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“The Scriptures Is a Fulfilling”: Sally Parker’s Weave

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Abstract: Sally Bradford Parker is not a name most LDS Church members recognize, but her faith, exemplified through the letter featured below, weaves an important fabric distinctive to early Latter-day Saint women. The limited number of known early Mormon women's voices, especially prior to the organization of the Relief Society in 1842, makes this document particularly valuable. As Sally shares her experience, she augments and supports the testimony of Hyrum Smith as a Book of Mormon witness and particularly the witness of another woman—the Prophet's mother, Lucy Mack Smith. When Sally arrived in Kirtland she was in awe of the many Latter-day Saints who focused their lives in faith and prayer. Lucy Mack was one of those exemplary individuals. Lucy's sincerity deeply impressed Sally, who seems to have shared a motherly kinship with her.

Sally's letters portray her as a powerful chronicler of her personal and family experience in a small branch on the periphery of the Church. Through her writing, Sally demonstrates that, like the saintly examples she found in Kirtland, her membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the dominant thread of her life—even though most of her life she was not gathered with the general body of the Saints. Sally's letters intricately wove that dominant thread with the price of produce, weather conditions, and familial inquiries of health.



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One of my priorities as document editor for *BYU Studies* is publishing documents by and about lesser-known Latter-day Saints, especially women. Only documents judged to have lasting historical significance are featured in *BYU Studies*, so the challenge is to discover rich, unpublished sources that allow readers to hear otherwise silent historical voices. Sally Bradford Parker's letter to her brother-in-law John Kempton on August 26, 1838, fills the role perfectly. I learned about the letter from Brenda McConkie, a relative of Sally Parker, who showed me a transcript of it while we were on a tour of LDS history sites in Ohio. Steve Sorenson at the LDS Church Archives brought Sally Parker's letters to Janiece Johnson's attention. Her research and writing on early LDS women made her the right choice to work with these letters and to write an introduction for the one featured here.

Sally's letter is published with the permission of the Delaware County Historical Society, where the original reposes safely in the Doris Whittier Pierce File in Delaware, Ohio, near Columbus. Pierce donated this and other family letters to the Historical Society, where family historian W. Edward Kempton painstakingly transcribed them. Kempton's transcription and genealogical research underpin this edition of Sally's letter. The letter is also available through the LDS Family History Library.

This document is more challenging to present than most of those *BYU Studies* has featured. As Kempton wrote to Brenda McConkie on October 15, 1997, Sally is a "powerful and moving writer," but her literacy, like Joseph Smith's, was limited. Her lack of capitalization, punctuation, standardized spelling and appropriate verb tenses is not much poorer than that of some undergraduates, but it makes deciphering her vocabulary and syntax difficult. Document editors today believe that the anthropology of a document—its humanness—is historically significant. We want to mediate only minimally between the author and the reader, the way a museum curator might present an artifact. But we also seek to provide access to the meanings of the document captured in the words. How does one capture the power and beauty of Sally's prose in modern language without damaging it and marring her in the process?

We decided to bring readers into the document editing process by featuring the text twice. The original transcription leaves usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation as Sally rendered it. Editorial insertions in brackets [like this] are minimal. Inserts <like this> show words Sally inserted. Strikeouts ~~like this~~ show words Sally struck out. The edited transcription strives to maintain the integrity of Sally's intent while increasing readability. Her verbs remain but tenses have been changed and punctuation, capitalization, and spelling have been standardized.

—Steven C. Harper, *BYU Studies*

“The Scriptures Is a Fulfilling”

Sally Parker’s Weave

Janiece L. Johnson

Sally Bradford Parker is not a name most LDS Church members recognize, but her faith, exemplified through the letter featured below, weaves an important fabric distinctive to early Latter-day Saint women. The limited number of known early Mormon women’s voices, especially prior to the organization of the Relief Society in 1842, makes this document particularly valuable. As Sally shares her experience, she augments and supports the testimony of Hyrum Smith as a Book of Mormon witness and particularly the witness of another woman—the Prophet’s mother, Lucy Mack Smith. When Sally arrived in Kirtland she was in awe of the many Latter-day Saints who focused their lives in faith and prayer. Lucy Mack was one of those exemplary individuals. Lucy’s sincerity deeply impressed Sally, who seems to have shared a motherly kinship with her.

Sally’s letters portray her as a powerful chronicler of her personal and family experience in a small branch on the periphery of the Church. Through her writing, Sally demonstrates that, like the saintly examples she found in Kirtland, her membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the dominant thread of her life—even though most of her life she was not gathered with the general body of the Saints. Sally’s letters intricately wove that dominant thread with the price of produce, weather conditions, and familial inquiries of health.

Sally Bradford’s parents were early settlers on the Maine frontier.¹ At the age of twenty she married Peter Parker in newly settled Farmington, Maine, in 1799. Sally bore three daughters and three sons, beginning in 1800 with her namesake, Sally, and ending with Julia Ann two decades later. She and Peter also raised their granddaughter Sarah after her mother died in 1826.² The Parkers and many of their relatives embraced the

restored gospel in Maine beginning in 1834. Sally and Peter optimistically migrated to Kirtland in June 1837 to gather with the Saints, but a national economic crisis that year devastated Kirtland's speculative base. Sally described with enthusiasm the events of her first week in Kirtland in a July 1837 letter. She attended meetings in the temple with hundreds of people, and after Sunday meetings she marveled as she witnessed the baptism of a 108-year-old man. Her son John worked with Joseph Smith and claimed that he "never saw a [more] clever man in his life."³ As the Parkers were able to gather with the Saints and participate in meetings, the fellowship they enjoyed with the Saints was contrasted by confrontations with the fruits of apostasy.⁴

Joseph Smith left Ohio for Missouri in January 1838. The Parkers left Kirtland soon after, following their non-Mormon son John to Sunbury, Ohio, a promising location near the National Road in central Ohio settled largely by other families from Farmington, Maine. The Parkers arrived in Sunbury early in March 1838. That summer, Kirtland Camp, the largest contingent of Latter-day Saints immigrating from Ohio to Missouri, passed near Sunbury under the direction of Hyrum Smith, and Sally eagerly awaited an opportunity to see the Saints.⁵ Though Sally missed the fellowship of the main body of the Saints, the Parkers' small branch in Sunbury would grow. In April 1840 Julia Ann Parker recorded that the Latter-day Saints were "increasing very fast in this town and about here there has three of the most respectable men in town been baptized and joined their church besides a good many others."⁶ In the same letter, Sally commented that four individuals had been baptized during the week to add to their branch of twenty. She added, "It is a grate comfort to us to see the work of the Lord a spredding so fast for it never spread so fast before as it has for a year past."⁷

A deeply moving letter written by Sally to her mother in September 1842 documents the death of her husband, Peter, in Sunbury. She wrote seeking sympathy in her "lonsom hours;" she mourned, "my hous is lonsom my tabel is lonsom my bed is lonsom was lonsom when I got out and when i comin and how lonsom the place whear he sat."⁸ As she expressed the great void she felt after Peter's death, she also shared his unfailing faith and the spiritual peace he felt at the time of his passing. After Peter's death Sally thought she would be in lonely Sunbury for the rest of her life, yet she sold her property in December and was living in the "promis land" of Nauvoo by summer 1843.⁹ She enthusiastically declared that "the way was opened for me to com and now I am in the middle of Nauvoo."¹⁰ After 1845 she moved frequently. For several years after the death of her husband, Sally's sons Asa and John attempted to get their mother to return to Sunbury,

yet she was determined to “take up her abode in the wilderness.”¹¹ Though their initial attempts were “all to no purpus,” at some point Sally did return to Sunbury and was living there with Asa by 1850.¹² Sally’s declining health limited her ability to be actively involved in the Sunbury branch, though she remained firm in her faith. She professed, “I feele som times if I had a thousands touns I could use them all in praising my Lord and Master for what he has don for me and what seens I have passed. . . . I had a feast of fat things to my soul that I never shall ever forget.”¹³ Though Pierce claimed that Sally died in 1852 in Iowa, it seems unlikely that she made it back to Iowa by that date, and her death and burial remain undocumented.¹⁴

For Sally Parker, religion was central to her experience. As she boarded a ship for Kirtland, she wondered if among the two hundred “out landish

“His Discourse was Beautiful”

Having done research on Hyrum Smith’s sermons and writings for the Joseph F. Smith family organization quite a few years back, I found the reference to Hyrum in Sally Parker’s letter quite enlightening. First, I believe this is the only reference that we have that indicates that Hyrum passed through Sunbury, Ohio. Second, Sally’s description of his sermon confirms my opinion that Hyrum had considerable eloquence as an orator. Overall, it is difficult to get a strong sense for Hyrum’s personality and speaking prowess because so few of his sermons were recorded. However, after my research, I came to know Hyrum as more than only the mild and meek supporter of his brother Joseph. At times his tongue was on fire. He could rise up in great denouncements of evil using the salty language of frontier times; he could reason carefully with investigators late into the night; his writing about the eventual destiny of Kirtland stands as one of the most prophetic documents of Church history; his Word of Wisdom discourse, in my mind, is the most visionary and doctrinally compelling on the subject.

True, when compared to Joseph (a man overflowing with charisma), Hyrum was described as being more demure. But in looking at the documents, we see that Hyrum, standing alone, was a dynamic leader and an unyielding witness for the Book of Mormon.

—James T. Summerhays, BYU Studies

peopl” there was “a nuf religion aboard the ship to save it.”¹⁵ If the group was as “out landish” as Sally thought, it is likely that she was not the only woman aboard with similar thoughts, for religion has always been of central import to the experience of American women. Women’s presence in churches has been a consistent feature of American religious history.¹⁶ Likewise, Sally’s letters share similar themes of witness and exhortation with the letters of other early Mormon women.¹⁷ Her baptism into the LDS Church brought her divine assurance and support. In an 1838 letter Sally shared with her daughter, “I feel the same confidence i[n] god as I did when I was Baptised about four years ago . . . that religion has stood by me ever sense and ever will I put my trust in god.”¹⁸ She exhorted family members of other faiths to “read the Book of Mormon” for “there never was no truer book than for the emerica land” and if they read it for themselves they would “find it so.”¹⁹ Though Sally often found her “eyes failing,” pens “wore out,” and “paper scarce,” for her these messages were critical and worth the trouble.²⁰ For us, her woven words give us a “window into [her] soul.”²¹

In the letter featured below, Sally writes in the aftermath of a devastating wave of bankruptcy and apostasy in Kirtland, updating her sister’s family on the community of saints. Sally describes her intimate relationship with Lucy Mack Smith, her experience listening to Hyrum Smith, what she knows about the antagonism of dissenters Warren Parrish and John Boynton, and the latest report from Orson Hyde on the success of the British mission. She weaves in the prices of potatoes and wheat as seamlessly as she wove the eighty yards of homespun cloth she reports in passing: Sally can be discovered in the way she weaves.²²

Sally’s weaving pattern altered with her baptism into the LDS Church. Reflecting both geographical and spiritual migration, she expressed, “I niver have wish my self back.”²³ Building upon her biblical foundation, the Book of Mormon and the new revelations added much more scripture to be “a fulfilling” and more to meld into her weave.

Her faith in the Restoration became her main pattern interwoven with daily life. This letter is Sally’s response to a wide variety of changing conditions: soil, crop prices, children, grandchildren, grandparents, the Kirtland economy, dissent, and an increasingly international church. In each instance Sally chooses to exercise faith. Indeed, faith in God, faith in the witnesses of the Restoration, and faith in the Book of Mormon become Sally’s most prominent thread. Her weave is a seamless, unpunctuated stream of consciousness flowing from one topic to another, resulting in the fabric of which Sally Parker and some other early Mormon converts were made.

Original Transcription

[Sunbury, Delaware Co., OH]
 De August the 26 1838
 Mr John Kempton²⁴
 Farmington Me

Dear and beloved Brother and sister in the Lord with pleather I now write you a few lines but I no not where to begin but I pray the lord to direct me wee heard the <letter> read that you sent to isiar or Peter Parker²⁵ and ~~and~~ you said you wanted if wee could send you somthing to confort you which I dont now as I can for I have not heard but one sermon sence wee have bin in the place²⁶ and that by hyrem Smith as he wass mooving to mesur<ia> he taried with us a lites while his dissorse wass butifull wee wass talking about th Book of mormon which he is ons of the witnesses he said he had but too hands and too eyes he said he had seene the plates with his eyes and handeled them with his hands and he saw a brest plate and he told how it wass maid it wass fixed for the brest of a man with a hollen stomak and too pieces upon eatch side with a hole throu them to put in a string to tye <it> on but that wass mot so good gold as the plates for that was pure why I write this is because thay dispute the Book so much²⁷ I lived by his Mother and and he

Edited Version

[Sunbury, Delaware Co., OH]
 De August the 26, 1838
 Mr. John Kempton
 Farmington, Maine

Dear and beloved Brother and sister in the Lord,

With pleasure I now write you a few lines but I know not where to begin. But I pray the Lord to direct me. We heard the letter read that you sent to Isaiah or Peter Parker. And you said you wanted if we could send you something to comfort you, which I don't know as I can. For I have not heard but one sermon since we have been in the place and that by Hyrum Smith. As he was moving to Missouri he tarried with us a little while. His discourse was beautiful. We were talking about the Book of Mormon, [of] which he is one of the witnesses. He said he had but two hands and two eyes. He said he had seen the plates with his eyes and handled them with his hands and he saw a breast plate and he told how it was made. It was fixed for the breast of a man with a hole in [the] stomach and two pieces upon each side with a hole through them to put in a string to tie it on, but that was not so good gold as the plates for that was pure. Why I write this is because they dispute the Book so much.

I lived by his Mother [Lucy Mack Smith, in Kirtland] and she

wass wone of the finest of wimen always helping them that stood in need she told me the hole story the plates wass in the house and some times in the woods for eight monts and on acount of peopel trying to git them thay had to hide them wonce thay hide them under the hearth they took up the brick and put them in and put the brick back the old lady told me this hur self wih tears in hur eyes and they run down hur cheeks too she put hur hand upon her stomack and said she o the peace of god that rested upon us all that time she said it wass a heaven below I axter if she saw th pates she said no it wass not for hur to see them but she hefted and handled them and I believed all she said for I lived by her eight monts and she was wone of the best of wimen²⁸ [page 2] I suppose thier Is is som that is departed from he faith thay will hold om to the Book of Mormon but if thay deny that fair wall to all religon wihout doubt you have heard from John Boyinton and worrin Parrish²⁹ I lived a lone nabour to Parish you remember the piece he put into the paper to send to his parents he apered to be amane of god and now he is turned like a Dog to his vommit and so forth he and Boyinton thay lost thair religon and thay com out from the mormons and drew away about 30 and now some has seen thier errow and gon bak but theothers has

was one of the finest of women, always helping those that stood in need. She told me the whole story. The plates were in the house and sometimes in the woods for eight months on account of people trying to get them. They had to hide them once. They hid them under the hearth. They took up the brick and put them in and put the brick back. The old lady told me this herself with tears in her eyes and they run down her cheeks too. She put her hand upon her stomach and said she, "O the peace of God that rested upon us all that time." She said it was a heaven below. I asked her if she saw the plates. She said no, it was not for her to see them, but she hefted and handled them and I believed all she said for I lived by her eight months and she was one of the best of women.

[page 2] I suppose there are some that are departed from the faith. They will hold on to the Book of Mormon, but if they deny that, farewell to all religion. Without doubt you have heard from John Boynton and Warren Parrish. I lived a lone neighbor to Parrish. You remember the piece he put into the paper to send to his parents. He appeared to be a man of God and now he is turned like a dog to his vomit and so forth. He and Boynton they lost their religion and they came out from the Mormons and drew away about thirty and now some have seen their error and gone back but the others have

denied the Bibel and the Book of Mormon and the thole Parrish is a lawyer and Boynton is up to all rigs and they are a working against the mormons But know they are a writing against the heads of the Church I heard they thave sent leters that they wass sorry that they deceved the peopel I believe at that they wass praying peopel now they will curs and swair and call upon god to dam annything that dont sute them and they have thier debating meetings that thier is no religion let us begain[?] and hold fast lest at aney time ꝛ wee let them slipe the older I gro and the more I see the stroger I feel in my mind o Brother stand fast in the leberly whar in with Crist has maid you free preach the preaching as wone said anchently that I bed the dont be disscurrege the prise is a head I mene to hold on to that faith which is like a grain of musterd seed which will remove Mountains yes and heal sicknes too bles the lord for I feel the power of it in my hart now I am as strong in the faith as I wass when wee wass Baptised and my mind is the same I mene to hold <on> by the gospel til death [page 3] I supose you will want to hear somthing about the times the spring very weat and cold and the sumer very te hot and dry the peopel thint their will not be half a crop of corn but if you had as much you would call it a hole crop potatoes very poore wheat very good som says it will not bee

denied the Bible and the Book of Mormon and the whole. Parrish is a lawyer and Boynton is up to all rigs and they are a working against the Mormons. But now they are a writing against the heads of the Church. I heard they have sent letters that they were sorry that they deceived the people. I believed that they were praying people. Now they will curse and swear and call upon God to damn anything that does not suit them and they have their debating meetings that there is no religion.

Let us begin and hold fast lest at any time we let them slip. The older I grow and the more I see the stronger I feel in my mind. O brother, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. Preach the preaching as one said anciently: that I [do not become] discouraged, the prize is ahead. I mean to hold on to that faith which is like a grain of mustard seed, which will remove Mountains yes and heal sickness too. Bless the Lord for I feel the power of it in my heart now. I am as strong in the faith as I was when we were baptized and my mind is the same. I mean to hold on by the gospel till death.

[page 3] I suppose you will want to hear something about the times. The spring [was] very wet and cold and the summer very hot and dry. The people think there will not be half a crop of corn but if you had as much you would call it a whole crop. Potatoes [are] very poor, wheat very good. Some say it will not be

more then fifty cents others 75 but if it is a dolar wee had not out to find fault I will write a letter more about the mormons Broth^{<er>} Hyde³⁰ has got home from england with good news thay have Baptised too <or> three thousand <in> england ireland scotland wales thay have ordained elders priests and Deacons and the work is very rapped they got licence [from?] the queene to ordain churches he has gon up to fair west³¹ with his famely and he is a goin back soon with others thier is a gethering from the east and west north and south thier are a mooving daily the camp west³² a bout three weeks ago six or seven hundred thay did not pass through this place for this I wass <sorry> for I expected to see maney of my nabours in kirtland I expect Josiah Butterfield Samuel Parker Benj^{<me>} Butterfield³³ <is gon> I believe Benjmin meenes to be saved and famely W[&] hannan Parker and Samuel wass Baptised th work is a goin on sum times when they are a moving thay stop and Baptise <on the road> thay are scaterd from kirtland to the mesurig all the parishites says it dont stop the work thay Baptise by day and by night and so the scriptures is a fulfilling if i could see you and sister too ours I could tell you a long story dont bee discoredege I see nothing to discoredege me all tho I have no privledge of meetings with the Brothering³⁴ yet I

more than fifty cents, others seventy-five, but if it is a dollar we had not ought to find fault.

I will write a little more about the Mormons. Brother Hyde has got home from England with good news. They have baptized two or three thousand in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales. They have ordained elders, priests, and deacons and the work is very rapid. They got license from the queen to ordain churches. He has gone up to Far West with his family and he is a going back soon with others. There is a gathering from the east and west, north and south. There are a moving daily the camp west—about three weeks ago six or seven hundred. They did not pass through this place. For this I was sorry, for I expected to see many of my neighbors in [from] Kirtland. I expect Josiah Butterfield, Samuel Parker, Benjamin Butterfield are gone. I believe Benjamin means to be saved and family. Hannah Parker and Samuel were baptized. The work is a goin' on. Sometimes when they are a moving they stop and baptize on the road. They are scattered from Kirtland to the Missouri. All the Parrishites say, it does not stop the work. They baptize by day and by night and so the scriptures is a fulfilling. If I could see you and sister two hours I could tell you a long story. Don't be discouraged. I see nothing to discourage me although I have no privilege of meetings with the brethren. Yet I

believe the time is not fair of when I shall enjoy the privledge[?] with Brothers and sisters agin o how I wish that you wass hear to dig them out of the holes of rocks³⁵ most all profesers but no religion I wrote this to you on a count of your letter but I dont now as it will bang satisfaction I should wrote to John Parker³⁶ but for fear he would start before this reach you I wrote to you if he has not started I want you should send word to him git a cradel with out fail for his children [page 4] Peter and mary³⁷ I supose will think hard If thay no I write to you I want you and sister should go and see them and tel them I think of daly and ourley with all the rest of the relitives and acquaintances Beshure and see grandmother woods for I send my best wishes to hur I dont kno as you can read this for I am in a grate hurry about weeving i have now eighty yards now on hand I want you should all send letters by John tel rosilla and cynthia³⁸ I have not for gotten them when you go to your meetings tel the Brothers and sisters I have not forgotten them and I want thay shuld pray for me fore I often think of think of the blesed seasons wee have had wee have not heard from Brother Pinkham³⁹ folks sence thay went away wee have not found Brother Moses⁴⁰ yet wee are as wall as common fairwall pray for us

Sally Parker
Brother and sister Kimpton

believe the time is not far off when I shall enjoy the privilege with brothers and sisters again. O how I wish that you were here to dig them out of the holes of rocks. Most all professors, but no religion.

I wrote this to you on account of your letter, but I don't know as it will bring satisfaction. I should [have] written to John Parker, but for fear he would start before this reached you I wrote to you. If he has not started I want you should send word to him get a cradle, without fail, for his children. [page 4] Peter and Mary I suppose will think hard if they know I write to you. I want you and sister should go and see them and tell them I think of [them] daily and hourly with all the rest of the relatives and acquaintances. Be sure and see Grandmother Woods, for I send my best wishes to her. I don't know as you can read this, for I am in a great hurry about weaving. I have now eighty yards now on hand. I want you should all send letters by John. Tell Rosilla and Cynthia I have not forgotten them. When you go to your meetings tell the brothers and sisters I have not forgotten them, and I want they should pray for me, for I often think of the blessed seasons we have had. We have not heard from Brother Pinkham's folks since they went away. We have not found Brother Moses. Yet we are as well as common. Farewell. Pray for us.

Sally Parker
Brother and Sister Kempton

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1. Alan Taylor's *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors: The Revolutionary Settlement on the Maine Frontier, 1760-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), tells the story of families like the Bradfords and Parkers. Sally Bradford Parker was born on that frontier in Maine in 1779.

2. Sarah Hiscock was also called Sally after her mother and grandmother.

3. Sally Parker to Mr. Francis Tufts, July 24, [1837?], Kirtland Mills, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

4. Sally commented that those that have "departed from the faith" are the "gratest oposers." Parker to Tufts, July 24, [1837?].

5. W. Edward Kempton, "When the Mormons Came to Sunbury," unpublished manuscript used by permission.

6. Julia and Sally Parker to Mr. Francis Tufts, April 18, 1840, Sunbury, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

7. Parker to Tufts, April 18, 1840.

8. Sally Parker to Mrs. Nathaniel Woods, September 25, 1842, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

9. Asa Parker to Mr. Francis Tufts, [August 1843?], Sunbury, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

10. Sally Parker to Mrs. Francis Tufts, August 28, 1843, Doris Whittier Pierce File. Mrs. Francis Tufts is Sally's daughter Mary, who married Mr. Francis Tufts.

11. Asa L. Parker to Brother and Sister, Spring 1849, Sunbury, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

12. John W. Parker to Mr. Francis Tufts Jr., June 16, [18]48, Aurora, Indiana, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

13. A. L. and Sally Parker to Brother and Sister, [Late Summer? 1851], Sunbury, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

14. The 1850 census for Delaware County, Ohio, records Sally as living with her son Asa in Sunbury. Though it is possible that Sally again returned to the Saints as Pierce claims, it is improbable that Sally's health would have permitted the 740-mile journey.

15. Parker to Tufts, July 24, [1837?].

16. Ann Braude, "Women's History Is American Religious History," in *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, ed. Thomas A. Tweed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 87-107.

17. See Janiece Johnson, "Give Up All and Follow Your Lord?: Testimony and Exhortation in Early Mormon Women's Letters, 1831-1839," *BYU Studies* 41, no. 1 (2002): 77-107; and Janiece Johnson, "Give It All Up and Follow Your Lord?: Mormon Female Religiosity, 1831-1943," MA thesis, Department of History, Brigham Young University, 2001.

18. Asa, Julia Ann, and Sally Parker to Mr. Francis Tufts, May 31, 1838, Sunbury, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

19. Sarah Condit and Sally Parker to Mr. Leonard Hescocck, March 9, 1847, Keosauqua, Iowa, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

20. Julia, John, and Sally Parker to Mr. Francis Tufts, November 11, 1838, Sunbury, Ohio; and Sally Parker to [Mr. Francis Tufts?], April [1842?], Sunbury, Ohio, Doris Whittier Pierce File.

21. Earle and Margaret Daley, *Women of Letter: A Study of Self and Genre in the Personal Writing of Caroline Schlegel-Schelling, Rahel Levin Varhagan, and Bettina von Arnim* (Columbia, S.C.: Camden House, 1998), 1–13.

22. Sally was a prodigious “weever.” In Parker’s first two months in Sunbury she wove three hundred yards of cloth. This is a classic example of home production common in the latter part of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. Sally contributed to the family economy by selling the cloth for anywhere from eight to sixteen cents a yard. Parker to Tufts, May 31, 1838; and Parker to Tufts, November 11, 1838. See Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780–1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 181–190.

23. Parker to Tufts, May 31, 1838.

24. John Kempton married Hannah Bradford, sister of Sally Bradford Parker, in 1818 in Farmington, Maine. John and Hannah Kempton moved to Sunbury, Ohio, in November 1838, apparently in response to this letter. The letter was post-marked “Sunbury August 28.”

25. Isaiah Kempton was the son of John and Hannah Bradford Kempton. Peter Parker III, Isaiah’s cousin, was the son of Peter and Sally Bradford Parker.

26. Shortly after their arrival in Sunbury Sally attended a Baptist meeting because of its proximity, yet she longed for fellowship with the Saints. Echoing Elijah’s biblical encounter with the priests of Baal (2 Kings 16) she opined, “I often thought their god was asleep or gone on a journey.” It seems Hyrum Smith’s discourse was the only one she would classify as a sermon. Parker to Tufts, November 11, 1838.

27. Sally probably refers to attacks on the Book of Mormon made in April and August of 1838 by Stephen Burnett and Warren Parrish. Apostles Lyman E. Johnson and John Boynton sympathized with Burnett and Parrish. See Stephen Burnett to Lyman E. Johnson, April 15, 1838, in Joseph Smith Letterbook, 2:64–66, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Parrish distorted the testimony of Book of Mormon witness Martin Harris in an August 11, 1838, letter published in *The Evangelist* (Carthage, Ohio), October 1, 1838, 226.

28. Sally’s statement from Lucy Mack Smith compares favorably to Lucy’s written narrative. See Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor, eds., *The Revised and Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 148–59; and Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 2001), 389–95.

29. John Boynton had been an Apostle since 1835, and the Parkers interacted with him and his family in Kirtland. Sally’s daughter Julia Ann worked for Boynton. Boynton’s mother impressed Sally as a woman as “free harted as ever I saw” (Parker to Tufts, July 24, [1837?]) who lived by faith and prayer. This likely added to her disdain of Boynton, who had rejected the Church. Warren Parrish was Joseph Smith’s scribe since 1835. Both were outspoken members of the dissident faction that arose in Kirtland with the failure of a joint stock company in which many Church leaders invested (the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company).

Parrish condemned Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon in letters to hostile editors. Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 310–41.

30. Orson Hyde was among the first Mormon missionaries in England. See James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission, 1837–1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 1–54.

31. Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri, was the central gathering place of Missouri Mormons from 1836 to 1838.

32. The camp to which Sally refers was Kirtland Camp, the largest group of LDS immigrants from Ohio to Missouri in 1838. They traveled southwest out of Kirtland, turning westward near Mansfield, Ohio, and passing just north of Sunbury.

33. Josiah Butterfield was an early Mormon missionary in Maine instrumental in converting many in the Farmington area. In 1837 he was living in Kirtland. Benjamin Butterfield and Samuel Parker were related to Sally Parker and John Kempton.

34. The Parkers were the only Mormon family in Sunbury, Ohio, in August 1838.

35. After joining Mormonism in 1834, John Kempton actively proselytized neighbors and friends in the Farmington, Maine, area. Here Sally refers to his missionary work, wishing he were ministering in Ohio. Sally's desire was soon realized when the Kempton family moved to Sunbury in November 1838. In her April 18, 1840, letter to Francis Tufts, Sally reported successful missionary work near Sunbury led by John Kempton. "Now our Church is about twenty and many very Believing and wee think it is a few drop[s] before a more plent[iful] shower. When we com in March [1838] there wass no Brethern of our sect til Brother Kempton cam and now wee have a go[o]dly number of loving Brothren and sisters." Parker to Tufts, April 18, 1840.

36. Sally's eldest son John Parker had returned to Maine from Ohio to move his young family or perhaps their belongings. Sally hoped to get him this message before he began the return trip to Ohio.

37. Peter was Sally and Peter Parker's eldest son. Mary Butterfield Parker is their daughter.

38. Cynthia and Rosilla Cowan were daughters of David Cowan Jr. and his wife, Joanna, who was a sister of John Kempton and thus a sister-in-law of Sally Parker. The Cowans were active Mormons in Farmington, Maine.

39. Nathan Pinkham was married to Betsey Bradford, Sally's sister. The Pinkhams lived in Kirtland when Sally and Peter Parker arrived there in the summer of 1837. Apparently the Pinkhams left for Missouri prior to the departure of the Parkers to Sunbury, Ohio.

40. Moses Bradford was Sally's oldest brother. He left Maine in 1818 with his family and settled in Star Township, Hocking County, Ohio.