STRUGGLING TO FIND ZION:
MORMONS IN COLORADO’S SAN LUIS VALLEY

By
Dana Rae EchoHawk

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado Denver in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in History
2012
This thesis for the Master of Arts in History degree by

Dana Rae EchoHawk

has been approved for the

University of Colorado Denver History Department masters Program

by

Thomas J. Noel, Chair
Rebecca Hunt, Advisor
Ryan Crewe, Advisor

October 25, 2012
EchoHawk, Dana Rae, Master of Arts in History

Struggling to Find Zion: Mormons in Colorado’s San Luis Valley

Thesis directed by Professor Thomas J. Noel

ABSTRACT

In 1876, an eclectic assemblage of Danish people, Hispanics, Southerners from Alabama, Georgia and other southern states, and members of the Catawba Indian tribe from South Carolina colonized in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado. Under the unified banner of Mormonism, they were thrown together by their religious faith and their struggle to find ‘Zion’, symbolic of a place to establish a society where all inhabitants lived in harmony. They came to settle along the Rio Grande near the spot where Mexico’s Governor Don Diego de Vargas crossed in 1694 and the banks of the Conejos River where Zebulon Montgomery Pike built a log stockade in 1807.

The Valley is historically best remembered for other events, both real and mythical. Spanish conquistadors searched for gold and explored pathways westward to California. Trappers and traders crisscrossed the area leaving only slight traces on the landscape. Before all of them, Folsom people, Ancestral Pueblo Indians and later other Native Americans occupied the San Luis Valley. But the arrival of Mormon colonizers in the spring of 1878 near the town of Los Cerritos in Conejos County is less well known. Historians Andrew Jensen and Nicholas G. Morgan published journal articles on the subject more than forty-five years ago; two thesis papers were written in the 1960s; in 1983 an institutional history was compiled for the local LDS Church in La Jara, Colorado; and in 2003 historian Edward R. Crowther contributed an article published in the San Luis Valley Historical Society Journal. These historical publications focused on
Mormon colonizers from southern states and the Danish who came from Utah to assist them. A history of the Catawba Indian people who arrived in the San Luis Valley as Mormons from South Carolina in 1886 has previously been omitted. The plural wives of social and financially elite practicing polygamists from Utah spent years of exile in the colonies but like the Catawba, this also has been omitted. The interwoven histories of each of these groups and individuals contribute additional context to the historiography of the multicultural diversity in the San Luis Valley, which is often over shadowed by the dominant Hispanic history of the region.

The experience of early Mormons in Colorado broadens and compliments Colorado historical scholarship and it is both relevant and deserving of recognition as a significant contribution to the states’ history. This is just one example of the surprising diversity to be found in many a region.

The form and content of this abstract are approved. I recommend its publication.

Approved: Thomas J. Noel
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children, Travis, Tobin and Tyson, my grandchildren Brooklyn, Tori, Kollin, Hayden, River and Rainn and to my mother Melvona Rae Sorenson Boren who, as an example for all her family, continues to learn and grow herself and is my source of inspiration that regardless of age, all things are possible.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are a number of people who have aided and supported my work on this thesis. I would like to express my appreciation to Gary Bailey, Mayor of Sanford, Colorado for opening the doors of the Sanford History Museum to me for exploration into the diaries, photographs, ephemeral artifacts and historical documents archived there. I would like to thank Cynthia A. Walsh, granddaughter of the James Patterson family for meeting with me and providing photos and information about her Catawba ancestors from South Carolina. Judy Martin Canty’s genealogy work greatly benefited my research on the Western Catawbas that came to Colorado in the 1880s and I appreciate the emails and documents she has shared. I would like to thank Barbara Dey, Reference Librarian at the Stephen H. Hart Library for pulling documents and having them ready for me whenever I arranged time in Denver. I appreciate the assistance of Krissy Giacoletto and Karen Carver from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah for their help with special collections.

I am most appreciative and want to especially thank Professor Thomas J. Noel for his guidance and support during my graduate studies program. His knowledge of Colorado history shared both in the classroom and in our frequent talks has been invaluable to my research. I thank Professor Rebecca Hunt for her insight and encouragement to continue with my topic when I had doubts of the direction to pursue. And, I would like to thank Professor Ryan Crewe for his guidance directing me to add context to my narrative of historical events in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................... 1

II. CONEJOS COUNTY, COLORADO ............................................................. 12

1830-1846 ......................................................................................................... 12

The Conejos or Guadalupe Mexican-American Land Grant ....................... 14

Early Settlement in Conejos County ................................................................. 18

III. THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS .......... 22

1830 - 1845 ....................................................................................................... 22

The Mormon Battalion in Colorado................................................................. 27

The First Colorado Mormon Settlement: 1846 ................................................. 31

Every Member a Missionary............................................................................. 35

Three Mission Fields: Lamanite, Southern States, Scandinavian ............... 39

Lamanite Mission.......................................................................................... 39

Southern States Mission................................................................................ 41

Scandinavian Mission ................................................................................... 43

IV. SOUTHERN STATES CONVERTS ............................................................. 47

“He Was Oddly Assessed a Road Tax” ............................................................ 47

Southern Converts Leave the South............................................................... 49

Los Cerritos, Colorado ...................................................................................... 63

Economic Status of the Southern Converts .................................................. 67
Antonio…. or Antonio? .......................................................................................................................... 72

V. MORMON SCANDINAVIANS ........................................................................................................... 74

Danish Mormons ..................................................................................................................................... 74

Hans Jensen: “My Family in Zion” ....................................................................................................... 78

Lauritz Peterson: “The Brother Gone Away and Lost in the Desert” ..................................................... 85

Utah Became too Crowded ..................................................................................................................... 89

Cultural Differences Between Scandinavians and Southerners ................................................................ 92

VI. COMMUNITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ........................................................................... 99

“Measure Up and Lay Out a City” ........................................................................................................ 99

Ephraim .................................................................................................................................................. 102

Richfield .................................................................................................................................................. 105

Eastdale ................................................................................................................................................... 111

Sanford .................................................................................................................................................... 112

Notes on Building Materials ................................................................................................................. 117

Mormon Agriculture in the San Luis Valley .......................................................................................... 120

Silas Sanford Smith ................................................................................................................................. 125

VII. CATAWBA INDIANS IN THE SAN LUIS VALLEY .................................................................. 129

Catawba History in South Carolina ..................................................................................................... 129

Mormon Catawbas .................................................................................................................................... 131

Pinkney Henry Head ............................................................................................................................... 136

James Goodwin Patterson ......................................................................................................................... 141

John Alonzo Canty ................................................................................................................................... 143

VIII. MORMON RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUTSIDERS .............................................................. 145
LIST OF FIGURES

Figures

Figure 1 1893 Map Sketch of the Conejos Grant ............................................................. 17
Figure 2 Letter requesting Hiram Schofield settle his family in the San Luis Valley ...... 39
Figure 3 Skandinaviens Stjerne ...................................................................................... 45
Figure 4 Poster promoting the Emerald Isle Clipper Ship from Denmark ..................... 46
Figure 5 James T. Lisonbee Sr ....................................................................................... 48
Figure 6 John Morgan, 1890 ......................................................................................... 53
Figure 7 Missionaries John Morgan and James Lisonbee ............................................. 54
Figure 8 Mormon Barracks built on an Island in the Arkansas River near Pueblo, Colorado in 1877 ................................................................. 56
Figure 9 Pack Haynie and Henrietta Bagwell ............................................................... 56
Figure 10 Daniel R. Sellers and family ......................................................................... 57
Figure 11 James Z. Stewart ......................................................................................... 61
Figure 12 Letter from John Z. Stewart describing going to the San Luis Valley .......... 62
Figure 13 The Los Cerritos Trujillo Family ................................................................. 65
Figure 14 Families of Hugh Lee Sellers ....................................................................... 68
Figure 15 Routes from Denmark to the American West .............................................. 75
Figure 16 Hans Jensen “Hals” ..................................................................................... 79
Figure 17 Map of Denmark drawn by Hans Jensen .................................................... 81
Figure 18 Lawrence Peterson and his wife Delores Romero ....................................... 88
Figure 19 Lawrence M. Peterson home ..................................................................... 88
Figure 20 Soren C. Berthelson and his wife Marianna Berthelson ............................... 92
Figure 45 Second Marriage Certificate for Pinkney and Martha Head ......................... 140
Figure 46 James Goodwin Patterson and Missouri White Patterson ......................... 143
Figure 47 Home of James and Elizabeth Missouri White ............................................. 143
Figure 48 La Jara Consolidated High School .............................................................. 152
Figure 49 Hans Jensen jailed for polygamy ................................................................. 154
Figure 50 General Authorities from Salt Lake City .................................................... 157
CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION

The consequences of Mormon arrival stirred controversy throughout the state of Colorado sparking distrust and sometimes fear. One Colorado newspaper claimed, “Mormons, recognize neither the laws of God nor man.”

Being expelled earlier from eastern states, Mormons were “faced with the dilemma of seeking a close-knit community free from corrosive outside influence, while at the same time striving to relate harmoniously with the broader American society.”

Although the Mormon experience represents the unique American theme of conquest and adventure in a search for community on the western frontier, Americans in the nineteenth century commonly viewed Mormons as being un-American. Mormons, like other Americans during this early period of American history, joined the amalgamations of people from the east looking for available land and greater opportunity in the West. To borrow a phrase from Frederick Jackson Turner, the result was the beginning of the “really American part of our history.”

Mormons, unlike other Americans however, uniquely searched for ‘Zion’, a place they described as being “the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety…the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.”\(^4\) While residing in Kirtland, Ohio in 1831, Church founder Joseph Smith recorded revelations as the *Doctrine and Covenants*.\(^5\) The directives provided within these revelations, documented as scripture, give clear instruction pertaining to the Mormon concept of ‘Zion’ and what was required of faithful members of the Church.

“Wherefore I, the Lord, have said, gather ye out from the eastern lands, assemble ye yourselves together ye elders of my church; go ye forth into the western countries, call upon the inhabitants to repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me.”\(^6\)

The two words “gather ye” served as a hymn for multitudes of Mormon people who moved westward beginning in the mid-1800s. They were lead by Smith, and after his death, by Brigham Young to places beyond mid-western prairies to the Rocky Mountains. The first companies of Mormon immigrants arrived in the Salt Lake Valley of Utah from Missouri in 1847.

---


\(^5\) The Doctrine and Covenants is a “book of scripture containing revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith and to a few other latter-day prophets. It is unique in scripture because it is not a translation of ancient documents”. It is one of four books used by Mormons. The other three are the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price. Source: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, https://www.lds.org/ (Accessed October 7, 2012).

\(^6\) Smith, *Doctrine and Covenants*, 45: 64.
Due to missionary efforts that had become a priority of the Church in its founding days, large numbers of converts continued to stream into Utah. Efforts were first focused on American Indians, then expanded to eastern and southern states and then outside of the United States to the British Isles and Scandinavian countries. Today, Mormon missionaries are found worldwide. In Denmark thousands of Danish people baptized in the 1870s began to heavily immigrate to Utah. Settlements in Sanpete County, Utah, south of Salt Lake City, became populated by Scandinavians, predominately the Danes and are known as “Little Denmark”. But as success with converting members increased, most wishing to relocate to be near the main body of Church activity, leaders began to consider regions in other parts of Utah, as well as other states and looked to identify new locations suitable for fostering new communities of Zion. Smith did not live to see the magnitude of convert migration to Utah but as he documented in the *Doctrine and Covenant*, the revelations of ‘gather ye’ were directed to converts worldwide “out of every nation”.

“And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.”

To have large amounts of acreage available for agricultural production was important to the general Mormon development philosophy and from this perspective, Utah became crowded. When converts from southern states desired to come west thirty years after the first company of Mormons settled in Utah, President Brigham Young

7 Smith, *Doctrine and Covenants*, 45: 69.
recommended they look to New Mexico or Texas for a location to colonize and although in neither state, the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado was ultimately selected. Attractive for its isolation from urban centers, its geographic and weather conditions and the availability of land to purchase, it met the requirements recommended by Church Apostle Erastus Snow when he wrote, “Our people are an agricultural people and wish to…improve and cultivate the land”. Joined in Conejos County by Danish people who had only recently settled in Utah from Denmark and a decade later by Catawba Indian people from South Carolina, the Southerners, Danes and Catawbas collectively colonized the first permanent Mormon settlements in Colorado.

But, the San Luis Valley colony was not the first Mormon settlement in Colorado. That honor belongs to a Company of Mormons led by John Brown in 1846 who settled near Fort Pueblo. They were joined by a group of Mormon Battalion soldiers discharged when they became ill in Santa Fe during the winter. It can be noted that these early Mormon residents, although temporary, settled in Colorado almost a year before Brigham Young’s company had reached Utah designating Colorado as having the first Mormon settlement west of the Rocky Mountains.

Opposition encountered by Mormons in Colorado appeared mild in comparison to their prior experiences. To quote Thomas F. O’Dea, a historian of Mormon history, “Even when most at odds with its fellow Americans, it (Mormonism) was to be typically

American, but was always to feel and express this combination of typicality and peculiarity.” 9 Coloradans like other Americans shared this common view that Mormons were a peculiar people. But, if they were a peculiar people to the outsiders they called gentiles, this heterogeneous group of settlers were also peculiar to one another.

Southerners were the first Mormons to arrive in the San Luis Valley, and “Saints” from New Mexico Territory who were more familiar with the area, soon joined them.10 As recent converts, Southerners struggled to learn the nuances of what their new faith required of them and taking guidance from biblical scripture and the Book of Mormon. They steadfastly followed doctrine to the letter of the law. They came to the San Luis Valley with few supplies or farm implements ill prepared to establish permanent settlements. Not being accustomed to the cold climate of the valley or high-altitude farming, and having no familiarity with available building materials in the region, they were confronted with difficulties. Church leaders determined that Scandinavian farmers from Utah, most from Denmark and new converts themselves, had the skills and knowledge required to assist Southerners through the difficult ordeals of early community development.

Church authorities however, did not anticipate the conflicts that arose between the two groups when, in addition to community development, they placed Danes in positions of authority within the local church hierarchy. Southerners reported that the Danes did not exhibit strict adherence to Church expectations of adhering to the ‘Word of Wisdom,

10. Mormons commonly refer to themselves as Saints. The Doctrine and Covenants Index provides the meaning as Believer or Children of God.
they would commonly swear and it was difficult for them to understand sermons spoken in a mixed English – Danish dialect.\textsuperscript{11} The unusual circumstance of colony governance by Church officials in Salt Lake City sparked additional difficulties. Catawba Indian people came from South Carolina a decade later but their arrival kindled no similar strife in the already growing communities. Their quiet appearance however, left them, as previously noted, relatively unknown in the historical scholarship of Mormons in the San Luis Valley.

As incongruous as the cultural compatibility of Southerners, Danish and Catawbas appeared, they shared the commonality of being recent converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their desire to find a just, harmonious society as promised them in the heavenly concept of Zion, bonded them together.

It can be asked, what factors encouraged them to leave their familiar homelands when they had no clear indication of where they would ultimately resettle? Or, as Marvin S. Hill posed in \textit{Mormonism and American Culture}, “Why should the gibberish of a crazy boy send thousands of people trekking off to establish a theocracy beyond the Rocky Mountains?”\textsuperscript{12} Utah Mormons followed their charismatic leader, Brigham Young to the Salt Lake Valley. The San Luis Valley colonists had no similar leadership to guide them. In fact, as will be told, the Southerners were left alone on an island in the Arkansas River.

\textsuperscript{11} “The Word of Wisdom is recorded in section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The scripture revealed foods that were good to eat and substances that were not good for the human body including “wine, strong drinks, tobacco, and hot drinks”. Source: Smith, \textit{Doctrine and Covenants}, 89: 1-9.

\textsuperscript{12} Hill, \textit{Mormonism and American Culture}, 14.
outside of Pueblo for the winter as Church leaders tried to determine where to take them for permanent settlement. Perhaps a brief discussion of the following four factors may provide partial answer, 1) faith, 2) economic motivation, 3) persecution and 4) fraternalism.

The first consideration of faith is most difficult to explain and therefore is addressed after discussions of the other three factors. Beginning with economic motivations, poverty loomed in the background as a factor for the Southerners, Danes and Catawbas. Their personal voices describe best their own circumstances of poverty. Annie Marie Jensen, a Danish woman who settled in Richfield, Colorado with her husband was born in Borglum in the county of Hjong in Vendyssel, Denmark. She wrote “in Denmark poverty was high, and living conditions were difficult. With our newfound religion we were anxious to join with the other Saints in America, so we joined with many others who emigrated to America about the same time.”13 On his mission to the Cherokees, Pinkney Head of the Catawba tribe wrote, “I Seen lot of the Cherokee going Bare footed and it Being in the month December and January 1886 the ground was Covered with snow”.14 Pinkney brought his family to settle in Sanford, Colorado less than a year later. Not all, but many of the Southerners required basic help to travel west. In 1861, “Church leaders called upon people in Springville, Utah to furnish two hundred

wagons, teams and night herders to journey to the Missouri River and bring back poor Saints to Utah”. Similar stories and accounts are numerous and are repeated in the diaries and journal accounts provided by converts as well as by the missionaries who brought them west.

Persecution, the third factor of consideration, persuaded groups of converts to trek west. The following describes why some Danish immigrants came to the United States. “The bitter feeling was directed toward them and persecution was heaped upon them. The feeling of hatred toward them hastened their desire to migrate to America and on to Zion where they could be at liberty to worship as they wished.” Excerpts from diaries quoted through this paper further illustrate the level of persecution experienced by Mormon converts in the southern states, in Denmark and by the Catawbas in South Carolina.

The eighteen-century has been called the “Golden Age of Fraternity” and fraternalism provides the fourth factor of consideration typified Mormon colonizers struggling to find Zion in the San Luis Valley. Mark C. Carnes’ review of fraternal societies in *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* indicates that fraternal organizations flourished in European countries before trickling over to America and by the nineteenth century there were roughly six hundred such societies in the United


16 Eva Mortensen. "Eva Mortensen." This typed manuscript is not dated. A copy is available in the Sanford History Museum.

States. When Joseph Smith lived in New York, he, his older brother and father were Freemasons. Later, in Nauvoo, Illinois, he wrote in his diary on March 15, 1842 “I officiated as grand chaplain at the installation of the Nauvoo Lodge of Free Masons, at the Grove near the Temple. Although Smith remained a Freemason until his death, other Church leaders including Brigham Young distanced themselves and present day members are advised, “not to affiliate with organizations that are secret”.

Fraternal societies typically display elitism on some level. To summarize, rituals shared among deservers bond them together and has the effect of producing a powerful unified coercion. This unification has the benefit of maintaining and directing efforts and cohesion among the group. Elitism additionally provides degrees of status within the ranks of the fraternity. This may be compared with the Mormon practice of priesthood for laymen members with levels of increasing authority for those who hold to the faith. Marvin S. Hill explains it as follows.

Through an elaborate system of interlocking political, social, and ecclesiastical organizations, a hierarchy of offices and positions in the Mormon priesthood provided a prestige ladder for those who may not have been even on the bottom rung of that other American ladder of upward mobility and progress,

18 Christopher J. Kauffman. *Faith and Fraternalism: The History of the Knoghts of Columbus*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1992, 8. Kauffman explains that freemasonry has middle-class origins and its “evolution represented a response to men’s social need to organize themselves into some kind of brotherhood during a period when the dominant social ethic was becoming individualism.”, 8.


20 Salt Lake Tribune Section D1, Monday Feb. 17, 1992.
thus providing an outlet for a search of recognition that was being stifled in a large number of common people.\textsuperscript{21}

The concept Hill defines of upward mobility on the American ladder of progress for common people, attracted Southerners, Scandinavian and Catawbas who came to the San Luis Valley who generally were not well do to in their places of origin.

The first consideration of faith, as mentioned, is most difficult to explain, but, combined with the factors of economy, persecution and fraternalism, was logically the bonding force that brought these people together in the San Luis Valley and best answers the question, “Why should the gibberish of a crazy boy send thousands of people trekking off to establish a theocracy beyond the Rocky Mountains?”.\textsuperscript{22} Diaries and letters to one another expressed their Christian faith that they should not fear to go where they felt they had been called by God to go. Their belief in the promise made in the *Doctrine and Covenants* was their guiding star.

“And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you”.\textsuperscript{23}

Heirs to all three groups continue to reside in the area today, and because history is precious to those whose stories we are telling, this paper attempts to relate with accuracy, the historic facts and personal stories of those who struggled to find Zion in the

\textsuperscript{21} Hill, *Mormonism and American Culture*, 122.
\textsuperscript{22} Hill, *Mormonism and American Culture*, 14.
\textsuperscript{23} Smith, *Doctrine and Covenants*, 45: 65.
San Luis Valley and reflect the true nature of their circumstances and their faith in the Mormon Church. The dust has settled and events surrounding arrival of Mormons in Colorado now encourages discussion of the historic diversity and circumstances of these people who came as Mormons and made the San Luis Valley of Colorado their home.
CHAPTER II.
CONEJOS COUNTY, COLORADO
1830-1846

The tract aforesaid shall be cultivated and never abandoned; and he that shall not cultivate his land within twelve years or that shall not reside upon it will forfeit his rights; land to be reassigned to another; pastures and watering places shall be in common for all the inhabitants; land donated for cultivation and for the pasturing of all kinds of live stock, and therefore, owing to the exposed frontier situation of the place, the grantees must keep themselves equipped with fire arms and bows and arrows … all the arms they have must undeviatingly be fire arms in good condition, under the penalty that whoever shall fail in this requirement shall forfeit his right in the said grant.…

Conditions of the 1833 Conejos Land Grant24

Spanish government had ruled the region of Conejos County, Colorado in the San Luis Valley as New Spain since 1521. In 1821, Mexico won independence from Spanish rule and under Mexican law the Conejos Land Grant was awarded as a colony grant having the stipulations listed above. Earlier in 1807 however, an American officer, Zebulon Pike entered the area and shortly before Spanish soldiers arrested he and his men for illegally entering New Spain he raised an American flag on the soil. When informed he was in Spanish territory he wrote, “I immediately ordered my flag to be taken down

and rolled up.”

Author Virginia Simmons conjectures that, “Zebulon Pike would have had difficulty imagining that a religious colony and pioneer farms would be located a half-dozen miles west of his stockade only eighty years after his arrest there by Spanish dragoons.” Nevertheless he remains credited with being first to raise the American Flag in Conejos County, Colorado.

When the Mormon Church was founded in New York in April 1830, the San Luis Valley, Colorado, was relatively unsettled. Spanish trading routes were active through the region, but only a few pobladores were brave enough to risk establishing outpost settlements. Navajo, Cheyenne and Comanche people and occasional intruding groups of Kiowa and others still traversed mountain trails and camped along the Rio Grande River but bands of Ute Indians dominated the region and frequently attacked the isolated Spanish residents.

Governance transferred from Spain to Mexico in 1821, and again to the United States at the end of the War between the U.S. and the Mexican Republic as formalized in the 1846 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Consequent to the Treaty, the southern border of American soil expanded north and with expansion came promise of protection to the scattered residents in the Valley. Hispanic life-ways and settlement in the Valley began


27. Settlers or pobladores where enlisted under land grant custom to farm and develop sparsely populated areas for titleholders of the grant. Pobladores favored saint-protectors as place names, partly due to their Catholic beliefs and perhaps also symbolic of protection against Native American raids and environmental hazards.
to flourish as domestic security became a reality under the watchful eye of U.S. military troops at Fort Massachusetts, and later Fort Garland. Terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo resulted in transfer of millions of acres originally deeded to by Mexican governors as land grants to the jurisdiction of the United States.

The Conejos or Guadalupe Mexican-American Land Grant

As one of the earliest Mexican land grants, Governor Francisco Sarracino awarded the Conejos or Guadalupe Land Grant as a colony grant on February 8, 1833 to some eighty individuals. It was not occupied due to a war with raiding Navajos. Nine years later during a temporary truce with the Navajos and during the tenure of Mexican Governor Manuel Armijo, the surviving original grantees re-petitioned their claim for over 2,500,000 acres and on February 21, 1842 it was upheld by Mexico’s Prefect of the First District, Don Juan Andres Archuleta. On behalf of all of the grantees, four men, Jose Maria Martines, Antonio Martines, Julian Gallegos and Sheldon Valdes [sic], signed the petition asking, “in place of the grantees who have died there may be others substituted.”

Eighty-three heads of families were placed in procession of the grant subject to two conditions. First, that the land be cultivated and second, that “towns

founded shall be walled around and fortified and settlers must move there at once and build shelters for protection of their families.”

After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, grant recipients were again required to reassert their land rights, this time in U.S. courts. A committee of grantees representing the eighty-three awardee families approached Governor Charles Bent, but with Bent’s death during the 1847 Taos Revolt it’s possible the petition was never reviewed and no response was set forth. Their claim was next presented to the U.S. Surveyor-General on July 3, 1861 and again to the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims on February 18, 1893. But the court rejected the claim on August 14, 1900 primarily because record of the original grant made in 1833 could not be found and reportedly because heirs had not complied with the tenets of the Conejos/Guadalupe grant to “cultivated and never abandon.” This assertion is questionable as when English land speculator William Blackmore visited the Conejos Grant in 1873 he recorded in his diary impressions of the excellent wheat and potatoes grown by the Spanish-American settlers.

Blackmore was in partnership with former Colorado Territorial Governor William Gilpin and together they acquired vast tracts of Mexican land grant acreage including the Sangre de Cristo grant and a portion of the Conejos Grant. In 1873, Blackmore rode to the ranch of Sheldon Valdez to negotiate purchase of Valdez’ holdings and noted


“numerous herds of cattle and flocks of sheep which dotted the well-watered pastures and grazing lands on the Conejos Grant.”31 The savvy speculators expounded throughout Europe about the resources and opportunities in the San Luis Valley, distributed pamphlets and touted promises that “A Splendid Opportunity Awaits you in the Famous San Luis Valley (Colorado)”32 To add credibility to their promotional publications, Gilpin and Blackmore commissioned Ferdinand V. Hayden to conduct a survey in the Valley. It was unusual to his otherwise dry and statistical style of reporting when he wrote a glowing descriptive geological report that stretches reality:33

…The land . . . formed the eastern and southern portions of this valley (San Luis Valley), and is by far the finest agricultural district I have seen west of the Missouri River. . . I can affirm that I know of no region of the West more desirable for settlement than this just described, combining as it does all the elements of wealth and productiveness.34

32. Promotional phrase used on an advertisement. Copy of the ad is available at the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC 20540. A digital copy is also in the possession of the author.
33. Typically Hayden wrote reports containing strictly factual information about resources, climate, terrain and water.
Figure 1 1893 Map Sketch of the Conejos Grant
Crescencio Valdez submitted this map to the U.S. Court of Private Land Clams when the Grant was accepted for adjudication in 1893. (U.S. Court of Private Land Claims No. 109, State Records Center and archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Reprinted in Stoller, Marianne L. "Grants of Desperation, Lands of Speculation: Mexican Period Land Grants in Colorado." In Spanish & Mexican Land Grants in New Mexico and Colorado, edited by John R. Van Ness and Christine M. Van Ness, 115. Santa Fe, NM: The Center for Land Grant Studies and the Colorado Humanities Program, 1980.
Early Settlement in Conejos County

Other than Blackmore and Gilpin’s glowing reports, early written descriptions of the region are rare. In 1859, “Tourist-author Albert D. Richardson traveled from Taos to Denver, and noted cattle and cultivated fields in the Valley.”35 Thirty miles from where Mormons later settled, referred to as Plaza Viejo, today known as Costilla, New Mexico was described as being a fortress in the form of a rectangle. As a Spanish style structure, the description indicates it was built for protection. “It had only two entrances, one on the west and one on the east, wide enough to admit a wagon into the plaza”. Another notation in William Brayers book on Blackmore tells of “Small farm strips, irrigated by shallow ditches carrying water from the mountain streams, produced corn, wheat, chili and a few vegetables.”36 By all accounts, there were moderately few small-scale farms and ranches and construction of dwellings were low single-story adobe homes built around a plaza for fortification.

The early resident Lafayette Head came to the area in 1854 with a group of Spanish-speaking people from Abiquiú, in New Mexico Territory. On the banks of the Conejos River, they established the first permanent settlement known as Guadalupita, better remembered as Plaza de Guadalupe or Guadalupe. When the banks of the Conejos River overflowed the village of Guadalupe flooded and in 1856, the community relocated further from the river on the other side and changed the name to Conejos. Scattered

sheep ranches and individual farms increased but even with military protection, population remained constant.

By 1900 when the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims ruling rejected the original Conejos Grant claim, exchange of ownership from grantees to developers was complicated by bankruptcy and corruption and under the domain of public land, the State of Colorado had begun selling acreage with proceeds going to the States educational fund. Mormon colonizers were among the bidders as noted by the *Denver Times* on August 9, 1897:

The request for sale of lands in Conejos county, approved by the state land board at the last meeting and which will be held at La Jara early next month, shows a substantial increase in the value of the lands in that vicinity. The price offered which accompanied the request for sale of some 1,500 acres ranged from $4 to $6 per acre, against former prices of $2.50. The request came from a colony of Mormons who desire to settle in the district and who make most desirable citizens, as they are industrious and quiet and first class farmers.

When these lands are all sold the public school fund of the state will be larger in proportion than that of any state in the union."37

Conejos County today lies along Colorado’s southern border and is one of six counties sharing the San Luis Valley.38 The Valley is about thirty-five miles wide and seventy miles long and although part of Colorado, it remains culturally connected with


38. The five counties in the San Luis Valley, Colorado include, Conejos, Costilla, Alamosa, Rio Grande, Saguache and Mineral.
New Mexico heritage. In a 2010 interview with Felix Lopez, a resident in the San Luis Valley, he describes the southern boundary of Colorado from his perspective of having had ancestors in the Valley for generations.

People that moved in from the East, they like to have straight lines and corners whereas in Hispanic culture, they like more curvature in their boundaries. Our Southern border is the Northern border of New Mexico, It’s a deliberate straight line. It really doesn’t follow any cultural type of boundary because I think people in the San Luis Valley that are Hispanic, feel like they are in line with part of New Mexico more than part of Colorado.39

There are numerous natural artesian wells and the valley floor tends to be marshy in places. Alamosa County is on the north, where the Sangre de Cristo Mountains rise to 14,000 feet. The Rio Grande runs along its eastern edge separating it from Costilla County and the Continental Divide runs close to its western border.

Change has been slow in the Valley and signs of the past remain clearly visible. Current residents in some parts of the Valley continue to use old Castilian Spanish words when speaking, adobe moradas are found on the outskirts of villages where men gather together as Hermanos to observe practices of their Penitente faith and historic Catholic Mission Churches in the villages are still filled with local parishioners each Sunday. Hornos or outdoor adobe ovens are used to roast corn until the kernels are dark and dried, much as it was done a hundred years ago. And still, on crisp fall days, the scent of

39 Lopez, 1, interview by Dana EchoHawk. *Interview with Felix Lopez* Denver, Colorado: Center for Colorado and the West at Auraria Library, (January 2011).
roasting corn is reminiscent of the smoky fires that burned during the nineteenth century for the same purpose and like in the past, small fields of corn stalks fade from green to straw yellow under gray winter clouds.

Although community life in the Valley has remained primarily centered around Spanish culture, other religious groups, nationalities began to appear in the later half of the nineteenth century. Among them, Presbyterian missionaries established small congregations and a Dutch colony made a settlement attempt near Alamosa. During World War II, German prisoners of war lived and worked in the Valley and around 1942, Japanese-American farmers from California increased the vegetable farming industry in the area. But unlike Mormons in their struggle to find Zion in the San Luis Valley these groups stirred little or no controversy throughout the State with their arrival. A historical review of Mormon Church may shed light on the controversy of their arrival in Colorado.
CHAPTER III.
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

1830 - 1845

There is no direct historic trail, road or route from the village of Fayette in western New York where founder Joseph Smith resided in 1830, to the obscure settlement of Los Cerritos in the southern Colorado San Luis Valley where Mormons settled in 1877, but one location marks the inaugural start of a figurative journey and the other the final destination.

Joseph Smith lived with his family on a farm near Fayette, New York and by 1815 when he was only ten-years old, he reportedly had become intrigued with legends of pirate, Indian and Spanish treasure hidden in the depths of dark soil on neighboring farms. Not far from his home, relics of copper and silver had reputedly been found in ancient Indian burial mounds with other artifacts. Rodsmen, noted as being men with treasure-hunting inclinations, scoured farmland, hills and valleys using rods and peep stones as tools of their trade. When twenty-years old, with the prospect of discovering a golden prize hidden in the hills or farmland around his home, Joseph invoked neighbors into believing he too could locate buried treasure. “Josiah Stowel, a farmer from Bainbridge, New York, assumed Joseph’s reputation to be legitimate and hired him in October, 1825, to locate treasures supposedly hidden by the Spanish in the vicinity of the town.” Smith failed at the task and Stowel had him arrested on a charge of “being a disorderly person and an impostor.” Smith testified at his trial, “he had a certain stone, which he had occasionally looked at to determine where hidden treasures in the bowels of the earth were.” Three witnesses testified that Smith could in fact ‘divine things’ and had
done so by looking at a ‘dark-colored stone’ in his hat.\textsuperscript{40} Consistent with the report that Joseph used a stone, was the report many years later that when translating the \textit{Book of Mormon}, his wife Emma revealed that her husband translated by looking at a seer stone in a hat.\textsuperscript{41}

Historians of Mormon history have debated and believers have conversed on the authenticity of the events recounted by Joseph of finding plates that had the appearance of gold, hidden on the side of a hill called Cumorah near Palmyra, New Your.\textsuperscript{42} Joseph tells that he translated the writings on the plates with the use of the Urim and Thummin as referred to in the Old Testament.\textsuperscript{43} David Whitmer, one of three people allowed to assist Joseph in the translation of writings on the plates stated they were “bound together like the leaves of a book by massive rings passing through the back edges.”\textsuperscript{44} In addition to the three men who aided Smith in the translation, only eight others were allowed to assist.


\textsuperscript{41} For additional information on the trial, see Marvin S. Hill, “Joseph Smith and the 1825 Trail: New Evidence and New Difficulties”, \textit{Brigham Young University Studies} 12 (Winter 1972): 223-33.


\textsuperscript{43} Examples found in Exodus 28:30; Leviticus 8:8; Numbers 27:21.

\textsuperscript{44} David Whitmer. "David Whitmer Interviews, 64." \textit{Kansas City Journal}, June 5, 1881.
view the plates. “We also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship.”

Once transcription of the Book of Mormon was complete membership in the Church began to grow rapidly. Even before copies were printed, newspaper accounts found the new volume of interest and reported wary accounts in their columns. “The Palmyra Freeman reported, “The greatest piece of superstition that has ever come within our knowledge, now occupies the attention of a few individuals of this quarter. It is generally known and spoken of as the ‘Golden Bible.’” Five thousand copies were printed when Martin Harris, a scribe during the translation process, borrowed $3,000.00 on his farm and arranged publication through Mr. Egbert B. Grandin and Company in Palmyra, New York. The printing contract was dated and signed on the twenty-fifth day of August 1829 with first copies issued from press on March 18, 1830.

Less than a month later, on April 6, 1830, at the log home of Peter Whitmer, Sr. in Fayette, Seneca County, New York, Joseph Smith, Jr., Samuel H. Smith, Hyrum Smith, David Whitmer and Peter Whitmer, Jr. signed their names to the articles of incorporation of the Church of Jesus Christ that had been drawn up in compliance to the laws of New

York State regulating the organization of religious bodies. In addition to the six who signed, at least three others, probably family members whose names are not documented, participated in the official organization of the Church.

In January 1831, Joseph Smith instructed his growing congregation to relocate from New York and Pennsylvania to Kirtland, Ohio, an area he referred to as the ‘New Zion’. Some were opposed to this directive, but most followed Joseph in his hope of building ‘cities of Zion’. In the darkness of midnight on March 24, 1832, Smith and an early convert, Sidney Rigdon were pulled from their beds by a mob. Simon Ryder, also an early convert, but by then an apostate, led the group of forty or more men who beat Smith into insensibility and stripped him of his clothing before covering him with tar and feathers. Horses drug Rigdon by his heels over frozen earth until he was unconscious. Both men survived, but this event marked the beginning of persecution, resulting in driving Mormons further west in search of a location to establish a utopian community of Zion. On June 27, 1844, Smith was jailed at Carthage, Missouri waiting trial on charges of ‘riot’ when a mob rushed the prison. Smith died when he was shot and fell from a second story window.

In 1845, calls demanding removal of Mormons from Illinois intensified. Among other reasons, there was antagonism over commercial insularity. Buying and selling was done collectively and large organized cooperative farms created economical competition.

48. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the full name of the Church. The Church is also referred to as the Church of Jesus Christ. Members refer to themselves as Latter-day Saints, Mormons or historically as The Saints.
with other local residents;\textsuperscript{49} Additionally, Missouri had been admitted as a slave state by narrow margin and “whether or not these Northerners (Mormons) preached the freedom of the slaves, it was a foregone conclusion that they would not vote for slavery at the polls.”\textsuperscript{50} The Mormon tendency to vote as a block was a threat to local governments on slavery as well as other local and national issues. When Church leadership replied to these and other conflicts with their resolve to move the congregation west to the Rocky Mountains, it marked the beginning of a Mormon exodus to the Salt Lake Valley that, thirty years later, with throngs of new converts continuously eager to join ‘Zion’ in the American West, continued into other states including the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

Mormonism is fundamentally a homegrown American religion, so says Klaus J. Hansen, a Mormon history scholar. Hansen reiterates that the Mormon story embraces the American landscape as few other religions can do, most having European origins\textsuperscript{51}. Despite American roots, Mormons were consistently seen as un-American and oppression developed against them. In addition to believing in a book translated from golden plates, engaging in block voting and assembling economic competition, members embraced the practice of polygamy. Additionally, Smith contemplated running for


\textsuperscript{50} Berrett, The Restored Church, 117.

President. The ambition of establishing an exclusive community referred to as ‘Zion’ added to the growing un-American suspicions.

…an exclusive Zion where only “The Righteous” could dwell and from which all others must necessarily move was an attitude that seemed innocent enough to those inspired to work for a New Zion, but it did not encourage the love of the old settlers (in Missouri).52

As Hansen asserts, at the risk of persecution to his followers, Smith and other church leaders actively attempted to implement their dream of establishing ‘Zion’ that was in conflict with evangelical religious values as well as to economic, political and social values of American life at the time. To avoid persecution Mormons ultimately began their trek west seeking a place to implement communities where they were free to live their religious, political and social practices. From New York to Missouri and Illinois and then further west to Utah, they encounter a first-hand view of the American landscape as they spread westward into the Great Salt Lake Basin and later into other western states. Few Coloradans are aware of the historical fact that before reaching Utah, a group of Mormons first came to settle in Colorado during the winter of 1846.

The Mormon Battalion in Colorado

LeRoy R. Hafen, Colorado State Historian, wrote that a Mormon settlement near present day Pueblo in 1846 was the “largest white settlement in Colorado prior to the Pikes Peak gold rush of 1858”, and continues that the Pueblo Mormon settlement “no

52 Berrett, The Restored Church, 116.
doubt has interest for the citizens of Colorado and deserves a place in the history of our state.”

As previously noted in this paper, they settled in Colorado almost a year before Brigham Young’s company reached Utah, designating Colorado as having the first Mormon settlement west of the Rocky Mountains.

After Smith’s death, Brigham Young became president of the Church and in January 1846, the high council of the Church made the announcement to move the Mormons to “some good valley of the Rocky Mountains.” Young began negotiations to procure funds to lessen the expense of conveying the Saints westward and with this intent, sent a representative to Washington offering President James K. Polk the assistance of Mormon men to freight “provisions or naval stores the government was desirous of sending to Oregon or to any portion of the Pacific.” During these negotiations, the message came that “Mexico had invaded our territory, and shed the blood of our citizens on our own soil.” This changed the nature of Young’s negotiations for a freighting contract and President Polk requested that Young form a

56 Roberts, The Mormon Battalion, 8.
battalion of men as paid volunteers to march with Col. Stephen W. Kearny’s “Army of the West.”

At a public meeting in 1846 in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Young encouraged men to volunteer for the battalion stating “If we want the privilege of going where we can worship God according to the dictates of our conscience, we must raise the Battalion.”

489 men accompanied by women and children marched from Council Bluffs, Iowa in summer, 1846 to Fort Leavenworth and then further south to join the Army of the West in Santa Fe, New Mexico. On July 16, 1846.

The afternoon before the battalion left Mosquito Creek camp, located downstream of Council Bluffs, they had a ball to commemorate the battalion members. Reference to dancing was frequently referenced in Mormon diaries and by other travelers who encountered them on their treks west. Even on ships from Denmark they danced. “Most every day we amused ourselves a short time by dancing on the deck to music played by some of our brethren or a member of the crew.”

The battalion likewise celebrated their departure and the following description of the occasion provides a glimpse of the social character of early Mormons. U.S. Colonel Thomas L. Kane, a non-Mormon, was amused with their jovial nature when he wrote:

57 Roberts, The Mormon Battalion, 7-11.
60 Additional description of the Mormon Battalion ball is provided by Brigham Henry Roberts. Source: Roberts. The Mormon Battalion, 19.
….to the canto of debonair violins, the cheer of horns, the jingle of sleigh bells, and the jovial snoring of the tambourine, they did dance! …Copenhagen jigs, Virginia reels, and the like forgotten figures executed with the spirit of people too happy to be slow, or bashful, or constrained. Light hearts, lithe figures, and light feet, had it their own way from an early hour till after the sun had dipped behind the sharp sky line of the Omaha hills.61

The Mormon Battalion arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico on October 9, 1846 to the salute of one hundred guns, the shots echoing in cracked unison then fading in the southwest landscape.62 The excessive heat of summer had taken its toll on the men and families traveling with them. “It was enlisted too much by families; some were too old and feeble, and some too young; it was embarrassed by many women; it was undisciplined; it was much worn by traveling on foot, their clothing was very scant; their mules were utterly broken down.”63 Eighty-six men were ordered with nearly all the women to winter at a Mormon settlement being built by John Brown near Fort Pueblo, Colorado.

62 Two Mormon detachments arrived in Santa Fe three days apart. When they first arrived on October 9, 1847, Col. Doniphan who came to Santa Fe with General Kearny ordered a salute of 100 guns. Source: Roberts, *The Mormon Battalion*, 30.
The First Colorado Mormon Settlement: 1846

A group of Mormons led by John Brown and William Crosby had taken up the task of constructing buildings and facilities to get them through the cold months. Brown’s party set out in 1846 with forty-three Mormon men, women and children from Missouri to intersect Brigham Young’s pioneers on their way to Utah. The meeting location was miscalculated as Brown described in his diary, “We were instructed by Prest. Young to leave our families here (in Mississippi) and take those families that were ready and go west with them through Missouri and fall in with the companies from Nauvoo.” After reaching the confluence of the South Fork of the Platte and the St. Vrain Fork, they had failed to learn anything about the whereabouts of Young’s party, but, ‘struck a wagon trail that led to Pueblo, made by the traders,” reaching Pueblo on August 7th, 1846. Here, they received news that Young had stopped on the Missouri River and 500 of his party had volunteered for the Mormon Battalion. Brown’s party waited through the winter at the Pueblo settlement established almost a full year before Brigham Young’s group reached Utah.

Through the winter, two additional Mormon detachments arrived at the Pueblo settlement totaling 273 people. As the sick battalion detachments, traveling with women and children, eighty-six in all, reached the Pueblo settlement on the Arkansas “The

64 William Crosby is confirmed as leading the company with John Brown in a paper trail contributed for use in USGenWeb Archives. Online source: http://files.usgwarchives.net/ut/state/bios/wdk.txt
greetings which occurred between comrades and old friends, husbands and wives, parents
and children, when the two detachments met, was quite touching."66 Winter quarters
were increased to eighteen rooms, fourteen feet square and they constructed a building
for meetings and worship twenty by thirty feet. Francis Parkman who later visited
described their settlement.

After half an hour’s riding we saw the white wagons of the Mormons
drawn up among the trees. Axes were sounding; trees were falling, and log huts
going up along the edge of the woods and upon the adjoining meadow. As we
came up the Mormons left their work and seated themselves on the timber around
us when they began earnestly to discuss points of theology, … 67

Lieutenant W.W. Willis took a second party of fifty-eight discharged battalion
members to the Fort Pueblo Mormon settlement in January 1847. The following is a
summary of events reviewed by LeRoy Hafen in a 1932 article in The Colorado
Magazine. Two of the men were left at Turley’s ranch on the Arroyo Hondo, in New
Mexico Territory and the remaining men traveled through the San Luis Valley, then over
Sangre de Cristo Pass in snow two to four feet deep. 68 George F. Ruston, an English

68 On January 19th, 1847, Pueblo Indians attacked Governor Charles Bent’s home in
Taos, killing Bent and others. A raid followed on Turley’s ranch resulting in the death of
Simon Turley and most of his men. John Albert, one of the men left at Turley’s Ranch
survived and brought the new of the attack to the upper Arkansas. Louy Simonds, the
other Mormon left at Turley’s carried the news to Bent’s Fort and to Charles Bent’s
brother William. (Hafen, LeRoy R, and Frank M. Young. "The Mormon Settlement at
Pueblo, Colorado, During the Mexican War." The Colorado Magazine (The State
Historical Society of Colorado) IX, no. 4 (July 1932): 121-136. Footnote, 132.)
traveler, caught up to the detachment on the Pass and wrote, “There were some twelve or fifteen of them, rawboned fanatics, with four or five pack-mules carrying their provisions themselves on foot. Some seated on the top of the mules’ packs some sitting down every few hundred yards, and all looking tired and miserable.”69 They joined the Pueblo settlement on December 20, 1846. Ruxton describes them as “a far better class than the generality of Mormons, and comprised many wealthy and respectable farmers from the western states, most of whom were accustomed to the life of woodmen and were good hunters.”70 The women were described as “many really beautiful Missourian girls who sported their tall graceful figures at the frequent fandangos.” Ruston related the story of mountain men who stopped at the Mormon settlement for a dance. But before the dancing could commence, they had to listen to preaching.71

Other than Hafen’s 1932 article on the Mormon Pueblo settlement, there are few other printed references. In 1897 the Denver Times quoted William C. Ferril from the State Historical Society announcing that a baby girl born in 1846 in Pueblo was possibly the first white child born in the state.

Curator Ferril of the State Historical Society has found that Bancroft’s history of Colorado records the birth of Malinda Catherine Kelley in Pueblo in 1846. Aspirants to first-born honors must now push their dates of birth back into the 40s to be in the race at all.72

70 Hafen, "The Mormon Settlement at Pueblo, Colorado”, 133.
Surprisingly, no mention is made of the Mormon settlement, yet Kelley was the daughter of Nicholas Kelley, a disabled Mormon Battalion soldier and his wife Malinda Allison. 73 At age thirty, Kelley, Malinda’s father died on November 4, 1846, three months before she was born on February 7, 1847. Ferril incorrectly reported that she was born in 1846. Nevertheless, the first white child born in Colorado may still be claimed by the Pueblo Mormon settlement. Sarah Emma Kartchner was born on August 17, 1846 to William Decatur Kartchner, a member of Brown’s company, and his wife Margaret Jane Casteel. 74

An interview collected for the State Historical Society of Colorado makes another brief reference to the Mormon Pueblo settlement.

In addition to the former residents of the 1840s, who did some farming, twelve Mormon families on the trek to Utah, had camped for a year in the bottoms on the south side and raised crops of corn, which at that time were green and growing. Ten of these families moved on to Utah, but two of them remained one at Pueblo and the other on the Hardscrabble. 75

According to Hafen, nothing remains of the Mormon settlement at Pueblo. The settlement was disbanded in the spring and on June 1,1847, Brigham Young’s band of

75 Interview by Elizabeth Cairns. Interviews collected during 1933-34 for the State Historical Society of Colorado by C.W.A. Workers Pam. 344/29. Pueblo. 1933-34.
Mormons arrived at the North Platte near Fort Laramie where seventeen members of the Pueblo settlement had been waiting for two weeks.

Every Member a Missionary

The refrain of “Every Member a Missionary” is a contemporize slogan that well defines one of the primary objectives of the Mormon Church from its inception in 1830. Mormon laymen were called upon as missionaries with assignments not only related to conversions activities of preaching and baptisms, but when required, also assisted new converts with travel arrangements and leading them to communities of ‘Zion’ in the western states. In 1833, an anti-Mormon committee in Missouri described the phenomenon of Mormon missionary work as:

For the want of more honest or commendable employment, many of their society are now preaching through the state of New York, Ohio, and Illinois and that their numbers are increasing beyond every rational calculation’ all of whom are required, as soon as convenient, to come up to Zion, [the] name they have thought proper to confer on our little village.76

To encourage members as missionaries, Joseph Smith wrote, “Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work;” “For behold the field is white already to harvest.” In the same section of scripture, qualifications of missionaries are

76 The Missouri Intelligencer reported the meeting minutes of a July 20, 1833 gathering of Missourians who met to decide on a course of action regarding the Mormons in their midst. Source: Mulder, William, and A. Russell Mortensen, Aong the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Obserers. Salt Lake City, UT: Western Epics, Inc., 1994, 78.
listed as, “faith, hope, charity and love with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work.” With little notice Mormon men left their families and homes to honor their assignment as missionaries and traveled wherever they had ‘been called to the work’ to ‘harvest’. As later told, Hans Jensen, a Danish immigrant residing in Utah was called as a missionary to return to his homeland in Denmark to preach and ‘share the gospel’ of the Church to his fellow countrymen. After two years, he was given the added responsibility of organizing travel arrangements for converts immigrating to America. In 1878, he was called on another mission to the San Luis Valley this time to assist southern states converts with colonization efforts. Again he left most of his family in Utah for two years, taking only one daughter and one son with him.

The first mission established by the Church was to proselytize to American Indians. Other subsequent Mission Fields were established in eastern and southern states. Success was immediate and converts joined the Church in mass resulting in members of extended families thirsty to relocate their families nearer the main body of the Church in Utah. In the early years of Church growth leaders also recognized that European countries were prime for mission work. The strategy of calling immigrant converts to return to their home countries as missionaries where they would preach in their native tongue, proved perhaps more successful than missionary efforts within the United States. Large numbers of people from entire regions joined the Church in the British and

Scandinavian Missions and consequently missionaries took on the added responsibility of managing emigration to America.

Traveling to ‘Zion’ in the American West became a common occurrence for new converts and is the defining element of the early Mormon historical experience. Danish born Maria Shawcroft, who settled in the San Luis Valley of Colorado, came to the United States as a new convert with her family and her uncle J.C.A. Weibye. Weibye’s diary recounts the experience found frequently in the diaries and journals of other American bound converts.

Traveled to Hamburg, Germany – left the port there destined for New York on the ship “Franklin” with 323 other church members. . . . We had travelled by train and steamboat until we reached Florence, Nebraska and purchased the necessary supplies. Can you imagine being able to travel so far in just 10 days?” The journey was long and slow and difficult… I remember that we had to stay on the north side of the Platte River all the time. 78

With success in the Southern States Mission, the Scandinavian Mission and the Lamanite Mission (American Indian), Church authorities encouraged converts from these areas to consider locations outside of Utah for settlement in the west. B.H. Roberts, a Church official from Utah, wrote the following commentary after southern Colorado was identified as a suitable location for a colony.

With so many Saints coming to Utah during he mid-eighteen-hundreds, and with agriculture being the main economy, available cultivated land was

dwindling. The valley (San Luis Valley) possesses all the facilities necessary to the establishment of comfortable homes; and it is for this purpose our people have come here from Utah. Knowing that lands could be more easily obtained here than in Utah, we have advised the converts to our faith in the Southern States to come to our settlements in Colorado, instead of going to Utah.79

The Danish, Lamanite and Scandinavian missions were the primary contributors of Mormon settlers who colonized in Conejos County, Colorado in the 1800s. Thus, the struggle to find Zion in Colorado’s San Luis Valley begins in far off regions of Denmark, in Arkansas, Georgia and other southern states and in the homelands of the Catawba people in South Carolina. A look at their circumstances prior to arriving in Colorado is relevant.

79. The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver.)
Figure 2 Letter requesting Hiram Schofield settle his family in the San Luis Valley.

Members of the Mormon Church were called as missionaries with little notice or instruction provided. This letter assigned Hiram Schofield to the San Luis Valley, Colorado, giving only general direction for the route he was to take. Image source: The Valley Courier, Alamosa, Colorado, Tuesday, July 22, 1980, Section B.

Three Mission Fields: Lamanite, Southern States, Scandinavian

Lamanite Mission

Established at a conference on September 26, 1830, the Lamanite, or American Indian Mission was the first official Mission identified by the Church. Lamanites are significant in the Book of Mormon. As a summary of the more lengthy history related in
the *Book of Mormon*, the word Lamanite refers to a group of Israelites who left the city of Jerusalem and eventually crossed the ocean in a ship, landing somewhere on the American continent. They divided into two groups, the Nephites, a light skinned people and the Lamanites, a darker skinned people. The Nephites erected Temples and maintained a written language. According to the *Book of Mormon* the two groups were often at war and the Lamanites annihilated the Nephites. Prior to the death of the Nephite named Moroni, he hid the written records that came into Joseph Smith’s hands for translation. As related to the origins of the plates from which Joseph Smith translated the *Book of Mormon*, Lamanites are significant to the founding of the Mormon Church. It is therefore understandable that missionary work with Lamanites, or American Indians would be a foremost effort shortly after the Church was founded.

South Carolina missionaries were successful in converting many of the Catawba Indian tribe. Once baptized as members of the Church, Catawba men were likewise called to be missionaries among their own people. Two Catawbas, Pinkney Head and John Alonzo ultimately came to the San Luis Valley in the 1890s but prior to moving west, they spent time as missionary companions with the Cherokees in North Carolina. During the 1840’s Catawbas had occasionally lived with the Cherokees so the strategy of sending missionaries to preach in their native language was the impetus of sending these two young men to preach among the Cherokees.

80 Details and the entire lengthy history as told by Joseph Smith are available in the *Book of Mormon*: Smith, *The Book of Mormon*. 
When members of five extended Catawba families came to the San Luis Valley in 1896, tribal membership had dwindled and these five families combined for a substantial percent of the tribe. Today their descendants refer to themselves as the Western Band of Catawbas.

Southern States Mission

The first large groups of Mormons to settle in the Valley were converts from the Southern States Mission. Established in 1832 it extended into all areas "south and west of Philadelphia." Most missionaries at the time were converts themselves from southern states and they baptized relatively large numbers of their own family, friends and neighbors. Mormon missionary work was interrupted by the Civil War and serious proselytizing did not resume until 1867 and John Brown, whose party had settled at Fort Pueblo in 1846, was assigned as Mission President. By then, the main body of Mormons had relocated west of the Rocky Mountains and missionaries to the south were sent from Utah. James Thompson Lisonbee who converted many of the San Luis

81. Southern States Mission, “Historical Records and Minutes”, 10 January 1868, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. Reprinted from Seferovich, Heather M. "History of the ODS Southern States Mission, 1875-1898." Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, Department of History, and August 1996. 158,18. When the mission was again organized in 1875 after the Civil War its boundaries were reduced to the states of Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Florida.

Southerners was called in April 1876 to leave his home in Utah as a missionary to the southern states.\textsuperscript{83}

Religious historian Samuel S. Hill theorizes that the South’s religious climate was heightened after its defeat in the Civil War and that in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, religion became an even stronger principal component of southern culture.\textsuperscript{84} But, hostility against the Mormons was intense in the South. Southerners were, as stated by historian Garth Jones, “ridding themselves of the last vestigies of radical reconstruction; and to the general hatred of Yankee carpetbaggers”, which, Jones asserts, Mormon missionaries were compared to.\textsuperscript{85} Jones further quotes southern scholar David Buice, “Mormon missionaries constituted the worse form of “carpetbagging,” and especially “those who preached polygamy, a doctrine as odious as any that ever reached the nostrils of southern Protestants.”\textsuperscript{86}

The Southerner’s who came to the San Luis Valley in 1877 had been converted by missionaries Lisonbee and John Hamilton Morgan and were concentrated in two areas separated by one hundred or more miles, Groveoak, Alabama and Haywood Valley,

\footnotesize{


Georgia. But, while they were being prepared to gather in the west with other ‘Saints’, the “leading question was to where? Lisonbee and Morgan could not provide an answer.”

**Scandinavian Mission**

During the mid-1800s, Church policy consciously focused on Scandinavian countries as a source of new converts predictably eager to immigrate to America and help establish Zion. Between 1850 and 1905, 30,000 converts came from Denmark, Norway and Sweden to Utah alone. A journalist wrote, “Denmark’s general emigration statistics showed graphically how much “wind and sail,” the Mormons had.” As indicated in the following editorial, by 1904 the Danish government made concerted efforts to keep their people at home in Denmark. “Statistics show that one out of every twenty-two Danish emigrants to the United States becomes a Mormon. The clergy, in connection with the government, are continuing their plans to put an end to the proselyting.” Of 3,749 emigrants departing Denmark in the 1850s, seventy-seven percent were Mormon, in the 1860s, thirty-eight percent were Mormon, most went to Utah first and from their ranks, select members were called as missionaries to assist with colonization of the San Luis Valley. Similar to the Southern States Mission, Scandinavian

---

88 Mudler, _Homeward to Zion_, vii.
89 Mudler, _Homeward to Zion_, 98.
missionaries assisted converts to immigrate from Denmark, Sweden and Finland to the United States.

Annie Maria Jensen, who came to the San Luis Valley with her husband John Shawcroft, was born on a farm near the village of Borglum in the county of Hjørring in Vendyssel, Denmark. In her memoirs she wrote that after she joined the Mormon Church in Denmark, “many of our neighbors and friends also listened to the missionaries and joined the Church and at one time there were 700 members in our area”.\(^91\) Taking their lead from the successful missionary efforts developed in the earlier British Mission, every detail of proselytizing was in place aimed at the final goal of bringing converts from Denmark to the U.S. Literature was printed in Danish and served both as proselyting materials by the Elders and as an emigrant guide.\(^92\) The newsletter, *Skandinaviens Stjerne* provided minute instructions regarding details of preparation and departure and the presiding Elders were adept at guiding converts through obtaining necessary documents, assisting them in disposal of their homes and possessions and when necessary helping them pack.\(^93\)


\(^{92}\) The term Elders is the title for male missionaries or men who have been bestowed with the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Figure 3 Skandinaviens Stjerne

The *Skandinaviens Stjerne* was published in Denmark for Mormon converts. It contained news from the Scandinavian settlements in Utah as well as sermons, stories and information to help converts immigrate to America. Image source: Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
Figure 4 Poster promoting the Emerald Isle Clipper Ship from Denmark

CHAPTER IV.
SOUTHERN STATES CONVERTS

“He Was Oddly Assessed a Road Tax”\footnote{Jones, Garth N., “James Thompson Lisonbee's Missionary Labors: On the Sand Mountain or Northeastern Alabama and Northwestern Georgia Beginning of a New Gathering In the San Luis Valley of Colorado, 1876-1878.” Anchorage, Alaska: College of Business and Public Policy, University of Alaska Ancorage, 2000 18-February, 34.}

In 1875 twenty-one missionaries were proselyting in the districts of Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Virginia. They traveled from family to family, preaching wherever they found a group or a congregation that would listen.\footnote{During the years following the Civil War, and possibly before, I found several references of preachers welcoming missionaries and preachers from other faiths to preach as guests to their congregations.} The Civil War and the intervening fourteen years had not dampened religious enthusiasm in the south. Missionary James Lisonbee, reported in January 1877 that he was quite successful and traveling so much in the area of Groveoak, Alabama that he “oddly was assessed a road tax which he worked off with the help of two friends”.\footnote{“The Diary of James Thompson Lisonbee (Sr.).” 30 January 1877. Recounted in Jones, “James Thompson Lisonbee's Missionary Labors”, 34.} The war-ravaged South was prime for converting Southerners to a new religion and although persecution was frequent, not all converts experienced difficulty. The Thomas family from Burke’s Garden, Virginia was one of the first families to be baptized in the south before the Civil War and twenty years before southerners started for Colorado. A granddaughter of Mr. Thomas remembered him telling her, “Some of the leading and
more influential people there had joined the Church more than twenty years earlier, and that Mormonism had become quite respectable because of the lives of these members.”

Figure 5 James T. Lisonbee Sr.

For residents not receptive to the peculiar notions of the Mormon faith, missionaries were a source of annoyance. Converts experienced retaliation from their neighbors with threats warning missionaries and converts to leave the county before being whipped. An anti-Mormon mob murdered Missionary Joseph Standing in 1879 near Varnell’s Station, Georgia and continued vengeance initiated desires of southern converts to immigrate west. In the summer of 1877, Morgan wrote to President Brigham Young relating that many new converts wanted to migrate to the Rocky Mountains and

______________________________

be near head quarters of the Church. 98 Undoubtedly persecution was a factor, but belief in the ideology of “Zion” was likely their motive.

Southern Converts Leave the South

A flat raft crossed the flooding Tennessee River on November 20, 1877 ferrying six ox-drawn wagons. Things had not gone well for their owner, Daniel Rice Sellers and his family Mormon converts traveling from Groveoak, Alabama. 99 Their goal was to get to Kansas City where they would embark by train to Pueblo, Colorado. In all, twelve families made the first trek to Colorado and many of them shared entwined kinship.

“Three heads of household were from the Sellers family; a fourth, headed by Bird J. Kirtland, married into the Sellers family.” 100 Though not related, Milton Evans and Bird Kirtland served together with the Confederate Army. 101 The group had experienced treacherous situations and ridicule from neighbors before they abandoned their homes. A notice posted at the gate of Daniel Rice Sellers proclaimed, “Mormons were dangerous and delusioned [sic] people, working with the spirit of “Beelzebub”…we have decided to

grant you ten days to leave our country and carry with you as many of your deluded followers as want to go…”102

John Morgan, Lisonbees missionary companion had arranged for their departure to Colorado. Morgan’s experience in the Civil War was in the Union Army with service under General William T. Sherman. College educated, he was also a cowpoke with rugged survival skills learned driving cattle from Kansas City to Salt Lake City. His competences were noticed by Church officials as beneficial to the planning efforts required for relocation of mass numbers of people, in this case, to southern Colorado.103

The Groveoak, Alabama group had crossed rugged mountain terrain and forded several rivers to reach Scottsboro, Alabama. There they where to meet up with the Haywood Valley, George converts whose travel would have been much easier on relatively good roads. On November 21, 1876, the two groups boarded the Memphis and Charleston Railroad train for the first leg of travel west. An arduous few days followed.

At Corinth, Mississippi, they changed cars and boarded the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad for Columbus, Kentucky. These cars were ferried across the Mississippi River. By the next morning of 22 November the company had reached St. Louis, which made another change necessary. The company climbed down the iron Mountain Railroad facilities and re-entrained on the Missouri

102 Jones, “James Thompson Lisonbee's Missionary Labors”, 42.
Pacific Railroad which carried the weary travelers to Kansas City, Missouri. They arrived at 11 p.m., and were permitted to remain in the cars over night.\textsuperscript{104} In the early morning of November 23, 1877, they boarded the Atchison-Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad in Kansas City, Missouri bound for Pueblo, Colorado.\textsuperscript{105} Traveling by rail was a new experience for most, if not all of the converts. Some had never seen a train. Victoria Hunnicutte traveling with the first group from Arkansas was excited and recorded “the brilliant headlight of the locomotive came shining [sic] down the track”.\textsuperscript{106}

The Pueblo and Arkansas Valley branch of the line that had just opened for general traffic between Pueblo and the east on March 1st 1876.\textsuperscript{107} It previously took months to travel by wagon from the east to the west but the southern Morons arrived in Pueblo on November 24\textsuperscript{th}, one day after leaving Kansas City. Having left Scottsboro, Alabama on November 21\textsuperscript{st}, they had traveled four days to reach Colorado.\textsuperscript{108} It would

\textsuperscript{105} Jones, “James Thompson Lisonbee's Missionary Labors”, 69.
\textsuperscript{107} Accompanied by missionaries John Morgan, James T. Lisonbee and Thomas Murphy, the southern converts began their journey in Scottsboro, Alabama on November 21, 1877 on the Mississippi and Memphis and Charleston Railroad. The changed trains in Kentucky to the Iron Mountain Railroad and again in St. Louis, Missouri on the Missouri Pacific Railroad. Fare of $29.80 (half for children under 12 years old) was for railroad travel from Scottsboro to Pueblo. Source: Anderson, Carleton Q., Betty Shawcroft, Robert Compton. The Mormons: 100 Years in the San Luis Valley of Colorado 1883-1983. Albuquerque, New Mexico: Adobe Press, 1982, 18.
\textsuperscript{108} Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 273.
be six additional months before they reached their final destination in the San Luis Valley.

Because Morgan had not made prior arrangements for rooms, he arranged for them to stay another night in the cars of the train.109 He wrote President John Taylor before leaving Arkansas stating,

It has been impossible for me to obtain definite information as regards the situation at Pueblo; whether work can be obtained – whether stock and wagons can be bought, or not, or whether the weather in that latitude will admit of our traveling at this season of the year – but we thought best to make the effort, trusting that God would control all things for our good and open up the way before us.110

The next day was Sunday morning and Morgan disembarked from the train to negotiate a place for them to stay and arranged for them to reside a few days in the old Thespian Theater, but it was uncomfortably cold and not suitable for permanent housing.111 With no prior plans for the Company to stay during the winter, an island in


111 The Thespian Theater was actually the Thespian Theatrical Company, which produced plays at Pueblo’s first opera house at 111 West 7th Street. It was an adobe structure constructed in the late 60s for Lewis Conley. First used as a store, it was converted into a hall known as Conley Hall. Also owned by Charles Goodnight who sold it to B.C. Montgomery in 1879. The Thespian Theater southern Mormons stayed in has been called the Thespian Theater as well as the Montgomery Opera House. Montgomery made a residence of the building in 1885; it was then the E.M Christmas Restaurant. The structure was razed for a parking lot. Reference: Opera Houses http://www.operaoldcolo.info/houses.html. (Accessed, September 8, 2012).
the Arkansas River was selected for a place to build temporary quarters.\textsuperscript{112} It appeared to be randomly selected but it was secluded and trees on the site would break the winds and temper the cold. “Barracks one hundred feet long and fifteen feet wide, consisting of ten rooms, at each end a communal kitchen and dining room” were soon constructed from slab lumber on an island in the bend of the Arkansas River.\textsuperscript{113}

\textbf{Figure 6 John Morgan, 1890.}

John Morgan was a missionary for the Mormon Church Southern States Mission. He was responsible for bringing groups of converts to the San Luis Valley from southern states between the years of 1877 and 1883. In 1879, he was made President of the Southern States Mission. Image source: Special Collections Department, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.

\textsuperscript{112} Morgan and a group of men looked over South Pueblo and on November 27\textsuperscript{th}, examined the island in the Arkansas River and decided to build temporary winter quarters there. Source: Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 273.

Figure 7 Missionaries John Morgan and James Lisonbee
Image source: “Hancock Legacy”.
The barracks served as home for nine families with six or more children. Each family had quarters in their own unit and some of the unmarried men slept in the kitchens for lack of space elsewhere.\textsuperscript{114}

Morgan was eager to rejoin his family in Utah and after only eleven days in Pueblo, he returned to Salt Lake City to tend to his own family. This left the impoverished families, most being recent converts, living in the middle of the Arkansas River on an island without seasoned missionary leadership and confined to scant shelter with an early winter approaching. Prior to leaving, Morgan coordinated a communal collection of funds totaling $409.84 to be used for the necessities of the entire group with plans to live under the United Order.\textsuperscript{115} Five men rented houses for their families in Pueblo and did not contribute.\textsuperscript{116} Morgan had found possible work for some of the men in Pueblo.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{114} See Appendix B. for a list of names of the families and individuals that wintered at the barracks.

\textsuperscript{115} The United Orders was a form of organization in the early days of the Church where individuals shared property, goods, and profits, receiving these things according to their want and needs.

\textsuperscript{116} See Appendix B. for a list of families that rented homes in Pueblo.

\textsuperscript{117} The Pennsylvania Company was erecting a mill and the Superintendent agreed to employ men from the Barracks as needed. The railroad also needed men to help with timber for ties on the line being built to New Mexico. Source: Morgan, Nicholas G. "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley." \textit{Colorado Magazine} (Colorado History) 27: 269-293.
Figure 8 Mormon Barracks built on an Island in the Arkansas River near Pueblo, Colorado in 1877. Nine families lived in these barracks as well as several unmarried men. The woman in the lower right corner is Mary Ellen Sellers, first child born in the barracks in 1878. Image Source: Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, item #p9605n01_015_05.

Figure 9 Pack Haynie and Henrietta Bagwell
Patrick ‘Pack’ Haynie and Henrietta Bagwell were with the original company to settle in Manassa, Colorado. They were married in the barracks on the Arkansas River near Pueblo, Colorado during the winter of 1878 and occupied Unit #8. Image Source (both): Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, item #p9605n01_03_24.
Figure 10 Daniel R. Sellers and family
The Daniel R. Sellers family was with the original company to settle in Manassa, Colorado. Daniel and his wife Mary Bagwell with their children occupied unit #2. Image Source: Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, item #p9605n01_03_24.

Morgan had written President Young before his death asking to be advised as to a suitable location for the southern converts to settle. Young answered on June 28, 1877:

As Zion is constantly growing, so must we extend our settlements, and we are of the opinion that it would be well for the Saints gathering from Georgia and the other Southern States to locate in some favorable spot in the western portion of Texas or in New Mexico: which of thee two regions you may decide on will, perhaps, depend on the means of transportation you have at your command. Your
company may be able to bring a few wagons and some harness with then, and we imagine could purchase, near the end of the railroad tract Spanish mules at very low rates. With these, they could move slowly forward until a suitable location was discovered. In choosing such a one, there are several considerations that should be entertained. It is very desirable that the spot selected should be a healthy one, with abundant supply of water which can be taken out, at little cost, for irrigation purposes.\textsuperscript{118}

Based on President Young’s advice, Morgan’s responded with his intention of arranging for the Southerners to travel by rail to Pueblo, continue again by rail on the Rio Grande Narrow Gauge Railway to Fort Garland, Colorado and from there, overland to New Mexico.\textsuperscript{119} He did not yet have a definite location identified.

When three battalion soldiers “who were mustered out at Santa Fe in 1847” came north through the San Luis Valley they reported to Brigham Young that the area had “wonderful attractions.” Historian G. Wayne Rogers asserts that their report planted the seed for consideration of the Valley as being a future site to establish a Mormon Colony.\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{118} Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 271.
\textsuperscript{119} Morgan’s letter to President Young was dated August 30, 1877, the day following Young’s death. He had not yet received notice that Young had died. Morgan’s subsequent communication was with President John Taylor who became president of the Church when Young died. Letter source: Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 272.
\textsuperscript{120} Interview by Charles E. Gibson Jr. \textit{Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla Counties Pamphlet 349, Doc. 1-49} State Historical Society of Colorado, (1933-34): 149,122. The interviewee was G. Wayne Rogers. The transcript lists his title as “Historian of the Manassa Colony for many years.”
\end{flushright}
Contrary to historiographical reports that Lawrence M. Peterson identified the San Luis Valley for a Mormon colony prior to the Southerners arriving, the location was not determined until after their winter in Pueblo. A series of correspondence between multiple individuals finally lead selection of a site. The area may have remained on Young’s mind from the report he was given by battalion soldiers thirty years earlier but with his death in August; he provided no further advice or discussion of a possible site for the converts. Peterson, who will be discussed in more detail further in this paper, was a recent convert himself. After his baptism, he lived at Los Cerritos in New Mexico Territory and had been effective in missionary work there when he recommended it to Church leaders as suitable place for Mormon people to settle.

Nevertheless, the location remained unidentified until spring of 1878. When John Morgan returned to Pueblo he immediately contacted former Territorial Governor of Colorado, Alexander Cameron Hunt requested a meeting with Hunt to discuss the possibility of obtaining employment for the converts on the extension of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad into the San Luis Valley. Hunt, who was at Fort Garland, telegraphed back that he would be pleased to talk with Morgan about the subject. Their subsequent meeting provided the determining information for final selection of a site for the colony. Not only did they discuss railroad employment possibilities, but also Hunt recommended to Morgan, “very highly certain lands located in the southern end of the San Luis Valley near the Conejos and Antonio Rivers”.

121 Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 277.
122 Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 278.
Morgan notified President Taylor of Hunt’s recommendation, explaining that land could be obtained and was a desirable location for a settlement. It also provided the foremost requirement expressed by President Young prior to his death that it had a good water supply for irrigation. Morgan further related to President Taylor in his letter that the site’s additional benefit was its close proximity to the extension of the railroad south to Santa Fe and the possibility of providing work for the converts.  

On receiving this communication, President Taylor requested Morgan to contact Peterson who had similarly recommended the area. Peterson’s response included a sense of skepticism “the elevation was high, the winters long, and the growing period of the year quite short.” All the same, in the mind of John Morgan, a general location for the colony of southern converts had been identified.

When Morgan was sent back to the Southern States Mission, President Taylor instructed James Z. Stewart to go to Pueblo in early March 1878 and assist the converts waiting there to continue their journey. The people Stewart encountered were poor, and had no means to purchase teams, wagons or supplies to move themselves. This was not surprising, as Morgan, prior to leaving Arkansas, addressed a letter dated November 21, 1877 to President Taylor alerting him of the economic situation of the southern converts.

The brethren will not be flush with means; they are generally a poor people and may not be able to provide themselves with teams and wagons

123 Morgan’s letter to John Taylor is printed in: Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 278.
sufficient or suitable for a long journey into the Interior. We shall be able to take tools of almost every kind and workmen to use them in all branches necessary for our comfort; also seeds of every description.\textsuperscript{125}

Steward selected three men from the group, George Wilson, Milton Evans and A.G. Bagwell to accompany him in finding a location for the indigent colony to settle, and hopefully to secure needed provisions.\textsuperscript{126}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{JamesZStewart.png}
\caption{James Z. Stewart}
\end{figure}
\begin{flushright}
James Z. Stewart
\end{flushright}
\begin{flushright}
Image source: Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, Item \#p0605n01_03_23.
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{125} Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 272.

James Z. Stewart gives the following particulars of the establishment of settlements in Colorado:

In the fall of 1877, Elder John Morgan brought a colony of Latter-day Saints from the Southern States as far west as Pueblo, Colorado, where they remained during the winter. It was thought best to not bring them to Utah, but to locate them in the southern part of Colorado, or in the eastern part of Utah.

Early in March, 1878, I was called by President John Taylor to go to Colorado and locate them in some suitable place in that State, or in the eastern part of Utah. On the 19th of March, I left home for Pueblo for that purpose.

Before I left Utah, I explained to President John Taylor the condition of the people, they being poor and having no means to purchase teams or to move themselves in any direction from their barracks in Pueblo, and I could not see how it would be possible for me to move them.

President Taylor told me to "go and the Lord would open up the way."

I arrived at Pueblo on the 2nd of March and found the people working as hard as they could, working wherever and whatever they could find anything to do.

Figure 12 Letter from John Z. Stewart describing going to the San Luis Valley.

John Z. Stewart wrote an account of meeting with Mormon converts in Pueblo and traveling to the San Luis Valley where he selected the site to begin the Mormon settlements. Image source: Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California. (BANC MSS P-F 71).
Los Cerritos, Colorado

With the air still cold from spring rains and a hint of snow, the foursome boarded the Denver and Rio Grande Rail Road in Pueblo and traveled to Fort Garland in the San Luis Valley. Dismounting from the relative comfort of their railroad coach, they had no pre-arranged transportation and went on foot to begin their search. Carrying with them provisions guns and axes they headed south. “While on the road we encountered a snow storm and very cold weather. Upon reaching the fork of the San Antonio and Conejos Rivers in the San Luis Valley, we found what I thought to be a suitable place to establish a colony and we set to work cutting trees and making claims.”127

Within days of arriving in the San Luis Valley in late March, Stewart ventured into the town of Conejos where he met Hunt and Major Lafayette Head. The two accepted the prospect of a Mormon colony establishing itself in that region and offered their assistance to promote the project. Stewart accepted their assistance and with funds provided by Church offices in Salt Lake City, he purchased a team, plow and several Mexican dwellings.128 “I then went to a wealthy Mexican by the name of Archuleta and he let us have as many cows to milk as the colonists needed and furnished some with work.”129

127 Stewart, Settlemens in Colorado, 3.
128 Stewart, Settlemens in Colorado, 3.
129 Stewart likely referred to Antonio D. Archuleta from Conejos County.129 The 1899 publication Portrait and Biographical Record of the State of Colorado lists Archuleta. “As a stock-raiser Archuleta has been unusually successful, and through his energy and business ability has become well-to-do.” (Portrait and Biographical Record of the State of Colorado, 1899, 589.)
Although some accounts indicate Lawrence Peterson was there to greet the first wave of southern converts, he did not arrive until May 14, 1878. He came to Los Cerritos from Cebolla, in New Mexico Territory with his family and the family of Juan de Dios Trujillo, a convert of Hispanic descent. Peterson’s acquaintance with the area and facility in the Spanish language enabled him to deliver valuable assistance in arranging for food and temporary lodging for the southern families. Peterson and Trujillo, one being Danish and the other Hispanic, were the first Latter-day Saint families to establish their homes at Los Cerritos, and Trujillo’s child was the first Mormon child born in the colonies on August 11, 1878. When Peterson and Trujillo met the southern states group, it was the first assemblage of Scandinavia, Spanish, and Southerner Mormons in Colorado. Steward left his three traveling companions to assist Peterson’s group in planting wheat, potatoes and vegetables while he returned to Pueblo for the rest of the southerners.

---

130 Juan de Deos Trujillo’s was the father-in-law of Lawrence M. Peterson. His wife was Marina Luiz Trujillo and their son; the first Mormon child born in Los Cerritos was Samuel Trujillo.

131 Alonzo S. Blair arrived with his family from Bear Lake County, Utah somewhere around May 22, 1878 to assist in setting up the new colony. Source: Anderson, The Mormons, 21.
This 1906 Photo shows members of the Juan de Dios Trujillo. Handwriting on the photo identifies, left to right, Cipriano Trujillo, third Salvador Chavez, sixth, Great Aunt Lillie, eighth. Notations on the back of the photo are contradictory and identify the people as follows: “3rd boy on left, Cipriano Trujillo, 5th Willie Chavez?, 6th Juan de Dios Trujillo, 8th Abigail, 10th (small girl) Bernice Miliona Trujillo, Los Cerritos Gen’l Store.” It’s possible that the man in the front next to a woman with a baby in a white gown may be Lawrence M. Peterson. The age would be about right and the three small children standing in front of him could be of Danish heritage. Image source: Private collection of Morgan Trujillo, great-great granddaughter of Juan de Dios Trujillo.

Like other Mormons, Steward believed that the realization of the Lord’s promises depended on them. In order to build ‘Zion’ on earth, they had to organize and tirelessly work with devotion. In a letter, Steward quoted President Taylor’s advice to him before he embarked on his trip to Colorado. “Go and the Lord would open up the way.”

Revelation in the *Doctrine and Covenants* encouraged Mormons to gather and assemble

---

together and build churches. This symbolized for them the building of communities of ‘Zion’. Faith in the Lord, despite adverse circumstances, carried the promise of residing in “a land of peace, a city of refuge, and a place of safety”.

Completing the mission Steward started home to Salt Lake City on June 17, 1879. He had spent less than four months assisting the first group of southern converts to establish the first permanent colony of Mormons in Colorado.

Prior to making arrangements for the first group of Southerners, Morgan predicted in a letter to President John Taylor that others would follow. “Many of the Saints are making preparations to emigrate the coming spring and doubtless a large emigration from this part of the south will occur at that time”. The following spring on March 28, 1879, John Morgan arrived with a second group of converts totaling about fifty members from Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Virginia. Although Morgan had made the decision of where the colony was to be established, he did not visit the location until he brought the second wave of southern converts. He wrote in his journal, “It is one of the finest valleys I have ever seen”.

---


134 Morgan’s letter to President Taylor is dated November 21, 1877. Source: Morgan, “Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 272

135 Morgan, "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley", 286
Economic Status of the Southern Converts

The new converts were “not (to) be flush with means.”136 But neither were they destitute. “The very poor could not afford to migrate west.”137 In 1880, $302.86 was the typical worth of an Alabama sharecropper.138 From the 1870 Federal census Edward R. Crowther calculated the following household wealth for heads of seven families that comprised the first wave of southern Mormon converts in 1877. It should be noted that the southern converts had been advised by John Morgan to “endeavor to take with them their own teams and wagons, although, he thought, livestock would be inexpensive at the railroad terminus and, perhaps, could be purchased there.”139 However, the following recollection indicates that many left most of their farm implements. Leona Sellers McCartney recalled that her relatives “left all of their possessions except [sic] few clothes they carried along with them. They never knew who came and lived in their homes, or who got their farms, wagons, teams, etc…The people in the town where they lived said they would have to give up their old Mormon religion or else leave town. They left it.”140 It’s likely they believed they would have opportunity to purchase wagons and livestock at

---

139 Morgan, "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley", 272.
the railroad terminus when they arrived in Pueblo, but having no arrangements for where they would spend the winter, funds perhaps unexpectedly, were required for building the barracks, food and supplies. Morgan also instructed them to “take with them all kinds of seeds and grains; garden and flower seed. Further, that if the freight rates were not too high, they would also take a circular saw, the necessary tools for mining and a cotton gin”.\textsuperscript{141} It remains currently uncertain what tools or seeds they brought with them.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{families.png}
\caption{Families of Hugh Lee Sellers.}
The Hugh Lee Sellers family was with the original company to settle in Manassa, Colorado. Hugh, wife Missouri and some of their children occupied the #4 unit in the barracks on the Arkansas River near Pueblo, Colorado during the winter of 1878. Left to right standing: Jane Sellers Haynie, Ernie R. Sellers, George Sellers, Mary Ellen Sellers, Heber Sellers – son of Robert Sellers; sitting: Missouri Sellers-mother, Don Sellers – young child, Hugh Sellers, Wilford Sellers, Parley Sellers, Robert Sellers. Image Source: Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, item #p9605n01_05_06.
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{141} Morgan, "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley", 272.
Crowther’s following estimate of $459 for an average estate was derived from the 1870 census, ten years prior to their immigration to Colorado. However, it does provide a measure of comparison with the standard wealth of sharecroppers in Alabama in the mid-1800s.

Their average estate was $459.00, including personal money or value of land and equipment. These individuals would not rank as wealthy men, and to northern standards they might well seem poor. Yet, their average wealth was fifty percent greater than the $302.86 standard an Alabama sharecropper of the day.142

As Crowther points out, the oral tradition in the San Luis Valley persists that many of the Southern Saints were impoverished. However, this may reflect more the struggles the pioneers faced in founding an economic identity in Colorado than the circumstances they left behind in Alabama and Georgia.143 Considering that Crowther’s estimates are based on the 1870s census before the converts left the south, there may be more truth to reports of impoverishment than credited by either Crowther or by early Church authorities who were quoted as contradicting claims of poverty in the Mormon colonies. One such contradiction was printed by the Denver Tribune from an interview with B.H. Roberts, a general authority from Salt Lake City who visited the colonies and

142 Crowther, "Southern Saints", 11.
143 Crowther notes that when the converts spent the winter in Pueblo, Colorado, James A. Cox rented private quarters for his family in the city, rather than living with the other converts in the barracks. Daniel Rice Sellers indicated a personal estate of $1,050 and had sufficient means to contribute $161.15 to the common treasury for the converts during the winter the party spent in Pueblo. (Crowther, Edward R. "Southern Saints: making a Mormon Community in the San Luis Valley." Edited by Rich Loosbrock. The San Luis Valley Historian (The San Luis Valley Historical Society) XXXV, no. 3 (2003): 5-18, 11)
commented to a journalist on multiple controversial topics including misrepresentation of suffering in the Valley.

That there are people in our midst that are poor, we admit. They were poor when they landed in Colorado, and had to be assisted from the start. But that anyone is actually perishing, or even suffering for want of food or clothing, or are likely to in the future, we positively deny.¹⁴⁴

Difficulties the first wave of southern converts experienced were not as prevalent for subsequent southern groups. Amanda E. Seago was a young girl when her family came west with 226 converts from Alabama. Her family of ten arrived in Manassa on March 5, 1887 and most of the town folk were out to meet them. “We all climbed into a big wagon box. The families were all willing to share their homes, and arranged places for us to stay. The first night Ellen and I went with the Haynie Family. Ezra and Ida went to the Hawkins. Mother and Father and three younger children stayed with Harmon Sowards, I can’t remember about Wilson.”¹⁴⁵ Amanda wrote that after the first night, her family had one large room over a tannery business and they began to acquire things they needed to establish a home. They ordered a stove and utensils from Alamosa but did not


have the funds to replace personal items including razors, brushes, thread and thimbles from a big satchel lost along the way.\textsuperscript{146}

John Morgan brought a second company from the south consisting of fifty converts from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Virginia. They arrived in Los Cerritos from Chattanooga, Tennessee on March 28, 1879.\textsuperscript{147} In the fall, another company of 110 Saints arrived in the Valley, making a total about 250 from the south and again on March 27, 1880; Morgan arrived with another company of seventy converts. More families that had been detained in the south due to illness arrived on April 17, 1880. With those from Utah, New Mexico and the south, the population in and around Manassa had grown to approximately 500 people.\textsuperscript{148} It must have pleased Morgan each time he arrived to see the growth in Manassa and surrounding areas. Mormon emigration to Colorado continued and in the fall, a company of ninety converts arrived in October from the counties of Sanpete, Sevier and Juab in Utah and another southern company came before the cold winds of winter. This group from Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and Kentucky consisted of 117 Saints, again led by John Morgan and another southern states missionary, Matthias F. Cowley. It was in the November 1880 Company that the parents of the “Manassa Mauler”, Jack Dempsey arrive.\textsuperscript{149}

\textsuperscript{146} Smith. "Family History of the Seago Family in America”.
\textsuperscript{147} Anderson, \textit{The Mormons}, 25.
\textsuperscript{148} Anderson, \textit{The Mormons}, 29.
\textsuperscript{149} Anderson, \textit{The Mormons}, 29.
Antonio…. or Antonio?

There is a story told in the Valley of a chance meeting around 1847 between a battalion soldier and the great-great-uncle of Senator Ken Salazar. The story is repeated locally and was published in the *Ensign*, a Mormon Church magazine. The following facts clarify this and other accounts.

A Mormon Battalion soldier, name unknown, made the acquaintance of Francisco Esteban de Salazar and during their acquaintance, left him a copy of the Book of Mormon. Francisco spent most of his life in Los Rincones, four miles southeast of present day Manassa and close to Los Cerritos. He was buried under the church in Conejos near the family ranch of Ken Salazar.

Not able to read English, Francisco gave the book to his son Antonio de Jesus Salazar who read the book and by 1878 when the first southern Mormons arrived in the Valley, he was very familiar with the contents of the book. The Ensign version gives credit to Antonio for giving “many of the settlers shelter and jobs on his ranch,” but according to Stewarts letter, it was actually Antonio D. Archuleta who gave aid to the poorly prepared southern Mormons. However, Antonio de Jesus Salazar and his family

150 Francisco Salazar spent most of his life in Los Rincones
151 Antonio de Jesus Salazar married a half Navajo and half Spanish woman, Dolores Romero in 1872, who, like himself was raised in the Catholic Church. After their marriage, they established a large sheep and cattle ranch in the San Luis Valley and were well established when Mormons appeared ready to colonize their own settlements (Salazar, 1976)
were later baptized in the chilly waters of the Conejos River, a story related later within this paper.
CHAPTER V.
MORMON SCANDINAVIANS

Danish Mormons

In the 1870 United States census, converts gave Utah nearly nineteen percent of the Danish population in the United States.\textsuperscript{153} Most of the first company of Danish converts had been sent to live in Utah’s Sanpete Valley. In 1870 the population of Sanpete County, Utah was comprised of 69% Danish, 12% Swedish and 6% Norwegian, the remainder being mostly British.\textsuperscript{154}

The peak of Scandinavian immigration to Utah occurred in 1862 with the majority coming from agricultural backgrounds in Denmark.\textsuperscript{155} Possessing strong community building skills, Danish immigrants profited from farming and agricultural traditions learned in Denmark. Christian Nielsen wrote in correspondence back to Denmark that, “his services were needed to build a grist mill, which “with God’s help” he built “after the Danish fashion,”\textsuperscript{156} and in 1884, the \textit{Gazetteer of Utah} reported that the Scandinavians made Sanpete Valley known as the granaries of Utah and they were “exceedingly well to do.”\textsuperscript{157}

\textsuperscript{153} Mudler, \textit{Homeward to Zion}, 104.
\textsuperscript{154} W.G. Barton. \textit{Ephraim's First One Hundred Years 1854 - 1954}. 123. Edited by Dentennial Book Committee. Ephraim, Utah: Centennial Book Committee, 80.
\textsuperscript{156} Mudler, \textit{Homeward to Zion}, 165.
\textsuperscript{157} Mudler, \textit{Homeward to Zion}, 8.
Figure 15 Routes from Denmark to the American West

Danish Mormons arrived in the United States either in New York City or, as Hans Jensen did in 1854, traveled up the Mississippi River. Jensen later was instrumental in establishing the San Luis Valley communities. When arriving in America he wrote in his diary that there were, “beautiful forests on both sides, small cities and beautiful places.” Image source: Mudler, *Homeward to Zion*, 254.

The first Mormons to arrive in Los Cerritos from the southern states struggled. President Young was cognizant of this possibility when he wrote in a letter to John Morgan on June 28, 1877 that New Mexico or Texas might be suitable locations for a colony. But he realized the Southerners would need help in adapting to the arid, high altitude climate. He wrote the following advice to Morgan.

It would please us if it were situated near the homes of some of the tribes of the Lamanites ([Indians] over whom our brethren and sisters could wield an influence for good, and to whom they could teach the ways of life eternal as well as the arts and industries of this life. The friendship and cooperation of these
people would also be found of great advantage to the new settlers through their knowledge of the country and its productions.\textsuperscript{158}

When Young recommended that the group would benefit if they located near “the homes of some of the tribes of the Lamanites”, he acknowledged recognition the Southerners would require assistance to establish themselves in a new region. However, tribes did not reside in the San Luis Valley at the time and when John Taylor became president, he looked to Mormons in Utah who were more experienced in the ways of the frontier and could greatly assist in colonization of the San Luis Valley. His attentions landed on Scandinavians in Sanpete County, sometimes called “Little Denmark” for the large number of Danish residing there. The southerners heard of the reputation of the Sanpete Mormons and anticipated that the Danish would come to their rescue. “The desire that a number of families be sent from Utah to join them was frequently expressed at the barracks in Pueblo…especially so in the practice of irrigation”\textsuperscript{159} An English settler in Utah described Scandinavians in Utah:

I have seen many Scandinavian families come into Manti with no means of support. After a few weeks, the new immigrant would acquire a lot, build himself a small adobe home surround it with a willow woven fence. Soon a few

\begin{center}
\bibliography{references}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{158} Morgan, "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley, Colorado", 271.  
\textsuperscript{159} Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 37.
acres of ground were added to his accumulations, every foot of which was utilized.\textsuperscript{160}

The 1870 census indicates that of the southern converts who later came to Colorado there were four farmers, two carpenters, and one grocer. The 1880 census revealed that one other, sixteen-year-old Patrick Calhoun Haynie was a blacksmith.\textsuperscript{161} In\textit{Homeward to Zion}, Mudler listed the occupations of southerners as carpenters, a blacksmith, a brick mason, stonemason and a shoemaker.\textsuperscript{162} Those who had been farmers in the south found that in Colorado, “they were entirely unacquainted with the country, its manner or customs, which was an obstacle of no small magnitude to overcome.”\textsuperscript{163} With few resources “John Harrison opened a store with total assets amounting to three dozen eggs and a five dollar bill.”\textsuperscript{164} Likely, humid climate, the green fertile landscapes of southern states, crops of cotton and local lumber for home building became a memory. To further complicate their new life, they were still learning of the expectations required by their Mormon faith and toiling to obtain an understanding of its theological doctrine.

\hspace{1cm}

\textsuperscript{160} Mudler, \textit{Homeward to Zion}, 198
\textsuperscript{161} Crowther, “Southern Saints: Making a Mormon Community in the San Luis Valley”, 17.
\textsuperscript{162} Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 30.
\textsuperscript{163} Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 31.
Danish Mormons sent to Southern Colorado to assist the Southerners with their predicaments can be generalized through the experience of two brothers Hans Jensen and ‘Lauritz’ Lawrence Peterson, both played significant roles in colonization of the Valley.¹⁶⁵ The diary and journal of Hans Jensen provides the greater part of the following historical information and, from his personal experience, elicits a glimpse of what occurred in the minds and hearts of these people who so willingly struggled to etch out a way of life embodying the spirit of Zion near Colorado’s southern border.

Hans Jensen: “My Family in Zion”

Jensen was born on the 24th of June 1829, in Hals Aalborg, Denmark. His father was Peter Jensen and this is possibly why Jensen used Peter as his middle name for legal purposes. In Manti, Utah, and while on a mission back to Denmark, Jensen was referred to as Hans Jensen Hals, conceivably to distinguish him from another Hans Jensen with “Hals” being descriptive of his origin back in Denmark. Due to the Scandinavian patronymic naming practice, it was common in the Utah communities of “Little

¹⁶⁵ The difference in names is accounted for by the fact that Lawrence adhered to the Scandinavian naming practice and took his father’s given name, Peter, as his own surname. His brother, Hans, adopted the Western practice and retained his father’s surname, Jensen.
Denmark” for multiple Danish men to have the same first and last name. A common bit of humor among Danish immigrants to Utah was that in church meetings when the speaker asked Pete to give the benediction, ten men from the congregation stood up. When the speaker clarified that he meant ‘Big’ Pete Peterson, five of them sat down.

Figure 16 Hans Jensen “Hals”

When Jensen was nineteen still living in Aalborg, he received the inheritance of his father’s house, farm and livestock in return for providing his parents a place to live,

166 In the old days in Denmark, or other Scandinavian counties, an individual had only one name and to differentiate between people, a short description of the person, or his origin, was added to the given name. When the practice of adding a second name evolved, it was derived from the paternal ancestor with the addition of a suffix “son”, or in the case of a daughter, ‘dotter’. Hans Jensen was the son of Peter and under the patronymic naming practice would have been Hans Peterson. However, his father’s surname was Jensen and Hans choose to use the Western practice of taking the family name as his surname.
food to eat and payment of 250 Rigsdaler. He was also required to, “give my brother Lauritz an upbringing and 100 Rigsdaler as his part of the inheritance.” When Jensen met two Mormon missionaries he was baptized within several days and following his baptism, gave the following account. “When I came home, my parents were against me and that summer I finished with my friends I had before, though I felt happy and everything was what I wanted because everything was what I had asked for.”

Two months later, Jensen’s parents were also baptized and eight days later, he put the home up for sale, sold the farm to Larsen of Olster for the sum of 1,025 Rigsdaler and immediately left for a mission in Jutland, Denmark. By the end of the year Jensen and his family were in Hals, Denmark preparing to embark for God’s Kingdom in America.

During the mid-1800s so many Danish were leaving the mainland for the purpose of establishing Zion in America, that during a period of time, the Danish government prohibited migration from Jutland to a foreign land. Permission

167 Currency used in Denmark was called rigsdaler. It was used until 1873 when Denmark and Sweden formed the Scandinavian Monetary Union and the rigsdaler was replaced by the Danish krone.


170 Jensen, "Journal of Hans Jensen”, 4-5.

171 Mudler, Homeward to Zion.
Circumventing restrictions, Jensen described in his diary the route he and his family took. “…went to Aarhus and from Aarhus on a ship to Kalundborg and by land to Copenhagen.” In Copenhagen, the family and 400 others boarded the ship Slesvig. Their route took them to Kjel, Germany, by train to Glystad, Germany, by ship to Hull, England where his father died and was buried at a church cemetery. From Hull they traveled by train to Liverpool where they sailed out through the British Channel in January bound for America.

Figure 17 Map of Denmark drawn by Hans Jensen
This map, from Hans Jensen’s diary, shows circles around Aalborg where he was born, and Copenhagen where he departed for the United States. Image source: Jensen, “Journal of Hans Jensen”.

Figure 17 Map of Denmark drawn by Hans Jensen
This map, from Hans Jensen’s diary, shows circles around Aalborg where he was born, and Copenhagen where he departed for the United States. Image source: Jensen, “Journal of Hans Jensen”. 
While on the voyage to American, on March 15, 1844, Jensen married his first wife Maren Ericksen. He arrived in through the port of New Orleans in the States with his mother and young brother and on arriving wrote,

On the 17th of March we could see the land of America. We sailed up the Mississippi River and were filled with joy seeing beautiful forests on both sides, small cities and beautiful places. We saw beautiful farms and livestock, we had great joy seeing them.172

His description is evidence that he associated his arrival in the United States with arrival in ‘Zion’ and coincides with the description Joseph Smith documented of coming to Zion in the *Doctrine and Covenants* “And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy”.173

The company took a steamship to Kansas City, Missouri where the group stopped to obtain provisions and make ready for their travel west. They took their wagons and tents and lived in the forest and during these days. Some of the weary converts, who had traveled so far from Denmark, died of cholera. Jensen’s mother among them, “She was buried in the Kansas forest about 1 English mile from the city.”174 The remainder of the company moved out on the prairie near the city of Westport where they purchased four oxen and two cows for every wagon.

173 Smith, *Doctrine and Covenants*, 71.
At this point during his journey to Utah, Jensen was separated from his young brother Lauritz. Jensen writes in his diary the following account. “My brother Lauritz was making company with a cowboy from Mexico or Santa Fe who talked him into going with him to my great sorrow. Where they went, we don’t know.”¹⁷⁵ Jensen’s diary entry clarifies other accounts of Lauritz’ disappearance including some that generally romanticize the story with an account of Peterson being a small boy who fell asleep in a wagon, only to awake and find that Spanish traders had carried him off far from his family. He was hysterical, but only able to communicate in Danish and the Spanish traders could not understand a word of his ranting.¹⁷⁶ In historiography, Lauritz Mickel Peterson is recognized only as Lawrence M. Peterson. His Danish name of Lauritz or Laurs has not previously been acknowledged. Lauritz grew up and was educated in New Mexico. When he became a bookkeeper he was in position to search records for his brother and learned that Hans Jensen was living in Manti, Utah. But, it would be more twenty-seven years before the brothers would meet again.

In 1868, when Brigham Young requested that Jensen return to Denmark as a missionary, he dutifully left his family of four children and three wives and wrote in his diary that as he said goodbye his small boys ran behind the wagon and cried.¹⁷⁷

---

¹⁷⁶ Published historical accounts of Jensen’s separation from his brother indicate that “his father and mother had both died during the voyage to America” and after a “fruitless search” for Lawrence near Kansas City, “family and friends gave up on young Lawrence as lost to them forever and wended their way to Utah.”
¹⁷⁷ It was common to send Danish-speaking people as missionaries to Denmark knowing they would have greater success proselyting in their native language.
entries from Denmark make frequent reference to his family as, “My family in Zion”, always underlining the words. Zion apparently was never far from his mind during his three and a half year mission. Jensen’s diary as well as accounts from personal letters and diary’s kept by other missionaries during the time indicate that the notice of Zion was not specifically connected to the Church in Salt Lake City, but rather Zion reflected the concept of any place in the American West where they had built their homes with other like-minded converts and could be “filled with joy….”

Successful as a missionary in 1868 Jensen returned from Denmark on the clipper ship Emerald Isle leading a company of 627 Mormon converts to America, or as they believed, communities of “Zion”. They arrived in Salt Lake City, from where Jensen then saw many of them safely escorted to the communities of Sanpete County, Utah, further populating Little Denmark. Shortly before being sent to the San Luis Valley, Jensen was appointed as a High Councilman by Apostle Orson Hyde from Church headquarters in Salt Lake City to handle Danish affairs for the Church in the Sanpete County, Utah settlements.

178 See Image of poster advertising the Emerald Isle on page 38.
Lauritz Peterson: “The Brother Gone Away and Lost in the Desert”

The brothers Jensen and Peterson reconnected in 1871. Jensen received a letter from his brother Lauritz Peterson, referring to him now as either Laurs or Louis Mickel, “that had gone away and was lost in the desert.” Peterson continued to communicate with his Jensen and sent a photograph of his family along with a lengthy letter giving a good report of what had happened to him.\(^{181}\) Peterson was well educated and worked professionally as a bookkeeper. Little else is known of his life in New Mexico Territory. He spoke and could read and write both in English and Spanish. These were valuable skills in the eyes of Church officials who after learning that Peterson had lived in Los Cerritos, Colorado contacted him for advice regarding the area and later directed him to assist with settlement in the San Luis Valley.\(^{182}\)

During the summer of 1875 Peterson and his family traveled by wagon to Utah to reconnect with his brother. It is easy to envision early morning sunlight on yellow rabbit brush along the dirt roads as may have seen it Peterson, “his wife and a Mexican named Wanonasia” drove a spring wagon and three horses to Denver, Laramie City, Wyoming

\(^{181}\) Jensen documents in his diary that his brother Lawrence Peterson sent him a letter, but the letter was not included with his papers. Descendants of the brothers have requested any information people may have available, specifically about Lawrence.

and through Wyoming down to Salt Lake City. Jensen’s describes the logistics of their meeting. “They had traveled 1,170 miles to get here and that was on a wagon pulled by horses. It had been 21 years since we had been together.”

The question may be asked, why did Peterson take an extended route from New Mexico to Utah? The answer remains unknown. However, his brother Hans Jensen describes the route his party later took from central Utah to the San Luis Valley as going through the Gunnison area. Other accounts verify that Scandinavians from Utah followed rugged, generally unmapped routes when coming to the San Luis Valley. Church leaders from Salt Lake City who later visited Colorado for Church conferences followed an incorporated route. A filing recorded in Conejos County by the Park View & Ft. Garland Freight Road & Telegraph Company on April 29, 1878 documents a route negotiated as a toll road for what is now Cumbres Pass. The planned telegraph line was never built, but “this became the common route between Salt Lake City and the new colony.”

Peterson and his family stayed with Jensen in for two months. Before returning to his home in the southwest, they became converts to the Mormon faith. Erastus Snow, an Apostle and missionary of the Mormon Church wrote, “In the summer of 1875, I baptized L. (Lawrence) M. Peterson and his wife and their Spanish muleteer, in company with many others at Manti, who at that time were renewing

[185] Jensen and Laurs met in Salt Lake City on June 4, 1875.
their covenants. The three named were visitors from the southern border of Colorado and enquirers after truth. There is a bit of romance connected with this man, Peterson, not altogether devoid of interest. He was a Scandinavian by birth, but Spanish-American by education.\footnote{Andrew Jenson. “The Founding of Mormon Settlements in the San Luis Valley, Colorado.” \textit{Colorado Magazine} 7, no. 5 (September 1940): 174-180.}

Following his baptism and stay in Utah, Peterson returned home to New Mexico where, acting as missionary, he converted a group of about forty people to the Mormon Church. Jensen writes, “When my brother arrived back home in Colorado, he immediately started to have meetings and preach.\footnote{Hans Jensen refers to his brother Lawrence’s home in Colorado. The letter must have been received after Lawrence relocated from New Mexico to Los Cerritos with converts from the southern states.} He received a lot of opposition from a Catholic priest and other religions.”\footnote{Jensen, "Journal of Hans Jensen", 133.}
Figure 18 Lawrence Peterson and his wife Delores Romero.


Figure 19 Lawrence M. Peterson home

It is not indicated on the photos which San Luis Valley community this home of Lawrence M. Peterson was located in. Image source: Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, item #p9605n01_03_24.
Utah Became too Crowded

The brothers Jensen and Peterson reunited again in the San Luis Valley to assist the Southerners with colonization. Peterson and his family spent the rest of their lives in the Valley but Jensen remained one day less that a full year coming to the Valley from Utah; long enough to plot town sites, oversee building of irrigation ditches and organize the first church meetings. Jensen wrote in his diary about going to Colorado. “While at quarterly conference held in Manti, I had been called to go to Colorado State to take care of and start a new settlement at ‘Manassh’ [sic] and to be president of the Saints of the southern states that should immigrate to San Louise [sic] Valley.” Jensen was willing and eager to assist the Colorado settlements and wrote of his relocation to the San Luis Valley in his diary.

...a home for thousands of Latter-day Saints, because Utah is becoming to [sic] crowded for us... Because our poor brethren and sisters who come to these tightly populated towns in Utah have no chance to get land to cultivate for themselves, the Lord has led our brethren the apostles to take this step for Zion’s outspreading.

On September 3, 1878, Eight men left Manti with Jensen as scouts and protection for the group, or as Jensen described, “traveling as ‘investigators’, and guards to watch

189 Anderson. The Mormons, 28.
for Indians."  

He traveled with his daughter Mary and son Marinus and a Mexican helper staying with them at the time. William A. Cox and the families of Soren C. Berthleson and John Alling were also part of the party, a total of eighteen people in all. This small group began the migration of Scandinavian Mormons to the San Luis Valley.

The Southerners had traveled over 1,300 miles from Scottsboro to Pueblo in four days. Jensen’s party took almost a month to travel 500 miles. His instructions in Manti had been simple. “I received an order that as I went over the water (Rivers) and over the land, I was to give them a blessing and dedicate them all the way through to where we would be staying while on my mission.”

His orders were of a spiritual, religious nature but were given to him without a route map. They made their way to Salina in southern Utah, and to the top of a mountain where he wrote, “As we stand here on top of this mountain, we have about 500 to 600 miles ahead of us to walk over with many rivers and mountains and a lot of things to do as we go along the way.”

Berthelson recorded in his diary that they followed the route taken by Colonel Gunnison on his return journey when military troops traveled to Utah in 1857. But before they found that route, Jensen provides details of following a long winding river canyon and over snow banks. Again he writes, and again his words reflect the bewilderment he must have felt at making ones own path in a remote wilderness. “I went up on the mountains with my binoculars and looked around to see what was around us I saw rain

192 Hans Jensen’s party left Manti on September 3, 1878.
water in holes in the rocks which we gathered to use again in the evening.”\textsuperscript{195} At this point Jensen makes reference of seeing a road previously traveled by others. “The mountain was very rocky with rocks and holes as we made our way over the man-made somewhat of a road to follow”\textsuperscript{196}

Further on, they went by way of the Green River to the Gunnison River and then to the “Uncan Pavderi” River and up to the Utes Reservation.\textsuperscript{197} Then we went to talk to the Chief of the Indians, but we didn’t find him home.”\textsuperscript{198} At this point the eight horsemen traveling with them turned back to Utah. Jensen and his party traveled more than 550 miles over rough country but on reaching the San Luis Valley, the words penned in his diary could be script for a travel brochure.

I saw my dream come true, I dreamed that I was coming to a valley with a little company and that the Valley was so big the eyes couldn’t see to the other mountain at the end of the valley. Now here we came to them, and the first place was a Mexican City with a small houses with flat roofs made of straw. We saw a lot of goats and mules and a lot of Mexican things going on.\textsuperscript{199}

His expressed delight at seeing a first view of the ‘big San Louis Valley’ reflected his vision of an ideal enclave for his fellow Mormons entering a millennium of social,

\footnotesize{
\textsuperscript{195} Jensen, ”Journal of Hans Jensen”, 135.
\textsuperscript{196} Jensen, ”Journal of Hans Jensen”, 135.
\textsuperscript{197} “Uncan Pavderi” was Jensen’s spelling of the Uncompahgre River. Source: Jensen, "Journal of Hans Jensen”, 136.
\textsuperscript{198} Jensen, ”Journal of Hans Jensen”, 136.
\textsuperscript{199} Jensen, ”Journal of Hans Jensen”, 137.
}
economic and political perfection. Berthelson wrote that the Mexican people they met were friendly and the southerners already there were grateful for the kindness having been shown them, especially by Jose Victor Garcia and Lafayette Head.

Figure 20 Soren C. Berthelson and his wife Marianna Berthelson

Soren C. Berthelson’s photo is labeled “Bishop Berthelson. This would date the photo sometime after 1890, as Berthelson was the first Bishop of Sanford Ward in Sanford, Colorado. Berthelson’s second wife was Josephine Echols. Photo courtesy: The Sanford History Museum.

Cultural Differences Between Scandinavians and Southerners

Differences in cultural temperament did not take long to emerge between Scandinavians and Southern Saints. Homing in around Manassa as their center, the ‘Manassa’ Southerners believed they were better than the Scandinavians because they avoided coffee and the Scandinavians; especially the many Danes “consumed the
forbidden drink in copious amounts.” Additionally, the Danish were prone to swear.

H.P. Dotson wrote a letter to the editors of the *Deseret Evening News* on August 19, 1881 and on behalf of the Southerners, expressed his assessment of Scandinavian Mormons.

“We expected to find a people – all who call themselves Latter-day Saints – purer, more refined, and especially clearer of what are vulgarly called “cuss words,” than any other people; but when they hear those professing to be Later-day Saints use such words as “d-n,” “h- - l,” etc. unsparingly upon trivial occasions, it throws a damper upon us, to say the least.”

As early as 1881, dire posturing was growing between the two cultural groups. Converts from the South arrived in greater number than the Scandinavians, but were greatly dependent on receiving farm and irrigation help from the Danes. Although Southerners were effectively subordinate, they viewed the Scandinavians as backward foreigners from Europe. Emily Wells Grant, a plural wife who came to hide in Manassa from federal marshals directed to find and prosecute polygamists wrote to her husband in Salt Lake City, “I never in all my life heard of so much contending among ‘Mormon’ people as there is here…I hardly ever hear one person speak well of another. Snubs and criticism is the order of the day.”

The Scandinavians made inroads towards economic

---

200 Garth N. Jones, Garth N. “James Thompson Lisonbee: San Luis Valley Gathering, 1876-78.”, 78.

201 Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 68.

stability in a relatively short time that southerners, on their own, had not achieved. Jensen borrowed $300.00 from Church President John Taylor to buy seed and farming equipment for the settlements and Berthelson created more dependency on the part of the southerners when he organized a successful co-op store at Manassa with a capital stock of $325, and additionally secured contract with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad to deliver ties, providing employment as a benefit to the Southerners. Before long, community development between the two groups became more cohesive and the settlements in the San Luis Valley began to see progress in agricultural endeavors as well as commercial interests.

Figure 21 The Sellers store in Manassa, Colorado. Image source: Sanford, Colorado History Museum.

The date of this photo is unknown. Information with the photos reads, “The Sellers store faced east and was on the north side of the old opera house. It was build of adobe and plastered, 25 feet wide by 40-50 feet long. A big “SELLERS” sign was on the front. Groceries and hardware were sold. Hugh L. Sellers owned the store. Image source: http://heritagewest.coalliance.org/items/show/59751 (accessed October 10, 2012).

Figure 22 Haynie Hardware Store, Manassa, Colorado
Image Source: Special Collections Dept. J. Willard Marriott Library University of Utah, item #p9605n01_13_10.

Danish was spoken routinely in the Mormon settlements. Being more experienced in Church doctrine, Scandinavian men holding positions of leadership conducted Church meetings with a Danish accent. Southerners, being recent converts to the Church, irritatingly found they could not understand nor comprehend church theology as told to them in the quirky English-Danish dialect of the Danes. Danish women ran the official women’s church organization, the ‘Relief Society’ and set-up classes to instruct
Southern women on homemaking duties of Mormon women.\textsuperscript{204} Disgruntlement spread outside of Church houses into the streets, and onto surrounding farmland. Southerners had experience that the Danes lacked in at least one area, “felling trees for houses and school buildings and fashioning timber into railroad ties to procure cash for the settlement.”\textsuperscript{205}

Differing customs, culture, language and adherence to Church doctrine continued to be the root of a mounting problem. Jensen and Berthelson, the first two Bishops of Ephraim, Colorado, preferred Danish to English.\textsuperscript{206} Like other Danish immigrants who had joined the Church in Denmark, they fully understood the necessity of speaking English and reportedly strived dutifully to acquire perfection in the language as directed by Church leaders to do. Yet the mishandlings of syntax, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary were rampant in their daily conversation. The Norwegians and Swedes among the Danish could understand enough to get by, but Southerners could not. The following quote from a book of Danish Humor in Ephraim, Utah was collected from

\begin{flushleft}
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushright}
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{204} Compiled from Chapter XIV “Women’s Contributions in Anderson, The Mormons, 86-91.
\textsuperscript{205} Crowther, "Southern Saints: Making a Mormon Community in the San Luis Valley", 15
\textsuperscript{206} Jensen’s great granddaughter Fay Rose Hansen Nickle notes that Jensen’s diary was written mostly in Danish - “old Danish”. With the help of Jens Hansen who had lived in Horsens, Denmark near Hans Jensen’s home in Hals, she was able to have the diary translated. Source: Jensen, "Journal of Hans Jensen 1829, Forward.
actual events. As the author states, Danes liked to laugh at their own difficulties with the English language.\textsuperscript{207}

\begin{quote}
Effën I han’t religious in de vay I deal vit my fellow-men, de fact dat I accept all of de deology of de kuirk han’t a going to make a true religious man of me…Dar han’t no vay to judge de value of any religion except by vat it does.\textsuperscript{208}
\end{quote}

Not generally a prudish people, the Danes further annoyed the Southerners with their seemingly inappropriate humor and droll stories. Adams Jenson, himself Danish, who studies and collects American West Danish stories states, “we tend to think some things are funny which shock the heck out of more “civilized” people. People take their personal views of morality very seriously and hate the idea that others may be getting a laugh out of something they figure will send us all to hell.”\textsuperscript{209} For Southerners not accustomed to Danish characteristics the daily conversation of Danes appeared inappropriate and not befitting the pure image of what they, now as Mormons, should themselves be. Perhaps, when the Danish phrase \textit{Jeg eisker dig}, “I love you” was spoken in the Valley; it did not convey the neighborly connotation it was intended to evoke. Southerners likely found themselves challenged by fellow church members they considered ill-spoken but who had been given dominance in Church matters over them.

\begin{flushright}---------------------------\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{207} Adams, William Jenson. Sanpete Tales, Humorous Folklore From Central Utah. Signature Books, 1999.

\textsuperscript{208} William Jenson Adams. \textit{Sanpete Tales, Humorous Folklore From Central Utah}. Signature Books, 1999, 98.

\textsuperscript{209} Adams, \textit{Sanpete Tales}, Introduction.
Language problems were referred to Church authorities in Salt Lake City for resolution. The internal division was remedied by the recommendation of Erastus Snow a General Authority of the Church. Conferring with Silas Sanford Smith, a Mormon frontiersman accustomed to struggles and issues of colonization Snow determined to make a change in the presiding officers at the Church in Manassa. The Scandinavians were released from positions of Church authority while retaining respect for their agricultural expertise. Men from the southern states assumed leadership as Church officials in Manassa.\textsuperscript{210}

\textsuperscript{210} Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 167.
CHAPTER VI.
COMMUNITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP

“Measure Up and Lay Out a City”

Jensen had been chosen with the foresight of having helped establish a prosperous farming community in what had been nothing but a desert in Sanpete County, Utah. Berthelson, also an energetic leader, was selected for his skills related to agriculture but who, in addition to farming, was described as “ready to tackle anything from a tie contract to a railroad grade with which to earn money to help our community.”211 The leadership of these men and others like them swiftly advanced settlement of twelve communities between the years 1878 and 1900.212

The town site of Manassa was selected in 1878 shortly after Jensen arrived and was, named in honor of the eldest son of Joseph of Biblical fame, as “a place to live by their own exertions and, fulfilling the words of President Taylor, survive in an almost miraculous manner.”213 In his February 21, 1878 diary entry he wrote, “measure up and lay out the land for a City called Manassa.”214 This included planning and plotting out

211 Alvin Theodore Steinel. History of Agriculture in Colorado, 403. Note: Berthelson remained in Colorado and served first as a Bishop in Ephraim, Colorado and then Sanford, Colorado where he established his permanent life-long residence.

212 The twelve communities were Manassa, Ephraim, Richfield, Sanford, Jaroso (Colorado, not to be confused with Jaroso, New Mexico), Morgan, Blanca, Fox Creek, Eastdale, Baulah, Sunflower, and El Rito. Not all communities were established under the direction of Church leadership. Jaroso, Blanca, For Creek, Eastdale and Sunflower were established by individual Mormons.

213 Stewart, Settlements in Colorado, 3.

land for farming, designating where hay would be grown and pasture for livestock. His
daughter wrote that the town and surrounding areas were laid out just like Manti, Utah.²¹⁵

In early summer John H. Hougaard surveyed the east half of Manassa into streets and into
thirty-two blocks, ten acres each, with each block then divided into four lots. Jensen built
the first house in Manassa but it was his daughter Mary Louise who dug a well for the
family, “eight feet deep and found water where the whole town came to be supplied at
first before they secured water for themselves.”²¹⁶

![Figure 23 Building Main Street, Manassa, Colorado 1895](image)

“Two children and seven men in the process of building Main Street, looking
south in Manassa, Colorado. Standing fourth from the left is G. Wayne Rogers, uncle of
Cletus Rogers. Image source: “Heritage West: Mormon Trail Digitization Project”,

²¹⁵ Mary Louis Jensen. "Life of Mary Louis Jensen." Biographical and Historical
²¹⁶ Jensen. "Life of Mary Louis Jensen".
Members had their first organized Church meetings at Jensen’s home. Prior to building his log home, members held church meetings in opened air structures constructed as arbors with posts set in the ground and poles tied across the top to support leafy branches that filter the sun out.\textsuperscript{217} Jensen fenced the area around his home, referring to it as a block, and according to the survey, it was ten acres, room enough for his home, a domestic garden and livestock used by the family.

\textbf{Figure 24 Shade arbor constructed for church meetings.}

A shade arbor similar to those built for the first Church meetings is in the upper left corner of this 1899 photo of a May Day celebration in Sanford, Colorado. Shown are members of the Jack-in-Green and Voco Phone Band. Image source: Fred T. Christensen. "Early History of Sanford, Colorado." \textit{Colorado Magazine} (History Colorado) 36, no. 3 (1959): 214-222.

Ephraim

Not long after laying out the town of Manassa, Jensen laid out a second town called Ephraim.\textsuperscript{218} Like Manassa, Ephraim was laid out in blocks and surrounded by agricultural land. The families of John L. Reed, Jensen Heiselt and Peter Poulson were among the first residents and Church leaders in Salt Lake City appointed Peter Rasmussen as their first bishop.\textsuperscript{219} When John Morgan visited Ephraim, he wrote a letter to the \textit{Deseret News} describing the homes.

The houses are composed chiefly of hewn logs, either pine or cottonwood and covered Mexican fashion with planks and two or three inches of dirt on top: a few shingle roofs can be seen and the manufacture of shingles during the coming winter promises to become quite an item of business as the temporal progress of the Saints will soon permit them to erect better and more substantial homes.\textsuperscript{220}

Ephraim did not survive many years. During the summer months of 1885, as the warmth of the sun blazed down on crops planted in marshy fields around Ephraim President John Taylor arrived for a visit with others from Salt Lake City. Families were having difficulty farming due to the marshy land and there was too much alkali in the soil. Touring the countryside, President Taylor noticed an agreeable site between the towns of Manassa and Ephraim and pointed out the ground where “Sanford now stands as the most suitable and consistent place for the people of Richfield and Ephraim to

\textsuperscript{218} There is also an Ephraim, Utah located ten miles north of Manti.
\textsuperscript{219} Interview by Charles E. Gibson Jr. \textit{Alamosa, Cnejos and Costilla Counties Pamphlet 349, Doc. 1-49} State Historical Society of Colorado, (1933-34): 149, 122
\textsuperscript{220} Morgan, "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley", 292.
concentrate their efforts.”\textsuperscript{221} Although the families of Chris Cornum, Howard Corey, Joe Poulson, Albion Haggard, C.O. Poulson and Brother Thomas refused to leave, Ephraim was largely abandoned, and its log cabins moved to Sanford.\textsuperscript{222} Carleton Anderson makes reference to the people of Ephraim being primarily Scandinavian when he notes that meetings in Ephraim were conducted in the Danish tongue.\textsuperscript{223} Anderson’s statement indicates, that given the surnames of those that stayed as not being Scandinavian, the Danish must have moved to Stanford while Southerners remained, another indication of the separation of these two groups of people. The father of Harry Thomas eventually moved the log cabin he built in Ephraim to Sanford around 1888 and in 1983 it “is still in service as the southwest room of the old Thomas home.”\textsuperscript{224}

\textsuperscript{221} Anderson, \textit{The Mormons}, 153.
\textsuperscript{223} Anderson, \textit{The Mormons}, 150,
\textsuperscript{224} Thomas, "History of Sanford." PAGE.
Figure 25 Ephraim Home of William Henry Kirby and Family


Figure 26 Cottonwood pole house

This 1898 photo shows Isaac Huffaker and his wife Martha Ann in front of their cottonwood pole house in Los Cerritos. Image source: Valley Courier, Thursday, July 22, 1980, Section B.
Richfield

Jensen had returned to Utah when the town of Richfield was plotted. Thors N. Peterson was appointed bishop and the families of Thomas Crowther, John Shawcroft, Peter Guymon, and S.C. Berthelson were some of the first residents. 225 Like Ephraim, Richfield residents relocate to the new site of Sanford. Peter Mortensen was building a house in Richfield in 1885 and when “his building was completed to the square-ready for the roof, he moved his building to one of his lots in Sanford and finished it there, making it the first house in the new town of Sanford.”226 But again like Ephraim, a few residents remained.

225 Richfield, like Ephraim, was also the name of a town in Utah ten miles south of Manti.
226 Thomas, "History of Sanford." Thomas indicates that the Mortensen’s home was located across the street and west of the W.H Carter home. It has since burned down.
Figure 27 Richfield, Colorado
Image source: Sanford, Colorado History Museum

Figure 28 First crop of alfalfa at Richfield, Colorado
Black and white photograph of the first crop of alfalfa harvested and stacked. Building in the foreground was a stable; just behind it is a single-roofed granary and behind that is the log home where Maria Shawcroft lived with her large family from 1882 until 1891. Image source: “Heritage West: Mormon Trail Digitization Project”, http://heritagewest.coalliance.org/items/show/59718 (Accessed October 10, 2012).
Figure 29 John Shawcroft House, Richfield, Colorado

Figure 30 John Shawcroft House, Richfield, Colorado, July 2012
Image source: Author’s private collection.
Figure 31 Maria Jensen Shawcroft and John Shawcroft

Maria Jensen Shawcroft and John Shawcroft. The photo was taken about 1890. Maria was born in Borglum, Denmark and John Shawcroft immigrated to Utah from England. There were a part of the Mormons from Sanpete, County, Utah who were sent to help colonize the San Luis Valley, Colorado. Notation on photo states, “John built the first house in Richfield, Colorado. Image source: “Heritage West: Mormon Trail Digitization Project”, http://heritagewest.coalliance.org/items/show/59750 (Accessed October 10, 2012).
Figure 32 Brick house of Jen and Maren Jensen in Richfield, Colorado. 1892
Image source: “Heritage West: Mormon Trail Digitization Project”,

Figure 33 Home of Jen and Maren Jensen in Richfield, Colorado 2012
Image source: Author’s private collection
Figure 34 Cabin in Richfield, Colorado 2012
Image source: Author’s private collection

Figure 35 Brick house in Richfield, Colorado, 2012.
Image source: Author’s private collection
**Eastdale**

In the Spring of 1890 or 1891, a number of families were moving east across the Rio Grand River into Costilla County onto a ‘land grant’ on the advice of Church Authorities to build a town and were quite enthused about it. My parents decided to go too, and so we moved twenty-five miles south-east of Sanford, and my Father bought land from this Grant. A small settlement was begun and they decided to call the town Eastdale.\(^{227}\)

Eastdale was the only Mormon town in Costilla County. Residents in the town ultimately had a dispute with the Costilla Estates Land Development Company that purchased a large tract of land originally part of the Sangre de Cristo Mexican–American land grant. Their dispute with the Mormon community was over water rights and the costs for a railroad easement originally planned to run to Eastdale. Steve Waldrip, a local historian and the only resident in Eastdale in 2009 has researched the dispute through county records and gives the following account.

“The railroad was rerouted to a location were Costilla Estates would build a new town called Jaroso, in Costilla County. Costilla Estates controlled the water in the upper half of the Estates and cut off the Mormons in Eastdale. According to records at the San Luis courthouse, all the residents of Eastdale sold out to the Costilla Estates Development Company and left in 1909”\(^{228}\).

\(^{227}\) Smith, "Family History of the Seago Family in America."

\(^{228}\) Steve Waldrip Interview with Dana EchoHawk, Eastdale, Colorado, October 2, 2009.
Figure 36 Mormon Church Building in Eastdale

The Eastdale Church house, built around 1900 of “Mormon” red-fired bricks. A note in the La Jara State history of one hundred years in the San Luis Valley states that parts of the rock foundation still remain. A visit to the site this year thus proved disappointing as the foundation is gone, and only a few hints of red brick are scattered about. Carleton Q. Anderson, Betty Shawcroft, Robert Compton. *The Mormons: 100 Years in the San Luis Valley of Colorado 1883-1983*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: Adobe Press, 1982. 49.

Sanford

Sanford, named in honor of Silas Sanford Smith, was surveyed in 1885 but platted later by Sanford Town Co. and finally incorporated in 1892.229 More has been written about Sanford in the body of this paper, but the following is an interesting story told by Harry Thomas about the social hall. Thomas who grew up in Sanford described the “Red Brick Social Hall” in Sanford as the first public building lit by gas and how it worked.

"A metal water tank was located in one corner. When chunks of carbide were dumped into the water, an acetylene gas was formed which piped about the ceilings and down through the pipes to which the burners were attached. If the lights began to dim slightly, the janitor, Andrew Rasmussen, would put more carbide in the tank and the brilliant lights would come on again."\textsuperscript{230}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{home_in_sanford.jpg}
\caption{Home in Sanford, Colorado}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{230} Thomas, "History of Sanford." Thomas provides an excellent account of early buildings in Sanford including the Relief Society Building, Post Office, the sandstone rock church house dedicated in 1907, a 1897 two-story brick schoolhouse, and a rock jail.
Figure 38 Sanford, Colorado 1895
The above image was taken looking north on Main Street. The home in the far upper left was still standing with alterations in 2012. Image source: Sanford History Museum.

Figure 39 O.T. Davis photo of Sanford Stone Church
Taken in 1920, this photo of the Sanford Mormon Sunday School with the Stone church House built in 1907. Photographer: O.T. Davis. Image source: Sanford, Colorado History Museum.
Figure 40 Sanford Stone Church
Figure 41 Sanford Band, 1892

Left to right top row: JA. Crowther, James Jensen, B. Peterson, Peter Peterson, Burt Whitney and Ira B. Whitney (woman). Bottom row left to right: Orlando Funk, J. Frank Crowther, Lars Mortensen, and William O. Crowther. The men in the back are not identified, neither is the child in the drum. Image source: Sanford, Colorado History Museum.

Figure 42 Sanford May Day celebration.

Women and girls are shown in Sanford, Colorado during a May Day celebration. Image source: Sanford, Colorado History Museum.
Notes on Building Materials

As more and more Mormon families arrived, they purchased additional land. An article in the *San Luis Valley Courier* asserted that the coming of Mormons was a
valuable addition to the county due to their knowledge of farming and irrigation, and The
Denver Times reported in August of 1897.\textsuperscript{231}

Band of Mormons Will Lease State Lands. Improvement of their land
increased both the demand for open land and the bid price, the sale of which
increased state school funds reportedly to greater than any other state in the
Union. The Denver Times article reported that the San Luis Valley promised to
be the future granary of the state.\textsuperscript{232}

Each individual family tended to their own home building and, given resources
available, to them, their homes varied. But regardless of the quality or size of their home,
each family planted a garden.

No sooner were the new dwellings made habitable than were young shade
trees planted and fruit trees and berries of various varieties were set out. It was
not long until the gardens which produced all the various varieties of vegetables
for the year’s family necessities added delicious fruit to the family storehouse.\textsuperscript{233}

When Pinkney Head, a member of the Catawba tribe arrived in 1887 his family he
acquired a town lot on the west side of Sanford and ‘Being Scarse of means” with the
help of his wife, made a dugout for the family to live in through the winter. The
following fall, Pinkney had put together enough funds to purchase 7,000 bricks from S.C.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{231} San Luis Valley Courier. Mar 13, 1889: page 1. \\
\textsuperscript{232} Denver Times. "New Colony, Band of Mormons Will Lease State Lands." August 9,
1897: 8. \\
\textsuperscript{233} Interview by Charles E. Gibson Jr. Alamosa, Cnejos and Costilla Counties Pamphlet
\end{flushright}
Berthelson and again, with the help of his wife, built a home “14 By 20 with 6 windows and 3 Doors one chimney.”

The bricks Pinkney purchased were commonly referred to as Mormon bricks. Kiln-fired they were burnt-red in color, but smaller than modern brick and produced at a brickyard on the outskirts of Richfield. The brickyard went out of business in the early 1900s but buildings, such as the Richfield Mormon Church, built with the bricks remain.

Alonzo Canty, another Catawba Indian, had an adobe-making machine. Canty mechanized the process with a contraption, three feet square, resembling, “an old fashioned cement mixer” pulled by a horse tethered to a middle pole, activating finger blades of various sizes and lengths to mix the mud. When the consistency was ready to pour, it was released from an opening and poured into molds. “Behind this box, they had a pit of mud. One man would shovel mud in the box. The horse would go around and around, and turn the pole with the fingers on it.”

____________________


235 Quinn Morgan, grandson of John Morgan, relayed this information in a March 1995 interview to Judy Martin Canty and Forrest Martin. The recording is in the procession of Judy martin Canty.

236 Quinn Morgan interview.
Mormon Agriculture in the San Luis Valley

The reward to Mormon farmers in the Valley was expressed with glowing terms in a letter from Silas Sanford Smith to the Denver Tribune. “…the soil yielding plenteous harvests to the husbandman as a reward for his labor.”237 Under the leadership of Silas Sanford Smith who came to the colonies in 1880, the colonies continued to achieve agricultural success and the dream was at least partially true as seen in consistent growth of the communities. 238 “…the Mormons in the San Luis grew the largest crop of potatoes the past season that we have ever yet heard of. Three hundred bushels from the acre was not uncommon among them. Their fields were generally small, but they cultivated thoroughly. These Mormons are good farmers, peaceable and law abiding.”239

In 1898, potatoes sold at $1.50 to $1.75 per hundred.

“Farming has always been a risky uncertain, and sometimes heartbreaking business”240 In speaking of the Mormon farmers, Smith acknowledged that the climate was uncertain in the Valley and early frost was inevitable, but that the farmers understood

------------------------

237 The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver.)

238 To avoid confusion with Joseph Smith who was Silas Sanford Smith’s first cousin, Silas will be referred to by his first name.

239 San Luis Valley Courier. Alamosa, CO, January 8, 1890. 3. (Farm Notes reprinted from Field and Farm).

their business and had no difficulty raising their crops. He told the *Denver Tribune* they had farm enclosures,

One of 900 acres, another of 640 acres, and another of 2,200 acres, as well as many small ones. We averaged fifty bushels of oats to the acre and twenty-five of wheat. Potatoes and garden vegetables that we raise are equal to any in the State.  

Water remained scarce in the Valley. Today, like then, black clouds can engulf the bald Sangre de Cristo peaks to the north but raindrops only pockmark the soil before dissipating, leaving little moisture to secure the hopes of farmers for a good crop. In 1890, residents in the town of Eastdale constructed two reservoirs but the Costilla Estates Land Company forced Eastdale Mormons to sell their water rights and the community failed to benefit from the reservoirs they had built.

The Scandinavians were experienced in irrigation and knowledge of agricultural practices at high altitudes. Their farming skills were likely learned in Denmark, but irrigation knowledge may have been perfected in Utah. Mormons in the Salt Lake Valley practiced irrigation methods that were similar in design to Spanish irrigation systems. Before settling in Utah, battalion members on the march to Santa Fe made note of the irrigation canals they saw along their route and may have implemented the same in the Utah communities. Following is a description of what they recorded.

Canals for irrigation purposes all along the banks of the river. Some of them several miles in length. They conveyed water to the farms, or as they were called in that country, ranchos. There being little or no rain during the growing

\[241\] *The Denver Tribune*. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver)
season, the water was made to flow over the ground until it was sufficiently saturated, and then shut off until needed again for the same purpose.242

It may be only an interesting speculation, but the Utah Mormon may have adapted the Spanish system of irrigation thirty years earlier in the Salt Lake and Sanpete Valleys that was later also implemented by the San Luis colonizers. Smith described irrigation in the Valley for a Denver Tribune reporter. “There are three irrigating canals out of the Conejos, and three more are being dug out to be supplied by the Rio Grande. Our farms are enclosures, on account of irrigation.”243

During the construction of the main channel of one of the ditches, they discovered that the Conejos River that fed it had been dammed up preventing the required water supply to flow into the ditch. Jensen was in charge of the colonies at that time and he sent a call out for volunteers to break the dam. Alvin T. Steinel describes the event in History of Agriculture in Colorado. “Every man in the ditch camp jumped into the river and got busy with pick and shovel, tearing out the obstruction. They expected trouble over taking the law into their own hands, but none developed. They got water to their crops in time and threshed out 400 bushels of well-ripened grain in the fall of 1879.244


243 The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver)

244 Steinel, History of Agriculture in Colorado, 403.
Steinel goes on to acknowledge that Mormons helped change the generally unsuccessful methods of raising grain in the Valley. Earlier residents had accepted that grain could not be raised at high altitudes and therefore, they unvaryingly put their grain in on moist bottomland. This practice allowed the grain to continue growing into September and early frost often damaged the crops. The experience of the colonists in farming at an altitude of 6,000 feet in Utah switched the practice of growing wheat throughout the region to putting in it sandy loam and gravelly land, both better suited to maturing wheat and oats.\textsuperscript{245}

Mormon wheat was piled in round stacks that shed water from rain and snow that might arrive before the grain could be thrashed. This practice was introduced by a Dane names Carl Fredericksen.

As the bundles were thrown from the wagon to the stack, Brother Fredericksen, on his knees, would hop around the top of the stack, placing each bundle in its proper position and placing his weight on each one to insure that the heads would be higher than the stems and that the bundles would lie like shingles on a roof.\textsuperscript{246}

The success of colonies agriculture projects attracted attention from C.A. Parks of Kansas City, a promoter of a scheme to colonize southwestern Colorado with Dutch and Scandinavian settlers. Denver capitalists were solicited and as a point of promotion he exclaimed,

\textsuperscript{245} Steinel, \textit{History of Agriculture in Colorado}, 402.
\textsuperscript{246} Thomas, "History of Sanford."
The Mormon colony, south of Alamosa, should not go unmentioned, for these people have shown conclusively how to farm in that valley successfully and profitable. They make allotments of forty acres to each family and cultivate these small tracts thoroughly and obtain the best results. It is a gratifying spectacle, and no one should pass through that section of the state without visiting this colony of thrifty Mormons. You will not observe any polygamous habits among them, but you will see every substantial evidence of industry, frugalit,y thrift and prosperity, and the steady accumulation of wealth. These people own their lands unencumbered, ‘mortgages’ and ‘interest coupons’ are obsolete terms with them. They also own the canal that furnishes water to irrigate their farms. The lands of this colony could not be purchased at the present time for $100 per acre.247

Agriculture in the Valley was not limited to commodities related to irrigation. Production of honey in Conejos County began in the early 1880s and is recorded in the following interview:

Jacob Spiker, of Manassa, collected a few stands and his success was noted by his neighbors, among whom were Jacob Nance and George Sowards who undertook bee culture on a larger scale and in the years that followed increased their colony to 600 stands, from which they furnished a local supply and found a market for their honey in the neighboring towns in the San Luis Valley. The superiority of their product, from alfalfa and sweet clover, gave it wider fame

and attracted the attention of some of the nation’s largest producers who established themselves in this favorable environment.248

Silas Sanford Smith

Jensen was instructed to return to Manti, Utah. “I said goodbye to my brother, Louis Mikel Pedersen, then took my daughter, Mary, and my son, Marinus, and we started on our traveling to Conejos.”249 The date was September 2, 1878 and Jensen would not return to Colorado until twenty-two years later. Peterson remained with his wife and six children.

Church leaders sent Silas Sanford Smith to the colonies to continue the work of Hans Jensen in community development and in matters of the Church. At eighteen years old, Silas had experienced his first military campaign between Utah Mormons and Indians. In 1864 a band of Indians wintering at Gunnison, Utah had experienced a high death rate among them. The Indians concluded the reason was that Mormons had written their names “on slips of paper and sent them to Satan.250 Chief Black Hawk or Nuch, his Ute name, determined retaliation was needed to stop the sickness among his tribe and in

248 Interview by Charles E. Gibson Jr. Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla Counties Pamphlet 349, Doc. 1-49 State Historical Society of Colorado, (1933-34): 149, 140. The interview continues and states that “In 1930 there were approximately 5,000 stands of bees in the county and the annual production of honey was approximately fifteen cars. (Cars refer to the number of railroad cars filled when transporting product to outside markets.)

249 Jensen, "Journal of Hans Jensen, 139.

February of that year, informed an Indian interpreter in Manti of “what the Indians were going to do when the snow went off. They would kill the Mormons and eat Mormon beef.”251 President Brigham Young’s “life-long motto and policy toward the redmen was…” “Feed them and not fight them”.252

Indians launched a continuous sweep of the southern valleys of Utah and Smith was active in defending many of the reoccurring raids. After ten battles and killing forty Indians, Smith was ready to step aside as captain of the local volunteers and live quietly with his family in Paragonah, Utah where he established a Mormon colony in 1857.

Smith had two wives and sixteen children, he did not engage in plural marriage. Married thirteen years to his first Clarinda Ricks, she died in 1864 leaving him with nine motherless children. Two years later he married a Sarah Ann Ricks, Clarinda’s sister and together they had six additional children.253 After the Indian wars, he engaged in farming and some mining, but as first cousin to Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Latter Day Saints, he remained always ready to serve when called by the presidency of the church.254

252 Gottfredson, History of Indian Depredations in Utah, Introduction, 28.
In 1880, was presiding as Mission president over the three new Colorado settlements, Manassa, Richfield and Ephraim, Smith wrote in his diary on Monday, June 14, 1880, “Started for Conejos. [County in Colorado where a colony is being located]. Party consisted of James Lewis, P.D. Lyman, and myself. Drove 10 miles to where the road leaves the river and camped.”

Smith crossed over the San Juan range at Grader’s Camp at the head of Pine Creek and on Friday July 2, 1880, reached Manassa. The following day he rode out to look at the town site of Ephraim, saw the Conejos River, looked at a grist mill in San Luis and from Fort Garland, took a freight train to Alamosa. “Stayed at Alamosa and consummated a trade with Judge Easterday for his grist mill on the Calabra [sic] for the sum of $3000.00.” Smith noted in his diary that the purchase included several Mexican houses.

The next day Smith met with Major Lafayette Head in Conejos and within three days of his arrival, Smith had assessed the needs of the colonies, made connections with important local people and paved the way for economic stability. He was also recognized at the state level. In February of 1884, the Denver Tribune reported he was “in the city for the purpose of buying land in Conejos County for his people.”

256 The considerable distance between Manassa and the mill in San Luis proved to be a problem. The mill operated successfully for five years before being moved to Manassa.
257 Smith, Silas Sanford Smith 1830, 2.
258 The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884.
He remained during the rest of his life in the Valley serving for many years as President of the San Luis Stake of Zion. Residents to honor of Smith when they learned that another Colorado town already had the name of Alma renamed the town of Sanford, originally named Alma.

Figure 44 Silas Sanford Smith
CHAPTER VII.
CATAWBA INDIANS IN THE SAN LUIS VALLEY

Catawba History in South Carolina

Members of the Catawba Nation from South Carolina were late arrivals to the Mormon colony in the Valley. Five families, together of which, were a substantial percentage of Catawbas, moved to the San Luis Valley in Colorado between 1886 and 1890. With the passage of years, recognition of the Mormon Catawbas in Colorado has been overshadowed by the more prevalent historic accounts of southern states converts. Yet, a historical account of the Catawbas as Mormons in Conejos County, Colorado during the 1890s, weaves interesting color into the tapestry story of the San Luis Valley Mormon colonies. Without inclusion of their story and circumstances, historical context and accuracy would be lacking.

The Catawba people reportedly first met Spanish explorers in 1521; the same year Spanish conquistadores marched into Mexico City. Then known as Cofitachiqui, their lands covered most of modern South Carolina, central North Carolina and north to an area around modern Danville, Virginia. In 1701 Lawson author of History of Carolina, 1714, visited them and spoke of them as a “powerful nation… and their villages were very thick”.

In 1840 South Carolina signed a treaty with the Catawbas at Nations Ford, near Rock Hill, South Carolina. Referred to as the Treaty of Nations Ford stipulations promised that South Carolina would pay the Catawbas $5,000 if they left their homeland. Most left to join the Cherokee, but the two tribes did not get along and when South Carolina failed to make payment as negotiated by treaty, the Catawbas were left with no homeland. “By 1847, South Carolina Governor David Johnson said, “They are, in effect dissolved.” Today, their 640-acre reservation is located at Rock Hill, York County, South Carolina.

During Dwight D. Eisenhower’s presidency in 1959, the Bureau of Indian Affairs removed federal recognition of the Catawba Tribe. In August 1993, Congress passed legislation providing for settlement of land claims with the Catawba Tribe and restoration of the federal trust relationship with the Tribe. Most Catawba people residing in South Carolina regained tribal enrollment status. During the same period, South Carolina

263 “The Catawbas decided to terminate their tribal status and give a cash or land settlement to every member. This occurred through an act of Congress on September 1959, ending the legal existence of the Catawbas, though certainly not the practical existence of the tribe.” Reprinted from Watson, Ian. Catawba Indian Genealogy. Series, the Department of Anthropology, State University of New YTork at Geneseo, Geneseo: Geneseo Foundation, 1995, 113, 12.
reconciled with the Catawba tribe for nonpayment of tribal lands as had been specified in the 1840 Treaty of Nation Fords.265

Descendants of Catawba people, who relocated to the San Luis Valley, refer to themselves as the Western Catawba. Many retain family and friendship ties to South Carolina however, the Western Catawbas were excluded for the 1993 settlement with the federal government.266

“The 1993 criteria said members had to be lineal descendants of tribe members listed on the 1959 roll. But at the time that census was done, the Western Catawbas had been settled here (Colorado) for more than 60 years.”267

**Mormon Catawbas**

When Mormon missionaries Wiley, Cragan, Joseph Willey, Robinson and Bingham came to the area around Rock Hill, South Carolina in 1883, the tribe had little or no centralized leadership at the time; members worked small cotton growing plots, dependency on employment by nearby Anglos was a necessity and alcoholism and family stability were major concerns.268 Missionaries stressed to converts that they must abstain

268 Martin, Judy Canty. "Genealogy of the Western Catawba: Genealogy of the 5 families And Those who joined them In the West." 1998, Preface.
from alcohol, live moral lives and respect the institution of marriage. Genealogists Judy Canty Martin, a Catawba descendant describes the relationships between the Catawba people and some of their Anglo neighbors. “This caused the white men great distress, their playground for infidelity on their white wives could come to an end if the Mormon Church succeeded in converting the ‘savages.’”

Charles Hudson further discussed the above situation in his examination of social and cultural relationships of the Catawbas compared with an external history of their contact with white populations.

The whites just didn’t want the Mormons to get established. Some Indian women had children by white men. They came in here to find the Indian women because they couldn’t get out and ramble. That was the only reason the whites came in here. They soon found that they couldn’t keep the Indians from becoming Mormons. I don’t think any of the whites around here belong.

I believe the above exhibits that, in South Carolina, the level of persecution Catawba people experienced was grounded in the relationships with their Anglo neighbors rather than in anti-Mormon sentiments. The Anglo expectations of them as Indians who they could and did take advantage of were more of a problem than was their Mormonism.

269 Martin. "Genealogy of the Western Catawba, Preface.
270 Martin. "Genealogy of the Western Catawba, Preface.
Joseph Willey, a Mormon missionary to the Catawba, quoted in his diary a notice from local citizens demanding that, based on the Mormon practice of polygamist doctrine, the missionaries leave the area and discontinue preaching to the Catawbas or there would be consequences.\textsuperscript{272} Canty points out that Frank Collins, one of the whites who fathered Catawba children and reportedly was the father of Harriet Harris’ children was one of the citizens who signed the notice.\textsuperscript{273}

John Morgan was acquainted with the Catawbas and acting as an agent more than a missionary he endeavored to secure assistance and made the necessary arrangements to bring Catawba converts to ‘Zion’ in Colorado. Referring to them as the powerful Catawba Tribe rather than Lamanites or Indians, he wrote:

\begin{quote}
Among those that the Elders have come in contact with are the remnants of the once numerous and powerful Catawba Tribe of Indians now numbering only 93 souls. They live on a reservation consisting of 660 acres of land and receive an annuity of $800 per annum from the State of South Carolina.\textsuperscript{274} About two-thirds of the tribe embraced the Gospel with very fair prospects of all or nearly all being baptized. They seem earnest and zealous and are endeavoring to make good Latter-Day-Saints.\textsuperscript{275}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{272} Joseph Willey’s Journal, June 6, 1883.
\textsuperscript{273} Martin. "Genealogy of the Western Catawba, 161.
\textsuperscript{274} The per annum amount of $800 was provided to the tribe as a whole and divided among members in varying amounts. In her genealogical publications, Canty provides an accounting of the amounts some of the tribes members received during the 1880s.
\end{flushleft}
Missionary Elder Willey wrote that “the Indians called us there [sic] preachers and the white people called us the Indian preachers.” Willey married five couples on a single day who had been living together but not married. In the same day he wrote, “. . we eat corn bread and buttermilk for the wedding supper. It was very cold and stormy.” James Goodwin Patterson and his wife Elizabeth Missouri White were among those who married and celebrated with corn bread and buttermilk.

By June 1, 1884, the South Carolina Catawba branch had thirty-one members; twenty-five of them were from the Catawba tribe. By November of that year the branch had been disbanded because of persecution and most Catawbas physically moved to Spartanburg, South Carolina. Not all animosity against them came from Anglos. “Some of the lamnites [sic] was the starter of getting up the mobs to Run off the Elders from our minds.”

276 Martin, "Genealogy of the Western Catawba, 3.
277 Joseph Willey’s Journal, June 6, 1883.
278 Catawba naming customs were complex. James took his mother’s surname; his father’s was Chappell. Some historic records refer to James and his brothers and sisters as Chappell. Confusing research efforts further is the fact that some Catawba children in the same family take their father’s surname, others their mother’s. It is helpful for research purposes when both surnames were used. Author Judy Canty documents that her Catawba ancestor John Alonzo Canty took his mother’s previous husband’s surname. From the extensive genealogical research she has done, Canty concludes that no system was used exclusively.
279 Early Mormon records including baptisms, confirmation, marriages and deaths are a goldmine of data specifically related to genealogy, and are helpful in verifying dates, facts and names. These records are available on microfilm from The Family History Centers of the LDS Church. The file #0001985 identifies records.
Around the first of the year, things appeared to settle and in February they returned to their Catawba Nation lands. It should be noted that during the mid-1800s, Catawba people, not only those who had joined the Mormon Church but others as well, had increasingly become interested in leaving their South Carolina home, “especially since they had no land left, having leased it all to whites”. Many desired to move to North Carolina and join the Eastern Cherokees. During this time, the Catawba wandered back and forth through North and South Carolina. “At one point that year, all but four Catawba men (John Joe, Sam Scott, Allen Harris, and David Harris) were in North Carolina with the Eastern Cherokees”.  

On August 31, 1886, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake shook South Carolina and “Ezekiel Stone Wiggins known as the Ottawa Prophet, began circulating the rumor that a second powerful disaster would end the world on September 29th at two o’clock in the afternoon.” In a history of Rock Hill, the author wrote of the rumbling sound, low and like thunder and the houses swayed. He continues, “Many of the people were sure they heard Gabriel’s horn when the steam whistle of the Old Mill was blown.” The Hornellsville Weekly Tribune reported on September 6, 1886, “One of our citizens, who

282 Watson, Catawba Indian Genealogy, 7.
is a Second Adventist, thinks the recent earthquake is an indication of the second coming of Christ and the end of the world is near. He had better get his ascension robe ready.”

Wiggins’ prophecy never came to pass but he had believers in a panic. It’s not directly documented that the Catawbas were in a panic, but Patterson’s young daughter was five years old at the time and remembers how the earth rumbled, farm equipment rattled and the family thought more “anti-Mormon mobs were coming.” It’s entirely possible that the earthquake shook them into making final plans to trek west.

**Pinkney Henry Head**

As a new convert in 1884, Pinkney heard that Mormons were going to Colorado and with the intention of joining them; he quit work “to fix up to go” and walked ten miles to Mortinsville, South Carolina. His plans were interrupted by a letter received in Mortinsville informing him his mother was “sick bad off no life expected for her” and requesting that he come see her one more time. Redirecting his travels to his mother’s home, he traveled non-stop for three days, walking and jumping rides on the rails. On the last night, he traveled on the “Railroade until about one houre Before Day”. Exhausted, he made a little fire in a nearby wooded area and slept for twenty-four hours. “I awak next morning about Daylight and starte on to the Catawba Nation. I call at some fine _________

---


286 Martin, "Genealogy of the Western Catawba”, 39.

houses along the Railroad for something to eat and at last I got a little to eat.” When arriving at his mother’s home, he found her still ill but feeling better, but it was too late to resume his plans to go west with other Mormons. ‘Going to Zion’ would have to wait for Pinkney but when the time came, he would not be traveling as a lone Catawba man, but as a married man with a child and in the company of his extended family.

The consequence of Pinkney’s mother’s being ill resulted in the mantra of ‘every member a missionary’ catching up with Pinkney and he was sent as a missionary to North Carolina to teach the Cherokees about Mormonism. “Me and Brother Alonzo Canty received a letter from Elder W.E. Bingham stating that our names had been suggested that we was worthy young men to take a mission among the Cherokee Lamintes [sic] …He told us that we could gather our crops before we started…”288 One Sunday at the end of a week when they had walked long distances and stayed in the woods where they were so cold they could not sleep, they met John Walking Stick who took them to a Cherokee meeting. “They preach all in their own langue we could not understand what they said.”289

Persecution of Mormon missionaries was frequent in the Southern States Mission. John Morgan recorded an 1885 incident involving missionaries at the home of Pinkney’s mother, Sarah Tims and her husband John Alexander Tims.290 Pinkney recorded the

289 Head, "Personal Journal of Pinckney H. Head" Entry from December 18, 1885.
290 See Appendix C. for another account of Mormon missionaries being attached in the south.
same event in his diary and noted that Elder Cragen and Elder, F.A. Fraughton, were secretly staying in the home as a refuge.

On the 25 night of May they was 32 men came on the Elders at our house about 10 o'clock. Came running up to the house all with arms. … Elder Cragen made his escape out of the north doors. … And Elder FA had no chance to get out and the mobs came in about 8 of them and caught Elder FA fraughton and hid gun away one mile and gave him 40 lashes with hickory switches and turned him aloose charging him to leave the country the next day. … They both staid in the woods the rest of the night and next morning Came to the house and got breakfast and appointed meeting that day … they was one couple married and baptized, namely James Harris and family. 291

While traveling to the Cherokee Nation as a missionary, Pinkney experienced an element of racism along with anti-Mormonism. It was the practice of missionaries to stop at homes along the way for food and shelter. Near Yorkville, he was given a place to stay by hired help. The next morning when the owner of the house discovered they were Mormons, he “Began to curse and spring about saying that we had to leave his place or he would mak us go saying the mormans was Bad enough But the Indians was worse so we left.”292 A similar viewpoint was printed in the Rock Hill Herald on February 19, 1885. “A Raleigh dispatch says three Mormon elders are preaching in Rutherford County, N.C. near the South Carolina line… We do not think it is true that the Mormons have any

converts with them from this section. They may be accompanied by a few of the Catawba Indians and if so, they are welcome to them.”

With Zion ever on his mind Pinkney completed his mission, married Martha Patterson and within a year, raised $30 for his trip, with his wife, to Colorado. His diary entry on November 28, 1887 does not express the joy Jensen had ten years earlier when he first viewed the Valley, but his description did give credit to ‘Zion’ with his following diary entry exclaiming, “arrived to the “Sanlouis Stake of Zion”.

“left Spartanburg Co. SC at am bound fore Zion” and on March 5, 1887, “I then arrived to the Sanlouis Stake of Zion with a company of 140 Saints in which my mother and wife and one child Step father and Father in law with two of his smaller children all making 8 Soles.”

Pinkney traveled the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad to Pueblo with his family and that of James Patterson. They were the first Catawba families in Manassa, Colorado but within the year, Pinkney moved his family to Sanford where he wrote his diary, “I like the place well when I first Saw it.”

According to Mormon doctrine, “If a man and woman have been married civilly, their marriage will end at death. They can, however, enter a Mormon temple and be sealed together so that their marriage will be ‘bound’ on both earth and in heaven.”

293 February 19, 1885; Rock Hill Herald (Pull out copy and UPDATE, FIND PAGE #)
Pinkney traveled with his wife and two daughters to Mormon Temple in Logan, Utah to be married a second time.

“I had to go to the Cort House and Buy my licens Before I could Bee married in the temple for time and all Eternity all so had our two little girls Seal to us.”

Figure 45 Second Marriage Certificate for Pinkney and Martha Head

Pinkney H. Head and Martha Patterson were first married in South Carolina in February 1886. They were married again in Logan, Utah in a Mormon Temple ceremony, sealing them with their two daughters, according to Mormon practice, for time and all eternity. Image source: Descendants of Pinkney Head, Farmington, New Mexico.

James Goodwin Patterson

Patterson was the first Catawba man to be converted and baptized in 1884, and after serving for a few years as president of the South Carolina Rock Hill Branch of the Mormon Church, he was one of the first Catawba to move his family west to “Zion.” He arrived in Manassa, Colorado in March of 1885 with his daughter and her husband (Pinkney Head), two younger children and additional members of Heads immediate family. “The 2 young ones got to go then because they didn’t have to pay train fare for them.”298 Later, after he found work and when funds were available, he sent for his wife, Elizabeth and their other children who joined him in Los Cerritos, Colorado.

Active in the Church, James served as President of the Los Cerritos Branch.299 By 1900, the Los Cerritos area was sparsely populated and the Patterson family moved to Sanford, Colorado to establish their permanent life-long home. Patterson was described by his granddaughter as “a small man with a big mustache and always wearing the same hat creased in four ways.”300 His parents were Martha Patterson, a Catawba woman and Laban Chappell, an Anglo man. His mixed parentage was similar to that of the other Catawba men and women, who came to Colorado.301

298 Martin, "Genealogy of the Western Catawba", 4.
299 Andrew Jensen, Church Chronology. A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT, Deseret News, 1899, 448.
300 Martin, "Genealogy of the Western Catawba", 4.
301 See Appendix D. for a list of Catawba families that moved west.
Both Head and Patterson had been appointed in positions of leadership while in South Carolina and again in Colorado. This recently came to light as somewhat unusual and perhaps contrary to the same circumstances for American Indians from other tribes during the 1800s and early 1900s. At a 2012 Western History Association conference, a panel titled “Latter-day Saint Indigenous Communities and Lamanites of the West”, chaired by Philip Lee Smith, three papers were presented on the topic. Consensus from the panelists indicted that from their research, respectively on the Navajo, Akimel Au-Authm and Xalychidom Pipaash (Arizona tribes) and Polynesian communities it was typical for Anglo men and women to served as bishops, relief society presidents, councilors and other positions of authority during the early years of Church history. It was not until the 1940’s that Indian people began to be placed in positions of authority within Church hierarchy.302

302 Presenters in this panel at the Western History Association conference in Denver, Colorado on Sunday, October 7, 2012 were, Farina King, Utah Valley University; Dominic F. Martinez, University of Colorado Denver; and D.L Turner, Arizona State University.
Figure 46  James Goodwin Patterson and Missouri White Patterson
James Goodwin Patterson and his wife Elizabeth Missouri White. Image source: private collection of Cynthia A. Walsh, great granddaughter of the Patterson’s.

Figure 47 Home of James and Elizabeth Missouri White
This was the Sanford, Colorado home of James Goodwin Patterson and his wife Elizabeth Missouri White. Image source: private collection of Cynthia A. Walsh, great granddaughter of the Patterson’s.

John Alonzo Canty

The twin children of South Carolina Indian Agent Thomas Whitesides were born on November 9, 1858. Fannie, his daughter took her Anglo father’s surname Whitesides, but her twin brother John Alonzo became known as John Alonzo Canty. Their mother, Eliza Scott was Catawba and prior to having children with Whitesides, had been married
to William Franklin Canty. With half brothers going by the last name of Canty, John Alonzo apparently preferred the name as well. Canty was a Mormon missionary to the Cherokees with Pinkney Head and when he returned home, he married Georgia Henrietta Patterson (Rhett) on February 17, 1886, the same day Pinkney married Rhett’s sister, Martha Patterson.\textsuperscript{303}

\textsuperscript{303} Joseph Willey Diary, Reprinted from: Martin, "Genealogy of the Western Catawba", 87.
CHAPTER VIII.
MORMON RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUTSIDERS

When Mormon settlers first arrived in the Valley, as previously discussed, individual Hispanics sponsored them with provisions, shelter and land acquisitions, and generally welcomed them as neighbors. James Stewart found a “Mexican stockman who was willing to sell his ranch that included a “good adobe house…and 120 acres of land” for only thirty-five dollars. Stewart had no money but offered a note. The Mexican rancher agreed provided there was a co-signer. Stewart had just met Major Lafayette Head who reluctantly signed the note.304 Within the week, he purchased another farm with a note of fifty dollars and he was able to also borrow farm implements.305

The Boulder Camera reported in 1895,

There was, in general, and especially in the earlier years of the Mormon colonization, a kindly and friendly feeling between the Mormons and their Mexican neighbors that may not exist today. The Saints were grateful at finding a peaceful and even helpful welcome extended to them by the Mexicans who, for their part, were equally pleased to encounter a group of Americans who did not rush to take advantage of their innocence in business matters.306 Perhaps both groups were seen as being outside the mainstream society of the times resulting in binding an informal allegiance between them. Arthur C. Johnson

304 Jones, “James Thompson Lisonbee”, 77.
305 Stewart, Settlements in Colorado, 2.
explained the population mix in southern Colorado when he wrote, “Mexicans and Mormons abound in great numbers, also many other curious people – the peculiarities of all of whom I will narrate in another letter.”

A nonchalant attitude of ‘take ‘em or leave ‘em” also existed between Mormons and their neighbors. Ben Romero, Sr. worked as a campero, managing sheep camps in the late 1800s when he became acquainted with Mormons. “Our attitude towards the Mormon is like the saying, “If you can’t eat what you bite, let somebody else eat it.” The Mormons were a very distinct people, although there were some that drank coffee, but we had very friendly relationships.”

On the other hand, Romero related the following story of competitiveness between Hispanic and Mormon sheep shearers.

The company that I became more acquainted with was a company in which the most dexterous Mormon was with, but he was the head of the sheep herders, his name was Lou Larson. And he would come from Utah with escuadrillas of shearers. I witnessed you know, how the Raza is, when they learned that Lou Larson was the champion of the Mormons in shearing, they then looked for someone among all the Raza, among the Spanish speaking in Taos, one who was superior, who could beat Lou Larson, and they found him who was…Lutero Santistevan from Walsenberg. Lutero Santistevan could beat any one of them…and I saw him, I saw Santistevan shearing, I was in the same group

309 The English translation of escuadrillas as used by Ben Romero, Sr. in his interview, is a squadron or a number of men traveling together between sheep camps to shear sheep. There was frequent competition among shearers, even within a single escuadrilla.
and I liked to see him shear wool. Lou Larson beat my compadre Santistevan to push through more sheep down the shoot, he sheared 200 sheep, also Santistevan sheared 200 sheep, but when the judges went to see the sheep, the work they had done, my compadre Lutero beat him because the sheep, his sheep were cleaner of wool and Lou Larson’s still had a lot of wool on them, and this way, Lutero beat him. For us it was a proud act, this was the last time that they had this competition that I saw.310

Business affairs were a mixed matter. T.C. Henry, proprietor of the T.C. Henry Irrigation and Land Agent, had attempted to induce eastern emigration on his tracts of land in the San Luis Valley, but his endeavors failed. He saw potential in working with Mormons who were already establishing settlements and in 1890 was quoted, “I will do all I can for the Mormons who come to the valley. If a poor man applies to me for a piece of land and has not the money to pay for it, I will take his note or a mortgage on the property.”311 The reporter’s tart response gives indication of attitudes held by newspapers throughout the state. “Mr. Henry in his anxiety to gobble up notes and mortgages has probably deceived himself about the Mormons.”312

Sports enthusiasts also made comment on Mormons in southern Colorado, or at least one journalist reporting on the condition of fishing around Conejos did. In 1888, Sports Afield ran a story titled “Trout Extermination.” Although serious in nature, the reporter furnished the following article that could be considered humorous if you picture

310 Romero, interview, 16-17.
312 T.C. Henry and the Mormons, Aspen Daily Chronicle, September 10, 1890, 2.
an image of Mormons holding pitchforks and spoiling the fine fishing conditions available in southern Colorado.

The Conejos River rises in the San Juan Mountains and flowing on through Conejos Count, in the extreme southern part of the State, finally blends its waters with those of the Rio Grand… Now what is the condition of affairs down there? It’s the same sad story of extermination that one hears of many of our more widely known fishing waters. The trout in descending the river in the fall naturally run into the irrigating ditches. …There is a large Mormon population down there, as well as more recent settlers, and in the fall it is a common occurrence to see them throwing great quantities of the finest trout out of those ditches with pitchforks.313

The above two articles reflect that relationships between neighbors may have been more harmonious than reported by journalists. Mr. Henry, for example, was content with his business propositions as long as he was paid. The reporter on the other hand, printed his contrary opinion that Mr. Henry probably deceived himself about the Mormons. Most residents in the region had not previously met Mormons and hostilities leveled against them in the south and in Scandinavia had not preceded them to the Valley. However, animosity did follow in the form of the printed word when it was negative columns were picked up by newspapers as editorials. The *Leadville Daily Herald* ran the following in 1884, “Some time ago the *Salt Lake Tribune* published the statement of persons who had been deceived by the misrepresentation of Mormon elders and induced them to move into San Luis Park, where they were in a suffering and destitute

__________________________

313 "Trout Extermination." *Fort Morgan Times*. Fort Morgan, CO, December 8, 1888. 3.
condition.”314 The article continued with a quote from the *Florence Gazette* (Alabama) claiming the southern paper reiterated every word from the *Tribune* in the following report.

...These misguided people, as they one and all assort, were induced to leave happy, if humble, homes, by the persuasion and deceit of these Mormon missionaries now prowling over our fair southern land, and whose deceits involves roasted hickory switches and running rope nooses. When once located in Colorado, the head devils of Mormonism undertook to sell their soles and meeting with resistance left them to their cruel fate.

These deceived people are said to be in an almost destitute condition, ... of which should not be lost sight of in the desire to punish the deceivers.315

Rural newspapers appeared more accepting of Mormons in their midst. In 1889, the *San Luis Valley Courier* printed, “A great many of the better class of Mormons are leaving Utah and settling in this valley, mostly in the vicinity of Manassa. These people are a valuable addition to this country as they understand thoroughly the problem of farming by irrigation.”316

Counter to the *San Luis Valley Courier* view, the *Daily Mining Journal* in Black Hawk, Colorado printed on April 18, 1866 “Mormons have come to a fixed determination to drive out or kill all Gentiles. Eight men have recently been assassinated,

________________________

314 *Leadville Daily Herald*. Leadville, CO, April 5, 1884. 2
315 *Leadville Daily Herald*. Leadville, CO, April 5, 1884. 2.
the *Gazette* editors with others has been notified to quit the country or fare worse by Mormons who recognize neither the laws of God nor man.”317

The *Pueblo Chieftain* printed a stance against polygamy. “The Mormons are trying to gain a foothold in San Luis Park, Colorado, and there build up a second Salt Lake. If polygamy is to be tolerated in America, let it be confined to Salt lake and Utah. The Mormons are of no benefit to any community and Colorado don’t want them. Keep them out.”318

The above articles give indication of similar content contained in numerous other publications during the eighteen hundreds with opposing views depicting them either as “a better class of Mormons”, or as, “no benefit to any community and Colorado don’t want them.”

Dissention from members occurred occasionally, and dissenters typically took their complaints to newspapers with hopes of discrediting their former Church brothers and sisters or of swindling do-gooders out of money promised to go to the good cause of helping poor Mormons in the Valley.319 Through the *Denver Tribune*, several converts from Kentucky made an appeal to the Kentucky Club of Denver providing information regarding how destitute they were with no work available to them in Conejos County.

317 Daily Mining Journal. April 18, 1866.
319 In his thesis, Flower refers to newspaper accounts written by dissenters who wished to discredit the Mormon settlements in Colorado. Source: Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 84.
When members of the Church learned what they had done, a Church official wrote in a letter to the *Tribune* the following.

If there are any Kentuckians who sanction that appeal, under the circumstances, with plenty of work within easy reach, and then would consent to wear the cast-off clothing of others, they are some worthless fellows who have been raised on wild cat whisky and never knew, or have entirely forgotten the smell of “‘ld Bourbon” – they are degenerate sons of noble sires.320

Reference to wild cat whisky compared with ‘ld (Old) Bourbon is an apt comparison, but surprising in view of the Mormon Word of Wisdom cautioning against the use of wine or strong drinks.321

In the early 1900s after Mormons had made their homes in the Valley for more than twenty-five years, evidence begin to surface of strained sentiments between Mormons and their Hispanic neighbors. Olivama Salazar de Valdez writes in *Life in Los Sauces* that she felt like an outcast attending high school in Sanford, Colorado. “The Mormon Anglo students and some of the teachers made me feel unwanted. I wasn’t treated equally. My class would hold meetings, but I was not included. Some of the students called me “Mexican Greaser.”322 Orlando Rivera, from La Jara, Colorado remembers racism in the Valley to have been ‘pretty overt,” but from his perspective, “It’s a two way thing; the Mexican-Americans in Alamosa and in the San Luis Valley, in

320 *The Denver Tribune.* "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver.)

321 Smith, *The Doctrine and Covenants,* 89-2.

general, do not care to associate with the Anglos or whatever you want to call them.”

Rivera acknowledged in a 1974 interview that generally poor Spanish-speaking people in Alamosa County might have suffered the consequences of racism. However, in Conejos County, he believed “Spanish-speaking people were the majority, or at least half of the population, many of them affluent, owning their own farms and had political positions giving them control of the political environment and giving them a stance of not caring to associate with the Anglos.”

![Image of La Jara Consolidated High School]

Figure 48 La Jara Consolidated High School

The La Jara High School, La Jara, Colorado was built 1915, People have not been identified. Image source: “Heritage West: Mormon Trail Digitization Project”, http://heritagewest.coalliance.org/items/show/59734 (Accessed October 10, 2012).


324 Rivera, "Utah Minorities".

325 Rivera, "Utah Minorities".
Polygamy and Politics

Polygamy

The 1882 Edmunds-Tucker Act declared polygamy a felony, and to preserve families against having husbands jailed, many plural wives went underground. Jensen had three wives they were not with him during his two years in the San Luis Valley. When he returned to Manti, Utah, he was careful, as other polygamists were, to avoid the eye of the law and in 1885, apparently believing the law would not molest him for his own polygamist home, or hoping that for his family’s sake they could somehow remain unknown to the law, he wrote in his diary about the persecution of polygamists. “The Law pearseguasion was kap op, and maney af the Leding man was arastet and put in the pennetancery for Coabetesion om Some Lef for Mexsico and Some for Uropa”. (In translation, “The law persecution was kept up and many of the leading men were arrested and put in the penitentiary for cohabitation and some left for Mexico and some for Europe.) 326  In 1888 however, he was arrested in Utah and pleaded guilty to charges of Cohabitation. 327  He received a minimum sentence of five months due to the fact that his last marriage had been twenty-nine years earlier and before there were laws against cohabitation. 328

Hans Jensen was jailed for polygamy. While in jail his son Marcus, who accompanied him to Colorado, was murdered in Silverton. His body was never returned to Utah. On November 13, 1888 Jensen writes in his diary, “I was photographed with Brother Westenskov and Brother Hennesen. They are not specifically identified in the above photo. Image source: Hans Jensen. "Journal of Hans Jensen 1829: One man's Faith." Translated by Jens Hansen. Compiled by Fay Rose Hansen Nickle. December 16, 1867, 146.

The Edmunds-Tucker Act passed only four years after settlement began in the Valley and as most settlers were fairly recent converts from the south, few had yet began to practice polygamy. Some polygamist families from the area relocated to Mexico. Moses Thatcher had a home in Manassa where one of his polygamist wives resided, yet
he hoped “to continue polygamy by persuading a number of Church members in the Valley to join his Mexican land schemes”.

But more common than polygamist southern families were the homes of plural wives, or ‘widows’, as they were called, of the General Authorities of the Church from Salt Lake City. Consequently General Authorities found reason to make frequent trips to the Valley, most often to officiate at conferences of the San Luis Stake. Manassa became a permanent home for many of their wives and temporary home for themselves as they traveled back and forth to Salt Lake City and perhaps other locations where they had additional underground wives. If a plural wife was caught with her children, federal officers judged it sufficient evidence to convict her husband so Manassa became a refuge for ‘widows’ as a safe haven where they were not likely to attract the attention of the marshals.

To remain unnoticed, in 1889 Emily Wells Grant, plural wife of Heber J. Grant traveled to Pueblo, with her two young daughters, escorted by another General Authority of the Church. In Pueblo, she met her husband and together they traveled the remaining way to Manassa. Emily was the third wife of Heber and they were married in May of 1884, two years after the Edmunds-Tucker Act. In earlier years, she had been


strongly opposed to plural marriage. Regardless, she married Heber after polygamy was outlawed and the day after he was married to his second wife Augusta Winters. Her choice sentenced her to a life of living underground with only infrequent visits from her husband. Heber stayed with Emily in Manassa for the better part of a month to establish her in a comfortable two-room home and when he returned to Utah, he hired a chore boy and left his mother for companionship.

Polygamist wives of other General Authorities lived in Manassa as well and when any of their husbands came to visit, they all benefited from the social events that then were planned. “When one of the husbands is in town we don’t do a thing but visit. We have a round of sociable, dinner parties and good meeting and there are so many of us here now that there is generally one or two good fellows with us.” Emily’s letters, as recorded in Walker’s article, indicate she was unhappy in Manassa and envied her sister wives, the first who remained in Salt Lake City with Heber, and the second hiding as she was but in the more exciting location of New York City. Heber was destined to travel between the three of them until government pressure eased, but it was many years before plural wives cautiously emerged from the underground. Emily eventually returned to Utah to be near her husband who became president of the Mormon Church for twenty-seven years.

332 Heber J. Grant to Dessie [Deseret Grant Boyle], March 1, 1935, Heber J. Grant Letterpress Copybook, 72:280-81, Grant Papers; and Heber J. Grant to Ray O. Wyland, December 12, 1936, Grant Letterpress Copybook, 74:532-34. Reprinted in Walker, “A Mormon “Widow” in Colorado”, 188.
333 Walker, "A Mormon "Widow" in Colorado”, 183
The Denver Tribune led a media fight against Mormons as polygamists, but the excitement was brief when the editors discovered that most of the San Luis colonists had never lived in Utah, were good at agricultural practices, law abiding citizens and had peaceable intentions. The plural wives remained quietly out of the attention of reporters. Apparently unaware that they existed, one journalist from the Tribune visited the settlements, and “fell captive to the charms of the Mormon maids and lost all his preconceived notions of the immoral tendencies of these new citizens.”334 Further in the

same article he proclaimed that he and his associates found Mormon girls had feminine
inquisitiveness and having become bewitched, expressed regret of leaving “this enticing
little place and all its charming Mormonessess.” He salutation to the girls was the
announcement that “almost thou persuades me to be a Mormon.”

Politics

A reporter asked Silas Smith for the Denver Tribune in 1884 “How about your
politics?” Smith gave the following summary.  

Our people have taken no especial interest in politics, and our settlements
have no political significance. The citizens vote for men rather than party. The
church takes no part in elections, nor does it try to control votes. The Bishops
merely tell the people to go to the poles [sic] quietly and in order, to vote as they
please, but not to wrangle over political questions. We do not hold it to be a
matter of fellowship as to how we vote as asserted in The Tribune article. Ball
said in that letter, “President Smith received $600 for the settlement vote in 1882.
It is an infamous falsehood. I never took any side in the campaign.”

335 Denver Tribune. July 29, 1890.

336 Ball as referred to by Smith was William L. Ball, an ex-member of the Church of
Jesus Christ and former Bishop who wrote letters to newspapers accusing Mormons of
deceiving converts from the South. Mr. Ball was a swindler and on more than one
occasion, solicited funds from members living out of state claiming the San Luis Valley
were destitute needing financial help for food, clothing and fuel. He was brought to trial
and was charged with faultfinding, misusing tithing and his Church books over which he
was custodian, showed a deficiency of nearly $300. He was also charged with stirring up
strife among the brethren by saying those who came from Utah hated those who came
from the South. The Church then withdrew their fellowship from him. Source: The
Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the
Hart Library, Denver.)

337 The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884, 2. (Typed copy
available at Hart Library).
Newspaper accounts charged Mormons with selling their votes to the highest bidder reporting that Church leaders forced them to do so under the threat of excommunication if they did not comply. From multiple sources, it is evident that some U.S. Citizens believed Mormons had plans to gain dominant influence over State politics. In Colorado, Brigham H. Roberts, Church official visited the Conejos County from Salt Lake City, heard about the rumors and allegations, so he began his own campaign to rectify the false information being circulated. He wrote to the *Denver Tribune* grumbling that Mormons in the settlements were being slandered and requested that, “justice demands that you publish our reply to these falsehoods.”

Our settlements in this State have no political significance. We have come to obtain homes, not to increase the political influence some people imagine the Mormons to possess; to make the wilderness glad with our toil, and the desert to blossom as the rose, rather than to dabble in sly games of politics.

Roberts ended his correspondence to the newspaper providing voting statistics. There were 1,300 Mormons in the settlements and 144 were registered as voters reasoning that if the charges of ambitious politics were their true purpose, “out of a

---

338 Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 77.
population of 1,300 we would have more than 144 voters registered.” But Roberts did not simply rely on the printed word to correct the falsehoods. He obtained the confirmation of officials in Conejos County to verify that Mormons had not ever sold their vote.

I am authorized by the following named gentlemen to say that it was not sold this year. Mr. McIntire, County Judge; C.M. Sampson, County Clerk; Mr. Austin, County Collector; Mr. Brown, Superintendent Public Instruction’ Joseph Smith, County Sheriff. All these men received the votes of our people, and to use their own language, we never paid a nickel for them, or even a drink of whisky.

In his extensive inquiry to get to the bottom of selling votes, Roberts describes uncovering one incident he found involving an 82 year-old man who was a county official and was paid forty-dollars. The elderly man however claimed that the money was not used to buy any one, but for cigars for the boys, bar expenses, etc.

The Abstract of Votes for the 1882 election in Conejos County indicated that of sixty-two Mormon votes cast, all went to the same congressional candidate. This was not the equal distribution that would have exonerated them of accusations of voter mischief,

-----------------------------

342 The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver.)
343 The Denver Tribune. "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884. (Typed copy available at the Hart Library, Denver.)
but, the candidate receiving their votes lost the election and Mormons as claimed in newspapers did not tip the balance. 344

**Faith Based Relationships**

Faith and religion, as has been all through history, in all parts of the world, is often at the root of conflict, but only on a small scale, in the Valley. The following story typifies other possible situations of conflict between Mormons and other religious organizations.

**“A Very Smart Set of Men, But Had the Religion of Hogs and Dogs”**

The characteristic of “every member a missionary” created unique circumstances between Mormons and neighboring priests and missionaries. In compliance with the Church priority of proselytizing missionaries “travel around the valley, preaching the Gospel.” 345 Their missionary activities with Mexican neighbors brought them into occasional conflict with local officials of the Catholic Church. One incident, occurred on January 3 1879 at a Catholic service held in Los Cerritos. Jensen recorded the incident in his diary.

I and four more of the Saints went into the meeting, stood in front of the priest as innocent as lambs while he scolded us for one hour. He called us thieves, liars, whoremongers, and a very smart set of men, but had the religion of hogs and dogs, and then he went through with his sacrament ceremony: Then he turned against us as a crazy man, and called for help to throw us out, although we went quiet [sic] and peaceable. It had a good effect on the people present, for

---

345 Flower, “Mormon Colonization of the San Luis Valley, Colorado”, 43.
yesterday I baptized twelve and blessed five children, and am now anxiously
waiting for the priest to come back and drive off another lot, and we will gladly
receive them through the waters of baptism…346

Antonio de Jesus Salazar, was in the congregation with his family.347  When the
Catholic priest scolded Jensen and demanded he and his Mormon companions leave the
building, Antonio and his wife Delores followed Jensen from the church.  On January 5,
1879, Antonio put up big tents, built big fires and chopped a hole in the ice on the
Conejos River and Bishop Jensen baptized him, Dolores, two of their daughters, and
Dolores’s Indian grandmother.348

“When They Returned, the Presbyterian Was a Mormon”

Toward the middle of the century, Presbyterians missionaries arrived in the
Valley. A letter from Jensen published in the Deseret News in 1877 described his
association with them.

There were also two Presbyterian missionaries laboring among the
Catholics. They attended some of the Mormon meetings where each
denomination took turns preaching. Jensen and one of the Presbyterians went on
a preaching tour together throughout the Valley. Jensen preached and the
Presbyterian translated into Spanish. When they returned, the Presbyterian was a
Mormon.349

347 Antonio’s brother Eusebio Salazar is the great grandfather of Senator Ken Salazar.
As Mormon records of baptism do not specify previous religion, verification of this story may not be possible. There is an element of boasting in Jensen’s story as he told it to the newspaper and it is most probably that he won over the Presbyterian with arguments of theology, but whether the Presbyterian actually became a Mormon or not remains unknown.
CHAPTER IX.
CONCLUSION

Scholars of history have written volumes on the formative period of Mormon Church history, most specifically on topics surrounding Utah settlements, economics, politics, doctrine, and exclusion of Blacks, the United Order, and polygamy. The history of Mormons in Colorado however, has noticeably been neglected in scholarly research. When Mitt Romney, a Mormon, became the 2012 Republican candidate for the U.S. Presidential race, and simultaneously the ad campaign I’m a Mormon”, aimed at helping Americans better understand Mormons, began appearing on billboards, bus ads, television spots and internet promotions, renewed focus was cast on Mormons nationwide. It is today, timely that Coloradans know the history of Mormons in their state and the circumstances of their arrival in the mid-1800s.

From the onset of the westward movement most settlers towed along their limited belongings, livestock, and children. They built churches, erected crosses and some carved religious Santos, but most often as they trekked west, their religions were unseen. The unfamiliar West was a bit more comforting if not more secure for them with their beliefs stored neatly beside their Bibles in the trunks of their baggage. Wildness erupted in the early development years of mining towns as well as in cities that struggled to establish dominance over other cities west of the Rocky Mountains. Catholicism had previously come north from Mexico and eastward with the Germans, Irish, Italians and others. The Christian soldiers of, “Blue Banner” Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists Episcopalians and others lent presence to mountain mining camps while immigrants brought their own flavors of religion from far off homelands. But Mormonism was then,
and remains now, different in the eyes of many Americans. Marvin S. Hill expressed his view that Mormonism was actually a microcosm of America. “The Mormon commitment to building Zion in the West is a manifestation of the American mission. . . The power of early Mormonism was the millennial hope, the vision of Zion soon to arise upon the earth.350

Southerners, Scandinavians, and Catawbas all found some of their dreams for ‘Zion’ in the San Luis Valley. Danish Hans Jensen “…saw my dream come true, I dreamed that I was coming to a valley with a little company and that the Valley was so big the eyes couldn’t see to the other mountain at the end of the valley”.351 Catawba Pinkney Head wrote, “I like the place well when I first Saw it.”352 Missionary John Morgan who led group after group of converts from the south to the San Luis Valley expressed, “It is one of the finest valleys I have ever seen”.353

As the title of this paper suggests, they struggled to find ‘Zion’ in Colorado’s San Luis Valley. The struggle remains for others to explore the histories of these men and woman and through their stories acknowledge them as significant in the greater context of Colorado history.

350 Hill, Mormonism and American Culture, 5.
351 Jensen, ”Journal of Hans Jensen”, 137.
353 Morgan, ”Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley”, 286
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Leadville Daily Herald. Leadville, CO, April 5, 1884. 2.


San Luis Valley Courier. Alamosa, CO, January 8, 1890. 3.


Christensen, Fred T. "Early History of Sanford, Colorado." Colorado Magazine (History Colorado).


Daily Mining Journal. April 18, 1866.


Denver Tribune. July 29, 1890.


"LDS1985: LDS microfilm #00001985." Salt Lake City, UT: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1895.


Martin, Judy Canty. "Genealogy of the Western Catawba: Genealogy of the 5 families And Those who joined them In the West." 1998.


Mortensen, Eva. "Eva Mortensen."


—. *The Doctrine and Covenants of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1969.


Sumner, Helen L. "Mormons enter the Mountains."


*The Denver Tribune.* "Colorado Mormons." February 27, 1884.

"The First White Child: Malinda Catherine Kelley, Born in 1848, Claims the Honor."


Appendix A. Glossary of Mormon Terminology

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

Full name of the Mormon Church.

Church of Jesus Christ:

Shortened name of the Church

Latter-day Saints, Mormons or Saints:

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ

LDS:

Abbreviation of Latter-Day Saints

Saints:

Mormons commonly refer to themselves as Saints. The Doctrine and Covenants Index provides the meaning as Believer or Children of God.

Elder:

Title given to holders of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The title is used for missionaries.

Apostle:

The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles is made up of twelve righteous men, who are high priests of the Mormon Church. They perform their duties full-time and support the Presidency of the Church.

General Authorities:

Men called to serve at the highest levels of leadership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. They have Church wide rather than local stewardship and may receive assignments anywhere in the world to preach the gospel, train and instruct local leaders and members, preside at stake conferences, organize new stakes, call and set apart new stake presidencies, and generally look after the interests of the Church.

Ward:

In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a ward is the larger of two types of local congregations. The smaller is a ‘branch’. They are organized geographically and members attend a ward or branch near their home. A group of wards forms a stake. The leader of a stake is a stake president.

Branch:

See ‘Ward’

Stake:

See “Ward”
Appendix B. Southern Families in Pueblo 1877

Units Number 1 and Number 11:

Used as kitchens.

Unit Number 2:

Daniel R. Sellers and his wife Mary A. Banister, their children Hugh Lee, William Robert, Reuben Daniel, Martha, Dora Lucinda and Ester Lucinda.

Unit Number 3:

Bird Jackson Kirtland and his wife Mary Ann Sellers, their children Mary Ann Delilah, Minerva Jane, Minta Ellen, Daniel Jackson, Albert Addison and Victoria Frances.

Unit Number 4:

Hugh Lee Sellers and his wife Missouri Mahula, their children James Robert and Mary Ellen.

Unit Number 5:

Samuel Surratt Sellers and his wife Martha E. Harton, their children John Lincoln, Elizabeth Jame, Robert Preston, Rhoda DeLain, Mary Tennessee, William Riley, Florence R. And Omer Ellen.

Unit Number 6:

Milton Evans and his wife, their children Mary Elizabeth, James Thomas, Margaret Lucinda and Joseph.

355 Morgan, "Mormon Colonization in the San Luis Valley",
Unit Number 7:

Thomas Chandler and his wife and their son Thomas Chandler, Jr.

Unit Number 8:

Patrick C. Haynie and his wife Henrietta Bagwell

Unit Number 9:

A.G. Bagwell, Carlyn M. Bagwell, Henrietta Bagwell and Albert (Toby) Bagwell, relationship unknown. (Note, Henrietta Bagwell married Patrick C. Haynie and may have then moved to Number 8 with her husband).

Number 10:

William Anderson Jones and his wife Palestine Horton Jones, their children Orange, Arthur, John, Preston, Martha, Elizabeth and Zole.

Families that rented houses in Pueblo included:

F.B. Moyer and family,

Francis M. Weldon and family,

James A. Cox and family;

George W. Wilson and family

W.L. Marshall and family.
Appendix C. Description of Attack on Mormon Missionaries

There are other accounts of similar incidents involving Mormon missionaries attacked while staying in the homes of Catawbas. In his diary, Elder Joseph Willey’s wrote on August 28, 1884 “That night he had received a notice form eight men who came with it, which reads as follows: “August 23, 1884 Notice, Messrs Willey, Humphreys, Humphrey, We the peaceable citizens of the surrounding country have been pained to learn that you three men professing to be Mormon missionaries have taken up your quarters with an ignorant class of our people and are denominating doctrines among them calculated to disorganize human society and adverse to the peace and well being of our people and country. To the laws and dignity of the State, now therefore these presents are to civilly and peaceable request and command you to vacte the State and to return no more among us and you are hereby allowed five days To obey this order to peaceable absent yourselves from the State without hurt or molestation but if you are found within the limits of the State after the expiration of that time you may charge consequences to disobedience to this order. We are going to be rid of you.” Capt of the mob, Wm. Kithcart, Wm. Carethers, Charles Harrison, Paul Harrison, Alexander Millens, Clarence Cotter.” His diary entry on September 1, states that the left their hiding place in the woods and moved to Mr. Tims loft in the stable.

356 Martin, "Genealogy of the Western Catawba, 188."
Appendix D. List of Catawba People Who Came West\textsuperscript{357}

Family 1:
James and Elizabeth White Patterson came with their children Bell, Lula, Dora, Emma, Maud, Abbie and Joseph. The Pattersons had two married daughters, Martha and Henrietta who came with their husbands. (see below)

Family 2:
Pinkney H. Head and Martha Jane Patterson and their infant daughter

Family 3:
John Alonzo Canty and Henrietta Patterson.

Family 4:
Pinkney’s mother, Sarah Evans-Canty Head Tims came with his stepfather, John Alexander Tims (Alec).

Family 5:
Alec’s first wife Martha Cottsky-Scott Tims came with their young son Harvey and their married daughter Rachel Tims Harris and her husband Hillery and young son Josiah.

\textsuperscript{357} Information compiled from: Martin, Judy Canty. "Genealogy of the Western Catawba: Genealogy of the 5 families And Those who joined them In the West." 1998.