

# **Stories of Heroism**

**From the History of the  
Church of Jesus Christ of  
Latter-day Saints**

# Real Heroism

- **Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me. (D&C 97:8)**
- **For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. (2 Corinthians 10:18)**

# James Kirkwood

- (Then) Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve shares the story of a young man named James Kirkwood. He epitomizes so much of what we all believe and hope to stand for.





**No**

ERECTED

**27**

JUNE 23, 1933

**WILLIE'S HANDCART COMPANY**

CAPTAIN JAMES G. WILLIE'S HANDCART COMPANY OF MORMON EMIGRANTS ON THE WAY TO UTAH, GREATLY EXHAUSTED BY THE DEEP SNOWS OF AN EARLY WINTER AND SUFFERING FROM LACK OF FOOD AND CLOTHING, HAD ASSEMBLED HERE FOR REORGANIZATION BY RELIEF PARTIES FROM UTAH, ABOUT THE END OF OCTOBER, 1856. THIRTEEN PERSONS WERE FROZEN TO DEATH DURING A SINGLE NIGHT AND WERE BURIED HERE IN ONE GRAVE. TWO OTHERS DIED THE NEXT DAY AND WERE BURIED NEARBY. OF THE COMPANY OF 404 PERSONS 77 PERISHED BEFORE HELP ARRIVED. THE SURVIVORS REACHED SALT LAKE CITY NOVEMBER 9, 1856.

UTAH PIONEER TRAILS & LANDMARKS ASSOCIATION & MEMBERS OF LYMAN STATE

IN MEMORY OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE WILLIE  
HANDCART CO. WHOSE JOURNEY STARTED TOO LATE  
AND ENDED TOO EARLY AND WERE BURIED HERE IN  
A CIRCULAR GRAVE OCTOBER, 24 & 25, 1856.

WILLIAM JAMES, 46

ELIZABETH BAILEY, 52

JAMES KIRKWOOD, 11

SAMUEL GADD, 10

LARS WENDIN, 60

ANNE OLSEN, 46

ELLA NILSON, 22

BODIL MORTINSEN, 9

NILS ANDERSON, 41

OLE MADSEN, 41

JAMES GIBB, 67

CHESTERTON GILMAN, 66

THOMAS GURLDSTONE, 62

WILLIAM GROVES, 22



# Joseph Foster Doxford



• Joseph  
Foster and  
Charlotte  
Doxford

- Joined the Church in 1851
- Served as president of three branches in England while also serving as a local “member” missionary.
- “Called up” by Apostle Ezra T. Benson to serve as a full time traveling elder, requiring him to leave his family, business and branch presidency responsibilities.

# Joseph Foster Doxford



**Elder  
Joseph  
Foster  
Doxford**

- Served from 1856-1858 in England, baptizing many and organizing two branches.
- Called to go to the U.S. without his family, where he served as a missionary in Pennsylvania four more years.
- After 11 years of missionary and branch presidency service, migrated with family to Utah in 1862 during the Civil War.



# Joseph Foster Doxford



Elder  
Joseph  
Foster  
Doxford

- After arriving in Utah, he was involved in the Blackhawk and Grasshopper wars.
- He relocated three times: from Spanish Fork to Richfield to Weber to Monroe.
- Remarkable: at age 67, he was called by President John Taylor to resume his missionary labors to the Eastern States, where he served for two more years and helped 18 saints migrate back with him. He received his second anointing in the Manti Temple (with his four wives) Nov. 26, 1896.

# Mission to the Lamanites



- The Church was barely six months old when Oliver Cowdery was called by revelation to go to the Lamanites and preach the gospel (see D&C 28:8). Subsequently Peter Whitmer, Jr., Ziba Peterson, and Parley P. Pratt were called to assist him (see D&C 30:5; 32:1–3). On 18 October they began their fifteen-hundred-mile westward trek.



# Mission to the Lamanites



Most of the trip was made during the “winter of deep snow” of 1830-31.

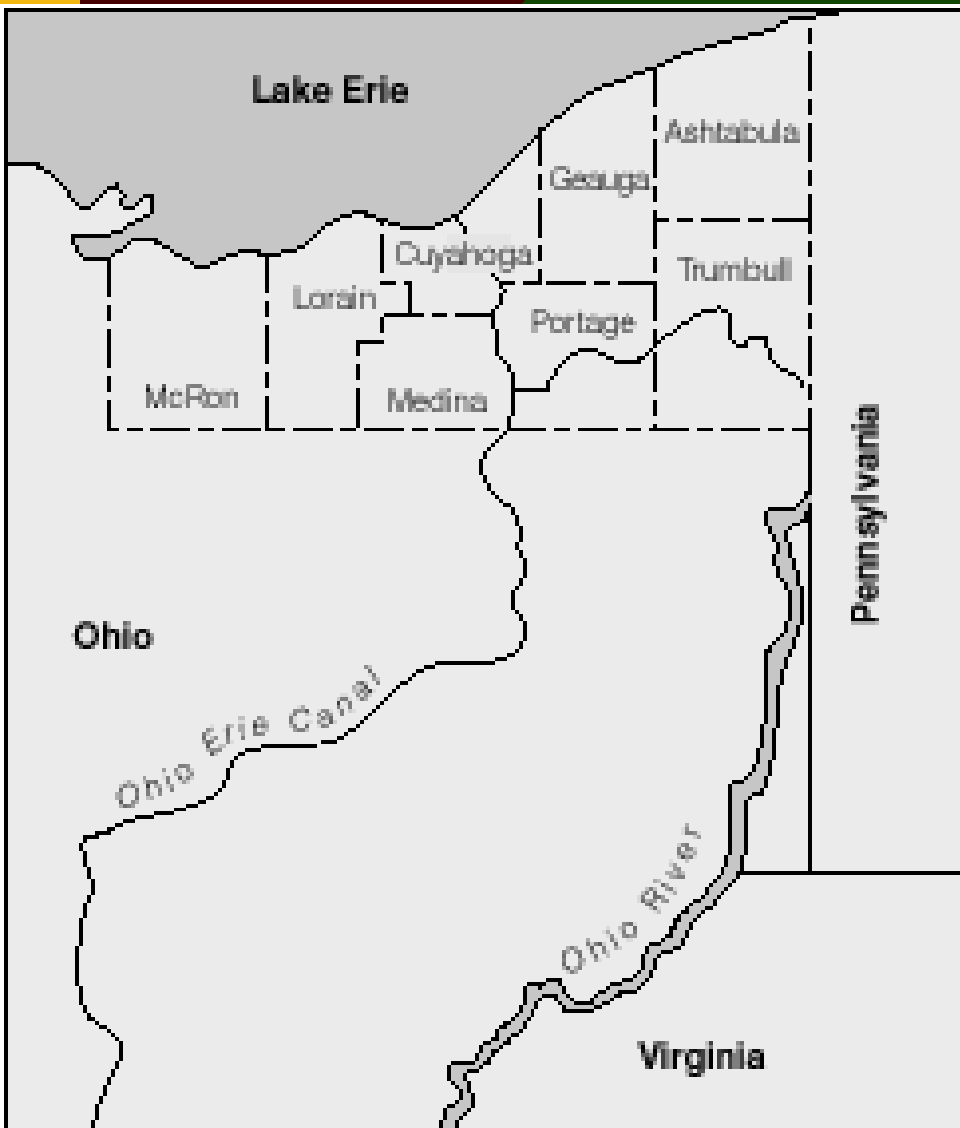
The weather was characterized as “bitter cold, a blinding, swirling blur of snow... some places three feet deep.”

All they had to eat was frozen corn bread and raw pork. Parley said the bread was “so frozen that we could not bite or penetrate any part of it but the outside crust.”



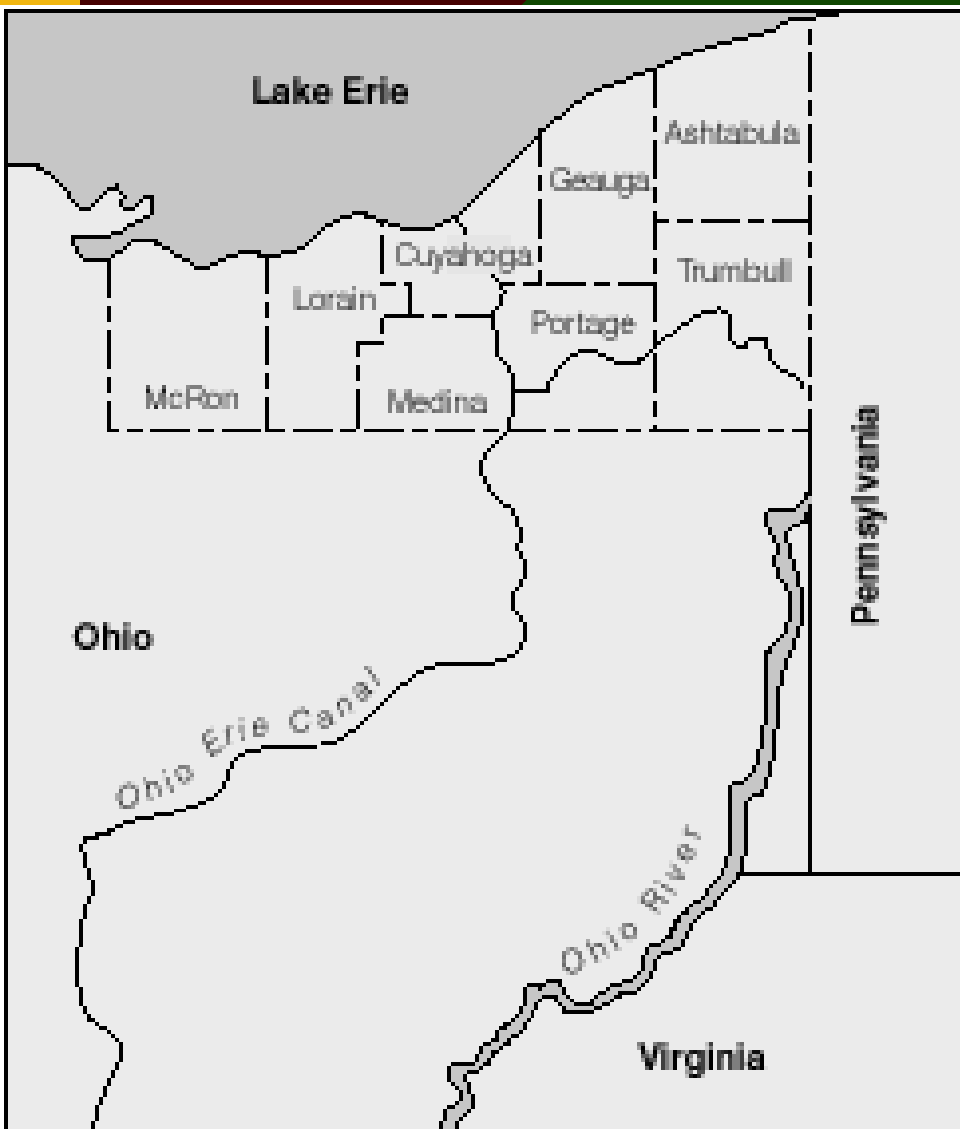
The entire trip was made on foot, except one small portion on a steamboat—and even that was ended by ice in the river.

# Mission to the Lamanites



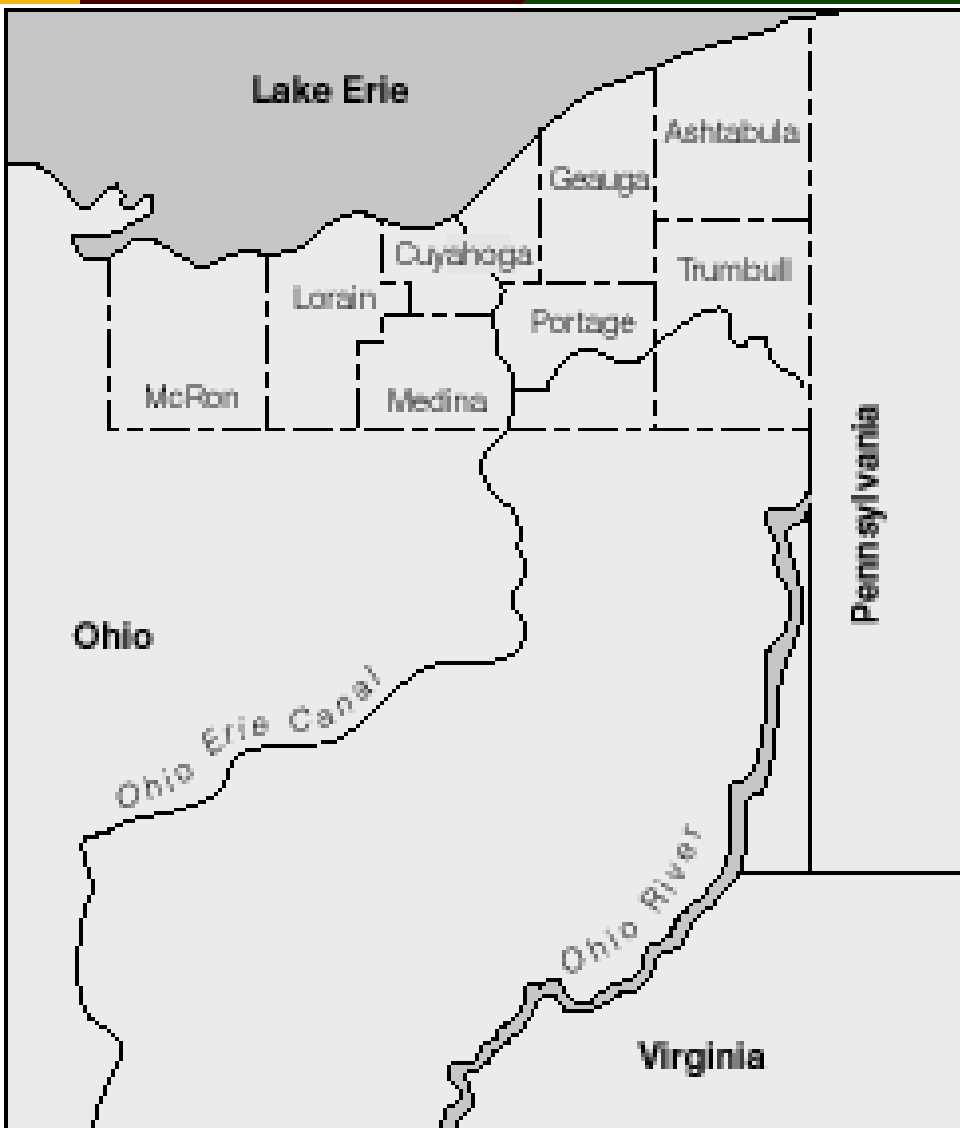
- First stop: “Western Reserve (Ohio)”
- Visit Seneca Indians and leave 2 copies of the Book of Mormon
- While in the vicinity, they call upon Sidney Rigdon and his following called the “seekers”

# Mission to the Lamanites



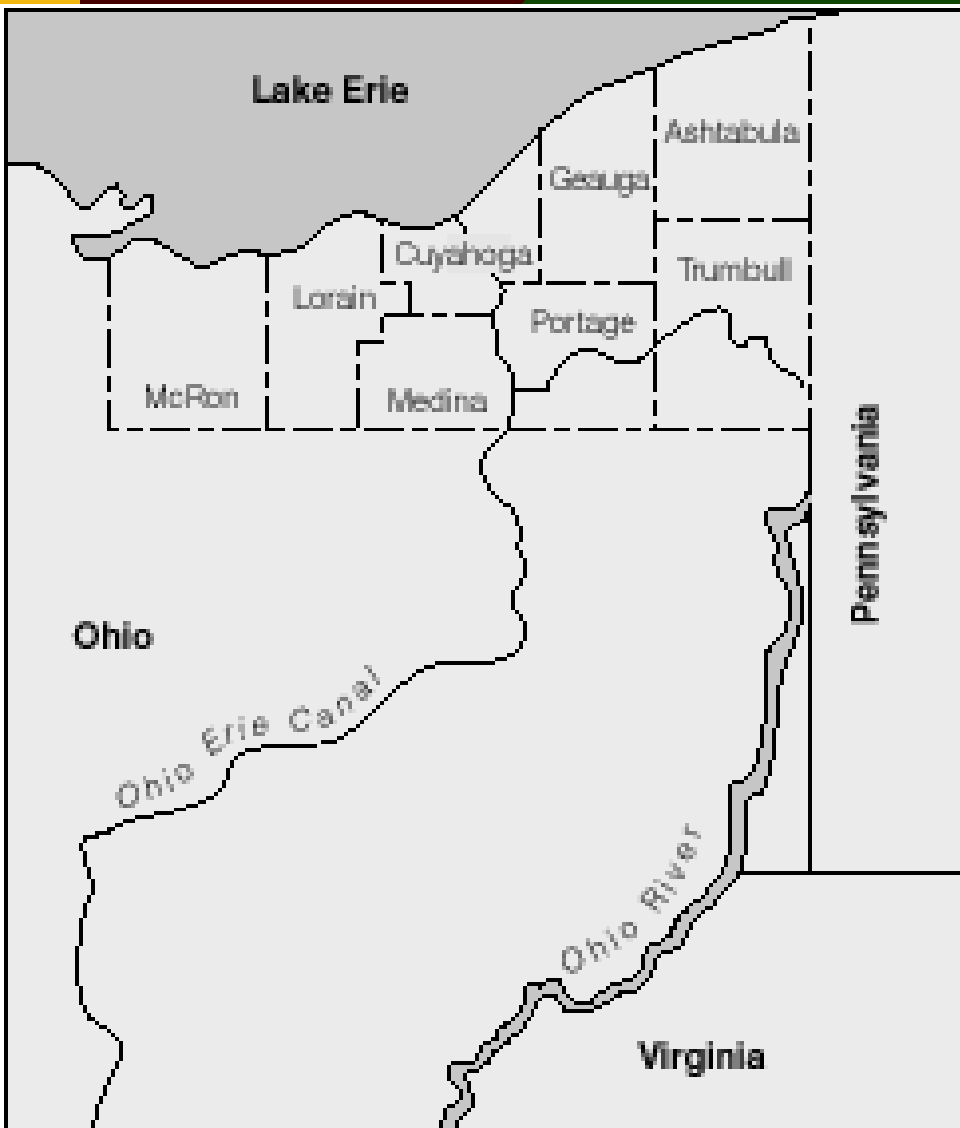
- Amazingly open-minded, they agree to hear the gospel
- Convinced they do not have the authority for baptism, Sidney Rigdon, along with 127 others request baptism and join the Church

# Mission to the Lamanites



- Prominent among the number were Isaac Morley, Levi Hancock, Lyman Wight, Philo Dibble, and John Murdock, well-known residents of the area who were destined to play an important role in future Church affairs.

# Mission to the Lamanites



- The brief stopover the missionaries made in the Western Reserve that November bore immediate and lasting fruits. These Ohio conversions more than doubled Church membership in only three weeks.



# Mission to the Lamanites

- Destination: Missouri
- At Amherst, Ohio, Parley P. Pratt has “stu-boy” experience
- Enroute, they stop and teach the Wyandot Indians at Sandusky, Ohio.
- On 13 January 1831 the missionaries arrived in Independence, Missouri, the western frontier of the United States.



# Mission to the Lamanites

- About 1 February, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, and Frederick G. Williams entered Indian lands to preach and introduce the Book of Mormon.
- William Anderson, the aged chief of the Delawares, is a willing listener.
- However, they are forced off Indian lands because they failed to obtain proper permits from Indian Agents



# Mission to the Lamanites

- Like so many other endeavors in life, often the best results come as unforeseen blessings from the Lord when we are anxiously engaged in other good causes.
- The mission to the Lamanites was highly productive in terms of convert baptisms, the overall growth of the Church, and the establishment of branches outside of the New York area. Many influential converts that would direct the future history of the Church were brought into the fold because of this mission.

# Mission to the Lamanites



- Although no Lamanite converts directly resulted from these efforts, the following did result from this important mission:
- Sydney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams (who both later serve in the First Presidency), Edward Partridge (first Bishop), and many other future leaders are brought into the Church.
- These five stalwart members of the Church gained invaluable experience in both the Independence Mo. And Kirtland Ohio areas of the Church, both of which would become spots for future gatherings.

# Joseph Knight



- Joseph Smith first became acquainted with “Father Knight,” as he affectionately called him, while boarding with him near the Susquehanna River in 1826. He was one of the first people to hear the prophet’s story, and he believed him. When Joseph obtained the plates, he used Father Knight’s carriage

# Joseph Knight



- During the translation of the Book of Mormon, ever-present economic concerns required that Joseph and Oliver stop and seek employment. Just as they were about to cease the work, Joseph Knight, Sr., came with provisions, including potatoes, mackerel, and several bushels of grain. He also brought lined paper and money to purchase more.

# Joseph Knight



- When the Lord commanded the Saints to go to “The Ohio” (D&C 37:1-4) in the middle of the Winter so that they might receive his law and be “endowed with power from on high” (D&C 38), Joseph and Emma make the arduous journey in the January snows (eighth move in 4 years—and Emma is six months pregnant) in Joseph Knight Sr.’s sleigh.

# Joseph Knight



- From the moment he was baptized in 1830, he suffered religious persecution and economic difficulty and was forced to relocate five times. First he moved to Colesville, then Kirtland, then Independence Missouri, and then Nauvoo. He left with the saints West and died in Mt. Pisgah, Iowa at the age of 74.



# Joseph Knight



- He remained true and faithful to the Church and its leaders from the moment he met the Prophet Joseph Smith. Joseph Smith said of him: “For fifteen years he has been faithful and true,... never deviating to the right hand or the left. Behold, he is a righteous man... and it shall be said of him, by the sons of Zion, while

# Joseph Knight



- there is one of them remaining, that this man was a faithful man in Israel; therefore his name shall never be forgotten.” (HC 5:124-25). Once Joseph saw him hobbling without a cane in Nauvoo, and he gave him his personal cane. He asked it to remain in his family and passed on to his descendants named Joseph.
- It was donated to the LDS Museum of Art in 2009

# The “Pueblo Saints”

- John Brown had been appointed by Brigham Young to gather the “Southern Saints” West to meet with the main body of Saints that intended to leave Nauvoo in the Spring of 1846 and settle in the Great Basin, probably in Bear River Valley, in the Fall of that Year. He, along with William Crosby, led forty-three people 640 miles to Independence, Missouri, where they were joined by fourteen others.



# The “Pueblo Saints”

- They then continued west along the Oregon Trail expecting to find the main body of the Saints led by Brigham Young. In July, however, when they reached Chimney Rock in western Nebraska, the main body of the Saints was nowhere to be found. Rather than get upset or overly concerned, they waited there until they received new direction.



# The “Pueblo Saints”

- Trappers returning from California told them there were no Mormons ahead of them. Unaware that Brigham Young had decided to establish Winter Quarters on the Missouri, they decided to wait at Fort Laramie. There they met John Richard, a trapper who invited them to winter near his trading post at Pueblo, Colorado. Their move there proves providential, because the three sick detachments of the Mormon



# The “Pueblo Saints”



- Battalion are sent to Pueblo, only to find a latter-day saint settlement already established.
- Word finally reached them in Pueblo that Brigham Young had stopped at Winter Quarters.
- When BY sent for them, they returned to Ft. Laramie and arrived in the SL Valley just five days after the advance company.

# Heber and Vilate Kimball



- Before Joseph Smith could fully trust Heber C. Kimball with the mysteries of the gospel, he designed for him a test.
- It was no less than a requirement for him to surrender his wife, his beloved Vilate, and give her to Joseph in marriage!
- The astounding revelation well-nigh paralyzed Heber. He could hardly believe he had heard right. Yet Joseph was solemnly in earnest.

# Heber and Vilate Kimball



- His heart-strings might be torn, his feelings crucified and sawn asunder, but so long as his faith in God and the priesthood remained, heaven helping him, he would try and do as he was told. Such, now, was his superhuman resolve. Three days he fasted and wept and prayed. Then, with a broken and bleeding heart, but with soul self-mastered for the sacrifice, he led his darling wife to the Prophet's house and presented her to Joseph.



# Heber and Vilate Kimball



- It was enough--the heavens accepted the sacrifice. The will for the deed was taken, and "accounted unto him for righteousness." Joseph wept at this proof of devotion, and embracing Heber, told him that was all that the Lord required. The Prophet joined the hands of the heroic and devoted pair, and then and there by virtue of the sealing power and authority of the Holy Priesthood, Heber and Vilate Kimball were made husband and wife for all eternity.

# Heber and Vilate Kimball



- It was one thing to give your wife to another—an even more excruciating test awaited them and many others. He was later told by Joseph, three times, to go and make a certain widow, Sister Noon, his wife; but not till he commanded him in the name of the Lord did he obey. However, Joseph told him not to divulge this secret, not even to his Vilate, for fear that she would not receive it; for Joseph's life was in constant jeopardy because of enemies.

# Heber and Vilate Kimball



- When Vilate noticed a change in his countenance, she asked him what was the matter to which he refused to answer. He became so ill at the thoughts of her finding out from another source, and at her constant questioning, he became sick, and his mental wretchedness was so great he could not sleep, and he would walk the floor till nearly morning, and sometimes the agony of his mind was so terrible that he would wring his hands and weep like a child.

# Heber and Vilate Kimball



- Finally, unable to convince him to tell her what was the matter, Vilate retired to her bedroom to ask of God. Her mind was immediately opened to a vision of the order of Celestial marriage. She covenanted to stand by him and honor the principle, which covenant she faithfully kept, and though her trials were often heavy and grievous to bear, she knew that Heber was also being tried, and her integrity was unflinching to the end. (taken from Orson F. Whitney, Life of Heber C. Kimball, pp. 321-328)