

the University of Utah, and state senator. In spite of their busy schedules, their family was always their first concern.

William supported Clarissa in her Relief Society activities. She later wrote: "After I was married and had seven children, I was asked to be secretary of the Seventeenth Ward Relief Society. I felt that I could not do this with all my little babies. But my husband said, 'My dear, you must do it; it is the very thing you need; you need to get away from the babies, and I will help you all I can, either by taking care of the children or making out your reports or copying your minutes, or any other thing I can do'" (*Relief Society Magazine* 15 [Dec. 1928]:668–69).

As general Relief Society president, Clarissa Williams concentrated on social problems. During her presidency, the Relief Society funded loans for training public health nurses, distributed free milk to infants, provided health examinations for preschool children, and operated summer camps for underprivileged children. She encouraged ward Relief Societies to prepare layettes for new mothers and distribute them according to need. In 1924 under her supervision the Relief Society established the Cottonwood Maternity Hospital, which continued in operation until 1963 (see HOSPITALS).

A member of the National Council of Women, Clarissa was one of nine U.S. delegates to the International Council of Women in Rome, Italy, in May 1914. She was appointed chairwoman of the Utah Women's Committee of the National Council of Defense during World War I. She died March 8, 1930, at her home in Salt Lake City.

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EVALYN DARGER BENNETT

WINTER QUARTERS

Brigham YOUNG's original plan for the LDS exodus from NAUVOO, Illinois, envisioned a quick journey across Iowa in the spring of 1846 and, at least for some, a journey "over the mountains" by fall. That plan called for small winter camps in Iowa, at the Missouri River, and at Grand Island, whence later

encampments could depart in the spring of 1847 for their mountain home. As the first wagons took over three months just to cross windblown and storm-drenched Iowa, this plan could not be carried out. By the time advance companies had reached the Missouri River, it was mid-June and too late for them or the 12,000 following to attempt a mountain crossing that season. A layover place had to be found.

The term "winter quarters," often used by trappers and explorers to describe a place of refuge from the hazards of winter, took on special significance in Mormon pioneer history. Built on Indian lands on the west bank of the Missouri River—now



A Tragedy of Winter Quarters, by Avard T. Fairbanks (1936, bronze sculpture), erected at Winter Quarters, in present Omaha, Nebraska. Commemorating the deaths of 340 Latter-day Saints at Winter Quarters between the fall of 1846 and the spring of 1848, and sculpted by a descendant of pioneers buried here, this statue depicts a couple huddled together in sorrow over the death of their child. It bears the inscription: "That the struggles, the sacrifices and the sufferings of the faithful pioneers and the cause they represented shall never be forgotten." Courtesy Brigham Young University.

Florence, a suburb of Omaha, Nebraska—their Winter Quarters became a vital new center for planning, regrouping, preparing, and religious renewal. Surveyed in October 1846 and subsequently laid out in a grid with 14 streets, 38 blocks, and over 760 lots and stockyards, and with houses ranging from two-story brick homes to sod huts, Winter Quarters housed almost 4,000 Latter-day Saints by December 1846. For the next two years, the name was also loosely applied to scores of much smaller settlements on the river's east side, home for another 8,000 LDS immigrants.

After the establishment of SALT LAKE CITY in 1847 and upon orders from government officials concerned about settlement on Indian lands, the Saints vacated Winter Quarters in 1848 to go either to the Salt Lake Valley or back east across the river, where they created the city of Kaneshville, Iowa (see COUNCIL BLUFFS).

Winter Quarters was more than a resting spot on the way to the West: It became a place of implementation and experimentation in Church practice and government. It was there, for example, that the LAW OF ADOPTION and PLURAL MARRIAGE were first openly practiced, though they had been taught in Nauvoo. Also at Winter Quarters Brigham Young and the QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES deliberated at length about leadership and Church government before reorganizing the FIRST PRESIDENCY at Kaneshville, December 1847. The role of BISHOP was also refined. Because of the needs created by the July 1846 departure of 500 able-bodied men to serve in the MORMON BATTALION, Winter Quarters became the first community divided into small WARDS (congregations) of 300 to 500 people, with a bishop responsible for each.

Winter Quarters also represents the tragic side of Mormon history: Some 2,000 Latter-day Saints died there and across the river between June 1846 and October 1848. This high death rate is attributable to excessive fatigue, heavy spring storms, generally inadequate provisions, the malaria then common along the river lowlands, improvised shelters, and the weakened condition of the “poor camp” refugees driven out of Nauvoo in the fall of 1846.

Winter Quarters tested Brigham Young's remarkable leadership abilities and the faith of thousands who followed him through sickness and wilderness to their eventual mountain refuge. In Latter-day Saint chronicles, Winter Quarters will

be forever remembered as a place of suffering and of faith.

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RICHARD E. BENNETT

WITNESSES, BOOK OF MORMON

See: Book of Mormon Witnesses

WITNESSES, LAW OF

The scriptural law of witnesses requires that in the mouth of two or three individuals shall every word be established (Deut. 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19). This law applies in divine as well as human relations, for members of the Godhead bear witness of one another (John 5:31–37; 3 Ne. 11:32), and books of holy writ give multiple witness to the work of God in the earth (2 Ne. 29:8–13). The law of witnesses is prominent in the history and practice of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

A witness gives personal verification of, or attests to the reality of, an event. To “witness” in the scriptural sense is much the same as in the legal sense: to give personal testimony based on firsthand evidence or experience. To bear false witness is a very serious offense (Deut. 5:20; 19:16–21). When prophets have an experience with the Lord, often he commands them to “bear record” of him and of the truths that have been revealed (1 Ne. 10:10; 11:7; D&C 58:59; 112:4; 138:60). In legal affairs, testimony is usually related to what a person knows by the physical senses. In spiritual matters there is additional knowledge or information received through the Holy Spirit.

The Bible illustrates that God often works with mankind through two or more witnesses (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:15–16). Likewise, latter-day scripture teaches the need for witnesses (D&C 6:28; 42:80–81; 128:3). One per-