(Note) The writer of this vivid and interesting autobiography was one of the earliest converts to the Church of Christ. Living in Portland at the time the first missionaries visited that place, she became intimate with the Prophet, Joseph Smith, and his parents. She was baptized in the Churc, and with all the early saints. Her recital of those scenes of joy, of sorrow, of trials, and of constant prayers is one of the most detailed and descriptive. She fills in the large gaps successively left by other historians, who give space to causes and effects rather than to the intimate feelings of daily domestic difficulties. The story is her own, in her own words, of the truth of the Prophet and the deceases of the Prophet Joseph Smith.
Mary Elizabeth Rollins

Was born in the Town of Lime, Livingston County, State of New York April 5th 1815. My father John D. Rollins came from one of the New England States, I think it was Vermont. My mother Eliza, born Bonthropp, was born in Albany, State of New York in 1796. She married my father in 1814. Three children were the fruit of this marriage, James, Henry - myself, and sister Caroline the youngest. When she was six months old, my father was shipwrecked on Lake Ontario during a terrible storm. Only one person was saved out of all the passengers and crew. When I was ten years old, we moved to Holland, Ohio, and lived in a house belonging to Algernon Sidney Gilbert, Mother's sister's husband. We remained there two years, when we heard of the Book of Mormon, or Golden Bible being found by Joseph Smith. The news was confirmed by the appearance of Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, and Ziba Peterson with the stories of the Restoration of the Gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith. They bore a powerful testimony by the Holy Spirit of the truth of the great work they had engaged in; and which they were commissioned by the Father to spread to all the world. Quite a number went forward for Baptism, Brother and myself also, in the Month of October 1831. A Branch of the Church was organised, and Father Morley was ordained an Elder to preside over it. He owned a large farm, about a mile from Holland; and five or six families were to live there, and meetings were held there. So it was called the Morley Settlement. A good spirit, and one of union prevailed among Brethren for some time. After Oliver Cowdery and his Brethren left there for to go to Missouri to find a place for the Center State of Zion, a strong spirit got into our hearts, and many were led away by their friends.
Enduring all manner of grievance, we were driven from the Territory. While we were camped on the banks of the Missouri River, waiting to be ferried over, they feared there was not money enough to take all over. One, or two families must be left behind.

And the fear was, that if left they would be killed. So, some of the Brethren thought they would try and catch some fish, perhaps the Ferryman would take them. They went out their lines in the evening. It rained all night, and most of the next day. When they took in their lines, they found 203 small fish, and a Cat fish that weighed 14 pounds. On opening it, what was their astonishment to find three bright Silver half Dollars, just the amount needed to pay for taking their team over the River. Their names were the Rigby Brothers. This was considered a miracle, and caused great rejoicing among us. At length we settled in Clay County, where my mother married Mr. John G. Kerr, a widower with two children—his wife having died with Cholera at St. Louis in 1831. I lived with Uncle Gilbert most of the time until Camp came up in 1834. Many of the Brethren stopped with us, including the Prophet Joseph Stamm and William and Jessie Smith, their cousin, Luke & Lyman Johnson, and some others. When the Cholera broke out among the Camp, Uncle Gilbert, who was preparing to go on a Mission, was among the first to die, then Jessie Smith, Mr. Weedon, Julia Murdock, there were five dead at Uncle's, and nine at a neighbors by the name of Burgoyne. This was in the month of June. The dead were boiled in blankets and consigned to the grave. As the people were so frightened, they would do nothing for us.

And our brethren were bowed down with sorrow for the loss of their friends, and almost despaired of seeing an end of the Plague. But the Lord saw fit to heal the most of those who had come up in the Camp, and there were not many deaths after Joseph had administered to them.
and prescribed a Teaspoonful of Salt, and One of ground Black pepper, dissolved in two Tablespoons full of good Vinegar to be given directly after they are taken with the Flour, and in one hour after to take a Teaspoonful of Concentrated Oil, and keep up the

Treatment untill cured. No one died after following his directions. Uncle died on the 23d of June 1834. Shortly after the Camp left for their homes in Kirkland I commenced teaching a few Children in Spelling, Reading and Writing, I did not understand much about Grammar, I had commenced its Study with Sabrina Phelps, O. Cowdrey, John Whitmer and 20 or others, in Jackson Co.

But were stopped by being driven. But I was well versed in Geography. I continued Teaching for two years, and met with good success. In 1835 on the Eleventh of August I was married to Mr. Adam Lightner, of Liberty, Clay County. Mr. Lightner was not very wealthy, he had a flourishing Farm and a settlement all around of Farms &c. The brethren persuaded Mr. Lightner to go there and keep a Store for their accommodation, as the Church was not able, for the most of them had been stripped of all they had - He concluded to go and build a log house for his Store, and leave me in Liberty until it was completed. We had been troubled for some time with aオスりりき shown of roaches our dishes would be apparently torn from the Cupboard onto a Stand, Kitchen, and thrown onto the floor in hundreds of pieces, we would be awakened by the Crash, and on lighting a Candle, we would find everything as we had left it - but as soon as we blew out the light, the Wine would Commence again, and continued Night after Night, until we had to keep a light burning all Night to get any sleep. But one Night Mr. Lightner was detained in Far West, and did not get Home as he said he would. My Step Sister, Selina Burk was staying with me, so we waited Supper until nine O'clock, then Sat. up until near Midnight, hoping he would come; at length I concluded to go upstairs and Sleep, rather than Sleep in My
He was about 50 years old, and was a fine, plump, good-looking man, with a pleasant countenance. He was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and had come from Missouri to Illinois, where he saw our situation, and offered us a home with him, until we could do better. He seemed a God-send to us, and we gladly accepted the opportunity. In January 1841, Mr. Markham, myself, and two children crossed the Mississippi River on the ice, as it was late in the evening, he did not dare to take his team, so we walked across the river, and up the hill near the Temple where he lived. Next morning, the ice was all broken up, and it was some days before he could get his team across. In the meantime, Brother Joseph, and Brother Brigham, came to see me, and invited me to go the next day to his office in the Brick Store. He was surprised at this, he asked me if I was afraid to go; I replied, why should I be afraid of a Prophet of God? he said Bro. Young would come for me. That night, I dreamed that I was married to him, and occupied an upper room, in a new house, in the morning, we were called to breakfast, and I rememberd what Emma would say to me, if I was afraid of her, but Joseph took me by the hand and led me up stairs, at the foot of which, stood Emma smiling at us, and conducted us to the breakfast room. I awoke then, and did not know what to think of my dream.

But on going to the office next day, I received the interpretation for what was my astonishment; when Joseph made known to me that God had commanded him in July 1834 to take me for a wife, but he had not dared to make it known to me, for when he received the Revelation, I was in Missouri, and when he did see me, I was married. But he was again commanded to fulfill the first revelation, or suffer condemnation, for I was created for him before the foundation of the Earth was said. I said, if the Lord told you such a thing, why don't he come and tell me?
Furthermore, I never would consent to be sealed to him, unless I had a witness for myself. He told me a great many things concerning the Order, and the Blessings pertaining to it &c. I felt that he and I were both long for I had dreamed for years that I belonged to him; and had besought the Lord to take away such Thoughts from my heart. No human being can tell my feelings in this occasion. My faith in him, as a Prophet almost failed me. I could not sleep, and scarcely eat. Next day Mrs. Young came to see me and said after we left the Office, Joseph told him that an Angel appeared to him, and told him that the Lord was well pleased with him, and that I should have a Witness that what he told me was true. I marvelled at this, but made it a subject of prayer, night and day. One evening in February I felt impressed to pray as Moses did in the Battle of Israel, with the Amalekites by holding up my hands towards Heaven. I also covered my head with a white cloth, and prayed with all my soul, that if the Doctrine was true, it give me a witness of the same. One night I retired to Bed, but not to sleep; for my mind was troubled so sleep fled from me. My Aunt Gilbert was sleeping with me at the time. When a great light appeared in the Room, shining the Kindling Wood was on fire, that was spread on the hearth; I rose up in Bed to look, when lo a Passenage stood on front of the Bed looking at me. Its clothes were whiter than any thing I had ever seen, I could look into its Person, but when I saw its face, so bright, and more beautiful than any earthly could be, and those eyes piercing me through and through, I could not endure it; it seemed as if I must die with fear, I fell back in Bed and Covered my head so as not to see it; I pushed Aunt very hard to have her look up and see it too, but I could not wake her and I could not speak. I thought if she were awake, I would not feel so afraid. As it is, I can never forget that face, it seems to be ever before me. A few days after this, Joseph asked me if I had received a witness yet? I said no, he said you soon will have; for the Angel expressly told me you should
Joseph on learning that we were going to leave these fellows and, while the tears ran down his cheeks, he prophesied that if we attempted to leave the Church, we would have plenty of sorrow; for we would not have property in the right hand, and lose it on the left; we would have sickness in sickness, and lose our children, and that we would have to work harder than I ever dreamed of and at last, when you are worn out, we are almost ready to go we will get back to the Church. I thought these were hard sayings, and felt to doubt them. But the sequel proved them true. Before leaving Nauvoo, on the 4th of July, there was a general parade of the Legion, about nine persons came to see the officers. All the officers were to ride with her, and Joseph was also, and he said the Lord commanded him to baptize us that day. Emma asked why is this? they have always been good members in the Church; and another thing, he will be ready soon, and you certainly won't go in those clothes? he said he wanted us to be ready by the time the war was to be not with for divinity. As we lived on the Banks of the River, we were soon ready. Brother Henry and the aunt Gilbert and myself were Baptized and Confirmed. Joseph tried hard to get Mr. Lightner to go into the water, but he said he did not feel worthy, but would come some other time. Joseph said to me that he knew would be Baptized, unless it was a few moments before he died. It was with sorrowful feelings that I went to his house to live, but by the time we were leaving we could not live, and that was all. A Lady called on me and asked me if we had a Cow? I said no, she said if I would let her have my Bedstead, she would give me a Cow, and I gladly accepted her offer, and slept on the floor until we could make a substitute. In a short time George was taken sick, and died. I was alone with him at the time, husband had gone to a neighbor for assistance. An old lady helped me dress him, and Mr. Lightner had to make the Coffin as he was the only Carpenter in the place. The two men that dug the grave, and a little girl was all that went to bury my husband. I felt that the Prophets' words were beginning to be fulfilled, we then moved to a more commodious house, in April my 3rd son Florentin Mathias was born. When he was two months old I commenced teaching a few children in Spelling & Reading. I had not taught long before I took a severe cold that caused inflammation of the bowels. I was so low that my life was despaired of by two physicians.
mother was sent for. She brought some concentrated oil with which she anoint[ed] me, and prayed for me. I felt better, and persuaded her to sit quietly in a chair, and let me try and sit up to have the bed made, for it had not been made for over two weeks, but she was afraid to try it, as the doctor said I could not live three days, but if I would so hard, they granted my request. By placing quilts and pillows in a large rocking chair tipped back as near like a bed as they could then lifting me on a sheet, I was placed on it. Mother was afraid it would make me worse. She put on my stockings & slippers and wrapped me in a large quilt while she made my bed more comfortable.

The 25th My body was in a large room, there were two more on the same floor, and a hall, while lying there a heavy storm came up, and our house was struck by lightning and all of us badly shocked, the door coming down two feet and struck mother on the shoulder and bruised her terribly. All were stunned for some time, then a servant of ours in the family at the time, I was the first to come to my senses, and I found myself at the foot of the bed, my head one side of the foot post of the bed and limbs on the other, as I looked around and saw them on the floor I thought they were all dead. I called for the doctor, who had gone into the next room, not getting any answer, I arose and went through the hall, to find him on the floor, as rigid as a corpse, the window in the hall had been torn out, and the water was pouring in, in torrents. I took a small bucket and would chip off the water, and pour it over him as fast as I could but could not do him any good. From the 1st to 20th of the neighbors came in, they saw the lightning strike the home and as they could see me moving they concluded that we were all killed, but when they saw me, they were frightened, the doctor got a quilt and wrapped it around me and brought to a neighbor. This was about 10 o'clock, the 26th of June, it was nine at night before they could bring the doctor. To the rise of his limits, he said he suffered more, in being treated for to live, than he would in dying, but as had been turned over in bed for two weeks by the deaths. (so I was so swollen, and inflamed in my bowels, I could not bear to have them handle me) was entirely cured, and dressed myself and went about the business, but for 2 years when a snow came up, I was very sick while it lasted.
...of pieces. The lightning head fell over it, and ran from the room to the ground in 2 different places. Both came from a pillar to see it, and wondered that we were not all killed. A few days after this, I went out to milk my cow; when about half done, she stepped over the bucket, and fell down dead. This was a great shock to us, for my long illness had upset our bosom. We were obliged to leave the house, and move into one close by us. When all of us came down with the chills and fever, it was too bad to do anything but eat. Dr. Lifton, his wife came on every other day, and he had all the cooking, and looking after the rest of us to do. My cow proved to be witches flour, in a bad form. I was again given up to die. I got a little girl to stay a day, then Mr. L. took the horse and oxen under my pillow, and rode horse back to Nauvoo, for no one to take care of. I never expected to see it again, the thought of leaving my little children in the Condition we were in, seemed more than I could bear. I thought of all Joseph had told me, and felt in my heart that it was all true. I prayed for help to get well, but the Dr. coming in said there was no hope for me. But I dreamed that an angel came to me, and said if I would go to Nauvoo, and call for a Mr. Easton that worked on the Temple to administer to me, I should be healed. But we could not get a team to go. We were in despair. However, my brother was impressed to send for me, he felt that something was wrong. He sent a boy with an ox team, after me, I was so glad, that for a few moments, I felt new life. But the people said I would not get a mile from town, when he would have to bring back my dead body. But I said I wanted to be buried in Nauvoo, and friends with them to take the place, dead or alive. So after giving my bed for the wagon, they placed me on it, the daughters laid me good by as they supposed for the last time. They were not of our faith, we went a mile, and stopped the team, they thought me dying as a green liquid was running out of my mouth, and the stench of death was on my linen. All the children were crying. That day, my senses and motioned for them to go, we went a few miles further, stopped at a house and asked to stay all night, the woman was willing until she saw me; she said I would die before morning, and she did not want me to die in her house. Dr. Lifton told her that I would certainly die if I was left in my open wagon all night. She finally let us in, made us as comfortable as she could, fed me some light food, after drinking some. I felt better, and least at a good height 51/2, but she was glad when
When we left, for the thought I could never see Nauvoo, after traveling a few miles further, the same green liquid began coming streaming from my mouth, and continued for some time. Finally we reached Nauvoo. They still thought me dying. Mr. L. asked Mr. B. if there was an Old Man by the name of Culley working on the Temple? he said yes. Mr. L. then told him my dreams. Soon they brought them, he administered to me, and I got up, and walked to the grave alone. In 2 weeks I was able to take care of my children. But just previous to this last sickness, Joseph and Huron were taken to Carthage Jail. And the men around Doisneau formed a company to go to Carthage. They said, to protect the Saints, but I thought otherwise, to go against Nauvoo if necessary demanded. They called Don to make a flag for this Company. I refused, for I felt so low spirited, I could hardly keep from weeping all day. I could not account for these awful feelings. But there was no one that knew how to make the flag but me, and I was compelled to make it, or suffer the consequence. For I was the only Mormon in the place. In the afternoon of the same day, this company started for Carthage. They returned in the night, as soon as we were all in the morning. 5 or 6 men came to the door and called us to come to the door, did so, when they told us that the Saints were killed, and that a great light appeared at their death. I said that I should know Joseph, a true Prophet of God. Oh! said one; it would prove that God was well pleased with them that killed him. I said no, for he said whenever Kimball shall not have forgiveness in the World, nor the World come, this angered them; and they said if we attempted to go to the Generals, we should be shot; I said you can shoot me here if you want to, but an Old Man won't up and said, if I stood at home I should not be hurt, unless the Mormons come against them, then I should be the first one to be killed, and Mr. Lightnin. too, unless he joined their side. we were ordered to remain three Months. When they thought I would not live to get there, they let us go. But when Mr. L. went back for our things, he had to give the rest of them to pay rent and Dr. Noll's. Even some of my clothes were taken. You debts in fact were Noll's of many things, but I felt thankful to be away from there with my life. Soon after I got well, the Temple was ready for giving the Endowment.
25th Augt. Otho receiving the Ordinances of the Church with all his distaste was also called to be young as far
for Joseph. Our first meeting at that time were very hard lives
and we were again obliged to leave our homes, but we had no
means to go with the Church, in fact we could hardly get
enough to eat. But Mr. L. sold some land for $150. Philip
and got money enough to take us deck passage to Galena.
Bigham asked me if I would go with the Church, to visit
I wanted to, he said that was right a few days after this
conversation, Mr. Bush came in and said to Young and
family were crossing the river on the ice, went out to see
if it was true was a - feel flooded, the thoughts came to
me that Deity was of the devil and Brigham knew it,
or he would have sent off his right hand before he would
have left me. For he said he would give anything to have
taken what I had, and if it had not have taken place I
should have denied the faith there and then, I kept
Myself sick, and felt to give up, and go among the Gentiles.
In fact I felt as though I was like one in an open boat
at sea, without Compass or Rudder. So when Spring opened
we went aboard the War Eagle bound for Galena, just
before we started, A. Young sent word back from Waldo
Quarters, for me to come on and the Lord would bless me.
I was destitute of Clothes for myself and children and
not a dollar to call my own, how could I go - and to add
to my distress, I was watched night and day - One one had
betrayed me. After reaching Galena, we did make out to
got work, and thought we should do pretty well, But in hope
the last week in June 1847 I was washing and got all make
in my wrist close to the pulse, and broke of, leaving half of
it in my wrist. My hand was drawn up to my Breast and
the pain was excruciating. I went to Dr. Henry Hunter,
but could get no help, Neither could I sleep, only when
I was perfectly exhausted, and then only for a moment or
two. It was September before I could sew on anything
on the month of February I had a son born, we named him
John Horace, Gilbert - in about six weeks I was able
to take my earning for a tailor, I made forty four of
pants, at from 45 to 50 cents a piece, for which I received
pay out of a store, no money - to Mrs. L. for cloth - I could get no