Introduction

After enduring a ship voyage from her native England to an unknown life in America, a long walk across the plains to Utah, the death of her first husband when she was only nineteen, and the loneliness of a plural marriage, Mary Lois Walker Morris may have thought that she had overcome the major challenges in her life. Yet, as the 1880s began, her life was about to turn upside down again. During the next decade, as the federal government challenged the practice of polygamy and pressure mounted for Utah to become more integrated in the United States, Mary Lois's church leaders and fellow Mormons faced prosecution and imprisonment. The pursuit of polygamists threatened her own marriage, and in 1885, after twenty-nine years of marriage, she and her husband, under duress, publicly separated. Mary Lois's memoir and diary provide a deeply felt account of how she experienced and negotiated this time of great change in Utah.

The daily regularity of Mary Lois's diary allows readers to better understand the everyday fabric of a woman's life in Salt Lake City in the 1880s. Meanwhile, the dramatic stories in her memoir provide a glimpse into the thoughts and experiences that a nineteenth-century immigrant woman most wanted remembered. Her voluminous writings also give insight into the rich cultural life, divisive legal battles, and tightly knit Latter-day Saints (LDS) community in Salt Lake City, including the life of the Mormon elite, of which her husband's prominent business position made her a part.

Having experienced both a monogamous and a polygamous marriage, Mary Lois had a special perspective from which to view the social transitions taking place in Utah as polygamy came under attack. At the age of nineteen, she made a bedside promise to her dying husband to enter into a biblical levirate marriage with his married brother, Elias Morris. Despite grave misgivings about becoming Elias's second wife, she kept this vow. By 1879, when her diary began, she had seven children with Elias—five were still living—and lived with him every other week in a two-story home in Salt Lake City.[1]

1. Elias's first wife, Mary Parry Morris (1834–1919), was born in Newmarket, Flint, Wales, the daughter of John Parry and Elizabeth Parry. She married Elias Morris on May 23,

Mary Lois's wide web of friendships and acquaintances makes her life writings particularly valuable in chronicling the daily interactions of the Utah Mormon community and the effect of their strong personal and religious ties on the struggle over polygamy. Hundreds of other people crowded her life. She spent her days visiting friends, helping lay out the dead, sitting up with the sick, taking food to the elderly, and teaching religious classes for children. Her home served as an extension of this LDS community. There she welcomed an unending stream of callers and gave recent immigrants and elderly women rooms until they got on their feet again. Her off-and-on work as a milliner, supplementing the money she received from her husband, further tied her to the community. With increased enforcement during the 1880s of federal laws outlawing polygamy, Mary Lois's relationships with her fellow church members enhanced her feelings of being under siege.

These circumstances led Mary Lois to move outside the boundaries of the law. Forced to choose whether to follow federal law or her church, Mary Lois chose her religion. When a warrant was issued for her husband's arrest and federal officers wanted her to testify, she went into hiding off and on for over a year. Then, to protect her husband from going to jail for unlawful cohabitation, she and other family members, perjured themselves during his trial, and he was found not guilty.

Although other Mormon women also defied the federal government during this time, Mary Lois's perspective is especially interesting because of her husband's involvement in mining, a business dominated by non-Mormons, where he worked closely with many men who probably supported federal prosecution of polygamy. The pressure on Mormons to assimilate by abandoning their exceptional marriage practices went hand in hand with economic pressure to give up their quest for self-sufficiency and respond to nationwide market forces, such as the demand for mineral ore.[2] Mary Lois describes her husband bridging the economic divide between the largely agricultural Mormons and the mining-oriented non-Mormons. A local leader in the LDS church, he also built many of the smelters, furnaces, and mills necessary to extract and process ore from local mines. His frequent dealings with non-Mormons in the mining industry contrasted sharply with Mary Lois's increasing separation

1852, at Council Bluffs, Iowa. The couple had twelve children. Mary Parry lived with her family at 230 South Third West in Salt Lake City. Virginia Goff Howe, comp., "A Sketch of the Life of Mary Parry Morris," May 20, 1932, private possession of Briant G. Badger; *Salt Lake City directory, for the year commencing Aug. 1 1885*, 134.

2. Richard W. Sadler, "The Impact of Mining on Salt Lake City," 236–53; Leonard J. Arrington, "Abundance from the Earth: The Beginnings of Commercial Mining in Utah," 201–19; Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900*, 202–5, 240–43.

from those outside the Mormon community and shows the complicated and often painful transition that Mormons went through as they emerged from their earlier near isolation into a more nationally integrated society.

Childhood

Polygamy seemed alien to Mary Lois when she was asked to enter into it because it flew in the face of the ingrained tradition with which she was raised. Born in the northern English town of Leek[3] on May 14, 1835, Mary Lois was the youngest child of Mary Godwin and William Gibson Walker. Her mother was well-educated and spoke French fluently. She worked as a professional milliner and, at the time of Mary Lois's birth, had apprentices and journeywomen.[4] From the handful of letters from Mary Godwin that survive, it is evident that she emphasized proper behavior and refinement to her daughters. She also seems to have valued education and continual self-improvement. For instance, in an 1847 letter to her older daughter, Ann Agatha, who had recently emigrated to America, Mary Godwin wrote, "I am sorry to see you spell so incorrectly, but as you have a dictionary never write a letter without having it at hand, and habituate yourself to looking for any word that you cannot spell, by so doing you will spell correctly." In the same letter, she added, "And now my dear child let me beg of you, as perhaps a last request, to refrain from singing vain silly songs, you little think how they degrade you in the eyes of those whose esteem you should covet."[5] This early training would have a great effect on Mary Lois, leading her throughout her life to seek out new avenues of learning and improvement.

Mary Lois's father William Walker earned his living as a school teacher and bookkeeper and was described by Mary Lois as "naturally religious and intellectual and . . . fond of books." This love of books passed to his daughter, who was herself an avid reader and often noted interesting points from her reading in her diary. According to Mary Lois, her father was a preacher in the Methodist church as a young man and then later joined the Congregational church, of which he was a member until about 1840.[6]

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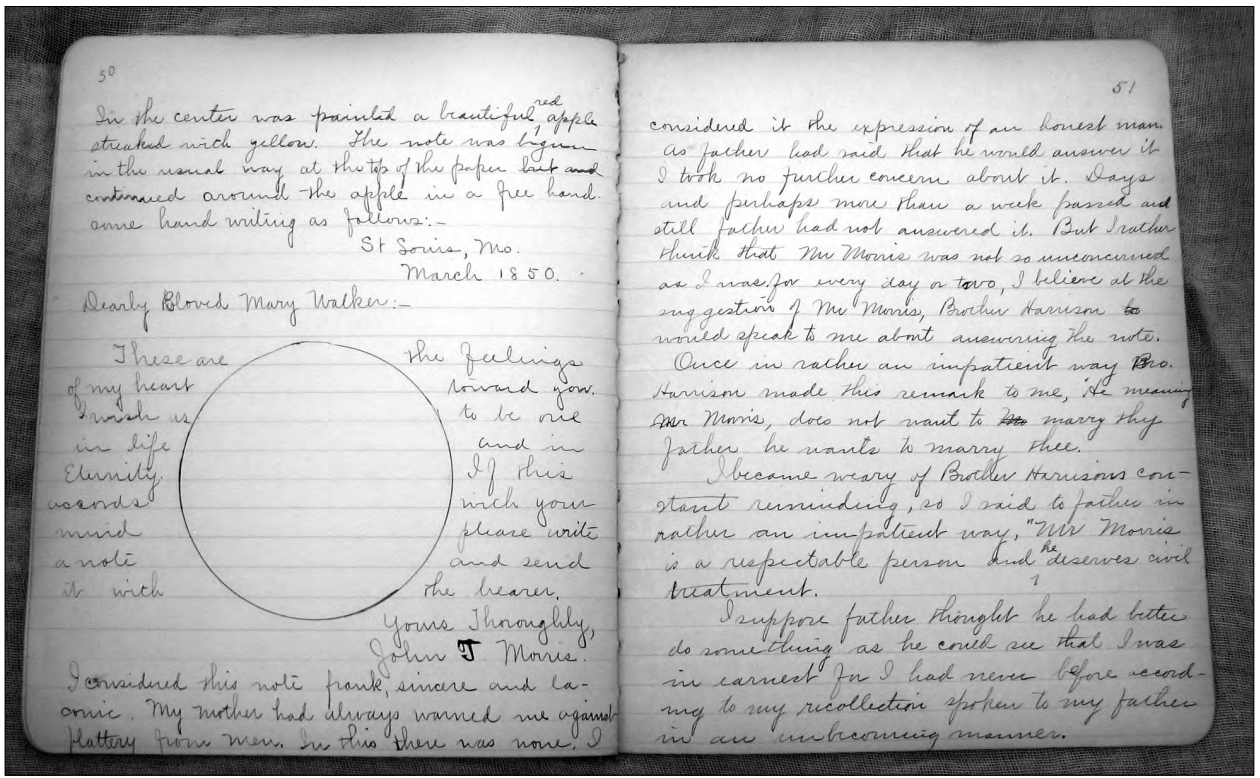
3. The English town of Leek was located on the main road between London and Manchester and had a population of about forty-three hundred inhabitants in 1831. At that time, the main industries in Leek were the manufacture of ribbons, articles of silk, and cheese. Places of worship for the Methodists, Society of Friends, and Independents were located in Leek. Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, 3:49–50.
4. Memoir 9–21; pp. 58–62.
5. Mary Godwin Walker to Ann Agatha Walker, February 15, 1847, LDS Archives.
6. Memoir 6–7; pp. 56–57.



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In the center was painted a beautiful red apple streaked with yellow. The note was begun in the usual way at the top of the paper but and continued around the apple in a fine hand. some hand writing as follows:-

St Louis, Mo.
March 1850.

Dearly Beloved Mary Walker:-

These are the feelings
of my heart toward you.
I wish us to be one
in life and in
Eternity. If this
accords with your
mind please write
a note and send
it with the bearer.

Yours Thoroughly,
John T. Morris.

I considered this note frank, sincere and laconic. My mother had always warned me against flattery from men. In this there was none. I considered it the expression of an honest man. As father had said that he would answer it I took no further concern about it. Days and perhaps more than a week passed and still father had not answered it. But I rather think that Mr Morris was not so unconcerned as I was for every day or two, I believe at the suggestion of Mr Morris, Brother Harrison would speak to me about answering the note.

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Once in rather an impatient way Bro. Harrison made this remark to me, He meaning Mr Morris, does not want to ~~He~~ marry thy father he wants to marry thee.

I became weary of Brother Harrisons constant reminding, so I said to father in rather an impatient way, "Mr Morris is a respectable person and he deserves civil treatment.

I suppose father thought he had better do something as he could see that I was in earnest for I had never before according to my recollection spoken to my father in an unbecoming manner.

Photo by author

The pages from Mary Lois's handwritten draft of her memoir in which she copied the text of her first husband's 1852 letter asking her to marry him.

Around 1837, the family moved from Leek to the larger city of Manchester,[7] where about 1840 they first heard missionaries teaching the religion of Mormonism. Manchester was one of the centers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in England, and in the early 1840s a number of the church's apostles preached as missionaries there.[8] Despite some initial reluctance on the part of Mary Lois's father, who feared losing his job as a teacher at an ecclesiastical children's school, the family joined the LDS church. Then, around 1843, William Walker was sent on a six-year mission to preach in other parts of England. He seems to have briefly returned to Manchester in 1845, where he baptized Mary Lois on April 24.[9] A year later, in 1846, Mary Lois's sixteen-year-old sister Ann Agatha sailed to America with a company of Mormons, and soon after she became the tenth wife of LDS apostle Parley P. Pratt.[10] Their older brother Charles also emigrated to America to join the Mormons in St. Louis, Missouri.[11]

Meanwhile, Mary Lois and her mother struggled to pay the rent. As her mother's millinery business did not always make ends meet, when

7. Manchester, a large marketing and manufacturing town, was one of the centers of the English industrial revolution. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Manchester was especially well known for its cloth factories, which produced large quantities of cotton, silk, and linen. The town's population increased sharply during the nineteenth century as a result of the industrial revolution. Anthony Wood, *Nineteenth Century Britain, 1815–1914*, 18, 102; Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, 3:233–46.

8. For a discussion of the LDS church in the 1840s in England, see Richard L. Jensen and Malcolm R. Thorp, eds., *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain*; Ronald W. Walker, "Cradling Mormonism: The Rise of the Gospel in Early Victorian England." The LDS church in early Victorian Manchester is examined in Jan G. Harris, "Mormons in Victorian Manchester," and William Clayton, *Manchester Mormons: The Journal of William Clayton, 1840 to 1842*. In addition, Leonard Arrington examines Mormon women in nineteenth-century Great Britain in "Mormon Women in Nineteenth-Century Britain."

9. Susan Easton Black, comp., *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1848,* 44:581.

10. Ann Agatha Walker Pratt (1829–1908), Mary Lois's older sister, was born in Leek, Staffordshire, England, on June 11, 1829. She married Parley P. Pratt (1807–1857) on April 28, 1847, becoming his tenth wife. In 1860, three years after the death of her first husband, she married Joseph Ridges (1827–1914), the builder of the Salt Lake Tabernacle organ. They separated in 1866, around the time that Joseph Ridges married Ann Agatha's daughter by her first marriage, Agatha (Aggie) Pratt (1848–1914), as a plural wife. Portions of Ann Agatha Walker Pratt's diary and memoir are recorded in Ann Agatha Walker Pratt, "Reminiscences of Mrs. A. Agatha Pratt. January 07," LDS Archives; "The Pratt Story: As Told by the 10th Wife," 17:223–45. In addition, a number of Ann Agatha Pratt's letters and papers, some of which mention her sister Mary Lois, survive in the LDS Archives.

11. Mary Lois's older brother, Charles Lowell Walker (1832–1904), migrated to St. Louis in 1849, working there and in Illinois until 1855, when he moved to Salt Lake City. In September 1861, he married Abigail Middlemass; and in 1862 the couple was called to the LDS Cotton Mission in St. George, Utah, where Charles remained until his death.

Mary Lois reached the age of twelve, she began working full time, doing housework and washing for a family next door. Even as a child, she believed that the Mormon religion was true. She listened to the messages of LDS apostles such as Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, and John Taylor, writing of one such missionary, "I well remember how powerfully he spoke and how joyfully my heart responded to his inspired words as I sat and listened to him in those humble cottage meetings."[12] She later recalled in her diary that "at the earley age of ten" she felt "the spirit of God" burning in her heart so that she "could not sit still."[13]

Finally, her father returned from his mission, and in February 1850 at the age of fourteen, Mary Lois set sail for America with her parents. They landed in New Orleans and then sailed up the Mississippi to St. Louis, arriving there in May 1850. Other members of the LDS church were also assembling in St. Louis as they prepared to travel west to Salt Lake City. Mary Lois soon found work as a servant in the home of a wealthy St. Louis family and began to save money for her family's journey to Utah. Then, about a year after their arrival, in August 1851, her mother died, leaving at home only her and her father.

Courtship

In her memoir Mary Lois recalled that in March 1852, as her seventeenth birthday approached, she went to visit family friends with her father. They introduced her to John Thomas Morris, a Mormon convert who also was visiting their home. A twenty-four-year-old painter, Morris had recently emigrated from North Wales. Mary Lois recalled, "The moment I met Mr. Morris, I had the impression that he would become my husband." A few days later, she saw him again at the home of their mutual friends and briefly "passed the time of day" with him. That evening, he sent her a beautifully painted card. "The moment I received it I knew its contents," she recorded.[14] It asked her to marry him. A dutiful daughter, she asked her father to answer it, and unable to part with his youngest daughter, he wrote John Morris a letter denying his request.

Months went by, and Mary Lois and John seldom saw each other. Then he started calling at intervals. One evening while out walking

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Nicknamed "Dixie's Poet," he wrote a number of poems about life in St. George as well as the song sung at the St. George Temple dedication. A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson, eds., *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, vii–xviii (hereinafter cited as CWD).

12. Memoir 36; p. 73.
13. February 4, 1879.
14. Memoir 67–68; pp. 94–96. John Thomas Morris (1828–1855) was born in Llanfair, Denbighshire, Wales, the son of John Morris and Barbara Thomas.

together, he told her, "I wish you would answer that note I sent you." Mary Lois made no reply. She recalled, "During the next few days I thought a great deal and prayed constantly for Divine guidance in making my decision." At the end of this time, she wrote Morris a note accepting his proposal.[15] They were married on September 5, 1852.

In recounting their courtship in her memoir, Mary Lois lovingly recalled conversations they had and reproduced letters they sent to each other, including the note in which he asked her to marry him. Their relationship was apparently romantic in nature, and she narrated it in the terms of a love story. In many ways, it could be the story of courtship and marriage of any young immigrant couple in the nineteenth-century United States.[16] Mary Lois did not write the narrative of this courtship in her memoir until the end of her life, in the first two decades of the twentieth century. By that time, the LDS church no longer sanctioned polygamy, and both of her husbands had died. In still recalling her monogamous relationship to her first husband in sentimental, romantic terms, she was projecting back across a long interval of intervening personal and cultural history. The image she drew stands in stark contrast to the picture she presents in her diary and memoir of her second marriage, as a plural wife, which she never described romantically.

Death of First Husband

Mary Lois and John Morris embarked from St. Louis on their journey to the Salt Lake Valley on May 17, 1853. Traveling in the Joseph Young Company with the Morris family, she recorded walking twenty miles beside their wagon each day. Five months later, on October 10, 1853, the company arrived in Salt Lake City.[17]

The young couple rented a small room in Salt Lake City, and Morris obtained commissions to paint several portraits, including life-size paintings of Mormon apostles Parley P. Pratt and George A. Smith. At least two of John Morris's paintings survive—a portrait of seventeen-

15. Memoir 69–70; p. 97.

16. For more about the historical context of marriage and love in the nineteenth century, see Nancy F. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation*; Hendrik Hartog, *Man and Wife in America: A History*; Karen Lystra, *Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America*.

17. Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, September 22, 1853. The Journal History lists the members of the 1853 Ten Pound Company led by Joseph W. Young. The company included John Morris, Barbara Thomas Morris, Barbara Elizabeth Morris, Hugh Conway Morris, John Thomas Morris, Mary Lois Walker Morris, Isaac Conway Morris, and Elizabeth Rowland Williams Morris. For a broader study of women journeying west that puts Mormon women's experience into the larger context, see Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800–1915*.

Mary Lois's first husband, John Thomas Morris, an artist, most likely photographed in St. Louis, Missouri about 1852.

Courtesy of the Ashton Family Organization

year-old Mary Lois Walker and what seems to be a self-portrait. As well as painting portraits, Morris added beauty to homes with marbling, graining, and fresco work and was even employed to paint horse carriages.[18]

In October 1854, Mary bore a son, whom they named John Walker after his father. As winter advanced, the health of John Thomas and of the baby began to decline. A doctor found they had the same difficulty breathing. Believing that the climate of southern Utah was milder and might be beneficial for their health, in January 1855 the Morrises journeyed south to Cedar City to visit John's family. Soon after arriving, baby John passed away, and although Mary Lois devoted her time to caring for her husband, he grew steadily worse. One evening, he seemed to be approaching death. Mary Lois, John's older brother Elias Morris, and his parents sat up all night at John's bedside. As morning

18. Memoir 89–92; pp. 111–12. John Thomas Morris's painting of Mary Lois Morris is labeled "Mary Lois Walker at Seventeen, St. Louis, Mo.—1850–3." In addition, an unsigned painting of John Thomas Morris in the possession of Mary Lois's descendants was mostly likely a self-portrait. This painting is the private possession of Jack and Mary Lois Wheatley.

Courtesy of Jack and Mary Lois Wheatley

Painting of John Thomas Morris, probably a self-portrait.

approached, Mary Lois asked her young husband if he had any last words. After a silence, he said, "If anything should happen that I do die, I do not want you to leave the family." She replied that she had no desire to do so. Then turning to his brother Elias, who had married his Welsh sweetheart almost three years earlier, John said, "Will you take Mary, and finish the work that I have begun[?]" Elias said, "I have no objection, if she is willing." Mary Lois agreed to a plural marriage with Elias Morris, and a few hours later on February 20, 1855, John Morris passed away.[19]

In her memoir, Mary Lois explained that she and John had learned the principle of levirate marriage from *The Seer*, a religious periodical to which they subscribed. Edited by LDS apostle Orson Pratt, the periodical used the Bible to defend Mormonism and its practice of polygamy. Mary Lois wrote that she and her husband "read and believed" the teachings of *The Seer*, including its doctrine "from the law of Ancient Israel,—that if a man died without issue, his brother should take the widow to wife

19. Memoir 95–97; pp. 114–16.

and raise up children to his deceased brother, that in the morning of the Resurrection he might take her and children she had borne in the second marriage and present them to his brother."[20]

In the form of levirate marriage outlined in Deuteronomy, when a man dies without children, his brother marries his widow and raises children with her to carry on his brother's name. In the Genesis account of Onan and Tamar, Onan is slain by the Lord because he does not fulfill his duty to raise up children for his dead brother with his brother's wife. Although Deuteronomy defines levirate marriage as applying to brothers, in the biblical account of Ruth, when no brothers survive, it also applies to close kinsmen. Therefore, when Ruth's first husband died, she married her husband's kinsman Boaz.[21] The doctrine of levirate marraige made Ruth's children with Boaz the heirs of her first husband.

According to the LDS view of levirate marriage, Mary Lois's second spouse, Elias Morris, while her husband in name and practice, was only a temporary replacement for John Thomas Morris, with whom she would be reunited in the afterlife. Her children with her second husband would be the first husband's posterity in the afterlife. It was necessary for this levirate relationship to be a plural marriage so that the second husband would have his own posterity in the hereafter.[22] While a few nineteenth-century Mormons, such as Brigham

20. Orson Pratt wrote in the September 1853 edition of *The Seer* that if a woman's first husband dies and was a good man, it is the duty of the wife's second husband to deliver the wife "up with all her children to her deceased husband in the morning of the first resurrection." Pratt received a call in 1852 to publish a periodical "explaining the principles of the gospel, but especially the doctrine of celestial marriage." The first issue of *The Seer* appeared in January 1853, about two years before the death of John Thomas Morris. The paper was printed in Washington, D.C., until June 1854, when Liverpool, England, became the place of publication. Publisher's note in "*The Seer*"; Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," 142; Andrew Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 783–84.

21. Deuteronomy 25:5–10; Genesis 38:6–11; Ruth 1–4.

22. According to Josephus, the "purpose of levirate marriage was threefold—to preserve the family name and the family estate and to provide for the welfare of the widow." The Bible seems to emphasize the importance of the first reason—carrying on the name of the dead husband in Israel. For nineteenth-century Mormons, according to historian Kathryn Daynes, levirate marriages "had a slightly different purpose" than in biblical times. Members of the LDS church occasionally took part in "proxy" marriages, in which "a spiritual brother married a deceased man's wife; he then fathered children who would increase the family belonging to the deceased in the eternities and assisted financially in caring for the family during their mortal lives." Nineteenth-century Mormons also used the biblical precedent of levirate marriage in arguments defending polygamy. For instance, Orson Pratt argued in a sermon in 1859 that levirate marriage showed the necessity of polygamy. He said that if a young unmarried man wanted to marry a widow who was married to her first husband for eternity, he would not have a

Young, practiced this form of polygamous marriage, it has been little documented.[23]

Although she believed the principle, Mary Lois remembered thinking with dread of the coming years: "So was I, while yet in my teens, bereft in the short period of twenty days, of my husband and my only child, in a strange land, hundreds of miles from my blood kin and with a mountain of difficulty before me." One evening as she was walking near a spot she had often gone with John, she "was reminded of his absence and my intense lonliness and as I wept bitterly I could see, as it were in mental vision, the steep hill of life I should have to climb and felt the reality of it with great force." At this point, she recalled, "I considered the covenant I had made with my husband on his death bed. . . . Was I willing to endure whatever might befall me in this straight and narrow path I had chosen? Yes, I had already counted the cost, had already tasted the bitter cup which I had agreed to drink to the dregs."[24] Although she wrote this late in her life, her fears still seem fresh, as does her faith and determination to go ahead with the marriage.

Shortly thereafter, Elias Morris met with Brigham Young, who approved the arrangement and set the date for the marriage in a year's time. As the date grew closer, Mary Lois felt more and more apprehension, although there was no question in her mind of what her course would be. In May 1856, a little over a year after John Morris's death, she and Elias, together with his first wife and two children, made the two-week wagon journey to be married in Salt Lake City. On the wedding day, May 21, 1856, Mary Lois went to the Salt Lake Endowment House, where LDS president Brigham Young performed the ceremonies to marry her "for time" to Elias and "for eternity" to John. On the same day, Elias and his first wife, Mary Parry, whom he had married four years earlier in 1852, were sealed "for eternity."[25] According to LDS belief, such a ceremony allowed the couple's marriage to continue after death. Mary Lois later recalled, "I kneeled on the altar in God's Holy House

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wife for eternity unless he also married another wife. "Levirate Marriage," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 3:282–83; Kathryn M. Daynes, *More Wives Than One: Transformation of the Mormon Marriage System, 1840–1910*, 79–80; Brigham Young et al., *Journal of Discourses*, 6:358 (July 24, 1859); B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage*, 214.

23. B. Carmon Hardy uses Mary Lois's experience as an example of levirate marriage in his study of Mormon polygamy (Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 236 n. 48). For examples of other Mormon levirate marriages and discussion of the practice, see Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History*, 170; Hardy, *Solemn Covenant*, 213–14; Leonard Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses*, 120–21.
24. Memoir 100–104; pp. 116–21.
25. Elias also stood proxy for his brother John Morris's ceremony of sealing to Mary Lois Walker Morris. "Endowment House Sealings for the Dead by Proxy, 1855–1856."

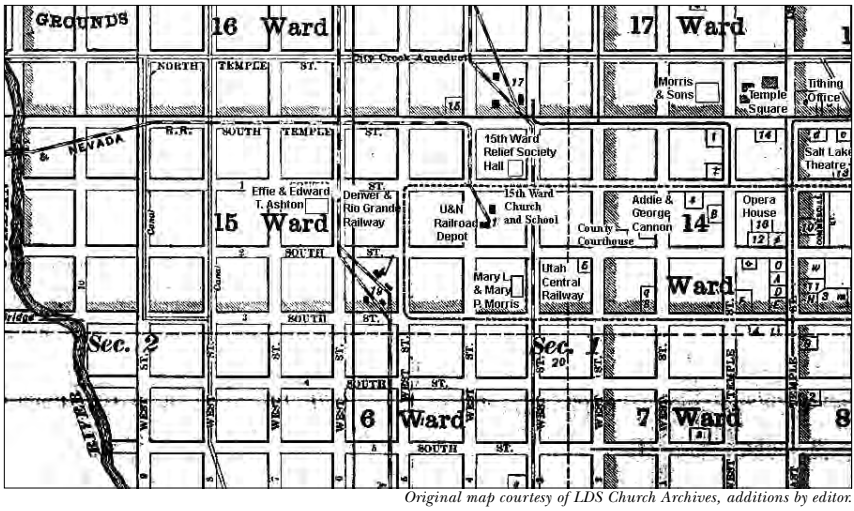
Courtesy of Jack and Mary Lois Wheatley

Elias Morris, Mary Lois Morris's second husband, photographed by C.R. Savage.

with the deepest dread in my heart that I had ever known. No physical strength could have drawn me there, had I consulted my own feelings. But God required it. I sensed keenly that it was no my happiness alone that was sacrificed, but it was marring the happiness of others, which rendered the cup doubly bitter."[26]

Kathryn Daynes concluded from her study of polygamy in Manti, Utah, that religious motivations were the main reason for Mormons' support of polygamy. In addition to their faith that Joseph Smith and other leaders received revelation from God, individual Mormons reported receiving personal revelation on the subject.[27] Thus, Mary Lois wrote in her memoir that she believed Apostle Orson Pratt's writings about polygamy and noted that Brigham Young approved and set a date for her plural marriage, and she also recounted personal affirmations of the principle. After recalling her husband's funeral and her agreement to marry his brother, she wrote, "I felt that I had served God to the utmost of my ability, that I had His approval, and that He would stand by me." In her writings, she continually noted that plural marriage was a trial ordained by God to make her a better person, expressing

26. Memoir 107–8; p. 124.
27. Daynes, *More Wives Than One*, 27–29.



Original map courtesy of LDS Church Archives, additions by editor.

Map of locations in Salt Lake City frequented by Mary Lois Morris.

sentiments such as "For how can gold be cleansed from dross except it be placed in the crucible?"[28]

There was also an element of the miraculous in her belief. She recalled that in the morning after John died, Elias returned home to find that his first wife "knew as much as he did" about his agreement to marry Mary Lois. According to Mary Lois, Mary Parry "testified that John had been to see her during the night, while we were still watching him, and had told her that Elias was going to take me and had asked her to be kind to me."[29]

Second Husband

It seems from Mary Lois's comments that Elias Morris may have been as unhappy about entering into a plural marriage as she was. Three years older than his brother John and ten years older than Mary Lois, Elias was born in 1825 in Llanfair, Denbighshire, Wales. His father was a stonemason; and when Elias was young, the Morris family moved to the town of Abergele, where his father worked for many years building

28. Memoir 97–98; pp. 122–23.
29. Memoir 106; p. 116.

a bridge and side walls for a nearby castle. At the age of eleven, Elias began working under his father as a mason's helper and bookkeeper, later advancing to the position of stonemason. At age nineteen, he went to England to gain more experience in bricklaying and furnace building. Upon his return to Wales, he was visited by two LDS missionaries, and on March 17, 1849, he became the first in his family to join the LDS church. He then taught his parents, sister, and four brothers about his new religion and they all joined the church and emigrated to Utah.[30]

Before leaving Wales, Elias Morris became engaged to Mary E. Parry of Newmarket, Wales, who was born in 1834, six months before Mary Lois Walker. Mary Parry sailed for America in February 1852, a month before Morris, and upon reuniting, they were married by Orson Hyde on May 23, 1852, in Kanesville, Iowa.[31] They reached the Salt Lake Valley in November 1852, one year ahead of Mary Lois and John Morris, and first settled in Provo, Utah. In 1853, after the sugar company they had been involved with dissolved, they moved to Cedar City, where Elias Morris superintended the construction of stone furnaces for iron manufacture. Cedar City was the center of the "Iron Mission," an early LDS venture in which church members were asked to work at iron mining and manufacturing.[32]

In his memoir, Elias Morris recalled that in January 1855, "My brother John Morris (who was born Feby 14th 1828) Wife Mary L. Walker and one little baby came to Cedar City from Salt Lake City. On account of ill health his voice had fail[ed] him for many month, so that he could only wisper. While at my father house my Bro's baby died on . . ."[33] Unfortunately his memoir breaks off in the middle of this sentence and does not begin again until five years later, obscuring from us his feelings

30. For more information on Elias Morris, see Elias Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris: Son of John and Barbara Morris"; Lowell Young Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris"; Virginia Goff Howe, "Elias Morris: Pioneer of 1852"; Thomas Cottam Romney, "Elias Morris," in *The Gospel in Action*, 119–20; Edward W. Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City and Its Founders*, 152–54; "Integrity, Craftsmanship, Quality: The Story of Elias Morris and Sons Company," Marriott Special Collections, University of Utah (hereinafter cited as Morris and Sons).
31. Elias Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris," 3.
32. Leonard Arrington explains that after the Cedar City iron works' first furnace failed, a second furnace was "built under the direction of Elias Morris, foremost Mormon carpenter and builder." The red sandstone furnace Morris constructed "was twenty-one feet square and thirty feet high, and required 650 tons of rock. Estimated to cost $4,000 in labor and materials, the new furnace had a capacity of ten tons per day." Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 122–28; Janet Burton Seegmiller, *A History of Iron County: Community above Self*, 62–69.
33. Elias Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris," 5.

and leaving Mary Lois's writings as the only point of view of their first years of marriage.[34]

She explains that after their May 1856 marriage, she felt like an unwanted part of the household. She lived with Morris for only a year before going back to Salt Lake City to stay with her sister, Ann Agatha Pratt. Her visit to Salt Lake coincided with the 1857 entrance of federal troops into the Utah Territory as part of the Utah War.[35] Mary Lois spent the next year in Salt Lake City with her sister, leaving in the summer of 1858 when "the soldiers entered the city and the people moved south." Mary Lois also went south, returning to her husband in Cedar City with her heart "full of sadness and dread for the future." Upon being reunited with Morris, she later recalled, "I met all that I had anticipated, and asked my Heavenly Father that I might die."[36]

The church-sponsored iron works that Elias worked for in Cedar City failed at the end of 1858 due to the limited and inferior quality of the coal supply in the area and the voluntary nature of the operation. According to historian Leonard Arrington, the "[s]mall, volunteer, cooperative industry was simply unable to cope with the problems associated with developing a major resource."[37] Mary Lois's situation, however, improved in January 1859 when she gave birth to a daughter, whom she named Effie Walker Morris.

After the Iron Mission's failure, Elias Morris, on the advice of Brigham Young, moved his two families to Salt Lake City, in May 1860. There he paid two mules, a harness, and a riding horse, all worth about four hundred dollars, for an adobe house his families would share. It had "two rooms and two half stories in bad repairs" and stood on a five-eighths acre lot in what is now downtown Salt Lake City.[38] There, in February 1861, Mary Lois gave birth to another daughter, Marian Adelaide, whom she called Addie. Her daughters were followed by John Conway (b. 1863), who died from an accident with fire at age four, Nephi Lowell (b. 1870), Ray Godwin (b. 1872), George Quayle (b. 1874), Katherine (Kate) Vaughan (b. 1876), and Richard Vaughan (b. 1882). Both Ray and Richard died as infants.

Mary Lois recalled that, in 1863, Morris added two small rooms for her and her children "west of the house proper, and we were more

34. The original handwritten Elias Morris memoir in the possession of Briant Badger, contains this omission as does the copy of the diary held by the University of Utah Special Collections, which was photocopied from Badger's original.
35. The Utah War is described in Donald R. Moorman, *Camp Floyd and the Mormons: The Utah War*, and in Norman F. Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict, 1850–1859*.
36. Memoir 109; pp. 124–25.
37. Arrington explains that the ten-year Iron Mission cost approximately $150,000 but resulted in little actual iron production. *Great Basin Kingdom*, 127.
38. Memoir 113; p. 128; Elias Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris," 6.

comfortable." Then about 1871, he constructed "a little new two roomed house . . . in the lucern patch" for Mary Lois and her children. A year later, in 1872, he added three more rooms onto Mary Lois's house, two of which she rented out. In 1872, he also built a larger, updated house for his first wife Mary Parry, at 230 South Third West.[39] Mary Lois's home at 236 South Third West was separated from Mary Parry Morris's house by only a narrow alleyway. While not as costly as the other house, Mary Lois's two-story home had a porch, kitchen, dining room, parlor, cellar, "buttery," and a few bedrooms. The parlor included a carpet of "brown and orange with a white thread for relief" and contained a "large round table and cane seated chairs and a rocker." Mary Lois recalled that the fireplace under the parlor mantelpiece "gave the room a cheery appearance."[40] She also owned a piano, around which visitors and family enjoyed gathering to sing. Outside she kept a cow and had several fruit trees and a vegetable garden.

After the failure of the LDS-sponsored iron mining venture for which he had labored for seven years, Elias Morris crossed Utah's cultural divide by using his construction skills in both Mormon and non-Mormon ventures. Trained as a mason, in 1862 Morris took a leadership role in redoing the stone foundation of the Salt Lake Temple because Brigham Young was not satisfied with the coarse masonry of the original. To supplement his work on the temple, Morris began a contracting business in Salt Lake and helped construct the Salt Lake Theatre and several large stores in Salt Lake, including the Eagle Emporium and William S. Godbe's Exchange Building. In 1862 and 1863, he constructed a bake oven and other buildings at Camp Douglas, the federal army camp that had been established overlooking Salt Lake in 1862, ostensibly to protect the overland trail from Native American raids but also to keep an eye on the Mormons.[41]

In 1865, Morris left both of his wives to serve a four-year mission for the LDS church in his native Wales, and during his last year there, he served as the president of the Wales Mission.[42] After his return, in 1870, he formed a contracting and building company with Samuel L. Evans called the Morris & Evans Marble, Cemetery Memorial, and Contracting Business. While Morris & Evans dealt regularly with non-Mormon

39. Memoir 122–23, 160–62; pp. 134, 159–60.
40. Memoir 170; p. 165.
41. Elias Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris," 6; *Contributor*, 14:263–65; Kate Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West*, 6:351 (hereinafter cited as HTW); Morris and Sons, 6–7; Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4:488; Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 201–4.
42. Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City*, 152–53; Romney, *The Gospel in Action*, 122. Elias Morris's diary from his mission to Wales is at the end of his memoir, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris." In addition, a 1868 letter he wrote about the progress of his mission was printed in *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star,* 30 (February 22, 1868):125–27.

customers, the company also worked on the Salt Lake Temple, and in 1873 they oversaw the rock laying for the temple walls. The company operated "much after the pattern of the United Order," the economic system advocated by the LDS church in the 1870s. Thus, the families of Elias Morris and Samuel Evans each drew from the company's earnings "just sufficient" for their needs, and the balance was "absorbed by the company to build up the business." Throughout the 1870s, Evans served as the bookkeeper and cashier of the firm, while Morris oversaw the practical work and the employees.[43]

During that decade, Elias became involved in the growing regional mining business in the region and in subsequent years, he built many mills, smelters, furnaces, and pumps for mines throughout the area. After the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, mining in Utah became more profitable because the ore could now be transported at lower cost by railroad. LDS church leaders had previously discouraged mining for precious metals, although there had been limited church-sponsored attempts to mine other ores, such as the Cedar City Iron Mission. After 1869, though, LDS authorities accepted that some Mormons would work in the mines but encouraged them to get permission from their local church leaders before doing so.[44] Yet mining remained generally a non-Mormon venture, which contrasted with the Mormon-dominated agricultural economy. As Mary Lois records, Elias Morris bridged this economic and cultural divide. A prominent member of Mormon society, he traveled to mines throughout the region, building smelters and mills in Park City, Sandy, Stockton, American Fork, Bingham, Little Cottonwood, Flagstaff, and East Canyon and constructing furnaces for the Marsac and the Bullionville Smelting Company, as well as in Butte, Montana. With infrastructure his company constructed, miners could extract minerals from ore near the mine site rather than transporting it over long distances in unrefined form, which made mining prohibitively expensive. Morris's company also bought a fireclay mine in Bingham and pioneered

43. Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 17:20–21 (hereinafter cited as OPH); Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:638 (hereinafter cited as AJ); Morris and Sons, 8–9; Romney, *The Gospel in Action*, 122. The "United Order of Enoch," a movement to remake the Utah economy into a new economic system, was advocated by the LDS church from 1873 to 1877. In its purest form, the United Order entailed the pooling of community resources and seeking to end "individualistic profit-seeking and trade and achieve the blessed state of opulent self-sufficiency and equality." In actual practice, few Mormon communities achieved this, although cooperative enterprises and a push for self-sufficiency were widespread. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 323–26.

44. Arrington, "Abundance from the Earth: The Beginnings of Commercial Mining in Utah," 205–17; Sadler, "The Impact of Mining on Salt Lake City," 249–53; Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 240–44.

Courtesy of the Special Collections Department, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah

The Ontario Mine in Park City, where Elias Morris worked on numerous construction projects during the 1880s.

Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society, all rights reserved

The Morris & Sons marble yard located at 21 W. South Temple, directly across from the Tabernacle, whose domed roof appears in the background.

Courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

The inside of Mary Lois's church, the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward chapel.

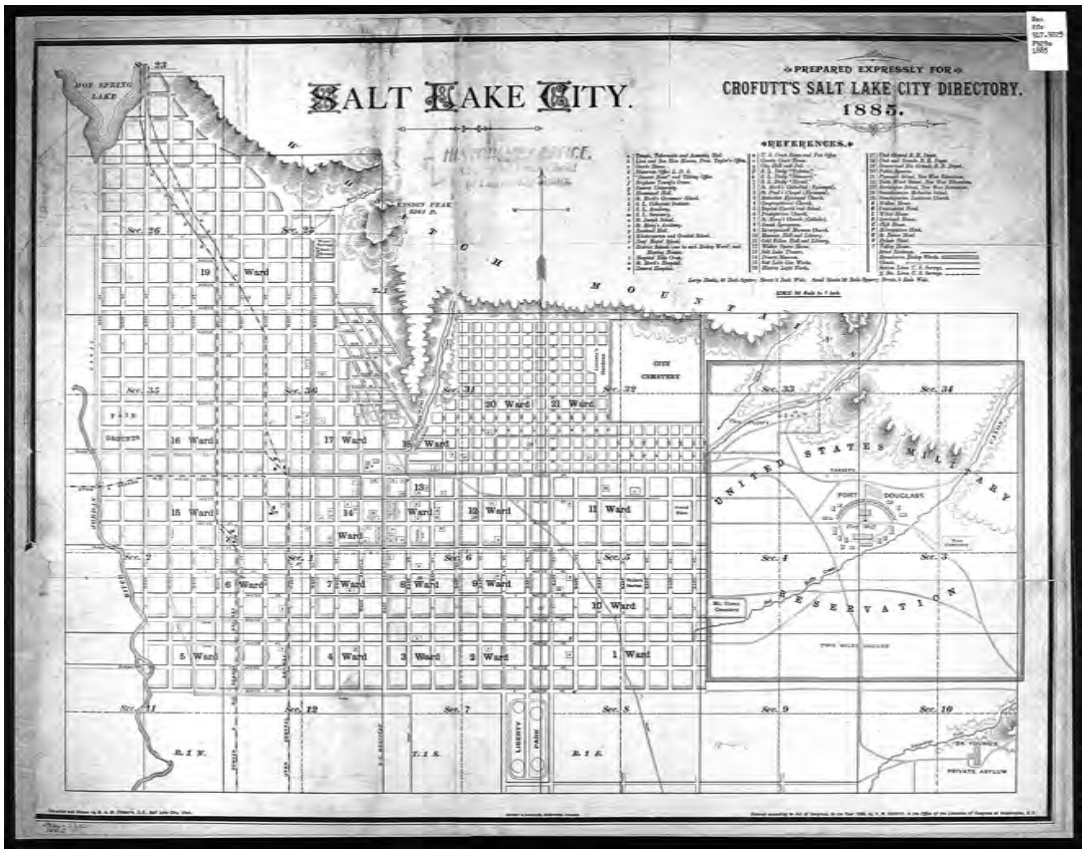
the manufacture of firebrick in the West, supplying firebrick in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Nevada.[45]

After Samuel Evans's death in 1881, Elias Morris bought his partner's share and renamed the company Morris & Sons. Despite a series of financial losses in the 1880s that included fires that burned down his businesses and the failure of the Mammoth mine in Tintic to pay approximately twenty-two thousand dollars that he claimed it owed his company, Morris persevered. His company continued to build mining infrastructure, and Mary Lois often noted in her diary that he was away from home working on different construction projects. During the 1880s, he worked especially frequently at the Ontario Mine in Park City, where in addition to a smelter and furnaces, his company erected the Ontario mill.[46]

One of Utah's first great entrepreneurs and capitalists, Elias Morris also developed and had interests in a tannery, the Salt Lake Foundry, a

45. AJ, 1:638; Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City*, 153; Lowell Young Morris, "Biographical Sketch of Elias Morris," 21–22; Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4:488.

46. Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City*, 153; Morris and Sons, 9; *Deseret Evening News*, June 21, 1883; July 19, 1883. For more about mining in Park City, see George A. Thompson and Fraser Buck, *Treasure Mountain Home: A Centennial History of Park City, Utah*, 33–44; Raye Carleson Ringholz, *Diggings and Doings in Park City*, 4–10; Carl L. Ege, *Selected Mining Districts of Utah*, 26–27.



1885 Map of Salt Lake City from Crofutt's City Directory.

soap factory, the Utah Cement Factory, a slate quarry, the Utah Sugar Factory, and the Pioneer Patent Flour Mills. His company, Morris & Sons, operated the first marble monument store in Salt Lake City, where they sold cement, marble memorials, fireplaces, and marble tiles. In the next decades, Morris & Sons played a significant role in the construction of a number of buildings in Salt Lake and the surrounding region, including the Deseret National Bank, the City and County Building, and one of the University of Utah's early buildings.[47]

The profits from Elias's mining and other building projects caused his assets to grow significantly throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Between 1865 and 1870, tax assessors valued his wealth at around $700. By 1873, he had acquired $3,000 in property; and throughout the 1870s, he was valued at between $3,200 and $4,800. After purchasing his partner's share in Morris & Evans in 1881 for $10,000 "in money and property," Elias's worth climbed, reaching $14,450 in 1885 and about $19,000 in 1888 and appearing on the tax assessor's rolls primarily in the form of property, machinery, and stock in mining or manufacturing companies.[48] On August 1, 1893, his firm incorporated as the Elias Morris & Sons Company, "with a capital stock of $60,000 at $10 a share."[49]

Elias also held leadership positions in the LDS church, serving as second counselor in the bishopric of his local congregation, the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward, from 1867 to 1877, as a high councillor in the Salt Lake Stake from 1878 to 1898, and as president of the high priests quorum in his ward for ten years. In 1890, he became the bishop of the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward, a position he held until his death in 1898.[50]

Involvement in Community

Religion defined Mary Lois's life, as it did her husband's. To her, God was not a far-off, distant deity. Rather, he was a constant part of her life, a partner with her in raising her children. She described God as the reason

47. AJ, 1:638; Morris and Sons, 8–13; Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4:488; OPH, 14:448. Elias Morris was also involved in local politics, serving as a member of the Salt Lake City council for four years and as a member of the Utah Constitutional Convention of 1895 that drafted the laws of the state.
48. Deed between Elias Morris and the heirs of Samuel Evans, August 19, 1882; Tullidge, *History of Salt Lake City*, 153; tax records for Elias Morris, Salt Lake County Assessor Tax Assessment Rolls, 1865–1890.
49. Morris and Sons, 14.
50. AJ, 1:638. According to historian Kathryn Daynes, a leadership position in the LDS church was a better predictor of a man having plural wives than any other factor. Men with a "higher church rank were considered more likely to attain exaltation in the next life and thus provide women with the eternal spouses they needed for their own exaltation." Daynes, *More Wives Than One*, 128–29.

for her every action, indeed for her very marriage. In recalling her moral struggle about whether to enter into polygamy, she wrote a comment that encapsulates much of her attitude toward life: "it was me and my God and stirling principle for the battle."[51] Her use of the intimate phrase "me and my God" shows her familiarity with diety. Yet her warlike metaphor also shows her decision to enter polygamy as the result of an internal battle between what she saw as a God-given principle and her resistance to the marriage. This struggle to do what she felt was right in spite of internal and external opposition carried over to the remainder of her life. To her, in many ways, all life was a "battle," in which duty and obedience to God played a larger role than personal satisfaction or pleasure. Thus, when polygamy was challenged in the 1880s, she again battled to do what she saw as right, driven by religious principle.

Unlike her husband's life, the majority of Mary Lois's interactions were with other Mormons. While she interacted with Mormons from throughout Utah, the core of her community was her church congregation, the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward, which encompassed an area three blocks wide and nine blocks long, bounded by South Temple Street on the north, Third South Street on the south, Second West Street on the east, and the Jordan River on the west. In 1880, the Fifteenth Ward boundaries included about 1,253 people, of which approximately three-fourths were LDS.[52] Mary Lois's diary carefully records her own and her children's meeting attendance. At this time, the Salt Lake wards generally held a morning Sunday school, which increasingly instructed adults as well as children, and an evening preaching session. A Sunday afternoon meeting open to all church members, regardless of ward, took place in the Tabernacle at Temple Square.[53] While Mary Lois rarely attended the morning Sunday school, she went to either the afternoon Tabernacle meeting or evening ward meeting almost every week, sometimes to both. She appears to have attended weekday Relief Society meetings for the women of her congregation, Thursday fast meetings, and the monthly Fourteenth Ward retrenchment leadership meetings less consistently. When she did go to the retrenchment leadership meeting, held to guide a movement for LDS women to become self-sufficient, modest, and less

51. Memoir 105; p. 122. Mary Lois later wrote a similar phrase about raising her children: "It was My Heavenly Father and me in the rearing of those children." Memoir 227–28; p. 193.
52. The Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward was organized February 22, 1849. When first organized, it extended from South Temple to Third South streets and from Second to Fifth West streets. Jenson, *Encyclopedic History*, 750; Map of Salt Lake City, Prepared Expressly for *Crofutt's Salt Lake City Directory* (1885), LDS Archives.
53. For an explanation of LDS church meetings during this time, see Ronald W. Walker, "'Going to Meeting' in Salt Lake City's Thirteenth Ward, 1849–1881: A Microanalysis," 138–61.

Courtesy of the Ashton Family Organization

A Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward group outing, similar to those Mary Lois describes in her diaries. John Jeremy is driving.

materially minded, she recorded witnessing on at least four occasions "the spirit of God . . . poured out upon the Sisters" and several women speaking in tongues.[54]

Religious belief seems to have prompted her extensive, daily involvement in service to her community. She participated in the Relief Society's drive for home industry and mentions its projects of producing silk, operating the Deseret Hospital, and storing wheat.[55] As a member of the visiting committee of the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward Relief Society from 1879 to 1884, Mary Lois visited the sick, took "comforts" to the poor, gave aid to the elderly, and visited the people on her city block regularly. Her acts varied from visiting "a number of German people, new comers," to going to "see Mother William about her haveing some shoes."[56]

54. May 24, 1879; September 11, 1880; April 9, 1881; June 14, 1884. According to LDS doctrine, speaking in tongues was a spiritual gift. For a discussion of LDS women speaking in tongues, see Linda King Newell, "Gifts of the Spirit: Women's Share," 111–50.

55. For more about the Relief Society's activities during this period, see Leonard J. Arrington, "The Economic Role of Pioneer Mormon Women," 145–64; Jill Mulvay Derr, Janeth Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant*; Jill Mulvay Derr, "Brigham Young and the Awakening of Mormon Women in the 1870s," 312–37.

56. November 4, 1886; December 27, 1879.

Funerals and the dead and dying were a constant presence in her life. As part of her church duties as a member of the visiting committee, she helped lay out the dead and stayed overnight with the dying to ease their suffering. She recorded many funerals that she attended. In describing those of nonrelatives, she often noted the corpse's pleasant appearance and commented on the remarks at the funeral service, finding them "interesting" or "beautiful." After the funerals of her relatives, she recorded none of these details, focusing instead on her and other family members' grief.[57] When her infant son died in 1882 on the day of his birth, she deeply mourned the loss of "the little treasure." For the next few weeks, she recorded her sorrow, writing a week and a half later, "wept most of the day, felt most acutely that my baby was gone."[58]

Mary Lois also oversaw the growth of her ward primary, part of an association for the children of the LDS church that was founded only three months before she began her diary.[59] At the evening ward meeting on October 12, 1884, Mary Lois's bishop rose and announced a new assignment for her—president of the Fifteenth Ward Primary Association.[60] She would hold this position for the next twelve years. She found it daunting at first but seems to have enjoyed the assignment. The first activity she held was a party with dancing by the children. Later activities included a children's concert, a visit to the Deseret Museum, games on the "green," public speaking by the children, and a primary fair where the children showed off items they had made. During the 1880s, Mary Lois created much of the primary curriculum she used herself as the churchwide leadership was largely immobilized by the conflict over polygamy.[61]

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57. According to Lester E. Bush, LDS church leaders sought to emphasize, particularly in regard to deaths among the elderly, "the perceived positive side of death, which they characterized as both a rebirth and a victory." Yet in the nineteenth century, the frequent deaths among infants and children often elicited a very different response. Despite their religious belief that young children would be granted exaltation, "early Mormon diarists show these losses, especially when unexpected, to have been a source of immense grief." Lester E. Bush Jr., *Health and Medicine among the Latter-day Saints: Science, Sense, and Scripture*, 25–26.
58. February 2, 1879; January 10, 1881; January 27, 1881; October 6, 1881; January 28, 1879; July 20–29, 1882.
59. The Primary Association was the children's organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In August 1878, the first Primary Association was organized, and during the succeeding years, Primary Associations were started in wards throughout the LDS church. Mary Barraclough, ed., *15th Ward Memories, Riverside Stake: 1849–1960*, 180–82; Carol Cornwall Madsen and Susan Staker Oman, *Sisters and Little Saints: One Hundred Years of Primary*, 1–13; Jill Mulvay Derr, "Sisters and Little Saints: One Hundred Years of Mormon Primaries," 75–101.
60. Memoir 197; p.191.
61. Mary Lois mentioned giving lectures to the children on the history of Utah, the Book of Mormon, "gospel principles," LDS church history, not working on the Sabbath, the

Courtesy of the Special Collections Department, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah

The Salt Lake Theatre, where Mary Lois frequently saw plays. Her husband Elias Morris worked on the construction of the theater.

Mary Lois participated in community discourse through her reading of histories of the LDS church, magazines such as the *Juvenile Instructor* and *Woman's Exponent*, and the *Deseret Evening News* paper. Throughout her diary, she recorded excerpts from early church history that she had read and noted the anniversary of significant LDS historical events. Like her brother, Charles Lowell Walker, who was nicknamed "Dixie's poet" for his poems of life in St. George, Utah, Mary Lois wrote poetry throughout her life. Several of her poems appear in the diary. They are more private in nature and more sentimental than those of her brother and most often express religious themes or commemorate the death or birth of a relative or friend.[62] Two Utah magazines, the *Woman's Exponent* and the *Juvenile Instructor*, published her poetry and essays.[63]

"power of healing," and natural history. November 20, 1884; May 29, 1885; July 16, 1886; October 20, 1886; December 1, 1886; May 6, 1887; July 22, 1887. For more on the Primary Association in this period, see Madsen and Oman, *Sisters and Little Saints*, 15–32.

62. In 1918, one year before Mary Lois Morris's death, her compiled poems were published for private circulation in Mary Lois Walker Morris, *A Few Thoughts of Mary L. Morris: Dedicated to Her Children.*

63. On December 1, 1897, the *Woman's Exponent* published a poem by Mary Lois Morris titled "The Weed and Her Friends," which uses the metaphor of weeds to show the importance of rooting out sin early before it is able to spread. The same issue contained a letter from Mary Lois to Emmeline B. Wells, the editor of the *Exponent*, entitled "A

As a professional milliner, Mary Lois interacted with many members of her community through her trade. In nineteenth-century Utah, the absence of men because of polygamy or missions led some women to pursue paid employment to bring additional money to their households.[64] When Elias Morris left for his mission, Mary Lois was thirty years old and had three young children. Lacking money, she began to work as a milliner, using skills she had learned from her mother and from the coaching of her older sister, Ann Agatha, who already had a millinery business in Salt Lake City. She later described a variety of the hats that she made. They included, for her husband, a hat "of fine rice straw, which he wore for best"; one for her six-month-old son in the form of "a turban with a round brim, of fine white rice straw trimmed with blue plush with rosettes to match"; and "a white straw bonnet with straw trimmings" for herself.[65] She was so successful at making and selling hats that when her husband returned and saw her thriving business, he suggested that she open a millinery store. She declined, noting later that operating a store would not have allowed her to be a good mother to her children, but continued to make hats at home and actively sought customers, as evidenced by multiple advertisements in the *Woman's Exponent* in 1878. One declared "Mrs. M. L. Morris Wishes to announce to her former patrons and others that she CLEANS, REMODELS AND DYES STRAW AND TUSCAN HATS. LEGHORN made a specialty. Ladies' own material made up. Residence—One block west and half a block south of Court House."[66]

She also manifested her sense of community in the political sphere. In 1870, women in the Utah Territory were given the right to vote, thereby becoming the second group of women in the United States, after those in the Wyoming Territory, to gain suffrage.[67] Mary Lois voted on

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Word to the Primaries," which recounted the efforts of the Salt Lake Stake Primary Association presidency (of which Mary Lois was a member) to visit all the surrounding primaries and separate the children into classes by age so that they could learn at their appropriate levels. *Woman's Exponent*, December 1, 1897, 217, 219. Mary Lois also wrote an essay that was published in the *Juvenile Instructor* on August 1, 1904, titled "We Trusted in the Lord," about an incident when a child was sick and Mary Lois persuaded the parents to discharge the doctor and trust in the administration of the elders. The child was healed and, despite a relapse a week later, survived. Mary Lois Morris, "We Trusted in the Lord," *Juvenile Instructor*, August 1, 1904, 465–67.

64. Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle*, 101–3; Michael Bargo, "Women's Occupations in the West in 1870," 30–45; Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "Women's Work on the Mormon Frontier," 276–90.

65. Memoir 152–55; pp. 153–58.

66. These advertisements were printed at least two times in the *Woman's Exponent*, appearing in the May 1, 1878, and May 15, 1878, editions.

67. A number of different perspectives about women's suffrage in Utah are presented in Carol Cornwall Madsen, ed., *Battle for the Ballot: Essays on Woman Suffrage in Utah, 1870–1896*. For the political experience of women in the United States as a whole, see

at least two occasions, both times for the Mormon-dominated People's Party. After the federal government revoked woman suffrage in Utah, she exhibited interest in the national suffrage movement, attending meetings advocating the vote for women in February 1889 and August 1893.[68]

A private web of friendship held together Mary Lois's community. A core element of urban middle and upper-class women's lives in late nineteenth-century America was the ritual of house-to-house visiting.[69] Few days went by without Mary Lois or her children calling on someone or receiving a visitor. Often neighbors or relatives, her visitors also came from other areas of the city and territory and were male as well as female. The greatest constant among callers was her family, which expanded to include the families her older daughters married into, the Ashtons and the Cannons. Callers were such an integral part of Mary Lois's life that she noted their absence with surprise, writing at the end of one day that "for a wonder," they did not have any visitors.[70] Since virtually all her visitors were Mormons, this constant flow of callers seems to have further connected her with the community of Mormons and separated her from those outside it. These associations increased her sense of being under siege when federal marshals began to arrest Mormon men on charges of polygamy and unlawful cohabitation.

As closely connected as Mary Lois records Mormon society to have been, there were still divisions based on class and other factors. While she spent time with people from many different walks of life, Elias Morris's prominent financial and social position situated her family in the elite circles of Mormon Salt Lake City. Yet even though she associated with prominent families such as the Cannons during the 1880s, she had worked as a domestic servant for several years before her marriages and had experienced poverty—as a child when her father left his family to go on a six-year mission and in the 1860s when she struggled to provide food and clothing for her children while her husband was on a four-year mission in Wales.

As one of the wealthier members of the community, Mary Lois took part in many of the cultural activities available in an increasingly

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Paula Baker, "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780–1920," 72–82.

68. February 9, 1880; February 13, 1882. Mary Lois wrote of attending suffrage meetings in her February 9, 1889 and August 14, 1893 diary entries.

69. Calling was a ritualized procedure "by which people identified their social intentions and maintained or sought to overcome class distinctions." Harvey Green, *The Light of the Home: An Intimate View of the Lives of Women in Victorian America*, 144–46; Thomas Schlereth, *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life, 1876–1915*, 117–18.

70. May 30, 1884.

Courtesy of the Ashton Family Organization

Effie Walker Morris Ashton (1859–1929) was the oldest daughter of Mary Lois Walker and Elias Morris. She married Edward Treharne Ashton on April 4, 1878, at the age of nineteen.

Courtesy of Jack and Mary Lois Wheatley

Marian Adelaide Morris (1861–1933), about twenty years old.

Courtesy of the International Society of Daughters of Utah Pioneers

Katherine Vaughan Morris (1876–1930), Mary Lois's youngest surviving child.

George Quayle Morris (1874–1962), Mary Lois's youngest surviving son, as a young man. He went on to become an apostle of the LDS church from 1954 to 1962.

Courtesy of Linda Kidd

Courtesy of Linda Kidd

Nephi Lowell Morris (1870–1943), Mary Lois's oldest surviving son, in September 1899. He went on to become stake president of the Salt Lake Stake and ran for governor of Utah two times. Photograph by C. R. Savage

sophisticated Salt Lake City.[71] In contrast to the many other women in the West who at this time lived in rough frontier conditions, Mary Lois regularly attended balls, parties, plays, concerts, and lectures. She wrote, for instance, on February 15, 1884, "This eve with my husband and his other Wife, attended a grand civic Ball in the Theatre given to the Salt Lake and Wyoming Legislator in honor of the latters visit. it was a dazziling affir."[72] She viewed many of the popular plays sweeping the nation, including "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and Gilbert and Sullivan's "H.M.S. Pinafore." She also saw performances by renowned actors and singers, such as Adelina Patti, who some regarded as "the greatest singer in the world."[73]

Mary Lois also made an effort to bring culture into her home. She particularly appreciated fine singing and noted on several occasions that she and her daughters or guests spent the evening in song. She had her children take voice lessons, and her daughter Addie played the guitar. In addition to music, Mary Lois emphasized reading and elocution to both her own children and the children she taught in primary.

While Mary Lois rarely remarked upon it, race was a significant issue in the nineteenth-century United States, and though her encounters with them were few, people not of European descent occasionally penetrated her awareness. Upon arriving in America, she had a naive view of slavery. She recalled that on a steamboat from New Orleans to St. Louis in 1850, "[s]ome fine looking colored girls were also on board, slaves no doubt, going to be sold or bought by some one." She further recorded, "Father gave them money, as was the custom for white people to do, and asked them if white men ever married them. They told him that they did. How little did we know of the customs of white slave owners." In 1853 while crossing the plains, she wrote of an encounter with Indians in the Platte River Valley, describing these Pawnees as "a very savage tribe" and noting that they were "dressed in their trappings and war paint." To her, the Pawnee chief was a type of noble savage, who patrolled the pioneer company's camp "to protect us from his own band," and she believed "that a superior power inspired him to do as he did."[74]

The one African American acquaintance in Salt Lake City that Mary Lois mentioned, her neighbor Susan Blanchard, was a member of the Baptist church who came from Kentucky in 1883 to "preside over" the kitchen of Utah governor Eli Houston Murray.[75] In 1887, Mary

71. See Thomas G. Alexander and James B. Allen, *Mormons and Gentiles: A History of Salt Lake City*, 87–123.
72. February 15, 1884.
73. In 1884, Adelina Patti sang in the Salt Lake Tabernacle to a crowd reputed to number seven thousand. Michael Hicks, *Mormonism and Music: A History*, 100–101.
74. Memoir 51, 79; pp. 103–4.
75. Susan Blanchard was a pioneering member of the Calvary Missionary Baptist Church

Lois described meeting two African American visitors to Salt Lake City who were staying with Susan Blanchard: Elizabeth Flake Rowan, who had lived in Nauvoo, Illinois, and Utah as a slave to the LDS family of James and Agnes Flake, and her daughter Alice Ann Rowan.[76] After Mary Lois met the Rowans along the "wayside," Alice Rowan called on her four times, accompanied on at least one visit by her mother. Mary Lois described Alice in her diary as "very Lady-like and refined" and a "very Clever performer upon the Piano" and noted that they sang several songs together. During one visit, Mary Lois had a "long talk" with Alice about Mormonism and accompanied her to a meeting in the Tabernacle.[77]

Life in Polygamy

Mary Lois's life writings are an important resource for understanding family life in polygamy. Her husband Elias Morris only appeared sporadically in her diary, often in the context of his business or church work. Mary Lois mentioned her children in both her diary and her memoir far more often than her husband. According to scholar Jill Mulvay Derr, it was common for plural wives to "reveal in their personal writings a primary emotional involvement with their children rather than with their

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in Salt Lake City, which she had joined by 1902. Although Mary Lois mentions Susan only once in her memoir (Memoir 243) and twice in her diaries (July 22 and July 23, 1887) and adds the description of "colored" to her name, Mary Lois describes her neighbor as "a very plasing person." According to the census records, there were 232 blacks in Utah in 1880 (0.2 percent of the total Utah population) and 588 blacks in Utah in 1890 (0.3 percent of the total Utah population). 1900 U.S. Federal Census; France A. Davis, *Light in the Midst of Zion: A History of Black Baptists in Utah, 1892–1996*, 9–19; Newell G. Bringhurst, *Saints, Slaves, and Blacks: The Changing Place of Black People within Mormonism*, 218–19, 228.

76. Elizabeth (Liz) Flake Rowan was born and raised on the North Carolina plantation of William Love. When William Love's daughter, Agnes Love, married James Flake, her father gave five-year-old Elizabeth to her "as her personal maid." In 1844, Agnes and James Flake joined the LDS church and with Elizabeth, moved to Nauvoo, Illinois. Elizabeth then traveled with them to Utah, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in October 1848. After James Flake's death in 1850, Elizabeth went with the remaining family to a Mormon colony in San Bernardino, California. Agnes Flake died soon after; and in 1855, Elizabeth went with Agnes's children to live with the Amasa Lyman family. When Agnes's son William left to return to Utah, he gave Elizabeth her freedom. She married a free African American man named Charles H. Rowan, who owned and operated a barber shop in the Grand Southern Hotel in San Bernardino. Elizabeth and Charles had two sons and a daughter, Alice Ann Rowan. Alice, a schoolteacher, "taught the white children at Riverside for three years," quitting teaching when she married. OPH, 8:514–16; Bringhurst, *Saints, Slaves, and Blacks*, 218–27.

77. July 22, 1887; July 28, 1887; August 3, 1887; August 7, 1887; August 8, 1887.

Courtesy of Briant G. Badger

Elias Morris, his first wife Mary Parry, and their children. Left to right, back row: Nellie Morris, Elias Morris Jr., Winifred M. Tibbs, John Morris, Tansie M. Brown. Front row: Albert G. Morris, Elias Morris, Sr., Barbara M. Jones, Mary Parry Morris, Josephine M. Goff, Ernest Morris.

husbands."[78] When Mary Lois's daughter Addie left to start a new home, for instance, Mary Lois wrote that it seemed "as if the light of our house had gone out."[79]

In 1879, as Mary Lois's diary began, her nineteen-year-old daughter, Effie, was a young wife, having married Edward Treharne Ashton, an employee of Elias Morris, one year earlier. Effie and Edward lived within walking distance of Mary Lois, and they visited each other often. Mary Lois's second daughter, Addie, was seventeen. As the oldest child living at home, Addie had an intimate relationship with her mother, and Mary Lois recorded many of her social and church activities. Because of Elias Morris's long absence during his mission to Wales and the death of her son John Conway, Mary Lois's two surviving sons were much younger than her older daughters. Nephi was eight years old when the diary began; George, four. While Nephi went on to be president of the Salt Lake Stake, in his youth Mary Lois struggled at times to get him to go to church. She

78. Jill Mulvay Derr, "'Strength in Our Union': The Making of Mormon Sisterhood," 167.
79. December 26, 1884.

depicted George, who later became one of the LDS church's twelve apostles, as a "good and steady child."[80] Mary Lois's youngest child in 1879 was two-year-old Kate. Kate loved to tag along when her sister Addie's suitor, George M. Cannon, came to call, setting a precedent for Kate's later plural marriage to Cannon, by then Addie's husband.[81]

Mary Lois was the primary caregiver to her children. She explained in her memoir, "It was my Heavenly Father and me in the rearing of those children."[82] Therefore, like other nineteenth-century Mormon women, when her children became ill, Mary Lois laid her hands upon them and gave them a healing blessing.[83] A typical example took place in November 1885, when she recorded being "wakened by little Kate complaining of her throat and high fever, put her through a througher course of steaming; but before that adminstered holy oil to her in the name of the Lord Juses, also anointed her in His Holy Name praying humbly for God to acknowledge the same. In ten minutes she was in a copious sweat, and relived from her pain. and able to sit up . . . let God be praised for his goodness." The next day she wrote, "little Kate is almost well the white and red spots are almost gone from her throat we trusted in God who is the best Phssican."[84] Thus, in a pattern seen throughout her diary, before using medical remedies, Mary Lois gave her daughter a healing blessing. Then she attributed it to God rather than to medical treatment when Kate recovered. While Mary Lois generally gave blessings to her children herself, at times she asked elders

80. January 10, 1886.

81. George Mousley Cannon (1861–1937), the son of Salt Lake Stake president Angus Munn Cannon and Sarah Maria Mousley, studied in the scientific department of Deseret University, completing his education at age 19. For the next two years, Cannon taught at the school George Q. Cannon had founded for his children. Then in 1882, Cannon gave up teaching and worked for two years as a deputy in the office of the county recorder. In 1884, he was elected county recorder, in which position he remained for six years. In 1892, he became the cashier of Zion's Saving Bank and Trust company, and in 1895, he served as a member of the Utah Constitutional Convention. He also served as the first president of the State Senate of Utah. He married Marian Adelaide (Addie) Morris in 1884 and Katherine (Kate) Vaughn Morris and Ellen Christina Steffensen in 1901, well after the Wilford Woodruff Manifesto that in 1890 announced an end to polygamy. AJ, 1:566, 4:206; *Biographical Record of Salt Lake City and Vicinity*, 330–32 (hereinafter cited as BRSL).

82. Memoir 227.

83. In nineteenth-century Utah, washing and anointing by women took place within sacred spaces such as the temple, as well as within private homes. According to Linda King Newell,"The wording took different forms as the occasion demanded. One of the most common uses of the washing and anointing blessing came as women administered to each other prior to childbirth." Newell, "Gifts of the Spirit: Women's Share," 111–50, quotation, 123; Derr, Cannon, and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 220–21.

84. November 14, 1885; November 15, 1885.

holding the priesthood to do the administration in addition to or instead of doing it herself.[85]

In 1879, Elias Morris spent every other week—when he was not away on his frequent business trips—with her family. Mary Lois recalled in her memoir that he was still staying with her family every other week as late as October 1884; and it seems from her diary that he did not stop living with her until April 14, 1885.[86] By the time the diaries commence, Mary Lois and Elias appear to have settled into a quiet friendship. They seemed to enjoy each other's company and to respect each other. Evidence suggests, however, that their relationship was not romantic but a practical and companionable association that they made the best of by liking each other as fellow human beings.

Despite Mary Lois's good feelings toward her husband, her relationship with her husband's other wife, Mary Parry Morris, was evidently distant. She rarely mentioned Mary Parry, and when she did, it was only in connection to their husband. Although the two women lived in the same home for at least a decade and Mary Lois recorded mutual visiting with hundreds of her neighbors, they do not seem to have been friends or even to have visited each other as neighbors. On rare occasions, the women both attended an event with Elias Morris, such as a play or a picnic, and Mary Lois usually noted that she enjoyed these events. Yet she also recorded several occasions when her husband, his first wife, and their family did something without including Mary Lois, as when Mary Parry and her children accompanied Morris to Park City, where he was working. On another occasion, Mary Lois wrote in her diary, "My Husband's seccond daughter Winnie. was Married this day to Peter Tibbs. . . . They hahave not so much as said wedding to me or Addie. These things cut and wound; but they cannot dim our crown if we are faithfull enough to gain one."[87] She also noticed differences in their economic treatment, writing that "beholding so many things" in Mary Parry's elegant new home, including wallpaper said to be the "most costly in the city . . . would have wounded a nature even less sensitive than my own."[88] Mary Lois and Mary Parry's young children did have some interaction, which is not surprising considering the proximity of their houses.

85. February 13, 1880. See also the entry of July 29, 1879, for an example of Mary Lois summoning the Elders to administer "the ordainance of the House of God" to her sick daughter instead of administering it herself. Although most of the healing blessings that Mary Lois gave were to her children, she also recorded washing and anointing at least two other people, a woman she called Sister Morgan and someone identified only as a "sick person." November 11, 1879; July 28, 1880.
86. Memoir 197; pp. 190–91. April 14, 1885.
87. April 3, 1879.
88. Memoir 161–62; p. 160.

The Raids

To many U.S. citizens, the LDS practice of polygamy was barbaric.[89] As a result, Congress passed law after law during the second half of the nineteenth century, tightening the vise on Utah in an effort to strangle polygamy before it spread its moral corruption to the rest of the nation.[90] Nineteenth-century Mormons generally saw the situation in a different light. While a minority of members actually practiced polygamy, most Mormons regarded it as divinely ordained.[91] The doctrine of polygamy was preached across Mormon pulpits as the highest form of marriage, and men in leadership positions in the church usually had more than one wife. As a result, when the federal government tried to end polygamy in Utah, Mormons peacefully resisted, fiercely protecting what they saw as their right.[92]

In the early 1880s, the federal government strengthened legislation against polygamy and began to enforce these laws more forcefully in Utah. Until this time, the antipolygamy laws of the U.S. were difficult to enforce because no Utah jury, which would naturally be composed primarily of members of the territory's majority religion, would convict a fellow Mormon for polygamy.[93] The 1882 Edmunds Act bolstered the

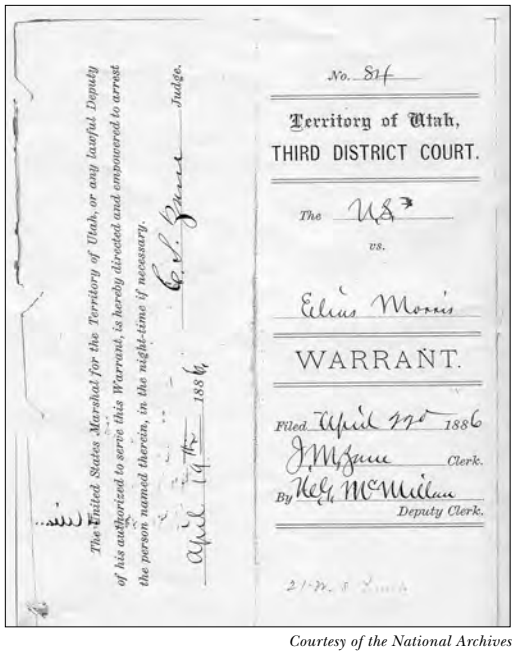
89. Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America*, 29–52.

90. See Gordon, *The Mormon Question*; Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900*, 129–260; Richard Douglas Poll, "The Legislative Antipolygamy Campaign," 107–21; Gustive O. Larson, "Government, Politics, and Conflict," 243–56.

91. Scholars disagree about the exact percentage of Mormons who practiced polygamy. The number of practicing polygamists also changed over time. One of the most accurate studies is historian Kathryn Daynes's in-depth examination of polygamy in Manti, Utah. Daynes found that in 1860, 44 percent of women in Manti were in a polygamous relationship; in 1870, 35 percent of women were in such a relationship; in 1880, 25 percent were living in polygamy; and by 1900, only 7 percent remained in polygamy. After 1860 the number of plural marriages steadily decreased as a result of both internal and external factors. Daynes, *More Wives Than One*, 108.

92. Mormons often resisted federal efforts to end polygamy by going into hiding to avoid arrest or to avoid testifying in court. See Gustive O. Larson, "The Crusade and the Manifesto"; Kimberly Jensen James, "'Between Two Fires': Women on the 'Underground' of Mormon Polygamy." Women as well as men also resisted federal intervention by defending the practice of polygamy in magazines, such as the *Woman's Exponent*, and in public and church meetings. See Claudia L. Bushman, "Reports from the Field: The World of the *Woman's Exponent*"; Davis Bitton, "Polygamy Defended: One Side of a Nineteenth-Century Polemic."

93. In 1862, just over a decade after the Mormons arrived in Utah, Congress passed the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act, which penalized those practicing bigamy and made it unlawful for U.S. religious organizations to hold property over fifty thousand dollars. As the law



No. 814

Territory of Utah,
THIRD DISTRICT COURT.

The U.S.
vs.
Elias Morris

WARRANT.

Filed April 22nd 1886
J. M. Zane Clerk.
By Neff McMillan Deputy Clerk.

The United States Marshal for the Territory of Utah, or any lawful Deputy of his authorized to serve this Warrant, is hereby directed and empowered to arrest the person named therein, in the night-time if necessary.

C. S. Zane Judge.

April 14th 1886

Courtesy of the National Archives

Warrant for the arrest of Elias Morris on the charge of unlawful cohabitation, filed on April 22, 1886.

existing legislation by declaring unlawful cohabitation a misdemeanor, disfranchising polygamists, barring polygamists from political office and jury duty, and putting a commission hostile to Mormon interests in charge of territorial elections. The offense of unlawful cohabitation was much easier to prove than polygamy, for which a conviction required proof of marriage. A conviction for cohabitation required proof only that a man lived with more than one woman. In 1887, the Edmunds-Tucker Act imposed even harsher penalties on the LDS church and its polygamist members by dissolving the corporation of the LDS church, seizing church property, and revoking woman suffrage in the territory.[94]

Beginning in 1884 with the appointment of Judge Charles Zane, federal authorities in Utah strictly enforced laws against plural marriage and illegal cohabitation.[95] In the ensuing years, many of the territory's most prominent men were prosecuted and jailed on charges of polygamy or

was difficult to enforce, the LDS church remained relatively unaffected by its penalties. In 1879, the Supreme Court issued a decision on the case in *Reynolds v. United States*, which alleged that polygamy was "antirepublican." Three years later, the Edmunds Act allowed jurors to be challenged if they believed in polygamy, thus invalidating Mormon jurors. Daynes, *More Wives Than One*, 47–48.

94. Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 147–61; Firmage and Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts*, 197–99.

95. Thomas G. Alexander, "Charles S. Zane: Apostle of the New Era," 291–93, 306–9.

unlawful cohabitation. The lives of ordinary citizens also changed. Mary Lois, for instance, found that the new antipolygamy laws left her marriage in an ambiguous state. Until 1884, she appeared with Elias Morris in public on a fairly regular basis. Then, on April 14, 1885, she recorded in her diary, "My Husband has thought it wisdom to absent himself from this part of the family, on account of the acts of the wicked."[96] Elias Morris's decision to severely limit his time with his second wife and her family was no doubt due to the increasing number of prosecutions of polygamists by Judge Zane.[97] While Elias still saw Mary Lois occasionally in 1885, by 1886 more than half their recorded interactions were by letter. In 1887, the year of the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, Mary Lois had almost no interaction with her husband.

As a result of the increased enforcement of federal law, in 1885 Mary Lois began to hide to avoid authorities anxious to prosecute her husband. At this time women had two options for "'getting out of the way.' One was to remain at home, going into hiding periodically when the need arose; the other, to relocate on a more permanent basis."[98] Initially, Mary Lois chose the first option, going to the homes of her daughters for an afternoon or several days when it was necessary to avoid federal deputies. On March 25, 1885, for instance, she wrote that she did housework in the morning but spent the evening "in a closet," finally coming home about 11 p.m. and entering the house through the buttery window. At the end of 1885, she noted in her diary, "[W]ent to Addie's accompanied by little George whoes hand is hurt. We had to carry a heavy bundle. fell into a deep ditch and brused my limbs thought it a rather hard experience after day's hard work; still it was not as bad as the Saints had in their driveings in early day."

Then, on December 2, 1885, her husband advised her to relocate more permanently to Provo, Utah, under an assumed identity. That night, Mary Lois recorded, "Awoak about 2. oclock spent the rest of the night in thinking and contemplating my Journey. Strange times these when a person is not safe night or day from burglers Deptuies."[99] Her departure from Salt Lake City a few days later seems to have been to avoid both testifying in court and the continued appearance of living in polygamy. She stayed in Provo off and on for the next six months, spending several weeks

96. April 14, 1885.

97. The more than fourteen hundred prosecutions for polygamy and illegal cohabitation between 1882 and 1896 were "heavily concentrated in the years 1886 to 1889—only one indictment each was handed down in 1882, 1883, and 1884" (Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 157). See also Alexander, "Charles S. Zane," 296–301.

98. James, "'Between Two Fires': Women on the 'Underground' of Mormon Polygamy," 51.

99. March 25, 1885; December 26, 1885; February 13, 1886.

there in December 1885 before returning to Salt Lake and then relocating again to Provo in mid-February 1886, where she remained until May 1886. While in hiding, she wore veils and did not acknowledge friends or even her own children when she saw them on the street.

Toward the end of this time, on April 12, 1886, a grand jury convened in the Third District Court to hear her husband's case, *United States of America v. Elias Morris*. The grand jury issued an indictment on April 19 accusing Elias Morris of unlawful cohabitation between the dates of May 1, 1883, and December 31, 1885, and authorizing a warrant for his arrest. On April 22, Elias was apprehended by U.S. Marshal E. A. Ireland and placed under a $15,000 bond, which was cosigned by prominent businessmen William S. Godbe and John C. Cutler.[100]

In the next two weeks, Mary Lois moved from home to home in Provo, fearful that she would be subpoenaed to testify in her husband's case. She was not discovered, and only Elias and his first wife testified before the grand jury. For unknown reasons, her husband's trial was then delayed for over a year. As a result, on May 1, 1886, Mary Lois was able to emerge from hiding, writing in her diary that she had been introduced at a wedding that night by her true name, "haveing got through with underground business for the pesant, and it seems ever so good."[101]

Mary Lois felt besieged not just for herself but for her community as a whole. While she had noted the imprisonment of a few prominent Mormon men and a woman in earlier years, in 1885 she began to record frequently the arrests and imprisonment of men in the territory who practiced plural marriage.[102] She did not know how to spell "subpoenaed" the first time she used the word in her diary, but by April 1886 she could spell it correctly, having written it a number of times. She depicted imprisonment for plural marriage as a black and white issue: the Mormon men were arrested for "truth's sake," and those arresting them were "villains." Her entries mentioned arrests in terms such as "two more of our

100. United States District, District of Utah, Papers and Files in Case No. 84, *United States of America v. Elias Morris*, case 1499, RG 21, National Archives. The warrant, which is signed by Judge Zane, empowered the U.S. Marshal to arrest Elias Morris, "in the nighttime if necessary."

101. May 1, 1886.

102. Mary Lois began to note such trials in the mid-1880s and wrote about them especially frequently in 1886 and 1887. Her record corresponded with the sharply increased number of prosecutions between 1886 and 1889. While she mentioned the arrests of church leaders, many of the men whose arrests she noted were relatively unknown members of the LDS church. According to legal historian Sarah Barringer Gordon, "[m]ost prosecutions were of less notorious polygamists. That population was both more vulnerable, because it was less able to call upon the machinery of the church and the Underground and more likely to be distressed by serving time in prison and fees." Gordon, *The Mormon Question*, 157–60.

brerthren were sent to prison for Keeping the commandments of God" or the "following brethren were taken to the Penitentary to day for prefering to serve God rather than man."[103] As her diary entries were often short, her frequent mention of the trials and sentences of these men indicates how much their imprisonment affected her.[104]

Mary Lois questioned what the world was coming to when upstanding men were sent to jail. No doubt her interest in the matter was personal to some degree, and her frequent ventures into hiding seem to demonstrate her fear of prosecution of her own family. Her comment, "It is hard to tell what Will happen to us as a people, or a family," indicates that she viewed what happened to the Mormon "people" and to her own family as integrally related. In spite of any fear she may have felt, she reaffirmed her belief that the crusade against polygamy would end well: "Felt that the ruselt of the present Crusade would be so good that the faithful would wish there had ~~would~~ be been more of it."[105]

The Trial

In the first decades of polygamy, the outside world largely portrayed Mormon women such as Mary Lois as innocent victims. But when these women continued to support the Mormon patriarchy after receiving the right to vote, antipolygamists began to view women as part of the problem. Indeed, Mormon wives were often complicit in helping their husbands resist arrest. Many women went into hiding, as Mary Lois had, to avoid testifying against their husbands. When forced to testify, they sometimes committed perjury, stating that they could not remember if their husbands had multiple wives or the last times they had seen their husbands. Such extralegal tactics often succeeded in undermining the government's cases against suspected polygamists.[106]

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103. November 28, 1885; March 1, 1886.

104. Mary Lois mentioned, for instance, when Rudger Clawson's wife went to visit her husband at the penitentiary. Mary Lois was also particularly interested in the trials and imprisonment of the prominent Cannon brothers, as her daughter Addie had married a son of Angus M. Cannon. See Rudger Clawson, *Prisoner for Polygamy: The Memoirs and Letters of Rudger Clawson at the Utah Territorial Penitentiary, 1884–1887*; W. C. Seifrit, "The Prison Experience of Abraham H. Cannon"; Davis Bitton, *George Q. Cannon: A Biography*.

105. April 1, 1886; October 31, 1885.

106. In a few cases, Mormon women were prosecuted for perjury. In 1887, for example, Marintha Loveridge was charged with perjury after testifying "at her father's trial for unlawful cohabitation that she could not remember ever meeting his other wife and had never heard it reported in the family that he had another wife." Sarah Barringer Gordon explains, "Several cases involved attempts by wives to exonerate their husbands by claiming that the illegal act at issue (either a marriage ceremony or unlawful

Mary Lois and Mary Parry Morris both followed this pattern of deceit when they testified on September 26, 1887, in their husband's case, *United States of America v. Elias Morris.* Over a year before, the court had put Morris under bonds to appear in the case, which charged him with illegal cohabitation between May 1, 1883, and December 31, 1885.[107] Mary Lois was one of the first witnesses, according to accounts in the *Deseret Evening News* and the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune.* She recalled, "After swearing to what I had been instructed, I stuck to my text. One thing to which I had to testify was, that defendent and I had not lived together for such a number of years." According to the newspaper accounts of the case, the "text" to which Mary Lois testified before the court was that she was "not now married" and had ceased living with Morris "as his wife about the last of December, 1882, or the first of January, 1883." At this time, she claimed to have "proposed to him that he live separate to save him from any trouble; he had been very kind to me, as I was his brother's wife."[108] As the charge was that they were living together from May 1883 to December 1885, she provided a margin of four months against his liability for cohabitation with her.

Mary Lois then responded to questions from the prosecution, explaining, "the proposition was that he should not live with me at all, as I did not want him to suffer on my account; he made no answer; the conversation was in my own house; he may have been in my house since, perhaps once or twice. . . . [H]e did not recognize me as his wife during 1883 and 1884; it is a very painful position to me. . . . [H]e used to live about half the time with me."[109] As she answered this question, it reportedly "grieved her much to talk about the separation," and she shed "a few tears."[110]

The next witness, Mary Parry Morris, testified to this agreement as well and stated that her husband "has not been to her [Mary Lois's] house since then. . . . I do not remember the last time he took her out." When further questioned, she said that she did not know why she had not mentioned this agreement when brought before a grand jury a year and a half earlier in April 1886; she said that she must not have thought of it. Several of Mary Parry's children and a servant testified as well. They seem to have all stuck to the same story except John Morris, one of Mary Parry's children, who first testified that it was about a year since Mary

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cohabitation) had occurred more than three years before the initiation of prosecution, and thus was barred by the statute of limitations." *The Mormon Question,* 162–64. For more about Mormons' use of "nontruths" during the campaign against Mormon polygamy, see Hardy, appendix I, "Lying for the Lord: An Essay," 368–75.

107. *United States of America v. Elias Morris.*

108. Memoir 239–40; pp. 200–201. *Deseret Evening News,* September 26, 1887; *Salt Lake Daily Tribune,* September 27, 1887.

109. *Deseret Evening News,* September 26, 1887.

110. *Salt Lake Daily Tribune,* September 27, 1887.

Lois and Elias Morris separated, but, when crossexamined, he changed his story and said that it was more than a year ago.

When the court reassembled at two o'clock, the jury retired to discuss the case; and after forty-five minutes they returned to the court and announced that they had found Elias Morris "not guilty" of the charge of unlawful cohabitation.[111] Mary Lois recalled, "One of the first to offer congratulations was Governor Murray, himself. I received my witness fee, and went on my way rejoicing. Not, however, without some unpleasant feelings. The thought of being dishonored as a wife, after a marriage of thirty years or more, was neither comforting or flattering. . . . I was free, at the expense of being separated from my husband!"[112]

As Mary Lois makes clear in her diary, it was on April 14, 1885, that Elias Morris stopped living with her, not the beginning of 1883 as she testified in court. And it was he, not she, who proposed to "absent" himself from her and her family. She testified as she did to prevent her husband from going to jail, just as many other LDS women did at the time, and her and Mary Parry's testimonies may have helped acquit him. However, Elias Morris's prominent position in the community and his involvement in the mining industry with influential non-Mormons most likely worked in his favor as well. The congratulations of non-Mormon governor Eli H. Murray after the trial seems to bear evidence of this.

During the three months after the trial, Mary Lois did not record seeing her husband in her diary. Yet she continued to write positively of him in her diary and to unabashedly support the institution of polygamy. On the last day of December 1887, when called upon to speak in ward meeting, she praised her husband for his kindness in beginning a tradition in which provisions were given to the poor each Christmas and then "spoke in favour of plural Marraige."[113]

Death of Husband

Although publicly separated from Elias Morris after the 1887 court trial, Mary Lois still saw him on infrequent occasions. She evidently felt some awkwardness on the rare instances after their separation when she went to the home he shared with Mary Parry. She had not planned to attend his sixtieth birthday party on June 30, 1888 until her husband's daughter invited her: "Barabara Swan came over to intreat me to come over and Join the party, as her Father could not enjoy himself unless we were

111. *Deseret Evening News*, September 26, 1887; *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, September 27, 1887.
112. Memoir 240; p. 201.
113. December 31, 1887.

there." Mary Lois then noted, "I humbled myself to go over," indicating her discomfort.[114]

On March 14, 1898, at the age of seventy-two, Elias accidentally fell down the open entrance of an elevator shaft. After his fall, a carriage conveyed him to his home, where for the next few days he hovered between life and death. Mary Lois wrote that she visited him "occasionally" during this time but was "careful not to obtrude, or be in the way of anyone who wished to be near him."[115]

On March 17, she went over early to see how he was faring and found him in "his last death struggle." About ten o'clock, Elias Morris died; and Mary Lois returned to her own home, mourning "the good man, my benefactor, with whom I had passed the greater part of my life." Shortly after Elias's death, Mary Lois wrote a poem in tribute to her partner of so many years. In the poem she does not mention his role as a husband, instead writing, "How can I paint the picture, or the merits speak / Of this good man? The father, brother, friend." She then wrote, after not having lived with him for over ten years: "Most faithfully he trod / In duty's path, though steep, / Holding the Iron Rod / Till life's sands were complete." As her marriage had been founded in duty and obedience so were these the qualities that she stressed when she chose to honor her husband at the end of his life. Finally, she expressed what she saw as the reward for this faithfulness: "There comes an end to toil / Where waits a brilliant crown."[116] Although Mary Lois desperately did not want to marry Elias and viewed him as only a temporary replacement for her first husband, she mourned his death.

Later Life

Mary Lois continued to keep a diary until six months before her death in 1919. After 1887, when the entries included here end, she continued her church work, serving as Fifteenth Ward primary president from 1884 until 1896 and as a counselor in the Salt Lake Stake primary presidency from 1896 to 1901.[117]

As the nineteenth century ended and the twentieth century began, Mary Lois continued to document changes both in her life and in Utah. A major shift occurred in 1890 when LDS president Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto, which officially ended the church's

114. June 30, 1888.
115. Memoir 265–67.
116. Memoir 271–73.
117. Mary Lois's release from the Stake Primary Presidency was recorded in the *Woman's Exponent* 29 (May 25, 1901), 104.

Courtesy of the Ashton Family Organization

Mary Lois and her five children. Back row, left to right: Marian Adelaide Morris Cannon, Effie Morris Ashton, Katherine Vaughan Morris Cannon. Front row, left to right: George Q. Morris, Mary Lois Walker Morris, Nephi Lowell Morris.

practice of polygamy.[118] While Mary Lois made no comment in her diary on the announcement of the Manifesto, her observations about her children's marriages provide a microcosmic view of the experiences of LDS church members as a whole at this time. Edward T. Ashton, husband of her oldest daughter, Effie, had a second wife whom he had married in 1883, five years after his first marriage to Effie.[119] In contrast, Mary Lois's sons were much younger than her older daughters and were still unmarried at the time of the Manifesto. When they did marry, in 1905 and 1907, respectively, George and Nephi contracted monogamous marriages.[120]

The ending of polygamy by the LDS church was not simple for many Mormons. The Morris family's experience demonstrates this. Mary Lois's daughter Addie was in a monogamous marriage to George M. Cannon in 1890. Her youngest daughter, Kate, had not yet married and lived at home. Because some Mormons remained unconvinced that polygamy had truly ended, the Manifesto did not eliminate the possibility of plural marriage for Mary Lois's daughters. Despite the LDS church's official announcement ending polygamy in 1890, Addie's husband, George M. Cannon, married two plural wives in 1901, one of whom was Kate.[121] According to family lore, Addie did not learn about her husband's plural marriages until after the weddings and was so upset "when she found out that he had married her sister she tore her hair out by the roots. She was just horrified."[122]

Though she came of age after the Manifesto, Kate chose a plural rather than a monogamous marriage. When she made this decision, she

118. President Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto on September 25, 1890, announcing that the LDS church would submit to the laws of the land and no longer practice plural marriage. After 1890, fewer families were openly polygamous, and those that were found themselves eventually pushed to the margins of Utah society. For the impact of the Manifesto on the practice of polygamy in Utah, see Daynes, *More Wives Than One*, 173–87. For more background into the issuing of the Manifesto, see Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet*, 261–87. Alexander examines the changes in the LDS church after the Manifesto in *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1890–1930*.

119. After being counseled by LDS church leaders to enter into polygamy, Edward Treharne Ashton married Cora May Lindsay as his second wife. He had married Effie Walker Morris in 1878. *The Edward Ashton and Jane Treharne Ashton Legacy of Faith*, 30–32 (hereinafter cited as EALF).

120. George Quayle Morris married Emily Marion Ramsey. Nephi Lowell Morris married Harriet Young.

121. As previously noted, George Mousley Cannon married Marian Adelaide (Addie) Morris in 1884. Seventeen years later, he married Addie's younger sister, Katherine Vaughan Morris, and Ellen Christina Steffensen.

122. Gabrielle Woods, interview by author, February 15, 2003. Gabrielle Woods is the daughter of Mary Lois's youngest son, George Q. Morris.

Courtesy of Ashton Family Organization

Mary Lois and descendants at a family reunion, about 1916. Back row, left to right: Lois Cannon, an unidentified woman, Marvin O. Ashton, Afton Grace Ashton?, Edward M. Ashton, Joe Kjar, Raymond Ashton, unidentified baby, Winnie Richards Ashton, Effie Ashton Kjar. Third row, left to right: Morris Badger Ashton, two unidentified children, Nephi L. Morris, Marian Adelaide Morris Cannon, Effie Walker Morris Ashton, George Q. Morris, (the rest of the row is unidentified). Second row: Mary Lois Walker Morris is fourth from the left, Katherine Vaughn Morris Cannon is fifth from the left, Emma Ramsey Morris is on the far right with Helen Ramsey Morris is her lap. Front row: Marion Ramsey Morris Wood is second from the right, and Margery Ramsey Morris Woods (also known as Gabrielle Woods) is on the far right.

had completed the teaching program at the University of Utah and was working as a kindergarten teacher in the Salt Lake area. Although Mary Lois does not mention Kate's marriage in her diary at the time of its occurrence, she seems to have encouraged Kate's post-Manifesto polygamous marriage. According to an oral interview with Kate's daughter, Katherine Morris Cannon Thomas, Mary Lois "persuaded her [Kate] to go into polygamy." Thomas also recalled that when Nephi and George found out that Kate "had gone into polygamy or was going into it[,] [t]hey were very much upset because they knew what lay ahead in the way of criticism. The Manifesto had been issued and here eleven years later she was going into it."[123] Kate's choice to become a polygamist wife and the opposition of her brothers Nephi and George seem to show that differences in attitudes toward polygamy were not always along generational lines.

Mary Lois's daughter Kate was not alone in entering into a polygamous marriage after the Manifesto. During the 1890s and early 1900s, certain members of the LDS church disregarded the church's proclamation, often because they viewed Wilford Woodruff's Manifesto as a political necessity rather than a doctrinal shift. For this reason, the LDS church issued a Second Manifesto in 1904, which led to stricter enforcement of the church's new policy.[124] Meanwhile, Mormons congregated in colonies in Mexico, where they were free to continue to practice plural marriage. In 1902, Mary Lois accompanied Kate and her two-month-old granddaughter, Katherine Morris Cannon, into exile in the Colonia Juarez, Mexico, colony. Mary Lois wrote of her decision to go with her daughter: "About this time I was advised, if able, to go into exile with my daughter. This I was willing to do and would have gone to prison also, rather than betray my brethren or bear witness against them. . . . I did not know whether I should ever see my home or my children again. Anything rather than betray my brethren."[125] Mary Lois and Kate would remain in Mexico for two and a half years, from December 1902 to May 1905.

During her time in Mexico, Mary Lois learned Spanish and took a class on the Doctrine and Covenants, an LDS book of scripture, at the local LDS school. Her poetry flourished in the dry Mexican desert as she described her surroundings in a number of poems. While in Colonia Juarez, she also wrote part of her memoir which she had begun in 1901 and would continue to work on for the next fourteen years of her life.[126]

123. Katherine Cannon Thomas, interview by Leonard Grover, March 25, 1980, transcript, pp.12–13, LDS Polygamy Oral History Project, Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
124. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 64–65, 72–73.
125. Memoir 342; p. 534.
126. Memoir 463.

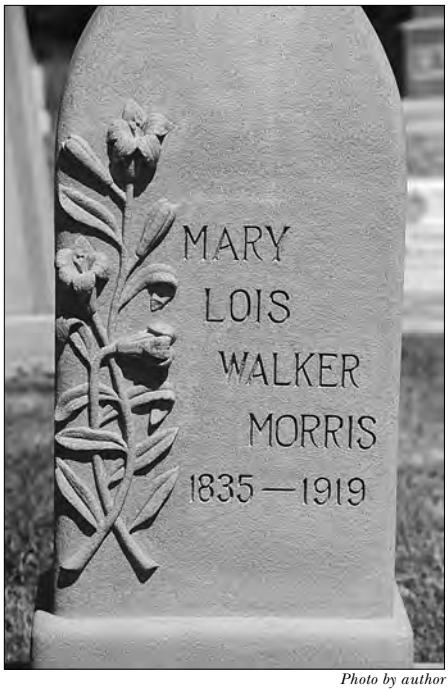

Photo by author

Mary Lois Morris's gravestone in the City Cemetery in Salt Lake City.

Mary Lois's time in Mexico was not all happy, however. She and her daughter Kate struggled at times to keep their spirits up. This was especially difficult when, a year after their arrival in Mexico, Kate gave birth to twin daughters, who both died within three days of their birth. Mary Lois and Kate both also suffered from illness. As a result of Mary Lois's failing health, they both returned to Utah in May 1905.

During the next years, Mary Lois's life remained intimately tied to her children and grandchildren. She watched and aided them in their successes and failures, taking on the position of the "grand dame" of the family in her signature black dress with a touch of white lace at her throat.[127] Her oldest son, Nephi, who took over his father's company after Elias Morris's death, had become president of the Salt Lake Stake during her absence in Mexico. In this position, which he held from 1904 to 1929, he oversaw many of the LDS congregations in the Salt Lake Valley. He also served on the State Industrial Commission and was president of the Salt Lake Board of Education.[128] A member of the state legislature, he ran for governor of Utah twice—on the Progressive ticket in 1912 and on the

127. Woods, interview.

128. Lynn M. Hilton, ed., *The Story of Salt Lake Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, 179–83.

Republican ticket in 1916—but lost both elections.[129] George Q. Morris, his younger brother, also worked at Morris & Sons, becoming president and general manager. He served as general superintendent of the LDS church's Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association from 1937 to 1948 and as president of the Eastern States Mission from 1948 to 1952. He became an assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in October 1951 and one of the twelve apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 8, 1954, a position he held until his death in 1962.[130]

Mary Lois's daughter Effie served as Relief Society president of the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward from March 1908 to December 1916 and was the grandmother of LDS apostle Marvin J. Ashton. Her daughter Addie lived in a spacious home in Forest Dale, a suburban Salt Lake City refuge for plural families, where she was the Relief Society president of the Forest Dale Ward for seventeen years.[131] Kate, however, had to remain in hiding, living on a farm in Ogden and taking the name of "Mrs. Jenson." Her husband George M. Cannon took the train from Salt Lake City to visit her every Thursday evening, leaving again early Friday morning. According to family tradition, George M. Cannon's political career in the Utah Senate came to an abrupt halt as a result of his plural marriages, although he continued to serve as county recorder.[132]

Mary Lois's attitude toward Kate's marriage seems to be an accurate measure of how she herself felt about polygamy after the issuance of the Manifesto. Around 1911, she explained her feelings about Kate's marriage in her memoir:

> Some time previous to this, your sister Kate had decided to keep one of the laws of God which the world, with the enemy of souls at the bottom of it, has been fighting for the last Seventy years. And I willhere bear this testimony, if I never bear it again, that God has sent to earth through this principle some of the noblest spirits that ever left their Father's courts above. And so much faith have I in this Celestial order of marriage that I would go to the ends of the earth to sustain it, although I am verging onto my Seventy-seventh year. The way is thorny and the path is steep. I have trodden it before them,

129. AJ, 1:639–40; Noble Warrum, ed., *Utah Since Statehood: Historical and Biographical*, 1:163–64, 177–78.

130. Lawrence R. Flake, *Prophets and Apostles of the Last Dispensation*, 501–3; "George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve," *Improvement Era*, May 1954, 294, 364; T. Earl Pardoe, *The Sons of Brigham*, 152–55.

131. EALF, 35; "Obituary of Marian A. Morris Cannon," Daughters of Utah Pioneers Obituary Scrapbook.

132. Thomas, interview, 3–4; Woods, interview.

> and I hope that my children will have the courage and integrity to walk therein.[133]

As a young child, Mary Lois's granddaughter Gabrielle Woods received a similar impression of Mary Lois's attitude toward polygamy, recalling, "I don't think Mary Lois liked polygamy, but she felt it was God's will. She didn't want to marry Elias, but she felt she had to."[134] After a life of sacrifice and civil disobedience for polygamy, it would have no doubt been difficult for Mary Lois to renounce the principle. In a way, to do so would have been to denounce the worth of the decisions of her life.

During her last years, Mary Lois continued to write her memoir and faithfully wrote in her journal. Her children collected the poetry she had written over the years and published it in a book in 1918.[135] In the last month she wrote in her diaries, April 1919, Mary Lois twice recorded knitting for the Red Cross to aid the Allied soldiers in World War I. Her second-to-last entry showed her continued interest in learning, as she wrote, "I have been reading for a week perhaps an account of the Ex Kaiser where he declars that he would rather kill himsel rather than be tried for misconduct." The next day, April 17, 1919, she penned her last entry, writing of a funeral she had attended that day and ending it with "have been working in my room."[136] Six months later, she died of heart trouble shortly before midnight on November 29, 1919, at the age of 84.[137] She was buried on the opposite side of the Salt Lake City Cemetery from Elias Morris and Mary Parry Morris.

Mary Lois left behind an extraordinary wealth of writing about her life. In her memoir, she seemed to sense that she had lived through times of great change, and with the flare of a natural storyteller, she recounted moments of great drama, sadness, and joy. While more mundane, the activities she recorded in her diaries clearly provided her with a sense of accomplishment and of completion as she set their details to paper. Her faithful journal writing and the massive fifteen-year task of writing her memoir bear witness that she felt her life in some small way had been significant and was worth recording for future generations.[138]

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133. Memoir 338–39.
134. Woods, interview.
135. Morris, *A Few Thoughts of Mary L. Morris: Dedicated to Her Children.*
136. April 16, 1919; April 17, 1919.
137. Kate B. Carter, comp., "Mary Lois Walker Morris," in *Treasures of Pioneer History*, 3:42. See also "Pioneer Woman Closes Career: Mrs. Morris' Funeral Tuesday," *Deseret Evening News*, December 1, 1919; Death Certificate for Mary Lois Morris.
138. Memoir 1; p. 53.