

Lyman and Charlotte Alvord Curtis

Work on the Kirtland temple was interrupted in 1834 when most of the able-bodied men, over two hundred, in the month of May were on their way to Missouri with Zion's Camp. They traveled 1,000 miles in 45 days to reach Missouri, suffering harsh conditions plus insufficient and often poor food. Charlotte Alvord, Lyman Curtis and his sister, Sophronia, were with the Pontiac, Michigan contingent. Following a scourge of cholera sent by the Lord to humble the rebellious Zion's Camp members they were honorably discharged in July to return to their homes or stay in the West which the above-named threesome chose to do. Lyman and Charlotte were married 26 July 1834.

The old settlers had already demanded the Mormons evacuate their homes and lands which the Mormons had agreed to do as of April 1834. Zion in Jackson County was no longer possible at that time. With the reign of terror commencing 31 October, they fled north to the desolate river bottoms. Their trail over the frozen sleet-covered ground was marked by blood from their lacerated feet. Some lost their lives as a result of exposure and hunger. They found temporary refuge in Clay County.

To sustain themselves and their families, they worked for the settlers of the area, doing all kinds of labor from wood chopping to school teaching which Sophronia did. Temporary log houses were constructed in which they lived under wretched conditions until they were able to secure themselves more permanently. Charlotte's and Lyman's families followed them in

1835. Charlotte gave birth to her first child, Julia, in Liberty, Clay County, on 7 May 1835.

Moved to Clay County in 1835 improved farm land until fall of 1838 when I was forced to flee to Far West with my family. When General Clark arrived with his army and the governor's extermination order we were all taken prisoners with our arms being taken from us. We were treated with all the cruelty they were masters of, taking possession of whatever they pleased. Burnt timber, laid waste to town and country and ordered us to leave immediately. I fled to Illinois with my family for safety.

Charlotte and Lyman's son, Ammon Curtis was born at Far West, on 12 June 1837. Life was tolerable. A year later on July 4th, an Independence Day celebration was held and the corner stone was laid for a new temple. Settlements sprang up in surrounding counties. Church leaders issued a declaration of independence from mob, to no avail.

Contrary to their word, the Missourians began sowing seeds of dissension and the incident at the Gallatin polling place at election time resulted in fifteen hundred members of the Church fleeing their homes with property loss of one and one-half million dollars. They painfully made their way eastward toward Illinois during the winter of 1838-1839. Lyman and Charlotte's young son, Ammon, died New Year's Day.

The people of Quincy, Illinois, received the Mormon refugee with kindness. Four months after burying the 18-month-old boy,

we could, a part of us preparing to start our final journey in the spring.

29 March 1847, Levi and Lyman left to join the camp of pioneers to find a home for the Saints somewhere in the Rocky Mountains. Levi had one yoke of oxen and a wagon, Lyman had one horse. They gathered food stuffs; some beans, a little pork but unable to get other groceries. Their clothing was old and scarce as they started to and they knew not where or with what they would have to contend with. They arrived in Winter Quarters on March 31 and arrived at Elk Horn on April 6. They crossed the creek on a raft behind four teams and waited for the remainder of the camp.

28 July – Brigham Young called all together and after exploring reports were made and all voted that this was the place to stop. A where he was a most respected citizens soon as they and had time to recuperate a little, with Levi's, Curtis along with other ox teams, started back to Winter Quarters.

Returning to Lyman's story: Soon after his second arrival at Salt Lake Valley, he was sent by Brigham Young to St. George to survey and oversee the construction of a canal. After completing this work, he moved to Payson where he lived for some years and then to Salem, originally known as Pond Town.

Additional information: wagon maker, colonizer in Southern Utah, surveyor, missionary to Indians.

Charlotte gave birth to another son named Thaddeus, after her father. He was born 28 March 1839.

May 1 1839, the swampy site of Commerce, Illinois, was purchased and work began building "Beautiful Nauvoo". Charlotte gave birth the following 16 March to daughter Adaline Clarinda. A son, Henry was born 29 Feb. 1842. He lived only six months. Lyman polished stones for the Nauvoo temple until he and his brother Moses were sent to LaCrosse, Wisconsin, in the Pinery Expedition to procure lumber for Nauvoo's extensive building program. By 1843, it became a regular settlement – Black River Camp. A small branch of the church was organized and it was here that Charlotte and Lyman's son, Samuel Bent, was born 9 Dec. 1844. Finally, 7 Feb. 1846, they were privileged to receive the endowment promised them for their efforts in the Zion's Camp movement. Charlotte gave birth to a stillborn son (1846) before they were driven from their home in Nauvoo by mobs and started their Western Trek. They had buried four little boys due to the mob violence they suffered.

Information obtained from Levi Jackman Journal for this narration:

Levi Jackman, Lyman, Moses and Joseph Curtis along with their families headed for Winter Quarters. They arrived in that section of the country after winter set in. Some of the families got old cabins to go into but most of the company had to build huts in which to spend the winter. We passed the winter as best

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Elder Lyman Curtis died at his home in Salem, Utah, August 6, 1898 of general debility. Lyman was born January 21, 1812, in Mew Salem, Mass. He joined the church in 1833 and was a member of the memorable body known as Zion's Camp. He shared in the early persecutions of the saints, came west with the pioneers, and entered Salt Lake Valley with Orson Pratt's company July 22, 1847. This notable man has been a constant worker in building up this country; quiet, modest and faithful in every trust and position. He has gone to meet the reward in store for God's faithful servants in the eternal worlds.

A.E.