Rhoda Richards was the sister of Willard Richards, (councilor and scribe to the Prophet Joseph Smith,) and of Phinehas and Levi Richards. Levi and Willard were both physicians who attended the Prophet.
Sept 2. Rode home with Uncle Haven this morn very feeble.

Sept 3. Have little strength faith increases.

Sept 8. A blessing from the Prophet he says I shall be well.

Sept 15. Sister Jennette confined with a daughter very comfortable weighed seven and half God has been merciful.


Sept 24. Nothing in particular has taken place since my last date.

Sept 30. Five years to day since Sister Hepsy fell asleep.

Oct. 1. Five years to day since Ann was born what a change in our family some in Eternity many of the rest are gone far away are now in Nauvoo.

Nov. 22. Brother Wd has moved from the brick store into Brother Joseph old house. Brother Levi and myself have moved to blocks north of the temple to live together.

Dec. 25. To a Christmas dinner we were invited br. Phinehas and his family, brother Brigham and wife the company 22 in number brother Levi was married to Miss Sarah Griffith.

1844

Feb 20. For three weeks have been a great sufferer from a burn on my hand.

Feb -- Have spent one week at brother Wd repairing his clothes.

April 5. Have spent the past week at br Wd making soap and washing.

April 6. Conference has commenced to day br Wd called to dinner.

April 7. Have been to Conference heard br Joseph the Prophet speak upon various subjects glorious season blessed views glorious prospects the saints have in view It appeared to me as if the whole sectarian world must fall before him as if it was the god of heaven spake could they but hear but when will the ears be opened and unbelief done away God only knows.
April 8. The conference dismissed at 12 heard br. Joseph by the mouth of br. Adams.

April 10. Mailed a letter to sister N. to day.

April 14. A rainy night and morning delightful growing season.

June 21. General Joseph Smith and Hiram his brother with a number of others went to Carthage brothers Levi and Willard many were bound over to Court and returned home brother Wd and John Taylor stopped with the prisoners our Prophet and Patriarch.

June 27. Joseph and Hiram were murdered by a mob about six in the afternoon there appeared from one hundred and fifty to two hundred painted black red and yellow they had each four balls brother Wd not hurt his work not finished.

June 28. The corps conveyed to the City followed by thousands.

June 29. Walked to brother Wd this morn a most awful and solemn scene was before us the two marters thousands upon thousands, com to take their last leave. I then returned home.

July 7. For three weeks we have lived to hear the awful threats of the mob that the City was to be laid in ashes such a night, the next that the men women and children were all to be destroyed, the next there was a certain number who would be slain within such a time, thus we are all spared but our heads, the Lord reigns let every heart rejoice.

* The next entry in Rhoda Richards diary is Oct 1857. The intervening years can be somewhat supplied by reading some of Rhoda’s letters, which follow:

Notes by:

Letter from Rhoda Richards to her brother, Willard Richards who was on a mission in England.

Richmond, (Mass.) March 3, 1839.

My Dear Brother Willard:

When I wrote you about six weeks since I thought Wm. would write you soon. I shall wait no longer for him. His heart and hands have been full, his wife has been on a visit three weeks at Mr. Himons', their little daughter has been very sick with lung fever. We hope they will be able to return this week. Brother has been here and there; he is alone, no brother to assist him. We all feel that we are alone, as Brother Willard alone in England, (Mother is gone), Brother Levi alone in Mo. Brother Phineas is preaching in N.Y. Brother Joseph is in Paptom (?). Sister Nancy not far from us. If you have received my last letter you have learned that our dear sister Hepsibah has fallen asleep. No brother except brother L. no sister to stand by her dying bed. Sister H. last letter was written in July 7. She observed to us in it that the foundation of her health was much better than it was last summer. And says I think I should be quite happy here if my father, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews were here too. I have felt extremely desirous that you should all come—but I wish not to direct your course. In the world we shall have tribulation whether in Mass. or Mo. The settlement of a new country is necessarily attended with trials and privations of which I have experienced my share. I have always told you I believed there were good people in this church. I enjoy society much better here than in Ohio.

July 9, Brother L. (Levi) finished the letter. He says yesterday a revelation was received by J. (Joseph) subjects—one was for the quorum of the individuals J. Page, W. Woodruff and Willard Richard forthwith. He speaks of various things, Hepsibah was baptized and confirmed last Joseph Smith Jun. a member of the Church Saints. Brother, I gave you what inform respecting Sister H. death. We have read since. I will pen as much as I can time

Brother L. commenced his letter to brot.

F.W. (Far West) Oct. 2:

My Dear Brother,

Solitary and alone though but a few real friends I sit down to receipt your of the gratefully received. I will now acquaint...
and the causes and changes which have produced it. The 22 of Dec., last, I left Kirtland in company with Cousin Brigham (Young) and... intention of Ohio, but resolved after traveling one day to visit Far West directly and accordingly pursued our journey thither.

Stopped a few days at Cousin Lorenzo Young's in Indians. When Joseph Smith Jun., and S. Rigdon came up with their families as they were fleeing from K. (Kirtland)—after resting about a week we all pursued the journey together with uncommon favour arriving at F.W. the 16th of March. From this time I attended to K. in a few difficult cases, traveled some six or eight weeks to view the country—visit friends, etc. I then proposed to return to K. assist H. (Hepsibah) and others in coming to F.W. but was prevented by council from Brother J. Smith which council proved, I think, to be right, and I am glad I followed it, for sister Hepsibah started from Kirtland about this time, I should have missed her on the way she traveling in safety arrived with our goods. We commenced housekeeping six miles from this, near Cousin Brigham's with his family, where we remained until the forepart of Sept.—When the spirit of mobery commenced we thought proper to remove into the city—and accordingly we did. On the day of the 8th I returned to get the remainder of my things. When I came in with them, Sister said she had been sick all day, taking some medicine, of which I have a pretty good assortment. Sabbath morning, took an emetic, had a pretty thorough operation showing a great deal of bile, sliny matter, pain in the limbs but partially relieved by medicine. Chills and fever daily for about a week—then acute & fever instead of appetite. She continued in this until Saturday 23 (taking what medicine seemed to be proper—sometimes considerably relieved & then worse). When she felt the need of an emetic but could not get courage enough to take one—took some medicine which partially relieved her—the next morning having similar feelings she concluded to take bonest (?) which vomated and considerably relieved her—after which the ague shak was about as usual lasting half an hour. As usual she was languid and required stimulating... friction etc., at times partially derrious while the fever was on—as is the case in this form of disease, generally, it being specific here. I attended her day and night constantly during her sickness providing for her almost everything she desired except some of Mothers.... But I could not... here.

At five o'clock a slight convulsion took place which lasted about a minute having raised herself she became quiet again & distinctly said "lay me back, lay me back" which I did, she breathed about 25 minutes & fell asleep—but one or two friends present this time being a meeting about 10 rods distant—they came instantly render every assistance possible. The funeral was attended yesterday afternoon—Congregation addressed by Brother H. C. Kimball with whom you are acquainted. The congregation retired without interest having learned that the Kirtland Camp...were coming in this morning but being disappointed that George Richards and Cousin Joseph Young family were not this morning; at kindness by the there strewed decently and I Sister Hepsibah troubling—have not been mother's death coming to this obeyed the god's grave was here Father, tho I believe it is with Cousin J.C. were detained back. After some of this place, mob of 250 fell massacred 14 of them as I am with his family only for walk be brought abe

March 11. I until this mor Bro... moved hi in and out with that he will much love to you I have thought were both in the if not cannot you. Bro. Phis st. last from he was well. D. Richards at remain there. Brother P. via N.Y. we kn three times. While at Upton lying at the...
The 22 of Dec., 1860. (Young) and... one day to visit them. They had been with us when the women were visiting. The friends of the family were not with it as we expected. Some friends collected this morning and performed the last ceremonies of respect and kindness by the occasion. The coffin was lowered into the grave—there strewed with flowers—the earth replaced—all things done decently and in order after the custom with which you are familiar. Sister Hepsibah is gone and I trust where the wicked cease their troubling—having passed through tribulation with which our sisters have not been familiar. She thought much of our eastern friends—took mother's death very hard—but do not know that she ever regretted coming to this country—for my part I rejoice that she came, obeyed the gospel and observed its ordinances—Oh that Mother's grave was here, and Father's eyes could see this goodly land. Father, tho this may be painful news—be not cast down—for we believe it is well with thy child. George came up in the camp with Cousin Joseph Youngs family—they with several other families were detained by the Missourians on their way some 30 to 50 miles back. After some days they were permitted to come within 6 miles of this place, where they stumped a few days—on the 30 of Oct a mob of 250 fell on them and the inhabitants with whom they were and massacred 1h or 18 men and children. George Richards was one of them as I am informed by Cousin J. Young who miraculously escaped with his family. George was killed instantly, an innocent child only for walking on Missourian ground—the Lord knows...what will be brought about by this. (This was the Hahn's Mill massacre—note by Helen R. Gardner, 1861).

March 11. Dear Brother. I have not been able to use my pen until this moment. Many aches and all but sick with a cold. Bro...moved his family....Ann health is improving. Brother and sister in and out with watching and nursing. Father is feeble. I have... that he will be with us until warm weather....The family desire much love to you and desire to see you this spring here. Brother, I have thought much of last August as my birthday and sister Susans were both in that month, the last in particular. Have you written... if not cannot someone write for you? We greatly desire to hear from you. Bro. Phineas and family are well. They received a letter last from Edwin date Feb. 3. He was at Uncle.....at Illinois he was well. Going to spend one month there then return to Franklin D. Richards at St. Louis then return home in April. F. desires to remain there. F. says Levi thinks of journeying East this spring. Brother P. visited our friends of the east this....from there to N.Y....we know not where he is now. He has written only two or three times....have had opportunity...to attend one such meeting. While at Upton we visited Mr. S. Hinaman, his wife Elisabeth was lying at the point of death. She sent her last and best love to
RICHARDS FAMILY HISTORY

(1586 to 1884)

Joseph Grant Stevenson
Editor

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CHAPTER XLV.

MORMON WOMEN OF MARTHA WASHINGTON’S TIME—
AUNT RHODA RICHARDS—WIFE OF THE FIRST
MORMON BISHOP—HONORABLE WOMEN OF ZION.

The heroic conduct of the Mormon women, in their eventful history, is not strange, nor their trained sentiments of religious liberty exaggerated in the action of their lives; for it must not be forgotten that many a sister among the Latter-day Saints had lived in the time of the Revolution, and had shown examples not unworthy of Martha Washington herself. Of course those women of the Revolution are now sleeping with the just, for nearly fifty years have passed since the rise of the church, but there are still left those who can remember the father of their country, and the mothers who inspired the war of independence. We have such an one to present in the person of Aunt Rhoda Richards, the sister of Willard, the apostle, and first cousin of Brigham Young.

Scarcely had the British evacuated New York, and Washington returned to his home at Mount Vernon, when Rhoda Richards was born. She was the sister of Phineas, Levi, and Willard Richards—three of illustrious memory in the Mormon Church

—was born August 8th, 1784, at Hopkington, Mass., and now at the advanced age of ninety-three, thus speaks of her life and works. She says:

"During the early years of my life I was much afflicted with sickness, but, through the mercies and blessings of my Heavenly Father, at the advanced age of nearly ninety-three, I live, and am privileged to bear my individual testimony, that for myself I know that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of the living God; and that the work which he, as an humble instrument in the hands of God, commenced in this, the evening of time, will not be cut short, save as the Lord himself, according to his promise, shall cut short his work in righteousness.

"My first knowledge of the Mormons was gained through my cousin, Joseph Young, though I had previously heard many strange things concerning them. I lay on a bed of sickness, unable to sit up, when Cousin Joseph came to visit at my father's house. I remember distinctly how cautiously my mother broached the subject of the new religion to him. Said she, 'Joseph, I have heard that some of the children of my sister, Abigail Young, have joined the Mormons. How is it?' Joseph replied, 'It is true, Aunt Richards, and I am one of them!' "It was Sabbath day, and in the morning Cousin Joseph attended church with my parents; but in the afternoon he chose to remain with my brother William, and myself, at home. He remarked that he could not enjoy the meeting, and in reply I said, 'I do not see why we might not have a meeting here.' My cousin was upon his feet in an instant,
and stood and preached to us—my brother and
myself—for about half an hour, finishing his dis-
course with, 'There, Cousin Rhoda, I don't know
but I have tired you out!' When he sat down I
remarked that meetings usually closed with prayer.
In an instant he was on his knees, offering up a
prayer. That was the first Mormon sermon and
the first Mormon prayer I ever listened to. I
weighed his words and sentences well. It was
enough. My soul was convinced of the truth.
But I waited a year before being baptized. Dur-
ing that time I read the books of the church, and
also saw and heard other elders, among whom was
my cousin, Brigham Young, and my brothers,
Phineas, Levi, and Willard; all of which served to
strengthen my faith and brighten my understand-
ing.
A short time after I was baptized and confirmed
I was greatly afflicted with the raging of a cancer,
about to break out in my face. I knew too well
the symptoms, having had one removed previously.
The agony of such an operation, only those who
have passed through a like experience can ever
imagine. The idea of again passing through a
like physical suffering seemed almost more than
humanity could endure. One Sabbath, after the
close of the morning service, I spoke to the presid-
ing elder, and acquainted him with my situation,
requesting that I might be administered to, accord-
ing to the pattern that God had given, that the
cancer might be rebuked and my body healed.
The elder called upon the sisters present to unite
their faith and prayers in my behalf, and upon the
brethren to come forward and lay their hands upon
me, and bless me in the name of the Lord Jesus
Christ, according to my desire. It was done, and
I went home completely healed, and rejoicing in
the God of my salvation. Many times have I
since been healed by the same power, when, appar-
ently, death had actually seized me as his prey. I
would not have it understood, however, that I have
been a weakly, sickly, useless individual all my
life. Those who have known me can say quite to
the contrary. Some of our ambitious little girls
and working women would doubtless be interested
in a simple sketch of some few things which I
have accomplished by manual labor. When my-
self and my sisters were only small girls, our ex-
cellent mother taught us how to work, and in such
a wise manner did she conduct our home educa-
tion that we always loved to work, and were never
so happy as when we were most usefully employed.
We knit our own and our brothers' stockings, made
our own clothes, braided and sewed straw hats and
bonnets, carded, spun, wove, kept house, and did
everything that girls and women of a self-sustaining
community would need to do. The day that
I was thirteen years old I wove thirteen yards of
cloth; and in twenty months, during which time I
celebrated my eightieth birthday, I carded twenty
weight of cotton, spun two hundred and fifteen
balls of candlewicking, and two hundred run of
yarn, prepared for the weaver's loom; besides do-
ing my housework, knitting socks, and making
shirts for 'my boys' (some of the sons of my bro-
thers). I merely make mention of these things as
finally brought her to Ohio, where she made the acquaintance of, and married, Edward Partridge. Her husband and herself were proselyted into the Campbellite persuasion by Sidney Rigdon; but they soon afterwards became converts to Mormonism, and Mr Partridge thereupon commenced his career as a laborer in the ministry of the church. They were among the first families to locate in Missouri, and also among the first to feel the sting of persecution in that State. Removing finally to Nauvoo, her husband there died. In the after-wanderings of the saints in search of a home in the wilderness she accompanied them. It may be briefly said of her that now, after forty-five years in the church, she is as firm and steadfast as ever in her faith, and is one of the staunchest advocates of polygamy.

Next comes Margaret T. M. Smoot, wife of Bishop Smoot, with the testimony of her life.

She was born in Chester District, South Carolina, April 16th, 1809. Her father, Anthony McMeans, was a Scotchman by birth, emigrating to America at an early age, and settling in South Carolina, where he resided at the breaking out of the Revolutionary war. Fired with patriotic zeal, he immediately enlisted in the ranks, and continued fighting in the cause of liberty until the close of the war, when he returned to his home, where he remained until his death. Her mother was a Hunter, being of Irish extraction. Her grandfather Hunter also served in the Revolutionary war, being an intimate
Territory of Utah    S S
County of Salt Lake

Be it remembered that on this first day of May A. D. 1869 personally appeared before me
Elias Smith Probate Judge for Said County, Rhoda Richards who was by me Sworn in due form
of law and upon her oath saith, that on the twelfth day of June A. D. 1843 at the City of Nauvoo,
County of Hancock State of Illinois, She was married or Sealed to Joseph Smith, President of the
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, by Willard Richards, one of the Twelve Apostles of
Said Church; according to the laws of the same, regulating marriage, in the presence of [blank
space].

Subscribed and Sworn to by the           Rhoda Richards
Said Rhoda Richards the day
and year first above written               E. Smith
                                            Probate Judge

(Joseph F. Smith Collection, Affidavit Book 1:17, LDS archives; typed copy)
Monday June 12, 1848.

at the office in the morning.

R. C. called at the office in the morning for Catharine Mullum up at John Edger. We ate about it, or fouled. 40 or 45. or 49. that is about 40 years away from Peterboro New Hampshire among whom was Peter Cols. He had been about one afternoon.
AFFIDAVIT OF ELIZABETH A. WHITNEY

Territory of Utah
County of Salt Lake.

Be it remembered that on this thirtieth day of August, A.D. 1869, personally appeared before me, James Jack, a notary public in and for said county, Elizabeth Ann Whitney, who was by me sworn in due form of law, and upon her oath saith that on the twenty-seventh day of July, A.D. 1842, at the city of Nauvoo, county of Hancock, state of Illinois, she was present and witnessed the marrying or sealing of her daughter Sarah Ann Whitney to the Prophet Joseph Smith, for time and all eternity, by her husband Newel K. Whitney then Presiding Bishop of the Church.

E. A. Whitney.
Subscribed and sworn to by the said Elizabeth Ann Whitney the day and year first above written.

James Jack, Notary Public.

AFFIDAVIT OF ORSON HYDE

Springtown, Sept. 15, 1869.

I, Orson Hyde, do hereby certify and declare according to my best recollection that on the fourth day of September I was married to Miss Marinda N. Johnson, in Kirtland, Ohio, in the year of our Lord 1834, and in the month of February or March, 1843, I was married to Miss Martha R. Browitt, by Joseph Smith, the martyred prophet, and by him she was sealed to me for time and for all eternity in Nauvoo, Ill., and in the month of April of the same year, 1843, I was married by the same person to Mrs. Mary Ann Price, and by him she was sealed to me for time and for all eternity, in Nauvoo, Ill., while the woman to whom I was first married was yet living, and gave her cordial consent to both transactions, and was personally present to witness the ceremonies.

Orson Hyde.
Sworn to and subscribed to before me this the 15th day of September, 1869, at Springtown, Sanpete County, U.T.

George Brough, Justice of the Peace.

I hereby certify that the above named George Brough is a justice of the peace for the precinct of Springtown in the county of Sanpete, U.T., and that he is duly qualified in accordance with law; in testimony whereof, I hereunto set my hand and official seal of the County Court of Sanpete County, at my office, Manti City, this Sept. 15, 1869.

[Seal.]
William T. Reed, County Clerk.

AFFIDAVIT OF JOSEPH BATES NOBLE

Territory of Utah
County of Salt Lake.

Be it remembered that on the 16th day of June, A.D. 1869, personally appeared before me, James Jack, a notary public in and for said county, Joseph Bates Noble, who was by me sworn in due form of law, and upon his oath saith, that on the fifth day of April, A.D. 1841, at the city of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, he married or sealed Louisa Beam to Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, according to the order of celestial marriage revealed to the said Joseph Smith.

Joseph B. Noble.
Subscribed and sworn to by the said Joseph Bates Noble, the day and year first above written.

[Seal.]
James Jack, Notary Public.

AFFIDAVIT OF RHODA RICHARDS SMITH

Territory of Utah
County of Salt Lake.

Be it remembered that on this first day of May, A.D. 1869, personally appeared before me, Elias Smith, Probate Judge for said county, Rhoda Richards, who was by me sworn in due form of law and upon her oath saith that on the twelfth day of June A.D. 1843, at the city of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, she was married or sealed to Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by Willard Richards, one of the Twelve Apostles of said Church, according to the laws of the same regulating marriage.

Rhoda Richards.
BLOOD ATONEMENT AND THE

Subscribed and sworn to by the said Rhoda Richards, the
day and year above written.

[Seal.]

Elias Smith, Probate Judge.

TESTIMONY OF BENJAMIN F. JOHNSON

Meta City, Arizona, 9th March, 1904.

President Joseph F. Smith,
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Brother:

In reading reports from the Senate Committee on the Reed
Smoot case, I see that witnesses are subpoenaed to prove that
the Prophet Joseph Smith did not authorize or practice polyg-
yny; and I do know that he did teach plural marriage, and that
he did give to me a plural wife who is still living with me, and
that I saw one of my sisters married to him. **

And I do know that at his Mansion House was living
Mariah and Sarah Lawrence and one of Cornelius P. Lott’s
daughters as his plural wives with the full knowledge of his
wife, Emma, of the married relations to him.

At that time I was his legal business agent at Macedonia
or Ramus, and was familiar with his family or domestic af-
fairs; and occupying, as I did, the family mansion often in a
business way with Emma, the Prophet’s first wife, who at no
time did ever in my hearing deny the plural character of her
husband’s family.

And now with this and much more knowledge relating to
this subject, could my evidence before the Senate Committee be
of any real value to the cause of truth? If so, although too in-
firm to travel alone I would willingly try to be there, if accord-
ing to your counsel and wish.

Loyal to the truth, I am,

Always brother,
B. F. Johnson.

THE CELESTIAL AND PLURAL MARRIAGE REVELATION

The following letter was written by Elder William Clay-
too who wrote the revelation known as section 132 in the Book

ORIGIN OF PLURAL MARRIAGE

of Doctrine and Covenants, at the direction of the Prophet
Joseph Smith, July 12, 1843.*

Salt Lake City, Nov. 11, 1871.

Madison M. Scott, Esq.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of 23rd of June last, was received by due course of mail,
but owing to my being so very closely confined with public duties, which
has almost destroyed my health, I have not answered your letter so
promptly as is my practice. My health is yet very poor, but I have resigned
the office which was bearing so heavy upon me, and am in hopes to regain
my usual sound health.

Now, in regard to the subject matter of your letter, it appears to me
that the principal topic in what is commonly called polygamy, but which
I prefer to call celestial marriage. As to young Joseph saying that the
Church here has apostatized; that we have introduced polygamy, deny-
ing bierly that his father ever had a revelation on the subject, that is
all mere bosh! I believe he knows better, and I have often felt sorry to
learn that the sons of the Prophet should spend their time in contending
against a pure and holy principle which their father’s blood was shed to
establish. They will have a heavy statement to make when they meet their
father in the next world. They are in the hands of God, and my respect
for their father will not permit me to say much about the wicked course
of his sons.

Now, I say to you, as I am ready to testify to all the world, and on
which scurrility I am most willing to meet all the Latter-day Saints and all
apostates, in time and through all eternity, I did write the revelations on
celestial marriage given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, on the 12th of
July, 1843.

When the revelation was written there was no one present except the
Prophet Joseph, his brother Hyrum and myself. It was written in
the small office upstairs in the rear of the brick store which stood on the banks
of the Mississippi river. It took some three hours to write it, Joseph dic-
tated sentence by sentence, and I wrote it as he dictated. After the whole
was written Joseph requested me to read it slowly and carefully, which
I did, and he then pronounced it correct. The same night a copy was
taken by Bishop Whiting, which copy is now here (in the Historian’s
office) and which I know and testify is correct. The original was de-
stroyed by Emma Smith.

I again testify that the revelation on polygamy was given through the
prophet Joseph on the 12th July, 1843; and that the Prophet Joseph both
taught and practiced polygamy I do positively know, and bear testimony
to the fact. In April, 1843, he sealed to me my second wife, my first wife
being then living. By my said second wife I had two sons born in Nauvoo.
The first died, the second is here now, and is married.

*This, however, was not the time this principle was first made known
to the Prophet Joseph Smith, for as early as 1831 the Lord revealed the
principle of celestial and plural marriage to him and he taught it to others.
April 13. The emigrants assembled to take instruction from the Prophet.

April 16. Brother Willard says he has heard the sweetest sermon from Joseph he ever heard in his life.

May 1. Moved to the Prophet's store to day...

Sept. 2. Rode home with Uncle Haven this morn, very feeble...

Sept. 8. A blessing from the Prophet; he says I shall be well.

Sept. 15. Sister Jennette confined with a daughter, very comfortable, weighed seven & half. God has been merciful...

Sept. 30. Five years to day since Sister Hepsy fell asleep.

Oct. 1. Five years to day since Ann was born, what a change in our family, some in Eternity, many of the rest are gone far away, are now in Nauvoo.

Nov. 22. Brother Willard has moved from the brick store into Brother Joseph's old house. Brother Levi and myself have moved two blocks north of the temple to live together.

Dec. 25. To a Christmas dinner we were invited, brother Phinehas and his family, brother Brigham and wife, the company 22 in number, brother Levi was married to Miss Sarah Griffith.

1844, April 7. Have been to Conference, heard brother Joseph the Prophet speak upon various subjects, glorious season, blessed views, glorious prospects the saints have in view. It appeared to me as if the whole sectarian world must fall before him as if it was the God of heaven spake, could they but hear, but when will the ears be opened and unbelief done away, God only knows.

June 24. General Joseph Smith and Hyram his brother with a number of others went to Carthage, brothers Levi and Willard, many were bound over to court and returned home, brother Willard and John Taylor stopped with the prisoners, our Prophet and Patriarch.
Jan. 31. Spent the day at home. Sister Whitney called after meeting. I went with her and Sister Eliza Snow to Bishop Woolley, evening meeting, a blessed meeting. My Father I do feel to rejoice that I have lived to see this day, for this retired place, that I can attend meetings where the servants of the living God are, and where they serve the living God, and preach the everlasting truths to the edification, and feeding hungry souls.

Feb. 15. No better, wrecked with pain, to day Sister Zina came in washed, anointed me.

April 30. This month is ended, we are here in Provo, oh Lord how long.

Aug. 8. This I will record as one of the most precious days of my life. Seventy-four years have passed away. We have had a blessed season, Violet and Laura Kimball, sister Whitney, Cousin Nancy Kent, Eliza Snow, Zina, Martha and Ellen, Elizabeth Parks. We had a blessed season, the spirit of the Lord rested upon us. I hope and pray that many such days may be realized by the daughters of Zion.

1859, June 11. Sister Fanny died alone to day.

June 12. Sister Fanny buried to day. Levi Willard came to see me his birth day 14 years.

Aug. 8. This day I see seventy-five years the celebration of my birthday, 14 of my choice friends at my table with President Young at the head.

1860, May 11. Left Brother Young's this morn, moved to the house that Brother Willard left to live with Heber John and Rhoda Ann Jennete, the two that Sister Jenette left. Spent the week alone. Heber was at school. Came to his meals morn and eve. Rhoda Ann was North with the family.

May 12. Rhoda Ann returned this morn in the great snow storm. Willard came home with her. He was very sick, was here six weeks. The Lord supports me.

June 23. Rhoda Ann went home with Willard to Farmington.

Sept. 22. Sister Nancy Kent departed this life this morn, 17 minutes to ten without a struggle.
#3

Rhoda Richards
Richmond Oct 21 1838

Sat eve,
Sister Hepsy,

I am now at brother Phineas. I have not had a moment that I could write for three weeks. Sister Susan has a little daughter I am worn out in bed.

May 31st. My life is spared to do good. Why not live up to my privilege.

June 1st. Washed Levi Willard's coat and pants; my dress finished; scrubbing.

June 9th. Charlotte Richard's little Eva buried to day.

July 1st. Father Smith is buried to day in his eighty-seventh year. Sister Whitney's Father.

Oct, 29th. Sewed and worked all day. Sent a note to Cousin Lucian Parker.

1867, April 11th. Thirty-six years to day since Sister Susan died.

May 13th, Levi Willard left a little before 12 to day to go on his mission to England. I ask my Heavenly Father to guide direct and keep him from all harm and preserve him from all danger seen and unseen; may he be carried safely through and have comfortable health, may he ever put his trust in the God of heaven that he may go and fill his mission to the honor and glory of God. When he has filled his mission and called home may he meet those that have sent him with joy and thanking, and may he feel to rejoice that he was counted worthy to administer comfort and consolation to poor sinners and lead them in the way of truth. May he be filled with wisdom and understanding ever be ready to instruct and edify, and bear his testimony to the great and glorious work of the last days. This is the desire of my heart and I pray my Father to bless him. And I pray that my life may be spared to meet him when his mission is filled, that he may return home to Zion rejoicing in his labors.

June 29th. Heber came in this morn and administered to me. I thank the Lord for the blessing. I spend my time in my room alone the most of the time. I intend to spend the most of my time in writing. Have received two letters from E. D. Richards, One from cousin Selima Ransom, Chicago. One from cousin Lucius Parker, Wisconsin. One from Susan S. Richards, Wanship. Have answered Damon's, Selima's and Susan's. Have written Ann L. Hutchinson. Have written
Brother Levi commenced his letter to brother Wm. in this way:

F. W. (Far West)
Oct. 2, 1838 10oclock p.m.

My Dear Brother,

Solitary and alone though but a few rods from the dwellings of my friends I sit down to receipt yours of the 20 of August, it was very gratefully received. I will now acquaint you with my present situation and the causes and changes which have produced it. The 22 of Dec. last, I left Kirtland in company with Cousin Brigham [Young] and ... intention of Ohio, but resolved after traveling one day to visit Far West directly and accordingly pursued our journey thither. Stopped a few days at Cousin Lorenzo Young's in Indiana. When Joseph Smith, Jun., and S. Rigdon came up with their families as they were fleeing from Kirtland--after resting about a week, we all pursued the journey together with uncommon favour arriving at Far West the 16th of March. From this time I attended the sick in a few difficult cases, traveled some six or eight weeks to view the country--visit friends, etc. I then proposed to return to K. to assist Hepsibah and others in coming to Far West but was prevented by council from Brother Joseph Smith which council proved, I think, to be right, and I am glad I followed it, for sister Hepsibah started from K. about this time, I should have missed her on the way--She, traveling in safety arrived with our goods. We commenced housekeeping six miles from this, near Cousin Brigham's with his family, where we remained until the forepart of Sept.--When the spirit of mobbery commenced we thought proper to remove into the city--& accordingly we did. On the day of the 8th I returned to get the remainder of my things. When I came in with them, Sister said she had been sick all day, taking some medicine, of which I have a pretty good assortment. Sabbath morning, took an emetic, had a pretty thorough operation showing a great deal of bile, slimy matter, pain in the limbs but partially relieved by medicine. Chills & fever daily for about a week--then ague & fever instead--
Oh that Mother's grave was here, and Father's eyes could see this goodly land. Father, tho this may be painful news--be not cast down--for we believe it is well with thy child, George came up in the camp with Cousin Joseph Young's family--they with several other families were detained by the Missourians on their way some 30 to 50 miles back. After some days they were permitted to come within 6 miles of this place, where they stopped a few days--on the 30 of Oct a mob of 250 fell on them and the inhabitants with whom they were and massacred 14 or 16 men and children. George Richards was one of them as I am informed by Cousin J. Young who miraculously escaped with his family. George was killed instantly, an innocent child only for walking on Missourian ground--the Lord knows...what will be brought about by this. [This was the Haun's Mill massacre]

March 11. Dear Brother, I have not been able to use my pen until this moment. Many aches and all but sick with a cold. Bro..., moved his family,...Ann health is improving. Brother and sister in and out with watching and nursing. Father is feeble. I have..., that he will be with us until warm weather..... The family desire much love to you and desire to see you this spring here. Brother, I have thought much of last August as my birthday and sister Susans were both in that month, the last in particular. Have you written.... if not cannot someone write for you? We greatly desire to hear from you. Bro. Phinehas and family are well. They received a letter Sat last from Edwin date Feb. 3. He was at Uncle...., at Illinois he was well. Going to spend one month there then return to Franklin D. Richard's at St. Louis then return home in April. F. desires to remain there. F. says Levi thinks of journeying East this spring. Brother F. visited our friends of the east this...from there to N. Y....we know not where he is now. He has written only two or three times.....have had opportunity..... to attend one such meeting. While at Upton we visited Mr. S. Hinaman, his wife Elisabeth was lying at the point of death. She sent her last and best love to all her friends as she supposed; we
me. Never since I was baptised have my jaws set, neither a poison spasm. The ice from my stomach has melted away, disease and poison has fled from the system.....in words are true. Those that have witnessed all this will not acknowledge it. My best love and good wishes to you and yours from me and sister Nancy also.

Letter from Rhoda Richards to her brother,
Willard Richards, Richmond July 19, 1839:

Elder Willard Richards, New House opposite No. 3
Meadow St., Preston, Eng.
Dear Brother and Sister:

I received your kind letter in March which gave information of your sickness and affliction. I felt that I could truly sympathize with you. I was then administering medicine and comfort to Uncle Leadbetter. The 20 of March he had his hand taken off half way to the elbow. The operation was 8 minutes, I was all the female that could stand by him, I took the place that sister Nancy did with me with all the firmness of a Mormon with Israel's God to support and brother William by my side. It was pronounced a rose cancer of the worst magnitude. It was evident to Nancy that his days would be few before the operation. After following with Thomsoms medicine six weeks I left him in perfect health with his stump healed, to the astonishment of all that beheld him. I would often affirm to his visitors that it was a good steam nurse that had the command. I know there were three letters on the way to you. Am expecting an opportunity long before this to send by the Apostles, pardon me, my dear brother.

I have spent this week with sister Nancy. We rode home early this morning on a visit. I found a letter directed to me. It had already been read by the family. Sister and myself eagerly devoured the contents. Was very grateful for all the good news you bestowed upon us. Father desired it read to him the second time but he cannot see nor feel that he has not all that is necessary. I hope ere this that you are enjoying all the smiles of our Heavenly Father which you
Hepsibah and George. It as one they, no more with us. Cousin Jesse Haven and his sister E. watched with sister in her sickness. She dropped away very sudden, unexpected he thought to all. He spent 6 weeks with brother Phineas and his sisters in Quincy. He left them in March and walked from that place to this, reached here the 21 of June. He took a brother Bradford along with him. They spent ten days with us. We had interesting meetings. I took sisters Nancy and W. went to Pittsfield spent a day with sister Butler, an interesting time with the Elders. Cousin said he hoped to raise his warning voice to the people of this state, his native state. He was going to see brother John and preach to him faithfully. Cousin thinks his sisters and all our friends are happy. We do not expect to see brother Levi this season. Franklin wrote sister Nancy a few days since, says Uncle Leadbetter has given up going to England. And he has had an introduction to brother Joseph Smith since his return. He is happy and wishes all his friends were there with him. The saints had been kindly treated in Illinois and many were moving on to Iowa. Brother Pratt and those that were with him were yet in prison. Cousin Jesse called on Aunt Sanford. Found her in comfortable health spends her time with her children since Uncle's death. Cousin Fitch has returned to the baptist but confesses that he does not enjoy himself as before he went to Kirtland. Other friends well. Aunt Morton is yet alive. Cousin Levi told Aunt last fall he would give more to see Cousin Willard than any other person on earth. Cousin L. Parker with his Eliza are a few miles from Oberlin preaching. Wm. is at O, preparing for the ministry. C. is near there teaching S. in northern Fratten (?), their mother died last year.

July 24

Brother Phineas called here last eve. He has just received a Brother Ball (?) N. Y. which gave him an extract from one of Sister Peacock's letters. She says the Church was never in a more prosperous situation. Forty had been cut off since the Prophet got out of prison. Pres. Rigdon and
held in prospect when you wrote. The thought struck me how I should rejoice to bestow some comforts upon that sister whom I have not seen, yet love. Brother Wm. says but little. The way is not clear to him. Sister L. is not a Mormon. They have a sweet babe, yes, I often think that little Ann Lewis will be a Mormon. When sister was reading your letter she was resting her head on my bosom and was very attentive. When she began to read of the judgements that were abroad, wars, famine, sword, and pestilence, she groaned, grieved and appeared to feel the weight of it. I turned her away and asked Susan Sanford to divert her. Will not the Lord cause babes to hear, while the aged turn a deaf ear and perish forever. We have a little band of brethren here nine in number. Brother Phineas has two meetings on the Sabbath at this house. Sister Nancy and brother Coney near, Abner Wests, and so go round. Sister W. and Brother Peirson do not come in, their children all attend with us. Br. Cone asked Dea. Bartlett the other day of what Priesthood Mr. Clark his minister was, the reply was the Priesthood was all done away. He likewise asked Dea. Thomas Cone of what priest hood Mr. Leister his minister at the village was, his reply was he knew nothing about the Priesthood, raging and raving, about what they know nothing of. Brother Phineas is not alarmed when he hears a howling against the old Mormon. Such a poor weak man as Br. Cone too, asking important questions that great men cannot answer. Since our Mother's death we have rarely seen the face of one of our old friends that once appeared so warm hearted. Father asked for a letter to go to the village as W. and Sarah go there. It was not granted, but they cut him off from Church privileges as they term it. He goes not near there. Here is a little specimen of the poor old saints in Richmond, Mass. There are two more I long to see cast out that no one of our relatives will have a seat in the old synagogue.

July 23

Brother I know not what you have heard or how late from Far West, the saints have all left the state, of our friends none remained but Sister
Rhoda Richards

have not heard from them since. The rest of Eastern friends were well. Brother P. had interesting meetings in Holliston. I have heard that all Uncle Havens family but one (I think that must be little John) have united with the Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints. Cousin Mary (?) has written an apology for her treatment to me when I was there with brother Willard. She felt as if she could not speak to us. Said she thought brother Willard could not obtain his object in getting her sister E., without me. Mary's sons in N. and E.

........, desire letters from me as from a sister. Cousin P. Brigham has moved back to Madison. Aunt Susannah lives with him since uncle's death, Cousin Fitch we hear has returned to the Baptist Church. Susan Kartson (?) has no more letters for Aunt Rhoda. I expect it was sealed (?) when you or I wrote. Cousin L. Parker is preaching about sixty miles from Cleveland, Ohio, City. Mrs. Gates died Jan. 17 with lung complaint. Uncle Leadbetter's hand is worse. We fear it will end his days soon. Aunt's health is good, she wishes to be remembered to you whenever I wrote. Sister Wealthy lives at the ...house near her. Sister W. trials are great yet she is comforted by friends. Sister N. and myself have a good sister Builen in Pittsfield. She walked down to brother P. to meeting last fall. Her hus-

band has been baptised, Sister W., daughter M. has just come in. She desires love to Uncle Willard. She is most as tall as her Aunt Rhoda. Susan and sister H. are alone in a wonderful world. ........sisters from England.........soon to meet sister H. in the place she has gone to, there to be happy together. But the Lord has a right to what he pleases with his own. She has got through with all the trials of this life. I could not wish her back. If I may but meet her where God is that is enough.

This from your ever affectionate

Sister Rhoda

Do write.

Brother Willard:

I am desirous to write for the Recorder. I want my brothers that are far, far away to assist
nicated taste, loss of appetite. She continued in this until Saturday 23 (taking what medicine seemed to be proper—sometimes considerably relieved & then worse). When she felt the need of an Emetic but could not get courage enough to take one—took some medicine which partially relieved her—the next morning having similar feelings she concluded to take boneset [?] which vomated and considerably relieved her—after which the ague shake was about as usual lasting half an hour. As usual she was languid and required stimulating...friction etc. at times partially delirious while the fever was on—as is the case in this form of disease, generally, it being specific here. I attended her day and night constantly during her sickness providing for her almost everything she desired except some of Mother's... But I could not... here. At five o'clock a slight convulsion took place which lasted about a minute having raised herself she became quiet again & distinctly said "Lay me back, lay me back" which I did, she breathed about two minutes & fell asleep—but one or two friends present this time—being a meeting about 50 rods distant—they came instantly rendering every assistance possible. The funeral was attended yesterday afternoon—Congregation addressed by Brother H. C. Kimball with whom you are acquainted. The congregation retired without interment—having learned that the Kirtland Camp...were coming in this morning, but being disappointed that George Richards and Cousin Joseph Young family were not with it as we expected. Some friends collected this morning and performed the last ceremonies of respect and kindness by the occasion. The coffin was lowered into the grave—there strewed with flowers—the earth replaced—all things done decently and in order after the custom with which you are familiar. Sister Hepsibah is gone! and I trust where the wicked cease their troubling—having passed through tribulation with which our sisters have not been familiar. She thought much of our eastern friends—took mother's death very hard—but do not know that she ever regretted coming to this country—for my part I rejoice that she came, obeyed the gospel and observed its ordinances—
Rhoda Richards

no longer for him, His heart and hands have been full, his wife has been on a visit three weeks at Mr. Himmons, their little daughter has been very sick with lung fever. We hope they will be able to relieve this week. Brother has been here and there, he is alone, no brother to assist him. We all feel that we are alone. (Mother is gone). As Brother Willard alone in England, Brother Levi alone in Mo, Brother Phinehas is preaching in N.Y. Brother Joseph is in Pampton (?). Sister Nancy not far from us. If you have received my last letter you have learned that our dear sister Hepshibah has fallen asleep. No brother except brother Levi; no sister to stand by her dying bed. Sister H. last letter was written July 7. She observed to us in it that the foundation of her health was much better than it was last summer. And says I think I should be quite happy here if my father, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews were here too. I have felt extremely desirous that you should all come—but I wish not to direct your course. In the world we shall have tribulation whether in Mass. or Mo. The settlement of a new country is necessarily attended with trials and privations of which I have experienced my share. I have always told you I believed there were good people in this church. I enjoy society much better here than in Ohio.

July 9 Brother Levi finished the letter. He says yesterday a revelation was received by Joseph Smith, Jun. on several subjects—one was for the quorum of the twelve to fill the vacancies of those that have failed, the individuals selected are Elders John Taylor, John Page, Wilford Woodruff and Willard Richards who are to be called home forthwith. He speaks of various things but closes in this way, "Sister Hepshibah was baptized and confirmed last evening under the hands of Joseph Smith, Jun. a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Brother, I gave you what information I had received in my last respecting Sister Hepshibah's death, We have received a letter from brother Levi since. I will pen as much as I can time & room may permit.
Rhoda Richards


Richmond Oct. 21, 1838

Brother Levi,

This is not as I would have it. You must take the will for the deed, I have stole away but a moment. I can tell you how I live. I long to hear how your prospects are and how you enjoy your situation. And how the cause of Zion prospers. I long to be numbered one among you. Is there not a spot of earth a little spot near you that I can have, When I see the shanties around sister N, house I think how desirable one would be in Zion to a palace here.

Father is feeble, has been through the summer. I have often thought my watch and care for him will not be long. God only knows. I shall feel it my duty while it is my privilege to do everything for his comfort. Mother is gone and he is alone. Do write to him. Tears often fall from his eyes that he is to see his children no more. I must refer you to F. for much intelligence for I cannot write.

Mother designed to send you stocking last fall. Had no opportunity. She left you one pair which I send you. She...[not legible] pairs. I prepared the yarn, and Aunt Leadbetter knit them.[not legible] the heels for you, for she said she wanted to do something for Levi, he had been so kind to her. She desired her best love to you with them. I have made 11 yds of flannel for you for sheets, or drawers, shall send it the first chance. I would do many things for you were it in my power. Do, Do, Do, say something to your poor Mormon sister. Do write me soon. I hope soon to hear from you.

Rhoda
Rhoda Richards

June 27. Joseph and Hyram were murdered by a mob about six in the afternoon, there appeared from one hundred and fifty to two hundred, painted black, red and yellow; they had each four balls, brother Willard not hurt, his work not finished.

June 28. The corps conveyed to the city followed by thousands.

Sept. 22nd. Brother [?] called for me today to go to Mary's; little Mary was sick. When I went in she looked up with joy and said my Aunt Rhoda has come.

Sept. 23rd. I found her very sick with fever and canker. When it came night I lay by her but could not sleep but one hour.

Sept. 24th. She continued bad but had her reason in part; when she awoke she would be wild. Cold water was all she wanted. Sisters Susan, Eliza and Zina were sent for. She was quiet for a while then very distressed turns; not her reason.

Sept. 25th. She stopped breathing at half past one. As long as she raise her hands and look up I felt that she see what we could not, and longed to go. She was blind and could not see any earthly object. She died on my own lap. She was dear to my soul.

Sept. 26th. I slept in my bed at home. I went to the funeral at two. Went to the grave and returned home with an awful head ache. The comfort of feeling that she had gone to Brother Willard, that she was received with joy. I am thankful that I could witness the last and close her eyes.

Nov. 22nd. Rhoda Ann's baby died. I washed and did many things.

Nov. 23rd. I went to the funeral, 24th. Wrote to Mary. Mailed at evening.

1866, April 8th. Heber John has returned to day from his mission, three years in England.

April 10th. Sent a letter to Susan this morn by sister Sarah. Her Brother Samuel Snyder was buried yesterday.

April 21st. I have washed, ironed, baked, cooked, washed dishes, cleaned since yesterday.

April 22nd. I sit in my room alone, a wonder to myself to think of the past and the present.

May 3rd. This is Brother William's birthday.--64

May 26th. God is good. Shall I murmur? If I am filled with a good spirit all will be well.
Rhoda Richards

striking the bottom, 21st, at sunrise we were fast on a sand bar, at 9 got off, at 12 we left a large steam boat in the middle of the river and some flat boats. Before sunset we were fast upon a sandbar with nine other boats. We spent the night quietly as possible. Before day we were all called to breakfast. 22nd, we were fast with 3 or 4 added to our number; it looked like a little city at 11, 23rd we left the bar. 24 passed Bandits cave hauled up by an island near the mouth of the Cumberland river brother Wd preached to an attentive people many expressing a wish to hear more. 25 left our flat boat at Paducah at the mouth of the Tennessee river at ten o’clock A M, entered the Mississippi half past four P M, five miles up the river we saw wreck steam boat Eliza sunk with about forty passengers they were still in the wreck, passed another wreck many hands were taking things out of the water, passed a large boat. 26. Arrived at St Lewis. 1842, Oct. 29, from Keokuk to Nauvoo. 30th: to Uncle Havens. Nov. 11, we commenced house keeping.

A sketch of my journey to Nauvoo— Rhoda 1843, Jan. 16. Brother Joseph with three of the twelve came to see brother Willard and lay hands on him. He was better.

Jan. 17. A church fast and thanksgiving in consequence of the delivery of brother Joseph from his oppressive enemies.

Jan. 18. Brother Willard and wife have gone to brother Joseph’s to partake of a splendid dinner, 15 years to day since he was married. J. took her bed.

Jan. 23. Brother Joseph and Sister Emma called, ...

Feb. 26. Spent the day at cousin Brigham’s with brother Willard and family.

Feb. 26. Spent the day with Sister Kimball, pleasant to get out. ...

April 6. Conference commenced.

April 8. Conference closed, I went—heard brother Joseph. ...