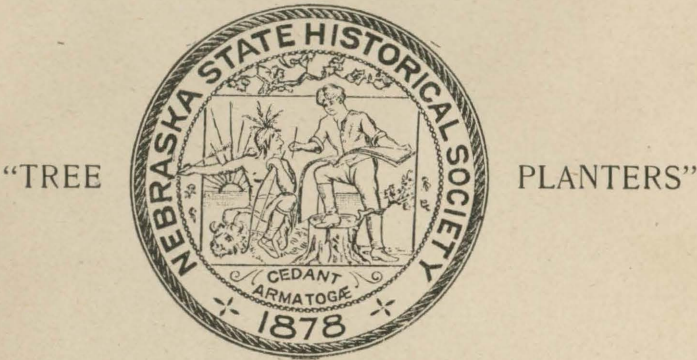


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THE MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN THE MISSOURI VALLEY.

A PAPER PRESENTED BY CLYDE B. AITCHISON, OF COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA, BEFORE THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, JANUARY 11, 1899.

In the spring of 1846, that portion of the Missouri valley now included in southeastern Nebraska and southwestern Iowa was nearly devoid of white settlers. The eastern slope of the valley, stretching from the Missouri river back to the lands of the Sacs and Foxes, was occupied by the Pottawattomi Indians, some 2,250 in number. By a treaty made September 26, 1833,¹ the Pottawattomies, with some of the Ottawas and Chippeways, were granted five million acres of land, embracing a large part of what is now included in southwestern Iowa. The Pottawattomies and their allies were removed from Chicago, and in time were located on new lands.² A subagency and trading post was established at Traders or Trading Point, or at St. Francis, within the present limits of Mills county, Iowa, and their wants were cared for at the Council Bluffs subagency.³ A considerable sized village called, after one of their chiefs, Mi-au-mise (Young Miami) was located on the Nishnabotna river, near the present site of Lewis, in Cass county, Iowa.⁴ Except a few small settlements of whites near the Missouri state line, the subagency opposite Bellevue, and scattering posts of the American Fur Company, the eastern slope of the Missouri valley was in the sole use and occupation of the Pottawattomies and

¹Treaty of Chicago, Illinois, (see Stat. L. VII, 431) modified October 1, 1834. The treaty is abstracted in part II, 18th Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, p. 750.

²See "Miscellanies" (John Dean Caton), p. 139.

³"Red Men of Iowa" (A. R. Fulton), p. 170.

⁴"Red Men of Iowa," p. 171.

their Ottawa and Chippeway allies. By a treaty made with the United States, June 5, 1846, the Pottawattomies disposed of their Iowa lands, but reserved for themselves the temporary right of occupancy.¹

West of the Missouri, the agency at Bellevue cared for four tribes of Indians, the Omahas, Otoes, Poncas, and Pawnees, beside attending to the Pottawattomies, Ottawas, and Chippeways through the Council Bluffs subagency on the east side of the river.² The Omaha tribe was to the north of the Platte, and the Otoes near its mouth, both bordering on the Missouri, with a strip of land between them still the cause of occasional disputes—the ridiculous warfare of poor remnants of once mightier tribes. When the territory of Louisiana was acquired in 1803, the tribe of Otoes was estimated to consist of about two hundred warriors, including twenty-five or thirty of the Missouris who had taken refuge with them about 1778. The Omahas in 1799 consisted of 500 warriors, but had been almost cut off by smallpox before the acquisition of the Louisiana territory.³ When found by the Mormons in 1846, the

¹“Early History of Iowa” (Charles Negus), in *Annals of Iowa*, 1870-71, p. 568. See Stat. L. ix. 853. The treaty is abstracted in part II, 18th Annual Report, Bureau of Ethnology, p. 778. The reservation of possession is not mentioned in the abstract of the cession.

²Care must be taken that the Council Bluffs agency is not confounded with the present city of Council Bluffs. The name Council Bluff or Council Bluffs was applied to various places along the Missouri river, in turn: first to the original Council Bluffs mentioned by Lewis and Clark, eighteen miles north of Omaha, and west of the Missouri, then to the agency at Bellevue, then to the subagency across the river from Bellevue and to the settlement at that point remaining after the removal of the Pottawattomi Indians. January 19, 1853, the name of the town of Kaneshville was changed to Council Bluffs, in conformity with a change of the name of the postoffice made some time previous thereto. By an act of the General Assembly of Iowa passed February 24, 1853, the town (now city) of Council Bluffs was incorporated. The *Frontier Guardian*, issue of September 18, 1850, says, “The marshal has completed the census of Kaneshville, and Trading Point or Council Bluffs. The former contains 1,103, the latter 125.” Hence as late as 1850 the names Kaneshville and Council Bluffs were entirely distinct.

³An account of Louisiana (being an abstract of documents in the offices of the Departments of State and of the Treasury). Reprinted in *Old South Leaflets* No. 105, p. 18. The description of the Indian tribes contained in this much-ridiculed account of the Louisiana Purchase transmitted by President Jefferson to Congress (see McMaster’s “History of the People of the United States,” vol. II, p. 631) was shown by later explorations to be remarkably accurate, except that the relative distances are much exaggerated.

Otoes and Omahas were but shadows of their former selves, miserably poor and wretched, not disposed to do evil unless forced by hunger and want to rob and steal, presumptuous when treated with kindness and charity, but well behaved when visited with vigor and severity.¹ The Omahas were particularly miserable. Unprotected from their old foes, the Sioux, yet forbidden to enter into a defensive alliance, they were reduced to a pitiable handful of scarcely more than a hundred families, the prey of disease, poverty stricken, too cowardly to venture from the shadow of their tepees to gather their scanty crops, unlucky in the hunt, slow to the chase, and too dispirited to be daring or successful thieves.

Further north, between the Niobrara or L'eau-qui-court and the Missouri rivers were five or six hundred almost equally abject Poncas. The Pawnees had their villages at the Loup Forks, and south of the Platte and west of the Otoes, and the country to their north was yet the scene of frequent conflicts between the Pawnees and their hereditary enemies, the Sioux.²

All west of the river was "Indian country"—a part of the vast territory of Missouri remaining after the state of Missouri had been created out of it. A white man entering it, unless specially licensed, became a trespasser. The country was unorganized, practically unexplored, and little else than

¹*Frontier Guardian*, issue of March 21, 1849. The Pottawattomi Indians were expressly excepted from this description. The editor (Orson Hyde) advised returning roving Omahas and Otoes to St. Francis or Trading Point, or the use of the hickory.

²Lewis and Clark, in 1804, located the Pawnees as follows: "Great Pawnee and Republican, consisting respectively of about 500 and 250 men, on the south side of the Platte, opposite the mouth of the Loup; the Pawnee Loups or Wolf Pawnees, numbering 280 men, on the Wolf fork of the Platte and about 90 miles above the principal Pawnees; and a fourth band of 400 men on the Red River." See also map 41, 2d part, 18th Annual Report, Bureau of Ethnology. "The Emigrants' Guide" (W. Clayton, 1848) places the old Pawnee mission station at Plum creek, Lat. 41° 24' 29", and 9¼ miles east of the Loup Fork ford, Lat. 41° 22' 37". Long. 98° 11', and locates the old Pawnee village formerly occupied by the Grand Pawnee and Tappas bands half a mile west of the Loup Fork. The village mentioned was burned by the Sioux in the fall of 1846. In the spring of 1847 the Pawnees were located on the Loup Fork, nearly thirty miles east of the old village, according to Clayton's Guide.

a name to the world. Peter A. Sarpy had a trading post or so in it; the Presbyterians had established a mission; and a few troops were stationed at Old Ft. Kearney. With these exceptions, the prairie sod of the Indian country was still unbroken by the plow of the white settler.¹

In 1830, some sixteen years before the time mentioned, a religious sect arose in New York, calling itself the Latter Day Saints, but commonly designated "Mormons."² As the result of great zeal and missionary enthusiasm its members increased rapidly. Vain attempts were made to secure a permanent home, isolated from the rest of mankind, in Jackson, Clay, and Caldwell counties, Missouri. When finally driven from Missouri, in 1840, they gathered on the left bank of the Mississippi at a place nearly opposite the mouth of the Des Moines river. Here at first they were welcomed for their voting power, and easily obtained a charter for the town of Nauvoo, so favorable it practically made them an independent state within a state. The surrounding inhabitants soon combined to drive them out. Five years of constant riot culminated in the assassination of Joseph Smith, the founder of the religion, in the revocation of the charter of Nauvoo, and the complete overthrow of the Saints by superior physical force.

After the election of Brigham Young as president of the twelve apostles, the Mormons promised to leave Illinois "as soon as grass grew and water ran," in the spring of 1846, provided meantime they were permitted to dispose of their property and make preparations for departure, without further molestation. September 9, 1845, the Mormon authorities determined to send an advance party of 1,500 to the valley of the Great Salt Lake. In January, 1846, a council of the church ordered this company to start at once, and announced

¹See p. 20, et seq., "William Walker and the Provisional Government of Nebraska Territory," by William E. Connelley, vol. III, second series, publications of Nebraska State Historical Society.

²Authorities and references for the general outline of Mormon history are deemed unnecessary. The word "Mormon" is used herein solely for convenience and for brevity.

in a circular to the Saints throughout the world their intention to secure a home beyond the Rockies, thus providing a safe haven from the annoyances of their enemies.

All through the winter of 1845-46 the Mormons exerted themselves to dispose of property which could not be easily moved, and to secure proper equipment for the march. Houses and farms and all immovable chattels were sacrificed on the best terms available, and the community for a hundred miles around was bartered out of wagons and cattle.

From motives of prudence, the pioneers hastened their departure. The first detachment, 1,600 men, women, and children, including the high officials of the church, crossed the Mississippi early in February, and pushed forward on the march. The main body of Mormons began crossing the day after, and followed the pioneers in large bodies, and at frequent intervals, though some little distance behind the first party. By the middle of May or first of June probably 16,000 persons with 2,000 wagons had been ferried across the Mississippi, and were on their way to the West. Thus commenced an exodus unparalleled in modern times. In point of numbers of emigrants, in length of travel, in hardships endured, and in lofty religious motives compelling such a host to journey so great a distance, through obstacles almost beyond human belief, there is nothing in recent history with which the march of the Mormons may be compared.

The sufferings of the pioneers (though the hardiest of the whole Mormon host) and of the earlier bands following almost baffle description. Hastily and inadequately equipped, without sufficient shelter or fuel, weakened by disease, short of food for both man and beast, exposed to every blast of an unusually severe winter, they plodded westward and wished for spring. Spring came, and found them destitute, and not half way to the Missouri. The excessive snows of the winter and the heavy spring rains turned the rich prairie soil of Iowa into pasty mud, and raised the streams so that in many instances the emigrants had to wait patiently for the waters to go down.

The pioneers laid out a road, and established huge farms in the lands of the Sacs and Foxes. Two of these settlements or farms were known as Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah. They included upwards of two miles of fenced land, well tilled, with comfortable log buildings, and were intended as permanent camps for those to follow, and where provisions could be accumulated for the coming winter. In addition to these, camps of more or less permanence were established at intervals along the trail from the Mississippi to the Missouri, at Sugar Creek, Richardson Point, on the Chariton, Lost Camp, Locust Creek, Sayent's Grove, and Campbell's Grove, and at Indian Town, the "Little Miami" village of the Pottawattomies.¹

Many did not reach the Missouri in 1846. Some returned to eastern states. Twelve thousand remained at Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah and in settlements westward to the Missouri, because of a lack of wagons to transport them further west, and for the purpose of cultivating the huge farms intended to provision the camps the following winter. President Young and the vanguard reached the Missouri June 14, 1846, near the present city of Council Bluffs, and then moved back into the hills while a ferry boat was being built. The boat was launched the 29th, and the next day the pioneers began pushing across the river. The next few weeks the companies of emigrants as they arrived temporarily camped on the bluffs and bottoms of the Missouri, at Mynster Springs, at Rushville, at Council Point, and Traders Point. The pioneers at the same time advanced into the Indian country, building bridges over the Papillion and Elkhorn and constructing roads. In July it was resolved to establish a fort on Grand island, but the pioneers did not reach that far west

¹Garden Grove is in the northeast part of Decatur county; Mt. Pisgah at the middle fork of the Grand river, in the eastern part of Union county; Lost Camp about six miles south of Osceola; Sayent's Grove in Adair county; and Campbell's Grove in Cass county—all in Iowa. Indian Town has already been located. See "Early History of Iowa" (Charles Negus) in "Annals of Iowa," 1870-71, p. 568; and the First General Epistle of the Church. Rushville was on the east side of Keg creek, about four miles north of the south boundary line of Mills county.

that year. Some reached the Pawnee villages, and then finding the season too far advanced to continue westward, turned north and wintered on the banks of the Missouri at the mouth of the Niobrara, among the Poncas.¹

The Pottawattomies and Omahas received the refugees kindly. A solemn council was held by the Pottawattomies in the yard of one of Peter A. Sarpy's trading houses, and the assembled chiefs welcomed the wanderers in aboriginal manner. Pied Riche, surnamed Le Clerc, the scholar, addressed them :

"The Pottawattomi came sad and tired into this inhospitable Missouri bottom, not many years back, when he was taken from his beautiful country beyond the Mississippi, which had abundant game and timber and clear water everywhere. Now you are driven away from your lodges and lands there and the graves of your people. We must help one another, and the Great Spirit will help us both. You are now free to cut and use all the wood you may wish. You can make all your improvements, and live on any part of our land not actually occupied by us. Because one suffers and does not deserve it is no reason he shall always suffer, I say. We may live to see all right yet. However, if we do not, our children will. Bon jour."

"The Pottawattomi came sad and tired into this inhospitable land to the United States, reserving to themselves temporary right of occupation, and now drew and signed articles of convention with the Mormons, with becoming dignity.

A large number of emigrants remained among the Pottawattomies during the winter of 1846-47, living in shacks of cottonwood, in caves in the bluffs, in log cabins in the groves and glens—wherever there was shelter, fuel, and water. The greater number of Mormons, however, crossed into the Indian country at the ferry established opposite the present site of Florence or at Sarpy's ferry below, making their first large

¹The camp on the Niobrara returned to the settlements on the Missouri, in the spring of 1847, for provisions. See First General Epistle of the Church.

camp at Cutler Park, a few miles northwest of the ferry, where they built a mill.

Here the chiefs of the Omaha tribe held a grand council with the Mormon leaders, and Big Elk, the principal chief of the tribe, gave permission to remain two years, invited reciprocal trade, and promised warning of danger from other Indians.¹

The Mexican War was now in progress.* About the time the exodus began, the Mormons applied to Washington for some form of work to assist them in getting further west. Their tender of military services was accepted, and under orders from General Kearney, Capt. James Allen raised a battalion of five companies in the Missouri camps in two weeks, himself assuming command. After a farewell ball, the recruits marched away, accompanied as far as Ft. Leavenworth by eighty women and children. There a bounty of \$40 was given each man, most of which was taken back to the families left behind at the Missouri river camps. While the enlistment of 500 able-bodied men left few but the sick in the camps, the bounty received was considerable and greatly needed, and the formation of the battalion induced Captain Allen to promise, for the government, to allow the Mormons to pass through the Pottawattomi and Omaha lands, and to remain there while necessary. Subsequent letters from Washington showed the Mormons were expected to leave the Indian lands in the spring of 1847.

Some 650 Saints had been left in Nauvoo after the emigration ceased in June, the remnant consisting of the sick, the poor, and those unable to sell their property. The gentile whigs renewed the old quarrel, fearing the vote of the Mormon element would control the August congressional election. The Saints finally agreed not to attempt to vote, but in fact, says Governor Ford,² all voted the democratic ticket, being induced by the considerations of the President allow-

¹The speech is set out in full in Sorenson's "History of Omaha," p. 24.

²"History of Illinois" (Ford), pp. 413-14.

ing their settlement on the Indian reservations on the Missouri, and the enlistment of the Mormon battalion. Nauvoo fell, and the last of the Mormons fled from the city in fear and extreme distress.

By the close of the summer of 1846 some 12,000 or 13,000 Mormons were encamped in the Missouri valley, at Rushville, Council Point, Traders Point, Mynster Springs, Indian Town, in the groves along the creeks, and in the glens in the hills and on the west side of the Missouri river, at Cutler Park, on the Elkhorn and Papillion crossings, and as far as the Pawnee villages.

During the summer and autumn of 1846, particularly in August and September, the various camps were seized with a plague of scrofulous nature, which the Mormons called the black canker. The Indians had lost one-ninth of their number from this strange disease the year before, and the mortality was fully as great among both Mormons and Indians in 1846. In one camp 37 per cent were down with the fever. The pestilence was attributed to the rank vegetation and decaying organic matter on the bottoms of the Missouri and its sluggish tributaries, to the foul slime left by the rapid subsidence of a flood, and to the turning of the virgin soil by the settlers. There were often not enough well persons to attend to the sick or bury the dead. Six hundred deaths occurred on the site of the present town of Florence. Hundreds were buried on the slopes of the Iowa bluffs.¹ The plague raged each successive year for several years, and from 1848 to 1851 hundreds of Mormons died of it on the Iowa side of the river.

During the autumn months preparations were made to winter on the site of the present town of Florence until the spring of 1847. They enclosed several miles of land, and planted all obtainable seed and erected farm cabins and cattle shelters. They built a town on a plateau overlooking the

¹ Kane's lecture, "The Mormons," p. 51, reprinted in *Frontier Guardian*, September 4, 1850; also numerous conversations of the writer with pioneers.

river, their "Winter Quarters," and 3,500 Saints lived there during the hard winter of 1846-47.

"Winter Quarters" was a town of mushroom growth, consisting, in December, 1846, of 538 log houses and 83 sod houses, laid out in symmetrical blocks, separated by regular streets. The numerous and skilful craftsmen of the emigrants had worked all the summer and fall under the incessant and energetic direction of Brigham Young. The houses they built afforded shelter and were comfortable, but were not calculated to stand the first sudden thaw or drenching rain.

"The buildings were generally of logs," says the manuscript history of Young, "from twelve to eighteen feet long; a few were split and made from linn and cottonwood timber; many roofs were made by splitting oak timber into boards, called shakes, about three feet long and six inches wide, and kept in place by weights and poles; others were made of willows, straw and earth, about a foot thick; some of puncheon. Many cabins had no floors; there were a few dugouts on the side hills—the fireplace was cut out at the upper end. The ridge pole was supported by two uprights in the center and roofed with straw and earth, with chimneys of prairie sod. The doors were made of shakes, with wooden hinges and a string latch; the inside of the log houses was daubed with clay; a few had stoves."

In October, the camp at Cutler Park was moved to Winter Quarters.¹ Schools were instituted, churches established, and the whole ecclesiastical and civic mechanism so rudely shattered at Nauvoo was once more running as smoothly and powerfully as ever. Eight thousand dollars was spent for machinery and stones for the water flouring mill Young was constructing. Several loads of willow baskets were made by the women. The winter was passed in endeavoring to keep alive and in preparation for resuming the march in the spring by those who were strong and had provisions for a year and a

¹Cutler Park, on the west side of the Missouri, is not to be confused with Cutler's Camp, on Silver creek, in Iowa. Compare John D. Lee's "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 180, with Andreas' Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa, p. 409.

half. Others made ready to plant and gather the crops of the coming summer. Several thousand cattle were driven across the Missouri and up into Harrison and Monona counties, in Iowa, to winter on the "rush bottoms," where a now extinct species of rush formerly grew in profusion, and remained green all winter, though covered by snow and ice.

Polygamy was practiced to a limited extent. Young, for instance, confesses to meeting, one afternoon, sixty-six of his family, including his adopted children.

In the octagon council house, "resembling a New England potato heap in time of frost," and which called for a load of fuel a day, the scheme of organization and exploration was perfected, and Young published most minute directions as to the manner of march, pursuant to a revelation made January 14, 1847. In response to a call for volunteers, what was called "the pioneer company" moved out from Winter Quarters to the rendezvous on the Elkhorn, April 14, 1847, and organized the 16th, with Brigham Young lieutenant general. The pioneer company numbered 143 men and three women. Seventy-three wagons were taken, loaded with provisions and farm machinery. About this time the camp on the Niobrara returned to the Missouri river settlements.

The pioneers followed the north side of the Platte to Ft. Laramie, crossing the Loup, April 24, in a leather boat, the Revenue Cutter, made for this purpose. They reached the Ancient Bluff ruins May 22 and Ft. Laramie June 1, halting while the animals rested and ferryboats were built. Captain Grover was left behind to ferry other companies arriving from Winter Quarters, but his services were not needed. After the pioneers had crossed to the south bank of the North Platte, they recrossed 124 miles further on, and subsequent emigration seems to have kept to the north bank of the river.¹

¹"The Latter Day Saints' Emigrants' Guide," by W. Clayton, originally published in 1848, and reprinted in the *Salt Lake Herald*, April 25, 1897, traces the customary route of the Mormon emigrants so that it is comparatively easy to retrace their road. Some suspicion may be cast on the accuracy of the latitude and longitude given in the Guide, by the fact that the first figures Clayton gave, the latitude of Winter Quarters, were erroneous.

The pioneers traveled more than a thousand miles, and laid out roads suitable for artillery. The valley of the Great Salt Lake was reached the 23d and 24th of July, and the city of Salt Lake was laid out in a month. Brigham Young and 107 persons started back to Winter Quarters August 26, a small party having preceded them eastward. October 31 the pioneers arrived at the Missouri.

After the pioneers left Winter Quarters in April all others who were able to go organized another company, known as the First Immigration, with Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor in command. The First Immigration consisted of 1,553 persons in about 560 wagons, with cattle, horses, swine, and poultry. It reached the Salt Lake valley in detachments in the autumn of 1847.

This and the strong expeditions later on were divided into companies of 100, subdivided into companies of fifty and squads of ten, each under a captain, and all under a member of the High Council of the church. Videttes selected the next day's camp and acted as skirmishers. Wherever possible the wagons traveled in a double column. Upon halting they were arranged in the form of two convex arcs, with openings at the points of intersection, the tongues of the wagons outward, one front wheel lapping the hind wheel of the wagon in front. The cattle corralled inside were watched by guards stationed at the openings at the ends and were safe from stampede or depredations. The tents were pitched outside. When practicable, the Mormons arranged the wagons in a single curve, with the river forming a natural defense on one side.¹

Their wagons were widened to six feet by extensions on the sides. Each was loaded to the canvas with farm implements, grains, machinery of all sorts, and a coop of chickens lashed on behind.² All the wagons were not of this size or description. They ranged from the heavy prairie schooner drawn by

¹See "History of Utah," H. H. Bancroft, p. 267, for the revelation to Brigham Young as to the method of travel.

²Popular tradition makes the Mormons' chickens responsible for scattering the sunflower seed which have grown into the prairie nuisance.

six or eight oxen to the crazy vehicle described by Colonel Kane as loaded with a baby and drawn by a dry, dogged little heifer. Each man marched with a loaded, but uncapped musket, and so perfect was their discipline and organization that frequently hostile Indians passed small bodies of Mormons to attack much stronger bands of other immigrants.

During the year 1847 the Indians on the west side of the river complained that the Mormons were killing too much game and cutting too much timber, and the Saints were thereupon ordered to leave.¹ They obtained permission to occupy the Pottawattomi lands for five years, and accordingly the main body moved to the east side of the Missouri. Their Bishop Miller had settled a little earlier, in the valley of Indian creek, in the center of the old part of the present city of Council Bluffs. After the complaint had been made by the Indians the great part of the Mormons settled around the old government blockhouse there. "Miller's Hollow" became "Kanesville" in honor of the gentile friend of the Mormons, Col. Thomas L. Kane, who was a brother of Elisha Kent Kane, the explorer.² The headquarters of the church were transferred to a huge log tabernacle on the flats.³ A postoffice was established that year in Kanesville, but mails were received very irregularly until the great influx of gentile immigration in 1852-53. Orson Hyde, the apostle and lawyer, became editor as well, and published the *Frontier Guardian* for three years, commencing in February, 1849.

Prof. Charles E. Bessey explodes this idea as non-botanical in a letter published in the *Lincoln Courier*, November 8, 1898. Positive testimony is existent that the sunflowers dotted the plains in 1832 (testimony of Benjamin Gilmore), fifteen years before the first Mormon emigration. Sunflowers, of course, marked the trails, as they sprang up in profusion where the soil was broken.

¹Not based on documentary authority quoting original sources, but amply verified by conversations with pioneers. The Mormon Church History claims that an outfitting station east of the Missouri was desired, hence the move.

²Biography of Elisha Kent Kane (William Elder), p. 313.

³*Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1849.

The population of Pottawattamie county at that time was about 4,000, mainly of the Mormon faith.¹

The crops in 1847 were bountiful, and a series of strong emigrant trains was organized at the Elkhorn rendezvous. The Quorum of the presidency of the church left for Salt Lake early in the summer at the head of strong bands; Brigham Young in May, with 397 wagons and 1,229 persons, Heber C. Kimball in July with 226 wagons and 662 persons, and Willard Richards soon after with 169 wagons and 526 persons, 2,417 emigrants in all, with 892 wagons. Richard's departure left Winter Quarters quite deserted.²

These companies took what was called the North Platte route, ferrying the Elkhorn (whose bridge had disappeared) and Loup, and keeping on the north bank of the Platte the whole distance to the Sweetwater. All the later Mormon trains were governed by the same strict discipline as the pioneers and first emigration, and their travels present no features of special interest.

The Salt Lake emigration continued with diminishing volume from 1848 to 1852, until scarcely distinguishable from the general rush to the West following the discovery of gold.³ The perpetual emigration fund was established in 1849, and the attention of the church was turned to gathering its communicants from Great Britain in Salt Lake valley. The emigration was to New Orleans and St. Louis by steamboat, and

¹ Memorial of Judge James Sloan to Iowa Senate, December 19, 1848, quoted in *Frontier Guardian*, April 4, 1849.

² *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1849, quoting First General Epistle of the presidency of the church from the Great Salt Lake valley. The Otoes and Omahas fired on Kimball's band at the Elkhorn, wounding three.

³ During the years 1849 and 1850 more than a hundred thousand emigrants passed through the trans-Missouri country on their way to California, Utah, Oregon, and New Mexico. (Letter of Abelard Guthrie, provisional delegate to Congress from Nebraska Territory, to Chairman Committee on Elections, U. S. House of Representatives, July 20, 1861. See vol. III, 2d series, Nebraska State Historical Society Publications, p. 75. In the spring of 1850, before June 3, there passed Ft. Laramie, bound westward, 11,433 men, 119 women, 99 children; 3,188 wagons, 10,900 horses, 3,588 mules, 3,428 oxen, 233 cows. It was estimated that by July 7 of the same year 40,000 persons and 10,000 wagons passed Ft. Laramie, westward. (*Frontier Guardian*, July 10, 1850.)

then by boat to Independence, St. Joseph, Kaneshville, or neighboring Missouri river settlements.

The Independence and St. Joseph trails soon merged in the well-known government and stage road of later years to Ft. Kearney. Bethlehem, opposite the mouth of the Platte, was a favorite crossing place for those landing at Council Point, near Kaneshville, but preferring the South Platte route. Many started from Nebraska City, or Old Ft. Kearney, and after 1856 from Wyoming, in Otoe county.¹ The South Platte route followed the southerly bank of the Platte until it joined the Ft. Kearney road.

The trail officially recognized and directed was along the north bank of the Platte, leaving Kaneshville by way of Crescent, making a rendezvous at Boyer Lake or Ferryville, crossing to the abandoned Winter Quarters, then to the Elkhorn rendezvous, with ferries over the Elkhorn and Loup. All the sunflower trails converged into one at Ft. Laramie. The North Platte route was deemed the healthier, and was thus constantly urged and recommended by the church authorities at Kaneshville. Orson Hyde counted 500 graves along the trail south of the Platte, and but three graves north of the Platte river from the Missouri to Ft. Laramie.²

Many Mormons did not start immediately for Salt Lake, and several thousand who were disaffected or impoverished never left the valley of the Missouri. These scattered over southwestern Iowa. A year after the last company left Winter Quarters, the church had thirty-eight branches in Pottawattamie and Mills counties.³ The census from 1849 to 1853 gives Pottawattamie county a population varying from 5,758 to 7,828, reaching the maximum in 1850, and showing a loss of 2,500 from 1852 to 1854, the years of final Mormon exodus. Every governmental function was controlled by the Mormons up to 1853. They elected Mormon representatives to

¹ Letter of the late J. Sterling Morton to the writer, December 17, 1898.

² *Frontier Guardian*, December 11, 1850.

³ *Frontier Guardian*, May 2, 1849.

the state general assembly, and Mormon juries sat in the courts of Mormon judges.

Kanesville, of course, was the principal settlement. As might be expected of a frontier outfitting camp, its population was very unstable. In September, 1850, it contained 1,100 inhabitants; in November, 1851, it was 2,500-3,000; and the census of 1852 showed 5,057. At first it hardly attained the dignity of a village. Its inhabitants regarded it as a temporary resting place and all looked forward to an early departure therefrom; the buildings they erected were makeshifts, and their home-made furniture was rude and not intended for permanent use. With the rush of the gold-seekers following 1849, the resting place of the well-behaved Saints gradually changed to a roistering mining camp, too lively and wicked for the Mormons, who, by the way, were the original prohibitionists of Iowa. Little attention was paid to life or property in the crush and confusion of outfitting from the first of March to the first of July, while the westward emigration was at its height. After June the population dwindled to scarcely 500, and the village again became sedate.¹

There were only two or three other settlements of any size. Council Point, three or four miles south of Kanesville, was a favorite steamboat landing.² Traders or Trading Point, or St. Francis, three or four miles below Council Point, opposite Bellevue, was made a postoffice in the summer of 1849, under the name Nebraska.³ A year later this postoffice was given the vagrant name Council Bluffs, and was credited with a population of 125.⁴

¹*Frontier Guardian*, September 18, 1850; testimony of G. G. Rice, reported in "History of Pottawattamie County," Iowa, by D. C. Bloomer, in "Annals of Iowa," 1870-71, pp. 528-29.

²*Frontier Guardian*, March 7, 1849.

³*Frontier Guardian*, July 11, 1849. Joseph Pendleton was postmaster. Traders Point was the "Pull Point" or Point aux Poules mentioned in Kane's lecture. (Testimony of Judge W. C. James.)

⁴*Frontier Guardian*, July 10, 1850, and September 18, 1850, the editor, in the former number, warning his readers to leave "Council Bluffs" off everything designed for Kanesville.

California City was directly opposite the mouth of the Platte, and a little south was Bethlehem ferry. Carterville was three miles southeast of Kanessville, a thriving village of some hundreds. Indiantown, at the crossing of the Nishnabotna, on the Mt. Pisgah road, west of the present Lewis, in Cass county, was the center of quite a large trade. Coonville became Glenwood.¹

We have the names of some forty or fifty other settlements in southwestern Iowa. Little of these remains, however, but their name and memory and a half-rotted squared log occasionally plowed up. Strictly, they were not villages or even hamlets, merely the collection within easy distance of a handful of farm houses in a grove on a creek, with a school or church and perhaps a mill or trader's stock. They resembled rather the ideal farm communities or settlements of some modern sociologists.²

The greater part of the Saints who acknowledged the leadership of Brigham Young left Iowa in 1852, and with the legislative change of the name of Kanessville to Council Bluffs

¹Plats of Kanessville, Bethlehem, Coonville, and California City are found in Record A, pp. 32, 7, 5, and 3 respectively, in the office of the recorder of deeds of Pottawattamie county, Iowa. The *Frontier Guardian*, February 6, 1850, reports a postoffice established at Indian Town, forty-five miles east of Kanessville.

²Among the other Iowa settlements whose names still remain were: Allred's Camp, Americus, Austin (Fremont county), Barney's Grove, Benson's Settlement, Big Grove (now Oakland), Big Pigeon (Boomer township), Blair, Boyer Lake Rendezvous, Brownings, Bullocks Grove, Carbonca, Cooleys Mill, Coolidges Mill, Crescent City (still existing by that name), Davis Camp, Dawsonburg (Fremont county), Ferryville (opposite Winter Quarters), Galland's Grove (Harrison or Shelby county), Harris Grove, Highland Grove (northwest of Nicola), Honey Creek (still existing by that name), Hyde Park, Indian Mill (also known as Wicks Mill, and later as Parks Mill, on Mosquito creek), Keg Creek, Keg Creek Mills (at present Glenwood), Little Pigeon, Lynn Grove (east of Avoca on one branch of Nishna off the trail), Macedonia (still existing by that name), McKissick's Grove (Fremont county), McOlneys, North Pigeon, Nishnabotna (synonymous with Macedonia), Old Agency, Perkins Camp (near Council Bluffs), Pleasant Grove, Plum Hollow (Fremont county) Rockyford or Rockford, Rushville, Sidney (Fremont county, still existing by that name), Silver City (Mills county, still existing by that name), Silver Creek, Springville, Stringtown (inside present limits of Council Bluffs on south bottoms), Union or Unionville, Voorhis' Spring (3½ miles north of present city of Council Bluffs), Wheeler's Grove (Hanson county), Willow. Many of these settlements can not be located definitely at this time. The Mormons had little to do with some named, but branches of the church were reported at all the above settlements at an early date.

City, in January, 1853, the history of the early Mormon settlements in the Missouri valley may be considered closed. March 16, 1854, the Omahas ceded their land west of the Missouri to the general government.¹ The organization of Nebraska territory soon after opened the lands around the Mormon Winter Quarters for settlement. A. J. Mitchell and A. J. Smith had been left in charge of the Mormons east of the river, but in the summer of 1854 they sold their interests in Council Bluffs to the gentiles, moved to the west of the river, and changed the name of Winter Quarters to Florence. But the rush of gentile settlers following the opening of the territory was so great that the Mormon settlements were not distinctive.

Council Bluffs remained an outfitting station for Mormon as well as other immigration for years, but there was little to distinguish Salt Lake travelers from any others preparing to cross the Rockies. Such immigration continued in considerable numbers until the Civil War, as witness the ill-fated hand-cart and wheelbarrow expedition of 1855. A colony of schismatics, under the leadership of Charles B. Thompson, founded a town called Preparation in the Soldier river valley, about fifteen miles from the present site of Onawa, Monona county, Iowa.² The colony finally disbanded and its property was divided by the courts. But passing mention is made of the later settlements of the reorganized branch of the Mormon church, centering around Lamoni, Iowa. They belong to the present, and not to the history of the early Mormon settlements in the Missouri valley.

A colony of a hundred families from St. Louis, under the direction of H. J. Hudson, formed three communistic settlements at Genoa in 1857, called Alton, Florence, and St. Louis, after unsuccessfully attempting to settle in Platte county. These colonists constructed dugouts and cabins in the fall,

¹Stat. L. x, 1043. See part II, 18th Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, p. 790.

²Omaha *Daily Bee*, January 30, 1899.

and the following spring surveyed the lands on which they were located and partitioned to each man his share. They enclosed 2,000 acres with fences and ditches, and turned the sod of two square miles of prairie. The Genoa postoffice was established, with Mr. Hudson, later of Columbus, as postmaster.

The first years of their occupancy were marked by great privations, gradually changing, however, to comfort and prosperity. After seven years' undisturbed occupancy by the colonists the Pawnees arrived and claimed possession of their new reservation on the same ground. The colonists resisted their claims for three years; but being worn and weary of strife and in constant danger from the continually conflicting Sioux and Pawnees, they abandoned further effort in 1863 and dispersed, some to Salt Lake and others to Iowa and some to Platte county, Nebraska.

Quite a settlement, or relay station, was made at Wood river, in Buffalo county, in 1858 by Joseph E. Johnson, who published a paper, the *Huntsman's Echo*, for two years, and grew "the largest and finest flower garden" then west of the Mississippi. The settlement was broken up in 1863 by the removal of Johnson and his companions to Salt Lake valley.¹

THE GREAT RAILROAD MIGRATION INTO NORTHERN NEBRASKA.

ADDRESS OF J. R. BUCHANAN,² DELIVERED BEFORE THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AT LINCOLN, JANUARY 14, 1902.

The railroads and the Bible are the two most potent agencies of modern times which have operated in the western country.

¹See Andreas, "History of Nebraska," under the various counties.

²John Ross Buchanan was born in Beaver Town, Pennsylvania, April, 1838. He removed to Guernsey county, Ohio, in 1847, where he attended