AMMON M. TENNEY
MORMON MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS

by

WINN WHITING SMILEY

The author is a Library Assistant at the Arizona Historical Society and has spent many years gathering information about her grandfather, Ammon M. Tenney. Her mother, Lurlene Tenney Whiting, was the youngest daughter of Ammon and Anna Tenney.

OF THE MANY Mormon missionaries who traversed Arizona during the 1880s, none was more dedicated than Ammon M. Tenney. For fifty years he endured cold, hunger, and danger to carry the message of Christ to the Indians of Arizona and the *mestizos* of Mexico. A blanket on the ground by a campfire became more familiar to him than his own bed and fireside at home.

Ammon Tenney began his missionary work at the age of fourteen by acting as an interpreter for Jacob Hamblin, apostle to the Indians, peacemaker, and Indian agent.[1] Hamblin's friendly attitude toward the Indians deeply influenced Tenney, and the young man developed strong personal feelings of affection and paternal concern for them. He communicated with them in Spanish, which he had learned as a child in San Bernardino, California.

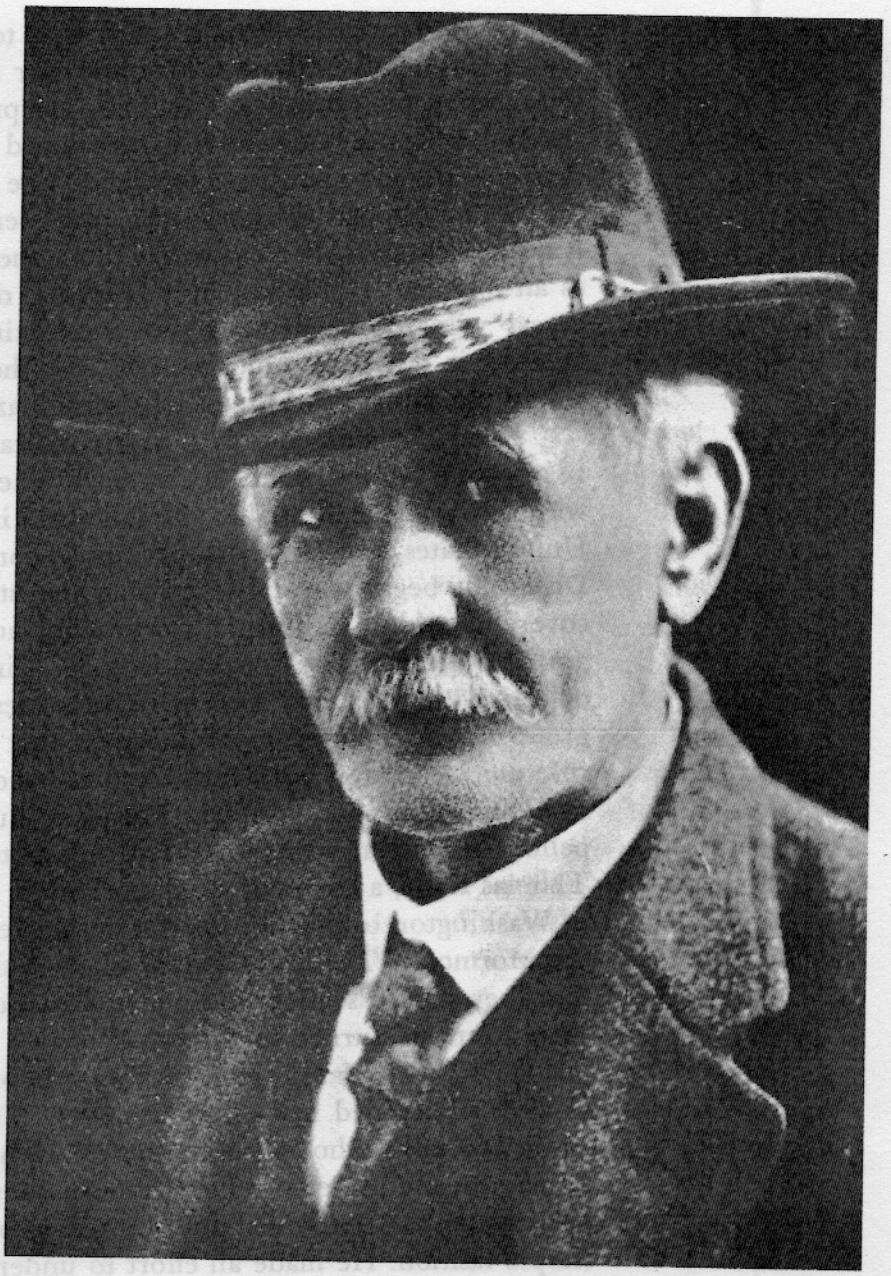
Ammon Tenney was born on November 16, 1844, in Lee County, Iowa, the second child of Olive Strong and Nathan Cram Tenney. His parents had come from western New York, and after joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1830, they followed the "gathering" from place to place to avoid anti-Mormon hostility. The Mormons were

industrious and different — the "elect of God," as they designated themselves — and seemed to threaten non-Mormons already established in an area.[2] The practice of polygamy further estranged them from others in the community.

When Ammon was just a year old, his mother carried him to join the Mormon exodus to the West because of anti-Mormon persecution. Their departure from Iowa began before dawn on February 4, 1846. It involved a movement of at least ten thousand church members and required four months to cross Iowa through winter snow and spring mud. The church leaders set up temporary headquarters near present-day Omaha, Nebraska, where they paused to organize for the journey to the far West. Six hundred of them died of exposure and disease in 1846.[3]

In the summer of 1847, after the death of Joseph Smith, Jr., founder of the Mormon Church, Brigham Young assumed leadership of the Church and led the first group of Mormons to the Salt Lake Valley in Utah, where he hoped his people could find freedom from persecution.[4] Nathan Tenney's family settled in Little Cottonwood, Utah, in 1848. They lived there until 1852, when they joined five hundred church members who went to San Bernardino, California, to settle that area. San Bernardino was to be a settlement on the Mormon Corridor, a route from Salt Lake City to San Diego which was expected to facilitate the movement of supplies and the coming of European converts by way of the Pacific.[5]

Ammon Tenney was seven when his family moved to California. They lived first in the "Old Mission House," which was originally constructed in 1822 and rebuilt in 1834 after it had been destroyed by Indians in 1831.[6] In April of 1852 a bowery was built for "a day school of one hundred scholars under the direction of two well qualified teachers. One of these was Hosea Stout; probably the other was the wife of Bishop Tenney [Olive Strong Tenney]."[7] While the Tenney family lived in San Bernardino, Ammon learned to speak Spanish from an orphaned Mexican boy adopted by his mother.



Ammon M. Tenney

In 1857 Brigham Young called back to Utah all the outlying settlements because a Mormon war seemed imminent. Once again an often-persecuted people prepared to defend themselves against Gentiles who threatened to invade territory they considered to be their homeland. The Mormons felt that this land belonged to them since they were the first Anglo-Americans to settle it. Before they came, the area was regarded as an obstacle in the path to California, due to its miles of desert wilderness and ranges of mountains. They chose it because it was harsh and remote, and they thought others would not want it because of its natural hazards.

From the time the first Mormons came in 1847 until 1849, Utah was without secular government. In accordance with the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo and in allegiance to the United States, the Mormons petitioned for territorial status. Dissension began within the territory almost immediately. Discovery of gold in California had brought non-Mormon immigrants to the territory. Men sent from Washington as territorial officers were alienated by the peculiarities of the Mormon group. They reported to Washington that Brigham Young's rule was completely autocratic. Anti-Mormon sentiment grew so strong in Washington that President Buchanan was compelled to send an army to the Mormon territory in 1857.[8] Thomas Kane, a friend of Brigham Young, used his influence in Washington to prevent altercation between the troops and the Mormons.[9] This near conflict showed the church leaders that they should seek more isolated areas for settlement, and their attention turned to Arizona.[10]

The Tenney family left San Bernardino during December of 1857 and settled in Cedar City, Utah. There Ammon met Jacob Hamblin, who had been sent to southern Utah to make peace with and proselytize the Paiute Indians. He lived among the Paiutes, ate their food and dressed in buckskins made in simple fashion. He made an effort to understand them, their customs, and religion.

When Brigham Young asked Hamblin to proselytize the Hopis and explore the area for the Mormons in October of 1858, Hamblin chose Ammon Tenney as interpreter because of Tenney's ability to speak Spanish. On this first visit to the Hopi villages, Hamblin used a Paiute named Naraguts as guide. He hoped on this expedition to substantiate a legend, familiar to many people in the United States, that men from Wales sailed to the New World in 1160 with three ships. Supposedly, they returned to Britain in 1163, saying they had found a beautiful land across the sea. The legend indicated that they set sail once more in 1164 with more men and ships, but were never heard from again. The Mormons believed that the Zunis, and possibly the Hopis, had words of Welsh origin in their languages because these men from Wales had encountered them and lived among them. James Davis, a Welshman, went along on the expedition to listen for Welsh words.[11] However, he did not report recognizing any words of Welsh origin. In his diary, Tenney described the departure of the group from Santa Clara settlement in southern Utah:

> The effulgent rays of a warming sun shone and my loving parents arose early from a sleepless night, their hearts had been swollen with emotion over my departure . . . for I was only fourteen years old, this coupled with the perils that they knew would be strewn at every turn of my pathway. . . . Our journey was tended with many hardships which for me were grievous to bear. I was required to take part in the labors and guarding of our animals at night. Owing to my tenderness in health and the kindness that had been given me at home I was unusually sensitive and my feelings were often lacerated or wounded but I had some friends in the company, especially Jacob, who fully appreciated my labors and his defense for me was often given in the following language, 'This little man has been our ears and tongue.'[12]

At the end of the third day they reached a spring flowing out from a low ridge of tumbled red buttes. They named the spring Pipe Springs[13] after William Hamblin, a good rifleman, shot the bowl out of the bottom of a tobacco pipe. The next camp was made at the foot of the Buckskin Mountains, where

the missionaries met some Paiutes who invited them to share a feast of roasted rabbit. The Indians agreed to meet them at the Colorado River, which they reached ten days later. Tenney described their crossing:

> We were accompanied by Naraguts, who acted as guide, and with nineteen warriors assisted us across what was known as the Crossing of the Fathers.[14] We were in the water about one mile wide. These warriors grasped each other's hands and stretched out in a line side by side, so they could aid and help to hold up the one or more who found it hard to swim the water. We remained in this one hundred foot line and would turn toward those that were seventy five yards ahead who were in the shallowest water and by doing so maneuvered our horses when they did not swim. Our suspense was lowered a little on reaching the eastern bank, though we were now in a no-man's land, to the land that had not been blessed and dedicated yet. I was only a child, still I remembered the teachings of my mother. I felt lonely and the longing that always follows homesickness.

The company moved carefully after crossing the river, traveling only at night and building no fires because they were afraid of the Navajos on the east side of the river. A serious mishap occurred when one night two pack animals escaped, carrying provisions with them. Two men stayed behind to search for the animals, but only one mule was recovered. Their food was almost gone when they came to the first mesa and found an Indian village, Oraibi, on its top.

Only a few Anglo soldiers and trappers had visited the Hopis before Hamblin's party arrived. They found a few persons in the village who could speak Spanish and a few more who spoke Ute, a language several of the missionaries understood. The Hopis welcomed them into their homes, provided food and shelter while the missionaries were visiting, and showed them other villages and their fields. They treated the Mormons hospitably, but could not spare food for the missionaries' return to Utah.

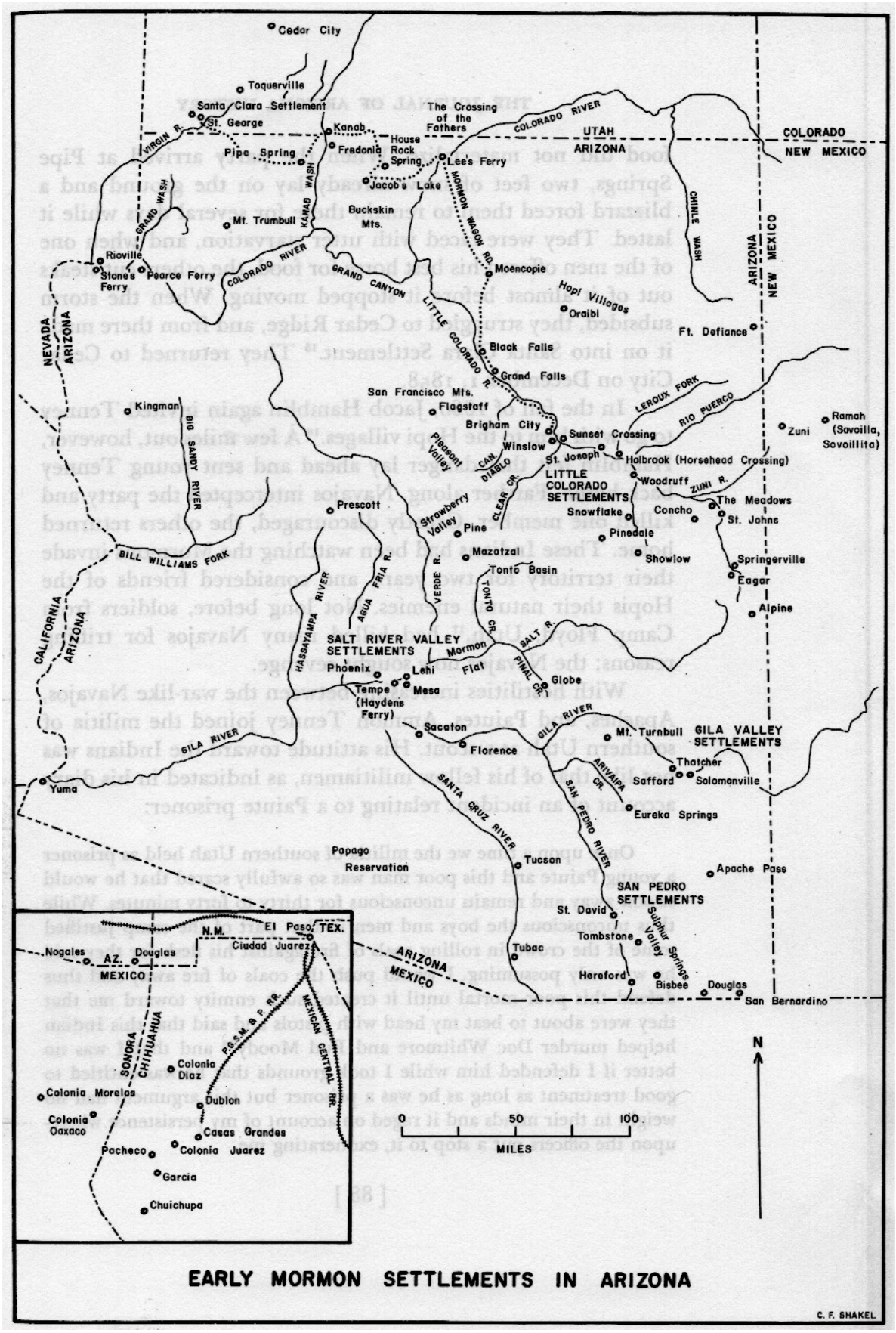
The return journey began on November 18, 1858, with very few provisions. Plans made earlier for the Paiutes to bring

food did not materialize. When the party arrived at Pipe Springs, two feet of snow already lay on the ground and a blizzard forced them to remain there for several days while it lasted. They were faced with utter starvation, and when one of the men offered his best horse for food, the others cut steaks out of it almost before it stopped moving. When the storm subsided, they struggled to Cedar Ridge, and from there made it on into Santa Clara Settlement.[15] They returned to Cedar City on December 1, 1858.

In the fall of 1860, Jacob Hamblin again invited Tenney to go with him to the Hopi villages.[16] A few miles out, however, Hamblin felt that danger lay ahead and sent young Tenney back home. Farther along, Navajos intercepted the party and killed one member. Greatly discouraged, the others returned home. These Indians had been watching the Mormons invade their territory for two years, and considered friends of the Hopis their natural enemies. Not long before, soldiers from Camp Floyd, Utah,[17] had killed many Navajos for trifling reasons; the Navajos now sought revenge.

With hostilities increasing between the war-like Navajos, Apaches, and Paiutes, Ammon Tenney joined the militia of southern Utah as a scout. His attitude toward the Indians was not like that of his fellow militiamen, as indicated in his diary account of an incident relating to a Paiute prisoner:

> Once upon a time we the militia of southern Utah held as prisoner a young Paiute and this poor man was so awfully scared that he would swoon away and remain unconscious for thirty to forty minutes. While thus unconscious the boys and men in that part of the camp justified some of the crowd in rolling coals of fire against his flesh for they said he was only possuming. I would push the coals of fire away and thus defend this poor mortal until it created such enmity toward me that they were about to beat my head with pistols and said that this Indian helped murder Doc Whitmore and Bud Moody[18] and that I was no better if I defended him while I took grounds that he was entitled to good treatment as long as he was a prisoner but this argument had no weight in their minds and it raged on account of my persistence whereupon the officers put a stop to it, exonerating me.



EARLY MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN ARIZONA

C. F. SHAKEL

At another time, Ammon, his father Nathan, and a man named Enoch Dodge found themselves surrounded by hostile Navajos. They were about eighteen miles west of Pipe Springs when the Indians attacked. The Mormons backed up to a cliff for protection and fought for an hour before running for better shelter. As they fled, Enoch Dodge was shot through the knee-cap with an arrow and Nathan fell and broke his shoulder bone. Ammon climbed an escarpment nearby, reached down with a rifle, and dragged the other two men up with him. They found a small crevice in which they hid until the Navajos stopped hunting for them. After dark they made their way into Duncan's Retreat on the Virgin River.[19]

In the same year Ammon Tenney found himself involved in another fight with the Navajos. Captain James Andrus rode into Toquerville, Utah, to get volunteers to retrieve cattle and horses stolen by marauding red men. He said the Indians had shot and wounded Mosiah Hancock in Pine Valley, and had picked up 200 head of cattle and horses. Andrus specifically asked for Ammon Tenney and insisted on having his help even after he was told that Ammon was seriously ill. The Bishop of Toquerville took Captain Andrus to the Tenney home to show him that Ammon was too ill to go. "No sooner had he reached our door," Tenney related, "than he began to make arrangements for our journey whereupon my loving mother began to cry and plead that it was utterly impossible for me to think of going."

The captain said Tenney would have to go even if they had to haul him in a wagon, as he was the only man available who knew the watering places and passes of the country. By the first night Tenney had improved sufficiently to stand guard. During the night he saw a small camp fire and notified the captain; camp was routed and they were ready to ride by day-break. Tenney led the company through a shallow wash within one and a half miles of the camp fire, then around a knoll that screened them from the Indians.

> When the fighting began the warriors took shelter in the crooked wash they had camped in. They were soon dislodged and they retreated up a low elevation. We saw one who secreted himself in the broken crevice of the wash in the hope of not being seen but the . . . camp retreating around him frightened him. He sprang forth and ran for his life. Instantly Captain Andrus called out an order to Mr. Warren to shoot that Indian. He was a new man in our country generally called up to this time a tenderfoot because he had not fired a gun, but just seemed dazed gazing with consternation at the awful deal of death and carnage around him. It was evident that he shot the man between the hip joints from the fact that the Indian slapped both his hands on his wound and continued to retreat, Mr. Warren having observed this gesture turned to the Captain and said, 'Do you think he meant to insult me?'
>
> The warriors who had reached this level top turned and faced eighty-four well-armed men. . . . As they were only thirteen warriors, this has ever been the most courageous and brave feat I have ever witnessed in all my experience.

The Indians escaped and Captain Andrus's company followed them for days. During that time there was only one encounter; one warrior was killed, but none of Captain Andrus's men was hurt.

In November of 1867, when Ammon Tenney was twenty-three years of age, he married Anna Eager.[20] They made their home in Toquerville, Utah, where the first two of their ten children were born. In 1870 they moved to Kanab, Utah. Nathan Tenney had maintained a herding ground for his sheep in the vicinity since 1863. Mormons had settled the Kanab area as early as 1864, and a fort had been started there in 1865.[21] After federal troops withdrew following the Civil War, Navajo raids became so persistent that Mormon settlers were forced to leave the area. They did not return until 1870, when Jacob Hamblin, Ammon Tenney, and others moved there.

In October of 1870, Tenney accompanied Hamblin and Major John Wesley Powell of the United States Geological Survey to Fort Defiance, Arizona.[22] They hoped to achieve peace with the Navajos and planned the visit for October when the Indians gathered to get their government rations. It was

necessary for the expedition to build a boat to cross the Colorado River, and they used two large cottonwood logs hewed to a thickness of three inches and the length of twelve feet. They shaped the underside of each in a rounded "v" and nailed one-by-eight-inch planks across them. The companies ferried the river at the mouth of the Paria River and traveled to the Hopi villages. In a few days Powell, his Hopi interpreter, and Tenney decided to go ahead of the others to Fort Defiance.

After riding only two hours toward Fort Defiance from Oraibi, they found they were being followed. Tenney wrote, "Two fine looking young men on fine horses and wearing much jewelry . . . dropped into line behind us obeying an unwritten law by leaving a distance between us." Tenney and the Hopi interpreter were afraid of their followers, but the major appeared to be calm and fearless. The travelers reached a place where the trail descended into a lower valley and "took a sudden turn to the east. From the top of our present situation we could see our trail lay parallel with an elevated bench land and as from an electric thunder cloud on a clear day our ears were saluted by a terrible war whoop, which reverberated in every corner, which made it appear to us that we were surrounded by an army of our would-be assassins. The Hopi interpreter's face was of a death-like hue . . . around his mouth was a froth, his whole appearance was distracted."

They dismounted and tightened their saddle girths. Tenney said he examined his repeater and,

> with a prayer on my lips prepared for death. As I lit from my saddle I saw two warriors leap from rock to rock toward the scene of action. I said to Major 'There they come, the first overt act on their part means war to me and I shall sell my life dearly.' I loaded my repeater and set the trigger at half cock and we took up our march as though nothing had happened, a bold move indeed. . . . The two behind us closed up with us, which at that tragic moment was equal to saying, 'We also want a hand in dispatching the booty.' A few rods brought them within twenty-five yards of the two raving maniacs who were approaching and at this critical moment our companions rode quietly around us and in an unusually mild tone talked to the approaching two and they reluctantly laid their guns down on the grass and came forward.

Powell dismounted, took two sacks of tobacco from his pack, and told Tenney to put up his guns. He walked over to the two men, slapped each on the back, and "with a hearty laugh handed them the tobacco."

Powell, Hamblin, and Tenney reached Fort Defiance the next day and were greeted by Captain Bennet, the United States Indian agent. A meeting was held at two o'clock that afternoon. Tenney estimated that eight thousand Navajos attended it. Through their interpreters, Powell and Hamblin described to the Navajos the hardships imposed on the whites by their raiding. They reminded the Navajos that Washington was trying to help them, but if the stealing of stock and the killing of whites was not stopped, Washington would send an army against them.

"What shall I tell my people?" Jacob asked, "Shall we live in peace and till the soil, raise cattle, horses and sheep and be friends or shall I tell my people that you want to live like wolves in the night and come prowling around instead of coming like friends?" This was translated into Hopi and then into Navajo by Lorenzo Hubbell.[23] The Indian agent, Bennet, talked next and asked for peace. He told the Navajos they should sign a document of reconciliation. Negotiations were continued the next day. Tenney could feel that a change had come over the Navajos during the night. "The excitement was terrible to witness. Their moves, their gestures, their war-like attitude as they rode the very animals they had stolen, flaunting them in our faces like saying, 'Here are your horses, take them if you can.' They laughed and sneered at us carrying a taunt of defiance over us." Chief Barboncito[24] explained that the animals had been traded many times and that it would be almost impossible to tell to whom they belonged. An agreement was finally reached allowing the Navajos to keep the stolen animals if they would maintain peace. In a few days, the Powell-Hamblin expedition started home, satisfied that they had accomplished their mission by obtaining peace. "Not withstanding," Tenney wrote, "I saw them riding my own horses that they had stolen from me."

In 1870 Ammon Tenney met Eliza Udall, whose family had settled in Kanab.[25] Ammon courted her and, with the consent of Anna, married her on Dec. 13, 1872. Anna's children said that she asked her husband to take a second wife, and that she believed she would be blessed by God for her belief in plural marriage.[26] It is true that she and Eliza shared a home, taking turns doing the cooking, week by week, for twenty years. The children of the two women said there was very little quarreling or family tension created by them. They remembered that they looked to Anna for nursing and care in time of sickness, and to Eliza to make the money needed when farm produce could not be traded for goods. She tanned hides and made them into gloves for the cowboys. During the years 1870–1874 Tenney built up a substantial ranching and cattle business near Kanab.

Between 1870 and 1873 there was peace on the Navajo-Mormon frontier. In January of 1874, however, four Navajos were caught in a snow storm while passing through the property of Mr. McCarty and slaughtered a calf to keep from starving. McCarty discovered them and killed three. The fourth, though wounded, got away to tell his friends of the murders. The Navajos thought McCarty was a Mormon because his ranch was in their territory, and they gathered for a council of war. When word reached the church leaders of the pending uprising, Brigham Young commanded that the Arizona missionary work be stopped.

The closing of the mission disturbed Hamblin and Tenney, who thought it would make the Navajo leaders lose respect for the Mormons. Hamblin appealed to the local church leaders to allow several missionaries to go with him and Tenney to restore peaceful relations. It was decided the missionaries would also help establish a settlement at Moenkopi, a spring near the Hopi villages. A letter from the church, dated December 28, 1874, instructed them to proceed. They were to map the country as they traveled through it, noting distances and watering places, and describing their journey for future reference.

Tenney and Hamblin met with Navajos at the spot where the McCarty murders took place, and proved to them that Mormons were not implicated. With the settlement of this affair the Mormons entered a period of peace with the Navajos that continued into the next century. The church felt that it was safe to begin to settle Arizona permanently.

In the fall of 1875 Tenney was asked by the church officials to go on a mission to southern Arizona and northern Mexico. He noted in his diary, "I relieved myself of all financial obligations and true to the spirit woven in every bone of my body made ready to join the missionaries." The group, under the direction of Daniel W. Jones, set out in October of 1875. Tenney guided them to the Colorado River crossing at Lee's Ferry.[27] From the Hopi villages they went on to the Little Colorado River, then took the mail wagon road to Prescott. The first night after leaving the Little Colorado River they camped at a mail station where they met two men who gave them information about the country ahead.

Finding the Pine mail station deserted, they continued to the Salt River Valley and were agreeably surprised to find Phoenix a green spot on the desert. There was no feed for their horses, however, so they went on to Hayden's Mill (Tempe), where they were allowed to graze their animals. At Sacaton on the Pima Indian Reservation Tenney discussed the Mormon religion with those who spoke Spanish. The Pimas expressed a desire for the Mormons to come to their country to live.[28]

With a letter of introduction to Governor Safford from Charles T. Hayden, the missionaries traveled to Tucson with the intention of going into Mexico to work among the Yaqui Indians. They learned, however, that the Yaquis were too warlike at that time to be visited. They decided instead to visit the Apaches, and Governor Safford provided them with a letter of introduction to Apache Pass Indian Agent Tom Jeffords, who allowed them to talk to his charges. The missionaries got no response from the Indians and continued east to El Paso, where Tenney and another missionary turned north to work in New Mexico. The others went into Mexico.

Anna Sariah Eager Tenney, first wife of Ammon Tenney.

Ammon Tenney with his second wife, Eliza Udall. The photograph was made in Mexico City in 1902.

At Zuni Tenney met other missionaries from Utah. In March of 1877 his father, Nathan Tenney, came to the Woodruff area[29] where he and two of Ammon's brothers, Sam and Arthur, established Tenney's Camp. In the summer of 1877 they exchanged their holdings at Woodruff for land near Ramah, New Mexico, which was called Savoia and Savoita [Cebolla and Cebolleta]. The Tenneys traveled to and from the Little Colorado River settlements[30] as they proselyted, sometimes stopping at the Mexican town of St. Johns. Ammon Tenney traded for the Bar S or Windmill Ranch a few miles west of Zuni. His wives joined him and they lived there until 1882.

Brigham Young appointed Ammon Tenney president of the Arizona-New Mexico Indian Mission in 1876 and asked him to locate sites for Mormon settlements. Tenney suggested the Meadows on the Little Colorado River a few miles northwest of St. Johns, and Concho on Concho Creek fifteen miles west of St. Johns. The first Mormons came to the Meadows and Upper Concho in 1879.

In August of 1879 Apostle Wilford Woodruff from Salt Lake City visited the Tenney ranch to discuss the purchase of land for a settlement in St. Johns adjacent to the Mexican town. Later Tenney drew up a bill of sale with Solomon Barth, his brother Morris Barth, and Marcus Baca of St. Johns. The deed gave to the Mormons "all the land and water including the bridge situated at the upper end of the town of St. Johns and the river with its appurtenances."[31] Tenney sent a copy of the bill to Woodruff in Snowflake, Arizona, and after careful consideration Apostle Woodruff gave his approval for the purchase.

The first Mormon village at St. Johns was laid out one mile north of the Mexican town. When David K. Udall was made Bishop, the town was moved to higher ground adjacent to the townsite of the Mexican village. This move disturbed the original St. Johns settlers, and thirty of them signed a note of protest written to Udall by Justice of the Peace Marcus Baca stating that they needed this area for continued expansion:

> Every townsite is entitled to this especially every Catholic town which has its rights by antiquity.... The object of this is to notify you

that you had better give it more thoughtful deliberation and desist desiring to establish the members of the Mormon Church in said place. We see in your determination only the intention of surrounding and oppressing us, this is your object. . . . We will place all the means in our power and within our reach to impede the establishment of the Mormons in the surroundings of this town.[32]

Bishop Udall replied that if they desired, Tenney would meet with the Mexicans to explain the surveying of the town. Tenney was the natural spokesman for the Mormon group. He understood the terms of sale of the townsite and he spoke Spanish. There is no record of what he told the Mexican people, but the settlement was not moved and this incident was the beginning of an antagonism that lasted many years between the Mormons and the Mexicans. The majority of the Anglo settlers living in St. Johns were also bitterly anti-Mormon, "some of them having taken part in driving the Saints from their homes in Missouri." In addition, early Mormon settlers faced other trials in St. Johns. They existed the first year largely on barley obtained from the Sunset community. Floods had washed away most of the crops of other settlements.[33]

In the spring of 1880, Tenney, Jesse N. Smith, and John W. Young signed a contract with the Atlantic Pacific Railroad Company to lay tracks between Ysleta, New Mexico, and Holbrook, Arizona.[34] "The incentive for getting employment for the brethren was so they might be able to get a little provisions during this period of scarcity of bread. They had taken a contract to grade five miles a little east of the Continental Divide, and would probably take more when that was done as this was to enable the people to get some flour."[35] A supply store and a boarding house were set up for the railroad workers by the contractors, and Tenney handled the freighting for the company, bringing supplies from Albuquerque. Tenney also was in charge of the Mexican and Indian laborers.

The antagonism which resulted from the purchase and settlement of land at St. Johns convinced Tenney and Apostle Woodruff that the Mormons needed political representation

in Apache County.[36] Apache County was formed early in 1879, and the first election was held on June 2 of that year. The main point of controversy then was the location of the new county seat. In describing the issues, Joseph Fish said "one party wanted it at St. Johns and the other party wanted it at Springerville. The Mormons did not take much interest in this quarrel over the county seat, but the party that favored Springerville also favored the Mormons to some extent." Fish was one of the election judges. "It was evident," he wrote, "that the Springerville ticket had a majority of the legal votes, but there had been a great amount of fraud practiced in some of the precincts and through this fraud the St. Johns, or Barth ticket as it was called, had a large majority."[37]

In order to be prepared for the next election in November of 1880, Woodruff suggested that Tenney form an alliance with Solomon Barth to secure votes for Mormon candidates.[38] In August of 1880, Jesse Smith withdrew from the firm of Young, Smith & Tenney, and before moving his family back to Snowflake, he asked Tenney to make arrangements with Barth to avoid a split between the Gentiles and Mormons. However, Tenney became so involved with the railroad work that he did not see Barth, nor did he report to Smith. Not hearing from Tenney, Smith went ahead and set up a ticket at a Snowflake convention. On September 8, Lorenzo Hubbell visited Tenney to discuss the election, and Tenney, not knowing of the arrangements made in Snowflake by Smith, pledged the vote of the Mormons to the ticket set up by Hubbell and Tenney. During the election, the existence of two tickets caused a bitter fight and all the Mormon candidates lost. . . . "Brother Tenney felt very much hurt over this affair and he resigned his position as President of the Indian Mission."[39]

By the end of December, 1880, most of the workers had left the railroad job and the company was ready to close the contract. On February 1, 1881, when Joseph Fish balanced the Young and Tenney company books for the month of January, he found that sales amounted to $23,000, including sup-

plies forwarded to Holbrook. John W. Young had a contract to carry the railroad on to Winslow without Tenney.[40]

Tenney returned to his ranch and raised sheep for the next year, but in March of 1882 he moved to St. Johns. Like other small sheep ranchers of the area he failed because large sheep companies were invading the country and pushing out those with small holdings. He tried farming next, on a homestead fifteen miles south of St. Johns. He also maintained a home in St. Johns where his mother and father lived. In January of 1882 his mother died; in the summer of the same year his father was killed during a dispute between cowboys and Mexicans of the area.

The cowboys had marked a Mexican with an ear "underslope," as cattle are marked, because he was found stealing one of their colts. When the cowboys entered the Mexican part of town on San Juan's day, June 24, 1882, a gun fight began. No Mormons were involved in the fight, but since Nathan Tenney spoke Spanish and knew the Mexicans involved, he attempted to get the men to stop firing at each other. During a lull in the shooting, he persuaded the cowboys to surrender to the sheriff. He was trying to put a stop to the fight when a bullet, fired from the Mexican side, struck him in the neck, killing him instantly. The bullet was probably intended for a cowboy.

When the shooting stopped, the cowboys were threatened with lynching, but the sheriff managed to prevent it. Their case was taken to court at Prescott, where they escaped with a light sentence. David K. Udall wrote, "Nathan Tenney's death was mourned by both sides and the Mormons. . . . All of the Tenney family spoke Spanish and were friends to the Mexican people who grieved with us over this sad affair."[41]

In the summer of 1883, the Mormons began printing a newspaper called the *Orion Era* to defend themselves against anti-Mormon attacks in other Apache County papers.[42] Some of the editorials expressed a distinct fear of the Mormons. "In a year from now the Mormons will have the power here and

Gentiles had better leave. Don't let them get it," *The Apache Chief* said.[43] According to Joseph Fish, the anti-Mormons

> commenced their persecutions of our people for polygamy. Ammon M. Tenney was arrested for polygamy, and they watched his house for sometime day and night to get some of his family. He was taken before U.S. Commissioner George A. McCarter who was the editor of *The Apache Chief* and was bound over to await the action of the Grand Jury at Prescott. McCarter did not intend to show any leniency to our people in these cases and did not take any evidence to bind them over. Others were soon arrested and all served the same.[44]

The first federal law against polygamy was passed in 1862 and was called the Anti-bigamy Act, but it had no teeth in it for enforcement. In 1879 the Supreme Court ruled that religious freedom did not permit misuse of social life or marriage, and that since society was built on marriage, the Anti-bigamy Act of 1862 was constitutional. In 1882 Senator George Edmunds sponsored a bill that disenfranchised polygamists and made plural marriage a crime.[45] Polygamy went underground.

Apache County was not a good retreat for polygamists, though many came there to hide from the law in Utah. Polygamy became the legal stick that anti-Mormons used to bully the Mormons without fear of being brought to task by law-abiding citizens of the county. Most polygamists fled to Mexico or sent their wives away to live with relatives.

Ammon Tenney, Charles Kempe, and Peter J. Christopherson stood trial for polygamy in Prescott and were sentenced to three and a half years in the House of Correction in Detroit, Michigan. Joseph Fish wrote that

> the highhanded way that the brethren were convicted at Prescott and the heavy sentence imposed upon them showed plainly that there was no regard for law and to be accused was to be convicted. Judge Sumner Howard evidently violated and disregarded the law in the conviction of the brethren at Prescott. To cover up the act and to turn minds of the people against the Saints, he, during the term of the court, commenced lecturing of evenings against the Mormons.[46]

Tenney and the others left for Detroit on December 7, 1884, and remained there almost two years until they were pardoned

for good behavior. The three rode a freight train home from Detroit.

Apache County politics went through a very corrupt period while Tenney was in prison. The driving of cattle to Arizona from Texas brought renegades of the worst kind. The Hashknife company, one of the largest in Arizona, began operations in Apache County in 1885. Its employees, many of whom took part in Apache County politics, left much to be desired. Though law breakers were brought into court, they were rarely punished for their crimes. By 1886 they had made a real art of cattle stealing in Apache County.

The Mormons suffered from the corrupt political situation in Apache County. The arrival of increasing numbers of Mormon settlers, however, made them a formidable power at the polls, thereby arousing "intense hatred and jealousy on the part of those who were in power," according to David K. Udall. "A vicious anti-Mormon political organization came into existence."[47] This group had as its chief aim the prevention of all Mormons from holding public offices. The renegade cowboys and the corrupt office holders combined to create disgust and consequently a desire for better conditions. The law-abiding citizens of Apache County joined forces in 1886 at a political convention in Winslow and drew up a ticket of law-abiding candidates. Every candidate except one was elected.

Before Tenney returned to Apache County in November of 1886, the county treasurer, who was accused of robbing the county of $11,000, had been removed from office. The days of the "Knights Errant" of the canyon and cienega, who found it easier to pillage the treasury than make an honest living, were gone. Tenney came back to a county which had wiped its slate clean and was ready to start a new era, in spite of an indebtedness of $130,000 caused by corrupt politicians.

Tenney remained in Apache County less than a year. With Christopherson and Gilbert D. Greer, another missionary, he answered a call from the Church to do missionary work among the Papagos. They began the journey on November 30, 1887,

with the following items listed by Tenney in his journal: a tent, cooking utensils, two horses, a mule, a light wagon, and one saddle. The wagon and tent were home to Tenney and his companions for the following year. They went to southern Arizona by way of Safford, then traversed the Papago country from one end to another, even going into Mexico as far south as Caborca. Tenney wrote that he had either walked, gone on horseback, or traveled in a wagon 5,000 miles during the year.

After this missionary trip, Tenney was penniless, so he borrowed money to go to Colonia Diaz, Mexico, where he found a job running a saw mill.[48] Eliza went to visit her father in Utah. Anna and the children came to Colonia Diaz for the summer. After they returned for schooling in St. Johns, Tenney lived with the J. J. Adams family. In March of 1890 he married Hettie Adams, one of the daughters of the family. Hettie and Tenney had ten children, the youngest born after Tenney was sixty years old.

Tenney and Hettie moved from Colonia Diaz to Colonia Dublan in 1895. Eliza went with them, but Anna remained in Colonia Diaz with her children. In 1901 the Church asked Tenney to go on another mission, this time to Mexico City. He boarded the train in July and remained there until January of 1903, working largely in the outlying agricultural areas. When he returned to Colonia Dublan, the family was in dire financial need, so he began freighting and farming to earn a living.

Tenney also found time to work as a missionary among the natives of the surrounding area. He often was asked to settle disputes between the Mormon colonists and the Mexican converts. He knew the converts felt tyrannized by some of the Mormons and were ill-prepared to defend themselves. When he took their side against the offending Mormons, his fellow colonists rarely could see the side of the Mexican convert.

During one such incident, the son of a wealthy Mormon merchant teased and beat a Mexican named Zuñiga, who then asked Tenney for help. Tenney tried to get action for Zuñiga

but was unsuccessful. He wrote in his journal that whenever he undertook to explain the Mexican side of any question, "there seems to be a spirit among the brethren that I am partial and can only see their side of the question and this has always been my lot."

As early as 1906 Tenney felt the stirrings of a revolution in Mexico, and noted that there seemed to be "quite a following against the rulers of this nation, against the policy adopted and urged upon the people." The unsettled element complained about the establishment of foreign capital on Mexican soil, and claimed that they intended "to drive out all foreigners as a stepping stone to a revolution," Tenney wrote. He regretted that this feeling existed, "for surely this part of Mexico is making long strides towards that civilization that brings peace to every door . . . should an uprising occur in our land we colonists would be the greatest sufferers from the fact that we have more invested in this our adopted soil."

When the revolution did begin, neither the Federalists nor the Revolutionists bothered the Mormon colonies except to buy or take their farm produce. Civilian rioters and looters let loose by the revolution, however, made the colonists' life in Mexico unbearable. "My family has been driven by force from our homes and all our accumulations of a life-time [are gone]," Tenney wrote. The Mexicans "began rioting and looting indiscriminately . . . we were compelled to either leave and flee to the mountains or shed the blood of our fellow men. . . . Nine of them came into my house and one about seventeen years old held me under a cocked pistol while the remainder looted my home. We the men of the town met at the tithing office with the object in view of retreating into the Sierra Madres where we were to join a complete exodus of all the colonies."

After waiting four or five days in the mountains for other colonists, they began their march towards the United States, crossing the international boundary at Dog Springs in July of 1912. Before reaching the line, the Mormons were frightened

by the appearance of a suspicious-looking group of Mexicans who joined the group. An uproar developed when a Mormon noticed one of the Mexicans riding his horse, and seized it. The Mormons wanted to leave the Mexican without transportation. "Let the Black Devil go afoot," they said. Tenney, however, argued that "the Mormons should not treat the Mexicans like the Mexicans treated them." He offered to give the Mexican his own horse if the Mormons left him afoot. They reconsidered and gave the horse back to the Mexican.

After camping at Dog Springs overnight, they marched to Hachita; from there they were sent to El Paso and given food, shelter, and money enough to transport them to any location in the United States. The United States government allowed the refugees $100,000 to enable them to get settled. Ammon and Hettie went to live with friends in El Paso; Eliza went to live with a married daughter in Thatcher, Arizona; Anna traveled with Fred Whiting, her future son-in-law, first to Utah, then to St. Johns, where he built her a home.

Tenney spent most of the remaining years of his life in Mesa and El Paso. He yearned to give further help to the converts he had made around the colonies in Mexico so he crossed the border in October of 1914 to obtain an audience with General "Pancho" Villa. Though kind to him, Villa did not help. In 1920 Tenney procured a letter of introduction from Governor Campbell to the Governor of Sonora, from whom Tenney wished to ask for help in settling the Chihuahua converts on land of their own. He traveled by train to Sonora, but got no help there either.

Governor Campbell's letter, which Tenney copied into his diary, serves as a good summary of the life of Ammon Tenney: "As early as 1858 he was among the Indians in the missionary capacity and in the following year he was a member of the party of the first white men to cross the Rio Grande del Norte [Colorado River] at El Vado de los Padres since the Franciscans crossed in 1776. . . . He was a guide for Major

Powell, the great explorer of the Grand Canyon. . . . Especially there must be consideration for Mr. Tenney as a colonizer. He was active in the establishment of colonies in southern Utah, northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico and in northern Mexico. . . ."

Ammon Tenney believed that the only task worthy of his time and energy was service to those less fortunate than himself. As he reviewed the days of his life, the ones he considered well-spent were passed in helping others. Though his zeal to help the Indians and Mexicans may have been inspired by a desire to convert them to the Mormon way of life, it was genuine. He made every effort to understand their ways and needs and thereby aid them. He died in Mesa, Arizona, on October 4, 1925, and was buried in Thatcher, Arizona.

NOTES

[1] Jacob Hamblin was born in Ohio on April 2, 1819. He came west with the Mormons and spent his life trying to make peace with the Indians of Utah and Arizona. He died in Pleasanton, New Mexico, on August 31, 1886. See Paul Bailey, *Jacob Hamblin: Buckskin Apostle* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1948).

[2] Thomas O'Day, *The Mormons* (University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 9.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Utah did not become a part of the United States until after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was signed in 1848. George P. Hammond, editor, *Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo* (San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1949).

[5] Church leaders envisioned "Zion" (terrestrial territory of God's Kingdom on earth) as extending from north of Utah into South America, a two-continent expansion. The Mormon Corridor was part of this plan. Charles S. Peterson, "Settlements On the Little Colorado 1873–1900" (University of Utah, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1967), p. 5.

[6] Luther A. Ingersoll, *Century Annals of San Bernardino County, California* (Los Angeles: L. A. Ingersoll, 1904), p. 83.

[7] John Evans, *Charles Coulson Rich* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1936), p. 205.

[8] Norman B. Furness, *The Mormon Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), pp. 22, 23, 95.

[9] Thomas L. Kane had helped the Mormons during the winter of 1846 in Nebraska. He was chairman of the Free Soil State Control Committee in 1848. Dumas Malone, editor, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), vol. 5, pt. 2, p. 258.

[10] Furness, *Conflict*, pp. 22, 23.

[11] The twelve members of the expedition included Jacob Hamblin and his two brothers, William and Fred; Dudley and Thomas Leavitt; Samuel Knight; Ira Hatch; Andrew Gibbons; James Davis; Ammon M. Tenney; Naraguts, the Paiute guide. James H. McClintock, *Mormon Settlement in Arizona* (Phoenix: Manufacturing Engravers Inc., 1921), pp. 63, 64.

[12] Ammon M. Tenney diary and papers, Arizona Historical Society (AHS), Tucson, Arizona. Unless otherwise noted, Tenney's diary and papers provide the source material for his comments in this article.

[13] McClintock, *Mormon Settlement,* p. 98.

[14] The ford at the Ute Crossing was called the "Crossing of the Fathers" because Fray Silvestre Escalante and his men crossed there in 1776. He was accompanied by Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and eight others. John F. Bannon, editor, *Bolton and the Spanish Borderlands* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), p. 291.

[15] Pearson H. Corbett, *Jacob Hamblin, the Peacemaker* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1952), p. 207.

[16] Hamblin made a second trip in 1859, but Tenney did not accompany him. McClintock, *Mormon Settlement,* p. 65.

[17] Camp Floyd was established Aug. 24, 1858, by Col. Albert S. Johnston during the Mormon Campaign (Mormon War). It was located in Cedar Valley near the present town of Fairfield, Utah. The name was changed to Crittenden on Feb. 6, 1861. Robert W. Fraser, *Forts of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 166.

[18] Doc Whitmore and Bud Moody were murdered by Navajos at Pipe Springs, Arizona, Jan. 8, 1866. McClintock, *Mormon Settlement,* p. 72.

[19] *Ibid.,* p. 71.

[20] Anna Sariah Eager was the daughter of John Eager, who sailed with a group of Mormons to San Francisco in 1846. The town of Eager, Arizona, was named for her brothers. Lurlene T. Whiting and Rosalia T. Payne, "Anna Sariah Eager," unpublished manuscript, AHS.

[21] L. D. S. Church History, Frederick S. Dellenbaugh Collection, AHS.

[22] Fort Defiance was established on the Navajo Reservation in 1854. Ruth Underhill, *The Navajos* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), p. 100.

[23] John Lorenzo Hubbell was born in Pajarito about fourteen miles from Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Nov. 27, 1853. He traveled from there to Utah in 1870 and then to the Hopi villages, where he lived for a time. Dorothy Albrecht, "John Lorenzo Hubbell, Navajo Indian Trader," *Arizoniana,* vol. 4 (Fall 1963), pp. 33–40.

[24] Barboncito was a Navajo leader. See biographical sketches in Richard Van Valkenburg collection, AHS.

[25] Eliza Udall was the sister of David K. Udall, who became the Bishop of St. Johns, Arizona, when the Mormons settled it in 1880. David K. Udall, *Arizona Pioneer Mormon* (Tucson: Arizona Silhouettes, 1959), p. 76.

[26] Statement of Lurlene T. Whiting and Rosalia T. Payne to author, Tucson, Oct. 9, 1958.

[27] Daniel W. Jones, *Forty Years Among the Indians* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1890), p. 233.

[28] *Ibid.,* p. 248.

[29] Originally settled by non-Mormon Luther Martin, the site was renamed after Apostle Wilford Woodruff, a church leader. McClintock, *Mormon Settlement,* p. 161.

[30] Four Mormon settlements were established on the Little Colorado River in March of 1876. Sunset was located at Sunset Crossing on the river. Brigham City was four miles northwest of the crossing. Allen's Camp and Obed were located near present-day Joseph City. Peterson, "Settlements."

[31] Copy of the original deed of sale in the *St. Johns Herald,* June 24, 1942.

32 Udall, *Pioneer Mormon*, pp. 76–79.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

34 Smith was an early settler of Snowflake. Young, a son of Brigham Young, spent most of the early years of the 1880s in Arizona promoting railroad building and other work for Mormon laborers. Peterson, "Settlements," p. 221; Oliver R. Smith, editor, *Six Decades in the Early West: Journal of Jesse N. Smith, 1834–1906* (Provo, Utah: Smith Family Assoc., 1970). The Atlantic and Pacific Company had just been purchased by the Santa Fe Railroad Co. Vernon J. Glover, Jr. and David I. Rees, "Arizona Railroads Past and Present," *Arizona Highways*, vol. 40 (July 1964), pp. 2–15.

35 John H. Krenkel, editor, *The Life and Times of Joseph Fish, Mormon Pioneer* (Danville, Ill.: The Interstate Printers & Publishers, Inc., 1970), p. 169.

36 Wilford Woodruff to Lot Smith, Salt Lake City, Dec. 14, 1880. Special Collections, University of Arizona Library (U of A).

37 Krenkel, *Joseph Fish*, pp. 121–192.

38 Woodruff to Smith, Salt Lake City, Dec. 14, 1880, quoting contents of a letter to Ammon M. Tenney. Special Collections, U of A.

39 Krenkel, *Joseph Fish*, pp. 215–216.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 178.

41 Udall, *Pioneer Mormon*, p. 93.

42 Non-Mormon newspapers included *The Arizona Pioneer*, edited by A. F. Banta, established in 1882; *The Apache Chief*, edited by George A. McCarter, started in 1884; and *The St. Johns Herald*, edited by Henry Reed, begun in 1885.

43 *The Apache Chief*, May 30, 1884.

44 Krenkel, *Joseph Fish*, p. 254.

45 O'Day, *The Mormons*, p. 108.

46 Krenkel, *Joseph Fish*, pp. 261, 270.

47 Udall, *Pioneer Mormon*, p. 115.

48 Seven Mormon colonies were established in Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1885. Colonia Diaz was the first to be settled. Elizabeth H. Mills, "Mormon Colonies in Chihuahua after the 1912 Exodus," *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 29 (July 1954), p. 167.

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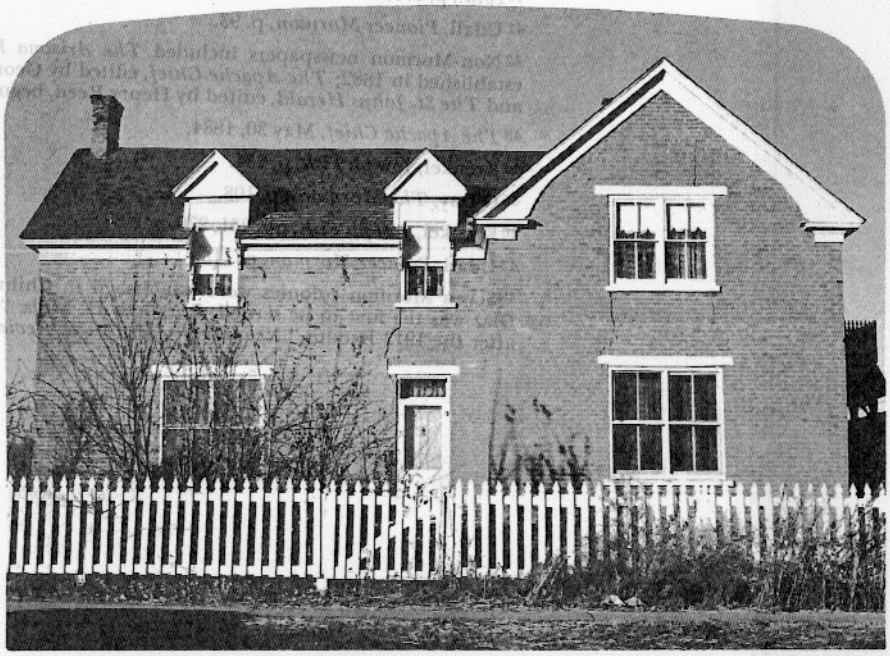

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