
“I hid [the Prophet] in a corn patch”: Mormon Women as Healers, Concealers, and Protectors in the 1838 Mormon-Missouri War

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Mary Isabella Hales Horne was a young bride of twenty years when she experienced the mob violence against the Mormons in Far West, Missouri, in the fall of 1838. Writing later in life, she remembered, “When the mob entered Far West, they entered houses, taking what they pleased, jeering and intimidating the women.” In spite of the terror, she was determined that “though father, husband and brothers were in danger . . . she would not humble herself to let them see she was afraid.”¹ By hiding her fear from the Missouri militiamen, Mary Isabella was able to maintain a semblance of personal control in an uncontrollable situation. Her account is useful for introducing Mormon women and their Missouri experiences, because it aptly conveys the themes of victimization and fear, but also of finding agency through concealment. Mary Horne’s resolution speaks to the many ways in which Mormon women experienced the physical dangers of the 1838 Missouri-Mormon, while also

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finding their own choice and action in the midst of intense violence.

The 1838 conflict also represented a crisis regarding the responsibilities traditionally carried out by males. When Mormon men were killed, arrested, or went into hiding to escape imprisonment and prosecution, they often left their wives and children unprotected, which forced the women to step in and fill traditionally male roles. In these instances, Mormon women acted in diverse ways: (1) as healers—being called upon to administer sick, wounded, or dying, both physically and spiritually; or (2) as mediators, concealers, and protectors—acting in those capacities to hide men and objects (such as guns, money, or items of worth); relay information, mislead or deceive their antagonists, or assist in prison escapes.

Mormon women's roles as "hiders" of things has been rather mythically passed down and preserved in Mormon lore through the story of how Mary Elizabeth and Caroline Rollins saved the printers' pages of the *Book of Commandments in Independence* in 1833. As the mobs attacked the office of the printing press and threw the press and uncut pages into the street, Mary Rollins took fast action:

The mob renewed their efforts again by tearing down the printing office, a two story building, and driving Brother Phelps' family out of the lower part of the house and putting their things in the street. They brought out some large sheets of paper, and said, "Here are the Mormon Commandments." My sister Caroline and myself were in a corner of a fence watching them; when they spoke of the commandments I was determined to have some of them. Sister said if I went to get any of them she would go too, but said "They will kill us." While their backs were turned, prying out the gable end of the house, we went, and got our arms full, and were turning away, when some of the mob saw us and called on us to stop, but we ran as fast as we could. Two of them started after us. Seeing a gap in a fence, we entered into a large cornfield, laid the papers on the ground, and hid them with our persons. The corn was from five to six feet high, and very thick; they hunted around considerable, and came very near us but did not find us.²

This event, told and retold in Mormon lore because of the unique bravery of adolescents in saving a significant portion of the published *Book of Commandments*, has been memorialized in LDS narratives about Missouri, as well as the Primary and youth-level curriculum. The fact that the incident



Mary Isabella Hales Horne, date unknown. Photograph courtesy Church History Library.

involved two teenage girls has made it all the more unexpected and all the more worth telling, since it exemplifies the faithful courage of two young Mormon protagonists. But it also introduces a theme repeated throughout the Missouri violence, wherein these unlikely heroes, often females inserted themselves into dangerous situations in clandestine, secret, or hidden ways. Certainly, concealment in war is not unique, nor is it a uniquely female activity, nor is it uniquely Mormon. Many stories from the Missouri period are testaments to the very nature of clandestine wartime actions. In fact, male acts of concealment outnumber the episodes of female hiding, simply by the numbers of men who found it necessary to go into hiding, either alone or in groups. What stands out, however, is how the Mormon War became a constructed war against civilian and domestic targets, thus bringing female participants into the necessity of wartime subterfuge, concealment, and deception in exceptional and gendered ways, for reasons of protecting their husbands and family members, their homes, and their communities.

The act of concealment became particularly necessary during the violence in 1838, as mobs considered all public and private locations to be appropriate targets for ferreting out the Mormon threat. And understandably so, since Mormons naturally used private spaces like homes and farms for hiding their defensive arms. Drusilla Dorris Hendricks remembered that as the mobs began to gather around Far West the “brethren began to gather and get ready to defend themselves,” and “twenty-five or thirty of the brethren . . . with their arms” came to the house. “I noticed they went upstairs and came down without their arms.” Soon, Sister Hendricks had to go upstairs for something, and “in stepping on my bed I was frightened and on removing some of the clothing found the bed full of guns, pistols, and swords.”³ Besides weapons, camouflage was required for other necessities, including documents, money, food, and household items. During the attack at Hawn’s Mill, Olive Eames, along with some other women, hid out at Jacob Hawn’s cabin, where they watched the mobs pour through the houses looking through the clothing and bedding. “Money was what they were hunting for,” she conjectured. “What little money we had was hid away in my old clock. I supposed that too would be



Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner,
date unknown.

taken, with all my bedding.”²⁴ She never said whether the mobs discovered her monetary stash.

By bringing women directly or indirectly into the acts of concealment of the objects or implements of war, Mormon women inserted themselves squarely into the sphere of military engagement. This role became even more needed as the numbers of men who fled into hiding or were arrested increased. Thus, as men needed to be hidden to avoid arrest—or worse—the wives and sisters of these men stepped in to become literal physical protectors and concealers of their threatened husbands, friends and church leaders. Having the distinction of hiding one of the church leaders from the mobs remained in the historical memory of the women who did it, often being included in reminiscences and autobiographies decades later.

For example, in 1837, Laura and Morris Phelps bought a farm just outside of Far West, around the time trouble began brewing in Caldwell County. She remembered: “One day the Prophet and his brother came running by their house and Laura hid them in her house behind the clothes curtain. When the mob rushed in and their leader said, “Where are they? We know they are here, we saw them come.” She answered calmly and with apparent unconcern, “No, gentlemen, they are not here, but you are welcome to look all you want to.” She tried to look unconcerned while the mob made a hasty search and left. Upon emerging from his hiding place, the Prophet said, “Sister Laura, ther[e] are black lies and white lies and that certainly was a white one that came from your lips.”²⁵

Other women also had the distinction of hiding Joseph Smith. In 1837, shortly after the Cole family relocated to Caldwell County, troubles between the Mormons and their Gentile neighbors began to intensify. One of the daughters—perhaps Susan Ann—remembered: “I knew the prophet [Joseph Smith] very well; when I was 18 years old, I hid him in the corn patch to keep him from his enemies. . . . We all loved him very well.”²⁶

No event of the 1838 conflict highlighted or engendered more violence than the Hawn’s Mill tragedy of October 30, 1838. While men and boys were the main casualties in the attack, women stepped in to hide, heal, and minister to the wounded and suffering, including burying the dead. In the midst of



Olive Eames, date unknown.
Photograph courtesy Community
of Christ Library-Archives.



Margaret Foutz, date unknown.



Artemisia Sidnie Myers Foote, artist unknown.

the shooting, many women fled into the surrounding wooded areas with the children. Margaret Foutz remembered: “I was at home with my family of five little children, and could hear the firing. In a moment I knew the mob was upon us. Soon a runner came, telling the women and children to hasten in to the timber and secrete themselves, which we did, without taking anything to keep us warm; and had we been fleeing from the scalping knife of the Indian we would not have made greater haste.”⁷⁷ Artemisia Sidnie Myers Foote, who was nine years old at the time of the attack, recalled that at the time of the attack, she also, with several family members, fled into woods: “About dark word came to us that the mobbers were coming and that men, women and children had better hide in the woods as they intended to kill all they could find. The men were told to hide by themselves. There were three families at father’s house. After the men were gone the women took the children, and went about a mile and a half to the woods.”⁷⁸ Women’s concerns for protecting their children from danger was ever-present. When Olive Eames saw the shooting, she rushed out of the house, crying, “Where are my children?” Relief came when “they gathered around me, then, with my babe, but one month old, in my arms, I started to hide, not knowing where to go or what to do, so frightened was I, but anxious to conceal my little ones somewhere.”⁷⁹

As Hawn’s Mill residents sought hiding places during the violence, they intuitively understood how men and women were being affected differently by the violence. John Hammer, a young boy at the time, remembered: “All

the male members of the neighborhood had to keep concealed. The moment the mob got sight of them, they were shot at. The women were not quite so closely hunted.”¹⁰ And yet, by not being as carefully watched or hunted by the attackers, women were able to function somewhat more undetected, providing relief and succor to the wounded, relaying messages, and physically concealing those who needed their protection. John also recalled how the women rendered assistance: “By being extremely cautious,” he wrote, the women “managed to convey water and food to their husbands, sons and brothers, to keep them from famishing.” He continued, “Myself and cousin had to sleep in shocks of corn or in the brush for two or three weeks, not daring to enter the house, and we were kept from starving by the food which our mothers and sisters managed to convey to us.”¹¹

Although the women at the mill remained mostly free from direct violence, Mary Stedwell did not escape injury, having been shot in the hand in a volley of gunfire, as she took cover behind a large log. That a woman was a victim of the violence is so noteworthy that the incident is mentioned in numerous first-hand accounts of the survivors. However, there is some discrepancy over whether the mobs consciously pursued female victims. In describing the shooting of Mary Stedwell, one unnamed reporter claimed, “Doubtless this shooting was accidental.”¹² And yet, Amanda Barnes Smith, who was close to Mary when she was shot, remembered that “though we were women, with tender children, in flight for our lives, the demons poured volley after volley to kill us.”¹³ More significant to this discussion, however, is that Mary’s life was saved by ducking behind a log. But various accounts tell very differently how this happened. Some say her dress caught on the log, and falling behind it was just an accident, but most agree that Mary actively sought self-concealment. “A young woman named Mary Studwell [*sic*] who was running away, at a distance from any one else was shot through the hand. Hearing the balls whistling by her she took shelter behind some logs which screened her from the balls as several lodged in the logs.”¹⁴ Amanda Smith gave two different accounts of Mary Stedwell’s hiding behind the log. In her April 1839 affidavit, Amanda claimed that Mary “was wounded by my side and fell over a log, her clothes hung across the Logs [and] they Shot at them expecting that they were hitting her, and our people af[ter]wards Cut out of that log twenty bullets.”¹⁵ When she recounted the story again in 1877, Amanda more consciously inserted her own role into helping Mary protect herself from the mob’s gunfire: “A number of bullets entered my clothes, but I was not wounded. Mary cried out that she was hit. We had just reached the trunk of a fallen tree, over which I urged her, bidding her to shelter there where the bullets could not reach her, while I continued my flight to some bottom land.” Upon returning when the firing had stopped, Amanda found

Mary “in a pool of blood where she had fainted, but she was only shot through the hand.”¹⁶

It is intriguing that in another account of the story, Amanda Smith’s role in protecting her friend is more conspicuous, perhaps as a result of memorializing her central role as a concealer and healer in the Hawn’s Mill tragedy. Amanda, whose husband, Warren, and son, Sardius, were killed in the attack, and who famously healed her seven-year-old son Alma’s mangled hip by filling it with a poultice, had assisted others in the wake of the massacre. Besides taking care of her own son, she also returned to the scene the night following the attack to help find and tend to the wounded. “All through the night we heard the groans of the dying. . . . Once in the dark we crawled over the heap of dead in the blacksmith’s shop to try to help or soothe the sufferers’ wants; once we followed the cries of a wounded brother who hid in some bushes from the murderers and relieved him all we could.”¹⁷



Amanda Barnes Smith, date unknown.

The women provided what assistance they could. David Lewis barely escaped the gunfire, but was too weak to flee quickly, after having been bedridden for three months due by an illness. His wife found him wandering, dehydrated and exhausted. “Are you wounded?” she asked. “I told her I was not hurt and we went with Aramintee, our only child, and secreted [*sic*] ourselves in a thicket until dark.” David was also grateful that his brother Benjamin had been “found about three hundred yards from the shop by some of the women who had been concealed in the bushes during the fracas.” Benjamin was still alive, and the extra time gave David the chance to get him back to the house, where his brother soon died from his wounds.¹⁸

Some women also assisted men who were not their own relations. Nathan Kinsman Knight had escaped a barrage of bullets. In his escape he finally

secreted [*sic*] myself in some fallen tree tops. . . . I remained about three quarters of an hour. A little after sunset I saw Sister Polly Wood (formerly Miss Polly Merrill). I motioned for her to come to me. I could not call her, neither could I stand up. She came and tried to lead me back, but I was too weak. She then kneeled down and placed her hands on my wounds and prayed the Lord to strengthen and heal me. I never heard a more powerful prayer. The Lord answered her prayer, and I received strength and walked back to Haun’s house by resting three or four times.¹⁹

Joseph Young, brother of Brigham Young, had been climbing a hill when the mob started shooting at him, until he descended the other side. Once on the backside of the hill he was able to hide. "I secreted myself in a thicket of bushes where I lay till eight o'clock in the evening at which time I heard a female voice calling my name in an under tone, telling me that the mob had gone and there was no danger. I immediately left the thicket, and went to the house of Benjamin Lewis where I found my family (who had fled there) in safety."²⁰

Isaac Leany, another young victim, was attended to by several women. Referring to Isaac's ordeal, James McBride wrote:

Isaac Laney [Leany] . . . was in the black-smith shop, when the mob began to fire on them. His gun stock was shot to pieces in his hands. He then escaped from the shop, ran to the mill, and climbed down one of the mill timbers into the creek. That being the quickest way for him to escape danger. From there he went into the house, where [my] sister Catherine, Mrs. Haun, Mrs. Merrill[] and some other women were. They administered to Isaac, and put him under the floor. He had received eleven bullet marks in his body. I was well acquainted with Isaac Laney, and helped to take care of him until he recovered. He told me that when trying to escape from the mob, the blood gushing from his mouth would almost strangle him. While he was under the floor he said he suffered a great deal for want of water. The women not daring to venture out to get water until they felt sure the mob was entirely gone.²¹

For the women of Hawm's Mill, one final act punctuated their roles in the concealment of their husbands, sons, and brothers. Many accounts describe the gruesome task of burying the deceased victims in a wide, shallow well. The hasty burial was necessary, and the survivors wanted to give their deceased friends and loved ones at least some semblance of a burial, fearing that their attackers might return and they would all have to flee together. Nathan Knight described it in detail:

Early next morning the men and women who had fled returned, and as the murderers were expected to return and complete their work of death, no time was to be lost. The bodies of those murdered numbering 16 were placed in an unfinished well which had only been dug to the depth of 12 or 14 feet. It had been made wider than common, in order to admit a curb before walling it up with rock as the ground was sandy. In this vault wives assisted to place their husbands and sons buried them hastily and fled again to the woods.²²

The burial in itself became a symbolic concealment; hiding their husbands' and sons' bodies in a mass grave, allowed no opportunity to mark individual places of rest. Nor did it offer hope for ever returning to a recognizable site. Instead, in the years since, the "waving cornfields have grown

in the surrounding land for years, while bushes filled the banks along Shoal Creek, as if nature conspired to hide the appalling site of this massacre."²³

These scenes are emblematic of how the women of Hawn's Mill assumed many significant roles, from performing ritual healing, to physically hiding the wounded, to burying the deceased. Another victim of the Massacre, Jacob Foutz was seriously wounded, leaving his wife, Margaret to take care of him, "During those days of mobocratic violence I would sometimes hide my husband in the house, and sometimes in the woods, covering him with leaves."²⁴ But she went even one step further in keeping her husband safe, by working out some creative gender reversing. After Jacob had recovered some and was able to sit up, "he was dressed as a woman and put at a spinning wheel." He was so made up on at least one occasion when the non-Mormons visited his home. "In this way, his life was protected."²⁵ Cross-dressing saved many a man's life throughout the Mormon-Missouri War. Following the Mormon surrender, Captain Samuel Bogart, of the Ray County militia, roamed Caldwell County in search of additional Mormons suspects, to bring them to Richmond to face charges. Bogart was on the lookout for Joseph Holbrook and Charles C. Rich, both of whom had been members of the Mormon detachment that had engaged against Bogart's company at the Battle of Crooked River. Fearing arrest, Holbrook hid out and successfully avoided capture by dressing up as a sick woman confined to bed. His impersonation was convincing. Nancy Naomi Tracy reported "He was not detected although the house was searched well."²⁶

Perhaps the most amusing account of gender reversal comes from Brigham Young, who often disguised himself as a woman. During the Mormon conflict, "when I wanted to go out of door I went out with Mother Angel's bonnet and petticoat on me and I could go around among them and do what I please and they didn't recognize me." In this way, he remembered, he could witness the mob violence "with my own eyes [space] they didn't happen to know me."²⁷

These creative gender reversals went both ways: women sometimes disguised themselves as men to avoid detection or to give the impression of a male presence. The Myers family, who lived a short distance from Hawn's Mill, received reports later that evening that an attack had occurred. Artemisia recalled her mother's leadership of the family: "After the children were asleep and lights put out my mother put on a man's coat and stood guard until one or two o'clock, when word came to us they had had a battle at the mill and two of my brothers were wounded."²⁸ The fact that her mother wore a man's coat might not have been worth mentioning had it been just to keep warm. Rather, Artemisia includes this detail as a reminder that the male disguise allowed her mother a necessary semblance of masculine authority in the midst of danger to a group of unprotected women and children.

Sometimes disguises were not gender-based at all, but just convenient costuming. Olive Eames helped facilitate a useful disguise for her husband, although this did not involve dressing up as a woman: “He was a great hand to go hunting, so I made a cap for him and he happened to have it on that day. That saved him from being killed, so we thought after we talked it over. The mob thought he was one of them because of the red stripes in his cap.” It still caused confusion, however: “there was a bullet hole in his coat tail.” Maybe the mob had just missed.”²⁹

The appropriation of gendered meanings of clothing served important purposes for both men and women. Just as women dressing up as men during wartime has allowed females to enter traditionally male spheres of activity such as combat, espionage, or lookout duty, so also female disguises during the Mormon-Missouri conflict allowed Mormon men the freedom to function within the nineteenth century cultural prescriptions for women who were seen as non-threatening and innocent. Women, or men dressed as women, usually went unsuspected because it was generally thought females would not participate in any type of subversion. This allowed women to take advantage of these assumptions about their gender in creative and useful ways, like hiding or concealing people and weapons, or assisting with escapes.

Drusilla D. Hendricks’s husband, James, was severely injured in the Battle of Crooked River and suffered paralysis from a gunshot wound to the

James and Drusilla Hendricks and an unidentified grandchild, date unknown. James suffered paralysis from a gunshot wound to the neck in the Battle of Crooked River, October 25, 1838.



neck. A short while later, several Missouri ruffians came to search their home, but not for James, who lay wounded in bed, but for Stephen Winchester, who they thought was hiding out in their home. “They took the candle from the table and turned down the bed clothes and [looking at James] asked what doctor I had. I told them I had none. They then asked me a great many questions.” She continued: “They told me they wanted to search the house, so one gave his pistol to another and took the candle. He told me to get up, and he wanted to look under my bed.”

They looked under my bed and said they were looking for Winchester. I told them to go to Illinois if they wanted to find him. They said his wife had been telling them that lie, but they did not believe it, so I told them when he started. After hunting under the beds at the back of the house, they must go upstairs. I told him where the children got up but said there was nothing there but meat. I had my meat up there to use on our journey. They finally concluded that Winchester was not there, so they came a second time to my husband’s bed and turned the clothes down below his breast. I still sat on the side of the bed, for I was determined I would not leave him. They made him talk, but he was so weak and pale he looked more like he was dead than alive. They turned around and asked me for water. I told them that there was a pail and a cup by it, that I would not get up.³⁰

In their search for the Mormon fugitive, the mobs conceded that Winchester’s wife had already lied to them, which lie had led them to search the Hendricks home, where Drusilla repeated the same fabrication. Sarah Studevart Leavitt took great pride in her knack for deception. When an officer asked whether she and other women were armed, she lied to him, then commented with satisfaction, “It is not hard to deceive a fool.”³¹

In November 1838, following the Mormon surrender to Missouri officials, Sarah DeArmon Pea Rich, wife of Charles C. Rich, experienced an interesting encounter. Missouri authorities had been on the lookout for Charles, hoping to arrest him for his involvement as a member of the Mormon company that had attacked a Missouri contingent under the command of Samuel Bogart at Crooked River. However, Charles successfully escaped and was making his way out of the state, leaving Sarah on her own. On one occasion, while en route to her home, a guard detail stopped Sarah and refused to let her pass. With no other recourse, she went to her sister-in-law’s home, where she explained what had happened. A captain in the militia overheard the conversation and asked her if she was the wife of the man whom Captain Samuel



Sarah DeArmon Pea Rich,
date unknown.

Bogart had killed the day before. Sarah lied and told him that she was, even though she knew Charles had not been killed, whereupon the officer said he would accompany her to where the guard was and see that she was permitted to pass on to her home. Leaving the impression that Charles had been killed gave him more time to get away. However, eventually the authorities learned that Charles was alive. “When they found out he was not killed they felt awfull [sic] mad,” Sarah wrote, “and would often come to my house and tell me if I did not tell where he was hid they would blow my brains out, at the same time pointing pistols at me. . . . They thought he must be hid up somewhere[e] never thinking it pos[s]ible for him to make his escape when there were so maney [many] troops of mobs in the country.”³²

Perhaps in no better way was Mormon women’s talent for concealment and deception more useful than in assisting with escapes or in conveying contraband for male leaders. For example, in March 1839, Presendia Huntington Buell went with her father, William Huntington, and Alanson Ripley and Heber C. Kimball to visit the Mormon leaders who were confined in Liberty Jail. On this occasion Presendia recalled that when they arrived at the jail a heavy guard had been placed on both the inside and the outside of the jail. “We were watched very closely,” she said, “lest we should leave tools to help the prisoners escape.”³³ When she returned to the jail a short time later, she was not allowed to enter. Joseph Smith later wrote to her about her attempted visit: “My heart rejoiced at the friendship you manifested in requesting to have conversation with us but the Jailer is a very Jealous man for fear some one will leave tools for us to get out with”³⁴

When Morris Phelps was incarcerated in the Columbia, Boone County, Missouri Jail in 1839, along with Parley P. Pratt, Luman Gibbs, and King Follett, Morris’s wife, Laura, along with her brother John, traveled 150 miles on horseback to help them escape. On the evening of the jailbreak, July 4, Laura, who was permitted to eat dinner with the inmates, helped them escape, although King Follett was later recaptured.³⁵ Because she rendered assistance, “the jailer and his wife began to curse and rail at Laura and threaten her with instant death and finally turned her out of doors in the dusk of the evening to face the mob that had gathered.” When the rabble returned after recapturing Follett, the abuse against Laura increased. Observing her mistreatment, one young boy ran home to tell his mother. The boy returned with his parents to the courthouse, whereupon the man said to his wife to take Laura to their home and care for her. “If her husband was the greatest murderer in the world,” he remarked, “we could not see anyone in our town treated with such cruelty as this.” Laura remained at their home for ten days before making her way to Illinois.³⁶

While incarcerated in the Richmond Jail, Parley P. Pratt began writing a full-length manuscript narrative about the Missouri problems, which he later published as *History of the Late Persecution Inflicted by the State of Missouri Upon the Mormons*. The officers and guards, well aware that Pratt was drafting some sort of manuscript, became worried it would be confiscated, so he devised a plan to get the manuscript safely out of prison, using his wife, Mary Ann.

He hid it in his wife's petticoats, and a timely accident involving his stepdaughter provided the perfect distraction. As she was climbing the ladder linking the dungeon to the main floor, a falling trap door struck her head. In great alarm—greater than the injury merited—Mary Ann rushed the hurting child outside and into the fresh air. In the panicky commotion, the guards did not search mother or child. She subsequently delivered the manuscript safely to nearby friends, the Stoddards, who kept it safe until Pratt's release.³⁷



Mary Ann Frost Stearns Pratt, date unknown. Photograph courtesy Jane W. Fife.

The petticoat story might sound familiar to readers who are much more acquainted with another somewhat similar tale. During Joseph Smith's incarceration in Liberty Jail, James Mulholland, his scribe, conceived a plan he hoped would secure the safety of some of the Prophet's most significant documents. Thinking that a woman might escape a search by authorities, he gave the papers to his sister-in-law, Ann Scott. "Immediately on taking possession of the papers . . . I made two cotton bags of sufficient size to contain them," she wrote, "sewing a band around the top ends of sufficient length to button around my waist; and I carried those papers on my person in the day-time, when the mob was round, and slept with them under my pillow at night." Later, she gave the cloth bags to Emma, just before her departure from Far West.³⁸

Examining in a larger context the incidents of Mormon women and their acts of deception, and concealment during the period of the Mormon-Missouri conflict allows us to explore the interplay between Missouri antagonists and Mormon women, as female accomplices inserted themselves in various ways to disrupt or usurp male incursions in the support of their family members, husbands, or church leaders. How did Mormon women weigh the balance

between deception and self and group preservation? Perhaps a more radical feminist reading of this period would suggest that women might have acted to subvert, rather than support, male constructions of violence, not just by the Missourians, but by their own male Mormon leaders. Specifically, in hiding of weapons of war or protecting men as combatants in that war, Mormon women seemed to embrace the logic of male bellicosity, becoming aiders and abettors rather than constructive critics. And yet, in the many acts of hiding and nurturing wounded men, protecting and saving precious documents, assisting with prison escapes, and leading groups of women and children into places of safety, Mormon women appropriated empowering roles for the defense and preservation of themselves and their people in the face of confrontation. In seeing all sides of women's actions, the story can move away from a romanticized notion of women as "noble innocents," toward a more robust female agency which was used for both good and ill.³⁹ Could we even subscribe Mormon women's behavior as inspirational? I believe we can, especially on personal levels, as women transcended their own fear and terror to find individual and even faith-affirming empowerment as a reaction against aggression.

In one final act of concealment, after witnessing so much cruelty and terror, Amanda Smith sought a hiding place in a field to pray: "I stole down into a corn-field and crawled into a stock of corn" she wrote. "It was as the temple of the Lord to me at that moment. I prayed aloud and most fervently." Her answer came quickly:

When I emerged from the corn a voice spoke to me. It was a voice as plain as I ever heard one. It was no silent, strong impression of the spirit, but a voice, repeating a verse of the saint's hymn: "*The soul who on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I cannot, I will not desert to his foes; that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake!*"⁴⁰

In seeking one last opportunity for self-concealment, Amanda discovered her own strength and faith. "From that moment I had not more fear. I felt that nothing could hurt me."⁴¹

Thus, just as Amanda Barnes Smith and Mary Isabella Horne found strength in the very act of concealing their fear from the mobs, we can find similar self and group-enabling silence in Margaret Foutz, who recalled her own untapped power in the midst of the Hawn's Mill Massacre: "At times like these, when human nature quailed, I felt the power of God upon me to that degree that I could stand before them fearless; and although a woman, and alone, those demons in inhuman shape had to succumb; *for there was a power with me that they knew not of.*"⁴²

Just as Mormon women's nineteenth century cultural invisibility acted as a wartime asset in allowing them to frequently go undetected, today their historical invisibility has at times been omitted or overlooked, which has worked against the true telling of the Mormon-Missouri War of 1838. Toward that end, this work seeks to bring Mormon women out of the shadows of both war and memory.

Notes

1. Mary Elizabeth Hales Horne, "Migration and Settlement of the Latter-day Saints," 8, typescript, Bancroft Library, University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, California. Mary wrote the article under the name Mrs. Joseph Horne.

2. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, "Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner," *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 17, no. 3 (July 1926):196.

3. Drusilla Dorris Hendricks, Autobiography, in *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900*, ed. Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 87.

4. Olive Eames, quoted in Joseph Smith III, and Heman C. Smith, *The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, 4 vols. (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1951), 2:236 (hereafter cited as *History of the Reorganized Church*).

5. Morris Calvin Phelps, "Biographical Sketch of Laura Clark Phelps," 2, MS 13777, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as CHL).

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10. John Hammer, quoted in Lyman Omer Littlefield, *Reminiscences of Latter-day Saints* (Logan, UT: The Utah Journal Company, 1888), 71.

11. Hammer, quoted in Littlefield, *Reminiscences of Latter-day Saints*, 71.

12. *History of Caldwell and Livingston Counties, Missouri* (St. Louis, MO: National Historical Company, 1886), 150.

13. Amanda Barnes Smith, quoted in Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom*, 122.

14. Ellis Eames, quoted in *Journal History of the Church*, October 30, 1838, 14, CHL. He was somehow misidentified in the *Journal History* as Ellis Eamut, and is sometimes also referred to as Ellis Ames.

15. Amanda Barnes Smith petition in Clark V. Johnson, ed., *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833-1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1992); 538; also in in Joseph Smith Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 3:324.

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17. Smith, quoted in Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom*, 125.
18. David Lewis, "History of Hawn's Mill," 5, typescript, Perry Special Collections.
19. Nathan Kinsman Knight, "Extracts from a Statement of Nathan K. Knight," in *History of Caldwell and Livingston Counties*, 158.
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27. Brigham Young, Remarks, April 8, 1868, 21, Papers of George D. Watt, MS 4534, box 4, disk 11, transcription by LaJean Carruth from shorthand notes by George D. Watt.
28. Foote, "Artemisia Sidnie Myers Foote's Experience," 1.
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31. Sarah Studevaut Leavitt, "History of Sarah Studevaut Leavitt," 28, CHL.
32. Sarah DeArmon Pea Rich, Autobiography, in Godfrey, et al., *Women's Voices*, 101–02.
33. Emmeline B. Wells, "A Venerable Woman: Presendia Lathrop Kimball," *Woman's Exponent* 11, no. 17 (March 1, 1883): 147.
34. Joseph Smith Jr. to Presendia Huntington Buell, March 18, 1839, in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2002), 426.
35. For a historical examination of the escape see Alexander L. Baugh, "The Final Episode of Mormonism in Missouri in the 1830s: The Incarceration of the Mormon Prisoners in Richmond and Columbia Jails, 1838–1839," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 28 (2008): 1–34.
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37. Terryl L. Givens and Matthew J. Grow, *Parley P. Pratt: The Apostle Paul of Mormonism* (New York: Oxford University Press), 150.
38. Ann Scott, as quoted in Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 79.
39. I credit my friend and colleague, David Pulsipher, with some of the useful interpretive analysis provided in this conclusion. David Pulsipher to Andrea Radke-Moss, June 2, 2014, transcript in possession of the author.
40. Smith, quoted in Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom*, 130.
41. *Ibid.*, emphasis added.
42. Foutz, quoted in Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom*, 173–74, emphasis added.