
INDEFATIGABLE
VETERAN

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY OF

Abel Evans

A WELSH MORMON ELDER

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PREFACE

In January 1849 Captain Dan Jones wrote President Orson Pratt in Manchester that a new “First Presidency” had been selected and set apart for Wales: William Phillips, “a sterling and tried man” as president; Abel Evans, “an indefatigable veteran” as first counselor; and John Davis, “a master Welsh printer” as second counselor (see *Millennial Star* 11:40).

The two aspects of the epithet “indefatigable veteran”—tireless dedication and longtime service to the cause of Mormonism in Wales—aptly describe the person for whom it was intended, Elder Abel Evans. Since his baptism into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1844 he had labored as a missionary for his new religion in an effort to bring his fellow countrymen to a knowledge of the true gospel of Jesus Christ as he had come to understand it. His first converts came just four days after his own conversion—his father, a sister, and two brothers. Scores of others would be “pricked in their hearts” upon hearing his message delivered with all of the oratorical skills that Abel Evans had honed from early on as a devoted Protestant.

There is evidence that Abel Evans wrote many letters during his six-year mission following his conversion. Several of these were excerpted in the Welsh Mormon periodicals; five were printed verbatim. The only surviving journal of Abel Evans covers just his first Atlantic crossing, and the nature of this journal suggests that any others he may have kept were brief at best.

Thus the biographer is left with only sparse primary information coming from Abel Evans himself; secondary sources, however, are more plentiful. Some of those whose paths Abel crossed mentioned him in their journals; others made reference to him in letters; still others, in an attempt to comfort surviving family members, left details of his passing and burial; and, ironically, it was two of Mormonism’s most notorious enemies in Wales who wrote of Abel’s conversion to the LDS church and of some of his missionary activities.

These sources offer a rather surprising array of details concerning the life of Abel Evans. And when combined with circumstantial evidence these details make it possible for the reader to come to know Abel quite well.

In this biographical portrait of Abel Evans we will follow him from his birth in southwest Wales in 1812 to the burgeoning town of Merthyr Tydfil, where he converted to Mormonism in 1844. We will observe some of his activities during his six years as a Mormon missionary in Wales. We will accompany him on his 1850 voyage across the ocean to New Orleans, up the Mississippi River to St. Louis, and up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs. We will rejoice with him as this thirty-seven-year-old bachelor finally relinquishes his celibacy by taking as his wife Mary Jones, a young girl he had met on the ship. We will mourn with Abel and Mary as they place their ten-month-old Elizabeth Ann in a tiny grave in Council Bluffs. Then we will go with them across the plains of America to their “Zion” in Utah. We will see them carve out an existence in the small town of Lehi, where they are joined by sister-wives, Martha and Jane, and fifteen children. Then we will go with Abel back to Wales, where he returned in 1865 to serve a second mission and where he literally gave his life for the cause of his religion. A simple headstone marks the location of his grave, just a morning’s walk from where he first heard the gospel truths nearly twenty-three years earlier.

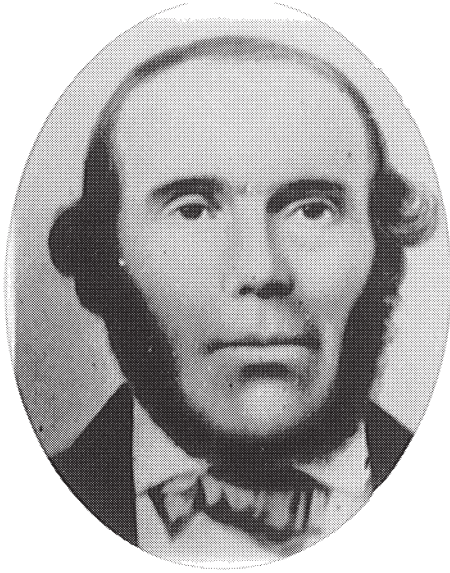
I hope that all who read this portrayal of Abel Evans will come to a greater appreciation of his exemplary life and a greater understanding of just how “indefatigable” this “vereran” really was.

Many of the quotations used in this biography are from documents in the Welsh language; all translations from the Welsh original into English are mine except where indicated in the notes. All italics and underlinings in quotations are in the original. I have preserved the original spelling in quotations from documents in English but have made some changes in punctuation to facilitate the reading. Appendixes A–C are biographical sketches of Abel Evans’s three wives, Mary, Martha, and Jane; Appendix D is a biographical sketch of Abel Evans’s father, Samuel Evans. Therefore, some of the information contained in these appendixes

appears more than once. Appendixes E–J consist of documents too lengthy to quote entirely in the text. Appendixes K and L are published biographical sketches about Abel Evans that require comment. Appendix M is a list of Abel Evans’s children and grandchildren.

I am indebted to many individuals for their assistance in producing this book. Robert J. Evans of Ogden, Vervene Grant of Lehi, Hazel Jackson of Salt Lake City, Eudon Wasden of Pleasant Grove, and Etheleen Evans of Orem have graciously shared their research with me. DeVere Oliver of Lehi, Lillian Reader of Salt Lake City, and Zona Steiner of Columbia, California, granddaughters of Abel Evans, have from their memories provided me with otherwise unavailable information. Bert J. Rawlins of the LDS Family History Library has offered many valuable suggestions. Richard S. Van Wagoner, Lehi historian, led me to rare manuscripts about the early years of Lehi. For their help in translating difficult passages of nineteenth-century Welsh, I am deeply indebted to D. L. Davies of Aberdare, South Wales, and R. Fred Roberts of Abergele, North Wales. Linda Hunter Adams of the Brigham Young University College of Humanities Publications Center edited the entire manuscript; Jane Clayson, a graduate student at BYU, designed the book and set the type; and David R. Coughanour, also a BYU student, created the index—for their expertise and late night hours I am most grateful. My thanks also to Jennifer L. Fletcher, Heidi Gassman, Lisa Hymas, Jennifer Klaumunzner, Val Merritt, Marie Pozernick, Karalee Larsen Pugmire, Brook Steckley, and April Thompson, who proofed galleys.

Fay L. Evans generously provided funding for the production of this biography of his great-grandfather. This book is dedicated to his memory.



Abel Evans

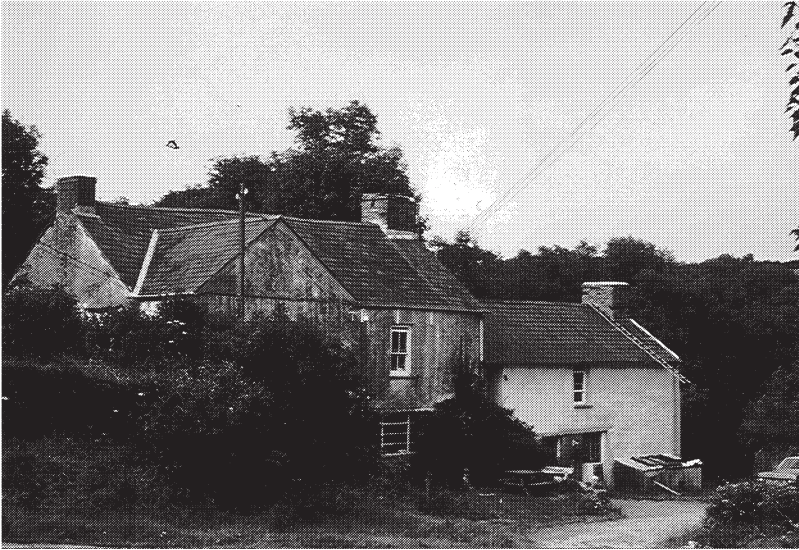
CHAPTER ONE

FROM FARM TO MINE

Only one-eighth the size of the State of Utah, Wales at the beginning of the nineteenth century was largely rural. The first census in 1801 shows that there was no town of more than ten thousand people in Wales and only four of more than five thousand. During the 1800s the Industrial Revolution caused dramatic changes to occur in the population distribution. The establishment of mines and factories exercised a magnetic attraction to the poverty-stricken farmers throughout the hills of Wales. Drawn by the prospect of wages at least three to four times their farming incomes, they packed up their meager possessions and made their way to the growing population centers. Most of the men and their sons over age nine went down into the mines.

Hedgehog Castle Farm

The spring of 1812 found Samuel Evans and Anne, his bride of less than a year, living on a farm in South Wales. “Castell Draenog” (hedgehog castle) was the name given to this modest-sized farm located in the parish of Llangan in the westernmost part of Carmarthenshire. The still-standing farmhouse of Castell Draenog bears no resemblance to a castle, although hedgehogs may well have inhabited the area.



Farmhouse at Castell Draenog

It was not in the farmhouse, however, that Samuel and Anne lived. As poor newlyweds, they most likely lived in one of the cottages built especially for the laborers. And it was in one of these small cottages that their firstborn, Abel, made his appearance on June 17th, just four days before the beginning of the summer of 1812.

In a brief war begun that year, Britain rekindled its hopes of reacquiring its colony lost thirty-six years earlier. And Napoleon still nurtured aspirations of controlling all of Europe—the Battle of Waterloo was just three years hence. Such events, however, were of little concern to Samuel and Anne Evans. Providing adequate shelter, sufficient food, and a proper upbringing for their little son constituted their focus.

Religion played an important role in the life of this small family. In most places in Wales at that time parents systematically took their infant children to the local vicar of the Church of England for christening. Nonconformity,



Independent Chapel at Llanboidy

however, had claimed the souls of Samuel and Anne by now. Although married in the Anglican church of Llanboidy in 1811—the law required that all marriages be performed in the Anglican church—they chose to have their baby son christened on October 20, 1812, in the Independent chapel in Llanboidy. The Independents, along with the Methodists, the Baptists, and several other faiths throughout Britain, were fiercely opposed to many of the beliefs of the Church of England. Because of their unwillingness to “conform” to the established religion they were known as “Nonconformists.”

Whether Samuel and Anne were brought up in Nonconformist families cannot be determined because of the paucity of surviving information. Virtually nothing is known about the origins of Anne Hughes Evans except that she was born in about 1785 and was the daughter of Leticia Mascie.¹ A few more details about Samuel Evans’s origins have survived: he was born August 18, 1789, at Llanglydwen, Carmarthenshire, son of Amos and Jemima Owen Evans.²

Since Samuel and Anne Evans had all their children christened in the chapels of the Independents (also known as Congregationalists), it is logical to assume that Abel's religious upbringing was as an Independent. One of the objectives of the Sunday Schools of the Independents and the other Nonconformist sects was to ensure that all their followers could read the Bible for themselves. Thus, the Evanses were probably readers of the holy writ, and they heard a great deal of fire and brimstone sermons preached from the pulpit. Abel's oratorical abilities may well have derived from hearing this style of preaching. Although he learned to write sometime during his life, his writing skills were not of the same level as that of his oratory.

Merthyr Tydfil

Until the age of at least nine Abel lived the life of a farm boy in Carmarthenshire. But when he was between nine and fourteen he moved with his family to Merthyr Tydfil, about one hundred miles east of their residences in Carmarthenshire. Conditions in the industrial town of Merthyr Tydfil were crowded and unsanitary compared with the bucolic atmosphere of rural Wales.³

The lowest-paid workers in the coal and iron mines earned wages three to four times the income of farm laborers. The miners, however, were forced to put up with some dreadful conditions underground to qualify for their pay each week: shifts of ten and often more hours per day, a six-day work week, no space to stand upright (they could straighten their bodies only when flat on their backs), coal dust and other impurities that often did permanent damage to their lungs, and constant danger of cave-ins and explosions. Miners were also required to spend part of their wages in employer-owned shops, where prices were generally twenty-five percent higher than in other shops. During the winter months miners

would see the sun only on Sundays, since they would be underground all the daylight hours of the other days.

When the Evanses arrived in Merthyr Tydfil in the 1820s the population was under twenty thousand. They witnessed a growth rate of more than one thousand new inhabitants per year over the next two decades. Sanitary conditions lagged far behind the relentless increase in numbers, and open-air sewers constituted ever-present health dangers as well as a constant stench.

The only indication we have of a residence for the Evanses is in the 1841 census in which they are listed as living in the lower section of town known as the Isle of Wight. By this year only their youngest child, Elizabeth, was living at home. For some reason Abel is not to be found in the 1841 census records, but he was most likely in the Merthyr Tydfil area working in the mines. And evidence indicates that Samuel and his family had aligned themselves with the Bethesda Chapel of the Independents in Merthyr Tydfil sometime before 1844. Anne died of phthisis (pulmonary tuberculosis) in January of that year, and two weeks later her son Abel converted in dramatic fashion to Mormonism.

Mormons in Merthyr Tydfil

Mormon missionaries first arrived in Great Britain in July 1837. They proselyted only in England until 1840 when they expanded their efforts into Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball appear to have been the first Mormon elders to preach in Wales. Their travels took them across the border to small communities such as Overton and Lightwood Green in Flintshire, North Wales. Although they did not baptize any converts, they were encouraged by the reception they received. Upon returning to England they sent other missionaries back to the Overton area, where thirty-two converts were baptized within three weeks. Other

missionaries were sent to Monmouthshire in South Wales, where a few branches were established. These early efforts, however, were concentrated in border areas where mainly English was spoken. It would be two more years before missionaries were sent into the heartland of Wales.⁴

In late 1842 an English convert from Wolverhampton by the name of William Henshaw was sent further into Wales by Lorenzo Snow. Henshaw's marriage to a native Welsh woman, Mary Ann Lewis, is a possible explanation as to why Lorenzo Snow issued Henshaw the call to establish himself and his family in the heartland of Wales in Merthyr Tydfil. Since Henshaw was unable to speak Welsh in an area where most could not understand English, he had to preach to those who were bilingual and depend on his bilingual converts to carry forth in Welsh.

Any records that may have been kept by William Henshaw and his group of converts lamentably have not surfaced to aid the modern-day historian in attempts to reconstruct some of the happenings among those early Mormons in Merthyr Tydfil. The firstfruits of Elder Henshaw's proselyting received baptism on February 19, 1843—William R. Davies and his wife, Rachel. There was a steady increase from this point on, and by the end of the year nearly eighty people had converted to Mormonism.⁵

The Reverend W. R. Davies

Ironically, it is to the Reverend W. R. Davies, a Baptist minister in the neighboring town of Dowlais, that we are indebted for some sketchy (and heavily biased) information concerning this small group of Mormons. In the March 1844 issue of *Y Bedyddiwr* [The Baptist] he declared:

The foolish and madmen who call themselves "Latter-day Saints" have arrived in Pendaran [a town bordering Merthyr

Tydfil]. They profess to work miracles, to prophesy, to speak in unknown tongues, yea, in a word to do everything that the apostles did. I am sorry to say that a number of the dregs of society are now believers. They baptize at night, and those receiving baptism must undress for them and go to the water stark naked!⁶

The Reverend Davies knew perfectly well that Latter-day Saints were not baptized in the nude; he most likely included this observation to prejudice the reader's mind against such "fanatical" people as the Mormons. He then proceeds to heap scorn on the Mormons, or, as he calls them, the "chief fools around," for their belief in the laying on of hands. He gives the account of a female member of the Church (probably Sister Mary Griffiths) who had become hysterical and to whom Brother John Jones gave a priesthood blessing. The blessing seemed to help for a short time, but then she became worse. "In this crisis," writes Davies, "there was nothing else to do but to grieve over the absence of the 'high-deceiver,' that is, the great prophet, the father of them all." Davies had reference to Elder William Henshaw, the leader of the Saints at that time (and the person who would later baptize both Abel Evans and his father Samuel Evans) and Elder Henshaw was sent for. But despite his blessing the sister continued to worsen, and finally a doctor was sent for. The doctor, according to the prejudiced and often "inaccurate" Reverend Davies, found that the woman had given birth and that the child had died in bed.

These and other similar stories about the Mormons were being circulated around Merthyr Tydfil during the months preceding the conversion of Abel Evans and his father to Mormonism. Being active supporters of the Independent faith and parishoners of the Bethesda Independent chapel in Merthyr, Abel and Samuel would most certainly have heard their own minister warning them about the dangers of

these “deceivers.” The Reverend W. R. Davies concluded his writeup with this comment: “I did not think there were men so stupid in Wales to believe such a heap of nonsense and presumption.” Those contemplating aligning themselves with the Latter-day Saints had to be willing to become subject to substantial ridicule and scorn on the part of Mormonism’s numerous detractors.

CHAPTER TWO

AN INTELLIGENT AND GIFTED YOUNG MAN

Throughout the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints people have converted in numerous manners and circumstances. Part of the Mormon belief is that the Holy Ghost is constantly ready to touch the heart of anyone who studies the doctrine and prays sincerely for a witness concerning the truthfulness of the message. Once individuals have received that witness they must accept baptism in order to be totally honest to the new belief. Most are converted gradually as they become acquainted with Mormon principles and practices, but occasionally the conversion is of a more dramatic nature. Probably few conversions, however, have been more dramatic than that of Abel Evans.

The Independents Debate the Mormons

In the April 1844 issue of *Y Bedyddiwr* the Reverend W. R. Davies again spewed forth his venom against the Latter-day Saints. "I shall give a brief account," he writes, "of their failure together with their success."¹ Davies devotes the first portion of his write-up to describing Mormon defeats in Georgetown and Twynyrodyn (areas of Merthyr Tydfil), Dowlais (a town about two miles northeast of Merthyr

Tydfil), and finally Cefncoedycymer (a town about two miles northwest of Merthyr). These defeats had come at the hands of the Baptists, especially Dafydd Oliver, a member of the Zion Baptist chapel in Merthyr, and his minister, James Wilkins—ironically, James Wilkins’s son Henry would later convert to Mormonism.² In Cefncoedycymer a lame man by the name of Thomas Thomas “conversed with them and confounded them until they fled from there.” Davies then presents a fairly detailed account of the Mormons’ ensuing encounter with the Independents of the Bethesda Chapel:

After much failure they moved and camped near the men of the “sprinkle,” that is, the church of the Independents by the name of Bethesda, Merthyr. These heard that the Saints had come to their borders, and since they were aware that they [the Saints] had yet to recover from the wounds received from Oliver, nor had they strengthened their armies after the lame man had chased them from Cefn [Cefncoedycymer], an intelligent and gifted young man who was a member in Bethesda, a deacon in the Sunday School and a warrior from his youth, was selected to chase the Saints from their boundaries. A heated battle about the miracles took place; the Saints lost their ground as usual, and the Independents appeared victorious in the eyes of the public. His brethren were extremely proud to have such a young man of hope in their midst; and some believed that ere long he would rise to the same level in the army as his brother, Quick.³

The Mormons and the Independents agreed to continue their discussion in a few days. Davies describes the second encounter:

A second debate was scheduled to the end that the giant could completely eliminate the Saints. The battle came, but by the second campaign the Saints had come to understand their

weakness, and they had also come to understand wherein lay the great strength of their enemy. Consequently, the Saints moved the ground of the debate, and instead of defending miracles, they took hold of sprinkling babies, and the sprinklers were killed forthwith. He [the young man] fell silent, and what's more he went of his own free will with the Saints from the scene of the debate to the river and was baptized. ⁴

Let us attempt to fill in some of the blanks of the story as outlined by the Reverend Davies. The “intelligent and gifted young man” was Abel Evans. We can make that statement with conclusive certainty thanks to a list of Mormon converts kept by one Edward Roberts, a convert himself as of January 21, 1844, just a little over three weeks before the entry of the Samuel Evans family into the Mormon fold.⁵ Listening to the debate with great interest and justifiable pride was Abel Evans’s father, Samuel Evans, who just two weeks earlier had buried his wife of thirty-two years. As he watched his son defend their beliefs in an open debate, Samuel may have reflected on a scene thirty-one years earlier, also at an Independent chapel, this one a hundred miles to the west of Merthyr Tydfil in the parish of Llanboidy, Carmarthenshire. It was here that he had taken Abel, his firstborn, to be christened. And for over three decades Samuel and his family had remained faithful to the beliefs of the Independents—baptism by sprinkling, the need for infant baptism, and the cessation of miracles after the early Apostles had died. His son had distinguished himself among the members of this Bethesda congregation, for it was he who was selected to represent them in a debate with a new group of religious extremists known as the Mormons. The first debate had gone entirely in his son’s favor. The scene afterwards was no doubt one of great rejoicing and congratulations from father to son for his adeptness in steering the ship of the Independents through the choppy waters of

the miracles and their nonexistence in modern times. There was no reason to suppose that the outcome would be any different in the second debate, this one about baptism, its proper mode, and to whom it should be administered. With what horror Samuel must have watched as his son fell silent during the debate! This silence coincided with the moment in which Abel Evans came to the startling realization that the religious ground he had stood on for over a quarter of a century was no longer solid. Not only did he perceive that his beliefs were incorrect, but also he simultaneously accepted a substitute set of beliefs from a small group seen as crazy fanatics by his compatriots, a group whose numbers did not even reach a hundred, a group that had no building to meet in, and a group whose leader did not even speak Welsh. Furthermore, Abel was unwilling to engage in further discussion. He had made his decision—as unpopular with his family and fellow parishioners in the Bethesda Chapel as it would no



Bethesda Independent Chapel at Merthyr Tydfil

doubt be, he had decided to receive an immersion baptism at the hands of a Mormon elder. And why wait? There was no need to unnecessarily postpone a sudden change in the direction of his life once he had made up his mind. No, it would be that very night in the river.⁶

Confusion among the Independents

One can imagine the resulting scene of confusion among those faithful members of the Bethesda Chapel. One minute they were cheering on their defender with “Amens” and “Hallelujahs,” and the next they were gaping in disbelief as he disassociated himself from them, essentially bidding them an everlasting farewell, as he followed the Mormons down to the riverside. The most incredulous of all was no doubt the defender-turned-opponent’s father, Samuel Evans. Other fathers in similar circumstances were known to have disowned their sons without further discussion. Would Samuel succumb to such a tempting and dramatic act? The Reverend Davies furnishes the outcome to this family crisis:

This news traveled like a tremor through the camp of the sprinkle in Bethesda, and great was the distress of the fallen one’s father. His lament the next night at the meeting at Bethesda was extraordinary, and all he could do was wonder and ponder as to what had bewitched his son. But you will be even more surprised when I tell you that his father was seen the second night following the same path, and was buried in the water by the Saints; then another son and his sister, and great was the singing and the shouting that was and is heard in the camp of the Saints!! Here are four individuals of the sprinkle brought down, but no wonder—they had previously believed in the existence of sprinkling babies, something that never before existed. . . . I hope that this absurd event will serve a good purpose to open the eyes and convince the

minds of many of the men of the “basin.” Had they been Baptists they would have won the battle.⁷

From the instant that Abel Evans let it be known that he would henceforth be associated with the Latter-day Saints his father and siblings were caught in a most awkward predicament. They could no longer continue their association with the Independents without suffering shame and embarrassment at the loss of their son and brother. At the subsequent meeting of the Independents they no doubt heard some harsh comments concerning the “tragedy” of their loved one. He had betrayed them all by going over with the enemy. But Samuel knew his son well; he had taught him carefully and helped to shape his thinking. Abel had a good mind and was highly respected by all who knew him. His sudden departure from three decades of religious training was certainly not based on a whim. He must have experienced something very strange and powerful to prompt him to abandon, from one minute to the next, his entire upbringing. Samuel and his other children who lived nearby must have demanded an explanation from Abel. At this point his persuasive powers came into full focus, and not only did he show them that he had not gone insane, but he also convinced them to do as he had done. Just four days after his own baptism Abel had the privilege of watching his father Samuel and his brother Evan be immersed in the river by a Mormon elder. And three days later his brother John and his sister Phoebe would follow suit.⁸ At this point the Independents at Bethesda Chapel had an even greater cause for remorse and mourning. An entire family, one of the stalwart families of the chapel, had joined the enemy! On the other hand the Latter-day Saints were celebrating and rejoicing as they became acquainted with their new brothers and sister in the gospel.

It was ironic that Abel Evans would triumph in the first debate with the Mormons about modern-day miracles. He

argued that the necessity for miracles had ceased in the days of the Apostles, but following his conversion he would eventually gain a reputation as one whose priesthood blessings had great force, yes, even a “miraculous” force.

CHAPTER THREE

PREACHING NEW PRINCIPLES

Because journals and diaries of early converts to Mormonism in Wales have not survived, it is difficult to furnish much detail about its growth and happenings during the first two years. A few highlights, however, deserve our attention.

The list of converts in Merthyr Tydfil and nearby Rhymney kept by Edward Roberts shows a total of 124 members in that part of Wales by April 20, 1844 (his records end on that date). By this time fourteen months had passed since William Henshaw had his first success in bringing William and Rachel Davies into the Church. This would mean an average of eight or nine new members were added each month, or a new member every three or four days, during that time. Abel Evans was chronologically the ninetieth convert to Mormonism in the Merthyr Tydfil area.

Early Converts

William Henshaw attended the April 1844 meeting in Manchester at which time he was named president of the newly formed Merthyr Tydfil Conference (or district). At that time there were just six branches over which he presided: Merthyr Tydfil, Aberdare, Rhymney, Tredegar, Beaufort, and

Abergavenny. The first two were in Glamorganshire; the others were in Monmouthshire. Abergavenny received its first missionaries in late 1840 and was the only branch that William Henshaw had not established. When Abel Evans converted in February of 1844 the only two well-established branches were Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney. The first converts were made in Tredegar just a few weeks before Abel's baptism. Logically, since all new members were expected to assist in bringing in new converts, it is safe to say that Abel Evans, as he was becoming accustomed to his new religious beliefs, played a role in strengthening the existing branches and helping to open up the work in Aberdare and Beaufort.

Four-and-a-half months after Abel Evans accepted Joseph Smith as a latter-day prophet, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred at the jail in Carthage, Illinois. News of this happening, however, did not reach the new converts in Wales until several months later. With Joseph Smith at the Carthage Jail until just a few hours before the Martyrdom was Dan Jones, a compatriot of Abel Evans. Converted to Mormonism in January of 1843 while operating a small steamboat up and down the Mississippi River, Captain Dan Jones would become acquainted with Abel Evans sometime in 1845.

Since Abel was single when he aligned himself with the small, struggling religious group known as the Mormons, he was in a position to devote his full energies to the cause. He had already had opportunity as an Independent to develop a knowledge of the Bible. Furthermore, the fact that he, rather than the minister, was selected to represent the Bethesda congregation in confronting the Mormons suggests that his oratorical skills were held in high regard. Consequently, one would imagine that being so well equipped Abel was eager, after his own conversion, to begin proselyting those around him. Oftimes the most difficult people to convince are one's

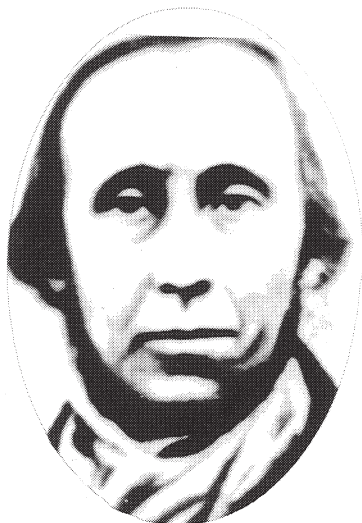
own family members, but it was in his own family that Abel experienced his first success. Because of the lack of records it is nearly impossible to determine any statistics concerning Abel's convert baptisms during this early period. Although his name appears a few times in the early branch records that have survived since the 1840s, most of the entries do not include the names of those who baptized the converts.

From other sources, however, the names of a few individuals who received their baptism from Abel Evans have been ascertained. One of these was Margaret Morris, the twenty-two-year-old fiancée of Hopkin Mathews. Hopkin was baptized in Merthyr Tydfil five weeks after Abel Evans, and he was no doubt anxious for Margaret to share his new religious beliefs. He probably arranged for Abel, by then a priest in the Mormon priesthood, to teach his fiancée the restored gospel. Margaret believed readily, and Abel performed her baptism on Tuesday, April 2, 1844, only seven weeks after his own dramatic conversion. For the first seven years of marriage

Hopkin served as a missionary. Margaret would often accompany him, sometimes with a baby in her arms, and sing hymns on the streets to attract a group to listen to her husband preach. During a church meeting in July 1847 attended by a man from Bengal, Margaret sang in tongues. The visitor, John M'Manmouth, took a small book from his pocket and sang with her, the tears streaming down his cheeks. Following the meeting he asked Hopkin Mathews who



Margaret Morris Mathews



William Perkins



Jane Mathews Perkins

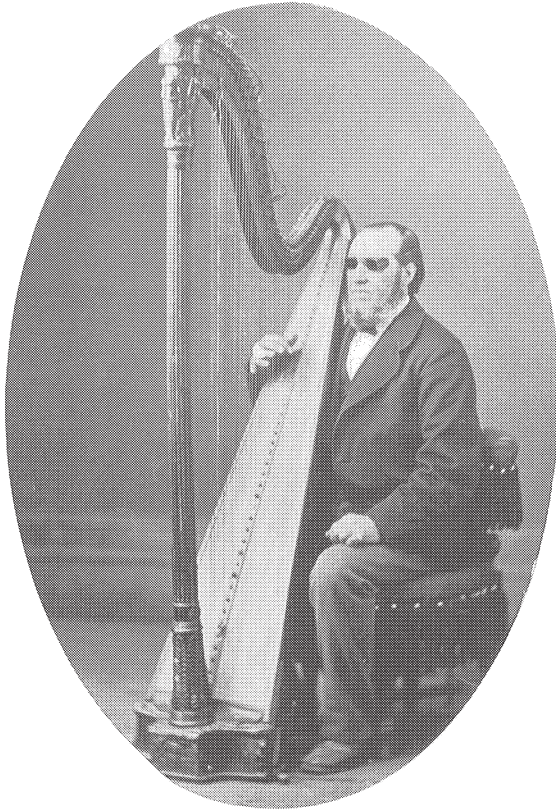
the lady was who sang so perfectly the song his mother sang to him when he was a boy. John was baptized a few days later by Captain Dan Jones. Margaret traveled with her husband and children to Utah in 1856 in a handcart company. They eventually settled near Logan, where they raised their ten children.¹

Two other people baptized by Abel Evans were William and Jane Mathews Perkins, who lived in Treboeth near Swansea. Jane was a cousin of Hopkin Mathews, so it appears that the “referral system” of gaining converts to Mormonism was in effective use during these early days of the Church in Wales. Although they were baptized October 23, 1844, William and Jane were so poor that emigration was impossible for them until twenty-four years later. They and their large family were the heart of the Treboeth branch during this time. They eventually settled in Cedar City, Utah, where they died a few years after immigrating. Their son

Benjamin, who was less than one year old at the time of their conversion, was later the central figure of the “Hole in the Rock Expedition.”²

Thomas D. Giles is one other name that we know for certain is connected with Abel Evans. An interviewer reported Thomas Giles’s first acquaintance with the Church:

Brother Giles was a Baptist when he was a young man, and an earnest seeker after truth wherever it was to be found. The first time he met his friend Abel Evans after that gentleman



Thomas D. Giles

had joined the Church, he was asked by him what he thought of the Latter-day Saints. Brother Giles replied that he knew nothing about them. Brother Evans then predicted that he soon would know something about them, and, more than that, he and his father's family would soon be baptized by them. Brother Giles thought but little of this prediction at the time, but it was soon literally fulfilled, for on hearing the gospel preached he was convinced of its truth, and on the 1st of November, 1844, he was baptized by Elder Abel Evans.³

Abel's prophecy was fulfilled, as Thomas Giles's family did eventually come into the fold. At first his mother declared that he had been deluded by false prophets, but after hearing more about the gospel she received baptism, the first after her son Thomas to do so. Then Thomas's father, his sister, and his two brothers were baptized. Last to receive baptism was his wife, Margaret; thus, one can imagine that communication may have been a bit strained during this interim, especially in view of the fact that he was called on a mission in the dead of winter three months after his baptism and had to leave his wife and newborn baby.⁴

Fortunately, Thomas's mission area was not an extreme distance from Merthyr Tydfil. He was called to open up the work in the growing mining town of Nantyglo in Monmouthshire about four miles from his birthplace in Blaenavon. Here he experienced much success in the midst of much persecution. About a year after being released from his mission Thomas met with a serious accident in the mines. A large piece of coal fell on his head and knocked his eyes out and otherwise crushed and injured him. He was declared a lost cause by the doctor who attended him, but only because the doctor did not know about the priesthood blessing from the Mormon elders and the extraordinary faith of Thomas Giles. "Through the mercy and power of God," says Thomas's journal entry, "I was speedily restored to health and

strength. I have no eyes; therefore, I cannot see, but in about a month after this accident happened, I was again enabled to go forth and preach the gospel.”⁵

Not only did Thomas Giles continue to preach the gospel, but he was also called as a conference president on the same occasion that Abel Evans was called as first counselor to William Phillips in the mission presidency on December 31, 1848. Six weeks later Thomas Giles bade farewell to his parents, his sister, and his brother as they began their journey to Salt Lake City. His own opportunity to emigrate would not be for another seven years when he sailed on the *Samuel Curling* with his wife and their one surviving child (seven others had died as infants and young children). Crossing the plains in a handcart company, Thomas and his son survived the journey; his wife did not and neither did their little daughter born near Laramie, Wyoming.

Unable to perform the normal labors of pioneer life, Thomas played the harp for his livelihood, a harp given to him by President Brigham Young. He remarried and had one more child. No doubt Abel Evans was glad to greet his old friend when Thomas passed through Lehi for a concert. What a great contribution to the strength of the Church to baptize a man such as Thomas D. Giles, “the blind harpist.”⁶

Initially Abel Evans and his fellow missionaries in Wales had leaflets and pamphlets in only the English language to distribute to investigators. It was not until September 1844, seven months after Abel’s conversion, that something was published in Welsh to assist them in preaching the gospel. In a letter dated September 3, 1844, Elder Reuben Hedlock, the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Great Britain, reported to Church leaders in America: “The Church in South Wales is progressing rapidly. I have published a small pamphlet in the Welsh language on the first principles.”⁷ There is no extant copy of this “small pamphlet,” but it was probably just

two sides of one sheet of paper or perhaps four pages of a folded sheet of paper.

Consequently, except for this pamphlet, investigators who spoke only the Welsh language were unable to study about Mormonism on their own. They had to rely solely on the spoken word. Of course, many of the Welsh were unable to read in any language because of their limited opportunities for education. Most of the early converts to Mormonism in Wales came from the laboring classes and were not privileged to receive any appreciable education, nor were they blessed with much of this world's goods. The lives of the men consisted mainly of twelve-hour days, six days a week, down in the mines or working at a factory. Their sons above the age of eight or so would accompany them to the mines. Records show that even six-year-old boys would be working. Little wonder they were willing to leave their country for the promise of a better life in America.

New Directions

The year of 1844 was one of vital importance in the lives of Abel Evans, his siblings, and their parents. The death of Abel's mother on January 25, 1844, had no doubt caused them to reflect on what lay ahead beyond this mortal existence.⁸ They could take comfort in their religious beliefs with the Independents, for Anne Hughes Evans would be "saved" because of her baptism in that faith. Greater comfort came to the grieving family when they heard and accepted the beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, especially the plan of salvation with its teachings on the premortal existence and the life after death. Would it not stand to reason that this new understanding played an important role in the conversion of the Evanses?

With their conversion came not only a change in beliefs but a desire for a change in residence as well. All converts were expected to begin making their plans to leave their

native land and journey to the Rocky Mountains in America to help establish the Kingdom. Emigration was financially impossible for the majority of the Welsh converts with their meager resources. Providing shelter and obtaining sufficient food for their families were about all most were able to do. Nevertheless, the counsel of the Brethren in Nauvoo, and later in Salt Lake City, was to begin saving. Thus the Evanses and hundreds (later thousands) of their fellow Saints began to view their native land as a temporary residence. And because of the animosity and persecution heaped upon them by their enemies they even began to refer to Wales as “Babylon.” America came to symbolize the promised land in a dual manner—religious salvation as well as financial salvation. In America they could even become landowners, something as far out of reach for most Welsh in those days as sending a man to the moon.

If the Evanses made any New Year’s resolutions for 1845 they would have included such things as saving all they could toward emigrating and bringing as many souls as possible into the fold of Mormonism. Emigration would not come for Abel until 1850 and not until 1854 for Samuel.⁹ Abel remained single for another six years after his conversion to Mormonism. His widowed father, however, married the widowed Catherine Havart Powell on March 18, 1845, in the Ynysgau Chapel of the Independents. Why not in a Mormon chapel by a Mormon preacher? The answer is simple—there were no Mormon chapels at that time (only rented halls), and Mormon preachers were not authorized to perform marriages considered legal by the British government. It is likely that Catherine Powell was the widow of John Powell and that both were early converts to Mormonism.¹⁰

Captain Dan Jones

The year 1845 brought a new missionary from Nauvoo to Wales, one who would offer inspiration to the Evans family

and one with whom Abel would form a lasting friendship. This missionary received his call to Wales directly from the Prophet Joseph Smith, himself. In fact, the last prophecy of Joseph Smith in mortality was concerning the call of this particular elder—Dan Jones, “Captain” Dan Jones, as he was often called.

A native of Flintshire in North Wales, Dan Jones had gone to sea in 1827 at the age of seventeen. After sailing all over the world, Dan Jones decided to emigrate to America with his wife, Jane, in about 1840. When he first heard of Mormonism he was operating a small steamboat, *The Maid of Iowa*, on the Mississippi River. He was baptized in January of 1843 in the waters of the Mississippi. Shortly thereafter he became acquainted with Joseph Smith, who bought out Dan Jones’s partner and became part owner of *The Maid of Iowa*. Eventually the Prophet Joseph bought out Dan Jones’s half of the steamboat as well so Jones would have money to go on his mission to Wales and print books and pamphlets in favor of Mormonism. The money, however, was never received by Dan Jones. His philosophical response

to this financial loss is an example of the proper way to put things in perspective. “Thrilled with the prospects of my mission,” wrote Jones in 1855, “I left all, rejoicing in the exchange of a steamboat for an Eldership on the deck of the never sinking ship of life.”¹¹

Dan Jones was with the Prophet Joseph the night before the Martyrdom on June 27, 1844. When Joseph asked him if he was afraid



Captain Dan Jones

to die, Jones replied, “Has that time come think you? Engaged in such a cause I do not think death would have many terrors.” Joseph assured him, “You will see Wales and fulfill the mission appointed you ere you die.”¹² During the next thirty-six hours Dan Jones had three narrow escapes from death at the hands of the rabid anti-Mormons and followers of arch-Mormon-hater Thomas Sharp. And it was just a few weeks later that in company with Wilford Woodruff, Hyrum Clark, and their wives that Dan and Jane Jones were on their way back to Wales—this in fulfillment of Joseph’s prophecy.

Early in January of 1845 Dan Jones began his missionary labors in North Wales, where he hoped to convert family and friends to his newfound truths. His parents and other family members were still living at this time, and he had many childhood friends and associates in Flintshire, the land of his birth in 1810. He saw no reason not to have all of them in the waters of baptism soon. For eleven months Captain Dan tirelessly preached the gospel all over North Wales. The result?—three souls, none of them family or associates. During this same period of time that Dan was in North Wales, William Henshaw and his missionaries (among them, of course, Abel Evans) were enjoying a bounteous harvest of new souls—nearly three hundred!

Dan Jones had occasion to become acquainted with William Henshaw at a conference held in Manchester in April 1845. At the gathering William Henshaw reported 316 members in the Merthyr Tydfil Conference, or an increase of 195 during the previous year. This meant that an average of 16 new members per month were added to the ranks of the Mormons in Wales during that year. Elder Henshaw reported having seven elders, ten priests, seven teachers, and four deacons. A few weeks later Jones read with interest Henshaw’s report to Thomas Ward of a conference held on June 1st in Merthyr Tydfil.

Dear Brother Ward—We held a conference in the Large Room, at Merthyr, according to appointment; the day was fine, and many of the Saints were present from a distance of twenty miles or more. One sister nearly seventy years of age walked forty-two miles. I spoke much on the object for which we were met, and exhorted them to continue in love and union, and the spirit of the Lord would crown our labours with success. Elder Rees, and others, spoke on the organization of the church in an interesting manner; many strangers were present; and we feel that much good will be done here. We have baptized forty since the General Conference: the Lord is rolling on his work. This has been the best Conference held in South Wales, it lasted two days, and truly it was a time of rejoicing. The Saints are in good spirits, and are determined to spread the gospel, and very soon will many arise and cross the mighty deep to the Land of Zion.¹³

Bursting with curiosity as to the reason for such success in South Wales while he was experiencing a veritable drought just a hundred miles to the North, Dan Jones arranged to pay a visit to his fellow Saints in Merthyr Tydfil in the summer of 1845. It was then that he and Abel Evans first became acquainted. Jones later wrote of his visit to South Wales: “I shall never forget my happiness when I met so many of my blood brothers and sisters who had come to the bond of the same eternal covenant, to see alike, and to walk together along the same paths, to be quenched with the same divine spirit, and directed towards the same aim.”¹⁴

On August 9, 1845, during Jones’s visit to Merthyr Tydfil, an explosion at the nearby Cwmbach colliery killed twenty-eight people. The editor of the *Millennial Star*, after conversing with Dan Jones, reported the incident:

The Saints who regularly were employed in the pit, were not there at the time of the explosion. They had been warned by

vision, of the catastrophe, and absented themselves from their work. While on the other hand, the individuals who were destroyed, had particularly distinguished themselves by disturbing a meeting of the Saints, and crying out for a sign, little deeming that their request would be granted so speedily, and in so awful a manner.¹⁵

Such a happening in the way described above must have had a dramatic effect on the congregations of the Saints in South Wales, most of them converts of under two years. Certainly they felt blessed to have been spared from this terrible calamity.

Four months after Dan Jones's visit to South Wales as a fellow missionary and an observer he would return as one newly appointed to preside over all the missionary work in Wales. Elder Henshaw would continue as president of the Merthyr Tydfil Conference, however. For nearly three years William Henshaw had presided over the work in South Wales and had seen the numbers grow from those in his own family to nearly five hundred. Having someone new sent by the leaders at Manchester to suddenly assume leadership over him without releasing him must have been rather disquieting to William Henshaw. But he and the somewhat confused Welsh Saints, including Abel and his family members, received this newcomer, fluent in both Welsh and English, and gave him their support. On the foundation of five hundred members that Elder Henshaw and his small group of missionaries had laid during the previous three years Elder Dan Jones would continue to build.

William Hughes Incident

The year 1846 brought with it many new developments, including that of unprecedented growth for Mormonism in Wales—over five hundred new converts. Dan Jones was now

presiding over the missionary work in all of Wales with a missionary force of a dozen or so—Abel Evans was, of course, part of this force. Whatever persecution the Saints in Wales had suffered before, that persecution intensified astonishingly with the coming of Dan Jones to South Wales. And the persecution became particularly intense through the press.

The Mormons' belief that God continued to work miracles through his servants in the nineteenth century was a particular irritant to their enemies. In true Protestant fashion the Reverend W. R. Davies declared that the heavens were closed as far as further revelation was concerned and that no one could go about healing the sick, as did the Apostles of old. Thus when Brother William Hughes of Cyfarthfa Row in Merthyr claimed that his broken leg had been healed in a matter of days as a result of a priesthood blessing given by Abel Evans and Dan Jones, they and all the Mormons had great scorn heaped upon them by the Reverend Davies. In the March issue of *Y Bedyddiwr* he published an extremely sarcastic article entitled "A Miracle! A Miracle! At last!" In this diatribe Davies ridiculed the Saints for claiming to have worked a miracle on William Hughes and stated that all the "Satanists" did was to remove the bandage, pretend to pray over the injury, and make matters worse. "The foolish scoundrel has not gotten better to this day," Davies wrote (full text is in Appendix E).¹⁶

Elder Dan Jones immediately prepared a response to Davies's article and sent it to the editor of *Y Bedyddiwr* in Cardiff hoping that he would demonstrate enough fairness to print it. The response was not printed in the Baptist periodical.¹⁷ It contained the testimony of William Hughes, the injured man, in which he declared: "In the evening [following the accident] one of the elders of the Church of which I am a member, came and anointed my leg with holy oil, and placed hands on me and prayed that the Lord take away the pain, etc. And I testify in words of soberness that I had

complete relief from my pain immediately and continued without pain.”¹⁸ Although Brother Hughes did not identify the elder by name, we know from later sources that it was Abel Evans.

Three days later Dan Jones paid a visit to the Hughes home and at William’s request he administered a second blessing. “And I testify seriously before God and men,” wrote Hughes, “that I immediately, yes, when his hands were still on me, received great healing from the Lord, and not from man; I pulled away the splints and everything, and within five minutes I jumped from the bed to the floor in the sight of all, praising God for his goodness.”¹⁹ Names of eleven witnesses to the incident, eight of them non-Mormons, were given with Hughes’s testimony. Several months later the Rev. Davies continued to maintain the failure of the Mormons to heal the leg of William Hughes.

Even years later the incident was mentioned yet again—this time in an American publication, *Early Scenes in Church History*:

In the year 1846, a man living in Merthyr Tydvil [*sic*], who was a member of the Church, happened accidentally to break his leg between the knee and ankle. A surgeon was called in, who set the broken bones, bound the limb up with bandages and splints and cautioned the patient to keep perfectly quiet until the fracture could have time to knit. Three days afterwards Elder Abel Evans and Thomas D. Giles called to see him, and the former questioned him as to his faith. “Do you believe,” said he, “that the Lord has power to heal your broken limb?” The man acknowledged that he did. “Do you believe,” he again asked, “that we, as the servants of God, holding the Priesthood, have authority to call upon the Almighty and claim a blessing for you at His hands?” The man assured him that he did. “Then,” said he, “If you wish it we will take the bandages off your broken leg and anoint it.”

The man consented, the bandages and splints were removed and his leg was anointed with consecrated oil. The brethren then placed their hands upon his head, and Elder Evans rebuked the power of the evil one, commanded the bones to come together and knit, and, finally, that the man should arise from his bed and walk. He got out of bed immediately and walked about the house, and from that time had no occasion to use a bandage on the injured limb or even walk with a stick.²⁰

The foregoing account was probably obtained from Thomas D. Giles more than thirty years following the incident. It is not surprising that some of the details would differ from those of the earlier accounts. William Hughes was sent the following year with his wife, Hannah, to proselyte in the town of Llanelli in Carmarthenshire, where he experienced enormous success. Unfortunately he died before he could emigrate.

The Forged Letter

In the same issue of *Y Bedyddiwr* in which the William Hughes incident was criticized, the Reverend W. R. Davies also had printed two forged letters, both intended to discredit Mormonism. The first was a letter attributed to Emma Smith, wife of the martyred prophet, Joseph Smith, that appeared in the December 9, 1845, *New York Sun*. It contains her supposed admission that she never really believed in her husband's visions and revelations. She explained in a letter to James Arlington Bennett, probably the real author of the letter, that it was a forgery. Her disclaimer appeared in the January 25, 1845, *New York Sun*, but not in *Y Bedyddiwr*.

The second is a letter dated January 10, 1846, and attributed to Abel Evans and William Henshaw. The editor's preface to the letter is an indication of the extreme animosity the Baptists felt towards the Mormons:

Because of the impudence of these fiends who falsely call themselves “Saints,” and their attacks on believers and disbelief continually in the areas of the mines, and the fact that they have mystified many children and wishy-washy individuals with their insult on the ordinances of the Heavens through their sinful imitations of them, we provide space for the following correspondence that took place between the Rev. W. R. Davies, Dowlais, and them. We must confess that the letter of Mr. Davies to them is rather clumsy, but taking into consideration the low level of knowledge and morals of those whom he addresses, perhaps it would be difficult to do better.²¹

This letter served as the Reverend Davies’s excuse to issue his arrogant and extremely sarcastic reply, printed immediately following the letter. But before considering the reply, let us make a few observations concerning the letter itself. It is filled with grammatical errors and misspellings in Welsh—I have not attempted to imitate these in the translation. These difficulties, together with the belligerent tone of the letter, suggest that it was written by men of limited education and intelligence who were ready to show the smart-aleck Davies a thing or two now that they had their champion in town. Two considerations at this point: First, William Henshaw knew no Welsh, so the letter probably was not written by him. Second, Abel Evans was a man of limited formal education, and the letter from a linguistic point of view could have been penned by him—the limited extant materials written by him exhibit considerable creativity in spelling; however, from a religious point of view for Abel Evans to have written such a letter borders on the absurd—he understood the nature of Dan Jones’s calling in Wales and knew perfectly well that he was not an Apostle. Furthermore, in an immediate response to this “outrage,” Evans and Henshaw categorically denied authorship. Dated

January 10, 1846, from Merthyr Tydfil, the letter in question is as follows:

Dear Sir: Since you have been preaching lately in the "Houses of Worship" of your sect and other places on miracles, etc., together with striking against our "churches" in our absence, you had an easy time of fighting only against your own shadow, or else you were a "straw man" "sir." We whose names are signed below have been appointed by the flock of the only true "Church" pertaining to "Jesus Christ" which customarily assembles under the Sign of the "White Lion of Merthyr Tydfil" to send you this letter to compel you as an honest man to come to the field to defend that which you have said, to face the public next "Thursday" night, that is the 15th of this month, and come out in the open so the public can know. If you come, there to stand against you will be our praiseworthy Apostle, namely "Cap. D. Jones." Not from our part do we fear you, rather we shall honor him this time as our oldest "Apostle" and "Most Respected Teacher" in Wales. Take the path that you see best to follow, and if you do not come, your absence will be proof of your heresy. We are in the name of and for the Church of Jesus Christ. Abel Evans, and Wm Henshaw.²²

Strangely enough, their response was allowed space in the columns of the May 1846 issue of *Y Bedyddiwr*, just two months later. Any fairness in printing the letter from Evans and Henshaw, however, was eliminated with this editorial comment: "Whether the letter referred to is false or authentic, the writing is very much like the writing of this letter. They are so similar that everyone who saw them decided at once that it was the same hand that wrote the two letters."²³ Here is the text of the authentic letter from Abel Evans and William Henshaw:

Mr. Editor. Recently the March issue of *Y Bedyddiwr* came into our hands, and we saw, to our great surprise and dismay, our names signed under some letter, which the Rev. W. R. Davies, Dowlais, says we wrote to him, calling upon him to debate with our “praiseworthy apostle, Capt. D. Jones,” etc. But we testify in soberness and truth, in the presence of God and man, that we never wrote, or caused to be written, the aforementioned letter, or any other piece of writing to this man; and if someone else wrote this letter to him, we are completely unaware of it. All we know of anything like it is, that we heard that the Rev. W. R. Davies was showing some letter rather similar to the aforementioned to his neighbors in scorn, with Capt. D. Jones’s name attached to it, about three months ago, and he threatened to publish it, etc., which caused Mr. Jones to announce publicly at the time, if the said letter appeared, that the public should not believe it, and that every word of it was a forgery. Notice of this was also sent to Mr. Davies, and it was expected that the matter had gone to the land of oblivion until we saw the aforementioned letter in *Y Bedyddiwr*, with our names on it. It is easy for every man who knows anything about us to see that the letter is a fake. We do not, and neither does Capt. D. Jones claim to be an “apostle,” and no one in Britain, as far as we know, claims, or is given the title of apostle in our midst. We expect you will give space to this defense in one of your next issues. It is fair for everyone to have the truth, whatever his opinion may be. We should like to make use of your columns to comment on Mr. Davies’s reply to the said letter, and we hope that neither you, nor the editor of any other religious publication in Wales, would publish such things about any of your fellow-countrymen, unless you were willing to publish the defense as well. At the very least, we are doing no more than our duty by giving you this information, so that you can, if you wish, take back the libels, so that we are not obliged finally to employ other means to obtain the justice and the

freedom accorded to our characters by the laws of our land.
Yours respectfully, Abel Evans, William Henshaw.²⁴

“The persons who address me are beneath my notice,” writes the Reverend W. R. Davies in his reply to the letter supposedly written by Abel Evans and William Henshaw. Then he adds sarcastically, “Abel and Henshaw. Oh, such excellent names! Oh, such shining characters! ‘O my soul, come not thou into their secret.’” The quotation is from Genesis 49:6 in which Jacob speaks of his sons, Simeon and Levi, whose secret was that in their anger they had killed a man, a rather heavy comparison to the supposed misdeeds of Evans and Henshaw. Dan Jones proved that he could be every bit as biting as Davies in his response to Davies’s “reply.” In the third issue of *Prophwyd y Jubili* (Prophet of the Jubilee), the Welsh Mormon periodical begun in July 1846, Dan Jones declares that Davies’s claim that Evans and Henshaw had issued a challenge to him in writing was “a complete lie, worded and devised in such a way as to give the said Mr. Davies a reason to laugh at them.”²⁵ He then declares: “This is a strange man, taking so much notice of something beneath his notice.”²⁶

Jones then chides Davies for his attitude about the names of Abel Evans and William Henshaw:

His proof that they are beneath his notice is because of their names: “Abel and Henshaw. Oh, such excellent names! Oh, such shining characters!” There is a specimen of new-fashioned logic, or old-fashioned from the days of Bajazett [a cruel Ottoman Sultan]. Who has heard that Mr. Davies has ever discussed a subject? His subject is persons; assertion is his reason; and libel is his trade! And so here, because a man’s parents named him “Abel,” he and every other Abel, from the oldest down, are “beneath the notice” of this illustrious man! Let those parents who desire his notice, take care to ask

him what names they give their children. "Henshaw;" what a pity his ancestors did not foresee that his name would lower him "beneath the notice" of the sages of this age!²⁷

Declaring that Abel Evans and William Henshaw are beneath his notice is only the first of five reasons the Reverend W. R. Davies gives for refusing their supposed offer to enter into debate with the Mormons. "The names you give yourselves are too low to be despised, such as 'the only true church of Jesus Christ, our praiseworthy apostle, Capt. D. Jones'" is the second. "The mad and arrogant teachings that you proclaim are below the notice of every man of common sense" is the third. "I refuse your offer with scorn, since I perceive that one of your purposes in holding a 'fair' is to collect fools together, but mainly to try to collect money" is the fourth. And for his fifth reason Davies states that he is simply following the advise that Paul gave to Timothy in the New Testament: "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, from such withdraw thyself" (1 Timothy 6:5).

When it became clear to the Welsh Mormons that receiving fair treatment from the various religious publications in Wales was highly unlikely they decided to have their own. The *Millennial Star* was in its seventh year of publication in Manchester but because it was in English its potential for tilting the balance of prejudice against the Mormons in Wales was severely restricted. Permission was granted for them to print a monthly periodical called *Prophwyd y Jubili* in which they could not only circulate their teachings throughout the Principality but defend themselves against the vicious attacks being leveled at them by the Reverend Davies and others. A very expensive and ambitious endeavor considering the number of Mormons who could read the Welsh language, the periodical would be financed by sales. All members, and especially the missionaries, were expected

to sell and distribute the monthly issues of *Prophwyd y Jubili*. And it was in the September 1846 issue, the third, that its editor, Dan Jones, would give a response to W. R. Davies's forged letter attack. The full text is in Appendix G. The full text of Davies's reply to the letter supposedly sent to him by Abel Evans and William Henshaw is in Appendix F.

Ironically, the periodical and other Welsh Mormon pamphlets were printed on the press owned by Dan Jones's older brother, John, who was a minister for the Independents. The Reverend John Jones was accused by his colleagues of the cloth of operating a "prostitute press" because of his willingness to print Mormon materials. He essentially thumbed his nose at them and did as he pleased. He preached against the teachings of the Mormons from the pulpit on Sundays and printed their teachings on his press during the week, receiving monetary profit from both activities. In his own periodical, *Y Golygydd* (The Editor), John Jones criticized W. R. Davies for his reply to the supposed challenge of Abel Evans and William Henshaw to engage in debate with the Mormons:

If Abel Evans and William Henshaw wrote this letter to Mr. D., they deserve to be rebuked; but not half as much as he himself deserves for the letter he sent in reply. Ah! if only he could hide his letter from the eyes of the country. . . . It is true that many heresies are preached by them; but, in the name of goodness, what is consuming Mr. Davies, and the others who write against them? Do you not know that the best way to increase a strange sect is to persecute it, thereby taking on a more unclean and libelous character than it has? Is there anyone at all around Merthyr and Dowlais, of the men who slander them, who dares attack their subjects? We beg, for the sake of the character of our literature, that our editors not release any more such persecution into their pages; and for the sake of the withering and ending of the Mormons, that no one persecute or disrespect them.²⁸

Nevertheless, the Reverend Jones's plea for restraint went unheeded. Hardly a month went by during the next ten years that something of an anti-Mormon nature did not appear in one of the several religious publications in Wales. Ironically, although John Jones defended the Mormons and continued to print their materials, he did not ever convert to Mormonism; however, his wife and some of his children did.

CHAPTER FOUR

FROM SOUTH TO NORTH AND BACK

That Abel Evans was assigned to travel to North Wales to proselyte in early 1846 is an indication of Dan Jones's confidence in him as a missionary. During his year in North Wales, Dan Jones had very limited success, with only two or three baptisms. One of these was Robert Evans, a former Campbellite. And it was with Robert Evans that Abel was assigned to travel about in North Wales to establish some branches. During the next three years Abel would spend most of his time in North Wales, with only periodic visits to South Wales for conferences.

First Fruits of North Wales

Abel is mentioned in the journal of Edward Roberts as having been in the town of Machynlleth in February of 1846. Among the group of his listeners were several Campbellites who had heard Dan Jones and Robert Evans preach on previous occasions. "From the day Captain Jones came to Machynlleth," writes Edward Roberts, "my work, along with Thomas Hughes and David Roberts in a school on a Sunday morning was to study the doctrines of the Saints . . . so that I could gain a broader understanding of their beliefs."¹ From their studies these three reached the conclusion that no true

religion existed if not with the Latter-day Saints. Thus when Abel Evans preached in Machynlleth in early 1846, several were ready to accept the challenge of baptism. Concerning Abel's preaching Roberts writes:

He preached on the subject of faith, repentance, and baptism as a means of gaining forgiveness of sins, and the laying on of hands to receive the power of the Holy Ghost. He testified that God had established his church on the earth and that through his divine power there were in his church apostles and prophets, that there were men and women who prophesied and who had visions, that there were others who spoke with strange tongues—in a word, the church of God in this age was enjoying all the talents bestowed by the Holy Ghost. He also testified that he had been sent by God. If we obeyed in true heart before God then we would receive the blessings of the Holy Ghost.²

The following night four of the Campbellites were baptized but did not tell the others. These were Thomas Ellis, Edward Davies, Lewis Davies, and Elizabeth Griffiths. Edward Roberts and two others made up their minds that they would be baptized the next time the Mormon missionaries came through town. It is unclear from Roberts's journal what reason the four had for keeping their baptisms a secret from the others.

In ten weeks Abel Evans was back in Machynlleth. One can sense Edward Roberts's excitement from his journal entry:

Edward Davies came Saturday morning to inform me that Abel Evans and Samuel Davies were in his house. I went there immediately to speak personally with Abel. At first I did not make clear my intention of receiving baptism. I told him that I had been an Anglican and that they professed to be successors of the apostles. I left them and joined the



David Giles Roberts

Campbellites, but in truth I did not gain knowledge that either religion had connected with heaven any more than the other. Abel Evans testified that I could not gain knowledge without submitting to the true faith, and if I was willing to be baptized I would gain this knowledge for myself. I told him that I was willing to be baptized that night.³

Unfortunately, the journal entry does not include the reaction of Abel to this declaration of intent. However, anyone who has ever served as a Mormon missionary can easily imagine the warm glow of satisfaction that permeated Abel's being at the time, a feeling he had on scores of occasions during his missionary efforts.

Edward Roberts continues his account:

I returned home and informed William Morris, an old man of around sixty, and David Roberts [Edward's brother] that I would be baptized that night, and they promised me that they would also receive their baptism at the same time with me. Around 9:00 A.M. the three of us went in the company of Abel Evans and Samuel Davies and Thomas Ellis. We passed Francog towards the Craig y Bwlch Lake along the River Dovey, and there I was baptized by Abel Evans, also William Morris and David Roberts, on April 18, 1846. ⁴

The next morning at 11 o'clock a preaching meeting was held to which all were invited, both Mormons and "the

world,” as non-Mormons were often called by the Saints. Then in the afternoon there was a “Saints meeting,” for Church members only. At this meeting the new converts received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Edward Roberts recorded his feelings:

I was told that should I be loyal, and pray, and keep the commandments given, I would receive the Spirit of the Lord, and I would receive the talent to speak in tongues and receive the spirit of revelation so that the sons of the forest would hear my voice preaching in their language, and that I would lead them from darkness to light. When his hands were on my head and he was praying I received the Spirit of the Lord, and it was the most blessed meeting I have attended in my life.⁵

News of the conversion of these three spread rapidly throughout the town. And on Monday morning the children ran after them shouting “Saints of the prophets” and “deceivers.” This was a fairly standard practice in many of the towns where there were branches of the Church. The Mormons believed it must have been the local preachers, and perhaps parents as well, who instructed the children to taunt the Mormons in this fashion. Edward Roberts and his brother, David, and their families were the mainstays of Mormonism in the Machynlleth area for nearly twenty years when they finally got their chance to emigrate to America. They both settled in Malad, Idaho, where they were faithful Latter-day Saints throughout their lives.

A young man by the name of Robert Evans, formerly a lay preacher with the Campbellites, was a frequent traveling companion of Abel Evans on his journeys to North Wales. Robert Evans’s first acquaintance with Mormonism came when he was living in Llanfrothen, about twenty-five miles north of Machynlleth, with Robert Roberts and employed in

the shoe shop of Robert Roberts's son Edward. Edward's thirty-one-year-old brother, David, lived with his wife and four children in nearby Ffestiniog, where he worked at the slate mines. David enjoyed discussing religion and would often frequent his brother's shoe shop to exchange ideas about religion. One day he approached Robert Evans, still single and considered one of the Roberts family, with an unusual request. Having heard a few bits and pieces about an interesting new religion known as Mormonism, David asked Robert Evans to journey to Merthyr Tydfil, the headquarters of the Mormons in Wales, to gather information as to what they believed. The outcome is recorded in the Roberts family records:

Robert Evans went, and the first representative of the new religion that he met in South Wales was Captain Dan Jones. . . . He was converted to the new religion and was baptized by Capt. Jones. He returned to Ffestiniog and told father [David Roberts] of his conversion. "But," said he, "you had better wait a little while, as I haven't a firm testimony as yet." Later he went back to South Wales to investigate his new religion further and returned again to father and testified to him that it was indeed the truth that had been restored. He taught the gospel to father, and father was convinced of its truth and was soon ready for baptism.⁶

David Roberts was baptized May 24, 1846, by Robert Evans in the River Pandy near his father's home, a place called Gelli Cornwydydd in the parish of Llanfrothen. It appears that Robert Evans had been ordained a priest on his second journey to Merthyr Tydfil and thus was able to baptize his friend David Roberts. The confirmation, however, would have to wait until an elder came through. That elder was Abel Evans, who was in the neighborhood a few weeks later. The confirmation took place on June 21, 1846, at the baptismal

service for two other new converts, David and Laura Peters. David Roberts's oldest son, eight-year-old Robert, recalls the time shortly after his father's conversion to Mormonism:

While they were gone [to the baptism] the women of our neighborhood came to mother and told her of the terrible character of the people father was joining; that they were thieves, robbers, blasphemers and a very wicked people; that they were denounced by the newspapers and all of the world, and that it was strange that an intelligent man like father should join such a people. What an awful tale these neighbor women had to tell. I listened; I did not know what to think of it. I was too young to understand it all, but when father came home I watched him. I sat near behind him. He appeared to me to be sweeter and cleaner than I had ever seen him. His face beamed with light, and his whole person seemed changed, and there was a peace in his presence that was soothing, and I came to the conclusion that father had done no wrong and that what he had done was right.⁷

It was more than a year later on August 22, 1847, before David's wife, Catherine, went into the waters of baptism. She was also confirmed by Abel Evans.

David served as president of the Ffestiniog branch until his emigration in 1856. Two years after arriving in Utah Catherine and their son Thomas both contracted mountain fever. Robert, now twenty-one, recalled the incident:

My father nursed both of them for some time. My mother was first to recover; then my father was stricken with the same fever in which he lingered for about a month and finally died, leaving my dear mother in great poverty and destitution among strangers, in a new country. They could not speak the English language, and it filled mother's soul with sorrow and anguish.⁸

Two of David Roberts's brothers, John and Daniel, followed his example and also converted to Mormonism with their families. Lamentably, John and Daniel both died from illness on their journeys to Salt Lake City. These and numerous other Welsh converts to Mormonism, including Abel Evans, literally gave their lives as they endeavored to build the kingdom.

Baptism of David and Laura Peters

David and Laura Peters lived at a place called Rhydysarn, located a short distance outside Ffestiniog, a little village nestled in the mountainous region of Snowdonia. The Peters home was situated on the banks of a picturesque river that furnished the power to operate David's woolen factory. The factory was very successful and would in all likelihood be the Peters's source of income for years to come. Abel Evans, however, presented a more attractive future in the Rocky Mountains of America.



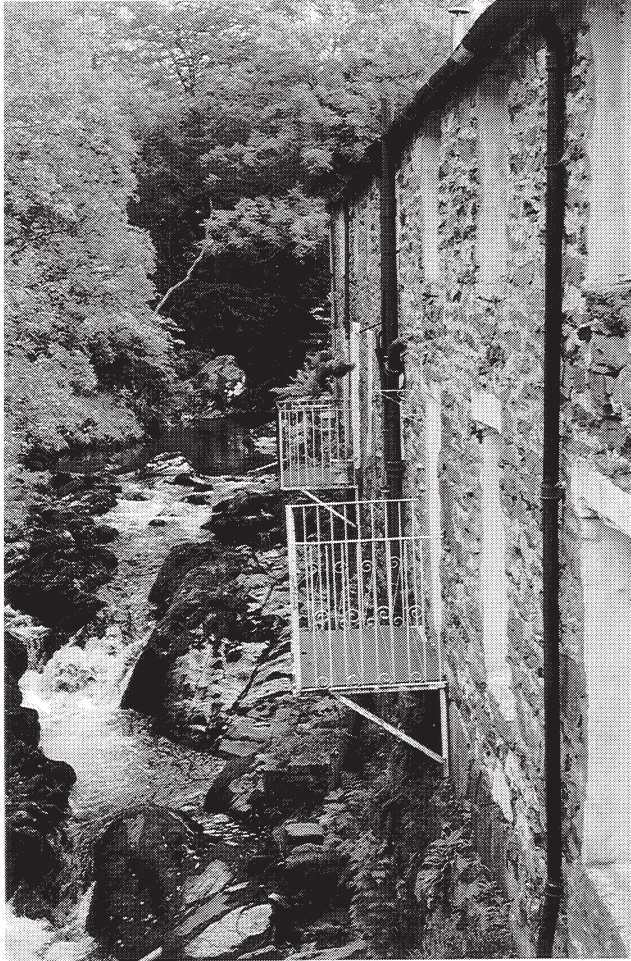
David and Laura Peters



Buildings at Rhydysarn, Ffestiniog, North Wales

After a thorough investigation of Mormonism, David and Laura were prepared to accept baptism. The baptismal service was set for June 21, 1846. Laura, being a bit more inclined than David, presented herself first. David, however, believed he had a duty to lead out in these matters and stepped forward into the water, clothes and all, to receive his baptism first. Both were baptized by Abel Evans in the little stream that ran past their home and factory. The buildings are still standing; the factory is now a private home.

According to a brief biography written by a granddaughter of David and Laura, David wished to sell the factory immediately and emigrate to America. David believed that since they were going to "Zion, the land of milk and honey" they would not need to take much luggage. Their entry into the Church coincided with the expulsion of the Mormons from Nauvoo, so their "Zion" was somewhere in the western part of the United States. The tendency among new converts was to idealize the situation that awaited them, and they had high expectations that God had prepared a heavenly place for them where suffering and hardship would be unknown.



Pool to the side of Rhydysarn where baptisms were performed

Laura, however, was of a more practical nature and argued for a less precipitous approach to the matter of leaving their home country. After all, they needed time to make the necessary preparations.

Laura prayed constantly for a confirmation concerning emigration. And, according to her granddaughter, the answer to her prayer came in a rather dramatic fashion: “She had

fallen asleep; suddenly she awoke and saw three personages surrounded by a beautiful light; the one in the center was taller than the other two, and all were dressed in white robes. The one in the center spoke, saying, 'It is right you should go, and you will arrive in safety.' They then disappeared. With her prayer answered Laura was now ready to make the journey."⁹

On March 5, 1849, just under three years from the time of their conversion, David and Laura Peters found themselves at the Waterloo Dock in Liverpool on board the *Hartley* ready to set sail for America. They had sold their factory and had paid passage for several other people besides themselves and their two young daughters. Their steamer trunks were filled with extra blankets, clothes, and shoes. These goods were shared generously with others when the company was attacked by the merciless cholera epidemic along the Missouri River. More than one in five died from cholera before the group reached Council Bluffs, the gathering place of the Saints bound for Salt Lake City. Laura was also stricken but recovered in a miraculous manner. They arrived safely in Utah just as the heavenly messengers had declared. David eventually acquired a farm in Perry, just south of Brigham City, where they spent the winter of 1853 in a dugout. The temperatures were so low that they could hear the lovely china dishes brought from Wales crack from the cold. David learned all the aspects of farming, but he never acquired the skill of milking a cow. Laura was very good at milking cows, however. When she had a new baby and could not walk out to milk the cows David would carry her out so she could perform the task.

Daniel, the Blind Man

The headquarters for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from the time of Abel Evans's conversion

until his emigration were in the town of Merthyr Tydfil. Numerous pamphlets and nearly all the issues of *Prophwyd y Jubili* were printed on the press belonging to the Reverend John Jones over fifty miles from the headquarters in the little hamlet of Rhydybont, about twenty miles north of the town of Carmarthen. Because travel was slow and difficult at this time period in Wales it was an ongoing challenge to transport materials compiled in Merthyr Tydfil to Rhydybont to have them printed and then to transport the pamphlets or issues of the periodical back to Merthyr Tydfil, where they would be put in the hands of the missionaries for distribution all over Wales. One benefit that came from using the press in Rhydybont, however, was the conversion of John Davis, a young typesetter in the employ of the Reverend John Jones. From a family of staunch Baptists, John Davis first became acquainted with the Mormons while setting the type for some of their pamphlets in Welsh. Believing what he read, Davis received baptism in April 1846, and less than three years later he would be called to serve alongside Abel Evans and William Phillips in what was called in those days the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Wales. His primary responsibility would be to continue with Church publications after Dan Jones's departure to return to America.

Only two miles from the Reverend John Jones's press was the village of Llanybydder, where a well-to-do farmer by the name of Thomas Jeremy and his wife, Sarah, lived with their young family of four children. Thomas received baptism at the hands of Dan Jones in March 1846, just a few weeks before John Davis. Sarah, however, could not be baptized at the time as she was expecting twins. After giving birth to twin daughters in May, she was prepared to enter the waters of the Teifi River for a baptismal service on July 7, 1846. Also receiving the ordinance of baptism that same day was a blind man by the name of Daniel Jones (no relationship to Captain



Sarah and Thomas Jeremy

Dan Jones). Abel Evans was present on that occasion and would assist Dan Jones in confirming the new members in Thomas Jeremy's house at Glantrenfawr farm following the baptisms. In order to avoid hecklers and rock throwers, normally the Mormons did not publicize their baptismal services. This time, however, because of the suspicious nature of the blind man's request to become a Mormon, they had spread the word to let all the surrounding populace know of the event. He was suspected of having been advised by his minister, the Reverend Josiah Thomas Jones, the editor of a religious periodical published in the town of Carmarthen, to feign conversion to Mormonism. Then after his baptism he was to request a blessing to restore his sight. And when he failed to receive his sight he and Josiah Thomas Jones could point with scorn and ridicule at the Mormon "imposters."

Dan Jones addressed the large crowd that had gathered for the baptism. He declared that Mormonism was true and that it would continue to be true in the future regardless of



Jeremy home at Glantrenfawr, Llanybydder, Carmarthenshire

whether the blind man received a restoration of his sight. Jones describes the occasion in a letter dated July 24, 1846, to Orson Spencer:

In another place, a blind man was persuaded, as I had reason to believe, and for a sign came forward to be baptized. I questioned him hard, suspecting his integrity, but he insisted on being baptized, so then I could forestall his wickedness and frustrate their plan only by publishing a public baptism of a blind man, far and wide, to take place on a certain time. It was astonishing to see the crowds that came from the regions round about; both priests, preachers, persecutors, and people. Oh, what an opportunity that was to explain the whys and wherefores of Mormonism, sign seeking, etc. They all listened with the greatest attention for about two hours, although many had come on purpose to oppose, but I could not get a try out of any of them. I shewed them that our religion was true, whether the blind man got his sight or not; it was true

before the blind man was heard of, that it would remain as true when he was dead and forgotten, and that it is eternally true, and I knew it. But after the baptism, while walking up to the house to be confirmed, it was amusing to hear the remarks as the crowd followed, crossing and recrossing to peep at his eyes, to see whether his sight was restored; some said it was, some that he was blinder than before, and that was difficult. But there and then Madam Slander filled the baskets of her pedlars with a variety of trinkets that were retailed out again at a fine rate, until even her own markets were entirely deluged. However, I confirmed the man, anointed and laid hands on him, and he shouted for joy in the presence of all, and testified that while hands were on his head he could “see the candle in the candlestick on the table; that he was more than satisfied.” But the fun of the matter was, that after I left, the sign-seekers who persuaded him to come, found themselves in their own trap, and again persuaded the man that it was all “conjuring,” imposition, etc., and were not satisfied until they got the man back to his former blindness, spiritually and bodily. If this is not a specimen of the “blind leading the blind,” tell me what is? However, it is only a prophecy fulfilled, “that both will fall in the ditch together.”¹⁰

The True Mirror

The foregoing was written just two-and-a-half weeks following the “failed healing.” But the incident was far from over. “Daniel, the Blind,” as he was known, began to go about the area singing or reciting a ballad he had composed, perhaps with the help of Josiah Thomas Jones, concerning his experience with the Mormons. The nonpoetic English translation of the following stanza, one of eight, will perhaps serve to provide the flavor of his composition:

And so, too, was I deceived,
Their words I believed,

And with them I joined,

But behold my cry—I was disillusioned.¹¹

Several months following his Mormon baptism in early 1847 the blind man participated in an interview with his friend Josiah Thomas Jones, which was then published as a twelve-page pamphlet and widely circulated. Entitled *Y drych cywir, lle y gellir canfod yn eglur twyll y Mormoniaid* (The true mirror, wherein one can perceive clearly the deceit of the Mormons), the pamphlet contained considerable detail concerning his “conversion,” his baptism, his confirmation and blessing, and his disillusionment. With respect to the priesthood blessing he recalled:

Capt. D. Jones put his hands on my head, pressing firmly, then poured some sort of oil on my head, until it wetted all my hair, and dripped across my clothes; also, at times, he rubbed my head with his hands while praying sincerely, as I thought, for a cure for me; then he said that I was a man who had received full forgiveness of all my sins, that he had received proof of this from above; then another whom they called a prophet joined in (his real name was Abel Evans), and he prophesied that I would surely regain my sight. Then Capt. D. Jones asked him how he knew this? To this he replied that he had seen a strange vision ensuring this; that is, he had seen the heavens open, and two bright stars appear there, and these were thrown down to earth, and that this showed that the blind man (that is, myself) would receive his sight; and he also added that it was not only that vision that ensured this, but that it was always the custom of his heavenly Father to everyone in his church, and that what he himself felt also proved this to him, that is, he had received a direct and miraculous cure through it himself from a severe fever he had also suffered in the past for three months and a week, and many other things also too long to relate here.¹²

Further on in the interview “Daniel, the Blind” commented on Abel Evans’s experience with spirits:

But for the old deacons, especially Abel Evans, the Prophet, as they called him, he could receive good and evil spirits whenever he wanted. An evil spirit almost entered him once, or the devil, as they more commonly called it, did enter him once. And as soon as he went among the saints, the old boy became restless in fear of them, and they said that he did not have lodgings there long, because Captain D. Jones worked a great miracle that amazed them all, that is, he cast the devil out of the prophet, and then when Dick had to leave his comfortable lodgings, surprising were the groans, the frowns, and the looks of poor Abel, an indication, he said, of the great torments he suffered when the strong warrior resisted, unwilling to yield his dwelling place, but they said he had to quit in the end.

Quite a difficult miracle was the trick,
 Changing the comfy lodgings of Dick;
 But the other was far too hard,
 That of giving sight to the blind bard.

Another time, he said, he was to receive the Spirit of the Lord in an exceptionally powerful manner. One particular time I heard him mention that he was in a far away place, and he received the spirit so abundantly that he prayed for it to cease, and the people praised and glorified God, and perceived him to be burning like a bright light, so powerfully did the Spirit descend on him.¹³

Given the blind man’s antagonistic attitude toward the Mormons, one can only wonder at the accuracy of his statements concerning them and particularly his anecdotes about Abel Evans, “the prophet.” Since he was there on the occasion and since he did participate with Captain Dan Jones in the blessing of the blind man, Abel Evans probably did

converse with the new “convert” and probably did relate to him some of his own experiences concerning spiritual matters. And he may well have had a prolonged illness that subsided upon receiving a blessing from his friend Dan Jones. Furthermore, the account of Abel’s struggle with the presence of an evil spirit is not out of line with the experiences of others of his contemporaries. One struggles a bit with the blind man’s final account of Abel’s “burning like a bright light,” but even this experience may have an element of truth, truth that the blind man and his friend modified somewhat to enhance their ridicule of Abel Evans and the Mormons and to emphasize their supposed deceit.

Haman Hanging from His Own Gallows

When the blind man’s twelve-page pamphlet came off the press in Carmarthen and began to be circulated in South Wales, Captain Dan Jones immediately set about to publish a vigorous reply to all the accusations leveled at the Mormons contained therein.¹⁴ Dan Jones entitled his pamphlet “*Haman*” *yn hongian ar ei grogbren ei hun!* (“Haman” hanging from his own gallows!). In the Book of Esther the king’s favorite, a man named Haman, wished to obtain the destruction of all the Jews and especially their leader, Mordecai. Haman even went so far as to prepare a gallows from which Mordecai was to be hanged. But the king, upon learning of Haman’s wickedness, ordered that Haman, not Mordecai, be hanged from his own gallows. And, according to this analogy, so it was with the blind man. He wished for the figurative destruction of all the Mormons and their beliefs. Together with the assistance of Josiah Thomas Jones he laid a snare for the Mormons that was to expose their fraud when they were unable to give the blind man his sight. But, according to Dan Jones, the plan backfired—through the laying on of hands and with the help of God the

Mormons did give sight, at least a moment of it, to the blind man. According to witnesses the blind man exclaimed that he could “see the candle in the candlestick on the table.” They also testified to having heard him say, “I believe that if Bro. Jones had continued to pray just a little while longer, I would have received my sight completely.”¹⁵

In answer to other charges leveled at the Latter-day Saints eight witnesses affixed their names to a sworn statement included in Dan Jones’s pamphlet. They said:

After he was counseled and exhorted to live righteously, etc., Daniel requested through the guidance of one of the elders that his eyes be anointed with oil, which was done by Abel Evans; and not one drop went on his hair, or on his clothes, as he says. After that, the two elders, Abel Evans and Capt. D. Jones, laid their hands on him and prayed for the Lord to bless his obedience to this plan according to his honesty and his faith, even to the extent of receiving his sight, if that was pleasing to him. After that, we heard Abel Evans say to him that he had seen something like two stars far from him, and that perhaps that signified that he would receive his sight in some future time, *if he lived faithfully*.¹⁶

Dan Jones stated that in the times of Christ “the hypocritical Pharisees said that nothing is a miracle unless it be done in public, fully, on the first try, and without using any medicine at all.”¹⁷ He then proceeded to explain how miracles were worked in biblical times, showing how this modern-day blind man had not given God a fair chance to bless him because he was so quick to abandon his new religion and because he had not demonstrated sufficient faith. Furthermore, added Jones, the Mormons had made no promise of a restoration of the blind man’s sight. Quite to the contrary. There was great reluctance on the part of the Mormons to even baptize this individual of questionable character. He had been

excommunicated from the Independents, and he showed every indication of being a “prepared Judas” by accepting baptism by the Latter-day Saints. According to Thomas Jeremy, the blind man attended the evening service following his baptism, a meeting two days later, and the Sunday meetings. And after this brief flurry of activity he began to speak against the Saints; growth of the LDS church in that area flourished in the months afterwards in spite of, perhaps because of, the opposition of Daniel Jones, the Blind.

In October 1846, just three months after the baptismal service and several months preceding the appearance of the pamphlets, Thomas Jeremy and Captain Dan Jones were returning to Llanybydder after a preaching engagement in Brechfa. On their way they met the blind man, who was on his way to the Brechfa fair. Thomas Jeremy recalls the incident:

Capt. D. Jones questioned him about how he had become such a persecutor of the Saints. Daniel did not give one reason in answer, but he indicated clearly enough that he was an enemy of the Saints. Capt. D. Jones told him that if he persecuted and falsely accused the Saints, the hand of God would be upon him, and his fate would be hotter than that of Cora, Dathan, and Abiram [the three in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers who were swallowed up in the earth for fighting against Moses]. He told him strongly the danger of persecuting and falsely accusing the Lord’s people.¹⁸

The entire incident came to a most unfortunate ending just seven months following Dan Jones’s dire prophecy. “He was taken very ill,” wrote Thomas Jeremy, “so that he felt his intestines on fire inside him. He drank large quantities of cold water to stop the supposed fire inside him, and also he ran out of the house to wallow in water in order to cool down; but all in vain. He died in this painful condition.”¹⁹

He died May 13, 1847, and was buried in the Llanllwni Cemetery not far from Llanybydder. A second edition of his pamphlet was published more than a year later, and those behind it claimed that the blind man was still alive. Thomas Jeremy wrote: "If he is alive, he must have taken part in the first resurrection. Where is he, that he may be seen?"²⁰ Dan Jones wrote concerning the blind man's death: "Yes, he died a monument of the displeasure of a just God for hypocrisy."²¹

Conference in Merthyr Tydfil

The month of July 1846 was noteworthy for the fledgling Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Wales in three significant ways. First, it was the beginning of the blind man incident in Llanybydder, an event that attracted a great deal of attention when it happened and one that would stimulate some rather astounding growth in that area in the following months. Some might argue that this growth came in spite of the negative publicity the Church received through the blind man's ballad and later his pamphlet. Others might point out that the numbers increased as a result of the attacks and persecution, causing unbiased men and women of the area to take notice of a religion that otherwise may have gone unnoticed. Many of these Carmarthenshire converts were among the first group of Welsh Mormon emigrants who sailed from Liverpool in February of 1849, a group that received a fond farewell from Abel Evans and a few other stalwarts that went to see off their brothers and sisters in the gospel—a number of these had first heard the gospel preached by Abel Evans.

A second event of major importance for the Church that transpired in July of 1846 was the publication of the first number of *Prophwyd y Jubili*, the Church's periodical in Welsh for the Welsh. The periodical would continue for nearly sixteen years.²² For twenty-eight months the issues of

Prophwyd y Jubili would be printed on the Reverend John Jones's press at Rhydybont, just two miles from Llanybydder, where the blind man's baptism took place. This periodical would provide for the Mormons in Wales a vehicle through which they could propagate the tenets of their religion and defend themselves against the relentless attacks of their enemies. In view of the meager numbers of adepts in Wales at the time—about seven hundred—this publication represented an ambitious and in many ways remarkable effort on the part of the Church. It provided a sense of identity and unity. No longer did the Welsh Mormons, all of them recent converts to an unpopular and persecuted religion, have to look to Manchester and the *Millennial Star* for orientation, guidance, and strength. No, they had their own cadre of tried and tested faithfuls who could stand up to their opponents, not as a group of weak no-names, but rather as fearless and skilled defenders of the faith with the printed word *in Welsh* as part of their arsenal. It was no doubt a source of great satisfaction for Abel Evans to have witnessed the growth of Mormonism in Wales during the nearly two-and-a-half years since his stunning conversion and to ponder the integral role he had played in building the Kingdom thus far. His contribution, however, was far from over.

The third event was the general conference in Merthyr Tydfil on Sunday and Monday, July 12th and 13th. With no building of their own, Church members were forced to rent facilities. One sect of Nonconformists with a chapel were usually willing to rent out their chapel to another sect—the Baptists to the Methodists, for example. Renting to the Latter-day Saints, however, was viewed as aiding and abetting the enemy. Consequently, the Mormons at that time essentially had only one other option—that of using public houses, or “pubs.” Since the pubs were not open on Sundays the owners were happy to rent out the room above the drinking area, often called the “long room,” to civic or religious

groups. The public house earliest identified with Mormonism in Wales was the White Lion Inn. Located on Mill Street near the Anglican Church of St. Tydfil, the White Lion Inn had an unusually large long room, called Cymreigyddion Hall, that would seat several hundred people.²³ It was in the Cymreigyddion Hall that a crowd of several hundred, not all of them Mormons, assembled on Sunday, July 12th, at 10:00 A.M. for the first session of the two-day gathering.

Thirty-four branches were reported as operating throughout the Principality, with a total of 670 baptized members.²⁴ In the lengthy report of this conference published in the August issue of *Prophwyd y Jubili* the excitement of the scribes, William Davies and Edward Edwards, was transparent. They recorded that “the audience was warmly addressed by several of the elders on the magnitude of this work, the glory of the dispensation of the fulness of times, the necessity for unity and faithfulness, and the help of the Spirit of God under all persecutions, in order to continue faithfully to the end.”²⁵



*White Lion Inn, Merthyr Tydfil
(the large building to the right of the Anglican Church tower)*

One of these elders was Abel Evans, who had traveled many miles since the last conference. Brother Davies and Edwards reported: "In about three months Abel Evans baptized over twenty in the counties of the North, several of whom had never heard the gospel before; four new branches were established there, all enjoying the gifts and blessings of the Holy Ghost, more or less, and in several places the sick were receiving health through God's power." Another elder was Eliezer Edwards, who had joined the Church five months previous to Abel Evans. Elder Edwards gave an enthusiastic report of his labors in Carmarthenshire, explaining how the false accusations of the enemy were actually contributing to the success of the gospel and "bringing shame to their inventors."²⁶ Yet another was Ebenezer Morris, who was baptized just eight days after Abel Evans. Elder Morris stated that it was from "the preachers and professors of the sects that they had the cruelest persecution" in the Pontypridd area; furthermore, "it was men without religion who prevented them from being stoned by the believers."²⁷

At 2 o'clock on Monday afternoon a feast was held at which "about seven hundred sat at the tables." The scribes reported: "To judge by all appearances, we would say from the unity, the happiness, and the love, that everyone was delighted. Hundreds of respected friends from the world came to join in our feast, and we greatly enjoyed their company." "Friends from the world" was their way of saying "non-Mormon friends." That evening a "Missionary Society" was established with its sole purpose being that of "assisting the missionaries who are sent from here throughout the country, to places where there are no Saints to supply their needs." It was proposed that a committee be formed, comprising the presidents of all the different branches throughout Wales. These presidents were then to select treasurers, and the treasurers were "not to pay any of the society's money to anyone without obtaining a ticket signed by the president on the

instructions of the majority of the committee.” Furthermore, the treasurer was to “take a receipt for what he pays, signed by the recipient.” It was also proposed that any money left over from the expenses of the feast that afternoon “be used for the sole benefit of the Society.”²⁸

At this point in the meeting, time was turned over to Robert Evans and Abel Evans, who “gave a comprehensive and entertaining report of their travels through the North, earnestly desiring their brethren in Merthyr to come out to the fight, to help them in the army of the God of Israel against the strong giants who are building the walls of great Babylon.”²⁹ Their encouragement must have touched some hearts, judging from the next paragraph in the report:

Then the President [Dan Jones] called on those preachers present who could arrange their affairs so that they could go into the vineyard for a while, to indicate this by standing up; and behold, fifteen stood up, indicating, “Here we are, send us.” These indicated their willingness and determination to go out into the vineyard, some for three months, some for five, and others on whom no one depended for sustenance committed to devote their whole time to preaching the gospel. The committee decided to assist them as far as possible out of the fund, according to their needs.³⁰

One who stood up was Abel Evans. And being single, Abel fit nicely into the latter category; consequently, he was willing to continue to devote his energies as a full-time missionary. Presumably, and rightly so, he received financial assistance from the newly formed Missionary Society.

Because of the success he had already had in North Wales, Abel Evans was sent there once again to continue his missionary labors. In fact, from this time until he emigrated in early 1850 Abel Evans would be identified with that part of the mission in Wales. He appears to have been a “man

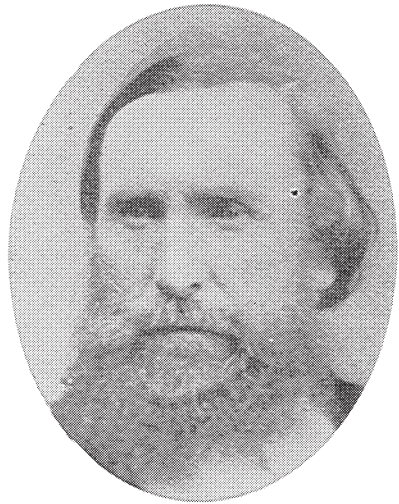
without a home” and rarely slept in the same bed more than a few nights in a row. No wonder Dan Jones gave him the epithet of “indefatigable veteran”—this was not just a charitable label, it was an accurate description.

Saga of Owen Roberts and Sarah Treharne

Back in Ffestiniog at the home of his recent converts, David and Laura Peters, Abel Evans taught the gospel to a young man by the name of Owen Roberts, a friend of the Peterses. Owen Roberts was just eighteen years old when on September 2nd he received baptism at the hands of Abel Evans in the stream to the side of the Peters’s home at Rhydysarn. But serving as an instrument in bringing the gospel into this young man’s life was not the only favor Abel Evans did for Owen Roberts. In a rather roundabout fashion his benefactor also provided him with his wife, the lovely Sarah Treharne, from the village of Llangyndeyrne in



Sarah Treharne



Owen Roberts

Carmarthenshire. Part of the story is in a book that has information about Sarah's sister Sage:

When Sage was approximately twelve years old, Eliezer Edwards and Abel Evans, missionaries of the LDS church came to that city to preach their religion. Her mother and father were unable to attend the meeting set up by these missionaries, so they sent their daughter, Jane, who was sixteen, to the meeting to find out what the teachings of the LDS church were. When Jane returned home and related to her parents what she had seen and heard, her father clapped his hands on his knees and said, "That is the gospel I have been looking for, for years." The following day the missionaries left the city, and the Treharne family did not hear any more about the LDS church until 1847.³¹

The story continues in Liverpool in February 1849, where over three hundred Welsh Mormon converts had gathered to sail to America. David and Laura Peters were there with their family and several others whose passage they had paid from the sale of the woolen factory; one of these was young Owen Roberts. William and Ann Treharne were there also with their four daughters and one son. All were expecting to sail away as one group on board the *Buena Vista*, but because the number of emigrants exceeded the space available on that ship quite a number were required to wait an additional week to sail on the *Hartley*. Owen, now age twenty-one, was part of the first group, and Sarah, age nineteen, was part of the second. They may have at least made each other's acquaintance in Liverpool since all the emigrants lodged at the huge Music Hall on Bold Street until their departures. And they may have expanded on that mutual acquaintance when both groups reached Council Bluffs about two months later. Most of the survivors were together at Council Bluffs—twenty percent, including Sister Ann Treharne, had died

from cholera—for several weeks before the wagon train got underway to Salt Lake City. Owen went with the wagon train, but Sarah remained another three years in Council Bluffs. Owen and Sarah finally got together in Salt Lake City, where they were married and raised a family, thanks (in a rather roundabout way) to one Abel Evans, who had played an important role in getting them both into the Church.³²

Reports of Activities up North

Judging from a county-by-county report of missionary successes in the December 1846 *Prophwyd y Jubili*, Abel Evans logged up a lot of miles in his travels during the latter-part of that year. Thomas Jeremy wrote from Carmarthenshire concerning various baptisms and added: “Brother Abel Evans baptized three more there soon after this [about mid-November 1846].” William Jones wrote from Merionethshire that the Saints in Harlech and Ffestiniog were firm in the faith and that “some were baptized there recently by Abel Evans, and some in Maentwrog.” The report from Anglesey: “Elders Jonah Richards, Abel Evans, and others, have been preaching throughout the main towns of this county after us, to large crowds, and have received every kindness, and an invitation to continue to preach in their midst. There is here a general demand for the truth as it is in Jesus.” From Denbighshire: “Abel Evans bapized two in addition to those who were already in Llandudno, and one in Dwygyfylchi.” And from Flintshire:

Elder R. Evans is laboring in the main towns of this county, and has baptized some in several places, such as Newmarket, Rhuddlan, etc. Elder A. Evans also baptized two at Newmarket about the middle of this month, and three others promised to submit to the gospel the next time he came there, or someone else who had the necessary authority from God to baptize “for the forgiveness of sins.”³³

Dan Jones must have scratched his head in wonder at the success of Abel Evans and others in North Wales during 1846, as his time and efforts there during 1845 had yielded practically nothing. Over eighty percent of Church growth during this year, however, came from South Wales, a trend that would continue throughout the 1840s and 1850s. And even today over eighty percent of Church members in Wales are in South Wales. Any attempt at an explanation would be merely conjecture.

CHAPTER FIVE

DAYS OF '47

Abel Evans began the year of 1847 on a high note. After nearly three years of faithful membership in the Church and unflagging support of Church leaders he finally received the opportunity of being in the presence of a modern-day Apostle, Elder John Taylor. The occasion was a conference in Merthyr Tydfil in the White Lion Inn on January 2nd and 3rd. No doubt Abel was inspired by Elder Taylor, who was a powerful speaker. The question is whether he was able to understand the words Elder Taylor spoke in a tongue that was foreign to Abel. Having spent the first dozen or so years of his life in Carmarthenshire, Abel is not likely to have grown up surrounded by much English. The opportunities became more plentiful after Samuel Evans moved his family to the far more cosmopolitan Merthyr Tydfil. People gathered in the mining town of Merthyr Tydfil from all parts of Wales, England, Ireland, and from across the English Channel as well; thus, he would have been exposed to numerous opportunities to hear English spoken during his years in this new setting.

It is unlikely that Abel was privileged to receive any appreciable amount of formal education. Children of mine workers rarely had more than a smattering of classroom

experience. It was not considered necessary for the miners' daughters to acquire any "book-learning" at all, and the miners' sons were often expected to spend long days in the mines from an early age to make their contribution to the family income. With his conversion to Mormonism Abel's motivation to learn the English language became suddenly very acute. Part of being a Mormon in nineteenth-century Wales was to leave Wales as soon as possible and go to America. At first the destination was Nauvoo, and later it was one thousand miles further west in the Rocky Mountains; in either case it would be necessary to speak English to earn a living and survive in the new environment.

Some of the Welsh Latter-day Saints were able to understand Elder John Taylor as he preached to them in English in the January 1847 conference, and they of course could understand Dan Jones and the others who addressed them in Welsh. John Davis, for example, was totally fluent in both Welsh and English because of his apprenticeship in the area of printing. But most of the converts, since they came from among the working class, were faced with the challenge of learning English as a second language. Some depended on their children to help them learn English after settling in Utah, and the progress was probably quite slow, especially for the older adults. And there were many like Laura Peters, who went to her grave with no more than a few phrases in the language of her new country after living near Brigham City for nearly five decades. With family and Welsh-speaking friends around, the incentive to gain fluency in English diminished considerably.

The January 1847 conference had special meaning for Dan Jones, who had been presiding over the missionary work for all of Wales for just over a year. He had become very well acquainted with Elder John Taylor in the time preceding the Martyrdom, and in his introduction of him at the conference he reminisced on "the honor of being a fellow prisoner with

him for the gospel of Jesus Christ which they preached together from the prison to thousands of their persecutors.”¹

Although Abel Evans’s name is not mentioned in the conference proceedings as published in the January 1847 issue of *Prophwyd y Jubili*, it is very likely that he was in attendance. After all, the chance to be in the presence of one so prominent in the Church was not one that a dynamic missionary like Abel would pass up. Furthermore, in the February issue is the following comment: “Elder Abel Evans began his journey through the North to visit the branches throughout the various northern counties.”² Thus it appears that he had returned to Merthyr from his travels in North Wales prior to the conference featuring Elder John Taylor, perhaps to visit family members at Christmas.

Success up North

Then in the March issue of *Prophwyd* Abel’s name is mentioned again: “Elder Abel Evans has sent comforting news about the joy and success of all the branches throughout the North.”³ Greater reference is made to his northern itinerant success in the April issue:

Abel Evans informs us he has visited most of the branches throughout the North, and that they are all, without exception almost, filled with the Spirit and firm in the ‘faith which was once delivered unto the saints,’ and enjoying the gifts and great blessings abundantly in every branch, and going forth toward perfection. May He who began the good work in them sustain them until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ is our prayer for all of them.⁴

Among the fruits of his labors during the time period referred to in the foregoing quotation was the Nathaniel Eames family. The branch records for Blaenau Ffestiniog

show that Robert Evans baptized Nathaniel Eames, age fifty-seven, on March 3, 1847, and that Abel Evans baptized young Nathaniel Eames, age eleven, that same day. Sarah Eames, wife of the older Nathaniel and stepmother to his son, was not baptized until a few months later, probably because she was expecting a baby at the time of the baptismal service in March. This family in two years' time would be part of the first group of Welsh Mormon emigrants, crossing the Atlantic on the *Hartley*. Things went well enough for them until May 7, 1849, when two-year-old Elinor Eames died of cholera on the Missouri River. The next day little two-month-old Jane Hartley Eames, born during the ocean crossing, died of cholera. Three days later on May 11th Brother Nathaniel Eames fell victim to the same disease, and the following day five-year-old John Eames and his mother, Sarah, were both claimed by cholera. One can only imagine the horror of young Nathaniel, now thirteen, as he witnessed every member of his family die in a five-day period. He was not, however, without friends. David and Laura Peters, members of the same little branch in Wales, took him with them across the plains to Utah that same year. Two years later Nathaniel's older brother, David, would journey from Wales to Utah, and there was no doubt a joyful, yet sorrowful reunion of the two remaining members of the Eames family.

July Merthyr Conference

Mid-July 1847 would find Abel Evans back in Merthyr Tydfil attending the Glamorganshire Conference meetings. Detailed minutes were printed in the August *Prophwyd*:

Monday at ten a meeting was held for the Saints, especially the officers. And at half past two the tables were spread with the finest dishes and laden down with the food prepared for the feast of the Missionary Society. And from then until

eight o'clock over a thousand people feasted. We have not heard of even one ungentlemanly act or unkindly appearance throughout this orderly crowd. All whom we saw had a smile on their faces indicative of their hearts' joy the entire time. There was more food prepared than was used so that everyone had plenty, and the remainder was sold for nearly two pounds. Following the feast the lovely gathering was addressed by President Jones, Elders Henshaw, A. Evans, and Mitchell, in a very warm and interesting manner.⁵

Dan Jones stated in his report of the conference that the gathering served the worthy purpose of eliminating some of the prejudice against the Church among the Welsh, for many of "the world" were present at the feast and were able to witness firsthand the love and unity among the Saints.

The next day the committee met to distribute the money on hand "for the needs of those preachers who had gone to the North, and to Pembrokeshire, and other places, to aid them to continue preaching through the remainder of this season." Dan Jones's following comments provide us with some idea as to the hardships of Abel Evans and others who were assigned to travel constantly:

We understand that some of these have been suffering greatly from need. We hope the Saints will strive in their monthly meetings to provide for these brethren who are giving their entire time in Christ's vineyard without purse or scrip for the journey, for they are in the midst of a stiffnecked and devout generation; yes, so godly that they consider it a sin against God to give a meal or a night's lodging to his servants! Oh, what disappointment will these wretched, beguiled ones receive when they have gone to their own lodgings!⁶

How much money these missionaries received is not stated. It could not have been a great lot since most of the Church

members were barely subsisting, and money was scarce. Abel Evans's situation was further complicated because there were so few Latter-day Saints throughout North Wales to provide meals and lodging for him on his travels. And it is doubtful that his father or siblings were able to be of much help, given their own limited means as miners and laborers.

Letters from the North

Immediately following the conference Elder Abel Evans was back on the road again, and his assignment was again to return to North Wales—Denbighshire and Merionethshire, according to the list of missionary assignments in *Prophwyd*.⁷ Abel was faithful in reporting his activities to President Dan Jones, and Jones was obviously pleased to include the following reference to him in the September 1847 issue of *Prophwyd*: “We received a letter from Elder A. Evans lately that he sent us from Machynlleth. The Saints are growing in unity and love, and just like all the congregations of the Saints, there is an abundance of the gifts and blessings of God in their midst.”⁸ Abel had been instrumental in establishing the branch of the Church in Machynlleth in April 1846. The two Roberts brothers, Edward and David, baptized by Abel Evans a year-and-a-half earlier, were the pillars of this small branch.

In the October issue of *Prophwyd* Dan Jones laments not being able to include the full text of letters received from Abel Evans:

We would be happy to put quotes from the comforting letters of our traveling brethren from the North before our readers if our columns permitted, but we must abridge them. We have received several letters from our dear and faithful brother, Abel Evans, from various places. The most salient characteristic that is throughout all of them is the unflagging loyalty of

the Saints practically everywhere to the gospel through every obstacle. Their increase in love and wisdom together with every grace is obvious to him every time he visits them, says he, and this is as it should be with everyone who is under the guidance of the Spirit of Grace. He says that many have been baptized lately throughout the various counties of the North.⁹

And in the December issue is this comment:

Our dear and hard-working brother, Elder A. Evans, informs us of more joyful news concerning the growth of this divine work throughout the North than we have space to publish here. Though there is no miraculous growth in their midst, yet some are getting baptized frequently. Some were baptized lately in new places also. The Saints are unusually faithful and determined to go forward through all contempt and obstacles until they achieve excellence in Jesus Christ. We expect to be able to aid our brethren of the North after this Conference by sending a host of gifted preachers from the South to plant their vineyards.¹⁰

Dan Jones's fondness for the indefatigable Abel Evans is readily apparent through his comments in the periodical about Abel's northern successes. Many of the early converts, even after three or four years of solid and selfless effort in building the Kingdom, became weak-kneed and drifted away from their convictions and their testimony. Such was the case of Robert Evans, a frequent traveling companion of Abel Evans. Others were excommunicated for a variety of offenses. There was never so much as a hint that Abel Evans ever wavered in his devotion to the cause. From the day he was baptized a Latter-day Saint the gospel received first priority in his life, and it continued thus until he took his dying breath twenty-two years later. Little wonder that Dan Jones

would call him to serve in the presidency of the Church in Wales in January 1849 and that he would request his emigration to help the Welsh branch in Council Bluffs less than a year after that.

December Merthyr Conference

The semi-annual conferences held in Merthyr Tydfil were always a highlight for the Latter-day Saints who were privileged to be in attendance. Long-term members like Abel Evans had been able to see the numbers grow from just a handful of faithfuls to hundreds. They delighted to be part of a movement whose objective was to glean from Wales the “elect of God” and help them to gather to their “Zion” in America. At the December 1847 conference in Merthyr Tydfil Abel Evans was pleased to report a total of 109 members in North Wales.¹¹ Two years earlier there had been no branches and practically no members in the counties of the North. This growth had resulted entirely from the efforts of Abel Evans, Robert Evans, John Parry, and two or three other missionaries. An increase of one member per week during this two-year period was astounding in comparison to the discouraging year that Dan Jones had proselyted there during 1845.

The growth in South Wales with its larger missionary force was unbelievable. During the previous five-and-a-half months 523 had been baptized, 110 of these in the Merthyr branch alone. This meant that every Sunday five new members were welcomed into the branch. And throughout South Wales twenty-two people were receiving baptism at the hands of the missionaries every week. Dan Jones was as excited as the Reverend W. R. Davies was worried at this astonishing growth rate. No minister felt safe from the “Mormon menace,” and they were all in constant worry that more of their followers would change direction and be led away by the

“deceitful” LDS elders. The ministers constantly told their congregations to close their doors to the Mormons and never to read their publications. The Mormons encouraged all to follow the advice of Paul: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (Thessalonians 5:21).

The December 1847 conference in Merthyr Tydfil welcomed a new leader for Great Britain, Elder Orson Spencer, newly arrived from America. His portrayal of the conference was printed two weeks later in the *Millennial Star*:

On my arrival at Merthyr Tydvil [sic], the residence of Captain Dan Jones, I was cordially greeted by this most faithful brother and his valuable partner. The throng that soon surrounded him from the influx of brethren coming from various parts, and the cares and duties that occupied his time, leaving but a limited portion to sleeping and private and secular duties, strongly reminded us of familiar scenes at our own office in Liverpool. The lively interchange of brotherly civilities and of reciprocal interest in each other’s success, in bringing men to the knowledge of God, and baptism for the remission of sins, was cheering to us, and not less so to him who has occupied a conspicuous part in building up the kingdom of God in Wales.¹²

One can easily imagine Abel Evans in enthusiastic Welsh conversation with old friends and fellow missionaries on this occasion, trading stories and experiences since the last conference. Orson Spencer’s description of being in a foreign-language setting helps us to understand the awkwardness of communication between the leaders in Liverpool and the growing numbers of non-English-speaking Church members in Wales:

During conference, Elder Jones and several Welsh brethren addressed the numerous congregation in the Welsh language.

The interest of the hearers appeared to be intense, while the speakers partook largely of the spirit of the heavens. Our spirit was truly edified, though through the confusion of tongues our understanding could not keep pace with the speakers. Yet while we saw the relics of the curse, entailed at the building of the Tower of Babel, with regret for the rebellious ambition of man, we were most gratefully elevated with the anticipation that “tongues should cease” in the final restitution of all things, and all nations should “turn to a pure language.” Then the English, Welsh, and all other varied tongues would give place to one tongue, and the plural number of *tongues* would be done away.¹³

Among the “several Welsh brethren” who “addressed the numerous congregation in the Welsh language” was Abel Evans. In the conference report printed in the January 1848 *Prophwyd* President Dan Jones regretted not being able to furnish details of these talks: “We are obliged to omit the eloquent and uplifting sermons of Elders A. Evans, Thomas Pugh, Robert Evans, etc., etc., because of lack of space, despite how delightful they are.”¹⁴ That Abel Evans would be invited to address the large congregation is an indication of the esteem in which he was held by Dan Jones, who organized the conference and selected the speakers.

CHAPTER SIX

DAYS OF '48

During 1848 Abel Evans would celebrate the fourth anniversary of his baptism into the LDS church, and it appears that most if not all of these four years had been devoted to propagating the faith. Like the previous two years this one would be spent mostly up North with occasional visits to South Wales for conferences and consultations. Although it was permitted for missionaries to get married in those days, this was apparently not one of his major concerns just then. Perhaps he saw marriage as a potential obstacle to his accomplishing the work he had been called to do.

Phillip Seix Saga

Shortly after the December 1847 conference the Latter-day Saints in Merthyr Tydfil received a dose of unwanted publicity. It came from a convert by the name of Phillip Seix (Sykes), whose conscience troubled him to the point of robbing him of his senses. He believed that he was guilty of great sin because he had not obeyed counsel given him by Church leaders in that area and because he had been negligent in his duties. According to Dan Jones's account of this incident in the March 1848 *Prophwyd* Phillip Seix "went in secret to pray to God to send a messenger to inform him whether

there was any forgiveness to be found for him.”¹ Seix claimed that after his prayer some being appeared to him and told him that all his prayers were in vain because he had committed unpardonable sin. This experience brought him to the brink of insanity. But his brothers in the gospel reasoned with him and gave him hope. And by the laying on of hands they also rebuked the evil spirit they believed to be in him. Things seemed to be back to normal for a time until Seix was injured in the mines by a rock that fell on his head. From this point on he was troubled over and over again by evil spirits. Dan Jones reported:

At last Elders W. Phillips and A. Evans visited him, and through their administrations of the above ordinances he was restored to possession of his full reason, and he went with them to Nantyglo. They advised him to stay there for a while until he was strengthened from his bodily illness, and the Saints there promised to take care of him. But the next day he insisted on returning, against the will of them all. He was warned that if he went he would be possessed once more by a worse spirit until he would be bound hand and foot and would be placed under the care of the police in a short time; but nothing had any effect—back he went. He remained in his full senses until the afternoon following his return. At this time he was called to a neighbor’s house, and he was invited to the table to drink tea with the others. These people accused the religion that he professed of having caused his sickness.²

Seix testified to them that it was not his religion that was to blame, rather the blame was on him. Then his mind became so agitated that he was possessed worse than ever. All present ran from the house and he after them “howling and frothing.” Finally he was bound and taken home, where he was again visited by William Phillips. And again he was restored

to his senses. But the next day he became worse than ever and ran about the streets “roaring like a lion, frothing, and trying to injure whomever he could.” At this point it became a matter for the police, and he was carried off to the insane asylum, all the while shouting that his problem was not the fault of his religion.

It was not the practice of the Latter-day Saints to make public announcement of any excommunications. In the case of Phillip Seix’s excommunication, however, they made an exception. Because his sickness became so well known in the Merthyr Tydfil area and because Dan Jones and William Phillips were accused of stealing the watch, the money, and even the coat belonging to Phillip Seix, it was decided to devote two full pages of *Prophwyd y Jubili* to explain all the details of the case. Dan Jones’s frustration was transparent: “We and our brethren have long suffered quietly every kind of lies against us because of our religion to the point that we do not believe that God will ask us to suffer like murderers or thieves while law is to be found in the country and man to administer it.”³ Captain Jones even went so far as to announce his decision to prosecute their accusers for libel if they could be identified. There is no indication, however, that the prosecution ever took place.

Less than one year later Philip Seix was released from the asylum. His letter of apology to the Church was published in the February 1849 *Udgorn Seion*. Apparently a public declaration was required of him to be readmitted into the Church. He was rebaptized and later emigrated to Utah.

Edward Lloyd Parry

Upon his return to North Wales after the December 1847 conference in Merthyr, Abel began to experience some unusual success as a missionary. Among the first of his baptisms for 1848 was Edward Lloyd Parry, a stonemason.



Edward Lloyd Parry

Edward recorded in his brief autobiography an account of his conversion to Mormonism:

Being naturally inclined to be religious, I frequently attended the Church of England and went to hear ministers of other denominations preach. But I could not be converted to join any of them, as their teachings did not appear to be consistent or in harmony

with the gospel as taught by the Savior and his apostles. On hearing an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints preach, I was converted to the truth, and wondered why I had not understood the gospel in that light before. I was baptized March 9, 1848, by Elder Abel Evans and confirmed at the riverside. About five weeks later I was ordained a priest. During the summer of 1848 my wife Elizabeth and my father and a number of my relatives joined the Church.⁴

Edward Lloyd Parry emigrated in 1853 and made some significant contributions to the building of the Kingdom in Utah, especially in temple building. He served as the master mason for both the St. George Temple and the Manti Temple. He died in 1906 at the age of eighty-eight in Manti.

First Published Letter

In the May 1848 *Prophwyd y Jubili* Dan Jones finally found enough space to print the entire text of a letter from

llygaid. trwy nerthol weithrediad yr Ysbryd Glân, mwyaf oll yr ymgynddeiriogant i'w erbyn, yn gyffelyb i weision haerllucaf Beelzebub gynt, y rhai, po fwyaf a welent o allu Duw trwy ei Fab, a waeddent yn ei wyneb.—“Y mae cythraul ganddo!” “Mae ffydd yn dyfod trwy glywed,” ac nid trwy weled, ar eirwiredd Paul. Y glust yw y cyfrwng, ac nid y llygaid—y gair sydd i'w gredu yn argyhoeddiadol, ac nid gwyrthiau; canys “nid ydym ni yn rhodio wrth olwg, ond wrth ffydd,” fel ag yr hyfforddia yr holl ysgrythyr. Bydded genym ffydd ddigonol i dderbyn ac i ddala gafael ar bob bendithion tymhorol ac ysbrydol ag a fyddo yn anghen arnom.—Gol.

LLYTHYR YR HENURIAD ABEL EVANS.

Efestiniog, Ebrill 24ain, 1848.

ANWYL FRAWD JONES,—

Y newyddion goreu sydd genyf i'ch hysbysu drwy y llythyr hwn, yw fod rhyw gyffro yn dechreu drwy'r gogledd, a'r bobl yn gyffredinol yn gwrandao, a rhai yn ufyddhau hefyd.

Daeth Mr. Parry, o Lerpwl, gyda fi i Mostyn i weithio, ac y mae efe a'i feibion am ddyfod i Gymru etto i fyw ar fyr, i weithio a phregethu. Bedyddiais wyth yr wythnos o flaen y ddiweddar, yn agos i Newmarket, gwr a gwraig y *Light House, Point of Air*, a 5 o Newmarket, ac un o Llansaint, a John Parry yn llywydd arnynt oll yno. Darfu i Mr. Davies, gweinidog yr Annibynwyr yno, dreio gwneuthur ymranriad yn nheulu John Williams, Coachmaker, trwy fyned yno i ddweyd fod y Saint yn dyfod yno i fwyta bwyd ei blant; ond cafodd sen *didy* am hynny gan y gwr a'r wraig. Aethum i Rhosllanerchrugog dydd Mercher diweddar, ac yr oedd Mr. Jones, (un o Liverpool,) gweinidog y Wesleyaid, wedi bod yn areithio yn erbyn y Saint nos Fawrth; ond yr oedd yn rhaid talu chwecheiniog am ddyfod i wrando. Dygwyddodd Robert Evans fod yno y noson hono, ac aeth i wrando ar y ddarlith trwy dalu chwecheiniog; gofynodd i'r cadeirydd aaniatad i adolygu y ddarlith, yr hyn a gafodd, ond rhwystrwyd ef cyn hir, oherwydd si fod yn ennill dylanwad ar y bobl i weled celwyddau y ddarlith. Ar ol cael ei rwystro, cyhoeddodd y byddai nes Fercher yn ei hadolygu yn gyflawn a manwl, bryd y daeth cannoedd i wrando, ac efe a ddarniodd darlith Mr. Jones yn chwilfriw.

Bedyddiwyd saith o'r Cefnawr yr wythnos o'r blaen, a rhoddodd paup addewid i mi dydd Gwener i gael eu bedyddio yn gyhoeddus heddyw, sef dydd Lluu y pasg: felly, y mae ar dân tua'r Rhos a'r Cefn. Yr ydwyf ar fy nbaith yn awr i ymofyn y *Prophwydi*. Danfonaf llythyr etto ar ddiwedd y mis, yn cynnwys hanes cyflawnach. Y mae eisieu pregethwyr yn arw iawn yn Bethesda, Sir Gaernarfon. Y mae y Saint yn gadarn yn y ffydd, ac yn wresog yn yr ysbryd, yn ddi-eithriad braidd drwy y Gogledd, ac yn mwynhau doniau yr Ysbryd Glân. Byddwch wych, a chofiwch fi at yr holl Saint yna. Ydwyf, eich brawd yn y cyfammod newydd,

ABEL EVANS.

Welsh version of Abel Evans's letter in Prophwyd y Jubili

Abel Evans, one dated April 24, 1848, from Ffestiniog (home of David and Laura Peters):

Dear Brother Jones—The best news I have to tell you in this letter is that some agitation has begun in the North, and the people are generally listening, and some are also obeying.

Mr. Parry, from Liverpool, came with me to Mostyn to work, and in a short while he and his sons are coming to Wales again to live, to work, and to preach. I baptized eight the week before last near Newmarket, a man and wife who live in the *Light House, Point of Ayr*, and five from Newmarket, and one from Llansaint; and John Parry is the president over all of them there. Mr. Davies, an Independent minister there, tried to create a division in the family of John Williams, coachmaker, by going there and saying that the saints had come there to eat the food of his children; but he got a *tidy* rebuke for that from the man and his wife. I went to Rhosllanerchrugog last Wednesday, and Mr. Jones (from Liverpool), a Wesleyan minister, had been speaking against the Saints on Tuesday night; but it was necessary to pay sixpence to come and hear him. Robert Evans happened to be there that night, and he went to listen to the lecture by paying sixpence. He asked permission from the chairman to review the lecture, which he received. But he was stopped before long, because he was gaining influence over the people to perceive the lies of the lecture. After being stopped, he announced that Wednesday night he would review the lecture completely and in detail, at which time hundreds came to listen, and he smashed Mr. Jones's lecture to bits.

Seven from Cefnmawr were baptized the week before last, and five promised me on Friday that they would be baptized in public today, Easter Monday. Thus things are on fire in Rhos and Cefn. I am on my way now to request copies of the *Prophwyd*. I shall send another letter at the end of the month with a more complete account. We desperately need

preachers in Bethesda, Caernarfonshire. The Saints are firm in the faith, and filled with the spirit almost without exception throughout the North, and enjoying the gifts of the Holy spirit. Please be so kind as to remember me to all the Saints there. I am your brother in the new covenant, Abel Evans.⁵

Immediately following the letter Dan Jones commented: “We have had several letters from this faithful brother before in the past telling of baptisms in several other places. We are glad to hear of their success and their faithfulness and that it is the same Spirit that cheers the hearts of the Saints of the South that is leading and guiding the Saints of the North to the unity of the faith also.”

Over twenty baptisms in a two-week period may well stand even today as the high point ever of Mormon missionary work in North Wales. Anyone who has served as a Mormon missionary can appreciate the near nirvana that Abel Evans must have been feeling in April 1848 after being instrumental in bringing so many new converts into the Church in such a short period of time.

Let us identify some of the people mentioned in the letter. “Mr. Parry” mentioned near the beginning is “Father” John Parry, a former Campbellite minister from Newmarket, Flintshire, who later was the founding conductor of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. His wife, Mary, his three adult sons, and he converted to Mormonism in September 1846 following a deathbed curse received from his daughter, Sarah, six weeks earlier for not allowing her to be baptized by the Mormons. The only other surviving child, Mary, had married John Williams in 1836. The “John Williams, coachmaker,” mentioned in the letter is Mary’s husband. Mary was one of the five from Newmarket who were baptized just before the letter was written; apparently her husband delayed until 1870 when he was finally baptized in Salt Lake City after journeying

to America with his wife and four daughters on board the *Samuel Curling* in 1856.

“Father” John Parry’s niece, Elizabeth, and her husband were another two of the five from Newmarket. Elizabeth’s brother Joseph had been baptized fifteen months earlier and had tried to interest members of his large family in Mormonism. He recorded his attempts in his journal:

I stayed in Liverpool till I emigrated to America with the exception of a short mission that I made to Wales to preach the Gospel to my Brothers and sistars and a large curcle of relitives and friends. I was not sucesful in converting any of them. But they ware under the impresion that I was delluded, and were sory for me. And my sister Elizabeth told me she woud prefer following me to my grave, rather than I should conect myself with a People who ware every ware spoken against. I told her that she would change her view from that, and that she would yet obey the Gospel and follow me to the home of the Saints. She informed me that that never would be the case. I left my testimony with her, and my blessing, and returned to Liverpool. In a few months after Elders Abel Evan [sic] and John Parry and other Elders traveled through that part of the country and converted her, her husband and children, and baptised the whole family. And in a few years they emegrated to Utah in the Hant Cart company and settled in Cedar City.⁶

Joseph and Elizabeth were the only two of their parents’ thirteen children who accepted the message of Mormonism. Quite a large number of their Parry cousins, however, were baptized. The “John Parry” mentioned in the letter was their cousin as well as their branch president. This John Parry was also a missionary companion to Abel Evans from time to time. And, as we shall see later, they traveled together in 1865 back to Wales on their missions, and John Parry was



Point of Ayr Lighthouse, North Wales

with Abel Evans the entire two weeks prior to Abel's death in November 1866.

The man and wife who lived in the lighthouse at Point of Ayr were Samuel Brooks and his wife, Emma. They emigrated with their three children eight years later on the *Samuel Curling*. Emma died while crossing the plains, and Samuel died just a few days after reaching Salt Lake City. Their eleven-year-old son, George, was adopted by family friends, Edward Lloyd Parry and his wife. George went with them to St. George in southern Utah, where he learned to be a stonemason. He also served as town marshal for many years as he raised his family of twelve children. George's father,

Samuel, had three children by a previous marriage back in Wales who had not converted to Mormonism. There are many of his descendants living in North Wales even today.

The Robert Evans mentioned was the frequent traveling companion of Abel Evans. Apparently he was a powerful preacher to “smash Mr. Jones’s lecture to bits.” It is regrettable that he later apostatized.

Handwritten Letter

In the papers of Thomas Jeremy on file in the archives of the Church Historian’s Office is a four-page letter he received from Abel Evans. Abel had gotten acquainted with the Jeremys two years earlier at the baptism and confirmation of the blind man, and no doubt he crossed paths with Thomas at least twice a year at the semiannual conferences in Merthyr Tydfil. The letter was written from Newmarket and is dated June 16, 1848. Following is the English translation of the letter:

Dear Brother and Sister Jeremy—I am sending these few lines to you hoping they will find you all well, as they leave me at present and all the Saints. Also, dear brother, I am sending to you this little lying lad, that is, this book!!! And you will see that he hides the name of his father, and his father denies him, for he knows of his lying nature. But even though his father does not claim him, he identifies his father, because he is so similar to him. First, in his great selfishness! Second, in his incomparable foolishness. And third, in his slanderous duel. Fourth, in his attempt at his own great fame through belittling others, you see. Fifth, through earning this lofty title for himself, that is, “Reviler.” And even better, sixth, “Liar.” You will have all these upon hearing him. [p. 2] This little lad was born in Llanrwst, as you will see, and that is where his mother is. And in that place, after his birth, he was

4
ai dardd. theol' aev' un delieg i hura agot oll
ac aidiyyuigi ei gwaith gan eidd John Denny a
dialgueth ar y clawn alet oll fued un y llyfrun
ac uno y cwmh wleth yspwy ei awdwr un i ddy
Cam aet ei gwaith un palmeria amneca & e
gan ddwyas hant i fof hury mecty gwynel
lles uno ac felli y gawray fed mwa arthegam
onw en y cyfan amant un acmawr enw had
ni un llwyth mwy huryy ac felli ynyw
erab gwynnt un y gogheir hdy un hury
hedydduwy yma & un dymwad hedyddes un
claw nat furo duedd un Eglwys fawr
ac yr fawnt unna fel yr lly hancnag un
un un miall oll ac mieuun yndel y ffrwy
Pa fawray a gwynn amant caicnial hury
mwt a hury fel y gwynnt un gwynnt
Dnyy haw Stonom felli a fawnt unna
hebyd fel un mhab man arall on Bud
un mawnt un amnecy hedydd a hury
hew tawp mwythas ac gullap apalley un
ar y fel & mwythas un mawnt unna a hury
y Brychpa. can mawnt un mawnt hury
cawnt fi un fawnt ut y chawnt fawnt
an teyli ll an holl fawnt. a. c. wsh hedy
onw fel un fawnt clach hury. fawnt
mawnt haw unna hawnt un hewnt a
-awnt un Dwynt hawnt un mawnt
fel awnt an clach. Pa ei hawnt un
gan unntawnt chawnt a hury
ac y mawnt hawnt Babelant un ei
hurynt hawnt a hony felli y fawnt
eych hawnt a hawnt hawnt

Last page of Abel Evans's letter to the Jeremys

sent to his father. Or his father came after him. Anyway he was found in Newmarket, and it is likely that is where his father lived, and he cannot deny that!! Next it will be seen that Mr. Davis, originally from Panteg and now from America, is trying to be a god himself, or he proves himself as such, and he proves that Joseph Smith is another god through that which follows and which he purports in his letter to give accurate information about Joseph Smith and his followers, and also to enable himself to be quite knowledgeable and informed about them and about that. Here he is an omnipotent and omnipresent god, and except he could be everywhere at all times he could not fulfill his contradictory, lying, and foolish promises!! [p. 3] Next that poor J. Smith not in possession of his full senses paying attention to every man and everything in an extremely keen and detailed manner. Notice that it is every man, and he must be in every place at once. Next it is everything, not some, but every single thing!! Here, at last, Joseph Smith is proved a god by this goblin, and he himself is another image, and no one was sufficiently wise to put this mischievous book into action but J. S. One has only to look at it (and behold Mr. Davies in contradiction to all his close brethren!!). His Joe Smith does not see anyone, says Mr. Roberts. If you see Captain Jones, show this little book to him. Or if you do not see him, perhaps Davis of Carmarthen would like to have it. Mr. Jones, a Calvinist minister, and Mr. Davis, with the Newmarket Independents, were lecturing against the Saints here. It caused the world to search for the truth. [p. 4] Their lectures were similar to all the others, and his work was reviewed by Mr. John Parry here. Notice the last piece of all in the book, and there you will see the spirit of its author in its last false step in his work in JS's Palmyra, America, showing that it has done good there, and so it will do good here, of course. But despite it all they complain that we are having success in that, and so we are. Not so much in the north so far. Two

have been baptized here lately. Then I baptized two last Monday night in Eglwysbach. And the Saints here are like an army with banners, of the same mind and in the unity of the faith. The more they are persecuted, the more solid still they become, like the wheat taking root through each storm. So it is with the Saints here also as in every other place in the world. I intend to be there within three weeks if I can, perhaps three weeks from next Sunday, or in Brechfa, but I am not sure of that. Give my fond regards to Sister Jeremy and all your family and all the Saints and also Nash, but to no one more than yourself, Bro. Jeremy. There are many here who wish to fly across the briny deep to the wilderness like birds from their nest. When they are shaken by sharp and strong winds, and when Babylon's rage shakes them, then thus it will be, says your brother there, Abel Evans.⁷

Apparently an anti-Mormon booklet had been published in North Wales. Many of these publications have been identified; unfortunately, the one Abel Evans discussed in the foregoing letter is not among them. Furthermore, it is not clear from the contents of the letter who the author is, but it seems to be someone whose name the Jeremys would recognize. Not knowing the contents of the pamphlet clouds the meaning of Abel Evans's comments in his letter.⁸

July Merthyr Conference

Just as he had predicted to the Jeremys in his letter to them, Abel Evans was back in South Wales a few weeks later. Conference time was not only a time to report—it was also a time to recharge spiritual batteries and swap stories and experiences. It was no doubt with great pleasure that Elder Evans reported fifty-two baptisms in North Wales since the previous December. An average of two baptisms each week was twice the pace of 1847. Also he reported a total of 18 elders, 19 priests, 9 teachers, 2 deacons, and 152 members throughout

North Wales. The pace in all of Wales had nearly doubled since 1847. A total of 938 baptisms for the previous six months was reported, putting the complete number of members at 2,747. And the Merthyr Tydfil branch continued to burst at the seams, now with 757 members, 153 of these newly baptized since the previous conference.⁹ Training leadership for such a fast growth-rate was undoubtedly a pleasant dilemma for the “old-timers” who had been members three or four years.

Several were called upon to speak, including Abel Evans. That he was the first to follow President Dan Jones in the 10 o'clock session on Sunday morning, the first of the two-day gathering, can be interpreted as an expression of confidence and most certainly appreciation for Abel's significant contribution to the missionary effort up North. The scribes, William Davies and Edward Edwards, recorded Abel's comments:

Then Elder A. Evans was called up to speak. He gave great praise to the Saints who are spread throughout the North, and said that they are very diligent in guarding against evil and living godly lives, and that they are enjoying the gifts of the Holy Spirit to a large extent, especially the gift of healing. And he said that the greater the persecution, the stronger they believe in the doctrine, and that they are almost without exception continuing in the unity of the faith and in brotherly love, and that there are better prospects for increasing in numbers than there have ever been before. He also said that there is a great need in many places for more preachers, and he made an earnest plea to his fellow officials from these parts to come to help him in the northern corners of the Welsh vineyard.¹⁰

In the Monday 10 o'clock session Abel Evans was the first speaker: “Elder A. Evans started the meeting, and he discussed the various duties of the priesthood, together with

the manner in which officers were to be called to fill them, the necessity and the usefulness of them, and the duties of the members to be obedient to them.”¹¹

This two-day conference in Merthyr Tydfil was a veritable marathon. Three sessions of two-hours each, or possibly longer, were held on Sunday. The 10 o'clock session on Monday went for three hours, and it was followed at 2:30 by a “tea party” for the Missionary Society. Nearly 1,500 were reported in attendance at this feast, which went until about 8 o'clock that evening, whereupon “the tables were moved, and the scene was changed to that of a public meeting in which several eloquent and captivating sermons were delivered by different persons.”¹² The scribes gave a glowing description of the endurance of those in attendance:

And although it was late the missionary feast continued, and we saw no sign that anyone had tired; and during the feast and the conference we heard of no one complaining, or reproving or finding fault with the arrangements, the feast, the format, or the teachings; and we saw no sign of a sad heart, a grieving face, or a frowning look, rather non-members and Saints alike, especially the merry sisters who served, all wore the pleasant smiles of people who were happy as could be; and for their incomparable cheerfulness, their efficiency, and their unequalled civility, they received the unanimous praise, love, and gratitude of every lover of mankind who enjoyed their delicacies.¹³

William and Eleanor Owens

As was his custom, Abel Evans returned to his field of labor in North Wales following the conference in Merthyr Tydfil. In the six-week period between September 17th and November 30th the ranks of the Ffestiniog branch were practically doubled by the entry of William and Eleanor



Margaret Owens

Owens and their nine surviving children (two other children had died previously). William Owens was renting a rather sizeable tract of land for £90 per year. There he kept over one thousand head of sheep and about twenty milk cows. The family belonged to the Baptist faith, but William was not a strong believer. However, he was the first of his family to accept the Latter-day Saint teachings, and he was bap-

tized by David Roberts on September 17, 1848. David Peters baptized Magdalan and Richard, two teenaged children, two weeks later. And two weeks after that Abel Evans baptized William's wife, Eleanor, and their twenty-three-year-old son, Cadwallader. Five other children soon followed, including nineteen-year-old Margaret, whom Abel Evans baptized on November 19th.

Two more children of William and Eleanor Owens died before the year was out. As they were financially able to pay their passage, the parents and the seven remaining children began immediately to make preparations to emigrate with the group Dan Jones had announced would be leaving in early 1849. Cadwallader, age twenty-four; Margaret, age twenty; and Owen, age twelve; all survived the journey and traveled straight on to the Salt Lake Valley in 1849. Their parents, however, and four of their siblings died of cholera while on the Missouri River in a terrible, eleven-day period between May 7th and May 18th of that year. The ultimate philosophy offered by Captain Dan Jones and others as the

grief-stricken survivors dragged themselves into Council Bluffs was borrowed from Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."¹⁴

Year-end Merthyr Conference

As Abel traveled back to Merthyr Tydfil for another conference he was no doubt aware that his life seemed to be in a holding pattern—travel to North Wales for several months and then return to Merthyr Tydfil for conference. Then back to North Wales and back to Merthyr Tydfil. Ever since Dan Jones began his presidency three years earlier Abel had been on the road constantly. Furthermore, he had been in the proselyting business for nearly five years from the time of his own conversion and baptism. He had celebrated his thirty-sixth birthday in June 1848 and was still single. He was willing to dedicate his full energies to bringing souls unto Christ because he had been called to do so by Church leaders he had committed to sustain. Although it was true that he received some monetary assistance from the funds of the Missionary Society it was also true that the help was quite meager. Much of the time he served without purse or scrip. Certainly by this time he was hoping to be part of the group of Welshmen that would be sailing to America from Liverpool in February the following year. But such was not to be the case. Lack of financial resources may have been the reason—the Perpetual Emigrating Fund had not yet been put into operation. Or perhaps a request from Dan Jones to continue in Church service for a while longer may have been the reason. Or perhaps both. Abel Evans gave continual evidence that he knew the meaning of commitment and perseverance. And he was ready to contribute his time and energy to whatever was deemed wisdom by his Church leaders.

The semiannual conferences at Merthyr Tydfil got progressively bigger and better as the Church continued to grow.

The one scheduled to begin on December 31, 1848, would close one year and begin another. And, since Dan Jones was to be released and another presidency installed, this conference would also close one era of the Church in Wales and begin another. The William Henshaw era saw the Church go from its infancy to a growing force of around five hundred members, all converts ranging from a few days as members to the “old-timers” who had been in between one and two years. Retention of converts was a serious problem back then just as it is in modern times. A significant percentage would become disenchanted with their new religion and either return to former beliefs or simply go “inactive.” Consequently only about half of the five hundred baptized members continued to be active supporters of Mormonism.

The Dan Jones era witnessed an extraordinary amount of growth during its three years. Numbers doubled from around five hundred to nearly one thousand members during 1846. They doubled again the following year, so that at the end of 1847 members numbered nearly two thousand. And the numbers nearly doubled again during 1848. Over the next decade, however, the weakening effects of constant emigration and attrition would reduce the numbers and strength of the Church to a very low level. Had it not been for emigration the LDS church in modern-day Wales would probably be among the strongest organizations in the Principality.

The next era was the William Phillips era. This would encompass a five-year period from 1849 to 1853. Abel Evans would be a very important part of this era, but only during its first year. Because of his faithful service during the five years since his conversion Abel Evans was called to be the first counselor to William Phillips in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Wales. He was set apart by Dan Jones in the Monday afternoon session of a conference that would be long remembered by any who attended.

The Wrong Spirit

What made this particular conference memorable was not just the large attendance or the fact that a neighboring hall had to be rented in addition to the White Lion to accommodate all who came. No, it was the uninvited and unwanted “guests” that made this conference unforgettable. But before we get to these guests let us first mention the two guests who were invited and anticipated but who did not come. These guests were Orson Pratt and Orson Spencer, who were to travel to Wales from Church headquarters in Liverpool. In his January 6, 1849, letter to Orson Pratt, Dan Jones laments that they did not come: “It was with regret that I, and thousands more, were disappointed by your absence from our Conference, which was anxiously anticipated until the last moment.”¹⁵ What doubled the frustration for Dan Jones is that these two were supposed to release him from his post and install a new presidency. In a burst of creativity that today’s General Handbook of Instructions would most certainly view with disdain, Dan Jones as the presiding authority simply released himself (whether “with a vote of thanks” or not is not recorded) and set apart the new presidency himself.

Now for a look at the other “guests.” In his letter to President Orson Pratt, Dan Jones describes their arrival during the Sunday afternoon session:

Whilst I was describing the beauties of Zion . . . the prince of darkness thought that I was getting to be too traitorous in the midst of his dominions; he could not bear such good and powerful truth, so he sent a legion of evil spirits into the hall at that time, as though he was determined with one grand rally to storm our little fortress, and demolish our citadel with impunity. In five minutes after their arrival, which was seen by some, three females were possessed and many more nearly

as bad; however, I perceived the enemy's design, and having command of the post I lost no time in returning him a heavy broadside with the artilleries of heaven, by commanding every evil spirit in the place to depart in the name of Jesus Christ, which was responded to by all the audience with such powerful Amens! that the neighbours thought it thundered, that all the devils, except three, run away in fright.¹⁶

Jones explains that some of their worst persecutors were in attendance at that session of conference, having come with evil intent. But when they saw the power of the priesthood manifested they recognized that God was with the Latter-day Saints. Also there were hundreds of rather new converts to the faith who had never witnessed anything like what was happening; consequently, Dan Jones decided to “maintain the platform for more than an hour to teach them the wiles of the devil, and to encourage them to be brave in the power of God.”

In the meantime Captain Jones sent some elders (among them was very likely Abel Evans) to rebuke the spirits who were calling out, “Old Captain, have you come to trouble us? d—d old captain we will hold you a battle.” Some of the spirits were even speaking English through one of the women who knew no English herself. He adds: “The spirits left one of the three females at the first rebuke, but the others cursed all the elders, calling many by names, with whom the females were totally unacquainted. They said they were at Carthage in the slaughter of the prophets.” The spirits claimed that they would not leave unless Brigham Young himself came from America to cast them out. Jones responded to one of the spirits that Brigham Young “had better business than to come and wait on such beings as him, at which he sneered and laughed that echoed through the hall and alarmed many.” Jones continues: “At the same time the streets were crowded with strangers and policemen, drawn

there by the noise, and shortly the whole town was in an uproar, like Ephesus of old.”¹⁷

President Dan Jones learned that the two women had been “frequently possessed elsewhere” and were living in transgression. The counsel of Elder Orson Hyde to “cut such off after the third offense” came to mind, and Jones decided to excommunicate the two women. He describes in his letter the events that followed:

The next I did was to close the meeting, and called the elders together with the females (who were all this time biting, kicking, and swearing most awfully, and being held by men) and explained to them the principle above alluded to; and when I proposed to cut the females off from the Church, all agreed to it; and after laughing, deriding, and saying that, that’s what they wanted, the spirits left them, both in less than five minutes; so that the females recovered themselves, dressed their upper garments which they had previously torn off themselves, and went home without any inconvenience. On their way home they were informed that they had been excommunicated, which they had not previously understood, though done over their heads, and they both wept bitterly.¹⁸

The evening meeting, after such excitement during the afternoon session, was full to overflowing. Dan Jones took advantage of this “teaching moment” to instruct the Saints concerning the “cunning craft of the devil” and to caution them to be diligent in keeping the commandments to ensure that the evil spirits would have no power over them. Although the spirits did not return to trouble them during this gathering there was a concurrent bit of confusion just outside the hall:

During all this time the spirit had led one of the females back, though late, but the place was too crowded for her to

get inside, and he kept her running about the streets in front of our hall, shrieking, cursing, barking and howling the most hideous noises imaginable, which at times penetrated the assembly, but failed to get inside, so that we had a glorious meeting in despite of him [*sic*] and all his legions.¹⁹

Jones's following comment is an indication of the fatigue that all must have felt at the end of the day: "After speaking with my whole strength for seven hours and a half, with but little cessation, I closed the meeting, and disbanded our noble battalion, fully determined to be more valiant than ever." Part of Dan Jones's speaking was done in some overflow meetings held in nearby Georgetown in another hall that had to be rented hastily for all who could not fit in the White Lion (or Cymreigyddion Hall). Deprived of the modern-day inventions that we now take for granted President Jones would apparently finish one session in the main hall and then hurry over to the other place and then back to the first for the next session. No wonder he was worried that his voice would not last.

New Year's Gift

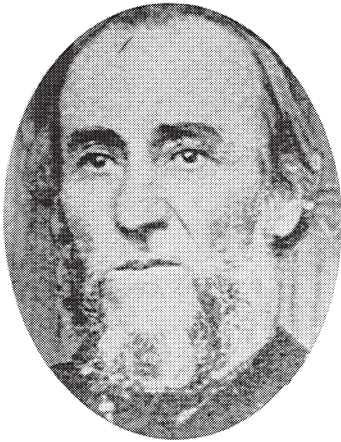
As part of his farewell address in the Monday afternoon session of the conference Dan Jones organized a first presidency for Wales. His file leaders from Liverpool were scheduled to be in attendance to take care of this matter of business, but they did not come. Since President Jones would be leaving Wales in just a few weeks, he had no choice but to issue the calls himself and make the announcement:

I called and organized a first presidency for Wales, (subject to the presidency at Liverpool, of course,) comprising a president and his two counsellors, to preside over all the conferences [districts], viz. : Elder William Philips, a sterling and

tried man, president; Abel Evans, an indefatigable veteran, his first counsellor and travelling president through the conferences in North Wales, and to see that all officers open new ground and teach righteous principles throughout Wales; Elder John Davies [*sic*], who is a faithful man, to be his second counsellor. . . . These three were blessed, in presence of the vast assembly, with their duties, and responsibilities made known unto them to serve the Saints; and, with many appeals and exhortations to them and the Saints, I introduced them on the platform to the assembly, and told the Saints that this presidency was the most precious “new year’s gift” which I, or heaven, could give them, and they, with tears of joy streaming down their faces, received them to their bosoms, and pledged themselves to love, honor, obey, and sustain them by faith and prayers, with uplifted hands, and the scene thereby presented, and the sensation produced when they saw their “little captain” divesting himself of every office which he had held in their midst so long, and throwing garment after garment on some ten men; but above all, when he stripped off the only remaining garment or office voluntarily, and clothed these three presidents with it, it was more than but few could bear: many burst out into unrestrained tears aloud. Such love I never before witnessed since the day—the awful and eventful day—when our beloved and martyred prophet left Nauvoo for Carthage! ’Twas past description; sweet, but yet bitter!²⁰

Conference Participation

In the Sunday morning session Abel Evans and numerous others were called on to report the growth and statistics of their respective branches or areas. Abel reported 75 baptized since the previous conference for a total of 208 members in North Wales. The rate continued to accelerate, no doubt a source of enormous satisfaction for Abel and his



William Phillips



John Davis

companions. He also reported 19 elders, 24 priests, 14 teachers, and 5 deacons. Zion was indeed growing! Abel was requested to close the morning meeting with prayer.

Considering Abel Evans's fame in laying on hands, he was most likely one of those whom Dan Jones asked to rebuke the evil spirits from the three females in the afternoon session.

It was Abel Evans once again in the Monday morning session who was asked to begin the meeting "with prayer and praise." And among the various proposals made during this session was one "that Anglesey be made a Conference, with Abel Evans to oversee it, and choose officials to labor in it."²¹

In the Monday afternoon session Abel Evans was set apart as first counselor in the new first presidency for Wales. Mention was made of the monetary collections of the various districts. These were to be paid to William Phillips, who was then to give one-fourth of the total to John Davis for being the secretary and the other fourth to Abel Evans, "if he needs it." Could it be that Abel needed this money after serving for

five straight years as a missionary without purse or scrip and probably without working during that time? He most likely viewed this as a great blessing.

In the Monday evening session he followed Captain Dan Jones in speaking to the large congregation—with no microphones, speakers had to provide their own volume when addressing the listeners. And those who did not know Welsh were left to wonder at the meaning of the message. Most of those present were Welsh monoglots with a few who spoke only English. A few talks were in English, during which the majority had to rely on the Spirit for understanding. The clerk recorded some of the ingredients of Abel's talk:

Upon his [Dan Jones's] finishing . . . brother Abel Evans was called on to stand up. He recommended the faithfulness of Eleazer Edwards,²² exhorting everyone to thrust his sickle in the work of reaping, instead of keeping it on his shoulder, while looking at others work. Brother Evans said that no one should be received in the South, when they are sent to the North; until after they have been released from there, since that would benefit indolent workers.²³

Abel Evans's instruction that missionaries called to labor in North Wales should not be "received" in South Wales until an official release has been given them is a curious one. Apparently some men had volunteered for missionary service as an alternative to working. Since they were permitted to receive food, lodging and even money from the members wherever they went, those who were less committed and perhaps tended to be a bit on the lazy side would logically wish to travel throughout the more numerous branches in South Wales rather than remain in the more spartan conditions of the northern branches. Abel had willingly spent the last three years in the less attractive and less populated North

Wales. This, of course, speaks well for his level of dedication and his altruistic motives in serving as an “itinerant preacher” for Mormonism.

Abel’s next year, his last before emigrating, would also be spent in North Wales, but the circumstances were considerably different from those of the previous years. As a member of Wales’s first presidency he would be involved in policy-making decisions for the entire missionary effort in Wales. He was also entitled to receive greater monetary assistance, although it appears that this was anything but constant and plentiful. Furthermore, his letters about happenings in connection with his travels in North Wales would not just receive “honorable mention” in the monthly periodical—no, they would be quoted in their entirety. Abel Evans was, after all, one of three men in Wales who were most highly respected by Latter-day Saints.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FIRST COUNSELOR

New Year's Day 1849 brought with it both a new year and a new role for Abel Evans in his religion—a religion that after nearly five years of dedicated service was no longer new. But although the newness was gone, the fervor continued as vibrant as ever, possibly even more so with this new calling to serve as first counselor to William Phillips, who would preside over the missionaries and members throughout all the Principality of Wales.

William Phillips and John Davis

When the new first presidency for Wales was organized, William Phillips and his wife Hannah were the parents of four young children, the youngest of whom was named Moroni. William Phillips was a mining superintendent at the time he converted to Mormonism on December 17, 1843, just two months before Abel Evans received his baptism. Filling the shoes of the charismatic Captain Dan Jones was a daunting task for the thirty-three-year-old incoming president. There is no evidence that William Phillips had ever traveled very far from Merthyr Tydfil, where he was born; Dan Jones had sailed the seven seas and could speak of an intimate friendship with Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and

other Church leaders. William Phillips spoke only Welsh; Dan Jones had charmed thousands of listeners with his finely honed oratory in both Welsh and English. William Phillips, however, had distinguished himself by his devoted service during his five years in the Church. This service was recognized with appreciation and with the honor of being called to preside over nearly four thousand Latter-day Saints in Wales. Elder Phillips was released to emigrate five years later at which time he was replaced by Dan Jones, then back in Wales on his second mission.

John Silvanus Davis was twenty-six years old when the call came for him to serve as William Phillips's second counselor. He was an expert in the printing business, having served a seven-year apprenticeship between the ages of thirteen and twenty. John Davis was probably the only person in the Church with the skills necessary to assume the editorship of the monthly Mormon periodical from Dan Jones. Furthermore, he was the proud owner of his own printing press, a second-hand Columbian Super Royal that he apparently had purchased in anticipation of his call. Many thousands of pages in defense of Mormonism would issue forth from this printing press over the next decade, including Davis's English-to-Welsh translation of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Book of Mormon. Like Abel Evans, John Davis was single as they began their service together.

Conference in Newmarket

John Davis was for the most part kept in Merthyr Tydfil by his printing responsibilities; William Phillips traveled extensively around the districts and branches of South Wales; and Abel Evans would do little else besides travel in North Wales. On January 21, 1849, Abel presided over a conference in Newmarket, Flintshire, probably the first in his new role as first counselor in the presidency. Newmarket

was of course the home of many of the Parrys who converted to Mormonism. Among them was John Parry, Jr., a frequent missionary companion of Abel Evans. Following are the minutes of that conference as recorded in *Udgorn Seion*, the successor to *Prophwyd y Jubili* as of January 1849:

The first conference to be held in North Wales at Newmarket was on the 21st of last January. Following the opening by John Parry, Jr., of the morning's meeting, Abel Evans was chosen to preside. He told the Saints what had taken place in the Conference at Merthyr—that John Parry, Jr., had been chosen as District President with Joseph Evans and David Williams as his counselors. Also two branches had been organized—one in Abergele, to be presided over by John Parry, and the other in Eglwysbach, to be presided over by Joseph Evans. All was approved unanimously. Following this, the Saints were addressed by John Parry. He proclaimed his gratitude to God and to the Saints for recommending him for this honorable office with which he was trusted, and he told of his decision to magnify it through the power of God and the prayers of the Saints. Then the branches of Newmarket, Abergele and Eglwysbach were represented. The number of members is fifty-seven, including three elders, three priests and three teachers, each in good standing. Two elders, four priests, three teachers and three deacons were called. Robert Parry was chosen as president of the Newmarket branch. The [afternoon] meeting began at 2 o'clock with song and prayer, and after the breaking of bread, etc., the new officials were ordained. Then the young officials and Saints were addressed by Brother Abel Evans. He gave them some beneficial advice and teachings showing them their duties to God and their fellow men. In the evening the meeting was addressed by several elders, and we received an abundant share of God's spirit throughout the day. A. Evans, President, W. Parry, Scribe.¹

Miraculous Healing

Two weeks later Abel Evans presided over a conference in the little town of Rhosllannerchrugog, about twenty-five miles to the southeast of Newmarket. Following are the minutes for that conference:

The Flintshire Conference was held in Rhosllannerchrugog on the 4th of last February. The meeting was opened by Abel Evans with song and prayer; he was then chosen to preside over the conference. That which was passed in the Merthyr conference was approved in this conference also. Then the presidents of the branches were called to represent them. Bagillt has two elders, two priests and fifteen members. Flint, one elder, one teacher, one deacon and fourteen members. Rhos, one elder, two priests and sixteen members. Cefn, one elder, four priests, one teacher and seventeen members. Six elders were called, three priests, three teachers and one deacon. The total is eleven elders, five priests, three teachers, one deacon and sixty-two members (including everyone). We had a delightful conference, everyone fervent in the Holy Spirit. Several bore strong testimonies with everyone wishing to speak at once. Among them was a sister who lived near Cefnmawr who testified that she had tried every doctor she had heard of in an effort to find a cure for her cancer, but in spite of everything, she had grown worse and hopeless as far as they were concerned, and they had given her up. After this, God made manifest his power through his servants, those who anointed her with oil in the name of the Lord, until she was entirely healed. It had eaten away her face and nose terribly, and inside her jaws it had bored holes. She thanked God for his blessing to her and decided to adhere to his work even if it meant losing the last drop of blood of her heart. Who will not obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Abel Evans, President, A. Vaughan, Scribe.²

The sister with the cancer was Sister Tomkinson, the wife of Brother John Tomkinson of the Cefnmawr branch. Elder John Parry assisted Abel Evans in administering to the afflicted sister, and in his journal, which he wrote in English, he recorded a few more details concerning the incident:

[Sister Tomkinson] was afflicted by the Cancer, and her nose was wholly eaten up by it, and by all appearance her life would soon be at an end. And the priest of the Parish visited her often to perswade her to leave such a deluded set [sect], inasmuch that she was not cured of such a dangerous Disease. But she did not wholly trust to the Lord, as she tryed all kinds of Doctors or Physicians, and traveled far and near to try to get cured, but went worse, untill no one would stay in the same house as her, as the odour of the disease was so nasty. After she came to the conclusion that she would trust to the Lord and the ordinance of anointing with Oil, and laying on of hands, etc., We administered to her. Som time afterwards I saw her at Manchester Conference, with a perfect new nose. She told me that she began to get well from the day we administered to her.³

Years later yet another version of the incident appeared in *Early Scenes in Church History*:

While laboring as a missionary in Wales in an early day he [Abel Evans] met a sister who was a member of the Church and was afflicted with a terrible cancer in her face which had eaten away her upper lip and the greater portion of her nose. She had tried all the doctors she could find who pretended to cure cancers and they had one after another given her case up as hopeless. When Brother Evans met her she was mourning over her affliction and recounting her suffering and the efforts she had made to get relief. He listened to her story and then asked; "Why do you not apply to the Great Physician to

cure you?” “Do you think it would be of any use?” she asked, brightening up. “Why,” he replied “with the Lord all things are possible! If you have faith you can be healed!” She expressed her anxiety to be administered to, and he forthwith purchased a bottle of olive oil, consecrated it and anointed her face, applying the oil with a feather to the worst part. He also rebuked the disease and prayed for her recovery, and from that hour the cancer was killed and her face began to heal. He repeated the operation two or three times, and, strange as it may appear, the flesh and skin actually grew again upon that part of her face which had been eaten away and a new nose in time developed—not a perfect one it is true, but one that was a great improvement upon none at all. Notwithstanding this great manifestation of God’s goodness to her, however, this woman afterwards apostatized.⁴

Welsh Saints on the Sea

On February 7, 1849, three days following the conference in Flintshire, Abel Evans was in Liverpool to receive an ordinance reserved for very few individuals in the Church at that time. Under the hands of Dan Jones and Orson Pratt he was ordained a high priest, the highest office in the Melchizedek Priesthood. Were we to have Abel’s written comments for that day in his life the entry would no doubt be filled with awe at the opportunity of being in the presence of one of the Twelve Apostles and having the leader’s hands laid on his head to ordain him to this high calling in the priesthood. He and William Phillips received this distinction because of their new callings to serve in the first presidency in Wales.

A week-and-a-half later Liverpool would again be the scene for a most important happening in the lives of the Welsh Mormons. Over three hundred would gather there to begin their journey to America, where they intended to join

the body of the Latter-day Saints in the Salt Lake Valley. During the interim between the ordinations of William Phillips and Abel Evans to the office of high priest the now “former” President Dan Jones returned to Merthyr Tydfil, where he coordinated the gathering of the emigrants in South Wales to Swansea. In Swansea they would board the steamer, *The Troubador*, that would take them all to Liverpool. Awaiting them in Liverpool was the *Buena Vista*, a small sailing vessel that had been contracted to take them to New Orleans.

President William Phillips accompanied Dan Jones back to Merthyr Tydfil, and several days later he went with the emigrating group from Swansea back to Liverpool. Abel Evans probably returned directly to North Wales from Liverpool in order to assist the emigrants from his jurisdiction to gather in Liverpool. All the emigrants from Wales stayed in a huge, six-story building on Bold Street called the Music Hall (this building still stands). And from there they transported themselves and their trunks to the *Buena Vista*, awaiting them at the Waterloo Dock. But there were more emigrants than space on this 141-foot ship. Consequently, when the *Buena Vista* was finally towed out of the dock on February 26th there were seventy-seven people waving farewell from the shore who had counted on being on the ship. These were able to sail on the *Hartley*, on March 5, 1849, exactly one week later. In his account of the crossing Dan Jones described the departure of the *Buena Vista*:

On Monday, the 26th of February, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, we set sail from the port, and all the Saints, accompanied by the harp, sang “The Saints’ Farewell” as we left the dock. Their sweet voices resounded throughout the city, attracting the attention of and causing amazement to thousands of spectators who followed us along the shore as if charmed. We were followed here by our dear and faithful

brethren, William Phillips, Merthyr, Abel Evans, Eliazer Edwards, and some of the other faithful elders, together with David Jeremy from Brechfa. These brethren, having shown every other kindness and assistance they could, like dear kinsmen to loved ones at the graveside, vied with each other in showing yet additional love by buying oranges and throwing them to us in the ship as long as they could reach it. The fall of the oranges out of our reach into the sea proved that we were too far to shake hands with each other any more. It was only this last separation from them that could agitate the fountains of tears in spite of ourselves. By this time, almost unawares, all we could see behind us were their handkerchiefs like flags waving in the breeze, in a language shouting from the aching heart, "Farewell, farewell! to sail across the vast sea to dear Zion" while all they heard back were the echoes of our warm hearts coming with the breeze from the water, "Farewell, farewell! land of Britain."⁵

Thomas Jeremy was equally nostalgic as he reflected on his friendship with Abel Evans and others on the shore:

Oh, how lovely was the association I had with some of these brethren on numerous occasions in Wales. Sometimes the day was too short for us to talk about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and we would frequently take the night as an extension to it. And sleep would stand in the distance from us while others would be abundantly comfortable in its grasp. At that time it came to my mind, "When will I see them again?" I imagined hearing something in answer that it would not be long before seeing them over in Zion. And at that I took courage.⁶

Only a handful of the 249 Welsh Saints on board the *Buena Vista* were from North Wales. David and Laura Peters and their family, William and Eleanor Owens and their family,

Nathaniel and Sarah Eames and their family—all of whom Abel Evans had helped to bring into the Church in North Wales—were obliged to wait yet another week before sailing on the *Hartley*. Just how the selection process worked was not recorded by Dan Jones or William Phillips. Because of the sizeable cluster of Abel Evans’s people from the area of his jurisdiction, it is not inconceivable that he was asked by Dan Jones to approach David Peters, William Owens, and Nathaniel Eames to persuade them to be patient and stay behind for a few more days. If so, his skills in diplomacy were put to the test, as all the Welsh Mormons wanted to remain as a group. Sailing on the *Hartley*, you see, meant being mixed in with a group that was mainly English.

Merciless Judgment

The next time we see Abel Evans’s name mentioned in *Udgorrn Seion* is in the May 1849 issue with a brief conference report:

A conference was held in this county [Anglesey] on the 8th of April at Menai Bridge. The district has two elders, two priests and two teachers; four baptized; the total is sixteen. David Williams was chosen as a counselor to Abel Evans. Several were called to positions. A. Evans, President.⁷

In the *Udgorrn Seion* for June, however, is the full text of a letter from Abel Evans to his brethren in Merthyr Tydfil. Here we finally get, from Abel Evans himself, an indication as to his expertise as a combatant in the army of missionaries in Wales. John Davis gave it the heading of “Merciless Judgment”:

A judgment meeting was held in Newmarket lately by Mr. Jones, a minister of the Calvinistic Methodists, and he condemned all the Saints to go to hell! And that was as sure,

he said, as Beelzebub's being there. And when in my travels I came past this place, I went to visit that strange judge in order to find out from him whether his authority was dignified and whether his opinion was just and with which law it was that he condemned them all. I wanted to get a second trial for their case since they did not have the same adviser there. But he was not prepared for that, nor did he have time. "And for that matter," said he, "make a small sign, and that would be the end of all discussion forever." I inquired of the judge if he would leave his belief and join the Saints if he were to receive a sign. And the answer I received was that he would do so immediately, and that was all anyone needed. Behold this judge advising everyone to join the false prophets, when they give miraculous signs, if only they would cause fire to come down from heaven to the earth in the sight of men! But the question is, why are all the Saints condemned? Oh, is it for believing in and obeying the pure rules of the Son of God, i.e., faith, repentance, baptism for remission of sins, and the laying on of hands, and seeking after the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12? Or for not giving signs to the wicked and adulterous generation that requests them? Well, for that reason Jesus and his servants were condemned also, and for doing an occasional act of mercy to those who were honest and believed in their mission. And so it is with the Saints also. I heard that a brother of Mr. Jones, that is, the Rev. Morgan Howells, in an association of Presbyterians in Aberystwyth, is in the same respected craft of persecuting the children of God, and calling them "Satanists," etc. By that, perhaps, they will earn for themselves the lofty title of slanderers. Now, I wish to set a few questions before Mr. Jones, hoping that he will see fit to answer them.

1. Who gave you the authority to judge the Saints?
2. Was your judgment just?
3. According to what law were you judging? And will Christ need to judge after you?

4. Will it be necessary to judge everyone throughout the countries who commits the same transgression of joining the Saints?

5. How often will judgment be passed?

6. Will everyone get the same punishment for the same transgression?

7. Is there a possibility of altering the judgment if people believe through signs and then join the Saints as you promised to do?

8. Who can judge you?

9. Are you willing to be judged as you judge?

Abel Evans.⁸

The foregoing letter allows the reader to sense readily the manner with which Abel Evans so aggressively defended his beliefs. For the Reverend Jones so arbitrarily and summarily to condemn all Latter-day Saints to hell violated Abel's sense of fair play. And if he had the ability to vent his feelings in such a vigorous fashion with the written word, what he was capable of doing with the spoken word teases the imagination. Modern-day ministers and preachers in Wales still employ a "fire and brimstone" approach in their sermons similar to techniques used all through the nineteenth century. There is ample reason to believe that the early converts to Mormonism did likewise, especially those, like Abel Evans, who had been lay preachers in other denominations previous to their conversion and were already profficient at *hwyl*, the Welsh word for dramatic and highly emotional preaching. And although many of these fiery personalities would be judged by today's standards as lacking in political correctness, in their day they were very much in step with accepted and widely used procedures. Abel Evans's written expression of righteous indignation in the foregoing reaction to the unfair and unfounded accusations of Mormonism's attackers suggests generous amounts of pulpit-pounding and voice modulation in his sermons.

Conversation between Reverends

The title of the next bit of writing that appeared in the August 1849 *Udgorn Seion* is “The secret of the sectarian revival, or a conversation between reverends.” Whether so entitled by Abel Evans, who wrote the article, or John Davis, who printed it, is unclear. Either way, this imaginary dialogue between two ministers is every bit as biting and sarcastic as anything written by John Davis or Dan Jones. Had Abel Evans remained a longer time in Wales as first counselor in the first presidency he would no doubt have created more such writings. As it stands, this article is the longest known piece of his authorship. Here is the full text:

EVANS: Good morning to you, Mr. Jones. What is the reason for your looking so sad?

JONES: Well, I have been frightfully vexed these days because of religions, and especially concerning that new religion, the religion of the Saints.

E: From all outward appearances it is true that the cause of religion is very close to our hearts; but I hope that the Saints have not troubled your thinking or drawn your attention to them in any way.

J: The truth is, Mr. Evans, that those Saints are deserving of more of my attention and yours also, as well as that of the other brothers, than we could ever imagine. It is not meet for us to allow them to go unnoticed.

E: I didn't think so before; but I know that you are a wise and learned man, and for that I believe you.

J: You, yourself, must awake now in earnest and strive to be wise, and learned also, so that we can invent the best way to keep our own religions in force and also to put a stop to the Saints.

E: Well, I hate them with all my heart, especially when I think how they are destroying our religions and baptizing some of our best members.

- J: What can we invent so that we can influence our members to hate them and persecute them?
- E: I think that the old scheme will succeed very well, if we follow it quite fervently; that is, exhort everyone to call them by their proper names, that is, Satanists, deceivers, false prophets, etc., and to announce from the pulpits and in the periodicals every story that is heard about them, and sign our names to them lest the people not believe. It would be foolishness to reason with any one of them from the scriptures, for they are so cunning that they notice every little word that is against us and our religion, in order to conquer us. Good stories about them is the best thing to destroy them, I think.
- J: I'm sorry that I do not agree with you on that. All this was given a fair try in America and to a large extent in Wales; but the Saints succeeded wondrously in spite of everything. Every old story that could be obtained was published about them, and it must be admitted that many of them are quite false also; but yet, the Saints continue to succeed, baptizing our members by the score.
- E: I see that what you say is true. But what else can be done? Do you know of any better plan?
- J: I have pondered a great deal on this matter during the last three months and have set my mind on a new plan that I think will better answer our purpose than anything else.
- E: Well, for goodness sake, tell me what it is, so that we can put it into action immediately.
- J: The only way to save our religions, and uproot the Saints, is to strive for a flowery and fervent Revival in our midst as sects; and after that, we can threaten our members that we will give them to the Saints if they do not take care to pay for our labor and keep our congregations, etc. In order to secure our members it is better for us never to forbid them to listen to the Saints, lest they think that we have worldly profit in mind; rather let us be somewhat indifferent,

especially after getting a revival started; and at times let us tell our worst members that they would be better off with the Saints than with us, and that it would be a great kindness to the churches of the country for the Mormon dungheap to conveniently receive their sweepings.

E: Truly excellent; but how will the revival be caused? It must have something to do with preaching, if I'm not mistaken.

J: Precisely, and here it is. When I am preaching, I shall frequently shout "Thank you," and then you will shout "Glory." Then the elders will be sure to shout "Amen," until the chapel will be filled with praise. Afterwards this will be heard throughout the whole neighborhood, and everyone will go to enquire after religion, especially in time of plague and famine; and there will be a general revival in every place where this shouting is begun in this manner.

E: That is truly excellent. Work is the next thing. The great Being himself could not wish for anything better. Tomorrow night, Brother Jones, for the sermon about the prodigal son; that is especially effective. I shall be opposite the pulpit, higher than anyone else, and I shall drive every bit of apathy from the chapel until we are on fire in love and praise for God.

J: Amen; so be it. Farewell now, and give solemn thought to the revival.⁹

Abel Evans's name is at the end of the "Conversation." He was not the only Mormon missionary in Wales to depict the Nonconformist ministers in such a negative fashion. There are several documented cases of people whose conversion to Mormonism came as a direct result of such devious tactics employed by their ministers against the Latter-day Saints. Job Rowland, for example, who was baptized in January of 1847, declared the main reason for his leaving the Baptist congregation of the Reverend W. R. Davies was that

he heard him say that his desire was to do to all Mormons what Joseph Smith's assassins had done to him.¹⁰ John Davies, a convert from the mining town of Victoria, stated that his minister had encouraged him to follow the example of a Latter-day Saint in America who had supposedly tricked his followers into believing that he was an angel by rubbing some phosphorus into his head so it would glow. Davies burned his fingers with the phosphorus and concluded that his minister had misled him.¹¹

Enslavement of a Crier

The ministers of other religions in Wales did not want their parishioners to hear the Mormon missionaries for fear that they might be convinced to leave their congregations to follow the "Satanists." In a letter printed in the August 1849 issue of *Udgorn Seion*, Abel Evans related his experience in a small town on the Isle of Anglesey with a town crier whose minister had forbidden him to announce Abel's sermon on a certain evening in July 1849:

Mr. Editor—On the 5th of July last, I happened to go to Llannerchymedd, in Anglesey, in order to preach. And since I wanted the people to be informed I sent a brother by the name of Hugh Jones to ask the crier to announce my coming throughout the village. After Bro. Jones saw him and tried to get him to announce the sermon, he answered: "I do not announce everything, and I am afraid that I cannot announce your preacher; but in any event I shall ask the minister." So it was. He asked and was soon given to understand that the minister would not permit that. He was free to announce dogs and swine, fairs and games—in short, everything except for a preacher of the Saints. Then I had to take the honor to myself of announcing throughout the town in his place; and together with announcing the sermon I was obliged to announce to the public why I was taking the job of

the restricted crier in question. And the people testified that I filled his office much better than he. I don't intend ever to try to obtain his services again, rather I shall announce myself. And perhaps if the crier is not able to escape from the Methodist clutches of his minister, everyone in Llanerchymedd will begin to announce himself also. After the trouble I took and the threats I received, an excellent meeting was held, and many testified that they believed on the sayings that cause some to begin in Christ. Yours in the truth, Abel Evans.¹²

Three days after Abel's debut as a town crier he was in Bangor for a conference. If he was able to walk the streets of Llanerchymedd shouting at the top of his lungs the announcement for that evening's street meeting and chastising the local minister for refusing to allow the town crier to make the announcement, he was certainly able to enjoy telling the story to the small group assembled for the conference in Bangor. Here are the minutes as given in *Udgorn Seion*:

The conference for this county was held in Bangor on the 8th of last July. After the opening of the conference by D. Williams, Abel Evans was called upon to preside. After addressing the congregation he called for the representation of the district which included one branch, five elders, six priests, three teachers, and one deacon. Thirty-three were baptized during the last three months; the total, fifty-two. A branch was organized in Bangor and in Caernarfon. A. Evans, President.¹³

Missionaries Nearly Hanged

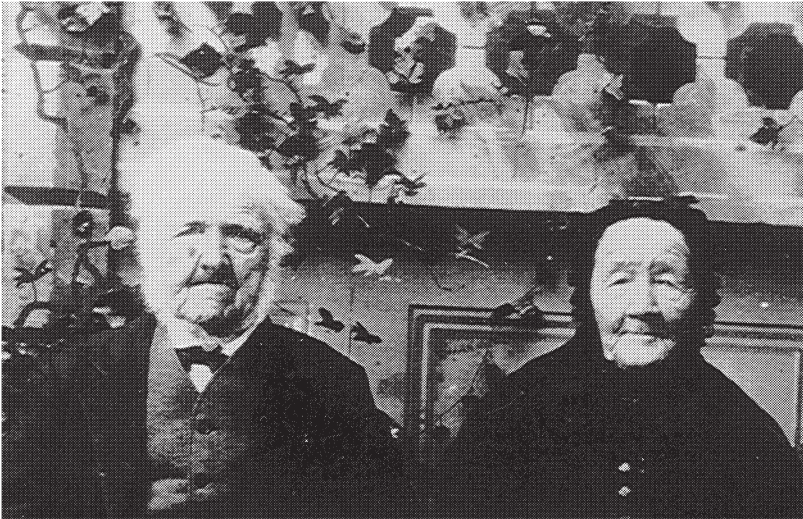
On May 25, 1847, Robert Evans, a frequent companion of Abel Evans, was in the little village of Eglwysbach, where he baptized Hugh Roberts, a shoemaker, and his ten-year-old

son, Owen. Abel Evans may also have been present, as he was traveling through North Wales at the time. The occasion and circumstances are described in *History and Genealogy of Hugh and Mary Owens Roberts*:

When Owen, Hugh's son, who was then ten years of age and who was sorely afflicted with dropsy and under a doctor's care, heard it, he was converted, for the "sick were healed" and he believed. He demanded baptism and was so insistent about it that he was taken out of bed in a quilt and was baptized. . . . This was done in the night time because of the bitter persecution against those who embraced this new religion. Hugh would not consent that Owen be baptized alone, so that memorable night after Owen, he was also baptized. Hugh would have entered the waters of baptism before, as he had been converted, but Mary, his wife, had not then been convinced of its truth.¹⁴

Immediately following the baptism young Owen began to improve dramatically. The neighbors noticed and inquired. Upon learning that Owen's parents had taken him off the doctor's medication the neighbors persuaded Mary to reconsider. Owen's vigorous objections, however, were overruled; he died about a week later.

Two years later Mary Roberts, the young boy's mother, was finally convinced to become a Latter-day Saint. Elder Abel Evans was there and had a hand in the convincing process. Hugh Roberts was a happy man as he watched his wife and their four oldest children (Robert, Elizabeth, Catherine, and Margaret) immersed in the waters of baptism by Abel Evans. A small branch was organized in Eglwysbach with Hugh Roberts as president, a position he occupied for the next fifteen years while planning and saving to emigrate. Because of Hugh's association with Mormonism, people in the village ceased to do business with him at his shoe



Hugh and Mary Roberts

shop, and soon the entire Roberts family was taken to the poor house in nearby Llanrwst. But Hugh made such a nuisance of himself with his proselyting endeavors that the officers of the place moved him and his family back to his old home and assisted him with means to work at his trade as shoemaker. And some time later he and a traveling elder were taken by some of the townspeople to a bridge where they were about to hang the two for preaching heresy. Hugh's daughter, Catherine, shouted at them and shamed them into releasing her father and the traveling elder. The Roberts family was finally able to emigrate in 1864, and they settled in northern Utah.

It is to the compilers of the book on the Hugh Roberts family that we are indebted for a more complete story about Elder Robert Evans, the former Campbellite and close friend to Abel Evans:

Soon afterward, Robert Evans migrated to Utah and, not being as well received as he thought he should have been,



Bridge in Eglwysbach where Hugh Roberts was nearly hanged

went to President Brigham Young and asked for a mission to Wales. President Young said to him, “And you are not coming back, are you?” He went to Wales and apostatized, took up a new religion and preached against the saints. He went to Hugh’s home again to preach his new doctrine, but Mary, the wife of Hugh, forbade him saying they had had enough new religion from him. He died and was buried in Wales out of the Church.¹⁵

Conference without the Captain

The first major conference in Merthyr Tydfil in four years without the charismatic Captain Dan Jones was held on July 29th and 30th in 1849. This was also Abel Evans’s first general conference for Wales since his calling to be in the first presidency with William Phillips and John Davis. Six months earlier North Wales had been organized into four districts: Merionethshire, Flintshire, Denbighshire, and Anglesey. Abel Evans was assigned to preside over Anglesey,

the smallest of the four, with only twelve members at the time. At this conference he was happy to report a total of fifty-five members, an average increase of six new members per month. The three other districts had also done quite well in this regard, and the total membership in North Wales was now at 292, an increase of 121 over the past seven months. The total membership would have been higher, but several families had emigrated earlier in the year with the first group of Welsh Mormon emigrants.

A grand total of 4,529 members were reported for all of Wales at this conference as compared to 3,603 reported at the conference seven months earlier. The number baptized since the previous conference was 1,359 as compared to 996 for the final six months of 1848. Furthermore, these most recent statistics did not include those for Monmouthshire, where there were 240 baptisms for July through December of 1848. The growth rate for the Church in Wales continued to accelerate despite the departure of President Dan Jones and over three hundred of the Welsh converts in late February and early March of 1849. The membership in Wales would peak two-and-a-half years later in December 1851 with a total of 5,244 after which the numbers of converts would no longer keep pace with the numbers of emigrants and excommunications. And it was on the foundation laid by Abel Evans and other early stalwarts that the strength of the Church in Wales was built during the late 1840s and early 1850s.

The 9 o'clock session of the conference on July 29th was held at the White Lion Inn, but for reasons that are not clear in the conference minutes the 11 o'clock session was held outside in front of the Market House. Abel Evans opened this session with prayer and later gave a talk in which he "portrayed the various unbelievers." The 2:30 session was also held outside, as was the 6 o'clock session. But the 6 o'clock session was interrupted by rain just as John Carver, the second speaker, was getting underway in English. Abel

Evans closed the meeting with prayer, and the conference was adjourned until the following morning at 10 o'clock. Those in attendance were disappointed and seemed more interested in hearing the speakers than escaping from the inclement weather: "The crowd appeared desirous to hear more, despite everything, and they did not disperse until they saw the preachers leave."¹⁶

On Monday morning the meetings were again in the White Lion Inn. Time was given to Abel Evans, who "related several very interesting things, encouraging his brethren to come to labor in the North. Abel also spoke in the evening meeting "in a very eloquent fashion."¹⁷

The conference minutes appeared in the August issue of *Udgorn Seion* three or four weeks after the conference was held. The following notice included by John Davis suggests that a concern had been expressed during Abel Evans's visit to Merthyr Tydfil: "It is the responsibility of the districts visited by Brother Abel Evans to do their best for him; for it is not reasonable that he should have to live on nothing. If they reap from his spiritual things, then he should be able to reap from their earthly things."¹⁸ According to a decision made in the conference held seven months earlier Abel was supposed to be receiving one-fourth of all contributions received from the various districts toward the support of the new first presidency. Apparently the meager circumstances of the Welsh Latter-day Saints and perhaps their forgetfulness resulted in very little money going into this fund.

Something that caused far greater distress at this time was the reports that had begun to trickle back to Wales about the great misfortune that had befallen the 326 Welsh Latter-day Saints who had left Britain five months earlier. Things had gone quite well until they came face-to-face with the cholera epidemic then raging on the Missouri River between St. Louis and Council Bluffs. Over twenty percent of that first group of Welsh Mormon emigrants lost their lives to this

vicious disease. From among the numerous groups of converts who traveled to the Salt Lake Valley in the nineteenth century only the Willie and Martin handcart companies in 1856 would suffer such heavy losses. The news was no doubt devastating to members in Wales who were also anticipating a similar journey. Nevertheless, the desire to emigrate continued high, and the numbers of emigrants increased.

One reason the Welsh continued to emigrate despite the possibility of contracting the dreaded cholera on their way to the Rocky Mountains was that there was also a cholera epidemic in Wales. It was especially bad in the Merthyr Tydfil area at this time. Among the many victims was one whose name was very familiar to Welsh Mormons—that of the Reverend W. R. Davies, their archenemy. John Davis exercised admirable restraint at the notice he placed in the issue of *Udgorrn Seion* for September 1849: “Yes, it is true that the well-known Reverend W. R. Davies from Dowlais has died of cholera. He died soon after returning home at a time when it was thought that the disease had left the place.”¹⁹ There was great relief among the Mormon community of Wales, and those who had suffered his verbal attacks and persecution for years were probably thinking that justice had finally prevailed.

Zion’s Trumpet

One responsibility of the district presidents was to supervise the distribution of copies of the monthly periodical *Udgorrn Seion*. Apparently Abel Evans coordinated this task for all of North Wales, receiving 240 copies of each month’s issue. Payment was supposed to be sent promptly to John Davis in Merthyr Tydfil but was often late. To stimulate better cooperation, John Davis began to publish in the periodical a list of distributors, money received from them, and money still owed by them. Abel Evans’s name appeared in

the June 1849 *Udgorn Seion* as having paid two pounds two shillings and as still owing one pound eighteen shillings for the quarter ending in March.²⁰ In the July issue his name again appears; for the quarter ending in June no payment had been made, and nine pounds were owing. The situation improved somewhat by the time the August issue appeared—four pounds sixpence had been paid for the quarter ending in June, but four pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence were still owing. The September issue showed no further payment and the same amount as outstanding. The October issue showed the figures for the quarter ending in September—no payment and a whopping twelve pounds twelve shillings and sixpence still owing. Payment of six pounds nineteen shillings is shown in the November issue with five pounds thirteen shillings and sixpence still owing. And in the December issue Abel Evans's name appears for the last time on the list—for the quarter ending in September he had paid one pound six shillings and sixpence, leaving a balance owed of four pounds seven shillings. At this point the burden of distribution was shifted to the other district presidents up North, since Abel would soon be emigrating.

An assessment of Abel Evans's skill in money management is a bit difficult to arrive at based on the foregoing figures. Other distributors suffered from lack of cooperation on the part of the subscribers to pay for issues of the periodical received. The figures for Abel Evans in the North, however, were consistently in arrears and more so than most of the others. It may well be an indication of how tenderhearted he was, anxious for people to have the latest issue of *Udgorn Seion* but reluctant to demand ready payment.

Abel Evans's address was printed in the issues of *Udgorn Seion* from May to December 1849: "Mr. F. Cross, Menai Bridge, Anglesey." This probably represents a kind of home-base for him, since he was constantly traveling from one place to another.

John Davis occasionally shows a sense of humor in *Udgorrn Seion*. In the April 1849 issue, for example, he says that he has heard in passing that the fourth verse of the tenth chapter of the Book of Esther mentions the origins of April Fool's Day. He encourages his readers to look this up for themselves as he was short on time and did not have a Bible handy. Readers who took the trouble to look for this reference discovered that the joke was on them—the Book of Esther ends with chapter ten, verse three.²¹

Another example of John Davis's humor is this anecdote in the October 1849 issue: "The inhabitants of a town in England were frightened once upon hearing a drunk one morning shouting 'Fire! fire!' 'Where, where is it?' scores asked through the windows from outside. 'That's what I want to know,' he said calmly, 'for it has just gone out of my pipe.'"²²

The item that would be of most interest to Abel Evans, however, was one that appeared in the November issue. It was contained in a letter to William Phillips, dated September 2, 1849, from William Morgan in Council Bluffs. Brother Morgan was then presiding over the Welsh Saints in Council Bluffs who had been part of the first emigrating group six months earlier and who had not been able to proceed directly on to Salt Lake Valley that year for lack of funds to purchase a "fitout." The few words he wrote would cause great excitement on the part of Abel Evans: "Brother Jones wishes you to send Abel Evans in the next company if you can spare him."²³ Word of this request would no doubt have been sent to Abel Evans in North Wales immediately after it was received by William Phillips in Merthyr Tydfil, probably in early November given the lag time for trans-Atlantic letters being sent in the midnineteenth century. The request was on the same order as if it had come from Queen Victoria, and from the time it was received Abel's life would never be the same. Preparations would begin immediately, as the next company would be departing Liverpool just

three months hence. Whether Dan Jones intended for Abel Evans to travel straight to the Salt Lake Valley to render assistance to the Welsh Mormons there or whether he was to remain with William Morgan and the Welsh branch in Council Bluffs is not clear. But, as we shall see, he would spend two years in Council Bluffs before continuing on across the plains.

The last time Abel Evans's name was mentioned in *Udgorrn Seion* for 1849 was in connection with a conference held in the town of Mold in Flintshire on November 11th. He along with several others addressed the small congregation assembled at a place belonging to the Black Lion Hotel.²⁴

Justice to the Persecutors

One of the experiences that Abel Evans had in North Wales about the time he received word of his imminent release is recorded in the journal of John Parry:

In the fall of this year [1849] we were mobd and stoned and sluged very often. I was called all the nick names that could be manufactord by our enemis, yet they had not the leased fault upon our charectors, as we all walked, shameless. One Sunday night as I and Young Barbara Morris was coming from meeting, a Gang of Rufians folowed us, calling Me all kinds of Names. At last one of the Boys struck the Girl in her face. My peaceance was exhausted. I struck him in his face. Then the Constable Robert Roberts (the worst enemy to the saints that was in all the town) came and wanted to take me up, But the Police came and ordered him off[f] and whept [whipped] many of the mob and came to see us safe of their reach. And as one sister was struck in the head with a stone, I and Abel Evans went to Esquire Wynn Garthewin to get sumons on them. And he took us in to his house, and we Preached to him, and he was well pleased. He gived me the

sumons and would not be paid for them, as he would make our enemis pay for them. And when all apeard before the Justice the Constable bore a fals witness against me, and the Justice said it was all right if it was the case. The enemy had a Lawyer to pled their case, but he was not alowed to say a word in the favour of the Rebels yet. And the Rebels was punished and would have been put in prison only I told them that all we wanted was peace. Then a penalty was fixed upon them, and the Lawer who was Paid 25 dollars by the enemise was oblidge to translate what the Justices said in our favour. And he [the justice] reprimanded our enemise and told them if ever any of them would come before them again that the Penalty would be 40 pounds, or 200 Dollars, and imprisonment. And from this time oute persecution ceased.²⁵

Constant opposition and frequent persecution were a way of life for all Latter-day Saint missionaries in Wales during the time period Abel Evans served his first mission. For justice to prevail, as in the foregoing instance, was the exception. Prior to his departure in February 1849 Dan Jones received numerous death threats and had to have bodyguards watching out for his safety around the clock.²⁶ Thomas Jeremy's brother David would suffer severe spasms for over thirty years and was never able to have children because of the brutal beating he received at the hands of a mob in Carmarthenshire who disagreed with his preaching.²⁷

The Captain's Request

It was Captain Dan Jones who sent Abel Evans to North Wales in early 1846; it was Captain Dan Jones who called Abel Evans to serve as the first counselor to William Phillips in 1849; and it was Captain Dan Jones who called for Abel Evans to be sent "in the next company" if he could be spared.

From Omaha on July 13, 1849, just as he was ready to begin his trek across the plains with about one-fourth of the original company of Welsh converts who had sailed from Liverpool just over four months earlier, Dan Jones wrote a letter to President William Phillips. In the letter he wrote:

Give my warm regards to Brothers John Davis and Abel Evans. Be one; put your shoulders unitedly under the ark—to all the conference presidents and all the officers; dear brethren, feelings of nostalgia are beating in my breast for your company, for your voices in the council and the congregations, and my hope is to behold your happy faces before long, and your hosts with you in worthy Zion. May God, our Father, hasten that blessed day is my sincere prayer continually.²⁸

Apparently at this time Dan Jones had not intended for Abel Evans to emigrate; otherwise, he most certainly would have mentioned it. But seven weeks later William Morgan,



Bull Inn, Abergele. LDS meetings were held in the small building from 1849–1856

who had been left behind in Council Bluffs to preside over the Welsh branch, relayed the request from Dan Jones that Abel Evans be sent in the next company. One is left to wonder at the reason for the change in Dan Jones's thinking. Since Abel Evans remained in Council Bluffs for two years following his arrival in America instead of going directly to Utah, one might speculate that the request for Abel Evans actually came from William Morgan—with Dan Jones's approval, of course. For the first several days of the journey toward the Rocky Mountains William Morgan accompanied the group of eighty-five Welsh Saints. And as he contemplated his assigned task of presiding over the 112 members of his branch of the Church in Council Bluffs composed entirely of Welsh Mormon converts, most of whom did not speak English, perhaps he felt the need for assistance and asked Dan Jones for permission to request Abel Evans. This is merely conjecture, but it would constitute one possible explanation as to why Abel Evans remained two years in Council Bluffs as William Morgan's counselor.

A First for the First Presidency

No general gathering of the Welsh Latter-day Saints was held at the end of 1849; several regional conferences were held instead. Abel Evans was in Merthyr Tydfil to attend the conference for the East Glamorgan District held on January 6, 1850, at the White Lion Inn. The East Glamorgan District continued to be the largest in Wales and now numbered over two thousand members, most of them residing in the Merthyr Tydfil and Dowlais area. Only a few details of this conference are given by John Davis in *Udgorrn Seion*, one of which is that for the first time in Wales someone was ordained a high priest under the hands of William Phillips, Abel Evans, and William Howells. Davis does not name the person, but other records show that it was John Davis, himself.²⁹

Another first for the first presidency in Wales, having now completed one year in office, was the publication of a “general epistle” to the Welsh members of the Church. Although the names of William Phillips, Abel Evans, and John Davis follow the four-page epistle, it is not clear just how much each contributed to its contents. It was probably a joint effort with the biggest contribution coming from John Davis, given his experience in the world of publishing.

In addition to general exhortations the epistle contains several specific concerns. Some of the Church officials and members traveling to district meetings were imposing on those who resided in the towns where the meetings were held. Counsel was given to guilty parties to make other arrangements for their lodging and cease to make life uncomfortable for their brothers and sisters in the gospel, some of whom were “afraid to see another conference scheduled.”³⁰ Local leaders were advised not to be unduly concerned about so many “of the world” attending the meetings intended for Church members only. On the other hand caution was required to make sure the Welsh Latter-day Saints were not deceived by those who pretended to be fellow Mormons so they could receive special favors such as free room and board. “No one should be received into your homes or meetings without a printed letter having been duly signed” was the counsel given.

The general epistle also clarified what the Church members in North Wales could expect after the departure of Abel Evans:

We wish to point out to the leaders and the Saints who are in the North that inasmuch as Elder Abel Evans intends to emigrate to Zion that no one will take his place for the time being; nevertheless, they will be cared for by our sending a missionary now and then to visit them and instruct them. Much confidence is placed in the leaders who are in the

various districts there, and they will be amply effective on their own. Let the Saints and all the officers obey the district presidents as they did Elder A. Evans, and blessings will be upon them. May gracious God bless you all.³¹

The last bit of counsel, occupying nearly two pages, had to do with LDS publications in Welsh. Church members in Wales were encouraged to “obtain a good supply of the various little pamphlets printed here, and choose the most influential officers to take them from house to house and to exchange them every week.” The distribution and circulation of the Church publications were considered of vital importance: “That will have more effect than anyone can imagine; for where can you get words of so much wisdom of God than those that are in the books the first presidency of the nation publishes?” Furthermore, counseled Presidents Phillips, Evans, and Davis, “a book is as much a preacher as an officer, if not more sometimes, when the officer is poorly dressed or if he wears a red jacket or handkerchief. Every officer who stands before the public should be dressed and be similar to a preacher in his dress, for who but others like him will listen to him?” Apparently some of the officers and missionaries, nearly all of very limited means, were not measuring up to the implied dress code in the foregoing.³² (The full text of this epistle is in Appendix H.)

Farewell to the Welsh Saints

Also included in the January 1850 *Udgorrn Seion* is the farewell address that Abel Evans gave to his Welsh brothers and sisters in the gospel. It appears to have been written especially for printing in the periodical, but it may have been presented orally in the January 6, 1850, conference held in Merthyr Tydfil for the East Glamorganshire District. Abel’s brevity in addition to the counsel he gave to his religious

colleagues in North Wales, keeping in mind that they were probably not in attendance at the January 6th conference, suggests a written presentation only of the address.

It was no doubt a difficult challenge for Abel Evans to sum up his feelings of six years as a Mormon missionary, making him a genuine “oldtimer,” in a short address. His nostalgia and love for the Welsh Latter-day Saints are transparent throughout:

Dear Saints of Wales—I wish to address you as I leave for another country, the place that my soul loves even before I see it, but only through faith, which came from hearing the word of God. And since God is calling us out of Babylon, I am pleased to obey him. And I would love to see many more of my dear brothers and sisters in obedience to this divine calling, especially those who have the means. That the kind God will open the way to the poor after us is my sincere wish and my constant prayer to Him who has every heart in his hand, for Christ. I have been laboring in your midst for nearly six years now; and I feel myself thankful for having this great privilege of serving you when you know whose children you are, that is God’s children. I am truly grateful also to Him who called me and strengthened me in this important task until this time, and I trust in the same divine power to serve you in the future to guide and defend my dear brothers and sisters to the place where they can take refuge when the powers of heaven shall be shaken—when there will be pestilences and plagues on Babylon—when the host of the high ones that are on high and the inhabitants of the earth upon the earth shall be punished, and when they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days they shall be visited!³³

On my departure at this time from Wales, I feel myself free from the blood of everyone, out of the Church as well as in the Church. I know of not a single thing that I have done that has caused so much as one person to leave this Church,

nor that has kept anyone from coming into it from the world. Also, if anyone has an accusation against me, I am able to call on all the officials of the Saints from any part of Wales, and tell them not to hide anything before my departure. For this I am extremely thankful.

And dear brothers and sisters of North Wales, you have always listened to all my counsel to the best of my knowledge. And I wish for you to listen yet to the last counsel I have for you in Wales; and that is to trust abundantly in the priesthood the servants of God possess and who will be in your midst and preside over you. To obey them and to trust in them is to trust in and obey God; and as long as you do that you will be blessed by Him who has blessed you up until now. But if you disobey and oppose the leaders that God has given for the purpose of defending you against your enemies, then will the enemy come in like the river and you will lose the Holy Spirit and his comfort and his divine blessings; and, oh, what a tremendous loss that will be, dear Saints. Also do not think that you will be protected or defended by the old shepherds who used to defend you, for they will have plenty of work to care for others their King will give them to watch over, where much stronger enemies will be attacking, and they will be more cunning by far. Rather your leaders will see and understand the attacks of your enemies in the time to come, for the enemies will make an attempt in many new ways. For this reason, all the teachings you have received in times gone by cannot be sufficient in the future time, because the devil will change his way and his armies in order to attack the armies of gentle Jesus. But in spite of that, his holy priesthood will see his entire plan in time. And for this reason, may all the Saints be ready in an instant, awaiting the command of their leaders, and the leaders of their leaders—each in his own place.

Now I shall finish by presenting my deepest appreciation for all the kindness that I have received in every way from my

dear brothers and sisters. Pray a great deal yet for me and for the emigrants, that we might all meet together in happiness on Zion's mount, having overcome all our enemies. Finally, I bid farewell to all the Saints. And that the gracious Lord bless you and keep you and me in his kingdom is the sincere wish of your brother in the new covenant, Abel Evans.³⁴

Steadfast and Immovable

William Howells had been a lay Baptist minister in Aberdare before converting to Mormonism in November 1847. His only acquaintance with Abel Evans would have been during Abel's periodic visits to South Wales, but judging from Howells's comments a kindred spirit was felt between the two. In a letter dated January 25, 1850, William Howells makes this observation about the three who had assumed the reins of leadership in Wales at the departure of Dan Jones one year earlier:

I feel an inclination to give Brother Pratt a short testimony of the pleasure I have experienced in seeing the light of truth rolling forward through the empire of darkness in Wales, under the Presidency of Brother William Phillips, Abel Evans, and John Davies [*sic*], each having a peculiar quality answering the nature of their various circumstances in connexion with their stewardship—concentrating a power in Wales which will shortly cause the Principality to become a general Zion of the pure in heart.³⁵

After additional comments about the good work of the three leaders, Howells continues:

But in the midst of the harmony, unity, and prosperity of the three that constituted, as it were, the pillars of the church in Wales, all at once we found that Abel, the shepherd of the

north, was to be taken away, not by the hand of violence, but by counsel, to fill another sphere in the church, which his undaunted faith entitled him to. Abel (although away) *will yet speak in Wales*, through his example of patience and perseverance in the midst of continual persecution, and by surmounting all difficulties, living soberly, righteously, and godly, steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.³⁶

William Howells was the first LDS missionary in France. After immigrating to America in 1851, he died of frail health in Council Bluffs at the age of thirty-five while making preparations to cross the plains with his wife and children.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FROM BABYLON TOWARD ZION

In the January 1850 issue of *Udgorn Seion* was the following notice for all who anticipated sailing to America that year:

The ship *Josiah Bradlee* will leave from Liverpool with the Welsh Saints on February 5th, barring any unforeseen obstacles. The price of the crossing for adults is £3 10 shillings, and for children under the age of fourteen £3; no charge for babies under the age of one year. Provided also in the bargain for each adult are 25 pounds of hardtack, 10 pounds of wheat flour, 30 pounds of rice, 50 pounds of oat flour, 10 pounds of salted pork, 5 pounds of treacle, 1¼ pounds of tea, 3 pounds of butter, 2 pounds of cheese, and one pint of vinegar. Children under fourteen and over one are to receive half this. If any wish to get anything else they will have to buy it on their own. The Saints will leave Bristol, Swansea, and Milford Haven, on the 29th and 30th of this January on board the *Troubador* fully determined to reach the land of their inheritance.¹

The *Troubador* was an iron steamer that several times each month made the journey between Liverpool and Bristol with

stops at Swansea and Milford Haven in South Wales. The pattern at this time was for the emigrating Saints to gather at Liverpool, where they would make final preparations to board the sailing vessel the Church had chartered to take them to New Orleans. Once in New Orleans, they would travel by steamer to St. Louis and then by a different steamer from St. Louis to Council Bluffs. At this point the journey was far from over, as more than one thousand miles of over-land travel remained before the destination was reached.

The Welsh Mormon emigrants could have waited another week before traveling on the *Troubador* to Liverpool, as the *Josiah Bradlee*, the sailing ship that would take them to America, would not leave until February 18th, thirteen days after the scheduled departure date. Such delays, however, were fairly common. It just meant a few extra days in Liverpool waiting for final preparations to be made on the part of the organizers. And like the Welsh emigrants of one year earlier, they stayed at the Music Hall on Bold Street.



Music Hall on Bold Street, Liverpool

Of the 263 passengers on board the *Josiah Bradlee* just over one-third of them were Welsh. Three full pages of the passenger list consisted of names of Church members from Wales. At the top of the list is the name of Abel Evans, minister, age thirty-seven. This part of the list is dated December 17, 1849, and it appears that the names for all the Welsh emigrants on board were submitted as a group by John Davis. The address column for all three pages of Welsh passengers has “John Davis, Printer, Georgetown, Merthyr Tydfil.”

Romance on Board the *Josiah Bradlee*

In Liverpool during the interim prior to the departure, Abel had a chance to get acquainted with the nearly ninety Welsh passengers while assisting them and others with their needs. Apparently he needed only two days at sea to overcome nausea and get his sea legs. Thus he and William Rees, the only other “non-sufferer” on board, were kept busy taking care of their ailing brothers and sisters in the gospel as best they could. In a few days stomachs and lives began to calm down somewhat. And perhaps it was at this point that Abel may have begun to notice that among the Welsh Saints on board there were no fewer than eight young ladies of marriageable age. If he had entertained thoughts of marriage during his six-year mission he certainly had not acted on any of those thoughts. But here was a totally different scenario, and being thirty-seven years old Abel most certainly received from his friends regular reminders that it was high time for him to reject celibacy and move on to the higher order of life.

John Rogers from Pembrokeshire had two daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth, who were possibilities. Six days out of Liverpool, however, Lewis Davis married Sarah, and some other impetuous young man on board was constantly pestering Elizabeth to marry him. Mary Eames, the twenty-four-year-old young lady from Herefordshire was also worthy of

consideration. But John Carver, a young man who was also from Herefordshire and who had served part of his mission in Wales, convinced Mary to be his wife. The marriage was performed on board the ship on March 10th, three weeks after sailing from Liverpool. Also there was Esther Cullen, the twenty-year-old girl traveling with the William Vaughn family. But romance seemed to be blossoming between her and David Eames from North Wales.² So what about twenty-year-old Ann Evans, also traveling with the William Vaughn family? No, young Thomas Rogers obviously had designs on her.

There were also Ann Prothero, traveling with her parents and siblings, and Maria Rees, traveling with her father and brother. But apparently the most attractive possibility to Abel Evans was twenty-two-year-old Mary Jones from Llangynnog in Carmarthenshire, the county of Abel's birth. Mary was traveling with Thomas and Ann Morris and their eight-month-old daughter, Jennett. As was often the case, Mary may have earned her passage on the ship by helping a young mother with her baby. Being the only member of her family to join the LDS church, Mary must have felt flattered to receive the attention of someone who had just been released from his calling as one of the highest officials in the Church in Wales. And Abel, perfectly aware of the fifteen-year age discrepancy between the two, must have felt equally flattered to have his attention received by this attractive, young girl with the shiny black hair.

Abel's Account of the Crossing

Fortunately, Abel Evans kept a journal during the crossing on the *Josiah Bradlee*. Unfortunately, he did not write down one word about the courtship between him and Mary. He recorded his brief entries in his *Penny's Improved Commercial Pocket Book with Almanack for 1850*,

PENNYS
 IMPROVED
COMMERCIAL
 Pocket Book
 With Almanack
 FOR
1850.
 Carefully arranged, and adapted
 to the use of Private Gentlemen
 the Merchant, Tradesman & Farmer.

London,
 PUBLISHED BY PENNY & SONS,
 BOW LANE CHEAPSIDE.
 PRICE 3/6.

JAN. 31 Days. Journal. [Week 3.]
 MEMORANDUMS, BILLS DUL. APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

13 Sunday	Cyclops 100-100-100 a. Decker - Publ. in. 2 of 1/2 & back nos - 1850 a. Brown, in. 2 C. J. Ross by 7 1/2 100
14 Monday	in mind C. J. 18 Feb Cyclops asom in - 10/10
15 Tuesday	Temp in Pa.
16 Wednesday	Temp of feet in a. L. am. a. Westi 1/2 Rec. in ill. 1/2
17 Thursday	in. W. when 7 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2
18 Friday	1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2
19 Saturday	1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2 - 1/2

a gift from William Thomas of the Black Lion in Llanybydder, Carmarthenshire. In very fancy writing on the inside front cover is “Abel Evans, His Book, December 17, 1849,” and below in smaller but very legible writing is “Written by Isaac Jones, Carmarthen.” As can be seen by the photographic copy of Abel’s June 16, 1848, letter to Thomas Jeremy and some entries in this journal, Abel’s writing was somewhat less fancy and somewhat less legible. One must remember, however, that most of Abel Evans’s literary ability was probably acquired outside any kind of formal setting, as opportunities for schooling were severely limited for children of miners and laborers. His understanding of the Bible and his oratorical skills were no doubt developed in the *chapel*, the term used to indicate membership or participation in one of the Nonconformist congregations—the term *church* was used to indicate allegiance to the Anglican Church.

Beneath the title of Abel’s “pocket book” is this indication of its use: “Carefully arranged and adapted to the use of Private Gentlemen, the Merchant, Tradesman, & Farmer.” Abel Evans did not fit in any of the last three categories, but as a minister he certainly qualified as a “private gentleman.” The term *gentleman*, however, carried with it connotations of a comfortable, financial base, something that Abel was far from having. So perhaps he could be labeled “pauper gentleman,” since he was absolutely penniless after serving as a missionary for the previous six years.

The little book is bound with a red leather covering that extends from the back cover to reach around with a flap that tucks in a slot on the front cover. It has 208 pages that contain an assortment of useful information such as an alphabetical list of the members of the House of Commons, a 32-page almanac, a lengthy list of bankers in the British Isles, a table for computing income tax, and numerous other facts and figures. The income tax table on page 205 no doubt made Abel smile with its example: “Suppose the income to be £2,346.”

That amount was approximately \$12,000, probably more money than Abel had seen in his entire thirty-seven years of living in Wales.

The part of the book that Abel found most useful was the blank pages, one for each week of the year 1850, on which he intended to record the most momentous adventure of his life—his journey to America, the land of Zion in the Rocky Mountains, according to his newfound faith. His first entries are on the two pages for week three, January 13th through the 19th, but the information he recorded was actually for February 14th through the 25th. Apparently he intended to rewrite these entries later, as much of the same information is written again in the spaces for which the dates are preprinted in the book, beginning on the pages for week eight, February 17th through the 23rd. The pages for weeks 31 through 40 and for 43 through 53 are missing. The English translation for all the entries made by Abel Evans concerning the crossing is as follows:

We started out from Liverpool on the 14th of February 1850 and we were on the river until the 18th of the same month. On the 18th we started the journey. The weather good. The packet pulled us out for about twenty miles on the river. Harsh wind and the Saints are sick. It continued against us until Thursday and throughout the day. We held a prayer meeting for the wind to turn and in hopes of receiving health. Friday we had the wind driving us over eight miles an hour. 22 No wind. Almost all the Saints improving. Continued like this tonight until 4 o'clock Saturday morning. 23 Favorable winds driving us about nine miles an hour to the west. 24 We saw a large fish thirty [yards] in length as far as we could ascertain. Some called it a whale. 25 A favorable wind. Almost all the Saints sick.

Feb 18 We started out. The packet pulled us for twenty miles and left us on the open sea. Wind from the south.

19 Harsh wind and almost all the Saints sick. Wm Rees and myself watching over them day and night.

20 Everyone very sick except for two, Jones and myself. We were carrying the pots out and tending to them.

21 Everyone sick again today except for Wm Rees and myself. We were helping them before sleeping.

22 No wind and nearly all the Saints are improving. The ship is standing still.

23 Good favorable wind driving us forward at about nine or ten miles an hour.

24 Today we saw a fish half the length of the ship. It was about thirty yards long!!

This Sunday I married Lewis Davis and Sarah Rodgers on board ship.

25 Strong wind driving us forward by seven to eight miles an hour.

26 Strong wind and the sea rough. The Saints sick, almost dying because of it.

27 Wind against us this morning again.

28 A two-month-old child died and he was buried today.

March 1 The wind very contrary. The elders agreed to pray for a favorable wind.

2 Strong favorable wind driving us along quickly.

3 No wind. The sea calm. Meeting on the deck and fasting.

4 Strong favorable wind throughout the day and this night.

5 Strong wind and the sea very rough. The Saints fairly healthy.

6 Strong wind throughout this day and some of the Saints ill.

7 Rather strong storm but in our favor and the sea rough with its large waves.

8 Today again much the same thing. A great deal of laying on of hands.

9 Strong storm in the morning before daybreak and some rain.

10 Strong rain. Pouring rather like floodwaters. John Carver and Mary Ann Eames are married.

11 The weather pleasant and the Saints healthy on deck. All arose.

12 A crosswind about the ship. Moving by between eight to ten miles an hour.

13 Essentially the same today. We held a Saints meeting.

14 A favorable wind driving us forward by between ten to twelve knots per hour.

15 The wind still behind us but no wind tonight.

16 The wind against us except it be very slight.

17 We held a meeting on deck. No wind.

18 Rather a favorable wind today.

19 The wind against us. The Saints fairly healthy.

20 About the same.

21 The same today. Seals before nighttime. Many of them.

22 A favorable but very weak wind.

23 Still the same.

24 Still the same.

25 Today the same. Hannah Hughes's daughter is sick.

26 Some are sick. A man and three children.

27 The daughter of Hannah Hughes from Llanelli died at six in the morning. She was cast into the sea before seven. She went from our sight before sinking.

28 A favorable breeze. Meeting of the Welsh Saints tonight.

29 A favorable breeze. Ann Howel is very sick.

30 Hands were laid on Ann Howels, who is very sick. She died from smallpox on the 30th.

31 A strong, favorable wind and the ship sailing at ten miles per hour.

1 **April** A favorable breeze. A powerful seal this evening. It struck before it was sighted.

2 A daughter was born at seven today to one of the English. Good time.

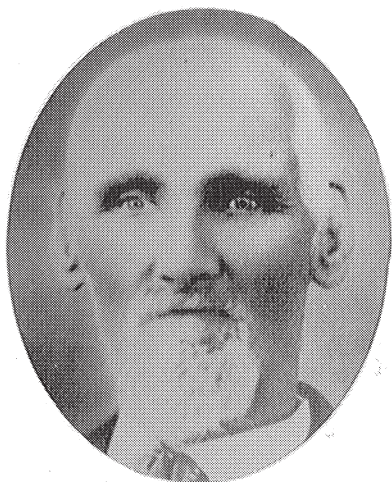
3 Good weather. Healthful breeze.³

The entry for April 3 is Abel's last concerning his journey to America. His entry for March 10th mentions strong wind and the marriage of John Carver and Mary Ann Eames. While serving as a missionary in Herefordshire, John Carver had brought the entire Eames family into the Church with the exception of Mary Ann. John prophesied to Mary Ann at the time: "I'll baptize you within the month." To prove him a false prophet Mary Ann became a Methodist, but she was disfellowshipped a week later for dancing. John baptized her within a month, and she became his wife in a wedding ceremony performed on the *Josiah Bradlee* three weeks into their journey. John recalled the event many years later:

This day (10th) will be a day long to be remembered to me. At an early hour I prepared for to fulfill that which God has required of every man, that is to take to themselves a partner in life and ever after support her. Thereafter at about 11 o'clock A.M. myself and Miss Mary Ann Eames presented ourselves before Elder Thomas Day to enter into the covenant together as man and wife, according to the order of the Kingdom of God. The meeting was opened by singing a hymn on page 233, after which Elder Day prayed and then pronounced us man and wife. It will be remembered that owing to the high toss of the sea and the rocking of the ship [we were] caused to be held up by Elder Abel Evans (of Lehi, Utah), as we was unable to stand.⁴

Thomas Day's Account

The president of the *Josiah Bradlee* company was Elder Thomas Day, a thirty-five-year-old convert from Staffordshire.



Thomas Day

Like Abel Evans, he had also served a mission for the Church since his conversion; his baptism was in 1842, a year and a half earlier than Abel's. He called Abel to be his counselor during the crossing and to preside over the Saints from Wales. Thomas Day also kept a day-by-day account of events that transpired during the fifty-nine-day crossing of the *Josiah Bradlee*, a three-masted, Yankee square-rigger that measured 150' x

31' x 23'. Because of additional details Day's account contains concerning the journey, it is included herein as follows:

February 1st I came on Board The *Josiah Bradlee*. I found her to be A New Vessel & A Substantial built Vessel. She Carried Seven Hundread tons Burden. The Master of the ship [was] Captain Mansfield.

3rd I attended the Saints meetings At The Music Hall.

4th Received the Appointment As Preasdent Over The Company Sailing In The above Named Vessel, Sailing from Liverpool to New Orleans & from thence to St. Louis by Steam Boat. The Company consists of men, women & Children to the Number of 2 Hundred & Sixty three. I Also Received A Blessing Under the Hands of Orson Prat, One of the Twelve Apostles, Presedent of [the] Churh of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints In the British Isls, Also Elder Kelly, Elder A. Corden, Elder R. Robins.

5th Lodged on Board. [It was] The Day appointed to Sail, But delayed, The wind being not favourable.

6th Gave An Adress On deck & Organized A Watch.

10th Held A General Church Meeting & Set thing[s] in order After the folowing maner. It was First Popoed [proposed] by Elder Evans Wether they would Receive Elder T. Day As Their Presedent, which was Unanimously Carried. 2nd, I Proposed that whe sustain Elder Evens As my Councelor to the Welch Saints. 3rd, that whe Also sustain Elder Baxter As my Councelor for the Scotch Saints. These propositions were Carried. 4th, That A Church meeting be held every Sabath Day when circumstances would permit, Also preaching on Wenesday Evenings for the English & Scotch, Thursday Evenings for the Welch & I then Proposed that the Company be devided into seven Wards Placing A Presedent over Each ward two [to] observe Cleanlyness & good order; That Each ward at 8 O'Clock In the morning unite in prayer & at 8 O'Clock In the Evening. Also that the Presedend of Each ward watch with his men Duering the whole of the Passage. Also that A Committe of Six be Appointed to serve out provisions once A week. Also Notice given the Company to rise at Six In the morning. These Proposons [propositions] were unanimously Carried.

14th Whe passed out of The Docks Into The River.

17th Held A Church Meeting Having been detained by the the [sic] Contrary Winds Until today, the winds being In the same quarter As It as [has] been for the Last Fortnight. When I Declared that whe should leave here tomorrow, at Which the Brethren said Amen, The Sailors turned away with A Laugh. One said he dare[d] give half A Crown to each passenger If it were so. But that which is Impossible with men Is possible with God.

18th 8 O'Clock this morning The Steam Tug was on our Side to bear us off to Sea to the Joy of all our hearts. At 10 O'Clock We Commenced our Journey Singing the Songs of Zion as whe passed along beholding the various seens

untill the Evening, At which time the steamer left us. Myself & nearly the whole of the company became sea sick. The night was rough, which much increased our sickness.

19th The Welch mountains are In our vew.

20th The Irish Coast in sight & The sea very Rough.

23rd Lost sight of Land. The company still remain sick. Elder Evans & Elder Reec still Remain quite well & attended to the sick Day & night.

Sunday 24th This morning A Marriage was Solimnized between Lewis John Davis And Sarah Rodgers. Administerd by Able Evens. Witnesses Elder Thomas Day [and] Elder Wm. Reece. The Day being fine whe were all A Little better And held A Church meeting. Afterwards was Amused by the cry of A Whale. When whe came on Deck two whales were folowing the ship. Evening Came on Rough when sickness returned.

28th This morning Death Laid its hand upon Jonathan Mathews, aged one year & 10 months. The Child was Dees^d [diseased] from its Birth sufering undo spinal Dec's [disease]. The Parents names is As follows: George Mathews [and] Eliner Mathews, Detford, Kent. Buried In the sea the same Day by Elder Walker.

March 3rd Whe held A fast & held preaching & Testifying On Deck And preching In The Evening Between Decks.

March 10th Nothing particular as [has] Occured up to this time. . . . This morning a Marridge Sollimnized between John Carver And Mary Ann Eames. Administered by Elder Thomas Day. Witnesses Elder Able Evens [and] Eldr Wm. Reece.

March 12th It is now about like unto May Day in England. Myself having been sick more or less until to Day And I feel to injoy the warmeth & trust by the blessing of My Heavenly Father I shal not be sick no more.

13th and 14th Had preaching in the Evenings.

17th Had an Excelent meeting upon Deck. My wife as [has] had a Little sickness & has been Able to Administer to those who were sick.

19th Eld [held] A Council meeting with the oficers of each Ward.

20th I Preached from the following words: For the kingdom of God is like unto A grain of Weat which was sown In The Earth.

21st Elder Evens Preached the same Discourse in the welch language the following Evening.

24th To Day A Church meeting was held upon Deck. James Needham Cought a Fish weighing 10 lbs. while he was Administering the Sacrament And drew away many of the Saints which caused confusion.

25th Whe have this Day just caught the trade winds, hav- ing been in what is called the horse Lattitude & made but little progress from the 12th Inst. Also held a councl Meet- ing with the Officers of the Varrious Wards to inquire of the state of the company at Large & give instructions to the same.

26th The wind Is Favourable & Whe are making consider- able progress on our Journey.

27th This morning brings with It the Tidings of the Death of A Child, Ann Ews [Hughes]. The mother's name— Hannah Ews. Came from Carnervonshire, Whales. Aged 10 Months, Its Death being Occasioned by A fall with the rock- ing of the Vessel, the mother not being preasent at the time. Buried in the sea by Elder Able Evens. Evening had a publick meeting on Deck & while I was preaching the inteligence came that A Child was Dead—Name Rachel Rigal, Aged 14 Months, mother's name Mary Rigal, Farther's name John Rigal from Gosberton Risegate, Lincolnshire. The Occasion of Its Death Were the Crupe. After the meeting, the Captain sent for me to Converse with him upon the Death of the Children & Expressed his sorrow at the same & his anxious for the health of the Company & will do all that lies in his

power for their health & Comfort, which he will. From Conduct that we have received from his hands Is that of A Gentleman. At Leveing him he requested that I would come & sit with him at any time I felt disposed.

28th This morning came in with Its usall busness after which I attended to the Buerying of the Child. The wind is fare. I have also been Ingaged In getting all on Deck & Sprinkling Between Decks with Vinegar.

29th Fair wind & was busseley Ingaged serving out provisions as usal.

30th When the following Death taken [took] place of John Hey, aged 14 Years, Son of Georg & Elizabeth Hey from Karridge, Cheshire. His Death was caused by the small Pox Which was brought on Board by A Young woman from the Isle of Man. Three families haven fallen with the same Deises [disease], but all has done well with the exception of John Hey whose remains I comitted to the sea on the same Day.

31st The Day being fine & the wind favourable we held A meeting on deck & had A good time While the brethren were baering their testimones to the work of God & laying down Rules wereby [whereby] those arround us might prove all sistems wether it be of God or of man.

April 1st The wind was strong & the sea rough. I was Again Efected with sea sickness with many others Which rendered me unable to attend to Council meeting.

2nd Half Past 7 O Clock In the morning When Elizer Noris, the wife of Robert Norris of Manchester Was delivered of A Fine Daughter And His [is] doing well. The wind is also favourable & the sea sickness Disappeared.

3rd The wind is still favourable & we are going well. In the evening preaching on Deck By Myself & Elder Baxter, which was well attended.

4th Came In sight of the Light House, It being the first Land we have seen since we seen the Irish Cost, being 41 days since we saw land.

5th Came in sight of the Key Islands & Engaged in serving out Provisions.

6th There was some Danger Apprehended In consequence of A Bank Under the water, But we were mercifully Delivered from the same.

7th Being the sabbath, we held A Church meeting on Deck. We also [saw] some portions of the wreck of some Vessel, which gave some little uneasiness to the Company, But all soon passed over.

8th The morning was fine & very Calm, so we are Making but very little progress.

9th Was much the same as Monday.

10th Wind rather more favourable. In the Afternoon held A meeting between Decks.

12th Wind Favourable & Attended to the serving out of the provisions.

14th The wind still being favourable, we are making progress on our Journey which we soon hope to Accomplish, as our provisions are getting very short Except Oatmeal & rice. We held A Church meeting on Deck.

15th The morning is fine & the wind Favourable, but my health is very Indifferent, as I have A Severe Cold which I have had for the last 8 Days. In the Evening the following Death taken [took] place, Damaris Smith, Daughter of Wm. & Rebeca Smith, aged 10 Years, Occasioned by exposure on Deck.

16th This morning Committed the body to A watery Grave. At two O Clock The Pilot came on Board to the Joy of all our Hearts. In the Evening Cast Anchor Before Crossing the Bar.

17th At 6 O Clock this morning The steam Boat "Angola Saxon" Came by our Side & brought us over the Bar without any Delay. We are now proceeding up the River with two other Vessels.⁵

Thomas Day's journal entries concerning the crossing end with his entry of April 17th as the ship was being dragged

into port at New Orleans. Four days later he wrote a letter to Elder Orson Pratt back in Liverpool to report the safe arrival of the *Josiah Bradlee* in America. (Because this letter is in large measure an abridgment of his journal entries, it has not been included here; however, it is quoted in its entirety in Appendix I.)

Events on Board

Not all the crossings were fortunate enough to have a kind captain such as Captain Mansfield. Some, such as Captain Morrill on the 1853 crossing of the *Hartley*, went out of their way to make life miserable for the Saints by making noise during their meetings and by showing kindness to a few of the women only.

In his letter to Orson Pratt back in Liverpool, Thomas Day mentioned that cooking tried the patience of those on board. Mary Lois Walker Morris, a fourteen-year-old English girl on board the *Josiah Bradlee*, recalled some of the details years later:

Sometimes we had trouble cooking such things as rice and beans, which absorb so much water that we would not have sufficient to finish cooking them properly. This cooking was done on a sheet-iron stove about the size of an ordinary kitchen table, in a small room not much larger than a pantry. Many would be cooking at the same time, and would have to stand and watch their own things lest someone should come and push them back to give their own a better place. The ship furnished a cook to attend to the fires and superintend things and assist the passengers. . . . The only way of going to and from the galley was by means of a large ship ladder. You can imagine the difficulty of carrying this hot food from the galley which was on the deck, down the ladder to our berths which were in the steerage. Fortunate indeed was the

individual who was possessed with a good stock of patience, for it was surely needed under these trying circumstances. ⁶

Certainly, there were other unpleasant aspects to the journey besides cooking. Such things as conflicts between persons on board, lack of space in steerage, lack of privacy everywhere, and taking care of bodily functions were also challenges. But these were things that went unmentioned in the journals.

Also not included in the accounts of the crossing were two incidents involving Abel Evans that were printed thirty-two years later in *Early Scenes in Church History*:

While crossing the sea in 1850, emigrating to Utah, a number of remarkable cases of healing occurred under his administration. One was that of a young girl who was terribly afflicted with evil spirits, and who was entirely relieved when he placed his hands upon her head. Another was that of a little boy who fell through the hatchway of the vessel, alighting upon his head on the ring and bolt of the lower hatchway. When he was picked up it was found that the force of the fall had driven the iron upon which he struck into his head, and within a minute afterwards the injured place puffed up like a distended bladder. Of course, he was knocked insensible and apparently lifeless, but Brother Evans and one or two other Elders immediately administered to him, and while their hands were upon his head the swelling entirely disappeared and he was restored to consciousness and to health. This was witnessed and marveled at by a number of persons who were not in the Church as well as a great many of the Saints who were on board.⁷

How these stories were preserved for thirty years following the crossing and sixteen years following Abel Evans's death in Wales is stated in the preface to *Early Scenes in Church*

History: “We gathered the incidents contained in the present volume at random (mostly from verbal narratives), compiled them very hastily, with too little regard perhaps for variety, and feel that we have hardly made a commencement at recounting the early scenes of which a record should be perpetuated.” The most likely source for the Abel Evans stories would be Mary Jones Evans, his first wife, who was also on the crossing and may have been an eyewitness. Another story is the following:

When Elder Evans was crossing the Atlantic in charge of a company of Saints emigrating to Utah, a terrible epidemic in the nature of a fever broke out on the ship, and threatened the destruction of all on board. He felt that their only hope lay in securing the favor of the Almighty, and determined to muster all the faith he could in appealing to the Lord. He called together four Elders of experience who were on board, and asked them to retire with him to the hold of the vessel and unite in prayer. They did so again and again without any apparent good result, and Brother Evans marveled at the cause. It was such an unusual thing for him to fail to have his prayers answered, that he was surprised that it should be so that instance, and he could only account for it by lack of union or worthiness on the part of the Elders. He therefore called the four Elders again to retire with him to the hold of the ship, and took with him a basin of clean water. When they had reached a secluded place where they were not likely to be overheard or disturbed by others, he talked to the Elders about the necessity of their being united in faith and clear of sin before God if they desired to call upon Him and receive a blessing. “Now,” he said, “I want each of you Elders, who feels that his conscience is clear before God, who has committed no sin to debar him from the enjoyment of the Holy Spirit, and who has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ sufficient to call upon the Almighty in His name and claim the

desired blessing, to wash his hands in that basin!" Three of the Elders stepped forward and did so; the fourth could not—his conscience smote him. He was therefore asked kindly to retire, and the four others joined in earnest prayer before the Lord and rebuked the disease by which the people were afflicted. The result was that the epidemic ceased its ravages and the sick recovered from that very hour, much to the surprise of the ship's officers and others on board who knew nothing of the power by which such a happy result was accomplished. ⁸

Tragedy among the Passengers

When fifteen-year-old Ann Rogers from Pembrokehire boarded the *Josiah Bradlee* she had ample reason to be optimistic about her future. Ann was the youngest of nine children, and although her mother had died when Ann was just two years old, she was now on her way to America with her father, her stepmother, her stepsister, two of her brothers and two of her sisters. One of these sisters was Elizabeth, eight years her senior, who had practically raised Ann after the death of their mother. Another sister, Sarah, was married to Lewis Davis just six days into the journey. But, according to the history of Ann Rogers written by her granddaughter, somewhere along their journey between St. Louis and Council Bluffs her sister Elizabeth died. The death, however, was not because of illness or accident:

One night when they were some miles beyond St. Louis, Aunt Elizabeth saw Grandmother to bed then went out on the deck of the steamer in the moonlight. Here the young man found her and again asked her to marry him. When she refused he became angry and strangled her to death. When the people on board found out about it, the captain said, "If you are with me, we'll stop and give this girl a decent burial."

They stopped at one of the lovely old plantations along the river bank and buried her under the grass and trees in the moonlight.⁹

The fate of the murderer is not given in this or any other account of the *Josiah Bradlee* crossing. Ann's life became even more bleak just four months later when her father and her sister Sarah died within a few days of each other. Ann was left with two brothers, a stepsister, and a stepmother, with whom she did not have a good relation. Then her brother Henry got a chance to hire out to a family going to California; and her other brother, Thomas, was now married. Ann ended up crossing the plains with her stepmother and stepsister and eventually went to work in the house of William Snow in Salt Lake City. She had received a proposal of marriage before leaving Wales from John Thaine but turned him down because she was too young. As she left Wales with her family, however, she did promise to wait three years for John before marrying anyone else. The three years elapsed without her having received any letters from John, so she decided to accept the proposal of William Snow to become his plural wife. Three months after the wedding she received a packet of letters from John Thaine. He had written to her every month since her departure from Wales, but the letters had been delayed somewhere, and she had not received them. Pioneer life was, indeed, fraught with trial and disappointment.

Celibacy Relinquished

Because of the possible negative consequences of making promises of marriage in Wales before sailing to America, William Morgan, president of the Welsh Branch at Council Bluffs, wrote to his compatriots in Wales in a letter dated May 26, 1850:

My opinion is that it is best to refrain [from making any promises], and that it would be wiser to get married before getting underway, for those who wish to do so. Brother Abel Evans and myself also failed to see that earlier; but he had opened his eyes before coming to the Bluffs and married a lovely girl from near Carmarthen, Mary Jones from Wern Branch.¹⁰

In his April 21, 1850, letter to Orson Pratt, Thomas Day mentioned two marriages that had occurred during the crossing. Neither of these was for Abel Evans and Mary Jones. William Morgan mentioned in his letter that the *Josiah Bradlee* company arrived at Council Bluffs on May 23, 1850. Sometime during this thirty-two-day period the marriage of Abel and Mary was performed, most likely by Thomas Day. Since the pages between those two dates are missing from the Abel Evans journal, we are left with no exact date for this marriage.

Years later in his letter to Orson Pratt about the death of Abel Evans, Franklin D. Richards wrote that Abel Evans was married at St. Louis. If this is true, we can narrow down a bit further the period of time during which the marriage probably took place. In a letter dated May 25, 1850, Abel Evans wrote to John Davis concerning the travels of the company from New Orleans to Council Bluffs. He said they had to wait in New Orleans for a week (presumably from April 18th to April 25th); they arrived at St. Louis in eight days (from April 25th to May 3rd); they had to wait five days in St. Louis (from May 3rd to May 8th); they were on the Missouri River for twelve days (from May 8th to May 20th). These calculations may be off a day or two, since they do not agree with William Morgan's statement that the company reached Council Bluffs on May 23rd.

If it is true that Abel and Mary were married at St. Louis, their wedding would have taken place sometime

between May 3rd and May 8th. Both marriages on board the *Josiah Bradlee* were performed on Sunday. If the marriage for Abel and Mary was on a Sunday, and if it was in St. Louis, then they were married on Sunday, the 5th of May, 1850. Nothing certain, however.

Letters to Wales

After his arrival in New Orleans Abel Evans wrote other letters to his brethren back in Wales prior to the one on May 25th from Council Bluffs. In the June 1850 issue of *Udgorrn Seion* John Davis printed some of the information concerning the *Josiah Bradlee* Saints contained in Thomas Day's April 21st letter and observed: "No doubt our dear brother Abel Evans has written also, but there is no knowledge of his letter. We saw his handwriting in a letter to Pontypridd, which signifies that everything is well, except the loss of his letter."¹¹ Then in the wrapper for the July 1850 *Udgorrn Seion*, John Davis clarified the mystery of the missing letter:

The letter of Brother Evans from New Orleans has reached us at last, while other letters from the company have had time to come here from the Bluffs the same day. Since it is so old, we deem it foolishness to publish it. Later letters from him and others tell us that the Saints have reached the Bluffs, and that A. Evans has married a girl from the Wern Branch, near Carmarthen. A happy marriage to him, then, and much success.¹²

Assuming that Abel did not get married until they reached St. Louis, the letter he wrote from New Orleans would not help us clarify the date. The other letters from him, mentioned by John Davis, would no doubt have that information, but they were not printed in the Welsh Mormon periodical.



"New Orleans," by Frederick Piercy

Abel's May 25, 1850, letter from Council Bluffs, however, was printed. Its contents are as follows:

Dear Brother Davis—I take this opportunity to give an account of our voyage on the waters to here. We had to wait in New Orleans for a week. Then we began our journey up the Mississippi River, and we arrived at St. Louis in eight days. We had to wait there five days. Then we came on our journey to here, and we were on this river twelve days. We came rather successfully along the two rivers, losing but five lives—one on the first and four on the second. The cholera was among us on the two rivers, and it was the cholera that killed three of the five. It was also in New Orleans and St. Louis.

Thirty of the Saints are staying to work in St. Louis, that is Thomas Morris, John Morgans of Nantyglo, Morgan Jones, John Hayes, Henry Pelew, Lewis Davies, William Vaughan, together with their families, all alive and healthy. Fifty-seven of us came to this shore, and we received a kind welcome, better by far than our expectations. The Welsh Saints came to see us the night we came to this place; and the next morning they brought their wagons and their oxen to us to carry all to their houses for free, and they gave us our lodging cheaply. Remember that there is here as good a reception to the widow and the orphan as to anyone else, if not better.

All who came with me are staying here except for David Evans and his wife, and some who are going before them. Three marriages have taken place since we came here; and among them one Rogers from Pembroke married Ann Evans from Merthyr. All who had means have taken houses and lands, and the others will be able to do the same before long. It is better for the young people who are there not to covenant to wait for each other when they come here, for it is not a good procedure. It is better for them to get married before or as they get under way. This is important, as is

everything else. Ann Howells from Merthyr came here from across the waters without any big difference in her condition; but it was through faith that she came. And all who prophesied her death on the sea were proven false prophets!

We would greatly love to see many yet follow us, but it is better for them to come here by the summer or the winter, for they will not be able to work here except in the summer. But they can come to St. Louis by the winter. It will be better for everyone who comes here to remember to keep every counsel they receive on their journey. And those who do this, will come here alive and healthy, when on the other hand those who do not heed the counsel will fall into error.

My regards to you and to Brother Phillips, and his family, to my father, and to my dear relatives, and to all the Saints throughout Wales. Your brother in the new covenant, Abel Evans.

P.S. The names of those who died are as follows: William Prothero, Sr., and his wife, from weakness; Edward Vincent and the wife of Charles Vincent; Elizabeth Rogers from Pembroke; the wife and child of John Jones of Pontypridd, of cholera, in the hospital in St. Louis.¹³

CHAPTER NINE

FIRST TWO YEARS IN AMERICA

When Abel Evans left Wales in February of 1850 he was thirty-seven years old, still single, and had not as yet met the person he would marry. Three months later, when he reached Council Bluffs, he was just under three weeks short of his thirty-eighth birthday and was a married man. Gone was the stigma of approaching forty as a bachelor. Gone also were the flexibility and lack of accountability to anyone but himself. At this point in his life Abel was no longer a traveling elder, or itinerant preacher in non-Mormon terminology. Consequently, his being unattached was no longer a desirable circumstance. After Abel was released from his mission in order to emigrate, his new direction in life did not require him to travel about, strengthening the Saints and searching for new ones. His main objective now was to establish himself in Zion and do his part in building the kingdom. And part of that building was to raise up a righteous generation, or in other words rearing a family. With twenty-two-year-old Mary Jones as his new bride Abel was now prepared to assume a new position in Mormon society, that of a married man and head of a family.



Mary Jones

Mary Jones Evans

Mary was born August 1, 1827, to John and Elizabeth Thomas Jones on a farm by the name of Pantyddwygraig (marsh by the two rocks) in the little parish of Llangynnog, Carmarthenshire. The fifth of sixth children, Mary was the only one of her family to convert to Mormonism. According to family tradition Mary first heard the Mormon missionaries preach when she was about seventeen years old. Apparently she was tending the small children of a family who was investigating the LDS church. One evening the missionaries were conversing with the parents as Mary was in the loft with the children. Unbeknown to those below Mary was listening intently to the gospel discussion when one of the missionaries began to speak in tongues. The other interpreted, saying that there was someone listening to them that night whom they could neither see nor hear. This person, he continued, would join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and continue faithful throughout his or her life. Mary believed

that the message had reference to her. About four years later at age twenty-one Mary received baptism into the LDS church. This was in June of 1849, several months before she boarded the *Josiah Bradlee*. And as she was preparing to leave she requested a lock of her mother's hair to remember her by. But her mother replied, "No, if you have got to go to destruction you're not taking my hair with you."¹

Just how Mary managed to arrange financing for her journey to America is not clear. Since her family was not supportive she may have received monetary assistance from someone in exchange for helping with that someone's family during the crossing. Her name appears just below those of Thomas and Ann Morris and their six-month-old daughter, Jennet. Perhaps the Morrises were her benefactors. Whatever the arrangements were, Mary found herself in February of 1850 on the *Josiah Bradlee*, a sailing vessel that would carry her to America. And it was during the crossing that she began to receive the attentions of a much older but highly respected man, Elder Abel Evans. With plenty of time for conversing and exchanging ideas Mary and Abel no doubt managed to come to know one another rather well by the time they reached New Orleans. A mutual commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ would serve to strengthen their commitment to each other. The exact date of their marriage is not known, but it was probably in early May in St. Louis, and it was most likely performed by Elder Thomas Day, the president of the emigrating company.²

Getting Settled

As the newlyweds, Abel and Mary, got off the steamer that had transported them from St. Louis to Council Bluffs they faced the challenge of finding a place to live and a way of supporting themselves while making preparations to journey across the plains to the Salt Lake Valley. In Council

Bluffs, located on the east bank of the Missouri River above its union with the Platte River, they found a branch of the Church that consisted of over one hundred of their compatriots from Wales who had come to America on board the *Buena Vista* or the *Hartley* the year before. Many of these were people Abel had known in Wales, and many were still healing from the wounds of losing loved ones to the dreaded cholera the previous year while on the Missouri River. The president of this branch was forty-six-year-old William Morgan, a widower from Merthyr Tydfil who had converted to Mormonism about two years after Abel Evans's conversion. He was the brother of Ann Morris, Mary's possible benefactress on board the *Josiah Bradlee*.

There is no evidence that Abel and Mary intended to proceed directly on to the Rocky Mountains that year. Lack of funds was usually the reason for remaining in Council Bluffs for a year or two while earning money to purchase a "fitout" in which to cross the plains. In Abel's case, however, it may have involved a new calling in the Church to assist William Morgan in the Welsh branch. But the calling he received in Council Bluffs was not restricted to just the Welsh—rather he was called to be a high councilor with responsibilities over all Church members in that area.

Very few specifics are known about the two Council Bluffs years in the life of Abel and Mary Evans. Their names appear on the 1850 census for Iowa as "Ebil" and Mary Evans, ages thirty-eight and twenty-two, born in Wales. This creative spelling of Abel's name by the census taker is a reflection of the peculiar Welsh pronunciation of one who was still struggling to develop fluency in the English language. Now that he was faced with the challenge of dealing with non-Welsh-speakers on a daily basis, Abel was no doubt making much faster progress than in the old country. How much English Mary had mastered at this point is only a point of conjecture. In the column that lists professions of

the inhabitants of Pottawattamie County the word *none* is written opposite Abel's name. Presumably he performed any work or odd jobs available as he tried to provide a living for himself and his new bride. The census was taken on September 24, 1850, and numbered the dwelling houses in order of visitation. The dwelling house for Abel and Mary was number 495; unfortunately, such information provides us with no clue as to the location or kind of place they were living in.

Blessing of Health

One recorded episode that involved Abel Evans during his first winter in Council Bluffs is that of Sister Jane Treharne Ashton, who had come the previous year on board the *Buena Vista*:

In the winter of 1850, Elder Abel Evans lived at Council Bluffs, on the eastern bank of the Missouri river. A great many of the Saints were there at the time working for an outfit for their overland journey or awaiting the return of fine weather before starting across the plains. That locality was somewhat noted for its insalubrity, but during that winter an unusually large amount of sickness prevailed. Some of the more prominent Elders were kept quite busy going about from house to house administering to the sick among the Saints, and scores, perhaps hundreds of cases of healing occurred under their hands, many of which were quite remarkable. Sister Ashton, now of Salt Lake City, relates how she was healed there when near death's door, and under circumstances the memory of which even now causes her to shed tears. She had been sick for a considerable length of time and so bad for two weeks that she had not been able to take a mouthful of food, when she heard of the death of her father.

In her weak condition this intelligence was a heavy blow to her. Her mother had died previously and been buried without

her having the privilege of being with her during her sickness or even seeing her face when dead, and the thought of being deprived of this privilege in the case of her father also, almost overcame her. She had during her sickness felt a strong desire to live, and now in addition to that she was anxious to see her dead father before he was buried, and attend his funeral. Some of the Elders came and administered to her, but they were not men in whom she had a great deal of faith, and she failed to receive any benefit from their administration. After awhile, however, Brother Evans called to see her, and, on learning of her desire to attend her father's funeral, he promised her without any hesitation that she would do so. Placing his hands upon her head, he rebuked the sickness with which she was prostrated and pronounced the blessing of health upon her. She arose immediately from her bed, and rode six miles that same day, and saw her father buried.³

Just over nine months after their marriage Abel and Mary welcomed a baby daughter into their home. Named for both her grandmothers, Elizabeth Ann was born February 10, 1851, seven years to the day from her father's rather dramatic entrance into his newfound religion. The joy and fulfillment this little baby brought into Abel and Mary's life would be limited to a time span of just ten months, for on December 10, 1851, Elizabeth Ann departed this life. No record or family tradition concerning the cause of her death has survived among Abel Evans's descendants. But there was no shortage of sickness and disease among the residents of Council Bluffs, and any of a number of these ailments could have been responsible. The spartan living conditions in Council Bluffs that winter of 1851 may have been a contributing factor as well.

Blessings from the Patriarch

On Sunday, July 6, 1851, both Abel and Mary had the hands of Brother William Draper placed on their heads and

received from him their patriarchal blessings. Abel's blessing is as follows:

A Blessing given by William Draper Patriarch on the head of Abel Son of Samuel and Ann Evans. Born in Carmarthen-shire South Wales July 17/12 [sic].

Dearly Beloved Brother, I lay my hands upon thy head and in the Name and Stead of Jesus Christ and by the Power and Authority of the Holy Priesthood I Bless thee with a Father's and a Patriarch's Blessing and inasmuch as thou hast obeyed the Gospel and been ordained to the Priesthood if thou art faithful in keeping the Covenant that thou hast entered into thou shalt be blest with all the power and Authority of the Priesthood that is necessary to qualify thee to fill thy Place and Station. Thou shalt stand at the head of thy Family as a Patriarch duly authorised to do all for them that is necessary to be done according to the order of the Church and Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Thou art of the Blood of Ephraim and thou and thy posterity shall be blest and numbered with the descendants of Ephraim in all their Generations they shall be numerous and great and thou shalt be a Man of God and do a great work upon the Earth. Thou shalt be an instrument in the Hands of God of bringing many souls into his Kingdom both of the Dead and the Living and many shall look up to thee for Counsel for thou shalt be a Counsellor and shall have many of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God opened to thy view. If thou wilt honour the Lord by keeping his Commandments thy wisdom shall be great and thine Understanding shall reach to Heaven. And thou shalt be called a Prophet and a Seer for many things shall be revealed unto thee and thou shalt Prophesy much. And thou shalt live long and see good days and enjoy much of the Treasures of the Earth and be an instrument in the Hands of God of relieving [sic] many of the afflicted for no good thing that thou desirest in Righteousness and askest for in faith shall be

witheld [sic] from thee. And thy life shall not be taken from thee till thou art willing to be changed and made Immortal and Reign with Christ on the Earth a thousand years and finally be Crowned in the Celestial Kingdom of God. All these Blessings Dear Brother are sure for thee if thou art faithful in keeping the Commandments of God to the end of thy Probation. For I ask God the Eternal Father in the Name of Jesus Christ to seal these Blessings upon thee and by the Authority of the Holy Priesthood I seal them upon thee and in the Name of Jesus Christ I seal thee unto Eternal Life. Even so. Amen.⁴

The blessing received by Mary is as follows:

A Blessing given by William Draper Patriarch on the head of Mary daughter of John and Elizabeth Jones and wife of Abel Evans. Born in Carmarthenshire, South Wales, August 1828.

Dearly Beloved Sister, I lay my hands upon thy head and in the name of Jesus Christ and by the Authority of the Holy Priesthood I bless thee with a Father's and a Patriarch's Blessing and say unto thee inasmuch as thou hast left thy native land for Christ's and the Gospel's sake if thou art faithful in keeping the Covenant that thou hast entered into great Blessings shall attend thee both Spiritual and Temporal and no good thing that thou desirest in Righteousness shall be witheld from thee. Thou art of the Blood of Ephraim and thou shalt be endowed with the Power of the Priesthood to enable thee to stand at the Head of thy family in union with thy Companion to aid and assist him in all his labours when required. Thou shalt be a Mother in Israel and thy Posterity shall be great, numerous and honourable and thou shalt participate in all the Blessings with thy Companion both Spiritual and Temporal and in union with him shall be instrumental in relieving [sic] many of the afflicted and they shall rise up and call thee Blessed and thou shalt rejoice in

the goodness of the Lord. If thou desirest the gift of Speaking in Tongues, Singing in Tongues or the Interpretation of Tongues and shall ask for it in faith it shall be granted unto thee. Thou shalt be an instrument in bringing many of thine Ancestors that have passed from this State of Action into the Kingdom. If thou art strong in faith and fruitful in good works thou shalt not see death till thou shalt see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with power and great glory and thou shalt finish thy course with joy and if thou keep the faith to the end of thy probation thou shalt be Changed and made Immortal and Reign with Christ on the Earth a thousand years and then be Crowned with Eternal Life in the Celestial Kingdom of God in a Mansion of glory prepared for thee and thine. These Blessings Dear Sister are sure for thee if thou art faithful unto the end of thy probation, for I ask God the Eternal Father in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ to seal these Blessings upon thee and I seal them upon thee by the Power and Authority of the Holy Priesthood and in the Name of Jesus Christ seal thee unto Eternal Life. Even so. Amen.⁵

Winter Message

The challenge of all Mormons in Council Bluffs (also known as Kaneshville) was to prepare themselves as quickly as possible to continue their westward journey. They needed a team of oxen, a wagon, and provisions to last for three months. One thousand miles separated them from the Zion they dreamed of reaching. In the midst of these preparations, however, there was apparently an inclination among some of the people to wish to remain in Pottawattamie County, thus sparing themselves the arduous trek across the plains. Such an attitude, of course, weakened the master plan of viewing Council Bluffs as merely the frontier “jumping off” place of the larger journey.

A timely epistle from Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards would spur the Saints to action. This epistle was considered of sufficient urgency to send Ezra T. Benson and Jedediah M. Grant from Salt Lake City in November of 1851 to deliver it. After a winter trek across the withering cold of Wyoming and Nebraska they arrived at Council Bluffs in February of 1852. Through their epistle and these two messengers Church leaders in Salt Lake City made their position unmistakably clear:

We have been calling to the Saints in Pottowattamie ever since we left them to come away; but there has continually been an opposing spirit, whispering, as if it were—stay another year, and get a better fitout. If a man will not gather when he has a chance, he will be affected with the Devil. His property will go to waste, his family fall by sickness, and destruction and misery will be on his path; even so has it been with some of you, and soon will it be with more of you, if you do not hearken to this call and come away. What are you waiting for? Have you any excuse for not coming?⁶

Most of the Welsh Saints needed to have an interpreter in order to understand this call to action read in English. And most had already suffered their share of the sickness, destruction, and misery mentioned in the epistle. But as committed members of the Kingdom they accepted the chastisement from their leaders and set a goal of being on their way to the Rockies by that same summer.

At least part of the urgency of Church officials in bringing the Saints across to the Salt Lake Valley came from their fear of inroads being made among the faithful by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Although the practice of plural marriage among certain of the Utah Mormons was not openly admitted until August of 1852, rumors had been circulating long before this time,

especially among faithful Latter-day Saints. Many tender testimonies of British immigrants were shaken as they learned for the first time of the possibility of the practice of polygamy among their leaders. Still wanting to be Mormons but not wanting to accept the new concept of plural marriage many aligned themselves to the RLDS church. One in particular was William Henshaw, the missionary who had baptized Abel Evans and his father in 1844. After serving a seven-year mission in South Wales and Herefordshire, Henshaw sailed on board the *Olympus* in 1851 with his wife and four children. His journey westward, however, ended in St. Louis, where he later became a member of the RLDS church. It is doubtful that he and Abel Evans ever had contact on this side of the ocean.

As a member of the Council Bluffs High Council, Abel Evans must have had information about the practice of plural marriage. But such knowledge had little effect on his determination to obey counsel and journey across the plains. In fact, he and Mary would enter into the practice just three years later while living in Lehi.

Country Flowing with Milk

Also as a member of the high council, Abel Evans would have taken part in the extensive planning that would precede the departure of the Saints from Council Bluffs. The thousand-mile journey for Abel and Mary and the rest of the Welsh began on June 22, 1852, just four months after the urgent epistle reached Council Bluffs from Salt Lake City. On this date William Morgan reported the event to his colleagues in Wales:

Dear Brothers Phillips and Davis—I take the present opportunity to write to you from Pottawatamie. The Welsh branch has begun its journey toward the Great Salt Lake Valley, with

some of the English and the French in the company. Fifty wagons make up the camp and are divided in five groups, that is, ten wagons in each group, and there is a captain over each ten wagons; also, a captain over the whole camp. I shall name those whom you know—Capt. D. Evans, Llanelli, the first; John Rees, blacksmith, formerly from near Pont Haiarn, Merthyr Tydfil, the second; H. Evans, former president of West Glamorgan, the third; Coward, the fourth; the fifth, you do not know him. William Beddoe, brickman, formerly from Pendaren, is the scribe of the camp, and Abel Evans is captain of the guards, and the writer is the servant of the whole camp. I have written three letters, and according to that which I heard from Bro. Evans, they have not reached their destination.

All the Saints are in good health, each one with his tent house as white as snow; and we would be glad if our brothers and sisters, many whom we know, were closer to us to get to see the truth of the word which is like this: “A country flowing with milk,” etc. Much milk in our camp is thrown out as casually as is the bathwater used by three or four Merthyr colliers. We have more than we can use, and there is no one close by in need of it.

Rachel Rowlands, Hirwaun, is improving well; she and William’s two daughters are in the camp on their journey to the Valley, together with Thomas Morris and Ann, my sister; thanks to you for sending them across. I shall make an end now; you shall have more of our story after we have crossed the river. I am in haste, William Morgan.⁷

Rachel Rowlands is mentioned in the letter as “improving well.” Hers was one of the most tragic stories and certainly the most recent from among the Welsh Mormons. At age eighteen she had married her aunt’s widower, William Rowlands, thereby becoming stepmother to his five children. One week after the marriage her eight-month-old step-daughter,

Elizabeth, died. Two months later, in February 1849, she sailed with her new family on board the *Buena Vista*. On the first anniversary of her marriage she gave birth to a son in Council Bluffs. Two years later she gave birth to a daughter in St. Louis. And on April 9, 1852, she was on the ill-fated *Saluda* with her husband, her two children, and her four stepchildren when it exploded. The explosion took the lives of her husband, her two children, and two of her stepchildren. Thus she was left a twenty-one-year-old widow with two stepdaughters: thirteen-year-old Mary and eight-year-old Anne. She was also left with crippling injuries that she would carry to the grave. She and the two girls were brought to Council Bluffs by friends in time to join the William Morgan Company as it began the journey across the plains of Nebraska and Wyoming. One can easily imagine the other Welsh Mormons in Council Bluffs rallying around their injured compatriots to make sure they were included in the great move. Among these were Abel and Mary Evans, who had buried a daughter of their own just a few months earlier. They volunteered to be responsible for thirteen-year-old Mary as they crossed the plains.⁸ Such altruistic deeds were characteristic of Abel and Mary Evans.

Mind Number One

David D. Bowen, a compatriot of Abel and Mary and a fellow traveler with them in the William Morgan Company, kept a brief record of some of the events of the 1852 crossing:

June 21st A little after breakfast Apostle Esra T. Benson, one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, come to our camp to organize the company. It resulted as follows: William Morgans, Captain of Fifty, Bishop W. R. Davies and Rees Jones Williams, his counselors, Abel Evans, Captain of the Guard, William Beddo, Clark of

Camping. David Evans, John Rees and Goward was Captains of Ten. In the evening we moved to the big hallow near the big springs and camp [sic] there for three days.

24th Today our company cross the Missouri River to the Mormon old winter quarters and camped about a half mile from the river until the 28th. Guards and wagons fixed all in their places.

28th This morning the hue and cray was, everybody to be ready for starting to our long journey. After breakfast all the men was yoking their cattle and the women preparing their cooking utensils in their respective wagons, which made our camp all alive and in two hours every body was ready for a start. The train started with the Captain on the lead. And Captain David Evans, Captain of the first ten, was the first in the train. Every wagon in their respective places and I was the ninth wagon in the first ten. I had a deal of trouble with my cattle for they was not broken, but very whiled [wild] and young. The day we started from winter quarters was very hot. I leboured so hard with the cattle and sweat so much that I had the headache that bad I was all most blind all day. Sometime in the afternoon Bishop Davies run against another wagon and brock [broke] his axel tree; the camp had to stay that day and part of the next. Just as we camped a wagon come to our camp from the west. There was inscribe on the cover of their wagon, The Salt Lake Boys. They where missionaries from Salt Lake City for England. They were six in number and Thomas Margets their Captain. They camped with us that afternoon, and went their way a little before dark. Weather was very hot and disagreeable.

29th Bishop Davies wagon was fixed again and the train traveled as far as the Pa Pa river and camped for the night. Marching along steadily evry day. We crossed the Elk Horn and the Loup Fork and many other streams until we came to Wood River where William David died of the Cholera and was buried there. In few days afterwards his son Thomas was

attacted by the Cholera and died. We traveled along until we reach Fort Larime and crossed the Platt from the north side to the south. The river was very high. We had a hard times to cross the platt. We lost good many things by crossing. We left Fort Larimie to our left side and traveled on the south side of the Platt and over the Black hills, arrived at Deer Creek where we stayed for good many days. . . . The train was ready and started once more, traveled every day. We crossed the last crossing of the Platt. We left the Platt entirely and traveled until we struck the independent rock and the sweetwaters and the Devils gate where good many cattle died. John D. Rees lost two big fine oxen. I lost one and good many more died belonging to others. About here the company divided into several parties. Our ten traveled alone and did not join another until we arrived at Salt Lake City. . . . We got to the mouth of emigration canyon 23rd of Suptember. Camp there that night and the next day. Bishop Loranso D. Young, Brigham Young's brother and another Bishop came to us and preach to us. They pressed on our minds particularly to mind Number one. That was the first principles in the valley.⁹

Joyful Reunion

On September 20, 1852, the rest of the weary group of travelers were just eighty miles from their destination of Salt Lake City. On that date William Morgan wrote to William Phillips and John Davis back in Wales with a report of their journey thus far:

Dear Brothers Phillips and Davis—According to my promise, I now take the opportunity of writing to you for the second time on this journey. We have had a comfortable journey all the way so far, and the weather has been unusually moderate with but little rain and no storms; and even though we

crossed one mountain which was 7,700 feet above sea level, we saw not so much as one day of snow on our way. We did see a lot of black clouds rising with the wind, and we heard distant thunder as if the whole heavens above were gathering their forces to sweep us away; but they dared not harm us, because of that One who has all authority, and who calls the stars by their names, and He whose command the winds obey. He parted them as if by His hand (i.e., the clouds) until they went past us on every side with us in the middle without our feeling their effects. And not just once or twice did this happen.

We are all well at present, and we had but little sickness on our journey. Four have died, i.e., William Dafydd, from Llanelli, and Thomas, his son. Also William, son of Sister Howells from Aberdare, who fell under his mother's wagon wheel which went over his chest. We administered to him through the ordinances of the Church of Jesus Christ, according to the scriptures, and the next night he was strolling around the camp. He fell sick again in a day or two, and Bro. Taylor and myself administered to him again, but he died in spite of everything and everyone. The other who died was Jennet, the daughter of Thomas and Anne Morris, from cancer. You shall have more of the account of our journey when we reach the Valley.

Last night we were in our camp on the bank of Sulphur Creek, two miles from here. We heard in the morning that our dear brother, Capt. D. Jones, was camped by the Bear River. It was not long, as you shall learn, after hearing the news, before the word "pack up and pick up" came out; and I know that nowhere on the journey was there a quicker response to any call. His name had lit a flame of love in the breast of everyone toward him so that nothing else could be heard through the camp but "Bro. Jones," and "let us go to meet him." It wasn't long before the wheels were turning. After traveling close to a mile, we saw a man of small stature

walking quickly to meet us. We did not know who it was; but as we drew nearer to each other, to our joy who would it be but our dear Bro. Jones and his customary cheery smile. It is easier to imagine than to describe our meeting. After shaking hands, embracing, weeping and kissing, we went to the bank of the river where he had left his horse, having traveled from twenty to thirty miles during the night ahead of his company in order to meet us. We decided to spend a day in his friendship, to converse with each other about things pertaining to the kingdom of our God. Oh, brethren, how sweet the words poured over his lips. It is true that every word from his mouth was sweet earlier in Wales, but they were a thousand times sweeter here on the desolate mountains of America, between eight and nine thousand miles from Wales.

I must end this letter, for the camp is getting near, and Brothers Jeremy and Daniels are coming. Who can hold a pen when faithful brethren with whom I traveled thousands of miles in the bonds of love are getting near? Not I. There, the brothers and sisters are running; I cannot restrain myself any longer. Behold, everyone is coming back to the camp with his heart full of joy in full proof of the truthfulness of the words "how lovely is the dwelling of brothers together." We spent the rest of the day in brotherly love, at times singing, other times testifying of our determinations, listening to the teaching of the three brethren, until the day went past, and, if the truth be told, until 12 o'clock at night also. And though in the midst of the green willows we met, the Spirit of God was among us. We all took our leave so that each could fulfill his calling in full confidence that we would meet again in Zion. The camp is getting underway. Farewell for now, dear Brothers Phillips and Davis. I am your brother in the bonds of the Gospel, W. Morgan.¹⁰

Dan Jones, Thomas Jeremy, and Daniel Daniels—all part of the original group of Welsh pioneers who entered the

Salt Lake Valley in October 1849—were now on their way back to Wales to serve as missionaries. Abel Evans must have been most pleased and proud to introduce Mrs. Abel Evans to his friends and former colleagues in Wales. And one of the topics no doubt reviewed as Abel reflected back with Dan Jones and Thomas Jeremy was that of the blind man in Carmarthenshire who had been baptized as a “prepared Judas” and who had attacked the Mormon movement with such enthusiasm. And it is reasonable to assume that Abel requested that these brethren check in on his father and other family members who had remained behind in Merthyr Tydfil.

Welsh from Salt Lake

After rejoicing in one another’s company for the better part of two days the Welsh going to the Valley and the three missionaries returning to Wales found it necessary to continue their respective journeys. Further details of the remainder of the journey of the William Morgan Company are contained in a letter William Morgan wrote several months later on June 25, 1853:

Dear Brothers Phillips and Davis—According to my promise in my last letter I take this opportunity to give some details of the account of our journey from the Bluffs to this lovely place. After taking our leave of Brothers Jones, Daniels, Jeremy and others, the ones I knew being more numerous than the ones I did not know, we continued our journey with our hearts rejoicing, reflecting on the conversations and the interesting and edifying counsels which we received from the aforementioned brethren, praying for our Father to bless all of them in their dangerous and goodly endeavors, on land and water and in the midst of our own nation. After arriving at Mountain Creek and traveling about three or four miles,

we decided to rest through the night where there was plenty of grazing for the animals. The sun was about to hide its head in the west and the mantle of night was drawing nigh exhorting everyone except the watchmen to rest. We heard the noise of a wagon coming pell-mell from the city road; by then all were straining their eyes to see what was coming, and before long the lead watchmen shouted out, "Welsh from Salt Lake." There was no need to say it again, for the first word pierced through us all like an electric current. Everyone came near having a race to meet them. To our great joy who were they but Thomas Jones, Hirwaun; Morgan Hughes, Pontyates; and William, son of Evan Jones, Mill Street, Aberdare. They had come from thirty to forty miles to meet us with a load of fruits of the Valley, such as watermelons, mushmelons, potatoes, pickle cucumbers, grapes, etc., to welcome us. The watchmen came over to the camp, according to the language of the ancient Welsh, "without a sword unsheathed against them." They put their entire load under my care, and I had the honor of dividing the load among the brothers and sisters; and even though the divider normally gets the smallest share, I got plenty myself and everyone else, even though we had not tasted such delicacies all during the summer. We went no further than the foot of the mountain the next day. The second day we crossed the second mountain, as it is seen here; by the time we reached the expanse which is between the second mountain and the first, there was a multitude of the brethren awaiting us with the same presents which we received from the other brethren. I shall name some of them: John Parry, Newmarket and his son, Dl. [Daniel] Leigh, Owen Roberts, Thomas James, Cadwaladr Owens, etc., too many to name. We reached the city on the last day of September, all healthy and our hearts thankful to our Father for the privilege.¹¹



"Great Salt Lake City in 1853," by Frederick Piercy

CHAPTER TEN

LIFE IN LEHI

Abel and Mary Evans arrived in the Salt Lake Valley the last day of September 1852, the culmination of several years of planning and preparation. They had left their native land of Wales two-and-one-half years earlier in obedience to the counsel of Church leaders to “gather to Zion.” The party of Welsh converts who had immigrated the previous year had met with great misfortune upon encountering the cholera epidemic that was raging along the waters of the Missouri River. The loss of one in five of these immigrants to this dread disease probably caused some in Wales to rethink their travel plans, but Abel and Mary were not among that number. They continued firm in their determination to venture forth to a new land fraught with many new challenges, including a new language, where they would carve out a new existence for themselves somewhere in the Rocky Mountains.

Although each was still single upon leaving Wales, they found one another during the crossing and joined their destinies upon reaching America. And during their two years in Council Bluffs they experienced the joy of receiving little Elizabeth Ann as their first child. Exactly ten months from the date of her birth their little daughter would complete



*The Old Meetinghouse, Lehi.
Abel and his family attended church here.
Reprinted from Lehi: Centennial History*

her earthly sojourn. Thus when Abel and Mary began their westward trek from Council Bluffs in June of 1852 they were still mourning the loss of a little girl they had only begun to know and whose first words they had not been permitted to hear.

The letters of their leader, William Morgan, back to colleagues in Wales give evidence of the enthusiastic reception this group of Welsh Mormon pioneers had upon their arrival in the Valley. Those of their compatriots who had preceded them in coming to Zion were delighted at being joined by a few more of their brothers and sisters in the gospel from the old country. Typically the newcomers were taken into the homes of friends or family in Salt Lake City for a period of time until they were able to make their own arrangements. No record has surfaced to let us know which of the Welsh families may have played host to Abel and Mary, but it could have been any of a number of Abel's converts.

Bishop's Request

Abel and Mary arrived on Thursday, September 30, 1852, and on Monday, October 4, Abel was already at work as a "mason tender" on the wall around what is now Temple Square in Salt Lake City. It is recorded that he also worked the following day and received \$3.50 for two days' work.¹ That he worked just the two days suggests that he and Mary probably began traveling toward a new destination soon thereafter. So many people arrived in the Valley in 1852 that it was necessary for them to be "called" to settle elsewhere outside the Salt Lake City vicinity. Family tradition has it that Brigham Young called Abel and Mary Evans to travel to Southern Utah and make their home in St. George. So after spending one hundred days trudging across what are now the states of Nebraska and Wyoming, Abel and his young wife, Mary, now about six months pregnant with their second

child, agreed to travel yet another twenty-five to thirty days with their team and wagon and their meager possessions three hundred miles to the south of Salt Lake City. Because of a plea from a persuasive bishop, however, they would never complete their journey to St. George. Their southward trek took them through the settlement of Lehi just beyond the Point of the Mountain, thirty miles south of Salt Lake City, where they became acquainted with Bishop David Evans.*

David Evans, who by this time had been a stalwart in the Church almost since its infancy, had been called the previous year by Brigham Young to settle in what was then called “Dry Creek” and to serve as bishop to the Saints there. Apparently Bishop Evans took an immediate liking to Abel and Mary when their travels southward took them through Dry Creek, and he requested that they remain in his town because of the need for a blacksmith there. Any skills Abel had in this line of work he must have obtained during his two years in Council Bluffs, as there is no evidence he ever did anything but coalmining and proselyting in Wales. Abel, of course, was reluctant to go against the counsel of Brigham Young, who had asked him to go much further south to settle. David Evans, however, assured Abel that he would make things right with Brother Brigham, a man whom he had known well for nearly two decades. Thus, as a result of Bishop Evans’s persuasive powers, Abel and Mary decided to establish themselves in the little community of Dry Creek.²

*Besides his surname the only thing Welsh that Bishop David Evans had was his paternal grandfather who, according to family tradition, had emigrated to America from Wales sometime in the middle of the eighteenth century. Bishop Evans himself was born in Maryland in 1804 and probably spoke no Welsh whatsoever. To resolve the obvious confusion of their identical surnames, Bishop Evans focused on a physical difference between the two and referred to Abel as the “long-legged Evans.”

Just how early Abel and Mary were in Lehi is not clear, but it was at least sometime before December 20, 1852, when their second child and first son, Abel John Evans, was born.³ Also the Bishops Report of 1852, a survey listing the head of each household in Utah and the ward of his residence as of December 28, 1852, has Abel Evans as residing in Lehi City.⁴

Cabin for Two

Once their decision was made at Bishop Evans's invitation to remain in Lehi the most urgent task Abel and Mary confronted was that of providing shelter and protection for themselves during the approaching winter. They may have been able to occupy an existing cabin left vacant by someone who had moved elsewhere. Or perhaps they faced the challenge of constructing their own cabin. If the latter, they probably used as material the native cottonwood trees some miles up the creek. The *History of Lehi* written by Hamilton Gardner and published by the Lehi Pioneer Committee in 1913 furnishes us with some details concerning pioneer housing:

Those early cabins consisted of only one or two rooms, according to the size of the family—surely none too ample quarters. The walls were approximately seven feet high; the roof a leaky, inadequate contrivance of willows and dirt, gabled at each end. The openings between the logs were “chinked” with pieces of wood and daubed with mud. A sod fireplace in one corner of the room served the varied purposes of cooking, furnishing heat and providing light. Doors were made for some of the cabins from the wagon boxes, while for others quilts served the same purpose. By those who had it, “factory” [unbleached muslin] was tacked over the window openings, which served the double purpose of letting in the light and keeping out the cold, although it necessarily performed both these functions imperfectly.⁵

In the absence of any journals or diaries of their time in Lehi only a short list of details can be pieced together concerning the lives of Abel and Mary from the end of 1852 until May of 1865 when Abel was called to return to Wales as a missionary. It is to the 1913 *History of Lehi* that we are indebted for many of these details. One of the first is that "early in 1853" Abel Evans was called to serve as second counselor to Bishop David Evans in the bishopric of the Lehi Ward.⁶ This call came just several months after Abel's arrival in Lehi. He would continue in the capacity of second counselor for ten years until 1863 at which time the first counselor, Lorenzo H. Hatch, created a vacancy in the bishopric by moving to Cache Valley. Bishop David Evans called Abel to be his first counselor at this time with Canute Peterson as second counselor.⁷ The next change in the bishopric would not occur until May 1865 when Abel left on his mission to Wales. Thus for all but the first few months of his time in Lehi, Abel Evans served as a counselor to Bishop Evans, a total of twelve years; Bishop Evans would serve for twenty-eight years before his release.

When the earliest families of Lehi arrived in the fall of 1850 they made plans to build their cabins from end to end in the form of a fort for protection against the Indians. Because of the small number of settlers, however, only the north side was completed with a few cabins going down the east side and even fewer going down the west side. No cabins were ever built on the intended south side. In the summer of 1853, when the difficulties with Chief Wakara arose because of the killing of an Indian in Springville, the leaders in Salt Lake City advised the inhabitants of Lehi and other settlements in Utah Valley to gather in forts and barricades. A site for this second fort was selected where no one had yet constructed any homes so that all would be treated fairly. Gardner in his 1913 *History of Lehi* describes the process:

The plan of construction for the fort was not a complex one. It consisted merely of placing the log houses of the settlers end to end, thus forming a hollow square seventy rods long. Inside the enclosure were to be built the corrals, stackyards and stables. As the crops were harvested this fall, they were brought to this place, and later the houses were moved into line. This was not accomplished without reluctance, especially on the part of those who had most recently erected their homes. But the need of defense was so urgent and the labor of moving a log house so comparatively small that eventually everyone was found in the fort.⁸

The cabin of Abel and Mary Evans was placed on the north side of the fort. Abel was also involved in another defense project:

As an additional safeguard against the Indians, a parapet was erected a short distance north of the fort near the State Road. Bishop David Evans and Abel Evans directed the work. The parapet consisted of a trench eight feet wide and five feet deep, enclosing a piece of ground eleven rods square. The excavated earth formed a formidable breastwork. In especially dangerous times, a guard maintained a lookout on the parapet and warned the people in the fort of any approaches of the enemy.⁹

By being vigilant and careful, the people of Lehi successfully protected themselves and their property from the Indians. Wherever the men went they carried firearms. And as they worked in their fields they were constantly on guard against any sudden attacks. If anyone needed to go into the mountains after animals or wood, he would never venture to go alone. The cattle were watched over by herders during the day and driven into the stockade at night. One cannot help wondering to what extent Abel and Mary had

given thought to such circumstances prior to their departure from Wales.

On December 16, 1853, eight policemen were selected by the city council, two for each of the four sides of the fort. Abel Evans was one of the two for the north side.¹⁰ Four days later Abel and Mary celebrated the first birthday of Abel John Evans and made preparations to celebrate their second Christmas in Lehi, their fourth in the new country. Life must have seemed rather promising as they took their places in the society then being formed in the growing town of Lehi, now with a population of nearly five hundred people. The Welsh tended to stay in groups as they settled in Utah; there was a goodly number in the old Sixteenth Ward in Salt Lake City about four miles west of the center of town. They even held meetings in Welsh. And Laura Peters, a woman baptized by Abel Evans in North Wales and who settled just south of Brigham City, was surrounded by so much Welsh during her fifty years in Utah that she never did bother to learn English. Such, however, was not the case for Abel and Mary in Lehi. Only a small percentage of the settlers there were from Wales; the vast majority of the surnames of the early Lehi residents would indicate American or English ancestry with a smattering of Scandinavians and Germans. Consequently, Abel and Mary were immersed in an English language situation, and their capacity in this new language must have increased considerably during their initial time there. It is doubtful, however, if their Welsh accent ever faded.

Election Victory

On March 6, 1854, the second municipal election for Lehi was held. Among others Abel Evans and Abraham Losee were elected to the city council. Hamilton Gardner makes the following statement about the latter: "Later it was discovered that Abraham Losee had not become a citizen

of the United States, so his seat was denied him.”¹¹ Since American citizenship was required to occupy a civic post, technically Abel Evans did not qualify either since his citizenship was not received until 1859. The wording on his “Certificate of Citizenship,” however, may clarify the situation: “Be it remembered, that on the Fifteenth day of March A.D. 1859, Abel Evans a subject of Queen Victoria made application to become a citizen of the United States, and produced to this court satisfactory evidence that he on the (1st) First day of March A.D. 1854, in due form of law, declared his intention to become such a citizen.” Apparently a legal declaration of intent to become a citizen was sufficient to satisfy the citizenship requirement. Or perhaps a bit of date juggling may have been involved, something certainly not unheard of in a frontier settlement, where details were not always attended to with great precision.

When Abel Evans was sworn into office the city recorder, Thomas Taylor, administered the oath of office. The Lehi City Council Minutes Book then has this entry: “On motion Richard C. Gibbons, Daniel Cox and Abel Evans were exonerated from the offices of Policemen by reason of holding offices in the City Council.”¹² Abel was also appointed to the Ways and Means Committee along with Lorenzo Hatch and Joseph Skeen. One of the items that came before the Lehi City Council for their consideration was whether to issue a license to Jonathan Partridge to “sell spirituous Liquours and for the Brewing and selling of Malt Liquours.”¹³ The license was granted. The September 22, 1854, minutes show that Abel Evans was appointed to serve on a committee to identify the owner of a cow found dead in the creek. The city had paid \$2.00 for its removal the previous April, and if the owner was found he or she was to reimburse the expense to the city treasury. The “dead cow” committee proved to be very expeditious, for on the very next council meeting held the following day the committee reported that the dead

cow belonged to William Burgess. "The committee liberated from further duties" was the clerk's entry in the minutes of September 25th.¹⁴

The year of 1854 was also the year of a partial family reunion. About two weeks after Abel Evans was elected to the Lehi City Council, Samuel Evans, Abel's father, first set foot on American soil. On March 18, 1854, the *Golconda* passengers reached New Orleans having left Liverpool six weeks earlier on February 4th. Samuel had begun the journey with his second wife, Catherine, but it appears that she died somewhere along the way before reaching Lehi. That Samuel received his patriarchal blessing in Lehi on November 14, 1854, indicates he had crossed the plains that same year. One can easily imagine the joyful and tearful reunion of Abel and Samuel after a separation of three-and-a-half years. They both continued firm in the faith they had espoused over a decade ago in Merthyr Tydfil, a faith that had altered the course of their lives in dramatic fashion.

Plural Marriage—Martha Morgan

The first recorded event in the life of Abel and Mary for 1855 is the birth of their son, William Samuel Evans on February 1, 1855. Four days later the following entry appears in the Lehi City Council Minutes Book: "Monday, Feb 5th 1855, 6:00 P.M., Councillor Evans wished to be excused on account of the sickness of his wife and on motion was excused."¹⁵ With no close relatives nearby it was up to Abel to take care of the older son while Mary was "confined" following the birth of a new baby. Such devotion and attentiveness to family can be added to an already sizeable list of Abel's admirable qualities. Four days later is this entry in the minutes book: "Friday, Feb 9th 1855, 6:00 o'clock P.M., prayer by Councillor Evans. Councillor Evans wished to be excused that he might meet with the teachers of this branch of the Church; on motion was excused."¹⁶



Martha Morgan

It was about this time that Abel was giving serious thought to entering the covenant of plural marriage. Family tradition has it that he approached Mary for her permission and her counsel. Apparently he had two women in mind, thirty-one-year-old Martha Morgan from South Wales and some other person. Abel asked Mary which one would be her preference. A granddaughter of Abel and Mary reports having heard that Mary, suspecting that her husband preferred the other person, advised him to marry Martha.¹⁷ Mary was four years Martha's junior and probably wanted to preserve her status as the number one wife in every way possible. Whether her plan was effective is, of course, a matter of pure conjecture.

In early March 1855 Mary bundled up her two-year-old son and her month-old baby boy and traveled with her husband and her husband's intended new wife to the Endowment House in Salt Lake City to be sealed to him. And the records show that at 9:30 on Saturday morning, the



Endowment House, Salt Lake City

10th of March, Abel knelt at the altar and was sealed first to Mary and then to Martha. The newly constructed Endowment House would not be officially dedicated until May 5, 1855; thus it was not possible for Abel and his two wives to receive their endowments at this time. But the records show that these three returned to the Endowment House on Tuesday, the 18th of September of that same year, for their endowments. And while they were there the sealings of Abel to Mary and to Martha were performed again, this time in a dedicated Endowment House. And accompanying them on this occasion was Abel's father, Samuel, who received his endowments as well.

Abel's family had now grown to six persons: Abel, his wife Mary, their two small sons, his second wife Martha, and Abel's father, Samuel. Life had become more complicated not only by sheer numbers in a limited amount of living space in frontier conditions, but by the composition of the family as well. The future, however, would bring more children and one more wife, and life would never get any less complicated. Furthermore, the 1855 crops were nearly all destroyed by the grasshoppers.

Abel's special gift for administering to the sick and the troubled did not cease with his arrival in Lehi. One example was recorded by Lorenzo Hatch, first counselor in the bishopric with Abel Evans, in his journal for October 1, 1855:

Friday night I was called out of bed to go and administer to John Catlin's wife. The devil caused her to bark like a dog. We cast the spirit out. Brother Abel Evans was with me. We administered to her, and she appeared well and comfortable, but as soon as we were gone the devil commenced again and they sent for Abel. He stayed all night and kept her right till morning. Brother Abel and I went and administered to several sick persons and then in company with Brother Thomas Karren, we went to John Catlin's and found his wife very

much enraged with an evil spirit. We administered to her, but the spirit did not stand rebuked. We then demanded in the name of Jesus of the spirit what right he had to inhabit that tabernacle. And because he was obliged to tell, the woman began to confess that she had stollen [sic] some feathers, and her husband acknowledged that he had killed a yearling heifer that belonged to James Ferguson who was on a mission. We got the key to much iniquity and the spirit lost his power. She soon recovered.¹⁸

As the year drew to a close yet one more person came to share the already cramped space occupied by Abel Evans and his family. On December 16th Martha had her first child, a little girl who was given the name of Margrett Martha Evans. The birth year for Margrett is recorded as 1856 in the Evans family Bible¹⁹ and also in the little red journal that Abel kept during his crossing on the *Josiah Bradlee* in 1850 (written on the pages for weeks 25 and 26). Margrett's name, however, appears right below Martha's name in the 1856 census for Utah. And since the census was taken in January and February of 1856 the logical conclusion is that Margrett was born in 1855. Furthermore, since Martha gave birth to another child on June 5, 1857, and since Mary gave birth to a child on February 18, 1857, it would have been impossible for either of them to have given birth in December 1856.

Reformation

The 1856 Utah census for Lehi shows the following persons in Abel Evans's family: Abel, Mary, John A., William S., Martha, Margaret, Samuel, Rufas, Harriett, and Susannah. No ages or relationships are recorded in this particular census. From what is known about Abel's family, it is no challenge to identify the first seven names as listed. But where on earth did "Rufas, Harriett, and Susannah" come

from? These names are easily explained once one understands something about the 1856 Utah census. It was taken at the request of Brigham Young as part of his campaign for statehood, and it was important to have a sufficient number of residents in Utah to measure up to the qualifications for statehood. Historians have discovered that the statistics in this census were “padded” or artificially inflated and that many of the names were just that—names with no persons behind them. Consequently, “Rufas, Harriett, and Susannah” were simply names made up by the census taker and assigned to the Evans household to boost the population in the bid for statehood.

In February of 1856 Abel was reelected to the city council.²⁰ It also appears that Samuel Evans made the trek to Salt Lake City for October conference, for on October 6, 1856, he was ordained a high priest by E. D. Woolley, S. W. Richards, and L. Farr in Salt Lake City.²¹

After ten years in the valley, the leaders in Salt Lake City noticed with sorrow that many of the Saints in Utah were becoming complacent about their spiritual commitments. Jedediah M. Grant, first counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency, was given the task of “waking up the saints.” His efforts and the resulting movement toward a spiritual rebirth became known as the “Reformation.” The years of 1856 and 1857 were particularly intense. Part of the test of determining the extent of one’s devotion was a transfer of one’s property to the Church. Such a transfer was effected by Abel Evans on December 31, 1856. On that day he appeared before Dominicus Carter, probate judge for Utah County, and acknowledged that of his own free will and choice he had transferred ownership of all his property, “except the N. E. quarter” of Lot 5 in Block 14, to Brigham Young, the Trustee in Trust of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The resulting document contains a list of the worldly goods of Abel and his growing family:

Be it known by these presents that I, Abel Evans, of Lehi City in the County of Utah and Territory of Utah for and in consideration of the good will which I have to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints give and convey unto Brigham Young, Trustee in Trust for said Church, his successors in office, and assigns, all my claim to and ownership of the following described property, to wit:

Lot 5 in Bl. 14 (Except the NE quarter of said Lot, containing 37 1/2 / 160 of an acre in the Lehi Survey of Building Lots with an house.)	\$150.00
Also the W. half of Lot 1 in Bl. 130. Containing 20 Acres in the American Creek survey	100.00
Also Lot 17 in Bl. 7 Containing 40 Acres in the American Creek Survey Plat B.	50.00
1 Yoke of Oxen & Wagon	100.00
1 Cow & Calf \$35	35.00
1 Swine \$20 & Farming Tooles \$25	45.00
8 Bushels of Wheat @ \$2 per Bu.	16.00
6 " " Oates " 1 "	6.00
12 " " " " " "	12.00
2 Tons of Hay @ \$7 per ton	14.00
Total Five hundred and twenty eight Dollars	\$528.00

Together with all the rights, privileges & appurtenances, thereunto belonging or appertaining: I also covenant and agree that I am the lawful claimant and owner of said property, and will warrant and forever defend the same unto the said Trustee in Trust, his successors in office, and assigns against the claims of my heirs, assigns or any person whomsoever.

Witnesses: Geo. H. Knowlden, Harlow Redfield, Geo. H. Sweat

Able Evans (seal)

Territory of Utah, Utah County

I, Dominicus Carter, Judge of the aforesaid County do hereby certify that the signer of the above transfer personally known to me appeared this 31st day of Dec. A. D. 1856 and acknowledged that he of his own choice, executed the foregoing transfer.

Dominicus Carter, Probate Judge. Recorded Jan 30th 1857.²²

The certificates of property ownership are dated the day after Abel Evans transferred everything to Brigham Young:

Certificate No. 1153, Territory of Utah, County of Utah, Surveyors Office, Provo City, Jan^y 1, 1857, Lehi City Survey of Building Lots. Abel Evans, Lot 5 in Block 14 containing 50/160 of an acre. James C. Snow, County Surveyor.

Certificate No. 1154, Territory of Utah, County of Utah, Surveyors Office, Provo City, Jan^y 1, 1857, American Creek Survey of Farm Land. Abel Evans the West half of Lot 1 in Block 130 containing twenty acres. James C. Snow, County Surveyor.

Territory of Utah, County of Utah, Surveyors Office, Provo City, Jan^y 1, 1857, American Creek Survey of Farm Land, Plat B, Abel Evans, Lot 17 in Block 7 containing Forty Acres. James C. Snow, County Surveyor.²³

The Reformation atmosphere seems to have pervaded the comments of Abel Evans as recorded in a Seventies meeting held on January 8, 1857, at the house of George Leslie. Lucius Scoville and Abel were visitors at the meeting. Scoville addressed the gathering first and admitted to having “put off his armour” since returning from his mission to Europe but that he was now ready to serve the Lord with greater fervor. Abel then spoke; his comments were recorded by the clerk as follows:

Br. Abel Evans arose, and said he felt a great weight upon his mind, and felt to wish with all his heart that he could say as Br P. Thomas had said in the last meeting, viz., that he could see but few times in his life where he could have done better than he did; he would rather than to have all the riches in Lehi, but he could not say so, had sinned and broken his covenants, but now he dermined [determined] to do better, exhorted all to love the kingdom of God, greater than any and every thing else on earth, so that we may be saved in Celestial Glory.²⁴

Several others presented similar *mea culpas*, and the meeting was adjourned, the benediction being offered by Abel Evans. Because of the prevailing atmosphere, it is rather doubtful that Abel's sins were of any great consequence, rather he probably admitted to such in an effort to have a greater impact on those listening. Whatever they were, they were certainly not serious enough to warrant a release from his calling in the bishopric.

Three Deaths

On February 18, 1857, a son was born to Abel and Mary. They named him Evan Jones Evans. But little Evan lived only two months; he died sometime in April of that same year. On July 5, 1857, another son was born, this time to Abel and Martha. They named him David Morgan Evans. Little David survived only seven months; he died February 14, 1858.

Another death occurred in 1857 that would have significance in the Evans family—that of Mary's mother, Elizabeth Thomas Jones. She died on November 8, 1857, at Llangynnog in Carmarthenshire, but given the slow means of midnineteenth-century communication, word would not reach her relatives in Lehi until sometime the following

spring. News of her mother's passing no doubt caused Mary to reflect on the great distress her conversion to Mormonism had brought about between them. If Mary had regrets concerning the course she had chosen, a course that had taken her thousands of miles from her family and her native land, such regrets had to remain contained and possibly suppressed. After all, the previous seven years since her departure from Wales had witnessed numerous changes in her life—crossing the ocean, saying marriage vows in a new land, living in a Mormon Welsh community in Council Bluffs for two years, traveling in a covered wagon for over one thousand miles across the plains of America, seeing the Mormon mecca of Salt Lake City, settling in an undeveloped community over six thousand miles from her birthplace, giving birth to four children with another one now on the way, and even accepting a sister-wife into her life—all rather sweeping changes for a young girl from the village of Llangynnog in South Wales. Turning back the clock was hardly an option if indeed she ever entertained such thoughts. Mary's continued devotion to the cause of Mormonism would suggest that her commitment was solid. But even totally committed Welsh Mormons could not help reflecting from time to time on the lush green valleys of the old country as they dropped hopeful seeds into the parched soil of the Utah desert.

Echo Canyon War

During the latter part of 1857 Church members began hearing “scorched earth” sermons in their meetings. Because of misinformation given to the newly inaugurated President James Buchanan about the Mormons in Utah he appointed a new governor, Alfred Cumming from Georgia, to replace Governor Brigham Young. And to ensure that the new governor and his authority would be accepted by the people of Utah, Buchanan sent along a large military force to

accompany Cumming. Because Brigham Young was not informed by President Buchanan that he was to be replaced he assumed that the troops headed for Utah were hostile forces that would attempt to drive the Utah residents from their homes. Memories of being driven from Missouri and then from Nauvoo made the Mormon leaders determined to resist any further attempts. Instructions were given to residents of the northern communities of Utah to be ready to move southward. Their homes were to be burned if the army attempted to take possession of them. Between the end of March and mid-May of 1858 thirty thousand people packed up their belongings and moved south according to their leaders' instructions. Gardner, in his 1913 *History of Lehi*, describes the "move" as witnessed by the residents of Lehi:

Day after day the citizens of Lehi saw them pass through their borders, a continuous stream along the State Road, from daylight till dark. A striking picture was this exodus, one long to be remembered—covered wagons laden with all manner of household goods; hand carts; men and women mounted on horses or mules; far more of them walking, often barefoot; cattle, sheep and pigs, singly and in herds; all manner of freak conveyances; no end of confusion, and not a little suffering and sorrow. Added to all the rest was the almost incessant rain which fell during that spring.²⁵

Those living in Lehi considered themselves very fortunate to be able to remain in their homes; however, they participated in the "Echo Canyon War" in other ways. A company of cavalry and a company of infantry set out from Lehi to join the forces in Echo Canyon, whose job it was to set up every obstacle possible to impede the progress of the army under the command of General Alfred Johnston. These men remained on active duty from September until early December when it became obvious that Johnston's army

had decided to remain at Fort Bridger for the winter. Abel Evans's name is not listed with the cavalry or the infantry from Lehi, but he and his family were no doubt totally involved with the "move" the following spring. Gardner portrays the confusion:

The people of Lehi responded nobly in assisting their unfortunate visitors. Men who could, furnished teams and wagons to help in the transporting of their neighbors from the north. Every home in the little city was thrown open, and each room filled to its capacity; even the Meeting House was placed at the disposal of the refugees. When all available room had been occupied, the men built cabins against the fort wall, and even made dugouts on the vacant lots in the city. But the hardest problem was to provide food for this excessive number. The foodstuffs from the previous crops were brought into requisition, and upon the advice of Bishop Evans many of the people raised vegetables.²⁶

Many compatriots of Abel, Mary, Martha, and Samuel were among the number who had to move south. Some of these were undoubtedly befriended and assisted by Abel Evans and his family. On June 30, 1858, four days after Johnston's troops passed through Salt Lake City and showed they did not intend to attack the residents, word was given for the displaced Saints to return to their homes. The troops took up permanent quarters at Camp Floyd in Cedar Valley, eighteen miles west of Lehi, and their proximity was a great financial benefit to the farmers and businessmen of Lehi. When the soldiers left Camp Floyd three years later they had to sell their surplus goods, about four million dollars' worth, at a fraction of their value. And again the people of Lehi benefitted.

On October 27, 1858, a daughter was born to Abel and Mary. She was named Mary after her mother, and she lived until she was past seventy.

American Citizen

Early in 1859, on February 14th, Abel was reelected to the city council. No elections were held in 1858 because of the Echo Canyon War, so the officials elected in 1856 continued to serve in their capacities until such time as another election could be held. On March 15th, a month following his reelection, Abel “made application to become a citizen of the United States.” He had “declared his intention to become such a citizen” five years earlier on March 1, 1854. David Evans and John Brown, American citizens, swore an oath that Abel Evans had resided in the Territory of Utah for “one year last past,” that during that time he had “behaved as a man of good moral character,” that he was “attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States,” and that he was “disposed to the good order of the inhabitants thereof.” Thereupon Abel Evans “was sworn in due form of law to support the Constitution of the United States, and absolutely and entirely renounce, and abjure forever, all allegiance and fidelity to every Foreign Prince, Potentate, State and Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to Her Majesty Victoria Queen of Great Britain and Ireland whose subject he heretofore has been.”

On March 16, 1859, the day after Abel became an American citizen, his second wife, Martha, gave birth to twins, Miriam and Edward Morgan. Miriam died the same day, but Edward lived until he was eighty-eight years of age.

Blessings from the Patriarch

Although they received patriarchal blessings while in Council Bluffs nine years earlier, both Abel and Mary again received blessings in Lehi in early 1860, this time from John Young. Abel’s is dated February 7, 1860:

CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Territory of Utah,
Utah County, ss. }

United States Second District Court for the *Second*
District Territory of Utah.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the *Fifteenth* day of *March*
A.D. 1859, *Abel Evans* a subject of *Queen Victoria*
made application to become a citizen of the United States, and produced to this court satisfactory
evidence that he on the *(10th) Tenth* day of *March* A.D. 1854;
in due form of law, declared his intention to become such a citizen; and thereupon the court being
satisfied by the oaths of *David Evans & John Brown*
two citizens of the United States, that the said *Abel Evans* for one
year last past has resided in *the Territory of Utah*; during
that time he has behaved as a man of good moral character—that he is attached to the principles of
the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order of the inhabitants thereof,
and admitted him to be a citizen of the same. AND THEREUPON, the said *Abel*,
Evans was sworn in due form of law to support the Constitution of the United
States, and absolutely and entirely renounce, and abjure forever, all allegiance and fidelity to every
Foreign Prince, Potentate, State and Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to *Her Majesty*
Victoria Queen of Great Britain & Ireland
whose subject he heretofore has been.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed
my name, and affixed the seal of said court, this
Fifteenth day of *March*,
one thousand eight hundred and fifty-*five*,
and of the Independence of the United States the
Eighty Third.
Lucius N. Seovil Clerk.

Certificate of Citizenship

Patriarchal Blessing Given at Lehi, Feb^y 7th, 1860, By John Young upon the head of Abel Evans, Son of Samuel and Ann, born June 17, 1812, Carmarthenshire, South Wales.

Brother Abel, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I now lay my hands upon your head to bless you, and to confirm and ratify all former blessings. You shall be blest from this time forth and for ever; live to enjoy the life of the righteous; do all the good that is in your heart, and good shall be restored unto you. You are a lawful heir to the priesthood, and you shall have a fulness of it. You are a literal descendant of Joseph through Ephraim, have left your native land to suffer and rejoice with the Saints rather than to enjoy the pleasures the pleasures [sic] of sin for a season. You shall comprehend all the principles necessary for your exaltation, enjoy the blessing of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which are wives and children, flocks and herds; you shall have the spirit of wisdom and integrity, and the spirit of counsel shall be with you, all the spirit that is necessary all the days of your life. You shall be filled with knowledge, be a blessing to your Father's house, be instructed in all the principles of the House of the Lord, become a minster [sic] to officiate in holy ordinances, have the privilege of assisting in the salvation of those who have died without the gospel. I seal the blessings of health, life and prosperity upon you, and say no enemy shall have power over you, but you shall be able to detect every enemy, and have power over every unhallowed thing to govern and control yourself, do good in your day and generation, fill up the measure of your creation, lay a good foundation for the time to come, have all the blessings that your heart can desire, be able to stand up in vindication of the cause, be gathered up to the centre Stake of Zion and your family, and those under your care. You shall dwell with the ministers of Jesus, administer [sic] to the Sick and afflicted, and they shall be blest. Be of good cheer and those blessings shall rest upon you, your

feet never shall turn aside, the candle of the Almighty shall be in you all the days of your pilgrimage, and you shall ultimately be gathered to have an inheritance in the new heavens and new earth to reign when Satan shall be bound, officiate in the holy ordinances of the House of the Lord. I seal you up to the day of redemption, according to the holy order and seal up power in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. John Y. Long, Reporter.²⁷

On the following Saturday, February 11, 1860, Mary received her second patriarchal blessing:

Patriarch Blessing given at Lehi, Feb. 11, 1860, By John Young, upon the head of Mary Jones Evans, born August 1828, Carmarthen, South Wales, daughter of John & Elizabeth Jones.

Sister Mary, I lay my hand upon your head to bless you, and confirm all former blessings with the things that your heart desires, even the blessings of the everlasting gospel which you are entitled to, having embraced the gospel in your youthful days with a desire to work righteousness. You are a lawful heir, a literal descendant of Ephraim, entitled to all the blessings promised to the fathers. You shall be a blessing to your father's house, to your husband, to all associated with you. You shall have posterity upon the earth which shall call you blessed, be able to govern and control yourself according to the holy order, and all things under your jurisdiction shall be brought into subjection. Your name shall be honorable in Israel, be blessed with long life upon the earth, live as long as life is sweet unto you; have the good things of the earth and of the heavens; no power shall turn you aside from the holy commandments given unto you. You shall be gathered up to Zion with the people of the Lord, see the temple of the Lord, rejoice in the midst of the Saints, have every necessary blessing, and in all times of trouble there

shall be a way for your escape. You shall be preserved on the earth, and no power be able to destroy you, for your mind shall cleave unto the principles of life. These blessings are yours; therefore, be faithful and you shall see good days in the land of the living, accomplish the work sent to do; stand upon Mount Zion with your kindred and friends in the new heavens and new earth. Follow the counsel of your husband and these blessings shall rest upon your head. We live for ever in the truth. These are seal [sic] upon you and seal you up to eternal life by virtue of the holy priesthood and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ: Amen. John Y. Long, Reporter.²⁸

Census Records

For some unexplained reason Abel Evans and his family were not reported in the 1860 Federal Census for Utah. If the information had been included it would have shown Abel Evans, age forty-eight; his wife, Mary, age thirty-two; their son Abel John; age seven, their son, William Samuel, age five; and their daughter, Mary, age one. Abel and Mary's daughter Sarah would not be born until November of that year. The census would also have shown Abel's wife, Martha, age thirty-six, and their son, Edward Morgan, age one. It was not uncommon for seven people to be living under one roof in the mid-nineteenth century, especially in a polygamous situation. In the 1870 census for the Abel Evans family his three widows with their combined total of nine children were living under the same roof, presumably the same house as in 1860. But when one pauses to consider the amount of living space available to those people, especially during the winter when the warmth of the family hearth was essential to all, one must wonder how they managed to survive from day to day and maintain anything even resembling a harmonious atmosphere. Perhaps they took comfort that many others

were no better off than they; furthermore, conditions had never really been much different for them.

Abel's father, Samuel Evans, is listed in the 1860 census. His name is spelled "Sam^l Evance," age seventy, occupation F[armer], value of real estate \$75, value of personal estate \$50. Listed also in his household is his wife, "Celena," a clear indication that sometime after his arrival in Lehi six years earlier he had married for the third time. Not much information has been uncovered for "Selina," the normal spelling for her name. To the census taker she declared her age as fifty-nine in 1860. When she went with Samuel Evans the following year on February 9, 1861, to the Endowment House to be sealed to him, the following information was recorded: Selina Evans, daughter of Evan and Luce Jenkins, born May 1, 1802, Glamorganshire, South Wales, baptized May 15, 1850.²⁹ Fourteen years later when she was rebaptized on November 7, 1875, it was written in the Lehi Ward records that Selina was the daughter of Evan and Luce Jenkins, but that she was born May 1, 1799, Glamorganshire, and that she was baptized in May 1849 by David Richards and confirmed in May 1849 by David John.³⁰ The information differs slightly, but it is obviously the same person in both cases. Selina was the widow of Benjamin Williams at the time of her marriage to Samuel Evans.

Plural Marriage—Jane Davis

On February 11, 1861, municipal elections were again held in Lehi City, the fifth such elections since the founding of the city. This time, however, Abel Evans was not reelected. It is not clear if he even ran for reelection. Perhaps he felt that seven consecutive years of service on the city council were sufficient. Something else that may have occupied his thoughts at this time was taking a third wife. Twenty-four-year-old Jane Davis had arrived in Lehi from

Wales in October of 1860 along with some other Welsh immigrants. In the practice of plural marriage, a man was not permitted to take a plural wife without the permission of his bishop and the consent of his first wife. Sometimes a bishop would “counsel” a worthy priesthood holder in his ward to take another wife. Whether Abel Evans was so counseled by Bishop David Evans or whether on his own he took a romantic interest in this young, single woman from Wales is not clear. Whatever the reason it was most likely not a popular decision with Abel’s other two wives, Mary and Martha. Jane Davis was ten years younger than Mary and fourteen years younger than Martha. And she was nearly twenty-five years younger than the man she agreed to marry. She was no doubt more slender than her future “sister-wives,” since she had not given birth to any children—Mary had borne six children, Martha four with one more due in May. Furthermore, their little house was already bulging at the seams with three adults and five children occupying the available space. But despite any fears and forebodings on the part of Mary and Martha, they made room in their home and presumably their hearts for Jane Davis, sealed to Abel Evans as his third wife in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City by Brigham Young on May 4, 1861. Two weeks later on May 18th a daughter was born to Abel and Martha—they gave her the name of Martha Morgan Evans. Now there were ten people under the Abel Evans roof in Lehi City and ten mouths to feed.

New Marshal in Lehi City

On November 2, 1862, a daughter was born to Abel and Mary, and she was given the name of Catherine Jones Evans. This brought the count of the Abel Evans family to eleven—four adults and seven children. The oldest child, Abel John, would be ten years old before year’s end.

The municipal election for Lehi City held in February 1863 was for only six posts: mayor, two aldermen, and three councilors. Two years earlier there had been fourteen posts up for election. Abel Evans was not elected to the city council in either election, but on February 18th, two days following the 1863 election, he was appointed by the city council to be marshal of Lehi. An ordinance passed on February 8, 1862, defined the duties of the marshal:

Sec 1 Be it Ordained by the City Council of Lehi City that the Marshal shall be qualified, and give bonds in the same manner as for the Treasurer provided he shall give bond in the sum of five hundred dollars.

Sec 2 The Marshal shall by himself or deputies attend all meetings of the City Council, have charge of the Stationary and see that the Hall is lighted and warmed when necessary and execute all orders of the Mayor or Council. Preserve the peace and good order of the City. Quell all riots. Arrest and bring disorderly persons before the Mayor or Aldermen for trial either with or without process. Serve all processes issued by the Mayor or any Alderman to him directed and see that all orders and judgments of said Courts are carried into effect; also see to the peace and good order of all public Assemblys and said Marshal may at any time call on the Police Captain or in the absence of the Captain any Policeman who is hereby required to assist in maintaining the peace and good order of the City.

Sec 3 This Ordinance to be in force from and after its passage.³¹

The next ordinance recorded in the minutes book, dated April 26, 1862, has to do with the fees of the municipal authorities of the city. It stipulates that the marshal was to

receive \$2.00 each day he attended court. In addition to the normal peacekeeping duties outlined in the "Ordinance defining the duties of the Marshal," he was also expected to enforce a June 1862 ordinance with respect to herding sheep: "Be it ordained by the City Council of Lehi City that no sheep shall be herded within the limits of this Corporation from the 1st of April until the 1st of November and any person so offending shall be liable to be fined in any sum not less than one, nor more than twenty dollars for every such offence."³² One other ordinance he was expected to enforce was the January 1863 ordinance having to do with fast riding: "Be it ordained by the City Council of Lehi City, that it shall be unlawful for any person or persons to Race Horses, or mules, within the limits of the City plot of said City. And be it further ordained that no person or persons shall be allowed to run Horses in the Streets of said City except when necessary in driving Cattle, horses, and other animals."³³ Violators were to be fined "not less than two, nor more than twenty-five dollars."

On September 4, 1863, Martha gave birth to a daughter, whom they named Ann. She probably died shortly after being born, as her name is not listed in the "Blessings of Children" section of the Lehi Ward records. The only two children listed for Martha in the 1870 census are Edward and Martha; she had given birth to six.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

BACK TO WALES

Abel Evans must have carried out his duties as marshal of Lehi City in a satisfactory manner, as he was re-appointed to the post following the elections held on February 13, 1865. And at this point it must have appeared that life for Abel and his growing family would continue on for the foreseeable future much as it had done for the previous dozen years. But an announcement made at April general conference would alter the lives of the Abel Evans family forever.

Call from the Prophet

From the pulpit at general conference, calls were issued to a number of brethren to prepare themselves to serve missions. One of those called was Abel Evans. Whether he was present at the time of his call or whether he had received prior notice is not known. In those days it was not considered essential to consult individuals before reading their names from the pulpit. What is certain is that when Abel Evans learned of his call to return to Wales he responded in the affirmative and immediately began making preparations to travel back. The call, of course, necessitated his release as first counselor to Bishop David Evans, also his release as marshal of Lehi.

John Parry, Jr., Abel's former missionary companion in North Wales, was also called to serve a mission in Wales, along with four others: Elias Morris, Griffith Roberts, Richard J. Davies, and Barry Wride. The wives and children of these men were expected to be patient and keep things going forward on their respective farms the best they could while their husbands and fathers were away from them in the Lord's service. The bishop was to provide foodstuffs from his storehouse, and the Church requested that friends and neighbors provide other assistance where needed. History shows, however, that the support given was generally very little compared to the amount truly required.

If Abel Evans kept a journal of his mission, as all missionaries were instructed to do back then, it has not surfaced among his descendants. The journals kept by John Parry, Elias Morris, and Barry Wride are extant and contain valuable information about the preparations, the trek back to the "States," and the ocean voyage to Liverpool. The following extract concerning preparations is from John Parry's journal:

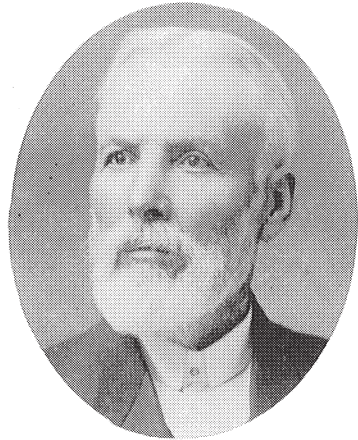
In order to get Myself ready, with the necessary means, I sold 5 Acres of the Land over Jordan, to James Moyle for 50 Dollars, and a Cow and Calf that I had lost for a year or two came home. I sold them for 81 Dollars, and And [sic] James Moyle & Peter Gilespie helped me 10 Dollars each.¹

Barry Wride had been in Utah just under four years, and his means were extremely limited. He recorded what he considered to be a "miraculous and marvelous" outpouring of generosity:

I received a letter direct from President Brigham Young notifying me of the Call and to be ready with means of Conveyance to go to Europe on a Mission and to be at Salt Lake City on the 1st of May. I presented the letter to



John Parry, Jr.



Barry Wride



Eliezer Edwards



Elias Morris

Bp J. B. Fairbanks of Payson Stating my Financial Condition limited in means to travel So great a journey and rather Scarcely provided for my family. He reply^d that he would Consider the matter and Consult the people for aid and on the following Sabbath the matter was presented before the meeting. Something over fifty dollars was Collected and handed to me a few days before I started.²

Elder Wride called on some friends and acquaintances in Provo on his way to Salt Lake City and received an additional \$34 toward his mission. Elias Morris also recorded receiving several donations. One could safely assume that Abel Evans was also the recipient of donations toward his mission expenses from friends and acquaintances in Lehi. Just how much he received is not a matter of record, but judging from the following comments in John Parry's journal he did have some money: "The folowing Missionarys Joined to procure a Team. Myself, Griffith Roberts, Elias Morris, Abel Evans, and Henry Cumberland. A Wagon was got by Cumberland, and we Joined in getting Horses, so we had Four Horses."³

From Zion back to Babylon

According to instructions received from President Brigham Young, at 10:00 A.M. on Monday, May 1, 1865, all the missionaries who had been called at April conference met at the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City. Crowded conditions prompted President Young to offer the use of his schoolhouse for the meeting, and it was there that instructions were given and each missionary was set apart for his mission. The scheduled departure was delayed about three weeks, however, "on account of the bad roads and snow in the mountains."⁴

With respect to the journey from Salt Lake City to Liverpool John Parry recorded the following details in his journal:

We started on the 24 of May from G. S. L. City, and Camped on the east side of the littl Mountain.

25 Thursday, the Company were organized, Comprising 54 Men & 2 Women, 47 Horses & Mules, 13 Wagons. W. B. Preston Capt, A. K. Thurber, Cap^t of the guard. Camped this night on Silver Creek.

26 Friday, Crossed the River Weber and Camped on Grass Creek.

27 Satarday we Camped 5 miles up Echo Canion.

28 Sunday, We camped near Cach Cave.

29 Left early traveled many miles. Camp^t near Pioneer Holow.

30 Pased Fort Bridger 10 miles and camped.

31 Wednesday, Crossed Smith's fork, and and [*sic*] Camped on the West Banks of Ham's fork.

June 1st Thursday, We was Ferryied over Ham's fork by Br Lewis Robinson. Aso [*also*] he came to take us over Green River with oute making any charge. Then we Camped.

2nd Friday, we pased Lott Smith's Hollow, where he burned the U. States's Wagons, when they was comeing to fight the Saints, and crossed Big Sandy. Traveled 30 Miles, and Camped.

3rd Satarday, Camped on the Pasific Springs.

4th Sunday, Very Cold wether. Camped by a Spring.

5th Monday, Traveled aboute 30 Miles each of the two last days. Camp^t on the Sweet Waters.

6th To day we, Tuesday, we passed the three crossing station where 120 U. S. Troops was, to protect the Teligraph. Camped nr Whiskey Gap.

7 Wednesday, we Passed Divel's Gate. Traveled 30 miles. Camped nr Horse Creek.

8 Thursday, Traveled over the Antelope's Hills and Camped on the Banks of the Platt River.

9 Friday, Started early, got Breakfast at Platt Bridg. Traveled 25 Miles, and Camped on or nr the Platt.

10 Saturday, Passed Deer Creek, Camped nr Roperal Creek.

11 Sunday, Traveled about 30 miles. Camped Platt.

12 Monday, Traveled with the Platt and Took to the hills, and crossed on Boulder Springs.

13 Tuesday, Traveled on. Camped within 8 miles to Larami.

14 Traveled and got Breakfast nr Laramie, where there was 600 Troops. Patt Conor Did Hang 3 unofensive Indians, and their Bodys was on the Gallows. When we was passing, we went over to buy some shugar, etc.

15 Thursday, Traveled about 30 Miles and Camped aboute a Mile from the Road. Heavey thunderstorm.

16 Friday, Aboute this Pleas [place] some Indians did folow us for a whole Day, and we Met a Com^y [company] of aboute 500 People with 200 Wagons, bound for the Gold Mines. We Camped aboute 5 miles West of Chimney Rock. Here met another Company of Emigrants, or a Fright Train Consisting of 30 Wagons. Camped near us and one of their Teamsters was missing.

17 Satarday, Started early and found the missing man, who had been killed by the Indians. We traveled about 30 miles.

18 Sunday, the road sandy all Day.

19 Monday, Passed Ash hollow, and Camped aboute 15 miles below.

20 Tuesday, we met a Company of Emigrants and 63 Indians Soldiers and 25 White ones escorting them.

21 Wednesday, Crossed over sand Hills, and Camped nr the Platt River.

22 Thursday, Road very sandy. Camped near Skunk Creek, 7 Miles West of Pawnee Springs.

23 Friday, this night I, & A Evans, G Roberts, and Elias Morris, was on guard, and we experienced, one of the greatest storms, of Lightening and Thunder, with a very heavy rain.

24 Saturday, left the Main road and traveled through a swampy country, and got to dug wells for to get water.

25 Sunday, Passed Buffalo Creek and Elm, and Camped near Fort Kerney.

26 Monday, Arived at Wood River, bought some Corn, and Camped on the Banks of Wood river.

27 Tuesday, Traveled to the Platt River & Camped.

28 Wednesday, continued to travel along the Platt, and crossed the Loup Fork, on a Ferry Boat, paid 1¼ Dollars for every Wagon and Camped after traveling 39 Miles we passed about 2000 Warriors, with their Woemen & Children, all quiet,

29 Thursday, we passed through the City of Columbus.

30 Friday, Passes Fremont, City, and crossed the Elke Horn River, and Camped on the West bank of Big Papio.

July 1st arived within 3 Miles to Omaha being Saturday.

2nd Sunday we held a Meeting at our Camping ground.

3 Monday, went to Omaha to sell our Teames And stayed at this Place untill Saturday.

8 We went on board of a steamer, Colorado ~~to St Joseph~~, to engage a Passage.

9 Sunday, Started early and continued untill midnight then stoped till morning.

10 Started early, arived at St Joe 6 o'Clock A.M. (We agreed for our Passage on the Steamer and on the Raleway in the same Office for 42 Dollars, from Omaha to New York.) We were aboute 72 Traveling hours makeing the Journey. Went through the folowing Places in the States. We started with the Train at Half past eleven o'Clock at night, from Saint Joe, on the 10 of July, Called at Chitticothe, Hudson, Palmyra, State of Ioway, Then crossed over the Mississipi River to Quincy. Change Cars here, & Traveled on the Michigan, Central Great, Western and Grand Trunk Railways, and Arived at Chicago, and change cars. Took the Grand Trunk Rail road to Detroit. Then crossed the River

that connects Lake Huron and Lake Erie, and came to Winsor in Upper Canada. Then we took the cars from here to Suspension Bridge. Distance about 300 Miles. We stopped here for about 9 hours, for to see the Niagara Falls. We also saw a Man that weighed 640 pounds, Aged 52 Years. We went Down above 300 steps to go down to the, what they call the Rapids, at the Riverside. McMaster, was with me down. About 6 P.M. We started with the Train to go to New York. We passed along Hudson River passed the Albany, and arrived at New York, about Twelve o'Clock at noon Friday 14th.

15 Started at noon Saturday, Paid for our Passage over the Ocean to Liverpool 28 Dollars, the name of the Steamer was Louisiana, Capt McNevin. We Missionarys was in number 27, and Passengers in All 142.

16 On Sunday we Met a Steamer going West.

17 Fair [fair] wind going very Fast.

18 Tuesday, Waves Rolling very high going Fourteen Miles an hour, little sea sickness.

19 Wednesday, Fine Day, Moving on smoother [smoother].

20 Fair Wind.

21 Friday, going Smooth and fast.

22 Saturday, As some of the Brethren bought some Liquor from the House where we put up in New York, they was going to Drink some, and it was nothing but Coloured Water, so it Was put overboard.

23 Sunday, All the Sails up going 12 Miles an hour.

24 Monday, Fair wind, saw a Sailing Vesel.

25 Tuesday, fine wether fair wind, 9 Miles an hour.

26 Wednesday, Raining, 11½ Miles p/hour.

27 Thursday, Very foggy. We passed Cape Clear Light house, 4 o'Clock A.M. Arrived opposite Queens Town 10 A.M. where 33 Passengers was put to shore, then went on. Met Many Steamers, &c.

28 Friday, we Passed Holy Head Light house, Wales, at 5 A.M. About 10 A.M. Passed Abergele Bay. Landed in Liverpool

aboute Noon. Took Quarters, with Mr. Clark, Hunter Street. In the evening a Counsel was called by President Daniel H. Welles, In which I, myself, Griffith Roberts, and Elias Morris, was apointed to Labour in North Wales, and the other 3 Welsh Bretheren in South, under the Direction of W. D. Williams.⁵

Preaching in South Wales

Upon passing Holyhead and Abergele Bay, Abel Evans must have had a flood of memories coming back to him from his many years of service as a missionary throughout North Wales. And his arrival in Liverpool no doubt took him back fifteen years to his departure on the *Josiah Bradlee*. Then he was thirty-seven years old and single. Now he had three wives and eight living children—six, possibly seven, had died in infancy. And he probably was not aware at this time that his third wife, Jane, was expecting a child that would be born in November, less than four months hence. Abel would not ever see his last child.

It must have seemed strange to Abel Evans to be assigned to labor in South Wales on this, his second mission. For four straight years prior to his emigration in 1850 he had been sent by his leaders to supervise all missionary work in North Wales. Because the number of members and missionaries had diminished so dramatically Wales was no longer organized as a separate mission. Now it was merely a district of the British Mission with William D. Williams as district president. And now in addition to the persecution from the Anglicans and the Nonconformists, some of the offshoots of Mormonism had produced opponents. Down in Swansea was Thomas Jenkins, who had gone to Salt Lake several years earlier but had become dissatisfied. Thus he returned to Wales as a “Josephite,” the nickname for a member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and

began to preach against the LDS church.⁶ It may have been to Thomas Jenkins and his associates that Elder Evan A. Richards had reference in a June 28, 1865, letter to his file leaders in Liverpool:

[We] met at 4 P.M. in a village called Pontardawe, but before we reached the place, there were a number of apostates preaching, but the substance of their discourses amounted to very little but lying and railing against the Authorities of the Church. We deemed it wisdom to leave them as beneath our notice, and went to another place, where the Lord had prepared a large number of attentive listeners.⁷

Also John Parry reported that some of the followers of James Strang, known as “Strangites,” had been visiting the Saints in North Wales.⁸

In his letter to President Daniel H. Wells, dated August 1, 1865, Elder Thomas P. Green gave a rather discouraging report of how the preaching was going in North Wales:

There has been a deal of preaching in North Wales, and many tracts have been distributed in the houses in Bagillt and other villages. We believe, however, that before much good can be done in this part of the country, the Lord will have to preach to the people by other means, because of the deep sleep that has fallen upon them. They are full of tradition and superstition, and it will require more than the simple testimony of the word to awaken them.⁹

On a more positive note Elder Green observed that there were a few brethren in his conference, the Denbighshire Conference, “who have been in the Church eighteen years and upwards, and were the first baptized in North Wales, and they are still faithful Saints today.” These were probably some of Abel Evans’s converts from his first mission.

Elias Morris, initially assigned to North Wales, then reassigned to labor in the south, expressed a level of enthusiasm for the work that was probably shared by the other recently arrived “Valley Elders.” Writing from Carmarthen after visiting the majority of the Saints in that conference he observed:

There is a feeling which prevails amongst many in this country, that all the honest-in-heart have been gathered into the Church here, and that it is of no use to preach to those outside of the Church, but simply to strive and save those who have embraced the Gospel. I do not believe in such doctrine as this, but, on the contrary, that there are many who will yet obey the truth if we are only united, and let our light shine before men.¹⁰

This sanguine attitude on the part of the newly arrived missionaries from Utah was viewed with great satisfaction by William D. Williams, president of the Welsh District. In his October 27, 1865, letter to Brigham Young, Jr., he was pleased to declare: “All things here at present appear to be moving along advantageously, eighty having been baptized in the last five months, and many more having given their names for baptism.”¹¹

District President

Because no missionary journal for Abel Evans has come to light, not much information is available concerning the specifics of his activities in South Wales from the time he first went there on assignment in early August 1865 until January 1866. Abel obviously made a favorable impression on his leader in Wales, William D. Williams, as he and John Parry were named as Williams’s counselors in the Welsh District Presidency on January 5, 1866, at a general council

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT.

ELDER

Abel Evans

BELOVED BROTHER,—

You are hereby appointed to take the general oversight and charge of the District comprising the *Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Swansea, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthen, Flintshire, Carmarvonshire, & Denbighshire* Conferences of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles.

It is your duty to watch over all the interests of the District committed to your charge, with paternal care; to see that the instructions given from time to time in the *Star* are faithfully executed among the Branches composing said Conferences; to set apart the most faithful and proper persons to teach and instruct the Saints; to call and ordain men to preach the Gospel, and open the same in new places; to see that no doctrines are taught but such as are authorized by the First Presidency, by the Revelations, and by the Presidency of the Church in the British Isles; to see that no immoral precepts and practices are allowed among the Saints, and that those who will not walk worthy of their holy profession, after faithful admonition and kind dealing with, are severed from the Church, that the Saints may increase in purity, and abound in the knowledge of God, through the gift of the Holy Spirit. You should make yourself familiar with the condition and circumstances of the Saints in your District, and see that they are not oppressed by the collection of Tithing or Donations. You will also counsel all who have means to tithe to pay Tithing, and minister to the wants of the Priesthood and Mission in their midst, and, as far as they can, deposit for their emigration. You should instruct the Elders in your District to be careful to look to the poor in their several fields of labour, and ever carry the blessings of their ministry to their abodes, that they may be comforted thereby, and that the Spirit may be increased that will call out every effort to promote the interests of Zion in the gathering of the poor and the redemption of the oppressed.

Letter of Appointment

In order to bring about so desirable a consummation, it will be necessary for you to counsel and instruct the Local Ministry under your charge in all matters which shall enable them to build up the Church in purity and power, exercising a constant supervisory regard and watchcare over them, seeing that their ministrations among the Saints are conducted so as not to become oppressive, but tending to the accomplishment of the great object of our labours—the salvation and gathering of the Saints to Zion.

Each Travelling Elder will receive a Letter of Appointment from the Presidency of the Church in the British Isles, and the Conference in which he is to labour will be specified. Should you at any time desire to remove him to another Conference within your District, you will please to signify the same to us, and a new Letter of Appointment will be forwarded. Whenever you appoint one of the Local Elders to travel, his name and the name of the Conference in which you wish him to labour must be submitted to us, and the Letter of Appointment will be forwarded to you.

Presidents of Conferences are not authorized to send out Elders to travel and preach, except by your direction, and subject to the above regulations.

We pray that the Spirit and power of God may rest mightily upon you, that you may be filled with the words of life, and that the counsels of the Holy One may be continually with you, that you may ever be prepared to administer salvation to the people.



{ Presidents of the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles
and adjacent countries,

42, ISLINGTON, LIVERPOOL,

January 30th 1866.

Letter of Appointment

held in Birmingham. In the *Millennial Star* is a brief synopsis of Abel's remarks made at the meeting:

Elder Abel Evans said he felt well in the work of God, and had never had any trouble in his feelings in regard to it. The greatest difficulty he had experienced was in trying to govern himself. He could not boast of a great deal of perfection, nor of a large amount of knowledge, yet he had learned that the greatest mystery of the kingdom was, do according to the counsel of the Priesthood, and you will constantly be in possession of the Spirit of God.¹²

Before the month was out Abel would be appointed to serve as president of the Welsh District. Normally such changes were made in the event of someone's emigration, but William D. Williams continued to serve as a missionary in Wales even following his release as district president until he sailed on the *John Bright* on April 30, 1866. Consequently, Williams was probably released at his own request, and since the leaders in Liverpool were not well acquainted with Abel Evans, it was probably at Williams's suggestion that Abel was named as his replacement.

Among the few personal effects of Abel Evans that have survived to the present day is his Letter of Appointment to "take the general oversight and charge of the District comprising the Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Swansea, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthen, Flintshire, Carnarvonshire, & Denbighshire Conferences of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles." The letter is dated January 30, 1866, and is signed by Brigham Young, Jr., who presided over the missionary effort at that time in the "British Isles and adjacent countries." Numerous responsibilities are specified in the letter, the first of which is as follows: "It is your duty to watch over all the interests of the District committed to your charge, with paternal care." Obedient

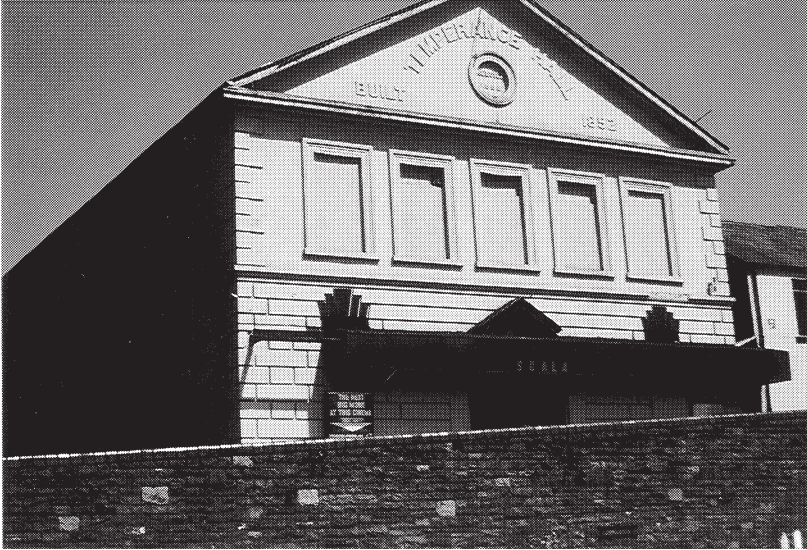
servant that he was, Abel Evans was relentless in carrying out this and all other duties as outlined in the rather lengthy letter.

A big part of a district president's life was to preside over conferences within his district. Twenty-five days following Abel's appointment as president of the Welsh District he was in Tredegar presiding over the Monmouthshire Conference. The remarks he made on that occasion were summarized by William E. Lewis, the clerk of the conference (now called district), and printed in the *Millennial Star*:

President Evans also gave many valuable instructions and exhortations to the Saints to seek after the truth, treasure it up in their hearts, and practice it in their lives, as eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither had it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that were in store for the faithful, who were living under the influence and direction of the holy Priesthood. He related a little of his own experience after he first embraced the Gospel, and said that he had received all the blessings that had been promised him before he joined the Church.¹³

The following month on March 25, 1866, Abel organized a district conference for all of Wales. Within the boundaries for this district were six conferences (or districts), each of which was to be represented by its president at the gathering in Merthyr Tydfil at the Temperance Hall.

In attendance also were Brigham Young, Jr., and Orson Pratt, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Such high-level visitors must have considerably increased the pressure the new district president already felt as he conducted the proceedings of the conference. Statistics were reported by each of the six conference presidents as follows: Glamorgan, 828 members; Swansea, 286; Carmarthenshire, 195;



Temperance Hall, Merthyr Tydfil

Pembrokeshire, 80; North Wales, 132; and Monmouthshire, 338—for a total of 1,859 members throughout Wales. Not all of these, of course, were active in the Church, but the percentage of activity did not constitute part of the report. Comments by the various speakers were summarized for the *Millennial Star*, including those made by Abel Evans:

Elder Abel Evans was called to address the meeting. He spoke of the unity of the Saints in the Valley. Said that there were people from eleven different nations in the settlement that he lived in, and he never saw any strife or discord in their midst, neither had they any trouble to get along, and the reason of their oneness was, because they had obeyed the same ordinances, partaken of the same influence, and drank [*sic*] of the same Spirit of the Gospel which leads those who obey it to see eye to eye in all things. Brother Evans repeated his remarks in Welsh.¹⁴

Another major responsibility of a district president in those days was to assist the members of his district in emigrating from Britain to strengthen the main body of the Church in America. So that Abel Evans would be official in every sense of the word in working in this capacity Brigham Young, Jr., appointed him "Passage Broker." The certificate reads as follows:

I, Brigham Young Jun^r, carrying on the business of Passage Broker, at Liverpool, do hereby nominate and appoint you, Abel Evans, 45, Union Terrace, Thomas Town, Merthyr Tydfil, in the County of Glamorgan, to act as my Agent, and on my behalf in the sale or letting of passages, and otherwise in the business of a Passage Broker, according to the provisions of the "Passenger Act, 1855."

The document is dated February 5, 1866, and is signed by Brigham Young, Jr., as well as by M. Bouchier, Commander,



45, Union Terrace, Merthyr Tydfil

Passenger Broker's
Agent's
Appointment

I, Brigham Young junr., carrying on the business of Passage
Broker, at Liverpool, do hereby nominate and appoint you, Abel
Evans, 45, Union Terrace, Thomas Town, Merthyr Tydfil, in the
County of Glamorgan, to act as my Agent, and on my behalf in
the sale or letting of passages, and otherwise in the business of a
Passage Broker, according to the provisions of the Passenger Act,
1855.

Brigham Young, J.
Liverpool, February 5th 1866.

W. Boucher { Commander, R. N. Chief-Emigration
- Officer, at the Port of Liverpool.

“R. N. Chief Emigration Officer, at the Port of Liverpool.” Abel began immediately to act in this new office by making arrangements for a number of Welsh emigrants to sail on the *John Bright*, a large ship that was scheduled to depart in April of that year. A total of 747 British Saints sailed from Liverpool on April 30, 1866, on board the *John Bright*. The Welsh constituted one-third of this number. There were 202 adults, 40 children, and 8 infants. Six of the adults were returning missionaries who had been laboring in Wales. Church leaders in Liverpool were rather disturbed at the lack of cooperation from many of those who had been scheduled to be part of this crossing, and a scathing rebuke appeared in the *Millennial Star* for May 12, 1866: “The notifications were sent out at the earliest practicable moment, but some of the Saints who received them were so indifferent to their own welfare, that they never intimated, by letter or otherwise, whether they would go in the *John Bright* or not, thus causing a loss to be sustained by this Office.”¹⁵ Another sad outcome of this particular crossing was the illness contracted by Abel Evans by “standing guard over night, while the Saints were embarking on board the ship.”¹⁶ Franklin D. Richards, later President of the British Mission, calculated that this illness was what led to Abel’s death six months later.

Last days

Barry Wride recorded in his journal that while in Merthyr Tydfil on April 2, 1866, he heard Abel Evans “deliver a lecture on the usages of the American Indians.”¹⁷ He also wrote that sometime during the month of June, Abel Evans “paid a visit to our District and accompanied us around the Branches with some profit counselling for about a week.”¹⁸

On July 22, 1866, a conference was held at Swansea with sessions at 11 o’clock, 2 o’clock, and 6 o’clock. Abel Evans had intended to take the train from Merthyr Tydfil in order

to be present at the various sessions. Elias Morris's journal entry for that day, however, indicates a mishap: "In the evening Pres^t A. Evans & Parry came in after been [sic] walking most part of the day on account of loosing the train at Merthyr."¹⁹ Perhaps to take advantage of the visit of Abel Evans, the next day a preaching meeting was held at which he spoke. And the following day, the 19th anniversary of the entrance of the pioneers into Salt Lake Valley, would not be forgotten for its significance:

We 7 Valley Elders took train to the Mumbles. We had a good bathing in the Sea. Returned at 5. in the evening to attend the Saints Tea Party at the Saints Hall. After Tea a first rate concert was held. After the concert A. Evans proposed to have a American Dance, so we had 4 sets, good feeling prevailed to the close, all went home rejoicing.²⁰

The next day Abel returned with John Parry, John D. Rees, and Barry Wride to Merthyr Tydfil.

Abel Evans was present on August 5, 1866, at a conference held in Victoria, about eleven miles east of Merthyr Tydfil. According to Elias Morris all "had a glorious time."²¹ Abel was also in attendance at a conference held at the Temperance Hall in Aberdare, about seven miles west of Merthyr Tydfil. Elders Orson Pratt and John W. Young were also there on the occasion. Barry Wride's brief report of the proceedings was printed in the *Millennial Star*. Regarding Abel Evans's remarks Elder Wride wrote: "Elder A. Evans followed [Orson Pratt] in Welsh on the same principle [authority to preach and administer in the things of God], translating in part brother Pratt's discourse, for the edification of those that did not understand the English language, after which the Conference closed."²² John Parry wrote in his journal concerning the conference: "On the Monday following, after walking over the Mountain the night of the conference,

we had a concert at Merthyr White Lion Room, in which O. Pratt occupied a little time in speaking. [James] Ure Received a piece of Eliza Snow's Poems. Had a very agreeable time of it."²³

Immediately following the conference at Aberdare, Abel Evans traveled to Birmingham to represent Wales at a British Mission conference held at the Oddfellows Hall on September 2, 1866. It was apparently soon after this time that Abel's strength began to fade. On October 2, 1866, he was in Swansea, where he had gone to work with Elder Elias Morris. Abel had intended to visit the various branches with Morris but was too ill. On October 4th, however, this entry appears in Morris's journal: "A. Evans and myself walked to Neath. Baptized a young man and a young woman."²⁴ Neath is about six miles east of Swansea. Here are the entries for the following three days: "5 [October] Walked to Morryston calling at Birch grove. 6 [October] Swansea visiting the Saints. 7 [October] Swansea Council reported 23 Baps [baptisms] in the 5 branches during the last month." No mention is made of Abel's illness, so one would assume that he accompanied Morris to Morryston, about two or three miles north of Swansea, and that he went with him to visit the Saints and to the council meeting. The entry for October 8th would suggest that all this activity had taken its toll: "Evans and myself preached. Bro. Evans left me to go Carmarthen. He complaint of been unwell."²⁵

That Abel went from Swansea to Carmarthen indicates that he intended to continue visiting the branches. Had he intended to take care of his illness he would have returned to his flat in Merthyr Tydfil at 2, Brecon Road. The town of Carmarthen is over twenty miles northwest of Swansea, but he probably did not have to walk that distance since train service was available. Despite feeling unwell Abel Evans continued to visit the branches in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire until the latter part of October.



2, Brecon Road, Merthyr Tydfil

John Parry recorded in his journal the last days of his friend and missionary colleague, Abel Evans:

In the laterend [sic] of October Abel Evans came home from the Above places, [Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen-shire], sick under a severe Cold.

11 [November 1866] Held our Counsel Meeting for merthyr District. My time this week was mostly spent with brother A. Evans, though he did not Desire it, as he did not want us to think that he was so sic as he realy was.*

18 Atended Aberdare Counsel Meeting. John D. Rees was with me in almost all the Counsels, as he was Traveling Elder

*Elias Morris's journal entries for 17 November: "Received a letter from Brother Parry stating that Pres^t A. Evans was very Sick, and desirous for me to go and visited him. Took the train in the evening, found Bro^f Evan very sick and not likely to get through it."²⁶

in the Con[ference]. Spent the week with A. Evans. He do not eat any except ~~thin~~ some water grewel mace with oat Meal, Yet he gets up every day, but do not want to see no one coming to see him, the Cough is getting worse all the time.

25 At Cardiff Counsel. Came back immediately, as I was counseled by Apostle O. Pratt to communicate with the Liverpool Office every day or tow [two]. The Elders O. Pratt, F. D. Richards and J. W. Young, by letters, offered their service in any way or shape, or money if Needed, but A. Evans did not feel that he wanted any thing. As he expected to get better all the time, And felt angry if anyone would insinuate any but that he would recover. Elias Morris was with J. D. Rees and Myself for a day or two nursing him.

30 To day A. Evans desired me to write to his Famaly to informe them (At his home in Lehi City Utah Territory) that he was sic of a severe cold, but that he would soon be able to write to them himself, &c. A few days ago A. Evans had a vision, stateing that he was to die, by a Personage, but he said that he did not believe that it was from the Lord, but that it was a Lieing spirit, &c. This day I was much impressed to call for a Doctor (for the Law would bring trouble upon us, if he should hapen to depart this life withoute a Doctor to examin a Person), after the Doctor examined him to told me that he could not live above 24 hours, this was aboute 4 o'Clock. And soon after seven o'Clock Abel Evans Departed in peace. He did not feel painful, and was very sensitive to the last, and did not manifest any thing that he was going to die. John D. Rees, Joseph Lawson and myself was presant.

On the First of December I Talegraphed to O. Pratt, Liverpool, and received an answer for me to Make a respectable burial for him, which I did.

3 Monday, F. D. Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve and Elder J. W. Young Came from Liverpool and brought a Temple robe for him, &c.

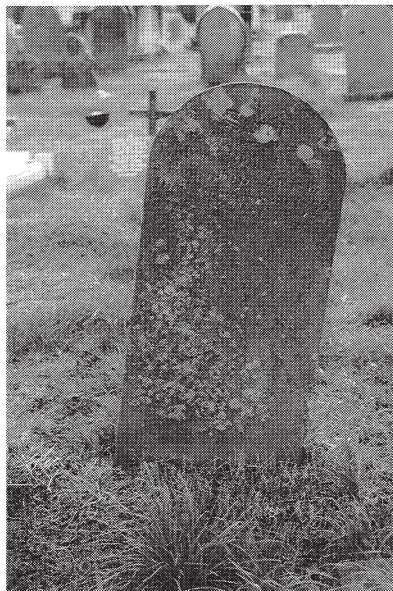
4 Tuesday we buried him in the New Sumetary at Cefn, belonging to Merthyr Tydvil.²⁷

Elias Morris wrote in his journal a few additional details concerning the death and burial of Abel Evans:

Dec 1st Rec^d a letter from Bro. J. Parry stating that Bro. Evans was still worse and anxious for me to go to see him; left for Merthyr; on my Arrival found that Bro. Evans had departed this life on Friday the 30th at 10 minites past 7 in the in the [sic] evening at 2, Brecon Road.

2 Sunday Attended Meetings at Merthyr Branch.

3 Pres^t F. D. Richard and John W. Young Arr^d [arrived] from L'pool to Assist in the funeral. We dressed the corps in full temple dress. Burried at Merthyr New Cemetery at 3 o'clock Tuesday the 4th. A grave stone was purchased for him which cost three pounds with the following inscribion:



Headstone, Cefncoedycymer Cemetery

“Sacred to the memory of Elder Abel Evans. Born June 24, 1813. Died November 30, 1866. Whoso looseth his life for my sake and the gospel shall find it again.”²⁸

Obituary by Franklin D. Richards

The day following the funeral Franklin D. Richards, president of the British Mission, while staying at #2, Brecon Road, wrote a letter to Orson Pratt about the death and burial of Abel Evans. The text of the letter, printed in the *Millennial Star* as an obituary for the departed Elder Evans, is as follows:

Dear Brother—It becomes our painful duty to record the departure of another faithful minister of the Gospel, Elder Abel Evans, late President of the Welsh District, who departed this life on Friday, November 30th, at about ten minutes past 7, P.M., of consumption. His first illness was contracted by standing guard over night, while the Saints were embarking on board the ship *John Bright*, at Liverpool, on or about the 1st of May last. He struggled against this cough and cold with apparent success, until some time in September last, while attending conference in Birmingham, he got wet, which renewed the cold and coughing upon him.* His indomitable energy and courage would not allow him to yield before the influence of the destroyer, and he continued to travel and preach, out of doors and in, until he became too weak to stand, still unwilling that his afflictions should be even referred to by his friends, which was the reason that

*Just after his getting wet at Birmingham, during the second week of October, while travelling in the Carmarthen Conference, he slept in a damp place, which fastened his cold and confirmed his cough upon him, from which time, he rapidly grew worse, until his death. This was the immediate cause of his death, added to former exposures. [This note appears in original text.]

we had no correct information of his real condition, until hearing incidentally of his inability to be about. He gave us the facts in answer to our letter of particular inquiry, which reached us only within a week of his decease. At this time he was only able to be dressed daily, but not to sit up even for this. It is deeply to be regretted that we could not have known of his affliction in time, that means or changes in circumstances might have been employed to mitigate the severity of his complaint at least, if not permitted to prevail for his recovery. From the time of his confinement to the house, all that the country could afford, or that could be derived from the faithful attention and administration of affectionate saints, was bestowed.

Elder Evans has been a faithful pioneer of the Gospel into almost every part of the Principality. He was born June 24th, 1813, in the village of Llanboidy, county of Carmarthen, South Wales,—was baptized on or about the 1st of March, 1844, we are unable to state by whom; but he appears to have been the fruit of Elder William Henshaw's labors, who commenced the work here shortly before Elder Dan Jones' arrival in the Principality. On the arrival of Brother Jones, Brother Evans engaged with fresh ardor in the ministry, travelling and opening up Branches, that have grown to Conferences; indeed, his name has become like household words among all the Welsh Saints. But a few days before he died, he told Elder John Parry that he had baptized over seven hundred souls into the Church, in Merthyr alone, and Elders Morris and Wride say, that he had recorded more than two thousand that he had baptized in Wales, before he emigrated to Zion. He was an able minister of the Holy Ghost, and the Lord wrought many miracles, among this people, through his instrumentality, healing many of their maladies, among others, several cases of cancer and cholera. Brother Evans emigrated in 1850, and was first married during this journey; I think at St. Louis. Staid [sic] at Council Point two years, and

was there chosen High Counsellor. In 1852, removed to Utah, in the company of Captain Morgan, and was chosen Captain of the Guard; located in Lehi, Utah county, where he was chosen Captain of Militia, Marshal of the City, Deputy Sheriff of the county, and Counsellor to Bishop David Evans, in which offices he continued to act, until April Conference of 1865, when he was called on his last mission to his native country. He arrived in Liverpool on the 28th of July, and labored as Travelling Elder in Wales, until soon after the Birmingham Council of January last, he was appointed President of the Welsh District, where he labored with increasing diligence so long as the powers of life were continued to him. Elders John Parry and John D. Rees were his faithful attendants, at the residence of brother Thomas James. The deep and abiding affection which he had won in the hearts of all the Saints around, secured for him more of kindly consideration, and tender manifestation than he could accept. He was strong and unshaken to the hour of his death, that he should recover, and rebuked those who manifested any doubt. So great was his confidence of recovery, that it was not until the day of his decease, that he consented for brother Parry to write to his family in Utah, to inform them that he was sick of a cold, but that he expected to be well in a few days, and would write them himself. He did not seem to realize that he was very ill, and had no idea that he was dangerous; nor did he complain of any disease or pain, except the inconvenience and weariness of the cough. He died with the utmost quietude, as a person falling asleep. I assisted Elders J. W. Young, Parry, Morris, Rees, and Davies, to lay his body out, just as he and his family would wish to have it done, if they could have been present to direct; and by request, I spoke to those at the funeral, according to the measure of the Spirit given to me. All was conducted with great respect throughout, and only for the very stormy weather, a very numerous company would have been present.

The funeral was on Tuesday the 4th inst., at 3 o'clock P.M. Several of the American Elders were present, namely, John W. Young, John Parry, John Reese, Elias Morris, Richard J. Davies, Joseph Lawson, and myself. F. D. Richards.²⁹

As with many obituaries the foregoing has a few factual errors, but on the whole it is a remarkably accurate and very sensitive account of Abel Evans's life. Although the month of his birth is correct in the obituary the day and year are in error. The date Abel gave to the recorder when he paid his first visit to the Endowment House on the occasion of his sealing to Mary and Martha was June 17, 1812, and that has become the date generally accepted among his descendants. The date of his baptism was February 10, 1844, and the ordinance was performed by William Henshaw, just as Elder Richards calculated. As for Abel's reported declaration to his missionary companions that he baptized seven hundred people into the Church in Merthyr Tydfil alone and more than two thousand in Wales before he emigrated in 1850, it may have been a misunderstanding on the parts of John Parry, Elias Morris, and Barry Wride. Only eighty-nine persons are recorded as having been baptized in the Merthyr Tydfil area before Abel's conversion to Mormonism. Following his baptism there is no doubt that he was involved in proselyting activities, as all new converts were encouraged to spread the good news of the gospel to their relatives, friends, and neighbors. But to what extent he contributed to the acquisition of new adepts is difficult to assess, given the paucity of extant records. When he was sent by Captain Dan Jones in the early part of 1846 to begin his missionary labors in North Wales the total number of converts in all of Wales was about six hundred. Abel Evans probably played a role in some, perhaps many of these. But he was only one of a number of missionaries—a respectable number of part-time preachers and perhaps a half dozen or so elders who devoted

their full energies to the cause. During his four years in North Wales well over three hundred converts were reported; and in this case Abel Evans may well have been responsible for a sizeable percentage of the new members since only a handful of proselyters were in and around the counties of the North from 1846 through 1849.

Afterwards

John Parry wrote in his journal that on December 14, 1866, he wrote a letter to Abel Evans's family. That letter has not been found, but one by John Parry to "Sister Evans" dated January 20, 1867, is extant. The text is as follows:

Dear Sister Evans. Doubtless you would like to know something more respecting the property of your late beloved Husband, Abel Evans. I wrote a letter to you (by his request) the morning of the day he departed with us, informing you of his illness, &c. Also one two days after we buried him, by the request of President O. Pratt informing you of his death and Burial. Hoping you have received the above letters, though they contained the unpleasant news, of the death of our beloved brother, in which i did sympathise Much with you as a Famaly, Though you could not do any better with him if he was at home with you, or you here with him, As he was attended to as well as if he was the richest man in the country in regard to Nurshing. I did atend him more than I was able, as I have been very low and has took me a month and more to recover. Also John D. Rees, Boxelder, was here with me, and some times other Brothren, Elias Morris and others. And we were counseled by B^{rs} O. Pratt & F. D. Richards & J. W. Young not to spare any expence in makeing him comfortable, which we did not. He would not have any women to atend him. His sister came to see him twice, she had a comand by her Mother the first time to come and see him, in

a dream, she lives about 4 miles from here. He never onest [once] said that he felt sick, nor felt any pain while he was Ill. The last words he said was that he did not know what was the mater with him, as he could not get his breath as usial, and in a phew minits he departed. He did not think to the last minit that he was going to die. All the greavance that he had in his sickness was that he could not sleep, on account of the cough that he had. I told you in my last conserning the Funeral. Br. O. Pratt told me to be carefull with his Cloths, etc., which I do. They are here, they shall be sent to you, as I shall send them to Liverpool to the Office. Now I shall tell you what they are, 1 Top Coat (grea coular), 2 Black Coats, 2 Pants, one Black & one Grea, 1 Black vest, and an old one he he [had] but I can not find it yet, 2 Shurts and some fronts, or (Cheats), 2 Flanel Shurts, one Pair of Boots & stockins and some colars, neck ties, gloves. His sister did ask me for ~~his~~ something to her boy, I did give her his Umbarelo to her, it was much wore by him, and I did give his hat to (that is his stove pipe) her son; else everything is here that belonged to him. His Watch is here, an old one, and a Gold ring, and some money. Most part of the money was got for him to get a New Watch, which he intended to do, and the money in all are £14, 13, 0 [14 pounds, 13 shillings, 0 pence], much of which went to bury him, but I will refund them as soon as I can, and I will buy a box to put his cloths with a portion of them, and I will send them to the care of the Presidency in Liverpool. He had a great desire to bring his sister and Famaly with him of [off?], when he would return, and she was enquireing if he had anything. I told her that he had and that I was going to send everything to you. She would be glad if she could borough the money to help her & husband, son, & daughter to Emigrat in 1868. The above is as corect statement as I can make, and if you wish me to do something different Pleas to send me a letter to that effect, and I shall be happy to do any kindness that be in my power.

Praying the Lord to bless and comfort you, I remain your brother in the Gospel, John Parry.³⁰

In his *History of Lehi*, Hamilton Gardner comments on the effect the news of Abel Evans's death had on the residents of Lehi: "A month afterwards [after 30 November 1866], when the sad news reached Lehi, it cast a feeling of gloom over the entire community. Abel Evans had been a man of exceptional worth to the people of Lehi, because of his integrity, uprightness, and devotion to duty."³¹ Mary, Martha, and Jane may well have begun the year of 1867 with fond hopes of their husband's return in the fall—some missions were just two years. What a devastating turn it was to be informed shortly after New Year's Day in the dead of winter that all hope was gone, that he would never see them or their children again in this life. Now, instead of the temporary "getting by" or "making do" until Abel returned, the three widows were faced with a far more permanent challenge of survival on their small patch of the Utah desert. Crops had to be raised, and nine children had to be reared. Somehow they managed to cope and complete the tasks.

Although Abel's spirit was strong and vibrant to the last, the body of this "indefatigable veteran" was worn down by the unrelenting illness that finally claimed him. He had consistently responded eagerly and voluntarily to all calls to serve in the Kingdom from the time of his conversion in 1844. Now at age fifty-four he would respond, albeit unwillingly, to the great and final call. At his passing he left but a very meager estate to be inherited by his widows and children. However, the legacy he left of unyielding allegiance to all that is good and godly in this life would prove to be of far greater worth than anything of a material nature. His descendants have every reason to take enormous pride in his memory.



*Five children of Abel and Mary Evans:
l to r: William Samuel Evans, Catherine Jones Evans, Abel John Evans,
Sarah Jones Evans, Hyrum Jones Evans*



*Four daughters of Abel Evans:
l to r: Catherine Jones Evans, Sarah Jones Evans, Mary Jones Evans,
Martha Morgan Evans*



Edward Morgan Evans



Martha Morgan Evans



Isaac Chilton



Charles Phillips

APPENDIX A

MARY JONES

We trace the roots of Mary Jones, first wife of Abel Evans, back to the little village of Llangynnog (church of the debtor), Carmarthenshire. Her father, John Jones, and her mother, Elizabeth Thomas Jones, were both born in this village and were married by the Anglican vicar on December 29, 1815. John and Elizabeth had both been christened in the Anglican church, as were their six children: Anne, Thomas, John, William, Mary, and Sarah.

John provided for his family by working as a “victualer,” suggesting that he operated a tavern or an inn. His wife bore him their first child, Anne, on a farm called Gorsgoch (red juniper) in Llangynnog. The other five children were born at a place called Pantyddwygraig (marsh by the two rocks), a piece of ground owned by George Bowen, Esquire.¹ Their fifth child, Mary, was born August 1, 1827.

Among the many visitors to Pantyddwygraig were two Mormon missionaries who called in the mid-1840s and received permission to hold a meeting there. Mary, presumably in her teens at the time, did not attend the meeting but was listening from a place in the house where she could not be seen by the others. At some point in the meeting one of the missionaries spoke in tongues, after which the other interpreted. The interpretation was that someone was listening to them that night whom they could neither see nor hear who would join the LDS church and

remain a faithful member forever after. It was made known to Mary that she was that person, a realization that left her trembling with fear. The next morning everyone was conjecturing who the person might be that the missionaries had mentioned. Some thought it might be someone from another world while others supposed it to be an unborn child. Mary was the only one who knew the identity of the person, but she did not say anything at that time.²

Mary's other family members did not accept the message of Mormonism and were hostile toward her when she finally announced her intention to be baptized by the missionaries. Hostility was the greeting most often received by the Mormons in mid-nineteenth-century Wales. One example of such animosity in the Llangynnog area was reported in *Udgon Seion*, a periodical published especially for Welsh Mormons:

On the 1st of last October [1848], in Wern, near Ebenezer, Llangynnog, two Saints from Carmarthen by the names of David Lewis and Isaac Jones, were preaching outside at about four o'clock and within a few feet of the road. The same Sunday afternoon, Mr. John Williams, son of Mr. Williams, Ebenezer, was preaching in a nearby farm, which is called Castellygarthen; and after finishing, a group of people started from there along toward Ebenezer, singing hymns, until they came to the meeting of the Saints when they lost the tune by being overly jealous of the Saints, one of whom was halfway through his sermon at the time. Those who were listening at the meeting of the Saints said that the expressions of those believers were very hateful as they passed, and that several of them accompanied their brethren past the Saints just to enjoy the disturbance and increase the insult, and they turned back to listen from afar. It is worthy of notice also that on one occasion the Saints obtained permission to preach by the end of the blacksmith's shop there, and the blacksmith was bothered so much by the Baptists until he agreed to deny them the place; after that the Saints moved the place of their meeting about three yards from the end of the smithy, where the land is of common ownership. After the Baptists had failed in that, they decided to try to forestall them by coming there to sing hymns!³

Whether Mary was in attendance at this particular meeting cannot be determined. It is safe to say, however, that she attended similar meetings and was the recipient of similar reactions from her neighbors. A story about her defense of Mormonism while still in Wales has been handed down through the family. Apparently she happened by when some young boys were throwing rocks at the Mormons during a meeting. She reacted by gathering some rocks and horse manure in her apron, whereupon she ran after the boys throwing the objects at them.

Probably out of deference to her parents' wishes Mary waited for several months, perhaps even a few years, before descending into the waters of baptism, an immersion that would dramatically alter the direction of her life. In August 1849 she rejected all entreaties from family and friends and was baptized by Thomas Edwards. Elder Henry Jones performed the confirmation afterwards. Mary was twenty-two years old at this point and was of legal age to make her own choices. Family tradition has it that two of her brothers were ministers of another religion; and although they believed the message of Mormonism, they declined to join since there was no money to be had in preaching with the Mormons.

Six months following her baptism Mary was on board the *Josiah Bradlee* going toward Zion, which according to her new religion was in the Rocky Mountains in a place known as Utah Territory. How she managed to pay for her passage is a fair question. Is it doubtful her disappointed parents would volunteer to give her the money to turn her back on them and her country forever. In those days before the Perpetual Emigrating Fund was instituted a young, single female without family support had only one possibility of getting sufficient resources with which to emigrate—help from some other passengers in exchange for her assistance with those persons' children. And in Mary's case those persons appear to have been Thomas and Ann Morris, members of the Church who had an infant daughter, Jennett, and who planned to emigrate on the *Josiah Bradlee* in February of 1850. Ann's brother William Morgan had gone with the first company of Welsh Mormons on the *Buena Vista* in February of 1849 and was then presiding over the Welsh branch of the Church in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

As Mary was bidding farewell to her family, her mother made a tearful plea for her not to go. Mary responded by asking her mother for a lock of her hair to remember her by. Her mother's response was bitter: "No, if you have got to go to destruction you're not taking my hair with you." Mary's rejection by her family was far from unique. Many converts to Mormonism in Wales were even disowned and disinherited by their families. Such hostility was offset by the kindness of their newfound friends in the gospel of Jesus Christ, friends that often served as a kind of surrogate family.

While in Liverpool, Mary stayed in the still-standing Music Hall along with the others waiting to board the *Josiah Bradlee*. One of the approximately ninety Welsh passengers who noticed her with special interest was Elder Abel Evans, well known in Wales for his six years of missionary service following his conversion and now a counselor to Elder Thomas Day, president of the crossing. Although fifteen years his junior, Mary received Abel's interest with some warmth, at least enough to kindle a relationship that led to their marriage after arriving in America. The courtship was carried forth in the midst of 260 benign and probably somewhat amused observers on the ship. Abel and Mary could take some comfort, however, that theirs was not the only show on ship; several marriages resulted from relationships formed during the crossing. (See chapter eight for an account of the crossing, also for the courtship and marriage of Abel and Mary.)

For lack of funds, Abel and Mary could not continue on to the Salt Lake Valley the same year as their arrival. Thus they settled in Council Bluffs, Iowa, until they could get enough money to purchase a "fitout" in which they would make the thousand-mile trek across the plains to join with the rest of the Saints in Utah. During their two years in Council Bluffs, Mary gave birth to their first child, Elizabeth Ann, born February 10, 1851. The little girl lived only ten months; she died fifteen days before Christmas of that year. Six months later Abel and Mary gathered up their meager possessions and with hearts still heavy at their loss continued their journey westward. "Their team consisted of one yoke of cattle, one cow and a two-year-old heifer," according to the brief biography of Mary Jones Evans in Hamilton Gardner's *History of*

Lehi.⁴ Descendants of Abel John Evans, the second child of Abel and Mary, say that he crossed the plains in a “special carrying case”—his mother’s womb. Mary was about three months pregnant when the journey began on June 22, 1852. They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley one hundred days later on September 30th.

Although originally called by Brigham Young to settle in southern Utah, Abel and Mary ended up staying in the newly formed community of Lehi in Utah Valley, this at the insistence of Bishop David Evans. It is possible that Mary would like to have settled in a place where other speakers of her native tongue resided. In Salt Lake City there was even a Welsh branch in which Welsh was spoken at the meetings. While journeying from her native land she was surrounded by speakers of Welsh on the ship, and during her two years in Council Bluffs she was able to attend church meetings in Welsh. But now in Lehi, Mary was faced with an English-speaking environment and would have to work diligently to develop fluency in her new tongue.

Mary gave birth to seven more children in Lehi:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Abel John Evans | December 20, 1852 |
| 2. William Samuel Evans | February 1, 1855 |
| 3. Evan Jones Evans | February 18, 1857 |
| 4. Mary Jones Evans | October 27, 1858 |
| 5. Sarah Jones Evans | November 3, 1860 |
| 6. Catherine Jones Evans | November 2, 1862 |
| 7. Hyrum Jones Evans | December 1, 1864 |

Following the birth of William Samuel Evans in early 1855 Mary was faced with a new and probably unexpected challenge—unexpected, that is, until she first heard about the principle of plural marriage. The LDS church officials first made public announcement of their belief in and their practice of plural marriage in August 1852, but Mary had no doubt heard of this doctrine earlier. Some converts lost their faith when confronted with the challenge of accepting something so foreign to anything they had ever believed. But Mary gave her consent and her blessing to Abel when he disclosed his intention of bringing a sister-wife into their lives. As a high priest and a member of the Lehi Ward bishopric he may have even been counseled to do so by higher authority.

According to family tradition Abel presented Mary with the opportunity of helping him choose between two single women in the ward whom he had considered as possibilities for this new arrangement. After determining which of the two Abel preferred, Mary allegedly chose the other—presumably so that Mary’s chances of continuing as the favored wife would be enhanced. Thus she bundled up two-year-old Abel John and five-week-old William Samuel and traveled in the cold March weather of 1855 with Abel and his new bride-to-be to the newly constructed Endowment House in Salt Lake City. And at 9:30 A.M. on Saturday morning the 10th of March, 1855, Mary knelt across the altar from Abel and was sealed to him “for time and for all eternity,” according to the Mormon practice of eternal marriage. Daniel James performed the ceremony. Mary had practically no time to savor the moment, one so precious to all practicing Mormons, before she was obliged to observe silently while Brother James performed the exact same ceremony for her husband and Martha Morgan, a thirty-one-year old convert from Llansawel, Carmarthenshire.

This was not an easy step for either Mary or Martha. They both faced the prospect of sharing not only the same husband but the same house as well. And it was not a large house where each could have separate accommodations. But somehow each was able to cope with this new situation, and they lived under the same roof for the next nineteen years. A division of responsibilities was determined, and they were both pleased, no doubt, to share in addition to all else the same native language and the same devotion to the gospel. Something else they shared was their sixty-six-year-old father-in-law, Samuel Evans, who also lived in what must have seemed to them a severely cramped house.

This first visit to the Endowment House preceded its dedication which took place on May 5, 1855; consequently, they were not able to receive their endowments prior to their sealings. Thus they returned to the Endowment House in September of the same year to receive this additional ordinance work. And while they were there the sealing ceremonies were again performed, this time by President Heber C. Kimball. The date was Tuesday, September 18, 1855. Martha was six months pregnant.

Mary probably helped in the delivery of little Margret Martha Evans, born to Martha nine days before the Christmas of 1855. And Martha, whose parents had both died before she joined the Church in 1850 and whose only sister still lived in Wales, was probably grateful to have Mary comfort her when little Margret died a few months later. Of the six children Martha bore to Abel Evans only two lived to maturity.

Six years after Mary gave her consent for Abel to marry Martha Morgan, she was again approached by her husband with a similar request. This time he intended to marry twenty-four-year-old Jane Davis. Permission for this second sister-wife was also granted, and Mary was obliged to receive yet one more person into her home following the marriage of Abel and Jane on May 4, 1861. By this time her father-in-law had remarried and lived in a separate house. But Mary also had two more children of her own, Mary and Sarah, for a total of four. Martha had one child, Edward, and was expecting another in a fortnight. With the arrival of Martha's new baby and the new sister-wife there were now ten people under the same roof.

The Church had demanded a great deal of Mary Jones Evans. First she had been required to turn her back on her family in Wales to align herself with a new religion; then she had to brave a five-week ocean crossing, followed by one hundred days crossing the plains of western America; then after carving out an existence in an obscure settlement in the middle of nowhere she had to share her husband and her house with two other women. What else could the Church possibly want of her? Ah yes, the Church wanted her husband to return to Wales for two or three years while his wives fended for themselves in their spartan existence on the small farm in Lehi. But this was not a choice—it was a calling. And a faithful member could say only “yes” to a calling. However, with the help of a concerned Heavenly Father and a benevolent bishop, Mary knew that they would somehow survive. So it was that Mary bade farewell to her husband and the father of her six surviving children (little Evan had died in April 1857 at the age of just two months) in the spring of 1865. Her oldest was now twelve, and her youngest was just five months old. Martha had a six-year-old son and a four-year-old daughter. Jane had lost

one child and would give birth to another, a little girl, six months later.

If bidding farewell to Abel was difficult, receiving news of his death eighteen months later must have been absolutely devastating. No longer could Mary count the days until his return. Never again in this life would she feel his arms around her to give her comfort and encouragement. Never again would she hear his voice or see his face. Now she was expected to carry on in a new role—that of widow.

Mary, Martha, and Jane appear in the 1870 Utah Census as still living under the same roof. Somehow they had survived and had been able to provide for themselves and their nine children. Mary had carried on with the farming and outside tasks; Martha had worked mainly in the house and with the children; Jane's health was quite fragile, so she did the sewing and the handwork. During this time one of the local Indians observed Mary and thought she would make a good squaw. He showed up with two horses wanting to make a trade, and Mary told him to leave. But he later returned with five horses, the limit that anyone of his culture was willing to pay for a good, sturdy wife. Martha and Jane volunteered to go for help, but Mary reportedly said, "I don't need any help." She then picked up a singletree and started toward the Indian. He finally got the message and beat a hasty retreat, never again to return.

Mary's youngest child, Hyrum, and Jane's little girl, Janie, were just a year apart in age. On one occasion they dressed up in their mothers' clothes and began playing with fire. The clothes caught on fire and burned, but the children were uninjured. Years later Hyrum told his daughter Lillian that his mother was ready to give him a "really good spanking," which she knew how to do very well. But Jane intervened: "No, don't spank him, because if you do I'll have to give Janie a spanking, and I don't want to. These children are going to feel bad enough when they see we can't both go to church. Because we have only one set of Sunday clothes between us we can go to church only every other Sunday, and that's going to make them feel bad." Hyrum was spared the spanking, but he later said that he wished he had received the physical punishment instead of being reminded every Sunday for some time that it was his fault that either his mother or his "Aunt" Jane had

to stay home and miss church. Samuel's wife, Selina, objected to the way Mary dealt with Hyrum. She was heard to say, "I don't like the way you're treating Hyrum. I'll see Abel before you do, and I'm going to tell him on you."

Sometime in the early 1870s Jane's fragile health failed her. Her major concern about dying was that she would be unable to complete the task of rearing her daughter, Janie. Mary comforted her and said that she would keep Janie as one of her own and see that she received a good upbringing.

One of Mary's worries was about her father-in-law. She did not know how she would get him in a casket when he died, as he was so bent over. But when he died he straightened right up, so the problem was solved.

Porter Rockwell was a friend of the Evanses in Lehi. When he went through on business periodically, he would stop to have a meal and have his horses cared for. Apparently Mary ran some kind of a livery stable and possibly a boardinghouse following Abel's death. Hyrum recalls on one occasion he was with some of his boyhood friends when he saw Porter Rockwell come into town. Everyone except Hyrum ran for cover. Hyrum had seen Rockwell visit his farm and knew he was harmless, so he just stood where he was. Rockwell with his long hair went right up to Hyrum, cracked his whip and said, "I'll stir the cream in your coffee." Hyrum was so frightened that he jumped into the river, hurried to the other side, and ran all the way home. After that whenever Porter Rockwell visited the Evans farm Hyrum would hide behind his mother's skirts. When his mother asked him why he did that he replied, "I'm scared of Porter Rockwell." But his mother assured him that Porter Rockwell would never harm a child of hers. Rockwell had high regard for Mary and called her his "little, black wench," apparently a reference to her long, black hair.

When Hyrum was about five years old he became extremely ill and was running a fever so hot that it would burn the hand of anyone who touched him. Mary, Martha, and Jane did not see how he would live through the night. But the next morning he was completely well. He said that his father and another man had come to him during the night. He told how they had poured oil on his head and had placed their hands on his head and given him a

blessing. Although he had never seen a picture of his father, he was able to describe him perfectly. The three widows took comfort in knowing that their husband was not so far away after all.

The proposal Mary received from the Indian with the horses was not the only chance she had to remarry after Abel's death. A man in Lehi by the name of Isaac Chilton had taken an interest in her. Isaac had come over from Wales in 1860 with his wife Ann and their three young daughters, Ellen, Phoebe, and Martha. Isaac was left a widower in 1863 when Ann died in childbirth; the baby died also. A few months later Isaac married Elizabeth Pearce from Monmouthshire, and they had five children: Jane, Mary, Sarah, Margaret, and John. In March 1878, Elizabeth and her baby died in childbirth. Isaac had approached Mary about becoming his wife while Elizabeth was still alive, but Mary told him she was not interested in being his plural wife. Eight months after Elizabeth's death, however, Isaac and Mary were married. When these two families were joined, Mary's unmarried children were twenty-year-old Mary, sixteen-year-old Catherine, fourteen-year-old Hyrum, and thirteen-year-old Janie (Jane's daughter). Isaac's three daughters by his first marriage were then ages twenty-five, twenty-four, and twenty; it is unclear whether any of them were still at home. All five children by his second marriage, however, were still at home: fourteen-year-old Jane, eleven-year-old Mary, nine-year-old Sarah, seven-year-old Margaret, and three-year-old John. Thus at age fifty-one Mary Jones Evans Chilton assumed the task of rearing one more teenager and four pre-teens in addition to completing the task with two of her own teenagers and Jane's daughter, Janie. One has to admire Mary for her willingness to subject herself to such a daunting task. One also has to wonder what may have been her motivation. Was it love for Isaac Chilton? Was she tired of being alone after twelve years of widowhood? Was she weary of being the head of a household? Did she feel compassion for Isaac's motherless children? Perhaps it was a combination of all the foregoing. Only Mary could tell us. During her life Mary played an important role in the rearing of fourteen children: her own six, Janie, Isaac's five, and Martha's two.

In the 1913 *History of Lehi* is this comment: "Although she had the care of raising her family, she was never known to

complain and was always cheerful.”⁵ Her descendants and the descendants of the other children she had a hand in rearing can look to Mary with a great deal of gratitude for her fine example and relentless efforts. She died on April 3, 1895, and was buried in the Lehi Cemetery.

APPENDIX B

MARTHA MORGAN

Martha Morgan was the younger of the two daughters born to David Morgan and Margaret Evans Morgan. She made her appearance in this life on August 21, 1823, in the small village of Llansawel, Carmarthenshire, in the southwestern part of Wales. Her older sister, Margaret, was four years her senior.

David Morgan, also born in Llansawel, was nearly forty years old when his daughter Martha was born. He died when she was just three weeks short of her eighth birthday in 1831. It was sometime after this that Martha's mother took her two daughters and moved back to the twenty-two-acre Bwlchnewydd (new pass/gap) farm where her family lived. And it was here, apparently, where Martha grew up.

On March 19, 1848, when Martha was twenty-four years old her mother died. She and her sister, both still single, continued to live at Bwlchnewydd. In October of that year her sister Margaret married Rees Powell, a young shoemaker from Llandeilo. The Mormon missionaries were preaching in the Llansawel area at that time, and strong new branches were being built up in Llanybydder, eight miles to the northwest, and in Brechfa, seven miles to the southwest. In March 1850 Margaret became the first of the three to accept baptism. She was followed by her husband a month later. Then in July of that year Martha was baptized by William Jones and confirmed by William Thomas. Her residence given in the branch records is Pen y Bank, so perhaps she had

moved from Bwlchnewydd and had obtained employment at some other farm in the area.¹

Martha was still single when she converted to Mormonism, which would suggest that either there were no suitors to her liking or that there were simply no suitors. Becoming a Mormon narrowed the field even further, as she was probably hoping to marry within her new religion. By the time she was thirty years old she had made arrangements to emigrate and join with the main body of the Latter-day Saints in Utah. On February 4, 1854, Martha sailed from Liverpool on the *Golconda*, a three-master built in Canada that measured 171' x 33' x 22' and weighed 1,124 tons. Captain Dan Jones, now back in Wales and once again presiding over the LDS church in Wales, accompanied the emigrants from South Wales to Liverpool. He described their departure in this account that appeared in *Udgorrn Seion*, the successor to *Prophwyd y Jubili*:

Two hundred and sixty-four Welsh Saints sailed from Liverpool on board the ship *Golconda*, Thursday, the 2nd of this month [February], bound for New Orleans. They anchored in sight of this port until Saturday morning, the 5th [sic], when they spread their large sails to the east wind which snatched them quickly from our sight to the western ocean. We are pleased to say that the behavior of the entire company on the way here, and in Liverpool, was remarkably polite, correct, loving, and pious—without exception. We had the pleasure of taking them and their goods to the ship easily, punctually and safely—of settling them in their places there and of giving them instructions while there to enjoy everything they desired for the voyage. We are proud to say that we did not hear a cross word between any of them—nor did we see a frown on the face of anyone on the ship, and we cannot give more praise to the dear sisters than they deserve because of their unceasing patience and unfailing zeal under every circumstance. We saw nothing except unity and cooperation without exception for everything that was attempted. While we were on the ship on the river until just before sailing, it was a pleasure to be in their midst and see their cheerfulness; we failed to get one, despite earnest persuading, to turn back to Wales with us; their response was to

pity our loss of not being able to go with them; and it was easy to understand that those were their feelings. When we returned to the shore for the last time, the scene defies description, the bidding of farewells, the shaking of hands and the greetings conveyed to relatives and friends, the shedding of tears of kindness; and as the steamboat chugged deliberately away, they all stretched for the last view; all their hats and their handkerchiefs were flags which they waved over their heads; their dear voices and their musical instruments all sank into the yonder depth that was between us. Let our constant prayer be that God their Father drop from his fist a fair and lovely eastern wind behind them until they arrive at the desired port.

Besides the above number of Welsh Saints, almost as many Saints from England are on board, all under the presidency of Dorris P. Curtis, an intelligent, experienced, and godly man; his counselors are Elders Squires and Elder W. S. Phillips, our former president from Wales. Also in the company were several other presidents and faithful servants of God, some whose names will be remembered long and sweetly and thankfully for the good they did to many. The fruit of a man's labor that remains is the best wealth he can leave behind as a remembrance to his followers. Christ said wisely, "I send you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain"—that those whom you brought into his kingdom might remain in his goodness and that they might remain eternally in his heavenly kingdom; so that your good works might remain in the memory of others to be worthy of emulation; and so, may the memory of the faithful brethren who left us on board the *Golconda*, prompt their acquaintances to follow them in all good and to hasten after them. Meetings were held every evening on board the ship, and it was easy to perceive the influences of the spirit of love amongst the emigrants. According to our request to them, they all promised that they will not forget their brothers and sisters they had left behind in the captivity of Babylon; rather they will do what they can after arriving at the end of their journey to send for them, by paying money into the Emigrating Society for their transportation; and we were greatly pleased at seeing as many as could binding themselves to that before beginning by offering to the Treasury the cost of their present transportation. This news will

encourage the poor Saints in Wales to await their deliverance more hopefully than ever; and yet I say to those who have relatives or acquaintances on their way, or who have reached Zion, write to them; do not let them forget you, and may the success of the “importunate widow” whom our Lord praised for her importunity crown your efforts.

They had a lovely fair wind on Saturday and Sunday to begin their journey, and we trust they will arrive safely to the ocean.²

Concerning the forty-four-day crossing of the *Golconda* two letters sent back to Dan Jones were printed in the *Udgorrn Seion*. A complete English translation of these letters is in Appendix J. According to Dan Jones’s wish everyone on board did arrive safely at New Orleans except for one small child. On Sunday the 19th of March a large steamboat named the *John Simmons* came alongside the *Golconda* and took the passengers and their luggage to a dock where they were able to walk on terra firma for the first time in more than six weeks. Two days later the *John Simmons* took them on their way to St. Louis. On March 25th they stopped for a short time at a small town called Napoleon, where for the first time they saw Indians with their bows and arrows. During the latter portion of the ten-day trip to St. Louis a number of the passengers were stricken with the dreaded cholera, and some were buried each day. After three weeks in St. Louis, where they bought equipment for the trek across the plains, they boarded another steamboat named the *Australia*. On the hurricane deck of this steamboat the wagon beds purchased in St. Louis were fitted up for places to sleep and live during the week-long journey up the Missouri River. It was a constant struggle to keep the covers and tents wet to prevent their being burned from the sparks from the steamboat’s funnels. Fortunately, no one died on board the *Australia*. They landed near Kansas City, where they took their wagons and luggage up to the camping ground in McGee’s Park. Various companies were organized and the trek across the plains was begun the first part of July. But once again cholera struck and claimed a number of victims. After cholera had taken its toll the remainder of the journey was rather uneventful, and the company reached Salt Lake City on September 25, 1854.³

Also on the ship was Samuel Evans, the future father-in-law of Martha Morgan. How well they became acquainted between Liverpool and Salt Lake City is hard to say. They both ended up in Lehi shortly after their arrival in Utah. Samuel went there because his son Abel lived in Lehi. It is not known why Martha went to Lehi, but her arrival attracted the attention of Abel Evans, who at that time was contemplating obedience to the practice of plural marriage. Abel and Martha had never met before, as Abel had left Wales in February of 1850, prior to Martha's conversion five months later. Abel's proposal of marriage to Martha most likely preceded any courting, if in fact there was any courting. Abel was forty-two years old and had been married to his first wife, Mary, for just over four years. They had buried a little girl in Council Bluffs; now they had a two-year-old boy, and Mary was expecting another baby shortly. According to a family tradition that has survived among the descendants of Abel and Mary, Abel had two women in mind, Martha and another single sister in the Lehi Ward, as possibilities for his entry into plural marriage. He approached Mary for her consent and also to allow her to participate in the selection process. Mary, twenty-seven years old at the time, reportedly chose thirty-one-year-old Martha upon learning that Abel actually preferred the other one. Perhaps she wished to remain the younger wife even though she would no longer be the only wife.

One can imagine the awkwardness of Martha's situation. No single young man had successfully sought her hand in marriage. And now that an opportunity had presented itself she was to be someone's second choice as his second wife in a plural marriage relationship under the same roof of a very small house. Unlike Mary, who had left Wales not knowing anything of the principle of polygamy, Martha knew perfectly well that such a thing was widespread in Utah, and she had had ample opportunity to think about this strange aspect of her new religion and to talk with others about it. Fortunately, only the righteous and upstanding men who honored their priesthood were allowed to have more than one wife, so that must have been of some comfort to her. And Abel Evans, after all, was first counselor to Bishop David Evans in the bishopric of the Lehi Ward. Furthermore, the single men were all much younger than she, and a marriage to Abel Evans might be

her best opportunity. At least he had only one other wife—some of the others had three and four! Abel was eleven years older than she, but she had heard of cases in which the husbands were twenty and sometimes thirty years older than their younger wives. One other point in her favor was that Abel was from Wales, even from the same county as she. Thus she would not have to communicate with him in English, which she was still trying hard to learn.

At the time of Martha's marriage to Abel, the Endowment House in Salt Lake City was not quite finished for dedication; but it was far enough along for sealings of husbands and wives to be performed. It was here that Martha was to be sealed to Abel Evans in March of 1855. In the early part of that month preparations were made for the three of them to travel around the Point of the Mountain to Salt Lake City. Martha probably gave Mary a hand with two-year-old Abel John and little five-week-old William Samuel as they made the two-day journey northward. After all, these two would be her own children's half-brothers.

At 9:30 A.M. on Saturday morning, the 10th of March, 1855, Martha watched in silence as Abel and Mary knelt at the altar and while Daniel James said the words of the sealing ceremony. Then it was her turn to kneel at the altar across from the man who in a few minutes would be her husband for time and for all eternity. The ceremony contained many beautiful promises that were hers if she remained faithful to the gospel that she had embraced nearly five years earlier. There was no doubt in her mind that she would someday receive those blessings. Right now, however, she was faced with the challenge of finding compatibility with Mary and developing a marriage relationship with Abel. And somehow she managed to do both.

This same group returned to the Endowment House in September of that same year to receive their endowments in a now-dedicated Endowment House. Traveling with them to receive his endowments also was Samuel Evans, Abel's twice-widowed, sixty-six-year-old father. And while they were there they repeated the sealing ceremonies, this time performed by Heber C. Kimball. Kneeling at the altar on this occasion presented somewhat more of a challenge than it did the first time back in March, as Martha was now six months pregnant. The date was September 18, 1855.

Martha gave birth to her first child on December 16, 1855. She gave her the name of Margaret Martha in honor of her mother, her sister, and her paternal grandmother. Little Margaret Martha lived at least two or three months, as her name appears in the Utah Census taken in January and February the following year. But it is not known how much longer she lived after that.⁴ During the coming years Martha gave birth to five other children; only two of these, Edward and Martha, would reach maturity:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. David Morgan Evans | June 5, 1857 |
| 2. Miriam Evans | March 16, 1859 |
| 3. Edward Morgan Evans | March 16, 1859 |
| 4. Martha Evans | May 18, 1861 |
| 5. Ann Evans | September 4, 1863 |

In February of 1860 Martha received her patriarchal blessing from John Young of the Lehi Stake. The text is as follows:

Sister Martha, I now lay my hand upon your head to bless you and confirm all former blessings. You have received the gospel and that with an honest heart and a desire to work righteousness to fill up the measure of your creation with usefulness. The Lord has his eye upon you for good and you shall have the comforts of the Holy Spirit, be a blessing to the family to which you are attached; the government of your family shall be according to the holy order. Inasmuch as you follow the counsel of your file leader you shall be blessed for you are a lawful heir to the blessings of the covenant which you have embraced. You are one of those that knew the joyful sound of salvation; therefore, you shall be blessed in your pilgrimages upon the earth, be a mother in Israel, have posterity upon the earth and rejoice in the midst of them. You shall have power to overcome, to do a good work upon the earth, be an honor to the cause, be a pattern of piety and sobriety, and live on the earth as long as you desire to live; you shall suffer and rejoice with the Saints of God. Your feet shall be kept in the strait and narrow path, for it is your desire to do good; you shall have strength according to your day, be blest with health and life, and energy and the graces of the gospel shall rest upon you so that you shall be enabled to accomplish all the things laid upon you to perform. In all difficult

circumstances your heavenly Father will be with you, and you shall be delivered from the grasp of the destroy[er], and all the blessings which your heart desires shall be given, for you will not desire anything but what is for your exaltation and blessing in the kingdom of God. You shall rise in the scales of intelligence, comprehend the blessing of the kingdom, be associated with friends and connections, rejoice in the midst of the Saints, stand upon Zion, rejoice with exceeding great joy. These blessings I confer upon your head with all the blessings pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant. You shall be preserved in innocence upon the earth, have an inheritance in the new heavens and new earth where sickness and death shall have no more power over you, in the name of Jesus, Amen.⁵

In May of 1861 when Martha was eight-and-one-half months pregnant with her fifth child her husband traveled to the Endowment House yet another time. Yes, there was to be a new sister-wife for her and Mary. Young Jane Davis, also from Wales, had consented to enter the covenant of plural marriage as Abel Evans's third wife. Abel was forty-eight; Mary was thirty-three; Martha was thirty-seven; and Jane was just twenty-four. Shortly there would be ten people under the same roof. Fortunately, Abel's father had remarried and was living in a different house. On May 18, 1861, fourteen days after Jane was received into the family, little Martha was born.

Many years later Martha Phillips Hunter, Abel and Martha's granddaughter, wrote of how her grandmother and mother were "always wanting" in those early days in Lehi:

My grandmother went into the fields and worked with the children. She had two children at that time, Edward Morgan Evans and my mother. Others had died. Nothing could be wasted in this family, so even small children went into the fields to glean every grain of wheat that could be found. The children went into the fields with bare feet and legs, usually on a diet of bread and molasses. I have heard my Mother tell of how their small hands ached from filling them so full and their backs ached from bending so much. She told me of how they cried when bathing time came, because of the

scratches upon their feet and legs. As I think of this story, I wonder if the soap they used was not homemade. The clothing they wore was homemade. Shoes were very precious and were only worn in the wintertime. . . . They were taught to mend their own stockings as soon as they could hold a needle. Mother told us about an old lady they called Gramma who used to pinch their legs if she saw a hole.⁶

After ten years of marriage, six pregnancies, and two living children, Martha learned that Abel had been called to serve a mission in Wales. This would mean even greater hardship for the three wives left behind who would then assume full responsibility for the farm, but at least it was only a temporary absence. In two or three years, the normal length of service in those days, her husband would be back, and life would return to normal. Abel left for Salt Lake City the last week of April, where he was to be set apart, and from there he journeyed back to his native land.

Letters took many weeks to go back and forth between Utah and Wales, rendering true communication nearly impossible. The most memorable letter was also the most tragic—the one from Elder John Parry that contained notice of Abel's death on November 30, 1866. Nine children were orphaned, including Martha's two—seven-year-old Edward and five-year-old Martha. Memories of their father would forever be very faint. The three widows continued on together until the death of Jane in the early 1870s. Her young daughter, born six months after Abel's departure for Wales, was unofficially adopted by Mary.

Two or three years after Abel Evans's death the family of Charles Phillips moved to Lehi. On November 18, 1873, Charles Phillips's wife Eliza died. They had come to Lehi from England with their two surviving children, Julia and George; five others had died young. Although circumstances of courtship are not known, several months later fifty-two-year-old Charles approached the fifty-one-year-old widow Martha with ideas of matrimony. She agreed, and they were married September 29, 1874. Julia, nineteen, was engaged to Jackson Wanlass; their wedding was exactly one week after that of Charles and Martha. Charles's son, George, was fourteen; Martha's son, Edward, was fifteen; and her daughter, Martha, was thirteen. There must have been a certain degree of harmony

among these three teenagers, as six years later George and Martha would go to the Endowment House for their own wedding.

Four-and-a-half months after Martha Morgan Evans married Charles Phillips they were in St. George, Utah. They both received patriarchal blessings from W. G. Perkins on February 14, 1875. Why they decided to move to St. George is not known. It could be that during the slow winter months for farming they were called on a mission to help with the temple construction then going on in St. George. Family tradition holds that Martha cooked for the temple builders;⁷ a phrase from her patriarchal blessing substantiates that tradition: "It will be the delight of thy heart to feed the sons of God, for they will be round you to protect you from every approaching evil." The blessing in its entirety is as follows:

Martha, you are much beloved of your Father, and in the name of Jesus I place my hands upon your head and seal upon you a Father's blessing. Your lineage is of Joseph, and his blessing will flow upon you as a fountain of living water. You are like Martha of old and you have chosen that better part that never will be taken from you, for your Heavenly Father gave you your name and blessed you and sent you to this Earth to receive a body, and you chose to come in the fulness of times. He has your name recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life and through your faith and prayers it will never be blotted out, for you are kind and affectionate to the Saints of God, and your last days will be your best days, and you will receive line upon line and precept upon precept, and the light of Christ will be in you and abound. Although you may feel your weakness you will become strong in the Lord, for you will be one with your husband in all things, and you will have prepared for you a beautiful mansion. You will dress it and keep it neat and in good order, and your table will be spread with the rich bounties of the earth. It will be the delight of thy heart to feed the sons of God, for they will be round you to protect you from every approaching evil. Holy messengers will visit you, that you may have strength in your body. They will acquaint you of your dead, that have and will receive the Gospel. They will give you their names, ages and birth places, and you with your husband will enter into the temple of the Lord and go through the ordinances of that house for yourselves and your dead.

They will be with you in the morning of the first resurrection, and you will be delivered up unto your former husband, and there will be joy and gladness, and the Glory of the Lord will be yours and your husband's, then the Glory of the Lord will be yours and will be upon your living husband for his kind and protecting care that he has had over you. You will have your lamp trimmed and burning, and when the cry is made, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh," you will be caught up to meet Jesus and his Saints, and return with them to that great Feast, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. There you will see as you are seen and know as you are known, for the Glory of Jesus will be upon you, and I bless you in your body, that you may do all this work to the Glory of God, and seal you up unto Eternal lives, and upon your head a crown of glory that will never fade away in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.⁸

By May 13, 1875, Charles and Martha were back in Lehi, for the Lehi Ward Relief Society records indicate that on that day Martha Phillips bore her testimony to the other sisters. Three weeks later she made her donation for the poor—"eggs valued at thirty cents." Her name is mentioned no fewer than thirty-six times in these records between 1869 and 1880 as donating small amounts of cash, potatoes, eggs, pork, flour, wheat, or apples. The following entries provide evidence of Martha's continued faithfulness to the Church:

24 Apr 1874 Mrs. Martha Evans said, "I feel it is good to be here and I always feel well in doing good in the kingdom of God. There never has been anything advanced in this Church but what I could receive. I desire the prayers of my sisters that I may be kept faithful to the end."

13 May 1875 Mrs Phillips [and others] followed bearing their testimony to the goodness of God and expressing the gratitude of their hearts that they were counted among the few that bear his name.

17 July 1879 Mrs. Martha Phillips expressed her thankfulness to her Heavenly Father for his blessings, knew that the Lord had heard her prayers, had none but good feelings towards her sisters and hoped to do right all the days of her life.

17 December 1879 Mrs. Martha Phillips bore her testimony to the truth of this work. [She] said, “Very often I feel sick and weak, but by the help of the spirit of God I am enabled to overcome. My desire is to be faithful and keep the commandments of God, as far as I am able.”

18 March 1880 Mrs. Martha Phillips said, “I feel well, I know the Spirit of the Lord is here. To see so many meet together is comforting. We need to pray every day to be prepared to meet the Savior when He comes to earth.”

On September 12, 1872, Martha and one other sister were appointed “teachers of this Society,” apparently a calling in which she was expected to present lessons to those in attendance. A similar appointment was made on July 6, 1876, when another sister “resigned her office” and Martha was appointed in her place.⁹

Other indications of Martha’s devotion to Mormonism are to be found in the LDS temple records of ordinance work performed vicariously for dead friends and ancestors. The Endowment House records show that on October 11, 1871, Martha was baptized for her mother and two aunts. Her son, Edward, was with her, and he was baptized for Martha’s father, David Morgans, and his uncle, David Morgans.¹⁰ Given the date, they may well have been in Salt Lake City to attend sessions of the general conference of the Church.

On October 21, 1884, Martha was in the Logan Temple. In addition to being baptized once again for her mother she was also baptized for Abel Evans’s mother, his paternal grandmother, and seven other “friends.” Again she had her son, Edward, with her in addition to Mary Evans Webb, the daughter of Abel and Mary, and Julia Sophia Phillips, her stepdaughter. These three were also baptized for a number of ancestors and friends. The date would indicate that perhaps they had gone to general conference in Salt Lake City and then journeyed up to Logan for a visit to the temple.

On November 9, 1893, Martha received yet another patriarchal blessing. This one was given by John Smith, the patriarch in Lehi at the time:

Sister Martha Phillips. Sister, Thou art numbered among the Mothers in Israel, and through obedience thy name is written in

the Lambs book of life, and shall live in the memory of the saints. Therefore be comforted, and look always upon the bright side. Learn also to listen to the whisperings of the Spirit, for the angel who has watched over thee in the past will not forsake thee in the future, but will yet whisper in thine ear, and give thee strength, and grace sufficient for thy day, that thou shalt receive comfort and consolation in times of seeming trial. Thou art of Ephraim, and thine inheritance is among the Saints. The Lord has heard thy petitions. He has witnessed thy trials. He has accepted thine offerings, and thou shalt verily receive thy reward. Thy days and years shall be prolonged untill [sic] thou has finished thy mission, completed the work of thy mother, and become a Saviour among thy kindred. For there are many honest in heart who would gladly unite with thee in the Kingdom of our Father if convinced of the truth. And thou art a legal heir to this privelege [sic]. It is also thy duty to counsel among thine associates and in thine dwelling that the younger may receive benefit through thy experience. Therefore, be at rest in thy mind, dilligent [sic] in the discharge of known duties, and all shall be well with thee both here and hereafter. This blessing I seal upon thee in the name of Jesus Christ. And I seal thee up unto eternal life to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection, with many of thy kindred and friends, even so. Amen.¹¹

Certainly life must have been considerably more comfortable for Martha when, after being a widow for eight long years, she married Charles Phillips. Her patriarchal blessing promised her that her last days would be her best days. It appears that this was the case. Martha died a faithful Latter-day Saint on June 16, 1897, at age seventy-three. She was buried in the Lehi Cemetery.¹²

APPENDIX C

JANE DAVIS

Jane Davis, third wife of Abel Evans, is a bit of a mystery. Her name appears on only a few records, and because she died in her early thirties leaving just one very young daughter, her descendants are left with only a few bits and pieces of information concerning her.

According to the information she gave to the clerk at the Endowment House in 1861, Jane was born February 19, 1837, in the little seaside town of Tywyn, Merionethshire, North Wales. Her parents were Hugh and Jane Hughes Davies. She appears to have had a younger sister, Catherine.¹

Where her parents lived after Jane's birth is not clear. She gave the date of her baptism into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as February 21, 1856, just three days past her nineteenth birthday. No evidence has been found to inform us whether others of her family converted also. Although there was a branch of the Church in Machynlleth, about ten miles to the east of Tywyn, the name of Jane Davis does not appear on the rather detailed records kept by David Giles Roberts and his brother, Edward Giles Roberts, two of the early converts in that area.

She sailed to America in 1860 aboard the *William Tapscott*, a 1525-ton square-rigger measuring 195' x 41' x 21'. The ship sailed from Liverpool on May 11, 1860, with a total of 730 Saints from Britain, Scandinavia, and Switzerland on board. The ship's list has the following information about her: age twenty-three, dressmaker,

36 Colliers Row, Tredegar, Monmouthshire, notification #99, April 27. She traveled in steerage, which was the cheapest way to travel by ship, and her total passage cost four pounds and six shillings. How payment was made is not indicated; it may have come from the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, or perhaps her way was paid by others who needed her help with their children. The address in Tredegar may have been where she lived, or it may have been the address of the person coordinating emigrants for the Church.

Jane Davis does appear in the LDS branch records for Tredegar, but she is the only member of her family listed. There is a note that she left for America on May 8, 1860, thus confirming that we have the right Jane Davis. Also given, however, is information on her baptism date, November 6, 1858, by Thomas Jones. Perhaps this represents a rebaptism as part of the “reformation” then going on throughout the LDS church, thus explaining the obvious conflict with the baptism date of February 21, 1856, registered in the Endowment House records a few years later.

Young single women on board ships to America were generally traveling with a family. In Jane’s case it appears that she was associated with the Joseph Colledge family. The Colledges also came from the Tredegar branch, and they also settled in Lehi. Furthermore, it was Joseph Colledge who confirmed Jane Davis a member of the Church on November 7, 1858.

Thomas Williams, one of the passengers on board the *William Tapscott*, wrote the following letter from New York concerning the crossing:

Dear Brother Jones. Through the tender mercies of our Heavenly Father, I am once more privileged to communicate with you. We experienced a pretty favourable time clear of the Channel, considering the winds we had to contend with. We have, however, had but poor winds the whole of the voyage to aid us in making a fair passage. It has been raining nearly every day since we left Liverpool; consequently, the Saints have not enjoyed the trip across the Atlantic so much as they would, if it had been finer weather. We have been at sea thirty days, and are now about 250 miles off New York. We have had the winds right ahead the

last two days, and have made but little progress. We hope, however, if all goes well, to arrive at New York on Thursday next.

Since our departure from Liverpool, there have been four births, five marriages, and ten deaths on board. The deaths have all occurred among the Scandinavian emigrants, with one exception—namely, brother Keller's child, from Switzerland.

The smallpox made its appearance among the Scandinavian Saints on Sunday, the 3rd of June. There have been nine cases up to the present time. I sincerely trust it will not spread further among the company. I feel satisfied that the Lord has heard and answered the prayers of his people, and that the disease has been checked to a wonderful extent. Those who took the disease are now doing well, and will in the course of a day or so be entirely out of danger.

I presume we shall be detained at New York a day or so; I hope no longer, as our time is precious. The Saints, as a general thing, have enjoyed good health, with the exception of a little inconvenience from sea sickness, and have manifested a desire to keep the commandments of God.

June 20th. We arrived safely at quarantine on the evening of Friday, the 15th inst. The quarantine doctor came off and informed Captain Bell that, in consequence of the disease being on board, all the passengers would have to be vaccinated, although all the patients were about recovered. On Saturday, the 16th, two doctors came off and vaccinated (with but few exceptions,) the whole of the steerage and a portion of the cabin passengers,—also the ship's crew. The passengers were all landed with their baggage at Castle Gardens today, and will proceed on their journey West tomorrow evening. The brethren here—namely, brothers Croxhall, Miles, Taylor, and Stones, have been *exceedingly* kind and attentive in making arrangements for this company, and the people feel to bless them for their solicitude for their welfare. I learn from brothers Croxhall and Miles that brother Cannon is still at Florence, and will receive us there. This, I can assure you, is gratifying to the Elders and Saints generally.

Captain Bell has also been very kind and liberal to the people, and has done all in his power to further their interest. He will call at the Office on his return to Liverpool, and I should much like you to make a further acquaintance with him.

I am thankful that the Lord has blessed me and my family with good health, and feel that his mercies will still be extended towards us. Sister W. joins me in affectionate remembrance to you, and brothers Gates, Andrus, and Blackburn,—also to all of my old associates in the Office, the good folks in Liverpool, and the Saints generally. The Lord bless and prosper you! Your friend and brother, Thomas Williams.²

What Thomas Williams described as a “little inconvenience from sea sickness” was viewed a bit differently by another passenger, Francis Astle from England: “The people are getting very sick. They lie and sit in all directions with their heads in their hands, some falling down with giddiness.”³ One could safely assume that Jane was among the sufferers, this probably being her first experience on the seas.

After being cleared to disembark at New York most of the LDS immigrants on board the *William Tapscott* continued by train to Florence, Nebraska, where they made preparations to cross the plains. Jane’s reception into the Lehi Ward on October 14, 1860, would indicate that she traveled directly across the plains immediately upon arriving at Florence. Having been on the road or on the sea for over five months straight she was most likely glad to have a new place to call “home.” How much English Jane had learned in Wales is difficult to say. She certainly had plenty of opportunity to hear and speak it during her travels, along with Danish, Swedish, and German.

Only a handful of people could understand her Welsh in Lehi. One of this handful was Abel Evans, a counselor in the Lehi Ward bishopric and a respected citizen in the town. Perhaps it was this common cultural background that drew them together. Abel had come to Lehi eight years earlier with his wife, Mary. At the time of Jane’s arrival in Lehi he was forty-eight years old and had four children—three by Mary (now eight months pregnant with their fourth) and one by Martha, his plural wife whom he had married five years earlier.

Details of the ensuing courtship and eventual marriage of Abel and Jane six-and-one-half months after her arrival in Lehi are not available to us. Necessary in such cases, however, was the

blessing of the first wife before plural wives could be received into the family. From Mary's point of view her husband's intention to take a third wife, one who was nine years her junior, was probably seen with some reluctance. Mary had been Abel's only wife for nearly five years before being approached for her blessing on his marriage to Martha Morgan in 1855. Martha may have viewed the new arrangement with less reluctance than did Mary; after all she knew what it was to be the "new" wife. And what might Jane have thought about marrying a man over twice her age instead of waiting for an opportunity of marriage to a younger and single man? Bishop David Evans would no doubt have counseled her to accept Abel's offer. In fact Bishop Evans may well have been the one to encourage Abel Evans to propose to Jane in the first place. Whatever her thoughts about other options Jane decided to accept Abel's proposal and a place in his home as his "junior" wife. She was no doubt well treated by her new husband and very possibly by the children, who were too young to comprehend the situation. How well she was received by Mary and Martha, however, and how long it took them to adjust to this new arrangement are questions only speculation can address. Certainly this expansion in numbers was no simple matter for any of the members of this new "family."

On May 4, 1861, Jane, twenty-four years old, knelt across the altar in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City and was married by President Brigham Young to Abel Evans, nearly forty-nine years old. Earlier in the day she had received her endowments and made a number of sacred covenants to be faithful to the Church she had joined in Wales just five years earlier. Her marriage to Abel, because it was performed in the Endowment House by the proper authority, meant that she was sealed to him for time and for all eternity. The "time" had reference to the amount of time they would both live on the earth. And in the case of Jane and Abel this "time" would total only five-and-a-half years.

It was only four years after her marriage that Jane learned the news that Abel had been called to return to Wales. President Brigham Young had joined them together in holy matrimony, and now he issued a call that would separate them for two, perhaps three years. It was in the spring of 1865 that Jane saw her husband leave on his mission. Mary and her six children bade him farewell,

as did Martha and her two children. On the occasion of Abel's departure Jane had no children; however, a daughter would be born six months later. Abel would never see this daughter.⁴

Whatever plans Jane had for her life after Abel's return were shattered when the news of Abel's death reached Lehi in early 1867. Three women who were desperately trying to keep things going until their husband could re-assume his role as provider for them and their children were now faced with the challenge of a total restructuring of their lives. What was intended as a temporary task now became a permanent challenge. According to family tradition, Mary was the strongest of the three and had taken the responsibility of the outside work. Martha worked inside the house with household tasks and with the children. Jane, somewhat fragile in health, involved herself with sewing and handwork.

On February 23, 1868, four days after she reached the age of thirty-one Jane received her patriarchal blessing from John Smith in Lehi. The blessing is as follows:

Sister Jane, in the name of Jesus Christ I lay my hands upon thy head to confer & Seal a Blessing upon thee & Say unto thee be of good Cheer & let thy heart be comforted for the Lord knoweth thine Integrity & all Shall be well with thee for thou art of the House of Israel & entitled to the Blessings of the Redeemer's Kingdom which I Seal upon thee & Say unto thee be of good faith & every desire of thy heart in Righteousness Shall be granted thee & better Days await thee in this life & hereafter. Thou Shalt have life Eternal, thou Shalt also be blest in thy daily avocation & duties in life & thy Days & Years Shall be lengthened unto thee according to thy faith. Thou Shalt also be blest in thy Basket & Store & in thy habitation & be comforted in thine old age & be the Saviour of Some of thy kindred, for thou art of the Tribe of Ephraim & entitled to many Blessings. Thou hast left thy native land, home, & Kindred for the Gospel's Sake. Thou hast also Seen trials & thou Shalt yet see many changing Sceens [sic] for thou Shalt live to a good old age & receive the Reward of a Mother in Israel. This Blessing I Seal upon thy head & I seal thee up unto Eternal life to come forth in the Morning of the first Resurrection with many of thy kindred & friends. Even so, Amen.⁵

Jane's little girl, Janie, was a year younger than Hyrum, Mary's youngest child. Two of Hyrum's daughters remember hearing a story from their father about him and his half-sister. Apparently they had dressed up in their mothers' clothes and began playing with fire. The clothes caught on fire, but the children were uninjured. Mary was prepared to give Hyrum "a really good spanking" when Jane intervened. "No, don't spank him," she said, "because if you do I'll have to give Janie a spanking, and I don't want to. These children are going to feel bad enough when they see we can't both go to church. Because we have only one set of Sunday clothes between us we can go to church only every other Sunday, and that's going to make them feel bad." The spanking was not given, but Hyrum later said that he would have preferred the planned corporal punishment to the weekly reminders that it was his fault that either his mother or his "Aunt" Jane had to stay home and miss church.⁶

The 1870 Federal Census for Utah shows that the three widows were still living under the same roof. A short time later, however, Jane's fragile health would fail her. Her major concern about dying was that she would be unable to complete the task of rearing her daughter, Janie. But her sister-wife, Mary, comforted her and said that she would keep Janie as one of her own and see that she received a good upbringing. Mary kept her promise. The date of Jane's death is not known, but it appears to have been in the early 1870s.⁷

APPENDIX D

SAMUEL EVANS

Samuel Evans was reared in the westernmost part of Carmarthenshire, an area of Wales where the various Nonconformist sects were very strong early on. He had all his children christened by Independent (or Congregationalist) ministers, which would suggest that he had converted to Nonconformity while still single. The absence of an entry for Samuel's christening in the Llanglydwen parish register, where he said he was born August 18, 1789, would perhaps be an indication that his parents, Amos and Jemima Owen Evans, were also converts to Nonconformity.¹ If so, Samuel received a Nonconformist upbringing. Unfortunately, the records kept by the Nonconformists have not survived in large number, and entries for Samuel, Amos, and Jemima are not to be found among the records that did survive. Conjecture, then, is the best we can do in this regard.

When he was twenty-two years old Samuel took twenty-six-year-old Anne Hughes² to the parish church in Llanboidy to be married by the Anglican vicar. Even though they both had probably left the Church of England by this time, they had no choice but to be married there—the law at that time allowed only Anglican vicars to perform marriages. The marriage of Anne and Samuel was performed on September 3, 1811; it would continue for the next thirty-two years until Anne's death in January of 1844.

At least seven children were born to Samuel and Anne. They are as follows:

1. Abel born Jun 17, 1812 Castell Draenog, Llangan
2. Thomas born Apr 1, 1813 Bixton, Laugharne
3. John chr Jul 9, 1814 Maencoch, Llanboidy
4. Sarah chr Apr 15, 1815 Castell Draenog, Llangan
5. Evan buried Aug 15, 1820 Lilpoints Land, Llangan
6. Jason chr Sep 23, 1821 Dyffryn Morlais, Llangan
7. Elizabeth born July 3, 1826 Isle Wight, Merthyr Tydfil

One notices from the variety of residences that Samuel and Anne moved around. The fluctuations in employment opportunities caused people to be rather mobile, and one would assume that Samuel, as a farm laborer, simply took his family where he could get work with which to support them and also where he could get a roof over their heads. None of the moves prior to 1826 were at any great distance from each other. The move to Merthyr Tydfil, however, was a major step in the lives of the Evans family. Just to pay for the travel expense for a journey of over fifty miles probably required all the money Samuel and Anne had; furthermore, it would have taken several days to travel such a distance, presumably made with horsedrawn carts over rustic roads. And when they reached their destination their lifestyle was transformed from one of poverty in the rural setting of Carmarthenshire to one of a higher level of poverty in the industrial melting pot that was Merthyr Tydfil in the 1820s. No longer were they able to obtain part of their sustenance from crops and farm animals; money would have to be earned by performing the exhausting tasks associated with chipping away bits and pieces of the earth's bowels and transporting them to the surface.³ And if Samuel Evans is typical of other miners of that era, he took his sons down into the mines with him when they were nine or ten years old.

The first record we have of Samuel and Anne in Merthyr Tydfil is the christening of their daughter Elizabeth on August 15, 1826; their residence is indicated as the Isle of Wight, an area of Merthyr Tydfil not far from the present-day center of town. The next record is fifteen years later when the 1841 British census indicates that they were still living in the Isle of Wight area of Merthyr Tydfil. By this time all the children were living elsewhere except for fifteen-year-old Elizabeth. Just three years later, on January 25, 1844, Anne died, leaving Samuel a widower at age fifty-three. At

this time Samuel no doubt anticipated living out the remaining years of his life in Merthyr Tydfil and being laid to rest in a grave next to Anne's. Twenty days later, however, he underwent a dramatic change in perspective when he desisted from his lifelong association with the Nonconformists and aligned himself with a religion that would take him six thousand miles from Wales.

Saturday, February 10, 1844, is a date that Samuel was to remember for the rest of his life. On that day he watched with pride as his son Abel defended their beliefs in a debate with the Mormon missionaries. Abel had been selected as the most qualified person of the Bethesda Independent congregation of Merthyr Tydfil to debate religion with the representatives of this relatively new sect in that area. Abel had stood his ground in the first debate held a few days earlier when the topic was miracles. But part way through this, the second debate, Abel suddenly fell silent. The topic this time was infant baptism, an integral part of the Independents' creed. The Mormon missionaries argued from the Bible that immersion was the proper mode of baptism and that no one was to be baptized until he had reached the age of accountability. Abel shocked the crowd, especially his family members, when he broke his silence and announced to them that he had just converted to Mormonism and that he was prepared to go immediately to the waters of baptism with the persons he had been debating.

Samuel knew his thirty-two-year-old son well and had high regard for his ability to reason. And after several long discussions with Abel, Samuel himself converted to Mormonism and was baptized on February 14, 1844, four days following his son's startling conversion.⁴

An added bonus to Samuel's becoming associated with the Latter-day Saints in Merthyr Tydfil was the opportunity he had to meet Catherine Havart Powell, who would become his second wife. Catherine had also lost her spouse, by whom she had four daughters and one son. Samuel and Catherine were married on March 18, 1845, by the Reverend Thomas Benjamin Evans, an Independent minister at the Ynysgau Independent chapel near the Iron Bridge that crossed the River Taff.⁵ It is not clear whether they combined their families at the groom's home on Quarry Street or at the bride's on Heolgerrig Road across the

Glamorganshire Canal. Given the location of these streets, chances are that the living accommodations were both miners' cottages built by the mine owners for their workers. Catherine appears in the 1841 census with her husband, John Powell, and their five children: Ann, age twenty; Margaret, age fifteen; Elizabeth, age eleven; William, age eight; and Jane, age six. Catherine's three youngest children were probably still at home when she married Samuel Evans. Samuel's youngest daughter, Elizabeth, was three months short of her nineteenth birthday when her father remarried and was possibly on her own by then.

The January 1847 issue of *Prophwyd y Jubili*, the monthly periodical published especially for the Welsh Mormons, contains a report on a conference of the Church held in Merthyr Tydfil earlier that month. Among the eleven faithful brethren called to be elders was Samuel Evans, an indication that he was still strong at this point in his testimony of Mormonism three years following his conversion.⁶

The dream of all Mormon converts in Wales was to join with the body of Saints in America. Samuel's son Abel fulfilled this dream in 1850 when he sailed on board the *Josiah Bradlee*. And when Abel bade farewell to his father, he no doubt promised him that he would send money back from America as soon as he possibly could with which other families members would be enabled to emigrate. Whether such assistance was rendered is not known.

The chance for Samuel and Catherine to emigrate did not come until four years later when they left for America on the *Golconda* along with 262 other Welsh Saints. A total of 464 British Saints set sail from Liverpool on the *Golconda* on February 4, 1854. Captain Dan Jones, once again presiding over the Church in Wales, had traveled with the Welsh emigrants from South Wales to Liverpool after which he remained with them until the ship left a few days later. Shortly thereafter his two-page account of the departure appeared in *Udgorn Seion*.⁷

The paths of Samuel Evans and Dan Jones had crossed before when both were in Merthyr Tydfil during the years of 1846, 1847, and 1848. It was Dan Jones who had sent Samuel's son Abel to proselyte throughout the counties of North Wales; it was he who had set Abel Evans apart as counselor to William S. Phillips five years earlier; and it was also he who had requested President Phillips

to send Abel Evans to America “in the next company” if he could be spared. During the time preceding his departure from Liverpool, Samuel must certainly have had the chance to converse at some length with this man who had played such an important role in the life of his son Abel. Dan and Abel had last crossed paths a year and a half earlier when Abel was with the William Morgan Company on his way to the Salt Lake Valley. The company was about eighty miles from their destination, and Dan Jones was on his way back to Wales traveling with Thomas Jeremy and Daniel Daniels. Samuel was no doubt pleased to learn from Dan Jones about Abel and also about Abel’s wife, Mary, whom Samuel had never met.

Samuel arrived in Lehi sometime before November 14, 1854, the date of his patriarchal blessing from John Murdock. There is no record that Catherine ever reached Lehi; she may well have died from the cholera on the Mississippi or perhaps later during the first part of the journey across the plains when cholera again claimed a number of victims. The words of the patriarch must have been of comfort to Samuel at this point in his life, sixty-five years old, a widower for the second time, and now with his son Abel and his daughter-in-law, Mary Jones Evans, whom he was able to meet for the first time. Here is the blessing he received from John Murdock:

Brother Samuel, in the name of the Lord Jesus I lay my hands upon thy head, being a Patriarch. I seal upon thee a Father’s blessing. Because thou hast long desired the Truth, and hast obtained the same and become obedient theretoo [sic], even the fulness of the everlasting gospel, and hath gathered with the Saints, therefore, the blessings of thy God shall rest upon thee. Thou shalt rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. Thou shalt become a Saviour unto thy kindred, and thou shalt receive an inheritance in the land of Joseph and rejoice not only with thy posterity, but with Many of thy progenitors. The power and authority of the Holy priesthood shall rest upon thee and upon thy posterity to the latest generation. Many shall rejoice, because of thy stability in the faith of thy God. I seal these blessings upon thy head with eternal life, even so, Amen.⁸

Written at the top of the blessing is the following: “A blessing by John Murdock, Patriarch, upon the head of Samuel Evans, son of

Amos and Jemima Evans, Born October ____ 1789, on the road near _____, South Wales.”⁹

Just how much English Samuel Evans was able to speak is difficult to determine. Perhaps he learned some when he moved from Carmarthenshire to Merthyr Tydfil. But people tended to learn only as much as they needed to; if he was surrounded by Welsh speakers in the mine, in his neighborhood, and in his religious activities, it is doubtful that he learned a great deal. Now in Lehi, where very few spoke Welsh, perhaps his English fluency increased.

That he remained faithful to his testimony of Mormonism can be seen from the few records in which his name appears over the next few years. He traveled up to the Endowment House in Salt Lake City in September of 1855, where he received his endowments on the 18th, the same day that his son Abel was sealed to Mary and Martha.¹⁰

A year later Samuel was ordained a high priest by E. D. Woolley, S. W. Richards, and L. Farr on October 6, 1856.¹¹ The date suggests that Samuel was in Salt Lake City for general conference. Samuel also appears in the 1856 census as living with Abel and his two wives and three children. How they were all able to fit in the miniscule and rustic accommodations typical of that era remains a mystery.

Sometime before the Federal Census was taken in Utah in 1860 Samuel married for the third time. And for the first time it was performed by a Mormon bishop, probably Bishop David Evans of the Lehi Ward. Samuel's name appears in the census records as “Sam^l Evance,” age seventy, Farmer, \$75 as the value of his real estate, \$50 as the value of his personal estate, born in England.¹² Just below Samuel's name is the name of “Celena Evans,” his wife, age fifty-nine, born in England. Selina, the customary spelling of her name, declared that she was born May 1, 1799, in Llanfabon, Glamorganshire, Wales, the daughter of Evan and Luce Jenkins, and that she had been baptized in May 1849 by David Richards and confirmed in May 1849 by David John.¹³ She was sealed to Samuel in the Endowment House on February 9, 1861, by President Brigham Young; she was sixty-one years old at the time, and Samuel was ten years her senior.¹⁴ Despite exhaustive searches, the only other information concerning Selina Jenkins Evans that

has been obtained is that she was the widow of Benjamin Williams. That she was sealed to Samuel Evans is an indication her first husband had probably not converted to Mormonism.

Filed in the Utah County land records and recorded on March 10, 1871 is the following:

Be it known by these presents that I, Wm H. Winn, Mayor of Lehi City, Utah County, Utah Territory, by virtue of the trust vested in me by an Act of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah Approved February 17, 1869, entitled an Act prescribing Rules and Regulations for the Executions of the Trust arising under an Act of Congress entitled an Act for the Relief of the Inhabitants of Cities and Towns upon the Public Lands, Approved March 2d, 1867, and in consideration of the sum of Three and 75/100 Dollars paid by Samuel Evans of Lehi City, County of Utah, Territory of Utah, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged [by] the said Samuel Evans, having been adjudged by the Probate Court of Utah County, Territory aforesaid, to be the rightful owner and possessor of the following described lots or parcels of Land, viz: Lot Two (2) in Block 51, Area 120/160 Acres. Also Lot 20 Block (71) Area one (1) Acre. Situate in Sections 8 & 17, Township 5S Range 1 East, do by these presents grant and convey unto the said Samuel Evans his heirs and assigns forever the foregoing described Land with all the rights, privileges, and appurtenances thereunto belonging or appertaining. In Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the City of Lehi at my office in Lehi City, Utah County, Utah Territory this Thirteenth day of January, A. D. 1871. Wm H. Winn, Mayor of Lehi City.¹⁵

On his piece of property Samuel probably kept a few animals to provide eggs, milk, and meat. And he may have raised vegetables in a garden. His granddaughters Lillian Reader and DeVere Oliver¹⁶ also recall hearing that Samuel made furniture from willows. They were in southern Utah many years ago when they stopped at a place that had pioneer furniture.¹⁷ Among the various items were a cradle, a bed, a table and chairs—all made out of willows. A sign indicated that the furniture had been made by a Mr. Evans from Lehi. Lillian asked her parents to clarify, and they

responded, "That was your great-grandfather, Samuel Evans. He had his back broken in an accident, and from then on he learned to make furniture out of willows."¹⁸ They added that there was a certain willow that grew along the creek in Lehi that Samuel found best suited to his purpose, and he paid his older grandsons to gather the willows for him. He had a special iron scraper designed for "skinning" the willows, and after they were prepared in this manner he would put them in the attic to dry. Hyrum recalls also that his older brothers John and Bill used to go barefoot to the canyon and get wood for their grandfather.

In May 1872 Samuel and Selina traveled to the Endowment House once again. On the 22nd of that month Brigham Young sealed Samuel's first wife, Anne Hughes, to him. Selina served as proxy. The following year immediately after April conference Samuel and Selina were again in the Endowment House. On the 9th of April, 1873, Joseph F. Smith sealed Hannah Evans to Samuel. Selina served as proxy. The identity of Hannah Evans is unclear; most likely it was someone Samuel had known and admired in Wales. This appears to have been their last time to visit the Endowment House.

The date of Samuel's death has not been determined. It was sometime after October 17, 1875, when he and Selina were rebaptized¹⁹ and before 1880, since neither of them appeared in the 1880 Census for Utah. Eudon Evans Wasden recalled hearing her Aunt Nean (Geneva) Stewart, the oldest child of William Samuel Evans, say that she could remember Samuel. In a letter to Robert J. Evans of Ogden, Eudon quoted her aunt's words: "He was almost bent to a right angle and used a cane."²⁰ She also recalled seeing "his wife laid out before burial." Aunt Nean was born January 15, 1875; assuming that her childhood memories would date back no earlier than when she was about three years old, it would put Samuel and Selina still alive as late as 1877 or perhaps 1878. They would have been buried in the old Lehi Cemetery on State Street. Graves were later moved when the new cemetery was opened. Unfortunately, the location of the graves for Samuel and Selina is not known. Samuel's rebaptism at age eighty-six suggests that he remained firm in the faith from the day of his baptism in 1844 until his death three decades later.

APPENDIX E

RESPONSE OF THE REV. W. R. DAVIES TO THE WILLIAM HUGHES INCIDENT¹

A Miracle! A Miracle! At Last!

The "Satanists" greatly professed many of their miracles, and they deceived an uneducated, irreligious and good-for-nothing crowd—they succeeded in charming a host of the dregs of Merthyr to follow them; and they were continuing with their deception quite well until the "praiseworthy apostle" came here to strengthen them in the faith, and to sell the craziest sort of pamphlet ever seen, beneath the notice of every man in his senses.² This was published by some little creature sometimes called "the apostle" and other times "Captain D. Jones." It was printed by his natural brother, John Jones, Rhydybont, (Llangollen), or the Rhymni baptismal fair member. This pamphlet claims the Satanists' ability to "perform miracles, talk with fairies," etc., etc. The people of Merthyr were tired of the proclaiming of "miracles, miracles" all the time, without seeing one sign; they had to get on with performing them or stop talking about them. And, as you know, here there is a place and opportunity every day to perform them. So it happened this particular time—a man called William Hughes, a collier who lives in Collier's Row, Cyfarthfa, had an accident (he is one of the Satanists). He broke the small bone in his leg at work—Dr. Davies was sent for, and he put it back in place and bound it up, etc. Then he was followed in a visit by the "praiseworthy apostle" and a crowd of the Satanists, and they pulled off the bandage. And the apostle placed his hand on the painful area pretending to pray; and the Satanists claimed in the strongest way that they saw the swelling lessen and disappear under his hand, etc. These things were proclaimed

throughout all the places, etc., until the people of Merthyr and Dowlais were surprised that the apostle's hands had strong powers. On leaving he told the man to come to the meeting the following day to show himself and that he was completely well, etc. The next day Dr. Davies called to see the man; and to his surprise he found him much worse than expected, his leg terribly swollen and very painful, etc. The doctor could not understand these things; but to his surprise, on looking at the leg he saw that some idiot had opened the bandage that he had applied the day before, and this had caused the above mentioned; and when questioned the sufferer admitted everything, and the foolish scoundrel has not gotten better to this day, being supported by the parish of Merthyr. And if the above fact is doubted by any man or woman, male or female Satanist, let him ask Mr. Roger Williams, Relieving Office, Merthyr Tydfil, if he can have the happening in more detail. I do not send these things to you in order to entertain myself, nor to give others something to laugh at; but for the world to understand such hellish boldness, and the Satanic deceit in the hearts of evil men. Oh, blessed Christianity! What great and numerous things have you suffered from every deceit and deceivers who have tried to charm others by calling themselves after your holy name. Is it not surprising that the one womb has treated the two brothers the same, and that the two brothers were endowed with extremes of deceit and arrogance, namely the apostle David Jones, and the commentator John Jones, Rhydybont, previously Llangollen (remember that they are two natural brothers). And no Welshman or Englishman, even if on oath, can say in which of the two is the greater curse and arrogance. The Welsh people must be more foolish than fools before they read, without mentioning buying the writings of these two men.

I ask you to put in the next almanac, in red ink, a notice about the three main books in the world, that is "The Address of the Twelve Apostles of the Saints," by the apostle David Jones, "An Explanation of the New Testament," by the Rev. John Jones, and "Sentinel" by Twm the Poet (T. ab Ieuan). These three wonderful books will be sure to have an extensive sale, because the names, learning, godliness, truth and honesty of their authors are so well known throughout the whole of Wales.

Merthyr.

Quick-in-Water.

APPENDIX F

THE REPLY OF THE REVEREND W. R. DAVIES TO THE “SUPPOSED” LETTER OF WILLIAM HENSHAW AND ABEL EVANS¹

To the most learned A. Evans and W. Henshaw.

Sirs: I received a most learned note from you, the contents of which prove the extent of your knowledge, together with the arrogance of your hearts; and I cannot help but be surprised, amazed, yes, feel deeply that one man in Wales has been blinded, or rather possesses such extremes of arrogance to enable him to claim such nonsensical and ungodly rubbish as the things which are proclaimed by you. I would consider Mahomet innocent in comparison with you. Such knowledge and enlightenment had not spread across the world in the time of that terrible, false prophet as has now spread across Wales, and different parts of the civilized world. I understand from your letter addressed to me, that the intention is to get me to be part of a “fair” with some sinful creature you call the “apostolic Captain” and that this is the subject at hand; and you announce, by the way, “my absence will be proof of my error. I consider that my appearance in such a place and on such an occasion would be proof of my foolishness for the following reasons:

1. The persons who address me are beneath my attention. Abel and Henshaw. Oh, such excellent names! Oh, such bright characters! “Let not my soul come into their secret.” [Genesis 49:6]
2. The names that you give yourselves are too low to be despised, such as “the only true church of Jesus Christ, our praiseworthy apostle, Capt. D. Jones, etc., names and characters no man

would claim unless he was as ignorant as the pagan about the things that comprise a church and an apostle, names that the most arrogant man would fear to adopt for himself, unless he was a complete atheist, or given up by God to strong error so that he will believe a lie, his conscience seared by hot iron. It would be the same for every man who understands what an apostle was for the Captain D. Jones you mentioned to claim at once that he is Jesus Christ; and doubtless the mad and foolish men who believe his apostolicism would believe that he is He, if he were to announce himself as this character.

3. The mad and arrogant teachings that you proclaim are below the attention of every man of common sense. For example, in the nonsensical pamphlet, which is neither one thing nor the other, only a pile of foolishness, look at "teachings of men and devils," which you call "an address," page 3, such as "the gift of healing the sick and receiving healing by the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus—casting out devils—and even to see visions, and to speak with angels and spirits of the invisible world." One could think that there would not be one man, even in Merthyr, who would lend an ear to listen to such madness, arrogance, and lies. The wretchedness of such a man must weigh heavily on him. I heard that you proclaim that the spirit of the scoundrel Joe Smith appears to you. No, do not tell your lies about the dead, his chains are too tight, and his prison too secure, and his memory will be a curse and a stench while history exists.

4. I refuse your offer with scorn, since I judge that one of your purposes in holding a "fair" is to collect fools together, but mainly to try to collect money. But if the Apostolic Captain wants a "fair," let the offer be made to his natural brother.* Maybe it will become advantageous to them; the one will have the honor of publishing it and the other of selling it.

5. I am completely determined to refuse your offer out of true respect for the inspired advice of God through the mouth of one of

*This apostle is a natural brother of the Rev. John Jones, Llangollen, now of Rhydybont. This shows that these are "Quick" men to know what thing is profitable. [This note appears in the original text.]

his holy apostles, who advised me, saying in 1 Timothy 6:5, "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, from such withdraw thyself." You yourselves are nothing more than corrupt men, prostituting yourselves to do evil.

I wish to draw your most serious attention as men accountable in the world to come, and I beseech the creature, Cap. Jones—I do not know of what he is a Captain, perhaps a Captain of a few evil men, or of Joe Smith's soul when it appears on earth—but if he has any sort of boat, if only a fishing boat, for the sake of his body and soul, let him follow his calling; or if he intends to live idly from deception, lies and arrogance, out of respect for his fellow-nation, if nothing else, let him go to the American Indians and not damn the souls and characters of the foolish and innocent Welsh. And, by the way, I desire the same favor with regard to the foolish Henshaw. Let this scoundrel go to his birthplace, that is Cornwall, and make fools of the Cornishmen, and let him live there on their backs. Oh, my fellow-nation, the dear Welsh! Do not make yourselves the object of scorn to all the nations of earth by lowering yourselves to listen to such a lying, deceiving, and devilish crowd. And I am very happy to announce that only a few of my fellow countrymen have been trapped by these wicked creatures; and of those deceived by them many have seen the deception and the shame on them for ever having listened to such foolishness. But truly, these arrogant men will not carry on much longer; their madness is clear to everyone. It is wonderful to hear and see men professing miracles and healing the sick, yet having to run to the doctors when some unfortunate circumstance calls for it. In Penydaren people remember what took place there when the wife of one of these lunatics was in a fever during childbirth. The room was filled with the lads they call "Saints." It would be a shame on humanity and the persons involved to relate the whole circumstance to the public; the woman was getting worse and worse, then someone ran to fetch one of the miracle men to put his hands on her, but nothing worked. He, they say, was too weak in faith; Henshaw away from home. And, oh, the commotion that was necessary! At last he came, and he put his filthy, sinful hands on her. Despite this, the poor, foolish woman was having great convulsions and fits, and in

the end they had to get Doctor Williams, Penydarn, and through him was the miracle done. Another of the crowd professed to cure all the children of Dowlais and overcome death; but in the midst of his miracles Mr. Death visited the man's house and killed his children. He said that "he could have brought them back but that it was a pity to take them from heaven," and at the time the wicked scoundrel had an accident at work. Were the hands of the apostles put on him to cure him? Oh no, men know that all their claims are deceitfulness and lies, and they heartily laugh up their sleeves at the fools who believe them and freely maintain them under the guise of preaching; and the greatest blame rests with those who shelter idlers of no conscience; wicked men have done and will do anything for money. I understand that there is now some fund for purposes that are known to your leaders—the fruits will soon be seen. Oh, my fellow Welshmen! how long will you be deceived?

You complain that I have preached on the miracles in your absence. Do not tell a lie; I was announced every time, and notice was given that that was the subject to be dealt with, and many of you were listening each time. And I shall preach again, as long as I'm alive, against you and all other heretics. But I would not wish you ill in this world nor the world to come, rather good, although I fear that your wicked and ungodly leaders have been given up by God to believe a lie and to deceive you.

Take note, as I finish, that I will never again take any notice of your letters if you go to the bother of writing them and sending them to me, rather I shall throw them away to the land of oblivion with the greatest contempt. However, the one that was sent to me this time shall appear word for word as it is, and it will be a pretty piece before the public, and this reply will also follow it, and if necessary more of your foolishness will appear. I do not ask you to forgive me because I do not call you "Saints," as this would be an insult to common sense, a disgrace to Christianity and a sin against God. But I call you by your proper names, sons and daughters of the devil, the enemies of all justice. And I ask, "for how long will you continue to pervert the just ways of the Lord?" Let no man be surprised at me nor think the phrase too harsh. One of these terrible creatures recently asked an old member on the day of

the Lord (while walking together towards Merthyr to their different places of worship) what was his basis for everlasting life? To this he was answered that it was "the death of Christ and his blood." To this the scoundrel replied with contempt, "The blood of Christ, indeed; do not be so stupid and foolish; that was lost in the earth, and that was the end of it; and it would serve the same purpose whether you drink water or wine to remember such madness." Take note, this was not a young lad, but an old man, and an old member of the family. Do not be deceived; these men are no more than Atheists and Deists of the worst kind of Chartists, the only difference being that they pretend to be religious in order to deceive their fellow-men. A family consisting of these creatures was recently living near me, and one among them was courting a sister in their religion who was working in a reputable shop in Dowlais. And it was surprising what an excellent family they were; the angels and spirits of the unseen world were with them as numerous as flies, so they said, and the business that took place at that time was that of plundering the shop of all sorts of goods through the kitchen window before the family arose. And it was an excellent sight to see the "Saints" being led through the streets by the police in pairs bound in iron chains, and from there to Cardiff jail where their teacher had been before them. But in spite of everything they are so impudent as to challenge even the ministers of the gospel to lower themselves to participate in a fair with them in the White Lion. If the foregoing facts are doubted, not only can they be substantiated, but a host of the same nature can be brought to light. I am, W. R. Davies.

APPENDIX G

RESPONSE OF DAN JONES TO W. R. DAVIES ABOUT HIS “FORGED LETTER”¹

Our readers will remember the letter sent to this man,² in response to the libelous accusations of his brother from Dowlais, a copy of which is to be found in the July *Prophet*; and that the editor decided that the best way to demonstrate his fairness to all sides was not to publish it—that the most gentlemanly approach to us was to open his monthly periodical for our enemies to accuse us of every folly and evil under pseudonyms, but to close it immediately against any word of self-defense we might offer, in the face of such accusations. Mr. Davies of Dowlais accused William Henshaw and another brother [Abel Evans]³ of issuing a challenge to him to come out to debate, which was a complete lie, worded and devised in such a way as to give the said Mr. Davies a reason to laugh at us. The two brethren tried to defend themselves through the same press that had condemned them, but they were not allowed to. That was too much justice for the editor to permit. If he had given them space, he would be praised, but he did not do so. He thinks he has got the keys into his own hands, and that he would scarcely take the trouble to go from Cardiff to see if he is telling truth or not. And then, after all the two men did, poor things, to assert their innocence—after testifying so soberly that it was not they who issued the challenge, the editor would have everyone believe that it was; and the proof he offers of this is, “that the writing is very similar to the writing of that letter.” How similar, I wonder? Similar enough to contradict the testimony of two witnesses? It

was not his fault that he could not get more weight than this feather to put in the scales in the face of the testimony of the two men. Is it reasonable to suppose that they would give such an opportunity to a man they know has been for years with all his might accepting every evil about them eagerly, and searching for libel material, like the tiger for prey? If not, no one but his *partner* dares think like that, I suppose. Let everyone notice the outpouring of his heart through five lines which he calls his five “reasons.”

His *first* “reason” is: “The people who address me are beneath my notice.” Yes, reader, this is the “reason” he offers for his lengthy essay, which takes a large part of four pages of the *Bedyddiwr*, to answer those “who are beneath his notice.” Let the reader judge if he believes himself. He is a strange man, taking so much notice of something “beneath his notice!” His proof that they are beneath his notice is because of their names: “Abel and Henshaw. Oh, such excellent names! Oh, such shining characters!” There is a *specimen* of new-fashioned *logic*, or old-fashioned from the days of *Bajazett*.⁴ Who has heard that Mr. Davies has ever discussed a subject? His subject is persons; assertion is his reason; and libel is his trade! And so here, because a man’s parents named him “Abel,” he and every other Abel, from the oldest down, are “beneath the notice” of this illustrious man! Let those parents who desire his *notice*, take care to ask him what names they give their children. “Henshaw;” what a pity his ancestors did not foresee that his name would lower him “beneath the notice” of the sages of this age! “Oh, shining characters!” he says; yes, so shining that even he was not able to find a blemish on them since they have been in the church of Christ, even though he tried hard; and if there were some blemishes on them, would that condemn the principles they profess? He is a strange reasoner; he would reason not only himself and his brethren to be cheats, but even Christ’s religion to be a fraud, because Peter, and Judas, etc., betrayed him. We do not profess to be perfect, and it would be useless for him to profess that to his acquaintances. It is not long since Mr. Davies considered William Henshaw’s character to be shining enough for him to bring him to his house, and extend an offer for him to join with him, and be an assistant preacher to him. And the next thing this gentle man offered him after he had refused his services, and shown

abhorrence for his company, was to ask him if he would drink a glass of poison, to prove that Christ had spoken the truth: "If they drink any deadly thing, it will do them no harm." But Henshaw refused to satisfy his desire, as his teacher refused the invitation of the other's master to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple. Henshaw went away from him, and from that time Mr. Davies has been trying to blacken his character with every story he can find, until Henshaw is not only unworthy to be an assistant preacher for him, but is "beneath his notice." He is "foolheaded Henshaw." Let "this scoundrel" go, not as a preacher under Mr. Davies of Dowlais, but to "Cornwall" now, "and let him make fools of the Cornishmen," instead of the Dowlaisites, as Mr. Davies wanted him to do a short time ago; "and he can live there on *their* backs." It would be an unending task to talk about grammatical errors where so many moral errors are deliberate ones. "At last [Henshaw] came, and laid his unclean and sinful hands on her," that is, those hands he thought a few months before were clean and holy enough to break the sacrament for his flock! It is strange the sudden change that has happened to his hands, as well as every other part of his body and his name! Yes, poor thing, he has turned into sour grapes, every joint and bone, from his head to his toes, like the ones that did in the wolf's eyes in the old *fable*. Then, his "character," he says; that must be reviled too after he has refused my service, so that he does not do good to anyone else. Characters, is it? He should be silent until the latest ditch in Dowlais has defended its character. Pity the poor *Cornishmen* if they relied on such a shepherd as this to feed them; and if the character he gives to Henshaw has acceded to his request, i.e., according to his own reasoning; and yet, if all he says is true, their hunger for wholesome food would not be greater than it is now. Perhaps he justifies himself by saying that he did not know at that time that Henshaw was so *unclean, sinful, Satanic, devilish, etc.* Worse still then, to have offered a man such a position over immortal souls, without knowing who and what he was. Let his flock forgive him for this, if they can. But why does he still continue to persecute such people? Was it not the same one who made us all? If they had drunk *brandy* until they turned their noses blue, and disfigured their faces like turkey heads, and if they had stayed in the school of Bacchus until

Sunday morning, he would not have cause to publish it in the *Bedyddiwr*. If they had appropriated to themselves three or four undeserved names and titles, as well as a list of pseudonyms, they would still be no worse than those who profess to be in the list of theologians. But having failed to devise one blemish on their persons, he closes his first *reason* by saying in borrowed words: "Let my soul not come into their secret" [Genesis 49:6]. We are very pleased to hear this, and more of an Amen is said to this than to anything else he says. We cannot stay with that pipe any longer. Hurry, the gas is lighting in the second, and is pouring out blue.

He says: "The names you give yourselves are beneath contempt." What! what name is beneath contempt? The name of a listener to this wise man who calls himself a preacher of the gospel, and a servant of God, answering for himself. "Like the only true church of Christ." Is it a man who professes to be a shepherd of Jesus Christ's flock who says that being "the only true church of Jesus Christ" is "beneath contempt?" Yes, reader, and without offering so much as one proof of his assertion either. The gas is high in this pipe: "praiseworthy apostle, Capt. D. Jones," he says. He does not love me much either, evidently; it is strange how he hates a man with whom he has never exchanged a word, who was never in his company, nor wished to be! It is foolish to hate and persecute the whole lineage of him who flogs him with his own stick. If he were to be silent, people would forget the shame he suffered in time; but his old wounds are festering and gathering again, and there is nothing to be done but change the plaster, in order to get to the bottom of it, or let them take his life. As for the first title, it is more honorable than any we ever claimed. The father is the same as that of the "Satanists," "little creature," "sinful creature," "apostolic Capt.," "lying, cheating, devilish tribe," "living in idleness at the expense of deceit, lies and presumption," etc. Every reasonable man believes we have cause to be proud of these titles, considering their source; and indeed, it must be admitted that we sometimes take some pride in being worthy of the evil words of professed persecutors; yet not ourselves, but because of our religion. We do not expect as many titles as our brethren in early times, or our holy Teacher except insofar as we are like them. As for the last title, it is one that was honestly won, through many

years of hard efforts, diligence, and morality, and is respected in the four corners of the earth; and he is the first one in the world found to be hard-faced enough to publish one insult or scorn of it; but he cannot scorn it either, for it is out of reach of his unhealthy odor, and if it does not satisfy him, he should not take it in vain so needlessly. But listen how intense this pipe is by now: "Names that the most presumptuous man would fear to adopt [so we are more so than the most can be], unless he is a perfect atheist." There, now the pipe has burst, and in its destruction can be seen how it fulfills the old proverb that "it is the thief who shouts thief first;" and the atheist is the first to shout atheist. Listen, all Christians of the world! According to Mr. Davies's logic, those who profess to be "the only true church of Jesus Christ," are atheists! Here is a hard judge. What will become of us if the rod of iron is in his hand, and if he gets a foot on the bench? You must be "as ignorant as the pagan (he says) about the things that constitute a church and an apostle," before you would claim to be "the only true church of Jesus Christ!" And does he not claim to be in the only true church of Jesus Christ himself? If so, according to his own reasoning, he proves himself to be an atheist like us! Did not Paul truly say that *God* set some in the church: "First APOSTLES (that is as head of the church, or the body of Christ on the earth, after Christ's ascension into heaven. Who has seen a living body without a head on it? Those who see the body of Christ, with Mr. Davies as a borrowed head of it in Dowlais, having cut off the apostolic head that Christ set on it for the head of an *atheist*! This is one of Mr. Davies's miracles, like the "swallowing his meeting house"), secondarily prophets, gifts of miracles, gifts of healings," etc., 1 Cor 12:28. And does Mr. Davies not assert so fearlessly that that is atheism? and that it would be "the same to claim to be Jesus Christ as to claim to be an apostle?" Which of the two is to be believed? They are completely contrary to each other. Is it not the same thing to claim that the apostles whom God set in his "only true church" are atheists in one age or country as in the other? Paul says to the Ephesians (chap. 4) that they are essential "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," in that age. Are they not essential for "the perfecting of the saints" in this age too? If the work of the

ministry could be carried on in that age without apostles, was it not unnecessary for God to set them for that? If they could not edify the body of Christ without apostles, etc., how can even Mr. Davies, or anyone else now, do more than they could then? If he can answer this without being an atheist, or at least a deist, he can do more than anyone else we have seen yet. But I fancy I can see him starting to look for his interpreters, and then he will shout victory, and Oh! they were only to continue through the apostolic age; they are not needed afterwards. Yes, but it is Mr. Davies of Dowlais who says that, and is it a speck closer to the truth because of that? No, it is not, even if all the people of the world said it. Paul knows better than them all, and he says that it is all to continue in the church "till we all come in the unity of the faith," etc., that is, in his only true church, "and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man." If Mr. Davies claims to be perfect enough without them, he should leave alone those who choose to enjoy them, in order that they too may be perfected. I wonder if the Son of God was so specific as to set down the plan of his "only true church" in the New Testament, putting in it *apostles*, *prophets*, and the *miraculous gifts* promised to *those who believe*, in every age and country, and then authorized Mr. Davies to establish a church for him in Dowlais on some different plan? He claims that it is atheism to profess His original and divine plan!

But although the second pipe has burst, there is yet more and hotter metal in the third. Here he rushes out like a furnace ember, without fear of God or man; and says: "The mad and presumptuous doctrines you proclaim are beneath the notice of every man of common sense," i.e., admitting his first epistle about them testifies that he himself does not possess "common sense;" and as he admits it so fearlessly, let us proceed to see one of his wonders. Here at last Mr. Davies offers *one* proof or example of his claims, and it is even stranger which example he quotes: "Such as the gift of healing the sick, and receiving health through the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus." This is an example, says Mr. Davies, of "the doctrine of men and *devils!*" Well, what does Christ say? This is what he said, and says to his saints in every age, "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover;" yes, that is the doctrine this reverend calls "presumption," "madness," and "devilish." This

is fulfilling the proverb to its limits. Let the reader choose which of the two authors he believes; he cannot believe both. But we shall see how Mr. Davies fares in the face of Paul on these "devilish doctrines" in 1 Cor 12:9: "To another faith, to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit." Well, Paul, there you are, as devilish as we, according to Mr. Davies. Verse 28: "After that miracles, then *gifts of healings*." Verse 30: "Have all the gifts of healing?" No; but God "gives to each one [in his "only true church"] separately, as it pleases him." Verse 31: "But covet earnestly the best gifts," says Paul. Oh no; do not covet earnestly any such thing, says Mr. Davies, otherwise you will be as bad as the "Satanists:" that is, "the doctrine of devils." There are two strong witnesses, namely the Son of God and Paul, at loggerheads with him already. But we offer one more apostle to prove the "presumption and madness" we profess, so that from the lips of three such witnesses, can be seen if it is we or Mr. Davies who deserves the above accusations. Come, James, what do you say? Is it "the doctrine of devils" to accept health in the name of Jesus? James answers that he says the same thing now as he said before (chap. 5:14): "Is any sick among you [saints]? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." It can be seen, by now, whether Mr. Davies for denying, or we for believing, what Jesus Christ, Paul, James, and others say, are the most like atheists. Another outpouring from this third fiery pipe is "an example of the doctrine of devils," namely "casting out devils," he says. This is not so devilish either, according to what our Lord says, when he was similarly accused: "A kingdom divided against itself will not stand." How does Mr. Davies make professing the casting out of devils in the name of Jesus a doctrine of devils, without making what Christ says, "In my name shall they cast out devils," the same thing too. He puts a twist in this pipe now, and says that no one but the apostles were to do that. He must twist it until he makes the Son of God a liar, when he says in Mark 16:17: "And these signs shall follow THEM THAT BELIEVE," in every country, and Wales too, at all times, yes, even now. When he proves that no one but the apostles were to enjoy these signs, he will have proven also at the same time, by the same reasoning, that no one but they

was to preach, to believe, or to be saved, for the one and the other are commanded, and promised in the same commission. When Mr. Davies finishes this task, he will have an atheist's crown on his head; but until then he should leave in peace anyone who chooses to profess them. But the furnace is seething hotter and hotter, until it blows this pipe to shreds again: "And even to see visions, and speak with spirits from the invisible world." Can one hear the view of a preacher of the gospel in this enlightened age about the above doctrine? "One would think [says he] that no man, even in Merthyr, would lower his ear to listen to such *madness, presumption, and lies*" as the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which the Son of God promised to the believers, while there was still one imperfect individual in their midst! I do not think that Paine or Voltaire ever claimed such dreadful blasphemies as this on the church of God.

But reader, listen to his fourth pipe roaring. He says "he thinks [on what basis he did not see fit to inform us, if not a guilty conscience rankling] that the aim was to hold a fair in order to gather fools, but mainly in an effort to collect money." In this too he verifies the old proverb. Who but he has for years now been idling at the expense of the poor Welsh, who work hard in order to contribute many pounds to him every month for standing over their heads to prove that the gospel of the Son of God is "doctrine of devils, deceit, presumption, madness, atheism," etc., etc., and call His children "Satanists," etc. Who but he shouted on the riverbank, as soon as he got his feet on *terra firma*, with the water pouring from his clothes, "for the money—bring forth that money, people!" And if one followed him to his pulpit, one would think that it was as easy for angels to fly without wings as for him to carry on without the *money*. When he was lucky enough, some time ago, to baptize three at once, it is strange how he shouted for the money; and he taunted a congregation of white people that they had contributed such and such before, when there was only one baptized, but "now for three times as many!" It is not known what would become of Dowlais if he baptized often. Despite all this, it is not very long since he accused us, although quite falsely, of charging half a crown for baptizing; but we challenge anyone to prove that we have ever charged a halfpenny; and we do not care how much he gets either. But the wonder is that such a man as this can sear his conscience so hard as

to be able to accuse the innocent so unsparingly. A man who makes a business of the souls of hundreds between his shop and his three chapels! It is he who accuses us of trying to hold a fair with him in order to obtain money! I wonder if he thinks so much of himself, that we would come to make an offer for him?

But anyone who wants to hear an example of shameless hypocrisy, to hear Satan assuming the form of an angel of light, his face as long, and his tone as howling as if the "hope of his profit" was all about to fade. Listen to him, in all seriousness! "Oh, my fellow countrymen, the dear Welsh." "Dear," indeed! dear enough to fill the ears of one group with invented fables about the other group?

But listen, reader, how he turns the fifth pipe against himself. It is so much against his grain that it crosses his own grain, and in his great desire to hurt others, he says too much to be true: "And it gives me great happiness to announce that only a *few* of my fellow countrymen have been ensnared by these evil creatures." Well, poor wretch! he has enjoyed the "great happiness," as can be seen from issues of the *Bedyddiwr*, for a long time. "Few, very few, the dregs of Merthyr, foolish, senseless people," etc., is his refrain always. But listen to him in the next line: "And of those who have been tricked by them, *many* have seen the deceit." Everyone will thank him for this. *A few* have joined, and *many* turned back. It is beyond common scholarship to say, when one takes *many* out of a *few*, how many will be left? Only Mr. Davies's arithmetic can answer that. This reverend goes so far as to contradict his own brethren. Mr. Editor says in his introductory "fiends" to the above letters: "And the fact that they [the saints] attract *many*." Here are two old contemporaries who are at loggerheads with each other. They have been at other people's heads for long enough. But listen to this prophet prophesying about himself; for he continues by the *rule of contradiction*. "But it is true that these presumptuous people will not continue much farther; their foolishness is apparent to all," he says. He has made this amazing prophecy in almost every chapel, where he has proclaimed his names for the saints, and it has been published as a tail to almost every accursed story of his; and although he sees that it is being fulfilled on his own head, he will not admit that it is about himself; yes, although his foolishness is apparent to all.

APPENDIX H

EPISTLE OF THE FIRST COUNCIL TO THE WELSH SAINTS¹

Dear Saints—This is the first time for us to address you in this manner; but you have been hearing from us since the beginning of our stewardship in some way or another, either each month in the UDGORN, or in quarterly and annual meetings, or in our visits to you. We have spoken to you through the conference and branch presidents and through every officer in Wales. We pray constantly for all of you that our gracious Father may bless you with his Spirit that you may be wise to salvation; and we hope that you are praying constantly for us that God may fill us with wisdom to lead you along his paths. The jealousy of the the devil is more against us than it is against anyone else in Wales, and there is need for all the Saints to pray earnestly on our behalf so that we may continue steadfast to the end.

We are confident that you are obedient to all the teachings that are given you from time to time and that you are desirous for spiritual food continually, bearing in mind that the words of the servants of God are that food, and that there is no way to receive the words of eternal life except through the mouths of the leaders of the Church.

Your advantages now are increasing continually, as you now have conferences in every part of the country where you and your pastors may always receive a replenishment of spiritual food. May all the leaders strive to be present in each one and also in each council so that they may have the opportunity to understand the laws of the kingdom of God and receive wisdom to serve him.

Every branch president or his counselors should be present in every council, for there is where their whole strength is. They must receive their spiritual food continually through their leader if they are to increase in the image of God. There is too much neglect in some places in this regard; and we hope that it will be corrected speedily. We grant permission to the branch presidents who live great distances from the meetings to call their officers together every fortnight or more often to teach them to serve in their various callings and to ask questions about that which will keep contact with them as officers; but they are not at liberty to treat any matters that pertain to the district council. Anything the presidents do not know about their duties they can learn in the district council.

We have observed what such meetings are doing around the districts. It is well known that they are numerous and happening frequently in the same place. That sometimes causes great poverty among the Saints who live in those places, since so many strangers eat with them. We know this can cause many to become weak in the faith; and we would counsel the district presidents to teach the Saints to prepare for themselves and their pastors in every such conference, so they will not in any way be a burden on the poor Saints. It is just as easy for men to pay their own way in a conference as it is in a fair or a market. Not in a conference should the Saints use their hospitality, rather on other occasions. A conference is too much all at once. The houses of the district presidents also are overflowing unreasonably on such occasions to the point that their families are afraid to see another conference scheduled. The president should be left alone at such times by everyone except those who have special callings. We know things such as these by personal experience, and for that reason we teach others. We hope that such a suggestion will be sufficient to everyone.

We wish to call the attention of all the Saints and leaders to the explanation given in the last UDGORN pertaining to the coming of the unlearned and the unbelievers to meetings held particularly for the Saints. Perhaps that explanation will cause many of the world to come to such meetings more than usual; but no one of the Saints needs to be concerned about their presence. Go along as usual with everything to build the kingdom; and let everyone strive for perfection in the various gifts—in tongues,

interpretations, prophecies, singing, and praying with the Spirit and with understanding, etc. Let no worry be given about the presence of the judges of this world; the Saints will not be judged by anyone except those who have received the spirit of prophecy and revelation. The world cannot receive that, and so they cannot judge anything concerning the Saints. The Saints are to be a light unto the world; and wherever they have gathered together there are many candles shining; and who knows but what their lights will enlighten the darkest of men. There is more of the Spirit of light in a social meeting of the Saints than in any other; in view of that, what danger is there for the world to attend them? None whatsoever. Let them come; we know of many who have been converted by so doing. But yet, it is the task of the leaders of the Saints to watch out for deceitful and bad men lest they pretend to be Saints while being wolves. No one should be received into your homes or meetings without a printed letter having been duly signed. It has been said before that the Saints are not to use any spiritual gifts or testimonies except in their own branches. There is order and wisdom in that, and this is to be taught in every branch; and the blessing of God will be the result.

We wish to point out to the leaders and the Saints who are in the North that as Elder Abel Evans intends to emigrate to Zion no one will take his place for the time being; nevertheless, they will be cared for by our sending a missionary now and then to visit them and instruct them. Much confidence is placed in the leaders who are in the various districts there, and they will be amply effective on their own. Let the Saints and all the officers obey the district presidents as they did Elder A. Evans, and blessings will be upon them. May gracious God bless you all.

There is one other thing yet before closing that we wish to point out to you, presidents of every level and the Saints also. Inasmuch as the Latter-day Saints have more advantages than the early Saints, they should do more with those advantages. The press is a blessing that pertains to the latter days only, and there is no greater blessing. Who preaches to the gentlemen of our country, to their preachers, and their priests? No one but books can come near them. Who convinces the hosts of honest men who are too high in their character to come down to a room of the Saints? What will

reach the deacons and others who are greatly zealous in refraining from going anywhere but to the chapel? Are unlearned men and influence all that are necessary to convince them? No, no; but also the best men with the greatest influence and their character. Because of that, we exhort all the leaders and the Saints to obtain a good supply of the various little pamphlets that are printed here, and choose the most influential officers to take them from house to house and to exchange them every week. That will have more effect than anyone can imagine; for where can you get words of so much wisdom of God than those in the books the first presidency of the nation publishes? If any district wishes to have unusual success and to get learned and influential men in their midst, let them distribute more books. They will bear fruit by the hundreds, and they will raise up more thorough and influential Saints who will pay greater attention to that which is written from month to month than many do now. We are writing these things because we are the ones who have been set apart to teach you in all things; and we are bold enough to instruct you to contribute to books and to the support of the presidents of your districts, and we wish to teach you to pray for us. We are desirous that there be not one president or officer of any kind who is not encouraged to read the scriptures and all the books published by the Church in these days, so that they may create a desire in the Saints and the Saints in the world. The inclination of each president will be the inclination of all under his presidency; there will not be much of a reward for not going to the trouble of selling and distributing books more than just preaching; for a book is as much a preacher as an officer, if not more sometimes, when the officer is poorly dressed or if he wears a red jacket or handkerchief. Every officer who stands before the public should be dressed and be similar to a preacher in his dress, for who but others like him will listen to him?

Now we come to a close wishing for the Lord to bless all his Saints throughout Wales; and we ourselves leave our blessing and our peace on all of you, presidents, officers, and Saints, by saying that there will be more success following them from now on than ever before. That is our sincere prayer in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Your humble servants in Christ, William Phillips, Abel Evans, John Davis.

APPENDIX I

LETTER OF THOMAS DAY TO ORSON PRATT¹

Beloved Brother—It is with joy and gladness of heart I make known unto you our safe arrival in New Orleans, on the 18th inst., after a passage of eight weeks and four days; indeed it was too fine to be speedy. We may truly say it was a pleasure trip, having nothing more to encounter than a good breeze, except a few light squalls, accompanied by showers of rain, which occasioned sea sickness, as a natural consequence. But those who were well administered relief to the sick; so the power of God was truly manifested in our midst. Therefore it is with grateful hearts we offer our thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father, for blessing us with a passage that comparatively few have hitherto experienced. Union prevailed in our midst as much as we could expect considering our condition. The cooking seemed to try our patience most, but according to the manner in which our company was organised, accompanied with the diligence of the presidents of each section, order and peace prevailed, and the whole company could have tea and be on deck by six o'clock, when the songs of Zion were sung more or less, which caused cheerfulness to beam on every countenance. Thus were our evenings generally passed, until the signal was given for prayers, which were attended to by the presidents of each section, at eight o'clock in the morning and at the same hour in the evening, after which preparations were made for rest; our watch taking their stand at the different hatchways, so that none were admitted from deck to disturb our repose, and in a very short time silence was only broken by the breeze passing through our rigging, or the lonely foot of the sailor pacing the deck.

We had preaching twice a week, and a church meeting every sabbath, generally on deck, which was well attended by all on board, as the labours of the sailors were generally suspended during our service. We are in duty bound to express our feelings regarding Captain Mansfield. His conduct towards us has truly been praiseworthy, giving us privileges considerably more than we could have expected. He was much interested in the welfare of all on board, and was always ready to administer to those who were sick; and, as a proof of our esteem towards him, we presented him with a memorial which represents the feelings of the whole company.

Our records, during our voyage, contain five deaths, one birth, and two marriages, as follows: Married, on the 24th February, 1850, Louis John Davies, of Glamorganshire, to Sarah Roger of Pembrokeshire, Wales. Also on the 10th March, 1850, John Carver, of Herefordshire, England, to Mary Eames of Herefordshire.

Deaths—On the 28th February, 1850, Jonathan, son of George and Ellen Matthews, aged 10 months, from the London Conference. On the 27th March, 1850, Ann, the daughter of Hannah Hughes, aged 10 months, from Wales. On the same date, Rachael, the daughter of David and Mary Riggall, of Gosberton, aged 14 months, not in the church. On the 30th March, 1850, John, the son of George and Elizabeth Hay, aged 14 years, from Cheshire, England. On the 15th April, 1850, Damina, the daughter of Robert and Rebecca Smith, aged 10 years, from Lincolnshire, England.²

The wife of Robert Norris gave birth to a daughter on the 2nd April 1850, they are from Manchester.

The general health and spirits of our company are truly flattering. Joy and cheerfulness marks the satisfaction of all as they open their eyes upon that land which they have longed to see. We are about to prepare, under the guidance of Brother M'Kenzie, to go up the river, and trust that our Heavenly Father will prosper us in the latter part as He has done in the former part of our journey.

May God bless every instrument of power in His kingdom, that the gospel may find its way to the remotest parts of the earth, that in due time the honest in heart may find themselves safe on the land of promise, is the prayer of your brother, Thomas Day.

APPENDIX J

CROSSING OF THE GOLCONDA

Letter of William Phillips to Dan Jones, dated March 18, 1854, New Orleans

Dear Brethren: I take this present opportunity to send you these few lines to give you a little of the history of how it is and how it has been with us until now. We have seen the great power of God with us, and we feel very thankful to him for his goodness to us. You know already that we were organized into Districts before leaving the *Docks* in Liverpool; but after that, the Districts were divided into seven Branches, with a president over each Branch, four of whom were Welshmen, namely, John Davis, William D. Jones, Phillip Sykes, and Thomas C. Martill. The Branches were divided into Groups, with a president over each Group, with a meeting of the Saints in each Branch every Tuesday and Thursday nights, with a family prayer each night before going to bed; and there was not one prayer in these in which we did not remember you and all the dear Saints back in Wales.

About 11 o'clock Saturday morning, February 4th, the steamboat came and took a turn around the "Golconda," which was at that time resting on the river. Then after sailing pleasantly for some time, a storm arose about 5 o'clock that afternoon, and the Saints generally began to get sick and continued that way through the night. On Sunday morning we remembered the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy, but it was different with most people here, the greater part of whom were in their beds. We continued sick through Monday night, and then each Branch was instructed to hold prayer meetings; and before 10 o'clock the wind had

turned and dropped, and it became fair in our favor; and there was great rejoicing the next day among the Saints and everyone was praising the name of the Lord.

Then we sailed very successfully until we reached the *Western Islands*, on the 14th of February, and the greater part was healthy. Then we kept sailing along until we came in sight of the *West India Islands*, and we had a close and splendid look at Jamaica, but we did not see Cuba.

And after coming to this point, I shall say a word to the Saints in Wales. I intended to address you before leaving, but I did not have the time because of the circumstances. I now write to you my feelings. All that I have to say to the Saints is for them to live righteously; take care not to follow your own ways, rather be obedient and respectful to the order and government of God that is among you, and may your faith increase, and may you trust continually in those brethren who preside over you.

We have had some excellent meetings, and the Spirit of God is most abundant at present with us, and we could not wish to be among better people than those who are emigrating. They are warm and full of the Holy Spirit. By saying that I do not consider everyone to be so. Seek to come after us, and have patience. There is an abundance of good food on this ship, but it would be wise for everyone who has the means to bring a little flour and some *preserves* with them, also a little dry beef, and ham, etc.

Some unusually good fortune has smiled upon us until the present time. At times we sighted in the distance a ship ahead of us through the *telescope* in the morning, and by nightfall we had passed them by far. We considered that a blessing from our Father. No one died during our journey except one small child who was born in Liverpool before we left. There were two marriages, namely David Davies and Esther Williams, both from Carmarthenshire; and Wm. Gillman, Blaenau, and Ann Davies, Pendeulwyn; and I do not think that there has ever been more enjoyment in a wedding on land or on sea than there was in the latter, which took place on the 11th of this month. At 9 o'clock there were two *flags* raised, with all looking for their *boxes* in order to get out their best clothes, and the marriage was carried forth according to the old-fashioned Welsh custom.

The aged sister, Esther Jones from Cardiganshire, is alive and well, and enjoying herself. She is now 84 years old, and let no one of the older sisters fear to start toward Zion because of the ocean; this elderly sister was walking back and forth on the deck as if she were on land, and she is out today.

My family and I now end by sending our love to you and to your counselors, together with the Conference Presidents, Robyn Ddu, John Jones, and Sims, and all the Saints throughout Wales—also Bro. R. Morris and Anna wish to be remembered to you all in the same way. I do not know how soon we shall start up the river. I am your brother in the gospel, W. S. Phillips.¹

Letter of John Davis to Dan Jones, dated March 18, 1854, New Orleans

Dear Brother Jones: That which I am writing to you now is what I was expecting to hear from you five years ago concerning your condition at that time, and from the same place. How strange are the turns of providence and the life of man in the world. By now I have seen fish flying and the whole world in water, not to mention the other great wonders. I also have learned more patience and discretion, I hope, than I have learned for a long time. The sea can salt everyone, and blessed are they who can take its salt. Its illness could not affect me, although I had a good dose of its troubles because of the illness of my wife and the wild behavior of my little one. We have now finished with the ocean; the rivers will be next to try us. A brief account of the voyage is being sent by Bro. W. S. Phillips; consequently, I shall give but little detail of that. We had a comfortable and successful voyage, with the bigger part of the Saints appearing happy and quite uncontentious. There were many diversions of every kind in our midst; but at the same time praying and watching and other religious duties were not forgotten. In our entreaties we remembered frequently the Welsh Saints and their leaders, and hope we will be heard in their behalf. We had many very warm meetings on board the ship, and the Spirit of God was strong in our midst, resulting in speaking and singing in tongues, as well as prophesying, etc. But

perhaps nothing captured more of our attention than the marriage that took place between W. Gillman from Blaenau and Ann David from Pendulwyn, on the 10th of March.

I shall now say a word to the future emigrants according to my knowledge and my own experience. It is difficult for everyone to express the same opinion and to agree about that which is best; but everyone can offer his own opinion and leave it to others to choose. In the first place, it would be wise to prepare dry parsley together with other vegetables for making tasty soup on the sea and on the plains. Also a bit of butter, *suet*, pepper, salt, *currants*, *raisins*, *jam*, *pickles*, *ginger*, *nutmeg*, good bread for a week (to be kept dry under the bed), *hams*, oat bread, herrings, potatoes for the trip, senna, castor oil, etc. Plenty of gruel or porridge can be made from the oat flour that is on the ship if there is a sieve to get it; vinegar will sour until you have warm weather to make it.

It would be good to buy *gutta-percha overshoes* to wear during the first days on the ship, as it is rather wet and cold; but you will soon need to put them away, since the weather gets continually warmer. It is not wise to sell your iron dishes in Wales, since they will be better than *tin* on the sea, especially Liverpool tin; and the earthenware cups would be very desirable for the ill, but be careful to put them in a place where they will not break. It is necessary to secure everything against breakage caused by the shaking of the ship. And if counsel is taken now, there will be no need to learn through experience. It is also necessary to watch a little more than pray on the ship since many, who are not Saints, make voluntary mistakes.

It is necessary for the emigrants to get dry wood boxes made beforehand, and to take care that everything that is placed in them is quite dry also; for I have seen many things get terribly mouldy in the boxes on the sea, especially shoes and velvet coats; a *carpetbag* is the best thing to carry shoes across the sea if it can be kept in a dry place on the bed. It is also very advantageous to have a hammer and nails handy, together with *gimlets*, etc. Iron bands are also good on the edges of the box lids.

The water stays fresh the whole voyage except for a little taste of the casks; that can be taken away by using a little oat flour

in the cup. It is not good to drink too much clear gruel, as it is too sour for the stomach.

I shall close now by sending my best wishes to you, Brothers Jeremy and Daniels, the Conference Presidents, Brothers Parry, Simms [sic], and Thos. Harries, together with all who wish to be remembered. I pray that God will bless you all so you will succeed in your labors and that you will receive a great reward when you complete your tasks. I expect many yet to follow us from Wales, and the sooner that all come the better. I am desirous of hearing news about all; and for that matter I hope to hear from you in St. Louis. Pray for us to reach the end of our journey safely. We have been greatly blessed up to now; and everyone is healthy and happy, for which I give thanks to God. Farewell for now, and may God bless you and us in the name of Christ, Amen. Your brother in the gospel, John Davis.²

APPENDIX K

“THE HEROIC ELDER ABEL EVANS”

*MILLENNIAL STAR*¹

Within seven years after the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, missionaries began to carry to the Gospel to the British Isles. These early British missionaries were some of the most dynamic ministers in the Church and their stories of dedication have inspired those who have followed them in this noble work.

Three years after the first group of missionaries landed in Liverpool, in the spring of 1840, Elders James Burnham and Henry Royle crossed the River Mersey and began proselyting in North Wales.² By the April 1841 Conference, Elder Burnham was able to report that three branches of the Church were organised in Wales and that there were 117 active members.³

While much of the impetus for the work in Wales sprang from the Elders from America, early in this era, Welsh converts demonstrated the courage for which their ancestors were noted in spreading the Gospel to their fellow countrymen. Two of the most colourful of these Welsh missionaries were the dynamic Captain Dan Jones and the heroic Elder Abel Evans. While much has been noted of Captain Jones' successes in his native land, Elder Evans was remembered for his devoted efforts in behalf of the Welsh Saints and because he was one of the first Welsh missionaries to die while serving on a mission, dying at Merthyr Tydfil in November 1866.

Abel Evans' boyhood was spent in the coal mines of South Wales and though he never joined any of the religious denominations, he was known among his fellowmen as a moral and honest man.⁴

In 1840 he heard the Gospel in Glamorganshire, and was later baptised in February of 1844. He was soon ordained to the Priesthood and spent the following six years travelling throughout Wales teaching the Gospel. He was a man of great faith and during these years in the ministry he baptised over 2,000 Saints, 700 of these members in Merthyr Tydfil alone.⁵ In 1849, Brother Evans was put in charge of all the Branches in North Wales and assisted President William Phillips of the Welsh Mission. And in February of that same year, when Captain Jones sailed from Liverpool on the *Buena Vista* with 249 Welsh Saints, Elder Evans was on the shore throwing oranges to the ship as long as he could reach it.

The following year he also left Wales for America until he was again called to his native land in 1866 for his final mission.⁶ While serving in this capacity, he was given the responsibility of standing watch while the saints embarked on the *John Bright*. During this vigil he contracted a cold which later developed into pneumonia. The details of which are described in the following letter to Orson Pratt, President of the British Mission:⁷

APPENDIX L

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ABEL EVANS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ABEL EVANS IN THE *LATTER-DAY SAINT BIOGRAPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA,* VOL. III

Evans, Abel, one of the Latter-day Saint Elders who died while filling a foreign mission, was born June 24, 1813, at Carmarthenshire, South Wales.¹ His boyhood and early life were spent in the coal mines of his native land, and he never joined any of the religious denominations, although he always lived an honest, moral and upright life.² Becoming a convert to "Mormonism," he was baptized Feb. 10, 1844, by William Henshaw and is believed to be the second person baptized by divine authority in Wales.³ Soon afterwards he was ordained to the Priesthood, traveling as a successful missionary and opening up branches which subsequently grew into conferences. He devoted about six years to the ministry, traveling in South and North Wales and labored with great success. Under the hands of Orson Pratt and Dan Jones he was ordained a High Priest Feb. 7, 1849. He was a man of strong faith, the Lord working many miracles through his instrumentality, many being healed of their maladies through his faith and prayers, among others several cases of cancer and cholera. He emigrated to America in 1850, and while crossing the ocean he became acquainted with Mary Jones, whom he married after landing in America. The next two years were spent in Pottawattamie County,

Iowa, where he was chosen as a High Councilor. In 1852 he and his wife crossed the plains with ox teams in Captain Morgan's company and soon after his arrival in the Valley he located in Lehi, Utah County, where he was chosen captain of militia, marshal of the city, deputy sheriff of the county, etc., and also acted as a counselor to Bishop David Evans. Thus he continued very active as a local officer until the April conference, 1865, when he was called on a mission to his native country. He arrived in Liverpool July 28, 1865, and after laboring as a traveling Elder in Wales he was appointed president of the Welsh district, where he labored with unceasing diligence as long as the powers of life were continued to him. He became ill with a cough while assisting some Saints to embark on the ship "John Bright" at Liverpool in May, 1866, and while attending a conference in Birmingham the following September, he slept in a damp bed, which renewed the cold and coughing upon him. Although his condition was serious, he continued his preaching, both indoors and out, being exposed from time to time, until he became so weak that he could not stand and until the day of his death, which occurred at Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, Nov. 30, 1866, he did not seem to realize his condition. Bro. Evans was the husband of three wives, namely, Mary Jones, Martha Morgan, and Jane Davis. He was the father of sixteen children,⁴ nine of whom reached maturity, namely, Abel John, William Samuel, Mary, Sarah, Catherine, Hyrum, Edward, Martha and Jane.⁵ Abel Evans was a man of considerable ability and was especially endowed with the gift of healing and discernment of spirits.

APPENDIX M

CHILDREN AND
GRANDCHILDREN OF
ABEL EVANS¹

Abel Evans and Mary Jones (1827–1895)

1. Elizabeth Ann Evans (1851–1851)
2. Abel John Evans (1852–1939) –Louisa Emeline Zimmerman
 1. Mary Emeline Evans (1874–1875)
 2. Harriet Mindwell Evans (1876–1957) - Heber Charles Webb
 3. Abel John Evans (1877–1896)
 4. William Erastus Evans (1879–1959) - Ada Wilkins
 5. Robert James Evans (1881–1967) - Alice Hazel Stallings
 6. Hulda Jane Evans (1883–1887)
 7. Rose Ethel Evans (1885–1948) - Angus Elmer Peterson
 8. Sarah Louisa Evans (1888–1892)
 9. Hazel Julia Evans (1891–1986) - George Ferosha Holmstead
 10. Vervene June Evans (1894–1919)
 11. Winnifred Erma Evans (1897–1963) - Edward B. Sorenson
3. William Samuel Evans (1855–1935) - Martha Geneva Clark
 1. Geneva Jane Evans (1875–1960) - Owen Thomas Stewart
 2. William Abel Evans (1876–1974) - Mary Elizabeth Johnson
 3. John Samuel Evans (1878–1960) - Maud Viola Collet
 4. Mary Pearl Evans (1880–1978) - Joseph Benedict Watson
 5. Rose Leath Evans (1882–1894)
 6. Hyrum Clark Evans (1885–1965) - Elizabeth L. Robinson
 7. Juliett Evans (1887–1980) - Charles Hyrum Goates
 8. Sylvester Evans (1889–1984) - Mary Ann Edith Smith
 9. Maria Evans (18191–1911) - William Tidd

10. Ina Jean Evans (1893–1939) - Elmer J. Teijen
11. Reta Evans (1894–1918) - Basil Jonas Dorton
12. Laverde Evans (1897–1951) - Golden Marion Adams
4. Evan Jones Evans (1857–1857)
5. Mary Evans (1858–1932) - Thomas Webb
 1. Thomas George Webb (1883–1965)
 2. Effie May Webb (1887–1976) - Raymond Roberts
 3. Sarah Dora Webb (1893–1945) - Valorius Zimmerman
6. Sarah Jones Evans (1860–1952) - William Sabey
 1. Mary Jane Sabey (1878–1885)
 2. William Sabey (1880–1885)
 3. Catherine Pearl Sabey (1882–1946) - John Brown
 4. Hyrum Isaac Sabey (1884–1979) - Elnora Bennett, Agnes Beswick
 5. Christian Joshua Sabey (1887–1887)
 6. Gerald Sabey (1889–1889)
 7. Armand Verner Sabey (1890–1952) - Effie Passey, Sarah Elizabeth James
 8. Christie Sarah Sabey (1892–1965) - Levi Linus Harker
 9. Abel James Sabey (1896–1989) - Genevieve Toomer
 10. Evan Lloyd Sabey (1899–1988) - Theta Eliza Rich
 11. Charles Franklin Sabey (1903–1981) - Zella Mae Harris
 12. Valentine Evans Sabey (1906–1960) - Helen R. O'Brien
7. Catherine Jones Evans (1862–1940) - William Richard Yates
 1. William Delroy Yates (1885–1968)
 2. Sarah Yates (1888–1932) - Charles Francis Gilbert
 3. Mary Yates (1890–1892)
 4. Isaac Evans Yates (1893–1965)
 5. Gwen Dora Yates (1895–1983) Arthur Lewis
8. Hyrum Jones Evans (1846–1951) - Lillian Mary Yates
 1. Mary Elizabeth Evans (1893–1987) - Roy Keith, Joseph Kirkland
 2. Hyrum Vivian Evans (1895–1969) - Thelma Anderson
 3. Geneva Catherine Evans (1897–) - Charles Mercer
 4. Thomas William Evans (1899–1928) - Vera Morse
 5. Abel John Evans (1903–1971) - Agnes Carson
 6. Lillian Ladeen Evans (1907–) - Joseph Davis, Ernest Reader
 7. Zona Emeline (1912–) - Theo Walker, Walter Steiner

8. Alice DeVere Evans (1915–) - Carl Flygare, Charles E. Oliver
9. Elisha Glen Evans (1919–) - Alice Christianson

Abel Evans and Martha Morgan (1823–1897)

1. Margret Martha Evans (1855–?)
2. David Morgan Evans (1857–1858)
3. Miriam Evans (1859–1859)
4. Edward Morgan Evans (1859–1947) - Eva Christine Ottesen
 1. Eva Mable Evans (1886–1918) - Alfred Hugo Martin
 2. Martha Ann Evans (1887–1945) - Leroy Purser
 3. Ivy Jane Evans (1890–1984) - Leroy Harwood Spencer
 4. Edward Orville Evans (1892–1939) - Ruby Lea Cheney
 5. Abel Linwood Evans (1894–1967) - Mary Lawson
 6. Sarah Catherine Evans (1897–1978) - Joseph W. McNeil
 7. Emma Elizabeth Evans (1900–1957) - Curney Carlsen
 8. Lydia Lenora Evans (1903–1936) William Earl Brown
 9. Twila B. Evans (1910–1973) - Alan Francis Cordery
5. Martha Evans (1861–1906) - George Charles Phillips
 1. George Phillips (1881–1955) - Christina Elizabeth Harrison
 2. Charles William Phillips (1883–1956) - Elizabeth A. Francis
 3. Edward Phillips (1886–1886)
 4. Able “J” Phillips (1887–1967) - Emma Goates
 5. Martha Edna Phillips (1889–1975) - George Walter Hunter
 6. Eliza Blanch Phillips (1891–1980) - George Boyes Andrus
 7. Julia Ann Phillips (1893–1966) - Everett Elydore Anderson
 8. Lillian Jane Phillips (1894–1976) - William Chaffin
 9. Leatha Livona Phillips (1896–1951) - Laurel Rock
 10. Ida May Phillips (1898–1989) - Peter Daniel Christensen
 11. David Evans Phillips (1900–1965) - Alice May Scorey
 12. Alice Violet Phillips (1903–1982) - Wesley Roe Harding
6. Ann Evans (1863–?)

Abel Evans and Jane Davis (1837–1871?)

1. Jane Evans (1865–1888) - Abraham Gudmundsen
 1. Abel Gudmun Gudmundsen (1885–1946) - Mary Jane Wall
 2. Isaac Leslie Gudmundsen (1887–1889)
 3. Mary Jane Gudmundsen (1888–1957) - Gilbert Sager, Lloyd Stone

NOTES

CHAPTER NOTES

Chapter 1—From Farm to Mine

1. Genealogical research conducted by Etheleen B. Evans, Orem, Utah.

2. Endowment House Records, Historical Division, Library Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. Hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives.

3. The move to Merthyr Tydfil would have been made after the birth of Abel's brother Jason in 1821 at Dyffryn Marlais, a farm not far from Castell Draenog, and before the birth of their sister Elizabeth in 1826 in Merthyr Tydfil.

4. Brigham Young to his wife, Mary Ann Young, letter dated November 12, 1840, Blair Collection, University of Utah. See also "The Welsh and the Gospel," by Ronald D. Dennis in *Truth Will Prevail: The Rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the British Isles, 1837–1987*, edited by V. Ben Bloxham, James R. Moss, and Larry C. Porter (Cambridge: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), pp. 236–267.

5. LDS Church Archives.

6. *Y Bedyddiwr* (The Baptist), March 1844, p. 99. This was one of several religious periodicals that regularly published anti-Mormon information.

Chapter 2—An Intelligent and Gifted Young Man

1. *Y Bedyddiwr*, April 1844, p. 123.

2. *Udgorn Seion* (Zion's Trumpet), May 3, 1851, p. 135.

3. *Y Bedyddiwr*, April 1844, p. 124. Davies's implication here is unclear.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Roberts entitled his record "The First Establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of LDS (in Wales) at Penydarren, Glanmorganshire." Penydarren is contiguous to Merthyr Tydfil.

6. This would most likely be the Taff River, which runs through Merthyr Tydfil.

7. *Y Bedyddiwr*, April 1844, p. 124.

8. Because Evans is a very common name in Wales and because the listing of Mormon converts gives only names and dates, it is not conclusive that the John Evans baptized on February 17, 1844, was Abel's brother. The only Evans female listed for the month of February, however, is Phoebe ("Pheb." as Edward Roberts recorded it). Perhaps this is a sister of Abel's whose christening record has not been identified.

Chapter 3—Preaching New Principles

1. "Margaret Morris Mathews," unpublished manuscript, n.d.

2. Treboeth LDS Branch Records, pp. 3–4, LDS Church Archives. Also "The Perkins Family History," compiled by Lyman de Platt (n.p.: Private publication, 1975).

3. *Early Scenes in Church History*, eighth book of the Faith-Promoting Series (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), p. 63.

4. Thomas D. Giles, Journal, English translation and typewritten transcript, p. 2.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

6. Andrew Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co., 1914), 2:507.

7. Journal History of the British Mission, LDS Church Archives.

8. The death certificate for Anne Evans shows that the cause of her death was phthisis or pulmonary tuberculosis.

9. Abel's brother Jason also emigrated to America, but he did not come as far as Utah. He settled in Ohio and raised a rather large family. As late as the 1960s Abel Evans's descendants had contact with Marjorie Coverdale, a descendant of Jason Evans. She mentioned having seen evidence that Jason had converted to Mormonism in Wales.

10. Catherine Powell appears in the 1841 British Census with her husband John and her children, Ann, Margaret, Elizabeth, William, and Jane. Then in the 1851 Census she appears as the wife of Samuel Evans; her daughter Jane is living with them.

11. Dan Jones to Thomas Bullock, letter dated January 20, 1855, p. [24], LDS Church Archives.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

13. *Millennial Star* 5:28.

14. Dan Jones, *Hanes Saint y Dyddiau Diweddaf* (History of the Latter-day Saints) (Merthyr Tydfil, 1847), p. 94.

15. *Millennial Star* 6:110.

16. *Y Bedyddiwr*, March 1846, p. 112. Full text is in Appendix E.

17. It did, however, appear in print about four months later in the first issue of *Prophwyd y Jubili*, July 1846, pp. 26–28.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Early Scenes in Church History*, p. 39. Evidence that Abel Evans's healing powers were remembered for decades following his death comes from an August 31, 1953, journal entry of Robert John Evans, grandson of Abel John Evans. Robert recorded that his father, Robert James Evans, was in Cedar City on business sometime in the 1920s when he was sought out by someone who had been a companion of Abel Evans in Wales. The gentleman, who by this time was quite elderly, recalled going with Abel to a town where there resided a member of the Church whose husband had forbade the missionaries from coming to his home. As they walked by this particular house they noticed a crippled boy, the son of the Church member and her husband, playing in the yard. Disregarding the husband's restriction, Abel took his companion into the house and asked the boy's mother if she had faith that her son could be healed. She said that she did, and Abel administered to the boy. That night when the boy's father returned home he said to his wife, "Those Mormons have been here again, haven't they?" His wife admitted that they had and that as a result their son was now healed. That same boy, according to the elderly gentleman in Cedar City who had been with Abel at the time and had witnessed the healing, was then grown and living in Cedar City.

21. *Y Bedyddiwr*, March 1846, p. 90.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, May 1846, p. 193.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 193–194. Also printed in *Prophwyd y Jubili*, September 1846, p. 2 of the wrapper.

25. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, September 1846, p. 78.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Y Golygydd* (The Editor), April 1846, pp. 89–90.

Chapter Four—From South to North and Back

1. Edward Giles Roberts, Journal, p. 10, holograph, LDS Church Archives. I am indebted to David A. Pretty, Pontypridd, for the translation of this journal.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
6. *Book of Remembrance of David and Catherine Roberts*, p. A-5.
7. *Ibid.*, p. A-6.
8. *Ibid.*, p. A-34.
9. "Life Sketch of David and Laura Peters," unpublished manuscript, n.d., p. 2.
10. *Millennial Star* 8:40-41.
11. *Y drych cywir, lle y gellir canfod yn eglur twyll y Mormoniaid* (The true mirror, wherein one can perceive clearly the deceit of the Mormons) (Carmarthen, 1847), p. [3].
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
14. Dan Jones's pamphlet consisted of eight pages, but because of the smaller typeface it is about the same length as the one published by the blind man.
15. "*Haman*" *yn hongian ar ei grogbren ei hun! neu Daniel Jones (ddall) a'i lyfr yn profi gwirionedd Mormoniaeth!!* ("Haman" hanging from his own gallows! or Daniel Jones [the blind] and his book proving the truth of Mormonism!!) (Merthyr Tydfil, [1847]), p. 4.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
18. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, November 1848, p. 171.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
21. *Millennial Star* 9:219.
22. The title of *Prophwyd y Jubili* was changed to *Udgorn Seion* in January 1849.
23. In the immediate vicinity was the Railway Inn on Plymouth Street with its somewhat smaller long room that was also frequently used for meetings during the 1840s and 1850s; the Railway Inn is still standing.
24. This number was 780 in Dan Jones's report to Manchester, mentioned in *Millennial Star* 8:41.
25. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, August 1846, p. 51.
26. *Ibid.* Eliezer Edwards would later settle in Goshen, Utah.
27. *Ibid.* Lamentably, the May 10, 1852, Cwmbach mine explosion would claim the lives of Ebenezer Morris, age 32, and his two young sons, David and John. He was serving as president of the Cwmbach branch at the time.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

31. York and Evelyn Jones, *Lehi Willard Jones—Biography* (Salt Lake City: Woodruff Printing Co., 1972), p. 6.

32. For a complete account of the 1849 crossings of the *Buena Vista* and the *Hartley*, see Ronald D. Dennis, *The Call of Zion: The Story of the First Welsh Mormon Emigration* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1987).

33. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, December 1846, pp. 161–163.

Chapter 5—Days of '47

1. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, January 1847, p. 16.

2. *Ibid.*, February 1847, p. 36.

3. *Ibid.*, March 1847, p. 51.

4. *Ibid.*, April 1847, p. 68. The scriptural reference is from Jude 3.

5. *Ibid.*, August 1847, p. 130.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

8. *Ibid.*, September 1847, p. 147.

9. *Ibid.*, October 1847, p. 161.

10. *Ibid.*, December 1847, p. 195.

11. *Ibid.*, January 1848, p. 10.

12. *Millennial Star* 10:24.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, January 1848, p. 11.

Chapter Six—Days of '48

1. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, March 1848, p. 43.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

4. Edward Lloyd Parry, *Biography*, unpublished manuscript, p. 1. The paragraph about his conversion is published in *George Brooks, Artist in Stone* by Juanita Brooks (n.p.: Private publication, 1965), p. 3.

5. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, May 1848, p. 70.

6. *A Genealogical and Historical Story of a Sturdy Pioneer, Joseph Parry* (n.p.: Private publication, 1988), p. 2.

7. The letter is part of the Thomas Jeremy manuscripts, LDS Church Archives. My thanks to R. Fred Roberts, Abergele, North Wales, for his invaluable assistance in the translation of this letter.

8. The comparison of the Saints in North Wales to “an army with banners” is taken from the Song of Solomon 6:10.

9. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, August 1848, p. 123.

10. Ibid., p. 124.
11. Ibid., p. 126.
12. Ibid., p. 127.
13. Ibid.
14. *Udgorn Seion*, April 1850, p. 108. Scriptural reference is Job 1:21.
15. *Millennial Star* 11:38.
16. Ibid., p. 39.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 40.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., pp. 40–41.
21. *Udgorn Seion*, January 1849, p. 19.
22. Eliezer Edwards was baptized five months earlier than Abel Evans.
23. *Udgorn Seion*, January 1849, p. 21.

Chapter Seven—First Counselor

1. *Udgorn Seion*, February 1849, pp. 41–42.
2. Ibid., March 1849, pp. 61–62.
3. John Parry, Jr., Journal, photocopy of holograph, LDS Church Archives, pp. 44–45.
4. *Early Scenes in Church History*, p. 38.
5. *Hanes ymfudriad y Saint i Galifornia* (An account of the Saints' emigration to California) (Merthyr Tydfil, 1849), p. 6. Complete English translation in *The Call of Zion*, pp. 146–168.
6. Ibid., p. 21. Complete English translation in Dennis, *The Call of Zion*, pp. 168–172.
7. *Udgorn Seion*, May 1849, p. 103.
8. Ibid., June 1849, pp. 119–120.
9. Ibid., August, pp. 154–156.
10. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, December 1848, pp. 187–188.
11. *Udgorn Seion*, February 1849, pp. 32–33. John Davies from Victoria is not to be confused with John Davis, the printer.
12. Ibid., August 1849, pp. 156–157.
13. Ibid., p. 163.
14. *History and Genealogy of Hugh and Mary Owens Roberts* (n.p.: Private publication, p. A–7).
15. Ibid.
16. *Udgorn Seion*, August 1849, p. 161.
17. Ibid., p. 162.
18. Ibid., August 1849, wrapper, p. 3.
19. Ibid., September 1849, wrapper, p. 3.

20. *Ibid.*, June 1849, wrapper, p. 4.
21. *Ibid.*, April 1849, p. 84.
22. *Ibid.*, October 1849, p. 204.
23. *Ibid.*, November 1849, p. 219.
24. *Ibid.*, December 1849, p. 239.
25. Parry, *Journal*, pp. 40–41. John Davis acknowledged having received an account of this incident on p. 2 of the wrapper of the December 1849 *Udgorrn Seion*. He laments the lack of space in the periodical, the reason for his not quoting the entire letter.
26. *Udgorrn Seion*, March 1849, p. 57.
27. *Ibid.*, November 18, 1854, pp. 569–570.
28. *Ibid.*, June 1850, p. 181.
29. Early Church Information File.
30. *Udgorrn Seion*, January 1850, p. 12.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
32. *Ibid.*
33. The phraseology is from Matthew 24:29 and Isaiah 24:21–22.
34. *Udgorrn Seion*, January 1850, pp. 18–20.
35. *Millennial Star* 12:90.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91.

Chapter Eight—From Babylon toward Zion

1. *Udgorrn Seion*, January 1850, wrapper, p. 3.
2. David Eames was the older brother of Nathaniel Eames, the only survivor in his cholera-stricken family the previous year as they made their way up the Missouri River to Council Bluffs.
3. My thanks to D. L. Davies, Aberdare, South Wales, for his invaluable assistance in translating these journal entries.
4. John Carver, *Journal*, typewritten excerpts.
5. Thomas Day, *Journal*, photocopy of holograph, Brigham Young University Archives, Harold B. Lee Library.
6. *Our Pioneer Heritage*, Vol. 12. Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1969.
7. *Early Scenes in Church History*, pp. 39–40.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
9. Ann Rogers Snow, *History*, by a granddaughter, photocopy of typescript, pp. 2–3.
10. *Udgorrn Seion*, July 1850, p. 187.
11. *Ibid.*, June 1850, p. 178.
12. *Ibid.*, July 1850, wrapper, p. 3.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 185–186.

Chapter Nine—First Two Years in America

1. Mary Jones Evans, History, unpublished typewritten manuscript.
2. See Chapter Eight, “From Babylon toward Zion,” for reasoning.
3. *Early Scenes in Church History*, p. 41.
4. Patriarchal Blessings, LDS Church Archives.
5. Ibid.
6. First Presidency Epistle, September 22, 1851, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives. As quoted in *Seeds of Promise*, by Clifford L. Ashton (n.p.: Private publication, 1983), p. 80.
7. *Udgorrn Seion*, August 7, 1852, pp. 259–260.
8. Rula D. Cash, History of Rachel Rowland, photocopy of holograph, p. 4.
9. David D. Bowen, Journal, photocopy of transcript, LDS Church Archives, pp. 29–30.
10. *Udgorrn Seion*, January 8, 1853, pp. 32–33.
11. Ibid., August 27, 1853, pp. 143–147.

Chapter Ten—Life in Lehi

1. Public Works Account Books 1848–1887, Time Book A, LDS Church Archives.
2. Family tradition has it that Bishop David Evans requested Abel and Mary to stay in Lehi to fill the need of a blacksmith. Hamilton Gardner’s *History of Lehi* (Salt Lake City: Lehi Pioneer Committee, 1913, p. 39), however, mentions that Joseph J. Smith had set up a blacksmith shop in Lehi at Bishop Evans’s request in the fall of 1851.
3. Abel John Evans was “John Abel” at first. His name appears in the 1856 Census as “John A.” And in the section entitled “Abel Evans Family” in Abel Evans’s red journal the name for the second child is “John Abel Evans.” Just who wrote these names is unclear; the handwriting is definitely not that of Abel Evans.
4. In Wales the term *city* was reserved for a settlement that was sufficiently large to have a cathedral of the Anglican church, and they would have considered Lehi nothing more than a village or possibly a small town.
5. Gardner, *History of Lehi*, pp. 18–19.
6. Ibid., p. 60.
7. Ibid., p. 241.
8. Ibid., pp. 66–67.
9. Ibid., p. 68.
10. Ibid., p. 55.
11. Ibid., p. 73.

12. Lehi City Council Minutes Book, Lehi Public Library, Lehi, Utah, p. 9.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Family tradition.
18. Lorenzo Hatch, Journal, Brigham Young University Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, p. 18.
19. No mother's name is given for any of the children. The Bible is in possession of Robert J. Evans, Ogden, Utah.
20. Gardner, *History of Lehi*, p. 92.
21. Early Church Information File.
22. Deeds, Book E, pp. 40–41, Utah State Archives.
23. *Ibid.*, Book D, p. 85.
24. Seventies Minutes, Lehi, p. 32.
25. Gardner, *History of Lehi*, p. 133.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Patriarchal Blessings, LDS Archives. Some words are missing at the bottom.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Endowment House Records.
30. Lehi Ward Records, LDS Church Archives.
31. Lehi City Council Minutes Book, p. 19.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Chapter Eleven—Back to Wales

1. Parry, Journal, p. 75.
2. Barry Wride, Journal, p. 30, typescript, Brigham Young University Special Collections.
3. Parry, Journal, p. 76.
4. Wride, Journal, p. 31.
5. Parry, Journal, pp. 76–82.
6. Wride, Journal, p. 65.
7. *Millennial Star* 27:508.
8. Parry, Journal, p. 85.
9. *Millennial Star* 27:543.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 683–684.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 716.
12. *Ibid.*, 28:83.

13. Ibid., p. 155.
14. Ibid., pp. 274–275.
15. Ibid., p. 297.
16. Ibid., p. 793.
17. Wride, Journal, p. 40.
18. Ibid., p. 41.
19. Elias Morris, Journal, photocopy of holograph, pp. 68–69.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 70.
22. *Millennial Star* 28:604.
23. Parry, Journal, p. 100.
24. Morris, Journal, p. 79.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., p. 81.
27. Parry, Journal, pp. 102–104.
28. Morris, Journal, pp. 82–83. The inscription was taken directly from the still-standing headstone, since Elder Morris neglected to transcribe it in his journal. On July 22, 1990, thanks to donations from some of Abel Evans's descendants, the headstone was cleaned and straightened. The Welsh Sesquicentennial Committee, in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Mormon missionary work in Wales, held a special ceremony at the gravesite of Abel Evans during which the grave was rededicated by Brother Ralph Pulman, president of the London Temple and former president of the Merthyr Tydfil Stake.
29. *Millennial Star* 28:793–794. Letter dated December 5, 1866.
30. John Parry to Mary Jones Evans, January 20, 1867, photocopy of the holograph.
31. Gardner, *History of Lehi*, p. 241.

APPENDIX NOTES

Appendix A—Mary Jones

1. 1841 Tithe Map, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. This is the only map on which I have been able to locate Pantyddwygraig.
2. For this story and all others in this appendix, I am indebted to Lillian Reader, Salt Lake City, and DeVere Oliver, Lehi, granddaughters of Abel and Mary.
3. *Udgorn Seion*, January 1849, p. 24.
4. Gardner, *History of Lehi*, pp. 363–364.
5. Ibid., p. 364.

Appendix B—Martha Morgan

1. Although her name does not appear in the 1851 British Census for Llansawel, she appears to have continued living in the area, because “1854” is given in the Llansawel branch records as the year of her emigration.

2. *Udgoron Seion*, February 11, 1854, pp. 93–95.

3. All the information in this paragraph is taken from the unpublished histories of John and Elizabeth Davis on the assumption that the Welsh Saints remained together after leaving the *Golconda* in New Orleans and that Martha was with them.

4. Margaret Martha’s name is also listed in the Evans family Bible and in Abel Evans’s little red journal. The handwriting in these two sources, however, is not Abel’s. The date of her birth in both sources is given as December 16, 1856. The year cannot be right since her name appears in the Utah Census taken ten or eleven months earlier.

5. Patriarchal blessings, LDS Church Archives.

6. “A few memories of our mother, Martha Evans Phillips,” unpublished, n.d. “Gramma” would be Selina Jenkins Evans, third wife of Samuel Evans.

7. Conversations with Edith Thompson and Erma Gardiner, descendants of Martha’s sister Margaret.

8. Patriarchal blessings, LDS Church Archives.

9. Lehi Ward Relief Society Minutes, LDS Church Archives.

10. The “s” was often part of the surname “Morgan” in the nineteenth century. This uncle may have been a brother to Martha and Margaret.

11. Patriarchal Blessings, LDS Church Archives.

12. Her gravesite has not been located by descendants.

Appendix C—Jane Davis

1. The “e” was often dropped from Davies when the Welsh arrived in America. The Welsh pronounce *Davies* and *Davis* identically. Hugh and Jane Hughes Davies were married by banns on July 18, 1834. My thanks to Madge Stoddard, Ogden, Utah, for her research on Jane Davis.

2. *Millennial Star* 22:29.

3. *An Enduring Legacy* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1978), 10:106.

4. Abel is said to have fathered sixteen children, but I can find records for just fifteen. The “missing” child may have been one that was born to Jane before her daughter was born on November 10, 1865.

5. Patriarchal Blessings, LDS Church Archives.

6. 1994 interviews with Lillian Reader and DeVere Oliver.

7. Jane Davis Evans's daughter, Jane, married Abraham Gudmundsen when she was about nineteen years old. She gave birth to three children between 1885 and 1888. She died on October 20, 1888, just two weeks after the third was born. Her oldest child, Abel, was raised by his maternal grandmother. Her second child, Isaac, died on November 4, 1889, a little over a year after Jane died. And her only daughter, Mary Jane, was raised by Jane's half-sister, Mary Evans Webb.

Appendix D—Samuel Evans

1. Early Church Information File.

2. Sarah Evans, daughter of Abel Evans and Mary Jones, declared on a pedigree chart submitted to the Genealogical Society sometime between 1924 and 1942 that Anne Hughes's mother was Leticia Mascie. Unfortunately, this is all the information available on the parentage of Anne Hughes.

3. Samuel declared in the 1851 British Census that he was an ironstone miner. He is listed as a collier on the *Golconda* shipping list.

4. A more detailed account of Abel's and Samuel's conversion is in Chapter Two, "An Intelligent and Gifted Young Man."

5. After the Marriage Act of 1836 Nonconformist ministers were authorized to perform marriages provided that they registered a building with the British government and that a registrar was present to record the information. Since the Mormons did not have their own building to register, they were not authorized to perform marriages in Wales. Samuel and Catherine obviously preferred an Independent minister to an Anglican vicar to give them their marriage vows.

6. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, January 1847, p. 17. The similarity of Welsh names makes it impossible to declare with absolute certainty that it was the Samuel Evans now being discussed, but it appears that it was.

7. For the two letters detailing the crossing to New Orleans written to Dan Jones by William Phillips and John Davis, see Appendix J. See Appendix B for the full text of Dan Jones's account of the departure and for information about the immigrants from the time they reached New Orleans until the time they began their trek across the plains.

8. Patriarchal Blessings, LDS Church Archives.

9. Blank spaces are in the original.

10. Actually Abel had been sealed to Mary and Martha on March 10, 1855, but that was before the Endowment House had been dedicated. Apparently Samuel was not with them on that occasion since his name is not in the Endowment House records as receiving any ordinances.

11. Early Church Information File.
12. The offensive American tendency to classify Wales as part of England obviously began many years ago.
13. Lehi Ward records.
14. Endowment House Records, LDS Church Archives.
15. Utah County Land Records, Book C, p. 193.
16. Lillian Reader and DeVere Oliver are daughters of Hyrum, the youngest child of Abel Evans and Mary Jones. Hyrum was only a few months old when Abel left on his mission in 1865.
17. In an interview, DeVere said it was Cove Fort.
18. Interviews with DeVere Oliver, February 7, 1994, and with Lillian Reader, April 28, 1994.
19. Lehi Ward Records.
20. Eudon Evans Wasden to Robert J. Evans, letter dated October 23, 1963.

Appendix E—Response of the Rev. W. R. Davies to the William Hughes Incident

1. *Y Bedyddiwr*, March 1846, pp. 111–112.
2. The pamphlet mentioned is Dan Jones's Welsh translation of *Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. The English version was first published in New York on April 6, 1845, then reprinted in Liverpool on October 22, 1845.

Appendix F—Reply of the Rev. W. R. Davies to the “Supposed” Letter

1. *Y Bedyddiwr*, March 1846, pp. 90–93.
2. The footnote in brackets is Davies's.

Appendix G—Response of Dan Jones to W. R. Davies about His “Forged Letter”

1. *Prophwyd y Jubili*, September 1846, pp. 78–84.
2. A reference to the editor of the Baptist periodical.
3. Brackets are mine. All other brackets, italics, and capital letters are Jones's.

Appendix H—Epistle of the First Council to the Welsh Saints

1. *Udgorrn Seion*, January 1850, pp. 10–14.

Appendix I—Letter of Thomas Day to Orson Pratt

1. *Millennial Star*, July 15, 1850, pp. 189–190. The letter is dated April 21, 1850.

2. In Thomas Day's journal, *Damina* is *Damaris* and *Robert Smith* is *Wm. Smith*. Journal entry is probably correct; the editor of the *Millennial Star* may have misread the letter.

Appendix J—Crossing of the *Golconda*

1. The writer of this letter was William Phillips, who had taken Jones's place as spiritual leader over the Welsh Saints five years earlier, just before Jones left with the first group of Welsh Mormon converts in 1849. In August of 1852 Jones had left the Salt Lake Valley to return to Wales, where he was to serve his second mission. And when Phillips was released in early 1854 to emigrate it was Jones who took his place.

2. The writer of this letter was John Davis, who had been set apart as second counselor to President Phillips at the same time Abel Evans was set apart as first counselor. During the five years he was in this position, between 1849 and 1854, John Davis served also as editor of *Udgorrn Seion*. Furthermore, he translated and published the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Book of Mormon from English into Welsh, all within a period of less than two years, truly an astounding accomplishment.

Appendix K—The Heroic Elder Abel Evans

1. This article by Elder H. Perry Driggs appeared in the *Millennial Star* for September 1963, pp. 237 and 243. Abel Evans's name is misspelled as "Able" throughout the article.

2. The sentence is ambiguous and erroneous. The first missionaries to Great Britain landed in Liverpool in July 1837. Elder Henry Royle and his companion, Frederick Cook, began proselyting in North Wales in October 1840, a short while after Elders Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball had been there. Elder James Burnham arrived in Liverpool from America on November 2, 1840, and apparently proceeded directly to North Wales for his first assignment.

3. This number should be 170, and nowhere in the conference minutes does it mention that they were all "active" members. See *Millennial Star*, April 1841, p. 302.

4. The source here appears to be the *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*.

5. See "Obituary by Franklin D. Richards" in Chapter Eleven, "Back to Wales," for a brief discussion concerning these numbers of baptisms.

6. He actually left in 1865.

7. I have omitted this letter, written by Franklin D. Richards, since it is quoted in its entirety in Chapter Eleven.

Appendix L—Biographical Sketch of Abel Evans

1. This brief sketch from volume 3 of the *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia* is correct for the most part. The first notable exception is this erroneous birthdate.

2. See Chapter One, “From Farm to Mine,” for evidence that he was a staunch Congregationalist.

3. Quite a number of people converted to Mormonism in Wales before Abel Evans. Prior to 1843 the converts came from areas bordering England. From William Henshaw’s proselyting efforts in the Merthyr Tydfil area Abel Evans was the ninetieth convert recorded in the list kept by Edward Roberts.

4. In my research I have identified fifteen children. But there could easily have been another child born to Abel and his third wife, Jane. They were married on May 4, 1861, and their first recorded child was born November 10, 1865. Perhaps one was born and died young during this interim.

5. William Samuel, Hyrum, and Edward are erroneously noted in the sketch as “William, Samuel” and “Hyrum Edward.”

Appendix M—Children and Grandchildren of Abel Evans

1. This information was gathered from the Ancestral File and from various descendants. I make no claim of total accuracy or completeness. My intent is to present an idea of the size of Abel Evans’s progeny, although he did not live to see his last child or any of his numerous grandchildren.

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