Eastern States Mission from 1930-1932. She had a great desire to serve a mission and was so excited when the time finally came that she couldn't sleep a wink.<sup>55</sup> Like Mary Woolzey, she was fascinated by the grandeur of the eastern United States. She was particularly amazed by the architectural achievements such as Grand Central Station, the Brooklyn Bridge and many of the tall buildings of New York City. After spending a couple of days in New York City, she was sent to Wilmington, Delaware to begin her missionary labors.<sup>56</sup>

Mary, like Margaret, also talked about her times of doing missionary work alone. Although Margaret and her companion separated during the daytime because it was a normal part of missionary life in the early 1920s, by the time Mary left on her mission in 1930, it was becoming less common to do work without one's companion. Mary, however, found it difficult to follow this updated procedure. She recalls meeting her first companion:

*This was a very sad experience in my life. I had a lady missionary companion who didn't have a testimony of the gospel, and I was supposed to labor with her...I immediately realized she was a very jealous type person...She was a person that was very difficult to get along with.*<sup>57</sup>

Mary's companion did not want to do any missionary work, so Mary realized that if she was to get any work done, she would have to do it herself. Later she was transferred to Philadelphia and found, to her delight, a hard-working woman as her companion. This new companion got up at six a.m., studied, tracted, kept the rules and held street meetings every night. Mary recalls that this time "was a wonderful experience in my life."<sup>58</sup>

The type of street meetings employed by Mary Pulley were similar to those performed by the male missionaries. When Margaret Holmes was in Philadelphia she would participate in street meetings two to three times a week only when the male missionaries were present to conduct the meetings.<sup>59</sup> Mary and her companion, however, would conduct their own street meetings with no men missionaries present at all. Mary became proficient enough in street meetings to be known as the leading street meeting person in the mission. When many elders complained to President James H. Moyle about street meetings being old-fashioned, he would tell them to go down to Philadelphia and listen to Mary Pulley and maybe that would change their minds.<sup>60</sup>

During the 1930s the use of the radio as a missionary tool first became prevalent in the Eastern States Mission. Over 212 radio broadcasts were conducted by missionaries in 1931 alone, all free to the church.<sup>40</sup> After her transfer to New Bedford, Massachusetts,

Mary was asked by President Moyle if she would be willing to give broadcasts on the New England Network.

*I agreed to do this and after six months, I had become guest announcer and also gave the Sunday night address. I think maybe I was the only lady missionary doing that. Many times people would call me and tell me how they enjoyed my talk.<sup>61</sup>*

Mary Pulley, like the other two missionaries discussed, had an extremely active and varied missionary life. But did their experiences differ greatly from those of their male counterparts?

#### V. Conclusion

The stories of these four women missionaries were examined to demonstrate their daily activities and to gain an insight into what their overall mission experiences might have been like. Compared with the experiences of the male missionaries, their experiences were very similar. At least in the Eastern States Mission from 1915 to 1932, it seemed that whether a missionary was male or female, their experiences were nearly identical. While it is true that men and women sometimes had different duties to perform on their mission, the basic day-to-day activities remained quite similar. Both men and women missionaries were sent out by the LDS Church to accomplish the same purposes--to teach non-LDS people the basic doctrines and beliefs of the church, thereby gaining converts in the process and strengthening their own faith and testimonies. Both men and women were given this same charge and they carried it out in remarkably similar ways.

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## NOTES

1. The Doctrine and Covenants of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, 61:9. This book is considered holy scripture by the LDS Church. In this chapter Joseph Smith is receiving a revelation from Christ on August 12, 1831 at McIlwaine's Bend on the Missouri River. This particular verse, like many others in the Doctrine and Covenants, speaks of leaving hastily on a mission.

2. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, The Story of the Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1976), 456.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 455.

5. Ibid.

6. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,

7. Doctrine and Covenants, 111:10.

8. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Local Units History Index, Archives, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, microfiche.

9. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Eastern States Mission, Manuscript History, vol. 5, Archives, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, microfilm. Jan. 1, 1929.

10. Ibid.

11. Manuscript History, vol. 5, June 26, 1928.

12. Departure Registers.

13. Ibid.

14. Manuscript History, vol. 5, 5-year Statistics, ending 1935.

15. Ibid.

16. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Ancestral File Individual Index (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), compact disc.

17. Aaron Bruce Mendenhall, Journals, 1915-1917, Archives, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, microfilm, 3,8.

18. Ibid. and Sarah Edna Stohl Hatch, Journal, June 1915-June 1916, Archives, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT, June 16-22, 1915.

19. Mendenhall, Journals, 9, 13.

20. Ibid., 16.

21. Ibid., 72.

22. John K. Edmunds, Oral History, Interviewed by Gordon Irving, 1979-1980, typescript, 3 vols. The James Moyle Oral History Program, Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 52-53.

23. Ibid., 51, 54.

24. Ibid., 56.

25. John Leonard Allen, Oral History, Interviewed by Charles Ursenbach, 1975, typescript. The James Moyle Oral History Program, Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 15.

26. Ibid.

27. Mendenhall, Journals, 19, 23.

28. Allen Oral History, 17.

29. Weldon Peter Jensen, Oral History, Interviewed by John W. Mayfield, 1977-1978, typescript. Oral History Program of the Bountiful, Utah North Stake, Bountiful 37th Ward, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 61.

30. Ibid., 63, 65.

31. Mary Wozzley Jensen, Oral History, Interviewed by John W. Mayfield, 1977-1978, typescript. Oral History Program of the Bountiful, Utah North Stake, Bountiful 37th Ward, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 45.

32. Edmunds Oral History, 66.

33. Margaret Holmes Weaver, Missionary Journal, 1921-1924. In possession of her daughter, Ellen Claire Shaeffer, epilogue.

34. Manuscript History, vol. 3, May 15, 1921.
35. Hatch, Journal, preface.
36. Ibid., June 16-22, 1915.
37. Ibid, July 30-31, 1915.
38. Ibid., July 24, 26, 1915, and May 25, 1916.
39. Weaver, Missionary Journal, preface.
40. Ibid., February 16, 1922.
41. Ibid., February 14, 1922.
42. Ibid., March 27, 1922.
43. Ibid., March 4, 1922.
44. Ibid., July 19, 1922.
45. Ibid., April 22, 1922.
46. Ibid., April 17, 1922.
47. Mary Wozzley Jensen, Oral History, 39-40.
48. Ibid., 41.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 42.
51. Ibid., 43.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid., 45.
55. Mary Pulley, Oral History, Interviewed by Jerry D. Lee, 1973, typescript. American Fork Oral History Project, Charles Redd Center for Western Studies and the Utah State Historical Society, Archives, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 136.
56. Ibid., 137.
57. Ibid., 138.

58. Ibid., 141.
59. Weaver, Missionary Journal, September 3, 1922.
60. Pulley Oral History, 146.
61. Ibid., 3.

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