

PRAYER, FASTING, SCRIPTURE STUDY, Sabbath WORSHIP, and service in the holy TEMPLES.

They seek to be merciful—to forgive as they would be forgiven, to judge as they would be judged, to love as they would be loved, to serve as they would be served (D&C 38:24–25).

They seek to be pure in heart—thinking no evil, envying not, and rejoicing not in iniquity but in the truth (1 Cor. 13:4–6). They are honest in their COVENANTS with God and in their dealings with their fellowmen. They are chaste and also virtuous.

Seekers of righteousness are peacemakers. They avoid contention, anger, and evil-speaking. They promote goodwill, brotherhood, and sisterhood; they seek to establish God’s will and his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

When persecuted for righteousness’ sake or when reviled or maligned for their allegiance to the Lord, they bear all things and endure all things (1 Cor. 13:7).

Such scriptural descriptions of righteousness are not to be reduced to lists that individuals self-righteously check off. They are constant reminders on the journey toward God, who has promised a Comforter—the HOLY GHOST—to give guidance and direction on that path (John 14:26).

The Lord delights “to honor those who serve [him] in righteousness” (D&C 76:5). At the last day, “the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel, they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever” (2 Ne. 9:18).

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ROBISON, LOUISE YATES

Louise Yates Robison (1866–1946) succeeded Clarissa Williams to become the seventh general presi-

dent of the RELIEF SOCIETY of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in October 1928 and led that society through the difficult years of the Great Depression (1928–1939). She had previously served as second counselor to President Williams in the general presidency. These two women had become friends while they prepared surgical dressings for the Red Cross during World War I. Louise Robison’s name rarely appears on lists of outstanding LDS women, an obscurity that would have pleased this unassuming, down-to-earth woman of plain appearance and quiet ways; nevertheless, she deserves recognition for several unique contributions to the Church and for the important principle of service she exemplified.

Born May 27, 1866, in the small rural town of Scipio, in south-central Utah, Louise grew up in a log house where she learned pioneer values from her parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Yates. Her early marriage to Joseph L. Robison and subse-



Louise Yates Robison (1866–1946), seventh general president of the Relief Society, served from 1928 to 1939. Photographer: Naylor Sisters.

quent rearing of six children shortened her studies at Brigham Young Academy, but her love of books and learning was lifelong. A six-month course in dressmaking at age fifteen helped prepare her for future service on the Relief Society General Board, where she directed the Temple and Burial Clothing Department.

As General President of the Relief Society, one of her practical responses to women's needs during the Depression of the 1930s was to establish MORMON HANDICRAFT in 1937. This shop enabled Relief Society women to sell homemade gift items on consignment. The shop reflected President Robison's appreciation both for the handiwork of women and for their role as mothers in the home. It flourished under the Relief Society until 1986, when management of the store was transferred to the DESERET BOOK COMPANY.

Louise Robison believed that burdens could be lightened with song. A daughter later remembered that she sang, or sometimes whistled, while doing her work at home. "A singing mother makes a happy home," she said when she named the popular Relief Society choral groups Singing Mothers in 1934.

Several modest historic achievements can be credited to President Robison. She was the first Relief Society general president to address a regular session of a General Conference (October 1929). She was the first to visit the Relief Societies in Great Britain, and on that trip she also served as a delegate to the Tenth World Congress of the International Council of Women, held in Paris. In 1933 she instigated the erection of a monument to the Relief Society on the site of its founding in NAUVOO, Illinois. Later relocated in the Monument to Women gardens, it is thought to be the first Church effort to mark its historic sites in Nauvoo.

WELFARE SERVICES was the greatest concern of President Robison's administration. Her long-time friend and coworker Belle SPAFFORD said that Louise Robison "stressed the volunteer compassionate services. 'Go where you're needed, do what you can'; that was her theme" (Spafford). She practiced what she preached, and the principle of personal service she exemplified was a needed counterpoint to the more structured Church welfare system.

After being released from service as Relief Society general president in 1939, Louise Robison

lived in San Francisco with her daughter Gladys Winter. She died March 30, 1946.

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ROGERS, AURELIA SPENCER

Aurelia Spencer Rogers (1834-1922), the first PRIMARY president of the Church, was born October 4, 1834, in Deep River, Connecticut, to Catherine Curtis and Orson Spencer, a Protestant minister. When Aurelia was six years old, her parents joined the Church and traveled to Nauvoo, Illinois. Years later, Aurelia's suggestions helped establish the Primary Association, the Church organization for children.

"Aurelia came by her concern for children through a long apprenticeship in mothering" (Madsen, p. 1). At the age of twelve, she and her older sister, Ellen, cared for four younger siblings when their mother died and their father was called by Church leaders to head the missionary work in Great Britain. The children lived on their own in WINTER QUARTERS, Nebraska, with limited provisions and then made the arduous trek to the Great Salt Lake basin. Wilford Woodruff, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote their father that "although in childhood, their faith, patience, . . . longsuffering and wisdom . . . [were] such as would have done honor to a Saint of thirty years" (Rogers, pp. 103-104).

At age seventeen Aurelia married Thomas Rogers. Through the next twenty-two years, she gave birth to twelve children, of whom only seven survived infancy. When three infants died in succession, she despaired and nearly lost her faith and belief in God; but a letter from her father came to mind and helped her gradually overcome her malaise. Her travail through the loss of children heightened her sensitivity to the preciousness of life and to the importance of nurturing the young.